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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Grant Promotes Healthy Living

(Papillion) Mayor James Blinn announced The Nebraska Department of Road's Safe Routes Nebraska program awarded \$12,205 to the City of Papillion implementing a Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program at Carriage Hill Elementary.

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

The SRTS program will increase children's knowledge and practice of safe walking and bicycling. Information and safety tips will go home with students, be included in the school's physical education and health curriculum and students will have the opportunity to participate in half or full day interactive safety sessions.

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 five and 15 walked or biked to or from school, compared to 42 percent in 1969.

The Safe Routes Nebraska funding benefits local school children and encourages community involvement in the Safe Routes effort.

Mayor James Blinn said, "We want these children to grow up to be happy and healthy individuals and that starts with learning the importance of exercise, as well as the benefits they can receive. In addition to staying healthy, we strive to educate our community on safety measures when kids are walking and riding their bikes to school."