



## Legislation Text

File #: [23-0068], Version: 1

### **Support a Safe Routes to School Non-Infrastructure Grant Application to the North Carolina Department of Transportation.**

**Staff:**

Mary Jane Nirdlinger, Deputy Town Manager, Interim Planning Director  
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**Department:**

Manager's Office  
Planning

**Overview:** The Town has an opportunity to apply for a grant from the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) that would fund Safe Routes to School programming; the application is due by February 6<sup>th</sup>. Municipalities, school districts, and eligible nonprofits can apply for the grant in amounts ranging from \$50,000 to \$500,000 that will cover activities over the next three years. The grant may be used for non-infrastructure programming, which focuses on encouragement, education, and evaluation. A local match is not required, though grant guidance states that providing a local match may improve the chances of receiving the grant.

The stated goals of the grant are to:

- Enable and encourage K-12 children and teens, including those with disabilities, to walk and bicycle to school
- Make bicycling and walking to school a safer and more appealing transportation alternative, thereby encouraging a healthy and active lifestyle from an early age
- Facilitate the planning, development, and implementation of projects and activities that will improve safety and reduce traffic, fuel consumption, and air pollution in the vicinity of schools.

Town staff have met with colleagues in Carrboro and at the Chapel Hill-Carrboro City School District and plan to submit a joint application. The grant criteria prioritize collaborations and partnerships, providing an opportunity to work together for a cross-community effort to reach schools across the district.

Staff plan to use the grant to fund a full-time position that would work within elementary and middle schools to support walking and biking. This position would build relationships across schools, establish programs to encourage walking and biking, set up incentive programs, and report to a cross-agency, multi-disciplinary advisory committee. The inter-agency work group is still determining the full scope of the application, and the proposal may include funding for consulting services to develop a Safe Routes to School Plan. Given the desire to fund a full-time position, programming support and supplies, and possibly professional services to assist with a Safe Routes to School Plan, the grant application will likely request close to \$500,000. The group has not yet determined which jurisdiction will employ the position.



**Recommendation(s):**

That the Council adopt a resolution supporting the Safe Routes to School Non-Infrastructure Grant Application.

**Key Issues:**

- If awarded, this funding would support a full-time time-limited position, programming, and potentially consulting services for three years.

- It is likely, but not confirmed, that there will be another grant opportunity in three years. If so, the inter-agency group could apply again to continue the position and programming; otherwise, the position would end unless the agencies could fund it without the grant funding.
- Staff has not fully fleshed out the scope of the proposal, but plans to include programs like walking school busses, family marathons, bike busses, bike safety education in classrooms, and robust evaluation.
- The deadline for the application is February 6, 2023, notification of award will be by March 13<sup>th</sup>, and reimbursement agreements will be initiated in April.

**Fiscal Impact/Resources:** There is no direct fiscal impact, as the grant does not require a local match. However, if there is not another grant opportunity in three years, or the inter-agency group is not successful in securing funding, and the Council wanted to continue the position/program, the agencies would need to secure other funding.

**Where is this item in its process?**



**Attachments:**

- Resolution

**A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING A SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL NON-INFRASTRUCTURE GRANT APPLICATION TO THE NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (2023-01-25/R-5)**

WHEREAS, the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) has allocated funds from the Transportation Alternatives Program for Safe Routes to School Non-Infrastructure Grants; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Chapel Hill has adopted a Vision Zero Policy that aims to eliminate traffic deaths and serious injuries on our roadways by 2031; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Chapel Hill adopted the Mobility and Connectivity Plan, which calls for increased engagement to support students walking and biking to school; and

WHEREAS, increased walking and biking to school would support the Mobility and Connectivity Plan's goal of 35% of residents commuting by alternative modes by 2025; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Chapel Hill consistently supports efforts to encourage more youth to walk and bike to school, like Walk to School Day and Bike to School Day; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Chapel Hill is working collaboratively with the Town of Carrboro and the Chapel Hill-Carrboro City School District on the grant application; and

WHEREAS, a Safe Routes to School grant would increase the Town's capacity to support walking and biking to school; and

WHEREAS, the grant would not require a local match.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the Town of Chapel Hill that the Council supports a Safe Routes to School Non-Infrastructure grant application to the North Carolina Department of Transportation.

This the 25th day of January, 2023.

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**The Agenda will reflect the text below and/or the motion text will be used during the meeting.**

By adopting the resolution, the Council supports a Safe Routes to School Non-Infrastructure grant application to the North Carolina Department of Transportation.