

CITY COUNCIL MEMORANDUM

FROM: The Office of the City Manager **DATE:** March 27, 2017
SUBJECT: Consider Resolution No. 2017-018 authorizing and supporting the submittal of a Safe Routes to School Grant Application to the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) for the Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside Program.
PRESENTER: Clayton Comstock, Planning Manager

SUMMARY:

The City of North Richland Hills is eligible to apply for matching grant funds from the Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside (TA Set-Aside) Program administered regionally by the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG). Adoption of the attached resolution is a pre-requisite for program eligibility. Although the application package was submitted prior to the February 24, 2017 project nomination deadline, nominating entities are given until April 21, 2017 to provide final resolutions of the governing bodies.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

There are two *non-competing* programs for this federally-funded TA Set-Aside Call for Projects. One program provides funding for active transportation facilities and improvements specifically focusing on regional and local network connectivity, access to public transportation, improving safety and providing safe trail and bike route crossings with roadway intersections. City Council approved Resolution No. 2017-005 on February 13, 2017 supporting the nomination of a project for various active transportation improvements along the City's extensive trail system.

The second TA Set-Aside funding opportunity is for Safe Routes to Schools projects. Safe Routes to Schools provides infrastructure improvements on and around school campuses for the purpose of improving safety for families walking or biking to and from school and encouraging such healthy pedestrian behaviors in youth.

UNT's Safe Routes to Schools Plan for NRH

In July 2016, the Department of Public Administration at the University of North Texas reached out to the NRH Planning & Zoning Department seeking ideas for service projects for a fall semester "Introduction to Urban Planning" course. Staff identified a starter "Safe Routes to Schools Plan" as an opportunity for the students to research a specific topic, identify problems specific to NRH/Birdville ISD, seek input from Birdville



ISD administrators and campus faculty, and recommend alternative solutions. Administrators at Birdville ISD selected three campuses for the study, and Smithfield Middle School was one of them. An excerpt of the final service project report is attached. The students also had an opportunity to present their project to the Planning & Zoning Commission in December.

Proposed Project Improvements

Coincidentally, NCTCOG announced a call for projects for a Safe Routes to Schools funding opportunity in December as well. NRH staff picked up where the UNT students left off and coordinated with BISD and Smithfield Middle School staff on an application to make the following improvements on and around Smithfield Middle School:

1. 2,796 linear feet of new sidewalks along Amundson Road, Main Street, Simmons Road, Martin Road, and Chilton Drive;
2. 35 new/reconstructed curb ramps;
3. 3 new mid-block crosswalks with continental-style pavement markings and crosswalk signage on Crane Road, Martin Road and Main Street;
4. 11 new crosswalks with standard-style pavement markings along Main Street; and
5. A new on-campus bicycle parking station containing a concrete pad and u-lock compatible racks designed to accommodate parking for 30 bicycles.

A map and images demonstrating the proposed improvements are attached as "Exhibit A."

Costs & Funding

The minimum federal funding award per project is \$150,000. The funds provided will be on a cost reimbursement basis with 80% of project costs being federally funded and 20% of the project costs being the responsibility of the local government. The total estimated project cost as submitted for the program is \$263,921.00. At the 20% match rate, the City's contribution would be \$52,784.00. A Capital Improvements Project request has been submitted for the FY18 CIP Budget Project to cover the cost of the project, however various capital project savings as well as the sidewalk fund can cover the 20% match requirement in the current fiscal year.

RECOMMENDATION:

Approve Resolution No. 2017-018.