

## **Student Safety Walking To Inderkum High School**

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### **Issue**

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Is there a safe path of travel along Natomas Boulevard for students walking to Inderkum High School?

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### **Reason for the Investigation**

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It was brought to the attention of the Sacramento County Grand Jury that there was not a completed pedestrian pathway to Inderkum High School from North Park Drive to New Market Drive on the west side of Natomas Boulevard. Students must cross Natomas Boulevard at several points along their route to the high school in order to stay on a sidewalk. However, it was noticed that some students take the shorter way and walk along Natomas Boulevard next to automobile traffic. The Grand Jury believed it was important to investigate when a complete walkway would be constructed providing sidewalks for the high school students.

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### **Method of Investigation**

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The following individuals were interviewed:

- Principal of Inderkum High School
- Vice Principal of Inderkum High School
- Manager of New Growth Division – Sacramento Development Services Department
- Assistant City Manager and Director for Development Services

The following documents were reviewed:

- North Natomas Financing Plan
- Natomas Boulevard Improvement table

In addition, several members of the Grand Jury walked the route. (See map on page 38).

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## **Background and Facts**

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The Grand Jury opened an investigation to determine what the future plan was for students to be able to walk to Inderkum High School in a safe and logical manner. At various places along Natomas Boulevard between North Park Drive and New Market Drive, sidewalks end in an abrupt manner, not connecting to either a crosswalk or pavement. On the west and east side between Del Paso Road and New Market Drive walkways are complete. From New Market to Inderkum High School on the south side there is also a completed sidewalk. There is no sidewalk from New Market to Inderkum High School on the north side and from New Market to North Bend on the west side. From North Bend to a walkway along the collection pond there is an area of about 35 feet where there is no walkway. At that point students must go to the crosswalk at North Bend, cross Natomas, continue on the east side to New Market, cross again and continue to Inderkum High School. From North Bend to North Park on the east side, there is a sidewalk.

Inderkum High School opened in September 2004 with approximately 700 students. When the school adds another grade for the 2005-2006 school year, the projected enrollment is 1100 students, more than a 50 percent increase. The posted speed limit along Natomas Boulevard is 45 miles per hour but it has been observed that traffic frequently exceeds 45 miles per hour. Students do not always cross at the marked crosswalks, but tend to walk on the non-paved areas which are unsafe and become muddy and very slippery in inclement weather. With the increased student population there is a greatly expanded risk of a student being injured.

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## **Findings and Recommendations**

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Finding 1. Student safety is in jeopardy because there is not a completed pedestrian pathway along Natomas Boulevard from North Bend to New Market on the west side.

Recommendation 1. In the interest of student safety, paved access in these areas needs to be completed.

Finding 2. The City has plans and the appropriate finances in the 2005-2006 budget to complete the pedestrian pathways sometime during the 2005-2006 fiscal year, but that may not occur until June 2006.

Recommendation 2. The City needs to ensure the completion of these areas to be used by students is done by the start of the school year, August 22, 2005.

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## **Response Requirements**

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**Penal Code sections 933 and 933.05 require that specific responses to both the findings and recommendations contained in this report be submitted to the Presiding Judge of the Sacramento Superior Court by September 30, 2005, from:**

- **Sacramento City Council, Findings 1, 2 and Recommendations 1, 2.**