

CITY OF SANTA ROSA
CITY COUNCIL

TO: MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
FROM: DAN HENNESSEY, DIRECTOR, TRANSPORTATION AND
PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT
SUBJECT: VISION ZERO IMPLEMENTATION PLAN UPDATE

AGENDA ACTION: STUDY SESSION

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended by the Transportation and Public Works Department that the Council hold a Study Session on the progress made related to the Sonoma Vision Zero Action Plan, the City of Santa Rosa Vision Zero Implementation Plan, and upcoming grant opportunities. This item is provided for Council's information and no action will be taken except for possible direction to staff.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In July 2022, the City Council adopted the Sonoma County Vision Zero Action Plan (VZAP) and the City's Local Roadway Safety Plan (LRSP) which target zero deaths from traffic-related violence by 2030. This study session is intended to provide an update on the execution of our Vision Zero Implementation Plan and additional opportunities available in support of those goals.

BACKGROUND

From 2012 to 2022, 74 people lost their lives to traffic-related violence on streets owned and maintained by the City of Santa Rosa. An additional 535 people were seriously injured in crashes. National guidance exists to help local transportation agencies quantify the estimated economic and quality of life impacts of a crash in financial terms. These 440 crashes that led to these 74 deaths and 535 serious injuries have a \$1,280,000,000 comprehensive cost. These crashes overwhelmingly affect non-white, non-male, and low-income community members.

PRIOR CITY COUNCIL REVIEW

On July 26, 2022, the Santa Rosa City Council adopted the Sonoma County VZAP by a vote of 7-0. The VZAP set a target goal of zero traffic deaths and severe injuries on roadways within Santa Rosa by 2030. The Council also approved the LRSP for citywide

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corridors including those identified in the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan Update 2018 by a 7-0 vote on the same date.

ANALYSIS

The VZAP was initiated in October of 2019 by the Sonoma County Transportation Authority (SCTA) and the Sonoma County Department of Health Services (DHS). Santa Rosa Planning and Economic Development and Transportation and Public Works Departments participated in the advisory committee to support SCTA and their consultants. The goal of the VZAP was to eliminate all traffic deaths and severe injuries in Sonoma County by 2030.

Vision Zero plans rely on a data-driven approach, identifying locations, types, and causes of crashes resulting in the types of outcomes to be reduced/eliminated. The data also includes demographic information on those affected; on streets owned and maintained by the City of Santa Rosa, crashes disproportionately affect pedestrians, bicyclists, motorcyclists, non-white, and low-income or unhoused community members.

Two important outcomes were provided in the VZAP. The first is a network of roadway segments and intersections where a pattern of crashes resulting in injuries or fatalities has been identified, otherwise known as the High Injury Network (HIN). The City of Santa Rosa has roughly 512 street-miles of roadway; almost 49 miles are included in the HIN (about 10 percent).

The second is a set of six categories of action items jointly agreed to by the jurisdictions within the County to help eliminate these crashes, which are as follows:

- Create Safer Speeds
- Eliminate Impaired Driving
- Create a Culture of Safety
- Build and Maintain Safe Streets for All
- Make Vehicles Safer and Reduce Private Vehicle Use
- Improve Data for Effective Decision Making

The Planning Division of the Transportation and Public Works Department put together a Vision Zero Implementation Plan (VZIP) with 47 action items to support the reduction of traffic violence in Santa Rosa.

Vision Zero plans have typically focused on three “E’s:” Engineering, Education, and Enforcement. Additional studies have added more “E’s,” including Encouragement, Evaluation, and Emergency Response. Some advocates include Ethics, Equity, and Empathy in their “E’s.”

Vision Zero was first introduced in the United States by New York and San Francisco in 2014, and thousands of jurisdictions have since adopted Vision Zero plans. In 2014, almost 33,000 people died on roadways in the United States; in 2022, that number was

more than 43,000.

Practitioners have since learned that the most important 'E' is Energy. Vehicle crashes involve the transfer of kinetic energy, which is generated based on the mass and velocity of the parties involved. There is little that the City of Santa Rosa can do about the size and weight of vehicles. Vehicle speeds are entirely a function of street and intersection design and are increasingly in the control of local jurisdictions to help reduce crash severity and likelihood.

A lot of time and effort is required for education, enforcement, and other behavior changes to take hold at an individual level. Instead, the industry has shifted to systemic infrastructure changes that decrease the ability of drivers to choose to drive at unsafe speeds. We now focus on decreasing the probability and amount of kinetic energy transfer. This can be done by slowing vehicles that are in collisions, but it can also be done by better separating people in time and space.

Ensuring that different user groups have adequate facilities such as bicycle lanes or safe sidewalks allow users to separate in space. Crafting signal operations to separate movements for conflicting movements and allowing pedestrians a short lead time into an intersection are examples of separating users in time. Narrowing lanes and tightening radii at intersections reduce speeds; these treatments also reduce the amount of time and space for vehicle-pedestrian conflicts at intersections, for example.

Our proposed direction is for projects to increasingly focus on eliminating fatal and serious injury traffic collisions through system infrastructure improvements. We cannot depend on education and enforcement to influence individual behavior. Thanks to the adoption of the VZAP and the LRSP, we have the policy in place to allow us to do this. Budgets, design standards, and individual programs need to be re-aligned to reduce the burden of traffic violence on Santa Rosans.

FISCAL IMPACT

This study session does not have a fiscal impact on the General Fund.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

This study session has been reviewed in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and is categorically exempt pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15306 Informational Collection. Section 15306 consists of basic data collection, research, experimental management, and resource evaluation activities which do not result in a serious or major disturbance to an environmental resource. These may be strictly for information gathering purposes, or as part of a study leading to an action which a public agency has not yet approved, adopted, or funded.

BOARD/COMMISSION/COMMITTEE REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Not applicable

NOTIFICATION

Not applicable.

ATTACHMENTS

None.

PRESENTER

Dan Hennessey, Director, Transportation and Public Works Department