



SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOLS: MARIN COUNTY



**Mill Valley Safe Routes to Schools
Zoom Task Force Meeting Notes
5/21/2020**

Attendance:

Wendi Kallins, Peggy Clark Safe Routes to Schools, Kathy McLeod- Crossing Guard Sup/Outreach Coordinator, David Hoffman- Parisi Assoc., Kevin Cuffe- Parent Tam High, Gwen Froh- Safe Routes Director, Dan Cuddeford- Parent, Stephanie Multon-Peters- Resident, Lisa Lund- Parent Strawberry School, James O'Brien-TAM Crossing Guard Consultant, Carey Lando- Marin County DPW, Amanda Finlaw- Mill Valley School District, Christina Mueller-Edna Maguire Parent, Sarah Estes-Smith, Aide to Kate Sears, Clay Kuntz-MVBPAC & Tam High Parent, Sarah Adams- Edna Maguire Parent, Debbie Alley- MVBPAC, John Neville- Marin County DPW.

Planning for re-opening of schools

Safe Routes to School (SR2S) staff have been meeting with many SR2S Task Force groups in Marin County to learn and discuss proposed plans for schools reopening in the fall.

Safe Routes to Schools is asking municipalities to look into temporary “roadway pop-ups” to encourage traffic calming. These could create space in the roadways; enabling physical distance for the students. Orange cones and planters are some of the creative ways to designate a cordoned off space. Engineers will also consider designs that do not impact/increase traffic with the “pop-ups”.

The Safe Routes to School engineer will be working very closely with town and county DPW staff to develop a toolkit. Each school has its own unique circumstances to create new and safe circulation patterns. It will ultimately

be up to each jurisdiction to make the decisions for their specific schools. There are 8 SRTS Task Force groups in Marin County working with school districts and departments of public works.

The Office of Education is working with schools to develop age & grade specific “cohorts for classroom management of physical distancing. Safe Routes to School staff are developing resources for students/families to travel to school within their cohort groups (10-12 students) called “ped-pods”. The goal is to encourage students that are in a cohort to travel to/from school together and/or students that live in a specific neighborhood to travel together. This would include walking, rolling and cycling. Carpooling is not encouraged and the yellow bus will not be operating this coming school year in Mill Valley.

Students will need specific instructions when traveling to/from school. These instructions will be different than those followed at school due to the nature and means of transportation. This includes how bike racks will be used by students when following protocols.

The Mill Valley School District will be sharing resources developed by SR2S with families. A task force has been created to manage the procedures and details for the start of the 2020/21 school year.

The school district is currently looking at and developing plans for 4 different models. The current school year will finish off with remote learning and will be offering some special ed programs during the summer. Individuals interested in supporting this task force can apply on the school district's site MVschools.org.

The Director of Maintenance and Operations has been working with the County of Marin addressing the established protocols for each classroom and more. He may be the person for SR2S to work with regarding transportation planning at the schools. If he is not the correct person Stephanie will follow-up to learn who the point of contact will be.

Yellow bus update

Unfortunately with all the efforts by so many to encourage and grow the program the City Council decided it could no longer fund the program this school year. City representatives and the School Board will be meeting this month to learn if there are other funding options. Hopefully in a few years the yellow bus program with the success and lessons learned can return with the needed funding.

The parent group understood ridership will be down if the school schedules are dispersed throughout the days. They remain supportive of the program if funding was confirmed in the future. The school district is also supportive of the program in the future. School bus programs throughout the county will be struggling too as they navigate these new protocols.

Crossing guard program is waiting to see what decisions are made with the schools. They will have to evaluate how it affects the crossing guard schedule and the current contract.

SR2S would like the crossing guard programmer to consider how they will manage students/parents at crosswalks while maintaining physical distance. Waiting to cross the street and crossing the street in groups must be planned out in advance. Traffic may need to wait longer for students to cross the streets safely without causing huge traffic delays.

Pedestrian crossing buttons to activate the signals will also need to be considered as protocols for managing spread of the virus. Currently some towns have maintenance staff walking an area and wiping them down. A consideration was made to suspend the need to push the buttons at all; have them go on automatically. There are some systems that detect when a person is at the crosswalk. These are very expensive. If the timing of the lights were reconfigured to include the ped crossing each time it would have an adverse impact on traffic.

The BPAC has discussed some of these options with the City of Mill Valley DPW. The technology for an automated system to detect a person is not great and it is expensive. Crossing guards may be of assistance at schools. At this time no solutions have been identified.

Transportation of Marin TAM *new* [Safe Routes to School](#) information site.

This is a one stop information site. It has links to the Safe Routes to Schools Remote Learning resources, suggested routes maps to schools, encouragement contest and challenges for students and task force meeting information.

Safe Routes Offerings this Spring

Summer Bike Events will be posted in June

Art and Poetry Contest - April

Elementary and Middle School students submitted works for the month of April. All school districts and local social media resources were provided information. Many (50+) wonderful submittals have been received.

Walk and Roll Recess Challenge- May

"Get your Ya Yas Out" is a fun contest for parents to conduct with their children. There are a host of activities students can do during the challenge; walking, rolling, hula hooping, ball toss and jump roping. There are students that have challenges getting out doors while practicing physical distancing. All healthy physical activities are encouraged and can be tracked for the challenge.

Remote Learn [Safe Routes to Schools](#)

[Social Distancing Tips for Walk and Rolling](#)- English

[Social Distancing Tips for Walk and Rolling](#)- Spanish

An information flyer was created as a resource to students and families throughout the county. With the increase of students walking and biking during the “shelter in place”; these tips are very useful safety reminders.

The Safe Routes to School program will be staying active throughout the county, providing meaningful resources to teachers and students; while supporting parents and the school districts. SR2S has developed on-line lessons; these lessons are normally presented in the classroom throughout the county each school year. [SR2S Remote Learning Lessons](#) are available to all students and parents. It has been a long term goal to make SR2S curriculum available to parents and now it is. The remote learning presentation will also be available in Spanish too.

SR2S plans to return to the schools in the fall teaching our outdoor education program following physical distancing protocols too. Most of the Mill Valley schools included the SR2S Remote Learn resources for their PE curriculum. They too have expressed their desire to have the outdoor walking and biking classes return next year. SR2S has been tracking the schools that are making use of these resources.

Bike Week Middle School Students- May

Will be rolled out in May; daily cycling related activities will be presented to students. As students track their participation they will be eligible to win prizes at the end of the month.

The encouragement aspect of SR2S is evaluating ideas (all welcome) on how to keep the positive momentum for Walking and Rolling. We are evaluating how/if “welcome tables, contests and Walk and Roll Wednesdays will be programmed and supported next school year.

If people have suggestions for SR2S programing please contact Gwen@marinbike.org

Tam Valley Sidewalk improvements

Caltrans has been working on scheduled road way improvements at Tam Junction. One issue has been the configuration of the crosswalk and crossing activation button for pedestrian and cyclists. Kathy Mcleod was pleased to see they have designed and built the access ramps correctly. This will help to keep students out of the street at the crosswalks/intersections.

Janes Street

Kevin has been in communication with Stephanie and the neighbor who wrote the letter. The stay at home order has delayed action; students are not traveling to school right now so it is not an issue currently.

The photos taken will be shared with the DPW and the BPAC. The travel way is on the City of Mill Valley side of Janes; it is a suggested safe route and students do use the route to get to school. The photos will help the DPW know what vegetation is to be cut back.

E Blithedale Rehab Project

The project limits are on the E Blithedale Ave between Sunnyside Ave and Highway 101 interchange

On June 3rd a public meeting was scheduled. Dave@plantoplace.com coordinated the meeting.

The project includes: This is not a Caltrans project.

- Repaving roadways
- Repair damaged curb, gutter and sidewalks
- Replace non-ADA compliant curb ramps
- Upgrade existing traffic signals to meet the current standards
- Improve bicycle and pedestrian mobility and safety

The BPAC will review the proposed design. The project is slated for construction for summer 2021.

Tam High

Safe Routes to Schools provided Kevin with a well prepared survey that had been conducted at Redwood High. It contains detailed questions to ask

students/parents: how and why parking choices are made and how they impact the school's neighborhood.

Kevin sent all the information over to JC just before the school campus shut down. The plan is to reconnect with the school before the start of the 20/21 school year. The PTSA is helping with the project.

Mapping updates

Tam Valley Map DRAFT

The map presented has been updated since the last task force meeting with parent input. The primary walking route is marked in red, along with an extensive cycling route. Most but not all of the cycling routes were mapped. Some of the current routes use roadways that are not suggested by Safe Routes to Schools and parents; they are not on the map.

The dangerous roadway curve at Loring Ave has been flagged. There are "radius" marks to help parents have an idea how far it is to walk or roll to the school.

The next step for all the maps is to have the County DPW review and approve them. Then they will be posted on the [Safe Routes to Schools map page](#).

Comments:

- The bike route (green line) needs to be corrected; the bike route is not on Shoreline Hwy but on the multi-use path way. It is helpful to include the name of roads and should have the McGlashan pathway noted.
- The short bridge from Ross Drive to Marin Ave should be identified. Once getting on Marin Ave the students have almost two blocks before getting to the school. Students ride on the sidewalk and against the flow of traffic. It is a very narrow road. Students should be able to get safely to the correct side of the roadway; however there is no room for cyclists and vehicles.

This is a good example of where COVID “pop-up” facilities can be considered to provide space for students/families traveling to school. The current parking areas may need to be coned off, offering space in the roadway.

This may be the best time to schedule a virtual walk audit with the County DPW. John will plan to go and see the site before the audit is scheduled now that the request was made from Safe Routes to Schools.

Stephaine proposed a write-up identifying what is being requested. Including temporary restricted parking on the right side of the road (direction leaving the school) for one block before school starts each morning. Is just asking them not to park there in the morning an option? When this was proposed a number of years ago parents were asked to park at the TCSD parking area. Remote parking locations need to be posted on the map. This will be confirmed with TCSD. Kate Sears office was requested to confirm if the parking could be restricted and if the TCSD parking lot could be used for a “park and walk” location (they said it could).

A recommendation was made to structure the entrance into Tam Valley School similar to Bel Aire School: restrict parent/student vehicles (only) from driving into the campus at Bell lane and Enterprise Concourse.

Edna Maguire Map DRAFT

The bicycle routes on the map were suggested by the parents. Camino Alto is a bike route, but it is not a recommended/suggested safe route for Safe Routes to Schools. It is not on the map. The green lines are the routes. There are a number of MUP short cuts/pass throughs included in the routes.

A request was made to clarify:

- The shortcut through the golf course: yes it is on the map by Fairway Drive.

- The route along the MUP needs to be labeled; clarify students are not cycling on Camino Alto.
- The route from Vasco will also be labeled.
- Label the Charles McGlashin route for students who travel to Edna so they do not use Tam Junction. Must include roads Flamingo and Marin Ave to McGlashan path (this could be more important for MVMS map)
- In time once this map is approved the Mill Valley Park and Rec Dept will receive a copy of the maps.
- The street named Park needs to be relabeled Willow. Park Terrace (different locatoin) needs to be identified as students use that route.
- No yellow bus- students who would be taking the bus from Strawberry to MVMS and Edna Maguire will increase too. The routes crossing Hwy 101 will need consideration too.

Next steps: recommended meeting for Edna Maguire Pop-up locations

A virtual walk audit meeting will be scheduled.

Set up a separate meeting with SR2S school parents and town/county representatives to identify the roads and pathways to be used for students to travel (Pop-up” facilities).

Strawberry School Map DRAFT

A request was made to look at the crossing of Tiburon Blvd from E Strawberry Drive which is very challenging. Students must cross the right turn pocket. It is a dangerous crossing; very few students walk this route.

This school seems to have more opportunities for students to walk and roll then other schools in the district.

There are crossing guards that need to be added:

- Tiburon Blvd and E Strawberry traffic light
- E Strawberry and Ricardo Rd
- Blackfield and Tiburon Blvd

East Strawberry Rd is used for cut through traffic and school traffic. The map needs a warning symbol for speeding traffic. The neighborhood for the school has a number of hills (some steep). Students do not cycle up/down the hills; if they do they cycle on the sidewalk. The Bay Trail should be marked on the map.

BPAC Report

The BPAC conducted one of two planning meetings prior to this meeting in June. There have not been that many meetings this past year. The DPW has a reduction in staff and resources; that will continue for now. The BPAC will be reviewing everything that is in the transportation plan that was approved to identify what they will focus on the next 3 years. There are new resource constraints for the city and the goals will need to be adjusted.

Focused efforts for the BPAC:

- Pathway through the golf course will remain a priority.
- The Nelson/Sycamore triangle area; community concerns to increase traffic calming and safety for pedestrian and bicycle travel. This has been presented to the City Council; it is not funded at this time.
- Bike Friendly designation: looking for current projects that will help to move the designation from silver to gold. Including developing an bicycle education program for officers and the community including resources from Safe Routes to Schools and the Marin County Bicycle Coalition (MCBC).

Safe Routes to Schools will have resources the BPAC/city can make use for parents and students cycling. MCBC will be the resource for adult education.

Next Meeting

9:30 Thursday, July 23, 2020.