



**San Rafael Safe Routes
Task Force Notes
September 8 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 Shriber - Parisi Transportation Engineer, Dan Zaich Senior- District Director, Capital Facilities Program, David Parisi- Parisi Engineering, Rafat Raie-Deputy Director of Public Works, Tyler Randazzo- Lead Safe Routes to Schools Instructor, Matthew Hartzell-WTB / Transportation Alternatives for Marin, Matt Farber- MCBC Canal Youth Bicycle Education, Carrie Wurlitzer- Vallecito Parent, Justin Gorger Mal - Wildfire Mitigation Specialist, Susannah Mzarek Beck- Parent Coleman School, Tamara Rich - Parent Sun Valley, Wes Howell - Director of Facilities Mark Day School, Jean Severinghaus- Neighbor, Geoff Rubendall- Parent Sun Valley, Mary Sackett- Supervisor Aide, Craig Murray - Neighbor

Safe Routes Education and Encouragement Fall 2022

Parent Volunteer- Kick- off meeting scheduled for Tuesday, Aug 20, 2022.
Parent volunteers will be presented with a rollout of the program for the school year.

This will be the first in-person meeting in three years. Topics discussed will include: [Walk & Roll Wednesdays](#) and [International Walk and Roll Day](#) (October 12, 2022). There will be monthly encouragement events in September to December. Parent volunteers will distribute buttons to participating students. International Walk and Roll to School Day annually has about 1000 students/families participate county wide. Parent volunteers are encouraged to contact Monica@marinbike.org to support their schools' efforts for these events.

Buddy Up Contest- New Encouragement Event

[BUDDY UP](#) is a new contest to get students to walk (park and walk), bike, carpool or ride the bus together. Now through October 31, sign up your group of two or more

Regardless of whether students are scootering, biking, or carpooling, we would like families to submit their Buddy Up Story. This is similar to the Bike Hero award; prizes will be awarded.

Family Biking- October 15, 9:30–11:30AM

Download a PDF Flier

Location: Ross Valley Charter School, 102 Marinda Dr, Fairfax

This Family Biking class helps to prepare students for riding on roads. Students ride on our courses to practice bike handling skills and learn the rules of the road on a mock street. Family Biking shows parents, first hand, how instructors teach safe cycling skills and pro-tips for reinforcement. An optional local ride is included. REGISTER HERE – Space is limited.

E-Bike & E-Scooter Safety Information

Safe Routes to School has heard from many people in our communities regarding Ebike safety concerns as students are riding them to school. SRTS includes e-bike safe education in our campus presentations.

In this [flier](#), we clarify the different types of e-bikes and recommend parents research and assess their student's ability to manage the increased speeds and challenging maneuverability of a heavy e-bike before purchasing one. There is information on e-scooters as well. Please read and share this flier with your family and friends. This flier has been shared with principals throughout the county. Local police agencies have also been sending out information on the safety concerns and are providing education.

The average speed of an average adult cyclist is 12 miles per hour (mph), and 9.7 mph for 14-year-olds. Yet e-bikes can travel 20 mph (Type I and II) and 28 mph (Type III).

Communities are worried about students e-biking at twice the speed of regular cyclists, many carrying helmet-less passengers, and dodging between and around vehicles, pedestrians and other cyclists. The Type II; throttle Ebikes can cause unique issues because it takes away the organic nature of pedaling a bicycle. E-bikes can go up hills with pedal assist only; a throttle is not required.

The popular Type II throttle e-bike offers riders the option to travel up to 20mph without pedaling. Many manufacturers state that "children under the age of 16 may lack the necessary judgment and skill to safely operate the e-bike." Many will not sell their bikes to individuals under the age of 16 yrs even though CA law does not have age restriction for Type 1 & 2 Ebikes. Type 3 Ebikes are restricted to 16 yrs and above; this Ebike can

reach a top speed of 28mph. They are not recommended for middle school age students by the manufacturers.

The flier is on the SRTS website and can be shared by anyone. SRTS has collected information for popular type two throttle manufacturers. They are clearly stating on their website, and when we called in person, that students should be 16 years of age to ride that Type II throttle Ebike.

Task Force members did report they have observed students riding double with and without helmets dangerously in roadways and parking lots. The [Safe Routes to Schools newsletter](#) has an article that could be shared as well. The Central Marin Police department did send out a notice that they would be issuing citations when illegal behavior is observed.

Safe Routes to School Fall Student Travel Survey

Marin County schools have been emailed the directions regarding the fall travel study. This survey is conducted in the fall and spring in classrooms. The Travel Survey measures the number of children traveling to and from school by various modes. This survey is required by Safe Routes to Schools funding source and gives them an assessment of the success of the program at your schools throughout the county.

The survey was conducted Sept 13-14-15; make up week is Sept 20-21-22. Please contact peggy@marinbike.org for all questions.

Street Smarts Campaign Overview- "Eyes Up Marin"

Link to [Street Smarts Campaign](#)

The following notes were made during this PowerPoint presentation.

Street Smarts is a traffic safety program run by the Transportation Authority of Marin.

The goal is to provide education to drivers, pedestrians and bicyclists about safety issues. It is designed to make streets safer and friendlier and reduce the number of traffic related collisions.

The prior campaign focused on speeding, stopping drivers from running red lights and stop signs, addressing distracted driving, crosswalk safety and bicycle violations. The signs and banners aged out and needed to be replaced.

The new campaign has engaged more community partners. New data is available that identifies roadway hotspots where collisions occur and the most common types of collisions. This data will help engineers develop roadway designs to help prevent collisions.

Moving forward, this is a data driven campaign. There will be new targeted messaging, updated branding, and new media platforms.

Safe Routes to School engineers collected and analyzed data of all collisions in Marin County from 2016 to 2020. The information helped to develop relevant messaging. During this period there were over 14,000 collisions; about 4% resulted in a fatality or severe injury, and about two thirds for vehicles only, while 5% involved bicycles and 3% involved pedestrians.

Even though the percentage of collisions involving pedestrians and cyclists were low; disproportionately they resulted in injuries or fatalities. 20% of collisions resulted in a fatality or severe injury for pedestrians; and for cyclists, 15% of those collisions involved a fatality or severe injury. SRTS wants to target behaviors that would hopefully prevent these collisions.

Collision factors = the main behavior that caused the collision. The trends identified are: speed, improper turning, driving or cycling under the influence, and pedestrian right of way violations. Distracted driving is unfortunately not recorded in crash reports; however, surveys have found that more than 54% of California drivers say that they had been hit or were nearly hit by a driver who was talking on a cell phone or texting. Ignoring traffic signs and cycling on the wrong side of the road is also an unsafe trend noted.

A Task Force was created with representatives from many cities and towns including TAM, school districts and other community leaders to focus on six target behaviors and help develop the messaging. The campaign “Eyes Up” models what was organized by the Butterfield Road Safety Committee. This new campaign has over 100 partners to help spread the word using their organization resources and social media. Marin Transit will have messaging on buses in the future.

The new banners and yard sign design will be distributed in many cities and towns and the unincorporated counties starting in mid-October-November. It will come back in the spring of 2023 (annually Spring/Fall). Residents can contact their local DPW for lawn signs in English and Spanish. Messaging will be focused on driver and cycling behavior and to help people who are walking.

The committee will discuss how the program can be tracked and what the impact is. All materials will be available at streetsmartsmarin.org. If you have additional questions, please contact jennifer@parisi-associates.com.

The task force members expressed their support and gratitude to the very thought out development of this new program. It is vital that data support and direct the messaging this program has to offer. It was recommended that all City of San Rafael vehicles display this program information.

The city will also make use of their social media resources to share information. SMART should also have this campaign prompted on their site and trains. Organizations in the Canal have also been contacted.

Vallecito Access Pathway Update

Parisi Engineering has been looking at the walking and biking conditions to and from Vallecito. There are several routes students can use, including a tunnel through the park or a little pathway that's not in super great shape. All of these routes have a steep grade creating unsafe conditions. These routes lead down onto the Mark Day parking lot where many vehicles come in/out for drop off and end of day pick up at Mark Day. This school is required to do this in the back of the school to relieve congestion on the street.

The engineers worked with this committee to figure short term solutions. Bollards/vertical post and buffer stripping have been installed and these facilities seem to be successful.

In addition, engineers have studied conditions and taken measurements of exact cross street dimensions and understanding the grades. This information was used to develop a refined long-term plan. This proposed plan will be presented to the school district and City of San Rafael for consideration and final approval.

Safe Routes engineer comments on proposed plan/drawing presented during the meeting:

The pathway underneath Monticello and curves would be at a 5% maximum grade (meets America's Disability Act guidelines), a separate pathway from the roadway going east to the fields behind the school. Some retaining walls would be needed and drainage areas would need to be addressed. A solution could be an appealing type of boardwalk.

Proposing closing the very steep pathway that drops down into the Mark Day access way and replacing it with a pathway about 8ft wide behind the Mark Day garden (ADA compliant). Mark Day admin had expressed support for reconfiguring their garden.

The proposed updates and additions to the pathway through the park would take into consideration the trees, grading, lighting

Task Force Comments:

Consider a way for the community to sponsor a picket fence that would represent their pride for their efforts in supporting these safety upgrades for the students and overall community.

Ensure students that attend Mark Day school also have access to these new proposed improvements including where the current bike racks are located on campus.

Please confirm if the property by the garden is owned by the city or the district. This could influence fund raising options under consideration and final approvals by both the district and city for future funding resources. There is a transportation sales tax that could be considered a resource given the number of people using the public park. Active Transportation grants and Safe Pathways funds could be available. The design needs to be in an “almost ready” status to apply for funding. Partnering with the schools and foundations are also options.

Engineers would also have to consider proposed changes and if they would influence environmental parameters in the park. There is more work to be addressed on this subject.

Engineers will look into how the fields are used at Vallecito school and how the routes would impact them.

A suggestion was made to consider partnering with the Terra Linda Homeowners Association. Years ago they had a plan to address certain conditions in the park. They could be very helpful in supporting proposed improvements, especially those supporting more use for seniors to use the park.

WTB / Transportation Alternatives for Marin would like to recommend expanding the scope of this project to the east to connect a paved pathway across the field of the park all the way to Vallecito School. Possibly a fully paved pathway east to west.

Venetia Valley Trail Update

The engineered drawing presented at the meeting addresses this area: Highway 101 (northbound and southbound), Civic Center Drive and the SMART station and Merrydale Drive. The drawing included the many proprietary owners property lines. The proposed design goes through private and public lands and must meet guidelines for the American Disabilities Act.

Engineers are addressing little sections at a time to develop an understanding of potential costs for a project: including retaining walls, lighting and excavation. There are drainage issues, utility lines and a gas pipe to be addressed.

There is currently a skinny section of trail under the highway. Without exorbitant cost or acquisition of right away this trail could not be wider than 8 or 10ft right.

Task Force Comments:

Many that attend the Walk Audit expressed how grateful they are to see steps moving forward. There are many neighbors who could not attend the Walk Audit that are interested in seeing the pathway on Merrydale paved for students traveling to and from schools. In the rainy months the trail is not usable.

Craig Murray and Mary Sackett offered assistance to obtain community support or give more feedback on observed conditions. "This project will serve many people".

Walk Audit Planning Date for 5th Ave.

Scheduling the Walk Audit needs to be when the conditions can be observed in real time. The intersection by Andy's Market would be the starting point; the meeting would be scheduled for 1 hour. Wednesdays are early release days. The walk route needs to be identified by Tamar and Geoff in advance. Sept 27, 8:30 was tentatively scheduled. A number of task force members will be invited.

E. Mission behind San Rafael High

The fire department has researched considerations for E Mission to address the dangerous speed of vehicle drivers, the curving roadway, off street parking and no sidewalks within the scope of the Safe Parking Program.

The department is focused on eliminating parking on many narrow curvy roads and suggesting safe parking in other locations. Currently many drivers park off the road in dirt areas; this condition prevents parking spaces to be marked (boxed parking spaces). Paving the road and or widening could encourage more speeding. It would be difficult for the department to resource/fund changes to change the roadway conditions

The department would like the city to consider installing a sidewalk where the dirt parking is. They understand the many concerns with students traveling on this road and looking at short term and long-term solutions.

The neighbor who brought this issue to Safe Routes was not able to attend the meeting. Justin had been in communication with her and used her comments during his visit to the area for the department's analysis. He will reach out to her again and report back to SRTS. The department is committed to creating access for emergency vehicles and creating more safe parking to clarify parking rules. Safe parking supports safe pedestrian and safe bicycle use. The fire department is available to add another view point when roadway facilities are under consideration.

City Updates

The city is focused on seven major project applications and funding that all have to do with pedestrian connectivity and will help school children traveling to schools in the city. The city traffic engineers will continue to meet with the school district representatives and Parisi engineers. Including the project on Albion that is looking really good.

The crosswalks will be a lot safer due to the increased visibility of pedestrians and the roadway improvements will influence drivers to reduce speeds in the area.

The city was requested to bring up this topic on Picnic Avenue to Safe Routes. There is concern for how students use this road to get to school. There are curves and roadway grades that are not ADA compliant very close to Laurel Del school.

Safe Routes has conducted a Walk audit in the past. If this area is on the suggested routes map it could qualify for review. Safe Routes has had success in other parts of the county where curve ramps and intersection improvements outside of the school were funded through either ATP, Safe Pathways funds or other

You see that the natural grade here exceeds ADA standards. And the question was, in general, what are we doing about a safe route to school from neighborhoods?

Coleman Update

Safe Routes is not aware of any specific updates other than the city's earlier report and grant applications for roadway improvements throughout the city.

The safety issue is speeding drivers coming off Irwin trying to cut through to Grand Ave. especially in the morning. There have been many near misses observed. There are

missing sidewalks; in the past the city had talked about installing a roundabout at Bell and Grand. Photos of the unsafe conditions will be sent to Wendi.

Reducing Speeds in School Zones Update

Dan would like the task force to consider going after funding for a school zone study to propose reducing the speed limit in school zones from 25 mph down to whatever would be appropriate 10-15 mph throughout the district.

This topic has been addressed in the city before and Rafat has participated in a study including the elements of the new state law. The law that allows agencies to drop the speed limit below 25 miles an hour near schools. When speed limits are reduced to 20mph it raises awareness of the drivers and the pedestrians.

The problem is in the implementation of it; there can be major kickback from residents who do not want to drive that slowly. These changes are not regional; each town/city would need to adopt an ordinance to lower speed limits. The DPW will present this issue to the City Manager; the city has not adopted an official position. The Public Works Department is making positive recommendations to move forward in that effort.

The process is pretty straightforward, getting an ordinance approved, conducting a public hearing and finding the funds; costs can be high to change the signs and law enforcement has to be supportive. The town of San Anselmo went through this process and they may be a resource for San Rafael.

Other Issues

A request was made to Safe Routes and the City to continue to address the lack of safe routes for students traveling to and from Sun Valley/Gerstle Park neighborhoods. These are areas very close to the downtown which creates challenges. Also, that traffic lights were adjusted a number of years ago that never got corrected. Vehicles traveling east/west and north/south including oversized trucks are routed down very narrow streets that make it very unsafe for pedestrians and cyclists.

Center Street is also a suggested route however the road is in such poor condition students are riding on 5th Street. It needs to be repaved

Next meeting

Thursday, February 2, 2022 at 5:00pm