



SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOLS: MARIN COUNTY



San Rafael - Safe Routes to Schools Task Force

Sept 22, 2020

Meeting Notes

Attendance:

Dan Zaich- School District Capital Facilities Program, Wendi Kallins- Safe Routes to Schools, Peggy Clark- Safe Routes to Schools, Lauren Davini- San Rafael Traffic Engineer, Kate Colin- San Rafael Vice Mayor, Gwen Froh- Safe Routes to School Education/Encouragement Director, Kate Powers- BPAC member, Tyler Nielsen- San Rafael BPAC, Maika Llorens Gulati- School Board President, Lillian Mazariegos - School District Transportation Manager, David Parisi- Parisi Engineering, Rob Purvis- Parent Vallecito School/community member, Monika Kainz-community member, Leslie Garber- Assistant to Head of School Mark Day School, Brooks Nguyen- School Board Trustee, Kelly Zalewski- Marin Transit, Jean Severinghaus- BPAC member, Greg Knell- School Board member, Shoshanna Harlem- Former student Terra Linda High school/ BPAC member

Bus Update

The school district reported they are in the planning stage for service in the most needed communities. San Pedro School will have bus service available for all the students who need it. Once the AM/PM cohorts are determined at San Pedro School they can finalize bus routes and then determine if service can be provided at other schools. Only 27 students can be on a bus; one student per seat, every other seat. Miller Creek School District owns their busses; parents do pay for the service that is supplemented/funded by the school district. The San Rafael district pays for the student bus service. Note: after the meeting SR2S heard from Lillian Perez, Transportation Manager for the district: "We will be transporting students to Glenwood, Laurel Dell, San Pedro, Sun Valley and Venetia Valley. I don't know if we will provide transportation in January 2021 for DMS students."

First Student bus service will be managing the sanitation procedures per Covid protocols. The buses will be disinfected after every run and they will be enforcing physical distancing. Students in TK to 2nd grade will be encouraged to wear a mask. Students in 3rd to 5th grade must wear masks at all times. Students riding the bus will not be grouped by their cohorts.

K-5 students will be returning to campus during the first round- 3 classes per school. Bussing is not planned for this first round. The district will make an announcement as they move forward with phases. The middle school's have not been identified as opening campuses in the near future.

Safe Routes to Schools will be collecting campus start dates and times AM/PM to be provided to the crossing guard program manager. This information is needed in advance to schedule crossing guards.

Marin Transit (MT) has not been informed that middle and high schools students are returning to campus. Rider capacity is currently 9 riders at a time on a large bus and 4 on a smaller bus. Extra service was approved by the MT Board in August on routes that loop through the Canal, along the Hwy 101 corridor and the 4th Street Transit Center to the College of Marin.

MT's service is down 60% of it's normal passenger load prior to Covid. The extra service has helped; however there are still a number of people who cannot get on a bus because there are already 9 riders on a bus. The bus service provided to the schools was redirected to help with passengers waiting at bus stops. When campuses re-open some of the buses that service primary students will resume and others will not for this school year.

Transportation Planning

[Covid Back to School Toolkit](#) (presented in July 2020)

Safe Routes toolkits [Covid-19 Toolkit Supplement](#) (available in Spanish)

Please view the Toolkit Supplement when reading the notes below. To learn more about:

- How to Set-up a Transportation Committee
- Park and Walk Locations
- Pop-Up Infrastructure
- Sample Letters
- Appendix (Oregon Metro)

Oregon Metro has developed a very extensive Toolkit. Many of their resources will be included in SR2S Toolkit Supplement: Pop-up Temporary Streets: one way streets, sidewalk extensions, communications/outreach, bike parking.

Safe Routes to Schools staff are available to address questions and support community and school members as they begin to carry out the following information provided.

How to Organize a Transportation Committee

Safe Routes has met with most of the school districts in Marin and they are setting up their committees. Some of the smaller districts are creating one committee to support all schools or they are establishing separate committees per school. When reporting back to a town or the county Department of Public Works school specifically, it is best to have 1-2 primary contacts only.

How to identify who needs to be on the committee: team leaders and task force members, Dept of Public Works (DPW) staff (City of San Rafael and the County of Marin), BPAC members, other volunteer parents, neighbors, school administrators, students, school operations, PTA (Maika offered to see if the Superintendent can approve Safe Routes attending a PTA meeting soon), school districts Transportation Coordinator, elected officials, school board members.

The Miller Creek District has a Homeschool Club at each of the four campuses. Safe Routes will be introduced to possibly attend an upcoming meeting.

Not all individuals can attend meetings; however they must be kept informed (public works and school administration). The DPW needs to be updated regularly on locations under consideration and give prior approval.

Middle and high school students may also be a resource. Many students walk and bike to school. They may be interested in this as a class project. School Site Councils may be involved in assisting the school with setting up Covid protocols.

Transportation Committees Primary Tasks

Identify pop-up locations and park and walk locations. The park and walk locations may be easier to plan for: no major roadway changes are needed. Obtaining permission for parking is the main task before announcing them to the school. Pop-ups require committee members to identify locations that require more space for physical distancing. Pop-ups are similar to what is happening on fourth Street in downtown San Rafael.

Identifying Park and Walk Locations

The park and walk locations free up roadways near the school and can be easier to plan for vs pop-up facilities: they do not require major roadway changes. The [Safe Routes to School Suggested Route Maps](#) has some locations identified and can help identify additional ones a ¼ to ½ mile from a school. K- 2nd grade students must be accompanied by an adult. Young students may be confident to walk alone- parents decide how students get to school safely.

Locations to consider are: church lots, shopping centers, public buildings and locations near multi-use pathways. It is important to get permission in writing from property owners in advance to avoid possible opposition (see sample letter Toolkit).

Resources are available on “how to develop a Park and Walk Program” at your school. Safe Routes has piloted this program with great success and has resources; signs and suggested messaging for encouragement. During the pilot at Loma Verde School traffic congestion was reduced by 50% in the drop-off zone (160 down to 80 vehicles). After the campaign families continued to walk to campus. Sample letters to promote Park and Walk are in the Toolkit.

Identifying Pop Up Locations

Using the [Safe Routes to School Suggested Route Maps](#) will be helpful for planning. Davidson has a map and hopefully the map for Coleman will be available and posted this fall. Google Maps is a good place to start for a base map. The important first step is to identify routes students currently take and how/if they will be impacted once the campus entrances/exits are determined for the students. Pop-ups can include widening lanes and sidewalks, providing students more space. Some are very temporary (moved daily) or in place until pre-Covid travel resumes. Communication with neighbors is very important; they must be notified in advance. The Public Works Dept must approve in advance where, what type and how long these temporary facilities are in place and if they need to be moved and by whom.

Oregon Metro (appendix) has helpful information called “school streets” that includes: concepts, locations, materials needed, education and encouragement, health and safety precautions. Information on one-way streets, sidewalk extensions/bike lanes, examples for communicating the changes in the community and secure bike and scooter parking.

Discussion

Transportation committees are made and led by team leaders and BPAC members in the smaller communities. San Rafael has not identified people yet. Safe Routes to Schools will be meeting with the BPAC in September and hopefully they can help.

The Miller Creek School District already has a transportation committee; task force members will reach out to them. Wendi will reach out to Lillian in the San Rafael School District and Maika will present Safe Routes needed resources to the PTA members.

Safe Routes Education and Encouragement Programs

Educational resources remain available to all schools and community members. Please visit the following links to learn more:

[Remote Learning Pedestrian and Bicycle Education](#). Classes are available for remote learning and on-line live. Safe Routes staff are available to meet with students to present all grade level classes online-live to support teachers and parents. Education presentations include drone footage of our bicycle skill stations to make class fun for the students. When schools return to campus Safe Routes instructors will be scheduling pedestrian and bicycle safety education following Covid protocols.

Pedal Playground

A Pedal Playground is an arrangement of connected streets with roadway features that are free of motorized vehicles. It is a fun space for students to develop their confidence as they navigate streets, intersections and crosswalks. Safe Routes to Schools instructors are available to chalk out a Pedal Playground. Please contact peggy@marinbike.org to schedule your FREE Pedal Playground now.

Family Bike Education

Savvy Family Cycling is a brief presentation for adults and students to watch together; teaching all how to ride safely while abiding by traffic rules. With more young cyclists on the roads for the first time during Covid-19 best practice lessons are very important.

Family Biking Live on October 15, 2020

This is a free 1 hour live webinar to help parents identify when their kids are ready to ride on the road and will offer safety tips, helmet fitting, and learning how to navigate the road while riding with your kids.

International Walk and Roll to Wherever - October 2020

The links below provide information for parents and students on how to participate, have fun, win an ice cream gift card and an Ortlieb bicycle bag. This information has been emailed to schools as well. Parents are encouraged to promote iWalk too.

[K-5 Schools iWalk](#)
[Middle School iWalk](#)

Third Street plans for walk/bikeway

Please view the [Third Street Rehabilitation Safe Routes Task Force](#) presentation as you review the notes below - presented by Lauren Davini. This presentation included the Safe Routes elements only; a more extensive presentation for this project will be presented at a San Rafael city meeting. The city project manager and consulting team developed this presentation. The public was encouraged to attend the Zoom meeting on 9/23/20.

The project has been underway since 2017. The project ends just before the Fourth Street intersection at West Street, extending down to Union Street. The city wants to reduce the number of crossings pedestrians and cyclists must take currently. The city is in the final design phase, which includes more community outreach. The project manager has been meeting with residents along the corridor where the most changes are planned. The project is planned to go out for construction in May 2021; construction will last about 1 year.

The project is locally funded by TAM and the Highway Safety and Improvement Program, federal funding. There are a number of goals for this project. Third Street is a major arterial that connects Hwy 101 and West Marin. It is an old street that has drainage and sidewalk issues, traffic signals need upgrading and safer traffic flow for all the users. Goals include supporting Safe Routes to Schools safer routes to students and to stay on budget (\$12 million budget).

The Third and Grand Street intersection will include bulb outs on the northeast and southwest corners. Students gather on these corners traveling to San Rafael High School.

On Second Street where it meets West Street down to Shaver Street the design includes narrowing the travel lanes in both directions (they are wide now) to include a two way cycle track on the hill side of the street as well as expand the width of the sidewalk by the hill. The project will include some type of protection from the vehicle lane.

Two concepts (not funded yet) are being reviewed for a 2nd and 4th project. A standard intersection and round-a-bout options are under consideration. There will be a good deal more community outreach and analysis for this proposed project.

North San Rafael freeway crossings

TAM has a study underway looking at all 12 freeway interchanges in Marin with a focus on short, medium and long term enhancements that include pedestrian and bicycle facilities. Regional funding will be required for future improvements. San Rafael is already focused on the freeway crossing.

Monticello and Trellis intersection

Parisi Engineering has been busy evaluating this intersection as well as the bike/walkway between Mark Day and Vallecion Schools. This is a very complicated project; the input provided has been very helpful.

The Mark Day property is owned by Miller Creek School District and there is a city owned park. To improve safety on this very wide intersection with long pedestrian crossings a number of options are being considered. One is to add curb bulb outs to all four corners to narrow the crossing for pedestrians and slow how drivers take the turns. This would be an expensive option due to the drainage inlets. Another option would be a quick build with painted bulb outs and vertical delineators and improved lighting. A request was made to consider continental crosswalks that are high-visibility roadway markings using thick vertical striping.

A walk and bike way has also been studied along the current 3-5 foot path by Mark Day School. With students and adults traveling in both directions, the pathway is just too narrow. The concept presented ,under review; is to widen the path to 6-7 feet and provide a buffer. There is more work to be done on this concept. The other side of the school does not provide options for a pathway due to a rain garden and needed access to the playing field.

Access to the pathway from Trellis is still an unresolved issue. Students tend to ride fast when approaching Mark Day School path way- that will be studied next. Additional work is planned with the city and Mark Day School representatives.

A request was made to consider blocking off a street as they do in Berkeley to change the dynamic of a four way crossing where many students cross. Also to be studied is to address safety issues for students when Mark Day drivers park on the dirt lot on the back side of the school for special events.

Next Zoom Meeting

Tuesday, January 26, 2021 at 5:00pm