

**Safe Routes to Schools (SRTS) Advisory Committee**

March 24<sup>th</sup>, 2026

10:00-11:00 AM

Remotely via Microsoft Teams

**Meeting Minutes**

**I. Call to Order, Roll Call**

Chair Abbey Seitz called the meeting to order at 10:01 am and conducted a roll call of committee members and confirmed a quorum was present.

Member requirement	Appointment detail(s)	Name	Present?
One member to be appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives	House of Representatives appointee	Kathleen Rooney	Y
One member to be appointed by the president of the senate	Senate appointee, chair for 2025-2026	Abbey Seitz	Y
The department of transportation's safe routes to school program coordinator		Tara Lucas	Y
The deputy director of the department of transportation's highways division		Robin Shishido	Y
One member representing the physical activity and nutrition section of the department of health's chronic disease prevention and health promotion division		Heidi Hansen-Smith, official designee	Y
The superintendent of education		Audrey Hidano, official designee	N
The co-chair of the Hawaii climate change mitigation and adaptation commission	Chairperson, Department of Land and Natural Resources	Luke Sarvis, official designee	N
The co-chair of the Hawaii climate change mitigation and adaptation commission	Director, Office of Planning and Sustainable Development	Leah Laramee, official designee	Y
One member representing the Hawaii state energy office		Shana Merrifield for Chris Yunker, official designee	Y
One member representing the Hawaii state council on developmental disabilities		Sierra Whiteside	N
One member representing each county agency with jurisdiction over transportation	City and County of Honolulu	Yamato Sasaki, official designee	Y
	County of Hawaii	Jesse Domian, official designee	Y
	County of Kauai	Keith Hatcher, official designee	Y

	County of Maui	Kurt Watanabe, official designee	Y
One member representing an organization with a focus on bicycling	Appointed by the governor, pursuant to section 26-34, for a three-year term	Thomas Noyes	Y
One member representing an organization with a focus on senior citizens and their families	Appointed by the governor, pursuant to section 26-34, for a three-year term	James Burke	Y
One member representing an organization that understands the ways families with young children navigate through the State	Appointed by the governor, pursuant to section 26-34, for a three-year term	Pending	N
One member representing an organization with a focus on public health and mobility	Appointed by the governor, pursuant to section 26-34, for a three-year term	Jessica Thompson	N
One member representing an organization with a focus on transportation equity and mobility	Appointed by the governor, pursuant to section 26-34, for a three-year term	Jeanne Torres	N
The chair of the senate standing committee with primary jurisdiction over transportation	Senate, serving as non-voting, ex-officio member	Senator Lorraine Inoye	N
The chair of representatives standing committee with primary jurisdiction over transportation	House of Representatives, serving as non-voting, ex-officio member	Dorene Eddy for Representative Darius Kila	Y

Identified Guests – Kevin Richardson (Attorney General’s Office); Po Unutoa (Hawai‘i Department of Transportation); Lauren Loor and Patti Hatzistavrakis (Hawai‘i Public Health Institute); and Bev Brody (Get Fit Kaua‘i)

**II. Old Business**

- a. Action to approve draft meeting minutes – The Committee voted to approve the December 16, 2025 meeting minutes unanimously.
- b. Action to approve the Safe Routes to School Advisory Committee Annual Report to the 34th Hawai‘i State Legislature and request that the Hawai‘i Department of Transportation submit the report to Legislature on behalf of the Safe Routes to School Advisory Committee – The Committee voted to approve unanimously the Annual report as amended, changing authorize to request and editing for clarity.

- c. Action to approve, in part, the Hawai‘i Department of Transportation (HDOT) funding request for the SRTS Coordinator.

The Committee deliberated extensively on this topic as several of HDOT’s concerns remained. The Chair confirmed that monthly updates meant brief verbal updates and not written reports. HDOT also continued to express concerns the report to legislature responsibility and that HRS assigns that to the Committee. It was discussed that although the Committee is responsible, it is also not realistic to have volunteer committee members do this work year over year. The intent is that staff resources (HDOT or consultants) would provide that support. There was concern that if the condition was removed from the SRTS position funding that it might result in no clear, durable assignment to ensure that the report is produced. It was recommended that the Committee recommend that this be added to the Consultant’s scope of work as well, but also edited down to reflect HDOT’s concerns. HDOT also agreed to review and amend the consultant scope of work to ensure this support would be provided. Another concern was that HDOT can’t guarantee actions outside their direct control within three months. The Chair confirmed that actions should be undertaken but that the clause doesn’t require completion. The salary and benefits clause was also noted to be redundant if “not-to-exceed” language was used in the action; it is also problematic because much of this is dependent on collective bargaining agreements. Finally it was agreed that clarification was needed regarding special funds in that they should be used as match or supplemental funding whenever possible. Due to the number and complexity of concerns raised, Chair Seitz recommended tabling the action to update the voting language and would work on updating accordingly with HDOT.

Below outlines the edited version of the action that will be put to vote at the April meeting, with edits underlined and deleted passages removed.

“The Committee approves the dispersal Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Special Fund monies to cover costs for the HDOT SRTS Coordinator and other HDOT staff related to the SRTS program, not to exceed \$500,000 from FY 2025–26 to FY 2028–29. Approval of funding shall be on a conditional basis, subject to terms outlined in the agenda and suggested changes here underlined:

- **Monthly Reporting.** The HDOT SRTS Coordinator shall provide verbal monthly meeting updates to the SRTS Advisory Committee on program activities and use of Special Fund monies. These updates shall include relevant activities identified in the HDOT SRTS Coordinator scope of work, including but not limited to: participation in walk audits, development of SRTS plans on state-owned facilities, and assistance provided to counties and communities.
- **Legislative Report.** HDOT will facilitate and coordinate the submission of the final report to Legislature in accordance with legislative deadlines and requirements, serving as a conduit between the consultant, counties and the Advisory Committee. At HDOT’s behest, the report shall be drafted by the consultant and provided to the SRTS Advisory Committee for review no fewer than thirty (30) days prior to the statutory transmittal deadline.

- Committee Minutes. The HDOT SRTS Coordinator, in coordination with and support from other HDOT staff and consultants, shall draft and finalize minutes for all monthly SRTS Advisory Committee meetings.
- Undertaking Committee Actions. The HDOT SRTS Coordinator, in coordination with and support from other HDOT staff and consultants, shall take steps to ensure that actions approved by the SRTS Advisory Committee are undertaken within three (3) months of approval, unless otherwise directed by the Committee.
- Supplemental Use of Funds. As in line with Act 244 (2023), it is preferred that SRTS Special Fund monies may be used only if funds are unavailable or insufficient, and shall supplement, not supplant, other funding sources.

It is desired that these changes suffice for approval in April and represent the remaining concerns.

- d. Update on the SRTS Special Fund Status, including the collection and depositing of \$5 registration fee [under Act 212 (2025)]

The current fund balance and quarterly distribution/allotment figures were included in the presentation. Any unspent funds from earlier quarters may be rolled into Quarter 4 if needed. Expenditures to date include

- \$2 million to the County of Kauai'i for SRTS projects (per prior committee approval).
- Ongoing payments for the Central Services Charge (surcharge) as a year-to-date figure.

HDOT also provided an update on implementation of Act 212. About 2–3 weeks prior, HDOT met with all county department of motor vehicles (DMVs) and the IT division. To collect the \$5 surcharge, each county DMV must modify their software/programming to add a new line item for the SRTS fee and track and report this revenue separately. Based on experience with the road user charge program, it was estimated that this would cost \$15,000–\$20,000 per county DMV, though actual bids are pending from each vendor. Once vendors are engaged and scheduled, implementation could take 3–6 months (or more), depending on workload and procurement. The Committee discussed being open to covering this cost as it was a one-time free and supported using the SRTS Special Fund for these items, if deemed legally allowable. The Committee also preferred that the county's submit when ready and would be amenable to approving. The Committee requested that Deputy Attorney General Richardson confirm the legality at a later date.

### III. **New Business** - Discussion on approach to meeting the law's mandate (plan, people, and projects)

- Plan - HDOT has received financial information from the consultant and is reviewing this information and the proposed rates. The updated timeframe for this contract initiation is now Q4.

- People – Chair Seitz asked for updates on staffing, specifically the County of Hawai‘i position that the committee previously approved funding for in October. HDOT has received the comments from the AG’s office and needs to process them. They have no firm deadline for this process but acknowledged the urgency. Yamato Sasaki asked about a Hawaii Department of Education position. Vice Chair Rooney responded that although conversations had occurred with the Department, it relied on a request from the Department of Education to move forward.
- Projects – HDOT is still working with the counties to finalize their transfers through various next steps (payment methods or finalized IGAs).
- 2026 Legislative Session – Chair Seitz summarized relevant bills for the Committee, including HB 2454 on Safe Routes to School Program Governance & Authority which would affect the Committee’s future work. At the time of the meeting, this measure was dead. SB 3234 / HB 2415 would provide funding to HDOT to install crosswalks and raised crosswalks near schools using the SRTS Special Fund as the primary funding source and requested more flexibility in the different types of pedestrian safety treatments. The Committee also requested AG review to understand how that would impact the current SRTS program and fund. HB 1879 that would authorize HDOT to establish a subsidized transit program for youth under 18, but that bills and related ones on Keiki Fare Free were dead.
- Upcoming Changes to Chair and Vice Chair position – Although Chair Seitz’s term runs through the end of the fiscal year (June), she will be going on maternity leave through August. As such, after consulting with the AG, she outlined the following transition:
  - Vice-Chair Kathleen Rooney will take over as Chair in April 2026.
  - A new temporary designee will be provided for her normal committee position.
  - Yamato Sasaki will serve as vice-chair during her leave as well.
- Future speakers – the next speaker is in India and as such the next meeting will be on April 28<sup>th</sup>, 2026 at 3pm.

**IV. Open Forum: Invitation to interested members of the public to be heard on matters not included on the agenda –**

- Effective May 1<sup>st</sup>, HDOT will be removing materials older than one year from the website; this applies to agendas, minutes, and other supporting documentation.

**IV. Announcements – None.**

**V. Adjournment at 11:16 AM**