

From: [Josh Olson](#)
To: [Transportation Commission](#)
Subject: Support for 92691 (Explaining Variances) and Experimentation
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Hi TC,

I wanted to express my support for two discussion items tonight.

1. I think the speaker/commenter who is asking for variances from the MGO Complete Streets guide is making a valid point. I've heard many times over that CGS has a hierarchy, and then witnessed a reversal of that hierarchy take place for design. If it's the law to follow CGS guidelines, unless through a variance, we should note how often the variances happen and if it's something that needs Common Council/Mayor oversight on if that's our goal as a city.

2. I appreciate the effort staff put into walking through experiments that can take place, especially on arterials. These are more difficult to implement, but we can clearly see the impact lives lost have on our community. Designing streets with appropriate infrastructure is critical. While enforcement or visual aids help, it's the structure that matters most in preventing drivers from going 62 mph on Park Street.

Separately, I think citizens have the best feel for what is working on the streets they live on. The backlog of Safe Streets projects shows that the City has many, many opportunities for improvement, but likely not the resources to make updates now. I think the TC and Common Council should consider the ability for community members to sponsor interventions that are approved by the city.

There could be a catalog of options, including costs and times, and citizens could "order" those improvements with proof of funding via a neighborhood association or non-profit. It would work best as a streamlined tool to help get approved interventions on our streets for low costs.

I believe some groups are concerned this would only improve the neighborhoods that have resources available to them now and could potentially overlook areas that typically lack investment. In my mind, this is a negative-sum view on an issue that requires immediate intervention. Areas that have resources can ensure no other people need to die or be seriously injured on a street they have identified as dangerous, while allowing the city to be flexible to invest in areas that have been overlooked with more available resources.

Thank you for looking into these options and I look forward to the discussion.

Josh Olson