



May 10, 2011

To the SFMTA:

Walk San Francisco is writing to strongly support the "boulevard" option for Masonic Avenue.

Today, Masonic Avenue is tragically unsafe. Just last Friday, 61-year-old James Hudson was killed by a speeding car while walking in a crosswalk. The circumstances were similar to those of Nils Yannick Linke, killed there last year on his bike. Last month, a woman was hit by a speeding car on Masonic at Grove and very seriously injured.

In our city, 100 people are seriously injured or killed every year. One of the most powerful things we can do to change this is to reduce traffic speeds on our arterial streets like Masonic. These wide fast streets are where the worst crashes occur, and where we have the most potential to save lives.

Some say that, because the two recent deaths on Masonic were caused by drunk drivers, that redesigning the street will not help. We strongly disagree. Design drives behavior, and the design of this stretch of Masonic Avenue encourages speeding, whatever the condition of the driver.

Last year there were four pedestrian injury collisions along Masonic: two were at Hayes and O'Farrell, and the other two were just outside the study area; at Oak and at Haight. Many other collisions occur along this stretch that do not involve pedestrians – Bike NOPA reported two serious collisions at Masonic and Hayes just in the last four days.

The boulevard option for redesigning Masonic will narrow the street, calm the traffic, and reduce speeding. This will make the area safer for pedestrians, and in fact, for all road users.

Walk San Francisco supports the boulevard option because it includes:

- A road diet, removing lanes to narrow the street and reduce speeding
- A tree-planted median; trees visually narrow the street
- Expanded sidewalks (bulb-outs) at corners and bus stops to shorten crossing distances and improve pedestrian visibility
- More visible crosswalks to improve pedestrian visibility and encourage yielding
- Separate cycle tracks to provide a buffer between cars and pedestrians

Walk San Francisco encourages you to lose no time in moving forward to rebuild Masonic to safer speeds with the boulevard option.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Elizabeth Stampe".

Elizabeth Stampe
Executive Director