

W. Russ Aikman
225 South Windomere Ave
Dallas, TX 75208

July 25, 2021

Councilmember Chad West, District 1
Dallas City Hall
1500 Marilla Street
Dallas, TX 75201

Re: Racing and Unsafe Driving on Jefferson Boulevard

Dear Councilmember West,

As you know, on July 19th lawn care worker **Armando Leija Esparza** was killed in a horrific accident in Winnetka Heights. Mr. Esparza was mowing the lawn of a neighbor at Jefferson Boulevard and Winnetka Avenue when a speeding driver lost control of his car and hit him while he was mowing. His teenage son witnessed this tragedy.

Unfortunately, this was not an isolated incident. The Jefferson Boulevard Task Force has documented multiple examples of crashes and unsafe driving incidents including:

- A total of eight fatalities between 2005 and 2019, including three family members killed in an accident near Jefferson and Rosemont (DEC 2013)
- A total of 236 accidents on Jefferson Boulevard between Hampton Boulevard (West boundary) and Tyler (East Boundary), for the period JAN 1, 2017 to MAR 11, 2021
 - This is an average of 57 accidents per year, with a high of 65 (2019)
- Driver knocked over light pole and sign at Jefferson and Windomere (NOV 2020)
- Driver plowed through a bus stop and into a dental office at Edgefield and Jefferson (AUG 2020)
- Driver hit retaining wall at urgent care facility, also at Edgefield and Jefferson (2018)
- Driver went through fence of a neighbor at Jefferson and Montclair (~2016)

This is only a partial list, and does not include the many complaints I hear from Winnetka Heights neighbors about street racing on Jefferson Boulevard. I hear additional complaints from neighbors, in Sunset Hill and L. O. Daniel.

Bottom line: Things are going from bad to worse on Jefferson Boulevard.

It's time to act.

The Jefferson Boulevard Task Force formally requests traffic calming efforts be implemented as soon as possible on this dangerous stretch of road in Dallas.

We feel the simplest, easiest to implement, and most cost-effective approach is to perform a 'road diet' on the section of Jefferson Boulevard between Polk (East boundary) and Hampton (West boundary). That is, to reduce the number of lanes from three to two in each direction. In essence, what we are asking the City of Dallas to do is to extend the two-lane format used on Jefferson in the commercial district (East of Polk) to the residential areas (West of Polk). To put it differently, it makes no sense to allow drivers to speed through a residential area to get to a commercial district!

As you will recall, this 'road diet' approach has been used successfully previously in Oak Cliff on Sylvan Avenue, in the section from I30 to Davis. The Task Force thinks this approach has worked well on Sylvan, and has been effective in slowing traffic to a safe speed, yet still allowing for a reasonable rate for commuters.

As a starting point we'd like to see a demonstration of the 'road diet' put in place within the next month. This will allow us to gather data to assess the effectiveness of this approach.

We are open to other traffic calming ideas to achieve our goal of a safer Jefferson Boulevard for neighbors, drivers and pedestrians.

We look forward to partnering with you on this initiative.

Sincerely,



W. Russ Aikman, *Chair*
Jefferson Boulevard Task Force

P. S. Please see the attachment with additional information about accidents including photos of crash scenes and excerpts from the study of Jefferson Boulevard traffic trends by the City of Dallas Transportation Department.