

## Issue 14: Traffic and Safety – Mitigation

### Summary:

Since the 2005 improvements to Sand Hill Road, not much has been done to address the ever growing issue of traffic volume. In one sense, one could argue that the widening of Sand Hill Road at Santa Cruz has contributed to even greater volume of traffic. No effective measures have been taken, nor are planned to reduce the volume of traffic.

Traffic volume reduction is key to improving all aspects of safety, reducing noise, and lowering pollution along the corridors of Santa Cruz, Alameda de las Pulgas, Alpine Road, Sand Hill, and Junipero Sierra Blvd.

#### Problems:

- Current traffic levels too high
- No plans to reduce traffic
- High accident rates
- Limited public transit options
- Unacceptable traffic noise/pollution
- County Policy/Procedure Errors
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- Sand Hill Traffic Signal Duration

Additionally, with the SB Santa Cruz Ave, south of the “Y”, narrowing to one lane, county engineers acknowledge that a problematic long traffic queue will result unless mitigated. Yet, nothing seems to be occurring to provide that mitigation. A key component of that mitigation is to shorten the duration of the traffic signal at Sand Hill/Santa Cruz. By reducing the cycle from nearly 3 minutes currently to less than 2 minutes would make the intersection significantly more efficient and dispatch the traffic queues on all segments of the intersection much more frequently, benefiting traffic in all directions of that intersection. Smoother traffic flow, reduced traffic queues.

Stanford is proposing even more expansion of offices and facilities near the Sand Hill/Alpine/Santa Cruz intersection, adding significantly more cars, support and delivery vehicles, and compounding the traffic issues that are already out of control.

This Issue then is one to get the dialog going and actions promoted that would actually reduce traffic volume and improve quality of life for residents.

### Proposed Solution Options:

Rather than detail each potential solution as was done on other Issues in this paper, a simple list of ideas from the community is presented:

<b>14.1 Increased bus service</b>	to improve frequency to a point that buses are a viable alternative
<b>14.2 Park and Shuttle</b>	- large facility to allow in bound 280 vehicles to park at 280 and shuttle in.
<b>14.3 Moratorium</b>	on any further office space expansion along Sand Hill until effective and proven traffic mitigation has been implemented

Sam Trans, Stanford Marquette, Menlo Shuttles. Key transportation points in Ladera, Stanford Campus, Hospital, Shopping Car, Caltrain at Palo Alto & Menlo Park, Menlo Commons, downtown Menlo Park, etc.... Improved frequency = improved ridership.

The goal here is to get several hundred cars from using the corridors, replacing instead effective and frequent shuttle service to the key destinations, including to Caltrain hubs

Before more vehicles are added to the current unacceptable traffic volume levels, no office space expansion should be allowed until mitigation measures have effectively reduced traffic volume. Should set traffic volume target to some published level, i.e. the 2006 traffic volume levels for these roads.

## Santa Cruz Ave/Alameda de las Pulgas - Safety Issues

<p><b>14.4 Restrict large trucks</b> during peak hours</p>	<p>Construction equipment, large freight trucks, and similar could use roadways off peak hours. Tightly regulated exceptions could be used.</p>
<p><b>14.5 Resolve 911 Multi-Jurisdictional Confusion and Disfunction</b></p>	<p>911 emergency calls often cause delays of 10 or more minutes. This problem is unfortunately manifested in the pedestrian fatality on Palo Alto Way crosswalk, where the 911 operator was arguing as to who should have jurisdiction, meanwhile the woman lay dying without any emergency aid having yet been called - a 15 minute delay.</p>
<p><b>14.6 County Policy and Procedures</b> Change to insure that issues are mitigated and avoided in the future</p>	<p>There needs to be a checklist added to county work approvals that insure that the many current problems noted in this document are not repeated in the future.</p> <p>For example, recent new construction placed traffic poles in the middle of new sidewalks, new corner sidewalk was not ADA compliant, the new curb did not have a wheel chair cut, and crosswalks were installed with inferior striping.</p> <p>A list of check off items needs to be established by City and County and made a requirement for any work authorization for roadway work. The check off items will be constructed to insure future work does not repeat the problems of the past.</p>
<p><b>14.7 Local Affordable Housing</b> for local workers</p>	<p>This needs to be on the west side so that local workers here and at Stanford can walk, bike, or take local shuttles. Having affordable housing in EPA or on the east side only adds to traffic volume.</p> <p>Stanford should create affordable facility and staff housing on campus and on its properties in West Menlo Park.</p>
<p><b>14.8 Improved and added bike routes</b> and promote cycling as alternative</p>	<p>West Menlo, especially the Santa Cruz/Alameda corridor is unsafe for cyclists and many issues exist, as are identified in this collection of issues.</p> <p>A larger selection of Bike routes, in addition to Santa Cruz/Alameda, should be established, especially for younger or less experienced cyclists; for instance, Menlo Park should open Oak Avenue to cyclists from Sand Hill and improve access with the Bike Bridge on San Mateo Ave from Sand Hill Rd.</p> <p>A publicity campaign to encourage local businesses and commuters to use bikes as a preferred method.</p> <p>Establish easy to use and convenient bike storage for downtown Menlo Park, and through out Stanford Shopping center and the campus.</p>

## Santa Cruz Ave/Alameda de las Pulgas - Safety Issues

<b>14.9 Congestion Monitoring and Management</b>	<b>Especially required for SB Santa Cruz Ave between "Y" and Sand Hill Rd.</b>
<p>County traffic engineers have identified that if nothing is done to mitigate congestion on SB Santa Cruz, traffic will back up north of the 'Y' intersection. This needs to be mitigated and the good news that there are effective ways to accomplish this.</p> <p>One step, is to put in traffic queue monitoring so that the traffic control system can be made aware of the long queues about to form. These could be camera based or other sensors to identify queues that extend north of Palo Alto Way and Oak Hollow.</p> <p>Another, is to make the traffic signal cycle at Sand Hill Rd be a more frequent light that has a shorter cycle. This would dispatch the SB Santa Cruz queue more frequently. This would benefit all approaches to Sand Hill, including the Alpine Rd and Sand Hill east-west approaches. Not only is a shorter cycle time recommended by FWHA and DOT guidelines, they also point out that a long light as we have at Sand Hill Rd should be avoided.</p> <p>As pointed out in many studies, a more frequent traffic signal tends to move more traffic at a calmer and more steady rate.</p>	

**Sam Trans:** They seem to have a backwards, self defeating approach to determining bus routes. Bus "service" at hours not needed to destinations not needed, then claim that ridership is too low to warrant such "service" and they discontinue the "service". Actually we have service workers, seniors and students that require bus service that is accessible and at times that are most appropriate for use.

### City and County: Significantly Improve Procedures and Policies

Check List	Description and objectives
Fire District	Notified of proposals and planning from the beginning so as to incorporate Fire District concerns and requirements at the start, not after the fact
Fire District	Review and sign off. It is essential that emergency routes and access are not negatively impacted - Fire district should have time to sign off on the final versions proposals and work.
Neighborhood notification	Notification is currently limited to a 100 foot range - roadway changes have much greater Notification range may be dependent upon the type of proposal, but the minimum notification should be at least 500 feet.
Pedestrian	Work that has impact on pedestrians need to have a check list to insure that impact on pedestrians have been taken into consideration. A series of check list items to insure ADA compliance, impact on connecting segments of work, work plan that staggers work in favor of maintaining access by pedestrians, strollers, walkers, wheelchairs, etc. That current and more safe methods and options are employed when possible (Crosswalks with ladder stripes, lighting, signage, etc.)
Cyclists	Changes that affect traffic flow, especially on main cycle routes need to insure that engineering contains provisions for maintaining safe cycle routes, adequate room for traffic and bikes to use roadway. Includes a check list required to make sure that even 'other' road changes not directly changing bike lanes, does not have impact on traffic/bike safety by in-directly creating unsafe traffic behavior.