

Data Request Memo

RE: ODOT Safe Routes to School Funding Application

To: City of Sunbury / Big Walnut Local Schools

From: Carpenter Marty Transportation

Date: January 6, 2026

Carpenter Marty Transportation (CM) will assist the City of Sunbury with a funding application to develop a School Travel Plan (STP) through ODOT's Safe Routes to School program. The below requested information is necessary to complete the application process. Please complete the below form with as much detail as possible. A complete and robust application will increase the chances of funding being rewarded. CM has provided example text in red. Please review and refine the text as needed.

Attachments Needed

- Letters of Support from all of the following: regional planning organization, the local jurisdiction, and school district.
 - CM has already reached out to MORPC (regional planning organization) on behalf of the City.
 - We will need a letter of support from the school district as well as the City.
- Copy of proposed Ordinance (attached to the accompanying email). Original will be required if selected.
- Provide student address data (no names) for all students at each of the target schools. An example spreadsheet to input this information has been provided. Let us know if you want us to take the lead in contacting the schools.

Applicant Information

<i>Applicant (name of agency or organization applying)</i>	<i>City of Sunbury</i>
<i>ODOT District</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>County</i>	<i>Delaware</i>
<i>Primary Contact</i>	<i>Gina Balsamo</i>
<i>Email</i>	<i>gbalsamo@cmtran.com</i>
<i>Phone</i>	<i>614.656.2429</i>
<i>Address</i>	<i>6612 Singletree Drive Columbus, OH 43229</i>
<i>Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) or Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RTPO), if applicable</i>	<i>MORPC</i>

Project Information

<i>School District</i>	<i>Sunbury</i>
<i>List who will be the local leader(s) in the STP development process (name, organization, title)</i>	<i>Ryan McLane, Big Walnut School District, Superintendent; James Hall, Big Walnut School District, Facilities Manager; Carla Odebralski, City of Sunbury, Director of Planning & Engineering; Joe St. John, City of Sunbury, Mayor</i>
<i>Are you developing a new plan or doing an update?</i>	<i>New Plan</i>
<i>Select the type of assistance you are seeking</i>	<i>Reimbursement for hiring a locally selected party (through quality based selection)</i>

Describe the schools you seek to develop an STP for (name, location, number of students)

*Big Walnut High School
713 Miller Drive,
Sunbury, OH 43074
XXX students*

*Big Walnut Middle School
555 S Old 3C Road
Sunbury, OH 43074
XXX students*

*Big Walnut Intermediate School
777 Cheshire Road
Sunbury, OH 43074
XXX students*

*Big Walnut Elementary School
940 S Old 3C Road
Sunbury, OH 43074
XXX students*

*General Rosecrans Elementary School
301 S Miller Drive
Sunbury, OH 43074
XXX students*

*Helen Souders Elementary School
4121 Miller-Paul Road
Galena, OH 43021
XXX students*

*Prairie Run Elementary School
701 North Miller Drive
Sunbury, OH 43074
XXX students*

*Early Learning Center at Harrison Street
70 Harrison Street
Sunbury, OH 43074
XXX Students*

How will developing an STP help you address gaps or opportunities for student connectivity to school?

NOTE: Identify gaps in existing infrastructure with a focus on school travel. Mention that having an STP in place will help with future planning for infrastructure, programs, and policy improvements.

The City of Sunbury and Big Walnut School District are strongly committed to expanding safe and accessible walking and bicycling options for students and their families. Despite this shared commitment, the community continues to face significant infrastructure and safety challenges that limit families' ability to choose active transportation over personal vehicles.

The Big Walnut School District spans 109 square miles and includes eight school buildings. Although the District provides busing, substantial opportunities exist to increase safe walking and biking access for K-12 students. Many households are located within a reasonable distance of school facilities. However, parents may hesitate to allow their kids to walk or bike to school due to concerns around speeding traffic, inadequate crossings, and gaps in the sidewalk network.

The development of a new STP will enable the City and District to systematically identify and prioritize critical infrastructure needs. This includes addressing sidewalk gaps; high-risk corridors; insufficient crossing infrastructure and missing curb ramps; and areas where visibility or signage is insufficient. The STP will also generate the data and analytical framework necessary to pursue external funding for projects that enhance student connectivity and safety.

By creating a data-driven, community-supported STP, Sunbury will be well positioned to apply for Safe Routes to School (SRTS) infrastructure grants and related funding programs. The plan will also guide non-infrastructure strategies such as safety education, strategic crossing-guard deployment, and policies that encourage active travel. Ultimately, the STP will serve as a foundational tool for coordinated infrastructure investment, programming, and policy improvements that ensure that walking and biking to school becomes a safe, convenient, and viable option for all students.

Are there any existing safety concerns for students walking or biking to school?

NOTE: Describe existing issues/concerns with current school travel. What have you heard from parents/caregivers or staff? Do most students currently travel via bus or car? Have there been any specific incidents (e.g. crashes, near-misses) which can be addressed in an STP?

In the past 10 years (Jan 2015 – Dec 2024), there have been seven pedestrian and bicycle crashes, one of which resulted in a fatality and four having minor injuries. All were within a mile of at least one of the local school buildings.

Describe why your community needs assistance in order to develop a School Travel Plan.
<p>NOTE: Focus on possible staff, expertise, and/or funding limitations.</p> <p><i>Big Walnut School District has never had an STP. A formal STP process would help the City and District evaluate current network conditions, travel behavior, and community priorities; and create an implementation plan of proven countermeasure that reflects current safety needs for all schools within the District.</i></p> <p><i>The City and School District have limited staff capacity and lack the specialized expertise needed to develop a robust, data-driven plan that meets ODOT's technical requirements. Sunbury does not have dedicated transportation planning or data analysis staff, and the City's Planning Department is primarily focused on land use planning, zoning, and compliance.</i></p> <p><i>Assistance from ODOT and its planning consultants is essential to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Conduct accurate data collection, such as student travel tallies, parent surveys, and walk/bike audits.</i> • <i>Provide technical analysis of pedestrian and traffic safety conditions near each school.</i> • <i>Develop evidence-based countermeasures tailored to the unique urban context of Sunbury.</i> • <i>Ensure alignment with ODOT SRTS standards and eligibility for future funding opportunities.</i> <p><i>In short, the City and School District have the commitment and local leadership to support a comprehensive plan but need state-level expertise and resources to create one that is technically sound and actionable. ODOT's assistance will allow Sunbury to build a strong, implementable STP that reflects the community's long-term vision for safe, connected, and equitable school travel.</i></p>

What percent of students are economically disadvantaged?
<p>NOTE: This information can be obtained via online resources. However, if the school district has additional information that can be provided (e.g. number of students who receive free lunches), that will be beneficial for the application.</p> <p><i>According to the Ohio Department of Education's most recent District Report Card (2024), approximately 18% of students in Big Walnut School District are classified as economically disadvantaged.</i></p>

Describe any Safe Routes to School related activities that have occurred in your community over the past year.

NOTE: If applicable. Examples include walk/bike to school days, roadway safety education programs, driver education programs. These can be school or City examples.

Briefly describe the main partners you will be engaging to develop and implement your STP and their potential roles.

NOTE: Think about who would be included in the stakeholder group and those who will be champions of the plan. Examples include teachers/staff, City staff, school principals, parents/caregivers, neighborhood groups, emergency services (police and fire), City Council or Planning Commission representatives, local business leaders, etc.

The Sunbury STP will be developed through a multi-agency partnership that reflects a strong local coalition of leadership, technical expertise, and community engagement:

- *Ryan McLane, Superintendent, Big Walnut School District– District liaison and coordinator for student travel data and parent communication.*
- *James Hall, Facilities Manager, Big Walnut School District – Oversees facility and operations coordination*
- *Carla Odebralski, City of Sunbury, Director of Planning & Engineering/City Engineer - Leads city infrastructure coordination, including engineering input*
- *Joe St. John, Mayor, City of Sunbury – Provides executive oversight, ensures alignment with citywide infrastructure and policy goals.*
- *Sunbury Police Department – Advises on crossing guard placement, traffic enforcement, and school-zone safety.*
- *Parent-Teacher Organizations and Community Advocates – Provide firsthand input on travel challenges and help build community support.*

This team combines municipal leadership, school administration, and community representation, ensuring that the resulting plan will be both actionable and widely supported.