

# R.L. STEVENSON MIDDLE SCHOOL QUICK BUILD

## Buccaneers Bettering Their Block



### PARTNERS

## What is a “QUICK BUILD”?

**Hawai‘i faces a climate and street safety crisis.** Both can be addressed simultaneously by prioritizing the safety for all – from keiki to kūpuna – through active transportation improvements. However, we can’t wait for every street to be reconfigured around walking, biking, and transit through lengthy construction processes – and we don’t have to!

### Quick build projects meet community needs faster and more dynamically.

They typically take less than a year to implement and are iterative processes that use flexible/temporary installation materials, such as paint and moveable barriers, to support safer walking, biking, and transit. Although smaller in scale than large streetscape projects, we know creating protected spaces for people “walking and rolling”<sup>1</sup> helps make these activities more desirable and likely. For example, walking is three times more common in a community with pedestrian-friendly streets than in otherwise comparable communities.<sup>2</sup> So, if walking conditions improve, then more people will feel safe to walk. **In addition, one of the major benefits of**

**a quick build is that we can see if the new design works before investing significant capital resources** (e.g., Is there demand for these new modes in this new location? Will people bike and walk here? How will the drivers respond realistically?).

## Why was it right for Makiki?

The broader R.L. Stevenson Middle School community wanted to support more walking and rolling to school and foster an age-friendly community – one that is livable for people of all ages.<sup>3</sup> Approximately 8,600 vehicles cross in front of the school every day (as of 2017), making this a busy neighborhood street.<sup>4</sup> And, there has been about one crash in front of the school every year.<sup>5</sup> In addition, the school community documented many safety issues such as illegal turns at many different locations around the school, speeding drivers, inconvenient and burdensome pedestrian crossings. Wide lanes generally have provided for less desirable and unsafe motorist behavior, like speeding and weaving, making this an ideal location for change.

- R.L. Stevenson Middle School Leadership Class (lead)
- Blue Zones Project Hawai‘i (lead)
- City and County of Honolulu Department of Transportation Services
- Ulupono Initiative
- Office of Councilmember Carol Fukunaga
- Office of Senator Brian Taniguchi
- Hawai‘i State Department of Health
- Honolulu Police Department
- Makiki-Tantalus Neighborhood Board No. 10
- Austin Tsutsumi and Associates
- Luke DeKneef, Artist
- R.L. Stevenson Middle School Association of Parents and Teachers
  - The Mayor’s Office of Culture & Arts, City and County of Honolulu
  - GP Roadways

<sup>1</sup> “Walking and rolling” is a term intended to encompass all possible modes of active transportation, including those who travel with mobility devices.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.vtpi.org/tdm/tdm4.htm>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/network-age-friendly-communities/info-2014/an-introduction.html>

<sup>4</sup> <https://histategis.maps.arcgis.com/home/webmap/viewer.html?useExisting=1&layers=debc2e88ce4949b384b954a07ad97ce3>

<sup>5</sup> R.L. Stevenson Middle School Safe Routes to School plan 2019 and

<https://www.arcgis.com/apps/mapviewer/index.html?webmap=667bcd3b19134981888a87535a3e606a>



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## What did we learn?

**The challenges were surmountable.** More than 100 survey responses told us that the biggest challenges for students and parents were distances and safety. About 70 percent of the school's population lives in the district, meaning that more than 450 students could possibly walk and roll to school if it was safe and convenient and perhaps more direct. Many parents likely drop their kids off on the way to work but are less likely to be available in the afternoon to pick them up. Safer and more convenient routes may help the entire family.

**Students can advocate successfully for themselves and their community.** The student leadership requested and received a resolution of support from the local neighborhood board and helped to lead the success of this project!

**Results can last.** Even after the pandemic and subsequent re-opening, many students and nearby residents continued to benefit from these changes. On one day alone in 2022, this quick build helped make it safer for more than 500 people to cross.<sup>6</sup> Drivers also seem to obey the speed limit more through these design changes.

## RESULTS & IMPACT

WALKING DISTANCES  
DROPPED  
BY

20-40%



EXPOSED TIME TO  
CROSS PROSPECT STREET  
DROPPED BY

55%

HELPED ON AVERAGE 190 PEOPLE CROSS  
MORE SAFELY EVERY DAY<sup>7</sup>

Before



After



▲ Project partners installed new curb extensions with plastic delineators, painted lovely street art murals, refreshed the crosswalk paint, and added in-street signs.

<sup>6</sup> Eco-counter analysis by Ulupono Initiative from November to December 2022.

<sup>7</sup> Eco-counter analysis by Ulupono Initiative from November to December 2022.