

Safe Routes to School – Funding Available

Safe Routes to School is an international movement. The concept is to increase the number of children who walk or bicycle to school by funding projects that remove the barriers that currently prevent them from doing so. Those barriers include lack of infrastructure, unsafe infrastructure, lack of programs that promote walking and bicycling through education/encouragement programs aimed at children, parents, and the community.

This program provides grants to local agencies to make infrastructure improvements around schools and neighborhoods to improve the environment for school children to walk and bicycle safely to school. The program has been funded with a part of the state's annual federal safety funding. The funds are divided between the State Highway Operation and Protection Program (SHOPP) and local safety programs. Of the local funds, approximately \$10 million is allocated to the Railroad Grade Separation Crossing Program with the remainder allocated to the local Hazard Elimination Safety Program (HES).

The new federal SRTS program provides \$612 million nationwide in dedicated funding to encourage children to walk or bike to school and to make these activities safer, especially around schools.

There are two separate programs administered by Caltrans. There is the State-legislated program referred to as SR2S and the Federal Program referred to as SRTS. For more information about these programs go to:

<http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LocalPrograms/saferoutes/saferoutes.htm>.

The program features and applications are found on the above web page.