

# Sundown Elementary School

6151 W Avenue J-8 | Westside Union School District

SUMMER 2022



SAFE  
ROUTES  
TO  
SCHOOL

# Sundown Elementary School

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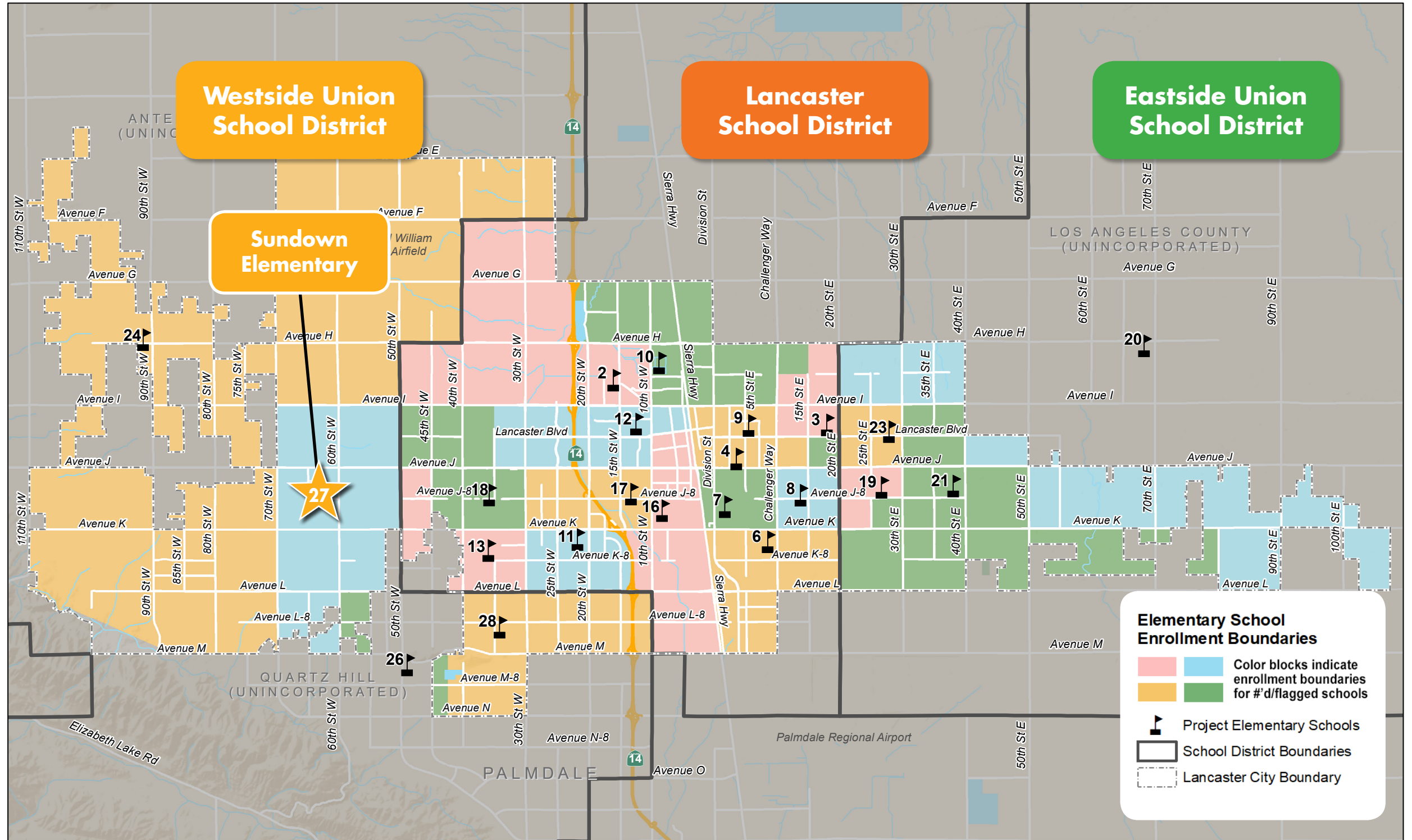


SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL



Kimley»Horn

## INTRODUCTION Location Map



Elementary School Enrollment Boundaries within City of Lancaster

# Sundown Elementary School

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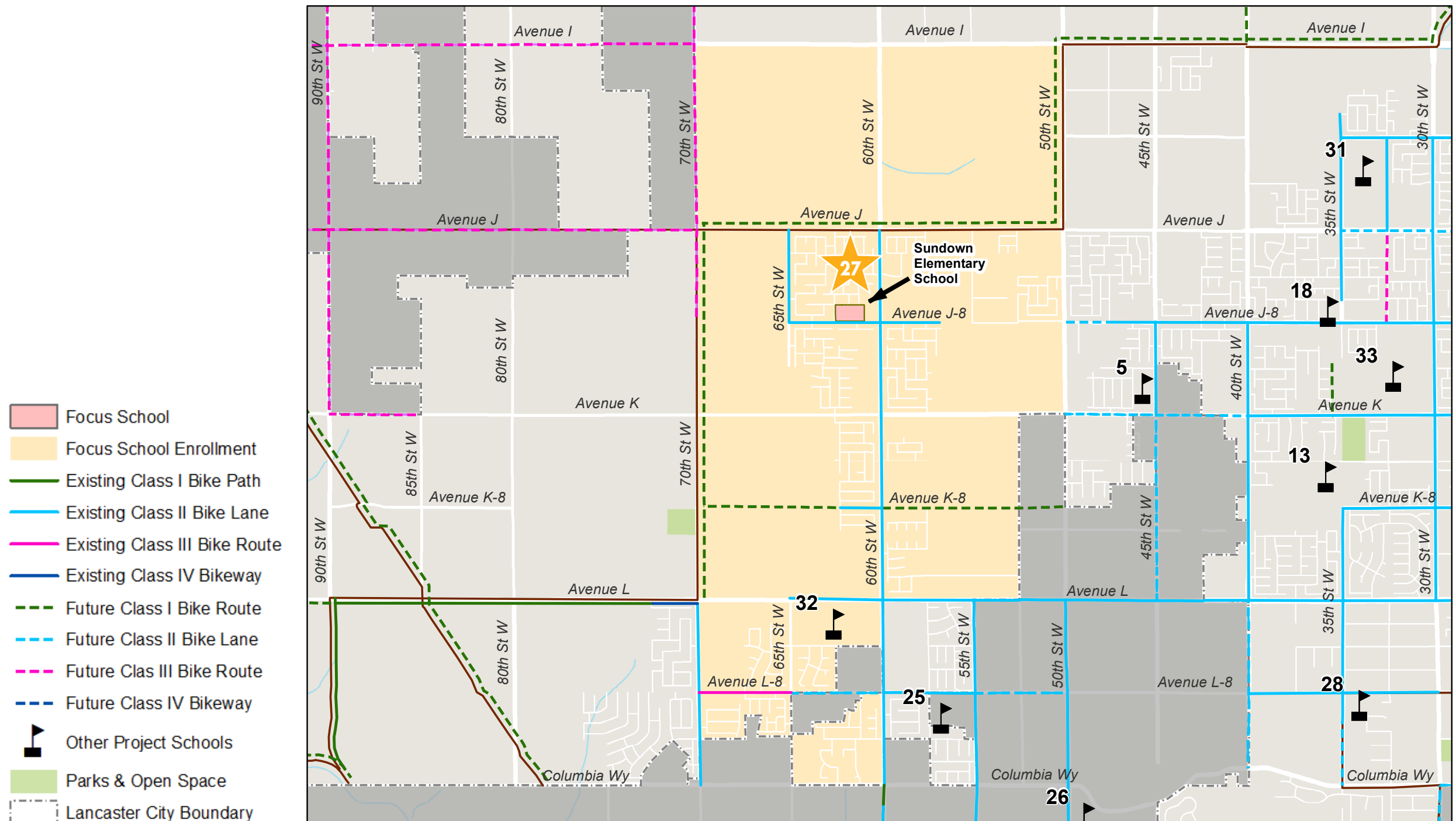
SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL



Kimley»Horn

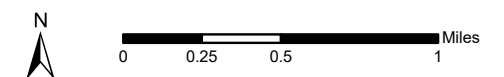
## INTRODUCTION

# 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

Sundown Elementary School - Enrollment Area



# Sundown Elementary School

6151 W Avenue J-8

SUMMER 2022



SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL



## INTRODUCTION School Facts

### Our Core Values

Compassion | Community | Positivity  
Kindness | Equity

## Pointing the Way, Providing the Path.

Our mission as a professional learning community is to establish a strong academic and social-emotional foundation for all students to prepare them to be successful and responsible citizens in our diverse community.

### Vision Statement

Our vision is to provide every child with a variety of learning opportunities in order to meet their needs and celebrate their growth.

**All means all.** We believe that all students can learn and grow at high levels. We believe that all students and their families will feel welcomed, safe, valued, and supported on campus.

### 2021-22 School Snapshot

**834** Student enrollment

**58.5%** of students eligible for free or reduced-price meals (FRPM)

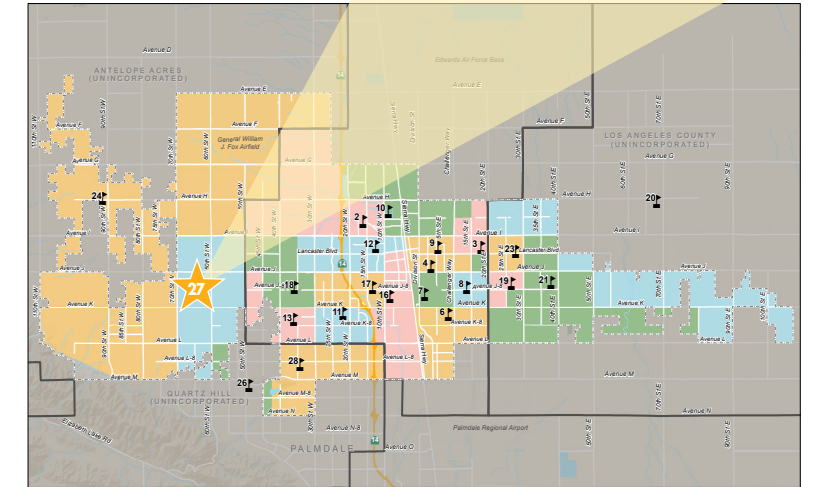
### AVID Certified

In all of our classrooms, students are developing skills to help ensure that they are college and career ready. The staff of Quartz Hill has diligently worked to put organizational systems in place to assist our students in becoming thoughtful, skilled, academic scholars.



### WASC Certified

Sundown Elementary School is accredited is focused on its mission and goals for students; it is student-oriented and examines its students' performance continuously; it accepts objective evaluation from a team of outside peer professionals trained by ACS WASC; it maintains a qualified faculty within an effectively organized school; it collaboratively assesses the quality of its educational programs on a regular basis; and it plans for the future.



Elementary School Enrollment Boundaries within City of Lancaster



## How are Sundown students getting to school?

YEAR STUDENT TALLIES COLLECTED	# OF TALLIES	# OF STUDENTS SURVEYED	WALK	BIKE	SCHOOL BUS	FAMILY VEHICLE	CARPOOL	TRANSIT	OTHER
2021	26	631	9%	0%	13%	74%	2%	0%	1%
2013-2015	N/A	N/A	8%	1%	6%	72%	7%	N/A	0%



# Sundown Elementary School

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SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL



## EXISTING CONDITIONS

# Pedestrian and Bicycle Crashes near Sundown

TIMS, 2015–2019

### TYPES OF CRASHES

Pedestrian

Bicycle

### CRASH SEVERITY

Fatal

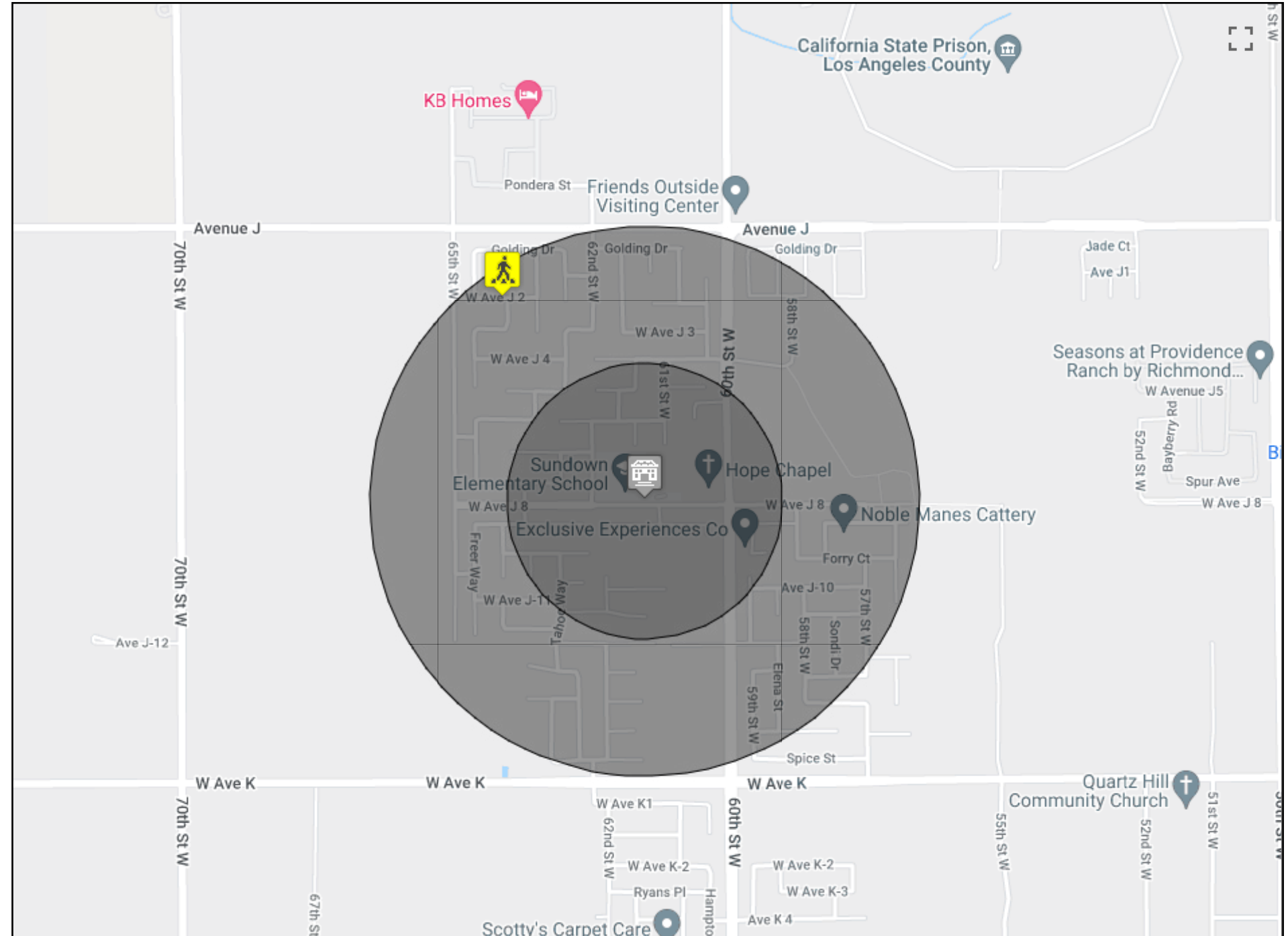
Severe Injury

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	0	0	0	0	0
1/4-1/2 mi.	0	0	1	0	1	0	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 19, 2021 Interview Summary

#### Westside Union School District Interviewees:

- Shelly Dearing, Director of Instructional Facilities, Risk Management and Safety
- Rhonda Hanson, Director, Risk Management

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

- Quartz Hill ES—walking/biking school potential (there are no school buses).
- Sundown ES—has some buses, but also lots of walkers.
- Valley View ES—has walkers.

- Del Sur—in a more rural, less dense area, and is more of a bus school, in the middle of busy roads, so parents don't let their children walk or bike to school. The distance is too great for biking/walking for most students, as well. Del Sur Acres is more than a mile and a half away. Although no one is biking to this school, it could conceivably occur if there were safe bike facilities.
- Joe Walker MS—has walkers.

## Anti-Bullying Campaign

Ms. Dearing and Ms. Hanson noted that one of the Westside Union School District counselors had developed a very successful anti-bullying program that included lessons for use in the lower grades.



Source: Westside Union School District, Lancaster, CA

## Lingering Impacts of COVID-19

At the time of the interview, Westside Union School District had just reopened and was experiencing a challenging start due to COVID-19, which impacted the trip to school in several ways. School had just reopened on August 4, and it was not clear at the time of the interview whether volunteers would be coming back to campus. It was noted generally that for school children walking alone, the youngest would be in 4th grade.

## SEE AND BE SEEN

The City's SRTS Project Manager, Candice Vander Hyde, explained that 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.



Ms. Dearing and Ms. Hanson indicated that none of the schools were using the SEE AND BE SEEN materials and that it is likely that teachers were unaware of the resource. Future use of the lessons would be based on the needs of each school. This is an area for further development, communication, and collaboration between the City and the School District.

## Parent Surveys and SRTS Interactive Map Input

### Sundown Elementary School

#### Avenue J-8 west of the school

- Gap in dedicated bike facilities.

#### Avenue J-8 east of the school

- Gap in dedicated bike facilities.

#### Avenue J-8 west of 60th Street West

- Sidewalks are broken along the north side of the street near the church parking lot.

#### 60th Street West between Jamaica Lane & Avenue J-8

- Lack of sidewalks along the east side of the street.

#### Avenue J-8 between 61st Street West & 62nd Street West

- Parents and students crossing the street outside of marked crosswalks.

#### Avenue J-8 & 60th Street West

- Queuing from vehicles using church parking lot block crosswalks.
- Vehicles turning onto Avenue J-8 westbound will enter the eastbound left-turn lane.
- Vehicles making northbound and eastbound left turns will try to beat the light and put crossing guards and students at risk.

#### 62nd Street West & Jasper Court

- Vehicles blocking crosswalks.

# EXISTING CONDITIONS

## Stakeholder and Community Input

### Avenue J-8 & Church Driveway

- Vehicles queuing during pickup and drop-off periods will block students crossing driveways.

### Avenue J-8 west of 62nd Street West

- Vehicles speeding.
  - Suggestion for designating pickup and drop-off location here so parents and students can utilize crosswalk at 62nd Street West.
  - Suggestion for stop control.

### Avenue J-8 between 62nd Street West & 60th Street West

- Parents illegally parking and double-parking during pickup and drop-off periods.

### 62nd Street West between Jasper Court & Avenue J-8

- Parked vehicles will block bus loading zones, driveways, and marked crosswalks.

### Avenue J-8 & School Driveway

- Vehicles will enter via the school exit.

### 60th Street West north of Avenue J-8

- Vehicles queuing during pickup and drop-off periods.

### Avenue J-8 in front of the School

- Street parking utilized by school staff.
- Lack of adequate parking during pickup and drop-off periods.

### 62nd Street West & School Bus Lot

- Vehicles can block buses from entering/accessing the lot during pickup and drop-off periods.

## SURVEY RESPONSES

Approximately 350 parents responded to the paper survey handed out at the schools as the Student Tallies were being conducted in September 2021. Because responses indicated discrepancies in how people answered the survey questions, these could not be meaningfully summarized and analyzed. However, it is clear that distance, traffic speeds and volumes, crime and the weather were significant factors in determining whether parents allowed their children to walk or ride to school.

Additionally, 56 parents or guardians, representing about 16% of respondents, provided written responses to an open-ended question eliciting comments. A sample of these is provided as follows.

### Together is Safer

"Both my children usually walk home together.

"It is unsafe for a child to walk home alone without adult supervision."

"My decision is not to allow her to walk home due to being scared she could get kidnapped while walking. To me, she is still too young to walk without an older person."

### Sidewalks and Stop Signs, Distance and Weather

"My children would ride/walk to school if Avenue J-8 went all the way through."

"A bus would be beneficial since a lot of kids in our neighborhood go to the same school. Bike or walking is currently not an option because it is unsafe and there is no pathway."

"Would like to walk or bike but the distance is too far, especially in the heat of summer."

### Pick-up/Drop-off

"Some parents are driving like idiots because they are in a rush both before and after school. Not enough traffic enforcement is provided by LASD."

### Parental Concerns

"I'm an over-protective mother and I may change my mind, but as of now, my child is too young to walk home on her own."

"My child is under parent care to and from school. We are responsible that my child is transported safely. We will continue to drive."

"The traffic on Avenue J & 60th Street West is way too fast for any child of elementary school age to be walking along. Also, I'm very worried about predators, preying on young children walking alone."

"Most of my concerns regarding allowing my child to ride or bike to school have to do with his health, hot weather, and the traffic on 60th Street West & Avenue J-8. (Driver speed and reaction to guards.)"

"The world's not safe enough."

"My biggest concern is the speeding along 60th Street West."

"The traffic and way parents drive at Sundown is very unsafe. No regard for pedestrians."

"If there was less crime in the world, I would let my daughter walk. Other than that, I feel like she needs to have supervision."

*"Where we live, there are a lot of students from here. I believe a designated parent/volunteer to walk the children 1.1 miles to the school would be good. Also, we need more crosswalks."*

## Sundown 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 Sundown Elementary School virtual walk audit was held on September 23, 2021, via web conference.

Amy Brouwer, Principal, Shemeka Andre, Vice Principal, and two crossing guards, Colleen Ruffner and Toya Davis, represented the school; Rhonda Hanson and Shelly Dearing represented Westside Union School District; 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. Walk audit comments in addition to those included previously in the SRTS Interactive Map Input section, are summarized below:

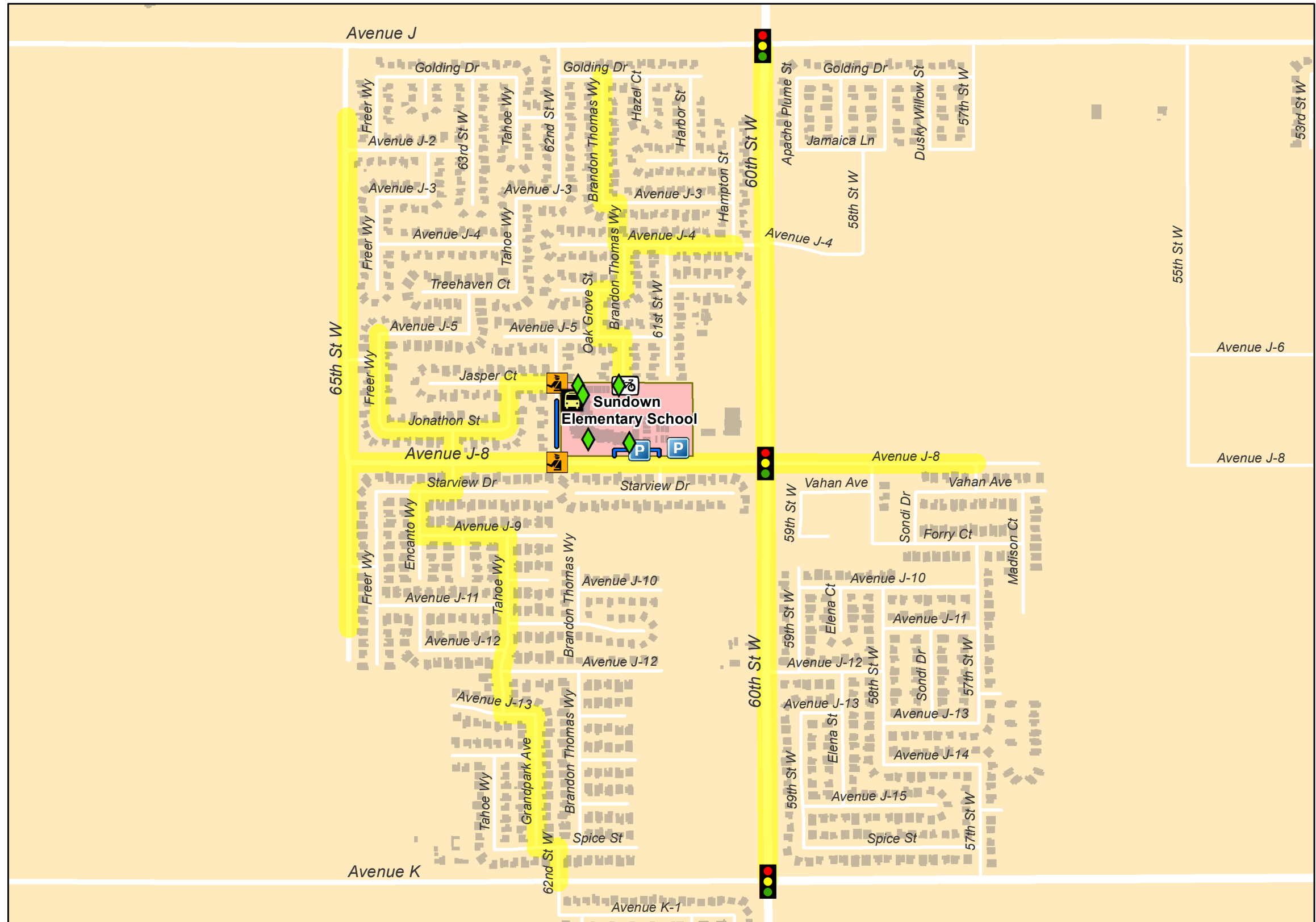
- We would like to encourage families in the immediate neighborhood to walk to school, but Sundown has quite a wide enrollment boundary, through desert areas without sidewalks. These parents will mostly drive their students.
- We do have about 6–8 kids who walk through the adjacent desert area, but they walk with their parents.
- We don't have more than a handful of bikers, and it's not consistent.
- Sundown Elementary is one of our largest schools, and there's no parking at all, either for staff (which uses up most of the available parking)
- Immediately to the east, there's a church and parents do park there. The school has a good relationship with the church. However, even here the double-parking and blocking of entrances create problems.
- Crossing guards have risked their lives as cars tried to beat the light in order to avoid waiting.
- More law enforcement presence has been requested. Even just the visual presence of the Sheriff's Department would get parents to start obeying the law.
- On 60th Street West and Avenue J-8, there's a raised sidewalk. Students have tripped on it, as have crossing guards.
- Perhaps the City could paint a red curb to allow the buses to turn into the bus parking lot. The school sets out cones, but the parents remove the cones and park there anyway.

## EXISTING CONDITIONS

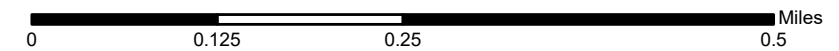
# Suggested Routes, Traffic Control, and School Access



- 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



Sundown Elementary School  
Traffic Control & School Access





# SRTS RECOMMENDATIONS

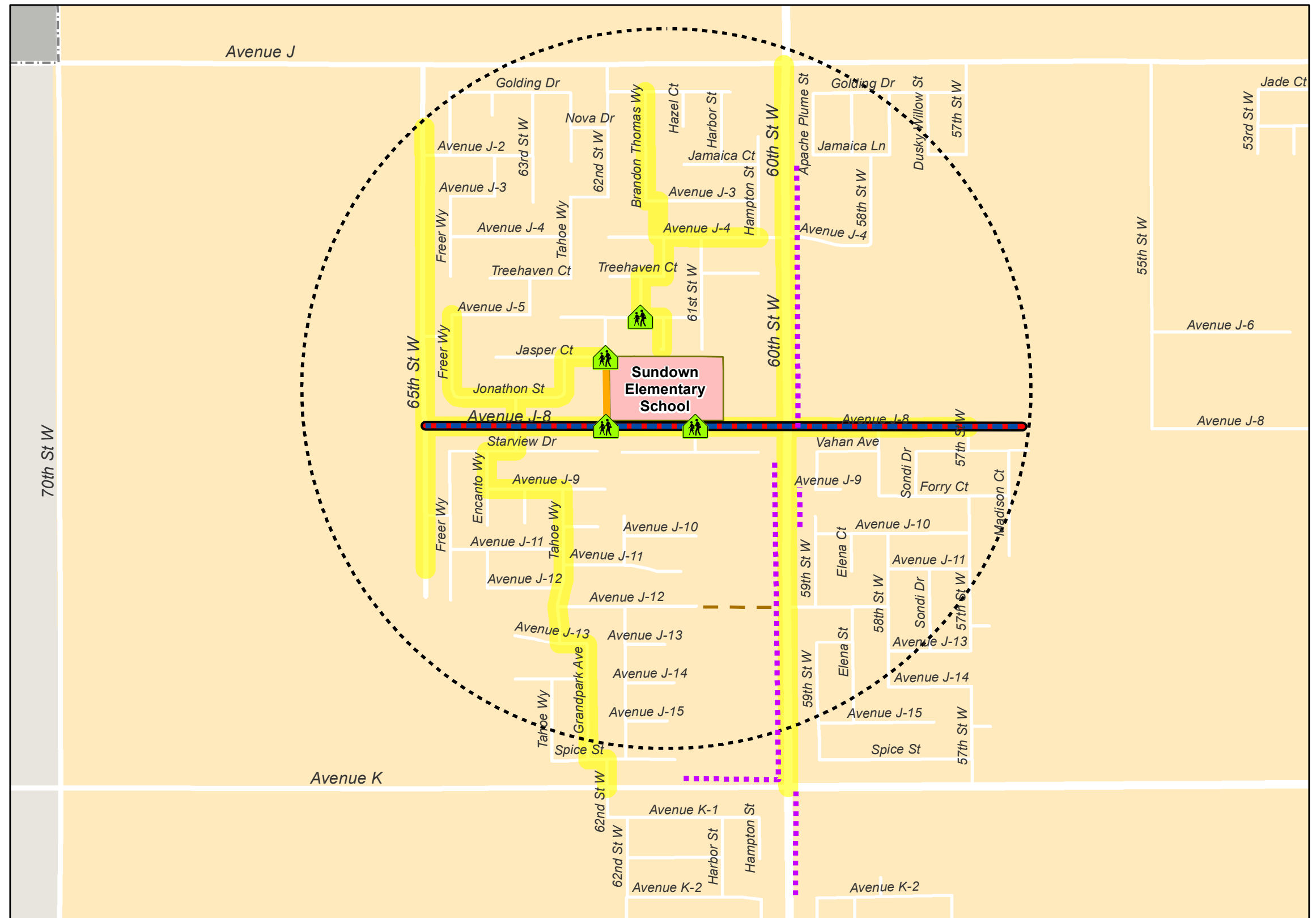
## Suggested Routes and Recommended Improvements



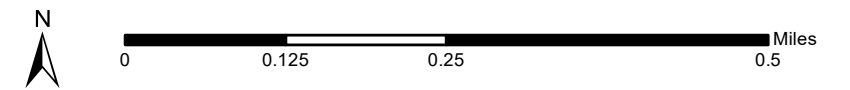
ENGINEERING

### Potential Improvements

- Buffered Bike Lanes
- Sidewalks
- Multipurpose Path
- Traffic Calming
- Lane Reductions
- Crossing Improvements
- Refresh Crosswalks
- Suggested Routes to School
- Focus School
- Focus School Enrollment Area
- Half-Mile Radius
- Other Project Schools
- Parks & Open Space
- Lancaster City Boundary



Sundown 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.

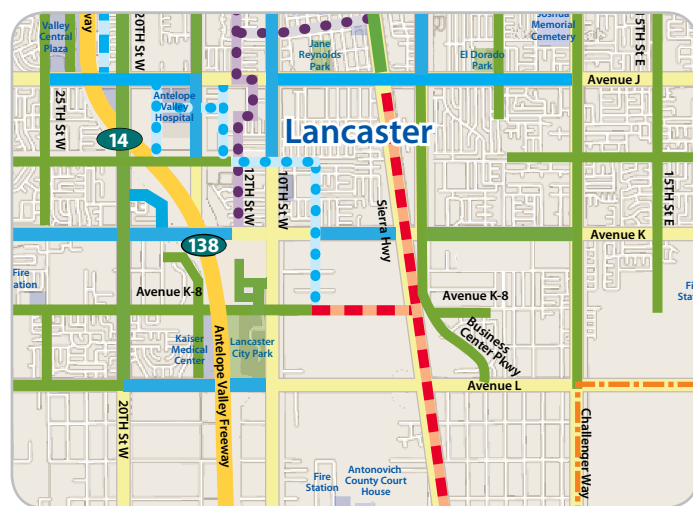
- Community events, family fun days
- Annual parent/guardian surveys



### EVALUATION

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

- Annual student tallies



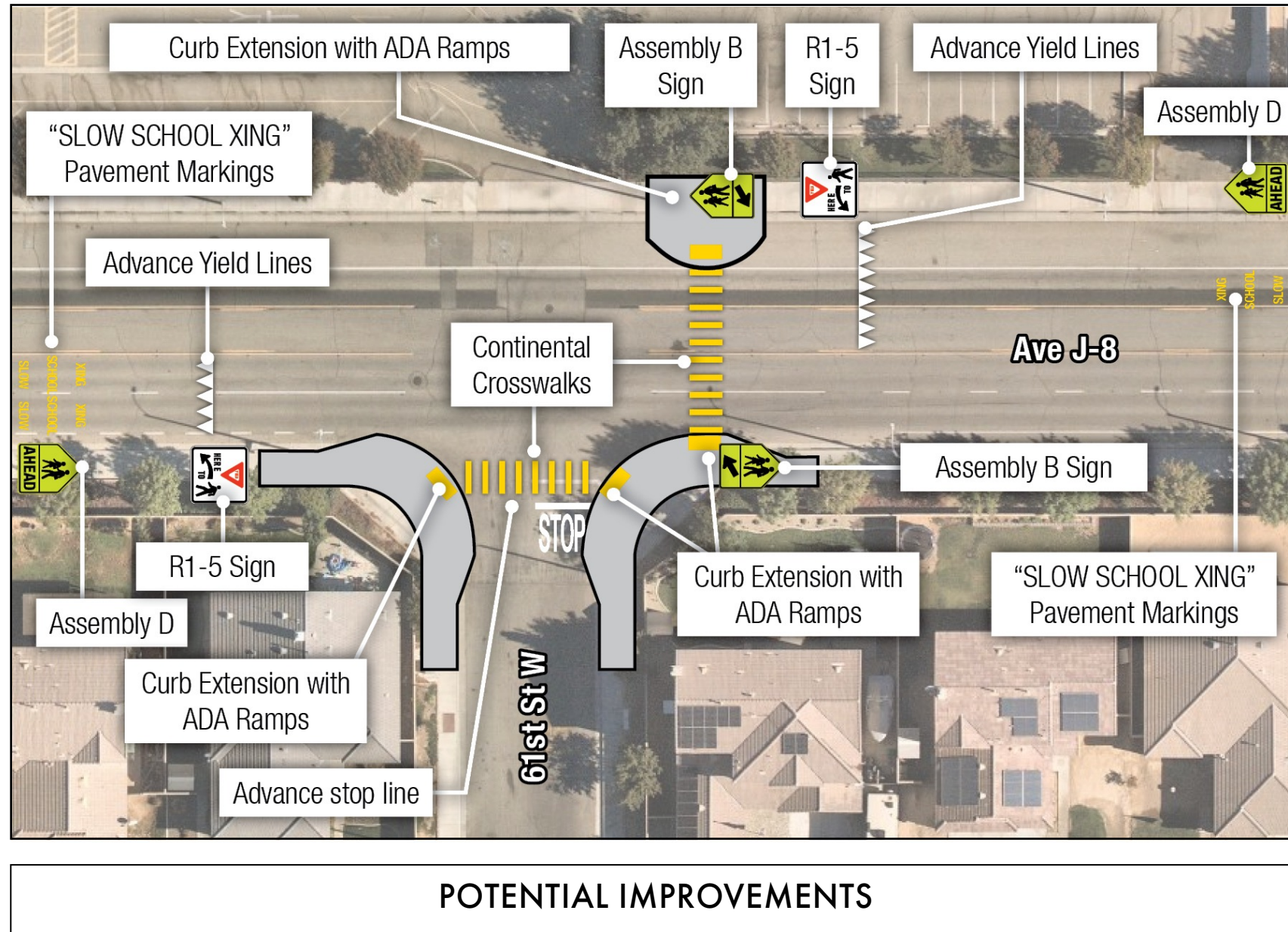
With City and School District programmatic support, the principal can set the tone to encourage and increase students who walk or bike to school.



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

# PROJECT IMPROVEMENTS

## Recommendations



## Avenue J-8 and 61st Street West

### Existing

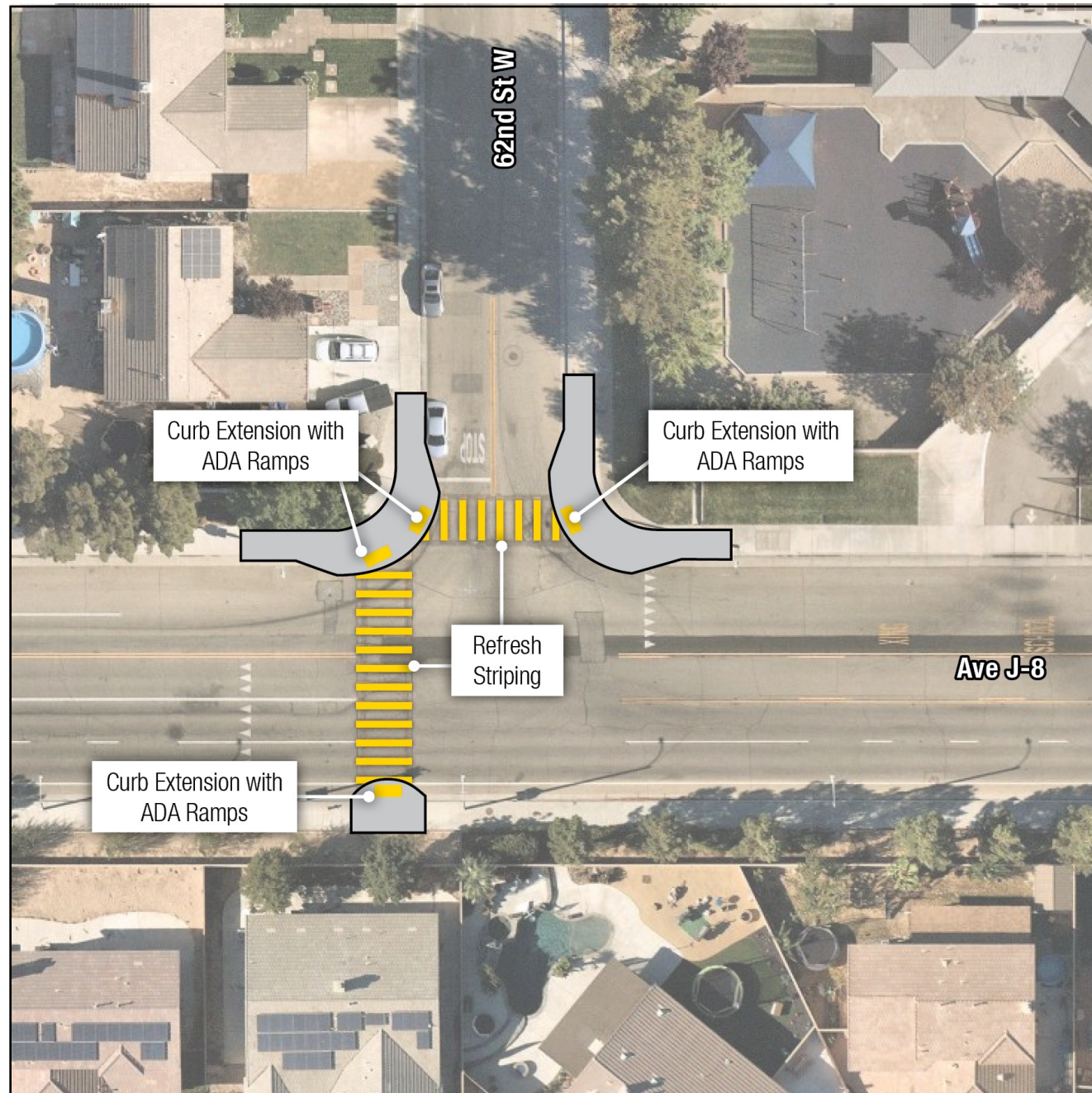
- T-intersection.
- Stop control on 61st Street West.
- No marked crosswalks.

### Potential Improvements

- Investigate installing an overhead pedestrian-activated rapid-flashing beacons or HAWK to the east leg crosswalk OR consider reducing the number of travel lanes to 1-lane in each direction.
- Add yellow continental crosswalks on south and east legs.
- Add curb extension with ADA curb ramps on south and east legs.
- Add advanced yield lines to both approaches of the east leg crosswalk.
- Add "SLOW SCHOOL XING" pavement markings.
- Add signs approaching crosswalk(s) per CA MUTCD guidelines.

## PROJECT IMPROVEMENTS

# Recommendations



### POTENTIAL IMPROVEMENTS

## Avenue J-8 and 62nd Street West

### Existing

- T-intersection.
- Stop control on 62nd Street West.
- Yellow continental crosswalks on north and west legs.

### Potential Improvements

- Investigate installing an overhead pedestrian-activated rapid-flashing beacons or HAWK to the west leg crosswalk OR consider reducing the number of travel lanes to 1-lane in each direction.
- Refresh yellow continental crosswalks on north and west legs.
- Add curb extensions with ADA curb ramps on north and west legs.

# PROJECT IMPROVEMENTS

## Recommendations

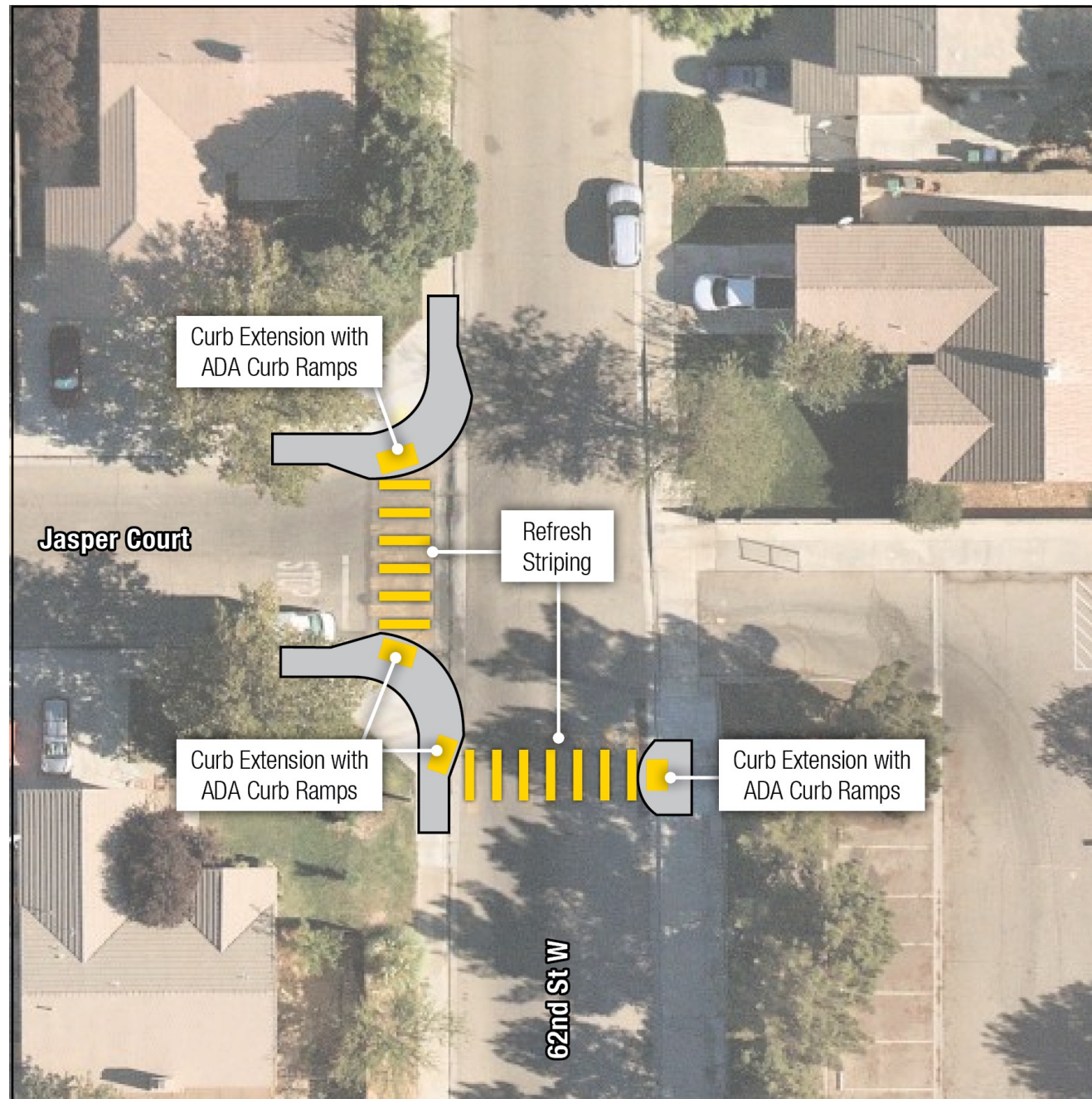
### Jasper Court and 62nd Street West

#### Existing

- T-intersection.
- Stop control on Jasper Court.

#### Potential Improvements

- Refresh yellow continental crosswalks on the west and south legs.
- Add curb extensions with ADA curb ramps on west and south legs.

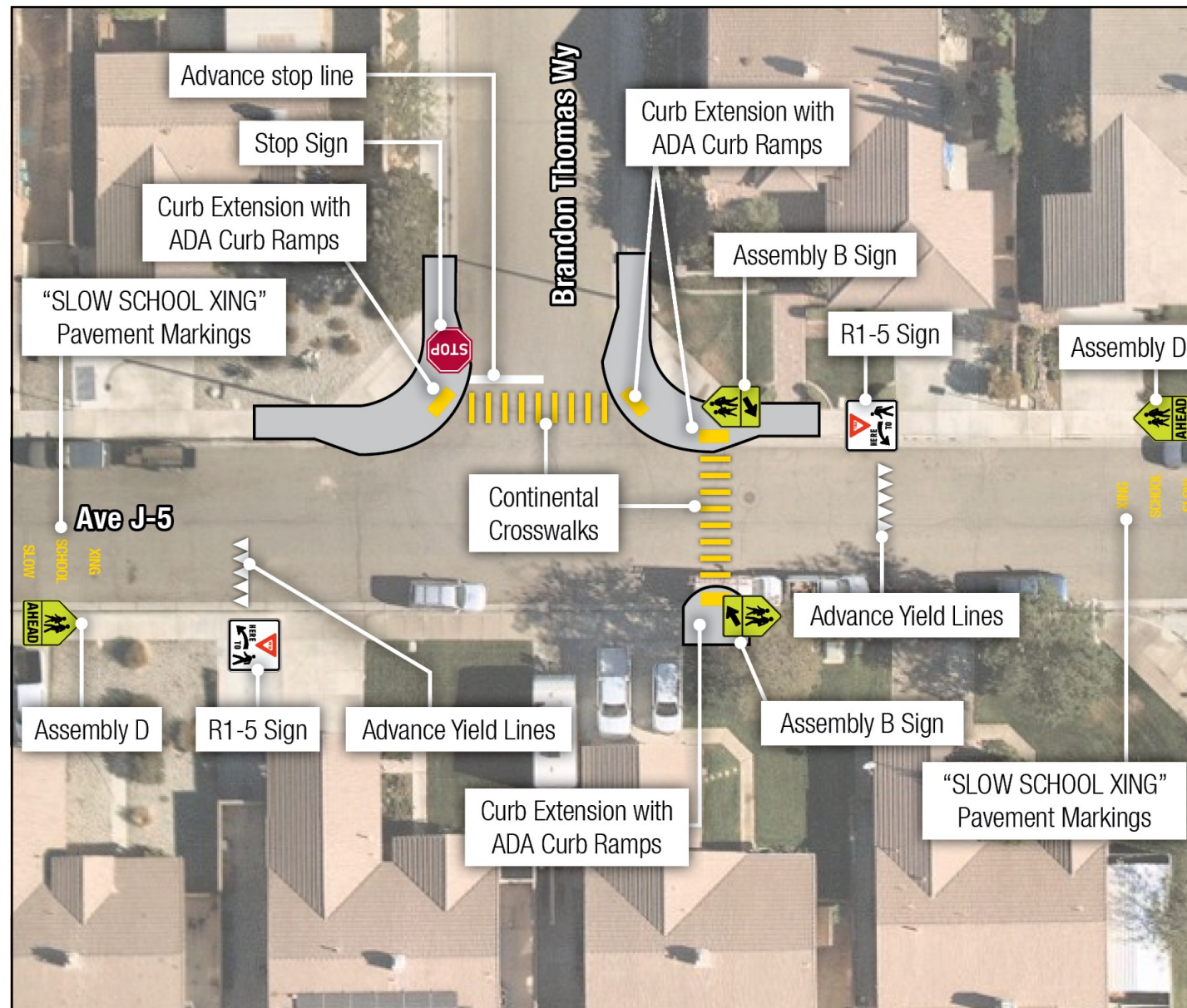


POTENTIAL IMPROVEMENTS

# PROJECT IMPROVEMENTS

## Recommendations

### Avenue J-5 and Brandon Thomas Way



POTENTIAL IMPROVEMENTS

#### Existing

- Uncontrolled T-intersection.
- No marked crosswalks.

#### Potential Improvements

- Investigate installing stop control on Brandon Thomas Way approach.
- Add yellow continental crosswalks on north and east legs.
- Add curb extensions with ADA curb ramps on north and east legs.
- Add advanced yield lines to both approaches of the east leg crosswalk.
- Add "SLOW SCHOOL XING" pavement markings.
- Add signs approaching crosswalk(s) per CA MUTCD guidelines.

# PROJECT & PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

## Strategy Packages

### Summary of Engineering Strategies, by Type

#### Crossing Improvements

- **Avenue J-8 & 61st Street West:** Pavement markings & signage; curb extensions/ramps; investigate pedestrian HAWK signal, rectangular rapid-flashing beacon (RRFB), or lane reductions
- **Avenue J-8 & 62nd Street West:** Pavement markings; curb extensions/ramps; investigate pedestrian HAWK signal, rectangular rapid-flashing beacon (RRFB), or lane reductions
- **Jasper Court & 62nd Street West:** Pavement markings; curb extensions/ramps
- **Avenue J-5 & Brandon Thomas Way:** Pavement markings & signage; Curb extensions/ramps

#### Bikeway

- **Avenue J-8 between east of 57th Street West & 65th Street West:** Lane reductions & Class II buffered bike lanes

#### Multipurpose Path

- **Avenue J-12** between 60th Street West & east of 62nd Street West

#### Sidewalks

- **60th Street West** between Jamaica Lane & Avenue J-8 (east side)
- **60th Street West** between Avenue J-9 & Avenue J-10 (east side)
- **60th Street West** between existing sidewalk south of Avenue J-8 & Avenue K (west side)
- **60th Street West** between Avenue K & Avenue K-2 (east side)
- **Avenue K** between 60th Street West & existing sidewalk east of 62nd Street West (north side)

#### Traffic Calming

- **62nd Street West between Jasper Court & Avenue J-8:** Speed humps

