

## **SRTS News, 2007: Encouraging Safe Bicycling and Walking to School**

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### Sept. 17 Application Deadline Approaching

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As kids return for the fall semester, community leaders from across the state are planning ways to encourage more students to safely walk and ride bicycles to school.

Applications for reimbursement funding under the Safe Routes to School (SRTS) initiative must be received by **Regional Planning Commissions** (RPCs) and the **N.H. Department of Transportation** (NHDOT) by the end of business (4 p.m. for the DOT) on **Monday, Sept. 17, 2007**. NHDOT will accept applications by fax and e-mail, provided a hard copy is subsequently submitted. (For the location of your RPC, visit <http://www.nharpc.org/index.php>.)

The RPCs and a statewide advisory committee will score applications according to [funding criteria and application guidelines](#) designed to support a range of community efforts:

1. Startup funding based on a budget of **up to \$5,000** for localities that are just beginning to establish

planning task forces, work on travel plans, conduct surveys, and engage in initial education, encouragement and enforcement activities.

2. Non-infrastructure funding for developing more comprehensive travel plans and other SRTS activities. No limit has been set for this category, but overall funding for non-infrastructure programs is limited to **10 to 30 percent of the state's allocation**.
3. Communities that have identified needed physical changes such as construction and repairs of sidewalks, bike routes and multi-use paths, signs and traffic signals, may apply for reimbursement for infrastructure work. The limit is **\$100,000 per project**.

Some communities have inquired about the eligibility of **equipment used to clear snow from sidewalks**. Although accumulations of frozen precipitation can be a barrier to walking to school in this northern state, the Federal Highway Administration classifies snow

removal as maintenance and **not eligible** for federal funding.

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## Walk to School Day

Schools looking for a good way to begin a local SRTS program might want to consider participating in **International Walk to School Day on Oct. 3**. Visit <http://www.walktoschool.org/> for detailed information and to register your local program.

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## Resources

Regina Flynn, health promotion advisor and coordinator of the KidPower! program for the N.H. Department of Health and Human Services, passed on information about the Kids Walk to School program of the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The Web site

<http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/kidswalk/> includes the following:

1. A PowerPoint presentation for community meetings.
2. A quick-start reference in PDF (portable document format).
3. A link to CDC research on barriers to walking and biking to school.

Flynn has several copies of "Kids Walk, A Guide to Promoting Walking to School" available in hard copy form. It can also be downloaded from <http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/kidswalk/pdf/kidswalk.pdf>

Also available from Flynn are five-minute videocassettes of a walk-to-school event taped in Concord.

For copies of the book or videocassette, contact:

Regina Flynn  
Health Promotion Advisor -  
KidPower! Program  
NH DHHS - Nutrition & Health  
Promotion  
29 Hazen Drive  
Concord, NH 03301  
603.271.4623

<http://www.dhhs.nh.gov/DHHS/NHP/Children.htm>

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## Community Outreach

**New Ipswich** is the latest community to form a SRTS task force. Local school and municipal leaders believe a sidewalk along a section of state highway between the middle school and town center will encourage more walking.

Activity is expected to pick up with the start of the new school year. Community leaders interested in getting started in the program are encouraged to fill out the **preliminary school survey** found on the home page of the [NHSRTS Web site](#) (address below).

John Corrigan, the state's coordinator, will travel to local cities and towns to give an overview of the program, answer any questions, and offer advice on the formation of a task force and full participation in the program.

**Local task forces working on applications for the first round of funding are invited to work with the coordinator and the RPC serving their areas.**

The program will be reviewed and modified based on the results of the first round of funding. The second round has not yet been scheduled.

Extensive information about the state program (including the application, guidelines and funding criteria) can be found at the [NHSRTS Web site](#). The site has been updated with photos of walking audits in Concord and Farmington and links to related

**Web sites. Local SRTS activists are invited to use the Web site for announcements and to share information about their activities.**

Contact the coordinator with your news and announcements.

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SRTS Web site:

[http://www.nh.gov/dot/bureaus/planning/SRTS\\_home.htm](http://www.nh.gov/dot/bureaus/planning/SRTS_home.htm)