



Petaluma Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Task Force

Meeting Announcement:

Date/Time: Thursday January 16th, 2025 4:00pm-5:30pm
Location: Petaluma Community Center
320 North McDowell Blvd

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 on Agenda Items:

1. Introductions:

- a. In attendance: Christina Panza (SRTS Director); Sarah Hadler (SRTS Program Manager); Bjorn Gripenburg (Active Transportation Planner); Walt Spiller (Traffic Sergeant, Petaluma PD); Jessica Medina (Communications, City of Petaluma); Jennifer Remmers-Wright (Blue Zones); Mady Cloud (Petaluma City Schools Trustee); Michael Gardener (Superintendent, Waugh School District); Bennett Holley (Principal, Corona Creek); Indy Monday (Principal, Sonoma Mountain Charter); Rick Parker (Resident, Former Adobe School Board); Brian Meux (Corona Creek Parent); Kristine Weeks (Parent/Resident/Waugh School Board); Zoe Unruh (Senior Planner, SMART)

2. Partner Announcements

- a. [Safe Routes to School Program update](#) (Christina Panza)
 - i. Encouragement Update (*Slides 1-3*)
 1. Our February Walk and Roll theme is Walk and Roll for our Hearts. We are sharing the message of being heart healthy and how walking and rolling is good for your mind and body. Many schools have a planned Walk and Roll Day for Wed. Feb 5th and the challenge is an art challenge where students can do art that shows what they love about walking and biking. We will choose 15 art pieces that we then make into a school year calendar.
 2. The March Challenge is March of the Penguins (*Slide 4*) in which students can track their miles and birds that they see.
 3. We will have a Green Transportation Challenge in April in which students are encouraged to try walking, biking, carpooling and transit to get around.
 4. Our Bike To School Day registration opens on 2/15 and will be celebrated on Wed. 5/7. We get lots of participation from Petaluma schools.

- ii. Jan-Feb education in Petaluma (*Slide 5*)
 - 1. Grant-4th grade basics on 1/9 and 1/16
 - 2. McKinley-3rd gr pedestrian safety and 5th gr mapping and communications on 1/13 and 1/27
 - 3. McDowell- 2nd gr pedestrian safety on 1/12 and 1/29
 - 4. Grant-2nd gr ped safety on 1/13 and 1/30
 - 5. Mary Collins at Cherry Valley—2nd/3rd gr pedestrian safety on 1/31 and 2/7
 - 6. Sonoma Mountain—2nd gr pedestrian safety and 5th gr mapping and communications on 2/6 and 2/13
- iii. Walk Audits Update for 2024-25 (*Slide 6*)
 - 1. Valley Vista/PJH/The Spring Hill School—8/29/24
 - 2. McNear—9/13/24
 - 3. Meadow—11/12/24
 - 4. Corona Creek/Kenilworth—12/12/24
 - 5. Sonoma Mtn—1/14/25
 - 6. Grant--2/25/25
 - 7. Mary Collins at Cherry Valley--2/11/25
 - 8. We have not targeted private schools but could have that conversation. The private schools are St. Vincents Elem and HS, San Antonio HS and River Montessori
 - 9. The report on the remaining audits (*Slide 7*) for Grant and Mary Collins will be at the 3/20 Task Force meeting at City Hall. At that meeting, we can also talk about the plan for the May 15th Task Force meeting (location TBD).
- iv. The SRTS Countywide Strategic plan is in the very early stages of being developed. There will be a time when we will want to get feedback from principals/schools on what their priorities are.
- b. City of Petaluma (public works, transit, police)
 - 1. Police Dept
 - a. Walt reported that they have lost 3 officers to injury, and there is a process to get them back off the injured list, so they are running low-staffed. There is an officer that is in training to be a new motor officer.
 - b. CHP has a marijuana tax grant and this brings a unique opportunity for education. They are working on a PSA film series on anti-DUI education called One Bad Decision. The producer has a lot of experience in the film industry. It's a 6 film series, and the films follow the different perspectives of people related to the true life event. The first PSA is from the driver's perspective and you can now view it on Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/petalumapolicedepartment/reel/DDdfyhovdM9/> The next one in production is from the view of the First Responders. Please check it out, share it, spread the word. Mady suggested that the PD reach out to schools to share this. Walt said that they have a very wide target audience.
 - 2. Jessica mentioned that the City might have more Slow the Fast Down signs and stickers as people have requested. She will look for them.
 - 3. Bjorn gave a few City updates:

- a. They have posted a Senior Traffic Engineer staffing position.
- b. The City is working on the next round of quick build projects: putting in an all-way stop at Mtn View/Mission in response to neighborhood requests; 5th St now has an implemented greenway between Mtn View and Western and there is a traffic circle at I and G Sts (the traffic diverter at the G St intersection makes it easier for crossing by foot and by bike; there are red curbs near every intersection, and 3 sets of speed cushions (basically bumps with gaps for Emergency vehicles to drive through). The City is excited to learn from these and improve them.
- c. The next round of improvements, in accordance with the new state law for reduced speed limits, will be implemented around the city: it will be 20 mph in downtown, and on any 2 lane street within 500 ft of a school, the speed limit will go down to 15 mph, when children are present. Mailers are being sent out and info is up on the website, so that people will be ready for the changes when they happen. They will roll out school by school, in the way that schools were identified for, and in order of, our Walk Audits, by collision history. They hope to get all these improvements out this year, with the later walk audit schools coming at the end of the year.
 - i. Walt mentioned that the PD is working in partnership with engineering and will give people a grace period of a couple of weeks after the signs go up before they start issuing tickets.
- d. Another new state law, rolling out school by school, prohibits parking within 20 ft of any intersection or crosswalk. This can be shortened to 15 ft if there is a bulb out (Payran/Jefferson; F ST/11th as examples). This makes pedestrians feel more safe to step out into the street to a more visible location and can also eliminate sweeping turning movements from drivers.
 - i. The PD will enforce if it becomes an issue or there are multiple complaints. They will mostly be issuing warnings, and treating it like an education piece as drivers get more used to it.
- e. Monday, Jan 27th is the City Council mtg and the City will be presenting deep dive into data collection for understanding how parking and curb space is being utilized in downtown.
- f. The Feb Community Workshop, which will probably be at the Petaluma Community Center, will share info and collect feedback on the paving project on Rainier and discuss the recommended design for the full corridor, from McDowell to Sonoma Mtn on Ranier.

- g. Jessica mentioned that the upcoming City e-news that focuses on sharing info about streets and waterways will have a general awareness and messaging on roundabouts/traffic circles.
- c. Other Partners (Cool Petaluma, Petaluma People Center, etc)
 - i. Jessica from Blue Zone noted that the December Holiday Lighted Bike Parade was really successful and super fun, with at least 400 participants!

3. Site Assessment(s) of Corona Creek, Kenilworth, and Sonoma Mountain
(Bjorn Gripenburg)(*Slide 1*)

- a. Bjorn showed slides of quick build bulb-outs and curb extensions (*Slide 2*). These are meant to improve visibility, decrease crossing distance and slow vehicle turning movements.
- b. **Corona Creek Elementary & Kenilworth Junior High:** Post site assessments & school/community feedback
 - i. The audit took place on Thursday, Dec 12th at 2:15pm (*Slide 3*). There were participants from SRTS, City Public Works and Police Dept, Corona Creek, Kenilworth, Waugh SD and the neighborhood. We started at Kenilworth, observed pick up, then walked along Riesling to Corona Creek and down Hahman, then turned east on to Ely, turned north on the Creek Trail and followed that back to Kenilworth.
 - ii. At Kenilworth, the main access point to campus is on Riesling (*Slide 4*) and the 2nd access point is on Dover Ln. There is an all-way stop at Dover/Landsdowne Way, and an all-way stop at the main school driveway/Sandstone. There are uncontrolled crosswalks on Riesling at Betsy Drive and Fieldstone Dr (where the Corona Creek Trail exits). The Eastside Ring Trail ends at Dover and there are hopes to extend the trail to meet the Corona Creek Trail.
 - 1. Rick mentioned the Safeway shopping center parking lot where students gather and walk along Riesling Rd. We did not go as far as the Safeway parking lot on this Walking Audit.
 - 2. Mady asked how many students use the trail to walk/bike to school? We do not have that specific data.
 - iii. Riesling Road at Dover Lane (*Slide 5*)—traffic waiting to enter the school driveway observed impeding north bound traffic on Riesling Rd.
 - 1. Potential Improvements—consider installing part-time loading zone b/w Dover and school driveway; putting up signage.
 - 2. Both Kristine and Michael like this idea; thinks it will improve traffic flow and reduce stress; middle school kids don't need to get walked in to school.
 - iv. Riesling Rd and Corona Creek Trail (Fieldstone Dr), and also at Betsy Dr.
 - 1. Repair rough section of asphalt near Corona Creek Trail crossing
 - 2. Add bulbouts and improve signage at both crosswalks

3. Michael said staff puts out temporary signs (yield to peds) in the middle of the crosswalk area and wondered if permanent signs could be installed so that Kenilworth staff doesn't have to haul signs every day. Bjorn thought that could be considered.
- v. At Corona Creek, the main campus access point is along Hartmann Lane (*Slide 7*)
 1. There is one uncontrolled crosswalk at Quarry across Hartman Lane and another uncontrolled crosswalk further south across Ely. On Ely, there is one uncontrolled crossing that leads to the Corona Creek Trail.
 2. Riesling Rd (*Slide 8*)—there is a long gap in the sidewalk that forces kids to walk in what is currently a parking lane between Corona Creek and Kenilworth.
 - a. Long term improvement would be to construct a new off street pathway.
 - b. Near term improvement would be to do a quick build that would create a multi-use pathway using the existing roadway width, and using the parking lane for a walking/biking way (*Slide 9* shows the potential quick-build configuration); when closer to the school, there would need to be a parking lane but then the path/lanes could widen in the middle and extend all the way to Kenilworth.
 - c. This potential improvement would need to get neighborhood feedback.
 - d. Michael and Kristine really like it, also said there would definitely need to be a physical barrier and also important to think of the parking lane, maybe in the morning, it's a loading zone. Elementary schools have a lot more parents walking their kids in and drivers need a place to line up to allow other traffic to flow around them. It's good there are no houses on that side of Riesling, so not much parking is needed there. Corona Creek is in a corner and doesn't have a lot of access, everyone is coming to one place. Implementing a project like this sooner than later would be really good!
 - e. Brian said that a lot of parents park and then walk their kids to school and if it is made into a loading zone there would be less available space for parking.
 - f. Bjorn hopes to get this into design taking into account driveways and space.
 3. Hartman Lane—Riesling Road Curve (*Slide 10*)
 - a. Desire for better delineation of curve and ensuring vehicle lanes are kept clear during pick up and drop off. There was discussion about what the City could do to help with physical delineators in the middle of the lane so school staff doesn't have to put cones out every morning but driveways can't be blocked for people turning into and out of.

- b. There is a potential improvement of using the cul-de-sac curb as a loading zone or another way to take advantage of that curb area space. Michael said that it was tried and didn't work to make that a drop-off/pick up space.
- 4. Main Entrance on Hartman Ln (*Slide 11*)—desire for additional crosswalk along school frontage; existing crosswalk at Quarry St is not convenient for all.
 - a. Kristine mentioned this could happen in Phase 2. She wants to see happens with the other suggested improvements and see how that changes behavior.
 - b. There is jam packed parking every morning and afternoon because people don't walk/bike on Hartmann or on Riesling, so seeing how the improvements on Riesling might have a ripple effect onto Hartmann.
 - i. Bjorn mentioned that it is hard to retrofit the wide streets with curb ramps.
- 5. Hartman Ln at Ely Rd N (*Slide 12*)
 - a. Complaints of speeds on and challenges crossing Ely Rd N and the left turn prohibition, that was put in for the safety of the kids crossing at the crosswalk across Ely) on school days creates a long circuitous detour for drivers that adds about a mile.
 - b. Potential near term improvements would be to put in bulbouts and create a pedestrian refuge island with some vertical elements, as well as move the stop sign (on Hartmann) further out into the street for visibility.
 - c. Long term improvements would be to explore the feasibility of a roundabout.
 - d. Brian asked about the possibility of putting in a stop sign on Ely. Bjorn said they'd need to look at traffic volumes and check warrants.
 - i. The crossing guard said even with the left turn prohibition, drivers are are still turning left and making it dangerous for the crossing guard and for those crossing.
 - ii. Another parent said that even though he believes kids can walk/bike on their own at the 4th grade level are not letting their kids because of this particular crossing.
 - e. Bjorn said that when Ely gets repaved, there's a lot of quick build improvements that can with a focus on pedestrian refuge islands.
 - f. Mady wondered if roundabouts can be made wide in a place like this to slow down traffic; Bjorn said yes, there is room here for that.
 - g. Brian said that the bulbouts and refuge islands would narrow lanes. Bjorn agreed and said that on Ely, there is no parking so to create curvature, you'd need to get rid of that 2 way left turn lane; quick builds don't lend

Ring Trail and the connector path to the back of campus as a way to get to school.

- viii. Christina said that Walking School Buses and Bike Trains can be very successful as they help to get parents involved in their children's travel modes and if you start early in elementary schools, walking and biking becomes more of a habit.

4. Other SRTS issues, concerns & opportunities—

- a. Brian expressed appreciation for the SRTS program and for the City of Petaluma. Indie agreed and gave kudos to the City of Petaluma for making improvements a priority.
 - b. Bjorn said that you could reach out to City council representatives to express support for these proposed improvements. John Schribbs is the representative for this area. The City budget is presented to council in draft form in May and adopted in May for the fiscal year of July 1st-June 30th. You might not see quick builds in the budget but you will see more of the long term improvements. It would be good to plant the seeds for the long term vision of a Ring Trail extension. Michael asked if the Riesling Rd project would be a quick build and Bjorn said it is likely so and funding could come from within their Safe Streets budget. The Ely Rd roundabout would not be a quick build, that's a bigger project. Bjorn said he'll be giving periodic updates at these Task Force mtgs on the timing of how these proposed improvements are coming along.
 - c. Michael said that there are 1200 students at Corona Creek and Kenilworth and hopes that these improvements are a priority.
5. Christina said that these Task Force notes will be posted on the SRTS website.
 6. Bjorn said that the proposed improvements from these walking audits are happening even more quickly than last year but we still want to engage the neighborhood and develop the concept a little further. Michael said that the schools can support the Community Engagement process.
 7. Mady encourages school board members to come to the Task Force meetings as well as the walking audits, it is good to see visible changes that happen relatively quickly.
 8. Christina finished by saying we hope to keep making these Task Force meetings worth your time to come to and we hope to see you in March and May.

9. Other Business & Announcements--NA

10. Next Meeting & adjournment

The next meeting of the Petaluma Task Force is scheduled for Thursday, March 20th from 4:00-5:30pm at Petaluma City Hall.

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