

Walnut Park Safe Routes to School Action Plan

2018



Berkeley SafeTREC
SAFE TRANSPORTATION RESEARCH AND EDUCATION CENTER



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1. INTRODUCTION

Community organizations, local agencies, and community members have been working to improve health, safety, and quality of life for residents including children and youth throughout Walnut Park. Safe Routes to School aims to create safe, convenient, and fun opportunities for students to walk, bike, and roll to and from school. This includes a wide variety of programs and projects, from creating enhanced street crossings and maintaining sidewalks to education and encouragement programs that teach children how to walk and bicycle safely to school.

Supporting students walking, biking, and rolling to and from school is a top community priority. Schools in Walnut Park have participated in events such as Walk to School Day. Communitywide, the County of Los Angeles, with technical assistance from the Southern California Association of Governments, hosted a Go Human demonstration event in June 2018. Through the [Community Pedestrian Plan for Walnut Park](#) included in the [Step by Step LA County: Pedestrian Plans for Unincorporated Communities](#), the County of Los Angeles has proposed infrastructure improvements near and along routes to schools in Walnut Park. In addition, the Plan includes short, medium and long term steps to enhance the County's Safe Routes to School efforts, including developing a website to provide resources such as suggested routes to school maps, how to request a crossing guard, info on infrastructure projects. However, there is not a formal Safe Routes to School program or framework established at any of the schools that serve Walnut Park.

A. THE SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL LAUNCH PROGRAM

In the spring of 2018, the YWCA Greater Los Angeles (YWCA GLA) and community partners began participating in the Safe Routes to School Launch Program, a joint project of the Safe Routes to School National Partnership (National Partnership) and UC Berkeley Safe Transportation Research and Education Center (SafeTREC) designed to help start strong and sustainable Safe Routes to School programs in California communities. As part of the Safe Routes to School Launch Program, the National Partnership gathered and analyzed data and local policies and interviewed key stakeholders. A workshop brought together representatives from the County of Los Angeles Departments of Public Health and Public Works, Office of First District Supervisor Hilda Solis, California Highway Patrol, and community members to learn

about Safe Routes to School and discuss strategies for developing a robust, comprehensive program in Walnut Park.

B. ABOUT THIS ACTION PLAN

This Safe Routes to School Action Plan is intended to guide Walnut Park in developing a robust and sustainable Safe Routes to School program that addresses local needs. The Action Plan was developed based on planning and input that took place at the Safe Routes to School Launch Workshop, the National Partnership’s assessment of current conditions, community needs and capacity, and a series of conversations with key stakeholders. Recommendations in the Action Plan are based upon the components needed to build a successful Safe Routes to School initiative and sustainable program. The most successful Safe Routes to School initiatives incorporate the Safe Routes to School Six E’s framework: education, encouragement, engineering, enforcement, evaluation, and equity.

The Action Plan begins with a summary of current conditions related to walking and biking to school, including existing policies, plans, programs, and infrastructure. The second section of the Action Plan outlines recommended strategies and actions to be undertaken in Walnut Park during the first implementation year (2018-2019) as well as additional longer-term actions in years two through five. A summary matrix includes potential implementation leaders and partners and suggested resources. Finally, a brief discussion of funding resources for implementation is provided. Additional information is provided in a number of appendices:

- Appendix A: Action Plan Matrix
- Appendix B: Existing Policies and Plans
- Appendix C: Pedestrian and Bicycle Collision Data
- Appendix D: Workshop Summary

The Six E’s of Safe Routes to School

Research shows that comprehensive Safe Routes to School initiatives are effective at increasing physical activity and reducing injuries for children. A comprehensive approach requires embedding Safe Routes to School into many aspects of a community. The Six E’s of Safe Routes to School are a convenient way to summarize the key components of a comprehensive, integrated approach. The Six E’s of Safe Routes to School include:

- **Education** – Teaching students and community members about the broad range of transportation choices, providing them with the skills to walk and bicycle, and educating them about how to be safe from traffic, crime, and other threats while using different methods of transportation.
- **Encouragement** – Using events and activities to promote walking, bicycling, public transportation, and being physically active.
- **Engineering** – Creating physical improvements to the streetscape and built environment that make walking and bicycling more comfortable and convenient, and that also decrease the risk of injury from motor vehicles or people, increasing street safety.
- **Enforcement** –Addressing traffic dangers and crime concerns in the neighborhood around the school and along school routes through work with local law enforcement, crossing guards, and community members.
- **Evaluation** – Assessing which approaches are more or less successful, ensuring that a program or initiative is decreasing health disparities and increasing equity, and identifying unintended consequences or opportunities to improve the effectiveness of an approach for a given community.
- **Equity** – Ensuring that Safe Routes to School initiatives are benefiting all demographic groups, with particular attention to ensuring safe, healthy, and fair outcomes for low-income communities, communities of color, students of all genders, students with disabilities, and others.

2. WALNUT PARK TODAY

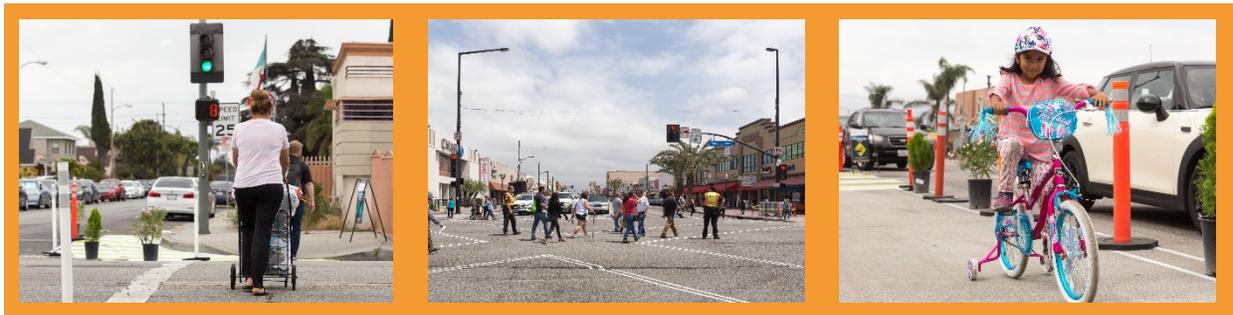
This section provides an overview of the current conditions in Walnut Park. It describes the current policies and plans, Safe Routes to School and related programs, existing infrastructure for walking and bicycling, and collision history in the unincorporated county area.

A. OVERVIEW

Currently, most students in Walnut Park arrive to school via car or walking. Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) schools that serve Walnut Park include: Walnut Park Elementary School, Hope Street Elementary School, Gage Middle School, Walnut Park Middle School, State Street Elementary School, Liberty Boulevard Elementary School, and Huntington Park High School. Additionally, two LAUSD authorized public charter schools, Alliance Margaret M. Bloomfield High School and Academia Moderna are located in Walnut Park. The nine schools have a combined enrollment of approximately 7,495 students. Safe Routes to School initiatives would fit in with other community initiatives, such as efforts by the County to improve bicycle and pedestrian facilities communitywide. Many areas of the County's Community Pedestrian Plan for Walnut Park consider the important role of schools in the community. While the County is considering infrastructure changes, there are opportunities to advance Safe Routes to School at individual schools and across the community through partnerships, policies, and program implementation.

B. COMMUNITY HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Safe Routes to School has the potential to address health challenges related to physical inactivity for students as well as the broader community. Around 15 percent of children ages 2-11 are overweight in Walnut Park, compared to 12 percent in Los Angeles County. Among Walnut Park residents ages 12-17, 40 percent are overweight or obese versus 38 percent countywide. Adult obesity rates are also higher in Walnut Park than the county average—36 percent versus 26 percent, respectively.¹ These health disparities have prompted the County to take action through policies and planning, and to think critically about how it prioritizes investments in walking and biking infrastructure. Organizations like the YWCA GLA are also working on numerous initiatives at the community level to improve health and wellness for community members.



¹ [http://www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/place/stepbystep/docs/5_Walnut_Park_Community_Ped_Plan_\(Summer%202017\).pdf](http://www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/place/stepbystep/docs/5_Walnut_Park_Community_Ped_Plan_(Summer%202017).pdf)

C. EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE FOR WALKING AND BIKING

Walnut Park is a small, unincorporated community in Los Angeles County that encompasses less than one square mile. As one of the densest communities in the county, Walnut Park consists primarily of residential areas, in addition to commercial areas along major roads, including Pacific Boulevard and Florence Avenue. For the most part, key services and local amenities, including Walnut Nature Park, are within walking distance from the residential areas. Yet issues with accessibility and community perceptions of safety make it challenging for residents to rely on active transportation to move around the around community efficiently.

The Community Pedestrian Plan for Walnut Park developed by the County of Los Angeles features an analysis of the existing pedestrian environment based on data and walk audits. Findings indicate that traffic volumes on roads that residents rely on for access to commercial goods and services, like Pacific Boulevard, are high. Additionally, vehicle speeds exceeding the posted limit are also common. Collision data confirms that these issues result in barriers to walking and can have serious health and safety implications.

Most streets in Walnut Park have sidewalks in place, but residents still experience challenges getting around on foot in many areas. These challenges include sidewalk gaps, narrow sidewalks, undesirable levels of lighting, and sidewalk obstructions. The plan found that marked crosswalks exist primarily at intersections along major and minor streets. There are also opportunities to enhance line-of-sight, and address deteriorating striping, lack of signage, and American with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance. Traffic signals are in place at most major intersections, but some signals at intersections controlled in part or whole by neighboring jurisdictions lack countdown pedestrian signals. Lack of pedestrian-scale lighting is another challenge that residents identify as a barrier to pedestrian activity, as currently most lighting in the community is oriented towards the street and not sidewalks. A lack of tree canopy along sidewalks throughout Walnut Park also deters residents from walking.

As part of the development of the Community Pedestrian Plan for Walnut Park, two community workshops and walk audits were conducted. Workshop participants identified the following concerns and opportunities:

- Need for more traffic enforcement
- High level of crime in the community
- Issues related to homeless encampments
- Unattractive pedestrian environment
- No buffer or physical barrier between the sidewalks and street
- Lack of safe passages for students
- Narrow sidewalks
- Desire for pedestrian-scale lighting on major streets

Workshop participants also identified the following requests for pedestrian improvements:

- Traffic calming measures
- Pedestrian lighting
- Walking paths
- Continental crosswalks

- Street trees
- Median refuge islands
- Pedestrian-activated warning systems
- Countdown pedestrian signals

In addition, a community survey identified the following challenges with walking in Walnut Park:

- Undesirable levels of lighting
- Fear of theft or robbery
- Fear of physical violence
- Undesirable number of marked crosswalks

Potential solutions identified by survey participants included:

- Additional lighting and more community policing
- Better maintained sidewalks
- More trees and shade along sidewalks
- Intersection enhancements

A series of proposed pedestrian improvement projects were developed based on community input on key concerns and opportunities for improvement. The proposed projects include crossing enhancements, sidewalk improvements, increased accessibility, curb extensions, and identifying areas that need further study. A detailed breakdown of these improvements, including estimated cost can be found in the Community Pedestrian Plan for Walnut Park. Figure 1 shows an overview of the proposed pedestrian enhancements.

There are few bicycle facilities in Walnut Park. The County of Los Angeles Bicycle Master Plan examines existing facilities and outlines a proposed network for unincorporated areas of the county. Figure 2 shows these facilities for the Metro Planning Area, includes Walnut Park. Similar to most other unincorporated communities in this planning area, there are no existing bike networks. Proposed facilities include primarily Class II bike lanes.

Figure 8 9: Map of proposed pedestrian improvements in Walnut Park

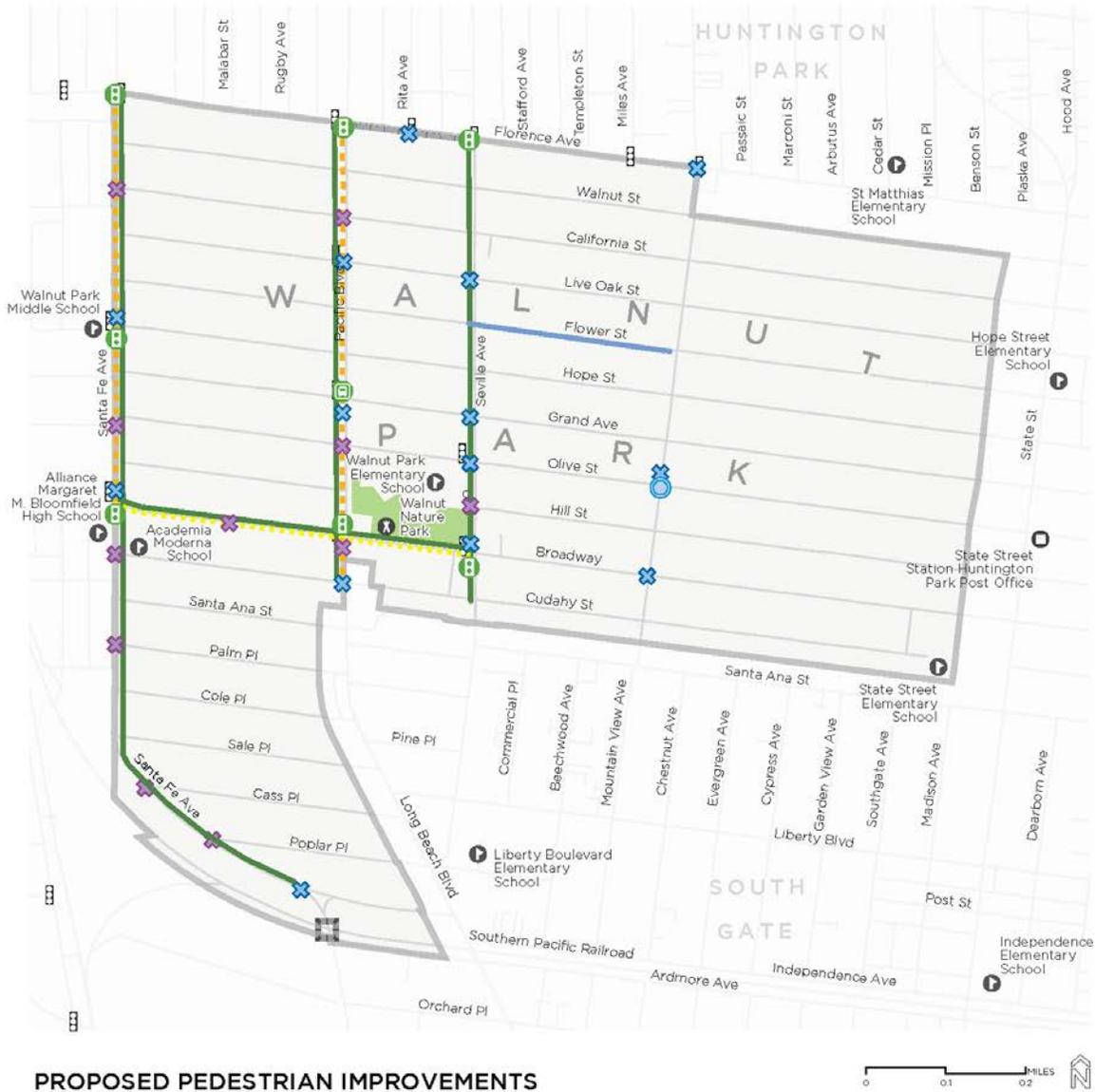


Figure 1.

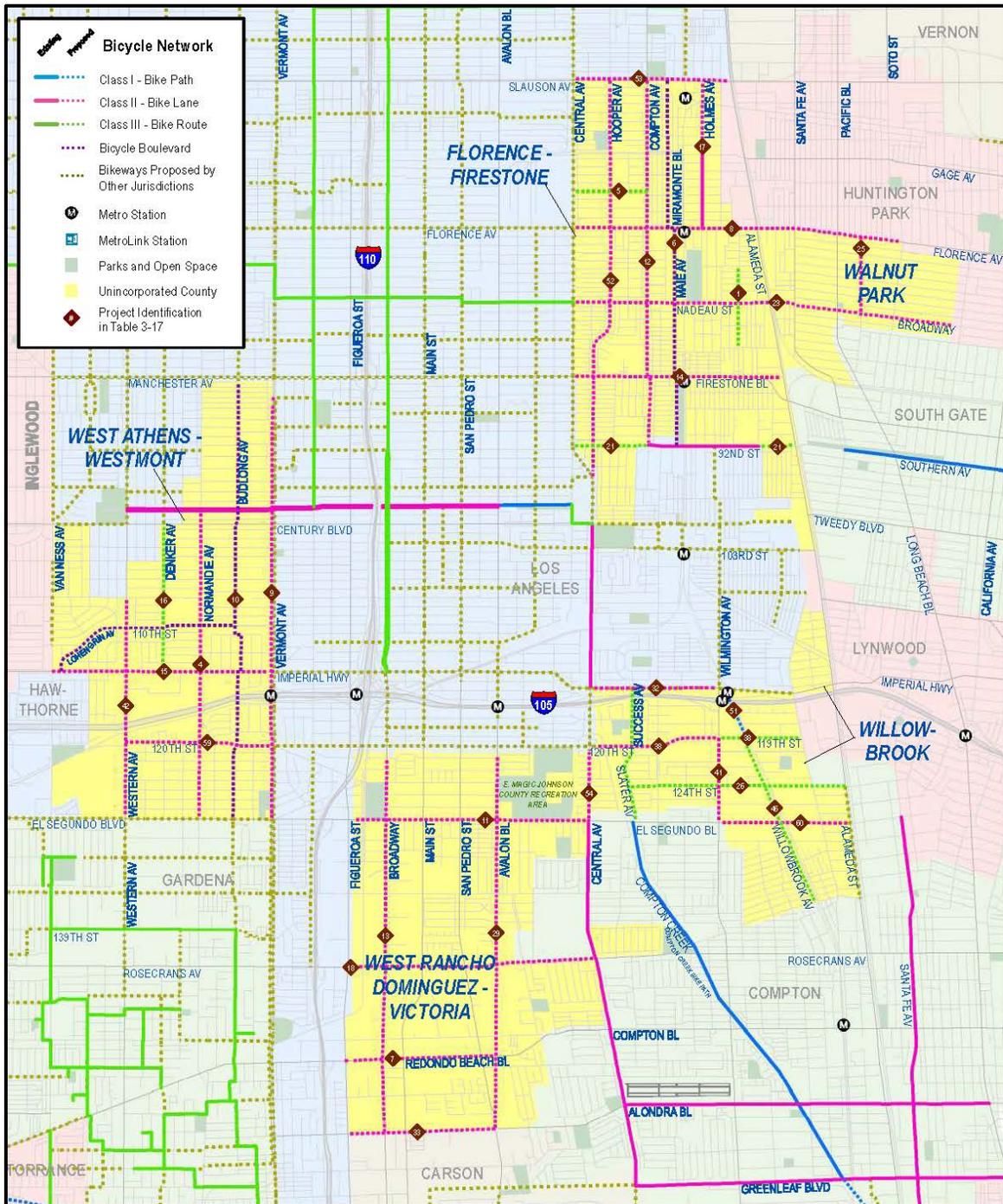


Figure 3-20: Florence-Firestone, Walnut Park, West Athens-Westmont, West Rancho Dominguez-Victoria and Willowbrook Proposed Bicycle Facilities

Los Angeles County Bicycle Master Plan
 Source: Los Angeles Metro (2006, 2010); Alta Planning + Design (2010)
 Date: 10/13/11

Alta Planning + Design | 88

Figure 2.

D. PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE COLLISION HISTORY

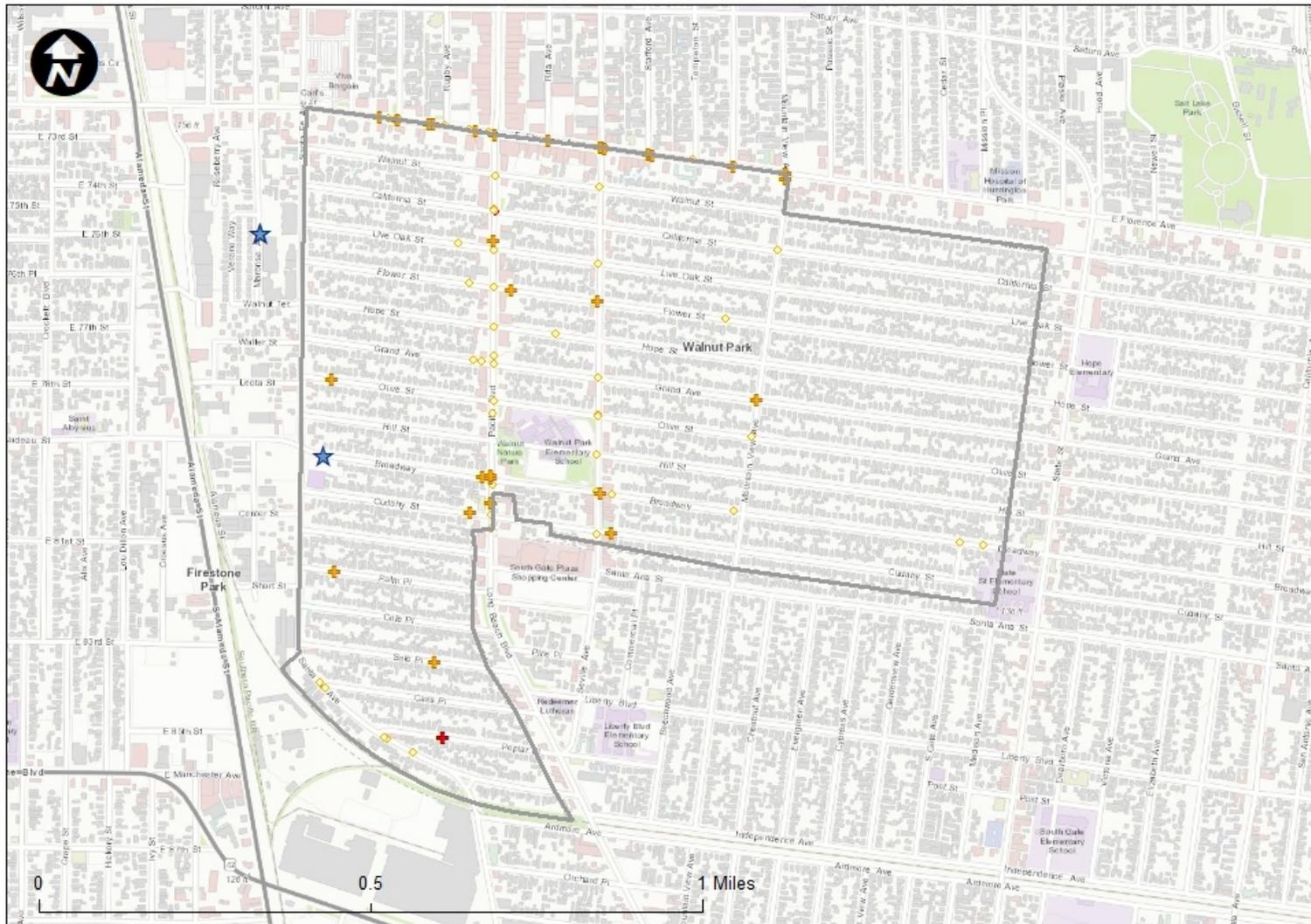
Between 2007 and 2016, there were a total of 78 injuries and 3 fatalities resulting from pedestrian and bicycle collisions in Walnut Park. Overall, pedestrian collisions appear to have declined since 2012, as there have been no pedestrian collisions involving school-age victims since. For pedestrian collisions not involving a school-age victim, the three-year moving average has fallen steadily from a peak of eight collisions in 2011 to a low of three collisions in 2015. In contrast, bicycle collisions appear to have been broadly stable over the past decade, with an average of one to two collisions involving a school-age victim each year and an average of two to three collisions not involving a school-age victim each year.

There were numerous pedestrian collisions along Pacific Boulevard, most of which included severe injuries. On this road, there were clusters of collisions at intersections with Broadway, Grand, and Florence Avenues. Half of all pedestrian collisions that involved school-age victims were located on Pacific Boulevard at intersections with Broadway and Florence Avenues. Most of the other collisions that involved school-age pedestrians occurred on or near Seville and Santa Fe Avenues. With bicycle collisions, there are also clusters at intersections along Pacific Boulevard with Broadway and Florence Avenues. These are also the two intersections where bicycle-involved injury collisions involving school-age victims occurred. Bicycle collisions were also concentrated on other roadways. Many collisions, including the one severe injury collision, occurred on or near Pacific Boulevard. The remaining bicycle collisions were on Broadway or Mountain View Avenues.

Between 2013 and 2017, there were 30 injured victims in 23 pedestrian collisions, including 27 pedestrians and three motor vehicle passengers. Of the 27 pedestrian victims, six (22.2%) were severely injured. About half (13) of these 27 victims of pedestrian collisions were female. Over one-quarter of the victims of pedestrian collisions were 19 years old or younger, including five male and two female victims. There were 22 victims in 21 bicycle collisions during the same time period, including 21 bicyclists and one motor vehicle driver. All victims suffered a minor injury. Of the 21 bicycle victims, 85.7% were male and one-fifth were 19 years old or younger - all of the younger victims were male.

More information about the collisions, including communitywide maps, and data trends, are provided in Appendix C.

Walnut Park - Pedestrian or Bicycle Collisions (2007-2016)



Schools by % FRPM Pedestrian/Bicycle Collisions

- ★ Low Income (>75) (3)
- ✚ Fatality (age 5-18) (1)
- ✚ Injury (age 5-18) (31)
- ◊ Fatality (other) (2)
- ◊ Injury (other) (72)

Collision Data Source: SWITRS 2007-2016
Figure 3.

E. LOCAL POLICIES AND PLANS RELATED TO SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL

The County of Los Angeles and LAUSD have adopted policies and plans that incorporate and support Safe Routes to School, but these policies have potential to be strengthened. County plans, including Step by Step LA County; Pedestrian Plans for Unincorporated Communities, the Bicycle Master Plan, and the General Plan Mobility Element, feature discussion on Safe Routes to School and different levels of approaches in implementation of such programs. For example, the Step by Step LA County plan provides a series of strategic recommendations to implement a Safe Routes to School Program, while the Community Pedestrian Plan for Walnut Park also identifies specific infrastructure enhancement opportunities near schools in Walnut Park. The County of Los Angeles Bicycle Master Plan and County of Los Angeles General Plan Mobility Element include goals and policies to support bicycle safety, encouragement, education, and community support and could be enhanced upon by more specifically addressing schools and the LAUSD. Outlining strategies that support better coordination and leadership in Safe Routes to School planning would also be beneficial.

LAUSD has a Wellness Policy that includes language that supports Safe Routes to School, although the language is weak and could be improved by addressing implementation, leadership, and collaboration. LAUSD's Transportation Policy is also limited in language and has opportunity to expand its coverage of encouraging walking and biking to school. Additionally, the LAUSD website provides background information on Safe Routes to School and encourages travel along designated safe walking routes near individual school locations.

More information about the existing policies and plans can be found in Appendix B.

F. SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL PROGRAMS AND RELATED EFFORTS

The County of Los Angeles currently does not have coordinated Safe Routes to School programming, but provides suggested routes to school maps. In addition, DPW helps coordinate the County's school crossing guard program in partnership with the Los Angeles County Office of Education. Walnut Park is served by LAUSD schools, but the community is not included in strategic communitywide Safe Routes to School planning that the District is a part of. For example, LAUSD is a key partner in the [City of Los Angeles Safe Routes to School Program](#). While the City's effort has led to strategic plans and actions on Safe Routes to School, this coordination does not include the unincorporated communities in the County of Los Angeles. For example, the listing of [Pedestrian Routes to School](#) on LAUSD's website does not include any schools that serve Walnut Park. Still, the City's strategic approach to Safe Routes to School and inclusion of LAUSD as an essential partner creates a solid foundation for County stakeholders to replicate.



Participation in Safe Routes to School activities in Walnut Park has been limited and overall could use more support from parents and community members. Leadership from community organizations like YWCA GLA helped Walnut Park Elementary School, Walnut Park Middle School, and Academia Moderna Charter School to successfully collaborate and host Walk to School Day events from 2015 to 2017. The County supported these events by providing guidance on

event day activities and programming, such as a walking school bus. The community also had success in June 2018 when the County hosted the Camina en Walnut Park event, in association with the Southern California Association of Governments. The 4-hour long demonstration event brought together community residents and other stakeholders to experience firsthand what biking and walking infrastructure enhancements could look like in their community. The event also exposed residents to education and encouragement programming.

Community Profile: Walnut Park

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| <p>Population: 15,966</p> <p>Land area: 0.75 square miles</p> <p>Race and ethnicity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> White 1.7% Black or African American 0.2% Asian 0.5% American Indian and Alaska Native 0.1% Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander 0% Some other race 0.1% Two or more races 0.1% Hispanic or Latino 97.4% <p>Languages spoken at home*:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> English only 6.9% Spanish 91.5% Asian and Pacific Islander Languages 1.3% | <p>Poverty status*:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> General population: 20.5% living below poverty level Ages <18 years old: 32.1% living below poverty level <p>Los Angeles Unified School District: 1,147 schools total, serving over 734,641 students. Serving Walnut Park:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 Elementary Schools (K-5) • 2 Junior High School (6-8) • 1 High School (9-12) • 2 Charter Schools (K-5 & 9-12) <p>Free or Reduced Price Meals Eligibility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walnut Park Elementary School 93.8% • Hope Street Elementary School 90.8% • Gage Middle School 96.0% • Walnut Park Middle School 94.8% • Huntington Park High School: 94.4% • Alliance Margaret M. Bloomfield High School 93.4% • Academia Moderna 90.8% |
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**2016 Five-Year American Community Survey*



G. COMMUNITY WORKSHOP OVERVIEW

The community workshop held on Saturday July 14, 2018 hosted by Safe Routes to School National Partnership at the YWCA revealed numerous findings that inform this Action Plan. A few key themes that came forward include:

- Traffic safety challenges – Speeding and high traffic volumes create a challenging environment for pedestrians. An increase in police presence and expanded crossing guard locations could enhance the pedestrian environment for students and families to walk to school.
- Opportunities to enhance infrastructure – Sidewalk and street intersections could be enhanced with features that make walking comfortable (e.g. pedestrian-scale lighting, traffic signals, high-visibility crosswalks).
- Opportunities to enhance bicycle facilities – A lack of bike lanes and bike racks at schools make it challenging for students who would like to ride their bikes to school to do so.
- Education opportunities – Residents are engaged in Walnut Park and could benefit from expanded education on the benefits of walking and biking. School curriculum should also educate students on opportunities to make biking and walking to school safer.

A full summary of the workshop can be found in Appendix D.

3. THE PATH TO SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL: APPROACHES AND ACTIONS

Implementation of Safe Routes to School initiatives in Walnut Park have been limited to date. Small scale activities have been conducted at a few schools and through local community events, but comprehensive activities have not been sustained because of a lack of ongoing leadership and support. However, community organizations like YWCA GLA, with support from various County entities, are interested and poised to begin developing a Safe Routes to School program that can grow to be comprehensive and in multiple schools. The County brings to the table a host of planning and policy that can support efforts such as Safe Routes to School, in addition to technical knowledge and experience in coordinating and implementing education and safety campaigns. These stakeholders are ready to work with community members to begin activities in all of the Six E's of Safe Routes to School.

This Action Plan summarizes recommended strategies and actions. The Action Plan is structured around the Six E's of Safe Routes to School: education, encouragement, engineering, enforcement, evaluation, and equity. In addition, the Action Plan includes activities related to program structure, operations, and coordination, as well as policy enhancements. Recommendations denoted with an asterisk were actions discussed by workshop participants. The Action Plan includes activities to establish a program framework and start activities at one or two target schools in the short term and then longer term expansion efforts. While the plan is structured this way, it does not preclude the community from implementing a strategy from the longer term sections earlier if an opportunity arises. Implementation of some of the proposed strategies and actions (in particular those pertaining to infrastructure changes) maybe contingent upon environmental analysis, future engineering review, available funding and resources, right-of-way, and obtaining community and political support.

In Appendix A, a matrix summarizes the strategies and actions along with anticipated timeframes, implementation leads, supporting partners, and additional implementation resources.

A. PROGRAM STRUCTURE, OPERATIONS, AND COORDINATION

Establishing a formal program structure with identified responsibilities for various partners is a key component of an effective and sustainable Safe Routes to School Program. This involves determining which organization or agency will take the lead, who will be involved in making program decisions, and how coordination will occur between different groups working on different components of the program. Organizations like YWCA GLA have led various Safe Routes to School activities with support from County agencies, but no formal program structure has been established.

Recommended short term strategies and actions:

1. Determine Safe Routes to School program lead organization. YWCA GLA has taken the lead with activities thus far, but should determine capacity to continue serving as the program lead or to engage other community partners in sharing program leadership. It may also be of benefit to eventually identify a lead staff point person within the lead organization.
2. Establish a Safe Routes to School task force or designate an existing task force/committee to serve as the Walnut Park - Safe Routes to School task force. Recruit members from the County, School District, schools, community leaders, and community organizations. Meet monthly, bi-monthly, or quarterly while building program momentum.
3. Outreach to principals to generate interest in participating in initial activities at one or two target schools.*
4. Establish a shared vision and goals for the Safe Routes to School program.*



Recommended medium and long term strategies and actions:

5. Expand outreach and program to additional schools as interest grows.
6. Create informational materials about the program that could be distributed to community members and families to recruit additional volunteers and program champions. Include information about past activities as well as a menu of options that schools can undertake.*
7. Conduct outreach on Safe Routes to School to school PTAs, community groups, etc.
8. Schedule a training for family members, school staff, and other volunteers and champions on implementing Safe Routes to School activities.*
9. Include Safe Routes to School messaging and resources on individual school webpages.
10. Include a County transportation staff person or other staff involved in active transportation in the School Health Council/Committee.

Recommendations denoted with an asterisk were actions discussed by workshop participants.

11. As the program expands across multiple schools, work with the County and LAUSD to assess staffing and determine need and ability to establish a part time or full time paid Safe Routes to School coordinator position; explore additional funding as needed.

B. EDUCATION

Education activities include teaching students and community members about the broad range of transportation choices, providing them with the skills to walk and bicycle, and educating them about how to be safe from traffic, crime, and other threats while using different methods of transportation. Currently in Walnut Park, YWCA GLA, in collaboration with local community groups and County agencies, has led limited education activities, which include trainings on how to organize a walk to school day event and programs such as a walking school bus.

Recommended short term strategies and actions:

1. Starting with one or two schools, incorporate bike/pedestrian safety education into in-class, on-campus or after-school programs.
2. Develop and distribute traffic safety education materials for families at each school that includes information related to pick-up/drop-off procedures as well as general safety.*
3. Conduct community education events such as family biking events or festivals to cultivate safe walking and bicycling.*

Recommended medium and long term strategies and actions:



4. Establish a volunteer pool or program that trains additional staff and community members to provide bicycle and pedestrian safety education programs.
5. Expand on-campus traffic safety education, with the ultimate goal of providing on-campus education for multiple grades and at all schools.
6. Work with high school students or others to create signage, social media, and/or other campaigns on pedestrian and bicyclist awareness and safety at and around schools.*

C. ENCOURAGEMENT

Encouragement strategies generate excitement about walking and bicycling safely to school. Children, parents, teachers, school administrators, and others can all be involved in special events like International Walk to School Day and ongoing activities like walking school buses and bike trains. Encouragement strategies can often be started relatively easily with little cost and a focus on fun.

Recommended short term strategies and actions:

1. Continue Walk to School events and grow activities to occur at all of the schools that serve Walnut Park.
2. Survey school leaders to identify what types of competition or incentive programs would likely be successful at each school. Include ideas generated at the workshops on lists of potential programs.

Engage businesses and local government agencies to provide materials and resources to each school to implement incentive programs.*

3. At schools with robust participation in Walk to School Day, encourage continued active transit to school by developing walking school bus programs that run monthly, weekly, or more frequently as interest grows.*

Recommended medium and long term strategies and actions:

4. Identify designated remote drop-off/pick-up locations at or near schools. Promote the locations by providing information to families.
5. Review current arrival and dismissal procedures at schools for potential changes such as staggered dismissal to reduce conflicts between students walking and biking with car pick-up/drop-off.

D. ENGINEERING

Engineering strategies create physical enhancements to the neighborhood that make walking and bicycling more comfortable, convenient, and safe. The County has identified proposed projects around schools as part of its Step by Step LA County: Pedestrian Plans for Unincorporated Communities, but there is not a comprehensive Safe Routes to School plan.

Recommended short term strategies and actions:

1. Continue to identify opportunities to include Safe Routes to School enhancements in existing projects and funding applications.
2. Conduct arrival and dismissal observations at target schools with County staff, School District staff, school staff, students and families to identify areas for enhancement.*

Recommended medium and long term strategies and actions:

3. Implement enhancements along school routes as identified in the Community Pedestrian Plan for Walnut Park.
4. Based on the arrival and dismissal assessments, identify opportunities to increase convenient access for students walking and bicycling on campus. This may include improvements on campus to provide direct access from the sidewalk to the bike racks and entry doors or opening gates to allow pedestrian and bicycle access from walkways and other destinations throughout the neighborhood.
5. Develop or update and maintain suggested route to school maps for schools and distribute online and via newsletters.

Sample Observation Worksheet

E. ENFORCEMENT

Enforcement activities deter unsafe behaviors of drivers, bicyclists, and pedestrians and encourage safe behaviors in the neighborhood around the school and along school routes. These activities can be

conducted by law enforcement, in partnership with law enforcement, or may be community-led. California Highway Patrol currently conducts focused traffic law enforcement at the start of the school year and responds to requests for other increased enforcement needs throughout the year.

Recommended short term strategies and actions:

1. Continue current focused traffic enforcement. Coordinate efforts with schools as well as the School District and provide pre- and post-event communication to families and school staff.



Recommended medium and long term strategies and actions:

2. Explore interest in developing school safety patrols where students in upper elementary grades receive traffic safety training, teach their peers, and assist with on campus enforcement activities using program materials from AAA.
3. As part of overall school route and improvement plans, assess needs for adult crossing guards at intersections near schools where students and families express difficulty crossing the street.*
4. Develop crossing guard training program in both English and Spanish so local residents can be trained to serve as crossing guards at prioritized crossing locations. Explore available supportive funding mechanisms.*

F. EVALUATION

Evaluation involves data collection and program tracking to assess which approaches are more or less successful, ensure that a program is meeting its objectives, and identify unintended consequences or opportunities to improve the effectiveness of an approach for the community.

Recommended short term strategies and actions:

1. At the target schools, conduct student travel tallies at the beginning and end of the school year, using the travel tally tool provided by the National Center for Safe Routes to School.*
2. Track Safe Routes to School education and encouragement program participation at target schools. Collection information on overall participation as well as grade level/age and other demographic information. Use this information to assess program effectiveness and identify any needs for improvement.

Recommended medium and long term strategies and actions:

3. Begin conducting a yearly assessment of Safe Routes to School efforts at the end of the school year. Evaluate program effectiveness, including participation by different population groups, changes in behaviors or perceptions around walking and bicycling, and school and community receptiveness to the program components.
4. Expand student travel tallies to multiple schools as they begin participating, using the travel tally tool provided by the National Center for Safe Routes to School.

5. Use mapping tools available from UC Berkeley's TIMS program to map bicycle and pedestrian collisions near schools. Use the collision information to assess changes and identify any needs for improvements communitywide or at specific locations.
6. Share program participation and evaluation results with schools and community members through newsletters or other materials.

G. EQUITY

Equity involves ensuring that Safe Routes to School initiatives are benefiting all demographic groups, with particular attention to ensuring safe, healthy, and fair outcomes for low-income communities, communities of color, and others.

Recommended short term strategies and actions:

1. Continue to prioritize education and encouragement materials to reach non-English speaking students and families. Ensure that education and encouragement materials are provided in Spanish.*

Recommended medium and long term strategies and actions:

2. Given limited ability to roll out a Safe Routes to School program at every school from the start, use equity measures, such as health disparities and eligibility for the free- and reduced-price lunch program, to develop a framework to prioritize schools for education and encouragement program implementation and/or infrastructure enhancements.
3. Use the results of previous year's evaluation efforts to identify gaps in participation. Develop and implement a strategy to ensure all population groups can participate in the Safe Routes to School program. This strategy may include targeted outreach or adjustments to the programs. Look particularly at students generally underrepresented in active travel; e.g., students of color, female students, and students with disabilities.

H. POLICY

Adopting Safe Routes to School policies or incorporating Safe Routes to School practices into existing county, school, and school district policies helps eliminate barriers and ensure long-term sustainability of the Safe Routes to School program. Policies help institutionalize supportive practices, broadening the reach beyond an individual school or activity to reach children and families across a community. This leads to more consistent implementation between schools and neighborhoods, creates accountability, and establishes formal relationships and responsibilities. The County of Los Angeles has strong policies and plans supporting active transportation, and strong language for Safe Routes to School. The Los Angeles Unified School District has limited language supporting Safe Routes to School within its policies. Both agencies have solid foundations for creating a Safe Routes to School program that involves the County and district. However, overall there remain clear opportunities to strengthen this language during updates as well as in implementation.

Recommended short term strategies and actions:

1. Implement education, encouragement, and communications activities described in LAUSD's Wellness Policy and use these activities to support Safe Routes to School initiatives.
2. Include a Safe Routes to School coordinator or County transportation professional in the School Health Council/Committee.

3. Include a link to Safe Routes to School messaging and resources on the LAUSD's Transportation Policy webpage.

Recommended medium and long term strategies and actions:

4. Work with LAUSD to encourage the inclusion of schools in unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County and other cities in the LAUSD Board or Education resolution that only prioritizes collaboration between LAUSD and the City of Los Angeles. (See: [Supporting Safe Routes to School, Vision Zero, and Walk to School Day \(Res-025-16/17\)](#)).

4. POTENTIAL FUNDING RESOURCES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

The following are potential funding sources and mechanisms that may be used to implement the Safe Routes to School Action Plan. The list is not exhaustive as additional funding sources and innovative mechanisms may develop during the life of the plan.

A. CALIFORNIA ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM

The California Active Transportation Program (ATP) consolidates federal transportation funding with state funds to provide local communities with funding for programs and projects that support active transportation. Safe Routes to School non-infrastructure programs such as traffic safety education and encouragement activities, as well as infrastructure improvements can be funded through the program. The funding is provided through a competitive application process. There is a statewide application process as well as a regional component administered by the Southern California Association of Governments

B. CALIFORNIA OFFICE OF TRAFFIC SAFETY

The California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) provides grants to local and state public agencies for programs that help them enforce traffic laws, educate the public in traffic safety, and provide means of reducing fatalities, injuries and economic losses from collisions. Funding can be used for Safe Routes to School education and encouragement programs. Historically, OTS has funded numerous bike rodeo (bike skills practice) programs around the state, often led by law enforcement agencies. Grants are awarded annually. More information can be found here: <http://www.ots.ca.gov/Grants/default.asp>

C. MEASURE M

In 2016, Los Angeles County passed Measure M, a half-cent countywide sales tax to enhance bus and rail operations, develop programs for students, seniors, and persons with disabilities, improve highways, expressways, and local roads, and expand opportunities for active transportation. The tax will generate an estimated \$860 million each year for the 88 cities in the County and the Unincorporated County Areas. Eligible projects include: complete streets, green streets, active transportation, traffic control measures (including Safe Routes to School projects), and transit oriented community investments.

D. AMERICA WALKS - COMMUNITY CHANGE GRANT

This grant offers a one-year stipend to communities for projects related to creating healthy, active, and engaged places to live, work, and play. Funded projects should increase walking and walkability. Applications for the 2018 cycle are due on November 2nd. More information can be found here: <http://americawalks.org/applications-open-for-2018-community-change-grants/>

E. LOCAL FOUNDATIONS, HEALTH ORGANIZATIONS, AND BUSINESSES

Local foundations, health organizations, and businesses may be sources of funding for implementing Safe Routes to School programs. The benefits of Safe Routes to School for students, families, schools, and communities often align with foundations and organizations looking to support community health, physical activity, youth development, and neighborhood improvement. In addition, local businesses may be willing to sponsor Safe Routes to School activities and provide monetary funding, volunteers, or giveaways.

5. CONCLUSION

Walnut Park is well positioned to build a strong and sustainable Safe Routes to School initiative. Existing and expanding Safe Routes to School initiatives conducted at schools and community-wide pedestrian safety events, in addition to strong community support from local groups and residents, mean that many important pieces are in place for a successful Safe Routes to School effort. Additionally, the County will soon be taking advantage of the Step by Step LA County: Pedestrian Plans for Unincorporated Communities by pursuing implementation funding and seeking opportunities to align efforts with strategies such as Safe Routes to School. By implementing the activities set out in this Action Plan, Walnut Park is poised to build a strong and sustainable Safe Routes to School program and see healthier students and residents, reduced congestion, and a more livable and safer community.