



SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOLS: MARIN COUNTY



**Novato Safe Routes to School  
Task Force February 6, 2019  
Meeting Notes**

Attendance: Wendi Kallins- Safe Routes to Schools, Monica Leifer- Safe Routes to Schools, Peggy Clark- Safe Routes to Schools, Paul LaPerriere-Resident, Chris Blunk- DPW Director, Bernard Johnson- Crossing Guard Supervisor, Joakim Osthus-Novato BPAC, Reza Pourfarhanie- Novato Police Department, Gretchen Schubeck-City of Novato, Dabney Smith- Resident, Michelle Tjosvold- Resident, Rene DeBos- Resident, Diane Gasson-NUSD, Aracelia Mendoza- Team Leader Olive School

**Working Group Update:**

Gretchen reported the working group has currently meets three times; they may meet more frequently than the task force.. They have been discussing traffic circulation and driver behavior around schools. The working group is open to school community members to join. They want to help identify safety issues around school and get students out of vehicles and to stop idling by schools.

**Flow chart**

One of the working group's goal is to support SR2S functions in Novato and learn what opportunities there are to work with enforcement and infrastructure issues. The flow chart shows who is responsible for what actions.

They will contact school PTA's to get a SR2S position filled each year; goal is to have team leaders in place at the start of each school year. If parents are not available, they may reach out to volunteer community members to support SR2S encouragement events. SR2S Team Leaders meetings will be planned for every 3 months. The working group will assist with email notices to Team Leaders (spam filters have been a problem).

**Traffic Counts**

Dabney has been conducting counts at San Jose Middle school during the morning for one month. She is primarily counting cars with students in them. She also tracking where the traffic is coming from.

Counts will also be conducted at Loma Verde School before, during and after the PAW campaign.

The DPW has resources that would enhance the data being collected by the volunteers. It is available upon request.

The police are challenged with managing cut through traffic; it has been an issue for a long time. Drivers are using various Apps to redirect them. The police do issue citations for cell phone use to drivers. Most drivers say they are using their phones for driving directions.

### **Mapping**

The working group will work with schools and neighbors who also have insight on how students travel to school to start the process for suggested route maps.

### **Safety Outreach**

TAM will be launching a countywide safety campaign with similar goals to Vision Zero. Chris Blunk is on the advisory board; as DPW Director his input will be invaluable. Other members include Marin County city and town representatives, hospital and Marin County Parks staff.

### **San Marin Dr/Novato Blvd**

Paul reported for Ashley who could not attend the meeting.

SR2S worked with San Marin students to develop safety PSA's focused on walking and biking. Share the Road classes were presented to all freshman students.

Ashley presented the work she has been doing with the City DPW on infrastructure to the city council meeting this past fall. Her presentation was well prepared and well received by the council. She is developing community awareness and encouraging residents attend a social gathering to build support and awareness of planned projects.

### **Novato Blvd Update**

The DPW is researching options for an electric fix mounted sign. The sign will be for inbound traffic near the west end by the dog park.

### **Crossing guards**

The safety of students crossing intersections at San Marin High are still an issue. A request was made to ask PTA to fund high school crossing guards since TAM and the Measure AA funds do not fund high school crossing. It is assumed that high school students have developed an awareness by the time they have reached high school for safe street crossing; this is one of the reasons TAM does not fund the positions.

San Marin High needs one or more trained crossing guards. There are many traffic and pedestrian issues that need to be evaluated. At least two guards would be needed; one at San Marin Drive and Novato Blvd. Volunteer crossing guards can be helpful; however, if a volunteer does not report to their location this creates safety issues and a paid person would replace them with the school to pay the fee.

Diane will present this issue to the NUSD to learn if PTA funding is available for guards at the high school. Estimated training cost for volunteer crossing guard is \$5,000 per person. For a paid crossing guard it is \$18,000.

### **Vineyard Road**

Contract has been approved; project can start in 45 days or potentially sooner. An announcement will be mailed explaining the project phases and details to the community. The project includes key infrastructure; pedestrian sidewalk island, cutting back vegetation, new curbs, road resurfacing, class 2 and 3 bike lane striping.

The DPW plans to have most of the work completed during the summer when students are not in school. If work does begin during the school year; the contractor will be updated on school start/end times and routes student travel. The road resurfacing will not be scheduled when students are in school. If issues develop, the DPW will address them.

### **Loma Verde Park and Walk Program**

The notes below were provided by Gwen Froh SR2S who could not attend the meeting. A Park and Walk encouragement campaign is planned at the school during the last 2 weeks of March.

- Two PAW locations along Alameda De La Loma have been identified; they are about 1/2 mile away -opposite ends, merging to LV. They still need to be confirmed for approval for parking.
- Gretchen is going to ask Mark to "map" the school addresses and tell us how many families are coming from various locations; we don't need home address; just approximately how many are coming from various neighborhoods. This will inform us whether we need a third PAW location; Michelle said she observed many families arriving from in back of school. Gretchen suggested that families simply park behind the

school, but that's not far enough away to make a difference with traffic/health. If we do a 3rd location, we'll need more volunteer neighbors/parents which Michelle thinks she can help recruit- tbd.

- In the proposed Parisi map creation for LV, I really think we should identify suggested "Park and Walk locations" and distance to school. Perhaps PAW prints could be used on the Map instead of dotted lines- tbd.
- Michelle and Gretchen suggested the school look at a "cut through section" behind the fields. It needs some "grooming" to make it accessible and inviting to use. This would really help motivate families to PAW from the Walker/Wallace? Family Park direction (see below).

### New Issues

Novato DPW is participating in Technical Advisory Committee formed with key members from the Marin Public Works Association, Transportation Authority of Marin and Marin General Hospital. The work involves collaboration with all the various Public Works departments, along with the various town and city Police departments, the Sheriff and the California Highway Patrol.

It is anticipated that the 2018 Marin County Travel Safety Plan will be a key document in the preparation of future Public Works work programs for each local jurisdiction and assist with funding applications.

Here is the link to the County SSAR and background information:

<https://www.marincounty.org/depts/pw/divisions/transportation/transportation/Roadway-Safety-Review>

The SR2S Task Force is concerned that pedestrians and bicycle incidents that are not reported will steer the data away from addressing issues in specific communities.

The DPW is aware of this issue and will continue to encourage community members to reports incidents and unsafe facilities. It is important for residents to attend meetings and update city staff. It has been observed that people shout out issues using social media resources like Next Door; however, they do not attend meetings.

The police department has limited resources including the number of officers on duty daily. Officers need support from the community "see something-say something". The city received an OTS Grant and will be rolling out a campaign called "slow down around town". A goal of the

city is to engage more people to take responsibility for their actions and driver slower is one issue.

A request was made to increase parent education including messaging for crossing guards. It has been observed parents often display bad behavior to the work crossing guards provide. Students see this disrespect and also disrespect the people who are there for safety.

**Next meeting**

May 15, 2019 at 6:00pm.