

November 4, 2019

TO: Members of the City of San Jose Traffic and Environment Committee

FROM: Rick Spalding,

RE: Impact on recent and upcoming traffic issues in the Northside Neighborhood, and how the Vision Zero Plan may benefit traffic concerns

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to submit this letter for the November 4 meeting at 1:30 where the Vision Zero Plan will come to the Traffic and Environment Committee. I attended a community meeting recently for the Northside Neighborhood of District 3 and was made aware of the Vision Zero San Jose initiative, and I commend the Traffic and Environment Committee on supporting this plan to eliminate deaths and severe injuries on San Jose roadways.

During the meeting, though, a large group of local residents discussed existing traffic concerns, and potential upcoming plans that may significantly add to the amount of traffic in the neighborhood. I'm hoping that the Vision Zero initiative may be able to address these concerns, and may include added funding to put measures in place to calm traffic on our local streets.

I recently returned to my house at 424 North 19th Street after working for a city in the California central valley for ten years. Upon my return to San Jose, I saw that there has been an increase in vehicles driving quickly past my house (beyond normal speeding – more like racing past at 20 to 30 miles per hour beyond the 25MPH speed limit), especially in the evening hours. 19th Street is a wide street, which I assume makes this street more desirable for this type of activity. I've heard that 21st Street sees the same activity.

Additionally, with the upcoming opening of the new Berryessa BART Station, I'm concerned that this will increase traffic congestion in our residential streets. The Google expansion in downtown, which I'd imagine will add traffic along corridors leading to freeways and the Berryessa BART station, further adds to this concern.

After thinking about what was discussed at the neighborhood meeting noted above, I wanted to bring to you a few ideas and questions:

- I learned that all of District 3 has \$200,000 available each year for traffic calming measures – and that other Council Districts are provided the same amount, though District 3 has a disproportionately high number of traffic accidents and fatalities. The need for traffic calming measures in my district far exceeds the amount that can be afforded with the \$200,000 funding. I also learned that only ten traffic officers patrol the entire City of San Jose to focus on traffic safety. Are either or both of these issues part of what will be addressed through the Vision Zero initiative?

- While working for the city in the central valley, I became familiar with a process (CEQA) where the community could note concerns related to environment impacts, such as traffic, caused by significant developments, before the project was approved. I would imagine that the Berryessa BART Station and Google expansion would have gone through such a process. Was the impact on traffic in nearby residential areas discussed, and if so, were any measures to alleviate concerns – along with funding to realize these measures – identified?
- Are there any existing plans to set up traffic calming or enforcement solutions to residential streets in the Northside Neighborhood related to the speeding activity? I realize that funding is often provided based on documented activity, and I'm wondering how the activity would best be reported – contacting 311, contacting 911, sending email to my Councilmember, sending email to the Traffic Safety email address, etc. At the neighborhood meeting I attended, an SJPD officer mentioned that in the last few months, there were no reports of speeding on the streets in the neighborhood – despite several residents mentioning that they had reported such incidents. I'm guessing that their reports are not made to the correct person to be included in the statistics.
- Has funding by recent projects that will potentially impact Northside traffic (notably the BART station and Google expansion) been granted to address the impact of additional vehicle traffic?
- Is there anything that I or my neighbors can do to help the City of San Jose in addressing this concern? Can I write letters to other entities at the City or perhaps elsewhere asking for help? Can I write letters of support when grants are available to fund traffic control measures?

I realize that there are likely many neighborhoods in the City of San Jose that would like to see local traffic issues addressed, and that there is not enough funding to address all of them. However, I am hopeful that this letter will provide my perspective of what is, and potentially soon could be, happening in this area. Please reach out to me with any response or if I can be of any assistance.

Thank you

Rick Spalding

San Jose, CA 95112

From: Marian Goldeen
Sent: Saturday, February 01, 2020 6:08 PM
To: City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>
Cc: John@
Subject: 2019–2020 Vision Zero funding in San José

[External Email]

Dear members of the San José City Council,

I have been living in San José (95118 zip code) and commuting daily by bicycle 13 miles to Apple Park in Cupertino, mostly on San José city streets, for the past year. My son has been living at the same address and also commuting by bicycle, first to De Anza College, and now to SJSU.

Our daily choice of bicycles instead of cars relieves local traffic congestion, parking pressure, injurious particulate-matter air pollution, and greenhouse gas emissions. Thanks to previous efforts on the part of the Council toward Vision Zero, we have the benefit of reasonably safe bike routes for our commutes, as well as other bicycle errands.

Yet there is still room for improvement. Some errands have no reasonable bike option, auto traffic often speeds (known to be particularly dangerous to bicyclists and pedestrians), traffic signal circuits are often unresponsive to bicycles—encouraging bicyclists to scoff them, and so forth.

Sadly, this need for improvement shows itself in the spike in traffic fatalities last year. I urge you not to back off on your commitment to safer streets. I want to see a sustained reduction in traffic fatalities to vulnerable road users. Safer streets benefit the whole community.

At your meeting on Monday (which unfortunately my schedule does not permit me to attend) please approve the Transportation Safety Vision Zero Action Plan and its funding. And I wholeheartedly ask you to take the advice of the Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition to enable faster implementation by increasing the funding to \$10M for the two budget years.

Thank you for taking my concerns into consideration.

Sincerely,

Marian Goldeen

From: Michael Kellagher [
Sent: Saturday, February 01, 2020 11:05 AM
To: City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>
Cc: john@ **Subject:** Re: Please Approve & Increase Funding for Vision Zero

[External Email]

Copying John at the correct email.

On Sat, Feb 1, 2020 at 11:01 AM Michael Kellagher <mkellagher@gmail.com> wrote:

Dear council,

I have lived and worked in San Jose for 4 years and use all forms of transportation (walk/bike/scooter/car). The growth of jobs in the area make this a hotbed for more cars and more safety concerns. However, jobs are not the problem, but rather the problem is the **lack of safe and connected transit avenues and options for those seeking preferred transportation options such as public transit, walking, and biking**, and some combo of the 3. Vision Zero is essential to keeping San Jose livable in the coming years.

The funding on the table is also not enough to meet the full goal. Please increase planned funds to \$10M from \$7M to ensure our safety concerns won't fall by the wayside.

My additional personal ask - please please **pressure adjacent councils to expand the protected bike lanes down San Carlos to the Westfield Mall / Santana Row**. Connecting major arteries from San Jose downtown and immediately surrounding will significantly improve options - and **viable options are all people need to start making good choices** for others' safety, the makeup of our city, and the local environment/pollution.

Thank you for your consideration and I look forward to millions having a safe option to bike/scooter/walk to work in just a few years. My wife, myself, and our future children in San Jose would appreciate it.

Best,
Michael Kellagher

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Michael Kellagher

From: Seema Lindskog
Sent: Friday, January 31, 2020 5:30 PM
To: City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>
Cc: John Cordes
Subject: I support the San Jose Vision Zero Action Plan

[External Email]

Dear San Jose Council Members,

My husband bikes to work every day in San Jose. A few years ago, he was in a bike accident which left him with a gaping hole in his arm, an arm muscle that will never grow back, and a severe concussion that lasted 9 months.

We've biked on the San Jose Ride of Silence to honor bikers who were killed by cars. Mayor Liccardo spoke at one of these events recently, that we attended.

The number of bikers being hit by cars and dying keeps on increasing year after year. This has to stop. We need the Vision Zero Action Plan to be a major priority for San Jose. Not next year, now.

Better bike infrastructure makes cities more liveable and friendly and increases property values - both commercial and residential. It's a good investment.

Please do the right thing and approve the Transportation Safety Vision Zero Action Plan and its funding.

Thanks,
Seema Lindskog

"You must be the change you want to see in the world." - Mahatma Gandhi

From: Megan Blass
Sent: Friday, January 31, 2020 5:29 PM
To: City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>
Cc: john@
Subject: Vision Zero

[External Email]

Dear City Council,

I'm writing to thank you for your continued investment in safer streets and bike/pedestrian infrastructure and to demand (albeit respectfully) that you step up efforts to make streets safer for ALL users. Frequently, discussions about improvements for non-car users turn to victim blaming and false narratives about how drivers are being deprived or whether cyclists and pedestrians follow all rules of the road. It's time to refocus the discussion on what the data actually shows and continue to aggressively work to reduce the unacceptable level of fatalities. Roughly a year ago, I emailed Raul Peralez and spoke to the vision zero coordinator when I had a near death experience on my morning ride to work. I was lawfully proceeding through a four way stop and was nearly through the intersection when a car came up on my right, rolled through the turn, and came so close to hitting me that I could feel the heat of the engine on my leg. While I try to be courageous and ride in spite of it all as my own form of protest and way of shining a light for others, the fact is I don't take nearly as many trips on my bike as I could because I don't want to die on my commute and am guaranteed to experience at least one near fatal incident when I get behind the handlebars. When I speak to others, they tell me they are scared and are surprised that I would do such a radical thing as riding a bike or walking. Enough is enough. I haven't seen enough progress since I reached out to the City last, things have gotten worse. We need to make San Jose streets a place where all can go without fear to their jobs, their families, and their communities using sustainable means. Please increase the funding and rapidity of allocation for vision zero. There is no popular time to do something courageous, but by showing through action how our streets could be, there is hope for garnering support as people experience safe, livable streets for themselves.

Sincerely,

Megan Beshai

From: Tony S
Sent: Friday, January 31, 2020 5:26 PM
To: City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>
Cc: "John Cordes" <john@>
Subject: Vision Zero Action Plan

[External Email]

Dear Madam / Sir,

I would like to express my strong support for San José's Vision Zero Action Plan. I have lived in West San José for over 20 years and use a bicycle for the majority of my trips including work-related trips to East San José and regular commuting to Palo Alto and Mountain View.

While I am very used to riding in urban traffic (using rear-view mirrors, strong lights and reflective clothing), many people I talk to will not be comfortable using bicycles for their regular transportation needs unless we have a much more protected bicycle infrastructure. We badly need east-west links to connect our nicely evolving north-south and creek-based bicycle trail system. Philosophically, we need to understand citizen desire lines and match our bicycle paths to those line and ensure that they are as barrier-free and safe as possible. Bicycle travel needs to be not only safe but also efficient if we want to get cars off the road.

Thank you for your consideration.

Tony Stieber
San José

From: Stan Dutrow

Sent: Monday, February 03, 2020 5:43 PM

To: City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>

Cc: Cordes John <>; Timur Valiulin <Tim Collins >; Jay Shuler ; Swart Gary; Sehgal Omar

Subject: San Jose Vision Zero Plan for 2020

Dear City of San Jose Transportation and Environment (T&E) Subcommittee,

My name is Stan Dutrow and I have lived in the Cambrian area of San Jose for the past 40 years. I am currently retired but moved here in 1979 when Silicon Valley was in its infancy. I was lucky enough to be an engineer in this valley as we have grown & evolved into what we are today. I have grown to love it (born in Oakland & grew up in Walnut Creek/Lafayette) even though we are now suffering some as a result of that economic growth.

I first learned of the Vision Zero plan in 2016 at a bicycling/transportation conference in Mountain View. I do applaud you for trying to make San José a safer city by creating and funding its Vision Zero efforts in the past. Unfortunately I just learned about the data showing that we are actually getting worse (increased bicycling & pedestrian fatalities). This is unacceptable ... we need to be improving our streets to make them safer for people walking & cycling!!! I did attend a VTA presentation last year on the Complete Streets program and liked the design BUT was VERY DISAPPOINTED that there are NO PLANS to actually implement it. We need your help >>> PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE APPROVE the Transportation Safety Vision Zero Action Plan and its funding. We can, and need to, do better through faster implementation by increasing the funding ... instead of \$7M in the two budget years, allocate \$10M.

Though I am now retired, I still ride my bicycles in the area for both fitness and function (shopping). I began commuting from the Cambrian area to North San Jose back in the early 80s and though bike lanes have improved, we still have work to do to make intersections safer for those NOT IN CARS. I have also begun to use both our light rail system and the public bus system since I am generally not in a rush anymore (though there is work to do there too on efficiency & safety). This can improve the quality of life for all of us living and working in this unique piece of the world. Let's continue to shine!!!

Thank you for taking the time to read my input, I hope that it moves you to positive action (we need that!!),

Stan

P.S. I've copied a few of my neighbors who also bicycle in San Jose in the hope that they too will add their voices in the growing call to action for safer, better streets in San Jose.

From: Ehsaneh Sadr
Sent: Monday, February 03, 2020 1:28 PM
To: City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>
Subject: Transportation Safety Vision Zero Action Plan

[External Email]

Hello,

My name is Ehsaneh Sadr and I've been working in San Jose for the last two years. I cycle into the city from Campbell most days and am very aware of the importance of safe streets for ALL users. Thank you so much for all your efforts and activities in this direction via pursuing Vision Zero in San Jose.

I urge you to **approve the Transportation Safety Vision Zero Action plan** and also ensure it is properly funded. In fact, I urge you to **increase funding to \$10 million.**

Thank you for considering,
Ehsaneh Sadr

From: Tim Collins
Sent: Tuesday, February 04, 2020 1:47 PM
To: City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>
Cc: District 6 <district6@sanjoseca.gov>; Stan Dutrow
Subject: San Jose Vision Zero Plan for 2020

[External Email]

To The City of San Jose Transportation and Environment (T&E) Subcommittee:

Hi, Ms. Taber:

After moving to San Jose five years ago from Palo Alto, I have taken an interest in the quality of bike life here, and I hope you will respond to this email by boosting the amount of funding for the San Jose Vision Zero Plan for 2020 from \$7M to \$10M.

Frankly, I have not been an active member of the political scene in San Jose, but this past weekend I attended the Shasta/Hanchett Park Neighborhood Association annual meeting. I spoke to and listened to representatives of various community outfits. Given my background as a bike rider commuting to work and heading out to the trails for fun, I **naturally** gravitated to the groups such as Save Our Trails, and listened intently to the talk given by my council rep, Dev Davis.

I was further inspired by my good buddy, Stan Dutrow, who copied me yesterday on his email to you regarding the Vision Zero Plan. Today I learned from the posted Plan [document](#) that there are many definitions of "Zero" in the plan and San Jose should be proud that it has achieved success regarding many of them. But overall, we ballooned from 2009's 38 traffic fatalities to 60 last year! Our goal has to be to get from that 60 to an overall definition of 0!

I hope the agenda for next Tuesday's City Council meeting includes discussion of yesterday's Transportation and Environment subcommittee meeting issues. If it does, I will most certainly be there.

Thanks for your attention!
Tim

Tim Collins

From: John Shuler

Sent: Wednesday, February 05, 2020 6:17 PM

To: City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>; Cordes John Timur Valiulin Tim Collins; Gary Swart; Sehgal Omar

Cc: Stan Dutrow

Subject: Re: San Jose Vision Zero Plan for 2020

[External Email]

Thank you, Stan. I'd like to add my voice — and that of my family — to the call for better plans for pedestrian and bicycle safety. I have good friend from the Netherlands who tell me that cycling to work has become a way of life for people of all ages, and I have seen evidence of this in my few visits to that country. We should be learning from these best examples as exhibited by cities with long experience. They've made the mistakes and know what works. I would support Transportation Planners going to the Netherlands to learn from their experience, bring it home, and IMPLEMENT IT.

Regards,

Jay (John H.) Shuler

From: Erica Stanojevic
Sent: Friday, February 07, 2020 1:23 PM
To: City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>
Subject: Approve the Vision Zero Action Plan on Feb. 11, 2020

[External Email]

Dear San José City Council,

Please approve the Vision Zero Action Plan.

Thank you,
Erica Stanojevic

From: Gina LaBlanc

Sent: Friday, January 31, 2020 1:20 PM

To: District 10 <District10@sanjoseca.gov>

Subject: Vision Zero and the Increase in Traffic Fatalities in our City

Dear Council Member Khamis,

My name is Gina LaBlanc, a long time San Jose resident, and I am very concerned about the rise in traffic fatalities in our city. I see it as an urgent public health crisis that deserves an urgent response.

Vision Zero will be presenting to the full council on February 11th and asking for funds to make the city safer especially for pedestrians and bicyclists.

This issue is personal to me because I am a bereaved mother. My son Kyle LaBlanc was killed as a pedestrian in January of 2016. He is a data point on the traffic fatality map for the City of San Jose, but my son is so much more than a data point. He had just turned 18, and was a senior in High School. He was looking forward to being the DJ at the upcoming Valentine's Dance and was planning on attending the Prom. He would have graduated in June with his class. Kyle was a "techie" and loved to invent new things using technology. His dream was to one day work for Google. All of his hopes and dreams were never to be realized. Our family was and still is devastated after this loss. Hundreds of people were affected by his passing. Grief counselors had to be brought in to his school as well as the hospital where I had worked as a nurse for 22 years. None of us live in a bubble and each traffic fatality affects hundreds of others like ripples in a pond. That makes the increase in traffic fatalities really a community crisis. As I learned more about Kyle's crash (after waiting 8 months for the police report due to a lack of officers) which occurred on Curtner Ave. under the Highway 87 overpass, I was shocked to learn from traffic investigators that Kyle was the third fatality at that intersection looking back 5 years. Eleven months later another pedestrian was killed at this location. Nothing has been done yet to make this area safer. The lights were out under the overpass when Kyle was hit, those were repaired the next day, too late for my son. There are other issues there, however. There are three public transit stops close by. My son was taking the Light Rail and used the Curtner Ave. Light Rail station. Traffic investigators told us this area is a "pedestrian trap." The crosswalks are confusing, the area is not well lit, and there are no signs directing pedestrians and bicyclists to a safe pathway.

For a city whose leaders would like more of its citizens to take public transit, I would hope that safe access to public transit would be a priority. There are Federal Best Practices published regarding safe access to public transit. One of these is the "Safe First and Last mile" for pedestrians and bicyclists who are taking public transit. If only someone had thought about pedestrian safety at the Curtner Ave. Light Rail station, my son could still be living.

As a Registered Nurse for 31 years, following "Best Practices" is required in order to prevent injuries or deaths. I'm not sure why a city is not held to the same standard if it means saving lives. If we can make the city safer for pedestrians and bicyclists, we need to prioritize this and in an urgent way. I do not want any other mother to feel this kind of horrific loss.

Vision Zero is asking for funding to improve 11 miles of roadway per year for 5 years. This is certainly a step in the right direction but 5 years is really too slow and too many people will die.

I'm hoping that you can see the urgency of what is really a public health crisis in our city and that you will support an urgent solution to the increase in traffic fatalities.

Sincerely,
Gina LaBlanc

-----Original Message-----

From: Marylou Avanzino

Sent: Saturday, February 08, 2020 5:56 AM

To: City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>

Subject: Approve the Vision Zero Action Plan on Feb. 11, 2020

[External Email]

Dear San José City Council,

I am writing to encourage approval of the Vision Zero Action Plan at the February 11 City Council meeting.

You know the traffic situation has gotten more dangerous and that people should use other means of transportation besides a metal box called a car. But with the consequences so grave if they are hit while walking or bicycling, I understand why they drive.

I haven't owned a car for 24 years. I ride a bike. I feel the increased threat from San Jose traffic and have decided to leave San Jose and move to Portland, Oregon. Portland has oodles of bike lanes and a city government that makes bike and pedestrian safety a true priority by spending money on infrastructure that makes it safer for non-car commuters.

If San Jose was more serious about tackling the traffic death problem I believe it would increase funding from \$6.6M in the next two budget years, to \$25M to fund the entire plan.

Marylou Avanzino
67 Cherry Ridge Court
San Jose, California

P.S. Sergio Jimenez, I am disappointed that you have done nothing to make Edenvale Avenue (Hayes Mansion area) safer for pedestrian and bicyclists during your term in office (remember, we local citizens did a walk down Edenvale Avenue with you prior to your election. You acted interested in our concerns at the time). Ash Kalra didn't tackle this problem either. And SJ DOT department only studies Edenvale Avenue and collects data. It appears I probably wouldn't live long enough to see significant improvement in pedestrian and bicycle safety on Edenvale Avenue. It is dispiriting.

From: b. beekman

Sent: Monday, February 10, 2020 4:25 PM

To: City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>

Subject: from blair beekman. c.council 2.11.20. Item 5.1. Vision Zero Action Plan.

[External Email]

Csn you place this email, with the Letters to the Public, c.council 2.11.20, item 5.1.

Dear city govt. of San Jose, and community,

We have started, a transitional period, into what can be, a new era, of good legal precedents, public & private policies, organization, better reasoning, open democratic practices, and peace.

With Vision Zero, the goals & questions, of law enforcement, technology, surveillance, & data collection - like overall, good community practices, of this country, was initially designed to have, a sometimes important, yet more auxiliary role,

I hope, important new ideas, and legal precedents, of open public policies, and more responsible, accountable, minimal use, technology practices - can work hand in hand, and as equals, with current neighborhood safety concerns, and the issues of green community sustainability,.

It is these sorts of ideas & partnerships, between ourselves, in San Jose, at this time, that should be some of the very ideas, of how to develop the future, of initial Vision Zero ideals. And, the overall good community ideals, of community harmony, stability, & long term green sustainability.

In an all boats can rise approach, these sorts of good humanistic terms, and concepts, can work well, across the country, at this time.

I feel this can be, a very good path, that can help work toward the efforts, of peace and negotiation, to end u.s. & intl. continual war, across the earth.

I am hoping, this can lead to, caring, innovative ideas in how to negotiate peace at the intl level, as well.

To try to address, my own recent confusion, at some of local govt. local media, and our community.

In what may have once been, a taboo subject - the February T&E meeting, may have tried to nicely explain, that houseless persons, may need to start to be counted, in yearly traffic fatalities.

I hope there can be, a very consistent, accurate formula & account, in the traffic fatality numbers, of the houseless, in the future. So that numbers, will not be, varied, opaque, or manipulated, each year, for political purposes.

I hope dialogue, can be open & friendly, about this important development, in better respecting the human & civil rights, of houseless persons.

sincerely,
blair beekman