

May 28, 2026
City of Madison Transportation Commission
Madison Municipal Building
215 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
Madison, WI 53703

RE: Strong Opposition to the Removal of the Crossing Guard at Raymond Road and Gilbert Road

Dear Members of the Transportation Commission,

I am writing to you on behalf of the Meadowood Neighborhood Association to express our strong opposition to the proposal to remove the school crossing guard at the intersection of Raymond Road and Gilbert Road.

Our neighborhood association has been contacted by deeply concerned local parents who rely on this critical safety measure daily. For families living south of Raymond Road and east of Whitney Way, this specific intersection serves as the primary, irreplaceable crossing point for neighborhood children traveling north to Orchard Ridge Elementary School and Toki Middle School.

The removal of this crossing guard compromises student safety for several critical reasons:

- **Vulnerable Walkers & All-Day 4K:** Because this neighborhood is designated by the Madison Metropolitan School District (MMSD) as a walking school area, these children do not have the option of bus transportation. Walking is the city's expected mode of transit for them. The crossing is utilized by children from the 5th grade all the way down to four-year-olds attending Orchard Ridge's all-day 4K program. Expecting early childhood and elementary students to navigate this minor arterial independently is an unacceptable safety risk.
- **The "Signal-Adjacent Acceleration" Effect:** Your department's traffic management data reflects a well-documented phenomenon in urban planning: drivers frequently accelerate aggressively when moving away from or trying to "beat" a nearby signalized intersection. Because Gilbert Road sits just one block away from the major traffic signal at Whitney Way, vehicles turning onto or traveling along Raymond Road routinely increase their speeds to make up for lost delays. The physical proximity to the signal naturally creates a higher-speed environment right at the Gilbert Road crossing.
- **Surging Traffic Volumes from Local Developments:** Our neighborhood is experiencing a steady increase in density and traffic volume due to recent and ongoing residential developments nearby. Raymond Road is bearing a higher

traffic burden than in previous years. Removing vital pedestrian infrastructure while simultaneously increasing vehicle counts contradicts safe, smart municipal planning.

- **Insufficiency of Flashing Pedestrian Lights:** While the flashing pedestrian beacon looks sufficient on paper, real-world conditions tell a different story. Anyone who navigates this corridor during school hours knows that visibility can be challenging and that drivers routinely fail to yield in a timely, predictable manner to small children standing on the curb. A flashing light cannot replace the physical presence, authoritative signaling, and watchful eye of a human crossing guard.

The City of Madison has frequently championed its commitment to Vision Zero and the safety of alternative, sustainable transportation. Telling families that walking is mandatory while systematically stripping away the few meaningful safety measures protecting their children along that route sends a deeply contradictory message.

The Meadowood Neighborhood Association stands firmly with our local families. We urge the Transportation Commission to reject this proposal and maintain the crossing guard placement at Raymond Road and Gilbert Road to keep our youngest residents safe.

Thank you for your time, consideration, and continued service to our community.

Sincerely,

Jay Close, President

Meadowood Neighborhood Association
Madison, WI