

## Reconfigure and Redesign Streets

Changing street designs can alter driver behavior and improve safety, such as by slowing traffic, improving visibility of cyclists, minimizing crossing distance for pedestrians, and the like. We're deploying such changes now on White and McKee Roads, for example, and we'll hustle in the year ahead to secure some of the [unprecedented amount of state and federal funding for traffic safety improvements](#). Yet constructing chicanes, bulb-outs, and [road diets](#) takes time, and those projects can cost millions of dollars.

Yet we need to scale those solutions for a city with 2,800 road miles. In short, we need cheaper, faster street redesigns.

In recent years, we've [learned how to become more scrappy, to more nimbly implement low-cost changes to street design](#) – relying on street markings, reflective materials, signs, plastic bollards and barriers, and signal timing adjustments. The right changes in the right locations can dramatically reduce dangerous behavior from road users.

Not all of that dangerous behavior comes from drivers, by the way. As noted above, fatal collisions for about 75% of our pedestrian victims occur while they're crossing a road *outside* of a crosswalk. So, we target signage and median barriers on roads like Monterey Road to deter mid-block crossing by pedestrians.

You can see several “quick-build” projects throughout the city, wherever you find the green plastic posts, for instance, to create safer space for pedestrians on street corners. In recent months, we've finished or embarked on quick-build projects on Senter Road, Fruitdale Avenue, Story Road, McLaughlin Avenue, Branham Lane, [Hillsdale Avenue](#), [King Road](#), and [Tully Road](#)—with more to come. I also ensured we'd identify funding in the March Budget Message for [more roadway safety projects](#) in the year ahead, and the Council agreed.

When I attend neighborhood meetings about traffic safety solutions, speed bumps invariably arise in the conversation. (San José's road engineers prefer “speed humps,” which enable fire engines to navigate more easily). While bumps and humps can provide a good solution to a speeding problem on a neighborhood street, they don't help much where we have more than 90% of our most serious injuries and deaths: on roads with speed limits above 35 mph. We cannot safely deploy bumps or humps on those roads, due to safety-related prohibitions in state law.

*Back Story: Roadway Fatalities Require a Focused – not Flailing – Response*

Written by San José Mayor Sam Liccardo

In addition to speed bumps and humps, though, the City uses several other means to reduce traffic speeds in our neighborhoods, and the City's [online Traffic Calming Toolkit](#) can help residents identify solutions, advocate with their neighbors, and get changes underway. Every year, the City sets aside funding for each council district for modest traffic calming improvements, and working with your own council office will help get things moving.