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**MEMORANDUM**  
Public Works Department

**DATE:** April 26, 2023

**TO:** Mountain View Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee  
Los Altos Complete Street Commission

**FROM:** Priyoti Ahmed, City of Mountain View Transportation Planner  
Ria Hutabarat Lo, City of Mountain View Transportation Manager  
Marisa Lee, City of Los Altos Transportation Manager

**SUBJECT: Safe Routes to School Program Update**

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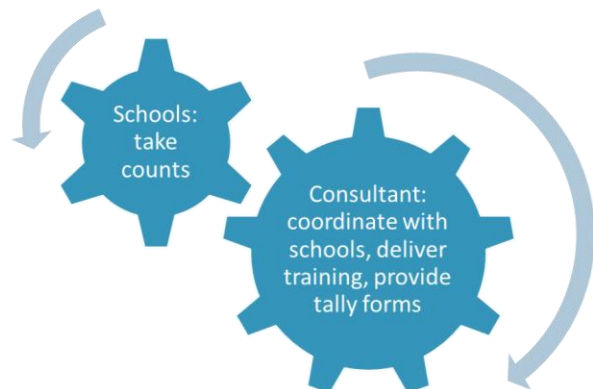
**RECOMMENDATION**

Receive an update on Mountain View and Los Altos' Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program and provide feedback on program elements as well as potential coordination efforts between Mountain View and Los Altos.

**BACKGROUND**

**City of Mountain View**

From 2011 to 2018, the City of Mountain View received \$1,000,000 from the Federal Vehicle Emissions Reductions Based at Schools (VERBS) program to fund Mountain View's SRTS program. The City of Mountain View hired Save Moves to deliver SRTS programming, including safety training, bike rodeos, encouragement events, parent/teacher engagement, and data collection at all 21 public and private schools in the City (Figure 1). Due to staffing constraints, there was no City staff involvement in the VERBS SRTS programming.



**Figure 1: VERBS Model**

For nearly three years, the SRTS program was discontinued in Mountain View schools due to a gap in funding and limited school access because of the restrictions caused by the COVID-19

pandemic. After schools reopened in August 2021, there were four nonsevere collisions and one fatal collision involving students. These collisions highlighted the need for the SRTS program, including partnerships between the school community (principals, school districts, parents, students), School Resource Officers (SROs) and City staff to ensure that the students are receiving effective safety education coupled with appropriate encouragement and infrastructure elements. Since 2019, the City has increased staff involvement that now encompasses collaboration with schools and school districts, review of program materials, participation in SRTS programming, review of the City's crossing guard program, coordination with SROs, and facilitation of a SRTS Coordinating Committee comprised of parents, principals, SROs, and school district staff. The City also executed a \$230,895 contract with Alta Planning and Design using a combination of City and VTA 2016 Measure B funding to develop and deliver SRTS programming services at all 15 public schools from 2019 to 2023.



**Figure 2: SRTS 2.0**

On [November 30, 2021](#), Mountain View's Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) received an update on the school year 2021-23 SRTS program activities and provided feedback on future program approaches, including an increasing partnership with schools, school districts, and parents. [On May 3, 2022](#), Mountain View's Council Transportation Committee (CTC) received an update on the SRTS activities and provided feedback on the SRTS upcoming approach.

### **City of Los Altos**

The City of Los Altos has a \$60,000 contract to hire a SRTS coordinator who provides day-to-day services for the program. The coordinator position is funded by City of Los Altos operating funds and VTA's 2016 Measure B funding.

### **ANALYSIS**

#### **City of Mountain View Staff-Led Activities**

For the school year 2022-23, Mountain View's SRTS program was delivered through City staff and consultant-led activities. The activities and program outcomes are described in the sections below.

### *Safe Routes to School Coordinating Committee*

In January 2022, the City of Mountain View launched the SRTS Coordinating Committee with Public Works SRTS staff, Police, PTA representatives, school principals, school district staff, parents, and students. The purpose of these monthly meetings is to organize, host, and advertise SRTS activities and to provide feedback on education materials. This committee has participated in activities, including Monster Bash, Safety Training, Walk Audits, and parent surveys and updated suggested maps.

### *Crossing Guard Program*

In 2021, Mountain View had nine crossing guards throughout the City. This work is conducted by All City Management Services (ACMS) with payment and contract management by the Police Department. In response to the number of collisions, the City of Mountain View partnered with Mountain View Whisman School District (MVWSD) to add six more crossing guards near school sites. For the upcoming school year, staff is requesting additional budget appropriations from the City Council to expand the crossing guard program further to include an additional six crossing guards. Council is scheduled to consider and approve the Fiscal Year 2023-24 budget in June 2023. The crossing guard locations are based on technical analysis and input from principals, parents, and students.

### **Los Altos Staff- and Consultant-Led Activities**

#### *SRTS Advisory Committee*

The City of Los Altos formed an SRTS Advisory Committee in January 2022 and continues to meet quarterly. The committee consists of administrators and principals from the Los Altos schools, administrators and staff from the school districts, a few engaged parents, members of GreenTown Los Altos, and members of the Complete Streets Commission.

#### *Bike Month Planning Committee*

The City of Los Altos formed a Bike Month Planning Committee for the planning of May 2023 Bike Month. This group is planning energizer stations, family bike days, Bike to Work Day, Bike to Wherever Day, and Bike to the Moon school challenge. The committee consists of:

- City of Los Altos (Safe Routes to School, Parks and Rec)
- GreenTown Los Altos
- Safe Routes to Downtown Los Altos
- Alto Velo Racing Club
- The Bicycle Outfitter
- Complete Streets Commission representatives

### *Bike Rodeo*

Los Altos (in coordination with the Los Altos Police Department) conducted its first Bike Rodeo of the season at one school in early April. Additional Bike Rodeos are scheduled throughout the spring with the contractor SafeMoves.

### *Yard Sign Campaign*

The City of Los Altos created yard signs for distribution to residents and school families with the message “We Slow Down For Each Other” as part of a citywide campaign for traffic safety near school zones and around the community at large. Approximately 800 signs have been distributed. The signs received strong support from families and residents.

### *Curriculum*

The City of Los Altos, in partnership with an SRTS consultant, developed a curriculum for schools (both in-classroom and assembly) for bicycle and pedestrian safety.

### *Monthly Messaging Campaign*

The City and SRTS consultant developed a monthly messaging campaign containing relevant monthly/seasonal information on how to safely walk and bike, encouraging good driver behavior around school zones, and current events to participate in.

### *Champion Toolkit*

The SRTS consultant developed a Champion Toolkit to help schools and champions plan a Walk or Wheel to School Event.

### *Schoolroutes.org*

The City commissioned part of Schoolroutes.org, a mobile app for walking and biking to school, including platforms for connecting with other students for walking and biking groups, rewards programs, and messaging from parent to parent, school to parents, etc.

### *Transportation Surveys*

Distributed a parent/caregiver survey to gauge attitudes toward active transportation as well as a student tally of travel modes. These surveys began in 2021 and will be done annually for comparison.

**Mountain View Consultant-Led Activities**

In partnership with MVWSD, the City of Mountain View developed a consultant-led work program for the 2022-23 school year. The work program set an activity schedule for the school year and streamlined the scheduling coordination process with MVWSD. Table 1 shows all the completed, ongoing, and upcoming activities for Mountain View’s 2022-23 SRTS program.

**Table 1: 2022-23 Mountain View Safe Routes to School Activities**

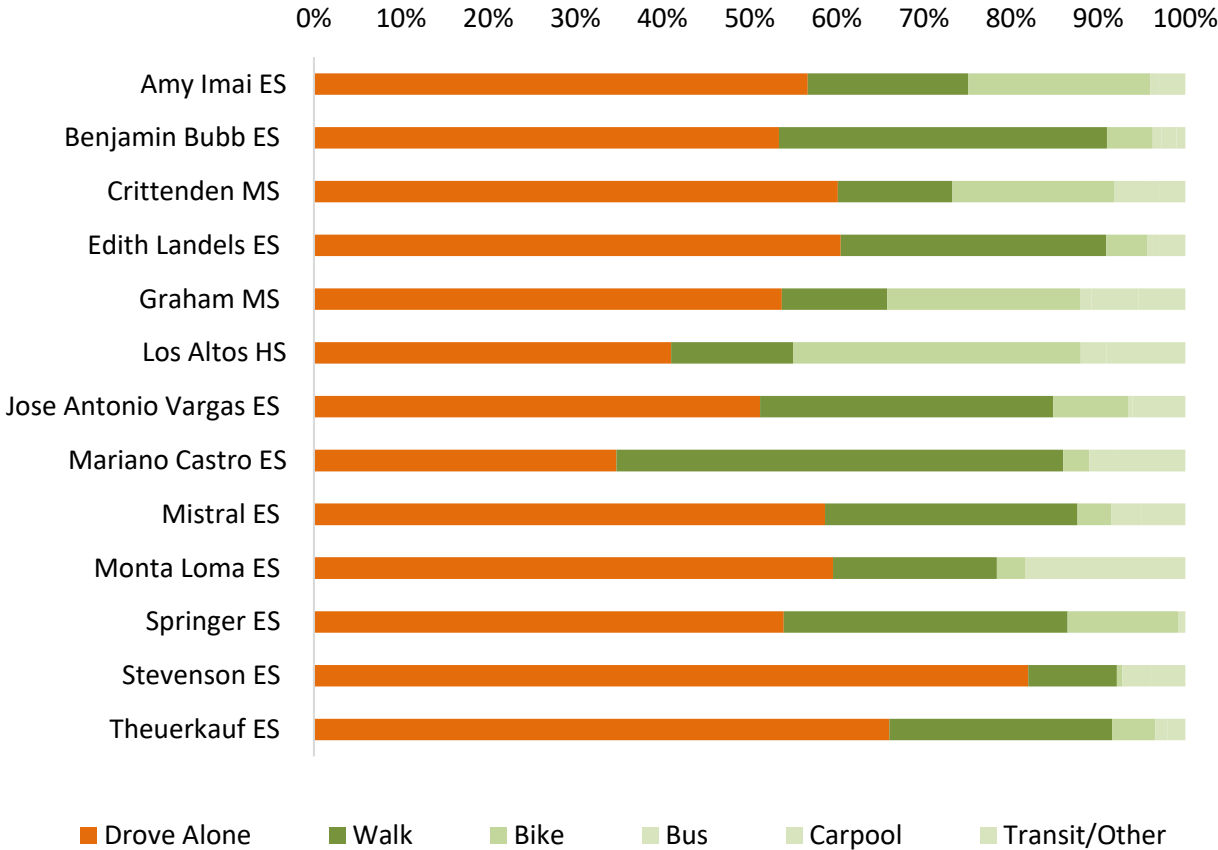
<b>SRTS Activity</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Participation</b>
Safety Training	<p>The SRTS team provided 40 minutes of hands-on safety training to all students from second grade to eighth grade during their Physical Education class.</p> <p>Students rotated through different stations where they learned about rules for riding, identified suggested routes to school, watched a bike maintenance demonstration, and practiced safely crossing a street and fitting a helmet.</p>	April 2022 to September 2022	All MVWSD Schools— 12 elementary and two middle schools (3,200 students)
Citywide Bike Rodeos	During the rodeo, participants practiced turning, stopping, hand signaling, and looking over the shoulder. Participants also got their helmets fitted and bikes fixed.	<p>Bike to Wherever Day—May 23, 2022</p> <p>Monster Bash—October 29, 2022</p>	15 to 20 participants
Sahara Mobile Park Bike Rodeo	During the walk/bike rodeo, participants practiced turning, stopping, hand signaling, and looking over the shoulder. Participants also got their helmets fitted and bikes fixed.	August 20, 2022	25 participants

<b>SRTS Activity</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Participation</b>
Student Tally	The survey is distributed to all the teachers to document students' mode share information.	October 2022 and May 2023	Schools from MVWSD, Mountain View Los Altos Union High School District (MVLA), and Springer Elementary School
Parent Survey	This survey documents parents' viewpoints toward walking and biking to school and the pain points they experience during their commute.	October 2022 to December 2022	800 parents
Walk Audit	Parents, principals, City staff, and SRTS consultants evaluate infrastructures near schools and observe parents' and students' behaviors.	January 2023 to May 2023	15 schools from MVWSD, MVLA, and Springer Elementary School—approximately 40 parents
Music Notes	Musical notes provided transportation safety education on helmet fitting, crossing intersections, and bicycle safety.	March 2023	Schools from MVWSD and Springer Elementary School—Approximately 3,500 students
Graham Middle School Walk and Bike Rodeo	During the walk/bike rodeo, participants practiced turning, stopping, hand signaling, and looking over the shoulder. Participants also got their helmets fitted and bikes fixed.	April 20, 2023	All sixth graders—approximately 300 students
Crittenden Middle School Walk and Bike Rodeo	During the walk/bike rodeo, participants will practice turning, stopping, hand signaling, and looking over the shoulder. Participants will also get their helmets fitted and their bikes fixed.	May 22, 2023	All sixth graders—approximately 188 students
Updated Suggested Maps	Suggested route maps reflect changes in infrastructure and student behavior	January to May 2023	All Mountain View schools (21 private and public schools)

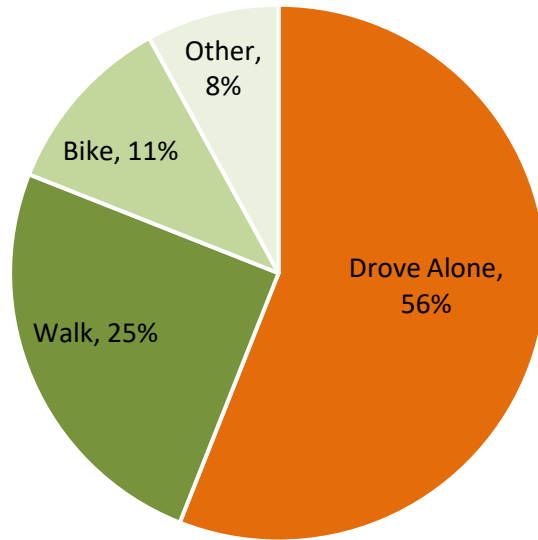
**Mountain View SRTS Program Outcomes**

*Mountain View Student Tally*

In fall 2022, Mountain View’s SRTS team conducted a Citywide student tally based on the National Center for Safe Routes to School (NCSRTS) to establish a new student mode-share baseline. This new baseline captures students’ post-COVID-19 pandemic travel patterns, and future student tallies will be compared against this baseline to evaluate the program. The student tally was distributed during the last two weeks of October to all public elementary, middle, and high schools in Mountain View. Figure 3 shows participating schools’ mode shares. The top three schools with the lowest vehicle mode shares are Los Altos High School, Jose Antonio Vargas Elementary, and Mariano Castro Elementary. Figure 4 shows the overall mode shares of all the participating schools. In 2016 to 2017, Mountain View’s students’ walk and bike mode share was 43%, and the current mode share is 36%.



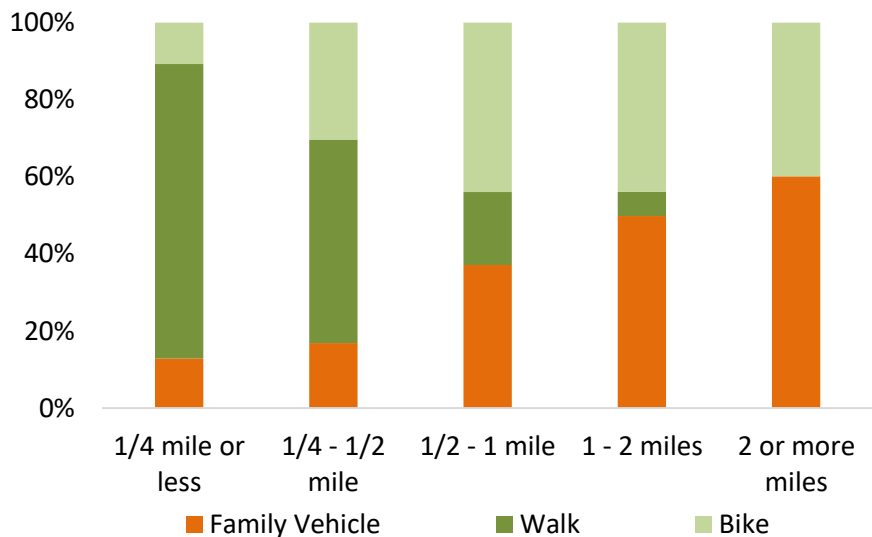
**Figure 3: Fall 2022 Mountain View’s Student Mode Share by Participating Schools**



**Figure 4: Fall 2022 Mountain View’s Students Total Mode Share (Only for Participating Schools)**

*Parent or Caretaker Survey*

The SRTS team developed a parent and caretaker survey to identify their travel patterns and document their pain points and safety concerns related to walking and biking to school. This survey result will be used to develop future SRTS programs and activities to increase walking, biking, and transit mode share among students. The survey was distributed to all the public schools in Mountain View and posted



**Figure 3: Fall 2022 Survey Participants Mode Share by Distance**

on the program’s webpage. The survey was active from October 2022 to December 2022. A total of 1,080 parents took the survey and provided valuable information and feedback on the program. Staff will use this feedback to design upcoming SRTS education and engagement materials. Figure 5 shows participating parents’ mode share by distance. The participants are most likely to walk and bike to school if they live one-quarter mile to one mile from the school.



As the commute distance increased, the participants chose to drive to school. Figure 6 shows participants' concerns about walking or biking to school.

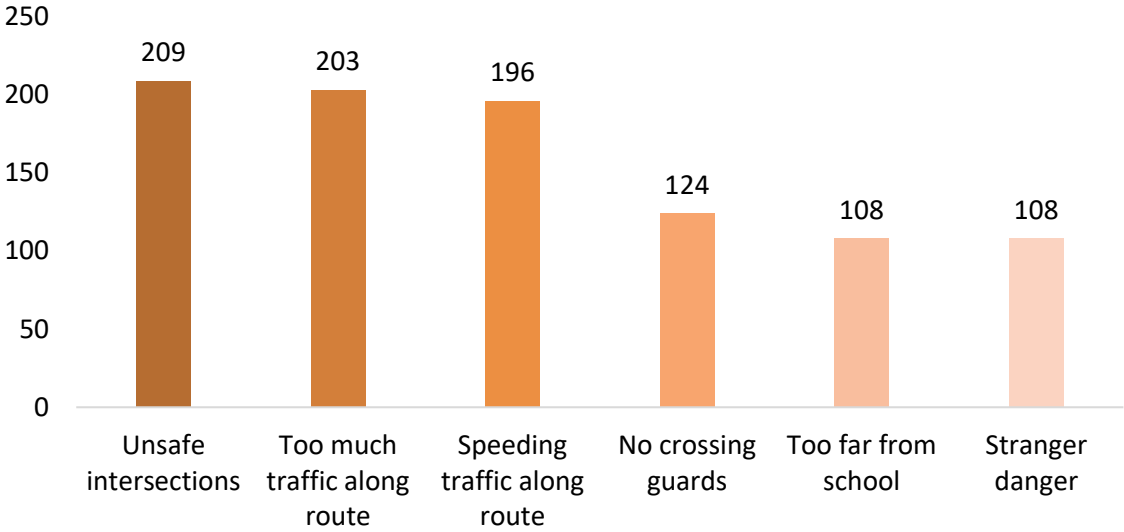


Figure 4: Fall 2022 Survey Participants' Safety Concerns

**Los Altos Student and Parent Survey**

The City of Los Altos conducted parent and student surveys in October and November 2021. The purpose of the surveys was to establish a baseline for the program and set evaluation goals and metrics.

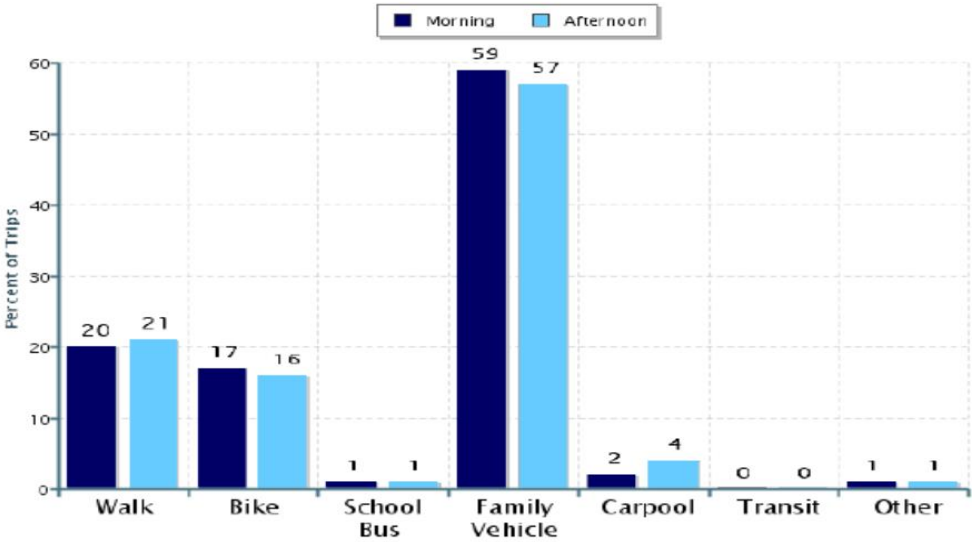
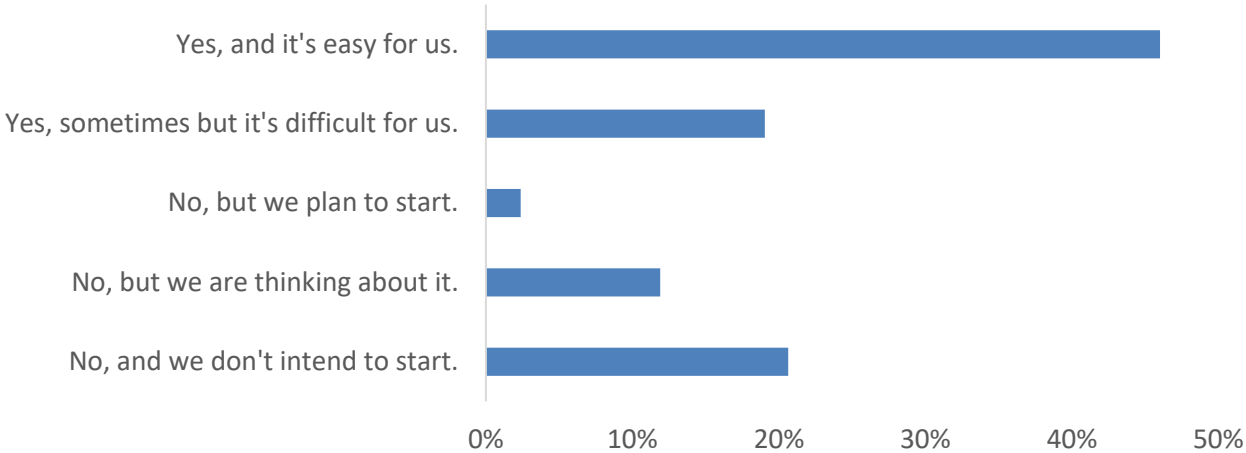
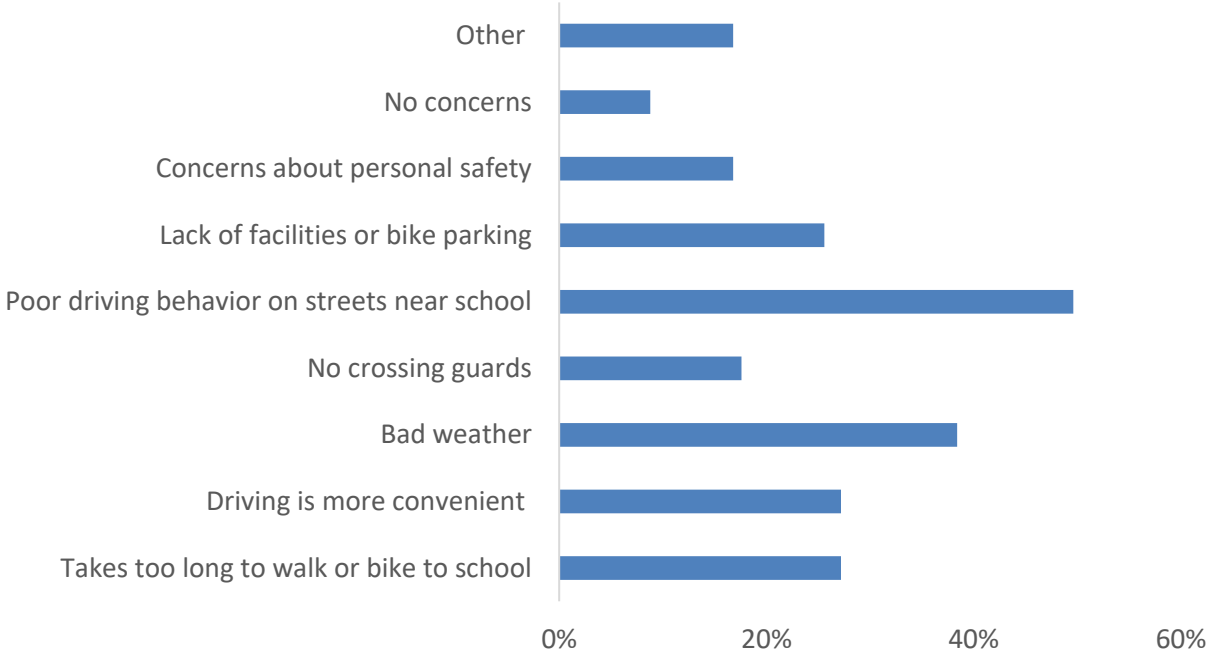


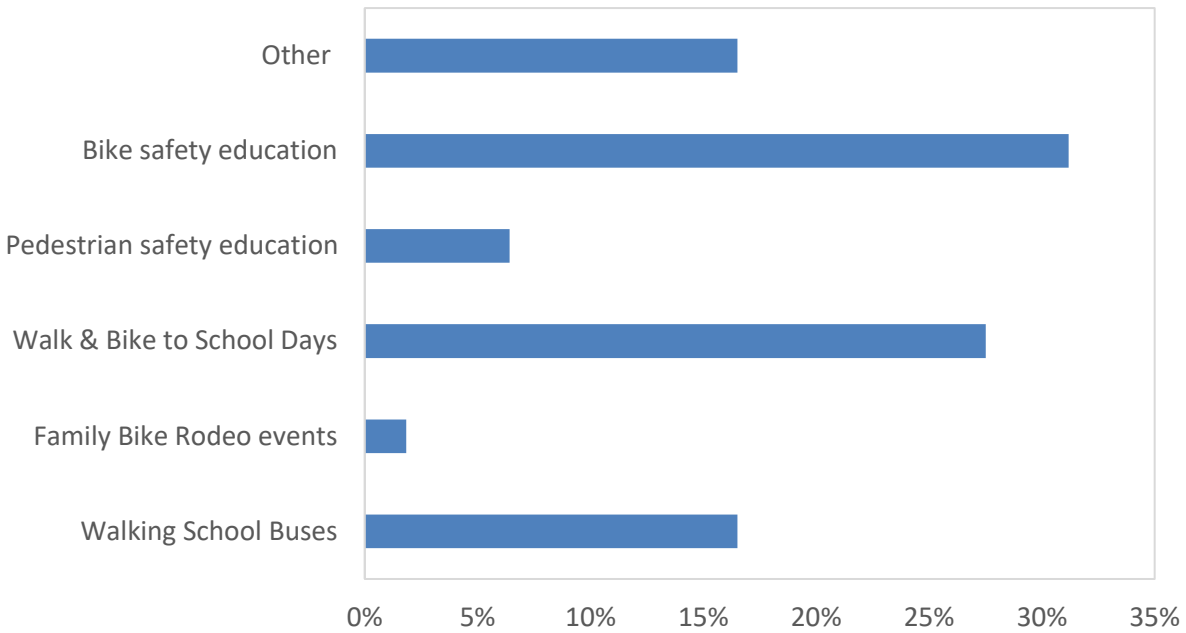
Figure 5: Student Mode Share for Los Altos School District



**Figure 6: Survey Participants' Response to Walking and Biking to School**



**Figure 7: Survey Participants' Concerns with Walking and Biking to School**



**Figure 10: Survey Participants' Interest in SRTS Services**

## **DISCUSSION**

Currently, the City of Mountain View and the City of Los Altos are developing next school year's education and encouragement programs and communitywide activities. The coordination between the two cities will address challenges, such as conducting multiple surveys to document the same information, consistency on educational materials, and suggested maps routes to schools. This coordinated approach could increase consistency between the two programs, increase participation from students, parents, and school staff, and reduce duplicity in developing multiple educational or engagement materials.

### **Mountain View and Los Altos Coordination Opportunities**

#### *SRTS Staff Coordination*

To make sure that the safety education and encouragement programs are being implemented consistently, the SRTS staff for both cities should coordinate quarterly for the upcoming activities. Both cities' staff have identified the following opportunities for coordination:

- Parent and Student Survey
- Safety Training and Los Altos Curriculum

- Consistency in Suggested Route Map
- Education Campaign Messaging
- Walk Audits and Audit Recommendations
- Upcoming Events (Bike to School Day, Family Bike Day, Bike to Work Day, Bike to Wherever Day, Bike to Downtown)
- Evaluation Metrics and Goal-Setting
- Infrastructure Improvements

**Table 2: Mountain View and Los Altos SRTS Program Strengths**

<b>Program</b>	<b>Los Altos</b>	<b>Mountain View</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Crossing Guard Program Expansion		X	Expanded crossing guard program from nine to 21 in two years.
Driver Compliance/Behavior Messaging	X		Los Altos developed a monthly messaging toolkit for unified information to be shared by schools with parents across all schools in the city.
Infrastructure—El Camino Real, El Monte Avenue	X	X	
Safe Routes to School Curriculum	X		Los Altos developed a SRTS curriculum and piloted it with teachers.
Suggested Route Maps	X		Los Altos has an interactive suggested route map. Mountain View will need to update paper-based maps to include schools from Los Altos.
Survey Response		X	The City of Mountain View received over 1,000 responses from parents.
Walk Audits	X	X	Both cities conducted walk audits of their schools and will compare notes to optimize recommendations.

<b>Program</b>	<b>Los Altos</b>	<b>Mountain View</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Metrics and Evaluation	X		Los Altos put together goals and metrics for LAHS, which will be extrapolated to citywide goals and metrics in coordination with Mountain View.

### **Questions**

1. Do the BPAC and Complete Street Commission support the overall coordination between Mountain View and Los Altos in the SRTS program?
2. Do the BPAC or Complete Street Commission wish to propose additional approaches or things to consider?

PA-RHL-ML/6/PWK

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