



**CITY OF SALINAS
COUNCIL STAFF REPORT**

DATE: OCTOBER 18, 2022
DEPARTMENT: PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT
FROM: DAVID JACOBS, PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR
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TITLE: DRAFT SALINAS SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOLS PLAN

RECOMMENDED MOTION:

None.

RECOMMENDATION:

Receive a presentation from Ecology Action staff on the Draft Salinas Safe Routes to Schools Plan and provide feedback. Comments and feedback can be incorporated into the plan before it is finalized. The Council will be asked to adopt the Salinas Safe Routes to School Plan as a strategic planning document later this year.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

At its October 22, 2019 meeting the City Council authorized an agreement (Attachment 1) with the Transportation Agency for Monterey County (TAMC) for the use of state grant funds for the development of a Salinas Safe Routes to Schools Plan. The Traffic and Transportation Commission received updates during the December 12, 2019, March 12, 2020 and April 12, 2022 meetings. The Draft Safe Routes to School Plan is now ready, and the City Council is asked to receive a presentation, review the plan and provide feedback. There is no recommendation for this item. The City Council will be given a time to review the plan and provide feedback. At a future Council meeting will be requested to adopt the Salinas Safe Routes to School Plan as a strategic planning document.

BACKGROUND:

City staff has been working with TAMC to develop a regional program for Safe Routes to School. With voter approval of Measure X, TAMC has allocated Measure X funds toward improving safety for all who travel to schools. Measure X funds in the amount of \$168,978 were leveraged to secure a \$954,502 Caltrans Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant focused on Salinas routes to schools.

Under the grant, TAMC partnered with the Monterey County Health Department, Ecology Action, and City staff to develop the Salinas Safe Routes to School Plan. The City Council approved a Resolution (No. 21724) to enter into an agreement with TAMC to develop the Salinas Safe Routes to School Plan (Attachment 1). The nearly four-year planning process is nearly complete and the Draft Salinas Safe Routes to School Plan is ready for public review. The Commission is asked to review the Plan and provide comments and feedback. At the October Traffic and Transportation Commission meeting, the Commission will be requested to make a recommendation to City Council.

The team has been in coordination with Caltrans and project partners since the Fall of 2019. The project team has conducted outreach for the forty-four (44) schools in and around Salinas. Meetings and school safety audits have been conducted to help identify safety concerns as well as barriers to choosing active transportation to and from schools. As part of the project the team also facilitated two (2) pop-up demonstration events. The pop-up events temporarily installed some of the infrastructure recommendations from the Safe Routes to School Plan. These events were held for Sherwood Elementary School, on East Alisal Street and for Harden Middle School on McKinnon Street. The team has completed the Draft Safe Routes to School Plan and is asking the Commission to review the plan and provide feedback prior to recommending to the City Council for approval.

The City of Salinas Safe Routes to Schools Plan provides community-identified needs as well as recommendations for infrastructure projects and programs that support walking, bicycling, and carpooling to 45 schools in Salinas. The plan also identifies possible funding sources and implementation priorities. The recommendations in this plan aim to support a healthy community, improve affordable transportation options for low-income and vulnerable residents, and help the City achieve its Vision Zero Goal and the statewide goals to address climate change by reducing vehicle miles traveled.

Public input was the foundation of the process to create the Safe Routes to Schools Plan. The planning team developed an outreach plan and sought input from community members to understand school transportation needs and barriers and refine the draft recommendations. Parent and student surveys, presentations at parent meetings, and walking audits with school staff all contributed input on the barriers to walking and biking to schools in Salinas and the types of improvements that community members would like to see.

- Parent Outreach
 - 140 presentations at virtual parent meetings
 - 2,425 responses to online parent survey
 - 1,341 responses to draft recommendations survey
 - 35,000+ parents reached through Parentsquare or social media
- Student Outreach
 - 474 responses to student survey
 - 17 elementary schools distributed traffic safety scavenger hunt activity to students
- Temporary Installations

- 2 demonstration projects on East Alisal Street and McKinnon Street

Based on parent survey data collected for this plan, 36% of students in Salinas walked or biked to school in 2019. The City of Salinas has set two goals for the future of Safe Routes to Schools, to be accomplished through implementation of the projects and programs in this plan:

- The majority of Salinas students walk, or bike to school
- Elimination of all severe injury and fatality collisions for Salinas youth under 18 who are walking and bicycling

The Safe Routes to Schools Plan identifies improvements for each school and also corridors which include improvements which provide key routes to multiple Salinas schools. These streets may be good candidates for corridor-level improvements in the future to slow traffic speeds, improve intersections and crossings, and create a safe and comfortable environment for students to walk to school. Class I shared-use paths are completely separated from motor vehicles and offer the most comfortable environment for walking and biking.

The projects recommended in this plan were evaluated using five criteria that are aligned with the vision and goals of this plan and with common grant application criteria. The criteria includes: safety; access to key destinations; connectivity and low-stress network; equity; and community-identified need. This project scoring is meant to help decisionmakers and city staff prioritize projects and identify the most competitive projects for various grant funding opportunities. Equity scores are based on the Healthy Places Index map, which shows data on health indicators such as education, job opportunities, and clean air and water. Each project was assigned a number from 0 to 100 and the top 10 highest priority ranking projects are as shown in the table below.

Rank	School	Project no.	Recommendation	Street	Cross Street 1	Cross Street 2	TOTAL
1	Sherwood Elementary/ El Sausal Middle	SE013/ ESM001	Consider protected pedestrian phases at Alisal/Woods, Alisal/Madeira, and Alisal/Hebbron. Install high-visibility crosswalks and protected bike lanes as outlined in Alisal Vibrancy Plan. Remove on-street parking in front of El Sausal, and shift bus drop-off from Towt to Alisal.	E Alisal St	Kern St	Skyway Blvd	100

2	Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Elementary/ Jesse G. Sanchez Elementary	MLKA008	Short term: Install class II bike lanes between Laurel and Del Monte. Long term: Widen sidewalk to create multi-use path from Laurel to Garner. Install bike-conflict markings at recreation center entrance and exit driveways. Install raised median with pedestrian refuge islands.	Sanborn Rd	Del Monte Ave	Laurel Dr	90
3	Carr Lake Community Day/Mount Toro High/ El Puente	CLCD005	Consolidate bike lanes to one side of the road for a two-way cycle track or multi-use path. Upgrade bike lanes on Natividad between Bernal and Boronda to class IV separated bikeways, and install protected intersection treatments at Bernal to facilitate transition to cycle track.	Sherwood Dr	Bernal St	Rossi St	86
4	Creekside Elementary	CE016	Upgrade class II bike lane to class IV.	Constitution Blvd	Boronda Rd	Independence	85
4	Henry F. Kammann	HFK006	Install class IV separated bikeways or class I multi-use path.	W Laurel Dr	Davis Rd	N Main St	85
4	Los Padres Elementary	LPE002	Install raised median for entire length of John St with landscaping and lighting. Consider other opportunities for traffic calming.	John St	Salinas St	E Alisal St	85
4	Sherwood Elementary	SE012	Install curb extensions and ramps along John St.	John St	S Wood St	Sanborn Rd	85

5	Fremont Elementary	FE014	Install traffic calming, sharrow marking, and bike boulevard signage.	Towt St	Market St	Laurel Dr	81
6	Santa Rita Elementary	SRE002	Consider bike boulevard with traffic calming between Main St and Van Buren Ave. Consider street trees. Consider sidewalk widening on south side to install multi-use path.	E Bolivar St	Main St	Van Buren Ave	79
6	Virginia Rocca Barton Elementary	VRBE020	Install traffic calming (chicanes and removal of parking at those locations), sharrow markings, and bike route signage.	Del Monte Ave	Rider Ave	William s Rd	79

The final plan and all of the outreach and recommendations can be found on the project’s website at: <https://saferoutesmonterey.org/planning-salinas/>. The website will be accepting comments until October 23rd. City Council can choose to submit comments through the website or directly to staff before the final plan is brought to Council for adoption.

CEQA CONSIDERATION:

The City of Salinas has determined that the proposed action is not a project as defined by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (CEQA Guidelines Section 15378). The Salinas Safe Routes to School Plan is a strategic planning document. The implementation of any of the Plan recommendations will require CEQA consideration.

STRATEGIC PLAN INITIATIVE:

The Safe Routes to School Plan supports Council’s goals of “Infrastructure and Environmental Sustainability”, “Youth and Senior”, and “Public Safety” by developing planned infrastructure recommendations to support safe walking and biking to Salinas Schools.

DEPARTMENTAL COORDINATION:

Public Works and Community Development staff are working with regional partners including Monterey County Health Department, School Districts and TAMC.

FISCAL AND SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT:

There is no impact to the General Fund. TAMC leveraged Measure X funds in the amount of \$168,978 to secure a \$954,502 Caltrans Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant focused on Salinas routes to schools. TAMC was the project lead with the City participating as a co-applicant for the Caltrans Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant. The City's portion of the budget for this grant funded project was \$72,116. At the time this report is being the City has only claimed \$28,699.38 and the City is anticipated to finish under budget.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment 1: Resolution 21724

Attachment 2: Draft Safe Routes to School Plan

Attachment 3: Presentation