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MEMORANDUM

DATE: March 8, 2012
TO: Rob Brueck, HBA
FROM: Gordon Shaw, PE, AICP, LSC
SUBJECT: North Tahoe Dollar Creek Trail Traffic/Bicycle/Pedestrian Data Collection

As part of the environmental analysis for the North Tahoe Dollar Creek Trail project, LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc. conducted a series of counts and observations at the SR 28 crossing location during the peak summer period of 2011 and reviewed available traffic counts. This memo presents the data collected as part of this effort.

Intersection Counts

Table A presents intersection turning movement volumes observed on September 2nd, 2011 (Friday afternoon of Labor Day weekend). The peak hour total volume through the intersection was observed to be 1,013 vehicles.

Roadway Counts

Table B presents roadway directional traffic volumes on SR 28 just east of Dollar Drive, for the 2011 Memorial Day weekend. The busiest traffic day was Sunday, September 4th, with a total 2-way traffic volume of 13,796. The busiest hour of traffic activity on Friday and Saturday was in the late afternoon (around 4:00 PM), while on Sunday and Monday it occurred in the late morning (around 11:30 AM). In general, traffic volumes reach relatively high levels on a consistent basis between approximately 10:00 AM and 6:00 PM.

Historical Caltrans Traffic Counts

Caltrans maintains a count program throughout the state highway network, including along SR 28. The segment that includes the study location extends from Lake Forest Drive on the west to Lardin Way on the east. For the majority of count locations (including this one), counts are typically conducted on an annual basis in the summer and adjusted to reflect both average annual and peak month (August) traffic conditions, though not all locations are counted every year. Table C and Figure A show the counts for the period from 1994 to 2010 (the most recent available). As shown, traffic volumes (both average annual and peak month) increased between 1994 and 2007/2008, and have since been on a slight decline. Overall between 2000 and 2010, volumes declined by approximately 9 percent.

Traffic Speed Study

Two speed surveys were conducted of vehicles on SR 28 just east of Dollar Drive. One was conducted by LSC staff using a radar gun counting 100 vehicles in each direction, on July 27th 2011, between 12:48 PM and 1:48 PM. The staffer was instructed to count only through traffic (not drivers turning into and out of the adjacent streets and driveways). In the westbound direction, this yielded an average speed of 41 mph, and 85th percentile speed of 45 mph, and a maximum speed of 52 mph. In the eastbound direction, the average speed was observed to be 43 mph, the 85th percentile speed was 48 mph, and the maximum speed was 55 mph.

Counts were also conducted on August 5th, 2011 between 12:58 PM and 2:03 PM using an automated radar counter. A total of 1,063 vehicles were observed, including both through traffic on SR 29 as well as vehicles turning onto and off of the highway at nearby intersections. This count indicated an average speed of 37 mph and 38 mph in the eastbound and westbound directions, respectively, and an 85th percentile speed of 42 mph in both directions.

Gap Survey

An important consideration regarding a crossing of SR 28 by the proposed trail is whether adequate gaps are present in the traffic streams to allow trail users to perceive crossing opportunities that would not require drivers to slow or stop. This is a function of the time needed to cross the roadway, the traffic volume, and the distribution of traffic activity.

The width of SR 28 just to the east of Dollar Drive between the fog lines (edge of travel lanes) to the fog line on the east side of the highway is approximately 35 feet. With the existing striped westbound left turn lane, a trail user would need to cross the entire roadway, requiring gaps in both directions. An adequate gap for bicycle/pedestrian crossing at this location is 13 seconds. This includes a start-up time of 3 seconds (per ITE recommendations) and a walk speed of 3.5 feet per second (per recent changes in ITE and ADA recommendations), and assumes that bulb-outs allow trail users to wait just outside the edge of the existing traveled way.

Gap counts were conducted during two busy summer periods: on Friday, August 5th between 1 PM and 2 PM and on Friday September 2nd between 4 PM and 5 PM. As shown in Table D, during the August 5th counts, 23 adequate gaps per hour were observed, while the September 2nd counts identified 19 adequate gaps per hour. Considering the proportion of randomly-arriving trail users that would arrive during periods of adequate gap and the average wait for an adequate gap of the remainder of trail users, during peak hours trail users would be required to wait an average of 77

seconds (1 minute 17 seconds) for an adequate gap in two-way traffic during the August 5th counts, and 94 seconds (1 minute 34 seconds) during the September 2nd counts¹. The 2010 edition of the *Highway Capacity Manual* (Institute of Transportation Engineers, 2010) provides Level Of Service (LOS) criteria for pedestrian crossings at uncontrolled legs of a Stop sign controlled intersection or at mid-block locations. These average delays would far exceed the LOS F standard of 45 seconds. This LOS is defined as “*delay exceeds tolerance level, high likelihood of pedestrian risk taking.*” (TRB, p 19-2). It can be concluded from this evaluation that simply striping a crosswalk at this location would not provide adequate crossing conditions. Evaluation of more extensive crossing options will be conducted in future tasks, once the trail use estimates have been completed.

Driver Sight Distance

Another key factor in assessing trail crossings is driver sight distance, specifically “stopping sight distance.” This is the minimum distance along a direction of travel that a driver can observe an object or person in the roadway (such as someone crossing at-grade), react, and bring the vehicle to a safe stop. This distance varies, of course, with speed. With a posted speed limit of 45 mph and observed 85th percentile speeds of 42 to 48 mph, a design speed of 50 mph is appropriate. At this speed, Table 201.1 of the Caltrans Highway Design Manual (6th Edition, 2006 as updated) indicates that a stopping sight distance of 430 feet is needed.

LSC staff conducted sight distance measurements, consistent with Caltrans methodology. Sight distance was measured at three locations: mid-way between the Dollar Drive intersection and the 7-11 driveway, just east of the Dollar Drive intersection, and approximately 370 feet to the east at the widest point of the painted median formed by the redirect taper for the westbound left turn pocket for Dollar Drive. As sight distance can differ across the roadway, this distance was measured both at the north and south edges of the existing pavement. As shown in Table E, the minimum sight distance was found to be 750 feet for the westernmost location, 640 for the center location, and 490 feet for the easternmost location, all of which meet the minimum required stopping sight distance. This distance is generally better to the west than to the east, where the vertical curve at the crest of Dollar Hill limits the available sight distance.

These sight distances can be used along with the observed speeds to estimate the length of time (in seconds) that a trail users can perceive oncoming traffic, in order to judge a gap of sufficient length to avoid needing to rely on drivers needing to slow or stop. As shown in the right portion of Table E, a minimum of 11.1 seconds would be provided looking west for trail users at the location between Dollar Drive and 7-11, and 10.7 looking east. As 13 seconds would be required to cross the entire roadway, trail users at this location would not be able to determine if they have adequate time in the westbound traffic stream. If a median refuge area were to be provided at this location that would allow a two-stage crossing (with trail users needing to observe a gap in only one traffic stream at a time), 8 seconds would be required to cross each travel lane. The northbound trail user at the south edge of pavement (or the southbound trail user at the south edge of the center median) would only need to judge gaps in one direction at a time, and would have more than adequate sight distance to do so.

At the Dollar Drive location, 13.5 seconds would be provided for trail users looking to the west, but only 9.1 to 9.9 seconds looking to the east. As 13 seconds would be required to cross the entire roadway, trail users at this location would not be able to determine if they have adequate time in the westbound traffic stream.

¹ To be conservative, it was assumed that no drivers yield to pedestrians waiting at the crossing, at all locations.

At the location 370' to the east of Dollar Drive, there is more than adequate time to observe gaps in the traffic coming from the west, but only 7.0 seconds (at the south edge of pavement) to 9.5 seconds (at the north edge of pavement) available to observe traffic coming from the east. A median refuge could also potentially be provided at this location.

References

ITE Manual of Transportation Engineering Studies, Institution of Transportation Engineers, 2010

HCM 2010: Highway Capacity Manual, Transportation Research Board, 2010

Highway Design Manual, 6th Edition, California Department of Transportation, 2006 as amended

Caltrans Traffic Volume Webpage at <http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/traffops/saferesr/trafdata/index.htm>

TABLE A: Intersection Count

Intersection: SR28/ Dollar Drive
 Location: Tahoe City/ Dollar Hill
 North/South Street: Dollar Drive
 East/West Street: SR 28

Date: 9/2/2001 Friday
 Time: 3:30PM-5:30 PM
 Name: Jason
 Project #: 117250

Time Period	NB - Dollar Dr			SB			EB - SR 28			WB		
	Left	Thru	Right	Left	Thru	Right	Left	Thru	Right	Left	Thru	Right
3:30PM	3	0	9	0	0	0	0	128	18	6	104	0
3:45PM	9	0	6	0	0	0	0	115	8	5	95	0
4:00PM	7	0	7	0	0	0	0	112	13	4	83	0
4:15PM	6	0	8	0	0	0	0	139	9	6	87	0
4:30PM	5	0	6	0	0	0	0	132	8	9	83	0
4:45PM	11	0	10	0	0	0	0	117	9	4	102	0
5:00PM	10	0	5	0	0	0	0	128	11	6	102	0
5:15PM	6	0	3	0	0	0	0	116	11	3	80	0
PM Peak Hour Volume	32	0	29	0	0	0	0	516	37	25	374	0
PM Peak Hour Factor	0.73	-	0.73	-	-	-	-	0.93	0.84	0.69	0.92	-

Source: LSC Transproation Consultants, Inc.

TABLE B: Directional Traffic Counts -- SR 28 just East of Dollar Drive

15-Min Period	Westbound				Eastbound				2-Way 15-Minute Total				Total 2-Way Hourly Total			
	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon
Beginning	9/2/2011	9/3/2011	9/4/2011	9/5/2011	9/2/2011	9/3/2011	9/4/2011	9/5/2011	9/2/2011	9/3/2011	9/4/2011	9/5/2011	9/2/2011	9/3/2011	9/4/2011	9/5/2011
0:00	5	10	22	13	11	17	17	25	18	27	39	38	45	116	111	127
0:15	5	9	5	18	10	22	24	12	15	31	29	28	38	115	84	110
0:30	3	4	15	13	6	25	9	12	9	29	24	25	26	104	74	91
0:45	2	8	9	18	3	21	10	20	5	29	19	36	23	87	70	80
1:00	2	8	7	9	5	20	5	12	7	28	12	21	23	81	62	59
1:15	2	9	7	4	3	11	12	5	5	20	19	9	22	67	88	45
1:30	2	3	9	7	4	9	11	7	6	12	20	14	20	60	53	52
1:45	3	13	3	8	2	10	8	9	5	23	11	15	17	55	48	42
2:00	2	6	8	5	4	8	8	2	6	12	16	7	15	34	42	30
2:15	2	3	5	8	1	10	1	6	3	13	6	18	10	28	31	30
2:30	2	4	3	3	1	3	10	1	3	7	13	4	9	21	32	19
2:45	1	1	3	1	2	1	4	2	3	2	7	3	6	16	32	19
3:00	1	3	2	5	0	3	3	2	1	6	5	7	8	19	30	18
3:15	1	2	8	2	1	4	1	3	2	8	7	5	10	17	32	12
3:30	0	1	3	3	0	1	10	1	0	2	13	4	11	15	34	11
3:45	3	3	2	1	2	2	3	1	5	5	5	2	16	23	33	12
4:00	2	2	4	0	1	2	3	1	3	4	7	1	19	27	39	15
4:15	1	1	8	2	2	3	3	2	3	4	9	4	21	24	35	21
4:30	3	3	5	3	2	7	7	2	5	10	12	5	28	22	31	26
4:45	5	4	7	5	3	5	4	0	6	9	11	5	36	24	34	36
5:00	4	1	1	4	1	0	2	3	5	1	3	7	80	25	34	50
5:15	6	1	4	8	2	1	1	1	6	2	5	9	93	37	49	73
5:30	12	10	4	11	3	2	11	4	15	12	15	15	139	61	67	81
5:45	25	9	10	14	7	1	1	5	32	10	11	19	211	85	88	115
6:00	22	7	12	18	16	6	8	12	38	13	16	30	270	118	123	138
6:15	32	13	14	12	22	13	9	5	54	28	23	17	342	155	160	152
6:30	57	19	17	32	30	17	17	17	87	38	34	49	435	201	205	199
6:45	81	28	33	28	30	15	15	14	91	43	48	42	478	237	244	237
7:00	75	32	29	28	35	18	28	18	110	50	55	44	555	294	308	287
7:15	96	41	36	39	51	31	32	25	147	72	68	64	837	349	377	348
7:30	82	44	38	55	46	28	35	32	128	72	73	67	863	387	418	414
7:45	111	59	74	64	59	41	38	28	170	100	112	92	888	449	489	484
8:00	127	54	68	70	65	51	58	35	192	105	124	105	687	513	574	527
8:15	93	65	57	85	80	45	50	45	173	110	107	130	627	577	620	575
8:30	71	85	85	80	80	49	81	57	151	134	146	137	604	628	702	595
8:45	102	99	121	95	89	65	76	60	171	164	197	155	602	879	772	806
9:00	80	88	81	85	52	71	89	68	132	169	170	153	593	707	813	648
9:15	86	87	115	101	64	72	74	49	150	159	189	150	650	724	884	880
9:30	78	104	139	90	71	83	77	58	149	187	216	148	683	773	919	754
9:45	86	107	155	128	76	85	83	71	162	192	238	197	721	797	975	789
10:00	111	105	148	118	78	81	95	69	189	188	241	185	721	835	983	808
10:15	97	107	135	142	86	101	89	82	183	208	224	224	708	875	990	857
10:30	103	132	169	109	84	79	103	74	167	211	272	183	722	872	1069	825
10:45	89	149	148	128	73	81	98	90	162	230	248	216	727	898	1087	878
11:00	101	131	146	157	75	95	102	77	178	228	248	234	769	888	1121	887
11:15	94	115	147	111	103	90	156	81	197	205	303	192	809	921	1175	854
11:30	108	117	180	129	84	120	130	105	192	237	290	234	839	955	1179	928
11:45	102	118	137	138	102	104	143	89	204	220	280	227	830	947	1165	878
12:00	97	131	155	123	119	128	147	78	218	259	302	201	825	986	1135	841
12:15	99	118	145	148	128	121	162	118	227	239	307	264	828	959	1093	847
12:30	83	108	138	95	100	121	140	91	183	229	278	186	798	978	1068	805
12:45	83	130	124	94	116	129	126	96	199	259	250	190	819	951	1050	812
13:00	95	112	126	107	122	120	134	100	217	232	260	207	829	959	1075	825
13:15	102	112	139	117	97	144	141	105	199	258	280	222	857	953	1080	810
13:30	97	95	129	103	107	109	131	90	204	204	260	193	863	955	1105	787
13:45	103	141	158	108	106	128	117	95	209	267	275	203	911	991	1148	786
14:00	101	100	139	100	144	128	138	92	245	228	275	192	945	954	1134	787
14:15	77	107	135	102	128	151	160	97	205	258	285	199	946	954	1150	789
14:30	115	100	170	85	137	140	133	107	252	240	303	192	967	928	1111	792
14:45	103	90	125	100	140	140	138	104	243	230	281	204	970	928	1058	774
15:00	104	100	136	91	142	126	155	103	246	228	291	194	964	942	1051	787
15:15	83	91	118	78	143	141	138	124	228	232	258	202	938	968	1031	782
15:30	100	107	117	78	155	133	131	98	255	240	248	174	957	995	1053	778
15:45	106	100	121	83	131	144	135	114	237	244	258	197	932	1015	1082	788
16:00	91	114	129	101	129	138	142	108	220	250	271	209	936	1029	1117	777
16:15	86	101	133	93	157	160	145	103	245	281	278	196	975	1048	1119	739
16:30	87	118	128	80	143	142	149	108	230	260	277	186	946	1049	1083	738
16:45	110	109	139	81	131	149	152	105	241	258	291	186	928	999	1048	748
17:00	118	106	122	55	143	163	151	116	259	289	273	171	897	960	989	741
17:15	84	101	91	103	132	161	161	92	218	262	252	195	850	928	938	718
17:30	71	101	92	73	139	109	138	121	210	210	230	194	618	890	922	678
17:45	100	98	89	79	112	121	145	102	212	219	234	191	780	874	904	608
18:00	92	102	92	68	120	135	130	80	212	237	222	148	724	823	892	559
18:15	83	105	88	68	101	119	150	87	184	224	238	155	643	738	877	522
18:30	82	71	75	59	90	123	137	67	172	194	212	128	591	873	858	465
18:45	67	78	90	59	89	92	132	73	158	168	222	132	521	621	851	424
19:00	50	68	91	47	61	84	116	62	131	152	207	109	461	563	800	383
19:15	58	89	89	50	74	90	128	48	132	159	215	98	420	529	754	358
19:30	51	81	81	42	51	81	146	43	102	142	207	85	394	504	670	331
19:45	40	52	62	32	58	59	109	59	98	110	171	91	391	478	567	311
20:00	36	63	75	31	54	55	86	53	90	118	181	84	382	491	510	278
20:15	37	50	41	27	89	84	90	44	106	134	131	71	397	487	439	265
20:30	28	53	35	21	71	61	69	44	99	114	104	65	400	445	418	244
20:45	35	46	50	22	62	79	84	34	97	125	114	56	368	417	403	231
21:00	27	40	35	24	68	74	55	39	95	114	90	63	360	378	378	211
21:15	35	38	41	17	74	58	69	43	109	92	110	60	342	354	362	174
21:30	28	27	35	21	37	59	54	31	65	86	89	52	299	346	327	168
21:45	22	41	34	15	69	45	53	21	91	88	87	38	282	332	316	133
22:00	28	35	29	12	51	55	47	14	77	90	76	28	280	305	285	118
22:15	22	34	31	14	44	50	44	28	68							

TABLE C: Summary of Caltrans Counts on SR 28

For Segment Between Lake Forest Dr. (MP 1.845) and Lardin Way (MP 4.25)

Year	Average Annual Daily Traffic	Average Daily Traffic in Peak Month (August)
1994	11,400	14,800
1995	11,400	14,800
1996	11,400	14,800
1997	12,200	15,700
1998	12,400	15,500
1999	12,100	15,100
2000	12,100	15,100
2001	12,100	15,100
2002	12,100	15,100
2003	12,100	15,100
2004	12,100	15,100
2005	11,500	14,400
2006	11,300	14,100
2007	11,300	14,100
2008	11,000	13,700
2009	11,000	13,700
2010	11,000	13,700
Change: 2000 to 2010		
Value	-1,100	-1,400
Percent	-9.1%	-9.3%
Average Annual Change: 2000 to 2010		
	-0.9%	-1.0%

Figure A: Historical Caltrans Traffic Counts on SR 28 at Dollar Hill

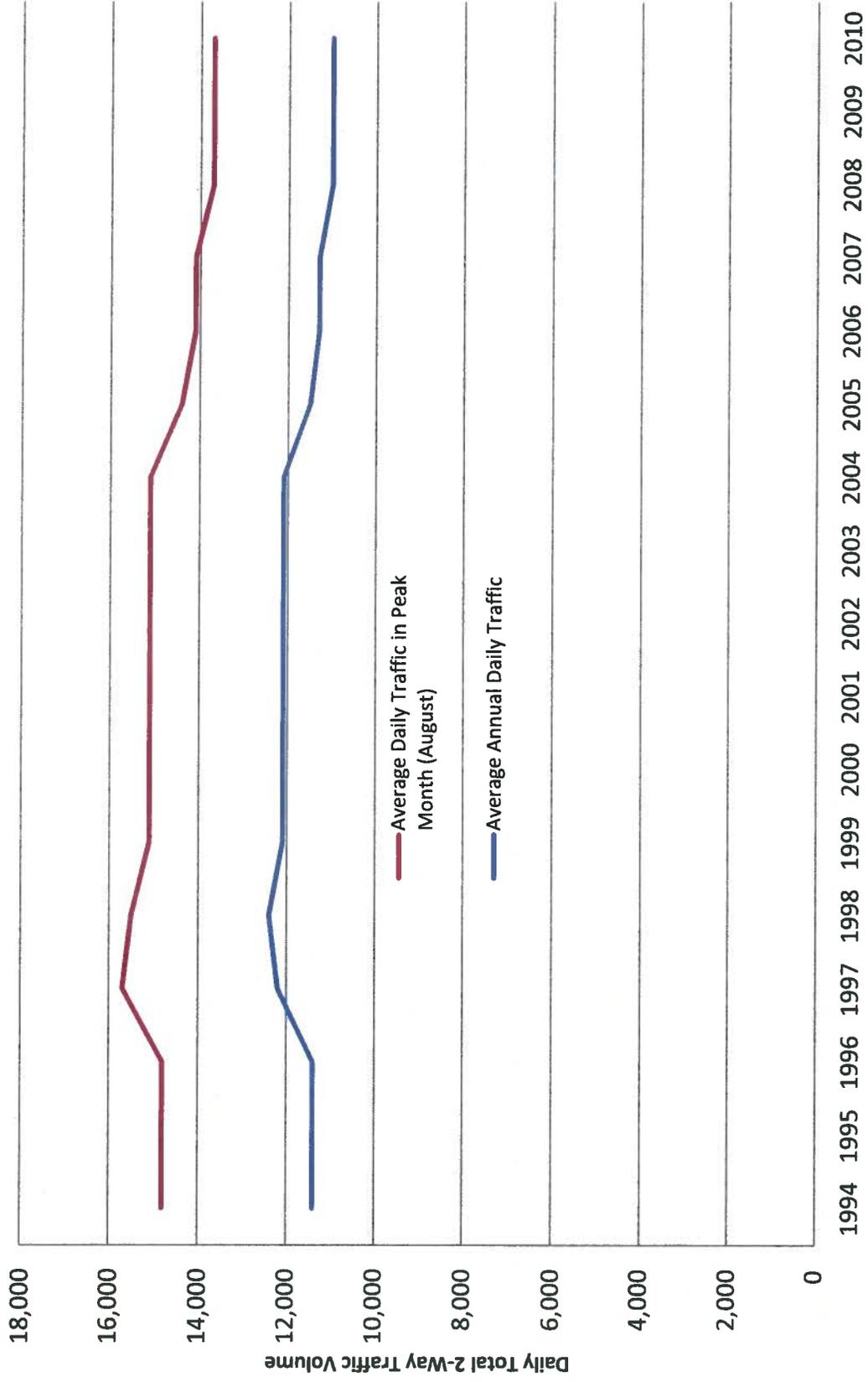


Table D: Gaps in SR 28 Traffic and Pedestrian Crossing LOS

Adequate Gaps Shown in Box

Count Interval			Number of Gaps per Hour by Length of Gap in Seconds																2-Way Volume			
Date	From	To	2 to 3	4 to 5	6 to 7	8 to 9	10 to 11	12 to 13	14 to 15	16 to 17	18 to 19	20 to 21	22 to 23	24 to 25	26 to 27	28 to 29	>29					
8/5/2011	1:00PM	2:00PM	126	118	46	28	22	20	10	5	2	1	2	1	0	0	2	988				
Minimum Gap for Crossing Both Directions							13	Seconds														
# of Adequate Gaps							23	Per Hour														
Average Time Between Adequate Gaps							2	Minutes	37	Seconds												
Average Trail User Wait Time for Adequate Gap							77	Seconds														
Pedestrian LOS							F															
9/2/2011	4:00 PM	5:00 PM	116	81	50	32	21	20	9	4	2	1	0	1	1	0	1	936				
Minimum Gap for Crossing Both Directions							13	Seconds														
# of Adequate Gaps							19	Per Hour														
Average Time Between Adequate Gaps							3	Minutes	9	Seconds												
Average Trail User Wait Time for Adequate Gap							94	Seconds														
Pedestrian LOS							F															

Source: LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc.

Table E: Existing Sight Distances on SR 28

Location	Stopping Sight Distance (feet)		Estimated Observable Gap Time for Trail Users (Seconds)	
	To the West	To the East	To the West	To the East
Between Dollar Drive and 7-11				
South Edge of Pavement	880	750	12.5	10.7
North Edge of Pavement	780	860	11.1	12.2
East Approach to Dollar Drive				
South Edge of Pavement	950	640	13.5	9.1
North Edge of Pavement	950	695	13.5	9.9
370' East of Dollar Drive (at Widest Point of Striped Median Island)				
South Edge of Pavement	1,230	490	17.5	7.0
North Edge of Pavement	1,160	670	16.5	9.5
Note 1: At an 85th percentile vehicle speed of 48 mph. Source: LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc.				