



SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOLS: MARIN COUNTY



**Ross Valley Safe Routes to Schools Task Force
Meeting Notes
Friday, September 11**

Attendees: Wendi Kallins- Safe Routes to School, Ashley Tam- Parisi-Assoc, Sgt. David Croll- Fairfax PD, Office Scott Niklwicz- Central Marin Police Authority, Bret Joyner- Facilities, Peggy Clark- Safe Routes to Schools, Robert Betts- Marin Transit, Hadley Dettmer- School Board, Renee Goddard- Fairfax Councilmember, Joe Loll- Team Leader Wade Thomas School, Laura French- Team Leader Brookside School, Erin McAuliff- Planner for Marin Transit, John Reed- Fairfax Councilmember, Nancy Vernon- Aide to Katie Rice, Karen Zamorano- Parent Hidden Valley

Infrastructure and Police

Fairfax Town updates

Fairfax is experiencing a grassroots effort to address the increase in vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists using the streets and sidewalks. On Friday Sept 18 the city will encourage the community to comment on ideas to improve traffic calming in Fairfax

Issues/Concerns/ Action Items:

1. Cyclist must come to a full stop at “stop signs” (they do not have to put a foot down but the must stop rolling). Fairfax PD has posted signs on road markers; reminding cyclists they must stop as part of the CA Vehicle Code.
2. Student rides descending hills- challenge for them to maintain balance and stop. The town is exploring “stopping” laws in other states.
3. “Reduce by 2” Sustainable Fairfax will be starting a pilot program to reduce family trips per day.

4. Police officers are issuing citations to cyclists that violate the vehicle code. Many officers are presenting the Marin County Bicycle Coalition information flyers on [Basic Street Skills](#). This is a class for adults; cyclists and non- cyclists. Individuals with citations can get the fee reduced after attending a class.

New Bus Program

The Golden Gate Transit (GGT) contract expired last school year. Marin Transit (MT) has been working with the school district since last spring to develop yellow bus schedule and a fee structure. Last spring a website was developed providing student rider information for a Yellow Bus program and to sell passes. The School District and Supervisor Katie Rice's office has been very helpful by providing information to families over the summer and at the start of the school year.

The new program is very different from GGT. The new program requires MT to contract the services of a bus company. There are 500 students with passes with 480 of them at White Hill School. A wait list had been developed and most of the students have now been placed on a bus. There are 43 students from Hidden Valley and 1 student from Brookside using the bus. Hidden Valley has expressed the need for a single use pass. The cost is 4.00 per pass.

The bus operating at Hidden Valley initially had some challenges. . It will now be driven into the "turn around". There are now signs posted; the bus must be able to pull in first. The bus does arrive early. As the bus leaves the school at the end of the day on to Green Valley Court there have not been any issues. It is great to see the kindergarten student on the bus.

The Marin Transit staff including the District Manger, Erin and Robert were riding the bus and assisting with logistics the first few days of school. This was a tremendous offer of support. The school district and parents are very grateful!

There are 6 busses supporting the Yellow Bus program with a capacity for 70 students.. Marin Transit is looking into alternative uses for the busses to offset the cost as families opt in for the bus service.

There are few riders coming from Fairfax to Hidden Valley. There are neighborhoods that need information recommended routes to the bus stops. The Willow Triangle is one that will need information on the local walking paths. Dominga Ave. residents also need path/lane information as there are 2-3 cut throughs available.

Fairfax has maps with suggested routes to help parent's efforts to have their younger children walk to the bus stops. The schools will be sending out information on Iwalk Day too.

Safe Streets Butterfield and Oak Manor

There are funds available from a Safe Pathways Grant for a "rapid beacon" at Green Valley Court by next spring. In addition the committee is looking into designated off road parking on Butterfield Road. A letter will go out to the residents requesting options for parking. Officials have noticed there has been a reduction in traffic and parents are parking off site and walking into the schools. Fawn Drive no longer permits vehicles to stop. The Sheriff has issued tickets; along with the red curbs there is a significance difference in driver behavior.

Residents in the Oak Manor Community have requested a digital speed sign for traffic coming down the hill before the school; also suggest on at Manor School.

Oak Manor at Drake

The red curb planned for Oak Manor and Drake (by the church) has not been painted yet. Nancy Vernon will be conducting a walk soon and will review this area. This has been an area of confusion for some years now as the property is shared by the Town and the County. This is the reason for the delays.

Crossing Guard

Brookside School lost their crossing guard a year ago. A request must come from the town to replace a crossing guard. The Fairfax Chief of police contacted TAM and successfully requested one be assigned at the library and Sir Frances Drake Blvd in Fairfax and it was suggested the same might be done for Butterfield. The new Yellow Bus now has more students crossing at that intersection than last year increasing the need for a crossing guard. *(Subsequent to the meeting it was discovered that the town had tried to retrieve that crossing guard unsuccessfully. It was suggested that the School District fund that guard. Hadley will look into this)*

The East Bound Yellow Bus that stops on Drake just past the stop light does not always pull up to the curb. This makes it very challenging and dangerous for pedestrians and passing vehicles. Robert commented; this is a challenging stop and usually the crossing guard is not there when the bus arrives. It would be a good place for a police officer to patrol. Officers requested the bus drivers use the red flashing lights and sign when stopping. Vehicles do not have to stop (oncoming lanes) when there are multi lanes such as Butterfield and Drake.

Infrastructure

Chevrons will be painted on the road to highlight the cross walk at Oak Tree and Drake. They indicate where vehicles are to stop. The flashing light is not consistently protecting pedestrians. Vehicle drivers going east tend not to pay attention and now that there are many more students crossing at this light. When police officers are present, vehicle drivers change their behavior.

Police

Sgt. Croll requested the contact information for the business that trains crossing guards (Dan Cherrier with the Transpiration of Marin). He suggested the crossing guard at Hidden Valley group the students before crossing.

The Fairfax Police Dept has placed several “candles” at key locations reminding cyclists to stop. Officers have determined many of the cyclists not stopping are from out of the area. Officers understand that cyclists traveling in a group do not always “all” stop; however if officers observe that the riders in the front of the pack did not stop they will be cited.

Back to School activities

Hidden Valley The start of the school year has been very busy. They will be hosting International Walk to School Day on Tuesday Oct 6. The principal has been very supportive.

San Domenico The school does not have a Team Leader. Nancy will reach out to the school to learn how the collaboration between the schools can be maintained..

Manor School- Walk and Roll Wednesdays have turned into every day walking and rolling. The bike racks are full pretty much full every day. Many of the older students are teaching the younger students correct cycling and walking behavior; however more education is needed for the parents as well as the students. There are now two Team Leaders at Manor which is very helpful. They are hosting the Green Sneak Challenge starting in September.

Iwalk will be celebrated at Manor and the police support will be requested for the Iwalk parade (meeting at 8:00am, depart at 8:10).

Brookside- The new Team Leader Laura French hosted her first Walk and Roll Wednesday and it went very well! They are still using Active 4 Me to check in students. They are currently borrowing computers from teachers; however they would prefer to use cell phones. Laure plans to host Iwalk but she needs to learn more about the planning details. She plans to get the Student Council to help too.

Wade Thomas- Iwalk will be celebrating on Oct. 7. The plan is the meet at Creekside Park at 7:50; depart at 8:10 with a fire truck escort down San Anselmo Ave.

The school's new principal has been very supportive in getting the message out about Walk and Roll Days. Over 200 students were counted on the first Walk and Roll day and about 80 of them were cycling along with a huge number of student using scooters.

This year there is new trend; 100% of the families are participating. Joe is observing 2-3 dozen kids riding without parents, including girls groups. They pick up other riders on the route to school.

Joe purchased a few of the candle style road markers to discourage parents from dropping off students on Woodland Ave. Drivers are seeing the cones; not parking and moving on. Woodland can be a very busy road because of the pre-school down the street. The oversized vehicles can create a visual barrier for other road users because they park straight in vs. parallel to the sidewalk.

Next meeting - Friday Jan 15 at 10:00AM.