

Community Focus Statement A: Improve the overall safety of the community.

Action Statement A.1: Coordinate with the County to design walkable routes to local schools, Helendale Community Park, and Silver Lakes' parks to improve pedestrian safety.

A

Benchmark: Implement a community led Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program, and implement at least one project committed to increasing safety through expanded walking and bicycling to schools around the community.

Champion: Volunteer group or person or can be identified by the community

Estimated Cost: Contingent upon level of improvements



Photo source: Flickr, Mayor McGinn

Helendale is served by three schools located in the community: Helendale Elementary School, ACE Charter School, and Independence Charter Academy. The community generally lacks adequate pedestrian and bicycle facilities along its roadways, so many children cannot safely walk or ride their bikes to the schools. The bridge over the Mojave River along Vista Road provides access between most of the residential areas and Independence Charter Academy; however, it only includes a narrow sidewalk on one side of the bridge and has limited Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accommodations. To aid in providing adequate pedestrian infrastructure and to encourage increased

mobility among the community's children, Helendale can develop and implement a Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Program.

A Safe Routes to School Program encourages children to walk or bike to school. Such a program funds projects that remove barriers which prevent children from walking or biking to school, as well as projects that actively promote the activity. Barriers may include a lack of or unsafe infrastructure and/or a lack of programs that promote walking and bicycling through educational programs for children, parents, and the community. In California, Caltrans administers two separate versions of the program, a State-legislated program, SR2S, and a federal program, SRTS. Per Caltrans, the following table summarizes the key differences between the programs.

Program Features	State-Legislated Program – SR2S	Federal Program – SRTS
Eligible Applicants	Cities and counties	State, local, and regional agencies and Native American tribes experienced in meeting federal transportation requirements. Nonprofit organizations, school districts, and public health departments must partner with a city, county, metropolitan planning organization (MPO), or regional transportation planning agency (RTPA) to serve as the responsible agency for their project.
Eligible Projects	Infrastructure projects	Stand-alone infrastructure or non-infrastructure projects
Local Match	10% minimum required	None
Project Completion Deadline	Within 4½ years after project funds are allocated to the agency	Within 4½ years after project is amended into the federal transportation improvement program (FTIP)
Restrictions on Infrastructure Projects	Must be located in the vicinity of a school	Infrastructure projects must be within 2 miles of a grade school or middle school
Targeted Beneficiaries	Children in grades K–12	Children in grades K–8
Funding	\$24.25M annual funding	\$21–25M annual funding

Caltrans identifies the following general steps for communities such as Helendale to follow when establishing a Safe Routes to School Program:

- Identify community stakeholders and form a multidisciplinary team of partners committed to working together in developing a community vision, developing project applications, and implementing those projects if selected for funding.
- Inventory and identify safety needs/hazards around schools; get information and seek out resources; and propose alternatives that would correct those needs/hazards.
- Prioritize alternatives and select the best alternative that proposes short-term and long-term safety solutions in the form of projects.
- Develop a plan for the project.
- Submit an application to compete for funding for the project when a call for projects cycle is under way.

Note: Focus Statements A.2, B.1, and B.2 are similar and could be addressed as part of one planning process. The community should consider all three objectives at once when considering implementation of these focus statements.



Action	Action Leader	Timeline	Objective Resources
1. Host a community meeting to identify stakeholders committed to working together in developing and implementing the project.	Champion	Months 1–3	San Bernardino County Transportation Authority (SBCTA) http://gobcta.com/index.html
2. Coordinate with SBCTA to determine any planned SRTS projects and whether Helendale can be included in the next round of studies. Engage SBCTA as a partner.	SRTS Team	Months 1–3	National Center for Safe Routes to School, Program Implementation Guidance http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/program-tools/build-sustain-program
3. Contact the Board of Supervisors to voice interest in developing a SRTS program and increasing safety in the community.	SRTS Team	Months 1–3	Caltrans – SRTS Program Local Assistance http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LocalPrograms/saferoutes/srts.htm
4. Identify appropriate assessment studies to be conducted as a way to inventory and identify safety needs and hazards around schools, get information and seek out resources, and propose alternatives that would correct those needs and hazards.	SRTS Team	Months 3–9	Riverside, California: SRTS Coalition sees success in Riverside (case study) http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/program-tools/success-stories/riverside-california-srts-coalition-sees-success-riverside Walk-Bike to School http://www.walkbiketoschool.org/
5. Once appropriate assessment studies are conducted and needs have been identified, prioritize alternatives and select the best alternative that proposes short-term and longer-term safety solutions in the form of projects.	SRTS Team	Months 9–12	Caltrans Local Assistance http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LocalPrograms/saferoutes/saferoutes.htm
6. Develop a plan for the implementation of the project.	SRTS Team with support from Community leaders, Helendale School District, San Bernardino County Transportation Authority	Months 12–15	Safe Routes to School National Partnership http://saferoutespartnership.org/healthy-communities/policy-change/federal Safe Routes to School Noteworthy Practices Guide - http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/sites/default/files/resources/SRTS%20Noteworthy%20Practices%20Guide%20FINAL.pdf
7. For Caltrans SR2S funding, submit an application to compete for funding for the project when a call for projects cycle is under way. Other non-state or federal funding opportunities can be sought out. The Safe Routes to School National Partnership offers resources and links to privately available funding sources.	SRTS Team with support from Community leaders, Helendale School District, San Bernardino County Transportation Authority	Months 15–18	California Active Transportation Resource Center: Tools - http://www.casaferoutestoschool.org/get-assistance/tools/ Safe Routes Info, SRTS Guide - http://guide.saferoutesinfo.org/steps/index.cfm http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/program-tools/funding http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LocalPrograms/saferoutes/srts_process.htm