

BOARD OF ALDERMEN

ITEM NO. C(8)

AGENDA ITEM ABSTRACT

MEETING DATE: October 5, 2010

TITLE: Resolution Designating October 2010 as Carrboro Walk/Bike to School Month and October 6th, 2010, as Carrboro Walk/Bike to School Day

DEPARTMENT: Planning	PUBLIC HEARING: YES ___ NO ___ X ___
ATTACHMENTS: A. Resolution	FOR INFORMATION CONTACT: Jeff Brubaker – 918-7329

PURPOSE

The purpose of the resolution (*Attachment A*) is to designate October as Carrboro Walk/Bike to School Month and October 6th as Carrboro Walk/Bike to School Day. An update on Safe Routes to School programs is provided.

INFORMATION

Events planned for Walk/Bike to School Month

- **Wednesday, Oct. 6th** – Walk/Bike to School Day at Carrboro and McDougle Elementary
- **Monday, Oct. 11th, 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m., McDougle Elementary School** – Safe Routes to School Action Plan, draft plan review open house and Action Plan Team meeting

October is International Walk to School Month, and Wednesday, October 6th, is International Walk to School Day. This month focuses on the benefits of walking and bicycling to school.

Carrboro Elementary and the Town are promoting walking and bicycling to school with educational activities throughout the school year, including two “Walk ‘n’ Roll” events. The fall Walk ‘n’ Roll will be held on Oct. 6th, and the spring event is expected to be held in May 2011. The Town is also coordinating with consultants Greenways Inc. and Greene Transportation Solutions to craft a Safe Routes to School Action Plan that will guide Town decisions in encouraging walking and bicycling to Carrboro and McDougle Elementary Schools. A draft of the Action Plan is complete and will be reviewed by the Action Plan Team and interested residents on Monday, Oct. 11th at 7:00 pm at McDougle Elementary School. The plan will be proposed for Board of Aldermen review in November. The Public Works Dept. is administering a sidewalk project on Elm St. as part of a Safe Routes to School infrastructure project. All three projects are supported by grants from the federal Safe Routes to School program and administered by NCDOT Safe Routes to School staff.

Town staff are also coordinating with Chapel Hill’s transportation demand management staff regarding SRTS promotional materials. Town staff and school administrators and teachers are evaluating school travel patterns and parent feedback twice per year with comprehensive surveys

developed by the National Center for Safe Routes to School. These evaluations will provide information regarding the effectiveness of SRTS programs and will inform future SRTS efforts.

One of the guidelines of the type of Action Plan grant the Town received limited the amount of participating schools to one or two. Town staff have identified Morris Grove Elementary as a priority for future SRTS programs, and funding the Town received under FHWA's Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) program last year to construct a connector between Orange County's Twin Creeks Greenway and the planned Jones Creek Greenway near Morris Grove also includes funding for implementing Safe Routes to School events. This project is scheduled for 2013-2014; however, a funding source for the required local match has not yet been identified. Staff will continue to look for future SRTS funding opportunities for any or all schools in Carrboro.

For more information, visit:

- International Walk to School in the U.S.: <http://www.walktoschool.org/>
- National Center for Safe Routes to School: <http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/index.cfm>
- League of American Bicyclists video on Safe Routes to School: <http://www.bikeleague.org/programs/saferoutes/video.php>
- Safe Routes to School National Partnership: <http://www.saferoutespartnership.org/home>

Background

The federal Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Program was initiated by SAFETEA-LU, the 2005 federal transportation authorization bill. Under the program, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) makes funding available to states to implement infrastructure projects, plans, and programs that encourage safe walking and bicycling to and from school. NCDOT administers North Carolina's SRTS program, which is supporting and overseeing the programs described below. The continuation of the federal Safe Routes to School program and its level of support are dependent on the content of the next federal transportation reauthorization, expected in 2011.

About 12 percent of elementary or middle school kids walked to school in the United States in 2009, according to the National Center for Safe Routes to School. About 2 percent of bicycled to school. Local data suggest that walking and bicycling to school in Carrboro is at or below national levels.

FISCAL AND STAFF IMPACT

No fiscal or staff impacts accrue from adopting the resolution. Projects listed above are supported by federal Safe Routes to School funding and NCDOT technical assistance.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommend that the Board of Aldermen adopt the resolution (*Attachment A*).