Transportation Achievement Award Category: Safety
Lead Agency: City of Santa Clarita, CA
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Exclusive Pedestrian Crossing Cycle by Time of Day

The intersection of Seco Canyon Road and Decoro Drive in the City of Santa Clarita is adjacent to an elementary and junior high school. This intersection experiences traffic congestion and significant pedestrian activity. Widening the roadway to improve circulation was not an option due to its prohibitive cost and did not provide any safety benefit for pedestrians. Since congestion at this location was limited to AM peak traffic, morning school drop-off and afternoon dismissal times, staff developed a plan to solve the issue by maximizing the existing technology in the traffic controller. That plan developed into the Exclusive Pedestrian Crossing Cycle by Time of Day project. It is a modified pedestrian scramble that uses special timing plans to separate vehicle and pedestrian phases. The pedestrian scramble timing plan is active only during morning drop-off and afternoon dismissal times, as traffic outside these periods is light. During non-peak traffic hours, the signals revert to standard timing. In addition, electronic blank-out signs were installed to restrict right-turn movements during the pedestrian phase to enhance pedestrian safety. The electronic blank-out signs have proven their effectiveness in the City to provide higher compliance rates compared to static signs, as they illuminate only when needed. The City of Santa Clarita is committed to the well-being of our community and understands that safety and traffic circulation play a major role with the City's goals. The Exclusive Pedestrian Crossing Cycle by Time of Day maximizes intersection capacity and is a creative and cost-effective way to ease traffic congestion while enhancing pedestrian safety.

Confined to the existing right-of-way, an innovative solution was essential. A modified pedestrian scramble was developed that included special timing to completely separate pedestrian and vehicular phases. This exclusive pedestrian crossing cycle would be active only during morning drop-off and afternoon school dismissal periods. During the rest of the day, the signal would follow the standard signal operation sequence. To supplement this exclusive pedestrian crossing cycle, electronic no-right turn blank-out signs were installed at each corner to enhance safety. When the exclusive pedestrian cycle phase is active, the electronic blank-out signs illuminate to restrict vehicles from turning right to further alert motorists to pedestrian activity.

Outreach was unique in that City staff met with the principal from each school as well as crossing guards and conducted an onsite demonstration at the intersection. This was done before the new school year started so they had an understanding and buy-in of how the exclusive pedestrian crossing cycle would operate. Both principals were impressed by the operation and worked with the city to notify the parents through school newsletters. Other outreach included using social media and local news outlets.

The project was completed on time before the start of the new school year in August 2019. The implementation of the Exclusive Pedestrian Crossing Cycle project has had a positive impact on the quality of life to the community. A traffic analysis study showed there was an improvement in the Level of Service and reduction in the overall intersection delay. Furthermore, post field observations concluded there is reduction of vehicle queueing and travel times as more vehicles are able to transverse the intersection without pedestrian conflicts. Similarly, pedestrian safety has been enhanced for the hundreds of students and parents utilizing the crosswalks. The City has received positive feedback from parents, motorists, crossing guards, and the schools. The project supports the City of Santa Clarita's Traffic Safety Plan goals of reducing collisions and pedestrian-involved incidents by enhancing pedestrian safety and improving traffic circulation.

New traffic pattern coming to Santa Clarita Elementary

PERRY SMITH   AUGUST 8, 2019   3:46 PM   NO COMMENTS

Part-time crossing guard Fred Mortimer, right, stops traffic on Decoro Drive for students and parents caring umbrellas as they head home from Santa Clarita Elementary School after rain fell on Saugus on Tuesday afternoon. DAN WATSON 011916
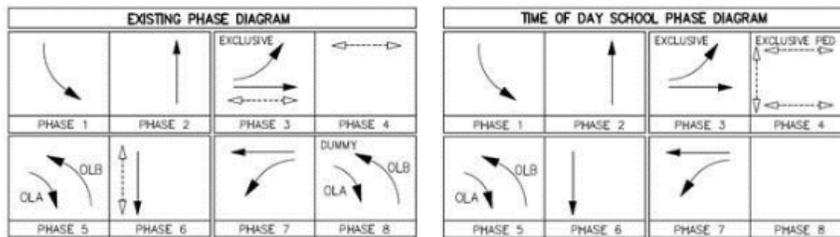
By Tobby Block

Signal Staff Writer

The city of Santa Clarita is introducing a new "Pedestrian Scramble" traffic cycle on two streets that see a relatively high volume of commuter traffic during school hours, beginning Tuesday, Aug. 13.

This timing eliminates vehicular-pedestrian conflicts, according to city officials in a statement Thursday. "Additionally, traffic circulation will be greatly improved because vehicles will no longer need to wait for high volumes of pedestrians to cross the street during a green light before they can make a turn."

The new system will be used primarily on school days during morning drop-off and afternoon dismissal times at lights on Seco Canyon Road and Decoro Drive. At all other times the signals will follow a standard sequence.

The new traffic pattern won't affect the timing of the lights' intervals, but rather introduce a phase in which vehicle traffic in all directions is stopped for pedestrians, according to city officials.

"The difference is that all three crosswalks are going to be lit at the same time," said Cesar Romo, traffic signal system administrator. "We're not changing the parameters that we had before, we're just changing the sequence."

Romo said the new traffic pattern would also be supplemented by what are called "blank-out signs," which instruct drivers on when they safely can make right-hand turns at the intersection.

"We're always looking at ways of improving traffic in the city, and safety," Romo said. "There's a lot of pedestrians at those two schools (referring to Arroyo Seco Junior High and Santa Clarita Elementary), and we want to get the pedestrians across the street without any conflict."

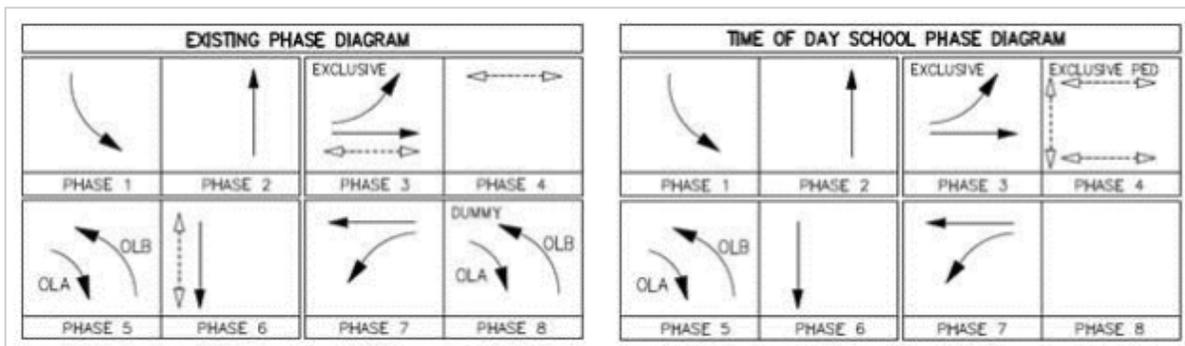https://signalscv.com/2019/08/new-traffic-pattern-coming-to-santa-clarita-elementary/

City Of Santa Clarita To Implement New Traffic Pattern Near Santa Clarita Elementary

👤 Posted by: KHTS News Release 🗀 in Community News, Santa Clarita Latest News   🕓 August 8, 2019 - 2:42 pm   💬 0
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In an effort to improve pedestrian safety and reduce traffic congestion, the City of Santa Clarita is set to use a "pedestrian scramble" traffic cycle at Seco Canyon Road and Decoro Drive during the school year, beginning Tuesday, Aug. 13, officials said.

Drivers and pedestrians using the intersection, which is adjacent to Santa Clarita Elementary School and Arroyo Seco Junior High School, will notice the new cycle during the schools' morning drop-off and afternoon dismissal times, according to City officials.

Due to the high volume of pedestrians crossing at the intersection and vehicular traffic during these times, the traffic signal will be modified to include a "pedestrian scramble" phase sequence. This phase enables all pedestrians to cross the intersection simultaneously while all vehicular traffic is stopped.

This timing aims to eliminate vehicular-pedestrian conflicts, making it safer for students and families to cross the street. Additionally, traffic circulation is expected to be greatly improved because vehicles will no longer need to wait for high volumes of pedestrians to cross the street during a green light before they can make a turn, City officials said.
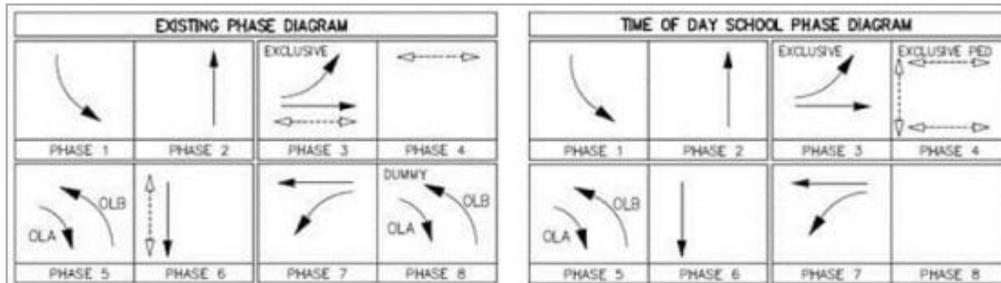
The new pedestrian scramble phase is set to operate on school days only. On non-school days and during times other than those identified, the signal at this intersection should follow a standard signal operation sequence.

For more information about the implementation of the pedestrian scramble phase, contact the City of Santa Clarita's Traffic Signal System Administrator Cesar Romo here.

New School Year Brings New Traffic Patterns to Santa Clarita Elementary

CITY OF SANTA CLARITA | THURSDAY, AUG 8, 2019

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https://scvnews.com/new-school-year-brings-new-traffic-patterns-to-santa-clarita-elementary/

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