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MEMORANDUM

To: Chelsea Biklen and David Stillman, City of Cupertino

From: Lola Torney, Alta Planning + Design

Date: June 21, 2017

Re: Garden Gate Elementary School Walk Audit Recommendations

Introduction

The City of Cupertino conducted a walk audit for Garden Gate Elementary School with staff from Alta Planning + Design. The audit was held in the morning of May 23, 2017 to observe the morning arrival time at the school.

A walk audit is an assessment of travel behaviors for drivers, bicyclists, pedestrians (both parents and students), developed by observing a school pick-up or drop-off period on and around school grounds. Walk audits provide insight into the specific barriers to walking and biking at each school. The assessment team included Alta Planning + Design staff; City of Cupertino staff, and concerned parents. The audit began with a discussion of current challenge areas and the types of issues to focus on for the walk audit. The team then observed student and parent travel activities during the drop-off period, and reviewed the immediate school zone area for quality of sidewalks, curb ramps, signage, and other engineering elements and patterns of activity. After the audit period was over, audit participants returned to discuss and document their findings on a large scale school area map. Based on observations and input provided by school staff, audit participants, and others, the project team developed recommendations which are presented for Garden Gate Elementary School in a narrative and graphical format.

This memo provides programmatic and project recommendations for Garden Gate Elementary School. It includes both on-campus recommendations that can be implemented by the school district and off-campus improvements that can be implemented by the City. The map of recommended projects is attached to this memo.

Existing Conditions

Garden Gate Elementary School is located on Greenleaf Drive between Castine Avenue and Flora Vista Avenue. The drop-off area is located in the main parking lot off of Greenleaf Drive. Staff and visitors can park in this lot. A crossing guard is stationed at the intersection of Stelling Road and Greenleaf Drive.

Bicycle and pedestrian access is only available from Greenleaf Drive. On-campus bicycle parking is located on the southern side of the school.

Project Recommendations

1. School Drop-Off
 - Shift, extend, and raise pedestrian walkway through parking lot. This will require moving two ADA parking spaces and removing six parking spaces.
 - There is an existing walkway in the center of the north side of the parking lot causing drivers to wait for pedestrians to cross and creating more congestion at the driveway entrance. There is an informal cut through from the sidewalk to the south side of the parking lot, causing conflicts between pedestrians and drivers in the south side of the parking lot.
 - Shifting and extending the existing cut-through will shorten the crossing distance for pedestrians within the parking lot and reduce the number of families crossing the exit driveway.
 - Shifting walkway allows drivers to pull forward in the drop-off lane instead of waiting for pedestrians to cross before pulling forward. This will reduce congestion at the driveway entrance.
 - Raising walkway provides traffic calming and increases visibility for students crossing parking lot.
 - Install ADA-compliant curb ramps at either end of walkway.
2. Greenleaf Drive/School Frontage
 - Trim bushes along sidewalk.
 - Unlock school access gate during drop-off/pick-up.
 - This will reduce the number of families crossing the entrance driveway.
 - Consider removing parking on the north side of curve.
 - Long term: Obtain easement from school district and install detached sidewalk.
3. Flora Vista Avenue/Greenleaf Drive
 - Install yellow high-visibility crosswalk across Greenleaf Drive.
 - Install ADA-compliant curb ramp on southwest corner of intersection.
4. Stelling Road/Greenleaf Drive
 - Study pedestrian signal timing.
 - Lengthening the pedestrian crossing time may help accommodate the large numbers of pedestrians crossing Stelling Road.
5. Castine Avenue/Greenleaf Drive
 - Conduct crossing guard warrant analysis for southbound Castine Avenue.
 - A significant number of people walking cross Castine Avenue, which creates a backup on Greenleaf Drive.
6. Ann Arbor Avenue/Greenleaf Drive
 - Conduct crossing guard warrant analysis.
7. Ann Arbor Avenue
 - Install yellow high-visibility crosswalks across Grenola Drive and Hazelbrook Drive.
 - Trim landscaping.
 - Conduct yield sign warrant analysis on Hazelbrook Drive.
 - Long term: Close sidewalk gaps.

Program Recommendations

1. Expand parking lot crossing guard program to the south side of the parking lot.
 - o This will cover both ends of the crosswalk.
2. Work with the PTA to implement a valet program during drop-off periods.
 - o Encourage valet to motion to drivers to pull forward in the drop-off lane.