

Highway 101 carries a significant amount of regional traffic through Laytonville that neither begins nor ends within the community, including interstate cargo, rec-reational travelers and other through traffic. During peak periods, there are 820 trips an hour, and on average, nearly 6,000 trips per day through the downtown area. The following chapter provides recommendations for improving safety and connectivity along Highway 101 by mitigating its impact on adjacent properties while enabling it to function as a regional connector.

A. Increase Safety

Throughout the visioning process, the Laytonville community has stressed the need for increased safety measures along Highway 101 and expressed a desire to develop strategies to slow traffic through the Town Center and to improve the pedestrian environment. Laytonville's Town Center encompasses many of the area's main activity generators, including the middle school and high school, and increased safety surrounding these uses is a high priority for the community.

B. Promote Accessibility

High-speed, high-volume traffic corridors like Highway 101 can effectively sever neighborhoods and hinder connectivity. The implementation of strategies to mitigate the negative impact of Highway 101 by

creating clear and accessible cross-corridor connections will foster a more coherent Town Center. Additionally, improvements to Highway 101 will encourage increased pedestrian activity and support economic development within the Town Center. A range of strategies, including physical interventions, roadway modifications and improved community perceptions of accessibility, will enable Highway 101 to function as Main Street, as well as a regional connector.

C. Recommendations



Figure 5-1 indicates the locations of some of the key destinations within the Town Center.

1. Reduce Posted Speed Limits

The collision rate on Highway 101 in Laytonville is twice the statewide average for similar roadways. According to State Department of Transportation's District 1 Traffic Safety Program, the number one cause of accidents is speeding, followed by failure to yield. The District 1 Traffic Safety Office has recommended that this community planning effort focus on effective speed reduction, an approach that will result in increased traffic safety in the community of Laytonville.

Changes in the posted speed limit, especially when accompanied by gateway features or other visual cues, will help slow traffic before it reaches the Town Center and increase driver awareness along Highway 101. Reduced speeds will improve safety for all modes of transportation, improve accessibility, decrease traffic noise and improve the quality of the pedestrian experience within the Town Center.

To facilitate the reduction in posted speed limits, a speed zone study must be conducted in accordance with State law, and the results submitted to Caltrans.

- Step down speed limits at transition points along

Highway 101.

- Post new speed limits at the following locations:
 - a) South of Harwood Road and north of Boomers: 45 MPH Zone
 - b) Between Harwood Road and Harmon Triangle: 35 MPH Zone
 - c) Between Boomers and Harmon Triangle: 25 MPH Zone

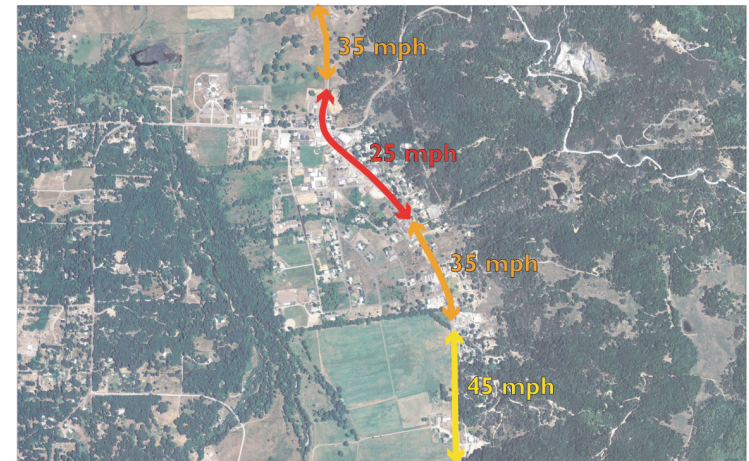


Figure 5-2 illustrates the locations of the recommended speed limit zones along Highway 101 within the Town Center.

2. Visibly Demarcate Shoulders along Highway 101

Visually narrowing street widths and indicating a change in road conditions, colored shoulder treatments effectively cause drivers to reduce driving speeds. Shoulder demarcation reduces vehicle encroachment into pedestrian and bicycle travel lanes and visually warns all users of potentially high-conflict areas. Additionally, the use of colored shoulders establishes a clear buffer between motorized traffic and non-motorized activity adjacent to the corridor.

- Add colored shoulder treatment along Highway 101 within the Town Center.
- Utilize a dyed asphalt application, a low-cost and highly-durable method, for the shoulder treatment.

For information and research on colorized shoulder treatments, refer to a Memo prepared by Traffic Engineering Consultants Fehr and Peers in Appendix B.

3. Improve the Branscomb Road/Highway 101 intersection

The Branscomb/Dos Rios Roads corridor serves as the primary east-west connector across Laytonville and is the only four-way intersection on Highway 101 within the Town Center. Currently, this intersection poses

serious safety and traffic concerns for the Laytonville community and is being reviewed as part of Caltrans' Highway 101 Improvement Project.

In addition to Caltrans' plans to implement sidewalk improvements, pedestrian-scaled lighting, street trees, eight foot sidewalks and crosswalks, eleven foot travel lanes and five foot shoulders, the following recommendations are intended to further the community's vision for a safer and more accessible Town Center.

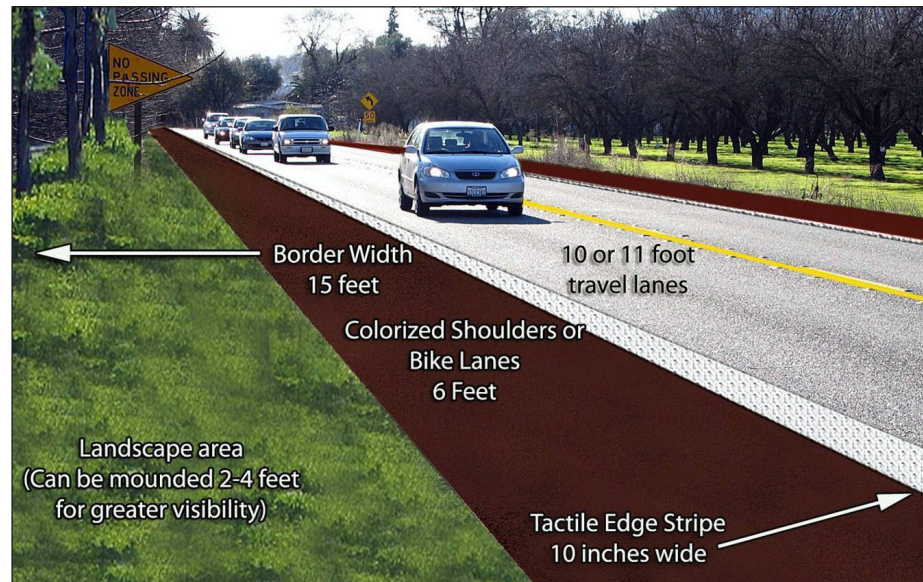


Figure 5-3 illustrates the use of colored shoulder treatments in a photo simulation.

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CHAPTER 5: SLOWING THE FLOW

- After intersection improvements are made at the Branscomb/Highway 101 intersection and monitoring has occurred, consider adding a pedestrian refuge island at the west leg of the intersection on Branscomb Road to reduce the pedestrian crossing distance and provide a safe waiting area within the crosswalk. The pedestrian refuge island should be five to six feet in width and include an end “cap” at the intersection for enhanced safety.
- If pedestrian refuge islands are not feasible, add decorative crosswalk markings across Branscomb Road near the school and at Willis Avenue to encourage pedestrians to cross Branscomb Rd. before the Highway 101 intersection.
- Investigate the possibility of replacing the intersection with a roundabout in the future. A one-lane roundabout would require 100'-130' of right-of-way. The Branscomb Road/Route 101 intersection is located in existing horizontal and vertical curves, thus the minimum horizontal and vertical sight distance standards may be difficult to meet.

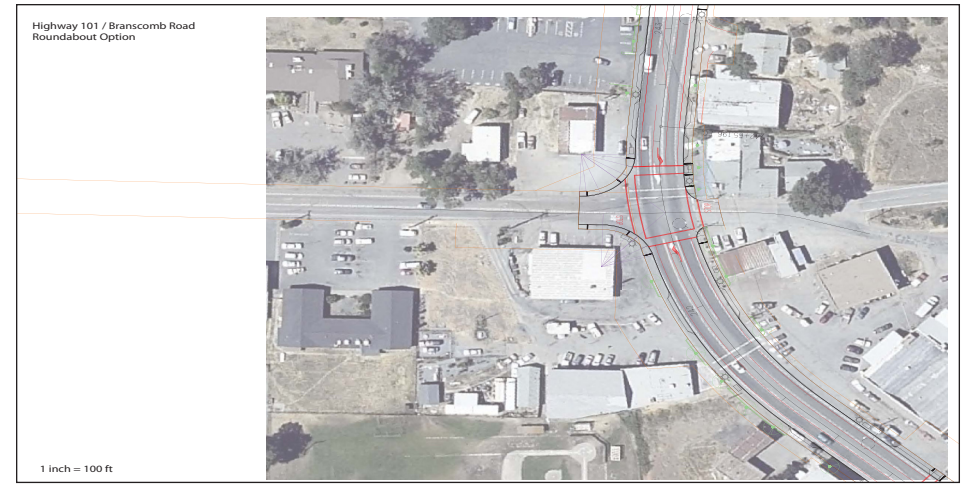


Figure Figures 5-4, 5-5, and 5-6 illustrate the potential for a roundabout at the intersection of Highway 101 and Branscomb/Dos Rios Road.

4. Improve Crosswalk Visibility

There are currently five crosswalks in downtown Laytonville on Highway 101. They do not meet Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) guidelines for high-visibility crosswalks. Concurrent with the Caltrans Safety Project scheduled for construction in 2008, a Transportation Enhancement (TE) project will construct higher-visibility crosswalks that will include a thermo-plastic treatment with a faux-brick façade. The mid-block crossing currently located on the curve of Highway 101 will be relocated immediately to the south, from the Bank of Willits to Geiger's Market.

As identified during community workshops and the walking audit, the establishment of improved crosswalks, including the use of pedestrian refuge islands, will provide essential cross-corridor connections and significantly improve Town Center accessibility. Crosswalks and pedestrian refuge islands provide clearly designated locations to cross Highway 101, reducing the potential for conflict between vehicles and pedestrians and increasing overall safety. These improvements will increase non-motorized activity within the Town Center and help foster community development.

- Conduct a focused traffic study on pedestrian refuge locations to determine that parcel access

and circulation are not adversely impacted.

- Provide raised median pedestrian refuges at key locations along Highway 101. The need for refuges would need to be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. As with all improvements within the State Highway Right of Way, Caltrans' Traffic Safety review and consideration thru the Encroachment Permit process would be required.
- Incorporate design features, such as special paving, landscaping or signage, to enhance the visibility of crosswalks.
- Add pedestrian-scaled lighting at crosswalk locations along Highway 101. Pedestrian-scaled lighting is not the same as "intersection lighting" but would still require Caltrans review thru the Encroachment Permit process. Pedestrian-scaled lighting development and maintenance costs would be the responsibility of the County Lighting District.
- Relocate and improve crosswalk on Ramsey Avenue in front of the Elementary School to increase visibility.
- Where feasible, add pedestrian refuge islands or bulb-outs to crosswalks on Willis, Ramsey, and Branscomb Roads. `

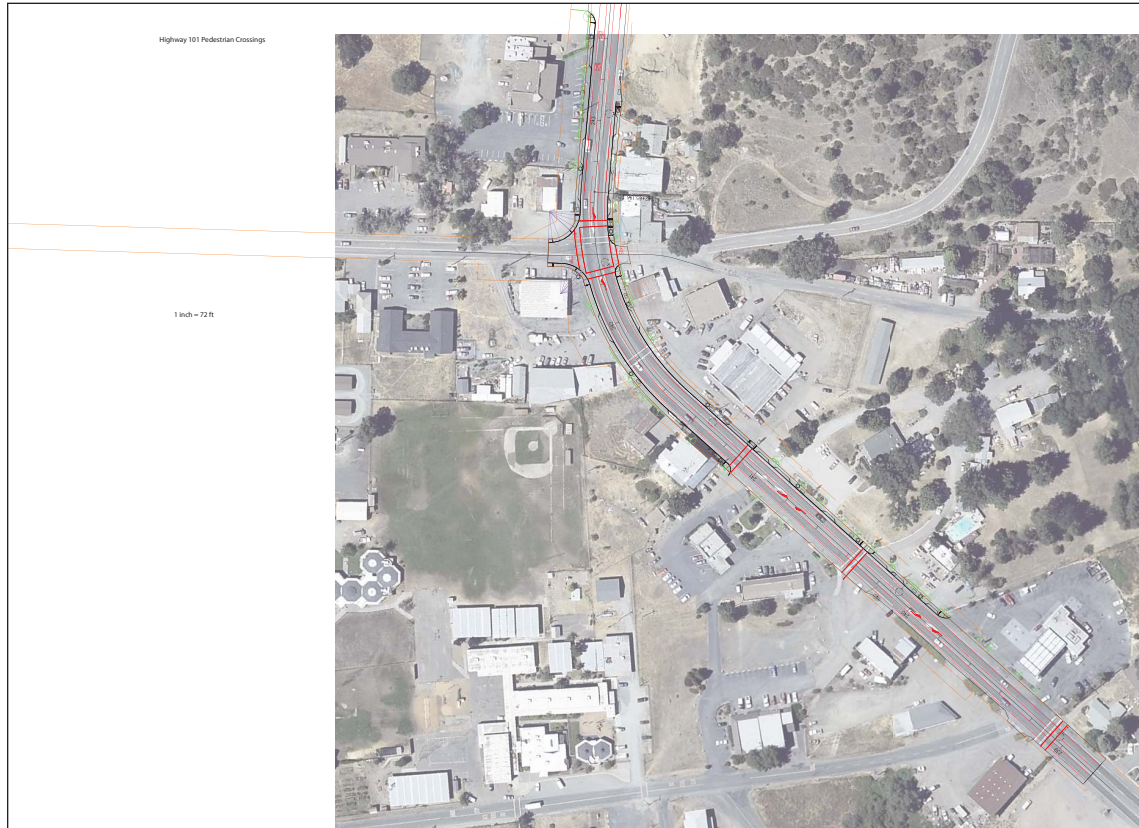


Figure 5-7 illustrates the key locations for crosswalks and pedestrian refuge islands within the Town Center.

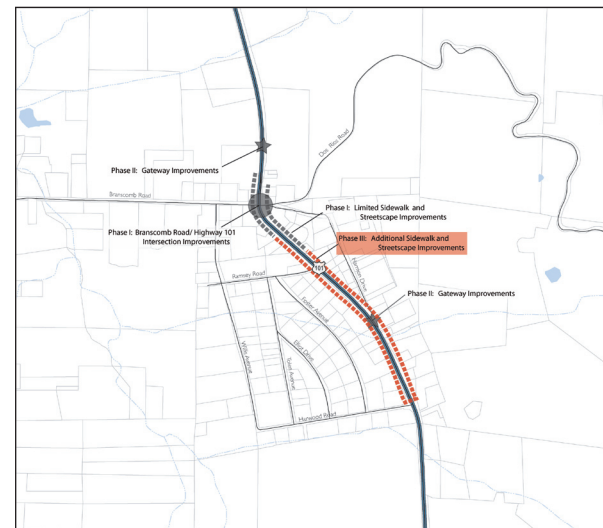
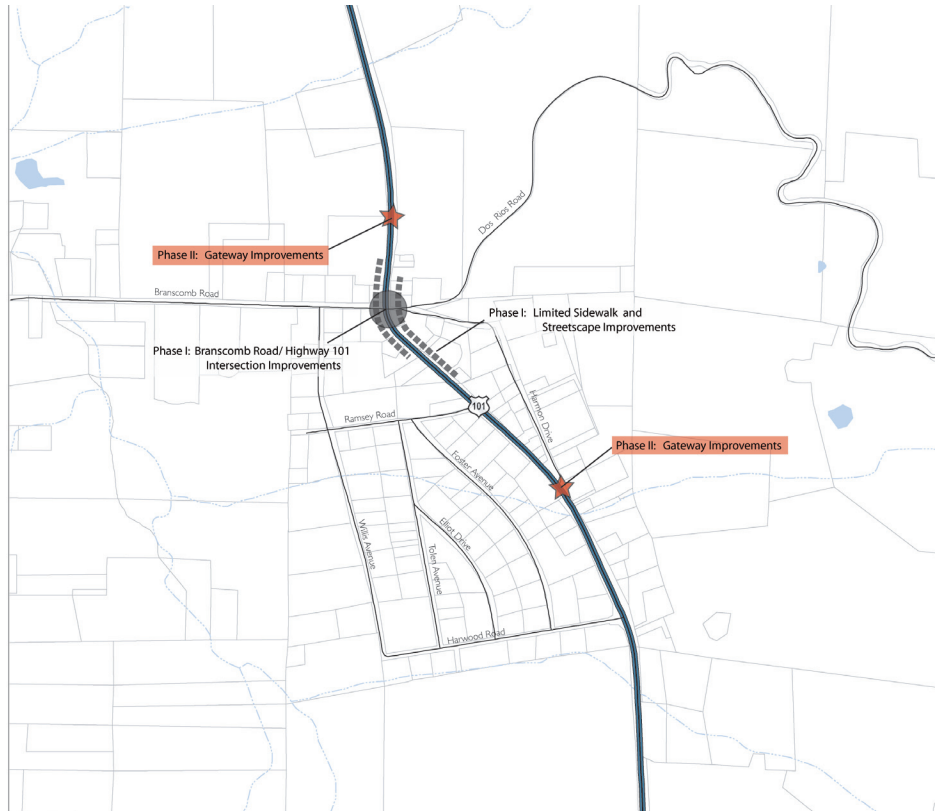
D. Phasing Recommendations

This section provides recommendations for project phasing within the Town Center.

1. Highway 101 Improvements

- Phase I: Improvements to the intersection of Branscomb Road with Highway 101, including the Caltrans Highway 101 Safety Project and concurrent TE project that will provide sidewalks, street trees and pedestrian-scaled lighting from Boomers to the Laytonville Inn on the west side of the Highway, and from the Laytonville Garage to Albert's on the east side of the Highway. Conduct speed zone study for speed limit reduction.
- Phase II: Gateway improvements signifying the northern and southern edges of the Town Center. Step down speed limits at transition points along Highway 101. Study pedestrian refuge island locations for impacts to parcel access and circulation.
- Phase III: Add colorized shoulder

treatment throughout downtown. Continue sidewalk and streetscape improvements along Highway 101, including pedestrian crossings with pedestrian refuges.



Figures 5-8, 5-9, and 5-10 illustrate the proposed phasing for improvements along Highway 101.