



## STAFF REPORT

**City Council**

**Meeting Date:**

**11/7/2023**

**Staff Report Number:**

**23-248-CC**

**Study Session:**

**Provide direction on the Vision Zero Action Plan**

### Recommendation

Staff requests direction from the City Council on the following in-progress deliverables for the Vision Zero Action Plan (VZAP):

- The framework used to develop priority projects
- Any gaps in or concerns about the priority projects
- The list of actions – either items that should or should not be included
- The recommended timeframe for the actions, especially those identified as near term

Feedback from the City Council is critical to preparing the draft plan by the end of the 2023 calendar year, as required to maintain funding eligibility for regional grant funds, including \$5 million for the Middle Avenue pedestrian and bicycle crossing of the Caltrain tracks.

### Policy Issues

The VZAP is consistent with General Plan policies CIRC 1.1, 1.7, 1.8, and 1.9 that establish vision zero as the City's guiding safety policy and establish specific safety policies for multimodal travel and safe routes to school.

### Background

The City's VZAP, also referred to as a local road safety plan, is being developed to implement the City's Vision Zero policy to eliminate fatalities and reduce collisions by 50% by 2030, as identified in the Circulation Element of the General Plan. A local safety plan is required for local jurisdictions to compete for several grant programs, including the Highway Safety Improvement Program, the regional One Bay Area Grant (OBAG) program, the federal Safe Streets for All program, and others. The City received a grant from the OBAG program for the Middle Avenue Caltrain crossing project and staff anticipate pursuing other grant sources for safety improvements in the future. Without an adopted local road safety plan, the City would not be eligible to pursue these grant funding sources.

The VZAP will serve as an extension of the City's Transportation Master Plan (TMP), which was adopted by City Council Nov. 17, 2020. The TMP included safety as one of several factors to prioritize transportation investments in the City. The VZAP focuses exclusively on safety and uses the nationally developed safe system approach to eliminating fatalities and serious injuries on our roads. This approach recognizes that humans make mistakes and that we need to collaborate with all agencies and groups that have a role in safety, including roadway designers, vehicle development, emergency responders, educators, the public and decision makers. It takes a public health approach that seeks to reduce the physical forces that result from collisions to a level where humans can survive when collisions occur.

On Nov. 15, 2022, the City Council authorized an agreement with Fehr & Peers to help the City develop the VZAP. Building on the City's ongoing work to develop the Environmental Justice element, the City engaged with Climate Resilient Communities (CRC) to help extend the outreach for the plan to engage populations in Menlo Park in historically underserved areas of the City (Belle Haven) and with groups that are more likely to experience collisions. More information about the outreach efforts is provided below.

On Sept. 12, the City Council conducted a study session on the Neighborhood Traffic Management Program (NTMP). During that update, the City Council discussed implementing the NTMP within an overall safety strategy. The VZAP is expected to serve as that broad safety strategy, with the revised NTMP implementing that strategy on local, residential streets.

## Analysis

On Oct. 24, the City Council received an informational update (Attachment A) on the purpose of the plan, progress of the VZAP to date, and information about two work products:

- High collision corridors (HCC) – the approximately 20% of City roads with over 90% of serious injuries and fatalities.
- Emphasis areas – these organize the safety challenges on the City's road network and include three types of roads (state highways, City circulatory roads and local roads), two types of intersections (signalized intersections and side street stop controlled intersections), and areas near schools.

Staff and the consultant team have been working on two remaining project deliverables since Oct. 24:

- Priority projects identification
- Action plan development

### Priority projects

A key product of the VZAP is a prioritized list of projects. Having a list of priorities helps to focus City resources and is also a requirement for several grant programs that the City might consider pursuing.

The team developed VZAP projects using the following approach:

- Start with the TMP. The TMP identified a robust list of transportation projects considering safety and other factors. Several TMP corridor projects have been funded in the capital improvement program recently and are in progress. These projects were reviewed in context of the VZAP, which confirmed that each addresses a safety concern.
- Identify projects for all roads on the HCC. Because the vast majority of collisions, serious injuries, and fatalities are on these roads, the VZAP identified safety projects for every road on this network.
  - Future corridor studies. Some roads on the HCC have corridor projects identified in the TMP that are not currently funded. These projects would be advanced in the future as ongoing corridor projects are completed.
  - Systemic treatments based on emphasis areas. The VZAP emphasis areas identify several safety challenges that have not been addressed in other planning efforts and would close gaps in the HCC where the TMP did not include corridor recommendations. These projects present an opportunity to address several significant types of collisions identified in the VZAP by systemically addressing locations across the City with similar safety concerns.
- Identify a systemic project for proactive safety on roads not located on the HCC. While the focus is on the HCC, some local streets have safety issues that would warrant further, more proactive treatment. Staff received feedback from City Council on these issues in the September study session on the NTMP.

The VZAP provides a first step in defining this project and the framework for how a refocused NTMP would fit within the overall VZAP strategy.

Because of the substantial number of ongoing TMP corridor projects and the gaps identified by the VZAP data analysis, the team recommended the following priority projects:

- Complete existing transportation corridor projects. For projects in planning and design, staff will use the analysis developed through the VZAP to help inform project development. Attachment B identifies existing safety projects on the HCC.
- Systemic project – side-street stop controlled intersections (where only the side street has a stop sign and the major street does not). This project includes priority locations for enhancements to these uncontrolled crossings.
- Systemic project – signals. This project would review the traffic signals in the City (including Caltrans signals) and identify systemic treatments to address turning movement collisions at these locations.
- Systemic project – local road traffic calming. This project would update the City’s NTMP process to prioritize traffic calming on local streets that experience high speeds, collisions and cut-through traffic.

These priorities respond to both staff capacity to advance major projects while identifying opportunities to address known safety issues. For the systemic projects, staff propose to use several criteria to help prioritize locations for future investment:

- Collision density –ensures that the City is responsive to existing collision locations
- Vulnerable user collisions – addresses the higher than average collision rates for younger and older residents in Menlo Park; considers both existing collision locations and areas of identified need (such as near senior housing or centers, along recommended routes to school, or where there are concentrations of residents with lower vehicle ownership rates)
- Speed – addresses locations with higher speeds, which are associated with more severe collisions and fatalities. Focusing on higher speed roads also helps ensure that the analysis captures systemic safety challenges.
- Cut-through traffic – addresses locations on the local road system that have substantial non-local traffic. Would be used for the local road traffic calming systemic project.
- Underserved communities – ensures investments in historically underserved areas of the City, such as the Belle Haven and Bayfront area

Attachment C identifies candidate locations for the side-street stop controlled intersections and signalized intersections, taking into consideration overall collision density and vulnerable road users. These are draft maps that will be updated based on feedback on the proposed criteria from the City Council and the public. They are intended to provide a flexible framework for implementing the systemic projects, and for prioritizing future corridor projects.

#### Action -lan

Another key product of the VZAP is the action plan. The action plan is organized according the Safe System principles, the national framework used by vision zero cities to provide a comprehensive, collaborative approach to eliminating fatalities and serious injuries (Attachment D).

The team has developed a comprehensive action plan and identified lead agencies/departments and the recommended timeframe for implementation for each action (Attachment E). The timeframes are organized as near term (within a year), medium term (2 to five years) and long term (more than five years), as well as a few that are ongoing. Table 1 summarizes the recommended near term actions.

**Table 1: Recommended near term actions**

Safe systems element	Near term actions (within one year of plan adoption)
Planning culture (relevant to all principles)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vision zero coordinator and agency working group – this will provide a means to track the plan and coordination across the City and with other agencies on plan implementation. The coordinator will be a member of the Public Works – Transportation staff.</li> <li>• Grant funding – continuing to pursue grants to implement transportation safety priorities</li> <li>• Equity in plans and projects – continuing to incorporate equity into all the transportation planning and design work conducted by the City, building on the work conducted for the Environmental Justice Element and the VZAP.</li> </ul>
Safe users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Youth leadership – this action builds on the City’s existing Safe Routes to School program to work with youth leaders who can help build a culture of safety for middle and high school students.</li> <li>• High-risk behaviors – this would target enforcement activities on vehicle code violations most likely to lead to severe collisions. In the near term, the Police Department would work on improving tools to track the reasons for traffic stops.</li> </ul>
Safe roads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quick builds – implementing high priority improvements with low cost countermeasures where possible, similar to work completed at Menlo Avenue and University Drive and at Willow Road and Alma Street.</li> <li>• Crosswalk policy – updating the City’s 2016 crosswalk policy (Attachment F) to address how crosswalks are marked and enhanced across the City (planned for early 2024).</li> </ul>
Safe speeds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Slow streets – this action includes reshaping the City’s NTMP as directed by City Council to proactively address speeding and cut through traffic on local streets.</li> </ul>
Post-crash care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rapid response team – this would combine Police, Public Works, and possibly other staff in reviewing locations with severe collisions. This would be piloted in the near term to develop a process.</li> </ul>
Safe vehicles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No near term actions recommended.</li> </ul>

Outreach

The City has received grant funding that requires completion of the draft VZAP by the end of the calendar year and adoption of the plan by City Council in early January. The City conducted the following outreach and engagement events:

- Three meetings of a stakeholder working group that includes representatives from multiple City departments, the Menlo Park Fire Protection District, SamTrans, Caltrans, and the City’s Complete Streets Commission. The most recent meeting occurred in late October and reviewed the draft framework, project priorities and action plan
- A listening session with community-based organizations (CBO) serving Menlo Park residents to gather input and encourage participation in public events.
- Public workshops, held in both English and one in Spanish, at the Belle Haven Branch Library. Over 80 individuals participated in these workshops.
- A pop-up event at the Menlo Park downtown farmers market held in early Fall.
- Targeted presentations to the Menlo Park Safe Routes to School Task Force.
- A presentation to the City’s Complete Streets Commission to review project progress.
- Development of a website for the project, including outreach events (Attachment G).

Several additional outreach events are planned for November to review the draft priority projects and action plan:

- An additional CBO listening session (Nov. 14)
- Additional workshops in English (Nov. 9) and Spanish (Nov. 16), held at the Belle Haven Branch Library

- Targeted presentations to the SRTS Task Force and to organizations working with elderly individuals (e.g., Peninsula Volunteers, Inc., Menlo Park Senior Center staff) (dates TBD)

#### Next steps

The remaining schedule for the plan includes:

- Draft final action plan released – early December 2023
- Complete Streets Commission review and recommendation of the draft plan – Dec. 13
- City submission of plan to MTC for compliance with OBAG requirements – Dec. 22 before winter closure (required to receive \$5 million in funding for the Middle Avenue Caltrain crossing project)
- City Council adoption of final plan – Jan. 9, 2024 (tentative)

#### **Impact on City Resources**

The City Council included funding for the VZAP in the fiscal year 2022-23 capital improvement program from the transportation fund. No additional resources are requested to complete the plan at this time.

#### **Environmental Review**

This informational update is not a project within the meaning of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines §§ 15378 and 15061(b)(3) as it will not result in any direct or indirect physical change in the environment.

#### **Public Notice**

Public notification was achieved by posting the agenda, with the agenda items being listed, at least 72 hours prior to the meeting.

#### **Attachments**

- A. Hyperlink – Oct. 24 City Council informational item:  
[menlopark.gov/files/sharedassets/public/v/1/agendas-and-minutes/city-council/2023-meetings/agendas/20231024/m3-20231024-cc-vision-zero-update.pdf](https://menlopark.gov/files/sharedassets/public/v/1/agendas-and-minutes/city-council/2023-meetings/agendas/20231024/m3-20231024-cc-vision-zero-update.pdf)
- B. Existing safety projects on the HCC
- C. Candidate systemic safety projects
- D. Hyperlink – Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Safe Systems approach website:  
[highways.dot.gov/safety/zero-deaths](https://highways.dot.gov/safety/zero-deaths)
- E. Recommended actions
- F. Hyperlink – City Crosswalk policy: [menlopark.gov/files/sharedassets/public/v/1/public-works/documents/transportation/transportation-projects/citywide-crosswalk-policy-20160906.pdf](https://menlopark.gov/files/sharedassets/public/v/1/public-works/documents/transportation/transportation-projects/citywide-crosswalk-policy-20160906.pdf)
- G. Hyperlink – VZAP webpage: [menlopark.gov/visionzero](https://menlopark.gov/visionzero)

Report prepared by:

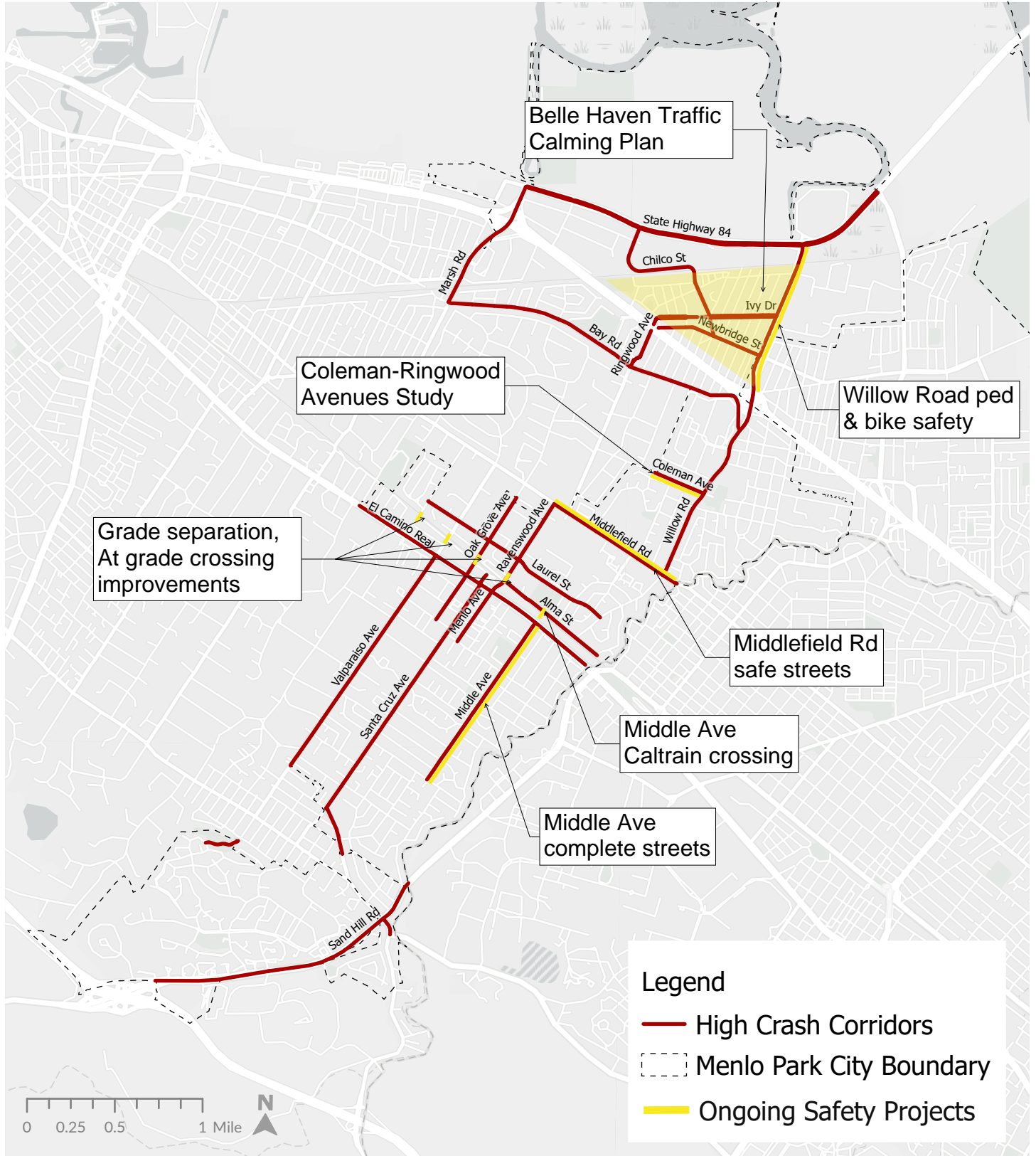
Hugh Louch, Assistant Public Works Director – Transportation

Report reviewed by:

Nikki Nagaya, Deputy City Manager

# Menlo Park Vision Zero Action Plan

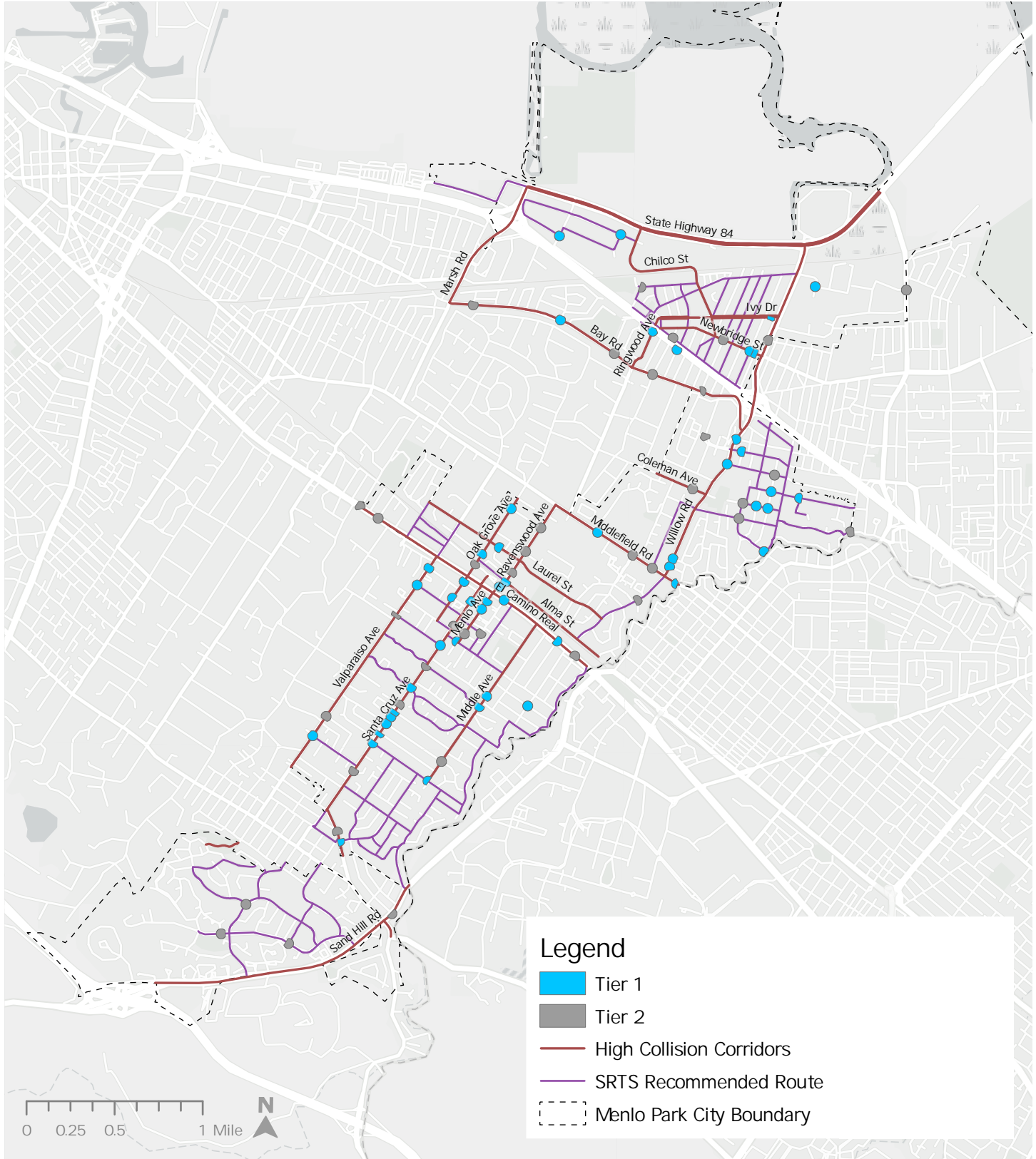
## Ongoing Safety Projects



# Menlo Park Vision Zero Action Plan

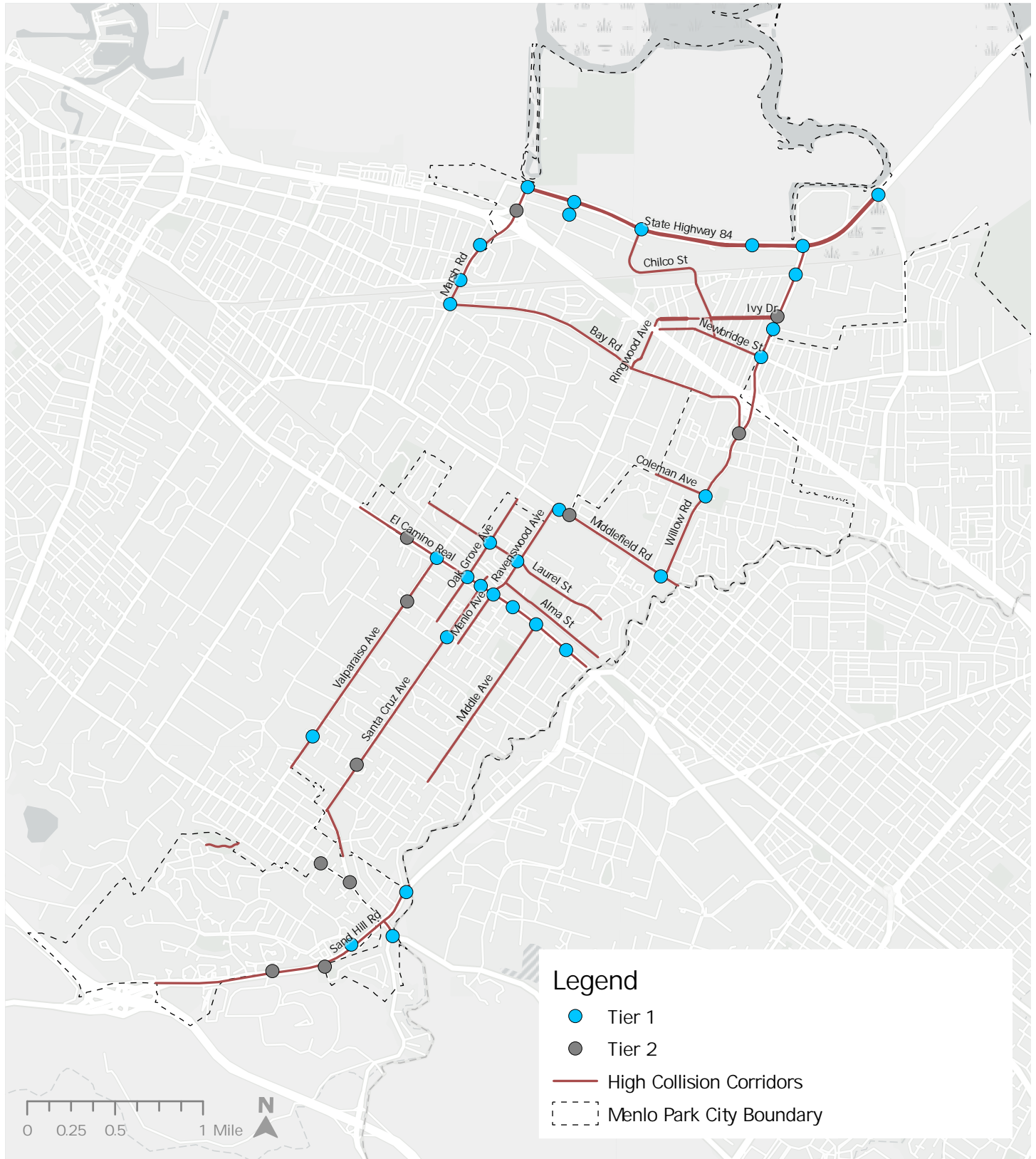
**DRAFT** Candidate Safety Projects:

Side Street Stop Controlled Intersections with Collisions



# Menlo Park Vision Zero Action Plan

## DRAFT Candidate Safety Projects: Signalized Intersections with Collisions





Element	Category	Action	Responsible Party	Timeline
Planning Culture	Leadership and Commitment	<b>Performance indicator monitoring:</b> Implement a monitoring process to evaluate progress of key safety performance indicators. Publicly share this data and intervene if city is not on track.	PD-Records, PW-Trans	Near/Mid
		<b>Vision Zero coordinator + working group:</b> Identify a staff coordinator to manage the City's Vision Zero program and convene a working group to review and coordinate on safety projects and initiatives.	PW-Trans	Near
		<b>Safe System training:</b> Develop and implement an ongoing Safe System training program, focused on management and key staff in City departments whose work touches transportation.	PW-Trans	Near/Mid
	Meaningful Engagement	<b>Vision Zero website:</b> Expand the City's existing Vision Zero project website into a program website to inform the public about Menlo Park's safety program goals and progress and the effectiveness of implemented safety projects.	PW-Trans; CMO-Comms	Near
		<b>Materials in Spanish:</b> Provide community engagement materials about traffic safety in Spanish for Menlo Park residents whose first language is not English.	CMO-Comms	Mid
	Data and Analysis	<b>ACT Menlo Park process:</b> Review the ACT Menlo Park process for reporting resident concerns to ensure that effective tracking of safety hazards and requests for safety interventions. Establish a data-driven approach for evaluating the reports/requests.	PW-Trans, PW-Maint	Mid
		<b>Safety + asset data:</b> Update and maintain the City's GIS inventory (Geodatabase and REMS). Actively work to improve accuracy and completeness of crash data, roadway data (e.g., sidewalks, bikeways, intersection controls, posted speed limits, signing, striping), and user volume data. With RIMS, ensure that demographic data is collected and maintained.	AS-IT, PD-Records	Long
		<b>Innovative data:</b> Explore opportunities to use innovative data collection and analysis approaches, such as crowdsourcing or video detection data.	PW-Trans, PD	Long
		<b>Data dashboard:</b> Create a data dashboard and update schedule to provide regular progress updates on Vision Zero implementation.	PD-Records	Long
	Funding	<b>Project evaluation framework:</b> Develop a project evaluation framework that prioritizes funding based on fatal and serious injury crash reduction opportunities, especially for underserved populations.	PW-Trans	Mid
		<b>Grant funding:</b> Proactively pursue grant funding to implement projects from the Vision Zero Action Plan.	PW-Trans	Ongoing
		<b>Safety in CIP projects:</b> Institutionalize safety considerations in all project types to systematically implement safety improvements through operations and maintenance efforts (such as repaving projects). Audit the city's Capital Improvement Program (CIP) for opportunities to enhance safety benefits of funded projects.	PW-Trans,PW-Eng	Mid
	Development Review	<b>Safety impact assessment:</b> Develop a process to conduct safety impact assessments of all new land use developments to identify standard safety improvements-and cost sharing opportunities.	PW-Trans,CDD-Plan	Mid/Long
	Underserved communities	<b>Underserved communities in plans + projects:</b> Set goals related to safety improvements for populations that have been traditionally underserved and incorporate into project planning, design, implementation, and assessment.	PW-Trans, CDD-Plan	Near
		<b>Community design review:</b> Continue to engage traditionally underserved communities in safety projects and programs by establishing a process of community design review for Vision Zero projects in traditionally underserved communities.	PW-Trans; CMO-Comms	Mid
<b>CSC oversight:</b> Use the Complete Streets Commission to help advise on safety project development and build relationships and trust with community leaders in underserved communities.		PW-Trans	Ongoing	

Element	Category	Action	Responsible Party	Timeline
Safe Users	Education	<b>High-risk behaviors:</b> Focus outreach and educational programs on the behaviors and target audiences most linked to fatalities and serious injuries, including improper turning, obeying traffic signs and signals, and unsafe speeding. Leverage partnerships with community-based organizations and advocacy groups.	PD; PW-Trans, CMO-Comms	Mid/Long
		<b>Demonstration projects:</b> Use demonstration projects to raise awareness of new designs, encourage piloting of safety projects requiring capacity trade-offs, and solicit feedback from the public. Demonstration projects also provide opportunity to measure safety effects and encourage innovation and design flexibility.	PW-Trans	Mid
		<b>Motorcycle/e-bike training:</b> Facilitate training opportunities for motorcycle, e-bike riders and similar road users to encourage safe and informed riding.	PD	Mid
		<b>SRTS curriculum:</b> Contine to implement safe walking and biking curriculum to elementary and middle school students throughout Menlo Park.	PW-Trans, PD-SRO	Ongoing
		<b>Youth leadership:</b> Develop targeted engagement for middle and high school students and families in traffic safety through the Safe Routes to School program and Youth Advisory Commission, with a focus on empowering youth leadership to promote safe transportation in their school communities.	PW-Trans, LCS-YAC, PD-SRO	Near
	Enforcement	<b>Disproportionate impact:</b> Continue to investigate, document, and address the impacts of traffic safety enforcement and traffic safety surveillance on underserved communities. Share results of investigation using website, Vision Zeroworking group, and other methods.	PD, CMO	Mid/Long
<b>High-risk behaviors:</b> Target enforcement on behaviors and locations most linked to fatalities and serious injuries, including speeding, obeying traffic signals and signs, and driving under the influence.		PD-Traffic	Near/Mid	
Safe Roadways	Collision Avoidance	<b>Vision Zero branding:</b> Provide clear Vision Zero branding and education messaging along the High Crash Corridors to increase awareness among travelers.	CMO-Comms, PW-Trans	Mid
		<b>AT network:</b> Build complete active transportation network that provides high-quality, low-stress connections to key City destinations including schools, libraries, and community centers - supporting an age-friendly environment.	PW-Trans	Mid/Ongoing
		<b>Priority safety projects:</b> Prioritize implementation of the safety projects identified in this plan.	PW-Trans	Mid
	Kinetic Energy Reduction	<b>Intersection design:</b> Evaluate intersection design and control decisions in the planning or scoping stage for opportunities to better prioritize using design and control strategies that separate users in time and space.	PW-Trans, PW-Eng	Mid
	Policies and Tradeoffs	<b>Functional classifications:</b> Evaluate functional classification designations from the General Plan to identify whether any corridors should be reclassified from circulatory roads to local roadways.	PW-Trans, CDD-Plan	Long
		<b>Signal timing:</b> Adopt signal timing policies that prioritize pedestrian safety.	PW-Trans	Mid
		<b>School speed zones:</b> Design 15 mph school zones aligned with target speed in those areas.	PW-Trans	Mid/Long
		<b>Maintenance:</b> Routinely review maintenance conditions of infrastructure on High Crash Corridors (e.g., roadway striping, pavement condition, street sweeping) and allocate funding to support ongoing maintenance.	PW-Trans, PW-Maint, PW-Eng	Mid
		<b>Quick builds:</b> Systematically apply low cost safety countermeasures citywide, including through adoption of a Vision Zero Quick Build Policy to streamline and expedite project delivery.	PW-Trans	Near
		<b>Crosswalk policy:</b> Update the existing citywide crosswalk policy to enhance safety of pedestrian crossings.	PW-Trans	Near
	<b>Construction detours:</b> Develop guidance around construction detours and temporary disruptions to the transportation network to prioritize safety for people walking and biking. This may include supporting temporary changes to the street, such as creating a pathway in place of onstreet parking for the duration of the project.	PW-Trans	Mid	

Element	Category	Action	Responsible Party	Timeline
Safe Vehicles	Supportive Infrastructure	<b>AV policy:</b> Monitor relevant policy guidance and design guidelines that accommodate autonomous vehicles (AVs).	PW-Trans	Long
		<b>Curbside management:</b> Develop a curbside management strategy to reduce double parking, prevent blocked intersections, and limit user conflicts around stopped or loading vehicles.	PW-Trans	Mid
	Fleet Management	<b>City vehicle fleet:</b> Support safer operations of city and commercial vehicles through a plan to transition city's vehicle fleet to safety feature enhanced vehicles and an update of existing heavy duty vehicle routes to avoid high-pedestrian areas. Increase the use of alternate modes, such as e-bikes, for City tasks.	CMO-Sust, PW-Maint, PD	Long
Safe Speeds	Design and Operations	<b>Standard plans + details:</b> Update City standard plans and details to include best practices in speed management, (e.g., roadway geometries are designed for context-appropriate speeds).	PW-Trans, PW-Eng	Mid
		<b>Slow streets:</b> Identify a strategy for the designation of Slow Streets in the City, including updating the City's Neighborhood Traffic Management Program.	PW-Trans	Near
	Enforcement	<b>Speed cameras:</b> Monitor recently approved California pilot of speed cameras, including strategies and policy to ensure privacy. Work with representatives to advocate for legislation to allow the use of speed cameras statewide.	PD-Traffic, PW-Trans	Long
		<b>Speed feedback signs:</b> Increase the use of speed feedback signs along High Crash Corridors and ensure accuracy and maintenance of signage.	PW-Trans	Mid
	Policies and Programs	<b>Speed management training:</b> Provide speed management training focused on fatality and serious injury minimization to staff working on transportation safety. <b>Speed management plan:</b> Develop a comprehensive speed management plan with the goal of slowing vehicle speeds on the High Crash Corridors using tools such as speed limit reductions (as authorized by AB 43), traffic signal re-timing, installing traffic calming devices, and re-purposing travel lanes. The Plan will include complementary tools like education and outreach and high visibility enforcement to slow speeds.	PD? PW-Trans	Long Long
Post Crash Care	Crash Investigation	<b>Collision reporting:</b> Employ collision reporting practices that promote complete and accurate data collection and documentation of road user behavior and infrastructure.	PD-Records	Mid
		<b>Feedback loop:</b> Establish a feedback loop such that key insights from crash investigations are shared with roadway designers and/or influence outreach and education.	PD-Traffic, MPFPD, PW-Trans	Mid
		<b>Near miss data:</b> Explore ways to collect data on near misses.	PW-Trans, PD-Records	Long
	Partnerships	<b>Data sharing:</b> Share data across agencies and organizations, including first responders and hospitals, to develop a holistic understanding of the safety landscape and improve data accuracy to reduce the likelihood of collision underreporting.	PW-Trans, PD-Traffic, MPFPD	Mid/Long
		<b>Rapid response team:</b> Deploy a multi-agency rapid response team to all crash locations with a fatality or serious injury to evaluate the site for safety enhancements.	MPFPD, PD-Traffic, PW-Trans, PW-Maint	Near/Mid