

# **City of Santa Rosa**

## **Bicycle & Pedestrian Master Plan 2018**

Policy & Program Recommendations  
June 2018

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# 1. Recommended Programs

This section describes recommended bicycle and pedestrian related programs for the City of Santa Rosa. The recommendations are organized in four E's:

- **Education** programs are designed to improve safety and awareness. They can include programs that teach students how to safely cross the street, or teach drivers where to anticipate bicyclists and how to share the road safely.
- **Encouragement** programs provide incentives and support to help people leave their car at home and try walking or bicycling instead.
- **Enforcement** programs enforce legal and respectful walking, bicycling, and driving. They include a variety of tactics, ranging from police enforcement to neighborhood signage campaigns.
- **Evaluation** programs are an important component of any investment. They help measure success at meeting the goals of this plan and to identify adjustments that may be necessary.

Programs recommended on the following pages should include outreach and education in both English and Spanish to serve the diverse Santa Rosa community.

## Education

### Share the Road Campaign

On a citywide scale, the City could implement a share-the-road or “StreetSmarts” media campaign similar to those in San Jose, Sacramento, Davis, and other California cities. Developed by the City of San Jose, StreetSmarts uses print media, radio, and television to educate the community about safe driving, bicycling, skateboarding, and walking behavior. California’s Three Foot Passing law, which requires drivers to overtake bicyclists only when there is enough room, could be the initial focus of a Share the Road campaign. A campaign could also address concerns identified by the Santa Rosa community including how to securely lock your bicycle, the importance of being seen at night, and helping drivers understand where to anticipate bicyclists.

Local resources for conducting a campaign can be maximized by assembling a partnership between the City, the Sonoma County Bicycle Coalition, law enforcement, schools, business owners, civic leaders, and community advocates. Artwork for the campaign could be created by local students in a Traffic Safety Poster Contest, or photos of local families on streets that will be familiar to the community could be used. Funding for this could be provided through a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety.

## **Bicycle Safety Education for Adults**

The Sonoma County Bicycle Coalition (SCBC) currently offers Smart Cycling classes once a month at their office in downtown Santa Rosa, in addition to periodically offering on-bicycle educational rides for adults. These courses are based on a curriculum from the League of American Bicyclists that focuses on how bicyclists should behave so they are safer, more predictable, and can be confident riding on streets both with and without dedicated bicycle facilities. The SCBC classes also incorporate photos and video clips of local streets to help students understand how various scenarios apply to real Santa Rosa locations.

This Plan recommends continuing these classes, which the City can support by advertising the classes and/or providing meeting space.

## **Safe Routes to School**

Santa Rosa benefits from a robust Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program coordinated by Sonoma County and the Sonoma County Bicycle Coalition. Many schools in the City participate in activities with the SRTS program, but involvement varies from school to school.

This Plan recommends the City seek grant funding to prepare a SRTS Plan to document and evaluate effectiveness of existing program activities, and identify priority programs to expand to all schools. This should include Suggested Routes to School maps, which help families plan their walking or bicycling trip to school by highlighting enhanced crossings and bikeways.

## **Encouragement**

Giveaways – get safety material out into the community, like helmets, and reflective bracelets/snap bands

## **Walking & Biking Ambassadors**

During the public outreach activities conducted for this Plan, the community repeatedly expressed concerns about personal security and comfort when bicycling or walking in Santa Rosa, especially on the extensive creek trail network. These trails provide a high quality experience for walking and bicycling separated from high-traffic streets, but can be secluded with little natural surveillance.

An ambassador program could recruit volunteers to act as eyes on the trail, report maintenance needs, share educational materials and maps, and provide a friendly presence on the trail network. The Guadalupe River Park Conservancy in San Jose operates a volunteer trail ambassador program, where volunteers wear green vests to identify themselves and spend at least 45 minutes each week bicycling or walking on the trail. In addition to reporting maintenance needs, ambassadors carry small kits with supplies for basic first aid, bicycle repairs, graffiti removal, or other tasks based on their interest and preference.

## **Social Walks/Rides**

Supporting social walks and bicycle rides in Santa Rosa can provide many benefits to the community. People who are uncomfortable bicycling or walking alone, or who are unfamiliar with the best routes to use, will benefit from having a group to show them the way. Rides can also be used as informal education opportunities to remind participants about safe walking and bicycling behavior and sharing the road.

This Plan recommends the City partner with or support local organizations who wish to host rides or walks, including the Council on Aging, the Sonoma County Bicycle Coalition, and others.

## Enforcement

### Targeted Enforcement

The Santa Rosa Police Department currently conducts targeted enforcement periodically based on requests from the community or focus areas of grant funding received.

This Plan recommends continuing these efforts, with a focus on those behaviors that create the greatest risk or potential conflict, and care should be taken that programs do not unfairly target specific demographics or modes of transportation. This Plan also recommends continuing current educational enforcement activities, where officers stop individuals and discuss the unsafe behavior observed without issuing citations.

Behaviors and locations for targeted enforcement should be reviewed each year based on collision data and community input. Current behaviors cited as challenges during public outreach for this Plan include drivers failing to stop at red lights and yield to pedestrians in crosswalks, pedestrians crossing streets unsafely, and bicyclists riding on the wrong side of the road.

## Evaluation

### Annual Report Card

An annual report card serves as an evaluation assessing the City's progress toward goals and objectives outlined in this Plan, implementation of the recommended projects and programs, and changing mode splits for active transportation. In addition to tracking these data, annual report cards can incorporate a review of effectiveness to evaluate costs and benefits of various efforts and adjust investments to maximize results.

This Plan recommends the City develop an Annual Report Card that tracks progress toward implementing this Plan, in addition to incorporating annual collision data, SRTS program and participation data, and other relevant information to highlight successes and challenges of improving walking and bicycling in the community each year.

## 2. Policy

### Vision Zero Policy

Vision Zero is a traffic safety philosophy that rejects the idea that traffic crashes are accidents, and instead asserts serious injuries or fatalities on the transportation system are preventable and unacceptable. Many cities that adopt Vision Zero policies set a target date by which they aim to eliminate all serious injuries and fatalities from their streets.

To achieve these goals, a variety of programs, campaigns, activities, and policies will be required based on the unique context of Santa Rosa, including a close examination of street design standards and how they relate to traffic crashes. Because speed is closely tied to the severity of a collision and the reaction time of a driver, reducing speeds and providing enhanced bicycling and walking facilities can reduce the number and severity of crashes.

Key actionable strategies identified by the Vision Zero Network include:

- Prioritize roadway design to implement bicycling, walking, and other transportation facilities that emphasize safety and can be implemented quickly to adapt and respond to identified challenges
- Focus on speed management to reduce severity of crashes
- Use education to raise awareness through the community
- Ensure enforcement is equitable and focuses on behaviors that contribute to crashes

Throughout all policies and strategies employed to achieve Vision Zero, equity must be considered to prevent disproportionate burdens or undue impacts to low income or minority communities in Santa Rosa.

The Vision Zero Network has resources and case studies available to guide cities as they develop and implement Vision Zero Action Plans. More information at:  
[visionzeronetwork.org/project/roadmapforaction](http://visionzeronetwork.org/project/roadmapforaction)  
[visionzeronetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/VZN-9-Components.pdf](http://visionzeronetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/VZN-9-Components.pdf)



This Plan recommends the City adopt a Vision Zero Policy with a goal to eliminate traffic fatalities and reduce the severity of injuries in the City.

## School Zone Speed Limits

On January 1, 2008, AB 321 took effect allowing local governments to extend school zones up to 1,000 feet and reduce speed limits within 500 feet of a school site to 15 mph in residential neighborhoods or on highways with speed limits of 30 mph or less.

In Santa Rosa from 2007 to 2016, nearly 14 percent of crashes involving a bicyclist or pedestrian occurred within 500 feet of a school campus—77 crashes involving a bicyclist, and 89 crashes involving a pedestrian.

At 15 mph, more than 90 percent of pedestrians are likely to survive a crash with only minor injuries. As speeds increase, however, crash severity increases dramatically. At 20 mph most crashes result in serious injuries to pedestrians, and nearly half may be fatal. At 40 mph, 90 percent of pedestrians will be killed in a crash. Reducing speeds even slightly can have a profound effect on safety for people walking and bicycling to school.

Cities that have already enacted this law include Berkeley, San Francisco, Los Angeles, and the City of Goleta.

This Plan recommends the City enact this law around eligible schools, and work with local law enforcement to educate parents and drivers about the new policy.

## Vehicle Miles Traveled

Transportation is the largest contributor to Green House Gas emissions in Santa Rosa and the City's 2012 Climate Action Plan recommends several strategies to reduce the number of miles residents and visitors travel daily by automobile. Following the passage of Senate Bill (SB) 743, CEQA guidelines will change how transportation impacts are measured by transitioning from auto delay calculated as Level of Service (LOS) to vehicle miles traveled (VMT). This Plan recommends the City adopt VMT as its standard for evaluating congestion and environmental impacts of transportation projects.

To help make this transition, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) offers Priority Development Area grants to assist municipalities in transitioning their general plans to implement VMT-based transportation impact standards.

## Street Sweeping

Residential streets in Santa Rosa are currently swept once per month, and commercial streets are swept more frequently. Despite this, community members expressed concerns about debris in bicycle lanes and on shared use paths.

This Plan recommends reviewing street sweeping practices and street sweeper driver training to ensure on-street bicycle lanes are swept at least monthly, and that they are cleared of any glass or other debris following a collision.

## Vegetation Maintenance

In many places in Santa Rosa, landscaping and vegetation near sidewalks and bikeways has overgrown into the travelway and creates challenges for people walking and bicycling. Overgrown vegetation can not only create safety challenges by narrowing the usable travelway, it can limit visibility and contribute to debris on the pathway. Routinely trimming back vegetation and mowing pathway shoulders contributes to a safer and more comfortable active transportation environment.

This Plan recommends the City implement a method for reporting vegetation in need of maintenance, and develop a policy to respond to all reports within a reasonable timeframe.

## Bicycle Parking at Large Events

Chapter 11-40 of the Santa Rosa Municipal Code currently addresses the procedures and requirements to apply for an event permit within the City. This Plan recommends revising Section 11040.040 Permit - Conditions for Issuance to require events expected to draw more than 5,000 attendees must provide secure, attended bicycle parking for attendees at no charge. Key considerations include:

- A space that is enclosed and secured on three sides (“corral”) must be provided, with the fourth side consisting of tables for checking in bicycles
- The corral must be in a visible and easily accessible location within one block of the event
- Bicycle parking must be offered for the full duration of the event, including the bicycle parking attendants having access to the location at least one hour before and one hour after the event for setup and break down
- Availability and location of free bicycle parking must be noticed on all event promotion where transportation or directional information for the event is advertised, in the same format and with an equal amount of space as parking and transportation information for other modes
- Bicycle parking must be attended and monitored at all times with a number of staff sufficient for the size of the event and whether attendees are expected to arrive for a single start time or arrive throughout the event
- Bicycles will be checked in and returned with a claim check to ensure the correct bicycle is released to each person, and bicycle valet attendants will record and share the number of bicycles parked at the event in order to better estimate the space needed for the following year
- The valet bicycle parking service provider shall have insurance; should the event sponsor provide the bicycle parking service, bicycles checked in must be insured against theft

The City of Oakland operates a successful bicycle parking policy for large events, and may be a resource to Santa Rosa.