



# FUNDING, PROGRAMS & LEGISLATION EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

MAY 8, 2023  
2:00 P.M.

**TAM CONFERENCE ROOM  
900 FIFTH AVENUE, SUITE 100  
SAN RAFAEL, CALIFORNIA**

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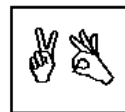
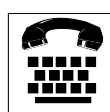
**How to provide public comment (limited to 3 minutes or less):**

**Before the meeting:** Please email your comment to [info@tam.ca.gov](mailto:info@tam.ca.gov), no later than 5:00 p.m. Sunday, May 7, 2023, to facilitate timely distribution to Committee members. Please include the agenda item number you are addressing and your name and address. Your comments will be forwarded to the Committee members and will be placed into the public record.

**During the meeting:** For members of the public participating in-person, the Committee Chair will recognize persons from the audience who wish to address the Committee during public open time or on a particular agenda item at the time that item is considered by the Committee.

If watching this meeting online, click the “raise hand” feature in the webinar controls. This will notify TAM staff that you would like to comment. If participating by phone, “raise hand” by pressing \*9 and wait to be called upon by the Chair or the Clerk. You will be asked to unmute your device when it is your turn to speak and your comments will become part of the public record.

Meeting-related comments may also be sent to [info@tam.ca.gov](mailto:info@tam.ca.gov), and will be read (up to 3-minute limit per comment) when the specific agenda item is considered by the Committee and will become part of the public record.



Late agenda material can be inspected in TAM's office between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.  
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The meeting facilities are accessible to persons with disabilities. Requests for special accommodations (assisted listening device, sign language interpreters, etc.) should be directed to Jennifer Doucette, 415-226-0820 or email: [jdoucette@tam.ca.gov](mailto:jdoucette@tam.ca.gov) no later than 5 days before the meeting date.

## AGENDA

1. Chair's Report & Commissioner Comments (Discussion)
2. Executive Director's Report (Discussion)
3. Open time for public expression, up to three minutes per speaker, on items not on the agenda that are within the subject matter of the agency's jurisdiction. (While members of the public are welcome to address the Committee, under the Brown Act, Committee members may not deliberate or take action on items not on the agenda, and generally may only listen.)
4. Approval of Meeting Minutes from April 10, 2023 (Action) – **Attachment**
5. Evaluation of Safe Routes to Schools Program (Action) – **Attachment**
6. Connect2Transit Pilot Program Update (Discussion) – **Attachment**



MEETING OF THE  
TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY OF MARIN  
FUNDING, PROGRAMS & LEGISLATION  
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

APRIL 10, 2023  
2:00 PM

TAM CONFERENCE ROOM, 900 FIFTH AVENUE, SUITE 100  
SAN RAFAEL, CALIFORNIA

33 HUCKLEBERRY LANE  
HAMPTON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

**MEETING MINUTES**

Members Present: Alice Fredericks, Tiburon Town Council  
Brian Colbert, San Anselmo Town Council, Committee Chair  
Katie Rice, County of Marin Board of Supervisors  
Mary Sackett, County of Marin Board of Supervisors  
Urban Carmel, Mill Valley City Council

Members Absent: None

Staff Members Present: Anne Richman, Executive Director  
Dan Cherrier, Director of Project Delivery  
David Chan, Director of Programming and Legislation  
Grace Zhuang, Accounting and Payroll Specialist  
Jennifer Doucette, Executive Assistant/Clerk of the Board  
Mikaela Hiatt, Associate Transportation Planner  
Nick Nguyen, Principal Project Delivery Manager

*Chair Colbert called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.*

Chair Colbert welcomed everyone to the meeting and announced that the meeting was being conducted pursuant to California Government Code Section 54953, in that he was participating remotely from New Hampshire; and that in accordance with the Ralph M. Brown Act, the teleconference location had been identified in the notice and agenda for the meeting.

Chair Colbert asked Executive Assistant/Clerk of the Board Jennifer Doucette to conduct a roll call to ensure a quorum. A quorum of the Funding, Programming and Legislation (FP&L) Executive Committee was confirmed and detailed information about how the public may participate was provided.

**1. Chair's Report & Commissioner Comments (Discussion)**

None.

**2. Executive Director's Report (Discussion)**

Executive Director (ED) Anne Richman reported that the Marin County Flood Control and Water Conservation District has begun work on the Marin City Stormwater Plan and is providing many opportunities for public participation. The first community meeting is scheduled for June 1. Additionally, a local task force has been created to assure that community interests and concerns are considered during the 18-month stormwater plan development process. Five task force meetings and three community meetings are planned over the 18-month process.

ED Richman also reported that the Marin County Department of Public Works will begin replacing the street lighting on median islands starting on April 17, along one mile of Sir Francis Drake Boulevard, between Manor Road in Kentfield and Eliseo Drive in Greenbrae as the result of feedback received from the community. Weather permitting, it will take approximately three weeks to replace the current poles with the shorter, more decorative poles and dimmer fixtures. During work hours, there may be minor traffic delays and intermittent single lane closures on Sir Francis Drake Boulevard. The “Upgrade the Drake” project was one of the Major Roads projects from the original Measure A Program. TAM contributed \$12.4 million to the project.

ED Richman further reported that the Street Smarts Banners are being reinstalled throughout the County and will stay in place through the month of May. Street Smarts is an educational program targeted at locations with identifiable accident histories. Community members are encouraged to contact their local jurisdictions to obtain yard signs.

Lastly, ED Richman reported that Pacific Gas & Electric (PG&E) recently released an electric vehicle (EV) fleet rebate for the purchase or lease of used electric vehicles. The rebate is for pre-owned battery or plug-in hybrid EVs and ranges between \$1000 to \$4000 per vehicle. Applications must be submitted within 180 days after purchase or lease.

In response to Commissioner Carmel, ED Richman noted that the rebates are approximately \$1,000-\$4,000 per vehicle and are based on several factors.

Commissioner Rice commented that the new lighting systems along Sir Francis Drake Boulevard are intended to reduce light dispersal on adjacent properties, decrease light intensity, and improve aesthetics while still maintaining the lighting uniformity levels necessary for public safety.

### **3. Open Time for Public Expression**

Chair Colbert asked if any members of the public wished to speak or had submitted a comment by e-mail, and hearing none, closed this item.

### **4. Approval of Meeting Minutes from March 13, 2023 (Action)**

Commissioner Sackett moved to approve the March 13, 2023 meeting minutes, which was seconded by Commissioner Carmel. A roll call vote was conducted, and the motion passed unanimously.

### **5. Review of Recommended Crossing Guard Location Selection (Action)**

Director of Project delivery Dan Cherrier presented this item, which recommends that the FP&L Executive Committee reviews the ranked list of crossing guard locations that was reviewed and supported by the Marin Public Works Association (MPWA); the staff recommendation to fund a total of 97 crossing guards, down to Rank 97 of the list; and to develop the next recertification list in three years (for the 2026/2027 school year) to allow the return of the evaluation cycle back to its regular 4-year interval since the current cycle was delayed by a year to allow more time for post COVID travel patterns to stabilize, and refers the item to the TAM Board for approval.

Mr. Cherrier provided an overview and background for the evaluation process of the revised location list and basis of the Crossing Guard Program, including number of guards/locations, evaluation methodology and weighted scoring criteria.



Mr. Cherrier also provided an overview of factors that affect crossing guard locations, including declining school enrollment and/or closure/consolidation; completed safety improvement capital projects around schools; and changes to nearby signal timing.

Lastly, Mr. Cherrier provided information on funding levels and outlined the recommendations and next steps.

In response to Commissioner Rice, Mr. Cherrier explained that the counts were conducted from September 2022 through February 2023, excluding Mondays and days where there was a 30% or higher chance of inclement weather. Mr. Cherrier also explained that the scoring for each criterion is based on the California Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (CMUTCD) and provided clarification for the vehicular and pedestrian volume scores. Mr. Cherrier also explained that the addition of a crossing guard does not always result in higher pedestrian volumes.

Commissioner Rice commented that the Crossing Guard Program was established with funding from Measure A/AA and supports the goals of Safe Routes to Schools, including increasing active transportation for school-aged children.

In response to Commissioner Rice, Mr. Cherrier explained that scatter graphs are created and used by the Safe Routes to Schools Program; and that crossing guard locations are selected for evaluation by the Department of Public Works for each local jurisdiction. Mr. Cherrier also explained that crossing guard requests submitted to TAM by school districts are forwarded to the appropriate Department of Public Works for that jurisdiction.

In response to Commissioner Rice, Mr. Cherrier explained that the recently completed capital improvements at the intersection of Laurel Grove and Sir Francis Drake Blvd. included the elimination of an uncontrolled crosswalk.

In response to Commissioner Sackett, Mr. Cherrier noted that the list will be updated to reflect the reopening of Greenwood School as North Bridge Academy. Mr. Cherrier also confirmed that the counts are tabulated using video footage from approximately 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. on weekday mornings (not including Mondays), and an approximate 2-hour window timed to each school's specific afternoon bell schedule. Mr. Cherrier explained that the criteria are scored using data collected over the past 8 months; and that high school students are not included in the data collection.

In response to Commissioner Carmel, Mr. Cherrier explained that TAM staff has been in communication with the City of Mill Valley's Department of Public Works, the Mill Valley School District and the School Principal of Park School regarding changes affecting Park School, including the implementation of signal phasing resulting in decreased vehicle conflicts at the intersection of East Blithedale Avenue and Elm Avenue.

ED Richman explained that the construction of capital improvements, including Safe Pathways projects and other safety efforts by local jurisdictions, are intended to have a positive safety impact but may also have resulted in lower scores at those particular locations.

Commissioner Carmel commented that perhaps seasonality should be considered when the data is evaluated.

Commissioner Rice commented that perhaps the data should be collected for all sites in the Spring.

Mr. Cherrier explained that one goal for the next round of evaluations will include collecting the data for all locations in the early Fall; that school districts have the opportunity to independently fund crossing guards through the Crossing Guard Program; and that locations may be reevaluated between cycles if there is a changed condition.

In response to Commissioner Sackett, Mr. Cherrier explained that the Kentfield School District funds the second crossing guard located at Wolfe Grade and Sir Francis Drake Blvd., and the Larkspur-Corte Madera School District funds the crossing guard located at Paradise Drive and Seawolf Passage. Mr. Cherrier also explained that the Corte Madera Public Works Director elected to move a crossing guard from Redwood Avenue and Pixley Avenue to Tamalpais Drive and Eastman Avenue.

Commissioner Sackett commented that perhaps Kaiser could be a funding partner for the crossing guard at Nova Albion Way and Montecillo Road.

Mr. Cherrier confirmed that changes in crossing guard locations will take place at the beginning of the 2023-2024 school year; and that outreach is on-going.

Chair Colbert asked if any members of the public wished to speak or had submitted a comment by e-mail, and hearing none, asked if there were additional comments from the commissioners.

Commissioner Rice expressed support for retaining the option of reevaluating locations between cycles should conditions change.

Chair Colbert expressed support for the evaluation process and appreciation for the clarity of the presentation.

Commissioner Fredericks moved to refer the ranked list of crossing guard locations; the staff recommendation to fund a total of 97 crossing guards; and the development of the next recertification list in three years (for the 2026/2027 school year) to the TAM Board for approval, which was seconded by Commissioner Rice. A roll call vote was conducted, and the motion passed unanimously.

## **6. USDOT's Charging and Fueling Infrastructure Discretionary Grant Program (Discussion)**

Associate Transportation Planner Mikaela Hiatt presented this item for discussion, which included a program overview and background, program highlights and summary, eligible project types and costs, contracting requirements, selection criteria, recent activity, potential partnership roles and next steps.

ED Richman explained that TAM staff have been in discussions with community partners to clarify roles and responsibilities; and that the Marin County Community Development Agency will be the lead applicant but will rely on partners for implementation of projects in different locations, as well as TAM for support in areas such as local funding matches, technical assistance, and/or partnering in grant applications.

In response to Commissioner Carmel, ED Richman explained that the amount of grant funding available through related State programs has yet to be determined; and that as part of the National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (NEVI) Program, the State analyzed population and travel patterns to determine the highest and best-use corridors for EV charging infrastructure. ED Richman also explained that the corridor component of the Charging and Fueling Infrastructure (CFI) Program is focused on building out the corridors along US 101 and State Route 1, including within a mile of those corridors. Lastly, ED Richman explained that further planning will be conducted with the community, including non-profits, to determine where charging infrastructure is most needed throughout the County.

Commissioner Carmel commented that it would be useful to have baseline maps that reflect existing charging infrastructure to determine where future resources may be allocated.

ED Richman explained that the CFI Program is focused on Equity Priority Communities (EPCs).

In response to Commissioner Fredericks, ED Richman explained that there may not be enough data to determine if there are sufficient employer and commuter sites within 1-mile of the proposed corridors; and that work patterns have changed since the initial EV charger site plan study was conducted.

In response to Commissioner Sackett, Ms. Hiatt explained that grant funding may be used for EV infrastructure within multi-family housing under the acquisitions and installation provisions of the program; and ED Richman explained that it is yet to be determined if separate grant programs may be combined to cover project costs.

Ms. Hiatt explained that grant funding may be available to address the repair or replacement of existing EV infrastructure under the reconstruction provision of the program.

Commissioner Rice expressed support for the CFI Program and TAM's role as an important resource to local jurisdictions and the community, especially to identify gaps in the EV charging network; and inquired if Measure B funds may be used as a local match source.

In response to Commissioner Carmel, ED Richman explained that while Marin County currently has approximately 750 EV chargers, the State has forecasted a need for approximately 4,000 chargers in the County by 2025.

In response to Commissioner Sackett, Ms. Hiatt explained that transit agencies are eligible for CFI grant funding and that TAM staff has been in communication with both Marin Transit (MT) and Golden Gate Transit (GGT) regarding the CFI Program.

ED Richman explained that MT is currently applying for grant funding for its electric bus fleet charging facility through the federal Low & No Emissions Bus Program; and that TAM staff has been working with GGT to identify opportunities to increase the number of EV chargers in its parking facilities for use by customers/transit users.

Chair Colbert expressed support for the program and TAM's effort to reach out to stakeholders; and commented on the importance of focusing on existing conditions as well as the needs of residents of multi-family housing.

Chair Colbert asked if any members of the public wished to speak or had submitted a comment by e-mail.

Founder and ED of Cool the Earth Carleen Cullen commented that Cool the Earth provides educational programs and webinars regarding new and used EV incentives. Ms. Cullen explained that she has been involved with building a coalition of agencies to prepare for the CFI Program, which will be administered in phases, including a feasibility and planning phase in which logistical details will be addressed (e.g., multi-family; ownership/maintenance of equipment). Ms. Cullen also commented on the need to coordinate funding among various federal, state and regional programs.

Commissioner Sackett thanked Commissioner Rice for taking the lead on coordinating with local agencies and community partners to prepare for the CFI Program.

*The meeting was adjourned at 3:42 p.m.*

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**DATE:** May 8, 2023

**TO:** Transportation Authority of Marin  
Funding, Programs & Legislation Executive Committee

**FROM:** Anne Richman, Executive Director *Anne Richman*  
Dan Cherrier, Director of Project Delivery

**SUBJECT:** Evaluation of Safe Routes to Schools Program (Action), Agenda Item No. 5

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## RECOMMENDATION

The Funding, Programs & Legislation (FP&L) Executive Committee accepts the Tri-Annual Safe Routes to Schools (SR2S) Evaluation Report and recommends it to the TAM Board for review and acceptance.

## BACKGROUND

Established in 2000, Marin County's SR2S program is an award-winning program designed to reduce congestion around schools while instilling healthy habits in children and creating a safer and cleaner environment for all. The program consists of education classes, encouragement events, infrastructure improvements, and other strategies that aim to increase the number of active green (walking and rolling programs) and green (carpooling, school bus, and transit) trips to and from schools.

Marin's SR2S program has been in operation for more than 20 years. With the passage of a dedicated funding source from the Measure A/AA ½-Cent Transportation Sales Tax, TAM became the administrator of the program in 2005. Under TAM's administration, the program has expanded to include 55 schools and the involvement of over 29,000 students.

The SR2S program is continually evaluated to determine its growth and effectiveness. Program evaluation efforts that occur on a regularly scheduled basis include:

- Surveys are provided to determine "before and after" changes in school-based travel.
- TAM and SR2S consultant team meet on a bi-monthly basis to review and assess the current program elements.
- TAM and SR2S consultant team meet periodically with local elected officials to discuss program work elements and current efforts in which local elected officials are engaged.

During these on-going evaluations, the SR2S program responds to lessons learned and best practices that emerge throughout the implementation of the program.

A comprehensive evaluation report is developed every three years to detail many of the trends that have occurred during the time period and to develop new strategies for meeting the program's goals. The first program evaluation report was prepared in 2007, providing details on the results of student and parent surveys and recommendations for future program development.

Updated reports were developed in 2011, 2013, 2016, and 2020, providing a robust and detailed comprehensive report on program changes, effectiveness, and recommendations to be integrated into the overall program. The 2023 program evaluation is the most recent update to these reports. Please note that this evaluation period includes the COVID-19 pandemic, during which time school closures prevented data collection efforts.

## **DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS**

The program evaluation is a key management tool to assess the SR2S program's impact and to plan for continued effective delivery of the program. In addition, this report is a key data source and support for continued funding decisions made by the TAM Board.

During the development of the evaluation report, TAM staff worked with the SR2S consultant team to develop an evaluation protocol that highlights the robust data reporting effort on local trip making behaviors. Green trips and active green trips to and from schools have been tracked over time to show historical trends, including program growth, enrollment growth, and their relationship to SR2S participation at individual schools. In addition, the relationship between the level of school involvement and geographic/infrastructure improvements has been measured to assess the impact of these program factors on resulting transportation mode shift.

Significant changes in the new evaluation report include chapters highlighting the program's adaptations and successes during the COVID-19 pandemic. An additional chapter highlights the program's equity focus and its work to expand its reach at underserved schools and schools with a high number of non-English speaking families. This evaluation report makes use of data gathered from the caregiver survey as well as geospatial analysis resulting in "dot maps" that show students' distance from school.

The comprehensive evaluation report is provided in Attachment A, and the presentation in Attachment B highlights key findings and recommendations.

## **FISCAL CONSIDERATION**

N/A

## **NEXT STEPS**

Staff will include comments from the FP&L Executive Committee in the Evaluation Report and forward it to the full TAM Board for acceptance.

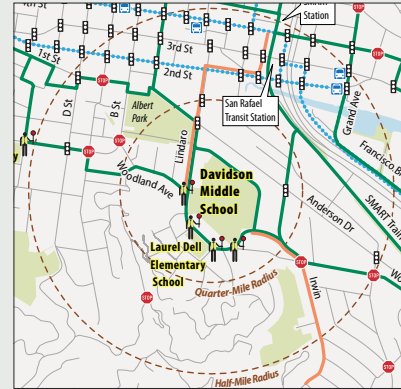
## **ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment A – Evaluation Report  
Attachment B – Program Evaluation Presentation



# MARIN COUNTY SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOLS PROGRAM EVALUATION

2018/19 THROUGH 2021/22 SCHOOL YEARS



APRIL 27, 2023



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

### TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY OF MARIN BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Melissa Blaustein *City of Sausalito*

Urban Carmel *City of Mill Valley*

Kevin Carroll *City of Larkspur*

Brian Colbert *Town of San Anselmo*

Kate Colin *City of San Rafael*

Chance Cutrano *Town of Fairfax*

Rachel Farac *City of Novato*

Alice Fredericks *Town of Tiburon*

Nancy Kemnitzer *City of Belvedere*

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Eric Lucan *County of Marin*

Stephanie Moulton-Peters *County of Marin*

K Pat Ravasio *Town of Corte Madera*

Katie Rice *County of Marin*

Dennis Rodoni *County of Marin*

Mary Sackett *County of Marin*

### TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY OF MARIN STAFF

Anne Richman *Executive Director*

Dan Cherrier *Director of Project Delivery*

Derek McGill *Director of Planning*

Molly Graham *Public Outreach Coordinator*

David Chan *Director of Programming and Legislation*

Li Zhang *Deputy Executive Director/Chief Financial Officer*

### CONSULTANT TEAM

David Parisi *Parisi Transportation Consulting/Parametrix*

Jennifer Shriber *Parisi Transportation Consulting/Parametrix*

David Hoffman *Parisi Transportation Consulting/Parametrix*

Jeremy Thornton *Parisi Transportation Consulting/Parametrix*

Wendi Kallins *Wendi Kallins Consulting*

Gwen Froh *Marin County Bicycle Coalition*





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# Chapter 1: Introduction

The Transportation Authority of Marin's Safe Routes to Schools is an award-winning program designed to increase the number of non-motorized and high vehicle occupancy trips to and from schools. The program integrates health, fitness, traffic relief, environmental awareness, and safety all under one program. It provides an opportunity for schools, communities, and local governments to work together to create a healthy lifestyle for children—and a safer and cleaner environment for everyone.



*TAM's Safe Routes to Schools program has been impacting Marin County students for over 20 years.*

The Safe Routes program has been in operation in Marin County for over 20 years and has expanded to include 55 schools with involvement by over 29,000 students. Safe Routes has enjoyed long-term success given its history and deep-rooted community participation. Some highlights of the program include:

- ▶ In 2000, five schools participated in Safe Routes to Schools; in the 2021-2022 school year 55 schools actively participated in the program.
- ▶ Since 2015-2016 and through the 2021-2022 school year, the county has maintained an average of at least 50% percent green trips rate (arriving to school by walking, biking, carpooling, or taking a bus) to and from schools, despite fluctuations in enrollment and the number of schools in the program.
- ▶ Although the average countywide green trip rate has remained relatively consistent, individual school districts have achieved recent success in increasing active green trips (walking, biking, scooter, etc.). For example, since 2015-2016, Lagunitas, Larkspur-Corte Madera, Kentfield, and Ross Valley school districts have increased the percentage of active green trips by 14%, 9%, 8%, and 8%, respectively.
- ▶ As of 2021-2022, 32 schools have exceeded the baseline countywide average percentage of green trips (51%) since joining Safe Routes.
- ▶ Safe Route to Schools has extended its reach into 30 of 34 public elementary schools, all public middle and K-8 schools, and six of twelve public high schools.
- ▶ Over 180 infrastructure projects aimed at increasing safety and encouraging children to walk or bicycle to school have been planned or built since 2000, at a cost of about \$55 million.

## EVALUATION REPORT

This evaluation report, covering the 2019/2020 through 2021/2022 school years, comes as Safe Routes has successfully responded to and adapted from the COVID-19 pandemic. It identifies new features that have been introduced since 2019 and examines aspects of the program that continue to make it successful, as well as those that would benefit from improvement. The report also responds to the recommendations from the previous evaluation.

Lastly, the report outlines a number of recommendations that are intended to improve the effectiveness of the Safe Routes program, setting it up for even greater success in future years. Previous evaluations of Marin's Safe Routes program were completed in September 2016 and July 2020, covering the 2011–2015 and 2015–2019 school years, respectively.

## REPORT ORGANIZATION

This evaluation report is organized into the following chapters:

### **PROGRAM OVERVIEW:**

Provides a brief history and overview of the Safe Routes program at both the national and local levels.

### **COVID-19 RESPONSE:**

Provides an overview of the challenges faced during the COVID-19 pandemic, Safe Routes' responses to those challenges, and its successes in maintaining the program during challenging times.

### **EDUCATION:**

Describes Safe Routes class offerings, including those held in the classroom as well as those in the field. It discusses historic trends and recent changes to the program curriculum.

### **ENCOURAGEMENT:**

Discusses the encouragement component of Safe Routes, which includes both long-standing events such as iWalk as well as new contests and initiatives.

### **ENGINEERING:**

Describes the process by which jurisdictions identify and implement infrastructure improvements around schools.

### **EQUITY:**

Describes the work Safe Routes does to reach disadvantaged students and those for whom English is not their first language.

### **ENFORCEMENT AND SAFETY PROGRAMS:**

Describes the role of enforcement, crossing guards, and the Street Smarts campaign to reinforce safety around schools.

### **FUNDING:**

Examines Safe Routes' funding sources as well as ways in which the Transportation Authority of Marin (TAM) is building long-term financial sustainability for the program.

### **EVALUATION:**

Describes the results of the evaluation and examines factors that contribute to schools that successfully increase active and green trips at schools.

### **A LOOK TO THE FUTURE:**

Looks to the future of Marin's Safe Routes program, making recommendations for its continued success.



## Chapter 2: Program Overview

The Safe Routes to Schools program has been operating in Marin County for over 20 years. This chapter provides an overview of the program's history, framework, and tools for program delivery and monitoring. It also provides an overview of the program's current participation levels and impacts.



*Safe Routes events encourage students to use active green modes to get to and from school.*

### PROGRAM HISTORY

#### Program Beginnings

The Marin County Safe Routes to Schools program began in 2000 when the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration funded two Safe Routes pilot programs that were intended to serve as nationwide models. One pilot program was established in Arlington, Massachusetts and the other in Marin County. The program was augmented with funding from the California Department of Health and the Marin Community Foundation. At the end of the two-year Marin County pilot program, nine participating schools experienced a 57 percent increase in the number of children walking and biking to school and a 29 percent decrease in the number of children arriving alone in a car.

#### Safe Routes to Schools in Marin County

Building on the pilot program's success, Marin County adopted Safe Routes in 2003 after receiving a grant provided by the Bay Area Air Quality Management District and the Marin Community Foundation. The program reached a major milestone in November 2004 when Marin County voters approved the ½-cent Transportation

Sales Tax (Measure A). The 20-year transportation-related sales tax provided an ongoing revenue source for Safe Routes programs, including the deployment of crossing guards and the construction of school travel-related infrastructure projects. Safe Routes became a program of the Transportation Authority of Marin (TAM) in 2005 as a result of this new funding source. Since then, the Transportation Sales Tax Renewal Expenditure Plan approved by voters as Measure AA in November 2018 has continued the ½-cent transportation sales tax and expenditure plan initially passed in 2004. Today, agencies such as the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) and Caltrans provide supplemental grants to implement new programs in addition to the funds generated locally within Marin County.

The program currently operates in 55 schools, serving a total population of over 29,000 students. It provides professional instructors to teach safe bicycling and pedestrian safety skills and oversee volunteers in promoting the program through contests, events, and regular submissions to school newsletters. Each school district is offered a facilitated Task Force that brings together the



school volunteers with school and jurisdictional staff to discuss infrastructure and enforcement issues, and to plan out district-wide promotion.

The consulting team consists of planning and engineering professionals to assist in identifying Safe Routes solutions, develop concepts, and apply for grant funding. To date, the program has succeeded in constructing and designing over 180 projects totaling over \$55 million.

In 2010, Marin Safe Routes to Schools was honored as a recipient of MTC's Grand Award, given to people and programs who work towards improving the Bay Area's transportation. Safe Routes was honored for its work to encourage students to walk and bike to school and to ensure that this can be done safely throughout Marin County.

As the first long-term sustainable program with a dedicated local funding source, Marin County continues to be a national leader with new and innovative programs.

**A National Model**

Within a year of the launch of the pilot projects in Marin County and Arlington, Massachusetts, similar efforts began throughout the country. Interest in a federally funded national program grew, and in 2005 the SAFETEA-LU federal transportation bill provided

\$612 million for a new national Safe Routes to Schools program that provides benefits in all fifty states. Communities have used this funding to construct new bicycle lanes, pathways, and sidewalks, as well as launch Safe Routes education and promotion campaigns in elementary and middle schools.

**HOW GREEN IS GREEN?**

Throughout this report, "Active Green" and "Green" trips will be referenced frequently as a way to categorize the modes students use to commute to/from school.

- ▶ An active green trip is a non-motorized student travel trip that involves physical activity, such as walking, biking, skateboarding, and scooting to school. Trips made using e-bikes are counted as active green trips.
- ▶ A green trip includes active green trips but also includes shared motorized travel categories such as carpooling, school buses, and public transportation.

One way to evaluate the success of the program is to measure the mode shift from single-student occupancy family vehicle trips to active green and green trips.



Safe Routes staff provide the "gold standard" of bike and pedestrian safety education for students in Marin .

## SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOLS PLANNING FRAMEWORK

The mission of Safe Routes is to increase the number of children walking and biking to school. The initiative integrates health, fitness, traffic relief, environmental awareness, and safety all under one program. It serves as an opportunity to work closely with schools, communities, and local governments to create a healthy lifestyle for children—and a safer and cleaner environment for everyone. The program consists of six focus areas, known collectively as the “6 E’s”:

### Education

Classroom lessons teach children the skills necessary to navigate through busy streets and persuade them to be active participants in the program. Safe Routes instructors have developed the curriculum, which includes lessons on safety, health, and the environment.

### Encouragement

Encouragement strategies, such as events, contests, and promotional materials, encourage children and parents to try walking and biking to school. The program supports and coordinates volunteer organizers and provides schools with promotional and contest materials, prizes, and ongoing consultation.

### Engineering

The focus of the program’s engineering component is on creating physical infrastructure improvements near schools to reduce speeds and establish safer crosswalks and pathways. The program’s professional traffic engineers assist schools in developing a plan to provide a safer environment for children to walk and bike to school. The improvements are implemented at the direction of the local jurisdiction public works staff.

### Enforcement

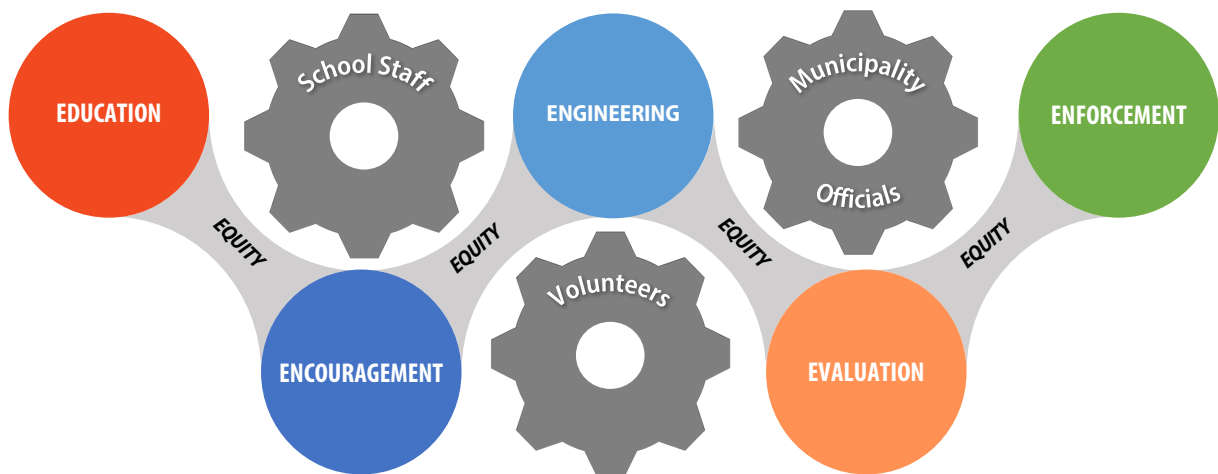
Law enforcement officials participate throughout the Safe Routes process to encourage safe travel through the community. Targeted enforcement of speed limits and other traffic laws around schools make the trip to school more predictable for students and allows them to interact with motorists and other travelers in the safest possible way. The program also includes unique safety-related messaging, crossing guards, and outreach to road users through the Street Smarts safety education campaign.

### Evaluation

Continually evaluating the program is critical to determine which approaches are successful, which can be improved, and which can be replaced. This ensures the effectiveness of the program in the communities where it operate.

### Equity

Equity aims to promote egalitarian support of safe, active, and healthy school travel opportunities for all children within the county. In recent years, Marin Safe Routes to Schools has worked to promote equitable distribution of program resources to students countywide. A bilingual volunteer coordinator works with Spanish-speaking parents in the school to organize events and give them a voice in assessing safety concerns.



## STUDENT TALLIES

Regular input from Safe Routes to Schools participants is critical in determining the effectiveness of the program's activities, identifying areas for additional resources, and helping to determine program facets that might need updating or improvements. As new participants join each year or current participants change their travel behavior, the program benefits from constant evaluation.

A key element of the Safe Routes program is quantitative measurement of the shift from single student vehicle trips to school into green trips. To measure how students travel to school, Safe Routes staff members work with classroom teachers to administer fall and spring surveys at participating schools. These tallies were previously sent to the National Center for Safe Routes to School, an organization that serves as the Federal Highway Administration's Safe Routes to School Clearinghouse. The National Center calculates the tallies and provides a summary of the data.

It is important to note the accuracy of this evaluation. The student tally data presented in this report were assessed to ensure a representative sample size that would produce results representative of each school population with a 95% confidence level. During any particular semester, the data sets for schools that did not have enough responses to meet the confidence level were omitted from the analysis. On average, however, approximately 85 percent of all survey data met the confidence level threshold. When available, fall and spring data were averaged per school year. The tallies were not carried out during Spring 2020 or the 2020/2021 school year owing to disruptions from the COVID-19 pandemic.

The National Database, which is used to collect and store student tally data, was shut down for the May 2022 surveys. During this time Safe Routes utilized its own system; the National Database will restart in 2023 and access will resume for the Spring 2023 tally.

## CAREGIVER SURVEYS

In addition to the student tallies, Safe Routes uses caregiver surveys as a way to gain insight into the program's opportunities and challenges. A survey was conducted at targeted schools in May 2022 with both English and Spanish language versions made available to caregivers.

1,462 surveys from 26 elementary schools were collected, with 1,302 from English speaking caregivers at 26 schools, and 160 from those who spoke Spanish from 19 schools. 268 middle school surveys were completed, with 220 in English and 48 in Spanish. 345 Redwood high school caregivers also completed the survey. The survey was only conducted at one high school, as at the time of the survey Safe Routes staff were not permitted onto high school

campuses to conduct programming, so program measurements would have been inconclusive.

The caregiver survey results allowed Safe Routes staff to better understand the reasons why caregivers allow or do not allow their students to walk, bike, carpool, or ride the bus to school. See Chapter 10 for a discussion of the survey results.

## PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS

A total of 61 schools have joined Marin's Safe Routes to Schools program since its inception in 2001. A total of 55 schools participated in the program during the 2021/2022 school year (Figure 1 on the next page). While new schools join and others may discontinue their participation, the total number of participating schools has stayed relatively consistent throughout the past 21 years (Figure 2). The 2019/2020 school year saw lower participation due to the COVID-19 pandemic, during which time in-person education and encouragement programs could not be carried out (see Chapter 3 for more information).

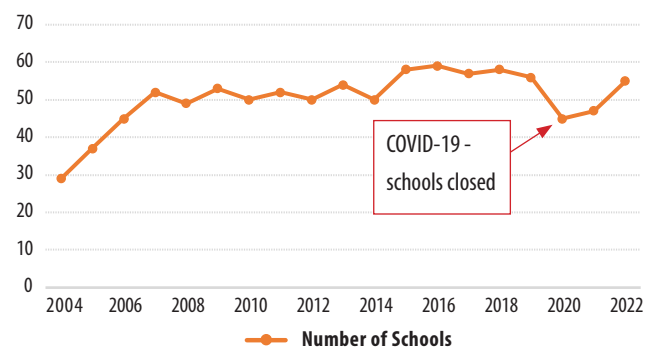


Figure 2: Participating Schools Over Time

There are numerous reasons why some schools do not continuously participate in the program. Some elementary schools may discontinue participation in the Safe Routes program when they are unable to recruit and provide parent volunteers to host encouragement events and attend Task Force meetings. Other schools that provide bus service to all of their students have limited need for the program's focus on increasing walking and bicycling and thus are not prioritized to receive Safe Routes program resources.

Schools participate in Safe Routes at different levels, based on the availability of staff and volunteers as well as on the school administration's willingness to incorporate Safe Routes to Schools lessons into their curricula.

Safe Routes has been extremely effective at reaching many of the county's younger students (Figure 3). 88% of public elementary schools and 100% of public middle schools participated in



Figure 1: Participating Schools



# MARIN COUNTY

SCHOOLS			
1	A. E. Kent MS	37	Reed ES
2	Archie Williams HS	38	Ross School
3	Bacich ES	39	Ross Valley Charter
4	Bahia Vista ES	40	San Domenico
5	Bayside MLK ES / Nevada Campus	41	San Jose MS
6	Bayside MLK MS / Phillips Campus	42	San Marin HS
7	Bel Aire ES	43	San Rafael HS
8	Bolinas-Stinson School	44	San Ramon ES
9	Brookside ES	45	Sinaloa MS
10	Coleman ES	46	Strawberry Point
11	Cove School	47	Sun Valley ES
12	Del Mar MS	48	Tamalpais HS
13	Edna Maguire ES	49	Tamalpais Valley ES
14	Glenwood ES	50	Terra Linda HS
15	Hamilton School	51	Vallecito ES
16	Henry Hall MS	52	Venetia Valley ES
17	Hidden Valley ES	53	Wade Thomas ES
18	James B. Davidson MS	54	West Marin ES
19	Lagunitas ES	55	White Hill MS
20	Laurel Dell ES		
21	Loma Verde ES		
22	Lu Sutton ES		
23	Lucas Valley ES		
24	Lynwood ES		
25	Manor ES		
26	Mary E. Silveira ES		
27	Mill Valley MS		
28	Miller Creek MS		
29	Neil Cummins ES		
30	Novato Charter School		
31	Old Mill School		
32	Olive ES		
33	Park ES		
34	Pleasant Valley ES		
35	Rancho ES		
36	Redwood HS		



the program during 2021/2022. 50% of public high schools participated, owing to restrictions stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic. 91% of public schools with a wide span of grades – K-8 and K-12 schools – participated in the program. 83% of public schools in Marin County participated in Safe Routes, while only 5% of private schools participated in the program.

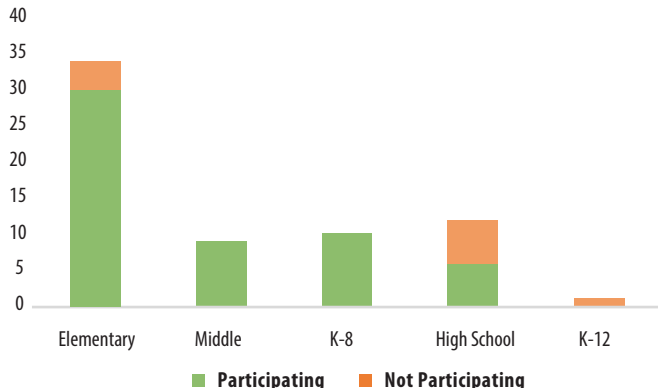


Figure 3: Participating Schools

### Travel Mode Share Summary

Green trips consist of both active green (biking, walking, scootering, etc.) and active green plus (school bus, transit, and carpool) trips. Green trips represent all possible ways to travel to and from school without the use of a family vehicle that is not a carpool. Figure 4 shows the percentage of green trips per school, and represents an average of the data collected in the past three years<sup>1</sup>.

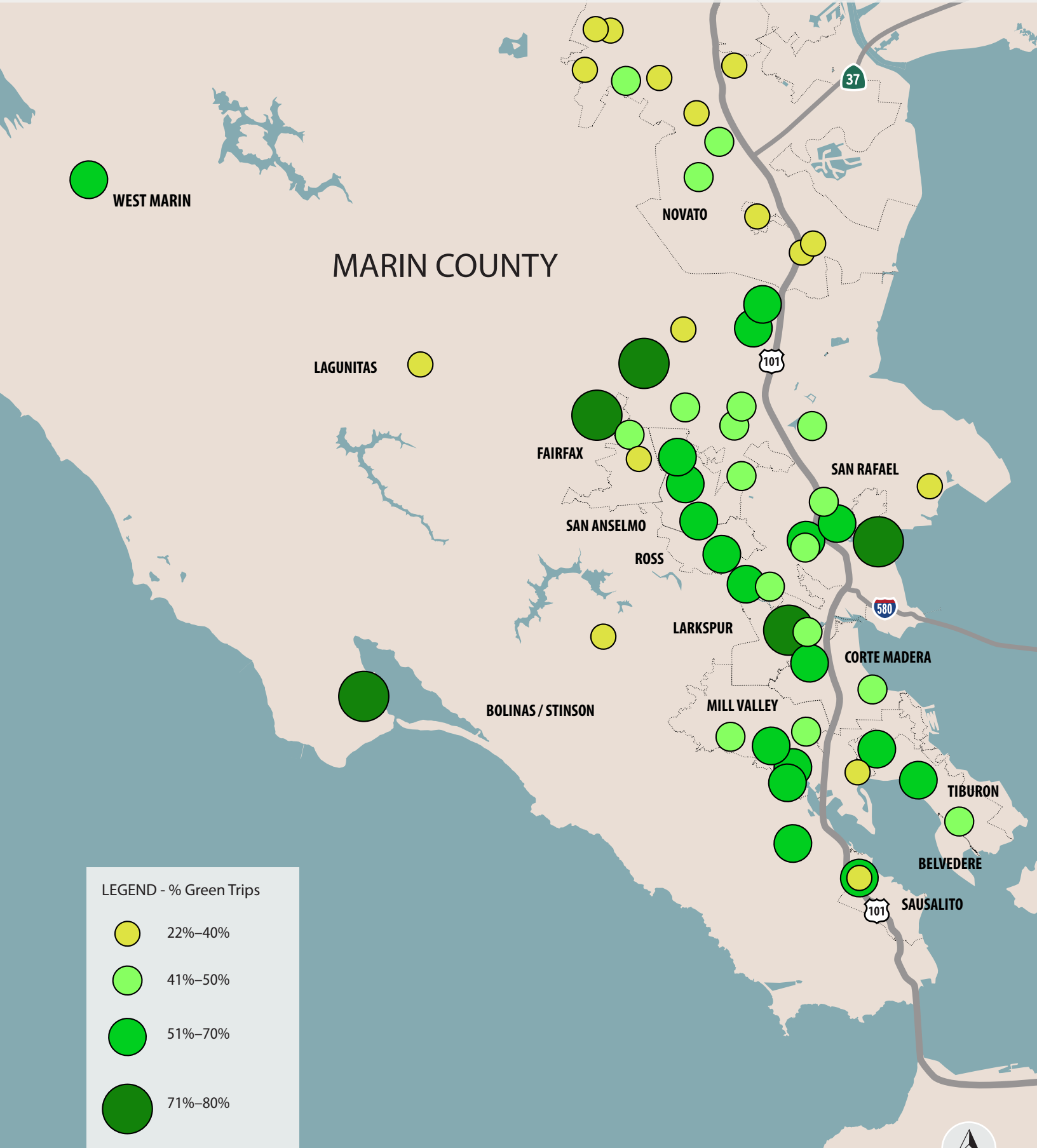
Marin County schools that participate in the Safe Routes program show high rates of green commuting. A total of 24 out of the 25 participating schools (44%) have green trip commute rates of greater than 50%. Further, eight schools (15% of participating schools) have green trip rates of higher than 65%, while White Hill Middle School and San Domenico School report that 78% and 77% of students, respectively, use green modes to travel to and from school due to robust bus programs.

The percentage of all participating Marin County students using green and active green transportation modes has generally increased over time, as shown in Figure 5 (p.10). During the 2021/2022 school year, 51% of trips were green trips: of these, 32% used an active mode. While this is a higher percentage than most years, it is worth noting that the percentage of green trips for this year is lower than expected given the COVID-19 pandemic, which generally led to a reduction in shared green modes such as bus, transit, and carpooling. One can also note the increase in active green trips from 2019/2020 to 2021/2022, as these modes allow for greater social distancing. See Chapter 3 for more information on Safe Routes’ response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Safe Routes uses a multifaceted strategy to affect transportation mode shift. However, it is important to recognize the correlation between students’ distance from school as a powerful determinant of students’ transportation modes: if students live too far from school, no amount of education or encouragement will lead them to use active modes and other modes should be prioritized. This is demonstrated in Figure 6 on page 10, which shows a clear correlation between the schools’ average student distance and the percentage of students who use active modes. At Bahia Vista Elementary School, where on average students live one half mile from school, almost 70% of students travel to school by walking or biking. Conversely, at Laurel Dell Elementary school students live an average of over 2.5 miles from school and only 21% use active modes to get to school. There is some variation in these trends based on grade level. The association between distance from school and active modes is most pronounced in elementary schools as Middle school students may be allowed to walk or bike from farther away as they gain independence. High school students, meanwhile, may be more inclined to drive to school once they are old enough regardless of how far they live from school.

<sup>1</sup> Note that data weren’t collected in Spring 2020 or the 2020/2021 school year due to disruptions from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Figure 4: Green Trips



LEGEND - % Green Trips

- 22%–40%
- 41%–50%
- 51%–70%
- 71%–80%



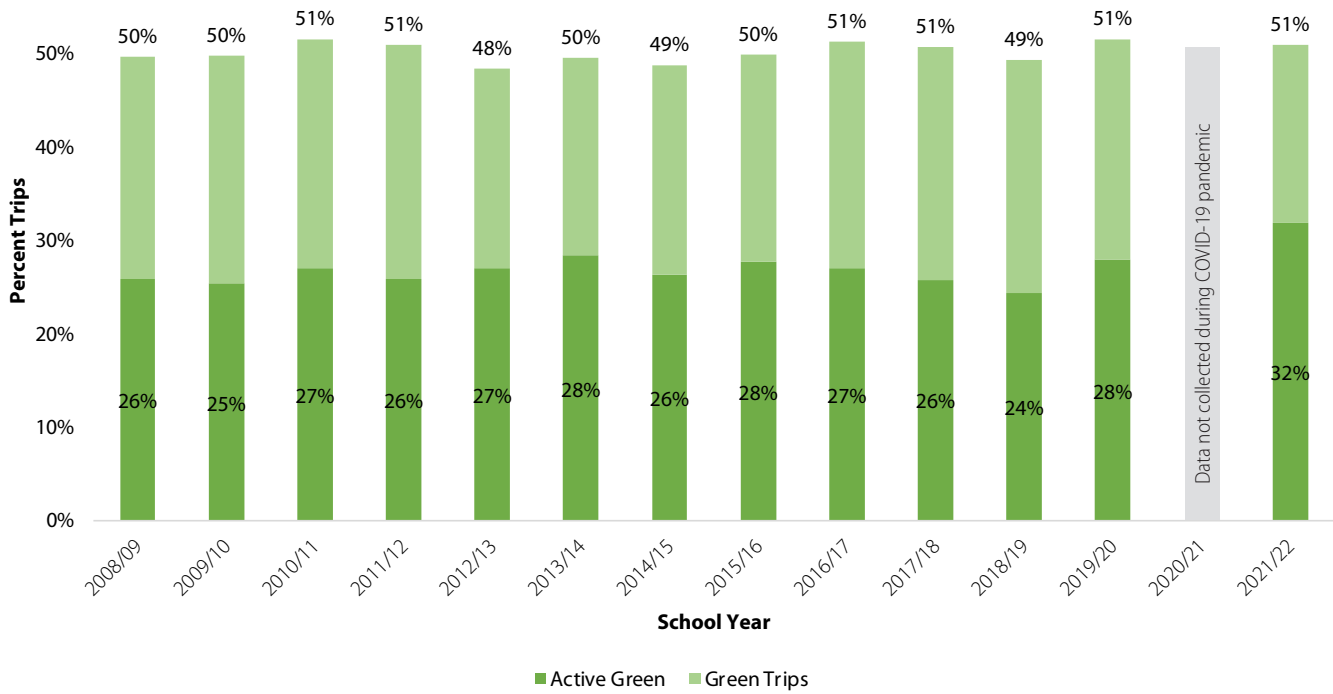


Figure 5: Countywide active green and green trips over time. Note that student tallies were not conducted during the 2020/2021 school year.

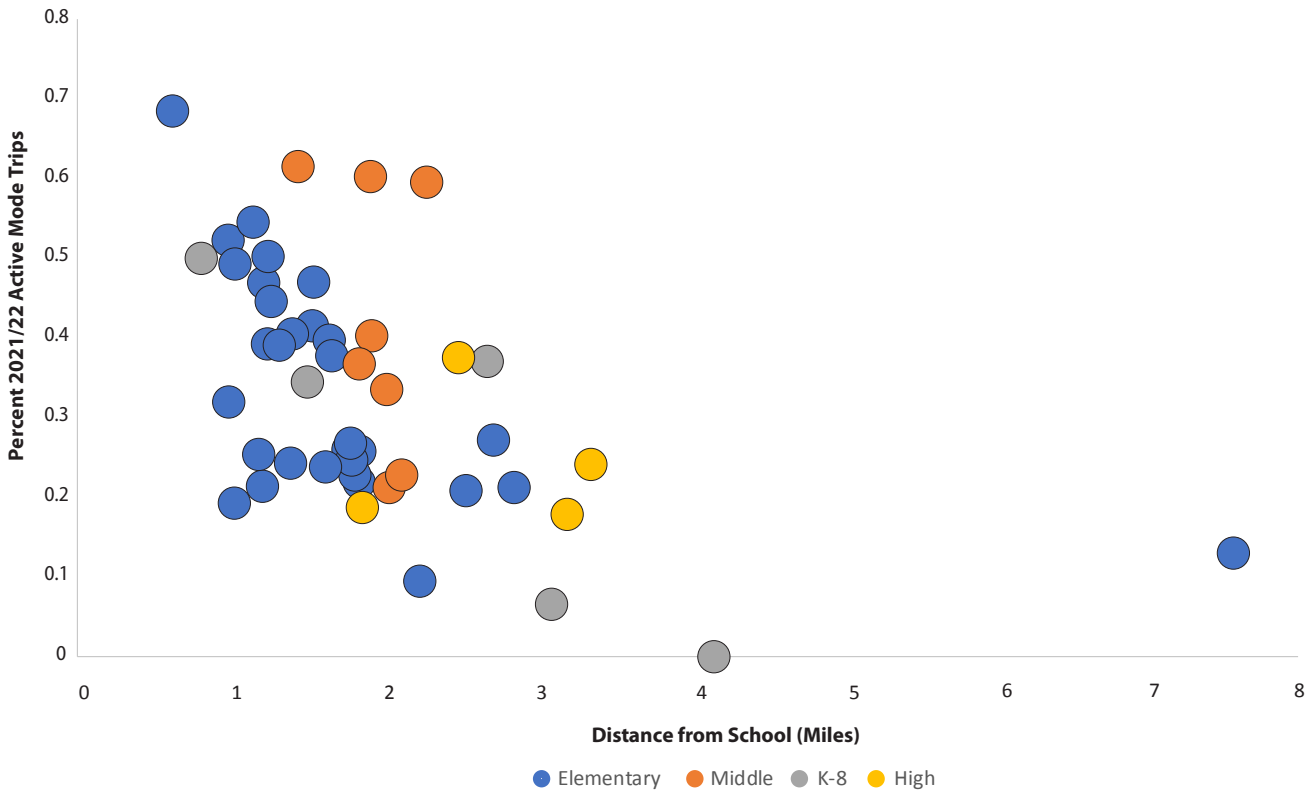


Figure 6: Average student distance from school and percent active modes

## SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOLS EFFECT ON TRAFFIC CONGESTION & VEHICLE MILES TRAVELED

The Safe Routes to Schools program mission is to promote green and active green transportation for students traveling to and from school. These modes promote healthy living and environmental sustainability while reducing congestion and vehicle miles traveled (VMT) throughout the county. To gauge the program's impact, an analysis of vehicle miles saved through shifts away from single-family vehicle trips was conducted. The analysis found that, compared to the 2015/2016 school year, Marin County schools participating in the Safe Routes program reduced their daily family trips by over 4,500 trips and daily VMT by over 9,400 miles during the 2021/2022 school year by shifting away from family trips towards other modes.

### Methods

With the cooperation of the school districts, the Safe Routes team was able to obtain anonymized address data for 53 of the 55 participating Marin County schools. Google Maps was used to quantify the distance from school for every student: this data was

then rolled up into an average distance from each school (see an example dot map in Figure 7).

This analysis focuses on elementary and middle schools only, as detailed mode share data were not available for high school students driving alone and carpooling. Student tally mode share data was used to calculate the number of elementary and middle school students at each school who were driven in single-family vehicles during the 2015/2016 and 2021/2022 school years. The average distance from each school was then used to estimate the daily VMT for each school, which was compared against the two study years. The 2015/2016 school year was used in this analysis as most of the schools participating in Safe Routes during 2021/2022 also participated in this previous year, whereas program baseline years tended to vary from school to school. Additionally, enrollment data were available for all schools for the two years.

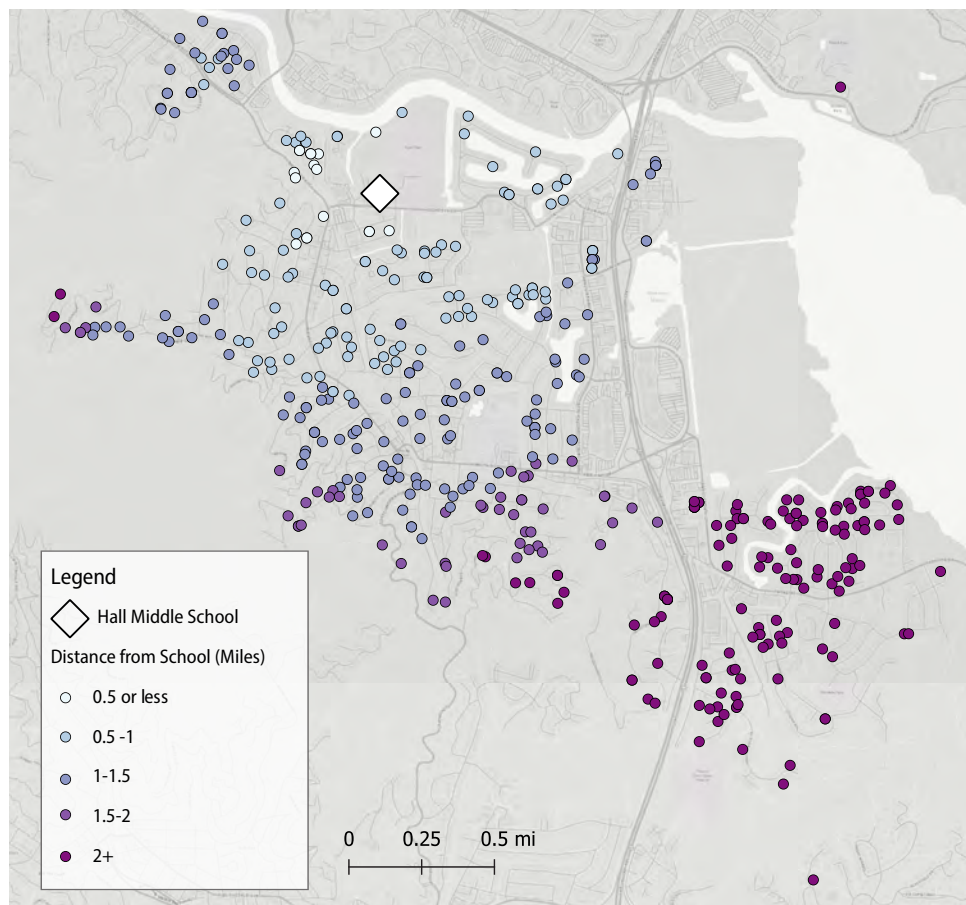


Figure 7: Example map showing student distance from school.



Figure 8: Change in VMT from family trips for elementary and middle schools by district, 2015/16 vs. 2021/22

**Results**

Compared to the 2015/2016 school year, VMT related to single-family vehicle trips to and from participating Safe Routes schools decreased by more than 9,400 miles per day in 2021/2022 as more students shifted to green and active green modes of transportation. In total, schools reduced their number of family trips by more than 4,500 daily trips.

The magnitude of this shift varied by school district (Figure 8). San Rafael saw a daily reduction of almost 2,800 miles. This was led by Venetia Valley Elementary School and Glenwood Elementary school, which each reduced their daily VMT by approximately 1,000 miles. Similarly, Mill Valley saw a daily reduction of almost 2,300 vehicle miles. In general, elementary schools saw more pronounced shifts away from family trips. This may be due to the tendency of elementary school children to live closer to school, making it easier for them to use active green modes of transportation.

Sausalito-Marin City and Shoreline Unified were the only two districts to see daily VMT increases. While the percentage of

family trips has gone down slightly for Sausalito-Marin City since 2015/2016, this has not been enough to offset VMT from recent enrollment increases at the district’s two schools. The unification of the Sausalito Marin City School district resulted in students from Marin City going to Sausalito for Elementary school, likely leading to an increase in family trips. The Shoreline Unified district’s percentage of family trips has increased by 33% since 2015. No education or encouragement programs were held in the district during this evaluation period.

This reduction in daily VMT not only reduces congestion around schools, creating safer spaces for students. It also reduces carbon dioxide emissions by 684 metric tons in one school year - the equivalent of 86 homes’ energy use for one calendar year - reducing impacts on the environment<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> EPA Greenhouse Gas Equivalencies Calculator - <https://www.epa.gov/energy/greenhouse-gas-equivalencies-calculator#results>



## TASK FORCES

The Safe Routes to School program strives to address safety issues along specific school routes as another tool to increase active trips to school. Safe Routes staff facilitate school district Task Forces to discuss these safety challenges. Task Force committees bring together parent leaders, elected officials and staff from the local jurisdiction, traffic engineers, school district representatives, law enforcement personnel, and neighborhood leaders to focus on specific transportation safety concerns in a given neighborhood and to work to provide solutions to address the concerns. Task Forces collaborate with the jurisdictions and Safe Routes staff to design and implement a program that addresses the unique needs of their school districts.

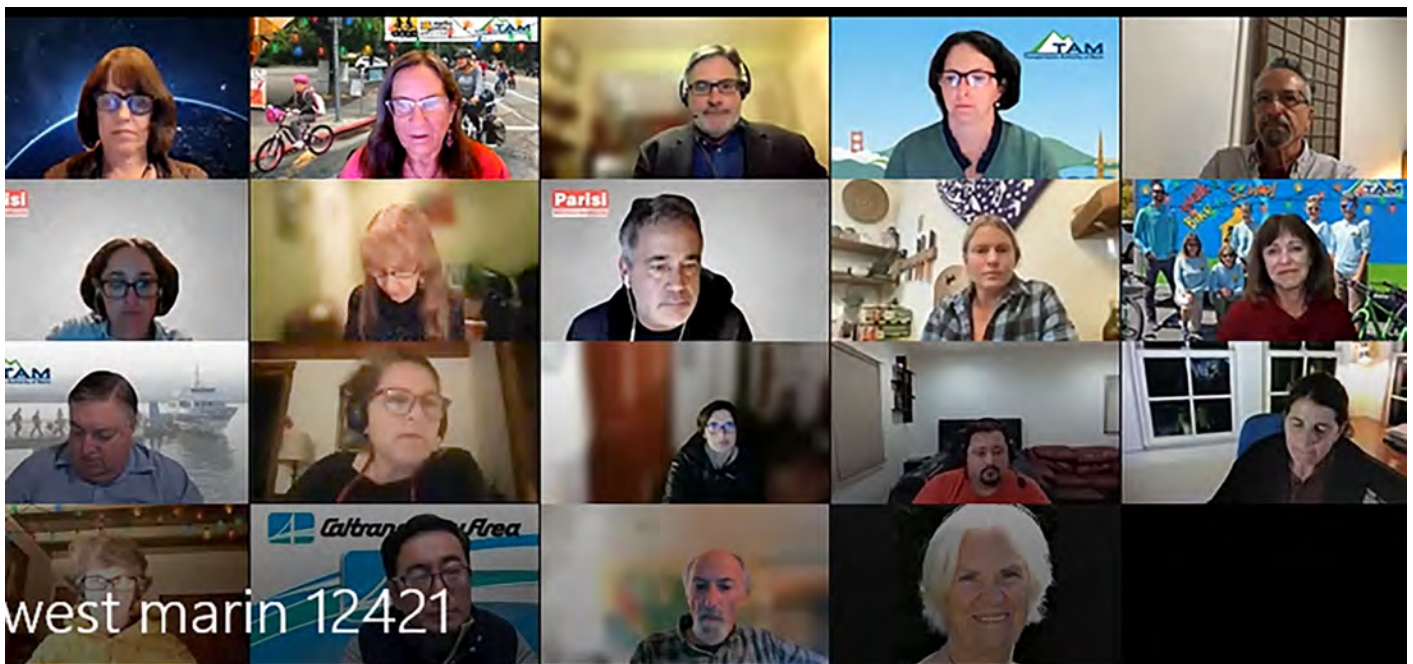
There were nine active Task Forces during the 2021–2022 school year, with West Marin joining as a new task force during the three-year evaluation period:

- Kentfield
- Larkspur-Corte Madera
- Mill Valley
- Novato
- Reed/Tiburon
- Ross Valley
- San Rafael
- Sausalito-Marín City
- West Marin

Task Force meetings provide an ideal venue for Safe Routes program stakeholders to discuss issues specific to each school district. The meetings also provide an opportunity for stakeholders to identify neighborhood-specific issues that require more focused attention. Starting during the COVID-19 pandemic, task force meetings have transitioned to a virtual platform. This allows for greater collaboration and larger meeting attendance. The virtual meetings have also allowed for innovations such as issues list mapping to help participants visualize the locations of infrastructure issues in their communities (see next chapter for more information).

Task Forces also work on suggested routes to school maps and organize walk audits to take a closer look at issues on the ground when students are traveling to and from school. Parents and school personnel are invited to participate in the walk audits along with the jurisdiction’s traffic engineers. These participants are able to interact with the experts to demonstrate the problem areas and focus the engineering teams on possible solutions (see Chapter 6).

Additionally, Safe Routes has partnered with Supervisor Katie Rice to form Neighborhood Safety Committees to focus on specific neighborhood safety issues that may require focused attention. These committees include neighbors and businesses from the area in addition to the usual Task Force participants. To date, Safe Routes program staff have participated in Neighborhood Safe Street Committees in Sleepy Hollow in San Anselmo and Acacia in Kentfield (see Case Studies).



Online meetings draw participants who may not be able to attend in-person meetings.

## WEBSITE UPDATE

The program refreshed its website in Spring 2022 to better communicate about Safe Routes with school officials, teachers, and parent volunteers. The goals of the refresh included streamlining existing content, emphasizing TAM, and increasing access to information for non-English speaking users and those with disabilities.

The updated website was reorganized to make content more streamlined and user-friendly. It also makes information easier to find by introducing the ability to filter encouragement programs and education classes by grade and topic. The website features a

new page highlighting the program's equity work and is branded to include TAM logos and information on each page.

The website features a translation widget allowing users to translate web content into Spanish and other languages. Additionally, the website was designed to meet Americans with Disabilities Act standards.

The refreshed website was launched in March 2022. Visit [www.saferoutestoschools.org](http://www.saferoutestoschools.org) to explore the site.



“

Safe Routes to Schools provides an invaluable service to our schools in Marin County. Its integrated program encourages children to walk and bike to school - decreasing traffic - and provides safety education so that children can travel safely. We especially appreciate the millions of dollars spent making the routes safer through infrastructure improvements that are identified through a collaborative process involving school districts, cities and parents.

—Mary Jane Burke, Superintendent Marin County Office of Education



## WHO IS SAFE ROUTES?

### The Enthusiastic Public Servant



Brian Colbert, councilmember from San Anselmo, attends Task Force meetings and serves on the Safe Routes Ad Hoc advisory committee. "Safe Routes engenders a culture of biking, walking and ped safety for young children, which will carry them for the rest of their life," he said. "The events create awareness to the larger community."

When it comes to infrastructure improvements, Brian suggests that there needs to be an overarching organization to coordinate everything around the county – such as the Transportation Authority of Marin. But, he adds, a lot of the issues are local. "That's where the Safe Routes to Schools Task Forces become important. You need the engagement of the public works officials and the active parents to bring up issues and drive awareness."

Brian has a message for other councilmembers from around the county: "If you are concerned about your constituents, bicycle and pedestrian safety should be at the forefront... most congestion happens around commute time when young users are to and fro. You can actually see projects implemented in a reasonable time if you focus on the task force."

Brian suggests that Safe Routes expand its education and awareness into the larger community. The issue coming up most frequently is the proliferation of e-bikes. He pointed out that there are three things you can do – adapt your infrastructure, which moves slowly; increase enforcement, which is not feasible; or provide more education. "SR2S is well placed to do that."

### The Influential School Administrator



Leslie Benjamin is the Communications Officer at Novato Unified School District (NUSD). She has been an invaluable partner to Safe Routes, and the feeling is mutual.

"Safe Routes has been a great partner," she said. "The program to encourage families/students to walk or ride their bike to school is fantastic. The campaign materials... are great and I appreciate receiving the materials ready to be distributed in both English and Spanish. This really helps getting families out of their cars, which addresses the traffic situations at the schools."

Leslie makes sure that Safe Routes materials equitably reach all families. NUSD emails uses emails, physical flyers, and text messages to reach families. "We have also used our social media channels to help Safe Routes reach the Novato community. Whatever is sent out from NUSD, it is in English and Spanish."

Leslie also appreciates the Safe Routes Task Forces. "Working with schools to identify the best and safest routes for families and students to walk to school is invaluable." She assisted Safe Routes in obtaining the data to create dot maps, which help determine what percentage of students can be reasonably expected to walk or bike to school.

Leslie has served on the advisory committee for the Street Smarts campaign. She finds it a pleasure to support Safe Routes as best she can. "I think we have a good relationship with Safe Routes and now that COVID is behind us, I believe Safe Routes has been able to make connections at the schools."

## CASE STUDY

### Collaborating to Improve Safety on Butterfield Road

Safe Routes to Schools has been working with a committee organized by Supervisor Rice's office, and consisting of the Marin County Bicycle Coalition, The Sleepy Hollow Homes Association, and a group of parents, community members and Town of San Anselmo and County of Marin staff to make Butterfield Road safer for everyone.

Butterfield Road runs from San Anselmo into the unincorporated Marin County community of Sleepy Hollow. It connects three schools - Brookside Elementary, Hidden Valley Elementary School, and Archie Williams High School - and is the only way in or out by car from the valley.

The Town of San Anselmo section of Butterfield Road has bicycle lanes but these disappear at the County of Marin border. There are no sidewalks, and parked cars on the road's shoulders force riders and walkers into the path of traffic.

Neighbors and frequent users of the road were uncomfortable with their children riding or walking on Butterfield Road. While the number of reported crashes on this road is in fact below the average, many crashes have gone unreported, and there are countless stories of near misses.

The committee first initiated a community survey to learn more about the problems encountered on Butterfield Road. The survey was well-received: responses were collected from 891 households accounting for over 2,000 individuals, 80% of whom live in San Anselmo. The survey found that a much larger number of crashes had occurred on Butterfield Road than had been reported to police, and over half of the cyclists involved in crashes were children. Over 85% of survey respondents approved of adding a bicycle lane to the road.

This information helped to gain approval from the County Board of Supervisors to paint a bike lane as far as Hidden Valley Road. The Town of San Anselmo also provided a number of improvements including targeted green bike lanes markings at intersections, a rectangular rapid flashing beacon at Woodside Drive, and a radar speed feedback sign near the fire station. The committee continues to work with the community to provide off-street parking areas in order to extend the bicycle lane to the end of the road. This shows the positive results when a community decides to collaborate to create improvements in its neighborhood.



# Chapter 3: COVID-19 Response

This evaluation period is unique in that it includes the COVID-19 pandemic, a period of time when the Safe Routes program was required to adapt to conditions that were far from normal. While challenging, the program was able to meet the challenges of a global pandemic, and in doing so, develop innovative strategies that will serve the program well going forward. This chapter describes the challenges that arose during the pandemic, Safe Routes adaptation, and successes.

## EFFECTS OF COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic created a massive disruption in Safe Routes operations. Almost all Marin County schools closed for in-classroom education from March 2020 to April 2021. This temporarily halted all-in person instruction until some schools began reopening and allowing Safe Routes staff back for in-person education. Safe Routes staff were not allowed back on high school campuses for the remainder of this evaluation period. Additionally, the program's budget was downsized as public programs everywhere were forced to tighten their belts. This budget reduction led some staff to be furloughed while others saw reduced hours.

These changes put a halt to the in-person education and encouragement activities that form the backbone of the Safe Routes program. Many bicycle and pedestrian safety classes couldn't be taught, and as a result some students missed out on grade-specific education courses.

There was also a loss of engagement with parents and in-school volunteers. COVID-19 restrictions meant that people couldn't meet in person for task forces, walk audits, and to host events. Participation waned, and this lack of input led to a decline in production of suggested route to school maps. Although schools reopened to students in Fall 2021, Safe Routes had to rebuild its volunteer base, which had dramatically dropped the year prior. Additionally, most schools were hesitant to allow parent volunteers on campus to host events. The largest event of the year, International Walk and Roll to School Day in October, required staff to scramble to find the volunteers necessary to host it. They also had to negotiate with principals to allow welcome tables slightly off campus for volunteers to give out incentives to students for walking and rolling to school. Encouragement activities could not resume at high schools until Fall 2022, outside the scope of this evaluation report.

Planning for the program's future was also affected. The annual student travel mode surveys that are regularly conducted in classrooms could not be completed for the 2020/2021 school year. These surveys are important to gauge changes in mode shift and adjust the program accordingly (see Section 2.3).

**CURRICULUM DESCRIPTIONS**

**On-line Live Instruction & Remote Learning**

Safe Routes to Schools provides live, on-line instruction to supplement a school's requirement for daily interaction with students. Remote Learning Presentations are also available.

**1ST & 2ND GRADE: STOP, LOOK & LISTEN**

**Remote Learning Presentation**

Via a fun video featuring ASIMO, a friendly robot, students cover the basics of pedestrian street safety, focusing on crossing the street. Next, a Q&A highlights neighborhood safety and the importance of "Stop, Look, and Listen" before entering a roadway.

**4TH GRADE: BIKE/TRAFFIC SAFETY**

**Remote Learning Presentation**

This lesson begins with an introduction to the health and environmental benefits of cycling. Students learn proper helmet and bike fit, how to check a bike for safety, key traffic laws, and best practices for riding predictably and responsibly.

**4TH GRADE: DRIVE THAT BIKE**

**Remote Learning Presentation**

This lesson illustrates the benefits and responsibilities of bike commuting, plus a brief look at bicycling's history and social impact. An interactive component covers laws that govern cars and bikes. Students learn how to be visible, predictable, and mindful when riding on roads and multi-use pathways.

**2ND GRADE: WALK AROUND THE BLOCK**

**On-line Live Instruction**

Using aerial videos and pictures, a class of students will take a fun and instructional walking field trip with their Safe Routes to School instructor, being introduced to the safe steps/lessons to practice before crossing a street. Look Left, Look Right, Look Left Again, Go Only When it is Safe.

**4TH GRADE BIKE RODEO**

**On-line Live Instruction**

Using aerial videos and pictures, a Safe Routes to Schools instructor will meet and show a class of students how to navigate our rodeo course in preparation for a future on-campus class. This fun class will include direct instruction and discussion about starting and stopping, using hand signals, and obeying the rules of the road on a mock street.

**6TH GRADE: BIKE DRILLS**



**On-line Live Instruction**

Using aerial videos and pictures, a Safe Routes to Schools instructor will meet and show a class of students how to navigate our bike drills course in preparation for a future on-site class. This fun class will include direct instruction and discussions about confident cycling on the road while obeying the rules of the road.

VISIT THE SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOLS WEBSITE  
[saferoutestoschools.org](http://saferoutestoschools.org) for more information on social distancing guidelines, contests and activities to keep children safe and active in Marin County.

VISIT [saferoutestoschools.org/safe-routes-remote.html](http://saferoutestoschools.org/safe-routes-remote) to view Remote Learning Presentations

DOWNLOAD the [Social Distancing Tip Flyer](#)

## PROGRAM ADAPTATION

The Safe Routes program quickly adapted to these challenges to ensure that services continued to be offered to the highest extent possible despite setbacks and restrictions from the pandemic.

In-person classes, activities, and meetings pivoted to virtual platforms to ensure continuity. Bicycle and pedestrian safety classes were recorded and offered online. Instructors tried to make materials fun, recognizable to students learning from home, and inclusive – ensuring that all student populations had equitable opportunities to learn how to travel safely. Virtual encouragement contests included safety videos and instruction while promoting active travel. Virtual task forces and walk audits were also held; these incorporated issues list mapping using Google Earth to facilitate input from participants.

During the pandemic more than ever, Safe Routes implemented its programming with a focus on equity. Bilingual education and encouragement materials were developed to ensure that language was not a barrier to participation. Additionally, the Safe Routes newsletter was translated into Spanish to help keep parents of bilingual families informed.

The program was also able to focus on COVID-related engineering activities to help students be active and safe in the face of the pandemic. Improvements at San Rafael's Coleman Elementary,



for example, provided greater separation between walkers and students being dropped-off at school to encourage safe active transportation. Quick-build and park-n-walk guidebooks helped communities enact quick, cost-effective treatments to encourage active transportation. Safe Routes also provided recommended routes for social distancing to encourage students and their parents to get outside.

## SUCCESSES & LESSONS LEARNED

The Safe Routes program's adaptations were successful, and school communities requested more services than had been initially anticipated. Program staff worked with each community to meet their very different needs. The program's importance was further acknowledged when Safe Routes were among the first to be included in COVID-19 vaccinations offered to educators. A number of notable successes and lessons learned resulted from these challenging times and will help Safe Routes more effectively deliver its services going forward.

### Outreach

The Safe Routes program successfully prioritized outreach to the Spanish-speaking population and underserved schools to equitably deliver programming. Translating materials into Spanish was tremendously effective, and the program will continue to translate its education and encouragement materials and newsletter. The program was also able to identify needs to better serve disadvantaged students. As a result of the active transportation photo contests, Safe Routes staff learned that many students did not own helmets and subsequently facilitated

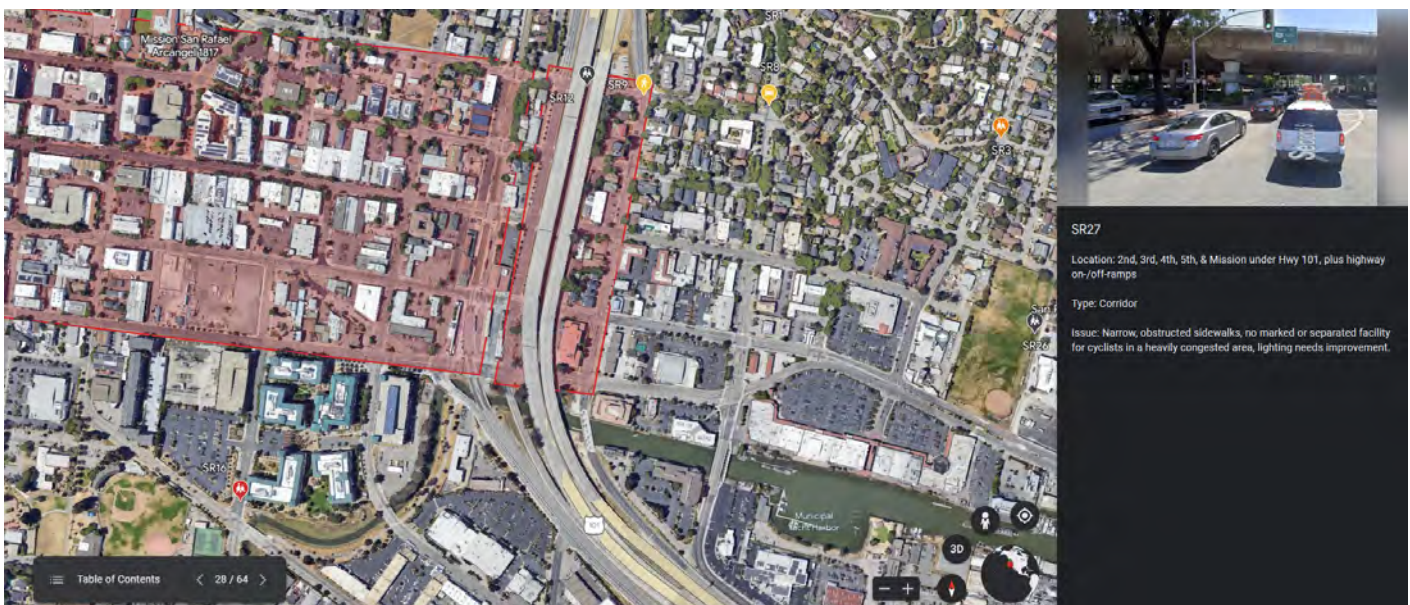
helmet donations for underserved students. A new education program was also initiated for high school students to receive bicycles that they otherwise could not afford. This work was done in part thanks to new grant funding that expanded outreach in six schools with a large number of Spanish-speaking students, as well as new partnerships with organizations aiding underserved communities (see Chapter 7 for more information about Safe Routes' equity focus).

### COVID-Specific Materials

The Safe Routes program developed effective COVID-specific materials to help students safely get outside during the pandemic. A toolkit was developed to help adapt streets and schools to the pandemic. Program staff also chalked educational and encouraging messaging on sidewalks cheering on the walkers and rollers during the partial school reopenings. The program recorded new bicycle and pedestrian safety classes and Bike Week contests to encourage active travel while also including safety education.

### Issues List Mapping

Issues list mapping was developed during the COVID-19 pandemic as a way for Task Force participants to more interactively view the locations of safety issues in their communities. Issues were mapped in Google Earth. Entries included photos and other key information. This allowed Task Force members to virtually walk together through their communities, and provided a better sense of where issues were located relative to one another. Issues list mapping and virtual meetings are two successful pandemic adaptations that remain in use.



Technology allowed Task Force members to virtually “walk” through their neighborhoods and identify issues.

## Adaptation

Safe Routes staff were also able to work with school and municipal staff on quick and relatively easy ways that they could adapt community streets to the new need for social distancing at a time when fewer drivers were on the road. Safe Routes assisted in well-received street closure projects to create more safe space for outdoor activity. It also formed special traffic committees to implement temporary street adaptations. As a result, new families participated in physical fitness activities.

## Volunteer & Parent Engagement

Throughout these successes, the importance of volunteers and parent engagement was underscored. Volunteer and parent involvement was necessary to run activities and gain input for engineering improvements. The effectiveness of virtual meetings was also noted, particularly for Task Forces, as the convenience of a virtual format encouraged participation and made it easier for school district and city staff to attend. As a result, task forces will be held virtually going forward to expand participation.

## CASE STUDY

### Acacia Street is Car Free During School Commute

In the summer of 2020, Safe Routes to Schools began working with school communities to plan ahead for students to safely return to school in the fall amid the COVID-19 pandemic. The focus was on helping students to safely distance themselves while walking and rolling to school. Special Transportation Committees were formed to address unique needs at every school. A comprehensive toolkit was developed to provide options for street closures, to identify park and walk locations, and to provide guidance on other “pop-up” temporary infrastructure such as extended sidewalks and bike lanes. Most notably, the Transportation Authority of Marin provided grants for county and city planners to redesign streets to meet the need for increased space for active travel.

The Kentfield School District Transportation Committee took advantage of these resources to close down Acacia Street to traffic during the morning and afternoon commute hours. Acacia

Street is a popular thoroughfare for both students walking and rolling and families driving to Bacich Elementary School. A street closure was warranted for the safety of students walking and biking to school, and plans were made for temporary closures during the busiest times. Yet that left the need for volunteers to move street closure signs twice a day.

Seeing the project through to completion, parent volunteers Bree Eaton and Allison Fortini-Crawford recruited Kent Middle School Leadership students who were trained (and occasionally rewarded with cookies) to put up and take down the barriers to limit street access during school commute hours. The students arrived before and after school every day for three months to diligently close and reopen the street. In 2022 the street closure was approved for another year and a parent volunteer has since stepped up to move the signs. A long-range plan is now in the works to continue allowing students safe access to school.





## WHO IS SAFE ROUTES?

### The Dedicated Club Leader

Cassie Hettleman has led the Kent Eco Action Club in partnership with Safe Routes for five years. Cassie, a local Marinite, has fond memories of riding her bike to school with friends along Blackie's Pasture and now wishes to pass the joy and independence of riding a bicycle onto her students. Through walking and rolling to school, Cassie acknowledges, kids learn to problem solve, get extra energy out to stay focused at school, connect more with their community, and take action to reduce traffic and pollution.

Hosting Walk and Roll events makes club members feel valuable to their school community. According to Cassie, middle school can be a difficult time for some students, and having a lunchtime club helps them feel safe while giving

them an environmentally focused purpose to rally behind. "The program is very well organized, and the kids love it."

Kent Middle School remained one of the most active Safe Routes schools even during the pandemic. The club wanted to continue meeting virtually: these virtual gatherings gave students a place to stay connected and a purpose during a challenging time. Thanks to the innovative contributions from the Kent Eco Action Club students, Safe Routes developed several county-wide contests to encourage active mobility while students remained at home.

The successful teen encouragement program is made possible through the dedicated leadership of teachers such as Cassie.



“

Thank you for your creative approach during this shelter in place.

– Brookside Principal

[Chalk N Walk drawings] are fantastic! I saw lots of kids studying the drawings and heard a few exchanges about how they bike or walk to school.

– Edna Maguire Principal

What a great end to the week. Thank you again for everything; it was such a breath of fresh air for the students. I really appreciate everything you and Safe Routes did this week to make it happen for the kids. Also wanted to let you know I received several thank yous, and (air) high fives from teachers/admin for your involvement in keeping the kids safe and active. Everyone loves the pedal playground (totally worth the time & effort).

– Old Mill Physical Education Teacher



*Safe Routes staff chalked encouraging and safety-minded messages on sidewalks near schools during the COVID-19 pandemic.*

Intentionally blank



## Chapter 4: Education

The Education element of the Safe Routes program provides comprehensive student instruction for safe and healthy travel to school. This chapter provides an overview of the classes annually taught to elementary, middle and high school students and highlights new educational programs provided during the pandemic when standard, in-person classes were not able to be taught.



*Students practice newly-learned skills at a Bike Rodeo.*

### EDUCATION PROGRAMS & CLASSES

For over two decades, Safe Routes to Schools has consistently offered education programs designed to teach students skills for safely walking and biking to school. Starting in second grade and continuing through high school, the Safe Routes curriculum provides age-appropriate instruction that meets California state education standards. The majority of instructors are League of American Bicyclist Certified, providing the “gold standard” education for students in Marin.

Pedestrian and bicycle safety classes are taught to students during either standard classroom time or for Physical Education at forty schools annually. School staff, acknowledging the importance of Safe Routes safety instruction, accommodated additional classes to make up for grades missed during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Safe Routes teaches students to be visible, predictable, and responsible and to obey California Vehicle Codes when walking, cycling and driving a car (high school). Classes are tailored to meet classroom size, time constraints, and to address school-specific concerns. For example, in response to parent and community concerns about students cycling across specific intersections, Safe Routes included videos of those intersections in classroom presentations. With new concerns over e-bike use, Safe Routes responded by developing safety awareness information for parents and added e-bike content to its in-class presentations.

Each grade-level student receives a two part instruction consisting of an in-class presentation followed by an experiential, hands-on class. For example, the Stop, Look, Listen second grade class is followed by a Walk Around the Block field trip off school grounds to give students a chance to practice crossing the street. The fourth grade Bike Safety presentation is followed by a Bike Rodeo where students practice their safety maneuvers and rules of the road on mock streets. The education programs offered are summarized in Table 1.

In March 2020, the pandemic interrupted practice as usual and had Safe Routes scrambling to meet schools’ needs in innovative ways (see Chapter 3). Schools partially reopened in Fall 2020 yet Safe Routes instructors were not initially allowed on campus. The Safe Routes education team responded by recording all safety presentations including drone footage of the Rodeo and Walk Around the Block classes using student performers. A Pedal Playground was chalked onto schools’ blacktops, giving students a chance to practice their bicycling skills on mock streets away from cars on the weekends.

When schools finally reopened fully in April 2021, Superintendent Mary Jane Burke prioritized getting Safe Routes Instructors vaccinated so in-person safety classes could resume as soon as possible.

Table 1: Safe Routes Education Classes

CLASS	GRADE
<b>Classroom Presentations</b>	
Stop Look Listen (Part I)	2
Pedestrian and Bike Safety	3
Traffic Safety Bike Education (Part I)	4
Drive Your Bike (Part I)	6
Share the Road	High
<b>Experiential, Hands-On Classes</b>	
Walk Around the Block (Part II)	2
Bike Rodeo (Part II)	4
Drive Your Bike (Part II)	6
On-road Bicycle Field Trips	Middle and High
Family Biking *	Parents and Elementary
<b>Assemblies</b>	
Pedal Power	Elementary
<b>Additional Presentations</b>	
Sustainable Transportation	Middle and High
How to Ride the Bus or SMART train	High
The True Cost of Transportation	High
<b>Other Activities</b>	
Poster Art	Elementary
No Idling Campaign	Middle
Route Mapping	Middle and High
Transit Race/Scavenger Hunt	High

\*Program available through MTC Spare the Air grant funding

## PARTICIPATION TRENDS

Safe Routes tracks numbers of classes and students taught annually. As classes were not conducted on-site during the 2020-2021 school year, this data was not collected. Reference Chapter 3 (COVID-19 Response) for the innovative ways that Safe Routes promoted bicycle safety education through the schools during school closures.

In the 2021-2022 school year, Safe Routes provided make-up classes to grades missed during the pandemic. This resulted in the largest number of students ever taught in the history of the program. Given that schools were focused on making up for lost academics, it was an unprecedented accomplishment that principals carved out the additional time in their school day to accommodate safety instruction. This underscores the value of and desire for Safe Routes education.

In 2021-2022, 36 elementary and middle schools, out of 48, requested the return of Safe Routes education. Twenty-two (61%) of those schools accommodated “all grade” (second through eighth grades) classes. In total, over 1,000 classes were taught with 12,400 students in attendance, a 24% increase over a normal, pre-pandemic year. In the 2022-2023 school year, Safe Routes will prioritize scheduling classes at the twelve schools that were unable to accommodate classes in the prior year.

Surprisingly, the Caregiver Survey revealed that only 17% of parents with students in second and fourth grades - those that standardly receive education classes - reported that their child takes pedestrian and bicycle safety classes at school. Fifteen percent of elementary school caregivers who live within one mile of school and who drive two or more times per week believe that their child is not competent enough to bike (4% say their student/family does not know how). To build family confidence with riding, Safe Routes needs to increase parents’ awareness of the classes taught along with recommendations to practice learned skills with their students (see Recommendations section at the end of this chapter).

## KEEPING IT FRESH

The Safe Routes to Schools curriculum has continuously evolved since its inception, expanding programs offered to meet students’ needs. During the 2021-2022 school year, Safe Routes staff revamped the curriculum to include specific safety instruction around schools by adding photos and videos of intersections, bike lanes, and crosswalks into the presentations. Safe Routes listens and adapts its education beyond the core curriculum to be responsive to the concerns of the community.





Caregivers and students participate in a Family Biking program to learn valuable safety skills.

## FAMILY BIKING

The Family Biking program brings parents and youth together for two hours of instruction in a rodeo setting with an optional on-the-road field trip. The purpose of Family Biking is to teach caregivers how to instruct children to navigate streets safely. During the pandemic, Instructors taught five virtual Family Biking classes to parents and elementary students incorporating interactive activities for the children. Once shelter in place was lifted, Family Biking classes were offered again in person. San Anselmo and Tamalpais Valley Recreation departments partnered with Safe Routes to bring Family Biking to their communities. The classes were popular, with an average of 18 students in attendance. The program is funded by MTC grant funding allocated to MCBC to expand upon Safe Routes bicycle education in schools. Funding has been renewed through 2026.

## E-BIKE EDUCATION

Safe Routes has been responding to community concerns about e-bikes by focusing its educational messages on both students and their parents.

Safe Routes instructors have been embedding e-bike safety messaging into their bicycle safety classes, rodeos, and presentations. Safe Routes has also developed a mandatory e-bike safety class for students at White Hill Elementary who ride e-bikes to school. This class will be rolled out in fall 2022.

In response to increased parent concerns over the safety of emerging student cyclists on e-bikes, Safe Routes provided a Parent Education Night for Mill Valley Families offered through their Parent Teacher Student Association. The online presentation took families through the Safe Routes education applicable for various age development and added a segment on the laws that govern E-bike use. Additionally, Safe Routes crafted an informational flyer to guide parents in purchasing age and ability-appropriate e-bikes for their students. These will be dispersed by schools in their Back to School notices in Fall 2022.

### E-Bikes are Electrifying the Future! What Parents Should Know...


E-bikes are rapidly increasing in popularity, especially with teens as they provide increased independence. E-bikes allow children to travel further and faster, allowing steep hills to be easily climbed. Heavy school books and sports equipment are no longer an issue to transport!

One less vehicle on the road benefits all.

**BUT, is your child experienced enough to manage the increased speeds and maneuverability of a heavy E-bike?**

Parents are advised to do their own research and assess their children's cycling capabilities before purchasing one. Below are some considerations to help parents make informed decisions.

1. Heavy E-bikes traveling at high speeds are harder to maneuver and take longer to stop. The average speed of a standard bicyclist is 12 mph. Type 1 & 2 ebikes can travel up to 20 mph (Type 3- 28 mph). This is a significant difference when considering the experience level of student E-bike riders.
2. E-bike riders (and all cyclists) must follow the same rules as vehicles when riding on roadways.  
[California Vehicle Code \(CVC\) 521230.](#)





**Is your child experienced with the following?**

**Riding confidently on roads and pathways takes practice**

- Taking turns with vehicles at intersections after coming to a complete stop
- Riding predictably WITH the flow of traffic and does not weave in and out of vehicles
- Riding outside of the door zone of parked vehicles (at least 3 feet away)
- Using hand signals for turning right, left and stopping, and scans before merging onto roads and changing lanes
- Obeying posted speeds on pathways and giving pedestrians the right of way
- Knowing how to stop abruptly and dodge obstacles without swerving into vehicle lanes
- Committed to wearing a helmet and ensuring their passenger does as well (17 and under are required to do so by law)

Parents, or another experienced adult cyclist, are advised to ride with children to ensure they are following the rules of the road and can handle the bicycle in various road conditions. With E-bikes, this includes extra practice – riding responsibly and under control at all times, including switching between gears and speed settings.

## WHO IS SAFE ROUTES?

### The Community-Minded Principal



Principal Julie Harris has championed Safe Routes for twenty years, first at Sun Valley and now at Wade Thomas. To Julie, Safe Routes is part of the welcoming environment that builds community pride. She firmly believes that the Safe Routes rodeo education supports the school's goal of mindfulness in action as students are taught to take responsibility for being respectful citizens. The community connectedness and holistic integration that Julie fosters for children at her school translates to the "life skill" of walking and biking for improved health, environment, and academic success.

Julie has included Safe Routes in school assemblies to help her students learn the benefits of active, safe travel, because being a good steward to the environment and understanding the personal impact on others are core values that she upholds for her community. "Acting with mindfulness and intentionality helps to foster social/emotional wellness, and everything we teach centers around this way of being." Safe Routes fits this mode.

Julie is eager to see more families walking and rolling to school together as part of her vision for building communities. Through the simple joy of commuting together on foot, parents will put the skills that Safe Routes teaches into practice: knowing the rules and responsibilities so the roads can be shared safely and respectfully. Julie concludes, "we are creating well-rounded persons who can thrive and grow." Safe Routes is honored to play a role in that endeavor.

### The Appreciative PE Teacher



Physical Education teacher Matt Gardner always finds time to include the Safe Routes pedestrian and bicycle safety curriculum into his school day. He has provided Safe Routes education to hundreds of students at the Novato School District for the last 20 years.

As a longtime Marin County resident, Matt appreciates the area's open space but recognizes that cars pose a challenge. He believes that learning how to navigate congested streets on foot or by bicycle requires skills that must be taught to students at a young age. "Kids need to be taught bicycle and pedestrian skills and they need to practice. Safe Routes does a great job of teaching rules of the road presentations followed by the Bicycle Rodeo and [Walk Around the Block], which give the students an opportunity to practice the important skills in a dynamic and fun environment."

Matt especially appreciates that Safe Routes teaches students to communicate with drivers when they are on their bicycles and on foot. "Something especially important to me is that, as pedestrians, people should make eye contact with drivers as they begin to cross the street. And it's always mentioned during [Walk Around the Block]."

Matt sees that students have fun with Safe Routes programs while also learning a great deal. He considers the Bike Rodeo and Walking Field Trip as highlights of the year that students always look forward to.

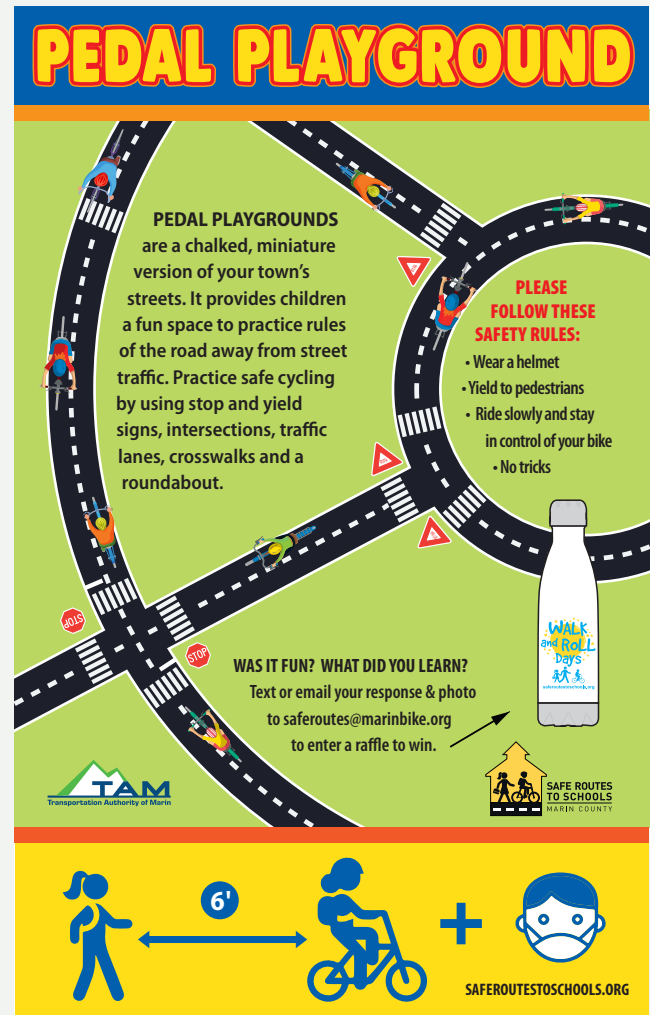
## CASE STUDY

### Education Program Gets Creative During the Pandemic

Bicycle safety education was warranted more than ever with the uptick in cycling during the pandemic. Yet with schools closed to in-person learning, Safe Routes to Schools grappled with how best to provide it, especially the experiential portions - elementary school Bike Rodeos and middle school Bike Drills. Starting in April 2020, Safe Routes pivoted to online learning by recording second through eighth grade classes, making them available on the program's website in English with Spanish subtitles for teachers to share with their students and families.

The Safe Routes program also adapted its education classes through online, live instruction. Cove Elementary School in Corte Madera was the first school to take advantage of these classes. Second and fourth graders "Zoomed" for 30 minutes learning "Walk Around the Block (Safely)" and "Traffic Safety for Bicyclists." Safe Routes staff taught live, interactive webinars to students, including a game where students took turns "spinning a wheel" to answer safety questions. The students were engaged, but especially so when they saw their Bike Rodeo class being demonstrated by peers using drone footage. They were then able to practice what they saw online at a Pedal Playground that was chalked at their school. The goal of Safe Routes to Schools in 2021 was to provide even more interactive classes, getting students briefly out of their seats when learning. The ultimate goal, of course, was to impart the knowledge to keep them joyfully walking and biking safely.

The drone footage was made possible when High school students gave their time and expertise to film bike and pedestrian safety classes. A rodeo course depicting "mock streets" was chalked on school grounds. As students practiced safe cycling by stopping, yielding, maneuvering around obstacles and taking turns at intersections, they were filmed from above with the drone technology. Additionally, an Edna McGuire mother and her children were filmed



crossing the streets and safely navigating sidewalks while being on the lookout for cars backing out of driveways. Safe Routes instructors later edited the film to add safety content and jingles for retention. The recordings still reside on the Safe Routes Remote Learning website page and are a resource for teachers and parents to use.



## RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are intended to enhance the Safe Routes education classes. They are based on the success and feedback received from participating schools and jurisdictions.

Program	Status	Recommendations
Elementary & Middle School Pedestrian & Bicycle Safety Education	The core curriculum is second, fourth, and sixth grade pedestrian and bicycle education classes. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, many schools requested second through fifth grade classes to provide continuity of instruction with annual education.	Continue with second, fourth, and sixth grade core curriculum and expand into all grades as active mobility increases at schools. Expand the number of pedestrian classes, provide Learn to Ride (bike) classes at select Bilingual Schools, and provide safety classes for Spanish speaking parents upon request.
Elementary & Middle School Education	In 2019, Safe Routes received a generous donation to purchase a new fleet of elementary school bikes, replacing outdated bikes used in Safe Routes elementary rodeos. These bikes are primarily used in class by students who did not bring their own, perhaps because they cannot afford to own one.	Repair or replace bicycles and helmets on an as-needed basis to maintain a professional fleet. Seek grants and/or sponsors to replace 15 outdated middle school bikes that are now 12 years old. New bikes are more cost-effective than the time allotted to maintain the existing middle school fleet.
High School Education	Grants from MTC's Spare the Air Youth funded a new Share the Road curriculum, which was developed and piloted at San Marin High School in 2018. Due to the pandemic, Safe Routes was unable to teach these classes.	Continue to offer the Share the Road presentation to all public high schools. Expand by adding an on-bike education component in addition to the presentation.
Middle & High School Education	Safe Routes included e-bike safety information into existing presentations.	Expand with dedicated e-bike safety classes to middle and high school students.
All Grades	Parents are not always aware that students are taking classes at their schools. Safe Routes discontinued giving students educational bookmarks and certificates upon completion of class during this evaluation period due to budget constraints.	Reinstitute giving out bookmarks, stickers, and/or certificates to students upon completion of class. Increase Safe Routes visibility through monthly education tips sent via schools' principals and newsletters. Increase Safe Routes visibility and education awareness through various advertising channels, including school newsletters.
All Grades	During the pandemic, Safe Routes developed a library of online video content available to schools.	Continue offering online content for schools to use including lesson plans for bringing active mobility and transportation alternatives into classrooms when Safe Routes classes are not actively happening at schools.
Third & Fifth Grade Rodeos	Safe Routes currently offers all grade classes to schools upon request. The rodeo curriculum for third and fifth grade currently is exactly the same as that taught in fourth grade.	Develop specific content for schools that request third and fifth grade rodeos, allowing for a skills progression and distinct age appropriate challenge for third, fourth, and fifth grades.

# Chapter 5: Encouragement

The partnership between Safe Routes program volunteers, local schools, and Safe Routes staff make up the backbone of successful Safe Routes encouragement programs. This chapter describes Safe Routes' encouragement offerings, including new programs that were developed during the COVID-19 pandemic.

## ENCOURAGEMENT CONTESTS & SPECIAL EVENTS

In elementary schools, Safe Routes parent volunteers host contests and events promoting active and shared travel modes. In middle school and high school, events and contests are facilitated through student clubs with support from their teachers and Safe Routes coordinators. Encouragement programs are generally held in the mornings as children arrive at school. To boost participation, program volunteers are prominently stationed at the schools and provide students with recognition and incentives for walking, rolling, carpooling, or taking the bus to school.

Safe Routes encouragement events and contests are listed in Table 2.

International Walk and Roll to School Day and National Bike to School Day are two popular events hosted annually at participating elementary, middle, and high schools. These larger events are community-based and often attended by local government officials, law enforcement, and other civic leaders who join schools to celebrate healthy and safe walking and bicycling practices.

Walk and Roll Wednesdays continues to be Safe Routes to Schools' signature program, embedded annually in 35 public elementary schools. The purpose of Walk and Roll Wednesdays is to promote green travel once per week throughout the school year. Participation in Walk and Roll Wednesdays has grown due to inclusion of students who take the bus, carpool, and Park and Walk to school.



Safe Routes staff, parent volunteers, school administrators, and student club members all help run encouragement events at schools.

Table 2: Safe Routes Encouragement Programs

PROGRAM	GRADE
<b>Events</b>	
International Walk to School Day	All grades
National Bike to School Day	All grades
Teens Go Green Days	Middle & High
Walk and Roll Wednesdays	Elementary
<b>Contests</b>	
JEDI Challenge*	Elementary/Middle
Pump It Up - Classroom Contest*	Elementary/Middle
<b>Other</b>	
Art and Poetry Contest *	Elementary/Middle
Bike Blender event	All Grades
Bike Hero Award	Elementary/Middle
Bridge the Bay *	High School
Buddy Up Contest *	Elementary/Middle
Cool with Traffic Assembly	Elementary
Park and Walk Campaigns	Elementary/Middle
Poster Art	Elementary
Transit Race	High School

\*New since 2019



Encouragement events motivate students to use green and active green transportation modes.

## KEEPING IT FRESH

Marin County Safe Routes to Schools is known nationally as program innovators and the 2019-2022 years provided no exception. During the pandemic, new encouragement activities were deployed to schools each month to keep students engaged in walking and rolling. In 2021, Safe Routes launched the J.E.D.I Challenge in April followed by May the Fourth Be With You for Bike to School Day held in May. Keeping events and contests fresh with new ideas that are relevant and current is essential to capturing students' attention from year to year.

Each year, schools are provided with new ideas and tools to expand Safe Routes encouragement beyond the monthly events in their communities. These vary from in-classroom recognition to countywide recognition. Having a fun, creative, community-based program with public recognition builds sustainable green travel habits.

Newly developed in 2022, the Buddy Up Contest was designed to encourage students to travel to school together when walking, biking, carpooling, or riding the bus. One group of eight students was so inspired by the two-month contest that they formed a "peloton" to ride to school daily. Pump It Up was another new contest developed in 2021 and rolled out in Physical Education classrooms following their bike rodeos. Classroom teachers tracked how students traveled to school for a chance to win and in doing so, provided daily reinforcement for walking and rolling to school.

The annual Bike Hero Award, held each May, recognizes students who are good "roll" models - those who ride frequently while following the rules of the road safely. There were 150 nominees from across the county in May 2021, up from 45 when first initiated in 2018.

Schools are always encouraged to add innovation to their events and contests. Novato Mayor Pat Eklund, who often appears at Safe Routes events, awarded two Olive students "Mayor for the Day" for winning a walk and roll contest in the fall of 2021. Fire truck escorts can be seen leading a parade of family cyclists to schools for International Walk to School Day every October. Manor, Lucas Valley, and Cove elementary schools have created Bike Trains to lead students to schools on event days. Mascots often greet students at welcome tables, reinforcing the message that walking and riding to school is fun. Safe Routes events and contests are the catalysts for these initiatives, and whether large or small, these initiatives strengthen the program and increase buy-in from school communities to choose active forms of travel to school.



# Become a Planet J.E.D.I.

**JOYFUL. EXCITED. DEVOTED. IMAGINATIVE.**  
by Walking & Rolling During Earth Month

Celebrate the Planet by Walking, Biking, Busing or Carpooling to School: **Wednesdays April 13, 20 & 27 and May 4.** See you at the **J.E.D.I.** welcome table!

**WEEK OF:** \_\_\_\_\_

## 4TH GRADE PUMP IT UP! CHALLENGE

### WALK, BIKE, OR SKATE TO SCHOOL

The 4th grade class with the most walkers and rollers will win a Popsicle Party!

ART: Ariah Whipkey, White Hill Middle School

# MAY THE 4TH BE WITH YOU

## NATIONAL BIKE TO SCHOOL DAY

**STUDENTS CAN WALK, SKATE, AND SCOOT TOO ON WEDNESDAY MAY 4TH**

Art: Violet Wilson, White Hill Middle School

## Buddy up Contest

**Travel to School Together!**

Contests and events encourage students to use green modes and reinforce safety practices learned through education programs.



## EQUITY FOCUS WITH ENCOURAGEMENT PROGRAMS

Equity was a key focus of this evaluation period with an aim to include more students in events and contests regardless of age, ability, or financial well-being. Encouraging more students to Park and Walk a short distance to school to receive a small prize or to participate in a contest helps families overcome the challenges that they may face when travelling to school. These challenges include challenging intersections, incomplete streets for walking and rolling, long distances to school, busy parents needing to get to work, or ability to afford a bicycle. Additionally, students who ride a bus to school are invited to participate in Walk and Roll events; many ride the bus out of necessity yet desire to partake in Safe Routes events.

Safe Routes has employed Bilingual Coordinators since 2011 to serve schools with primarily Spanish speaking families. In the last three years, the number of Safe Routes “designated Bilingual Schools” has grown from six to nine, including Martin Luther King Elementary in Sausalito, an equity priority school with mostly English speaking families. However, many schools with predominantly English speaking parents also have a large population of Spanish speaking families; therefore, all schools receive communications in both English and Spanish and internally, staff collaborate to address the cultural differences and challenges for these equity priority constituents. For example, 37% of Bahia Vista caregivers surveyed (majority Spanish speaking) say that spending time with their child affects their decision to walk or roll to school. Comparatively, predominantly English-speaking Brookside parents prioritize health benefits from active travel (38%) and environmental factors when considering the decision to walk or roll to school. Safe Routes is mindful of the different messaging that resonated with varying demographics; having a Bilingual Coordinator therefore helps to tailor the program for the different communities.

Refer to Chapter 7 for more insight into Safe Routes’ equity focus.



## TEENS GO GREEN - MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL

The Teens Go Green program relies on partnerships formed with teachers and students to host Safe Routes encouragement programs. From 2019-2022, Safe Routes collaborated with nine public middle schools and three public high schools for events. Post-pandemic, Safe Routes was able to re-establish relationships with teachers to host International Walk To School Day in all public middle schools.

Middle schools generally have the highest percentage of students who use active and shared transportation choices: over 60%. This is somewhat expected as students are of an age where they can travel more independently. Yet this shift to green travel has increased by 20% to 40% from baseline years. This success can be attributed to actively participating middle schools where on-going education and encouragement activities have existed for 15 years or more, and where “feeder” elementary schools have had high Safe Routes engagement.

The COVID-19 pandemic took a toll on the on-going partnerships previously established with high school students; the encouragement program will take time to re-establish as former connections have since graduated. Despite not being allowed on campus from March 2020 until June 2022, Safe Routes had some successes. The Cory’s Ride program was developed through a generous donation made to Marin County Bicycle Coalition (MCBC), providing bicycles and helmets to students who would not otherwise be able to afford them as well as the on-going education to sustain their cycling. Due to Safe Routes’ professional reputation and educational expertise, MCBC was able to successfully make in-roads with San Rafael High School teachers who identified students who would benefit most.

Safe Routes, through an MTC-funded Spare the Air Youth (STAY) grant awarded to MCBC, was also able to host a Bridge the Bay event in April, 2022, bringing students from various high schools together for a day of climate action. The Bridge the Bay event was extremely successful: the Bay Area Bike Mobile, joined by high school students, repaired roughly 60 bicycles for families who live in the Canal Area of San Rafael.







Safe Routes encouragement events engage student of all ages both on- and off-campus.



## WHO IS SAFE ROUTES?

### The Student Volunteer



Nayad Garcia, a San Rafael High School student, helped “wrench bicycles” at the first Bridge the Bay event in April 2022. Bridge the Bay was a high school-inspired event hosted at Pickleweed Park in San Rafael’s Canal area to promote bicycling among the community.

Nayad was one of three high school students to join the Bay Area Bike Mobile to repair 60 bicycles for local families. Nayad, who credits his early love of bicycling and mechanics to his father, fixes bicycles for friends who have mechanical issues; because of his technical expertise, he was invited to help the Bike Mobile team. According to Nayad, who biked 10 miles to Pickleweed Park as a child, “to fix that many bicycles for the community where I spent a lot of time as a kid, felt great.” Naya added, “It was awesome. Many of the bikes were going to be ridden by kids making it possible for them to enjoy the outdoors and explore just like I did when I was a kid.” As the only Spanish speaking bike mechanic, Nayad also enjoyed the responsibility of handling the bike intakes with the community.

For future Bridge the Bay events, Nayad recommends adding a bike ride in the neighborhood and providing bikes and helmets to those who do not have them. Nayad points out, “lots of high schoolers either don’t own a bike or the bike they have is really old, too small, or needs to be repaired to be ridden again.”

Overall, he finds it a pleasure to attend the quarterly meetings and support Safe Routes as best he can. “I think we have a good relationship with Safe Routes and now that COVID is behind us, I believe Safe Routes has been able to make connections at the schools.”

“

With our full in-person instruction in place at Bacich and Kent, we would love to kick off more of your Safe Routes to Schools programs, encourage more students to regularly walk and roll to school, and possibly integrate other pedestrian/bike safety programs beyond the 2nd and 4th grade that you would recommend.

– Bacich Assistant Principal

## WHO IS SAFE ROUTES?

### Long-Serving Volunteer



Kelly Smith says that she has volunteered with Safe Routes for seven years because the organization's values align with those of her family. They all love to bike, are passionate about

the Earth, and want to empower students and families to feel safe walking and biking to school.

As a parent, Kelly is always concerned about the safety of the children on the streets. "Many drivers on the road are distracted, in a rush, or not looking out for pedestrians and bikers. When we bike to school, we are always on high alert and talking about proactive awareness with our daughter."

Kelly appreciates that the Safe Routes team is always considering fun activities, publicity, and prizes for the students.

She is particularly excited about the program's community involvement. "Inviting and involving students, teachers, families, staff, and community members to be an integral part of the program is by far what works best. Our incredible principal, community liaison, and PE teacher all champion the program. Our neighborhood crossing guard, who we lovingly call 'Papa Pete', [keeps] our children safe."

### The Engaging Art Teachers



For 10 years, White Hill Middle School art teachers Doretta Ruzzier-Gaul and Emma Beuchamp have led their students to design Safe Routes posters and flyers that publicized the major Safe Routes events throughout the county. For Bike to

School Day on May 4, 2021, their students enthusiastically designed the Star Wars characters for the popular May the Fourth Be With You flyers advertising the event in newsletters, social media, and hundreds of classrooms at 45 schools.

According to Doretta, "Working with Safe Routes gives us an opportunity to teach students successful design components that they can then apply to their own creations. While teaching, we reinforce how we all want to be mindful of our environment while being engaged in healthy activities such as walking and biking." Emma adds, "It's great for our middle school artists to see that their artwork has a direct impact in the community they live in, that they can create something that helps others to make positive changes to the environment or to promote a healthy lifestyle."

Community engagement is a core value of Safe Routes to Schools. As Doretta states, "it is impactful for our students to see their art on display in their own communities." Doretta and Emma are commended for their years of dedication to Safe Routes, providing meaningful artistic experiences that benefit their students and the community at large.



## CASE STUDY

### Why Parents Love to Volunteer



Safe Routes to Schools' encouragement program to promote walking and rolling to school is made possible by a team of dedicated volunteers who host contests and events at their schools. What might move parents to get up earlier than all the other families to host welcome tables to greet walkers and rollers at schools? Parents Joey and Stacy Shepp from Manor Elementary have the answers!

"As bike commuters ourselves, we enjoy the benefits of biking more than driving: exercise, lower stress, no need to park a car and feeling good about reducing our carbon footprint. These are values that we want to make sure get passed on to our child, and all the kids that we can influence."

Safe Routes to Schools has often been described as a community program, fostering friendships and family connectedness through the simple pleasure of walking and rolling to school together. This sentiment is echoed by the Shepps. "It is a great way to be social with the other parents and kids, establishing a face to face community that you just don't get when you drive to school."

"When we started biking to school, we found the Walk and Roll program to provide great incentives to reinforce the habit for kids." According to the Shepps, more than half of the Manor students participate regularly. Joey Shepp adds, "when we make announcements about the Walk and Roll program at our morning school assemblies, the kids cheer with excitement and purpose. I believe many families have started biking and walking to school because of this program, and continue to make it a habit because their kids love the community and prizes. I consider Walk and Roll to be a core program of our school's culture and I'm thrilled to be part of it."

The Shepps also lead a two mile Bike Train with several meet-up locations where families can join the ride enroute. According to the Schepps, the bike train is "an exciting parade to school where the kids learn bike safety skills and have fun waving to all the onlookers who smile back." Going above and beyond, the Shepps provide the skills to develop confident, responsible riders including observing traffic signs, using hand signals, and following bike lanes and sharrows, all while getting to school early to enjoy the Walk and Roll prizes.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are intended to enhance the Safe Routes encouragement program. They are based on the success and feedback received from participating schools and jurisdictions.

Program	Status	Recommendations
Walk and Roll Wednesdays - Elementary Events	Since the pandemic, the number of participating elementary schools has returned to 35. Safe Routes participation levels are growing due to adding Park and Walk and rewarding carpooling and riding the bus to the Walk and Roll days. This was done to make the encouragement program more equitable.	Increase the number of incentives from 5,000 per event to 8,000 per event as participation, in monthly events has grown.
Park and Walk - Elementary & Middle Schools	Park and Walk has been embedded into all events and contests, giving all students an equitable opportunity to participate regardless of age, economic standing (e.g., ability to purchase bikes), or distance from school.	Continue promoting Safe Routes and Walk in all events and help schools identify Park and Walk locations.
Contests - Elementary & Middle Schools	Annual contests have been refreshed; the J.E.D.I. Challenge was added in spring 2022. Fall contests were discontinued due to the risk of fires.	Continue with one spring contest per year. Continue seeking business sponsorships for prizes to encourage active mobility such as bicycles.
Recognition Awards	Bike Hero, Buddy Up, and school assemblies provide student Safe Routes recognition opportunities at schools.	Continue with new, creative recognition awards to supplement the program.
High Schools - Teens Go Green	Safe Routes is working with student clubs (leadership, environmental, etc.) at five high schools to create on-campus and off-campus events such as Bridge the Bay.	Continue school events with student clubs. Use a mobile app such as Ride Amigos to make contests more age appropriate for upper grade students.
Middle Schools - Teens Go Green	Teens Go Green Coordinators currently work with students in all ten public middle schools to host major annual events: International Walk to School Day (October) and Bike to School Day (May).	Continue with two annual events per year at all schools and continue with specialized events at schools that have club support.
Focus Groups for New Encouragement Programs	In 2009 with a grant from the BAAQMD, Safe Routes conducted a focus group of parent leaders that resulted in development of the Green Ways to School program. This program generated the highest boost in green trips since the program's beginning. Input from volunteers on the ground was instrumental in making this program a success.	Conduct focus groups of past and present team leaders to develop new innovative encouragement programs.



“

Thanks for this sweet way to encourage and celebrate our students walking and rolling to school! It's incredible to know that 300 of our Falcons did so today! Much appreciation for your part in making this happen.

– Kent Middle School Assistant Principal

My students are excited they did so well with the challenge. Many of them were very motivated and walked or rode even when they would not usually do so.

– Bacich Physical Education Teacher



## Chapter 6: Engineering

The Safe Routes to Schools program recognizes that, while education and encouragement can change behavior, roadway design also plays a big role when families decide how their students will travel to and from school. The lack of comfortable and direct walking and biking paths to school, along with challenging intersections to cross, represent some of the primary barriers preventing parents from allowing their children to walk and bike to school. This chapter describes how the Engineering component of the Safe Routes program works to remove these barriers.



*The Safe Routes Engineering program designs treatments to make it safer for students to walk and roll to school, such as this improvement to the Bon Air Road & Magnolia Avenue intersection in Larkspur.*

Safe Routes helps communities identify circulation and access issues and solutions. This process includes walk and bike audits and the creation of improvement concept plans, which eventually become part of a jurisdiction's infrastructure improvement list. Often the basis for grant proposals, these plans are a critical part of Safe Routes, which has been extremely successful in funding infrastructure improvements across the country. To date, over 180 Safe Routes projects totaling over \$55 million have been constructed or are currently in planning or design.

Previous surveys have found the following five improvements to be most effective in encouraging walking and biking to school:

- ▶ Bike/pedestrian paths separated from traffic
- ▶ Improved intersections
- ▶ Bike lanes
- ▶ Crossing guards
- ▶ Marked crosswalks
- ▶ Sidewalks
- ▶ Signage and street markings



## DEVELOPING CONCEPT PLANS

The Safe Routes engineering team works closely with each of the participating Task Forces to identify short- and long-term engineering projects that can improve walking and biking to school. This process consists of the following steps (see also Figure 9):

- ▶ A walk and bike audit is conducted with the engineering team, Task Force members, and representatives from the local jurisdiction and law enforcement.
- ▶ The audit identifies operational and physical obstacles within the school study area, which are then prioritized by the jurisdiction and Task Force.
- ▶ The engineering team, working closely with the local jurisdiction’s Public Works department, develops draft conceptual plans for the highest prioritized locations to address the operational and physical obstacles within the school area.
- ▶ The plans are presented to the district Task Force for review.
- ▶ Staff from the local jurisdiction seeks funding to develop detailed engineering designs and, ultimately, to construct the recommended measures.

The concept plans include both short-term and longer-range recommendations. Short-term measures can typically be implemented within one to two years, are relatively low cost, and can be funded locally. Larger projects need to rely on other funds, including grant funding from State or Federal programs. In addition, TAM’s Safe Pathways program is a key source of funding for schools that have participated in Safe Routes planning efforts or have the project on their infrastructure improvement list. (for more information on funding sources, see the Funding chapter.)

## ACHIEVING RESULTS

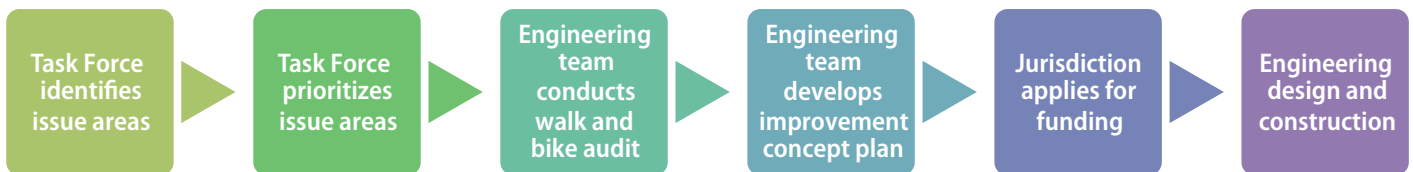
As mentioned, the Safe Routes program has been increasingly successful in implementing engineering projects throughout the county. Figure 10 identifies the locations of infrastructure improvements completed as a result of the Safe Routes engineering process during the 2019/2020, 2020/2021, and 2021/2022 school years.

Much of the success of the Safe Routes program can be attributed to the collaborative work of the Task Forces with local jurisdictions. Engineering plans need to be developed and implemented with the support of both community members and city officials. It is particularly important that Public Works staff from the relevant cities and the Safe Routes engineering team work collaboratively with Task Forces to address their concerns. Without consistent Public Works involvement, Task Forces can lose confidence in the ability to improve walking and bicycling infrastructure and safety.

A toolbox of pedestrian and bicyclist enhancement measures is presented in the following pages.



*Representatives from schools staff, parents, and city staff come together to identify issues during walk audits.*





**Figure 9: Safe Routes Engineering Process Diagram**

Figure 10: Completed Infrastructure Projects



**LEGEND**

-  Infrastructure Project
-  Infrastructure Project Initiated During Evaluation Period



**Safe Routes Engineering Toolbox**



**School area signage** warns drivers that they are entering a school zone and/or a school crossing.



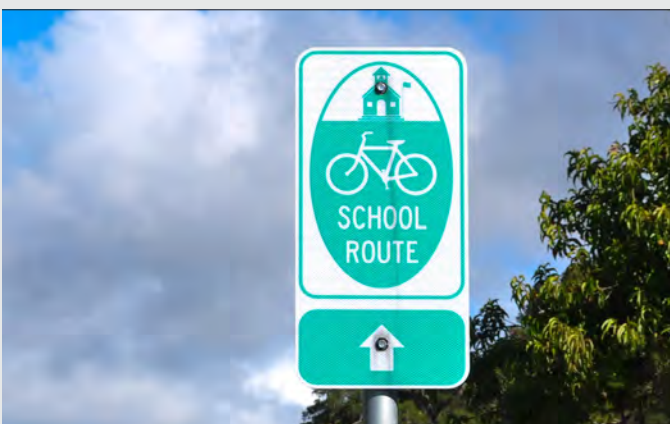
**School area pavement markings** also warn drivers that they are about to enter a school zone or encounter a school crossing.



**High-visibility crosswalk striping** provides heightened visibility over standard crosswalk markings.



**Bicycle lanes** designate an exclusive space for cyclists through the use of pavement markings and signage. Bike lanes visually remind drivers of cyclists' right to the street.



**School bike routes** provide children guidance for the recommended route to and from school, while increasing driver awareness of the presence of children as co-users of the roadway.



**Curb extensions**, sometimes called bulb-outs, make pedestrians more visible to drivers while providing additional room to wait before crossing the street. The extensions also reduce crosswalk lengths and slow turning vehicles.





**Median refuge islands** are protected areas where pedestrians, who may be less able to cross the street in one stage, may safely pause or wait while crossing a street.



**Extending sidewalks** where they currently do not exist provides access to schools. Sidewalk widening can enable pedestrians to walk side-by-side or wheelchair users to pass each other.



**Rectangular rapid flashing beacons** are pedestrian-activated beacons that supplement warning signs. They have been proved to increase driver yield compliance by alerting drivers of pedestrians waiting to cross the street.



**Radar speed feedback signs** display drivers' speeds compared to the street's speed limit, altering drivers if they drove in excess of the limit.



**Multi-use pathways** are shared between pedestrians and bicyclists and allow them to travel separated from vehicular traffic. Paths are typically at least ten feet wide to provide bi-directional travel.



**A cycle track** is an exclusive bike facility physically separated from vehicular lanes or parking lanes and distinct from the sidewalk. Cycle tracks offer a higher level of safety and convenience by separating cyclists from vehicle traffic and pedestrians.



## LOW COST IMPROVEMENTS & SAFE PATHWAYS

TAM's Safe Pathways to Schools program funds construction projects that make the commute to school safer. In 2019 TAM issued a Safe Pathways to Schools call for projects as part of a fourth funding cycle.

As part of the Safe Pathways application process, TAM categorized projects as either "small" or "large." Small Safe Pathways projects are projects that require \$50,000 or less to design and construct and that should be completed within one year from commencement. Large projects have a maximum requested amount of \$400,000.

The fourth cycle resulted in funding totaling \$5.2 million. This breaks down to approximately \$4.5 million for 13 large projects and \$700,000 for 14 small projects.

To date, over \$14.6 million has been allocated to Safe Routes infrastructure improvements through Safe Pathways funding. A fifth cycle will occur in 2023 or 2024.

## INNOVATIONS

The Safe Routes engineering team helps jurisdictions develop projects featuring innovative engineering solutions based on the latest design guidelines and recommended best practices. Described below are examples of two projects that were implemented during this evaluation period and will provide key safety improvements at schools in Marin County.

### City of Larkspur Bon Air Road and Magnolia Boulevard Complete Streets Projects

In 2022, Magnolia Boulevard and Bon Air Road in Larkspur received multimodal infrastructure upgrades, including pedestrian enhancements, bike lane improvements, and traffic calming (see photo at the beginning of this chapter). After a multi-year process, Bon Air Road saw the completion of the new multimodal bridge, which serves as a critical connection across Corte Madera Creek. The bridge fills a gap in the pedestrian and bicycle network with new wide sidewalks and bike lanes that better connect pathways, trails, and bike lanes to schools, businesses, and the surrounding neighborhoods.

Connected to the new bridge, the intersection of Bon Air Road and Magnolia Boulevard also received a variety of multimodal safety enhancements. The new intersection design replaces the previous yield-controlled vehicle right-turn slip lanes with protective islands to remove this pedestrian-vehicle conflict zone, to provide a dedicated space for people on bicycles to maneuver through the intersection, and to make vehicle right turns safer. Additional

enhancements to the traffic signal and landscaping provide for an improved transportation experience. Repurposing the previous vehicle-centric roadway and intersection design better balances the needs of all public transportation network users.

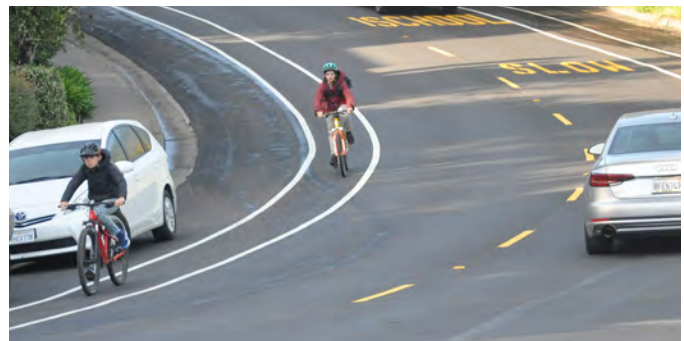
The opportunity to make improvements along the city-wide Magnolia Boulevard corridor while it was being repaved was used to add more than a mile of new bike lanes and upgraded buffered bike lanes, enhanced pedestrian crossings, and improved vehicle travel lanes. Near Marin Primary & Middle School, several uncontrolled pedestrian crossings were also enhanced with traffic calming features, including painted "bulb-outs" and reflective delineator posts. These improvements help slow vehicular traffic and increase the visibility of children crossing the road.

Overall, these improvements provide greater and safer opportunities for students walking and rolling to nearby schools.

### City of Sausalito Nevada Street Traffic Calming

The Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Academy's Nevada Campus, which serves kindergarten through fifth grade, is accessed via Nevada Street. The number of students walking and cycling along Nevada Street has increased over the years. However, prior to 2021 the roadway was not well suited for active transportation. It experienced high vehicle speeds yet lacked bicycle facilities and high-visibility crosswalk markings.

Based on extensive community input and funding from TAM's Safe Pathways infrastructure program, the City of Sausalito designed and constructed traffic calming improvements along the 1,300-foot span of Nevada Street between Bridgeway and Lincoln Drive/Marin Avenue. Enhancements included new paving, narrowed vehicular travel lanes, edge line and buffer markings, new curb ramps and high-visibility crosswalks, and school area pavement markings and signage. The traffic calming project has led to lowered vehicular travel speeds and a more comfortable facility for walking and cycling.



*Traffic calming elements and new bicycle facilities make it easier for students to travel to school along Nevada Street.*

## SUGGESTED ROUTES TO SCHOOLS MAPS

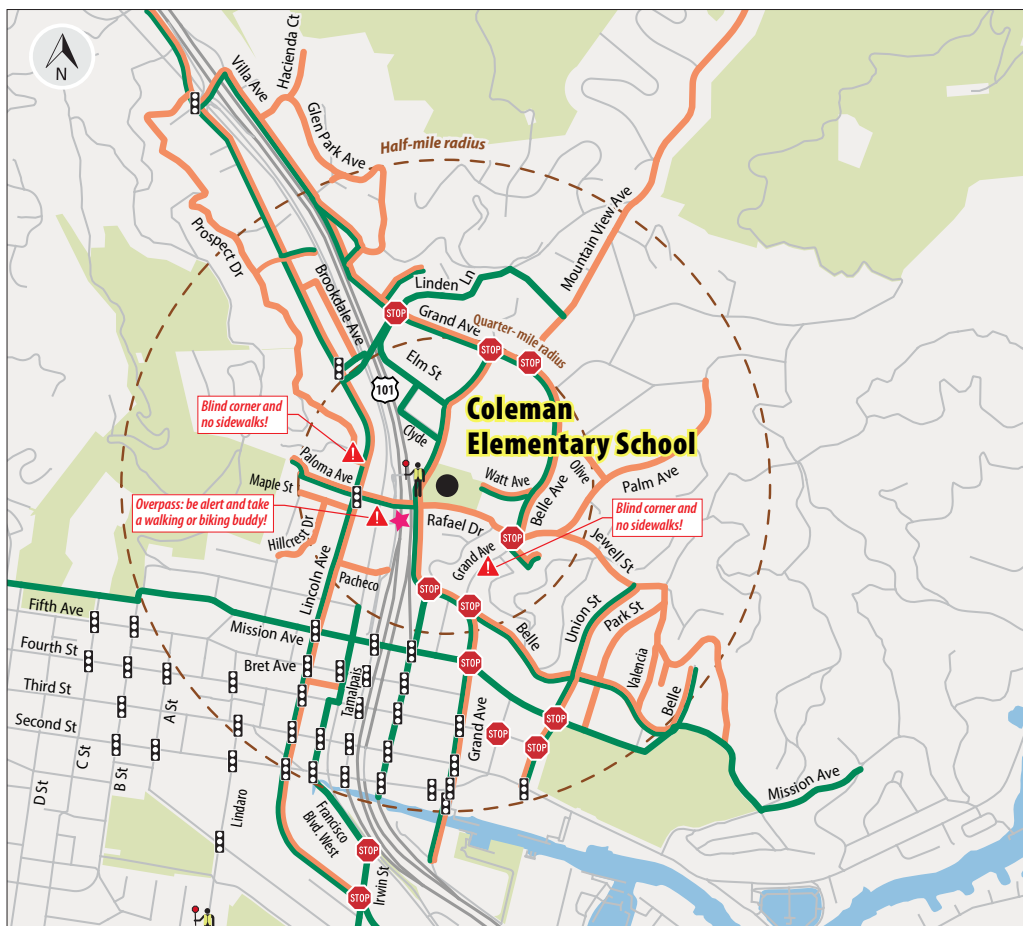
The Safe Routes to Schools program works with several schools each year to develop suggested school route maps. From 2019 to 2022 19 maps were prepared for schools throughout the county. These maps are used to inform students and families about suggested walking and bicycling routes to school as well as to identify priority areas that may need to be addressed for potential future infrastructure improvements.

Route maps are created in collaboration with staff from Public Works departments, school administration, and parent volunteers who are familiar with the conditions of the various routes to schools. Each map begins with a plotting session. Parent representatives draw on a large-scale map the preferred route for students who walk and bicycle to and from their neighborhood. During the COVID-19 pandemic, this method has been modified to allow online working sessions. Base maps are distributed before the online session to provide preliminary information to start the discussion.

Walking routes are drawn to at least one-half mile radius out from the school while bicycle routes extend past the one-mile

radius mark. Areas of concern are called out on the map and the challenges are discussed by the group. Using the information gathered at the working session, a preliminary map is created. In addition to the suggested walking and biking routes, the map shows additional key features such as crossing guard locations, traffic signals, and all-way-stop controlled locations. The maps also include tips for safe biking and walking in both English and Spanish. The preliminary map is then presented to the representative Task Force, where members discuss the recommended routes and make changes to the routes as necessary. Once the maps are approved by the Task Force and receive signoff from their jurisdiction, the school is able to distribute the maps. Depending on the level of funding available, some schools choose to print physical copies and send them home with the students, while other schools provide digital copies to families via their websites.

Visit <https://www.saferoutestoschools.org/about/suggested-routes-to-school-maps/> to view and download suggested routes to school maps.



JUNE 2022

### Suggested Routes to School

### COLEMAN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

San Rafael City School District



**LEGEND**

- Recommended Walking Routes
- Recommended Bike Route
- All-way Stop
- Traffic Signals
- Approved Crossing Guard Location
- Bicycle & Pedestrian Overcrossing



## WHO IS SAFE ROUTES?

### The Committed Engineer



Lauren Davini was the key traffic engineer working with the San Rafael Task Force over the last several years. She acknowledges the importance of Safe Routes bringing together City staff and school communities. "Safe Routes is extremely valuable because it is an opportunity for public agency staff to meet with the parents and school faculty who

have the first-hand experience...[this] helps focus City staff attention on the most critical issues."

Lauren understands the necessity of community input on projects. "Community members often have valuable input regarding proposed changes. When City staff listens to the community, trust is built and that trust can carry forward to future projects. The most successful projects are when all parties meet in the middle and compromise."

One vital project is the ongoing construction of a multi-use pathway on Second Street. "Personally, and professionally, I am so excited that it is finally being constructed...the letters of support and public comment from Safe Routes and parents of children that would benefit from this connection, were hugely impactful in reiterating the importance of this connection."

Lauren recently left the City to study urban planning at Erasmus University in Rotterdam, the Netherlands. While she will be missed, she will surely be a valuable asset in her next endeavor.

### The Steadfast Volunteer



Jean Severinghaus is a long-time bicycle advocate. For seven years, she served on the nine-county bicycle advisory committee to Caltrans. "Right now I've been working on trying to move forward the north-south greenway in Central Marin on the SMART right-of-way."

Jean doesn't have children, but she joined two Safe Routes Task Forces as a neighbor. "We had a group in my neighborhood that had the school kids involved trying to improve Redwood Highway and the route across the pedestrian overcrossing to Hall Middle School and Redwood High School. It was really clear that the kids, especially at middle school, had talents and could organize and so I was working with them and out of that I started working with Safe Routes and then I discovered that Safe Routes to Schools is really a phenomenal thing."

Jean especially appreciates the power of Safe Routes walk audits. "Walk audits are gems...it brings together the public servants, the Department of Public Works, the elected officials, the parents; and you watch the kids coming and going and all of a sudden, they go, oh right, we need ramps here, we didn't understand that there wasn't a ramp here. Because you bring everybody together, you get done what nobody could get done."

"I found that to be true in San Rafael and in the Larkspur-Corte-Madera area too. It's really a worthy organization to support."



## CASE STUDY

### WALK AUDITS: COLLABORATING TO IMPROVE WALKING & ROLLING



When an issue is considered of high importance because it serves a large number of students and poses a safety risk to them, Safe Routes Task Force members go out into the field to assess the conditions on the ground.

Students walking or biking from the west side of Highway 101 to Venetia Valley School currently have to cross a freeway entrance on North San Pedro Road. A resident suggested that a dirt pathway paralleling the SMART tracks might be improved to be used as an alternative route. While there is currently a bicycle path on the other side of the tracks, it comes out far from the neighborhoods that Venetia Valley serves.

A walk audit was held in the winter of 2021 and was attended by representatives of the residents, Marin County Supervisor's aide (currently the District One Supervisor), Marin County Parks, SMART, San Rafael City Council and School District, San Rafael Public Works, Caltrans, and Safe Routes staff. The ownership of

the pathway falls under all of these jurisdictions, making this a complex project

Attendees expressed their enthusiasm for the route to be improved. They observed that the dirt path is well used despite having one section that is narrow and steep on one side. The area by the freeway over/under pass is now managed by SMART. As a North Bay-based agency, this could be helpful to move the project forward despite the high number of agencies involved and high cost.

Grant funding will need to be obtained to pave the pathway and install lighting. This path provides an opportunity for a safer, more comfortable option for students traveling on the west side to get to Venetia Valley. It would also be a boon for other neighborhood residents. Safe Routes is continuing to coordinate with all the various jurisdictions to explore options for funding and improving the pathway.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The table below provides recommendations associated with Safe Routes' engineering program and is based on the success and feedback received from participating jurisdictions.

Program	Status	Recommendations
Identification of Short-Term Projects	Safe Routes engineers coordinate with Task Forces and municipal public works departments to identify issues and recommend short-term improvement measures to be implemented by local jurisdictions.	Continue to provide engineering and safety improvement support to public works departments. Work with Safe Routes Task Forces to identify short-term remedies. Continue to provide design services for low-cost projects.
Long-Term Infrastructure Projects	Municipalities have installed over 180 infrastructure projects to improve school travel safety including, but not limited to, sidewalk gap closures, shorter crosswalks, bicycle lanes, and use of new tools such as cycle tracks and protected intersections.	Focus infrastructure and safety improvements on high vehicular volume corridors, in areas with high levels of school enrollment, and in disadvantaged communities. Continue exploring new and improved tools for improving pedestrian and bicycle safety.
Suggested Routes to School Maps	Prepared Suggested Routes to School maps illustrate preferred walking and bicycling routes along with existing sidewalks, bikeways, crosswalks, crossing guards, and other features.	Continue to provide new route maps for schools. Accelerate route map production to complete travel plans. Update existing maps as necessary to account for changes in crossing guard locations and walking and bicycling facilities.
Task Forces	Safe Routes Task Forces pivoted to online meetings during the pandemic. This became very popular, increased participation, and made it easier for city and school staff to attend. Task Forces for West Marin and Ross were added.	Continue to offer Task Forces online. Reduce the number of meetings per year for smaller Task Forces or when the workload is reduced for that Task Force.
Equity in Safe Routes Engineering Program	Bilingual parents rarely attend Task Force meetings; when they do, translation services are required.	Instead of getting bilingual parents to Task Force meetings, the task force facilitator should attend existing school meetings to increase outreach with Spanish speaking families to identify infrastructure issues and create suggested routes to school maps.



# Chapter 7: Equity

Equitable access to safe and healthy routes to schools is a key pillar of Safe Routes to Schools. As a core value, Safe Routes to Schools strives to equitably meet the needs of all students and their families – regardless of ability or background – through a number of diverse programs, engagement opportunities, and support for using active and shared travel to and from schools. During the 2019/2020-2021/2022 school years Safe Routes has ensured equitable access to its services through many strategies, which are detailed in this chapter.

## A FOCUS ON EQUITY

Safe Routes incorporates bilingual services and cultural sensitivity to reach all students at schools participating in the program. A Bilingual Coordinator and Spanish-speaking Lead Instructor provides outreach and communication with Latinx students and families. Classes, encouragement activities, and all communications, including newsletters and printed materials, are accessible in Spanish. Programs are created with a cultural awareness and sensitivity through Safe Routes' ongoing partnership with principals and family liaisons who work directly with Latinx families at schools.

Safe Routes is aware that not all students can afford bicycles, other cycling equipment, and repairs. For students who may not own a bicycle, Safe Routes provides quality bicycles and helmets for students to borrow so they can participate in classes to learn the rules of the road. Through partnering with MCBC, a number of bicycles are provided each year to students who do not have an opportunity to own one. When needed, Safe Routes works with school communities to help outfit students with helmets. The program also enjoys a partnership with the Bay Area Bike

Mobile to provide simple maintenance repairs and equipment for students; this particularly benefits those who may not have access to bicycle repair shops. For over five years, Safe Routes has annually scheduled half a dozen student-instructed repair days at Marin Schools.

Safe Routes task forces strive for inclusive participation from school communities. Meetings are now conducted virtually to assist those with time and distance constraints. Meetings are open to the public and can be translated into Spanish on request. Safe Routes staff also work directly with schools to gather and address safety concerns if school communities are unable to attend virtual meetings.

Safe Routes works to reduce traffic congestion around campuses for the safe arrival of every student, regardless of mode. To this end, Safe Routes encourages students to carpool, ride the bus, and to walk, bike, or scooter at least part way to school if they live too far. The goal is to prioritize safe access onto campus for all children who walk, bike, or roll by reducing the number of cars backed up onto arterial roads from school drop-off zones.



*Safe Routes prioritizes an equitable approach to reach all students at participating schools regardless of age, ability, or background.*



## BILINGUAL PROGRAM

The Safe Routes bilingual program currently comprises nine schools in underserved communities in Marin County where the majority of students speak Spanish at home. In six of those schools, between 50 and 90 percent of the students are eligible for the free and reduced meals program. Given the cultural differences, language barrier, and unaddressed level of needs among the student population, the bilingual schools require a different approach than the less racially-diverse institutions of learning.

Safe Routes has had a designated Spanish-speaking coordinator for the past eight years to facilitate inclusion of parents with limited or no English proficiency. All written communications with families are designed in English and Spanish, including safety messages, announcements, classroom flyers, posters, and presentations. Printed communications have been adapted for a group of parents where illiteracy in both languages is prevalent, so the designs are mostly visual, with very little text. Simplicity is key because in many cases, the children are the ones who read and interpret the messages to their parents. Translation is also provided during meetings with parents.

Beyond the literacy and language barrier, there are also cultural differences that need to be addressed. To begin with, the priorities for the families of color tend to differ compared to other families. While climate change is a big concern among communities comprised largely of white families, for Hispanics, health concerns such as child obesity are the main motivators for walking and rolling to school. Academic performance is also important to families of color: thus Safe Routes' messaging about "waking the brain in the morning with a walk or bike ride to school" is one that grabs parents' attention.



*The bilingual program works to overcome language and other barriers at schools with a high proportion of non-English speaking families.*

### As of the end of the 2021-2022 school year, the bilingual program included:

- ▶ Bahia Vista Elementary School
- ▶ Laurel Dell Elementary School
- ▶ Coleman Elementary School
- ▶ Venetia Valley K-8
- ▶ Loma Verde Elementary School
- ▶ Lynwood Elementary School
- ▶ Lu Sutton Elementary School
- ▶ Olive Elementary School
- ▶ Bayside Martin Luther King Junior Academy

Another communications challenge with bilingual communities includes the fact that email is not very widely used; in many cases, letters in the students' Friday folders go unread or unseen. Over the past several years Safe Routes has learned that text messaging in Spanish is the most effective way to communicate with the Hispanic community. For that reason, Safe Routes has recruited the help of San Rafael and Novato School Districts' communications directors to disseminate text announcements about upcoming activities and publications. Thanks to this effort, the readership of the Spanish-language newsletter has increased exponentially and participation in the events has also improved.

Finding volunteers among the Hispanic communities can be difficult. Most of these parents come from countries where working for free is not common, and so bilingual schools require more direct involvement from Safe Routes for their events, communications, and scheduling. The Bilingual Coordinator is constantly present in the schools to make herself known and trusted by the communities in order to recruit and retain volunteers. Once aboard with the program, these parents need to be groomed and trained extensively to get them to stay with the program for an extended period of time. Examples of the success of this tactic can be seen at Bahia Vista, where some volunteers have been in place between two and five years, and Venetia Valley, where one of the volunteers has been with the program for eight years.

Recruitment would be nearly impossible without the partnership between the Bilingual Coordinator and the schools' family liaisons, school employees helping their constituents navigate not only the school system, but also other government services, such as food stamps, Cal Fresh, and health services. In many cases, the family

liaisons introduce Safe Routes personnel to the families and help recruit volunteers for the events. They are, in the bilingual schools, the main connection between the schools and Safe Routes, even more so than the principals.

Most Hispanic parent volunteers not only require a trusting relationship with Safe Routes, but also further incentives to remain with the program. One of the most valuable recruitment tools in the last few years has been the offer of a \$20 appreciation gift card from a supermarket or a store such as Target. The Marin Health and Human Services (HHS) has been providing the funds for these gift cards.

Finally, the lack of resources among these communities must be noted when speaking of their involvement with Safe Routes. Often it is difficult for the families to provide bicycles or helmets for their children, who are ride unprotected. A contest conducted in 2020 asked parents to send pictures of their children exercising out of their homes; Safe Routes noticed many students, particularly among those from Lynwood Elementary School, were not wearing helmets in the submitted photos. When the school reopened, the family liaison reported that 67 students did not have any kind of head protection while riding a bicycle or a scooter. Safe Routes purchased helmets, using TAM funds, and delivered them to the school. Most recently, at the end of the 2021-2022 school year, there was another donation of 17 helmets for Lynwood Elementary School, 20 for Lu Sutton Elementary School, and five for Loma

Verde Elementary School thanks to a crowdfunding campaign introduced by school board member Diane Gasson.

## PARTNERSHIPS TO PROMOTE EQUITY

The Marin HHS has been an invaluable partner since the inception of the bilingual program. When first approached by Safe Routes eight years ago, HHS sent some of their staff and interns to help with encouragement events where volunteers were not available. They also brought along stickers and other incentives that were left over from their own events. Since 2015, the partnership has deepened to the point where HHS provided Safe Routes with a \$2,000 annual grant (with a pause in 2022) and most recently, the agency pledged \$10,000 for 2023. That money will make it possible to introduce more schools to the bilingual program.

HHS's grants have been pivotal for the bilingual program, funding the printing costs of publicity, safety messages, and contest cards. During the COVID-19 lockdown, almost all the grant funding was used for printing contest materials and purchasing active toys that were distributed through partner organizations. Thanks to that strategy, the bilingual program was able to keep pushing for children's physical activity and green travel in the underserved communities while schools were closed.

The HHS funds have also paid for monthly thank-you gift cards for volunteers hosting the welcome tables at six different schools.



*Safe Routes strives to provide services that equitably meet the needs of all Marin students.*



## WHO IS SAFE ROUTES?

### The Patient Family Liaison



Lynwood Elementary Family Liaison Jazmin Babendir has been determined to keep the Safe Routes program going for the past eight years. She has taken on various roles, from dressing as a squirrel for contests to counting helmetless students and recruiting volunteers. All this, despite the longtime lack of parent involvement at the school.

Jazmin insisted that parents would eventually be more eager, but patience was necessary. “It is going to work out. We just have to give it some time,” she would say, even during the pandemic, when the lockdown made running the program difficult.

Jazmin felt compelled to support Safe Routes when the school realized that many students were unaware of safety rules for biking and walking. She felt that “the program provided by Safe Routes to Schools promotes children’s safety when riding their bikes or simply walking to school.”

Jazmin has helped students obtain helmets on several occasions. She first identified 67 students who had a bicycle or a scooter but did not own a helmet. Safe Routes was able to leverage funds to purchase helmets for them. Last year when another 17 students received helmets paid for through a community crowdfunding effort.

At this point, Jazmin’s patience has paid off. Today Lynwood Elementary has a solid group of parent volunteers and a thriving Safe Routes program.

“

Sometimes the kids are very bored; but having specific ideas of what to do outside, like jumping rope or practicing their route to school on their bikes, gives them a purpose when leaving the house.

– Bilingual Parent during the COVID-19 Pandemic



## WHO IS SAFE ROUTES?

### The Supportive Office Manager



Claudia Alvarenga, the Office Manager at Coleman Elementary in San Rafael, has shown that support for Safe Routes can sometimes come from unexpected places. Now, three years later, Claudia continues being the biggest cheerleader of the program at the school.

"I love it that this program offers the children the opportunity to bond with each other when they walk or bike together. That it's also true for parents who approach the welcome table and start talking...On the days of the events, I see on the sidewalks many kids buddying up. This activity creates connections that wouldn't have happened otherwise," she notes happily.

Since the school's reopening post-pandemic, Claudia has been in charge of recruiting volunteers to keep the events going. She also monitors supplies and makes sure that the events are publicized.

"[The] flyers are great! My favorite one was the one from last semester with the four squares that showed the events for every month," she points out.

Claudia is currently concerned about students' safety around the school. She says the traffic congestion on Belle Avenue during drop-off and pick-up periods compounds with the parents making repeated infractions such as talking on their phones while driving and making U-turns in the middle of the street.

### The Venetia Valley Dynamic Duo



Paula Viera is one of Safe Routes' longest-serving volunteers. She has been involved for eight years, first as a crossing guard and then helping with encouragement events. For a long time she did this by herself at a school with over 600 students.

"I think that Safe Routes helps improve the health of the students...It is very rewarding for me to see them happy when they come to the welcome table and share a few minutes with us," Paula says.

Sometimes Paula had a challenging time since, as a native of El Salvador, she is not fluent in English. But Paula is no longer alone. During the pandemic, new parent volunteer Heather Crossen, a native English speaker, joined the program.

Heather says, "I decided to reach out to volunteer with the Safe Routes program because me and my two kids walked or rode a bike to school every day anyway. I decided to be the example for not only my kids, but for others too."

For Paula, the biggest accomplishment at Venetia Valley is the implementation of a remote drop-off area at the jury duty parking lot. Heather applauds that she sees many families motivated to park farther away to walk, bike, or ride their scooter to school.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are intended to enhance the Safe Routes program's equity mission. They are based on the success and feedback received from participating schools and jurisdictions.

Program	Status	Recommendations
Bilingual Program - Elementary	Bilingual coordinator support was increased from six to eight schools during the evaluation period. A Health and Human Services contract was renewed with additional grant funding to supplement Safe Routes incentives awarded to students who walk, roll, carpool, and ride the bus at eight schools that qualify for free and reduced lunch programs.	Expand the Bilingual Program to 10 Bilingual schools (adding West Marin and Hamilton). Continue partnership with the Marin County Health Department to obtain grant funding for Safe Routes contest supplies and incentives to run encouragement events at eight designated low income schools, including Bayside Martin Luther King Jr. Academy.
Annual Events for K-12th Grades	Safe Routes has continued with traditional annual events. Bike to School Day is now called Bike and Walk to School to make it accessible for those who cannot afford a bicycle.	Continue with an increased number of incentives for growing participation levels and an increased number of schools.
Speciality Programs	Safe Routes added an additional fall semester event: Ruby Bridges Day at Bayside Martin Luther King, Jr. Academy.	Expand this specialized Walk and Roll event to 35 schools each November.
Equity in Safe Routes Engineering Program	Bilingual parents rarely attend Task Force meetings; when they do, translation is required.	Instead of getting bi-lingual parents to attend Task Force meetings, the Task Force facilitator should attend existing school meetings to increase outreach with Spanish speaking families to identify infrastructure issues and create suggested routes to school maps.
Focus Groups for New Encouragement Programs	In 2009 with a grant from the BAAQMD, Safe Routes conducted a focus group of parent leaders that resulted in development of the Green Ways to School program. This program generated the highest boost in green trips since the program's beginning. Input from volunteers on the ground was instrumental in making this program a success.	Conduct focus groups of parent and community leaders in underserved communities to develop new innovative and culturally appropriate encouragement programs



## Chapter 8: Enforcement & Safety Programs

Caregiver surveys have found that the top two reasons families of elementary school students don't feel comfortable allowing their children to walk or bike to school are speeding vehicles and challenging intersections. Local police departments play a critical role in addressing these concerns by enforcing safe behaviors. The Safe Routes to School's Enforcement component is additionally supported by two key safety programs: the Crossing Guard program and Street Smarts. These programs are addressed in this chapter.



*Law enforcement officers often participate in encouragement events such as Walk and Roll Wednesdays.*

### LAW ENFORCEMENT

The Enforcement component of the Safe Routes program relies on the participation of local police departments to ensure that drivers, cyclists, and pedestrians all obey the rules of the road. They use a combination of education and enforcement to promote safety: this includes ticketing, targeted enforcement around schools, radar trailers, and educational pamphlets. Local police officers also often participate on Task Forces, which may also include representatives from the Marin County Sheriff and California Highway Patrol (CHP), when appropriate. Finally, law enforcement has assisted in major events such as International Walk and Roll to School Day by leading bike parades and helping with temporary street closures.

While Marin's Safe Routes to Schools program recognizes the inequitable impacts of law enforcement on people of color, it has always prioritized facilitating positive partnerships between local law enforcement and the school communities in which they serve, particularly in equity priority communities.

One example of relationship building in Safe Routes communities can be seen in Novato. Following a Novato Task Force meeting in which parents expressed concern about both roadway safety and police engagement, a Novato police officer took time to meet with the parents to assure them of the police's role. Safe Routes is committed to engaging communities on the appropriate role of law enforcement in the execution of the Safe Routes program.



## CROSSING GUARDS

Half of caregivers surveyed stated that unsafe intersections limit their student's ability to walk or bike to school. Among parents who live within one mile of school - typically considered walking or biking distance - 47% worry about unsafe intersections and 54% are concerned by speeding vehicles. Increasing safety at intersections is a key step towards increasing the number of students who use active modes of transportation to travel to school.

TAM's crossing guard program provides trained crossing guards at key intersections throughout Marin County. This is a key component of Safe Routes as crossing guards help reduce the reluctance that some parents may feel towards allowing their children to walk or bike to school. The program began in 2006 with 54 crossing guards, and 101 crossing guard locations were active during the 2021/2022 school year, including 15 at schools with high percentages of disadvantaged students (see Figure 11). The passage of Measure AA significantly increased funds for the program, allowing for expansion throughout the county. TAM contracts with a professional company that specializes in crossing guard programs: this ensures that guards are properly trained and equipped with back-ups for every critical intersection, facilitating continuous coverage during school commute periods.

Crossing guard locations are selected through a rigorous selection process that ensures coverage at the most critical intersections. Preliminary sites are selected based on input from public works departments and schools. The locations are then evaluated by TAM based on standardized criteria using predetermined elements that expand on State criteria. All locations are evaluated and ranked,

with the highest-ranking locations being prioritized for crossing guards. The ultimate number of staffed crossing guard locations is dependent on the availability of program funds. The list of intersections is periodically updated to take into account changed conditions around schools, including new travel patterns. The next re-evaluation will take place during the 2022/2023 school year, with changes implemented in Fall 2023.

## Crossing Improvements

Crossing guards are deployed at school area crosswalks that drivers are allowed to traverse if a pedestrian is not present. For example, drivers turning right on a green light are required to yield to pedestrians in the crosswalk. However, this still poses a potential conflict between vehicles and crossing pedestrians. Such potential conflicts are part of the criteria for assessing whether crossing guards should be provided at specific school crossings.

Several intersections have been redesigned and reconstructed during this evaluation period to reduce the potential for vehicle/pedestrian conflicts, enabling a crossing guard to be reassigned to a different school crossing that may have higher conflict potential. Intersections that have been recently modified to decrease pedestrian collision potential include East Blithedale Avenue and Elm Avenue (Mill Valley), Bon Air Road/South Eliseo Drive (Larkspur), Tiburon Boulevard/Blackfield Drive/Greenwood Cove Drive (Tiburon), Sir Francis Drake Boulevard's intersections with Bon Air Road (Greenbrae) and Laurel Grove Avenue (Kentfield), and Third Street across from San Rafael High School (San Rafael), and Miller Creek Road/Marinwood Avenue (Marinwood).



*Crossing guards help students safely access school on foot and can often relieve parents' worries at challenging intersections.*

Figure 11: Crossing Guard Locations, 2021-2022 School Year



## STREET SMARTS MARIN

Street Smarts is an important part of the Safe Routes to Schools program, aiming to make streets safer for students by educating the general public. The traffic safety program educates drivers, pedestrians and cyclists about safety issues, including distracted driving. The goal is to encourage people to adopt new attitudes and behaviors that will reduce the number of collisions and make the streets safer for everyone.

Street Smarts has been ongoing throughout Marin County since 2008. It typically consists of biannual rollouts – one during the spring semester and one in the fall – and features banners, signs, and other media to promote its road safety messaging.

### Street Smarts Refresh

The Street Smarts program underwent a refresh during the 2021/2022 school year. There were several reasons for this refresh. First, the current banners had been in use for several years and showed signs of wear. The refresh provided an opportunity to use a data-driven approach to develop targeted messaging based on the latest Marin County collision data and best practices from around the country. It also meant an opportunity to update the program’s branding and to take advantage of new media platforms, such as Facebook and Twitter.

The first step in the process to update Street Smarts was data analysis. All Marin County collisions for the latest five-year period (2016-2020) were analyzed to identify trends that could be addressed through an education campaign. The analysis found that collisions involving pedestrians and cyclists made up a small percentage of overall collisions but disproportionately resulted in injuries or fatalities. Additionally, several primary collision factors were responsible for most collisions: unsafe speed, improper turning, and pedestrian right-of-way violations caused 55% of all Marin County collisions during the study period (See Figure 12). Other behaviors – distracted driving and bicyclists cycling unpredictably – were also noted as important.

The analysis identified six target behaviors that were selected for the refreshed campaign. Targeted driver behaviors were making safe turns, speeding, distracted driving, and looking for pedestrians in crosswalks. For cyclists, this was looking for pedestrians and following the rules of the road. Pedestrians were to be educated about safe walking.

Development of the campaign messaging and designs was informed through two main avenues. First, research was conducted to determine best practices for educational messaging campaigns. Campaigns from cities across the country were surveyed to provide examples, while academic literature was consulted to gain an understanding of what types of messaging generated the best results. Second, a task force of 17 members representing public works, schools, law enforcement, and other stakeholders was periodically convened to provide feedback and refine the messaging and designs.

The process resulted in the creation of new vertical banners, yard signs, bus back designs, and social media images targeting the key behaviors (Figure 13). The designs were inspired by the popular “Eyes Up” safety campaign on Butterfield Road in San Anselmo, as this slogan was deemed simple yet effective at conveying its message.

A collision cluster analysis was conducted to determine the most useful places to install each message in Marin County’s 11 jurisdictions. For example, this allowed messages regarding speeding to be placed near hotspots for collisions resulting from unsafe speeds. Yard signs, email signatures, and social media designs were created in both English and Spanish to ensure a wider audience. A social media toolkit was created with the aim of enlisting jurisdictions, school districts, local organizations, and others in spreading the Street Smarts messaging. Rollout of the refreshed campaign was scheduled for Fall 2022, including deployment of 177 banners and signs throughout the County. Visit the Street Smarts website for more information: <https://www.streetsmartsmarin.org/>.

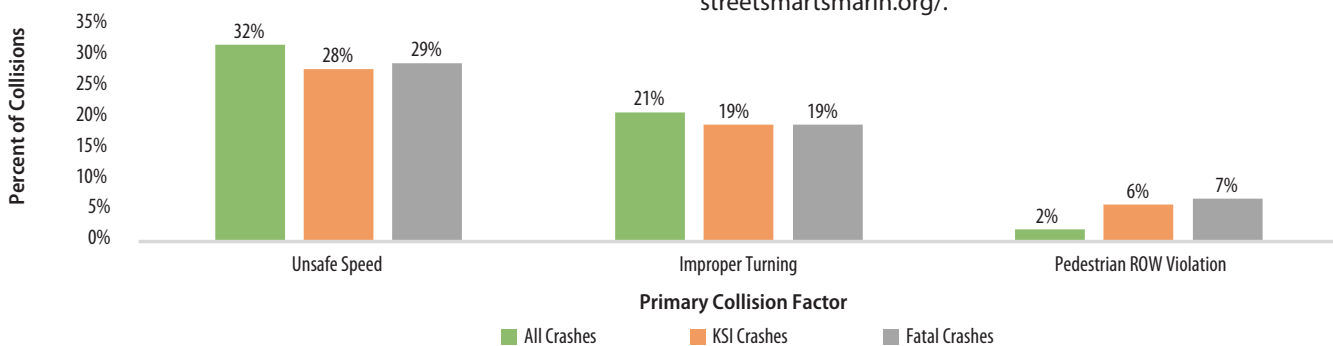


Figure 12: Top Primary Collision Factors for Marin County Collisions, 2016-2020





Figure13: Street Smarts Campaign: top row vertical street banners: bottom grid bilingual social media messaging

## WHO IS SAFE ROUTES?

### The Dedicated Crossing Guard



Carmel Morini was recognized as Crossing Guard of the Year for 2022. For the past 44 years, Morini has donned a neon vest and carried a stop sign to safely lead Marin students on their way to the classroom and on their route home. Carmel, who is currently posted at Lu Sutton Elementary School in Novato, has lived in the city since 1971. She decided to become a crossing guard to spend time with her four children.

Carmel said the generations of children she has helped guide to Olive, Rancho, and now Lu Sutton throughout her career have been great, asking her friendly questions and paying attention while crossing the street.

When Carmel first became a crossing guard, the program was managed by the Novato Police Department with funding from a variety of sources including cities, towns, and school districts. The passage of Marin's ½-cent Transportation Sales Tax in 2004 (renewed in 2018) and the Vehicle Registration Fee in 2010, created a reliable source of funding for crossing guards. The program now funds approximately 100 crossing guards throughout Marin County.

Carmel said she plans to continue serving as a crossing guard, greeting children and families each morning and practicing the motto pinned on her safety vest: "Do Good. Be Kind."

### The Safety-Focused Program Manager



Dan Cherrier, Director of Project Delivery at the Transportation Authority of Marin, is no stranger to Safe Routes. He has been involved in the program since 2008, managing two key programs that contribute to Safe Routes' mission: the Crossing Guard program and Street Smarts.

Dan sees both programs as "an integral part of SR2S." Crossing guards "allow students and parents to have more confidence in walking or biking to school when crossing difficult intersections." Crossing guard sites are reevaluated every four years to ensure that they are placed at the most deserving intersections. In recent years the program has expanded up to 100 crossing guards throughout the County.

Street Smarts, meanwhile, builds on the educational mission of Safe Routes by targeting key driver, pedestrian, and cyclist behaviors. Dan notes that Street Smarts is continually evolving and was completely overhauled with new messaging and banner locations ahead of the fall 2022 rollout.

Students' wellbeing is of high importance to Dan, who also serves as a School Board Trustee in Dublin. He believes that getting more students to walk and roll to school reduces congestion around schools, which reduces potential conflicts between vehicles and students. It also encourages healthy habits that can last a lifetime. Through his work with TAM, Dan will continue to work towards a reduction of vehicles near schools and safer, healthier commutes for students.

## CASE STUDY

### Partnerships with Novato Public Officials Go Beyond Enforcement

Novato law enforcement have been an integral partner to Safe Routes to Schools. They can frequently be seen attending encouragement events, handing out incentives at welcome tables. Yet, they went above and beyond with a special recognition event hosted in Novato in partnership with Novato's Mayor, Pat Eklund.

On December 13, Sofia Bermúdez, a kindergartener, and Kaylee Perry, a fifth grader, at Olive Elementary were Mayors of the City of Novato for a day. To win this grand prize, both students won a raffle conducted among Olive's students who walked or rolled to school every day in October.

Novato's Mayor, Pat Eklund, proposed the idea when she hosted a Safe Routes to Schools welcome table at Olive School in October. The Mayor, a long-time Safe Routes supporter, hosted the students for a tour the police station, the city offices, and City Hall. Mayor Eklund also made arrangements for Sofia and Kaylee to recite the Pledge of Allegiance at the commencement of the City Council meeting the next day. The experience ended with both children sitting at the Mayor's desk at the City Council Chambers and using the gavel, which was, not surprisingly, a highlight of the day.

During the Mayor for a Day visit, Captain Sasha D'Amico offered the students and their parents a tour of the Police Department. She introduced the group to Police Chief Matthew McCaffery and explained to them the day-to-day operations of the police force, including the work performed by 911 dispatchers. At the City Building, Sofia and Kaylee met Assistant City Manager Jessica Deakne, who talked about the nature of her job and, in general, about what it means to be a public servant





## RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are intended to enhance the enforcement and safety element of the Safe Routes program. They are based on the success and feedback received from participating schools and jurisdictions.

Program	Status	Recommendations
Enforcement	Local law enforcement plays an important role to address traffic safety issues and remains an important partner in helping the school communities successfully execute many of the Safe Routes programs.	Continue incorporating newly defined best practices from national resources for Safe Routes to further engage Marin's communities of color in local programming and encourage further participation of law enforcement in the Safe Routes program.
Crossing Guard Program	Fifteen additional crossing guards were added at key intersections near schools in January 2019. Increases were made possible due to Measure AA funding.	Continue to support the Crossing Guard program by identifying potential locations for guard deployment, providing education to school children regarding crossing streets, and publicizing crossing guard locations on Suggested Routes to School maps. Maintain the number of crossing guard locations.
Street Smarts Marin	The Street Smarts Marin program is being refreshed with new banners, signs, and social media messaging. The updated campaign will roll out in Fall 2022 in all 11 jurisdictions and unincorporated Marin County.	Use lessons learned from the Fall 2022 rollout to continue advancing the Street Smarts program. Consider expanding future rollouts to include more school participation in the form of activities, contests, and giveaways. Additionally, consider using a mechanism for residents to report near misses for the purpose of including these locations in future campaigns. Consider purchasing social media advertising.



*The Safe Routes enforcement and safety program components make it safer for students to walk and roll to school.*

# Chapter 9: Funding

The Safe Routes program relies on funding from a variety of sources to complete its mission. This chapter provides an overview of the program's funding and the ways in which that funding is leveraged.



The Marin Transportation Sales Tax was approved by voters under Ballot Measure A in November 2004 and extended again in November 2018 as Measure AA by voters until 2049. The measure provided a one-half cent increase in Marin County's sales tax that would be designated to transportation-related expenditures, including the Safe Routes to School

program. Marin County became the first jurisdiction in the country to provide long-term funding for its Safe Routes to Schools programs. Since then, it has been extremely successful in leveraging this money to secure even greater funding (Figure 14). Safe Routes' capital funding program, Safe Pathways to Schools, has been particularly vital in providing a "local match" source that is used to gain additional state and federal capital funding. By using

this approach, TAM has been able to triple its initial investment, and allowed Safe Routes staff to expand its innovative programming, as well as implement a wide range of infrastructure projects. This included additional funding for crossing guards from the 2010 voter-approved Measure B \$10 vehicle registration fee.

## TRANSPORTATION SALES TAX EXPENDITURE PLAN

Measure AA, the 1/2 cent Transportation Sales Tax Renewal, is expected to generate \$827 million over a 30-year period (through FY 2049). As shown in Table 3 on the following page, approximately \$95.1 million, or 11.5%, is allocated to school access programs. Of this, nearly \$29 million will be used to support many of the Safe Routes programs, such as classroom activities and special community events. The remaining \$66 million is split between two complementary programs: the Crossing Guard program (approximately \$58 million) and the Safe Pathways to Schools Projects (approximately \$8 million).

LOCAL	REGIONAL
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local jurisdictions' general funds</li> <li>School districts and individual schools</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Measure AA (½ cent sales tax) (TAM)</li> <li>Measure A (½ cent sales tax) (TAM)</li> <li>Active Transportation Program (Regional)</li> <li>One Bay Area Grant (MTC)</li> <li>TAM Safe Pathways</li> <li>Local Transportation Fund for Clean Air (TAM)</li> <li>Regional Transportation Fund for Clean Air (BAAQMD)</li> <li>Measure B \$10 vehicle registration fee (TAM)</li> <li>Bicycle Facilities Program (BAAQMD)</li> </ul>
STATE	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Active Transportation Program (Caltrans)</li> <li>State Safe Routes to Schools (Previous Program)</li> <li>Bicycle Transportation Account (Caltrans)</li> <li>Office of Traffic Safety</li> <li>Highway Safety Improvement Program (Caltrans)</li> </ul>	
FEDERAL	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Federal Safe Routes to Schools (Previous Program)</li> <li>Transportation Enhancement Program</li> </ul>	

Figure 14: Marin's Safe Routes to School program's funding sources.

Table 3: Measure AA Funding Allocation for Implementation Category 3

Category #3: Reduce school-related congestion and provide safer access to schools	%	Est. 30-year revenue (millions)
1. Safe Routes to Schools	3.5%	\$28.9
2. Crossing Guards	7.0%	\$57.9
3. Provide capital funds for Safe Pathways to Schools projects	1.0%	\$8.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>11.5%</b>	<b>\$95.1</b>

## SAFE PATHWAYS TO SCHOOL

Safe Pathways is Safe Routes’ capital funding program, which is projected to provide an additional \$8.3 million for engineering, environmental clearance, and construction of pathway and sidewalk improvements. Safe Pathways projects are selected based on the following performance criteria:

- ▶ The project completes a gap in the bicycle and pedestrian system along a major school route
- ▶ The project maximizes daily use by students and others
- ▶ The project relieves an identified safety or congestion problem along a major school route
- ▶ The project attracts matching funds
- ▶ The project respects geographic equity

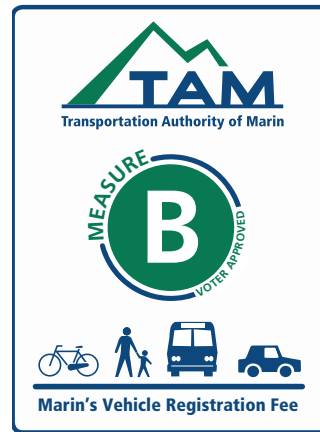
Although Safe Pathways projects target improvements around schools, they benefit the entire community by creating a safe network of bicycle and pedestrian facilities, enhancing safety, and reducing local congestion.

To date, the Safe Pathways program has funded over \$14 million in infrastructure projects. Its first funding cycle in 2007 provided \$1.77 million for 12 projects in the county. During its second cycle in 2010, over \$2 million in Transportation Sales Tax funds were allocated to 13 new Safe Pathway projects. In 2015, the third cycle of grants totaled \$4.2 million, and included both “large” and “small” projects. Large projects had funding requests of up to \$300,000 and small projects could receive up to \$25,000. The inclusion of small projects as a discrete category was created to facilitate the quick implementation of low cost improvements, which proved extremely successful.

In 2019, \$5.16 million was allocated to 27 projects consisting of 13 large and 14 small projects. Funding for individual projects was increased to \$400,000 for large projects, and \$50,000 for small projects.

A fifth cycle and call for projects will be released in 2023 or 2024.

## VEHICLE REGISTRATION FEE



In addition to the Transportation Sales Tax, Safe Routes programs received another source of revenue in November 2010 when Marin voters approved Ballot Measure B. The measure authorized a ten-dollar increase in motor vehicle registration fees for the exclusive purpose of funding local transportation projects and programs. A portion of

the funds is dedicated to School Safety and Congestion Reduction, which includes the following objectives:

- ▶ Maintain and expand the School Crossing Guard program
- ▶ Enhance/expand programs designed to reduce congestion and improve safety around schools, including Street Smarts and SchoolPool programs

Annually, approximately \$150,000 is programmed for crossing guards and \$25,000 for Street Smarts.



## LEVERAGING FUNDS

The Safe Routes program supplements its funding through several channels. Primary among these are infrastructure grants and in-kind donations.

### Infrastructure Grants

One of the unique features of Marin’s Safe Routes to Schools is its support to cities, towns and the county in developing and submitting grant applications. Primarily aimed at infrastructure projects, the grants have ranged from as little as \$5,000 for crosswalk enhancements to almost \$4 million for more comprehensive improvements. Combined, this level of assistance has resulted in Marin County being awarded over \$34.9 million in outside funding since the program began in 2000. See Figure 15 for a breakdown of the Safe Routes program’s infrastructure funding.

In order to increase the impact of local funds, Safe Pathway projects are expected to attract matching grants from other sources. Safe Pathways to School currently makes up only 23 percent of the total infrastructure funding for Safe Routes projects.

### In-Kind Donations

Local partners, such as businesses, and school parent-teacher associations, have contributed to the success of the Safe Routes program through the provision of in-kind donations. In total, these average approximately \$10,000 to \$15,000 annually.

In-kind donations range from food to equipment. During the 2019-2020 school year a donor to MCBC provided a fleet of bicycles to Safe Routes that could be used during education classes by students who do not own bicycles. During the 2021-2022 school year, Jambar donated \$17,000 worth of bars and other materials that could be distributed at welcome tables. These donations help supplement the program’s regular funding and allow Safe Routes programming to expand its reach to students.

## PROGRAM FUNDING

Funding for the Safe Routes program from 2008–2022 is shown in Figure 16 and is compared to the annual Consumer Price Index (CPI) for the Bay Area. While funding from TAM’s Measure AA 1/2 cent Transportation Sales Tax funds remains relatively consistent, grant funding has decreased over time.

As the CPI increases in Marin County, program staff wages must also increase. Over time, program funding increases are needed to be able to keep staff hours from decreasing. This proves to be a challenge as more schools join the program and staff hours are limited.

Increasing and supporting growth at participating schools while adding new schools to Safe Routes would require additional staff time. Teaching classes and providing tools to implement activities such as contests to a greater number of students and schools requires supplemental resources. Moreover, increased outreach to disadvantaged schools, including bilingual schools, would also require more staff time.

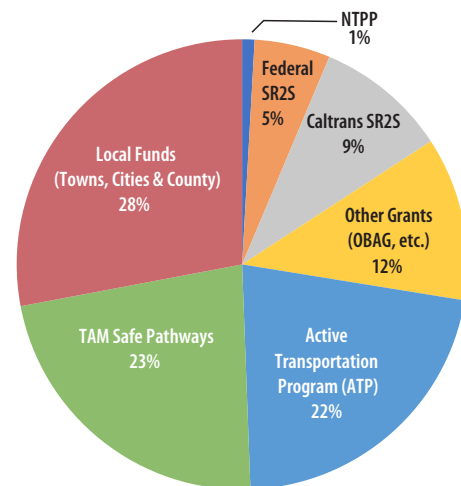


Figure 15: Safe Routes Program Infrastructure Funding Sources

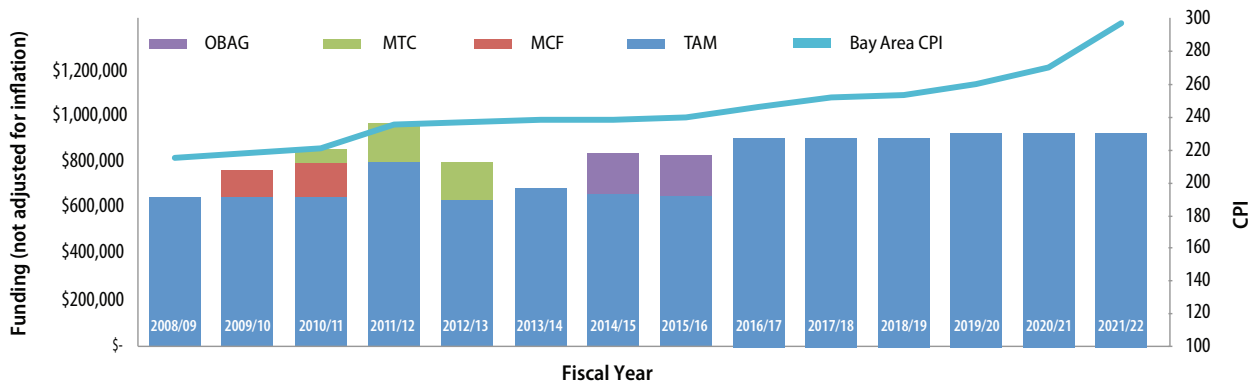


Figure 16: Safe Routes Funding Over Time (Not Including In-Kind Donations)

## WHO IS SAFE ROUTES

### The Championing Transportation Agency

Transportation Authority of Marin (TAM) staff work closely with Safe Routes to promote the program's continued success in Marin County. From managing the ½ cent transportation sales tax and \$10 vehicle registration fee, the driving force behind the program's success, to creatively finding new funds, TAM is dedicated to maintaining and growing the Safe Routes program.

TAM staff have actively supported the Safe Routes team since 2004 by providing coordination with its member agencies: the cities, towns, and the county. TAM staff directly

manage the Crossing Guard program and guide the Street Smarts program. TAM has also managed the environmental clearance, design, and construction of several Safe Pathway projects. Notably, TAM Board members and staff have come together with the Safe Routes team to coordinate all the program features in order to keep a complex program going strong.

From paying the bills to championing innovation, TAM staff remain a key source of sustainability for the success of Safe Routes in Marin.





## WHO IS SAFE ROUTES

### The Determined School District Trustee



Diane Gasson's involvement with Safe Routes started as a parent volunteer during Walk and Roll Wednesdays. Currently, she is an elected official in Novato who works hard to keep children safe and to engage the community with active travel.

"In 2018, as a newly elected Novato Unified School District Trustee, I signed up to work more closely and in partnership

with the SR25 team. Since then, I have attended all regular meetings and see the many positive changes and the visible impact this group of individuals has made on our community," says Diane.

Diane took it upon herself last year to start a GoFundMe campaign to provide helmets to 42 elementary school children who could not afford them. She partnered with Mike's Bikes to purchase high quality helmets at a reduced price. Her efforts allowed Safe Routes to Schools to provide free helmets to Novato schools Lu Sutton Elementary, Lynwood Elementary, and Loma Verde Elementary.

As an elected official, Diane highlights the importance of reducing traffic congestion and to help save the planet by choosing to walk or bike more. For now, she is concerned about children on electric bikes. "I travel to two different school sites every day and [I see that] drivers are not expecting a fast-moving bike and kids are not keeping eye contact with drivers," she says.





## RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are intended to enhance the funding of the Safe Routes program. They are based on the success and feedback received from participating schools and jurisdictions.

Program	Status	Recommendations
Supplemental Program Funding	Measures AA and B provide most of the funding for the Safe Routes program. However, supplemental outside funding is helpful to achieve program objectives, not only for infrastructure implementation, but also for education and encouragement programming.	Leverage TAM's Measure AA and Measure B funding to secure potential outside supplemental funding to achieve Safe Routes program objectives.
Infrastructure Improvements Funding	From 2019-2022 Marin's Safe Routes program secured funding for the implementation of infrastructure projects including sidewalks, pathways, multi-use bridges, enhanced crosswalks, and improved intersections.	Continue to seek outside funding for implementation of capital infrastructure projects, e.g., through the Active Transportation Program, One Bay Area Grants, Highway Safety Improvement Program, etc.
Safe Pathways Projects	Potential projects are only eligible if included in an adopted Safe Routes Travel Plan. Safe Routes engineers have developed low-cost, short-term solutions as well as longer-range designs.	<p>Continue to identify effective short- and long-term Safe Pathways projects, including popular lower-cost solutions that can be implemented within a short timeframe.</p> <p>Develop longer-range projects that are competitive for grant funding.</p>



*Funding for Safe Routes supports the program's numerous components, including the design of engineering improvements such as cycle tracks.*

# Chapter 10: Evaluation

A main goal of the Safe Routes to Schools program is to help schools increase their green trip mode share to the highest extent possible. Program staff regularly monitor the program's success by collecting and analyzing student transportation mode data each semester (see Chapter 2 for more information). In addition to tracking changes in travel mode share data, it is also important to consider the various factors that could influence families' decisions surrounding a student's mode to school. This holistic approach to program evaluation helps staff better understand why some schools are successful in achieving high rates of green travel modes and how those successes can be replicated at other schools. This chapter describes the evaluation of schools participating in Safe Routes during this evaluation period.

## METHODOLOGY



Extensive program evaluation was conducted using both quantitative and qualitative analysis of various factors that impact the choices students make regarding their travel modes. This evaluation sought to identify these factors' impacts on the percentage of active trips, which include non-motorized student travel modes involving physical activity (i.e., walking and bicycling); and green trips, which include active trips as well as carpooling, school buses, and public transit. Both active and green trips help achieve the Safe Routes goals of increasing healthy travel choices and reducing school-related vehicular traffic congestion.

The first step in conducting the assessment was to evaluate the student travel mode splits for each participating school. A review of the shifts in both active trips and green trips was conducted for the 56 schools that participated in the 2021–2022 school year. Student tally data from both the fall and spring semesters were averaged and compared to each school's baseline time period.

The supplementary factors and corresponding scores used to assess each school are based on a review of the education and encouragement classes and events held at each school, as well as on Safe Routes staff knowledge of administrator and parent volunteer activity. These factors were assigned low, medium, or high ratings as they pertain to each school. See Table 4 for a detailed explanation of ranking criteria.

As mentioned in the Engineering chapter, the lack of comfortable and direct walking and biking paths to school can dissuade parents from allowing their children to walk and bike to school, resulting in lower active trips. Each school was ranked as having low, medium, or high green infrastructure based on the walking and biking infrastructure near the school.

The availability of busing options (both yellow school bus and public transit) for students to travel to and from school was also evaluated. Some schools have a yellow school bus program that provides their students with the option to travel to school by bus via a direct connection between their neighborhood and the school campus. Other schools are only served by public transit operators providing local and regional transit access to the schools. It should be noted that although these services are available, they may not be convenient options for school travel.

Public transit schedules may not always coincide with school schedules. For example, some buses with stops near school sites only make stops at these locations every 30 minutes to one hour. This would mean students using public transit would potentially have to arrive an hour early to be on campus by their first period, or similarly, would have to wait up to an hour after their last period before boarding buses.

Additionally, it was noted whether or not a school could be considered a "neighborhood school." A neighborhood school is a school whose boundaries and the nature of the surrounding residential neighborhood make walking and biking to school an easy choice. Students who attend neighborhood schools are likely to live within walking and/or bicycling distance from their school, making this a more viable option for their school commute. The number of crossing guards serving intersections along routes to each school was also tabulated. It should be noted that based on

location, some crossing guards serve multiple schools. Because crossing guard locations are selected based on criteria that includes high pedestrian volumes, schools with higher active trips are often served by multiple guards at different crossing locations near the school. There are also schools that have high or moderate active trips but are not served by crossing guards. These schools are typically elementary schools that have a relatively smaller student body, and therefore less pedestrian volume generated.

Finally, the average distance to each school was taken into account. Despite the best efforts of the Safe Routes to Schools program, some students simply live too far from their schools to feasibly

walk or roll every day. Students' average distance from school was calculated using anonymized student address data and Google Maps navigation tools. The highest five student distances from each school were excluded from the analysis, as these were often the addresses of parents who live in other cities and with whom the students may not actually reside. This address data has been used to create 'dot maps' for each school. These maps show the number of students who live within one-quarter, one-half, and one mile from their schools and can be used to target Safe Routes programming in locations where a high percentage of students live within walking or rolling distance from school.

Table 4: Assessment Factors for Safe Routes Participation Success (Continued on Next Page)

Factor	High	Medium	Low
<b>School Involvement-Based</b>			
<b>Administration</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Actively involved in promoting the program</li> <li>Participates in and independently promotes events</li> <li>Attends Task Force Meetings</li> <li>Hosts Safe Routes assemblies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promotes events at the request of Safe Routes staff</li> <li>Include Safe Routes information in school newsletters</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Little to no participation in or promotion of Safe Routes events and programs</li> </ul>
<b>Team Leader</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Makes extra effort beyond the minimum requirements to ensure the success of Safe Routes programs</li> <li>Attends Task Force meetings</li> <li>Develops and implements new programs</li> <li>Hosts extra contests and/or events</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coordinates a weekly Walk and Roll Wednesday program</li> <li>Hosts contests provided by Safe Routes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No team leader</li> </ul>
<b>Education</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hosts all core Safe Routes education safety programs each year</li> <li>Coordinates additional classroom activities, schoolwide assemblies and educational events</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hosts some Safe Routes education safety programs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does not offer an education program</li> </ul>
<b>Encouragement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hosts all available Safe Routes encouragement programs at least once per year</li> <li>Develops and hosts additional encouragement events</li> <li>Actively promotes Safe Routes through school newsletters and other media</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hosts some encouragement events when coordinated by Safe Routes team</li> <li>Coordinates monthly Walk and Roll events</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Only holds annual events e.g., iWalk or National Bike to School Day</li> </ul>



Factor	High	Medium	Low
<b>Geographic / Infrastructure-Based</b>			
<b>Green Infrastructure</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School is located in a very walkable and bikeable community.</li> <li>• Pedestrian-friendly sidewalks and dedicated bicycle facilities within a one-half mile radius of the school</li> <li>• High-visibility crosswalks and signage at intersections and crossings serving school-based traffic</li> <li>• School has ample and secure bicycle parking</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School is located in a moderately walkable and bikeable community</li> <li>• Some pedestrian-friendly sidewalks and dedicated bicycle facilities within a one-mile radius of school; however, facilities could be upgraded to better accommodate pedestrians and bicyclist</li> <li>• Opportunities for improved crosswalks and signage at intersections and crossing serving school-based traffic</li> <li>• Minimal bicycle parking provided at school</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Noticeable gaps in pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure connecting neighborhoods to school</li> </ul>
<b>Busing</b>	Yellow (Y) • School is directly served by yellow school service and may also be served by public transit operators Transit (T) • School is served by public transit operators providing local and regional service to the community No (N) • School does not have a yellow school bus system and is not served by public transit operators		
<b>Neighborhood Schools</b>	A neighborhood school is one that draws its student population from within defined neighborhood boundaries. This would result in students living within walking / bicycling distance to their school		
<b>Crossing Guards</b>	Number of crossin guards present at each school.		
<b>Distance from School</b>	Average distance in miles from students' places of residence to school.		



## RESULTS

Table 5 provides the results of this multifaceted program evaluation for all participating schools during the 2021-2022 school year.

As seen in the matrix, the schools with the highest rate of active trips generally have supporting infrastructure as well as active leadership and participation. Of course, there are exceptions and anomalies.

The COVID-19 pandemic impacted how many programs and classes could be held at the schools: this impacted some schools more than

others. Particularly, Safe Routes' access to Marin high schools was curtailed. From March 2020 until Fall 2022, Safe Routes staff were not allowed on high school campuses to direct encouragement events and lead education classes. This persisted even after staff were allowed back on elementary and middle school campuses. While some high schools were able to hold limited events with the help of parent volunteers, the pandemic severely limited programming at these schools.



Table 5: Evaluation Table 2022

School Name	Baseline			2021/22 Trips		2021/2022 School Trips by Mode							Factors <sup>1</sup>								
	Semester	Green Trips	Active Green Trips	Green Trips	Active Green Trips	Walk	Bike	Other	School Bus	Public Transit	Carpool	Family Vehicle	Aministration	Team Leader	Education	Encouragement	Green Infrastructure	Busing <sup>2</sup>	Neighborhood Schools	Crossing Guards <sup>3</sup>	Average Student Distance from School (MI)
A. E. Kent Middle School (5-8)	2001	48%	34%	68%	62%	28%	27%	7%	0%	0%	6%	32%	H	H	H	H	M	N	M	4	1.44
Archie Williams High School (9-12)	Fall 2004	66%	25%	60%	38%	25%	11%	2%	0%	6%	17%	40%	L	L	L	L	M	P	L	0	2.5
Bacich Elementary School (K-5)	Fall 2001	28%	20%	46%	39%	22%	14%	4%	0%	0%	7%	53%	M	H	H	H	M	N	M	3	1.24
Bahia Vista Elementary School (K-5)	Fall 2002	49%	45%	72%	69%	66%	2%	1%	0%	0%	3%	28%	M	M	H	H	H	Y	H	3	0.62
Bayside MLK, Jr. Academy - Nevada Campus (K-5)	Fall 2015	22%	10%	35%	7%	5%	2%	0%	25%	0%	4%	66%	H	M	L	M	L	P	L	0	3.1
Bayside MLK, Jr. Academy - Phillips Campus (6-8)	Fall 2015	64%	63%	55%	37%	29%	8%	0%	4%	5%	9%	45%	H	L	L	L	L	P	H	0	2.69
Bel Aire Elementary School (3-5)	Fall 2002	57%	19%	56%	27%	20%	7%	0%	24%	1%	4%	45%	H	H	H	H	M	Y	M	1	2.72
Brookside Elementary School (K-5)	Fall 2001	37%	16%	58%	52%	39%	8%	6%	1%	0%	5%	41%	M	M	H	M	H	N	H	1	0.98
Coleman Elementary School (K-5)	Spring 2008	42%	12%	50%	42%	36%	5%	1%	3%	0%	5%	50%	M	H	L	H	M	Y	M	0	1.54
Cove School (K-5)	Fall 2014	59%	43%	49%	40%	25%	13%	2%	4%	0%	6%	52%	H	H	L	H	H	Y	M	1	1.65
Del Mar Middle School (6-8)	Fall 2004	58%	22%	67%	40%	17%	22%	2%	21%	1%	5%	34%	M	M	M	M	M	Y	L	2	1.92
Edna Maguire Elementary School (K-5)	2004	60%	23%	45%	38%	19%	18%	1%	0%	0%	7%	56%	M	M	H	M	H	Y	M	1	1.67
Glenwood Elementary School (K-5)	2000	46%	26%	38%	21%	13%	4%	5%	10%	0%	7%	62%	L	M	L	M	M	Y	M	2	2.86
Hamilton Meadow Park (K-8)	Fall 2001	45%	28%	39%	35%	26%	5%	4%	1%	1%	4%	60%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	M	N	L	1	1.51
Henry Hall Middle School (5-8)	Fall 2009	54%	38%	72%	60%	16%	43%	2%	3%	4%	4%	29%	M	H	M	M	H	P	H	2	1.92
Hidden Valley Elementary School (K-5)	Fall 2008	60%	30%	57%	41%	17%	22%	2%	9%	0%	8%	43%	H	H	H	H	M	Y	H	1	1.4
James B. Davidson Middle School (6-8)	Fall 2010	63%	19%	62%	21%	16%	6%	0%	29%	6%	7%	38%	L	L	L	M	H	Y	L	3	2.04
Lagunitas Elementary School (K-8)	Fall 2000	40%	16%	41%	26%	9%	15%	2%	0%	4%	12%	59%	L	L	H	N/A	M	N	L	0	1.77
Laurel Dell Elementary School (K-5)	2004	45%	17%	44%	21%	19%	1%	2%	19%	1%	4%	56%	H	H	H	H	M	Y	H	2	1.21
Loma Verde Elementary School (K-5)	2008	40%	16%	36%	24%	19%	5%	1%	0%	0%	11%	64%	H	H	L	H	M	N	M	1	1.39
Lu Sutton Elementary School (K-5)	2004	34%	23%	26%	19%	14%	3%	2%	0%	1%	6%	74%	M	M	M	M	M	N	M	1	1.03
Lucas Valley Elementary School (K-5)	Fall 2003	51%	19%	41%	22%	17%	5%	0%	18%	0%	2%	59%	H	H	H	H	M	Y	M	1	1.85
Lynwood Elementary School (K-5)	2004	35%	25%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	L	M	H	M	M	N	H	2	1.54
Manor Elementary School (K-5)	Fall 2000	39%	24%	50%	47%	18%	24%	5%	0%	0%	3%	51%	H	H	H	H	H	N	M	2	1.22
Mary E. Silveira Elementary School (K-5)	2006	55%	30%	49%	26%	20%	4%	2%	19%	0%	4%	51%	H	M	H	M	M	Y	M	0	1.85
Mill Valley Middle School (6-8)	2003	49%	29%	65%	60%	26%	32%	3%	0%	0%	6%	35%	L	L	H	L	H	Y	L	1	2.29
Miller Creek Middle School (6-8)	2004	69%	20%	67%	37%	20%	17%	0%	21%	0%	9%	33%	M	H	H	H	M	Y	M	1	1.84
Neil Cummins Elementary School (K-4)	2001	52%	25%	55%	50%	24%	23%	3%	0%	0%	5%	45%	M	H	M	H	H	N	H	3	1.25
Novato Charter School (K-8)	Fall 2017	22%	8%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	L	H	N/A	H					4.17
Old Mill School (K-5)	2003	17%	16%	51%	45%	35%	8%	2%	0%	0%	6%	49%	H	M	H	M	M	N	H	2	1.27
Olive Elementary School (K-5)	2004	30%	9%	20%	23%	19%	4%	1%	5%	0%	12%	61%	M	M	H	M	H	N	H	1	1.82
Park Elementary School (K-5)	2004	44%	34%	56%	55%	45%	8%	2%	0%	0%	1%	44%	H	M	H	M	M	N	H	1	1.15

NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Ranking:  
L-Low, M-Medium, H-High

<sup>2</sup> Bussing:  
Y - Yellow School Bus,  
T - Public Transit,  
N - No bussing options

<sup>3</sup> Number of locally funded crossing guards



**Table 4: Evaluation Table 2022 continued**

School Name	Baseline			2021/22 Trips		2021/2022 School Trips by Mode							Factors <sup>1</sup>								
	Semester	Green Trips	Active Green Trips	Green Trips	Active Green Trips	Walk	Bike	Other	School Bus	Public Transit	Carpool	Family Vehicle	Amintistration	Team Leader	Education	Encouragement	Green Infrastructure	Busing <sup>2</sup>	Neighborhood Schools	Crossing Guards <sup>3</sup>	Average Student Distance from School (MI)
Pleasant Valley Elementary School (K-5)	Fall 2003	28%	14%	32%	25%	12%	12%	1%	0%	0%	6%	68%	M	H	H	H	M	N	M	2	1.19
Rancho Elementary School (K-5)	2003	43%	12%	46%	39%	33%	5%	1%	0%	0%	7%	54%	M	M	H	M	M	N	M	4	1.32
Redwood High School (9-12)	2009	47%	17%	47%	24%	12%	11%	1%	3%	4%	16%	54%	H	L	L	L	H	P	L	0	3.36
Reed Elementary School (K-2)	2003	36%	8%	43%	10%	7%	3%	0%	28%	0%	6%	57%	L	H	L	H	M	Y	M	2	2.24
Ross School (K-8)	Fall 2001	43%	36%	57%	50%	30%	15%	5%	3%	0%	4%	43%	M	H	H	H	M	N	M	4	N/A
Ross Valley Charter (K-5)	Spring 2018	60%	40%	18%	13%	9%	4%	0%	3%	0%	3%	82%	M	M	M	M		N	L	1	0.81
San Domenico School (K-12)	Spring 2012	70%	19%	75%	16%	9%	6%	1%	55%	0%	4%	26%	L	M	H	M	M	Y	L	0	N/A
San Jose Middle School (6-8)	Fall 2011	58%	12%	43%	23%	17%	6%	0%	1%	6%	13%	58%	L	L	L	L	M	P	M	2	2.12
San Marin High School (9-12)	Spring 2019	42%	21%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	M	P	L	1	2.91
San Rafael High School (9-12)	2011	54%	18%	47%	19%	14%	3%	2%	2%	14%	13%	53%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A					1.86
San Ramon Elementary School (K-5)	2006	41%	22%	39%	25%	14%	9%	2%	12%	0%	2%	62%	M	L	L	L	M	N	M	4	1.8
Sinaloa Middle School (6-8)	Spring 2012	61%	34%	47%	34%	16%	16%	2%	0%	1%	13%	53%	H	L	H	L	M	P	M	3	2.03
Strawberry Point School (K-5)	2006	24%	15%	28%	24%	20%	2%	1%	0%	0%	5%	72%	H	M	H	M	M	Y	M	2	1.62
Sun Valley Elementary School (K-5)	2004	41%	15%	52%	27%	21%	5%	1%	21%	0%	4%	48%	H	H	H	H	M	Y	M	2	1.79
Tamalpais High School (9-12)	2004	52%	19%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	M	M	N/A	L	H	P	L	0	2.51
Tamalpais Valley Elementary School (K-5)	2000	17%	17%	53%	47%	38%	7%	3%	0%	0%	6%	47%	L	N/A	H	L	M	N	M	1	1.55
Terra Linda High School (9-12)	Fall 2014	37%	12%	41%	18%	13%	4%	1%	1%	7%	15%	60%	L	L	N/A	N/A	M	P	L	0	3.21
Vallecito Elementary School (K-5)	2000	56%	24%	43%	32%	26%	5%	2%	7%	0%	4%	58%	M	M	H	M	M	Y	L	3	0.99
Venetia Valley Elementary School (K-8)	2002	46%	13%	56%	21%	20%	1%	0%	27%	2%	6%	44%	M	M	L	H	M	Y	H	2	2.55
Wade Thomas Elementary School (K-5)	2002	47%	40%	55%	49%	33%	13%	4%	0%	0%	5%	46%	H	H	H	H	M	N	M	1	1.03
West Marin Elementary School (2-8)	2009	54%	17%	48%	13%	13%	0%	0%	31%	0%	5%	51%	L	L	L	L	M	Y	L	0	7.57
White Hill Middle School (6-8)	2006	67%	11%	75%	30%	8%	21%	1%	36%	5%	5%	25%	M	M	H	M	M	Y	L	1	2.76

NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Ranking:  
L-Low, M-Medium, H-High

<sup>2</sup> Bussing:  
Y - Yellow School Bus,  
T - Public Transit,  
N - No bussing options

<sup>3</sup> Number of locally funded crossing guards

## CAREGIVER SURVEY

To better understand the reasons caregivers allow or do not allow their student to walk, bike, carpool, or ride the bus to school, a qualitative caregiver evaluation was conducted in May 2022. Seventeen questions aimed to learn the motivation behind the transportation choices caregivers were making for their child(ren). The survey was conducted in both English and Spanish for elementary and middle school caregivers. Only one high school caregiver survey was conducted; at the time of the survey, Safe Routes staff were not permitted onto high school campuses to conduct programming, so program measurements would have been inconclusive.

1,462 surveys from 26 elementary schools were collected, with 1,302 from English speaking caregivers at 26 schools and 160 from those who speak Spanish from 19 schools. 266 middle school survey responses were reported, with 220 in English and 48 in Spanish. 345 Redwood high school caregivers completed the survey. Of those, 56% were caregivers of 9th and 10th graders who typically do not yet have their driver's licenses, and 44% had 11th or 12th graders who possibly could drive.

The majority of the Spanish language responses were from San Rafael schools - Bahia Vista, Coleman, Laurel Dell, Venetia Valley, and Davidson - though it is important to note that the majority of schools surveyed (70%) had at least some caregivers who speak Spanish and preferred that version.

A sample of the caregiver survey can be found in Figure 17. Though results are reported in the evaluation comprehensively for the county, it should be noted that mobility choices may vary depending upon such factors as the unique terrain (e.g. hills) and infrastructure leading to schools. In other words, no two schools are exactly the same, though some generalizations from the surveys can be made.

Given the small sample size of middle school responses, only elementary and high school survey results will be discussed in the following sections.

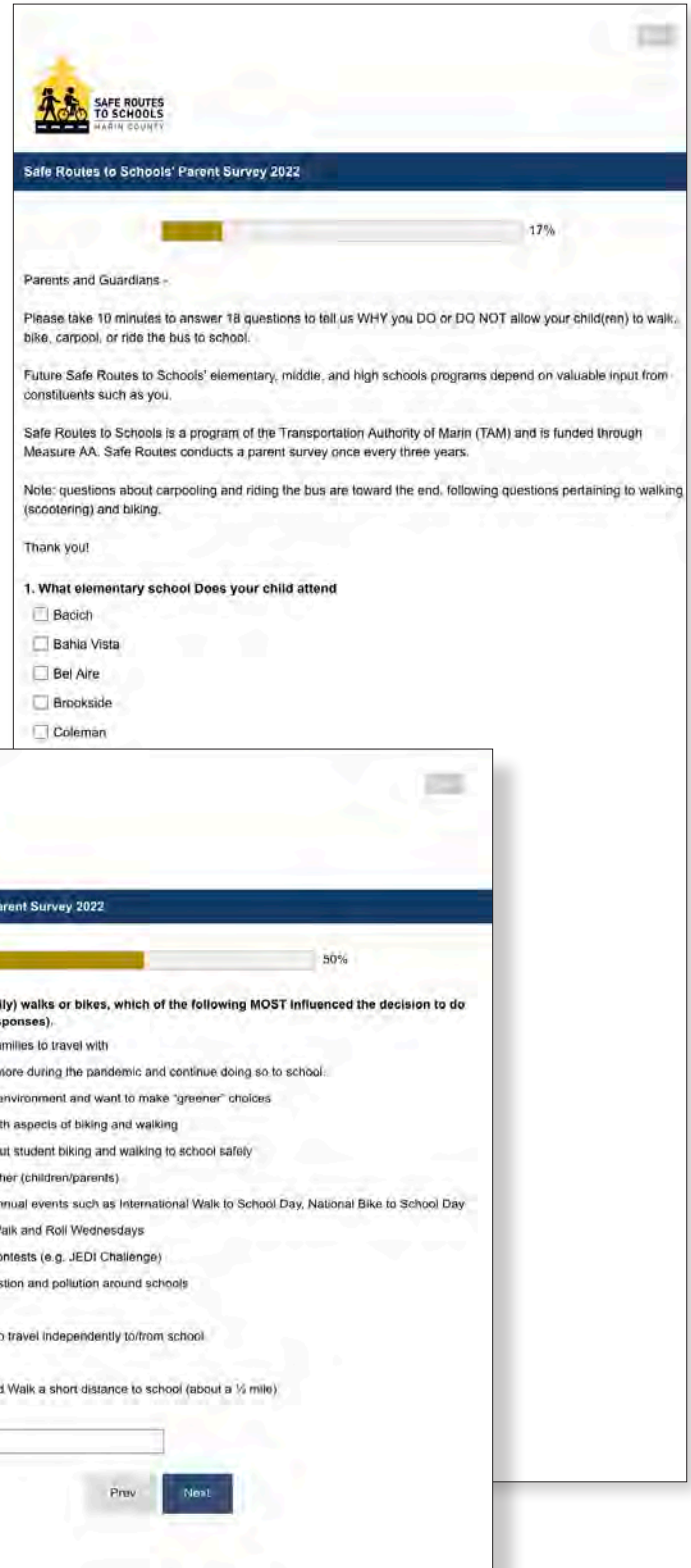


Figure 17: Caregiver Survey Pages

## ELEMENTARY SCHOOL RESULTS



*The Caregiver survey confirmed that Walk and Roll Wednesday is a popular encouragement event among students.*



*Park and Walk offers an alternative for caregivers who drive their students to school.*

The evaluation first asked for students' grade and distance from school, as these factors are known to play a major role in a student's ability to travel to and from school. Roughly 55% of the elementary students surveyed were in kindergarten through second grade; typically, these students are not able or allowed to travel to or from school without adult supervision no matter the distance.

The survey showed that almost 40% of the elementary students live within a half mile walking distance to school; 24% live between one half and one mile away; and 34% live more than one mile away. 65% of caregivers perceive that living close to school is a primary influence for allowing their elementary student to walk or bike to school.

Half of elementary school caregivers drive their students to school every day, but only 35% live more than one mile away. 16% of caregivers drive every day but live within one half mile of school. In these cases, safety concerns play the biggest role in caregivers' decisions. Over half of caregivers cite speeding cars as a factor for driving their students to school, while 43% are concerned about their students crossing dangerous intersections. Convenience and scheduling also play a role. Almost one-third of caregivers drive their students because walking or rolling would take too much time. 30% drop their students at school while driving on their own commutes.

In an analysis of what most influenced caregivers to allow their student to walk or bike to school, quality time together, students' health, and the environment were leading motivators. Of the elementary school caregivers whose children bike at least once per week, 54% noted health as the primary reason, followed by environmental factors (50%) and quality time (44%). For the walkers, the motivators are similar with quality time (52%), health (45%) and the environment (38%) as primary influencers. Figure 18 shows how each factor influenced caregivers and students in elementary, middle, and high school

Of the primary concerns given to limit a student's ability to walk or bike to or from schools, caregivers of elementary students who took the survey reported "dangerous intersections" (55%) and speeding cars (58%). Respondents' opinions of these infrastructure barriers are seen in Figure 19. "Just don't trust the drivers," noted one caregiver. "Cars speed excessive[ly]...and do not stop when people are waiting to cross in the crosswalk." "We almost got hit. Lots of drivers don't stop or fully stop for pedestrians to cross; this is the reason why I drive [my kids]." Lack of continuous sidewalks and bike lanes were also noted deterrents at 32% and 30% of respondents, respectively. Not surprisingly, caregivers said bike/pedestrian pathways separate from traffic would be the most effective safety improvement to encourage walking and biking



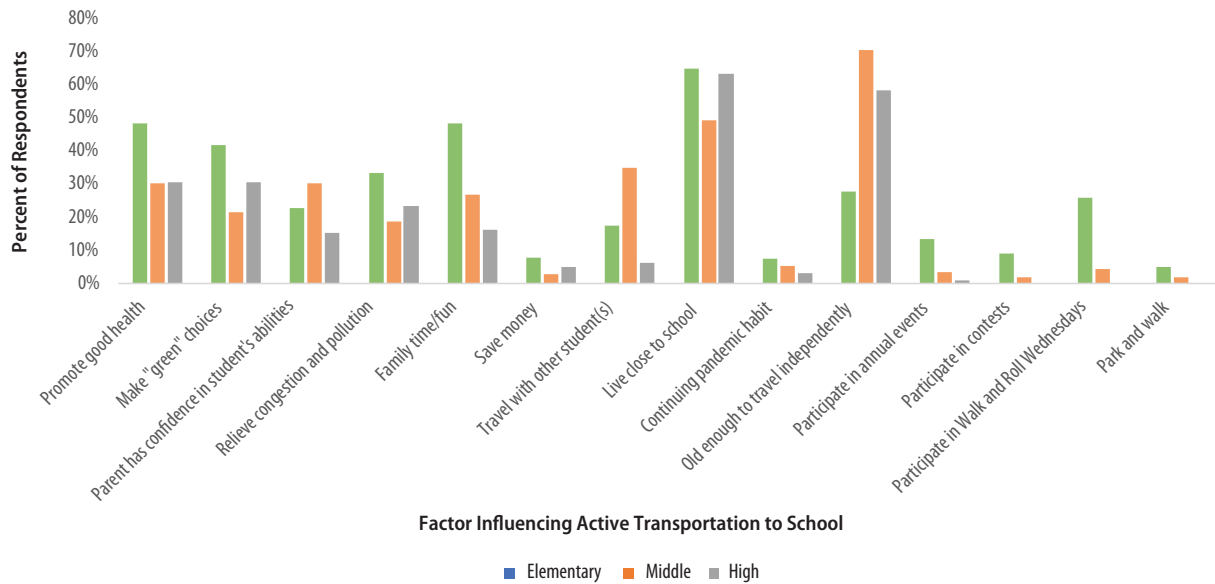


Figure 18. Factors influencing parents' decisions to allow active transportation to school at least one time per week

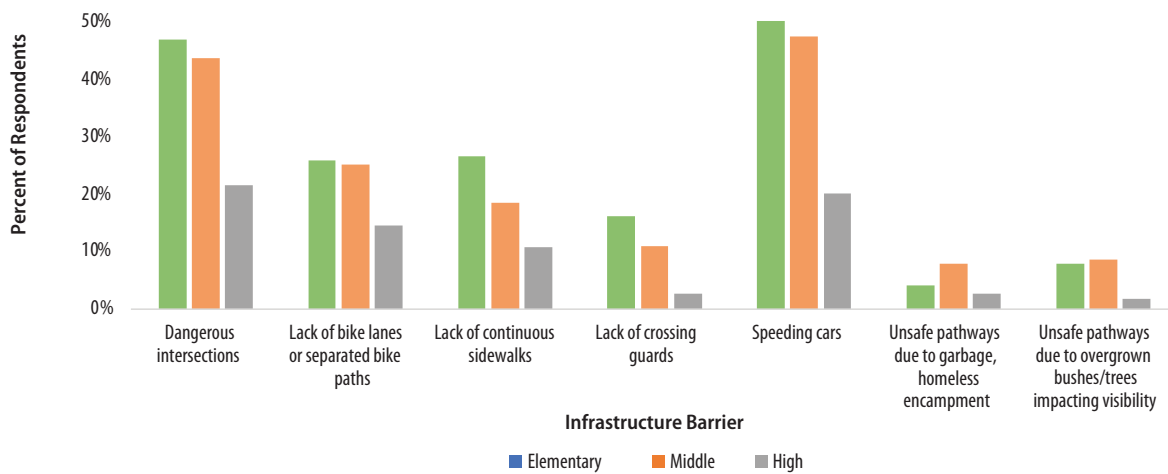


Figure 19. Infrastructure barriers to active transportation use

to school (56%), with more sidewalks, bike lanes, and improved intersections also scoring high in importance (35%, 42%, 43% of respondents). The caregiver community continues to value crossing guards as an efficient safety measure for encouraging more active travel to school (45%). When given an opportunity to report specific concerns along the student's route to school, 419 caregivers documented their concerns in depth. Safe Routes is now in the process of identifying those locations in the "issues lists" presented at Task Force meetings.

Despite all the caregiver reported issues and obstacles limiting students' ability to walk and roll regularly, an astounding 79% of respondents noted that their elementary student participated in at least one of Safe Routes to Schools encouragement events

throughout the year. Most popular of all the events is Walk and Roll Wednesday, with 66% of caregivers noting monthly participation compared to 56% who participate weekly. 28% of the families whose students bike at least once per week, and 24% whose students walk at least once per week, said they were influenced by wanting to participate in Walk and Roll Wednesday events. Another popular event, National Bike (and Walk) to School Day held in May, had 65% participation among respondents' children. Annual contests such as the JEDI Challenge had a lower influence on students walking and rolling to school (11%). This might be because the JEDI Challenge was a new contest, whereas Walk and Roll Wednesdays has been a well advertised, consistent event for 10 years and has significant name recognition.

## Summary of Elementary School Caregiver Feedback

### Top Reasons to Walk or Bike

- Family lives close to school (65%)
- Quality time together (48%)
- Walking and biking has health benefits (48%)
- Walking and biking helps the environment (42%)

### Barriers to Walking/Biking to School

- Speeding drivers along routes to schools (58%)
- Dangerous intersections (55%)
- Lack of continuous sidewalks/bike lanes (33%)
- Convenience - takes too long due to factors such as parents on their way to work (30%)

### Evidence of Program Effectiveness

- Students participated in at least one encouragement event (79%)
- Events such as Walk and Roll Wednesdays see monthly participation (65%)
- Crossing Guards assist students (45%)

## HIGH SCHOOL RESULTS

Of the 345 caregivers surveyed for Redwood High School, 55% reported that their student lives beyond two miles from school. Despite this distance, 57% of Redwood students walk, bike, or take the bus to school. The primary reason given for driving for those who live within one mile is due to “too much time/running late” (45%) in the morning and “too much to carry” (36%). Caregivers desired bike and pedestrian pathways separate from traffic (37%) and bike lanes (31%). Interestingly, the primary reason given for students who live beyond one mile from school and using active modes was the pandemic; students started walking and biking more during the COVID-19 pandemic and continue to do so. Since no other Safe Routes to School programs existed during the 2021/22 school year, this response is not surprising that this is the main reason given for the mode shift.



## Key Elements of a Successful Program

When it comes to showing tangible results, participating Safe Routes schools have achieved various levels of success. Those that have experienced the most dramatic results - whether through high increases in green trips or a large number of infrastructure projects - often have three key features in common:

- ▶ **A STRONG VISION.** Having a long-term vision in place allows schools to more effectively implement their goals as they relate to Education, Encouragement, Engineering, Enforcement, Evaluation, and Equity. Schools that have a clear vision for their future are also able to more successfully seek out grants to implement activities and improvements.
- ▶ **ACTIVE SCHOOL PARTICIPATION.** Based on the evaluation results, it is evident that those schools that experience the highest reduction in car trips are also those that are fully engaged in the six “Es.” Schools that do not participate in classroom education activities, or at least one of the all-school events, do not do as well as

those that do. Involving the whole school reinforces the lessons taught at specific grade levels and continues the teaching process. Lastly, a successful program cannot be achieved without a team of active school leaders and volunteers.

- ▶ **STRONG LOCAL SUPPORT.** An effective Safe Routes program requires a team approach that involves not only schools, but also support from city, town and county representatives and elected officials. Enforcement programs cannot be administered without the cooperation of local police departments, just as engineering projects cannot be implemented without the help of agency engineers.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The following table contains recommendations to strengthen the Safe Routes program evaluation.

Program	Status	Recommendations
Annual Student Tallies and Parent Surveys	No surveys were collected during pandemic years (Spring 2020 - Fall 2021). The National Safe Routes to Schools Database was not available for data collection in 2021-2022; however, the database collection will resume in 2023.	Continue evaluating the program through the use of student tallies and parent surveys. Continue using the National Partnership Database for collecting student tallies and aim for increased survey response rates from all participating schools.
District Travel Plans	A template for the District Travel plans was developed in 2019 to provide comprehensive analysis on a district level.	Complete Travel Plans for each school district. Consider developing a safe school zone policy for cities. Accelerate suggested route map production in order to complete travel plans.
Dot Maps	Dot maps have been created for nearly all participating Safe Routes schools using anonymized student address data.	Use dot maps to determine what percentage of school students live within walking and/or biking distance of school, to help target programming. Continue working with schools to gain access to anonymized address data.









## Chapter 11: A Look to the Future

The Marin County Safe Routes to Schools program has consistently proven its effectiveness in reducing the number of children who are driven alone to school and in increasing the numbers of students walking, bicycling, taking the bus, or participating in a carpool.

The Safe Routes to Schools program is constantly evolving and developing new ideas in order to strengthen its relevance and ensure long-term impacts. The past three years have seen updated classroom offerings, new contests, new partnerships, the innovative use of technology, construction of new

engineering treatments, and new funding sources. These developments have been key in allowing Safe Routes to expand its reach while also strengthening its core elements.

A well-established program like Marin County's focuses on continual maintenance rather than expansion. The following future directions and recommendations are intended to improve the effectiveness of the existing program so that it can continue to be a leader for years to come.



*Students and parents participate in Safe Routes encouragement events.*

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The following tables contain a summary of recommendations to strengthen the Safe Routes program.

Program	Status	Recommendations
<b>EDUCATION</b>		
<b>Elementary &amp; Middle School Pedestrian &amp; Bicycle Safety Education</b>	The core curriculum is second, fourth, and sixth grade pedestrian and bicycle education classes. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, many schools requested second through fifth grade classes to provide continuity of instruction with annual education.	Continue with second, fourth, and sixth grade core curriculum and expand into all grades as active mobility increases at schools. Expand the number of pedestrian classes, provide Learn to Ride (bike) classes at select Bilingual Schools, and provide safety classes for Spanish speaking parents upon request.
<b>Elementary &amp; Middle School Education</b>	In 2019, Safe Routes received a generous donation to purchase a new fleet of elementary school bikes, replacing outdated bikes used in Safe Routes elementary rodeos. These bikes are primarily used in class by students who did not bring their own, perhaps because they cannot afford to own one.	Repair or replace bicycles and helmets on an as-needed basis to maintain a professional fleet. Seek grants and/or sponsors to replace 15 outdated middle school bikes that are now 12 years old. New bikes are more cost-effective than the time allotted to maintain the existing middle school fleet.
<b>High School Education</b>	Grants from MTC's Spare the Air Youth funded a new Share the Road curriculum, which was developed and piloted at San Marin High School in 2018. Due to the pandemic, Safe Routes was unable to teach these classes.	Continue to offer the Share the Road presentation to all public high schools. Expand by adding an on-bike education component in addition to the presentation.
<b>Middle &amp; High School Education</b>	Safe Routes included e-bike safety information into existing presentations.	Expand with dedicated e-bike safety classes to middle and high school students.
<b>All Grades</b>	Parents are not always aware that students are taking classes at their schools. Safe Routes discontinued giving students educational bookmarks and certificates upon completion of class during this evaluation period due to budget constraints.	Reinstitute giving out bookmarks, stickers, and/or certificates to students upon completion of class. Increase Safe Routes visibility through monthly education tips sent via schools' principals and newsletters. Increase Safe Routes visibility and education awareness through various advertising channels, including school newsletters.
<b>All Grades</b>	During the pandemic, Safe Routes developed a library of online video content available to schools.	Continue offering online content for schools to use including lesson plans for bringing active mobility and transportation alternatives into classrooms when Safe Routes classes are not actively happening at schools.



Program	Status	Recommendations
<b>Third &amp; Fifth Grade Rodeos</b>	Safe Routes currently offers all grade classes to schools upon request. The rodeo curriculum for third and fifth grade currently is exactly the same as that taught in fourth grade.	Develop specific content for schools that request third and fifth grade rodeos, allowing for a skills progression and distinct age appropriate challenge for third, fourth, and fifth grades.
<b>ENCOURAGEMENT</b>		
<b>Walk and Roll Wednesdays - Elementary Events</b>	Since the pandemic, the number of participating elementary schools has returned to 35. Safe Routes participation levels are growing due to adding Park and Walk and rewarding carpooling and riding the bus to the Walk and Roll days. This was done to make the encouragement program more equitable.	Increase the number of incentives from 5,000 per event to 8,000 per event as participation, in monthly events has grown.
<b>Park and Walk - Elementary &amp; Middle Schools</b>	Park and Walk has been embedded into all events and contests, giving all students an equitable opportunity to participate regardless of age, economic standing (e.g., ability to purchase bikes), or distance from school.	Continue promoting Safe Routes and Walk in all events and help schools identify Park and Walk locations.
<b>Contests - Elementary &amp; Middle Schools</b>	Annual contests have been refreshed; the J.E.D.I. Challenge was added in spring 2022. Fall contests were discontinued due to the risk of fires.	Continue with one spring contest per year. Continue seeking business sponsorships for prizes to encourage active mobility such as bicycles.
<b>Recognition Awards</b>	Bike Hero, Buddy Up, and school assemblies provide student Safe Routes recognition opportunities at schools.	Continue with new, creative recognition awards to supplement the program.
<b>High Schools - Teens Go Green</b>	Safe Routes is working with student clubs (leadership, environmental, etc.) at five high schools to create on-campus and off-campus events such as Bridge the Bay.	Continue school events with student clubs. Use a mobile app such as Ride Amigos to make contests more age appropriate for upper grade students.
<b>Middle Schools - Teens Go Green</b>	Teens Go Green Coordinators currently work with students in all ten public middle schools to host major annual events: International Walk to School Day (October) and Bike to School Day (May).	Continue with two annual events per year at all schools and continue with specialized events at schools that have club support.

Program	Status	Recommendations
Focus Groups for New Encouragement Programs	In 2009 with a grant from the BAAQMD, Safe Routes conducted a focus group of parent leaders that resulted in development of the Green Ways to School program. This program generated the highest boost in green trips since the program's beginning. Input from volunteers on the ground was instrumental in making this program a success.	Conduct focus groups of past and present team leaders to develop new innovative encouragement programs.
<b>ENGINEERING</b>		
<b>Identification of Short-Term Projects</b>	Safe Routes engineers coordinate with Task Forces and municipal public works departments to identify issues and recommend short-term improvement measures to be implemented by local jurisdictions.	Continue to provide engineering and safety improvement support to public works departments. Work with Safe Routes Task Forces to identify short-term remedies. Continue to provide design services for low-cost projects.
<b>Long-Term Infrastructure Projects</b>	Municipalities have installed over 180 infrastructure projects to improve school travel safety including, but not limited to, sidewalk gap closures, shorter crosswalks, bicycle lanes, and use of new tools such as cycle tracks and protected intersections.	Focus infrastructure and safety improvements on high vehicular volume corridors, in areas with high levels of school enrollment, and in disadvantaged communities. Continue exploring new and improved tools for improving pedestrian and bicycle safety.
<b>Suggested Routes to School Maps</b>	Prepared Suggested Routes to School maps illustrate preferred walking and bicycling routes along with existing sidewalks, bikeways, crosswalks, crossing guards, and other features.	Continue to provide new route maps for schools. Accelerate route map production to complete travel plans. Update existing maps as necessary to account for changes in crossing guard locations and walking and bicycling facilities.
<b>Task Forces</b>	Safe Routes Task Forces pivoted to online meetings during the pandemic. This became very popular, increased participation, and made it easier for city and school staff to attend. Task Forces for West Marin and Ross were added.	Continue to offer Task Forces online. Reduce the number of meetings per year for smaller Task Forces or when the workload is reduced for that Task Force.
<b>ENGINEERING/EQUITY</b>		
<b>Equity in Safe Routes Engineering Program</b>	Bilingual parents rarely attend Task Force meetings; when they do, translation services are required.	Instead of getting bilingual parents to Task Force meetings, the task force facilitator should attend existing school meetings to increase outreach with Spanish speaking families to identify infrastructure issues and create suggested routes to school maps.

Program	Status	Recommendations
<b>EQUITY</b>		
<b>Bilingual Program - Elementary</b>	Bilingual coordinator support was increased from six to eight schools during the evaluation period. A Health and Human Services contract was renewed with additional grant funding to supplement Safe Routes incentives awarded to students who walk, roll, carpool, and ride the bus at eight schools that qualify for free and reduced lunch programs.	Expand the Bilingual Program to 10 Bilingual schools (adding West Marin and Hamilton). Continue partnership with the Marin County Health Department to obtain grant funding for Safe Routes contest supplies and incentives to run encouragement events at eight designated low income schools, including Bayside Martin Luther King Jr. Academy.
<b>Annual Events for K-12th Grades</b>	Safe Routes has continued with traditional annual events. Bike to School Day is now called Bike and Walk to School to make it accessible for those who cannot afford a bicycle.	Continue with an increased number of incentives for growing participation levels and an increased number of schools.
<b>Specialty Programs</b>	Safe Routes added an additional fall semester event: Ruby Bridges Day at Bayside Martin Luther King, Jr. Academy.	Expand this specialized Walk and Roll event to 35 schools each November.
<b>Safe Pathways Projects</b>	Potential projects are only eligible if included in an adopted Safe Routes Travel Plan. Safe Routes engineers have developed low-cost, short-term solutions as well as longer-range designs.	Continue to identify effective short- and long-term Safe Pathways projects, including popular lower-cost solutions that can be implemented within a short timeframe.  Develop longer-range projects that are competitive for grant funding.
<b>Focus Groups for New Encouragement Programs</b>	In 2009 with a grant from the BAAQMD, Safe Routes conducted a focus group of parent leaders that resulted in development of the Green Ways to School program. This program generated the highest boost in green trips since the program's beginning. Input from volunteers on the ground was instrumental in making this program a success.	Conduct focus groups of parent and community leaders in underserved communities to develop new innovative and culturally appropriate encouragement programs
<b>ENFORCEMENT &amp; SAFETY</b>		
<b>Enforcement</b>	Local law enforcement plays an important role to address traffic safety issues and remains an important partner in helping the school communities successfully execute many of the Safe Routes programs.	Continue incorporating newly defined best practices from national resources for Safe Routes to further engage Marin's communities of color in local programming and encourage further participation of law enforcement in the Safe Routes program.



Program	Status	Recommendations
<b>Crossing Guard Program</b>	Fifteen additional crossing guards were added at key intersections near schools in January 2019. Increases were made possible due to Measure AA funding.	Continue to support the Crossing Guard program by identifying potential locations for guard deployment, providing education to school children regarding crossing streets, and publicizing crossing guard locations on Suggested Routes to School maps. Maintain the number of crossing guard locations.
<b>Street Smarts Marin</b>	The Street Smarts Marin program is being refreshed with new banners, signs, and social media messaging. The updated campaign will roll out in Fall 2022 in all 11 jurisdictions and unincorporated Marin County.	Use lessons learned from the Fall 2022 rollout to continue advancing the Street Smarts program. Consider expanding future rollouts to include more school participation in the form of activities, contests, and giveaways. Additionally, consider using a mechanism for residents to report near misses for the purpose of including these locations in future campaigns. Consider purchasing social media advertising.
<b>FUNDING</b>		
<b>Supplemental Program Funding</b>	Measures AA and B provide most of the funding for the Safe Routes program. However, supplemental outside funding is helpful to achieve program objectives, not only for infrastructure implementation, but also for education and encouragement programming.	Leverage TAM's Measure AA and Measure B funding to secure potential outside supplemental funding to achieve Safe Routes program objectives.
<b>Infrastructure Improvements Funding</b>	From 2019-2022 Marin's Safe Routes program secured funding for the implementation of infrastructure projects including sidewalks, pathways, multi-use bridges, enhanced crosswalks, and improved intersections.	Continue to seek outside funding for implementation of capital infrastructure projects, e.g., through the Active Transportation Program, One Bay Area Grants, Highway Safety Improvement Program, etc.
<b>Safe Pathways Project</b>	Potential projects are only eligible if included in an adopted Safe Routes Travel Plan. Safe Routes engineers have developed low-cost, short-term solutions as well as longer-range designs.	Continue to identify effective short- and long-term Safe Pathways projects, including popular lower-cost solutions that can be implemented within a short timeframe. Develop longer-range projects that are competitive for grant funding.

Program	Status	Recommendations
<b>EVALUATION</b>		
<b>Annual Student Tallies and Parent Surveys</b>	No surveys were collected during pandemic years (Spring 2020 - Fall 2021). The National Safe Routes to Schools Database was not available for data collection in 2021-2022; however, the database collection will resume in 2023.	Continue evaluating the program through the use of student tallies and parent surveys. Continue using the National Partnership Database for collecting student tallies and aim for increased survey response rates from all participating schools.
<b>District Travel Plans</b>	A template for the District Travel plans was developed in 2019 to provide comprehensive analysis on a district level.	Complete Travel Plans for each school district. Consider developing a safe school zone policy for cities. Accelerate suggested route map production in order to complete travel plans.
<b>Dot Maps</b>	Dot maps have been created for nearly all participating Safe Routes schools using anonymized student address data.	Use dot maps to determine what percentage of school students live within walking and/or biking distance of school, to help target programming. Continue working with schools to gain access to anonymized address data.



*Safe Routes continues equipping students with the knowledge and desire to make healthy transportation choices.*







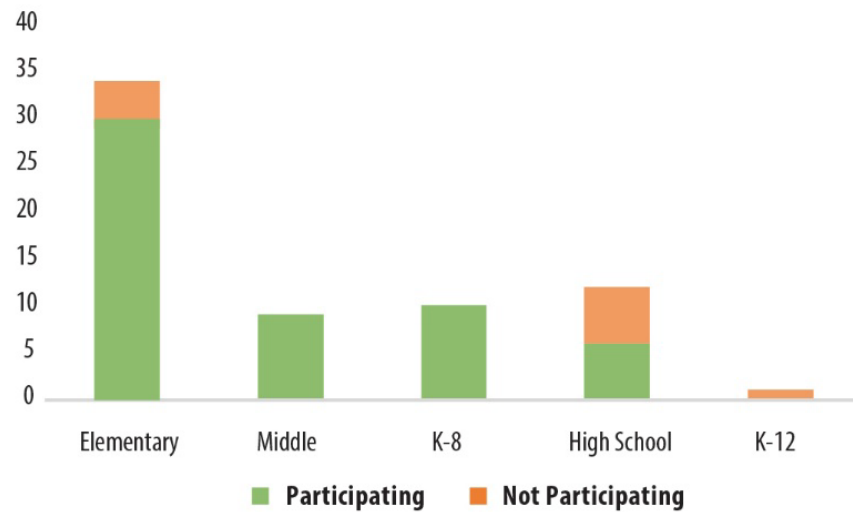
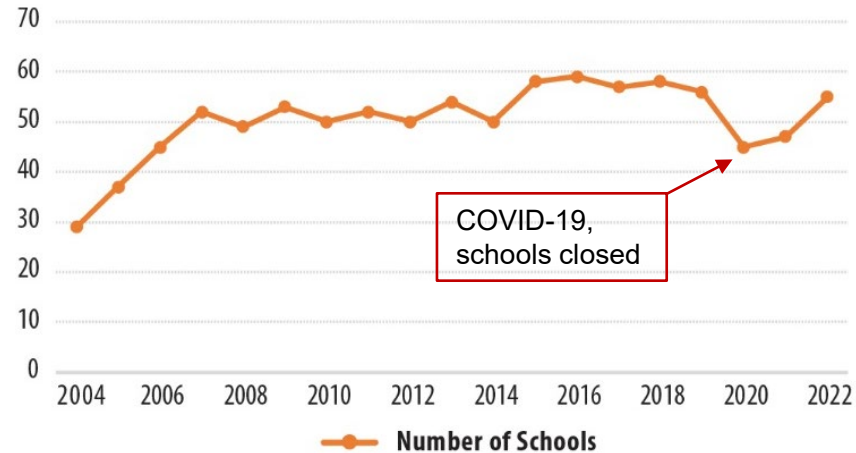
# Safe Routes to Schools Evaluation 2019/2020 – 2021/2022

Transportation Authority of Marin

Funding, Programs and Legislation  
Executive Committee Meeting

May 8, 2023

# Participating Schools



- 55 schools participated during the 2021/2022 school year
- Participation has stayed relatively stable, except for the pandemic
- 88% of public elementary schools, 100% of public middle schools, and 50% of high schools participated during 2021/2022
- 83% of public schools and 5% of private schools participated in the program

# Participating Schools

## Schools

1	A. E. Kent MS	19	Lagunitas ES	37	Reed ES
2	Archie Williams HS	20	Laurel Dell ES	38	Ross School
3	Bacich ES	21	Loma Verde ES	39	Ross Valley Charter
4	Bahia Vista ES	22	Lu Sutton ES	40	San Domenico
5	Bayside MLK ES / Nevada Campus	23	Lucas Valley ES	41	San Jose MS
6	Bayside MLK MS / Phillips Campus	24	Lynwood ES	42	San Marin HS
7	Bel Aire ES	25	Manor ES	43	San Rafael HS
8	Bolinas-Stinson School	26	Mary E. Silveira ES	44	San Ramon ES
9	Brookside ES	27	Mill Valley MS	45	Sinaloa MS
10	Coleman ES	28	Miller Creek MS	46	Strawberry Point
11	Cove School	29	Neil Cummins ES	47	Sun Valley ES
12	Del Mar MS	30	Novato Charter School	48	Tamalpais HS
13	Edna Maguire ES	31	Old Mill School	49	Tamalpais Valley ES
14	Glenwood ES	32	Olive ES	50	Terra Linda HS
15	Hamilton School	33	Park ES	51	Vallecito ES
16	Henry Hall MS	34	Pleasant Valley ES	52	Venetia Valley ES
17	Hidden Valley ES	35	Rancho ES	53	Wade Thomas ES
18	James B. Davidson MS	36	Redwood HS	54	West Marin ES
				55	White Hill MS

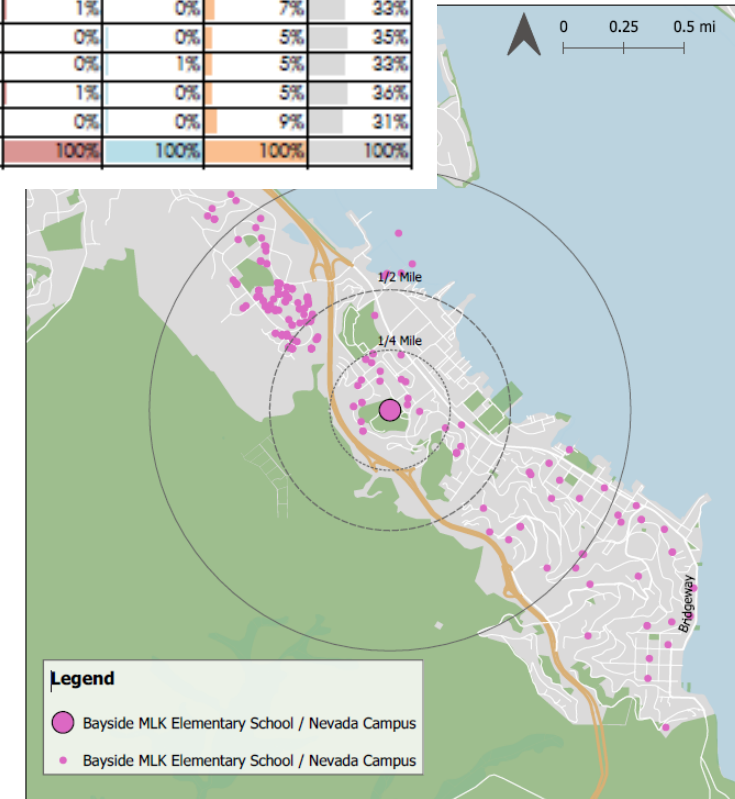




# A Data-Driven Program

- Student tallies conducted twice annually to gauge students' transportation modes
- Caregiver survey distributed at targeted schools to assess participation, attitudes, and program opportunities
- Dot maps using anonymized student address data help guide program priorities
- Evaluation of all participating schools assess “primary green trip factor” effects on travel modes

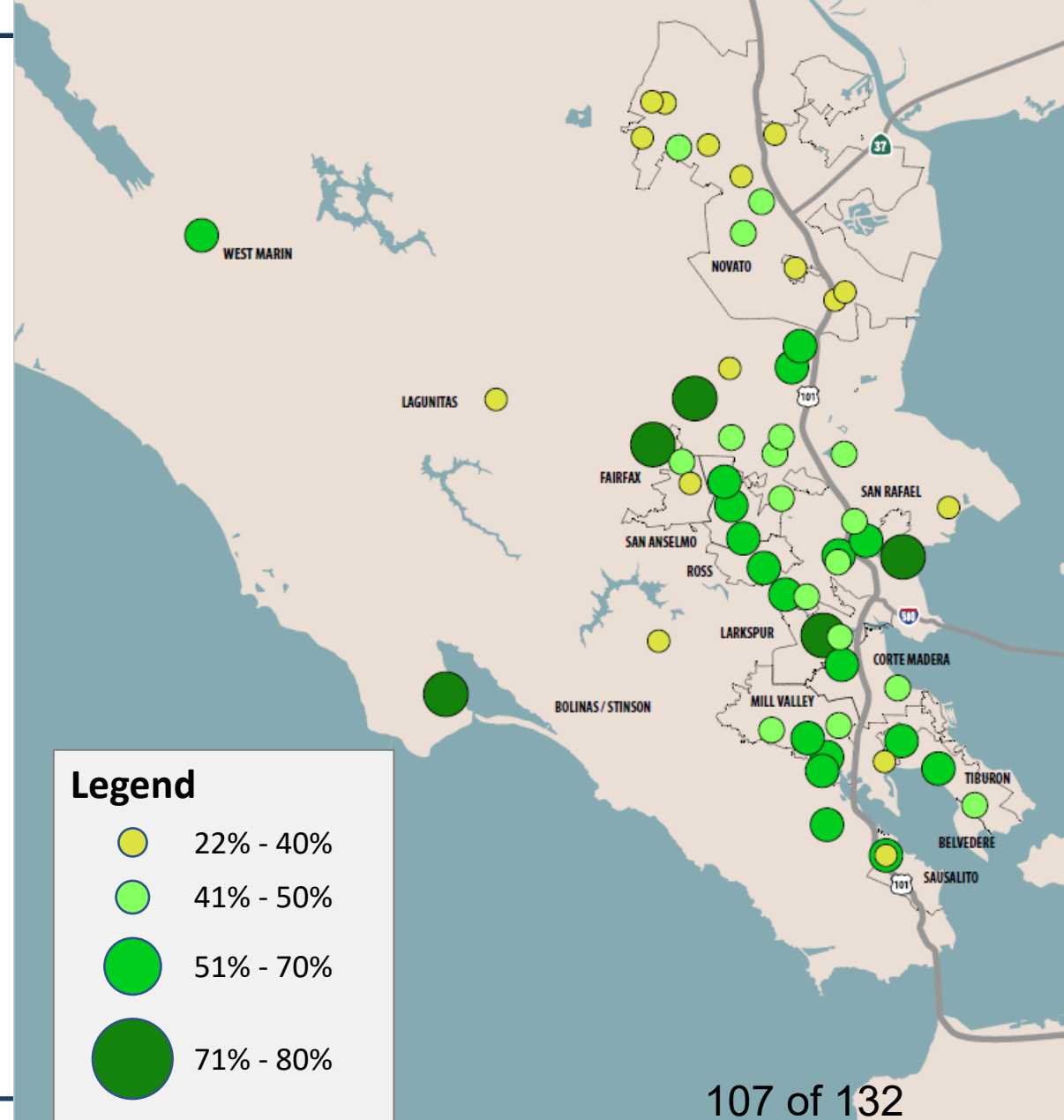
School Year	School Trips by Mode						
	Walk	Bike	Other	School Bus	Public Transit	Carpool	Family Vehicle
2021/22	66%	2%	1%	0%	0%	3%	28%
2020/21	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
2019/20	68%	1%	0%	0%	0%	2%	28%
2018/19	61%	1%	0%	0%	0%	8%	31%
2017/18	65%	0%	0%	0%	0%	8%	28%
2016 / 17	65%	1%	0%	0%	0%	6%	29%
2015 / 16	64%	3%	1%	0%	0%	6%	27%
2014 / 15	60%	0%	0%	0%	0%	6%	34%
2013 / 14	61%	0%	1%	0%	0%	7%	31%
2012 / 13	57%	2%	1%	1%	0%	7%	33%
2011 / 12	57%	2%	0%	0%	0%	5%	35%
2010 / 11	59%	1%	0%	0%	1%	5%	33%
2009 / 10	57%	1%	1%	1%	0%	5%	36%
2008 / 09	58%	3%	0%	0%	0%	9%	31%
Max	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%



# Travel Mode Shift Summary

- During the 2021/2022 school year, 51% of trips were green trips
  - Of these, 32% used an active mode
- 24 out of the 55 participating schools (44%) have green trip commute rates of greater than 50%
- 8 schools (15% of participating schools) have green trip rates of higher than 65%

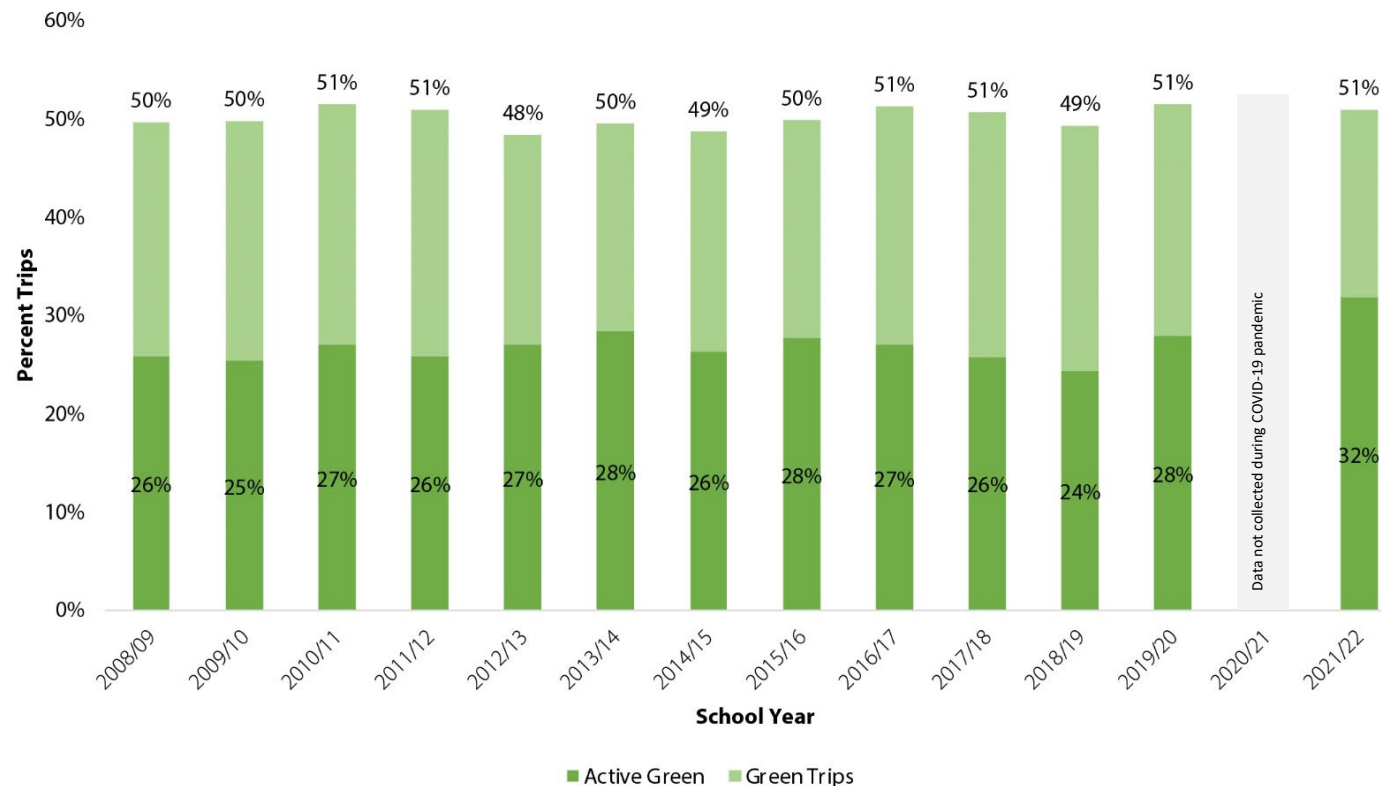
## Green Trips



# Travel Mode Shift Summary

- Increase in percentage of students using green and active green transportation modes
- Mode shifts due to the pandemic
  - Decrease in shared green modes (bus, transit, carpooling)
  - Increase in active modes that promote social distancing (walking, biking)

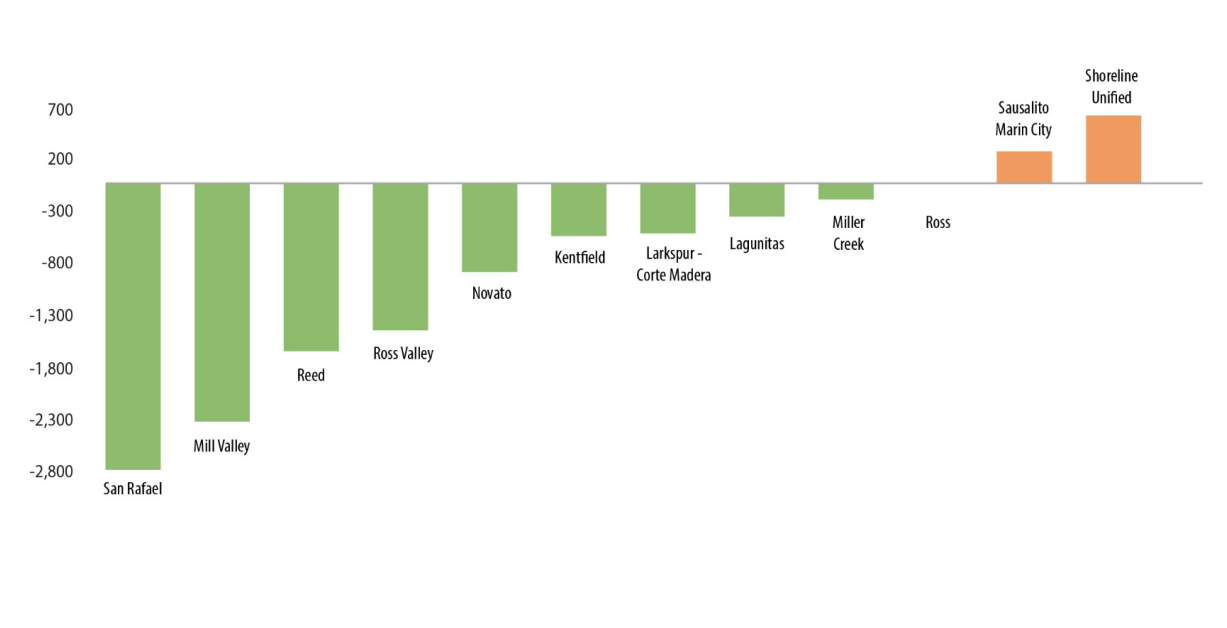
**Green & Active Green Trips Over Time**





# Safe Routes & VMT

Daily VMT Reduction by District – 2021/2022 vs. 2015/2016



- Compared to 2015/2016...
  - Reduction of 4,500 family trips
  - Reduction of over 9,400 daily vehicle miles traveled
- San Rafael: Reduction of almost 2,800 VMT per day
- Mill Valley: Reduction of almost 2,300 VMT per day

# COVID-19 Adaptation & Successes

- Switch to online classes and contests with materials offered in English and Spanish
- Successful prioritization of outreach to Spanish-speaking populations and underserved schools
- Effective COVID-specific materials developed
- Inclusion of technology helped parents, volunteers, and others participate
- Street adaptations encouraged families to walk and bike



# Education Programs & Classes

CLASS	GRADE
<b>Classroom Presentations</b>	
Stop Look Listen (Part I)	2
Pedestrian and Bike Safety	3
Traffic Safety Bike Education (Part I)	4
Drive Your Bike (Part I)	6
Share the Road	High
<b>Experiential, Hands-On Classes</b>	
Walk Around the Block (Part II)	2
Bike Rodeo (Part II)	4
Drive Your Bike (Part II)	6
On-road Bicycle Field Trips	Middle and High
Family Biking *	Parents and Elementary

CLASS	GRADE
<b>Assemblies</b>	
Pedal Power	Elementary
<b>Additional Presentations</b>	
Sustainable Transportation	Middle and High
How to Ride the Bus or SMART train	High
The True Cost of Transportation	High
<b>Other Activities</b>	
Poster Art	Elementary
No Idling Campaign	Middle
Route Mapping	Middle and High
Transit Race/Scavenger Hunt	High

\*Program available through MTC Spare the Air grant funding



# Encouragement Activities & Contests

PROGRAM	GRADE
<b>Events</b>	
International Walk to School Day	All grades
National Bike to School Day	All grades
Teens Go Green Days	Middle & High
Walk and Roll Wednesdays	Elementary
<b>Contests</b>	
JEDI Challenge*	Elementary/Middle
Pump It Up - Classroom Contest*	Elementary/Middle

PROGRAM	GRADE
<b>Other</b>	
Art and Poetry Contest *	Elementary/Middle
Bike Blender event	All Grades
Bike Hero Award	Elementary/Middle
Bridge the Bay *	High School
Buddy Up Contest *	Elementary/Middle
Cool with Traffic Assembly	Elementary
Park and Walk Campaigns	Elementary/Middle
Poster Art	Elementary
Transit Race	High School

\*New since 2019

# Engineering

- 8 infrastructure projects initiated during the evaluation period
- 19 suggested route to school maps prepared
- Success through collaborative work of Task Forces with local jurisdictions



## Infrastructure Projects



# Equity

- 9 schools participate in bilingual program
- All written communications in English and Spanish; communications adapted for parents with high rates of illiteracy
- Cultural differences considered for Safe Routes messaging
- Bilingual coordinator builds trust in schools and ensures volunteer retention
- Campaigns to provide helmets for students who may not be able to afford them
- Partnership with Marin Health & Human Services to sustain and grow bilingual program





# Enforcement & Safety Programs

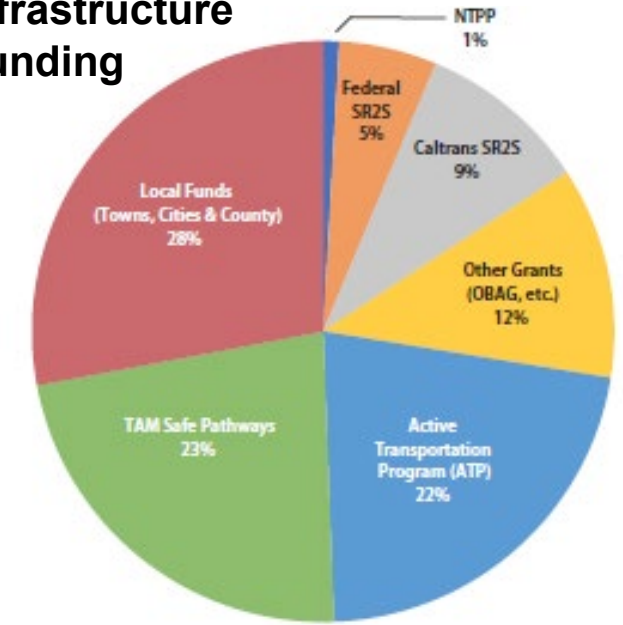
- Relationship-building between law enforcement and communities through SR2S
- Crossing guards were present at 101 locations during 2021-2022
- Some intersections improved to the point where they will no longer need crossing guards
- Street Smarts campaign refreshed using a data-driven approach, new messaging, and new designs



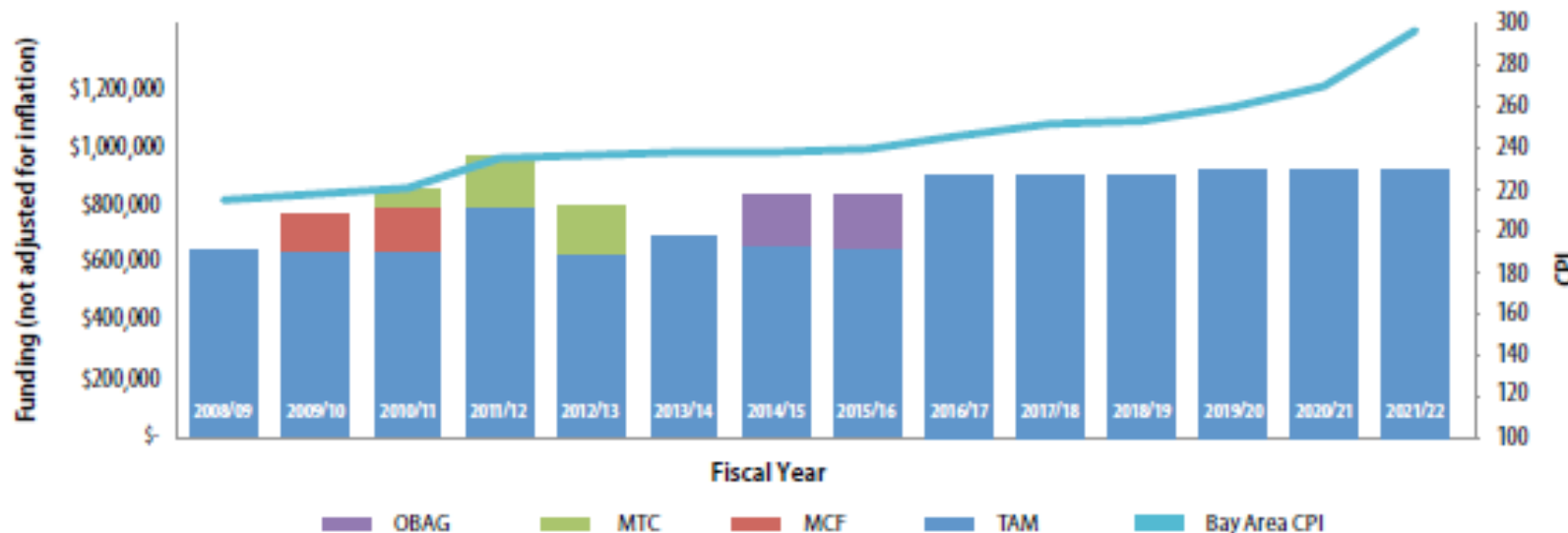
# Funding

- SR2S has been funded by a variety of sources: Measure A, Measure AA, ATP, federal/state SR2S, etc.
- Funding has generally stayed the same while inflation has increased

## Infrastructure Funding



## Program Funding Over Time



# Recommendations Summary

- Continue to provide and expand education offerings, both in schools and online, to meet the demand as active mobility increases at schools.
- Continue providing and promoting successful encouragement programs. Increase creative recognition awards and incentives to encourage active mobility.
- Incorporate national best-practices to improving pedestrian and bicycle safety.
- Continue to support engineering projects that make the networks safer for people on foot and on bikes.
- Maintain existing crossing guard levels.
- Continue promoting equity in all aspects of the SR2S program and expand the bilingual program. Increase participation in underserved schools by practicing cultural sensitivity and meeting parents where they are.
- Use lessons learned from the Fall 2022 rollout to continue advancing the Street Smarts program.



# Questions?

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Thank you!



**DATE:** May 8, 2023

**TO:** Transportation Authority of Marin  
Funding, Programs & Legislation Executive Committee

**FROM:** Anne Richman, Executive Director *Anne Richman*  
Derek McGill, Director of Planning  
Scott McDonald, Principal Transportation Planner

**SUBJECT:** Connect2Transit Pilot Program Update (Discussion), Agenda Item No. 6

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## RECOMMENDATION

Discussion item only.

## BACKGROUND

With the launch of the Sonoma Marin Area Rail Transit (SMART) services and to support connections to Marin's expanding transit system, in 2017, TAM initiated the pilot program "GetSMART" offering first/last mile ride vouchers through Lyft Inc. while separately contracting with Whistlestop (now renamed Vivalon) to provide wheelchair accessible vehicles as a component of the program required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The following year, Marin Transit launched Marin Transit "Connect", providing same-day accessible rides to older adults and people with disabilities using wheelchair accessible vehicles in the northern San Rafael area. TAM and Marin Transit soon began coordinating and exploring options to integrate TAM's GetSMART Program with Connect to address first/last mile needs with a reliable on-demand wheelchair accessible service.

In 2019, TAM partnered with Marin Transit to issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) for an integrated Mobility On Demand Program. This RFP led to an approved contract with Uber Inc. (Uber) along with a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Marin Transit, and the formation of the "Connect2Transit" Pilot Program. The program seamlessly integrated a Connect wheelchair accessible vehicle on-demand service and TAM's first/last mile voucher program through the Uber app starting in July 2020. Through the Uber app, the program has provided connections to transit hubs through Connect and Uber services (UberX). While the pilot program was initially set up as a two-year program, it was extended in June 2022 for an additional year of testing and implementation during the pandemic to allow more time to continue program operations.

## DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS

The partnership model with Marin Transit offered several key benefits and garnered national recognition with presentations from TAM and Marin Transit requested by the American Public Transit Association (APTA) and other groups. For Marin Transit, among other benefits, this program allowed for a significant expansion of the Connect service area to include a roughly 2.5-mile radius around SMART stations in Marin. For TAM, this program offered an efficient delivery model to offer vouchers for first/last mile transit connections, with Marin Transit fulfilling the ADA required complementary wheelchair accessible service.

In addition to offering public vouchers on Connect and Uber services, it allowed TAM to expand the scope of services to include employer-specific vouchers, advancing partnerships with County of Marin and Kaiser Permanente (Marin Transit formerly had public/private agreements under its prior Marin Transit Connect Program with these employers). Under the Connect2Transit Pilot Program, TAM set up new agreements with Kaiser Permanente and the County of Marin, allowing these employers to supplement public voucher amounts offered. TAM's public voucher offered up to \$5 off first/last mile rides to transit for the public, whereas the County of Marin agreed to offer its employees up to an additional \$8 off rides, and Kaiser Permanente agreed to offer employees up to an additional \$11.

### Program Challenges

The Connect2Transit Program was launched in July 2020 early in the pandemic during an extremely uncertain time for transit and shared mobility services. Since the launch of the program, public health orders limited vehicle capacities, and shared ride services in Uber were suspended for much of the program service period, limiting service options and supply (UberPool was cancelled and only UberX was utilized). Additionally, demand has been limited during the program, as many people have been required or offered the option to work from home.

The lack of ridership (voucher rides shown in Attachment A) has led to considerable challenges and costs related to the Connect wheelchair accessible service component of the program, and despite the major ridership recovery Marin Transit has experienced within its fixed route services, that rebound has not extended to Connect. According to Marin Transit's May 1st Board Update on the program, Connect has only seen 26% of its pre-COVID ridership over the past year. Marin Transit also experienced higher than average costs for delivering Connect. According to Marin Transit, Connect is the least cost-effective program in its suite of Marin Access programs; based on the second quarter of this fiscal year the program required \$157 per passenger in subsidy, as compared to a Local Paratransit passenger subsidy of \$85 over the same period.

Marin Transit staff also reported to its Board in May that as driver shortages have become more acute, drivers have been slowly shifted away from the Connect program to operate the mandated ADA paratransit services. This has often left only one Connect vehicle and driver in service at any given time. Due to this, riders have experienced challenges with trip fulfillment, and many have abandoned the service due to lack of service reliability.

Finally, just as Marin Transit and TAM staff were discussing some of the challenges related to the program services, in March 2023 Uber notified that it would no longer offer the Software As A Service (SAAS) contract that allows Connect vehicles operated by Marin Transit to be shown in the Uber app beyond July 1, 2023.

### Program Termination in June 2023

Based on the inability to extend the current arrangement with Uber, as well as the program's challenges, Marin Transit has recommended cancellation of Connect leading to the upcoming termination of the overall Connect2Transit Program. TAM's agreement for the Uber services also expires in June. Thus, the TAM voucher program will also be discontinued after June. The users of the program are being notified of TAM's voucher discontinuation through the Uber app as of June 22, 2023, at the conclusion of the current contract period with Uber.

### **FISCAL CONSIDERATION**

There is no anticipated cost for TAM associated with the termination of the Connect2Transit Pilot Program.



The relatively low utilization has kept program costs low for TAM voucher expenditures. TAM has only expended approximately \$15,200 to date toward the \$140,000 contract with Uber. However, as noted above, Marin Transit's Connect service has incurred high costs relative to usage, indicating that there is relatively low cost-effectiveness with regards to the wheelchair accessible vehicle delivery under the program.

## **NEXT STEPS**

TAM staff is continuing to communicate with the transit operators to understand future opportunities or models for providing first/last mile services, including for those needing wheelchair vehicles, such as monitoring SMART's microtransit pilot to connect riders to the Charles M. Schulz Sonoma County Airport. Under the Marin Commutes Program, TAM staff is also continually exploring new types of incentives to connect people with transit services. Staff also convenes meetings with TAM's Commute Alternatives & Reduction of Trips (CART) Ad Hoc Committee and Transportation Demand Management Working Group as opportunities are proposed for future implementation.

Additionally, staff is currently working on a grant application to the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), for a Mobility Hub Plan to identify ways to incorporate first/last mile programs within mobility hubs in the future. This and other grants may help advance the goals of connecting more commuters/riders to transit and help form future partnerships for the delivery of new services.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment A – Connect2Transit Presentation

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# Connect2Transit Pilot Program Update

Transportation Authority of Marin  
Funding, Programs & Legislation Executive Committee

May 8, 2023



# Connect2Transit Development & Background

- TAM previously launched the “GetSMART” first/last mile program in 2017 under separate contracts:
  - Providing \$5 incentive for shared rides to/from SMART with Lyft Inc.
  - Integrating Wheelchair Accessible Service with Whistlestop (Vivalon)
- Marin Transit launched Connect in 2018, providing on-demand micro transit service using Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles
- TAM and Marin Transit partnered on an RFP and contracted with UBER in 2020 to launch an integrated first/last mile voucher (provided by TAM) and Wheelchair Accessible Connect Service (provided through Marin Transit)



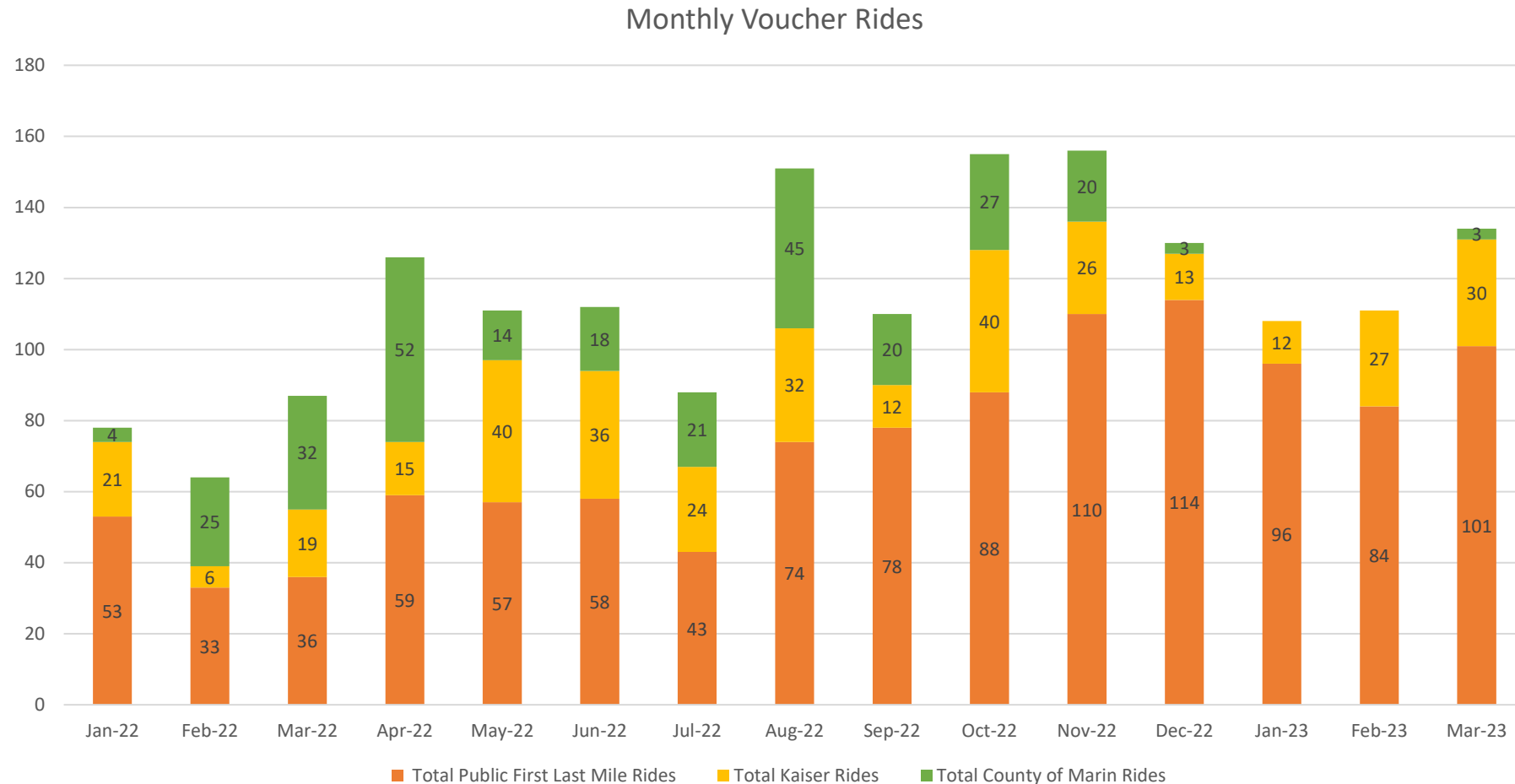
# Benefits of Connect2Transit

- Integration of on-demand services, including TAM's voucher program, Marin Transit's Connect; and UBER Services connecting to major transit hubs all within one app
- Provides employer partnership opportunities
- Enhanced Data Reporting for program management
- Significant service area expansion (2.5 miles from all SMART stations)



# TAM's Voucher Service Utilization

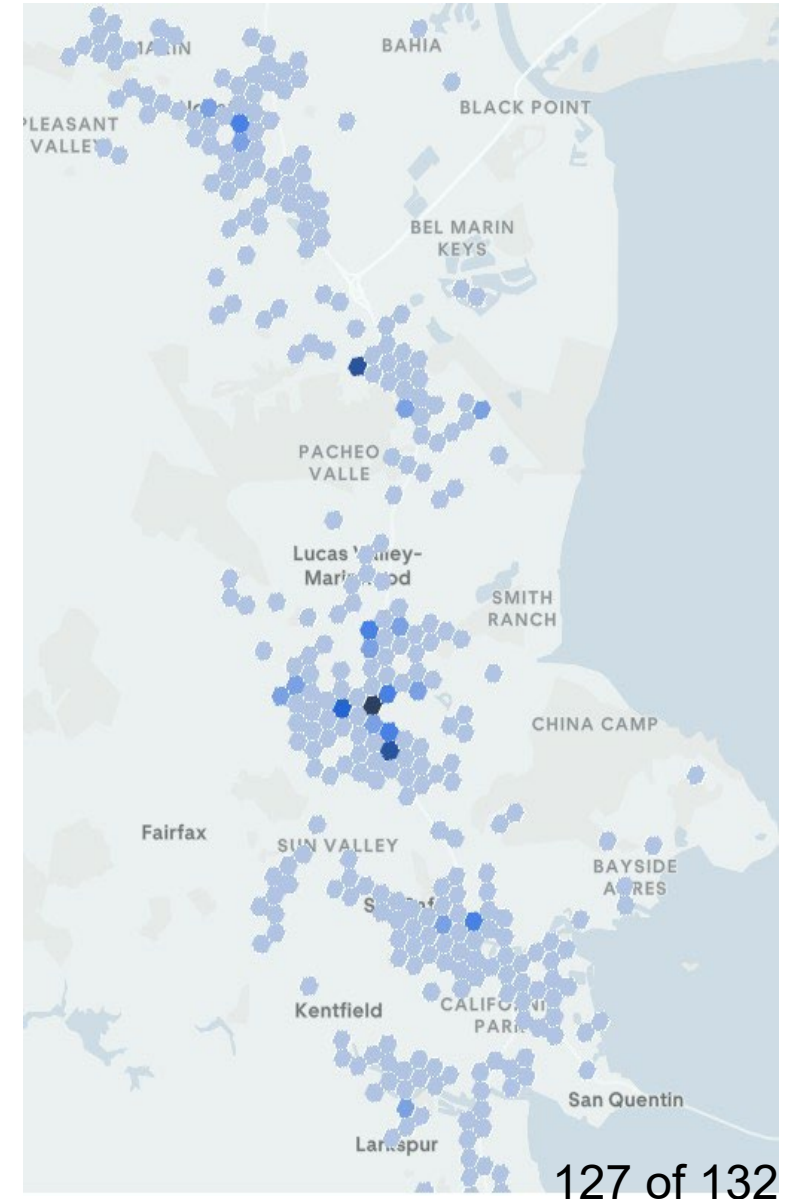
- Total Program Voucher Expenditure - \$15,200 dollars
- TAM has provided an average of approximately 125 voucher rides per month over the past year





# Top Locations for Connect Riders

- Civic Center SMART
- Kaiser Hospital
- Marin Health Urgent Care
- Marin General
- Downtown San Rafael/Canal Neighborhood
- Downtown Novato
- Grocery Stores
- Terra Linda Neighborhood
- Large Senior Living Facilities



# Challenges Faced During the Pilot Program

- Service heavily impacted by pandemic
  - Supply of service reduced to 2 seat/vehicle on Connect
  - Employer demand limited
  - Uber shared rides not available as planned
- Connect Service reliability issues and driver staffing challenges, causing rider frustration
- Connect Productivity is low and Marin Transit subsidy is high

# Recent Developments

- Marin Transit cancelling Connect Program, realigning Marin Access suite of programs
- Uber cancelling SaaS contracted service with Marin Transit
- TAM relies on this contract to provide WAVs
- TAM explored options to maintain WAV services by July 1st, however, will need to terminate program after June



# Updates to Marin Commutes Program

- Connect2Transit will be promoted through June 22 within MarinCommutes.org
- TAM is currently expanding other resources and incentives through the Marin Commutes Rewards trip program (with up to \$500 per year for participants for logging trips on transit and other alternative modes)
- TAM is collaborating with Sonoma County Transportation Authority and MTC to establish a bike share micromobility program (\$826,000 grant for upcoming re-procurement of bike share contract)
- TAM also is expanding promotion of the Marin Emergency Ride Home program through Marin Commutes.org which covers up to \$125 per trip with up to 4 trips a year



# Next Steps

- Notifications to employers and employees regarding voucher program termination
- Review of ADA requirements as relates to potential future TAM voucher programs
- Marin Commutes Program evaluation to consider new incentives
- Monitor SMART Microtransit Pilot at Sonoma County Airport

# Questions & Feedback

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Thank you!