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Berkeley SafeTREC
SAFE TRANSPORTATION RESEARCH AND EDUCATION CENTER

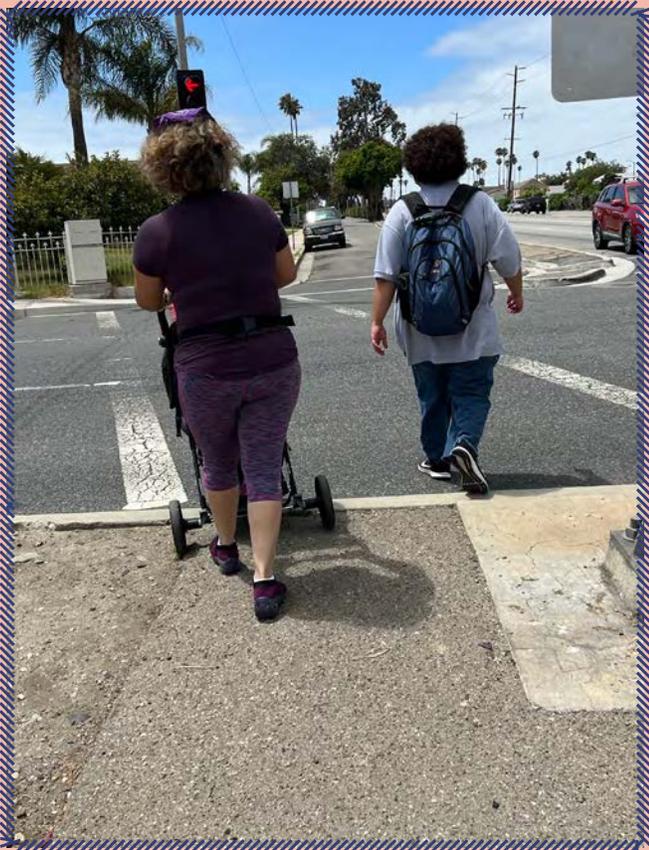


Comunidades Activas y Seguras (Safe and Active Communities), Oxnard Executive Summary & Recommendations Report



Comunidades Activas y Seguras
Creating streets that are walkable and bikeable

Funded by a grant from
the California Office of Traffic Safety, through the National Highway Traffic Safety
Administration



Oxnard, CA

Acknowledgments

Thank you to the Planning Committee for inviting us into their community and partnering with us to make Oxnard a safer place to walk and bike. In particular, their contributions prompted meaningfully informed discussions and strengthened the workshop's outcomes. We also want to acknowledge the Chumash & Micqanaqa'n peoples as the traditional land caretakers of Oxnard.

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Introduction

Comunidades Activas y Seguras (Active and Safe Communities) is a statewide program of California Walks (Cal Walks) and the University of California at Berkeley's Safe Transportation Research and Education Center (SafeTREC). This program caters to the needs of monolingual Spanish speakers by providing a culturally sensitive and relevant curriculum that aims to improve walking and biking safety in communities in California.

The training for Oxnard was collaboratively planned and facilitated by community residents, the Planning Committee, Cal Walks, and SafeTREC to:

1. Improve walking and biking safety along West Hemlock Street where a fatal crash occurred;
2. Increase community engagement around pedestrian and biking safety through storytelling; and
3. Humanize crash data to raise awareness of community concerns around pedestrian and bicycle safety

The virtual training was held on August 16, 2022, and consisted of a:

- A visioning activity where participants imagine an ideal street in their community by drawing or building it using small household items;
- Virtual walking and biking assessment of the community to identify pedestrian and bicycle safety concerns and road user behavior patterns; and
- Radionovela activity where participants use the power of storytelling to create a podcast episode that can be used for continued walking and biking safety advocacy.



Background and Pedestrian and Bicycle Crash Data

The California Office of Traffic Safety Crash Rankings show that, in 2019, the City of Oxnard ranked 4 out of 59 cities of similar population size for people killed or injured in a traffic crash (with a ranking of “1” indicating the worst). It ranked “19” for pedestrian crashes and “19” for bicycle crashes. Oxnard also ranked 1 out of 59 for alcohol-related crashes and 2 out of 59 for speed-related crashes, illustrating opportunities to engage community members on safe driving and pedestrian and bicycling safety.

From [Esri Community Analyst](#), in 2021, within the City of Oxnard, 28 percent of households included at least one or more residents with a disability and 8 percent of households did not own a vehicle. The majority of the community, 62 percent, were within the ages of 18 and 65, and 11 percent of the community lived below the poverty level. Very few community residents walked, biked or took public transit to work (2.3 percent).

The following data is based on police-reported pedestrian and bicycle crashes resulting in injuries to pedestrians and bicyclists in the City of Oxnard. Data reported in this section are taken from the Statewide Integrated Traffic Records System (SWITRS) accessed via the Transportation Injury Mapping System (TIMS) in May 2022. Crash data from 2020 is considered provisional as of May 2022.

In the years 2016 to 2020, there were 430 pedestrian crashes resulting in 455 pedestrians injured, including 59 fatal or serious injuries. Pedestrian crashes remained steadily high from 2016 to 2019, and then declined in 2020. Pedestrian crashes were concentrated on Saviers Road (36) and Oxnard Boulevard (37). The most commonly cited violation in pedestrian crashes was drivers not yielding the right of way to pedestrians in a marked or unmarked crosswalk followed by pedestrians failure to yield the right of way to vehicles when not within a marked or unmarked crosswalk at an intersection, comprising 35 percent and 23 percent of pedestrian crashes violations, respectively.

In the years 2016 to 2020, there were 325 bicycle crashes resulting in 327 bicyclists injured, including three fatalities and 17 serious injuries. In 2017, the number of bicycle crashes peaked before it followed a descending trajectory through 2020. Similarly to pedestrian crashes, bicycle crashes were concentrated on Saviers Road (31). They were also concentrated on Rose Avenue (27).

Figure 1: Pedestrian Injury Crashes

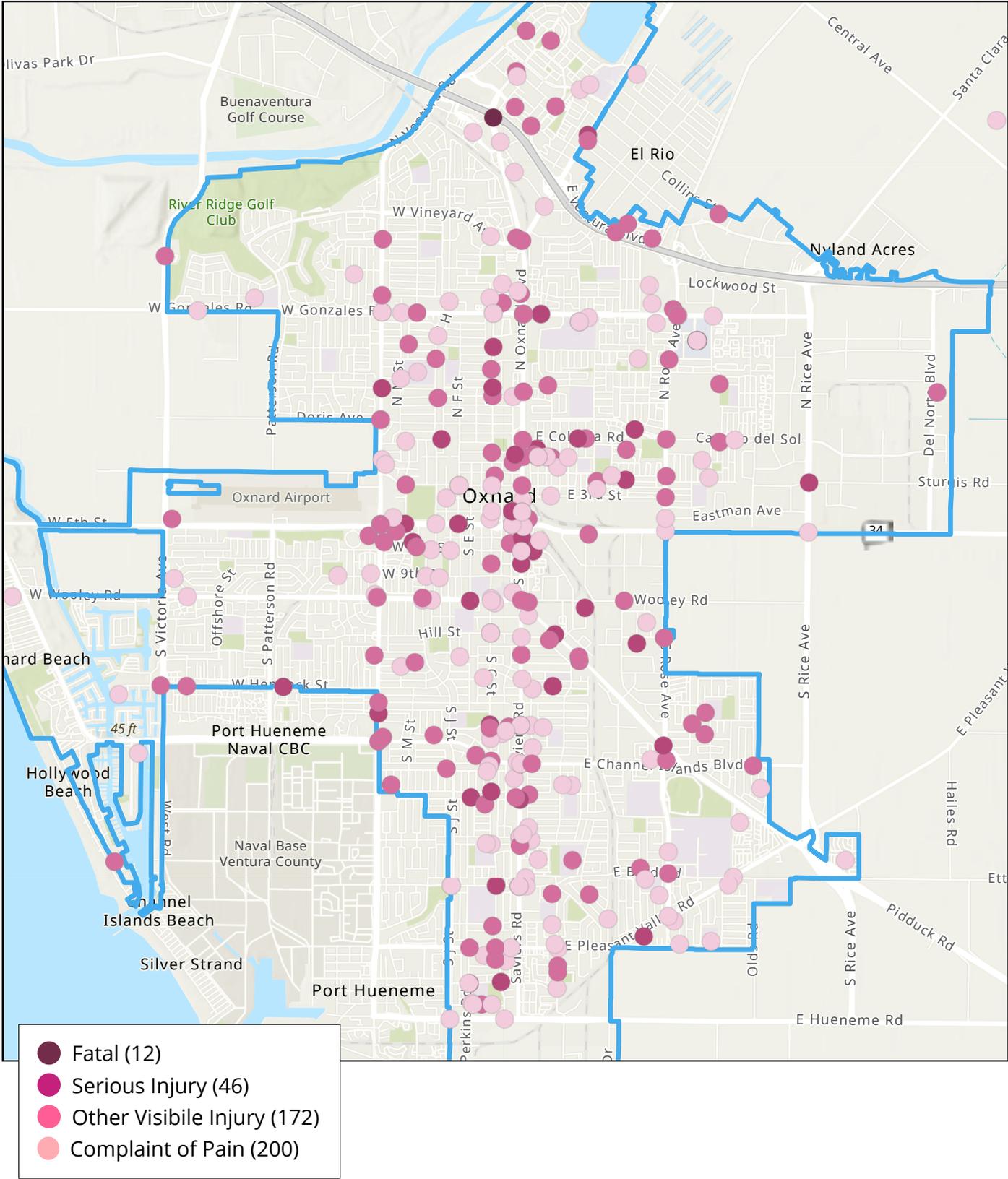
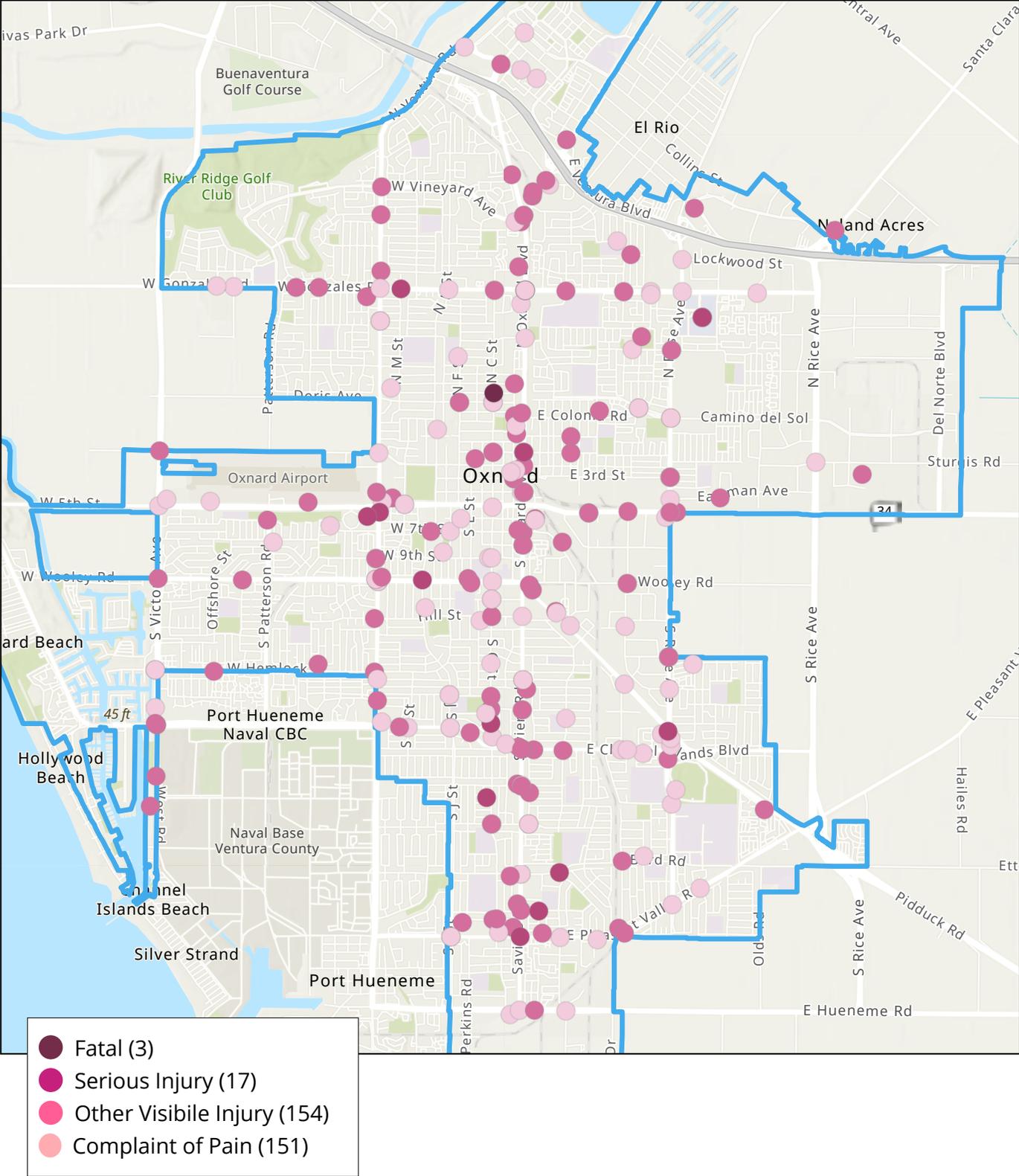


Figure 2: Bicycle Injury Crashes

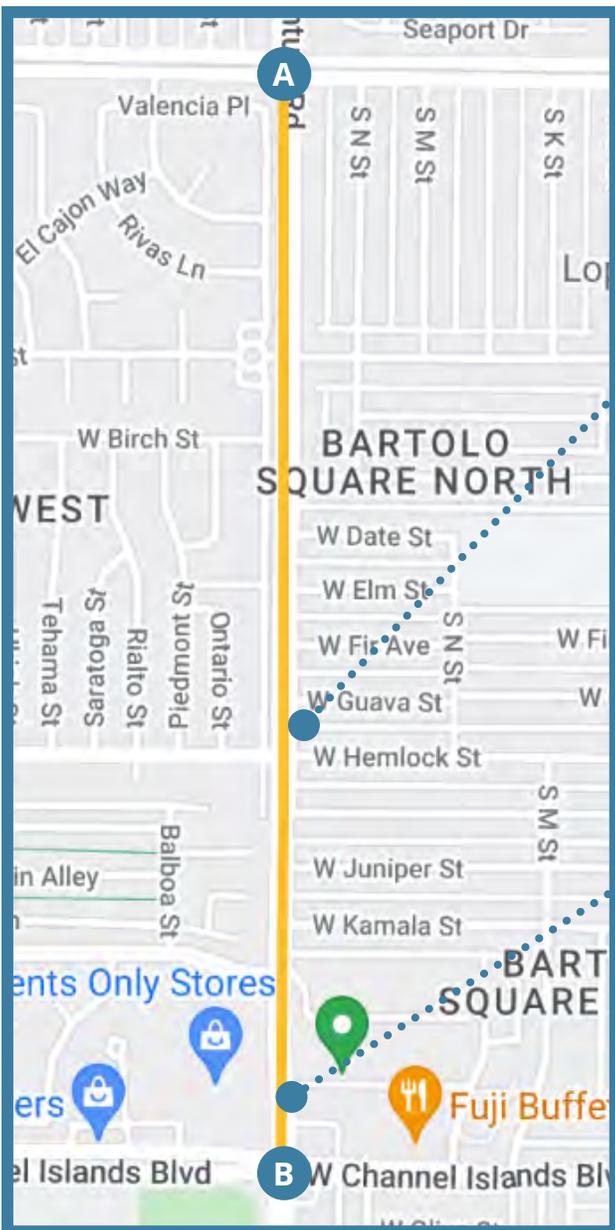


 **Walking & Biking Assessment**

During the workshop, participants took part in a virtual walking and biking safety assessment along two major corridors frequented by pedestrians. Participants were asked to identify community assets, assess infrastructure conditions, and share how road users engage with the built environment. The following is a summary of the walking and biking assessment focused on South Ventura Road between West Wooley Road and West Hemlock Street and West Hemlock Street between South Ventura Road and South J Street.

South Ventura Road Assets

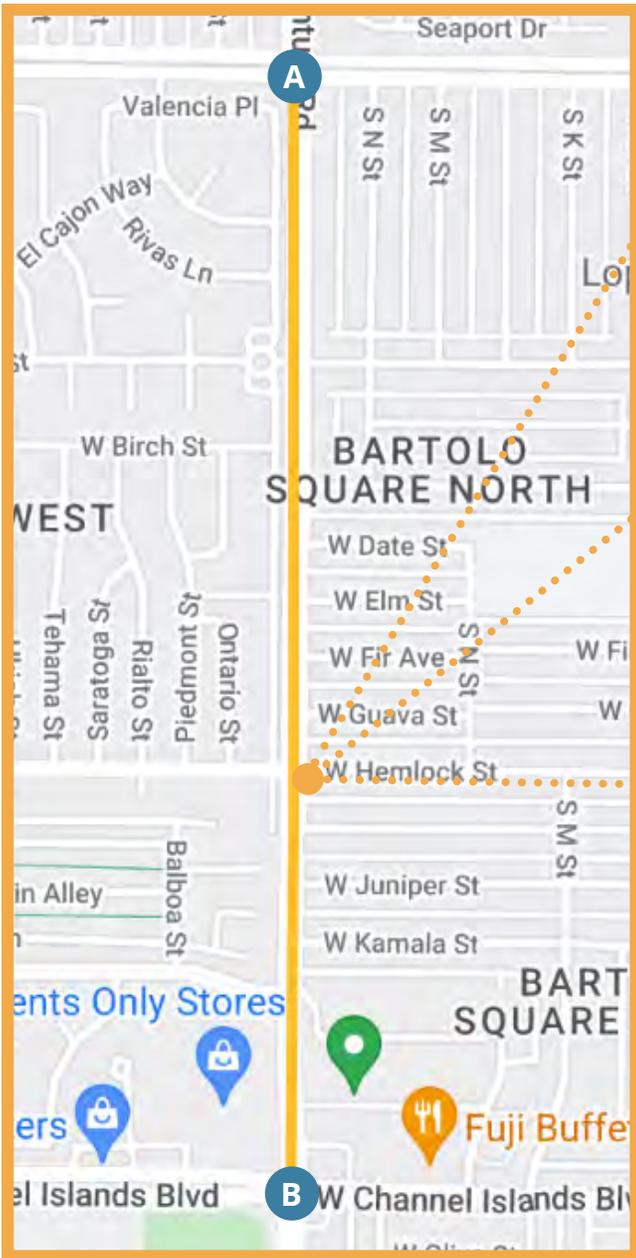
Community members highlighted the following assets along South Ventura Road:



1. South Ventura Service Road runs parallel to South Ventura Road. It is mostly lined by trees and is buffered from the higher-speed vehicle traffic on Ventura Road. The service road looks continuous between West Wooley Road and West Hemlock Street. Roads like this allow pedestrians and bicyclists to use alternative routes to travel around the community.

2. South Ventura Road is a major artery that connects north and south Oxnard, and has many points of interest including shopping centers, museums, and eateries. This road is a connector from residential areas to resources.

South Ventura Road Concerns



1. Crosswalks along South Ventura Road between West Wooley Road and West Hemlock Street are very far apart, encouraging pedestrians to cross mid-block along a 6-lane wide road. Driver behavior such as speeding makes crossing anywhere with no clearly marked crosswalk dangerous.

2. Participants shared that drivers do not give pedestrians the right of way at the green light, or they run the red light at the South Ventura Road/West Wooley Road intersection. This shortens pedestrian crossing time where both South Ventura Road and West Wooley Street are 6-lanes each. There have been numerous near misses and 5 bicycle and 2 pedestrian crashes at this intersection.

3. While the intersection is signaled, the faded crosswalk markings at the South Ventura Road/West Wooley Road intersection are less visible to drivers, which increases the chance that they do not stop for pedestrians.

4. Drivers speed along South Ventura Boulevard which is a long, wide, and straight street with limited traffic calming infrastructure. Driver speeds put bicyclists at greater risk for crashes and create a dangerous environment for bicyclists to share the road with them.

5. Even though South Ventura Road is a wide 6-lane road, there is no bicycle infrastructure or road-sharing signage. Despite three travel lanes in each direction, drivers often force bicyclists out of the traffic lane and into the gutter. Participants shared that some bicyclists feel so unsafe with the lack of protection and avoid South Ventura Road.



Top: The picture shows a very long distance before the next crosswalk along South Ventura Road and the six lanes of this wide road. Bottom: The pedestrian island at the South Ventura Road/West Wooley Road intersection provides very limited protection since it is narrow.

Walking and Biking Assessment



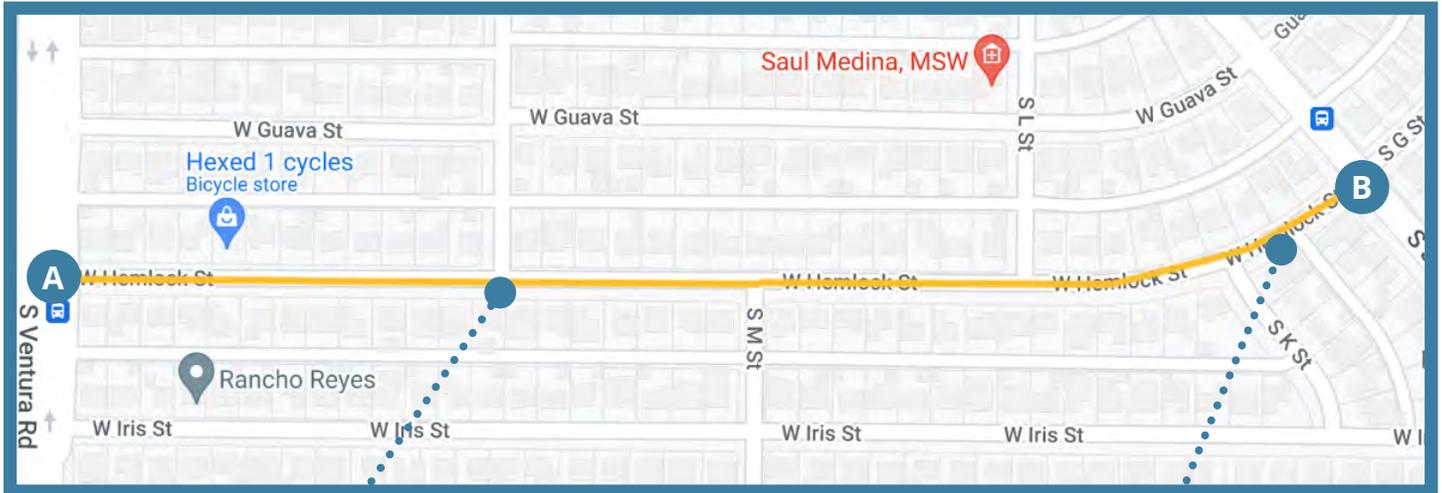
Top: Faded crosswalk markings at the South Ventura Road/ West Wooley Road intersection. Bottom: South Ventura Road has no bike infrastructure to provide a safe ride for bicyclists.



Route West Hemlock Street

West Hemlock Street Assets

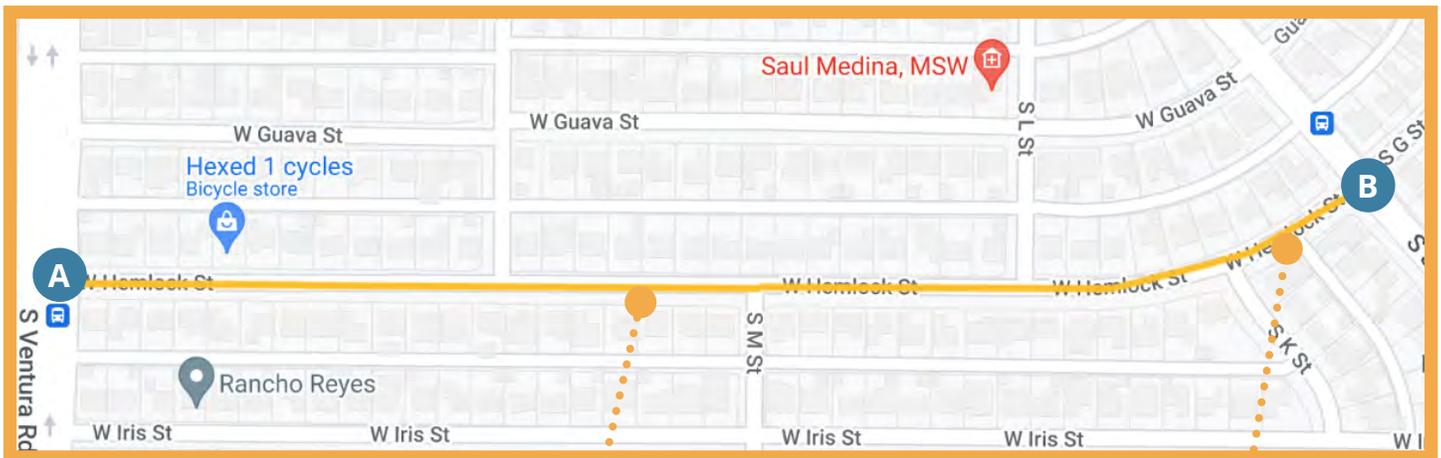
Community members highlighted the following assets along West Hemlock Street:



1. West Hemlock Street is a residential street that is an official bike route that connects to the downtown area. The street has bike route signage and sharrows that prioritize bicyclist on this street. This street allows bicyclists to avoid busier streets where drivers speed such as West Wooley Road and South Ventura Road.

2. The City of Oxnard installed a speed feedback sign on the south side of West Hemlock Street right before J street that alerts drivers of their speed and encourages them to slow down.

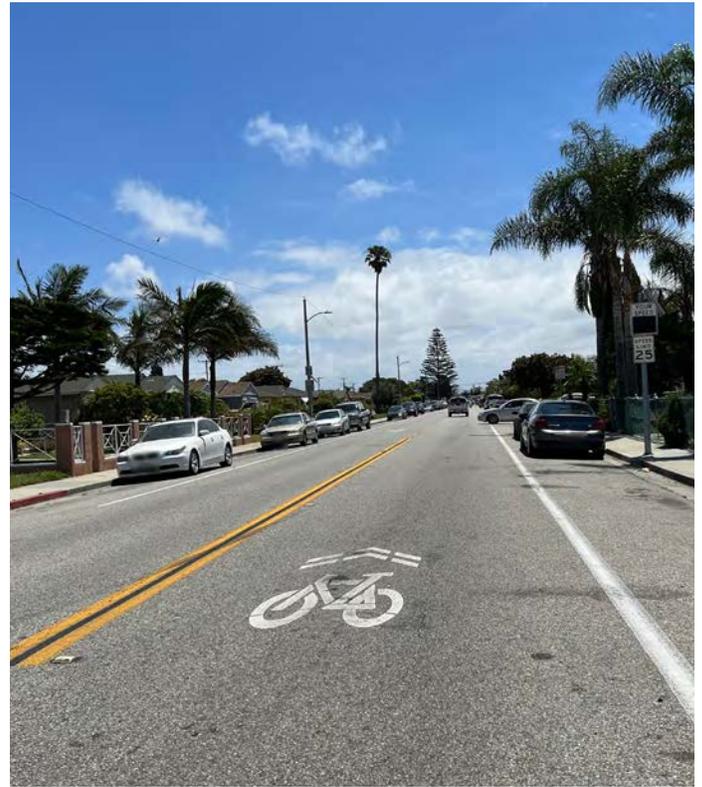
West Hemlock Street Concerns



1. Sidewalks along West Hemlock Street are narrow. Signs and fire hydrants further narrow the sidewalk which makes it difficult for pedestrians to walk without going into the street or on someone's front lawn.
2. Drivers speed along West Hemlock Street making it dangerous for pedestrians and bicyclists who share the road. Families living along West Hemlock Street expressed feeling unsafe in letting their children play in the front yard because of high driver speeds. Participants shared that there have been several instances where speeding drivers have jumped onto the sidewalk.
3. West Hemlock Street is a two-lane street with parking on the north and south side. The travel lanes are very narrow, which puts bicyclists in the door zone of parked vehicles. On trash pickup day, residential garbage cans are placed on the street, further narrowing the travel lane for bicyclists. These obstructions force bicyclists to ride on the sidewalk, limiting the space for pedestrians.
4. West Hemlock Street is a designated bike route and has sharrows to alert drivers that bicyclists can take the lane. However, drivers often speed and drive too close to bicyclists. Bicyclists end up riding on the sidewalk, leaving limited space for pedestrians.

5. There are no marked crosswalks on West Hemlock Street between South Ventura Road and J Street. Despite the McKinna Elementary School on South N Street, Community residents were told by the City of Oxnard that there is insufficient pedestrian traffic to warrant a marked crossing at the West Hemlock Street/S N Street intersection where many students must cross at the unmarked crosswalk to get to and from school. Without a marked crosswalk, drivers often do not stop for pedestrians, which forces pedestrians to run across and increases the chances of near misses or crashes.

Walking and Biking Assessment



Top Left: Narrow sidewalks with road signs on West Hemlock Street prevent pedestrians from walking side-by-side comfortably. Top Right: West Hemlock Street has sharrow markings to show it is a designated bike route. Bottom: The unmarked crosswalk at the West Hemlock Street/South N Street intersection.



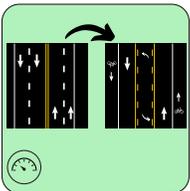
Project Team Recommendations

The Project Team offers the community the following recommendations based on the community's walking and biking safety concerns and Safe System strategy priorities.



Walk Counts

The Project Team recommends the Planning Committee partner with the City of Oxnard and local pedestrian and bike safety groups to conduct [pedestrian and bicyclist counts](#) along West Hemlock Street to gather data to advocate for infrastructure improvements. Pedestrian and bike counts measure usage on a particular street and can help engage more residents to discuss pedestrian and bicycle safety issues. Resources like the [National Bicycle and Pedestrian Documentation Project](#) can help provide more templates for gathering data during pedestrian and bicycle counts.



Street Reconfiguration on South Ventura Road

The Project Team recommends the Planning Committee partner with the City of Oxnard to assess if South Ventura Road is eligible for a road reconfiguration project. If it is, the Planning Committee can help gather community input on concerns along the corridor and potential infrastructure solutions to improve walking and biking safety. The City and the Planning Committee can reference Los Angeles Vision Zero's [dignity-infused community engagement](#) approach. This expansive approach to community engagement addresses systemic harm to communities and centers community residents to ensure they feel supported throughout the process and that projects reflect what is needed in the community. Residents can use the [CPBST Toolkit \(Spanish\)](#) as a starting point to understand different infrastructure treatments, their purpose, and their use in creating safer streets.



Safety Messaging Campaign and Activation Events

The Project Team recommends the Planning Committee work with residents to develop a community-led safety messaging campaign that targets driver behavior in residential areas and near schools. Drivers in the area often drive at speeds higher than the posted speed limit, which makes it unsafe for pedestrians and bicyclists to share the road. A safety messaging campaign can produce various outcomes for the community, including changing behavior and building awareness of dangerous driver behavior.

- Southern California Association of Government’s [Go Human Safety Campaign](#) focuses on reducing driver speed through a series of lawn signs, banners, and posters. Community residents can request materials using this [form](#). This low-cost option is a great way to start a safety messaging campaign in the community. The Planning Committee can leverage current community events as a first step in engaging the community in pedestrian and bike safety efforts. The [Oxnard Recreation and Community Services](#) activity guide lists multiple activities that are happening around the city, many of which are free and in public spaces like parks.
- The [Ambassador Program Toolkit](#) includes a section that highlights community-led activations that can serve as an example of activities that focus on walking and biking safety. The Planning Committee can use this to guide their engagement in the community.



Develop a Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee

The Project Team recommends the Planning Committee partner with local groups such as [Bike Ventura](#) to ask the City of Oxnard to establish a Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee as recommended in the [2011 City of Oxnard Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan](#). This [Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee](#) is a volunteer group of residents, community stakeholders, and subject experts that advise and make recommendations to decision-makers on walking and biking programs, projects, and policies. This committee provides opportunities for residents, community stakeholders, and subject matter experts to give direct feedback and help shape walking and biking programs, projects, and policies. Guides such as [Los Angeles Walks Safe Streets Advocacy Guide](#) can provide guidance on how to approach various advocacy projects and increase community participation. Activation events like those listed in the [Oxnard Recreation and Community Services](#) can be a starting point for engaging community residents. The Planning Committee can also engage with cohort peers from SELA Health Allies and United Parents for Education Justice to get guidance on engaging community residents in advocacy.

Los Caminos de la Vía Radionovela

During the training, participants created a Radionovela, a podcast that highlights community concerns and proposes solutions through the power of storytelling. This project is intended to be used as a tool for advocacy to create their local community visions for a healthy walkable and bikeable community. This episode and all past Camino de las Vía podcasts can be found on [Soundcloud](http://bit.ly/los-caminos-de-la-via) (<http://bit.ly/los-caminos-de-la-via>). A transcript of the Radionovela can be found in the appendix of this report.

This episode highlights the need for the Oxnard community to get involved in pedestrian and bicycle safety work. Participants share the dangers of biking on South Ventura Road and West Hemlock Street due to the lack of biking infrastructure such as bike lanes and driver behaviors such as speeding. Residents urge the community of Oxnard to get involved in advocacy efforts. To read a transcript of the audio, see Appendix A.

Visit <https://bit.ly/los-caminos-de-la-via> or scan the QR code to listen to the Oxnard Community Radionovela!



Appendix

- [Radionovela Transcript](#)
- [Review of Crash Data in Oxnard, CA](#)

Radionovela Transcript

Read the translated transcript from the Spanish audio to learn about community residents' walking and biking stories in the City of Oxnard.

Community residents in the City of Oxnard thought about the following questions as they developed their community story.

What would make your community feel safer to walk or bike? What changes do you want to see in your community?

Do you have a story or experience that shows why these changes are necessary?

Who should be supporting and listening to these experiences?

What would it take for others in your community to support this work?



Narrator: Hello everyone, welcome to our new episode of Caminos de la Vía. Los Caminos de la Vía is a project that came out of the California Walks and UC Berkeley SafeTREC's Comunidades Activas y Seguras (Active and Safe Communities) workshop.

This program focuses on helping Spanish-speaking communities in California improve pedestrian and bicycle safety in their cities through the creation of audio content that can be used as a tool for advocacy and education. This mini podcast highlights community concerns through storytelling, helps raise awareness of pedestrian and bicycle safety and proposes community-led solutions. In our segment today, we spoke to the Oxnard community about the concerns they have using South Ventura Road and West Hemlock Street. Participants share a very personal story that highlights the need to see changes for the safety of Oxnard's pedestrians and bicyclists and asks that the rest of the community join in advocating for changes that can save lives.

Community: It is true that safer routes are needed on the streets of Oxnard, as well as the need for a lot of signs and maybe speed bumps on some of the streets, especially the low-speed ones [where people speed], where maybe sometimes there are no signs. It's a street, well, as you saw it, it's very narrow, because there isn't space for bicycles. If a car [driver] opens their door or whatever. There's no space.

Community: Well, I would say the same thing. The street is too narrow to share it with everyone. The risk is very high. If the questions is, would I feel safe passing that intersection on a bicycle or think about walking or going there with my children? No, I would avoid that intersection.

Narrator: The city has a large Latino population. 8% of households do not own a car. Very few community residents, just 2.3%, walked, cycled, or took public transportation to work. The relatively low level of active transportation suggests that Oxnard's work, school and shopping destinations are less accessible to those who do rely on walking and biking. There are major concerns like driver behavior and a lack of infrastructure that makes it dangerous to get around in more active ways. The community calls for changes that can improve these conditions.

Community: I think that the city has to put more speed bumps on streets where there are no signs for bicycles. Cars [drivers] need to look when people are crossing and when people cross they also have to look.

Narrator: Between the years 2016 to 2020 there were 430 pedestrian crashes and 325 bicycle crashes in the city of Oxnard. Oxnard ranked fourth out of 59 cities of similar population size for people killed or injured in traffic crashes. Oxnard also ranked number one out of 59 for alcohol-related crashes and 2 out of 59 for speed-related crashes, illustrating the need to engage community members in learning the importance of safe driving and the need to take into account the safety of pedestrians and cyclists.

Community: I tell the community that this is more about security. We also all have to be aware of what we are doing when driving a car. Of course I have a story that shows why these changes are so needed. A year ago, on September 29, my son Andrés was run over [hit] by a man who was under the influence of alcohol or perhaps drugs. And something really needs to

be done. I direct myself to the city of Oxnard, to the police, so that they will be more careful with these people who drive, killing perhaps one, two, three or I don't know how many people due to negligence, due to irresponsibility. A change is needed in our city.

Narrator: Personal stories like this and the crash data highlight the need for immediate change in the city of Oxnard. The community around Oxnard is ready to continue to advocate for safer routes and ask for the support of the rest of the community to make this possible.

Community: It is unfortunate to hear when someone dies due to a crash or due to poorly designed streets or because a signal did not work or because there were no painted lines [crosswalks]. Well, it is important to

drive and walk on the street as a cyclist or as a pedestrian, always thinking about the safety of others, not only one's own, but thinking about them when one is driving. What if it were my child on that bike? Or what if it was my son or my mom crossing the street with their groceries? There is strength in numbers. United we can do more. If a person is asking for something, it may be almost impossible for them to heed it, but the more people that join and the more people who ask for those changes, the more likely they will be made for them.

Community: For people who would like more information or to get involved in what are we doing to make our streets safer. This is our meeting point. It is the Christian Church, the Nazarene at 1630 Saviers Road in Oxnard, California. Services are on Sundays at 12:30. And that is our main meeting point.

"It is important to drive and walk on the street as a cyclist or as a pedestrian, thinking about the safety of others, not only one's own, but thinking about them when one is driving. What if it were my child on that bike? Or what if it was my son or my mom crossing that street with their groceries?"

Narrator: We thank Andrés' family for sharing such a personal story and we will honor their memory by working to improve pedestrian and bicycle safety so that this story does not repeat itself. Thanks for joining us and be sure to listen to the rest of Caminos de la Via episodes. We invite you to read the Oxnard Executive Summary at the link in the description to learn more about active and safe communities, visit the California Walks and UC Berkeley SafeTREC website. Until next time!

Visit

<https://bit.ly/los-caminos-de-la-via>

or scan the QR code to listen to the Oxnard Community Radionovela!



Review of Crash Data in Oxnard, CA

Review of Crash Data in Oxnard, CA

Comunidades Activas y Seguras (Safe and Active Communities)



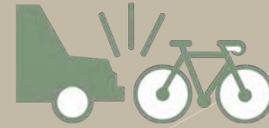
¿What is a pedestrian crash?



- A crash between a pedestrian and a motor-vehicle. It includes a person on foot, skateboard, stroller, in wheelchair, electric assisted mobility device
- A crash can result in multiple injuries



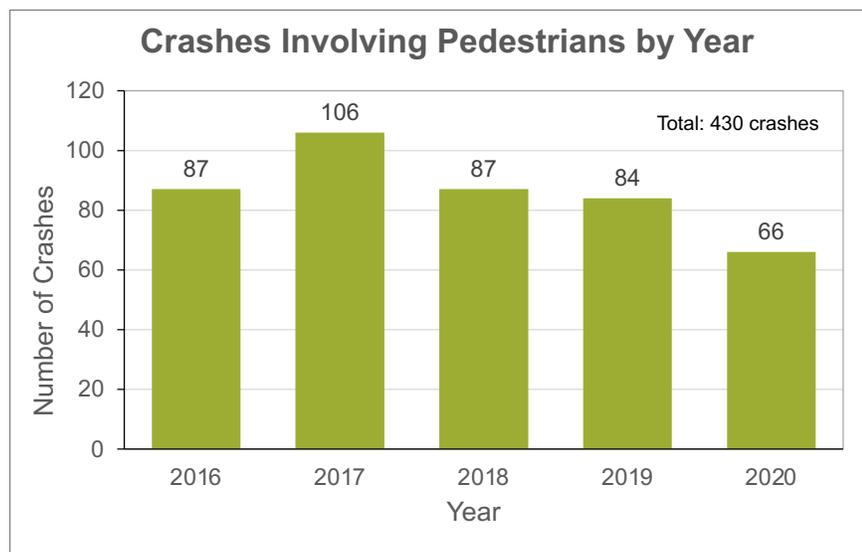
What is a cyclist crash?



- A crash between a bicyclist and a motor-vehicle
- Bicycles are considered vehicles and therefore the violations committed by a "driver" could have been committed by a motor vehicle driver or by a cyclist.



Pedestrian Crashes (2016-2020) per year

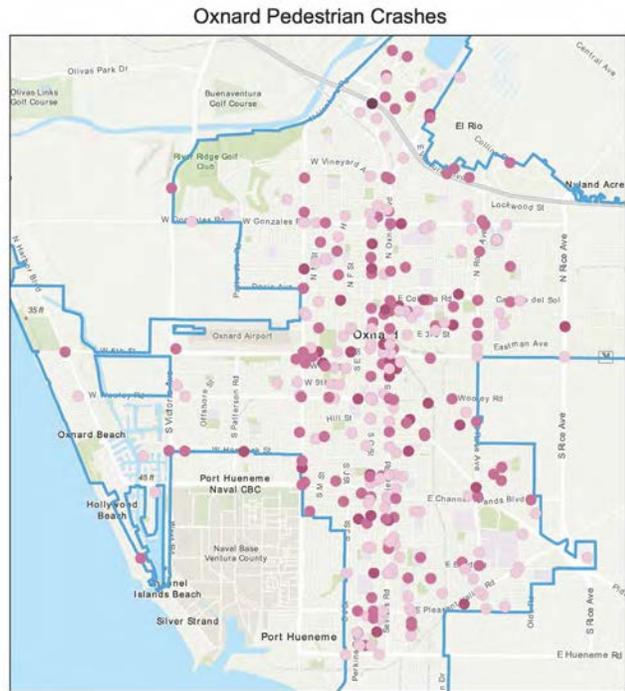


Pedestrian Crashes 2016-2020

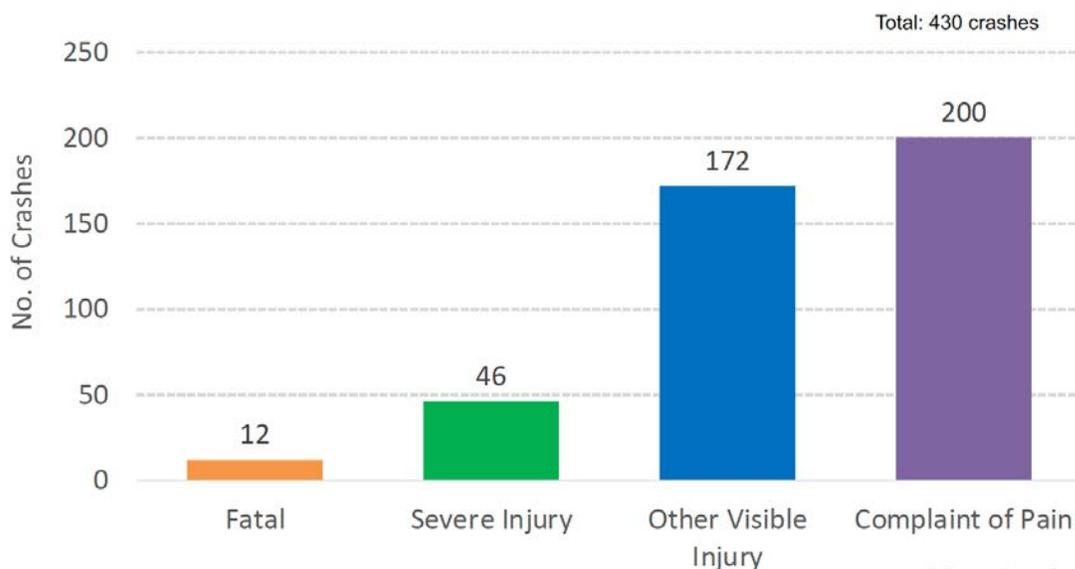
The crashes were concentrated along:

- Saviers Road (36 crashes)
- Oxnard Boulevard (37 crashes)

There were 12 crashes that resulted in fatal injuries.

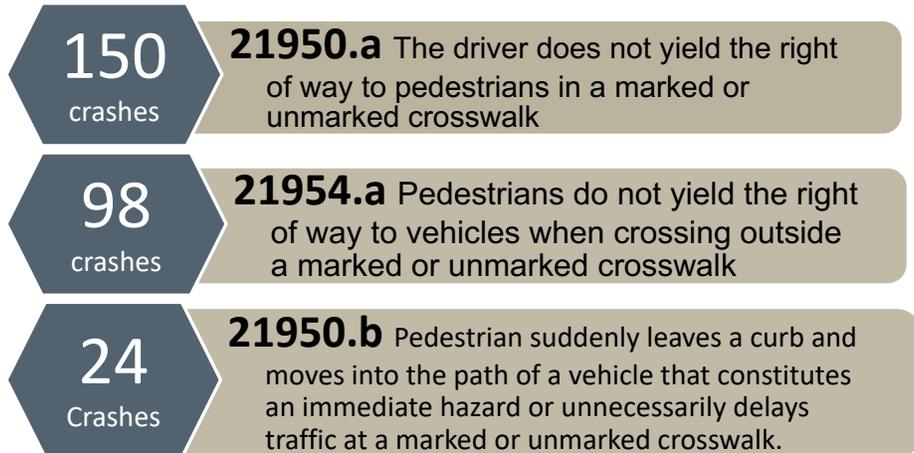


Pedestrian Crashes (2016-2020) by Severity of Injury



Pedestrian crashes (2016-2020)

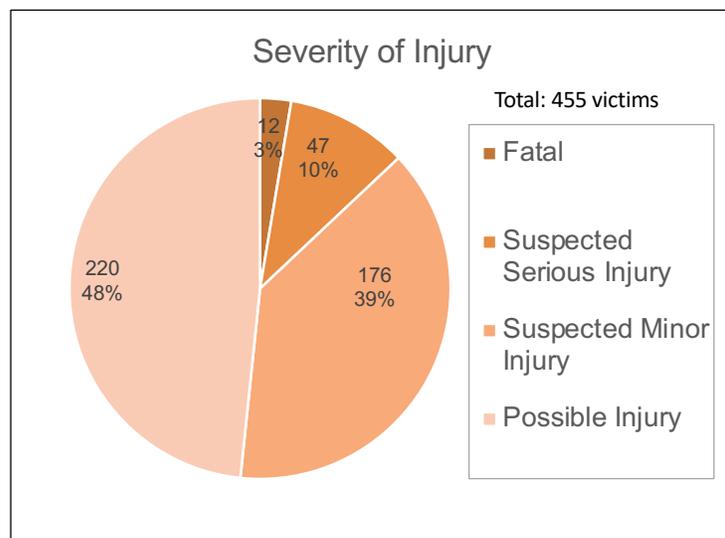
most frequently cited violations



Pedestrian Crash Victims

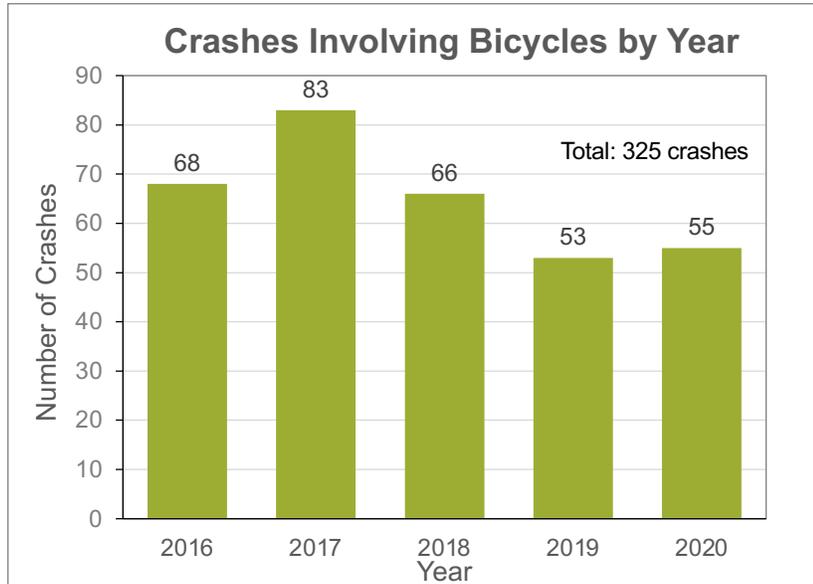
by severity of injury

- 455 victims were injured in 430 pedestrian crashes
- There were 59 victims with fatal or serious injuries.



Bicycle Crashes (2016-2020)

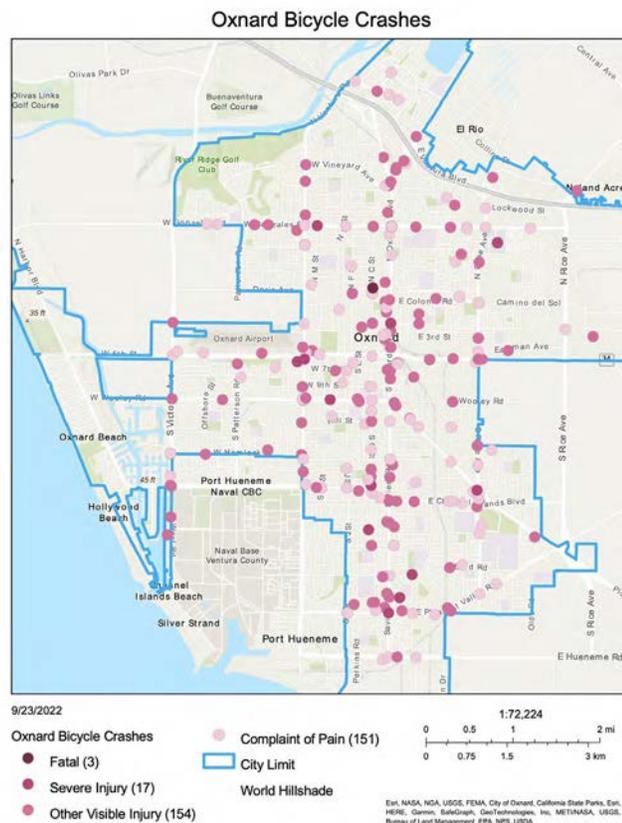
per year



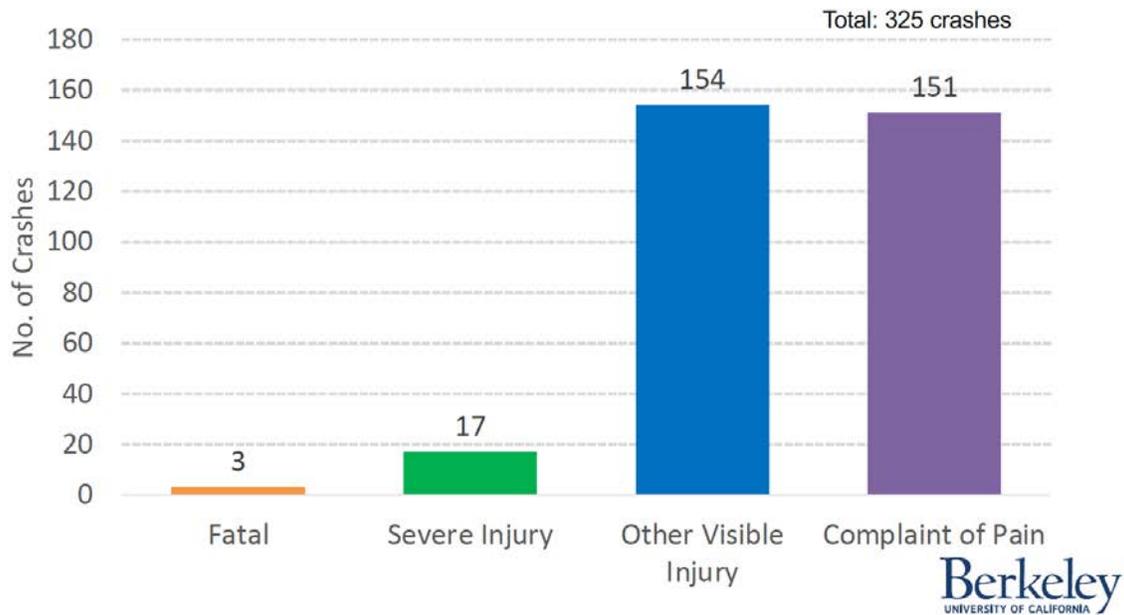
Bicycle Crashes 2016-2020

Similarly to pedestrian crashes, bicycle crashes were concentrated on:

- Saviers Road (31)
- Rose Avenue (27)



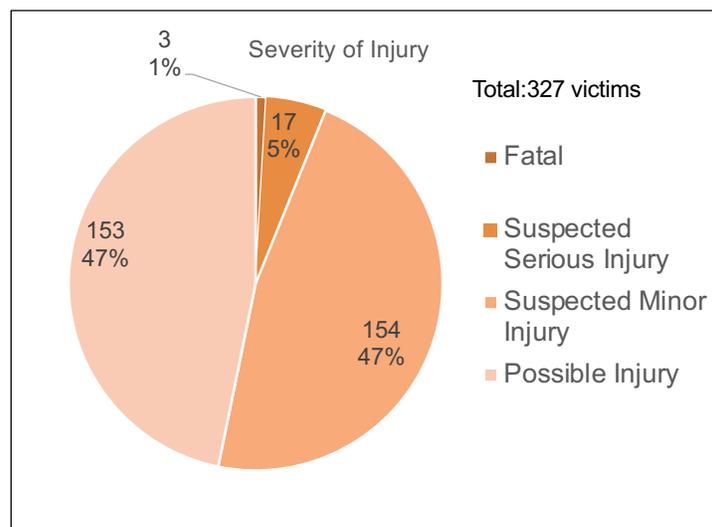
Bicycle Crashes (2016-2020) by severity of injury



Bicycle Crash Victims (2016-2020) by severity of injury

327 bicyclist victims
were injured in 325
bicycle crashes

- There were 3 victims who died and 17 were severely injured.
- 21% of victims, or just over 1/5, were 19 years old or younger



Street Story

Street Story is a tool for gathering community feedback on transportation safety issues. Share stories in Street Story of where you've been in a crash or near-miss, or where you feel safe or unsafe traveling.

<https://streetstory.berkeley.edu>



Transportation Injury Mapping System (TIMS)

TIMS is a web-based tool that allows users to analyze and map data from the California Integrated System of State Traffic Records (SWITRS). To further explore collision data, sign up for a free account to access TIMS tools and resources.

<https://tims.berkeley.edu>





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*To learn more about the Community Pedestrian and Bicycle
Safety Program visit UC Berkeley SafeTREC's site
<https://safetrec.berkeley.edu> or California Walks' site
<https://www.calwalks.org/comunidades-activas-y-seguras>.*