

Caltrans SRTS Cycle 3 Call for Projects
Cycle 3 Questions and Caltrans Response
Updated: June 6, 2011

For your convenience, the questions have been grouped into separate tables according to: 1) General Application, 2) Equipment Purchase/Installation, 3) Infrastructure, and 4) Non-Infrastructure. Every effort has been made to appropriately classify questions. We encourage you to browse all of the questions in each section.

General Application Questions

QUESTION	CALTRANS RESPONSE
Will the presentation be available online or as a PDF?	Yes, a PDF of the PowerPoint will be available online at www.CAsaferoutestoschool.org and http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LocalPrograms/saferoutes/saferoutes.htm by May 27th. Or you can email Patti Horsley at patti.horsley@cdph.ca.gov for a copy.
Are mail-in applications due on 7/15 or must be post-marked by that date?	Mail-in applications must be post-marked by July 15th. Online applications must be completed by July 15 th at 5 PM.
How many applications can be submitted by a jurisdiction? There was a reference in the guidelines that it was preferred only 3 proposals per lead agency could be submitted? In addition, if County DOT submits 3 infrastructure applications, can County Public Health also submit 3 proposals?	There is no limit, but suggest submitting the very best because there are limited funds available. Yes.
If a County submits both an infrastructure and a non-infrastructure application, are they competing with each other for funding?	No, I and NI proposals are scored separately and do not compete against each other. Agencies must rank / prioritize NI and I applications separately.
Is there a limit to the amount of schools that can be included in	There is no limit, but we want to ensure each school receives a

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one application?	benefit. In-depth activities or a fully-planned program is preferred.
Can an agency apply for both I and NI projects?	Yes
Can infrastructure applications include 10% for programmatic (e.g. non-infrastructure) items?	Yes
Is SRTS funding available to private schools?	Yes
If your agency already received a grant from Cycle 2, can the agency still apply for Cycle 3 funding?	Yes, as long as the agency has as no red flags and is on schedule with their SRTS projects.
If you already have a project on the FTIP, can you still apply for additional funds?	Yes
If an agency's red flag is on an HSIP project, does it still disqualify an agency to go after SRTS funds?	If you have a red flag for another Caltrans local assistance program you can still apply for SRTS funding. Project status is specific to each program.
If a school submits a grant application in partnership with a DOT/MPO, does it still have to be ranked by the DOT/MPO as if they had submitted it directly?	Yes
What are the funding amounts per district?	The funding apportionment is based on student enrollment data provided by the California Department of Education. This information is targeted to be available by the end of May.
Is the funding set aside at set amounts for NI and I projects?	There are district targets based upon student enrollment in each District and upon the applications that come into the district.
Is a Countywide project acceptable?	Yes, but the key is to be able to identify the schools in the

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	application. If there are 50 schools in a County, the benefit to each of those schools would need to be explained.
Can you provide a timeline for the Cycle 3 Grant? If applications are due July 15, when would applicants be notified? How long do you anticipate the obligation of funds will take? What would be the start and end date of the funding period for this cycle?	<p>An approved project list is anticipated by 10/15/2011. Agencies will be notified at that time that they were selected for SRTS funding. The projects must then be amended into the Federal Transportation Improvement Program (FTIP) prior to submitting the Request for Authorization Package to Caltrans. The FTIP amendment process takes between 2 – 6 months. From the FTIP Amendment date, an agency then would follow the project delivery requirements that are stated in the Cycle 3 Guidelines posted on the web.</p> <p>Please refer to the SRTS Program Delivery Requirements posted at: http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LocalPrograms/HSIP/delivery_status.htm for further information regarding the timeline expected to complete and close-out a SRTS project.</p>
Will DLAE's really notify applicants of award? This has not happened in past two cycles.	DLAEs notify applicants of award status after the statewide project list is approved.
What is the difference between "amount of request" and "total project cost," especially if there is no match required?	It depends on whether it is NI or I. On I, total project costs may be higher than \$1 million allowed per project and additional costs may be supplemented by other funds. Include only the amount of SRTS Cycle 3 funds requested in the "amount of request" column.
What if statistics don't support the "need" but crowded school drop off and pick up, swarming of crosswalks by kids, and other supporting information does. Is this sufficient?	Statistics are important in a SRTS project, but there are a number of questions that must be answered in the application to receive an overall score that is competitive.

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SRTS Grants always align at a time of year when the legislature is off and it is difficult to get letters of support. Would changing the date be considered?	No
Where is a sample agreement between the County Agency and School District located?	The County should have that information. Check with County administration.
Is it possible to place on your website some examples of successful project applications?	No
Does an application from a tribe have to be reviewed by a regional transportation planning organization prior to submittal to the State?	No
Can an MPO coordinate and submit an application for a local agency? In this case, would the local agency implement the project?	Yes, in this case the Local Agency can implement the project, but the MPO is still the responsible agency.
Can SRTS funds be used to fund a citywide bicycle and pedestrian master plan?	Yes
Can a SRTS Coordinator be funded through either I or NI? What about funding partially through an I and partially through an NI grant?	Yes, but there is a 10% limit in an infrastructure application. It is not recommended to partially fund a position with two different projects because one of them may not get funded.
Will SafeTREC data be favored or given weight on Cycle 3 applications?	SafeTREC is available as a tool for agencies and the District evaluators can use it as well to verify that collision information provided in the application is supported. I would think evaluators would use this information to score the application accordingly. It

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	is not part of the breakdown of scoring criteria.
<p>Can staff training and travel be part of the scope of project? For example, to attend regional meetings or trainings provided by the SRTS Technical Assistance Resource Center?</p>	<p>Travel is part of the project cost estimate. During the review of the application, any unreasonable or excessive cost will be discussed with the applicant for further justification or elimination from the application. Please refer to Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-87 Cost Principles for State and Local Governments and 49 CFR, Part 18, Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements for State and Local Governments.</p>

Equipment Purchase & Installation

QUESTION	CALTRANS RESPONSE
<p>The Boltage program is a frequent biker and walker program that includes both an education and infrastructure component. Would we need to split the components into infrastructure and non-infrastructure grants?</p> <p>When a Boltage system is purchased, installation is part of the cost. Therefore, is the installation of the Boltage RF pole allowed in a non-infrastructure grant?</p>	<p>Installation of equipment would be considered an infrastructure project.</p>
<p>Are speed feedback signs an eligible expense?</p>	<p>Yes, permanent signs such as speed feedback signs are an eligible expense under an infrastructure project.</p>

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If speed feedback equipment is part of a non-infrastructure grant, can an application be made for the same project under infrastructure to fund the installation?	Yes, an infrastructure application would be required to install any permanent sign in public right of way and requires that a full PES form be submitted for NEPA clearance.
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Infrastructure Projects

QUESTION	CALTRANS RESPONSE
Will project readiness (such as being shovel ready) be considered in the application evaluation?	Yes, in that the project must be delivered in 4 years.
Would conducting an evaluation of crosswalks including identifying design criteria be eligible for the grant funds?	Identification of crosswalk locations is an eligible expense.
Can the funds be used as a planning grant?	SRTS projects whether infrastructure or non-infrastructure require that Title 23 Federal Requirements are met.
Will the benefit/cost ratio play a part in the evaluation process?	No, it does not determine whether a project gets funding, but we will be looking at this as an indicator.
If your project is to create/locate a bus loading and unloading facility on school/city property, is this ineligible for funding falling under bus safety improvements to bus stops?	Bus stop improvement or bus safety is not an eligible expense under cycle 3 funding.
Is there a limit to the number of projects included in an application? For example, can the application include sidewalk improvements as well as bicycle facility improvements?	As long as you have a defined scope, more than one I improvement can be included.
Is planning or preliminary engineering an eligible item?	Preliminary traffic or engineering studies will be considered

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	eligible under non-infrastructure as part of funding an SRTS Plan or school route plan. Preliminary Engineering in an infrastructure project is also eligible for reimbursement.
If there is no engineering, and we are going for construction only, do we still need an environmental clearance? Say this is sidewalk project with no widening.	Yes, NEPA clearance is required on all projects.
During the last cycle, what was the minimum score for a “winning” infrastructure proposal?	This cycle of funding has different questions and scoring criteria. Therefore, the minimum score for a winning proposal won’t be the same for this cycle as in past cycles.
Do you have examples of non-eligible infrastructure projects that improve driver convenience for drop off and pick up?	No.
Can SRTS funds be used for conducting a traffic or engineering study around a school? According to the LAPG (Cycle 3), infrastructure projects include engineering or capital improvement projects, or the planning of such projects (including hiring a consultant).	A preliminary traffic or engineering study would be needed prior to applying for infrastructure funds in order to scope out the project. Additional studies may be needed during the preliminary engineering phase depending on the work involved.
In infrastructure projects, can CCTV cameras in the Public Right of Way be funded so that parents can check the routes?	CCTV cameras are not an eligible expense under SRTS funding.
Are improvements to a bus turn-around area eligible?	Bus stop or turn-around improvements are not eligible under Cycle 3 funding unless it improves the walking and biking of children to/from school.
We are looking for confirmation on question number 38: Approximate Number of Students living along school route proposed for improvements – What we need to know...Are you looking ONLY for the number of students living in houses on the	Approximate number of students living along school route would be those children living in houses that would walk or bike along the improvement route on their way to/from school and that resides within the school enrollment boundaries. The route is

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proposed improvement area, or for ALL the students who will be walking and/or biking on the proposed route.	defined as the expected route that the children would utilize on their way to/from school.

Non-Infrastructure Projects

QUESTION	CALTRANS RESPONSE
With the 7/15/2011 deadline for applying for this grant, approximately when would applicants be notified and what is the funding period that this cycle will cover (for an NI grant)? What will the project start and end dates be in the project timeline?	Please refer to the project delivery requirements for non-infrastructure projects at: http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LocalPrograms/HSIP/delivery_status.htm
Who would need to sign for non-infrastructure grants within a county or city government?	The responsible agency is the department that maintains the Master Agreement with Caltrans. Typically, this is the public works department. So the required signature will likely be the Public Works Director.
What is the role of the project sponsor?	An agency who is the initiator of the SRTS program and who wants to partner with a local public works agency to ensure that project is implemented.
In order for a school district to apply for funds, would a local	Yes, a local agency such as a City or County Public Works

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<p>agency, such as the City, need to serve as the fiscal agent and lead in the application process?</p>	<p>Department would need to serve as the fiscal agent and application lead. There is a verification form in the application that needs to be filled out by the local agency.</p>
<p>If non-profit partners with a public works agency to apply for a non-infrastructure grant, does that preclude the public works agency from having to put the contract out to “bid” for project implementation due to DBE requirements?</p>	<p>A non-profit agency wanting to initiate a SRTS project must partner with a public works agency in order to implement SRTS activities and the public works agency would need to justify the cost effectiveness of the non-profit completing the work under a Public Interest Finding.</p>
<p>The online application seemed to suggest applicants must pick individual schools and list information for each school. We would like to work with a school district within our County. How do we complete the application with a school district in mind? Will we score poorly if we do not have individual schools selected?</p>	<p>Each individual school needs to be identified in the application if the school is receiving specific SRTS activities or specific benefit which can be documented in the SRTS work plan.</p>
<p>You addressed project depth versus reaching more school sites – is the preference to deeply change behavior at a specific school site with several ongoing programs or a wider approach?</p>	<p>It really depends on the type of activities being done. Handing out a few flyers on SRTS for a large number of schools in a region is not an effective program. An in-depth or fully planned program is preferred.</p>
<p>If we have identified target schools based on need, but subsequently need to switch out schools after the grant is awarded, do we need permission to do so? Often, school priorities shift and in order to ensure fidelity we would want to continue with committee schools. Can we replace targeted schools with other schools <u>with similar need</u> (i.e. demographics, tally counts, etc)?</p>	<p>Revising school locations would jeopardize the competitiveness of the project and therefore more than likely would be denied if requested.</p>
<p>Can a full-time staff person be hired to run a crossing guard training program that trains youth and parents?</p>	<p>Right now, requirements allow for a full time SRTS program coordinator. If that Coordinator is utilized for the training then,</p>

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	yes, it would be an eligible expense.
Would the hiring of a SRTS bicycle and pedestrian coordinator for our city be allowed under the non-infrastructure component?	Yes as long as the person is working on SRTS programs.
Will background checks for Walking School Bus leaders (or other volunteers) be covered?	SRTS funds can pay for one time background check per person over the life of the grant.
Does NI pay for incentive items in general to encourage and reward biking and walking to school? Will NI grants pay for food gift certificates if used as incentive items?	<p>Incentives are allowed under cycle 3. It is highly recommended that incentives be as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Bikes and helmets are not to be handed out, but must be part of an incentive program. Any bike contract greater than \$2500.00 must meet "buy america" provisions. Any bicycle purchased as an incentive would need to be considered a modest bicycle cost to be eligible for reimbursement. It is the intent of this program that bicycles be used beyond the life of the project as part of a sustainable SRTS program in the community if used in training and educational programs. 2) Modest incentives for encouraging children to walk/bike to school would include items that either have a message regarding "safety" of walking or biking or that improves safety for walking/biking. IPODs, Gift Certificates and similar incentive items are not allowed under cycle 3 funding. Bike blenders would be eligible for reimbursement 3) Education Materials must be specific to walking and bicycling to school. Transit is not an eligible component of the SRTS Program. 4) Scooters and skateboards will not be eligible for reimbursement or trainings specific to these activities will not be eligible for reimbursement.

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In encouragement efforts, are incentives for encouragement programs reviewed favorably?	Yes, see response above.
For an NI project, can the project be completed in less than 4 years?	Yes, just make sure that it is clearly described in application and consider sustainability in the project.
Due to the lack of time since schools will be out in a few weeks, how critical is it to create a SRTS committee with schools to select or prioritize projects?	An application is more competitive with school representative involvement.
Are bicycle / scooter helmets an eligible expense?	It depends on what they are used for. Helmets are an eligible expense if used as part of a training program or encouragement program, but are not eligible if just being handed out.
Do we need to go through the Federal Procurement process for materials in the NI projects?	Yes, please see Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 49, section 18.36.
Do NI applications fall under “request for authorization for construction?”	Yes
Is National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) clearance needed for non-infrastructure applications?	Yes
Can we sole-source things like radio and TV time or billboard space for NI projects?	Yes, refer to Chapter 10 in LAPM, for when sole sourcing is allowed.
Can this be used as a planning grant? For example to plan the routes to walk to school or to plan where crosswalks would be beneficial? Construction would not be involved?	SRTS plans are an eligible expense in the NI program.

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<p>Can Cycle 3 funds be used to build on Cycle 2 activities? For example, can we continue to fund bike and walk safety education work?</p>	<p>The same project will not be refunded. Projects that expand the scope or reach of a program or build on it are acceptable.</p>
<p>Can we leverage activities with two separate projects such as traffic safety equipment?</p>	<p>Yes.</p>
<p>Can / Should “in-kind” costs be included in the project budget or application?</p>	<p>“In kind” costs were removed under the Cycle 3 Project Cost Estimate for NI Projects so agencies won’t be penalized for reimbursement, but they can elaborate on additional sources of funding within the narrative section of the application questions.</p>
<p>In Part 5 of the application questions, there is no mention of consideration for providing services for low-income or the underserved community. Can you say how important this factor is?</p>	<p>Please refer to the scoring rubrics break-down posted on the web. It falls under category of “Project Need.”</p>
<p>With the Cycle 3 non-infrastructure application, where would Walking Audits (i.e. identification & prioritization of engineering needs) fit into the 4 E’s activity matrix? Would they be considered Evaluation or Education?</p>	<p>A walking audit to determine any future infrastructure needs would be considered within the “Evaluation” category of the program.</p>
<p>Are there any items that are not listed in the SRTS Cycle 3 Guidelines that are eligible under the non-infrastructure program?</p>	<p>If you have questions regarding the eligibility of a project component or item, please contact the District Local Assistance Engineer who will be able to answer your question. In addition, during the application review, if any item within the project scope does not meet the eligibility requirements of the SRTS program, the applicant will be notified to revise their scope of work and</p>

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	resubmit their application for further review, if applicable.
Can a City Police Department qualify as a fiscal agent?	The City Police Department would need to partner with the City Public Works Department to deliver the project. The City Public Works has a Master Agreement with Caltrans to deliver and implement projects.