

Honorable Council Members, Staff and Other Interested Parties:

My family moved to Silver Lake just over a year ago. We live on Rowena Avenue and our 5-year old son recently started kindergarten at Ivanhoe Elementary School. Owing to this, we have a fair sense of the state of Rowena as well as it's impact, or lack thereof, on neighboring streets.

Along with many of our neighbors, on Rowena or otherwise, my husband or I walk our son to and from school, crossing at Rowena and W. Silver Lake Boulevard, twice every day. We are thankful that our walk to school is safer for Rowena's current configuration that was installed in 2013, and what has come to be known as the "Rowena Road Diet." These changes were made after years of consideration and community deliberation because of countless accidents, but most tragically, after the unnecessary death of a young woman who was hit by a car while crossing the very same intersection we, and countless other families with small children, cross each day.

Before the reconfiguration, Rowena was often referred to as the "Rowena Raceway." I, for one, am not comfortable with the notion of my child traversing a "raceway" on foot multiples times each day. And I'm sure others aren't either.

With all that said, the very changes that made Rowena safer are now being considered for reversal because of unfortunate timing and conflating of circumstances. The Road Diet implementation coincided with the advent of Waze and traffic being re-routed onto formerly primarily local traffic only streets like Waverly and Angus. There's a contingent of our community who insist that correlation equals causation, even despite multiple studies showing otherwise. Studies since 2013 show that Rowena is demonstrably safer for all - motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians alike. Likewise the studies show while Rowena is safer today, it also accommodates more traffic with less congestion than it did before the reconfiguration. It stands to reason that the cut-through traffic is not owing to the Road Diet but rather other issues like the increased popularity of Waze circumventing traffic on Hyperion and Silver Lake Boulevards.

As you very well know, reversing the Road Diet would mean eliminating bike lanes and parking, both of which act as barriers for pedestrians from cars. These very bike lanes are also used daily by students from Thomas Starr King Middle School and Marshall High School. As a mom, keeping all of the children in my community is a top priority. There are win-win proposals that would keep Rowena safe and actually serve to make other neighborhood streets safer too. Likewise, they would preserve the environment that has allowed so many local small business to flourish on Rowena in these past 5 years.

Making Rowena less safe will not make Angus or Waverly more safe --- it will only make Rowena less safe. Please consider proposals that will demonstrably maintain and improve safety for our community rather than making changes that will serve no purpose but return Rowena to unsafe conditions.

Thank you very much for your time.