

Novato Unified School District

Safe Routes to School Task Force Meeting Notes

Wednesday, September 24, 2025

5:00 PM – 6:30 PM

[VIEW RECORDING - 87 mins \(No highlights\)](#)

Participants

- Karen Freemantle – Lu Sutton Principal
- Alex Geyer – San Jose and Hamilton parent
- Lou Goodwin – SR2S/MCBC
- Lori Hiura – Olive Principal
- Wendi Kallins – SR2S
- Manijeh Larizadeh – Novato Public Works Engineering
- Monica Leifer – SR2S Bilingual Coordinator
- Natalie Levine – SR2S parent volunteer (Lu Sutton)
- David Parisi – SR2S/Parametrix
- Aneri Rodriguez – SR2S/SEI
- Caitlin Russo – SR2S/MCBC
- Gretchen Schubeck – Novato Sustainability Coordinator, School Travel Working Group
- Jen Shriber – SR2S/Parametrix
- Sharanya Varma – SR2S/Parametrix
- Dana Weissman – Fehr & Peers
- Casey Ward – CSPOC, SR2S parent volunteer (San Ramon)

Overlay Maps Next Steps (Sharanya Varma)

Sharanya presented the Safe Routes to Schools prioritization process, which involved gathering issues through walk audits, task force meetings, and community feedback. The Safe Routes team applied objective criteria to analyze the data, considering factors like equity, safety, and impact. The process resulted in scoring issues across 50 schools countywide; for Novato, 65 issues across 10 schools were identified. The top 10 projects were presented as a starting point for discussion, with the goal of using the prioritization results to guide walk audits and corridor plan development. Wendi explained that the goal is to develop concept plans for priority corridors to be presented to the Public Works Department, which will help in planning for future grant funding and capital improvement projects.

Center Road was identified as the top priority due to high traffic and safety concerns for students walking and biking. Natalie pointed out that some projects are already funded through quick-build initiatives. Gretchen highlighted the alignment with Novato's Climate Action Plan, which emphasizes active transportation as a key strategy for reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

San Jose Route Map (Wendi Kallins)

The team reviewed a draft suggested route map for San Jose Middle School. Gretchen confirmed that the main routes were accurate. She also noted that Sunset Parkway has bike lanes, but people often drive in it. Gretchen agreed to investigate and provide information about



an off-road trail from Rowland Boulevard that could be a potential alternative route. The team also discussed adding more street names to the map including Leafwood Drive and Indian Way.

Marin County School Access Safety Action Plan (Dana Weissman)

Dana presented the Marin County School Access Safety Action Plan, a county-wide effort led by TAM to identify and address safety challenges around schools. The project, funded by a federal grant, will analyze crash data from 2015-2024 to identify priority areas for safety improvements. The plan will focus on areas within 2 miles of schools, particularly those with high rates of youth and active transportation-related crashes. The project will result in a countywide safety analysis and toolkit as well as individual improvement plans for up to 10 priority areas.

Park & Walk Pilot Programs (Natalie Levine)

Natalie presented the results of a pilot Park and Walk program at Lu Sutton, which aims to reduce traffic congestion and improve safety during school drop-off and pick-up times. The program, which involved a six-day raffle contest and increased messaging to parents, showed promise in alleviating traffic issues. However, Natalie noted that the program would be more effective if targeted at older grades, as TK through second grade students are required to be walked to their classrooms.

The group discussed the potential for expanding this program to other schools. Others noted that Lu Sutton's policy for younger students was not in effect elsewhere.

Safe Routes Activities (Lu Goodwin & Aneri Rodriguez)

Lou provided an update on education and encouragement at Novato schools. She noted that scheduling classes is going well. A bike rodeo will be held at Hamilton tomorrow, while other schools will hold them in the spring. San Jose and Sinaloa are doing International Walk & Roll to School Day, and Lou is working with leadership clubs at the schools to have students promote events.

Aneri gave an update on the Youth Leading Active Communities (YLAC) program at Hamilton, Lu Sutton, Olive, and Lynwood. YLAC is supporting Walk & Roll Wednesday events, will deliver classes in the fall, and is hoping to collaborate with Green Teams at Lu Sutton and Lynwood.

San Ramon & Lu Sutton Recommendations (David Parisi)

David presented plans for pedestrian safety improvements at San Ramon Elementary School and Lu Sutton Elementary School, including high-visibility crosswalks, painted bulb-outs, and daylighting measures to improve sight lines and reduce parking near crosswalks. Casey raised concerns about driver speeds and suggested adding speed bumps, while Natalie highlighted the need for crossing guards, noting that two crosswalk bollards were recently destroyed by drivers. David explained that crossing guard placement is determined by a comprehensive warrant analysis conducted by TAM that considers pedestrian counts, car volumes, and sight lines. The group discussed the possibility of using rapid flashing beacons at crosswalks and agreed that education about speeding should be part of the overall safety strategy.

Street Smarts (Jen Shriber)

Jen provided details on the upcoming Street Smarts education campaign, which will run from September 29 to November 14, featuring banner rollouts, school and yard signs, and social media messaging about road user safety. Wendi and Jen discussed the program's components, including the distribution of materials and templates for newsletters and social media posts. See



the Street Smarts website for more information: <http://streetsmartsmarin.org/>.

Next Steps

- Safe Routes will assess prioritized issues for prior funding and walk audits.
- Safe Routes will update the suggested route map based on feedback.
- Safe Routes will incorporate feedback into the San Ramon and Lu Sutton concepts and will continue working with the Novato DPW to finalize them.
- Alex will help Lou contact San Jose to coordinate blacktop classes.
- Gretchen will help Wendi get a police department contact to spread the word about Street Smarts.

Next Meeting Date: February 11, 2026 at 5 PM