

Describe the project/program to be accomplished. (Use only the space provided).

Our objective is to start a Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program that will make walking and bicycling to school safer for children and to increase the number of children who choose to walk and bicycle. Additionally the program will support the enhancement of children's health and well-being, ease traffic congestion near the school, reduce carbon emissions affecting air quality and improve the overall quality of life in the community. Our foremost objective with the education program is ~~to provide pedestrian and bicycle safety training to elementary school aged children~~ in the London area as the basis for safe utilization of the SRTS infrastructure (Objective 1). Training and education will also be provided in the ~~role of regular exercise~~ as related to personal health (Objective 2) and the ~~beneficial environmental effects~~ from the act of utilizing manual transportation modes versus automotive transportation (Objective 3). ~~A volunteer crossing guard program~~ will be established for the two major state highway crossings at Highways 64 and 333 (Objective 4). To encourage utilization of the infrastructure, an encouragement element will be employed through organized community events within a focused setting of the SRTS program platforms. These events will focus on information distribution related to walking and bicycling and incorporate fun activities to encourage participation (Objective 5).

Why is the project needed? What is its relationship to the affected school?

Use only the space provided.

London Elementary School serves K - 4th graders and is the bus loading site for 5th - 12th graders to Russellville Middle School, Jr. High & High School. In London, AR, our children are walking and bicycling to school in unsafe conditions and along poorly maintained routes. There is a need to provide options that will allow children to walk and bicycle to school safely. London Elementary struggles with traffic congestion during drop-off and pick-up times, and with the growing epidemic of obesity, our children need to engage in more physical activities. In conjunction with the infrastructure project, the education program will provide the information and training necessary to promote safe and effective utilization of the invested capital in these infrastructure projects as well as providing lifelong useful training lessons. The London elementary school will take a lead role in implementation of the education program through staff and Parent Teacher Association (PTA) participation. The school will be primary benefactor of the infrastructure project and as such will shoulder the majority of the responsibility for the training/educational programs needed to support the overall objectives. The education program elements will be developed by the staff at London Elementary and the PTA organization at the school. Implementation of the program for education and encouragement will be a collaborative effort between the school, PTA, volunteers, neighborhood groups, law enforcement officers, and city officials all of whom have signified their support for the infrastructure and education projects.

The Arkansas Safe Routes to School Advisory Committee will rate the following items. Points can range from zero up to a maximum as listed for each item. Failure to respond will result in zero points awarded for that particular item.

1. **Describe the planning process that led to this proposal and include references to any applicable SRTS Plan or long range plan. 50 points.**

The London Economic Development Committee (LEDC), a 501(c)3 tax-exempt corporation formed in 2005, became aware of the SRTS Program while researching potential funding sources to support infrastructure needs identified as part of London's long range plan, developed through participation in the Arkansas Communities of Excellence (ACE) Program. Various town hall type meetings have been held to identify community needs. Sidewalk improvements are frequently identified in these meetings as a high priority in the community. Once the SRTS program was identified, a meeting with London City officials was held to determine their interest in our pursuit of this program. A meeting was also held with London School Principal to determine interest on behalf of the school. Both groups enthusiastically agreed that improvement of the sidewalks and signage marking school zones would enhance the community and school. The LEDC utilized a civil engineer on its committee to study the area and draft a proposal to the committee for an infrastructure improvement plan. The draft proposal was then presented to the City, LEDC, London PTA and London Elementary school administrator. From those meetings, the infrastructure project proposal was refined to incorporate project elements suggested by the various groups including an educational element. The London PTA agreed to and then developed a framework for the education and encouragement program. The plan was revised to coordinate with a proposed city project that may result in widening and curb and gutter for School Street. An agreement was reached with the London PTA to develop and administer an educational program in conjunction with the infrastructure proposal to enhance the value and safe utilization of the infrastructure investment. The school administration has agreed to function as the voice of the project within the community through communications with parents and students. The LEDC has agreed to prepare and submit the necessary applications, provide coordination of activities supporting the grant application, and if funded, administer the grant funds to assure successful project implementation. The city of London has agreed to provide support necessary to facilitate right of way access on existing right of ways and to take on ownership rights and responsibilities of the completed project, including maintenance and upkeep. A final presentation was made to the London City Council at its monthly public meeting, outlining the elements of the project and requesting the pursuit of this project as an official city endeavor. The project received unanimous support in the form of a support resolution from the Council. A volunteer committee was formed from interested members of the community to perform a door to door survey which introduced the project to the community at large and to seek their opinion of the project (see Attachment for completed survey forms).

2. **Overall number of students to be directly affected by this project? (information only, no points awarded.)**

There are approximately 85 children who will directly benefit from the project. There are 39 children in the K– 4th grades at London Elementary School within walking/bike riding distance of the school (1mile), and an additional 46 students (grades 5-12) within walking/bike riding distance that use the London school as a bus hub to reach other schools in the Russellville School district. (Note: School employees within walking distance are not included in the numbers listed above). A brief survey was conducted which indicated that only 10-15% of these directly affected students were presently walking or bicycling to school on a regular basis. Discussions with school administration lead to establishing a project goal of increasing regular walkers/cyclists to a minimum of 50% by the end of the 1st year of project / program implementation.

3. **Number of children involved in crashes with motor vehicles while walking or bicycling to or from school in the past 24 months.**

Injuries: 0 Fatalities: 0 (information only, no points awarded)

4. **Describe any cooperative agreements between the affected school, school cluster, or school district and city or county government agencies. 10 points.**

The London police department has agreed to enforce the reduced speed limits during school ingress/egress periods and to provide reasonable patrols in the predominant pedestrian areas utilized by children for travel to and from school.

The London Elementary PTA and the London Elementary school has agreed to develop and implement the educational elements of this project.

London School Administration has agreed to provide access to existing communications channels for use in implementing the educational programs developed by the London PTA as well as to provide use of facilities and staff as determined appropriate for the implementation of the program. Where the elements of the SRTS educational program can be incorporated into the educational objectives of the school, there will be staff available to implement the program.

5. Outline personnel responsibilities and the timeline necessary to accomplish the project/program. 10 points.

(Note: Scheduling / Coordination of this educational program will be in conjunction with the infrastructure project proposed by LEDC)

Project Infrastructure Construction Project (see Infrastructure Grant application for detailed project schedule)	12 months	LEDC
Educational Program Development (this activity will occur concurrent with months 6-9 of project infrastructure construction period)	3 months	London PTA and School Staff
Educational Program Implementation (implementation of educational program will be concurrent with last 2 months of construction period and continue for equivalent of 1 school year) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Safety Education Program ▪ Environmental Benefits Training ▪ Personal Health Benefits Training ▪ Utilization Encouragement Program ▪ Volunteer crossing guard Program 	9-12 months (1 school year)	London Elementary PTA and London School Staff
Project Evaluation Phase (Ongoing throughout Education Program Implementation Phase with conclusion 2 months following completion of Education program.	2 months	London School PTA and London School Staff and LEDC
Total Project (Infrastructure + Education)	21-24 months	

6. How will the effectiveness of the project/program be evaluated? 20 points.

Pedestrian and bicycling safety training courses will be reviewed to determine correlation between numbers of regular walkers/bike riders with numbers of students who have successfully completed the safety training courses. The safety training courses will be objectives based with minimum performance standards established for successful completion. Practical factors training will also be a part of the safety training to verify the objectives are implemented in the field. This training will be provide during school time with an objective goal that 75% of all students in the school, and 90% of the students who regularly walk or cycle to school will have successfully completed the training. Volunteer crossing guards will be used at the high risk crossings to monitor how well the child understands and applies the trained safety skills. Each day for the evaluation period, the crossing guard will be asked to track successful safety strategies used by children at the highway crossings. Crossing guards, parents and volunteers will help track how many students follow the safety procedures while walking or bicycling to school. Percentages will be compiled monthly during the project evaluation phase and will strive to maintain a positive outcome of 95% or better. In addition to the classroom and practical factors completion, certification of successful performance will require that a safety mentor (parent or program instructor etc.) will walk or cycle with a child to school for a period of 1 week (5 total trips either to or from school) before the child will receive a certificate of completion of the safety course.

Environmental and health benefit training will be monitored by attendance rates at the educational training sessions. Feedback forms will be provided to the participants to afford a chance to provide feedback on the information received. The feedback forms will be maintained as a part of the project evaluation records. This training/information will typically be scheduled outside of normal school hours and will encourage both student/parent/community participation. 50 participants per event is established as the objective goal.

Encouragement events are expected to reach a wide element of the community with fun and informative activities related to SRTS. These activities will strive to reach the widest audience possible with an objective goal of 250 or more participants per event.

The volunteer crossing guard programs goal is to have 2 volunteers for each school day start and end. Office personnel will monitor the participation rates by having the volunteers sign in/sign out for each volunteer session. The objective goal is to have greater than 95% of the available time slots covered with volunteer crossing guard personnel. Records of the volunteer rate will be maintained and become a part of the project evaluation record.

7. Describe how affected students and parents will be informed of the benefits of the project/program. 10 points

The London School Administration and London PTA will accept primary responsibility for keeping parents and students informed of the project. The London PTA will facilitate a "Get Fit" day early each Fall. During this event parents/students will be informed about the benefits of an active lifestyle and encouraged to utilize the infrastructure project. The get fit day will incorporate fitness activities utilizing bicycles and walking. Information flyers will be provided on Health/Safety/Environmental Benefits associated with the SRTS project as part of the education program.

London School administration will utilize its existing communications channels including its web site and its monthly newsletter to advertise the program benefits as well as to acknowledge the successes experienced as a result of the project. Project progress reports will be a part of the London PTA monthly meetings. SRTS events will additionally use notes sent home with the students that are passed out by the teachers and bus drivers at London School.

8. How will educational programs be operated and evaluated? 50 points

Our main goal for the London SRTS program are education and enforcement strategies to deter unsafe behaviors of drivers, walkers and cyclists and to encourage all road users to obey traffic laws and share the road safely. Our education program will include community supports of enforcement officers, teachers, PTA, parents and the community to address the specific needs of our school and achieve long term results.

Each educational program proposed within this application will be developed by either the London School staff or the London PTA. A 1 to 3 page document white paper will be required detailing the event/training description, training objectives, budget, and monitoring/evaluation criteria. Each of these white papers detailing each specific element of this educational program will be presented to a committee composed of a representative from the London School, London PTA, LEDC, and one at large community participant. Each participant will need to sign off in agreement with each element of the education program. A request for final acceptance of each program element will be forwarded to the Elementary school principal for final approval. Following approval, the LEDC will forward the budgeted funds to the appropriate implementation group. Each completed program element, including documentation of elements evaluation will be returned to the LEDC for inclusion in the project evaluation file.

Before beginning our encouragement strategies, children will receive pedestrian and bicyclist safety education. A combination of educational methods such as group activities, hands on skill and discussion will be used to educate the children concerning the London SRTS program. The pedestrian and bicyclist pedestrian skills that children need will be taught by practical experience and verbal instruction. Hands on activities will give each child the opportunity to watch and apply safety skills. A parent or program instructor will walk or cycle with a child to school for a period of 1 week before the child will receive a certificate of completion of the safety course.

Our educational program will aim to provide parents with information about how to address barriers to walking and bicycling and how to create and promote safe walking and bicycling behaviors and environments for their children.

Methods utilized for evaluation of the education program will be through observation of behaviors and utilization rates as described in section 6 above.

ARKANSAS SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL PROGRAM

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM BUDGET ESTIMATE

Sponsor: London Economic Development Corporation

Educational Programs

Work to be accomplished (brief description)

The educational program contains 5 objectives which will need funding to accomplish. Objective 1 is to establish a permanent bicycle and pedestrian safety course. This will involve training 2 staff positions as trainers and purchasing necessary training materials to provide and ongoing safety course. Objective 2 involves seminar type of education on the effects of regular exercise on personal health. Objective 3 involves environmental education in the cumulative effects of use of automobiles versus walking and cycling. Objectives 2 and 3 will need funding for procurement of educational materials. Objective 4 involves establishment of a volunteer crossing guard program. This will require funding for safety crossing gear and training of the volunteers. Objective 5 is an encouragement element which will involve community events, and nominal incentives for those participating in the educational programs and utilizing the project for transportation to school.

Line Item 1	<u>Project Administration</u>	<u>\$ 300</u>
Line Item 2	<u>Training for 2 teachers or volunteers to become instructors for bicycle and pedestrian safety course</u>	<u>\$ 4000</u>
Line Item 3	<u>Safety training materials and incentive awards</u>	<u>\$ 1500</u>
Line Item 4	<u>Environmental Training Materials</u>	<u>\$ 1250</u>
Line Item 5	<u>Personal Health Training Materials</u>	<u>\$ 1250</u>
Line Item 6	<u>“Get Fit Day” SRTS Encouragement Event (2 fall events)</u>	<u>\$ 4000</u>
Line Item 7	<u>“Spring to your Feet and Walk or Ride” SRTS Encouragement Event (2 Spring Events)</u>	<u>\$ 4000</u>
Line Item 8	<u>Crossing guard safety equipment and training</u>	<u>\$ 1250</u>
	Total Safe Routes to School Funds Applied For	<u>\$ 17,550</u>

