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**WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL**

Washington State Department of Transportation  
Attention: Safe Routes to School Program

March 24, 2026

To whom it may concern,

Whatcom County Council writes in strong support of Whatcom County Public Works' Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Grant Application, which would allow for important safety improvements to walking paths and pedestrian crossings used by Alderwood Elementary School students on their routes to and from school.

Alderwood Elementary School is one of three Bellingham Public School District schools outside City of Bellingham limits and within Whatcom County jurisdiction. While much of unincorporated Whatcom County is rural, the area surrounding Alderwood is densely populated with homes and apartment complexes, and there is high pedestrian and bike activity during school drop-off and pick-up hours.

Whatcom County and Bellingham Public Schools have worked together to identify needed safety enhancements within the Alderwood Elementary School walk route, including improvements to sidewalks, crossings, signage, and accessibility. In 2025, Council adopted Ordinance 2025-035, establishing 20 MPH school speed zones on Bennett Drive and Alderwood Avenue and allowing for the installation of new and enhanced signage near the school.

Funding from the SRTS Program would allow for the remaining planned safety improvements to move forward. There are currently several long stretches along the Alderwood walk route where sidewalks are not present and students must walk along the road shoulders to reach their destination. This project would allow for the construction of much-needed sidewalk connections along Redwood Avenue, Hollywood Avenue, and Alderwood Avenue, ensuring students have a safe, reliable path to travel between home and school. Funding from this grant would also support the addition of several marked crossings and Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFBs), increasing students' visibility to drivers on a busy, high-traffic road corridor. In addition to these safety enhancements, the project also includes ADA-compliant upgrades to curb returns, improving access for all.

Whatcom County Council is proud to support this project to enhance the safety and wellbeing of students at Alderwood Elementary School.

Thank you for your time and consideration of Whatcom County Public Works' grant application.

Sincerely,

Kaylee Galloway, Chair  
Whatcom County Council