



## City Council Agenda Item Staff Report

CITY OF SAN BRUNO

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**DATE:** January 10, 2023

**TO:** Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

**FROM:** Jovan D. Grogan, City Manager

**PREPARED BY:** Ana Morales, Public Works Management Analyst II

**SUBJECT:** Conduct Study Session and Provide Comments on the Draft Safe Routes to School Plan

### BACKGROUND:

Developing new and improving existing pedestrian and bicycle networks are components of the City of San Bruno's Capital Improvement Program (CIP) and overall General Plan. The City of San Bruno's first pedestrian and bicycle master plan, the Walk 'n Bike Plan (Plan), was adopted in July 2016. The needs assessment process for the Plan consisted of gathering information from the public on the barriers, obstacles and challenges to walking and biking in the city; the needs and concerns of local pedestrians and cyclists; specific problem areas and locations; and ideas and suggestions for improving locations. Several themes emerged as especially important areas of concern and as key focus areas for improvements regarding children and school routes.

In February 2021, the City issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for professional consulting services for the development of a comprehensive Safe Routes to School Plan (SRTS Plan). Alta Planning + Design (Alta) was selected as the consultant firm for this project and in November 2021 Alta began their work on the SRTS Plan. After 14 months of intensive collaboration, review, and analysis of 12 schools across San Bruno, Alta's efforts culminated in the development of the Draft SRTS Plan which was released for public review and comment on October 18, 2022, and the final Draft SRTS Plan which was shared with the City on December 18, 2022.

The City's Draft SRTS Plan serves to address some of those key focus areas by making it safer and more accessible to walk, bicycle and/or take transit or carpool. The SRTS Plan includes school specific summaries that describe existing conditions and a list of prioritized projects. The SRTS Plan provides training, resources, and customized support to schools in collaboration with district and school administration, parents, teachers, and local community-based organizations. The desired outcome with implementation is to increase the number of students who choose active or shared modes of transportation to school. The overall goal of the SRTS Plan is to make San Bruno a healthier, safer, more sustainable, and environmentally sound community, with improved air quality and less traffic congestion, by reducing the number of school-related automobile trips.

At the City Council meeting on April 12, 2022, the Council discussed the topic of 15 Miles Per Hour (MPH) Speed Limit Signs on School Zones. As part of that discussion, the Council

provided direction that the SRTS Plan should study schools to analyze whether a 15 MPH zones would be needed, and if so, the appropriate locations.

The intent of the January 10, 2023, City Council Study Session is to introduce the Draft SRTS Plan, to answer any questions and to receive comments from City Council before formal adoption of the SRTS Plan at a future City Council meeting.

## **DISCUSSION:**

### *Plan Objective and Goals*

The Draft SRTS Plan is framed on the six Es of Safe Routes to School (Evaluation, Engineering, Education, Encouragement, Engagement, and Equity), and is informed by input from school and community-based groups such as parent-teacher organizations, citizen advisory committees, three open community meetings, online parent and student surveys, in-depth analysis of collision data, and comprehensive walking audits at each school. The Draft SRTS Plan captures the intended goals and vision of Safe Routes to School programming, identifying countermeasures (e.g., engineering strategies such as traffic calming and improvements to pedestrian infrastructure, education strategies, and encouragement strategies) that support safer walking and biking for all students and families, including our most vulnerable residents, to school and other destinations in their neighborhood. The Draft SRTS Plan was developed by the project team, which included the consultants from Alta, as well as City staff from the Public Works Department and City Manager's Office.

### *The Process*

To understand existing conditions, the project team collected three types of data:

- Collision analysis:
  - Involved weighting street segments for collision severity, collisions involving youth, and collisions involving people walking or biking.
  - Resulted in Safety Priority Index identifying corridors with the most significant safety challenges.
  - Resulted in collision summaries for the nine fully-participating schools, as well as a Citywide summary.
- Walk audits:
  - Conducted at all nine fully-participating schools.
  - Attended by district staff, school administrator, parents, consulting staff.
  - Participants observed biking/walking circulation, street crossings, safety issues, interactions between people walking/biking and driving, barriers and opportunities.
- Engagement:
  - Parent/community survey to identify issues and opportunities.
  - Online interactive map to identify routes and issues.
  - Parent Teacher Organizations (PTO)/Parent Teacher Associations (PTA) coordination – including presenting for all active PTO groups.
  - Three virtual open houses – first to identify issues and opportunities, then to provide input on draft recommendations, and finally to weigh in on the final plan draft.

With this information, the project team identified infrastructure and non-infrastructure recommendations to address findings from the three sets of data. Infrastructure recommendations were prioritized (for each school, as well as overall) based on a combined score aggregating the project cost, efficacy as measured by crash modification factors, and location on the Safety Priority Index.

Findings of the SRTS Plan

- Collision analysis
  - Unsafe speed is the top primary crash factor in school study areas.
  - Crashes spike between 3:00 and 4:00 PM, as students are traveling home.
  - 64% of pedestrians involved in collisions were struck while legally crossing in a crosswalk at an intersection.
- Over 400 citywide survey responses
  - Main concerns about getting kid(s) to/from school:
    - Speeding traffic along route (41%).
    - Unsafe intersections (39%).
    - Too much traffic along the route (36%).
  - Specific locations of concern identified at most schools.

Citywide Recommendations

- 92 total projects at a cost of \$7,597,700.
- 22 high priority projects at a cost of \$495,150.
- 14 non-infrastructure programs, recommended a total of 35 times.

Table 1: Citywide Project Priority Levels and Costs			
Project Priority Level	Number of Projects	Percent of Total Projects	Sum of Cost
High	22	24%	\$495,150
Medium	38	41%	\$2,132,250
Low	32	35%	\$4,970,300
<b>Total</b>	<b>92</b>		<b>\$7,597,700</b>

Future funding to implement part or all of the SRTS Plan will be strategically determined based on the potential funder's priority funding areas. Future opportunities may include federal funding from the U.S. Department of Transportation's Highway Safety Improvement Program, state funding from the California Department of Transportation's Clean California Local Grant Program, and/or county funding from San Mateo County's Office of Education via competitive application processes. Council can also decide to self-fund improvements that they deem a priority with City Funds.

In response to the April 12, 2022, City Council discussion on speed limit signs on school zones, two of the three Citywide infrastructure recommendations focused on speeds around schools and included:

- School zone speed limits lowering from 30 miles per hour to 15 miles per hour, encompassing all two-way residential streets under the City's jurisdiction within 500 feet of the school. However, as discussed at the April 12, 2022, City Council meeting, prior to implementation, the City would need to look at enforcement strategies in collaboration with the Police Department or explore other traffic calming measures.

- The City exploring the feasibility of lowering the volume and speed thresholds for implementing all-way stop control (adding stop signs) within 500 feet of a school.

### Conclusion

The Citywide SRTS Plan highlights the importance of walking, bicycling, and other forms of active transport to school. Once implemented, the SRTS Plan provides the City with a plan to achieve those highlights. The direct benefits include increased physical activity and associated wellness and learning outcomes for students, as well as concurrently benefitting students and the community via safety enhancements, reduced vehicle traffic, and reduced air pollution near schools.

### Update on the Parkside Intermediate School Traffic Safety and Crossing Guard

At the City Council meeting on October 11, 2022, there was an inquiry and discussion regarding the relocation of a crossing guard from the intersection of Crystal Springs Road and Donner Avenue to the intersection of Crystal Springs Road and Oak Avenue. As was explained at that time, the impetus for this relocation was the closure of the rear entrance to Parkside Intermediate School ("Parkside"), which is located on Donner Avenue. This closure resulted in a rerouting of nearly all the pedestrian traffic that previously used the Donner intersection for travel to and from the school to the Oak intersection. This change was observed by Parkside staff, the assigned crossing guard, and San Bruno Police Traffic and School Officers. Subsequently, the City and school staff decided that relocating the crossing guard was appropriate for optimal student safety. During the discussion at the City Council meeting, the Council expressed concern over student pedestrian safety on Niles Avenue in the area immediately in front of Parkside. The Council requested that staff investigate the possibility of adding one or more crossing guards to work the crosswalks in this area.

Crossing guard locations are determined through collaboration between the Police Department and the San Bruno Park School District. The cost of crossing guard services is included in the Police Department budget. The FY 2022-23 budget included an appropriation in the Police Department budget of \$59,289.00 for crossing guard services, which are provided at three locations: Angus Avenue/El Camino Real, 3rd Avenue/San Bruno Avenue, and Crystal Springs Road/Oak Avenue. If Council directs staff to add an additional crossing guard at a specified intersection, the approximate cost is \$20,000 per year. This would require an amendment to the current budget to appropriate these funds. A detailed memorandum with an update on this topic is provided as Attachment 2.

### **NEXT STEPS:**

With input and direction received from City Council, the project team will finalize the SRTS Plan and present it for City Council's adoption at a future meeting.

### **FISCAL IMPACT:**

There is no fiscal impact with receiving this study session. The adopted FY 2020-21 Capital Improvement Program Budget includes a project with appropriation for the development of the Safe Routes to School Plan. The cost of the SRTS Plan preparation has been fully funded by \$248,929 of Caltrans grant funding and \$32,251 of Measure A local match for a total project budget of \$281,180.

**ALTERNATIVES:**

None.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Conduct Study Session and Provide Comments on the Draft Safe Routes to School Plan

**ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Draft SRTS Plan
2. Memorandum Regarding an Update on the Parkside Intermediate School Traffic Safety and Crossing Guard

**DATE PREPARED:**

January 10, 2023

**DISTRIBUTION:**

None.