COLORADO
Department of Transportation

Safe Routes Activating Communities Program

Notice of Funding Opportunity

Program Overview

The Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) and the Safe Routes to School Partnership invite applications for the 2026 Colorado Safe Routes Activating Communities Program.

This 12-month program is designed to enhance the capacity of small and lower-resourced communities in Colorado to develop safer walking, biking and rolling routes to everyday destinations. Whether your focus is safe access to schools, parks, healthy food, senior centers or other everyday destinations, this program provides the roadmap and the initial seed funding to get started.

The program is built on three core pillars:

- **Peer Learning:** Participation in six virtual “Community of Practice” sessions (one hour, every other month) to learn from experts and peer communities.
- **Expert Guidance:** Up to 10 hours of individual technical assistance for each community from the Safe Routes Partnership to set goals and develop a customized Safe Routes action plan.
- **Action Funding:** A $10,000 mini-grant to implement a "Kick-off Activity" identified during the planning process.

Eligibility & Participation Requirements

Eligible entities: Local municipalities and tribal governments, schools and special districts (school districts, business improvement districts, etc.) located in the State of Colorado. (Must be a political subdivision of the state).

Target Communities: Priority is given to rural areas, small towns, and communities identified as disadvantaged or low-resource who are in the early stages of developing a safe routes program.

Administrative Readiness: Applicants must maintain an active registration in the System for Award Management (SAM.gov) and possess a valid Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) at the time of application submission. The applicant entity must remain in good

standing and be free from active exclusions, debarments, or suspensions in SAM.gov throughout the application and award period.

Risk Assessment: Selected applicants will be required to complete a brief financial risk assessment.

Commitment to Participate: This is a cohort-based program. Selected communities **must** commit a staff lead or dedicated volunteer to attend group sessions and technical assistance calls.

Program Funding & Match Policy

Total Funding: The Safe Routes Activating Communities Program 2026 has a total of $60,000 in CDOT grant funds to award to program participants.

Award Amount: Up to $10,000 per community (six communities total).

Grant Mechanism: This is a reimbursement grant. Grantees must pay for eligible costs up-front and submit invoices and proof of payment to CDOT for reimbursement.

Match Requirement: There is no match requirement.

Funding Source: Federal. Compliance with 2 CFR Part 200 (Uniform Guidance) is required for receiving federal awards, covering administrative requirements, cost principles and audit requirements.

Scope of Work: You do **not** need a finalized project to apply. Your specific $10,000 project scope will be developed **during** the technical assistance phase based on your community's unique needs.

Eligible Activities and Expenses

Funds must be used for active transportation (walking, biking and rolling) improvements and related activities. After developing a Safe Routes action plan, communities will work with program staff to identify and plan an appropriate planning activity. A scope of work and budget for the selected activity will be approved by CDOT prior to executing a grant contract. All activities funded by the CDOT grant are expected to be completed within 12 months.

Potential activities include:

- Engagement: Walk/bike/ADA audits, community workshops or outreach events, outreach materials

- Education or Encouragement Activities: Bike rodeos, traffic gardens, “Walking School Bus” or “Bike Bus” programming, safety education
- Data collection and monitoring: Bicycle/pedestrian counting, community surveys, road safety assessments

Program Deliverables

Participants will work with program staff to complete three main milestones over a 12-month period:

- Safe Routes Action Plan: A strategic document outlining future goals, projects and action steps
- Safe Routes Activity: Implementation of an early action item from the Safe Routes Action Plan, funded by the $10,000 mini-grant
- Close-out/Evaluation Report: A brief summary of lessons learned and next steps.

Timeline

- Applications open: August 20, 2026
- Applications close: September 30, 2026
- Award decisions announced: October 30, 2026
- Program kick-off: November 2026
- Program completion: November 2027

Selection Criteria

If CDOT receives more applicants than funds allow, applicants will be scored using the following criteria to determine if they will be awarded funding.

Table 1. Safe Routes Activating Communities Selection Criteria

Category	Description	% of Total Score
Community need	Community’s MMOF match rate percentile rank and demonstrated need.	50%
Commitment / preparedness	Applicant’s ability and willingness to commit time and resources to the requirements of the program.	25%
Long-term strategy	Community has a long-term vision compatible with this program and/or is interested in furthering safe routes activities following program completion.	25%

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How to Apply

Apply by filling out the electronic application on the Safe Routes Activating Communities webpage.

Application assistance is available from August 20 - September 30, 2026. Schedule a session with program staff.

The application must be submitted no later than 11:59 p.m. on September 30, 2026.

Questions

Contact active.insights@state.co.us.