

## Cespedes, Christopher

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**From:** City of Ann Arbor Transportation Commission  
**Sent:** Monday, June 16, 2025 9:38 AM  
**To:** Cespedes, Christopher  
**Subject:** FW: The System is Broken

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

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**From:** Seth Peterson <[REDACTED]@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 5, 2025 8:19 AM  
**To:** City of Ann Arbor Transportation Commission <[TransportationCommission@a2gov.org](mailto:TransportationCommission@a2gov.org)>  
**Subject:** The System is Broken

Hello TC,  
Apparently I'm becoming one of the town crazies, but perhaps I've lived here long enough at this point to qualify. For better or worse, I continue:

If Ann Arbor is serious about Vision Zero (which we certainly are in word) we need to *do* more. I am greatly appreciative of the efforts of our city engineers--I know they are doing their level best. Unfortunately, theirs is an impossible job because the engineering profession is a bit blind to what a street should be:

- 254. Statutory Speed Limit—a speed limit established by legislative action (such as Federal or State law) that typically is applicable for a particular class of highways with specified design, functional, jurisdictional, and/or location characteristics and that is not necessarily displayed on Speed Limit signs.
- 255. Steady (Steady Mode)—the continuous display of a signal indication for the duration of an interval, signal phase, or consecutive signal phases.
- 256. Stop Line—a solid white pavement marking line extending across approach lanes to indicate the point at which a stop is intended or required to be made.
- 257. Street—see Highway.
- 258. Supplemental Signal Face—a signal face that is not a primary signal face but which is provided for a given approach or separate turning movement to enhance visibility or conspicuity.
- 259. Swing Gate—a self-closing fence-type gate designated to swing open away from the track area and return to the closed position upon release.
- 260. Symbol—the approved design of a pictorial or graphical representation of a specific traffic control message for signs, pavement markings, traffic control signals, or other traffic control devices, as shown in the MUTCD.

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I don't know what's a rule and what's a guideline and what's a norm, but we need to start breaking something to get where we need to be. If the basis for street design is a highway design manual, then we are, unfortunately, stuck with highways cleaving our community. I don't know to what extent the TC or the city can empower engineers to make challenging calls, but let's do it if it is at all possible. Or perhaps our street design parameters can be established by the TC so the decision does not rest on the shoulders of staff?

As an example, a couple months back you were presented with the new Nixon Road design (which is, don't get me wrong, certainly an improvement over what is there). Someone asked about the speed limit which was said to be posted at 25mph. A follow-up asked about the design speed which was guessed to be 35mph. I was surprised that no one batted an eye about that. I guess the assumption is that people driving will speed so we need to make it safer for them? But this only makes sense in an environment where *everyone* is in a car. What about this?:

hit by a car  
driving at...

**20 MPH**

**9.5** out of 10 pedestrians survive.



**30 MPH**

**5** out of 10 pedestrians survive.



**40 MPH**

**1** out of 10 pedestrians survive.



Don't we want a design speed that is safe for all users and shouldn't that align with a speed limit? If we can't do that along an entire corridor, perhaps there are "slow zones" within [X]ft. of a crosswalk? I would love to see better alignment between what we are saying about Vision Zero and what we are doing. But as I said at the top, perhaps I'm crazy.

Thanks as always for your time in service to the city,  
Seth Peterson