

From: [Nathan](#) [REDACTED]
To: [-- City Clerk](#)
Subject: Public comment for City Council 7/17/2023 meeting
Date: Sunday, July 16, 2023 8:32:28 PM

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Hello City Clerk,

I have a public comment to submit below for the City Council 7/17/2023 meeting. My comment is in regards to the "North McDowell Complete Streets Project Update" presentation; if there is not an option to enter comment for it then please add it to the General Public Comment section. Thank you! -Nathan

Public comment regarding North McDowell Complete Streets Project Update

Dear Council and Staff,

Thank you for working on making N McDowell Blvd a safer street! McDowell is a key corridor in our town that moves many people. Anything we can do to improve its safety has a significant impact. I believe that everyone in Petaluma deserves to safely walk or bike to their daily destinations.

I traverse N McDowell by car and bike with my young family. We go from West Petaluma to places like Lagunitas, Ethel's Bagels, Barn 5400, and Penngrove. I love riding bikes on the SMART path from Payran to Southpoint Blvd. Once you reach the end of that path it gets bad: the section of McDowell from Southpoint to Old Redwood Hwy is a high stress, unsafe zone for cyclists. I often ride on the sidewalk there, which isn't ideal but feels safer than being on the road.

The proposed Class II bike lanes on McDowell from Corona Rd to Scott St seem very unsafe. Cars traveling at the posted 40mph (effectively 50mph) next to cyclists in an unprotected bike lane is unacceptable and should not be constructed. A collision of car and cyclist at 40mph has an 80% chance of killing the cyclist. Lowering it to 35mph will not appreciably change that. NACTO's Designing for All Ages and Abilities guidance recommends that streets with speeds > 25mph should have protected bike lanes. I would rather our citizens ride on the sidewalk than on an unprotected bike lane next to cars traveling at 40-50mph.

I know our staff can come up with innovative solutions that allow cyclists to safely ride this section of road while retaining the desired car throughput. There are many options.

I am all for incremental safety improvements to our roads. That's how we make progress. Most of the proposed changes in this project are fantastic and I'm excited for their arrival.

However, the safety issue I highlighted above gives me pause. Please don't build unsafe bike facilities on the section between Corona and Scott St.

Thank you,
Nathan Spindel