

SAN JOSÉ VISION ZERO TASK FORCE

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, November 30th 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, November 30th, 2022; 9.30 a.m. via Zoom.

Attendees

Chair, CM Foley (CD9)

Vice Chair, CM Peralez (CD3)

City of San Jose, Dept of:

Transportation

Lily Lim-Tsao, 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

Christy Cheung, Associate Engineer

Housing

Ragan Hannigan, Assistant Director

Planning, Building and Code

Michael Brilliot, Deputy Director

Parks, Recreation, & Neighb. Services (PRNS)

Neil Rufino, Assistant Director

Economic Development

Salvador Alvarez, Executive Analyst

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

Jackie Lowther

Education

[did not attend]

Medical Examiner-Coroner's office:

Candice Garcia – Analyst

Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition

Diana Crumedy, Associate Director Outreach and Community Engagement

California Walks

[did not attend]

AARP

Joe Glynn, San Jose Representative

This is the first meeting of CM Foley as the Chairperson of the Vision Zero Task Force and the last meeting that CM Peralez is attending, where he served as Vice Chair. The Chairperson opened the meeting by appreciating the efforts of CM Peralez as the first and founding Chair of the Task Force and expressed gratitude for his guidance and passion to the cause. The Chairperson then acknowledged that there have been 17 traffic fatalities since the last meeting and the Chair, and the Vice Chair read out the names of the victims. CM Foley 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

- **2022 Traffic Collision Data Trends**
 - By end of November, with one month to spare in 2022, City of San Jose has reached the record high fatality number of years 2015, 2019 and 2021.
 - First quarter of 2022 saw a large number of fatalities, that was a 167% increase over the same period in 2021.
 - A similar trend is seen in other cities and states. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) reported 7% increase of traffic fatalities in the 1st quarter of 2022 compared to the previous year and a 20% increase from 2020, reaching a 20-year high.
 - In 2022, San Jose is heading towards a record high number of fatalities, currently 50% of the fatalities are pedestrians.
 - 60% fatalities were during dark hours, many of them during the first few months of the year.
 - Since 2019, San Jose has been using Changeable Message Signs on major roadways, particularly Priority Safety Corridors, between November and March, alerting drivers to slowdown. Coordination with Police Department (PD) is carried out for enforcement on these corridors during this time.
 - In 2022, DOT is collaborating with PRNS and Housing Department to distribute flashlights and reflective vests to people experiencing homelessness. A significant percentage of fatalities are unhoused decedents.
 - 82% of fatalities occurred on roadways with posted speed limits of 35mph or higher.
 - Large number of pedestrians killed were outside a marked crossed walk, an area that needs to be addressed.
 - Speeding was a contributing factor to 23% of fatalities this year.

- **Adult Crossing Guard Program – Sgt. Doug Gates**
 - With PD incorporating vehicular and pedestrian safety around schools, Adult Crossing Guard Program around schools is an important program led by PD.
 - Currently, 262 funded positions; 185 staffed and 77 vacancies.
 - This split-shift position is hard to staff, and typically employs older adults.
 - Challenges:
 - During Covid, a large number of older adult employees resigned.
 - During the current holiday season, many employees take time off due to ill-health.
 - 10hr/week part time split shift job
 - 121 authorized locations under adult crossing guard program. Only 100 locations are staffed due to lack of staffing.
 - Staffing (not budget) is the main issue due to difficulty of finding candidates to serve split-shifts.

- **Fatality Review Board**
 - Established in Fall 2020 to review fatal collision reports.
 - 111 traffic fatalities evaluated, so far.
 - Internal process (involving Planning and Operations teams of DOT):
 - Identify causes of crashes
 - Identify potential mitigation or enhancement to reduce crashes
 - Identify methods of delivery (leveraging current program, grant opportunities, pavement program, development).
 - Interested in engaging Task Force members in this process. Can further discuss possibilities during 2023 Work Plan discussion.

- **Work Plan 2023**
 - A new work plan for 2023 will be created through an internal exercise in early 2023
 - Potential themes: Outreach, School Safety, Pedestrian Visibility

- **Work Plan 2023: School Safety: Rules Memo**
 - School Safety - Rules Memo 10/19/2022 Recommendation
 - CM Foley co-authored a memo with the Mayor, Vice-Mayor and CM Cohen, in the light of the tragic fatality at Castlemont Av and Driftwood Dr, for a longer term and holistic approach on prioritizing safe routes to schools.
 - This memo calls for Task Force members to incorporate safe routes to schools and safety near schools into the Vision Zero Task Force work plan and further discussion on this regard will be done at the next Task Force meeting
 - Staff has been encouraged to find ways to accelerate filling the budgeted school crossing guard positions.
 - While some items on the memorandum need to be considered by the full council, such as developing metrics for school safety and developing traffic calming near school sites, this memo mainly encourages the committee members of the Task Force to think of School safety and how it can be incorporated into the next year's work plan.
- **Work Plan 2023: School Safety: Near Castlemont Elementary**
 - Safety upgrades carried out following the fatality at Castlemont Av and Driftwood Dr of Jacob Villaneuva, a 3rd grader, are illustrative of the kinds of improvements that could be made near other schools
 - Upgraded 5 crosswalks to high visibility
 - Refreshed markings on 5 streets
 - Trimmed trees and installed all-way stop signs at Castlemont Av and Driftwood Dr
 - One-way stop installed at Teakwood Dr and Driftwood Dr.

Task Force Member Discussion

- **CM Peralez:**
 - City has enough people to fill the vacancies for Adult Crossing Guards, therefore more awareness should be brought upon this opportunity.
 - How can DOT incorporate this information in their outreach efforts to recruit more people to fill the vacancies?
- **Lily Lim-Tsao (DOT):**
 - DOT public engagement platforms can be used to do this effort. Task Force members who do regular public outreach can also assist in this effort. Council District Newsletters could also be another resource. If PD can provide a description of the Job summary and list of vacancy locations, that could encourage those in the neighborhoods to take the opportunity.
- **CM Foley:**
 - Can a list of schools in each Council District that need crossing guards be provided, so that more targeted marketing can be done to encourage parents/grandparents of the particular schools.
- **Ragan Henniger (Housing):**
 - Targeted marketing at specific schools is an effective strategy
 - Happy to participate in the Fatality Review Board (FRB). Considering the number of unhoused decedents among traffic fatal victims, is there a possibility of having someone with lived experience of homelessness engage in the FRB. They may be able to provide valuable insights. Able to help with connecting such individuals.
- **Neil Rufino (PRNS):**
 - Offer support of PRNS in outreach on adult crossing guard vacancies, if both social media and hardcopy document containing information can be provided, those could be circulated at the Senior Centers.
 - Quarterly School/City Collaborative meetings provide an opportunity to share information about Crossing Guard vacancies with the School District Superintendents.
- **Joe Glynn, AARP:**

- Able to communicate about vacancies for Adult Crossing Guards to the AARP membership in San Jose.
- Interested in getting involved in the FRB, to get a better understanding of the older adult decedents
- **Diana Crumedy (SVBC):**
 - Able to share information regarding the Crossing Guard vacancies during weekly outreach program.
 - Would like to invite participants to the Infrastructure Bike Ride in January to showcase the stark difference between the infrastructure in affluent neighborhoods vs underserved communities, to show why some neighborhoods have higher rates of collisions over others. Seeing the conditions upfront is a more effective way to bring awareness.
- **CM Foley:**
 - Do Task Force members have the opportunity to bring public awareness about Vision Zero and its efforts during outreach events they attend?
 - Are there any efforts that can be leveraged to increase safety awareness around schools?
- **Neil Rufino (PRNS):**
 - PRNS has afterschool programs to which DOT team can join.
- **Lily Lim-Tsao (DOT):**
 - Good opportunity for DOT School Safety Program to get engaged with the youth to pique their interest in traffic engineering and traffic safety, encouraging future career paths in this field. Will follow up about this program.
- **Salvador Alvarez (Economic Development):**
 - Office of Economic Development and Cultural Affairs has a newsletter and host guest bloggers, mainly focused on the business community, therefore can use those resources to share information about Vision Zero efforts.
 - Another way to reach into schools may be by engaging the PTA.
- **CM Foley:**
 - Is there a possibility of changing the split-shift to allow individuals to choose one particular shift of the day, so that they could better budget their time, as split-shift opportunities aren't ideal for most people.
- **Sgt. Gates (SYPD):**
 - There may be a possibility that such opportunity may be available, considering the challenges the program is facing.

Meeting Presentations

- Strategic Communications Update – Deanna Chow Trotter (MIG):
 - Project overview:
 - Timeline was presented in August
 - Project Recap: Develop a data-driven multi-touchpoint campaign.
 - Conducted baseline research based on crash profile and public opinion survey
 - Selected Speeding as campaign issue focus
 - Delved deeper into the issue by conducting focus group research.
 - Developed a strategy for Safer Speeds campaign
 - Campaign Strategy:
 - Objective:
 - Increase awareness of the dangers of Speeding and the value of safe speeds and speed limits
 - Focus group research:
 - Limited number of people recognized speeding as a traffic safety issue without further probing

- There is a disconnect between the public opinion and focus group responses.
- Campaign Audience: Drivers of San Jose
 - 91% of people in San Jose drive a car at least once a week.
- Content/Tone:
 - most considered behavior “speeding” was associated with reckless driving and only occurred on freeways
 - Open about exceeding speed limits as long as they are going with the flow and were slow to think it was wrong
 - Messaging:
 - Connect unsafe speeds to city and residential-roadway driving
 - Confront the attitude that driving above the speed limit is acceptable and convey dangers of speeding
 - Communicate a clear call-to-action: Focus group respondents expressed a desire to be given clear direction
 - Visuals: Photographic imagery was more effective to connect more personally and convey gravity of unsafe speeds
 - Portray a serious tone, indicating the sobering consequences of the issue and calls for urgency
 - A collective tone to reflect “we are in this together, my actions impact others”
 - A hopeful message that safer choices will save lives
- Campaign Targeting: Achieving measurable effectiveness
 - Media placements targeting key crash locations: integrating efforts with engineering projects and enforcement efforts
 - Use demographic and common attributes to target those who speed
 - Reaching out to Spanish and Vietnamese speakers
- Potential Touchpoints
 - Commute-time radio/streaming audio: active media bump
 - Digital display ads
 - Organic and paid social media
 - Shareable videos
 - Out-of-home media
 - Newspaper ads
 - Earned media
 - Campaign landing page
 - Community outreach
- Next steps:
 - Commencing creative development
 - Coordinate with Vision Zero team on engineering, enforcement and measurement tie-ins
 - Craft media and outreach plans
 - Potential Spring 2023 launch
- Gathering feedback from Task Force members:
 - Are there existing communications and outreach channels that can be leveraged for this campaign?
 - What is other campaign targeting insights and input or specific areas of consideration?
 - Questions or comments on the campaign strategy

Task Force Member Discussion

- **CM Foley:**
 - Hopeful this campaign is effective considering negative driver behaviors
 - There is a Lack of self-awareness among drivers on their responsibility to make behavioral changes
 - Although higher fatalities occur during left turns, right turn movements also cause injuries, therefore need attention

- **CM Peralez:**
 - Using the outreach channels of the Task Force membership is good way to spread the campaign messaging.
 - Increasing enforcement and announcing the increase of enforcement to make people more mindful.
 - Radar Speed Signs are physical elements that triggers to make people more aware, the marketing hopefully will do the same.
 - Suggest targeting youth drivers, tap into the youth as a resource vs adults marketing to children about driving.
 - Tactics such as DUI checkpoints work.
 - Recent years the reduction of police force and traffic enforcement units have been marketed. This has adversely affected traffic safety.
 - Promoting the addition of traffic safety officers or crossing guards to trigger a response of drivers be more conscious of driving.
 - Excited to see changes as a civilian.

- **Lauren Ledbetter (VTA):**
 - VTA marketing department is working with MIG and will address the questions about engagement opportunities.
 - City of San Jose's Request for Proposal (RFP) allows other agencies to bring MIG onboard without the competitive process leveraging the initial RFP. VTA is going through internal processes to bring MIG on board to carry out similar campaign County-wide, funded by 2016 Measure B funding.
 - Question: Is the campaign focused only on posted speed limit, or it focuses on safe speeds under specific conditions (weather, lighting etc.) as well?

- **Deanna Chow Trotter (MIG):**
 - Both aspects will be considered but messaging platform may differ.

- **Salvador Alvarez:**
 - Is there a way to address or have an outlet of memorials on crash sites?
 - Any focus on educating and reminding pedestrians about defensive walking?
 - Any messaging to share with employers on safe work practice while driving?
 - Encouraging safer mindful driving.
 - Remind people of the fatalities by reading out names of the victims is impactful.

- **Joe Glynn:**
 - Drivers feel safe in their vehicle, so campaign should be focused on other road users. Defensive walking, defensive biking should also be part of the messaging campaign.

- **Diana Crumedy:**
 - Improving roadway design to force the slower speed driving is necessary.

- **CM Foley:**
 - How long does it take the messaging campaign to make an impact on the audience and how do we know behavior has been modified?
- **Deanna Chow Trotter (MIG):**
 - Did baseline opinion and tracking survey after campaign asked similar questions to see changes.
 - Behavioral changes and changes in social norms take a long time to take effect and is an ongoing effort.
 - A multi-disciplinary effort will be the way forward.
- **CM Foley:**
 - Enforcement would be very important to reduce speeding among drivers. Pushing for more enforcement will be effective.
 - Addressing traffic safety with engagement, enforcement, infrastructure. We are working on all tracks but need more aggressive treatment.
- **Rebecca Graham (MIG):**
 - Technological advancements are helpful to improve traffic safety.
- **CM Foley:**
 - While agreeing to that, some of the technological advances may be harmful as well.
 - Some of those who speed in school zones are parents themselves. This should be a collective effort where everyone is mindful of their behaviors on the road.
- **CM Peralez:**
 - At the start of the 3rd year, it's important to look at the future.
 - A Permanent/semi-permanent committee, to continue this work would be important. Despite our goals is to reduce traffic injuries and eventually reaching zero fatalities, this process is a lengthy one.
 - Fremont has been a success story since implementing a Vision Zero program. San Jose is a much larger city, thus need collaboration among all the members.

Open Forum

- Gina LeBlanc:
 - Consider possibility of school street closure during school hours
 - San Francisco (SF) releases all victims' names without any issues. On World Day of Remembrance for Traffic Victims (20th November) lay 250 flowers with names of the SF traffic fatal victims since 2014.
 - SF updates their High Injury Network every two years instead of five.
 - Thank you CM Peralez for your efforts.
- Marylou A:
 - After 4 years, speedbumps were installed on Edenvale Av. But only three were installed, instead of six as per earlier understanding.
 - Cherry Ridge Lane and Edenvale Ave intersection needs a speedbump but DOT requires time to evaluate the location, which will result in another long time prior to implementation. Quicker action will be appreciated.
 - Slower roadway improvements hinder the reduction of fatal and severe injuries in San Jose.

- Christine F:
 - Wheelchair users are often at risk of being hit during left turn movement. Slower left turn movements increase awareness, and more rigorous education of new drivers would be effective measures.
 - Driver education should be a continuous effort across all drivers.

- Blair B:
 - Impressive discussion about speed. At a Vision Zero ceremony there were interesting talks of less car use in future and looking out for each other for roadway safety. Look forward to seeing the effects of speed related strategies.
 - More than enforcement and technology what we need is openness and accountability to work together with this process that is a democratic feature of good practices, community harmony and a real vision.

- Gail O.:
 - Thank you for a wonderful meeting. Can the Work plan 2023 include a plan around senior centers?
 - We are putting together a questionnaire to take to senior centers and community centers to talk to seniors about pedestrian and traffic safety.

- Arturo G.:
 - [Not able to connect]

- Jordan M:
 - Attending San Jose Vision Zero Task Force meeting for the first time; therefore, found it odd to find “communication” has been the focus of the meeting.
 - Enforcement and infrastructure are important factors. The roadway structure itself dictates the driving speed.
 - Radar Speed Signs are effective.
 - Often people run red lights. There is a resource in Mountain View to allow people to report intersections where traffic violations were committed but limited people were aware of the resource. It is important to communicate to the public of the available resources.

- Caller -4608:
 - Vision Zero Task Force is important for the city, thank you for the efforts.
 - Can bike lights be distributed to underserved communities?
 - Outstanding issue with DOT about a blind curve around school area that I will reach out separately but are issues around schools being tracked?
 - Schools have electric signs that can be used for the safety campaigns.
 - Do you meet with the PD detectives when traffic fatalities occur.

New Business / Updates / Future Action Items

- Next Task Force meeting in 1st quarter 2023

Adjournment

- Meeting adjourned at 11.30 a.m.