

SEPTEMBER 2026

A PRIVATE MAGAZINE FOR THE RESIDENTS OF ATHERTON, CALIFORNIA

ATHERTON *living*

COVER PHOTO BY
AARON ALVAREZ MENDOZA

LOGAN MILLS

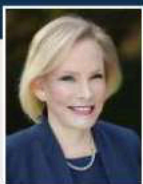
ALSO INSIDE

WHEN IS THE RIGHT TIME?

WORLD CREOLE
MUSIC FESTIVAL

APPLE ORCHARDS
AROUND THE WORLD

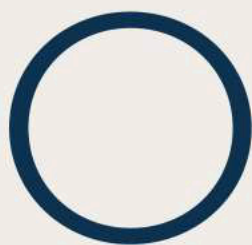




Sharing the Road: A Reminder from a Neighbor

Small habits that keep our streets safer year-round

By Mary Alexander



In any given morning in Atherton, our streets are shared by a mix of commuters, school drop-off traffic, cyclists heading out for a training ride, joggers, and neighbors out for a walk.. It is one of the things I love about living here. It is also a reminder that safety on our roads is a shared responsibility — not just a matter for law enforcement or city planners, but for each of us behind the wheel, on a bike, or on the sidewalk.

Recently, the Atherton Police Department conducted a dedicated bicycle and pedestrian safety operation. An officer focused specifically on the driving and riding behaviors most likely to cause serious injuries: speeding, illegal turns, failing to yield or provide right of way to bicyclists and pedestrians, running stop signs and signals, and unsafe cycling that contributes to crashes.

As a personal injury attorney, I see firsthand what happens when those behaviors go unchecked. A crash between a car and a person on foot or on a bike is rarely a fair fight. At 30 miles per hour, a driver needs at least 90 feet to come to a full stop — often more distance than the driver realizes they have. The consequences of that math, when a person is on the other end of it, can change a family forever.

The good news is that most of these incidents are preventable.

The Atherton Police Department has shared straightforward guidance for everyone who uses our streets, and it is worth taking a moment to review — whether you drive, ride, or walk.

The Atherton Police guidelines are:

If you are walking

- Be predictable. Use crosswalks whenever they are available.
- Watch for approaching vehicles and practice due care, even when you have the right of way.
- Never walk or run into the path of a vehicle. Drivers cannot stop on a dime.
- Be visible. Wear light colors or reflective material, and carry a flashlight at dawn, dusk, or after dark.
- Take extra care at night, on busier streets, and where speed limits are higher.

If you are driving

- Do not speed, and slow down at intersections.
- Be ready to stop for pedestrians at marked and unmarked crosswalks — and between intersections where people may cross.
- Do not block crosswalks while waiting to turn right.
- Never drive impaired. Ever.

If you are on a bike

- Obey traffic laws, use hand signals, use lights at night (front white light, rear red reflector), and wear a helmet.
- Ride in the same direction as traffic. You have the same responsibilities as any slow-moving vehicle.
- Avoid the door zone — do not ride too closely to parked cars.
- Use bike lanes when they are available, except when making a left turn, passing, or approaching a legal right turn.
- Yield to pedestrians in marked and unmarked crosswalks, at intersections, and between intersections where pedestrians may cross.

A shared responsibility

Commander Daniel Larsen of the Atherton Police Department put it well: "We all have places to be and not everyone gets there by car. Bicyclists and pedestrians have the same rights to the road but face even more risk without the protections vehicles have. We should all be looking out for one another."

That last line is the one I keep coming back to. Looking out for one another is not a slogan — it is a habit. It is the extra second at a stop sign to check for a jogger stepping off the curb. It is the driver who pauses before opening a car door on a busy street. It is the cyclist who signals a turn instead of assuming everyone can guess. It is the parent who reminds a child, one more time, to look both ways.

Enforcement operations like the one happening this week are an important tool, and I am grateful to our local officers for making this a priority. Funding for the program comes from a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety, through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. But the real work happens in the thousands of small decisions the rest of us make on the road every day.

If you or someone you love is ever injured in a crash, know that there are resources and advocates in this community ready to help. My deeper hope, though, is that we never need them — that the next time you drive down Middlefield or turn onto Alameda, the person on the bike ahead of you gets home safely, and so do you.

Stay safe, Atherton.

— — —

About the author: *Mary Alexander is a personal injury attorney and longtime Atherton resident. She has spent her career representing people and families injured in preventable accidents, and is a frequent voice on community safety issues on the Peninsula.*