

# Infrastructure Development

This final chapter of the MPEDS discusses the roles of accessibility, pedestrian improvements, transportation and land use in advancing economic development in Morningside Park. Accessibility is a broad topic that includes subjects such as: automobile, public transit, pedestrian access, and knowing the role major arterials play in creating an accessible community and commercial corridor. Information and recommendations regarding market access were addressed in Chapter 2.

Pedestrian improvements are touched upon, because there are a number of issues facing pedestrians and cyclists on Manchester Blvd. The improvements range from physically altering the streets to installing new technologies that will enhance accessibility and safety in relation to the pedestrian experience. Again, as with Chapters 3 and 4, goals and recommendations are prioritized based on the number of times the idea was proposed by each of the student groups.

# Goals

## HIGH

- ✓ *Improve the pedestrian environment.*
- ✓ *Improve parking options.*

## LOW

- ✓ *Improve general accessibility.*

## Improve Pedestrian Environment

One of the goals expressed by residents and merchants in Morningside Park is to improve the image of the area socially, physically and economically. As part of the physical improvements, pedestrian street lights with aids for the disabled, and sidewalk and crosswalk improvements were requested. This section suggests ways to help the community achieve these goals.

### VEHICULAR AND PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION

A traffic count from the Inglewood Public Works Department states that 30,000 motor vehicles travel along Manchester Boulevard daily. Most of the traffic is traveling east to west in the morning, and vice versa in the evening. The section of Manchester Boulevard in Morningside Park is serviced by one-way parking lots that spill into Manchester. There is also on-street parking in the area.

Pedestrians are able to circulate through the area using sidewalks. The sidewalk along Manchester is approximately ten feet wide on either side of the street. The planted trees along the walkway sometimes decrease the width of the street. The distance from a sidewalk to the other side of the street is more than 60 feet. When crossing from one side to another, pedestrians are relieved by the land median that rests in the middle.

### PLANNING FOR PEDESTRIANS

Better conditions for cycling and walking provide intangible benefits to the quality of life in cities and towns. The ability to ride a bicycle and walk are often considered important indicators of a community's livability. In cities and towns where people can regularly be seen cycling and walking, there is a sense that these are safe and friendly places to live and visit. Well-designed streets and sidewalks can add to a community's sense of place, foster neighborliness, and provide

a place for interactions between people of all ages and races. Planning appropriately for pedestrians and cyclists will help local residents and merchants to achieve their goals of improving Morningside Park socially, physically and economically.

The current problems facing pedestrians on Manchester are discussed below. Recommendations are then discussed in detail. Information on how to fund these recommendations is provided in Appendix C.

## **PROBLEMS FACING PEDESTRIANS ON MANCHESTER BOULEVARD**

The current design of Manchester Boulevard creates a number of problems for pedestrians and cyclists. As part of the goal of revitalizing the area and encouraging new business development along the Boulevard, means should be taken to ensure the Boulevard also becomes inviting for pedestrians and cyclists.

As discussed in Chapter 2, 20 percent of the Morningside Park's population is under 18, and 16 percent are



Westbound side of Manchester, showing lack of bicycle lane

over the age of 65. Therefore, planning for these age groups must be a consideration in making pedestrian friendly changes to the area. These age groups have both unique characteristics and needs. The elderly may have vision problems and likely walk at a slower pace than a younger person. According to the Federal Highway Administration, pedestrians aged 65 and older are two to eight times more likely to be killed than

younger people when struck by motor vehicles, in part because they are often less physically resilient.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> <http://www.tfhrc.gov/safety/pedbike/facts/oldped.htm>

Children are also at high risk as pedestrians, as they may not be accustomed to looking both ways when crossing the street, or may dart out in front of cars into the middle of the road. According to the Federal Highway Administration, the "midblock dart-out" accounts for 33 percent of all pedestrian crashes and for 38 percent of all serious pedestrian injuries.<sup>15</sup>

After several visits to the study area, the following information regarding pedestrian activity was gathered through visual analysis, as well as by walking up and down Manchester and trying to cross the boulevard at various points. Some of the specific problems facing pedestrians and cyclists on Manchester Boulevard include:

- Lack of motorist awareness of pedestrians in crosswalks.
- Lack of bicycle lanes.
- Ability of pedestrians to cross boulevard in specified time.
- Pedestrian misunderstanding of crosswalks and signals.
- Long stretches between available crosswalks.

Many things can be done to make Manchester Boulevard safer and more pleasant for pedestrians and cyclists. An issue to be considered for the long term is the overall function of the street. The current street structure is conducive for heavy use and fast-paced traffic. If the street is going to be used for pedestrian activities, more traffic signals or blinking lights will need to be put in place to stop the constant flow of traffic and provide a degree of safety for pedestrians.

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<sup>15</sup> <http://www.tfhrc.gov/safety/pedbike/facts/kidped.htm>

## MORE STREET CROSSINGS

One important principle of “walkable” streets is to have short distances between blocks, approximately 400 to 600 feet, creating many linkages between both sides of the street.<sup>16</sup> The south side of Manchester Boulevard in Morningside Park does have short blocks and crossings also between each street. The



Intersection at 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Manchester

north side of the street, however, has longer blocks, often not opening up to a crosswalk for two blocks at a time. This makes it very difficult for pedestrians to cross from the south side of the street to the north side of the street at all intersections on the south side. For example, the south side of the street at 6th Avenue is open, while the north side of the street is not. These intersections that form a “T” shape also do not have traffic signals, further hindering pedestrian movement across the boulevard. Traffic is encouraged to move at higher speeds along the street because there are fewer traffic signals and no stop signs at all.

## BLINKING RED LIGHT

The installation of blinking red lights at intersections, such as 3rd Avenue and Manchester will enable pedestrians to have more street crossings and calm traffic. Traffic will not have to come to a full stop but will still have to slow down and watch for crossing pedestrians, creating a safer environment

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<sup>16</sup> Burden, Dan. (2001) *Building Communities with Transportation*, available from <http://www.walkable.org/index.htm>



Rendering of crosswalk with in-pavement lighting.  
Source: [www.walkinginfo.org/pedsmart/home.htm](http://www.walkinginfo.org/pedsmart/home.htm)

and enabling people to walk across and shop on both sides of the boulevard.

## UTILIZE NEW TECHNOLOGIES

On the intersections that do have traffic signals, pedestrian walk buttons and crosswalks, such as those at 11th Avenue, Crenshaw, 7th Avenue, 5th Avenue and Van Ness,

changes can still be made to make the intersections safer and more walkable. Elderly pedestrians and children are often not able to cross the entire intersection because the time to cross is too short, and many people are often confused by the walk push button and if it is actually working or not. In the next section regarding new technologies, solutions will be suggested to deal with these problems. One of the positive aspects of these current intersections is that they all have left hand turning lanes, which makes the turn safer and helps to slow down traffic through the intersection. Many of the problems pedestrians face when crossing the street can be minimized by implementing “Intelligent Transportation System” (ITS) technologies. These technologies can help to lessen some of the problems discussed earlier, such as motorist awareness of pedestrians in the crosswalk, pedestrian confusion surrounding use of the walk push button, and unique problems that the visually impaired face when crossing the street.

### In-Pavement Lighting

On the intersections along Manchester that do not have a traffic signal, it may be hard for motorists to see crossing pedestrians until it is too late. A pedestrian crossing sign was

observed at the intersection of 3rd and Manchester; however, it alone is not enough to attract motorists' attention. Some of the intersections without a traffic signal have thick white stripes indicating a crosswalk, but many of these are faded, and especially hard for motorists to see at night. Some of the intersections do not have the white stripes on both sides of the intersection, indicating a pedestrian crossing. A new technology called in-pavement lighting can be used on both sides of the crosswalk to make the intersection safer. This lighting is activated when the pedestrian begins crossing the



Example of countdown signal  
Source: [www.walkinginfo.org/pedsmart/home.htm](http://www.walkinginfo.org/pedsmart/home.htm)

street (either through a push button or motion detection system) and remains flashing as long as the pedestrian remains in the crosswalk.<sup>17</sup> The lights are visible both day and night, and serve to increase visibility of the crosswalk to both pedestrians and motorists, creating a safer environment for all.

### **Illuminated Push Button and Countdown Signal**

Another problem pedestrians encounter when crossing the street is confusion with the walk push button. Often pedestrians press the button, but are not sure if it is really working, and they begin to cross the street against the light. Research has shown that pedestrians are confused by the three phases of the signal, which are Walk, flashing Don't Walk and steady Don't Walk.<sup>18</sup> Here again, new ITS technologies can be implemented to decrease confusion.

Installing an illuminated push button will provide instant feedback to the waiting pedestrian that the push button is working, and discourage them from crossing against the light. The push button will light up as soon as the pedestrian pushes the button, indicating that the signal will soon change

<sup>17</sup> [www.walkinginfo.org/pedsmart/home.htm](http://www.walkinginfo.org/pedsmart/home.htm)

and it will be safe to cross the street.<sup>19</sup> Additionally, confusion regarding the three phases of the Walk/Don't Walk signal can be mitigated by a countdown signal. The countdown signal is used in conjunction with the standard Walk/Don't Walk display, but also counts down the seconds until the light will change, enabling pedestrians to make better decisions about entering the crosswalk.<sup>20</sup> Locally, these countdown signals have recently been installed in Santa Monica around the 3rd Street Promenade, in conjunction with other transportation and streetscape improvements.

### **Accessible Signals**

Lastly, ITS technology can be used to lessen some of the problems visually impaired pedestrians face at intersections. The large percentage of elderly people in the study area indicates that a larger portion of the population may have vision problems. Solutions to help the visually impaired cross the street include the use of “accessible signals,” which include audible signals or talking signs. Audible signals are

often bird sounds or buzzers, and they indicate when the Walk phase is displayed.<sup>21</sup> Different sounds are used for either the east-west or north-south crossing. Additional information regarding these new ITS technologies can be found at the website, <http://www.walkinginfo.org/pedsmart/home.htm>.

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid

<sup>19</sup> Ibid

<sup>20</sup> Ibid

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid



Curb juts out into Market Street

## **CURB CHANGES**

All of the intersections appear to have the appropriate curb designs to meet the standards set by the Americans with Disabilities Act. However, the curbs in Morningside Park can also be changed to enhance the pedestrian environment. Similar to the intersection at Market Street and Manchester, the curbs can be made to jut out into Manchester, helping to slow down traffic and shorten the distance across the boulevard from

one side of the street to the other. The high percentage of elderly and young people in the vicinity will also benefit from strict adherence to ADA Guidelines.

## **BIKE LANE**

A bike lane would be a nice addition to the boulevard, as it would hopefully serve to encourage the use of non-motorized transportation. The recommended alternative to add in the bike lane would be to take away the on-street parking and use this new space to add in the bike lane, and at the same time widen the sidewalk. Taking away the on-street parking would have to be done in conjunction with constructing a parking lot in the area.

## **REPAIR SIDEWALKS**

The sidewalks in Morningside Park are cracked and many are in need of repair. Weeds have sprouted up through the cracks. The median, through the study area is nicely landscaped with grass and trees, and some of the sidewalks have trees and grass as well. However, the sidewalk landscaping is very sporadic, with one block looking fresh and



well kept, followed by another block with weeds. The entire length of the study area on Manchester should be uniformly landscaped, and the sidewalks should be cleaned and repaired as necessary.

Currently, there is little room on the sidewalk for people to do more than just walk along it. The heavy flow of traffic along Manchester Boulevard also creates an environment that discourages too much pedestrian activity

(other than walking) along the sidewalk. To calm traffic and allow more people to spend time comfortably in the area, the city should consider creating a barrier between the cars and the pedestrians. Widening the sidewalks would be one way to create that space. This has the potential to reduce the number of street parking spaces but the widening would allow businesses to have sidewalk sales and visitors to sit outside of restaurants. The city could also physically create a divider between the street traffic, parking spaces and the sidewalk. This was accomplished on Main Street in El Segundo, as seen in the photo above, to help alleviate a similar problem.

Along with considering widening the sidewalks, the city should evaluate the paving designs of the sidewalks. Main Street in El Segundo has promoted a sidewalk “hall of fame”. Local businesses and residents were invited to buy a paving stone to be integrated into the sidewalk. Every time people walk around the area to either eat in the restaurants or shop in the small stores, a glance down tells a story of the city’s and the community’s commitment to the area. This idea has also been implemented in East Los Angeles, along Whittier

Boulevard with the Latino “Walk of Fame.” In Morningside Park, there could be an African American “Walk of Fame” or the paving stones could revolve around the history of the City of Inglewood.

Main Street El Segundo

## **BENEFIT S TO MORNINGSIDESIDE PARK**

Making Morningside Park friendlier to pedestrians and cyclists will help the area to achieve the goals they have set for themselves. The recommended changes will enable pedestrians to easily and enjoyably stroll through the area, which will in turn provide an environment that is safer and more conducive to business. The new pedestrian-centered environment, coupled with the other strategies to encourage new business development in the area, other visual and physical design changes, and other neighborhood improvement strategies, will create a place that local residents and merchants can be proud of, as well as a place that outsiders will want to visit.

## Improve Parking Options



Entrance to one-way parking lot on the south side of Manchester



Close up picture of the same one-way parking lot on the south side of Manchester

With more visitors to Morningside, parking will be an important issue for revitalizing the Commercial District. Currently, there are a limited number of parking lots and street parking is in short supply. Residents, or frequent visitors, to the area use the one-way lots (see picture on next page) that are only accessible from the residential sides on the south side of the street, or they take advantage of parking spots offered by businesses. During site visits, it became apparent that the street parking on Manchester Boulevard was used mostly for short-term visits. Long-term visitors used parking on the side streets. For the short term, the city can make sure that street parking meters have uniform limits depending upon the shops that are near that location. During a recent visit, patrons to the area had to filter through multiple street signs to determine their time constraints. Instead of having a twenty-minute parking spot located next to an hour spot, the entire street should have uniform time limits.

To determine the long term parking capacity, there should be an assessment about the design and location of the one-way parking lots. (See pictures.) With more traffic into the area, people will only travel to the area if there is a way for them to park in close proximity to the stores. The one-way lots should be re-designed to accommodate more cars or to flow in two directions.

In addition, the city should consider creating more parking. Any future development should be required to include parking to compensate for the lack of currently available spots and the impact of any development on the area. The city should also look into purchasing one of the vacant lots in the area and converting it for parking uses. Other parking recommendations include:

- Add several attractive and bold signs along westbound Manchester, starting at the Van Ness intersection, indicating the available parking at 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue.
- Improve signage on eastbound Manchester by adding simple and bold indicators directing traffic to the alley for

access to the diagonal side street parking, thus avoiding unnecessary traffic in adjacent residential neighborhoods.

- Reverse diagonal parking for direct access from Manchester and add simple entry signage and simple exit signage from the lots to the alley to avoid unnecessary residential traffic.

## Improve General Accessibility

“Accessibility is determined by the spatial distribution of potential destinations, the ease of reaching each destination, and the magnitude, quality, and character of the activities found there” (Handy, 1997, 1175). “Accessibility is thus determined both by patterns of land use and by the nature of the transportation system, although two people in the same place may evaluate their accessibility differently, as wants and tastes vary” (Handy, 1997, 1175). Therefore, this section of the MPEDS Infrastructure element will highlight the major steps the City of Inglewood should take when determining whether or not the current level of accessibility in Morningside Park is adequate and how to increase the level of accessibility in the area, if needed.

### IDENTIFY ARTERIALS

The first step in determining the level of overall accessibility to an area’s goods and services is to recognize that different types of arterials serve different types of markets.

Manchester Blvd. plays a critical role in determining accessibility for Morningside Park. The City should immediately recognize Manchester as a seam and not an edge. Usually, a seam allows speeds ranging from 30-35 mph and has up to six lanes with a median (Urban Land Institute, 2001, 12). As the term implies, a seam has the potential to knit the community together across the arterial. Nonetheless, Manchester Blvd’s role as a vital road for through-traffic and non-local customers should urge the City to attempt traffic calming with caution and precision. For example, as previously suggested, the City of Inglewood may consider marked crosswalks between traffic lights on Manchester. This measure of traffic calming does not affect through-traffic, as long as no pedestrians are attempting to cross Manchester Blvd.

## **AUTOMOBILE ACCESS**

The second step is to evaluate automobile access to the commercial area. Although Manchester Blvd currently serves as a major arterial for through-traffic, automobile access to the commercial corridor (destination- traffic) should be taken very seriously. As discussed above, current parking options should be evaluated to determine whether they promote or deter shopping for non-local customers. Parking signs should be checked for consistent time restrictions, parking space angles and location should be investigated, and options for alternative parking (e.g. a parking structure) should be considered and weighed.

## **ACCESS TO PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION**

The third step is to evaluate access to public transportation to and from the commercial corridor, which is another factor in business location decisions. Currently, the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) operates six bus lines in the study area. Line 209 operates on Van Ness; Lines 115, 315, and 442 operate on

Manchester Blvd. In addition, Lines 210 and 310 operate on Crenshaw Blvd. These lines provide access to the Morningside Park commercial corridor, LAX, the Blue Line Metro rail station, the I-110/Manchester Transit/Busway station, connecting buses going to and from the Green Line Metro rail station, and connecting buses that operate throughout Los Angeles County. Further, the MTA is also the primary funding source for Access Services Incorporated, the federally required ADA paratransit service for city-sponsored dial-a-rides. This service is offered to individuals whose disabilities prevent them from using regular buses or rail service. It is comparable to fixed-route service and offers 24-hour-a-day curb-to-curb service. Access Services Incorporated can be reached at 1-800-827-0829.

Moreover, this step requires the City to do feasibility studies for projects as radical as creating a Transit-Oriented Development (TOD). This study would determine whether the major components of a TOD are present or feasible in the Morningside Park area. A TOD is generally considered an investment in new rail capacity and actions to encourage

development around the stations. Thus, the first thing the City of Inglewood should look at is the current distance to rail and the feasibility of creating new rail capacity in the community. Since “TOD proponents paint a very attractive picture of compact communities, pedestrian and bicycle-friendly, with a mix of retail establishments and work sites, convenient schools and recreational facilities, and green spaces,” the City should determine whether or not Morningside Park has or can potentially feature these components.<sup>22</sup>

Unfortunately, the current geographic location, the lack of office/retail mix, and the low population density (housing) does not seem conducive to a TOD. Although there are rare cases of TODs built upon a strong bus system, i.e. Wilshire Rapid Bus. The Morningside Park area may not have the population density (ridership) to support such a system. As a reference point for determining the likelihood of a TOD built upon a bus system in Morningside Park, Metro Rapid line 720 (Wilshire-Whittier) has an estimated ridership of 29,260 persons per weekday. This is in addition to the ridership on

lines 18, 20, and 21 that simultaneously operate on Whittier and Wilshire Boulevards. In 1996, Line 210, which operates on Crenshaw Blvd, had an estimated ridership of 19,750 persons per weekday. Line 115, which runs along Manchester Blvd., had an estimated ridership of 15, 250 persons per weekday. Although the numbers for the Metro Rapid are more recent (1999-2000), this information may give an idea of the level of ridership needed in order to convert a Bus Line into a Metro Rapid or to consider a TOD.

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<sup>22</sup> Bundy, 1999. <http://faculty.washington.edu/~jbs/itrans/bundden.htm>

# Conclusion

There are many revitalization opportunities for Morningside Park. The economic development vision presented in this document is one that will produce real results over the long term. The MPEDS has offered a number of solutions to perceived economic barriers. It has addressed the area's socio-demographic, income, business development, design and accessibility needs.

It is clear that political support, at the grassroots, elected and administrative levels, and a strong desire for change will lead to successful implementation of at least some of these recommendations.

The following matrix summarizes all student recommended actions.

## Morningside Park Economic Development Strategy Action Plan Business Development

<b>Barriers to Economic Development</b>	<b>Short-Term Response (1-year)</b>	<b>Long-Term Response (3-5 years)</b>
Limited business diversity	<p>Identify the businesses, by brand, type or both that the community wants/needs;</p> <p>Identify complimentary businesses that encourage consumer to linger in the area;</p> <p>Create partnerships between business and real estate brokers;</p> <p>Develop a simplified business development information package;</p>	<p>Increase number of locally-oriented businesses;</p> <p>Develop business incubators</p>
Lack of localized, coordinated attention on area.	Develop single economic development organization	Develop BID
Underutilized business development services	Develop resource guide or quarterly business newsletter summarizing services.	Consider reduction or staggering of permit and taxes for small businesses.
Limited employment opportunities	Recruit F.I.R.E businesses	

**Morningside Park Economic Development Strategy Action Plan  
Visitor and Retail Development**

<b>Barriers to Economic Development</b>	<b>Short-Term Response (1-year)</b>	<b>Long-Term Response (3-5 years)</b>
<p>Poor community image; Crime and graffiti; Closed shops or shops that look closed</p>	<p>Code and safety enforcement; Increase dialogue and collaboration with police, business owners and local residents; Increase lighting in alleys; Add more trashcans;</p>	<p>Develop design and streetscape standards (limitations on wrought iron bars); Adopt community policing plan; Adopt a façade improvement program; Amend General Plan to create a design overlay zone called the Morningside Park Commercial District;</p>
<p>Lack of localized marketing strategy</p>	<p>Economic development organization include marketing committee; Hang banners;</p>	<p>Create a permanent gateway; Implement a Historic Main Street program;</p>
<p>Lack of interest as center to shop and/or eat</p>	<p>Add street furniture (benches); Host arts and cultural activities;</p>	<p>Initiate development that will serve as catalyst for growth of other businesses and retail; Consider widening the sidewalks to encourage pedestrian traffic; Create a barrier between the cars and the pedestrians;</p>

## Morningside Park Economic Development Strategy Action Plan Infrastructure Development

<b>Barriers to Economic Development</b>	<b>Short-Term Response (1-year)</b>	<b>Long-Term Response (3-5 years)</b>
Unfriendly environment for pedestrians and cyclists	Paint more street crossings;  Add Blinking red light;  Repair sidewalks;	Utilize new technologies (In-Pavement Lighting, Illuminated Push Button and Count Down Signal, Accessible Signals);  Modify curbs;  Install bike lane;
Limited parking	Market available parking at 12th Avenue;  Direct eastbound Manchester traffic to alley for access diagonal side street parking;  Standardize parking time limits	Redesign one-way lots;  Require parking for new development;  Build parking structure
Limited accessibility		Conduct TOD feasibility study.