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To: annelizabethkovich@gmail.com; [Transportation Commission](#); swr.dtsd@dot.wi.gov; [Evers, Tag](#)
Subject: URGENT - Madison needs safer streets. Please take action.
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Dear Chair Kovich, Director Schave, Alder Evers, and transportation commission members,

I am writing to you today as a community member to urge you to take swift action following the tragic death of 17-year-old Sasha Rosen. While I never had the privilege of meeting Sasha, as the guardian of a Madison West student and a Madison resident, I am deeply troubled by his untimely and preventable death.

I live on Fish Hatchery Rd, less than one mile west of the South Park St crosswalk where Sasha was killed. As a pedestrian and a cyclist, I have seen and experienced dozens of unsafe intersections on Park St and so many other high speed roads like it.

Crossing a street in so many parts of our city feels dangerous -- because it is. I feel this danger every time I dodge speeding traffic while crossing my street to the Hmong Legacy Market or while walking my bike across an intersection on South Park St. This sense of worry grows exponentially every time I hold my breath while the child under my care crosses the street to catch a bus to school.

Just last summer, I witnessed what could have been yet another senseless traffic-caused death on South Park St. While driving, I saw a pedestrian jog towards a crosswalk and stopped to let him cross the street. Several seconds later, an inattentive driver hit the back of my car, nearly pushing my stopped vehicle into the crosswalk. Because my car had already stopped, the pedestrian was never touched, and I was able to drive away from the incident with a loose bumper and a stiff neck. But it pains me to imagine what almost happened instead.

If that speeding driver had hit that pedestrian rather than my vehicle, he would have suffered much more than a fender bender. He may have suffered paralyzing injuries, preventing him from ever running again. Or, like Sasha, he could have been killed, becoming another one of the [dozens of lives taken on Dane County's roads each year](#).

What frustrates me the most is that we already know how to make safe streets. [The statistics prove it year after year](#) -- speed kills. According to an [IIHS report](#), pedestrians struck at 20 mph had only a 1% chance of dying from their injuries, but at 35 mph, the risk reached 19%. At 50 mph, it exceeded 80%.

We also know that speed limits alone do not make for safe streets. [It takes more than just a sign to slow speeding traffic](#). If you've ever driven on South Park St or any of Madison's other multi-lane, high speed "streets," I'd easily put a dollar down that almost no drivers were following the posted 30 mph speed limit. As the data shows, drivers follow the visual cues of their environment. When streets are designed like highways, with multiple wide lanes and few stops, they will never be safe, regardless of the speed limit sign. Our streets and roads cannot keep prioritizing vehicle speed over human lives. We need comprehensive change that includes safe design and systems to hold drivers accountable.

Madison's roads are filled with speeding drivers, ignored crosswalk signals, and countless potential fatalities. I know too many friends who have been hit by careless drivers, leading to disruptive and traumatic injuries. I pray that I will never have to mourn a loved one killed in traffic, as Sasha's family and friends now must.

No parent should ever have to lose a child, and no community should ever have to face the grief of a lost loved one, especially when a death like this could -- and should -- have been prevented.

Please take action before another life is lost. Madison needs safer streets, now.

Thank you,
Julius Shieh

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