

Minutes from County Wide SR2S Task Force Meeting

December 14, 2016 10am – 11am

Task Force Members Present

- Jenny Weiss - Redwood Community Action Agency
- Emily Sinkhorn - Redwood Community Action Agency
- Melody Mallick – Humboldt County DHHS Public Health
- Elaine Hogan – Humboldt County DHHS Public Health
- Melanie Williams – Bikes There
- Johnny Calkins – McKinleyville Organizing Committee
- Debra Dees – Humboldt County Association of Governments
- Tony Seghetti – Humboldt County Engineering Division
- Art Reeve – Humboldt County Roads and Equipment Maintenance
- Taylin Titus – N. Coast Schools Insurance Group
- Melissa Lazon – Arcata Elementary

October Meeting Minutes: Approved. As an update to Fuente Nueva's Foster Ave concerns, the city completed 'Phase I' by lowering the speed limit to 25mph. 'Phase II' will involve County and City working together to reduce the speed limit to 15mph. The Arcata City Council will have on their January 18th, 2017 agenda a motion to pass AB 321 by resolution and lower speed limits in Arcata school zones citywide to 15 mph and extend school zones from 500 to 1000 feet.

Opportunities and Challenges for Joint Use of School Grounds: Joint Use Agreements can create safe places for children and families to play and recreate in neighborhoods that otherwise lack parks or recreation centers by opening up school grounds to allow children to use playgrounds. In Humboldt County there are few agreements in place allowing Joint Use. Washington School in Eureka has a Field Use agreement with local soccer and baseball organizations so that the fields may be used after school hours and on weekends. Trinidad school allows community members to use school playground facilities after 6pm on weekdays and on weekends. Blue Lake also has an agreement with the school that opens up the playground to children after school hours.

Arcata Elementary parents have recently discussed ways to install a covered play area or ways to partner with the City to get more life out of their playground. Arcata has an interest in parks and years ago there was a bike tour highlighting Arcata's public parks.

There have been recent discussions at the County Public Health Department about Safe Routes to Parks and Joint Use was brought up as a potential way to increase physical activity in children, especially where parks do not exist.

Concerns about vandalism and theft are potential reasons cities have shied away from Joint Use Agreements however there is an argument that opening up schools for play will result in 'more eyes on the street' which could potentially reduce crime and the incidences of vandalism and theft.

Similar to the Crossing Guard program that recently ended, this concept has huge community benefits but also raises concerns for jurisdictions. The Crossing Guard program took 5 years to

implement but was started by discussing and addressing potential challenges. Initial questions/opposition to Joint Use Agreements might be:

- What's in it for schools?
- Cost of maintenance and repair
- Lack of staffing to open/close school grounds

The City of Eureka Parks and Rec Department head was recently quoted in the North Coast Journal about the importance of people using parks because when they are used, communities are safer. Therefore, the City of Eureka may be an advocate for this project.

The Task Force would like to first identify priority areas that lack parks and/or play areas to then have discussions about opportunities and challenges around Joint Use at those schools/in those neighborhoods.

Countywide SR2S School Summary Report: In 2012, HCAOG invested in a Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Prioritization Tool developed by Redwood Community Action Agency. The Tool enabled jurisdictions to prioritize schools with the greatest need and capacity for carrying out SRTS programs. One piece of the project was contacting all Humboldt County schools to gather information about their safety concerns as well as interest and involvement in SRTS topics and issues. The inventory was repeated to the best of RCAA/HCAOG's ability in 2014 and once again the inventory is being updated for 2016 by HCAOG. Debra Dees has been calling schools for information, so far reaching 20 and brought summaries of the school concerns and needs to the Task Force this month. The draft list of 2016 schools summaries is not yet completed but once finalized they will be available by contacting HCAOG or Jenny Weiss.

Potential Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) Grant Projects:

Announcements:

- Green bike lanes on Central Avenue in McKinleyville are completed
- Ambrosini School in Fortuna new sidewalks are a huge improvement
- Zane Leadership class will be presenting their Photo Voice posters to the public at the County Library on Saturday January 28th at 2pm in the Young Adult Room.
- There will be a public meeting hosted by Caltrans on Tuesday January 17 to look at the Wabash and Broadway and Hawthorne and Broadway intersections. They are also looking into ADA improvements and adding sidewalks on the east side of Broadway.
- Please send us stories and topics for SRTS E-news. Also requesting emails of people who may be interested in receiving the SRTS E-news.

Next Meeting Date: February 15th at 10 am at the Community Wellness Center