



City of San Antonio

Agenda Memorandum

File Number:15-1131

Agenda Item Number: 32.

Agenda Date: 4/2/2015

In Control: City Council A Session

DEPARTMENT: Transportation & Capital Improvements

DEPARTMENT HEAD: Mike Frisbie, P.E.

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: City Wide

SUBJECT: TxDOT Traffic Safety Grant

SUMMARY:

An ordinance authorizing the submission of an application to the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) for funding consideration under the Traffic Safety Grant Program. This action also authorizes the acceptance of \$35,992.96 in grant funds administered by TxDOT if awarded for school and community tool kits promoting walking and bike safety.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The City of San Antonio is currently developing a Strategic Multi-Modal Transportation Plan (SMMTP) to begin planning for the major population growth expected by the year 2040. In an effort to emphasize multi-modal transportation for walking and biking it is imperative that our community find a way to minimize pedestrian and bicycle fatalities. The complementing component to safety is education. This is an approach that the City of San Antonio believes is critical to enhancing the safety of multi-modal transportation. To assist the City through this educational outreach, the City has applied for a grant from the Texas Department of Transportation to provide printed materials and giveaways to include in safety tool kits. Staff was asked to quantify the amount of funding that would be needed to assemble these tool kits and it is estimated that this will cost \$44,991.20 to focus on the walking and bike safety. The goal of the grant would be to educate as many students as possible with tool kits, as well as, promote safety throughout San Antonio for all ages. This approach would reach record numbers of individuals on a personal level to educate the public and the future of San Antonio on the importance of safety around schools.

The first portion of this grant is to prepare a school safety kit for local schools to teach their students walking and biking safety. The kit will provide a variety of items such as educational curriculum, informational handouts, web resources, safety facts, giveaway items and surveys. Currently, school counselors have many opportunities to meet with all students to teach subjects such as gun safety and stranger safety, but no education is given on traffic safety. The curriculum will come from the "Child Safety Pedestrian Curriculum" offered by

the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). It provides a variety of curriculum based upon age groups from Kindergarten through 5th grade. In addition, the NHTSA provides a Bicycle Safety Activity Kit that can be paired with the pedestrian curriculum to teach the basics of bicycle safety. This fun approach to learning teaches kids biking safety and the traffic rules of the road.

The proposed approach also is intended to target education in a local neighborhood, in order to reach the students where they live and travel. Children are far more likely to retain and practice safe behaviors when they are taught how the rules and laws apply to their school and environment. Additionally, the school safety kit can be equipped with additional information to be sent home with students to educate their families on the importance of pedestrian and bicycle safety. The provided informational brochures and safety giveaways (promotional children's collaterals) can empower children with the knowledge to keep themselves, and others, safe.

The second approach to promoting walking and biking safety is to address safety in adult populations through distribution of materials in the community. Materials developed as part of Walk Safe SA, Drive Safe SA, Bike Safe SA campaign that was prepared by TCI, in association with the San Antonio Police Department (SAPD), will be used to educate citizens on the importance of using designated crosswalks as well as to motorists to drive attentively. Safety messages could be displayed in areas like bus placards, local parks facilities and senior centers. Informational packets, paired with the school safety education, could be provided to neighborhood associations and other public meetings as part of the SMMTP. Coordination with SAPD Safe Officers will be very important in dispersing the information.

ISSUE:

This ordinance authorizes the submission of an application to the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) for funding consideration under the Traffic Safety Grant Program. This action also authorizes the acceptance of \$35,992.96 in grant funds administered by TxDOT if awarded for the development of tool kits to promote walking and bike safety.

The City of San Antonio, Transportation & Capital Improvements (TCI) Department, would like to begin the process of education and public awareness campaigns as a two-fold approach to both educate young children and bring awareness to adults by providing a school safety curriculum and promoting walking and biking safety. If the City of San Antonio is selected for this grant, TCI will make outreach to San Antonio school districts to determine which schools are interested in incorporating the school safety curriculum. Another opportunity to reach the community is through the City of San Antonio Parks and Recreation Department. This department provides summer care to many children throughout the city and can be another opportunity to provide the tool kits to educate the enrolled children. To target adult awareness, TCI, in association with the San Antonio Police Department (SAPD), prepared information for the Walk Safe SA, Drive Safe SA, Bike Safe SA campaign which educates citizens on the importance of using designated crosswalks as well as to motorists to drive attentively. Safety messages could be displayed in areas like bus placards, local parks facilities and senior centers. Informational packets, paired with the school safety education, could be provided to neighborhood associations and other public meetings as part of the SMMTP. Coordination with SAPD SAFE Officers will be very important in dispersing the information.

Grant recipients will be announced in October 2015 for use of funds in FY 2016.

ALTERNATIVES:

City Council could choose to not authorize any or all of the projects in this submittal for grant funding consideration. However, the City would miss an opportunity to obtain approximately \$35,992.96 in grant funds dedicated specifically to bike and pedestrian education. This is an opportunity to enhancing the safety of multi-modal transportation.

FISCAL IMPACT:

This City Council action to submit the application does not commit any funds. However, if these projects are awarded, a local match of 20% of the approved costs will be required from the City. This grant will total \$35,992.96 and the City will be required to contribute an additional \$8,998.24, which will be paid by the City of San Antonio from the Strategic Multi-Modal Transportation Plan project for a grand total of \$44,991.20. City contributed funds are available in the FY 2015 - FY 2020 Capital Improvements Program.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff Recommends approval of an ordinance authorizing the submission of an application to the Texas Department of Transportation for funding consideration under the Traffic Safety Grant Program, and authorization for the acceptance of grant funds if awarded.