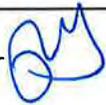


Safe Routes to Schools



City of Las Cruces

Community Development Interoffice Memorandum

To: Robert Garza, City Manager 

From: Tom Murphy, MPO Officer 

Subject: CLC/ LCPS Joint Work Session- Safe Routes to School

Date: November 21, 2013 MPO-13-038

There has been some question about the discontinuation of dedicated funding for the Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program. Staff will brief the City Council and Las Cruces School Board on the history of the program in the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) area and layout how the program will go forward utilizing available resources.

Beginning with the adoption of the 2005 MPO Metropolitan Transportation Plan, MPO staff began discussions and coordination with various City and school district staff. The results of these actions led to the pilot SRTS program at Hillrise Elementary School. Based upon the success of this effort, the MPO began receiving 100% grant funding for the SRTS coordinator position in FY09. The original contract with NMDOT called for two years of funding for the purpose of developing an Action Plan for the SRTS program so that the program could sustain itself at the local level. Naoma Staley was hired into the position. Shortly into FY10, that funding was extended for two more years to aid in the development of projects (called Phase II) consistent with the Action Plan. This was accomplished with the encumbrance of the SRTS projects that the Public Works Department is projected to bid out this winter. During the development of the Phase II projects, there was a staff change as Ms. Staley left to pursue other interests and Devashree Desai was brought on board.

It is important to note that the funding was never intended to be permanent. Also, in developing the latest federal transportation bill (MAP-21), SRTS was eliminated as a stand-alone program and was rolled into the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP). Therefore, when Ms. Desai left the position, NMDOT decided that with the Action Plan in place and the option for the City or school district to pursue TAP funds for a coordinator, it would not fund the remaining year left for the MPO position.

In the most recent call for TAP funding applications (FFY13/14), both the City and Las Cruces Public Schools (LCPS) submitted component parts of what became a joint request for SRTS coordinator positions. Each request was approved by the MPO Policy

Committee, but unfortunately, the MPO was later informed that City funding was unlikely due to substantial SRTS investment in prior years.

The SRTS remains a priority concern of the MPO Policy Committee. MPO support will revert back to where it was prior to the coordinators being funded. MPO staff will coordinate with various staff from the City, County, Town, and school district to maintain the SRTS program. The various activities such as GIS support, meeting coordination, etc. will be divided based on staffing strengths. The SRTS Action Plan is a Policy Committee adopted document and will continue to guide MPO staffing allocation.

The program continues to also receive State support through the Department of Health funding SRTS Champions within the school district. LCPS has also received a TAP grant for coordinator funding. These resources, along with continued support from City departments such as Police, Public Works, and Transportation, should keep the program sustainable absent the direct SRTS grant.

MPO staff will be available at the Joint Work Session to discuss related matters. A powerpoint presentation will be prepared to facilitate this discussion.

cc:  Vincent Banegas, Community Development Deputy Director
David Weir, Community Development Director 
Brian Denmark, Assistant City Manager 

Safe Routes to School

December 3, 2013



Las Cruces Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)

Safe Routes To School (SRTS) Topics

- History
- Program Outline
- District-Wide Progress
- Program Goals and future



International History

- 1970's - Denmark
 - Spread internationally
- 1998 - US DOT funds 2 pilot projects
 - Marin County, CA
 - Arlington, MA
- 2005 Transportation Bill



Beginnings

- 2005 MPO Transportation Plan
 - Create regional SRTS Program
- SRTS Steering Committee Meeting
 - September 2005
 - City, County, and NMDOT Traffic Engineering, NM Department of Health, Las Cruces and Gadsden SD, LCPD, Principals, Citizens
- Selected Hillrise Elementary for pilot project
- Regional SRTS Coordinator (funded by NMDOT 2009-13)



The “5 E’s”

- Education
- Encouragement
- Engineering
- Enforcement
- Evaluation



Who needs to be involved?

- Students and Parents
- Schools - principals, teachers, school nurses, PE teachers, Wellness Coordinator, etc.
- School districts - Board, Transportation, Safety, Facilities
- Local government - engineers, planners, law enforcement, elected officials, etc.
- Other - health officials, PTC, RPO/MPO, bike/ped advocacy groups, businesses, etc.



Desired Outcomes

- Increased bike, pedestrian and traffic safety
- More children walking to/from school
- Improved childhood health
- Reduced childhood obesity
- Encouragement of healthy and active lifestyles
- Well planned and located school sites
- Decreased traffic congestion
- Improved air quality and community safety
- Reduced fuel consumption
- Building Community



District-Wide Progress

- International Walk and Roll to School Day (2006 - 2013)
- SRTS Updates to the LCPS Board
- Action Plan adopted
- Assessments completed @ each school
 - Analyzing data and patterns
- \$500,000 Infrastructure projects through Action Plan
- School siting committee



Next Steps

- Maintain momentum in absence of Coordinator position
 - Part-time champions funded in school district through Department of Health
 - Part time coordinator funded by TAP funds in school district
- Active involvement from school district and strategic City Departments
- Integration of SRTS Curriculum into schools





Thank you

Questions?