

VILLAGE OF HOMEWOOD
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 14, 2025
VILLAGE HALL BOARD ROOM

CALL TO ORDER: President Hofeld called the meeting of the Board of Trustees to order at 7:00 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: President Hofeld led trustees in the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL: Clerk Nakina Flores called the roll. Those present were Trustee Vivian Harris-Jones, Trustee Julie Willis, Trustee Jay Heiferman, Trustee Patrick Siemsen, Trustee Lauren Roman, and Village President Richard Hofeld. Trustee Phillip Mason was absent.

President Hofeld introduced staff present: Village Manager Napoleon Haney, Village Attorney Chris Cummings, Chief of Police Denise McGrath, Deputy Fire Chief Steven DeJong, Economic and Community Development Director Angela Mesaros, Director of Finance Amy Zukowski, Director of Public Works Joshua Burman, and Assistant Village Manager Terence Acquah.

MINUTES: The minutes of September 30, 2025 were presented. There were no comments or corrections.

A motion was made by Trustee Siemsen and seconded by Trustee Roman to approve the minutes as presented.

Roll Call: AYES --Trustees Harris-Jones, Willis, Heiferman, Siemsen, Roman. NAYS –None.

CLAIMS LIST: The Claims List in the amount of \$1,139,206.58 was presented. There were no questions from the Trustees.

A motion was made by Trustee Roman and seconded by Trustee Willis to approve the Claims List as presented.

Roll Call: AYES --Trustees Harris-Jones, Willis, Heiferman, Siemsen, and Roman. NAYS –None.

President Hofeld said three (3) items totaled 65 percent of the Claims List: \$357,000 to the City of Chicago Heights for water, \$286,000 for one month's employee health insurance and \$99,000 to E-Com for quarterly police and fire dispatch.

HEAR FROM THE AUDIENCE: Resident Amy Crump read passages from the book "On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century" by Timothy D. Snyder.

Jackie Riffice from Books without Borders said her September 11 book club meeting went well and she invited everyone out for her November 11 book club meeting at 6:45p.m.

Resident Bob Griffith asked if police would respond to his calls to protect his family against federal ICE agents who would try to take his daughters. Police Chief McGrath said yes the police will respond to any and all calls for service.

OMNIBUS VOTE: The Board was asked to pass, approve, authorize, accept, or award the following item(s):

- A. Reappointments/Economic Development Committee/Beautification Committee: Approve the reappointments of Barbara Dawkins to the Economic Development Committee for a two-year term ending on October 14, 2027 and Karen Gallagher to the Beautification Committee for a five-year term ending on October 14, 2030.
- B. Purchase Approval/Replacement Dump Truck Body/Kankakee Truck Equipment: Waive competitive bidding due to standardization of equipment; and, authorize the purchase and installation of a replacement dump truck body for the 2009 International 7400 tandem axle Public Works dump truck, from Kankakee Truck Equipment of Kankakee, IL in the amount of \$43,568.
- C. R-3236/Jurisdictional Transfer Agreement/Illinois Department of Transportation/Harwood Avenue: Pass a resolution approving a Jurisdictional Transfer Agreement between the Village of Homewood and the State of Illinois for Harwood Avenue between Pine Road and Ridge Road in the Village of Homewood; and approve an amended Jurisdictional Transfer Agreement between the Village of Homewood and the State of Illinois for Harwood Avenue from Pine Road to Ridge Road in the Village of Homewood.
- D. M-2373/Increase of Liquor Licenses/Berkot's Super Foods/2345 183rd Street: Pass an ordinance amending the Table of the Number of Liquor License Limitations by Class, increasing the allowed number of Class 2 liquor licenses by one for Berkot's Super Foods for their proposed location at 2345 183rd Street, subject to successful completion of the liquor license application process.
- E. Intergovernmental Agreement/Cook County/Health Inspection Services: Authorize the Village President to enter into an agreement with the Cook County Department of Public Health for the Provision of Environmental Health Inspectional Services for the period of December 1, 2025 through November 30, 2026.

Before the vote, President Hofeld invited comments. The Board welcomed the new Berkot's grocery store.

Item D: Tim Kelly, the business development operator at Berkot's, said Lucas Kotara, the owner of Berkot's, owns and operates 16 stores in the surrounding areas. Berkot's is a family-owned business that will purchase and update the Walt's store, and will keep all the currently employed staff. He said that Berkot's looks forward to coming to Homewood.

A motion was made by Trustee Roman and seconded by Trustee Harris-Jones to approve the Omnibus Report as presented.

Roll Call: AYES --Trustees Harris-Jones, Willis, Heiferman, Siemsen, and Roman. NAYS --None.

OLD BUSINESS: Napoleon Haney, along with staff members Noah Schumerth, Joshua Burman, and Terence Acquah, gave a presentation on the 183rd Street Speeding and Safety Mitigation Options. Staff reviewed years of data from the Burns & McDonnell traffic study conducted in 2021 and recommended four options. Option 1: Perform Additional Studies and/or Analyses. Option 2: Fund the 183rd Street Bike Lane Reconfiguration Project with Sub-Options. Option 3: Pursue Alternative Corridor Safety Improvements. Option 4: Consider Village-wide Input and Feedback via Non-Binding Referendum.

There were 11 residents who spoke in favor of the 183rd Street Road Diet. Steven Mc Dowell, who has been a road designer for 20 years, said it is not wise to reduce lanes because the Village has expanded, and when a town expands it does not reduce roads, it makes them larger. Jen Belinski said the police can only do so much because they cannot be there 24/7. Ashley Kjos said reducing lanes would add a buffer for pedestrians. Other residents said that something needs to be done because it is difficult to cross the street, pull out of their driveway, or walk and bike on the sidewalk. Residents shared that 183rd Street has been a problem for years and they would like something to be done about it. Jack Rivak said the radar signs that were recently installed seem to be slowing cars down. Eric Crump, who spoke as a resident and not as a representative for the HF Chronicle, said that the 183rd Street discussion has been a respectable debate for some time and added that based on the lower annual traffic counts of a section of 183rd Street, he feels like the section would be a sweet spot for a road diet. Amy Crump suggested that funds from recently passed 1% non-home rule sales tax should be used for the road diet.

President Hofeld asked Police Chief McGrath what her thoughts were on 183rd Street and she shared that she did not think there was enough data to proceed with a road diet because it would have a big impact on other streets as well as the flow of traffic on 183rd Street. When asked the same question, Deputy Fire Chief Steve DeJong said 183rd Street is a main response corridor and turning this into two lanes would cause more congestion, and create blind spots especially for drivers attempting to avoid fire and police vehicles stopped on the roadway.

President Hofeld solicited the Trustees for comments. Trustee Harris-Jones said that safety and the accessibility of emergency vehicles need to be addressed. Trustee Willis said option 3 is best because the drivers who disobey laws will also disobey 2 lanes creating head on collisions. Trustee Heiferman said he still supports the road diet option with the ITEP funding. Trustee Siemsen is not in favor of a road diet because of the need for accessibility for police and fire vehicles. Trustee Roman does not believe there is enough data, so she would like to implement option 3 for now with a possibility for a future road diet. Trustee Mason's statement was read by the Clerk, which stated that he believes that the issue can ultimately be reduced with targeted enforcement and traffic controls.

Napoleon Haney said police would exclusively target 183rd Street with more enforcement. President Hofeld said he has been open to all comments. The rationale is that reducing lanes would lead to heavier traffic on nearby streets and more congestion on 183rd Street. He stated that option 3 would be the right way to go and that staff should be directed to continue to increase enforcement and recommend tools that can address traffic safety concerns without road configuration. President Hofeld asked the Board to recommend one of the options.

A motion was made by Trustee Siemsen and seconded by Trustee Willis to direct staff to implement option 3 for 183rd Street.

Roll Call: AYES --Trustees Harris-Jones, Willis, Siemsen, and Roman. NAYS – Heiferman.

NEW BUSINESS: Amy Zukowski presented the 2024-2025 Annual Financial Report. The Audit was conducted by Lauterbach and Amen as a clean opinion. This year the Village was able to add \$2.5 million to the general fund reserves. This money mostly came from the gaming tax, interest rates on investments, acquisition of 18155 Dixie Highway, acquisition of 17701 Bretz Drive, and general fund expenses that only used 93% of funds due to items that were not completed. The Village's general fund reserves are \$20.3 million. John from Lauterbach and Amen pointed out the historical

data trends of debt obligations for Homewood that show that our debt liability is extremely lower than what a municipality would reasonably be expected to borrow.

Before the vote, President Hofeld invited comments. The Board thanked the staff going through the audit and providing all the information. President Hofeld said once again we are financially sound, as we have been in the past.

A motion was made by Trustee Heiferman and seconded by Trustee Harris-Jones to accept the 2024-2025 Annual Financial Report

Roll Call: AYES --Trustees Harris-Jones, Willis, Heiferman, Siemsen, and Roman. NAYS --None.

GENERAL BOARD DISCUSSION: Trustees thanked the residents for attending the meeting and voicing their concerns and comments about the traffic mitigation and safety on 183rd Street. All the Board members felt that the discussions were good. Trustees said Fall Fest had a fantastic turnout and they wanted to thank and acknowledge staff for all of their hard work. Trustee Heiferman mentioned a fence on a private property on Gottschalk that creates a blind spot and may be adding to the issues on 183rd Street. Although staff and elected officials attempted to reach the property owner in the past, Chris Cummings shared that he would revisit the legal options again.

Trustee Siemsen acknowledged the passing of a former Homewood Police Reserve Officer Ed Poe. President Hofeld gave compliments to staff and said that this is how government should function. President Hofeld gave Denise McGrath full support for more police enforcement on 183rd Street.

ADJOURN: A motion was made by Trustee Roman and seconded by Trustee Siemsen to adjourn the regular meeting of the Board of Trustees.

Roll Call: AYES --Trustees Harris-Jones, Willis, Heiferman, Siemsen, and Roman. NAYS --None.

The meeting adjourned at 9:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Nakina Flores', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Nakina Flores
Village Clerk



**PUBLIC COMMENTS –
for the Tuesday, October 14, 2025 Board Meeting**

From: barbaralawler
Sent: Tuesday, October 14, 2025 10:17 AM
To: PublicComments
Subject: RE: Lane reduction on 183rd street

Thank you for the detailed recap/ rundown of the meeting for tonight - October 14th.

While I personally am out of town and can't attend, please know that I am a strong proponent of the 'road diet' for the 183rd street corridor in Homewood.

I have reviewed several videos and associated documents on the subject of 'road diets'. While there has been some negative responses, it seems the majority of them occurred in business areas related to parking and access complications for businesses. I hope the board keeps in mind the section of 183rd is residential and consider the benefits of making it safer and more pedestrian and bicycle friendly while improving the comfort of drivers by providing more distance from the very close sidewalks along the stretch.

I found it interesting when I was delivering signs to residents on 183rd on the sidewalk how many cars in the near lane would move closer to the left lane as they approached where I was. This indicated to me the drivers felt uncomfortable with the spacing. When there are 2 lanes and cars are moving over, especially at increased speed in excess of the posted limit, I can easily see why a change is necessary.

I encourage the board to consider safety as the #1 factor but also consider the benefit to residents living along the road and south of 183rd wanting to walk or bike to and from the downtown area.

Regards,
Barbara Lawler

From: Caroline Kjos
Sent: Tuesday, October 14, 2025 9:46 AM
To: PublicComments
Subject: Urging the Village to Advance the 183rd Street Safety Improvement Project

Dear Mayor Hofeld, Trustees, and Village Staff,

I am writing as a concerned resident of Homewood to express my support for advancing the proposed safety improvements along 183rd Street, including the recommended four-to-three lane conversion ("road diet").

As documented in the Village's prior traffic studies, 183rd Street carries significant vehicle volumes—exceeding 20,000 vehicles per day in some segments—and has a history of speeding, turning conflicts, and crash incidents. The proposed lane reconfiguration represents a data-driven, federally recognized approach to addressing these safety challenges.

Communities across the country, including those with comparable or greater traffic volumes, have successfully implemented similar conversions, resulting in measurable reductions in crashes, calmer traffic flow, and safer crossings for pedestrians and bicyclists. The Village's proactive pursuit of grant funding for this project further demonstrates a prudent and fiscally responsible path forward.

I respectfully urge the Village to proceed with design and implementation of the 183rd Street safety project and to continue engaging residents throughout the process. Prioritizing safety for all roadway users—drivers, pedestrians, and cyclists—is both a practical investment and a reflection of Homewood's longstanding commitment to quality of life and community well-being.

Thank you for your leadership and consideration.

Respectfully,
Katherine Thompson
Homewood Resident

From: Caroline Kjos
Sent: Tuesday, October 14, 2025 9:44 AM
To: PublicComments
Subject: Support for a Safer 183rd Street
Dear Village of Homewood Board and Staff,

I'm writing to express my strong support for moving forward with the plan to improve safety on 183rd Street through the proposed "4-to-3" lane conversion.

As a resident and community member, I share the concern that 183rd Street has become increasingly unsafe for drivers, pedestrians, and cyclists alike. Traffic volumes are high, speeding is common, and turning movements can be risky. The proposed redesign offers a practical, research-backed way to calm traffic, reduce crashes, and make the corridor safer for everyone who uses it.

Road diets like this have been implemented successfully in communities across the country—including those with similar or even higher traffic volumes than ours—with measurable improvements in safety and minimal impact on travel time. The Village's own studies and grant funding show that Homewood is well-positioned to benefit from this approach.

I encourage the Village to move forward with this project and continue communicating openly with residents about the safety, mobility, and community benefits it will bring.

Thank you for your leadership and commitment to making Homewood's streets safer and more welcoming for all.

Sincerely,
Caroline Kjos

From: ERVIN MOODY
Sent: Saturday, October 11, 2025 10:48 AM
To: PublicComments
Subject: 4 to 3 lane conversion

Please finish the job that was started—a 4-to-3 lane conversion for 183rd Street—a top priority in the capital improvement program. Thanks.

From: Irwin Friedman
Sent: Friday, October 10, 2025 4:40 PM
To: PublicComments
Subject: Road diet for 183rd Street

It's been a few years since I attended a village-sponsored meeting to discuss this topic. At that time, it seemed that there was universal consensus this is a good idea. I've followed the 'progress' of the project in the Chronicle with growing confusion. I'm hoping the board will finally continue the process.....again!

Irwin Friedman

From: LA Benjamin
Sent: Friday, October 10, 2025 6:39 AM
To: PublicComments
Subject: STOP 4-to-3

Hello. I'm a Homewood resident writing to suggest Stop signs be installed versus reducing lanes resulting in chaos and abuse of the turning lane.

Just as some people drive on the shoulder to get around traffic on the expressway, they will drive in the turning lane to pass. To change speeding behavior, they just have to be slowed down. Thank you.

From: John Sulek
Sent: Thursday, October 9, 2025 8:20 PM
To: PublicComments
Subject: Speeding

I'm beyond frustrated with the speeding on 187th Street. The limit is 25 mph, but many cars are going over 40, and that includes school buses picking up kids. It's ridiculous and dangerous.

Reducing 183rd to three lanes is only going to make this worse, forcing more cars onto 187th. The intersection at 187th and Ashland needs a stop sign now, before someone gets hurt.

187th and Reigel doesn't even have pedestrian buttons to cross safely, and there was a major accident there on August 31st. Meanwhile, Flossmoor is putting in pedestrian beacons, and Reigel and Holbrook is getting upgrades but our intersection is ignored.

For a residential street, the entire length of 187th has almost no sidewalks or streetlights, there are no bike lanes, and it's treated like a main road. People walk here every day in the dark and in traffic. It's unsafe and unacceptable. The Village's inaction speaks volumes about its priorities. We deserve safe streets, functioning infrastructure, and actual enforcement of traffic laws. Please stop waiting for another accident or tragedy to finally take this seriously. Where are the tax dollars going?

Thank you,
Sheila Jackson

Do something about the speeding and fix these intersections before there's another crash.

— [Your Name]

Would you like me to make it sound a bit more sarcastic or biting (like a Facebook post someone forwards to the mayor's office), or keep it at this straightforward "angry but serious" tone

From: Eric Crump
Sent: Thursday, October 9, 2025 11:38 AM
To: PublicComments
Subject: A 'road diet' by any other name would save the street

Regarding 183rd Street lane reconfiguration. This was published Oct. 7 in the Chronicle.

Words matter, and even accurate terms, if they conjure the wrong connotations, are not the best fit. Take "road diet," for example.

I've been advocating for Homewood to prioritize its plan to convert 183rd Street east of Dixie Highway from four lanes to three (two travel lanes, a turn lane plus two bike lanes). "Road diet" is a common term to describe the 4 to 3 reconfiguration.

However, "diet" is often associated with denial. When we diet to lose weight, we're giving up foods or quantities of food that we enjoy, so diet is associated with denial. Even people who practice dieting often do not like it.

The same appears to be true for lane reconfigurations. People often complain about speeding and other risky driving behaviors on 183rd Street. But a solution to those problems that involves "dieting" (as in lanes, not food), produces some resistance.

From conversations I've had online and in person, I think some people are assuming the change will result in something unpleasant and inconvenient. In practice it's more like switching to a healthy treat that tastes great and doesn't add pounds around the middle.

But enough of the diet analogy. I vote we retire it.

The evidence available from more than 45 years of similar reconfigurations (the first 4 to 3 lane conversion was done in 1979 in Montana), shows the change almost always results in safer streets, good traffic capacity and improved access. That means 4 to 3 works well for everybody: drivers, walkers, bikers and others.

The Federal Highway Administration notes that studies show 19% to 47% reduction in crashes following 4 to 3 reconfigurations.

The improved safety is the result of decreased speed differentials (most vehicles are traveling at closer to the same speed), fewer lane changes (turn lanes allow left-turning vehicles to get out of the travel lanes) and fewer conflict zones (those are situations created by road design that are opportunities for collisions). Traffic goes a bit slower (that's the point) but it flows well.

In some cases, capacity increases after a reconfiguration because the flow is more consistent and efficient.

Traffic calming is another common term, but it is more of an umbrella term to describe a wide range of measures that can improve safety in a wide variety of situations.

So I suggest we replace road diet with "community mobility corridor," or comoco. It's unwieldy. It's got a goofy abbreviation. It's perfect.

Here's why I like it.

"Community" reminds people that our public thoroughfares are paid for and used by everyone, not just drivers of motor vehicles. Right now, 183rd Street is vehicle-dominated. It was designed so. Lanes are wide and inviting for cars and trucks, but crossing four lanes as a pedestrian is dangerous. There are only three places where crossing is marked and safe in the 1.6 miles between Dixie Highway and Halsted Street. That's an indication that pedestrians were not a primary concern when the street was designed.

Pedestrians and cyclists also find it challenging to travel along 183rd Street. They have to share narrow sidewalks because it's not safe to bike on the street. The sidewalks have inconsistent surfaces, obstructions and for long stretches have no buffer from traffic.

That's why pedestrians and cyclists are rarely seen on 183rd Street. It's hostile territory.

"Mobility" reminds us that the purpose of 183rd Street is to help people move. Cars and trucks and buses are important tools for mobility, but so are bikes and strollers and scooters and skateboards and wheelchairs and legs.

We have many ways to move, and our public ways can and should support them all. Lane reconfigurations help by enabling cyclists and scooters to leave the sidewalks to pedestrians while also offering a buffer between traffic on wheels and traffic on legs. Everybody's safer. Everybody can move.

"Corridor" indicates a passageway that links spaces within a larger structure. In this case, 183rd as reconfigured could be a more effective link between parts of Homewood.

As designed, its function as a community passageway is eroded by its function as a regional arterial throughway. It carries a lot of traffic that is not trying to move around Homewood or visit Homewood but just get through Homewood as fast as possible. In a way, Homewood is just in the way of many 183rd Street drivers.

That throughway function has made 183rd Street into a kind of barrier that splits the village into two sections.

I was struck by a comment from a resident that was featured in the Downtown Transit Oriented Development Plan adopted by the village last year. "I ride my bike to Flossmoor station to avoid crossing 183rd and Harwood." This is a Homewood resident who doesn't use Homewood's train station because of 183rd Street.

When I read that, I realized that South Homewood is geographically better linked to Flossmoor than to North Homewood. If you travel from Homewood to Flossmoor on Dixie Highway, Harwood/Western or Western/Sterling it's not obvious when you've left one village and entered the other. The two are seamlessly connected. To go from South Homewood to North Homewood, however, involves crossing busy 183rd Street, which can be challenging whether you're in a car or a bike or on foot. The street is a permeable barrier. You can get through it, but it offers resistance.

A similar situation exists with the section of town north of 183rd and west of the railroad tracks. That's why improvements to both viaducts were included as recommendations in the downtown plan.

The widening of 183rd Street was designed and completed during a time when planners and elected officials were convinced economic growth and traffic capacity were inextricably linked. They weren't wrong.

But they also had a certain myopia about what kind of transportation technology to consider in their plans. They apparently thought mobility = motor vehicles. The old newspaper stories I've read make little or no mention of how pedestrians, cyclists and people with disabilities would use 183rd Street. Those travelers just weren't on the radar.

The Americans with Disabilities Act was passed in 1990. It made inclusion the law of the land, and it should be the guiding spirit for shaping our public ways.

I realize "comoco" is a ridiculous replacement for road diet, but maybe somebody will read this, snort derisively, and propose a more elegant term. Just so it also conveys the idea of making major streets a resource everyone can use safely and conveniently, converting them from barriers to seams that knit the community together and still serve regional transportation needs.

Eric Crump
Homewood

From: Jon Labok
Sent: Wednesday, October 8, 2025 8:51 AM
To: PublicComments
Subject: 183rd Road Diet comments

Dear Mayor Hofeld and Trustees,

I am writing to you today not merely as a constituent, but as a resident who lives on 183rd Street, directly confronting the daily reality of the road that is divisive in more ways than one. I have witnessed many accidents here, just in front of my house, in fact, my house is located at 1918, directly in front of the site where Michael Wexler was killed by a driver while crossing. This type of accident is an inevitability due to the design of the street. This is not a quality-of-life issue; it is a crisis of infrastructure that risks the lives of pedestrians and drivers alike.

To delay this initiative is to send a message that safety is not the priority for our residents. There is a quantifiable safety risk in the street's current configuration, and a road diet directly addresses that head-on. In this message, I've also notated and included sources for further learning which I plead that you thoughtfully take into consideration to make our community safer.

When I hear discussions about relying solely on more enforcement, I must ask: how can we expect police officers to be everywhere, all the time, when the very design of 183rd Street encourages high-speed travel? Research confirms that roadway design is the fundamental factor determining travel speeds, making **design solutions** more effective than relying purely on punitive enforcement¹. We know the current configuration is mathematically deadly because studies show that **8 out of 10 pedestrians struck by a vehicle traveling 40+ mph will die**². The Road Diet is the permanent solution because it passively corrects this fatal design flaw.

This 4-to-3 lane conversion is not a risky experiment. It is a **Proven Safety Countermeasure**³ endorsed by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) precisely because it systematically reduces total crashes on similar roads by 19% to 47%⁴. This conversion eliminates the dangerous "Multiple-Threat Crash" scenario, protecting all road users and pedestrians⁵.

Other issues that I have heard in talking to residents & community members – including friends of mine – are listed below. I believe a little research & a willingness to learn can help us all align around this safety initiative.

- **Traffic Volume:** While 183rd Street's volume (under 20,000 Average Daily Traffic east of Dixie) is often cited as a concern, the FHWA officially considers this conversion feasible on corridors with ADT volume **up to 25,000 vehicles per day**⁶. More importantly, the Village's own project was already validated by the state when we received the ITEP grant in 2023 to complete the restriping, confirming the conversion meets the necessary engineering standards despite the volume⁷.
- **Emergency Access:** The concern that the center turn lane will impede emergency vehicles is a common, but refuted, misconception. The FHWA has demonstrated that the TWLTL **actually improves emergency response times** because it functions as a *dedicated high-speed bypass lane* that fire and police can use to safely navigate around congestion, which is impossible on the current four-lane layout⁸.

- **Traffic Diversion:** The fear that traffic will migrate to Ridge Road and 187th Street is minimized by the operational benefits of the Road Diet. The conversion **creates more consistent traffic flow** by separating through traffic from turning vehicles, which reduces the stop-and-go “accordion-style” delays that incentivize drivers to abandon the street in the first place¹.

Thanks in large part to the Federal Highway Administration, along with numerous other reputable sources, and our own village-sponsored testing, we have the safety evidence, the national best practices, the local validation, and the state funding. It certainly seems that the only thing preventing this low-cost, life-saving measure from moving forward is approval. Please honor the urgency of this safety imperative and transform 183rd Street from a dividing artery for drivers just passing through into a safe community main street.

I urge the Board to approve the next steps to move forward with this plan immediately.

I've included additional links to provide further validation to this cause. While I admit they may generate additional questions, I also wanted to take this conversation off of social media – where people generally aren't interested in changing their opinion – and sort out with you, the decision makers, how to address this safety issue. Thank you for taking the time to read through my note and engaging on this topic.

Respectfully,

Jon Labok

Resident of 183rd Street, Homewood, IL

Additional Reading/Sources:

¹ Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). USDOT: Speed Enforcement Program Guidelines <https://highways.dot.gov/media/15221>

² Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) Fact Sheet. Road Diet (Roadway Reconfiguration) https://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/Engineering/Docs_TrafficEng/Fact-Sheet_Road-Diets.pdf

³ Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). **Road Diets (Roadway Reconfiguration)** <https://highways.dot.gov/safety/proven-safety-countermeasures/road-diets-roadway-reconfiguration>

⁴ Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). Evaluation of Lane Reduction "Road Diet" Measures on Crashes/ Road Diet: Road Diets and Emergency Response: Friends, Not Foes <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/publications/research/safety/10053/>, <https://rosap.ntl.bts.gov/view/dot/50488>

⁵ Environmental and Energy Study Institute (EESI). Proven Safety Countermeasures https://www.eesi.org/files/cs-fhwa_diets.pdf

⁶ Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). Road Diet Informational Guide. less. <https://highways.dot.gov/safety/proven-safety-countermeasures/road-diets-roadway-reconfiguration>

⁷ Village of Homewood. Downtown Transit-Oriented Development Plan: Village-owned 183rd Street has traffic volumes over 20,000 ADT and received state grant funds in 2023 to complete the road diet

project.. (Note: Illinois DOT guidelines suggest engineering judgment is required for volumes over 20,000 ADT).

⁸ FHWA. Road Diets and Emergency Response: Friends, Not Foes –

Mythbusting <https://policycommons.net/artifacts/2443164/road-diet-road-diets-and-emergency-response/3464888/>

From: Kristen S
Sent: Monday, October 6, 2025 4:42 PM
To: PublicComments
Subject: Please vote to move forward on the 183rd Street Road Diet

Dear Village President and Trustees,

I am writing as a Homewood resident deeply invested in the safety, livability, and long-term vitality of our community to urge you to vote to move forward on the proposed 4-to-3 road diet for 183rd Street. This project is not an idealistic vision—it is a proven, endorsed safety measure with decades of research and successful implementations across the country, including in nearby villages.

According to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), roadway design—not traffic enforcement—is the most effective way to reduce speeding and crashes (FHWA, 2022). In other words, engineering safer streets saves lives more effectively than ticketing drivers after the fact. While I appreciate the village’s commitment to ticketing drivers who speed, this is not the best or most cost-effective way to reduce fatal crashes.

A 4-to-3 lane conversion has been officially recognized by the FHWA as a “*Proven Safety Countermeasure*” that improves safety, mobility, and quality of life for all users—including drivers, pedestrians, and cyclists. Research shows that these conversions **reduce total crashes by 19% to 47%** (FHWA, 2010). The **Village of Lansing** saw **traffic crashes drop almost 50%** after converting Ridge Road west of Torrence Ave. from 4 lanes to 3. The conversion was so successful that they’ve converted Wentworth Avenue as well! The FHWA further notes that road diets are ideally suited for roadways with Average Daily Traffic (ADT) volumes of **25,000 or fewer vehicles per day** (FHWA, 2023). The Village’s own data confirm that 183rd Street carries traffic volumes in the low 20,000s—squarely within the recommended range—and that the Village has already received **state grant funding** to implement this safety project (Village of Homewood, 2023).

While I am a cyclist and a runner who often crosses 183rd on foot and by bike, I am primarily a driver who does not enjoy being slowed down by traffic congestion. Concerns about congestion and emergency access due to a road diet are understandable, but federal data and case studies demonstrate that road diets **do not reduce traffic flow efficiency**—they actually **make it more consistent** by minimizing speed variability and erratic lane changes (FHWA, 2014). Moreover, road diet designs include a **center two-way left-turn lane (TWLTL)** that can serve as a **dedicated bypass lane for emergency vehicles**, improving emergency response times compared to four-lane configurations (FHWA, 2022). Furthermore, road diets throughout the country have not resulted in significantly more traffic flow to alternate routes (a phenomenon that urban planners call “traffic evaporation”). I would never want to see a change in my town that would make a road I frequently use undriveable. A road diet is a win-win solution.

Like many other Homewood residents, I wear a lot of hats. I'm a runner and a cyclist; I enjoy running and riding on safe streets. I drive my car daily to pick up my kids at their daycare, which is on the opposite side of 183rd from where I live. I am also a researcher and I appreciate when data can support policy decision-making. **Let's lead with data, not fear**—and create a safer, more connected Homewood.

Thank you for your consideration and commitment to our community's safety and future.

Sincerely,
Kristen Salkas, PhD
Homewood Resident

References

- Federal Highway Administration (2022). *Roadway Design vs. Enforcement*. <https://highways.dot.gov/media/15221>
- Federal Highway Administration (2023). *Proven Safety Countermeasures: Road Diets (Roadway Reconfiguration)*. <https://highways.dot.gov/safety/proven-safety-countermeasures/road-diets-roadway-reconfiguration>
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