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# Local Infrastructure Hub

## Winning Strategies for Planning and Demonstration Grants Under Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A)

The SS4A program provides support for communities to plan and implement strategies to reduce traffic-related deaths and serious injuries. This year's funding opportunity differs from FY 2022's in that it allows communities to apply for resources to simultaneously develop Safety Action Plans – which assess a community's road safety and put forth recommendations for improvement – and Demonstration Projects, which inform safety action plans by piloting interventions designed to improve road safety. Below are five winning strategies for cities seeking funding for these Action and Demonstration Planning Grants.<sup>1</sup>

*Interested applicants should visit the Infrastructure Hub website for several winning applications from last year's SS4A round of funding.*

**Application Deadline: July 10, 2023**

### 1) Understand Safety Action Plans

Safety Action Plans are a foundational component in developing and implementing impactful projects, as they articulate well-defined and measurable strategies to prevent road injuries and fatalities within a community. They require high levels of community engagement, processes for data collection, and goal-setting. See [here](#) for background from the Department of Transportation on how to develop a safety action plan, as well as inventory of existing [action plans](#); those developed under the SS4A program should have these following features (for more details, see page 6 of the NOFO):

- **Leadership and Commitment Goal Setting.** A public commitment from the mayor or other high-ranking official to a long-term goal of zero roadway fatalities or serious injuries.
- **Planning Structure.** A committee or similar body to handle plan development, implementation, and monitoring.
- **Safety Analysis** of existing and historical data to provide baseline levels of crash data under which future interventions will be evaluated against.
- **Engagement and Collaboration**, including with frontline community groups and the private sector, which will enable relevant input and feedback.
- **Equity Considerations** through data analysis that identifies underserved communities with engagement from relevant stakeholders.

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<sup>1</sup> The SS4A program also provides implementation grants for communities that have already developed Safety Action Plans, as well as supplemental planning grants for those wishing to bolster their Safety Action Plans; these funding opportunities are not addressed in this document.



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- **Policy and Process Changes.** Assessment of current policies to identify opportunities to improve traffic safety.
- **Strategy and Project Selections.** Identification of projects and strategies—informed by data, evidence, stakeholder input and equity—to address safety problems articulated in the Action Plan
- **Progress and Transparency,** including developing methods to measure progress and outcomes.

## 2) Use data to make the case that your Safety Action Plan will address road safety needs

A successful application must make a quantitative case that a Safety Action Plan is needed to address a given community's road safety concerns. Specifically, DOT requires that applicants report the total number of roadway fatalities over the past five years, as well as the average fatality rate per 100,000 population over the past five years – these data can be found in the National Highway Safety Administration's [Fatality Analysis Reporting System](#).

Additionally, the NOFO requires that applicants discuss in narrative form how the Safety Action Plan will reduce fatalities, engage stakeholders, adopt innovative technologies, and use [evidence-based](#) or evidence-building practices to promote safety (see [Mesa, Arizona's winning application](#) for insights into how to articulate these ideas). Additionally, communities should look towards case studies that highlight the power of evidence-based programs to promote road safety. For example, Hoboken, NJ has [eliminated](#) all traffic-related deaths since 2017 as a result of implementing data-driven strategies.

## 3) Detail Equity Impacts

Consistent with the Administration's [focus](#) on investing in underserved communities, DOT seeks to award grants that promote equitable impacts with regard to traffic safety. As such, the NOFO requires that applicants detail the percentage of their population residing in an “underserved community” census tract. To calculate this, applicants can use [DOT's Equitable Transportation Community Explorer \(ETCE\)](#) tool or the [Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool](#).

## 4) Apply for Funding for a Demonstration Activity

The 2023 SS4A NOFO allows communities to simultaneously apply for action planning and demonstration activities, which are intended to inform Safety Action Plan development by testing interventions meant to improve road safety at a small scale. Note that DOT will prioritize demonstration projects that can be set up within 18 months. Eligible activities include:

- Quick build interventions to inform permanent future projects (for example, using paint/plastic delineator posts to experiment with impermanent roadway design changes).



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- Engineering studies from the [Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices](#) focused on safety applications (for example, high visibility crosswalk markings).
- Pilot programs for behavioral or operational activities that incorporate DOT's [Safe System Approach](#) (for example, message-testing at a small scale).
- Pilot programs demonstrating safety technologies that a community has not yet adopted (for example, [variable speed limits](#)).

## 5) Forge regional partnerships

DOT encourages communities to partner with neighboring cities, metropolitan planning organizations, their county, and/or and other regional organizations. For example, the city of [Kokomo, IN was awarded](#) a \$200,000 planning grant in partnership with Howard County to develop a comprehensive safety plan to reduce road injuries and fatalities. Taking a regional approach will allow for greater strategic alignment and will prevent duplication – if DOT flags your application as duplicative, it will deny funding.