



School Safety Assessment Technical Memorandum

Oakland Charter Academy

Oakland Unified School District

March 2019

OAKLAND CHARTER ACADEMY


A school safety assessment was conducted at Oakland Charter Academy in Oakland during the afternoon dismissal on March 27, 2019. The assessment was attended by representatives from the City of Oakland, Alameda County Safe Routes to Schools staff, Oakland Charter Academy staff, and 3 students.

Participants included:

- Beaver Boonsook, Transportation Engineer, OakDOT
- Jessyca Mitchell, Staff, Oakland Charter Academy
- Osiah Carbonneau, Staff, Oakland Charter Academy
- Aleida Andrino-Chavez, Alameda County SR2S Team
- Jeannette Cooper, Alameda County SR2S School Site Coordinator
- Nick Bleich, Engineer, Alameda County SR2S Team
- Ben Frazier, Planner, Alameda County SR2S Team
- 3 Oakland Charter Academy students



School Information

Location & Enrollment

	Address:	4215 Foothill Blvd, Oakland, CA 94601
	Morning Bell(s):	8:00 AM
	Afternoon Bell(s):	Monday-Thursday: 3:00 PM Friday: 1:00 PM
	Grade Levels:	Grades 6 - 8
	Enrollment	250
	School Type (neighborhood/magnet/charter):	Charter

Bikes, Buses, and Drop-off/Pick-up

Does the school have bike racks? What is the capacity? Is it secure bike parking?	Oakland Charter Academy has one bike rack that holds approximately three bikes. It is not enclosed, but is locked within the gated campus.
On a typical day, what percentage of racks are used?	Typically, no students bike to school.

<p>Is the school served by local transit agencies? Are there stops within ¼ mile?</p>		<p>Oakland Charter is served by AC Transit lines 40, 14, and 648 with bus stops located along Foothill Boulevard and High Street.</p>
<p>Does the school have special pick-up/drop-off policies/procedures?</p>		<p>School pick-up and drop-off activity occurs along the school's Foothill Blvd frontage. No activity occurs within the gated campus area.</p>

Note: Oakland Charter Academy is not served by school buses.

Frontage Streets

Street Name	Width	Lanes	Posted Speed Limit	Traffic Volumes	Notes
Foothill Blvd	54 feet	4 lanes	25 mph	16,337 ADT	Curb extensions
Bond St	40 feet	2 lanes, one way	25 mph	-	No sidewalks
42 nd Ave	76 feet	4 lanes	30 mph	10,906 ADT	No sidewalks

Existing Conditions

Overview

Oakland Charter Academy is located at the intersection of Foothill Boulevard and 42nd Avenue. The school is contained within a fenced-off campus that occupies half of the block bound by 42nd Avenue, Foothill Boulevard, High Street, and Bond Street. Most pick-up and drop-off activities occur on Foothill Boulevard in the small frontage of the school. Many Oakland Charter Academy students walk or take AC Transit to/from school. The most commonly used AC Transit stops are within two blocks of the campus. No drop-off or pick-up activity currently occurs on Bond Street due to safety concerns regarding a homeless encampment and this gate currently being locked.

Observations

The following existing conditions were observed or reported by participants during the school safety assessment (SSA).

1. Foothill Boulevard/42nd Avenue

- ◆ Foothill Boulevard/42nd Avenue is a four-way signalized intersection.
- ◆ The raised medians on 42nd Avenue serve as refuge islands and the southwest corner (immediately adjacent to Oakland Charter) has a curb extension.
- ◆ The intersection has decorative crosswalks outlined by white transverse crosswalk markings.
- ◆ There are no sidewalks west of the intersection on either side of 42nd Avenue.
- ◆ Students traveling northbound on AC Transit Line 40 need to cross the intersection twice to access the northeast corner.
- ◆ There is a Ford GoBike Station at the northwest corner along Foothill.
- ◆ Students reported that the traffic signal controller does not always register their actuation from the push button to activate the pedestrian signal.



Left: The southern crossing of Foothill Boulevard, looking east from the school.

Right: The western crossing of 42nd Avenue, looking north from the school.

2. Foothill Boulevard

- ◆ Oakland Charter Academy has approximately 130 feet of frontage along Foothill Boulevard; providing queuing/loading space for approximately five vehicles.
 - This curb space restricts parking during drop-off hours, 7:30AM-9:00AM and 3:00PM-4:00PM. The curb is painted white, but the paint is faded.
- ◆ All student access in and out of the campus occurs via the pedestrian gate located on Foothill Boulevard.
- ◆ Only school staff vehicles are allowed to use the on-site parking within the gated area. The gate is kept closed and is remotely opened when an authorized vehicle needs access.
- ◆ Parents were observed idling in front of the vehicle gate, blocking the driveway, to load/unload students.
- ◆ The sidewalk area immediately in front of the school is very congested with students moving and congregating.
- ◆ The curb space is used by motorists for parking and loading passengers.
- ◆ Parents were observed stopping their vehicles in the southbound right travel lane for student loading/unloading; these students were walking among vehicles entering the travel lane from the parking lane.
- ◆ Multiple vehicles were observed performing U-turns from the northbound direction of Foothill Boulevard into either the parking or travel lanes in front of the school to pick-up students.
- ◆ Many students were observed crossing mid-block in front of the school to reach parked or idling vehicles on the northbound side of Foothill Boulevard.
- ◆ There are sharrows on this segment of Foothill Boulevard. No bicyclists were observed during the assessment.
- ◆ Students who need to access the southbound AC Transit Line 40 or buses along High Street walk south on Foothill Boulevard.
- ◆ After school, many students walk to the Foothill Boulevard/High Street intersection to shop at the convenience stores at the Exxon and Chevron gas stations.

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- Because of the volume of students walking toward High Street to the bus stops and the gas stations, the sidewalk on this segment of Foothill Boulevard is very congested.



Above: Foothill Boulevard, looking towards High Street. This picture shows Oakland Charter Academy students boarding vehicles along the curb and walking among vehicles idling in the travel lane. This creates congestion and safety issues on Foothill Boulevard.



Left: A driver performing a mid-block U-turn on Foothill Boulevard to pick up a student.

Right: Foothill Boulevard, near High Street; the two gas stations and the southbound AC Transit 40 stop.

3. Foothill Boulevard/High Street

- ◆ Foothill Boulevard/High Street is a four-way signalized intersection.
- ◆ All four crosswalks are marked with yellow transverse markings.
- ◆ Fremont High School fronts the northeastern corner.
- ◆ School staff reported that students regularly use this intersection to access the Exxon gas station and shop at the convenience store.
- ◆ Multiple AC Transit buses serve this intersection.
 - School staff noted that there are not shelters at these bus stops and expressed concern for students who have to wait for the buses in inclement weather.
- ◆ Students were observed congregating around the gas stations and blocking the driveway (on foot), which presents safety hazards if a motorist tries to enter the gas station.
 - Some of these students were waiting for the bus and others were just hanging around with friends.
- ◆ Some students were riding shared electric scooters around this intersection area.
 - Students were observed riding both on the sidewalk and in the street.
 - Shared electric scooters (Lime and Bird) are intended for use by those eighteen and older.



Above: Foothill Boulevard/High Street looking southeast towards Fremont High.

4. Bond Street

- ◆ There is one locked pedestrian access gate to the school on Bond Street.
 - In past years, this gate was available for student loading and unloading, however, with an increase in the homeless population living on this segment of Bond Street, families and the school administration stopped using Bond Street as a pick up/drop-off location. Bond is a calm and low vehicular volume neighborhood street but with the homeless encampment, children are often exposed to unsafe, unsanitary conditions, and illegal or inappropriate activity. School staff currently keep this gate locked and dismiss students at the front gate/entrance facing Foothill Boulevard, which is a major arterial with high vehicular volume and speeds, and heavy vehicle traffic, exposing children to unsafe street conditions.

On several occasions, school staff has contacted the police to report unsafe conditions and illegal or inappropriate activities at the Bond Street homeless encampment. In particular, when children are in Physical Education in the backyard, where there is unobstructed view of the encampment from the school.

- ◆ There are no paved sidewalks on either side of the street, further limiting its practical use as a loading space or route for students.
- ◆ The school is the only land use fronting on this block of Bond Street, which provides an ideal location for a designated drop-off/pick-up area.
 - One of the properties fronting along East 17th Street has added a garage door and non-standard ramp to allow for access to/from their property via Bond Street.



Above: The homeless encampment on Bond Street, across the street from Oakland Charter Academy.

5. 42nd Avenue

- ◆ Curb, gutter and sidewalks are not present on 42nd Street west of Foothill Boulevard. There are wide outside travel lanes of approximately 17 feet, which transitions to an unpaved / vegetated shoulder area that abuts property fences.
 - The wide outside travel lanes and No Parking restrictions create a space for vehicles to queue before picking-up students.
 - On the eastbound intersection approach the lanes are configured with a marked Left Turn Only, and a shared right/through lane.
- ◆ On the eastern side of 42nd Avenue, parents routinely pull over to drop-off/pick-up students from this location.
 - This unmarked shoulder area is also used as a queuing space for some parents until they can find a parking spot on Foothill Boulevard. Some cars pull partially off the asphalt into the unpaved shoulder.
 - The curb extension at the southwest corner forces queuing vehicles back into the shared right/through travel lane in order to make a right turn onto Foothill Boulevard
- ◆ Cars idling close to the intersection limit the visibility of pedestrians crossing or waiting to cross at the intersection at Foothill Boulevard.

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Left: The end of the sidewalk along 42nd Avenue at Foothill Boulevard (looking south).

Right: A car idling, mostly in the unpaved area, on 42nd Avenue waiting to pick up a student.

Recommendations

Engineering Recommendations

Recommendations to improve infrastructure or operations surrounding Oakland Charter Academy are presented in the conceptual improvement plan on the following pages.

Policy & Program Recommendations

In addition to engineering improvements, the Alameda County Safe Routes to Schools Program has many encouragement and educational activities that can benefit students and the campus community of the Oakland Charter Academy.

The School Site Coordinator for Oakland Charter Academy is Jeannette Cooper. The Site Coordinator can help schedule, organize, and promote many of the program offerings of Alameda County SR2S Program. The contact information for the Site Coordinator is below:

Jeannette Cooper, jcooper@alamedacountysr2s.org

Please do not hesitate to reach out to the Site Coordinator if you have any questions or concerns, or if you wish to move forward with additional programming activities.

Programs

The following improvements are recommendations for policy and program implementation at Oakland Charter Academy to increase safety and active commutes to school.

- ◆ Develop Walk and Bicycle Route Maps
 - The SR2S Program can create recommended Walking Route Maps. These maps illustrate preferred routes to school for walking. Maps also provide safety tips to encourage better travel behavior. These maps can also be used as a part of Walking School Buses (WSBs) or other Walk and Roll to School activities. Park and Walk and WSB meeting locations are also shown on these maps where appropriate.
- ◆ Encourage and Help Facilitate Carpooling
 - The SR2S Program can assist schools in working with parents to connect them with other families who live nearby to increase the number of students carpooling. This can reduce congestion by reducing the number of vehicles coming to campus.
- ◆ Facilitate Walking School Buses
 - Walking School Buses (WSBs) are groups of students, led by parent/adult chaperone(s) that meet at designated locations and times to gather and walk to school together. WSBs can be regular events, occurring daily, weekly, or monthly or occur in coordination with other events like International Walk and Roll to School Day or the Golden Sneaker Contest. SR2S staff can assist schools with the planning, coordination, and execution of the WSBs. Walking in groups with parental supervision can not only increase the visibility of these road users, but also reduce barriers to walking or biking for some families while making it fun and exciting for the students.

- ◆ Schedule the Step Up Crew Assembly
 - Step Up Crew is a fun, interactive assembly that teaches lessons about safely walking and bicycling to and from school. The Step Up Crew Assembly also includes information about how to ride transit. The Step Crew assembly is tailored to middle school students.
- ◆ Participate in International Walk and Roll to School Day (IRW2SD), the Golden Sneaker Contest (GSC), and Bike to School Day (B2SD)
 - These are the three main countywide encouragement events that occur throughout the academic year. All schools can participate in International Walk and Roll to School Day, held in October every year. The Golden Sneaker Contest, held in spring, is for elementary and middle schools and is a two-week contest both within schools and across the county challenging classrooms to travel to/from school using active and shared modes. All schools can also participate in Bike to School Day, held in tandem with Bike to Work Day, which encourages schools to sponsor Energizer Stations and students and families to bike to school.
- ◆ Staff Curb Supervision
 - If a staff member can be made available, they could be stationed along the curb and discourage students from crossing mid-block.
- ◆ Bond Street Rolling Drop Off
 - The school district should contact the City of Oakland administration and Oakland Police Department to seek relocation of the homeless community currently camping on Bond Street
 - After the homeless encampment is relocated and sidewalks have been constructed, Bond Street is an ideal location for a rolling drop-off. With these improvements, Bond Street can become the primary loading/unloading location for Oakland Charter Academy. The SR2S Program can help with the development of a new drop-off plan.

Transit Recommendations

- ◆ Oakland Charter Academy is served by transit with multiple bus stops within close proximity to the campus.
- ◆ The two intersections that students most frequently use for boarding and alighting are:
 - Foothill Boulevard/42nd Avenue
 - Foothill Boulevard/High Street
- ◆ There is limited sidewalk space available to provide additional bus stop amenities. The limited width should prioritize pedestrian throughput.
- ◆ Long-term streetscape improvements would benefit active modes and transit users and provide a more comfortable experience for these users.
 - These improvements could include bus shelters, street trees, buffer areas, and other items that improve the walking and transit experience.

Safe Routes to Schools Improvement Plan

Oakland Charter Academy, Oakland

Site Assessment held March 2019



- 1 Foothill Boulevard/42nd Avenue**
 - Restripe transverse crosswalk markings in yellow, maintaining the interior decoration
 - Consider modifying the signal cycle to provide pedestrians with a leading pedestrian interval for all four crossings
- 2 Foothill Boulevard**
 - Install a R3-4 No U-Turn sign for northbound Foothill Blvd traffic
 - Long Term: To create a uniform/consistent corridor design, redesign the one block between 42nd Avenue and High Street with two travel lanes and a center turn lane
- 3 Foothill Boulevard/High Street**
 - Upgrade the four transverse crosswalks to yellow high visibility crosswalks
- 4 Bond Street**
 - Construct sidewalks on the eastern side of Bond Street, between High Street and 42nd Avenue
 - Install an additional 160 feet of white curb loading space on Bond Street
 - Install R25D School Loading Signs along all white curb areas along Bond Street
 - Upgrade the four transverse crosswalks at the Bond Street/High Street intersection to yellow transverse crosswalks
 - Install a high visibility crosswalk across Bond Street at 42nd Avenue
 - The school, school district, and OPD should work together to provide social services and relocate the disadvantaged community members currently camping on Bond Street
 - Once these improvements have been implemented, Bond Street should become the primary drop-off area for Oakland Charter Academy; shifting activity away from Foothill Boulevard
- 5 42nd Ave**
 - Install R26S No Stopping Anytime signs on the eastern side of 42nd Avenue between Bond Street and Foothill Boulevard
 - Long Term: Construct sidewalks on 42nd Avenue between Foothill Boulevard and International Boulevard



The Alameda County Safe Routes to Schools Program is funded by the Alameda County Transportation Commission. Your transportation dollars at work!

The above items are recommendations only and based on Safe Routes to Schools site assessment best practices. Feasibility determination, final design, accessibility, funding, and implementation of any recommended improvements is the responsibility of the appropriate governing agency.