



March 2, 2022

Caltrans  
 Sean Nozzari  
 Deputy Director of Traffic Operations  
 Caltrans Bay Area (District 4)

*Via email:*

**RE: Urgent Request for Improvements to Traffic Safety in the Springs**

Dear Caltrans,

The Springs Municipal Advisory Council (Springs MAC) is aware of ongoing meetings between Supervisor Susan Gorin, CalTrans and Sonoma County Transportation and Public Works (TPW) regarding improvements to traffic safety in The Springs along the Highway 12 (HWY 12) corridor. The CalTrans Complete Streets program requires that the Safety and Accessibility of walking, biking, and taking public transit be prioritized on their roads whenever a project is undertaken. Due to recent improvements on Hwy 12 in the City of Sonoma, we have become aware of the possibilities in additional safety improvements that could be made for pedestrians and bicyclists in our community. We (The Springs MAC members) make an urgent request that CalTrans initiates action at the earliest possible time, on the following requests for pedestrian, bicycle and vehicular safety in the Springs.

**Highway 12/Verano Avenue Intersection/Verano Avenue & Main Street Crosswalk**

We grant that the Hwy 12/Verano Ave intersection is the only portion of this request under Springs (County) and CalTrans joint jurisdiction. CalTrans personnel are aware of the death of two people and two girls in their early teens injured at that intersection. All of these occurrences were within less than a quarter mile of the locations mentioned (see below chart for references). The deaths of two people, one in the City of Sonoma and the other in Sonoma County (the Springs), highlight our awareness that conditions at the Hwy 12/Verano Ave intersection directly impact conditions at these two sites. It is our contention that improvements to the Hwy 12/Verano Ave intersections are highly indicated.

Our concerns are the inequity of designated turn signals and lanes at the Hwy 12/Verano Ave intersection that create confusion and increased danger. The critical point seems to be for vehicles turning left from the west on Verano to proceed north on Hwy 12.

**Recent Injuries and Deaths at Verano Ave and Highway 12 intersection**

Date	Location	Details	Article link



<b>3/22/21</b>	Bike Path— HWY 12 Maxwell Park	Fatality Pedestrian James Pendergast hit by work van	<a href="https://www.pressdemocrat.com/article/news/highway-12-north-of-sonoma-closed-after-fatal-collision/?artslide=0&amp;sba=AAS">https://www.pressdemocrat.com/article/news/highway-12-north-of-sonoma-closed-after-fatal-collision/?artslide=0&amp;sba=AAS</a>
<b>2/14/21</b>	Crosswalk HWY 12 & Verano Avenue between Palms Cafe and McDonald's	Accident Two girls injured by Car	<a href="https://www.sonomanews.com/article/news/2-girls-struck-at-verano-and-sonoma-highway/">https://www.sonomanews.com/article/news/2-girls-struck-at-verano-and-sonoma-highway/</a>
<b>11/24/20</b>	Crosswalk Verano Avenue & Main St	Fatality Pedestrian Ray Carrillo hit by Car	<a href="https://www.sonomanews.com/article/news/pedestrian-dies-after-being-hit-by-car-in-sonoma/">https://www.sonomanews.com/article/news/pedestrian-dies-after-being-hit-by-car-in-sonoma/</a>

**Springs/HWY 12 Crosswalks**

There is need for additional marked crosswalks throughout the Hwy 12 corridor from El Verano to Agua Caliente. The Springs Community is dense with businesses and housing along that stretch of highway. Many people walk to shopping and other businesses throughout the Springs. Vehicles frequently take advantage of gaps in traffic to speed from stop signal to stop signal making unsafe conditions for pedestrians and bicyclists. There are few actual cross streets (only “T” intersections) in the area, increasing the need for more marked crosswalks. We request implementation of four pedestrian beacons. Three beacons at already marked crosswalks on Highway 12 located at Boyes Foods Center (16205 Sonoma Hwy), El Molino (11 Central Avenue)/Andy’s Liquor (18002 Sonoma Hwy), and Parsons Hardware x Waterman (17800 Sonoma Hwy). The additional pedestrian beacon should be placed at the Verano Ave/Main Street crosswalk (TPW area of responsibility).

**Donald Street Gap, Bike Lanes**

The Donald Street Gap along both sides of the highway, in the area between Happy Dog (18962 Sonoma Hwy) and Baker and Cook (18812 Sonoma Hwy), has no sidewalk. Pedestrians must walk alongside traffic in the bike lane/shoulder. The bike lanes are more like bike gutters, and for pedestrians and biking to be safe, more space and protection than a line of paint needs to be given to both groups. These goals are in line with the Complete Streets Program, and need to be undertaken sooner than later.

The Springs area of Unincorporated Sonoma County is recognized as a disadvantaged community. We are not wealthy. That does not mean we are not worthy. We ask that CalTrans work with TPW and Supervisor Gorin (and the Board of Supervisors, as needed) as she advocates for us, to address the above safety needs along Highway 12. We want to minimize accidents and prevent further pedestrian fatalities.

Sincerely,

Maite Iturri  
 Chair, Springs Municipal Advisory Council

Springs MAC letter  
March 2, 2022



CC: Sonoma County Board of Supervisors, Sonoma County Transportation and Public Works, City of Sonoma City Council, Sonoma County Transportation Authority, Permit Sonoma, Governor Gavin Newsom, Congressman Mike Thompson, Congressman Jared Huffman, Senator Bill Dodd, Senator Mike Maguire, Representative Cecilia Aguiar-Curry, Senator Diane Feinstein, Senator Alex Padilla

Please see attached community petitions along with reports:

- [springs\\_hwy\\_12\\_ladg.pdf](#)
- [CBTP The Springs \(Central Sonoma Valley\)2010.pdf](#)

