



Santa Rosa Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Task Force

Focus Area: Central/NW Santa Rosa Focus Area (City Council Districts 4, 5 & 6)

Meeting Notes of Friday, December 1, 2023

[You can view the recording of this meeting by clicking this link](#)

Members in attendance

Christina Panza	Director, Safe Routes to Schools & Education	Sonoma County Bicycle Coalition
Sarah Hadler	Safe Routes to School Education/Encouragement Program Manager	Sonoma County Bicycle Coalition
Alexander Ocegüera	Active Transportation Planner	City of Santa Rosa
Torina Wilson	Active Transportation Planner	City of Santa Rosa
Emily Shartin	Advocacy	Sonoma County Bicycle Coalition
Patricia Turner	Director of Risk Management	Santa Rosa City School District

Additional Attendees via Teleconference: Summer Gloeckner (Sergeant Traffic Division, Santa Rosa Police Dept); Dana Turrey (SCTA); Patricia Cruz (Family Engagement Coordinator Lincoln Elementary School); Jeanine Wilson (Lincoln Elementary School Principal); Maria Bautista (Parent from Lincoln Elementary School and SR High School)

Notes on Agenda Items:

1. Introductions & public comments for items not on agenda*

(This item begins at [2:22](#) on the video recording)

- a. Christina welcomed everyone to the meeting and then everyone introduced themselves (please see above for attendees).
- b. There were no public comments.

2. Safe Routes to School Program Report (Christina Panza)

(This item begins at [4:32](#) on the video recording)

(PowerPoint slides and corresponding handouts included in notes packet)

- a. We are in the North and Central Santa Rosa focus area. The enrolled schools in the SRTS program are Helen Lehman, Hidden Valley, Luther Burbank (newly enrolled this school year), Monroe, Proctor Terrace, Piner

High School (newly enrolled) and Santa Rosa Charter School for the Arts. Again, these are the schools enrolled just in this focus area, City Council Districts 4, 5 and 6. There are no schools from the Piner-Olivet School District enrolled in the SRTS program. (*Slides 1 and 2*)

- b. Christina shared school snapshots for each school in this focus area, these are the overviews of all the ways that schools have participated in the program over the last school year. The snapshot reviews how long the school has been in the program, what the travel mode data is, their encouragement events data, and how they have been engaged with encouragement, education and community engagement, as well as data from the GIS maps and their bike rodeos. Christina has snapshots for all of the schools in the program last year (Helen Lehman, Hidden Valley, James Monroe, Proctor Terrace, SR Charter for the Arts). She handed out hard copies and said they will be also posted to the website. (*Slide 3*)
- c. Our student address GIS maps for this school year have just been completed for all of the schools in our program (*Slide 4; this item begins at [6:57](#) on the video recording*). We are in the process of distributing all maps to our schools and having these all available on the website. We will also be working on travel plans for each school and will have more info about this in January. Christina shared the GIS map example of Helen Lehman and said it really shows so clearly how a big cluster of families lives on the east side of the railroad tracks and the Jennings crossing has been closed off for about 8 years, making it difficult for families to walk/bike to school. A lot of advocacy is happening to get SMART to make that crossing an at grade crossing. SRTS cannot advocate but we want to inform you and encourage you to share your thoughts about that crossing so that kids can safely walk/bike to school.
- d. Christina said that the parent survey comments from last spring have been collected and will be also available on the website (*Slide 5; this item begins at [8:27](#) on the video recording*). These will be included in the school travel plans for which we'll have more information in January, and there are handouts and will be included in the notes for this meeting as well. There were quite a few comments from schools in this focus area.
- e. The process for scheduling a Walking Audit/Assessment at your site is that the principal needs to email a request to Christina and then the audits are scheduled as requested, depending on the availability of the school, the City and SRTS staff and capacity (*Slide 6; this item begins at [8:64](#) on the video recording*). There have been two Walking Audits so far this school year, one at Sequoia on 9/11 and one at Wright Charter on 11/8. We had a request from Austin Creek after the last Task Force meeting and that has been scheduled for Monday, 12/4. There have been no other requests yet. We are thinking about a process for the Walking Audits that we are still working through and will discuss at the January meeting. We want to make that we're being equitable in how we are selecting and ordering schools for the audits in a way that makes sense for SRTS, the City and

the schools involved. This process is relevant for now and if we get a request, we'll consider it.

- f. We've been busy in our education services between Oct and Dec in this focus area (*Slide 7; this item begins at [9:42](#) on the video recording*). This slide shows where we've been for our 2nd grade pedestrian safety lessons, our 4th grade Bike Basics lessons and bike rodeos and our 5th grade mapping and communications lessons as well as our Learn to Ride lessons. We've been at Proctor Terrace and Hidden Valley for our 2nd grade lessons and at Helen Lehman and Monroe for our 4th gr bike rodeos and Proctor Terrace and Hidden Valley for the 5th grade lessons.
- g. Our Int'l Walk and Roll to School took place in October and Ruby Bridges Walk to School Day happened in November (*Slides 8-13; this item begins at [:64](#) on the video recording*). Ruby Bridges was super successful, 60 schools participated, many of which were in this focus area, including schools who don't participate in other aspects of our program, like Biella and Brook Hill. Christina shared photos of Ruby Bridges Walk to School Day from Proctor Terrace and their Walking School Bus, Hidden Valley's big event around educating about equity and diversity, and Monroe had a Walking School Bus with Janelle and members of the SRJC football team and the Press Democrat was out there. RL Stevens (not in this focus area) had students draw pictures showing Ruby Bridges. Schools got really creative in how they celebrated the event and brought attention to equity and diversity and educated about Ruby Bridges. We're excited about this event and how it is growing, we had double the amount of schools participate this year than did last year.
- h. Coming up is Wacky Winter Walk and Roll (*Slides 14-15*). We've gotten lots of emails from schools who are having a Wacky Winter Walk and Roll to School Day next week, where kids are encouraged to dress brightly. We have a Scavenger Hunt Challenge which is something you can do at home with parents and anyone can share and participate in. If they do the challenge and turn it in, they can be entered into a drawing for a hand-knitted wacky winter hat. We should have about 20 hand knitted hats to give out. Please share, SR Police Dept, City of SR and SR City school district, this is a fun, holiday activity that is getting kids out walking and to think about infrastructure, too.
- i. Our educational highlight PSA is on Winter Weather Riding (*Slide 16*). We sent it out in our SRTS E-news and it's on our youtube channel. It has good info about how to be safe when you are riding your bike when it's overcast and raining. It would be great if the SR Polic Dept can share this out as well.
- j. A reminder about the Santa Rosa Community Improvement Grants (*Slide 17; this item begins at [34:2](#): on the video recording*), these are still open and the applications are due on January 2nd.
- k. Our next Task Force meeting will be an all-city meeting on January 31, 2024, 4pm-5:30pm, at SCTA (*Slide 18*)—This will be an important meeting for everyone to attend as will discuss how to move forward with the Task

Force. We have tentative meetings scheduled for Feb, April and May but we want to make sure we have participation from principals and parents and move forward in a productive way for everyone.

- I. Some new participants joined via Zoom and they introduced themselves: Patricia Cruz, Family Engagement Coordinator at Lincoln; Jeanine Wilson, Lincoln Principal; Maria Bautista (Lincoln and SR High parent). Christina thanked everyone from Lincoln, said it was good to see them and she hopes they will get involved with SRTS again. There is a teacher from Lincoln, Christa Knapp, who has been doing the SRTS monthly challenges with her class every month—she gets her whole class to participate, they had a good time with the Ruby Bridges Bingo Challenges.

3. **City of Santa Rosa Active Transportation Update (Alexander Oceguera)**

(This item begins at [38:37](#) on the video recording; Slide 1)

(PowerPoint slides included in notes packet)

- a. There are two Rapid Rectangular Flashing Beacon (RRFB) projects in this focus area (*Slide 2*). One will be at Mendocino Ave and Howard Street and the other one will be at Steel Lane and Meyers Dr. The RRFBs are meant to help alert drivers that pedestrians are crossing the street with flashing lights and pedestrian crossing signs. These are due to be installed hopefully by Summer 2024.
- b. A completed project in this district is the Armory Dr. two-way cycle track (*this item begins at [39:41](#) on the video recording; Slide 3*). We recently received counts for use from this project—coming in on the Elliot Dr side, there were 274 riders within a 2-week period and from the southside off Ridgeway, there were about 450 riders. We'll get more counts as the weather gets warmer, but good to see people utilizing the cycle-track even when the weather is not the greatest.
- c. A project that is moving forward is the Santa Rosa Ave cycle track from 1st St. to Sonoma Ave. This should be fully installed in the next few months. There will be a push button for cyclists to get across Santa Rosa Ave heading northbound on the cycle track. It's a new feature and there will be some education as it gets set up. We look to get people off the Prince Memorial Greenway and on to our bicycle network.
 - i. Jeanine Wilson commented that the Armory Dr cycle track is a great addition and asked if there will be more of these projects coming up or are you waiting for feedback before going ahead. Alexander answered that the Santa Rosa Ave cycle track will be forthcoming. As we plan out our Active Transportation Plan (ATP), we will identify more roads to convert to Class IV bike lanes, that add a separate protection to the bike lanes and not all will be 2-way, but they will be separated, but going with the path of vehicular travel as well. Jeanine mentioned that W. College and Mendocino and maybe W. 9th St would be streets that could benefit from these improvements. Alexander said that streets need to have the right road width to do these projects. W. 9th St has not been measured

out, but it potentially could. You have to allot a certain # of feet for the bike lane, the buffer, the travel lanes, as well as parking. On W. 9th St., the parking is in high demand and it probably wouldn't be taken out. Alexander would love to hear more input and suggests offering feedback on the ATP website and you can also look there for future developments and when mtgs are. Torina mentioned that public outreach for the ATP plan will begin in late winter/early spring next year.

- d. We are looking to put in road diets in and near schools to help reduce speeds (*this item begins at [44:22](#) on the video recording; Slide 4*). Road diets are taking a multi-lane roadway and taking a lane in each direction to add a protected bike lane or other feature, that way, you go from two lanes to one and it reduces speeds and calms traffic. We are looking to implement these in certain areas but have to go through the proper channels. There is at least one that is in the process of going through the proper vetting, we have to check with the fire department and emergency response, we have a meeting with fire next week. There should be more information on our pilot projects at the next Task Force meeting.
- e. The most recent walking audit at Wright Charter School was very successful (*this item begins at [46:02](#) on the video recording; Slide 5*). There were folks from a lot of different agencies, SCTA, the County from the Traffic Engineering division, the City of Santa Rosa, SRTS and the principal and superintendent from the Wright school district. Something that came out of fruition from that walking audit is that a crosswalk will be installed at Finley Ave and South Wright Rd as kids could be crossing here but drivers don't know that this is a walking path/area that kids use and a crosswalk will help identify that.
- f. Emily asked if there are any results from the other walking audits and acknowledges that the process is in flux.
 - i. Christina said that what we do in the walking audits is we gather together with the principal, a couple of parents, SRTS reps, and the City planner and City engineer. We hear about the concerns in the vicinity of school, and we record them and discuss potential short term and long terms solutions and put that in a document. Everything that can be done in the short term is often done.
 - ii. Alexander said that at Sequoia, there was a crosswalk with parked cars on the approach side so by daylighting it and adding red curb, the visibility issue was mitigated. Any low lying fruit that we can get to right away, we do. The other concerns were a request for protected bike lanes, and there is a future plan for redoing Calistoga Rd that will take time and funding, but having that concern documented will help for future projects and the walking audits will educate folks. Christina said that we have that report for the school now and the concerns are documented and can be taken into account for future improvement projects. We had a walking audit at a school in Petaluma and it turned out the school

wanted and was very supportive of what the City was proposing, a road diet and roundabout on McDowell Ave. The principal is an advocate and will show up to support this proposed project. This Task Force is important to keep the lines of communication open and to let people know there are other opportunities for schools and parents to voice their concerns, like public mtgs that the City of Santa Rosa has, the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) mtgs and we hope this Task Force meeting is a place where information is disseminated. We'd love to have more parent and school engagement and we appreciate the parents and school staff from Lincoln today. We are moving our meetings in the new year to 4pm in the hopes that more parents will be able to attend.

- g. Jeanine asked about parent involvement and asked how much time Christina would need to come to a Parent Mtg or Site Council mtg and Christina said to email her anytime up to a week ahead and if she can come to the meeting she will. Jeanine said she'd like for Tina to present to the parents and get feedback in a more intimate setting and the middle of the day is difficult for parents to attend.
- h. Patty mentioned that Lincoln did initially request a walking audit and suggested Jeanine should formally email Christina with this request.

4. Santa Rosa Police Department Enforcement Update (*Sergeant Summer Gloeckner*)

(this item begins at [53:43](#) on the video recording)

- a. Sergeant Summer Gloeckner will be at the Austin Creek walking audit on Monday, December 4th. The Police Dept's public information officer is working on a timeline to share the educational PSA on social media. Srgnt Gloeckner offered motor officers to be involved with Walk/Roll on 12/6. Christina will send list of schools that will be doing events on 12/6.

5. District/site SRTS issues, concerns & opportunities

(this item begins at [55:34](#) on the video recording)

- a. Christina said that we did change the process for requesting walking audits because we realized that we need them to come in a more formal way rather than just announcing them at a meeting. She invited anyone to share issues and/or concerns that they have. Christina apologized for not having a translator here and asked if Patricia could translate for Maria.
- b. Patricia Cruz translated the question for Maria to see if she had any questions/comments about concerns around the Lincoln area.
- c. Maria asked if it would be possible for more volunteer police officers to be at school every day when the kids come to school so that there are visible security figures around school (*this item begins at [56:57](#) on the video recording*). Sergeant Gloeckner is in charge of the volunteer-in-policing program and said she will put in a request for extra patrol with volunteer police officers for the Lincoln area. If there's a specific issue, the PD will

respond. She also said that they don't have school resource officers right now, so they can't post officers at schools. She will also ask the Sergeant in charge of that area for extra patrols during school hours. Maria thanked everyone for listening to her and really appreciates the extra support.

- d. Christina asked a clarifying question: is Maria requesting officers at pick up and drop off for traffic control or at other times to engage with students and parents during the day? Patricia said she asked for police volunteers in the morning when kids are walking to school; this shows kids they are taking care of the area. Maria hopes that police officers can interact with students during school hours in a social way to build relationships and it shows a police presence. Jeanine can email Sergeant Gloeckner with a time and day for officer to come out and make a presentation and can interact with the kids. Christina said to email her and she will forward it to Sergeant Gloeckner.
- e. Christina said that if a school is requesting Police Dept presence at a bike rodeo, that is fine, please let us know. We have taken that piece out of our bike rodeo norm, but if the request is coming from the school, we can do our best to make that work and 4th graders at least could interact with the PD at a bike rodeo.
- f. Patty wanted to add a note that she heard from Maria there is a concern in the community that things happen during school hours and a presence of a patrol during school hours would make the community feel safer and more vigilant with a police presence.
- g. Jeanine said that W. 9th St. is a long, straight stretch, and can often be a drag race and very loud with the cars throughout the day which is extremely unsafe. If there could be an increase in police presence, that would be great (*this item begins at 65:35 on the video recording*).
- h. Sergeant Gloeckner said that she will request adding extra patrols to the motor officers assigned to Beat 5.
- i. Christina asked Jeanine to email her to request for a walking audit at Lincoln, as W. 9th St could potentially be a site for a pilot project for traffic calming measures, not sure that could work with the width of the street, etc, but it would be good to look at (*this item begins at 66:28 on the video recording*). Jeanine said that white reflectors were installed in the center of the street to deter drag racing, but even during the school day, there is drag racing on W. 9th St and the noise is distracting for the kids and they can even hear it in school meetings. Jeanine is concerned about safety and does not want to see a parent or kid get plowed down. Christina said that it would be good to see it in action at drop off or pick up and it would be good to have Jeanine there and a parent, like Maria, and a City engineer and a City planner, SRTS staff, and Police Dept, and to see what potential solutions could be implemented and to document it all. Sarah mentioned that there is a very high percentage of walking students at Lincoln. Jeanine said that 88% of the student population walks. Christina said that is all the more reason to think about the crossings with such a large number of walkers.

6. Other Business & Announcements

(This item begins at [69:3](#) on the video recording)

Christina thanked everyone for being here and reminded all about the Winter Dec Scavenger Hunt Challenge, it is due on Jan 15th, so kids can do it over the holiday break.

The next meeting of the Santa Rosa Safe Routes to School Task Force is scheduled for Wednesday January 31st at 4pm at the Sonoma County Transportation Authority (411 King St).

**Public comment on items not on the agenda. Please limit comments to 2 minutes each. The Committee will hear public comments on non-agenda issues for up to 5 minutes, at which time they will hear scheduled agenda items. Any additional public comments will be heard at the conclusion of the items that are already on the agenda, if time permits. Comments may also be emailed pre- or post-meeting to Christina Panza, SRTS Director & Task Force Facilitator at christina@bikesonoma.org*