



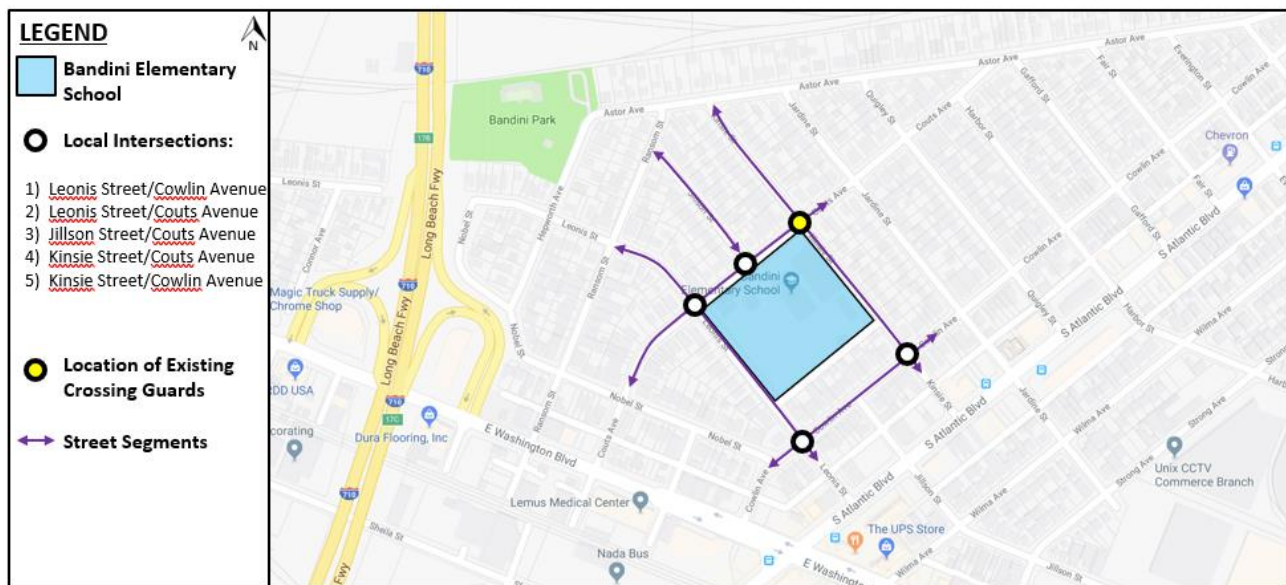
# CITY OF COMMERCE AGENDA REPORT

## PARKING & TRAFFIC CONDITIONS AROUND BANDINI ELEMENTARY SCHOOL (ASSESSMENT STUDY)

### BACKGROUND:

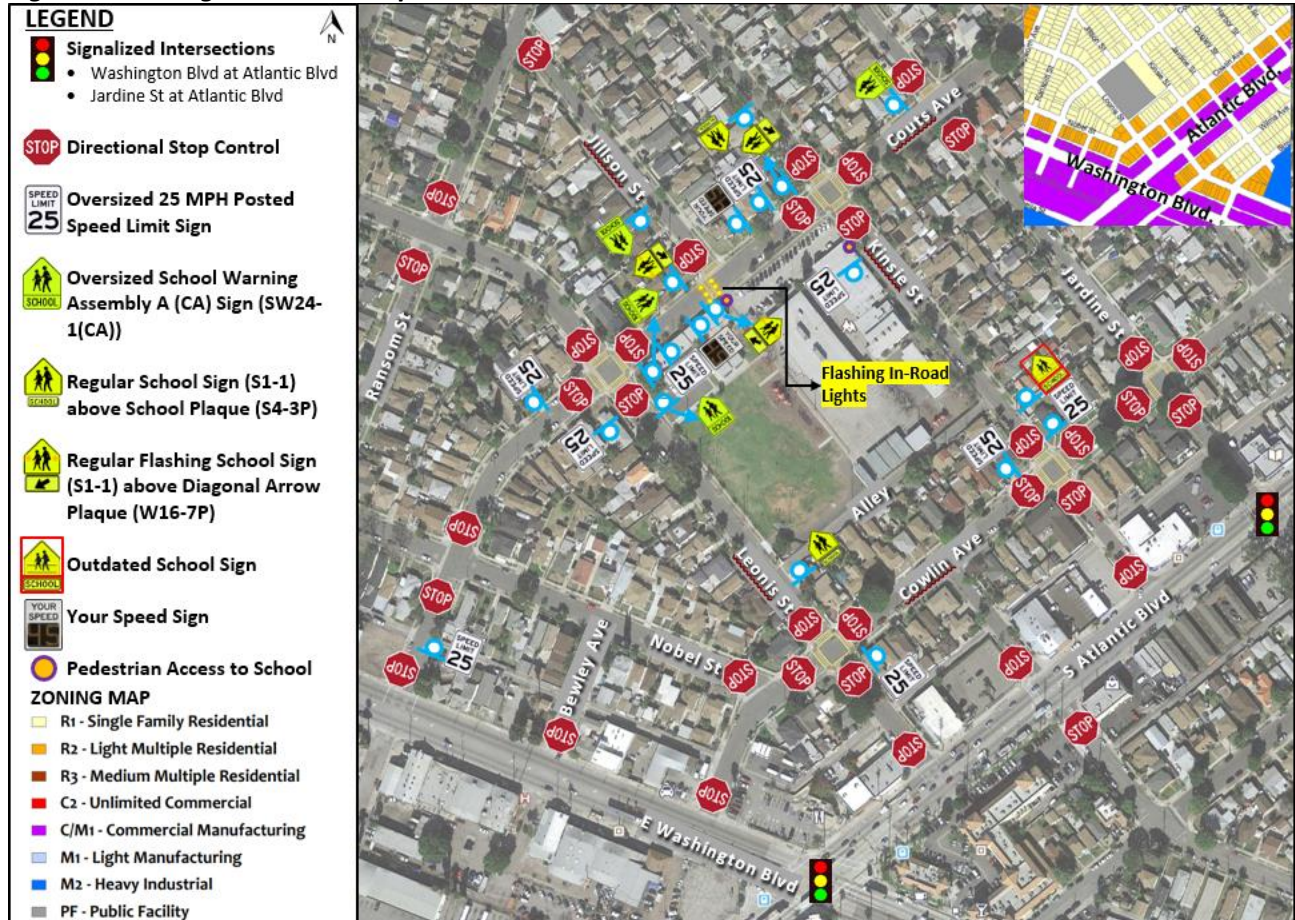
Per the request of residents and school staff from Bandini Elementary School, staff has completed an assessment of the traffic circulation at streets surrounding the school to evaluate and recommend measures to alleviate congestion, parking concerns and pedestrian safety near the school campus during the peak AM drop-off and AFT pick-up times. *Figure 1: Vicinity Map* below shows the location of the school and affected intersections and street segments.

**Figure 1: Vicinity Map**



## ANALYSIS:

**Figure 2: Existing Conditions Map**



## EXISTING CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT:

The City directed Traffic Consulting staff to conduct an assessment of existing conditions and come up with recommendations that would alleviate the traffic congestion and improve pedestrian safety during the peak AM drop-off and AFT pick-up times.

Communities often tailor a combination of strategies including engineering, enforcement, education, and encouragement to address specific needs of each school as well as other stakeholders. In order to come up with the most appropriate and suitable solution it is important to identify the root cause of the congestion surrounding Bandini Elementary School. Today there is a significant decline in the number of students walking to school. Forty years ago, about half of all students walked to school, now fewer than 15% of all school trips are by walking or bicycling. This has a serious effect on traffic congestion as well as air quality around schools. Studies have shown that kids today are leading more inactive lifestyles which puts them at risk for obesity and diabetes.

Some parents are reluctant to allow their children to walk or bicycle to school due to the traffic congestion and “perceived” traffic danger during student arrival and dismissal times. This often results in more parents driving their children to school, thus adding extra congestion and safety problems at the school, creating an increase in traffic and decrease in walking. Safety issues are a big concern for parents. Cities are often not consulted prior to construction of schools and are faced with the effects of school district decisions such as the layout of the schools, location of schools, on-site parking and location of drop off and pick up areas.

Cities must scramble to provide residents and parents with resources to protect and provide for safe travel to and from schools.

The development of a successful school circulation program requires community support and input as well as the support of school district representatives and decision makers to ensure that all stakeholders are represented. While school traffic during the peak drop-off and pick-up times is unavoidable, there are mitigation measures that can be implemented to ease the traffic congestions and improve the safety and circulation for parents driving to and from Bandini Elementary School and to encourage more students to walk to school. It is also important to educate community members on which mitigation measures are appropriate and why other improvements may not be successful for this particular scenario.

Streets serve multiple users and modes of transportation including passenger cars, pedestrians, bicycles, buses, and Emergency Service vehicles. As a result, measures used to affect the way vehicles operate on a street may also affect other users. Potential impacts to other modes of travel need to be considered to minimize or prevent unintended consequences.

#### **MEETING WITH BANDINI ELEMENTARY SCHOOL:**

**January 18, 2018:** Traffic Consultant staff met with the Principal of Bandini Elementary School, Ms. Benedetta Kennedy, on *Thursday, January 18, 2018 at 9:00 am.*

Staff discussed the concerns of the parents and the school and the Principal mentioned that their main concern is the existing location of the bus loading and unloading zone which is just south of the uncontrolled crosswalk on Coutts Avenue and Jillson Street. When the buses are lined up along the east side of Coutts Avenue behind the crosswalk the view of pedestrians waiting on the east side of Coutts Avenue is partially blocked making it difficult for vehicles traveling northbound on Coutts Avenue to see any pedestrians crossing from the east side of Coutts Avenue to the west side. The Principal also mentioned that there are some concerns with vehicles speeding along Coutts Avenue.

The bus loading and unloading zone used to be located along Kinsie Street but it was moved to Coutts Avenue according to the Principal because Kinsie Street is much narrower than Coutts Avenue and it would impede the flow of traffic causing congestion along Kinsie Street.

The Principal stated that she is out by the Coutts Avenue and Jillson Street intersection most mornings, when available, to direct vehicles into the school driveway and pedestrians across the driveway and across the uncontrolled crosswalk. The driveway provides access to the school parking lot which is available only to staff.

The school has 3 regular size buses dropping students off in the mornings and picking them up in the afternoons and one smaller special ed bus. In the morning the buses come in relatively close to each other but in the afternoons the buses come by to pick-up students during a staggered schedule. According to the Principal, the buses tend to park behind the crosswalk only in the mornings, but not in the afternoons. During the field observation it was observed that buses are parking behind the crosswalk in the mornings and in the afternoons.

Students start arriving at Bandini Elementary School from 7:40 am for the breakfast program until 8:15 am when school starts. The buses drop off students from 7:45 am to 8:10 am. Kindergarten students are not allowed to walk into the school by themselves, a parent or guardian must walk the kindergartener into the school so if they are driving they must find a place to park. Buses start arriving to pick-up students in the afternoons from 2:10 pm to 2:20 pm. All students are released from school at 2:20 pm, Monday thru Friday, and on selected minimum days students are released at 1:05 pm.

The Principal requested the City to look into additional measures that could be installed at the uncontrolled crosswalk to further warn motorists of crossing pedestrians and if it is possible to relocate the existing crossing guard from the Coutts Avenue and Kinsie Street intersection to the uncontrolled crosswalk on the south leg of the Coutts Avenue and Jillson Street intersection.

**February 07, 2018:** Laura Tilley the City's Public Safety Manager, Seung Yang the City's Deputy Director of Engineering Services, two officers who patrol Bandini Elementary School from the Los Angeles County Sheriff's department, and Traffic Consultant staff met with the Principal of Bandini Elementary School, Ms. Benedetta Kennedy, on *Wednesday, February 07, 2018 at 10:00 am.*

The Principal discussed the same concerns mentioned in the previous meeting that took place on January 18, 2018 with the buses blocking the view of pedestrians crossing from the east side to the west side at the uncontrolled crosswalk on the Coutts Avenue and Jillson Street intersection as well as the flashing pedestrian sign posted on the east side of the street. The Principal mentioned that in the afternoons when available she has a teacher or herself helping students cross the uncontrolled crosswalk at the intersection of Jillson Street and Coutts Avenue but that there are days when there is no one available to help cross students.

The officers present also mentioned additional concerns with the way vehicles stop at the intersection of Kinsie Street and Cowlin Avenue heading eastbound on Kinsie Street, they said that vehicles are currently stopping halfway into the crosswalk. They asked if additional red curb could be installed on the northwest and southwest corners of the intersection to give vehicles an unobstructed view of crossing pedestrians and pedestrians and an unobstructed view of oncoming vehicles and to install STOP bars in advance of the crosswalks, so vehicles know to stop ahead the crosswalk and not partially in the crosswalk like they are doing now. The officers mentioned that there's a pre-k class at the church located on the southeast corner of the Kinsie Street and Cowlin Avenue intersection.

#### **EXISTING CONDITIONS:**

The City directed Traffic Consulting staff to conduct an assessment of existing conditions which included an analysis and observation of the existing drop-off and pick-up process, parking and traffic conditions along Coutts Avenue, Leonis Street, Jillson Street and Kinsie Street and overall school circulation of the school campus during the morning and afternoon periods.

In order to find out what was happening along these streets, observations were taken over several periods and days. Staff observed what was happening near Bandini Elementary School; how parents picked up and dropped off students, where the parents are parking, the queues, and how they walked to and from the school. As a result of initial observations, field counts of vehicles and pedestrians were conducted. Field observations took place on January 25, 2018 while the school was in session and on a regular schedule.

**Coutts Avenue:** Coutts Avenue is approximately 40-feet in width with one lane in each direction and a posted speed limit of 25 mph. The sidewalk is approximately 5-feet wide on both sides of Coutts Avenue. The intersections of Coutts Avenue at Leonis Street, and at Kinsie Street are all way stop controlled. The 3-way intersection of Coutts Avenue at Jillson Street is uncontrolled along Coutts Avenue in the northbound and southbound direction and stop controlled along Jillson Street in the eastbound direction. There is an uncontrolled crosswalk at the south leg of the Coutts Avenue and Jillson Street intersection with flashing signs on both sides of the crosswalk and inroad lights activated by a pedestrian push button. Along the east side of Coutts Avenue, just north of the intersection of Jillson Street and Coutts Avenue is a designated red curbed (60-feet) school bus loading and unloading zone with posted signs that read "SCHOOL BUS LOADING AND UNLOADING 7AM TO 5PM SCHOOL DAYS ONLY". Just south of the uncontrolled crosswalk at the south



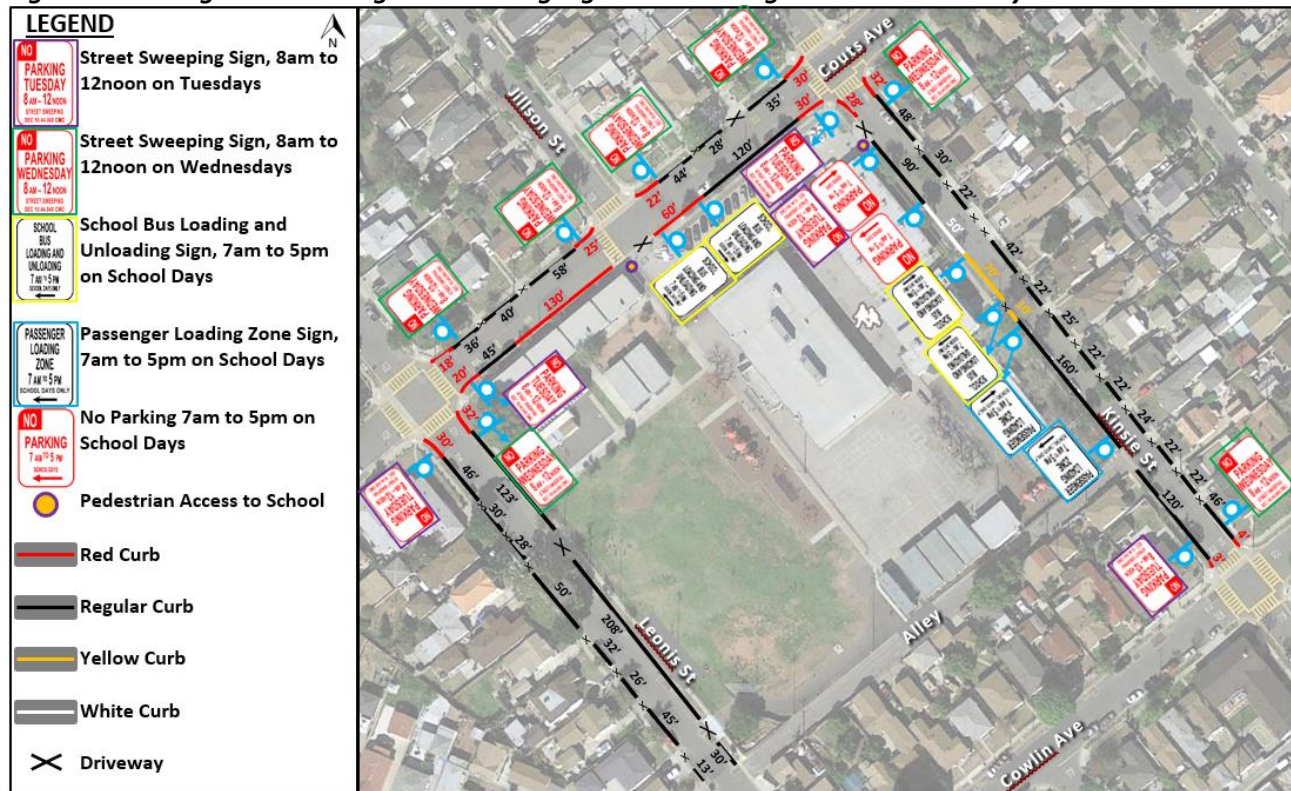
leg of the Coutts Avenue at Jillson Street intersection is 124-feet of red curb that buses also utilize for loading and unloading. This section of red curb is not signed with bus loading and unloading. There are no parking restrictions on the west side of the Coutts Avenue except during street sweeping on Wednesdays from 8:00 am to 12:00 pm. There is a gated driveway to a staff parking lot at the east side of the intersection of Coutts Avenue and Jillson Street for staff members only. There is a gated pedestrian access south of the staff parking lot driveway leading into Bandini Elementary School. Land use along Coutts Avenue is classified as single family residential and public facility where Bandini Elementary is located.

**Leonis Street:** Leonis Street is approximately 38-feet in width with one lane in each direction and a posted speed limit of 25 mph. The sidewalk is approximately 10-feet wide on both sides of Leonis Street. The intersections of Leonis Street at Coutts Avenue and at Cowlin Avenue are all stop controlled. There are no parking restrictions on the north nor south side of Leonis Street except during street sweeping on Wednesdays from 8:00 am to 12:00 pm on the north side and on Tuesdays from 8:00 am to 12:00 pm on the south side. Land use along Leonis Street is classified as single family residential with some light multiple residential and public facility where Bandini Elementary is located.

**Kinsie Street:** Kinsie Street is approximately 28-feet in width with one lane in each direction with a posted speed limit of 25 mph. The sidewalk is approximately 10-feet wide on both sides of Kinsie Street. The intersections of Kinsie Street at Coutts Avenue and at Cowlin Avenue are all way stop controlled. Along the south side of Kinsie Street, east of the intersection of Kinsie Street and Coutts Avenue there is approximately 90-feet of regular curb with signs prohibiting parking from 7:00 am to 5:00 pm on school days, approximately 52-feet of white curb with no posted signs, approximately 68-feet of yellow curb with signs designating the area as a school bus loading and unloading zone from 7:00 am to 5:00 pm on school days, and approximately 155-feet of regular curb with signs designating the area as a passenger loading zone from 7:00 am to 5:00 pm on school days. Parking is prohibited on the south side of Kinsie Street during street sweeping on Tuesdays from 8:00 am to 12:00 pm. There are no parking restrictions on the north side of the Kinsie Street except during street sweeping on Wednesdays from 8:00 am to 12:00 pm. There is a gated driveway at the south side of Kinsie Street just east of the intersection of Kinsie Street and Coutts Avenue for vehicles exiting only along the Bandini Elementary School on-site staff parking lot onto Kinsie Street. There are several pedestrian access gates from Kinsie Street leading into Bandini Elementary School. Land use along Kinsie Street is classified as single family residential and public facility where Bandini Elementary is located.

**Jillson Street:** Jillson Street is approximately 30-feet in width with one lane in each direction and a posted speed limit of 25 mph. Jillson Street runs for approximately 544-feet before coming to an end at Ransom Street. The sidewalk is approximately 10-feet wide on both sides of Jillson Street. The 3-way intersection of Coutts Avenue at Jillson Street is uncontrolled along Coutts Avenue in the northbound and southbound direction and stop controlled along Jillson Street in the eastbound direction. The 3-way intersection of Ransom Street at Jillson Street is uncontrolled along Ransom Street in the northbound and southbound direction and stop controlled along Jillson Street in the westbound direction. Bandini Elementary School is located east of the intersection of Coutts Avenue and Jillson Street. East of the intersection with Coutts Avenue is the on-site staff only parking lot. There are no parking restrictions on the north nor south side of Jillson Street except during street sweeping on Tuesdays from 8:00 am to 12:00 pm on the north side and on Wednesdays from 8:00 am to 12:00 pm on the south side. Land use along Jillson Street is classified as single family residential.

**Figure 3: Existing Curb Markings and Parking Signs Surrounding Bandini Elementary School**



Below is the school's profile including grades served, school address, approximate number of students, and the bell schedule.

- Serves K through 5th Grades
- School Address: 2318 Coutts Avenue, Commerce, CA 90040
- Approx. Number of Students: 464 (K-5th Grades)
- Bell Schedule:
  - Monday thru Friday: 8:10 am to 2:20 pm
  - Minimum Days: 8:10 am to 1:05 pm (9/16/17; 10/31/17; 11/13/17 - 11/17/17; 12/22/17; 3/19/18 – 3/23/18; 5/23/18; 6/15/18)
- Student/Passenger Loading and Unloading Zone:
  - West Side of Kinsie Street

#### **SCHOOL SITE DROP-OFF AND PICK UP LOCATIONS:**

Students are primarily being dropped off along Coutts Avenue between Leonis Street and Kinsie Street and along Kinsie Street between Coutts Avenue and Cowlin Avenue. *Figure 3: Existing Curb Markings and Parking Signs Surrounding Bandini Elementary School* shows the designated student loading and unloading zones as well as the school bus loading and unloading zones and the areas where regular parking is allowed. There are two designated school bus loading and unloading zones one marked by red curb on Coutts Avenue and the other by yellow curb on Kinsie Street and both locations have signs posted that read "School Bus Loading and Unloading Sign, 7am to 5pm on School Days" with arrows indicating where the school bus loading zone begins and ends. There is one designated student loading and unloading zone along Kinsie Street with posted signs that read "Passenger Loading Zone Sign, 7am to 5pm on School Days" with arrows indicating where the student loading and unloading zone begins and ends.