

CITY COUNCIL AGENDA MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT:

Resolution No. 9035 endorsing Vision Zero, an approach to traffic safety whose ultimate goal is to end traffic deaths and serious injuries in the City of Bellevue by 2030.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Current City budget supports traffic safety programs, projects and enforcement efforts. Endorsing Vision Zero provides a framework and a clearly articulated objective for a multifaceted approach to traffic safety and may in the future be enhanced with additional programs as part of the City's budget process for Council action.

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POLICY ISSUES:

U.S. DOT Mayor's Challenge

The City of Bellevue accepted the U.S. Department of Transportation's challenge along with 200 other cities across the nation for Safe People, Safer Streets, asking 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.

Comprehensive Plan

The Transportation Element of the Comprehensive Plan, adopted in August 2015, includes policies to support the Transportation Vision of a system that integrates leading safety and efficiency technology to provide safe and reliable mobility options, including walking, biking, transit and car, to take people where they need to go.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Implementation Initiative

The 2009 Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan articulates a shared vision of a desirable future for non-motorized mobility that remains relevant today. The Pedestrian and Bicycle Implementation Initiative (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.

DIRECTION NEEDED FROM COUNCIL:

- Action
- Discussion
- Information

BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS:

At the November 23, 2015 Council meeting, staff shared the concepts of Vision Zero, an approach to traffic safety whose ultimate goal is to end traffic deaths and serious injuries. At the core of Vision Zero is the belief that death and injury on city streets is preventable—that, for the most part, these are not “accidents” that occur but collisions that could be avoided. Collisions are often the result of poor behaviors and unforgiving roadway designs, so the problem must be approached from multiple angles: street designs that emphasize safety for the most vulnerable users, predictability and the potential for human error, coupled with targeted education and data-driven enforcement efforts. Vision Zero is supported by a number of agencies, including the Washington State Department of Transportation and King County.

Councilmembers expressed support for the Vision Zero concept and noted the 2015 Comprehensive Plan provides policy intent and support to implement a wide range of traffic safety measures. Through existing programs and enforcement efforts, Bellevue staff work towards enhancing safe and reliable mobility options, including walking, biking, transit and car, to take people where they need to go. Endorsing Vision Zero would add to these efforts by creating a framework for a multi-faced approach that provides for:

- Designing streets to encourage safe behavior, provide facilities to accommodate all travel modes, and protects the most vulnerable users.
- Building a complete and connected non-motorized transportation network that supports people walking and bicycling: creating safe mobility options through separation from moving vehicles, reducing vehicle speeds, and designing facilities for people who are not able to move very quickly.
- Educating the community to instill awareness and respect for one another as we share our streets. This education component may include the possibility of supporting a change in state laws on driver education.
- Consistently enforce traffic safety laws with focused effort on our highest crash roadways and adjacent to places that attract our most vulnerable road users.

With direction from Council, the Transportation Commission would prepare a recommendation for Council consideration that adopts the concept of Vision Zero as policy into the Transportation Element of the Comprehensive Plan during the 2016 amendment cycle.

Adoption of this resolution will provide a framework for Bellevue’s next steps in endorsing Vision Zero and will help align other policies and programs, such as the Comprehensive Plan and the Pedestrian and Bicycle Implementation Initiative. It will also focus conversations with residents, staff, school districts, health organization and other stakeholders—to help the City achieve a singular goal of reducing death and serious injuries on our roads.

EFFECTIVE DATE:

If adopted this Resolution becomes effective immediately.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Adopt the Resolution endorsing Vision Zero and initiating a Comprehensive Plan Amendment proposal into the 2016 CPA Work Program under LUC 20.30I.B.1.a for policies within the Transportation Element informed by Vision Zero.
2. Do not adopt the Resolution and provide alternative direction to staff.

RECOMMENDATION:

Option 1.

MOTION:

Move to adopt the Resolution No. 9035 endorsing Vision Zero and initiating a Comprehensive Plan Amendment proposal into the 2016 CPA Work Program under LUC 20.30I.B.1.a for policies within the Transportation Element informed by Vision Zero.

ATTACHMENTS:

Proposed Resolution No. 9035