



SPECIAL EDITION!

Coordinator's Corner

Welcome to this special edition of the Virginia Safe Routes to School (SRTS) newsletter. We have a number of events and funding opportunities coming up very quickly that I want to share with you. In addition, over a dozen new school divisions now have SRTS coordinators to promote and support school-based programs.

This year promises to be an exciting one for SRTS, beginning with **Student Travel Tally Week** the week of September 16 - 20, and **International Walk to School Day** on October 9. In past years, this family-friendly event has been popular with Virginia schools and a great way to get a SRTS program started.



We also encourage you to consider four funding opportunities to further SRTS in your community. QuickStart Mini-grants are back, along with a one-time Enhanced Walkabout Mini-grant program. In addition, infrastructure grants are available through the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) managed by VDOT's Local Assistance Division, and non-infrastructure grants are also available through the Virginia SRTS program.

More information on the fall events and funding opportunities are included in this newsletter, so please read on! **Also** -- We are planning a webinar version of this newsletter in mid-August. We'll start with a brief overview of upcoming events and funding opportunities described here, then take questions and comments using an 'open phone line' format. Stay tuned for the webinar date and time.

Regards,

-Rob Williams
VDOT Safe Routes to School Coordinator

Fall Funding Opportunities Raining Down

Consider one or more of four opportunities for funding your SRTS program this fall: Enhanced Walkabout Mini-grants, Transportation Alternatives Program Infrastructure Grants, Quickstart Mini-grants, Transportation Alternatives Program Infrastructure Grants, SRTS Non-infrastructure Grant.



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CALENDAR

August 2013

- 1: Transportation Alternatives Applicant Workshop in Culpepper
- 13: Transportation Alternatives Applicant Workshop in Smithfield
- 15: QuickStart Mini-grant applications due
- 21: Transportation Alternatives Applicant Workshop in Farmville
- 23: Enhanced Walkabout Mini-grant applications due
- 28: Transportation Alternatives Applicant Workshop in Wytheville

September 2013

- 16-20: Student Travel Tally Week
- 19: QuickStart Mini-grant applications due

Extended calendar on page 5.

Enhanced Walkabout Mini-grants

Ready to identify ways to improve walking and bicycling routes to your school? If so, consider applying for a new Enhanced Walkabout Mini-grant. The application deadline is August 23. This one-time new mini-grant opportunity will help you work with your community's engineer to identify infrastructure projects that may be eligible for funding through the Transportation Alternatives Program (applications are due November 1, 2013).

SRTS infrastructure funds are now available under the new Transportation Alternatives Program. If you are thinking about working with your community's local engineer to identify a SRTS project and complete an application, the VDOT SRTS Program wants to help. VDOT is making available six Enhanced Walkabout Mini-grants to help you identify projects that may be eligible for funding and complete key sections of the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) application for an infrastructure project that benefits walking and bicycling to school.

Enhanced Walkabout Mini-grant recipients will receive a Walkabout led by an experienced transportation consultant and a Walkabout Report summarizing SRTS infrastructure and non-infrastructure recommendations. The Enhanced Walkabout Report will include a description of the conditions observed during the Walkabout, photos, and recommended improvements in a format that makes it easy to use in funding applications.

The Enhanced Walkabout is an excellent opportunity for community stakeholders to experience pedestrian and bicycle conditions, share perspectives, and build consensus around potential solutions.

Details on this limited-time program are available on the Enhanced Walkabout Mini-grant landing page on our website. The Enhanced Walkabout Mini-grant is valued at \$2,500 and may be used for this purpose only. Also note that:

- Six Enhanced Walkabout Mini-grants are available.
- Walkabouts must be conducted between September 15 and October 4 in order to meet the anticipated Transportation Alternatives application deadline of November 1, 2013.
- Applicants must identify three dates from those

offered that they can assemble a team for the walkabout.

- Grant awards will be announced on September 3 and will specify the date on which the enhanced walkabout will be conducted.

Click here to apply. You may also preview the online application and print out a copy. More information on the Transportation Alternatives program is available on VDOT's Local Assistance Division website .

Transportation Alternative Program Infrastructure Grants

The Virginia Department of Transportation's local Assistance Division will accept applications for infrastructure projects from the Transportation Alternatives Program (TA), formerly the Transportation Enhancement Program and Safe Routes to School Program. The application deadline is November 1, 2013. Attend one of four applicant workshops to be held in August to review the TA program eligibility, application process, and scoring criteria. **Remember!** SRTS infrastructure projects are eligible for additional points as part of the scoring criteria but require additional information.

Infrastructure project funding is now included in the Transportation Alternatives Program, which is managed by VDOT's Local Assistance Division (LAD). Funding is available through a grant application process beginning in August 2013. The LAD will accept applications for Transportation Alternatives funding through November 1, 2013. More information is available on the LAD website and by attending one of four Applicant's Workshops during August 2013:

Wednesday, August 7, 2013
Culpeper, 10 a.m.
Germanna Community College
Daniel Technology Center
18121 Technology drive

Tuesday August 13, 2013 at 10AM
Smithfield, 10 a.m.
Smithfield Conference Center
220 North Church Street

Wednesday August 21, 2013
Farmville, 10 a.m.
Farmville Town Hall
3rd Floor EOC Conference Room

116 North Main Street

Wednesday August 28, 2013
10AM, Wytheville
Heritage Preservation Center
115 W. Spiller Street

More information on the Transportation Alternatives program is available on VDOT's Local Assistance Division website.

Reminder: VDOT is offering six Enhanced Walkabout Mini-grants to communities interested in applying for an infrastructure grant to benefit walking bicycling to school. The Enhanced Walkabout Mini-grants can be used to provide information needed for the upcoming Transportation Alternatives grant application. See the Enhanced Walkabout Mini-grants landing page for more information.

QuickStart Mini-grants

Help launch the second year of these popular grants. Apply during August, September, October, or November for a grant to provide some oomph to your school's SRTS program. More information on is on the Virginia SRTS program website, or you may call the hotline at 1-855-601-7787.

Apply for an SRTS Non-infrastructure Grant this Fall!

VDOT is accepting applications for non-infrastructure (Activities and Programs) grant applications. Application amounts must be between \$5,000 and \$100,000. Each application must include a VDOT-approved SRTS Activities and Programs Plan. These plans must be submitted for VDOT review and approval by December 6, 2013. Two options are available for an initial review before submitting the final plan, described below. Applicants wishing to take advantage of these review opportunities should submit their draft plan as far in advance of the final submission deadline as possible, to ensure proper time for review and response, as well time for revision and resubmission.

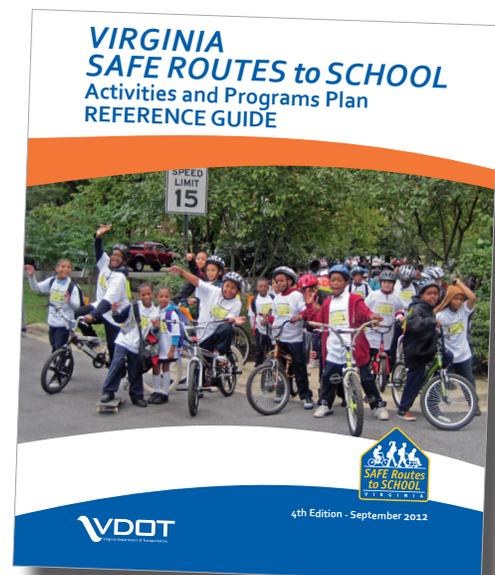
- A review by the Local Technical Assistance Coordinator working in your region, between September 23 and October 17. This review is focused on completeness of the plan.
- A review and comment by VDOT, especially with respect to the plan's thoroughness. Activities and Programs Plans submitted for optional review after November 1, 2013 are not guaranteed a review.

Non-infrastructure grant applications are due to VDOT by December 17, 2013.

Each application must include a VDOT-approved SRTS Activities and Programs Plan and request funding between \$5,000 and \$100,000.

Applications are completed online through Foundant. Prospective grant applicants will receive access to Foundant once the SRTS Activities and Programs Plan is approved.

Please note that the non-infrastructure grant application will draw from information contained in the Activities and Programs Plan, but also requires detailed cost estimates for the submitted programs and activities. Applicants seeking funding for a local coordinator will also need to describe her/his intended role in the SRTS program.



VDOT Awards Four Non-infrastructure Grants

Four school communities were recently awarded SRTS non-infrastructure grants. The school submitted their application for funding in December 2012, with an eye on implementing programs in the 2013-2014 school year. The grants are an important resource for school communities that intend to establish life-long walking and bicycling habits for their youth and to foster a sustainable safe routes to school culture within each community.

Fairfax County Public School, \$99,300
Division-wide program with SRTS coordinator at 165 schools. Activities include local SRTS training and toolkits, walk/bike to school day activities, and program evaluation.

Lynchburg City Public Schools, \$78,000
Division-wide program with SRTS coordinator at seven schools. Activities include route map development, safety curriculum, bike/walk to school days, walking club, crossing guard training, and program evaluation.

City of Galax, \$54,750
Division-wide program with SRTS coordinator at three schools. Activities include "school zone" plan development, bike/walk to school day activities, bicycle library, and program evaluation.

Macy McClaugherty Elementary - Giles County Public Schools, \$6,000
Single school program. Activities include bicycle/pedestrian safety education and outreach, law enforcement coordination, policy development, and program evaluation.

Another round of grants will be accepted in December 2013. See the article, **Apply for a Non-infrastructure grant this fall!** for more information.

Student Travel Tally Week is September 16

Now is a great time to start planning for Student Travel Tally Week, September 16-20. Check off these three things to get your school ready.

- Put it on your school calendar
- Identify a travel tally coordinator
- Contact the Virginia SRTS program hotline at 1-855-601-7787 to learn about new ways to collect, submit and use the data.

Ever wonder... if it's too early to plan for Student Tally Week?



Plan Your Walk to School Day Event Now!

Wednesday, October 9 is the "official" Walk to School Day, but events held anytime in the fall are recognized by the International Walk to School Day organizers. If you haven't yet scheduled an event or started planning for one, now's the time to begin. To get things rolling, check out the following four steps to plan an event from the International Walk to school in the USA website:

Step 1: Get Partners

Successful events have the support and participation of the principal, police and parents. Ask them to be partners. The school principal can give the school's commitment, while the local police department is a valuable resource and will ensure that safety is a priority. Parents add energy and enthusiasm and make the walk work. Also be sure to invite public officials and other community leaders, such as mayors and city council members. Walk to School celebrations give leaders the opportunity to publicly support health,

environment and safety initiatives, so consider finding ways to involve them.

The International Walk to School Website has additional suggestions on how to involve public officials and even a sample proclamation.

Step 2: Plan

Work with partners to plan the celebration. Together, decide what type of event fits your school and community, and plan for all abilities. Then choose a focus for the walk, such as promoting physical activity or pedestrian safety, and determine whether the event will last one day or a week. Local businesses may be willing to sponsor the walk by providing refreshments or small gifts for participants.

Check out event ideas to help you decide what type of event will work best for you. This page also has information on planning an event in less than seven days, including children with disabilities and tips for contacting potential sponsors. The resources page has graphics, logos and pre-made flyers to promote your event.

Step 3: Register Your Event

Registering an event is a great way to announcement it to media, the community and other participants, not only in your community, but statewide! Once you create a free account to register your event, you will have access to special templates for stickers, media lists and certificates that are not on the rest of the website. You will also automatically be signed up for a weekly newsletter that includes updates on national participation and tips for your event. Newsletters are already going out, so if you missed one, log into your account and check out the last three archived issues, located with the sticker templates.

The on-line registration form includes an option to describe unique aspects of your event, which will be posted on the Who's Walking page with your school name. This is an additional way to promote your event. Write about how you are encouraging kids and their families to walk. If you're involving community figures and elected officials, don't leave that out!

It only takes a minute - add your school's name to the list of Virginia schools that have already registered!

Step 4: Promote It

Tell students, parents and others how to participate in your Walk to School event. Making announcements at school, publishing school newsletter articles and sending flyers home are just a few ways to get the word out. Posting signs along the route a few days ahead will help the community know. Business sponsors may want to hang signs in their stores.

For schools that have an active SRTS program, media coverage of the event brings visibility and can help spread the word about the many health, safety, environmental and social benefits children walking and biking to school. Colorful signs held by smiling, walking children and adults creates a perfect photo opportunity.

In addition to the templates and other materials you will find on the International Walk to School Day website, check out Virginia's SRTS Program website next week for customizable planning materials, including flyers to assist in asking for volunteers to help plan the event, scripts for PA announcements at the school, and materials to help you advertise your event.

CALENDAR

AUGUST

- 7: Transportation Alternatives Applicant Workshop in Culpepper
- 13: Transportation Alternatives Applicant Workshop in Smithfield
- 15: QuickStart Mini-grant applications due
- 21: Transportation Alternatives Applicant Workshop in Farmville
- 23: Enhanced Walkabout Mini-grant applications due
- 28: Transportation Alternatives Applicant Workshop in Wytheville

SEPTEMBER

- 16-20: Student Travel Tally Week
- 19: QuickStart Mini-grant applications due

OCTOBER

- 9: International Walk to School Day
- 17: QuickStart Mini-grant applications due

NOVEMBER

- 1: Last day to submit Transportation Alternatives Applications
- 1: Last day to submit draft SRTS Activities and Programs Plan for VDOT review and comment
- 21: QuickStart Mini-grant applications due

DECEMBER

- 6: Last day to submit SRTS Activities and Programs Plan for VDOT review and approval
- 17: SRTS Non-infrastructure grant applications due

Let us know about SRTS events in your community!

