



SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOLS: MARIN COUNTY



Larkspur Corte Madera Safe Routes to Schools Task Force
Zoom Meeting Notes
Thursday, July 16, 2020

Attendance:

Wendi Kallins- Safe Routes to Schools, Jared Barrilleaux- Engineer DPW Corte Madera, Jean Severinghaus- Volunteer for Caltrans Advisory, Julian Skinner- Director DPW Larkspur, Cheryl Longinotti- Volunteer for BPAC, Patrick Golier- Parisi Engineering, John Neville- Traffic Engineer- DPW County of Marin, David Parisi- Parisi Engineering, Gwen Froh- Program Director Safe Routes to Schools, R.J. Suoko- Director DPW Corte Madera, Charles Lee- Corte Madera Town Council

Developing Transportation Plans

Safe Routes to Schools (SR2S) team has been working with and attending meetings county wide. School Districts are focused on developing plans to run classes and SR2S is focused on supporting plans to get students to schools safely.

County wide districts are struggling with how to use the yellow bus and Marin Transit services. Redwood High and Hall Middle School and Cove School have all been using the bus services. Understand this, SR2S may be the best resource to support efforts to reduce traffic and encourage walking and rolling to school. The possibility of more families driving students will have a negative impact on safe transportation options for students. When the number of vehicles increases during school hours there will be significant traffic issues, that will have a negative impact on the neighborhoods too.

Toolkit presentation

[COVID Back to School Toolkit](#) Power Point Presentation

Please view this presentation used during the Zoom meeting. Notes/comments will refer to the PowerPoint slide by title.

Planning for the Fall - 3 Objectives- slide

A transportation committee needs to be created for each school to ensure roadway space using pop-up facilities and locations for park and walk are identified in advance or

school reopening. Volunteers from the community are needed; BPAC volunteers would be a great resource. SR2S staff will be available to develop an encouragement plan; however, they cannot be at every school.

Safe Routes to Schools does not have the resources to work with every school in the county. We are asking volunteers to create a temporary committee to take the necessary steps. Some school districts are smaller than others; this can be an opportunity for schools to work together; pooling resources.

Tools to Consider- slide

Street Adaptations are all about finding space on roadway networks that lead to schools to provide additional space for walking, biking while physical distancing.

Sidewalk Extensions- slide

The advantage of these options is to allow students to spread apart while traveling and waiting to enter a school campus. *The challenges are for vehicle drivers to be aware of these temporary facilities. Proper and effective messaging to all users is very important.*

Bike and Roll Lanes- slide

These provide dedicated space for students to travel safely on bike routes that are separated from vehicles. These are best used on roadways that have a high volume of students cycling.

Slow Street- slide

These facilities are being used throughout the Bay Area and the country. They are used on quiet residential streets that are closed off to through traffic; that still allow access for emergency and local vehicle access. They are typically used in grid roadway networks where drivers can find an alternate route. The materials used are sandwich boards at the end of each block, with signs discouraging through traffic.

One-Way Traffic Flow- slide

Good options for a street that will also include a bike way or if a school is making use of pick-up/drop-off for drivers. Good for roads with parking lanes and without existing bike lanes.

Additional Engineering Tools-slide

The information on this slide is not: temporary, quick build or used in pop-up scenarios. They are engineering tools that may be considered.

- Pedestrian recall setting - The photo was taken in Berkeley; the city eliminated the need at many intersections for the pedestrian to have to push a button to activate the crossing signal. They are now pre-set to display the “walk” symbol.
- Signal timing for active transportation (urban areas)
This may not be appropriate in these towns; they are used on city corridors with a high volume of cyclists to manage traffic lights.

- **Speed Management/Traffic Calming**
Used to slow traffic to make a roadway safer for all road users including students traveling to school.

Pop-Up Considerations- slide

Some of the resources needed to separate traffic from students that are walking: sandwich boards, cones, planters (long term pop-up use) something that is forgiving (not steel or heavy) yet a barrier.

Predictably is very important. Do not create a bike way going against the flow of road traffic. Cyclists should ride with the flow of vehicle traffic. Establish a complete suggested route network that leads directly to the school(s). Corte Madera and Larkspur have advantages due the existing networks in place with the multi-use path and Doherty Drive.

Park and Walk- slide

On the date of this meeting the Office of Education provided guidelines on the routes for entry/exit will be specified by cohorts using as many entrances and exits as feasible. The SR2S recommendations of pop-ups and park and walk supports the school's plans to reduce the number of students congesting at the front of a school.

Park and Walk locations provide an opportunity for families with multi age students or cohort carpools that live too far or do not have enough time to walk/roll the full distance to campus. This SR2S program has already proven to be a viable program, the learnings are documented from the pilot and the marketing materials are available.

Neil Cummins has a nearby park, where they expect parents to park and walk onto campus. This school has some of the highest number of students traveling green in the county. The drop-off zone has been closed down to families for a number of years.

Loma Verde Elementary School piloted a Park and Walk campaign last year. The program was a huge success. On average 160 vehicles were driven onto campus during drop off; this was reduced to 80 vehicles during and after the campaign. Lawn signs were used to identify suggested parking locations in neighborhoods. SR2S does have a few signs available.

PedPods and Pedal Pods- slide

These are alternatives to a "[walking school bus](#)". If/when schools identify cohorts for classroom needs; these cohorts could also meet up to walk or roll to school while maintaining physical distancing. These could be 2-3 families not to exceed groups of 6 students/adults traveling to school together. Another option for a Pod are the social

bubbles some families are forming outside of school. There are a number of resources available though the bay area on walking cohorts. Please contact SR2S for more information.

Encouragement programs

Encouragement for Active Travel- slide

Safe Routes staff are here to support efforts to maintain active travel to school. A [Social Distancing Tips for Walking and Rolling](#) is available in English and Spanish. Over 500 copies were distributed this spring via the Canal Alliance. Cycling has increased nationally during this time. SR2S on-line education curriculum is a resource to continue these healthy practices. Health professionals have stated COVID is less dangerous outdoors while physically distancing.

Traffic Committee - Steps to Take- slide

Safe Routes to Schools does not have the resources to work with every school in the county. We are asking volunteers to create a temporary committee to take the necessary steps. Some school districts are smaller than others; this can be an opportunity for schools to work together; pooling resources. Volunteers will need to start planning even without having all the information from the county/school district. Communication with the DPW will help to identify what could or cannot work for a pop-up.

Pop-up locations must be approved by the town or county Dept of Public Works (DPW) in advance. One option is to install a pop-up that would remain in place throughout the school year; this would be managed by the DPW. Focus should be on locations immediately adjacent to the entrance to the school. Hall and Neil Cummins already have many completed improvements. The street behind Cove School is also an option for a “traffic calm street” to discourage vehicle traffic when students are traveling.

Most pop-up resources (sandwich boards and cones) are very temporary; they are set-up before the start/ end of a school day. These types of pop-up are not managed by the DPW; they do not have the staff. At one school the crossing guard set-up the materials each day.

Volunteers could also put out supplies if approved through an encroachment permit and instructed by public works in advance. The PTA can be a resource for finding volunteers.

Safe Routes Education and Encouragement Programs

In past years SR2S volunteers used banners to announce the start of the school year to encourage green travel.

SR2S staff are looking at encouragement programs/challenges without campus welcome tables; this does not mean walking and rolling will not be promoted. Contest

cards will be handed out to students at participating schools to track how they get to school. This will be available when campuses reopen.

Safe Routes to Schools now has [Remote Learning](#) resources for all “classroom” curriculum on-line for grades 1-8th grades in English and Spanish. These lessons were distributed to all the schools in the county this past spring. These will be prompted in the fall too.

[Savvy Family Cycling with Youth](#) is a resource for parents to use when teaching children and their families how to ride on the roadway when they are ready.

Summer Bike Week

During the spring SR2S hosted a Bike Week for middle school students. Over 500 students participated. Now there are two Summer Bike Weeks contests for elementary and middle school age students.; 5 days of fun and education activities; participants can win ice cream for their family.

[Family Bike Week-](#) elementary age
[Bike Week](#) - middle school age

Volunteers were asked to share these resources on their local NextDoor network. SR2S would also welcome support to continue promoting these resources at the schools.

Discussion

The County of Marin DPW must review and approve (at a department level) all proposed changes to road facilities. This process addresses the county's liability. The DPW will be asking all volunteers to wear the appropriate vests and that only approved control devices are used. If a plan is approved it cannot change day by day. The proposed changes cannot be left up to the schools to move traffic around. The county's guidelines will help the local DPW develop guidelines as well.

The guidance that came from [NACTO](#) has a good deal of soft barriers; acceptable examples: orange traffic cones, candle stick delineators permanently mounted during this time). Advance warning signs: change road condition ahead, shoulder closed ahead, traffic lane shifted ahead are very important.

Larkspur has been using some of these resources as they are establishing outdoor dining. They are using their standard encroachment permit and offering guidance for this non-traditional way of outdoor dining by closing lanes or parking spaces. They are also expanding pedestrian and bicycle lanes. The challenge is these proposed facilities are getting into “non-traditional” designs. The DPW does want to work with the schools; they want to make sure any changes are managed safely and they are all reviewed by

Larkspur DPW in advance. It would be best if proposed and approved changes are uniform throughout the county to help drivers experience consistent messaging.

Corte Madera DPW sees that each school may have different needs. Neil Cummins and Cove Schools do have local neighborhood streets that could lend themselves to pop-up facilities. The Mohawk Neighborhood streets may have options heading toward Neil Cummins; the Town Park parking lot could be an option for drop-off. The DPW is available to review ideas and work with the schools to support the safety of students traveling to/from schools. Most of the ideas being presented include parking spaces to be temporarily removed; as long as residents are OK then could be opportunities. Consistent messaging will be important to all road users in each town throughout the county.

The project construction is planned in the next month for Redwood and Pixley intersection. The DPW recommend any temporary considerations be put on hold until construction is complete.

The county and town DPW Directors meet monthly; the next meeting is Thursday, August 20th. SR2S would like to be invited to the Zoom meeting by Julian Skinner. SR2S was requested to share the presentation to the DPW directors ahead of the next meeting to help them understand the concepts and goals. SR2S will plan to make an abbreviated presentation during the Zoom meeting.

The Town Center seems to have a good deal of available parking to be identified as a Park & Walk and a Drop & Walk location. This is a location that is not too far from Neil Cummins School. Madera Blvd can be a busy street. Corte Madera Plaza is closer to the middle and high schools if approved and it is just across the street from the multi-use path.

The task force will be meeting again in September; this will be an opportunity to present some of the ideas being discussed and presented.

Redwood Highway Path- update: Scheduled to start Sept 1, 2020 for environmental reasons. Project will take 2 to 2.5 months.

A plan view was presented that identified a temporary path along Redwood Hwy starting at the intersection of San Clemente Dr. The path would take a lane on Redwood Hwy moving north. Barricades (hard plastic K-Tails) would be in place at the beginning of the

path with striping and delineators between intersections - intersections would have the K-Rails in place. The temporary path would be continued all the way to Wornum Drive. The focus is to get the students on a safe route from the start to end during the construction.

If students will not be traveling to school the DPW would like to know. The temporary route is costly.

The DPW was asked if they would consider reviewing the traffic flow while this temp lane closure was in place. Mill Valley had completed a project that required a lane be closed during construction. After the project was completed a study identified that the vehicle lane was not needed; they redesigned the roadway to include a bike lane.

The current uneven road surface due to trees, will be addressed in this project. The dugouts (repairs) may not be addressed before the temporary path is in place. They may be addressed during constructions. This temp route will have full use of the travel lane and most of the damaged road is near the gutters.

Corte Madera Planned Projects Update:

- Redwood and Pixel project is slated to begin
- Mohawk and Monona Drive intersections improvements include pedestrian refuge island, new striping, rapid flashing beacons, bulb outs
- East side of town- sidewalk widening San Clementa and Seawolf Passage (20/21 construction)

Larkspur Planned Projects Update:

- An 8ft pathway had been designed to go next to the 4ft sidewalk along Redwood High; an extension of the current wide side walk. It had been bid on a few times; they all came in too high. The town decided to build as much of it as they can; this will give the town a foundation to apply for a future grant to finish it.
- Additional Safe Pathways funding was granted for Doherty near Hall Middle School to include some buffered bike lanes (4-5 year plan).
- The raised crosswalk at Piper Park is included in the Doherty buffered bike lanes project. This too is a TAM funded project where the funds will be distributed over time.

TAM Grants Update

TAM had awarded funding to towns to help during Covid. Corte Madera is using funds to define safety corridors for people to eat outdoors with more space. This included

roadway barriers, bathroom and wash stations, table and chairs that need to be set-up weekly.

The County DPW was also awarded \$20,000.00; they identified six schools that could get resources: Bayside MLK, Edna Maguire, Hidden Valley, Loma Verde, Mary Silveria and Tam Valley schools. Resources will include: identified drop-off locations, bike and roll lanes along the frontage of schools, signage, marking for social distancing, The details for these temporary pop-ups will be presented at the next task force meetings in September.

Next Zoom meeting

Wednesday, September 16, 2020 at 3:00pm