



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

**Focus Area: Central Santa Rosa**

**Meeting Notes of Friday, May 22, 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
Patricia Turner	Director of Risk Management	Santa Rosa City Schools
Amber Williams	Principal	Steele Lane Elementary

**Additional Attendees via Teleconference:** Rob Sprinkle (Deputy Director for Engineering, Transportation and Public Works, City of Santa Rosa); Summer Gloeckner (Traffic Sergeant, SRPD); Lynn Satow (Parent/SRTS Champion at Hidden Valley Elementary); Jeanine Wilson (Principal, Lincoln Elementary); Brad Coscarelli (Principal, Hidden Valley Elementary)

## **Notes on Agenda Items:**

### **1. Introductions**

*(this item begins at [0:00](#) on the video recording)*

- a. Christina welcomed everyone and then everyone went around and introduced themselves (see above for attendees). Note: some attendees arrived partway through the meeting.
- b. Christina said that she will share about the SRTS program, Rob Sprinkle will share City of Santa Rosa project updates that impact schools, Summer can share any news about the Police Dept and then schools can have a chance to share any successes and challenges. We'd also like to share the plan for the Task Force meetings next year and get any feedback around that.

### **2. Partner Updates**

- a. **Safe Routes to School Program and Bike to School Day update (Christina Panza)**

*(this item begins at [2:37](#) on the video recording)*

*(Powerpoint slides included in note packet)*

- i. Christina shared the SRTS Goals (*Slide 2*) for the record and for any one who is new to the Task Force meeting.
  1. Encourage more students/families to walk, bike, scoot/skate for transportation
  2. To teach kids/families how to be safe while doing so
  3. Identify barriers to active transportation and identify engineering improvements that should be made to take away those barriers
  4. Connect the community and make them more aware of the benefits of SRTS to their health and environment.
- ii. The reason we have these goals (*Slide 3*) is that transportation is 60% of the annual Green House Gas Emissions in Sonoma County and a large part of this is single family vehicles/cars so we would like to see less cars on the road and more people walking and biking.
- iii. Another reason is for health (*Slide 4*). One mile of walking each way is 2/3 of the recommended 60 min of daily activity for kids. Far fewer kids are getting that exercise these days and we want to encourage as much of that healthy behavior as possible.
- iv. A goal with our program is to really encourage families to consider fitting biking and walking into their daily routines to school or anywhere (*Slide 5*). We promote walk/roll to school or anywhere, like post office, store, library, etc.
- v. The Three Ps for Change (*Slide 6*) is a shared vision that the Task Force has. There are 3 Ps for change that will result in more families walking and biking. The top is Programs, which is a lot of what we do with education and encouragement programs, these are easier to implement, and then there is Physical Projects, like putting in bicycle lanes, improving crossings and these have a bigger impact for change, and then there are Policies, where schools are sited or having budget dedicated to buses, having SRTS coordinators at schools, etc. These three Ps work together, and it is important to have a Task Force that connects these Ps.
- vi. Tomorrow is an Open House/Reception for the winners of our walk/roll art contest and their pictures will be featured in our 2024-25 Calendar (*Slide 7*). We will be at Juilliard Park, from 3:30-5 to have treats, give out the calendars and honor the artists. Every year we have this challenge and we are raising awareness of the benefits of walking and rolling and we get such beautiful pictures (*Slides 8,9*). We produce a 15-month calendar, June-August, and we'll be distributing these calendars this month. Christina invited everyone to come by and have a treat and pick up a calendar.
- vii. SRTS Activities in May in Santa Rosa (*this item begins at 7:19 on the video recording; Slide 10*) We have been very busy this month. We did a bike safety assembly at Monroe, we had several bike rodeos, we did our Monroe Walk Audit, we had Bike To School Day, we did education at Middle Schools, we were at the Bike Block party downtown. We were at so many schools doing so much education and encouragement and this just shows Santa Rosa. We are also in Petaluma, Sebastopol, Sonoma, Healdsburg, all over the place.
- viii. Bike To School Day was on Wed. 5/8 (*this item begins at 7:57 on the video recording; Slides 11,12*) This shows some of the collateral that we had. The bottom right is a sticker that kids got

- ix. This was our 3<sup>rd</sup> year celebrating as a county, and we had a hugely successful event (*Slide 13*). We had nearly 3X the normal number of bike riders. We get pre bike counts and the day of counts. The chart shows the number and the schools % increase and the schools that are highlighted in red are the schools that established bike trains where there was a meet up spot with a parent/staff leader and biked in a group. You can see the schools that had bike trains had huge jumps in the number of bicyclists. It helps to connect parents who want to ride to school with their kids. Biking is a way to get to school quickly from a longer distance than walking but a lot of people aren't comfortable with it, but they get comfortable with company and doing the bike trains with more adults. Some schools say parents have to accompany children or have a parent responsible for your children but others have enough adults that kids can be dropped off, it's up to the school to communicate in whatever way they are comfortable with. We are going to work more on this next year and we're still encouraging walking and active/alternative transportation. Biking is a barrier we can overcome by connecting people.
- x. It was just a fantastic event and here are some pictures from Bike to School Day (*Slide 14*): bikes with bike stickers, a bike train from Santa Rosa Charter for the Arts, the upper right is from Monroe, and then lower left is from San Miguel, another from SR Charter Arts, and a bike train from Summerfield.
- xi. We were at the Bike Block Event on Thu. 5/16 (*Slide 15*). This was the first event put on by the City of Santa Rosa along with Bikeable Santa Rosa. It was on Bike to Work Day, and the street was shut down between B St and Mendocino on 4<sup>th</sup> St. There were tables and music and we brought our bike blender and interacted with lots of kids and parents from Santa Rosa schools. We can come to schools' Family Fun Nights, Open House or other events and bring our education table and interact with kids and parents.
- xii. We want to recognize a student from Binkley Elementary school (*this item begins at [12:10](#) on the video recording; Slide 16*). Binkley, with our encouragement started a AAA Safety Patrol Program, where students get to help with drop off and pick up, moving cars along and helping kids get in and out of cars, and there was a student at Binkley, a model Safety Patroller, Jeffrey Magee, and he was one of ten winners in Northern Cal, and the school won a \$2000 grant to use to partially support the SRTS program and the AAA Safety Patrol program. Our SRTS program connects schools with AAA and we encourage schools to contact and connect with AAA and implement a Safety Patrol Program at their site.
- xiii. We have enrollment open during the month of April and we have our enrolled sites for the 2024-25 school year (*this item begins at [13:45](#) on the video recording; Slide 17*). Priority enrollment is during month of April and we had all the elementary schools and one middle school from the Rincon Valley School District, we had all the schools from the Wright School District, Strawberry enrolled from the Bennett Valley School District, Roseland (new) and Sheppard from the Roseland School District and we have ten schools from Santa Rosa City Schools. We still accept enrollment at any time of year, but priority enrollment is for schools requesting limited services, like a bike rodeo, so we can assess and plan now and set the schedule for the upcoming year. We will work with

schools and we can serve them in any way that we are able. Schools don't have to enroll if they just want to register for one event or have service for one grade level—it's just when we do education at multiple grade levels and have an ongoing encouragement program that we need schools to enroll to collect data and have some responsibilities in return for those services.

- xiv. We will come back to Walk and Roll Encouragement successes and challenges (*Slide 18*) if we have enough people to share.

b. **City of Santa Rosa Transportation & Public Works (Rob Sprinkle)**

(*this item begins at 15:58 on the video recording, Slides 1,2*)

(*Powerpoint slides included in note packet*)

- i. Crossing Improvements (*Slide 3*)—the City of Santa Rosa received a grant through TDA, Article 3, through MTC, to install several of the Rapid Rectangular Flashing Beacons (RRFBs) throughout the city:
  1. Sebastopol Road and Laurel Grove
  2. Dutton Ave and Funston Ave
  3. Parktrail and Summerfield
  4. Hoen Ave and Sierra Creek
  5. North St and Spencer Ave—waiting on a part but should be installed very soon, this week
  6. Mendocino Ave and Howard Dr—waiting for one part, but the foundations are complete
  7. Pythian Rd and Oak Trail (not related to school, but in Oakmont, a retirement community)
  8. Dutton Ave and W. 8<sup>th</sup> St (under construction and should be finished soon)
  9. W. College and Navarro (near Biella Elem)
  10. 4<sup>th</sup> St and Hope Dr (at a development project)
  11. Santa Rosa Ave and Oak St—we are almost finished with the Santa Rosa Ave corridor plan
- ii. Christina clarified that W. College and Navarro was near Biella, not Binkley. She also asked if while putting in the RRFBs, any other improvements would be happening, like bulb outs to shorten the crossing distances. Rob said that yes, in some of the locations they are, and they are also looking at the striping to put in higher intensity crosswalks and yield to pedestrian markings. He recognized that bulb outs are very popular but often they have to redo the entire drainage system. A bulb out can create a pond, so they're not always as easy to put in as it seems and you have to look at the construction of it. We put the bulb outs in where we can but we also don't want to hold up the installation of the RRFBs.
- iii. Jeanine Wilson, Principal of Lincoln, asked a question about the walking audit and the identified crosswalk in front of Jacobs Park/Lincoln on W. 9<sup>th</sup> St to be improved—is that on the list or has it not been approved yet? Rob asked if it was installing and beacon there and Jeanine believed it was. Rob hasn't heard feedback from that one and we had the Lincoln Walk Audit in January. Christina said that all the identified projects from Walk Audits are in the reports and we are working on a spreadsheet to have clear visibility of each potential identified project to be able to communicate back and forth between City planners and engineers and

SRTS staff. Rob said that will definitely help and then they can review projects from all the walking audits and rank them accordingly and projects closer to parks/schools will have higher rankings. When ranking the locations, we look at the speeds, the number of approach lanes, the pedestrian use on the crossing, if it's on a /high injury network and the Average Daily Traffic Volume. We grade each location on how critical it is to install improvements there. These improvements came from those rankings and we will insert the Lincoln crosswalk into the list and see where it falls in the ranking and then attack the projects as money becomes available.

1. Jeanine appreciates the info and ask how can she access the info, like if and when it gets approved and what is the upcoming timeline, and is there a website. Rob said it would be through these meetings that she would stay informed. Christina said that she will stay on top of all the projects and stay in communication with schools. You can always reach out to her, and she can connect with the City to find out the status of things. Jeanine said that parents have asked about the results of the Walking Audit and if there were any updates.
  2. Christina asked one more question about the bulb outs and if the quick build bulb outs affect the drainage. Rob agreed that the quick build bulb outs don't affect drainage. Christina put a plug in for the quick build bulb outs at the North and Spencer location to help shorten the crossing.
- iv. A crosswalk at Finley Ave and S Wright Rd has also been added as well as a crosswalk at the west side of Sebastopol Road and the West Ave intersection. That is a signalized intersection and it was going to be coordinated with a development project but we saw the need to install that early because of the Boys and Girls Club across the street from the school. All four legs of that intersection at the signal now have pedestrian crossings.
- v. Update on upcoming signal installations (*this item begins at [25:40](#) on the video recording; Slide 4*):
1. Santa Rosa Ave and Bellevue—has met warrants, in design as a protected intersection.
  2. Hearn Ave and Burbank Ave—currently an RRFB that is being upgraded to a signal to help with school traffic on Burbank at Roseland Creek School.
- vi. Hearn Overcrossing in the SW Area (*this item begins at [26:30](#) on the video recording; Slide 5*) We are adding pedestrian/bike facilities on the Hearn Interchange project. Currently, there is very minimal sidewalk and shoulder that pedestrians/bicyclists have to share. This project will add protected bike lanes on both sides as well as a Class 4 bikeway on the south side of the street and sidewalks on both north and south sides—this will be a drastic improvement.
1. In conjunction to this project and following it, we will add a Class 4 separated bikeway, from the intersection of Corby over to the SMART multi-use path, so this will all be connected.
- vii. Walking Audit Results (*this item begins at [27:46](#) on the video recording; Slides 6,7*)

1. Walking Audit Locations: Sequoia (9/11/23); Wright Charter (11/8/23); Austin Creek (12/4/23); Lincoln (1/10/24); Brook Hill (2/3/24); JX Wilson (2/26/24); Helen Lehman (3/11/24); Kawana Springs (4/2/24); Steele Lane (4/23/24); Monroe (5/6/24)
2. Generalizing the concerns from the audits—vehicles traveling too fast during pick up/drop off school times; crosswalks are not always comfortable for children (Rob encourages using crossing guards where they are available); bicycle facilities are not always comfortable for parents/children (Rob said the City of SR is working on making bike facilities comfortable for all users); drivers not obeying the signs/signals and pedestrian right of way and making illegal u-turns; need for improved drop-off/pick up locations; missing sidewalks (at some sites). Things have changed from bussing to single car drop-off/pick up and most schools weren't designed for this, so we are dealing with old infrastructure.
3. Question from Lynn, Hidden Valley—how did you come up with this list and can we add our school to the list? Christina answered saying that for the first four audits, we were taking requests from schools and then as we began to work with the City of SR to set our goals for the Task Force, we realized we needed to create a priority list of schools based on data (crash statistics, traffic volume, demographics, etc). JX Wilson was the first school that was on the priority list, but Lincoln and Brook Hill would have been high on the list if they had been ranked on the priority list. Our next ten schools are set for next year because of their ranking on the list and also because a secondary factor is that we are getting funding through the Dept of Public Health to audit schools in their priority development areas. The next 10 schools are Comstock, Slater, Taylor Mtn, RL Stevens, Montgomery High, Luther Burbank, Cesar Chavez, Santa Rosa MS, Roseland Elem, and Meadowview Elem. Of those, schools that are in the Public Health priority development areas are Comstock, Slater, Taylor Mtn, RL Stevens, LB, SRMS and Meadowview, so we will get funding for those. Hidden Valley is farther down on the list but you can still always express an explicit concern at your site and share it with Christina, and she can follow up and there could be improvements that can be made. Our intent is to methodically continue to audit schools based on priority, doing 10-12 audits a year, and then when we have done all of the schools, we will rotate back and we'll keep doing this and keep the connection between the city and schools going. Lynn said that Chanate is so busy, we usually have one bike rider, but then we had 24 (for Bike to School Day); Fountaingrove and Chanate are very busy streets. Christina said that we have to look at the particular streets and identify what the potential solutions are and what is feasible on certain roads, sometimes it's not feasible to make a particular road bikeable and sometimes it is. This takes time and money but the most important thing is to keep in communication with the City and identify and prioritize areas around schools.
4. Christina shared the Walking Audit priority list and said that she will post this on the website, on the SRTS Task Force page. The



schools that are bolded are ones we are planning for next year. The schools that we already did are at the bottom of the list. The connection with the principals is important and we have lots of Santa Rosa City schools that we are auditing next year. We want principals to be there and parents, and planners and engineers from Public Works, and representatives from the Police Dept as much as we can, so that we can educate the people that are there and share ideas. It is possible that schools could be moved up on the list, like Sheppard perhaps, but this list is the intent for next year. Christina let Lynn know that Hidden Valley is 41 on the list and assured her that we will get there.

- viii. Amber Williams, Principal of Steele Lane arrived (*this item begins at [37:12](#) on the video recording*) and Christina asked Rob to share info about the Pilot Project in front of Steele Lane Elementary. Rob said they reduced the travel lanes from four to three and there is now only one lane that merges in the westbound direction in front of the school to see what that effect would be on traffic and for drop off and pick up in front of the school. This is going on now until the end of the school year and they've gotten a lot of positive comments on it. Amber (Steele Lane) said that a student eloped from the classroom and ran into the white cone area and there was an adult there and if that lane was not blocked off, there would have been a different turn-out. The school has 20 more feet of room and they are doing some remedies in the area of the annex, they'll be putting a gate in front of it.
  - 1. Christina said that as we do walk audits, other pilot projects can be identified or schools might have ideas for pilot projects and to let us know. We want to work with schools to see what might be done in the short term. We get requests and consider them.
  - 2. At the Steele Lane walking audit, we also talked about the possibility of improving the drop off zone and instead of having drop off in the front of the school, maybe the district could create a u-shaped path behind the school in the field. This is in the report and we hope that the district is also looking at these Walking Audit reports and seeing what they can do to improve their long term facilities plans as well.

**c. Santa Rosa Police Department (Summer Gloeckner)**

(this item begins at [40:44](#) on the video recording)

- i. Tuesday Traffic Reports were started last week and we included a shout out to SRTS and contact information. We had a video on bus safety and what you should do when a bus puts a stop sign out, stopping in both directions. School is out for summertime and there will be a focus on other things and when schools are back in session, there will be a focus on school safety, how to maneuver during drop off and watching out for walkers/bikers. We are gearing up for a busy summer.
- ii. Christina asked how do you share videos? Are they shared on Instagram or Facebook. Summer said that they are on Instragram and Facebook and may be on YouTube as well. Every Tuesday, it's Tuesday Traffic, fun intro music comes on and Officer John Fisher is the face of it. We ask people to send in topics, questions, anything traffic related that you'd like discussed. Christina asked that when a video is shared, if you tag

Sonoma Safe Routes when you share it, we'll see you shared it and SRTS can reshare it and then the SRTS followers can follow it, the more shares the better. Summer will tell the Public Info Officer to do that. Sonoma Safe Routes is the tag.

- iii. Question from Brad (Principal at Hidden Valley) and he didn't know if the question should go to Rob or Summer. We are on Chanate, and people come fast down Chanate, and we have asked for the Speed radar trailer that shows people's speed and it is hugely helpful and we would love to request it again. Summer said that Brad can email her and she will try to prioritize it for Hidden Valley/Chanate Rd. It is highly requested and volunteers take it out and set it up. ([sgloeckner@srpd.org](mailto:sgloeckner@srpd.org))
- iv. Amber said that she has a similar situation at Steele Lane. People drive like they are on the freeway in front of the school. During the Walking Audit, it was explained that when children are present, during drop off and pick up, that's when the low speed limits have to be obeyed, but cars get very close to the crosswalk, don't stop and just don't obey the crossing area. The crossing guard is pretty amazing but it is still very unsafe. Her vision or hope is to do education to the community along with some enforcement, so that behavior can be changed. She's seen more police officers in the last few weeks and just having officers be visible really helps. It is not a safe street to have a school on under the current circumstances. Summer will ask the motor sergeant to do extra enforcement until the end of the school year. Also, the officers who patrol the area during school hours can possibly do some extra enforcement hours. Steele Lane Elem falls into what is known as Beat 2.
- v. Brad said that we know you're spread thin, and would love an officer, but give us your oldest beat up car and we'll park it near the school.
- vi. Christina asked if there is a schedule/prioritization for extra enforcement operations. Every school wants officers but there are schools where it is genuinely dangerous. Summer said that if SRTS can send the Walking Audit priority list, and then the PD could do a rotating schedule. Christina said that that would help with prioritizing enforcement and then Summer can report on results when they do extra enforcement in those areas. Christina said that when it comes to the next ten audits, it really helps having PD there so they can help to educate the principals and parents. Summer will try to send rotating officers to the upcoming walking audits.
- vii. Amber said that summer school is happening at Steele Lane Elementary.

**3. 23-24 Walk & Roll Encouragement Initiatives: successes and areas of improvement** (*this item begins at [50:44](#) on the video recording*)

- a. Christina said that one thing we are considering for next year, because of Bike to School Day and the benefit of connecting parents for biking and walking together, is changing and adding to the Sept Challenge which is about mapping your route to school. We want to encourage families to connect and walk/bike to school together and having some kind of incentive for families to do that early in the year. Int'l Walk/Roll to School Day is the big launch event for Walk/Roll. We will keep most of our encouragement Walk/Roll challenges the same next year. Christina asked Amber and Lynn to share their feedback on this idea.



- b. Amber said that Steele Lane is just not a place for walking/rolling to school and the community that we serve, this is just not possible for a good portion of population.
- c. Lynn loved the Wacky Winter Walk and Roll with bright colors to be visible and seen. For the mapping, because of where they live, people were worried about giving out too much information, kids and teachers were talking about that. Christina said that is great feedback—we don't have to have them turn in a map, just encourage them to do it.
- d. Lynn said that the PFO, like PTA, would put the challenges on facebook, email and Parent square and would also give the challenges to the teachers. The DHH loved the bike rodeo for including special needs kids, which was new. Christina said that we did that at every site this year and include special needs wherever we can. Lynn said it was amazing and they felt seen and heard.

#### **4. Feedback/Scheduling Task Force meetings for school year 2024-25**

(this item begins at [56:11](#) on the video recording)

- a. Christina asked for feedback for next year's Task Force. This year was our pilot year of doing Task Force meetings, we did four in the fall and four in the spring and we rotated from area to area and we really tried to open it up to parents and schools, had the meetings at different times, etc. We found out that parents don't come to these meetings, maybe one parent per meeting comes. We put a lot of effort into promoting the meetings with our schools and we don't want to put the burden on schools to share the info. What we found that is valuable is when principals show up to the meetings, they can connect with the City planners directly and they can connect with each other about the program. Our plan for next year is to have one meeting in the fall and one in the spring. We want to know what month and what time of day would work best. We've been meeting with our schools and asking these questions. We've heard that October and March could be good, perhaps Fridays mid-morning. We want to schedule the meetings now so principals can get them on their calendars. Of course, if a parent champion can join, wonderful—the meetings will be posted on the City or Safe Routes website.
- b. Amber said that for elementary principals, before noon is helpful because a lot happens during recess and lunch. March is good. Wed or Thur are better. Tuesdays are hard for her. Christina is thinking a Thursday at 9am might be good. Amber agreed, saying that then the meeting is done before primary recess and an hour and a half is a long time for a meeting.
- c. Christina said that we could have the meetings be an hour as long as there's not a lot of discussion. These meetings are to keep the connection between the City and schools and the SRTS program. The Walking Audits will continue but having a place where we can meet and the City can share information directly about what they are doing or planning is crucial.
- d. Amber asked in regards to the City and the PD, if there could be an info sheet for principals as to who do we contact for certain things and this

would be especially helpful for new principals. Christina said that we can work with Alexander to come up with an info list. For example, a crosswalk light would be MySantaRosa ap.

- e. Rob Sprinkle asked if two meetings are enough? Do we want an opportunity for a third for people who can't come to a meeting because something comes up? Maybe 3 would be better. Patty agreed saying maybe every 2 months, like Oct/Jan/Apr. Christina said that she is fine with three and really wants to invite the principals to all the meetings. Rob said that if the invites are sent out with a specific agenda then principals can see if they have a vested interest and this can help them make a decision on which meeting they will attend. Christina said that agendas have been fairly general but we could see if the City has specific info to report on or get feedback on from a certain area.
- f. We are having our end of year meetings now and asking principals for feedback on dates/times. Christina is thinking that 9-10am on Thursdays for 3 different months will work. We'll get all the dates on the calendar soon and share them out with everyone.
- g. Christina told Rob that she will reach out to Alexander to set Walking Audit dates for the fall for certain schools so we can get those on the calendar. Christina thanked everyone for coming to the meeting.
- h. Lynn said that Amber is a wonderful principal and asked Amber if she can email her about her thoughts on doing some assemblies.

*\*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)*