



August 1, 2024

Subject: City of Antioch Traffic Safety - Lone Tree Way

Honorable Councilmembers,

Just after midnight on Saturday, July 27, a 29-year-old mother of 2 named Linda Woolridge was struck and killed by a drunk driver while she was bicycling on Lone Tree Way near Sagebrush Drive. This part of Lone Tree is a 6 lane roadway signed at 45 miles per hour. It is next to Deer Valley High School, the Antioch Community Center and Library, the water park, skate park, and the forthcoming bike safety training park that many of you have expressed excitement about.

Before 2019 Lone Tree Way had 2 car travel lanes in each direction, with a painted shoulder on each side that was used commonly by bike riders. In 2018 when Antioch proposed a conversion of the shoulder to another travel lane, Bike East Bay staff and other community members spoke up loudly and clearly to staff and city council with warnings of increased dangers resulting from the new configuration. Our warnings were ignored and the additional travel lanes were installed before the end of the year. Painted bike/car shared lane markings (aka "sharrows") and "bikes may use full lane" signs were deemed by staff to be adequate in protecting bike rider safety.

Since then, 11 people have been killed in crashes on Lone Tree Way, many of them related to speeding. These people included Elijah Holland, an 11 year old Antioch resident who was crossing the street on foot when he was hit and killed by a driver in 2020, and 20 year old Angela Fierro, a pregnant mother who was killed while riding in the passenger seat of a vehicle involved in a high speed crash with another driver. Another 21 individuals have been seriously injured in crashes since the 6 lane configuration was installed, many of whose lives are forever altered via pain and disability.

Before the additional car lanes were added we wrote to Antioch staff on September 17, 2018:

"Any shared lane suggestion for these types of streets is wholly inappropriate and should be strongly resisted. Signage will not fix it, and this is not why we worked to help win the "3 feet for safety" minimum passing law."

An Antioch resident and Bike East Bay member also wrote to staff on September 17, 2018

"Converting to more lanes will make the road more dangerous. Making a city street into what will be almost a freeway will increase speeds and make crossing it that much less safe. Putting more lanes in front of a high school where students will be crossing is not a good plan."



The response provided by the city traffic engineer the same day was as follows:

“Much thought has been given to the decision to follow the general plan and stripe three lanes along Lone Tree Way. This project has been in the works for many years with the Mokelumne Trail being the preferred bike route adjacent to this roadway. Shared bike lanes are also being provided in accordance with the California Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices to provide riders options to use the roadway.”

Another Antioch resident commented in person to City Council on November 26, 2018, with the following:

“I’m particularly concerned as a teacher that you have this 45 mile an hour, 6 lanes, going in front of a water park, in front of the community center, in front of a high school. It goes down past two middle schools where kids will be crossing the street, we have two retirement centers off of Lone Tree. I just think that’s totally unacceptable. And because you have the chance with resurfacing, I think you need to look at the plan that Bike East Bay sent to Antioch, and said this is how you could stripe it to slow traffic, and to add a bike lane and make it safer.”

Now 6 years after the additional lanes were installed on Lone Tree Way it should be incredibly clear to everyone that this was a mistake, and that immediate action is needed to prevent more tragedies. Furthermore, attention is needed along many other problematic corridors in Antioch with similar safety concerns related to overbuilt roadways that encourage speeding and enable dangerous driving, as identified in Antioch’s 2022 Local Road Safety Plan (LRSP).

Our request is for you to request that staff coordinate with Bike East Bay and the Antioch Parks & Recreation Commission, which currently serves as Antioch’s bike/walk committee, to develop a rapid response, near term safety project for Lone Tree Way and mitigate the ongoing dangers on that corridor. This project should be informed by countermeasures from the Local Road Safety Plan, as well as Caltrans’ 2024 Complete Streets Contextual Design Guidance.

We also request that you initiate an Antioch bike/walk planning effort, the city’s first and separate from the Contra Costa Countywide Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan. City Council should form a dedicated bike/walk commission to help provide community oversight on plan development and implementation.

Thank you for receiving this correspondence, and please let us know how we can be of assistance.

Sincerely,

Robert Prinz
Advocacy Director
Bike East Bay