

Chatsworth Street

A Walkable Street Proposal

BACKGROUND

Granada Hills is a neighborhood in the San Fernando Valley surrounded by the communities of North Hills and Northridge to the south, Mission Hills and Sylmar to the east, and Porter Ranch to the west. Many Freeways run through Granada Hills: the Ronald Reagan (118), San Diego (405) and the Golden State (I 5). Granada Hills is approximately 15 square miles and contains many arterial roads such as Balboa Boulevard, Rinaldi Street, San Fernando Mission Boulevard, and Chatsworth Street.



PURPOSE

The purpose of the project was to analyze elements at the site that encourage/discourage individuals to walk and bike. The URBS 440 Community Based Urban Design class at California State University, Northridge studied Chatsworth Street between Lindley Avenue and Encino Avenue in order to propose a more pedestrian and bicycle friendly environment.

Cover Page by Cesar Correa

PROCESS

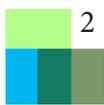
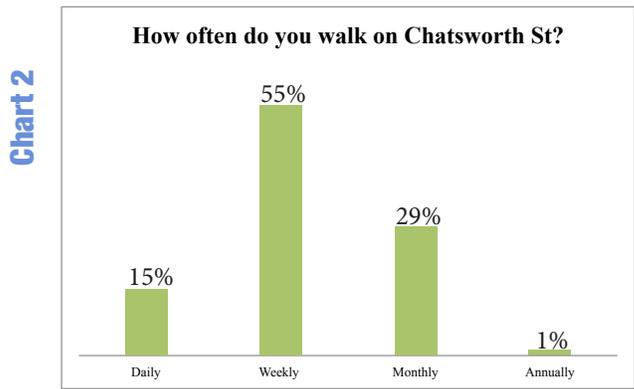
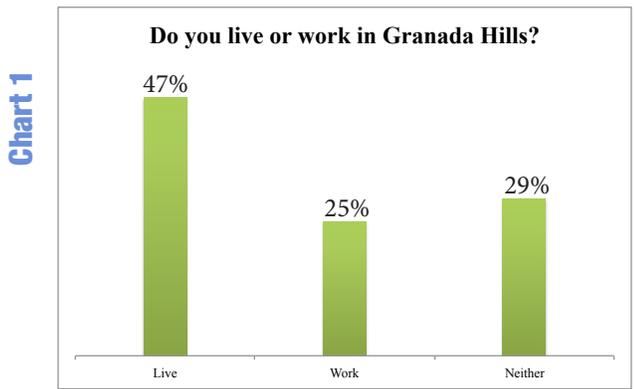
Two methods of data collection were used in this study. The first part of the study was a questionnaire that was administered to individuals walking on Chatsworth Street. The questionnaires contained six questions that accessed 1) whether the respondent lived or worked in Granada Hills 2) the best and worst characteristics of the street, and 3) the frequency of the pedestrians, cyclists, and public transit users. The second method was a set of student lead observations that enabled the analysis of specific elements: Land use, Façade openings, Streetscape for sidewalk, Streetscape for roadbed, Sidewalk surface quality, Sidewalk accessibility, Pedestrians and cyclists, Public transit users, Traffic volume, Crosswalk use, Traffic safety, and Weather elements.

QUESTIONNAIRES

Student researchers were designated to conduct twenty surveys throughout a specific portion of Chatsworth Street. The questionnaire consisted of six questions, which were asked to individuals who either lived or worked in Granada Hills or the surrounding neighborhoods. Question one assessed the association the individual had with Chatsworth St. and the frequency of visits. Question two and three asked the individual what the two best and worst characteristics of Chatsworth St.. Question four, five, and six asked the frequency for which each activity was performed: walking, cycling, skateboarding, or transit usage.

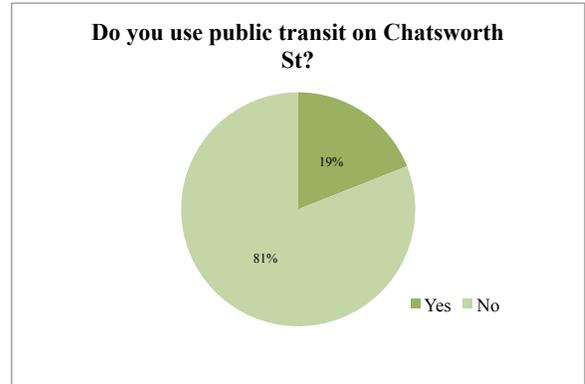
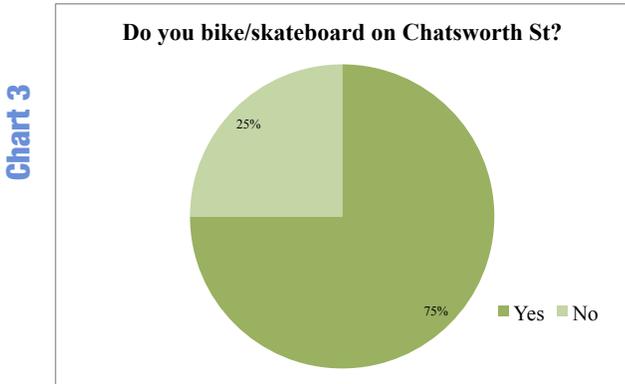
QUESTIONNAIRE OUTCOMES

The compilation of answers provided by respondents concluded that some activities are performed more often than others. Of 355 respondents, 47% lived, 25% worked, and 29% were just visiting Granada Hills (Chart 1). Of 367 respondents, 55% walk Chatsworth Street on a weekly basis (Chart 2).



QUESTIONNAIRE OUTCOMES

Of 374 respondents, 75% bike on Chatsworth Street (Chart 3).
 Of 380 respondents, 19% use public transit (Chart 4).



Best and worst characteristics:

Respondents were asked to identify two of the best and worst characteristics of Chatsworth Street.

The best characteristics identified were the pleasant environment, wide sidewalks, restaurants and shops, cleanliness, shade, and visible crosswalks (Chart 5).

The worst characteristics identified were traffic congestion, trash on sidewalks, lack of crosswalks, car travel speed, sidewalk quality, and lack of bike lanes (Chart 6).

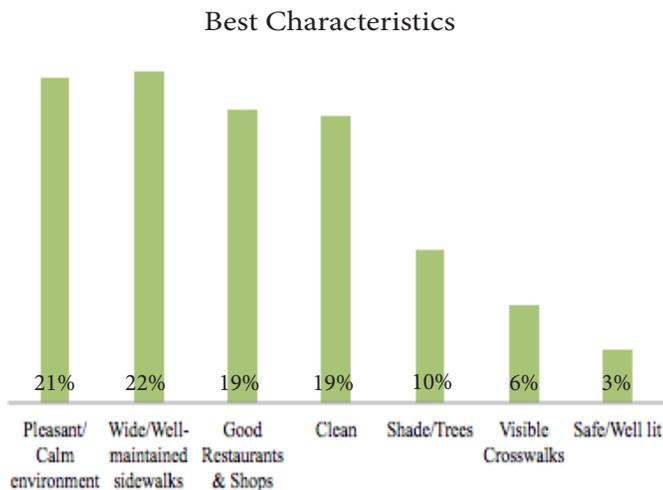


Chart 5

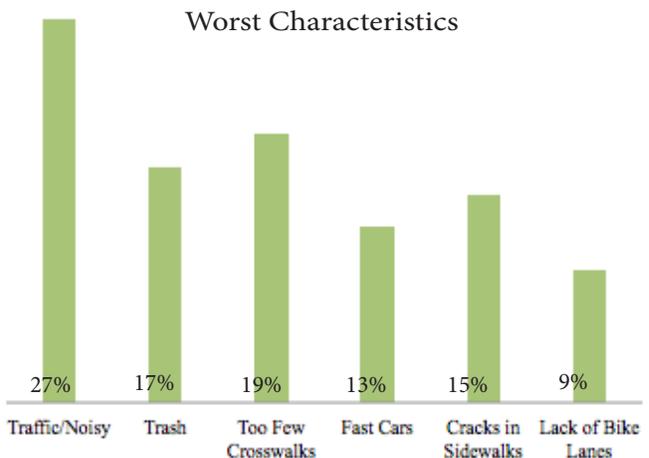


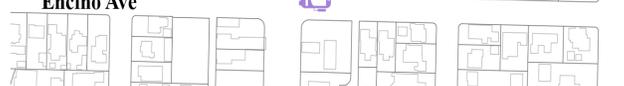
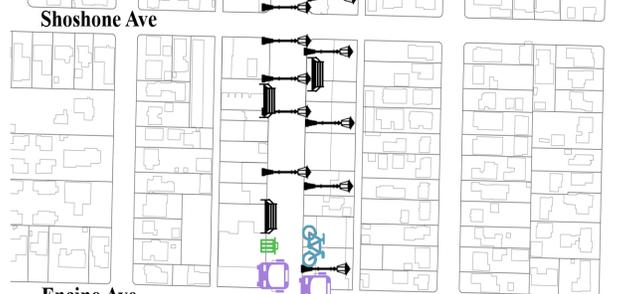
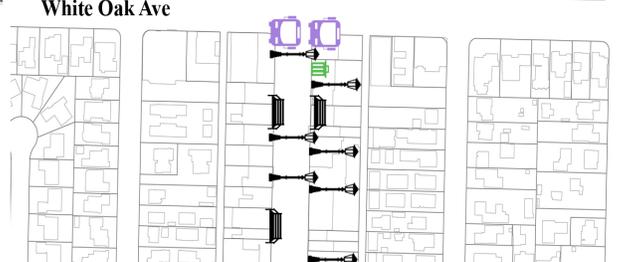
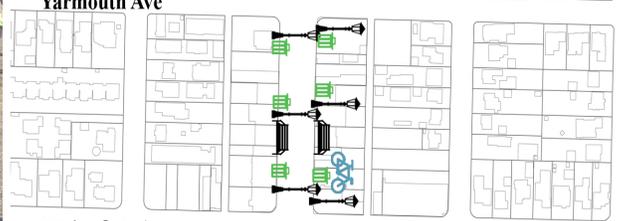
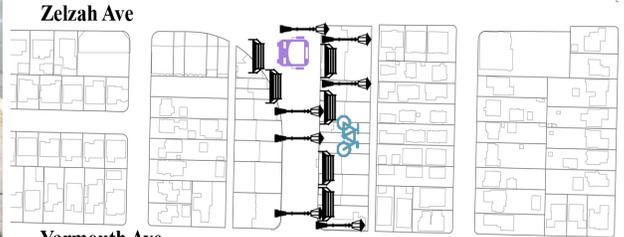
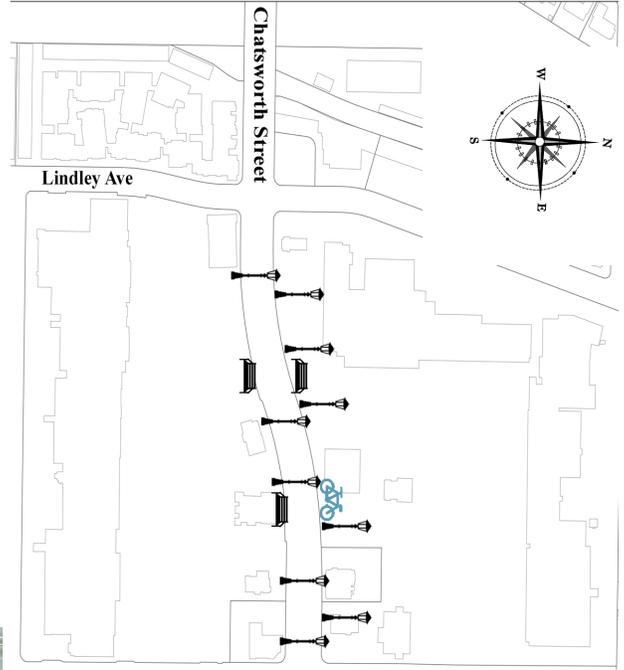
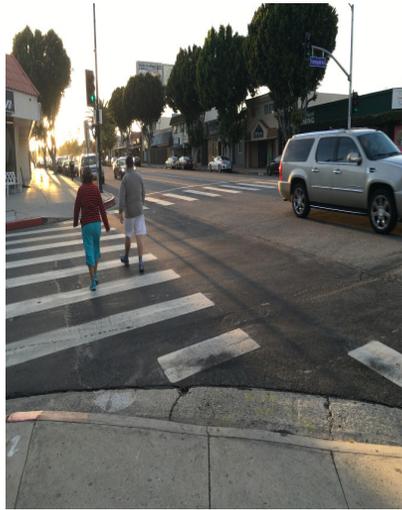
Chart 6



OBSERVATION OUTCOMES

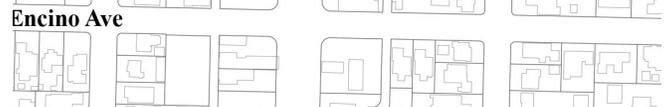
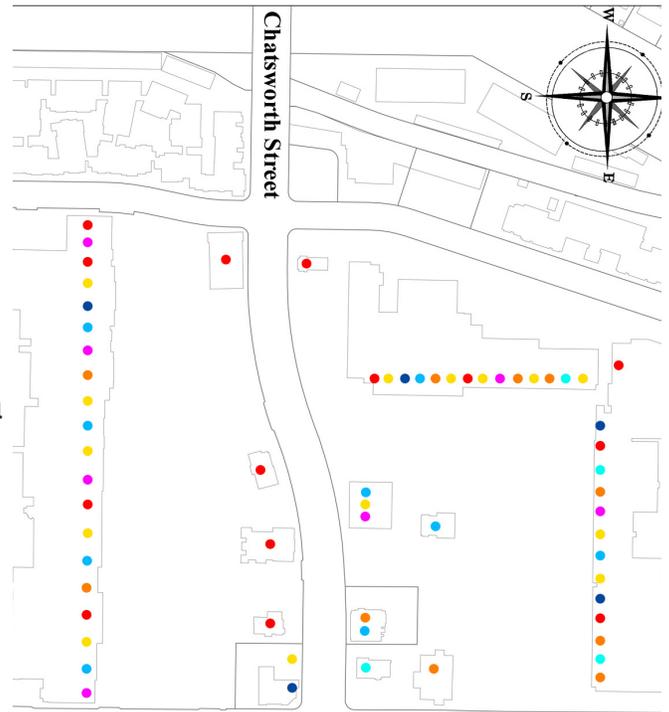
STREETSCAPE

Streetscape is defined as the appearance of a street, and for Chatsworth Street, it was ranked one of the highest in the best characteristics category in questionnaire outcomes. Streetscape can influence a pedestrian friendly environment because it encompasses aesthetics. The questionnaires revealed that the top two responses for best characteristics were: pleasant/calm environment and wide well maintained sidewalks.



LAND USE

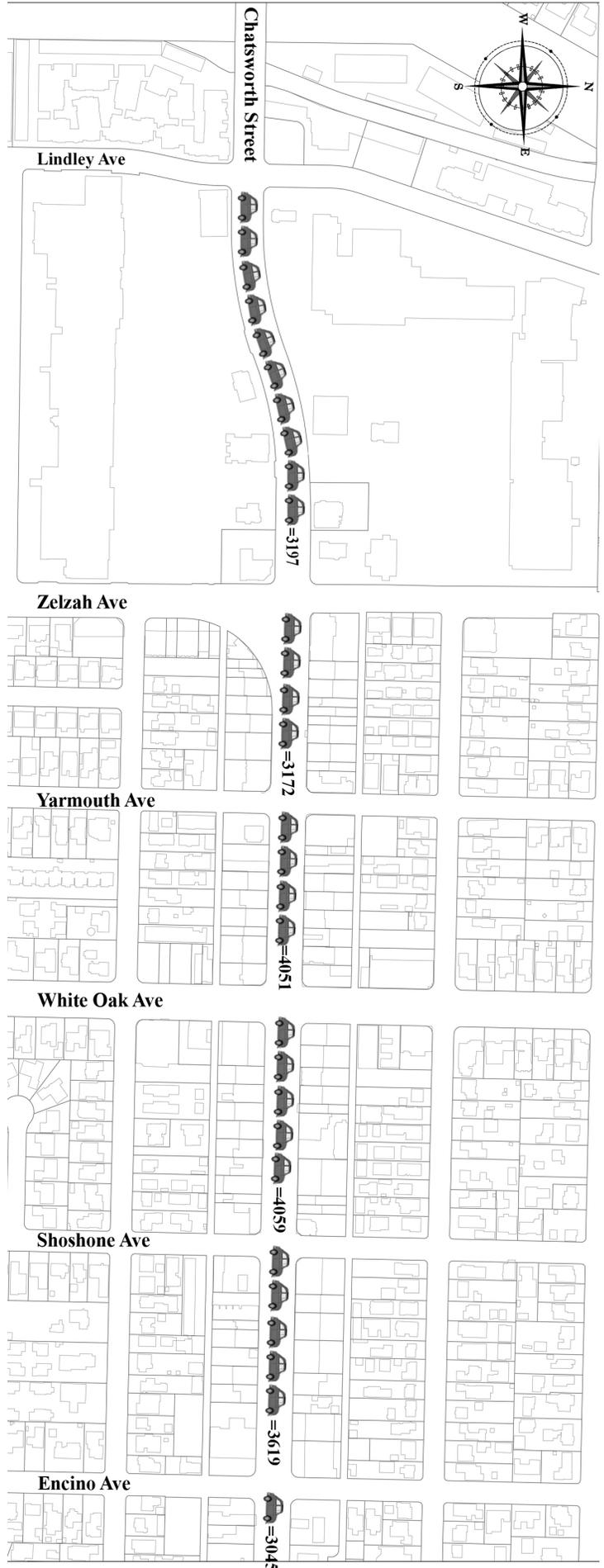
Land use on Chatsworth Street is diverse, it contains: big box, retail, restaurants, offices, café's, fast food, personal care, and banks. The diverse set of businesses that line Chatsworth Street ranked land use the third best characteristic in questionnaire outcomes. This diversified usage enables residents in Granada Hills a facilitated access to many businesses.



- Land Use Legend**
- Big Box
 - Restaurants
 - Fast Food
 - Personal Care
 - Retail
 - Office
 - Bakery/Cafe
 - Banks

TRAFFIC VOLUME

Traffic volume on Chatsworth Street was ranked the top worst characteristic from the questionnaire outcomes. The map illustrates the amount of cars counted in a thirty minute time frame on a Friday afternoon.



Traffic Volume Legend

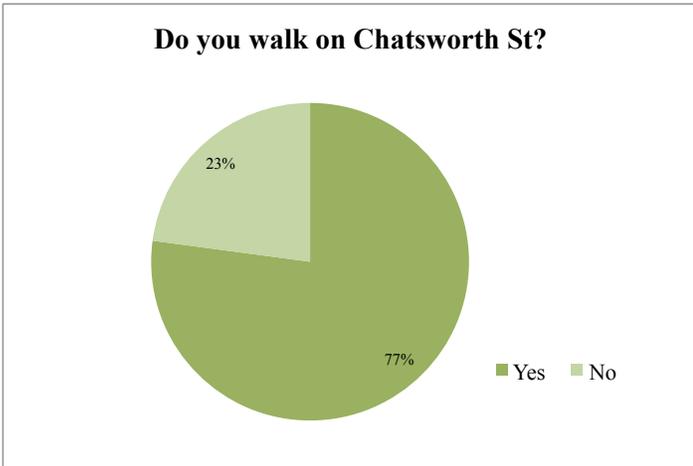
 = 1000 Cars



CIRCULATION

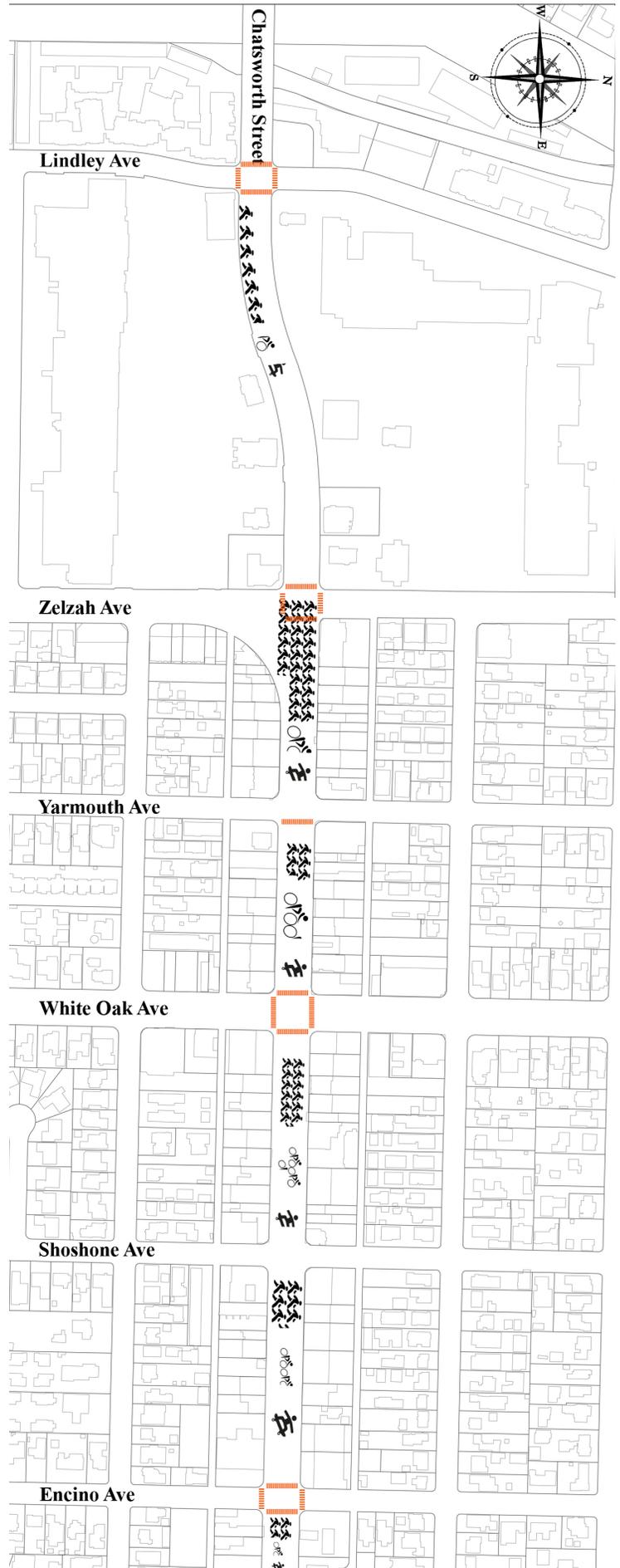
Circulation encompasses pedestrian, bicyclist, and skateboarder count, on Chatsworth Street. Student lead observations on Chatsworth Street revealed that walking is the most commonly used method of transportation when compared to transit and cyclists.

The questionnaires also revealed the same, with 77% of people surveyed answering that they walk on Chatsworth Street.



Circulation Legend

- = 10 Pedestrians
- = 5 Cyclists
- = 5 Skateboarders

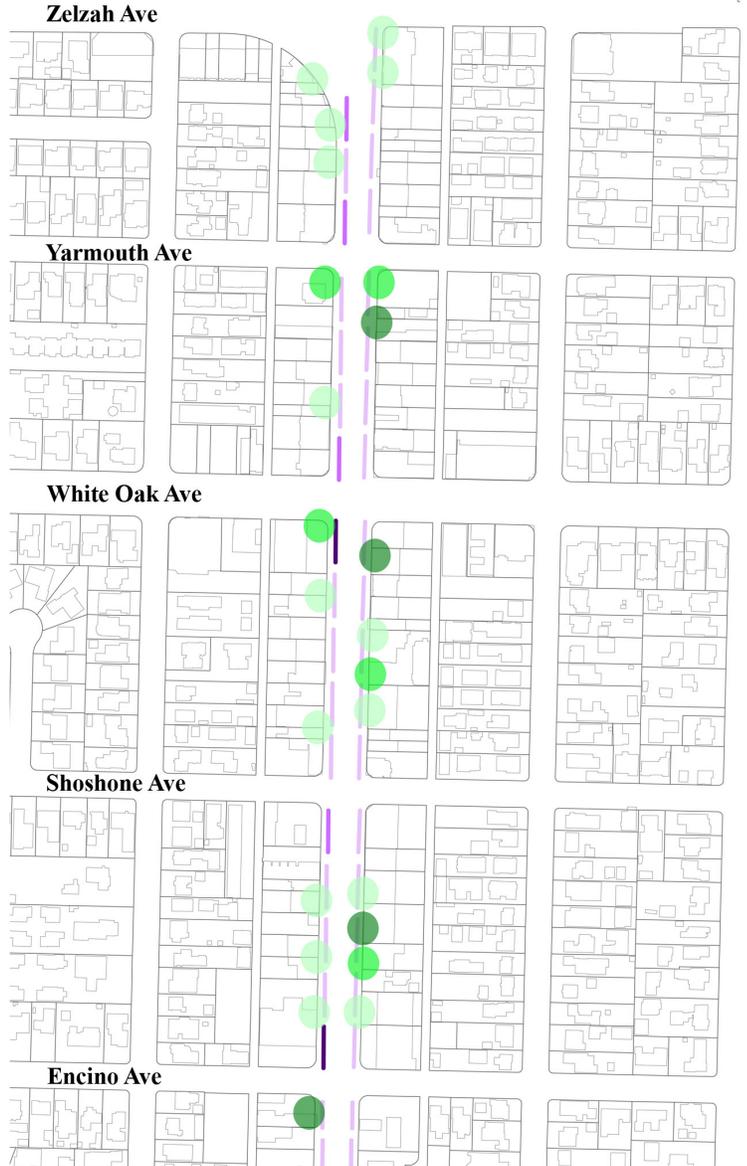
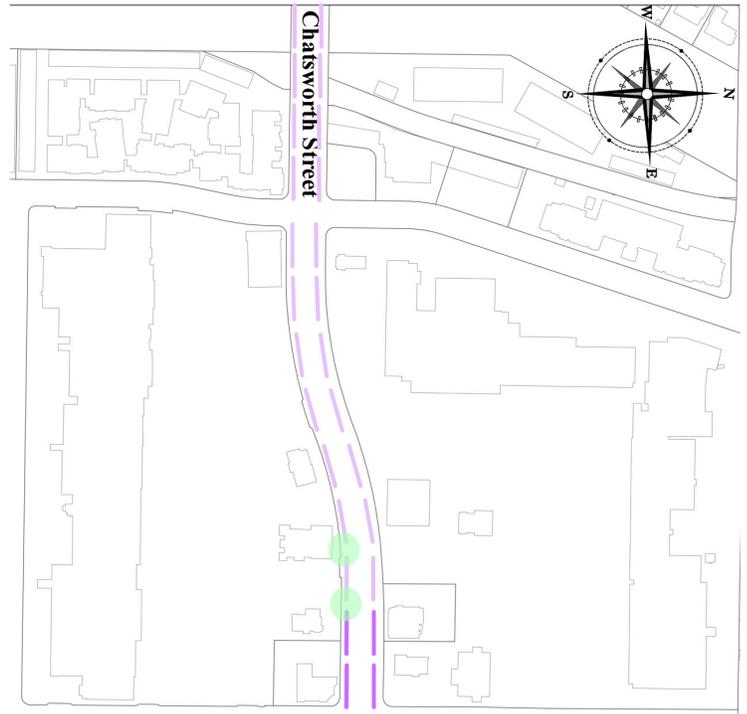


SIDEWALK QUALITY

Sidewalk Quality and Cleanliness on Chatsworth Street appeared in both the student observation and the questionnaires.

Sidewalk cleanliness ranked first in the “best characteristics” portion of the survey, but sidewalk quality ranked fourth in the “worst characteristics” portion of the survey.

Student lead observations revealed that sidewalks were mostly clean and well maintained.



Sidewalk Quality Legend

Cracks on sidewalk

- Visible
- Moderate
- Severe

Sidewalk Cleanliness

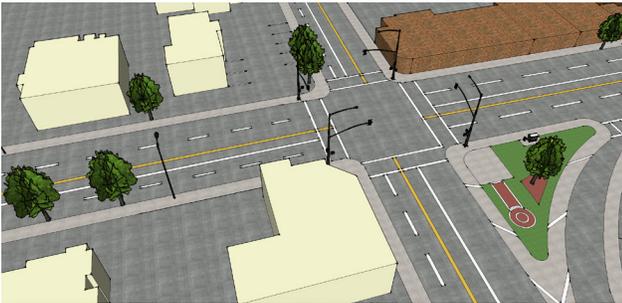
- Clean
- Fairly Clean
- Dirty

DESIGN GUIDELINES

1. Traffic Speed Should Be Lowered

- a. Bike Lanes should be installed at busy intersections
- b. Curb Extensions should be added

Chatsworth St. and Zelzah Ave: Before



Chatsworth St. and Zelzah Ave: After

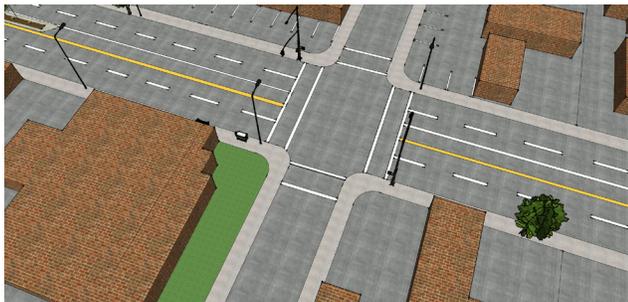


Traffic Speeds should be lowered: Bike Lanes added

2. Sidewalk Maintenance Should Be Improved

- a. Number of trashcans should be increased

Chatsworth St. and Encino Ave: Before



Chatsworth St. and Encino Ave: After



Sidewalk maintenance should be improved: Trashcans added

3. Number of Crosswalks Should Be Increased

- a. A crosswalk on the intersection of Chatsworth Street and Shoshone Ave should be added

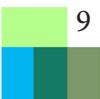
Chatsworth St. and Shoshone Ave: Before



Chatsworth St. and Shoshone Ave: After



Amount of Crosswalks should be increased: Crosswalk added



*This study was conducted in Fall 2015 by **students** in the Community Based Urban Design [URBS 440] course under the supervision of Professor Zeynep Toker, Ph.D.*

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