

**CITY OF CHARLOTTESVILLE, VIRGINIA
CITY COUNCIL AGENDA**



Agenda Date:	August 3, 2020
Action Required:	Appropriation of Grant Funds
Presenter:	Amanda Poncy, Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator
Staff Contacts:	Amanda Poncy, Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator; Kyle Rodland, Safe Routes to School Coordinator
Title:	Safe Routes to School Non-Infrastructure Grant Award - \$95,000

Background:

This is the 5th year that the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) has awarded the City of Charlottesville with a Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Non-Infrastructure (Activities and Programs) Grant. This \$76,000 grant will be used to fund education, encouragement, evaluation and enforcement programs related to Safe Routes to School. The Non-Infrastructure Grant will also be used to fund a full-time SRTS coordinator who works within the school division to promote and facilitate Safe Routes to School activities.

Last year, the city received a non-infrastructure grant in the amount of \$74,500 to fund a full-time coordinator and associated program budget to manage, train, and expand Safe Routes to School programming city-wide. The grant provides for a dedicated champion to work within schools to provide education, encouragement and evaluation activities needed to support active transportation for K-8 students.

Discussion:

As part of the grant application, the City was required to update the Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Activities and Programs Plan (APP), a written document that outlines a community's intentions for enabling and encouraging students to engage in active transportation (i.e. walking or bicycling) as they travel to and from school. The plan details the number of students living within ¼ to 2 miles of their school and demonstrates the potential benefits that can be accrued from a coordinate SRTS program (nearly 30% of students live within ½ mile of school and nearly 70% live within 1 mile of school). The SRTS APP was originally created through a team-based approach that involved key community stakeholders and members of the public in both identifying key behavior-related to barriers to active transportation and, using the four non-

infrastructure related E's (education, encouragement, enforcement and evaluation) to address them.

The APP update reflects minimal changes from last year's plan, but emphasizes lessons learned since our Coordinator was hired in October 2016. The following short-term recommendations were developed to enhance the program:

- Institute bike riding, repair, and safety curriculum (Education)
- Develop a division-wide SRTS website and newsletter (Education)
- Facilitate biking and walking incentive program (Encouragement)
- Regularly host walk- and bike-to-school days (Encouragement)
- Consistently host annual Bicycle Rodeos (Encouragement)
- Conduct bike safety checks (Enforcement)
- Expand the bike helmet give-away program (Enforcement)
- Administer student travel tallies (Evaluation)
- Keep records of participation in workshops, biking and walking trains, bike rodeos, afterschool clubs, and other events (Evaluation)

The SRTS Activities and Programs Plan will continue to serve as a guiding document to assist in promoting, encouraging, and enabling walking and bicycling to school. The \$76,000 grant 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 APP.

The grant requires a 20% match in the amount of \$19,000. Of that amount \$15,400 will be funded by the Public Works Engineering Operating Budget. An additional \$3,600 will be provided as an in-kind donation of bicycle maintenance. For the 2019-2020 school year, the program received approximately \$10,000 in local in-kind and we anticipate being able to secure that level of match again for the 2020 – 2021 school year.

As a reimbursable grant, costs will be incurred by Public Works and reimbursed by VDOT.

Alignment with City Council's Vision and Strategic Plan:

This initiative supports Council's Vision to be a "Connected Community" ("the City of Charlottesville is part of a comprehensive, regional transportation system that enables citizens of all ages and incomes to easily navigate our community") and "America's Healthiest City" ("we have a community-wide commitment to personal fitness and wellness, and all residents enjoy our outstanding recreational facilities, walking trails, and safe routes to schools").

In addition, the project contributes to Goals 1 and 3 of the Strategic Plan, to be an inclusive, self-sufficient community and a healthy and safe city.

The initiative further implements recommendations within the Comprehensive Plan (2013), Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan (2015) and supports the City's Healthy Eating Active Living (HEAL) Resolution.

Community Engagement:

This grant application implements one of the programming recommendations included in the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan (adopted 2015), which included significant public involvement. Further, city staff from Neighborhood Development Services worked with staff from the Thomas Jefferson Health District and Charlottesville City Schools (Physical Education and Pupil Transportation) to create a Safe Routes to School Task Force in 2016 that was responsible for outlining elements of a city-wide Safe Routes to School Activities and Programs Plan (APP). The task force included representatives from city schools, community organizations, multiple city departments (NDS, Public Works, Parks and Recreation), as well as health and enforcement disciplines. The APP was developed by the task force with input from parents (via Parent Survey) and further discussed/refined at public meeting in February 2016. The Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee provided feedback on the APP annually. A parent survey will be conducted in the 2020-2021 school year to better understand some of the barriers and challenges of walking and biking school.

Budgetary Impact:

There is no impact to the General Fund. The total grant appropriation is \$95,000 which will be recorded and expensed from a grant fund. The grant requires a 20% match of \$19,000 (cash or in-kind donations are acceptable). \$15,400 of the City match will come from funds previously appropriated as part of the FY 2021 PW Operating Budget, and local in-kind donations will cover the remainder (\$3,600).

Recommendation:

Staff recommends approval and appropriation of the grant funds.

Alternatives:

If grants funds are not appropriated, Safe Routes to School programming will continue in an ad-hoc fashion with assistance from community partners and parent volunteers.

Attachments:

Safe Routes to School Activities and Programs Plan <http://www.charlottesville.org/departments-and-services/departments-h-z/neighborhood-development-services/transportation/bicycle-and-pedestrian/safe-routes-to-school>

Appropriation

APPROPRIATION

Safe Routes to School Program (SRTS) Non-Infrastructure Grants
\$95,000

WHEREAS, the Safe Routes to School Program (SRTS) non-infrastructure grant, providing Federal payments for **education, encouragement, evaluation and enforcement** programs to promote safe walking and bicycling to school has been awarded the City of Charlottesville, in the amount of \$76,000;

WHEREAS, the SRTS program is a 80% reimbursement program requiring a 20% match from the City, of which \$15,400 will come from Public Works and the remainder will be in-kind contributions;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Charlottesville, Virginia that the following is hereby appropriated in the following manner:

REVENUE

\$76,000	Fund: 209	Cost Center: 3901008000	G/L Account: 430120
\$15,400	Fund: 209	Cost Center: 3901008000	G/L Account: 498010

EXPENDITURES

\$67,400	Fund: 209	Cost Center: 3901008000	G/L Account: 519999
\$24,000	Fund: 209	Cost Center: 3901008000	G/L Account: 599999

TRANSFER FROM

\$15,400	Fund: 105	Cost Center: 2401003000	G/L Account: 561209
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BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this appropriation is conditioned upon the receipt of \$76,000 from the Virginia Department of Transportation.