



# SAFE ROUTES TO PARKS ACCELERATOR

This free technical assistance program will help a team of staff from a state's departments of transportation, health, and natural resources work together to improve safe, convenient, and equitable walking and biking routes to parks and open spaces, establish sustainable processes for cross-agency collaboration and implement projects and programs that better support local communities' park access needs. We are looking for leaders within agencies who are ready to transform the way they work with other departments and agencies, excited to try new approaches for high-impact, equitable processes, and center community needs.

## About the Safe Routes to Parks Accelerator

Over 12 months, Safe Routes Partnership will provide consulting services customized to support each state team. We will use a hybrid model, combining virtual trainings, regular consultations, and peer learning opportunities, with one in-person site visit. Through this program, you can expect to:

- Learn how to build lasting, productive working relationships between state agencies to support safe access to everyday destinations.
- Identify the messaging that works best to frame your work on Safe Routes to Parks to potential partners and decision-makers.
- Maximize the opportunities of existing state funding and staff capacity to support park access and identify opportunities and models for expanding on those existing resources.

**Benefits of Participation:** Each team will have access to expert technical assistance from Safe Routes Partnership staff and can expect to have a tailored coaching plan to support the action or change they plan to implement during the 12-month program. Examples of how we can help include but are not limited to:

- Conduct policy scans to identify opportunities for collaboration on Safe Routes to Parks across agencies.
- Identify state and federal funding opportunities for implementing park access improvements.
- Facilitate cross-agency strategy sessions
- Incorporate local planning and community engagement into state plans and programs.
- Align project schedules to increase efficiency.
- Identify potential partners to build project capacity.
- Develop and implement workshops to build staff knowledge on Safe Routes to Parks.
- Provide content expertise on community engagement and integrate best practices in plans and processes.
- Assist with drafting policy language that supports Safe Routes to Parks.
- Document implementation plans for states to operationalize big goals.
- Identify strategies to sustain this work after the end of the program.

## Program Timing and Commitment

**Program Period:** November 2022 to October 2023

States will assemble a Safe Routes to Parks team that includes representatives from various state agencies, including, but not limited to transportation, public health, and conservation & natural resources. Each agency must dedicate a lead staff person, designated to be the primary contact.

Teams can anticipate dedicating up to 10 hours per month to this program. This time includes team check-in calls twice per month, three scheduled program trainings and quarterly peer-to-peer learning sessions with other state teams. The Accelerator will help your team integrate Safe Routes to Parks into existing work, and the program commitment accounts for dedicated time to kick-start your work.

## Participation and Eligibility

Safe Routes Partnership will select three states to participate in the Safe Routes to Parks Accelerator. Participating state teams should be ready and excited to increase their potential for achieving high-impact, sustainable and equitable outcomes, and sustain their Safe Routes to Parks work well after the completion of this program.

Note: In one of the selected states, Safe Routes Partnership will provide simultaneous coaching and funding to nonprofit organizations in three to five communities to further advance one state's Safe Routes to Parks efforts.

### How to Apply:

Each team should fill out this [brief form](#) and submit a 1-2 page Letter of Interest that highlights why your state would like to participate in the Safe Routes to Parks Accelerator. Letters of interest are due 9/23/2022 and should address the following questions:

- What does your team hope to gain by participating in the program?
- Do you have established cross-agency partnerships that can advance Safe Routes to Parks? Please describe how you work together.
- What existing plan, policy, or program is the best opportunity to address walking and biking barriers to parks and open spaces?
- How has your state demonstrated a substantial investment in equity and community engagement? This could be through policy, plans, and/or practices.
- How has your agency demonstrated adaptability or innovation through the adoption of new processes or novel approaches? (ex. Covid-19 response, innovative data collection, creative use of resources or funds, etc.)
- Describe partnerships with community-based organizations and any partners you anticipate building relationships with.

Safe Routes Partnership may follow up with a phone call to discuss how the Safe Routes to Parks Accelerator can help to advance park access in your state.



## The Value of Working with Safe Routes Partnership

Safe Routes Partnership has nearly two decades of experience developing policies, programs, and funding streams that connect people to places and is a national leader in the Safe Routes to Parks movement. From November 2017 to October 2021, Safe Routes Partnership supported 28 diverse communities from across the country through its [Safe Routes to Parks Activating Communities program](#), directly coaching them to develop and implement concrete, actionable steps to advance safe and equitable access to parks in their local community. Safe Routes Partnership successfully guided each of these communities with unique needs to achieve successful early wins that lay the groundwork for growing and sustaining their Safe Routes to Parks initiatives.

**For more information, please email**  
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