

CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION

Bellevue Vision Zero Action Plan – Safe Systems Approach and Strategies

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DIRECTION NEEDED FROM COUNCIL**DIRECTION**

The Transportation Commission seeks Council approval of a Safe Systems approach and strategies to move Bellevue towards Vision Zero. A draft Resolution is attached and, pending Council direction, will be brought back for adoption at a future meeting.

RECOMMENDATION

Direct staff to return to a future Council meeting with a Resolution approving the Safe Systems approach and strategies to move Bellevue towards Vision Zero as recommended by the Bellevue Transportation Commission and to direct the Transportation Commission to review the Comprehensive Plan to determine if any updates, revisions, or additional policies are warranted to support the Safe Systems approach.

BACKGROUND & ANALYSIS

Bellevue's road safety record compares favorably to other cities in Washington state. In 2018 there were 1,518 police reported crashes in Bellevue resulting in 450 injuries. Of these 450 injuries, 19 were serious injuries and one was a fatality. Although staff has not received final audited results from the WSDOT crash database, it is anticipated that fatal and serious-injury crash data for Bellevue in 2019 will reflect an increase over prior years.

In response to Council direction and to address the above statistics, staff is preparing a Vision Zero Action Plan that responds to the following decision-making timeline:

- December 7, 2015: Council unanimously adopted Resolution No. 9035 endorsing Vision Zero, for the City to strive 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.
- December 8, 2016: Council unanimously adopted Ordinance No. 6334 incorporating Vision Zero 2016 amendments to the Comprehensive Plan of the City of Bellevue. Additionally, Council 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, and communicate progress to the City Council and to the community.

- During 2019: The Transportation Commission considered Bellevue crash data, vetted existing road safety efforts in Bellevue and international Vision Zero best practices, listened to the community, attended the Bellevue Vision Zero Summit (February 13), and worked with staff during study sessions (January 10, March 28, November 14, and December 12) to arrive at its Safe Systems approach and strategies recommendation to move Bellevue towards Vision Zero.
- January 9, 2020: Transportation Commission members voted unanimously to recommend Council approve a Safe Systems approach and strategies to move Bellevue towards Vision Zero (see Attachment A).

At its March 2 meeting, the Chair and Vice Chair of the Transportation Commission will review with Council the Safe Systems approach which broadens the effort to achieve Vision Zero to include everyone – acknowledging that new vehicle technologies, improved street infrastructure, lower vehicle speeds, and enhanced public awareness on traffic safety each contribute to reducing the frequency and severity of crashes. The responsibility for the Safe Systems approach is shared: leaders make challenging decisions when traffic safety is at stake; staff leverages new technologies, closely monitors data to assess results, and creates partnerships with the public and private sectors; and all parties develop a safety culture that acknowledges zero as the only acceptable number of deaths and serious injuries on our streets.

The Transportation Commission's recommendation on the Safe Systems approach is informed by the following considerations:

- In their research on 53 countries, the WRI Ross Center for Sustainable Cities and the Global Road Safety Facility of the World Bank “found that those that have taken a Safe System based approach have achieved both the lowest rates of fatalities per 100,000 inhabitants and the greatest reduction in fatality levels over the past 20 years.”
- The Institute of Transportation Engineers – in partnership with the national Road to Zero Coalition – is encouraging Vision Zero communities in the United States to adopt the Safe Systems approach because it is demonstrated to result in improved safety outcomes.
- The Washington Traffic Safety Commission incorporated a Safe Systems approach in the 2019 Target Zero Plan. The document states: “It is time for Washington to adopt the Safe Systems principles statewide in its policies, programs, projects, activities, and investments. When we do so, we will save lives provide better stewardship of public resources and improve the function of the transportation system for everyone using it.”

Pending Council approval of the Safe Systems approach and strategies, the Vision Zero Steering Team (comprised of department heads from the City Manager's Office, Transportation, Fire, Police, Community Development, Development Services, Parks & Community Services, and Human Resources) will finalize the Vision Zero Action Plan. No formal Council action is required to guide the Vision Zero work plan and budget proposal development.

Implementation arising from the Vision Zero Action Plan that requires policy guidance, for example creating a speed management program, will be vetted through Transportation Commission and Council

consultation and approval processes. As a next step, the Transportation Commission requests Council direction to review the Comprehensive Plan to determine if any updates, revisions, or additional policies are warranted to support the Safe Systems approach (Attachment B).

POLICY & FISCAL IMPACTS

Policy Impact

Bellevue Comprehensive Plan Policy TR-61.2 provides direction to: “Develop a programmatic approach to Vision Zero that integrates components of Education, Encouragement, Enforcement, Engineering, Equity, and Evaluation.” Consistent with this direction, approving the Safe Systems approach builds upon Council’s “why” statement (i.e., the Vision Zero goal) by articulating “what” steps (i.e., Safe Systems strategies) staff should pursue to strive to eliminate traffic fatalities and serious injuries in Bellevue by 2030.

Fiscal Impact

Neighborhood Safety, Connectivity, and Congestion Levy funding is available to implement safety projects that will be identified in the Bellevue Vision Zero Action Plan. Additionally, standalone Vision Zero budget proposals will be prepared for the 2021-2022 biennium.

OPTIONS

1. Direct staff to return to a future Council meeting with a Resolution approving the Safe Systems approach and strategies to move Bellevue towards Vision Zero as recommended by the Bellevue Transportation Commission and to direct the Transportation Commission to review the Comprehensive Plan to determine if any updates, revisions, or additional policies are warranted to support the Safe Systems approach.
2. Do not direct staff to return and provide alternative direction.

ATTACHMENTS & AVAILABLE DOCUMENTS

- A. Transmittal letter from the Transportation Commission
- B. Draft Safe Systems Resolution

AVAILABLE IN COUNCIL LIBRARY

N/A