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LETTERS | Opinion *This piece expresses the views of its author(s), separate from those of this publication.*

Safer streets would keep drivers, riders out of conflicts | Letters

If we want sidewalks to truly belong to pedestrians, we need streets that are safe enough for everyone else.

Letters to the Editor Milwaukee Journal Sentinel
June 28, 2026, 5:02 a.m. CT

The serious injury on Old World Third Street after a Lime scooter rider struck a pedestrian should not be dismissed as just one reckless person making one bad choice ("Police: LaCage owner seriously injured after being struck by Lime scooter," June 19).

Yes, the rider was wrong to be on the sidewalk. Sidewalks are for pedestrians, period. But Milwaukee also has to confront why so many people on scooters and bikes end up there in the first place: our streets often feel unsafe for anyone not inside a car.

When the only space we give bikes and scooters is a strip of paint next to distracted drivers staring at their phones, some riders make the wrong choice and retreat to the sidewalk. That puts pedestrians in danger, especially in busy areas like Old World Third.

Accountability matters. He shouldn't have been riding an electric scooter on the sidewalk. But enforcement alone will not prevent the next crash. Milwaukee needs a connected network of protected bike and scooter "mobility" lanes, slower street design and safer intersections so pedestrians, cyclists, scooter riders and drivers are not forced into conflict.

If we want sidewalks to truly belong to pedestrians, we need streets that are safe enough for everyone else.

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Jimmy Lemke, Milwaukee

Opinion: We praise a new kitchen. But we're ignoring the real crisis

Scooters are not the enemy

A fast-moving scooter-rider recently struck and seriously injured a man on a busy, narrow sidewalk, and the conversation so far has been centered around restricting scooter-use and leveling harsh punishment against the operator ("Police: LaCage owner seriously injured after being struck by Lime scooter," June 19).

It doesn't take a magic eye exercise to see the asymmetry between official responses to motor vehicle crashes and scooter crashes such as this one. Dozens of fatalities and hundreds of non-fatal injuries occur by motor vehicle each year in Milwaukee, yet the immediate response is not typically to lower speed limits, broadly restrict or ban vehicle use, or cast felony charges for the drivers (except perhaps for the most egregious law-breakers). But there is a larger point to be made: If most streets don't offer safe — i.e., fully protected — lanes dedicated for users of micromobility devices (i.e., bikes, scooters, etc.), of course riders will prefer to use the sidewalk despite potential consequences.

Now, we can either continue fixating on pseudo-solutions to this problem and uphold the status quo of favoring automobiles over every other mode of transportation, or take this opportunity to further address the need for creating safe environments for users of micromobility devices, and by extension pedestrians. Scooters are not the enemy.

Sara Pope, Milwaukee

Letter: Class cellphone ban won't change anything outside school

Tips for getting your letter to the editor published

Here are some tips to get your views shared with your friends, family, neighbors and across our state:

- Please include your name, street address and daytime phone.

- Generally, we limit letters to 200 words.
- Cite sources of where you found information or the article that prompted your letter.
- Be civil and constructive, especially when criticizing.
- Avoid ad hominem attacks, take issue with a position, not a person.
- We cannot acknowledge receipt of submissions.
- We don't publish poetry, anonymous or open letters.
- Each writer is limited to one published letter every two months.
- All letters are subject to editing.

Write: Letters to the editor, Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, 330 E. Kilbourn Avenue, Suite 500, Milwaukee, WI, 53202. Fax: (414)-223-5444. E-mail: jsedit@jrn.com or submit using the form that can be found on the on the bottom of this page.