

PACHECO BOULEVARD COMPLETE STREETS PLAN

Existing Conditions and Background Document Review

January 2019

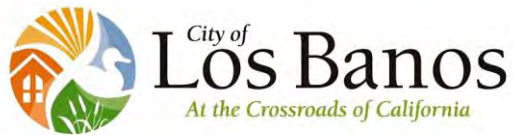


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I. Introduction

This Existing Conditions Report is the first step in the process of developing the Pacheco Boulevard Complete Streets Plan. The Plan will be a community-based plan to improve SR-152 through the City of Los Banos, wherein the highway is known as “Pacheco Boulevard.” All modes of transportation will be considered: vehicle, truck, transit, bicycles and pedestrians. Aesthetic and wayfinding improvements will also be considered during the planning process.

The Existing Conditions Report summarizes existing physical features, regulations and analysis of the Pacheco Boulevard corridor, and will serve as a resource throughout the development of the Complete Streets Plan.

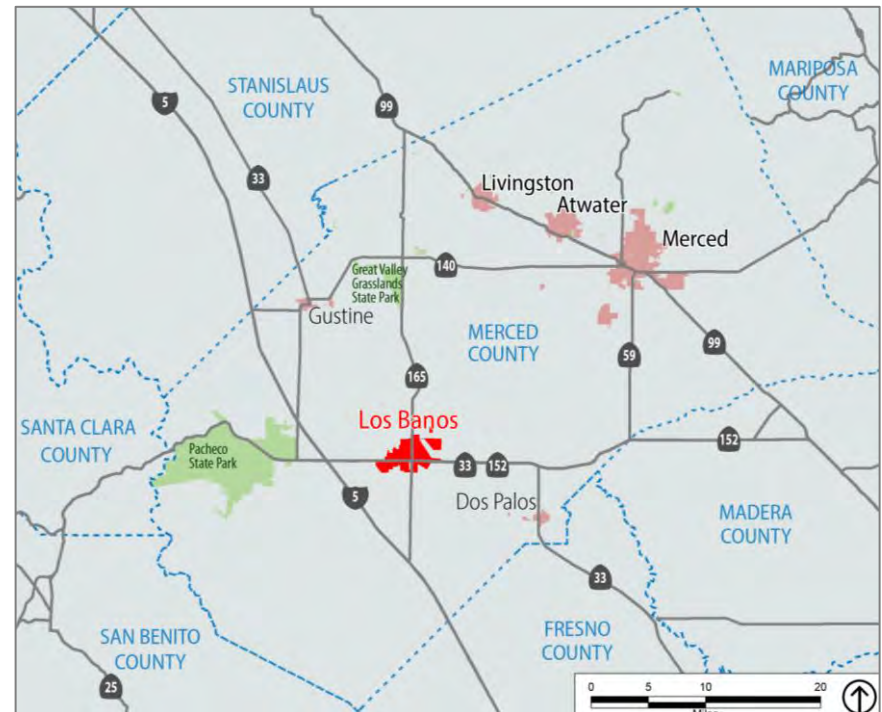
II. Study Area Review

CITY AND REGIONAL CONTEXT

Los Banos is located in Merced County, a mostly rural county located in the northern San Joaquin Valley region of California’s larger Central Valley (Figure 1). To the east of Merced County are major recreational destinations like the Sierra National Forest, Yosemite Valley, and Mono Lake. West of Merced County, California’s Central Valley region transitions into the Monterey Bay coastline. Merced’s County Seat, the City of Merced, is a City of about 83,000 people, and contains the newest University of California Campus, UC Merced, with approximately 6,815 undergraduate students. Merced County’s other incorporated cities include Los Banos, Atwater, Livingston, Gustine, and Dos Palos. These cities are significantly smaller than the City of Merced, with populations of 38,000, 30,000, 13,000, 6,000, and 5,500, respectively, as of the 2010 U.S. Census.

Most cities in Merced County, including Los Banos, have historically been characterized as small farming communities since their incorporation. The City of Los Banos has grown significantly within the last two decades, transitioning from a smaller, primarily agricultural town to the bustling, full-

Figure 1. Regional Context



service community it is today. The population of Los Banos is currently around 40,000. While most of the land area in Merced County and in the Central Valley region generally is dedicated to agriculture, the City of Los Banos itself is largely comprised of single-family neighborhoods, with commercial uses heavily concentrated along the Pacheco Boulevard corridor.

STUDY AREA DESCRIPTION

The Pacheco Boulevard Complete Streets Study Area encompasses a key 4-mile segment of California State Route 152 that runs east-west through the City of Los Banos, as shown in Figure 2. As previously mentioned, SR-152 is known as “Pacheco Boulevard” within Los Banos City Limits. For consistency, this document refers to SR-152 within the Study Area as “Pacheco Boulevard,” even though the Study Area encompasses part of SR-152 that technically lies outside of Los Banos.

Most of the Study Area lies within Los Banos City Limits, except a portion of the north side of SR-152 on the west side of the Study Area roughly between the College until the intersection with Badger Flat Road. This small unincorporated section includes Merced College, Los Banos Creek, and

several agricultural properties. Although it is outside City Limits, this section of the Study Area lies within the City's Sphere of Influence.

Several key local and regional destinations lie both within the Study Area and nearby, such as Merced College – Los Banos Campus, Downtown, Los Banos Park, the Los Banos Airport, shopping centers, and schools. (See the section later in this document for an analysis of school drop-off and pick-up times at two elementary schools immediately adjacent to the corridor.)

Figure 2. Study Area Boundaries



GENERAL OVERVIEW OF TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES

Regional Context

The origin of SR-152 in the west begins near Watsonville, a major agricultural center, at the intersection with the Pacific Coast Highway. The route terminates to the east where it interchanges with SR-99 near the City of Merced. The route's entire 104-mile span serves as a central connection between the coastline to the west and the Sierra Mountain Range to the east, with California's bustling agricultural industry in between. SR-152 thus is a major route for both private vehicle traffic and commercial trucking.

General Overview of SR-152 / Pacheco Boulevard

SR-152 is classified according to the National Highway System as a principal arterial comprised of four lanes—two in each direction. Within Los Banos City Limits, Pacheco Boulevard is further classified as a "conventional highway", which is defined as a street with speed limits of 30-50 miles per hour (mph). Outside the City, SR-152 is classified as an expressway with a posted speed limit of 55 mph.

Several characteristics of the SR-152 segment within Los Banos compound traffic congestion in the Study Area. First, the portion of SR-152 within Los Banos is the only segment of SR-152 within Merced County that mixes regional through-traffic with local urban traffic (traffic originating within the City). Secondly, Los Banos and other Merced communities offer affordable housing opportunities for commuters working in the employment centers of Santa Clara and Santa Cruz counties to the west. As a result, SR-152 serves as the principal commuter corridor between the employment centers to the west and valley communities to the east and south, such as Los Banos, Merced, Atwater, and Fresno.





Pacheco Boulevard intersects State Route 165 (Merced Springs Road) towards the east end of Los Banos—a major north-south arterial. State Route 165 begins south of Los Banos at Interstate 5, passes through the City east of the downtown area, and ends to the north at State Route 99, thus connecting two major roadways for moving goods through the state. Recreational users also frequent several state and federal wildlife refuges located north of Los Banos, which are accessed primarily by SR-165. The intersection of Pacheco Boulevard and SR-165 is thus a major source of additional congestion in the Study Area.

Appendix A of this report include a detailed analysis of transportation infrastructure along Pacheco Boulevard.

PUBLIC TRANSIT

The Merced County Association of Governments (MCAG) manages “The Bus,” which is the single public transportation service provider for all Merced County, including Los Banos. All Los Banos bus routes use and make stops near Pacheco Boulevard, but none stop directly on the street. All Pacheco Boulevard bus stops are off-street, typically in shopping centers.

As shown in Figure 3, “The Bus” operates a commuter route between Los Banos and Merced, a dial-a-ride service for the general public within the City of Los Banos, and two intercity routes that switch between fixed-route service and dial-a-ride para-transit service according to defined zones. In addition, there is a Greyhound Bus stop at 820 G Street, roughly five blocks north of Pacheco Boulevard.

The Los Banos Commuter

This commuter service runs between Los Banos and the City of Merced. From its western terminus at the Merced College-Los Banos Campus, the commuter route runs eastward along Pacheco Boulevard then turns left onto West I street heading north. The route eventually returns to Pacheco Boulevard via H Street and continues eastward to the City of Dos Palos and, ultimately, to the City of Merced. On weekdays, there are seven outbound trips from Los Banos to Merced and five inbound trips from Merced to Los



Figure 3. Los Banos Commuter and Dos Palos Link Route in Los Banos

Banos. On Saturdays and Sundays, a morning and midday bus operates from Los Banos to Merced, and a midday and early evening bus returns from Merced to Los Banos.

Dos Palos Link (DP)

The Dos Palos Link (DP) operates between Los Banos to the northwest and the City of Dos Palos to the southeast. Within Los Banos, the line follows roughly the same route as the Los Banos Commuter and has the same western terminus at the Merced College Los Banos Campus. East of Los Banos, however, the DP route turns right onto SR-33 heading south to Dos Palos.

Five trips are operated from Los Banos to Dos Palos, and four from Dos Palos to Los Banos on weekdays. These runs take between 60 to 70 minutes. Additionally, once the fixed route vehicle arrives in Dos Palos on the morning, midday and late afternoon run, the vehicle switches to Paratransit service for an hour before returning to Los Banos.

G - Gustine

The G-Gustine Link is a combination of Dial-a-Ride service within the communities of Gustine/Newman and Santa Nella, and fixed route service in Los Banos. The easternmost terminus of the G-Gustine is in the parking

lot adjacent to the Food 4 Less in Los Banos along Pacheco Boulevard. From there, the route runs westward along Pacheco Boulevard until turning right and heading North on H Street. The G-Gustine operates three outbound trips and three inbound trips during weekdays, starting with approximately half an hour of dial-a-ride service in Gustine. This service is only provided on weekdays.

Los Banos Dial-a-Ride

The dial-a-ride service within the City of Los Banos is available to the general public, having replaced a local fixed route as of 2016. The MCAG Short Range Transportation Plan notes that “under this new routing, less of the northeast area of Los Banos is served by fixed route, but more of the main corridor and east area are served” (page 38).

The Los Banos Dial-A-Ride service uses two vehicles to provide curb-to-curb service within a defined service area from 5:30 AM to 7:30 PM on weekdays, and from 7 AM to 5 PM on weekends and holidays.

LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT ALONG PACHECO BOULEVARD

As mentioned previously, the Pacheco Boulevard Complete Streets Study Area encompasses SR-152 and all adjacent properties from the intersection at Merced College Los Banos Campus on the west side to a point approximately four-tenths of a mile east of Ward Road on the east side.

Most of the land on either side of Pacheco Boulevard within the Study Area is developed with commercial uses. Since the SR-152 corridor is a major east-west thoroughfare for both commercial and passenger vehicle traffic, much of the commercial uses along the corridor within Los Banos cater to drivers, such as drive-through restaurants, gas stations, auto services, and motels. Accordingly, the zoning designation for most properties along Pacheco Boulevard in Los Banos is called “Highway Commercial (H-C)” which, according to the Los Banos Municipal code, provides “a district for commercial uses which do not specialize in serving the pedestrian shopper but rather, because of their character, are more appropriately located along a highway or major street where drive-in operations are more feasible” (§ 4.27, Ord. 342, as amended by § 88, Ord. 1095, eff. November 20, 2010). Other Highway Commercial uses in the Study Area include auto dealerships and shopping plazas featuring national chain retailers like Wal-Mart and Target. In addition, between twenty and twenty-five corridor-adjacent lots are vacant, and many more are underutilized compared to the maximum development allowed according to their zoning and land use designations.

Six parks can be found in the Study Area. These are: Airport Park and Wolfsen Park (each are on either side of SR-152 at the intersection with West I Street), Los Banos Park on the south side of Pacheco Boulevard at Seventh Street, and three linear parks which cross Pacheco Boulevard at a roughly perpendicular angle. The three linear parks crossing SR-152 in the Study Area include Los Banos Creek on the west side, the Main Canal towards the City’s center, and the Rail Trail on the east side.



Figure 4 provides an overview of citywide land uses, as indicated by General Plan land use designations.

The subsections below describe existing land uses and General Plan land use designations for three segments of the Study Area (West, Center and East) in more detail.



West Segment Land Uses

Existing

The intersection of SR-152 with Merced College – Los Banos Campus marks the western boundary of the Pacheco Boulevard Study Area. In this segment of the Study Area, some parcels on the north side, including the college and land eastward until the intersection of Pacheco Boulevard and Badger Flat Road, are outside of Los Banos City Limits, but are within the Los Banos Sphere of Influence. For the most part, properties in this segment of the Study Area, regardless of whether they are within City Limits, are primarily used for agriculture, with large lot sizes of several acres or more. The Los Banos Creek also crosses SR-152 at the intersection with Merced Community College, just east of the campus.

Continuing eastward, land uses begin to transition from primarily agricultural to primarily large-scale retail uses beginning with the intersection of Pacheco Boulevard and Badger Flat Road. This intersection

features a gas station and a large shopping center containing several fast food restaurants, a Walmart, and other large-scale retail destinations. This pattern of primarily larger-scale commercial uses continues east towards West I street, though some agricultural uses remain on the north side of Pacheco Boulevard.

General Plan Land Use Designations

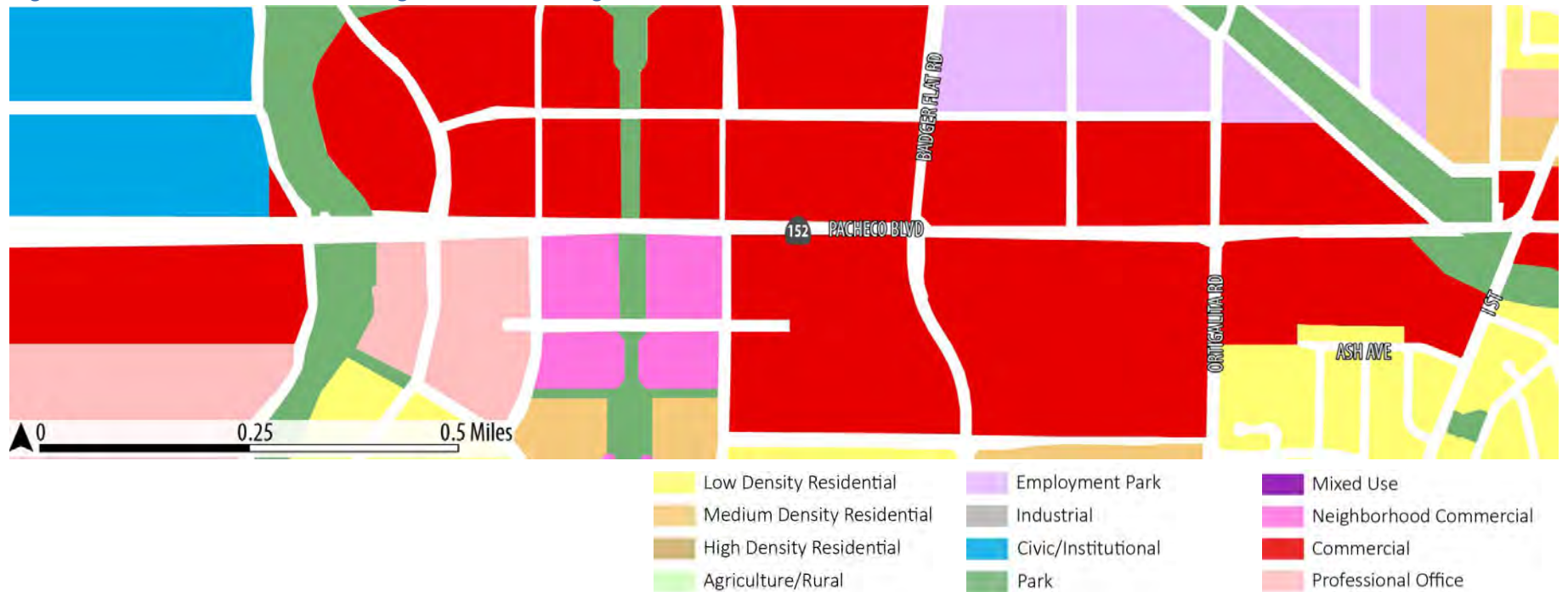
Although agricultural uses are prevalent in the western segment of the Study Area currently, Figure 5 shows that future land use designations for this segment are primarily commercial, with some professional office designations on the South side SR-152/Pacheco Boulevard just east of the Los Banos Creek. For specific policies pertaining to land use designations in the Study Area, see the “Planning and Regulatory Framework” section of this report.



Figure 5. Existing Land Use – West Segment



Figure 6. General Plan Land Use Designations – West Segment



Center Segment Land Uses

Existing

This segment is more urban in character compared to the west and east segments. The area where the Main Canal in Los Banos intersects Pacheco Boulevard, just west of the intersection with I Street, serves as a civic gateway into the heart of Los Banos. Here, the Los Banos Municipal Airport lies on the north side of Pacheco Boulevard, and a large welcome sign featuring various associations and businesses in Los Banos lies on the south side in Wolfson Park. The City is considering relocating the airport due to declining airport use and pressure for alternative development of other uses on the site. If relocated, the available land at the airport's current location could be converted to office parks with supporting retail uses, connected to the rest of the region with a transit center. A landscaped trail runs along the Main Canal where it crosses Pacheco Boulevard east of the I Street intersection. A wayfinding sign at the southern trailhead bears the Los Banos City seal and indicates the location of important civic, retail and recreation destinations in Los Banos.

Continuing eastward along Pacheco Boulevard from West I Street, parcels become smaller, and while commercial uses remain the dominant land use along the corridor, more of them are small-scale, local retail destinations

like butcher shops, thrift stores, local restaurants and taquerias. However, auto-oriented retail such as big box stores, fast food restaurants, and auto dealerships remain prevalent along this segment.

In addition to commercial uses, the center segment of the Pacheco Boulevard Study Area contains several important civic uses. These include two elementary schools (Westside Union and Los Banos Elementary schools, both on the north side of Pacheco boulevard at 7th Street), Los Banos Park, Milliken Museum, and Merced County Library on the South side of Pacheco. The Los Banos Unified School District office and California Highway Patrol office are also located along this segment of Pacheco Boulevard. Downtown Los Banos lies to the north of the corridor.

General Plan Land Use Designations

The center segment is the most built-out of the three Study Area segments. Figure 8 shows that land use designations in the center segment are largely consistent with current land uses discussed above. Both current and future land uses in this area are primarily commercial except schools and parks, which are designated civic/institutional and parkland respectively. In addition, a currently inactive dairy pasteurization plant on the south side of Pacheco Boulevard is designated for future industrial use.

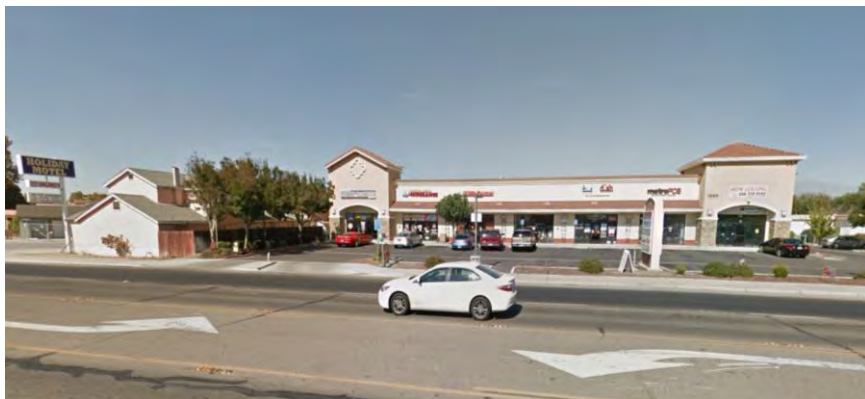


Figure 7. Existing Land Use – Center Segment

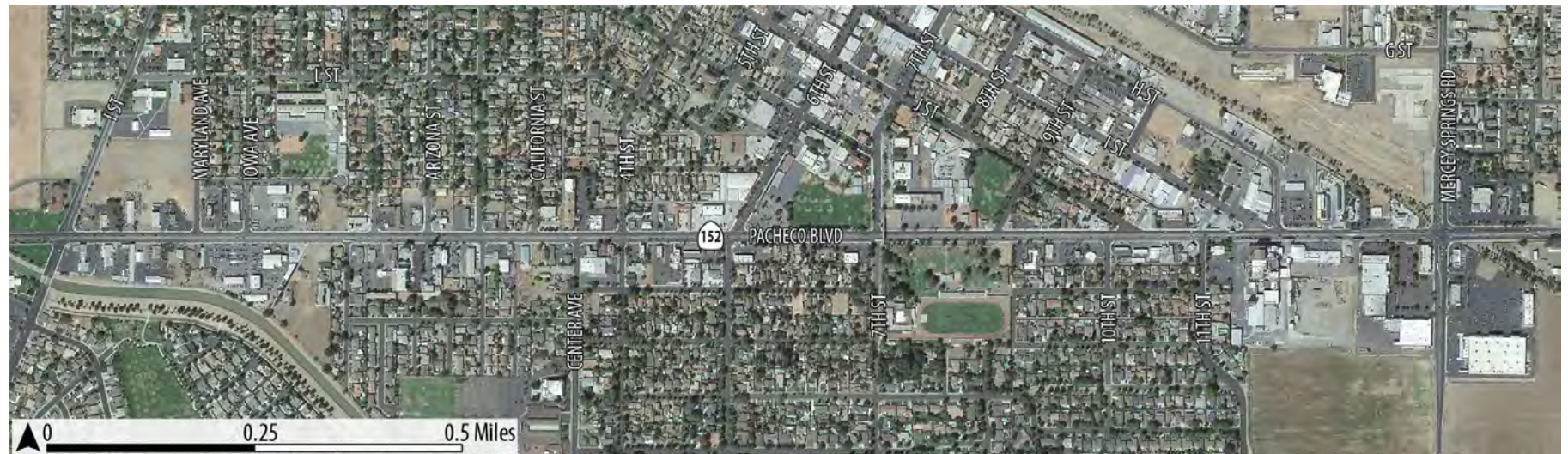
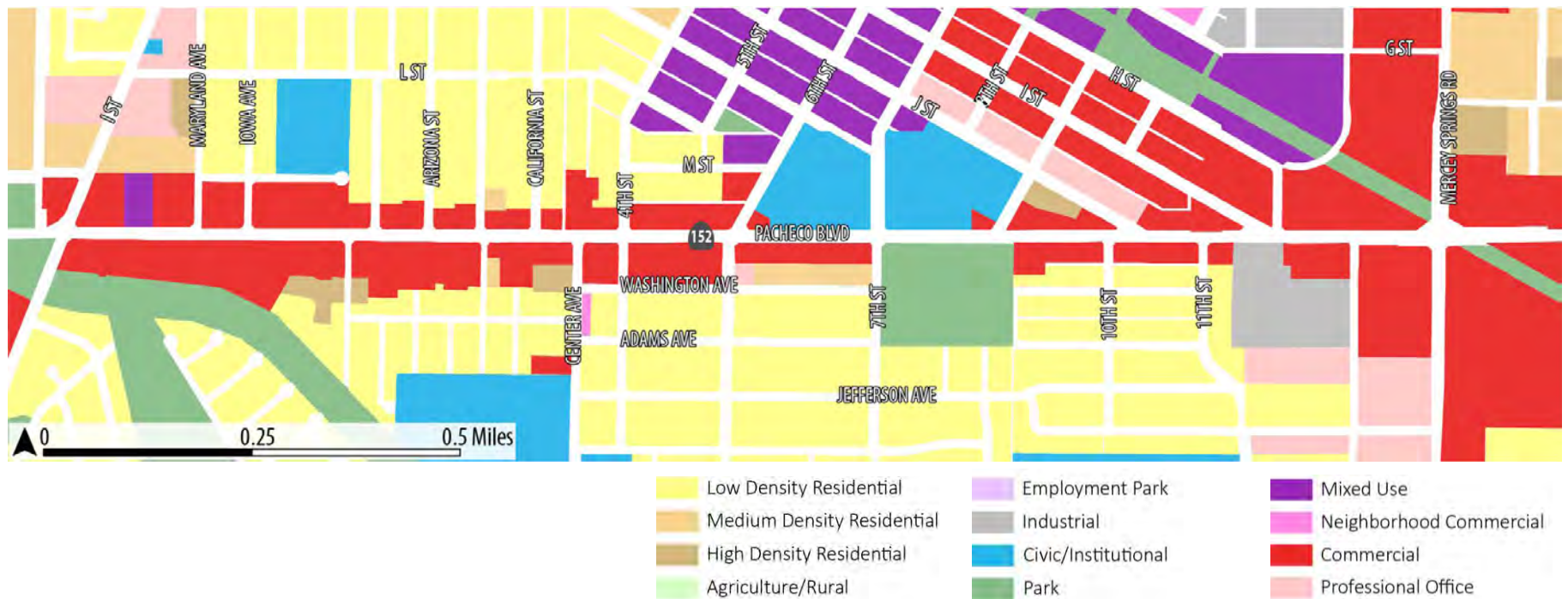


Figure 8. General Plan Land Use Designations – Center Segment



East Segment Land Uses

Existing

The eastern segment of the Study Area begins just before the intersection of Pacheco Boulevard and Mercey Springs Road (SR-165). This intersection features a landscaped entrance to the Rail Trail linear park, which crosses this intersection diagonally (roughly at a 60-degree angle running northwest to southeast), as well as several chain-retail shopping centers and fast food restaurants.

Continuing eastward from this intersection, vacant or underutilized properties become more prevalent—with active uses becoming much more interspersed between large stretches of unimproved land. The east end of the Study Area also features several industrial parcels (e.g., towing services and truck repair) on the south side at the easternmost end of the City. Unimproved parcels, underutilized parcels, vacant parcels, and parcels with inactive uses (like the dairy plant) all pose opportunities for future development or redevelopment.

Finally, the east end of the corridor includes the intersection with Rancho Drive on the south side of Pacheco Boulevard. Rancho Drive is the entrance to Rancho Los Banos Mobile Park, a development with roughly 100 residences. A large unimproved property lies immediately adjacent to Rancho Los Banos on the east side between Rancho Drive and Ward Road.

The intersection of Ward Road and Pacheco Boulevard roughly marks the eastern boundary of the Study Area. In addition to the large unimproved lot abutting the southwest corner, this intersection features a Chevron gas station on the northwest corner, another unimproved lot on the northeast corner (with a small roadside fruit stand), and a single-family residence adjacent to the Los Banos Motel located on the southeast corner.

General Plan Land Use Designations

As shown in Figure 10, properties along Pacheco Boulevard between Mercey Springs Road and Ward Road are designated primarily for commercial use, including properties that are currently vacant or



underutilized. One exception is Los Banos Mobile home park, which is designated for high-density residential housing in the General Plan (roughly consistent with its current use). Continuing eastward on Pacheco Boulevard from this intersection, General Plan land use designations are primarily commercial or Neighborhood Commercial on the north side of Pacheco, including those that are currently vacant or used for light-industrial purposes. The General Plan designates all properties on the south side of Pacheco east of Ward Road as industrial, including vacant or unimproved properties, the Los Banos Motel, and a single-family home on the southeast corner of Ward Road and Pacheco Boulevard.

Figure 9. Existing Land Use – East Segment



Figure 10. General Plan Land Use Designations – East Segment



URBAN DESIGN ANALYSIS

Key Destinations

Pacheco Boulevard provides two essential functions – as a regional connector between west and east parts of the southern Central Valley, and as the “Main Street” of the City. Most goods and services that residents want are available somewhere on Pacheco, from clothing to groceries to tax accountants. The map shown in Figure 11 highlights many destinations along or near to Pacheco Boulevard, and the text below describes categories:

Schools

There are two elementary schools on Pacheco in the center of the City: Westside Union and Los Banos Elementary. At least six other public and

private schools are nearby, including Los Banos Middle, Creekside Junior High and Los Banos High School. In addition, the Merced College – Los Banos Campus anchors the west end of the Study Area.

Parks

Pacheco Park (also known as Los Banos Park) is directly adjacent to Pacheco Boulevard, close to Downtown. This park provides a welcome green oasis along the auto-oriented character along the rest of the street.

Businesses

While there are many different types of businesses along Pacheco Boulevard, the most common categories are shopping centers with grocery stores or comparison goods (such as Target or Walmart) and eating establishments ranging from fast food to full-service restaurants.

Figure 11. Key Destinations



Automobile-oriented businesses like tire shops and auto parts are also common along the street.

Hotels and Residences

There are several motels or hotels along Pacheco Boulevard, befitting its role as a regional highway. Although the entire street is zoned for commercial, there are a few homes still standing surrounded by commercial developments.

Landmarks

One of the tallest structures in Los Banos is the tower portion of the Los Banos Food Inc. plant on Pacheco Boulevard near South 11th Street. It serves as a landmark due to its size and proximity to the street. Another feature that could be considered a landmark is the pedestrian bridge over Pacheco Boulevard at 7th Street. For some passersby it is a marker indicating the center of the City.

Trails

There are two trails that cross Pacheco Boulevard. The Rail Trail multi-use path crosses Pacheco Boulevard around Mercey Springs Road. It is attractively laid out on the north side of Pacheco Boulevard but not fully implemented on the south side. There is also the HG Fawcett multi-use path which extends along the Main Canal to the south of Pacheco Boulevard near West I street. The path is not yet developed north of Pacheco Boulevard. Another trail is proposed along the north side of Pacheco Boulevard to connect the City to Merced College – Los Banos Campus.

Gateways

Coming from the west side, the Los Banos campus of Merced College serves as an attractive gateway into the City. Farther along at Wolfsen Park on West I Street, an electronic signboard welcomes visitors. Coming from the east side there is a City gateway sign near the place where the highway changes from a separated highway to non-separated, not far from San Luis Street. The change from separated highway is itself an indicator that one is coming into the City. Moving westward, there is a large stand of eucalyptus

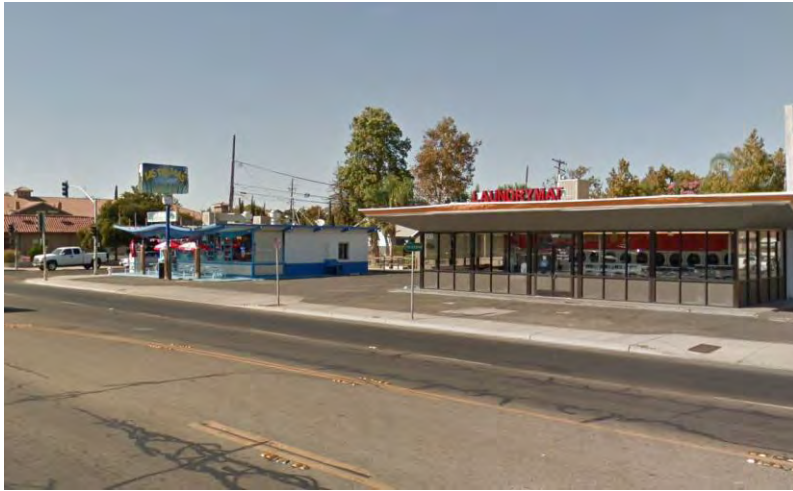


trees on both sides of Pacheco east of Ward Road that serves as a subtle gateway.

Existing Streetscape Character

The streetscape character of Pacheco Boulevard. changes significantly throughout the Study Area. Much of the perceived character of the street has to do with the width of the roadway, the type of median and the surrounding land uses. We have identified the following zones of streetscape character:

Country to City Transition Zone. At the west and east ends of the Study Area travelers move from a high-speed highway with speed limits of 65 mph surrounded by open agricultural lands, to a slower but still fast-moving road with speed limits of 55 mph with intermittent development interspersed with agriculture. On the west side, Merced College – Los Banos Campus serves as the first urbanized development, while on the east side, motels and an RV sales business are some of the first visible development. In this transition zone there are utility poles on one or both sides of the street and the highway is divided by a gravel median with little formal landscaping.



Large-scale Regional Commercial Zone. Past the transition zone, Pacheco Boulevard slows to 45 mph, and one sees some newer large-scale regional commercial developments. Generally, the street has raised medians with left turn lanes in this zone, including turn lanes to the Walmart and Target shopping centers in the west side, and to the centers with Food 4 Less and

Dollar Tree on the north side of the street. These regional scale developments generally have well maintained landscaping with sidewalks set back from the street. Street trees (mostly sycamores) help to visually separate the parking lot from the street. Also, utility lines in these areas have been undergrounded.

Near Downtown Zone. Moving away from the large scale of the regional centers, the street section becomes somewhat narrower and the speed reduces from 45 to 35 mph. This zone contains some older landmark buildings, such as Espana's Restaurant on the east side. Some residential homes are located in this zone, and they are generally well landscaped and well maintained. Elsewhere, the landscaping is not continuous but varies widely for each property, and some properties have no landscaping whatsoever, creating large undifferentiated areas of parking asphalt. One area that has a nice character is west of Mercey Springs Road where store buildings are set back behind a single row of parking (rather than multiple rows as occurring elsewhere); this approach reduces the area of parking visible to travelers and brings the streetwall closer to the street.



Downtown Zone. Starting around Center Street on the west and H Street Mercy Springs Road on the east the character changes to a more intimate scale, with shorter block lengths and greater pedestrian activity. It feels like the center of town. Some of the buildings in this area are '50's-era diners and stores with interesting roadside architecture. Buildings are facing the street much more than other areas and are more likely to be on the corner of key intersections. Some memorable places in this area are the green relief of the park and the schools across the street. However, other than those green spaces there is very little visible landscaping in this zone.

Overall Impressions. There is a lack of continuity in the streetscape of Pacheco Boulevard through Los Banos. The regional commercial centers are well landscaped, and a few properties in other zones have done a good job with landscaping, but overall the character of the street is lacking. This could be addressed through a requirement for consistent landscaping along the Pacheco edge for all new projects or additions. There are also opportunities for setting consistent character of landscaping in medians and other public frontages, for example Pacheco Park, the Rail Trail, and Wolfson Park. As for the character of landscape and street trees, the Pacheco Boulevard Complete Streets Plan is a good opportunity to have a discussion with the community to identify what kinds of streetscape residents would like.

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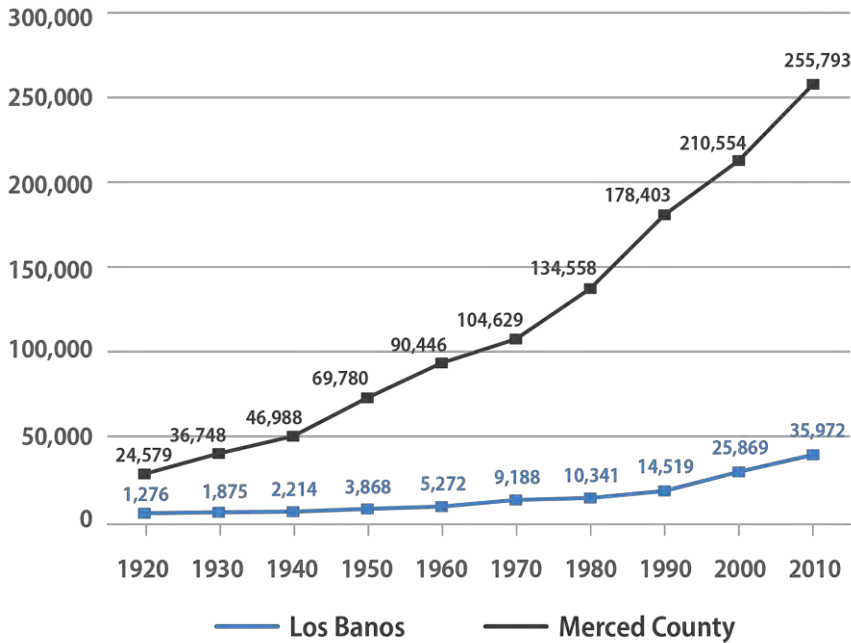
DEMOGRAPHIC AND SOCIOECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

The demographic profile presented in this report uses data from the American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates (2013-2017), unless otherwise noted.

Population Trends

The current population of Los Banos is around 40,000. The population of Los Banos remained under 5,000 until 1960, when it reached 5,272 residents. As shown in Figure 12, the population grew faster during the following decade between 1960 and 1970 until slowing down again (but still increasing by 13%) between 1970 and 1980. The most dramatic population growth in Los Banos occurred between 1990 and 2010, during

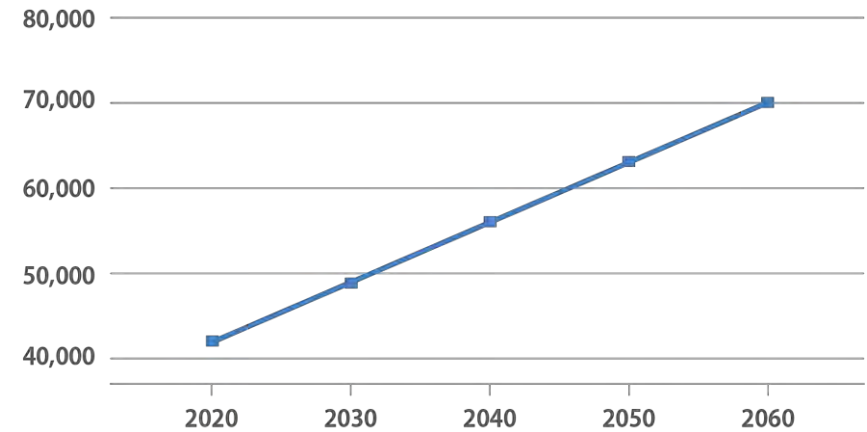
Figure 12. Population Growth in Los Banos and Merced County, 1920-2010



which the population increased from around 15,000 to almost 36,000. By contrast, Merced County’s population has been increasing more steadily at an average of 30% per decade since 1920, which is mostly attributable to the City of Merced, the County’s Seat and most populous municipality. Although Los Banos is the second most populous city in Merced County at nearly 36,000 people in 2010, the City of Merced is more than twice as large as Los Banos, with nearly 79,000 people in 2010.

The growth rate projections shown in Figure 13 were produced in a report from the University of the Pacific in 2016. They project that the population of Los Banos will grow at a steady rate from 2020 to 2060, increasing by approximately 10% per year.

Figure 13. Los Banos Population Projections, 2020-2060

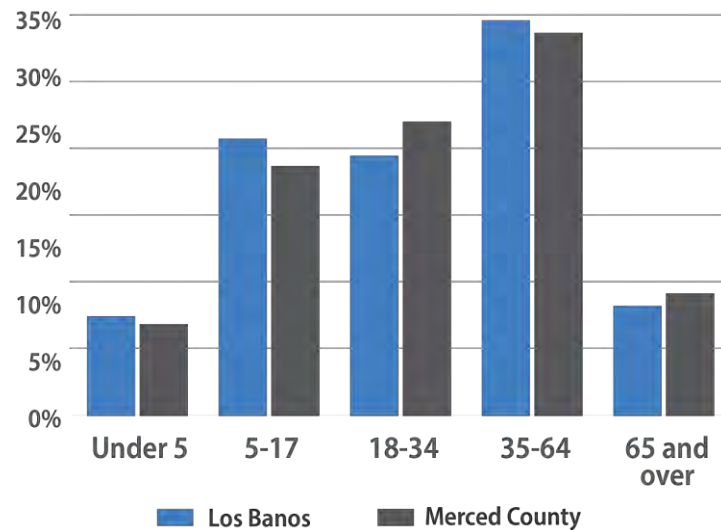


Source: University of the Pacific, 2016

Age Distribution

In terms of age, the population in Los Banos is distributed similarly to that of Merced County as a whole (Figure 14). Children under 18 constitute roughly a third of the entire population for both the City and the County. Approximately 23% of California's entire population is under 18 of age according to estimates as of 2017, so both Los Banos and Merced County

Figure 14. Age Distribution in Los Banos and Merced County



have slightly higher than average youth populations compared to the State. The City and County also have slightly lower than average shares of retirement-age population, at roughly 10% compared to the Statewide estimate of 14%.

Race and Ethnicity

As shown in Figures 15 and 16, the share of Los Banos residents who identify as Hispanic or Latino is roughly 10% higher than the share of Merced County residents who identify as Hispanic or Latino (of any race). Merced County as a whole appears to have a slightly higher percentage of

Figure 15. Los Banos Race and Ethnicity

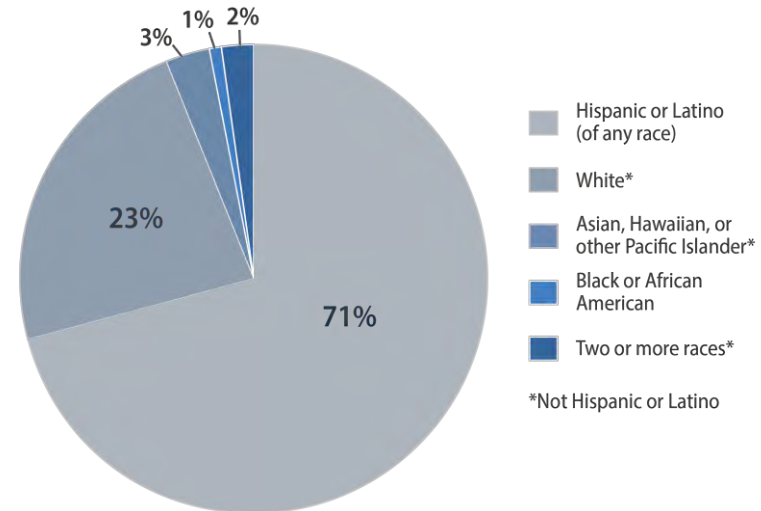
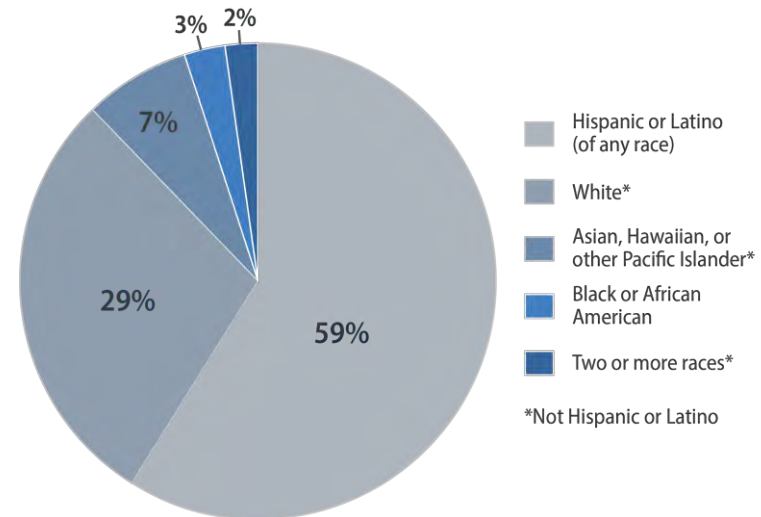


Figure 16. Merced County Race and Ethnicity



residents who identify as any other (non-Hispanic or Latino) race or ethnicity compared to Los Banos, but these differences are not statistically significant. In general, both Los Banos and Merced County have low shares of the population who identify as Black or African American, Asian, Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, or who are mixed-race.

Compared to Los Banos and Merced County, a significantly larger share of residents statewide – about 14% – identify as Non-Hispanic Asian, Hawaiian or Pacific Islander. The share of the statewide population that identifies as Black or African American or as mixed-race is similar to the shares for Los Banos and Merced County, at 5% and 3% respectively.

Language and Limited English Proficiency

In terms of language, 43% of households countywide speak primarily Spanish, with 5% speaking other Indo-European languages, and 5% speaking Asian and Pacific Island language. Of all households in Merced County, 13% report being “limited English-speaking,” meaning most members of the household speak English less than “very well.” Of limited-English speaking households in Merced County, 26% speak primarily Spanish, 21% speak other Indo-European languages, 15% speak Asian and Pacific Island languages, and the rest of limited-English speaking households in Merced County speak other languages.

In Los Banos, 46% of households speak primarily Spanish, with 4.25% of households speaking other Indo-European languages, and 2.7% speaking Asian or Pacific Island languages. Of all households in Los Banos, 19.5% report being “limited English-speaking.” Of these limited English-speaking households in Los Banos, 40% speak primarily Spanish, 30% speak Asian and other Pacific Island languages, 18% speak other Indo-European languages, and 33% speak other languages.

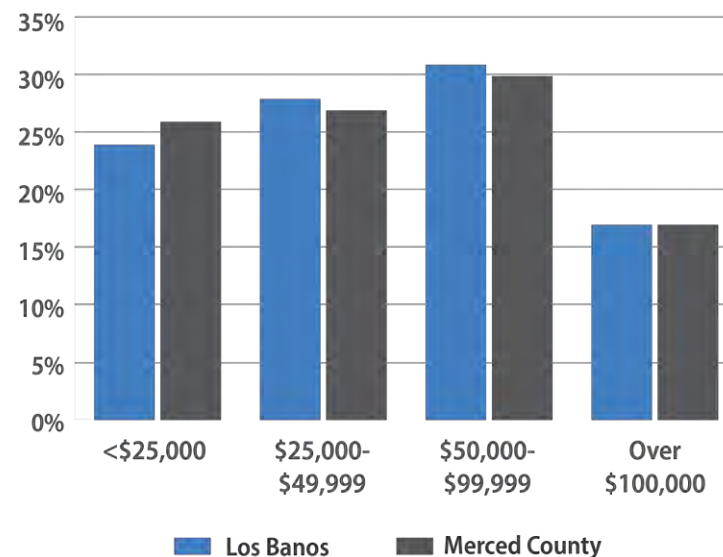
Household Income

According to 2017 American Community Survey 5-year estimates, Los Banos and Merced County as a whole are almost identically distributed by income bracket (Figure 17). Roughly a quarter of Los Banos and Merced County residents make less than \$25,000 per year in 2017 inflation

adjusted dollars. Another quarter makes between \$25,000 and \$50,000 per year, 30% make between \$50,000 and \$100,000 per year and 17% of residents make over \$100,000 per year.

The median income for households in Los Banos and for households in Merced County are also roughly equivalent, at \$46,994 and \$46,338 respectively. These figures are significantly lower than the statewide median household income, estimated at \$71,805 in 2017.

Figure 17. Income Distribution in Los Banos and Merced County



Means of Transportation to Work

As shown in Table 1, residents in Los Banos and countywide overwhelmingly drive alone to work (81% and 79% respectively). Very few residents in the City or County walk, bike, or use transit to get to work. Statewide, approximately 74% of workers 16 years and older drive alone to work, so the share of commuters who drive alone in Los Banos and in Merced County as a whole is slightly higher than the statewide average according to 2017 ACS estimates.

Table 1. Means of Transportation to Work

Mode	Los Banos	Merced County
Drove Alone	81%	79%
Carpooled	13%	11%
Public Transit	1%	1%
Walk	1%	2%
Biked	0.4%	0.4%
Other*	1%	3%
Worked from Home	3%	3%

*Includes motorcycles and taxicabs. The U.S. census has yet to include ride-hailing services.

Source: 2017 ACS 5-Year Estimates (2013-2017)

Employment by Industry

According to the 2017 Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics program administered by the U.S. census, Los Banos has a slightly higher share of residents employed in the Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, Accommodation and Food Service Industries compared to Merced County as a whole (Table 2). In large part, however, the City and County are similarly distributed between industry sectors, with roughly 17% of both populations working in heavy industrial sectors like manufacturing, oil and gas extraction, or mining.

Notably, Los Banos (and the County as a whole) have relatively low shares of their populations working in information-related, professional, scientific and technical services compared to other regions in California, but relatively higher shares of the population working in agricultural or heavy industrial sectors. Statewide, over 11% of the employed population over 16 years of age works in information-related, professional, scientific or technical services sector, while less than 8% work in heavy industrial sectors like manufacturing, mining, or oil and gas extraction, and 2.3% work in agricultural sectors.

Table 2. Employment by Industry in Los Banos and Merced County

Industry	Los Banos	Merced County
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	10%	12%
Heavy Industry*	16%	17%
Light Industry**	6%	7%
Construction	6%	5%
Information, Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	4%	3%
Finance and Insurance, Real Estate, Rental and Leasing	2%	3%
Utilities, Waste Management and Remediation	6%	5%
Educational Services	12%	12%
Health Care and Social Assistance	11%	12%
Arts/Entertainment, Recreation, Food Service, Accommodation	12%	9%
Retail Trade	13%	11%
Other Services (excluding Public Administration)	3%	2%
Public Administration	4%	4%

* Includes manufacturing, mining, quarrying, and fossil fuel extraction

** Includes transportation/logistics, warehousing, and wholesale trade

Source: 2017 ACS 5-Year Estimates (2013-2017)

Vehicle Availability Per Household

Merced County and Los Banos have a nearly identical distribution of vehicles available per household. Most households in both geographies have between one and two vehicles available, not accounting for household size or household type (family or non-family). Seven percent of households in both Los Banos and in the entire county do not have access to a vehicle at all. This distribution of household vehicle access is the same for the entire State, with 7% of households having no access to a vehicle, 31% with access to one vehicle, 37% with access to two vehicles, 17% of households with access to three vehicles and 8% of households with four or more vehicles available.

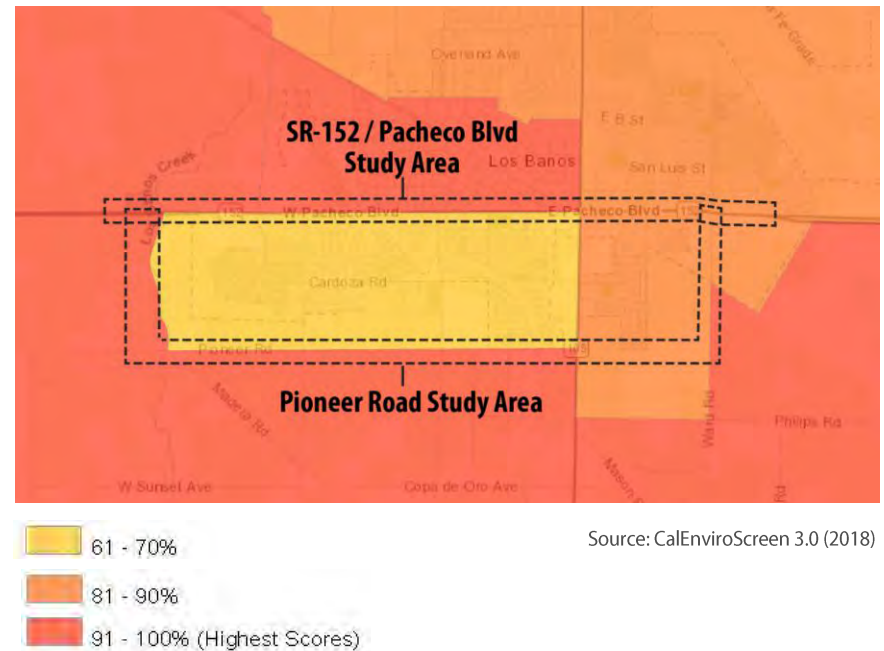
ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS

CalEnviroScreen is a mapping tool that helps identify California communities by census tract that are disproportionately burdened by, and vulnerable to, multiple sources of pollution. The tool was developed by the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA) and the California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA). CalEnviroScreen uses environmental, health, and socioeconomic information to rank census tracts, with higher scores suggesting higher pollution burden and vulnerability. Some statewide transportation funding sources, such as the Cap-and-Trade Program and the Active Transportation Program are specifically intended for, or more accessible to, communities identified as having high pollution vulnerability according to this tool.

According to CalEnviroScreen 3.0 and as shown Figure 18, census tracts comprising the City of Los Banos score between 61% and 100% in terms of cumulative pollution vulnerability. Census tracts with higher cumulative vulnerability (in red) generally appear to encompass large swaths of unincorporated Merced County in addition to areas within Los Banos City Limits. These tracts are associated with a higher pollution burden than tracts encompassing mostly urbanized Los Banos, because unlike the City, much of unincorporated Merced County is devoted to large-scale commercial agriculture. Large-scale agricultural activities tend to be geographically

associated with higher rates of soil and groundwater contamination from pesticides and herbicides, and with higher populations of low-income residents, many of whom work on commercial farms. High levels of pollution and high concentrations of residents with low incomes are both factors contributing to higher rates of overall pollution vulnerability according to CalEnviroScreen. One exception is census tract 22.01: this tract is almost entirely within Los Banos City Limit, but still scores between 90% and 100% in terms of cumulative pollution vulnerability.

Figure 18. CalEnviroScreen 3.0 Scores (2018) in Los Banos



PLANNING AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

The City of Los Banos and regional agencies have developed many documents and studies to guide planning and decision-making for the physical environment in Los Banos. Together they provide a framework for the development of the Pacheco Boulevard Complete Streets Plan. This section summarizes key local and regional plans, studies and projects.

Los Banos General Plan 2030 Update (2009)

Adopted in 2009, the City of Los Banos 2030 General Plan presents goals, policies, and actions to guide planning and development to the year 2030 and beyond. It includes several key themes and initiatives, including limiting growth to the urban growth boundary and preserving surrounding farmland, encouraging economic development and job growth, creating a walkable network between neighborhoods, enhancing community character and aesthetics, enhancing the network of parks and open space, providing a range of commercial and retail opportunities, and identifying adequate flexible school sites.

The General Plan describes SR-152 as a major gateway through Los Banos and establishes the SR-152/Pacheco Boulevard Corridor as a specific planning subarea. Land use policies outlined for the SR-152 corridor subarea in the General Plan aim to “keep land use (along the corridor) mainly commercial and enhance its visual character through design requirements.” In addition, the General Plan prioritizes gradually phasing out industrial and warehouse uses along the corridor between Mercey Springs Road and Ortigalita Boulevard, and to explore mechanisms to help these uses relocated to planned employment parks or industrial areas (LU-I-56). The Plan prioritizes an SR-152 bypass; at the time of Plan adoption, the preferred route was a 9.5-mile-long roadway around the north of the Los Banos outside of city boundaries.

The General Plan also identifies Pacheco Boulevard as a major retail destination in Los Banos. The 2030 General Plan distinguishes two types of retail uses: neighborhood retail and regional retail. The former is typically smaller in scale, caters primarily to local residents, and is more integrated

with neighborhoods (especially near higher-density housing that serves as an anchor customer base). Regional retail by contrast tends to include larger national retailers like Wal-Mart or Target, serving both local and regional residents. Regional retail uses tend to be concentrated in larger-scale shopping centers with large parking lots, and tend to sell larger items or bulk items requiring an automobile to transport. For these reasons, they are less suited to support nearby transit stops than neighborhood retail uses. Regional retail uses also tend to be located on major regional corridors, farther from residential neighborhoods. Both types of retail are found along Pacheco Boulevard.

In addition, since SR-152 is a major thoroughfare for both commercial and passenger vehicle traffic, it is identified in the Plan as one of three major noise sources of concern in Los Banos (in addition to SR-165 and the Los Banos Airport). Pacheco Boulevard also contains a concentration of sites with underground contamination, primarily from leaking underground storage tanks, associated with retail and commercial uses like gas stations, convenience stores, or car washes.

Finally, the 2030 General Plan notes two locations along the Corridor that may grow and/or change significantly within the next 30 years. Merced College-Los Banos Campus, located at the western end of SR-152, is identified as an area of growth, with the student population and associated staffing forecasted to double in the next 25 years. The City is also considering relocating the Los Banos Airport and converting the existing site to residential, office, and/or retail uses which may be more appropriate for the site’s central location within the City.

Los Banos Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan (2018)

The Los Banos Bicycle Transportation Plan, published in 2018, “is a comprehensive document outlining the future of walking and bicycling in Los Banos. It includes a vision for walking and bicycling in the city, policies to achieve this vision, planned bicycle and pedestrian networks, a prioritized list of projects to develop these networks, and guidelines for such elements as wayfinding signs and bicycle parking.” The goal of the plan is to “help increase the number of people in Los Banos that travel in the city by walking

or bicycling, and to improve the City's access to funding for bike and pedestrian projects from the State's Active Transportation Program and from the Regional Measure V Program."

Background research in the 2018 Plan includes a map of existing bikeways in Los Banos, an analysis and accompanying map of bicycle and pedestrian collisions, a map of the existing pedestrian network in Los Banos, and a detailed table (and accompanying map) of proposed future bike improvements in Los Banos, with identified funding sources and ranked by priority. (See the Infrastructure Analysis section of this report for a description and images of the proposed bikeway network.) It also describes the City's existing policies for bike support facilities like parking and showers, with an accompanying map of existing and proposed bike support facilities. Finally, the report includes a set of recommendations for wayfinding and signage policies, as well as other policies governing the future of bike infrastructure development in Los Banos.

Los Banos State Route 152 Comprehensive Operational Study 2015

The 2015 SR-152 Comprehensive Operational Study was published after the SR-152 Bypass project was delayed due to funding shortfalls. The study details existing conditions, lists planned corridor improvements, provides an overview of the corridor operations, and presents a needs assessment. Ultimately, the purpose of the study was to identify multimodal opportunities and critical needs along the corridor in the project area that would need to be addressed once funding was made available. The report described a number of challenges including issues that may arise from non-linear street grid patterns and an increase in mixed-use development along the corridor—parcels with access points that may need to be relocated as they add to current congestion levels and conflict points.

As the Pacheco Boulevard Complete Streets Plan is further developed, the Street Design and Caltrans' Standards section of this study will be referenced to ensure project recommendations meet Caltrans' requirements. Although the proposed improvements detailed in this document are focused on vehicular improvements (e.g., access control,

signal timing and Intelligent Transportation Systems [ITS]), they will be further studied to ensure that they minimize conflicts and complement the multimodal improvements this plan will develop. The study's recommended improvements are presented in key categories and summarized below:

- **Roadway Design Elements:** Improvements along SR-152/Pacheco Boulevard include intersection reconfiguration, raised medians, pavement markings, closing/restricting certain driveways, and intersection widening.
- **Signal Timing Optimization and Coordination:** Signal synchronization will manage how a group of vehicles will travel through Pacheco Boulevard, minimizing stopping and improving traffic flow.
- **Access Control and Raised Medians:** This type of improvement aims to manage the number and location of access points along Pacheco Boulevard to minimize traffic flow interruption. Operational performance and safety will improve by restricting driveway turning movements with raised medians and identifying a limited number of intersections for U-turns.
- **Crosswalks:** Reducing crosswalks along SR-152 will reduce the number of conflicts between pedestrians and vehicles. Crosswalk configurations will be evaluated at three key intersections.
- **Intelligent Transportation System (ITS):** By installing ITS elements such as closed-circuit television (CCTV) and changeable message signs (CMS), traffic will be managed in real time, ultimately reducing traffic delay and improving roadway monitoring.

Community Design Standards (2008)

The key objective for the Los Banos Community Design Standards, published in 2008, is to provide a set of design guidelines for new development that would maintain the City's small-town atmosphere. The document defines the City's vision for "small-town atmosphere" as one that emphasizes a pedestrian scale and accessibility by walking (especially to schools), one where neighborhoods are clearly identified and distinguished

from one another, and with a community-centered downtown that intermingles commercial and civic uses.

The Community Design Standards also reference the Pacheco Corridor Beautification Plan adopted in 1999, which “establishes a uniform theme to the architecture of new development along Pacheco Boulevard. At that time, the City chose a Spanish Mission/Agrarian style within the corridor. The present version of the highway commercial design standards continues that vision, expanding the standards’ applicability to commercial development along Mercey Springs Road as well, and adding new standards within the central core of Pacheco Boulevard, to establish a transition (from Pacheco Boulevard) to Downtown Los Banos.”

Multi-Use Path Feasibility Study, City of Los Banos (2018)

The Regional Multi-Use Path Feasibility Study for the City of Los Banos provides analysis of two potential alignments for a mile-long multi-use path along Pacheco Boulevard in the west segment of the City. The multi-use path would extend from Badger Flat Road to Merced College. One alternative was located on the north side of the roadway and the second alternative was designed along the south side of the roadway. For each alignment the study details design, safety, environmental analysis, cost estimates, potential funding sources, and describes how the bikeway interfaces with Pacheco Boulevard. The study ultimately recommended the north alignment, which is a Class I Bikeway that meanders through undeveloped land to an eastern parking lot in Merced College, the bikeway spans approximately 0.84 miles and is 10ft wide with a staging area for users at crossing locations. The alignment was recommended due to safety and the cost to implement.

Los Banos Transportation Master Plan (2010)

A Transportation Master Plan (TMP) for the City was developed in 2010. A citywide traffic model was created to assess the City’s transportation network to plan for future growth. In addition, a license plate survey was conducted to calibrate the model and review the amount of regional traffic pass-by thru the City on Pacheco Boulevard. The TMP assumed the

construction of a bypass as an expressway within northern limits of the City. While the study validated that a SR-152 bypass would alleviate traffic congestion, it identified several deficiencies and needed improvements in the roadway system.

Merced County Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), 2018

The State of California requires that all Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) adopt a Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) that includes transportation goals for the region, as well as an associated list of priority transportation projects with identified funding sources, timelines, and implementation measures. Additionally, California Senate Bill 375 passed in 2008 requires that RTPs also include in them a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) with land use goals and implementation measures ensuring development patterns (and the transportation systems serving them) are planned with the goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions associated with sprawl.

The most-recent RTP for Merced County, published in 2018, is intended to “ensure that the Merced County transportation system will continue to operate efficiently over the next 25 years with sufficient capacity to meet demand and that mobility options are available for all of Merced County’s residents.”

The Plan also includes a list (and associated map) of planned transportation projects within the City of Los Banos. These include:

- Merced College bike/pedestrian path on Badger Flat Road and on SR-152 to Merced College
- Sidewalk infill at various locations (including Pacheco Boulevard)
- Active transportation (bike/ped) improvements on Pacheco Boulevard from 7th Street to H Street at various locations
- Safety improvements at the intersection of Pacheco Boulevard and Mercey Springs Road
- Road widening along Badger Flat Road from West H Street to SR-152.

Merced County Regional Bicycle Transportation Plan (2008)

In 2008, the Merced County Association of Governments (MCAG) published the Merced County Regional Bicycle Transportation Plan. The plan provides a “comprehensive long-range view for the development of an extensive regional bikeway network that connects cities and unincorporated areas countywide.” It documents conditions of existing bikeways within Merced County (as of 2008) and outlines a plan for future improvements. The 2008 Plan updated the previous 2003 Merced County Regional Commuter Bicycle Plan and meets the requirements of the California Bicycle Transportation Act in the California Streets and Highways Code. Adopting a bicycle transportation plan that meets these requirements enables the County and its local jurisdictions to apply for bicycle project funding through the State Bicycle Transportation Account.

The Plan describes the funding sources for two key bike projects in Los Banos—the Rail Trail and the Central California Irrigation District (CCID) Class I Canal pathway. The County Plan also summarizes the City’s overall vision for developing an integrated bicycle network that maximizes bicycling benefits to the area’s cycling and non-cycling public.

A map on page 39 of the Plan depicts the length of Pacheco Boulevard in Los Banos as a proposed Class II bike lane. It indicates that bike fatalities have occurred at two intersections along Pacheco Boulevard: West I Street towards the west end of Los Banos, and at the intersection with Mercey Springs Road east of Downtown. This map depicts other existing and proposed bike lanes in Los Banos, but this map is updated and expanded upon in the 2018 Los Banos Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.

Merced County Short Range Transit Plan (2017)

The Merced Short Range Transit Plan (SRTP), published in 2017, is a document developed for MCAG and for the Merced County regional transit system, *The Bus*. It describes detailed business plans to guide the transit organization over a five-year period (from 2017 to 2022). The first part of the report evaluates the effectiveness and efficiency of existing transit services using ridership counts, rider demographics, rider surveys, onboard observations, and site evaluations. It concludes with detailed operational,

capital, institutional, and marketing plans for *The Bus*, including implementation measures.

The report describes service conditions on existing routes through Los Banos, of which the fixed portions all utilize Pacheco Boulevard. The report includes descriptions of rider experience, on/off counts by stop, and a detailed physical description of bus stops, as well as a summary of route segments with low ridership. The two major bus stops along Pacheco Boulevard include Merced College – Los Banos Campus and the stop outside the Food 4 Less towards the East end of Los Banos.

Merced County General Plan (Circulation element)

The most recent update to the Merced County General Plan was approved in 2013. The 2030 Plan describes goals, policies, and actions to guide planning and development in Merced County to the year 2030. Specifically, the Circulation Element of the Plan contains policies pertaining to roadways within Merced County, which includes SR-152. The Circulation Element of the Plan identifies State Route 152 as an urban “Principal Arterial” which is “a roadway that serves major centers of activity in cities and urban communities. These roadways generally accommodate high traffic volumes with longer trip lengths. A high proportion of motorists in an urban area travel on Principal Arterials as part of their routine trip to a destination.” Table CIR-1 in the Plan classifies Urban Principle Arterials as having between 100 and 180 feet in right-of-way width, between two and six lanes, and a required Level of Service (LOS) Analysis threshold D. Principal Arterials generally feature intersections at quarter-mile intervals, medium-high traffic speeds, and “Very Limited” access to private property (meaning encroachment permits are very rarely granted to private property owners along these routes).

Regional Measure V Sales Tax

Merced County voters adopted the Regional Measure V half-cent sales tax in November 2016. The tax is estimated to generate \$450 million for transportation projects in Merced County, and has an implementation period of 30 years.

Caltrans Plans, Directives and Guides

Context-Sensitive Solutions (CSS)

Defined by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the CSS process is a collaborative, interdisciplinary, and holistic approach to the development of transportation projects. Guided by four core principles, the process includes a shared stakeholder vision, a comprehensive understanding of a project's context, flexibility and creativity to produce solutions that link a project to its surrounding environment, and communication and collaboration throughout the project process to enable consensus. Caltrans' policy on CSS is provided through Deputy Directive 22 (DP-22), signed in 2001. As mentioned in the directive, Caltrans uses CSS as an approach to plan, design, construct, maintain, and operate its transportation system. The implementation of DP-22 has influenced multiple policy decisions from Caltrans, including the Deputy Directive Accommodating Non-Motorized Travel (DD-64) in 2001 and its subsequent enhancements (DD-64-R1 in 2008, DD-64-R2 in 2014) to further integrate complete streets into the planning of transportation projects. Another notable application of CSS principles is the development of the "Main Streets California Guide," which provides a range of design solutions that balance community values with efficient operations of all modes. It was first adopted in 2005 with the latest edition updated in 2013.

Caltrans Deputy Directive Accommodating Non-Motorized Travel (DD-64, DD-64-R1, DD-64-R2)

Originally signed in March 2001, DD-64 gave direction accommodating non-motorized travel, providing expectations to programs related to the need of all non-motorized travelers, including bicyclists, pedestrians, and persons with disabilities statewide. Coinciding with the California Complete Street Act (AB 1358) in 2008, Caltrans updated and strengthened their policy on non-motorized travel with DD-64-R1. This revision enhanced DD-64 from accommodation to integration of the transportation system, providing "for needs of travelers of all ages and abilities in all planning, programming, design, construction, operations, and maintenance activities and products on the State highway system." Caltrans revised the directive

(DD-64-R2) in 2014 to reflect changes of Caltrans division names and management within the organization, as well as reaffirming its commitment to complete streets and its emphasis on multi-modal mobility.

Caltrans Complete Streets Implementation Action Plan 2.0 (CSIAP 2.0)

Released in 2014, this Plan updates the first Complete Street Implementation Action Plan from 2010. The intent of the Plan is to describe the current Caltrans complete streets policy framework and overview of complete streets efforts statewide. This update also lays out the structure for monitoring, reporting, and overcoming barriers to complete streets. Over 100 additional action items were introduced in this Plan update, further integrating complete streets into all Caltrans functions and processes. Action items include conducting complete streets training courses to Caltrans staff, the development of a statewide Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan and supporting complete street plans for all twelve Caltrans districts. The Plan also includes policies on collecting complete streets data, the creation of performance measures evaluating the effectiveness of bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, and the revision of Caltrans manuals to be consistent with and supportive of complete streets.

Main Streets California Guide

This informational guide was created to serve as a reference on current traffic engineering practices, policies, and standards for Caltrans staff, local partners, and stakeholders to develop a shared vision on projects. In addition, the guide also provides guidance on design practices that aim to improve livability, sustainability, aesthetics, public space, and landscaping. Compatible with current guidance in the Caltrans Highway Design Manual (HDM), Manual of Uniform Traffic Devices (MUTCD), and Project Development Procedures Manual (PDPM), it offers flexibility of design standards for roadways that serve both as a State highway and a community street with traffic speeds typically less than 40 mph. The most recent edition of the manual, published in November 2013, includes greater emphasis on complete street investments consistent with recent Caltrans Non-Motorized Travel Deputy Directives, including support of infrastructure

improvements that enhance travel conditions for all modes, with design solutions that focus on creating livable and sustainable communities.

Transportation Concept Reports (TCR)

As long-range planning documents, TCRs identify existing conditions and future needs for each route on the State Highway System (SHS). Developed with the Caltrans Mission, Vision, and Goals in mind, each TCR includes an overall route summary, summaries of individual route segments and maps, existing and future travel data along the route, and a list of planned, programmed, and needed projects over the next 20 years. The most current TCR for SR-152 was published in July 2016. The report analyzes the span of the SR-152 roadway—including how the roadway interfaces with the community of Los Banos.

Corridor Plan (CP)

A multimodal, multijurisdictional way to manage existing transportation infrastructure and systems, the CP involves using capacity improvement projects to optimize a corridor versus increasing roadway capacity for automobiles. CP's provide a lower cost, higher benefit option to make existing roadway systems more efficient. Improvements may include Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) solutions such as adaptive signals and changeable message signs to better manage traffic flow for drivers, transit, and alternative modes alike. A CP was prepared for SR-152.

III. Infrastructure Analysis

The infrastructure analysis detailed below considers the existing physical roadway conditions, pedestrian and cyclist facilities, right-of-way configurations, and utility infrastructure along Pacheco Boulevard within the City of Los Banos. Appendix A provides figures that further detail infrastructure configuration for the length of the corridor in the Study Area. This analysis also identifies potential safety and traffic flow issues based on the current roadway configuration of the corridor. Additional assessment of student drop-off/pick-up procedures are provided for Los Banos Elementary School and Westside Union Elementary School.

CORRIDOR DESCRIPTION

State Route (SR) 152, known as Pacheco Boulevard within Los Banos, is part of the State Highway system. The highway spans from Pacific Coast Highway in Watsonville to the west and terminates at State Route 99 near Merced to the east. Pacheco Boulevard comprises of four lanes and is classified as a major arterial in the City's General Plan Circulation Element.

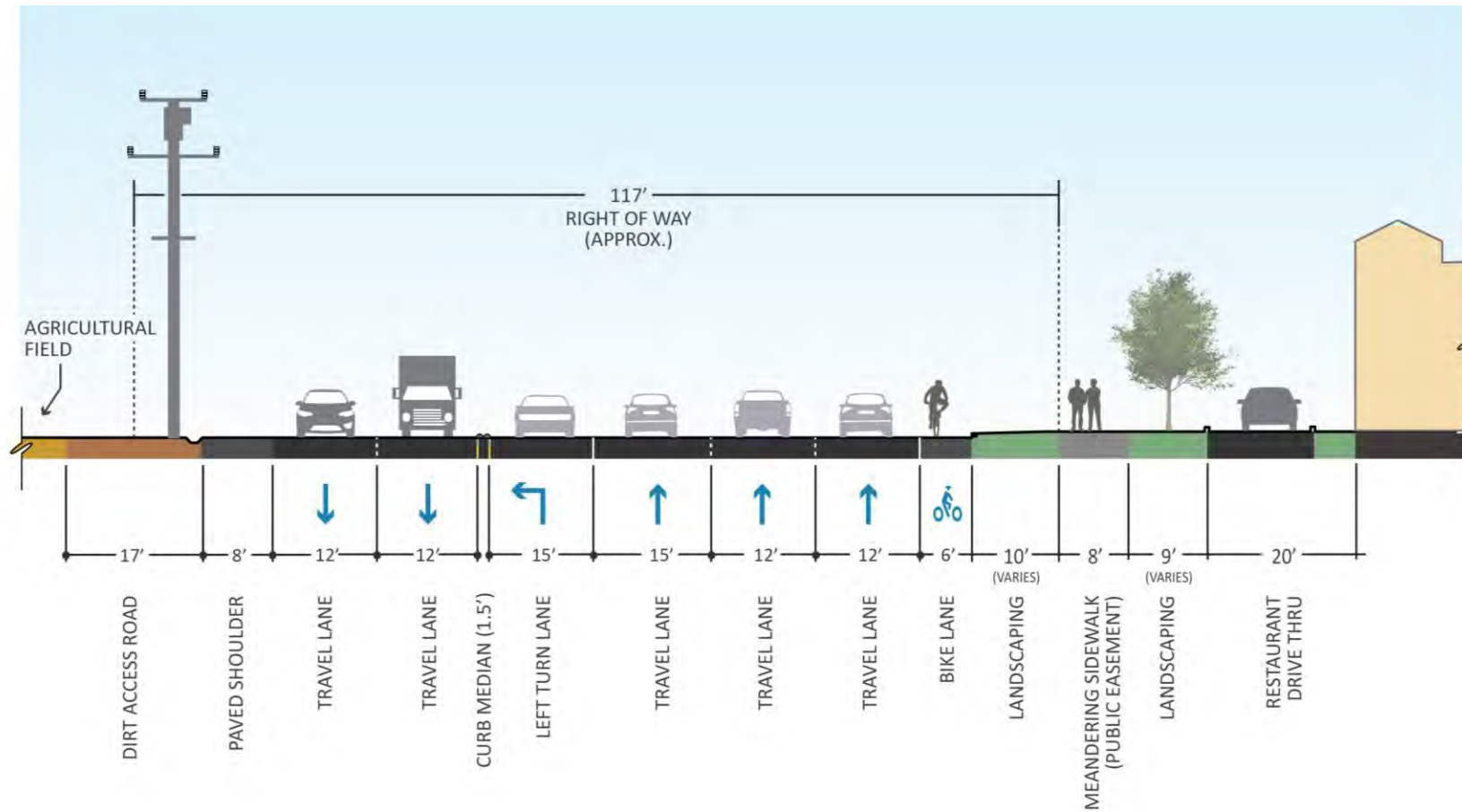


As the busiest roadway in Los Banos, Pacheco Boulevard provides east-west circulation and access to activity centers in the City linking housing, commercial and businesses establishments, schools and Merced College - Los Banos Campus. The posted speed limit along Pacheco Boulevard in Los Banos ranges from 35 to 45 mph. Within the Study Area along Pacheco Boulevard, there are sidewalks on both sides of the roadway, however there are missing segments along the far west and eastern segments where the roadway transitions to a highway. Currently there are no bikeways along the corridor.

Roadways in Los Banos carry a substantial number of trucks that serve local businesses and travel between I-5 and Highway 99 to other regional destinations. Caltrans has designated SR-152 (Pacheco Boulevard) and SR-165 (Merced Springs Road) as local truck routes to allow truck traffic to pass through the City while minimizing impacts on residential neighborhoods, local traffic, and cyclists and pedestrians. As a Caltrans route, it is a Surface Transportation Assistance Act (STAA) and Terminal Access truck route on the National Network.

The three section diagrams on the following pages (Figures 19-21) depict typical configurations of Pacheco Boulevard. They show the varying widths of the right-of-way along the corridor and varying configurations of sidewalks, travel lanes, turn lane widths, and medians.

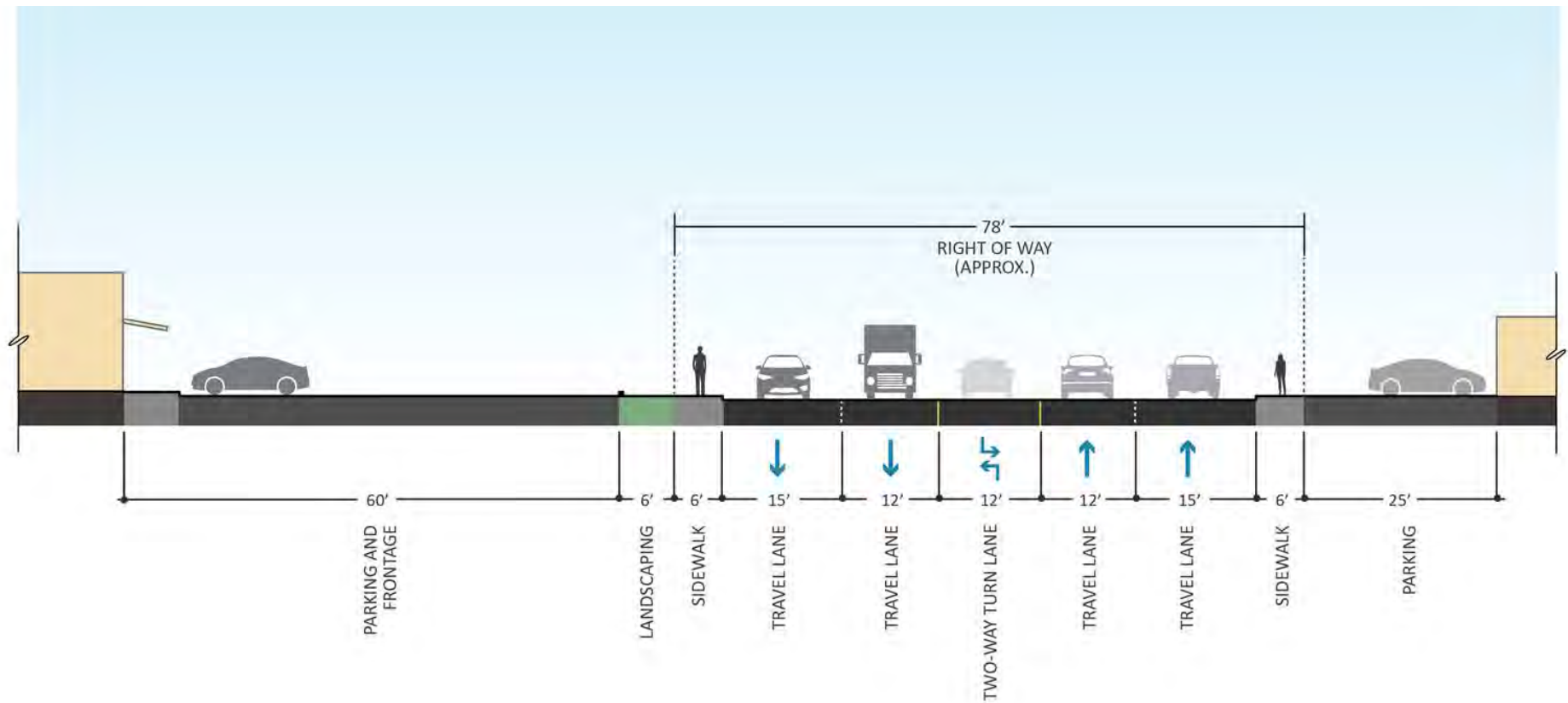
Figure 19. Pacheco Boulevard Near Ortigalita Road (Looking East)



Location of Section Diagram



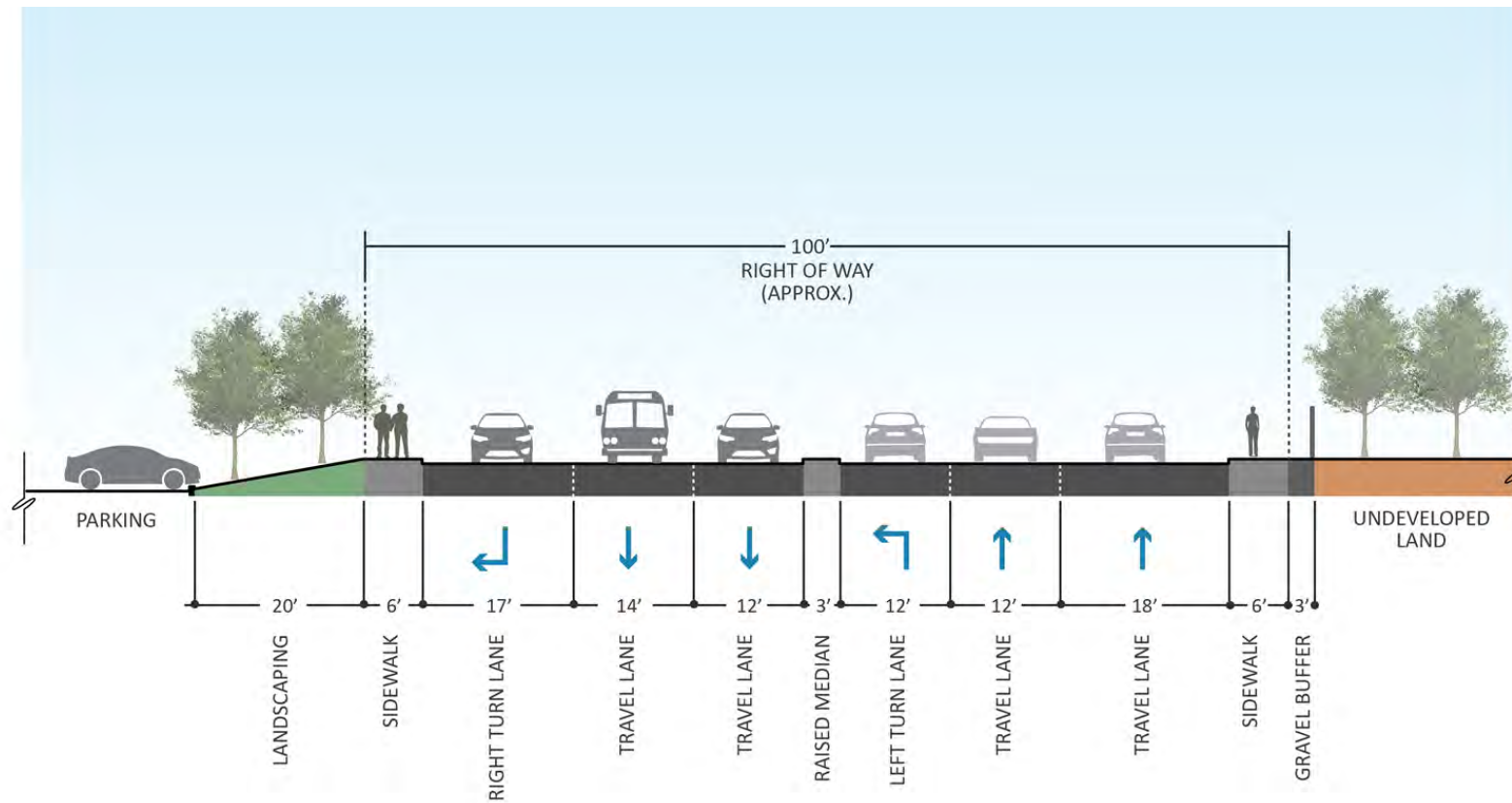
Figure 20. Pacheco Boulevard Between J Street and 11th Street



Location of Section Diagram



Figure 21. Pacheco Boulevard Near Mercey Springs Road (Looking East)



Location of Section Diagram



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Roadway Network

Los Banos' local roadways serve neighborhoods, schools, stores, and other services. Most local roads are oriented on a north/south/east/west grid, with the exception of streets in and around downtown, which are askew at a 45-degree angle, oriented northwest to southeast.

The City's roadway system is classified into a hierarchy of street types, as defined in the current Circulation Element:

- **Major Arterials** – Major arterials are access controlled roadways designed to accommodate large traffic volumes emphasizing mobility between major portions of the city and to regional freeways and highways. The right-of-way of major arterials spans from 80 to 122 feet. On-street parking should not be provided on major arterials.
- **Minor Arterials** – Minor arterials are roadways that provide mobility through the city and access to major residential, employment, and activity centers. The right-of-way along minor arterials ranges from 62 to 100 feet. On-street parking may be provided on minor arterials. Bicycle lanes, landscaped parkway strips, sidewalks, and transit facilities may also be accommodated within the right-of way of minor arterials.
- **Collectors** – Minor and major collectors are roadways that collect traffic from local streets within residential areas and provide access to arterials. The width of the right-of-way for collectors spans from 34 to 80 feet, with allowances for parking. Bicycle lanes and on-street parking should generally be provided for collector streets.
- **Neighborhood/Local Streets** – Local streets are roadways whose primary function is to provide direct access to neighborhoods. Neighborhood /Local Streets are found throughout Los Banos in residential areas. The width of the right-of-way of residential streets spans from 32 to 60 feet with allowances for parking.

Table 3 presents the City's design volumes for the various street classifications, right-of-way, curb widths, configuration, design speed, and volumes.

Table 3. Design Standards & Volumes by Street Classification

Street Classification	R/W, Curb-Curb Width (Feet)		Standard Configuration	Design Speed (mph)	Daily Traffic Volume Range	
	Low	High			Low	High
Private Residential			2 lanes	25	0	500
Local Residential	52	32	2 lanes with parking	30	0	4,000
Minor Collector	60	40	2 lanes with parking	35	500	4,000
Minor Collector	60	34	2 lanes with no parking	35	500	4,000
Major Collector	72	56	2 lanes with parking and left turn lane median	40	4,000	7,500
Major Collector	80	50	2 lanes with no parking and with walls at the property line	40	4,000	7,500
Industrial	66	48	2 lanes	40	0	14,000
Minor Arterial	84	62	4 lanes with no parking	50	7,500	–
Minor Arterial	100	62	With wall at property line and no parking	50	7,500	–
Major Arterial	106	80	4 lanes w/ left turn lane/median and no parking	55	–	25,000
Major Arterial	122	80	4 lanes with no parking and with walls at property line	55	–	25,000

Source: City of Los Banos Improvement Standards and Specifications.

The following section provides descriptions of key roadways that intersect Pacheco Boulevard within the Study Area. The roadways are listed from west to east. Table 4 provides a summary of the roadways.

- **Badger Flat Road** is a two-lane or four-lane roadway that provides north-south circulation in Los Banos. The roadway provides access to residential and commercial land uses. North of Pacheco Boulevard, there are no sidewalks along both sides of the roadway; however, south of Pacheco Boulevard there are continuous sidewalk. The City's Circulation Element indicates there is a bikeway along the roadway between Prairie Springs Road and Cardoza Road, with planned bikeways depicted extending through the length of the street.
- **Ortitalita Road** is a four-lane roadway that provides north-south circulation in western Los Banos. The roadway has typical two-way markings with single lane left/right turn configurations, and provides access to residential streets and commercial properties. Bike lanes (Type II Bikeways) exist along the roadway between Pacheco Boulevard and Sandra Street northbound.
- **I Street** is a two-lane roadway that extends from Sandra Street and curves through residential and commercial areas until it intersects Pacheco Boulevard, just east of H Street. The roadway allows for street parking; however, the parking zone is shared with a bikeway. The City's Circulation Element depicts planned bikeway segments that would ensure the bikeway extends from Pioneer Road to Overland Avenue via 2nd Street. For the majority of the roadway there are sidewalks on both sides of the road.
- **Center Ave** is a two-lane roadway that provides north-south travel in Los Banos and access to neighborhood streets. Where the roadway intersects Canal Trail Park, high-visibility crosswalks exist. Similarly, as the roadway provides access to Our Lady of Fatima School, yellow striping marks conventional crosswalks for school crossings. Sidewalks exist between Cardoza Road and Pacheco Boulevard. No bikeways

Table 4. Roadway Classifications and Configurations for Roadways within the Study Area

Roadway	Classification	Direction	# of Lanes	Median	Divided/ Undivided	Speed Limit	Sidewalks	Bikeways	Street Parking
SR-152 (Pacheco Boulevard)	Major Arterial	E/W	4	Varied – raised and striped	Varied	35-45 mph	Yes	No	No
Badger Flat Road	Minor Arterial	N/S	2-4	Yes – raised south of SR-152	Varied	Not Posted	Yes – south of Pacheco Blvd	Yes	No
Ortitalita Road	Minor Arterial	N/S	2-4	No*	Divided	45 mph	Yes – missing segments	Yes	No
I Street	Minor Arterial	Curves	2	Yes – flush, north of SR-152	Varied	30 mph	Yes	Yes	Yes
7 th Street	Major Collector	N/S	2-4	Yes – raised, north of H Street	Divided	25 mph	Yes	Yes	Yes
H Street	Minor Arterial	E/W	2	Yes, striped, west of 3 rd Street	Divided	Not Posted	No	Yes	No
SR-165 (Mercey Springs Road)	Major Arterial	N/S	2-4	Varied – raised and striped	Varied	35 mph	Yes – missing segments	No	No
Ward Road	Major Arterial	N/S	2-4	Yes – raised	Varied	Not Posted	Yes – north of Pacheco Blvd	No	No

* There are no medians (striped or raised) for the greater length of the corridor, however a flush median with diagonal crosshatching exists between Pacheco Boulevard and Prairie Springs Drive.

currently exist, but the City's Circulation Element depicts a proposed bikeway along this street.

- **7th Street** is a two-lane or four-lane roadway that provides north-south circulation in Los Banos, through commercial and residential areas. The roadway allows for street parking, although, the parking zone is shared with a bikeway that extends from Pacheco Boulevard to Vineyard Drive. The City's Circulation Element depicts planned bikeway segments that would ensure the bikeway extends through the length of the street. There are sidewalks on both sides of the road through the corridor and yellow striped crosswalks near schools.
- **H Street** is a two-lane minor arterial roadway that generally provides east-west circulation and terminates in downtown Los Banos. H Street provides access to agricultural, industrial, and commercial land uses in the City. In the Study Area, the roadway is undivided with standard two-way markings. A bikeway runs through the corridor between 3rd Street and Pacheco Boulevard.
- **State Route 165** is a regional State Highway and is designated as a truck route. Known as Mercey Springs Road, the roadway provides north-south travel through Los Banos. Mercey Springs Road is mostly a two-lane roadway through the City, becoming a four-lane road within and immediately adjacent to the intersection of Pacheco Boulevard. There are missing sidewalk segments throughout the length of the corridor in Los Banos. No bikeways currently exist, but the City's Circulation Element depicts a proposed bikeway along this corridor.
- **Ward Road** is a two-lane or four-lane roadway that provides north-south travel in eastern Los Banos. The roadway is two-lanes between Pioneer Road and Pacheco Boulevard, and there are no sidewalks. North of Pacheco Boulevard, the roadway converts to four-lanes with sidewalks on both sides of the road. Bike lanes exist along the roadway north of Canal Farm Lane (north of Pacheco Boulevard). The City's Circulation Element and the Pedestrian-Bicycle Plan propose bikeways along the length of this corridor.

Signalized Intersections

Table 5 and Figure 22 show 14 signalized intersections along Pacheco Boulevard between Merced College and Ward Road. All intersections are under Caltrans' jurisdiction. Appendix A provide more-detailed diagrams of signal locations and other infrastructure elements.

Table 5: Pacheco Boulevard (SR-152) Signalized Intersections

Intersection	Traffic Control
1. Merced College Entrance	Traffic Signal
2. Badger Flat Road	Traffic Signal
3. Ortigalita Road	Traffic Signal
4. W I Street	Traffic Signal
5. 4 th Street	Traffic Signal
6. 6 th Street	Traffic Signal
7. 7 th Street	Traffic Signal
8. 11 th Street	Pedestrian Actuated Signal
9. H Street	Traffic Signal
10. Mercey Springs Road	Traffic Signal
11. Miller Lane	Traffic Signal
12. Place Road	Traffic Signal
13. Commercial Access Driveways	Traffic Signal
14. Ward Road	Traffic Signal

Figure 22. Signalized Intersections, Average Daily Traffic, and Level of Service

West Segment



Central Segment



East Segment



-  Traffic Signals
-  Pedestrian Actuated Signal
-  ADT Volumes (1,000s)
-  Intersection LOS - Weekday (AM/PM)
-  Intersection LOS - Weekend (Midday)
-  Roads
-  Waterways
-  Parks
-  Schools

Figure 23. Median Types Along Pacheco Boulevard

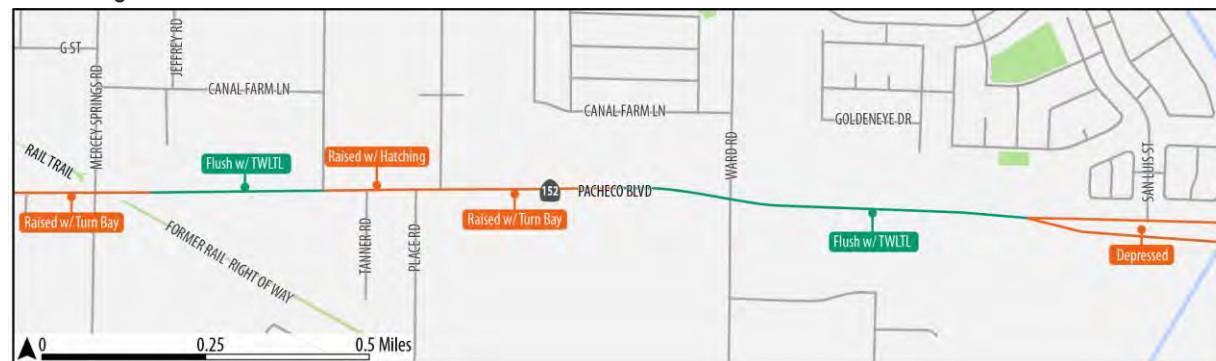
West Segment



Central Segment



West Segment



Medians

Pacheco Boulevard is divided by a raised median west of Main Canal and mostly divided by a striped median to the east of Main Canal, allowing for center two-way left turn lanes. Figure 23 presents Pacheco Boulevard as segments within the Study Area and depicts the varied medians along the corridor. A bridge with an approximate length of 70 feet and width of 60 feet crosses the Main Canal between Ortigalita Road and I Street—at this juncture the roadway currently has two through lanes, a flush median, and no shoulder.



- Closed Median (Raised/Depressed)
- Open Median (Flush)
- Roads
- Waterways
- Parks
- Schools

Existing Pedestrian Infrastructure

Sidewalks

Through the City of Los Banos' Capital Improvements Program, the City recently improved pedestrian infrastructure, including repainted curb markings, crosswalks and bikeway markings, especially in the Downtown area. Additionally, the City recently conducted a lighting survey throughout the city to determine repairs and updates to its inventory. Of significance was the City's effort to remove and replace 2,500 square feet of sidewalk and retrofit the streets to ensure they are ADA accessible. Figure 24, Pedestrian Infrastructure, presents a sidewalk inventory of streets in Los Banos detailing where sidewalks are located and where gaps currently exist in the network. The majority of Pacheco Boulevard has sidewalks that vary from 5–8 feet in width without a landscaped buffer; however, there are segments missing in less-dense areas that are slated for future development. The following are key segments along the roadway with missing sidewalks providing noticeable barriers to walkability.

- Merced College to W. I Street (north side of the roadway).
- Merced College to Badger Flat Road (south side of the roadway).
- España's Restaurant – the parcel the restaurant is located on is missing a sidewalk in front of the parking lot (north side).
- Caltrans Los Banos Maintenance Station – the parcel the maintenance site is located on has a missing sidewalk segment (south side).
- Caltrans Los Banos Maintenance Station to Miller Lane – multiple parcels on the south side of the road are missing sidewalks.
- East of Miller Lane – a vacant parcel just east of Miller Lane has missing sidewalks on the north side.
- Just east of the Home Depot Shopping Center (1955 E. Pacheco Boulevard) to eastern boundary of the City (south side).

Crosswalks

Between Badger Flat Road and Ward Road, there are 12 intersections with signalized crosswalks that cross Pacheco Boulevard north/south. Crosswalks along Pacheco Boulevard that cross smaller residential and minor collector roadways east/west are unsignalized. Figure 24 depicts the location of all the crosswalks along Pacheco Boulevard, both signalized and unsignalized, all of which are standard crosswalks with parallel lines. The following provides a list of roadways with signalized crosswalks that intersect Pacheco Boulevard.

- | | |
|--|------------------------------|
| ▪ Badger Flat Road | ▪ H Street |
| ▪ W I Street | ▪ Mercey Springs Road |
| ▪ 4 th Street | ▪ Miller Lane |
| ▪ 6 th Street | ▪ Place Road |
| ▪ 7 th Street | ▪ Home Depot Shopping Center |
| ▪ 11 th Street (Pedestrian Actuated Signal) | ▪ Ward Road |

The following streets that intersect Pacheco Boulevard are yellow (parallel line) crosswalks due to their proximity to schools.

- Center Avenue
- 4th Street
- 7th Street

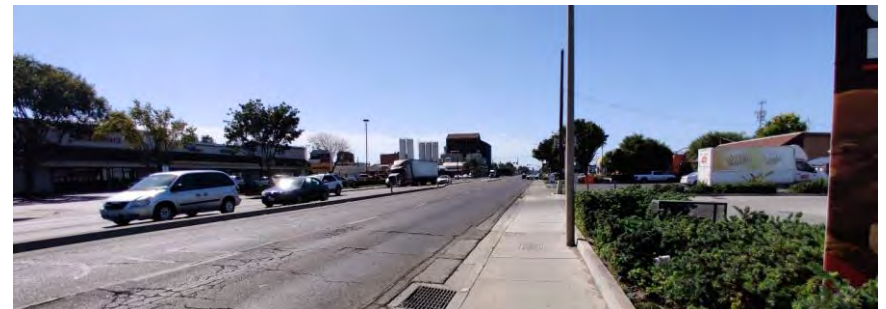
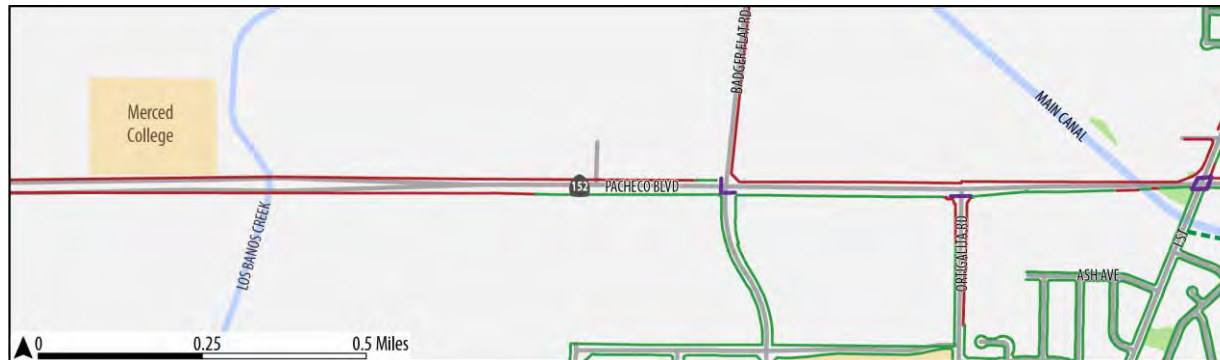
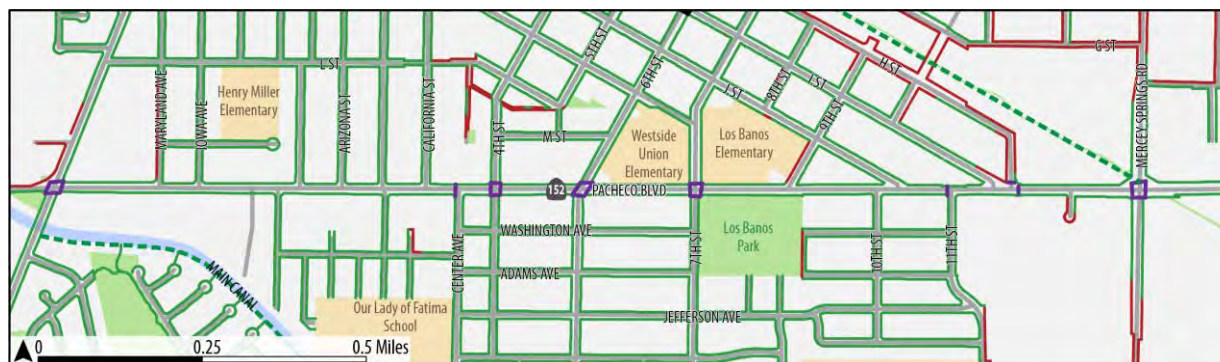


Figure 24. Sidewalks and Crosswalks

West Segment



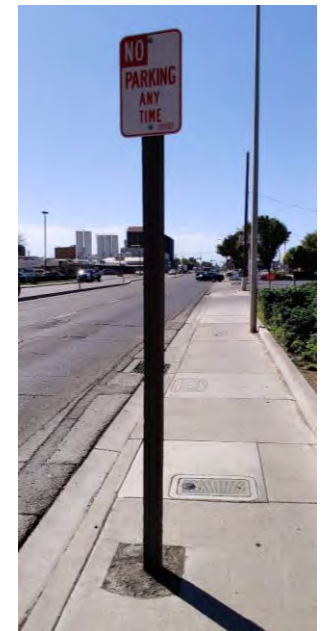
Central Segment



East Segment



- Sidewalk
- No Sidewalk
- Pacheco Blvd Crosswalk
- - - Trail
- Roads
- Waterways
- Schools
- Parks



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Existing and Proposed Bicycle Network and Facilities

Figure 25 shows existing bicycle facilities in Los Banos as well as planned or proposed facilities recommended in the Los Banos Pedestrian-Bicycle Plan (2018). The City of Los Banos has two Class I bikeway facilities – the Rail Trail and Canal Pathway. Class I facilities are dedicated shared-use paths located away from the roadway. The Rail Trail spans from H Street to where Pacheco Boulevard and Mercey Springs Road Intersect. The Canal Pathway spans from Pioneer Road to I Street. In addition to the two primary bikeways, the City has a number of Class II bikeways located throughout the City. The Los Banos Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan adopted in 2018 presents a vision for increasing walking and bicycling in the city through the adoption of a comprehensive set of policies, programs, guidelines, and goals. The Plan recommends several proposed bikeway improvements throughout the City. The proposed improvements prioritize Mercey Springs Road and Pacheco Boulevard as key commuter corridors. The proposed network closes gaps and expands the network into areas that are currently under development or slated for future development.

Figure 25. Existing and Proposed Bikeways – City Context

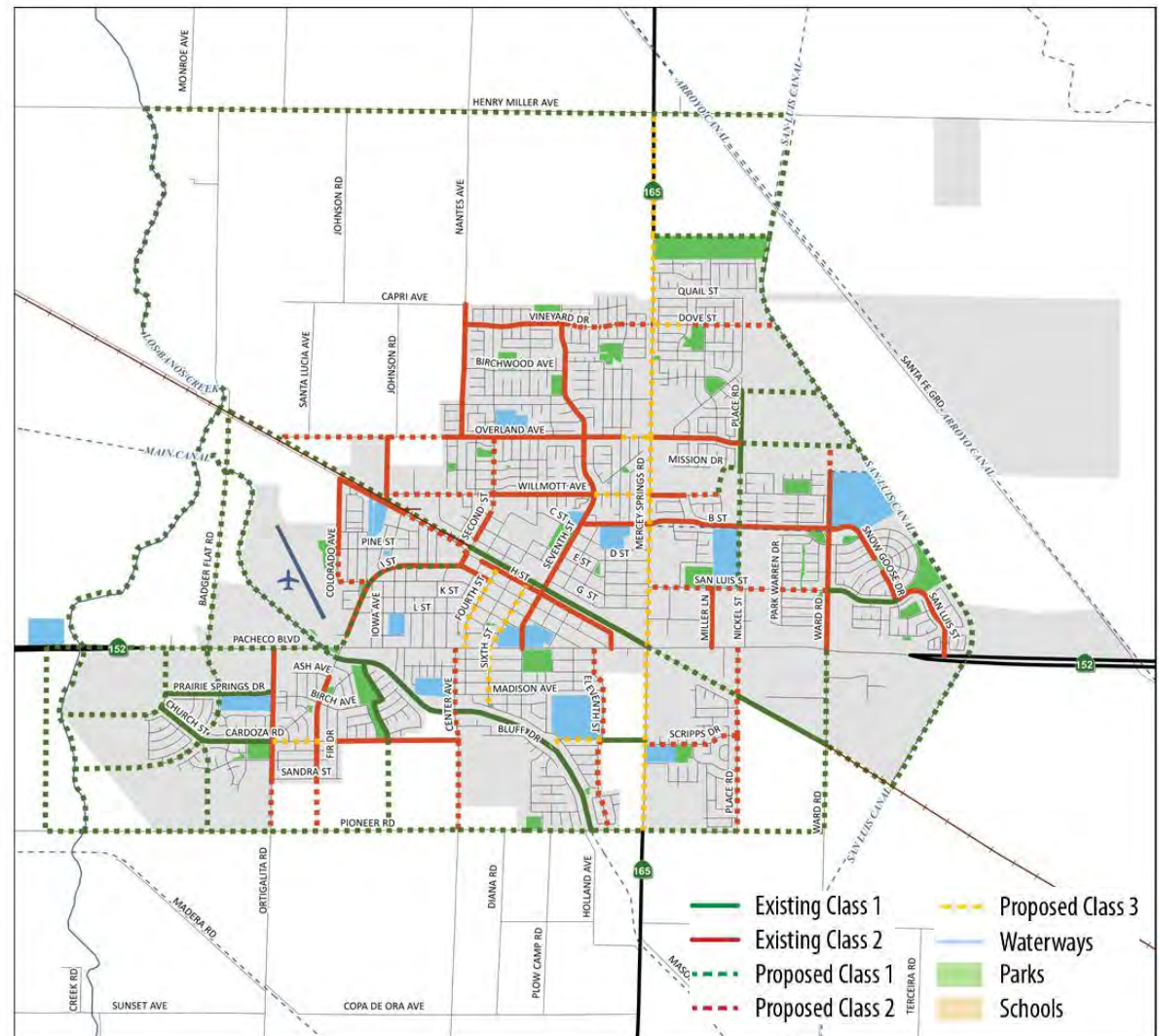


Image source: Los Banos Pedestrian-Bicycle Plan, MCAG (2018)

Figure 26 shows existing bikeways and proposed bikeways along Pacheco Boulevard and intersecting roadways. Notably, the 2018 Pedestrian-Bicycle Plan proposes a Class I bikeway along Pacheco Boulevard beginning at Merced College and connecting with a Class I bikeway along W. I Street.

The following are existing and proposed bikeways that intersect Pacheco Boulevard: Existing bikeways (from west to east):

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| ▪ Main Canal (Class I) | ▪ Rail Trail (Class I) |
| ▪ Ortigalita Rd (Class II) | ▪ Miller Lane (Class II) |
| ▪ West I Street (Class II) | ▪ Ward Road (Class II) |
| ▪ 7 th Street (Class II) | ▪ San Luis Street (Class II) |
| ▪ H Street (Class II) | |

Proposed bikeways (from west to east):

- Los Banos Creek (Class I)
- Badger Flat Road (Class I)
- Main Canal Extension (Class I)
- W I Street (Convert to Class I)
- Fourth Street (Class III)
- Sixth Street (Class III)
- 11th Street (Class II)
- Mercey Springs Road (Class III)
- Place Road (Class II)
- Ward Road (Class II)



Figure 26. Existing and Proposed Bikeways in the Study Area

West Segment



Central Segment



East Segment



- Existing Class 1
- Existing Class 2
- Proposed Class 1
- Proposed Class 2
- Proposed Class 3
- Waterways
- Parks
- Schools

EXISTING TRAFFIC VOLUMES AND LEVELS OF SERVICE

This section presents published traffic volumes on roadways and intersections in the Study Area from various data sources. Roadway capacity is generally limited by the ability to move vehicles through intersections. A level of service (LOS) is a standard performance measurement to describe the operating characteristics of a street system in terms of the level of congestion or delay experienced by motorists. Service levels range from A through F, which relate to traffic conditions from uncongested, free-flowing conditions (LOS A) to total congestion with stop-and-go operation (LOS F).

Roadway Segments

The Draft Program Environmental Impact Report for the Merced County Association of Governments (MCAG) 2018 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) presents year 2015 LOS and Annual Daily Traffic (ADT) data for key state highways. The roadway ADT volumes along Pacheco Boulevard within the Study Area range from 23,000 to 33,500. Daily traffic volumes along Pacheco Boulevard and SR-165 (Mercey Springs Road) are presented by segment and summarized in Table 6. The ADT volumes are also presented by segment in Figure 22 above.

According to Caltrans data, trucks comprise approximately 10% of the daily traffic on SR-152 through Los Banos. A license plate survey indicated that 22% of total traffic and 69% of truck traffic entering Los Banos via SR-152 from the west passed through the city.

Table 6. Pacheco Boulevard (SR-152) and Mercey Springs Road (SR-165) Average Daily Traffic (ADT)

State Route	Segment		Existing Conditions		
	From	To	2015 ADT	No. of Lanes	LOS
SR-152	Jct. Rte. 5	Ortigalita Road	23,000	4	B
	Ortigalita Road	West I Street	28,000	4	B
	West I Street	7 th Street	31,500	4	C
	7 th Street	East I Street	30,500	4	C
	East I Street	Jct. Rte. 165	28,000	4	B
	Jct. Rte. 165	Ward Road	33,500	4	C
SR-165	Charleston Avenue	Pioneer Road	4,300	2	B
	Pioneer Road	Scripps Drive	6,700	2	C
	Scripps Drive	Jct. Rte. 152	12,000	2	D
	Jct. Rte. 152	East B Street	12,000	2	D

Source: Merced County Association of Governments (MCAG) 2018 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), Draft EIR – Table 3-90.

INTERSECTION LOS ANALYSIS

The intersection LOS analysis is based on the traffic volumes observed during the peak hour conditions. The peak hours are the highest traffic volumes that occur in four consecutive 15-minute periods from 7 to 9 AM and from 4 to 6 PM on weekdays, and from 12 to 2 PM during weekend midday peak. The methodology used to assess the operation of a signalized intersection is based on the Highway Capacity Manual (HCM) in terms of control delay (in seconds per vehicle).

To review traffic conditions in the area, intersection LOS results were compiled from previous traffic studies. These results are based on weekday counts taken on Wednesday, April 8, 2015 between 7 and 9 AM and between 4 and 6 PM. Weekend midday peak hours were observed from 12 to 2 PM on Saturday, March 7, 2015. Intersection operations analysis results are summarized in Tables 7 and 8, Existing Peak Hour Intersection Levels of Service Along Pacheco Boulevard (Weekday & Weekend). The Study Area signalized intersections currently operate at LOS levels ranging from B to D during peak hours.

Table 7. Existing Peak Hour Intersection Levels of Service Along SR-152 – Weekday

Intersection	Control	Weekday AM Peak Hour		Weekday PM Peak Hour	
		Average Delay (sec/veh)	LOS	Average Delay (sec/veh)	LOS
SR-152 and Mercey Springs Road ^a	Signal	39.0	D	30.3	C

Notes: AM peak hour is from 7 to 9 AM and the PM peak hour from 4 to 6 PM.

a. Source: Traffic Impact Analysis for Presidential Estates East Area Plan, prepared by KD Anderson & Associates Inc., 2016.

Table 8. Existing Peak Hour Intersection Levels of Service Along SR-152 – Weekend

Intersection	Control	Saturday Midday Peak Hour Average Delay (sec/veh)	Saturday Midday Peak Hour LOS
SR-152 and Mercey Springs Road	Signal	28.0	C
SR-152 and H Street ^a	Signal	10.1	B

Notes: Weekend midday peak hour is from 12 PM to 2 PM.

a. Source: Traffic Impact Analysis for Prime Shine Car Wash, prepared by KD Anderson & Associates Inc., 2015.

CORRIDOR ACCESS DRIVEWAYS AND MEDIANS

Driveways for entrances and exits to facilities and properties along a roadway serve mobility and access functions. Management of driveways, along with traffic volumes and speeds, are factors to consider when assessing conflict points along a roadway. Future improvements along Pacheco Boulevard would require evaluation of the location of driveways and medians to promote safety and minimize conflict points between vehicular traffic, pedestrians, and cyclists. The current configuration of Pacheco Boulevard varies in median design and driveway accessibility, Table 9 presents the number of access points and identifies the median type between key segments along Pacheco Boulevard. Due to the density and configuration of Downtown Los Banos, more driveway access points exist between West I Street and H Street versus other sections of the Pacheco Boulevard corridor in Los Banos. The central segment that includes the Downtown is designated commercial and low to high density residential uses are composed of small parcels that take direct access to Pacheco Boulevard. As a result, several closely spaced driveways exist to provide access to these parcels.



Table 9. SR-152 Median Configuration and Access Points

Segment	Median	Access Points
Merced College Entrance to Badger Flat Rd	Mixed: ▪ Divided depressed median ▪ Flush median with two-way left turn lane ▪ Raised median	10N, 10S
Badger Flat Rd to California Ave	Mixed: ▪ Raised median with left turn bay ▪ Flush median with two-way left turn lane	44N, 46S
California Ave to 4 th St	Mixed: ▪ Raised median with left turn bay ▪ Flush median with two-way left turn lane	6N, 5S
4 th St to 11 th St	Flush median with two-way left turn lane	23N, 39S
11 th St to H St	Raised median with left turn bay	4N, 3S
H St to Mercey Springs Rd	Mixed: ▪ Flush median with hatching & two-way left turn lane ▪ Raised median with left turn bay	9N, 7S
Mercey Springs Rd to Miller Lane	Mixed: ▪ Raised median with left turn bay ▪ Flush median with two-way left turn lane	9N, 10S
Miller Lane to Place Rd	Raised median with cross-hatching	4N, 7S
Place Rd to Menezes Blvd	Raised median with left-turn bay	6N, 5S
Menezes Blvd to Ward Rd	Flush median & divided yellow line	1N, 0S

For a detailed diagrammatic assessment of access driveways and medians along the length of the corridor, see Appendix A.

PLANNED AND PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS

The MCAG 2018 RTP details improvements throughout Los Banos that are within the City's jurisdiction. Table 10 details projects of relevance to Pacheco Boulevard/SR-152. Additionally, the City's Circulation Element depicts a planned bikeway along Pacheco Boulevard from Canyon Road to Santa Fe Grade.

The RTP/SCS also details roadway capacity increasing improvements throughout Merced County, including the City of Los Banos. SR-152 is operated by Caltrans, who is the agency responsible for planning, improvements and operation of the route. Table 11 provides a list of planned improvements for Pacheco Boulevard within or near Los Banos.

Table 10. MCAG 2018 RTP Roadway Capacity Increasing Improvements (City of Los Banos)

Agency	Title	Limits/Description	Type	Year	Cost (\$1,000's)	Funding Source
Los Banos	Merced College Bike/Pedestrian Trail	Badger Flat Road/SR-152 to Merced College	Active (Bike/Ped)	2020	\$1,200	Measure V
Los Banos	Sidewalk infill at various locations	–	Active (Bike/Ped)	2020	\$319	ATP, CMAQ
Los Banos	Various locations	Berkley Drive to St. Francis drive at various locations; Also, on SR-152 from 7 th Street to H Street (PM 20.6/21.1) at various locations	Active (Bike/Ped)	2020	\$2,500	ATP, CMAQ
Los Banos	Class II Bike Paths; H Street – Badger Flat from Pacheco to H Street – Overland (Triangle)	–	Active (Bike/Ped)	2030	\$4,500	ATP, CMAQ
Los Banos	Downtown Complete Streets – street and sidewalk rehab, new curbs and finished street surface with storm drains	–	Complete Streets	2024	\$6,000	Measure V/SB-1/STIP/Local
Los Banos	Multipurpose Bike/Pedestrian Path (810 ft) and ped/bike bridge across creek	–	Active (Bike/Ped)	2022	\$4,000	Measure V/SB-1/STIP/Local
Los Banos	Local Projects: Cape Seal, ADA corner, downtown renovation – City to provide list	–	Road Maintenance	2030	\$6,000	Measure V/SB-1/STIP/Local
Los Banos	Pioneer Road Widening	SR/152/Merced College to Pioneer Road/Ward Road	Road Capacity	2025	\$45,000	Measure V
Los Banos	H Street, Bader Flat Road, Overland Avenue Widening	Bader Flat/SR-152 to Ingomar Grade; H Street; Overland Avenue – Nantes Avenue to H Street	Road Capacity	2025	\$25,000	Measure V
Los Banos	Mercey Springs Road (SR-165) Widening	SR-152 to Henry Miller Road	Road Capacity	2025	\$20,000	Measure V

Source: Merced County Association of Governments (MCAG) 2018 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)/Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS).

Table 11. MCAG 2018 RTP Roadway Capacity Increasing Improvements (Caltrans)

Agency	Title	Limits/Description	Funding Source
Caltrans	Intersection Traffic Control	SR-152/SR-165 Los Banos Urban Area. (Year 2020, Budget of \$200,000)	SHOPP
Caltrans	I-5 STAA Improvements	SR-152/SR-33 and SR-5/SR-165 Interchange (Year 2018, Budget of \$1,400,000)	SHOPP
Caltrans	SR-152 Install Truck Climbing lane	Install between I-5 and Santa Clara County line (Year 2024, Budget \$10,000,000)	SHOPP

Source: Merced County Association of Governments (MCAG) 2018 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)/Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS).

In addition to the proposed projects listed above, Caltrans has recently recommended several improvements at the intersection of Pacheco Boulevard/SR-152 and West I Street. The recommendations include installing additional signage to alert motorists of signals ahead, allowable turn movements, and lane assignments. These improvements will be completed through Maintenance Work Orders.

Caltrans has also begun a project at the intersection of Pacheco Boulevard/SR-152 and 11th street to address intersection control and install a traffic signal. This project has a Fall 2020 expected completion date.

SCHOOL TRAFFIC

The Los Banos Unified School District comprises of nine schools, two of which are located along Pacheco Boulevard within the Study Area. Westside Union Elementary School is located at 659 K Street and Los Banos Elementary School is located at 1260 7th Street; both schools share a boundary that intersects at 7th Street and Pacheco Boulevard. Both schools combined have an enrollment of 1562 students that have similar class start and dismissal times. During a site visit, traffic during the student dismissal period was observed, with most of the congestion occurring along 7th Street, K Street, J Street. However, no queues and traffic congestion were observed on Pacheco Boulevard due to school traffic.

The discussion below summarizes the school access and circulation features for Los Banos Elementary School and Westside Union Elementary School.

School Access at Los Banos Elementary School

Los Banos Elementary School has a student enrollment of 861 students consisting of grades K–6. Kindergarten students attend school as two groups, AM and PM. AM Kindergarten students start school at 7:40 AM and conclude at 11:25 AM; PM Kindergarten students start at 11:35 AM and conclude at 3:20 PM. Primary students (1st – 3rd) start school at 8 AM and conclude at 2:15 PM. Intermediate students (4th – 6th) start school at 8 AM and conclude at 2:40 PM.

The student loading zone occurs primarily along the east side of 7th Street and J Street. The bus drop-off/pick-up area is at the off-street loop adjacent to 7th Street. Through traffic is not allowed in the loop when buses are present and from 7:30 to 8 AM and from 2:15 to 3 PM.

Parents park or drop off curbside on 7th Street, J Street, or the drop-off area off of J Street. Curbside parking is permitted along 7th Street directly in front of the school entrance and is restricted to 24 minutes in curb sections painted green. On sections of J Street, curbside parking is permitted and designated as loading zones with yellow painted curbs.

The streets that surround the school have paved sidewalks. 7th Street, J Street, K Street, and Pacheco Boulevard have paved sidewalks on both sides of the road; however, 9th Street only has paved sidewalks adjacent to the northbound lane. A pedestrian bridge links the southwest corner of the school with the northwest corner of the Los Banos Branch Merced County Library and the other facilities located at Los Banos Co Park. Standard crossings (with parallel lines) in the vicinity of the school are stripped yellow with additional pavement markings indicating the area is a school zone. Yellow crosswalks exist at the following intersections:

- 7th Street and Pacheco Boulevard intersection
- At a mid-block crossing between Pacheco Boulevard and K Street
- K Street and 7th Street
- 7th Street and J Street

- J Street and 8th Street
- 9th Street and J Street

School Access at Westside Union Elementary School

Westside Union Elementary School has a student enrollment of 701 students consisting of grades K–6. Kindergarten students attend school as two groups, AM and PM. AM Kindergarten students start school at 7:40 AM and conclude at 11:25 AM; PM Kindergarten students start at 11:35 AM and conclude at 3:20 PM. Primary students (1st – 3rd) start school at 8:05 AM and conclude at 2:15 PM. Intermediate students (4th – 6th) start school at 8:05 AM and conclude at 2:40 PM.

The vehicular drop-off/pick-up area is curbside on K Street. The drop-off area is adjacent to the only access point of entry/exit on the school campus. Parking on the south side of K Street is not permitted as it is dedicated to school pick-up and drop-off; curbside parking on the north side is restricted for 2 hours. Drop-off and pick-up also occurs on 6th Street at angled stalls, where parents park and walk children to/from the school entrance.

The streets that surround the school have paved sidewalks. 6th Street, K Street, 7th Street, and SR-152 have paved sidewalks on both sides of the road. Standard crossings (with parallel lines) in the vicinity of the school are stripped yellow with additional pavement markings and signage indicating the area is a school zone. Yellow crosswalks exist at the following intersections:

- 6th Street and Pacheco Boulevard intersection,
- Two mid-block crossings between Pacheco Boulevard and K Street,
- K Street and 6th Street,
- 7th Street and K Street, and
- 7th Street and Pacheco Boulevard intersection



IV. Safety Analysis

To understand existing conditions related to traffic safety in Los Banos, SafeTREC Traffic Injury Monitoring System (TIMS) data for 2014 through 2018 for Los Banos was examined. This data represents reported vehicle collisions involving an injury or fatality. As such, it does not capture collisions not involving injuries or fatalities, incidents unreported to law enforcement, or near misses. A map showing concentrations of incidents within the Study Area along Pacheco Boulevard is shown in Figure 27.

Types of Collisions

Table 12 shows that collisions involving two or more motor vehicles were the most common type of collision in both the Study Area and in Los Banos as a whole, though the percentage was slightly higher in the Study Area (84%) than in the City as a whole (71%). Conversely, there was a lower percentage of collisions involving bicycles or pedestrians in the Study Area compared to the entire City as a whole.

Out of 601 collision events that occurred within the City of Los Banos between January 1, 2014 and December 31, 2018, 219 of them (approximately 36%) occurred on Pacheco Boulevard. This result is unsurprising given that Pacheco Boulevard carries more daily vehicle traffic than any other street in the City of Los Banos by a significant margin. As shown in Table 13, for both Pacheco Boulevard and for Los Banos as a whole, the top four violation categories for collisions occurring during this five-year period (in order) are: Unsafe Speed, Automobile Right of Way (failure to yield to a vehicle, pedestrian or bicyclist), Traffic Signals and Signs, and Improper Turning. Alcohol or Drug-Related collisions are the fifth-most common violation factor for collisions on Pacheco Boulevard and for collisions in Los Banos as a whole.

Table 12. Motor Vehicle Involved With (MVIW)

Motor Vehicle Involved With	Study Area (% of 219 Total Collisions)	Los Banos (% of 601 Total Collisions)
Pedestrian	12 (5%)	55 (9%)
Other Motor Vehicle	183 (84%)	424 (71%)
Motor Vehicle on Other Roadway	2 (1%)	10 (2%)
Parked Motor Vehicle	1 (0.5%)	23 (4%)
Bicycle	8 (4%)	33 (6%)
Fixed Object or Other Object	14 (6%)	43 (7%)
Non-Collision or not stated	0 (0.0%)	13 (2%)

Source: Traffic Injury Mapping System (TIMS), 2014-2018.

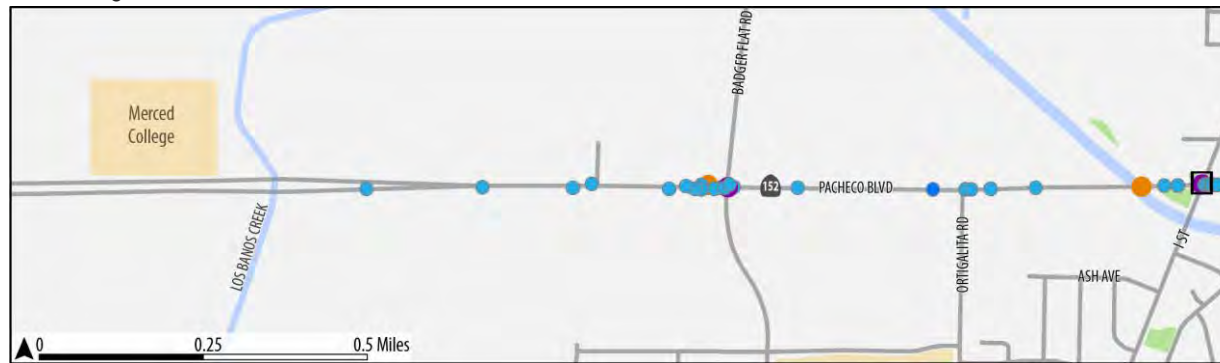
Table 13. Top 5 Primary Collision Factors

PCF Violation	Study Area (% of 219 Total Collisions)	Citywide (% of 601 Total Collisions)
Unsafe Speed	81%	79%
Automobile Right of Way	13%	11%
Traffic Signals and Signs	1%	1%
Improper Turning	1%	2%
Driving or Bicycling Under the Influence of Alcohol or Drugs	0.4%	0.4%

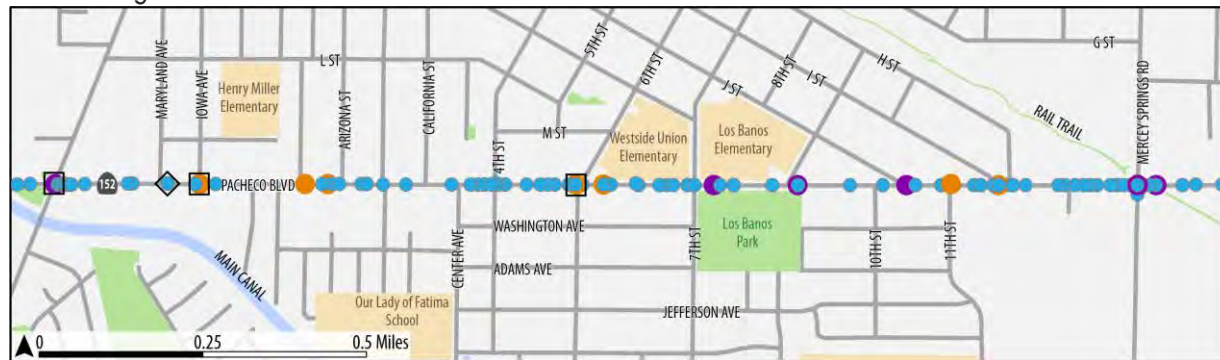
Source: Traffic Injury Mapping System (TIMS), 2014-2019.

Figure 27. Vehicle, Bicycle, and Pedestrian Collisions Along Pacheco Boulevard

West Segment



Central Segment



East Segment



- Vehicle Only
- Pedestrian Involved
- Bicycle Involved
- Bicyclist or Pedestrian Fatality
- ◇ Motorist Fatality

Source: Traffic Injury Mapping System (TIMS), 2014-2018.

As shown in Table 14, rear-end collisions constituted a much higher percentage of total collisions along Pacheco Boulevard than in Los Banos as a whole (54% in the Study Area compared to 32% for the city) during the period from 2014 through 2019. The frequency of rear-end collisions is likely due to failure to maintain adequate following distance for the speed being traveled, exacerbated by the high volume of traffic along the corridor. Conversely, broadside collisions were more common in the city as a whole (33%) than in the Study Area specifically (20%).

Table 14. Top 4 Primary Vehicle Collision Types

Collision Type	Study Area (% of 219 Total)	Citywide (% of 601 Total)
Rear End	119 (54%)	194 (32%)
Broadside	43 (20%)	203 (34%)
Sideswipe	17 (8%)	46 (8%)
Head-On	13 (6%)	44 (7%)

Source: Traffic Injury Mapping System (TIMS), 2014-2019.

Collisions Involving Pedestrians and Bicyclists

Although the percent of overall collisions involving pedestrians and bicyclists is lower along Pacheco Boulevard compared to citywide, Pacheco Boulevard is still a significant route for cyclists and pedestrians indicated by the number of collisions involving bicycles or pedestrians. Out of the 55 total collisions involving a motor vehicle and a pedestrian that occurred in Los Banos from 2014 through 2018, 12 (22%) occurred on Pacheco Boulevard. Similarly, out of the 33 collision incidents involving a motor vehicle and a bicycle in Los Banos during this period, almost a quarter of these incidents (8) occurred on Pacheco Boulevard.

Collision Severity

Of the 41 collisions citywide resulting in a severe injury, 17 (41%) occurred on Pacheco Boulevard. 15 of these collisions involved motorists, two

involved pedestrians, and none involved bicyclists. While collisions with severe injuries were distributed along the length of the corridor, there were “hot spots” at Badger Flat Road and Ward Road – each with three vehicle-only collisions resulting in severe injuries.

Five collisions on Pacheco Boulevard from 2014 through 2018 resulted in a fatality, comprising half of the 10 citywide fatal collisions. Of these five, there were two motorist fatalities, two pedestrian fatalities and one bicyclist fatality.

V. Summary of Key Issues and Opportunities

KEY ISSUES

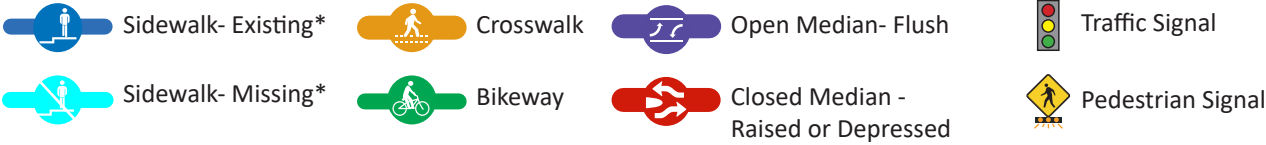
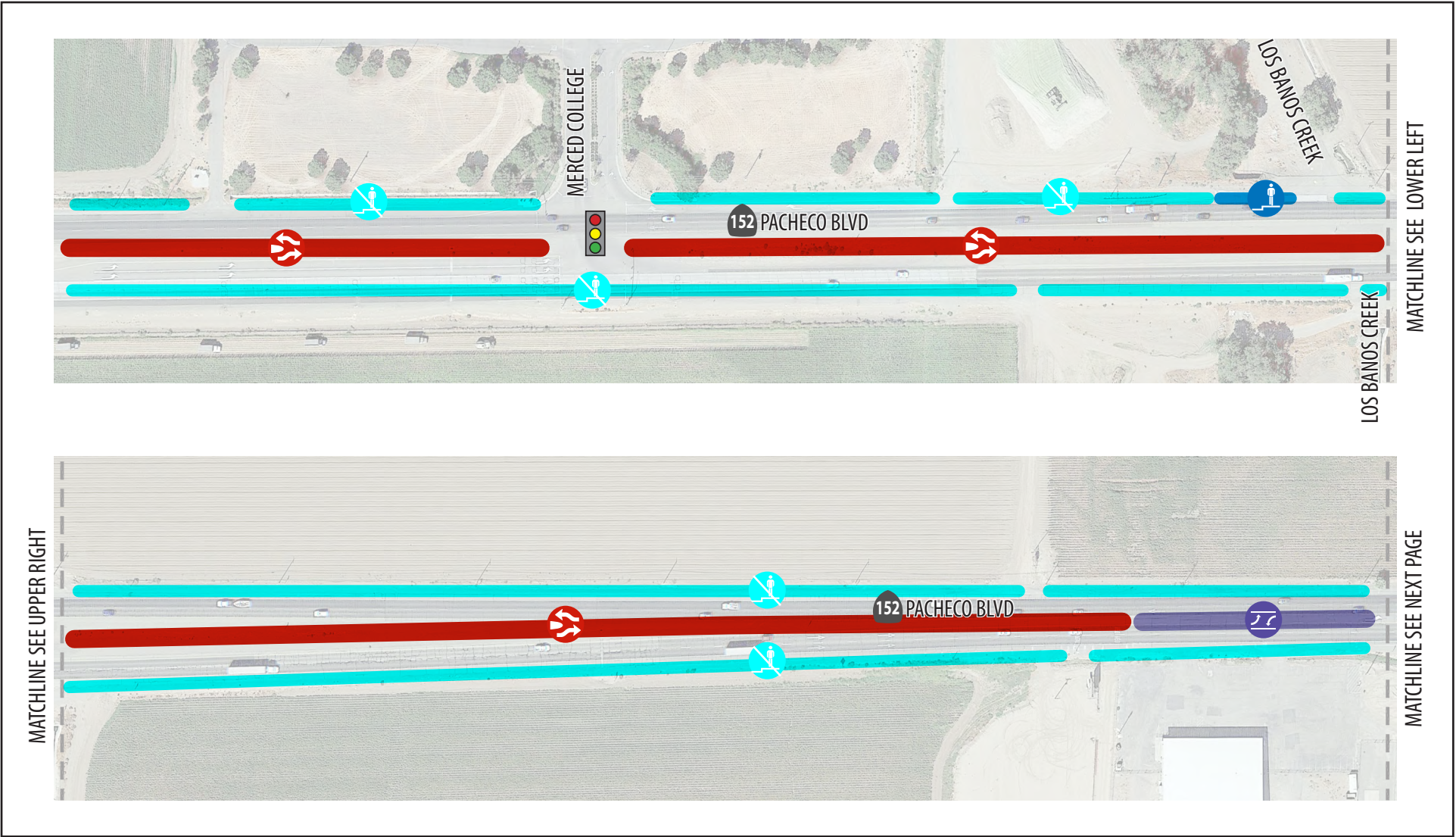
- Limited Space. Pacheco Boulevard has a constrained right-of-way and a high volume of vehicles, limiting the ability to provide more space for bicycle lanes, additional landscaping or wider sidewalks.
- Challenging Pedestrian Crossings. Most sections of Pacheco Boulevard have long blocks so the pedestrian crossings are very far apart. Where there are crossings, the pedestrian must cross up to 6 lanes of traffic.
- Difficult to Implement Bicycle Facilities. Pacheco Boulevard carries a considerable amount of truck traffic, along with traffic volumes and speeds that make it challenging to make a viable Class III Bike Route (where bikes share a lane with traffic).
- Conflicting Turning Movements. Especially in the center section, Pacheco Boulevard has many curb-cuts for driveways into businesses, resulting in many vehicles turning across traffic mid-block and leading to potential conflicts.
- Not Pedestrian Friendly. Many developments along Pacheco Boulevard (especially outside the center) have large parking lots facing Pacheco with little or no landscape screening, creating car-centric development that is not pedestrian friendly.
- Aesthetic Character. Although a few stretches of Pacheco Boulevard are attractive, there is a lack of consistent streetscape along Pacheco. Very little landscape or street trees are in the street right-of-way, so the existing landscaping is mostly on the properties bordering the street, leading to a lack of unified character.
- Caltrans Requirements. Because Pacheco Boulevard is a state highway, it is controlled by Caltrans, and any proposals for changes need to be reviewed and approved by Caltrans. This may limit the potential for certain changes to the corridor.

KEY OPPORTUNITIES

- Improve Flow. There are various ways to improve flow along Pacheco Boulevard. For example, some mid-block turning movements can be restricted and driveways may be consolidated.
- Better Crossings. At key locations, improve pedestrian and bike lane crossings to promote north-south connectivity across Pacheco Boulevard. Consider pedestrian refuges where there are medians, and use high visibility crosswalks.
- Plan for Bicycle Facilities. Especially on portions east and west of the downtown section of Pacheco Boulevard, plan for bicycle lanes or off-street pathways where properties have not yet been fully developed.
- Aesthetic Improvements. In order to achieve consistent character throughout the corridor, development standards for streetscape, landscape and lighting in front of new development should be considered. This could also include a landscape and streetlight implementation program for medians and landscape areas within the right-of-way.
- Connect to Regional Trails. Ensure good pedestrian and bicycle connections from Pacheco Boulevard and surrounding neighborhoods to regional trails such as the Rail Trail.
- Implement Wayfinding. New signage and gateway features can make the corridor feel more unified. For example, consistent bicycle signage with directions to regional trails would send the message that it is a multimodal corridor. Also, a new gateway at Sixth Street indicating the location of Downtown already has significant community support.
- Provide an Alternative Route. Pacheco Boulevard is the only way to get through Los Banos from east to west. A future widening of Pioneer Road to the south to create an alternative route would result in a reduction of traffic on Pacheco and provide opportunities for multimodal improvements on Pacheco Boulevard.

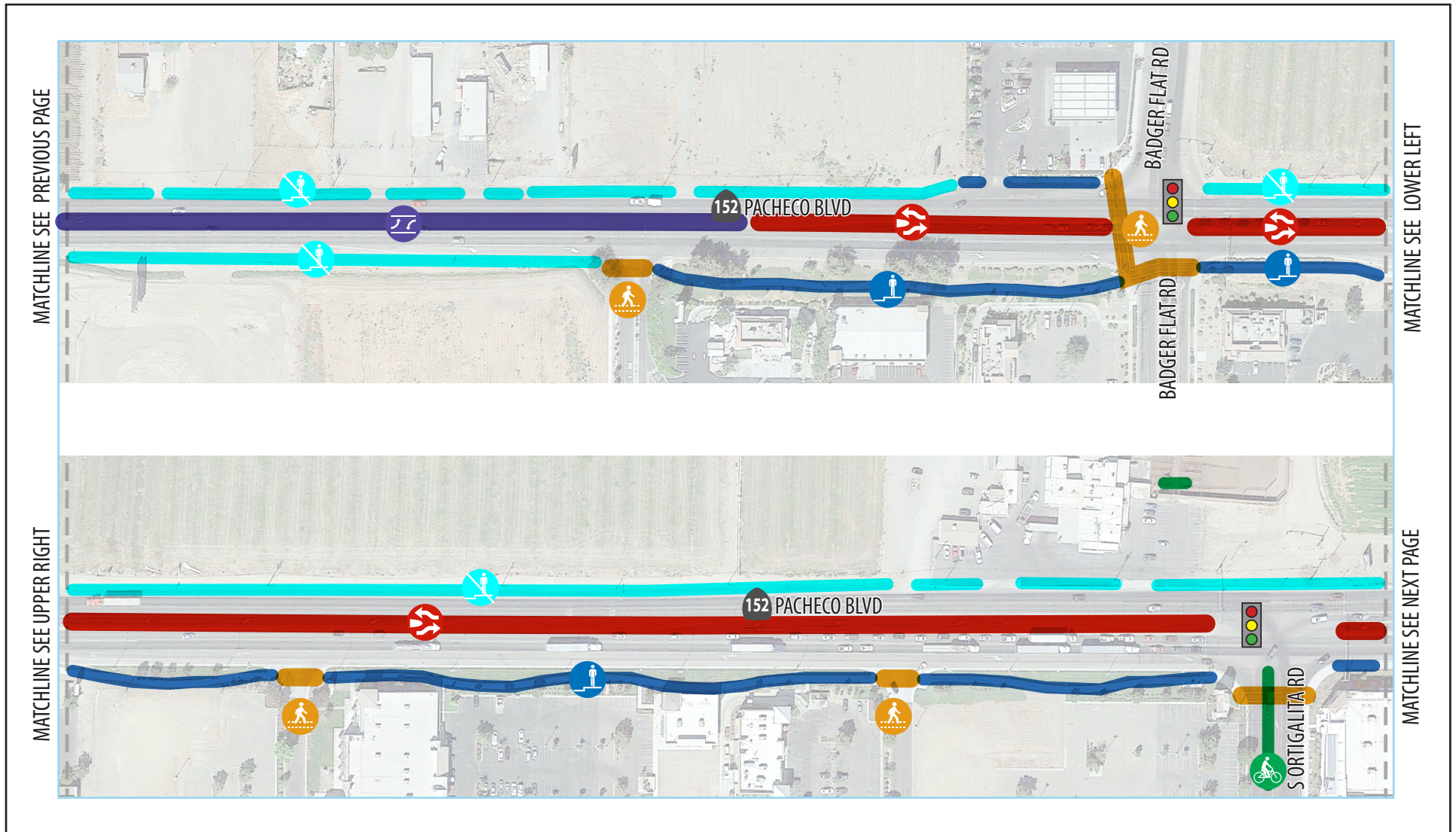
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Appendix A: Physical Characteristics of Pacheco Boulevard Segments



* Gaps shown in sidewalk-existing and sidewalk-missing indicate driveways

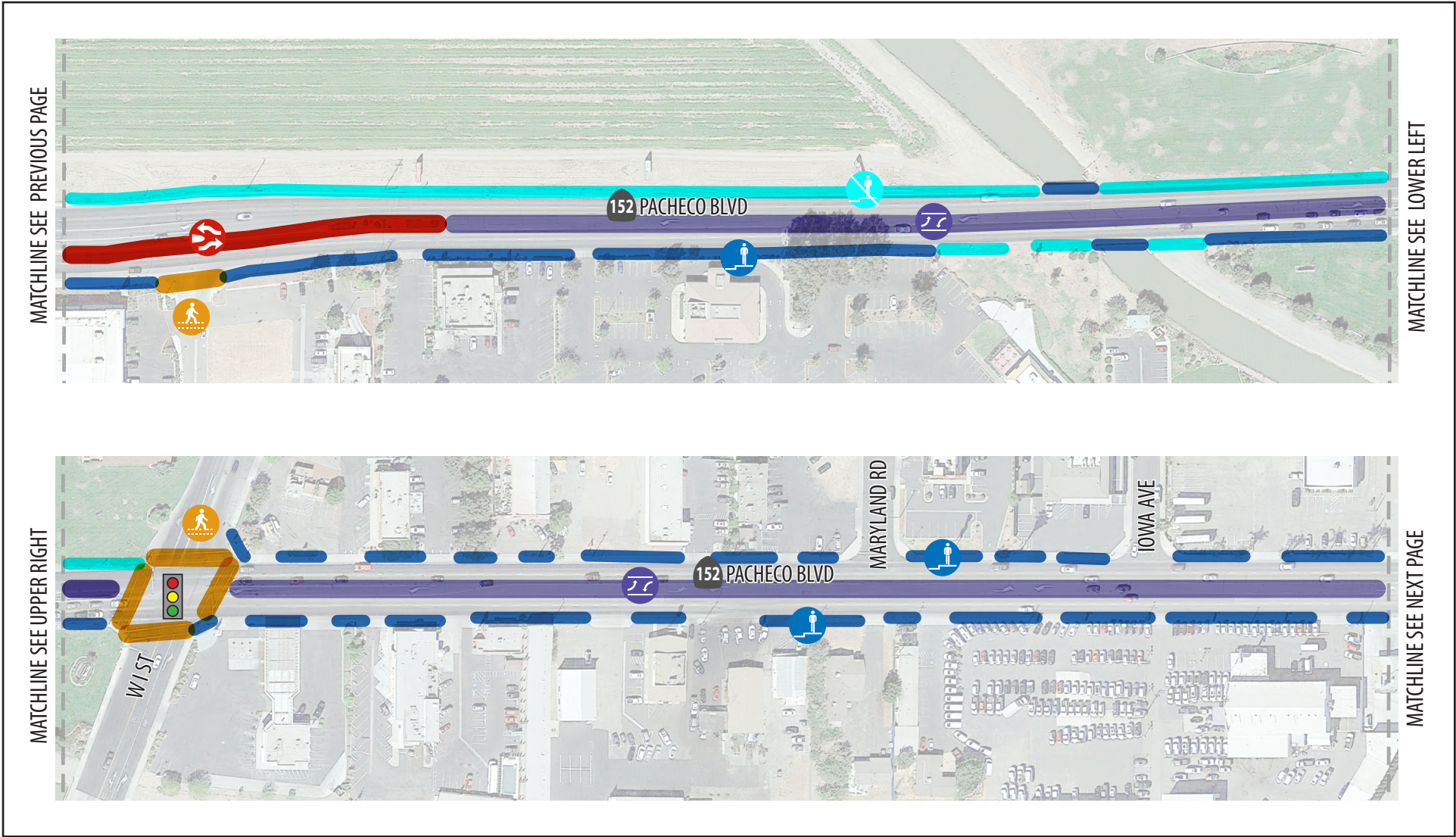




-  Sidewalk- Existing*
  Crosswalk
  Open Median- Flush
  Traffic Signal
-  Sidewalk- Missing*
  Bikeway
  Closed Median - Raised or Depressed
  Pedestrian Signal

* Gaps shown in sidewalk-existing and sidewalk-missing indicate driveways

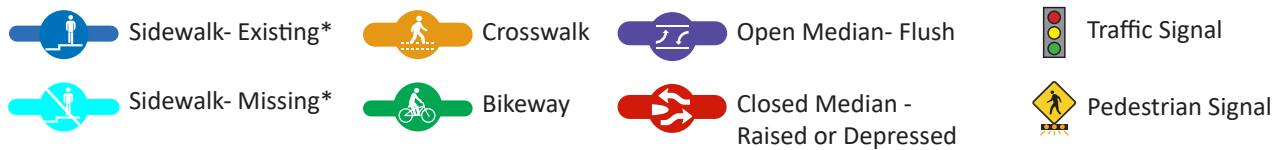
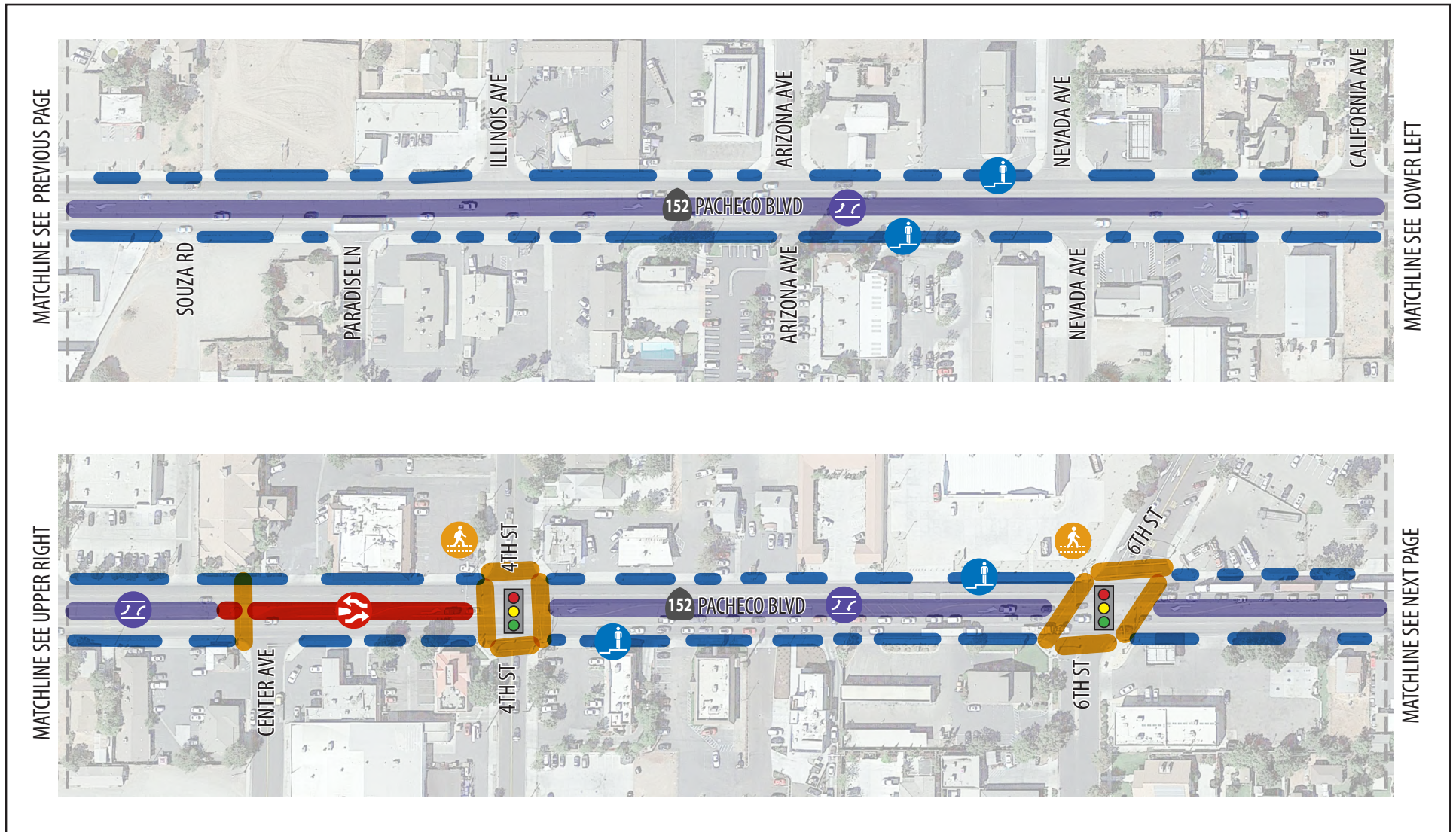




-  Sidewalk- Existing*
-  Crosswalk
-  Open Median- Flush
-  Traffic Signal
-  Sidewalk- Missing*
-  Bikeway
-  Closed Median - Raised or Depressed
-  Pedestrian Signal

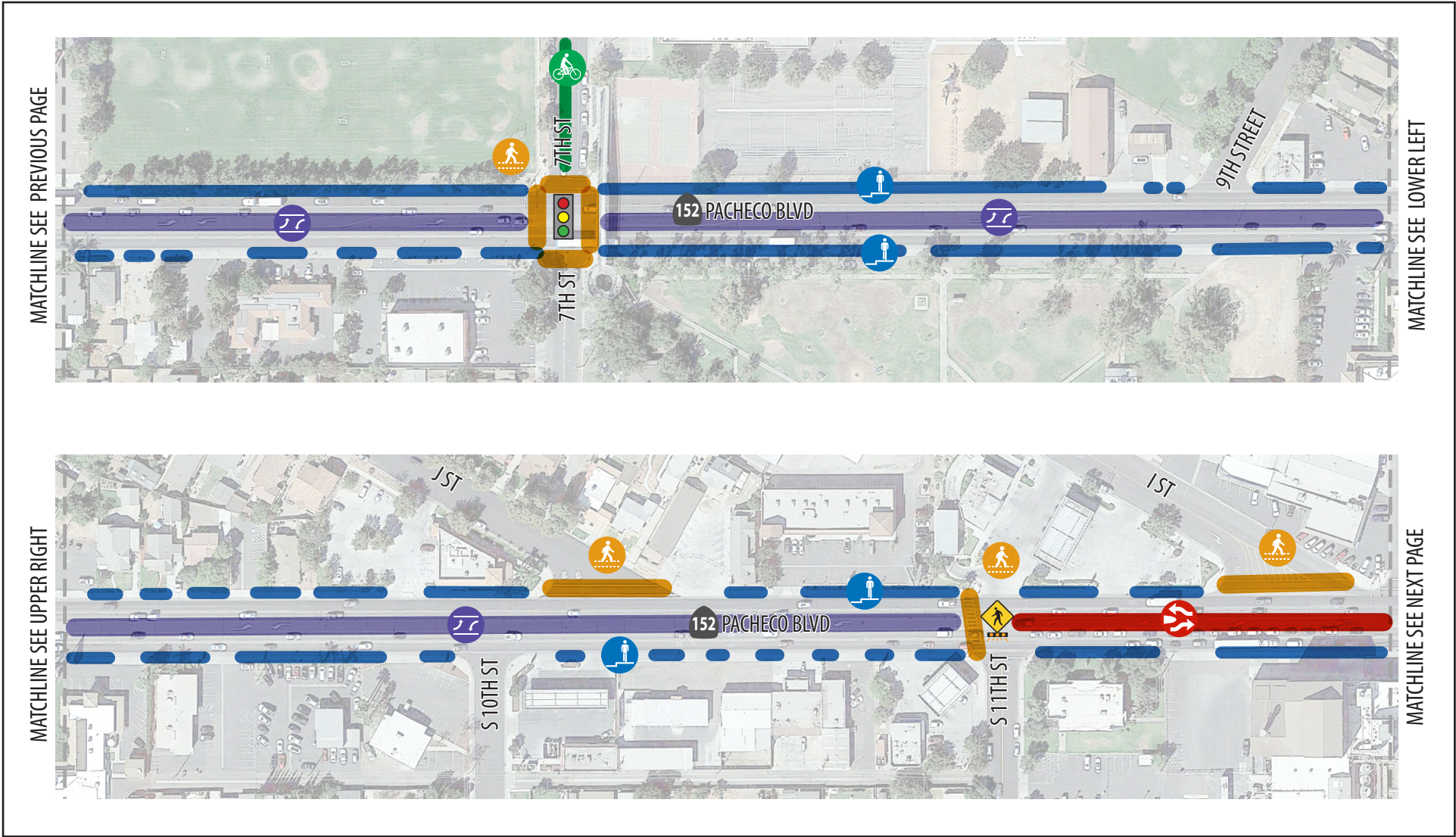
* Gaps shown in sidewalk-existing and sidewalk-missing indicate driveways





* Gaps shown in sidewalk-existing and sidewalk-missing indicate driveways

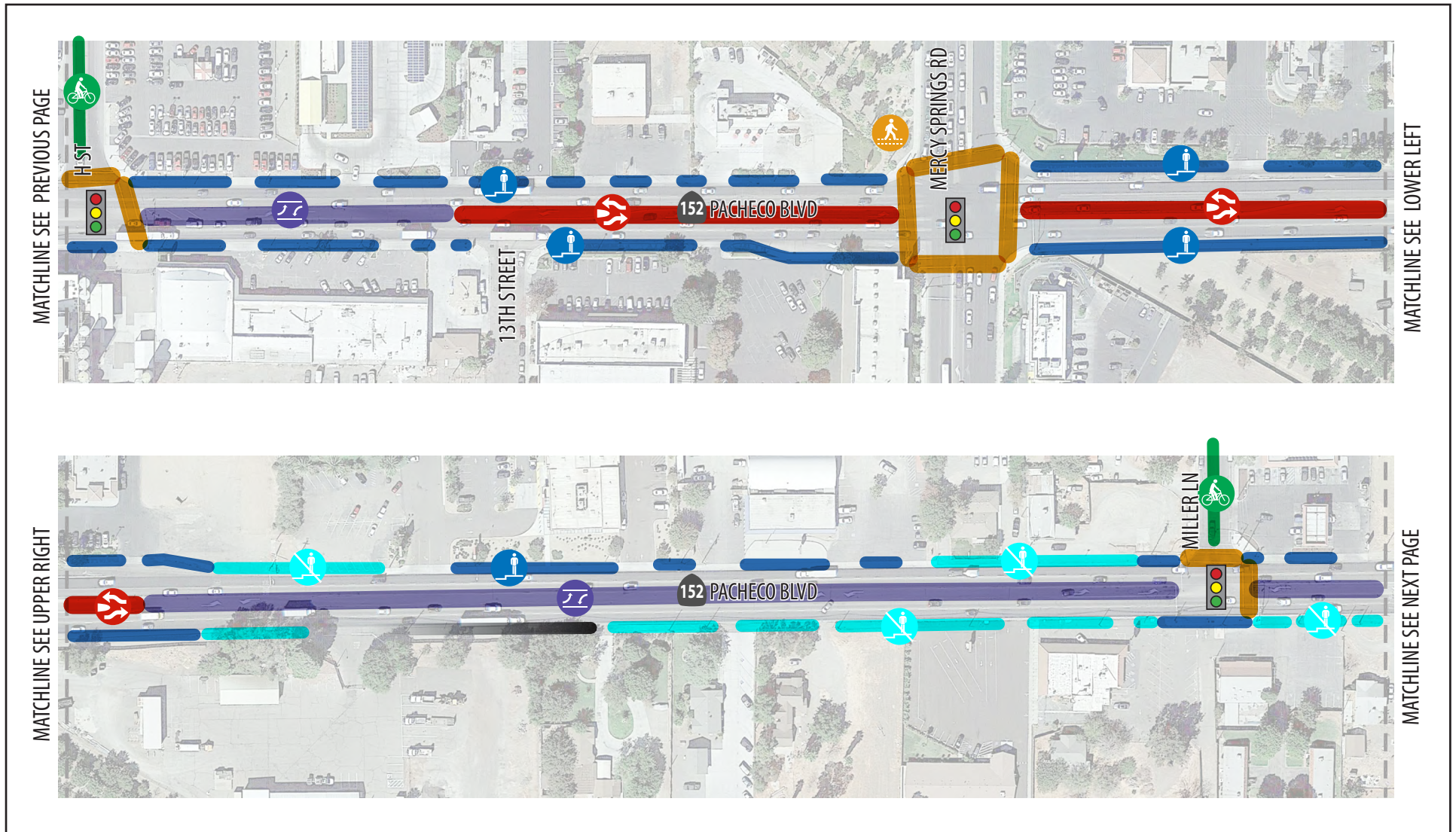




- Sidewalk- Existing*
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- Pedestrian Signal
- Sidewalk- Missing*

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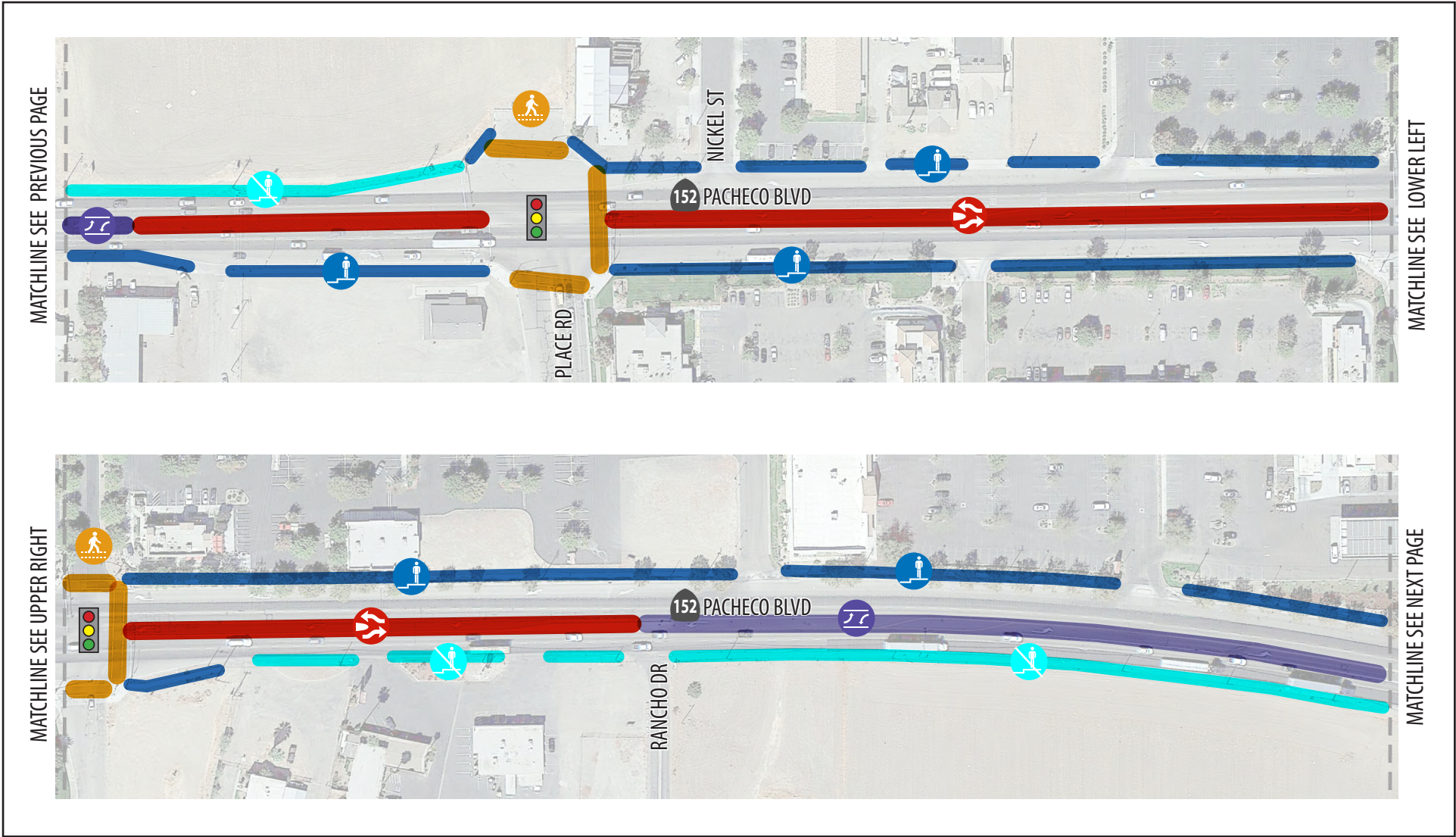




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- Sidewalk- Missing*
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-  Open Median- Flush
-  Traffic Signal
-  Sidewalk- Missing*
-  Bikeway
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