

**CITY OF MANHATTAN BEACH
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

TO: Parking and Public Improvements Commission

FROM: Erik Zandvliet, T.E., City Traffic Engineer

DATE: July 25, 2019

SUBJECT: Consider an Adult Crossing Guard at Blanche Road and 27th Street

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Commission pass a motion to recommend that the City Council authorize the relocation of an existing crossing guard from Valley Drive at Francisco Street to Blanche Road at 27th Street and to paint a new school crosswalk on the west leg of 27th Street at Blanche Road.

BACKGROUND:

The City currently provides 20 adult crossing guards at 21 locations throughout the City. Each crossing guard costs around \$15,000 per year.

In May, 2019, the City received a request from Grandview Principal and PTA for an adult crossing guard at the intersection of Blanche Road and 27th Street adjacent to Grandview Elementary School. The school staff explain that 27th Street is a suggested route to school and parents are concerned about crossing Blanche Road. They note that the school campus will be modernized with new buildings fronting Bell Avenue in the next few years, which will increase pedestrian traffic east of the school grounds. (Exhibit 1)

DISCUSSION:

The intersection of Blanche Road and 27th Street is located in a residential area east of Grandview School. The school has frontages on both Bell Avenue and 24th Street. Blanche Road is classified as a two-lane Major Local Street, and 27th Street is a two-lane Local roadway. Both streets have a speed limit of 25 MPH. There are no curbs, gutters sidewalks on either street, except for a sidewalk on the west side of Blanche Road. The intersection of Blanche Road and 27th Street is stopped in all directions. There are marked crosswalks on the north leg of the intersection. Street parking is allowed on both streets and pedestrians must walk in the street. (See Exhibit 2-Location Map and Aerial Photo)

The traffic collision history between January 1, 2007 and December 31, 2017 was analyzed for this intersection. According to City records, there have been no reported pedestrian collisions at the intersection of Blanche Road and 27th Street during this ten (10) year period.

Pedestrian Counts

Pedestrian volume counts were taken in May 2019 on normal school days with good weather. Traffic volumes were collected from the City's latest records. A summary and pedestrian and traffic counts are provided below:

Intersection Pedestrian and Traffic Volume Counts

PEDESTRIANS/VEHICLES	Blanche Road at 27th Street		
	Students	Other Peds	Total
AM Pedestrian Volume (Arrival)	54	35	89
PM Pedestrian Volume (Dismissal)	40	37	77
TWO HOUR STUDENT TOTAL	94	72	166
AM Traffic Volume (All Directions)			499
PM Traffic Volume (All Directions)			276
TWO HOUR TRAFFIC TOTAL			775
AM Cross-Product (Students x Volume)			26,946
PM Cross-Product (Students x Volume)			11,040
Cross-Product (Students x Volume)			37,986

The cross-product is an indication of the relative exposure of pedestrians to vehicle traffic, and is comprised of the student pedestrian volume multiplied by the conflicting traffic volume for the AM and PM peak hours. A comparison of this location to other intersections with crossing guards is attached as Exhibit 3.

It should be noted that the north leg of Blanche Road at 27th Street is not identified as a suggested crossing on Grandview Elementary School Suggested Routes map. (Exhibit 4) However, City and school staff have recognized that parents prefer to walk along 27th Street instead of along Blanche Road between 24th Street and 27th Street. In addition, the City recently installed flashing beacons at the intersection of Blanche Road and 29th Street, one block to the north, as part of a Federal Safe Routes to School Grant. As a result, few school pedestrians walk along Blanche Road between 24th Street and 27th Street, and prefer to use Bell Avenue as a north-south route.

Field Observations

Staff conducted field observations at Blanche Road and 27th Street on typical school days. These observations confirm the traffic count data and pedestrian patterns. A large number of students use the crosswalks in the east-west direction, and typically walk along 27th Street partly in the street due to parked cars and low traffic volumes. Midblock pedestrian crossings on Blanche Road were not observed. It was apparent that the majority of pedestrians were walking to or from their homes east of Blanche Road, rather than to vehicles parked along the road.

It was observed that motorists tend to travel slower at peak school times, due to the congestion and parked cars on the streets. This condition improves safety by lowering the potential and severity of pedestrian collisions. Minor driving infraction were noticed, including failure to fully

stop at stop signs, but drivers were generally courteous to pedestrians. The intersection has adequate sight distance for motorists stopped at the stop signs. Proper right-of-way rules are currently established by the existing all-way stop controls. However, the pedestrian crossing on the west leg of the intersection was not obvious to both motorists and pedestrians, and would benefit from the installation of a painted crosswalk on the west leg.

Adult Crossing Guards

The State of California guidelines for the installation of adult crossing guards were reviewed at this intersection. These guidelines state that adult crossing guards are desirable at stop-controlled crossings on a four-lane street where the traffic volume exceeds 500 vehicles during each of any two hours in which 40 school pedestrians cross in each of any two hours during the day. However, adult crossing guards may also be considered if special problems exist which make it necessary to assist elementary school pedestrians in crossing the street, such as at an unusually complicated intersection with frequent turning movements and high vehicular speeds. The specific guidelines are in the California Manual on Traffic Control Devices Section 7D.02, as described below:

Adult crossing guards may be used to provide gaps in traffic at school crossings where an engineering study has shown that adequate gaps need to be created (see Section 7A.03), and where authorized by law. Adult Crossing Guards may be assigned at designated school crossings to assist school pedestrians at specified hours when going to or from school. The following suggested policy for their assignment applies only to crossings.

Guidance:

An Adult Crossing Guard should be considered when:

- A. Special situations make it necessary to assist elementary school pedestrians in crossing the street.
- B. A change in the school crossing location is being made, but prevailing conditions require school crossing supervision until the change is constructed and it is not reasonable to install another form of traffic control or technique for this period.

Criteria for Adult Crossing Guards:

Support:

Adult Crossing Guards normally are assigned where official supervision of school pedestrians is desirable while they cross a public highway, and at least 40 school pedestrians for each of any two hours (not necessarily consecutive) daily use the crossing while going to or from school.

Option:

Adult crossing guards may be used under the following conditions:

1. At uncontrolled crossings where there is no alternate controlled crossing within 600 feet; and
 - a. In urban areas where the vehicular traffic volume exceeds 350 during each of any two hours (not necessarily consecutive) in which 40 or more school pedestrians cross daily while going to or from school; or
 - b. In rural areas where the vehicular traffic volume exceeds 300 during each of any two hours (not necessarily consecutive) in which 30 or more school pedestrians cross daily while going to or from school.Whenever the critical (85th percentile) approach speed exceeds 40 mph, the guidelines for rural areas should be applied.
2. At stop sign-controlled crossing:
Where the vehicular traffic volumes on undivided highways of four or more lanes exceeds 500 per hour during any period when the school pedestrians are going to or from school.
3. At traffic signal-controlled crossings:
 - a. Where the number of vehicular turning movements through the school crosswalk exceeds 300 per hour while school pedestrians are going to or from school; or
 - b. Where justified through analysis of the operations of the intersection.

As shown on the attached Adult Crossing Guard Evaluation Form (Exhibit 5), the intersection meets the minimum pedestrian warrant, but does not meet the requirements for a minimum of 4 travel lanes or the minimum traffic volume warrant. While this intersection does not completely

meet all of the suggested State guidelines for adult school crossing guards, it should be noted that several existing crossing guards are assigned to locations that would otherwise not meet current warrants. The City can choose to provide crossing guards at locations that meet the general guidance advice on the basis of an engineering study or policy. There are 11 locations where crossing guards have been authorized without meeting State warrants. Alternately, the City can choose to relocate an existing crossing guard from another location that has a lower pedestrian-vehicle exposure than the proposed location. In such cases, the City has utilized a ranking method to identify the locations with the highest vehicle-pedestrian conflicts, and prioritized them when funds for additional guards are limited.

The Traffic Engineer believes that the current school pedestrian and traffic volumes can justify the assignment of an adult crossing guard at this location. However, the school already has four adult crossing guards assigned to nearby crossing locations. In reviewing the crossing guard comparison table, the adult crossing guard at the lowest ranking location at Valley Drive and Francisco Street serves far fewer school pedestrians, and this location was recently upgraded with flashing crossing beacons and in-pavement warning lights. It would be reasonable to relocate that crossing guard to the higher vehicle-pedestrian exposure location at Blanche Road and 27th Street.

CONCLUSION:

Due to the failure to meet the minimum number of travel lanes in the State crossing guard guidelines for stopped-controlled intersections, an adult school crossing guard is not fully warranted at the intersection of Blanche Road and 27th Street. However, based on current school pedestrian and traffic volumes as well as to reinforce continuity of the preferred school route along 27th Street, staff recommends the reassignment of the existing crossing guard from Valley Drive and Francisco Street to the higher pedestrian-vehicle exposure location at Blanche Road and 27th Street. Staff also recommends the installation of a new school crosswalk on the west leg of 27th Street at Blanche Road.

- Exhibits:
1. Grandview School Crossing Guard Request
 2. Location Map and Aerial Photo
 3. Crossing Guard Location Comparison Table
 4. Suggested Routes to Grandview Elementary School
 5. Adult School Crossing Guard Worksheets

EHZ

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EXHIBIT 1

Erik Zandvliet

From: Sharon Witzansky <switzansky@manhattan.k12.ca.us>
Sent: Tuesday, January 15, 2019 1:56 PM
To: Erik Zandvliet
Cc: Nancy Doyle
Subject: Grand View School Formally Requesting a Crossing Guard Study

Dear Erik,

On behalf of parents and students, the administration at Grand View School would like to formally request a crossing guard study for the corner of Blanche Road and 27th Street. This intersection is highly utilized by pedestrians on school mornings and afternoons as so many families use 27th Street to get all the way to Bell Avenue.

Please let me know if you need anything beyond this written request to move forward.

Yours respectfully,

Sharon Witzansky

Sharon Witzansky
Assistant Principal
Grand View School 310-546-8022
Pacific School 310-546-8044



EXHIBIT 1

Erik Zandvliet

From: Richard Montgomery
Sent: Tuesday, June 4, 2019 2:22 PM
To: Erik Zandvliet
Cc: Anne McIntosh; Bruce Moe
Subject: Fwd: Crossing Guard 27th and Blanche Avenue

Hi Erik,

GV PTA believes you have already completed a study at this location in the past year?

Is that true ?

Or was it 27th and Flournoy?

Richard

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Sarah Leonard Sheahan <sarah@lspgr.com>
Date: June 4, 2019 at 2:15:47 PM PDT
To: Richard Montgomery <rmontgomery@citymb.info>, citycouncil@citymb.info
Subject: **Crossing Guard 27th and Blanche Avenue**

Dear Manhattan Beach City Council Members:

Safe routes to school are likely the single most important step we can take as a community to protect our children. We appreciate the City Council and Traffic Engineer Eric Zandvliet's continued attention and efforts on this issue for our school and the entire District.

The Grand View PTA has requested a crossing guard be added to the intersection of 27th Street and Blanche Avenue. This guard will significantly increase the safety of this - the most dangerous aside from Bell Avenue - intersection along our Walking Route to school. Please see the map:

https://www.gvpta.com/apps/pages/index.jsp?uREC_ID=862767&type=d&pREC_ID=1225460

Blanche Avenue is an extremely busy street just a single block from our campus. Hundreds of students from preschool to 5th grade need to cross it every day. Unfortunately, yet understandably, parents deem Blanche Avenue as too dangerous for students to cross on their own. So they drive them. As a result, walking to school is even MORE dangerous. In addition, we have extreme traffic congestion around our campus and throughout our neighborhoods, twice a day. This is not only harmful to our neighborhood relationships, it also eliminates a perfect opportunity for students to independently make their way to school, form healthy habits, get some exercise and fresh air.

EXHIBIT 1

In the next couple of years, construction will begin on our new campus buildings. As a result, the corner of 27th and Blanche Avenue will see an increase in car and foot traffic. Our school is hoping to increase the number of students to travel on foot or wheels to alleviate the traffic congestion. A crossing guard will help us a great deal.

There is a stop sign at 27th Street and Blanche Avenue, along our Walking Route. However, too many cars roll through the intersection rather than stop. The single stop sign is unfortunately not enough to ensure the safety of our students crossing Blanche Avenue.

Therefore, we request a crossing guard be added to the intersection so that more students can walk or wheel to school.

Sincerely,

Grand View PTA Executive Board

Grand View PTA Safety Committee

Grand View Vice Principal Sharon Witzansky

Grand View Principal Nancy Doyle

Richard Montgomery
Mayor Pro Tem

P: (424) 390-3629

E: rmontgomery@citymb.info



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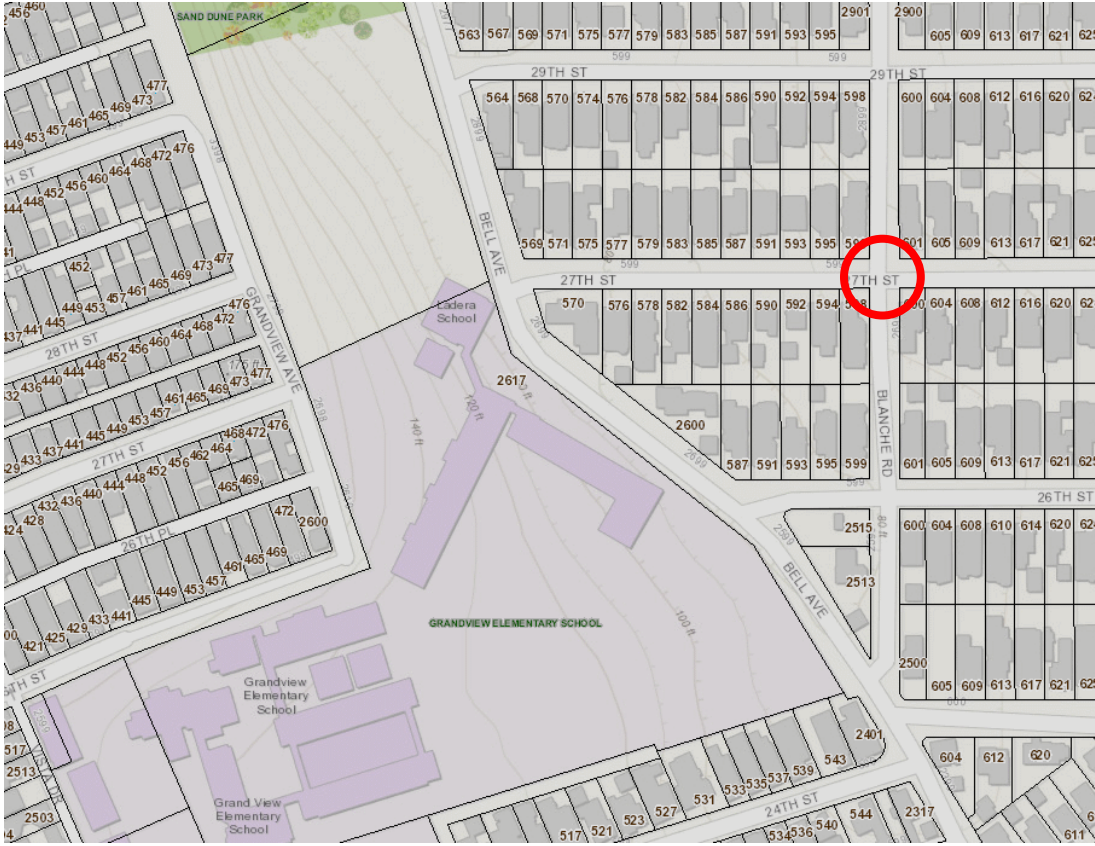
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EXHIBIT 2
Aerial Photo and Location Map



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EXHIBIT 3

CITY OF MANHATTAN BEACH CROSSING GUARD LOCATION COMPARISON TABLE

RANK	SCHOOL	LOCATION	PED COUNT DATE	AM PEDS	PM PEDS	CROSSING VOLUME (VEH/HR)	85TH SPEED (MPH)	TRAFFIC CONTROLS	OTHER FACTORS	MEETS PED VOLUME WARRANTS	VEH x PED PRODUCT	EX. XING GUARD
1	Manhattan Beach MS	Manhattan Beach Blvd at Redondo Ave	Oct-10	122	164	714	32	Traffic Signal		YES	204,204	XX
2	Pennekamp ES	Peck Ave at 2 nd St	Oct-10	102	98	707	31	Stop Control		YES	141,400	X
3	Manhattan Beach MS	Redondo Ave at 15 th St	Oct-10	122	164	388	32	Stop Control		YES	110,968	X
4	Grand View ES	Highland Ave at 26 th St	May-10	38	24	1,200	28	Uncontrolled		60%	74,400	X
5	Pennekamp ES	Peck Ave. at 1st St.	Nov-16	92	103	366	29	Uncontrolled		YES	71,370	X
6	Pacific ES	Pacific Ave. at 17th St.	Mar-17	71	98	501/463	32	Stop Control		YES	60,163	X
7	Robinson ES	Ardmore Ave at 2 nd St	Oct-10	38	17	1,024	36	Uncontrolled	Skewed I/S	43%	56,320	X
8	Grand View ES	Blanche Rd at 24 th St/25 th St	Oct-10	17	37	1,009	25	Stop Control		43%	54,486	X
9	American Martyrs ES	Laurel Ave at 18 th St (am) Laurel Ave at 15 th St (pm)	Oct-10	79	90	275	34	Stop Control		YES	46,475	X
10	Pacific ES	Pacific Ave at 14th St	Oct-10	57	58	348	39	Stop Control		YES	40,020	X
11	Grand View ES	24 th St at Manor Dr	Oct-10	95	87	196	25	Stop Control		YES	35,672	X
12	Meadows ES Manhattan Bch MS	Manhattan Beach Blvd at Peck Ave	Oct-10	35	53	359	40	Traffic Signal		88%	31,592	X
13	Pacific ES	Pacific Ave at Ardmore Ave/Valley	Oct-10	17	10	889	37	Stop Control		25%	24,003	X
14	Pacific ES	Manhattan Beach Blvd at Pacific Ave.	Oct-10	19	29	456	39	Traffic Signal		48%	21,888	X
15	Pacific ES American Martyrs	Poinsettia Ave at 17 th St	Oct-10	42	47	228	32	Stop Control		YES	20,292	X
16	Grand View ES	Bell Ave at 27 th St	Oct-10	53	50	197	25	Stop Control		YES	20,291	X
17	Meadows ES	Manhattan Beach Blvd at Meadows Ave	Oct-10	30	16	424	40	Traffic Signal		40%	19,504	X
18	Meadows ES	Meadows Ave at 12 th St	Oct-10	61	38	187	30	Stop Control		95%	18,513	X
19	Robinson ES	Valley Dr at 1 st St	Jan-10	13	11	702	35	Stop Control	Skewed I/S	28%	16,848	See #7
20	Pennekamp ES	Rowell Ave. at Gates St.	Mar-17	46	61	120/105	26	Stop Control		YES	11,925	X
	Meadows ES	Rowell Ave. at 15th St.	Jan-18	33	35	150	33	Stop Control	Temp Guard	83%	10,200	
21	Robinson ES	Valley Dr at Francisco St	Oct-10	16	6	450	35	Uncontrolled		15%	9,900	X
	Grand View ES	Blanche Rd at 27th St	May-19	54	40	388	31	Stop Control		100%	36,472	

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EXHIBIT 4

Suggested Routes to Grand View Elementary School



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**EXHIBIT 5
ADULT CROSSING GUARD LOCATION
EVALUATION FORM**

Street/Intersection: Blanche Road / 27th Street

Evaluation Date: 7/12/2019

Crosswalk Location: North Leg

Evaluated By: EHZ

Criteria Guideline	Minimum	Actual	Meets Criteria?	
			YES	NO
Uncontrolled Crossing:			YES	NO
Nearest Alternate Crossing	> 600'			
Crossing Traffic Volume	> 350/hr Urban (> 300/hr Rural*)	AM		
		PM		
School Pedestrian Volume	40+ Urban (30+ Rural*)	AM		
		PM		
Meets all above criteria?				
Stop-Controlled Crossing: North Leg Crosswalk			YES	NO
Undivided Highway	Undivided**	Yes	X	
Number of Through Traffic Lanes	4 or More	2		X
Crossing Traffic Volume	> 500/hr	AM 473		X
		PM 253		X
School Pedestrian Volume	40+ per hour	AM 54	X	
		PM 40	X	
Meets all above criteria?				X
Traffic Signal-Controlled Crossings			YES	NO
Turning Volume Through Crosswalk	> 300/hr	AM		
		PM		
School Pedestrian Volume	40+ per hour	AM		
		PM		
Meets all above criteria?				
OR Justified through analysis of the intersection operations (i.e. no LT phasing, RTOR conflicts)				

* Whenever the critical (85th Percentile) speed exceeds 40 mph, the guidelines for rural areas should be applied.

** Undivided means does not have a raised or painted median (double double yellow line). A two-way left turn lane does not make a divided highway.

Comments: School Crosswalk on North Leg, 4-way Stop Controlled Intersection, no sidewalks on 27th Street