

Attachment 4



Transportation Commission

TRANSMITTAL

November 14, 2019

RE: Safe Systems Approach and Strategies to Move Bellevue Towards Vision Zero

Honorable Mayor [REDACTED] and City Councilmembers:

The Transportation Commission is advising staff as they develop the Bellevue Vision Zero Action Plan. In our advisory role, we are guided by Council intent expressed in Resolution 9035 “to achieve zero traffic deaths and serious injuries on Bellevue streets by 2030 and directing the Transportation Commission to review the Comprehensive Plan to determine if any updates, revisions, or additional policies are warranted in light of Vision Zero and other transportation network goals.”

On December 12, 2016, the City Council adopted Ordinance 6334, incorporating Vision Zero policies into the Bellevue Comprehensive Plan and directed staff to: (i) prepare and implement a Vision Zero Action Plan; (ii) update Vision Zero strategies periodically; and, (iii) provide Vision Zero status reports that aggregate and analyze data, document efforts, communicate progress to the City Council and to the community. Among the policies adopted into the Comprehensive Plan is TR-61.2 directing staff to: “Develop a programmatic approach to Vision Zero that integrates components of Education, Encouragement, Enforcement, Engineering, Equity, and Evaluation.” Consistent with this directive, the Transportation Commission engaged in conversations with staff on January 10, March 28, and November 14, 2019 to arrive at a programmatic approach to Vision Zero.

At our November 14, 2019 meeting, Transportation Commission members voted unanimously in favor of recommending City Council endorse the proposed Safe Systems approach and strategies to move Bellevue towards Vision Zero (see Attachment). The Safe Systems approach and strategies arise from carefully evaluating crash data – including trends, contributing factors, and streets with a high concentration of traffic collisions that result in severe injuries and deaths. These quantitative insights were blended with a consideration of existing road safety efforts underway in Bellevue and Vision Zero best practices – including policies, strategies, and actions that are successful elsewhere and applicable to Bellevue. Finally, staff solicited input from residents and business stakeholders, first responders, public health professionals, safety advocates, technologists, and state and federal agencies. Notably, experts from the Federal Highway Administration, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Washington Traffic Safety Commission, Washington State Department of Transportation, Washington State Patrol, Pacific Northwest Transportation Consortium, Institute of Transportation Engineers, and others validated the Safe Systems approach and strategies at the Bellevue Vision Zero Summit on February 13, 2019 at Overlake Medical Center.

The Safe Systems approach broadens the discussion of Vision Zero to include everyone – acknowledging that new vehicle technologies, improved street infrastructure, lower speeds, and enhanced public awareness on traffic safety can all contribute to reducing the impact of crashes. The responsibility for the Safe Systems approach is shared: leaders are prepared to make challenging decisions when traffic safety is at stake, staff leverages new technologies and closely monitors data to assess results, partnerships with the public and private sectors are formed to achieve intended outcomes, and together we are developing a safety culture which acknowledges that zero is the only acceptable number of deaths and serious injuries on our streets.

At its core, the Safe Systems approach rests on four pillars (Safe Speeds, Safe People, Safe Vehicles, and Safe Streets) paired with four supportive elements (Data, Leadership, Partnerships, and Culture). Nested within the Safe Systems approach are 36 strategies that build upon the City Council's "why" statement (i.e., the Vision Zero goal) by articulating "what" programmatic steps staff should pursue to eliminate traffic fatalities and serious injuries in Bellevue by 2030.

Pending City Council endorsement of the Safe Systems approach and strategies, we understand that staff will finalize the Vision Zero Action Plan and commence work on "One City" collaborations between city departments to advance coordinated actions in engineering, education, encouragement, evaluation, equity, and enforcement. Concurrent with staff finalizing the Vision Zero Action Plan, the Transportation Commission requests the opportunity to recommend policies to integrate the Safe Systems approach and strategies into the Comprehensive Plan.

We appreciate the City Council's leadership and our community's participation in the planning process in helping us formulate a programmatic approach to Vision Zero that will make our community safer.

Sincerely,



Lei Wu
Chair, Transportation Commission