



# *Petaluma Equitable Climate Action Coalition*

Tuesday, March 14, 2023

# Welcome

Thank you for joining us tonight to hear PECAC and community members recommendations on how to ensure equitable transportation in Petaluma.





**EQUITY FIRST**  
CONSULTING  
LLC  
Diversity | Equity | Belonging





# Agenda



- 5:30 - Welcome, Introducing the PECAC team
- 5:45 - Context & Methodology
- 6:05 - Equitable Climate Action Recommendations
  - Walking
  - Biking
  - Public Transportation
  - Community Engagement
- 6:45 - Call to Action and Comments





# Design Team



**Ana Lugo, Founder**

*Equity First Consulting*



**Ri Bussey**

*PECAC Program Coordinator, Daily Acts*



**Kerry Fugett**

*Leadership Institute Program Manager, Daily Acts*

# Lynn Gen

*Casa Grande High School Student*

*Volunteered with Petaluma Historical  
Museum*

*Passion for learning and problem solving,  
especially logistics issues & climate change*



*Photo by Patia Curtis*

# Julio Rodriguez



*Habitat Restoration Technician with Point Blue  
Conservation Science's STRAW program*

*Loves native plants and interacting with local  
community*



# Kaylia Brown



*SRJC Student*

*Volunteer with Petaluma Blacks for Community  
Development*

*Loves helping others*

# Evan Cantwell

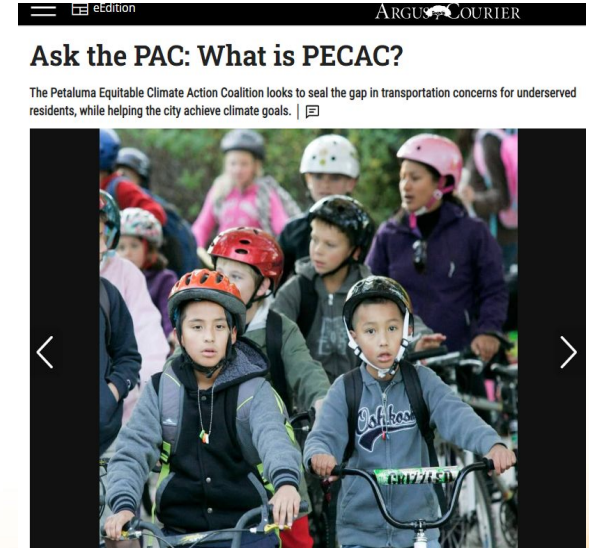


*Casa Grande High School Student*

*Passionate about creating positive change within the  
community*

# What is PECAC?

A 6 month equitable civic engagement program designed to support participants in uplifting the voices of our most impacted communities in providing input into how the City of Petaluma can prioritize and focus policies, programs and resources to equitably address transportation and climate change locally.





# Key Events leading up to PECAC 1.0

**May 2019** - City of Petaluma passes first in County:

*Climate Emergency Resolution*

**Aug 2019** - City of Petaluma forms first in County:

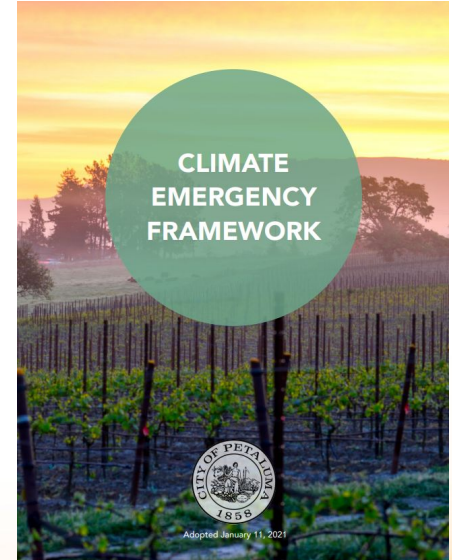
*Climate Action Commission*

**Jan 2021** - Petaluma City Council passes:

*Climate Emergency Framework (CEF)*

**April 2021** - PECAC 1.0 Launches!

**Sept 2021** - PECAC 1.0 presents recommendations



# Key Events leading up to PECAC 2.0

**Summer 2022** - PECAC 2.0 funded

*Strategic integration with existing City Planning*

**August 2022** - Hire Ri from PECAC 1.0

**September 2022** - PECAC 2.0 launches

**Jan/Feb 2023** - 3 Listening Sessions Conducted

**March 2023** - PECAC presents transportation recommendations





# Funding Systems Change

*“From the inception of our country, government...has played a [significant] role in creating and maintaining racial inequity. Many current inequities are sustained by historical legacies and structures and systems that repeat patterns of exclusion.”*

- Government Alliance on Race & Equity

Existing Civic Engagement structures perpetuate systems of exclusion.

We are grateful to the City of Petaluma for working to shift this, starting by funding PECAC as a way to reduce these barriers and redesign the systems and structures of local civic engagement.



# The problem with Transportation

Petaluma has a goal to achieve greenhouse gas carbon neutrality by 2030, 60-70% of which is from transportation. We know that impact of the climate crisis and transportation systems fall heaviest on communities rendered most vulnerable by racist systems.

- People of color breathe **disproportionate levels of toxic smog** from transportation-related emissions, which contributes to higher rates of asthma, cancer, and other illnesses than their white counterparts.
- Low-income people—who are disproportionately people of color—**spend a greater proportion of their income on transportation** (~40%) costs compared to wealthier people
- People of color, people who lack housing, people with lower income, people without access to vehicles, and other groups **experience elevated traffic safety risks.**

# Why is PECAC needed?

Communities who are closest to the pain of the problem, are also closest to the solution.

New structures of equitable civic engagement are needed to center the voices of communities who are most impacted by the climate crisis and our transportation system, but who have been systematically excluded from decision making, in sharing ideas and solutions that can ultimately uplift everyone.



# Transformative Communities Approach

**Conduct an intentional design process** working in partnership and shifting the paradigm of who is an expert by applying a transformative lens to outreach, interviews, selection criteria and curriculum design to center the wisdom, expertise and voices of folks who have experienced systemic inequities.

**Foster relationships** and a space to build trust within the coalition where participants feel seen and valued, can be courageous and vulnerable, and show up as their full selves.

**Remove barriers** by providing \$1800 stipends for participation and honor the time, energy and work of folks engaged in program.

**Embrace discomfort and continual learning** by actively decentering whiteness, trusting the process, and humanizing climate change and transportation systems.



# Methodology

## Part 1:

Learn about equity principles, transportation, systems thinking, local government, trauma-transformed practices and self-care in addition to how to facilitate listening sessions. Speakers included PECAC 1.0, City Staff, and Office of Equity. Engaged in experiential walks and joined Maria Drive listening session.

## Part 2:

Conducting team listening circles as well as a group listening circle at McDowell Family Resources with members of the community about their transportation concerns and impacts.

## Part 3:

Apply lessons learned by synthesizing this input and presenting a set of policy recommendations to the Petaluma City Council, Commission, folks actively involved in transportation in town.



# Part 1: Experiential Walk



# Part 1: Speakers



Alegria De La Cruz-  
Sonoma County Office of Equity



Lisa Lim-  
PECAC 1.0



Jared Hall-  
City of Petaluma  
Transit Manager

Bjorn Gripenburg-  
City of Petaluma  
ATP Project Manager

Celeste Chavez-  
PECAC 1.0



David Ortega-  
PECAC 1.0



# Part 2: Listening Sessions



- McDowell Family Resource Center
- Youth/Student Focused
- General Petaluma Community Members



# Collective Purpose

## How we show up:

We rely on each other and ensure we learn and grow together.

We are a team of friends.

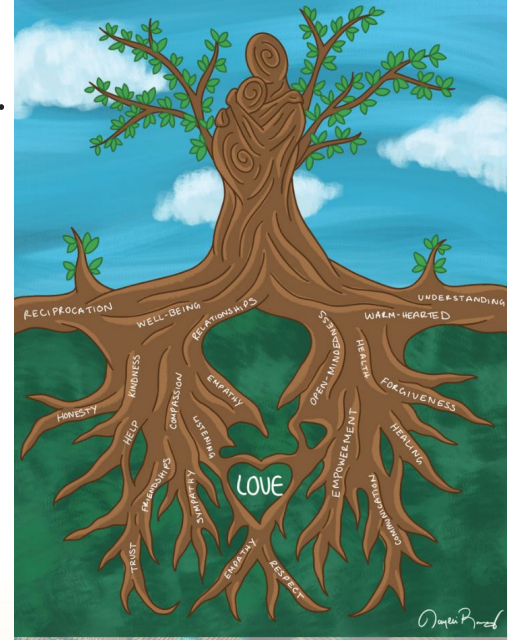
We work toward solutions

We show up as our authentic selves

## What we learn about:

Learn about equitable transportation

Learn how to make (small) yet important changes within our community



# Why is Equity critical to the process?

- The scale of impact of these inequities is enormous, the most privileged group has been making decisions for everyone else without regard for the well being of communities of color.
- The current structure of engagement doesn't address these systemic inequities, perpetuating inequities and fear of retaliation for speaking up.
- Inequities hurt people who are most affected by transportation systems.
- We have a personal experience with the impact of climate change, so we should have a say in what we do about it.

# STEP 1: Assumptions & Bias Check

- You have biases. We all do. Practice true mindfulness.
- We can't assume that one person speaks for an entire community.
- We can't assume people don't want to engage or are too busy. There has been a systematic exclusion of communities of color. Folks do want to be asked to share and connect.
- Decenter yourself. Current systems directly or indirectly are causing harm to members of the Petaluma community and beyond.

## SYSTEMS DESIGN: THE ICEBERG MODEL

### EVENT

The tendency of this level is to react to what has just happened.

### PATTERN

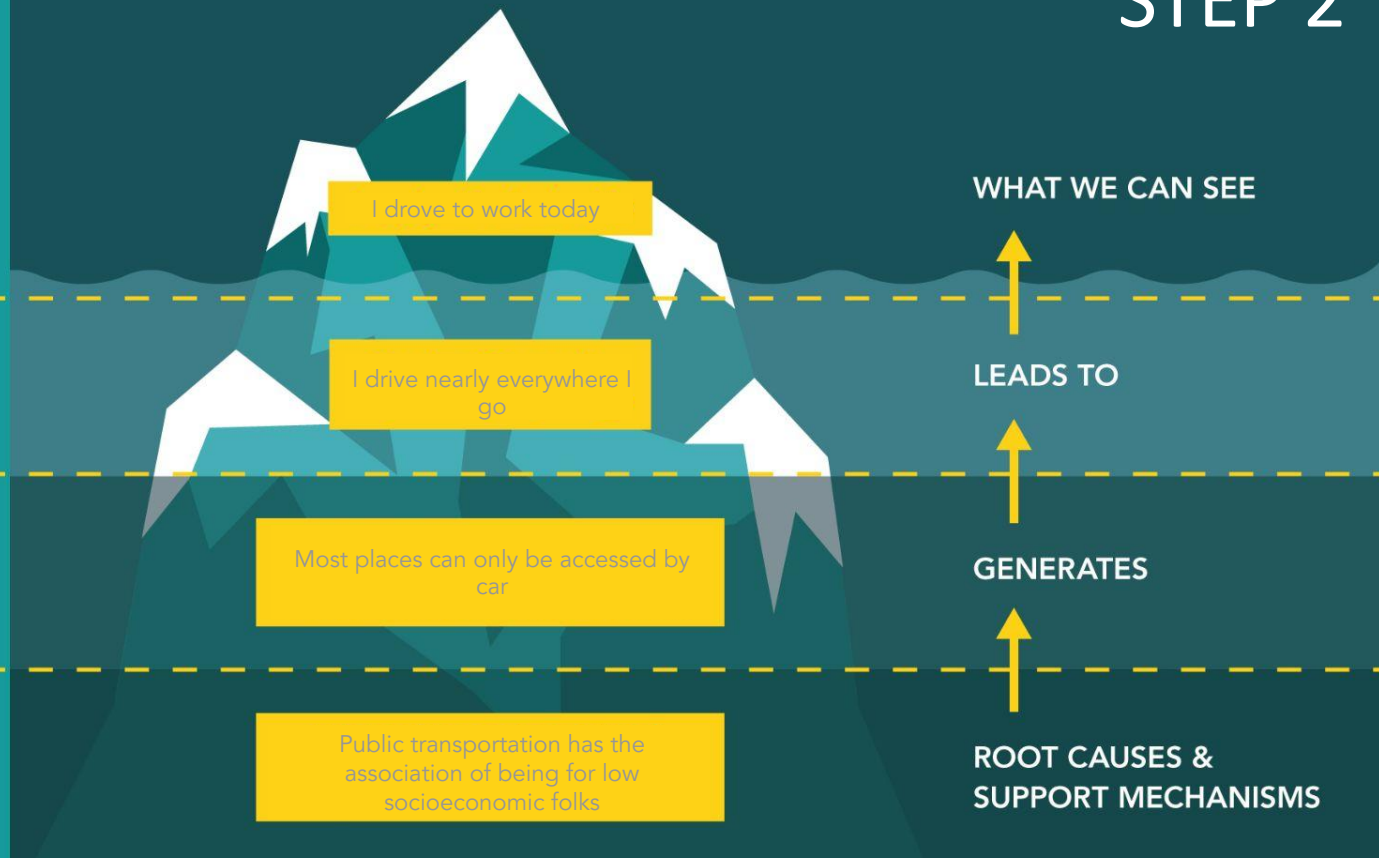
You can start to notice trends that leads to event.

### STRUCTURES

Systems and ways of working that connects models to patterns.

### MENTAL MODELS

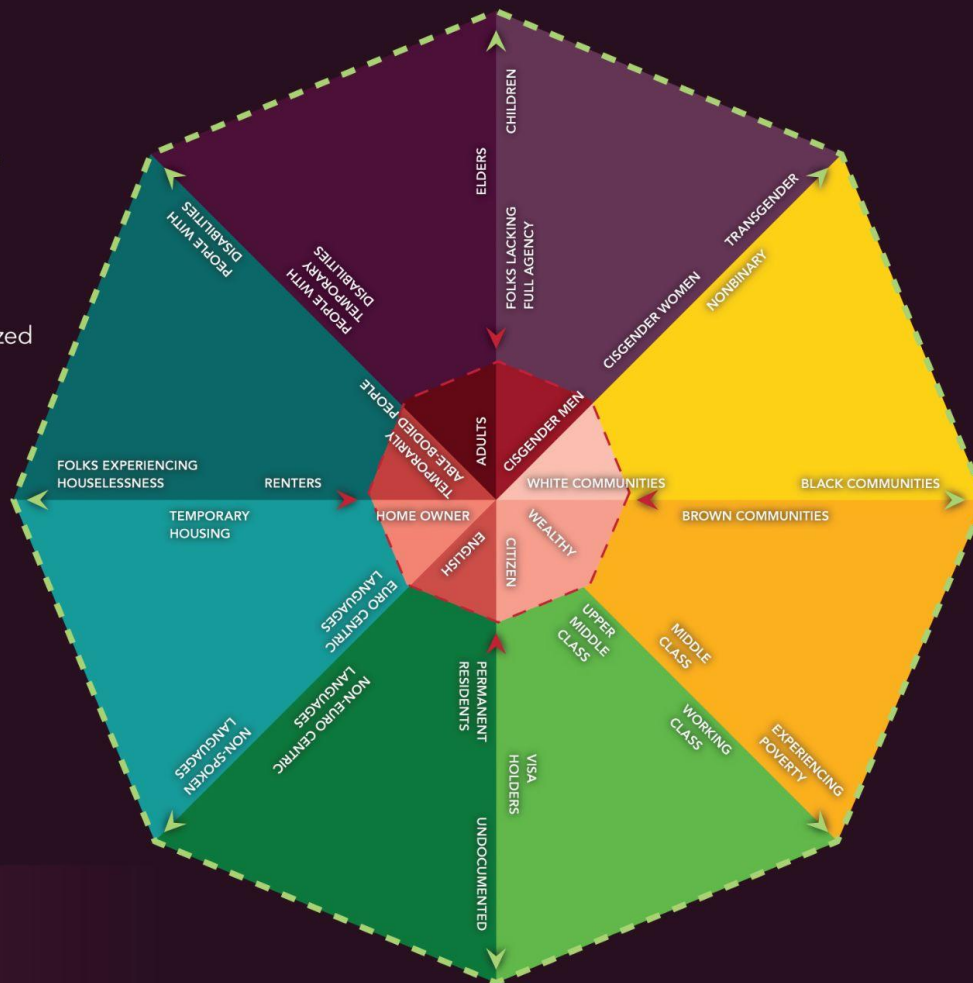
This includes the assumptions that hold the system together and is the stage we need to leverage to transform a system.



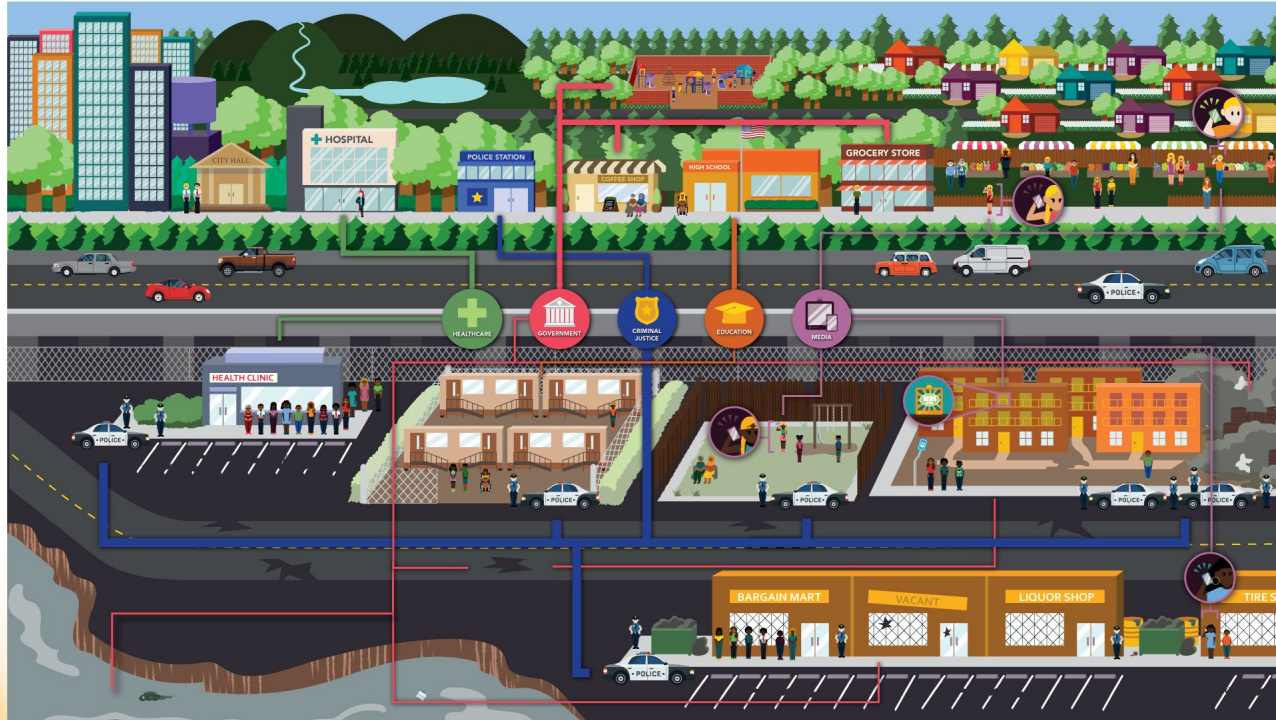


## DESIGNING TO THE MARGINS

- Designing for the most privileged
- Designing for the communities who have been historically marginalized



# Ecosystem of Oppression



# Application of Equity & Systems Thinking Lens

**Step 1:** Notice & Reflect on our **assumptions & bias**.

**Step 2:** Apply **Iceberg Systems Analysis**. Apply an equity lens to identify and remove systemic barriers by **designing to the margins**.

**Step 3:** Draft tangible and systemic recommendations

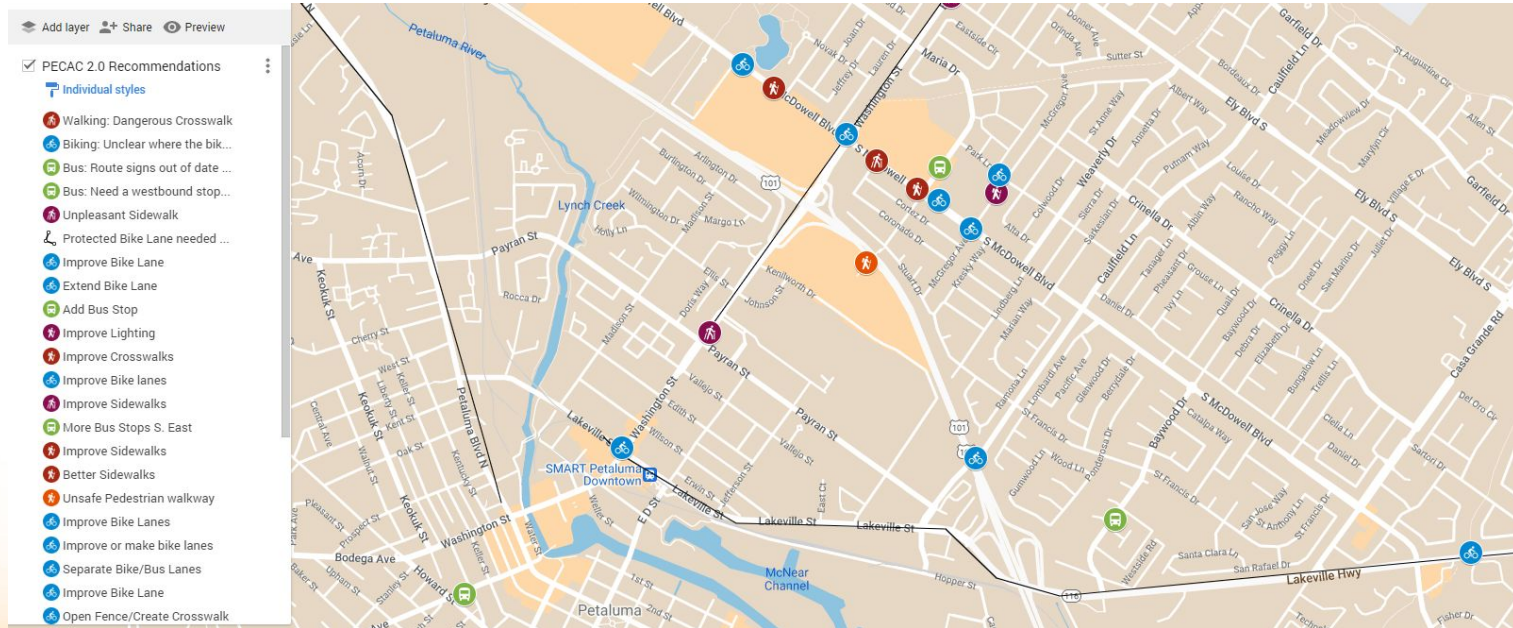
# Recommendations

- Interactive Map
- Walking
- Biking
- Public Transportation
- Community Engagement





# Interactive Map



# Walking in Petaluma





# Ensure Safe Walking Experiences

**We recommend that the city prioritize a safe walking experience around key shopping centers and schools along McDowell and Washington**

- Put crossing lights on all crosswalks
- This area is very congested and cars go very fast, how can we slow this traffic? (maybe make 2 lanes with a dedicated bike lane)
- Sidewalks on the east side need trees for shade, beauty and to create a more enjoyable walking experience, especially during heatwaves.
- Walking around McDowell and Washington does not feel safe at night



# Ensure Safe Walking Experiences



Lackluster biking and walking infrastructure at the McDowell  
Blvd. shopping center



# Ensure Safe Walking Experiences



Telegraph Ave. in Oakland with exemplary walking and biking infrastructure

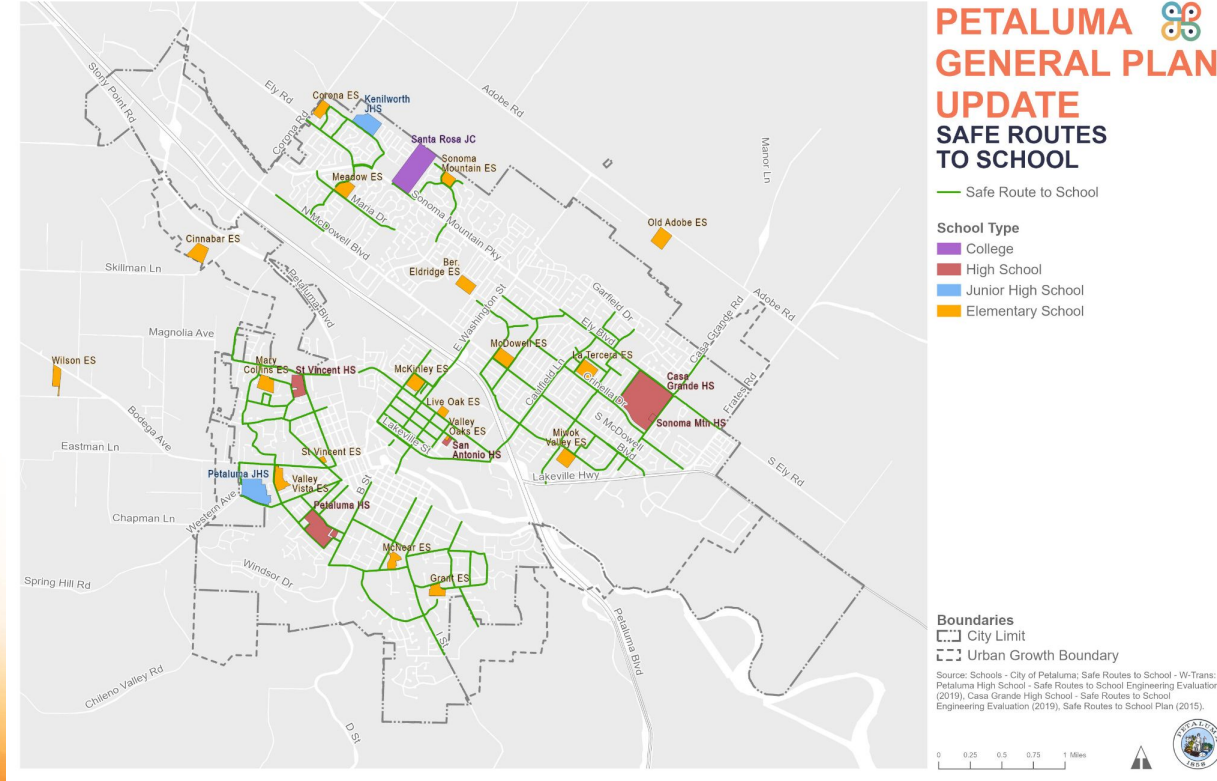
# Quote

*“I don’t feel safe walking around McDowell school or park at night. There is a lack of lighting”*

*-McDowell Listening Session Participant*



# “Safe” Routes?



- What does a “safe route” mean on this map? We don’t know
- Four schools are not directly connected to *any* safe routes
- Some “safe routes” on this map don’t seem safe at all, like the East Washington bridge over the highway





# Safe Routes that are Safe

We recommend the City redefine criteria for “safe routes to school” to add more protective infrastructure and crossings.

- Crossing guards at primary intersections near schools when school starts/ends
- Four lane roads fundamentally don't feel safe, “safe routes to school” should only be two lane roads.
- Sidewalks should be well maintained
- Routes should avoid major roads when avoidable (ex: McDowell)
- All schools should have multiple safe routes accessing them



# Biking in Petaluma





# Make Biking Safe and Convenient

We recommend the goal of transportation planning be bike safety, prioritization, and convenience.

# Make Biking Safe and Convenient



- The most direct routes to important day to day locations all need protected bike lanes and traffic slowing. Ex: Mcdowell Blvd., Washington St., Lakeville Hwy, Petaluma Blvd., Ely Blvd.
- Slow down drivers and create safer streets through a myriad of strategies such as eliminating car lanes, adding blinking lights, and creating blinking lights



# Make Biking Safe and Convenient



- Improve bike lane signage and maps to make it more clear and obvious where they are and how to access them.
- Maintenance bike lanes and roads that are used as bike lanes to make it safer for biking



# Listening Session Quote

*“Larger bike lanes all around town (more so on busier streets) would be very helpful and could possibly help limit accidents”*

*-McDowell Listening Session  
Participant*



*“I used to enjoy riding my bicycle. I don’t enjoy it anymore. It’s [Biking is] part of my identity. I don’t do it because it’s so dangerous.”*

*-Participant from  
listening session*



# Prioritize a Culture of Respect

**We recommend the City invest in creating a culture of respect and safety for bikers, with priority on people who bike for necessity.**

# Prioritize a Culture of Respect



- Add a process for reporting incidents between cars, bikes and pedestrians to your “Report An Issue” site.
- Publicize these issues to grow public awareness of them and the need for a culture of respect for bikers.
- This includes:
  - Near misses
  - Issues with angry drivers

# Prioritize a Culture of Respect

- Invest in a campaign to encourage more biking
  - Encourage employees and other employers to bike to work
  - Highlight important bike paths with events around them
  - More events that close down roads for bikers and walkers







# Reclaim Washington Street

**We recommend the City make it enjoyable, fast and safe to cross between the east and west side Petaluma via Washington Street.**

- There is zero motivation to walk or bike across town; it feels dangerous and far. None of the cross-town connectors feel safe to walk or bike.
- Make Washington two lanes, create a bike only lane, a walk only lane, encourage local entrepreneurs to sell food, plant trees, pollinators, have places to sit and hangout, protected benches.
- Crosswalks across freeway onramps are very unsafe (wide, dark) Cars should be required to go slower

# Public Transit in Petaluma





# Celebrate Our True Climate Leaders

**We recommend the City invest in creating a dignified bus riding experience that celebrates the fact that our walkers, bikers and bus riders are our true climate leaders - we should be celebrated!**

- Bus stops need to feel safe, comfortable, well maintained with up to date route information. Run down, exposed, standing-only and dark bus stops send a message that we don't matter.
- Build trust in the system by ensuring buses are reliable and more frequent (every 15 min?)
- Make sure bus capacity meets the need of students (of all ages)

# Listening Session Quote

*“I feel like I’m in a cattle car . . . the 303 feels like a lottery—is it going to arrive? Will it be full?”*

*—Student*







# Lower Barriers for New Riders

We recommend the City lower the barrier for new riders to use the system, centering students, service workers, immigrants, and seniors.

- Bus transfer information needs to be clear and linked with inter-city connectivity information
- Everyone should have a bus stop within  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile safe walking distance from every home, starting with systematically impacted neighborhoods.
- Buses need to run later, at minimum 9pm but ideally 11pm, as well as on weekends, to allow our service workers and adult students to affordably get to and from work.

# Listening Session Quotes

*“No one knows how transfers work... the only people who do is because they went to the wrong place first.” —Student*

*“One of the major reasons people don’t take the bus because the information barrier is intimidating. You don’t know basic things like how to get a transfer, where major stops are, how to get to and from them to schools. When I first came here it was terrifying to get on the bus.” —Student*



# Culturally Responsive Info Access

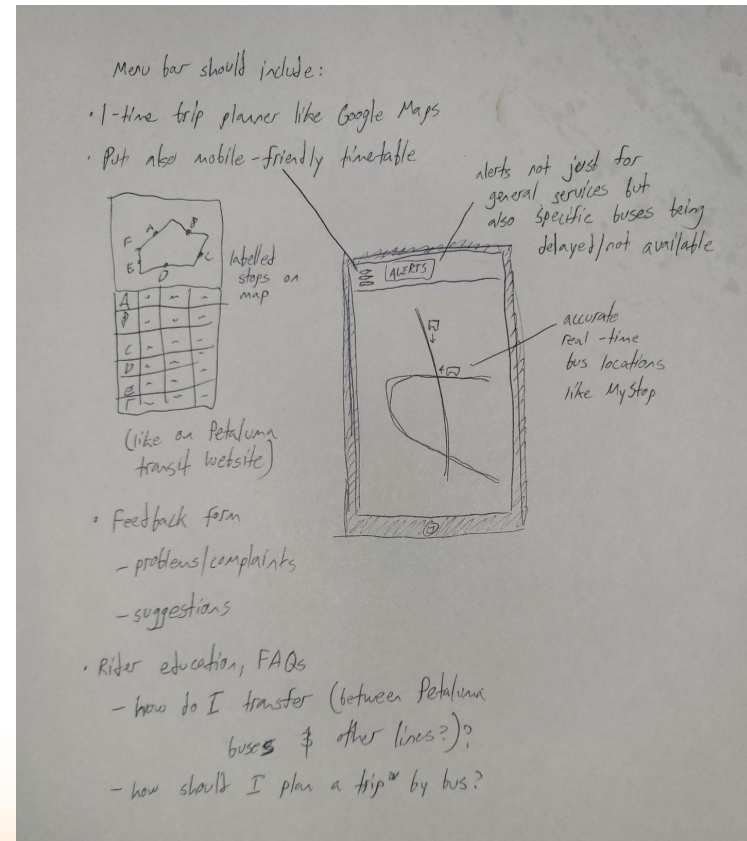
**We recommend the City creates culturally responsive information access and feedback mechanisms that advances bus rider agency no matter their your language, income or age.**

- Make it easy and free to find information about bus routes, schedules and transfers for folx of all ages and available in Spanish; Provide a free phone app and add QR codes for it at bus stops.
- Alert riders when cancellations happen, don't expect riders to constantly check the website.
- Create communication systems for your largest bus rider demographic: Students and low income folx! Consider collaborating with teachers to go to schools for a bus education day, provide easy feedback portals, and proactively reach out every year.



# Information Renovation: An Ideal Bus App

- Feedback forms (Suggestions, problems/complaints)
- Rider Education/FAQ (How to transfer in Petaluma and other bus lines, how to plan a bus trip)
- Alerts for buses that are delayed or not available
- Accurate real time bus locations (similar to MyStop)
- Mobile-Friendly timetable
- The app must be promoted! Everyone who rides the bus needs to know they can access essential information easily





# Community Engagement





# Reach Out!

**We recommend the City invests in ongoing community engagement with communities most impacted by its systems (students and low-income folx).**

- Shift from “customer service” model that puts burden on residents to figure out how to contact you to “community ownership” that fosters democratic participation
- Invite systemically underrepresented community members into a participatory budgeting process for all public works projects
- Elected officials & Staff build relationships with anchor community organizations year round so they are established before planning processes occur. Prioritize organizations who work directly with systemically underrepresented communities such as immigrants, youth, seniors, low-income and people of color.



# When to Engage



**Meet people where they are at.**

- Evening times for engagement or weekends, when people tend to be more available. Include engagement on social media so more folks can join.
- Go to schools at 8:30am (drop off) and pickup times, keep it short and sweet, offer morning meeting donut and coffee for parents while asking for feedback.



# Be Accountable

## Create accountability mechanisms.

- Create a Community Engagement Plan to coordinate and align across departmental silos and embeds criteria that advances equity/designing to the margins in all transportation planning and prioritization efforts
- Develop humanizing data practices grounded in anti-racism, such as valuing qualitative, story-based data in addition to disaggregating quantitative data by various identity markers.
- Develop a guiding vision statement to align between and within departments around ‘why’ humanizing data practices are important to create equitable transportation systems that center the experiences of folx at the margins.



# Insights from Listening Session Process

- Participants were grateful for the personal chance to share their experiences.
- It felt motivating to know their feedback would go back to the City and be implemented.
- They appreciated the fact that we came to them and the ease of being able to give feedback.
- Smaller, more intimate conversation helped them connect
- Participants were eager to share, happy to have the space to be heard, and had a lot to say.



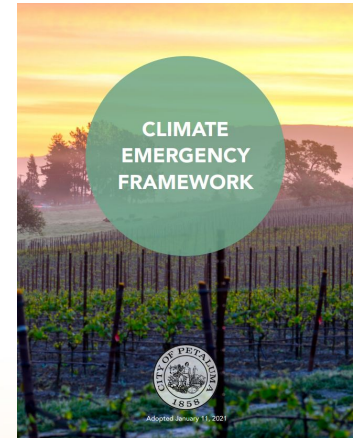


# Call to Action

- Restructure City funding so that walking, biking and bus transportation improvements are prioritized.
- Integrate these recommendations into the General Plan update so they are implemented.
- Develop a community engagement place and invest in culturally responsive engagement.

# Resources

- Sonoma Vision Zero Action Plan (2022)
- Greenlining's Mobility Equity Framework
- Equity in Transportation
- Environmental Justice Report
- City of Petaluma Bike & Pedestrian HIN
- Climate Emergency Framework



# Questions/Comments?







# THANK YOU!



Ri Bussey, Program Coordinator, Daily Acts: [Ri@dailyacts.org](mailto:Ri@dailyacts.org)

Kerry Fugett, Program Manager, Daily Acts: [Kerry@dailyacts.org](mailto:Kerry@dailyacts.org)