

SAN JOSÉ VISION ZERO TASK FORCE

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, October 24, 2024: 1:30 pm – 3:30 pm PST

Call to Order and Chairperson Report

The twelfth Vision Zero Task Force Meeting was called to order on October 24, 2024, 1:30 pm in-person at San José City Hall Wing Rooms and via Zoom.

Attendees

Chair — CM Pam Foley (CD 9)	Member (SCC Roads & Airports) – Harry Freitas
Vice Chair — CM Bien Doan (CD7)	Member (SCC Emergency Medical) – Nick Clay
Member (CSJ Transportation)—John Ristow	Member (SCC Medical Examiner) — Candace Garcia
Member (CSJ City Manager’s Office) – Dolan Beckel	Member (Silicon Valley Bike Coalition) — Anthony Montes
Member (CSJ Fire) — James A Williams	Member (AARP) – Joe Glynn
Member (CSJ Police) — Lt. Nqui Scherry	Member (Advocate: Families for Safe Streets) – Gina LaBlanc
Member (PRNS) - Andrea Flores Shelton	Member (County Public Health) Michelle Wexler
Member (Housing) - Cupid Alexander	Member (County Department of Education) Dr. Jessica Bonduris

Call to Order and Chairperson Report

- Roll Call (Departments/Agencies present).
- Names of people who lost their lives to traffic fatalities since last Task Force meeting were read out by the Chair and Vice Chair and a moment of silence was observed in their memory.

Reports / Updates

- **Traffic Fatality Trends in recent years (Jesse Mintz-Roth, DOT)**
 - In 2023 there was a 25% reduction of traffic fatalities (49) from 2022 (65), which was the peak year for traffic fatalities in San Jose.
 - Bicyclists and Motor Vehicle Occupants had the highest drop in 2023.
 - In 2024, the cumulative monthly traffic fatalities are trending similar to 2023. By end of September 2024, there were 39 fatalities.
 - As of 10/23 there have been 44 traffic fatalities in 2024.
 - Pedestrian fatalities are usually the highest among all street users, but in 2024, the cumulative monthly pedestrian fatalities are much lower than 2023.
 - The same number for bicyclist is much higher than 2023.
 - Fatalities on roadways with 35+ mph speed limits, on PSC and during dark hours remain high.
- **2025 Action Plan:**
 - There are 5 priority areas proposed in this action plan.
- 1. **Prioritize Equity, vulnerable road users – prioritize resources to areas with high KSI, especially in areas with the highest equity scores in the Equity Atlas.**
 - Pilot street safety near hotspot locations involving vulnerable road users.
 - Implement “Walk Safe San Jose” Pedestrian safety study recommendations.

- Improve roadway accessibility.
- Provide interpreters at community meetings for engagement when needed.
- 2. Center Data Analytics, report metrics – Increase accountability through understanding project effectiveness, data sharing among agencies and better data reporting.**
 - Post project evaluations.
 - Create metrics for tracking progress of Action Plan
 - Reporting key metrics twice per year
 - Data sharing agreements with county agencies (EMS, VTA)
 - Utilize trauma injury data in data analysis
 - New public-facing crash data dashboards
- 3. Strategize traffic enforcement – Implementing new technologies and strategize enforcement using data driven enforcement efforts.**
 - Report on top 3 traffic citations (SJPD)
 - Implement 33 speed cameras (5-year pilot)
 - Implement red light running cameras at 4 intersections (1-year pilot)
 - Conduct before/after study of camera programs' effectiveness.
- 4. Engineer for safety – Improving traffic safety through engineering methods.**
 - Street Safety improvements such as 1200 traffic safety requests/studies per year, 200 paving project miles (30' eq) per year, 15 bikeway project miles per year, All traffic fatalities reviewed, 35 pedestrian safety and traffic calming projects per year, 4 Vision Zero Quick build projects per year, 150+ signal safety projects.
 - K-12 school safety improvements such as 35 access/circulation studies and improvements and 100 high-visibility school crosswalks per year.
 - Monitor Street Safety Bills such as Lower speed limit (2021 AB 43): business activity district analyses, 130 roadway segments (about 125.5 miles) extension to 14 years, 530 roadway segments (about 500 miles) being resurveyed for speed limit, Daylight crosswalks (2023 AB 413)
- 5. Engage the community, message safety – Increasing public awareness of traffic safety issues.**
 - Changeable Message Signs with safety messages pending funding
 - Engage community for speed camera and red-light running camera deployments
 - 10,000 adults per year receiving traffic safety education
 - 25,000 children ages 5-17 (K-12) per year receiving traffic safety education
 - 5 Educational videos online explaining projects that have already been built
 - Partner with BPAC on a pedestrian and bicyclist safety campaign
- Public feedback received for the 2025 Action Plan:
 - At the end of public comment period (07/08/2024 – 8/31/2024), 35 comments online, a 15-page document co-signed by 16 Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition advocates, and letters/emails from advocates, San Jose Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee, Vision Zero Network were received.
 - Engineering for safety received most comments:
 - Systemic, focus on 35+ mph roadways.
 - Pedestrian refuge islands.
 - Daylighting.
 - Remove slip lanes.
 - Add quick build curb extensions.
 - Use safety as a factor for repaving schedule.
 - Lighting.
 - Improve accessibility.
 - Reduce speeding, Lower posted speed limits.

- No right turn on red.
 - Deliver quick build faster.
- Next area that received most comments was Focus:
 - Older adults.
 - People experiencing homelessness.
 - Near transit.
 - Near trails.
 - Spend more on engineering.
 - Proactive about reducing injuries before they happen.
- Engagement received the third-most comments:
 - Realign Task Force (don't end the task force).
 - More leadership at every level.
 - Educate drivers about redesigns.

Prioritization guidance (Lam Cruz, DOT)

- An exercise was carried out to get feedback from the Task Force members and the public attending the meeting on prioritization:
 - If there is limited resources and funding what should be prioritized?
 - Which initiatives should be prioritized in the next two years?
- This will help strategizing the plan and have clarity for budget asks, as well as the Federal safety funding requirement of “Strategy and Project Selections”.
- The following items are additional items to the current priorities of the Vision Zero Program:
 - **DATA SHARING:** Incorporate trauma injuries (EMS), Light rail injuries (VTA)
 - **INNOVATIVE:** Pilot new types of safety projects, Close Slip lanes, No right turn on red
 - **MESSAGING:** Pedestrian Safety, Speeding, Distraction
 - **MORE:** Traffic Calming, Pedestrian Projects, Walk Audits
 - **PROACTIVE:** Develop systemic map of PSC-like road network
 - **QUICKER:** Build quick build projects faster and in high-injury locations
 - **REVIEW:** Serious Injuries (~220/year). We already review all traffic fatalities (~50/year)
 - **TRANSPARENCY:** More project progress reporting on web/dashboard
 - **VULNERABLE ROAD USERS:** Walk Safe San Jose pedestrian safety plan, Top 5 KSI locations for unhoused people and older adults

Public comments:

- James Campbell:
 - Public safety is key. Public engagement and education for both drivers and pedestrians are important.
 - Redlight cameras are helpful. People who are not from the neighborhood tend to violate the red light.
 - Due to the wideness of the streets drivers make fast turns without paying attention to those waiting to cross.
- Jordan Moldow:
 - Have many comments, sent out in a letter.
 - Speed leads to fatalities and that needs to be reviewed. Improving built environment to reduce speeds should be a priority.
 - It is important to follow highest standards when improving our roadways. Among the projects carried out in the last two years, Saratoga Av improvements is a good example of narrowing the roadway to reduce speeds. Tully Rd improvements have not resulted in similar effects.

- Setting a standard to narrowing roadways and applying it to all roadways, except for segments that have unique requirements.
- Jeff Boissier:
 - Since 60% of the traffic fatalities is pedestrians and bicyclists, the key focus should be to change our built environment.
 - When improving the built environment, do it with the focus being on pedestrians and bicyclists who are the most vulnerable road users.
 - Drivers are going to make bad judgements, but we should proactively change the environment to ensure when such mistakes are made, the impact of those is minimal.
- Blair Beekman:
 - Even if the Task Force is sunseting, hope there continues to be a good dialogue among the Task Force members as well as the community.
 - The work that is done should be done in collaboration and there should be transparency and accountability.
- Tony Stieber:
 - Kudos to Vision Zero program for the improvement in bicycle infrastructure, but there is a lot left to achieve.
 - Action Plan is a great idea, would like to see more specifics in it. There needs to be more direct links between objectives, deliverables, metrics, goals etc., more rigor is required overall.
 - Root-cause analysis is missing from the discussions. It is important to consider the human factors in crashes. Conducting root-cause analysis will help better understand why the crashes occur.
 - Take inspiration from other cities around the world.
- Diane Solomon:
 - Innovative and Review would be the two priority picks.
 - There are near misses from which a lot can be learnt.
- Gail Osmer:
 - While appreciative of including the unhoused community as vulnerable road users, the messaging and outreach to unhoused communities need to be improved.
- Chris Giangreco:
 - More enforcement is required in the Valley Fair Mall/Santana Row area (Stevens Creek Bl, Winchester Bl) during holiday season as there is high pedestrian crossing there, when there is a lot of gridlocking, intersection and crosswalk blocking happen.
- CM Pam Foley:
 - Agree with the idea of narrowing the roadways to slow down traffic

Task Force member feedback:

- Each TF member was given two stars select their top two priority areas and stated reasons for their selection. This will help shape the Action Plan.
- CM Pam Foley:
 - More & quicker: Build more safety infrastructure and do it quicker. As it is one way to influence change.
 - The areas that got the most stars:
 - More – 8 stars
 - Messaging – 6

- Quicker & Vulnerable road users – 5 (each)
- Lt. Nqui Scherry:
 - Messaging: Enforcement should've been on the list as it is a necessity to influence driver behavior. Selected outreach/messaging because that helps a lot. Even officers give warnings instead of tickets which help.
- Dolan Beckel:
 - More & quicker (considered together) & messaging: Messaging needs to be more repetitive, in larger volume and capturing attention.
- CM Bien Doan:
 - More & Messaging: It is important to educate people to not be distracted while on the road and made aware how many parties will be suffering due to their erratic actions.
- Gina LaBlanc:
 - Quicker & more (and innovative): Always advocating for quicker actions and engineering is important to improve traffic safety above anything else.
- Candace Garcia:
 - Data sharing & transparency: Data sharing is important to highlight hotspots and take necessary action in those areas and publicly reporting data makes us accountable.
- Joe Glynn:
 - Quicker & Vulnerable road users: Quick build is a good way of quickly improving roadway safety conditions and look forward to the Walk Safe San Jose pedestrian safety plan for a holistic approach to making vulnerable roadway users such as unhoused, older adults and young people safer.
- Andrea Flores Shelton:
 - Vulnerable road users & messaging: It's important to focus on the vulnerable roadway users, including young people. Until the built environment changes, it is important to keep up with the messaging.
- Cupid Alexander:
 - Vulnerable roadway users & both data sharing and more: Data sharing is important to know the effectiveness of improvements we make. Focusing on vulnerable roadway users is important because we need to make changes to the built environment to make it safer for them.
- Anthony Montes:
 - More & quicker: Need to have the same energy and response to making improvements for the safety of vulnerable roadway users. Use all the other areas to do this as they all are connected.
- James A Williams:
 - Messaging & innovative: Messaging is important to make awareness about changes to built environments. Being innovative is important to implement new technologies to improve safety.
- Harry Freitas:
 - Both stars on Review: By reviewing available severe injury location data it is possible to predict hotspots that need improvements to avoid further catastrophic results.
 - Conducting causation analysis can decide on devices that best address the issues.

- Project evaluation is important to understand the effectiveness of the implementations.
- Also by identifying the hotspots, it is possible to narrow down the exact areas that need improvement, which would be more cost effective.
- Jessica Bonduris:
 - Messaging & Innovative: Messaging would be more impactful by humanizing the issue.
 - Need to be innovative by using knowledge from the areas where it is safety improvements are effective and utilize that to make improvements on other areas.
 - Would be interesting to see whether the initial selections would change if the exercise is redone after this discussion.
- CM Pan Foley:
 - After the exercise was redone, there were changes to initial selections.
- Lam Cruz:
 - Engineering was a key area of priority based on public & TF member comments. More and quicker improvements to the built environment. By increasing the Priority Safety Corridor network, we hope to do more aggressive treatment on those roadways.
 - This activity was helpful because our initial understanding prior to it was producing a better data dashboard was a priority. But now deeper analysis of our data to make more effective decisions is priority.
 - This activity helps us on strategizing the areas which we will prioritize and what sort of resources and funding we would request when we go for budget asks.
- CM Pam Foley:
 - We will have a detailed draft incorporating this feedback to approve at the next TF meeting, which will then be taken to Council for approval.
 - With the draft Action Plan, it is helpful to see a resource analysis as well.
- Joe Glynn:
 - Does the city have plans to use the opportunities to make safety improvements using new legislature such as Daylighting, and AB 43?
- John Ristow:
 - The City has plans to do that but the timeline is tentative.
- Anthony Montes:
 - Would like to see more detailed deliverables, especially for Key Area 1.
- Jesse Mintz-Roth:
 - Walk Safe San Jose plan has recommendations that we can add to that in detail.

Open Forum (Public):

- Chris Giangreco:
 - Personal experience is that it's not the narrowing of roadways but the added congestion.
 - City spent money to make the Stevens Creek Bl area an innovation zone, but not effective.
 - Need to see improvements such as installing red light cameras, upgrading anti gridlock laws, adopt holiday traffic management plan that prioritizes pedestrians, and include the Winchester Bl neighborhood included in that discussion.
 - Need enforcement and police presence to mitigate holiday traffic chaos.

- Blair Beekman:
 - Vision Zero has an idealistic view and has a focus on environment and community.
 - It is important to have more openness and accountability practices to create community harmony.

- Jordan Moldow:
 - County of Santa Clara has a draft Active Transportation Plan (ATP) for which they are seeking feedback. This is a good opportunity to express viewpoints on safety on county expressways. Encourage DOT staff and Council Offices to provide feedback on this ATP.
 - AB 645 allows issuing speed tickets to those traveling 11 miles+ over the posted speed limit. City council should accelerate plans to utilize AB 43 to its fullest extent to reduce posted speed limits where possible.

- Tony Steiber:
 - Build social capital by having people engage more in using roadways for walking and biking.
 - San Jose has flat terrain that is ideal for cycling. Vision Zero fits into our climate goals. People who feel vulnerable to cycle should be encouraged to do so.
 - Create more pedestrian zones, roundabouts and encourage more biking.
 - Review the data in-depth and conduct root-cause analysis.

- Jeff Boissier:
 - This Task Force meeting was the most collaborative, informative and engaging meeting.
 - Do not disband the Task Force, reinforce and restructure the Task Force to have more authority.
 - While there have been significant safety improvements, the residents still feel unsafe due to situations like cars driving in bike lanes.
 - The key priority of the upcoming Action Plan should be to engineer a safety-first environment for the vulnerable roadway users, i.e., pedestrians and bicyclists, to move towards a true equitable transportation system.

New Business / Updates / Future Action Items

- Next Task Force meeting in December 2024 (tentative)

Adjournment

- Meeting adjourned at 3:08 p.m.