

TRAFFIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

MEETING DATE: January 29, 2020

ITEM FOR CONSIDERATION

Traffic Control Assessment in School Areas

Action Item: X Non-Action Item:

Report prepared by: Thomas Mericle, P.E., T.E.
 Consulting City Traffic Engineer



Signature

Reviewed by: John Ilasin, P.E.
 Public Works Director



Signature

I. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Traffic Safety Committee (TSC) take public comment, discuss this item, and support the staff recommendation to update all of the existing traffic control devices in school areas to be compliant with current state standards that includes the recent City Council approved lowering the speed limit from 25 mph to 20 mph when children are present on El Carro Lane in the school area of Canalino Elementary School/Carpinteria Family School.

II. DISCUSSION

An assessment was conducted on existing traffic control devices in the school areas throughout the city. The purpose of the assessment was to determine whether the existing traffic control devices meet the current state standards, which is the California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (California MUTCD). The traffic control devices in the vicinity of the following schools were assessed:

- Aliso Elementary School
- Canalino Elementary School/Carpinteria Family School
- Carpinteria Middle School
- Carpinteria High School/Rincon High School
- The Howard School

The assessment did not include the review of school routes.

Field reviews of each of the school areas were conducted the week of September 23, 2019, during the morning and afternoon periods when students were not actively being dropped off or picked up. This was done for the safety of the field review personnel, students, and parents so there were no distractions. The field review included collecting data on existing signs and pavement markings as well as posted speed limits. The following discussion describe the general traffic control devices in school areas, observations of the field review, and the recommendations for each school area.

School Area Traffic Control Signs

There are basically two ways to assign traffic control signs in school areas. When the posted speed limit is less than or equal to 25 mph, warning signs are used to inform motorists that they are entering a school area and to be aware of children. When the posted speed limit is greater than 25 mph, special 25 mph speed reduction signage is placed to reduce speeds through the school area. In each case, state law requires the signage to be installed on streets contiguous to a school. In special cases, speed limits are allowed to be lowered from 25 mph to 20 mph or 15 mph in the school area. Signage for school areas generally consists of the following signs:

- S1-1: Pentagon shaped sign showing the presence of kids and adults.
- W16-5: Arrow signs that show the location of a school crossing.
- SW24-1: Combined S1-1 and “SCHOOL” sign used to warn drivers of a school ahead and placed at the school zone boundary (500-feet).
- SW24-2: Combined S1-1 and Arrow sign used to warn drivers of a school crossing and placed at the crosswalk.
- SW24-3: Combined S1-1 and “AHEAD” sign used to warn drivers of a school crossing ahead.
- SR4-1: School speed limit sign for streets over 25 mph and placed at the school zone boundary (500-feet).
- R1-6: Ground mounted plastic placard to supplement school crossing signs.
- S4-5: School Speed Limit Ahead warning sign to warn of changing school speed limit on higher speed roads.

For images of the aforementioned signs, see Figure 1 (School Area Traffic Control Signs) on the next page.



S1-1

W16-7P



SW24-1



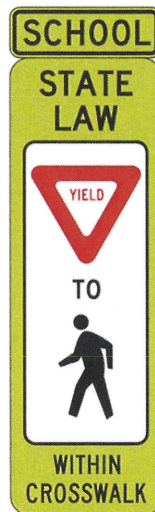
SW24-2



SW24-3



SR4-1



R1-6



S4-5

Figure 1- School Area Traffic Control Signs

School Area Traffic Control Pavement Markings

The only pavement markings that are specific to school areas are the yellow crosswalk and the SLOW SCHOOL XING yellow legend. These pavement markings are used for crosswalks within the school area. Crosswalks within 500 feet of the school are required to be yellow. The SLOW SCHOOL XING yellow legend is required to be placed at 100-feet in advance of every uncontrolled school crossing (e.g. not at Stop or Yield signs or traffic signal).

School Areas

Aliso Elementary School:

Aliso Elementary School is at the southwest corner of Carpinteria Avenue and Seventh Street. The Carpinteria Avenue/Seventh Street and Santa Ynez Avenue intersection adjacent to the school is controlled by a traffic signal. The posted speed limit of Carpinteria Avenue between U.S. Highway 101 Off-ramp Exit 87B (Carpinteria Avenue) and Santa Monica Creek is 40 mph. The posted speed limit on Carpinteria Avenue between Santa Monica Creek and Santa Ynez Avenue is 35 mph. The posted speed limit on Santa Ynez is 25 mph, and the new speed limit on Seventh Street will be 25 mph.

It is recommended for the school crossing signs on Seventh Street adjacent to the Reynolds Avenue/Ninth Street intersection to be updated to conform with the current California MUTCD standard. Advance school area signs and a school speed sign on Carpinteria Avenue east of the school should be installed. See Figure 2 below for traffic control device recommendations.



Figure 2- Aliso Elementary School

Carpinteria Middle School:

Carpinteria Middle School is located along Carpinteria Avenue and Palm Avenue with the back side of the play fields facing Eighth Street. The posted speed limit on Carpinteria Avenue east of the Casitas Pass Road intersection is currently 30 mph, but it will be increasing to 35 mph. The posted speed limit on Carpinteria Avenue west of the Casitas Pass Road intersection is 25 mph. The posted speed limits on Palm Avenue, Casitas Pass Road, and Eighth Street are 25 mph. There are demand-actuated pedestrian push button flashing crosswalk signs and white crosswalk markings on Carpinteria Avenue adjacent to the Albertson's shopping center driveway. The intersection of Carpinteria Avenue and Casitas Pass Road directly in front of the school is controlled by a traffic signal. There is a Stop sign on Palm Avenue at the T-intersection of Carpinteria Avenue. There are also yellow crosswalk markings with school crossing signs at this intersection. The intersection of Palm Avenue and Eighth Street is controlled by Multi-way Stop signs, and there are yellow crosswalk markings. At the intersection of Palm Avenue and Sixth Street, there are Stop signs only on the west and east legs of Sixth Street. There are also yellow crosswalk markings at this intersection on the north leg of Palm Avenue and the west leg of Sixth Street.

It is recommended for the existing school crossing signs to be updated to conform with the current California MUTCD standard. On Carpinteria Avenue adjacent to the Albertson's shopping center driveway, the existing white crosswalk markings and signs should be removed and replaced with yellow crosswalk markings and school crossing signs. On Casitas Pass Road, the existing school zone speed sign should be removed and replaced with a standard school zone sign (SW24-1). See Figure 4 below for traffic control device recommendations.

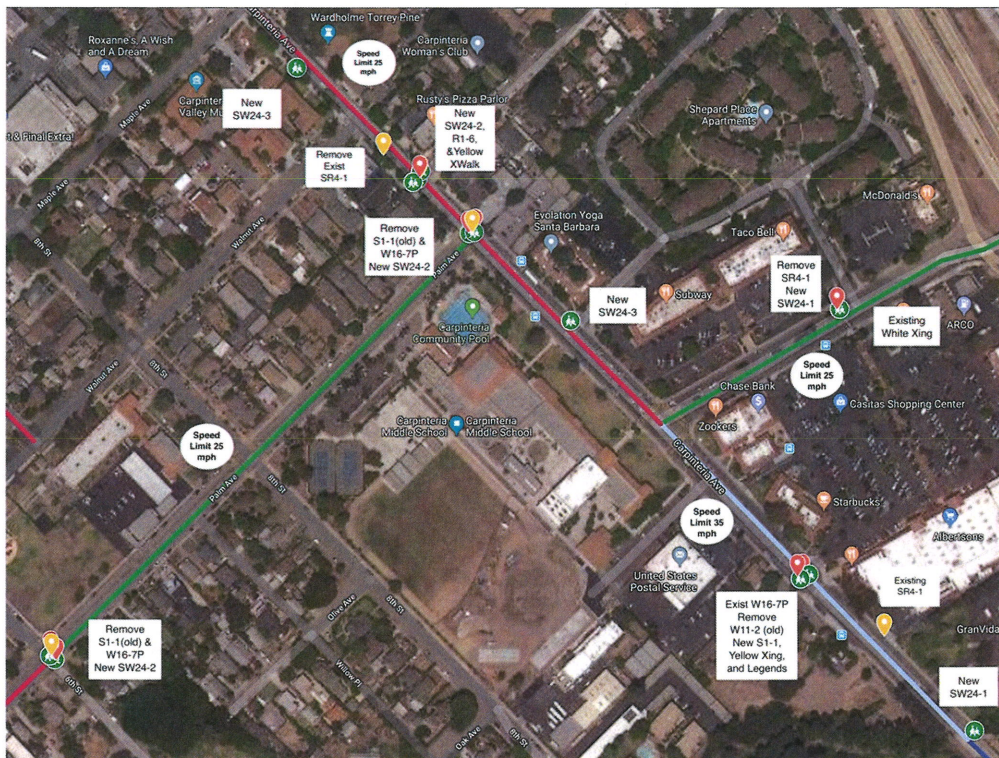


Figure 4- Carpinteria Middle School

Carpinteria High School/Rincon High School:

Carpinteria High School and Rincon High School are located along Foothill Road. Foothill Road is also State Route 192. There are school zone speed signs for both eastbound and westbound directions adjacent to Carpinteria High School. There is a school crossing in front of Carpinteria High School with demand-actuated pedestrian push button flashing school crossing signs and yellow crosswalk markings. There is one school zone sign for the eastbound direction adjacent to Rincon High School.

It is recommended for a school zone speed sign (SR4-1) and advance warning sign (SW24-3) in the westbound direction to be relocated at an additional distance from the schools in order to mark the beginning of the school zone rather than the limit of the school grounds. It is also recommended for a new school zone sign (SW24-1) sign to be installed in the westbound direction in advance of the entrance to Rincon High School. It is also recommended to install a new school crossing yield sign (R1-6) sign in the yellow crosswalk in front of Carpinteria High School. See Figure 5 below for traffic control device recommendations.



Figure 5- Carpinteria High School/Rincon High School

The Howard School:

The Howard School is located on Foothill Road (State Route 192) between Linden Avenue and Casitas Pass Road. Drop-off and pick-up of students are on the school site. The posted speed limit on Foothill Road adjacent to the school is 40 mph. There is no posted school zone signage adjacent to the school

It is recommended for new school zone speed limit signs (SR4-1) and advance speed limit warning signs (S4-5) to be installed adjacent to the school. See Figure 6 below for traffic control device recommendations.

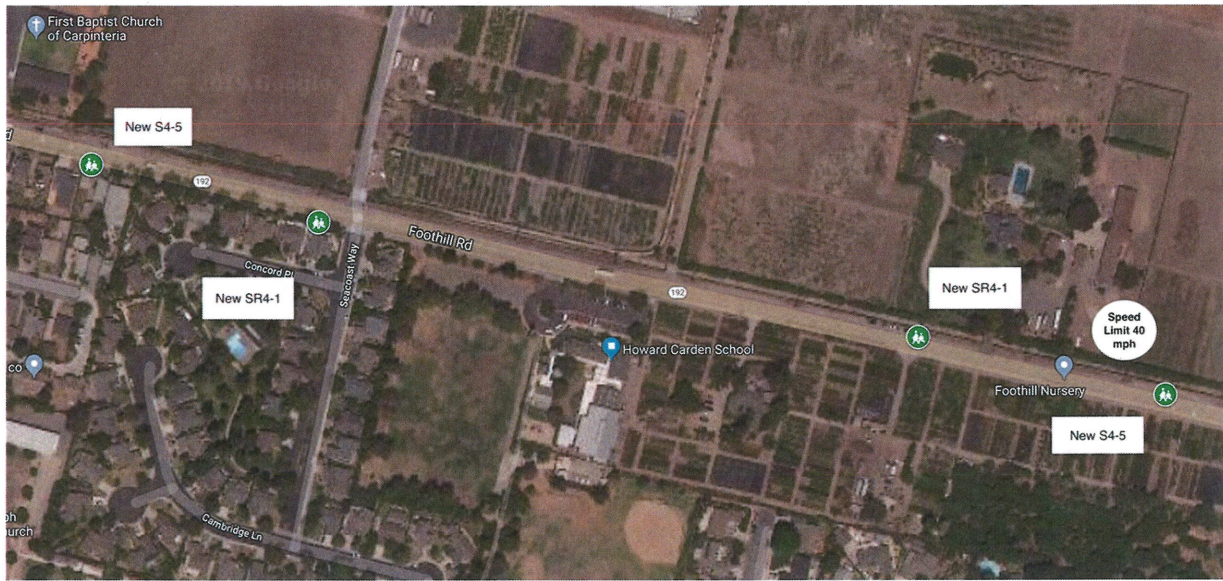


Figure 6- The Howard School