



**For Immediate Release**  
February 20<sup>th</sup>, 2009

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### **The City of Sargent in partnership with the Sargent Public Schools Receives Federal Safe Routes to School Funding**

**Sargent, Neb.** – The City of Sargent in partnership with the Sargent Public Schools was awarded \$137,005 recently by the Nebraska Department of Road's Safe Routes Nebraska program to build safer walking and biking routes to school for local children.

The Safe Routes Nebraska program provides schools and community groups with the funding they need to build safer routes to and from school. These improvements include engineering solutions as well as safety training, awareness and strategies to encourage children to get the exercise they need to lead happy, healthy lives.

Childhood obesity rates have more than tripled in the past 30 years while the number of children walking and biking to school has declined. According to the 2001 National Household Travel Survey, less than 16 percent of students between the ages of 5 and 15 walked or biked to or from school, compared to 42 percent in 1969.

The Safe Routes Nebraska funding will benefit local school children and encourage community involvement in the Safe Routes effort. Jessica Decker from the Sargent City Office is excited about the joint effort with Sargent Public Schools. *"This program not only helps our children but also offers benefits for the senior citizens. The improvements to our town show that we care and we want to move forward in a positive manner."*

Through the 2005 passage of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), Congress designated a total of \$612 million toward developing the National Safe Routes to School Program.

The Safe Routes Nebraska program will receive about \$1 million in funds annually from the National Safe Routes to School Program. Schools and communities across Nebraska are eligible to apply for a portion of these funds to help build safer routes to and from school and to promote walking and biking.

For additional information or to get involved, visit these Web sites:

*Sargent, Nebraska*  
<http://www.sargentne.com>

Safe Routes Nebraska  
<http://www.saferoutesne.org>