

SAN JOSÉ VISION ZERO TASK FORCE

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, August 31st 2022; 9.30 – 11.30 am PST

Call to Order and Chairperson Report

The eighth Vision Zero Task Force Meeting was called to order on Wednesday, August 31st, 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

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. Doug Gates - TEU

Fire

James Williams – Assistant Fire chief

Public Works

[did not attend]

Housing

[did not attend]

Planning, Building and Code

[did not attend]

Parks, Recreation, and Neighb. Services

[did not attend]

Economic Development

[did not attend]

VTA

Lauren Ledbetter, Senior Transportation Planner

Santa Clara County, Dept of:

Roads and Airports

Harry Freitas, Director

Ananth Prasad, Deputy Director

Public Health

Michelle Wexler – Program Manager, Active and Safe Communities

Emergency Medical Service Agency

[did not attend]

Education

[did not attend]

Medical Examiner-Coroner's office:

Dr. Michelle Jorden – Chief Medical Examiner

Candice Garcia – Administrative Service Officer

Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition

California Walks

[did not attend]

AARP

Joe Glynn, California Representative

The Chairperson opened the meeting by acknowledging that there have been 21 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**
 - After the reopening of the economy in mid-2021, the fatality rate increased and continues to be so in 2022, particularly in the early months of the year when an alarming number of fatalities occurred. Currently there are 45 fatalities by end of August 2022.
 - In comparison to the last 5 years, the injuries this year are within the range but on the higher end, where as severe and fatal injuries (KSI) remain on the lower end of the 5 year range.
 - In 2022, just over 50% of fatalities were people walking, out of them, 61% were outside a marked crosswalk at the time of collision.
 - 62% of fatalities occurred during the night.
 - Speeding was a factor in 22% of the fatalities, continuing to be a the highest known factor.
 - 5 fatalities occurred on White Rd, interested in applying for grant funding to address some of the bigger issues on this corridor.
 - 18% of the fatalities were possibly unhoused.
- **2020 Action Plan: Priority Action Area Update**
 - **Build robust data analytics tools**
 - Priority Safety Corridors (PSC) Update progress: This is the first time in 5 years that the PSC network is being updated. Urban Logiq compared methodologies used by other VZ cities in this effort and the network will expand from 3% to 6% of centerline miles within the city.
 - 88% of this network is within Metropolitan Transportation Commission's (MTC) Equity Priority Communities.
 - A comprehensive update on PSC will be given at the T&E meeting on Nov. 7th, 2022.
 - **Strategize Traffic Enforcement – Sgt. Doug Gates**
 - Citations and warnings: Looked into the dip in citations during December and January period, particularly because of the higher KSI during that time. It was due to hindrance from weather and short of staff.
 - TEU is currently struggling with staff shortage but working towards resolving this issue and to work with DOT to determine areas where enforcement is most needed.
 - **Increase Community Outreach and Engagement**
 - CM Peralez: The Town Hall meeting held on May 7th was an attempt to gather some qualitative data regarding safety concerns in the city.
 - Based on the input, two inferences:
 - 1) Quick Build (QB) improvements are highly effective and desired by residents: Council continues to invest in QB projects on PSC. Several Council members requested funding from the budget for additional traffic calming measures and the council approved more funding for crosswalk study, side show and enhanced crosswalks.
 - 2) Continuing dialog and engagement: The feedback from the meeting was evaluated and investigated by the traffic safety team. DOT Traffic Safety Team will continue to work towards enhancing safety based on the concerns/feedback from the public.
 - Summer walk audits:
 - Completed
Almaden Expwy (Lincoln – Cherry) in June
Capitol Expwy (McLaughlin – Snell) in July
Mt Pleasant/Clayton Rd in August
 - Upcoming
Calle Willow: Thursday, September 8 at 6pm
Tradewinds Dr: Wednesday, September 21 at 6pm

- With concerns on higher rate of unhoused fatalities, a 3-month safety messaging campaign was conducted to bring awareness of drivers to look out for people crossing the streets. Along 13 roadways near unhoused encampments, 58 Changeable Message Sign (CMS) boards, 70 posters and 1700 palm cards were distributed.
- New items with the new branded VZ logo area available to enhance visibility of different types of road users. They will be distributed to unhoused people as well as DOT staff.
- Worked with BeautifySJ and PRNS to distribute flashlights and lanterns to 225 unhoused people at 15 locations.
- **Implement Quick Build Data-Driven Safety Improvements**
 - Completed 2.3 miles of quick build improvements on Hillsdale Av (Almaden Ex – Ross Av).
 - Leveraged Pavement Plan in conjunction with the funding from VTA transportation fund for clean air grant to implement the improvements.
 - Lane reduction from 6 to 4 to reduce speeds, allocated the space for high quality bike lanes with ample buffer area, upgraded to High Viz crosswalks, GPE bike lanes through the intersection, reflective back plates for signal lights to improve visibility, and quick build median island to reduce vehicle conflict points and speeds.
- **Prioritize Resources on High KSI corridors and districts**
 - Received \$10M state earmark for safety improvements on Senter Rd
 - Bay Area MTC OBAG Cycle 3 – applied for 3 PSC in East San Jose: Jackson Av, White Rd and King Rd
 - Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP)
 - USDOT Safe Streets for All (SS4A) grant: Partnering with County Roads and Airports Department. State earmark funding will be used as 20% local match.

Task Force Member Discussion

- **CM Foley:**
 - Considering the number of older adults among the pedestrian fatal victims, improvements must be made by considering these road users.
 - Consulted residents of District 9 for a list of intersections with highest safety concerns. Will share the list with DOT.
 - There was additional funds allocated during the budget to expand TEU. Can an update on staffing be provided?
 - Two teams with a sergeant and 7 officers in each. Total 2 sergeants and 14 officers currently. For special events there is one sergeant and two officers.
 - Are there available funding for unfulfilled positions?
 - Hillsdale Ave quick build lane reduction recently implemented in D9 had a lot of positive comments and some frustrations after the improvements but optimistic that the frustrations will resolve as people adapt to the new changes. What is the purpose of the yellow posts in the middle of Hillsdale and why are there some left turn pockets where only a U-turn is possible?
 - They were placed to emulate a median and it is fundamental and typical for a wide roadway like Hillsdale. Areas with openings are for drivers to make U-turns or left turns into the neighborhoods. The installation of a median create a separation and reduce risk of conflicts and make the roadway safer.
 - How long does it take to analyze and respond to resident concerns?
 - 1-2 weeks to respond to the concerns, 1-3 weeks for minor adjustments.
 - Depending on the safety concern the actions are prioritized.

- Why are there parking protected bike lanes only in certain segments?
 - Bike lanes are not parking protected in areas where there are driveways or bus stops
- **Joe Glynn, AARP:**
 - 56% of pedestrian fatalities were older adults (50+), which is alarming, and AARP has taken note of that. When moving towards community outreach, AARP is willing to offer their resources and facilitate reaching out to the older adults. AARP is excited about the future community engagement plans and look forward to ways to get involved and contribute.
- **CM Peralez:**
 - Partnering with County for the grant application is great. Is the State earmark eligible as a local match?
 - Grants team of DOT has confirmed that it is eligible.
 - Is there opportunities for other TF members to provide letters of support for this and other future grant applications?
 - Request all TF members to provide letters of support particularly for the SS4A grant application.
 - 24 was the allocated staffing, as recalled. Is that correct? Will reiterate to the chief to have the Unit increased. Hopefully the vacant and unfulfilled positions can be filled soon.
- **CM Foley:**
 - Can a template for the support letter be provided?
 - There is a template and it will be distributed among the members.

Meeting Presentations

- Strategic Communications Update - Rebecca Graham (Project Manager, MIG):
 - Last meeting: Research phase
 - Strategy phase: Brand Identity is complete (as seen on this meeting).
 - Big milestone: Issue selection strategy:
 - Quantitative Baseline: random and representative data from 800 respondents
 - Findings: 25% of residents identified VZ as a safety initiative
 - 91% drive at least once a week
 - 77% agree biking and walking will be safer if people drove more slowly
 - 71% thought speeding is leading cause of traffic collisions.
 - Distracted driving, Speeding, Red light running are major concerns of the residents.
 - Most residents are open to making safety improvements for pedestrians and bicyclists, even at the cost of some inconvenience to cars.
 - Qualitative Data - Crash profiles (2016 – 2021) Fehr and Peers: Speeding was the most common cause of KSI. Speeding was a factor of each crash profile provided by the consultant.
 - Full reports of these research are available by request.
 - Having shared the above data with DOT VZ specialists efforts were made to select one issue to be the city's first VZ branded multi-channel campaign.
 - Most effective behavior change campaigns direct and integrate multiple efforts towards addressing the same issue. Therefore, during a workshop with the VZ specialist team six criteria were considered: Prevalence, Public Perception, Engineering, Enforcement, Policy/legislation, Measurement.
 - Unsafe speeds matched all 6 criteria and the selection was made through thorough review process..
 - Next Steps: Campaign Development
 - Qualitative Research – Focus groups, 2 English, 1 Spanish and 1 Vietnamese to learn why and how of the unsafe behavior

- Campaign strategy draft will be presented in November and expect the campaign rollout in 2023
- Project Evaluation - DOT
 - Senter Rd Quick Build Project Evaluation – Thao Nguyen
 - Senter Rd is a PSC with high KSI.
 - Issues: Wide roadway encouraged high speeds, long distances between marked crosswalks, unprotected bike lanes making cyclists feel unsafe, failure to yield to Pedestrians at flashing beacons.
 - To address issues the city got a grant in 2018 to do a complete study between Tully and Monterey. Community engagement conducted in 2019. With the 2020 VZ Action Plan there were funds to implement the recommendations, most of the improvements focused on the segment between Tully to Monterey including a lane reduction from 6 to 4 lanes.
 - The project construction took place from August 2020 to August 2021.
 - For this project evaluation, main focus area is the Tully-Monterey segment of Senter Rd. A complete dataset from only 6 months (Sept 2021 – Feb 2022) after the completion of the project is available. Therefore, it was compared with the average of the same six-month period between 2015 and 2020. Due to the short period of time since the completion of the project this evaluation may not reflect the entire story of the project and DOT will continue to update the study when more data is available. PD crash data and qualitative data from post project community feedback were used in this study.
 - Improvements: Buffered and protected bike lanes, high visibility crosswalks, lane reductions from Tully to Monterey.
 - Crash data: Overall injuries decreased. Safety improvements for bicyclists and motor vehicles with decrease or no change in injuries, KSI and fatalities. Pedestrian injuries have decreased but KSI and fatalities have increased.
 - City if working with the County to make improvements at the intersection of Senter Rd and Capitol Ex.
 - Community feedback: talked to 211 at 10 locations. Nearly all pedestrians and bicyclists supported the improvements. 70% of drivers supported the project and 15% expressed concerns. 12% of drivers were unaware of the implemented safety improvements.
 - For the proposed improvements to further enhance safety of Senter Rd, we are applying for a Federal grant in collaboration with County Roads and Airports Department and together with the State earmark funding, hope to change quick build to permanent improvements, implementing protected intersections, removing slip ramps at Capitol Ex and Monterey Rd and possibly add new signals.
 - McLaughlin Av Preliminary Project Evaluation - Kyle Wong
 - McLaughlin is a PSC. The project was carried out between Owsley Av and Loupe Av from July to November 2020.
 - Issues: Low Visibility at crossings, non-ADA compliant curb ramps, wide roadway encouraging high speeds, conflicting movement areas.
 - A total of \$ 5.3M including a \$2.5 HSIP grant funding was spent to make improvements on 2.6 miles of roadway.
 - Improvements: New streetlights, flashing beacons, bulb-outs, median Islands, ADA ramps.
 - For this project evaluation PD crash data was used. 1 year of after data (2021) was compared with 1 year avg. data between 2015 and 2019 from the before period.

- There was an overall decrease in injuries but an increase in KSI and fatalities among pedestrians and bicyclists. Prior to the project there were 7 fatalities (2015 – 2019). After project implementation there were 2 at Tully Rd.
 - Key improvement elements on McLaughlin Rd (Owsley to Loupe Ave)
 - Streetlights: Auburn Dr, Idlewood Dr, Umbarger Rd
 - Flashing Beacons: Audubon Dr, Idlewood Dr, Umbarger Rd, Panoche Ave
 - Median islands throughout corridor
 - Local projects team will start a safety project along Tully Rd, which will include high visibility crosswalks and green bike striping at Tully/McLaughlin intersection in 2023.
- White Rd Preliminary Project Evaluation - Kyle Wong
 - A priority safety corridor, with the project focus being on the norther part of the street, from Penitencia Creek Rd to Ross Av. Improvements took place between Oct 2020 and May 2021.
 - Issues: Wide roads encouraging speeds, low visibility crossings
 - \$1.3M including 1.2M HSIP grant funding was spent to make 2 intersection improvements and 2 miles of striping.
 - Improvements: 2 Flashing beacons (1. Patt Ave 2. Rose Ave), Refuge Island (Patt Ave), Streetlights (1. Patt Ave, 2. Rose Ave)
 - PD crash data was used. 9 months of after data (June 2021 – Feb 2022) was compared with the same 9-month period avg. data between 2015 and 2020 from the before period. The evaluation will be updated once more complete data is available.
 - Data at the two improved intersections show decrease or no change in KSI for all modes and these trends look promising.
- This was the first-time project evaluation. The scale of these projects is different from each other. Evaluation of projects is important to shave the direction of future projects, and give us direction on where to consider quick build tweaks or strengthen safety improvements to improve crash and injury reduction as we look to upcoming grant funding opportunities.
 - Upcoming PSC evaluations: Story Rd, Hillsdale Av and Branham Ln.

Task Force Member Discussion

- **CM Peralez:**
 - It is important to monitor the improvement made by gathering qualitative and quantitative data. Quick Build is a great way to make quick improvements, but capital projects are more impactful.
- **Sgt. Gates:**
 - To follow-up on the staffing question: authorized for a total of 30; 1 Lieutenant, 6 sergeants and 23 officers.
- **CM Foley:**
 - How did MIG select members of the focus group? Can we invite others to participate and if so, how? How can we get involved and inform our community to get involved in the focus groups?
 - Sarah LaBatt, EMC Research: Essentially recruiting people at random, not from any list of people who are interested in the topic. They are selected from among the drivers of San Jose who meet the criteria, a group of people who admit to not being the safest drivers, who are open minded and are willing to have an open conversation with the intent of identifying the most impactful messaging. Groups are selected to include a diversity of residents representing different demographics, age groups, ethnicities and geographies.

Announcement

- Later today there will be a low-rider car parade celebrating the repeal of the No Cruising Ordinance, at the City Hall from 4 to 8pm.

Open Forum

- Marylou A:
As a user of the bicycle for transportation, does not approve having bike lanes sandwiched between the curb and the parking lane on Hillsdale Av for the following four reasons: 1) bicyclists are trapped in a narrow lane preventing emergency exit, 2) the City does not often keep this lane cleaned due to difficulty in accessing the area, 3) Some cars park in the bike lane, 4) There's no enforcement to remove the illegally parked cars.
- Christine F:
Seniors and people with mobility impairments and use mobility devices deserve attention during roadway improvements. Suggests involving the disability community when making the designs- willing to facilitate it. Having the bike lane in between the curb and parking lane impacts those with disabilities during transferring from mobility device to the vehicle, as well as visibility factor.
- Gail O:
Commendable meeting. Questions: 1) Can outside groups write support letters for grants? 2) How can we get engaged in community outreach for seniors? 3) Have you reached out to unhoused people for the said Focus Group?
- Blair B:
Interesting that new ways to use statistics are being developed, for example including unhoused people. Honesty and clarification are key in reporting/using these statistics. Openness and accountability in our practices will bring out better policies and San Jose is making good strides in these efforts with equity ideas in the data collection.
- Eamon:
The bike lanes altering between protected and exposed might not be ideal. While it is understandable that parking protected bike lanes are not possible in areas with driveways, the Dutch have designed ways to overcome this challenge. Suggest reaching out to the Dutch Cycling Embassy to discuss this issue. Secondly, recent research by Insurance Institute for Highway Safety on the prevalence of SUVs and trucks in KSI crashes and the higher likelihood of these vehicles killing pedestrians in comparison to smaller cars. Interested in the KSI data broken down by vehicle type. With these findings perhaps new laws can be enforced on vehicle standards.
- Sophie Horiuchi-Forrester, Regional Director-AARP, California:
To add to Joe Glynn's comment, AARP is happy to offer support in outreach.
- Gina L:
As someone who has lost a loved one in a traffic collision, I commend the work that is being done, but would like to see the changes being made faster. Encourage the City to keep making improvements to make roadways safer. As the city changes rapidly, it may be a good idea to review Priority Safety Corridors every 3 years.

New Business / Updates / Future Action Items

- Next Task Force meeting on Monday Nov. 30 9.30 -11.30 a.m.

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 11.26 a.m.