



CITY OF KIRKLAND
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MEMORANDUM

To: Kurt Triplett, City Manager

From: Kari Page, Senior Neighborhood Services Outreach Coordinator
Joel Pfundt, Transportation Manager
Rod Steitzer, Capital Improvement Program Manager
James Lopez, Assistant City Manager
Julie Underwood, Interim Director of Public Works

Date: August 20, 2020

Subject: SAFER ROUTES TO SCHOOL ACTION PLANS ADOPTION

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the City Council:

- Approve the attached Resolution R-5445 adopting the Safer Routes to School Action Plans; and
- Note staff's recommendation to rebrand one existing Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) Project series to account for future Safer Routes to School projects, and to create a new CIP subproject within that series for a specific, high-priority project. This recommendation also is discussed in the staff report for the Draft 2021-2026 Capital Improvement Program.

BACKGROUND DISCUSSION:

From April 2019 to August 2020, staff worked in partnership with the Lake Washington School District, law enforcement, engineering professionals, students, parents, administrators, and neighborhoods to develop the Safer Routes to School Action Plans. The plans include the following seven elements.

- **Engagement** means listening to students, families, school administrators, and community organizations throughout the decision-making process to ensure the public's concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.
- **Equity** is about fair and equitable distribution of resources and ensuring safe, healthy, and fair outcomes for low-income students, students of color, and students with disabilities.
- **Education** is about improving safe walking and bicycling skills for all students and community members.
- **Encouragement** strategies are about getting more students walking and biking to and from school. Encouragement strategies also promote riding the bus and carpooling as simple, safe, cost-effective, and environmentally friendly options.

- **Enforcement** activities increase the safety of students walking and biking to school by targeting unsafe driving behavior. Such behavior includes speeding, failing to yield to pedestrians and bicyclists, illegal parking, and illegal turns in school areas.
- **Engineering** efforts include the design and implementation of traffic control devices and physical improvements to make walking, biking, and busing to school safer, more convenient, and comfortable.
- **Evaluation** includes collecting information and tracking data over time to measure the effectiveness of methods and practices in the Safer Routes to School Action Plans.

In 2019, staff efforts centered around encouraging more students to walk, bike, and ride the bus to school while also engaging the public in identifying potential safety improvements. This phase included a great deal of public outreach, an online survey, and mapping of suggested walking and biking improvements.

The presence of the coronavirus and the resulting pandemic substantially slowed the momentum of the Safer Routes to School Initiative during the spring months of 2020, when staff was counting on students being active, parents being engaged in this process, and neighborhoods providing forums for public engagement. The Governor's Stay Home, Stay Safe order required staff to pause and rethink the speed and approach to many of the Safer Routes to School Action Plan elements.

At the April 21, 2020 City Council meeting, staff updated the Council on the progress of the Safer Routes to School Action Plans initiative and provided methodologies, data, and findings from the year-long effort. The Council directed staff to move forward with the Engineering element of the Action Plans and to use online public engagement tools to obtain feedback on the walk recommendations.

On August 4, 2020 staff returned to the City Council with the draft Safer Routes to School Action Plans including the prioritized list of sidewalk and crosswalk improvements in each neighborhood. The City Council directed that when staff returned for adoption of the Action Plans they should present a recommended funding mechanism for implementing the plans.

CIP PROJECT RECOMMENDATIONS:

To establish an ongoing funding mechanism for the implementation of the Safer Routes to School Action Plans, staff proposes the following 2021-2026 Capital Improvement Program changes.

1. Rebrand the existing Capital Improvement Program Project series NMC 08700, to be called "Safer Routes to School Action Plans Implementation," which has been used as the series to account for "Citywide School Walk Route Enhancements." The funding source(s) and amounts are identified in the Draft 2021-2026 Capital Improvement Program, as follows: \$150,000 from the 2012 Streets levy, \$300,000 in REET 2 to backfill the expired "Walkable Kirkland" funding, and an additional \$100,000 in REET 2, for a total of \$550,000 per year.

Improvements selected for the first two-year funding cycle will be proposed to the City Council in the first quarter of 2021.

Description/justification: This project will complete priority improvements in the Safer Routes to School Action Plans. The Safer Routes to School Action Plans were developed through an extensive public engagement process and engineering assessment of Kirkland's streets in 2019 and 2020. The Action Plans include 133

improvements, with 58 of them being enhanced crossings and 75 being new or improved sidewalk segments. Additional improvements may be added to the Action Plans as determined in the future. This project is expected to leverage funding with State and federal grants.

2. Close subproject NMC 008710 "North Kirkland/JFK School Walk Route Enhancements" (remaining balance of \$439,000) and create a new subproject NMC 08720 called "NE 131st Way/90th Avenue NE Nonmotorized Improvements from 97th Avenue NE to NE 134th Street Scope and Design." Move the remaining balance of \$439,000 to the new project NMC 08720.

Description/justification: This project provides for the scope and design of the NE 131st Way/90th Avenue NE Nonmotorized Improvements from 97th Avenue NE to NE 134th Street. The ultimate project will include surface water control and repair of roadway safety features for vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists. The project includes scope and design for 3,000 feet of extruded curb, guardrail repair, and surface water drainage improvements. 90th Avenue NE is a north/south neighborhood collector with high traffic volumes connecting the Finn Hill Neighborhood with 100th Avenue NE business district, two schools (Juanita Elementary School and Juanita High School), and Interstate 405. The project is one of the high priorities in the Safer Routes to School Action Plans. The project will need additional funding for construction.

3. Additional funding for this program and the Neighborhood Safety Program (NSP) is expected to be generated by school zone speed camera revenues in excess of the amounts needed to administer that program. Given that the school zone cameras have not been in operation since the pandemic and it is unclear when schools will return to on-site instruction, the amount of revenue available toward Safer Routes to School projects is difficult to project at this time. Once the program returns to operation, this potential funding source for Safer Routes to School and the NSP will be incorporated into a future CIP update.

Priorities for the Safer Routes to School Action Plans were developed in time for the application process with the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) [Safe Routes to School Grant Program](#). Table 1, below, lists the Safer Routes projects submitted for grants. Project locations can be seen on the Safer Routes to School Action Plans [interactive map](#).

Table 1: Safer Routes to School Grant Applications Submitted to WSDOT

Project Number	Project Description	Estimated Cost	Priority
EV04	Install Rapid Flashing Beacons on NE 68 th Street at 106 th Avenue NE	\$134,800	Highest ranked project in the neighborhood and the City.
MK05	Install Rapid Flashing Beacons on Market at 19th Street	\$146,900	Highest ranked project in the neighborhood. Fourth ranked project in the City.
NK12	Install sidewalk on 19th Avenue from Market to 4 th Street	\$1,973,886	Project with highest votes in the neighborhood and the City.
NK07	Fill sidewalk gaps along 4 th Street from 18 th Street to 19 th Street	\$322,683	Low ranked project but connects 19 th Avenue

			sidewalks to Kirkland Middle School entrance.
NRH01	Fill sidewalk gaps along 124 th Avenue NE from NE 100 th Street to NE 104 th Street	\$462,036	Low ranked project but fills important gaps in recent City sidewalk investment on 124 th Avenue NE.
Total Requested		\$3,040,305	

Safer Routes to School accomplishments will be reported annually in the Transportation Master Plan Progress Report and Streets Levy Report.

Attachment A: Final Safer Routes to School Action Plans
 Attachment B: Resolution R-5445