

BOARD OF ALDERMEN

ITEM NO. D(1)

AGENDA ITEM ABSTRACT

MEETING DATE: February 15, 2011

TITLE: Presentation of the Safe Routes to School Action Plan

DEPARTMENT: Planning	PUBLIC HEARING: YES ___ NO <u>X</u> ___
ATTACHMENTS: A. Resolution B. Meeting minutes, summaries, and materials	FOR INFORMATION CONTACT: Jeff Brubaker, Transportation Planner – 918-7329 Matt Hayes, Greenways Inc. Senior Project Manager – 484-8448, Ext. 3 Christa Greene, Greene Transportation Solutions – 229-9579

PURPOSE

The Board is asked to receive a presentation of the draft Safe Routes to School Action Plan that offers recommendations on improving the safety and convenience of walking and cycling to school in Carrboro.

INFORMATION

Background

In 2009, the Town received a service award from NCDOT to craft a Safe Routes to School Action Plan. This new type of plan outlines infrastructure improvements, programs and activities, enforcement strategies, and educational efforts that serve to improve options for walking and cycling to school. Funding is provided by the grant award directly to a consulting team, who develops the plan and offers technical assistance to cities, towns, and counties in North Carolina. The two participating schools are Carrboro and McDougle Elementary Schools.

Participants

The Town's plan is being prepared by consultants Greenways Inc. and Greene Transportation Solutions. The Action Plan Team – a steering committee composed of school principals, teachers, parents, the CHCCS transportation department, the Carrboro Transportation Advisory Board, as well as Town staff (Police, Fire, Planning, Recreation and Parks, Public Works) – has guided plan development and made comments at public meetings.

Public participation

The following dates provided opportunities for the participants and interested community members to offer input.

- December 7, 2009: Action Plan Team Kickoff Meeting at Town Hall
- Spring 2010: Consultant site visits to schools

- May 3, 2010: Public Open House @ Carrboro Elementary
- June 1-2: Student travel tallies and parent surveys
- June 15, 2010: Board of Aldermen receives update on SRTS programs
- September 21-23: Student travel tallies and parent surveys
- October 11, 2010: Action Plan Review Meeting @ McDougle Elementary
- October 30, 2010: Map of recommendations @ McDougle Elementary Fall Festival

Input was also received at other times via email and phone.

Current SRTS efforts

In addition to the Action Plan, the Town has been fortunate to receive support from SRTS grants for two other SRTS activities. Infrastructure funding is being provided for the construction of a sidewalk on Elm St. Non-infrastructure funding is being used by the Planning Department to support encouragement activities at Carrboro Elementary. This included holding a “Walk/Bike to School Day” last fall that had over 100 participating students, as well as parents. Planning by Carrboro Elementary and the Planning Department is underway for additional encouragement events in the spring, such as a Bike Rodeo, Bike Fix-It Day, walking encouragement programs, and culminating in a Walk/Bike to School Week in May.

The Town and schools have been monitoring school travel and parent perceptions through student travel tallies, parent surveys, and walking/cycling counts to evaluate the program’s effectiveness.

Future SRTS opportunities

The application for this service award was submitted in January 2008, eight months before the opening of Morris Grove Elementary. 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 events similar to those of Safe Routes to School. 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.

FISCAL AND STAFF IMPACT

No fiscal and staff impacts accrue from receiving the presentation. Although the service award did not scope for a final presentation to the Board of Aldermen, the consultants are volunteering to make the presentation.

Some staff time (30-40 hours) has been used to coordinate meetings and review the plan. After the plan is adopted, some staff time may be associated with implementation of projects and programs, as needed.

RECOMMENDATION

The Board is asked to receive a presentation on the plan and offer comments.