

To: City of Ann Arbor Transportation Commission  
From: Nick Parsons  
Subject: Division  
Wednesday, September 22, 2021

Hi Transportation Commission,

I write to you today to ask that you please do something about the current configuration of Division between Hill and Packard. While I have long had concerns about this street (including having previously written to both of my Ward 4 councilmembers, who encouraged me to reach out to you), it was an incident yesterday afternoon that spurred me to write to you today, when I witnessed a large flatbed tow truck going 25 mph (the posted speed limit) literally bob and weave around the cars parked on both sides of Division without touching his brakes, coming literal centimeters from scraping a car or taking out a side mirror. I clutched my phone ready to take a picture of the truck, as I was sure it would cause some sort of damage, but miraculously it did not (clearly this was not the first time the driver had driven this particular stretch of Division).

This experience reinforces my belief that there is far too much being crammed into this stretch of Division (a vehicle travel lane, a bike lane, a bike lane buffer, and two lanes of street parking). As currently designed, most if not all of the cars parked on the east side of the street (forming the buffer for the bike lane) have learned to partially park in the striped buffer lane for the bike lane, as this is the only way to provide enough clearance for large vehicles (e.g., buses, tow trucks, etc.) to avoid damaging cars parked on the street. I understand that the purpose of the current layout was to provide a buffer of parked cars between vehicle traffic and bike traffic (although you don't see this particular street design anywhere else in the city and I think it would be better if the bike lane and parking lane were switched, like on Pauline west of Seventh), but wouldn't it have made sense to also eliminate street parking on the west side of the street as part of this design approach? This would provide ample space for larger vehicles to travel on Division and still maintain the parked car buffer for bikes. Or even better, perhaps you could use this extra space to extend the new buffered two-way bikeway that's being planned for Division (north of Packard) all the way south to Hill?

Anyway, hopefully you found this email helpful and thanks for all that you do for our city!

- Nick