

BOARD OF ALDERMEN

ITEM NO. A(1)

AGENDA ITEM ABSTRACT

MEETING DATE: January 13, 2009

TITLE: A Resolution in Support of Applying for Two North Carolina Safe Routes to School Grants

DEPARTMENT: PLANNING	PUBLIC HEARING: YES __ NO _ X _
ATTACHMENTS: A. Resolution B. Map of Proposed Infrastructure Project	FOR INFORMATION CONTACT: Adena Messinger, Transportation Planner - 918-7329

PURPOSE

Town staff has prepared a resolution for consideration by the Board of Aldermen in support of staff applying for both an Infrastructure and Non-infrastructure Safe Routes to School grant, and in support of the Town serving as the lead agency in the event that one or both of the grants are awarded to the Town.

INFORMATION

The SRTS program is "...a program that enables and encourages children to walk and bicycle to school; makes walking and bicycling to school a safe and more appealing transportation option, and facilitates the planning, development, and implementation of projects and activities that will improve safety and reduce traffic, fuel consumption, and air pollution in the vicinity of school."

The North Carolina Department of Transportation, Division of Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation has issued a call for two Safe Routes to School (SRTS) grants: an infrastructure grant and a non-infrastructure grant. The infrastructure grant provides funds for planning, design, and construction of a project that will provide a safer walking or bicycling route to/from school for K-8 students. Funding requests may range from \$100,000 to \$300,000 per project. The non-infrastructure grant provides funds for education, encouragement, enforcement, and evaluation programs and activities. Funding requests may range from \$10,000 to \$50,000.

Town of Carrboro Planning and Public Works staff reviewed the opportunities available to propose an infrastructure project that would meet the grant application criteria and are currently proposing the Elm Street sidewalk be submitted for infrastructure funding (see attachment B). Elm Street provides a direct link to Carrboro Elementary as well the Frances Shetley multi-use path. It is located in the heart of a downtown residential neighborhood and is linked to the greater sidewalk network through the sidewalk on Weaver Street and Shelton Street. A sidewalk in this location not only provides a safer walking environment for students within the Old Carrboro neighborhood, but also fills in

a gap for students walking from locations to the south and west. The estimated cost for this project is around \$300,000.

Planning staff, with the assistance of several Transportation Advisory Board members, is also proposing to submit an application for non-infrastructure grant funds that would support the following educational and encouragement programs for Carrboro Elementary:

- Two Walk & Roll events. These events would be held during each semester and would include the following elements:
 - Education materials provided to students and parents during the month prior to the event
 - Workshop prior to the event – safe walking and biking skills
 - Two designated “park and walk/bike” locations for the day of the event for families too far to walk or bike directly from their homes
 - Follow up during the month after the event
 - Evaluation of the events

The estimated cost for implementing these programs is \$15,000.

Further information about these grant applications is available at <http://www.ncdot.org/transit/bicycle/saferoutes/SafeRoutes.html>

A requirement for all of the SRTS applications is a resolution from the lead agency (which would be the Town of Carrboro), in support of the application and administration of a grant (see Attachment A).

Staff is interested in applying for these grants, pursuant to Board approval and support from the schools and the DCHC MPO.

FISCAL AND STAFF IMPACTS

There is no fiscal impact associated with applying for or administering a Safe Routes to School grant. Should either of the grants be awarded to the Town, 100% of the awarded funds would first be expended by the Town and would then be reimbursed by NCDOT.

Should either of the grants be awarded to the Town, staff time would be required to manage the project(s).

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

The town staff recommends that the Board of Aldermen adopts the attached resolution of support for applying for and administering the infrastructure and non-infrastructure Safe Routes to School grants (Attachment A).