

Columbia Elementary School

2640 E Avenue J-4 | Eastside Union School District

SUMMER 2022



SAFE
ROUTES
TO
SCHOOL

Columbia Elementary School

2640 E Avenue J-4

SUMMER 2022

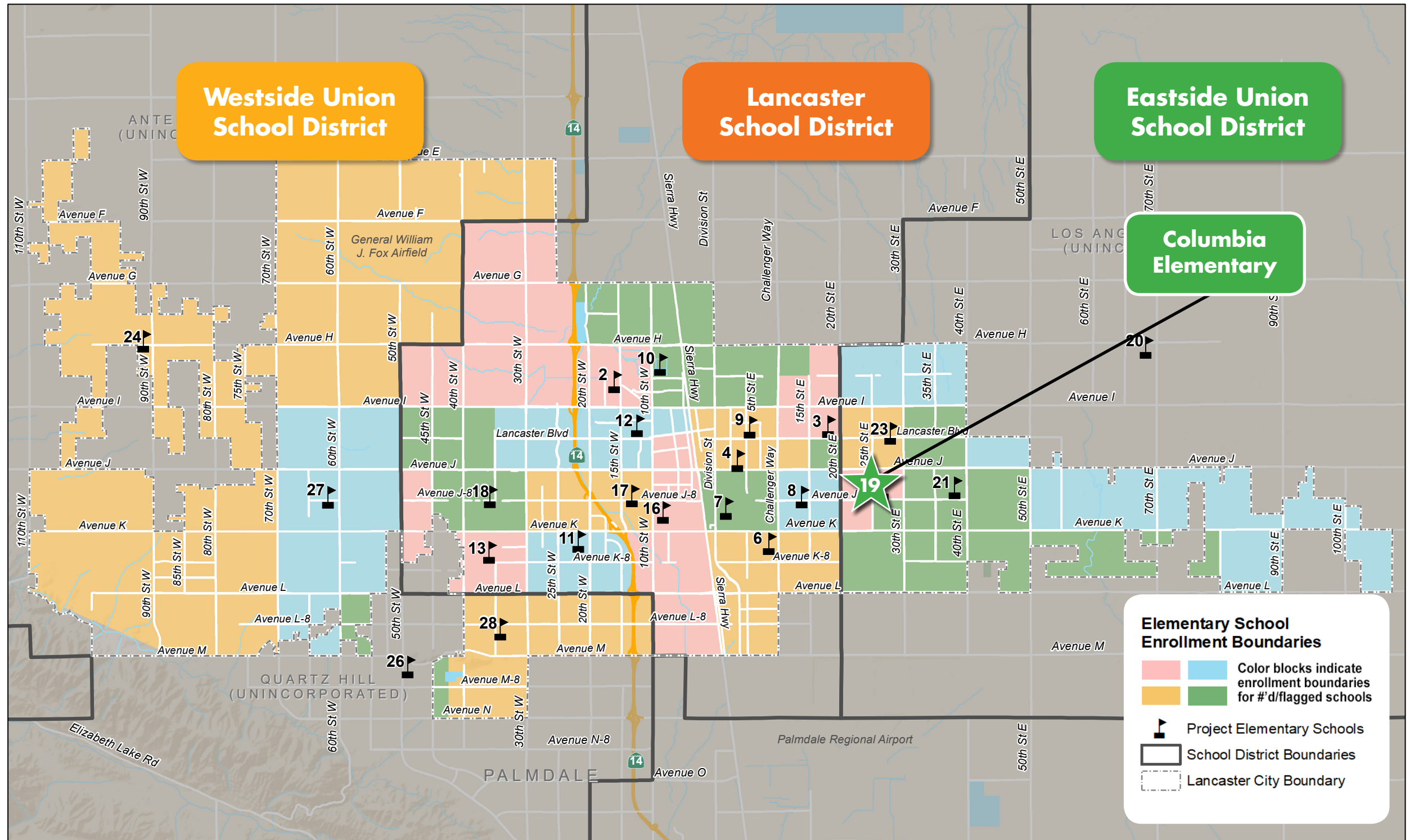


SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL



Kimley»Horn

INTRODUCTION Location Map



Elementary School Enrollment Boundaries within City of Lancaster

Columbia Elementary School

2640 E Avenue J-4

SUMMER 2022



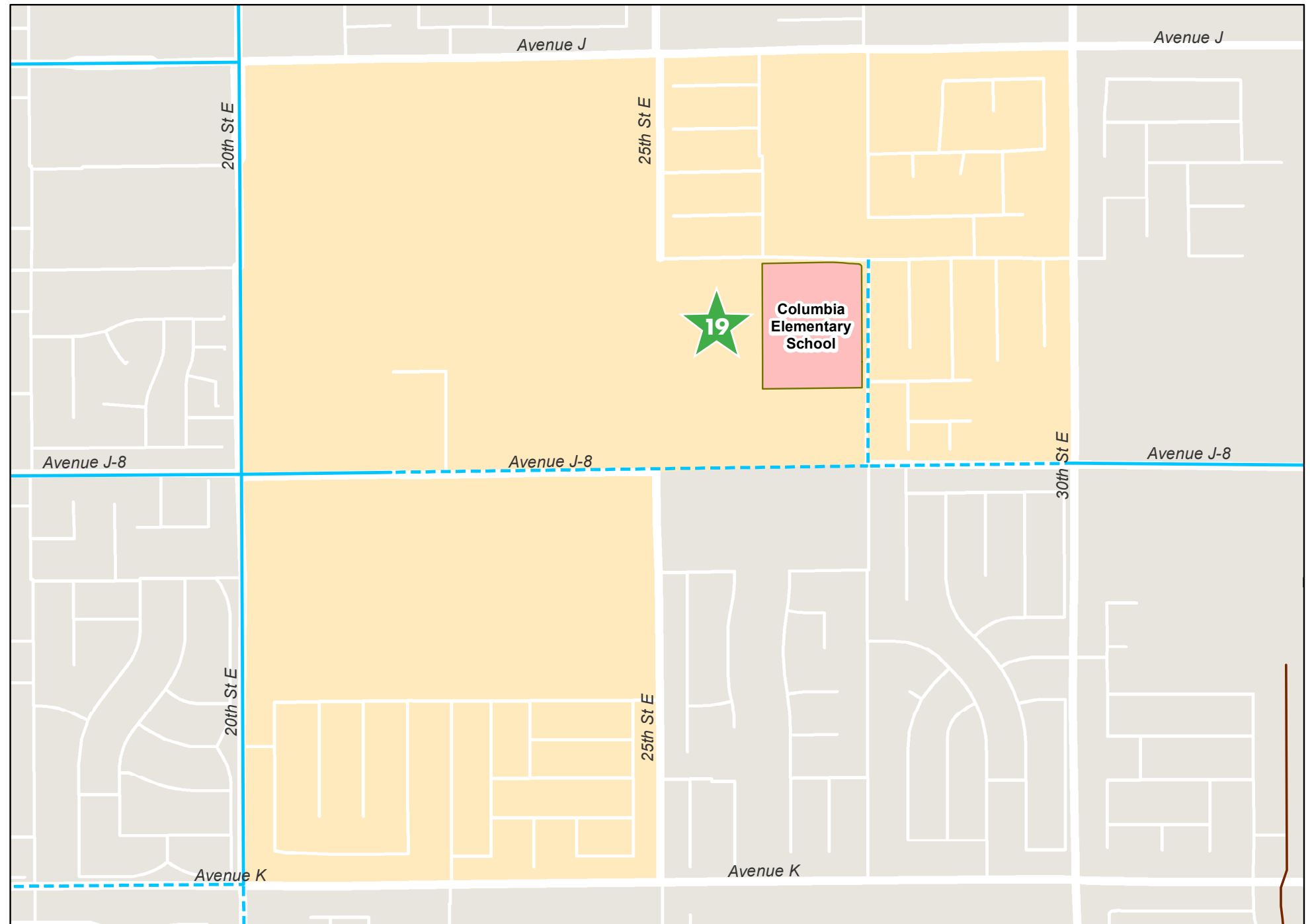
SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL



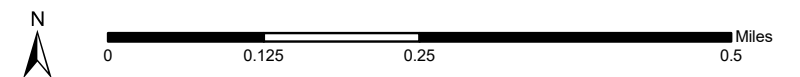
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INTRODUCTION School Enrollment Area

- Focus School
- Focus School Enrollment
- Existing Class I Bike Path
- Existing Class II Bike Lane
- Existing Class III Bike Route
- Existing Class IV Bikeway
- Future Class I Bike Route
- Future Class II Bike Lane
- Future Class III Bike Route
- Future Class IV Bikeway
- Other Project Schools
- Parks & Open Space
- Lancaster City Boundary



Columbia Elementary School - Enrollment Area



Columbia Elementary School

2640 E Avenue J-4

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SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL



INTRODUCTION School Facts

Columbia Astronauts, Reach for the Stars!

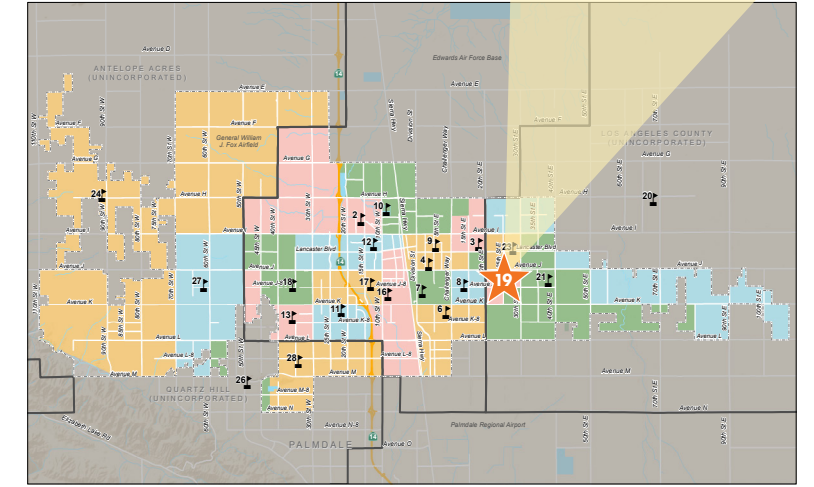


With a vision toward the future and a commitment to excellence, Columbia Elementary School, a dynamic and nurturing institute of learning, strives to provide quality educational experiences. We work to ensure that all students become responsible citizens who possess the knowledge and skills necessary to succeed in an ever-changing, multicultural, interdependent world. We believe that through creating a nurturing and safe environment, students will develop a sense of excitement and positive self-expectation about learning.

2021-22 School Snapshot

622 Student enrollment

88.9% of students eligible for free or reduced-price meals (FRPM)



Elementary School Enrollment Boundaries within City of Lancaster



How are Columbia students getting to school?

YEAR STUDENT TALLIES COLLECTED	# OF TALLIES	# OF STUDENTS SURVEYED	WALK	BIKE	SCHOOL BUS	FAMILY VEHICLE	CARPPOOL	TRANSIT	OTHER
2021	20	440	11%	0%	9%	71%	8%	0%	0%
2013-2015	N/A	N/A	13%	1%	2%	71%	5%	0%	0%



Columbia Elementary School

2640 E Avenue J-4

SUMMER 2022



SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL



EXISTING CONDITIONS

Pedestrian and Bicycle Crashes near Columbia

TIMS, 2015-2019

TYPES OF CRASHES

Pedestrian

Bicycle

CRASH SEVERITY

Fatal

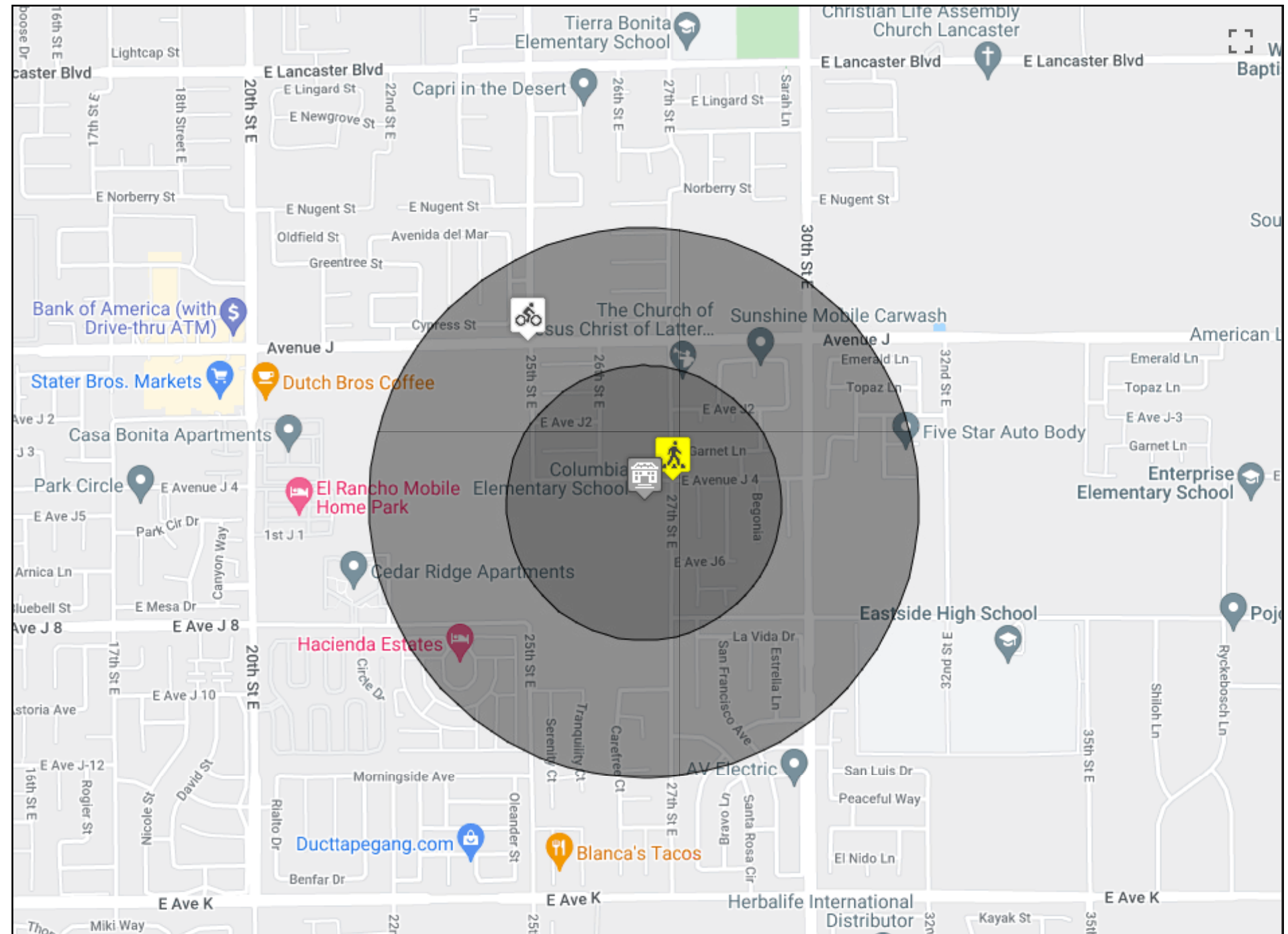
Severe Injury

Other Visible Injury

Complaint of Pain

YEARS 2015-2019

Interactive Map data summaries of bicycle and/or pedestrian crashes around school (1/4 and 1/2 mile)



Radius	Fatal	Severe Injury	Visible Injury	Complaint of Pain	Pedestrian	Bicycle	Total
<1/4 mi.	0	0	1	0	1	0	1
1/4-1/2 mi.	0	0	0	1	0	1	1

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Stakeholder and Community Input

Engagement Portals

The City of Lancaster met the challenge of eliciting meaningful community input during a pandemic by calling on long-standing relationships between City staff and the schools, as well as professional connections with community-based organizations. The Project Team also utilized proven virtual engagement strategies, in concert with the City's social network apparatus, electronic newsletters, and flyers, to spark interest in the Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Interactive Map housed on the City's website, along with community and parent surveys. These materials and links were provided to the project's Stakeholder Advisory Team that included Lancaster's four School Districts. The major school-specific engagement activities are described below.

Lancaster School District One-on-One Interview

In order to gain insight into conditions affecting local School Districts, and to support the development of an effective SRTS Master Plan update, the City of Lancaster and its consultant team conducted a series of one-on-one interviews with the SRTS Stakeholder Advisory Team. These interviews were focused on the School Districts but included other stakeholders as well. Key points from the interview with Lancaster School District are presented here.

August 17, 2021 Interview Summary Eastside Union School District Interviewees:

- Daryl Bell, Director of Instructional Facilities, Risk Management and Safety
- Shanna Robinson, Director Risk Management

Five Eastside Union School District (EUSD) schools were included in the 2022 update, including one school that had not been included in the 2016 plan (Eastside Elementary School.)

The district-level perspective on the potential for active transportation at the five schools included in the SRTS Master Plan update is as follows:

- Mr. Bell noted that Columbia ES and Tierra Bonita ES hold good potential for increased walking, and perhaps some bicycling. Currently, however, there's a lot of parent drop-offs, making it very chaotic.

- Safety assessments may be most helpful at Tierra Bonita and Columbia elementary schools, because neither has bus routes, as the school enrollment boundary is tight.
- Tierra Bonita has a drop-off issue that the school is looking into right now. Parents who had been there for a while knew what to do during drop-off, but many were going "here, there, and everywhere."
- All students at Tierra Bonita could walk, but it's not the safest environment. The enrollment area is within a small radius, and kids who are being dropped off could walk or bike. They don't need to be dropped off by their parents.
- Mr. Bell assumed that the reason for the drop-offs might be because the neighborhood isn't the safest. High levels of crime occur (and are reported) throughout the Antelope Valley and there is a significant transient population near the schools.
- Ms. Robinson suggested parents of the youngest – the six-year-olds – would not be comfortable allowing them to walk alone, but that perhaps "walking school bus" concepts could work in some locations.
- There's a geographical obstacle to active transportation at a couple of the schools, e.g., Eastside ES—I and 20th Street East to Avenue H and 90th Street East—is approximately 8 miles. The District has students who are living at the end of town, and the elementary school is in an isolated spot, with few homes near it.
- Eastside ES can only be accessed via school bus or parent drop-off. Safety here will mean traffic safety. The school is on a two-lane rural road, but people speed in that area. The school is proposing a new parking lot behind the old baseball field. They are moving some portables out to make room for parking.

Parent and Community Involvement

- Eastside has both Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) and Parent Teacher Organizations (PTOs). PTAs require school funding in order to access the programs. Now all elementary schools have a PTA.
- Mr. Bell has been at the District for four years (as of 2021). One school had an official PTA, with good parent involvement—this was Columbia ES.
- Cole Middle School had good organization around sports teams fundraising activities.
- EUSD has a community liaison at the District office, and school site liaisons at each school to work with the families and the school communities.

- Saturday events—started before the pandemic. Lego day, for example. Have the kids come and do Legos and host community booths.
- Parent University—school sites hold these at their own schools and provide activities. Communities can attend events at any school in the District. Activities include a range of community programs, including immunizations for children, College University, and a women's shelter group is there.
- Community center for receiving food—sent out a message to every kid that they were having a food giveaway on Saturday. Christmas donations for jackets, and toys. Food drives—pickup on Wednesday. Lines were wrapped around the schools, especially during the beginning of COVID. Anyone can pick up food—not just parents or district residents. The District partnered with the Antelope Valley Dream Center.

"EUSD is working toward a vision where school becomes a touchstone for all kinds of community needs. This is the district-wide vision of Dr. Lightle and Dr. Smith."

Lingering Impacts of COVID-19

At the time of the interview, Eastside Union School District had been reopened for about a week and was experiencing a challenging start due to COVID-19, which impacted the trip to school in several ways. The district is trying to make the schools very community-centered, though the pandemic has made this difficult.

SEE AND BE SEEN

The City's SRTS Project Manager, Candice Vander Hyde, explained that the initial S&BS program began as a safety awareness program, with safety-themed traffic signal wraps designed by young student artists. That program was expanded through a second grant from the Caltrans Office of Traffic Safety. The original idea had been to develop in-person training, but with COVID-19, this was converted to online STEAM lessons and Physical Education (P.E.), in a distance-friendly format. The P.E. request was from Lancaster School District staff who said it was proving difficult to provide P.E. in a distance format.



EXISTING CONDITIONS

Stakeholder and Community Input



Community rides on the weekends and a May 2021 scavenger hunt were well-received by the community, as was a Walk and Roll Fest at Tierra Bonita Park. Once distance learning began in 2020, the City worked to develop and post instructional materials adapted for that learning mode on the SEE AND BE SEEN website. Additionally, teacher instructions

were provided, along with lessons and lab worksheets for various lessons.

Mr. Bell was not familiar with the program. Ms. Robinson was aware of the traffic signal cabinet wraps that had initiated the program. The evolution and effective utilization of S&BS programming is an area for further development, communication, and collaboration between the City and the School District.

Parent Surveys and SRTS Interactive Map Input

Columbia Elementary School

Vacant Lots west of and south of School

- Lack of connections in street network and bike facilities southwest of school leads to students walking, biking, and driving along unpaved paths through vacant lots to access the school from these neighborhoods.
- Vehicles tend to speed along these unpaved paths, putting students walking and biking along the same paths at risk.
- Issues with students encountering homeless individuals, trash and illegally dumped items, and hypodermic needles along unpaved routes through vacant lots.
 - There have been past campus cleanup events focused on these lots.
- Lots are private property, complicating potential improvements.

27th Street East & Avenue J-10

- Uncontrolled nature of intersection leads to vehicles turning suddenly onto 27th Street East from Avenue J-10 at high speeds without looking for oncoming vehicles.

25th Street East & Avenue K

- Vehicles speed along Avenue K.
- Unsignalized nature of intersection makes it difficult for vehicles to make southbound left turns, leading to congestion along 25th Street East.
 - Vehicles will instead sometimes make southbound right turns to make U-turns to head east on Avenue K.

Avenue J-8 between 22nd Street East & 25th Street East

- Lack of sidewalks on the north side of the street.
- Narrow and broken sidewalks on the south side of the street will sometimes force students into the street.

Avenue J-4 between 26th Street East & 27th Street East

- Students cross the street outside of marked crosswalks and parents illegally park in front of the school.
 - Crossing guard deters parents from encouraging students to cross outside marked crosswalks.
 - Traffic safety officers will speak with offenders.
 - The City erected a berm to discourage illegal parking, but it still occurs.
- Congestion during pickup and drop-off periods causes queuing back to 26th Street East.
- Vehicles and kids on dirt bikes speed along Avenue J-4.
- Request from school staff for traffic calming measures (speed humps).
- Request from school staff for better signage indicating the school zone.

Avenue J-4 in front of the School

- Issues with illegal dumping and litter in the vacant lot across the street from the school.
- Issues with traffic circulation during pickup and drop-off periods.

26th Street East & Avenue J-4

- Suggestion from school staff to utilize this area for pickup and drop-off for Grade 4–6 students and posting a crossing guard to direct them to school.

Avenue J-8 between 20th Street East & 25th Street East

- Vehicles speed along Avenue J-8.

27th Street East & Avenue J-4

- Vehicles turn too quickly through crosswalks. Parents have disobeyed crossing guard and posted signage.

Columbia Elementary School Virtual Walk Audit

Walk audits are used across the nation and were employed here to help the project team understand existing conditions, walking and bicycling patterns, locations of crossing guards, conflicts with traffic, concerns about sidewalks, crosswalks, bicycle facilities, signals, lighting, and social and environmental factors. The Columbia Elementary School virtual walk audit was held on September 30, 2021, via web conference.

Ed Beleno, Principal, and Carolyn Day, Office Manager represented the school; Candice Vander Hyde and Matt Simons represented the City. With everyone able to view the SRTS Interactive Map, participants were able to quickly discuss general topics and concerns and identify specific problems. Note also that In April 2022, a follow-up interview with Mr. Greg Moore, who oversees safety and preparedness at the District. Mr. Moore's concerns and suggestions have been included in the SRTS Interactive Map Input, above. Walk audit comments in addition to those included previously in the SRTS Interactive Map Input section, are summarized below:

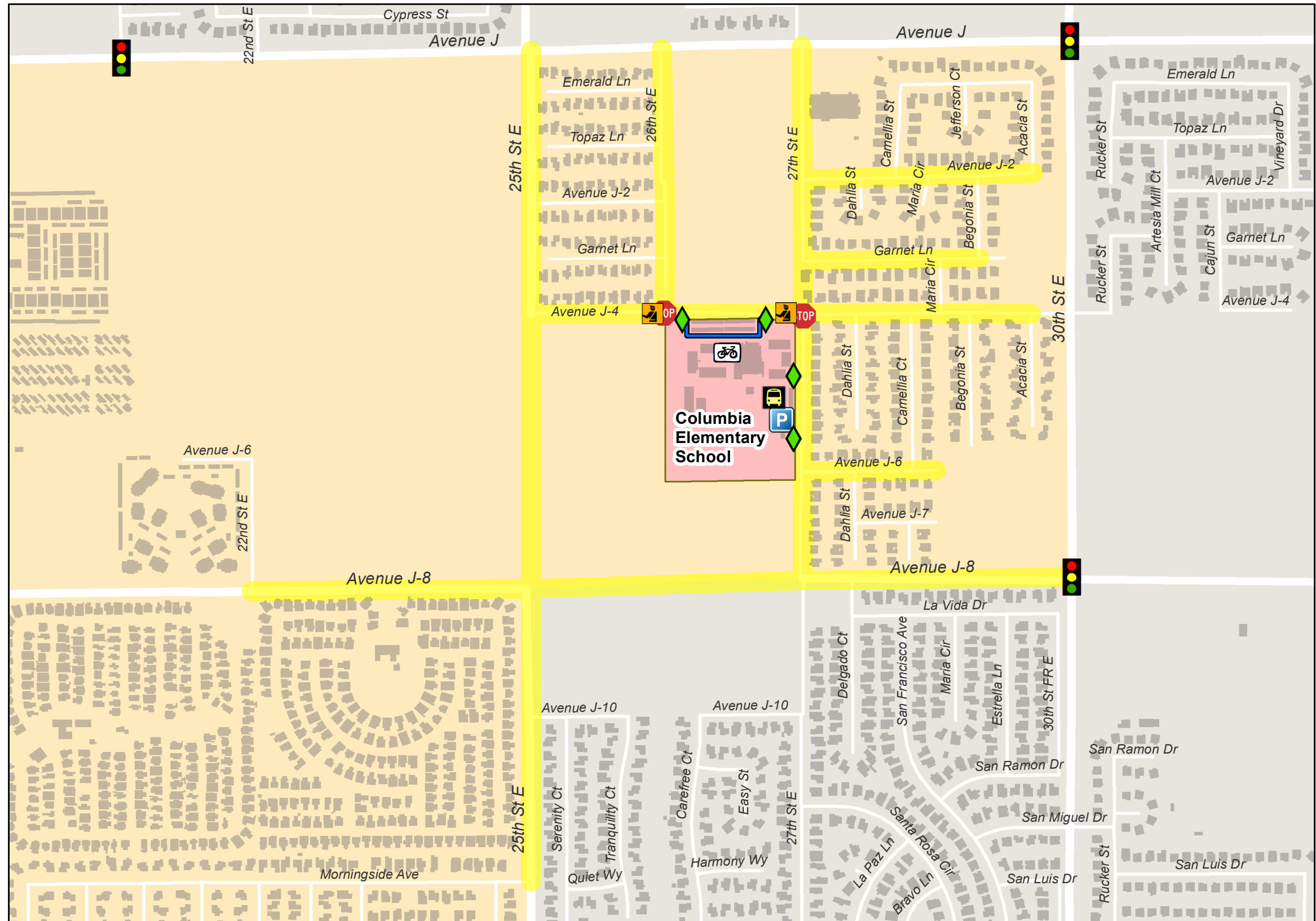
- Kids walk in groups or with siblings. Parents with strollers.
- Normally, they've had about 20 bicyclists, but now only about 6 are riding. Most don't wear bike helmets.
- The school does give out a site map on the first day, to tell parents how to manage drop-off and pick-up. Going forward, they plan to develop a video explaining traffic circulation.
- The amount of illegal dumping in the desert is significant—we've had campus cleanup events, and we had to focus on the desert lot. People dump couches, televisions, etc. The City helped out with a roll-up container.
- The school is starting Saturday enrichment. We could fold in some active transportation safety education. The school deputy has done safe riding to school events.
- One of the nearby mobile homes—Rancho Mirage—has a community center, and the school has delivered some workshops there.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

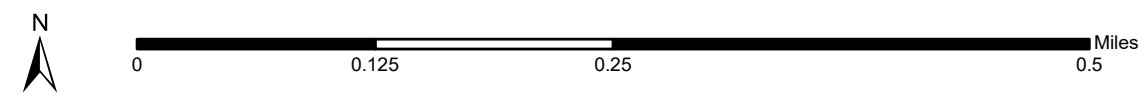
Suggested Routes, Traffic Control, and School Access



- School Gates
- Bus Loading
- Bike Parking
- Crossing Guards
- School Parking
- Parent Dropoff/Pickup
- Traffic Signal
- Roundabout
- All-Way Stop
- School Beacon
- School Beacon and Smart Crosswalk
- School Beacon and All-Way Stop
- Suggested Routes to School
- Focus School
- Focus School Enrollment Area
- Other Project Schools
- Parks & Open Space
- Lancaster City Boundary



Columbia Elementary School
Traffic Control & School Access



SRTS RECOMMENDATIONS

Suggested Routes and Recommended Improvements



- Potential Improvements**
- Bike Route
 - Bike Lanes
 - Sidewalks
 - Multipurpose Path
 - Traffic calming
 - Crossing Improvements
 - Suggested Routes to School
 - Focus School
 - Focus School Enrollment Area
 - Half-Mile Radius
 - Other Project Schools
 - Parks & Open Space
 - Lancaster City Boundary



Columbia Elementary School
Potential Improvements

SRTS PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS

The Other 'E's



EDUCATION

The City will partner with School Districts and funders to expand SEE AND BE SEEN's offerings, and ensure educators and the general public can easily access and use its features. Driver education to improve the safety of motorists and non-motorists is included.

- Bike rodeos and clinics
- Pedestrian skills and safety rodeos
- SEE & BE SEEN lesson plans



ENCOURAGEMENT

Programmed and funded events, public recognition, themed activities, posters and signage will support current walkers and rollers, and inspire others to join them. School-focused and community-wide events will be identified and scheduled.

- Promote SRTS Calendar — Walk & Roll events and challenges
- Walking school bus in nice weather



ENFORCEMENT

Appropriate enforcement strategies ensure that motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians obey the rules of the road near schools, improving safety while encouraging active transportation. Community enforcement programs augment local law enforcement to establish new norms that respect student safety and help parents feel confident as they send their children to school.

- School Circulation Plans
- Support for crossing guards/campus supervisors
- Sheriff's Dept. roadway safety talks



EQUITY

At the core of Lancaster's SRTS is a commitment to deliver high-quality and effective projects and programs to all school communities, especially disadvantaged and low-income students, students of color, and mobility-impaired students who face challenges to walking, bicycling, or rolling to school safely and comfortably.

- Prioritize high-need schools
- RE-Cycle Bike Donation / Repair Clinics



ENGAGEMENT

Successful, funded SRTS plans result from ongoing, meaningful engagement with the students, families, schools and local community organizations who will benefit from the projects and programs. Community engagement that continues beyond plan adoption ensures that the SRTS is a living document and that implementation of the plan is responsive to intergenerational needs for bicycle and pedestrian facilities and programs as they change over time.

- Community events, family fun days
- Annual parent/guardian surveys



EVALUATION

Clearly identified periodic reporting allows schools and the City to document progress, make modifications, request needed funding, and celebrate success.

- Annual student tallies



With City and School District programmatic support, the principal can set the tone to encourage and increase students who walk or bike to school.



**See SRTS Master Plan Introduction:
Menu of Best People Strategies**

PROJECT IMPROVEMENTS

Recommendations

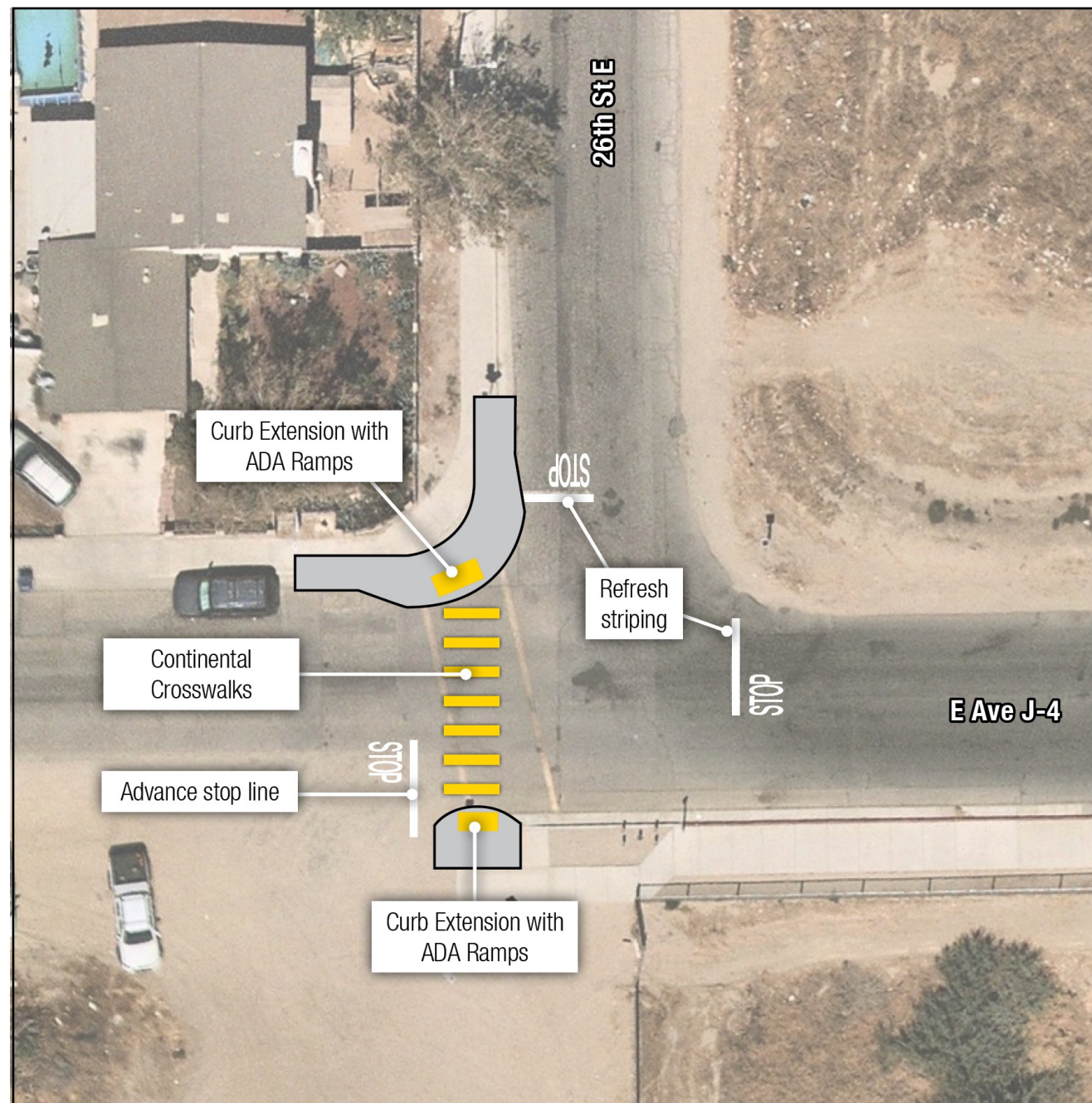
26th Street East and Avenue J-4

Existing

- T-intersection.
- All-way stop control.
- Yellow transverse-line crosswalk on the west leg.
- ADA compliant curb ramp in the southwest corner.

Potential Improvements

- Add yellow continental crosswalk on the west leg.
- Add an advanced stop line on the west leg.
- Add "STOP" pavement markings to all legs.
- Add curb extensions with ADA curb ramps to west leg crosswalk.
- Refresh stop line striping.



POTENTIAL IMPROVEMENTS

PROJECT IMPROVEMENTS

Recommendations

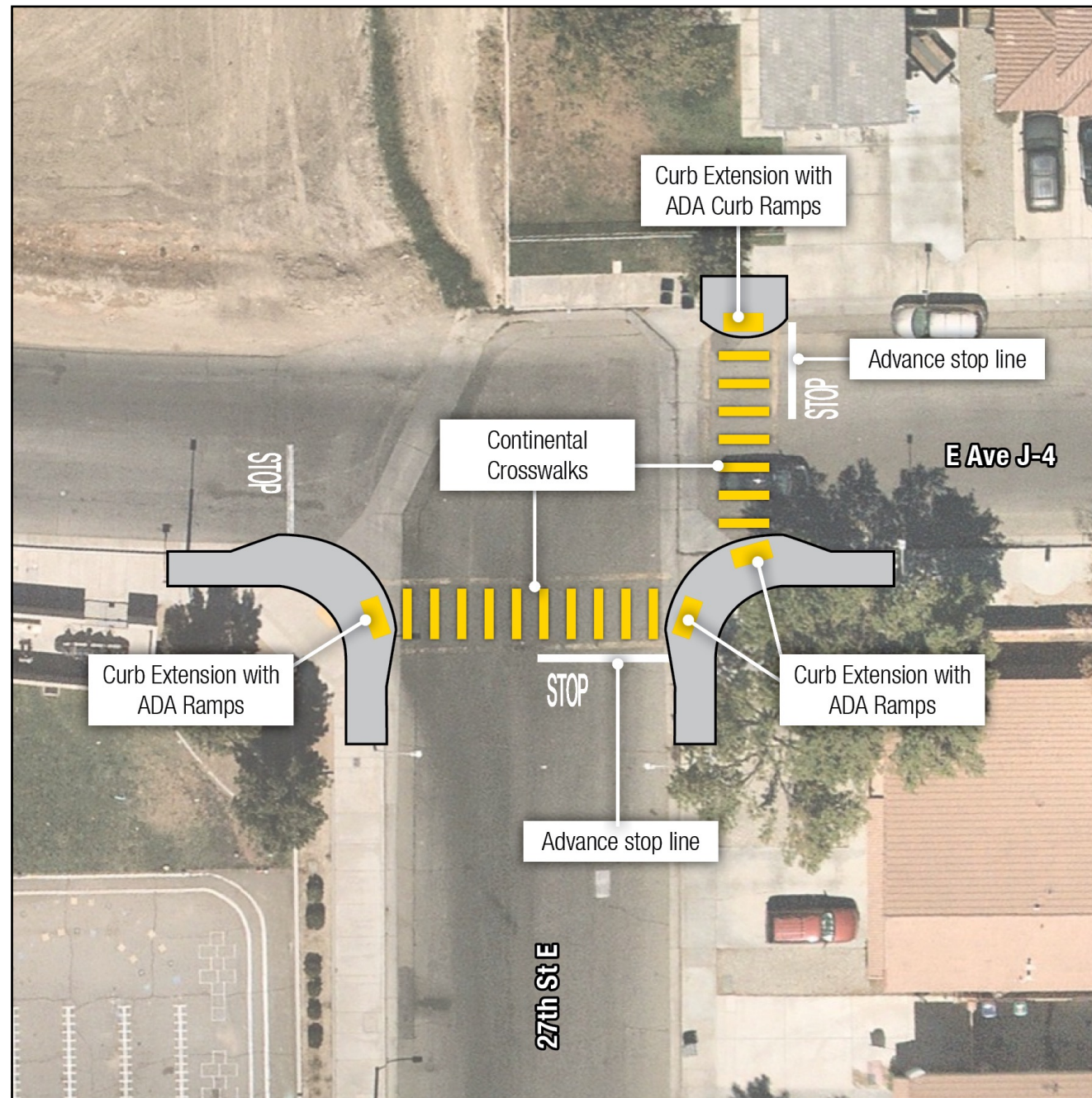
27th Street East and Avenue J-4

Existing

- T-intersection.
- All-way stop control.
- Yellow transverse-line crosswalks on south and east legs.

Potential Improvements

- Add yellow continental crosswalks to south and east legs.
- Add advanced stop lines to south and east legs.
- Add "STOP" pavement markings to all legs.
- Add curb extension with ADA curb ramps to south and east legs.

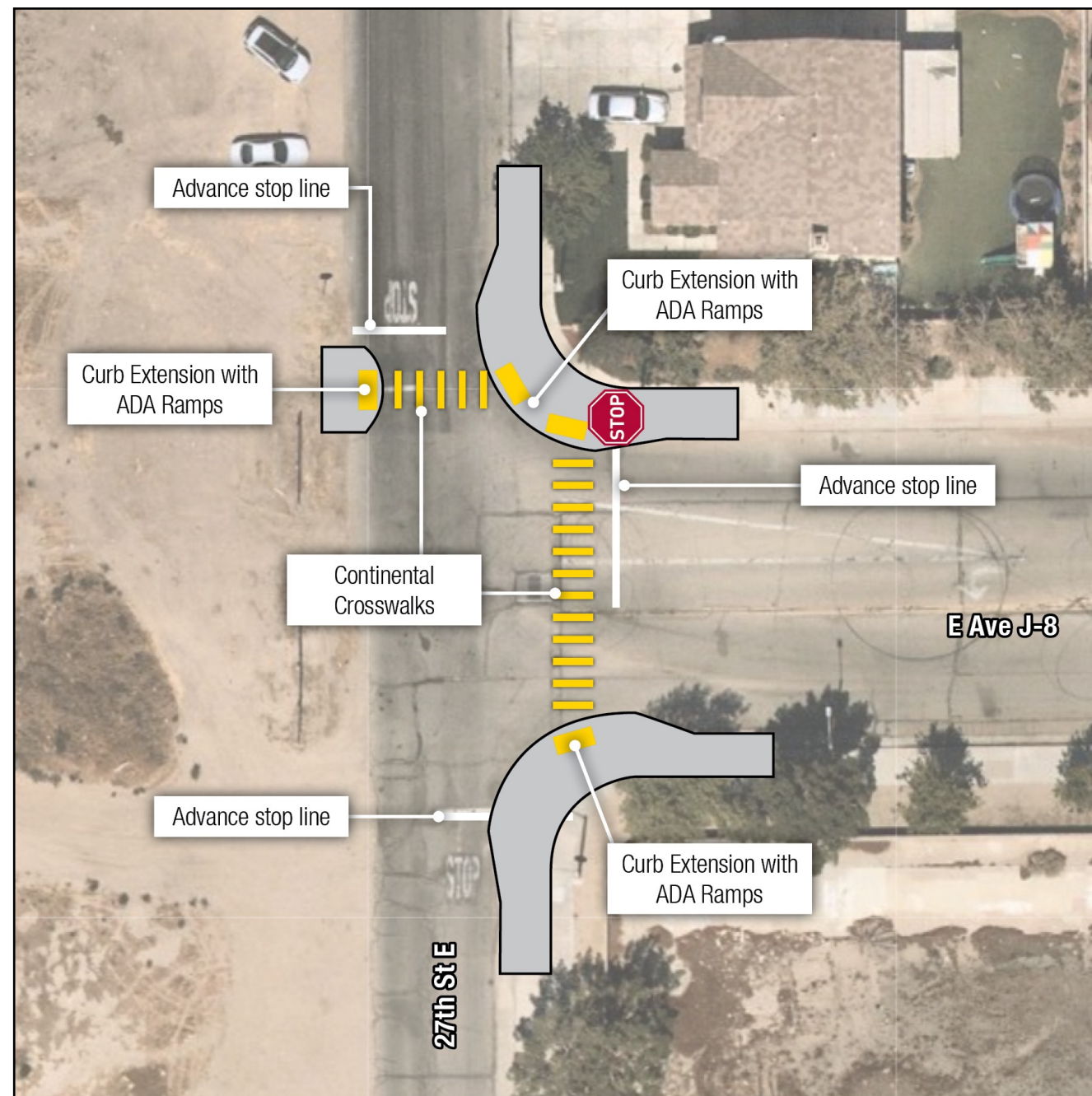


POTENTIAL IMPROVEMENTS

PROJECT IMPROVEMENTS

Recommendations

27th Street East and Avenue J-8



POTENTIAL IMPROVEMENTS

Existing

- T-intersection.
- TWSC intersection.
- Stop control on 27th Street East approaches.
- No marked crosswalks.

Potential Improvements

- Add curb extensions with ADA curb ramps to north and east leg crosswalks.
- Add yellow continental crosswalks to the north and east legs.
- Add advanced stop lines to the north and east legs.
- Investigate adding a stop sign to the east leg.

PROJECT & PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

Strategy Packages

Summary of Engineering Strategies, by Type

Crossing Improvements

- 26th Street East & Avenue J-4: Pavement markings; curb extension/ramps
- 27th Street East & Avenue J-4: Pavement markings; curb extensions/ramps
- 27th Street East & Avenue J-8: Pavement markings & signage; curb extensions/ramps

Bikeways

- Avenue J-8 between 22nd Street East & 25th Street East: Class II bike lanes
- Avenue J-8 between 27th Street East & 30th Street East: Class II bike lanes
- 27th Street East between Avenue J-4 & Avenue J-8: Class III bike route

Multipurpose Trails

- 25th Street East between Avenue J-4 & Avenue J-8
- Avenue J-8 between 25th Street East & 27th Street East

Sidewalks

- Avenue J-4 between 25th Street East & 26th Street East (south side)
- Avenue J-4 between 26th Street East & 27th Street East (north side)
- Avenue J-8 between 22nd Street East & 25th Street East (north side)
- 27th Street East between Avenue J-6 & Avenue J-8 (west side)

Traffic Calming

- 27th Street East between Avenue J-4 & Avenue J-8: Speed humps

