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August 3, 2021

Mr. Ed Zuercher, Phoenix City Manager  
Phoenix City Hall  
200 W. Washington, 12<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Phoenix, AZ 85003

Re: Unfunded 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue Improvements in Willo Historic District

Dear Mr. Zuercher

On behalf of the Willo Neighborhood Association, I am writing to urge the City of Phoenix to prioritize funding for completion and implementation of the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue's re-design project from McDowell to Thomas Roads. This roadway re-design is of vital importance to Willo and surrounding neighborhoods to address the dangers of speeding and wrong-way drivers on 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Avenues - the two main thoroughfares through our neighborhood. We were disappointed to learn in a recent update from the Streets Transportation Department that the construction phase of this project has not been budgeted for the present fiscal year despite our residents' efforts to be heard on this issue, including attending multiple budget meetings to advocate for funding. We have been working on this issue for 4.5 years, and we continue to ask the City to support this project.

The Willo Conservation Plan, adopted by the Phoenix City Council in 1986, recognizes the importance of minimizing the adverse impacts of commercial and pass-through commuter traffic as an essential component of preserving our historic neighborhood – which the city has recognized as one of Phoenix's oldest and best-preserved historic districts. Historically, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Avenues through Willo have been designated as local streets, but current traffic patterns have transformed them into "mini-highways" filled with speeding cars seeking to avoid traffic on the adjacent arterials (7<sup>th</sup> Ave. and Central Ave.) in and out of downtown Phoenix. Cut-through drivers are often encountered driving the wrong way down 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Aves., creating a safety hazard - especially for pedestrians and bicyclists. The recent completion of the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue's re-design south of McDowell has created more confusion, as the traffic pattern changes from one lane to two lanes at McDowell Rd. (our southern boundary), inducing drivers heading north on 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue to speed up and try to pass each other as they enter Willo. Pedestrians, especially parents with young children in tow and our elderly neighbors, feel vulnerable in having to dodge speeding cars as they simply try to walk across residential streets in their own neighborhood. The Phoenix Sonoran Bikeway, which passes through Willo on 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue, is the primary north-south bicycle commuter pathway through Central Phoenix, yet the segment of the Phoenix Sonoran Bikeway through Willo remains incomplete. Cyclists who utilize the Bikeway face a confusing array of configuration and signage changes as they try to navigate their way through this incomplete bicycle infrastructure along 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue, to the detriment of their safety. Timely completion of the Phoenix Sonoran Bikeway is essential for connectivity and the safety of bicycle commuters who use this route.

In conclusion, as economic conditions continue to improve, we respectfully request that priority be given to funding the re-design of 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Avenues from McDowell to Thomas Rds. through the construction and implementation phases. The longer the disconnect in traffic patterns and roadway configurations north and south of McDowell Rd. continue to exist, the more 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Avenues through Willo will be used as "reliever" speedways for cut-through drivers, placing our residents and nearby neighbors at continued and unacceptable risk.

Willo will continue to do its part to partner with the City of Phoenix in fulfilling our neighborhood Conservation Plan, including seeking a safe environment for our residents and others who travel on 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Avenues in our area.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Dr. Robert L. Cannon".

Dr. Robert L. Cannon, President  
Willo Neighborhood Association  
Willophx.com

cc: Kate Gallego, Mayor of Phoenix  
Laura Pastor, Councilwoman, District 4  
Kini Knudson, Director, Streets Transportation Department  
Brent Kleinman, President, Encanto-Palmcroft Historic Preservation Association  
Jeanine Baber, President, Story Preservation Association  
Ryan Tempest, President, Roosevelt Action Association