

From: [Planning](#)
To: [Plan Commission Comments](#)
Subject: FW: Safety concern: Southwest bike path at Hammersley Road: near crashes observed; concern for future if proposed apartment complex built
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Attachments: [IMG_0466.png](#)

From: Cherie & Bruce Olsen <olsens.madison@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 29, 2025 5:07 PM
To: Biking and Walking <walkingbiking@cityofmadison.com>; Traffic <traffic@cityofmadison.com>; Planning <planning@cityofmadison.com>; chloe@wisconsinbikefed.org
Subject: Safety concern: Southwest bike path at Hammersley Road: near crashes observed; concern for future if proposed apartment complex built

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Hello all (Traffic Department, Bike/walk unit, Plan Commission, and Bike Federation),

This is a somewhat scattershot approach to raising a bike/vehicle safety concern, because I am uncertain about who is best positioned to respond to my concern. Thank you in advance for forwarding my concern to the appropriate person or persons.

The south-bound Southwest commuter bike path rises over the Beltline Highway on a bridge, spirals down to the east along the Beltline safety barrier, and then makes a sharp right turn, where it crosses Hammersley Road and continues on toward the south.

Hammersley Road, traveling east from the intersection of Hammersley and Reetz Road, descends down a hill until it meets the Southwest bike path crossing. Cyclists traveling down the bridge spiral and to the south are largely obscured from the view of motorists traveling east on Hammersley Road by the superstructure that supports the bike path spiral, and by the path configuration that runs tight to the Beltline until the sharp right turn onto Hammersley. Cyclists traveling north on the commuter path are largely obscured from the view of motorists traveling east on Hammersley Road by the Sub Zero office building on the south side of the road and sits tight to the northbound bike path. I have attached a screenshot from Apple Maps to put a picture to my words (North is at the top; East to the right). The bike path crossing is denoted by the green-painted pavement (thank you, by the way!). Motorists traveling west on Hammersley Road have better sight lines for both south-bound and north-bound cyclists.

1. Immediate concerns. I live in the Orchard Ridge neighborhood, where the subject

intersection is located. I am also a bicyclist, so I am always on the lookout for danger points. Since I retired, I make more trips down Hammersley Road to and from Home Depot, which is located outside the frame of the attached photo, basically south of the bike path intersection. On several occasions in the last few weeks—probably because of Home Depot’s garden center—I have observed near collisions between bicycles traveling south of the bike path and vehicles traveling east on Hammersley Road. I saw the near crashes as I was headed west on Hammersley. Motorists traveling east on Hammersley are not specifically alerted to cyclists traveling down the ramp because their view is obscured by the ramp superstructure and cyclists’ proximity to the Beltline safety barrier. Cyclists cannot see vehicles headed east on Hammersley, because the cyclists, too, are traveling east until the sharp right turn at the Hammersley crossing.

A. Short-term possible improvements. Better signage of both the bike path—warning cyclists that the Hammersley intersection is essentially blind for east-bound motorists—and on Hammersley—alerting east-bound motorists that they are approaching a blind bike-crossing? Alternatively, and more expensively, an intermittent, cyclist-operated flashing light bar across Hammersley?

3. Medium-term concerns. There is currently a proposal before the Plan Commission for an apartment complex along the Hammersley Road/Beltline Frontage Road, proposed to be located slightly east of the Hammersley/Bike Path intersection. I am concerned that the project, if built, will increase traffic in both directions on Hammersley Road for motorists whose destinations are west—or east—of the project. For both groups of motorists wishing to travel on the Beltline, the options are **(a)** Hammersley to Gilbert to Whitney (no traffic lights) to the Beltline on-ramps, or **(b)** the frontage road south past Home Depot and U-Haul, 3/4 of the way around the roundabout under Verona Road, left at the stop-light on the east side of Verona Road, and then north on Verona Road to the Beltline on-ramps. I know that I would choose option A to avoid the roundabout and the extra traffic light. I don’t know what residents of the proposed apartment project would choose to do—but if they would also choose option A, Hammersley Road would likely see much greater traffic volume, and therefore a much greater likelihood of highly adverse vehicle/bicycle interactions at the Hammersley Road/Southwest path crossing.

A. Medium-term possible solutions. A traffic study as part of the Plan Commission’s consideration of the proposed apartment project, to test the hypothesis that Beltline-bound traffic would choose the Hammersley option over

the Roundabout option? Such a study might provide useful information about the best bike path safety improvement for the Hammersly Road crossing.

Thank you for your consideration of this message. I will be happy to engage with you—or whomever you suggest—in any appropriate manner. My contact information appears below my signature block.

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