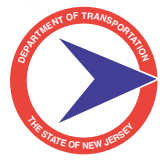


# Safe Routes to School Travel Plan



*April 2009*



# CAMDEN'S PROMISE CHARTER SCHOOL, CAMDEN, NJ

## SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL TRAVEL PLAN

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Appendix B – Safe Routes to School Pledge to Students

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Appendix D – Typical Opportunities & Treatments

# CAMDEN'S PROMISE CHARTER SCHOOL, CAMDEN, NJ

## SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL TRAVEL PLAN

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### INTRODUCTION

Camden's Promise Charter School is one of 6 schools in Newark, Trenton and Camden that participated in New Jersey Department of Transportation's Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Urban Demonstration Program in 2008. The program aims to empower inner city school communities with tools and strategies to overcome barriers to walking and bicycling to and from school by addressing the needs that are important and specific to them. Through this program, the NJDOT provided Camden's Promise Charter School and the City of Camden with a project team led by The RBA Group (RBA) and including the National Center for Bicycling and Walking (NCBW) and the Voorhees Transportation Center (VTC) at Rutgers University. Each of the 6 school communities that participated in the Urban Demonstration Program took part in a collaborative problem solving approach to identifying their community's specific issues and assets, which include what they as individuals bring to the table. An important aspect of Camden's Promise Charter School's SRTS Program is that it enables the school community to take ownership and achieve the goals specific to getting their kids to and from school safely on foot or bicycle.

Utilizing the NJDOT's New Jersey SRTS Travel Plan Guide, Camden's Promise's SRTS Travel Plan contains the six required elements of a "complete" travel plan:

1. School Description
2. SRTS Task Force and Partnerships
3. Barriers & Opportunities to Walking and Bicycling
4. Map of the School Neighborhood
5. Action Plan
6. Program Evaluation and Monitoring

This Safe Routes to School Travel Plan is a working document intended to set priorities for increasing the number and safety of students walking and bicycling to and from school. In so doing, this Travel Plan will serve as a basis for the organizing and funding of those priorities and will (hopefully) be replicated across Camden and in other areas of New Jersey.



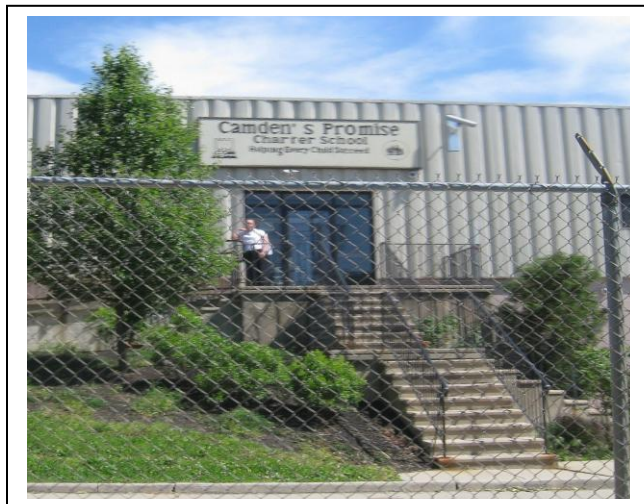


# CAMDEN'S PROMISE CHARTER SCHOOL, CAMDEN, NJ

## SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL TRAVEL PLAN

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### SCHOOL DESCRIPTION



#### **Camden's Promise Charter School**

879 Beideman Avenue

(between Hayes and Cleveland Avenues)

#### **School District:**

Camden City

#### **Grade Levels:**

5<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup>

#### **Student Population:**

391

### **Student Travel Mode**

Camden's Promise Charter School is a charter school<sup>1</sup> that was established in 1998 by a group of concerned parents, teachers and community members. Students who attend Camden's Promise enroll by choice and busing is available for all eligible students.

There is no crossing guard currently assigned to the school to assist at the various intersections during arrival and dismissal.

The official hours of instruction at the school are 8:00am – 4:00pm. According to the Principal, students arrive between 7:30am – 8:00am. The school does not participate in a state-sponsored breakfast program but the time period between 7:30am – 7:55am is set-aside for breakfast. Their afterschool program runs from 4:00pm – 6:00pm and all students who attend the program are either bused or driven home.

Driven:	20%
Walk:	22%
Bike:	0%
School Bus:	57%
Public Transit or Car Pool:	1%

*Percentage of current  
student travel to and  
from school*

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<sup>1</sup> An independently run but tax-supported public school whose educational philosophy and curriculum differs from other public schools in the surrounding area.

# CAMDEN'S PROMISE CHARTER SCHOOL, CAMDEN, NJ

## SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL TRAVEL PLAN

### SRTS TASK FORCE AND PARTNERSHIPS

A key element in the process was to conduct outreach efforts to the city and school communities and establish a Task Force for each school. The aim was to engage active community groups and local organizers who will support and sustain the SRTS program over time. In Camden, the Task Force is comprised of Camden's Division of Special Grant Projects, the Camden City Public Schools, the Camden's Promise Charter School, the LEAP Academy University Charter School, the Environmental Community Opportunity Charter School, the Department of Health and Human Services, the Police Department, the Cross County Connection Transportation Management Agency, the Safe Kids New Jersey Chapter, the Camden Greenways, the Camden County Health Department, the Community Health Outreach Consortium of South Jersey and the Board of Education. The key contact for the Camden's Promise Charter School is Principal Joseph Conway.



Task force members attended a program awareness meeting to receive an overview of SRTS and the Urban Demonstration Program while helping the project team gather insight to specific issues/concerns within the school community. This insight helped to facilitate the development of the program at each school as each representative identified issues that they believe compromise the safety of their students on their way to and from school.

### Partner Organizations

Organization	Role/Responsibility	Contact
Camden Promise Charter School	Programmatic Activity and Implementation	Joseph Conway <i>Principal</i> Camden Promise Charter School 856-365-1000 ext. 101 <a href="mailto:camdenspromise@aol.com">camdenspromise@aol.com</a>
Camden City	Programmatic Activity and Implementation	Anthony D. Lingo <i>Manager of Special Grant Projects</i> City of Camden 856-757-7063 <a href="mailto:anlingo@ci.camden.nj.us">anlingo@ci.camden.nj.us</a>
Camden City	Programmatic Activity and Implementation	Pauline Bey <i>Mayor's Youth Council Coordinator</i> Camden City Mayor's Office 856-520-4443 <a href="mailto:paulbey3@aol.com">paulbey3@aol.com</a>

**CAMDEN'S PROMISE CHARTER SCHOOL, CAMDEN, NJ**  
**SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL TRAVEL PLAN**

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<b>Organization</b>	<b>Role/Responsibility</b>	<b>Contact</b>
Camden City	Engineering Project Implementation	Dana Burley Camden City Council 856-757-7115 <a href="mailto:daburley@ci.camden.nj.us">daburley@ci.camden.nj.us</a>
Camden City	Programmatic Activity and Implementation	Deborah Polk <i>Supervisor</i> Camden City Board of Education Grants Division/Federal and State 856-966-2405 <a href="mailto:dpolk58715@aol.com">dpolk58715@aol.com</a>
Camden City	Programmatic Activity and Implementation	Alfred Dansbury Grants Division 856-757-7344 <a href="mailto:aldansbu@ci.camden.nj.us">aldansbu@ci.camden.nj.us</a>
Camden City	Programmatic Activity and Implementation	Louise McGee Camden City Board of Education 856-964-0528 <a href="mailto:louise-mcgee2001@yahoo.com">louise-mcgee2001@yahoo.com</a>
Camden City	Programmatic Activity and Implementation	Sharon Shields <i>Project Manager – School Based Youth Services Programs</i> Camden City Public Schools 856-541-0253 <a href="mailto:sharons101s@aol.com">sharons101s@aol.com</a>
Camden City	Programmatic Activity and Implementation	Carolyn Morgan Camden City Board of Education 856-963-5510 <a href="mailto:cmorgan@camden.k12.nj.us">cmorgan@camden.k12.nj.us</a>
Camden City	Programmatic Activity and Implementation	Steve Kuchin Camden City Board of Education Transportation Division 856-966-2111 <a href="mailto:skuchin@camden.k12.nj.us">skuchin@camden.k12.nj.us</a>

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<b>Organization</b>	<b>Role/Responsibility</b>	<b>Contact</b>
Camden City	Programmatic Activity and Implementation	Reverend Tony C. Evans <i>Director</i> Camden City Department of Health and Human Services 856-541-6385 <a href="mailto:toevans@ci.camden.nj.us">toevans@ci.camden.nj.us</a>
Cooper Health System	Programmatic Activity and Implementation	Maureen Donnelly Cooper Health System - Safe Kids 856-342-2082 <a href="mailto:safekids@cooper-health.edu">safekids@cooper-health.edu</a>
Community Health Outreach Consortium of South Jersey	Programmatic Activity and Implementation	Robin Waddell <i>Chair</i> Community Health Outreach Consortium of South Jersey 856-225-6169 <a href="mailto:waddell@aesop.rutgers.edu">waddell@aesop.rutgers.edu</a>
Camden City	Programmatic Activity and Implementation	Patrick Freeman Camden City Department of Recreation 856-757-7096 <a href="mailto:pafrema@ci.camden.nj.us">pafrema@ci.camden.nj.us</a>
Camden County	Programmatic Activity and Implementation	Mitchel Berger Camden County Department of Health and Human Services
Camden City	Enforcement/Safety Education	Erica Coy Camden Police Department 856-757-7008 <a href="mailto:coye@camdenpd.com">coye@camdenpd.com</a>
Camden Greenways Inc.	Programmatic Activity and Implementation	Daneen M. Morris Camden Greenways Inc. 856-964-7336 <a href="mailto:camdengreenways@aol.com">camdengreenways@aol.com</a>

# **CAMDEN'S PROMISE CHARTER SCHOOL, CAMDEN, NJ**

## **SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL TRAVEL PLAN**

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### **BARRIERS & OPPORTUNITIES TO WALKING AND BICYCLING**

The information gathering process for the Camden's Promise Charter School followed a series of steps conducted by the project team including stakeholder interviews, data collection, student travel surveys, neighborhood mapping, visual preference surveys and a community workshop. Together, these steps allowed the project team to develop a list of preliminary recommendations to the school neighborhood to improve conditions for students on their way to and from school.

#### **Stakeholder Interviews**

On April 3, 2008, the Camden's Promise Charter School participated in a Camden Task Force SRTS Program Awareness meeting along with the Harry C. Sharp Elementary School. The purpose of the meeting was to provide the participants with background on the NJ SRTS Urban Demonstration Program and to interview key stakeholders who might provide valuable insight to the issues students face during their trip to and from school and potential resources that might be available to address those issues.

Through the interviews, the project team discovered that there are existing programs in Camden that can be supportive of Promise's SRTS program. For instance, the Mayor along with Board of Education developed a "Safe Corridors/Safe Haven" Program that designates school routes and safe havens throughout City. The City's Engineering Department and Traffic Bureau worked together to install "Safe Corridor" signs throughout the city and developed a brochure indicating the Safe Routes and Safe Havens. The program also instituted Parent Rangers, which focuses on having parent volunteers – well identified with hats and clothing – to guard children as they walk on their way to and from school. These parents are the eyes and ears of the school routes. Currently, parents band together to share pick-up responsibilities.

Many of the children do not bike to school now but the city would like to see that number increase. It was noted that the Mayor of Camden has a strong commitment to bringing back the importance of bicycling back to the community. This is presumably the catalyst for the City's practical role in such SRTS encouragement activities such as the Bike Rodeo that was scheduled to take place at the City's Annual Juneteenth Celebration. Police Bike Patrol Units are also in each school at least 1 hour every day.

Although the City has been proactive in its programming efforts to create a safe environment around schools, there were some concerns about general school safety. One of the concerns is that parents need to be educated on child pedestrian safety during drop-off/pick-up. As expressed through the interviews, hurried parents tend to drop-off or pick-up their children in a way that often conflicts with other pedestrians or motorists. It was also felt that students should be made aware of safety conflicts when navigating the school community and that this education should take place through the school.



# CAMDEN'S PROMISE CHARTER SCHOOL, CAMDEN, NJ

## SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL TRAVEL PLAN

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Another issue that surfaced is the dormancy of the several of the school-related safety programs. The Safe Corridors program established “safe havens” along the route but it was this facet of the program that became an issue for Camden’s Board of Education. Even though many of the businesses had been identified on the route map, the Board could not guarantee that these locations were indeed “safe” for students. The Parent Rangers program is also currently dormant due to lack of funding.

### **Data Collection**

Using readily available data, the project team was able to collect demographic information, city mapping, school enrollment, crime and crash data/statistics. Key sources of information gathered included a Geographic Information Systems (GIS) base map of Camden from Camden’s ArcGIS Enterprise Network (CAGEN), crime data/statistics from CAMConnect: Linking Communities with Information and crash data/statistics from the Plan4Safety at the Transportation Safety Resource Center at Rutgers University. This information will help to clearly describe the physical and demographic characteristics of the school and to identify where solutions to safe walking and bicycling are needed. Summaries of demographic, crime and crash data are as follows:

### ***Demographic Information***

Camden is a dense, urban city located in Camden County along the Delaware River. With a diverse population, estimated at 79, 318<sup>2</sup>, it serves as the Camden County Seat. Camden City is a designated urban center under the New Jersey State Redevelopment Plan. It is also an “Abbott District”<sup>3</sup> and qualifies for both municipal and urban aid funding.

Camden’s Promise Charter School is located in the Cramer Hill neighborhood of Camden.

### ***Student Subgroups***

	<b>Camden’s Promise</b>	<b>State Average</b>
Students participating in free or reduced-price lunch program	n/a	27%
Percentage of students with IEPs (Individualized Education Program)	13%	12%
Limited English Proficient (LEP)	n/a	4%

*Source: www.greatschools.net, NJ Department of Education, 2006-2007*

### ***Home Languages of All Students***

<b>Language</b>	<b>Camden’s Promise</b>
English	68%
Other languages	33%

*Source: www.greatschools.net, NJ Department of Education, 2006-2007*

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<sup>2</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, American Fact Finder, GCT-T1 2006 Population Estimates Table, [www.factfinder.census.gov](http://www.factfinder.census.gov)

<sup>3</sup> The term “Abbott” is used to distinguish the 31 school districts in New Jersey selected by the Court and the Legislature to receive financial assistance from the State to implement Court-mandated remedies for equal educational practices in disadvantaged communities.

# CAMDEN'S PROMISE CHARTER SCHOOL, CAMDEN, NJ

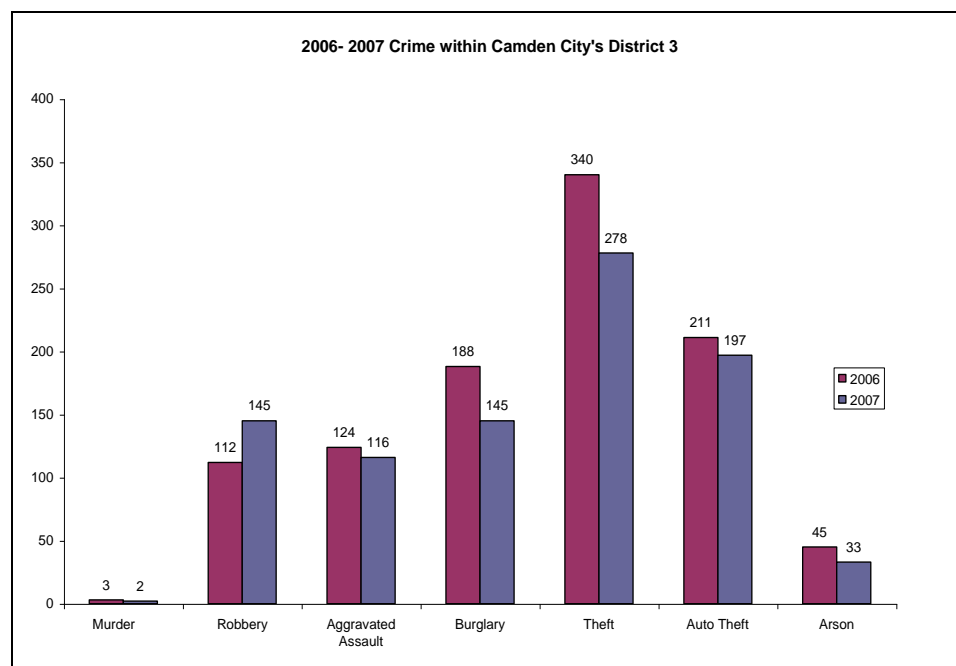
## SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL TRAVEL PLAN

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### *Crime Data*

In 2004 & 2005, Camden was ranked as the "Most Dangerous City" in America with a population of over 75,000. Though the rankings are based on local police reports as reported to the FBI, the FBI warns about the dangers of judging the city by this tagline. They noted even though these reports are generated each year, these rankings "provide no insight into the many variables that mold the crime in a particular town, city, county, state, region, or other jurisdiction. Consequently, these rankings lead to simplistic and/or incomplete analyses that often create misleading perceptions adversely affecting cities and counties, along with their residents."<sup>4</sup>

For the school neighborhood, crime data within the district was reviewed from CAMConnect - a non-profit organization in Camden that gathers citywide data for the purpose of helping to make informed public decisions. This information is summarized in the following bar graph:



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<sup>4</sup> Federal Bureau of Investigations, Uniform Crime Report, *Crime in the United States 2006*, September 2007  
[http://www.fbi.gov/ucr/cius2006/about/variables\\_affecting\\_crime.html](http://www.fbi.gov/ucr/cius2006/about/variables_affecting_crime.html)

## **CAMDEN'S PROMISE CHARTER SCHOOL, CAMDEN, NJ**

### **SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL TRAVEL PLAN**

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Although crime has been identified as a key concern and a significant risk for children walking and bicycling, the City of Camden has seen a decrease in crime which has led to its rank among most dangerous cities in 2006 and 2007 dropping to 5<sup>th</sup> place.<sup>5</sup> The City has continued to address these concerns through programs such as Safe Corridors and Safe Havens and is actively working to repair its image.

#### ***Crash Data***

The project team reviewed crash data provided by the Plan4Safety<sup>6</sup> at the Transportation Safety Resource Center at Rutgers University for the three year period covering January 2004 – December 2006. For the 1-mile square area surrounding the school neighborhood, the review was conducted where incidents of crashes involving either a pedestrian or a bicyclist were occurring and the type of action that the pedestrian or bicyclist was performing prior to being hit. The same data was analyzed by the number of accidents that occurred each day of the week, to determine the number of crashes that are occurring around the school area on days when children may be in school.

A total of 16 accidents occurred within the 1-mile radius surrounding the Camden's Promise School during the years 2003-2006. 15 of the 16 accidents involved an injured pedestrian, none of which were fatal. This information was useful in determining where infrastructure improvements might be needed.

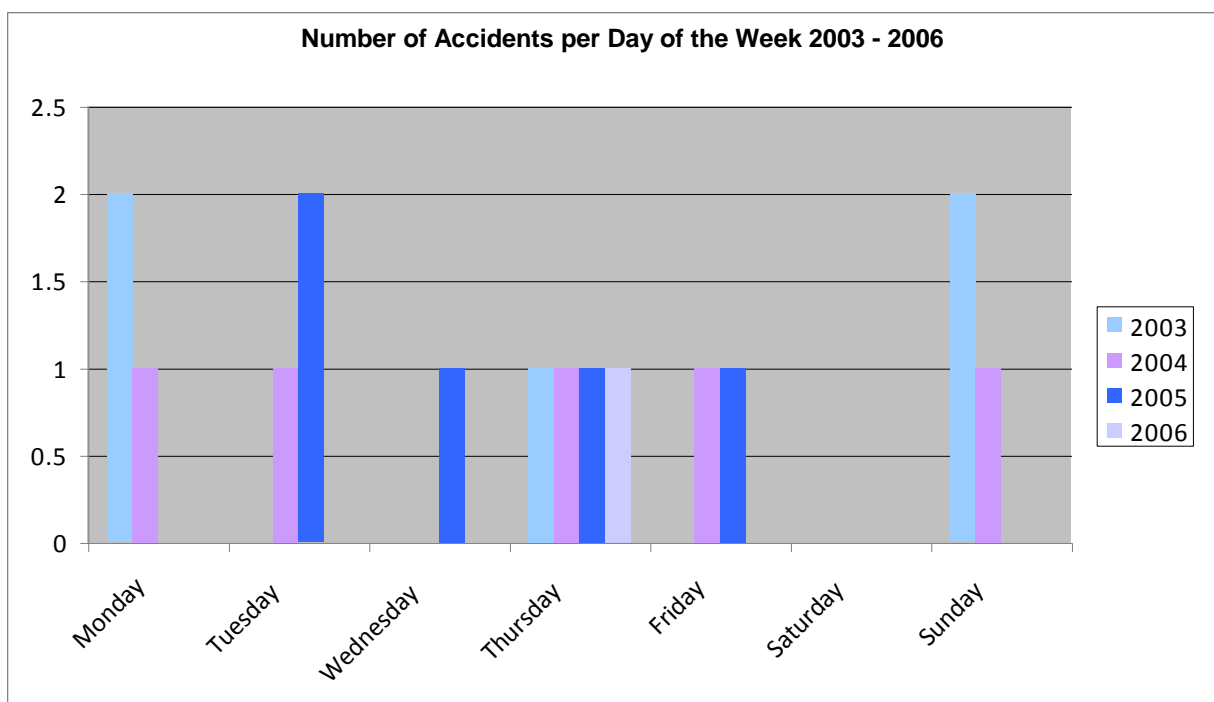
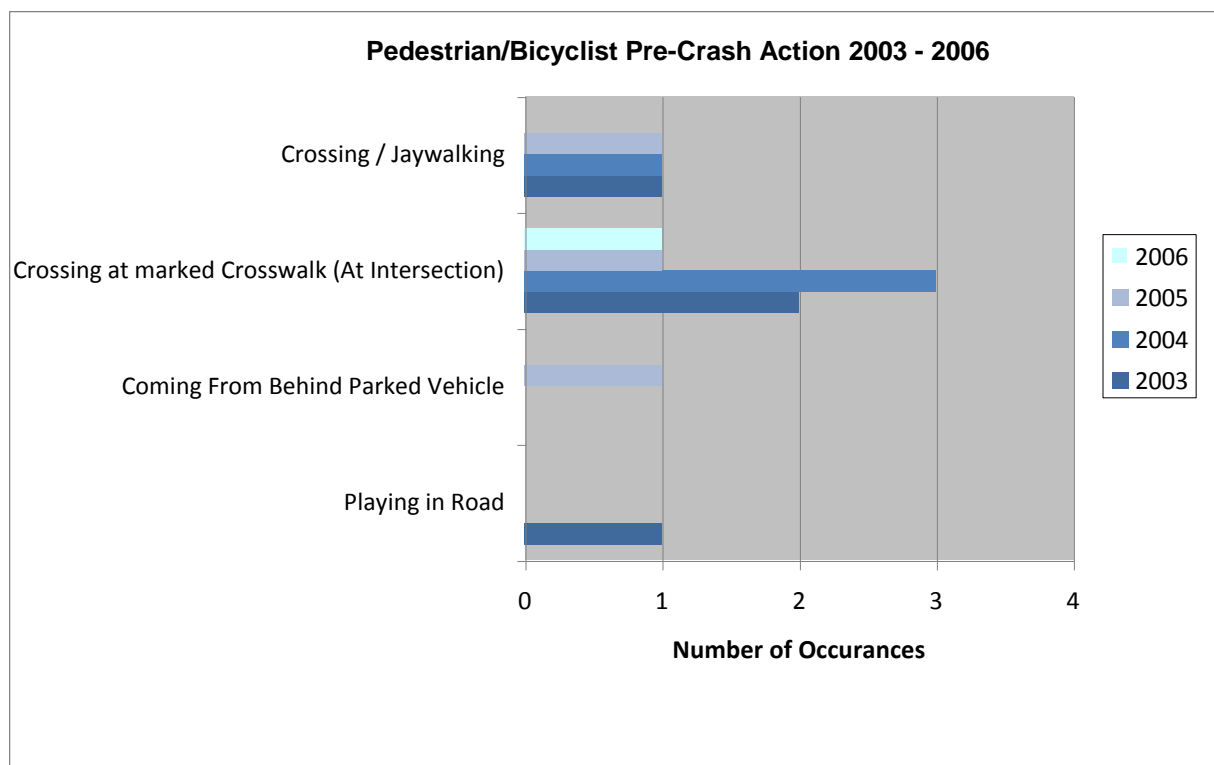
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<sup>5</sup> CAMConnect, Camden Reports, Most Dangerous City Rankings, November 2007  
<http://www.camconnect.org/MostDangerousCity.htm>

<sup>6</sup> Plan4Safety is a NJDOT sponsored program that offers a tool to transportation professionals to filter and analyze Statewide Crash Records for more detailed and place-based analysis

# CAMDEN'S PROMISE CHARTER SCHOOL, CAMDEN, NJ

## SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL TRAVEL PLAN





# CAMDEN'S PROMISE CHARTER SCHOOL, CAMDEN, NJ

## SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL TRAVEL PLAN

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### Student Travel Surveys

The project team also gathered information from classroom surveys using a student travel tally form developed by the National Center for Safe Routes to School. The student travel tally form is intended to help track the number of children walking and biking to and from school through the use of a "hands-up" classroom survey. These student travel tally forms were handed out to each principal at the Community Workshop on May 28, 2008.

### *Camden's Promise Charter School*

In the Camden's Promise Charter School, these surveys were conducted on Tuesday and Wednesday during the week of June 9, 2008. On Tuesday morning, the weather conditions presented hazy skies and an average temperature of 81° while the afternoon was scattered with clouds with an average temperature of 96°. On Wednesday morning, the weather conditions presented mostly cloudy skies and an average temperature of 73° while the afternoon was scattered with clouds with an average temperature of 84°.

The data from each classroom was tallied and analyzed, using the National Center for Safe Routes to School's "Data Tools" System<sup>7</sup>, to reveal the number and average/percentage of students that traveled by each mode. A morning and afternoon comparison was also done to compare whether students are using the same mode of travel to arrive and depart from school.

In the Camden's Promise Charter School, an average 20% of the students are driven to and from school, 22% walk, 57% take the school bus and the remaining 1% travel by carpool.

A summary of results from these surveys are noted on the following pages:

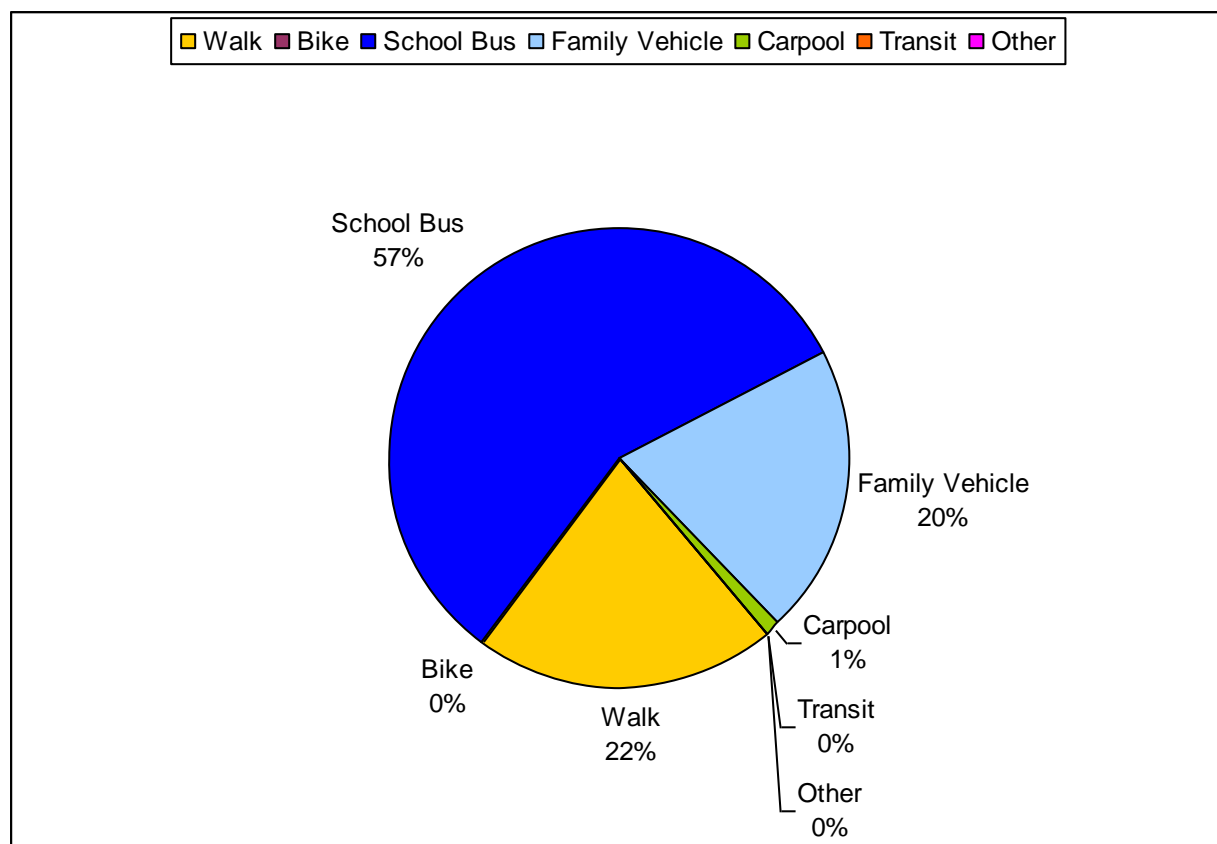
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<sup>7</sup> [www.saferoutesinfo.org/tracking](http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/tracking)

# CAMDEN'S PROMISE CHARTER SCHOOL, CAMDEN, NJ

## SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL TRAVEL PLAN

Students Traveling by each Mode (averaged across all reported days)



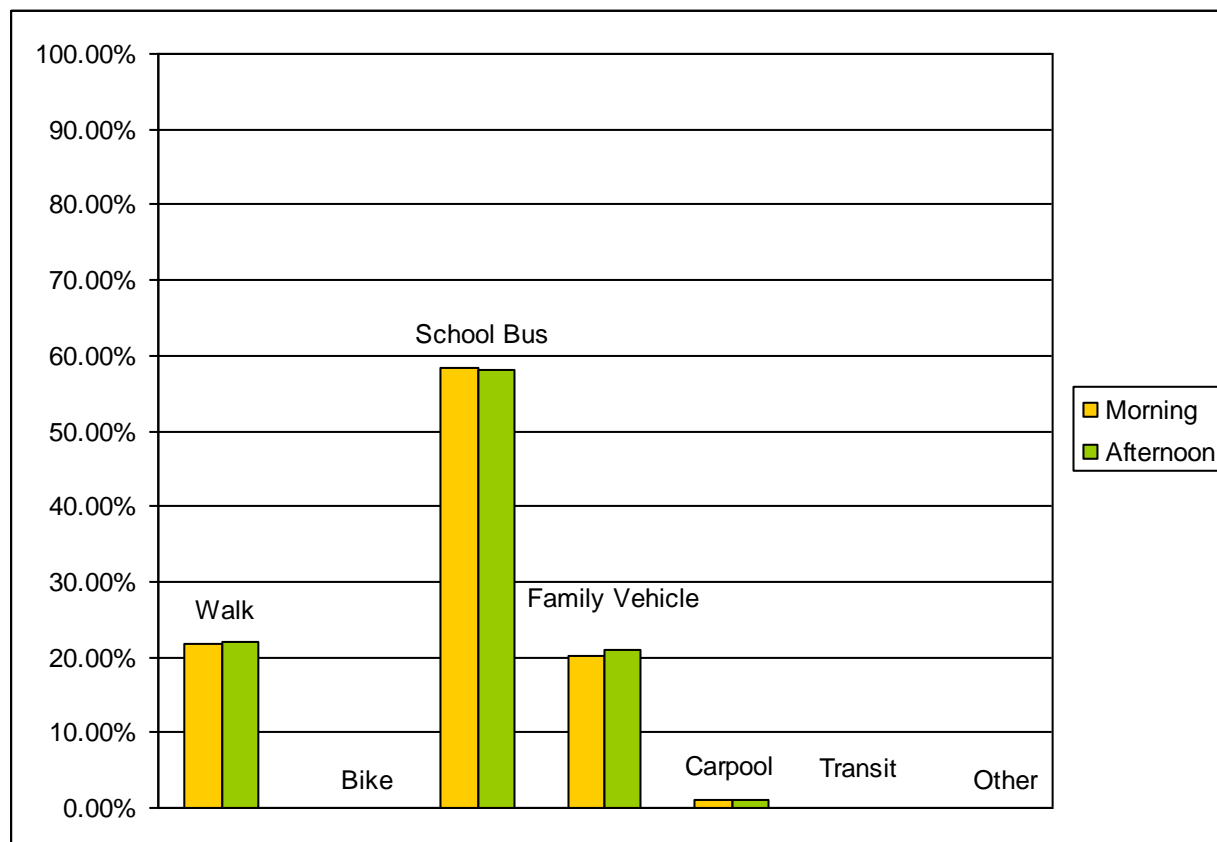
	Walk	Bike	School Bus	Family Vehicle	Carpool	Transit	Other
<b>Average</b>	82.50	0.00	219.50	77.75	4.00	0.00	0.00
<b>Percent</b>	21.50%	0.00%	57.20%	20.26%	1.04%	0.00%	0.00%

Average daily number of students: 383.75

# CAMDEN'S PROMISE CHARTER SCHOOL, CAMDEN, NJ

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**Morning to Afternoon Travel Mode Comparison (by percent)**



	Walk	Bike	School Bus	Family Vehicle	Carpool	Transit	Other
<b>Morning</b>	21.85%	0.00%	58.41%	20.26%	1.06%	0.00%	0.00%
<b>Afternoon</b>	21.91%	0.00%	58.03%	20.98%	1.06%	0.00%	0.00%

# CAMDEN'S PROMISE CHARTER SCHOOL, CAMDEN, NJ

## SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL TRAVEL PLAN

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**Summary Table (Totals):**

	Number of Students	Walk	Bike	School Bus	Family Vehicle	Carpool	Transit	Other
Tues AM	379	83	0	226	72	4	0	0
Tues PM	377	83	0	221	78	4	0	0
Wed PM	376	82	0	215	81	4	0	0
Wed PM	376	82	0	216	80	4	0	0

**Summary Table (Percentages):**

	Number of Students	Walk	Bike	School Bus	Family Vehicle	Carpool	Transit	Other
Tues AM	385	21.56%	0.00%	58.70%	18.70%	1.04%	0.00%	0.00%
Tues PM	385	21.50%	0.00%	57.25%	20.21%	1.04%	0.00%	0.00%
Wed PM	382	21.47%	0.00%	56.28%	21.20%	1.05%	0.00%	0.00%
Wed PM	382	21.47%	0.00%	56.54%	20.94%	1.05%	0.00%	0.00%

### Neighborhood Mapping

Following the community workshop, the project team arranged to meet any available members of the Task Force at the Camden's Promise Charter School to perform a field investigation around the school. This field investigation was conducted on June 18, 2008 to observe arrival at the Promise School.

The weather conditions on the morning of the site visit were clear, partially sunny, with the temperature in the 60's. There was construction activity on CR 543/River Road near 31<sup>st</sup> Street closing the roadway to all traffic. There was a detour routing traffic to use Pierce



## CAMDEN'S PROMISE CHARTER SCHOOL, CAMDEN, NJ

### SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL TRAVEL PLAN

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Avenue to the north. This appeared to not have any significant effects along Hayes Avenue, where the school is located, one block to the south of CR 543/River Road.

Summaries and results of these collection efforts and field investigation are as follows:

#### *Observations of the Physical Conditions/Built Environment*

Observations were made of the physical conditions (built environment) all around the school; parking patterns and restrictions; auto and foot traffic and circulation. Special note was taken of Hayes Avenue, as this was noted as a critical location by several attendees at the Community Workshop:

- Hayes Avenue between 31<sup>st</sup> Street and 34<sup>th</sup> Street (one way eastbound)
- 32<sup>nd</sup> Street between CR 543/River Road and Hayes Avenue (one way southbound)
- 31<sup>st</sup> Street between Hayes Avenue and Cleveland Avenue
- CR 543/River Road – County road and major through route in the neighborhood
- CR 611/N. 36<sup>th</sup> Street

The physical conditions along Hayes Avenue were largely consistent throughout the corridor. The roadway is 26 feet wide, with parking permitted along each side. Most of the land use in the area is residential. There are varying parking restrictions posted for street sweeping, proximity to adjacent streets, and for school days. Some restrictions are posted with up to three signs on one post. The crosswalks, where present, are typically traditional transverse lines. The intersection of Hayes Avenue with N. 33<sup>rd</sup> Street has high visibility ladder style striping.

There are curb ramps at intermittent intersection locations. Some are located along each independent sidewalk approach, some located at the apex or center of the curve around an intersection. This is unpredictable and inconsistent for pedestrians. Along each of the four legged intersections on Hayes Avenue there could be 2 curb ramps per corner, yielding 8 ramps per intersection. The intersections were observed to have the following conditions:

- N. 31<sup>st</sup> Street – 3 out of 8 ramps (including one apex ramp)
- Biedeman Avenue – 6 out of 8 ramps (including one apex ramp)
- N. 32<sup>nd</sup> Street – 1 out of 8 ramps (one apex ramp only)
- Bergen Avenue – no ramps
- N. 33<sup>rd</sup> Street – 4 apex ramps

None of the curb ramps had tactile warnings (truncated domes) required for vision-impaired pedestrians to detect that there is a transition from sidewalk to the crossing roadway. The intersection of N. 33<sup>rd</sup> Street did have a red brick area that does provide a good visual contrast, a very helpful design tool for low vision pedestrians.

## **CAMDEN'S PROMISE CHARTER SCHOOL, CAMDEN, NJ**

### **SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL TRAVEL PLAN**

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The sidewalk network is mostly complete throughout the school area. One major exception is N. 31<sup>st</sup> Street just south of Hayes Avenue. There is no sidewalk on either side of the roadway for approximately 50 feet. This leaves all pedestrian traffic headed to or coming from the Promise Academy Center walking across the grass area or in the roadway.

Vegetation is generally well maintained along the area sidewalks. The north side of Hayes Avenue north of N. 33<sup>rd</sup> Street does have overgrown bushes that partially block the sidewalk.

There are school advance warning signs defining a zone along River Road westbound approaching Bergen Avenue and along 32<sup>nd</sup> Street southbound approaching Hayes Avenue. There were no school zone designations along Hayes Avenue. The easternmost River Road sign has solar powered flashing warning beacons.

Hayes Avenue operates one-way eastbound, with the intersections roadways having stop sign control. At the approach to the intersection with CR 611, Hayes Avenue has two abrupt curves. The sight distance onto CR 611 is restricted by the vertical curve of CR 611 crossing the adjacent railroad to the south.

#### ***Observations Noted at Arrival and Dismissal***

Student arrival and dismissal at Camden's Promise were not observed during this field investigation. The Camden's Promise Charter School was no longer in session. Summer recess began on Friday June 13, 2008. Maintenance staff were on site and shared insights about the built environment surrounding the school property.

#### ***Issues/Concerns***

The following is a list of primary issues and concerns perceived during the field investigation and communicated by participants during the community workshop.

- Speeding in school neighborhoods along Hayes Avenue – Hayes Avenue often used as alternative to River Road to avoid lights – there are no stop signs along Hayes Avenue
- Perceived speeding, blind spots and heavy truck traffic on nearby through streets
- Not all school zones are clearly defined or marked
- School crossing sign flashing beacons on River Road do not work
- Variable and confusing parking restrictions along Hayes Avenue
- No identified/designated routes to school
- Crosswalk striping varies in style and level of maintenance (many faded) – some nonexistent
- Limited and inconsistent curb ramp placement – most without tactile domes/contrasting color

## CAMDEN'S PROMISE CHARTER SCHOOL, CAMDEN, NJ

### SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL TRAVEL PLAN

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- Minimal landscaping and general streetscape maintenance
- Auto repair business on Beideman Avenue parks cars on sidewalk
- Poor sight distance due to parking close to intersections on Beideman Avenue and Bergen Avenue at River Road and at intersections along Hayes Avenue
- Uneven/broken pavement on Cleveland Avenue
- Flooding along roadways through Von Nieda Park – Hayes Avenue, River Road, Pierce Avenue, and Harrison Avenue – motor vehicles drive on sidewalk to circumvent flooded roadway
- Difficult pedestrian crossings along River Road and on Hayes Avenue at Bergen Avenue and N. 32<sup>nd</sup> Street
- Limited crossing guards (often disrespected by students and motorists) located only at 4 intersections surrounding Sharp Elementary School – none elsewhere in school neighborhoods.
- Poor lighting along Hayes Avenue and Sherman Road along south side of Von Nieda Park
- Areas of loitering, undesirable behavior and vacant buildings/properties in school neighborhoods, particularly along Beideman Avenue, Pierce Avenue, and River Road
- Stray/loose dogs are a problem
- Recreation center at the western terminus of Reeves Avenue in Von Nieda Park gets little use due to dangerous walking conditions.
- Gap in sidewalk on N. 31<sup>st</sup> Street just east of Hayes Avenue
- Bicycle parking conflicts with auto parking

### **Community Workshop**

The final step in Camden's Promise information-gathering process was a community workshop, sponsored by the New Jersey Department of Transportation. The workshop took place at the Harry C. Sharp Elementary School, Camden, NJ on May 28, 2008 from 5 to 7 pm and included parents/caregivers, teachers, police and community leaders, each taking part in a hands-on brainstorming process about resources to make students' trips to and from school safer and one that they might prefer to make on foot instead of in a car. Camden's Promise Charter School and Harry C. Sharp Elementary School are located two blocks apart so the workshop was combined to incorporate both school communities.

Although the two-hour community workshop was held late in the day, the project team got an early start and spent the entire school day with students, observing arrival and in a classroom session getting their perspective on their trip to and from school. The student perceptions set the context for the evening's discussion.

### ***Student Arrival***

The project team met in the neighborhood of the Camden's Promise Charter School at 8:00 am on Wednesday, May 28, 2008 to observe arrival of Promise's students. The purpose was

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### **SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL TRAVEL PLAN**

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to observe potential safety hazards and to document with photos and video the arrival of students. The photographs and video were utilized in that afternoon's Safe Routes to School community workshop. Below are observations noted along Hayes Avenue and River Road.

#### **Hayes Avenue**

The school is located off Hayes Avenue, which is a one lane, one-way street, that parallels River Road, connecting 27<sup>th</sup> Street to the west and 36<sup>th</sup> Street to the east. On-street parking is permitted on both sides of this street and it is primarily lined with homes, except for an open space that precedes the school zone for Camden's Promise Charter School. There are no stop signs on this street, and few speed limit signs. The speed limit is 25 mph, however traffic was frequently judged to be traveling much faster during the time while school was in session.

The road is being used as an alternative to River Road for drivers traveling east. The road presents a particularly attractive alternative to River Road because it has no stop signs or traffic signals, and remains non-congested except during student arrival/dismissal times at both Camden's Promise Charter School and Sharp Elementary School.

An area of particular concern is the approach to the Camden's Promise School, which is not a clearly identified school zone. Drivers traveling downhill along Hayes (between N. 27<sup>th</sup> and N. 29<sup>th</sup> Streets) tend to pick up speed as they go through the open space by Von Nieda Park and there are no signs indicating the presence of a school ahead. It is only two blocks later that drivers are made aware (SLOW SCHOOL ZONE and SAFE CORRIDOR signs) they are in a school zone. There are no pavement markings for the school zone and the crosswalks are very poorly marked.

According to comments from crossing guards, school faculty, students and the project team's observations, Hayes Avenue was identified as a problem spot, with motor vehicle speed, and traffic congestion during arrival/dismissal are cited as the most common concerns.

Potential recommendations to consider are as follows:

1. Calm traffic on Hayes Avenue. Motor vehicles are traveling too fast when entering the school zone for Camden's Promise Charter School. The section of Hayes Avenue from N. 28<sup>th</sup> Street to Lois Avenue is of particular concern. At a minimum paint striping should be applied to the road to visually narrow it. More aggressive measures such as speed tables and stop signs should be considered as well (the latter should be applied in the school zones). Hayes Avenue is too desirable as an alternative to River Road; steps should be taken to decrease its utility as a thru route.
2. Designate a School Zone for Camden's Promise Charter School. The school zone is unmarked. Advance warning signs should be posted. The school zone for both



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schools should be marked on the pavement. Both school zones should receive consistent treatments.

3. Lower the speed limit in the school zones. Currently, the speed limit is posted at 25 mph. That is too fast. The school zone should be designed for 15 mph.
4. Improve crosswalks in the school zones. Crosswalks immediately adjacent to both schools should be high visibility. The crosswalks at N. 33<sup>rd</sup> Street are great. The schools should apply the same treatment.
5. Assign crossing guards for Camden's Promise Charter School.

#### **River Road**

River Road is currently undergoing streetscape improvements for which construction activity related to a sewer project was taking place during the project team's observation; thereby making it difficult to get a true sense of the traffic volume and driver behavior at crosswalks (controlled and uncontrolled). It was noted that there was a large volume of truck traffic and the project team was able to observe the sections of River Road that were completed. Treatments along these sections included: curb extensions, improved sidewalk lighting, and high visibility crosswalks. The segment that affects both Promise and Sharp schools is slated for improvement in 2009. The improvements will enhance the school neighborhood and should be welcomed by the community.

Two crossing guards are posted along River Road at the intersections of N. 32<sup>nd</sup> Street and Bergen Avenue. The former is a signalized intersection; the latter is uncontrolled with a low visibility crosswalk. There is an advanced warning sign with a flashing beacon on River Road that should be re-activated.

#### ***Classroom Session***

At 9:00 am, Principal Conway arranged for the project team to meet with approximately twenty-five students from a 7<sup>th</sup> grade math class to discuss obstacles to walking and bicycling in their neighborhood. When asked about general concerns of safety around the school neighborhood, the students, their parents and school officials expressed the following issues:

- Personal security
- High number of registered sex offenders in the surrounding neighborhood
- Loitering
- No safe place to store or ride bicycles
- Stray dogs
- Street litter

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After giving the students a brief background of Safe Routes to School, the project team asked them to participate in a visual preference survey. Students were asked how they would improve their neighborhood if they were Mayor and here are their responses:

- Drop-off zone
- Playground/swing
- Repair existing playground surface
- Fix Cleveland Avenue
- Create a wall between Cleveland Avenue and the railroad tracks
- Relieve Hayes Avenue congestion at school dismissal time
- Area around school needs to be more pleasant – “it’s too plain”
- Remove graffiti
- More police
- More plants/more trees
- Benches
- Basketball courts
- Crossing guards
- Traffic light by school
- Eliminate the bad people around the school (drug addicts)
- Colored sidewalks
- New trashcans
- Attractive storefronts
- More street lights
- Bike lanes

#### *Community Workshop*

The afternoon’s community workshop began at 5pm in the Harry C. Sharp School’s Multi-Purpose Room. Members of the Camden’s Promise and Sharp school communities attended the workshop to discuss Safe Routes to School for *both* schools - marking the first time in a decade that they have come together for discussion despite their close proximity. Approximately fifty people attended the workshop. Due to the large number of Spanish-speaking families, a translator (who was also a Sharp parent and trusted member of the community) assisted the project team with the workshop to ensure that all attendees were able to voice their opinions and have a full understanding of the ideas and issues being presented.

The project team’s goal for this working meeting was to present sufficient information on Safe Routes to School programs to the community as well as supplying audience members with anecdotal information from their earlier discussion with students and their own observations of the school’s arrival and dismissal. The intent was to stimulate discussion and to inform any discussion of solutions to local barriers to walking and bicycling; however, the audience already had a very good grasp of the challenges facing the schools’

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neighborhood. The audience was given a forum to voice their concerns and the project team led the discussion on what actions and resources are available to combat these issues.

Workshop participants identified barriers, areas of concerns and opportunities in the environment around both Camden's Promise and Sharp in their discussion and through the mapping exercise facilitated by the project team.

Here are their concerns:

- Parents are worried about abductions.
- Bike theft has been a problem.
- Stray/loose dogs are a problem.
- There is a blind spot on N. 36th Street and Bergen Avenue.
- There are no flashing beacons, signs, or speed bumps to slow vehicles in the school zone.
- Few students use helmets when biking.
- River Road has too much traffic, has blind spots, has illegal parking, and heavy truck traffic.
- The car repair shop on Beideman parks its cars on the street.
- There is a recreation center on Reeves Avenue, but it gets little use because it is a dangerous walk.
- Drinking in the park (Reeves Avenue and River Road).
- Speeding on Hayes Avenue.
- Men approaching young girls.
- Faded crosswalks.
- During fire drills students empty on the streets and sidewalks along Hayes Avenue. Traffic on Hayes is a threat to the students.

The group had several items for priority action. These are:

- 4-way stop signs
- Everyone has to work together. It takes a whole community to make it work.
- Parent volunteer patrol.
- NO ALCOHOL signs for the park.
- SCHOOL ZONE signs for Camden's Promise.
- High visibility crosswalks.
- Dedicated crossing guards for River Road during school hours.
- Crossing guards along Hayes Avenue at N. 27<sup>th</sup> Street and CR 609.
- Get the entire neighborhood involved.
- We are in need of a quick win. We should make the high visibility crosswalks, school zone markings, and pavement markings on Hayes Avenue a priority.

## **CAMDEN'S PROMISE CHARTER SCHOOL, CAMDEN, NJ**

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Based on the experience and observations at Camden's Promise and Sharp Elementary School, the project team offers the following suggestions on how to proceed with a Safe Routes to School program:

1. Action is needed on Hayes Street. Traffic must be calmed. The school zone for Camden's Promise can quickly be marked with signs and high visibility crosswalks. If the Camden Police Department has a speed trailer to deploy, it should be parked in advance of the Camden's Promise school zone. The need for traffic calming will only become more pressing once River Road receives its traffic calming improvements.
2. Another meeting is needed. This group was too large, to delve into specifics. A combined task force should be formed to review pedestrian safety around the schools.
3. The community must decide to come together. Safe Routes to School (children) may present this opportunity. All factions agree that Hayes Avenue must be addressed. Quick action by the City of Camden may be pivotal in creating conditions under which a Camden's Promise/Sharp SRTS team could form.

### **Preliminary Recommendations**

Recommendations, where appropriate, are provided as options for the Camden's Promise Charter School to consider while implementing its Safe Routes to School plan.

#### ***Engineering***

- Review and revise parking restrictions and drop-off and pick-up zones.
- Provide new or enhance existing high visibility crosswalks along the school zone and designated school routes.
- Provide pedestrian safety, traffic calming (horizontal and/or vertical elements) and streetscape improvements along Hayes Avenue, River Road (currently by others), and Pierce Avenue.
- Clearly define and enhance school zones with reduced speed limit and strong yellow-green advance warning signs.
- Define bus zone and designate a drop-off/pick-up area and provide signs to inform motorists of appropriate areas and policies.

## CAMDEN'S PROMISE CHARTER SCHOOL, CAMDEN, NJ

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- Clearly define with striping where parking is prohibited adjacent to intersections ("daylighting").
- Evaluate and possibly repair/install flashing beacons at school crossing signs.
- Provide intersection improvements on Hayes Avenue at CR 609/N. 27<sup>th</sup> Street for pedestrian crossings and at CR 611/N. 36<sup>th</sup> Street for motor vehicle movements and sight distance.
- Investigate/consider alternating stop control between Hayes Avenue and side streets such as Sherman Road, Lois Avenue, 31<sup>st</sup> Street, and 32<sup>nd</sup> Street (or similar configuration).
- Improve lighting along Hayes Avenue and Sherman Road along south side of Von Nieda Park.
- Construct sidewalk along both sides of N. 31<sup>st</sup> Street just east of Hayes Avenue.

#### *Education*

- Conduct community wide outreach, possibly with flyers detailing SRTS programs and benefits. This could help to reach both school families and the general population.
- The neighborhood should be informed of any designated school routes, and priority given to helping those who need assistance with snow removal or other sidewalk maintenance.
- The health benefits of conducting a SRTS program should be included in teacher training programs and in the student curriculum.
- Parents and students should be educated about the established drop-off and pick-up procedures.
- Walking school bus options should be distributed to school families.
- School walking event information could be circulated with municipal utility or tax bills. This would help to reach all residents, not just the families with students currently in the school system. The school newspapers could also be utilized as a means to circulate information about major events.

# CAMDEN'S PROMISE CHARTER SCHOOL, CAMDEN, NJ

## SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL TRAVEL PLAN

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### *Encouragement*

- The City should define recommended walking routes between major residential areas and the school. This would passively encourage families to have the students walk more often. The recommended walking routes could be displayed both on paper maps that can be easily shared with the school community and installed physically on the ground with pavement markings, and/or with signs.
- Develop a Safe Routes to School Committee that will lead the effort to expand school access safety and coordinate preparing any grant applications and administering the SRTS program.
- Prepare for and participate in the International Walk to School Days.
- Conduct a preference survey to determine what families would like to see and have available as choices for their school commute.
- Establish walking school buses. (Safety in numbers! Walk with family and other students.)
- Establish "Frequent Walker Card" system. This is similar to "Frequent Flyer Mile" programs, and can be a great motivator.
- Conduct a bicycle rodeo. This could include stations about bicycle safety, helmet and bicycle fit, rules of the road, handling skills and numerous other safety topics.
- Consider establishing a "Golden Sneaker" award that would be circulated between the classrooms that achieve the highest participation rates for walking or bicycling to and from school. This will require ongoing travel mode surveys. Some schools opt for a "stinky sneaker" alternative – students should choose what will be a better motivator.
- The City could consider taking on snow removal responsibility along identified routes to school.





# CAMDEN'S PROMISE CHARTER SCHOOL, CAMDEN, NJ

## SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL TRAVEL PLAN

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### *Enforcement*

- Clear parking regulation signs should be posted at all intended drop-offs and pick-up locations at each school to better define and support the drop off and pick up procedures. This helps to keep motorists self enforced, without excessive police presence required or misunderstanding or confusion in the school area roadways.
- Consider issuing warnings, rather than citations for first offenses. Include education materials about the dangers of speeding or other violations, especially in the school area.
- Police could conduct a series of pedestrian stings, to strongly reinforce that Camden takes its motor vehicle laws and pedestrian rights seriously. This should be considered to be repeated approximately every six weeks until driver behavior is perceived to be more respectful of pedestrian's right to travel safely.
- Police presence should continue to be maintained at major pedestrian crossing locations such as River Road at Hayes Avenue. This will help to passively encourage drivers to obey the laws, and expect that they are being monitored.
- Police should also work within the school system to educate students on bicycle and pedestrian safety.
- Consider posting speed monitoring signs on Hayes Avenue.
- Lower speed limit on Hayes Avenue in school zones.
- Prioritize/enhance police presence in areas of loitering, undesirable behavior and vacant buildings/properties in school neighborhoods during school commute times. Encourage police to walk or bike these routes.
- Assign crossing guard for Camden's Promise particularly at Hayes Avenue at N. 31<sup>st</sup> Street.



## CAMDEN'S PROMISE CHARTER SCHOOL, CAMDEN, NJ

### SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL TRAVEL PLAN

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#### *Evaluation*

- Conduct a survey to define mode choice (number and percentage of students who walk or bicycle to and from school) so that there is a base line to reference when assessing the success of future efforts.
- Monitor the timing of drop off dynamics around the school campus. This can help to evaluate the effectiveness of the staggered school start time policy.
- Conduct school commute time parking studies to evaluate effectiveness of SRTS programs.
- Conduct a preference survey to determine what families would like to see and have available as choices for their school commute.
- Conduct tracking exercises for distances students walk both on-line and in the classroom.

# CAMDEN'S PROMISE CHARTER SCHOOL, CAMDEN, NJ

## SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL TRAVEL PLAN

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### Photo Documentation

#### CAMDEN'S PROMISE CHARTER SCHOOL



Traditional two solid line striped crosswalks at Hayes Avenue and N. 32<sup>nd</sup> Street by Sharp Elementary



No curb ramp access to Sharp Elementary's Teacher parking lot

Mid-block drop-off at the side entrance of the Sharp Elementary along Bergen Avenue between Hayes Avenue and River Road



No bike rack available at Sharp Elementary



## CAMDEN'S PROMISE CHARTER SCHOOL, CAMDEN, NJ

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Sidewalk network interruption along N. 31<sup>st</sup> Street between Hayes Avenue and Cleveland Avenue near Camden's Promise



Drainage issues impede crosswalk at the intersection of Hayes Avenue and Beideman Avenue



Congestion along Hayes Avenue during morning drop-off in front of Sharp Elementary School

## CAMDEN'S PROMISE CHARTER SCHOOL, CAMDEN, NJ

### SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL TRAVEL PLAN

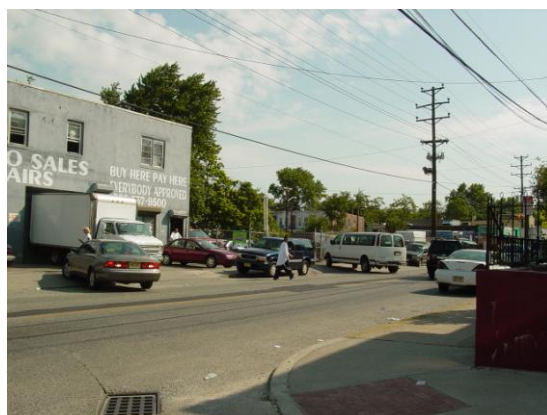
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Open utility chamber impedes the crosswalk at the intersection of Hayes Avenue and N. 31<sup>st</sup> Street near Camden's Promise



Unpaved roadway and sidewalk network interruption along Cleveland Avenue



Cars parked on the sidewalk along River Road block pedestrians from using the sidewalk

## CAMDEN'S PROMISE CHARTER SCHOOL, CAMDEN, NJ

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Multiple parking restriction signs

Multiple steps along main access to Sharp Elementary



Camden's Promise School – Bicycle racks located along car parking area



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High visual crosswalk striping pattern, apex ramp with brick pavers – no tactile warning



Front door access to Sharp's faculty parking lot has no curb ramps, no high visibility crosswalk



## CAMDEN'S PROMISE CHARTER SCHOOL, CAMDEN, NJ

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Curb extension and school zone signs  
south/west on River Road



# **CAMDEN'S PROMISE CHARTER SCHOOL, CAMDEN, NJ**

## **SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL TRAVEL PLAN**

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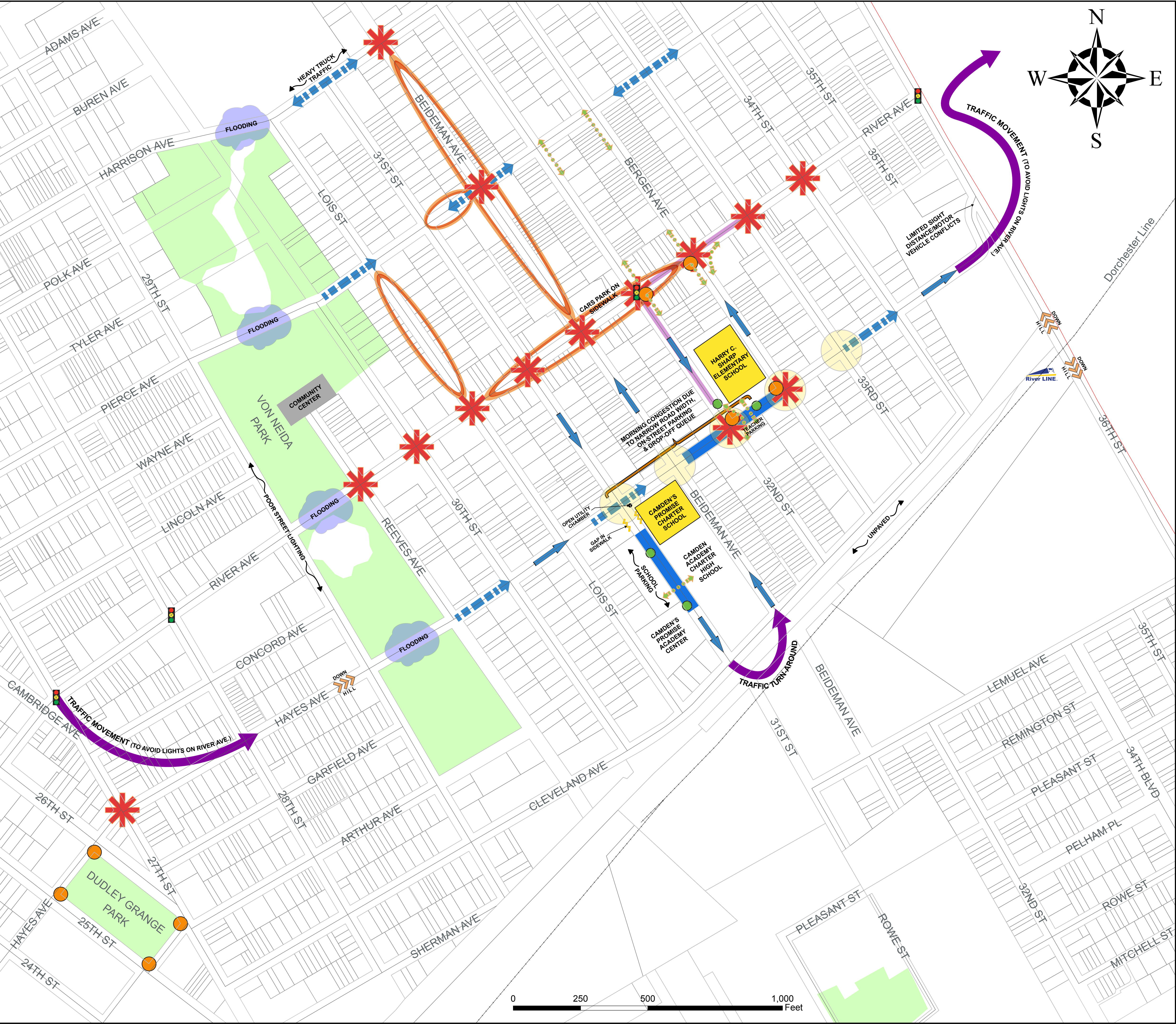
### **MAPS OF THE SCHOOL NEIGHBORHOOD**

The maps in this section illustrate the existing conditions in the neighborhood of the Camden's Promise Charter School, the Barriers and Opportunities students face walking to and from school, and some Neighborhood Recommendations to improving facilities so their trips are safer.

Map 1. Barriers and Opportunities

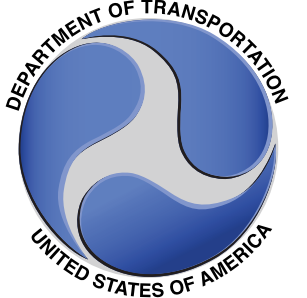
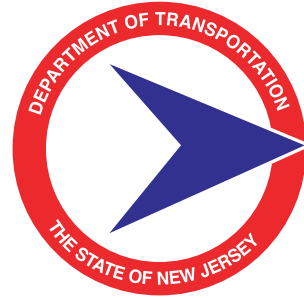
Map 2. Neighborhood Recommendations





NJ SRTS Urban Demonstration Program  
Camden's Promise Charter School  
Camden, NJ  
**Barriers & Opportunities**

August 2008



**LEGEND**

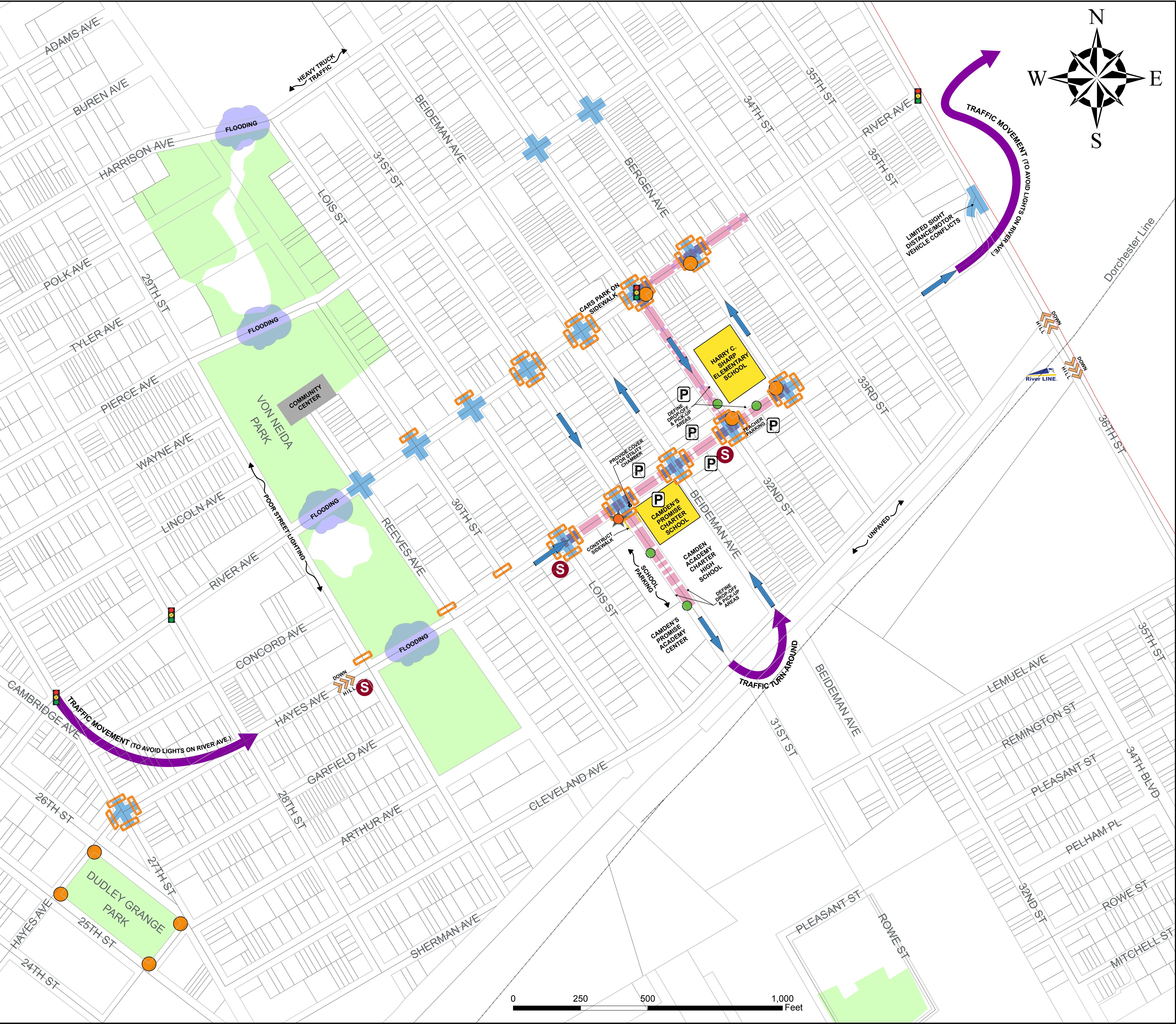
Existing Conditions

- School
- Park
- School Bus Stop
- Crossing Guard
- Traffic Light
- One-Way Street
- Existing School Zone
- Unofficial Drop-Off & Pick-Up Zone

Barriers & Opportunities

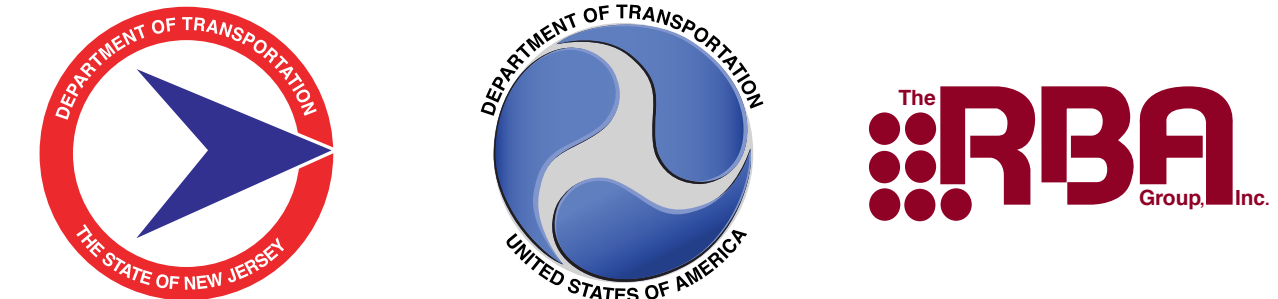
- Loitering/Undesirable Behavior Hotspot
- Difficult Crossing
- Perceived Speeding
- Frequent Pedestrian Activity
- Non-ADA Compliant Intersections





NJ SRTS Urban Demonstration Program  
Camden's Promise Charter School  
Camden, NJ  
**Neighborhood Recommendations**

August 2008



**LEGEND**

Existing Conditions

- School
- Park
- School Bus Stop
- Crossing Guard
- Traffic Light
- One-Way Street
- Existing School Zone

Neighborhood Recommendations

- High Visibility Crosswalk
- Pedestrian Safety and Traffic Calming
- Provide Crossing Guard
- Enhanced School Zone
- Investigate Stop Signs
- Review Parking Restrictions



# CAMDEN'S PROMISE CHARTER SCHOOL, CAMDEN, NJ

## SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL TRAVEL PLAN

### ACTION PLAN

This plan of action for implementing the Camden's Promise Charter School SRTS program is intended to increase safety for students on their walk to and from school and when appropriate, encourage more students to walk. The table below identifies those actions, a responsible party for implementing them, a time frame and a level of cost.

#### Engineering

Action	Responsibility	Time Frame	Cost
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide new or enhance existing high visibility crosswalks along the school zone and designated school routes.</li> </ul>	Municipality	Short-Term	Low
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide pedestrian safety, traffic calming (horizontal and/or vertical elements) and streetscape improvements along Hayes Avenue, River Road (currently by others), and Pierce Avenue.</li> </ul>	School/ Municipality/County	Short-Term	Medium
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clearly define and enhance school zones with reduced speed limit and strong yellow green advance warning signs.</li> </ul>	Municipality	Short-Term	Low
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Define bus zone and designate a drop-off/pick-up area and provide signs to inform motorists of appropriate areas and policies.</li> </ul>	School/ Municipality	Short-Term	Low
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review and revise parking restrictions and drop-off and pick-up zones.</li> </ul>	School/Municipality	Short-Term	Low
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clearly define with striping where parking is prohibited adjacent to intersections ("daylighting").</li> </ul>	Municipality	Short-Term	Low
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evaluate and possibly repair/install flashing beacons at school crossing signs.</li> </ul>	Municipality	Short-Term	Low
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide intersection improvements on Hayes Avenue at CR 609/N. 27<sup>th</sup> Street for pedestrian crossings and at CR 611/N. 36<sup>th</sup> Street for motor vehicle movements and sight distance.</li> </ul>	County	Short-Term	Low
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investigate/consider alternating stop control between Hayes Avenue and side streets such as Sherman Road, Lois Avenue, 31<sup>st</sup> Street, and 32<sup>nd</sup> Street (or similar configuration).</li> </ul>	Municipality	Short-Term	Low



## CAMDEN'S PROMISE CHARTER SCHOOL, CAMDEN, NJ

### SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL TRAVEL PLAN

Action	Responsibility	Time Frame	Cost
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve lighting along Hayes Avenue and Sherman Road along south side of Von Nieda Park.</li> </ul>	Municipality	Short-Term	Low
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Construct sidewalk along both sides of N. 31<sup>st</sup> Street just east of Hayes Avenue.</li> </ul>	Municipality	Short-Term	High

#### *Education*

Action	Responsibility	Time Frame	Cost
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct community wide outreach, possibly with flyers detailing SRTS programs and benefits. This could help to reach both school families and the general population.</li> </ul>	School/ Municipality	Short-Term	Low
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The neighborhood should be informed of any designated school routes, and priority given to helping those who need assistance with snow removal or other sidewalk maintenance.</li> </ul>	Municipality	Short-Term	Low
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The health benefits of conducting a SRTS program should be included in teacher training programs and in the student curriculum.</li> </ul>	School/ PTO	Short-Term	Low
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parents and students should be educated about the established drop-off and pick-up procedures</li> </ul>	School/ Municipality	Short-Term	Low
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Walking school bus options should be distributed to school families.</li> </ul>	School/ PTO	Short-Term	Low
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>School walking event information could be circulated with municipal utility or tax bills. This would help to reach all residents, not just the families with students currently in the school system. The school newspapers could also be utilized as a means to circulate information about major events.</li> </ul>	School/ Municipality	Short-Term	Low

# CAMDEN'S PROMISE CHARTER SCHOOL, CAMDEN, NJ

## SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL TRAVEL PLAN

### *Encouragement*

Action	Responsibility	Time Frame	Cost
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The City should define recommended walking routes between major residential areas and the school. This would passively encourage families to have the students walk more often. The recommended walking routes could be displayed both on paper maps that can be easily shared with the school community and installed physically on the ground with pavement markings, and/or with signs.</li> </ul>	School/ Municipality	Short-Term	Low
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a Safe Routes to School Committee that will lead the effort to expand school access safety and coordinate preparing any grant applications and administering the SRTS program.</li> </ul>	School/ PTO	Short-Term	Low
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prepare for and participate in the International Walk to School Days.</li> </ul>	PTO/School/ Municipality	Short-Term	Medium
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct a preference survey to determine what families would like to see and have available as choices for their school commute.</li> </ul>	School	Short-Term	Low
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish walking school buses. (Safety in numbers! Walk with family and other students.)</li> </ul>	PTO/ School	Mid-Term	Low
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish "Frequent Walker Card" system. This is similar to "Frequent Flyer Mile" programs, and can be a great motivator.</li> </ul>	PTO/ School	Short-Term	Low
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct a bicycle rodeo. This could include stations about bicycle safety, helmet and bicycle fit, rules of the road, handling skills and numerous other safety topics.</li> </ul>	PTO/School/ Municipality	Mid-Term	Low

## CAMDEN'S PROMISE CHARTER SCHOOL, CAMDEN, NJ

### SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL TRAVEL PLAN

Action	Responsibility	Time Frame	Cost
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider establishing a "Golden Sneaker" award that would be circulated between the classrooms that achieve the highest participation rates for walking or bicycling to and from school. This will require ongoing travel mode surveys. Some schools opt for a "stinky sneaker" alternative – students should choose what will be a better motivator.</li> </ul>	School	Short-Term	Low
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The City could consider taking on snow removal responsibility along identified routes to and from school.</li> </ul>	Municipality	Mid-Term	Medium

#### *Enforcement*

Action	Responsibility	Time Frame	Cost
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clear parking regulation signs should be posted at all intended drop-offs and pick-up locations at each school to better define and support the drop off and pick up procedures. This helps to keep motorists self enforced, without excessive police presence required or misunderstanding or confusion in the school area roadways.</li> </ul>	Municipality/ School	Mid-Term	Low
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider issuing warnings, rather than citations for first offenses. Include education materials about the dangers of speeding or other violations, especially in the school area.</li> </ul>	Municipality/ Police	Short-Term	Low
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Police could conduct a series of pedestrian stings, to strongly reinforce that Camden takes its motor vehicle laws and pedestrian rights seriously. This should be considered to be repeated approximately every six weeks until driver behavior is perceived to be more respectful of pedestrian's right to travel safely.</li> </ul>	Municipality/ Police	Short-Term	Low

## CAMDEN'S PROMISE CHARTER SCHOOL, CAMDEN, NJ

### SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL TRAVEL PLAN

Action	Responsibility	Time Frame	Cost
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Police presence should continue to be maintained at major pedestrian crossing locations such as River Road at Hayes Avenue. This will help to passively encourage drivers to obey the laws, and expect that they are being monitored.</li> </ul>	Police	Short-Term	Low
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Police should also work within the school system to educate students on bicycle and pedestrian safety.</li> </ul>	Police/ School	Short-Term	Low
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider posting speed monitoring signs on Hayes Avenue.</li> </ul>	Police/ Municipality	Short-Term	Low
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lower speed limit on Hayes Avenue in school zones.</li> </ul>	Municipality	Short-Term	Low
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prioritize/enhance police presence in areas of loitering, undesirable behavior and vacant buildings/properties in school neighborhoods during school commute times.</li> </ul>	Police/ School	Short-Term	Low
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assign crossing guard for Camden's Promise particularly at Hayes Avenue at N. 31<sup>st</sup> Street.</li> </ul>	Police	Short-Term	Low

#### *Evaluation*

Action	Responsibility	Time Frame	Cost
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct a survey to define mode choice (number and percentage of students who walk or bicycle to and from school) so that there is a base line to reference when assessing the success of future efforts.</li> </ul>	School/ PTO	Short-Term	Low
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitor the timing of drop off dynamics around the school campus. This can help to evaluate the effectiveness of the staggered school start time policy.</li> </ul>	School/ PTO	Short-Term	Low
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct school commute time parking studies to evaluate effectiveness of SRTS programs.</li> </ul>	School/ PTO	Short-Term	Low
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct a preference survey to determine what families would like to see and have available as choices for their school commute.</li> </ul>	School/ PTO	Short-Term	Low

## CAMDEN'S PROMISE CHARTER SCHOOL, CAMDEN, NJ

### SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL TRAVEL PLAN

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Action	Responsibility	Time Frame	Cost
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Conduct tracking exercises for distances students walk both on-line and in the classroom.</li></ul>	School/ PTO	Short-Term	Low

*Note: Engineering projects defined as "short -term" are generally high priority, critical connections, or projects that do not require an intensive design effort. "Long-term" projects are either lower priority or will require additional design efforts to prepare construction documents and bid the projects. Programmatic actions may require target dates for implementation. Projects estimated to be "low cost" are generally "short term" projects that may include signing and striping or other low-impact construction activities. A "high cost" project would generally be considered "long term" and would include activities like roadway reconstruction, utility relocation, and projects that have right-of-way impacts.*

*Non-engineering projects costs are based on the anticipated labor effort and are generally defined as: Low = less than 2 days, Medium = 2-5 days, High = More than one week.*

# CAMDEN'S PROMISE CHARTER SCHOOL, CAMDEN, NJ

## SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL TRAVEL PLAN

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### PROGRAM EVALUATION AND MONITORING

Utilizing the NJDOT SRTS Toolbox Fact Sheet, "EVALUATING YOUR SRTS PROGRAM" as a guide, Camden's Promise Charter School will conduct classroom/student hands-up travel pattern surveys and parent/caregiver take-home attitudinal surveys to evaluate its SRTS Program over time.

Travel Mode Surveys – The Camden's Promise Charter School will measure the number of children walking and bicycling to and from school by conducting Travel Mode Surveys once a year. For younger aged children, the teacher could incorporate the survey in the lesson plan and by asking for raised hand responses and tabulating the overall classroom results with the students in a bar chart. The results will be evaluated yearly to show if there has been a shift in the number of children walking and bicycling to and from school.

Parent/Caregiver Survey – The Camden's Promise Charter School will administer a take-home survey to determine, from a parent/caregiver perspective, the overall environment for walking and biking, why children do not walk or bike to school, and how attitudes change as a result of SRTS Programs.

Other program evaluation methods can include monitoring the timing of drop-off dynamics around the school, parking studies, and distance tracking exercises. These methods are described further in the ACTION PLAN section of this Plan.

- \* The Camden's Promise Charter School will utilize the services of the Voorhees Transportation Center at Rutgers University to tabulate survey data.



## APPENDIX A

# SAMPLE JOINT RESOLUTION BETWEEN CITY AND BOARD OF EDUCATION

# **CAMDEN'S PROMISE CHARTER SCHOOL, CAMDEN, NJ**

## **SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL TRAVEL PLAN**

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### **RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE CAMDEN'S PROMISE CHARTER SCHOOL SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL PROGRAM**

**WHEREAS**, the Camden's Promise Charter School participated in a Safe Routes to School Urban Demonstration Program sponsored by the New Jersey Department of Transportation and an Action Plan was developed, and

**WHEREAS**, the City, School Board and the Safe Routes to School Task Force have reviewed and support the Action Plan elements, and

**WHEREAS**, the Safe Routes to School Program will support and encourage students to walk and bike to school through on-going programs, and through improvements to the walking and biking environment, and

**WHEREAS**, the Safe Routes to School Program will support and encourage increased parent education and community involvement, decrease the amount of traffic near the schools, and encourage children to be independent and healthy, and

**WHEREAS**, the Safe Routes to School Program provides a means to pursue public policy goals related to:

- Reducing traffic congestion around schools
- Creating safer, calmer streets and neighborhoods
- Improving air quality and providing a cleaner environment
- Increasing physical activity for children
- Fostering a healthier lifestyle for the whole family, and

**WHEREAS**, the Safe Routes to School Program will support objectives such as:

- Teaching age-appropriate walking and bicycle traffic safety skills routinely in school and offering special events such as Walk and Bike to School Days, and other encouragement models including classroom participation and contests
- Providing opportunities for the community to participate in developing plans for making streets, sidewalks, pathways, trails, and crosswalks safe, convenient and attractive for walking and bicycling to school
- Enforcing all traffic laws near schools and on school routes, and in other areas of high pedestrian and bicycle activity
- Applying the use of human and technological resources, including volunteers, to provide routes to school that feel secure to both parents and children alike, and

**WHEREAS**, there will be participation by school and district administrators, teachers, students parents, and municipal and community representatives to implement the Safe Routes to School Program; now therefore, be it

**RESOLVED**, the Camden's Promise Charter School Council and Camden's Promise Charter School Board of Education jointly endorse the Safe Routes to School Program for the Camden's Promise Charter School.

# APPENDIX B

## SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL PLEDGE TO STUDENTS

# CAMDEN'S PROMISE CHARTER SCHOOL, CAMDEN, NJ

## SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL TRAVEL PLAN

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### Safe Routes to School

### Pledge to Camden's Promise Charter School Children

#### Take the Pledge

In the last 30 years, our children have lost a lot of the freedom and independence they once had to explore our neighborhoods. As we have designed our communities around automobiles, activities like walking or bicycling to school have declined dramatically. *We believe it's time for a change. We pledge that by the time the kindergarten class of 2008 graduates high school, the majority of school trips will once again be made safely by foot or bicycle.*<sup>1</sup>

To our children, we pledge to make your health and safety our number one priority, including to:

- Make the streets safe, convenient and attractive enough to let you walk or bicycle to schools.
- Ensure the streets around your schools have frequent, safe places to cross.
- Drive slowly through school zones.
- Enforce traffic laws in school zones and neighborhoods to slow down motor vehicle traffic.
- Locate schools within walking and bicycling distance of as many pupils as possible.
- Reduce the amount of traffic around your schools.
- Provide secure bicycle parking at your schools.
- Teach traffic safety skills routinely throughout your school career: first as a pedestrian, next as a bicyclist, and then as a motorist.
- Encourage staff and students at your schools to walk and bicycle more often.

Signed (any combination of the following),

Mayor  
City Council  
City Manager/Administrator  
City Engineer/Public Works  
City Police

School District Board of Education  
School Principal  
School Teacher(s)  
School Nurse  
PTA/Parents/Caregivers

Community Liaison  
Other community groups

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<sup>1</sup> Pledge to Children is based on the Active Living Resource Center's SRTS Pledge.

# APPENDIX C

## SCHOOL SAFETY TIPS



# CAMDEN'S PROMISE CHARTER SCHOOL, CAMDEN, NJ

## SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL TRAVEL PLAN

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### SCHOOL SAFETY TIPS...

...to help keep your children, your school and your neighborhood safe.<sup>1</sup>

#### **Create and Maintain a School Safety Zone:**

Police enforcement helps to ensure that criminal activities don't occur in or around schools, in part by increasing the penalties for such activities. But "School Zone" signs alone aren't enough; parents and other community residents need to be actively involved in creating safety zones.

#### **Parent Patrols:**

Parent patrols are an effective way of ensuring that the areas around our schools are free from crime. Parents, community residents and school staff monitor and observe all activities in and around schools and can serve as a powerful deterrent to criminal activity. Many schools now have Walking Schools Buses -- groups of children that walk to school under the care of a responsible adult -- to complement the activities of the Parent Patrols.

Get involved with your school's Parent Patrol or Walking School Bus or help organize one. Also, find out about your school district's court process. Parent groups can help ensure that the court system imposes stiff penalties for violations of School Zone laws.

#### **Check Your Children's Route to School for Hazards:**

Abandoned buildings, abandoned cars and uncleared vacant lots can pose a danger to your children. Not only can these seem to your children to be exciting places to play, they can often become centers for criminal activity. Another benefit of a Walking School Bus is that it can help to identify such conditions on your children's route to and from school and report them to the local police. Working together with the Police and other City agencies, you can ensure that these kinds of hazards are removed from your neighborhood.

#### **Make Sure Your Children Are in School Every Day:**

Youngsters are most likely to get into trouble when they are not in school when they should be. Try to sit down and have a 10-minute conversation with your children every day about what they did in school. Not only will this help you to ensure that your children are going to school, it can help you identify problems or challenges that your children may be facing and help them to address those problems. Also make sure that your children's school has a well-developed anti-truancy policy that can help you address truancy problems should they occur.

#### **Ensure that Your Children Have Something to do and Somewhere to go After School:**

There are a variety of activities available to broaden your children's interests and abilities as well as provide a safe place to be after school. Many New Jersey Public Schools offer after-school programs and activities, in areas such as art, music and sports. In addition, local YMCA's or community recreation departments sponsor a wide range of activities at facilities throughout the city.

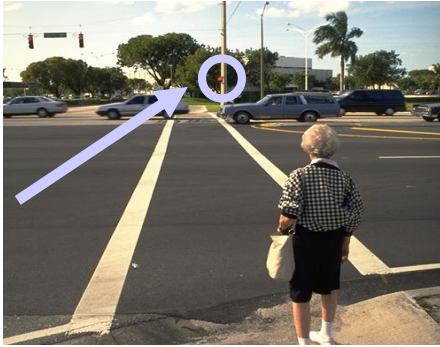
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<sup>1</sup> Adopted from City of Chicago School Safety Tips, [CityofChicago.org](http://CityofChicago.org)

# APPENDIX D

## TYPICAL OPPORTUNITIES AND TREATMENTS

## Typical Opportunities for Improvements



### LONG CROSSING DISTANCES

Long crossing distances prolong the exposure time of pedestrians to motorists and make it difficult to see the pedestrian signal head on the other side of the road.



### PEDESTRIAN OBSTRUCTIONS

Obstructions in the pedestrian right-of-way impede pedestrian movement and safety.



### LACK OF CURB CUTS

Sidewalks without curb cuts are an obstacle to parents with baby carriages as well as people with disabilities.



### POOR MAINTENANCE

Without maintenance pedestrians can trip, it can be a liability issue, and people with disabilities can have trouble negotiating the area.

## Typical Bicycle/Pedestrian Treatments



### SHARED-USE ROADWAY

Can be a safe for bicyclists when:

- Width is sufficient
- Speeds are low
- Traffic volumes are low



### BICYCLE LANE

- Provides a safe and comfortable environment for bicyclists
- An area that is delineated, but not separated from the roadway
- Typically 4' wide with a bicycle stencil



### SHARED USE PATH (TRAIL)

- Offers connections and opportunities not provided in the roadway system
- Can provide valuable connections and recreational opportunities
- Typically 8'-10' wide



### OTHER FACILITIES

- Bicycle Lockers
- Bicycle Racks on Transit
- Bicycle Racks
- Bicycle Safety Programs



## Typical Bicycle/Pedestrian Treatments



### SIDEWALKS

- A portion of the road ROW for the preferential or exclusive use of pedestrians
- Typically at least 5' wide
- Should be free of obstructions along its width and 80" high



### CROSSWALKS

- Provides a designated crossing point
- Helps provide more predictable pedestrian movements
- Alerts drivers to pedestrian areas



### SIGNAGE AND STRIPING

- Can help define pedestrian realm
- Provide visual cues for pedestrians and motorists
- Can augment other facilities



### AMENITIES AND AESTHETICS

- Lets pedestrians know area was designed for their use
- Helps provide a safe and comfortable environment
- Helps provide sense of "place"



## Typical Bicycle/Pedestrian Treatments



### CURB EXTENSION

- Reduces Vehicle Speeds
- Reduces Pedestrian Crossing Distance
- Increases Pedestrian Visibility
- Protects Parking Area & Prevents Parking Close to Intersection



### FULL CLOSURE

- Can be used to eliminate neighborhood cut-throughs
- Eliminates vehicular access
- Allows pedestrian and bicycle access and egress



### MID-BLOCK CROSSING

- Reduces Vehicle Speeds
- Increases Pedestrians Visibility
- Reduces Pedestrian Crossing Distance
- Connects Pedestrian Generators



### RAISED MEDIAN GATEWAY

- Provides Defined Entry
- Provides Cue to a Transition Area
- Aesthetically Pleasing
- Provides Pedestrian Refuge
- Reduction in Vehicle Speeds

## Typical Traffic Calming Devices



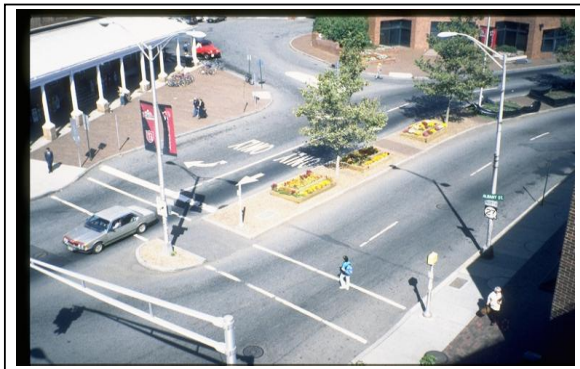
### GATEWAY TREATMENT

- Provides Defined Entry
- Provides Cue to a Transition Area
- Aesthetically Pleasing



### CURB EXTENSION WITH REDUCED TURNING RADIUS

- Reduces Vehicle Speeds
- Reduces Pedestrian Crossing Distance
- Increases Pedestrian Visibility
- Protects Parking Area & Prevents Parking Close to Intersection



### RAISED MEDIAN

- Reduces Vehicle Speeds
- Increases Pedestrians Visibility
- Reduces Pedestrian Crossing Distance
- Provides Pedestrian Refuge



### BIKELANE

- Reduces Vehicle Speeds
- Produces Designated Lane for Bicyclists
- Provides Additional Buffer for Pedestrians



## Typical Traffic Calming Devices



### RAISED MEDIAN GATEWAY

- Provides Defined Entry
- Provides Cue to a Transition Area
- Aesthetically Pleasing
- Provides Pedestrian Refuge
- Reduction in Vehicle Speeds



### PUBLIC ART

- Provides Identifiable Landmark
- Identifies Entry/ Transition
- Can Contribute to History
- Aesthetically Pleasing



### TEXTURED PAVING

- Better Defines the Crossing Location for the Pedestrian
- May Reduce Pedestrian-Vehicle Conflicts
- Aesthetically Pleasing



### TEXTURED PARKING

- Better defines parking area
- Provides Consistency to Define linear corridors
- Aesthetically Pleasing

## Typical Traffic Calming Devices



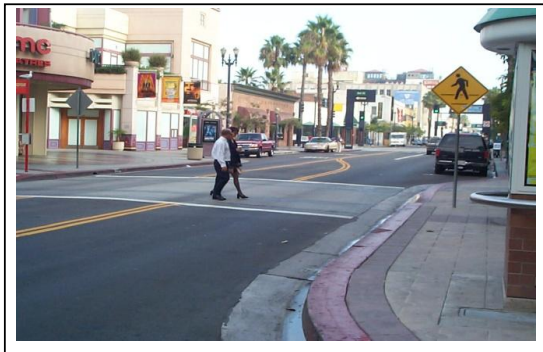
### **CURB EXTENSION**

- Reduces Vehicle Speeds
- Reduces Pedestrian Crossing Distance
- Increases Pedestrian Visibility
- Protects Parking Area & Prevents Parking Close to Intersection



### **MEDIAN REFUGE**

- Reduces Vehicle Speeds
- Reduces Pedestrian- Vehicle Conflict
- Reduces Pedestrian Crossing Distance
- Improves Aesthetics if well-maintained



### **MID-BLOCK CROSSING**

- Reduces Vehicle Speeds
- Increases Pedestrians Visibility
- Reduces Pedestrian Crossing Distance
- Connects Pedestrian Generators



### **SIDEWALKS AND ACCESS**

- Simplifies Crossing Movement
- Reinforces pedestrian priority
- Improves visibility
- Provides safe accessibility