

SUMMER 2021

Lancaster Biking Assessment Community Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Training

COMMUNITY PEDESTRIAN & BICYCLE SAFETY TRAINING
PROGRAM

Creating Safer Streets for Walking and Biking



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Acknowledgments

A special thank you to the Planning Committee for inviting us back into their community and partnering with us to further assess biking infrastructure in Lancaster. We hope to continue to work with you to make Lancaster a safer place to walk and bike!

A warm thank you to Candice Vander Hyde and Vjones Fonbuena for their organizing and outreach efforts for this follow-up event. We would also like to acknowledge the Lakays Cycling Group who both represented the avid cycling community in Lancaster, as well as residents and parents who live and work in Lancaster. Their collective participation meaningfully informed and strengthened the workshop's outcomes.

We also want to acknowledge the Fernandefio Tataviam and Yuhaaviatam/Maarenga'yam (Serrano) peoples as the traditional land caretakers of the area surrounding the City of Lancaster.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

2 Acknowledgments

2 Planning Committee

4 Executive Summary

4 Biking Assessment

5 ROUTE 1: Eastside Route

8 ROUTE 2: Downtown Route

10 ROUTE 3: American Heroes Park

13 Conclusion

Executive Summary

The Community Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Training (CPBST) is a statewide project of California Walks (Cal Walks) and the University of California at Berkeley Safe Transportation Research and Education Center (SafeTREC). The CPBST engages residents and safety advocates to develop a [community-driven action plan](#) to improve walking and biking safety in their communities. In 2019, the project team worked with the City of Lancaster on a CPBST workshop focused on walking accessibility in the downtown area. Since then, we have stayed in communication with the city and partnered to conduct a biking assessment for a broader scope of geographical areas in Lancaster.

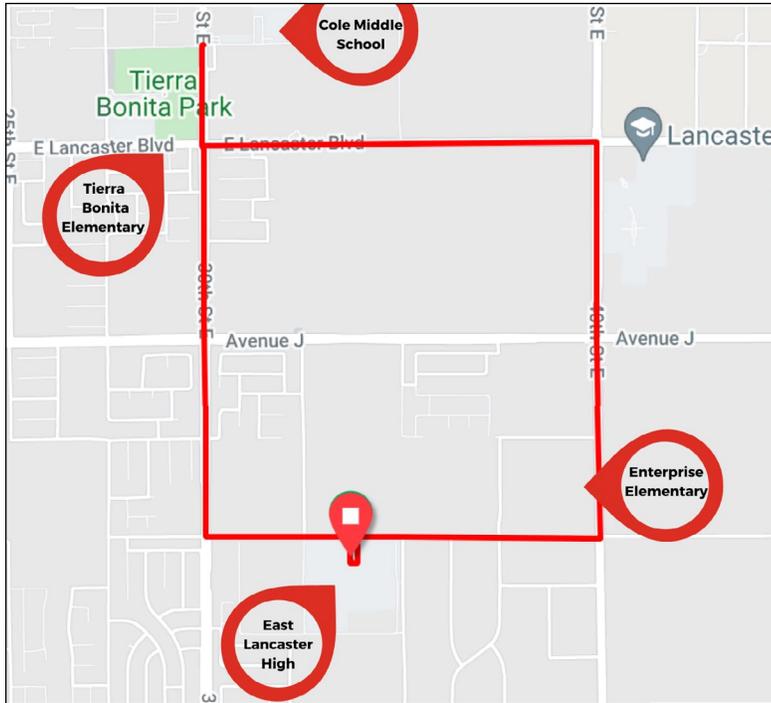
The follow-up biking assessment event took place on May 15, 2021, and convened twenty-six people from the Lakays Cycling Group, Squeaky Wheel Bikes, and the City of Lancaster. The biking assessment goals were to:

1. Identify local biking safety concerns and ideas for potential solutions from residents and bicyclists who ride in Lancaster; and
2. Encourage more biking in the community by developing more fun, family-friendly events in Lancaster.

Biking Assessment

During the biking assessment, participants biked along three key routes frequently used by bicyclists in the community. Participants were asked to identify community assets, assess walking and biking infrastructure conditions, and share how road users engage with the built environment. The next few pages provide a brief summary of the walking and biking assessment.

ROUTE 1: Eastside Route

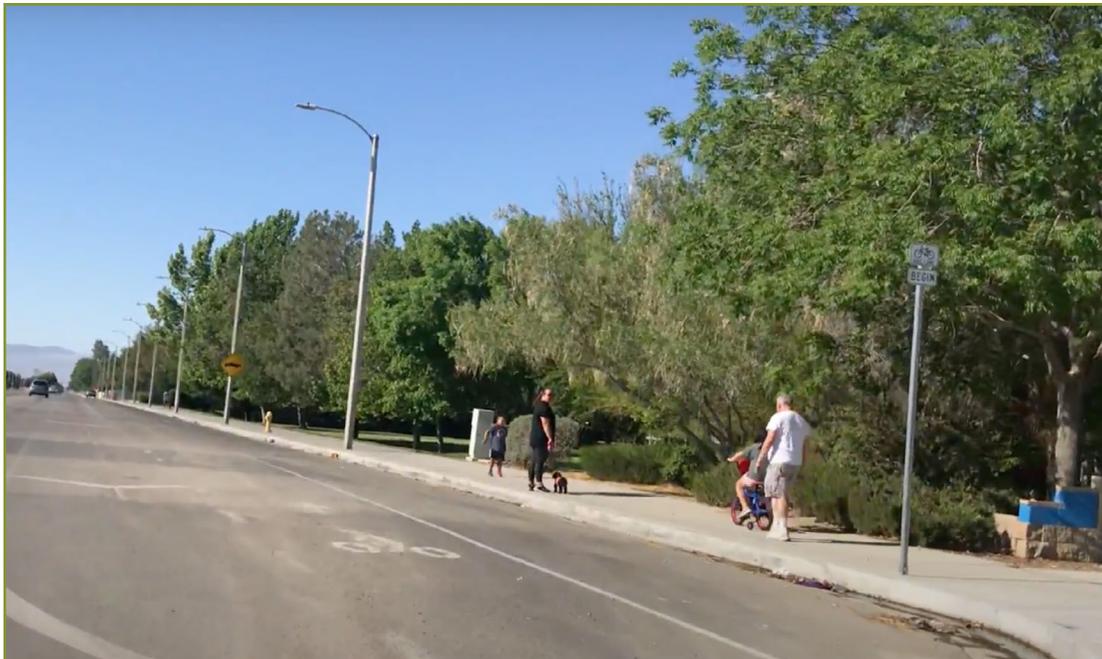


Focus:

East Lancaster's residential density is increasing, as evidenced by the multiple new schools and housing tracks under construction in the area. This route encompasses Eastside High School, Enterprise Elementary School, Lancaster Baptist School, Tierra Bonita Elementary School, and Cole Middle School. We assessed the existing bike infrastructure, specifically student and residential access to recreation and schools.

Strengths:

- Lancaster Boulevard connects East Lancaster to downtown Lancaster via a marked Class II bike lane that starts at East Lancaster Boulevard/30th Street East and ends at East Lancaster Boulevard/Division Street.
- There is a high-visibility buffered bike lane and posted school zone speed limit of 25 miles per hour when children are present sign on Avenue J 8, in front of Eastside High School. These street enhancements slow driver traffic increasing student and pedestrian visibility and safety.



Southbound view of 30th Street East Class II bike lanes in front of Tierra Bonita Park.

Concerns:

- Drivers appear to travel above the posted speed limit of 40 and 50 miles per hour along 40th Street East and 30th Street East, respectively. Participants shared that they feel vulnerable on 40th Street East because of the high traffic speed, expressing fear around sharing the road with hostile drivers. Participants stated that the shoulder on 30th Street East makes them feel relieved to not compete for space. Furthermore, the lack of bike culture creates anxiety and fear for people who bike or would like to start biking in East Lancaster.
- East Lancaster lacks connected infrastructure participants are concerned about the lack of bike infrastructure on 40th Street East, where the posted speed limit is 50 miles per hour. Although the City of Lancaster has some Class II bike lanes on Lancaster Boulevard and 30th Street East, participants shared that not many residents use them because these bike lanes end abruptly. Participants further shared that they would not allow their children to ride their bikes on these streets because of the lack of protected bike lanes.
- Participants expressed concerns about road debris and overgrown vegetation. During this bike assessment, road debris punctured the route facilitator's bike tire at the 30th Street East/Avenue J intersection. These road conditions are a deterrent because they create the vulnerable situation of being stranded on the road.
- The lack of sidewalks in East Lancaster inhibits students' and residents' access to schools and recreation. The sidewalk on Avenue J 8 ends east of Eastside High School at 35th Street East. There is a minimal shoulder and no sidewalk on East Lancaster Boulevard west of 40th Street East. Not having sidewalks creates hazards for students and families who need to or want to walk to school by forcing pedestrians to share the high-speed roads with vehicles.



A bike assessment participant rides north on 40th Street East, where there is no dedicated bike lane nor shoulder.



East Avenue J 8 near 35th Street lacks sidewalks. This forces pedestrians to walk on the road with vehicles.

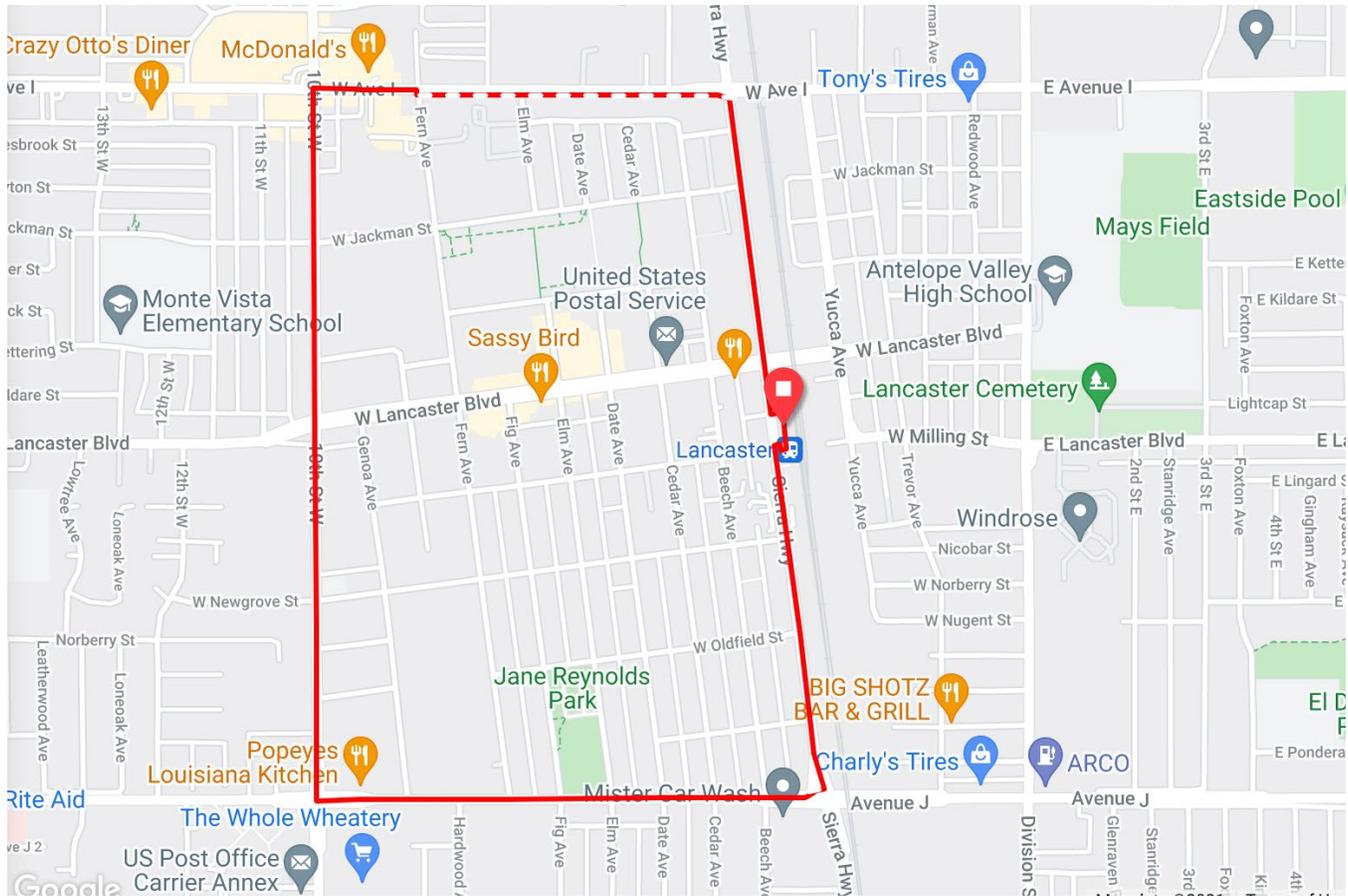


A family walking and riding bikes on the Tierra Bonita Park sidewalk next to the 30th Street East bike lane.

Opportunities:

- Build a Lancaster Bike network by connecting the existing bike lanes in East Lancaster to transit, businesses, residential, schools, and parks, extending the East Lancaster Boulevard bike lanes that currently end at 30th Street East to 40th Street East, and extending the 30th Street East bike line that currently ends on East Lancaster Boulevard south past Avenue J 8.
- Enhance the existing bike lanes on East Lancaster Boulevard and 30th Street East with high-visibility paint and bollards to clearly delineate road space for bicyclists and improve the perceived safety on the roadway. Build Class IV parking-protected bike lanes around schools and parks to provide a greater sense of safety by creating more separation between bicyclists and vehicles. While participants would not let their children ride to school along the routes in their current condition, a protected bike lane would make them feel safer.
- Participants expressed a need for street cleaning and maintenance because the wind brings a lot of debris and natural fibers, commonly known as goat heads, which litter the neighborhood streets. These natural fibers can puncture bike tires, which makes it more difficult for people to ride bikes for transportation or recreation.
- Create wider shoulders on rural streets to serve as a biking and walking path. Participants shared that a shoulder would make them feel more comfortable because they would no longer need to compete for space with vehicles.

ROUTE 2: Downtown Route



Focus:

This route assessed key corridors connected to the Lancaster Metrolink Station in order to promote all modes of active transportation within the City. Residents and visitors use the Metrolink Station that is connected to the rest of LA County and neighboring counties. West Avenue J and 10th Street West are major corridors that connect residents and visitors to shops, schools, parks, and hospitals.

Strengths:

- Participants felt comfortable and protected riding on the buffered bike lanes on 10th Street West. They especially appreciated the bollards, which they felt added a layer of protection from drivers.



Lakay cyclists riding in the buffered bike lanes on 10th Street West.



The Sierra Highway bike lane merges with the right driving lane leading up to Avenue J.

Concerns:

- Participants felt vulnerable riding south on the Sierra Highway bike lanes because they were riding next to speeding drivers on the left and parked cars on the right. The road pavement on the Sierra Highway bike lanes was cracked, and there was a lot of metal debris which forced cyclists to weave in and out of the bike lanes. The unreliable condition of the bike lane led to unpredictable rider behavior, which increases the potential for crashes.
- Road pavement along Avenue J was cracked and posed tripping hazards for cyclists. Participants were concerned about how the local community accessed Jane Reynolds Park, especially youth who ride bicycles or skate to the skate park.
- After riding on the buffered bike lanes along 10th Street West, participants were disappointed they didn't extend to east-west routes, like Avenue I. The road pavement along Avenue I was cracked and posed tripping hazards for the cyclists.

Opportunities:

- Participants shared that Lancaster is a destination for recreational bicyclists who live outside of the community. This may be due to the level grade streets throughout the area and light car traffic on roads outside of the city center. To improve connectivity, participants recommend a sidepath for all active transportation users along Sierra Highway, parallel to the railroad tracks. Sierra Highway is a major corridor connecting the city of Lancaster to the nearest city of Palmdale.



A young skateboarder at the Jane Reynolds Skate Park, facing Avenue J.

ROUTE 3: American Heroes Park Route



Focus:

Pedestrians and bicyclists use Lancaster Boulevard to connect to the Metrolink Station and downtown Lancaster. Drivers, pedestrians, and bicyclists travel on Avenue J, a main east-west commercial corridor, to get to work or local businesses. 10th Street is a main north-south corridor, connecting Lancaster to the neighboring city of Palmdale. The Planning Committee would like to encourage students to walk or bike to Sierra Elementary School on Hardwood Avenue and Heaton Avenue.

Strengths:

- A painted bike lane with adequate signage along Lancaster Boulevard makes bicyclists feel visible to all road users and not in competition with drivers on the road.
- A continental crosswalk with a rapid flashing hybrid beacon, bulb-outs, and pedestrian island at the Lancaster Boulevard/12th Street intersection reduces drivers' speed and increases pedestrian visibility.
- A continental crosswalk, with a rapid flashing hybrid beacon, bulb-outs, and pedestrian island at the 15th Street/Norberry Street and 15th Street/Pillsbury Street intersections, reduces drivers' speed and increases pedestrian visibility.

Concerns:

- Traveling along West Lancaster Boulevard, the bike lane abruptly ends as a bulb-out begins approaching the roundabout on the 15th Street/Lancaster Boulevard intersection. This creates a conflict between bicyclists and drivers, forcing bicyclists to wait in the shoulder for a safe opportunity to merge into the travel lane or ride on the sidewalk, where pedestrians walk. There is a lack of signage that bicyclists riding in the bike lane now need to merge into the travel lane to go through the roundabout.
- Bicyclists are forced to merge from a designated bike lane on 15th Street to a 40 miles per hour posted speed limit travel lane with drivers on Avenue J. This causes a point of conflict between bicyclists and drivers.
- High driver speeds along with Avenue J from 15th Street to Hardwood Avenue, and along 10th Street from Avenue J 12 to Avenue J 8, creates near misses for bicyclists and exposes them to road rage while sharing the road.
- A two-way stop at the Hardwood Avenue/Avenue J 4 intersection decreases bicyclists' visibility from oncoming traffic when traveling along Hardwood Avenue. Bicyclists traveling along Hardwood Avenue are blocked from incoming driver's visibility by parked cars along Avenue J 4, especially in front of Park View Little League.
- A two-way stop at the Heaton Avenue/Avenue J 4 intersection and the Heaton Avenue/Avenue J-6 intersection decreases bicyclists' visibility from oncoming traffic when traveling along Heaton Avenue.
- Bicyclists traveling along Heaton Avenue are blocked from incoming driver's visibility by parked cars along Avenue J-6.
- Gaps in the bike lane network along 10th Street require bicyclists to move in and out of the travel lane creating near misses with drivers.



Unsafe roadway conditions, such as cracked, crumbling uneven pavement along Hardwood Avenue, Avenue J 4, Heaton Avenue, Avenue J 8, and Avenue J contribute to tire damage, falls, and near misses.

Opportunities:

- Install a bike box, and bike pavement sensors on the northeast left turning lane at the Jackman Street/10th Street intersection.
- Install yield to bicyclist signage and share the road signage leading up to the Lancaster Boulevard/15th Street roundabout along Lancaster Boulevard.
- Install a buffered bike lane with high-visibility bollards along with Avenue J, Hardwood Avenue, and Heaton Avenue.



Assessment participants preparing to turn left onto Avenue J from 15th Street

- Install a stop sign on the east and west side of the Hardwood Avenue/Avenue J-4, the Heaton Avenue/Avenue J-4, and the Heaton Avenue/Avenue J-6 intersections.
- Extend the buffered bike lane on 10th Street to Avenue J 4 and Avenue J 12, creating a designated space for students to ride to Sierra Elementary School.



Assessment participants stopped at the 15th Street/Avenue J intersection

Conclusion

This biking assessment demonstrates the City of Lancaster's continued commitment to creating a safe and comfortable biking community. The city partnered with local cycling groups, Lakays, and Squeaky Wheel bikes shop, to gather user feedback and determine what facilities would encourage them and their families to bike for transportation, not just recreationally. As the City of Lancaster continues to adapt to bicyclists' needs, the Project Team remains committed to supporting their walking and biking efforts past this follow-up event.

For a more detailed discussion of the past Community Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Trainings this workshop references, please download the full reports on [SafeTREC's](#) or [Cal Walks'](#) websites. The 2019 Lancaster CPBST is available [here](#).



The Lakays Cycling Group

Thank you for your interest in the Community Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Program. For more information, please visit:

<https://safetrec.berkeley.edu/programs/cpbst> or <https://www.calwalks.org/cpbst>

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