



White Hill Middle 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 White Hill Middle 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 White Hill Middle School Travel Plan qualifies as such a plan and identifies potential capital projects eligible for Safe Pathways funding.

2. White Hill Middle School Profile

2.1. School Location

101 Glen Drive
Fairfax, CA 94930

2.2. Enrollment and Demographics

Table 1 shows enrollment by grade for the 2008-09 school year. **Table 2** shows the racial and ethnic enrollment.

Table 1: Enrollment by Grade, 2008-09

Grade Level	Enrollment
Grade 6	182
Grade 7	184
Grade 8	206
Total	573
<i>Source: California Department of Education</i>	

Table 2: Racial and Ethnic Subgroups, 2008-09

Racial and Ethnic Subgroup	Number of Students	Percent of Students
African American	9	1.6%
American Indian or Alaska Native	2	0.3%
Asian	25	4.4%
Filipino	5	0.9%
Hispanic or Latino	42	7.3%
Pacific Islander	0	0%
White (Not Hispanic)	474	82.7%
Multiple or No Response	16	2.8%
<i>Source: California Department of Education</i>		

2.3. School Lunch Program

Information not obtained.

2.4. Existing Conditions

Entrances to School

- **Primary School Entrance:** Glen Drive

Cross Streets

- **Cross Street:** McKenny Drive

Traffic Controls

- The intersection of Glen Drive/Sir Francis Drake Boulevard is a T-intersection; stop controlled on the Glen Drive approach only.
- Sir Francis Drake Boulevard extends just to the south of the school.

Crosswalks

Marked crosswalks are provided at the following locations near the school:

- Glen Drive at Mitchell Lane: yellow transverse
- Sir Francis Drake at Glen Drive: yellow ladder across west leg

Crossing Guards

- **Location of TAM Crossing Guards:** None

Transit

- **School Bus Availability:** White Hill School contracts with Marin Transit to provide school bus service on routes 123.
- **Public Transit Availability:** Public bus service is available on the Golden Gate Transit Routes 23 and 24, which stop at Sir Francis Drake Boulevard and Olema Road (just west of Glen Drive).
- **Special Transit Needs Offered:** Information not obtained.

Bike Racks

- **Location of Bike Racks:** Information not obtained.
- **Number of Bike Spaces:** Information not obtained.
- **Rack Condition and Security:** Information not obtained.

2.5. Policies

Pick Up and Drop Off

- **Location:** Pick-up/drop-off is located in the parking lot loop off of Glen Drive. Traffic enters the northern driveway, travels in a counterclockwise direction, and exits the south driveway.
- **Parking Policy:** Information not obtained.
- **Staff and General Parking:** Staff parking is available in the front parking lot on Glen Drive, and street parking along Glen Drive. On-site parking accommodates much of the daily staff demand; remaining staff park on-street areas and walk to campus. Visitors also use the main parking lot.

2.6. Education

In 2007, White Hill Middle participated in the following education programs:

- Share the Road
- Assembly

In the 2009-10 school year, the SR2S program will provide a two part bicycle safety class during lunch and connections times. The class will include a game show and field trip. The curriculum will teach students to walk bikes in crosswalks, make sure that they are visible to motorists and making eye contact with them before crossing.

2.7. Encouragement

In 2009, White Hill Middle participated in the following encouragement programs:

- Assembly
- Bike blender contest
- Celebrated Earth Day and International Walk to School Day (with other Fairfax schools including Drake High)

2.8. Enforcement

The Town implemented a Street Smarts Program in Fall 2009 and will be repeated in Spring 2010. This program includes signs and banners in areas where awareness of bicyclists and pedestrians is needed and a slide show for parents on traffic safety.

In addition, the Fairfax Police Department plans to schedule a Pedestrian Sting at the Glen Drive crosswalk.

Principal David Finnane, Hal Brown, Aide Katy Rice will look into requesting a crossing guard from TAM. Since parents at St. Rita’s paid for a crossing guard through the TAM program, White Hill parents indicated their interest in paying for one. The hiring of a crossing guard is dependant on the Town authorizing a crossing guard warrant.

Fairfax Police Department recommends that parents use the existing facilities and cross Sir Francis Drake Boulevard at the library or Oak Tree Lane and then ride the bike lane down Sir Francis Drake Boulevard.

2.9. Student Hand Tally

White Hill Middle has conducted fall and spring student surveys since the 2006-07 school year. With the exception of Spring 2008, students were asked by their teachers each fall and spring how they got to school that day. **Table 3** shows the survey results. Blank entries indicate that the information was not collected.

Table 3: How Students Got To School

	Fall						
Year	Walk	Bike	Bus	Transit	Carpool	Family Vehicle	Other
2006-07	6%	5%	50%		6%	33%	
2007-08	5%	6%	63%	0%	7%	18%	0%
2008-09	9%	4%	0%	67%	8%	12%	0%
2009-10	5%	8%	22%	42%	5%	18%	1%
2010-11	5%	1%	53%	6%	7%	18%	0%
	Spring						
Year	Walk	Bike	Bus	Transit	Carpool	Family Vehicle	Other
2006-07	6%	6%	56%		5%	26%	
2007-08							
2008-09	9%	4%	0%	69%	5%	14%	1%
2009-10	4%	5%	58%	13%	6%	14%	0%
2010-11							

Figure 1 charts the information in **Table 3**. Over the course of the survey years, most children were bused to school. Since 2007-08, “transit” and “other” were offered as travel choices. The result is that students indicated that they rode “transit” instead of the “bus,” compared to previous years when transit was not a survey option. The percentage of students walking to school has remained between four and nine percent since 2006, while the percentage of those driven alone in a family vehicle has decreased by half.

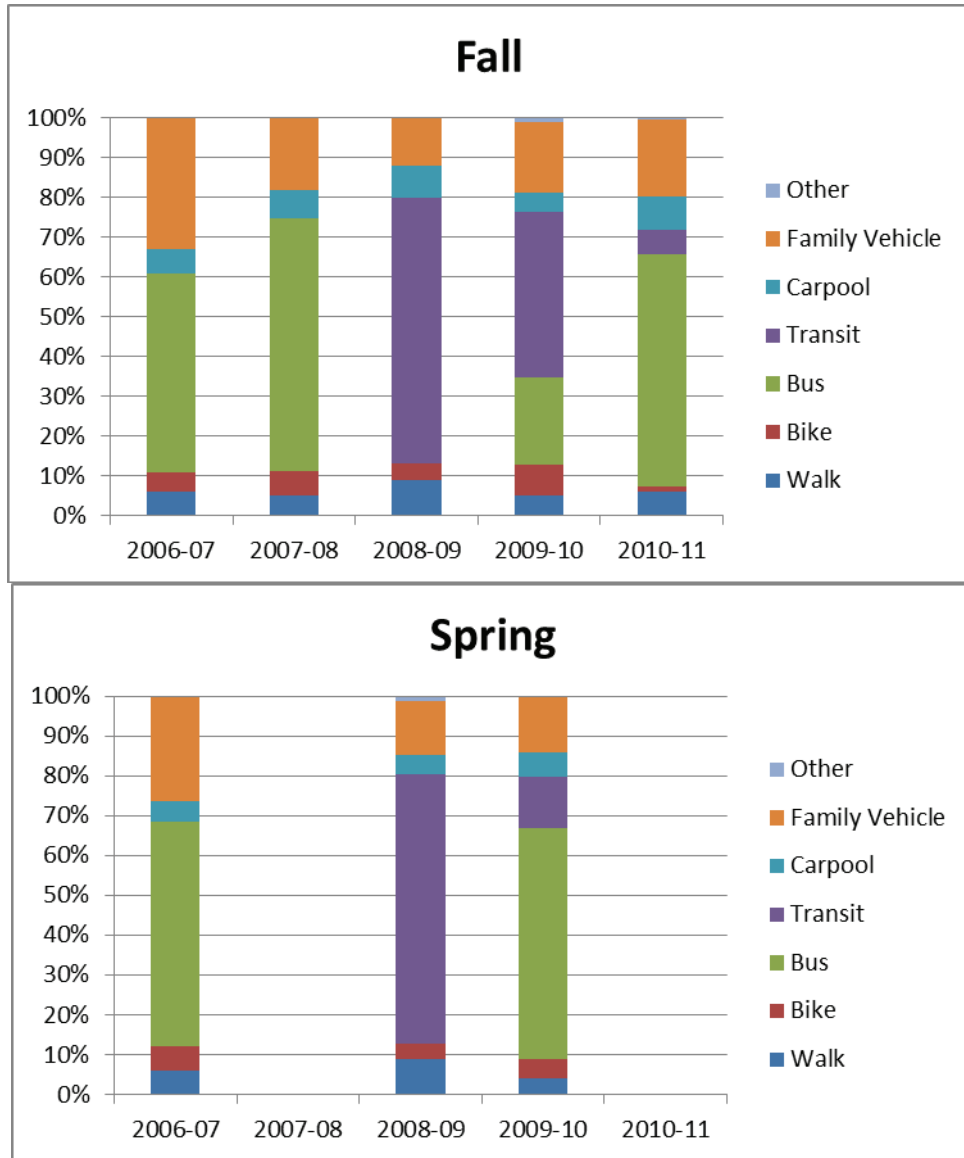


Figure 1: How Children Got To School

2.9.1. Student Administered Surveys

Students were asked to administer a travel behavior survey to their peers during the 2007-08 school year. The results of the survey were consistent with those from the student hand-raising survey, with most respondents reporting riding the bus to school, while very few reporting walking or biking to school. When comparing the students' means of travel to and from school, there is little

variation, with the exception of carpooling. Only half of the students arriving to school by carpool leave by carpool.

Table 4: Means of Travel to School (Student Administered Survey)

	Every Day		3-4 Days		1-2 Days		Not Often		Never	
	To	From	To	From	To	From	To	From	To	From
Bike	1%	1%	4%	4%	3%	3%	10%	10%	22%	22%
Walk	5%	6%	3%	4%	1%	1%	6%	8%	23%	21%
Carpool	18%	9%	4%	6%	7%	5%	19%	19%	5%	9%
Bus	52%	51%	10%	13%	4%	9%	4%	5%	6%	6%

3. Barriers and Opportunities

Encouraging Walking and Biking to School

Students would be most encouraged to walk or bike to school if they had an “alternative to carrying heavy backpacks” and “friends to walk or bike.” Students would be least encouraged if they knew more about the health benefits of walking or biking to school.

Table 5: Encouraging Walking and Biking to School

Barrier	% of Respondents
Alternatives to carrying heavy backpacks	43%
Have friends to walk or bike with	41%
Great incentives (e.g. prizes, extra credit)	30%
Improved bike paths and routes to school	23%
Other	23%
More information about safer paths from my home to school	9%
Better Bike Parking	4%
More information about environmental impact	4%
More information about health benefits	2%

Benefits from Walking and Biking to School

Students cited a wide range of benefits from walking and biking to school. Among the most cited benefits were, “getting exercise,” reducing air pollution,” and “not creating global warming gases.” Students cited “being more alert in school” and building social relationships” as the least benefit.

Table 6: Benefits from Walking and Biking to School

Benefit	% of Respondents
Getting exercise	88%
Reducing air pollution	79%
Not creating global warming gasses (CO2)	69%
Saving money	60%
Improving overall health	59%
Having fun	47%
Reducing traffic	45%
Being more independent	18%
Reducing stress	16%
Learning traffic rules	16%
Being more alert at school	11%
Building social relationships	11%
Other	1%

Barriers to Carpooling

Students cited not knowing other people in their area as the number one barrier to carpooling to school. Ten percent of students indicated that they already carpoled.

Table 7: Barriers to Carpooling

Barrier	% of Respondents
I don't know other people in my area that are interested in carpooling	44%
Other	33%
It's too much work to organize it	28%
I would need to get up earlier	20%
I already carpool	10%
My parents don't feel comfortable with it	4%

Encouraging Carpooling

Students would be most encouraged to carpool to school if they knew people in their area to carpool with, though only 36% of the students indicated this.

Table 8: Encouraging Carpooling to School

Encouragement	% of Respondents
Knowing who wants to carpool in my area	36%
Other	26%
I'd do it if someone else organized it	23%
I already carpool	11%

Encouraging Riding the Bus to School

Because the majority of students already ride the bus to school, it may be difficult to encourage more students to ride the bus. Only 14% of students would be encouraged to ride the bus if it ran closer to their house. No other encouragement strategy received more responses.

Table 9: Encouraging Riding the Bus to School

Encouragement	% of Respondents
I already ride the bus	67%
If the bus run closer to my home	14%
If I could ride for free	13%
I live too close	10%
Other	7%
The cost was reduced	6%
The schedule was more convenient	6%

Influencing Students' Travel Behavior with Advertisements

Students indicated being most influenced by homeroom presentations and intercom announcements, while they were least influenced by back pack mail.

Table 10: Influential Advertising Methods

Advertisement	% of Respondents
Homeroom presentations	39%
Intercom announcements	38%
Posters	30%
Word of mouth	24%
Phone calls	13%
Mailings	11%
Back pack mail	10%
Other	6%

Potential Opportunities

Parents and guardians were asked under what circumstances they would allow their child to walk or bike to school. **Table 5** shows the responses to the survey. The opportunity cited the most was is their children were “accompanied by other parents”. The opportunities cited second most were if “improved sidewalks and paths” and when their child “was older”.

Table 11: Potential Opportunities to Increase Walking and Bicycle Among Children

Opportunities	Percent
Accompanied by other parents	49%
Improved sidewalks and paths	42%
When he/she is older	40%
Cars slowed down	37%
Crossing guards at dangerous intersections	33%
Improved intersections	32%

Opportunities	Percent
Accompanied by other children	26%
Safety training was provided for students	18%
More police enforcement	11%
Park and walk locations where we could walk part way	11%
Route maps were provided	9%
Secure bike storage was available	7%
Other (please specify)	5%
<i>Source: Parent Survey, 2007-08</i>	

3.1.1. Walkabout and Bikeabout

A walkabout at White Hill School was held on March 10, 2006 and a bikeabout was held on July 25, 2006. Issues identified during the walkabout and bikeabouts include:

- Sir Francis Drake has sidewalk gaps near Olema Road. Students still walk along Sir Francis Drake.
- Vehicles and buses commonly block bicycle facilities on Sir Francis Drake.
- Potential use of a trail/old railroad grade behind the residential development as a pathway to school.

The bikeabout focused on identifying potential trail connections to school, including the old railroad grade and another route behind the residential area, as well as a route along Sir Francis Drake.

An additional meeting was held at White Hill to discuss parent concerns on October 13, 2009. Those concerns included:

- Crosswalk needed at Glenn Drive
- Speeding traffic on Sir Francis Drake Boulevard
- Crossing guard needed at Glenn Drive
- Unsure if school children should cross at Mitchell Drive
- Bike racks are hard to get to from Glen Drive
- People bike the wrong way on the sidewalk
- Unsafe bike riding by kids

Appendix A provides complete notes from the walkabout and bikeabout.

4. Programs and Projects

Based on the walkabout, bikeabout and Task Force meetings, design concepts were prepared. These concepts are summarized below and illustrated in **Appendix B**.

Signage Improvements on Sir Francis Drake and Glen Drive

This improvement plan recommended several pedestrian enhancements on Glen Drive near Sir Francis Drake, including repainting the existing crosswalk across Glen Drive as high-visibility, installing curb ramps, and installing warning signage. Along Sir Francis Drake this plan recommends installing a flashing beacon at the existing crosswalk at just west of Glen.

Baywood Canyon Estates Connector Path

This improvement plan provides a conceptual plan for a connector pathway between White Hill School and the Baywood Canyon Estates neighborhood located east of school. This pathway would utilize a former railroad grade located north of the residential areas. The path would connect to White Hill School on the east side of campus, off of Shadow Creek Court. Construction of new bridges may be required where the pathway alignment extends over steep gullies. Completion of this connector, if feasible, would allow children in the Baywood Canyon area to walk to school without walking along Sir Francis Drake

The Town of Fairfax plans to resurface Sir Francis Drake from June Court to the school in 2010. The town will be re-striping and creating curb cuts for wheel chair access. There is a possibility that the Town will investigate narrowing the travel lanes and widening the bike lanes at that time. The town will also improve the crosswalk in front of Cascade Canyon.

5. Implementation Matrix

An implementation matrix with district wide improvements is in the Ross Valley District Plan.

Appendix A: Walkabout and Bikeabout Notes

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Walkabout

March 10, 2006

Attendees

- Robyn Berry
- John Reed
- Maya Butterfield
- Connie Breeze
- Deputy Chris Boden
- Marin County Sheriff

Issues:

- Bus Stop – The bus sits at the bus stop for 30 minutes or more blocking the bike lane, reducing visibility for pedestrians using the crosswalk, and reducing visibility for cars exiting Shemran. Sometimes they pull forward from the bus stop and park in the red zone.
- Shemran – People cross the street here to get to the bus stop and to Olema Rd. Very wide, fast moving cars.
- Gomez Field – Little league cars park in the bike lane – can it be painted red?
- Shadow Creek – People use the entranceway as a drop off point. Kids congregate and vandalize the neighborhood.
- SFD past Fairfax – Cars exceed the speed limit, kids must walk right next to the road, there is no bike lane at all eastbound. Would this be Highway Patrol or Fairfax police? Sheriff suggests requesting Highway Patrol.
- Baywood Canyon residents can't get across the Drake – very difficult intersection to cross, no visibility, cars going very fast.
- Back path – Who owns the property? Is the road private? Is it possible to get a flat path around the outside of Sunnyside property?
- Old railroad grade – Scotch broom blocks one access point. It becomes steep at one point where there used to be a trestle. Comes out at Shadow Creek – privacy issues?

A subcommittee will do a mountain bike ride to look at the fire road behind White Hill.

Maya, John, Robyn, Wendi and possible Joe Breeze (Connie volunteered him).

Bikeabout for White Hill to Baywood Canyon

Tuesday, July 25, 2006

Attendees:

- Robyn Berry and son
- Kent
- Wendi Kallins
- John Reed
- Joe Breeze

Route #1

We started by biking the level trail behind White Hill and looping around up to the railroad grade to avoid the steep hill. This proved to be very rutted with gullies and other hazards. Those of us who were not seasoned mountain bikers had to get off and walk our bikes.

At the top, Joe eyeballed a possible new trail that would follow the contours, but it was a long shot. At the current fire road that goes directly from the school, there was no opportunity for switchbacks. This road is very steep – possibly 10% grade or more.

The rest of the road was easy to ride, but going down to Baywood Canyon was steep, slippery and treacherous. Again, those of us who were not seasoned bikers walked our bikes down (Kent did ride it – brave lad). We would not recommend this route.

Route #2

We walked the lower railroad grade (which we took on the first walkabout), cutting up the side since the level grade is overgrown. At the point where the trail drops down into the ravine, Joe eyeballed a possible contour that could take people around the ravine and to the remainder of the trail. If this is proven feasible, it would allow a nice level trail all the way from Baywood Canyon to Shadow Creek. This would be an easy walk or bike and would make for a very nice neighborhood trail for both developments. Robyn has agreed to go to the county to check on the ownership of this stretch. We suspect it is Open Space but we want to be sure. This trail could be built using neighborhood volunteers and would be an informal trail, rather than an “official” trail.

Routes #3

We walked along Drake to see if there was a possibility of a guardrail. The area to the right of the fog line is fairly narrow and it would be difficult, but not impossible, to put a guardrail in. However, this would not be a very attractive route and it is doubtful that many children would use it. Route #2 offers a much more attractive alternative that would probably be heavily used by children and adults alike from the local community.

White Hill Safety Meeting

Tuesday, October 13, 2009

Attendees:

- David Weinsoff, town council
- Marsha Wilvine, parent
- Sgt. Morin, Fairfax Police Dept
- Kathy Wilkies, Fairfax DPW
- Gwen Froh, parent/SR2S teen coordinator
- Lou Goodwin, parent, SR2S team leader
- Katie Rice, aide to Supervisor Hal Brown
- John Reed, FX SR2S
- Claire Chedekel, parent
- Caroline Stephens, parent
- Monique Kunst, parent
- David Finanne, school principal
- Jason Richardson, school assistance principal
- Bryce Sunnick, RVSD

The following are concerns/questions from attendees at this meeting:

- Need crosswalk at Glenn Drive
- Need to slow traffic on Sir Francis Drake
- Can we get a crossing guard?
- Should kids use crosswalk at Mitchell?
- What is the best way to get to bike racks from Glenn Drive?
- Bicyclists are going the wrong way on sidewalks
- Unsafe riding by kids

Appendix B: Engineering Concepts

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SIGNAGE IMPROVEMENTS ON SIR FRANCIS DRAKE AND GLEN DRIVE

VICINITY MAP



GLEN DRIVE SIGNAGE IMPROVEMENT



Glen Drive Existing



Proposed Installation of Assembly D (Photosimulation)

GLEN DRIVE CROSSWALK



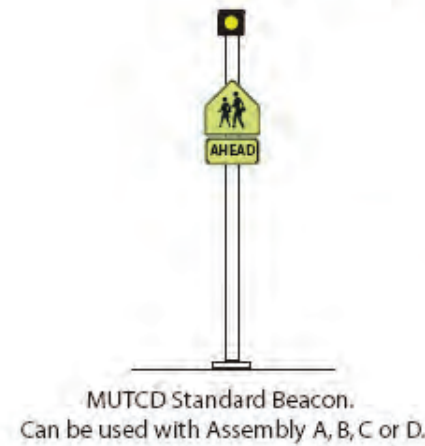
Existing Glen Drive at Crosswalk Location



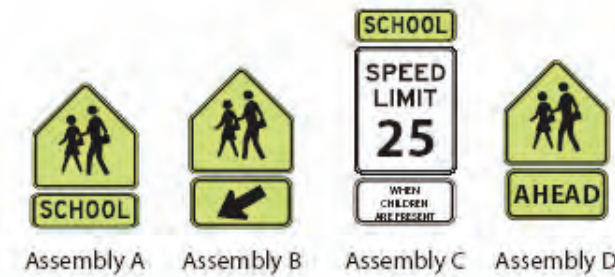
Proposed High Visibility Crosswalk and Signage (Photosimulation)

RECOMMENDATIONS

- A** Repaint existing crosswalk with high visibility striping across Glen Drive
- B** Construct curb ramps
- C** Extend no parking zone for 10 feet on Glen Drive
- D** Install Assembly B signage
- E** Install Assembly D signage on median
- F** Install MUTCD standard flashing beacon and Assembly B on Sir Francis Drake



MUTCD Signage



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6/22/06

SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN FOR WHITE HILL SCHOOL

Paris Associates
transportation consulting



Figure 2: Signage Improvements on Sir Francis Drake and Glen Drive

BAYWOOD CANYON ESTATES CONNECTOR PHOTOS



1 Cross section of rail road right of way, showing steep grades on either side



2 Cross section of abandoned railroad bed



3 View of gate to Shadow Creek Court from rail road right of way



4 View from Shadow Creek Court, facing west toward the rail road right of way. The street dead-ends at gate



5 View of Shadow Creek Court from the proposed entrance to school grounds



6 View of corner of school grounds where pathway will enter



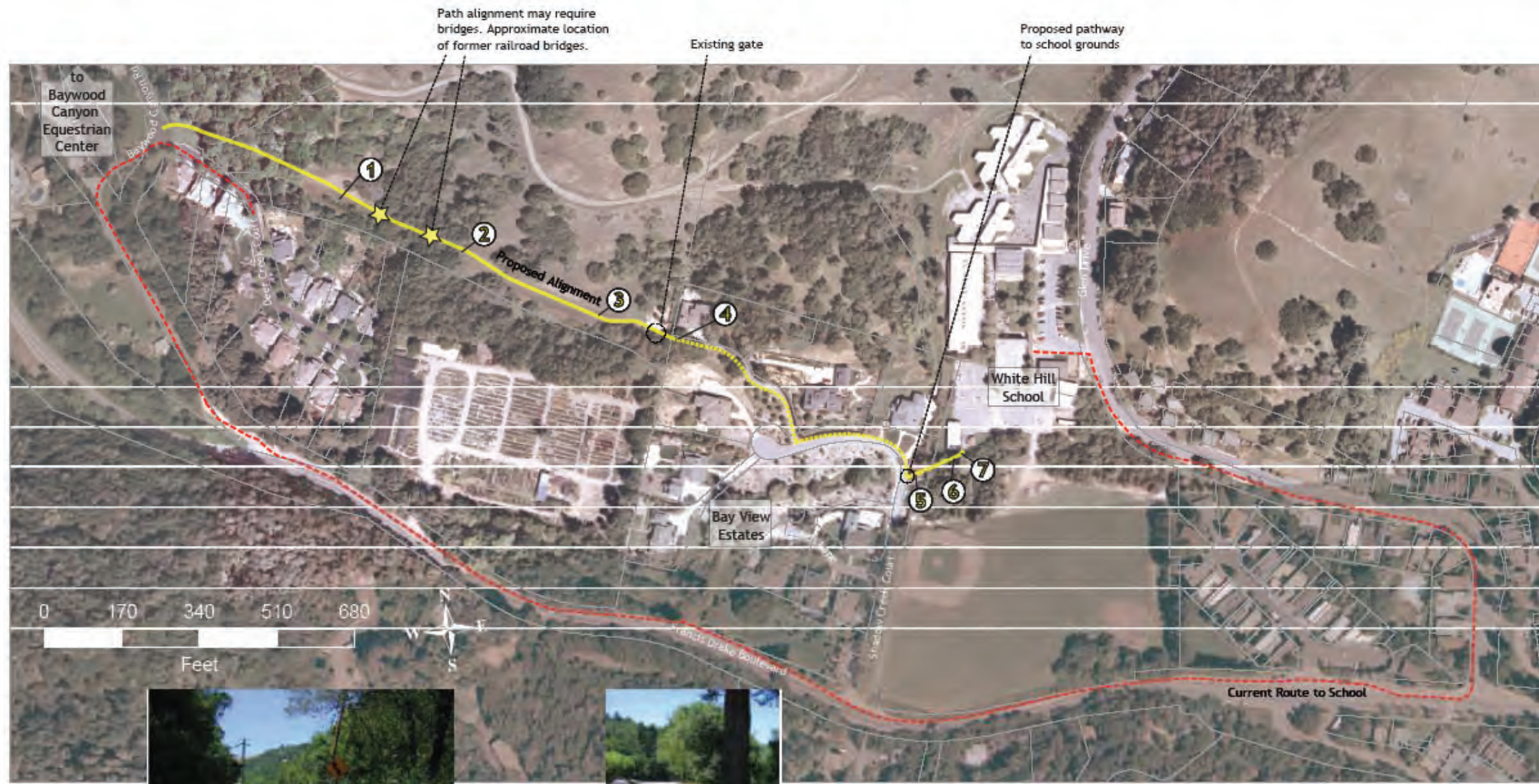
9 View of White Hill School from the pathway entrance at the southwest corner of school property

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October 2006 SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN FOR WHITE HILL SCHOOL



Figure 3: Baywood Canyon Estates Connector Photos

BAYWOOD CANYON ESTATES CONNECTOR CONCEPTUAL PLAN



0 170 340 510 680
Feet



Constraints along Sir Francis Drake include steep grade (left) and large trees within potential path alignment (right).



Sir Francis Drake Boulevard
Due to constraints, including substandard shoulder, grade and creek, pathway improvement is not feasible along Sir Francis Drake Boulevard.

Legend
 - - - Current Route to School
 — Proposed Trail Alignment
 — On-street Section of Proposed Alignment

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SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN FOR WHITE HILL SCHOOL



Figure 4: Baywood Canyon Estates Connector Conceptual Plan