



Staff Report

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TO: Mayor and City Council

THROUGH: Steve Powers, City Manager

FROM: Peter Fernandez, PE, Public Works Director

SUBJECT:

Application for project funding under the Oregon Department of Transportation Safe Routes to School Infrastructure Program.

Ward(s): 3, 7

Councilor(s): Nanke, Cook

Neighborhood(s): Southeast Mill Creek, Faye Wright, Sunnyslope

ISSUE:

Shall Council authorize the City Manager to apply for funding to design and construct three projects through the Safe Routes to School Infrastructure Program and, if successful, incorporate these projects into a future Capital Improvement Plan and authorize the City Manager to enter into an agreement with the Oregon Department of Transportation to accept the funds?

RECOMMENDATION:

Authorize the City Manager to apply for funding to design and construct three projects through the Safe Routes to School Infrastructure Program and, if successful, incorporate these projects into a future Capital Improvement Plan and authorize the City Manager to enter into an agreement with the Oregon Department of Transportation to accept the funds.

SUMMARY AND BACKGROUND:

The Transportation Funding Package approved by the Oregon Legislature in 2017 included dedicated funding for a Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Infrastructure Program. This Program is intended to help communities build safety projects to reduce barriers and hazards for children walking or bicycling to school (Attachment 1).

Based on grant award criteria provided by Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT), City staff have identified three projects that should be competitive in the next round of screening by ODOT.

- **Liberty Road S:** Install a pedestrian median island on Liberty Road S at Liberty Elementary School. Estimated project cost is \$175,000.
- **Macleay Road SE:** Install missing sidewalk on the west side of Macleay Road SE, serving Miller Elementary School and Houck Middle School. Estimated project cost is \$430,000.
- **Kuebler Boulevard S and Skyline Road S:** Install pedestrian median islands on Kuebler Boulevard S at Croisan Scenic Way S, and Skyline Road S at Croisan Scenic Way S, serving Schirle Elementary School, Sprague High School, and Crossler Middle School. Estimated project cost is \$445,000.

FACTS AND FINDINGS:

The SRTS Infrastructure Grant Program is funded at \$10 million a year through 2022 and funded to \$15 million in 2023. The total funding available statewide for this round is \$16 million. The minimum grant award amount is \$60,000 and the maximum is \$2,000,000.

The solicitation for the initial round of this program was released July 23, 2018. Letters of Intent to apply were submitted by August 31, 2018, and final applications are due October 15, 2018. Projects recommended for funding are expected to be presented to the Oregon Transportation Commission in February 2019.

Projects for the initial round of grant funding must be located on public right-of-way within one mile of a Title 1 school. Additionally, projects must be included in or consistent with an adopted plan. For the purposes of this grant program, a map of eligible schools is available on the ODOT web page <https://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/Programs/Pages/SRTS.aspx> under the "How to Apply" heading. Most, but not all, of the schools located within Salem are eligible as Title 1 schools as defined by ODOT.

For this round of funding, projects are required to provide a 20 percent cash match. Upon award, recipients will be required to enter into an agreement with ODOT specifying matching funds and delivery expectations. The City's share of the State Gas Tax would be the recommended source of the required cash match. If successful, matching funds would be included in a future Capital Improvement Program and budget.

City staff reviewed infrastructure needs to determine candidate projects. This review drew from the following sources:

- Input from the School District;
- Information obtained through participation on School Site Safety Assessments;
- Safe Routes to School Solutions Memo (October 11, 2012);
- *Salem Transportation System Plan*; and
- Neighborhood Plans.

Candidate projects were screened against the grant award criteria. High priorities for this cycle of funding include: proximity to Title 1 schools (with higher priority given to schools with higher percent free/reduced lunch participants); safety risk factors; elementary and middle schools; and project readiness.

On July 23, 2018, the City Council authorized the City Manager to submit Notices of Intent for the Safe Routes to School Infrastructure Grant Program. Based upon an initial review of infrastructure needs, Notices of Intent were submitted for nine potential projects.

Staff pre-scored each of the nine potential submissions to determine which would be most competitive under the scoring guidelines established by ODOT (Attachment 2). Upon pre-scoring the submissions, staff believes that the three projects, shown in Attachment 3, would be most competitive.

Staff will monitor future SRTS Infrastructure Program solicitations and other opportunities to fund projects that reduce barriers and hazards for children walking or bicycling to school.

Robert D. Chandler, PhD, PE
Assistant Public Works Director

Attachments:

1. SRTS Competitive Infrastructure Grant Program Overview
2. 2019-2020 SRTS Project Selection Criteria
3. SRTS Project Applications Vicinity Map