



# PEDESTRIAN SAFETY, MOBILITY & CONTEXT IMPROVEMENT STUDY

STATE ROUTES 70/20  
MARYSVILLE, CA

JULY 2008

PREPARED BY

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# PEDESTRIAN SAFETY, MOBILITY & CONTEXT IMPROVEMENT STUDY: STATE ROUTES 70/20 IN MARYSVILLE, CA

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## Introduction

### Project Purpose

The project's purpose is to prepare recommendations to improve pedestrian connections and walkability across and along State Route 70 and State Route 20 (SR70/20). As these highways pass through the City of Marysville, they become the major downtown arterials. Tens of thousands of cars and trucks travel through the city each day. The large trucks and heavy traffic volumes discourage walking and bicycling along these corridors. Furthermore, these corridors have little or no landscaping or accessibility compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Some sidewalks are broken or uplifted. As a result, potential pedestrian and bicycle access between the historic downtown, parks, and other neighborhoods is severely restricted.

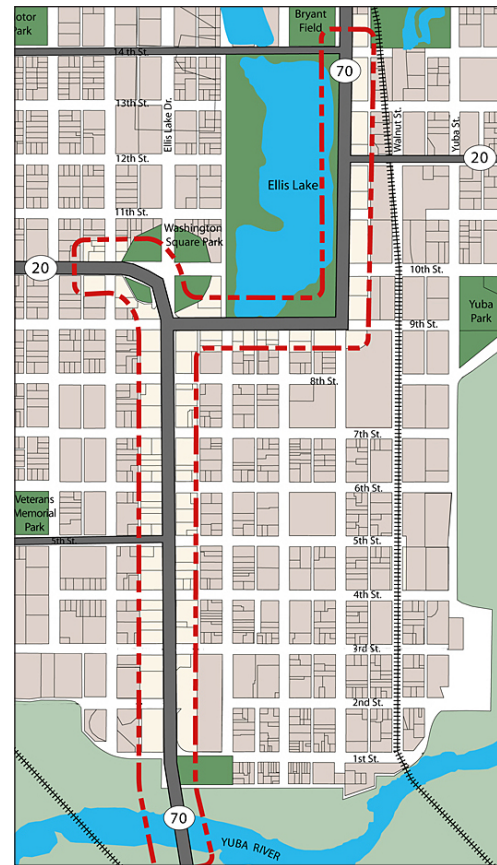
The project will produce a vision plan and detailed recommendations to help Marysville achieve its Smart Growth goals, including improved walking, cycling, and transit facilities.

### Background

Marysville has about 12,500 residents and is the Yuba County seat. It is located at the confluence of the Feather and Yuba Rivers, 40 miles north of Sacramento. Highways 70 and 20 intersect in Marysville, making it a crossroads for vehicles destined for Chico, Grass Valley, Central Valley, and the Sierra Nevada, as well as many northern cities located near Interstate 5. Highways 70 and 20 are high volume roadways that provide access for through and local trips.

Some City neighborhoods attract pedestrian and bicycle users, but the state highways act as barriers between neighborhoods for walkers and cyclists. The southwest quadrant shown on the study map includes a hospital, elementary school, park, and residences. The southeast quadrant includes the historic downtown, parks, residences, library, post office, private school, churches, office buildings, and civic buildings.

Previous planning efforts have recommended improving connectivity and enhancing the appearance of major street development. The Downtown Economic Development Strategic Plan was to guide public and private investment toward building a thriving downtown commercial district in Marysville. The plan stresses providing pedestrian links between neighborhoods and



*Highways 70/20 include E Street to 10<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> west of E to the City border, 9<sup>th</sup> between E and B, and B Street north of 9<sup>th</sup>. The highway wraps around the downtown area of Marysville and runs along the popular park around Ellis Lake.*





*The recreational trail on this levee in Marysville has few connections with downtown or other destinations.*



*E and 9<sup>th</sup> Streets, Marysville. State highways 70 and 20 merge at this intersection.*



*The study area's commercial development was largely car-oriented, like in the photo above. Numerous wide driveways increase pedestrian risk.*

corridors, both downtown and throughout the city. The General Plan promotes pedestrian convenience and requires landscaping and trees along major streets and highways.

The need for a highway bypass has been discussed over the years. Caltrans has no plans for a bypass, but the Metropolitan Transportation Plan, first tier, includes the first phase of a Marysville bypass project. That project is not expected to provide a complete bypass in the foreseeable future.

The Yuba-Sutter Bikeway Master Plan, December 1995, is incorporated into the Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) Regional Bicycle, Pedestrian, and Trails Master Plan dated May, 2007. SACOG vision statements express the need for a regional network of multi-use paths and lanes that connect jurisdictions. This network would provide walking and bicycling access to all destinations. Specific goals include providing bicycle and pedestrian connections within, through, and between each city and town in the six-county region. These include all public transit systems, park and ride lots, and activity centers such as universities, hospitals, and commercial centers. The SACOG plan includes a list of projects, none of which are located in Marysville.

### Existing Conditions

The primary purpose of state highways is enabling inter-regional travel between counties and cities throughout the state. The same state highways also often serve as the backbone of local circulation systems, as in Marysville.

In Marysville, Highways 70 and 20 are surface streets with two to six through travel lanes varying in width. Entering Marysville from the south Highway 70 becomes E Street, turns east onto 9<sup>th</sup> Street and then north on B Street. Highway 20 enters the City from the west on 10<sup>th</sup> Street, shifts south one block to 9<sup>th</sup>, north on B Street and east on 12<sup>th</sup> Street. On-street parking is allowed in some segments of E Street between 3<sup>rd</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> Streets. Some street segments within the study area have raised medians or curbing between signalized intersections that prevents left-turn movements.

Most businesses along the two highways are car-oriented, with multiple driveways, drive-through windows between sidewalks and buildings, and surface parking in front of buildings. Historic buildings along E Street are located near the back of sidewalks.

Many of the buildings in the study area are accessible from alleys in the back of the premises.

Sidewalks are on both sides of the street in most of the study area. The walkway on the north side of 9<sup>th</sup> Street and the west side of B Street is a narrow path near Ellis Lake. Sidewalk width and buffers between sidewalks and moving traffic vary. Some street segments have mature landscaping along the roadway edges. Portions of 10<sup>th</sup> Street have a landscaped median.

Fire hydrants are located on one side of the street. Emergency services do not currently have a system to preempt signals when crossing E Street, a common route for responding to calls.

At signal-controlled intersections, pedestrian crosswalks are marked inconsistently. Some intersections have all legs marked. Other intersections have some legs marked, while some signal-controlled intersections in the study area have no markings. Crosswalks are not marked on any uncontrolled intersections. Participants reported the highways were difficult to cross. During field observations, some pedestrians who tired of waiting for a walk signal to cross E Street proceeded against the light during gaps in traffic.

Some intersections provide curb ramps for people who use wheelchairs, strollers, or other personal assistance devices. Many curb ramps and driveway crossings appear to exceed maximum slope allowed. Truncated domes specified by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Public Rights-of-Way requirements are missing from most curb ramps.

There is no bikeway system in Marysville. Bike lanes are marked on some side streets and there are some shared-use trails, but they are not easy to find. The facilities are disconnected and do not create a complete network. Some bicyclists use sidewalks, which creates conflicts with pedestrians. Other cyclists share travel lanes with vehicles.

Yuba-Sutter Transit provides service to Marysville. Transit routes almost completely avoid the state highways. Buses loop the downtown and link to Yuba City, outlying areas, and Sacramento. Transit routes cross E Street, but do not travel on E Street. One route does travel along B Street next to Ellis Lake, but only a few blocks where transit travels lie within the study area. Crash data for January 2002 to December 2006 provided by Marysville



*Crosswalk marking is inconsistent, as shown in the photo above. Crossing E Street here is legal, though the crosswalk is not marked, while the shorter 4<sup>th</sup> Street has a marked crosswalk.*

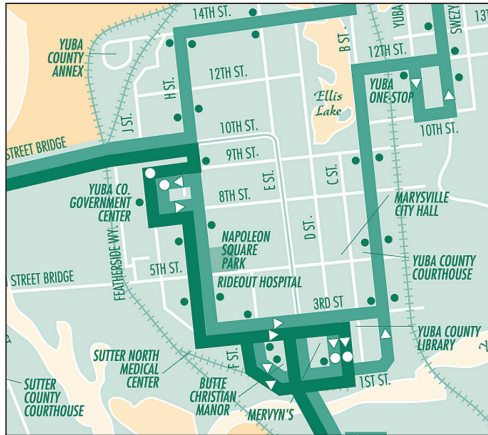


*Marysville lacks a bikeway system. Major routes, like the one above, lack marked bike lanes.*



*Yuba Sutter Regional Transit buses serve downtown Marysville frequently.*





Yuba Sutter Regional Transit provides frequent service connecting downtown Marysville (above) with Yuba City, outlying districts, and Sacramento. Buses have bike racks as shown below.



Police Department shows that most collisions on Highway 70/20 were property damage only or resulted in minor injuries. Crashes were highest at the intersection of E and 5<sup>th</sup>. The Police Department reported the two fatalities last year were bicyclists. During focus groups, participants reported that crashes were reduced when cameras that take photos of vehicles running lights were installed at G, 3<sup>rd</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup> Streets.. They also reported that even minor “fender bender” collisions created substantial delays at intersections.

### Process

A multi-day design effort, or *charrette*, was conducted from May 30 to June 6, 2007. Staff, community leaders, and residents participated in a series of events designed to identify concerns, priorities, and potential solutions. The events began with a series of focus group meetings. Groups included City, SACOG, and Caltrans staff, emergency services providers, community leaders, schools, and downtown business people. The facilitator encouraged each group to share their knowledge, concerns, and ideas about the study area. Highlights of the focus groups appear in the Appendix.

A Community Workshop was held in Marysville at the Historic Packard Library on Thursday, May 31, 2007. Participants shared ideas and viewed a slide presentation highlighting study area issues. On Saturday, participants walked with the Consultant Team along E, 9<sup>th</sup>, and B Streets. The group observed traffic and pedestrian patterns in the field, discussed concerns, and considered some ideas for resolving problems. After the field review, participants viewed a presentation illustrating concepts for addressing issues within the study areas. Citizens then



A series of focus groups held at the beginning of the charrette helped identify concerns and ideas. In the photos above, participants provide input.



gathered at tables to develop suggestions for improvements and present their results to the entire audience.

Some community concerns were beyond the scope of this project, but the improvement plan developed during the next four days reflected most of the input. On Wednesday, June 6, 2007, Consultants presented slides of the plan's key points at a Closing Workshop.

Detailed notes from public processes appear in the Appendix.



*Photos at the top show participants at the charrette workshops. Middle photos show participants working with aerial maps to plan improvements. Photos at the bottom show participants conducting field audit.*