



## Montgomery High School SRTS Walk Audit

Tuesday, December 10<sup>th</sup>, 2024



**In attendance:** Christina Panza (SRTS Director), Sarah Hadler (SRTS Program Manager), Torina Wilson (City of Santa Rosa Transportation Planner), Mike VanMidde (City of Santa Rosa Associate Traffic Engineer), Yuri Koslen (Santa Rosa City Transit Planner), April Santos (Principal, Montgomery), Heather Garcia Rossi (Montgomery Staff/ parent & former student), Dominic Delucca (9<sup>th</sup> Grade student), Gavin Gillespie (9<sup>th</sup> Grade student), James Derrick (9<sup>th</sup> Grade student)

**Route:** Met on Hahman Drive in front of the crosswalk west of the school office. Walked south on Hahman to Hoen, observed the Hahman/Hoen intersection. Walked east on Hoen to the Hoen/Cypress (western) intersection to observe. Continued east on Hoen to the intersection of Hoen and the east side of the Cypress Loop. Headed back west on Hoen to Franquette Ave, walked on the east side of Franquette and crossed mid-block at the back entrance to the school by the baseball field to enter campus.

### **Pick up/Drop off:**

Morning drop-off takes place on both Hahman Drive, Hoen Avenue, the school parking lot, and Franquette Avenue behind the school. There is a staff and student parking lot with entrances on both Hahman and Hoen. Students/parents are supposed to enter the parking lot at the eastern entrance off Hoen, and exit at the western entrance on Hoen, although students/parents frequently do not follow this guidance and were observed entering/exiting from both driveways. Staff are to enter the parking lot from Hahman drive, as the staff portion of the parking lot is currently located on west side of the lot (due to the regular staff parking lot being closed due to construction). After drop-off, the Hoen Avenue entrance/exit to the parking lot are closed, and visitors and students/parents arriving at other times must enter the parking lot from Hahman Drive.

### Pick up/Drop off Considerations for School/District:

- Continue to frequently communicate clear English/Spanish drop off/pick up procedures & other travel safety recommendations and share with parents/students via multiple channels on a regular basis including but not limited to Back-to-School Night, Parent Square, School newsletters, PFO, student assemblies, student council, etc.

### School Information:

Address	1250 Hahman Drive, Santa Rosa, 95405
Morning Bell(s)	8:30am (1 <sup>st</sup> period) (7:30am zero period)
Afternoon Bell(s)	M, T, F: 3:30pm W, Th: 3:05pm
Grade levels	9-12
Enrollment	1250 (24-25)
School type	Traditional
Student's proximity to school	1250 geocoded students in 2024-25 898 live within 2 miles of school (72%) 284 live within 1 mile of school (23%) 75 live within ½ mile of school (6%) 13 live within ¼ mile of school (1%)
Participating School in Sonoma County SRTS program?	No
Student Travel Mode info	Not collected in recent years
Safe Routes to School Non-Infrastructure Programming (2024-25)	n/a

### CONCERNS &/or POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS:

*Please note that all recommendations on the following pages are meant to capture potential solutions to issues or ideas raised during the walk audit. Each of these recommendations are subject to additional design, analysis, outreach, funding, prioritization, and approval by the City and/or Santa Rosa City School District prior to implementation.*

### Hahman Drive to Hoen Avenue Extension

#### Concerns:

- Hahman Drive is a relatively narrow street where lots of cars park around intersections to the north of campus, which can feel unsafe for kids walking to school. On the Fall 2024 Parent Survey, a parent expressed particular concern re: the intersections of Spring Creek and Hahman and Rock Creek and Hahman, where the sidewalks are too narrow for bicyclists to share with pedestrians, but the road is too dangerous for her son to comfortably bike on. A student in the Fall 2024 student survey mentioned that the intersection of Hahman and Patio is a “bit chaotic with all the car traffic.”
- There are sidewalk gaps on the west side of Hahman Drive between Patio Court and Montgomery Drive. Hahman Drive is frequently utilized by pedestrians, particularly students who are dropped off at the bus stop at Hahman and Sonoma Avenue, which is on the south side of Sonoma Avenue, west of Hahman. Students walking from that bus-stop (or from

Montgomery Dr.) have to navigate through the Montgomery Village parking lot, or cross to the east side of Hahman Drive.

- Principal Santos expressed concerns about the crossing at Hahman Drive and Matanzas in front of the west side of the school (near main office). She indicated that students cross unsafely and that cars do not always obey pedestrian right of way, so she expressed interest in a pedestrian activated flashing beacon at that crossing. There are currently crosswalks on both the north and the south side of Matanzas.
- Participants expressed concerns that drivers traveling west on Hoen Drive from Farmers Lane “fly through” the intersection of Hoen and Hahman, particularly when making a left to head north on Hahman Drive, and there have been conflicts at this location. Because the light at Farmers Lane & Hoen has such a long wait-time for drivers traveling on Hoen, they may be more inclined to rush due to impatience.
- Students present at the audit, as well as in both the Fall 2024 parent and student surveys, indicated that speeding is an issue on all roads leading to the school, the Hoen Extension and Hahman Drive included.

### **Potential Solutions:**

#### **City of Santa Rosa**

- Review the Patio Ct., Spring Creek Dr., Matanzas Way, and Rock Creek Dr. and Hahman Drive crossings, (between Sonoma Avenue and the Hoen Extension), to determine if any improvements, such as bulb-outs to shorten crossing distances, or additional school signage, could improve safety.
- Construct sidewalks on the west side of Hahman Drive between Montgomery Drive and Patio Court. Note: Closing sidewalk gaps in this location is identified in the Santa Rosa Active Transportation Plan, however construction of sidewalks in this area will likely occur as development or redevelopment takes place.
- Consider a pedestrian-activated flashing beacon and/or bulb-outs to shorten the crossing distance for the crossing on Hahman Drive and Matanzas Way, next to west school driveway entrance.
- Consider converting the intersection of Hahman Drive and Hoen Avenue to an all-way stop, if feasible given traffic flow/patterns.

#### **Santa Rosa Police Department:**

- Enforce speed and other moving violations along Hahman Drive

#### **Hoen Avenue**

#### **Concerns:**

- The speed and volume of traffic along Hoen Avenue is of great concern to parents & students. Anywhere a pedestrian needs to cross Hoen Avenue feels “busy and dangerous” with many careless, distracted drivers. In the Fall 2024 parent survey, the intersections of Summerfield Road, Yulupa Avenue, and both ends of Cypress Way (see below) were all specifically mentioned as barriers to bicycling and walking to school by both parent and student respondents.
- The signalized intersection of the west end of Cypress Way & Hoen Avenue is extremely busy and parents expressed that “cars often run red lights.” One parent commented on the Fall 2024 parent survey that she and her daughter have seen 10-20 “accidents” there, some live and some soon after, and even more close calls and red light runners. Audit participants expressed particular concern about drivers who are heading east on Hoen Avenue Extension

and making left turns onto Hoen Avenue. There is a dedicated turn lane, but not a dedicated green light for left turns, which they perceive has resulted in conflicts or near misses.

- The intersection of the east end of Cypress Way & Hoen Avenue has a pedestrian activated flashing beacon, which includes both round/amber LED lights on either side, under the pedestrian crossing sign, and an overhead pedestrian lighted warning sign. However, this intersection is also extremely busy and a parent participant expressed that about “50% of the drivers ignore it” even when a pedestrian is waiting to cross.
- A vehicle is virtually always parked on the north side of Hoen Avenue directly east of the east Cypress Way & Hoen Avenue crosswalk. This vehicle obstructs the view of pedestrians/cars, and seriously compromises safety for pedestrians.
- The school crossing signage on the poles at the east Cypress/Hoen crossing is single sided (although there is a single sided sign the north side of the crossing for drivers heading west, and a single sided sign on the south side of the crossing for drivers heading east).
- There is no direct or signed pathway to the school buildings through the staff and student parking lot, off of Hoen Ave, for students walking and biking to school.

### **Potential Solutions:**

#### **City of Santa Rosa:**

- Consider future improvements to the West Cypress Way and Hoen Avenue intersection that would create a protected left turn green arrow for drivers turning left. Note: this particular improvement would be extremely costly and would require completely replacing the current poles/signals/infrastructure, and would result in longer delays for all users at the intersection.
- Restrict parking on the north side of Hoen Avenue, directly east of the east Cypress Way & Hoen Avenue crosswalk.
- Install double sided school crossing signage to both the north and the south side of the east Cypress Way & Hoen Avenue crossing, to improve the visibility of that crossing for drivers.
- Consider installing a median to provide a refuge for pedestrians crossing Hoen Avenue at East Cypress Way, or alternatively median/delineator bollards to protect pedestrians/cyclists by helping slow down traffic and creating a visual obstacle in the road.
- Consider lowering the speed limits on Hoen Avenue and Hahman Drive, if feasible.

#### **School District**

- Consider putting in a pathway and/or marked signage for students who walk or bike to campus through the school parking lot off of Hoen Ave.

#### **Santa Rosa Police Department:**

- Enforce speed and other moving violations
- Enforce right-of-way violations at the Cypress/Hoen intersections
- If feasible, rotate deployment of radar speed trailer along this corridor.

### **Franquette Avenue**

#### **Concerns/observations**

- Franquette Avenue behind the football/baseball field is a frequently utilized pick up/drop off area, as well as a walking/bicycling route to school. However, there are no sidewalks on the west side of Franquette between Hoen and the school property (about 500 feet), and the pedestrian pathway on same section of Franquette on the east side gets flooded in heavy rain, and can also become overgrown with foliage blocking the pathway.

- In the Fall 2024 Student survey, a student mentioned that they “love the bridge at Franquette (between Spring Creek Dr and Princeton Dr), that makes avoiding traffic easy...(and that) anytime there is a path away from cars (they) prefer it for biking and walking.” However, a parent survey respondent mentioned “The foot bridge on Franquette is essential, and it would be nice if there was an easy way for bikes, not just kids on foot, to enter campus off Franquette, so that made sense as a bike route (though the fence on the bridge is bowed in, and needs to be fixed for the safety of people on bikes).”

### **Potential Solutions:**

- Sidewalk gaps and improvements in this area are identified in the Active Transportation Plan. There will be opportunities to improve the sidewalks along Franquette Avenue (and other identified walking/bicycling routes & crossings to/from Montgomery High School), when the city of Santa Rosa begins the planning and design of the Southeast Greenway. The city has secured ownership of the Greenway and the planning process will begin in the 2025-26 Fiscal Year. School (staff/student and parent) involvement in this process will be strongly encouraged, and opportunities for engagement will be shared with the school/district and the Safe Routes to School program.
- City Public Works will inspect the foot bridge on Franquette Avenue and, if feasible, will repair the fence in the short term. Long term solutions, such as replacement of the bridge to be ADA-accessible, are possible as part of future work related to the Southeast Greenway project.
  - *Note: City Public work already inspected and repaired the bowed in fence on the Franquette foot bridge on 12/12/24.*

### **Bike Racks:**

#### **Current Conditions/Concerns**

- Grid Bicycle racks are located in two locations toward the front of campus, on either side of the performing arts building, with space for about 20 bicycles. Normally there are bicycle racks in a 3<sup>rd</sup> location at the north end of campus, but this location is currently not available due to construction. There were two bikes parked in one rack, and 4 bikes parked in the other. Student participants commented that up to 15 bikes can be parked in the bike racks on nicer days.
- In both the parent & student survey, respondents indicated that the current bicycle storage conditions are a barrier to bicycling to school. The following comments were recorded:
  - *There is not an adequate location to lock up the bikes.*
  - *A safe place to store bike and equipment at school - my son/daughter had things stolen at school.*
  - *My son had his bike stolen from school. It was locked and someone unscrewed the bottom of the bike rack to take it.*

#### **Potential Improvements**

- Consider providing a secure area where students can store bicycles during the school day, such as a locked bicycle cage – or even better a covered/locked cage.
- Determine the most convenient area to locate bicycle racks, given security issues as well as where bicyclists typically enter the school campus (consider surveying students who bicycle or who are interested in bicycling to school)

#### **Public Transportation**

- Provide students/parents with information re: how to utilize public transportation. Santa Rosa City bus provided the following information for the site to consider, whether it's communicating with parents about public transit, or advocating for improved transit options.

- All students at the school can ride **CityBus, Sonoma County Transit and SMART free of charge.**
- If the school needs assistance planning school trips on transit, please use the tools on the Santa Rosa Transit website or contact Yuri Koslen, City Transit Planner, directly at [ykoslen@srcity.org](mailto:ykoslen@srcity.org). If staff at the school need training passes in order to train students on riding the bus, the city can make those available to staff at any school in Sonoma County.
- **Here are a list of transit infrastructure related to Montgomery High School.**
  - Current
    - The closest **CityBus** bus stop in front of the school on Hoen Ave/Hoen Frontage Rd. or Sonoma Ave./Hahman Dr.
      - From Sonoma Ave./Hahman Dr.
        - [Route 8](#) every 30 minutes and provides direct service to/from Downtown via 4<sup>th</sup> Street to Montgomery Village to Summerfield Rd to Beathards Dr. to Yulupa Ave back to Montgomery Village then Downtown.
        - Route [4/4B](#) every 30 minutes and provides direct service to/from Downtown via Sonoma Ave to Montgomery Village to Mission Blvd. to Montecito Blvd. to Calistoga back to Montgomery Village then Downtown.
          - Bus stops at Montgomery Village are Bus stop # 80407 and 80439
      - From Hoen Ave/Hoen Frontage Rd.
        - [Route 18](#) once an hour and provides service south and north to Coddington
        - [Bus stop # 80469 - Hoen Ave/Hoen Frontage Rd.](#)
        - [Bus stop # 80468 - Hoen Ave @ Franquette Ave.](#)
        - [Bus stop # 80561 - Farmers Ln at Patio Ct](#)
  - Feasible improvement if the school would like to advocate for improved transit.
    - Bus stop improvements at the stops near the school
    - Real-time arrival departure information for buses at Montgomery Village at a central location within the school
    - Improved sidewalk infrastructure along Hahman from Montgomery Village Transit Hub to the school
  - City transit planning
    - Within the [CityBus Short Range Transit Planning](#) Document
      - Increased frequency of Route 4/4B along Sonoma Ave.
  - Other future considerations
    - Route 18 route changes to improve connections to Montgomery High
    - Coordination with school bus transportation to compliment the service to better improve transportation coordination for the schools

**Additional District/School SRTS Considerations:**

- Assist the SRTS program in gathering additional data and information to have a better understanding of the current travel behavior/modes to Montgomery, and determine if future improvements impact active travel.
  - Conduct student arrival/departure tallies this September/October (not on a Walk/Roll Day) to gather data on the number and percentage of students who walk, bike, scooter/skateboard, carpool, bus and travel in single-family vehicles in both the morning and afternoon on a typical day.
- Consider enrolling in/participating in the County SRTS program to participate in ongoing Walk/Roll initiatives (including but not limited to International Walk & Roll to School Day and Ruby Bridges Walk to School Day), and to be eligible to receive SRTS services such as bicycle and/or pedestrian safety education programming, the Bay Area Bikemobile, and more.
- Share information with students and parents about students being able to ride the City Bus and SMART Train for free.
- Consider sharing the following SRTS tip-sheet(s) and videos to support safe walking, bicycling, drop-off, and parking & walking:
  - Walking Safety Tip Sheet [English](#) [Spanish](#)
  - Bike Safety Tip Sheet [English](#) [Spanish](#)
  - Driver Awareness for Safe Arrival/Dismissal [English](#) [Spanish](#)
  - E-Bicycles Tip Sheet [English](#) [Spanish](#)
  - Park & Walk Video [English](#) [Spanish](#)
- Report incidents to Santa Rosa Police Department when they occur (i.e., if someone is hit in a crosswalk but not hurt, etc), as well as ongoing concerns, such as parents continuing to make U-turns, opening doors into traffic, etc.

### **Safe Routes to School Program Information**

- The SRTS program coordinates a Safe Routes to School Task Force to bring together representatives from schools/school districts (school administration, staff and/or parents), city planning/engineering, law enforcement, and SRTS program staff. The goal of the Task Force is to:
  - 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 Santa Rosa.
  - Provide a venue for sharing of program initiatives and projects in the city of Santa Rosa, as well as inter-agency collaboration.

Santa Rosa Task Force meeting notices, agendas, and meeting notes & handouts can be found on our SRTS Task Force page [HERE](#).
- Enrollment for participation in the SRTS program takes place in April each year (deadline is April 30<sup>th</sup>). Schools must enroll each year to be eligible to receive visiting education services & ongoing technical support. Enrolled, comprehensive sites agree to:
  - Meet with SRTS program staff 3x per year to discuss/plan programming
  - Collect student travel tally data in September
  - Provide data for the SRTS program to enable creation of an annual SRTS “study map” showing where students live in relation to the school
  - Engage with/implement a minimum of 5 walk/roll encouragement initiatives per year.
  - Support scheduling & implementation of education programming.



- SRTS encouragement “Walk/Roll” initiatives and promotional materials are emailed to enrolled school contacts every month via our SRTS E-Newsletter, and may also be accessed at [www.sonomasaferroutes.org](http://www.sonomasaferroutes.org). To request to receive our SRTS E-Newsletter directly, email [christina@bikeosnoma.org](mailto:christina@bikeosnoma.org)

**Appendix: Walk Audit Pictures:**



Hahman & Matanzas – principal request to consider flashing beacon/RRFB or bulb outs



Hahman & Hoen – consider all-way stop



Sidewalk gap on Hahman, beginning at Patio Ct.



Sidewalk gap continues, students must navigate parking lot





Consider replacing signalized intersection at Hoen/W. Cypress with dedicated left turn signal for drivers traveling east on Hoen



Busy Hoen/Cypress intersection



Pedestrian activated flashing beacon at Hoen and east end of Cypress, consider a median or bollards to slow traffic/provide protection for peds.



What that intersection looks like in the low, bright sun in the morning.



Crossing Hoen at E Cypress is extremely difficult on a December morning due to traffic, low sun and parked vehicle.



A vehicle is nearly always parked directly east of crosswalk that blocks sight views. Recommend restricting parking at this location.





Sidewalk gap on west side of Franquette



View of sidewalk gap on east side, from school property where sidewalk ends



Pathway on east side of Franquette that becomes flooded, overgrown



Franquette foot bridge, difficult for bicyclists to cross, bent railing



Bike Rack on campus



Other bike rack on campus