

SAN JOSÉ VISION ZERO TASK FORCE

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, April 7th 2022; 9.30 – 11.30 am PST

Call to Order and Chairperson Report

The seventh Vision Zero Task Force Meeting was called to order on Wednesday, April 7th, 2022; 9.30 a.m. via Zoom.

Attendees

Chair, CM Peralez (CD3)

Vice Chair, CM Foley (CD9)

City of San Jose, Dept of:

Transportation

Laura Wells, Assistant Director

Lily Lim-Tsao, Deputy Director

Jesse Mintz-Roth, VZ Program Manager

Lam Cruz, Traffic Safety Division Manager

Cordell Bailey, Transportation Specialist

Vu Dao, Senior Transportation Specialist

Thao Nguyen, Associate Transportation Specialist

Police

Sgt. Justin Palmer - TIU

Fire

[did not attend]

Public Works

Michelle Kimball

Housing

Ragan Henninger, Deputy Director

Planning, Building and Code

[did not attend]

Parks, Recreation, and Neighb. Services

Neil Rufino, Assistant Director

Economic Development

Salvador Alvarez, Executive Analyst

VTA

Adam Burger

Lauren Ledbetter

Nikki Diaz

Antonio Tovar

Santa Clara County, Dept of:

Roads and Airports

Harry Freitas, Director

Ellen Talbo

Ananth Prasad, Acting Deputy Director

Public Health

Michelle Wexler

Emergency Medical Service Agency

Jackie Lowther, Director

Ashanti Z. Corey, Senior Epidemiologist

Education

Dr. Mary Ann Dewan, Superintendent of Schools

Medical Examiner-Coroner's office:

Dr. Michelle Jordan – Chief Medical Examiner

Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition

California Walks

Sandhya Laddha

AARP

Joe Glynn

The Chairperson opened the meeting by acknowledging that there have been 28 traffic fatalities since the last meeting and the Chair, and the Vice Chair read out the names of the victims. CM Peralez explained the objectives of the Task Force meetings and the progress made. The Chair encouraged the Task Force members to reflect on safety improvement measures to mitigate high fatality rates, particularly in 2022.

Minutes of previous meeting have been posted on Vision Zero website.

Reports / Updates

- **Quarterly Update on Vision Zero Key Metrics**
 - 60 traffic fatalities 2021, it being is among highest fatality years.
 - With the reopening of economy, the trend rose beyond 2016-2020 average. The trend continues in 2022, with 24 in 2022 as of 3/31
 - Injuries are within the 5-year range, however, fatal and severe injury (KSI) numbers are above average.
 - Pedestrians continue to be the highest fatality group.
 - Motorcycle fatalities were significantly higher in 2021.
 - Majority of fatalities happened on roadways with a posted speed limit of 35+ mph
 - 30% of fatalities had speeding as a factor.
 - Rise in fatalities on Priority Safety Corridors, indicating the focus in on the correct place.
 - Growth of unhoued fatalities, numbers tripled since 2019.
 - 70% of pedestrians were killed while crossing outside a crosswalk.
 - In 2022 – 50% fatalities are pedestrians. These pedestrians were mostly outside the crosswalk or crossed against a light when the vehicles had right of the way. Working towards making the pedestrians more mindful while crossing roads.
 - Most victims are unhoued, acting to better educate this group.

- **2020 Action Plan: Priority Action Area Update – Increase Community Outreach and Engagement**
 1. Safety Messaging consultant update
 - Currently wrapping up the research phase
 - Upcoming items, Campaign issues and strategy workshop, developing communications plan and first campaign towards the end of the year
 2. Fight the Spike Campaign
 - 88 changeable message sign boards were deployed along Priority Safety corridors and recent fatality locations between 11/15/2021 and 03/12/2022 (during Daylight Savings Time) with coordinated enforcement from PD.
 3. Traffic fatality coverage in local press
 - Increasing awareness considering the unprecedented number of traffic fatalities in the first quarter of 2022
 - Mayor Liccardo spoke about Vision Zero at a 3/16/22 press conference at Senter Rd
 - Mayor Liccardo testified at the California Assembly Transportation Committee in favor of AB 2336, to allow pilot speed camera project on high Injury Roadways on 3/28/22
 4. Bike Rodeo
 - Walk n Roll team held an in-person Bike Rodeo at Trace Elementary school where 166 students participated. The event was held to teach students how to be safe on the streets.
 5. Unhoued Community Outreach
 - Number of unhoued traffic fatalities has tripled from 2019 to 2021.
 - Developed engagement material including palm cards and working with partner departments to distribute them in high encampment locations. PRNS together with Beautify SJ also requested 50 reflective vests to be distributed in 30 locations around the city with initial focus on Monterey Rd, Roosevelt Creek and Thompson Creek, where incidents of crossing outside the crosswalk have occurred.

- **Quick Build Data Driven Safety Improvements**
 - Making progress in Quick Build (QB) projects. Projects planned at Hillsdale Ave, Branham Lane, and Curtner Ave.
 - Monterey and Curtner QB improvements as response to recent fatalities at the intersection. Curb extensions at the corners to reduce speeds of right turn movement, green bike lanes to clearly

mark designated areas for bikers, Retro-reflective back plates for enhanced visibility, median island fence to channelize pedestrians to cross at the marked crosswalks.

- **Prioritize resources on high-KSI corridors and districts**
 - Coordination with Santa Clara County, Dept. Of Roads and airports to make safety improvements on county expressways intersecting with city roads, particularly at Almaden Exp and Foxworthy Ave. Also working with SJPD to improve notification to county when fatalities occur on Expressways.
 - “Walk Safe San Jose” Pedestrian Safety Plan – A project in collaboration with CalWalks. Currently evaluating RFP applications. Focus on highest KSI districts; 3,5,6,7. Conducting Multi-stakeholder Safety/placemaking strategies working groups.
 - Engineering and Traffic Survey (ETS) RFQ - to determine posted speed limits and assist in determining more streets eligible for speed reduction under AB 43.
 - AB 43 – Speed Limit setting for safer streets: Gives more flexibility to lower speed limits on eligible roadways, allows extension of ETS to 14 years. Caltrans will develop criteria for high injury roadways and high pedestrian/bicyclist generators. Currently, Evergreen Square, some roadway segments in downtown and Jackson St in Japantown are eligible for speed reduction to 20mph.

Task Force Member Discussion

- Joe Glynn (AARP) – Data indicates older adults being an increasingly vulnerable category, especially among pedestrians. Is there a co-relation between older adult and unhoused fatalities?
 - Sal Alvarez (OED) – What is the approach to speed limit reduction, what were the provisions in choosing the afore mentioned streets and what is the expected timeline? Is there any support that the Task Force can extend?
 - Lily Lim-Tsao: The said roadways meet specific criteria indicated in the Bill and with changes in land-use, more roadways may become eligible. Awaiting Priority Safety Corridor provisions
 - CM Peralez – As a body that involves many stakeholders, the Task Force is willing to extend support via an Advocacy letter to be taken into consideration for the next provisions of AB 43 as well as the other upcoming Bill AB 2336. Will consider taking formal action to agendize preparation of advocacy letters for the next TF meeting so that this body of broad coalition can vote on such action.
 - Lauren Ledbetter – Encourage dialogue with other agencies in County regarding AB43, who are interested in the provisions of this Bill
 - CM Peralez – Do we get a toxicology report of the fatal victims, particularly of the unhoused members. Highly interested in seeing this data point.
 - ME-C office – this dataset can be provided in an upcoming meeting.
 - CM Foley – Agree with looking at toxicology dataset to understand if intoxication was an associated factor of these incidents. Particularly concerned about nighttime activity at a bar near Foxworthy and Almaden. Toxicology report of all pedestrians involved will be helpful to better understand the causes of these fatalities.
 - Sandhya Laddha (SVBC) - The goal of Vision Zero is to make roadway and policy improvements to curb KSIs caused by human mistakes. Therefore, while it is good to gather datasets, such as intoxication levels, they should not be a main focus.
- CM Peralez – Memo
 - How to evaluate the current action plan and ensure the needed work is done.
 - Outreach and Education
 - Enforcement
 - Infrastructure and planning

- Lily Lim-Tsao - how does the increasing staff will help – short of staff affects the speed of project delivery
- Memo accepted by T&E committee

Comments:

- Sandhya Laddha – Some comments and suggestions to the memo on actions under the categories of Infrastructure and planning, Enforcement and Outreach.
- CM Peralez – Asked to have a summary of these suggestions in writing so that they can be officially included as comments when this memo is presented to the Council again.

Meeting Presentations

- Lauren Ledbetter - VTA:
 - **Ped Access to Transit Plan** – adopted in 2017 to improve the safety, comfort and convenience of the walking to transit for all customers
 - Methodology: Geographic analysis mapping and public input and public outreach.
 - Developed criteria used to identify focus areas (e.g.: transit ridership, socioeconomic, major destinations) and identified 12 focus areas
 - Evaluated the existing conditions of the focused areas and recommended projects for each area
 - Each project was evaluated on the basis of community benefit and ease of implementation.
 - Next steps: Publicize and share plan, fund projects, advance multi-jurisdictional projects

- Adam Burger - VTA:
 - **Transit Passenger Environment Plan** – To enhance the bus stop improvement program
 - The effort was to evaluate the conditions of the existing bus stops and understand requirements of the transit users to use public funding efficiently for these improvements
 - Bus ridership is not evenly distributed. Bus stops were categorized based on weekday boarding average: Major stops, Core stops, Basic stops.
 - Based on the average weekday boarding, locations were prioritized for quality and quantity of infrastructure investment.
 - The Bus stop categories are then divided into sub-categories as urban and suburban.
 - Additionally, another category was also developed, namely Community Destination Stop
 - These prioritized locations draw in a lot of pedestrian activity and are locations where Vision Zero focus should be directed.
 - Challenges: tapping into the local electricity system, particularly the streetlights to power the bus stops. A closer working relationship between the City and VTA will help overcome this challenge.

- Nikki Diaz - VTA
 - **Fast Transit Bus stop balancing** –to control reduce transit delays
 - Evaluation of the bus stops indicated that some are located too close to each other. By setting bus stops in even distances, and in obvious locations, ideally near intersections with crosswalks.
 - Basics of Bus Stop Balancing are keeping the bus stops at points of interest, intersecting bus routes, highly utilized stops and removing stops that are located too close to each other, those with low ridership or have operational or safety issues.
 - Before bus stop removal/consolidation recommendations are taken from staff scheduling the routes, Operators who drive on the routes, and staff that maintain transit amenities. Notices are also put out at the bus stops for public comments.
 - At the initial stage Routes 56, 66 and 68 were looked at. Based on rider feedback, 6 stops were kept, and 3 new stops were installed.
 - Next focus: Routes 23,25,73,523 and upgrading passenger amenities
 - 2022 efforts include Transit Signal Priority on routes 56, 66, 68 and Faster Fares to expedite boarding.

- This effort focuses on ‘right-sizing’ the number of bus stops and achieving faster transit for all rides.
- Ellen Talbo – Santa Clara County Roads and Airports –
 - **Active Santa Clara County** – Pedestrian and Bike plan for expressways and unincorporated areas of the county.
 - Purpose and intent of the project was to recognize non-traditional, non-vehicular road users of the county and re-ensuring their safety in a multi-modular environment.
 - Evaluated existing bike facilities and sidewalks in both urban and rural county roads.
 - Pedestrian and bike crash (2015-2020) data was analyzed and a High Injury Network was created.
 - In addition to crash data following studies were also conducted:
 - Health and equity study – Highest concentration of Equity Priority Communities is within CSJ
 - Health data – Communities with highest health risks have less transportation resources
 - By overlapping this data, it is possible to prioritize where more attention is required
 - Next steps – Origin-Destination network analysis – data phase, community outreach and outreach at schools – outreach and education

Task Force Member Discussion

- Jesse Mintz-Roth – DOT PIO can aid Public Outreach phase of the Active Santa Clara County Project. What was the methodology used to create the County High Injury Network?
 - Anticipate increased engagement with City, probably at a monthly level
- Lam Cruz – Interested in the bus stop boarding location data to possibly have it embedded in the Urban Logiq platform. Can it be shared, so that it can help in improving pedestrian safety measures?
- Ananth Prasad (County Roads and Airports) – Does each bus stop get its own facilities where it is sat on?
- Jesse – Once the Walk Safe San Jose plan starts further collaboration with VTA can be anticipated
- CM Peralez – Is there a direction or plan by the County to convert some of the County roadways to include designated bike lanes, particularly in the rural roadways
 - Complete Streets Policy language states “delineate but not designate”. Therefore, County is taking efforts to make changes to these language in policy. City policies can also affect improvements on roadways. Commuters have different views.

Open Forum

- Call in user 1 - Displeasure about road diets and increase in enforcement.
- Jill Borders – Looking at data from a different perspective, identifying the groups that are not getting/ getting less involved in KSI crashes and the reasons for it.
- Mary Lou – Thank you for your effort. There is no crosswalk on one side at the intersection of Almaden Expressway and Foxworthy Av, which may lead people to cross outside the crosswalk. Thornwood and Santa Theresa and Cahalan and Blossom Hill do not have pedestrian push buttons on one side. This leads to crossing on red as there is no provision to get a greenlight. Have bicycle loops stenciled to inform the bicyclists that they can get a green light, deter pedestrians and bicyclists from crossing streets on a red because they are unable to get a greenlight by ensuring pedestrian push buttons are available at all intersections
- Blair Bleekman – Interesting and honest data should be commended. Openness and accountability in our practices will bring out better policies. Open discussion on Hit and Runs must be conducted.
- Gail Osmer – Eye opening meeting. Interested in Senior fatalities and would like to collaborate to bring down senior fatalities.

New Business / Updates / Future Action Items

- Public Townhall (in person) – May 7th, 2022
- Next Task Force meeting on Aug 31st, 2022

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 11.30 a.m.