



Memorandum

TO: RULES AND OPEN GOVERNMENT GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE **FROM:** Councilmember Esparza

SUBJECT: PEDESTRIAN SAFETY PILOT AT MONTEREY RD. AND CURTNER AVE. **DATE:** 8/26/2021

Approved *Maya Esparza*

Date 8/26/2021

RECOMMENDATION:

1. Direct the City Manager to allocate resources for a dedicated homeless outreach effort to the encampments near the intersection of Monterey and Curtner, including coordinating with Destination: Home's Lived Experience Advisory Board and County's Community Mobile Response Program.
2. Direct Staff to explore physical barriers on the medians and along the sidewalks at Curtner and Monterey, and other high fatality intersections, to deter pedestrians from crossing outside the designated crosswalks.
3. Direct Staff to pilot recording video cameras at Monterey and Curtner, which will record the intersection in a manner consistent with our current Privacy Policy, including time-limited recording retention as appropriate, and report back to the Transportation and Environment Committee with a report on the pilot program to assess effectiveness.
4. Direct Staff to explore the use of American Rescue Plan or federal infrastructure funding for these efforts.

BACKGROUND

On the night of April 1, 2021, Vanessa Arce was tragically killed by a hit and run driver in the intersection of Curtner Ave. and Monterey Road. Venessa would be the first of two disabled victims of hit and run incidents near the intersection that month, and one of seven pedestrians who lost their lives near the intersection in the past year. Six of these were hit and runs. This pattern of tragedy is unacceptable, and calls for urgent action to address pedestrian safety near this intersection.

Unfortunately we know that our unhoused residents are especially vulnerable to the traffic-related dangers, particularly in this intersection. As such, I am calling on the City Manager to provide dedicated outreach efforts to the encampments near the Curtner-Monterey intersection. This effort should include close coordination with Destination: Home's Lived Experience Advisory Board, as well as with the Santa Clara County Behavioral Health Department's Community Mobile Response Program. This outreach should be concentrated in the evening hours to maximize impact in reaching our unhoused residents.

Furthermore, we know that pedestrians often cross the Curtner-Monterey intersection outside of the designated crosswalks, putting them at further risk of injury or death. I recommend that staff explore options for physical barriers, such as fencing, on the median, as well as the surrounding sidewalks, to deter crossing outside of the designated crosswalks, and return to the Transportation and Environment Committee with recommendations.

Finally, we need to address the reality that most of these fatalities are due to hit and run drivers who need to be brought to justice. We have an opportunity, and a responsibility, to pilot a recording traffic camera program through our Department of Transportation that can capture and record these incidents, both to deter hit and run drivers, and find those who do commit these heinous acts. This program will comply with our existing Privacy Policy, as well as all other relevant department policies regarding duration of recording retention, etc. After an appropriate pilot period, staff should return to the Transportation and Environment Committee with an evaluation of the program.

We have seen a significant rise in encampments, both along the Monterey Corridor and throughout the City as a result of the Covid pandemic and consequent economic impacts. As with so many aspects of the pandemic, the impacts to our community have been inequitable. Given this undeniable relationship, staff should explore the use of American Rescue Plan funding for this work, as well as any eligible funding through the upcoming federal infrastructure bill. This effort, along with all of our Vision Zero work, represents a crucial element of our efforts to build back equitably in a community that has been severely impacted by the pandemic, and continues to suffer disproportionately during this challenging time. Justice for Vanessa Arce, and all those who have lost their lives on this dangerous corridor, means ensuring that we do everything we can to end these preventable tragedies, and the pain they cause for so many in our community. I urge my Council colleagues on the Rules Committee to support this critical work that will save lives.

The signers of this memorandum have not had, and will not have, any private conversation with any other member of the City council, or that member's staff, concerning any action discussed in the memorandum, and that each signer's staff members have not had, and have been instructed not to have, any such conversation with any other member of the City Council or that member's staff.