

## **Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Recommendation for Funding**

### **Background**

Safe Routes to School (SRTS) is a federal, state and local effort to enable and encourage children, including those with disabilities, to walk and bicycle to school — and to make walking and bicycling to school safe and appealing.

The goals of New York's Safe Routes to School Program are to assist New York communities in developing and implementing projects and programs that encourage walking and bicycling to school while enhancing the safety of these trips and increase bicycle, pedestrian and traffic safety. Successful Safe Routes to School programs in the United States usually includes one or more of these approaches: engineering, enforcement, education, encouragement and evaluation.

These programs can bring a wide range of benefits to students and the community. These include an easy way for children to get the regular physical activity they need for good health and even to ease traffic jams and reduce pollution around schools.

In early 2008, NYSDOT sent out solicitation letters for Safe Routes to School Projects. Applications were due on April 1, 2008. The program uses 100% federal funds; no local match was required. The intention was to program all of the SRTS funds (\$1,616,288 for Region 1) available through SAFETEA-LU.

### **General Proposal Information**

- 17 proposals were received (see attached sheet)
- Eleven (11) are from the CDTC area, three (3) from AGFTC area and three (3) from NYSDOT rural areas
- The proposals totaled \$4,540,259 in SRTS funds requested. They ranged in value from \$27,260 to \$497,132 requested.
- Ten (10) of the proposals indicated the use of additional local funds to supplement the SRTS funds.

### **Selection Process**

The proposals were reviewed by NYSDOT Region 1 to determine if they met the Program's eligibility requirements. An evaluation team consisting of representatives from CDTC, AGFTC, and NYSDOT Region 1 reviewed each of the proposals using the evaluation criteria provided by NYSDOT Main Office.

The evaluation criteria included:

- Evaluation of safety benefits--25 points
- Proximity of the project within a two mile radius of a school--10 points
- Community support/multi-modal aspects or connections--25 points
- Proposed SRTS project's relationship to the 5 "Es"--10 points
- Sponsor/Applicant Competency--10 points
- Sponsor/Applicant Contribution(s)--20 points.

Based on the scores, geographic balance, and the Safe Routes To School Program objectives, the projects were placed into one of three categories. Category 1 represents the projects the review team considers excellent candidates and recommends for funding. Category 2 represents projects that are good projects and considered equal in merit for the remaining funds. Category 3 projects represent the review committee's lowest priority for funding. **Projects are shown in each group in order by project ID number.**

### **Evaluation Team Recommendation**

The evaluation team is responsible for providing NYSDOT Main Office with a recommendation for funding. After review and a detailed discussion on the projects, the scores, geographic balance, and SRTS objectives, the evaluation team recommends funding all of the projects in Group 1. This would result in 5 projects being fully funded for a total of \$1,542,277. It is recommended that the remaining \$74,011 (\$1,616,288 minus \$1,542,277) is offered to either fully or partially fund a project(s) in Group 2. Preference should be given to the non-infrastructure elements if any partial funding is awarded.