



## Luther Burbank Elementary School SRTS Walk Audit

Tuesday, January 21<sup>st</sup>, 2025



**In attendance:** Christina Panza (SRTS Director), Sarah Hadler (SRTS Program Manager) Alexander Ocegüera (City of Santa Rosa Active Transportation Planner), Mike Vanmidde (City of Santa Rosa Traffic Engineer), Mitchell Tucker (Burbank Principal)

**Route:** Met at school entrance. Observed drop off from the school frontage on South A Street. Walked north to Sonoma Avenue, then headed west to the Sonoma Ave. entrance to the Prince Memorial Greenway. Walked west on the Greenway to Olive Park, then to the intersection of Olive & Hazel Street. Headed back to the school via the Prince Memorial Greenway, then walked east on Sonoma Avenue to Santa Rosa Avenue, south on Santa Rosa Avenue to Sebastopol Avenue, and west on Sebastopol Avenue back to South A Street and the school site. Afterward, walked back to Olive Street and Hazel Street, and followed Olive Street south to the intersection of Olive Street and Sebastopol Avenue.

**Pick up/Drop off:** Morning drop off and afternoon pick up for the elementary school takes place primarily in front of the school on South A St, with the busiest period taking place between 7:45-8:00am in the morning, and 1:20-1:35pm on minimum days, and between 2:20-2:35pm T-F. Two full size school buses drop off/pick up students (approximately 30 students per bus), an early bus at approximately 7:20am and another bus closer to 7:30am.

There is a crossing guard stationed at the intersection of South A Street and Sonoma Avenue, M-F mornings and afternoons.

## School Information:

Address	203 S. A Street, Santa Rosa 95401
Morning Bell(s)	8:00am
Afternoon Bell(s)	2:20pm (T-F), 1:20pm M, 11:50pm on minimum days (i.e. conferences, etc).
Grade levels	Tk-6
Enrollment	337
School type	Traditional
Student's proximity to school	2024-25 GIS Map Data 337 Geocoded Students 285 live within 2 miles of the school (85%) 224 live within 1 mile (66%) 99 live within ½ mile (29%) 41 live within ¼ mile (12%)
Participating School in Sonoma County SRTS program?	Yes
Student Travel Mode info	Walk – 11% morning, 8% afternoon Bike – 3% morning, 1% afternoon Other – 0% Carpool – 3% School bus – 18% Transit – 1% Single Family Vehicle – 67% morning, 72% afternoon
Safe Routes to School Non-Infrastructure Programming (2024-25)	Ruby Bridges Walk to School Day 2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade Pedestrian Safety Education

## **CONCERNS &/or POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS:**

*Please note that all recommendations on the following pages are meant to capture potential solutions to issues or ideas raised during the walk audit. Each of these recommendations are subject to additional design, analysis, outreach, funding, prioritization, and approval by the City and/or Santa Rosa City School District prior to implementation.*

### **Active Transportation Observations and/or Concerns:**

- Morning drop-off was relatively smooth, despite the volume of traffic. The crossing guard indicated that “90% of drivers” are respectful and that drop off/pick up is fairly orderly (which aligned with our observations), but that sometimes she does have conflicts/near misses with drivers who do not obey pedestrian right-of-way. She indicated that she would love the crossing to be “more visible.”
- The main concern(s) expressed by parents in the 2024-25 SRTS Parent survey were in reference to safety on the Santa Rosa Creek Trail. Parents indicated that conditions on the creek trail are a barrier to walking & bicycling to school, with comments such as:
  - Santa Rosa Creek Trail is beautiful and useful connecting east and west of 101, but underpass is shelter for homeless individuals, many of whom do not have adequate space for hygiene. In our commute, we have encountered human waste, trash, fires,

and people in active mental health crises/addiction, (and) inappropriate behavior or exposure. “Compassion for these people is a must, but is not a safe place for children to commute to school”.

- “The creek would be a shortcut to the school but nobody would see my kids if something were to happen to them on the way to school.”
- A large number (seemingly a majority) of Luther Burbank Elementary families live west of Hwy 101, in the neighborhoods south of Sebastopol Avenue, east of the SMART trail, and north of Baker Avenue. There is a large cluster of families that live on neighborhood streets north of Barham Avenue and west of Olive Street (primarily on/off Boyd St. or Earle St), and there is another large cluster of families that live south of Barham Avenue, west of Corby Avenue and east of (or on) Beechwood Drive and the SMART Trail.
- Despite the above concerns about the Greenway, it is notable that the walk from Olive Park, through the Greenway, to the school, would take a typical child about 5 minutes to travel. Furthermore, a walk from Boyd St or Earle St, west of Olive Street, to Olive Park would take between 5-10 minutes, depending on distance.
- The “Friends of the Prince Memorial Greenway” group is an all-volunteer, neighborhood group dedicated to the beautification, cleanliness and support of the Prince Memorial Greenway. One of their volunteers, named Robert, is very engaged and may be a potential partner/supporter of school travel along the Greenway.
- The group observed that Olive Street between Earle Street and Sebastopol Ave. (in the half mile radius of the school) would greatly benefit from infrastructure enhancements to make it safer and more pleasant for pedestrians and/or bicyclists. A majority of families live on the west side of Olive Street. Families walking north on Olive Street likely travel on the west sidewalk to Sebastopol Avenue, then cross at that location or at Hazel to the east side of Olive St. to be on the same side of the street as Olive Park and the Greenway. Therefore, improvements to make that route as safe and visible as possible would be best:
  - Traffic can be heavy on Olive Street, there is vehicle parking on both sides, and the street is not wide enough to accommodate both parking and bicycle lanes. Therefore bicyclists must “take the lane” if they are confident enough to do so, or ride on sidewalk if they are not.
  - Crosswalks are faded and/or missing legs at some intersections
  - Sidewalks also had some cracks/tripping hazards
  - There are unsightly areas, particularly near the freeway underpass, where there are overgrown weeds, a broken fence, etc.
- The group did not observe the neighborhood west of Corby Avenue and East of the SMART Trail, south of Barham Ave. and north of Baker Ave., but parents in the 2024-25 SRTS parent survey expressed concerns about heavy traffic and neighborhood safety.
- Santa Rosa Avenue is a heavy traffic roadway, and a likely barrier for families, particularly of younger children, who live east of it and would like to walk/bicycle to Burbank Elementary. That said Santa Rosa Public Works staff noted recent improvements to crossings along Santa Rosa Avenue to make it easier and safer for active travelers to cross that busy street. The following improvements have been made since September of 2024:
  - Protected bicycles lane on the east side and a protected two-way cycle track on the west side of Santa Rosa Ave between Sonoma Avenue and 1<sup>st</sup> Street
  - “Bike Boxes” (*designated area at the head of a traffic lane at a signalized intersection that provides bicyclists with a safe and visible way to get ahead of queuing traffic during the red signal phase*) and ADA compliant ramps on all four sides of the intersection of Santa Rosa Avenue & Sonoma Avenue,
  - Refreshed crosswalk, signage, ramps, and RRFB (pedestrian activated Rapid Rectangular Flashing Beacon) at Charles Street
  - Refreshed crosswalk, signage, ramps, and median island at Wheeler Street

- Refreshed crosswalk, bulbouts, ramps, to shorten crossing distance, and traffic signal at Mill Street/Sebastopol Avenue
- Refreshed crosswalk, signage, ramps, median island at Pine Street
- Refreshed crosswalk, signage, ramps, and RRFB at Oak Street
- School closures planned for the 25-26 school year will result in students traveling to/from Burbank from additional neighborhoods. For example, if new boundaries result in students from Brook Hill Elementary attending Luther Burbank, a large number of students will travel in from east of Santa Rosa Avenue and south of Highway 12 (i.e. South Park)

### **Active Transportation & Public Transportation Ideas and Potential Solutions:**

- Sonoma Avenue and South A Street
  - Refresh crosswalks
  - Daylight curbs to prevent drivers from parking near crosswalks and blocking pedestrians
  - Consider adding curb extensions to shorten crossing distance
- Olive Street between Hazel Street and Earle Street
  - Consider improvements to the intersection of Olive Street and Hazel
    - Refresh existing crosswalks, add crosswalks to all legs of intersection
    - Consider adding curb extensions to shorten crossing distance
    - Daylighting
  - Consider improvements to the intersection of Olive Street and Sebastopol Avenue
    - Refresh existing crosswalks
    - Curb extensions to shorten crossing distance
    - Daylighting
  - Review sidewalk conditions and repair as able
  - Repair or removal of unsightly fencing/overgrown weeds near freeway underpass
  - Consider adding buffered bicycle lanes (would require removal of parking)
  - Consider sidewalk improvements on the following streets or street segments, should funding be secured:
    - Earle St. between S. Davis St. and Boyd St.
    - Olive St. between Earle St. and Barham Ave.
    - Boyd St. Between Earle St. and Barham Ave.
    - Carrington St. between Olive St. and S. Davis. St.
    - Theresa St. between Olive St. and S. David St.
    - S Davis St. between Carrington St. and Barham Ave.
    - Barham Ave
  - Consider converting Barham Avenue to a Bicycle Boulevard
- Potential, future improvements that could facilitate active travel to/from Burbank Elementary from the south and/or east are referenced in the City of Santa Rosa's Active Transportation Plan:
  - Class IV Bicycle Lane on Petaluma Hill Rd from Santa Rosa Avenue to Yolanda Avenue (high priority list)
  - Class IV Bicycle Lane on Santa Rosa Avenue from Petaluma Hill Rd. to Hearn Avenue (high priority list)
  - Class I Bicycle Lane from Maple Ave to Bennett Valley Rd (high priority list)
  - Class IV Bicycle Lanes on Bennett Valley Rd. from Santa Rosa Avenue to Farmers Lane (opportunity project)

## **District/School:**

- Continue enrolling in/participating in the County SRTS program to participate in ongoing Walk/Roll initiatives (including but not limited to International Walk & Roll to School Day and Ruby Bridges Walk to School Day), and to be eligible to receive SRTS services such as bicycle and/or pedestrian safety education programming, and more.
- Continue to assist the SRTS program in data and information to maintain understanding of travel behavior and barriers to travel at Burbank Elementary.
  - Conduct student arrival/departure tallies in September/October (not on a Walk/Roll Day) to gather data on the number and percentage of students who walk, bike, scooter/skateboard, carpool, bus and travel in single-family vehicles in both the morning and afternoon on a typical day.
  - Distribute parent surveys, as requested, to collect more comprehensive feedback on the barriers to walking & bicycling as well as preferred routes to school.
- Consider establishing & promoting “Walking School Bus” (WSB) or Bike Train meet up spots, and identifying a school “SRTS Champion” (may be school staff or a parent or a team that includes both) to facilitate promotion and community participation. School administration, teacher(s), or even vetted community partners (such as volunteers from Friends of the Prince Memorial Greenway) may lead a group of students on the Walking School Bus or Bike Train in the morning on special event days, and also encourage students & parents to walk together on non-event days and as well as model safe walking behavior. Walking School Buses can operate a couple times a year, once a month, or even once a week during certain months, depending on capacity.
  - A potential meet-up spot discussed at the audit was Olive Park.
- Consider reaching out to Friends of the Prince Memorial Greenway to determine if a partnership could be established that could support a regular Walking School Bus program.
- Share information with students and parents about students being able to ride the City Bus and SMART Train for free.
- Consider sharing the following SRTS tip-sheet(s) and videos to support safe walking, bicycling, drop-off, and parking & walking:
  - Walking Safety Tip Sheet [English](#) [Spanish](#)
  - Bike Safety Tip Sheet [English](#) [Spanish](#)
  - Driver Awareness for Safe Arrival/Dismissal [English](#) [Spanish](#)
  - E-Bicycles Tip Sheet [English](#) [Spanish](#)
  - Park & Walk Video [English](#) [Spanish](#)
- Report incidents to Santa Rosa Police Department when they occur (i.e., if someone is hit in a crosswalk but not hurt, etc), as well as ongoing concerns, near misses, etc.

## **Santa Rosa Police Department:**

- Monitor conditions on Prince Memorial Greenway, provide enforcement of illegal behaviors. Consider enhancing police presence on creek trail during pick-up/drop off time for Burbank Elementary school.
- Continue enforcing speed and moving violations along Santa Rosa Avenue and Sonoma Avenue (high injury networks)

## Transit Information/Options:

- Currently, the two school buses serving Burbank Elementary pick up/drop off students living in the neighborhoods referenced above (south of Sebastopol Avenue, east of the SMART trail, and north of Baker Avenue), with stops on Olive Street, Boyd St, Corby Avenue, Baker St, Cherrywood Drive, Rosewood Drive, Beachwood Drive, Greenwood Drive, Flower Ave, Petaluma Hill Rd, and Colgan Ave.
- All students at the school can ride **CityBus, Sonoma County Transit and SMART free of charge**.
- If school staff require assistance planning school trips on transit, please use the tools on Google Maps (transit option), [www.srcitybus.org](http://www.srcitybus.org) or contact Yuri Koslen, Transit Planner at [ykoslen@srcity.org](mailto:ykoslen@srcity.org).
- If staff at the school need training passes in order to train students on riding the bus, SR City Transit can make those available to staff at any school in Sonoma County.
- Current Transit infrastructure related to this site.
  - The closest Transit stops to Burbank Elementary School,
    - The City of Santa Rosa Transit Mall, which is less than ¼ mile
      - The Transit Mall is managed by the City and served by CityBus' 13 different routes operating Monday – Saturday 6am -8pm. See route details at [www.srcitybus.org](http://www.srcitybus.org)
      - Additionally, the Transit Mall is also served by Sonoma County Transit's seven main routes. <https://sctransit.com/>
      - Additionally, the Transit Mall is also served by Golden Gate Transit and Mendocino Transit.
    - Bus stops on Santa Rosa Ave, at the corner of Santa Rosa Ave and Sonoma Ave, are served by CityBus Route 3 and Route 5
    - SMART Downtown Station is ½ mile walk from the school as well
  - For South Park (south of Bennett Valley Rd. between the Fairgrounds and Petaluma Hill Rd).
    - This area is served by Route 18, Route 3, and Route 5
    - If students are going from South Park to Burbank it is a short ride on Route 3 or Route 5 from Santa Rosa Ave or Petaluma Ave.
- Feasible improvement if the school would like to advocate for transit use
  - Just promote proximity to Transit Mall and SMART as service is significant
  - Discuss with bus operators options for transit cost discounts

## Safe Routes to School Program Information

- The SRTS program coordinates a Safe Routes to School Task Force to bring together representatives from schools/school districts (school administration, staff and/or parents), city planning/engineering, law enforcement, and SRTS program staff. The goal of the Task Force is to:
  - Seek input from Task Force members and the public, in order to identify barriers to active transportation, opportunities for improvement and collaboration, and set priorities for future infrastructure projects within the city of Santa Rosa.
  - Provide a venue for sharing of program initiatives and projects in the city of Santa Rosa, as well as inter-agency collaboration.

Santa Rosa Task Force meeting notices, agendas, and meeting notes & handouts can be found on our SRTS Task Force page [HERE](#).



- Enrollment for participation in the SRTS program takes place in April each year (deadline is April 30<sup>th</sup>). Schools must enroll each year to be eligible to receive visiting education services & ongoing technical support. Enrolled, comprehensive sites agree to:
  - Meet with SRTS program staff 3x per year to discuss/plan programming
  - Collect student travel tally data in September
  - Provide data for the SRTS program to enable creation of an annual SRTS “study map” showing where students live in relation to the school
  - Engage with/implement a minimum of 5 walk/roll encouragement initiatives per year.
  - Support scheduling & implementation of education programming.
- SRTS encouragement “Walk/Roll” initiatives and promotional materials are emailed to enrolled school contacts every month via our SRTS E-Newsletter, and may also be accessed at [www.sonomasaferroutes.org](http://www.sonomasaferroutes.org). To request to receive our SRTS E-Newsletter directly, email [christina@bikeosnoma.org](mailto:christina@bikeosnoma.org)

**Appendix: Walk Audit Pictures:**



South A and Sonoma Ave intersection – refresh, improve visibility



Prince Memorial Greenway



Traffic and parking on Olive Street



Intersection of Olive Street & Hazel – add legs to crosswalk, refresh





No parking on east side of Olive between Hazel and W. 3<sup>rd</sup> – if parking removed further down Olive Street, space for bicycle facilities could be created



Intersection of Olive and Sebastopol Ave – refresh crosswalks, daylight, etc...



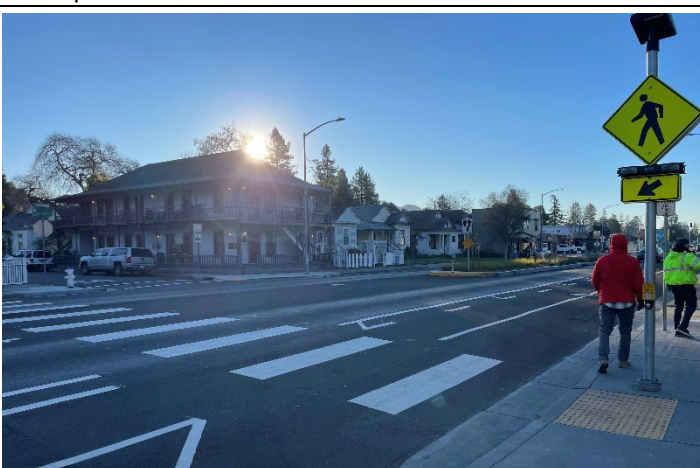
Cracked sidewalk on east side of Olive Street between Hazel and Sebastopol Ave.



Broken fence, overgrown weeds on Olive Street south of underpass



Intersection of Santa Rosa and Sonoma Avenue: Bike box pictured, new ADA compliant ramps



Intersection of Santa Rosa Avenue & Charles – RRFB, ADA compliant ramps, refreshed continental style crosswalk





<<intersection of Santa Rosa Avenue & Wheeler Street, refreshed continental style crosswalks, ramps, median island, signage