



School Safety Assessment Technical Memorandum

Donlon Elementary School

4150 Dorman Rd., Pleasanton, CA 94588

Pleasanton Unified School District

October 2021



The Alameda County Safe Routes to Schools Program is a program of the Alameda County Transportation Commission (alamedactc.org) and is funded with Alameda County's local sales tax Measure B, regional, state and federal funds.

Donlon Elementary School


Two school safety assessments (SSAs) were conducted at Donlon Elementary School in Pleasanton during afternoon dismissal on Thursday, September 23, 2021, and the morning drop-off on Wednesday, October 27, 2021. The assessments were attended by representatives from the City of Pleasanton, Alameda County Safe Routes to Schools staff, and Donlon Elementary School staff, parents, and caregivers.

Participants included:

- Matt Nelson, associate traffic engineer, City of Pleasanton
- Janet Gates, principal, Donlon Elementary School
- Adrienne Herz, administrative secretary, Donlon Elementary School
- Courtney Wood, planner, Alameda County SR2S team
- Lisa Schroer, planner, Alameda County SR2S team
- Allison Woodworth, engineer, Alameda County SR2S team
- Four Donlon Elementary School parents

School Information

Location and Enrollment

	Address:	4150 Dorman Rd., Pleasanton, CA 94588
	Morning Bell(s):	8:15 a.m. (K-5) 9:00 a.m. (Grade 1 Group B) 9:15 a.m. (K Group B)
	Afternoon Bell(s):	12:05 p.m. (K Group A, K Group B on Wednesday) 1:05 p.m. (K Group B) 1:55 p.m. (Grade 1 Group A, Grade 1 Group B, and Grades 2-5 on Wednesday) 2:50 p.m. (Grade 1 Group A, Grades 2-5)
	Grade Levels:	K-5
	Enrollment:	754
	School Type (neighborhood/magnet/charter):	Neighborhood

Student Travel Data

Students' Proximity to School (school estimate):	<p>Less than ¼ mile (5-min. walk): 25%</p> <p>Between ¼ and ½ mile (5- to 10-min. walk): 35%</p> <p>Between ½ and 1 mile (10- to 20-min. walk): 25%</p> <p>Greater than 1 mile (more than 20-min. walk): 15%</p>
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Student Travel Mode Info:	<p>School Estimate:</p> <p>Walking: 30%</p> <p>Biking: 10%</p> <p>School bus: 0%</p> <p>Transit: 0%</p> <p>Carpool: 10%</p> <p>Family vehicle: 50%</p> <p>Other: 0%</p>
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Bikes, Buses, and Drop-Off/Pick-Up

Does the school have bike racks? What is the capacity? Is it secure bike parking?	Eighty bike parking spots are located in secure spaces. Two racks are in front of the school and one by the back fence. The current capacity is adequate for the number of bikes.
Does the school have special pick-up/drop-off policies/ procedures?	Kindergarteners must be picked up by parents or caregivers either from the kinder yard or can walk to their parent or caregiver's car with supervision.

Note: Donlon Elementary School is not served by local public transit or a school bus.

Street Profiles

Street Name	Width	Lanes	Posted Speed Limit	Traffic Volumes	Notes
Dorman Road	40 feet	Two-three lanes	25 mph	-	No street parking
Denker Drive	40 feet	Two lanes	25 mph	-	Street parking on either side
Payne Road	40 feet	Two lanes	25 mph	-	Street parking on either side

Pedestrian- and Bicycle-Involved Collision Summary 2016-2020

The collision summary table shows all bicycle- and pedestrian-involved collisions within one-half mile of the school. These collisions may or may not involve school-related travel.

Radius from School	Total Collisions	Fatal Collisions	Severe Injury Collisions	Visible Injury Collisions	Complaint of Pain Collisions	Pedestrian Collisions	Bicycle Collisions
< ¼ mi	4	0	0	1	3	0	1
¼ mi – ½ mi	30	0	1	16	13	0	5
Total	34	0	1	17	16	0	6

Source: UC Berkeley – Transportation Injury Mapping System, Safe Transportation Research and Education Center, University of California, Berkeley, 2021

Community Health and Demographics (Data from the Census Tract of the School Site)

Percent of Students Eligible for Free or Reduced Priced Meals (2020-21 school year)	MTC Community of Concern Designation (2018)	Healthy Places Index Score (2021)	CalEnviroScreen 4.0 Percentile (2021)
6.2%	N/A	91.8th Percentile	36th Percentile

Sources: California Department of Education, Metropolitan Transportation Commission, Public Health Alliance of Southern California, and California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment

Existing Conditions

Overview

Donlon Elementary is located off Dorman Road in Pleasanton, California. The school is surrounded by residential neighborhoods and Val Vista Park, and the majority of Donlon students get to school via a private vehicle (including driving alone or carpooling). The main entrance to the school is accessed from Dorman Road, where the driveway loop and school parking lot are located. Students and families can also access the school from behind by entering from Payne Road or Denker Drive and using pathways along the edge of campus to walk or bike to the entrance.

During pick-up/drop-off hours, parents and caregivers use the driveway loop located off Dorman Road. Private vehicles can pull into the loop where students are dropped off or picked up near the school's main entrance. The loop runs counterclockwise. After pick-up and drop-off, parents exit the loop and turn right back onto Dorman Road. A long queue of cars waiting to enter the loop tends to form and extend north along Dorman Road during peak times. Alternatively, some parents choose to park along nearby streets such as Homer Court and Chapman Way, then walk to the school's entrance with their students in the morning or meet them after school. A crossing guard is stationed to help those walking at the intersection of Homer Way and Dorman Road. Traffic is controlled here by an all-way stop.

Between 2016 and 2020, there were six reported bicycle-involved collisions and zero reported pedestrian-involved collisions within a half mile of the school. Most of these collisions occurred on larger arterial streets around the school's neighborhood, including Hopyard Road and Los Positas Boulevard. One bicycle-involved collision happened in the school's neighborhood at the Dorman Road and Singletree Way intersection in May 2018.

Observations

Participants observed or reported the following conditions during the SSA.

1. Dorman Road and Homer Way

- ◆ The intersection is not controlled by a stop sign or other traffic control device. A crossing guard is stationed here during school arrival and dismissal. Two high-visibility crosswalks are located on the intersection's north and east legs.
- ◆ People driving and walking were observed following the crossing guard's instructions.
- ◆ One driver parked on Homer Way and encroached on the crosswalk with their vehicle.



Left: The crossing guard is located at Dorman Road and Homer Way.



Right: Sidewalk leading to the school's main entrance on Dorman Road.

2. Dorman Road and Roslin Court (Corresponds to #3 on Improvement Map)

- ◆ One high-visibility crosswalk is located at this intersection on the south leg across Dorman Road.
- ◆ During pick-up and drop-off hours, all vehicles exiting the driveway loop must pass through this intersection, as there is a no-left-turn sign at the driveway's exit.
- ◆ The number of lanes increases from two to three lanes; a northbound left-turn lane is present between Robin Court and Roslin Court. Sometimes two lanes of northbound traffic will form south of Roslin, where there is still just one northbound lane.
- ◆ The "KEEP CLEAR" markings on the street in front of the crosswalk are faded and difficult for drivers to see.
- ◆ The times on the no-left-turn sign near the driveway loop exit are not up-to-date.

The following infrastructure recommendations are proposed to improve the previously described existing conditions:

- *Refreshing/updating these existing items: “KEEP CLEAR” paint markings, drop-off area no-left-turn signage*
- *Constructing new: curb extensions on each side of the crosswalk (a near-term approach would be to stripe pavement curb extensions with bollards)*

3. Dorman Road *(Corresponds to #5 on Improvement Map)*

- ◆ Drivers formed a long line when waiting to turn right off Dorman Road into the school driveway for pick-up and drop-off.
- ◆ Through drivers were observed swerving around the line.
- ◆ Parents and caregivers noted that this area is confusing as it is unclear where drivers should form a line, where through traffic should go, and if there are one or two lanes in the southbound direction on Dorman Road.
- ◆ The line often backs up into the crosswalk at Dorman Road and Homer Way.

4. Denker Drive *(Corresponds to #1 and #2 on Improvement Map)*

- ◆ Two transverse crosswalks are located on Denker Drive in the rear of the school’s campus near Payne Road and the campus’s northwest corner.
- ◆ Parents and caregivers perceive that there is a lot of speeding on Denker Drive, especially in the mornings during school drop-off.
- ◆ Drivers were observed making U-turns on the street.
- ◆ Some students and families were observed crossing midblock at locations along Denker Drive.

The following infrastructure recommendations are proposed to improve the previously described existing conditions:

- *Lowering the speed limit on Denker Drive from 25 mph to 15 mph*

5. School Parking Lot *(Corresponds to #4 on Improvement Map)*

- ◆ Five crosswalks are located within the school parking lot—currently, all have faded paint.
- ◆ In addition to the crosswalks, the pavement markings and red curb lines within the parking lot are faded.
- ◆ The two lanes exiting the parking lot (at the driveway) merge into one lane upon exiting. Parents and caregivers noted this can cause confusion.



Above: The Donlon Elementary parking lot and crosswalk.

The following infrastructure recommendations are proposed to improve the previously described existing conditions:

- *Refreshing these existing items: pavement markings and red curb lines*
- *Relocating the crosswalk at the main entrance to the west end of the island (as a yellow high-visibility crosswalk with appropriate signage), adding landscaping to the island to discourage midblock crossing in front of the school, and expanding the walkway in the island*
- *Using cones or painting lane lines to mark two lanes of traffic entering the school parking lot*



Above: Students using the crosswalk located at Dorman Road and Roslin Court.

6. Dorman Road and Robin Court

- ◆ Drivers were observed using Robin Court as a place to park before walking to the school's entrance to pick up or drop off their students.
- ◆ There are no marked crosswalks located at Robin Court and Dorman Road. Those walking from Robin Court must use a slightly indirect route to get to the school's entrance by walking one block north or one block south to cross Dorman Road at a marked crossing.
- ◆ Some students and families cross at midblock locations on Dorman Road when walking from Robin Court.

7. Pathway on the South Leg of the School's Campus (*Corresponds to #6 on Improvement Map*)

- ◆ Parents noted the surface of the pathway is uneven and bumpy.

The following infrastructure recommendations are proposed to improve the previously described existing conditions:

- *Updating these existing items: widen (to at least 8 feet, preferably 10 feet) and repave the pathway*



Above: Cars lining up along Dorman Road before entering the school's driveway loop for pick-up/drop-off.

Participant Comments

The school principal and SSA participants were enthusiastic and excited about the potential to improve student safety on the streets and transportation facilities around Donlon Elementary School. Most of the discussion following the SSA related to concerns about safety issues for those walking to school, nearby speeding

vehicles, and user conflict from long lines of vehicles trailing out of the parking lot during peak pick-up and drop-off times. SSA participants' comments about specific locations throughout the school campus have been reflected in the Observations section of this memorandum.

Parents and caregivers also provided comments through an interactive online web map where they added the routes they take to get to school with their students and areas where they face challenges. Comments include:

- Parents crossing Dorman Road midblock instead of at the marked crosswalks
- A need for a crossing guard or traffic calming at the intersection of Dorman Road and Roslin Court
- Drivers making U-turns on Dorman Road north of Homer Way to avoid lines after dropping their kids off
- Cars driving above the posted speed limit on Denker Drive and Payne Road
- A need for a rectangular rapid flashing beacon at the midblock crossing on Denker Drive behind the school

Recommendations

Engineering Recommendations

Recommendations to improve infrastructure or operations surrounding Donlon Elementary School can be seen on the conceptual improvement plan found following this memo.

Policy and Program Recommendations

In addition to engineering improvements, the Alameda County SR2S Program has many encouragement and educational activities that can benefit students and the campus community at Donlon Elementary School.

The school site coordinator for Donlon Elementary is Jennifer Holmes-Ledet. The site coordinator can help schedule, organize, and promote many of the program offerings of Alameda County SR2S. The contact information for the site coordinator is below:

Jennifer Holmes-Ledet, jledet@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 Donlon Elementary School to increase safety and active commutes to school:

- ◆ Develop Walk and Bicycle Route Maps:
 - The SR2S Program can create recommended Walk and Bicycle Route Maps. These maps illustrate preferred routes to school for walking and biking. Maps also provide safety tips to encourage better travel behavior.
 - These maps can also be used as a part of Walking School Buses, Bicycle Trains, or other Walk and Roll to School activities. Park and Walk, Walking School Bus, and Bicycle Train meeting locations are also shown on these maps where appropriate.
- ◆ Encourage and facilitate carpooling:
 - The SR2S Program can assist schools in working with parents and caregivers 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.
- ◆ Encourage parents to Park and Walk from designated locations:
 - Potential Park and Walk locations have been identified on the Improvement Plan Map:
 - The intersection of Payne Road and Denker Drive.
 - The school should encourage parents to use these locations to reduce congestion in and near existing drop-off and pick-up locations.
- ◆ Facilitate Walking School Buses and Bicycle Trains:
 - Walking School Buses and Bicycle Trains are groups of students, led by parent/adult chaperones, that meet at designated locations and times to gather and walk or bike to school together. Walking School Buses and Bicycle Trains 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 Walking School Buses and Bicycle Trains. Walking and biking in groups with parental supervision can not only increase the visibility of these road users, but can reduce barriers to walking or biking for some families while making it fun and exciting for the students.
- ◆ Schedule Pedestrian Rodeos and Bicycle Rodeos:
 - These interactive rodeos are great educational opportunities to teach and refresh safe walking and bicycling behavior. These workshops cover a wide range of relevant topics including understanding traffic signals and signs, bicycle hand signals, and how to safely cross the street. Pedestrian Safety Rodeos and Bicycle Safety Rodeos are geared toward elementary school students.

- ◆ Participate in International Walk and Roll to School Day, the Golden Sneaker Contest, and Bike to School Day:
 - 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.



Safe Routes to Schools Improvement Plan

Donlon Elementary



Pleasanton

School Safety Assessment held September and October, 2021

Improvement Detail

- 1a. Consider lowering speed limit on Denker Drive from 25 mph to 15 mph
- 2a. Upgrade the existing crosswalk to a yellow high-visibility crosswalk northeast leg of the intersection
- 3a. Construct curb extensions on each side of existing yellow high-visibility crosswalk on south leg of intersection
- 3b. Refresh existing "KEEP CLEAR" paint markings and update the drop off area "No Left Turn" signage with current hours
- 4a. Refresh pavement markings and red curb paint lines in school parking lot
- 4b. Relocate crosswalk at main entrance down to west end of the island, add landscaping to east end of the island to discourage crossing at front of the school, and widen walkway in the island
- 4c. Coordinate with District facilities staff to determine the feasibility of placing cones or painting lines to mark two lanes of traffic entering the school parking lot. If moved forward, coordinate with City staff for review
- 5a. The school should encourage drivers using the parking lot on Dorman Road to pull close to the curb when waiting to enter the parking lot
- 6a. Widen (to at least 8 feet, preferably 10 feet) and repave existing pathway on south side of school campus
- 7a. Update hours on "No Left Turn" sign at parking lot exit to reflect current drop-off and pick-up times

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.
**Red curb and/or parking restriction signage should be provided between advance stop/yield markings and the crosswalk. Exact red curb distance should be determined in accordance with the CA-MUTCD and City policies/standards. Red curb not symbolized on map.
This figure is intended only for reference, conceptual planning, and informational purposes. This figure should not be used to establish boundaries, property lines, location of objects, or to provide any other information typically needed for final design, construction or any other purpose when engineered plans are required.



Alameda County Transportation Commission

Safe Routes to Schools

Alameda County Transportation Commission

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Improvements not to scale

The Alameda County Safe Routes to Schools Program is a program of the Alameda County Transportation Commission (alamedactc.org) and is funded with Alameda County's local sales tax Measure B, regional, state and federal funds.