



Taylor Mountain Elementary School SRTS Walk Audit

Wednesday, October 16, 2024



In attendance: Christina Panza (SRTS Director), Sarah Hadler (SRTS Program Manager), Alexander Oceguera (City of Santa Rosa Active Transportation Planner), Lisa Sevilla (Civil Engineering Technician II), Paul Patterson (Civil Engineering Quality Control Associate), Officer Brian Mann (Santa Rosa Police Department), Margaret Jacobson (Taylor Mountain Principal), Bertha Avila (parent), Berenice Velazquez (parent), Elida Guerrero (parent), Shana Loyola (parent/staff), Janske M. Silva (neighbor), Leslie Heckaton (neighbor).

Route: Met in school office then headed to front of school to observe drop off from main entrance and along the school frontage on Education Drive. Walked north on Education Drive, then headed west on Bellevue to Santa Rosa Avenue. Headed north on Santa Rosa Avenue to Powderhorn Ave, east on Powderhorn to Terrimay Ln, then south on Terrimay to Bellevue Avenue & the school.

Pick up/Drop off:

Morning drop-off takes place on Education Drive, in the school parking lot, and through the school parking lot drop-off loop. Vehicles travel through the school parking lot in one direction, entering the south driveway and exit from the north driveway. The drop off/pick up area in the school driveway loop is clearly designated with cones and green paint on the pavement. There are two staff monitoring drop off, a crossing guard who assists students in crossing at a designated crosswalk between the school parking lot and the sidewalk in front of the school, and another staff who monitors the parking lot itself. Principal Jacobson indicated that the parking lot monitor is a new addition this year, assigned to prevent unsafe behaviors by parents and/or students (such as running through the parking lot) in the parking lot. She said that this has made a real difference in improving behavior. Parents who are simply dropping off their children do so in the driveway loop. Parents who wish to

accompany their children to class primarily park in the school parking lot or on Education Drive. Parents are not permitted to park in the school parking lot or on Education Drive and let their students walk to school on their own from there – if a parent parks, they are required to accompany their child onto the school campus.

A yellow school bus arrives on campus at ~7.45 am, and drops off students in a designated bus-only area on Bellevue Avenue, in front of the school office, which is mostly blocked off with cones.

School Information:

Address	1210 E. Bellevue Avenue, Santa Rosa 95407
Morning Bell(s)	8:10am
Afternoon Bell(s)	2:45pm (Wednesday short day: 12:40pm)
Grade levels	Tk-6
Enrollment	469 (24-25)
School type	Traditional
Student’s proximity to school	441 geocoded students in 2024-25 457 live within 2 miles of school (97%) 382 live within 1 mile of school (81%) 253 live within ½ mile of school (54%) 132 live within ¼ mile of school (28%)
Participating School in Sonoma County SRTS program?	No
Student Travel Mode info (Sept 2024 student arrival/departure tally data)	TBD – plans to collect this Fall or Spring
Safe Routes to School Non-Infrastructure Programming (2024-25)	Not enrolled in 2024-25

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.

School Drop off Loop, Parking Lot, and Education Drive

Concerns:

- Morning drop-off was relatively smooth, despite the volume of traffic. Spaces for parking and drop off are clearly designated. However, school staff reported that parent drivers often do not pull all the way forward into the green drop-off zone to drop off their students, and this can impede the flow of traffic in the drop-off zone.
- Parent drivers also frequently make illegal U-turns on Education Drive, rather than driving to the end of the road and turning around in the District Office parking lot. To help prevent this behavior, the school placed cones in the middle of a section of Education Drive, close to the

north driveway. Although this has been somewhat successful, parents are still making U-turns farther down Education Drive.

- Once the parking lot is full, parents must park on Education Drive to drop off their students. Parents who park on the west side of Education Drive end up crossing the street (presumably with their children) at any location along Education Drive.
- Parents park their cars close to both sides of the (north) school driveway exit on Education Drive, which can block sightlines for drivers exiting the driveway.
- Parents frequently do not stop at the stop-sign on Education Drive at Bellevue Ave. However, the school does not wish to enforce this behavior because it would impede the flow of traffic at drop-off and result in other issues. There is another crossing guard stationed at that location to support safe crossing of pedestrians.
- Cars park in front of the fire hydrant on Education Drive.
- Tree needs trimming on the corner of Bellevue and Education Drive so that the stop sign will be more visible
- Parents living in the mobile home park off of Santa Rosa Avenue south of the school expressed the desire to have a viable walking path to school that avoids Santa Rosa Avenue. They pointed out that there is a gate at the end of Education Drive & a sign that indicates that a road is planned for development, and wondered if that will be happening anytime soon. There is also a lot of trash here and it looks like people dump old appliances and other items. There are some vehicles that also park long term at the end of Education Dr. Principal Jacobson said that the Bellevue School District offices maintenance personnel deal with these issues.

Potential Solutions:

School/District:

- Consider enrolling with AAA to establish a student [AAA School Safety Patrol](#) (or alternatively assigning additional school staff if feasible) to support a smoother, safer drop off. Student Safety Patrols (or staff) can help kids exit vehicles, enable parent drivers to move along more quickly, and even help kids who require support to get to/from class.
- 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, etc.
- Trim the tree at the corner of Education Drive & Bellevue Avenue if it is on school/district property.

County of Sonoma Public Infrastructure

- Consider installing permanent bollards along the center line of Education Drive, to prevent drivers from making U-turns, and enhance safety.
- Paint the curb red in front of the fire hydrant on education drive.
- Daylight the curbs on either side of the north school driveway, and at Education Drive and Bellevue Avenue.

- Notify property owner (if not the school district) about the need to trim the tree at the corner of Bellevue Ave. and Education Drive.
- Update SRTS/District on status of “future through street” of Education Drive. When/if extending street, include a sidewalk and any relevant pedestrian safety enhancements for that corridor.

Bellevue Avenue from Education Drive to Terrimay Lane

Concerns:

- Parents have expressed concerns that other parents do not follow the rules of the road on Bellevue Ave. They drive fast, do not stop before crosswalks, block crosswalks, and more. Parents also sometimes move the cones that block off the designated bus zone and park/drop off in that area, even though this is prohibited.
- Cars park close to the curb at the intersection of Education and Bellevue, and cars parked all up and down Bellevue Ave. can make it difficult to see vehicles entering and exiting Quail Run apartments.
- In the parent survey also it was mentioned that “dead brush/debris partially obstructs the sidewalk along Bellevue Ave just past Terrimay Ln, on the left before the crosswalk. During the audit, we observed a number of long weeds that bent over into the sidewalk at that location and others along Bellevue Avenue.
- Crossing Bellevue Avenue at both Terrimay Lane and at Education Drive feels extremely unsafe, due to the width of the street, cars that appear to be going too fast, and few pedestrian safety enhancements. Furthermore, crosswalk paint is faded, as are other pavement markings along Bellevue Avenue.

Potential Solutions:

City of Santa Rosa:

- Review curbs along Bellevue Avenue where daylighting should be present (look into curb at entrance/exit of Quail Run apartments) Education and Bellevue is a county intersection the city starts half way between Education Dr and Bellevue
- City/SRTS program to consult with school to determine exact locations where weeds extend to the sidewalk, as this is the responsibility of property owners that back Santa Rosa avenue. Once property owners are identify, city can notify homeowners along Bellevue Avenue of the need to trim weeds.
- Consider pedestrian safety improvements to the intersection of Terrimay Lane & Education such as:
 - Refresh/repaint crosswalk
 - Curb extensions to shorten crossing distance
 - Median island
 - Conversion of intersection to a roundabout
- Review and refresh pavement markings on Bellevue Avenue
- Review school signage along Bellevue Avenue and add signage if needed
- Consider reducing speed limit on Bellevue Avenue to 20 mph (it is currently 25mph)

Bellevue Avenue at Santa Rosa Avenue and Santa Rosa Avenue

Concerns

- Santa Rosa Avenue is a major barrier to active transportation to Taylor Mountain. The majority of families live in housing off of Santa Rosa Avenue, and with the exception of the families living on Powderhorn/Potomac/Terrimay/Bellevue Ave, must walk/bicycle on Santa Rosa Avenue to actively travel to school. Parents have expressed the following concerns about Santa Rosa Avenue:
 - Extremely busy street with dangerous intersections
 - Speed limit not observed
 - Crash prone intersections and lack of school signage
 - Homelessness
 - Dirty, uneven sidewalks
 - Way too busy to allow their child to ride a bike – lack of protection for bicyclists
- The crossing at Bellevue Avenue & Santa Rosa Avenue is of significant concern to parents and school staff. They expressed that the current flashing beacon is insufficient to create a safe environment for crossing. Parents advocated for a traffic light at this location, or another treatment, such as a roundabout, that would slow traffic and allow for pedestrians to safely cross,
- At Portal Dr. and Santa Rosa Avenue, there is a large bush that blocks the drivers visibility and results in them speeding right up to the edge of the curb often without checking for pedestrians.

Potential Solutions:

City of Santa Rosa

- City to consider implementing other traffic calming measures to slow traffic as it approaches Bellevue Avenue, in addition to what they have already done, namely, lowering the speed limit to 35mph on Santa Rosa Avenue at the city limit.
 - Implement significant safety enhancements to the crossing at Bellevue Ave & Santa Rosa Avenue. A project is currently in the design phase, and the following improvements are under consideration:
 - Replace current flashing beacon with a traffic signal
 - Add further protections to increase visibility and enhance safety for pedestrians and bicyclists. For example, once the intersection is signalized, consider adding a protected intersection, which includes curb extensions at the corners to shorten crossing distance for pedestrians.
- OR
- Convert crossing to a roundabout, which would include both pedestrian safety enhancements and shorter crossings, and would also slow traffic flow all the time, rather than just when cars are required to stop at a stop light.
 - Daylighting to the approach to crosswalk at Powderhorn and Santa Rosa Ave.

County of Sonoma

- Notify homeowner at Portal Drive & Santa Rosa Ave of requirement to trim their tree/bush. Portal Dr is within the County of Sonoma Jurisdiction.
- Consider lowering the speed limit on Santa Rosa Avenue to 35mph before entering the city limit.

Santa Rosa Police Department:

- Enforce the speed limit on Santa Rosa Avenue
- Deploy the speed trailer on Santa Rosa Avenue at/near Bellevue Avenue

Powderhorn Avenue & Terrimay Lane

Concerns

- Powderhorn is a frequently utilized cut-through for parents who wish to avoid Bellevue Avenue at drop off/pick up.
- Janske Silva, the neighbor who lives on the corner of Powderhorn & Terrimay Lane expressed concerns about the safety of kids and parents who cross at that intersection, to or from the park. Many kids play at the park after school, and the neighbor has observed some near-misses at that location. She also feels that cars drive too fast on Powderhorn and has observed that drivers park their vehicles close to the corners on both the east and west side of Powderhorn at Terrimay (which blocks views of pedestrians), park in front of the fire hydrant on the SE corner of Powderhorn at Terrimay, and do not obey pedestrian right of way. She inquired about whether it would be possible to add a painted crosswalk at that location and/or add a stop sign on Powderhorn at Terrimay (there is a stop sign on Terrimay at Powderhorn, but not on Powderhorn itself).
- Cars park in front of the fire hydrant on the SW corner of Powderhorn at Terrimay.

Potential Solutions:

City of Santa Rosa

- City staff indicated that a stop sign on Powderhorn at Terrimay is not warranted, due to the volume and speed of traffic on that section of roadway. They explained that stop signs should not be utilized as a “traffic calming” measure and when installed in locations where they are not warranted, do not necessarily enhance safety. City staff also do not recommend a painted crosswalk across Powderhorn at Terrimay on either the east or west side, due to the presence of driveways on the north side of Powderhorn.
- Staff will look into whether a painted crosswalk across Terrimay at Powderhorn would enhance safety at that location, although they expressed that it may give pedestrians a “false sense of security” at an intersection where there is no stop control and drivers might navigate that curb quickly.
- Daylight curbs at the intersection of Powderhorn and Terrimay (both the east and west side, due to the number of families that cross from the park.
- Paint the curb red/restrict parking in front of the fire hydrant
- Consider conversion of Powderhorn to a Class III bicycle facility, which could qualify the road for additional traffic calming elements, such as speed tables, should they be deemed feasible.

Additional District/School SRTS Considerations:

- Collaborate with SRTS to collect student arrival/departure tally data in either October 2024 or Spring 2025, to have visibility into how many students are utilizing each mode of transportation (walk, bike, other active, school bus, public transit, carpool, single family vehicle)

- Consider enrolling in/participate in the County SRTS program to participate in Walk/Roll initiatives, and to be eligible to receive SRTS services such as bicycle and/or pedestrian safety lessons and/or on-bicycle education programming.
- Consider establishing & promoting “Walking School Bus” (WSB) meet up spots, and identifying a school “SRTS Champion” (may be school staff or a parent or a team that includes both) to facilitate promotion and community participation. School administration, teacher(s), or even parents may lead a group of students on the Walking School Bus in the morning on special event days, such as International Walk & Roll to School Day or Ruby Bridges Walk to School Day. A walking school bus can be an excellent community engagement tool, and can highlight the importance of safety in numbers. SRTS staff can support the identification and promotion of convenient routes.
- 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.
- Provide students/parents with information re: how to utilize public transportation, which is free to all youth under the age of 18. 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.
 - The closest **CityBus** bus stop is at [Elsa Dr. @ Santa Rosa Ave.](#) served by [Route 3](#)
 - In the short term: Route 3 is planned to increase frequency to every 30 minutes.
 - In the long term: Route 3 is planned to extend down Santa Rosa Ave to Todd Rd with 30 minute frequency
 - The closest **Sonoma County Transit** at either at El Portal Way to the north or North Star Dr. to the south served by [Route 44/48](#)
 - Feasible improvement if the school would like to advocate for improved transit.
 - Bus stops at Santa Rosa Ave @ Bellevue Ave for Sonoma County Transit [Route 44/48](#)

Safe Routes to School Program Information

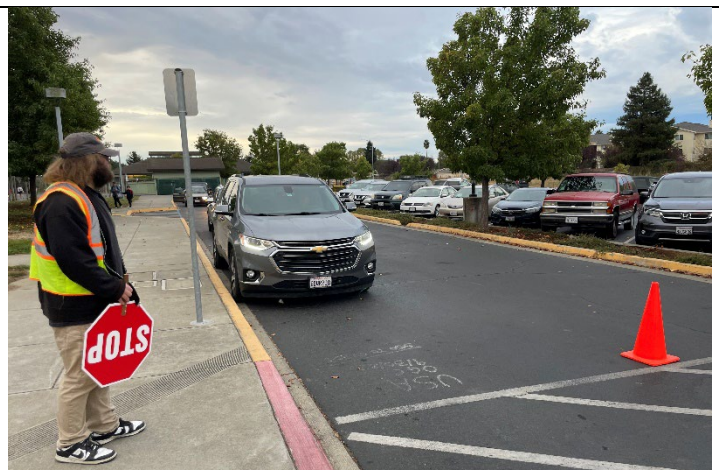
- The SRTS program coordinates a Safe Routes to School Task Force to bring together representatives from schools/school districts (school administration, staff and/or parents), city planning/engineering, law enforcement, and SRTS program staff. The goal of the Task Force is to:
 - Seek input from Task 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 30th). 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.sonomasaferoutes.org. To request to receive our SRTS E-Newsletter directly, email christina@bikeosnoma.org

Appendix: Walk Audit Pictures:



Morning traffic traveling down school driveway; entrance to staff driveway on left of picture



Traffic cue in and sidewalk in front of school, staff only parking on left could have a few spaces converted to visitor



Fire hydrant and unpainted curb on Education Dr.



Cones on Education Drive to prevent U-turns (replace with more permanent bollards?)



Gate at end of Education drive – field leads to mobile home park where parents/students live



What is the status of this project?



Corner of Education Drive & Bellevue – Daylight curb



Improve crossing at Bellevue & Education Drive



Another view of Education Drive at Bellevue



Improve crossing at Bellevue Ave & Terrimay



Crossing on Santa Rosa Avenue at Bellevue;
improvements in design phase...signal or
roundabout?



Intersection of Powderhorn and Terrimay – daylight curbs,
consider conversion of roadway to class III bicycle facility.