

BUDGET WORKING PAPER

TO: W. Calvin Horton, Town Manager
FROM: Roger Waldon, Planning Director
SUBJECT: Support for the Ephesus Elementary School Safe Routes to School Program
DATE: April 27, 2005

The budget working paper reviews the request by Chapel Hill-Carrboro Schools for the Town to fund the Ephesus Elementary School Safe Routes to School Program.

BACKGROUND

In 2003, the Town of Chapel Hill was awarded an Active Living by Design grant by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to support the development of programs to encourage Chapel Hill residents to be more physically active.

One initiative of the Town's Active Living by Design program has been working with groups of parents and administrators from Ephesus Elementary School to identify ways to increase opportunities for students to walk and bicycle to school. The working group at Ephesus has completed an audit of pedestrian and bicycle facilities in the identified walk zone and developed recommendations for the Town's Active Living by Design Advisory Committee. Terry Blalock, Chair of the Active Living by Design Advisory Committee and Lisa Stuckey, Chapel Hill-Carrboro School Board Chair and member of the Active Living by Design Committee submitted the Committee's request to the Council on March 23, 2005 to fund a program of projects to improve safety and encourage more walking and bicycling to the Ephesus School. A copy of their request is attached. The Ephesus working group is also organizing a weeklong Walking School Bus program for May, 2005. This project would provide opportunities for student to walk or bicycle to school under adult supervision.

DISCUSSION

We will continue to provide support to the Ephesus working group through the ongoing Active Living by Design program. This support will include assisting them in the development and implementation of the Walking School Bus program and associated efforts.

We have reviewed the request by the Active Living by Design Advisory Committee for sidewalk improvements in the Ephesus Elementary School walk zone. The Committee's first priority, a sidewalk along Ephesus Church Road, from U.S. 15-501 to Eden Lane and several of their second priority projects are already identified on the Town's Sidewalk Construction Priority List. Several others are not included at this time, including sidewalks along Eden Lane, Churchill



Drive, Emory Drive, Ferrell Road, Landerwood Lane, Francis Street and Thornwood Road. For further discussion on the relationship between proposed sidewalk construction and Chapel Hill schools see the Budget Working Paper, "Funding To Improve the Sidewalk Network to Elementary, Middle and High Schools".

CONCLUSION

We suggest that those sidewalk projects requested by the Active Living by Design Advisory Committee that are not currently included in the Construction Priority List be considered for inclusion in the **2005-2006** Town Sidewalk Construction Plan.

ATTACHMENT

1. Active Living by Design Advisory Committee Recommendation (p. 3).

SUMMARY OF ACTIVE LIVING BY DESIGN COMMITTEE ACTION

Subject: Ephesus Safe Routes to School Initiative

Meeting Date: 11 March 2005

ALbD Committee Recommendation:

The Active Living by Design Advisory Committee voted to recommend that the Ephesus Safe Routes to Schools Initiative survey/audit results be forwarded to the Town Council for their information and request that the data be distributed to appropriate Town Advisory Boards. The Committee also recommended that Priority 1, 2, and 3 Recommendations be considered by the Council for funding in the Town’s Capital Improvement Program.

The Committee reviewed the recommendations of the Safe Routes to school subcommittee (attached) and amended those recommendations to reflect currently underway projects along

These recommendations support a “walking school bus” program with adult volunteer “drivers” that will be conducted one week in April and one in May of this school year.

Vote: 9 in favor, 0 opposed

Initiative Goal To improve the health and well-being of children by assessing and taking measures to improve walking and biking conditions on the routes to school and enabling and encouraging children to walk and bike these routes.

Ephesus Recommendations

Recommendations are based on Parent Survey and Walk Zone Audit. Results are attached.

- Requested for immediate safety improvements: Crosswalks along (not across) Ephesus Church Road & flashing lights for school zone warning treatments similar to Creekside Elementary in Durham.
- Priority 1 - sidewalk on south side of Ephesus Church Road from 15/501 to Eden Lane
- Priority 2 - Sidewalks on one side for Eden Lane/Cypress Road/Spruce Street. Sidewalks on one side of Longleaf Drive, Churchill Drive, and Tinkerbell Road as well.

Priority 3 - Sidewalks on one side at Emory Drive; Willow Drive, Ferrell Road, Landerwood Lane, Thornwood Road, Francis Street.

Prepared by: Terry Blalock, Active Living by Design Chair
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