



## Sequoia Elementary School SRTS Walk Audit

Monday 9/22/23 8:00am-9:30am

**In attendance:** Christina Panza (SRTS Director), Alexander Oceguela (City of Santa Rosa Active Transportation Planner), Mike VanMidde (City of Santa Rosa Associate Traffic Engineer), Amy Jones (RVUSD Superintendent), Patrick Jackson (Sequoia Principal), Elizabeth Schwartz Crane (Sequoia Parent), Alycia Krause (Sequoia Parent), Jessica Helms (Sequoia Parent), Deb Fox (Community Partner, observing on behalf of Cool Petaluma)

**Route:** Dupont Avenue in front of school, walked past school parking lot (west) to intersection of Calistoga and Dupont, which is a signalized intersection with traffic lights. Observed intersection on NE corner. Crossed Calistoga, observed from NW corner, crossed Dupont and walked south on west side of Calistoga past Merit Ave, about a block past Fire Station. Crossed Calistoga at Merit, walked back to school on east side of Calistoga, turned right/east on Dupont, crossed crosswalk in front of school at Dupont.

### **Concerns Expressed:**

#### **Parking Lot on Dupont:**

1. Drivers turning into and out of parking lot on north side of Dupont result in potential conflicts for pedestrians walking on sidewalk. Is there something that could be done to make driveway entryway/exit more visible? Students do not always pay close attention.
2. Drivers parking in spaces directly north of sidewalk sometimes pull into sidewalk, blocking or creating a hazard for pedestrians.



#### **Intersection of Calistoga & Dupont:**

1. Drivers heading south on Calistoga appear to drive too fast or “be in a hurry”. It is a “commuter highway.”
2. Drivers heading south on Calistoga sometimes do not appear to see the crosswalk – they stop IN it instead of ahead of it, or do not stop at all.
3. Street is very wide, feels unsafe to cross.

4. Drivers often turn right/North from Dupont to Calistoga when pedestrians are in the crosswalk.
5. Post Walk-Audit, the Sequoia crossing guard shared that a mom with a stroller complained about the curb at the NE corner of Calistoga and Dupont right at Sequoia). When she pushes the stroller off the curb, she feels she is pushing it almost into the traffic. The crossing guard also shared that she felt “she was the only thing stopping cars from turning right into the crosswalk and not yielding to pedestrians.”
6. Law enforcement were present at the beginning of the year, ticketed for violations. Staff/parents appreciated this and felt it was effective, but ideally there would be law enforcement presence more frequently.



Calistoga Road:

1. Even with bike lanes, bicycling feels unsafe for kids/families due to speed of traffic.
2. Crossing Calistoga feels dangerous at every intersection due to crossing distance.



Calistoga at Merit:

1. Some expressed confusion at the road markings at the T-intersection of Calistoga and Merit. City staff explained that the area in front of the fire station must legally be kept clear. There is a stop bar in advance of the crosswalk at Merit to remind people to stop ahead of the crosswalk. The crosswalk at Merit has pedestrian-activated controls which activate flashing lights.

2. Concerns were expressed that more people may park on Calistoga Road directly south of Merit once the apartment complex at Calistoga & Hwy 12 is completed, blocking sightlines for the crossing.
3. Many people use that crossing at Merit to get to Safeway because it is directly across from the Austin Creek Trail pathway connecting to the neighborhoods to the west.
4. More families/students may be crossing Calistoga at Merit or Dupont once apartment complex is occupied.



#### Calistoga at Hwy 12:

1. Parents pointed out that a lot of bicycle riders take a left turn onto Hwy 12 from Calistoga to continue onto Melita and expressed the desire for a left turn lane for bicyclists at that location. (not pictured)

#### Hwy 12:

1. There are gaps in the sidewalk (or no sidewalk?) on Hwy 12 between Boas and Calistoga Road (not pictured)

#### Calistoga at Monte Verde:

1. A parent expressed a concern that many parents/older students drive down Monte Verde on their route to Sequoia, RVMS, or Maria Carillo in the morning and block the crosswalk that runs north-south across Monte Verde.



## SHORT TERM SOLUTIONS

1. School Parking Lot:
  - a. District to consider installing parking stops in parking spaces on south and west side of parking lot to prevent cars from parking on sidewalk.
2. Calistoga & Dupont:
  - a. City to consider installing leading pedestrian intervals (LPI) at signalized intersection at Calistoga and Dupont. LPI will enable pedestrians to get out in the crosswalk while the signal is still red for vehicles allowing the pedestrian to be established in the crosswalk.
  - b. City to consider additional signage to raise visibility of pedestrian crossing, such as R10-15 signs (Turning Vehicles Yield to Pedestrians)
  - c. Curb ramps along Calistoga Road will be improved as part of the future reconstruction project. Where feasible, ramps will be installed directionally (i.e. two ramps per corner, pointing in each direction)
3. Calistoga & Merit:

Red curb/No parking zone on east side of Calistoga 50 feet to the south of Merit to prevent drivers from parking in that area and blocking view of people crossing.
4. Calistoga & Monte Verde (or other)

Vegetation trimming on NE corner of Calistoga and Monte Verde (private property) will be recommended to improve sight lines for pedestrians/drivers at that intersection.
5. Highway 12 between Calistoga and Boas (jurisdiction of Caltrans)
  - a. New signal (currently or in the near future) to be installed by Caltrans. The north side of Hwy 12 will also have sidewalk improvements with development that is currently in construction.
  - b. Residents may advocate with Caltrans for improvements to the south side of Highway 12 at that location. City to consider adding project to their ATP plan to reinforce the fact that a gap closure needs to be pursued.
  - c. Caltrans is updating their Bay Area Bicycle Plan and are seeking input from residents. Parents/residents may add comments on the map page and take a survey to express their concerns about the above (or other) locations in the city/county that are managed by Caltrans. Here is the link to the map & survey: [Bay Area Bike Plan Outreach v2 \(arcgis.com\)](https://arcgis.com)
6. General:
  - a. Residents are welcome to install buckets/flags at crossings to improve visibility of pedestrians crossing. City will not remove.
  - b. Residents/school staff encouraged to contact law enforcement to request patrols or report issues: phone number: 707-543-3636
  - c. City to stay on top of refreshing crosswalk/bike lane paint in the interim before Calistoga road reconstruction begins.
  - d. SRTS program and teachers to educate students and parents re: safe walking and bicycling in the school zone. 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade Pedestrian safety lessons to specifically address walking past school driveway on Dupont.
  - e. SRTS program/School staff to share opportunities to provide feedback on City Active Plan. Parents are encouraged to respond to surveys and requests for feedback.

## LONG TERM SOLUTIONS

1. Calistoga Road reconstruction is on the list of future city projects, but timeline TBD (could be years out, dependent on funding). Considerations for reconstruction (would depend on road width, turning configurations and other geometric constraints, traffic, support of residents, etc).

The city has hired a design consultant firm to work on the project design, but funds currently available do not cover the cost of design, therefore the city is still in the preliminary stages of this project.

- a. City to narrow lanes to reduce speeds
- b. City to consider protected bicycle lanes on sections of Calistoga that do not have front-facing residences with driveways.
- c. City to consider bulb outs at corners to shorten crossings