

Chris Taggart

From: Zenita Lathrop <mzlath@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, July 8, 2023 6:26 PM
To: Ravalli County Commissioners Office
Cc: Chris Taggart
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Highway 93 Study

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Hello Greg, Dan, Jeff & Chris,

I am reaching out because I have become aware that the Ravalli County Commissioners have requested a speed study on the Hwy 93 corridor.

We live in a 10 lot subdivision off Hwy 93. We have a very dangerous situation when getting onto Hwy 93 and leaving Hwy 93 onto our street - Sunrider Lane; very near mile marker 71.9. The speed limit is 70 mph and there is no left hand turn lane off the highway. We routinely encounter people not moving over into the right lane when we are trying to turn left onto Sunrider Lane from Hwy 93. Often we have to come to a full stop in the Highway which has speeds of 70 mph to wait for oncoming traffic in order to turn.

On Wednesday June 14, 2023 our daughter and her one month old son were hit at a speed approximately 70 mph by an individual who was distracted driving as our daughter attempted to turn left onto Sunrider Ln from Hwy 93. Had there been oncoming traffic there would have been at least two fatalities. Fortunately the oncoming traffic had just cleared and she was in the process of starting to turn when she was hit from behind. The driver was cited for careless driving but that doesn't change the fact that there are many distracted drivers and this is a dangerous situation that has happened before and will most likely happen again. Next time there may be fatalities.

We have since found out that a number of our neighbors have also been in accidents trying to leave Hwy 93 into the subdivision and accessing Hwy 93 from our subdivision.

What can we do to get a left hand turn lane and reduced speeds? Given that there are at least 10 lots in our subdivision, the number of daily trips trying access Hwy 93 and our street is quite a few. Most of Hwy 93 has turn lanes and there are almost no other 10 lot subdivisions without a left hand turn lane. An article that I found when researching the issue did mention that the Montana Constitution states that landowners along state highways must have reasonable access to the highway.<https://www.kpax.com/news/local-news/flathead-county/montana-transportation-commission-approves-motion-for-change-on-highway-93-for-alpine-coaster-project>

We want you to be aware of this situation as you consider trying to increase the safety along the Hwy 93 Corridor. Please reach out if you want more information or if there is anything else we can do. Please keep us updated on any public comment time.

Thank you,

Matt & Zenita Lathrop
406-544-1343

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