



Santa Rosa Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Task Force

Meeting Notes of Thursday, October 10th, 2024

[You can view the recording of this meeting by clicking this link](#)

Note: The first few minutes of this meeting had audio issues and is not included on this video. Video starts when audio is restored.

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
Rob Sprinkle	Deputy Director for Engineering, Transportation and Public Works	City of Santa Rosa
Mike Herfurth	Interim Superintendent	Rincon Valley Union School District

Additional Attendees via Teleconference: Laurel Chambers (Healthy Eating/Active Living Coordinator, Sonoma County Department of Health Services-Public Health Division)

Notes on Agenda Items:

1. Introductions

- a. Christina welcomed everyone in the Task Force meeting.
- b. Christina said that it's been very challenging to find a time to meet for district and site leadership and champions implementing the SRTS program at their sites. We'd like to have a forum to share and hear about what is going on at different sites and how they communicate with their school community. Last spring, we surveyed our site partners for the best day/time for a meeting and Thursday afternoon was chosen but there is no site leadership here today.
- c. The purpose of the Task Force is to share information about what individual school sites are doing to promote walking and bicycling at their schools, identify barriers to walking and bicycling and to come up with solutions for those barriers, and to report out what the City is doing to make improvements.
- d. Today (*this item begins at 2:22 on the video recording*), we have a district representative from Rincon Valley and we have the City of Santa Rosa represented but we do not have any site leadership here today. We still want to cover a few things but we are going to skip the round table and the site infrastructure concerns as we don't have anyone here from school sites but we do want to share a few things for the record and we can share our notes and recording with our site leaders.

2. IWalk/Roll Day: Local Bike Train & Walking School Bus Successes (Christina Panza)

(this item begins at [2:47](#) on the video recording)

(Powerpoint slide included in note packet)

- a. Christina talks about the International Walk and Roll to School Day (IWRSD) event in Santa Rosa and emphasizes how Walking School Buses, and Bike Trains, are really helpful in building community and moving the needle on getting more families to walk and bike to school (*Slide 1*).
- b. This spreadsheet shows the schools that participated in IWRSD and also the school that established a Bike Train and/or Walking School Bus where a meet up spot is established and promoted and a parent or school staff will be there on the morning of and walk or bike with the group to school.
- c. Here's where we had Walking School Buses or Bike Train meet ups:
 - i. Austin Creek had a Bike Train; Binkley had two Walking School Buses; Cesar Chavez had a Bike Train and Walking School Bus; JX Wilson had a Walking School Bus and Bike Train; Monroe had a Walking School Bus/Bike Train; Proctor Terrace had a Bike Train; RL Stevens had two Walking School Buses; SR Charter Arts had three Bike Trains; SR French American Charter had a teacher-led Bike Train; Sequoia had two Walking School Buses and a Bike Train; Village had a very successful Bike Train; Whited had a Walking School Bus. You can see that quite a number of Santa Rosa schools are doing this and we wanted to have the opportunity to talk about that, who is leading them, how do they get started.
 - ii. Sharing a 4-minute clip of a video (*this item begins at [8:26](#) on the video recording*) from our Bike Train Webinar from last March. One of our principals, Annette Zucconi, from Brooks in Windsor speaks about starting a bike train and what this can do for a school site Here is a link to the Bike Train webinar itself: [How to Start a Bike Train, Webinar](#)
 - iii. We do have other principals that lead Walking School Buses and we have parents and teachers that lead Bike Trains (*this item begins at [32:44](#) on the video recording*). Usually, a police department does not join a bike train, that is unusual—the former Windsor Police Chief was an avid bicyclist. There are other great stories that we can share and inspire one another. It is doable, it just takes putting it out there.
 - iv. There were three bike trains formed at SR Charter Arts last May. A teacher at the site wanted to start Bike Trains and Christina helped her to compose an email and suggested a few meet up points for Bike To School Day and there were responses from parents who were interested and we set up spots and meet up times and it happened. It just took that teacher sending out an email to the school community. A lot of schools say we can't do this but it is just a communication piece and an intent.

3. Introductions

(this item begins at [34:65](#) on the video recording)

- a. Christina apologized about not doing introductions earlier. Everyone went around and introduced themselves (see attendee list above).
- b. Christina mentioned that Laurel Chambers and the Public Health Dept are supporting some of our Walking Audits this year.

4. City of Santa Rosa Public Works Update – Current Projects & Future Plans (Rob Sprinkle, filling in for Alexander Ocegüera, Active Transportation Planner)

(this item begins at [35-79](#) on the video recording)

(Powerpoint slides included in notes packet)

- a. Rob Sprinkle introduced himself, he is the Deputy Director for Traffic Engineering for the City of Santa Rosa and is filling in for Alexander Ocegüera, Active Transportation Planner (*Slide 1*).
- b. Walking Audits and reading the disclaimer (*this item begins at [36-4](#) on the video recording; Slides 2 and 3*) Please note that all recommendations from walking audits are meant to capture possible solutions to issues or ideas raised during the walking audit. Each of these recommendations are subject to additional design, analysis, outreach, funding, prioritization, by the City and/or Santa Rosa City Schools prior to implementation.
- c. Two walking audits so far this school year, at Comstock and Slater, and we have one coming up soon at Taylor Mountain (on 10/16) and the first one was at Comstock Middle School (*this item begins at [37-22](#) on the video recording; Slide 4*)
 - i. Issues and potential solutions:
 1. Students walk across the main driveway of the parking lot that's next to a City Park and baseball field and cross wherever they want. Looking to formalize that crossing with signage and working with the Parks Dept.
 2. Speeding along Steele Lane—looking to design elements there to slow speeds and we are slurry sealing that road this spring and can narrow the lanes a little bit which will help slow speeds down as well.
 3. The majority of the kids cross at Apache and Steele Lane so we are looking to install a Rapid Rectangular Flashing Beacon (RRFB) there at the west leg of the intersection. There is a crossing guard there as well. The RRFB will give drivers another way to recognize that there are people crossing.
 4. Determining why the audio signal at the signalized crossing at Comstock/NW Community Park/Steele Lane doesn't work when it rains—the engineers will look at this over the winter.
 5. Another issue is that kids who bike to school ride along the sidewalk (*Slide 5*) along the Comstock driveway and is not wide enough to accommodate both bicyclists and pedestrians—work with the Parks Dept to widen that sidewalk so that both bicyclists and pedestrians can use the path.
 6. The pictures show the crossing at Apache (picture on the left) and a sidewalk uplift that we've already gone out and patched, on the right.
- d. We did a walking audit at Slater Middle School in September (*this item begins at [39-62](#) on the video recording; Slide 6*)
 - i. Issues and potential solutions
 1. One of the main issues is the high speeds and traffic volumes on Sonoma Ave, one of our arterial streets—the City is looking at ways to decrease the speeds on Sonoma Ave and the Police Dept understands that this has been a complaint there and will do enforcement there. Bill AB43 recently passed and that allows us to lower the speed limit on the non-school section as you are

approaching the school and we'll be doing this and moving from 35mph to 30 mph with 25 mph in front of the school.

2. We also want to make the crossing distance shorter and can do that with bulb outs and lane delineators and we want to do some striping modifications for a westbound bike lane on Sonoma.
- e. Walking Audit List for this year (*this item begins at [3:24](#) on the video recording; Slide 7*)
 - i. Taylor Mtn will be on 10/16; RL Stevens will be on 11/18; Montgomery HS will be on 12/3; Luther Burbank will be on 1/21/25; Cesar Chavez will be on 2/18/25; SRMS will be in March; Roseland Elem will be in April; Meadow View will be in May. We will do one each month. This list will be posted on the handouts with the notes for this meeting. This list will be updated every month as we add new dates.
 - f. Walking Audit Outcomes (*this item begins at [42:22](#) on the video recording; Slide 8*)
 - i. We have met with the folks at Sequoia Elem who were on the walking audit and it spurred a larger conversation about the Calistoga Rd reconstruction project that we're working on. We met with the principal and the concerned parents and walked a good portion of Calistoga Rd and will look to incorporate their suggestions into the project.
 - ii. Walking audits lead to other great information that the City can add to grants; it's good to have that community input.
 - iii. We're putting in an all-way stop at Dudley and Jennings which is in the que with our field team and should happen shortly.
 - iv. We installed a crosswalk at Finley Ave, near Wright Charter.
 - v. We've done 22 other work orders that include: adding red curb for daylighting, crosswalk markings, having the radar feedback trailer come out, install other signage, pothole repairs, all stop installations, etc.
 - g. Steele Lane Pilot Study Phase 2 (*this item begins at [43:65](#) on the video recording, Slides 9 and 10*)—we started this project in March of last year and we took a lane in the west bound direction and now we've gone back and taken a lane in the east bound direction as well with a middle left-turn lane.
 - i. We've had a mixed variety of comments, but in general, it operates very well most of the day with some back-up and slowness in the morning during peak traffic. The speeds have slowed because of this installation and it is more comfortable for people dropping off for school—
 - ii. There is a survey open in November to contribute feedback. You can go to our website: [Steele Lane Pilot Project Phase One and Phase Two | Santa Rosa, CA](#)
 - h. Updating the Active Transportation Plan (*this item can be viewed at [44:48](#) on the video recording; Slides 11 and 12*). We are going through and updating our Active Transportation Plan which is basically our bike and pedestrian master plan.
 - i. We've opened up a project list which is on the website: [Active Transportation Plan | Santa Rosa, CA](#)
 - ii. There is an Interactive map and you can add things that you want to see done in the City of SR for bike and pedestrian improvements. It shows where we're planning to put in protected bike lanes, buffered bike lanes, bike routes, bicycle boulevards. This won't all happen at once but this plan helps to guide us.

- iii. We plan to share the link to this interactive map in the SRTS e-news that goes out on Monday which goes to the whole county, and we will follow up individually with Santa Rosa schools and encourage the schools to share this with their school communities as people know what should be emphasized for their sites.
 - i. Any questions—Mike asked about the Calistoga Rd Reconstruction project. Rob said that they are reconstructing the road itself and the project will be incorporating the feedback from the walking audit into the road reconstruction.
 - i. Sequoia was our first walking audit last year and the principal came and a very engaged parent actually became our SRTS champion who helps with walk/roll and she brought other parents into a meeting with the City to talk about Calistoga Rd, so this shows that the connection between city and schools and district leadership is very helpful in getting more data and feedback in making improvements for walking and biking to school.
- 5. Roundtable: What is the most critical element for SRTS program success at your site?** (*this item begins at [48:49](#) on the video recording*)
- a. Christina said that the answer to this question for every site will probably be a little bit different and she is very curious to hear from schools about this. It would likely be very useful for one site to hear from another about what is critical at their site and learn from that, for our program and for the other schools. This is why it's critical for their to be site representation at these meetings.
 - b. It is also helpful at these meetings for sites to express concerns directly to City staff and we hope to have law enforcement here as well.

6. Next Meeting(s) & Adjournment

- a. Sarah and Christina will be reaching out to our site leadership to figure out if our planned date for February will work. It's scheduled for Thu. Feb. 13th at 3pm via Zoom or in person at Santa Rosa City School District. If not, we are open to changing it. We will see if that is the best date to get the people in the room that can help us with strengthening and maintaining our program. We have a very strong program, we are in a lot of schools in Santa Rosa and we're doing a lot of great work.
- b. Christina thanked everyone for being here, she thanked Laurel for supporting the walking audits. Laurel said thanks for the update, it's great progress.

**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*