



# **Petaluma Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Task Force**

## **Meeting Minutes**

**Date/Time:** Thursday November 21st, 2024, 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); Jennifer Remmer-Wright (Blue Zones); John Bee (Community Member/Meadow Parent); Pete Gang (Safe Streets/Community Advocate); Catina Haugen (Meadow Principal); Jessica Medina (Communications, City of Petaluma)

### **2. Partner Announcements**

- a. [Safe Routes to School Program update](#) (Christina Panza)  
(*Powerpoint slides included in note packet*)
  1. Ruby Bridges Walk to School Day (*Slide 1*)
    - a. Most sites celebrated Ruby Bridges on Thursday 11/14, some sites celebrated on Wed. 11/13. Participating sites were very similar to those who participated in Int'l W/R to School Day (*Slide 2*)
    - b. It was a day to celebrate Ruby Bridges and also to talk about equity and diversity. SRTS provided electronic fliers and collateral (*Slide 3*) AAA provided incentives to schools who registered. AAA also provided grants to some schools who applied; many schools used the grant money to buy books about Ruby Bridges and her accomplishments.
    - c. The November Challenge is a Ruby Bridges/Be Safe and Be Seen Bingo Challenge. Kids can learn about the history of Ruby Bridges as well as being safe/seen with a pedestrian safety focus. Challenges can be turned in the first week of Dec and be entered into a drawing for a \$25 gift card to Copperfield's Bookstore (*Slide 4*)

- d. We asked sites to share pictures and stories from their Ruby Bridges Day and we heard back from 3 schools: Mary Collins at Cherry Valley (*Slide 5*), McKinley (*Slide 6*) and Meadow (*Slide 7*).
  - e. La Tercera, Old Adobe, Petaluma Jr High and Kenilworth were the only Petaluma K-8 schools who did not register for the event. Petaluma Jr High did have a November Walk/Roll Day.
  - f. There was a school in Santa Rosa where all of the students decorated a purple heart and these were hung up all around the school, they also created footprints and students could follow the footprints to the first grade classrooms. This is an example of a way to be creative and make the event meaningful and memorable (*Slide 8*)
2. Wacky Winter Walk & Roll is for the months of December and January. Many schools hold a Walk/Roll Day on Wed. 12/4 (like McKinley/PACS and Meadow). Cherry Valley will have one on 12/13). Students are encouraged to dress up in colorful and bright clothes and gear to highlight being visible in the rain/cold and fog (*Slide 9*).
    - a. The December Monthly Challenge is a Scavenger Hunt that is similar to years past. We've hear feedback from schools that repeating themes is helpful (*Slide 10*).
  3. SRTS Education that has taken place from Aug-Dec at Petaluma Schools (*see Slide 11*)
  4. SRTS Walk Audits/Site Assessments have taken place at: combined audit at Valley Vista/Petaluma Jr High/The Spring Hill on 8/29; McNear on 9/13; Meadow on 11/12; combined audit at Corona Creek/Kenilworth on 12/12; Sonoma Mtn is scheduled for 1/14 and Grant and Mary Collins at Cherry Valley will be scheduled during Feb-April (*Slide 12*)
    - a. Christina will discuss with Bjorn whether there will be a site done in early May and that info will be forthcoming.
  5. There is a new page on the SRTS website where the walk audit documents are posted and there is a link to the Final Walk Audit Reports, the presentations are also on the Task Force pages so that anyone can access the info (*Slide 13*).
  6. We are not having a Dec Task Force meeting so the next mtg will be Jan 16, we will skip Feb, and have a mtg in March, skip April, and have a mtg in May (*Slide 14*). We will be reporting on the Corona Creek/Kenilworth and Sonoma Mtn Walking Audits at the Jan 16<sup>th</sup> meeting.
- b. City of Petaluma Updates (public works, transit, police)
    1. Petaluma Police Dept (Walt Spiller)
      - a. The PD is gearing up for the holiday lighted bike parade which takes place on Dec 20<sup>th</sup>.
      - b. The Santa Parade will be on Dec. 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> and the PD and the Fire Dept will be visiting neighborhoods with Santa in the firetrucks;

- c. The PD is working on their PSA videos that were funded through a CHP Cannabis grant. The first one is about to get finished and released. The main topic that the PSAs address is drunk driving through an anti-DUI campaign. There is a series of 6 short, related videos based off of One Bad Decision. The first is from the point of view of the suspect and how it affected him—this was a real crash that happened 15 years ago where a drunk driver crashed and killed his four friends. The second one will be the effect on the First Responders (the original First Responders who responded in the actual crash are travelling to be in the video). The third one will be from the Hospital and ER staff perspective and the effects it had on them. The next one will be from the point of view of maybe the mortician/coroner. The fifth one will be the effects on the family of the victims and then the last one will be on the victims themselves. These should be really impactful .
  - d. Christina said that we can share the PSAs through SRTS and the Bike Coalition.
2. City of Petaluma (Bjorn Gripenberg/Jessica Medina)
- a. We learned late last week that SCTA's county-wide application to USDOT Safe Streets and Roads for all was successful. Petaluma requested 2 ½ million dollars and SCTA received half of their ask, so Petaluma is assuming that they will get about ½ of their ask. There will be a meeting soon and Petaluma has started scoping out which corridors would be best served by these quick build projects. Knowing that federal funding has red tape, it will be likely that implementation will start in Summer 2025 or thereabouts. Petaluma is well positioned because they are already doing this work, and have a contractor and designer on board that they are working with, they are in a position to deliver a lot with this money.
  - b. The City is starting to communicate about the 5<sup>th</sup> St Greenway project. The contractor is waiting for the weather to shift and once it is dry, it should be a week or two of working days. There will be a traffic circle at 5<sup>th</sup> and I St.
    - i. Christina said she's seen a a lot of positive letters about the 5<sup>th</sup> St project.
    - ii. Bjorn said they are working on collecting speed and collision data for the 5<sup>th</sup> St project—so far, there have been two collisions, one was a DUI and one was a bike collision that was not related to the project.
  - c. Transit Update (Bjorn Gripenberg)
    - i. The LumaGo transit ap was launched a while back and ridership is growing. Walt suggested

that Jared promote the ap with the local bars, and will also have to check transit service hours, to see if there is overlap.

- d. Redwood Empire Bike Share Launch—Petaluma is in part of the first phase and there are several hubs around downtown, at the Community Center, the library and the Junior College.
  - e. SMART crossing at N. McDowell—paving should happen in early December. A new signal will be added on the north side of the tracks. N. McDowell will not be fully closed down when the paving happens, there will be a lane or two open. The Multi-Use Pathway from Southpoint all the way to Penngrove is almost complete.
  - f. Stop signs have been added on Mountain View and Mission and safety upgrades have been done on East Court.
3. Other Partners (Cool Petaluma, Petaluma People Center, etc)
- a. Safe Streets (Pete Gang)--Dec. 20<sup>th</sup> is the Holiday Lighted Bike Parade; it starts and finishes here at the Petaluma Community Center, wheels up is at 5:30pm and asking people to arrive no later than 5pm. It's a 5.4 mile route through the neighborhoods, it's pretty flat, and should take about an hour. We have just started to publicize this event. Heavy rain cancels. It's big, it's free and a fun event for everybody.
  - b. Blue Zones (Jennifer Remmer-Wright)—we participated in Ruby Bridges Walk to School Day at McNear, Miwok and McDowell. We also have bike lights and such that will be brought to the lighted bike parade and extra twinkle lights as well.

### 3. Site Assessment(s)

- a. [Meadow Elementary: Post site assessment](#) & school/community feedback (Bjorn Griepenberg)  
(Powerpoint slides included in note packet) (Slide 1)
  1. Meadow Walking Audit took place on Tue. 11/12 from 1:30-3pm during afternoon pick up. The focus area was on Maria Drive, along the school frontage, and on Colombard Rd, along the side and back of the school and also on Yarberry Dr, along the side of the park, and where it enters Maria Dr. (Slide 2)
  2. The main campus access points are on Maria Dr, in front of the school and on Colombard Rd, on the side and back of the school (Slide 3)
  3. Colombard Rd: Issues and Observations (Slide 4)
    - a. Complaints of speeding and crosswalk obstruction during drop-off and pick-up.
      - i. Reports of speeding, you don't expect speeding here because it's narrow, tree-lined, and there is a big sweeping curve and there is also no through traffic

- a. Update school signage zone with reduced speed limit (15 MPH)
    - ii. There are a lot of cars parked on the street, increasing the potential for the crosswalk to be obstructed by parents and other parked cars, especially during drop-off and pick up.
      - a. Add curb extensions to both sides of crosswalk (see example on F St/11<sup>th</sup> St—*Slide 5*); this allows pedestrians to step further out in the street while being protected, makes crossing shorter.
      - b. Improve signage by double-siding the signs and putting them further out in the street; Catina encourages doing this.
      - c. Note that debris can accumulate in the white parking blocks that protect the area. City is talking about what vertical elements will work the best in certain areas and be most functional; Parking blocks keep cars out, but can create a tripping hazard; white delineators get hit by cars and break and need to be replaced; reflective dots are 8 inches in diameter, and the county uses them to deter sideshows.
    - b. Sonoma Mtn Parkway/Colombard intersection—Leading Pedestrian Intervals (LPI) already in place, it is a massive intersection and there is not much else to do in terms of low hanging fruit solutions.
    - c. Sonoma Mtn/Maria Dr intersection—might be possible to move crosswalks in closer, that would shorten the crossing
      - i. The LPI is a 5 second start for pedestrians; John Bee asked if that could be double-checked as he thought it was a shorter lead time
      - ii. Catina mentioned that there is a crossing guard here in the morning and afternoon.
      - iii. Jennifer from Blue Zones gave info/reference on crossing times nationally. (The Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices has a very specific walk speed rate to calculate the needed time to cross intersections. When you add a curb extension, you often reduce the crossing distance by 10' or so per side, so 20' less. That means a pedestrian is out of harm's way for some of that 20 seconds, and they can recalculate the crossing time because it has physically been reduced  
<https://mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov/html/2009/part4/part4e.htm>
4. Maria Drive along school frontage: Issues and Observations (Slide 6)
  - a. Complaints of speeding and lack of crosswalk
    - i. There are a lot of families crossing Maria Dr where there is no crosswalk.

- a. Opportunity to install new crosswalk at Yarberry, on the park side; can add bulb-outs and new curb ramp (*Slides 7, 8*)
- b. A Meadow parent also asked to consider putting in stop signs/crossing lights at the new crosswalks.
- c. A school parent sent in an email saying that speed is a problem on Maria Dr coming towards the school—there is nothing to break up the speed between Sunrise and Dupree, which is a long straightaway.
  - 1. Trees obscure the school zone sign so it needs to be closer to the road or trees trimmed back.
  - 2. There is also potential for doing something creative by Zinfandel, some kind of gateway treatment for entering a school zone.
  - 3. Update school signage zone with reduced speed limit (15 MPH)
- ii. Could also bumping out the curb at the existing crosswalk on Maria Dr/Dupree Way
- iii. Catina asked if the crossing guard can bring kids into the bulb-out area, at either crosswalk, to wait. Bjorn said yes.
- b. Maria Drive at Morning Glory Dr: Issues and Observations (*Slide 9*)
  - i. Complaints of speeding and conflicts with traffic turning on/off of Morning Glory Dr.
    - a. Add dashed striping through curb around intersection as another visual cue to drivers
    - b. Modify intersection to shorten pedestrian crossing distance and slow turning movement
    - c. Pete asked if a roundabout could work here; answer was that perhaps it could and it would be another gateway symbol of entering a slower speed school zone
- c. Yarberry Dr: Issues and Observations (*Slide 10*)
  - i. Complaints of speeding and lack of crosswalk to Meadow View Park
    - a. Yarberry is really wide, 47 feet, but there are lots and lots of driveways, and can't put crosswalks in people's driveways. Can potentially add bike lanes or edge lines to narrow the roadway (see example of edge lines on Garfield Dr, *Slide 11*)
    - b. Meadow parent emailed in comment asking to consider putting in crosswalks at Stillwater and Dupree both leading over to Meadow Park. Bjorn said that the grades would be challenging to make ADA crosswalks; the park is higher than the street.

- ii. Bjorn also noted that curb ramps and bulb outs are super expensive, \$30,000 each, we need to prioritize where the \$ are spent,
  - iii. To consider a crosswalk on Yarberry over to the park, John pointed out that the most logical location is where the playground and picnic area are as that is the main draw.
- 5. Additional Notes (*Slide 12*)
  - a. Awkward crossing at the Capri Creek Trail; one has to go all the way to the Junior College side to cross; idea would be to line up the crossing with the trail so you don't have to turn.
  - b. The City applied for funding to upgrade the Lynch Creek Trail crossing of Sonoma Mtn Parkway.
  - c. Catina mentioned that this is the 2<sup>nd</sup> Walk Audit with City that she has been a part of and she very much appreciates the innovative and collective will to make productive changes.
  - d. Bjorn said that right after the McNear walk audit, they got to put in bike lanes on Sunnyslope.
  - e. Catina asked about the timeline for the Meadow Walking Audit improvements.
    - i. Improvements on Colombard are straightforward, and can likely happen quickly. These will be sent soon to the contractor. The City will need to communicate with homes in the surrounding area about the improvements.
    - ii. Maria Dr/Yarberry crosswalk will have to be considered and the striping and concrete contractors will have to get work lined up at the same time.
    - iii. Yarberry is a little more of a neighborhood discussion about widespread changes to the corridor and this will be lower on the priority list as compared to the other two.
    - iv. Bulbouts can be added to the Maria Dr/Dupree crosswalk already in existence; City will have to check in with transit about bustop. Ideally, the school district side would put in a ramp, but Catina said there is not funding for that now.
  - f. Christina gave props to Petaluma, and said that the City is fully engaged with the Walk Audit process and the intentions are to fix the issues.
- 6. Upcoming Walk Audits (*Slide 13*)
  - a. Thursday, Dec. 12<sup>th</sup> at 2:15pm--Corona Creek/Kenilworth (meet at Kenilworth)
  - b. Tuesday, Jan. 14<sup>th</sup> at 2:30pm--Sonoma Mtn
  - c. The info from these Walking Audits will both be shared at the Jan 16<sup>th</sup> Task Force meeting.
- 7. Contact Information and Resources (*Slide 14*)
- 8. Walk Audit Recommendations (*Slide 15*)—Please note that all recommendations are meant to capture **possible** 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 Petaluma City Schools prior to implementation.

**4. Other SRTS issues, concerns & opportunities—N/A**

**5. Other Business & Announcements—N/A**

**6. Next Meeting & adjournment**

***The next meeting of the Petaluma Task Force is scheduled for Thursday, January 16<sup>th</sup> from 4:00-5:30pm at the Petaluma Community Center.***

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