

**CITY OF GAUTIER
MEMORANDUM**

To: Samantha Abell, City Manager
From: Patty Huffman, Grants and Projects Manager
Through: Eric Meyer, Director of Economic Development and Planning
Date: February 11, 2013
Subject: Request to submit an application for Mississippi Department of Transportation's 2013 Safe Routes to School grant funds

REQUEST:

The Economic Development and Planning Department requests City Council authorization for the submission of a grant application to the Mississippi Department of Transportation for the 2013 Safe Routes to School funding.

BACKGROUND:

The Safe Routes to School Program was established as a response to the reduced number of children walking and bicycling to school. This change in the mode of transportation has added to traffic congestion, reduced air quality, and contributed to the decline in children's health. The purpose of this grant funding is

- to enable and encourage children, including those with disabilities, to walk and bicycle to school;
- to make bicycling and walking to school a safer and more appealing alternative; and
- to facilitate the planning, development and implementation of projects and activities that will improve safety; and reduce traffic, fuel consumption and air pollution in the vicinity of schools.

DISCUSSION:

A grant application is proposed for up to \$250,000 for infrastructure improvements and activities designed to encourage and enable children to walk and bicycle safely to College Park Elementary School. School officials estimate that approximately 100 children walk or ride bikes to that school on a daily basis. The guidelines require the formation of a Safe Routes to School Task Force and all proposals must include the "5 E's": Engineering, Education, Enforcement, Encouragement, and Evaluation. Applications must be postmarked by March 1, 2013. The Safe Routes to School Program is 100% federally funded and therefore requires no matching funds from applicants. Safe Routes to School is a reimbursement program; payment will be made after project expenses have been incurred, submitted, and approved for payment. Projects must be initiated within 90 days of the award notification letter, and all projects must be completed within two years following the date of the signed award letter.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Economic Development and Planning Department staff recommends that City Council authorize submission of a grant application for the 2013 Safe Routes to School funding for infrastructure and non-infrastructure improvements for College Park Elementary School.

City Council may:

1. Authorize submission of an application for up to \$250,000 in grant funding as described above; or
2. Authorize submission of a grant application with changes; or
3. Disapprove submission of a grant application.

ATTACHMENT(S):

N/A