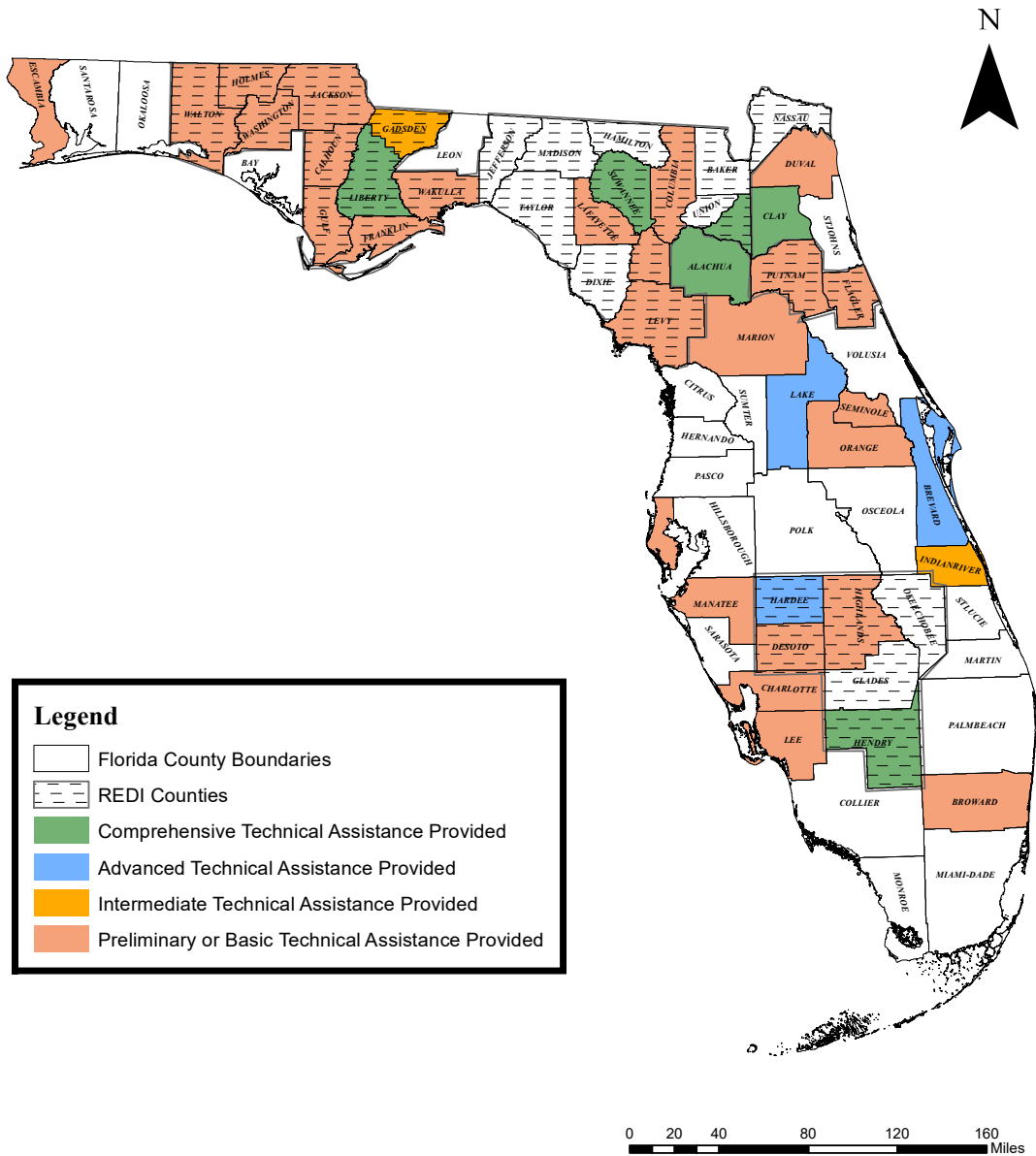


UF SRTS Technical Assistance Team Activity Summary, 2016-2019

UF's Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Technical Assistance team has worked diligently to complete an evaluation of the safety and effectiveness of the program, and develop local partnerships, a user-friendly website, an updated toolkit, and strategic regional plans supporting the participation of rural communities in the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) SRTS infrastructure funding program. Through partnerships and strategies developed over the last four years, the University's team has provided assistance to 48 of Florida's cities and counties. The comprehensive technical assistance team at UF is comprised of faculty leadership, professional staff with engineering, design, construction and technical assistance experience, and enthusiastic graduate students focusing on urban and regional planning and geographic information system (GIS) analysis. This brief report includes a summary of activities, a corresponding map, and a summary of lessons learned and challenges faced over the past four years.

UF SRTS Technical Assistance Team Coverage (2016-2019)



UF SRTS technical assistance team assists Florida communities that are the focus of the state’s Rural Economic Development Initiative (REDI), Title I schools, and agencies with limited technical skills. Communities are defined as a REDI community if any of the following three criteria is met: (1) the county has a population of 75,000 or fewer; (2) the county has a population of 125,000 or fewer and is contiguous to a county with a population of 75,000 or fewer; and (3) a municipality within a county has a population of 75,000 or fewer, or is a municipality within a county with a population of 125,000 or fewer that is contiguous to a county with a population of 75,000 or fewer. The REDI communities in Florida are primarily located in FDOT districts 1, 2, and 3. The map above shows the communities that the UF SRTS team has provided technical assistance since 2016. The UF SRTS team provided some form of technical assistant to a majority of the REDI counties (21 out of 31). The technical assistance provided to the non-REDI counties takes three forms. The first is technical assistance to a REDI community in a non-REDI county. For example, the cities of Alachua, Newberry and Hawthorne have been designated as REDI communities even though Alachua County is not-designated as a REDI county. Secondly, the UF team provided technical assistance to a school that is a Title I school; Doctors Inlet in Clay County is an example of such a school. Thirdly, the team used requests from non-REDI counties to

developed tools that were subsequently used for analysis in other counties. For example, in 2017, a representative of the Brevard County Schools requested that we analyze which schools in that county might benefit from the SRTS program. In response, the team developed a tool that considered, sidewalk coverage, crash locations, traffic volumes and number of residences near schools to make recommendation about schools that might benefit from the SRTS investments. This methodology was then used for an analysis of the opportunities for schools to develop SRTS projects and to calculate the benefits of the SRTS program for specific schools.

Summary of Activities

Over the past few years, the activities of UF's SRTS technical assistance team members have cultivated relationships with leadership and staff in areas lacking resources. One primary goal is improve the technical capabilities of local agencies through sharing knowledge and resources. Persistent, thoughtful, and detail oriented technical assistance led to successful submission of ten (10) SRTS infrastructure-funding applications serving rural and under-resourced communities. In the appendix, we provide detail on our technical assistance activities for each year since 2016.

Over time the team has developed a methodology to provide various levels of technical assistance. During the early stages, the team conducts a preliminary evaluation and to assess the level of assistance required. By considering the individual needs of each agency, the project team developed varying levels of standard assistance requested and provided. Standard levels consist of basic, intermediate and advanced technical assistance.

- **Basic Technical Assistance** includes initial consultation, general application consultation, and final application review.
- **Intermediate Technical Assistance** includes each of the basic services, in addition to, project identification support, coordinating school's involvement with community engagement.
- **Advanced Technical Assistance** includes intermediate services, in addition to, intensive project identification support, infrastructural planning support, coordination with FDOT SRTS district representatives, and a GIS analysis to prioritize community needs.
- **Comprehensive Technical Assistance** includes advanced services, in addition to, extensive community engagement, school involvement, consultation regarding LAP certification, project map production, assessment of community benefit, and coordination with applicable transportation planning organization.

Summary of Partnerships

Collaborative partnerships with over 40 agencies and organizations allow for optimal technical assistance experience. Specifically, the Florida Traffic and Bicycle Safety Education Program (FTBSEP) and its Safe Routes to School project provided educators well versed in educating community partners on walking and biking safely; Community Traffic Safety Teams (CTST) meetings in targeted districts provided valuable insight regarding local roadway and facility concerns. UF Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences provides a statewide local network in each of Florida's 67 counties. Their Family Nutrition Program (FNP) provides resources for local organizations in 40 counties, including many REDI counties, to support and promote healthy eating and physical activity in their communities. The goals of the FNP are complementary to the goals of the SRTS infrastructure program. Annual SRTS workshops provide a captive audience to initiate contact with communities in need of technical assistance. Involvement with the FTBSEP, CTST, IFAS, SRTS Workshops, and collaborative partners create community vision, offer varying perspectives, and resources to develop and execute the prudent plan and achieve community goals.

Summary of Challenges

In the UF SRTS team's experience, a successful SRTS infrastructure application requires three essential components: a willing champion, cohesive community vision with agency buy-in, and strong community and school involvement. A few hurdles that seemed to stop the application development dead in its tracks were lack of common vision, lack of agreement on project area or scope, extensive or expensive project scopes due to associated drainage or infrastructure conflicts (e.g., utility facilities located in an inconvenient location), inability to collaborate with all required parties, and lack of or conflicting understanding of inter-local agreements. Additionally, the team consistently receives technical assistance requests near the application deadline. Though the team has managed all requests, perhaps, to benefit the state as a whole, the Department could consider an incentive for REDI communities who submit prior to the deadline. The potential results of an early submission incentive could yield applications that are more comprehensive with increased review time and a motivated champion to complete tasks quickly. Perhaps, these common challenges faced are inherent features of local agencies with limited staff. Nonetheless, the UF SRTS project team has formed the foundation for streamlined technical assistance services across the state. The continuation of this project is vital to improve the health of infrastructure and access to funding opportunities for limited resource communities in our state.

Appendix:

Summary of Activity by SRTS Project Team , 2016-2019

Key:
" * " indicates a community that submitted an SRTS application
Community that received Comprehensive Technical Assistance
Community that received Advanced Technical Assistance
Community that received Intermediate Technical Assistance
Community that has received Preliminary or Basic Technical Assistance
Partnership
SRTS Workshop attended
Conference Participation (tabling, presentation)

Community/Agency/Organization/Workshop	Number of Meetings & Interactions
2016	
Hawthorne*	24
Newberry	15
Live Oak	6
Gadsden County	5
Indian River County	5
Desoto	2
Highland County	2
Apalachee Regional Planning Council	2
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention	2
CTST (Gadsden County)	2
Department of Health	3
Department of Healthy/Action for Healthy Kids	2
Dewberry	2
Florida Department of Economic Opportunity	4
Florida Department of Education	3
Florida Rural Health Association	2
Florida Traffic & Bicycle Safety Education Program	2
Indian River County CTST	2

National Association of County and City Health Officials	1
The Barbara Bush Children's Hospital	1
University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences - Family, Youth, and Community Sciences	5
USDA	3
USF- Center for Urban Transportation Research	3
2016 Total Meetings & Contacts:	98
2017	
Clay County*	23
City of Alachua*	25
Live Oak	12
Brevard County	3
Liberty County	3
Apalachicola	2
Calhoun County	2
City of Dunedin	3
Escambia County	2
Franklin County	2
Gainesville	3
Gulf County	2
Jackson County	2
Jacksonville	2
Levy County	2
Margate	2
Orange County	2
Palm Bay	2
Wakulla County	3
Washington County	3
Central Florida Regional Planning Council	3
CTST (District 1)	4
Element Engineering Group	2
Gene Boles	5
Highland County CTST	5
Lucy Gonzalez, then District 5 Coordinator with Florida Traffic and Bicycle Safety Education Program	7
Tracy Suber, FDOE Office of Educational Facilities	4
West Florida Regional Planning Council	3
Workshop (Hosted)- Gainesville	17
Florida Chapter of the American Planning Association (Daytona Beach) - tabling	50
2017 Total Meetings & Contacts:	200

2018	
Bradford County*	23
Clay County*	25
Brevard County	10
Suwanee County	8
Live Oak	5
Alachua County	4
City of Starke	4
City of Ocala	2
Columbia County	3
Duval County	3
Hardee County	2
Holmes County	2
Lake County	3
Lee County	3
Levy County	2
Wakulla County	2
Brevard County CTST	2
Flagler County CTST	2
Health Planning Council of NE Florida	2
Pedestrian Bicycle Coalition	2
Seminole County CTST	2
Well Florida	4
District 1 Workshop	2
District 2 Workshop	1
District 5 Workshop	1
District 7 Workshop	1
College of Design Construction and Planning	20
Florida Chapter of the American Planning Association (West Palm Beach) - conference session	50
International Conference on Transport and Health (ICTH)	25
2018 Total Meetings & Contacts:	215
2019	
City of Alachua*	8
Clewiston*	27
Leesburg*	10
Liberty County*	17
Suwanee County*	15
City of Clermont	13
Hardee County	12
Alachua County	4
Clay County	4

Hawthorne	3
Holmes County	2
Palatka	3
Putnam County	3
Walton County	2
Washington County	3
UF Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences -Associate Dean for Extension	3
Central Florida Regional Planning Council	1
Charlotte County CTST	1
Child Passenger Safety Special Needs	3
Columbian County CTST	3
CTST (Alachua, Gilchrist, Levy)	1
CTST (Columbia, Hamilton, Lafayette, Suwannee)	3
Dewberry	4
Flagler County CTST	1
Law Enforcement Liason	2
Manatee County CTST	1
NW Florida Regional Planning Council	2
Safe Kids North Central Florida	2
Safe Kids North Central Florida	2
Space Coast Transportation Planning Organization	2
Well Florida	5
District 1 Workshop	2
District 2 Workshop	2
District 3 Workshop	3
District 5 Workshop	2
Safe Routes to School National Partnership (Tampa) - conference presentation	50
2019 Total Meetings & Contacts:	221
2016-2019 Total Meetings & Contacts:	734