



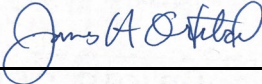
Memorandum

TO: TRANSPORTATION AND
ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

FROM: John Ristow

SUBJECT: VISION ZERO UPDATE

DATE: October 14, 2020

Approved 

Date
10/26/20

RECOMMENDATION

Accept the semi-annual update report on the current year's traffic collision data trends and Vision Zero Action Plan progress.

BACKGROUND

On February 11, 2020, City Council adopted the 2020 Vision Zero Action Plan, and committed an initial investment of \$6.8 million to begin work on high priority actions to reduce traffic fatalities and severe injuries (KSI):

1. Build Robust Data Analytics Tools
2. Form a Vision Zero Task Force
3. Increase Traffic Enforcement and KSI-Reduction Strategies
4. Increase Community Outreach and Engagement to Build a Culture of Safety
5. Implement Quick Build Data-Driven Safety Improvements
6. Prioritize Resources on high KSI Corridors and Districts

City Council also approved the following additional direction outlined in a joint memorandum from Mayor Licarrdo and Councilmembers Peralez, Carrasco, Davis and Esparza, and in a memorandum from Councilmember Foley:

1. Develop a geospatial data tool for Vision Zero analytics, insights, and predictive modeling to inform policies, programs, and projects.
2. Form Vision Zero Task Force chaired by Councilmember Peralez.
3. Return with an MBA in the budget process to evaluate Traffic Enforcement Unit staffing options to increase staffing – specifically for evenings and weekend.
4. Retain consultant to design an engagement strategy and messaging campaign.
5. Accelerate “quick-build” project implementation and grow funding for Vision Zero Safety Initiatives.
6. Continue engaging in legislative advocacy efforts to advance Automated Speed Enforcement authority in California.
7. Investigate the possibility of procuring and deploying cloud-based Internet of Things technology to collect traffic data and instantly send the traffic data to a central database.

8. Ensure multiple departments have access to the centralized database for analysis purposes when determining how best to deploy limited resources.

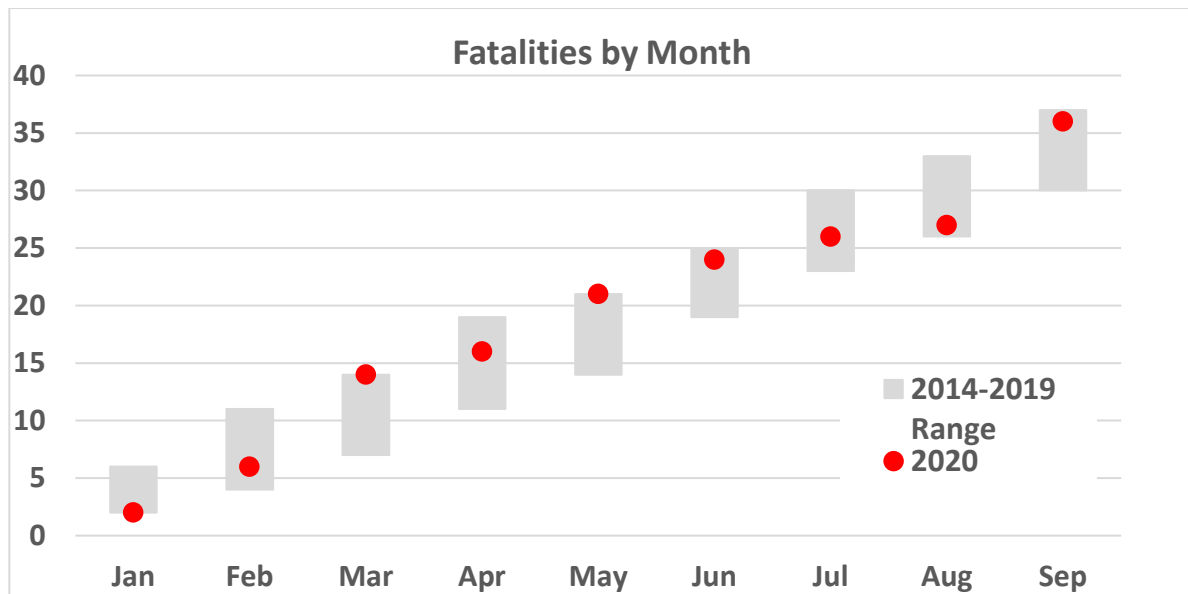
Each Spring, an Annual Transportation System Safety Report and Vision Zero Update is provided to the T&E Committee. This report is the first Fall report that will also be provided to the T&E Committee annually to provide partial year fatality and severe injury data, noteworthy updates on safety programs and projects, and the Task Force work product.

ANALYSIS

A. Traffic Fatalities: January 1 to September 30, 2020

There have been 37 traffic fatalities in the first nine months of 2020, with similar trends in recent peak fatality years. As a result of the pandemic, many cities in the US are reporting lower congestion and more speeding on uncongested roads. Speeding has been the top known factor contributing to fatal and severe injuries in San Jose. In the first nine months of 2020, 46% (17 of 36) of the city's traffic fatalities are attributed to speeding.

Figure 1 – Traffic Fatalities: 2020 Cumulative by Month (to 9/30/20) vs. 5 past years



Notable data trends so far in 2020:

- 54% (20 of 37) of fatalities are on Vision Zero Priority Safety Corridors
- 24% (9 of 37) involve a solo male driver who hit a fixed object
- 46% (17 of 37) involve speeding
- 2 were bike-on-bike fatalities that occurred at Guadalupe River Trail underpasses

The two bike-on-bike fatalities, which occurred in May and June, is a very unusual fatality type: none have been previously recorded in San Jose. These fatalities occurred in the context of the highest bike sales in 50 years and increased biking activities during the pandemic.¹

Not included in the total fatality count is a pedestrian fatality that occurred within VTA's lightrail right-of-way, in May 2020. The County Sheriff's Office is responsible for preparing such incident reports, which are not shared with the City at this time.

B. Progress on Vision Zero Initiatives and Priority Action Plan

1. Build Robust Data Analytics Tools

While DOT has been able to identify over-represented types of fatalities and severe injuries relative to the City's population and transportation mode split, a more robust analytic tool is necessary to incorporate other data sources and assets, such as socio-economic or census data, and public health agency or public safety data. Efforts underway include:

- Participated in the City's Startup in Residence (STiR) program to engage a consultant capable of creating a smart data analytic platform and visualization tool that could layer crash data with city densification and growth data, as well as homeless and socio-economic data. This process was initially paused by the pandemic. Consultant selection and contract execution is expected to be completed by year end.
- Hired a computer science intern through Notre Dame University's Silicon Valley Semester program in Spring 2020 to map mid-block crashes, providing a much more granular understanding of collision locations, and the ability to evaluate street segments, not just intersections. Two versions of this data map are online at visionzerosj.org and <http://bit.ly/SanJoseCrashMap>
- A pilot with Verizon Smart Communities to develop near-miss collision insights using video data analytics is nearing development completion. Three intersections are included in this emerging technology pilot to provide a reliable near-miss dataset not available today to inform intersection safety work.
- Hired staff in Fall 2020 to work on the ongoing data visualization and user interface of crash maps to enable visualizing crash, injury, and KSI rates per roadway segment.
- DOT multi-disciplinary crash review board was formed to review each fatal police crash report and location to identify possible improvements.

¹ LA Times. "Bike Sales have enjoyed a boom during the pandemic. Will it last as car traffic resumes?" 6/25/20. <https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2020-06-25/bicycle-business-is-exploding-during-covid-19-will-it-last>

2. Form a Vision Zero Task Force

The Vision Zero Task Force was established in Spring 2020 and held its inaugural meeting on September 25, 2020. It is comprised of 17 members: 12 decisionmakers from various City and Santa Clara County departments, Councilmember Peralez as Chair and Councilmember Foley as Vice Chair, and three local advocates (California Walks, Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition, and AARP). The Task Force is a multi-department, multi-agency platform focused on the common goal of reducing traffic fatality and severe injury crashes. It will meet quarterly, with the next meeting scheduled for December 10, 2020. Meeting agenda and minutes are available at visionzerosj.org.

Two city and county staff level working groups (Data and Outreach) have been formed to support the Task Force. The Data Working Group will focus on harnessing available data across all member agencies to derive new insights and to support resource prioritization efforts. The Outreach Working Group will explore how communications or outreach programs within the County can be leveraged and used across the county.

3. Increase Traffic Enforcement

As reported at the Vision Zero Task Force meeting in September, the Police Department (PD) Traffic Enforcement Unit (TEU) spent 80-90% of their enforcement time on the Vision Zero Priority Safety Corridors this year. In Fiscal Year 2019-2020, PD issued 7,928 citations. Between January-June, 2020, PD issued more than 2,500 warnings. Due to the pandemic, TEU altered its enforcement strategy to comply with health and safety codes, focusing efforts on warnings and educational interactions. This allowed for increased positive engagements during this difficult time. TEU resumed a traditional enforcement approach in September. Responding to an increase in bicycle fatalities, between March 2019-March 2020, PD issued 284 citations for motorists driving in bike lanes.

As of September 2020, the TEU is comprised of 16 staff: 1 Lieutenant, 1 Sergeant, and 11 Officers focused on traffic enforcement; and 1 Sergeant and 2 officers supporting special events. In response to Council's request to evaluate Traffic Enforcement Unit staffing options to increase staffing – specifically for evenings and weekend, PD is presently conducting benchmark work with similar size agencies to collect data on the size of traffic enforcement units and how different services are prioritized within the department. PD will report findings at the next Public Safety, Finance and Strategic Support Services Committee.

PD and DOT are more consistently meeting to coordinate engineering, outreach and enforcement activities. The Fight the Spike campaign is an example of collaborative work to avoid traffic fatality spikes in the months when Daylight Savings Time ends. Beginning early November, DOT will place advisory message boards along priority safety corridors for two weeks on a rotation basis, displaying "SLOW DOWN" and "SPEED KILLS PEOPLE." TEU will be deployed for a focused enforcement following the sign placements.

4. Increase Community Outreach and Engagement to Build a Culture of Safety

As part of the Vision Zero Action Plan, City Council asked DOT to retain a consultant to design a city-wide outreach and engagement strategy that is culturally inclusive, multi-lingual, and with special consideration for the elderly population. A Request for Proposal (RFP) was circulated for stakeholder review in September 2020. The Valley Transportation Authority has indicated interest in using the same contract for its Vision Zero outreach and campaign program and requested the City include purchasing provisions for multi-agency transactions. The RFP is being revised at this time to support this and is anticipated to be advertised in November.

Pivoting outreach strategies during the pandemic – Conducting outreach efforts via video conferencing vs. in-person, has been challenging for nearly every outreach program, particularly for those that are intended for populations that may not have access to the internet. To reach some communities, DOT partnered with community organizations to leverage their existing programs.

Outreach to school-aged children – Walk ‘n’ Roll, San Jose’s Safe Routes to School program, is also conducting on-line bike and pedestrian safety education, replacing outreach work that previously occurred at general school assemblies with a large attendance. Outreach is now done on-line one classroom at a time, allowing students the opportunity to make comments and ask questions. This new programming started this Fall at Payne Elementary in October, with Matsumoto Elementary scheduled for November. Walk ‘n’ Roll is planning to offer class-by-class presentations to 15-20 schools each year.

5. Implement Quick Build Data-Driven Safety Improvements

The 17 Priority Safety Corridors (PSCs) comprise about 73 miles of roadway, about 3% of San José’s streets. The 15 PSCs within the City’s jurisdiction are the top engineering focus of the 2020 Vision Zero Action Plan.

New Quick Build Team - In Spring 2020, DOT created a new quick build delivery team primarily by redeploying existing Traffic Safety Operations staff. Quick build projects use markings, signs, and bollards to create dedicated or protected pedestrian and bicycle travel space, and signal timing adjustments to create more pedestrian friendly crossings.

The first projects under design with anticipated completion by June 2021 are:

- Senter Rd (Tully Rd to Monterey Rd)
- Fruitdale Ave (Bascom Ave to Southwest Expy)

Figure 2: Willow St and Almaden Ave
(Guadalupe Washington Neighborhood)



- Story Rd and Jackson Ave - Intersection Improvement Concepts
- Guadalupe River Trail – Cycling improvements (2 underpasses)
- Silver Creek Rd and Daniel Maloney Dr
- Roberts Ave and Phelan Ave
- Guadalupe Washington Neighborhood – Pedestrian Safety (3 intersections)

Pursuit of Grants – Since the June 2020 report, the City has received a \$230k grant from the Transportation Fund for Clean Air grant for Hillsdale Ave Traffic Calming, and a \$622k grant from the Active Transportation Program’s Quick Build Pilot grant to build pedestrian safety enhancements near Edendale Elementary and Sylvandale Middle schools. The latter grant award was developed in collaboration with Project HOPE.

6. Prioritize Resources on high-KSI Corridors

While Vision Zero’s Quick Build program focuses on priority safety corridors, other safety improvement programs such as Pedestrian and Traffic Safety Enhancement Program and Traffic Signal Improvement, funded by Traffic Capital Improvement funds, also prioritize resources at locations Citywide where frequent collisions have occurred.

COORDINATION

This report has been coordinated with the Police Department and the City Attorney’s Office.

/s/

JOHN RISTOW

Director of Transportation

For questions please contact Lily Lim-Tsao, Deputy Director for Transportation Safety, Operations and Parking, at 408-975-3269.