

CITY OF ALAMEDA RESOLUTION NO. _____

ESTABLISHING POLICIES ON STREET WIDTH, LANE WIDTH, CROSSWALKS AND
BULB-OUTS TO PROMOTE SAFE, LIVABLE STREETS AND ENVIRONMENTALLY
SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORTATION CHOICES.

WHEREAS, in January 2018, the Alameda City Council adopted the Transportation Choices Plan, which set as a primary goal to increase the safety and convenience of walking, bicycling, carpooling and using transit within Alameda; and

WHEREAS, in March 2019, the Alameda City Council declared a climate emergency calling for an immediate, just transition and emergency mobilization effort to restore a safe climate; and

WHEREAS, in September 2019, the Alameda City Council passed the Climate Action and Resiliency Plan which will require large numbers of Alamedans to choose transit, walking, and biking over driving alone in order to meet ambitious greenhouse gas reduction goals; and

WHEREAS, the Climate Action and Resiliency Plan states that in 2020, seventy percent of Alameda's greenhouse gas emissions are expected to be generated by the transportation sector, primarily from private automobile use; and

WHEREAS, in November 2019, the Alameda City Council declared that Vision Zero is the citywide guiding principle for transportation planning, the design of streets and sidewalks, and the maintenance of the public rights-of-way, when it adopted the Vision Zero policy; and

WHEREAS, with the Vision Zero policy, City Council directed the Transportation Commission and City staff to consider safety as the highest priority when balancing competing needs and demands for space within the public right-of-way; and

WHEREAS, City Council policy establishing Vision Zero accepted the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) guides as nationally-accepted best design practices and stated that the City will reference, and use as applicable, these guides in the design of all transportation projects; and

WHEREAS, from 2011 to 2018, 16 people died and 82 suffered severe, life-changing injuries on Alameda's streets, an average of 2 deaths and 10 severe injuries per year; and

WHEREAS, half of the traffic crash fatalities during this period were people walking, and over 60 percent of people who suffered severe injuries were walking or biking; and

WHEREAS, senior pedestrians are especially vulnerable: 75 percent of the pedestrians who died in crashes from 2011-2018 in the City were 65 years old or older, and all were 59 years old or older; and

WHEREAS, wider travel lanes are correlated with higher vehicle speeds, which increases the likelihood of collisions that result in severe or fatal injuries; and

WHEREAS, speeding vehicles reduce the safety and livability of Alameda's residential neighborhoods and commercial districts while discouraging walking and bicycling; and

WHEREAS, NACTO states that lane widths of 10 feet are appropriate in urban areas and have positive safety impacts without impacting traffic operations; and

WHEREAS, NACTO's Urban Street Design Guide states that an 11 foot lane may be used for designated truck or transit routes; and

WHEREAS, NACTO states that "restrictive policies that favor the use of wider travel lanes have no place in constrained urban settings, where every foot counts"; and

WHEREAS, the International Fire Code specifies a minimum clear width of 20 feet (two 10 foot lanes) for fire access and recommends 26 feet in limited circumstances and only when necessary to provide adequate access to individual buildings exceeding 30 feet in height; and

WHEREAS, increasing real and perceived safety for people walking is a key step in encouraging more people to walk for transportation; and

WHEREAS, marked crosswalks serve to alert motorists to expect people crossing the street and to show everyone that the roadway also serves people walking; and

WHEREAS, bulb-outs enhance pedestrian safety by increasing pedestrian visibility, shortening crossing distances, slowing turning vehicles, and visually narrowing the roadway; and

WHEREAS, per the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) *Guide for Improving Pedestrian Safety at Uncontrolled Crossing Locations*, high-visibility crosswalk markings and bulb-outs are both appropriate countermeasures to consider at uncontrolled crossing locations.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that when designing, redesigning or resurfacing streets consistent with this policy, improvements and right-of-way space shall be allocated based upon the following principles and priorities:

- Provide safe and convenient access for vulnerable users including children, seniors, and people bicycling and walking; and also for those riding transit.
- Safety for people walking and bicycling shall be the highest priority. Transit efficiency shall be the second highest priority. On-street parking shall be the lowest priority and will be managed for safe, efficient use.

- Ensure pedestrian connectivity, including ADA accessible sidewalks and crossings and, where feasible and appropriate, include accessible parking consistent with United States Access Board standards.
- Support motor vehicle speeds of 25 miles per hour or less citywide except for on Doolittle Drive and Harbor Bay Parkway.
- Motor vehicle turning speeds and pedestrian crossing distances should be appropriately minimized.
- Separated bicycle lanes should be provided instead of unprotected, standard bicycle lanes, when feasible; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that to minimize speeding and reduce collisions resulting in severe injuries and fatalities on Alameda streets:

- Standard travel lane width in Alameda shall be 10 feet on all streets, except on designated truck routes and streets accommodating AC Transit services where 11 foot lanes are preferable.
- Where auto traffic volumes are low and/or space is constrained, further reductions in lane widths may be considered, if they meet the objectives in this policy.
- If no parking is present, one foot may be added to the above to provide shy distance from a vertical curb.
- Standard parking lanes shall be eight feet wide; however, seven feet may be allowed to accommodate bicycle or transit facilities.
- Where additional street width exists, wider parking lanes may be marked to create a door-zone buffer to increase safety for people bicycling and to provide an informal path of travel for increased accessibility and comfort.
- Where necessary to accommodate Fire Department aerial apparatus access roads, the Fire Chief may require additional clearance, striving to minimize unnecessary street width to support decreased travel speeds, injuries and fatalities; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, to encourage walking and increase safety, marked crosswalks and bulb-outs should be utilized as follows:

- The City shall place marked crosswalks at regular and frequent intervals on arterial and collector streets.
- When analyzing pedestrian demand for a marked crosswalk, projected pedestrian volumes shall be considered as well as existing volumes.
- Crosswalk marking and bulb-out placement shall be prioritized according to high injury corridors, uncontrolled crossings of arterial and collector streets, as well as other corridors, typologies, and/or locations identified in the upcoming Alameda Active Transportation Plan and Vision Zero Action Plan.
- Per the FHWA *Guide for Improving Pedestrian Safety at Uncontrolled Crossing Locations*, the City shall use high-visibility crosswalk markings at uncontrolled crossings of arterial and collector streets; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the use of increased striping and bollards for crosswalks, bike lanes, buffer zones, and bulb-outs are cost effective traffic safety improvements compared to countermeasures like concrete bulb-outs and street reconfigurations; however, they do increase ongoing maintenance costs. Future City budgets should include sufficient funds to install and maintain safety improvements consistent with the guidance in this resolution; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, to increase safety and encourage sustainable transportation choices, the Public Works Department shall update existing, and create new, standards, guidance and design details consistent with this resolution and the forthcoming Active Transportation Plan and Vision Zero Action Plan; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the City Engineer and the Fire Chief are empowered by this resolution to make exceptions to this policy at individual locations or in special circumstances to protect or improve public safety at specific locations or, if necessary to improve transit efficiency.