

From: [Becca Wernis](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Council Meeting 12/7, Items 7-A and 7-C (support)
Date: Tuesday, December 7, 2021 6:13:30 PM

Dear Mayor Ashcraft and City Council,

I'm writing to you in support of staff's recommendations for Agenda Item 7-A, adopting the Vision Zero Action Plan and Resolution to Make Significant Safety Improvements, and Agenda Item 7-C, approving a one-year extension of the Slow Streets Program.

Regarding Item 7-A: My primary mode of transport around the island is bicycling. I ride my bicycle to the grocery store, to the bus stop to get to work, and to restaurants as well as recreationally. While I appreciate the separated bicycle and multi-use paths in certain areas (and the slow streets!), when I do need to ride with motor vehicles it can be a pretty stressful experience, as many drivers don't like being "stuck" behind me, even for just a block or two, and I have been honked at and passed closely when trying to ride safely by taking the lane. An integral part of shifting the current culture of car convenience and speed above all else, which leads to the types of unpleasant experiences I've had and much, much worse, is redesigning our streets to prioritize safety. I hope you will support these resolutions so we can get to work as a city making our streets safer for all users.

Regarding Item 7-C: I love the Pacific Ave Slow Street. In the absence of a continuous Cross Alameda Trail (though I know progress is being made), Pacific Ave is my main way to get between West End, where I live, and the commercial area along Park Street. It is far less stressful than being in motor vehicle traffic or right next to it (as I would be on Santa Clara). If possible, I would like to see city council direct staff to ensure there are barricades at every slow street intersection and improve signage on the barricades to more clearly state the intent and purpose of slow streets. I had a motorist honk at me and tell me I should be on the side of the road (out of "his way") on Pacific where it meets Grand. He proceeded to continue on Pacific for several blocks, driving around barricades. Never mind that I'm well within my rights to take the lane on a normal street - clearly this man did not understand the Slow Street designation despite the existing barricades. With this minor addition, I hope you will approve this agenda item.

Rebecca Wernis
463 Buena Vista Ave

From: [Lara Weisiger](#)
To: [Ashley Zieba](#)
Subject: FW: [EXTERNAL] City Council Agenda Item 7-A Vision Zero Plan
Date: Tuesday, December 7, 2021 5:29:05 PM

From: Pat Potter <pttr_pt@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, December 7, 2021 4:40 PM
To: City Clerk <CLERK@alamedaca.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] City Council Agenda Item 7-A Vision Zero Plan

The Vision Zero Plan is an excellent outline of how our community can work towards no deaths or crashes. It may not eliminate them all, but it is a clear step in the right direction. Please pass the Vision Zero Plan.

Thank you,
Pat Potter

From: [Joyce Mercado](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Tonight's agenda items comments
Date: Tuesday, December 7, 2021 2:32:59 PM

Hi, I'm writing in support of the following:

Vision zero staff recommendations

Slow streets continuing

Automated license plate readers

Joyce Mercado

2901 Lincoln Ave

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Ken Freeman](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Regarding December 7, 2021 City Council Meeting
Date: Monday, December 6, 2021 10:12:46 PM

Dear Major Ashcraft and City Council Members,

I am a long time resident of Alameda, close to 40 years.

I support all the positions of Bike Walk Alameda outlined below.

I ask you to please support these positions as well and vote accordingly.

Thanks for all you do,

Kenneth R Freeman DDS

Here are Bike Walk Alameda's positions, at a high level, for quick reference if you find them helpful (with the full letters we wrote to Council below):

Vision Zero Action Plan (Agenda Item 7-A):

We fully support staff recommendations, underscoring the need for more funding and staffing to ensure success.

IEAP (Agenda Item 7-B):

Our Intersection Access Policy (aka Beg Button Policy) should provide pedestrians and cyclists the same consistent, predictable signal operations the drivers enjoy. The policy proposed by our Public Works department is a good start, but doesn't go nearly far enough. We hope that Council will direct staff to beef up to this policy proposal by 1) expanding the number of signals, and hours of coverage, that signals that will be on full recall and 2) ensuring that our toolbox of pedestrian safety enhancements (LPs, countdown timers, etc..) are applied consistently wherever total recall is not implemented. Consistency should be the goal, not driver throughput.

Slow Streets (Agenda Item 7-C):

We support staff recommendations to extend the program and improve Slow Streets, but would also like to see barricades on each side of every intersection, and new slow street segments added to Eighth, Pacific, Ninth, and San Antonio for a north-south connection between Jean Sweeney Park and the Santa Jose Slow Street.

From: [Karen Miller](#)
To: [Trish Spencer](#); [Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft](#); [Malia Vella](#); [John Knox White](#); [Tony Daysog](#)
Cc: [Lara Weisiger](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Mark Greenside's letter attached
Date: Monday, December 6, 2021 2:28:46 PM
Attachments: [We sent you safe versions of your files.msg](#)
[Dear Transportation Commissioners.pdf](#)

Mimecast Attachment Protection has deemed this file to be safe, but always exercise caution when opening files.

Dear Mayor and Councilmembers,

I read Mr. Greenside's letter to the Sun and to the "Transportation commissioners" and wholeheartedly agree with everything he says.

"Dear Transportation Commissioners:

I recently read a letter by Commissioner Randy Rentschler with interest, and I write, with all due respect, to say I believe he has it wrong. Given that the overwhelming amount of public transport and motion occurs in cars and given that cars are much more dangerous and lethal than bikes or pedestrians, it would seem to be wiser and more prudent to plan for better and safer driving conditions as a way of reducing accidents.

You cannot make bicyclists and pedestrians safer by making drivers and driving conditions worse. After all, if there is an accident between a car and a bike or a car and a person, we know who will be worse off.

To put all of the City's improvement emphasis on bike and pedestrian safety, as your letter and City policy do, and make driving conditions worse is self-defeating — and dangerous. You and the City, not to mention bikers and walkers, would be better off and safer if you make improving driving conditions at least an equal if not greater goal. After all, safer and better driving means safer and better biking and walking. Unsafe driving conditions make safe biking and walking impossible. For example, the curb extensions mentioned — those curbs sticking into the street (especially at Grand Street at Otis Drive) — are accidents waiting to happen. For one thing, they are not easily seen at night, and someone is bound to jump those curbs sticking into the street; for another, it is all but impossible to right turn from Otis onto Grand and stay in your lane. The turn is too wide and too sharp. Also, on that corner, if you are driving on Otis toward Grand and you do not know about that corner, you are more than likely to drive into the bike lane thinking it is the right turn lane and get stuck and/or jump the curb. Then there are Park and Webster streets, two major crosstown connections, both of which have been compromised and made less safe by crazy traffic flows that force drivers to weave in and out of a single lane for cars, buses, ambulances, and fire vehicles. The sidewalks have become bike lanes because sane and sensible bicyclists don't want to be on those streets either. Those streets are more congested now and more dangerous than they were before the City's improvements.

Please, understand, I am not against change or the future. I studied Urban Studies, as it was called then, in college, and I worked as a community college educational program planner for almost 20 years. I know what planning entails: it requires shepherding, encouraging, enhancing, welcoming, developing, and hopefully guessing right about the future while at the same time meeting the needs of the present and not failing, undercutting, or sabotaging them. Both present and future have to be addressed and protected, and if they are not, the planning and planners will fail.

As I see it, you're betting on a future that is 20 to 40 years off and worsening the present for the vast majority of citizens. In the present, the island has no abundant, reliable mass transportation. If you have to be somewhere on time, you probably need to go by car.

The same is so when shopping for more than a tomato, or in the rain or cold or at night or with young children or if you're disabled or old or carrying something heavy or bulky. In these circumstances, a bike or walking usually won't do... For people who need to drive, you are making life and driving more difficult, and that can only result in more accidents that will most negatively impact bikers and walkers, which is exactly what you don't want to do.

I know these words go against the planning credo these days, but I ask you to think about them. In former days, the job and goal of transportation management was to maintain safety and the steady flow of traffic. On Park and Webster and Shoreline, the bridges, and the tubes, the flow now is more often a clot: traffic is worse and fatal accidents are increasing. Angry, frustrated, confused, and distracted drivers will not and cannot lead to safer walking and biking — and as a walker and biker, as well as a driver, I'm concerned.

Please, think about this before you approve more improvements.

- Mark Greenside"

As tragic as the 3 deaths at Fernside, Lincoln and Shoreline were, they were all due to driver error. Two drunk drivers and a driver that was apparently impaired by the sun. When I first moved here, it was common knowledge that if you went faster than 30 mph you would get a ticket. What we need is more enforcement of traffic laws not never ending changes in the roadway configurations.

Regards,

Karen Miller



This email has been checked for viruses by Avast antivirus software.

www.avast.com

Dear Transportation Commissioners:

I recently read a letter by Commissioner Randy Rentschler with interest, and I write, with all due respect, to say I believe he has it wrong. Given that the overwhelming amount of public transport and motion occurs in cars and given that cars are much more dangerous and lethal than bikes or pedestrians, it would seem to be wiser and more prudent to plan for better and safer driving conditions as a way of reducing accidents.

You cannot make bicyclists and pedestrians safer by making drivers and driving conditions worse. After all, if there is an accident between a car and a bike or a car and a person, we know who will be worse off.

To put all of the City's improvement emphasis on bike and pedestrian safety, as your letter and City policy do, and make driving conditions worse is self-defeating — and dangerous. You and the City, not to mention bikers and walkers, would be better off and safer if you make improving driving conditions at least an equal if not greater goal. After all, safer and better driving means safer and better biking and walking. Unsafe driving conditions make safe biking and walking impossible.

For example, the curb extensions mentioned — those curbs sticking into the street (especially at Grand Street at Otis Drive) — are accidents waiting to happen. For one thing, they are not easily seen at night, and someone is bound to jump those curbs sticking into the street; for another, it is all but impossible to right turn from Otis onto Grand and stay in your lane. The turn is too wide and too sharp. Also, on that corner, if you are driving on Otis toward Grand and you do not know about that corner, you are more than likely to drive into the bike lane thinking it is the right turn lane and get stuck and/or jump the curb. Then there are Park and Webster streets, two major crosstown connections, both of which have been compromised and made less safe by crazy traffic flows that force drivers to weave in and out of a single lane for cars, buses, ambulances, and fire vehicles.

The sidewalks have become bike lanes because sane and sensible bicyclists don't want to be on those streets either. Those streets are more congested now and more dangerous than they were before the City's improvements.

Please, understand, I am not against change or the future. I studied Urban Studies, as it was called then, in college, and I worked as a community college educational program planner for almost 20 years. I know what planning entails: it requires shepherding, encouraging, enhancing, welcoming, developing, and hopefully guessing right about the future while at the same time meeting the needs of the present and not failing, undercutting, or sabotaging them. Both present and future have to be addressed and protected, and if they are not, the planning and planners will fail.

As I see it, you're betting on a future that is 20 to 40 years off and worsening the present for the vast majority of citizens. In the present, the island has no abundant, reliable mass transportation. If you have to be somewhere on time, you probably need to go by car.

The same is so when shopping for more than a tomato, or in the rain or cold or at night or with young children or if you're disabled or old or carrying something heavy or bulky. In these circumstances, a bike or walking usually won't do... For people who need to drive, you are making life and driving more difficult, and that can only result in more accidents that will most negatively impact bikers and walkers, which is exactly what you don't want to do.

I know these words go against the planning credo these days, but I ask you to think about them. In former days, the job and goal of transportation management was to maintain safety and the steady flow of traffic. On Park and Webster and Shoreline, the bridges, and the tubes, the flow now is more often a clot: traffic is worse and fatal accidents are increasing. Angry, frustrated, confused, and distracted drivers will not and cannot lead to safer walking and biking — and as a walker and biker, as well as a driver, I'm concerned.

Please, think about this before you approve more improvements.

- Mark Greenside

From: [marcy voyevod](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] street safety
Date: Monday, December 6, 2021 2:22:39 PM

please consider the 800 block of haight ave for safety review. people looking for a short cut turn onto haight from 8th and drive really fast. if someone could just hangout in the afternoon they would see the issue.

thx

marcy

--

Typed with one finger on iPhone

Please excuse any typos

510.325.4310

From: [kevin.jordan](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Bike / pedestrian safety
Date: Monday, December 6, 2021 2:16:58 PM

We see that developers are encroaching on bike lanes and walking areas in many locations, including Sherman and Pacific, the development in the old navy base, and we are very dissatisfied with the actions of our politicians who allow our bike riding kids/families to be put in danger. When we bike through the Ruby Bridges neighborhood, we realize once the developers have been given free reign to squeeze our bikes, they will increase their profits and reduce our safety.

The Jordan-Sumintac Family
1521 Morton St. Alameda CA

From: [Lorin Laiacona Salem](#)
To: [City Clerk](#); [Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft](#); [Manager Manager](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Item 7-A, Vision Zero Plan
Date: Monday, December 6, 2021 5:53:40 PM

Dear Mme. Mayor and Council,

I am writing to support the adoption of the Vision Zero Action Plan and budget for 2022 and beyond. Thank you to city staff and consultants for laying out both a goal for the future as well as concrete steps needed to reach the goal. I will make one note - police enforcement should be the last step in achieving our VZ goal. Infrastructure and programming changes are far more likely to create safe streets for pedestrians and bicyclists. Police enforcement increases the risk of dangerous encounters for our black and brown neighbors, without making our streets safer than a road diet and protected lanes would.

Thank you for your support of the Vision Zero Action Plan.

Regards,
Lorin Salem
Alameda Resident

From: [Drew Dara-Abrams](#)
To: [Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft](#); [Malia Vella](#); [John Knox White](#); [Tony Daysog](#); [Trish Spencer](#)
Cc: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] transportation safety on 12/7 council meeting agenda: 7-A, 7-B, 7-C, 7-D, 7-E
Date: Monday, December 6, 2021 10:56:17 AM
Attachments: [image.png](#)

Dear Mayor, Vice Mayor, and Councilmembers,

I am writing to strongly support adoption of the Vision Zero Action Plan and associated plans and budget for 2022 and beyond. I would also like to comment on how related items on tonight's agenda can concurrently improve the safety and quality of Alameda's transportation network:

7-A Vision Zero Action Plan and 2022 Budget

It's appropriate to see the VZ Action Plan paired together with a concrete set of projects and budget proposed for 2022. I hope you all will vote to pass both resolutions tonight.

Getting to the true safety of "zero" deaths and serious injuries on Alameda's roads may take years and effort — as represented by the target date of 2035 — but rapidly reducing risks for everyone by redesigning infrastructure and making related policy and programmatic changes is within reach in the next handful of years.

Bad news about traffic safety in Alameda is there are so many physical design features, city policies, and behaviors by all of us that lead to potentially dangerous driving. This is also the good news: there are many "levers" the city and residents can all choose to use to lower the chances of deaths and serious injuries on our streets.

Thanks to diligent work by city staff and consultants, this Vision Zero Action Plan has the breadth and the depth needed to effectively address many causes, direct and indirect, of traffic deaths and injuries. This plan learns from what has worked and what has failed in other American cities that have adopted their own Vision Zero plans (many of which, like San Francisco's, were adopted 7+/- years ago and are unfortunately not on track to meet their targets of eliminating traffic deaths within 10 years).

Alameda's original draft did over-correct by setting a target date of 2040. (Sure was depressing to stand around at one of the outreach events and chat with other concerned residents about how many Alamedans might be hit on streets in the period of 19 years!) Thanks to staff for listening to this feedback — but more importantly, thanks to staff for also submitting to City Council an appropriately aggressive plan for 2022. Both ends of the Vision Zero timeline matter: setting a target date that is inspiring but achievable *and* beginning with sufficient commitment and budget across all the city departments to make substantive progress on the most dangerous infrastructure, policies, and behaviors.

One suggestion: Federal dollars are coming for transportation improvements, particularly to support the "safe systems" approach, "complete streets," and projects that promote equity through transportation. **How can the City of Alameda be ready to apply for as many of these funds as possible? What are the bottlenecks to having "shovel ready" projects? If the bottleneck is staff time, please hire more or bring on more consultants. If the bottleneck is cross-departmental communication, please direct the City Manager to prioritize this.** Given the large infusion of funds by the "Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill" and discretion Secretary of Transportation Buttigieg and his staff have been given, this is a unique opportunity for the City of Alameda to improve the safety

and quality of its transportation network. Please go get that funding and use it, on behalf of Alameda's residents of today and tomorrow.

7-B Signalized Intersection Access

What an unfortunate contrast with the Vision Zero Action Plan. With all due respect to the city's traffic engineers and Transportation Commission members, they have presented you with a Catch-22: They think it's unwise to provide pedestrians the same experience at intersections as drivers, because if there's an unneeded WALK cycle with no nearby pedestrians, the motorists will sit, emit more CO₂, and maybe get so mad they just run the red light.

But why do the WALK lights have to be on so long? Because post-war American intersections are very wide to provide multiple thru-lanes and turning lanes for motorists. The WALK cycle must stay on longer than a typical green car signal, to allow a pedestrian to get all the way across all that pavement.

It's even worse near senior living centers, where WALK cycles are often made longer as a token effort to enable slower walkers to cross. Therefore, all the more reason — per the traffic engineer's logic — that these long WALK cycles must only happen when a pedestrian has pressed a “beg button” in advance of the light changing. Pressing the button during a green car cycle isn't sufficient — it has to be pressed in advance.

Note that the “beg buttons” are often attached directly to the posts used to support traffic lights, which may already be offset from the sidewalk. Meaning further walking for the potentially elderly pedestrian.

Take this example. It's between the Marina Village Shopping Center (to the east) and Independence Plaza, a senior living complex. I believe it's also where Augusta Collins, aged 69, was killed while crossing on foot in 2015. The WALK cycle is now extra long, but pedestrians and cyclists are most always waiting, since they didn't arrive at the right time to press the “beg button.” (For cyclists, they have to get off their bike and walk down a slope to reach the posts where the buttons are attached.) The extended WALK cycle time just put lipstick on the pig of an intersection that is no more accessible or safer than before.



The full solutions for intersections like these are to reduce the distance pedestrians must cross, or to redo the entire intersection as modern roundabouts (which have much shorter legs for pedestrians to cross). While those types of changes are out of scope for this specific policy, a good traffic signal policy should still somehow reflect this broader context of what actually makes intersections accessible for all users.

Please take the staff recommendation for “1. Construction of new traffic signals should have crosswalks marked on all legs” and send the rest of this policy back to the drawing board.

7-C Slow Streets

My family has used and enjoyed almost all of the Slow Streets. First as places to walk (novel places to go during the doldrums of last year!) and now mainly as pleasant routes to ride our bikes across town.

The temporary barricades aren't the ideal method to slow traffic everywhere. Many intersections where Slow Streets cross larger arterials could also use re-thinks. But that's what makes this a good experiment: the city is now well positioned to decide what features to retain and what to change.

Please continue the program so that the city can transition these routes to more permanent status as part of the Active Transport Plan. These are exactly the type of projects the city should be primed and ready to submit as “shovel ready” to transportation funding agencies, at moment's notice.

7-D Roundabouts

Alameda may not need quite as many roundabouts as the Indiana town featured in The New York Times article that the Mayor emailed around, but modern roundabouts are a good “tool” to add to Alameda’s “traffic toolkit.”

To use this tool properly does require expertise. For example, the City Council’s most recent discussion of the Central Ave Safety Project turned into an exercise in literal hand-waving about the

proposed modern roundabout at Sherman/Central/Encinal. The fact that electeds asked staff and consultants to dig into the appendix to pull out design alternatives is perhaps representative of the homework everyone needs to do to successfully deploy the tool of modern roundabouts in Alameda. Good to see staff presenting City Council with a productive way forward on this topic.

7-E Automated License Plate Readers

I was surprised to read in the staff report that APD already has vehicles equipped with ALPRs, but they aren't currently in operation. For all the repeated calls for ALPRs, I didn't realize the city already had this technology at hand.

This suggests one potential solution: Just install big fake cameras at Alameda's bridges and tubes. I'm only half kidding. ALPRs seem to have an almost totemic significance to some in Alameda. However, that focus on the solution of cameras at city limits does not make for good decision-making.

To my knowledge, more people in Alameda have been killed in recent years by drivers speeding than by other forms of crime with the culprit then fleeing town by get-away car. **Please broaden the focus of this topic from using ALPRs to "catch bad guys" at city limits to encompass automated camera enforcement, including speeding, in appropriate locations around the city.**

Just as there is much homework to do to effectively deploy modern roundabouts, the City of Alameda must do even more preparation before deploying fixed automated camera enforcement. (To wit: BuzzFeed's reporting in 2019 on APD's unauthorized use of facial recognition software.) By broadening the focus of ALPRs to also encompass roadway safety, I hope the city can have more productive discussions about the role of automated camera enforcement in public safety.

Thank you for helping to make Alameda streets safer for me, my family, and everyone else who lives and works in Alameda.

Sincerely,
Drew Dara-Abrams
Calhoun St.



(510) 516-0497
P.O. BOX 2732
ALAMEDA, CA 94501
www.bikewalkalameda.org

**Board of
Directors**

December 4, 2021

Denyse Trepanier
President

RE: Item 7A: Vision Zero Action Plan

Brian Fowler
Treasurer

Dear Mayor Ashcraft and Council Members,

Cameron Holland
Secretary

Bike Walk Alameda whole-heartedly supports staff's work and recommendations regarding the Vision Zero Action Plan and the Resolution to Make Significant Safety Improvements. We hope you will support both, too.

Cyndy Johnsen
Board Member

Tim Beloney
Board Member

As you know, almost 40,000 Americans are killed in traffic violence a year, and it's a leading cause of death for American children. Pedestrians and bicyclists are impacted disproportionately, and the trend is getting worse. The recent uptick in reckless driving is only compounding the issue. In Alameda, eight people have been killed in collisions on our streets since last year, and families are reluctant to let kids bike to school for fear of being run over by a car. It's a big problem, and there's a lot we can do to address it. The actions proposed here are a good start.

Lucy Gigli
Founder, non-voting

For too long we've optimized streets for car speed and convenience, assuming good driving skills and our judgement would keep our oversized boxes of speeding steel from doing damage. It hasn't worked. We know we can do better, as other countries have, and as we're starting to do here in Alameda, with a systems approach that focuses on design to anticipate the mistakes we inevitably make. Each collision is a design failure of some sort. We know that if we design differently, to prioritize safety, we'll get better outcomes. Safety is a policy choice, and one we've already made through our Vision Zero Policy and our Street Design Resolution. It's now time to get moving on those decisions with concrete actions.

Succeeding with Vision Zero will take work from everyone. For many of us, it's a paradigm shift: we're largely a car-centric culture, and some of these actions will mean a move away from things we're accustomed to, like easy parking, wide street widths, and other infrastructure that allows us to drive

too fast, without paying full attention. But these changes are critical, and we will adapt, as others have, in making their cities safer.

Shortening the Vision Zero target from 2040 to 2035 as proposed makes the challenge even greater. But in the balance are potentially 10-20 lives, and hundreds of life-altering injuries averted. We think it's well worth the effort, and look forward to collaborating with the city in the years ahead in any way we can to help.

We have a few asks that we hope you will consider in addition to approving staff's recommendations.

First, we would like to underscore the note about the need for more staffing for Transportation Planning and Public Works. We feel we've been running too lean as is, and between the many important backlogged projects, current workload, and Vision Zero (with an accelerated timeline) before you now, we think budgeting significantly more for human resources is mission-critical. Let's be proactive and hire enough staff to assure that we get to Vision Zero by 2035 as envisioned, or even sooner.

Second, in the Action Plan, please add to Goal 2 (Institutional Commitment) a requirement that when city vehicles are purchased, safety for those *outside* of the vehicle is a priority in the purchasing decision. Vehicle size, front profile, window visibility, and other safety features should be considered. Larger vehicles — SUVs and trucks — are [much more dangerous](#) than vehicles of the past. Their greater mass, often poorer visibility, and longer braking times are to blame for their growing share of injury- and fatal crashes. They are typically more expensive and less efficient, too. For all these reasons, our city should avoid buying these vehicles unless absolutely necessary for the job.

Thank you for your consideration.

Bike Walk Alameda Board