

# RECOMMENDATIONS TO IMPROVE PEDESTRIAN SAFETY FOR THE SAMUEL JACKMAN MIDDLE SCHOOL COMMUNITY

(ELK GROVE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT)



June  
2014

By Tony Dang, Wendy Alfsen, California Walks;  
Jill Cooper, UC Berkeley SafeTREC



# Recommendations to Improve Pedestrian Safety for the Samuel Jackman Middle School Community

BY TONY DANG, WENDY ALFSEN, CALIFORNIA WALKS;  
JILL COOPER, UC BERKELEY SAFETREC

## INTRODUCTION

To strengthen its current Safe Routes to School efforts, the Elk Grove Unified School District invited the University of California at Berkeley's Safe Transportation Research Center (SafeTREC) and California Walks (Cal Walks) to facilitate a Safe Routes to School-focused pedestrian safety action-planning workshop with a focus on its South Sacramento area schools, specifically Samuel Jackman Middle School and its surrounding feeder schools.

Cal Walks facilitated the workshop on April 10, 2014 and provided an overview of multidisciplinary approaches to improve pedestrian safety, a walkability assessment of city streets, and small group discussions to facilitate the development of recommendations for the District's ongoing Safe Routes to School efforts. This report summarizes the workshop proceedings, as well as ideas identified during the process.

## BACKGROUND

### Community Pedestrian Safety Training Program

The Community Pedestrian Safety Training (CPST) program is a joint project of the UC Berkeley SafeTREC and Cal Walks. Funding for this program is provided by a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. The purpose of the CPST is to train local neighborhood residents and safety advocates in pedestrian safety and to educate them about collaborating with local officials and agency staff to make communities safer and more pleasant to walk. The half-day training is designed to provide participants with pedestrian safety best practices and a range of proven strategies (the 6 E's: Evaluation, Engineering, Enforcement, Education, Encouragement, Empowerment) to address and improve pedestrian safety conditions and concerns. In the Safe Routes to School context, the program is narrowed to focus on the 5 E's: Evaluation, Engineering, Enforcement, Education, Encouragement. Participants are then guided on a walkability assessment of nearby streets before setting pedestrian safety priorities and actionable next steps for their community.

For a summary of outcomes from past CPST workshops, please visit:

[www.californiawalks.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/CPST\\_Outcomes\\_2009-11.pdf](http://www.californiawalks.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/CPST_Outcomes_2009-11.pdf)

## Samuel Jackman Middle School's Pedestrian & Bicyclist Collision History

Over a three-year period (2009-2011), there have been a total of 24 pedestrian and bicyclist collisions within a half-mile of Samuel Jackman Middle School, including a pedestrian fatality near the intersection of Mack Road and Center Parkway. More recently in November 2013, a Samuel Jackman student was hit and injured while crossing Valley Hi Drive in a marked crosswalk and a 17-year old student at nearby Rio Cazadero High School was killed crossing Mack Road at Summersdale Way in an unmarked crosswalk.



2009-2011 PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLIST COLLISION HISTORY WITHIN 1/4 AND 1/2 MILE OF SAMUEL JACKMAN MIDDLE SCHOOL

### APRIL 10 WORKSHOP

The Elk Grove Unified School District requested a Safe Routes to School-focused workshop for Samuel Jackman Middle School, located in South Sacramento. The workshop was attended by 20 individuals representing a wide range of organizations and disciplines, including: concerned City residents, community-based organizations (WALKSacramento, People Reaching Out), state agencies (Office of Traffic Safety, California Department of Public Health), law enforcement, school district staff, city agency staff, and public health.



TERRY PRESTON OF WALKSACRAMENTO SHARING DETAILS OF PEDESTRIAN FATALITY AT SUMMERSDALE DRIVE & MACK ROAD

### Reflections from Walkability Assessment

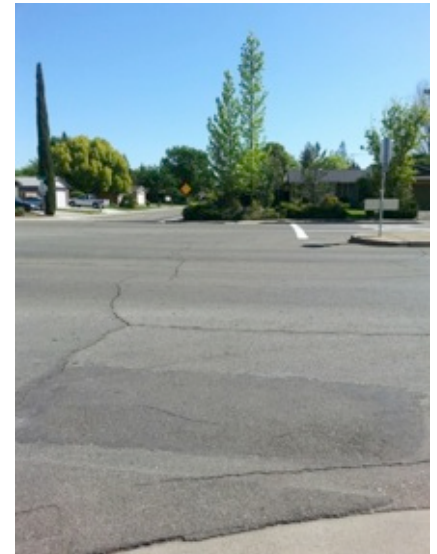
Walkability assessments were conducted in two small groups along portions of major arterial roads (Mack Road, Center Parkway, and Valley Hi Drive), as well as smaller side streets (Kentwal Drive, Bamford Drive, Summersdale Drive). Participants were asked to 1) observe infrastructure conditions and the behavior of all road users and 2) apply strategies learned from the 5 E's presentation that could work in for the Samuel Jackman Middle School community. Following the walkability assessments, participants shared the following reflections:

- **Speeding on Mack Road:** Participants noted that there were fewer drivers speeding than anticipated, as registered on the speed radar device used during the walkability assessment. This may, however, have been influenced by our large group presence, as well as the high-visibility safety vests and radar devices the group was wearing/carrying. Unsafe speed was determined to be



the primary collision factor for 47.6% of 2009-2011 collisions within 0.1 mile of Mack Road between Franklin Boulevard and Center Parkway. Perceptions of unsafe speed may discourage families from allowing children to walk and bike across Mack Road to get to school and may have a real impact on the number of children walking, biking, and even being driven safely to school.

- **What Constitutes “Jaywalking”:** Participants shared that prior to the workshop, they believed that all crossing outside of a marked crosswalk was considered jaywalking. During the walkability assessment, facilitators explained that legal crosswalks exist at all intersections—whether marked or unmarked—and unless otherwise signed as prohibited.
- **Need for Marked Crosswalks at Center Parkway & Bamford Drive:** The intersection of Center Parkway & Bamford Drive/Loorz Court is a stop-controlled 4-way intersection with 2-3 lanes of traffic in each direction of Center Parkway. Participants expressed the need for crosswalk markings in addition to the stop sign limit line. Additionally, further south, Center Parkway intersects Bamford Drive again in a T-intersection. Currently, there are no marked crosswalks at this T-intersection despite the nearby presence of Rio Cazadero and Las Flores High Schools, as well as Samuel Jackman Middle School.



CENTER PARKWAY & BAMFORD DRIVE: NO MARKED CROSSWALKS DESPITE HIGH STUDENT USE

## Community Resident Recommendations



Following the walkability assessment, workshop participants were divided into two groups to discuss and provide concrete recommendations and priorities along the 5 E's:

### Priority Actions in Short-Term (3-6 Months)

- **Install Crosswalks Closest to Samuel Jackman Middle School:** Workshop participants identified 4 locations where the City and School District could prioritize the installation and/or improvement of crosswalks: Kentwal Drive & Amblebrook Way; Bamford Drive & Summerview Way; Center Parkway & Bamford Drive/Loorz Court; and Center Parkway & Bamford Drive.
- **Install Missing Signage & Restripe Faded Markings Near Samuel Jackman:** During the walkability assessment, participants noted that there were very few school zone and speed limit signs on the major streets surrounding the school (Center Parkway, Valley Hi Drive, Franklin Boulevard). Participants would like to see this signage

installed at appropriate locations in the neighborhood, as well as for any faded markings restriped—with a priority on Bamford Drive. At crossing locations where there was particular concern, participants expressed support for additional “Yield Here to Pedestrians” signage and/or rectangular rapid flashing beacons.

- **Increase Outreach to Parents on Traffic Safety:** While some parents participated in the workshop, it was noted that much greater outreach to parents is needed to secure the community investment critical to improving traffic safety in the neighborhood. Participants underscored that leveraging existing outlets—including school flyers, reminders, autocalls, monthly bulletins, and the school marquee—and resources (e.g., Sacramento Police Department’s traffic safety handouts) would be key to quick mobilization and outreach.



PARTICIPANTS SHARING RECOMMENDATIONS DEVELOPED IN SMALL GROUPS

- **Partner with Neighborhood and Community Groups for Targeted Resident Outreach:**

Likewise, participants noted that greater partnerships with neighborhood groups would be essential to reach non-parent residents. Participants proposed outreach to nearby churches (including the South Sacramento Christian Center), the Valley Hi Walking Group, Mack Road Partnership, Saturday Night Lights, and other neighborhood associations as a starting place to cultivate a cadre of peer/community educators. Once this cadre is formed, traffic safety education efforts could be coordinated and targeted toward the numerous apartment complexes nearby. It was suggested that community members could use Nextdoor.com—a Facebook-like website with a smaller, neighborhood focus—to organize their efforts.

- **Institute School Prize Encouragement System:** Participants were very enthusiastic about rewarding safe walking and biking behavior among students and parents. It was suggested that teachers could “write up” students for “Caught You Doing Good” tickets that could then be redeemed for Hawk cards at the school. This system could easily be expanded into a competition where different classes compete for the most tickets to earn a treat. Participants also stressed that such an incentive system, if extended to parent behavior, could encourage students to influence their parents to practice safer driving habits near the school.
- **Restrict Parking Along Center Parkway at Intersections & Crossing Locations:** Participants were not able to discern any parking restrictions along Center Parkway. Accordingly, they suggested that the City restrict parking at intersections and crossing locations along Center Parkway to improve the visibility of students crossing the street, particularly at Bamford Drive/Loorz Court.

### Medium- to Long-Term Actions (6-18 Months and Ongoing)

- **Install Traffic Signal at Summersdale Drive & Mack Road:** Though a legal crossing exists at this intersection, there are no markings or crossing control devices to assist residents cross Mack Road.

Mack Road is a wide, 4-6 lane road with a posted speed limit of 40 MPH. Due to retail and housing being located on north of Mack Road and the long distance between signalized intersections along Mack Road, many residents cross where it is most convenient to them despite dangerous conditions rather than take a 0.6 mile detour. In light of the recent death of a 17-year-old student crossing Mack Road at this intersection, participants voiced strong support for the installation of a traffic signal and accompanying crosswalk markings at this location.

- **Extending Median Fence Along Mack Road:** Fencing exists in certain sections of the median along Mack Road. Participants suggested extending the fencing along the entire length of the median to discourage unsafe crossing. When combined with a new traffic signal at Summersdale Drive and existing signalized crossings at Center Parkway and Franklin Boulevard, dangerous pedestrian behavior should be curtailed while providing increased and safer pedestrian crossing opportunities.
- **Evaluate Installation of Midblock Crossing on Center Parkway Between Mack Road & Bamford Drive:** Workshop participants noted that a new community center would soon be opening up on the east side of Center Parkway between Mack Road & Bamford Drive. This center would be a pedestrian activity attractor, and it is likely that many residents living on the west side of Center Parkway would simply cross directly to the center rather than walking to Bamford. Currently, there is a landscaped median along Center Parkway that would need to be removed or reconfigured to accommodate a midblock crossing.
- **Install Bulb Outs at Priority Crossings Near Samuel Jackman Campus:** Participants expressed enthusiasm and support for bulb outs in the neighborhood for a range of benefits, including slowing down turning traffic, improving sight distances, and shortening crossing distances for students. Proposed locations included Kentwal Drive & Amblebrook Way; Bamford Drive & Bamford Court; Bamford Drive & Summerview Way; and Bamford Drive/Loorz Court & Center Parkway.
- **Repair Damaged Sidewalks Near Samuel Jackman Campus:** Participants observed uplifted and damaged sidewalks near the school that should be fixed: on south side of Bamford Drive at school driveway between Summerview Way & Pedrick Street; southwest corner of Bamford Drive & Richion Drive.
- **Bike Lane Along Center Parkway and Bamford Drive:** Participants noted that it is unclear whether a bike lane exists along Center Parkway. If there is a bike lane, additional markings should be used to clarify its existence; if the bike lane does not exist, participants believe the street could easily accommodate a bike lane. Bike lanes were also proposed for Bamford Drive to provide students with an unambiguous space to bicycle, as well as for its traffic calming benefits.
- **Develop Suggested Walking & Biking Routes to School:** Participants expressed interest in collaborating with the School District and City to develop designated walking and



CRACKED SIDEWALK AT SOUTHWEST CORNER OF BAMFORD DRIVE AND SCHOOL DRIVEWAY



biking routes to school. This process would present a prime opportunity to engage youth, as well as their parents. The walking and biking routes could be designed and printed as an easy-to-carry postcard and could also highlight nearby community destinations and assets.

- **Other Suggestions**
  - **Pursue Funding for Community Education Campaign on Speeding** using the It's Up to All of Us campaign as a model.
  - **Create Crossing Guard Program at Center Parkway and Bamford Drive/Loorz Court**
  - **Explore the Feasibility of a Remote Drop Off Program.** Potential locations include St. Andrews Lutheran Church and Valley High Park.
  - **Continue Parent Surveys and Student Travel Tallies to Collect Data**
  - **Collaborate with People Reaching Out/Students Reaching Out to Produce VideoVoice Projects** as a student engagement strategy.



EXAMPLE IMPLEMENTATION OF IT'S UP TO ALL OF US BANNER

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We would like to thank Samuel Jackman Middle School for hosting the Community Pedestrian Safety Training. Thank you to Lisa Dixon of the Elk Grove Unified School District and Terry Preston of WALKSacramento, as well as Principal Michael Anderson and Librarian Karen Meyer, who provided leadership and organizational support in planning the workshop. We would also like to acknowledge Sacramento City Councilmember Darrell Fong and the community members who attended the workshop.



WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS PREPARING TO HEAD OUT FOR WALKABILITY ASSESSMENT

Funding for this program was provided by a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.