



Office of the City Manager

WORKSESSION  
November 5, 2019

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council  
From: Dee Williams-Ridley, City Manager  
Submitted by: Phillip L. Harrington, Director, Department of Public Works  
Subject: Development of a Vision Zero Action Plan

### INTRODUCTION

In March 2018 the Berkeley City Council adopted the Vision Zero goal of eliminating traffic deaths and severe injuries in Berkeley by 2028, and directed staff to form a Vision Zero Task Force and develop a Vision Zero Action Plan (Resolution No. 68,371-N.S.). The resolution specified that the multi-disciplinary Task Force include members with expertise in enforcement, education, public health, emergency response, equity, and all modes of transportation; research a minimum of five years of collision data to identify behaviors most associated with traffic deaths and injuries, and geographic locations and populations which bear a disproportionate burden of fatal and severe crashes; engage the community in developing the Plan; develop assurances against racial profiling and targeting as it pertains to Vision Zero enforcement; and ensure that communities of color, the Police Department, and community leadership are included in the development of enforcement plans or policies. This report provides information on the Vision Zero Task Force process and progress toward developing a Vision Zero Action Plan.

### CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

Following the March 2018 City Council meeting, Public Works convened a Vision Zero Task Force and Vision Zero Advisory Committee, and has begun drafting a Vision Zero Action Plan. The Task Force consists of government agency representatives from multiple City of Berkeley Departments and partner agencies, including the Berkeley Police Department; Berkeley Fire Department; Department of Public Works; Department of Health, Housing, and Community Services; AC Transit; the University of California, Berkeley; the Office of the City Manager. Representatives from the Mayor's Office and interested Council Members' offices also participate. The purpose of the Task Force is to provide an agency perspective on the development of the Vision Zero Action Plan. The Advisory Committee consists of members of the public representing various parts of the Berkeley community, including City of Berkeley Commissioners, BUSD Board of Directors, Safe Routes to Schools parents, business associations, and pedestrian and bicycle advocates. The purpose of the Advisory Committee is to provide a public perspective on the development of the Vision Zero Action Plan.

In partnership with these two groups, Public Works staff have begun the process of drafting a Vision Zero Action Plan. This process is structured around a series of five meetings with each group, as well as focus-group meetings with specific Task Force members. Each meeting has focused on one step in the Plan development process:

1. Vision: *“eliminate traffic deaths and severe injuries on our city streets by 2028”*;
2. Guiding Principles: *values that guide the development of action items, such as safety, equity, sustainability*;
3. Draft Actions: *specific recommendations including administrative, data analysis, street design, enforcement, and public awareness components*;
4. Prioritized Actions: *given constrained resources, which actions are first*;
5. Draft Action Plan: *all above elements in a coherent, actionable policy document*.

One of the draft Action Items recommends the creation of an ongoing Vision Zero implementation committee. After consultation with the City Clerk, staff is considering continuation of both the Task Force (agency staff) and the Advisory Committee (members of the public) in one consolidated “Vision Zero Coordinating Committee”, formed to advise the City Manager on Action Plan implementation. Similar to the composition of the existing Task Force and Advisory Committee, this new Committee would consist of City staff from affected departments, assigned by the City Manager; Commissioners selected by their respective commissions; and other members of the Berkeley community as appropriate. The Committee would be an ad-hoc non-legislative body not subject to the Brown Act, and would meet quarterly to discuss a predetermined work plan and agenda. It would provide quarterly updates to the City Manager and to the City Council in the form of Information Items.

Additional information and Action Plan recommendations can be found in Attachment 1: Draft Berkeley Vision Zero Vision Statement and Guiding Principles; and Attachment 2: Draft Berkeley Vision Zero Action Items.

## BACKGROUND

Vision Zero is a safety-first approach to transportation that seeks to eliminate all traffic deaths and severe injuries. The Vision Zero approach to traffic safety was first adopted by Sweden’s parliament in 1997. By 2015, traffic deaths in Sweden dropped by over 50%, saving approximately 280 lives per year<sup>1</sup>. The first US city to adopt a Vision Zero

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<sup>1</sup> *Development of Road Safety in Sweden*. Swedish Transport Agency, Swedish Transport Administration, Transport Analysis, and Swedish National Road and Transport Research Institute. See <http://bit.ly/2yLFUmi>; *Global Status Report on Road Safety 2015*. World Health Organization. See <http://bit.ly/2ciLUp7>.

policy or plan was Chicago in 2012. Since then, other US Cities have followed suit, including San Francisco, San Jose, Los Angeles, and Fremont, California. Vision Zero is a paradigm shift that emphasizes a “safe systems” approach to roadway design and engineering, supported by enforcement and public awareness efforts.

From 2012 to 2016, an average of three people per year were killed in traffic collisions on Berkeley streets and an additional thirty-one people per year were severely injured. Severe injuries are often debilitating or life threatening and require hospitalization. Of the fourteen people killed in traffic collisions in Berkeley between 2012 and 2016, five were walking, four were bicycling, and five were driving motor vehicles at the time of the collision. Pedestrians and bicyclists are highly overrepresented among those killed and severely injured in traffic collisions in Berkeley.

The three most common factors that caused severe and fatal collisions, as recorded by law enforcement, were “Unsafe Speed” (22%), a violation of the “Pedestrian Right of Way” (14%) and “Driving or Bicycling Under the Influence of Alcohol or Drugs” (10%). Under a Vision Zero approach, traffic safety efforts would focus on reducing these primary causes of severe and fatal collisions. Reducing vehicle speed is particularly important for reducing pedestrian fatalities, as a pedestrian hit by a vehicle traveling at twenty miles per hour has a 90% chance of survival, but a pedestrian hit by a vehicle traveling at forty miles per hour has a 90% chance of dying.

#### ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Walking and cycling trips do not release air pollutants or greenhouse gasses. Implementation of the Vision Zero Action Plan could increase walking and cycling trips by improving the safety and accessibility of these modes. A survey for the 2017 Berkeley Bicycle Plan found that 71% of Berkeley residents are interested in bicycling, but do not ride because they are concerned about safety. Increasing cycling and walking would help the City achieve the Berkeley Climate Action Plan greenhouse gas emission reduction targets of 33% below year 2000 levels by the year 2020, and 80% below year 2000 levels by 2050. The Climate Action Plan states that transportation modes such as cycling must become the primary means of fulfilling the City’s mobility needs in order to meet these targets.

#### POSSIBLE FUTURE ACTION

The next step in developing a Vision Zero Action Plan will be to work with the consultant team, Task Force, and Advisory Committee to complete a draft Plan. The draft Action Plan will be presented at the November 2019 Transportation Commission meeting for review, comment, and recommendation. The final Action Plan will be presented to the Berkeley City Council in February 2020 for consideration for approval.

#### FISCAL IMPACTS OF POSSIBLE FUTURE ACTION

The fiscal impacts of the Vision Zero Action Plan will depend on what actions are approved by Council and identified by a future Vision Zero Coordinating Committee. New safety efforts will require prioritizing new safety-related actions, re-focusing existing

safety-related work under a Vision Zero approach, and potentially providing additional funding and staffing to support these priorities.

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Attachments:

- 1: DRAFT Berkeley Vision Zero Vision Statement and Guiding Principles
- 2: DRAFT Berkeley Vision Zero Action Items

## ATTACHMENT 1: VISION ZERO GUIDING PRINCIPLES

*The City of Berkeley is committed to an equity-focused, data-driven effort to eliminate traffic deaths and severe injuries on our city streets by 2028.*

- 1. Safety is our highest priority.** Human life is more important than speed, convenience, or property. We will evaluate tradeoffs and make both proactive and reactive engineering decisions about street design based on this value.
- 2. Traffic deaths and severe injuries are preventable and unacceptable.** Using a holistic, data-driven, systems-level approach to street design, we will treat fatal and severe crashes as preventable and unacceptable incidents that can and must be addressed.
- 3. People make mistakes.** We will design our streets so that mistakes do not result in death or severe injury.
- 4. Slower streets are safer streets.** We will design, construct, and operate our streets for slower speeds with the goal of eliminating all fatal and severe collisions and of protecting our most vulnerable street users – children, seniors, people with disabilities, and people walking and biking.
- 5. We will create safer transportation options for people who choose to walk, bike, and take transit.** Creating safer transportation options for people to walk, bike, and take transit can reduce the number of car trips in Berkeley. Fewer car trips can mean fewer severe and fatal collisions.
- 6. Street safety must be achieved equitably.** We will respond to the disproportionate burden of traffic deaths and severe injuries on low-income communities, people of color, un-housed residents, people with no or limited English proficiency, and people with disabilities. Enforcement strategies will target the specific safety violations that disproportionately impact these vulnerable populations, to best utilize scarce resources. They will not result in racial profiling.
- 7. Vision Zero will be accountable, transparent, and data-driven.** Actions will be data-driven to respond to the causal factors of deaths and severe injuries on Berkeley streets. This response will utilize both proven methods and innovative strategies. We will perform annual monitoring, reporting, and evaluation through an equity lens. We will communicate clearly what resources are necessary to achieve Vision Zero, why street design modifications are proposed, and the basis by which competing improvements are prioritized.

## **ATTACHMENT 2: Draft Berkeley Vision Zero Actions Summary**

### ***The Vision Zero Program***

#### **0.1 COLLABORATION**

*With City departments, regional and community partners, and mobility providers to achieve Vision Zero goals. Continuing commitment from Berkeley elected officials.*

#### **0.2 CAPACITY**

*Sustainable funding and staffing to complete Vision Zero action items, including program management, infrastructure projects, and education, engagement, and enforcement.*

#### **0.3 TRANSPARENCY AND EQUITY**

*Establish a milestone reporting schedule. Incorporate equity into data collection, analytics, engagement, and reporting.*

### ***Safer Streets for Everyone***

#### **1.1 PROJECT PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT**

*Prioritize High-Injury Streets and the most vulnerable street users.*

#### **1.2 PROJECT DESIGN**

*Design for vulnerable users of the transportation network, including people of all ages and abilities.*

#### **1.3 PROJECT DELIVERY**

*Deliver Vision Zero traffic safety infrastructure improvements both reactively and proactively.*

### ***Safer Streets by Everyone***

#### **2.1 PUBLIC AWARENESS**

*Create a culture of traffic safety by promoting awareness through public information programs and campaigns.*

#### **2.2 ENFORCEMENT**

*Develop an equitable and data-driven enforcement strategy focused on the most critical safety violations contributing to fatal and severe injuries, including speeding, failure to yield, and inattentive driving.*

## Draft Berkeley Vision Zero Actions

### **The Vision Zero Program**

#### **0.1 COLLABORATION**

*With City departments, regional and community partners, and mobility providers to achieve Vision Zero goals. Continuing commitment from Berkeley elected officials.*

ACTIONS (RESPONSIBLE PARTY):

- **Establish a standing Vision Zero Coordinating Committee** consisting of staff and Commissioners such as those representing the Commission on Aging, Community Health, Disability, Police Review, Planning, Public Works, and Transportation, and City Council members or their representatives, with quarterly meetings organized around a predetermined annual agenda. **(City Manager, Department Directors)**
- **With MTC or Alameda CTC, establish a peer-to-peer Bay Area Vision Zero Network** for information-sharing and collaboration on countywide and regional initiatives such as public health analysis of crash victim hospital data. **(Mayor's Office, City Manager, PW/Transportation)**
- **Develop a targeted, strategic Vision Zero staff training plan** to send key staff responsible for implementing the Vision Zero Action Plan such as Public Works; Police; Health, Housing and Community Services (HHCS); and the City Manager's Office and elected officials to Vision Zero-related conferences. **(City Manager, Department Directors)**
- **Incorporate Vision Zero goals into plan and policy updates** for all departments and partner institutions, including the upcoming City of Berkeley Zoning Ordinance update and UC Berkeley's Long-Range Development Plan. **(City Manager, Department Directors)**

#### **0.2 CAPACITY**

*Sustainable funding and staffing to complete Vision Zero action items, including program management, infrastructure projects, and education, engagement, and enforcement*

ACTIONS (RESPONSIBLE PARTY):

- **Conduct a citywide Vision Zero Action Plan evaluation** of existing staffing and funding capacity to complete Vision Zero Action Items. **(City Manager, Public Works, HHCS, Police Department)**
  - **Create a staffing matrix** of existing and proposed staff for the delivery of Vision Zero Action Items. New or realigned staff needs are anticipated in the areas listed below:
    - Public Works Rapid Response Safety Project team
    - Public Information Officers in key Vision Zero departments, including Police and HHCS
    - Berkeley Police Department Traffic Enforcement Unit
    - HHCS Vision Zero public awareness program
- **Establish a milestone staffing and funding schedule** to complete Vision Zero Action Items, including City and grant funds.

- **Apply for a Vision Zero Performance Audit** to be performed during the FY21 audit period to evaluate the implementation of the Action Plan and make any additional needed recommendations, including additional and/or realigned staffing and funding, for effective Vision Zero Action Plan implementation. Provide required 6-month updates to the City Council. **(Public Works)**

### 0.3 TRANSPARENCY AND EQUITY

*Establish a milestone reporting schedule. Incorporate equity into data collection, analytics, engagement, and reporting.*

ACTIONS (RESPONSIBLE PARTY):

- **Provide an annual Vision Zero Progress Report**, reviewed by the City Auditor, to the City Council, City Department Directors, Vision Zero Coordinating Committee, and Transportation Commission, on progress on reducing fatal and severe crashes, including in historically underserved neighborhoods, and on meeting the funding, staffing, and Vision Zero program delivery schedules. Include an updated Vision Zero High-Injury Street map. **(PW/Transportation)**
- **Complete a full update of the Vision Zero Action Plan every three years** to ensure continued relevancy of the Action Plan by integrating advancements in best practices and technologies. The first update will include an evaluation of equity gaps in safety datasets and develop equity milestones to address inequities related to gender, people with disabilities, homelessness, race/ethnicity, language, and income, as well as assess the need to include hospital data in Vision Zero analyses and maps. **(PW/Transportation)**

## Safer Streets for Everyone

### 1.1 PROJECT PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

*Prioritize High-Injury Streets and the most vulnerable street users.*

ACTIONS (RESPONSIBLE PARTY):

- **Develop a matrix to track project prioritization and progress.** Prioritize both new/existing requests/referrals and delivery of established infrastructure project lists (e.g. Five Year Repaving Program, BeST Plan, etc.) according to the Vision Zero High-Injury Street map and equity-driven prioritization from City Council adopted plans such as the forthcoming Pedestrian Master Plan and Bicycle Plan. **(City Manager, Public Works)**
- **Establish a Vision Zero Rapid Response Safety Project Protocol** that utilizes data from the Fatal Accident Investigation Team (FAIT) to deploy quick-build projects if engineering countermeasures would be effective at improving safety. **(PW/Transportation, Police Dept)**
- **Conduct before and after studies** of a sample of Vision Zero infrastructure projects to evaluate effectiveness. **(PW/Transportation, Police Dept)**
- **Undertake a Standards of Coverage/Response Time Study** to provide a data-driven understanding of how safety improvements impact emergency response times. **(PW/Transportation, Fire Department, Police Dept)**

- **Establish a pre-approved list of safety infrastructure improvements** with the Vision Zero Coordinating Committee to streamline the implementation of projects. **(PW/Transportation)**

## 1.2 PROJECT DESIGN

*Design for vulnerable users of the transportation network, including people of all ages and abilities.*

ACTIONS (RESPONSIBLE PARTY):

- **Utilize and maintain policies and design guidelines from Council-adopted plans such as the Pedestrian Master Plan and Bicycle Plan** to guide Berkeley's street design, traffic, and parking procedures in order to prioritize safety over convenience and reduce the incidence of severe and fatal collisions. Update the Berkeley Municipal Code to be consistent with these Council-adopted plans. Ensure revisions and updates are reviewed by the Vision Zero Coordinating Committee to maintain accessibility for people of all ages and abilities. **(PW/Transportation, PW/Engineering)**
- **Refine the existing traffic calming toolbox** to include design guidelines for all street types, utilizing Council adopted plans where applicable. Ensure the traffic calming toolbox is reviewed by the Vision Zero Coordinating Committee to streamline the implementation of projects. **(PW/Transportation)**

## 1.3 PROJECT DELIVERY

*Deliver Vision Zero traffic safety infrastructure improvements both reactively and proactively*

ACTIONS (RESPONSIBLE PARTY):

- **Proactively implement already-identified capital and quick-build safety projects** on all Vision Zero High-Injury Streets on a schedule to complete such projects by 2028. **(PW/Transportation, PW/Engineering)**
- **Reactively implement newly identified quick-build projects** at locations with recent severe and fatal collisions if engineering countermeasures could be effective at improving safety, based on Rapid Response Safety Project Protocol. **(PW/Transportation, PW/Engineering)**
- **Continue to deliver neighborhood traffic calming** as part of the request-based program and proactively deliver data-driven major street traffic calming projects on Vision Zero High-Injury Streets. **(PW/Transportation, PW/Engineering)**
- **Establish a Complete Streets Repaving and Development Project Checklist** to ensure proactive and reactive Vision Zero safety infrastructure for people of all ages and abilities are included with each repaving project and in the conditions of approval for development projects. **(PW/Transportation, PW/Engineering, Planning)**

## Safer Streets by Everyone

### 2.1 PUBLIC AWARENESS

*Create a culture of traffic safety by promoting awareness through public information programs and campaigns.*

ACTIONS (RESPONSIBLE PARTY):

- **Make Vision Zero a household term.** Develop Berkeley Vision Zero branding for use on promotional and educational material. Use decals and branding on City vehicle fleet to promote Vision Zero, including on police and fire department vehicles. Use existing relationships with community-based organizations to distribute material City-wide. **(City Manager PIO, PW/Transportation, HHCS)**
- **Develop and proactively deliver a Vision Zero educational campaign** focused on primary collision factors for severe and fatal injuries in Berkeley, elevating victims' stories. Regularly update the campaign to ensure it is context-specific and culturally relevant. **(City Manager PIO, PW/Transportation, HHCS)**
- **Establish a Vision Zero Rapid Response Safety Communication Protocol.** Reactively employ a communication strategy in response to recent severe and fatal collisions aimed at the human element of traffic safety, elevating victims' stories. **(PW/Transportation, HHCS)**
- **Maintain an understanding of the Berkeley community's perception of safety.** Target direct public engagement to residents of Berkeley's historically underserved neighborhoods and other vulnerable users, including seniors, people with disabilities, and people who walk and bike. **(City Manager PIO, PW/Transportation, HHCS)**
- **Partner with UC Berkeley, Berkeley City College, Berkeley Unified School District, and the Commission on Aging** to create targeted Vision Zero messaging for students, faculty, and seniors. **(City Manager PIO, PW/Transportation, HHCS)**
- **Integrate Vision Zero traffic safety awareness into training for City employees** who drive City vehicles or drive while on City business, including Police, Fire, Public Works, and all City departments and divisions. **(City Manager, PW/Transportation)**

## 2.2 ENFORCEMENT

*Develop an equitable and data-driven enforcement strategy focused on the most critical safety violations contributing to fatal and severe injuries, including speeding, failure to yield, and inattentive driving.*

ACTIONS (RESPONSIBLE PARTY):

- **Continue and regularly update a crash data-driven enforcement strategy** using Fatal Accident Investigation Team (FAIT) reports, crash data, and the High-Injury Street map. **(PW/Transportation, Police Dept)**
- **Expand safe speeds enforcement** to recognize speeding as the top primary collision factor in collisions resulting in a severe injury or fatality. Continue to provide updated speed surveys on High-Injury Streets to the Police Department. **(PW/Transportation, Police Dept)**
- **Expand on Zachary Cruz's Pedestrian Safety Month** to conduct highly-visible, well-publicized year-round pedestrian right-of-way enforcement operations. **(PW/Transportation, Police Dept)**
- **Seek opportunities to educate before issuing citations** during Vision Zero enforcement. **(PW/Transportation, Police Dept)**
- **Support state-wide traffic safety legislation** allowing automated speed enforcement by local agencies, designation of speed limits on local streets based on desired safety outcomes rather than the existing prevailing speed, and the reduction of local residential street speed

limits to below 25 MPH, which would allow for 20 MPH speed limit on local residential streets, consistent with “20 Is Plenty” campaigns. **(City Manager, PW/Transportation, Police Dept)**

