



Hamilton Elementary School Travel Plan



SAFE ROUTES
TO SCHOOLS
MARIN COUNTY



Transportation Authority of Marin

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1. Purpose

1.1. SR2S Planning, Implementation and Monitoring

The Hamilton Elementary School Travel Plan is the blueprint for identifying and prioritizing Safe Routes to School (SR2S) programs, resources, and capital improvements. The Travel Plan also documents program activities and impacts on school-related travel that can be used to assess the success of the SR2S program over time, and important school-specific transportation policies and operations.

The Travel Plan differs from most plans in that it is not a snapshot in time but a living document; one that is repeatedly updated and modified to reflect school staff, community, and parent input along with technical information and lessons learned. This input is primarily captured by a SR2S task force that meets periodically to identify and address new concerns. For more information on Safe Routes to School partnerships in Marin County, visit www.saferoutestoschools.org

1.2. Marin County Measure A

The Transportation Sales Tax Measure Expenditure Plan approved by voters as Measure A in November 2004 dedicates an estimated \$332 million in local sales tax revenues to transportation needs in Marin County. Approximately \$36.5 million (11%) of the sales tax expenditure has been earmarked to reduce school related congestion and safer access to schools. These funds are allocated to three sub-strategies, or programs:

- Safe Routes to School (SR2S)
- Crossing Guards
- Safe Pathways to School

The Safe Pathways infrastructure program is integral to the success of the overall strategy; it is the capital improvement element of the Safe Routes to School program. As a stated policy in the *Transportation Authority of Marin (TAM) Measure A – Transportation Sales Tax Strategic Plan Update (2009)*, all projects eligible for Safe Pathways funding must be identified in Safe Routes plans. The Hamilton Elementary School Travel Plan qualifies as such a plan and identifies potential capital projects eligible for Safe Pathways funding.

2. Hamilton Elementary School Profile

2.1. School Location

1 Marin Gate road
Novato, CA 94949

Principal: Ruthanne Bexton
Assistant Principal: Steve Hospadar

2.2. Enrollment and Demographics

Table 1 shows the number of students enrolled in each grade for the 2008/09 school year. **Table 2** shows the racial and ethnic breakdown of the student population

Table 1: Hamilton School Enrollment by Grade, 2008-09

Grade Level	Enrollment
Kindergarten	100
Grade 1	100
Grade 2	80
Grade 3	81
Grade 4	81
Grade 5	89
Total	531
<i>Source: California Department of Education</i>	

Table 2: Hamilton Racial and Ethnic Subgroups, 2008-09

Racial and Ethnic Subgroup	Number of Students	Percent of Students
African American	46	8.4%
American Indian or Alaska Native	1	0.2%
Asian	27	5.0%
Filipino	10	1.8%
Hispanic or Latino	209	38.3%
Pacific Islander	7	1.3%
White (Not Hispanic)	233	42.8%
Multiple or No Response	12	2.2%
<i>Source: California Department of Education</i>		

2.2.1. Free Lunch Program

Hamilton's lunch program has 282 students enrolled. Two hundred twenty-two students receive free lunch and 60 receive reduced lunch.

2.3. Existing Conditions

This section describes the physical conditions around Hamilton Elementary School. Physical conditions include school entrances, traffic controls, crosswalks, crossing guards, transit, and bicycle racks.

Entrances to School

- **Primary School Entrance:** Main Gate Road

Cross Streets

- **Cross Street:** Nave Boulevard

Crossing Guards

- **Location of School Crossing Guards:** There is a TAM crossing guard at Main Gate Road and school crossing guards in the front lot driveway

Transit

- **School Bus Availability:** Available for students living 2.5 miles from school
- **Public Transit Availability:** ½ block away
- **Special Transit Needs Offered:** Taxi service

Bike Racks

- **Location of Bike Racks:** Upper and lower campus
- **Number of Bike Spaces:** 200
- **Rack Condition:** Good condition

2.4. Policies

Pick Up and Drop Off

- **Location:** Main Gate and Tinker Street

- **Policy:** The child should arrive no more than 15 minutes before the start of school and be picked up no later than 15 minutes after dismissal.

Parking

- **Staff parking** is available in front and rear of the school
- **General Public Parking** is in the front of the school
- **Policy:** No parking in bus zones or loading zones. There is designated “staff parking in the first few rows of the front lot.

Bicycle and Skate Policy

- Students must walk their bicycles on campus.
- Students are not allowed to bring skateboards on campus.

2.5. Student Surveys

Hamilton teachers have conducted fall and spring student surveys since the 2004-05 school year. Surveys were not conducted in the 2005-06 school year. Teachers asked students how they traveled between home and school. **Table 3** shows the survey results through fall 2010.

Table 3: How Students Got To School

Fall							
Year	Walk	Bike	Bus	Transit	Carpool	Family Vehicle	Other
2004-05	16%	7%	9%		15%	53%	
2006-07	23%	11%	5%		14%	47%	
2007-08	18%	10%	6%		16%	49%	1%
2008-09	20%	8%	4%	0%	13%	52%	4%
2009-10	21%	4%	6%	0%	13%	53%	4%
2010-11	23%	7%	1%	1%	13%	52%	3%
Spring							
Year	Walk	Bike	Bus	Transit	Carpool	Family Vehicle	Other
2004-05							
2006-07	18%	10%	7%		15%	50%	
2007-08	15%	5%	8%		15%	57%	0%
2008-09	25%	5%	5%	0%	14%	46%	4%
2009-10	21%	5%	4%	1%	12%	50%	6%
2010-11							

Figure 1 shows how children got to school from 2004 through 2010. Over the course of the survey years, the majority of children were driven to school. Carpooling was the second most common way children got to school.

The ways children travel to school changed between years for some modes. Bus use decreased by half and walking rates peaked every other year.

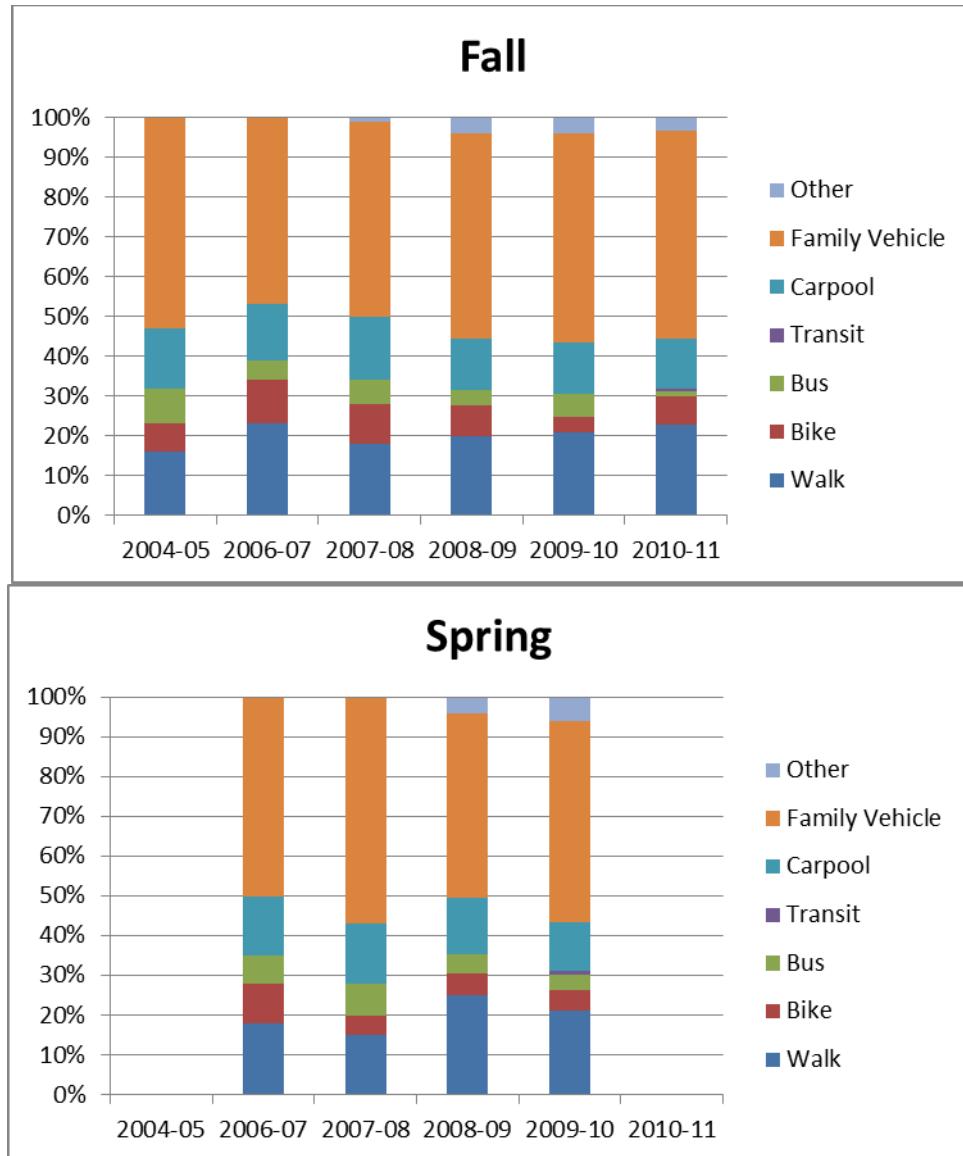


Figure 1: How Children Got To School

3. Barriers and Opportunities

3.1. Parent Survey

Team leaders administered volunteer parent/guardian surveys as part of the 2003-04 school year. The survey was distributed at school. Parents and guardians could either return the completed survey to the school or complete it online through a link on the Transportation Authority of Marin homepage. The following section summarizes the results of that survey.

Concerns

When asked “Why you drive your child to school (check all that apply)”, “safety” was the most cited response. **Table 4** lists parent concerns from most to least common.

Table 4: Parental Concerns

Concern	Percent
Safety	60%
Age	41%
Stranger Danger	39%
Weather	38%
Convenience	34%
Work	32%
Too Far	28%
Speeding	18%
Distance	17%
Late	16%
Dangerous Crossings	13%
Backpack	10%
Carrying Projects	10%
Child not following Safety Rules	4%
Sidewalk	4%
Paths	3%
Dogs	1%
Bike Storage	1%
Maps	1%
Steepness	0%
<i>Source: Parent Survey, 2003-04, 154 Responses</i>	

Distance to School

When asked “how far do you live from school”, half to one mile was the most cited response. **Table 5** lists the response results.

Table 5: Distance to School

Distance to School	Percent of Total Surveyed
1/2 to 1 mile	35%
Between 1 - 2 miles	19%
Over 2 miles	18%
No Response	12%
1/4 mile or less	10%
1/4 to 1/2 mile	6%
<i>Source: Parent Survey, 2003-04, 154 Responses</i>	

Potential Opportunities

When asked under what circumstances they would allow their child to walk or bike to school, “with other children” was the most cited response. **Table 6** lists the other potential opportunities from most to least cited.

Table 6: Potential Opportunities to Increase Walking and Bicycle Among Children

Opportunities	Percent
With Other Children	49%
Paths Separated from Traffic	26%
With Other Parents	21%
Crossing Guard	20%
Safety Training	17%
Bike Storage	11%
Cars Slowed Down	6%
Better Sidewalks and Bike Paths	1%
<i>Source: Parent Survey, 2003-04, 154 Responses</i>	

3.2. Walkabout Notes

A walkabout was held at the Hamilton Elementary School on December 9th 2005. Several issues were identified including speeding on Main Gate Road and issues in the back of the school. The following were notes from the walkabout:

Hotspots

- Motorists speed on Main Gate Road in front of the school
- From Lanham Village to school:
 - There is no crossing guard and the traffic is very heavy, safety could be improved, most of the children from Lanham Village walk or bike.

- The vegetation in the median blocks motorists' view of crossing children.
- A painted pedestrian path is needed along the parking lot fence.
- "C" Street and Main Gate Road
 - A crosswalk is needed where the road turns in to C street
 - No sidewalks
 - Kids taking short cuts by crossing at the railroad
- Captain Nurse Circle at Bolling Drive needs school crossing signage and striping at the pathway entrance.
- Randolph Drive, Bolling Drive, Bolling Circle needs school striping and signage.
- Bolling Circle and Bolling Drive need a three way stop sign.
- Many complaints about Tinker Way.

4. Programs and Projects

4.1. Engineering Design Concepts

Based on the walkabout and Task Force meetings, a series of Design Concepts were developed and are listed below.

Access Improvements to Parking Lot

Access from the sidewalk to the school can be improved by constructing a separated walkway or raised crosswalk on the west side of the parking lot. Approximately six parking spaces would need to be removed to accommodate the walkway.

Main Gate Road

The design concepts recommend reducing sign clutter along Main Gate Road and updated signage to comply with the California MUTCD 2006 standards. Recommended improvements at the uncontrolled crosswalk in front of the school include high-visibility striping and signage, yield markings, or a raised crosswalk.

Bolling Circle and Randolph Drive

Traffic calming improvements are recommended. Specifically, restriping Bolling Circle and Randolph Drive to ten foot travel lanes with bike lanes and parking on one side.

Appendix A illustrates these concepts.

4.2. Classroom Education

In 2007 Hamilton had the following classes:

- Stop Look and Listen (2nd grade)

- Walk Around the Block (2nd grade)
- Traffic Safety Game Show (4th grade)

For the spring of 2009 Hamilton has requested a bike rodeo for 2nd and 4th grade students.

4.3. Encouragement Programs

Currently, the school offers the following programs of encouragement:

- Participated in International Walk to School Day since 2006.
- Participating in the Frequent Rider Miles contest in the spring of 2009 from March 23 to April 24
- Requested a Pedal Power assembly to act as a kick off for the Frequent Rider Miles contest
- Conducts monthly Walk and Roll to School Days during the 2008-9 school year

5. Implementation Matrix

Implementation plans for the Novato School District are summarized in the District Travel Plan. Please refer to that plan for implementation efforts.

6. Appendix A: Engineering Design Concept

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CROSSWALK IMPROVEMENTS AT SCHOOL ENTRANCE ON MAIN GATE ROAD

EXISTING CONDITIONS



Approaching crosswalk from west on Main Gate Road



Looking south across Main Gate Road toward Hamilton School



Approaching crosswalk from east on Main Gate Road

EXISTING CROSSWALK



OPTION 1: HIGH VISIBILITY CROSSWALK



OPTION 2: RAISED CROSSWALK



Recommendations

- Replace existing crosswalk with high-visibility crosswalk
- Replace signs with current MUTCD Assembly B in fluorescent yellow-green
- Paint yield markings on street, 20' to 50' before crosswalk

Recommendations

- Same as Option 1, with:
- Replace existing crosswalk with raised crosswalk.

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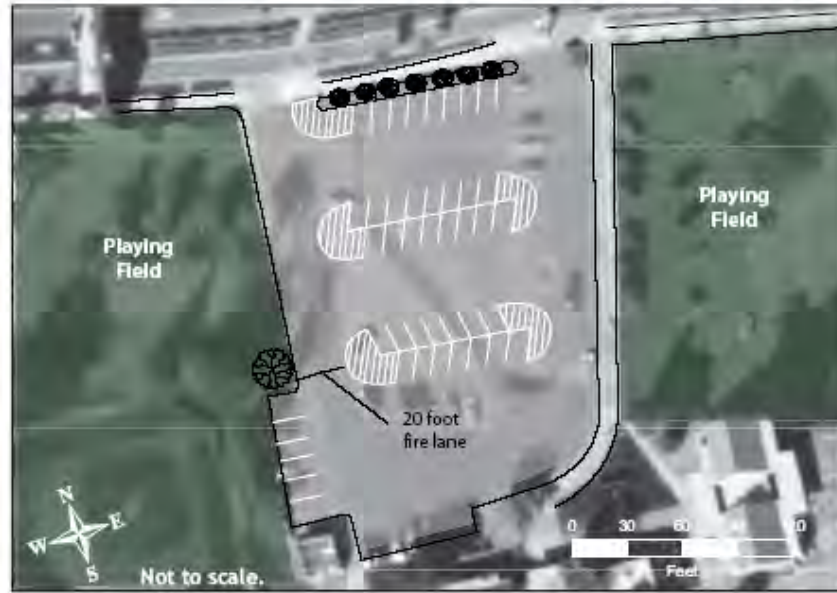
April 2005



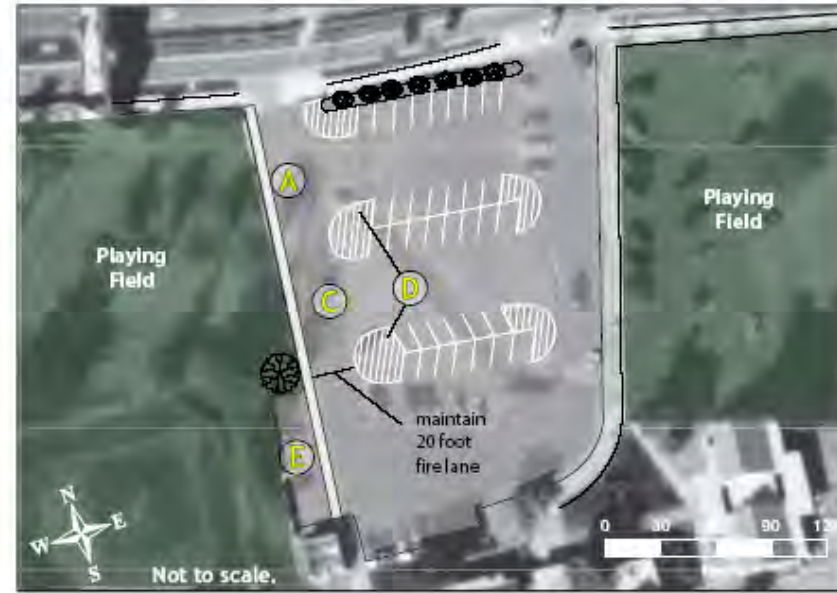
Figure 2: Crosswalk Improvements at School Entrance and Main Gate Road

ACCESS IMPROVEMENTS IN SCHOOL PARKING LOT

EXISTING PARKING LOT DESIGN



RECOMMENDED PARKING LOT DESIGN



Recommendations

- A** Option 1: Construct raised four foot pathway on west edge of parking lot from sidewalk to school entrance.
- B** Option 2: Install bollards to create four-foot separated walkway on west edge of parking lot.
- C** Shift fire lane east by approximately four feet.
- D** Remove two parking spaces to maintain 20' fire lane
- E** Remove six parking spaces to accommodate walkway

Existing Conditions



Option 1: Raised Sidewalk



Option 2: Bollards



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April 2006



Figure 3: Access Improvements in School Parking Lot

RECOMMENDED SIGNAGE IMPROVEMENTS

EXISTING CONDITIONS



Facing west on Main Gate Road
Existing crosswalk signs should be replaced by new, lower FYG signs



Facing east on Main Gate Road
Assembly C "25 mph school" is placed after school and obscured by trees



Facing east on Main Gate Road
30 mph sign is placed before school sign clutter distracts

PROPOSED SIGNAGE



Photo simulation shows approach to school with fewer signs and Assembly C

Recommendations

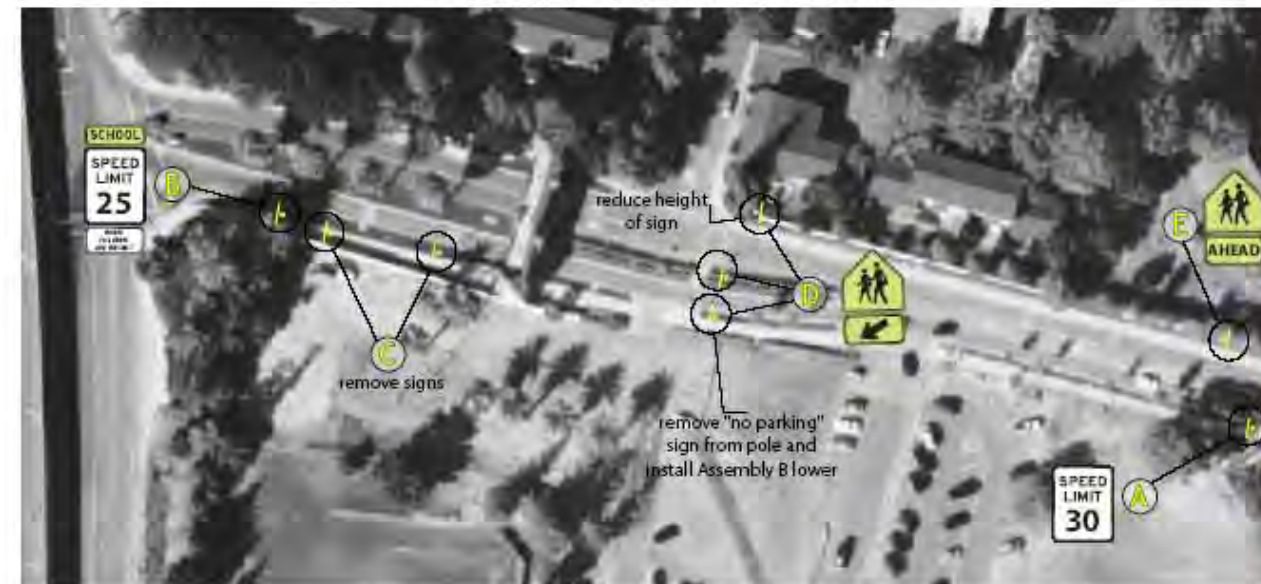
On eastbound Main Gate Road:

- (A) Relocate "30 mph speed limit" sign to approximately 500 ft past school
- (B) Relocate Assembly C "25 mph school" sign to before school
- (C) Remove "Watch for Wildlife" and "Bike Route" signs located before school
- (D) Replace existing "Crosswalk" signs with new fluorescent yellow-green Assembly B. Install new signs lower than current signs. Remove "No Parking" sign from pole

On westbound Main Gate Road:

- (E) Install Assembly D before crosswalk on westbound Main Gate Road

RECOMMENDED SIGNAGE IMPROVEMENTS



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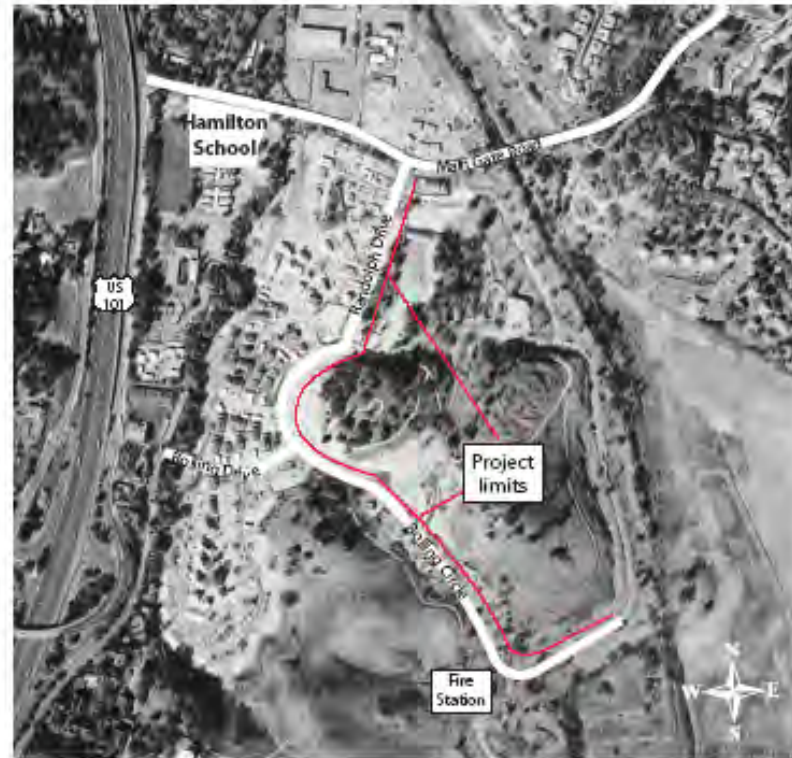
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Figure 4: Recommended Signage Improvements

TRAFFIC CALMING IMPROVEMENTS ON BOLLING CIRCLE AND RANDOLPH DRIVE

VICINITY MAP



Recommendations:

- Restripe Bolling Circle and Randolph Drive to ten foot travel lanes, two six foot bicycle lanes, and one eight foot parking lane on residential side.
- Provision of bicycle lanes would require a General Plan amendment.
- Limits: Bolling Circle from Randolph Drive to end Randolph Drive from Main Gate Road to Bolling Circle
- Note: On-street parking shifts from west side to east side on Bolling Circle at Fire Station

BEFORE

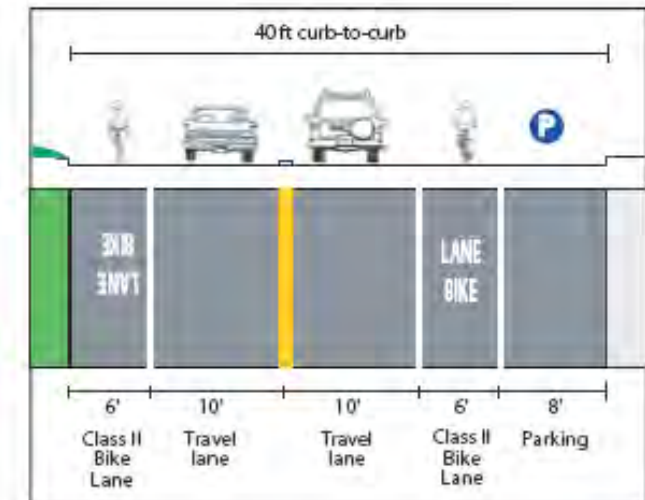
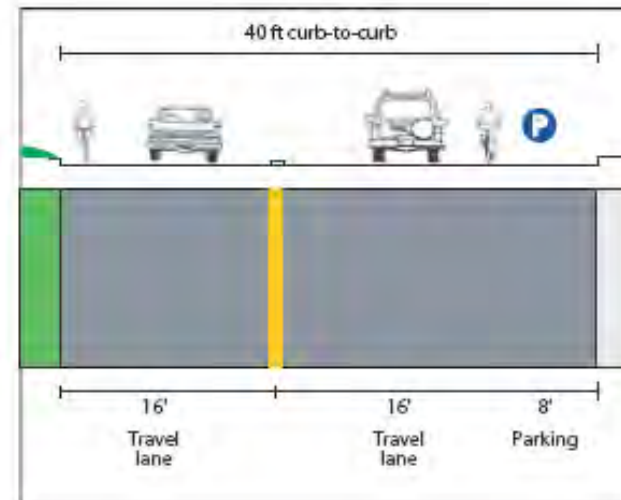


Existing conditions on Bolling Circle:
two 16' travel lanes
one eight foot parking lane on west side

AFTER



Proposed improvements:
two 6' bicycle lanes
travel lanes reduced to 10'
8' parking retained on west side



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Revised 10/19/09



Figure 5: Traffic Calming Improvements on Bolling Circle and Randolph Drive