

BUDGET ISSUE SUMMARY FORM

Title: Safe Routes to School Program Coordinator

Lead Department: Department of Public Safety

1. What are the key elements of the issue? What precipitated it?

Safe Routes to School (SRTS) in Sunnyvale began in 2008, through a partnership with the Santa Clara County Public Health Department. Grant funding from the Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission for the VERBS (Vehicle Emissions Reductions Based at Schools) and Caltrans grants allowed the SRTS Program to expand services to a majority of the schools in Sunnyvale.

During the 2012-2013 school year, SRTS began to increase outreach to Fremont High School as part of a pilot program. The APE (Acting to Protect the Environment) Club now coordinates all of the FHS SRTS activities. This is an example of how the program succeeds. A SRTS Coordinator can engage the community to take a leadership role and effectively sustain the program using volunteer resources.

Schools participating in SRTS in the 2015/2016 school year include Fremont High School and eleven schools from Sunnyvale School District, Santa Clara Unified School District, and Cupertino Union School District, reaching over 13,600 students.

Council recently received and responded to inquiries from community members who became aware of the impending end of grant funds for the county's Safe Routes to School Coordinator. Information from the Santa Clara County Department of Public Health indicates that funding for the position will end in eighteen months.

On November 19, 2015, Santa Clara County Public Health Department hosted a workshop addressing the next steps for a stronger and sustainable future for Safe Routes to Schools. According to a representative from Santa Clara County Public Health, the key component of program sustainability is the allocation of a City employee to act as the local program coordinator. For effective succession planning, it is proposed that the position be created and filled as soon as possible.

The SRTS Coordinator will implement the program by engaging with local schools and utilizing parent volunteers and school staff to: collect data at the beginning of the school year to assess the school's needs; develop a plan to educate students and parents in bicycle and pedestrian safety; encourage the school community through ongoing programs such as "Walking School Bus" and large events such as National Walk and Bike to School Day and bicycle rodeos; and evaluate the success of programs by collecting data at special events and at the end of the school year.

2. How does this relate to the General Plan or existing City Policy?

Existing Policy: **General Plan Goal SN-3: Safe and Secure City** – Ensure a safe and secure environment for people and property in the community by providing effective public safety response and prevention and education services.

DPS currently utilizes grant funding from the State of California Office of Traffic Safety to implement a Selective Traffic Enforcement Program, the focus of which is to reduce the incidence of injuries to bicyclists and pedestrians in the City of Sunnyvale. Safe Routes to Schools activities supplement and support DPS efforts to educate the community in how to utilize safe transportation alternatives.

3. Is the budget issue a: PROJECT X OPERATING X

4. If the issue is operating, specify the change in service objective(s) that would result (from what, to what). If the issue is a project, write N/A.

DPS currently provides support to the Safe Routes to Schools program by responding, upon request, from Sunnyvale schools. The services provided are within the scope of normal activities; for example, a Neighborhood Resource Officer will attend a school assembly to provide Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety Presentations, or a Public Safety Specialist will attend a bicycle rodeo and assist with helmet fittings.

5. Origin of issue: Council X

Councilmembers Jim Griffith, Tara Martin-Milius, and Jim Davis

Board and Commission _____ **Board/Commission:** _____

Staff _____ **Department** _____

6. Projected cost (list rough annual cost of budget item):

Operating Issue \$ \$130,658 (Annual Operating Costs)*

Capital/Project \$ 45,800 (Project Cost)**

 \$ _____ (Associated Annual Operating Costs)

* *Based on the current cost for one CSO (Community Services Officer)*

** *One-time cost for a vehicle and computer*

7. Recommended funding source:

New revenue source _____

Service level reduction _____

Other General Fund

Please describe recommended funding source: This position is not included in the current Operating Budget and would require the addition of one CSO to the DPS BPA.

8. Staff evaluation and recommendation of proposed budget issue:

Evaluation: DPS is seeking opportunities to expand the educational component of the existing traffic safety program. The City is experiencing increased daily traffic flow and continues to respond to collisions involving injury to bicyclists and pedestrians. The goals and objectives of the Selective Traffic Enforcement Program include taking steps to reduce the incidence of injury and fatality to bicyclists and pedestrians that result from collisions. The Safe Routes to Schools Program is a good fit with existing Department goals.

Adding a Program Coordinator would provide a new level of service, replacing a service that is currently grant funded and being delivered by the Santa Clara County Public Health Department. Should the Council refer this budget issue to the City Manager for consideration in development of the proposed budget, staff would analyze the potential to have this need filled by an existing City classification – a Community Services Officer (CSO), for example. Utilizing an existing classification would provide greater flexibility in offering Safe Routes to Schools program services and other, related duties as allowed by that more general position (e.g., support to the Traffic or Crime Prevention Units).

Recruitment, hiring, and training of a new position to coordinate the Safe Routes to Schools program will take six to nine months. Ideally, that person would work with the County's current coordinator during a transition phase of nine to twelve months to ensure seamless program continuity.

Refer budget issue for consideration in Recommended Budget	<u> X </u>
Defer budget issue to future fiscal year	<u> </u>
Drop budget issue	<u> </u>

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