SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL MASTER PLAN

City of Baldwin Park




October 2014

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Local Government Commission

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Safe Routes to School Master Plan

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Views and opinions presented in this report do not necessarily represent the views or opinions of Caltrans or the California Business Transportation and Housing Agency

INTRODUCTION

The City of Baldwin Park has embarked on an effort to improve safety at all of its public schools. Baldwin Park has received both Federal and State SRTS grants to fund the Maine Avenue Complete Streets project. The Maine Avenue project will make numerous improvements to Maine Avenue from Los Angeles Street to Arrow Highway. These will be completed soon. The Maine Avenue project precedes this current planning effort and sets the stage for improvements called for in this Plan. This Plan will position the City well to receive future grants for both infrastructure projects and non-infrastructure programs.

The City partnered with the Local Government Commission and the California Center for Public Health Advocacy, and was awarded a grant from Caltrans to create a City of Baldwin Park Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Plan (the Plan). The Plan will include SRTS plans for each school, and citywide efforts to support and complement the individual plans. This document details work completed thus far and future steps.

There are two primary purposes to SRTS programs:

1. To make it safer for students to walk and bicycle to school
2. To increase the number of students walking and bicycling to school

In addition to safety benefits, there are health benefits for students who walk and bike to school. Environmental benefits result as fewer parents drive their children to school every day. Additionally, as children and families adopt more active lifestyles, their quality of life increases, they have more free time from driving less, and community relationships are strengthened. All of these benefits combine to create more livable neighborhoods surrounding schools where children walk or bike to school.

This document contains a program for a “5E” approach to making walking and bicycling safer and more attractive to Baldwin Park’s students and parents. The 5Es include the following:

- Engineering—to make physical improvements to the routes that students use to walk or bicycle to school

- Education—to teach students safe walking and bicycling habits, to teach parents the importance of safe driving habits, and to emphasize health and environmental benefits

- Encouragement—to promote walking and bicycling to school so more students choose to do so

- Enforcement—to ensure that rules and laws of the road are followed, as well as safe pick-up and drop-off practices are adhered to at the schools

- Evaluation—to track the Plan to assess its success and to modify it accordingly

Experience shows that this approach yields successful results in both making our communities safer to walk and bicycle in, and increasing the number of students doing so.

The Caltrans grant funded a range of efforts at the schools to initiate this Plan. The grant was used to do the following:

- Conduct SRTS workshops at schools
- Assess the safety issues
- Plan physical modifications to the routes

This project began in August of 2013. In September of 2013 the consultant team began conducting SRTS workshops for the stakeholders at each school. Three nationally certified SRTS instructors from the consultant team facilitated the workshops. The workshops began with a presentation that described why SRTS is important, along with a sampling of engineering devices that can be applied to make walking and bicycling safer. Attendees also saw presentation modules on education, encouragement, and enforcement programs. The workshops provided Spanish-speaking residents at all the schools with translated presentation slides along with simultaneous interpretation with headphones.

After the presentation, stakeholder attendees walked around the school and identified safety concerns at particular locations along common routes to each school. Upon returning to the presentation room, attendees drew on large-scale maps of their schools and surrounding areas. Attendees marked common walking and cycling routes to their school and identified key issues and locations needing improvement. They identified general safety issues, as well as location-specific safety issues. They also listed potential education, encouragement, and enforcement programs that might work at their schools. These led to the creation of SRTS plans for each school.

Since Baldwin Park high schools are located adjacent to elementary and middle schools, the team conducted joint workshops and prepared joint plans for these.

The plans for each school contain detailed engineering concepts. They also include a bullet-pointed list of some education, encouragement, and enforcement ideas that workshop attendees mentioned as potential programs.

After the draft of this plan was released and reviewed by City staff, a final community workshop was conducted on April 29, 2104. Community members were presented with the draft projects and program plans for each school, and offered a chance to comment and offer additional ideas. The ideas received were then incorporated into the existing projects and recommendations in this plan.

This Plan updates SRTS planning work conducted in 1995 by Baldwin Park. The 1995 SRTS Plan identified specific street improvements near each school in a similar fashion to this Plan. Signals, crosswalk striping, signs and other improvements were called for. Those improvements have been completed. This Plan moves Baldwin Park to the next step. This update utilizes the latest devices and design guidance which have changed significantly since 1995.

EVALUATION

In the beginning of the process, baseline surveys were taken to learn about existing commute to school patterns. As the Plan's programs unfold, they should show increases in the number of students walking and bicycling. Since engineering improvements (physical modifications made to streets and intersections) will likely be made after this planning effort ends, initial improvements will result from the programs alone. Further increases can be expected once the physical improvements are made. Table 1 below shows results of the first baseline tally conducted in classrooms in the fall of 2013. Students identified the way they commute to school by all the modes that are commonly used. "Other" may include skateboards, scooters or taxis.

Table 1: Baseline Commute to School Tally

School	Walk	Bicycle	Other Self-Driven	School Bus	Family Vehicle	Carpool with Children of Other Family	Public Bus	Other	Number of Students
Bursch Elementary School	104	1	1	10	189	13	0	0	318
Central Elementary School									
De Anza Elementary School	174	12	3	111	252	7	0	0	559
Elwin Elementary School	133	1	5	19	193	15	0	0	366
Foster Elementary School	206	2	5	58	283	21	7	1	583
Geddes Elementary School	145	3	5	112	414	28	0	0	707
Kenmore Elementary School	175	0	1	52	258	12	0	2	500
Margaret Heath Elementary School	166	0	0	7	304	34	0	0	511
Pleasant View Elementary School	124	4	3	16	181	31	0	1	360
Santa Fe Elementary School	28	0	0	0	194	31	0	3	256
Tracy Elementary School	172	0	0	28	351	32	1	1	585
Vineland Elementary School	208	9	4	53	369	41	0	1	685
Walnut Elementary School	118	1	5	11	332	32	1	4	504
Holland Middle School	176	11	30	34	275	24	0	0	550
Jones Jr. High School	181	5	0	35	223	19	1	5	469
Olive Middle School	97	3	5	21	325	16	0	0	467
Sierra Vista Jr. High School	275	5	3	32	399	31	1	0	746
TOTAL BY MODE	2482	57	70	599	4542	387	11	18	8166
% BY MODE	**30.39%**	**0.70%**	**0.86%**	**7.34%**	**55.62%**	**4.74%**	**0.13%**	**0.22%**	

School	Walkers	Riders	Number of Students
Central Elementary School	221	302	523

Notes: Tallies were taken for Grades 1-8 between the dates of 10/7/13-10/21/13. High School students were not tallied. Central Elementary used different categories for their tally.

SRTS PLANS BY SCHOOL

Comments from the SRTS workshops were brought along when fieldwork was conducted so that the resulting plans address the issues raised. The fieldwork also identified issues observed, which the plans address. The schools are presented in the order when the workshops were conducted. The workshops were grouped with the elementary schools that feed each corresponding middle school.

The planned physical improvements along school routes are described in the following pages. The Design Guidance section at the end of this document provides definition and guidance on these improvements. All bulb-outs and curb extensions will include perpendicular curb ramps and truncated dome tactile devices for the sight impaired. All pedestrian signals include audible signals for the sight impaired. All parkways planned for paving will ideally be paved with porous concrete for infiltration.

This is a *planned* list of improvements. The list gives the City projects that it can seek funds for. The City may want to change the list over time, as the list is conceptual. Engineering will need to be conducted prior to construction.

Crossing improvements are numbered according to their location in this document.

Maps on the following pages illustrate common routes that students take to get to school. The proposed improvements were planned along these routes.

The City should consider implementing some of the less expensive items first. Some items are relatively inexpensive and many can be put in within a short time frame after this Plan has been adopted. On the other hand, devices that require construction, and perhaps drainage modification, are significantly more expensive and may become long-term expenditures. Table 2 below shows some of the devices for consideration of short-term or long-term implementation.

Table 2: Short-Term Vs. Long-Term Devices

Short-Term Devices	Long-Term Devices
Crosswalks	Curb extensions
Advanced stop/yield lines	Crossing islands
Signs	Hybrid beacons
Countdown signals	Raised crosswalks
Curb ramps	Sidewalks
Bike lanes	Paths
Red curbs	Drainage modifications
Rapid flash beacons	

However, the City should take extra care with uncontrolled crossings, especially of multi-lane streets. Research has shown that simply marking a crosswalk on multi-lane streets with over 12,000 vehicles per day may result in more pedestrian crashes. The research recommends that other devices, such as but not limited to crossing islands, advanced yield lines, curb extensions and beacons are needed to make these pedestrian crossings safe. So in these cases, new crosswalks should be put in with some devices that are more expensive.

In addition to cost, the City should also consider means of prioritizing projects. The City won't be able to fund all of the improvements at once so they will have to be phased in. In order to prioritize projects the city can apply such criteria as, but not limited to:

- Crash history
- Traffic volumes
- Pedestrian volumes
- Number of travel lanes
- Width of the street
- Traffic speed
- Size of the school
- Community support

The City should also seek opportunities to piggy back on other projects. For example, the Maine Avenue project will soon make improvements that will benefit a number of schools. A future Olive Street project could do the same. Implementing a citywide bicycle plan will coincide with bikeway projects in this Plan. Resurfacing projects present ideal opportunities to stripe bike lanes, crosswalks, advanced yield lines, etc.

The plans for each school are presented in an order that groups elementary schools with the middle schools that they feed into in the same area of the city.

Sierra Vista Junior High School

Sierra Vista High School

SRTS Workshop

A SRTS workshop was conducted on October 9, 2013. The following key stakeholders attended:

- School principal
- School community liaison
- Parents
- Representatives from the Baldwin Park Unified School District
- Representatives from the California Center for Public Health Advocacy

Safety Issues Raised at the Stakeholder Workshop or Through Field Observations

General

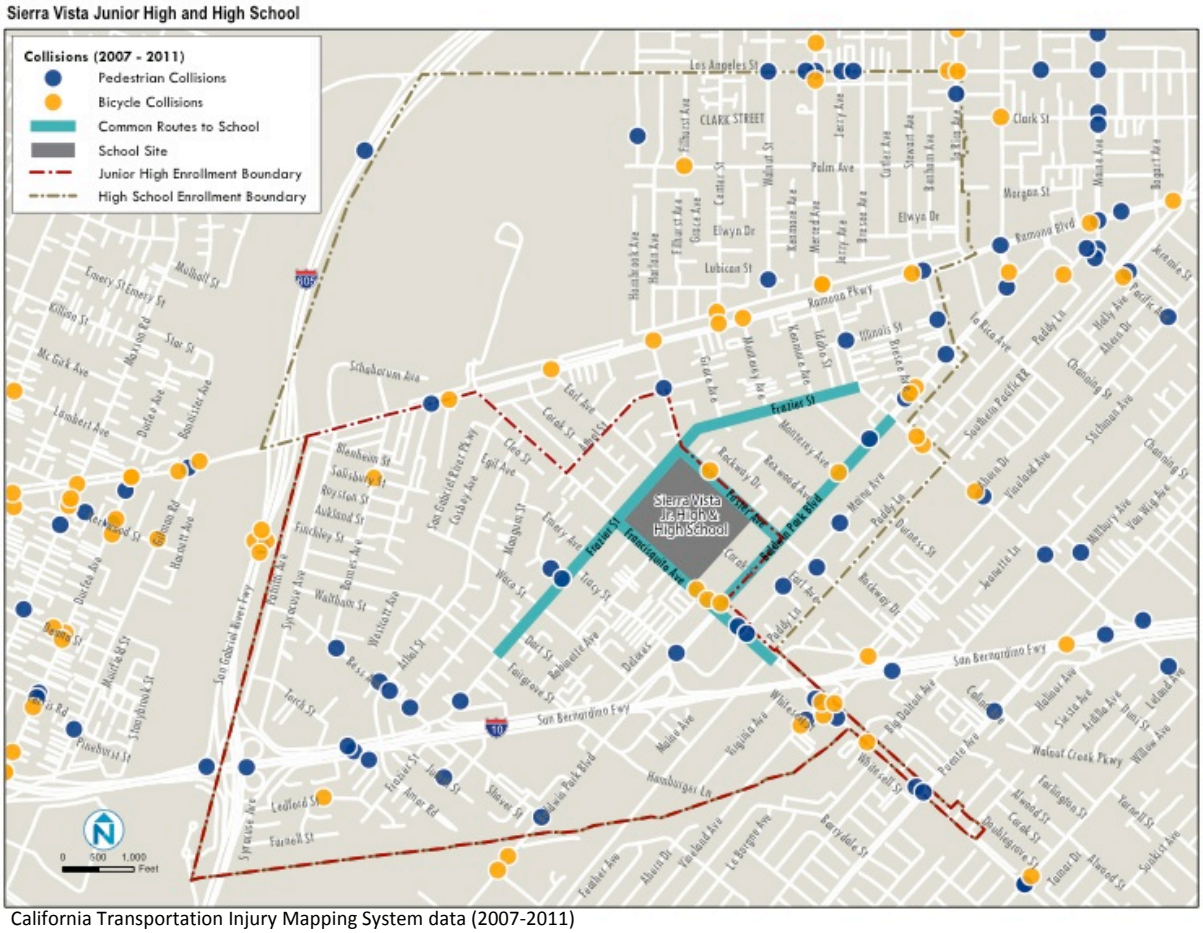
- Speeding
- Narrow sidewalks
- Crosswalks not very visible
- Traffic signals not audible
- Speed humps not very visible
- Lack of signs
- Dogs

Location-Specific Issues

- Francisquito Ave.
  - speeding
  - motorists stopping in the street
  - long distance between crosswalks; need a crosswalk at Robinette Ave.
- Foster Ave. & Frazier St.
  - need audio signals
  - need more time to cross
- Foster Ave. & Baldwin Park Blvd.
  - need audio signals
  - need more time to cross
- Foster Ave. & Sparland St.
  - need a crosswalk
- Frazier St. SW of Foster St.
  - speeds are too high; need traffic calming

Maps

The following map displays bicyclist and pedestrian involved crashes for a five-year period between 2007 and 2011.



California Transportation Injury Mapping System data (2007-2011)

The map below shows the proposed engineering projects along common routes used by students to get to school.

Sierra Vista Junior High and High School

Existing Conditions and Engineering Recommendations

Crossing Improvements

J1. Frazier Ave. & Foster Ave.

Existing

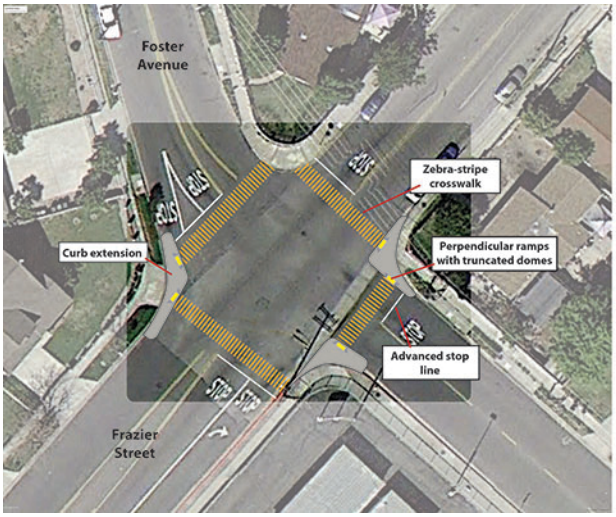
- Signalized intersection
- Skewed
- Yellow transverse-line crosswalks on all legs
- Countdown signals

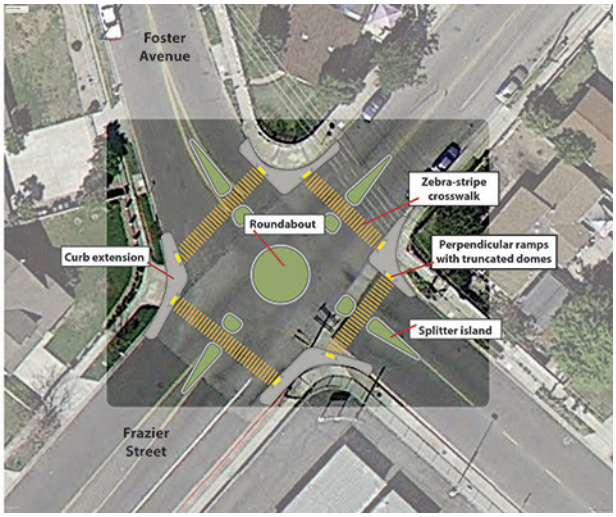
Proposed Option 1

- Add a yellow zebra-stripe crosswalk on all legs (4)
- Add advanced stop lines to all crosswalks (4)
- Add curb extensions to the west corner to straighten out both crossing faces on the NW and SW legs (2)
- Add curb extensions to the east and south corners of the NE and SE legs (4)
- Check the walk signal timing; add more time if needed

Proposed Option 2

- Replace the signals with a roundabout
- Choke the intersection down with curb extensions

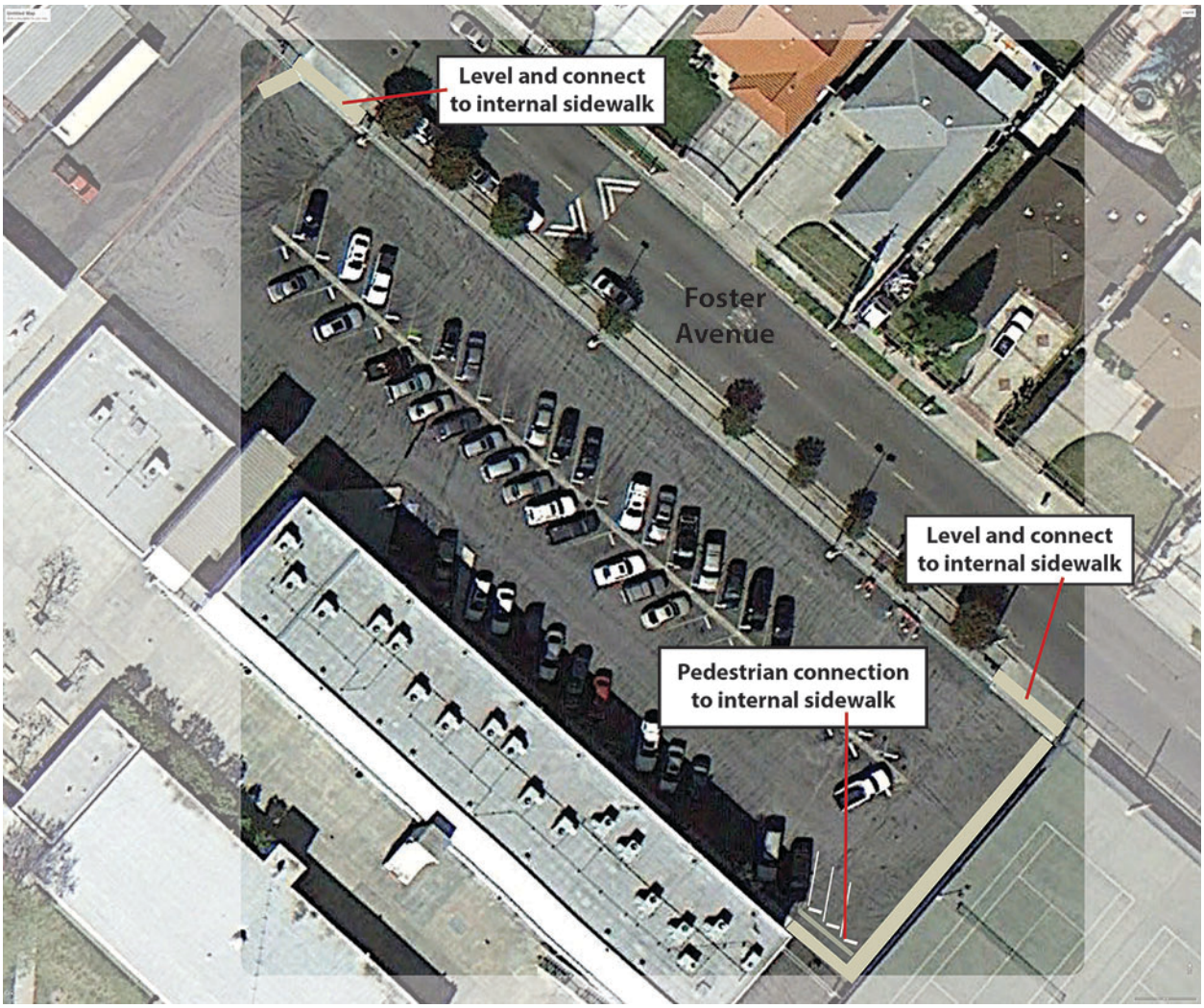




J2. School Driveway Entrance and Exit on Foster Ave.

Proposed

- Level the sidewalks across the entrance and exit (2)
- Connect the sidewalk NW of the NW entrance to the internal sidewalk
- Delineate an area (with parking stops, pylons, etc.) SE of the SE exit next to the tennis courts to create a pedestrian connection from the sidewalk to the internal sidewalk



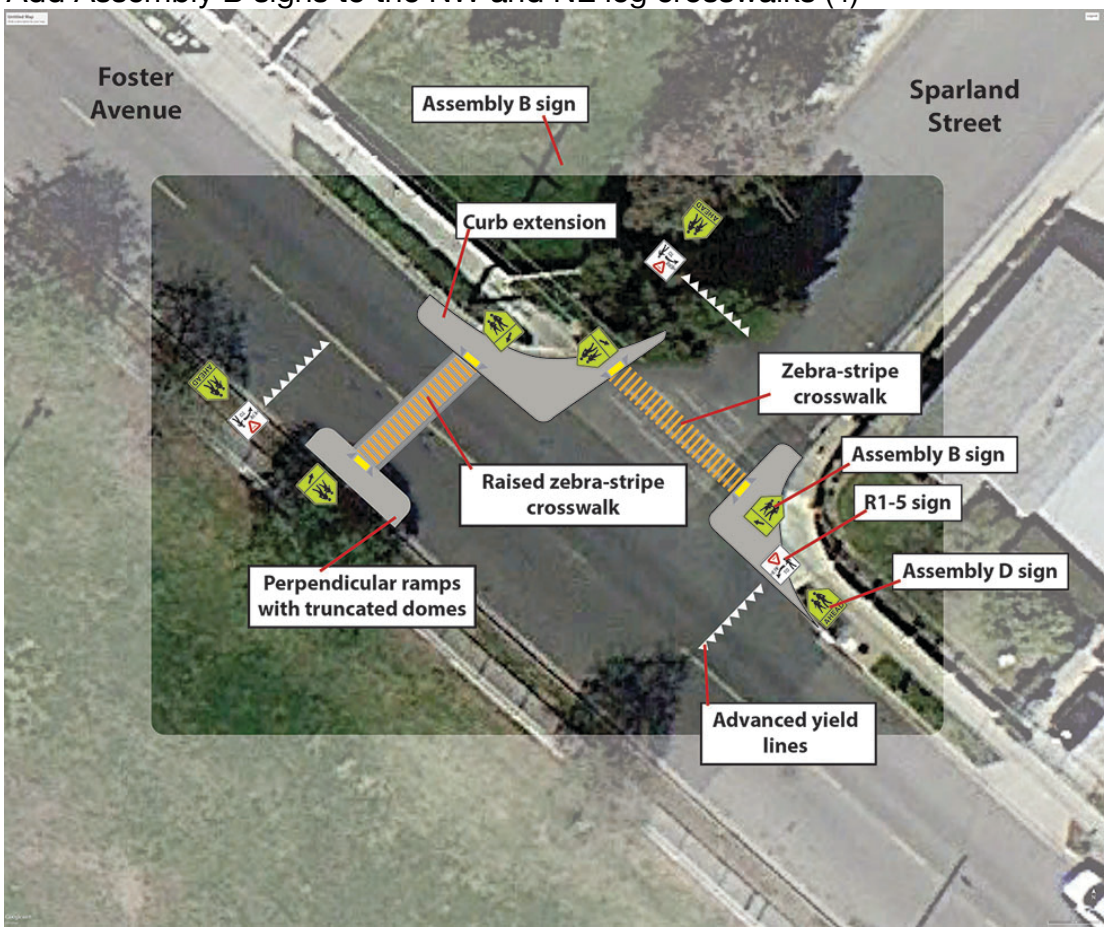
J3. Foster Ave. & Sparland St.

Existing

- T-intersection
- Uncontrolled
- No marked crosswalk

Proposed

- Add a raised yellow zebra-stripe crosswalk on the NW leg (1)
- Add a yellow zebra-stripe crosswalk to the NE leg (1)
- Add curb extensions on both crossing faces of the NW and NE legs (4)
- If the street remains 2-way (see plan for 1-way treatment in Linear Improvements) install crossing islands on the NW crosswalk instead of curb extensions
- Add advanced yield lines to both approaches of the NW leg crosswalk and to the approach to the NW leg crosswalk (3)
- Add R1-5 signs to both approaches of the NW leg crosswalk and to the approach to the NW leg crosswalk (3)
- Add an Assembly D sign to both approaches of the NW leg crosswalk and to the approach to the NW leg crosswalk (3)
- Add Assembly B signs to the NW and NE leg crosswalks (4)



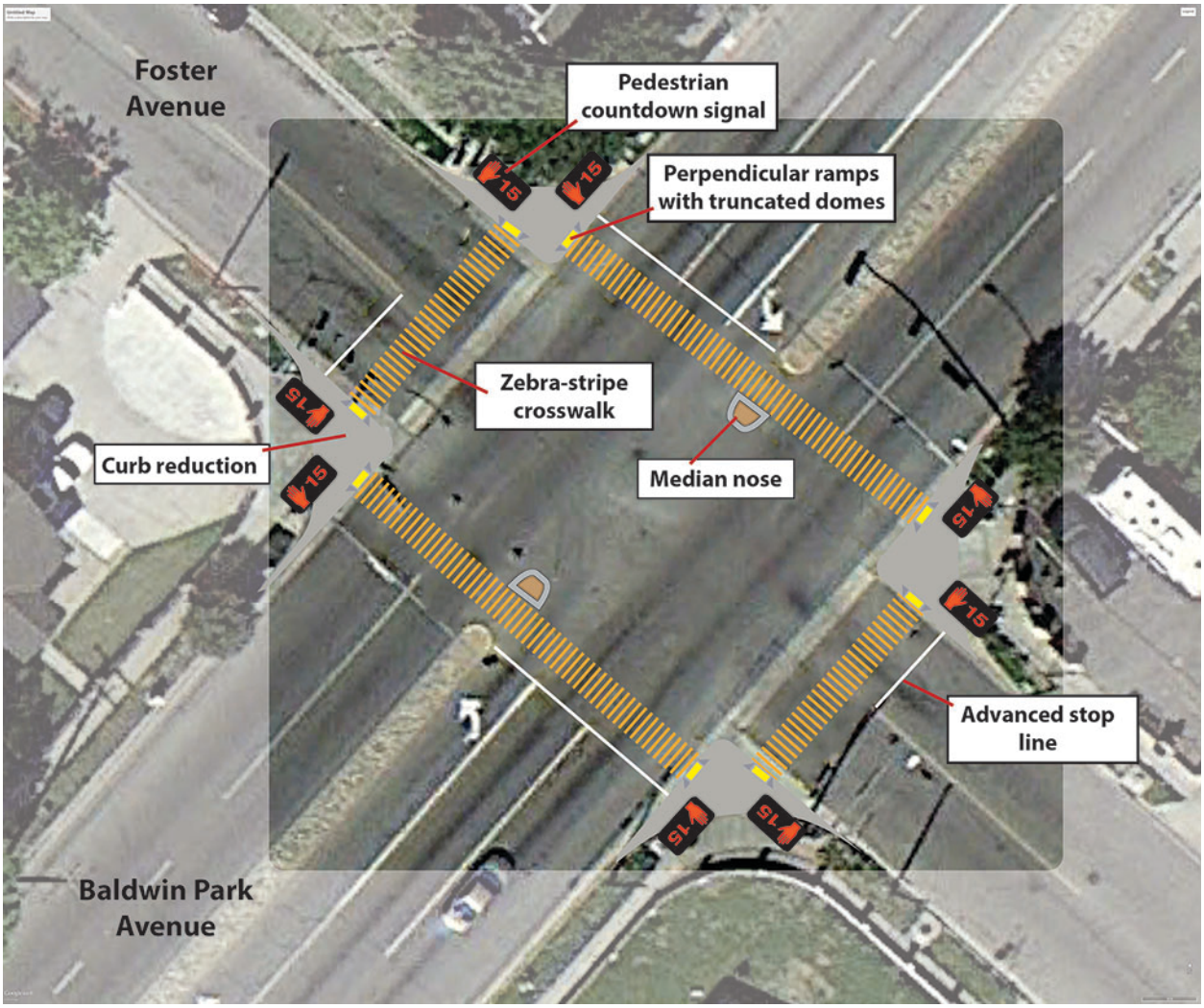
J4. Foster Ave. & Baldwin Park Blvd.

Existing

- Signalized intersection
- Yellow transverse-line crosswalks on all legs
- No countdown signals
- Protected left turns

Proposed

- Add a yellow zebra-stripe crosswalk on all legs (4)
- Add advanced stop lines to all crosswalks (4)
- Add countdown signals to all legs (8)
- Add median noses to the medians in Baldwin Park Blvd. (2)
- Reduce the curb return on all corners (4)
- Check the walk signal timing; add more time if needed



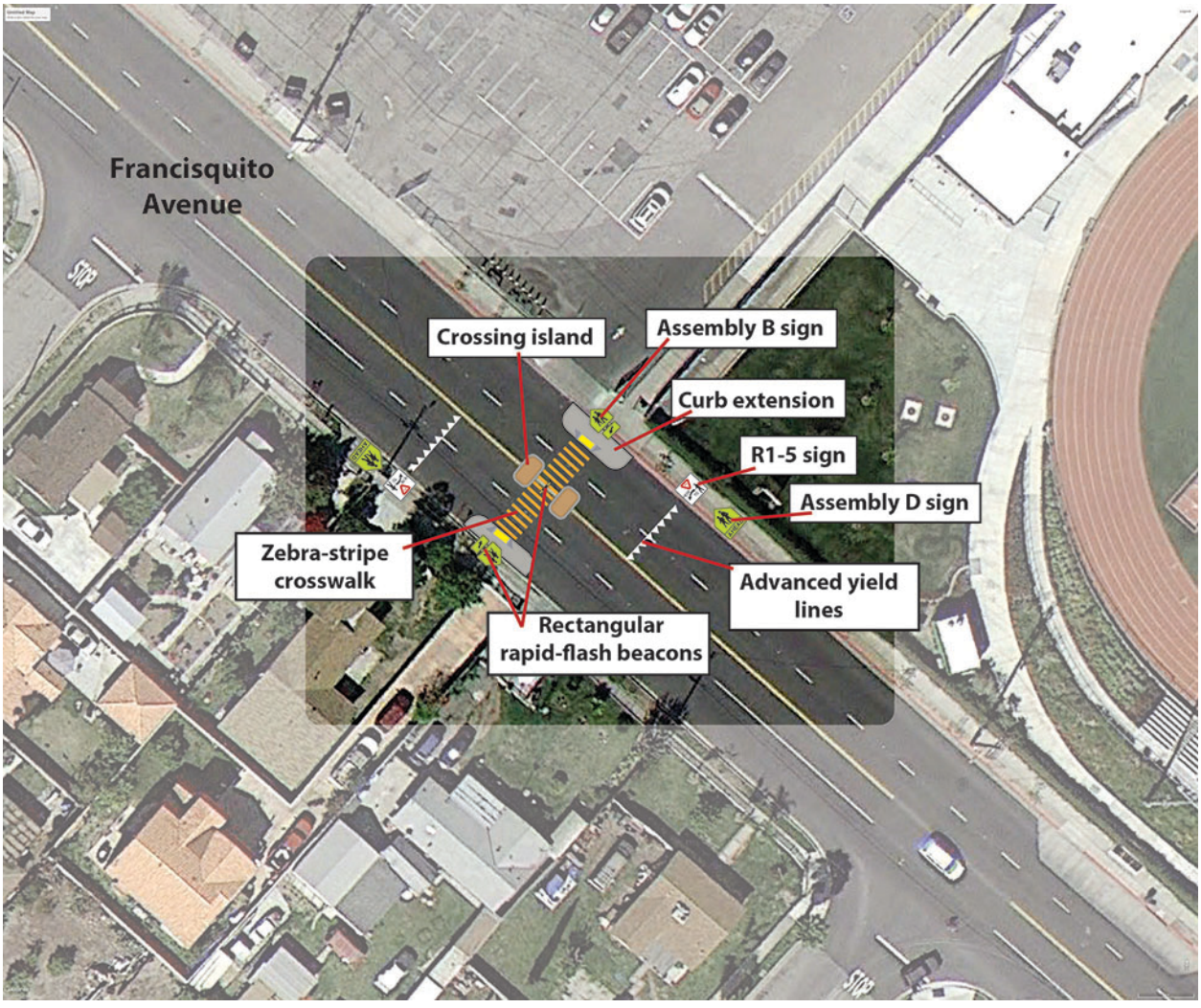
J5. School Entrance on Francisquito Ave. between Robinette Ave. & Remey Ave.

Existing

- No marked crosswalk

Proposed

- Add a yellow zebra-stripe crosswalk (1)
- Add curb extensions to both sides of the new crosswalk (2)
- Add crossing islands (1 pair)
- Add advanced yield lines to the new crosswalk (2)
- Add R1-5 signs to both approaches of the new crosswalk (2)
- Add an Assembly D sign to both approaches of the new crosswalk (2)
- Add Assembly B signs to the new crosswalk (2)
- Add rectangular rapid flash beacons to the new crosswalk (1 set)



J6. Francisquito Ave. & Frazier St.

Existing

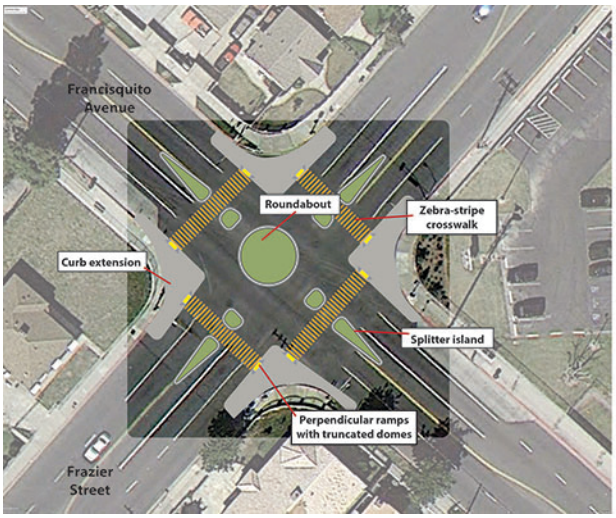
- Signalized intersection
- Yellow transverse-line crosswalks on all legs
- No countdown signal on the south corner to cross SW
- Bus stops with shelters near the side on Francisquito Ave.

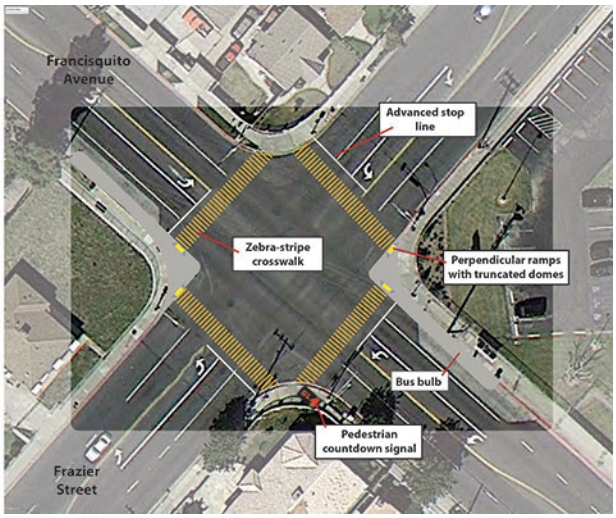
Proposed Option 1

- Replace the signals with a roundabout if a road diet is implemented on both Frazier St. and Francisquito Ave.
- Choke the intersection down with curb extensions

Proposed Option 2

- Add a yellow zebra-stripe crosswalk on all legs (4)
- Add advanced stop lines to all crosswalks (4)
- Add a countdown signal to the SE corner to cross SE (1)
- With a road diet on Francisquito Ave. add bus bulbs on the east and west corners

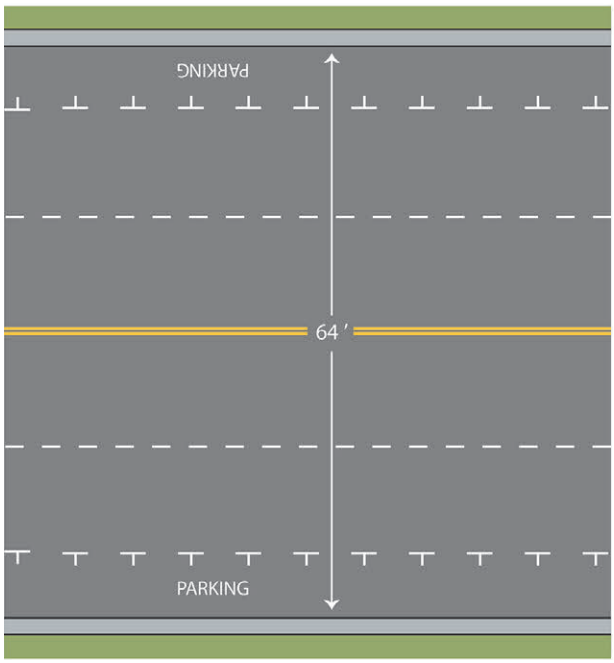




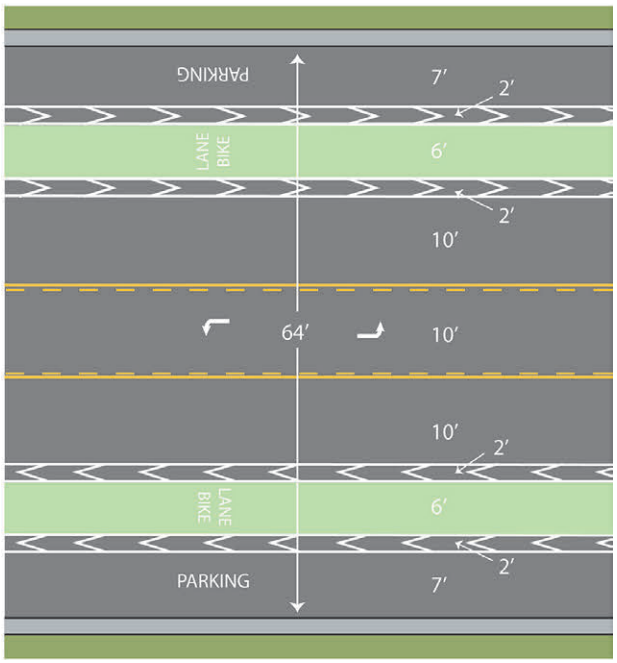
Linear Improvements

- Foster Ave. between Frazier St. and Baldwin Park Blvd. has Assembly C signs and 2 speed humps
  - add Assembly A signs (2)
  - evaluate for 15 mph Assembly C signs
  - consider 1-way treatment NW-bound with a drop-off on the SW side and a 2-way cycle track (12' cycle track, 3' buffer, 8' drop-off, 10' travel lane, 7' parking) (0.35 mi.)
- Add a bike route with shared lane markings along Foster Ave./Harlan Ave. from Vineland Ave. to Los Angeles St. (this would have a 2-way cycle track between Frazier St. and Baldwin Park Blvd. with the concept above) (1.8 mi.)
- Widen the sidewalk into a parkway along Foster Ave. from Frazier St. to Baldwin Park Blvd. (approximately 1,800')
- Add a bike route with shared lane markings on Frazier St. from Foster Ave. to Merced Ave. (0.5 mi.)
- Reduce travel lanes on Merced Ave. from Baldwin Park Blvd. to Los Angeles St. and add colored bike lanes (56'-60' wide; 7' parking, 6' colored bike lane, 2' buffer where width is sufficient, 10' travel lane, 10' center-turn lane, 10' travel lane, 2' buffer where width is sufficient, 6' colored bike lane, 7' parking) (1.0 mi.) (Graphics of Merced Ave. road diets shown in Jones Jr. High Plan.)
- Reduce travel lanes on Frazier St. from Garvey Ave. to Foster Ave. and add bike lanes (1.0 mi.)

Existing

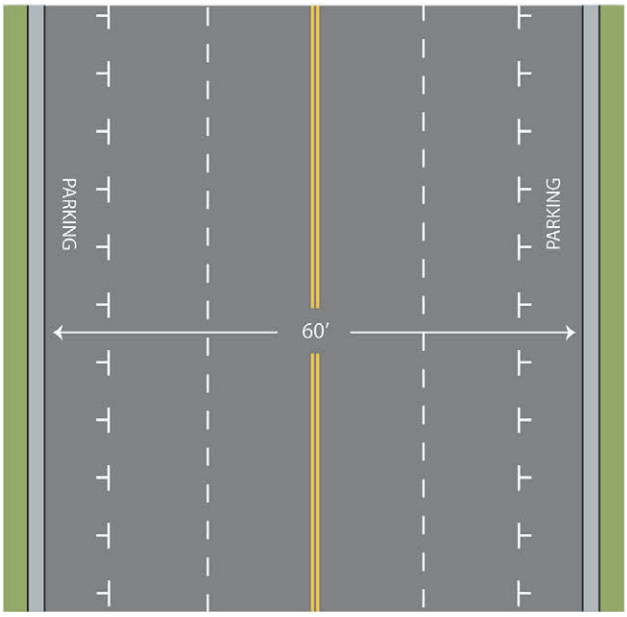


Proposed



- Reduce travel lanes on Francisquito Ave. from Romona Blvd. to Baldwin Park Blvd. and add colored bike lanes (8’ parking, 7’ colored bike lane, 10’-12’ travel lane, 10’ center-turn lane, 10’-12’ travel lane, 7’ bike lane, 8’ parking) (0.9 mi.)

Existing



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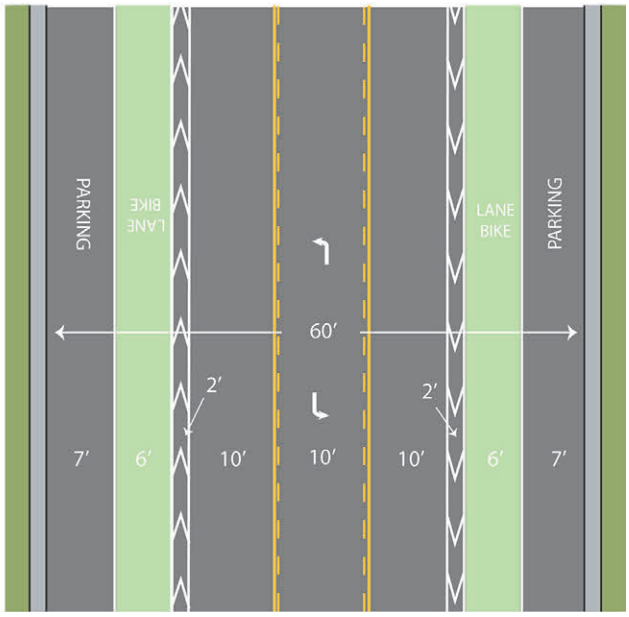

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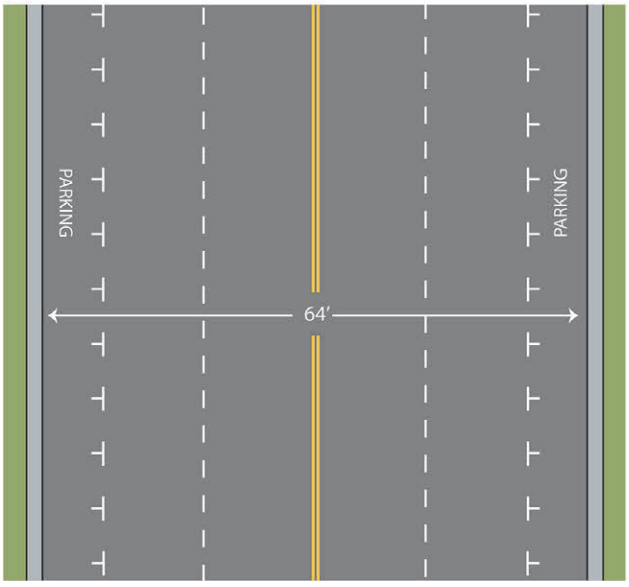

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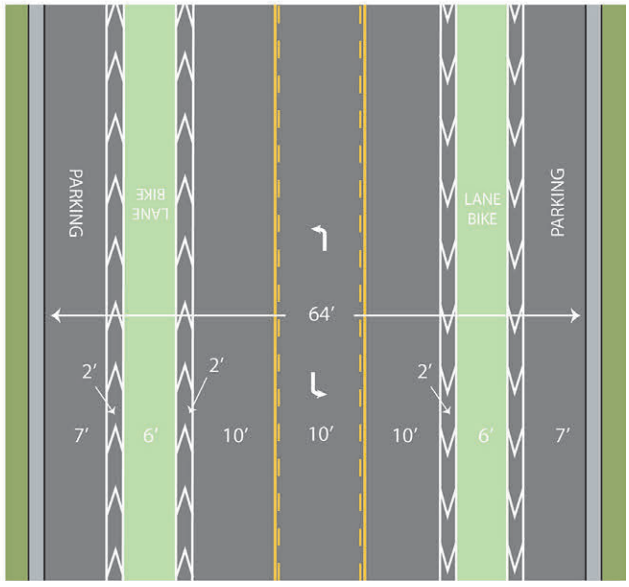

Bicycle, Skateboard, and Scooter Parking

- Add racks for 10 bicycles as described in the Design Guidance section. Add racks for 10 skateboards or scooters. Add more if needed.

Program Plan

Over time the schools will form SRTS Committees. These committees will oversee and coordinate ongoing education, encouragement, and enforcement programs at the schools. They will decide which programs to institute. In the meantime, workshop participants at Sierra Vista Junior High School and Sierra Vista High School viewed modules on these topics and will decide later what sort of programs they would like to implement.

Education

Encouragement

Enforcement