

4th Street / College Avenue, Santa Rosa Executive Summary

Community Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Training

The Community Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Training (CPBST) is a statewide project of California Walks (Cal Walks) and the University of California at Berkeley's Safe Transportation Research and Education Center (SafeTREC). The CPBST program engages residents and safety advocates to develop community-driven action plans to improve walking and biking safety in their communities.

The 4th Street/College Avenue Corridor Santa Rosa, CPBST was collaboratively planned and facilitated by The City of Santa Rosa, the Planning Committee, Cal Walks, and SafeTREC Project Team to:

1. Improve walking and biking in the 4th St/College Ave Corridor; and
2. Gather and document community feedback to strengthen ATP applications and other grants;

The August 12, 2020 training consisted of:

- Introduction Poll
- Walking and biking assessments along three (3) key routes;
- An overview of the 3 E's strategies to improve walking and biking safety using the intersectional 3 E's framework including: Equity, Engineering, and Education;
- Action-planning sessions to prioritize and plan for community programs, and infrastructure projects; and
- Exit Poll

Data

The Project Team and Planning Committee reviewed data which demonstrated a safety concern in the area. As predetermined by the Planning Committee, we reviewed pedestrian and bicycle crash data on the 4th Street corridor from College Avenue to Farmers Lane and on College Avenue from the U.S. Highway 101 to 4th Street. On 4th Street, there were two pedestrian crashes and two bicycle crashes occurring on the eastern side of the corridor between Alderbrook Drive and Farmers Lane. On College Avenue, there were 4 pedestrian crashes and 5 bicycle crashes. A full discussion of pedestrian and bicycle crashes can be found in the CPBST report and more neighborhood crash data can be found in the Appendix of the CPBST report.

Walking & Biking Assessment

Workshop participants conducted walking and biking assessments along three (3) key routes used by residents to access schools and business in Santa Rosa. Participants were asked to:

- Identify community assets;
- Assess infrastructure conditions; and
- Observe how road users are engaging with the built-environment.

The planning committee consisted of representatives from the community group Midtown 4th, The City of Santa Rosa, Traffic Engineering and Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee, Sonoma County Bicycle Coalition, Sonoma County Vision Zero, Santa Rosa Transit and CityBus.

Workshop participants were community members and/or representatives from the Planning Committee, Proctor Terrace Elementary School parents, Santa Rosa Waterway Committee, Sonoma County Bicycle Coalition, Santa Rosa Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee, and the Sonoma County Transportation Authority.

For a more detailed discussion of the workshop, please download the full report on SafeTREC's or Cal Walks' websites.

Funding for this program was provided by a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety, through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

Community Observations

Participants expressed the following concerns during the assessment:

- Workshop participants identified Midtown 4th and the Safe Routes to School programming at the Proctor Terrace Elementary and French-American Charter schools in the project area as key community assets that can help the community achieve their walking and biking goals;
- Workshop participants identified visibility issues between pedestrians, bicyclists, and drivers at the 4th Street/Bryden Lane intersection, along 4th Street;
- Pedestrians avoid using the crosswalks because of high driver speeds, low visibility caused by the 4th Street curve, and because drivers are said to run the red lights. Drivers often honk at bicyclists riding along 4th Street and drive so close, forcing them to ride in the gutter or the sidewalk. Many bicyclists ride along 4th Street on the sidewalks; causing potential near misses with pedestrians;
- The safety of intersections and crossings is the top barrier mentioned in Safe Routes to Schools parent surveys; parents specifically mentioned speed as the primary reason they do not allow their children to walk or bicycle to school. Traffic congestion and high speeds while exiting and entering the interstate and state highways make crossing on College Avenue and 4th Street challenging; and
- There are two bus stops on 4th Street, The bus stop on the north side of 4th Street and Farmers Lane has various facilities that support transit users, protecting them from harsh weather conditions that the bus stop on the southside does not. The eastbound bus stop at the corner of Rogers Way and 4th Street lacks facilities such as curbs, benches, and bus shelters.

Community Recommendations

During the action-planning sessions, participants prioritized and outlined preliminary plans for the following community programs and infrastructure projects aimed at increasing the health and safety of the community:

- Community Engagement Campaign to Finalize 4th Street Corridor Improvements,
- Slow Streets Activation on Talbot Avenue; and
- 4th Street Corridor Video/Voice Project;

Cal Walks & SafeTREC Recommendations

The following are recommendations for bicycle and pedestrian safety improvements:

- Proctor Terrace Elementary School parents and administrators to evaluate how all road users travel through the Bryden Lane/Grosse Avenue intersection during arrival and dismissal time at Proctor Terrace Elementary School;
- The City of Santa Rosa to work with the Santa Rosa CityBus agency to improve bus stops along the 4th Street corridor from E Street to Farmers Lane;
- The City of Santa Rosa to collaborate with the Midtown 4th community group to outreach and help build temporary parklets along the 4th Street Corridor; and
- The City of Santa Rosa to explore improving pedestrian and bicycle visibility at the curving 4th Street/Bryden Lane intersection.