FY 25 Safe Streets and Roads for All Resources for Applications

In 2025, there is $1 billion available for communities through the Safe Streets and Roads for All program to develop plans and implement strategies to improve roadway safety. Applications are as short as two pages, and the chances of success are remarkably high. The deadline is June 26, 2025. The Safe Routes Partnership is here to help you win this funding.

We have pulled together this content to help you more easily apply for this opportunity. Below is a table showing what resources are included and where to find them in the document.

Contents

A. Data points to make the case for Safe Routes to School and active transportation

In the short narrative application, you will have an opportunity to briefly explain the safety problem(s) to be solved and how your project will address it. Feel free to use the framing or data points from below to support your narrative.

1. **Safe Routes to School's return on investment; and as a high-impact, low cost, evidenced-based strategy:** Safe Routes to School is one of only 14 community interventions deemed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to show a positive impact on health and be cost-effective within 5 years.[1]
    a. **Safety**
        i. Traffic injuries remain one of the leading causes of death for children.[2] Safe Routes to School works to keep kids safe from traffic injuries and fatalities.
        ii. The Safe Routes to School program has been rigorously evaluated to show reductions in roadway injuries and fatalities among school aged youth and people of all ages. A study across 18 states showed a 23% reduction in traffic injuries involving school-aged kids walking and bicycling.[3]
        iii. Safe Routes to School benefits not just children and their families, but also their communities. An analysis of 47 schools in California found that Safe Routes to School infrastructure improvements resulted in a 75 percent reduction in collisions involving bicyclists and pedestrians of all ages—not just children.[4]
    b. **Cost**
        i. Building transportation infrastructure to connect kids to schools and people to key destinations in their communities makes sense for improving transportation and for our economy. Research across the country reveals that Safe Routes to School projects generate economic benefits 4.4 times greater than the costs of infrastructure and programming.[5] That means every $1 of investment yields about $4.40 in benefits.

[1] "Physical Activity: Interventions to Increase Active Travel to School." Community Prevention Services Task Force. Accessed April 4, 2025: https://stacks.cdc.gov/view/cdc/168567

[2] https://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMc2201761

[3] https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC5248654/

[4] D Ragland, S Pande, J Bigham and FJ Cooper (2014, January) Ten years later: examining the long-term impact of the California Safe Routes to School program Presented at the Transportation Research Board 93rd Annual Meeting, Washington DC Available at http://docstrborg/prp/14-4226pdf

[5] https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/33341185/

ii. Safe Routes to School provides low-cost options for students to get to and from school, reducing the amount of money needed for personal vehicle use and busing.

2. Economic support for active transportation
    a. Relatively small investments in amenities that improve biking and walking can lead to big gains in property value.
        i. One nationwide study by CEOs for Cities, a cross-sector organization that develops ideas to make U.S. cities more economically successful, found that "houses located in areas with above-average walkability or bikability are worth up to $34,000 more than similar houses in areas with average walkability levels."[6]
        ii. Properties within ¼ mile (0.4 km) of the Radnor Trail, part of Philadelphia's Circuit regional trail network, were valued on average $69,000 higher than other area properties.[7]
    b. Homes located near bicycle, pedestrian, and transit facilities are worth more and maintain their value. Even real estate sites like Redfin and Zillow include walkscores in their listing, knowing that this is an important amenity to potential home buyers. WalkScore rankings, which factor in walkability and amenities, on pricing and value. A study of commercial properties such as office, retail, and apartment buildings found that a ten-point increase in walkability increased the property value by 1 to 9 percent.[8]
3. Communities that support active transportation see lower health insurance costs to local employers. The costs have been quantified in several ways. One way this has been quantified is the medical costs and work-loss costs for injury and fatalities for someone involved in a traffic crash, which could have been prevented with safe street design. Another way the research has shown is that when employees live in more walkable communities, they are more productive, have fewer sick days, and lower health insurance costs - all of which are outcomes that benefit the employer. [9]
4. Communities that have safe streets for walking and biking are more likely to attract visitors. This is becoming less of a secret as we've seen a movement across the country of small towns looking to revive their main streets to become vibrant and walkable attractions – and income generators.

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[6] Urban Land Institute (2016). Active Transportation and Real Estate: The Next Frontier. Accessed on April 4, 2025. https://uli.org/wp-content/uploads/ULI-Documents/Active-Transportation-and-Real-Estate-The-Next-Frontier.pdf

[7] https://uli.org/wp-content/uploads/ULI-Documents/Active-Transportation-and-Real-Estate-The-Next-Frontier.pdf

[8] G Pivo and J Fisher. "The walkability premium in commercial real estate investments." Real Estate Economics. March 1, 2011. 39: 185–219. doi:10.1111/ j.1540-6229.2010.00296.x

[9] Littman, T. (March 2025) Evaluating Active Transportation Benefits and Costs https://www.vtpi.org/nmt-tdm.pdf

5. **Communities that support biking and walking projects see increased retail sales.** Streets where walking is safe and easy are streets where businesses usually thrive. There are two ways that this has been approached. On average, transportation costs ranks as the number two household expense. AAA estimates $10, 728/year in 2022 for average car ownership. Vehicle-dependent households devote 20% more income to transportation than households in communities with streets that are safe for biking and walking. When people are able to reduce the amount of money they spend on car ownership, they have more expendable income to make purchases. But also, walkable streets encourage business activity, generate greater tax revenue per acre and offer a higher return on investment, square foot for square foot, than auto-oriented streets. This has been shown in large cities (like Washington, DC) as well as small towns (West Jefferson, NC – small rural downtown where some minor streetscape and signal improvements resulted in 55 new jobs and $500,000 in private investment). Estimates show that for retailers, walking interventions can increase the number of people entering shops and spending by up to 40% and retail rents by 20%.[10]
6. **Biking and walking projects create jobs** at higher rates than new highway construction, and communities can leverage community benefit agreements to ensure that jobs can be local.[11]
7. **Safety impacts: High impact, low cost, evidence based strategies**
    a. Examples and References of Low-Cost, Evidence Based Strategies
        i. Safe Routes Partnerships Engineering Solutions - Easy to use reference with research and price ranges on varying treatments
        ii. NHTSA's Low-Cost Pedestrian Zones: Economical, evidence-based safety strategies
    b. U.S. DOT's Proven Safety CounterMeasures
    c. Making the case for asphalt art:
        i. Bloomberg Philanthropies funded a 2022 evaluation of asphalt art's effect on road safety which showed significant improved safety benefits. The report contains data on crashes and behavior of people driving and walking before and after asphalt art projects. Here are some findings:
            1. 50% decrease in the rate of crashes involving pedestrians or other vulnerable road users
            2. 37% decrease in the rate of crashes leading to injuries
            3. 17% decrease in the total crash rate
            4. 25% decrease in pedestrian crossings involving a conflict with drivers

[10] Littman, T. (March 2025) Evaluating Active Transportation Benefits and Costs https://www.vtpi.org/nmt-tdm.pdf

[11] https://www.railstotrails.org/trailblog/2019/october/15/new-research-finds-public-investment-in-trails-walking-and-biking-infrastructure-delivers-potential-economic-benefits-of-138-5-billion-annually/

5. 27% increase in frequency of drivers immediately yielding to pedestrians with the right of way
6. 38% decrease in pedestrians crossing against the walk signal

B. Data points required for the application and where to find them

This is content required in the application based on page 28 of the SS4A NOFO.

1. Jurisdiction Population, Source: 2020 Census Data
    a. Hyperlink: https://data.census.gov/table
    b. How-To:
        i. Go to filters on left-hand column
        ii. Input your city/town/county
        iii. Ensure 2020 data
        iv. Example Phoenix, AZ: 1,608,139
2. Total Count Motor-Vehicle Involved Roadway Fatality that includes the last five years of data available in FARS (Fatality Analysis Reporting System), Source: 2018 - 2022 FARS
    a. Hyperlink https://www.nhtsa.gov/research-data/fatality-analysis-reporting-system-fars
    b. How-To
        i. Click: Run a Query Using the FARS Web-Based Encyclopedia
        ii. Click: Query FARS Data (See menu at the top)
        iii. Query inputs:
        iv. Fatal Motor-Vehicle Crashes
        v. Time Frame: 2018-2022
        vi. State and city (or county)
        vii. Click: Submit (Green Button)
        viii. Use the Total Number in the lower right hand corner of the table.
        ix. Example of Phoenix, AZ: Total is 1,210
3. Total Average Annual Fatality Rate (per 100,000), Source: Total count of Fatalities based on FARS 2018-2022, divided by jurisdiction population based on 2020 Census:
    a. Use data sources above to calculate the annual fatality rate.
        i. Divide the Total Motor-Vehicle Involved Roadway Fatality by Jurisdiction Population, Example: 1,210/1,608,139 = 0.000752
        ii. Divide that number by 5, Example 0.000752/5=.00015
        iii. Multiple that number by 100,000, Example .00015*100,000= 15.048
4. Inclusion of Underserved Census Tracts
    a. An “Area of Persistent Poverty” is defined by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. A project is located in an Area of Persistent Poverty if:
        i. the County in which the project is located consistently had greater than or equal to 20 percent of the population living in poverty in all three of the following datasets: (a) the 1990 decennial census; (b) the 2000 decennial census; and (c) the most recent (2022) Small Area Income Poverty Estimates; OR

ii. the Census Tract in which the project is located has a poverty rate of at least 20 percent as measured by the 2014-2018 5-year data series available from the American Community Survey of the Bureau of the Census; OR

iii. the project is located in any territory or possession of the United States.

b. List of Areas of Persistent Poverty: https://www.transportation.gov/grants/mpdg-areas-persistent-poverty-and-historically-disadvantaged-communities-1

C. Sample timelines for demonstration activities

The 2025 Safe Streets for All Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) requests that applications with demonstration activities include a brief schedule for the start/end dates and when activities will occur. It also asks applicants to include any timeline implications or constraints due to meeting administrative requirements such as NEPA, waivers, and permits, including approval timeframes (listed starting on page 66). According to the NOFO "DOT generally expects demonstration activities to be initiated within 18 months of executing a grant agreement (e.g., quick-builds on the roadway; pilot project established) and the benefits of the demonstration activity to be evaluated during the period of performance for the grant agreement."

Demonstration activities are temporary safety improvements that can be used to inform comprehensive safety action plans by testing strategies to determine what works. This can be a feasibility study of bulb-outs on a roadway, a walking school bus, a temporary traffic garden or open street event, a test of technology for variable speed limits, and the list goes on (see more examples here). Any demonstration activity must also involve data collection and evaluation to measure potential benefits.

We have included an example timeline for a quick-build feasibility study and programming demonstration activities below. These timelines assume that there has been little to no engagement or preparation work before the grant award. Use these as a starting point and tailor them to your particular context and needs. We have also included other considerations as you think about your proposed timeline. You may not want to include this level of detail in your application, but we included more to help you think through what can be expected between milestones.

Our advice: Take your time to do this well! A successful demonstration activity simultaneously produces a great single demonstration of a strategy and is also an opportunity to teach everyone involved how to do this work in the future. Bring along partners and treat this as a learning experience.

Feasibility Study/Demonstration Project Sample Timeline

- June 26, 2025: Applications due
- End of Fall 2025-Winter 2025: Award Announcements (Estimate based on past cycles, pending USDOT)
- January/February 2026: Project kick-off and initial work
    - Connect with partners, identify next steps, and clarify team roles
- Spring 2026: Begin planning, permitting, and review processes
    - Project scoping discussions with partners

- Connect with your state DOT and/or MPO contact (ideally a regional representative) about NEPA and other permitting requirements as necessary.
- Summer 2026: Community engagement and project plan finalization
  - Community engagement
  - Rescoping as necessary and finalizing the project plan
  - Finalizing a data collection and analysis plan to help inform action planning (this is a great overview for different ways of evaluating projects using different metrics and this guide from Minnesota Department of Transportation has great evaluation tools with worksheets, engagement materials, surveys, and communications templates)
- Fall and Winter 2026:
  - Finalize permitting and reviews process (NEPA, other permits)
  - Order materials (and ensure they are in alignment with Buy America Preference)
- January to July 2027: Installation and assessment (Adjust for seasonality/weather constraints, below is a sample for a location avoiding winter weather)
  - March/April: Initial data collection to provide a baseline for comparison (allow for 1-2 weeks of data collection)
- May/June: Installation (demonstration projects can typically be installed in a single day)
- June/July: Data collection
  - Ideally, wait for at least three weeks after installation to collect data (There will be a behavior change immediately after installation, so ideally you let that normalize first to see how the project is impacting people in the long-term). If that is a limiting factor, you can collect data immediately but just know that it could affect your data.
  - These projects are meant to test a project or strategy for a finite time. We recommend removing project materials no sooner than 4 weeks after installation. The period of performance should not exceed 5 years after executing the grant agreement. These are temporary measures but can last for a relatively long time to help test a proposed project and determine potential benefits and future scope.

Other factors to consider:

- Seasonality: How will the weather during different times of year affect your project? For example, places with snow in the winter may want to avoid demonstrations during that time to avoid conflicts with snowplows. Conversely, southern locales may want to avoid the hottest summer months to capture times with people walking and biking more frequently.
- Target population: For example, if your project is related to schools, you want school to be in session when the demonstration activity is happening.

- **Materials procurement:** More durable or specialized materials may take longer to get. For example, durable planters are typically made to order and could be 2-8 weeks depending on the time of year and demand. Also, demonstration activities are subject to the Build America, Buy America Act (Pub. L. No 117–58, div. G §§ 70901–70927) as clarified in OMB Memorandum M-22-11.31. Additional information on construction materials requirements can be found at the FHWA Construction Program Guide webpage.
- **State vs local roadway:** Permitting will be different depending on which entity owns the roadway. Demonstration activities on state roads typically require more permits, planning, and time compared to locally controlled roads.
- **Write data collection/analysis into your budget:** Consider what information you want to collect before and after the demonstration activities. This is a requirement for the SS4A program but an essential part of using this demonstration activity to inform future planning and projects. Set your project up for success by including any resources needed for data collection and assessment in your application budget. For example, you can pay for speed monitoring technology that your community has not yet adopted as long as it supports assessment of your demonstration project for an action plan.

Safe Routes to School Activities and Timeline

Safe Routes to School pilot activities are under the umbrella of eligible demonstration activities piloting. Examples of eligible Safe Routes to School non-infrastructure activities include:

- Bike trains or walking school buses
- Walk or bike audits
- Pop-up events such as traffic gardens, open streets (school streets, play streets), bike rodeos
- Artistic installations to convey traffic safety messaging to alert road users to students walking/biking in the area
- New versions of safety campaigns, develop targeted messages
- Walk to School Day events

Build a timeline that takes the school calendar into account and allows pre/post data collection to happen. This can include quantitative data on participation and qualitative data on perceptions of safety. Consult with your school partners on timing. Typically, the beginning of the school year (early Fall) is a suitable time to launch engagement activities, when teachers and students are entering a new school year with time to instill new habits.

Resources to get you started:
Step By Step: How to Start a Walking School Bus At Your School
The Wheels on the Bike Go Round and Round Bike Train Toolkit
Pop-Ups for Safe Routes to School

Safe Routes to School activity sample timeline

May-August 2026: Begin planning and coordination with school partners

- Identify where students live using household addresses and/or boundary maps
- Host initial walk or bike audit to identify walking/biking routes
- Identify school engagement opportunities such as open house/back-to-school night for outreach to collect baseline qualitative data (eg. surveys)
- Develop plans to recruit and train volunteers
- Develop promotional materials

August - September 2026: Outreach and Promotion

- Begin volunteer and student recruitment
- Conduct baseline quantitative evaluation - (ex. Mode tallies, surveys on perception of safety, school pick-up/drop off observations)
- Finalize routes and number of volunteers
- Host a training for adult volunteers

October 2026: Implement/Launch Activities

- Host Walk/Bike to School Day
- Launch walking school bus or bike train
- Provide student training such as bike rodeos

October - December 2026: Provide Ongoing Support and Coordination

- Conduct process evaluation including track student participation in SRTS activities, mode tallies, changes in school pick-up/drop off
- Provide ongoing coordination of recruitment of students and volunteers
- Provide ongoing support such as distribution of safety equipment (helmets, vests) and bike maintenance

December 2026: Mid-Year Survey

- Conduct mid-year survey of participants and volunteers

January -May 2027: Spring Program Activities

- Provided tailored safety messages for winter conditions
- Reboot ongoing activities and provide coordination as needed
    - Reassess walk/bike routes if needed
    - Provide additional training for new adult volunteers
- Plan for special days to drum up participation, e.g. Winter Walk to School Day, Earth Day (April), Bike to School Day (May)
    - Track participation for special walking/biking days

May 2027: Conduct Post-Program Evaluation

- Conduct post-program evaluation (ex. Mode tallies, surveys on perception of safety, school pick-up/drop off observations)

D. Guidance on how to create a map as a shape file

On page 31 of the NOFO it says, “Applicants must submit a map in PDF and spatial format (e.g., Shapefile, .KML) that shows the location of the jurisdiction and highlights the roadway network under the applicant’s jurisdiction. Applicants requesting funding for demonstration activities should include the locations of any proposed demonstration pilots if known.”

Watch this YouTube video on how to create a shape file using google maps.

E. Budget guidance

You can find every awarded project and how much was awarded on the SS4A website. Here are links for all awards for FY24, FY 23, and FY22. For just the planning and demonstration look at FY 24, FY 23, and FY 22. We have also pulled information specifically for Safe Routes to School projects and MPOs

1. Safe Routes to School
    a. Awards for Safe Routes to School-related work in FY 23 and FY 24 can be found in this spreadsheet.
    b. Local Safe Routes to School Action Plans: The average total project cost in FY 23 and FY 24 for developing and/or updating Safe Routes to School plans was $487,886 with a maximum of $1.2 million (City of Anaheim, CA to develop an SRTS plan) and minimum of $125,000 (Carson City, NV to update their SRTS Master Plan)
2. MPOs
    d. To get a sense of the average request from MPOs for planning and demonstration projects, view a chart of MPO SS4A FY 24 awards for all planning and demonstration projects by population.
    e. For Safe Routes to School Plans
        i. Both Fresno Council of Governments and Oahu Metropolitan Planning Organization requested $500,000 to develop a comprehensive Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Safety Action Plans in FY 24
        ii. Benton Franklin Council of Governments (an RTPO) requested $400,000 for a regional Safe Routes to School Action Plan in FY 23.
        iii. Billings, MT MPO Safe Routes to School RFP
3. Average demonstration project costs
    a. This guide from the Minnesota Department of Transportation provides a materials list with price estimates starting in the appendix on page iv.
    b. This guide from the Western Transportation Institute provides cost estimates for low-cost street elements and cost breakdowns of materials starting on page 3.