



Sheppard Accelerated Elementary School

Wednesday, April 8, 2025



In attendance: Christina Panza (SRTS Director), Alexander Ocegüera (City of Santa Rosa Active Transportation Planner), Mike Vanmide (City of Santa Rosa Associate Traffic Engineer), Erinn Mackey (Principal), Chad Hunt (3rd Grade Teacher/Taco Tuesday Ride Leader), Chris Hernandez-Pena (Boys & Girls Club Director), Rumualdo Hernandez (Family Coordinator), Carmela Rios (parent)

Route: Began at school entrance on West Avenue. Observed drop off in the drop-off loop in front of the school, and in the south parking lot. Headed south on West Ave. to Liana Dr., then west on Liana to Biwana Dr. We then headed back east on Liana Dr., to Leo Dr., and walked east on Leo Dr. to Dutton Ave. We headed north on Dutton Ave. to Funston Dr., then west on Funston Dr., and cut through Bayer Park and Gardens back to West Ave. and the school.

Pick up/Drop off: Morning drop off and afternoon pick up for the school takes place primarily in the two designated school drop off zones; the driveway loop in front of the school, and in the staff parking lot south of the main driveway loop. Some parents also park on Rose Meadow Ct. and enter campus from a back gate. And some parents park along West Ave. as well. Staff expressed appreciation for the pedestrian-activated flashing beacon on West Ave. in front of the school, which is heavily utilized by students and parents. Staff also expressed appreciation for the pedestrian-activated flashing beacon at the crosswalk of Dutton Ave. and Funston Drive.

Drop-off was observed to be relatively smooth in the loop in front of the school. The district recently widened the driveway to provide additional space for both a bus zone and travel lane, which has been a vast improvement.

Parents/students may also enter campus from the back gate on the west side of campus, off Biwana Dr. This entry is primarily utilized by parents/students who live in the neighborhood and walk to school.

There are two yellow school buses carrying students to Sheppard. The yellow buses also pick up students at Sheppard and transport them to other sites in the Roseland USD.

School Information:

Address	1777 West Ave., Santa Rosa, 95407
Morning Bell(s)	8:30am
Afternoon Bell(s)	2:22pm (TK-K); 3pm (1 st -6 th)
Grade levels	TK-6
Enrollment	577
School type	neighborhood
Student's proximity to school	2024-25 GIS Map Data 577 Geocoded Students 491 live within 2 miles of the school (85%) 404 live within 1 mile (70%) 267 live within ½ mile (46%) 137 live within ¼ mile (24%)
Participating School in Sonoma County SRTS program?	Yes
Student Travel Mode info (<i>Travel mode data is from the 23-24 school year</i>)	Walk – 22% Bike – 2% Other – 0% Carpool – 11% School bus – 3% Transit – 0% Single Family Vehicle – 62%
Safe Routes to School Non-Infrastructure Programming (2024-25)	2 nd Grade Pedestrian safety lessons 4 th Grade Bicycle Basics Lessons, Bike Rodeo 5 th Grade Mapping and Communication Lessons Multiple Walk/Roll to School Events annually

CONCERNS &/or POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS:

Please note that all recommendations on the following pages are meant to capture potential solutions to issues or ideas raised during the walk audit. Each of these recommendations are subject to additional design, analysis, outreach, funding, prioritization, and approval by the City and/or Santa Rosa City School District prior to implementation.

Concerns & Observations:

- The primary concern/barrier to active transportation expressed by Sheppard staff & parents is the intersection of West Ave. and Liana Dr., which is stop-controlled for drivers heading east on Liana Dr, but not for drivers heading north-south on West Ave. Liana is a heavily utilized route for drivers traveling to/from Sheppard, Roseland University Prep, and Roseland Creek/Roseland Accelerated Middle School (RAMS). Not only do both Liana Dr. and West Ave. become quite congested, but visibility at the intersection of Liana Dr. and West Ave. is challenging for drivers on Liana Dr. who are turning north or south onto West Ave. As a result, drivers pull into the crosswalk before turning, in order to view traffic on West, and often miss

the fact that kids are entering or in the crosswalk. Often drivers don't stop or obey pedestrian right of way at all, and the intersection becomes congested with little clear space for pedestrians to cross. Parent Carmela Rios indicated that she has seen three students hit by cars in that intersection, and school staff indicated that near misses are frequent. We also observed several drivers quickly turning from West Ave. onto Liana Dr. seemingly not confirming that the crosswalk was clear before doing so.

- The intersection of Leo Dr. and West Ave. is an all-way stop, and only ~250 ft. south of the intersection of Liana Dr. and West Avenue. Leo Dr. is frequently utilized by families traveling from Dutton to West Ave, and schools in the vicinity. Audit participants did not express concerns about this intersection, perhaps due to the fact that a Crossing Guard is stationed there in both the mornings and afternoons, however a parent on the Spring 2023 survey expressed that Leo Drive is an “unregulated nightmare” (which speaks to maintaining a Crossing Guard at that location). City staff indicated that it may not be feasible to convert Liana Drive an all-way stop (with stop-signs for drivers traveling north-south on West Ave.) because it is so close to Leo Drive.
- Parents often illegally park alongside the fence in front of the school, on the east side of West Ave., despite the fact that this is a no-parking zone with red curbs and signs. This results in safety/sightline issues for both drivers entering/exiting the parking lot, and for pedestrians crossing at the crosswalk in front of the school. Staff also have safety concerns re: students exiting vehicles that are parked alongside the fence.
- Dutton Avenue is a major thoroughfare with heavy, fast moving traffic. Crossing and/or traveling along Dutton Ave. is a barrier for families that are traveling from the east and northeast. West Ave. is also heavily used by parents and students traveling to/from school. Neither corridor is bicycle friendly.
- The intersection of Dutton Ave. and Funston Dr. is frequently utilized by students/parents who live on the east side of Dutton, as Funston empties onto Bayer Park and Gardens and then to West Ave. Participants indicated that the pedestrian-controlled flashing beacon (RRFB) that was recently installed at this location has been extremely beneficial. However, participants also expressed that the intersection is still very wide and dangerous to cross, given the speed and volume of traffic on Dutton Ave.
- Prior to COVID, families frequently utilize the Joe Rodota Trail to travel to/from school. However, in recent years, the trail has been vastly underutilized due to safety concerns related to the houseless populations that camp along and/or litter the trail.
- For families living in the neighborhoods east of the SMART Trail and west of Corby Ave. W. Barham Ave. is the only east-west connector to Dutton Avenue (other than Sebastopol Rd. to the north and Hearn Ave to the south). However, W. Barham has no sidewalks, and bicyclists must “take the lane” in order to traverse it. Also the volume and speed of traffic on Dutton makes the Barham/Dutton intersection dangerous. The desire to have an improved connection from the SMART Trail to Barham, to Dutton, and to the school was expressed by participants.
- Sidewalks are missing along the majority of South Ave. Participants indicated that South Ave. is also frequently utilized by drivers to get from Dutton to West Ave., perhaps even by drivers who live on or very close to South Ave. but do not feel safe walking along that corridor. In our Spring 2023 parent survey, a parent commented *“South Ave and West Ave have terrible blind spots. The crosswalk is not marked clearly. Cars fly through the intersection at all times of the day. Cars don’t always stop, they roll through the intersection.”*
- A resident or parents often park on the west side of West Ave., directly north of Rose Meadow Ct, blocking sightlines for drivers turning left/north from Rose Meadow Ct. to West Ave. Parking within 20 feet of the approach to an intersection is illegal under California’s new Daylighting law.

Potential Solutions (City of Santa Rosa):

- City staff to study circulation patterns to Sheppard, RUP, Roseland Creek, and RAMS to determine the most viable solution for the concerns expressed about the intersection of Liana Dr. and West Ave. Some ideas expressed during the audit included adding “keep clear” markings throughout the intersection, or adding a diverter down the middle to restrict left turns into and out of Liana.
- City to study feasibility of converting Liana Drive to an all-way stop (with stop-signs for drivers traveling north-south on West Ave.
- To address illegal parking along the fence on West Ave., city to consider installing permanent cones beginning at the fence/curb directly north of the crosswalk in front of the school, and every 15 feet, to the end of the fence directly north of the south driveway entrance/exit, to create a physical barrier that prevents parking at those locations.
- Pursue funding for a corridor study of West Ave. and Dutton Ave. to determine best options for improving bicycle access along one or both corridors.
- Consider additional improvements to the intersection of Dutton Ave. and Funston Dr. to improve pedestrian safety, such as:
 - Removal of left turn pocket
 - Bulb outs to shorten crossing distance
- Consider improvements to W. Barham Avenue to improve both pedestrian and bicycle access, ideally a class I multi-use path.
- City staff is currently planning a project to repave South Avenue from Dutton Avenue to West Avenue which will also connect the sidewalk gap along the south side of the street. This project is scheduled to be completed during summer 2026.
- Crosswalk at South & West will be refreshed when West Ave. is repaved, see above bullet.
- Continue to maintain red curb at the intersection of West Ave. and Rose Meadow Court. Santa Rosa Police Department is responsible for enforcing violations.

Note re: concern about safety on Joe Rodota Trail: A new development at the intersection of Sebastopol Road and West Avenue (Tierra de Rosas) will extend West Avenue north and connect bicycles and pedestrians to the Joe Rodota Trail. Students/parents could utilize this new walking path to travel to/from school, avoiding portions of the Trail.

District/School SRTS Considerations:

- Continue enrolling in/participating in the County SRTS program to participate in ongoing Walk/Roll initiatives (including but not limited to International Walk & Roll to School Day and Ruby Bridges Walk to School Day), and to be eligible to receive SRTS services such as bicycle and/or pedestrian safety education programming, and more. Identify a “school team” consisting of site admin, staff (teacher and/or classified staff), and even a parent or parent(s) who can assist with implementation and communications.
 - Consider notifying Sonoma County Parks and/or the Sheriff in advance of planned Walk/Roll events (esp if both your site and Roseland is celebrating on the same day), to request that the path be cleared ahead of the event. If law enforcement is able to confirm that this will occur, the school could then notify families that conditions on the path are favorable, and encourage them to establish a “meet up spot” and walk to school together. If more families are motivated to travel that short distance along the path, they (or the school) may continue to notify law enforcement when conditions do not feel safe, which may result in better conditions overall.

- Continue to assist the SRTS program in data and information to maintain understanding of travel behavior and barriers to travel at CCLA.
 - Conduct student arrival/departure tallies in September/October (not on a Walk/Roll Day) to gather data on the number and percentage of students who walk, bike, scooter/skateboard, carpool, transit, yellow bus and travel in single-family vehicles in both the morning and afternoon on a typical day.
 - Distribute parent surveys, as requested, to collect more comprehensive feedback on the barriers to walking & bicycling as well as preferred routes to school.
- Continue to establish/promote current (as suggested above) “Walking School Bus” (WSB) or Bike Train meet up spots, and supporting school “SRTS Champions” to facilitate promotion and community participation. School administration, teacher(s), or even vetted community partners may lead a group of students on the Walking School Bus or Bike Train in the morning on special event days, and also encourage students & parents to walk together on non-event days and as well as model safe walking behavior. Walking School Buses can operate a couple times a year, once a month, or even once a week during certain months, depending on capacity.
 - The former Dollar Tree Parking lot was a prior meet up spot. When construction is complete on the housing complex/park at that location, this meet-up spot could be re-established.
 - Identify additional meet up spots and/or leaders to facilitate groups walking or bicycling together.
- Pursue opportunities to provide free bicycle repairs to parents and students, as well as adult “Smart Cycling” instruction in Spanish to parents who may not feel comfortable or knowledgeable about bicycling.
- Pursue opportunities to educate parents and neighbors about the California’s Daylighting law. SRTS to consider creating materials that schools can share with parents and community partners.
- Share information with students and parents about bus routes as well as students being able to ride the City Bus and SMART Train for free.
- Consider sharing the following SRTS tip-sheet(s) and videos to support safe walking, bicycling, drop-off, and parking & walking:
 - Walking Safety Tip Sheet [English](#) [Spanish](#)
 - Bike Safety Tip Sheet [English](#) [Spanish](#)
 - Driver Awareness for Safe Arrival/Dismissal [English](#) [Spanish](#)
 - E-Bicycles Tip Sheet [English](#) [Spanish](#)
 - Park & Walk Video [English](#) [Spanish](#)
- Report incidents to Santa Rosa Police Department when they occur (i.e., if someone is hit in a crosswalk but not hurt, etc), as well as ongoing concerns, near misses, etc.

Santa Rosa Police Department or Sheriff:

- Monitor traffic on West Ave. and Dutton Ave., provide enforcement of illegal behaviors.
- Continue to monitor conditions along the Joe Rodota Trail and respond to school/community requests to improve unfavorable conditions.
- Partner with SRTS to educate community members about California's new daylighting law.

Transit Information/Options:

1. All students at the school can ride CityBus, Sonoma County Transit and SMART free of charge.
2. If the school wants to discuss improvements at the nearest bus stop contact Yuri Koslen directly at ykoslen@srcity.org.
3. If the school needs assistance planning school trips on transit, please use the tools on the Santa Rosa City Transit website or contact Yuri Koslen directly at ykoslen@srcity.org. If staff at the school need training passes in order to train students on riding the bus, we can make those available to staff at any school in Sonoma County.

4. Current CityBus Routes & Potential Improvements

- Current Service provided by CityBus
 - Route 12 operates every 30 minutes
 - The closest Transit stop # 80533 on West Ave. adjacent to park
 - Or Bus stop # 80374 is located at Leo Drive
 - Route 2 and 2B each operate every 30 minutes / thus the campus has service every 15 minutes both east bound and west bound on Sebastopol Rd.
 - Serves Eastbound bus stop #80163
 - Serves Westbound bus stop #80134
- Feasible improvement if the school would like to advocate for transit use
 - Just promote proximity via Route 12,2 or 2B to the SMART station
 - Discuss with operator's discount transit cost options
 - Bus stop improvements (bench, shelter, trash cans, other)
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Safe Routes to School Program Information

- The SRTS program coordinates a Safe Routes to School Task Force to bring together representatives from schools/school districts (school administration, staff and/or parents), city planning/engineering, law enforcement, and SRTS program staff. The goal of the Task Force is to:
 - Seek input from Task Force members and the public, in order to identify barriers to active transportation (including Transit), opportunities for improvement and collaboration, and set priorities for future infrastructure projects within the city of Santa Rosa.
 - Provide a venue for sharing of program initiatives and projects in the city of Santa Rosa, as well as inter-agency collaboration.

Santa Rosa Task Force meeting notices, agendas, and meeting notes & handouts can be found on our SRTS Task Force page [HERE](#).

- Enrollment for participation in the SRTS program takes place in April each year (deadline is April 30th). Schools must enroll each year to be eligible to receive visiting education services & ongoing technical support. Enrolled, comprehensive sites agree to:
 - Meet with SRTS program staff 3x per year to discuss/plan programming
 - Collect student travel tally data in September

- Provide data for the SRTS program to enable creation of an annual SRTS “study map” showing where students live in relation to the school
 - Engage with/implement a minimum of 5 walk/roll encouragement initiatives per year.
 - Support scheduling & implementation of education programming.
- SRTS encouragement “Walk/Roll” initiatives and promotional materials are emailed to enrolled school contacts every month via our SRTS E-Newsletter, and may also be accessed at www.sonomasaferroutes.org. To request to receive our SRTS E-Newsletter directly, email christina@bikeosnoma.org

Appendix: Walk Audit Pictures:



Expanded school drop off loop in front of school – school bus zone separated from moving traffic



Drop off Loop



Entry to south parking lot/drop off loop



Intersection of Liana Dr. and West Ave.



Intersection of Liana Dr. and West Ave.



All way stop at Leo Dr. and West Ave. (Crossing Guard location)



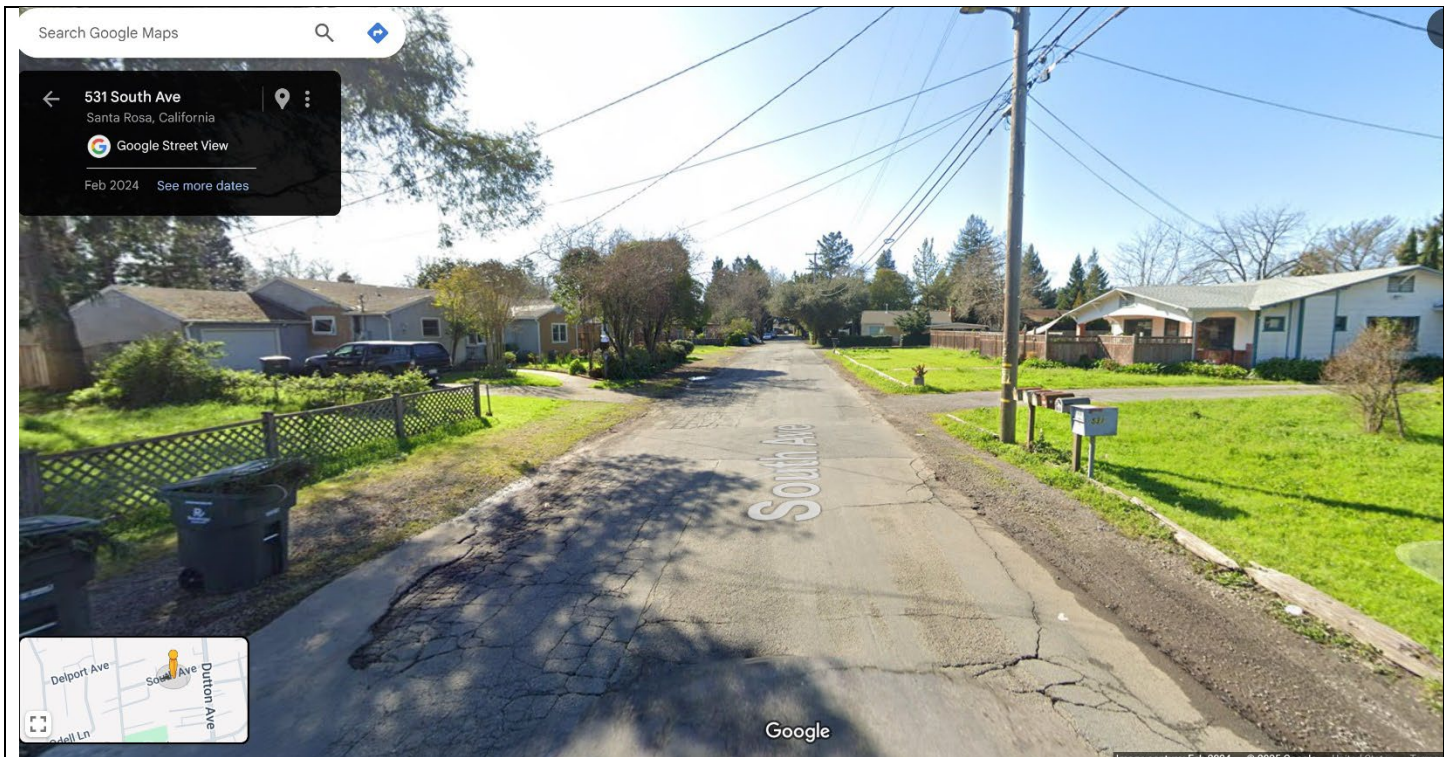
Intersection of Dutton Ave. and Funston Dr. – remove left turn pocket, shorten crossing distance



Restrict parking along fence line beginning north of crosswalk



Continue with cones to restrict parking every 15 feet along fence.



South Avenue sidewalk gaps



Intersection of South & West Ave.