

Improving Transportation in Naples Park

Creating Livable Streets

TRANSPORTATION ANALYSIS

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In Naples Park, children walk or ride their bikes along the existing roadway lanes to reach their recreation destination; in this case, an empty lot where they play football.



The narrow roadways can become crowded when service vehicles park on the street, making the situation precarious for pedestrians and bicyclists.

TRANSPORTATION ANALYSIS

The Naples Park neighborhood has a design heritage that stems from contemporary 1960s style. That era emphasized quick and efficient design and sales for the land developer. Typical designs at the time included long narrow blocks to serve primarily the automobile access to and from each home. Pedestrian facilities were not considered essential at the time. Several problems emerge from this oversimplification of the built environment.

1. Pedestrians are forced to always use the street travel lanes for walking.
2. Drivers feel more comfortable at speeds of 30 to 35 mph, even with a speed limit set at 25mph.

A walking renaissance has occurred in urban areas throughout the nation. This increased pedestrian activity falls into two categories; Recreation Walking and Destination Walking. Recreation walking is the primary form observed in Naples Park. By definition, recreation walkers begin their trip, usually at home, and return to the same location where the walk began. They do not enter other buildings and

remain there for 5 minutes or more. Destination walking, on the other hand, can remove auto trips from the street system because pedestrians have personal or business stops at other buildings than their home, often shopping or dining, and on rare occasions a work trip.

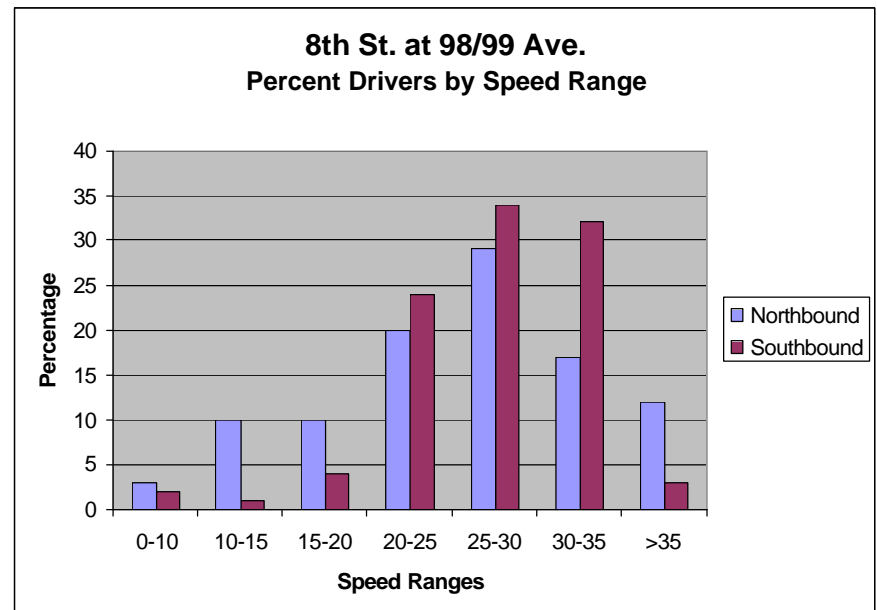
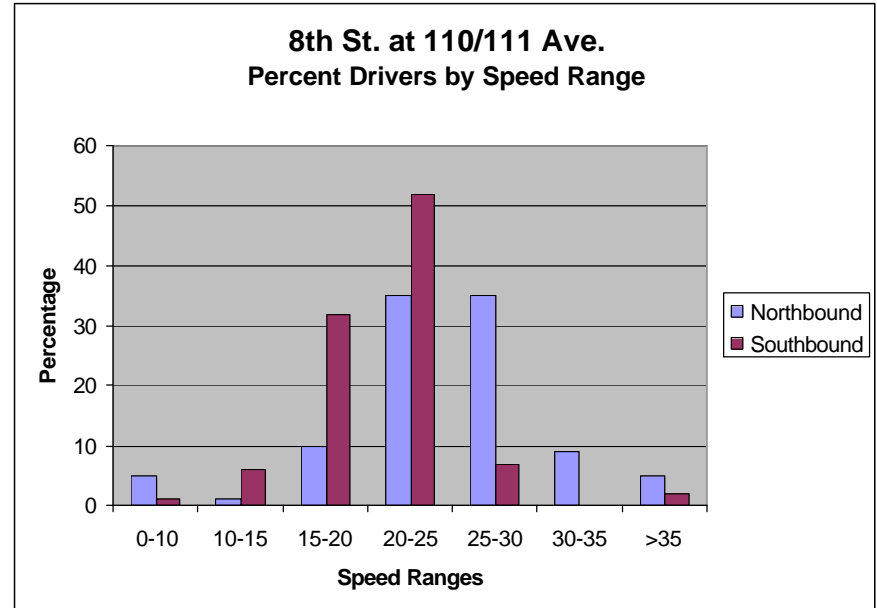
In Naples Park, since sidewalks were not part of the original design, recreation walkers must use the existing roadway lanes. Both children and adults are pedestrians on the over 25 miles of two lane urban streets. A standard block size of $\frac{1}{4}$ mile or 1,320 feet long and 330 feet deep ($\frac{1}{16}$ mile) forces longer walks without the opportunity to cut through at mid-block. Recreation walkers, with no particular destination point, can adjust to the long blocks; however, drivers often exceed residential speed on the long, straight streets, in spite of the 25 mph posted speed. The higher vehicle speeds, in turn, add discomfort to the walking environment. Future sidewalk construction should be undertaken on a block by block basis in conjunction with the Avenue Improvements discussed in the implementation section.

Traffic Speed Analysis

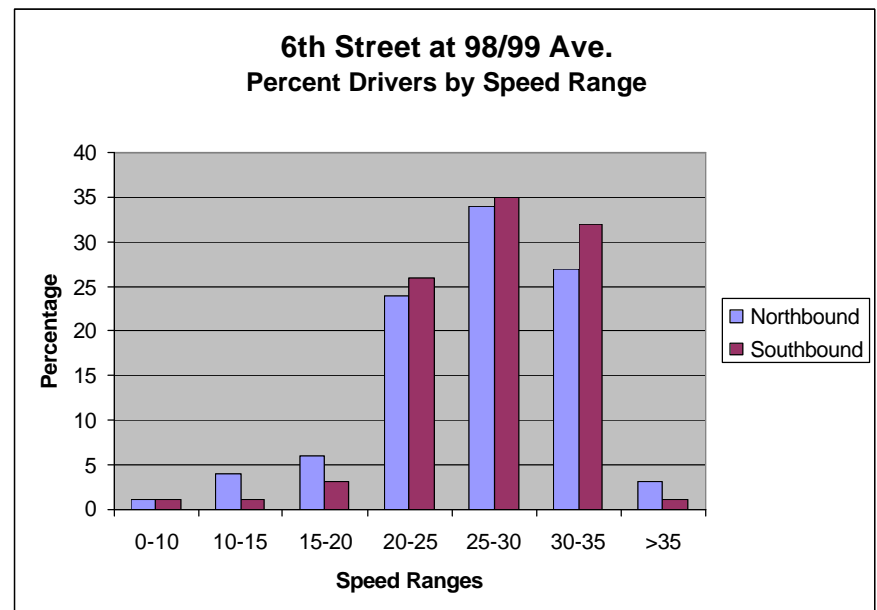
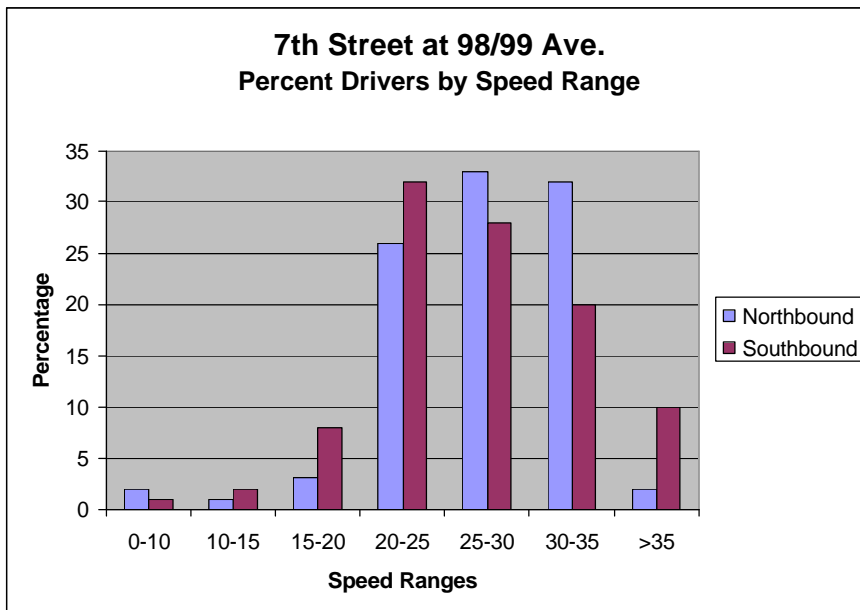
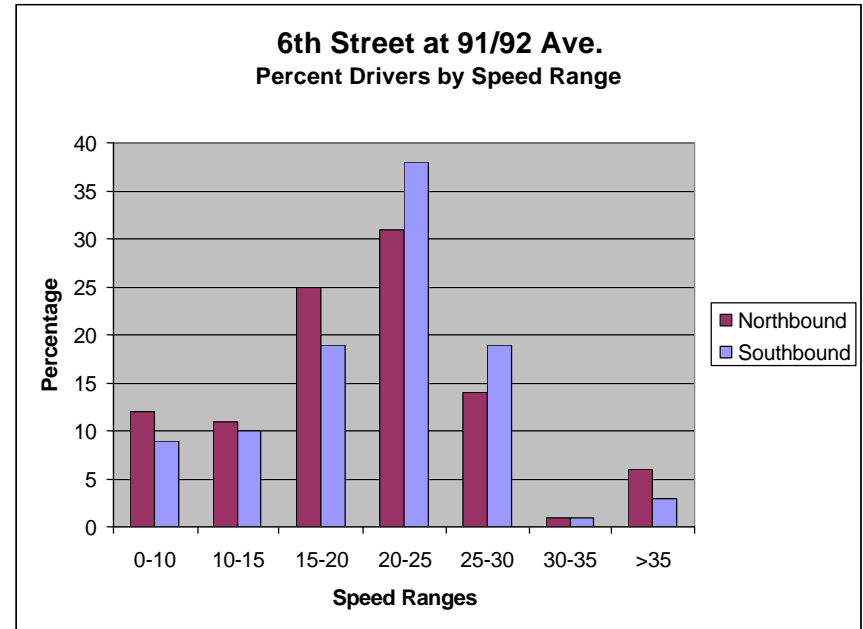
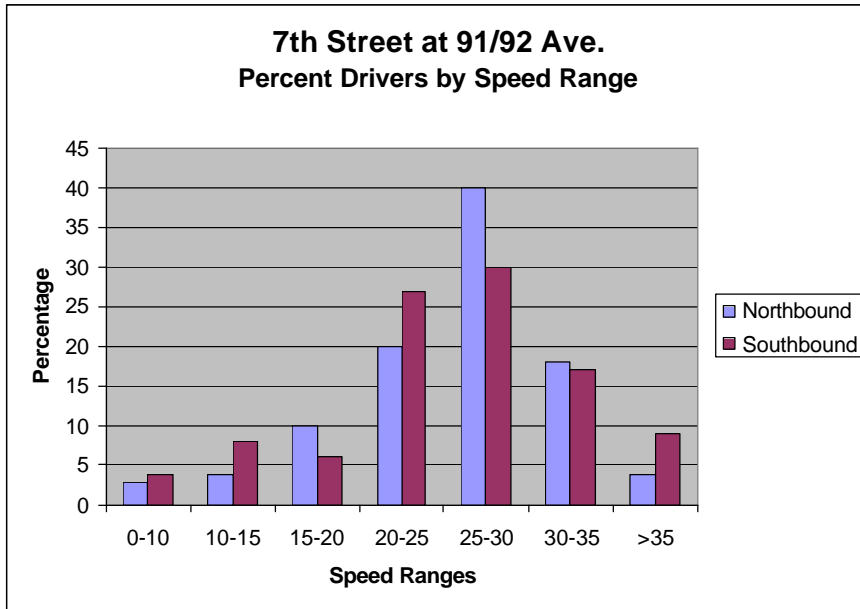
In an attempt to control speeds within the neighborhood, 4 Way Stop signs were placed at 20 intersections along the north south streets. This means that approximately 800 stop signs exist in this 1.5 square mile community. This configuration helps control traffic to a degree, but long street sections provide little diversion or interest in obeying the 25mph posted speed. Bar charts on the following pages show speed groups and the percentage of drivers occurring in each group. Higher speeds are found in the center, near 99th Avenue, compared to 91st Avenue on the South and 110th Avenue on the north. Drivers are more serious about slowing for a major roadway like 111th Avenue on the north and for the "T" intersections with 91st Street to the south. Speeds measured in the 99th Avenue corridor showed that over 50% of the traffic exceeds the posted 25 mph limit.

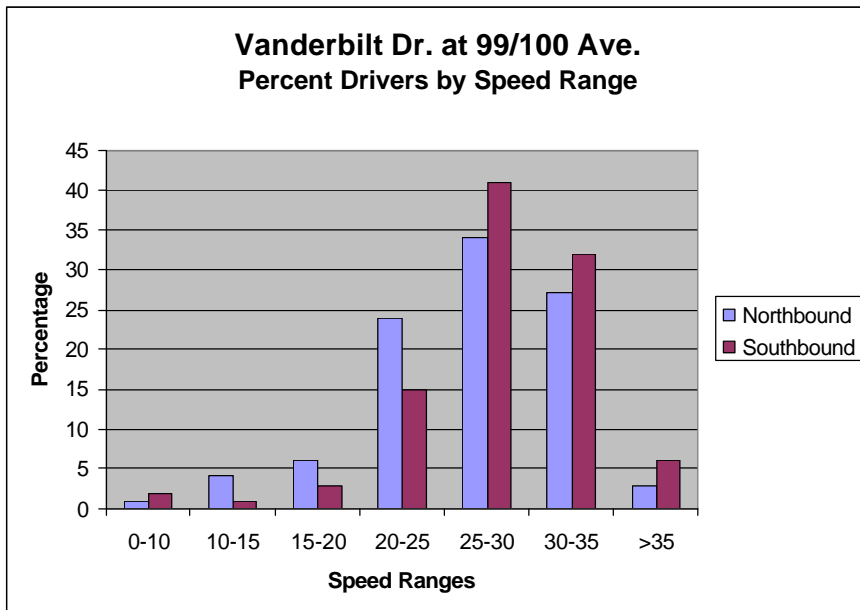
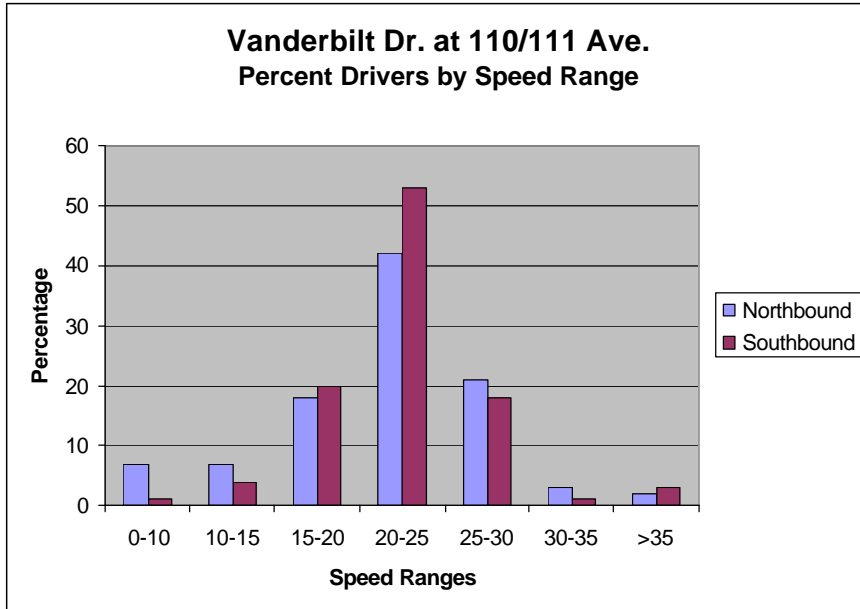
Traffic volumes in the neighborhood are less of a problem than speed, however volume increases are also a concern. Volumes on 8th street in 1999 were approximately 1,200 vehicles per day northbound and 800 southbound. East/West traffic near 99th Avenue and 8th Street averaged 500 vehicles per day. Only Vanderbilt Drive had counts as high as 4,000 vehicles per day.

Traffic calming devices are recommended for specific intersections within Naples Park to control the documented high travel speeds.



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The intersection of Immokalee and US 41

Increasing Connectivity

Naples Park residents have several shopping and recreation destinations available to them in their immediate vicinity; however, access to these amenities is not as readily available as it could be. Pedestrian access is very limited and even vehicular access is somewhat limited.

The Granada Shops, located directly across US 41, east of the neighborhood, offer a range of restaurants and shops for residents to enjoy. Currently, most Naples Park residents access this area by car, even though it is very close to the neighborhood, as it is difficult for pedestrians and bicyclists to cross US 41. The intersection at Immokalee Road and US 41 does have a pedestrian actuated signal phase allowing a protected crossing at this key intersection. The next signal is located $\frac{3}{4}$ mile to the south at 99th Avenue North. The need for an additional signal between these two, $\frac{1}{4}$ mile (1320 feet) south of Immokalee Road, should be studied, especially if pedestrians and cyclists use the existing pedestrian signal phase with any frequency.



Existing conditions, south of 91st Avenue; behind the hedge on the far right is the Pavilion Club condos; to its left is the existing bike path; in the center is the rear driveway that could become the connection through to the Pavilion shops.

Commercial Connection

The Pavilion Shops, located just south of the neighborhood at the intersection of Vanderbilt Beach Road and US 41, are also disconnected from Naples Park residents. Motorists access the shops from US 41 or Vanderbilt Beach Road. A direct vehicular connection from 91st Avenue would allow motorists to access the shops without adding additional traffic to these already heavily traveled roadways. A good opportunity to create this connection was lost when the Pavilion Club condos were constructed; Gulf Pavilion Drive could have been extended north to 91st Avenue from Vanderbilt Beach Road. Instead, the road dead-ends into the Pavilion Club gate, and there is a row of condos that were built where the road extension would have been. At the time of redevelopment, this situation should be corrected; however, a more immediate solution should also be explored.

Currently, pedestrians or bicyclists can access the shops via a narrow trail that leads from 91st Avenue to the rear of the shopping area. The path is 4-5' wide and serves its purpose very well- it is shady, accommodating to pedestrians and bicyclists, and fairly well used. The path runs along the east side of a fence that separates Pavilion Club from the adjoining commercial sites. On the west side of the path is an elliptical extension of Pavilion Club that allows the condos

to have 6-7 guest parking spaces inside their fence; on the east side the land drops off almost immediately into the cypress head. There is room to create a narrow two-lane vehicular connection that runs parallel to this bike path, on top of the rear driveway of the commercial building that faces 91st Avenue. To reach the Pavilion shops, this new road would have to then extend through the edge of the cypress head, or turn slightly and take space from the guest parking spaces for Pavilion Club.

The County should prioritize the acquisition of this land, to create an important transportation connection, and eliminate trips from the often overcrowded intersection of US 41 and Vanderbilt Beach Road. This location is the sole exception in this plan where eminent domain could be used as an option for obtaining land for the greater public benefit. If obtaining enough land to create a two-lane roadway is problematic, a one-way road could be considered, flowing northbound from the shops to 91st Avenue. (This is the more difficult connection; trips southbound along US 41 do not need to encounter the US 41/Vanderbilt Beach intersection.) The Pavilion shops would also greatly



This aerial displays different options where a vehicular connection could be established between 91st Avenue N. and the Pavilion Shops. The orange arrow is where a future connection could be established from Gulf Pavilion Drive, if the Pavilion Club condos are redeveloped in the future. The red and blue arrows show where a connection could occur in place of the existing pedestrian/ bicycle trail; the red path would require taking out the edge of the cypress head, and the blue would require re-locating some guest parking for the Pavilion Club condos.

benefit from this new connection, and might be willing to cooperate, either financially, or by giving up a small amount of land which could be used to replace lost parking spaces of the Pavilion Club.

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Looking east down 111th Avenue; Wiggins Park is located to the right.

Beach Connection

For many years, residents felt detached from the beach area, as there were insufficient pedestrian amenities between the beach and neighborhood. Wiggins Park, located northwest of the neighborhood along 111th Avenue, was created to provide this beach connection. Today, it is frequented and enjoyed by both pedestrians and bicyclists.

The connection relies on a pedestrian and bicycle friendly environment along 111th Avenue from the beach park to Vanderbilt Drive and eastward to 6th Street north. Widening 111th Avenue to four lanes had been considered previously; converting 111th Avenue from two lanes to four lanes would have negative consequences on the pedestrian environment that would far outweigh the benefits to vehicular travel. This road provides an important connection to both the beach and the Naples Park Elementary School. To maintain greater sensitivity to the neighborhood context, future improvements to this road should focus on improving the pedestrian environment, through the addition of sidewalks, street trees, and pedestrian-scaled lighting. This would help maintain vehicular travel speeds and crossing distances at a neighborhood scale.



The existing road closure on 107th Avenue.

Locations at the east end of 107 & 108 Avenues, currently are closed to through traffic. These should only be opened if a neck down technique is applied. Neck downs limit the opening to 8 or 9 feet in width, an adequate width for the passage of one car. An oncoming vehicle from the opposite direction must yield until the neck down is clear.

Recommendations

Based on our analysis, a brief list of recommendations is offered:

1. Sidewalks should be added in conjunction with drainage improvements (the Avenue Improvements discussed in the implementation section) on a block by block basis, to create an enjoyable walking environment, and aid in pedestrian safety.
2. Traffic calming tools should be implemented by the Collier County Neighborhood Traffic Management Program with the goal of managing traffic speeds to near the posted speed of 25 mph. These devices include mini roundabouts, narrowing points and new narrower streets. They are not intended to burden the safe drivers with increased delay, but to simply remind those who may seriously violate the speed limits to be more careful. The Mini roundabouts built in Naples are good examples of the size and character possible for Naples Park. They will add a positive aesthetic effect to the public realm.
3. Locations at the east end of 107 & 108 Avenues, currently are closed to through traffic. These should only be opened if a neck down technique is applied. Neck downs limit the opening to 8 or 9 feet in width, an adequate width for the passage of one car. An oncoming vehicle from the opposite direction must yield until the neck down is clear.
4. Study the pedestrian usage level at the intersection of Immokalee Road and US 41 to see if Naples Park residents are actually walking to shopping such as Granada Park. Consider adding another signal at the major shopping center driveway at 107th Street, ¼ mile south of Immokalee Road.
5. Collier County, as part of its regular program of road improvements, should create a narrow two-lane vehicular connection between the Pavilion shops and the commercial building adjacent to 91st Avenue near US 41. To reach the Pavilion shops, this new road would have to extend through the edge of a cypress head and several properties to make the important connection.
6. To maintain greater sensitivity to the neighborhood context, future improvements to 111th Avenue should focus on improving the pedestrian environment, through the addition of sidewalks, street trees, and pedestrian-scaled lighting. This would help maintain vehicular travel speeds and crossing distances at a neighborhood scale.