



# **Petaluma Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Task Force**

## **Meeting Announcement:**

**Date/Time:** Thursday December 21<sup>st</sup>, 4-5:30pm

**Location:** Petaluma Community Center

## **Goals & Objectives:**

1. 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 Petaluma.
2. Provide a venue for sharing of program initiatives and projects in the city of Petaluma, as well as inter-agency collaboration.

## **Notes:**

### **1. Attendees**

- Bjorn Gripenburg, Project Manager, City of Petaluma
- Christina Panzia, Director, SRTS/SCTA SRTS program
- Mariana Rivarola, Interpreter, City of Petaluma
- Walt Spiller, Traffic Sergeant, Petaluma Police Dept
- Jared Hall, Transit Director, City of Petaluma
- Zoe Unruh, Senior Planner, SMART
- Kent Carotles, Public Works, City of Petaluma
- Rachel Beers, Parks and Recreation, City of Petaluma
- Jessica Medina, Communications Consultant, The Design Guild, Communications Contractor serving the City of Petaluma
- Mike Gardner, Superintendent, Waugh School District
- Molly Nagel, Community Schools/Wellness Coordinator, Petaluma City Schools
- Danny Alvarez, Boys and Girls Club
- Sarah Hadler, SRTS Coordinator/Sonoma County Bicycle Coalition
- Deb Fox, Co-Founder, Operations and Collaborations, Cool Petaluma
- Emily Shartin, Sonoma County Bike Coalition
- Jackie Aguirre, McDowell Elementary, Parent
- David Felix, McNear Elementary, Parent
- Emily Oh, McDowell Elementary, Parent, SRTS liaison
- Adrianna Hernandez, McDowell Elementary, Parent
- Ruth Miller, Principal, Mc McDowell Elementary, Parent
- Aimee Bunting, Mc McDowell Elementary, Parent
- Erica Marnes, Mc McDowell Elementary, Parent

### **2. Partner Announcements**

- **Safe Routes to School Program Report:** *current education/encouragement initiatives and evaluation report*

- Education—refer to powerpoint slides
  - Encouragement—Dec Challenge scavenger hunt, all program materials are in Eng and Spanish—win a handknit wacky winter hat
  - Updated January Idle Free challenge so that schools can do them any time of the year (flier/Instagram info/bunch of resources on our website that anyone can use); benefits of not idling—turning engine off if sitting more than 30 seconds; can be shared on social media by anybody
  - Cool event happening on Fri. 12/22—2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Holiday Lighted Bike Ride (flier in Eng and Spanish)—we sent to schools to ask to share if they could
  - **City of Petaluma (public works, transit, police)**
    - **City of Petaluma** has the “Slow the Fast Down” Campaign and is sharing signs, stickers and magnets. [Sign up here](#) to participate.
    - **SMART** (Zoe) has a field trip program; on April 1st, free fares for youth; Danny asked if Boys and Girls Club could also use the SMART field trip program—yes, Zoe will share the link
    - **Police**—support on the holiday bike lighted ride; PD is in middle of anti-DUI holiday campaign, had a press release, last Friday, in 3 hours, 8 arrests. Over the weekend, 13 arrests
    - **Transit**—continue to run free K-12 youth program through June 2025—up 60% from year prior; talked to drivers to be extra cautious and slow speed on McGregor—max of 15 mph when school is session; call if there is an issue; event downtown that was successful; toy drive and Cots with UnaVida; training for bus drivers with bike coalition to drive around bikes and peds; completely free on weekends to ride
    - **Other Partners**—no updates
- 3. Site Assessments and Travel Plans**
- Proposed schedule for site assessments
    - Goal is to cover every school by Feb 2025
    - Proposed schedule for walk audits is based on collisions near schools over 5 years; McDowell had highest and coincidentally had first walking audit/travel plan
    - McKinley is next/combined with Live Oak—on 1/16
    - In process of refining schedule and figuring an equitable order for schools to have site assessments
    - Christina encouraged parents to come to this meeting even if your school is not on the agenda; created new infographic in Eng and Span—flier in Eng and Span
  - McDowell Elem: Post Site Assessment report
    - Leading ped intervals at McGregor and Maria intersections—5 seconds head-start
    - Additional school zone and reduced speed limit signs
    - Speed feedback signs
    - Met Thu. 11/30, 8:30-10am, best to meet during morning drop off or afternoon pick up; participants from SRTS, Cool Petaluma, principal, parents, City (Bjorn and Ken); Walt from PD

- Walk audit recommendations are meant to capture possible solutions (disclaimer)
- School entrance on McGregor Ave (refer to slide)
- Loading Zone on McGregor Ave
- McGregor Ave and Park Lane—prohibit parking at the corners and install bulbouts (like the ones on Jefferson and Vallejo St)
- McGregor Ave—need for traffic calming, speed cushions or chicanes that create a natural curvature; achieve a lower speed limit of 15mph during school hours
- Park Lane—install new mid-block crosswalk; create pedestrian pathway from Park Ln to potential new rear entrance
- Maria Dr and Park Lane—add crosswalk to west leg of intersection and install bulbouts
- Maria Dr –install new mid-block crosswalk (make sure it is really safe and visible); prohibit overnight parking; create pedestrian pathway
- Maria DR—would need a lot of community support behind this idea; prohibit parking on one side and have a 2 way protected cycle track that connects to Washington Creek Trail; Little League parking accommodations)
- Parking Lot entrance/exit on S McDowell Blvd—improve signage/stripping to alert drivers of right turn; fill gap in median to prohibit u-turns with some sort of vertical element to prevent that
- Longer term idea on McDowell—road diet, depending on operational and traffic impacts, could be feasible, go from 5 vehicle lanes to 3 vehicles lanes—this can lead to wider sidewalks, protected bike lanes, landscaping and 2 roundabouts that would help with traffic calming and moving traffic
- Emily asked to make a short term/med term/long term plans/goals
- Bjorn said Christina has made a spreadsheet that does just that; Bjorn said anything involving concrete work is a mid-long term project; can put a timeline, cost, feasibility in the spreadsheet and see what can happen short/med/long term
- Christina created a draft spreadsheet that can be viewable, it's on our website; also, developing a travel plan for every school in Petaluma, there will be a site overview that has information about how a school has engaged in the SRTS program, data from address map and tallies, etc, then on the 2<sup>nd</sup> tap, there is a link to the actual GIS address map; 3<sup>rd</sup> tab is keeping track of the concerns we have received whether from a parent survey or a task force, also preferred routes are documented; 4<sup>th</sup> tab is walk audit report (might just link to the City's presentation); could have link to recommended route maps
- Plan to create a travel plan for each school that is accessible on the SRTS page; living document that we'll update each year
- Emily asked if there is a follow up mtg; Christina said that this is the follow up, and then the document exists with school and city; this can be a venue for this to happen in the future—it's an ongoing process
- Christina would like in the future to do 3-5 mile radius maps for middle schools and high schools

- Bjorn—when can you expect to see more changes? City wants to be nimble with lowhanging fruit—addressing quick build, paint, sign improvements; tracking the things that take more funding, design and community engagement so that we know they are there when opportunities come around
- Christina showed SRTS Website—Petaluma SRTS Task Force, have agendas/meeting notes and this is where Travel plans will be as well as the spreadsheet of identified projects/concerns, whether that is public or not, but always able to ask Christina or Bjorn about any issue
- Kent—adding to the City being nimble—this is a good time for Walking Audit at McDowell because we have Park and other projects going on in that area; council funding and approval
- Ruth Miller asked about the park crosswalk but Kent said they're replacing park walkways within the park
- David asking if striping and signage are quickbuild—crosswalks and speed limit signs; Bjorn—installing new crosswalks need ADA ramps which would require concrete work, flow of storm water and grades; annual pedestrian project to do ADA ramps and curbs assuming budget is left. For speed limits, understanding new state legislation that can lower speed limit around schools that is going to council in spring 2024—need a council resolution to speed limits can be enforced.
- McDowell parent thanked the group for the Walking audit—it is appreciated!
- Christina said we need your voices to make these safety improvements—we can only inform and share information.
- A mother from McDowell asked for name/phone number to send requests/reports in English and Spanish
- David—asked to consider doing a biking audit when you are there doing a walking audit, to do both to save time and a bigger radius for middle schools and high schools
- Christina said that would depend on the site and who can get on bike.
- Bjorn suggested that David call out improvements on the ATP plan, some sort of protected bike lane, sidewalk closure near Kenilworth; bike improvements are much more linear, getting them into the ATP would be very helpful. Christina said that these walk audits are the first step and maybe get a bike audit in there as well
- Parent from McDowell said there are no flashing lights at the stop signs. At certain times of day, the visibility is not the greatest—glare on the windshield. Her request at every crosswalk would be there would be a flashing light; Bjorn said those are usually at crosswalks without any other sign/signal so that would be on the mid-block crosswalks we talked about. By putting bulbouts at stop sign intersections, that would make pedestrians more visible. Parent would like to see more flashing lights.
- Emily—each time parent uses ped button, there is no sound, can someone recheck?
- Ruth Miller thanked the group—parent really wants to walk/bike on the other side of Washington to McDowell, any plan on other side

of Washington for McDowell? Bjorn said it is one of the most challenging sections in the city to improve for biking; major redesign for the road, limited real estate and amount of traffic; encourage people to use Maria as option to McDowell; this has been elevated a lot in the ATP plan

#### **4. Other SRTS issues, concerns & opportunities**

- Email From Nicholas Austin from McNear: The sidewalk on the west side of I Street terminates just past 820 I Street, then begins again just past the driveway at 930 I Street. There is no crosswalk at 8th Street. The closest crosswalk across I Street from the northernmost edge of the missing sidewalk is almost a quarter of a mile down the road at 6th Street. This missing sidewalk is a little more than a tenth of a mile from McNear Elementary, and about three tenths of a mile from Grant Elementary. If connecting the sidewalk isn't feasible, I would suggest a well lit crosswalk across I Street near Olive Street & 820 I Street.
  - Bjorn said that should be on the ATP already—he will double check.

#### **5. Other Business & Announcements**

- For notes from past meetings, travel plans, spreadsheet with audit tracking (if possible), next meeting.  
<https://sonomasaferroutes.org/content/petaluma-safe-routes-school-task-force>

#### **6. Next Meeting & adjournment**

***The next meeting of the Petaluma Task Force is scheduled for Thursday January 18th, 4pm-5:30 at the Petaluma City Hall (Council Chambers), 11 English St***

*\*SRTS issues and concerns may also be emailed pre- or post-meeting to Christina Panza, SRTS Director & Task Force Facilitator at [christina@bikesonoma.org](mailto:christina@bikesonoma.org)*