



City of Grand Island

Tuesday, December 04, 2007

Council Session

Item G8

**#2007-314 - Approving Application for Safe Routes to School
Program Funds for Independence Trail**

Staff Contact: Steven P. Riehle, City Engineer/Public Works Direc

Council Agenda Memo

From: Steven P. Riehle, Public Works Director

Meeting: December 4, 2007

Subject: Approving Application for Safe Routes to School Program Funds for Independence Trail

Item #'s: G-8

Presenter(s): Steven P. Riehle, Public Works Director

Background

The Nebraska Department of Roads (NDOR) administers the federal funds for the Safe Routes To Schools (SRTS) program for Infrastructure projects such as sidewalk & street crossing improvements, traffic diversion, bicycle facilities, etc. and Non-Infrastructure projects such as promotional materials & activities, student bicycle & pedestrian safety education, etc. The projects must enable and encourage K-8 school children to safely walk and bike to school. The program focuses on promoting physical activity & improving health by encouraging children to walk & bike to school, making routes to school safe, and reducing traffic congestion around schools.

A maximum of \$250,000 is available per project to communities, schools and other local entities. SRTS projects can be 100 percent funded by the program, but local matches increase the strength of an application.

The City of Grand Island (Public Works and Community Development) is partnering with Grand Island Public Schools, Northwest High School, Central District Health Department, and Tri-Cities Safe Kids on the a project titled the "Independence Trail". The Grand Island Police Department and School Resource Officers will play important roles in the success of the project when complete.

Grants were requested in 2 categories, Infrastructure and Non-Infrastructure.

Infrastructure Grant Application

We requested \$250,000 for Infrastructure funds for the trail plus a \$30,000 local match. The infrastructure part of the project is for a trail along the west side of Independence Ave from the old Westridge Middle School (new Engleman Elementary) at Manchester Road to George Park and then continuing along Independence Avenue across Capital

Avenue to Woodland Park Subdivision, then along the edge of the subdivision to Northwest High School.

Non-Infrastructure Grant Application

We requested \$35,076.12 for a Non-Infrastructure project plus a \$8,538.72 local match. The Non-Infrastructure part of the project is for education, enforcement, and encouragement to complement Infrastructure improvements. The Central District Health Department is facilitating the Non-Infrastructure application.

This is the third step in the application process for Safe Routes to Schools. In August 2007, the City submitted an Intent to Apply application to construct a Hike & Bike Trail extension from the existing Shoemaker Trail at the southeast corner of the old Westridge Middle School (new Engleman Elementary School) to George Park and then up to North West High School. A Draft application was submitted to the Department of Roads in October. The City was invited to submit Final applications for both the Infrastructure and the Non-Infrastructure projects. The final applications are due on December 7th.

Discussion

Sinclair Hille Architects is the Nebraska Department of Roads Project Coordinator Consultant for the SRTS program. A grant review meeting was held with a project coordinator from Sinclair Hille on November 19th. At the meeting, the location for the trail was shifted to the west side of Independence, requiring filling in the west ditch of Independence north of Manchester Avenue, thus increasing the project cost significantly.

The project coordinator said they have 70 applicants and only \$1.0 million in available funding. The projects are being considered as one, so the cap on funding is \$250,000 for the total of both projects. To keep under the \$250,000 limit and to increase our chance for the project to be funded, the proposed Infrastructure project is being shortened to build a trail along the west side of Independence Avenue from Manchester Road to George Park. The trail segments from the existing Shoemaker Trail to the Manchester Road and Independence Avenue intersection and from Capital Avenue to Northwest High School were removed from the grant application to lower the cost.

If the grants are approved, the projects could be completed in 2009.

Alternatives

It appears that the Council has the following alternatives concerning the issue at hand. The Council may:

1. Move to approve
2. Refer the issue to a Committee
3. Postpone the issue to future date
4. Take no action on the issue

Recommendation

City Administration recommends that the Council approve the Safe Routes to Schools Infrastructure and Non-Infrastructure grant applications and authorize the Mayor to sign all related documents for the projects.

Sample Motion

Move to approve submission of the proposed Infrastructure and Non-Infrastructure grant applications and authorize the Mayor to sign all related documents for the projects.



Infrastructure Project Request (Draft Application Form)

For Office Use Only
Date Received: _____

1.	APPLICANT NAME: City of Grand Island	TYPE OF APPLICANT <i>(Check One)</i> : <input type="checkbox"/> Village <input type="checkbox"/> NRD	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> City	<input type="checkbox"/> County	<input type="checkbox"/> School
			<input type="checkbox"/> State	<input type="checkbox"/> School District	<input type="checkbox"/> Other
2.	APPLICANT CONTACT PERSON: Steve Riehle	FAX NUMBER: (308) 385-5423			
	MAILING ADDRESS: <i>(Street)</i> P.O. Box 1968 (100 E. 1 st St.)	CITY: Grand Island	STATE: NE	ZIP: 68801	
	DAYTIME PHONE: (308) 385-5444	E-MAIL: sriehle@grand-island.com			
3.	CONTACT PERSON: <i>(Print Name & Title)</i> Steve Riehle, Public Works Director/City Engineer	SIGNATURE		DATE: 10-18-2007	
4.	APPLICANT: <i>(Print Name & Title)</i> Margaret Hornady, Mayor	SIGNATURE		DATE: 10-18-2007	

5.	PROJECT NAME: <i>(Example: Rushville Safe Routes Project; Hawthorne Elementary School Routes)</i> INDEPENDENCE TRAIL (formerly called CAPITAL HEIGHTS PROJECT)
6.	PROJECT DESCRIPTION/LOCATION: <i>(Include location, work to be performed, attach map and aerial image)</i> The City of Grand Island Community Development, Parks, Police, & Public Works Departments; Grand Island Public Schools; Northwest School District; Central District Health Department; and Safe Kids Tri-Cities are participating in the school route project, Independence Trail. The trail will extend the existing Shoemaker Trail and complete a connection between Shoemaker Elementary, the New Engleman Elementary, the New Westridge Middle School, Northwest High School and George Park. The off-street trail will start at the Old Westridge Middle School that is soon to be remodeled into the new Engleman Elementary School. The trail will continue along Independence Avenue, weave through the edge of George Park, continue north along Independence Avenue and connect to Northwest High School through Woodland Park Subdivision. Independence Trail connects to the school route that was incorporated into the design of a new northwest Grand Island Westridge Middle School. The New Westridge was placed along the Shoemaker Trail to complement the School Route Plan, improve pedestrian and biker safety, and encourage students to walk and bike to school. The proposed project will 1) provide a continuous walking/biking trail on one side of the street, 2) improve pedestrian and biker safety along streets that carry significant volumes of traffic, 3) connect 4 schools to George Park with a safe, off-street trail, and 4) enhance the existing School Route Plan. Independence Trail is a great multi-use opportunity for Grand Island youth, families, parks and schools.

	<p>a) CURRENT WALK/BICYCLE CONDITIONS: The area was developed prior to being annexed into the city with asphalt streets, open ditches and no curb & gutter. Sidewalks that tie the neighborhood to the schools and park are almost non-existent. Pedestrians are often required to walk in the street, walk in the ditches, or cross the street if a sidewalk is available. School related motor vehicular traffic in the area is significant with no school bussing available in Grand Island. Many Northwest High School Students also drive to school further adding to the congestion. There are four existing schools west of US Highway 281 in Grand Island with over 1,500 students walking, biking, driving, or relying on a driver for transportation. Recent traffic counts near the high school and Capital Avenue were 3,000 vehicles per day. Traffic counts near the new Westridge Middle School were 1,100 vehicles per day.</p> <p>The school system is making sidewalk and even some trail enhancements as part of their work at the New Westridge and New Engleman. In response to parent, school staff, and community concerns for student safety, the school is also modifying vehicular traffic flow at the New Engleman to make walking and biking conditions safer.</p> <p>b) SCHOOL AND STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS: Free and reduced lunch students comprise about 26% of the total 1,500 student population of all four schools, with Shoemaker Elementary reporting the largest percentage at 48.5%. The four schools further report an average of 12.25% of their students as minority, with Shoemaker Elementary again reporting the largest percentage at 25% (60 students.) The majority of the student population in the area is concentrated between the elementary and middle schools. Consequently, K-8 students will receive the bulk of education and encouragement to use the trail to get to school and to George Park. The existing Westridge Middle School has many activities that involve the use of George Park. Having a trail that connects the schools to themselves and to George Park will open new opportunities for collaborative programs and activities.</p> <p>It is possible that activities may be scheduled that would require Shoemaker Elementary students to walk to the new Westridge or Engleman Elementary students may walk to the new Westridge. The distance between the new Westridge and the new Engleman is shorter than between Westridge and Shoemaker. Therefore, since the new Westridge has a football field and track (which the old Westridge did not have), it is quite possible that students from Shoemaker or Engleman could walk to Westridge to watch middle school siblings participating in sports events)</p> <p>c) DESCRIBE HOW THE PROJECT WILL ENABLE & ENCOURAGE K-8 STUDENTS TO WALK AND BICYCLE TO SCHOOL: 1) The Engineering for the project will increase safety for walking/biking students. Infrastructure changes at the new Engleman and Westridge schools will improve pedestrian safety and help traffic flow resulting in less traffic congestion. This will create a physical environment that is more conducive to walking/biking to and from school. 2) The Educational campaign will enlist students in its design and implementation. Middle school activities will capitalize on middle school behaviors of behavioral autonomy, value autonomy, and the strong need to belong to a peer group. Elementary activities will mirror middle school themes to some degree, but will be tailored to fit elementary age social development and necessarily target parents who serve as decision makers for this age group. 3) Encouragement for all age levels will come from parents and faculty in promoting healthy behaviors, thereby shifting the community norm from transporting children to school by car to a new norm of walking/biking. 4) Enforcement and enhanced traffic surveillance by law enforcement will further ensure safety for walking/biking by increasing community adherence to traffic laws and walking/biking rules. 5) Evaluation will show the effectiveness of infrastructure changes and measure the level of behavioral/attitude changes in walking/biking students. Parent/student completion of an evaluation instrument will provide post-intervention data and remind both of the benefits of walking/biking as healthy, safe transportation options..</p>	
7.	PROJECT COST TOTAL: \$280,000 FEDERAL FUNDS REQUESTED: \$250,000	
8.	ADDITIONAL FUNDS: <i>(If yes, please describe)</i> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes City of Grand Island <input type="checkbox"/> no	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL PROJECT COST: 10.7%
9.	PROJECT TYPE: <input type="checkbox"/> Traffic Calming or Speed Reduction Improvements <input type="checkbox"/> Pedestrian and bicycle crossing improvements <input type="checkbox"/> Sidewalk improvements <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Off-street bicycle and pedestrian facilities <input type="checkbox"/> Secure bicycle parking facilities <input type="checkbox"/> Traffic diversion improvements in the vicinity of schools	

Attach the following required items:

- **Budget** (see sample budget)
- **School Route Plan Map** (8 ½ x 11 only--include project location/alignment, street names, north arrow, points of interest--see Appendix C within *Application Guidelines*)
- **Aerial image** (8 ½ x 11 only—aerial images can be obtained at <http://dnrmap2.dnr.state.ne.us/website/doqviewer/viewer.htm>)





Noninfrastructure Project Request (Draft Application Form)

For Office Use Only
Date Received: _____

1.	APPLICANT NAME: City of Grand Island	TYPE OF APPLICANT <i>(Check One)</i> : <input type="checkbox"/> Village <input type="checkbox"/> NRD	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> City	<input type="checkbox"/> County	<input type="checkbox"/> School
			<input type="checkbox"/> State	<input type="checkbox"/> School District	<input type="checkbox"/> Other
2.	APPLICANT CONTACT PERSON: Steve Riehle	FAX NUMBER: (308) 385-5423			
	MAILING ADDRESS: <i>(Street)</i> P.O. Box 1968	CITY: Grand Island	STATE: NE	ZIP: 68801	
	DAYTIME PHONE: (308) 385-5444	E-MAIL: sriehle@grand-island.com			
3.	CONTACT PERSON: <i>(Print Name & Title)</i> Steven Riehle, Public Works Director/City Engineer	SIGNATURE			DATE: October 18, 2007
4.	APPLICANT: <i>(Print Name & Title)</i> Margaret Hornady, Mayor	SIGNATURE			DATE: October 18, 2007

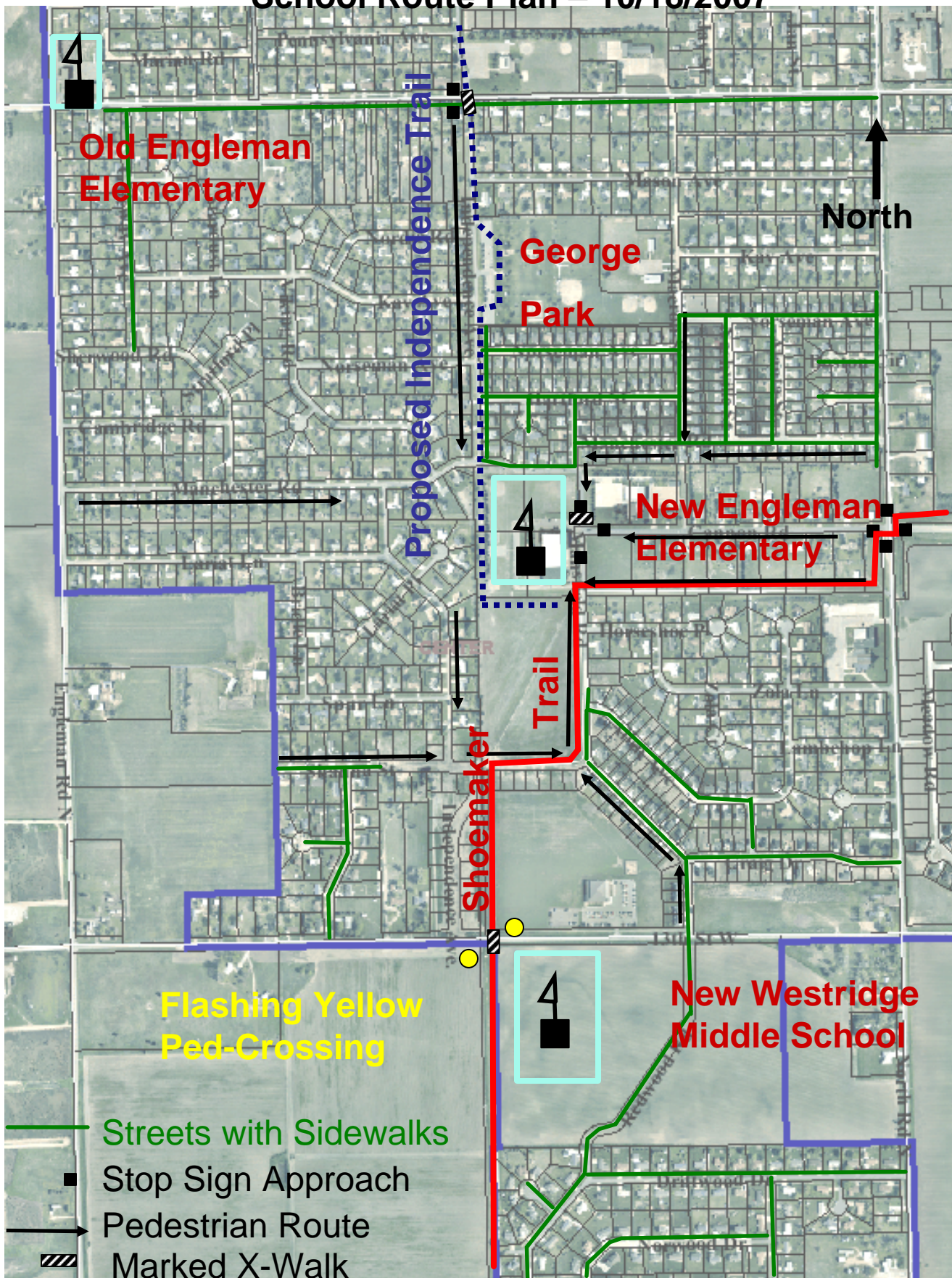
5.	PROJECT NAME: <i>(Example: Ogallala Public Schools Walk to School Day; Ralston Crossing Guard Training Program)</i> INDEPENDENCE TRAIL <i>(Previously called CAPITAL HEIGHTS PROJECT)</i>
6.	PROJECT DESCRIPTION/LOCATION: <i>(Include location, work to be performed, and attach map)</i> The City, Grand Island & Northwest School Districts, Central District Health Department, and Safe Kids Tri-Cities are participating on the school route project, Independence Trail. The trail will extend the existing Shoemaker Trail and complete a connection to two elementary schools, a middle school, Northwest High School and George Park. The off-street trail will start at the old Westridge Middle School that is soon to be remodeled into the new Engleman Elementary School. The trail will continue along Independence Avenue, weave through the edge of George Park, continue north along Independence Avenue to Woodlawn Park Subdivision, and connects to Northwest High School through Woodland Park Subdivision. Independence Trail connects to the school route that was incorporated into the design of a new northwest Grand Island Westridge Middle School. The new Westridge was placed along the Shoemaker Trail to complement the School Route Plan, improve pedestrian and biker safety, and encourage students to walk and bike to school. The proposed project will 1) provide continuous walking/biking trail on one side of the street, 2) improve pedestrian and biker safety along streets that carry significant volumes of traffic, 3) connect 4 schools to George Park with a safe, off-street trail, and 4) enhance the existing School Route Plan. Independence Trail is a great multi-use opportunity for northwest Grand Island youth and families.

	<p>a) CURRENT WALK/BICYCLE CONDITIONS: The area was developed prior to being annexed into the city with asphalt streets, open ditches and no curb & gutter. Sidewalks that tie the neighborhood to the schools and park are almost non-existent. Pedestrians are often required to walk in the street, walk in the ditches, or cross the street if a sidewalk is available. School related motor vehicular traffic in the area is significant with no school bussing available in Grand Island. Many Northwest High School Students also drive to school further adding to the congestion. There are four existing schools west of US Highway 281 in Grand Island with over 1,500 students walking, biking, driving, or relying on a driver for transportation. Recent traffic counts near the high school and Capital Avenue were 3,000 vehicles per day. Traffic counts near the new Westridge Middle School were 1,100 vehicles per day.</p> <p>The school system is making sidewalk and even some trail enhancements as part of their work at the New Westridge and New Engleman. In response to parent, school staff, and community concerns for student safety, the school is also modifying vehicular traffic flow at the New Engleman to make walking and biking conditions safer.</p> <p>b) SCHOOL AND STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS: Free and reduced lunch students comprise about 26% of the total 1,500 student population of all four schools, with Shoemaker Elementary reporting the largest percentage at 48.5%. The four schools further report an average of 12.25% of their students as minority, with Shoemaker Elementary again reporting the largest percentage at 25% (60 students.) The majority of the student population in the area is concentrated between the elementary and middle schools. Consequently, K-8 students will receive the bulk of education and encouragement to use the trail to get to school and to George Park. The existing Westridge Middle School has many activities that involve the use of George Park. Having a trail that connects the schools to themselves and to George Park will open new opportunities for collaborative programs and activities.</p> <p>It is possible that activities may be scheduled that would require Shoemaker Elementary students to walk to the new Westridge or Engleman Elementary students may walk to the new Westridge. The distance between the new Westridge and the new Engleman is shorter than between Westridge and Shoemaker. Therefore, since the new Westridge has a football field and track (which the old Westridge did not have), it is quite possible that students from Shoemaker or Engleman could walk to Westridge to watch middle school siblings participating in sports events)</p> <p>c) DESCRIBE HOW THE PROJECT WILL ENABLE & ENCOURAGE K-8 STUDENTS TO WALK AND BICYCLE TO SCHOOL: 1) The Engineering for the project will increase safety for walking/biking students. Infrastructure changes at the new Engleman and Westridge schools will improve pedestrian safety and help traffic flow resulting in less traffic congestion. This will create a physical environment that is more conducive to walking/biking to and from school. 2) The Educational campaign will enlist students in its design and implementation. Middle school activities will capitalize on middle school behaviors of behavioral autonomy, value autonomy, and the strong need to belong to a peer group. Elementary activities will mirror middle school themes to some degree, but will be tailored to fit elementary age social development and necessarily target parents who serve as decision makers for this age group. 3) Encouragement for all age levels will come from parents and faculty in promoting healthy behaviors, thereby shifting the community norm from transporting children to school by car to a new norm of walking/biking. 4) Enforcement and enhanced traffic surveillance by law enforcement will further ensure safety for walking/biking by increasing community adherence to traffic laws and walking/biking rules. 5) Evaluation will show the effectiveness of infrastructure changes and measure the level of behavioral/attitude changes in walking/biking students. Parent/student completion of an evaluation instrument will provide post-intervention data and remind both of the benefits of walking/biking as healthy, safe transportation options..</p>	
7.	PROJECT COST TOTAL: \$43,614.84 FEDERAL FUNDS REQUESTED: \$35,076.12	
8.	ADDITIONAL FUNDS: <i>(If yes, please describe)</i> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes \$8,538.72 from Central District Health Department <input type="checkbox"/> no	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL PROJECT COST: 19.5%
9.	PROJECT TYPE: <input type="checkbox"/> Public awareness campaigns and outreach to press and community leaders <input type="checkbox"/> Traffic education and enforcement in the vicinity of schools <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Student sessions on bicycle and pedestrian safety, health, and environment <input type="checkbox"/> Funding for training, volunteers, and managers of safe routes to school programs	

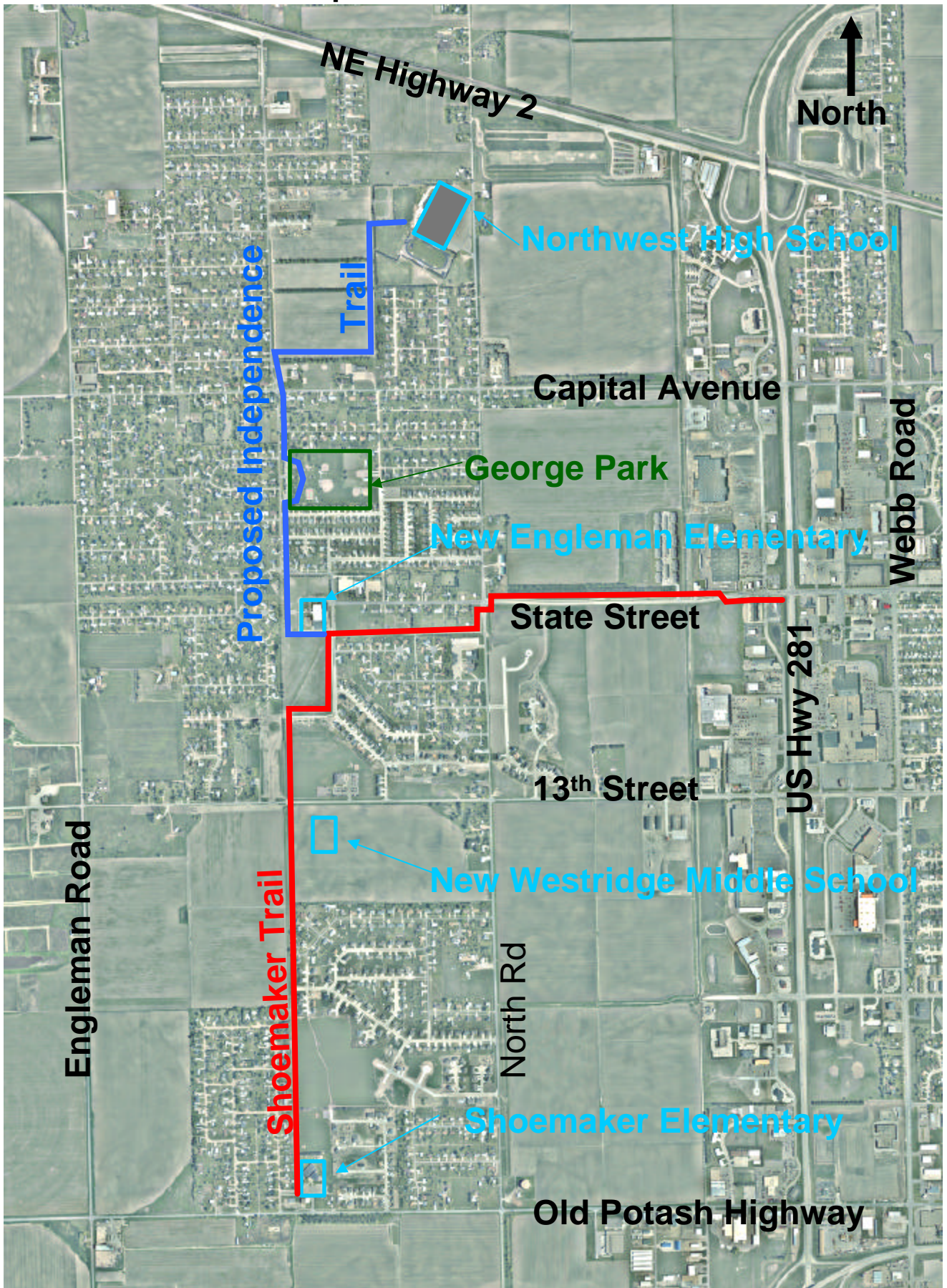
Attach the following required items:

- **Budget** (see sample budget)
- **Project Schedule**
- **School Route Plan Map** (8 ½ x 11 only--include project location/alignment, street names, north arrow, points of interest--see Appendix C within *Application Guidelines*)

School Route Plan – 10/18/2007



Independence Trail – 10/18/2007



RESOLUTION 2007-314

WHEREAS, In 2006 the Nebraska Department of Roads instituted the Safe Routes to Schools program to fund infrastructure and non-infrastructure projects to enable and encourage kindergarten through eighth grade children to safely walk and ride their bicycles to school; and

WHEREAS, the City of Grand Island is partnering with Grand Island Public Schools, Northwest High School, Central District Health Department and Safe Kids Tri Cities on the "Independence Trail" project; and

WHEREAS, the City of Grand Island was invited to submit final applications for Infrastructure and Non-Infrastructure projects for the "Independence Trail" project; and

WHEREAS, the Nebraska Department of Roads requires that the final application for the grant be submitted by December 7, 2007; and

WHEREAS, the proposed applications and supporting documents were made available for public review at a properly announced meeting of the Grand Island City Council; and

WHEREAS, the Safe Routes to Schools program is 100% funded by the federal government and requires no matching funds from the City of Grand Island; and

WHEREAS, \$18,924.00 of local funds and \$19,614.72 of in-kind donations are being made available to strengthen the application; and

WHEREAS, the City of Grand Island has funds available to finance the activity until reimbursed by the Safe Routes to School Program, and has the financial capability to operate, maintain and manage the completed project in a safe and attractive manner for public use.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF GRAND ISLAND, NEBRASKA, that the City of Grand Island, Nebraska, is hereby authorized to apply for the Safe Routes to School Grant to fund the Infrastructure and Non-Infrastructure projects for the "Independence Trail" project.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Mayor is hereby authorized and directed to execute such grant application and other documentation on behalf of the City of Grand Island for such grant purposes.

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Adopted by the City Council of the City of Grand Island, Nebraska, December 4, 2007.

Margaret Hornady, Mayor

Attest:

Approved as to Form	☐ _____
November 29, 2007	☐ City Attorney

RaNae Edwards, City Clerk