

Chapter 7: Recommendation

Context

Crows Landing Road varies in character along the two-mile study area. The northernmost stretch north of State Route 99 is industrial in nature with a small remnant of the former residential area along Blankenburg Avenue. The portion of the road between State Route 99 and Amador Avenue has a strong neighborhood character. Businesses are smaller and generally neighborhood-serving, with residential areas immediately adjacent. South of Amador Avenue, the character of the corridor is mixed: east of Crows Landing Road is a substantial industrial area, while west of Crows Landing Road is a mix of highway-oriented and neighborhood-oriented retail on larger lots. South of Algen Avenue, Crows Landing Road becomes primarily industrial and highway-oriented with development including a John Deere dealer, FedEx, and a mini-storage facility. The commercial development west of Crows Landing Road and south of Algen Avenue is immediately adjacent to residential development, but the uses are increasing highway-oriented moving south, rather than neighborhood-oriented. A substantial number of commercial buildings along Crows Landing Road are 40 to 60 years old. Although there are many examples of investment along the corridor in the last 25 years, there are significant opportunities for reinvestment and renewal.

Roadway Designation and Design Elements

In order to change Crows Landing Road from six lanes to four, the facility will need to be redesignated in the general plan from Principal Arterial to Minor Arterial. While this designation does not necessarily include all of the elements in the manner or dimensions illustrated in the Preferred Option, staff will recommend adopting those elements, with refinements to be made as needed. This recommendation varies from the Standard Specifications in several ways. Engineering best practices have been and will be employed to maximize safety for all travelers. Specifically, elements will include:

- 100-foot right of way (typical)
- 11-foot travel lanes (typical)
- raised medians (channel and refuge)
- 10-foot-wide sidewalks (typical)
- reduced/relocated driveways
- 6-foot-wide bicycle lanes (typical)
- 4-foot-wide buffers (typical)
- street trees at roadway edge

Priority Projects

Pedestrian Safety Perhaps the most pressing issue on Crows Landing Road is pedestrian safety. In spite of the traffic signal at Butte Avenue having been installed, in part, to improve pedestrian safety, two pedestrians have been struck by cars and killed in recent years near Glenn Avenue. Pedestrian safety improvements, such as refreshing pavement markings and installing push button-activated flashing signage to draw attention to pedestrians in the street, should be made a high priority. Increasing green times for pedestrians at traffic signals to allow children and the elderly to cross streets more safely, such as at Hatch Road and School Avenue, should also be evaluated and implemented based on contemporary transportation practices. Additional signage and other improvements to improve safety for school children should also be considered at School Avenue, which has a traffic signal, and possibly also for Crater Avenue/Barozzi Avenue, which does not have a signal, but where children cross Crows Landing Road nevertheless. Pedestrian refuge islands may be added at key locations to further improve safety. Further traffic-calming devices, such as speed bumps, should be considered on local streets in the vicinity of Shackelford Elementary School. Priority pedestrian projects include:

- Refresh crosswalk at Amador Avenue
- Consider additional flashing crosswalk at Glenn Avenue
- Increase standard green times at signals to allow safe crossing
- Signage and other improvements at School and Crater/Barozzi Avenues
- Traffic-calming devices on local streets near Shackelford School
- Install push button-activated flashing signage for crosswalk at Amador Avenue
- Install pedestrian refuge islands at crossings

Resurface/Restripe Visibility of road markings other than pedestrian crossings is also a problem on Crows Landing Road. The pavement surface is cracked and worn in many places, which prevents road markings from adhering to the pavement. Because of the amount of traffic Crows Landing Road carries, it should be made a high priority for resurfacing and restriping. When resurfacing and restriping occur, travel lanes will be reduced in width and bicycle lanes and buffers can be added, which will also improve pedestrian safety by moving traffic away from the curb and sidewalk, while providing additional safety and visibility for bicycle riders and for motorists exiting driveways and intersecting streets.

Further Study

Traffic Signals The traffic signal at Butte Avenue, in combination with the signal at Winmoore Way, creates traffic flow problems, particularly when a standard-length freight truck is caught between signals. Apparently the signal was installed to improve pedestrian safety, but pedestrian fatalities still occur north and south of Butte Avenue at Glenn and Amador Avenues, suggesting the need for a different solution or set of solutions to improve pedestrian safety. Modesto has planned to install a traffic signal at Glenn Avenue for many years, but has not yet done so, due to difficulty obtaining right of way. Furthermore, traffic speeds are high on the southernmost stretch of Crows Landing Road, where the greatest number of collisions also occurs. Reducing travel speeds will help improve safety by giving motorists more time to respond to changing road conditions and also by reducing the severity of collisions when they occur. Adding a traffic signal to Imperial Avenue should be considered to help reduce travel speeds and also to improve access to Crows Landing Road for the Industrial Fire Protection District's emergency vehicles. Careful consideration will be given to the effect of signal installation or removal on nearby intersections and on travel speeds.

Extended Raised Medians Raised medians have been recommended throughout Crows Landing Road with limited openings for left-in left-out traffic at intersections and driveways. Prior to the installation of substantial raised medians, city staff will meet with property owners and conduct driveway volume measurements, if necessary, to determine where medians should be open to allow left turns with careful consideration given to public safety.

On-Street Parking Evaluate whether on-street parking is desirable or necessary in conjunction with adjoining businesses. Care should be taken to avoid creating friction between neighboring businesses where customers or employees of one business may occupy parking on a nearby property. On-street parking can help pedestrians feel safer on the sidewalk by creating a buffer between them and moving traffic, but they can pose a hazard for bicyclists, who may need to avoid a suddenly-opened door.

Land Use

New or updated zoning regulations will need to be established to shape future development along Crows Landing Road. Such regulations will need to consider such issues as building locations, allowable land uses, and access standards. Additionally, zoning regulations will need to consider near-term and mid-term approaches for addressing non-conforming development. Modesto may develop a form-based code for the area, an overlay zone, or design guidelines or some combination of these to ensure a more vibrant, pedestrian-friendly environment. A general plan amendment may also be necessary, if Modesto wants to allow a mix of commercial and residential land uses. The primary focus should be to support and enhance the pedestrian-friendliness of Crows Landing Road between State Route 99 and Amador Avenue (both east and west), which has a distinct neighborhood orientation and the west side of Crows Landing Road between Amador and Algen Avenues, which has a similar character. These areas have good potential for redevelopment. Future development patterns for the segments of Crows Landing Road that are more industrial or highway-oriented should be given careful consideration with respect to expansion and reuse and secondarily for redevelopment. Access policies should be carefully thought out for the entire corridor in the context of neighborhood-, industry-, or highway-orientation.

As developed areas are annexed to Modesto, the City will continue to pursue its agreement with the County providing for the installation of infrastructure to City standards. Nevertheless, Modesto will also need to develop a strategy to install curb, gutter, and sidewalk along those portions of Amador and E. Glenn Avenues that have already been annexed

to Modesto. In coordination with Stanislaus County, Modesto will need to develop a strategy for consolidating driveways and retrofitting with vertical curbs and raising the sidewalks to grade.

