

City of
Bellevue



Transportation Commission Study Session

DATE: January 8, 2016

TO: Chair Lampe and Members of the Transportation Commission

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SUBJECT: Vision Zero Comprehensive Plan Amendment

DIRECTION REQUESTED

_____ Action

X _____ Discussion and direction

_____ Information

On December 7, 2015 the City Council adopted [Resolution 9035](#), endorsing Vision Zero. Vision Zero is a comprehensive approach to traffic safety, the ultimate goal of which is to end traffic deaths and serious injuries in the City of Bellevue by 2030. With this resolution the Council directed the Transportation Commission to determine if any updates, revisions or additional policies are warranted to incorporate Vision Zero into the 2016 amendments for the Transportation Element of the Comprehensive Plan. To meet this request, a recommendation from the Transportation Commission will be due to the Council in March 2016. To that end, staff proposes a preliminary recommendation with a range of potential alternatives for Commission consideration on January 14, 2016. Staff seeks Commission direction to prepare a preliminary Commission recommendation that would be discussed and potentially approved on February 11 or March 10, 2016.

BACKGROUND

Vision Zero is a global approach to traffic safety that has the ultimate goal of ending traffic deaths and serious injuries. The idea began in Sweden in the 1990s, where it was adopted as national policy. At the core of Vision Zero is the premise that death and injury on city streets is preventable—that, for the most part, these outcomes are not the result of “accidents”, but rather they are the result of collisions that significantly affect the most vulnerable users of the roadway—people who are walking and bicycling. Collisions are often the result of behaviors that are dangerous and inappropriate and of street design that may encourage such inappropriate behavior. To that end, Vision Zero streets should be designed in such a way that encourage and reinforce safe, positive behavior. Given that vehicle speed is a fundamental predictor of crash survival for people walking and biking, the problem must be approached from the perspective that street design should emphasize safety, predictability and the potential for human error, coupled with targeted education and rigorous, data-driven enforcement. Vision Zero instills a holistic, new way of thinking about traffic fatalities and serious injuries—that they are not inevitable.

By endorsing Vision Zero, the Council supported ongoing city efforts to keep people safe on Bellevue streets. Vision Zero is a multi-faceted approach to safety that would provide for:

- Designing and managing streets to encourage safe and context-appropriate behavior of all roadway users,
- Providing facilities that accommodate all travel modes, and create a protected environment for the most vulnerable users,
- Building a complete and connected non-motorized transportation network that supports people who are walking and bicycling: creating safe mobility options by separating moving vehicles from people walking and riding bicycles , reducing vehicle speeds, and designing facilities for people who are not able to move very quickly under their own power,
- Educating the community to instill awareness and respect for one another in the environment of shared streets, and
- Consistently and rigorously enforcing traffic safety laws with emphasis on roadways and intersections that have high crash rates, and especially where crashes involve vulnerable road users.

The city has comprehensive plan policies, programs, direction from Council and endorsement of design manuals that are intended to make streets safe for everyone. Vision Zero goes one step farther to succinctly and explicitly tie city policies and efforts into a unifying framework.

Examples of existing policies, programs, direction and endorsements include:

- Comprehensive Plan: Council adopted the Transportation Element in August 2015 as part of the ten-year Comprehensive Plan update. Transportation Element policy addresses the safety for all users of the transportation system.
- Pedestrian and Bicycle Implementation Initiative (PBII): PBII is a complement of action-oriented efforts that will advance project designs and programs identified in the 2009 Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan to make Bellevue a great place to walk and bike.
- U.S. DOT Mayor’s Challenge: Along with 200 other cities across the nation, the City of Bellevue—in April 2015— joined the U.S. Department of Transportation challenge for Safe People, Safer Streets, asking mayors and local elected officials to take significant action to improve the safety of transportation networks for people of all ages and abilities while they are walking or riding a bicycle. Each jurisdiction takes an approach targeted to the needs of the community, while staying true to the idea that human errors in judgment shouldn’t lead to death and serious injury.
- National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO): In March 2014, the City of Bellevue endorsed the NACTO Urban Street Design Guide to recognize that streets must be safe, sustainable, multi-modal and context-appropriate for all users.

INFORMATION

Transportation Commission recommendations embedded in the Transportation Element include policies to support the Transportation Vision of a system that integrates leading safety and efficiency techniques to provide safe and reliable mobility options for people wherever they need to go throughout the city, whether they are walking, riding a bicycle, taking transit and/or driving a car.

The goal of the Transportation Element and its supporting policies articulate the safety considerations for the transportation system design, operation and maintenance.

TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT GOAL “To maintain and enhance a comprehensive multimodal transportation system to serve all members of the community.”

Roadways - *Policies that address management of the city’s street system to meet community mobility needs.*

TR-53. Maintain and enhance safety for all users of the roadway network.

TR-55. Maintain a collision reduction program to identify high collision locations, evaluate potential safety improvements and implement recommended changes.

TR-56. Provide street lighting where needed and appropriate based on neighborhood context to improve visibility and safety while minimizing light/glare spillover.

TR-57. Minimize visual distractions, extraneous objects, and excessive clutter along arterials.

TR-58. Minimize the number of driveways on arterials to improve the pedestrian environment and reduce the potential for pedestrian and vehicle collisions.

Transit - Policies that address the provision of transit service and access to transit in Bellevue.

TR-76. Develop and maintain safe and convenient pedestrian access to transit stops and stations, through shared responsibility with transit providers, that:

1. Provides short, direct routes within a ten-minute walk;
2. Designs the pedestrian environment to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without adaptation;
3. Maximizes safety for pedestrians at street crossings; and
4. Gives priority to pedestrian access and safety.

TR-77. Facilitate intermodal transfers and increased access to transit stations through partnerships with public and private providers of transit and shuttle services with an emphasis on safety for people transferring between the station platform and the various modes.

TR-91. Implement standards and guidelines to create transit stations that are valued places in the community by providing:

1. Comfortable and safe access to the surrounding community;
2. Space that is comfortable for both large and small numbers of people; and
3. Design that encourages social interaction.

TR-94. Maintain and enhance safety when incorporating high capacity transit along Bellevue streets, through the use of street design features, materials, street signage and lane markings that provide clear, unambiguous direction to drivers, pedestrians, and bicyclists.

TR-97. Ensure that agreements with transit providers include elements to provide long-term safety and security, operation and maintenance of stations.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation - Policies that address increasing the opportunities to provide people with safe, comfortable and connected pedestrian and bicycle facilities in Bellevue.

TR-105. Implement the Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan and prioritize projects that:

1. Address safety issues;

2. Provide access to activity centers;
3. Provide access to the transit and school bus systems;
4. Complete and connect planned pedestrian or bicycle facilities;
5. Develop primary north-south and east-west bicycle routes through the city;
6. Improve multimodal level of service along travel corridors; and
7. Serve residents who have special accessibility needs.

- TR-109.** Ensure that a safe, permanent, and convenient alternative facility is present prior to the permanent vacation of an off-street pedestrian or bicycle facility.
- TR-110.** Support education and information programs to promote a share the road/share the trail message.
- TR-116.** Improve the opportunities for pedestrians to safely cross streets at intersections and designated mid-block locations.

Neighborhood Protection - *Policies that address how the city will protect neighborhoods from impacts associated with the transportation system, such as noise, congestion, and cut-through traffic in coordination with the policies of the Neighborhoods Element.*

- TR-145.** Preserve the safety and livability of residential streets through an adequately funded neighborhood traffic safety program.
- TR-153.** Employ traffic calming measures to slow vehicular travel speed along residential streets and to reduce the volume of cut-through traffic.

RECOMMENDATION

In the Transportation Element, Vision Zero policies would create a framework and an objective around which to align existing or new Bellevue policies and programs and would focus conversation to help the city achieve the goal of eliminating deaths and serious injuries that occur on Bellevue streets by 2030. Transportation Department staff have identified two different approaches to integrate Vision Zero policies into the Transportation Element; a “Basic Approach” that has two options and a “Programmatic Approach” that would identify additional steps the City could take to embrace Vision Zero.

Basic Approach

Given that the Transportation Element is embedded with policies that address safety from a number of perspectives, staff has identified two options to incorporate a basic Vision Zero framework in support of existing policies and programs.

Basic Approach 1

One option would be to create a new Vision Zero “chapter” within the Transportation Element, similar to the chapters on Roadways, Transit, etc. In a Vision Zero chapter, a brief statement of policy intent would be followed by several specific Vision Zero policies. The existing safety-related policies would be retained in their respective chapters. There may be merit in creating a new Vision Zero chapter in that it would be front-and-center in the Transportation Element as the framework for existing policies and programs. A new Vision Zero chapter could look like the draft staff has prepared in Attachment 2.

Basic Approach 2

Another option would be to integrate new Vision Zero policies into the existing Transportation Element chapters. In this option, policies that capture the Vision Zero intent would be matched with similar policies in other chapters. While this may shine a Vision Zero spotlight on the existing policies and programs, the overall Vision Zero message and policy framework may be diluted. Embedded Vision Zero policies are shown in draft form in Attachment 3.

Programmatic Approach

As drafted in Attachments 2 and 3, staff provides a simple Vision Zero framework that would create another context for existing Bellevue traffic safety policies and programs. Staff believes that either option of this *Basic Approach* would meet the Council’s intent and direction expressed in Resolution No. 9035. Alternatively, with Commission direction, staff would draft policies that may be considered a more *Programmatic Approach* to implementing Vision Zero.

A *Programmatic Approach* would recognize that Vision Zero is more than a framework for existing policies and programs. It may be used to identify collaborative, expanded or new efforts in programs, support modifications to the design of transportation facilities, clarify priorities and document the need for new resources. At the core of a *Programmatic Approach* to integrating Vision Zero in Bellevue are the “6 Es” that are the essence for implementing Vision Zero:

- Education: Inform residents about traffic laws and safe behavior for travelers of all ages and abilities
- Encouragement: Incentivize safe behavior
- Enforcement: Implement strategies to more effectively enforce traffic laws and regulations
- Engineering: Employ street design techniques to make streets safe for all, especially for the most vulnerable users
- Equity: Ensure that safety applies to everyone no matter who you are, what mode you are using or where in the city you are traveling

- Evaluation: Monitor progress, adjust strategies, and celebrate success

Other jurisdictions that have taken a programmatic approach include the following jurisdictions:

Washington State: [Washington State Strategic Highway Safety Plan](#)

This plan is the manifestation of the state’s Target Zero plan that envisions zero deaths and serious injuries by 2030 on state highways. Target Zero is a “practitioner’s plan” intended to unite the contributing organizations as well as traffic safety organizations statewide. The plan coordinates traffic safety programs, better aligns priorities and strategies, and has a common language and approach to traffic safety efforts across Washington State. The plan is data driven, identifying the factors contributing to fatal and serious injury collisions on Washington roads, as well as listing proven and recommended strategies for reducing traffic deaths and serious injuries.

Seattle: [Seattle’s Plan to End Traffic Deaths and Serious Injuries by 2030](#)

Vision Zero provides an opportunity to integrate safety efforts by combining the street design recommendations of the Pedestrian, Bicycle, Transit, and Freight Master Plans with targeted enforcement patrols and educational outreach to address behavioral issues. Strategies are grouped into three categories: street design, policies and regulation; education and public engagement, and enforcement.

San Jose: [Moving Toward Zero Traffic Deaths and Providing Safe Streets for All, as Soon as Possible](#)

The goal of Vision Zero San Jose is to create a community culture that prioritizes traffic safety and ensures that mistakes on roadways don’t result in severe injury or death. Strategies are aligned with evaluation; engineering, enforcement and education; technology and policy; and partnerships.

Washington, DC: [A Plan of Action](#)

The Washington, DC *Plan of Action* dedicates staff to pursue and lead the strategies within the Action Plan. Through Vision Zero, Washington, DC commits to: create safe streets; protect vulnerable users; prevent dangerous driving; and be transparent and responsive.

San Francisco: [Zero Traffic Deaths in San Francisco by 2024](#)

The Vision Zero Two-Year Action Strategy outlines the projects and policy changes the City of San Francisco plans to pursue in the next two years to build safety and livability into city streets. Action items are aligned with engineering, enforcement, education and evaluation analysis and monitoring.

Boston: [Vision Zero Boston Action Plan](#)

In Boston, the efforts toward Vision Zero are focused on reducing speeds and building safer streets, tackling distracted and impaired driving, engaging the community, and demonstrating results.

Many of these cities identify strategies on how to fund proposed actions or strategies. Further, recognizing that achieving zero deaths and serious injuries requires considerable effort, many agencies identify partnering agencies or organization to help achieve the ambitious goal.

If the Commission would like to recommend the Council consider a programmatic approach to Vision Zero, staff proposes policies that could be added to a Vision Zero chapter in the Transportation Element. These policies would be in addition to the policies outlined in the *Basic Approach*:

- Establish an ongoing Vision Zero task force that includes interdepartmental representatives as well as community stakeholders to coordinate roadway safety efforts, considering the 6 Es
- Prepare and implement—with adequate resources—a Vision Zero action strategy that incorporates the 6 Es and includes a clear purpose, outcomes, action items and performance measures
- Update Vision Zero action strategy periodically, as needed to keep current with local needs and national best practices
- Provide annual status reports that document efforts and communicate progress to the City Council and to the general public

NEXT STEPS

On February 11, 2016, staff will bring a draft Vision Zero recommendation for Commission consideration and possible action.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Resolution No. 9035
2. Vision Zero Chapter (staff draft)
3. Integrated Vision Zero Policies (staff draft)
4. Existing Bellevue Traffic Safety Efforts

CITY OF BELLEVUE, WASHINGTON

RESOLUTION NO. 9035

A RESOLUTION endorsing Vision Zero, for the city of Bellevue 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 and other transportation network goals.

WHEREAS, the worldwide Vision Zero movement is founded on the belief that death and injury on city streets is unacceptable and preventable; and

WHEREAS, the life, safety and health of residents, employees and visitors to Bellevue is the City Council's highest priority; and

WHEREAS, in the past decade there have been over 450 collisions involving pedestrians and fifteen people have lost their lives as result of collisions on streets in Bellevue; and

WHEREAS, the U.S Department of Transportation, through the Mayor's Challenge for Safe People, Safer Streets has challenged mayors and local elected officials to take significant action to improve the safety of transportation networks for pedestrians and bicyclists of all ages and abilities; and

WHEREAS, the City of Bellevue has endorsed the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) Urban Street Design Guide to recognize that streets must be safe, sustainable, resilient, multi-modal and economically beneficial for all users; and

WHEREAS, cities and states around the country, including the State of Washington and the cities of Seattle and Kenmore, have established Vision Zero/Target Zero initiatives specifically focused on the needs of the agency; and

WHEREAS, the Transportation Element of the Bellevue Comprehensive Plan provides policy intent and support for a wide range of traffic safety measures; and

WHEREAS, the City of Bellevue implements programs, services and standards that are foundational to the Vision Zero movement that utilize education, targeted enforcement, implement best design practices, provide encouragement and incorporate evaluation to enhance traffic safety; and

WHEREAS, examples of Bellevue's traffic safety programs and services include the Accident Reduction Program, Neighborhood Traffic Safety Program,

police enforcement, school zone safety initiatives, and signal and street lighting improvements; and

WHEREAS, the Bellevue Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan identifies projects to complete a safe and connected non-motorized transportation system in Bellevue; and

WHEREAS, the Pedestrian and Bicycle Implementation Initiative seeks to define priorities with a focus on accelerating the rate of completion of the projects identified in the Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan; and

WHEREAS, a Comprehensive Plan amendment to incorporate Vision Zero could provide the policy framework to advance traffic safety improvements in a coordinated manner throughout the Bellevue transportation system; now therefore,

THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BELLEVUE, WASHINGTON, DOES
RESOLVE AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. The City of Bellevue endorses Vision Zero as part of a comprehensive effort to strive to achieve zero traffic deaths and serious injuries on Bellevue streets by 2030.

Section 2. The City Council directs the Transportation Commission to review the existing Comprehensive Plan to determine if any updates, revisions, or additional policies are warranted in light of Vision Zero and other transportation network goals. The Transportation Commission will report its findings and recommendations to the City Council for its consideration in determining whether to initiate any Comprehensive Plan amendments.

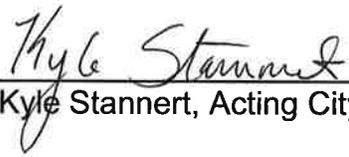
Passed by the City Council this 7th day of December, 2015,
and signed in authentication of its passage this 7th day of December,
2015.

(SEAL)



Claudia Balducci, Mayor

Attest:



Kyle Stannert, Acting City Clerk

ATTACHMENT 2

Transportation Element – Integrate Vision Zero. Basic Approach – Option 1

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WHAT IS VISION ZERO?

Vision Zero is a global approach to traffic safety that has the ultimate goal of ending traffic deaths and serious injuries. It is a framework for a multi-faceted approach to creating a safe transportation system for all users. Components of a Vision Zero approach include several categories of actions: Education; Encouragement; Enforcement; Engineering; Equity; and Evaluation.

Add paragraph to Bellevue’s Transportation Plan section

Vision Zero

Bellevue has adopted a Resolution that endorses Vision Zero – recognizing that death and serious injury on city streets is unacceptable and preventable. Vision Zero incorporates policies and programs that integrate context-appropriate traffic safety improvements to accommodate all travel modes and emphasize protecting the most vulnerable users. Design and management of the city’s street system will focus on eliminating traffic deaths and serious injuries by 2030.

New Vision Zero Chapter

Vision Zero – Policies that establish Vision Zero as the framework and a clearly articulated objective for the policies, programs, services and standards to integrate traffic safety improvements throughout the Bellevue transportation system.

TR- A. Strive to achieve zero traffic deaths and serious injuries on Bellevue streets by 2030.

TR-B. Design and manage streets to foster safe and context-appropriate behavior of all roadway users.

TR-C. Provide facilities that accommodate all travel modes, and create a protected environment for the most vulnerable users.

TR-D. Build a complete and connected non-motorized transportation network that supports people walking and bicycling:

1. Create safe mobility options by separating moving vehicles from people walking and riding bicycles;
2. Encourage safe travel speeds through engineering and enforcement; and

3. Design facilities for all people regardless of age and ability.

TR-E. Provide education and information to instill awareness and respect between all users of the multimodal transportation system.

TR-F. Emphasize safety enhancements on roadways and intersections that have high crash rates, and especially where crashes involve vulnerable road users.

TR-G. Provide safe mobility options for everyone, regardless of demographics and geography.

ATTACHMENT 3

Transportation Element – Integrate Vision Zero. Basic Approach – Option 2

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WHAT IS VISION ZERO?

Vision Zero is a global approach to traffic safety that has the ultimate goal of ending traffic deaths and serious injuries. It is a framework for a multi-faceted approach to creating a safe transportation system for all users. Components of a Vision Zero approach include several categories of actions: Education; Encouragement; Enforcement; Engineering; Equity; and Evaluation.

Add paragraph to Bellevue’s Transportation Plan section

Vision Zero

Bellevue has adopted a Resolution that endorses Vision Zero – recognizing that death and serious injury on city streets is unacceptable and preventable. Vision Zero incorporates policies and programs that integrate context-appropriate traffic safety improvements to accommodate all travel modes and emphasize protecting the most vulnerable users. Design and management of the city’s street system will focus on eliminating traffic deaths and serious injuries by 2030.

Existing Chapter Structure - Integrate Vision Zero Policies

Roadways - *Policies that address design and management of the city’s street system to meet community mobility needs and to focus on eliminating traffic deaths and serious injuries by 2030, in accordance with Vision Zero.*

- TR-A** Strive to achieve zero traffic deaths and serious injuries on Bellevue streets by 2030.
- TR-B.** Design and manage streets to foster safe and context-appropriate behavior of all roadway users.
- TR-C.** Provide facilities that accommodate all travel modes, and create a protected environment for the most vulnerable users.
- TR-G.** Provide safe mobility options for everyone, regardless of demographics and geography.
- TR-53.** Maintain and enhance safety for all users of the roadway network.
- TR-55.** Maintain a collision reduction program to identify high collision locations, evaluate potential safety improvements and implement recommended changes.
- TR-F.** Emphasize safety enhancements on roadways and intersections that have high crash rates, and especially where crashes involve vulnerable road users.

TR-56. Provide street lighting where needed and appropriate based on neighborhood context to improve visibility and safety while minimizing light/glare spillover.

TR-57. Minimize visual distractions, extraneous objects, and excessive clutter along arterials.

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TR-94. Maintain and enhance safety when incorporating high capacity transit along Bellevue streets, through the use of street design features, materials, street signage and lane markings that provide clear, unambiguous direction to drivers, pedestrians, and bicyclists.

TR-97. Ensure that agreements with transit providers include elements to provide long-term safety and security, operation and maintenance of stations.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation - Policies that address increasing the opportunities to provide people with safe, comfortable and connected pedestrian and bicycle facilities in Bellevue.

TR-D. Build a complete and connected non-motorized transportation network that supports people walking and bicycling:

1. Create safe mobility options by separating moving vehicles from people walking and riding bicycles;
2. Encourage safe travel speeds through engineering and enforcement; and
3. Design facilities for all people regardless of age and ability.

TR-105. Implement the Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan and prioritize projects that:

1. Address safety issues;
2. Provide access to activity centers;
3. Provide access to the transit and school bus systems;
4. Complete and connect planned pedestrian or bicycle facilities;
5. Develop primary north-south and east-west bicycle routes through the city;
6. Improve multimodal level of service along travel corridors; and
7. Serve residents who have special accessibility needs.

TR-109. Ensure that a safe, permanent, and convenient alternative facility is present prior to the permanent vacation of an off-street pedestrian or bicycle facility.

TR-110. Support education and information programs to promote a share the road/share the trail message.

TR-116. Improve the opportunities for pedestrians to safely cross streets at intersections and designated mid-block locations.

Neighborhood Protection - *Policies that address how the city will protect neighborhoods from impacts associated with the transportation system, such as noise, congestion, speeding, and cut-through traffic in coordination with the policies of the Neighborhoods Element.*

TR-145. Preserve the safety and livability of residential streets through an adequately funded neighborhood traffic safety program.

TR-153. Employ traffic calming measures to slow vehicular travel speed along residential streets and to reduce the volume of cut-through traffic.

TR-E. Provide education and information to instill awareness and respect between all users of the multimodal transportation system.

ATTACHMENT 4

A Vision Zero **Proactive Approach** for Bellevue could coordinate existing efforts and fill gaps.

Existing Traffic Safety Efforts in Bellevue
Policy
Comprehensive Plan Transportation Element
Plans
Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan + Implementation Initiative
Downtown Transportation Plan + Downtown Livability Initiative
Projects
Transportation Design Manual to inform Capital Investment Program and Development Review
Mid-Block Pedestrian Crossings
Intersection Improvements
Programs
Pedestrian and Bicycle Access Improvements
Neighborhood Sidewalk Program
Neighborhood Traffic Safety Program
Street maintenance Program
Accident (Collision) Reduction Program
Intelligent Transportation Systems (SCATS) + Flashing Yellow Speed Zones/School Zones
Right-of-Way Use Management and Permits
Street Lighting Program + LED Streetlight Conversion
Education
PedBee – Be safe walking and biking to school
School Zone Safety – Walk to School
Traffic Safety Toolkit
Enforcement

Routine Traffic Enforcement
Photo Enforcement at Schools and Intersections
Bicycle Patrols
Potential Gaps – What a Proactive Vision Zero Action Plan Could Address
Interdepartmental Vision Zero task force to coordinate roadway safety efforts
Vision Zero action plan to define purpose, intended outcomes, actions and metrics
Vision Zero status report