

MEMORANDUM

To: MPO Policy Board

From: Amanda Poncy, Bike and Pedestrian Coordinator, City of Charlottesville

Date: June 9, 2021

Reference: City of Charlottesville's application for Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside Program Funding to support Safe Routes to School Programming

Purpose: Applications for Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside Program funding require a resolution of support from the locality as well as regional governing bodies, such as the MPO Policy Board.

The following resolution supports the City of Charlottesville's Transportation Alternatives Set Aside Grant application to continue Safe Routes to School Programming at Charlottesville City Schools for school years 2022-2024. The grant request will allow the City to continue to fund a full-time Safe Routes to School Coordinator and the supplies needed to implement the recommendations included in the Program Plan. As a reimbursable grant, costs will be incurred by Public Works and reimbursed by VDOT. This application requests \$200,000 in grant funding and requires a 20% local match to support the program for 2 years (School Years 2022-2024).

Background: The City of Charlottesville has provided Safe Routes to School programming for the last five years with the support of the VDOT Safe Routes to School Non-Infrastructure grant. In the spring of 2021, VDOT announced that future grant awards would be provided by Transportation Alternatives Set Aside Program.

The City of Charlottesville Safe Routes to School Initiative aims to:

1. Increase the number of students using active transportation to get to & from school, especially among those living within one mile of their school
2. Reduce the number of injuries suffered by school-aged students walking & biking.
3. Raise awareness of the benefits of active transportation to students, parents, & the community at large.
4. Reduce traffic congestion & greenhouse gas emissions.
5. Promote lifelong healthy habits.

Since the program started in 2016, there has been an observed increase in walk/bike travel to/from school from an average of 7%, to an average of 14% (for K-8 students city wide). Data is based on travel tallies taken annually in schools. In addition, Bicycle and Pedestrian education is taught in every public school serving grades K-8. There is an established free helmet program for city school students and there are fleets of 25 bikes at 6 city schools.

The following will items will continue to be emphasized as part of the program:

- Institute bike riding, repair, and safety curriculum
- Develop a division-wide SRTS website social media presence
- Regularly host walk- and bike-to-school events
- Conduct Neighborhood Bike Repair Days

- Expand the bike helmet give-away program
- Administer student travel tallies
- Monitor school transportation data and keep records of participation in workshops, biking and walking trains, bike rodeos, afterschool clubs, and other events

Recommendation: Staff requests that the MPO Policy Board vote in favor of the resolution to support the City of Charlottesville's application for funding to continue the Safe Routes to School Program in K-8 schools citywide.

Any questions on project details can be directed to Amanda Poncy, City of Charlottesville Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator, via email (poncy@charlottesville.gov) or phone (434-970-3720).