

# Learn it. Do it. Live it!

## FUNDING SRTS PROJECTS

Some SRTS projects require little or no funds to implement. Others, such as constructing a new sidewalk, may require a substantial investment. Here are tips for your funding search, whether for large projects or small ones.

### FUNDING SRTS IMPLEMENTATION

- ✓ **Clarify your needs.**  
It helps to approach the task of identifying funding sources with a clear sense of your funding needs. How much funding do you need, when do you need it, and what do you need it for? The answers to these questions will help you focus your efforts on the funding sources that best match your needs.
- ✓ **Think creatively about funding sources.**  
Funding for SRTS projects is available through a wide variety of sources, including state and local governments, hospitals and health systems, law enforcement, businesses, foundations, advocacy groups, and others. A list of potential funding sources is provided below but is by no means comprehensive. It's important to look beyond the list and consider organizations in your community whose interests might intersect with SRTS. For example, if an organization's mission involves promoting physical activity, safety, environmental preservation, or community development, it may be worth reaching out to them for funding, particularly if your SRTS team has a personal connection with the organization.
- ✓ **Understand different kinds of grant opportunities.**  
Not all funding opportunities are created equal. Grants offered at the national or state levels may be more competitive, while grants offered at the local level may be less so. Grants for large amounts of money, particularly federal grants, can take a long time to initiate and implement and have large administrative requirements. Consider whether you have the experience and capacity to meet those requirements; if not, try finding a partner.
- ✓ **Cultivate partnerships.**  
Partnerships with local governments, health systems, advocacy groups, and others are critical to succeeding at the SRTS funding game. Even when these organizations

are not able to fund a project themselves, they may be able to point you to potential funders, assist with grant writing, or sign on as a project sponsor, which is why it's important to keep existing and potential partners in the loop from the get go.

Depending on the partner organization's focus, you may wish to invite them to participate in your meetings and activities. For example, if you are conducting a walkabout to evaluate existing walking and bicycling conditions, you should consider inviting representatives from your local department of transportation, planning department, and/or public works department. Note that grants often limit who is eligible to apply, so forming a partnership with an eligible sponsor may, in some cases, be the only way to access funding.

- ✓ **Be prepared!**  
Funding opportunities can pop up out of the blue! Develop a calendar of the grant opportunities you know about and keep your eyes open to others. It can be helpful to review previous grant applications and develop responses to common grant questions in advance. That way, you'll be ready to pounce when opportunities arise. It's also good to follow the local government and school district budget cycle, as community members may be able to influence how funds are allocated.
- ✓ **Don't sell yourself short.**  
Provide complete answers to all application questions, with enough detail to convey that you've really thought things through. You don't need to write a book, but simple yes/no responses can be taken the wrong way. Also, think about how you can convey the need for the grant and its potential benefits in the most compelling way. Photos, videos, letters of support, and a few statistics can make an application more convincing.
- ✓ **Sign up for the Virginia SRTS program newsletter!**  
The Virginia SRTS Program publishes a quarterly newsletter that regularly highlights upcoming funding opportunities. Sign up on the Virginia SRTS Program website: [www.vdot.virginia.gov/programs/srsm\\_join\\_our\\_email\\_list.asp](http://www.vdot.virginia.gov/programs/srsm_join_our_email_list.asp)



## MENU OF FUNDING OPTIONS

On the following pages you will find a menu of options you can use to fund SRTS projects. Each funding option indicates the type of SRTS project it can fund (infrastructure or non-infrastructure), the estimated amount funding or type of assistance provided, eligible activities, considerations, and the match requirement, if any. (See Mix and Match for more information about match requirements.)

The options are organized by category:

### SRTS Planning Projects

These projects are focused on developing recommendations to improve walking and bicycling conditions and to encourage safe walking and bicycling.

### Small-Scale SRTS Activities and Infrastructure Projects

These projects are limited to a handful of schools and cost no more than a few thousand dollars. Examples include:

- Putting on events such as a Walk to School Day or bike rodeo
- Operating a walking school bus or frequent walker program
- Implementing a pedestrian safety curriculum
- Purchasing a bike rack
- Striping a crosswalk on school grounds

### Large-Scale SRTS Programs and Infrastructure Projects

These projects may cover multiple schools or involve substantial costs for things like design and construction.

Examples include:

- A county or city-level SRTS program that involves coordination of SRTS activities at multiple schools.
- Crossing redesigns, such as new signals or crosswalk striping.
- Sidewalk or shared-use path construction.

A county or a city government may be able to fund larger projects through an existing budget line item, which is why it's a good idea to check with your local government about this possibility prior to investigating other options. Local hospitals and health systems can also be a source of funding for health or injury prevention-focused SRTS efforts, and local businesses may be able to contribute as well.

Note that the SRTS project funding options listed below do not constitute a comprehensive list of sources and that funding sources change frequently. Please use this list as a starting point.

#### Resource Tip!

We recommend you read [Frequent Routes to Funding](#) by the Safe Routes to School National Partnership for additional advice on how to fund SRTS projects.

Project Category	Funding Options
SRTS Planning Projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VA SRTS Program, Walkabout Mini-grant</li> <li>• Virginia Foundation for Healthy Youth, Healthy Community Action Team Initiative</li> <li>• SRTS National Partnership, Safe Routes to Parks Grant</li> </ul>
Small-Scale SRTS Activities and Infrastructure Projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VA SRTS Program, QuickStart Mini-grant</li> <li>• SafeKids, Walk this Way Grant</li> <li>• People for Bikes, Community Grants</li> </ul>
Large-Scale SRTS Activities and Infrastructure Projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VA SRTS Program, Non-Infrastructure Grant</li> <li>• VDOT, Transportation Alternatives Program Grant</li> <li>• VDOT, Revenue Sharing Program</li> <li>• VDOT, Highway Safety Improvement Program</li> <li>• Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Funding</li> <li>• SMART SCALE</li> </ul>



## SRTS PLANNING PROJECTS

### Virginia SRTS Program—Walkabout Mini-grants

- **Type:** Planning
- **Estimated Amount/Type of Assistance:** Technical assistance worth \$3,000-\$5,000
- **Match Requirement:** None
- **Funding Cycle:** Twice a year, spring and fall
- **Eligible Activities:** Walkabout Mini-grant recipients receive a hands-on walking and bicycling infrastructure survey and written report about the walking and bicycling conditions in the area around their school. The goal is to lay the foundation for a future application for infrastructure funding, such as the Transportation Alternatives Program. See below for more information on the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) grant.
- **More Information:** [www.virginiadot.org/programs/srsm\\_walkabout\\_mini-grants.asp](http://www.virginiadot.org/programs/srsm_walkabout_mini-grants.asp)

### Virginia Foundation for Healthy Youth—Healthy Community Action Team Grants

- **Type:** Non-infrastructure
- **Estimated Amount/Type of Assistance:** \$30,000 based on previous grant rounds
- **Match Requirement:** None
- **Funding Cycle:** Sign up for VFHY's mailing list at [www.vfhy.org](http://www.vfhy.org) to be alerted to RFPs
- **Eligible Activities:** The Virginia Foundation for Healthy Youth provides funding to Healthy Communities Action Teams (HCATs) to improve access to healthy foods and opportunities for physical activity to prevent and reduce childhood obesity. Any group can apply, newly established or otherwise.
- **Considerations:** HCATs consist of a minimum of five representatives from a locality. These partners may include community organizations, schools, policy makers, local growers, physicians, businesses, health departments, faith-based organizations, cooperative extension agencies, afterschool programs and others active in the call for healthier, sustainable lifestyles that prevent and reduce childhood obesity.
- **More Information:** [www.vfhy.org/obesity/hcat-initiative](http://www.vfhy.org/obesity/hcat-initiative)



Skyline Middle School used a QuickStart mini-grant to start a bicycling program in physical education classes.

### Safe Routes to School National Partnership—Safe Routes to Parks Grants

- **Type:** Non-infrastructure
- **Estimated Amount/Type of Assistance:** Technical assistance to develop a Safe Routes to Parks Plan plus \$12,500 for implementation
- **Match Requirement:** None
- **Funding Cycle:** Yearly in December
- **Eligible Activities:** Developing a Safe Routes to Parks action plan. The plan might address connections between schools and parks or benefit schools if schools are located near parks.
- **More Information:** [www.saferoutespartnership.org/healthy-communities/saferoutestoparks/2019](http://www.saferoutespartnership.org/healthy-communities/saferoutestoparks/2019)

#### Mix and Match

The term “match” is often used in the context of grant funding. It refers to the share of funding that a grant applicant is required to provide as part of the grant agreement. For example, most federal grants for transportation projects require a 20% match from the applicant. This means the applicant must pay for 20% of the project, while the remaining 80% is paid for with federal funds.

Depending on the grant, there may be a variety of ways that the match requirement can be fulfilled. In the case of federal transportation grants, state funds, local government funds, and private cash donations are all eligible to meet the match requirement. Donations of materials, equipment, and services may also be eligible, and are referred to as “in-kind” donations.

#### Resources

[VDOT, Third Party In-Kind Contributions for Transportation Alternatives Projects: Supplemented Guidance](#)



## SMALL-SCALE SRTS ACTIVITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

### Virginia SRTS Program—QuickStart Mini-grants

- **Type:** Primarily Non-infrastructure
- **Estimated Amount/Type of Assistance:** \$1,000
- **Match Requirement:** None
- **Funding Cycle:** Multiple times in the fall and spring
- **Eligible Activities:** Can be used to implement SRTS education and encouragement activities, such as a pedestrian safety curriculum or a Bike to School Day event. Can also be used to fund small infrastructure projects on school property, such as a bicycle rack; however, these small infrastructure projects must be accompanied by an education or encouragement activity.
- **More Information:** [www.virginiadot.org/programs/srsm\\_quick\\_start\\_mini-grant\\_program.asp](http://www.virginiadot.org/programs/srsm_quick_start_mini-grant_program.asp)

### Safe Kids Worldwide—Walk this Way Grants

- **Type:** Non-infrastructure
- **Estimated Amount/Type of Assistance:** \$500-\$1,000
- **Match Requirement:** None
- **Funding Cycle:** Applications due in July
- **Eligible Activities:** Walk to School Day events.
- **More Information:** [www.safekids.org/walk-way](http://www.safekids.org/walk-way)



The Arlington County Police Department used a QuickStart mini-grant to get reflective stop signs for school crossing guards.

## Virginia Department of Transportation Neighborhood Traffic Programs

VDOT offers various programs which neighborhoods and subdivisions may use to address traffic concerns on their streets. The programs include “Additional \$200 Fine” signs, Traffic Calming, “Watch for Children” signs, and the Through Truck Restriction program.

- Under the “Additional \$200 Fine” sign program, a county or town can request that VDOT install “Additional \$200 Fine” signs on local, residential streets, where there is documented speeding.
- Under the traffic calming program, a neighborhood Home Owners Association (HOA), Civic Association (CA) or group of homeowners can initiate a process to request traffic calming treatments on existing, neighborhood streets that are VDOT-maintained and have speed limits of 25 mph or less.
- Under the Through Truck Restriction Program, a local governing body may request signs prohibiting through trucks on a primary or secondary highway if a reasonable alternative route is provided. If VDOT approves the request, it will post the appropriate signs.

### People for Bikes Community Grants

- **Type:** Primarily Infrastructure
- **Estimated Amount/Type of Assistance:** Up to \$10,000
- **Match Requirement:** People for Bikes does not require a specific percentage match but prefers projects that are supported by other funding partners.
- **Funding Cycle:** There are funding cycles in the spring and fall of each year. For the spring cycle, the online application form opens in December. For the fall cycle, the online application form opens in June.
- **Eligible Activities:** Bicycle infrastructure projects, including bicycle parking and bicycle paths, lanes, trails, and bridges. Also some advocacy projects, such as Ciclovias or Open Streets events.
- **Considerations:** Eligible applicants include non-profit organizations with a focus on bicycling, active transportation, or community development, city or county agencies or departments, and state or federal agencies working locally. Funds cannot be used for general operating costs.
- **More Information:** [www.peopleforbikes.org/apply-now/](http://www.peopleforbikes.org/apply-now/)





Harrisonburg Public Schools used a QuickStart mini-grant to create Walker Reward Cards for students who walk to school.

## LARGE-SCALE SRTS PROGRAMS AND INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

### Virginia SRTS Program—Non-Infrastructure Grants

- **Type:** Non-Infrastructure
- **Estimated Amount/Type of Assistance:** \$5,000-\$100,000
- **Match Requirement:** 20% for programs that have already received three SRTS Non-Infrastructure Grants
- **Funding Cycle:** Annually in the spring
- **Eligible Activities:** Can be used to fund education, encouragement, evaluation and enforcement programs related to Safe Routes to School (SRTS). The Non-Infrastructure Grant can also be used to fund a SRTS Coordinator, a part- or full-time SRTS advocate who works within a local jurisdiction or school division to promote and facilitate SRTS activities at a minimum of three schools.
- **Considerations:** The first step is to create a SRTS Activities & Programs Plan (APP). The APP is the first phase of any SRTS effort and outlines a school or community's intentions for making active travel to and from school safer and more sustainable. There are both a Reference Guide and Template available for preparing a SRTS APP.
- **More Information:** [www.virginiadot.org/programs/srsm\\_srts\\_activities\\_and\\_programs\\_plan\\_app\\_for\\_non-infrastructure\\_grantsactivities\\_and\\_programs\\_plan\\_non-infrastructure\\_act.asp](http://www.virginiadot.org/programs/srsm_srts_activities_and_programs_plan_app_for_non-infrastructure_grantsactivities_and_programs_plan_non-infrastructure_act.asp)

### Virginia Department of Transportation—Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside Program Grants

- **Type:** Infrastructure and Non-Infrastructure
- **Estimated Amount/Type of Assistance:** \$50,000-\$1.5 million (based on recent awards)
- **Match Requirement:** 20%
- **Funding Cycle:** Every 2 years in the fall-winter timeframe
- **Eligible Activities:** Provides funding for SRTS, Transportation Alternatives, Recreational Trails, and Boulevard projects. Eligible SRTS projects include infrastructure and non-infrastructure activities that are intended to enable and encourage children in grades K-8 to walk and bicycle to school.
- **Considerations:** SRTS projects must be within 2 miles of a school.
- **More Information:** [www.virginiadot.org/business/prehancegrants.asp](http://www.virginiadot.org/business/prehancegrants.asp)

### Virginia Department of Transportation—Revenue Sharing Program Grants

- **Type:** Infrastructure
- **Estimated Amount/Type of Assistance:** \$20,000-\$5 million (based on recent awards and program guidelines)
- **Match Requirement:** 50%
- **Funding Cycle:** Every 2 years
- **Eligible Activities:** Provides funding to finance eligible work on highway systems within a locality. Can include sidewalks, trails, and other facilities that improve pedestrian and/or bicycle access.
- **Considerations:** The Revenue Sharing Program is intended to provide funding for immediately needed changes or to supplement funding for existing projects. Larger new projects may also be considered, provided the locality identifies any additional funding needed to implement the project.
- **More Information:** [www.virginiadot.org/business/local-assistance-access-programs.asp#Revenue\\_Sharing](http://www.virginiadot.org/business/local-assistance-access-programs.asp#Revenue_Sharing)

#### Resource Tip!

For additional funding ideas, go to the Virginia Grants Portal, [www.governor.virginia.gov/constituent-services/grants/](http://www.governor.virginia.gov/constituent-services/grants/)



### Resource Tip!

The [VDOT Board of Supervisors Manual 2019](#) provides an excellent overview of funding programs offered by VDOT.

### Virginia Department of Transportation—Highway Safety Improvement Program Grants

- **Type:** Infrastructure and Non-Infrastructure
- **Estimated Amount/Type of Assistance:** \$50,000-\$25 million (based on recent awards)
- **Match Requirement:** 10%
- **Funding Cycle:** Annually in the fall-winter timeframe
- **Eligible Activities:** Eligible activities in the Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety Program area include, but are not limited to: on-street facilities; shared-use paths; treatments for intersections, mid-block crossings, and crosswalks; signs and pavement markings; accessibility features; and traffic calming measures.
- **Considerations:** Proposals need to document the expected reduction in crashes or risk for bicyclists and pedestrians and address existing hazardous conditions.
- **More Information:** [www.virginiadot.org/business/ted\\_app\\_pro.asp](http://www.virginiadot.org/business/ted_app_pro.asp)

### Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Funding

- **Type:** Infrastructure and Non-Infrastructure
- **Estimated Amount/Type of Assistance:** \$190,000-\$66 million (based on recent awards)
- **Match Requirement:** 20%
- **Funding Cycle:** Yearly in the summer-fall timeframe
- **Eligible Activities:** Projects and programs in urban areas that reduce congestion and transportation related emissions, including pedestrian and bicycle facilities that have a transportation purpose.
- **Considerations:** Must be in an air quality nonattainment or maintenance area for ozone, carbon monoxide, and particulate matter (click here for list).
- **More Information:** Northern Virginia: [www.thenovaauthority.org/programming/cmaq-rstp/](http://www.thenovaauthority.org/programming/cmaq-rstp/), Richmond: [www.richmondregional.org/TPO/RSTP-CMAQ/index.htm](http://www.richmondregional.org/TPO/RSTP-CMAQ/index.htm), Hampton Roads: <https://www.hrtpo.org/page/cmaq-and-rstp/>

### SMART SCALE

- **Type:** Infrastructure and Non-Infrastructure
- **Estimated Amount/Type of Assistance:** \$200,000 or more (based on recent awards)
- **Match Requirement:** None
- **Funding Cycle:** Every two years
- **Eligible Activities:** Pedestrian and bicycle projects anywhere in the Commonwealth are eligible, including sidewalks, trails, and other facilities that improve pedestrian and/or bicycle access.
- **Considerations:** SMART SCALE is the primary means of funding transportation projects in Virginia, is highly competitive and requires that the project meet several criteria to be eligible. Applicants must be counties, cities, towns, MPOs (Metropolitan Planning Organizations) or PDCs (Planning District Commissions), and each can only submit a limited number of applications. SMART SCALE funds are typically awarded several years before they are made available, so this program is not intended for low-cost projects, or those expected to be completed quickly.
- **More Information:** Visit [www.vasmartscale.org](http://www.vasmartscale.org) to learn more about the program. To find out whom the SMART SCALE point of contact for your municipality is, email [SMARTPORTAL@CTB.Virginia.gov](mailto:SMARTPORTAL@CTB.Virginia.gov).

Sign up for our newsletter, find updated grant information, program news and free, downloadable resources at [www.virginiadot.org/saferoutes](http://www.virginiadot.org/saferoutes).

Got questions? Contact our Local Technical Assistance Coordinators at **1.855.601.7787** or email us at [Info@VirginiaSRTS.org](mailto:Info@VirginiaSRTS.org).

