

For Immediate Release
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**CITY LAUNCHES CITY WIDE SAFE ROUTE TO SCHOOL PROGRAM
WITH RIBBON CUTTING CEREMONY
AT EDISON BRENTWOOD SCHOOL TUESDAY- OCTOBER 13, 2009 @ 12.00PM**



East Palo Alto, California-The City of East Palo Alto and the Ravenswood City School District will jointly host a ribbon cutting ceremony on October 13 @ 12.00pm to officially open the recently completed sidewalk improvements between O'Connor and Donohoe adjacent to Edison Brentwood School- located at 2086 Clarke Avenue. The improvements which were designed to provide a safe environment for children to get to and from school are part of a citywide program designed to install sidewalks and other traffic improvements that would make it generally safe for children to walk, bike, be dropped off and picked up and even skate to their neighborhood schools.

“The celebration, represents a significant milestone in City-School District relations”, said Mayor Abrica. The statement was echoed by Larry Moody, the President of the district board of trustees who added that the event signals a beginning of collaboration in a multitude of projects of mutual benefit to both the District and the City. A sub-committee of the School District Board of Trustees and one of the City Council has met regularly over the last years to explore various areas of collaboration.

The celebration will also launch a citywide sidewalk improvement program part of an overall Safe Routes to School Program that will install several blocks, representing approximately 1.6 miles of sidewalks on streets leading to and adjacent to schools in East Palo Alto. The program has been made possible by grants from the State as well as City contributions totaling \$1,544,000.

The National Center for Safe Routes to Schools recognizes Safe Routes to School (SRTS) programs as “sustained efforts by parents, schools, community leaders and local, state, and

federal governments to improve the health and well-being of children by enabling and encouraging them to walk and bicycle to school”.

SRTS programs the center further notes, “examine conditions around schools and conduct projects and activities that work to improve safety and reduce traffic and air pollution in the vicinity of schools. As a result, these programs help make bicycling and walking to school safer and more appealing transportation choices thus encouraging a healthy and active lifestyle from an early age.”

Prior to the sidewalk improvements at Edison Brentwood, conditions for children and parents were very unsafe, the improvements, according to school district and city officials would dramatically enhance the safety for all children, walking to and from school as well as being dropped off and picked up by parents.

Other streets to get new sidewalks under the program include Bell Street from Euclid Street to Oakwood Drive, Oakwood Drive, from Bell Street to Bay Road and Dumbarton Avenue, from Bell Street to Bay Road. According to Kamal Fallaha, the design from the proposed improvements are almost complete, however, fencing encroachment into the Public Right of Way is a problem in most of the streets. “Encroachments include all types of fencing, concrete walls and concrete pads all representing intrusions onto the street that residents have built over the years’ said Mr. Fallaha. In a recent report to the City Council Mr. Fallaha indicated that city staff would be notifying residents whose fences are encroaching into the city’s right of way with a request to relocate fences to the recorded property line. “Construction, he added, “would start as soon as the encroachment problems are resolved”.