

Program Guidelines for the Safer  
Rural Roads Program specific to  
Round 1 – 2023-24.

# Safer Rural Roads Program

## Round 1 2023-24



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## Safer Rural Roads Program

### Aim

The Safer Rural Roads Program (SRRP) aims to:

- provide an opportunity for local governments to develop and implement low-cost corridor-based infrastructure treatments targeting rural road safety improvements
- reduce lane departure crashes on rural roads and lessen the harm for when they do occur
- increase capacity in local government to apply Safe System treatments across their rural road network
- increase road safety engagement across all local governments of Tasmania.

Tasmanian municipal Councils may apply for SRRP grants up to the value of \$600,000.

### Background

The SRRP is an initiative of the [Towards Zero Action Plan 2020-2024](#) (Action Plan).

Rural, local government-owned roads are the focus of the SRRP as they typically carry lower traffic volume than strategic corridors. Generally, this results in these road corridors being unlikely to attract sufficient funding for major upgrades such as shoulder sealing, lane separation, or junction realignments, in the medium to long term.

This is an important road safety consideration given that local government-owned roads comprise approximately 80 per cent of the Tasmanian road network (approx. 14,500km), of which approximately 78 per cent (10,700km) are in rural areas (i.e., outside of recognised city and town boundaries).

These 10,700km account for approximately one-third of Tasmania's fatal and serious injury crashes.

The SRRP focuses on supporting local governments, as local rural road safety issues are often best addressed and informed by locals. Local governments are well-positioned to identify specific problems and engage the community in their municipality.

### The Safe System approach

The Safe System approach underpins the Tasmanian Government's [Towards Zero – Tasmanian Road Safety Strategy 2017-2026](#) and Action Plan. The approach represents a shift away from reactive approaches to road safety infrastructure.

The core Safe System principles are:

- fatal and serious injuries are not acceptable on our roads
- humans are fallible
- humans are vulnerable
- road safety is a shared responsibility.

In applying the Safe System approach to project designs there are three key considerations:

- the **exposure** to risk
- the **likelihood** of a crash
- the injury **severity** in the event of a crash.

### Important note

Projects should primarily aim to implement infrastructure treatments that collectively reduce the **exposure, likelihood, and severity** in relation to rural road lane departure crashes.

Such treatments may include a combination of:

- line marking
- improved and consistent signage
- sight line improvements
- chevron alignment markers (CAMs)
- hazard removal (e.g., large trees)
- speed reduction proposals (aligned to the environment).

By implementing low-cost corridor improvements on rural networks, local government can improve the safety of their entire rural network, with a relatively similar capital expense to that of one significant single-location targeted treatment.

To ensure that local governments implement Safe System improvements, the Assessment Criteria of the SRRP considers the application of Safe System principles within the design of the proposed works.



## What projects will be funded?

### Infrastructure grants

Tasmanian municipal Councils may apply for SRRP infrastructure grants up to the value of \$600,000 and be no less than \$10,000.

Infrastructure grants are available for the implementation of planned infrastructure treatments that demonstrate safety improvements aligned with the aim of the SRRP.

Proposed treatments must align to sound research and/or established road safety design principles and safety treatments (i.e., Safe System Principles). See the reference documents at the end of the Program Guide for further information about road safety design principles.

## 1. Eligibility criteria

Applicants may be asked to supply documentation to support their eligibility claims, as part of the application process, or as part of an audit process.

To be eligible for a SRRP grant, applicants must:

- be a Tasmanian municipal Council
- support an application with a co-contribution or provide an explanation on why co-contribution is not appropriate or viable.

For an application to be eligible, it must propose works:

1. on a specific corridor and address identified road safety risk/s on that corridor
2. on a road that is owned by either the Tasmanian Government or the local government (as the applicant) that is:
  - i. is in a regional or remote area
3. with detailed designs and a schedule for delivery
4. that are a new project
  - i. example: works must not have commenced or be extensions of a current project
5. that are not infrastructure maintenance activities
6. that require a Tasmanian Government co-contribution of less than or equal to \$600,000 and more than or equal to \$10,000

7. that do not include an allocation for the funding of administration costs, either directly or incurred.

### 1.1 Note on legislative compliance

The applicant will need to consider if the proposed works are subject to any legislation. This includes, but is not limited to, the *Roads and Jetties Act 1935*.

### 1.2 Note on regional/remote areas

The Department of State Growth acknowledges that, in the context of the SRRP, no standardised definition of a 'regional/remote' area is suitable for all local government areas. For the purposes of this program, the department has developed a framework to identify 'regional/remote' areas in each municipality.

If an applicant wishes to confirm the suitability of a project location, please contact the department on 03 6166 3241.

## 2. Ineligible applications

Certain infrastructure treatments are not eligible and will not be considered for funding under the SRRP.

This includes:

- bridge or structure works
- urban treatments.

Depending on the type of treatment, urban treatments may be eligible for funding under the Vulnerable Road User Program (VRUP). Details of the VRUP are available at:

[https://www.transport.tas.gov.au/road\\_safety\\_and\\_rules/grants\\_programs](https://www.transport.tas.gov.au/road_safety_and_rules/grants_programs)

## 3. Route selection

In determining potential routes for treatment under the SRRP, applicants should note:

- the program is intended to treat road corridors rather than isolated locations
- the program is intended to deliver a consistent application of treatments
- crash rates, and particularly, any identified crash clusters should be considered as part of the location identification process and subsequent project development phases

- traffic volumes should be considered (traffic volume may indicate a priority for treatment)
- community concern is a valid indicator of a corridor requiring treatment
- a systematic and proactive approach to treat an entire corridor is the core purpose of the SRRP.

#### 4. Road owner collaboration

Collaboration between road owners on road corridors across multiple local government areas is encouraged.

In such cases, individual submissions from each involved road-owner are required. This ensures that responsibilities are defined for the project in its entirety. All road owners involved in a project with multiple road owners should detail in their applications the liaison that has taken place between road owners to develop the proposal, as well as details of how the project will be managed and coordinated to ensure effective delivery of the overall project.

#### 5. Assessment criteria

The SRRP applies a risk management approach to competitively assessing applications.

Applications that include plausible and credible supporting evidence that the proposed project will prove effective in reducing the risk of serious casualties occurring, will receive funding priority.

Not all eligible applications will receive funding. Applications will be assessed, based on the quality of information provided, against the following criteria.

No.	Criteria	Weight
1	The likelihood of a crash occurring, based on exposure rates (i.e., traffic volume data), and the likely consequence of such a crash.	20%
2	The potential crash reduction benefit(s) of the proposed infrastructure treatment.	20%
2a	Application of the <i>Austroads Safe System Assessment Framework</i> (refer to Reference Document 6).	10%
3	Level of co-contribution from the applicant, or validity of explanation for why co-contribution is not appropriate or viable.	25%
4	Cost-effectiveness of the project.	25%

#### Examples of suitable treatments

The SRRP seeks applications for infrastructure treatments that improve overall safety and reduce the risk of crashes.

Because of the likely length of corridor treatments, the type of treatments are typically focussed on the application of several low-cost treatments, rather than fewer localised high-cost treatments.

Types of infrastructure treatments envisaged for delivery through the SRRP include:

- warning signs (including curve advisory speed signs)
- chevron alignment markers (CAMs) to highlight out-of-context curves or curves beyond crests
- guideposts
- centreline markings
- road widening (small high-risk sections)
- tree and roadside hazard removal, particularly on the outside of curves
- short sections of safety barrier to protect against severe hazards
- sight distance improvements
  - vegetation removal or sight benching
- improved skid resistance
  - an over-representation of loss-of-control crashes in wet conditions may be an indicator of inadequate skid resistance
- reduced speed limit proposals may be considered appropriate where, even after treatment, the road would remain significantly more hazardous than the surrounding road network.

Applicants should refer to the Austroads research report [AP-R560-18 Towards Safe System Infrastructure: Compendium of Current Knowledge \(2018\)](#) to assist in the selection of appropriate infrastructure treatments.

Applicants can also refer to the Austroads research report [AP-R612-20 Local Government Road Safety Management Guidance \(2020\)](#) for guidance on contemporary best practice methods for the development and implementation of road safety management frameworks.

## 6. Assessment committee

The Department of State Growth assesses applications made to the SRRP. The Assessment Committee consists of representation from within the department, including traffic engineers, road safety crash data specialists and infrastructure managers.

The Assessment Committee competitively assesses applications against the Assessment Criteria and recommends applications for funding.

## 7. Timeframes

No applications will be accepted after the closing date.

Description	Date/time
Program opens	4 December 2023 10:00 am
Program closes	23 February 2024 5:00 pm
Applicants notified	By 30 April 2024
Delivery of Grant Deeds	May 2024

During the assessment process the department may, at its discretion, require further information to support or clarify an application.

This information must be provided within three working days, unless otherwise advised. Failure to provide further requested information within the timeframe may result in the application being unsuccessful.

### Finalising designs for funding

Final project designs must be provided to the department and approved by the department prior to funding for the project being released (see 10.).

Any delays in providing final designs to the department within 120 days (four months) of the execution of the Grant Deed may result in:

- delayed initial payment
- the project being withdrawn by the department.

## 8. Application process

Applications are received through SmartyGrants, the Department of State Growth's online grants management system. SmartyGrants is easy to use and accessible via mobile phones, tablets, laptops and personal computers.

Applicants should follow the process below to complete an application.

1. Read the program guidelines carefully before starting an application.
2. Review the Reference Documents to ensure familiarity with the Safe System approach to Road Safety and potential treatments for rural road safety improvements.
3. Complete and lodge an application online via SmartyGrants from the Transport Services website, [https://www.transport.tas.gov.au/road\\_safety\\_and\\_rules/grants\\_programs](https://www.transport.tas.gov.au/road_safety_and_rules/grants_programs)
4. Check your email to confirm you have received an automatic receipt of your application. This receipt will include details of the application and a unique application ID.
5. Applications will be assessed by the Assessment Committee.
6. Applicants will be advised of the outcome of their application once considered by the Assessment Committee and endorsed.

Applicants should note that there will be no opportunity to change an application or upload further information to support it once it has been submitted.

Applicants should, therefore, ensure that all supporting documentation provided is accurate and is attached correctly before submitting.

A summary of the application process that an applicant can expect is provided under Appendix A.

## 9. Appealing a decision

The appeals process is designed to ensure that all applicants have been treated fairly and consistently in applying for Department of State Growth grants. The department will consider appeals relating to administrative process issues in grants management.

All requests must be in writing and should be addressed to the General Manager of Road User Services where the application was assessed.

Your request must be received within 28 days from the date of the Department of State Growth notifying you of the decision about your application. For further information about the process, contact (03) 6166 3241.

## 10. Grant payments

### 10.1 Payment information

Successful applicants will be asked for their bank account details to process grant payments. This bank account must be in the same name as the organisation that applied for the grant. Applicants may be asked to provide a copy of their bank statement or a letter from their bank to confirm their bank account details.

Payments to successful applicants will be made in two equal parts, comprising an Initial and Final payment.

- The Initial payment (50 per cent of total sum) will be made after the department approves finalised designs.
- The Final payment (50 per cent of total sum) will be made after the completion of the grant acquittal process.

Applicants can also apply to the department for an early advance of the grant amount to support their delivery of works. For further information about this process contact (03) 6166 3241.

### 10.2 Provision of misinformation

Providing incorrect bank account details may result in funds being paid to an incorrect account. These funds will need to be returned to us before we attempt another grant payment. This process may result in significant delays in funding being received.

Additionally, we cannot guarantee that funds paid to an incorrect bank account will be returned to us.

If a grant recipient does not complete the activities or tasks required under the Grant Deed, or does not use any or all of the funding provided, the recipient will be required to return some or all of the funds to the department.

Similarly, if the information provided to us is found to be false or misleading, or the recipient's situation changes in a way that prevents completion of the agreed project, the recipient will be required to return some or all of the funds to the department.

## 11. Taxation and financial implications

Grants distributed under the program attract Goods and Services Tax (GST). Grant payments to successful applicants, who are registered for GST, are increased to compensate for GST payable. Where GST applies to

the grant funding, a valid tax invoice must be supplied by the successful applicant to the department.

The receipt of funding from this program may be treated as income by the Australian Taxation Office (ATO).

It is strongly recommended that, prior to applying, potential applicants seek independent advice from a tax advisor, financial advisor and/or the ATO, about the possible tax implications of receiving a grant.

## 12. Quarterly progress updates

Successful Applicants will be required to provide quarterly progress updates through SmartyGrants.

These updates will require applicants to report on their progress delivering approved works, expenditure and any delivery issues.

## 13. Acquittal

An acquittal is a statement made by a grant recipient, confirming that the grant funding was used as per the Grant Deed. Unless otherwise stated, it is a requirement that all Department of State Growth grants are acquitted.

### 13.1 How to acquit a grant

An acquittal form will be provided to recipients using SmartyGrants. The acquittal form will ask for information relating to the delivery of the grant and associated expenditures. Evidence such as quotations, invoices, receipts, statements, reports, photos, etc., are also required to support the acquittal.

The department may ask recipients to provide a Statement of Expenditure certified by an independent, professional auditor. In this situation the recipient will be responsible for the cost of obtaining the certified Statement of Expenditure.

### 13.2 Assessment by the department

As part of the acquittal process the department will undertake an assessment of the works, in respect to the approved purpose of the Grant Deed.

### 13.3 Failure to complete an acquittal

Failure to lodge a valid acquittal by the due date will result in the recipient being required to return the funding to the department. In this situation the department will invoice the recipient.

## 13.4 Unacquitted grants

The Assessment Panel may decline an application due to outstanding works.

## 14. Administration and contact details

The program will be administered by the Department of State Growth on behalf of the Crown in the Right of Tasmania. Contact [SRRP@stategrowth.tas.gov.au](mailto:SRRP@stategrowth.tas.gov.au) or the Road Safety Branch on (03) 6166 3241.

### 14.1 Note

All applicants must take care to provide true and accurate information. Any information that is found to be false or misleading may result in action being taken and grant funds, if already provided, will be required to be repaid to the department.

## 15. Publicity of grant assistance

The Department of State Growth disburses public funds and is therefore accountable for the distribution of those funds. As part of the accountability process, the department may publicise the level of financial assistance, the identity of the recipient, the purpose of the financial assistance, and any other details considered by the department to be appropriate.

## 16. Right to information

Information provided to the Department of State Growth may be subject to disclosure in accordance with the *Right to Information Act 2009*.

## 17. Confidentiality

The Tasmanian Government may use and disclose the information provided by applicants for the purposes of discharging its respective functions under the Program Guidelines and otherwise for the purposes of the program and related uses.

The department may also:

1. use information received in applications for any other departmental business
2. use information received in applications and during the delivery of the project for reporting purposes.

## 18. Personal information protection

Personal information will be managed in accordance with the *Personal Information Protection Act 2004*.

This information may be accessed by the individual to whom it related, on request to the Department of State Growth. A fee for this service may be charged.

## 19. Disclosure

The following applies to all successful applicants:

- Despite any confidentiality or intellectual property right subsisting in the Grant Deed or deed, a party may publish all or any part of the Grant Deed or deed without reference to another party.
- Please note that all obligations under the *Personal Information Protection Act 2004* (Tas) or the *Privacy Act 1988* (Cwlth) still apply.

## 20. Disclaimer

Although care has been taken in the preparation of this document, no warranty, express or implied, is given by the Crown in Right of Tasmania, as to the accuracy or completeness of the information it contains.

The Crown in Right of Tasmania accepts no responsibility for any loss or damage that may arise from anything contained in or omitted from or that may arise from the use of this document, and any person relying on this document and the information it contains does so at their own risk absolutely.

The Crown in Right of Tasmania does not accept liability or responsibility for any loss incurred by an applicant that are in any way related to the program.



## 21. Reference documents

The following documents can be utilised to inform applications.

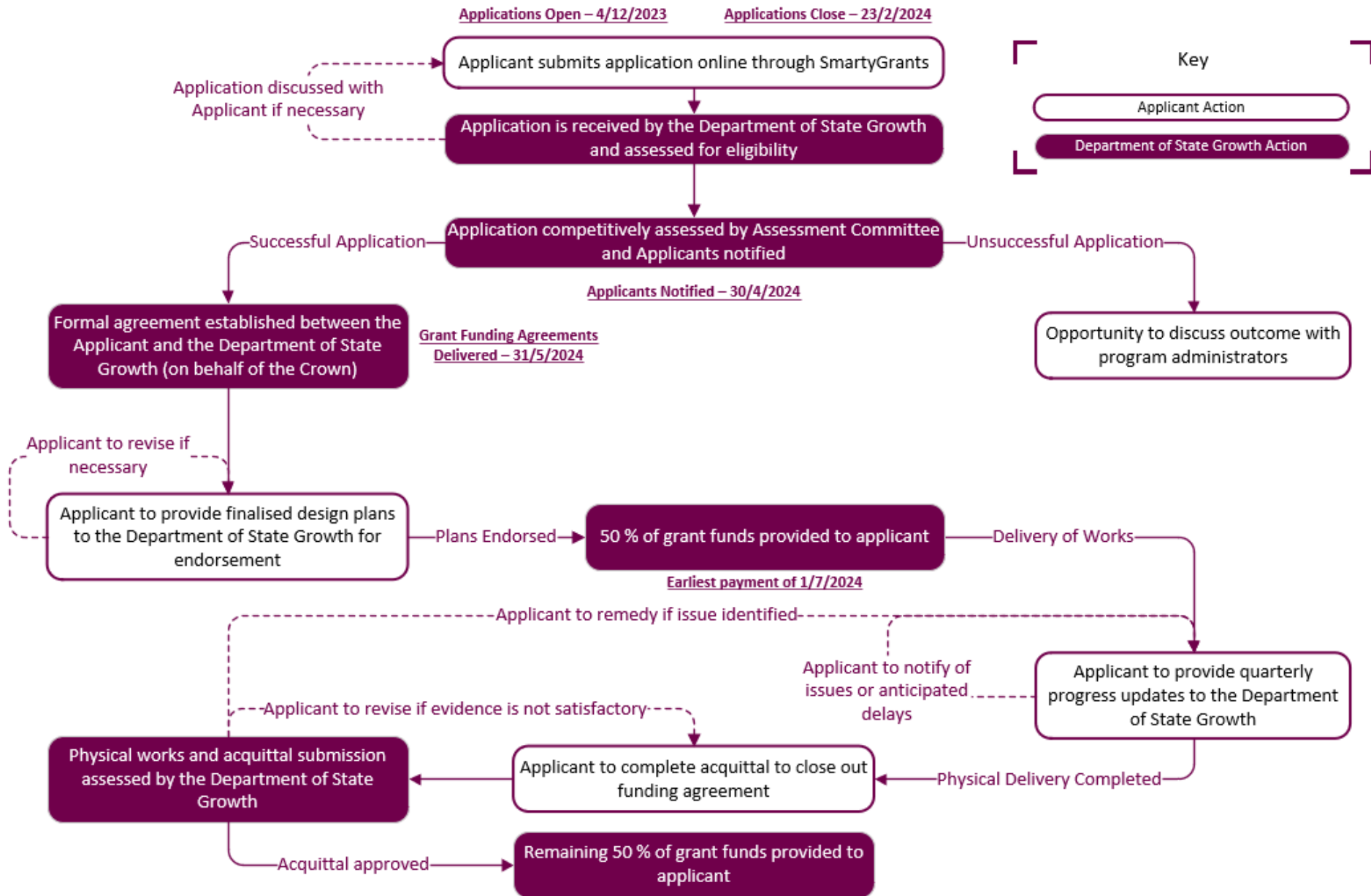
1. [National Road Safety Strategy 2021-30](#)
2. [Towards Zero – Tasmanian Road Safety Strategy 2017-2026](#)
3. [Towards Zero – Tasmanian Road Safety Action Plan 2020-2024](#)
4. Austroads, AP-R612-20 *Local Government Road Safety Management Guidance* (2020)
  - i. PDF - <https://austroads.com.au/publications/road-safety/ap-r612-20>
  - ii. Webinar - <https://austroads.com.au/publications/road-safety/web-r612-20>
5. Austroads, AP-R560-18 *Towards Safe System Infrastructure. A compendium of current Knowledge* (2018)
  - i. PDF - <https://austroads.com.au/publications/road-safety/ap-r560-18>
6. Austroads, AP-R509-16 *Safe System Assessment Framework* (2016)
  - i. PDF - <https://austroads.com.au/publications/road-safety/ap-r509-16>
7. Austroads, AP-R595-19 *Embedding Safe System in the Guide to Traffic Management* (2019)
  - i. PDF - <https://austroads.com.au/publications/traffic-management/ap-r595-19>
  - ii. Webinar - <https://austroads.com.au/publications/traffic-management/web-r595-19>

## 22. Other materials

In addition to the reference documents, the following free resources assist in understanding and implementing a Safe System. These resources should be utilised by persons engaged in developing and delivering a Safe System.

1. Austroads, Traffic Management Training
  - i. Online set - <https://austroads.com.au/network-operations/traffic-management/traffic-management-training>
2. Austroads, Guide to Road Design
  - i. Online set - <https://austroads.com.au/publications/road-design/agrd-set>
3. Austroads, Guide to Road Safety
  - i. Online set - <https://austroads.com.au/publications/road-safety/agrs-set>

# Appendix A – Safer Rural Roads Program – Round 1 2023-24 Process Map





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