

CAPITAL PROJECT IDEA SUBMISSION

[2000 Character Limit]

On behalf of the Sequoia Parent Teacher Organization and Sequoia Elementary School community, I am proposing that the City of Oakland address the traffic congestion and safety issues surrounding Sequoia by implementing the infrastructure recommendations from the February 2020 School Safety Assessment Technical Memorandum issued by the A.C. Safe Routes to Schools Program (SR2S), as well as additional traffic control measures needed to keep our community of 425 students safe. Traffic congestion has only worsened in the past two years so the city should make use of funds to implement SR2S recs before anyone is critically injured or killed.

Sequoia is located on Lincoln, a busy road that connects MacArthur to both Highway 13 and Highway 580. Families walking to and from school observe drivers make risky decisions, near-miss collisions, and pedestrians narrowly avoid being hit at intersections. Drivers speed through crosswalks and fail to yield. Drivers get frustrated with congestion and sometimes pull into the opposite lane. In addition to SR2S recs, our community would benefit from a traffic light at Lincoln & Hearst, a stop sign and flashing pedestrian lights at Lincoln & Scenic as well as Lincoln & Wilbur. Additional measures to slow cars on Laguna would help protect our youngest students who enter school at Laguna & Scenic for TK and Kinder. Additional school zone signage would also be beneficial to alert drivers.

Finally, as pointed out by the SR2S report, the private K-12 Head Royce School up the road from Sequoia increases traffic congestion for our campus, but has its own stoplight to control traffic. Our understanding is this was installed only after a fatal accident occurred. As a matter of equity, OUSD community members should also have access to a much needed stoplight before a preventable tragedy occurs. Our community would be excited to partner with OakDOT to bring these safety measures to fruition.

View SRS2: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1yvik5FdwPhaCrMLp3KBI2FGBBowWj50uy/>

SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTIONS

EQUITY

In your opinion, please describe how your project idea advances equity within your community and/or the City of Oakland

A highly sought-after school, Sequoia Elementary serves a community as diverse as the City itself. Nearly half of Sequoia's students live outside of Sequoia's enrollment zone and commute to campus from neighborhoods all over Oakland. While OakDOT deems the neighborhood around Sequoia low priority in terms of need, the school qualifies for Title I funding. Those families sending their children to Sequoia from more distant neighborhoods should know that the City is helping keep their children as safe as possible during their commute to school.

Furthermore, ensuring that public school students at Sequoia have safe approaches, given that Head Royce students have two traffic lights to control traffic just up the hill, will help address current inequities in safety around the two schools.

HEALTH

In your opinion, please describe how your project idea makes the community healthier

These improvements would dramatically increase the physical health and safety of Sequoia community members, neighborhood residents, and drivers using Lincoln Avenue and the surrounding streets. By improving safety conditions around Sequoia, these improvements would also encourage more walking to school by neighborhood residents, reducing congestion on neighborhood streets and emissions from gas vehicles.

SAFETY

In your opinion, please describe how your project idea makes the community safer

Community members walking to and from Sequoia Elementary during morning and afternoon pickup and dropoff currently face significant risks due to inadequate safety measures along Lincoln Avenue and the surrounding streets. Neighborhood residents must navigate congested streets, and traffic conditions remain consistently dangerous due to inadequate safety and speed control measures around Sequoia. Implementing these improvements would dramatically reduce the chances of catastrophic or fatal injury to these groups.

ENVIRONMENT (sustainable infrastructure/resiliency strategies)

In your opinion, please describe how your project idea improves the environment

This project will encourage walking and other non-automobile modes of transportation to and from Sequoia, thereby reducing the number of cars on the streets around the school and the harmful emissions associated with them.

ECONOMY

In your opinion, please describe how your project idea improves the community's economy

This project will have a negligible effect on the community's economy; however, an improvement to pedestrian safety through this project encourages residents and visitors to the neighborhood to spend time out walking around, which could in turn benefit the local economy within the Dimond business district.

COLLABORATION

In your opinion, please describe how your project idea includes collaboration within your community and/or other organizations within the City of Oakland

(alignment with public engagement feedback, existing adopted plans, other collaborative opportunities)

This project was created/developed by Sequoia community members, and involves collaborating with other agencies including OUSD, Sequoia Parent Teacher Organization, Safe Routes to Schools, and OakDOT. This project is supported by the Dimond Improvement Association Public Safety Committee. This project is endorsed by current Sequoia Principal, Dr. LeJon April Payne.