



SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOLS: MARIN COUNTY



**Safe Routes to Schools
San Rafael Task Force
Meeting Notes
Wednesday, January 22, 2020**

Attendance: Wendi Kallins and Peggy Clark- Safe Routes to Schools, Raul Aguilar-San Rafael Police Dept, Lauren Davini-DPW San Rafael, Gwen Froh- Safe Routes to Schools, David Parisi- Parisi Associates, Tamara Rich-Team Leader- Sun Valley School, Jean Severinghaus- Caltrans District 4 volunteer, Dan Zaich- San Rafael School District

Referenced Documents

1. Safe Routes to Schools - Coleman Issues List
2. DPW- 1st Street Greenway- Proposed Improvements - January 22, 2020

Updates

Grants Received

- Francisco Blvd. Multi-use Gap Closure, San Rafael
- Point San Pedro Rd Rapid Flashing Beacon (RRFB), San Rafael
- Fifth Avenue and River Oaks Road RRFB Project, San Rafael- The City of San Rafael will be working with Parisi Engineering on a traffic study for a school zone to determine most effective Rectangular **Rapid Flashing Beacon (RRFB)**
- Knight Drive and Ashwood Court RRFB Project, San Rafael- This project will include addressing concrete and drainage issues.
- Mission Avenue and Park Street RRFB Project, San Rafael
- Mission Avenue and Alice Street RRFB, San Rafael
- RRFB unincorporated: North San Pedro Rd/Schmidt Ln/Oakcrest Dr

Third Street Crosswalk Hawk https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/HAWK_beacon

Features: Stop control vs a yield control, it will hang overhead providing increased visibility.

The DPW and School District are working together on this project. A HAWK Beacon was identified as the best facility for this location due to the higher level of safety they

provided for pedestrians. This will be a new light facility for San Rafael, it will address the safety challenges students encounter on this roadway that has 2 lanes both east and west bound.

West End Sidewalk

The DPW is evaluating options to address the challenges of the narrow side that has a guard rail and other issues. It will be part of the Third Street Project. Public opinion will be requested when the design phase begins. No dates have been announced. A new senior engineer has been hired by the city and they will be assigned the Third Street Project.

Terra Linda Parking lot

The City has not gotten very far into the design work. A drawing was provided to show design intent, it is not a final schematic design document. The City will be addressing more detailed issues such as routes for pedestrians and bicycles when they move forward with the design work. Safe Routes has been asked to provide input.

On the map the dotted line indicates the dangerous route students take through the high school parking lot along with many vehicles. In addition to heading to the main campus students are cycling to the bike parking that is not in a convenient location. Next steps include scheduling a Bike Audit for the issues coming to the campus and to request support from the BPAC.

First Street Improvements Proposed plans

The City is looking at First Street to be part of a suggested route for students traveling to/from San Valley and West End neighborhood to Davidson Middle School and Laurel Del School. The DPW will be adding all way stops at 1st/E, adding an RRFB at 1st/D (high traffic volumes) and sharrows.

The city has not addressed the one-way section yet. One of several options are under consideration including making one-way section of D a two way for cyclists only; however, there are safety concerns with cyclists traveling against the flow of traffic on a one-way street. Another suggestion was to make D Street a two-way roadway entirely.

New idea suggested during the meeting:

1. Make a designated left turn off D onto Third. It is a narrow roadway and there may not be enough space on the road.

2. Add a push button at 1st and D that cyclists can access to trip the ped light; activate the light for cyclists to cross.

New Requests made to the DPW:

1. D and First Street a staggered push button for cyclists traveling in both directions.
2. A “green backed” roadway sharrow . These are expensive to install and maintain.

Other updates:

Marin Transit

The Canal bus services discussed last year will change on March 8, 2020. This expansion of service will create frequencies every 7-8 minutes during the AM and PM peak commute hours and give high school students more options.

Coleman Route map

Safe Routes to Schools staff recently met with the Principal of Coleman School regarding recent incidents with students and parents near the Hwy 101 overpass. One student was grabbed by a homeless person in the middle of the day. There is also broken glass and medical needles on the pathway. It is believed there are more incidents that are not reported to the police.

Parents are now avoiding the area and driving students to school. This is impacting safety near campus and increasing traffic. The principal would like the police to come to the school to encourage parents to file reports.

Many students and parents are concerned if they report issues to the police this will make them a target for ICE. The San Rafael police have publicly stated they do not collaborate with ICE. The police must be made aware of these incidents; they encourage community members to report incidents to the police. Reported incidents help them know where to patrol. The overpass has been a long-term issue. There was a similar issue on Mahone Pathway; enforcement was increased, and the number of reported incidents has reduced. The police are scheduled to meet with Coleman Principal on February 1, 2020.

Safe Routes to School-PILOT PROGRAM

This school year Safe Routes will begin the process to develop a new pilot program. Three schools have been identified for the pilot; Coleman School is one of the three schools.

Research will be gathered at the three schools this year and the program will be implemented in the fall of 2020. The pilot program is focused on identifying key factors

that influence behavior changes. One component SR2S has used to encourage student/parent participation has been offering students rewards such pencils, eraser and bracelets to travel green to school.

This pilot program will look at ways to influence participation without prizes. Parent surveys will be conducted, and focus groups will be tasked to learn about new options. Safe Routes goal: 20% change in behavior; increase the number of new families participating in green travel and increasing the frequency; increase to at least one day a week.

The DPW reported some infrastructure projects have been completed: more curbs have been painted red to increase visibility and faded signs have been replaced near Coleman School. A complete list of improvement will be provided to Safe Routes to Schools.

New Issues

SMART Crosswalk issues

A request was made during the meeting to address the timing of the pedestrian crosswalk at 3rd and Heatherton. When vehicles have a red light, so do pedestrians. This impacts students that are walking toward the high school.

The police department, City of San Rafael and SMART are aware of these issues. The SMART timing of the lights for vehicles and pedestrians is determined by the California Public Utility Commission. It is a complex issue and the challenges are being reviewed.

Safe Routes to School- Issues List- Coleman School

The data collected from the map project have been compiled on the issues list. The next step is to prioritize each issue, plan a Walk Audit, have the engineers evaluate and present to the DPW for review.

New Look at Sun Valley to Davidson Route

Tamara expressed her concerns with the suggested routes or student traveling from the Sun Valley neighborhood to Davidson Middle School.

Students cycle Fifth Avenue; the road is narrow with parked vehicles on both sides of the roadway it does not feel safe for students. She would like another round of eyes to review the suggested routes. There does not seem to be any great route for students and she is ambivalent to encourage her kids and others to use this route. The BPAC suggests 4th Street however the students tend to travel on 5th Street. The intersection at

Irwin and 5th Street is very busy; this is a challenging intersection for students and adult cyclists and needs to be evaluated.

The routes suggested by Safe Routes to Schools are only suggestions; the routes identified were selected after evaluations of the best possible suggested route. The maps can include markings that identify challenging roadway conditions and potentially hazardous intersections. Practice rides with students and experienced parents is recommended; this helps students develop awareness for the varied road conditions.

A suggested route from the Gerstle Park neighborhood has been requested. The current route students take to the local schools has not been completely evaluated.

Next meeting

Tuesday, April 21, 2020 at 5:00 PM. School District Offices – meeting room 604.