

# COMMUNITY PEDESTRIAN SAFETY TRAINING

## Long Beach June 5<sup>th</sup>, 2010

### *Long Beach*

The City of Long Beach is located in Los Angeles County, Southern California. Long Beach is currently home to 462,604 persons (the seventh largest city in California)<sup>i</sup>, is 50 square miles<sup>ii</sup> and has an average population density of 9,252 persons per square mile. Long Beach is situated on the coast and is known for its beautiful coastline and the retired Queen Mary ship. Long Beach has approximately 5 million visitors each year and is home to the busiest port on the West coast.<sup>iii</sup> Long Beach has a vibrant bicycle community and provides several transportation options for residents and visitors (including LA Metro's Blue and Green Line). Several major highways run through and around Long Beach including Highways 710, 405, 605, 110, 105, and 1. There are many places within Long Beach where the highways are at ground level and automobiles on these highways frequently interact with pedestrians.

From 2003 to 2007 Long Beach has had 196 pedestrian-auto collisions resulting in 151 injuries and 45 fatalities.<sup>iv</sup> Community members in Long Beach are concerned with older adult and youth pedestrian safety.

### *Process & Instigating factor*

The City of Long Beach was selected as a training site for a variety of factors. Namely, data from the California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) has ranked the City of Long Beach as number 4 for total fatalities and injuries involving pedestrians and number 3 for both persons 1-14 years of age and 65+ years of age (compared to cities of similar size).<sup>v</sup>

In addition to the OTS ranking, the City of Long Beach has shown continued commitment to keeping resident and visiting pedestrians safe. Professionals in Long Beach requested that they host a workshop to spark engagement in pedestrian safety to coincide with many of the existing transportation and bicycle work that is being done in Long Beach.

### *Existing Conditions (data)*

Pedestrian collision data analyzed by age categories identifies populations that may be at greater risk of pedestrian collision. From years 2003-2007, fatality rates are the highest for adults aged 85+ (see Figure 1). Severe injury rates for 2003-2007 were highest those aged 5-9, followed by an oscillating pattern for other age groups (see Figure 2). This data shows that while pedestrian safety is a concern for all age groups, older adults and school-aged children are at the highest risk for fatality and injury in Long Beach.

Figure 1

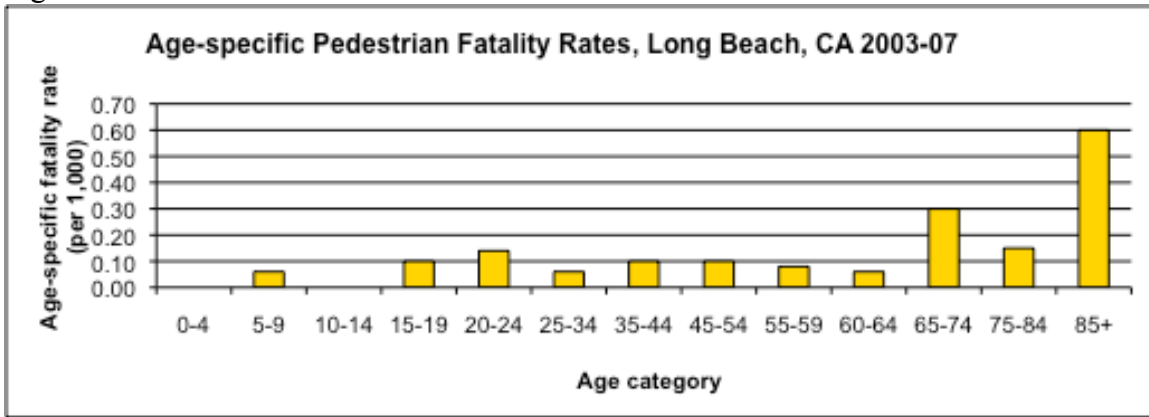
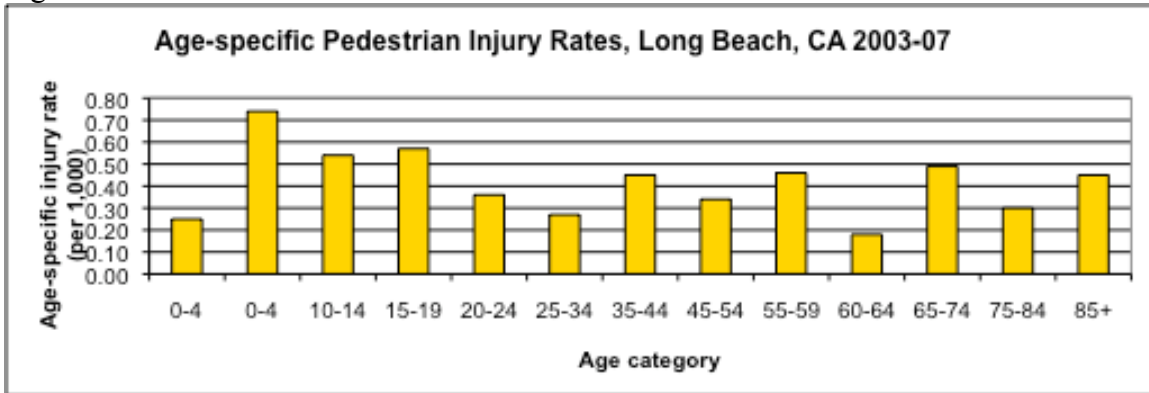


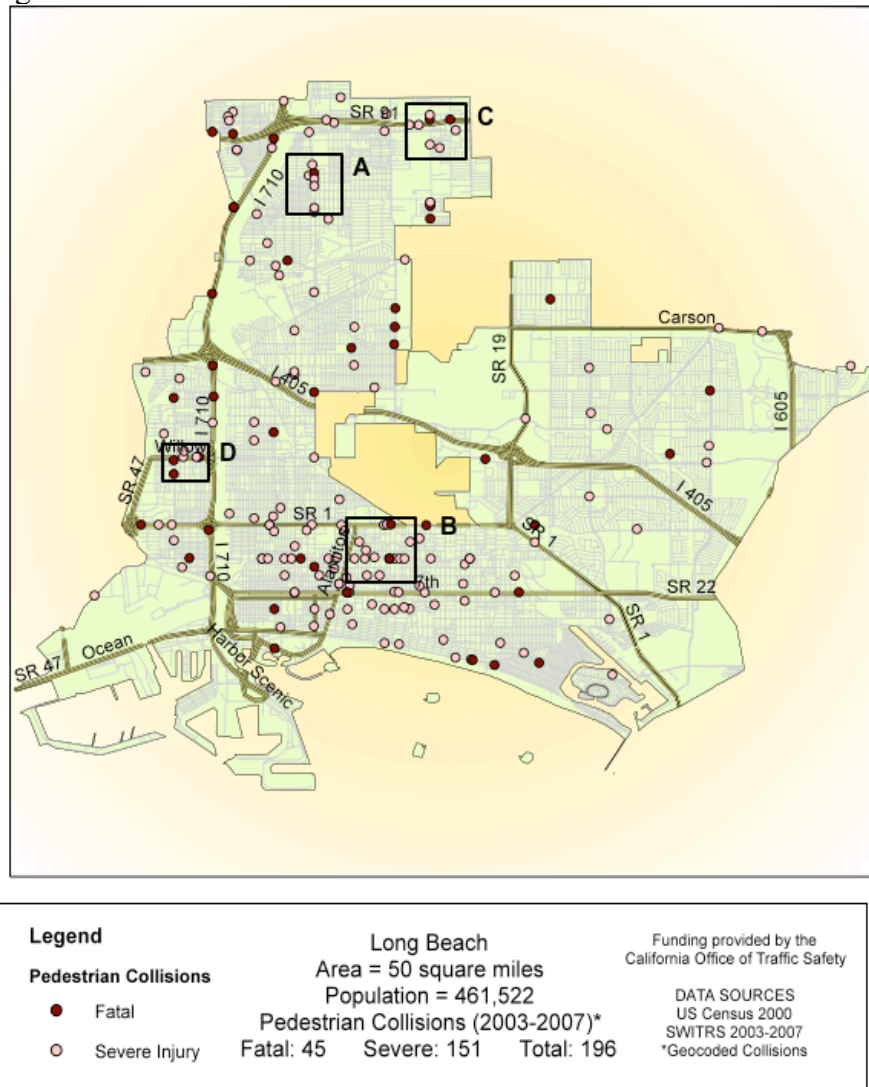
Figure 2



Areas that have been highlighted as of particular concern to pedestrians in Long Beach from the geocoded analysis include: (see map below in Figure 3)

- A) Atlantic Ave. and E 61<sup>st</sup> St.
- B) Cherry Ave and E Anaheim St.
- C) N Paramount Blvd. and Artesia Fwy.
- D) Santa Fe Ave. and W Willow St.

Figure 3



### ***Community Involvement***

Persons who were actively involved in making the Long Beach training a success include:

- Margaret Madden, Neighborhood Improvement officer for City of Long Beach PD, Neighborhood Resource Center
- Scottie Hinkey, Workshop Coordinator, Neighborhood Resource Center
- Scott Marcoux and Sean Parilla, Long Beach Police Department
- Dave Roseman, Traffic Engineer City of Long Beach
- Mark Christoffels, Deputy Director of Public Works City of Long Beach

### ***Media & Outreach***

The primary host of this workshop was the Neighborhood Resource Center. They have extensive experience in conducting community-based workshops and outreaching to local residents. Staff from the Neighborhood Resource Center distributed the flyer in their newsletter, email lists of over 25,000 persons including neighborhood associations, city

professionals, school principals and leaders, etc.

The flyer received approval from the Long Beach Unified School District Public Information Officer, and was then distributed to the Elementary schools. Specific outreach was conducted to the schools nearby (with a focus on Stevenson Elementary) with a letter inviting parents, teachers and staff to attend.

### ***Training Day***

The Long Beach Community Pedestrian Safety Training took place on the morning of Saturday June 5th (10 am - 2 pm). The training was held in at the Neighborhood Resource Center located at 425 Atlantic Ave. Participants began arriving about 9:45 am, and the workshop commenced at 10:10 am. The workshop was conducted in English, and approximately 15 persons were in attendance. The majority of participants considered themselves older pedestrians. The participants represented both community residents and city/county professionals, including the Long Beach Police Department and City Engineering.

Sean Parilla, Long Beach Police Department and Dave Roseman, Traffic Engineer City of Long Beach were active participants in the workshop and gave specific information on current activities in Long Beach while simultaneously answering numerous questions from participants.

The workshop walkability assessment started at the Neighborhood Resource Center and went along E 4<sup>th</sup> St., down Lime Ave. around Stevenson Elementary and back down Atlantic Ave. to the Neighborhood Resource Center. During the walk route, residents spoke to their personal experience in the neighborhood and identified pervasive areas of concern. Representatives from the Police Department and City Engineering spoke to recent activities including the installation of a traffic light at E 4<sup>th</sup> St. and Lime Ave. partially in response to advocacy efforts from parents at Stevenson Elementary.

### ***Identified priorities\****

After the walking route, participants formed two groups to discuss areas of concern and priorities for next steps. Both of the groups identified concerns that they had as well as next steps and ways for continued involvement. After the small group work, participants came together and identified a master list of priorities and next steps. These priorities and next steps include:

- Organize neighborhood clean up days (trash, graffiti, crime, lights, etc.) in partnership with the local conservation corps.
- Encourage the city to update and maintain the existing and needed curb ramps throughout the city.
- Education aimed at drivers about pedestrian safety and rules of the road.
- Education aimed at bicyclists and skateboards regarding the rules of the sidewalk and safety for pedestrians.

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\* For full list of identified priorities see final report.

- Call the Traffic Engineering Department if you would like an evaluation or study conducted at a specific intersection. This is useful especially around school zones where it is suspected that traffic calming may improve pedestrian safety.
- Involve parents in pedestrian safety and education in school zones. This can include involving parents as crosswalk monitors, designated lanes for safe drop off, and school authorities educating parents and PTA on safety.

### ***Evaluation***

Results from the evaluation of the Long Beach Community Pedestrian Safety Training were overwhelmingly positive. A total of 6 evaluations were collected and tabulated.

#### *General & knowledge/skills gained*

All (100 percent) of the of respondents stated that the training workshop met their expectations and were satisfied with the quality of the training. When asked about the most valuable learning of the day respondents identified specific learning's such as "Engaging 1) police enforcement, 2) class in prepared manners. To know lights, vs. stop signs @ corners", "How to ask for help. Who to ask for help", "Safety in crossing intersections", and the "walk thru neighborhood was excellent to apply examples".

The attendees at this workshop were both community residents, with several being older and disabled adults, and local professionals with a strong personal interest in pedestrian safety. All of the participants reported that they acquired new knowledge about pedestrian safety best practices and that the walkability assessment was useful in applying the knowledge gained at the workshop. The majority reported having a new understanding about the rules of the road for pedestrians (83 percent), and that their behavior as a pedestrian is likely to change after the training (83 percent).

100 percent of participants reported that they are now more familiar with the community professionals to contact regarding further work on pedestrian safety, the training provided participants with new skills to promote pedestrian safety, and that the pedestrian priorities reflect the needs of the community, and they are committed to continuing to promote safe walking and pedestrian safety in their community. 80 percent of the respondents also stated that they have an increase in confidence to work with other community members on pedestrian safety priorities.

#### *Logistics*

All (100 percent) the attendees felt that there was an adequate length of time for the training and all of the participants felt that the location was good for the training.

#### *Presenters*

Participants felt unanimously (100 percent) that the presenters were knowledgeable, there was adequate time provided for discussion, and the training was tailored to meet the needs of the community.

#### ***Complementary efforts***

Neighborhood Resource Center

- The Neighborhood Resource Center has ongoing workshops and leadership training programs for community residents interested in improving the safety of their community.

[http://www.longbeach.gov/cd/neighborhood\\_services/resource\\_center/](http://www.longbeach.gov/cd/neighborhood_services/resource_center/)

#### School Valet Programs at Long Beach Unified School District

- Many of the Elementary Schools in Long Beach have existing Valet programs to guide and control drop-off and pick-up congestion at school locations. Those interested can contact Thomas Hickman, School Safety Chief at LBUSD (562) 997-8446 or [http://www.lbschools.net/Main\\_Offices/School\\_Safety/](http://www.lbschools.net/Main_Offices/School_Safety/)

#### Long Beach Health and Human Services

- The Long Beach Public Health Department is committed to maintaining the safety of the entire Long Beach population, including pedestrian safety. In May of 2010 they conducted a workshop on walkability assessments and these efforts can be encouraged and become ongoing partners for the Neighborhood Resource Center members. <http://www.longbeach.gov/health/>

#### Building Healthy Communities in Long Beach

- The California Endowment has chosen Central Long Beach as a community for the Building Healthy Communities program. The Long Beach community is working to improve its air quality and healthy transportation options are a component of this work.

<http://www.calendow.org/healthycommunities/LongBeachDescrip.htm>

#### Asian Pacific Islander Older Adult Task Force

- The mission of the Asian & Pacific Islander Older Adults Task Force (APIOATF) is to promote quality of life issues for Asian and Pacific Islander older adults in Los Angeles County. <http://www.apioatf.org/>

#### Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at California State University Long Beach

- Provides courses and lifelong learning for persons 50 years of age and older. Courses are volunteer run and can be developed to include issues of pedestrian, driving and traffic safety. <http://www.csulb.edu/colleges/chhs/centers/olli/>

Stevenson School. They have been active with traffic safety. They have a parent leadership program. They also have a parent group that does a walking school bus.

#### ***Lessons Learned***

- While this was a small group, it is important for our group and the professionals involved to encourage those who are present, as they are concerned citizens desiring a safer community. The group present were all self-identified pedestrians and interested in how to get more involved in pedestrian safety. This workshop

provided those present the opportunity to meet one another and local professionals to assist them in their priorities.

- As always, outreach is a significant component to a successful workshop. The Neighborhood Resource Center did a wonderful job on conducting outreach, but we all know that working together as collaborative efforts can have a greater return.

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<sup>i</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, 2009 Population Estimates, <http://factfinder.census.gov>

<sup>ii</sup> City of Long Beach webpage: <http://www.longbeach.gov/about/facts.asp>

<sup>iii</sup> City of Long Beach webpage: <http://www.longbeach.gov/about/facts.asp>

<sup>iv</sup> SWITRS, 2003-2007

<sup>v</sup> California Office of Traffic Safety Rankings. [www.ots.ca.gov](http://www.ots.ca.gov)