

SOS's Road Safety Audit Template for Neighborhoods, Non-profits, & Concerned Citizens

Safe Omaha Streets (SOS) is dedicated to making Omaha's streets safe for ALL USERS through education, advocacy, projects, and collaboration with local government.

Introduction

Safe Omaha Streets conducted its first crowdsourced <u>Road Safety Audit along 72nd</u> <u>Street from Pacific Street to Dodge Street</u> in Omaha, Nebraska in July of 2023. Now YOU can conduct your own crowdsourced road safety audit in your neighborhood or business district.

A Road Safety Audit is similar to a Walk Audit, except a Walk Audit is usually conducted on foot, at one time, and with a group of people.

A Road Safety Audit lets multiple road users conduct the audit on their own time over a period of days or weeks. If you want to stick to a walk audit, then check out these helpful walk audit templates from <u>One Omaha, Safe Routes</u> <u>Partnership</u> or <u>AARP Walk Audit Toolkit</u>

Road Safety Audits are usually conducted by a variety of interdisciplinary groups to assess the safety of a roadway. Now you can do it with your neighborhood!

How to Use Our Template

This RSA template is for ALL users, including motorists & motorcyclists, bicyclists, and pedestrians & vulnerable users, such as the elderly and persons with disabilities.

Walking, biking, driving, and taking public transit all play a role in how individuals experience their daily commute and travel. It is important to view the transportation system as a whole, and this template will help YOU do just that!

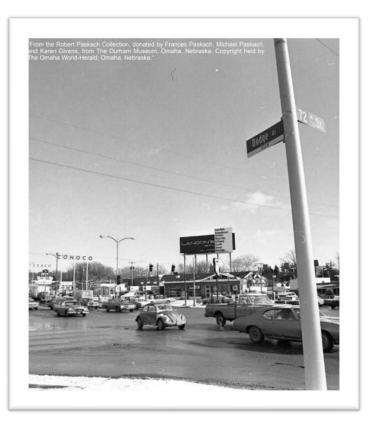
This RSA can be conducted multiple times by the same users, or multiple times as multiple users, meaning you can drive the audit area, then walk it, then ride it. Or you can do the audit as one type of user but at different times of the day or week.

Our RSA template gathers both hard and soft data, meaning there are questions about quantitative "data" and subjective questions about how the user "feels."

WHY Conduct an RSA?

You can conduct a Road Safety Audit to:

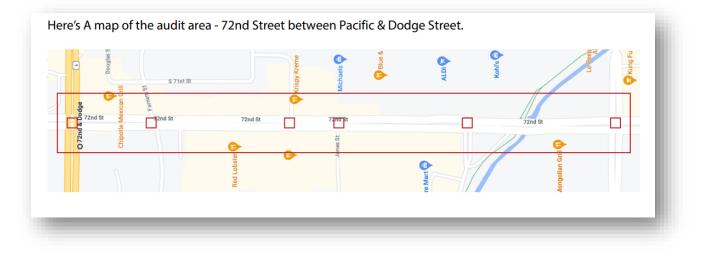
- ✓ Document how safe or unsafe a road or intersection feels.
- \checkmark Identify inequities of the road.
- ✓ Quantify disparities in how the road is designed or used.
- ✓ Identify areas that need improvement.
- ✓ Provide suggestions for solutions.
- ✓ Engage elected officials and city staff/representatives in the process.



RSA STEPS:

Identify your audit area:

- Make a map of your audit area and include it in the survey/checklist forms
- See the map below that we included in our RSA survey forms



Identify your Purpose:

- Document the reasons or problems that made your group want to tackle this area.
- Is it . . . speeding, red light running, erratic driving, unsafe infrastructure, unmarked crosswalks, broken sidewalks, etc.?

Create your RSA survey form:

You can create one large survey for all users, or you can use our survey templates for specific users, like drivers, pedestrians, bicyclists, etc.

We posted our forms on our website in a fillable pdf and then asked participants to download the forms and email them back to us. Some folks printed out the forms and then mailed their completed surveys back to us via the post. Choose whichever way is best for you and your group!

Here is an example of the Pedestrian survey form we created for our Road Safety Audit:

We are hosting this crowd-sourced RSA for the whole month of July. Please submit your forms by July 31st. Email completed forms to safeomahastreetsigmail.com RSAs are for Everyone: RSAs are for all users, including motorists & motorcyclists, bicyclists, and pedestrians & vulnerable users such as persons with disabilities, elderly, and children. Waking, biling, driving, and taking public transit all play a role in how individuals experience their daily commute and travel. It is important to view the transportation system as a whole from waying perspectives to understand how all the modes interact with each other from behavioral and infrastructure perspectives. This RSA will help SOS do just that Do It A Lot: We encourage you to complete this audit multiple times as multiple users, or multiple times as one user but at different times of day. This will provide more experiential data. Herds & Soft Data: You'll notice that along with questions about quantitative 'data,' we also ask as one user but at different times of day. This will provide more experiential data. Herds & Soft Data: You'll notice that along with questions about quantitative 'data,' we also ask and theig improve 27ad Street! Here's A map of the audit are - 72nd Street between Pacific & Dodge Street. Were's A map of the audit are - 72nd Street between Pacific & Dodge Street. Were's A map of the audit are - 72nd Street between Pacific & Dodge Street. Were's A map of the audit are - 72nd Street between Pacific & Dodge Street. Were's A map of the audit are - 72nd Street between Pacific & Dodge Street. Were's A map of the audit are - 72nd Street between Pacific & Dodge Street. Were's A map of the audit are - 72nd Street between Pacific & Dodge Street. Were 's A map of the audit are - 72nd Street between Pacific & Dodge Street. Were's A map of the audit are - 72nd Street between Pacific & Dodge Street. Wer	72ND ST. BETWEEN DODGE ST. & PACI	EIC ST IN OMAHA NE		SIDEWALK	s	
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If not, what improvements could be made to make the sidewalk safer for all users?						
		C Side C	Did you feel safe while w	walking on this sidewalk?		YES 🗌 NO
Did you see any other pedestrians or vulnerable users? Please provide a number.		// •	If not, what improveme	nts could be made to make the sidev	alk safer for all users?	
Did you see any other pedestrians or vulnerable users? Please provide a number.		0				
Did you see any other pedestrians or vulnerable users? Please provide a number.	i i i i i i i i i i i i i i i i i i i					
			Did you see any other p	edestrians or vulnerable users? Pleas	e provide a number.	
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Safeomahastreets.com

RSA FORM FOR PE	DESTRIANS		
Transit Stops: Many pedestrians are multimodal, meaning th observe the condition and quality of transit stops. There are many of them have benches, and some don't.			
In general, were the transit stops you saw well-maintained? Fe	el free to explain. YES] NO	C
In general, were the transit stops easy to see/identify?	YES [NO	C
In general, would you feel safe at these transit stops at any tim If not, why?	e of the day? YES	NO	
Would you feel protected from the elements at this transit sto	o? YES] NO	
If not, why? What is your overall feedback about these transit stops – lo etc.?	cation, amenities, number,		

What do you think would improve these transit stops for public transit users?

Answer for each of the intersections you stopped at:	
72nd & Pacific St.	
Did you see any motorists run red lights?	YES NO
How long did you have to wait to cross the street?	
Did any motorists impede your path while crossing?	YES D NO
Did you have enough time to cross comfortably?	YES D NO
Did you feel safe crossing this intersection?	YES D NO
What improvements could be made to this intersection to make it safer	and/or more
efficient for pedestrians and vulnerable users?	
Would these changes make this street safer for ALL users, including motor	rists and bicy- YES 🗌 NO 🗌
clists?	
https://www.safeomahastreets.com/ Thank you for held	pina our community become a safer place

SOS FORM #722023PED-D SOS ROAD SAFETY AUDIT (RSA) RSA FORM FOR PEDESTRIANS

INTERSECTIONS			
72nd & Rose Blumkin			
Did you see any motorists run red lights?	YES 🗌	NO	
How long did you have to wait to cross the street?			
Did any motorists impede your path while crossing?	YES 🗆	NO	
Did you have enough time to cross comfortably?	YES 🗆	NO	
Did you feel safe crossing this intersection?	YES 🗆	NO	
What improvements could be made to this intersection to make it safer and/or more			
efficient for pedestrians and vulnerable users?			
Would these changes make this street safer for ALL users, including motorists and bicy-	YES 🗌	NO	
clists?			
72nd & Jones Street			
Did you see any motorists run red lights?	YES 🗌	NO	
How long did you have to wait to cross the street?			
Did any motorists impede your path while crossing?	YES 🗆	NO	
Did you have enough time to cross comfortably?	YES 🗌	NO	
Did you feel safe crossing this intersection?	YES 🗌	NO	
What improvements could be made to this intersection to make it safer and/or more			
efficient for pedestrians and vulnerable users?			
Would these changes make this street safer for ALL users, including motorists and bicy- clists?	YES 🗆	NO	
72nd & Jones Circle			
Did you see any motorists run red lights?	YES 🗌	NO	
How long did you have to wait to cross the street?			
Did any motorists impede your path while crossing?	YES 🗆	NO	
Did you have enough time to cross comfortably?	YES	NO	
Did you feel safe crossing this intersection?	YES 🗌	NO	
What improvements could be made to this intersection to make it safer and/or more			
efficient for pedestrians and vulnerable users?			
Would these changes make this street safer for ALL users, including motorists and bicy- clists?	YES 🗌	NO	
https://www.safeomahastreets.com/ Thank you for helping our communit	ty become a s	afer pi	lacel

SOS FORM #722023PED-E SOS ROAD SAFETY AUDIT (RSA) RSA FORM FOR PEDESTRIANS

INTERSECTIONS

INTERSECTIONS		
72nd & Farnam St.		
Did you see any motorists run red lights?	YES I NO	
How long did you have to wait to cross the street?		
Did any motorists impede your path while crossing?	YES D NO	
Did you have enough time to cross comfortably?	YES 🗌 NO	
Did you feel safe crossing this intersection?	YES D NO	
What improvements could be made to this intersection to make it safer and/or more		
efficient for pedestrians and vulnerable users?		
Would these changes make this street safer for ALL users, including motorists and bicy- clists?	YES 🗆 NO	
72nd & Dodge St.		
Did you see any motorists run red lights?	YES INC	
How long did you have to wait to cross the street?		
Did any motorists impede your path while crossing?	YES 🗆 NO	
Did you have enough time to cross comfortably?	YES 🗌 NO	
Did you feel safe crossing this intersection?	YES 🗌 NO	
What improvements could be made to this intersection to make it safer and/or more efficient for pedestrians and vulnerable users?		
Would these changes make this street safer for ALL users, including motorists and bicy- clists?	YES 🗌 NG	
ENFORCEMENT		
	YES 🗌 NO	
Did you see any presence of traffic enforcement, ie, Omaha Police Department? Would traffic enforcement in this area make you feel safer?		

Remember, our audit area was nearly one mile in area, so we had a lot of ground to cover!

If your audit area is just one block or one intersection, your survey form could be much smaller and more streamlined.

You can find all the survey forms in the <u>Appendices of our Road Safety Audit</u>.

We've included Road Safety Audit templates for Motorists & Motorcyclists, Bicyclists, Pedestrians & Vulnerable Users at the end of this document. You can modify them to fit your needs!

Decide Your Timing:

We hosted our RSA for one whole month and kept the audit forms live on our website from June 30 to August 1. It's up to you how long your survey is open.

Who are the Stakeholders?

Identify all the stakeholders in the area you are auditing. A stakeholder is any person, entity, group or business with an interest or concern in the area. So think about all the people who use the area you are auditing and ask yourself. . .

"Is there a school nearby?" This could be a cool project for students!

"Is there a church nearby?"

"Are there businesses in the area?" Businesses want safe streets too!

"Are there residential homes or apartments?"

"Are there people who walk the area a lot?"

"*Are there public transit users in the area?*" Public transit users usually have daily interaction with the road infrastructure as both a pedestrian AND a passenger.

Once you've identified all the stakeholders, invite them to participate in your Road Safety Audit survey. And don't forget to communicate WHY you are conducting the audit.

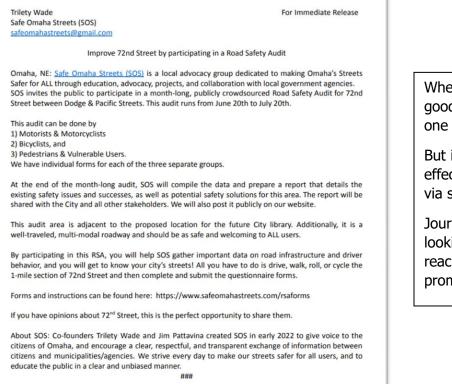
Don't Forget Outreach

You have a variety of ways to promote your RSA to the public and stakeholders, but it's always smart to start with an image/postcard/flyer, etc, like the one we created below:



Here are some ways to promote your project!

• <u>Traditional Media</u>: news stations, radio stations, local newspapers



When reaching out to the media, it's good to send a press release, like the one to the left.

But in this day and age, it's also just as effective to reach out to media contacts via social platforms.

Journalists and news reporters are often looking for stories, so don't be shy about reaching out to them online and promoting your project.

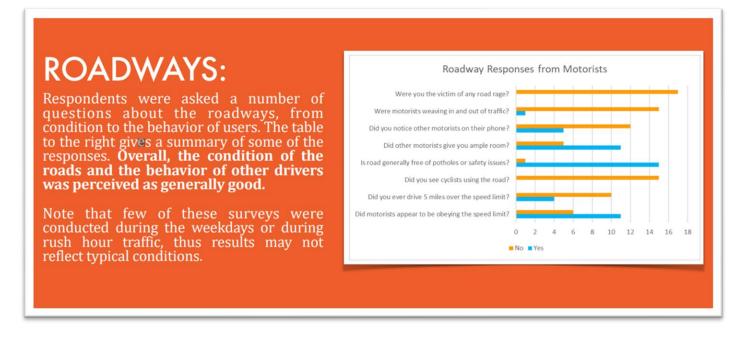
- <u>Social media</u>: Share your RSA often on all your social media platforms!
- <u>Neighborhood Associations</u>: Reach out to neighborhood associations and ask to include your project in their newsletters or on their websites/social media pages.
- <u>Direct Promotion</u>: Promote your RSA directly to stakeholders via email, online newsletters, mailed postcards/flyers, or door-knocking. Write emails that are clear, coherent, but also brief.
 - When you enter a business or knock on a person's door, make sure to have some sort of postcard or flyer that you can leave with them, and have a short "elevator pitch" to let them know all about your project without taking up too much of their time.
 - Here's an example of a quick pitch: "Would you like to participate in making our city safer? We are hosting a Road Safety Audit for *** and you can participate by driving, walking, or cycling in the area and then filling out a questionnaire about your experience. You're an important part of improving this area!" You'll know pretty quickly if they're interested.

Gather & Analyze the Data:

Most of the data-gathering will be done by the audit participants. After they submit their RSA forms, now it's time for you to analyze the data.

Using mainly "Yes" or "No" questions in your surveys will make data analysis easier. Findings can be presented as percentages and can also be presented visually in charts and graphs. Remember to present findings specific to each user because motorists will likely experience the road differently than pedestrians or cyclists.

Here are two examples from our Report:



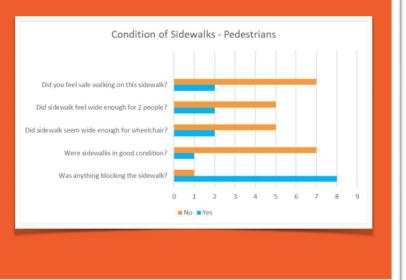
SIDEWALKS:

Respondents were asked a number of questions about the sidewalks, from condition to perception of safety.

The graph to the right gives a summary of some of the sidewalk conditions. **Overall, the sidewalks** were perceived poorly by respondents.

In comparison to the motorist survey, where the majority of motorists said the road surfaces were generally free of potholes or other safety issues, the same was not the case for the condition of sidewalks.

Pedestrian feedback on the sidewalks noted issues with **design** (narrow width, narrow buffer, too many driveway cuts), **maintenance**, and **blockage**.



Supplemental Documentation:

Feel free to do your own supplemental research so the burden isn't solely on the audit participants. Some research and data gathering you can do on your own is:

- Conduct your own "speed audit" with a traffic radar device. We used a device from Pocket Radar.
- Conduct your own "pedestrian" or "cyclist" count where you survey the area for a specific amount of time on specific days.
- Gather video documentation of problems in the area or use a dash cam.

For our report, we included supplemental data such as quotes from businesses along the audit area, video documentation of drivers running red lights, and data from the Omaha Police Department about citations issued for red light violations.

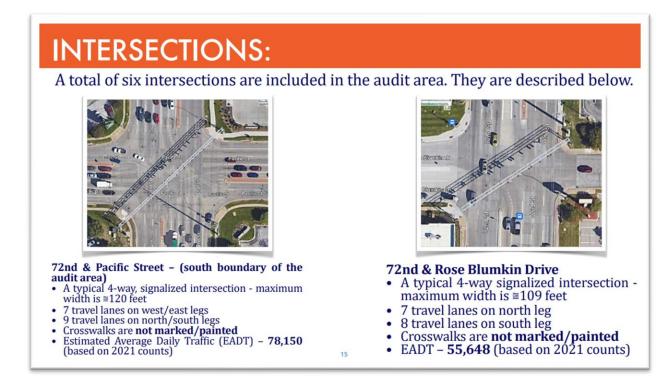
You can present all your supplemental findings in a section that is separate from the results of the submitted audit forms.

Presenting Your Findings:

Now it's time to prepare your report! You want to make sure your findings are easy to read. Even a one-page report or press release is effective as long as the data is accurate, and your findings are presented clearly.

Before you launch into the results of your surveys, provide the boundaries of the audit area and a description of the existing conditions. This will help other residents and leaders understand what the current conditions are, as well as what opportunities for improvement there are. Here's an example of how we tackled that in our report:

SURVEY BOUNDARIES The audit area is bounded on the north by the 72m & Pacific intersection, and on the west and east posted speed limit along this portion of 72nd Street Sidewalks along the audit area are contiguous. The of this audit area is 3 feet, with the exception of a c For example, the sidewalk adjacent to the Kum & G wide.	nd & Dodge intersection, on the south by the 72nd by adjacent sidewalks and private property. The t is 35 mph. average width of the sidewalks along the majority couple of segments of newly constructed sidewalk.
Omaha metro buses travel along 72nd Street every 15 minutes Monday through Saturday and every 20 minutes on Sunday. Specifically, 72nd Street is served by Route 18 buses which pass along 72nd Street: • 131 times a day on weekdays • 102 times a day on Saturdays • 73 times a day on Sundays For a total of 830 bus trips per week along the audit area! ORBT buses do not run on 72nd Street but do run through the 72nd & Dodge Street intersection. • 196 times on weekdays • 130 times on Saturdays • 196 times on weekdays • 106 times on Sundays For a total of 12.16 trips per week. There are 10 transit stops on 72nd Street from Dodge to Pacific and two ORBT stations at 72nd & Dodge.	 Dodge Street (the north boundary) is designated as Highway 6 and is a six-lane road with dedicated turn lanes and an average daily traffic volume of 50,000 vehicles. At the intersection with 72nd Street, Dodge Street has three through lanes in each direction, dual left turn lanes for all directions, and dedicated right turn lanes for eastbound and northbound. 72nd Street is a major arterial that runs north/south through the City of Omaha with an average daily traffic volume of 40,000 vehicles. 72nd Street, within the boundaries of this audit, is a six-lane road with a median from Pacific to Dodge. There is no on-street parking, no bike lanes, protected or otherwise. Pacific Street (the south boundary) is a four-lane road with dedicated turn lanes. At the intersection with 72nd Street, Pacific has two through lanes in each direction, dual left turn lane sin all directions, and dedicated right turn lanes for all directions. Pacific Street west of 72nd Street, as well as 72nd Street and Dodge Street, are all designated turck routes.



Your Report Should Include:

- A **<u>summary of the results</u>** from your surveys, ie the major problems documented.
 - Here are a few slides from our report as an example:

SIDEWALKS:	
Respondents were asked a number of questions about the sidewalks, from condition to perception of safety.	Condition of Sidewalks - Pedestrians
The graph to the right gives a summary of some of the sidewalk conditions. Overall, the sidewalks were perceived poorly by respondents.	Did you feel safe walking on this sidewalk? Did sidewalk feel wide enough for 2 people?
In comparison to the motorist survey, where the majority of motorists said the road surfaces were generally free of potholes or other safety issues, the same was not the case for the	Did sidewalk seem wide enough for wheelchair? Were sidewalks in good condition? Was anything blocking the sidewalk?
condition of sidewalks. Pedestrian feedback on the sidewalks noted issues with design (narrow width, narrow buffer, too many driveway cuts), maintenance , and blockage .	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 No Yes

SUMMARY:

100% DESIRE FOR MARKED CROSSWALKS

One consistent theme across all Road Audit Surveys (motorists, pedestrians, cyclists) was a need for marked crosswalks at the 5 intersections without painted crosswalks. There was also a request for improved crosswalk amenities at the 72nd & Dodge intersection.

OAD INFRASTRUCTURE NOT BUILT FOR ALL

verall, the feedback from the Road Audit participants showed that this area of 72nd Street is built for notorists, while leaving other users feeling unwelcome and unsafe. Roads were generally considered to e in good condition by motorists, while sidewalks were considered in poor condition by pedestrians, ulnerable users, and cyclists. Participants also noted the poor condition of transit stops along this area.

OMMON THEME OF AVOIDANCE

nother common theme was that people avoid this area. This was noted by motorists, pedestrians, and yclists. Even employees of businesses along the Audit area will access their businesses by side roads ather than drive on 72nd Street.

• **<u>Relevant quotes</u>** from survey participants, like the slides from our report below:

WIDTH OF SIDEWALK & WIDTH OF BUFFER:

Quotes from Pedestrians About Condition of Sidewalks

"I am a manual wheelchair user. I did the assessment with a power chair user. There were only 2 places that the sidewalk was wide enough for 2 wheelchair users to wheel next to each other. It was in front of the Pepper Jax and the Kum & Go. These were the best sidewalks during the assessment. **Otherwise, the sidewalks were too narrow, or they had uneven surfaces because of the grey** cement and this brick-colored pavement that went along the sidewalk next to the street. The brick-colored pavement needs to be replaced on both the west and east side of 72nd."

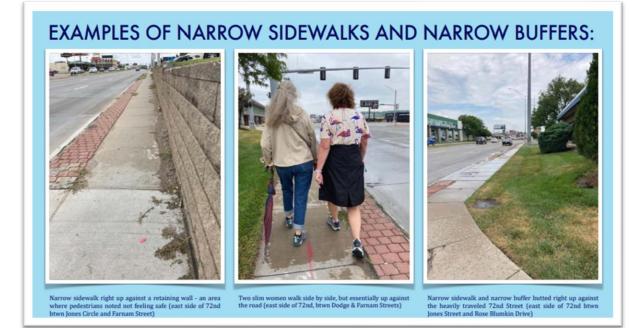
"Most of this sidewalk is just not built for pedestrians at all! The street is too close to the sidewalk with not enough of a buffer between curb and sidewalk. I don't feel safe being that close to a street where people are speeding. I wished I was wearing reflective gear cuz it requires a neon vest to feel safe."

"More distance between edge of sidewalk and street. Sidewalks with grass and trees **separating sidewalk from traffic would make me feel safer.** More shade by way of trees would make a much more pleasant walk."

"Buffer between sidewalks and motorists (grass strip, trees, metal railing, etc), better maintenance (weeds, cracks, etc), trees to provide shade and dampen noise - I felt very exposed and vulnerable as a pedestrian with so much car traffic right next to me."

"This specific experience was fine: not crowded, people didn't run red lights, no weaving, the speeding was minimal. However, I usually avoid this road because it's usually crowded, people run red lights, and there's weaving."	"Design encourages high speed and efficiency for motor vehicles. Cycling on lanes feels unsafe. Crosswalks are long distances and feel intimidating. Minimal landscape/ugly."
"It probably encourages lower speeds just simply due to the number of stop lights."	"Busy road that can be crowded with lots of people turning into the
"This area can be stressful and crowded, so I probably drive more cautiously here than on other 'easier' stretches of road."	businesses there, so I tend to avoid it, but I also drive more cautiously there because I trust the other drivers there less."

• Documentation of **problem areas**:



Documentation of <u>problem behaviors</u>:



• **<u>Recommendations</u>** for improvement:

• Here are a few recommendations from our report:



Your report should use easy-to-understand language so it's accessible to all. Make sure to include ideas for improvement or suggestions for solving the problem. You don't want your report to be an accusatory attack; you want it to be a collaborative solution.

Keep in mind that your findings may not match your expectations. Sometimes, you'll find there are problems you didn't even know about, and other times, you'll find that things you thought were problems really aren't.

Lastly, if your report is large like ours was, consider including an "Executive Summary" that covers the major issues in the report as well as your prioritized recommendations.

Contact Safe Omaha Streets for more information or assistance at <u>safeomahastreets@gmail.com</u>

Local Resources:

City of Omaha Planning Department

City of Omaha Traffic Engineering & Maintenance

Traffic Counts and Average Daily Volume - City of Omaha

MAPA – 2020 Metro Area Traffic Reports

Metro NEXT

Durham Photo Archive for old Omaha photos