

From: [Jonathan Mertzig](#)
To: [Transportation Commission](#)
Subject: Whitney Way Improvements
Date: Tuesday, April 13, 2021 9:46:07 PM

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Dear members of the Transportation Commission,

I am writing to express my support of proposed Whitney Way safety improvements being considered under item #6 - 2021 Vision Zero Projects (File number 64987) at the April 14th meeting.

As a resident of neighborhoods adjacent to Whitney Way for the past 12 years, I have found that Whitney Way in its current form acts as a considerable barrier to pedestrians and cyclists' ability to safely navigate the neighborhood.

I have to cross Whitney at Tokay on a daily basis to get to the West Transfer Point, and I frequently encounter a variety of unsafe driver behavior such as excessive speeding and red light running that is only encouraged by an infrastructure that is built more like a freeway than a neighborhood street. Current traffic speeds and poor crossing design put pedestrians at a dangerous disadvantage, and I also see cyclists struggle to bike in prevailing traffic conditions, with many often forced to ride on the sidewalk as the only marginally safe option.

The proposed improvements and speed reduction should provide a significant boost to safety in the neighborhood. My only concern about the plans is they may not go far enough, as the broad street profile and boulevard-style layout will still provide visual cues toward driving at fast speeds, perhaps limiting the effectiveness of the 25 MPH speed limit.

The addition of buffered bike lanes will also help bridge a major missing link in the north/south "low stress" bike network in this part of town. Currently the only reasonably safe option for cycling in the neighborhood is on Segoe, which offers a somewhat circuitous and disconnected path between other parts of our city's fine bike network. The addition of quality bike infrastructure on Whitney would provide a much needed more direct north/south link between path and bike lane connections at Old Middleton Road, University Ave, and along Odana Road and the Beltline Path. Without this improvement, I would not feel safe biking on Whitney Way in anything resembling its current configuration where bikes must jostle for space with parked cars.

I hope the opportunity to bridge a significant gap in our city-wide cycling network will be favored over the narrowly self-interested demands to maintain parking along segments of Whitney Way. These improvements to accessibility for both pedestrians and cyclists will also be a key investment in the success of future Bus Rapid Transit plans along this corridor.

Thank you,
Jonathan Mertzig
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Midvale Heights neighborhood resident