

Previous comments on the traffic safety forum highlight concerns over systemic issues affecting pedestrian safety:

- “We need a safe walkway around the entire lab. Currently it is necessary to walk some sections in the road.”
- “busy intersection near the firehouse ... has no walkways”
- “several heavily-used pedestrian routes ... don't have adequate protection for pedestrians”
- “...there is no walkway...”
- “The walkway up Lee Road ... is so uneven I generally walk in the street.”
- “[Inadequate] lighting along walking paths is an ongoing safety issue”

What are we doing about it? Recent example:

March 2013, brand-new
“walkway” on Chamberlain Rd.

There is no buffer or curb
between “walkway” and
roadway. Width of the new
“walkway” is 21 inches, much
less than walkway widths
referred to in traffic manuals.

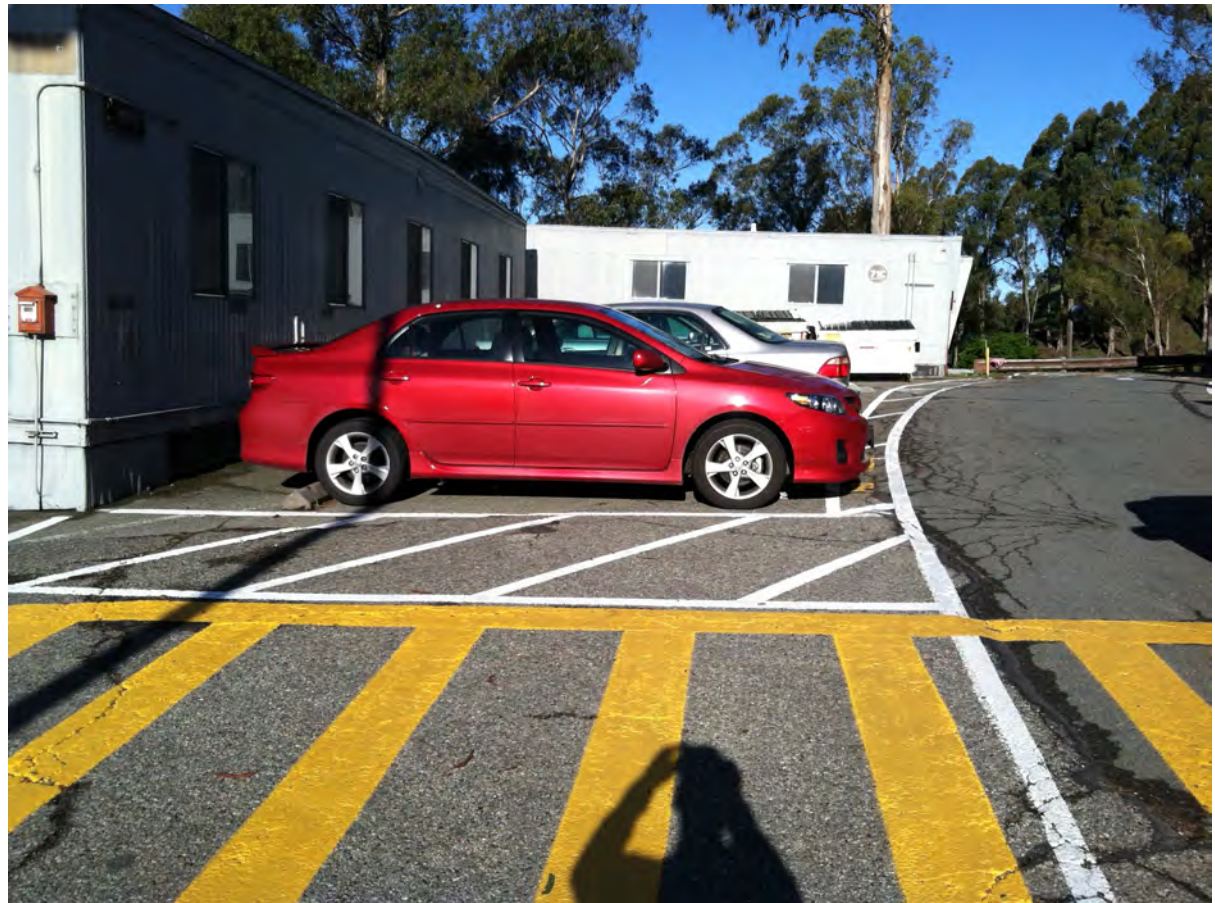


Does this “walkway” help ensure pedestrian safety?

Does this walkway help ensure Pedestrian Safety?

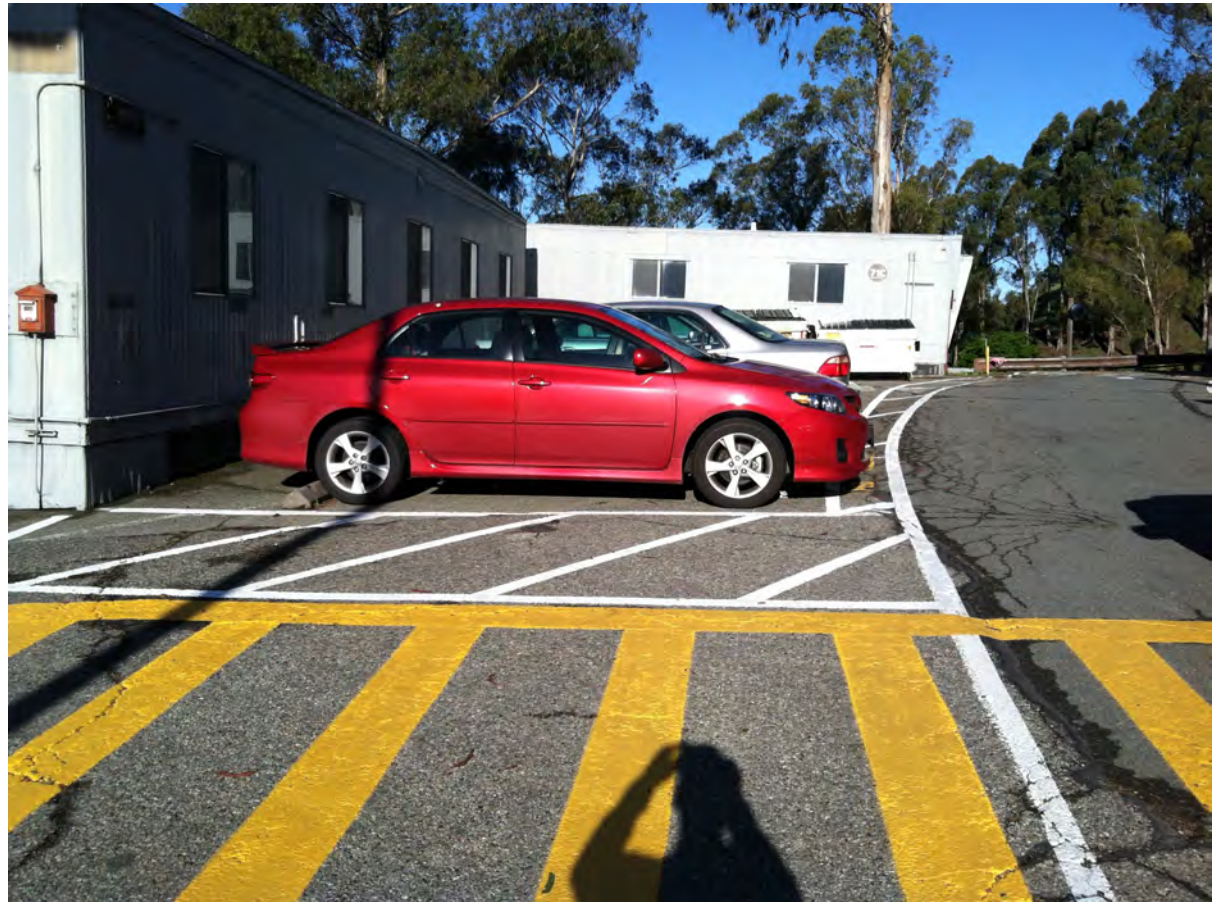
The little red Toyota Corolla is backed up as far into the space as possible, rear wheels at curb, yet it blocks most of the new “walkway”:

Even a little car cannot *not* block the “walkway”.



How much room do we need for a walkway?

In this situation, many pedestrians will end up walking in the street.



How much room do we need for a walkway?

With *education and training*, it is at least possible to get good at navigating narrow walkways.



Would I fit in this walkway?

I think I'm an average person. I'm certainly less talented and probably larger than Gabby Douglas.

Would I fit into 21-inch walkway?

Would I fit in this walkway?

One way to measure: lie down, trace my outline with chalk.

Oh-oh. I think I don't fit.



“Pedestrian Safety” is our obligation. Could there be a better design?

The present “walkway” design marginalizes our walking colleagues while prioritizing drivers.

Pedestrians walk in the street here and in many LBNL locations because, by engineering design, we are not giving them the option not to walk in the street.

Chamberlain is a tiny back-road with little traffic – why don’t we just give to the pedestrians the space to do safely what they must do anyway?



A possible way to respect Pedestrian Safety:

Traffic engineering standards do not limit the maximum width of crosswalks.

We are free to extend markings between separate crosswalks, forming a single extra-wide pedestrian-priority “crosswalk”.

A design change of this nature would have practically no cost, zero effect on motor vehicle flow, and no loss of parking capacity.



A possible way to respect Pedestrian Safety:

LBNL aims to improve walkability, safety & sustainability.

We are looking for good places to create pedestrian-friendly areas, where drivers and more vulnerable traffic participants can safely and cordially navigate around each other.

Here's one location to consider.



The solution to improving traffic safety lies in helping the drivers realize that they share transportation corridors with other drivers as well as people on foot and on bike. Cluttered markings and signage may easily result in the opposite, encouraging an “automobile-centered” view that more likely strengthens the underlying cause of accidents.

Traffic Safety Proposal

- Focus better on system designs that are adapted to the needs and limitations of the human being, particularly in situations where the humans are not protected by a steel shell.
- Aiming to alter the behavior of the road-user in order to adapt him/her to the existing road transport system presumes that the system is OK as-is. The existing LBNL is afflicted with idiosyncrasies that present serious challenges to this approach.
- We have to give our traffic engineering team and our Traffic and Pedestrian Safety Committee the latitude to challenge the existing system.
- Walkability and bikeability are a crucial commitment. The top end of Chamberlain Rd. is an excellent place to start redesign.