Commonwealth of Virginia's Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Program

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Intended Purpose of SRTS

SAFETEA-LU stated purposes:

- To enable and encourage children to walk and bicycle to school
- To make bicycling and walking to school a safer and more appealing
- To facilitate the planning, development, and implementation of safety projects and activities

Safe Routes to School Program Goals

- Comply with CTB goals and be consistent with VDOT's Bike & Pedestrian Policy
- Create effective bike and pedestrian plans and programs in every school
- Develop model schools in every construction district
- Distribute funds across Virginia based on demonstrated safety needs and established criteria

VDOT Program Partners

- Elementary and Middle School Students and Parents
- Parent – Teacher Associations
- School Divisions
- Local Governments
- Non-Profit Organizations
- Va. Department of Education
- Va. Department of Health
- Va. Department of Motor Vehicles

Grant Proposal Criteria

VDOT developed criteria to evaluate applicants:

- Demonstrated needs
- Identification of current and potential safe walking and bicycling routes to schools
- Identification of safety hazards
- Number of current and anticipated child pedestrians and bicyclists
- Potential to create and encourage safer walking and bicycling
- Community support for application

Grant Proposal Criteria (cont.)

Emphasis placed on awarding first-round grants to candidate "model schools" that:

- Have existing plans for improving bicycle and pedestrian access;
- Have the potential for reduction of vehicle miles traveled as a result of proposed improvements; and
- Have demonstrated a capacity to rapidly advance improvements and to work in coordination with local government agencies.

VDOT Program Administration

VDOT will use two grant types

1. Program Grants (up to 30% of funds)

- Lays the groundwork for localities & targets safety improvements
- Develops safety education and encouragement components
- Provides funds to develop and implement required local SRTS Plans and programs
- Requires a needs assessment specific to application
- Calls for rapid grant award process

Program Administration (cont.)

2. Project Grants (up 70 -90% of funds)

- Provide physical improvements that will enhance or facilitate safe biking and walking to school
- **Safety enhancements**
  - Signalization
  - Signing
  - Traffic calming
- **Bike & pedestrian facilities**
  - Sidewalks
  - Crosswalks
  - Bike lanes/paths
  - Multi-use trails
  - Secure bike racks

Program Requirements

- SAFETEA-LU requires that schools receiving SRTS grant funds have an approved SRTS Plan or use grant funds to develop and implement one.

- An approved SRTS Plan must be in place before Project Grant awards can proceed, and the proposed project must be consistent with the needs identified and proposed solutions in the Plan.

SRTS Administrative Process

- CTB allocates SRTS funds into statewide line items
- VDOT Commissioner and Secretary of Transportation will review and approve Program and Project Grant awards
- Commissioner would report to CTB & FHWA on Virginia's SRTS program annually

Advisory Committee

- VDOT lead with representatives from partner agencies and groups: DOE, VDH, DCR, DMV, BikeWalk Va., Va. PTA, and Va. Assn. of Elementary School Principals
- Reviews applications and recommends awards
- Provides advice and guidance to VDOT on program guidelines, criteria for grants, and overall program operation
- Serves as representatives to publicize SRTS and receive feedback from grantees

Grant Accountability

- Program grants to be administered by localities with quarterly progress reports and vouchers to VDOT
- Project grants to be administered locally with semi-annual progress reports and normal billing
- Measurement of results required to assess program

Next Steps

September 2006	Convene Advisory Committee
December 31, 2006	Grants Due
March 1, 2007	Award First Grants
August 2007	Annual SRTS Report to CTB

Questions