



Wright Charter School School SRTS Walk Audit

Wednesday, November 8th, 2023

In attendance: Christina Panza (SRTS Director), Sarah Hadler (SRTS Program Manager), Lisa Saxon (Wright School District Superintendent), Stefan Schaefer (Wright Charter Principal), Laurel Chambers (Wright Charter Parent, Healthy Eating/Active Living Coordinator County Public Health Division), Clyde Galentine (Engineer, County Public Infrastructure), Stevan Hunter (Engineer, County Public Infrastructure), Michael Kalua (Junior Engineer, County Public Infrastructure), Dana Turrey (Senior Transportation Planner, Sonoma County Transportation Authority), David Rippera (Assistant Director of Projects & Programming, Sonoma County Transportation Authority), Alexander Oceguela (City of Santa Rosa Active Transportation Planner), Mike VanMidde (City of Santa Rosa Associate Traffic Engineer), Steve Weinberger (SRTS Engineering Consultant, W-Trans)

Route: Met in front of school on the north side of Price Avenue. Walked west on north side of Price toward mid-block crossing at the western edge of the school property. Walked east on north side of Price to intersection of Price and S. Wright Rd, as well as the intersection of Finley St. and S. Wright Rd. Observed Pick-up, which takes place in the drive aisle in front of the school, most vehicles enter the driveway from the east and drop off/pick up in one direction, many exit to the west, but also a fair number to the east.

School Information:

Address	4389 Price Avenue, 95407
Morning Bell(s)	8:20am
Afternoon Bell(s)	M,T, Th-F: 1:15 (TK/K), 2:35 (1-3), 2:45 (4-8) W: 12:00 (TK/K), 12:35 (1-3), 12:45 (4-8)
Grade levels	Tk-8
Enrollment	~479 students
School type (neighborhood or magnet)	neighborhood, charter
Student's proximity to school	465 geocoded students 350 live within 2 miles of school (75%) 229 live within 1 mile of school (49%) 79 live within ½ mile of school (17%) 46 live within ¼ mile of school (10%)
Participating School in Sonoma County SRTS program?	Yes
Student Travel Mode info (Sept 2023 student arrival/departure tally data)	4% walk 0% bike 3% other (scoot/skate) 4% carpool 14% school bus 0 % public transit 76% single family vehicle <i>*totals do not equal 100% due to rounding</i>

Safe Routes to School Non-Infrastructure Programming (2023-24)	2 nd Grade Pedestrian safety lessons 4 th Grade Bicycle Basics Lessons, Bike Rodeo 5 th Grade Mapping & Communication lessons Monthly Walk/Roll to School Events
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CONCERNS EXPRESSED:

Price Avenue:

1. Although the speed limit is 25 mph at all times, drivers speed down Price Avenue, treat it like a “drag raceway” at times. Principal Stefan Schaeffer has contacted CHP, but has not received a response, although a parent who is a CHP officer has provided some support at times.
2. Price Avenue and the school driveway become very congested at drop off/pick up time; the majority of parents drive their children to/from school in single family vehicles.
3. Superintendent Lisa Saxon, Principal Schaefer and concerned parents expressed the desire for traffic calming measures, such as speed humps and speed radar signs on Price Avenue.
4. The only crossing on Price Avenue near the school is on the west end of the school which includes a painted crosswalk and school pedestrian crossing signs in each direction, but does not include any additional lighting safety features.
5. This crosswalk connects the walking path with a concrete berm on the south side of Price Ave from Merced Ave to the school. There is no walking path/sidewalk on the north side of Price Ave from Merced Ave. to the school crosswalk.
6. There is no sidewalk/path on the south side of Price Ave from the school crosswalk to S. Wright Rd., rather there is a culvert, presumably for drainage, on that side of the road.
7. There is a walking path with a concrete berm to separate pedestrians from traffic, on the north side of Price Ave to S. Wright Rd.
8. Lisa Saxon expressed concern that there is no designated crossing on Price Avenue between Wright Rd. and the crosswalk at the west end of the school. Students/parents who walk to school on the west side of Wright Rd, then turn west on Price, then cross Price in an unsafe manner to arrive on campus. She expressed fear that someone will eventually be hurt crossing Price. It should be noted that the designated pedestrian path on South Wright Road is on the east side of the street.
9. The majority of students either take the bus or are driven to school due to the lack of safe pedestrian routes, however, a significant number of students/parents do utilize the path.



Price in front of school, heading East



Price, looking west from South Wright Rd.



Crosswalk on Price on the west end of the school site:

1. Parents often park near this crosswalk to drop off/pick up children; it is heavily used.
2. There are no additional safety features at this crossing other than the painted crosswalk and school pedestrian crossing signs.

Intersection of Price/S. Wright Rd:

1. Concerns were expressed that there is no crosswalk going north/south across Price Avenue at S. Wright Rd. Mike Van Midde, City Engineer, explained that the city would not place a crosswalk at that location because there is no pedestrian walkway facilities on west wide of Wright Road. Instead, they suggest that students/families who live on the west side of South Wright Rd. carefully cross South Wright Rd, to walk along the path on the east side of South Wright, then cross again at the crossing on the north side of South Wright Rd. at Price, continuing down the pathway on the north side of Price Avenue to the school. City/County staff expressed that CA state law has changed and “jaywalking” (i.e. crossing outside of a marked crosswalk) is legal. That said, pedestrians should proceed with caution whenever crossing at any location, and parents should be encouraged to accompany children when crossing any street in the vicinity of the school.
2. This is an extremely busy intersection during school drop off/pick up.
3. There is a red fence on the west side of S. Wright Rd. at Price Ave. that blocks sightlines and may be a code violation.
4. The 25 mph speed limit sign is just to the west of the intersection of Price & S. Wright Rd. and may be easy to miss. There are no school zone signs, which apparently are not required since the 25 mph speed limit is at all times. However, concerns were expressed that some drivers may be unaware they are in a school zone and less likely to slow down as a result.



Intersection of S. Wright Rd/Finley Ave:

1. Some parents use the mini-mart on the NE corner of South Wright and Finley Avenue as a drop-off/pick up location.
2. A supervised walking school bus travels down South Wright Rd. from the Santa Rosa Junior College Roseland parking lot, on designated walk/roll days.
3. Crossing Finley Avenue north/south and vice versa feels dangerous, there is no marked crosswalk. School staff/parents inquired whether any improvements could be added to this location to enhance safety.
4. Homeless people from Sam Jones Hall often gather under the shade tree at the SE corner of S. Wright and Finley Ave, students/families have expressed feeling unsafe at this location.



POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS DISCUSSED:

Price Avenue:

1. School Driveway: District should consider possible reconfiguration of school frontage/driveway to create three lanes, two lanes for drop off and third lane to allow for traffic to pass through.
2. Speed Humps. If Price Road meets the criteria for speed humps (see below bullets), school district/residents may consider following the County's procedure for potential installation.
 - a. [Refer to Sonoma County Speed Hump Installation Policy](#)
 - Must be designated as a "local road" by the County.
 - The surrounding area must be zoned as residential
 - The width of the road shall be no more than 2 travel lanes
 - Minimum length uninterrupted by stop signs – 1200 feet
 - Speed profile: 25 mph per CA vehicle code
 - Approval from emergency services required
 - The road shall not a be transit bus route, unless approved by transit agency.
 - Daily traffic count on road must be less than 4000 vehicles

- 67% of property owners, as identified on current tax roll, in target area determined by DTPI, must indicate approval
 - Requires review & approval by DTPI
- b. Page 5 of policy includes “Procedures for Installation”, which include determining target area to circulate petition, getting emergency response approval, circulating petition, and more (see policy). *Read through these procedures carefully.*
 - c. Cost: If approved, the county will provide a quote for construction, which is in several steps. All costs are the responsibility of the applicant.
 - First, a temporary speed hump is installed, then removed after 30 days.
 - After 30 days, another petition must be circulated for a permanent speed hump (67% approval)
 - If approved, applicant shall pay DTPI in advance for installation of permanent speed hump.
 - Page 7 of the policy included cost estimate (subject to change), installation approximately \$15,000 for the temporary speed hump, than another \$15,000 for the permanent speed hump (plus \$5,000 for lighting if applicable).
3. Other Traffic Calming options for Price Avenue:
 - a. School or District may request “enhanced enforcement” from California Highway Patrol. CHP Public Information Officer Dave Derrute was not present at the audit, but communicated with Christina Panza that Principal Schaefer may reach out to him via email at dderrute@chp.ca.gov and he will forward requests to their neighborhood patrol team. Dave indicated that they do not have the personnel to respond to all requests; they do their best to prioritize.
 - b. Clyde Galentine/County Public Infrastructure identified a location along Price Avenue east of the campus where placement of their speed radar trailer would be appropriate. The school/district may contact Clyde to request placement of the speed radar trailer periodically. The speed trailer is moved weekly, based on requests, and likely could be placed at any given site once every 4-6 months.
 - c. Consider moving the 25 mph speed limit sign, now located just a few feet west of S. Wright Rd on Price, a bit farther to the west to a more visible location, and consider adding “school zone” designation/signage as well.
 - d. District and/or County to consider pursuing grant funding for purchase/placement of a permanent speed feedback sign along Price Avenue.
 - e. Alexander Ocegüera suggested that the school district or county consider installation of chicanes on Price Ave (unclear on suggested location). This would create a short, s-shaped turn that requires drivers to reduce speed.
 4. Crosswalk on Price Avenue, between school and S. Wright Road.
 - a. According to county staff, a crosswalk at this location is not feasible under current conditions. Improvements to the south side of Price (i.e. installation of a sidewalk or pathway in place of the current culvert) would be necessary first.
 - b. Improvements to the south side of Price would be a sizeable, multi-year endeavor requiring multiple studies (flood, drainage, etc). In order to pursue improvements to Price Avenue, the project should be included in a County plan (is it in a plan already??), and if pursued, a source of grant funding would need to be identified.

Crosswalk on Price Avenue at west end of school

1. County to consider installation of either pedestrian activated rapid rectangular flashing beacon (RRFB) at this location, to facilitate safer crossing of pedestrians, or flashing yellow beacons that would flash all the time during designated hours, to facilitate drivers slowing down as they enter the school zone.

- a. A funding source would need to be identified to install one or the other.
 - b. Installation of an RRFB costs approximately \$48,000.00
2. A raised crosswalk may also be considered at this location. Would need to inquire with fire district re: feasibility. This could be an alternative to a speed hump.
 - a. We discussed the possibility of SRTS sub-contractor W-Trans conducting pedestrian counts at this location.

Intersection of Price/S. Wright Rd:

1. School/District to contact County code enforcement complaint line at 707-565-1992 to lodge a complaint about the fence on the w. side of South Wright Rd. at Price that is blocking sightlines. Stevan Hunter indicated that he believes there is a 90% chance they are in violation.
2. Traffic signal (traffic control) warrants could be evaluated to determine if a traffic signal or roundabout meets warrants.
3. There was a discussion re: reconfiguring intersection to create a type of “roundabout” to enhance safety of this tricky intersection. This would be a long-term solution and traffic control warrants would need to first be conducted to determine if such improvements to this location would even be warranted. (Jurisdiction of the project would shared between the City of Santa Rosa and the County).
4. We discussed the possibility of SRTS sub-contractor W-Trans conducting a traffic control warrant study as well as pedestrian counts at this location to determine feasibility of a potential future project at this location.

Intersection of S. Wright Rd/Finley Ave:

1. City of Santa Rosa to consider improvements to the north-south crossing at this location. It may be feasible to install a painted crosswalk or other pavement improvements. City staff will need to evaluate the location to determine feasible improvements.
2. Mike or Alexander from City of Santa Rosa will research who to contact re: the possibility of removing the shade tree at the corner of Finley Ave. & South Wright. They believe it cannot be removed as it is a protected California Live oak, but another option could be to perhaps plant more shade trees in other areas to make the shade under this particular tree less inviting.

SHORT TERM ACTION ITEMS:

School/District/Residents:

- Research speed hump policy/pursue if desired
- Contact CHP/Dave Derutte dderutte@chp.ca.gov
- Contact County Code enforcement re: fence code violation 707-565-1992
- Consider reconfiguration of school driveway
- Consider communication to parents encouraging walking on east side of South Wright and north side of Price; crossing S. Wright or Price as needed, when safe to cross (i.e. jaywalking not illegal). Note: children strongly encouraged to cross with adults.
- Continue participating in SRTS program to educate students and parents re: safe walking and bicycling practices, and to encourage safe & supervised walking to school on designated walk/roll event days (and potentially less traffic on those days).

County of Sonoma:

- Review recommendations and respond with any plans/progress:
 - Placement of Speed radar trailer on Price Ave.
 - Movement of speed limit sign on Price Ave (with school zone designation?)
 - Research feasibility and cost of installing RRFB or Flashing lights at crosswalk at Price near Merced
 - Respond with any further information re: any additional, future improvements to Price Ave (i.e. South side, raised crosswalk near Merced, chicanes on Price Ave, etc), or recommendations re: inclusion of future project(s) in a county plan

City of Santa Rosa

- Review recommendations, provide input re: feasibility/timeline of improvements at South Wright Ave & Finley
- Provide contact information for tree removal request (or planting request/making the area under current tree less inviting)

Sonoma County Transportation Authority

- Review recommendations, determine whether any projects should be included in County ATP or SR 12/Fulton Rd. Feasibility study.
- Provide information re: sources of grant funding for active transportation projects that school district(s) and/or county staff may apply for

SRTS Program Staff:

- Distribute/Finalize report
- Consider W-Trans subcontractor to conduct data collection on Price Avenue to determine a) traffic control warrants for South Wright Road/Price Avenue and warrants for speed humps.