

Kansas Safe Routes to School

2024 Application Guidance

Transportation Alternatives Program



Kansas

Safe Routes to School



KDOT Application Guide for Safe Routes to School Non-Construction Projects 2024

This document is intended to be used as a guide for potential Transportation Alternatives (TA) Program applicants. This document includes information specific to the Non-Construction Safe Routes to School funding including eligibility requirements, project scoring and selection process, and application process. If you have any questions about the contents within this document, please contact:

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Table of Contents

1. [Program Description](#)
2. [Program Structure](#)
 - a. [Eligible Applicants](#)
 - b. [Ineligible Applicants](#)
 - c. [Eligible Projects and Activities](#)
 - d. [Funding](#)
3. [Expectations and Requirements](#)
 - a. [Compliance with Federal and State Requirements](#)
 - b. [Minimum Project Requirements](#)
4. [Application Information and Support](#)
 - a. [MPO Support](#)
 - b. [Required Documents](#)
 - c. [Project Submission](#)
 - d. [Important Dates and Deadlines](#)
5. [KDOT Contacts and Resources](#)
 - a. [Internal and External Contacts](#)
6. [Project Selection Criteria](#)
 - a. [Applicant Review Process](#)
7. [Resources](#)

1. Program Description

The federally funded Transportation Alternatives (TA) Program was originally established by Congress in the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act of 2012 (MAP-21). The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) continues the program beginning Federal Fiscal Year 2022 with greater investments in active transportation infrastructure and planning. The BIL continues all requirements that applied to Transportation Alternatives under the FAST Act except as specified in the BIL-TA [Fact Sheet](#).

TA provides funding for surface transportation projects and programs defined as transportation alternatives, such as on- and off-road pedestrian and bicycle facilities, infrastructure projects for improving non-driver access to public transportation and enhanced mobility, community improvement activities, and environmental mitigation; Safe Routes to School projects; and projects for planning, designing, or constructing boulevards and other roadways largely in the right-of-way of former Interstate System routes or other divided highways.

In Kansas, the TA Program is administered by the Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT). All states are required to develop a competitive process specifically for the TA Program project selection process. The development of a competitive process for TA funds is an opportunity to develop transparent project solicitation, prioritization and selection processes and increase transportation equity. KDOT expects this method to deliver high project quality and infrastructure improvements that are supported by local, regional and state transportation goals.

SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL Overview

The overall purpose of the SRTS program is to:

1. Enable and encourage children, including those with disabilities, to walk and bicycle to school.
2. Make bicycling and walking to school a safer and more appealing transportation option, thereby encouraging a healthy and active lifestyle from an early age.
3. Facilitate the planning, development, and implementation of programs and activities that will improve safety and reduce traffic, fuel consumption, and air pollution in the vicinity of schools.

Eligible costs and activities must be related to:

- Engineering – Designing for operational and physical improvements to the infrastructure surrounding schools that reduce speeds and potential conflicts with motor vehicle traffic, and establish safer and fully accessible crossings, walkways, trails, and bikeways.
- Education – Teaching children about the broad range of transportation options, instructing them in important lifelong bicycling and walking safety and comprehension skills, and launching driver safety campaigns in the vicinity of schools.
- Enforcement – Partnering with local organizations and law enforcement to ensure traffic laws are obeyed in the vicinity of schools (this includes enforcement of speeds, compliance with traffic control devices (especially yielding to pedestrians in crossings), and proper walking and bicycling behaviors), and initiating community enforcement such as crossing guard programs.

- **Encouragement** – Events and activities are maximized to promote walking and cycling as a fun option that is safe and health-promoting.
- **Equity** – Programs benefit students from all demographic groups, especially low-income, students of color, all genders, and all ability levels.
- **Engagement** – Residents, families, business owners, etc. are engaged and have a chance to provide feedback from the beginning and throughout the process.
- **Evaluation** – Monitoring and documenting outcomes and trends through the collection of data, including the collection of data before and after the intervention(s).

The non-construction and planning phases of SRTS are as follows:

- Master Plan Development
 - Must address the Es while Plan is being developed and must include action items for sustaining activities covering the Es.
- Programs and Activities (Education, Encouragement, Equity, Enforcement, Engagement, Equity, and Evaluation)
 - Community must have an approved SRTS Master Plan to receive funding to assist with eligible programs and activities.
 - Identified programming must be related to what was outlined in an approved SRTS plan.
 - Must focus on sustainable policy, systems, environmental, and behavioral change.
 - Examples may include one or more of the following:
 - Development and delivery of SRTS-related programs such as a walking school bus, bike train, traffic education, traffic gardens, remote drop off, and more.
 - Public awareness campaigns.
 - Planning and development of events or materials that promote walking and biking.
 - Pop-up events or demonstration projects that could test out future walking and/or biking infrastructure.
 - Bicycle and pedestrian safety curricula, materials and trainers.
 - For more examples of education and programming, resources, and support, visit: <https://www.kansassrts.org/resources-and-education> and [BikeWalkKC Biking and Walking Activities](#) and [Youth Education](#).

2. Program Structure

Included in the following information is a summary of the FHWA TA Program Guidance. For more information, please visit FHWA's *Transportation Alternatives* [webpage](#).

a. Eligible Applicants

Entities that are eligible to apply for SRTS Non-Construction are:

- Local governments
- School Districts, local education agencies or schools
- Tribal governments
- Non-Profits Organizations

b. Ineligible Applicants

Entities that are not eligible to apply for TA funds are:

- KDOT and urbanized areas of Wichita and Kansas City MPOs.

c. Eligible Projects and Activities

To be eligible for SRTS funds, a project must meet the TA project definition listed below.

1. [Safe Routes to School \(SRTS\)](#) – planning and programming of non-construction projects that will substantially improve the ability of students to walk and bicycle to school, including:
 - Development of a Safe Routes to School Master Plan
 - Activities and Programs (Education, Encouragement, Equity, Engagement, Enforcement and Evaluation Activities).

d. Funding

SRTS Funding Levels	
Master Plan Development	No Max
Activities and Programs (Education, Encouragement, Enforcement and Evaluation Activities)	Up to \$50,000 total including match

Local Match

In Kansas, TA funds may pay for up to 80% of eligible expenses but cannot exceed the approved grant maximum. A cash match is required to pay for 20% or more of the eligible project costs. For the 2024 round, Kansas Active Transportation Enhancement program state funds will be used to cover the 20% match on the SRTS non-construction projects.

Project sponsors are responsible for 100% of non-participating items, ineligible expenses, and all costs exceeding the award amount.

Cost Reimbursement

KDOT’s TA Program is a cost-reimbursement program. Paid invoices are submitted for reimbursement. Since state funds provide the 20% match, 100% of total costs will be reimbursed until funds are expended and/or project is complete. Sponsors are required to show proof of payment on invoice.

Please note that if your agency’s application is selected for funding, the agency will enter into a City/State Agreement with KDOT and serve as the official sponsoring agency. As the official sponsoring agency, you will be responsible for submitting payments.

3. Expectations and Requirements

It is the duty of each Project Sponsor to read this guidance and become familiar with KDOT’s TA process. Applying for federal funds begins a significant undertaking, which must

be led by the Project Sponsor from start to finish. Projects that are not able to navigate the federal requirements may be subject to forfeiture of awarded funds and project cancellation.

a. Compliance with Federal and State Requirements

The following is a list of the basic eligibility requirements that all KDOT TA projects must follow.

- Involvement of the public, including parents or guardians of students, students, school officials/administration, property owners, business owners, community leaders, local organizations, and other stakeholders in the development of the project.
- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Projects must conform to the Americans with Disabilities Act, which allows for reasonable access to the project for persons with disabilities.

b. Minimum Project Requirements

In addition to the above requirements, applicants for TA funds must meet the following minimum requirements:

1. The Project Sponsor and the proposed activity or project must meet the program's eligibility requirements.
2. The Project Sponsor must provide a Resolution of Support indicating proof of local commitment to the proposed project and availability of funds in the agency's budget to pay all project costs up front.
3. The Project Sponsor must submit a map showing 0.5- and 1-mile buffer zones around school(s) identifying the location of the proposed project.
4. Project Sponsors must present a well-defined scope of work, which lays the foundation for an accurate budget and meets the purposes of the SRTS program.

4. Application Information and Support

The following information is provided to assist applicants with preparing an eligible, competitive project application.

a. MPO Support

All projects located within the boundaries of an MPO will require a letter of concurrence from MPO staff. The MPO may decide to route that letter to their policy body for formal action, but it is not required. If this situation applies to your project, please contact the appropriate MPO to discuss your project, the MPO's process of approval, and deadline information.

Mid-America Regional Council (MARC)

<https://www.marc.org/>

Patrick Trouba, Transportation Planner

ptrouba@marc.org

Wichita Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (WAMPO)

<https://www.wampo.org/>

Nick Flanders, Senior Transportation Planner
nicholas.flanders@wampo.org

Flint Hills Metropolitan Planning Organization (FHMPPO)

www.flinthillsmmpo.org

Jared Tremblay, Project Manager
tremblay@flinthillsmmpo.org

Metropolitan Topeka Planning Organization (MTPO)

www.topekampo.org

Taylor Wolfe, Multi-Modal Transportation Planner 1
twolfe@Topeka.org

Lawrence-Douglas County Metropolitan Planning Organization (LDCMPO)

www.lawrenceks.org/mpo/

Jessica Mortinger, Senior Transportation Planner
jmortinger@lawrenceks.org

St. Joseph Area Transportation Study Organization (SJATSO)

www.stjoemo.info

Maximillian Scheiber, Transportation Planner, mschieber@stjosephmo.gov
 Joshua Stevens, Transportation Planner, jstephens@stjosephmo.gov

b. Required Documents

Incomplete applications will not be considered

All applicants must submit the following documents as part of the TA Program application:

- **2024 SRTS NON-CONSTRUCTION PROJECT APPLICATION** – to be submitted [on-line](#). See [TA webpage](#) for a Word version of application.
- **BUFFER ZONE MAP & PHOTOS** - that identify the project location(s), boundaries, and existing conditions.
- **COST ESTIMATES** – an itemized breakdown of the total project costs. Please list costs that are expected to be “participating” and “non-participating” expenses.
- **PROJECT TIMELINE** – for the total duration of project development. Please base your schedule upon awards being announced in Summer 2024.
- **RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT** – indicating proof of local support and understanding of budget responsibilities from Project Sponsor
- **LETTERS OF SUPPORT** – from the school/USD, public, community organizations, businesses, etc.
- **SRTS MASTER PLAN** – supporting proposed projects, programs, and activities (not required for applications requesting funding assistance for SRTS Master Plan development).

c. Project Submission

Applications must now be submitted on-line. Submission of the SRTS Non-Construction [On-line Concept Paper](#) is required prior to receiving the link to a full application once applicant and project is determined to be eligible.

Consistent with other Federal-aid highway programs, TA funds must be used for eligible projects that are submitted by eligible entities and selected through a competitive process. The federal TA Program does not establish minimum standards or procedures for the competitive process. The project scoring and selection process is conducted by KDOT’s Project Scoring Committee (PSC)

All applications submitted to KDOT for inclusion in the statewide competitive selection process will be rated and ranked by the PSC in accordance with the criteria listed in this guide. All projects will be ranked and presented to KDOT leadership for their review and approval of recommended projects to receive TA funding. Since funding is limited by the total TA Program allocation, as well as the sub-allocations to the population areas, which KDOT is required by FHWA to meet, KDOT does not base project selections solely on score or ranking and may select projects to funds in a geographically equitable manner.

After projects are selected, official award letters will be sent to the Project Sponsors in addition to a public announcement through a media event and/or a press release. Award recipients within MPO boundaries must contact their respective MPOs with information on the selected projects.

Important Dates and Deadlines

Date	Activity
February 1, 2024	Call for Project Concepts Released
March 1, 2024	Project Concept Forms due on-line
March	Project Concept technical assistance and feedback period.
End of March 2024	Applications emailed to eligible sponsors who completed the Project Concept Form.
May 17, 2024	Applications are due on-line.
May 16 to June 30, 2024	Application review period.
July 2024	Project selections and public announcement of awards.

5. KDOT Contacts

For more information on KDOT’s TA Program, interested applicants should contact:

Bureau of Multimodal Transportation
 Jenny Kramer, Active Transportation Manager
Jenny.Kramer@ks.gov; (785) 296-5186

Bureau of Multimodal Transportation

Ann Katt, Safe Routes to School Coordinator

Ann.Katt@ks.gov; (785) 220-0413**Bureau of Multimodal Transportation**

Matt Messina, Bureau Chief

Matthew.Messina@ks.gov; 785-296-7448

6. Project Selection Criteria

Application Review Process

a. Initial Review

An initial review of applications will be completed based on the criteria listed below. Any missing documents or information will be requested. Upon notice of missing items, applicant will have three (3) business days to submit.

To pass the initial review, applications must meet all of the following **minimum requirements**:

- The application submitted by the deadline.
- The applicant is an eligible entity to receive TA funding and has the authority to enter into a contract with the State.
- The application form is filled out correctly and includes all required attachments.
- The applicant demonstrates how the project is one or more of the eligible projects or activities.
- Project sponsors are responsible for 100% of ineligible expenses, non-participating items, and all costs exceeding the award amount.
- The application includes a Resolution of Support that commits to sustaining the proposed programs and activities.
- The applicant does not currently have any other projects with KDOT that are on FHWA's inactive project report.
- The proposed programs and activities will be available to all students enrolled at the target school/USD and to the general public and meet accessibility standards of the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- The application demonstrates that the completed project fulfills a public need, directly addresses a safety issue, or makes an important connection to the local/regional/state transportation system.
- The applicant demonstrates the ability to meet applicable federal, state, and local requirements.

b. Comprehensive and Categorical Technical Review

All projects are evaluated based on the comprehensive and categorical scoring rubric. Scoring sheets may be found on the [KDOT Transportation Alternatives Program webpage](#).

c. Project Scoring Committee (PSC) deliberations and recommendations

Final recommendations of the PSC will be presented to KDOT leadership for review and discussion. Selection considers the scores, but also considers merit, availability and geographical distribution of funding, and project ranking. KDOT will officially announce the list of funded projects Summer 2024.

7. Resources

- [Kansas SRTS](#)
- [KDOT Transportation Alternatives Program](#)
- [Funding Opportunities for Active Transportation](#)
- [Active Transportation Resources](#)
- [FHWA Transportation Alternatives](#) and [Safe Routes to School](#)
- Safe Route to School National [Center](#). Includes an Online [Guide](#), [Parent Surveys](#), [student travel tallies](#) and more.