

# COMMUNITY PEDESTRIAN SAFETY TRAINING

## Oakland

December 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> 2009

### *Oakland*

The City of Oakland is an urban area located in Northern California in the San Francisco Bay Area. Oakland is currently home to 362,342 persons.<sup>i</sup> Oakland is 56 square miles with an average population density of 6,470 persons per square mile. Oakland is quite large and there are several California State Highways that converge in Oakland, including California State Highways 580, 680, 880, 80, and 980. In addition, there are many corridors and arterial roads that run through Oakland and adjoining cities. Alameda and Contra Costa Transit, Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART), Amtrak, and the Oakland Alameda Ferry serve as the primary transit systems in Oakland. The combination of dense urban areas with suburban sprawl, and the existence of many corridors that are highly used with vehicles traveling at high speeds, all highlight the need for pedestrian safety awareness and risk reduction efforts in the City of Oakland. From 2003 to 2007 Oakland has had 192 pedestrian crashes resulting in 142 severe injuries and 50 fatalities.<sup>ii</sup>

### *Process & Instigating factor*

The City of Oakland was selected as a training site for a variety of factors. The two primary factors that led to the development of the training were 1) high rates of pedestrian collisions based on the California Office of Traffic Safety rankings, and 2) the existing efforts in Oakland regarding pedestrian safety and neighborhood improvements.

In 2007, the City of Oakland has ranked number 3 in pedestrian fatalities and injuries, and number 4 for pedestrians aged 1-14 and over 65 years of age (for a City of it's size: over 250,000) from the Office of Traffic Safety data.

Existing efforts that compliment and strengthen the efforts of the CPST include the ongoing efforts from the City of Oakland Mayor's office, and involvement of the California Urban Communities Collaborative (CUCC). During the fall of 2009 the Mayor's office was conducting a series of safety awareness programs throughout the City of Oakland and the CPST complemented the existing programming.

In addition, Oakland is a site for the California Urban Communities Collaborative (CUCC). The CUCC is "a voluntary initiative that includes various pilot projects intended to, among other things, facilitate collaboration among state and local government agencies, community-based organizations, and the private sector for the purpose of identifying, accessing, and coordinating delivery of public and private resources to at-risk urban communities within specified metropolitan areas to stabilize the social structure, increase the living standards and the overall economic performance, and improve the health of at-risk communities".<sup>1</sup> Included in these efforts are California's

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<sup>1</sup> AB 177 California Urban Communities Collaborative Initiative Act of 2009. Available at: [www.legalinfo.ca.gov](http://www.legalinfo.ca.gov)

Highway Patrol (CHP) efforts in areas that are at high risk for vehicle collisions and in the case of the LA Crenshaw district; gang activities.

The existing data and programming highlight the City of Oakland as not only in need of a CPST, but ready with existing community resources and momentum to move pedestrian safety priorities forward.

***Existing Conditions (data)***

Pedestrian collision data analyzed by age categories identifies populations that may be at greater risk of pedestrian collision. From years 2003-2007, there have been 142 severe pedestrian injuries and 50 pedestrian fatalities in Oakland. The highest rates for both injury and fatality occur between the ages of 20 and 24. For both, there is a relatively steady decline after the age of 24. Older adult 80 years of age and above have a slight spike in fatality rates, and older adults 90 years of age and above have a slight spike in severe injury rates. It is possible that severe injury rates are slightly less than fatality rates because older adults are frail and more likely to be killed in a pedestrian/auto collision.

The greatest spike in both severe injuries and fatalities is in the young adult years ages 10 and above. Inversely from older adults, younger adults may have higher rates of severe injury rather than fatality because of physical resiliency upon a pedestrian/automobile collision.

Figure 1

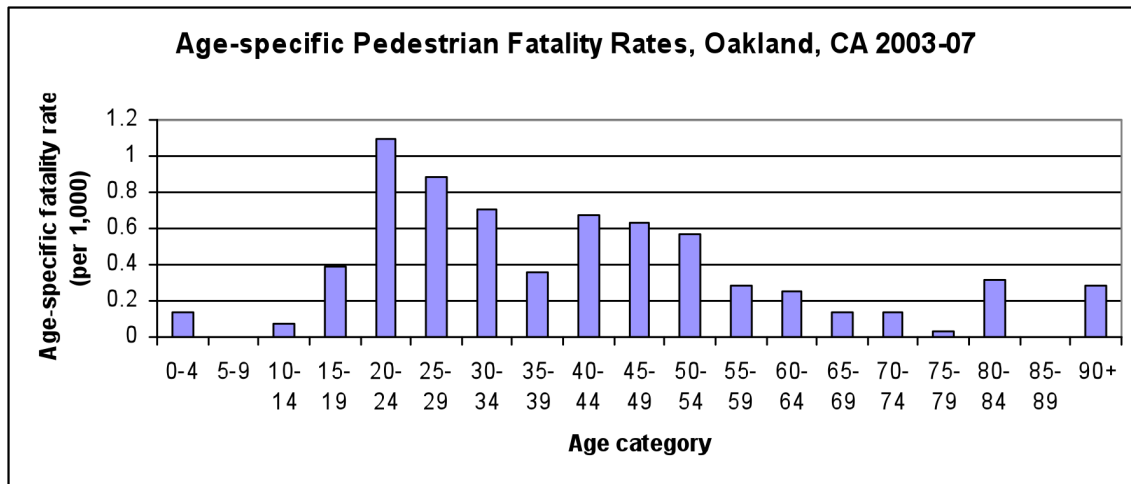
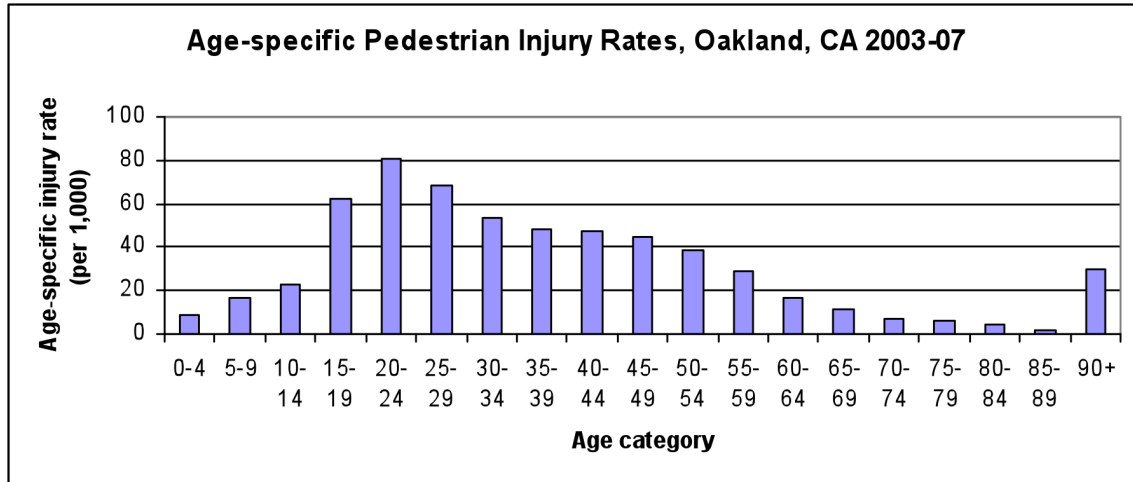


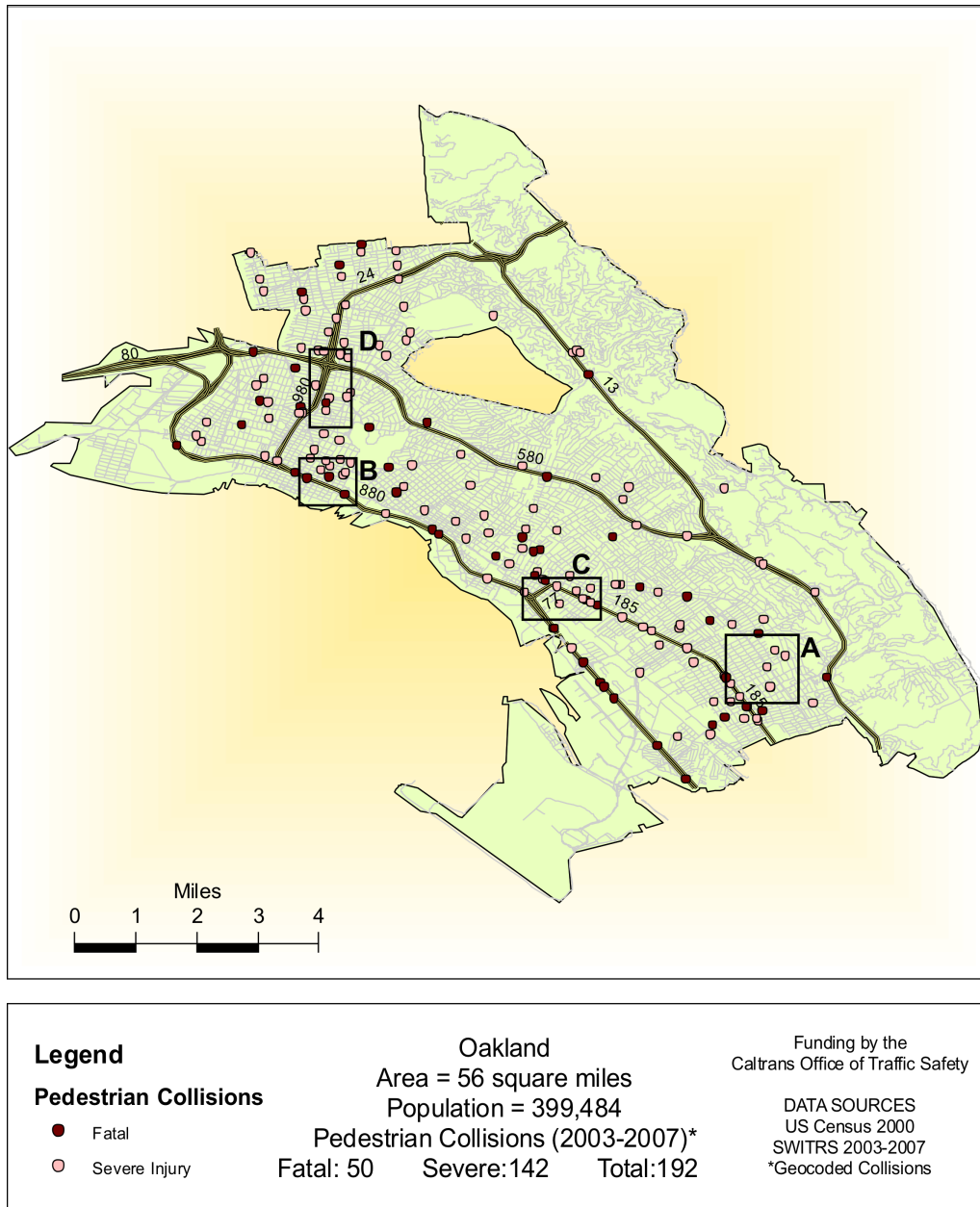
Figure 2



Areas that have been highlighted as of particular concern to pedestrians from the geocoded analysis include: (see map below in Figure 3)

- A) East 14<sup>th</sup> Street and 98<sup>th</sup> Ave,
- B) 8<sup>th</sup> and Harrison Streets,
- C) East 14<sup>th</sup> and High Streets, and
- D) Telegraph Ave and W MacArthur Boulevard.

Figure 3



**Community Involvement**

Persons who were actively involved in making the Oakland trainings a success include:

- Stacey Perry, Oakland Police Department
- VaShone Huff, Oakland Mayor’s Office
- Arlette Flores, Neighborhood Service Coordinator

- Patricia Rose, Neighborhood Service Coordinator
- Jenifer Argueta, Neighborhood Service Coordinator

During the planning process other professionals from the following departments provided input:

- AC Transit
- City of Oakland Engineering Department
- Safe Routes to Schools Coordinators

### ***Media & Outreach***

A generic press release was provided to the Oakland Police Department and Mayor's office regarding the training purpose, date, time and place. Hard copies of the flyers were distributed through the Mayor's office, including the annual Toy Drive. Neighborhood Service Coordinators also mailed out flyers to their constituents and conducted on-the-ground outreach to key merchants and organizations using the flyers and their knowledge of the training.

Planning team members emailed out the flyer to walking and transportation related community organizations in Oakland as well as to older adult organizations. For example the United Seniors of Oakland and Alameda County not only received the flyer, but then passed it along to their email lists as well as the Area Agency on Aging.

### ***Training Days***

Two trainings were conducted in Oakland to meet the needs of such a large and diverse community. The first training took place on December 3<sup>rd</sup> at 6-9 pm at Brookfield Elementary School. The second training took place on December 5<sup>th</sup> at 9-12 noon at the Eastmont Police Substation. Both trainings were well attended.

### **December 3<sup>rd</sup>**

There were a total of 26 persons in attendance at the December 3<sup>rd</sup> training. Many of the community members who were present were parents of children who go to school at Brookfield Elementary. The workshop was conducted in Spanish with simultaneous English translation. Representatives were present from the City of Oakland Department of Engineering, Alameda County Transit Improvement Authority (ACTIA), California Highway Patrol, and Safe Routes to Schools.

This training was held in the evening to accommodate parents and working community members schedules. The training started at 6 pm, and the walk route assessment was the first activity (rather than the presentation as in other trainings). Due to daylight savings time, it was dusk during the walk. The group all walked together and flashlights were provided for participants. Although the participants had not received (prior to the walk) the presented materials on the elements of pedestrian safety, they were very familiar with their community and articulated areas of high concern for pedestrian safety.

The walk assessment started on Jones Ave, to Edes Ave, down 98<sup>th</sup> Ave, and back through the residential streets to Brookfield Elementary School. Participants identified

areas along Edes Ave where crossing was difficult, especially at S Elmhurst Ave, Tyler St., and Nevada St. Participants did not feel comfortable crossing 98<sup>th</sup> Ave, as cars frequently travel at high speeds along 98<sup>th</sup> Ave.

After the walk participants came back together as a group and learned about pedestrian safety from a variety of different disciplines as well as what they can do immediately to improve pedestrian safety in their neighborhoods. The CHP and OPD presented on pedestrian related law enforcement and current efforts. The City Engineering Department presented on traffic engineering solutions and what is currently feasible for Oakland. A Safe Routes to Schools (SRTS) Coordinator presented on the SRTS program and the feasibility of starting a program at Brookfield Elementary.

#### *December 3<sup>rd</sup> Identified priorities\**

There were several priorities that participants identified; all touching on a variety of health and safety factors in the community.

- Work to get SRTS at Brookfield Elementary school.
- Invite Oakland Police Department and SRTS staff to the upcoming PTA Meetings for continued involvement.
- Speeding along 98<sup>th</sup> Ave. and Edes Ave.
- Review of traffic light placement along Edes Ave.
- Improve safety of Brookfield Village Park.

#### **December 5<sup>th</sup>**

There were a total of 24 persons in attendance at the December 5<sup>th</sup> training held at the Eastmont Mall Police Substation. This training had a mix of community residents and staff from organizations that work directly with community residents. The workshop was conducted in Spanish with simultaneous English translation. Representatives were present from the California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS), Oakland Police Department, California Highway Patrol, Walk Oakland Bike Oakland (WOBO), and the United Seniors of Oakland and Alameda County. Lisa Dixon from the Office of Traffic Safety introduced the training and commended participants for their interest and efforts to make their communities safer for pedestrians.

Two walking groups formed for the walk assessments and walked (in opposite directions) the blocks around Eastmont Mall. These walks provided a plethora of information to discuss during the group priority development break-out sessions.

Members who were present were able to share resources, such as traffic and driving related resources the California Highway Patrol offers, Walking clubs supported through the United Seniors of Oakland and Alameda County and how to become an advocate with Walk Oakland Bike Oakland.

#### *December 5<sup>th</sup> Identified priorities\**

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\* For full list of identified priorities see final report.

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The identified priorities during this training largely focused on the immediate built environment around Eastmont Mall and areas the participants were familiar with. Priorities included:

- The intersection of 73<sup>rd</sup> Ave and Hillside St. does not have a crosswalk.
- Pedestrians, especially the elderly do not feel comfortable crossing the intersection of International Blvd. and 101<sup>st</sup>.
- Pedestrians, especially the elderly do not feel comfortable crossing the intersection of Seminary Ave. and International Blvd.

### *Evaluation*

#### **Brookfield Elementary CPST Evaluation**

Results from the evaluation of the Oakland Brookfield Elementary Community Pedestrian Safety Training were overwhelmingly positive. A total of 9 evaluations were collected and tabulated.

#### *General & knowledge/skills gained*

100 percent of the respondents stated that the training workshop met their expectations and were satisfied with the quality of the training. When asked about the most valuable learning of the day respondents identified specific learning's such as "That we can do lots of things for the community knowing how to ask" and "How to coordinate the city and community to better the safety infrastructure of our neighborhood".

There was extremely positive feedback with regard to the participants reporting new knowledge gained during the training. 100 percent of the participants reported that they acquired new knowledge about pedestrian safety best practices, a new understanding about the rules of the road for pedestrians, the walkability assessment was useful to identify safe and unsafe pedestrian environments, their behavior as a pedestrian is likely to change after the training, they have an increase in confidence to work with other community members on pedestrian safety priorities, the training provided participants with new skills to promote pedestrian safety, and they are committed to continuing to promote safe walking and pedestrian safety in their community. 90 percent of the respondents also stated that they are now more familiar with the community professionals to contact regarding further work on pedestrian safety, and that the pedestrian priorities reflect the needs of the community,

#### *Logistics*

100 percent of attendees felt that there was an adequate length of time for the training and that the location was good for the training.

#### *Presenters*

Participants felt very strongly (100 percent) that the presenters were knowledgeable, the training was tailored to meet the needs of the community and that there was adequate time provided for discussion.

## **Eastmont Mall CPST Evaluation**

Results from the evaluation of the Oakland-Eastmont Mall Community Pedestrian Safety Training were overwhelmingly positive. A total of 13 evaluations were collected and tabulated.

### *General & knowledge/skills gained*

100 percent of the respondents stated that the training workshop met their expectations and 92 percent were satisfied with the quality of the training. When asked about the most valuable learning of the day respondents identified specific learning's such as "who we are supposed to talk to when we have a problem (depending on the problem)" and "how to work together and work better for our safety how to help my community"

There was very positive feedback with regard to the participants reporting new knowledge gained during the training. 100 percent of the participants reported that the walkability assessment was useful to identify safe and unsafe pedestrian environments, they have an increase in confidence to work with other community members on pedestrian safety priorities, the training provided participants with new skills to promote pedestrian safety, and they are now more familiar with the community professionals to contact regarding further work on pedestrian safety.

Over 90 percent of the participants reported that they acquired new knowledge about pedestrian safety best practices, that the pedestrian priorities reflect the needs of the community, and they are committed to continuing to promote safe walking and pedestrian safety in their community.

85 percent and 70 percent reported they have a new understanding about the rules of the road for pedestrians, and their behavior as a pedestrian is likely to change after the training (respectively). This suggests that participants already had knowledge regarding the rules of the road and practiced pedestrian safety.

### *Logistics*

100 percent of attendees felt that there was an adequate length of time for the training and that the location was good for the training.

### *Presenters*

Participants felt very strongly that the presenters were knowledgeable (100 percent), the training was tailored to meet the needs of the community (92 percent) and that there was adequate time provided for discussion (100 percent). There were a couple of comments in the evaluations that identified the need to perhaps have a similar training in English. This training was tailored towards the Spanish-speaking community with English translation.

### ***Complementary efforts***

Safe Routes to School Grant

- TransForm current administers the Safe Routes to Schools program in Alameda County. The Safe Routes to Schools program works with over 90 schools in



Alameda County (now including Brookfield Elementary).  
<http://transformca.org/campaign/sr2s>

#### California Urban Communities Collaborative (CUCC)

- The California Highway Patrol is currently (until 2010) working in four Oakland areas in conjunction with the Oakland Police Department to reduce crime in the area and thereby making it a safer community.

#### Pedestrian Safety Action Plan (PSAP)

- The City of Oakland was selected as one of five sites in the State of California for a Pedestrian Safety Action Plan training involving professionals. This training is administered through the California Department of Public Health and engages professionals in developing a Pedestrian Safety Action Plan.

### *Lessons Learned*

- Both trainings were offered at the beginning of December in an attempt to beat the holiday vacation schedule. However, due to the Thanksgiving holiday and City furloughs the planning and outreach efforts were somewhat strained for time. Every effort will be made to avoid all holidays and vacation/time-off schedules in future trainings.
- The most effective outreach in Oakland was the one-to-one efforts from the Neighborhood Service Coordinators that were well integrated into the community. They were able to effectively address how participation in this training will directly benefit the local community and residents. While, conducting mailings and outreach via media is effective in some communities, this community did not respond to the non-personal outreach. Additionally, community organizations are in a unique position and have a unique relationship with community residents in contrast with City departments. Community organizations are invaluable in the outreach process and should be leveraged with the City connections and resources.

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<sup>i</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, 2008 Population Estimates, <http://factfinder.census.gov>

<sup>ii</sup> SWITRS, 2003-2007