



SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOLS: MARIN COUNTY



**Ross Valley Safe Routes to Schools Task Force  
Zoom Meeting notes  
Tuesday, July 21, 2020**

**Attendance:**

Wendi Kallins- Safe Routes to Schools, Renee Gaddard- Fairfax Mayor, Gwen Froh- Program Director Safe Routes to Schools, Peggy Clark- Program Manager Safe Routes to Schools, Mark Regan- School Board Trustee, John Neville- Traffic Engineer County of Marin, Scott Schbeider- Asst Public Works Director, Brian Colbert- San Anselmo Town Council, James O'Brien- TAM Crossing Guard Consultant, Kelly Zalewski- School Operations Marin Transit, Patrick Golier- Engineer - Parisi Engineering, David Gehman- School District Director of Maintenance, Shelley Flint- Administrator San Domenico School, Carrie Robley- Assistant Head of School San Domenico, Sean Condry- Director of Public Works San Anselmo, David Parisi- Parisi Engineering, Garrett Toy- Fairfax Town Manager, David Wise- CFO San Domenico School, Nancy Vernon- Aide to Kate Rice

**Developing Transportation Plans**

Safe Routes to Schools (SR2S) team has been 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. Our goal is to assist with the planning when schools reopen to students on campus.

The county has announced that campuses will not reopen to all students until mid-September. The recommendation is not to consider opening campuses until Sept 8, 2020.

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. The notes/comments below refer to the powerpoint slide by title. Not all slides have comments below.

This presentation was scheduled to present ideas and collect suggestions; no confirmed actions have been approved or taken at the time of this meeting.

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 park and walk are identified in advance of school reopening. SR2S staff will be available to develop an encouragement plan that will be used.

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 to identify pop-up facilities and park and walk locations. Some schools are located near each other; this can be an opportunity for schools to work together; pooling resources. School administrators/teachers are focused on teaching students; they do not have the staff to support these transportation goals.

#### Tools to Consider- slide

**Street Adaptations** are about finding space on roadway networks that lead to schools and 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 and on current suggested routes to school.

#### 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 and clear consistent messaging to drivers.

#### One-Way Traffic Flow- slide

Good options for residential or local streets 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. Resources are cones and signs and very clear messaging to all vehicle drivers.

#### 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. They may not be appropriate for Fairfax and San Anselmo.

- 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; they are used on city corridors with a high volume of cyclists to manage traffic lights to be timed for cycling speed.

- **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

In the lower income neighborhoods where students must walk to school pop-up facilities should be given priority if funding is limited. 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.

Predictability 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).

#### Bike Parking- slide

A plan for parking and removing bikes will be needed in advance (in a line/one at a time). If there is an increase in students cycling; will more racks be needed. The health checks may be conducted at the bike parking locations.

#### Park and Walk- slide

SR2S staff are on the Office of Educations - Transportation Task Force obtaining first hand information on continued developments. The guidelines are calling for schools to use multiple entrances/exits; specifying locations for each cohort. 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.

Loma Verde Elementary School piloted a Park and Walk campaign last year. 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.

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 marketing materials are available. Park and Walk locations can potentially be the first and fastest option for Traffic Committee volunteers to consider to reduce the forecasted increase in traffic around schools.

#### 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 throughout 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 and to give students and adults “best practice” road and path safety information. 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. Volunteers are needed to start planning even without having all the information from the county/school district. Advance communications with the DPW will help to identify what could or cannot work for a pop-up. ***Communications are also essential with the school community and surrounding neighborhoods in advance if access to a school changes.***

Pop-up locations must be approved by the town or county Dept of Public Works (DPW) in advance; not all requests may be approved. The DPW will identify/approve what materials can be used.

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. The “temporary” pop-ups (set up at the start and end of day only) cannot be supported by the DPW; possibly the crossing guards can assist with these if close to their location.

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

## **Safe Routes Education and Encouragement Programs**

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. Safe Routes staff will be ready when school reopens to present experiential classes with students.

[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.

### **Yellow Bus program**

Marin Transit did not have an update to report. They are waiting to hear back from the county health department regarding protocols for buses. The (JPA) [Joint Powers Agreement](#) is conducting strategy meetings; all are encouraged to attend.

### **Discussion**

Sean asked about how parking in the neighborhoods was received during the Loma Verde pilot program and how it would be received in this school district. The neighbors for Loma Verde School had mostly positive feedback; they were pleased to have less roadway traffic in general.

The County DPW is planning to be supportive and as pro-active as possible. The TAM grant that was awarded to the County will be available for approved temporary road facilities (stripping and signs). These funds were identified and awarded to support safety measures that will be mandated for students traveling safely to schools.

Traffic Committee volunteers need to be identified soon. One school district suggested reaching out to the school principals, asking them to inquire with the PTA to take the lead. Town Council members or DPW staff could help too. The Butterfield - Safe Streets Coalition will be asked to help; this would support Brookside, Hidden Valley and San Domenico Schools. Manor, Wade Thomas Ross Valley Charter and White Hill may need to be supported separately. St Anselms has a church parking lot that may be considered an option for Park and Walk. Each school has its unique restrictions and opportunities. All school districts have limited resources especially during this time; community support is needed.

Brian offered to reach out to the head of the PTA at Wade Thomas and the administration at St Anselms to learn if they can help drive volunteers to support a Traffic Committee for their school.

The San Anselmo DPW is available to help as resources allow. They are down in staff and see additional funding cuts. A team approach would be welcomed. Currently the DPW has a project planned for Caletta St and Sycamore Ave which are going to be marked as "slow streets". There will be signs "local traffic only, slow down. Vehicles to park on these streets; with advance notice hopefully the owners could support efforts to limit parking or make them "parking streets" to make more space for students walking and rolling while maintaining physical distancing.

Many people in the town have been painting rainbows on roadways. The DPW has witnessed drivers slowing down to view them. They are becoming forms of creative traffic calming. This could be an option for some of the busier roads. Permits/approval is required for painting roadways in the county.

**Next ZOOM meeting**

Friday, September 11, 2020 at 10:00 am