



## **Novato Task Force Meeting Notes May 5, 2011**

### **Present (10)**

Wendi Kallins – Program Director for Safe Routes to Schools; Laura Kelly – Volunteer Liaison for Safe Routes to Schools; Jason Nutt – Novato Public Works Director/City Engineer; David Harlan – Novato Principal Civil Engineer (Private Projects); Mark Silva – Director of Maintenance Operations for the Novato Unified School District; Terry Brown – Grant Writer for Novato Police Department; Oliver Collins – Novato Police Department; Marla Fields – Team Leader for Rancho Elementary. Michelle Camicia – Team Leader for Loma Verde; Kathy McLeod – Wheelscape.

### **Infrastructure plans and issues**

#### **1) Call for Cycle 3 Federal Safe Routes to Schools Projects**

The deadline to apply for Cycle 3 federal funds is July 15, 2011. However, input is needed by June 15 (before school gets out). There is no local match required. \$1,000,000,000 is the maximum amount that can be requested for an infrastructure project, and \$500,000 for a non-infrastructure project. The grant application process is very competitive. Wendi noted there will be a webinar regarding how to prepare an effective application package.

Jason reported that we have applied for Cycle 7, 8 and 9. We did receive Cycle 7 funding. Jason added that we can incorporate other requests into the Cycle 7 funding that we have received.

Michelle asked if we could submit a Cycle 3 request to widen the sidewalk near Loma Verde Elementary School. Wendi replied that we could not because it is an unincorporated area. The best way to apply for funds for Loma Verde from the county is to contact county public works.

#### **2) Lynwood Elementary School Recommendations**

As a result of the walkabout that was conducted in the Lynwood Elementary parking lot area, a hard copy of improvement recommendations were prepared and distributed to

Task Force members to review. Team Leader Nathan Hirsch, David Parisi, Jason Nutt and Dave Harlan all participated in the walkabout to clearly identify the issues regarding the fact that there is no direct walking path to the main entrance of the school. Two options were provided regarding relocating parking and creating a new concrete walkway.

Marla said the Area 3 stretch (in the diagram provided) is very narrow and many times there are NUSD food service trucks parked. Three white trucks are shown in the photo that was included in the report. Marla believes that Option #2 makes more sense because you would need to restripe the narrow path if Option #1 was pursued. Drop off is not happening in the circle because of traffic backup. Dave said that closing the gate and proposing one-way traffic might be another option to help with traffic flow.

Oliver said that although closing the gate might decrease traffic clogging, the police and fire departments do not recommend closing the gate. Oliver believes that better education about traffic safety and how to drop off is needed. Continued education and enforcement will help alleviate poor driver problems. Marla said in the past the Principal has sent home flyers to parents regarding proper procedure for pickup and drop-off. Dave shared that he is also in favor of Option 2, which helps to simplify the road stripe and relocate parking away from the fence. Dave added that the gate is closed during the day, but appears to be open at school drop off and pick up times.

Marla asked if it is possible to look at a second small drop off area at the South Novato boulevard area. Dave said that we will take a look at it and if it can be addressed in some way. If it's only striping, then it's doable.

The next step is to send the audit and recommendations to the Lynwood Principal for your review.

### **3) Rancho School**

Three projects are underway at the Rancho Elementary School: 1) parking lot connector 2) bulb-outs for the Cambridge/Arthur intersection and 3) replacement of gutters on Valley. Marla shared that the former Principal at Rancho had concerns about installing bulb-outs at Cambridge/Arthur because drivers make a free right-hand turn causing backup onto Novato Boulevard. Wendi added that free right-hand turns are very dangerous to pedestrians. Marla is unsure how the new Principal at Rancho feels about the bulb-outs and that she needs to revisit the issue with her. A visit to Cambridge/Arthur would need to be conducted during peak hours. (NOTE: after the meeting it was discovered that this improvement had already been eliminated)

Wendi will send to Marla a template for a letter of support to customize and send to the Rancho Principal in efforts to gain approval/support.

### **4) Loma Verde**

Signage and striping request will be folded into the Federal project for the intersection of Fairway and Alameda de LaLoma.

### **Police Updates – Pole mounted radar speed feedback signs**

Terry shared that he needs assistance from the Task Force identifying the four school zone locations to place the 4 pole mounted radar speed back signs that were purchased and received earlier this year. Public Works will install the four radar signs. Jason mentioned speed feedback signs work best when paired.

The Task Force discussed various location possibilities and decided upon the following four sites: Two radar signs will be placed at both ends of Lu Sutton Elementary to cover both directions, a third at Olive Avenue (East Bound) and the fourth at near the main gate at Hamilton Elementary (when coming West Bound). Jason said they will be installed sometime this spring.

### *Education programs*

Terry also shared that partnering with Safe Routes to Schools on the education front has been going extremely well. Frances Barbour and James Siebert (SR2S instructors) have been very effective in teaching children biking skills, as well as making the classes fun and interesting. Wendi reinforced that SR2S would still like to continue to work together on this front.

Oliver shared that the police department has started its education and enforcement campaign for juveniles.

### **School Updates:**

Wendi shared that **SchoolPoolMarin.org** is now offering online tripsharing for afterschool activities. The TripShare system provides a match list via e-mail of other interested parents whose children participate in the same activities after school. Registering is free and easy. Parents contact each other to discuss and arrange carpooling, walking or biking. Mill Valley Little League is the first organization to use the [www.SchoolPoolMarin](http://www.SchoolPoolMarin.org) website for afterschool purposes. It was suggested to forward the SchoolPoolMarin information to J. Taylor, Facilities Coordinator for the Novato Unified School District.

Wendi shared that all Novato schools will be conducting student travel surveys for Safe Routes to Schools during the last week of May after STAR testing is done. The surveys determine who will win the Green Ways to School Challenge.

Wendi also shared that she recently met with the Novato PTA about institutionalizing Safe Routes to Schools by establishing an ongoing committee and team at each school. Wendi distributed a handout about the new process of building a SR2S team at each school.

## **Wheelscape Bike Club (After School)**

Kathy shared information about a new program she created called *WheelScape* which is now offering after school bike classes to teach children how to safely ride their route to school from their neighborhood. The student/teacher ratio is 6 to 1. League of American Bicyclists Certified instructors teach children skills and rules of safety while they increase endurance and become confident cyclists. The fee is \$75 per session, for a 4-week session, or \$65 for Marin County Bicycle Coalition members. Fees include training materials, snacks and water. There is an additional \$20 charge for t-shirts. For more information, go to [www.wheelscape.com](http://www.wheelscape.com)

It was suggested that wheelscape should join forces with *Let's Move Novato* – hosted by the parks and recreation department.

**The next Novato Task Force meeting will be scheduled for the start of the 2011-2012 academic school year. Date and time to be announced in August by Safe Routes to Schools.**