



**San Rafael Safe Routes Task Force
Meeting Notes
Tuesday April 26, 2022**

Attendance:

Wendi Kallins- Safe Routes to Schools- Program Coordinator, Gwen Froh- Safe Routes to Schools Program Director, Peggy Clark- Safe Routes to Schools, Jennifer Schriber - Parisi Transportation Engineer, Kimberly Rider- SRHS parent, Jeffrey Olson, Resident and TAM Citizen Oversight Committee, Lauren Davini- San Rafael Traffic Engineer, Matthew Hartzell-WTB / Transportation Alternatives for Marin, Monica Liefer- Safe Routes Bi-lingual Coordinator, Bob Marcucci - Asst Superintendent Business Services, Craig Murray - Neighbor, Carrie Wurlitzer - Vallecito Parent, Jean Severinghaus -Marin Resident,

Upcoming Safe Routes Activities

Safe Routes Education and Encouragement Spring 2022

[Safe Routes to Schools](#) has launched its new website (the web link has not changed). The improvements include; better navigation, Spanish translation option; archived pages have been removed, improved access to Task Force group information, newsletter publications, ongoing encouragement activities and education resources. If you have not received it, please email peggy@marinbike.org

J.E.D.I. Challenge April 13, 20, 27, May 4

The J.E.D.I Challenge is a four-week contest to help reinforce the habit of walking, rolling, carpooling and taking the bus to school. Participating school's valued parent volunteers will host welcome tables.

Vallectio is hosting the challenge. The welcome table was moved to the bike locker area due to the traffic at the front entrance. There are a number of students participating. Additional parent support to welcome the students would be appreciated to help stamp.

Bike to School Day- May 4th- "May the 4th Be with You"

This national annual event supports walking, biking, skating, scooting and strolling to school! Participating schools will have welcome tables and handing out (donated) JAMBARs to our walkers and rollers.

Mark your calendars! Community representatives are welcome to visit their local school on May 4 to celebrate. To learn more please contact elementary contact monica@marinbike.org or cooper@marinbike.org or lou@marinbike.org for middle and high school details.

Graphic Art Talent at White Hill Middle School

The flier for BTSD was designed by a middle school student. Safe Routes web site has a gallery displaying all of the submittals by the middle school students. This was supported by the school teachers.

Annual Bike Hero AWARD- – Coming This May

(Check the [Safe Routes to Schools website](#) to learn more and nominate a hero)

Seeking Bike Heroes – students who are stellar “roll” models by biking to school frequently while *following the rules of the road*. In May, parents, neighbors, friends, teachers and administrators are encouraged to nominate a Bike Hero from their school worthy of receiving this county-wide award.

Bridge the Bay Event for High Schools April 23

The Bridge The Bay in Pickleweed Park event supported and inspired high school students' climate activism, and education about the impacts of greenhouse gas emissions on our neighboring communities. The focus was on carbon-free active transportation and equitable rights to clean air. It was a huge success; over 60 bikes were serviced, San Rafael High School students stayed longer than they had planned to help out!

A professional street painter led a community mural, [The Bike Mobile](#) provided free bike tune-ups and there were games, food and more.

EBikes Concerns Update

Safe Routes has received a number of complaints and concerns throughout the county regarding students riding Ebikes to and from school. The concerns expressed include; students not wearing helmets, riding too fast, riding with more than one person and weaving in/out of vehicles on the roadway.

Safe Routes elementary, middle and high school curriculum includes the safe and legal use of e-bikes. Safe Routes high school program “share the road” has a very specific curriculum addressing Ebikes and driving awareness.

This is a county wide issue that needs to be addressed and discussed. The safe and legal aspects of riding an Ebike by students is an important issue for parents to address with their children before one is purchased. The law states an individual must be 18 or older to ride an Ebike that goes 28mph.

Safe Routes is available to work with the school district to develop an informational flier to be distributed next school year. It would contain the do’s and don’ts when riding an Ebike. Bob suggested an outline be sent to him and he will share it with Christina Perrino (District Communications) who could be of assistance.

Task force members mentioned that Ebike students that ride locally in Fairfax and some that ride over the hill to San Rafael tend to be riding safely. This could be due to the greater number of adult and student riders in the community who are aware of the rules of the road for cyclists.

A concern was also raised for e-scooter rides in the Sun Valley area riding on the sidewalks. Safe Routes will reach out to the school administration to learn if they would like education information.

Surveys- Student Travel Survey

The Safe Routes to Schools student travel survey is required for program funding. The survey measures the number of students traveling to and from school by various modes of transportation (bike, walk, carpool or bus). It will be conducted in classrooms during May.

Data was not collected for the 2020/2021 school year. Safe Routes is encouraging all participating schools to conduct it this spring.

Surveys- Parent Survey

Safe Routes conducts this survey every three years at a select number of participating schools. Schools are selected to survey a cross section of the county’s demographics to learn if barriers and opportunities have changed over the years. This survey will be distributed in both English and Spanish to the school district. If possible, the format will be in email and text formats.

Crossing Guard Program Update

The crossing guard program is managed and funded by The Transportation Authority of Marin. It is up for renewal this year. This evaluation process will be examined including the scoring process used to evaluate where a guard is to be stationed.

The three changes will include:

1. Safety: it will be weighted as a score of ten versus five.
2. The definition of TK will be redefined to include this age group.
3. The definition of speed limits by school will be updated.

The actual speed of drivers will be evaluated to understand the safety needs at a crosswalk.

The evaluation will be conducted at the start of the next school year, in the fall. A report will be developed and presented in the spring of 2022 to the Board. The updated list of crossing guard locations will be implemented in the fall of 2023.

Crossing guard positions are available county wide. People interested should contact Dan Cherrier, TAM Crossing Guard Manager at dcherrier@tam.ca.gov .

Report – Walk Audit Venetia Valley access pathway

Community organizers are addressing the need to identify and obtain approval for a pathway for students traveling to Venetia Valley School. Currently they can only take San Pedro Road; passing a very busy freeway interchange with vehicles entering/exiting the freeway very fast.

Task Force members, Marina Palma, San Rafael School District, CalTrans, Marin County Parks, Mary Sackett, aid to Supervisor Connolly, Rachel Kirkz- City Council, SMART, San Rafael Department of Public works, David Parisi, and Craig Murray attended a walk audit along the dirt pathway along the Smart Tracks from the Civic Center station to Merrydale to identify possible options. They are looking for options to get students to Vallecito without having to cross the railroad tracks or freeway entrances. Attendants expressed their enthusiasm for the route to be improved.

They observed the dirt path is well used with one section that's pretty narrow and steep on one side. The area by the freeway over/under pass was once owned by the Northwestern Pacific Railroad that is now managed by SMART. SMART has authority over the CA State of Transportation Dept. As a Marin based agency this could be helpful to move this project forward even though there are many agencies involved and it will be an expensive project.

If grant funds were obtained to get the pathway paved and lighting installed this could be a safer option for the kids traveling on the west side to get to the school. A next step is for this project to be included in the San Rafael Bike Pedestrian Plan.

Travel Plans

San Rafael Safe Routes to Schools Goals and Objectives

Safe Routes is preparing travel plans for all school districts. *Task Force members are requested to review the document and provide comments to Wendi as soon as possible.*

Comments:

1. Clarify the definition of green transportation: “as defined as more than one child in a car”. How is carpooling defined?
2. Yellow and public bus riding- how is that included in the green transportation?
3. Active trips will be measured by school using the safe routes travel surveys. The goal will be for the overall district: 50% for elementary school, 60% for middle schools, 70% for schools with the bus program.

Suggestion: footnotes will be included to provide more detail on the definition of green trips.

The Objectives are the mechanisms that are used to achieve the goals that are measurable.

City Updates

The city is applying for two ATP active transportation program funding opportunities. It is a competitive grant program through the State. San Rafael is applying for funding to study a swing bridge over the canal.

It would go from the harbor area in the Canal to Third Street near Embarcadero Way. It would provide a way for students to get to the schools and for the community to get to the shopping center and other local areas.

San Rafael is also seeking other grants for the Canal neighborhood: pedestrian crossing improvements, street lighting and improvements for the transit shelter. Many projects in the PED Master Plan.

The ATP funding is that it is geared towards disadvantaged communities. More points are awarded if a strong case is provided for the projects to benefit disadvantaged communities.

Information was provided from prior year workshops on state ATP guidelines that may help support the efforts/application: “A commissioner was requesting that agencies must explain why they justify making people walk and bike within 500ft of the freeway”. This would be very helpful for the grant application for the swing bridge.

Caltrans is doing improvements for the Freitas interchange with a roundabout. These will be good improvements for the bus stops along 101 that will include improvements to bike and pedestrian facilities down to the Civic Center and to the SMART train. More information can be found on the [project web page](#).

On Woodland Ave there is a big sewer placement project underway. There is some street resurfacing and re-stripping that will include “sharrows” in the middle of the travel lane to make it very clear where bikes and vehicles can move. Due to the demand for parking on Woodland the City is adding the sharrows not protected bike lanes.

[Third Street Improvement Project](#) .

Construction is underway, the multi-use pathway is the first facility they are working on. The entire project is planned for 18 months. The city continues to work with the contractor to ensure good pedestrian and vehicle detour signage is posted. The city wants to ensure students and the community travel safely.

As the project moves forward the city will be updating the website with the proposed and finalized plans that are received from Caltrans.

A concern was expressed for students traveling on Merrydale Road; asking the city if they would be including “sharrows” to indicate cyclists are moving in the area too. It is now a narrow road with the updated sidewalk.

Mission behind San Rafael High

Link to [Presentation](#) and [Photos](#) presented by Kimberly Rider.

The following notes were made during the presentation.

Alta Vista Road is located in Montecito Heights in San Rafael just above the San Rafael High School. The roads wind around the neighborhood and there are no sidewalks for students or residents to walk or cycle safely away from vehicles. The intersection of East Mission, Sea View Marina, Court Drive and Embarcadero (4 way stop) is especially busy.

On Mission the road narrows (creating a bottleneck) and drivers need to pull over behind park cars to let each other pass. This is a dangerous area for students walking to/from school; oncoming vehicles can be hard to see.

She is asking the City of San Rafael to consider making specific areas no parking to create space for students walking and cycling in the area.

The DPW response: they can look into stripping and red curbs (not usually very expensive) after outreach to the community is conducted. They need to be notified if parking is to be removed. Curb and sidewalk improvements must be programmed into the city capital improvements program.

The DPW requested Kimberly add her comments on the following site. *How to contact the City of San Rafael Department of Public Works.* [Link](#).

Once the city reviews the issues presented and if there are remaining safety concerns for students, Safe Routes to School can add it to the San Rafael Safe Routes to School Issues list. It would then be prioritized using a few factors. Safe Routes and the DPW work together on such projects.

Andy's Market- presented by Jeffrey Olson

In the neighborhood of Sun Valley at the intersection at Fifth and California there are a number of safety issues for student travel that have been shared with the DPW.

Many of the students that travel to the elementary school cross the street at Andy's Market. Drivers are turning in front of the store which has no sidewalks, vehicle parking extends into the roadway and commercial trucks often double park.

The DPW has suggested re-painting the red no parking area; unfortunately, without constant enforcement vehicles still park there. These issues create very limited site lines for drivers making the turn and students crossing the street to look for oncoming traffic. It is also a location where parents drop off students to walk to school.

The DPW recently visited the area and they are working with the City Public process for such issues. They recently met with the owner of Andy's Market. The city will be extending the red-curb, they will not be installing "bollards" at this time. The city will be installing "wheel stops" by the market. The market owner said he would make sure delivery trucks do not park in the red zones. Changes could be completed in four weeks.

Safe Routes can organize a Walk Audit when school is in session with neighbors, city representatives and engineers if the planned improvements do not help.

Maintenance of Park behind Vallecito

Annually weeds and brush are overgrown into the pathway/sidewalk that deters students from walking. It also has them walking in the roadway to avoid the bushes with thorns.

The city requested that a formal request be made that the brush maintenance removal be regularly scheduled. *How to contact the City of San Rafael Department of Public Works.* [Link](#).

Vallecito Pathway Project Update

This is still a work in progress for the engineers. Currently they are looking to realign that downhill path to avoid the parking lot. It would then connect to the multi-use path that would then connect to the pathway through the tunnel. Also, a boardwalk with a retaining wall could be designed to direct students cycling and walking and away from the roadway.

This area is all on School District property. The principal has been very involved in the process. The planned Northgate project could also influence how quickly this project is addressed. The TAM Safe Pathways funding could be a resource when the next funding cycle comes up.

Next Zoom Meeting

Wednesday, August 31 at 5:00pm