



**Tennessee Department of Transportation
Communications Office**

Julie Oaks

**615.741.2331 (office)
615.533.7105 (mobile)
615.741.9093 (fax)**

October 23, 2008

Bredesen & Williams Announce Safe Routes to School Grant for Rogersville

Nashville, Tenn. – Governor Phil Bredesen and State Senator Mike Williams today announced that the state of Tennessee will provide the city of Rogersville with Safe Routes to School funds totaling \$229,810 for sidewalk and crosswalk improvements and for safety activities for middle and elementary school children. The Safe Routes to School program is a statewide initiative designed to make bicycling and walking to school a safer, more appealing and healthier alternative for students in kindergarten through eighth grade.

“The Safe Routes to School program is a great opportunity for schools, communities and government officials to work together to promote a healthier lifestyle for Tennessee children,” said Bredesen. “The program helps create safer walking and biking environments for younger students and funds activities to encourage children and their parents to consider walking and biking to school each day for a more active lifestyle.”

The city of Rogersville will utilize the Safe Routes to Schools funds to repair sidewalks and provide clearer markings for crosswalks in the area of Rogersville City School. The grant will also fund a number of educational activities for students and parents, addressing topics such as pedestrian and bicycle safety and the health benefits of walking and biking to school.

“This program has all the tools to successfully encourage more children to walk and bike to school,” said Williams. “By improving the safety of sidewalks and crosswalks and by educating children on safe walking and biking practices, more parents will be comfortable with allowing their children to walk and bike to school. I’m pleased to have secured these funds for Rogersville.”

Representative Mike Harrison added, “Fewer children walk and bike to school today than ever before. This program helps create a safe environment for children to walk or bike to school and teaches them the practices they need to stay safe. I’m pleased to support this program.”

The grant is made possible through a federally funded program administered by the Tennessee Department of Transportation. This year, TDOT provided more than \$1.7 million in Safe Routes to School funds to ten municipalities for projects across the state.

“The Safe Routes to School program is an innovative program that integrates health, fitness, traffic relief, environmental concerns, and safety all under one umbrella,” said TDOT Commissioner Gerald Nicely. “Funds may be used for two different types of projects, infrastructure and non-infrastructure, that directly support increased safety and conveniences for kindergarten through middle school children to walk and bike to school.”

The SRTS program is funded by \$10.7 million in federal funds through 2009. The funds were provided specifically for this purpose through SAFETEA-LU (Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users), the federal surface transportation program. The Safe Routes to School program is 100% federally funded and does not require a local match.

(MORE)

**James K. Polk Building, #700 • 505 Deaderick Street • Nashville, Tennessee 37243
www.tennessee.gov/tdot**

The Safe Routes to School program is comprised of five elements referred to as the 5 E's. The selection process was driven by the following:

- Engineering—creating operational and physical improvements to the infrastructure surrounding schools that reduce speeds and potential conflicts with motor vehicle traffic, and establishing safer and fully accessible crossings, walkways, trails and bikeways.
- Education—teaching children about the broad range of transportation choices, instructing them in important lifelong bicycling and walking safety skills and launching driver safety campaigns in the vicinity of schools.
- Enforcement—partnering with local law enforcement agencies to ensure traffic laws are obeyed in the vicinity of schools (including enforcement of speeds, yielding to pedestrians in crossings, and proper walking and bicycling behaviors), and to initiate community enforcement such as crossing guard programs.
- Encouragement—events and activities to promote walking and bicycling (bike rodeos).
- Evaluation—monitoring and documenting outcomes and trends through the collection of data both before and after the intervention.

To learn more about the Safe Routes to School Program at the Tennessee Department of Transportation, please visit <http://www.tdot.state.tn.us/bikeped/saferoutes.htm> or contact Diana Benedict, Program Coordinator, at (615) 253-2421 or diana.benedict@state.tn.us.

###