



VALLEJO CITY
UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Vallejo Safe Routes to School Community Task Force

VCUSD Offices, 665 Walnut Ave., Vallejo

Thursday, October 24, 2019

9:30 – 11:00 am

Members

PRESENT		
Mitch Romao	Chief Operations Officer	Vallejo City USD
Sam Kumar	Senior Civil Engineer	City of Vallejo
Mandi Renshaw	Program Analyst	SolTrans
Lloyd Nadal	Program Services Division Manager	STA/SR2S
Erika McLitus	Project Assistant	STA
Karin Bloesch	Senior Program Coordinator	STA/SR2S
Tiffany Gephart	Program Coordinator	STA/SR2S
Shantel Livingston	Health Education Specialist	Solano Public Health
Carolyn Logan	Academic Support Provider	Solano-Widenmann K-8

Meeting Goals

- 1) Seek input from the taskforce in order to set priorities for future infrastructure projects to be included in the Safe Routes to School Plan Update.
- 2) Provide an update on current program initiatives and projects around the city of Vallejo.

Agenda

Introduction

Lloyd Nadal provided a brief introduction and overview of the purpose of local Safe Routes to School (SR2S) Community Task Forces and the meeting. The group will be working to develop a list of Safe Routes to School projects to recommend for funding and inclusion in the SR2S Plan and the upcoming Active Transportation Plan. Along with working individually with schools to implement and encourage programs that discourage single occupancy vehicle trips and encourage use of alternative modes to travel to and from school.

SR2S Program Update

Tiffany Gephart provided those in attendance a program update handout with all Vallejo Safe Routes to School activity for 2018-19 (program update attached). Returned Travel Survey data show a lot of walkers for Vallejo City USD schools 20-23% per school, not many students report biking to school. Ms. Gephart also provided the list of schools that have had walk audits and observations from the SR2S Evaluation Project and requested observations by a school (Solano-Widenmann K-8).

Karin Bloesch provided an update on the SR2S Micro Grant Program. The Micro-grant application period is currently open through January 17, 2020. The application is available on the SR2S website at <https://solanosr2s.ca.gov/programs/microgrant-program/>. SR2S staff will reach out to schools to market

the program. STA staff encouraged applicants to communicate with the appropriate school or district personnel to make sure all affected parties are aware of the request, and that if awarded, the project can be completed within the allotted timeframe of one year.

A question was asked if the applications were granted on a first-come-first-served basis. STA staff commented that although the micro-grant program is not marketed first-come-first-served, awards will depend on the number of applicants, scoring, and need.

Ms. Bloesch also informed the group that Fall 2019 Hand Tally Travel Survey requests were sent to all schools and that going forward these surveys will be collected once per year, instead of each fall and spring. Schools are currently holding these student tally surveys in the classroom and will be returning the survey sheets in early November.

School and School District Update

Mitch Romao provided a general overview of the Vallejo City Unified School District (VCUSD) Facilities Master Plan and Implementation Plan (expected to take 8-10 years to implement) status update that can be found online at <https://www.vallejo.k12.ca.us/operations>. The Facilities Master Plan identified needs in excess of \$700 million. VUSD sold first \$39M bond in May 2019, the overall bond measure gives \$186M for improvements for VCUSD schools. VCUSD launched a bond oversight committee, that recently met on October 23, 2019.

Mr. Romao also provided an update on several facilities projects either completed or in the process of completion. Solano-Widenmann K-8 School has received 3 million in expenditures to date. This school year, VCUSD closed Widenmann Elementary and moved the students to the Solano Middle School campus and designating the school as Solano-Wiedemann K-8. VCUSD has also repainted Hogan High School, Cooper Elementary, Highland Elementary and Pennycook Elementary schools.

Mr. Romao provided a brief explanation of various facility structure improvements as outlined in the implementation plan including planned improvements for the Corbus Field (located at Vallejo High School) with a replacement track and field slated for the summer. Scheduled for 2024, the grandstand will be demolished and rebuilt (estimated \$10 million project).

Mr. Romao also mentioned that there are infrastructure needs and accessibility issues at many school approaches (sidewalks, curbs, etc.) that are not ADA accessible. The district can address the school site needs on district property; however, many schools need city infrastructure improvements. Federal Terrace and Lincoln Elementary are just two examples of schools that have barriers for ADA needs, because of school site entrances and city sidewalks in need of improvements. Mr. Nadal mentioned that these types of improvements and projects are what the SR2S priority list of projects is designed to help to identify and apply for funding when funding applications are available.

During the discussion, Mr. Romao mentioned the additional need for enforcement of the traffic laws around the schools, and that he understands the traffic unit responsible for the enforcement is understaffed. Mr. Nadal mentioned the collaborative meeting that used to happen with the Police Dept. and the district, this might be revisited in the future.

City Update - Projects

Sam Kumar asked during the discussion about the VCUSD facility upgrade to clarify that the improvements that VCUSD is currently implementing are within the fence line of the school. He asked if a list of items/improvements needed "outside the fence line" currently exists. Mr. Kumar mentioned

that existing city programs (city wide curb ramps and sidewalks program) can work to prioritize those school locations.

To identify city improvements around the schools, Mr. Kumar suggested the Mr. Romao reach out to Vallejo City Engineer Melissa Tigbao and meet to let her know of the specific needs from the district. Mr. Romao suggested meeting at specific school locations to identify the improvements needed, instead of just sending a list. Mr. Nadal also suggested looking at the paths connecting schools and transit accessibility at the walk throughs. Mr. Kumar said that a walk-through list can be developed for each school site, and that would help address some of the infrastructure needs by using currently existing city programs along with identifying these projects within existing city plans.

Active Transportation Program Process

Ms. McLitus discussed the project identification process during the Active Transportation Plan identifying school and transit projects that are identified with a “gap” that is within a ½ mile radius of schools. During this discussion, Erika McLitus explained the funding and construction cycles of federal and state programs, in relation to the delayed Active Transportation Cycle 2 projects. The group recognized that local funding can provide a shorter project delivery, but that for larger projects with State and Federal funding, 4 years is the typical cycle, with applications every two years. In 2020, Cycle 5 applications will be received. Mr. Nadal explained the process to identify potential projects with walk audits at schools, in addition to the 4 already completed. Mr. Nadal suggested the group attend the walk throughs at the schools to identify projects for the SR2S plan.

Mandi Renshaw informed the group about the outreach (54 public meetings and workshops) and outcomes of the SolTrans Comprehensive Operational Analysis, and that the Phase 1 improvements based on community feedback were implemented in June 2019. Phase 2 of route improvements which including later routes from the Vallejo Transit Center for SolanoExpress will be implemented on December 1, 2019. Mr. Nadal asked if there was a way to get ridership information from SolTrans to track the number of students using transit to and from specific schools. Ms. Renshaw said that information on specific stops, numbers of boardings and alightings, as well as additional data points are available. Also based on community feedback, SolTrans is launching a mobile app on November 1, 2019 for riders to purchase passes when needed. Mr. Nadal mentioned reviewing the potential infrastructure projects and how they coincide with transit options.

Mr. Romao suggested the potential to use a parking lot location at Bethel High, for a drop off or turnaround area, and that he is open to having the discussion with SolTrans. Mr. Romao also asked about the new SolanoExpress bus stop on the slip rampa t Fairgrounds Dr. and SR 37, this stop is intended for quicker on and off freeway access for express buses. Ms. McLitus explained this stop is the first of some of the planned improvements happening around Fairgrounds Drive that include express bus stops, and bike and ped improvements along Fairgrounds Drive and in the area. Mr. Nadal mentioned that a conversation might be good to have with the schools that will benefit from the improvements, to let them know about the future planned improvements. Ms. McLitus also mentioned the Solano 360 group that is working on the improvements to the fairground’s property.

Next Steps

- VCUSD to arrange walk audits with City of Vallejo – Mitch to provide City with prioritized project list and reach out to city staff to arrange the site visits.
- Invite schools to ATP Community Outreach event on October (completed).
- Provide update on Active Transportation Plan.
- Coordinate with SolTrans to look at transit improvements and how they can coincide with the SR2S project list.

- Future presentation on Fairgrounds expansion by STA staff. Invite affected schools such as Dan Mini, Solano Wiedemann K-8, Loma Vista, etc. when the improvement designs are available.