

El Monte Avenue Corridor Study Feedback Summary

Below is an outline of feedback from the comment cards¹ & discussion from the charrette².

Overall Challenges

The list below identifies the top six challenges perceived by residents as reasons to an unsafe environment along the El Monte Avenue Corridor, as summarized from the comment cards and from the group discussions at the Public Outreach Meeting (Charrette) for the El Monte Corridor Study hosted at the Mountain View Community Center on January 15, 2020:

1. High Vehicle Volumes
2. High Vehicle Speeds
3. Unclear Signage
4. Inadequate Street Lighting
5. Crosswalk Visibility
6. Lack of Protected Bicycle Infrastructure

Speeding vehicles and high traffic volumes along the corridor pose a challenge to pedestrians and bicyclists traveling along the corridor. Population growth associated with new developments has increased vehicle volumes on the corridor, thus amplifying the safety concerns within the community. Some participants shared that they fear crossing El Monte Avenue on foot or by bike during peak hours and either wait for times of day when traffic is slower to cross the corridor or prefer not to cross the street at all using these modes. Residents shared observations that most vehicles do not yield the right-of-way to pedestrians or bicyclists and believe that the roadway width encourages this behavior. In addition, high vehicle speeds and volumes along the corridor make it challenging to turn left to and from the side streets due to minimal gaps in vehicular traffic.

Existing signage creates perceptions of unsafe conditions for some residents leading to difficulty traveling along the corridor by all modes. For example, when approaching the El Monte Avenue/Springer Road/Jay Street intersection from El Monte Avenue, participants indicated that it is unclear which stop sign applies due to the convergence of three streets. This can result in vehicles hesitating or making last-minute lane changes when entering the intersection therefore creating uncertainty for pedestrians looking to cross the intersection. Trees were also observed to be blocking electronic speed signs and flashing signs causing drivers to disobey the signs. In addition to unclear signage, lack of adequate street lighting makes pedestrians and bicyclists moving along the corridor at night feel unsafe as they are not confident that vehicles are able to see them. Another observation

¹ Qualitative responses from Question 3, 4 & 5 from the comment cards

² Notes collected from participants discussion with facilitators using guide to foster the discussion

raised by participants was that “lighting along this corridor is at automotive scale, which is much higher above the roadway than necessary to illuminate pedestrians.”

Lack of crosswalk visibility and dedicated bicycle infrastructure were also significant concerns raised by community members. Additionally, residents were concerned about not having sufficient marked crosswalks or protected bike lanes along the corridor. Several residents mentioned not biking through the corridor or crossing El Monte Avenue because of the lack of safe, marked bicycle facilities. Community members also expressed the need for an additional crosswalk for the stretch between Pilgrim Avenue and Lloyd Way along El Monte Avenue.

Themes by Intersection

1. El Camino Real/Escuela Ave

Traffic Signal Phasing (Left Turns): Left turn movements at the intersection of El Camino Real and Escuela Avenue are observed to conflict with pedestrians. Also, left-turn movements do not have protected phases; thus, pedestrians cross concurrently as vehicles turn left from Escuela Avenue onto El Camino Real.

Lack of Bicycle Infrastructure: Lack of protected bicycle infrastructure and connectivity make it difficult to cross El Camino Real from Escuela Avenue to El Monte Avenue and vice-versa. This often results in bicyclists riding along with cars or riding on the sidewalk alongside pedestrians.

2. El Camino Real/El Monte Ave

Vehicle Speeds: Community members noted that cars traveling south on El Monte Avenue from El Camino Real are traveling at high speeds and because of this, vehicles do not adhere to the pedestrian right-of-way and are observed to stop within the crosswalks.

Lighting: Attendees noted the lack of lighting at the El Monte Ave/El Camino Real eastbound crosswalk. Pedestrians believe that it is “too dark” for vehicles to see them attempting to cross especially given the number of vehicles speeding northbound and southbound on El Monte Ave.

3. El Monte Ave/Ednamary Way

Crosswalk Visibility & Vehicle Volumes: The traffic signal at Ednamary Way is confusing to people who are unfamiliar with the area and when cars cross El Monte Ave, the crosswalk comes as a surprise as they exit off of El Camino Ave. Also, the volume of traffic that moves across this crosswalk serves as a deterrent to people who want to cross at that intersection.

Signage: At the El Monte Avenue and Ednamary Way intersection, a large proportion of vehicles were observed to run the red-light because the traffic light is “ill-situated.” Other observations included concerns with the traffic signal being non-apparent to motorists moving through the intersection.

4. El Monte Ave/Marich Way

Left turns: Wait times are long for vehicles to make left-turns safely from the CVS parking lot onto El Monte Avenue due to the high traffic volumes moving northbound and southbound on El Monte Avenue.

Crosswalk Visibility: Community members indicated challenges at the crosswalk at Marich Way and El Monte Avenue, noting that not all moving traffic stops for pedestrians or bicyclists at that crosswalk because “drivers that do typically stop to check for pedestrians to their left but miss if someone is also crossing from the right concurrently.” This was a concern in crossing in both directions of traffic along El Monte Avenue at this intersection.

Lack of Protected Bicycle Infrastructure: Participants indicated how difficult it is exiting the CVS shopping center as a cyclist onto El Monte Ave when heading south because there is no clearly defined bike lane.

5. El Monte Ave/Pilgrim Ave

Vehicle Speeds: At the El Monte Ave and Pilgrim Ave intersection, community members noted that it is difficult to turn left because of the fast-moving cars and added that “space in traffic (gaps) is hard to find” due to the vehicle speeds.

6. El Monte Ave/Hollingsworth Dr.

Vehicle Speeds: Participants at the community meeting indicated that speeding vehicles and the lack of a crosswalk at this intersection both make it unsafe for pedestrians who wish to cross at this location.

7. El Monte Ave/Spargur Dr.

Crosswalks: Discussion during the charrette touched on the lack of sufficient crosswalks on El Monte Avenue beyond Marich Way and that crosswalks are needed at the El Monte Ave/Spargur Dr. intersection.

Left turns: With cars traveling fast along the corridor, making left-turns on to El Monte Avenue is very difficult as a bicyclist.

Lane Configuration: Right turn lane is confusing which results in a lot of lane switching for vehicles traveling through the corridor.

8. El Monte Ave/Lloyd Way

Left turns & multiple lanes: Turning left from Lloyd Way onto El Monte Ave is difficult due to the intersecting streets, rolling traffic, and multiple travel lanes. Residents noted that even at stop signs “cars accelerate....and (the) multiple lanes make crossing hard, especially if you are biking or walking.”

9. El Monte Ave/ Springer Rd/Jay St.

Crosswalk Visibility: Crosswalk visibility poses an issue to pedestrians crossing the intersection. The perception is that drivers do not “anticipate pedestrians to cross.” Community members also noted that while using the crosswalk on the south side of the intersection, cars headed north on Springer Road do not see pedestrians if cars are parked by the houses on Springer Road because parked cars block the view of pedestrians trying to cross the intersection.

Left-turns: Attendees noted that “the intersection of El Monte Avenue/Springer Road/Jay Street is a mess for pedestrians” and that the north-most crosswalk does not provide enough visibility for left-turning vehicles from El Monte Avenue who are traveling northbound. For the south-most crosswalk, northbound left turning vehicles from Springer Road to El Monte Avenue usually do not stop.

Vehicle Speeds: Speeding vehicles on El Monte Avenue create the perception of this intersection being unsafe for pedestrians to cross and participants indicated that “speed limits are a concern” especially for pedestrians and cyclists moving through the intersection in any direction.

Signage: Signage was another challenge to safety with one participant indicating that at the “El Monte Ave/Springer Rd/Jay St intersection school crossing signage is needed” to alert vehicles of children moving through the area. Residents expressed concerns turning into their driveways and mentioned that they often take detours to avoid this movement. Some suggested “Keep Clear” pavement markings in front of driveways to help pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers when moving through the El Monte Avenue/Springer Road/Jay Street intersection.

Lack of Bicycle Infrastructure: Discussions also centered around a designated protected bicycle lane at the Springer Road/El Monte Avenue/Jay Street intersection that is “better marked” and alerts vehicles that the right lane is right-turn only because so many people “are surprised and switch to the left lane last minute to continue south on Springer from El Monte.”