# South El Monte High School Mobility & Active Transportation Plan

Prepared for: South El Monte High School

Final Document Submitted October 8, 2021

LA-3222.00

Fehr / Peers

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# School Mobility & Active Transportation Plan

### Introduction

This School Mobility & Active Transportation Plan was developed for South El Monte High School with the goal of identifying school-related mobility needs and solutions that will encourage active transportation. The Plan is part of larger clean transportation efforts that are underway to electrify El Monte Union High School District's school bus fleet, funded by a Clean Mobility in Schools grant from the California Air Resources Board (CARB).

#### **Project Goals**

The goal of the School Mobility & Active Transportation Plan (Plan) is to identify project ideas that will make it more safe, comfortable, and fun to walk, bike, or take other types of low-emission transportation to get to campus. The Plan is tailored to the specific conditions and needs of South El Monte High School and draws from industry best practices to inform future actions that can be taken in years to come. The Plan is informed by an analysis of existing conditions, an inventory of existing infrastructure, circulation patterns, and a school community survey.

#### **School Overview & Enrollment**

South El Monte High School is located at 1001 Durfee Avenue, South El Monte, CA 91733. The school's frontage is along Durfee Avenue and is generally bound by SR-60 and Santa Anita Avenue.



The high school lies 0.1 miles south of the SR-60 Pomona Freeway, adjacent to Whittier Narrows Recreation Area and Whittier Narrows Disc Golf. A map of the area can be found in Figure 1. A brief overview of the school's enrollment data is presented in Table 1. Based on the 2019-2020 student enrollment data, enrollment numbers are lower compared to previous years, possibly due to COVID-19.

Enrollment Data Type <sup>1</sup>	Total
2019-2020 Cumulative Day Student Enrollment <sup>2</sup>	1,282
2018-2019 Census Day Student Enrollment <sup>3</sup>	1,240
2018-2019 Cumulative Student Enrollment	1,290
Free & Reduced-Price Meals	89.5%
English Learners	16.7%
Languages of English Learners	Spanish: 202 Cantonese: 4 Albanian: 1
2017-2018 Number of Faculty	82
2017-2018 Number of Staff	11
2017-2018 Number of Classified Staff	54

Table 1. South El Monte High School Enrollment Data

#### **School Kick-Off Meeting**

On November 12<sup>th</sup>, 2020, the project team conducted a site visit and kick-off meeting with Jorge Morales, Principal of South El Monte High School, to further understand existing conditions at the school and any opportunities for improvements near the school. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the goals and expectations for the project, review the key transportation issues at the school, and finalize data collection

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> According to ED-Data.org, "Census Day" enrollment is measured by counting the number of students enrolled in school on the first Wednesday in October. Short term enrollments are not accounted for in this number.



<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Source: Education Data Partnership

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> According to ED-Data.org, "Cumulative" enrollment counts are collected at the end of the year and consist of the total number of unduplicated primary and short-term enrollments within the academic year.

efforts. The project team was also able to see on- and off-campus circulation patterns, bike racks, and pedestrian paths.

Principal Morales described the drop-off and pick-up patterns on campus, identifying the route that vehicles take on campus to circulate through the parking lot and back onto Durfee Avenue. He shared that students who walk to school must interact with vehicles at a few points during drop-off and pick-up time, and that through a campus modernization effort also underway, the circulation patterns were being considered for reconfiguration. He also pointed out that transit service used to serve the school directly but service was no longer present (despite bus stop signage remaining on Durfee Avenue). The changes to transit service were unrelated to the COVID pandemic.

Some key issues identified for the school are summarized below:

- On-campus circulation results in several points of conflict between vehicles and pedestrians during arrival and dismissal
- The campus supports District-level activities, resulting in additional traffic unrelated to the direct operations of the school
- Bike racks are available on campus and well-utilized; a student bike club is active on campus
- No busing system exists for high school students
- No sidewalk exists on the south side of Durfee Avenue
- Class II bike lane exists on Durfee Avenue, but provides little separation from fast-moving traffic
- Durfee Avenue has a posted speed limit of 40 MPH; vehicles were observed traveling faster than the posted speed limit
- There are high volumes along the Peck Road corridor which create a bottleneck at the SR-60 freeway ramps and creates conflict with nearby driveways
- The principal of South El Monte High School estimates there are about 700 students that get dropped off during the morning peak hour
- Pedestrian access exists along Durfee Avenue and at the back of the school campus on Farmer Avenue
- The pedestrian overcrossing at Fawcett Avenue is a common route home for students who live on the other side of SR-60
- The 7-11 at Peck Road & Michael Hunt Drive is a common after-school destination for students

### **Existing Conditions**

An existing conditions assessment was conducted for South El Monte High School. The project team conducted field observations, evaluated circulation patterns, analyzed historical collision data, and reviewed transit options offered by the City of El Monte, Foothill Transit, Norwalk Transit, and Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro).



#### **School Location, Circulation & Access**

South El Monte High School is located in the City of South El Monte on Durfee Avenue, directly next to the SR-60 Pomona Freeway. The school is served by Durfee Avenue to the south and Farmer Avenue to the north, and is surrounded by the Whittier Narrows Recreation Area to the west and the Peck Road SR-60 Freeway entrances and exits to the east. The school is located adjacent to the Whittier Narrows Disc Golf course, Whittier Narrows Recreation Area, and the Whittier Narrows Nature Center. The Whittier Narrows Routh El Monte High School. The nearest transit options are along Santa Anita Avenue and Peck Road.

Figure 1 shows the location of the school and the circulation of the area around it. Primary vehicle access to school grounds occurs from the school's frontage on Durfee Avenue. Students on foot arrive from either the north or the east, and must cross several driveways, intersections, and freeway ramps to get to the pedestrian entrance from the nearest residential area. The school has five parking lots serving visitors, staff, students, and District level uses. Students on foot must enter the school through either of the two parking lot entrances along Durfee Avenue. There are two driveway entrances—one for parking and one for parent drop-off and pick-up.

A secondary drop-off area is located along Farmer Avenue to the north of the school, where vehicles follow a counterclockwise direction along the residential block. Pedestrian entrances are located on Farmer Avenue which is accessible to neighborhoods north of the SR-60 Pomona Freeway via a pedestrian bridge. The pedestrian bridge entrance is at the corner of Fawcett Avenue & Lexham Avenue and leads to Cogswell Road within a residential area. The entrance to the bridge has limited visibility from the street, is loud due to freeway traffic, and does not feel well-maintained.





#### Legend



◎ S El Monte High School Vehicle Circulation ••••• Pedestrian Circulation City Boundary

(#) Parking Lot

- 1 Visitors to Training Center2 Students
- 3 Faculty/Staff & Visitors
- 4 Overflow during Sports Events5 Drop Off for Food Service, Special Ed, & District Staff

Figure 1

South El Monte High School Circulation

#### **Field Observations**

On October 29<sup>th</sup>, 2020, a site visit was conducted at South El Monte High School by the project team. During the site visit, the school was assessed for existing primary and secondary access points, usage of various modes, existing circulation patterns, and existing bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure. An audit of the entire school perimeter was conducted. Due to COVID-19 public health guidelines, school was not in session during the site visit, on-site school conditions were not observed, and the site visit did not offer an opportunity to assess drop-off and pick-up during normal school traffic and circulation conditions.

Durfee Avenue has high speeds and lacks pedestrian crossings, particularly one connecting the Whittier Narrows Nature Center to the school. Students enter along Durfee Avenue via a pedestrian entrance adjacent to the main school driveway. There are no pedestrian crossings available between Santa Anita Avenue and the 60 Freeway Ramps on Durfee Avenue, a distance of about 0.8 miles, and the only destination on the south side of Durfee Avenue is the Nature Center. Class II bike lanes are present in both directions on Durfee Avenue but are narrow and provide limited protection on the 40 MPH road. There is a lack of school zone signage on the corridor directly fronting the school.

To access the campus, a one-way driveway provides two lanes for drop-off and pick-up, as well as a separate entrance for staff and faculty on the campus. The back of South El Monte High School is located on Farmer Avenue with additional drop-off and pick-up activity and a pedestrian entrance to the campus. The residential neighborhood bounded by Farmer Avenue, Fawcett Avenue, and Lexham Avenue form a counter-clockwise drop-off and pick-up pattern, and is somewhat isolated as it is bound by the SR-60 freeway, the Whittier Narrows Recreation Area, and the school campus. A pedestrian bridge at Fawcett Avenue & Lexham Avenue provides access to residents and students who live on the other side of the freeway. Fawcett Avenue & Lexham Avenue has a stop-controlled crosswalk, but only in one direction. This crosswalk is located at a 90-degree curve in the road and could be redesigned to improve safety and visibility from both directions.

Observations made for each corridor and intersection surrounding the school are summarized below:

- > General Observations
  - Whittier Nature Center is right across the street from the school; no crosswalk exists to connect the school to this resource
  - Closest access point to the San Gabriel River Bike Path is at Peck Road on east side of the street
  - Students on foot enter school via parking lot entrance and must cross multiple lanes of drop-off and pick-up traffic
  - EV charging stations are available on school site
  - Two driveway entrances on Durfee Avenue separate student parking and drop-off/pickup from staff and visitor parking



• The District has meeting space, office space, and other facilities at the back of the campus, with a separate entrance and parking facility that is managed separately from the circulation and operations of the school

#### Durfee Avenue

- Class II bike lanes exist in both directions but feel narrow and unprotected from the fastmoving traffic on the 4-lane, 40 MPH road
- Faded "SCHOOL" stencils visible on the road surface
- There is no marked crossing for 0.8 miles between Santa Anita Avenue and the freeway off-ramps (though besides the Nature Center, there are no destinations to the south)
- o Faded bike marking stencils appear older than more recent bike lane striping
- There is no school zone signage near the school
- Raised pavement markers on Durfee Avenue are present to prevent left turns in and out of driveways
- "No Stopping" signs exist along Durfee Avenue, along with a signed Metro Layover Zone (though service no longer exists on this corridor), overlapping with the bike lane

#### > Farmer Avenue

• School zone signs are present at the back entrance to the school

#### Fawcett Avenue & Lexham Avenue

- Stop-controlled crosswalk only in one direction
- Provides access to pedestrian bridge across SR-60 (school attendance boundary extends across SR-60 to the residential neighborhood on the other side of the freeway)

#### Figure 2. Pedestrian Infrastructure on Farmer Avenue





<image>

*Figure 3. Pedestrian Bridge Access at Fawcett Avenue* 

Figure 4. Pedestrian Bridge Access on the North Side of SR-60





#### **Collision History**

Collision data from 2015 through 2019 was analyzed to assess roadway safety conditions near South El Monte High School. Collision data from the UC Berkeley Transportation Injury Mapping System (TIMS) database was used to conduct the collision analysis. The purpose of the collision analysis was to understand existing roadway safety conditions and identify locations where vehicle-vehicle, pedestrian-vehicle, and bicycle-vehicle collisions are concentrated near the school. Collision data was analyzed by mode, year, collision severity, and school age (14-19) within one mile of South El Monte High School. Highway collisions were excluded from the analysis.

Figure 5 visualizes the collision patterns as a heat map over the five-year period. The hotspots represent vehicle, pedestrian, and bicycle collision densities. During the five-year period, collisions occurred primarily along arterials such as Durfee Avenue, Peck Road and Tyler Avenue. Intersections of notable collision hotspots shown in Figure 5 are summarized in Table 2 below.

Local Intersections of Major Collision Hotspots	Adjacent Built Environment Characteristics	Signalized/Unsignalized
Fawcett Ave. & Santa Anita Ave.	Commercial	Signalized
Peck Rd. & Durfee Ave.	Commercial	Signalized
Michael Hunt Dr. & Peck Rd.	Commercial & Residential	Signalized
Thienes Ave. & Durfee Ave.	Commercial	Signalized
Rush St. & Peck Rd.	Commercial	Signalized

Table 2. Collision Hotspot Characteristics

#### Collisions by Mode

In addition to the summary hotspot map, understanding the location patterns of collisions involving bicyclists and pedestrians can help inform where improvements to pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure are needed. Figure 6 below presents the reported bicycle-vehicle and pedestrian-vehicle collisions from 2015 to 2019 within one mile of South El Monte High School. The general distribution of collisions shows that most have occurred north of campus. Durfee Avenue and Tyler Avenue have the greatest number of collisions near the school.





![](_page_13_Figure_0.jpeg)

Figure 7 and Figure 8 below display the total collisions near South El Monte High School. Between 2015 and 2019, there were 681 collisions within one mile of the school. Most of the collisions were vehicle collisions, followed by pedestrian and bicycle collisions, respectively. Vehicle collisions have increased from 2015 to 2017 and decreased through 2019. Seventy-seven people between the ages of 14 through 19 were involved in the collisions in the area, with 52 reporting injuries. Of the students involved, 65 were drivers, five were pedestrians, and seven were bicyclists. There was one reported fatality, identified as a 19-year-old student driver.

![](_page_14_Figure_1.jpeg)

![](_page_14_Figure_2.jpeg)

Figure 8. Collisions by Mode Within One Mile of South El Monte High School

![](_page_14_Figure_4.jpeg)

![](_page_14_Picture_5.jpeg)

#### Collision Severity

Of the 871 collisions in this area throughout the five-year period, the collisions resulted in 21 fatalities. There were 53 reports of severe injuries, 265 reports of visible injuries, and 532 complaints of pain. One fatality was between the ages of 14 and 19. Reports of severe injuries and other visible injuries have been generally increasing since 2015. The charts below depicts the levels of severity for all collisions within one mile of South El Monte High School.

![](_page_15_Figure_2.jpeg)

Figure 9. Collision Severity Year by Year Within One Mile of South El Monte High School

![](_page_15_Picture_4.jpeg)

![](_page_16_Figure_0.jpeg)

Figure 10. Collision Severity Within One Mile of South El Monte High School

#### Pedestrian Collision Severity

The chart below depicts the proportion of levels of severity across pedestrian collisions near South El Monte High School. There were four pedestrian fatalities, however none were people between the ages of 14 and 19. Five of the pedestrians that reported injuries were determined to be people between the ages of 14 and 19.

![](_page_16_Figure_4.jpeg)

![](_page_16_Figure_5.jpeg)

![](_page_16_Picture_6.jpeg)

#### Bicycle Collision Severity

The chart below depicts the proportion of levels of severity across bicycle collisions near South El Monte High School. Of the 30 bicyclists who reported injuries, seven were identified to be people between the ages of 14 and 19. No bicyclist fatalities were reported.

![](_page_17_Figure_2.jpeg)

*Figure 12. Bicycle Collisions by Severity Within One Mile of South El Monte High School* 

#### **Community Transit Systems**

Norwalk Transit Route 7 operates along Durfee Avenue & Peck Road, with weekday service every 20-50 minutes. Additionally, Foothill Transit Route 269 operates along Santa Anita Avenue west of campus, with weekday service every 30-minutes. Existing transit conditions in the vicinity of South El Monte High School are displayed in Figure 13.

![](_page_17_Picture_6.jpeg)

![](_page_18_Figure_0.jpeg)

## **Community Input**

In addition to the review of existing conditions, the project team conducted a survey inviting students, parents, and staff to describe their school travel experiences and offer input to the process of developing project ideas. The survey was made available for four weeks during Spring 2021, in English, Spanish, Mandarin, and Vietnamese. The surveys were created using the Survey Monkey platform and were distributed as links at various after-school meetings. In addition, the link was circulated through social media and other communications channels by another project partner, VMA Communications, Inc. Table 3 shows the survey response totals for South El Monte High School.

Groups	Total Number of Respondents
Students	48
Parents	87
Staff <sup>4</sup>	0

Table 3. South El Monte High School Survey Response Totals

#### **Mode Share**

Mode share refers to the percentage of travelers who use or prefer a particular type of transportation including walking, biking, driving, transit, or other options. Mode shift represents a change in travel patterns based on previous mode share. The survey asked respondents about their current mode share, (how they get to school on most days, assuming in-person instruction during non-COVID conditions), as well as the potential for mode shift (how they would prefer to get to school in an ideal world). Results are shown in Figure 14 and Figure 15 for students, and students' behavior reported by parents, respectively.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Includes faculty, staff and classified staff

![](_page_19_Picture_7.jpeg)

![](_page_20_Figure_0.jpeg)

Figure 14. Potential for Student Mode Shift

Students being dropped off and walking to school comprise most of the current mode share according to survey results. There are also a small percentage of students who drive themselves and take public transit. Being dropped off saw the largest potential for mode shift among students, representing 73% of the current mode share and dropping to 31% of students' ideal mode of transportation. Driving oneself also saw a large mode shift, from 4% of the current mode share to 31% of students' ideal mode. Bicycling also saw a large mode shift, from 0% of current mode share to 17% of students' ideal mode of transportation. This shows opportunities for improving the bicycling environment to encourage more students to ride to school. In addition, the desire to drive oneself signals a latent demand for independent travel, which could be met (in part) by non-auto options if improvements to walking and bicycling infrastructure were made.

![](_page_20_Figure_3.jpeg)

Figure 15. Potential for Student Mode Shift, Reported by Parents

![](_page_20_Picture_5.jpeg)

Mode share results among parents aligned with the student responses that showed driving students to school and students walking as the predominant modes of transportation. Parents also shared that a small percentage of student's bike, drive themselves, and take the school bus. "Student Takes School Bus" saw the largest mode shift among parents, representing 1% of the current mode share and growing to 39% of parent's ideal mode of transportation. "Student Bikes" also grew from 2% to 6%. These trends present an opportunity for improved access and availability of non-auto modes, particularly as it relates to school bus access. "Student Walks" comprised a smaller share of ideal mode of transportation at 9% compared to 13% of current mode share, however it remained the third most popular mode among parents. "Student Drives Self" grew from 1% of current mode share to 10% of ideal mode.

No staff members at South El Monte High School provided survey responses. Due to the low response rate among staff across all schools, a graph of the staff responses across all surveyed high schools is below, representing fifteen total staff responses.

![](_page_21_Figure_2.jpeg)

Figure 16. Staff Mode Shift Across the District

#### **Reported Safety Concerns**

Survey respondents identified locations where they experienced near-misses with vehicles or streets with safety concerns. Survey mentions were aggregated and mapped, resulting in the identification of key locations. This information helps to inform the locations for project ideas that prioritize safety-related active transportation improvements.

Figure 17 shows key intersections around South El Monte High School. The most frequently cited intersections are Durfee Avenue & SR-60 freeway ramps, as well as Peck Road & Michael Hunt Drive.

Figure 18 shows key corridors where students, parents, and staff reported feeling unsafe. For South El Monte High School respondents, Durfee Avenue is most frequently cited as unsafe, followed by Peck Road and Santa Anita Avenue.

![](_page_21_Picture_8.jpeg)

![](_page_22_Picture_0.jpeg)

- 9 4
- 5 13

14 - 30

Survey Results South El Monte High School-Key Intersections

Figure 17

![](_page_23_Picture_0.jpeg)

Figure 18

Survey Results South El Monte High School-Key Corridors

f

#### **Short-Answer Survey Questions**

The survey also asked respondents open-ended questions related to travel after-school and desired transportation improvements. Students and parents were asked where they often go after-school to get a better idea of students' travel patterns. This information is important, as it helps guide the project development process in cultivating ways to ensure student safety around the school. Figure 19 presents the after-school destinations. The most popular destination was local restaurants, followed by the library.

![](_page_24_Figure_2.jpeg)

Figure 19. After-School Destinations

In response to, the question, "If there were one thing you could change that would make your trip to school easier, safer, more comfortable, or more pleasant, what would it be?" students and parents shared insights on the concerns they have commuting to and from school. The most frequent suggestion from South El Monte High School parents and students was the need for a school bus or public transportation options to the school, followed by an increased traffic enforcement presence. Respondents frequently cited the need for increased traffic enforcement in and around the school, including "More police patrolling incoming or outgoing vehicles" and "Police guarding the streets of Peck Road and Durfee Avenue". Additional crossing guards and surveillance around the school perimeter are also suggested. There are also multiple firsthand accounts detailing the need for improved infrastructure around the school and a lack of traffic enforcement resulting in near-miss experiences that endanger students and residents, and deter families from choosing active modes of transportation. Many of these concerns could be addressed with a school bus system as it would serve as an alternative with a high perception of safety, which emerged as respondents' top priority.

![](_page_24_Picture_5.jpeg)

![](_page_25_Figure_0.jpeg)

Figure 20. Desired Improvements for the Journey to South El Monte High School

The community responses from the figure above show the major opportunities for improvement being the creation or enhancement of school bus and public transportation options, as well as the need for increased security in the school vicinity. Given that walking and biking are two of the students' ideal mode shift, along with parents' ideal mode shift being public transportation, these responses underscore the potential for improvement in these areas.

#### **Community Meetings**

On February 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2021, the project team attended a city coordination meeting with Jana Robbins from TransTech (acting traffic engineer for the City of South El Monte) and Ian McAleese from the City of South El Monte to discuss Active Transportation Projects near South El Monte High School. The team gained an understanding of the concerns near the school and how those can tie into potential improvements discussed in the project development phase. City staff agreed that the freeway ramps from SR-60 were areas that could benefit from pedestrian safety improvements. The project team followed up several times with the City of South El Monte staff to learn more about upcoming projects within the City, but did not receive any additional information before the publication of this Plan.

![](_page_25_Picture_5.jpeg)

### **Project Ideas**

Based on the review of existing conditions and the input offered from the survey, the project team developed a set of targeted recommendations, including infrastructure improvements and programs, to improve active transportation and mobility options around South El Monte High School. El Monte Union High School District has control over the campus conditions but not the public right of way within adjacent cities. Therefore, the District would need to continue to engage with the City of South El Monte and Los Angeles County traffic engineering staff to implement recommended off-campus improvements.

#### **Location-specific Recommendations**

The project team developed the following targeted recommendations in Figure 21 located within a onemile walkshed of the school. Recommendations were prioritized for intersections and corridors that were bicycle and pedestrian collision hotspots, and where survey participants noted they felt unsafe. Table 4 details the intersections and corridor of interest, along with their recommended improvements.

Location	Location Type	Recommended Improvements
Santa Anita Ave. & Michael Hunt Dr.	Intersection	<ul> <li>Extend median to add pedestrian refuge island on south leg of Santa Anita Ave.</li> <li>Update curb ramps on all corners to comply with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards</li> </ul>
Peck Rd. & Michael Hunt Dr.	Intersection	• Convert medians on Peck Rd. to pedestrian refuge islands
Peck Rd. & SR-60 Fwy On-ramp	Intersection	Add high-visibility continental crosswalks
Peck Rd. & SR-60 Fwy Overpass	Intersection	<ul> <li>Add lighting for pedestrians under freeway overpass</li> <li>Improve bicycle connection between Peck Rd. Class IV bikeway and Durfee Ave. bike lanes</li> </ul>
Durfee Ave. & SR-60 Fwy Ramps	Intersection	<ul> <li>Extend median for pedestrian refuge island at freeway entrances and exits</li> <li>Add curb ramps with truncated domes to all curbs at crosswalk to comply with ADA standards</li> </ul>

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![](_page_26_Picture_6.jpeg)

Location	Location Type	Recommended Improvements
Santa Anita Ave. & Fawcett Ave.	Intersection	<ul> <li>Replace crosswalks with high-visibility continental crosswalks</li> <li>Extend median to add pedestrian refuge island on north leg of Santa Anita Ave.</li> <li>Install speed limit signage at intersection</li> </ul>
Santa Anita Ave. & Central Ave.	Intersection	<ul> <li>Install tactile warning pads on all curb ramps to comply with ADA standards</li> </ul>
Fawcett Ave. & Lexham Ave.	Intersection	<ul> <li>Install stop-control in both directions</li> <li>Redesign crosswalk to improve visibility from both directions</li> </ul>
Santa Anita Ave.	Corridor	<ul> <li>Study potential for installation of Class IV bike lane</li> <li>Install high-visibility continental crosswalks</li> </ul>
Durfee Ave.	Corridor	<ul> <li>Upgrade to Class IV bike lanes and refresh all striping</li> <li>Install additional school zone signage along corridor</li> </ul>
SR-60 Pedestrian Bridge	Pathway	<ul> <li>Widen sidewalks and improve accessibility at south entrance on Fawcett Ave.</li> <li>Install additional signage and improve lighting along entry points</li> </ul>

Figure 22 below provides a closer look at what these recommendations could look like on the ground for the intersection of Durfee Avenue and the SR-60 freeway's on and off ramps. As the intersection closest to South El Monte High School, it demonstrates a need for active transportation improvements, particularly for students on foot. Recommended improvements include extending the median between freeway ramps to provide a pedestrian refuge island, as well as installing tactile warning pads at all curb ramps to comply with ADA standards. Additionally, evaluating the feasibility of installing a left turn pocket on the east leg with protected left turn phasing can improve safety and operations, limiting queues that can occur when pedestrians are crossing the freeway ramp crosswalks by giving vehicles a dedicated phase.

![](_page_27_Picture_2.jpeg)

![](_page_28_Figure_0.jpeg)

#### **Project Development Sites**

Intersection

1 Mile Walkshed

Corridor

) Improvement/Recommendation Type

Figure 21

Project Development Recommendations South El Monte High School

![](_page_29_Picture_0.jpeg)

Figure 22

![](_page_29_Picture_2.jpeg)

Conceptual Improvements Intersection of Durfee Ave & 60 Freeway Ramp South El Monte High School

DETAILED ANALYSIS AND ENGINEERING DESIGN REQUIRED.

#### **Recommended Policies & Programs**

In addition to infrastructure recommendations, the following policies and programs provide for broader systemwide improvements to help support and enhance active transportation at the school and local level. Policies and program recommendations include:

- Station additional crossing guards near large intersections during arrival and dismissal times
- Develop off-site drop-off locations with chaperoned routes that pass intersections supported by crossing guards
- Reconfigure drop-off and pick-up circulation patterns to minimize conflicts with students arriving on foot
- Formally communicate and enforce drop-off and pick-up circulation patterns and expectations to parents at multiple times throughout the school year
- Partner with transit agencies to reinstate transit service that directly serves the school and offer reduced transit fare to students or advocate for fare-free transit
- Advocate for city policies to improve near-school intersections with infrastructure that includes more frequent pedestrian crossings, curb ramps, and signal timing review to add leading pedestrian intervals (LPIs) and extend crossing time
- Designate a District staff person to actively engage South El Monte City and Los Angeles County staff around these ideas, emphasizing the importance of improving pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure near schools
- Partner with popular student destinations (nearby restaurants and parks) to offer incentives and discounts for students who walk or bike
- Build transit and biking confidence among students by disseminating information to students through education programs

#### **Example Costs for Recommended Improvements**

The following table provides an overview of example costs<sup>5</sup> associated with typical projects by type, to provide additional information that can support the District in prioritizing project ideas, coordinating with City engineering staff, pursuing grant funding or identifying other funding opportunities.

#### Table 5. Example Costs for Recommended Improvements

Recommended Improvements	Project Type	Cost Estimate
Sidewalk Enhancements	Sidewalks (per mile, one side)	\$1,800,000
Pedestrian Crossing	High-visibility crosswalk	\$5,000

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Costs are based on Fehr & Peers cost estimates of transportation and infrastructure projects from the California market.

![](_page_30_Picture_16.jpeg)

Recommended Improvements	Project Type	Cost Estimate
Enhancements	Painted curb extensions (varying extents)	\$15,000-\$40,000
	Concrete curb extensions (varying extents)	\$100,000-\$125,000
	Rapid rectangular flashing beacon	\$45,000
	Pedestrian hybrid beacon	\$170,000
	Pedestrian signs (per sign)	\$3,000
	Existing signal timing adjustments	\$5,000-\$10,000
	New or upgraded signal	\$400,000-\$500,000
	Reconstruct corners to reduce curb radius and close slip lanes	\$200,000-\$450,000
Speed Management	Re-stripe with narrowed or reconfigured lanes (per mile)	\$300,000
	Roadway lighting (per mile)	\$750,000
Lighting	Pedestrian-scale lighting (per mile)	\$2,000,000
	Intersection lighting	\$40,000
Bicycle Enhancements	Class I bicycle path (per mile)	\$1,847,000
	Class II bicycle lane (per mile)	\$245,000
	Class III bicycle lane (per mile)	\$358,000
	Class IV bicycle lane (per mile)	\$2,634,000

#### Conclusion

Overall, the South El Monte High School analysis highlights some key themes and recommendations for the District to consider:

- Latent demand for bicycling to school has been identified, offering an opportunity to provide more support for students who currently or would consider arriving to school by bicycle
- Safety concerns are a key issue for students, parents, and staff, regardless of mode
- Reinstated transit service would provide additional access benefits for students and staff
- Opportunities exist to partner with local restaurants, the South El Monte Library, and the Whittier Narrows Recreation Area key after-school destinations to encourage walking and bicycling, to install bicycle parking, and to improve the pedestrian environment
- Key intersections of focus include the freeway undercrossing on Peck Road, the freeway ramps on Durfee Avenue and Peck Road, and the freeway overcrossing at Fawcett Avenue
- Key corridors of focus include Durfee Avenue, Peck Road, and Santa Anita Avenue

![](_page_31_Picture_9.jpeg)

- On-campus improvements could focus on information dissemination around drop-off and pickup and options for traveling to school using modes other than a personal car
- Non-infrastructure improvements off-campus could include additional staff/crossing guards, especially located at major intersections around the school
- Coordination with the City of South El Monte and the County of Los Angeles will be necessary to advance off-campus infrastructure improvements to the roadway, sidewalks, intersections, and connection to regional amenities like the Whittier Narrows Recreation Area

The South El Monte High School Mobility & Active Transportation Plan provides a foundation and a roadmap to address school-related mobility needs and provides solutions that will encourage active transportation for both the school and local community. The School District, the City of South El Monte, and the County of Los Angeles should work together to prioritize both infrastructure and policy solutions that will encourage safer, more active, and sustainable transportation options for students and families.

![](_page_32_Picture_4.jpeg)

# Appendix A: Glossary of Active Transportation Terms

Term	Description	
Class III Bike Route	Class III bike routes provide for shared use with motor vehicle traffic either to: (1) provide continuity to other bicycle facilities (typically Class II); or (2) designate preferred routes through high demand corridors. Established with bike route signs and shared roadway markings along the route. <i>Caltrans, 2020</i>	
Class IV Bikeway	Class IV bikeways provide space on the roadway set aside for the exclusive use of bicycles, physically separated from vehicle traffic. Types of separation include, but are not limited to, grade separation, flexible posts, physical barriers, or on-street parking. <i>Fehr &amp; Peers, 2021</i>	
Closed Slip Lane	Modifies the corner of an intersection to remove the sweeping right turn lane for vehicles. Results in shorter crossings for pedestrians, reduced speed for turning vehicles, better sight lines, and space for landscaping and other amenities. <i>Fehr &amp; Peers, 2021</i>	
Curb Extensions	Widens the sidewalk at intersections or midblock crossings to shorten the pedestrian crossing distance, to make pedestrians more visible to vehicles, and to reduce the speed of turning vehicles at intersections. <i>Fehr &amp; Peers, 2021</i>	

![](_page_33_Picture_2.jpeg)

Term	Description
High-Visibility Crosswalk	A crosswalk that is designed to be more visible to approaching drivers. Crosswalks should be designed with continental markings and use high-visibility material, such as inlay tape or thermoplastic tape instead of paint.
	Fehr & Peers, 2021
In-Roadway Warning Lights (IRWL)	In-Roadway Lights are special types of highway traffic signals installed in the roadway surface to warn road users that they are approaching a condition on or adjacent to the roadway that might not be readily apparent and might require the road users to slow down and/or come to a stop.
	MOTCD, 2005
Lane Narrowing	A reduction in lane width produces a traffic calming effect by encouraging motorists to travel at slower speeds, lowering the risk of collision with bicyclists, pedestrians, and other motorists. <i>Fehr &amp; Peers, 2021</i>
Leading Pedestrian Interval (LPI)	Gives people walking a head start, making them more visible to drivers turning right or left. "WALK" signal comes on a few seconds before drivers get a green light. May be used in combination with No Right Turn on Red restrictions. <i>Fehr &amp; Peers, 2021</i>
Pedestrian Refuge Island	Pedestrian refuge islands provide a protected area for pedestrians at the center of the roadway within a marked crosswalk. They reduce the exposure time for pedestrians crossing the road. They simplify crossings by allowing pedestrians to focus on one direction of traffic at a time.

![](_page_34_Picture_1.jpeg)

Term	Description
Pedestrian Scramble	A form of pedestrian "WALK" phase at a signalized intersection in which all vehicular traffic is required to stop, allowing pedestrians to safely cross through the intersection in any direction, including diagonally. <i>Fehr &amp; Peers, 2021</i>
Rectangular Rapid-Flashing Beacon (RRFB)	A Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon (RRFB) is a pedestrian- actuated conspicuity enhancement used in combination with a pedestrian, school, or trail crossing warning sign to improve safety at uncontrolled, marked crosswalks. The device includes two rectangular shaped yellow indications, each with an LED-array- based light source, that flash with high frequency when activated. <i>FHWA</i> , 2018
Lane Reconfiguration (Road Diet)	Depending on the street, a lane reconfiguration, sometimes called a road diet, may change the number of lanes, turn lanes, center turn lanes, bike lanes, parking lanes, and/or sidewalks. Lane reconfigurations optimize street space to benefit all users by reallocating excess travel lanes, improving the safety and comfort of pedestrians and bicyclists, and reducing vehicle speeds and the potential for rear end collisions. <i>Fehr &amp; Peers, 2021</i>
Stop Bar	A stop bar is a solid white line extending across approach lanes to indicate the point at which the stop is intended or required to be made. A stop bar should be placed to allow sufficient sight distance to all other approaches to an intersection. <i>MUTCD, 2003</i>

![](_page_35_Picture_1.jpeg)

Term	Description
Tactile Warning Pad	Tactile warning pads (sometimes called "truncated domes" or "warning domes") are applied to provide pedestrians physical notice that they are about to enter the roadway environment; these applications need to be detectable underfoot or by a long cane. The tactile warning should be complimented with a visual warning, as the use of a contrasting color will increase its conspicuity to pedestrians whose sight is limited but who are not completely blind. <i>ITE, 2015</i>
Walkshed	A walkshed is the area around a school – or any central destination—that is reachable on foot for the average person, typically up to ¼ or ½ mile, depending on the destination. <i>MWCOG, 2019</i>

![](_page_36_Picture_1.jpeg)

# Fehr / Peers

# Appendix B: El Monte Union High Schools Transportation Survey

The California Air Resources Board (CARB) awarded \$9.8 million dollars to implement the Clean Mobility in Schools Pilot Project in disadvantaged neighborhoods throughout El Monte Union High School District. The Clean Mobility in Schools Pilot Project will provide all electric school buses, school bus charging infrastructure, and other clean mobility options throughout the District. The Clean Mobility in Schools Pilot Project is part of California Climate Investments, a statewide program that puts billions of Cap-and-Trade dollars to work reducing greenhouse gas emissions, strengthening the economy and improving public health and the environment — particularly in disadvantaged communities.

We want to make our schools safer and easier to get to. Help us make the best plan to get you or your student to school by taking this survey. The survey should take about 5 minutes. To thank you, we have a raffle for a \$25 Gift Card from a local store in the El Monte Union High School District community. A winner will be selected from each of the student, parent, and staff/teacher groups.

Answer the survey questions as if we are holding in-person classes (pre-COVID).

- 1. Survey Language Preference/Preferencia de idioma de la encuesta
  - a. English (Inglés)
  - b. Spanish (Español)
  - c. Chinese
  - d. Vietnamese

If select D will be redirected to this survey.

- 2. Choose the option that best describes you:
  - a. I'm a student
  - b. I'm a parent or guardian with a student at this school
  - c. I'm a teacher
  - d. I'm a school employee

#### <u>Student Survey</u>

- 1. What school do you attend?
  - a. El Monte High School

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![](_page_38_Picture_1.jpeg)

- b. Ledesma High School
- c. South El Monte High School
- d. Rosemead High School
- e. Arroyo High School
- f. Mountain View High School
- g. Granada Transition Center
- 2. How do you get to school most days?
  - a. Walking
  - b. Biking
  - c. I get dropped off
  - d. I drive myself
  - e. I carpool with another driver
  - f. Public transit
  - g. School bus
- 3. In an ideal world, how would you prefer to get to school?
  - a. Walking
  - b. Biking
  - c. Getting dropped off
  - d. Driving myself
  - e. Carpooling with another driver
  - f. Public transit
  - g. School bus
  - h. Other
- 4. Are there streets that feel unsafe when traveling to school? If so, please list the street in the box below along with why/how it feels unsafe. For example, cars speed on the street or there isn't enough time for you to cross the street.
  - a. [comment box here]
- 5. What places do you go after school? This can be a restaurant, library, park, or other places.
  - a. [comment box here]
- 6. Are there locations where you have experienced close calls with getting hit by a car on your way to or from school? If so, please list them below.
  - a. [comment box here]
- 7. What are some of the streets you use on your way to school?

![](_page_39_Picture_1.jpeg)

- a. [comment box here]
- 8. If there were one thing you could change that would make your trip to school easier, safer, more comfortable, or more pleasant, what would it be?
- 9. Thank you for taking the survey! Don't forget to provide your email to be entered into the raffle! (optional)
  - a. [enter email]

#### Parent Survey

- 1. What school does your student attend?
  - a. El Monte High School
  - b. Ledesma High School
  - c. South El Monte High School
  - d. Rosemead High School
  - e. Arroyo High School
  - f. Mountain View High School
  - g. Granada Transition Center
- 2. How does your student get to school?
  - a. Walking
  - b. Biking
  - c. I or another family member drop them off
  - d. They drive themselves
  - e. They carpool with another driver
  - f. Public transit
  - g. School bus
- 3. In an ideal world, how would you prefer your student get to school?
  - a. Walking
  - b. Biking
  - c. Getting dropped off
  - d. Driving themself
  - e. Carpooling with another driver
  - f. Public transit
  - g. School bus
  - h. Other

![](_page_40_Picture_1.jpeg)

- 4. Are there streets that seem unsafe when traveling to your student's school? If so, please list the street in the box below along with why/how it feels unsafe. For example, cars speed on the street or there isn't enough time for you to cross the street.
  - a. [comment box here]
- 5. What places does your student go after school? This can be a restaurant, library, park, or other places.
  - a. [comment box here]
- 6. Are there locations where you have experienced close calls with getting hit by a car on your way to or from your student's school? If so, please list them below.
  - a. [comment box here]
- What are some of the streets you use on your way to school?
   b. [comment box here]
- 8. If there were one thing you could change that would make your trip to your student's school easier, safer, more comfortable, or more pleasant, what would it be?
- 9. Thank you for taking the survey! Don't forget to provide your email to be entered into the raffle! (optional)
  - a. [enter email]

#### School Employee and Teacher Survey

- 1. What school do you work at?
  - a. El Monte High School
  - b. Ledesma High School
  - c. South El Monte High School
  - d. Rosemead High School
  - e. Arroyo High School
  - f. Mountain View High School
  - g. Granada Transition Center
- 2. How do you get to school?
  - a. Walking
  - b. Biking
  - c. I drive myself
  - d. I carpool with another driver

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![](_page_41_Picture_1.jpeg)

- e. I get dropped off
- f. Public transit
- 3. In an ideal world, how would you prefer to get to school?
  - a. Walking
  - b. Biking
  - c. Driving myself
  - d. Carpooling with another driver
  - e. Public transit
  - f. School bus
- 4. Are there streets that seem unsafe when traveling to campus? If so, please list the street in the box below along with why/how it feels unsafe. For example, cars speed on the street or there isn't enough time for you to cross the street.
  - a. [comment box here]
- 5. What places do you go after work near the school? This can be a restaurant, library, park, or other places.
  - a. [comment box here]
- 6. Are there locations where you have experienced close calls with getting hit by a car on your way to or from school? If so, please list them below.
  - a. [comment box here]
- 7. What are some of the streets you use on your way to school?
  - a. [comment box here]
- 8. If there were one thing you could change that would make your trip to school easier, safer, more comfortable, or more pleasant, what would it be?