



Oregon

Kate Brown, Governor

Oregon Transportation Commission

Office of the Director, MS 11

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DATE: January 7, 2019
TO: Oregon Transportation Commission

[Original signature on file]

FROM: Matthew L. Garrett
Director

SUBJECT: **Agenda E** – Approve Recommended 2019-2020 Safe Routes to School Infrastructure Projects

Requested Action:

Approve recommended projects for the Safe Routes to School 2019-2020 Competitive Grant Program, and the reduced match for requesting entities on qualified projects.

Background:

In September 2017, the Commission approved the formation of a Rulemaking Advisory Committee to implement Safe Routes to School infrastructure funding from House Bill 2017 (2017 Transportation Funding). The legislation allocated \$10 million dollars of state highway funds each year to the Safe Routes to School Fund ([ORS 184.740](#)), which increases to \$15 million in 2023 and beyond. The legislation also states that the Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC) may reduce the local cash match requirement from 40 percent to 20 percent if the project meets certain criteria (described below). In July of 2018, the OTC approved amendments to the Safe Routes to School Rule ([OAR 737-025](#)).

Using this direction, staff established the Safe Routes to School Competitive Grant Program of \$16 million for 2019-2020. In August 2018, the OTC approved project selection criteria and weighting for this first cycle of funding. ODOT staff conducted broad stakeholder outreach about the program and how to apply, and over 400 people attended in-person workshops or an online webinar. ODOT received a total of 112 applications from across Oregon, with total requests for funding of \$85 million far outpacing the \$16 million available.

Also, per direction in the Rule, ODOT formed an 18-member Safe Routes to School Advisory Committee in the fall of 2018 to advise ODOT and the OTC on program design and project selection. This committee includes safe routes to school coordinators and advocates, as well as representatives from local jurisdictions, state advisory committees (safety, public transportation, and bicycle/pedestrian), the Oregon Department of Education, and ones representing equity, accessibility, and public health perspectives (Attachment 1).

Safe Routes to School Decision Making Process

ODOT received applications in October 2018, and ODOT staff assigned a quantitative score to all applications using the selection criteria set by the OTC. ODOT's OTC-approved scoring criteria

prioritized projects benefiting low income students (Title I schools), addressing high-risk safety issues, located near elementary and middle schools, and ones which were “shovel-ready.” ODOT staff conducted a ground conditions review on the highest scoring projects and sent the full list of applicants to the Safe Routes to School Advisory Committee.

Safe Routes to School Advisory Committee Recommended Projects

On December 17, 2018 the Safe Routes to School Advisory Committee reviewed all the ODOT-vetted applications and, relying on empirical scores and considerations of the geographic distribution of funds, approved a list of 24 projects recommended for OTC approval (Attachment 2). The Safe Routes to School Advisory Committee also recommended that the Commission approve a reduction in match for requesting entities on qualified projects.

Match Reductions

Per HB 2017 (Transportation Funding) and OAR 737-025, the OTC may approve a match reduction from 40 percent to 20 percent for projects:

- in a city with a population of 5,000 or fewer;
- along a Priority Safety Corridor;¹ or
- that serve a Title I school.

All applications recommended were for projects that serve a Title I school, which was the focus for this first round of funding. Thus, all projects recommended are eligible for a reduced match. ODOT is choosing not to request match reduction in an attempt to maximize the impact of limited SRTS funding — all projects awarded to ODOT will contribute the full 40 percent match. A few other jurisdictions also chose to contribute the full 40 percent match. The rest of the entities request a reduced match (as shown in Attachment 2’s project list). The Safe Routes to School Advisory Committee and staff recommend match reductions for requesting entities.

Safe Routes to School Infrastructure Program beyond the Recommendation

ODOT staff is working to have agreements with new grantees in place by spring of 2019. Projects are required to be completed within five years of the signed agreement.

Attachments:

- Attachment 1 – Safe Routes to School Advisory Committee Roster
- Attachment 2 – Safe Routes to School Recommended Projects for the 2019-2020 Competitive Grant Program and Request for Match Reductions

¹ A “Priority Safety Corridor” is a project in an area with high-risk factors that are known to impact safety and which have not been mitigated. Conditions of a Priority Safety Corridor are defined in OAR 737-025 and include speed, width of the roadway, traffic volumes, and history of crashes.

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