



# **Santa Rosa Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Task Force**

## **Meeting Notes of Thursday, February 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2024**

[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 Ocegueda	Active Transportation Planner	City of Santa Rosa
Staci Desideri	Executive Director of Wellness and Engagement	Santa Rosa City Schools

**Additional Attendees via Teleconference:** Torina Wilson (Active Transportation Planner, City of Santa Rosa); Summer Gloeckner (Traffic Sergeant, Santa Rosa Police Dept); Macy Juhola (Principal, Wright Charter School); Tony Roehrick (Superintendent, Piner-Olivet School District); Kathy Stoural (Principal, Monroe Elem); Olga Venegas (Principal, Jack London Elem); Ryan Partika (Principal, Herbert Slater MS)

### **Notes on Agenda items:**

1. **Introductions**—Christina welcomed everyone to the Task Force meeting. Attendees went around and introduced themselves (please see “Members in Attendance”).
2. **SRTS Program Update: Countywide Strategic SRTS Plan, Upcoming initiatives (Christina Panza)**  
(this item begins at [2:22](#) on the video recording)  
(Powerpoint slides included in note packet)
  - a. A Countywide Strategic SRTS Plan is commencing at this time—we want to make sure that the Task Force, school principals and districts were aware of this process, who is leading it and what the outcomes will be (*Slide 2*). Currently, the SRTS program in Sonoma County is a program of the Sonoma County Transportation Authority (SCTA) and the Regional Climate Protection Authority (RCPA). SCTA collaborates with cities and County to maintain and improve our transportation network, prioritizing, coordinating and maximizing funds for wide planning, project development and grant administration. RCPA coordinates climate protection activities countywide, including advocacy and research, leading a coalition to mobilize regional climate action in Sonoma County. These

two agencies, really SCTA at this time, hold the SRTS program and the Bicycle Coalition is the consultant who implements programming at schools countywide.

- b. In our existing program, we have active mobility education and encouragement, data collection (creating the GIS maps and getting data from schools about how students are travelling to and from school) and site assessments (determining barriers to walking/biking and potential improvements) (*Slide 3*).
- c. The Countywide SRTS Strategic Plan is going to go into a process where our existing program is looked at, seeing if/how there could be expansion, and for assessing and prioritizing schools (this item begins at [3:43](#); *Slide 4*). There are a number of components and these are in order of when they are happening:
  - i. Countywide Schools prioritization of schools countywide—state and federal grant programs increasingly prioritize applications for infrastructure that incorporate collision score ratings and other metrics like disadvantaged communities, public support, severity of collisions near schools, detailed assessments of students' proximity to schools and more. The plan for comprehensive data driven school prioritization analysis based on those critical factors and to insure this process is rigorous and reflective of the diverse needs of school communities. They will be ranking all of the schools in the county.
  - ii. Work on a Countermeasure Toolbox—Alexander will show us an example of this later. This will be a toolbox that educates everyone on what types of safety improvements are potential solutions for safer travel, tailored to the needs of Sonoma County. Things like crosswalk enhancements, bike lanes and other traffic calming measures, referencing best practices, from local, regional, state and national programs, some best practices from Santa Rosa and Petaluma will likely be looked at. This toolbox will be available for schools/districts to understand what types of measures can be implemented.
  - iii. There will be programmatic recommendations for Education and Encouragement and recommendations for expansion.
  - iv. There is a plan to hold listening sessions—lessons learned, success stories, existing SRTS efforts. This is where this Task Force comes in and our relationships with principals. One of my goals was to get feedback from principals about their with successes/priorities so we could utilize that as we move forward in planning for the countywide program.
  - v. Focus on the City of Healdsburg—assessing all the schools in Healdsburg and developing a Healdsburg SRTS Plan for all the schools in Healdsburg.
  - vi. There will be a County SRTS Project Task Force bringing together stakeholders countywide to inform this process. Hopefully, there will be reps from school districts, schools, cities, elected officials so we can really look at the needs of the county holistically for Safe Routes.
  - vii. There will be a process where 10 schools will be selected to have site assessments and infrastructure improvement plans. They may or may not be in Santa Rosa, but there will be 10 schools from that prioritization list that will have a full assessment and have concept plans done for shovel ready projects for grant applications to go into.
  - viii. A County Safe Routes to School Plan will be developed.
  - ix. Make sure everyone knows this is going on and we have started the work in Healdsburg now and listening sessions will probably happen

next year. Keep an eye open for communications—it's very important for school districts to be engaged in this process and for school voices to be heard as we develop those priorities, especially for the education and encouragement planning.

- d. This is a flow chart of the process (*Slide 5*)—the green is what we are already doing and the blue is what will be coming out of this process.
- e. Back to the site assessments, we are doing those already (this item begins at [84](#); *Slide 6*). In the City of Santa Rosa, we have really worked hard since 2023 to methodically assess sites for the barriers to walking and bicycling to school. Alexander developed a prioritization process. We started the audits before the prioritization list was developed, so the first 3 schools were audited before there was a list and then we realized that we needed to create a list. The list starts from Lincoln on, and this list may end up getting modified based on some of the new factors that the county is looking at but for now this is our list for this year. The whole list will be posted as an addendum to this Task Force presentation and notes that will be up on our website. These are the schools we have audited so far and are planning on auditing this school year except for Santa Rosa Middle School, as we are waiting on the school consolidation decision. Every school in Santa Rosa is on this list, including Piner-Olivet schools.
  - i. City of Santa Rosa/SRTS Site Assessments September 2023-Present
    - i. Sequoia Elem—9/11/23
    - ii. Wright Charter School—11/8/23
    - iii. Austin Creek Elem—12/4/23
    - iv. Lincoln Elem—1/10/24
    - v. Brook Hill Elem—2/13/24
    - vi. JX Wilson Elem—2/25/24
    - vii. Helen Lehman Elem—3/11/24
    - viii. Steele Lane Elem—4/23/24
    - ix. Monroe Elem—5/7/24
    - x. Comstock MS—8/27/24
    - xi. Slater MS—9/18/24
    - xii. Taylor Mountain Elem—10/16/24
    - xiii. RL Stevens—11/19/24
    - xiv. Montgomery HS—12/10/24
    - xv. Luther Burbank Elem—1/21/25
    - xvi. Cesar Chavez Language Academy—3/5/25
    - xvii. Roseland Elem—3/26/25
    - xviii. Santa Rosa MS—postponed until after school consolidation decision
    - xix. Meadowview Elem—TBD, April 2025
    - xx. Sheppard Elem—TBD, May 2025
    - xxi. Roseland University Prep—TBD (possibly May 2025, with Sheppard)
- f. Highlight Enrolled Sites for 2024-25; these are the schools that are engaged in the SRTS program this year in the City of Santa Rosa (*this item begins at* [62](#); *Slide 7*) By enrolled, these are sites that are implementing SRTS encouragement programming and receiving education services from us. Roseland joined us this year and Burbank joined last year but is doing a bit more.
  - i. Rincon Valley Union School District: Austin Creek, Binkley, Madrone, Manzanita, Sequoia, Spring Lake Middle, Village, Whited
  - ii. Wright Elem School District: JX Wilson, RL Stevens, Wright Charter

- iii. Bennett Valley School District: Strawberry
- iv. Roseland School District: Roseland, Sheppard
- v. Santa Rosa City Schools District: Cesar Chavez, Comstock Middle, Helen Lehman, Hidden Valley, Lincoln, Luther Burbank, Monroe, Proctor Terrace, SR Charter Arts, SR French American Charter
- vi. No enrolled sites in Piner-Olivet or Bellevue Districts
- g. Overview of Enrolled Site Services—if you are an enrolled school, you are receiving all of these services (this item begins at [:§2; Slide 8](#))
  - i. Evaluation: Student Address Maps; Arrival/Departure Tally Data
  - ii. Walk and Roll to School (or anywhere) Encouragement Events
  - iii. Depending on your school, receiving educational lessons:
    - i. 2<sup>nd</sup> gr Pedestrian Safety Lessons
    - ii. 4<sup>th</sup> Gr Bike Safety Lessons
    - iii. 4<sup>th</sup> Gr Bike Rodeo
    - iv. 5<sup>th</sup> Gr mapping and communications lessons
    - v. Middle School “Drive Your Bike” Lessons
    - vi. Middle School Rides/Youth Engagement
    - vii. Community On-bike Education/Outreach
  - iv. SRTS presentations with school staff/parents/board/City Council, etc
  - v. Engineering/Enforcement Support (SRTS Task Force/Site Assessments)
- h. Encouragement program (this item begins at [32-57](#)) Whether or not your school is enrolled in the program, these are things you can do or share:
  - i. February—Walk and Roll for our Hearts Month (*Slides 9, 10*)—art contest is shared county-wide and we are asking students to draw a picture describing what they love about walking/biking. We choose 15 winners and make a calendar and winners receive a gift card to a local art store
  - ii. March of the Penguins Month in March and many schools do a March Walk/Roll Day on the first Wed of the month, Wed 3/5 (*Slide 11*) —you can walk miles and observe birds and try to walk to Antarctica, tracking miles while walking and biking to school or even walking on the blacktop or to the grocery store. Teachers can do with students as a class project.
  - iii. April Green Transportation Month (*Slide 12*). We are encouraging schools to hold a Walk/Roll Day encouraging walking/biking/carpool/bus and to give out this challenge sheet on their Walk/Roll Day and try another mode on another day and even try all four modes. We’re asking them to think of the benefits of each of these mode and to try carpooling or transit or anything that gets families out of single family vehicles.
  - iv. May Bike To School Day (*Slide 13*) on Wed. 5/7—we ask schools to register for this event, you do not have to be enrolled and you can celebrate this day which is also a Walk and Roll Day, just one that highlights bikes. We also have safety education information about biking safely.
- i. The next Task Force is on Thu. 6/12 (*this item begins at [36-34](#); Slide 14*) **Note: this got updated to Tue. 6/10 at 10am**
- j. We had some new attendees join us: Katheryne Stoural, principal of Monroe, we participate in the SRTS program with a Walking School Bus and students ride and walk and we do a bike rodeo; Olga Venegas, Principal at Jack London Elem,

interested in the future riding our bikes to school—thank you for putting on all of the events.

### **3. City of Santa Rosa Public Works Update – Current Projects & Future Plans (Alexander Ocegueda)**

*(this item begins at [38:54](#) on the video recording; Slide 1)*

*(Powerpoint slides included in note packet)*

- a. We are working towards slower speeds and safer streets in our community  
*(this item begins at [39:32](#); Slide 2)*
- b. Transfer of energy (*Slide 3*) Speed is a determinant for the severity of a crash. Think of someone getting into a collision on a street, the faster you are going, the more impact it is, hence a more severe collision. We are trying to reduce that through engineering controls and working together to create solutions.
  - i. Data: a study found that an impact at the speed of 30mph had a risk of fatality of 20%, at 40mph, it was 46%, at 50 mph, it was 75% and at 60 mph, 92%. You can see the speed of an impact definitely has an effect on how severe a collision is.
- c. Engineering Controls (this item begins at [3:46](#); *Slide 4*) are a way for us to design the roadway to slow speeds down and hopefully make the streets safer for people walking, biking and for people in cars. In our toolbox, we have:
  - i. Curb Extensions (*Slide 5*) shorten the distance a kid has to go across the street, with bulbouts and delineators. They slow speeds and drivers can't make sweeping turns; they are a cheap/easy way to minimize collisions and slow down speeds.
  - ii. Protected bike lanes (*Slide 6*) create a separation using delineators and they can go all the way to the intersection and having the same benefit of shortening the crossing distance across a crosswalk. We want to implement these in more places and they also give more space for kids riding their bike on the roadway; reduces the likelihood for vehicle/bike collision and they slow speeds down as well as they give a vertical visual that the roadway seems narrower.
  - iii. Flashing Lights at a Crosswalk (RRFB or Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons) (*Slide 7*) gives drivers a warning that a person is crossing the street; it also helps to notify drivers two or three cars back that someone is crossing the street which would prevent rear end collisions. This is just a warning light so always check and wait until car stops before going into street.
- d. What are we doing? (this item begins at [43:78](#); *Slide 8*) We are out there doing these Walking Audits at schools throughout the city.
  - i. Easy Fixes (*Slide 9*) at first:
    - i. Red curbs to daylight an intersection. There is a new law that was passed that we have to daylight with a red curb 20 feet

from an approach to an intersection, this helps with visibility and seeing pedestrians crossing the street.

- ii. We also have the leading pedestrian interval (LPI). This gives a lead time to the pedestrian walking into the intersection, to get out ahead of the light as it turns to green. This is very beneficial, gets the pedestrian established in the crosswalk before people drive through the intersection
- ii. Long Term Fixes (*Slide 10*) need more planning and cost more than the easy fixes.
  - i. Protected intersection with delineators/colorful/curb extensions/shortened crossing distance
  - ii. Protected bike lanes
  - iii. Flashing crosswalk lights (RRFBs)
- e. We need your help! (*Slide 11*) this is a good forum to have outreach, we need your input and help. You'll see that the Walking audits have been impactful and helpful for the City to make meaningful decisions as we repave our roadways and make slurry seals on our roadways, there is an opportunity to make more long term improvement fixes.
- f. Identifying barriers to walking and biking (this item begins at [46-73](#); *Slide 12*) and the Walking Audits are very helpful. The more parents involved the better and the more students involved, especially at the Middle School level is very helpful. A student at Comstock told us about bus stops and where they crossed, this helped to inform decisions on where to put infrastructure improvements.
- g. Comstock Middle School Walking Audit (this item begins at [47-53](#); *Slide 13*)
  - i. At the bus stop heading east bound, an area needed a sidewalk uplift and has now been repaired. If nobody tells the City about it, we can't do anything about it. You all are our eyes and ears.
  - ii. Two crosswalks at Apache/Steele Lane and city was under impression that the one to the east was more used by kids, but everyone uses the one to the west, so that informed the decision to add an RRFB. There is a pavement project along Steele Lane, and then we'll add an RRFB there.
  - iii. Crossing at Apple Valley Lane always seems to be an issue. There have been in roadway signs (not super useful, getting hit), so those will be taken out and we'll instal a stop control through pavement maintenance.
  - iv. Bus stop area and kids crossing through the parking lot, the Santa Rosa City School Dist could work with Parks and Rec to add ramps and a crosswalk there.
- h. Taylor Mountain Elementary Walking Audit (this item begins at [4: 66](#); *Slide 14*)
  - i. The campus is nice and can be pretty walkable area, there are neighborhoods but there are issues, like Santa Rosa Ave, the speeds are high and it is a deterrent for walking along Santa Rosa Ave. We recently lowered speeds from Bellevue north on Santa



Rosa Ave, hopefully this helps people feel more comfortable. We are trying to design roadway to better accommodate walking and biking. At Santa Rosa Ave and Bellevue, we are installing a signal and protected intersection with curb extensions (that area was a deterrent to crossing the street).

- ii. Through planning, we have an Active Transportation Plan update that we're doing. We can set streets with separated bike lanes and Santa Rosa Ave has become a place where we will have class IV protected bike lanes.
  - i. Katheryne thanked the city for putting in a covered bus shelter on Steele Lane and the Comstock driveway for the Comstock students. It was installed in December.
- i. Montgomery High School Walking Audit (this item begins at [52:48](#); Slide 15)
  - i. On Cyprus Way, cars were being parked very close to the crosswalk. We are putting in red curbs at the intersections so people crossing are more visible.
  - ii. In the future with our SS4A (Safe Streets For All) grant, at Cypress and Hoen, we will be looking at doing a protected intersection with curb extensions there.
  - iii. All along Hahman Dr, we will be daylighting (putting in red curbs) the crosswalks so students will be more visible crossing the streets.
  - iv. SS4A is a Safe Streets For All grant and in our portion of the grant, we'll be emphasizing intersections on high injury networks and doing protected intersections and curb extensions, it's an opportunity to try out different materials to see what works. Hopefully, we still get that money, as things are going to be changing. We are excited to get moving on this.
- j. Luther Burbank Elementary (this item begins at [55:21](#); Slide 16)
  - i. There are a lot of issues with folks hanging out underneath the freeway, and there are a good portion of students living on the west side of the underpass, so going under the freeway to get to the east side of town and to school is challenging. We are trying to coordinate with Friends of the Prince Memorial Greenway, a group that gets out and cleans up the Greenway to make it nicer, cleaner and more of a community space. Attending their recent meeting and hoping to establish a Walking School Bus to meet up at a designated spot and walk together to school, it's a community builder and people feel safer and more visible walking together. Hopefully, there will be a potential to do this.
  - ii. Class IV separated bike lanes on Santa Rosa Ave are a potential that came out of our Active Transportation Plan update.
  - iii. Katheryne asked about the walking overpass on the freeway that was removed. Are there any thoughts on reestablishing that? Alexander said that no, the city is not exploring that as there is

now access under the freeway and that was probably one of the reasons why it was removed.

- k. RL Stevens Walking Audit (this item begins at [58-3](#); *Slide 17*)
  - i. With the SS4A Grant, we hope to improve Stony Pt/Giffen intersection.
  - ii. Flashing yellow arrow at that intersection, and parents and school staff were worried about people turning into students. So during school hours, we changed that to a green turn only arrow and that in non-school hours, it goes back to a flashing yellow arrow. This makes people feel safer crossing.
  - iii. We are daylighting the intersection at Campbell/Doane, cars are parked too close to the intersection. Students will be more visible walking across the street
- l. Slater Middle School Walking Audit (this item begins at [5: 6](#); *Slide 18*)
  - i. We will be daylighting the crossing on Sonoma Ave that goes to the school.
  - ii. In the long term, it would be good to add curb extensions and/or protected bike lanes to make it a shorter crossing distance.
- m. For Your Reference (this item begins at [5: 45](#); *Slide 19*)
  - i. MySantaRosa <https://www.srcity.org/3661/MySantaRosa> If you see an area that needs a curb uplift, like at a bus stop, you can go here and report things and this goes to our street crew or our Parks Dept and they'll in turn help make that improvement.
  - ii. Active Transportation Website <https://www.srcity.org/3906/Active-Transportation-Plan> Here is a map of the improvements we are planning to make and also things that have been done recently. Shows the different classifications for the bike lanes, so you know where there are protected lanes. We also have our Active Transportation Plan here and you can go to it and see what the update is. We are currently in an internal review process and the draft will be out for public review shortly.
  - iii. Alexander Ocegüera, Active Transportation Planner, City of Santa Rosa contact: [aoceguera2@srcity.org](mailto:aoceguera2@srcity.org)
- n. Christina said that we will also have this presentation posted on the Santa Rosa Task Force page on our Safe Routes to School website: <https://sonomasaferoutes.org/>
- o. Christina said that she talked to the principal at Helen Lehman, Christina Seina, recently and she mentioned that a stop sign was put in at the crosswalk in front of the school and this has been a huge improvement and she wanted to thank the city.
- p. Christina asked Summer Gloeckner (this item begins at [63-72](#)) about the underpass issues on the Prince Memorial Greenway and if there is a way for law enforcement to prioritize the underpass area that goes between Olive Park and Luther Burbank Elementary School as that is a genuine barrier to walking to school; when we walked there we saw a just burnt tent and is there a way to have a daily patrol.



- i. Summer replied that the downtown enforcement team is led by Sergeant Tim Berit and she can discuss with him that specific area of concern. He can take his team out and assess and move people along. They do enforcement during the day, and then nighttime approaches and people experiencing homelessness come back at night and then the morning is an issue. Their shifts start at 7am and she'll ask Tim and his team to prioritize that area. Christina said that's great and if it can be in those morning hours between 7 and 7:30 and especially when we have our Walk/Roll Days, we can communicate when those are. Summer asked for that information and she will pass it on.
  - a. Katheryne said thanked everyone for thinking about the times that students are walking to and from school. In the mornings, it's 7:30-8am and students get out at 2:20 and Wednesdays they get out at around 1 something; Stacy could pull up the bell schedule. Christina will send Summer the Walking Audit Report that has the start and end bell times.

**4. Roundtable: What is the most critical element for SRTS program success at your site? What are your site priorities? Are there any District/site SRTS infrastructure or enforcement issues, concerns & opportunities? *(this item begins at 67:4: +***

- a. Christina said that for time's sake, we'll consolidate items four and five and sites can either share a success or a priority for their site or a district infrastructure or enforcement concern.
- b. Ryan said for Slater, we're talking about something that potentially keeps parents from doing u-turns in front of the school, like on Steele Lane.
- c. Katheryne said that the Walking Audit from last year and there were quite a few things we dogeared, there was new signage and cutting of trees and the city has taken care of most of those pieces. It is so nice to have this partnership, it's good to looking at things from a different lens, taking a walk from a different perspective, we appreciate that. Sarah mentioned that our program at Monroe is very strong, we have a Walking School Bus and Bike Train, and there was a staff presentation yesterday. The SRTS program is strong and deep at Monroe.
- d. Staci said that the Santa Rosa City Schools District is undergoing a dramatic transition between now and August in an effort to right size our budget. We are considering some closures and consolidations and our families and staff are living in a time of great uncertainty, knowing that next year our highest priority is the exact same as this year, serving all of our students with highest quality engagement, education and priority of safety. But our four walls of schools and boundaries in our neighborhoods may look a little bit different. We have invited a group of community partners and staff to begin working together (first meeting is tomorrow morning) to put together what we are calling a Rebuilding and Resilience Alliance. This team of like minded individuals are going to set aside the traditional

methodologies and naming of “I am Montgomery” or “I am Slater” or “I am Monroe” and ask “We are Santa Rosa, how can we come together as a community to support families and students and staff through this transition?” One of our highest priorities is helping families whose boundaries or schools may have changed, figuring out ways to feel confident transitioning their children to school if their school might be new. We have invited Christina Panza to be a part of that conversation so that we can use the experience and expertise of SRTS to help families feel safe as they transition through this crazy time of ours. We want SRPD to be a part of this as well, because, regardless of whether we have an MOU or a program, we appreciate all of the support that SRPD gives to our families and schools. We want families to know they are not alone.

- i. Katheryne said that there are going to be a lot of new safe routes and is glad that SRTS is going to be a part of it. Staci said that if there is a family who used to go to Monroe and is now going to Lehman and Lehman had a Walking Audit, so being able to share that information/past work and expertise with the family, so people know there are options and that their children’s path to school is important to us.
- ii. Christina said that she really appreciates the Santa Rosa City Schools has been very proactive in establishing an MOU with the SRTS program, so that we can create Student Address GIS maps for every school in the district, not just enrolled schools in our program. Christina is sad that Piner-Oliver just left as she would love to have that same agreement with every district so that we can produce these maps for every school in Santa Rosa so that we have that visibility into where students are coming from and where are the priorities for infrastructure or enforcement, where are they coming from, where are the crossings that are most utilized. This is data that we use not just in our programming but in grant applications and that’s part of what the county planning process will result in. We are sharing what data we need county-wide. Staci said that the maps will need to be recreated when we redraw the boundaries. Christina said we do the maps every year by December. Katheryne said that this will impact the partnership with the city, where are those areas that we need to improve so that our families can walk safely.

## **5. Next Meeting(s) & Adjournment: Tue June 10th at 2pm**

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