

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF THE SOS ROAD SAFETY REPORT



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## FOR 72ND STREET BETWEEN DODGE & PACIFIC STREETS



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This comprehensive and easy-on-the-eyes document serves as a resource for the public about 72nd Street, specifically, and the City of Omaha in general. From the current conditions of 72nd Street to ideas for improvement, this report will make you see your surroundings in a new way. Beyond that, this document provides information on transportation-adjacent topics such as TOD & ACI zoning, the City's Sidewalk Program, the City & Metro's shared authority over bus stops, homelessness, and bike & pedestrian counts.

SOS, an Omaha-based safe streets advocacy group, conducted a user-based Road Safety Audit for the area of 72nd Street between Dodge and Pacific Streets. The vicinity of the audit is currently undergoing a renaissance, with various new developments, such as the City's Central Library.

The goals of the audit were to gather qualitative and quantitative data from ALL road users, to advocate for safety improvements along this stretch of road as well as in other areas of the City, and to create a generalizable and scalable Road Safety Audit template.

The Road Audit was conducted over a period of 1+ months during the summer of 2023. Three separate road audit forms for three categories of users (motorists & motorcyclists, pedestrians & vulnerable users, and bicyclists) were promoted to the public. A total of 30 audit forms were submitted during the audit period.

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**Motorists reported the audit area was safe but stressful, and an area they typically avoid. Road conditions and driver behavior were noted as satisfactory, but a need for more marked crosswalks was unanimous.**

**Pedestrians and vulnerable users found the audit area unsafe and stressful, and they found transit stops lacking. In contrast to motorists, who felt the infrastructure was overall safe, pedestrians and vulnerable users found the infrastructure overall too narrow, too close to the street, and poorly maintained.**

**Cyclists found the audit area was not intended for them, and there was a consensus for either more access to the Keystone Trail or more bicycle infrastructure.**

To supplement the survey data provided by audit participants, SOS also surveyed some of the businesses along the corridor and found many people avoid 72nd Street altogether and access their places of employment from side streets.

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SOS also supplemented the data provided by audit participants with its own video and radar documentation of red-light running and speeding, respectively. Additionally, due to the consistent presence of people experiencing homelessness along the audit corridor, SOS provided important information on homelessness.

One of the most surprising takeaways from the survey was that Metro is not the sole, let alone primary, authority over bus stops.

Overall, the findings show that this area is not built for ALL, people often avoid it, and there was a 100% desire for marked crosswalks across ALL survey respondents.

SOS provided a variety of recommendations from policy and design to transit and enforcement. Here are just a few of the proposed recommendations (please see the report for the full list of recommendations):

- Increase support for the City's sidewalk program
- Establish a sidewalk task force
- Start a BID
- Add access to the Keystone from the area of 72nd & Dodge
- Add marked crosswalks
- Encourage public/private partnerships to improve transit stops
- Increase funding specifically for the Omaha Police Department's Traffic Unit
- Host an on-foot intersection enforcement event (partner with OPD)
- Conduct road safety audits and speed audits along this corridor and in other areas of concern.