Frequently asked questions about the Safe Routes to School Infrastructure Competitive Program Letter of Intent and Application

Updated: 9/21/18

LETTER OF INTENT FAQ

Q: I am interested in submitting one or two projects at three different Title I schools. Does each individual project need a separate LOI? I looked at the sample letter and it seems to look that way. It asks which school is being served, making it sound like different schools will need different LOIs.

> A: Each project does not need an LOI if you are planning to submit them all together in one application. In the application and the LOI, we ask for the primarily effected school. Since all of the affected schools are Title I, you're in great shape! You can list multiple schools in the "Primarily Affected School" box. Let me know if you have any other issues!

Q: After we submit the Letter of Intent, will there be feedback from ODOT? Like a thumbs up/down? Red/yellow/green light? Ranking of projects that look like a better fit than others?

> A: I will send a response just confirming eligibility by 9/15. I imagine that most applicants' eligibility will be confirmed. In rare cases, I may ask questions, but that won't be the norm.

Q: Are we limited to a 250 <u>character</u> limit, and not a word a limit for our problem statement? I'm writing drafts of our business cases and realized how challenging it is to keep these short.

> A: It is a 250 <u>character</u> limit. In the letter of Intent, we are just looking for really high level information. There will be space for more descriptions in the application.

Q: Would it be a problem if some of the projects changed between when we submit our letter of intent and our final application as long as most of the list of projects stays the same?

> A: Changes to the project between the LOI and application are fine and won't affect your eligibility to apply. Try to be as accurate as you can!

Q: For the LOI should we provide a letter of support to show school support of the project? Or is a description of how they are involved sufficient?

> A: You can wait for when you apply.

APPLICATION FAQ

Q: When we listed the amount in our INTENT, the engineer told us the job would be $95,000. Now he says we will need a bulb on both corners for an additional $15,000. That makes it $110,000. How do we handle that when wring the grant?

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A: The letter of intent is just a rough estimate and I expect some of them will change. So don't worry about the changes and just apply for the actual cost of the project when you fill out the application.

Q: Our prospective projects will likely require the acquisition of some limited ROW to construct sidewalks. Typically, when we are doing a City-funded project, we can usually arrange a donation of the ROW from the affected land owners. Since these are ODOT funds, do different acquisition rules apply?

A: The local public agency must follow federal law for property acquisition regardless of funding source. The distinction is that since the project is state-funded only, ODOT has no oversight of the ROW acquisition process for this project. The local public agency is to follow applicable state and federal laws as if it was with their own gas tax dollars.

Q: Can I submit more than one application?

A: Yes.

Q: Can we match SRTS projects with federal funds? We have a federal grant we'd like to use as leverage for an SRTS project.

A: Yes and that would federalize the SRTS state funds so you would have to follow all federal regulations. It also may make completing the Intergovernmental Agreement take a bit longer (due to there are more steps and reviewers).

Q: For an ODOT grant application could improvements be considered two individual projects and require two separate grant applications? Or could they be "bundled" as one project and submitted under one grant application?

A: Projects can definitely be bundled. I'd say make the case for the project as a whole if you think it makes sense. You are also able to submit more than one application, but we will ask you to rank your applications.

Q: In order to be eligible for the program does a project have to meet the definition of a "Priority Safety Corridor," **or** does it merely need to demonstrate that the project reduces barriers/hazards to children walking or bicycling to school?

A: The project does not have to be on a "priority safety corridor" but does need to reduce a barrier. A project will be more competitive if it is on a "priority safety corridor."

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Q: We are pulling crash history to determine if any of our projects meet the definition for a priority safety corridor. Can you provide direction on how we determine if a location has a "demonstrated history of crashes related to school traffic"? Do we look at crashes that happen during a time window around arrival and departure?

> A: I'd suggest looking at the crashes and making the case. We don't want to be too prescriptive because each situation is different. Once example of a crash that I think would not be school related, would be an alcohol related crash in the middle of the night.

Q: Should an applicant: either establish a dedicated Public Access Easement **or** they could dedicate the ROW. They are asking for guidance on which of those two options they would need to pursue in order to ensure that the project would be eligible for SRTS funding.

> A: An applicant can build on an easement with gas tax funds if it is documented, if the easement lasts for as long as the infrastructure will be used, and is used to widen the ROW adjacent to the road. Entities can also dedicate the ROW as long as it is adjacent to a road in the space where the ROW usually is.

Q: I need to know who you want to sign the SRTS applications. It's very clear who signs letters for schools, but I can't find any guidelines for who signs for agencies. Is a PE an acceptable signature, or should it be the County Engineer? Or someone else altogether?

> A: The person signing the application should have knowledge of the proposal being submitted so they can answer any questions that arise; additionally they should have the support of whoever has signature authority to sign the IGA should one be forthcoming. In the past we have received applications signed by engineers, planners, program managers, mayors, bike-ped coordinators, city administrators, etc.

Q: I think I have heard at meetings that the maximum project applicable for the Infrastructure Grant is $2 M but when I looked at the presentation you provided at the SRTS training it says that the "maximum funding request = $2M". Does this mean that the project could cost $2.5 M with us requesting $2 M from ODOT and our match being $500K or is the maximum project cost $2M?

> A: Yes. The funding request maximum is 2M. This means that including the match your total project cost can be over 2M.

Q: In Part 1 of the SRTS application, a question asks if the applicant will be submitting more than one application, then it follows with, if yes, rank this application. Our question is, because we have two top priorities, should we submit two applications under the same applicant name? This would make each application at a lower cost. Or should we list out both school projects under one application for a larger amount?

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A: Since this is the first round of funding and I don't have historical knowledge to pull from, I'd suggest making the best case for funding your project(s) and put them together or separate based on what you think will make the best case for funding.

Q: When ODOT awards applicants, is it a binary answer of yes or no to fund the full amount and the full project? Or is it an option that ODOT will fund part of the projects listed in the application? And would then ODOT say which parts they want to fund if awarded?

A: The Safe Routes to School Advisory Committee or ODOT staff may decide to fund partial projects and come back to the applicant to see if they would be willing to split up the project.

Q: If an infrastructure project is selected by the OTC for grant funding what is the earliest date the funds would be available? We are working on a couple of projects to be considered for a grant and I want to make sure I have our required cash match included in the appropriate fiscal cycle.

A: The funds would be available as soon as the intergovernmental agreement is signed. That process will start in early March 2019. The process length will depend on how long the IGA language negotiation takes between the funded applicant and ODOT as well as if the project remains state funded (quicker!) or is federalized due to combining the SRTS project with a federal project (takes more time). Our goal is to streamline this process so it can happen as quickly as possible.

Q: I am also wondering about value for right of way. I will be working with the School District to dedicate some property for right of way for one of our proposed projects with the "payment" to them being the construction of a new pedestrian and bike pathway. If they agree to that proposal can the property value of the land dedicated for right of way be included in the 20% match requirement even though the property was not actually purchased?

A: Unfortunately not unless the school district has purchased the ROW in the time period two years prior to the application deadline. Because the statute says "cash match" the item must have been purchased by an entity (although the school district purchasing the land would count as match. The School District can provide ROW as match for the project bit they must have purchased it recently (like any entity could provide ROW as match for the project but must have purchased in recently).

Q: Do you have to apply for both; non-Infrastructure, and infrastructure? Or can you apply for only the infrastructure grant?

A: You can just apply for the infrastructure grant.

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Q: I had a question about match funding for the competitive grant program. X Elementary is a Title 1 school. We are nearly done with a SRTS Action Plan for the school. A new school is actually being built on the existing site---a new school will go where the playfields are now and the old school will be torn down to become playfields. As part of that new school, the City has required the School District to build some new crossings and intersection treatments since there will be a new entrance to the school. A report recommended additional improvements within a few blocks of the school--adding missing sidewalks, a couple of neighborhood mini-circles, some curb extensions, etc. So my question is, can the improvements that the city is requiring from the school district be applied towards the local match as part of a larger SRTS project?

> A: If you describe it as a larger project, and the entirety of the project meets all of the eligibility criteria, then yes!

Q: Looking to confirm if landscaping and other "soft" elements such as benches, trashcans, etc. are eligible under the SRST grant program. The community has a strong interest in creating walking and alternative transportation connects that are enjoyable and encourage people to use.

> A: Landscaping in the public ROW is a yes as long as it is part of a larger infrastructure project and has utility in that project (like trees have soil stabilization or plants for storm water mitigation), but soft elements like benches and trashcans are no. When I spoke with the DOJ early on about what is gas-tax eligible, they mentioned that "street furniture" like benches were specifically not eligible.

Q: In the project schedule, does "Project Completion" mean completion of the planning phase or is it the overall project (confusing because of the order of items)?

> A: Completion of the whole project.

Q: Prior work - does substantial planning work qualify as prior work that's eligible for match, or just construction work?

> A: Match is be considered pre-engineering. Examples of cash match include engineering, design, utility relocation, right of way acquisition, and construction costs.

Q: Barriers - can you provide the list of options? I think we can only see it if we've entered the info thus far in the application and we're working in a Word doc.

> A: Options include: Barrier or gap is passable for school-age users with mobility limitations; Barrier or gap is passable for school-age users with considerable mobility and safety limitations; Barrier or gap is impassable for most school-age users; Or Other.

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Q: Can paving, curb, and gutter be a part of a SRTS project?

> A: Yes. If the sidewalk/etc (the essence of the project) cannot be completed without building/installing the pavement, curb, and/or gutter.

Q: Can replacing existing non-compliant curbs with ADA accessible curb returns at crossings be included as SRS project elements? If so, who do I need to talk to in ODOT to get their approval to include ADA curb ramp improvements on one intersection on Hwy XX as part of our project?

> A: Yes, when it meets the eligibility requirements of the SRTS program. Like it addresses a barrier to students walking and biking to school, is located within a one mile radius of the school, is a priority of the school/school district, etc. You should contact the ODOT Active Transportation Liaison in your Region. Contact your ODOT region for their contact information, https://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/Regions/Pages/Region-Contacts.aspx.

Q: Most of our sidewalks in town are built at grade and curbs are installed separate due to the topography of city. I understand that this is actually better from a safety standpoint as it creates more separation from vehicles and pedestrians feel more at ease walking on such paths compared to traversing curb line sidewalks. Is it an issue for SRTS if we continue construction of sidewalks and curbs in this manner (separate rather than together)? We want to ensure that the grant will support us building the curbs in addition to the sidewalks as we feel it imperative to pedestrian safety.

> A: Yes the funds can be used to build curbs if they are needed for a sidewalk or other needed safety feature. A curb on its own i do not believe could be considered addressing a barrier to kids walking and biking to school. I don't know if this answers your question or not. I hope it helps!

Q: For the infrastructure grant application and the below table, what information needs to be inserted? Just a number at the yellow highlighted x? Or more scheduling detail in the left and/or right column?

Scoping and Planning (mandatory):	Phase Completed in X weeks after IGA is executed, or date if already completed

> A: Just a number where the X is located.

Q: I have a question regarding our SRTS application. In Part 4, we are to provide the AADT for our project locations. At this time, the only data I have was collected in the summer, and the traffic counts are substantially lower than the minimum (3,000-5,999) category available. We're getting some updated counts now that school is back in session. That said, what should I do if the AADT counts are less than 3,000? This will be especially applicable to one project location, which is a residential street serving as a back-way entrance to our school site.

> A: Good catch! I just added a less than 3,000 option in the drop down menu on the online form.

Q: There is a portion of the application that asks which school/primary school the work is going to benefit and I am coming up with a question. Currently the local jr/sr high school is the only school in the project vicinity but the district has purchased property down the road for the alternative school, which would service all ages. The alternative school would likely score higher because of the age range and a tier 1 rating 30% higher than the jr/sr HS, so I would want to list that one, but it has not moved to the new site yet. The plan is to have the school move to the new site soon but I am confident that won't happen in the next month, prior to the application due date. Can I still list the alternative school as the primary school serviced since that is the plan for the area or do I need to stick with the jr/sr HS since that is the existing, established school?

> A: If you can confirm that the school will be moved by the time the project is finished so that students would be able to use it right away that can be considered a primary school.

Q: The following question is under the Program Evaluation section for the SRTS Infrastructure Grant
"Does this project address a need in the supplemental busing plan (also known as a hazard busing plan) for the school district? If yes, describe: Maximum 750 characters." What is the reference to the supplemental busing plan-hazard busing plan? My district studied walk zones though a comprehensive study during the 2015-16 and 2016-17 school years. Is this document what you mean by a "supplemental busing plan-hazard busing plan"?

> A: Yes. For example on page 12 of your plan, a potential SRTS project identified with the school district could help students cross streets that are currently deemed uncross-able.

Q: In Section 6 it asks the applicant to select the option that best describes the barrier from a drop down. Can you provide the list in the dropdown so that I can prepare my answer to the following question?

> A: This question uses a drop menu that includes: Barrier or gap is passable for school-age users with mobility limitations; Barrier or gap is passable for school-age users with considerable mobility and safety limitations; Barrier or gap is impassable for most school-age users; Other.

Q: Barriers and solutions are addressed in Part 3 of the grant application. Is this section with the drop down options just supposed to address ADA? Any additional information would be helpful.

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A: The options are meant to better help the Committee understand the barrier. It was briefly discussed on the committee to score projects based on how passable the barrier currently is. I kept the question in the application to gather information in case the Safe Routes to School Committee decides to score on that kind of information in the future.

Q: I'm putting together application and need to know for signature of the grant do you require a resolution by the City or is it just the signature page? Trying to determine if I type up a resolution for City Council or just have them sign it.

A: Just the signature page.

Q: Would it be more advantageous to propose constructing sidewalks along one side of both streets, providing at least some pedestrian access to more people, or propose a complete pedestrian network along both sides of one street?

A: In regards to scoring the project, one side or two side of sidewalks won't score higher or lower as it is not on the scoring criteria. My take it that for building the most effective project for the SRTS program, more information is needed. I'd look at the attendance boundaries to the school and see where the students live to accommodate the students. If lots of students live on both sides of the street, I'd consider sidewalks on both sides. I agree with the Bike/Ped Design Guide around building on both sides if possible.

Q: What if details of the project change from when I submitted the Letter of Intent, can the application differ than the LOI?

A: Yes. The purpose of the letter of intent was to give us an idea about who would apply. The details of your project can change in the application including things like the cost range.

Q: I'm not sure what was submitted for my community for the Letter of Intent. Can you share the list?

A: Below is a list of communities that submitted Letters of Intent. This list should be posted on the Safe Routes to School Program website by October 1, 2018.

Letters of Intent submitted:

Applicant Name	Title	Agency
Kevin Purnell	Superintendent of Schools	Adrian SD
Marc Thielman	Superintendent/K-12 Principal	Alsea School District
Aaron Hiemstra	Civil Engineer II	City of Albany
Ron Irish	Transportation Systems Analyst	City of Albany
Ron Irish	Transportation Systems Analyst	City of Albany
Justin Hogue	City Administrator	City of Amity
Justin Hogue	City Administrator	City of Amity
Justin Hogue	City Administrator	City of Amity
Justin Hogue	City Administrator	City of Amity

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Scott Fleury	Deputy Public Works Director	City of Ashland
Stacy Revay	Associate Transportation Planner	City of Beaverton
Allison Platt	Senior Planner	City of Bend
Karen Pettigrew	City Manager	City of Boardman
Anthony Baron	Public Works Director	City of Brookings
Kathryn Greiner	City Administrator	City of Condon
Randy Dixon	Operations Adminstrator	City of Coos Bay
Lisa Scherf	Transportation Services Supervisor	City of Corvallis
Amanda Ferguson	City Planner	City of Cottage Grove
Madeline Phillips	City Planner	City of Creswell
Kathy Bostick	City Recorder	City of Dufur
Robert Miller	Public Works Director/City Engineer	City of Eagle Point
Dan Larman	Public Works Director	City of Elgin
Melanie Wagner	Assistant to the City Manager	City of Estacada
Reed Dunbar	Transportation Planner	City of Eugene
Mike Miller	Public Works Director	City of Florence
Jesse VanderZanden	City Manager	City of Forest Grove
Sharon Bregante-Candau	Funding Specialist	City of Gaston
Susie Marston	City Manager	City of Gervais
Scott Lindberg	Grants Specialist	City of Grants Pass
Jay Higgins	Associate Transportation Planner	City of Gresham
Brian Latta	City Administrator	City of Harrisburg
Mark Morgan	Assistant City Manager	City of Hermiston
Tom Arnold	Public Works Director	City of Hillsboro
Mark Lago	Director of Publc Works	City of Hood River
Mark Lago	Director of Public Works	City of Hood River
Mark Lago	Director of Public Works	City of Hood River
Aaron Palmquist	City Manager	City of Irrigon
Lynne Curry	Parent, community member	City of Joseph
Bill Lawyer	Public Work Director	City of Keizer
Bill Lawyer	Public Works Director	City of Keizer
Michael Weston	City Manager	City of King City
Mark Willrett	Director of Public Works	City of Klamath Falls
Kyle Carpenter	PE, CWRE MBA	City of La Grande
Cory Misley	City Manager	City of La Pine
Ronald F. Chandler	City Manager	City of Lincoln City
Jeff Hurd	Public Works Director	City of Madras
Karl MacNair	Transportation Manager	City of Medford
Stacie Cook	City Recorder	City of Mill City
Steven Patten	Public Works Technician	City of Milton-Freewater
Tessie Prentice	Associate Engineer	City of Milwaukie

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Tessie Prentice	Associate Engineer	City of Milwaukie
Rick Hohnbaum	City Administrator	City of Monroe
Colleen Coleman	City Manager	City of Mosier
Brett Musick	Senior Engineer	City of Newberg - Engineering
Dayna Webb	Senior Project Engineer	City of Oregon City
George Cress	City Planner	City of Pendleton
George Cress	City Planner	City of Pendleton
Chris Workman	City Manager	City of Philomath
Dana Dickman	Active Transportation Division, Safety Section Manager	City of Portland, Bureau of Transportation
Dana Dickman	Active Transportation Division, Safety Section Manager	City of Portland, Bureau of Transportation
Dana Dickman	Active Transportation Division, Safety Section Manager	City of Portland, Bureau of Transportation
Mike Caccavano	City Engineer	City of Redmond
Carolyn Bahrman	Councilor	City of Rivergrove
Nikki Messenger	Public Works Director	City of Roseburg
Anthony Gamallo	Senior Transportation Planner	City of Salem Public Works Department
Anthony Gamallo	Senior Transportation Planner	City of Salem Public Works Department
Anthony Gamallo	Senior Transportation Planner	City of Salem Public Works Department
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Anthony Gamallo	Senior Transportation Planner	City of Salem Public Works Department
Dale McDowell	Public Works Director	City of Seaside
Thomas J. Corrigan	City Administrator	City of Shady Cove
Jason Gottgetreu	Community Development Director	City of Silverton
Jason Gottgetreu	Community Development Director	City of Silverton
Paul Bertagna	Public Works Director	City of Sisters
Emma Newman	Senior Transportation Planner	City of Springfield
Jennifer Dimsho	Associate Planner	City of St. Helens

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Dan Fleishman	Planning and Development Director	City of Stayton
Kristi Gilbert	Community Development Specialist	City of Sutherlin
Joe Graybill	Staff Engineer	City of Sweet Home
Dale McCabe	City Engineer	City of The Dalles
Dave Roth	Senior Transportation Planner	City of Tigard
Liane Welch	City Engineer	City of Tillamook
Jeff Fuchs	Public Works Director/City Engineer	City of Tualatin
David Sawyer	City Administrator	City of Turner
Ric Ingham	City Administrator	City of Veneta
Kerry Kemp	City Manager	City of Waldport
Sheldon Delph	Grants Co-ordinator	City of Weston, OR
Richard Howard	Public Works Director	City of Yamhill
Clackamas County (Scott Hoelscher - Senior Transportation Planner)	Fuller Road Crosswalk	Clackamas County - Department of Transportation and Development
Clackamas County	SE Webster Road Sidewalks	Clackamas County - Department of Transportation and Development
Clackamas County (Scott Hoelscher)	Webster Road Crosswalk	Clackamas County Department of Transportation and Development
Jonetta Everano	Public Works Director	Confederated Tribes of the Umailla Indian Reservation
Bruce Irwin	Development Director	Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs Indian Reservation of Oregon
John Rowe	Director / Roadmaster	Coos County
Joshua Heacock	Division Manager, Public Works Engineering	County
Chris Doty	Director, Road Department	Deschutes County
Betsy Roberts	City Engineer, City of Ontario	Jacobs for City of Ontario
Julie A. Schmelzer	Director of Community Development	Josephine County Community Development
Jeremy Morris, P.E.	Public Works Director	Klamath County
Becky Taylor	Senior Transportation Planner	Lane County
Becky Taylor	Senior Transportation Planner	Lane County
Becky Taylor	Transportation Planner	Lane County
Becky Taylor	Senior Transportation Planner	Lane County Public Works
Daineal Malone, PE	Civil Engineer/Project Manager	Linn County Road Department

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Clackamas County (Scott Hoelscher)	Senior Transportation Planner	Local Government - Department of Transportation and Development
Jill Ogden	Senior Engineering Technician	Marion County Public Works
Jill Ogden	Senior Engineering Technician	Marion County Public Works
Jill Ogden	Senior Engineering Technician	Marion County Public Works
Jill Ogden	Senior Engineering Technician	Marion County Public Works
Jill Ogden	Senior Engineering Technician	Marion County Public Works
Joanna Valencia	Manager, Multnomah County Transportation Planning and Development	Multnomah County
Joanna Valencia	Manager, Multnomah County Transportation Planning and Development	Multnomah County Transportation Planning
Ken Patterson	Region 5 Area Manager	ODOT
Ken Patterson	Region 5 Area Manager	ODOT
Ken Patterson	Region 5 Area Manager	ODOT
Ken Patterson	Area Manager - Region 5	ODOT
John Huestis	Area Manager	ODOT - Region 2
John Huestis	Area Manager	ODOT - Region 2
Paul L. Scarlett	Area Manager Region 1 Metro East	ODOT Region 1
Paul L. Scarlett	Area Manager Region 1 Metro East	ODOT Region 1
Shelli Romero, MPA	Area Manager Region 1 Metro Central	ODOT Region 1
Shelli Romero, MPA	Area Manager Region 1 Metro Central	ODOT Region 1
Matt Freitag, P.E.	Area Manager Region 1 Metro West	ODOT Region 1
Matt Freitag, P.E.	Area Manager, Region 1 Metro Wesy	ODOT Region 1
Lisa Nell	Area Manager	ODOT Region 2
Darrin Neavoll	District 7 Manager	ODOT Region 3
Jeremiah Griffin	Assistant District Manager	ODOT Region 3
David Amiton	Region 4 Active Transportation Liaison	Oregon Department of Transportation
Jarod Johnson	South Central Oregon Area Manager	Oregon Department of Transportation
Jarod Johnson	South Central Oregon Area Manager	Oregon Department of Transportation, Region 4
Jarod Johnson	South Central Oregon Area Manager	Oregon Department of Transportation, Region 4
Jarod Johnson	South Central Oregon Area Manager	Oregon Department of Transportation, Region 4

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Jarod Johnson	South Central Oregon Area Manager	Oregon Department of Transportation, Region 4
Todd Whitaker	Public Works Director	Polk County
Shelley Oylear	Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator	Washignton County Oregon
Shelley Oylear	Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator	Washington County Oregon
Shelley Oylear	Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator	Washington County Oregon
Shelley Oylear	Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator	Washington County Oregon

OTHER PROGRAMS

Q: We would like to know more about the "Project Identification Grant Program". We could not find it on the ODOT website. From the SRTS presentation information, it appears that is where we should be starting, rather than jumping into the SRTS grant process. Could you provide or direct us to the "Project Identification Grant Program" information?

> A: The Project Identification Program will be rolled out in spring/summer of 2019. We are still working on the details, but you are right, it will be a good first step for communities. We should be able to fund 20 communities for the Project Identification Program in 2019-2020. A consultant will be able to come out to your community and work with stakeholders to create a prioritized list of projects. I will have more information in January of 2019. Please sign up to receive updates on the ODOT Safe Routes to School Program website to receive updates, https://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/Programs/Pages/SRTS.aspx!