

QUESTIONS and ANSWERS

- **How to keep the program going with other agencies help**

A SRTS projects and activities are locally based. As the sponsor, the city, town, school or school district has the lead role. The awards are intended to launch your local programs, not be the sole support for continued efforts. Your local Safe Routes committee should strive to inspire and encourage more walking and biking to school, promoting -- even initiating -- other relevant projects, events and training. Local health departments and police departments are your allies...work with them, enlist their support. Talk to your local planning and engineering departments to pursue other federal transportation funding sources like STP, HSIP and CMAQ for viable projects.

- **What if you had ideas proposed that are not feasible because of the stipulations of the award, is it possible to forego certain aspects of the grant?**

A Hopefully proposals were more than just ideas by the time your application was submitted. We look for commitment! It is the sponsor's responsibility to think through the project scope and work with local sources to understand what's in store. We discourage changes from the original proposal. Any possible modifications require an assessment of how they affect the students biking or walking to school, consideration of the original vs. the proposed costs, and the full support of the official sponsor and agency responsible for implementation. INDOT's district office concurrence is also required. The local sponsor is responsible for any costs above the award amount.

- **I'd like to learn more about the process, from start to finish and about some of the projects in Indy.**

A The best source of information about implementation of walking and bicycling projects in general is your local engineering department and INDOT's Local Programs office at the districts. The first step in moving your proposed project or activities forward is setting up your coordination meeting with the district LPA coordinator, as stated in your award letters. These meetings define the overall process and offer a chance to ask questions. Usually you will meet your district project manager, who has a significant role in advancing your project. In addition, INDOT offers free training that is required for infrastructure projects.

We have a number of representatives from Indianapolis here today. I think we'd like to hear from them what their experiences have been. Altogether 13 awards have gone to sponsors in Marion County.

- **What to expect from INDOT... Is the development and review process similar to other federally funded local projects?**

A For the most part SRTS infrastructure projects are treated like any other walking, biking or trail project funded by INDOT. Expect the same process and procedures. Non-infrastructure activities are different. They are simpler, with fewer steps and fewer requirements. For example, there is only one phase, preliminary engineering (PE), and only one obligation of funds. There are no ROW or construction elements and environmental reviews are much simpler and quicker.

- **Names, specifications and recommendations for approved vendors of encouragement and educational products (i.e. zipper tag scanners etc.)**

A There are vendors for incentive items like water bottles, blinky lights, pedometers, zipper and shoe tags, bike helmets, crossing guard STOP paddles, etc. Bike shops may be willing to assist you in purchasing quantities of bike locks and bike lights for school bike safety programs. There are companies that produce scanners for reading ID tags in back packs or bike helmets. One is Boltage, but there are others. St. Thomas Aquinas School purchased such a system in 2011 from another vendor.

- **How will new funding laws in Indiana affect the 2013 SRTS program?**

A SRTS projects and activities would now be funded under the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP). Time for implementing awarded projects is now limited to a few years. Safe Routes activities and projects will now compete against trail projects, restoration of former rail depots for trailheads, historic bridge projects and environmental mitigation improvements. The biggest change is that there is now a 20% match requirement, like most other federal funding programs. Nationwide, total funding available under the TAP for walking, biking and trail projects is down about 30%, so it's more important than ever to consider funds from CMAQ, STP and HSIP.

- **INDOT's plans for the Transportation Alternatives program.**

A SRTS is not a stand-alone program any more as it was under SAFETEA-LU. The program is now part of the Local Programs section instead of the INDOT Safety Office. Applications will now likely be electronically prepared and submitted online. No timetable has been set for the next call for applications under the TAP. Visit the INDOT SRTS webpage (<http://saferoutes.in.gov>) for periodic updates.

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Disclaimer: "The answers I prepared reflect my opinions and knowledge about the topics; others may disagree. In many instances there is no official INDOT position on the questions. How the program will be structured under MAP-21 has not yet been determined."