More Minnesota children are walking and biking to school for their health and academic performance
We need to help keep them safe.

Safe Routes to School (SRTS) helps improve the safety of children by providing safer crosswalks and routes to walk and bicycle to school. Towns and schools throughout Minnesota recognize this, which is why demand for SRTS infrastructure funding is growing. In 2016-2017, 128 SRTS grant applications were received, but only 54 could be funded.1 In 2017-2018 the amount available could only fund 42% of the requests. Unfortunately, year after year, requests for SRTS funding in Minnesota far exceed available state and federal dollars.

| Safe Routes to School State and Federal Funding Requests |
|------------------|-----------------|
| 2014              | $10.3M Requested | $4M Available |
| 2015              | $13.6M Requested | $5M Available |
| 2016              | $22.8M Requested | $8.1M Available |
| 2017              | $5.9M Requested  | $2.4M Avail. |

Investing in Safe Routes to School results in big returns for Minnesotans

Safety
- In the U.S. in 2015, 12,000 children (ages 5 to 14) were injured and nearly 200 killed by cars when they were struck while walking or bicycling. This represents 26% of all children’s traffic fatalities and 10% of all children’s traffic injuries. SRTS is the only program focused on addressing this tragic reality.8
- A study in New York revealed that census tracts with Safe Routes to School interventions saw a 44% decline in school-aged pedestrian injury during school travel hours while locations without Safe Routes to School interventions stayed the same.6

Health
- Walking one mile to and from school each day equals two-thirds of the recommended level of physical activity per day, and children who walk to school are more physically active throughout the day.4
- Studies show that children who walk or bike to school are more physically active than children who are driven or bussed to school. Studies also find that they have improved body composition and better cardiovascular fitness.5
- In the 40 years between 1969 and 2009, the percentage of children who walk or bike to school plummeted from 48% to 13%.6 During this same period, the number of Minnesota children who are overweight or obese skyrocketed to 27%.6 SRTS is helping to reverse this trend.

School achievement
- Evidence connects school-based physical activity to improvements in academic performance, including academic achievement and behavior.8
- Overweight and obese children, on average, have lower GPAs, more school absences, and more disciplinary referrals.4

Safe Routes to School—an investment in Minnesota’s future!
In 2016, requests for SRTS funding exceeded $20 million. The Bicycle Alliance of Minnesota supports $6 million for SRTS infrastructure grants in the 2019 bonding bill (HF59 and SF418). These funds would help support the highest demand SRTS projects across the state. BkeMN also supports an increase in Safe Routes Program Grant funding in MnDOT’s base budget from $500,000/yr to $750,000/yr.

Sources: