

The Loop Feedback

DATE	SUBMITTER'S NAME	SUBMITTER'S EMAIL ADDRESS	RESPONSE REQ.	MESSAGE SUBJECT	MESSAGE	REFERRED TO:	NOTES/RESPONSE
8/10/2014	Damion Alexander (via email)	damion@damionalexander.com	Yes	Dog attack on The Loop	<p>Had a comment regarding dogs that I wanted to ask you about. What is the protocol when you see a loose dog, or a pack of dogs. Can we get a policy statement as well as what is being done for the public's safety?</p> <p>This is the actual note it was sent</p> <p>Hello folks.</p> <p>I know you've posted about this kindly before, but I was wondering if you have any suggestions regarding the amount of loose, aggressive dogs who are seeming to take over lately. We live on the Cortaro end of the Santa Cruz path, and loose dogs as well as Owners walking theirs without leashes seems to have become the norm up here ☐</p> <p>Considering I bike or run/walk with stroller almost daily out here, and got chased more than once, it's really becoming terrifying to be out there. My husband was out with friends today from up here they rode down towards A-Mountain and back and he ended up bitten by a loose Pit close to Grant Rd (south of it). It's really unbelievable lately and I can't afford to get hurt or see my toddler end up getting mauled, hence will have to refrain from using the Loop - which is partially why we moved to where we did... any suggestions/plans on how to improve this issue?</p>	Nanette	<p>Nanette: Everyone who encounters a loose dog is asked to report it by phone to Pima Animal Care Center in Tucson at (520) 243-5900. The County policy related to loose animals can be found at http://webcms.pima.gov/community/animal_care/reporting_complaints/loose_animals/.</p>
8/6/2014	Don Melhado (via email to Nanette)	dmelhado@cox.net		Loop open letter	<p>After reading the county's open letter about the Loop, I paid greater attention during my daily ride on the Rillito Path. My conclusion is that most of the issues between users occur on weekends. With that in mind I would suggest a small group of law enforcement trained volunteers to patrol the Rillito Path on weekends during peak hours. These volunteers would hand out information leaflets to those users abusing path use in some manner. A uniformed presence would diminish the current freewheeling attitude of many users today.</p> <p>I would be happy to discuss this in greater detail at your convenience. I would also offer to become one of the volunteers. I am currently the USA Cycling / Arizona Bicycle Racing Association administrator and a bicycle racer for over 30 years.</p>		<p>Nanette: Thanks so much for your feedback, and the offer. I have copied Matt Zoll who is in charge of the Bike Ambassador program that we are using to do just what you recommended. We will also be starting a "courtesy campaign" in the coming weeks. Keep your eyes open for Burma Shave style signs along the Loop reminding everyone to be mindful of others while on the Loop. I would love to hear from you on its effectiveness. So, please keep in touch. You should hear from Matt shortly.</p>

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8/3/2014	Floyd Hershberger (via Maura Kwiatkowski)	fhershberger@hotmail.com	Yes	What are plans for speedway to kenyon completion	Are there plans to complete the bridges, underpasses and the loop bike path between Speedway and kenyon on Pantano wash? If there are plans when will they be started? Thanks. Floyd Hershberger 7442 E Montecito Dr Tucson, Az 85710	Nanette, Nancy, Sandi	Diane (channeling Nancy and Sandi): Construction is expected to begin in September on the segment between Broadway and Kenyon, which is the last unfinished piece between Broadway and 22nd St. Construction between Fifth Street and Speedway is expected to begin early next year, pending Arizona Department of Transportation approval. Both segments should be completed in 2015.
7/31/2014	Damion Alexander	damion@damionalexander.com	Yes		I sent an email earlier this week about some reports of violence on the loop. Sorry to bother you again, but it has picked up more attention on facebook than the average post. I understand this is going to be an issue, as it is the world we live in. What would be great is if we have someone to report the issues to. Can we get a Loop liaison from the Sheriff, and TPD? The bike community has one and it is nice when there is an issue to have someone in the dept. who is looking out for us. Someone who we know is following up on the police reports. The county has spent way to much effort and money on The Loop not to make this a priority. I appreciate your taking the time to bring this up in the next staff meeting and getting back to me. The comment that received the most "likes" was the one I wrote about seeing TPD bike cops riding on the loop. What are the chances we can get officers assigned to a Loop detail? As much as I'm not a fan of anything mechanized, I'd personally support an officer on a moped or hi-bred in the name of public safety.		Nanette: We need to determine where the funds would come from. So, I'm not sure just yet. I will be talking with the Sheriff at our next Loop meeting to see if they can get a little more exposure.
7/30/2014	Damion Alexander	damion@damionalexander.com	Yes		These are postings from Craigslist about some violence on the loop. Any comments from the county on the subject? http://tucson.craigslist.org/bik/4588882655.html http://tucson.craigslist.org/bik/4591482426.html		
7/22/2014	Lucas Hill	hillucas@gmail.com	Yes	Motorized wheelchairs and scooters	Your page describing The Loop suggests that any mode of transportation that is not motorized is permitted on the loop. Are in that case, are motorized wheelchairs and scooters, which in some cases are people's only modes of transportation, allowed on the loop?		Diane: Motorized wheelchairs and scooters are allowed on The Loop for ADA accessibility only. Thanks for writing.

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7/22/2014	Blair Finkelstein (via Loop Facebook page)				Any chance we could help by pruning the path? Much of it is only 1.5 or less lanes wide. When it gets narrow, it becomes more of a hazard for everyone, not just pedestrians.	George	Diane (channeling George): Thanks, Blair, but I don't think we want Loop users out there with pruning shears. The monsoon does spur growth along The Loop and elsewhere. If you see places along The Loop that need a trim, please contact George Kuck, who oversees maintenance, at George.Kuck@pima.gov . Thanks again.
7/22/2014	Alison Nylund (via email to Nanette)	alison3579@gmail.com		Pedestrians with limitations	<p>My husband and I were very happy to learn that Pima County is taking note of the many cyclists who put Loop walkers at risk.</p> <p>I am now retired after years working with people, especially elders, who have disabilities. Many Loop walkers are elders like me who go out for a walk every day to improve their health. Many have disabilities that may not be obvious, such as hearing loss, dim eyesight, unsteady balance, or slow reflexes.</p> <p>I believe cyclists, having no experience of disability, assume everyone on the trail is as quick and vigorous as themselves. They don't make allowance for possible disabilities of pedestrians.</p> <p>We elderly pedestrians benefit greatly from the trails and parks Pima County provides. Many of us are not able to show up for town hall meetings because we can't drive, or can't drive at night, or can't stand out in the sun waiting for a bus. Many on fixed incomes can't afford a newspaper or Internet connection to find out about your department's plans. For these and other reasons, we don't speak up in proportion to our interest and our need.</p> <p>Please hold the elderly demographic in your thoughts as you go forward in your good work of providing beautiful spaces for healthy exercise.</p>		Nanette: Thanks so much for your very thoughtful reminder. The Loop is intended for all residents. It is an equal opportunity community asset. We are planning on a Burma Shave type campaign to bring awareness to Loop users of trail etiquette. We are also increasing the presence of our Bike Ambassadors to help with safety tips. So, please continue to enjoy the Loop and let me know if things are improving or not in the coming months.
7/21/2014	Karen Matsushino	kmat11@gmail.com	Yes	Open letter to cyclists	I would like to read the "open letter" that was mentioned in the Star this morning. I can't seem to find it on the website. I agree wholeheartedly with you. I have seen way too many close calls and wrecks on the path.		Diane: The open letter to cyclists was issued July 2 and is under the News and Construction Updates on The Loop web page. It is also available on The Loop Facebook page. And I have attached it to this email.

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7/21/2014	Richard Nylund (via email to Nanette)	kveekari46@gmail.com	Yes	Reckless cyclists	<p>My wife and I appreciated the article today in the Daily Star's Roadrunner column. Living near La Cañada and the Loop, we frequently walk on the trail during cooler months. We're both infuriated by the 20% or so of cyclists who think it's OK to come as close as they can to walkers and runners, even when there's no other traffic on the trail. When there are others around, the minority think it's OK to use a 3-foot gap between others to zip through. Pairs of cyclists are usually unwilling to pass single-file; they feel they must pass while riding side-by-side. A few of them also think it's OK to use the dirt trails, even when in parts where they're narrow. It's also very hard to hear cyclists coming; only about a quarter of them will say "on your left," so the combination of a silent approach and close proximity becomes all the more dangerous.</p> <p>I've been tempted to walk on the left so I can see them coming, or to swing a hefty stick to my left to force the self-centered cyclists to give me space. When cyclists demand 5 feet of clearance from motorists, is it unreasonable for them to give walkers 3 feet?</p> <p>We need some kind of enforcement out there, as problematic and costly that that would be.</p>		<p>Nanette: Thank you for taking the time to write. We will be introducing some additional signage and increasing the presence of the bike ambassadors in the coming weeks/months. We would love to hear back from you once we've got these new measures in place to see whether you feel they are making a difference. Please keep in touch.</p>

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7/21/2014	Jonathan Hayt (via email to Nanette)	jonhayt@gmail.com	Yes	The Loop cycling letter	<p>I am sure that you have received loads of responses to your open letter regarding cyclist speed on the The Loop now that the Arizona Daily Star has done a front page story. I live just off the The Loop near Tucson Blvd and access it almost every day for riding and walking and I completely agree that the fast bicycle riders are a big issue that has the potential to spoil the pleasant quality of cycling and walking/jogging on this incredible path. I also noted that you did drop in a short paragraph in your open letter regarding the lack of attentiveness of the walking public on the trail. I have used this trail as both a cyclist and pedestrian for many years and have seen a huge drop in the quality of courtesy and attentiveness on both sides. This is not a one sided issue as the trail users have lost a lot of the common sense and good manners needed to keep the trail safe and fun.</p> <p>The bicycle community was mostly a pretty courteous group years ago but has become far less friendly both to pedestrians and riders alike. No one waves or says hello anymore and the fast riders are acting like the are training for Le Tour. I would not be offended to see signage that reminds riders to keep their speed down but I would really not like to see any sort of speed limit posted as their are often open sections of trail at times of the day where no one is present and riding at a normal and safe speed is not an issue. Yelling "Passing" at pedestrians is generally something that offends most folks as it takes them by surprise and they usually react poorly. I have made it a habit to keep a bell on my bike and ring it from some distance out to get their attention and then I pleasantly say hello or good morning/day as I pass. Slowing down is the key to safe riding around the two and four footed trail users. The cyclists that ride up on each other and walkers yelling "On Your Left" or "Passing" instead of just nicely saying hello as they safely pass are just showing their newness to the sport and lack of good manners. Riding by other cyclists can be quite nice when you just slow down, say hello and add some short banter and then move on. I have met some great people this way.</p>		<p>Nanette: Thank you for taking the time to write. And you are absolutely correct, trail etiquette applies to ALL parties. We are embarking on some additional efforts to do a movable sign campaign and get the Bike Ambassadors out there a lot more to remind folks to be aware of each other. I expect you will see more of this in the coming months. I'd love to hear back from you on its effectiveness. Enjoy, and be safe.</p>

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					<p>As a mostly bicycle user of the trail, I am constantly amazed at the huge amount of trail users that have absolutely no regard for anyone but themselves on this trail. The 2-3-4 across groups are completely oblivious to everyone and always seem to take great offense if asked politely to move over. Most of the runners and joggers are tuned out with headphones and ipods. I see walkers on the wrong side of the trail and dog walkers that congregate in large groups and block the trail and then get nasty when asked to leave a small path so that others can pass. By the way, I am not a dog fan on the trail but they tend to be the most courteous walkers and rarely cause problems as they are very aware of the potential for creating accidents if they don't control their dogs. The runners and tuned out walkers are like deer-in -the-headlights and show the least courtesy and awareness of all trail users. I have had many of them turn right in front of me to their left as I pass them even though I have made every effort to gain their attention. This is very much a two way street out there and fast cyclists are only a small but noticeable part of the problem. The fast riders and out-of-it runners/walkers are a very poor mix. I think there is some lingering confusion from earlier days when trail walkers were asked to go against traffic and there is very little signage that lets users know how to behave.</p> <p>In closing, please be fair to all users of this trail as their seems to be an overall obliviousness to common sense and good manners on all sides. Better signage and consistent rules will no doubt help and educating users on proper trail etiquette would go a long way to reducing poor and stupid behavior by all parties.</p> <p>Thanks for building such an incredible trail system and I hope that it continues to grow. You should be very proud of what has been accomplished here as this quiet project is one of Tucson's great assets. Best regards.</p>		
7/19/2014	Angela Hagen	akhagen@gainbroadband.com	No	Dead coyote	A dead coyote or dog is making a terrible stink. It's near the north bank of the Rillito River, just below the western end of that little parking lot with restrooms and fountains at Swan Road.	George	George: We will look into it and handle its disposal.

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7/15/2014	Kellin Lovegren (via email to Diane)	klovegren@yahoo.com		The Loop	<p>I read the recent article in the paper by Doug Kreutz. I sent him a question and he referred me to you.</p> <p>I live just off the loop, Columbus, and I ride for exercise along the loop regularly. I also work on the east side just off the Pantano wash. I would like to consider riding to work however the path ends at Craycroft. I am not a serious road biker (I ride a hybrid) and I am not comfortable riding on the Grant/Kolb section. It is a highly traveled part of my trip to work and I feel it is dangerous for us bikers, cars traveling at a fast rate of speed. Add to the fact that along Grant there is no bike lane designated.</p> <p>I see on the map for the loop that the section from Craycroft to the Pantano wash is "Under Design or Construction" or "planning". It appears the map has not been updated for some time. I was hoping you could update me as to what the status of that section is. It would be nice to continue east to the Pantano and get to work and even beyond that point for exercise.</p> <p>I appreciate any information and thank you and all for providing the community with this type of park and facilities.</p>		<p>Nanette: Thanks so much for writing. I'm glad you use the Loop. We are in the design stage for the section you referenced behind Ft. Lowell park. The neighbors in that area are opposed to the bike path going through/adjacent to their property. So, the County is looking at an option to have the Loop connect briefly to Craycroft Road and go north to Glenn. Then Glen will take you back to the river and a new path that will connect to the Pantano near Costco. We are hoping to find another off-street route along Ft. Lowell Park. In either case, we are hoping to begin construction early next year. Feel free to keep tabs on our progress at the Loop webpage or Facebook page.</p>
7/14/2014	Bob Murphy (via email to Diane)	Romurf@aol.com		Comments on Loop riders	<p>I have recently started riding the Loop trail, and generally have enjoyed the experience. Riders and pedestrians both are courteous and respectful.</p> <p>I do, however, have a comment about notifying pedestrians with an "on your left" call; that is, none of them can hear me. Over my last two rides, totalling more than 35 miles, I have yet to pass a SINGLE pedestrian who was not wearing earphone or ear buds. Though I continue to give intention of my passing, not one has acknowledge that they have heard me.</p> <p>I have no problem with abiding by the rules set forth for the cyclists, I only wish the pedestrians would do the same.</p>		<p>Diane: We hear you! You are not the first -- and probably will not be the last -- cyclist to mention pedestrians with earbuds or headphones.</p> <p>We are trying to come up with a way to alert pedestrians on The Loop, as well as other users, to good shared-use path etiquette, and that will probably include a request that people listen to music or whatever in one ear only so they can hear other Loop users coming up behind them.</p> <p>Stay tuned. We understand your frustration. Thanks for writing.</p>

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7/14/2014	Wanda Poindexter	interbeingtucson@yahoo.com	Yes	Garbage between Santa Cruz and Rillito	I have lived on the westside of Tucson for decades and regularly enjoy using the Santa Cruz riverwalk between Grant and 29th Street. And I also often walk on the Rillito. A friend and I were excited to bicycle for the first time on the loop between Juhon Park, along the Santa Cruz, up to Sunset and across to the Rillito. It was much fun--UNTIL we got to the section going under I-10. There was much garbage. One of the flood gates had opened spilling garbage into the path and into the riverbed. It was on Sunday 6 July. Hope it has been cleaned up by now? Thanks Wanda Poindexter	George Kuck	Sherrie Barfield: The trail under I-10 has been cleaned up and is being monitored after each rain event. This area is subject to flooding, and the debris that is carried with it, from the storm water culvert bringing flow across the path, as well as, the Rillito River when flowing. Therefore, we will be clearing the paths regularly but will not address the debris and "garbage" in the river bed or behind the gate at this time.
7/11/2014	Sherri Barrett	ssherricoke@comcast.net			I am a cyclist. I do not ride The Loop very often. There is just too much foot traffic for me. I will take my chances with the cars. There are several reasons that I do not like riding the loop. And my group does call out "bikes on your left" when coming up on walkers, or runners. A couple of Sunday's ago we did ride the loop. There was a group of 3 walkers that did not move over at all when we called out "bikes on your left" several times. They were out to the center line. And there were over a dozen runners that had their headphones on and did not hear us at all. So, my assumption would be that some of these bikers are actually calling things out but the walkers/runners are not always hearing us. Yes, some may not be calling things out. You also run into some dog walkers that let their dogs leash all the way out. I even saw a biker that was ringing his bell to get the walkers attention who refused to move over at all. Walkers should also be curious on The Loop. There is no reason why they can't move over when a biker or runner is passing them. Especially when there is a lot of traffic on both side.		Diane: We hear you! You are not the first -- and probably will not be the last -- cyclist to mention pedestrians with earbuds or headphones. Or dog walkers. Or just inconsiderate walkers. We are trying to come up with a way to alert pedestrians on The Loop, as well as other users, to good shared-use path etiquette, and that will probably include a request that people listen to music or whatever in one ear only so they can hear other Loop users coming up behind them. Stay tuned. We understand your frustration. Thanks for writing.

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7/11/2014	George Schnepf (via email to Diane)	gschnepf@mindspring.com	Query regarding The Loop and complaints		<p>I am a member of GABA and saw your Open Letter in the most recent newsletter regarding complaints from pedestrians regarding cyclists using The Loop. I was curious what is meant by cyclists riding "too fast"? Speed is relative and to a pedestrian virtually any one riding a bicycle will pass them and will, consequently, be liable to be accused of riding "too fast".</p> <p>Now, I don't deny there are both inconsiderate and clueless cyclists out there who ride recklessly. But I wonder if these pedestrian complaints of "too fast" are simply taken at face value without regard to whether that person simply doesn't like sharing space with cyclists at all or, alternatively, is simply uneasy with shared space due to an oversensitive safety concern?</p> <p>That said, for this and various other reasons, I am loathe to use The Loop albeit there are vast stretches (particularly in the areas below Broadway) where one rarely sees any pedestrians at all.</p> <p>Perhaps The Loop just doesn't "work" for cyclists and pedestrians because the shared space is not delineated with one lane clearly marked for pedestrians and the other for cyclists? Not to say this would solve the "problem" (after all, then which side should someone on roller blades use?) but it might at least provide guidance for different types of users. So too might the posting of a "speed limit" for cyclists (with perhaps a time of day variable to permit faster speeds during AM and PM commuting hours). At least then you would have a benchmark to quantify "too fast" rather than simply relying on the perception of complaining pedestrians.</p> <p>Of course, the alternative would be to simply ban cyclists from The Loop. The problem, as I see it, with this "solution" is that it kind of negates a key purpose of The Loop which is to encourage bicycling as an alternative commutation choice to vehicle use. Perhaps, in the final analysis The Loop simply doesn't "work" because it serves too many conflicting users?</p>		<p>Diane: Thanks for taking the time to write, George.</p> <p>I have to say that I hope you're wrong about The Loop not working because there are too many conflicting users.</p> <p>I ride on The Loop, and I enjoy seeing so many people out walking, riding, jogging or whatever – being outside, getting or staying healthy, and maybe connecting with other folks who are doing the same – even though, on occasion, a pedestrian or pet may get in my way. I guess I think The Loop is all about community.</p> <p>I too wondered what "too fast" meant. It's not just the pedestrians who object to speeding cyclists. Cyclists like yourself recognize reckless, inconsiderate and clueless cyclists. And it's not just speed. It's the interaction between cyclists and other users that's the issue. And also the interaction (or lack thereof) between pedestrians with earbuds or headphones on and cyclists who are trying to alert them. Consideration goes both ways.</p> <p>A speed limit probably wouldn't work because there's no reason to go slow when you're the only person on the path – or you're riding with other folks who are interested in moving along and there are no pedestrians around. Riding slower – but still recklessly or inconsiderately – around pedestrians would still be a problem. Establishing separate lanes for cyclists and pedestrians – well, there's just not enough room on too many segments of The Loop to create a two-way lane for pedestrians and a two-way lane for cyclists. And as you say, where would the roller-bladers go?</p> <p>I have heard no one talk about banning</p>

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							<p>cyclists from The Loop. That may be because many of the County staff who work on The Loop are cyclists, not to mention the County Administrator (and Loop leader) himself. I just don't see that happening.</p> <p>As the letter said (which I didn't write but thought was well done), we don't want to create a bunch of rules or impose a lot of restrictions. We're hoping that people will just think more about how their use of The Loop affects others and act accordingly. It may sound trite but can't we all just get along? You're free to avoid The Loop, but I hope you won't. Its popularity has perhaps created a few "speed bumps." But The Loop is such a wonderful transportation and recreation amenity. We continue to work to make it longer, more attractive, more useful and, now, more harmonious.</p>