



CLARIFYING MESSAGE RE: CALL TO ACTION

We've received some feedback that our "ask" from last night wasn't clear. In short, please email the Menlo Park City Council (by 3pm on Tuesday, 3/26) with the following request:

"Do not compromise safety.

Thank you for your ongoing commitment to Safe Routes."

Send to city.council@menlopark.org

CALL TO ACTION!

On Tuesday night (3/26/19), the Menlo Park City Council will be voting on whether or not to add "Congestion Relief/Management" as a top city transportation goal, potentially weighted equally with safety. **Please join Parents for Safe Routes in demanding that safety not be compromised.**

The goal of "congestion relief/management" acknowledges the pain that we all feel when driving at rush hour. However, measures to alleviate congestion can refer to a whole grab bag of things, some of which are positive and forward-thinking and some of which can come into direct conflict with safety goals. The devil is in the details...

The City's [Staff Report](#) for Tuesday night defines "congestion relief/management" as "Manage traffic congestion to reduce travel time on city streets and minimize cut-through traffic on neighborhood streets." We need

Council members and staff to clarify their thinking about how these non-complementary goals could be accomplished, especially while maintaining our city's [Vision Zero](#) policy and commitment to safety.

The upcoming [Dumbarton Rail](#) initiative is an excellent “congestion relief/management” project - it will give cross-bay commuters a compelling alternative to sitting in traffic for hours each day. And some “congestion relief/management” solutions such as improved signal timing can help smooth travel at a speed that maintains safety.

Unfortunately other strategies aimed at reducing delays for drivers can compromise safety and increase risks for our children and other vulnerable people. Many of our kids need to cross major arteries such as Willow, El Camino Real, Santa Cruz, etc., to get to school. It's already scary. “Congestion relief/management” strategies that widen or add extra travel lanes to these roads will make things worse for people walking and bicycling. And ironically, research has shown that increasing capacity might provide temporary relief but ultimately leads to even more congestion.

Traffic is a huge pain point throughout Menlo Park. There are myriad regional issues (excessive office development coupled with an under-supply of housing, etc.) contributing to this problem and we will not eliminate it by widening a few roads locally. Some people will always have to drive, and traffic will be part of their daily reality. But we can do a lot more to ensure that all residents have compelling alternative mobility options for local trips, and that people who can't drive, such as our children, are able to walk and bike places safely.

Please contact City Council and ask that safety continue to come first in our transportation planning, no matter how desperate we all feel, trapped in our cars.

Take Action Now!

- Write an email by 3pm, Tuesday, March 26th, to City Council telling them to reaffirm safety as our top priority for transportation planning, and ensure that any additional goals will not compromise safety. Write your email so that it speaks to your/your kids' situation, especially if you/they need to cross a major street to get to school. Send the email to city.council@menlopark.org.

- If you have a relationship with any of our City Council members, please reach out to them individually, especially if you live in their district. You can get their emails from the City's website here:
<https://www.menlopark.org/455/City-Council>.
- Attend the City Council meeting on Tuesday night (3/26/19). The discussion about transportation goals will come later in the evening. If you send us your cell number, we will send a text when the item is about to come forward and you can come to Council Chambers to comment. Best guess is that it will come up for discussion around 9pm.
- Tell your friends and neighbors what's going on and encourage them to provide feedback to the City Council.

Thank you for your ongoing support!

Parents for Safe Routes



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