



# Appendix I

Alternative Funding Resources

# GSATS Safety Action Plan Funding Strategies

## Overview

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The GSATS Safety Action Plan recommends 21 projects that will improve the safety of all roadway users and mitigate fatal and severe injury crashes. Implementing the projects will likely require additional funding outside of the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program offered by both North and South Carolina Departments of Transportation. The purpose of this document is to identify additional state and federal funding sources to help implement the proposed safety projects.

## Federal Funding

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**Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) Grant Program:** Funds initiatives through grants to prevent roadway deaths and serious injuries. Provides two types of grants (described below). Requires a local match of 20%.

- **Planning and Demonstration Grants:** May be used to develop, complete, or supplement a Safety Action Plan (such as this plan). May also be used for supplementary planning activities (such as road safety audits, safety planning for a corridor or subarea, or community engagement) and demonstration activities (such as pilot programs or feasibility studies). Examples of demonstration grants include implementing low-cost/quick-build materials that can inform potential permanent projects (e.g., protected bike lanes), new technology pilot programs (e.g., use of GIS/GPS technology for signal preemption for emergency vehicles), or pilot training for law enforcement. It should be noted that most demonstration activities require the collection and analysis of before-and-after crash data related to the safety problems being addressed.
- **Implementation Grants:** May be used to implement projects and strategies identified in a Safety Action Plan. Includes infrastructural, behavioral, and operational activities. May also include supplemental planning and demonstration activities. In FY24, eligible entities could submit their Safety Action Plan for pre-application review so USDOT could affirm or provide details regarding whether the Action Plan met the eligibility requirements. In 2024, those were due in April.
- **Additional Considerations:** In 2024, approximately 20% of applications were awarded Implementation Grant funds. Nearly all eligible Planning and Demonstration grant applications received grant funds. The Implementation Grant program is much more competitive than the Planning and Demonstration Grant Program.

**Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Grant:** Provides funds up to \$25 million that can be used for a variety of transportation projects that have a significant local or

regional impact, including impacts to safety. May include funds for planning, design, and/or construction of projects. Requires a local match of 20% for projects in urban areas.

- **Additional Considerations:** A Benefit Cost Analysis (BCA) is required to submit a capital improvement project (not a planning project). This is a very technical process that requires extensive traffic engineering analysis. The success rate of RAISE grant applications is approximately 13%.

**Active Transportation Infrastructure Investment Program (ATIIP):** Provides funds for projects that help communities plan, design, and construct safe active transportation systems that connect to destinations or between communities. Priority is given to projects with significant public input. Requires a local match of 20% unless located in a community with a poverty rate over 40%.

- **Additional Considerations:** Planning and Design projects must have a cost of at least \$100,000; Construction projects must have a cost of at least \$15 million. In 2024, applications were due in June.

**Reconnecting Communities Pilot (RCP) Program:** Provides funds for projects focused on improving disadvantage communities adversely-impacted by past infrastructure choices. Competitive projects are those that reconnect communities by removing, retrofitting, or mitigating highways or other transportation facilities that create barriers to community connectivity, including to mobility, access, or economic development. Includes Capital Construction and Community Planning grant types. Planning grants require a 20% local match; Construction grants require a 50% local match.

- **Additional Considerations:** A BCA is required for Construction applications.

**Local Highway Safety Improvement Program (LHSIP):** Federally-funded program distributed by the Local Highway Technical Assistance Council (LHTAC) aimed at eliminating fatal and serious injury crashes on the roadway system. Local Highway Jurisdictions (LHJs) with a Fatal and/or Serious Injury (Type A) crash in a rolling five (5) year window are eligible for the program. LHJs that have experienced at least one (1) Fatal or Serious Injury (Type A) crash over the last five years are eligible to apply. A 7.34% local match is required.

**Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG):** Federal formula program that may be applied to many types of roadway projects, including pedestrian and bicycle projects, transit capital projects, and maintenance. A 20% local match is required for all STBG program grants. NOTE: This federal formula program and its set asides are administered by SCDOT and/or GSATS.

- **Direct Attributable:** Set-aside from the STBG; provides flexible funding that may be used for projects to preserve and improve the conditions and performance on any Federal-aid highway, bridge and tunnel projects on any public road; pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, and transit capital projects, including intercity bus terminals.

- **Transportation Alternatives Program:** Set-Aside from the STBG program that generally provides funding for smaller-scale projects, such as pedestrian and bicycle facilities; construction of turnouts, overlooks and viewing areas; community improvements such as historic preservation and vegetation management; environmental mitigation related to storm water and habitat connectivity; recreational trails; safe routes to school projects; and vulnerable road user safety assessments.
- **Carbon Reduction Plan:** Set-aside from the STBG program that can be used for projects that reduce transportation carbon dioxide emissions, including public transportation and pedestrian facility projects.

### **Promoting Resilient Operations for Transformative, Efficient, and Cost Saving Transportation**

**(PROTECT) Grant Program:** PROTECT provides funding to ensure surface transportation resilience to natural hazards including climate change, sea level rise, flooding, extreme weather events, and other natural disasters through support of planning activities, resilience improvements, community resilience and evacuation routes, and at-risk coastal infrastructure. A 20% local match is required.

- **Additional Considerations:** A BCA is required to submit a Construction application.

**Strengthening Mobility and Revolutionizing Transportation (SMART) Grant:** The SMART Program provides funding to eligible public-sector agencies to conduct demonstration projects focused on advanced smart community technologies and systems in order to improve transportation efficiency and safety, among the other USDOT Innovation Principles. SMART is a two-stage program. Stage 1 (up to \$2,000,000 dollars and 18 months) grants are open for any eligible entity to apply. Recipients of Stage 1 grants will be eligible to expand their projects through Stage 2 grants (up to \$15,000,000 and 36 months).

**Road to Zero Grant Program:** The Road to Zero Community Traffic Safety Grant Program is focused on supporting innovative and promising approaches for implementing evidence-based countermeasures, supporting a Safe System approach, and performing necessary research to address traffic fatalities and serious injuries, and disparities in mobility safety and access. Awarded grants are contingent upon the availability of funds; awards may be given in the range of \$50,000 - \$200,000. In 2025, applications were due January 17<sup>th</sup>.

## South Carolina State/Local Funding

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**SC Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP):** The Highway Safety Improvement Program is housed and implemented through the Traffic Engineering-Traffic Safety Office located at SCDOT headquarters. HSIP funding is currently allocated to align with crash categories and emphasis areas from the Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP). The 2023 funding for these Emphasis areas is as follows with some overlap between categories:

- Roadway Departure (\$30 Million)
  - Interstate Safety Program (\$15M)
  - Roadway Departure Mitigation Program (\$15M)
- Intersections and Other High Risk Locations (\$37 Million)
  - Intersection Safety Program (\$15M)
  - Road Safety Assessments Program (\$17M)
  - Railroad Safety Projects (\$5M)
- Vulnerable Road Users (\$10 Million)
- Safety Data Analysis (\$3 Million)

**C Funds:** The C fund program distributes funds to each county based on population, land area and rural road mileage. C funds may be used for construction, improvements, or maintenance on the state highway system; local paving or improving county roads; street and traffic signs; and other road and bridge projects. Resurfacing, sidewalk construction, and drainage improvements are also eligible C Fund activities.

**SC Department of Public Safety's Office of Highway Safety and Justice Programs (OHSJP):** Through the State and Community Highway Safety Program, South Carolina administers \$10-\$12 million in Highway Safety grant funds from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) of the US Department of Transportation each year. These funds, as well as other pools of federal funds for which the state may qualify or apply and receive, are used to assist, via grants, eligible entities in carrying out specific programs that will have a direct impact in improving driver behavior and reducing the number of traffic-related collisions, injuries, and fatalities. Highway Safety grant funds are awarded to qualified applicants to create new or expand existing highway safety programs, with the intention that such initiatives continue when grant funding is discontinued. In 2024, applications were due in March. No local match is required.

**RIDE IV:** The RIDE IV local option sales tax will be collected over a seven-year period from May 1, 2025, to April 30, 2032. The 18-member advisory committee finalized their list of recommended projects in April 2023, allocating a projected \$826 million in revenue to bridge and roadway projects, paving and resurfacing projects, and environmental mitigation. Assuming the same proportion from RIDE III, the GSATS portion of Horry County could expect approximately \$569 million worth of programmed projects over the seven-year period. Due to the success of the first three rounds of the RIDE program, it is anticipated that the RIDE program will continue through 2045.

**Regional Mobility Program (RMP):** Formally known as Guideshare, RMP funds are allocated to the MPOs in SC based on study area population. GSATS funding allocation from the RMP for FY 2023 was \$12.7 million; in FY 2024 it increased to an annual allocation of \$15.7 million in FY 2024. Road improvements may include constructing new roads, adding traffic lanes to existing roads, constructing paved shoulders, installing traffic signals, constructing sidewalks or bike lanes, or making safety improvements. Major maintenance improvements may also be included, such as resurfacing a road.

**SCDOT Safety Funds:** SCDOT has Safety Funds that can be used on qualifying intersections and corridors based on ADT and collision history.

**SC Transportation Infrastructure Bank:** The South Carolina Transportation Infrastructure Bank was created in 1997 (Bank Act), with the corporate purpose of the Bank to assist in financing major qualified projects by providing loans and other financial assistance to government units and private entities for constructing and improving highway and transportation facilities necessary for public purposes including economic development.

**Georgetown County Sales Tax:** Georgetown County voters in 2014 approved a one percent sales tax that expired in May 2019. The tax raised \$41 million and was for a variety of projects including road paving. If this one percent sales tax could be restored, it could potentially be a major contributor to aid with the transportation infrastructure needs for the County.

**SC Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Program:** SC SRTS was developed to encourage school children to walk and bike to school through a variety of strategies, including the development of safe, dedicated bicycle and pedestrian facilities in the direct vicinity of schools. Since 2012, funding for SRTS has come out of tap from the state's Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG). The 2021 Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) codified SRTS, increased TAP funding as a percentage of STBG funds, and expanded eligibility to include high schools. GSATS dedicates 80% of their TAP funding in South Carolina to the completion of the east coast greenway. The BIL's SRTS and TAP updates provide more funding for the SRTS and walking and biking programs.

## North Carolina State Funding

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**Governors' Highway Safety Program:** This program helps fund the efforts of law enforcement agencies, local governments, community organizations, schools and nonprofits to reduce traffic crashes in North Carolina. GHSP funds projects/programs that address the following areas of highway safety: drunken driving, seat belt safety, police traffic services, young drivers, motorcycle safety, and traffic record-keeping. GHSP also provides funds to address distracted driving and to make roads safer for older drivers, pedestrians, bicyclists, commercial motor vehicles and school buses.

**NCDOT High Impact/Low Cost Funds:** High Impact / Low-Cost funds are for statewide rural or small urban highway improvements and related transportation enhancements to public roads/public facilities, industrial access roads, and spot safety projects. Funds are used to complete low-cost projects with high impacts to the transportation system including intersection improvement projects, minor widening projects, and operational improvement projects. Applications are submitted to NCDOT Division Engineers for a field inspection, review, and recommendation to be approved by the NCDOT Board. The maximum award amount is \$1.5 million.

**NC Department of Natural and Cultural Resources (DNCR) Division of Parks and Recreation's Recreational Trails Program (RTP):** The Recreational Trails Program provides funding for construction of new trails, maintenance and repair of existing trails, land acquisition, purchase of trail tools and planning, legal, environmental and permitting costs. It is a federal grant reviewed by the NC Trails Committee and recommendations are made to the Secretary of the NC Department of Natural and Cultural Resources who

makes the final determination. In 2024, applications were due early September. A 25% local match is required. The minimum award is \$10,000; the maximum award is \$100,000.

**NC's Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Non-Infrastructure Program:** provide an opportunity for communities to improve conditions for bicycling and walking to school. Projects can range up to three years. Grant amounts range from \$50,000 - \$500,000 per project. Funding may be requested to support activities for community-wide, regional or statewide programs. Proposed projects need to be education, encouragement, or evaluation-based.

**NC DNCR Division of Parks and Recreation's Parks and Recreation Trust Fund Grant (PARTF):** PARTF provides matching grants to local governments to assist with public park and recreation projects, including greenways. In 2024, applications were due in early May. The project must be on a single site. A 50% local match is required. The maximum award is \$500,000.

**Land and Water Conservation fund (LWCF):** LWCF is split into the 'federal side' with money allocated to the National Parks Service and the 'state side' which allocates 40% of the funds as matching grants to states and local governments. In NC, LWCF can fund riparian greenway projects. These projects can include land and easements along streams, and often feature paved or natural surface trails for recreational, educational, and environmental uses. Greenway corridors funded by the NCLWF can connect schools, neighborhoods, and community parks in urban areas. The project must be on a single site. A 50% local match is required. The maximum award is \$500,000.

**Powell Bill Program:** The Powell Bill program, also known as the State Street Aid program, is administered by the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) to provide state funding to eligible municipalities for street maintenance and improvements. The funds are derived from a percentage of the state's gasoline tax revenue. Municipalities can use the funds to maintain, repair, reconstruct, or improve streets, sidewalks, bikeways, greenways, and public thoroughfares; build or widen streets, bridges, and drainage areas; and plan, build, and maintain bicycle paths. Each municipality manages Powell Bill funds differently as they own/maintain different roads.

**NCDOT Small Construction Funds:** Established 1985 to fund small projects in and around cities and towns which could not be funded in the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). Budget Bill provisions currently allow for use on variety of transportation projects for municipalities, counties, businesses, schools and industries throughout the State. An equal amount of funds are allocated to each NCDOT Division. Division engineer performs field inspection, forwards information to Chief Engineer, who sends along to the Project Review Committee that will approve or deny. The maximum award is \$250,000 per project per year.

**NCDOT Statewide Contingency Funds:** These funds were created for statewide rural or small urban highway improvements and related transportation enhancements to public roads/public facilities, industrial access roads, and spot safety projects. Same review/approval process as above.