



To: David Wong, City of San Bruno, CA
From: Alta Planning + Design
Date: July 2022
Re: Portola Elementary Walk Audit and Recommendations DRAFT Memo

The following memo contains infrastructure and behavior observations gathered through a walk audit at Portola Elementary School. These in-person observations are supplemented with parent survey results and feedback from project presentations at PTO/PTA meetings. Existing issues identified through those channels are labeled as “Findings.” The proposed actions or projects to address the identified issues are labeled as “Recommendations,” with the relevant implementing agency (City or school) identified for each. Findings and recommendations are categorized into two groups based on the type of solution presented: infrastructure or non-infrastructure.

Due to its close proximity to Highlands Christian School, some of the recommendations in the Portola Audit Memo also pertain to Highlands Christian.

Infrastructure Findings and Recommendations

NOTES:

Where recommendations involve Caltrans right-of-way, such as El Camino Real, coordination with the Caltrans is required.

Where crosswalks and curb extensions are recommended to be added to an intersection, if the number of each improvement is not specified, the default quantity to be added is 4, for each leg/corner of the intersection.

Recommendations that involve the installation of traffic calming elements must follow the City’s standard process for traffic calming if they are to be implemented with the City’s designated traffic calming funding. This includes meeting the standards of public engagement (be resident led) and speed thresholds.

- 1. Finding:** *Some parents impede the crosswalk waiting to turn into school during drop-off/pick-up and ignore people walking. Additionally, the crest of the hill on Amador Ave to the west of the school entrance creates a very short sightline for drivers to see the crosswalk across Amador Ave.*

Recommendation: Remove the existing crosswalk. Paint a new high visibility crosswalk at the crest of the hill on Amador Ave to increase crosswalk visibility. Move the existing Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon to the new crosswalk location. Implementing agency: City.

Finding: *Pedestrians don’t press the RRFB button at the crosswalk, and therefore don’t activate the warning flashers.*

Recommendation: Add passive detection to the existing RRFB to alert cars to a pedestrian’s presence, without requiring action from the pedestrian. Implementing agency: City.
- 2. Finding:** *The crosswalk across the school parking lot entrance is faded and hard to see, as well as missing curb ramps. Drop-off traffic backs up at the entrance and blocks the crosswalk.*

Recommendation: Repaint as a high visibility crosswalk. Install two curb ramps with tactile warning pads for

improved ADA accessibility. Implementing agency: City.

Finding: *Drivers don't follow the Right Turn Only sign and try to turn left on Amador Ave when exiting the school.*

Recommendation: Add flex posts to the driveway entrance to encourage right-in/right-out only. Implementing agency: City.

3. **Finding:** *The pedestrian path from Sneath Ln to the back of the school is dark and deteriorated, and as such, is minimally used. (Note that students need parental permission to use the path, as it is on school grounds but unsupervised by staff.)*

Recommendation: Enhance the pedestrian path by adding lighting and installing a fence between the path and drainage ditch. Implementing agency: School.

4. **Finding:** *Amador Ave lacks streets lighting. Due to fog, weather, and varying sunrise/sunset times, pedestrians have a difficult time seeing traffic and being seen.*

Recommendation: Add pedestrian scale street lighting to Amador Ave. Implementing agency: City.

5. **Finding:** *Drivers are perceived to drive too quickly on Amador Ave.*

Recommendation: Add traffic calming elements to Amador Ave, such as speed feedback signs and visually narrowing the travel lanes by striping the edge of the parking lanes. Implementing agency: City.

6. **Finding:** *The intersections leading to the school lack crosswalks, or they are extremely worn and faded. These intersections include Amador Ave/Monterey Dr and Sneath Ln/Monterey Dr.*

Recommendation: Install high visibility crosswalks on all sides of these intersections. Implementing agency: City.

7. **Finding:** *The intersection of Sneath Ln/Skyline Blvd only has one crosswalk across the south leg of the intersection. In addition, the intersection corners lack curb ramps and sufficient space and pavement for multiple pedestrians to wait for their turn to cross the street comfortably.*

Recommendation: Implementing agency: City.

- a. Install a high visibility crosswalk on the southern leg of the intersection.
- b. Add concrete pavement to expand the pedestrian waiting area on both ends of the crosswalk. Both corners should contain ADA curb ramps each with tactile warning pads.
When building the concrete curb at each corner, reduce the corner turning radii as much as possible in partnership with Caltrans in order to increase space for pedestrians and slow turning cars.

8. **Recommendation:** All crosswalks (existing and new) should be painted in yellow within 600 ft of school grounds. Implementing agency: City.

Non-Infrastructure Findings and Recommendations

These recommendations can be completed by assorted responsible parties: PTO members, school staff, local organizations, or in partnership with government staff (city staff, police).

- 1. Finding:** *One resident blocks the back gate to the school (on Sneath Ave) with their trailer and cones.*
Recommendation: Work with the resident on an alternate parking arrangement.
- 2. Finding:** There is traffic congestion around the school entrance during arrival/dismissal.
Recommendation: Implement a crossing guard program and training, with a focus on the school entrance. Clearer direction will help families feel more comfortable that their student can access the school grounds safely.
- 3. Finding:** *Over 85% of survey respondents from Portola reported that they think walking/biking to school is important for their child's health, and over 70% would like to walk/bike to school more often.*
Recommendations:

 - a. Institute recurring encouragement events, such as Walk/Roll to School Days or Cocoa for Carpool. These events help to build a community around alternative transportation, and help families and students feel more comfortable walking and biking to school.
 - b. Prioritize parent outreach and engagement to improve compliance with existing regulations during arrival/dismissal, as well as promote alternative transportation modes. Efforts could also focus on creating Safe Routes to School champions or encouraging families to try walking or biking; especially while developing new habits in a changing environment due to the status of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 4. Finding:** *Coyotes have been seen in the school parking lot and along the back path leading to Sneath Ln. Many parents feel that it is unsafe for children to walk alone, especially on the back path.*
Recommendation: Encourage students and parents to walk in groups, creating a "walking school bus."
- 5. Finding:** *The gate by the staff parking lot is closed in morning, but opens in the afternoon for pick-up.*
Recommendation: Consider realigning the traffic pattern at arrival/dismissal to do a drive-through loop around the school to reduce car backup on Amador Ave.
- 6. Recommendation:** The school zone speed limit should to be dropped to 15 mph as allowed by the CVC and with the approval of the City Council. Street on which this applies: Amador Ave.

DRAFT

**Safe Routes to Schools Improvement Plan
Portola Elementary School**



Improvement Detail

- 1 Move high visibility crosswalk and RRFB to crest of hill. Add passive detection to the existing RRFB.
- 2 Install high visibility crosswalk. Install two curb ramps with tactile warning pads. Install flex posts to encourage Right in right out only.
- 3 Enhance the pedestrian path by adding lighting and installing a fence between the path and drainage ditch
- 4 Add pedestrian scale street lighting to Amador Ave.
- 5 Add traffic calming elements to Amador Ave, such as speed feedback signs and visually narrowing the travel lanes by striping the edge of the parking lanes.
- 6 Install high visibility crosswalks at Amador Ave/Monterey Dr and Sneath Ln/Monterey Dr.
- 7 Install 1 high visibility crosswalk on the south leg of the intersection. Add concrete pavement to 2 corners (connect to sidewalks) and add curb ramps with warning pads. Reduce corner turning radii as much as possible.



The above items are recommendations only and based on Safe Routes to Schools site assessment best practices. Feasibility determination, final design, accessibility, funding, and implementation of any recommended improvements is the responsibility of the appropriate governing agency.
 **Red curb and/or parking restriction signage should be provided between advance stop/yield markings and the crosswalk. Exact red curb distance should be determined in accordance with the CA-MUTCD and City policies/standards. Red curb not symbolized on map.
 This figure is intended only for reference, conceptual planning, and informational purposes. This figure should not be used to establish boundaries, property lines, location of objects, or to provide any other information (especially needed for final design, construction or any other purpose when engineered plans are required).