

Safe Routes to School

Subcommittee on Design

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Safe Routes to School

- Benefits of education, enforcement and engineering
- Safe Routes to School Design Considerations
- Examples from around the country
- Funding



Benefits of Safe Routes to School

- Protect children from traffic deaths and injuries
- Eliminate inefficient and unnecessary driving
- Bring children better health
- Strengthen neighborhoods



Safe Routes to School

The best results come when programs include:

- Engineering solutions
- Enforcement initiatives
- Education and Encouragement



Basic Design Considerations...

- Speed (is 40mph in urbanizing area appropriate?)
- Sidewalks, sidewalks, sidewalks
- Buffers
- Signs
- Pedestrian lighting
- Paths and trails
- Safe crossing opportunities



Safe Routes to School

- Engineering for Safe Routes
- Enforcement
 - School Crossing Guards
- Education and Encouragement
 - Walking School Bus
 - Bicycle Rodeo



Washington State

- First “Safe Routes” program in the country (1981) called Traffic Safety Near Schools.
- In 2004, the State Legislature dedicated \$1 Million in state gas tax funds to create the Safe Routes to Schools Program.
- In 2005, based on the success of the 2004 program, the State Legislature approved an additional \$74 million over 16 years in state gas tax to support the Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Program -- including Safe Routes to School



Washington's Safe Routes Process

Washington's *Safe Routes to Schools* Program provides children a safe, healthy alternative to being driven by parents or riding the bus to school. Eligible projects for local community programs and state support target some or all of the following:

- **Engineering fixes** (like sidewalks, pathways, street safety and design improvements) to create safer routes for children bicycling and walking to schools.
- **Safety education curriculums and programs** to encourage children to become physically active by walking and biking to school.
- **Enforcement programs** by local law enforcement agencies to improve traffic safety around schools with school zone, school route law and safety enforcement programs.
- **Community Health and Encouragement Initiatives** that link to the long-term community health benefits when parents and children can take advantage of safe ways for biking and walking to school.

State of California

- Many regional Safe Routes to Schools Programs.
- California combines education, community organizing, and engineering improvements.
- The state legislature directs \$25 million annually in federal transportation safety funding to fund local engineering improvements near schools.



Texas

- The legislature in Texas approved a Safe Routes to Schools program.



- It supports \$3 million annually in federal funding to sidewalk improvements, traffic signals, bicycle and pedestrian paths, and other safety features.

Some Other Notable State and Regional Programs...

- Boston, MA
 - Oregon
 - Florida
 - New York
 - Connecticut
- and the list goes on...



Federal Funding for Safe Routes to Schools

- TEA-21 Extension to June 30, 2005
- Both House (TEA-LU) and Senate (SAFETEA) versions include Safe Routes to School Funding
- Both versions are in the Reauthorization Conference Committee



Federal Funding for Safe Routes



Senate **(SAFETEA)**

- \$350 million over five years
- Funded by takedown of \$70 million/year from Highway Safety Improvement Program funds

House **(TEA-LU)**

- \$875 million over five years (separate authorization of \$1.0 billion over 6 years).
- Includes task force, clearinghouse, and state coordinator positions

Federal Funding for Safe Routes



Senate

(SAFETEA)

- Continue as a 10% set-aside of STP
- Available to K-12 programs
- Railroad grade crossing improvements eligible

House

(TEA-LU)

- Continue as a 10% set-aside of STP
- Requires some funding to go to State FTE
- Available to K-8 programs

Some Resources...

FHWA – Safe Routes Funding Information

<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/reauthorization/sidebyside/35safe.htm>

National Center for Biking and Walking

http://www.bikewalk.org/safe_routes_to_school/SR2S_resources.htm

Washington's Safe Routes Website

http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/bike/Safe_Routes.htm

California's Safe Routes Website

<http://www.dhs.ca.gov/epic/sr2s/>

Texas' Safe Routes Website

<http://www.dot.state.tx.us/trafficsafety/srs/>

Thanks / Credits

- Paula Reeves - WSDOT

www.wsdot.wa.gov/ta/operations