

CONSENT CALENDAR

July 23, 2019

Office of the Mayor

TO: Members of the City Council

FROM: Mayor Arreguín, Council Members Droste, Hahn, and Wengraf

SUBJECT: Implementing Vision Zero: Prioritizing High Collision Streets

RECOMMENDATION

As street lights are being replaced and transportation infrastructure improvements are made throughout the City, and as work plans and schedules are developed, priority should be given to high-collision streets, as identified in the Pedestrian Master Plan¹ and Vision Zero program. Examples include but are not limited to improving lighting, updating signage, and painting of crosswalks.

BACKGROUND

Approximately three people are killed and 31 people are severely injured each year in traffic collisions on Berkeley streets (City Council work session report, 2017). Pedestrians and bicyclists are involved in only 7% of overall crashes but represent roughly one-third of all traffic fatalities. High vehicle speeds, violation of “Pedestrian Right of Way”, and alcohol/drug intoxication are the primary causes of severe and fatal collisions. Under a Vision Zero approach, traffic safety efforts would focus on reducing these primary causes of severe and fatal collisions (City Council Worksession Report, December 2017²).

In recent years, major cities across the United States have begun adopting this policy, including San Francisco in 2014³. In March 2018, the Berkeley City Council resolved to make Berkeley a Vision Zero City⁴. We have stepped up implementation efforts in recent months, with the creation of a Vision Zero Task Force⁵.

¹ <https://www.cityofberkeley.info/pedestrian>; <https://www.cityofberkeley.info/pedestrian>

² https://www.cityofberkeley.info/Clerk/City_Council/2017/12_Dec/Documents/2017-12-07_WS_Item_02_Vision_Zero_Traffic_Safety_Policy_-_Pres.aspx [PDF]

³ <https://www.visionzerosf.org/about/what-is-vision-zero>

⁴ https://www.cityofberkeley.info/Clerk/City_Council/2018/03_Mar/Documents/2018-03-27_Item_18_Vision_Zero_-_Rev.aspx [PDF]

On June 25, 2019, the Berkeley City Council approved the City Budget for Fiscal Years 2020 and 2021. Thanks to the efforts of community members and advocacy groups, the budget prioritized funding to implement Vision Zero and for multiple traffic safety improvements, making the streets safer and more accessible for pedestrians and bicyclists.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

No additional financial implications. City staff will provide a high-level, preliminary analysis of potential costs, timelines, and staffing demands as part of the referral to the Facilities, Infrastructure, Transportation, Environment, & Sustainability Policy Committee.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Vision Zero policies are consistent with several provisions of the City of Berkeley's Climate Action Plan. Significant positive environmental impacts (e.g. increased pedestrian and bicycle trips resulting in lower greenhouse gas output) arise when cities prioritize walking and bicycling infrastructure and safety.

CONTACT

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ATTACHMENTS

1. [Resolution 68-371 — In Support of Vision Zero](#)

⁵ <http://www.jessearreguin.com/vizion-zero>

RESOLUTION NO. 68,371-N.S.

IN SUPPORT OF VISION ZERO

WHEREAS, the City of Berkeley wants a safe and healthy city where we do everything possible to avoid traffic-related injuries and fatalities; and

WHEREAS, Berkeley City Council adopted the Berkeley Strategic Transportation (BeST) Plan in 2016 which included a recommendation that the City develop a Vision Zero policy with the goal of eliminating the number of fatal and severe traffic injuries; and

WHEREAS, cars and trucks produce greenhouse gas emissions when they burn gasoline or other fossil fuels, which contributes to human-made climate change; and

WHEREAS, transportation-related greenhouse gas emissions are increasing in Berkeley and now account for 56% of Berkeley's greenhouse gas emissions; and

WHEREAS, the City of Berkeley's vulnerabilities to climate change include sea level rise and flooding, heat waves, damage to local ecosystems, and risks to the city's transportation and water infrastructure; and

WHEREAS, the City of Berkeley's Climate Action Plan supports measures that increase walking, transit ridership, ridesharing and bicycling to achieve greenhouse gas reduction goals; and

WHEREAS, according to the December 2017 Council work session report "Development of a Vision Zero Traffic Safety Policy," pedestrians and bicyclists are the most vulnerable road users and account for 29-36% of all traffic deaths in Berkeley; and

WHEREAS, the California Office of Traffic Safety consistently ranks Berkeley as having more pedestrian and bicycle injuries than other California cities its size; and

WHEREAS, many more people choose to walk, bike, and take transit in Berkeley than in most other cities in California and the United States; and

WHEREAS, measures to make Berkeley's streets safer for all road users, particularly those who are most physically vulnerable, will further encourage people to walk, bike and take transit; and

WHEREAS, the City of Berkeley's Complete Streets Policy (2012), Pedestrian Plan (2010), and Bicycle Plan (2017) all seek to reduce serious or fatal pedestrian and bicycle injuries; and

WHEREAS, Vision Zero is a data-driven strategy to eliminate all traffic fatalities and severe injuries, while increasing safe, healthy, equitable mobility for all; and

WHEREAS, Vision Zero is founded on a Safe Systems approach that recognizes humans will make mistakes and roadway systems and policies should be designed to protect them; and

WHEREAS, Vision Zero road safety goals are accomplished through a combination of engineering, education, and enforcement measures; and

WHEREAS, Vision Zero was first implemented in Sweden, which now has one of the lowest annual rates of road deaths in the world, even as trips have increased; and

WHEREAS, San Francisco, Santa Barbara, and Eugene (Oregon) are among 34 Vision Zero cities in the United States; and

WHEREAS, the Vision Zero Network's minimum criteria for recognizing Vision Zero cities include setting a clear goal of eliminating traffic fatalities and severe injuries within in a set timeframe, publicly committing to Vision Zero, establishing a Vision Zero implementation plan or strategy, and engaging key city departments (including transportation, police, and public health); and

WHEREAS, the City of Berkeley Transportation Division collaborates with other departments to support policies, programs, and initiatives that promote safer streets such as the Traffic Calming Program, Safe Routes to School program, and Pedestrian and Bicycle Plans.

WHEREAS, a commitment to Vision Zero should create opportunities to invite meaningful input from the community, including communities that are disproportionately burdened by traffic collisions, and historically have been underserved.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Berkeley City Council adopts the Vision Zero goal of eliminating traffic deaths and severe injuries by 2028.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a multi-disciplinary Vision Zero Task Force will be formed to advise City Council on the development and implementation of a Vision Zero Action Plan, and shall be comprised of organizations and agencies with expertise in transportation, enforcement, education, public health, emergency response, equity, transit, biking, walking, and vehicles.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Berkeley City Council directs the Vision Zero Task Force to research a minimum of five years of data to identify dangerous behaviors causing death and injury, and geographic locations and populations which bear a disproportionate burden of fatal and severe crashes, and engage community in developing the Action Plan.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Berkeley City Council directs the Vision Zero Task Force to develop assurances against racial profiling and targeting as it pertains to Vision Zero enforcement and to ensure that communities of color, police bureau, and community

leadership are included in the decision-making and development of enforcement plans or policies.

The foregoing Resolution was adopted by the Berkeley City Council on March 27, 2018 by the following vote:

Ayes: Bartlett, Davila, Droste, Hahn, Harrison, Maio, Wengraf, Worthington and Arreguin.

Noes: None.

Absent: None.



Jesse Arreguin, Mayor

Attest: 

Mark Numainville, City Clerk

