



Council Communication

Office of the City Manager

Date	September 22, 2008
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Agenda Item No.	27
Roll Call No.	08-
Communication No.	08-572
Submitted by:	Jeb E. Brewer, P.E. City Engineer

AGENDA HEADING:

Authorize the City Manager to submit “Safe Routes to School” (SRTS) Fund Applications to the Iowa Department of Transportation (IDOT).

SYNOPSIS:

The IDOT administers an annual SRTS program. In conjunction with the Des Moines School District, City staff has developed a project that would enhance school crossings at signalized intersections. The estimated project cost is \$140,000, to be requested from the SRTS program funding. Staff recommends approval and authorization to submit an application to the IDOT for SRTS funds for this project.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Amount: The project is eligible for 100% federal funding. No local match is required.

Funding Source: The project would be 100% federally funded. Incidental costs would be paid from the City’s operating budget.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

The 2005 Federal Transportation Act (SAFETEA-LU: Safe, Accountable, Flexible and Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users) authorizes and provides annual funding for a program entitled “Safe Routes to School” (SRTS). The IDOT administers this program, which will fund approximately \$1 million annually for Iowa. This year’s project applications must be submitted to the IDOT by October 1, 2008 to be considered.

This federal funding program is intended to enable and encourage children, including those with disabilities, to walk and bicycle to school; to make walking and bicycling to school safe and more appealing; and to facilitate the planning, development, and implementation of projects that will provide safety, and reduce traffic, fuel consumption, and air pollution in the vicinity of schools.

Two years ago, in cooperation with the Des Moines School District, the City of Des Moines submitted a project that involved (1) crosswalk enhancements at locations where adult guards were in place, and (2) an educational program within the schools that would provide information to the schoolchildren and parents on safety at street crossings. This project, at an estimated cost of \$250,000, was partly funded by the IDOT, with \$125,748 being approved. Staff recommends that a similar project be submitted for this year, to include the portion of the project that was not funded in 2006, as follows:

Enhanced School Crossings at Signalized Intersections

This project will provide a multi-faceted approach to improve safety for schoolchildren crossing the city street system as they walk/bike to and from elementary and middle schools. Traffic signals where adult school crossing guards are assigned would be targeted by this project.

Phase 1 would include installation of enhanced pavement markings and pedestrian signals with “count-down” timers. Phase 2 would consist of an educational program within the schools that would provide information to the schoolchildren and parents on safety at street crossings. The estimated project cost is \$140,000, requested from SRTS funds.

This same project was submitted to IDOT for consideration in 2007, but was not approved for funding. In follow-up discussions with IDOT staff, they indicated that the project was a good candidate, and they would consider it if it were re-submitted in another fiscal year’s funding cycle.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION(S):

Date: September 25, 2006

Roll Call: 06-1883

Action: “SAFE ROUTE TO SCHOOL” (SRTS) Fund Applications to the Iowa Department of Transportation to be used for Enhanced School Crossings at Signalized Intersections, estimated amount of \$250,000. (Council Communication No. 06-613) Moved by Vlassis to adopt. Motion Carried 6-0.

Date: August 8, 2007

Roll Call: 07-1487

Action: Authorizing City Manager to submit “Safe Routes to School” (SRTS) Fund Application to the Iowa Department of Transportation (IDOT) to be used to enhance school crossings at signalized intersections. (Council Communication No. 07-478)

) Moved by Vlassis to adopt. Motion Carried 7-0

BOARD/COMMISSION ACTION(S): NONE

ANTICIPATED ACTIONS AND FUTURE COMMITMENTS:

Approval of future project agreements with the Iowa Department of Transportation.

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