Menlo Park Vision Zero Action Plan

Appendix C: Benchmarking Assessment

Core Element	Category	Benchmark	Assessed Level of Commitment/Implementation			State of Current Practice in Menlo Park	Source
			Not a Current Practice	Occasional/ Partial Practice	Institutionalized Practice		
Safety Planning and Culture	Leadership and Commitment	Leaders publicly commit to a "Zero" goal for traffic fatalities and serious injuries within a specific timeframe, and exhibit buy-in for the Safe System approach through media, public events, and support for related policies and programs.			✓	A key goal of the Transportation Master Plan, adopted in November 2016 is Vision Zero: eliminate traffic fatalities and reduce the number of non-fatal collisions by 50% by 2040.	General Plan Circulation Element, Transportation Master Plan (TMP)
		Develop a safety plan aligned with the Safe System approach that establishes a "Zero" goal for traffic fatalities and serious injuries and identifies concrete actions to help Menlo Park achieve zero including designation of lead agency, timeline, and funding. Safety plan should include an assessment of the local challenges that have hindered safety interventions in the past and create a roadmap for addressing them.	✓		*	Will be institutionalized through development of Menlo Park VZAP	Menlo Park VZAP
		Establish key safety performance indicators and implement a monitoring process to evaluate progress and intervene if city is not on track.		✓	*	The TMP includes two safety performance metrics, including "reduction in number of collisions for each mode of travel" and "elimination of collisions resulting in one or more fatalities," however the City does not have a clear process for tracking these. Will be institutionalized through development of Menlo Park VZAP.	TMP, Menlo Park VZAP
		Identify a staff coordinator to manage the agency's safety program and convene an inter-agency working group that discusses safety projects and initiatives. The working group includes a representative from every agency or department that plays a critical role in advancing each Safe System element. Actively work to identify and overcome barriers to coordination across departments and agencies.	✓				
		Provide training to Menlo Park staff, directors, elected officials, and community stakeholders on the Safe System approach.	✓				
		Establish an ongoing Safe Routes to Schools program and funding mechanism.			✓	SR2S is active, funded through City's annual budget for over 5 years.	TMP; https://menlopark.gov/Government/Departments/Public-Works/Transportation-Division/Safe-Routes-to-School-program
	Meaningful Engagement	Establish a website to inform the public about Menlo Park's safety program goals and progress and the effectiveness of implemented safety projects.		✓		The City has a website for the development of the VZAP, which can form the basis for tracking safety-related program goals and progress.	https://menlopark.gov/Government/Departments/Public-Works/Capital-improvement-projects/Local-Road-Safety-Plan
		Provide public safety materials in common languages spoken by Menlo Park residents whose first language is not English.		✓		City's website has some safety-related materials prepared in multiple languages, but not all materials.	City Website
	Data and Analysis	Apply a proactive and transparent approach to data-driven safety analysis, including the use of systemic profiles, emphasis areas based on roadway or contextual contributing factors, mode-specific conditions assessments (e.g., bicycle network stress or distance between marked crossings), and equity considerations.	✓		*	Will be institutionalized through development of Menlo Park VZAP	Menlo Park VZAP
		Establish a process for citizens to report safety hazards or request safety interventions and a data-driven approach for evaluating the reports/requests.		✓		ACT Menlo Park allows users to report and track service requests. Currently requests are evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Recommend creating a transparent, data-driven process to respond to requests.	https://menlopark.gov/Services/ACT-Menlo-Park
		Focus network screening and benefit/cost calculations on fatal and serious injuries, instead of all collisions, to identify the core safety issues for human vulnerability.	✓		*	Will be institutionalized through development of Menlo Park VZAP	Menlo Park VZAP
		Maintain a GIS inventory and actively work to improve accuracy of crash data and roadway data such as missing sidewalks, bikeways, intersection controls, etc.		✓		City has GIS database that is actively maintained, however the database has limited information when compared with the statewide database, and has potential geocoding issues.	Conversations with City
		Use innovative data collection and analysis approaches, such as crowdsourcing or video detection data, to identify emphasis areas related to near misses or crashes previously unreported by vulnerable communities.	✓				
	Funding	Develop a project evaluation framework that prioritizes funding based on fatal and serious injury crash reduction opportunities, especially for equity populations. Audit the city's Capital Improvement Program (CIP) for opportunities to enhance safety benefits and remove safety risks of funded projects.		✓		Transportation staff review CIP projects and development projects with a safety lens, but review is not consistent across all projects.	Conversations with City
		Apply for grant programs to fund safety projects.		✓		TMP details HSIP and ATP as example funding sources, but City currently takes a reactive approach to pursuing safety grant funding.	TMP
		Institutionalize safety considerations in all project types to systematically fund projects through operations and maintenance efforts (such as repaving projects).	✓				
	Development Review	Conduct safety impact assessments of new developments to identify mitigation and cost sharing opportunities.	✓				
	Equity First	Clearly define equity in the safety plan and include equity considerations throughout the emphasis areas and strategies.	✓		*	Will be institutionalized through development of Menlo Park VZAP	Menlo Park VZAP
		Incorporate equity considerations in implementation and assessment plans, such as goals related to safety improvements for populations that are traditionally underserved.		✓		General Plan Environmental Justice and Safety elements have started the process of institutionalizing equity into practice.	City General Plan Environmental Justice and Safety Elements
		Meaningfully engage populations that are traditionally underserved in shared decision-making for safety efforts.	✓	*		Has been incorporated into several planning efforts (notable EJ and Safety elements) and will be incorporated into development of Menlo Park VZAP; however, must be carried through future projects for it to be institutionalized.	City General Plan Environmental Justice and Safety Elements

Core Element	Category	Benchmark	Not a Current Practice	Occasional/ Partial Practice	Institutionalized Practice	State of Current Practice in Menlo Park	Source
Safe Users	Education	Perform outreach through educational programs, with a focus on the behaviors and target audiences most linked to deaths and serious injuries. Utilize partnerships with community-based organizations and advocacy groups.		✓		Menlo Park PD releases educational advisories around topics such as drunk driving and DUIs. Other City agencies/departments can also participate in these advisories and/or the City can work with community-based organizations to strengthen education on this topic. Education should focus on behaviors most linked to traffic deaths and serious injuries.	Conversations with City
		Use demonstration projects to raise awareness of new designs, encourage support among stakeholders for 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.		✓		City has conduced pilots of some new treatments and regularly conducts evaluations of treatments that may have an impact on some users as a means to provided transparency in the planning process.	Conversations with City
	Enforcement	Investigate and document the impacts of traffic safety enforcement and traffic safety surveillance on minority communities. Take steps to mitigate disproportionate impact of enforcement on disadvantaged populations.	✓				
		Reallocate enforcement activities to target those behaviors and locations most linked to death and serious injury.	✓				
	Research	Develop and implement strategies for robust demographic data collection in crash reporting.	✓				
Safe Roadways	Collision Avoidance	Systemically install proven countermeasures to separate users in space, separate users in time, and increase attentiveness and awareness, such as: protected signal phases, clear zones, and vertical and horizontal separation for pedestrians and bicyclists.		✓		The City has installed safety-related countermeasures to increase awareness of various users, including green-painted intersection conflict markings for bike lanes. The VZAP will recommend countermeasures to achieve this.	GIS database of citywide roadway elements
		Complete infrastructure connectivity for pedestrians and bicyclists and make progress toward providing separation where needed based on crash exposure, crash history, characteristics of the roadway, and adjacent land uses associated with higher levels of use.			✓	Sidewalk Master Plan (2009) purpose is to close gaps in the City's existing sidewalk network. Bicycle Master Plan (2005) has similar purpose for bicycle network. TMP builds on these goals and includes "safety prioritization criteria" related to closing gaps in these networks.	TMP, Sidewalk Master Plan, Bicycle Master Plan.
	Kinetic Energy Reduction	Systemically install proven countermeasures to manage motor vehicle speed and collision angles, such as roadside appurtenances, roundabouts, refuge islands, hardened center lines, and road diets.		✓		The City has installed safety-related countermeasures to manage motor vehicle speeds, including various traffic calming measures. The VZAP will recommend countermeasures to achieve this.	GIS database of citywide roadway elements
		Evaluate intersection design and control decisions in the planning or scoping stage for opportunities to better prioritize reducing kinetic energy transfer, following new FHWA guidance.	✓				
	Policies and Tradeoffs	Designate functional class and modal priority for roadways to pinpoint the most effective safety countermeasures and streamline tradeoff decisions - evaluated at a network scale for network-based priorities.	✓				
		Ensure safety for all users is prioritized, and accessibility maintained, during construction and road maintenance projects.	✓				
	Innovation	Provide infrastructure for smarter roadways and intelligent transportation systems (ITS) in support of data collection and analysis, as well as proactive system management. Consider long-term network priorities and immediate pedestrian and bicyclist safety and mobility needs when citing EV charging stations.	✓				
Safe Vehicles	Supportive Infrastructure	Enable infrastructure-to-vehicle communication to provide warnings to drivers that support safer driving behavior.	✓				
		Provide supportive infrastructure for dynamic curbside management and autonomous vehicles to enable active safety technology.	✓				
	Fleet Management	Support safer operations of city and commercial vehicles through a transition plan of city's vehicle fleet to lower-mass and safety feature enhanced vehicles; heavy vehicle route restrictions to avoid high-pedestrian areas; and curbside management programs to limit user conflicts around stopped or loading vehicles.		✓		City is publicly committed to updating its fleet, and newer vehicles likely will have more safety feature enhancements. City does not have heavy vehicle route restrictions or a curbside management program.	https://menlopark.gov/News-articles/Sustainability-news/20221107-Meet-the-newest-members-of-the-city-fleet
	Data	Collect data about the involvement of AVs in crashes for future data analysis, and to inform design and policies.	✓				
Safe Speeds	Design and Operations	Adopt roadway design standards that are focused on speed management, such as target speed-based design, for residential and arterial roadways. Adjust roadway geometries for context-appropriate speeds.	✓				
	Enforcement	Deploy speed safety cameras, with a focus on equitable fee structures. Where not permitted, monitor changes in state legislation that may allow for this in the future.	✓				
	Policy and Training	Follow speed limit setting methodologies that determine appropriate or target speeds based on land use context, roadway context, and/or modal priority - accounting for the human body's ability to tolerate crash forces rather than the historic behavior of road users. Consider utilizing innovative data sources to systemically assess prevailing versus target speeds and develop a plan to lower speeds in areas with a large discrepancy.	✓	*		The VZAP will utilize Wejo connected vehicle data to inform recommendations about speed limit setting.	Menlo Park VZAP
		Provide speed management training to staff focused on fatality and serious injury minimization.	✓				
Post Crash Care	Crash Investigation	Employ collision reporting practices that promote complete and accurate data collection and documentation of road user behavior and infrastructure.		✓		City collects collision data, but collision database is limited. It does not include information regarding factors that led to the collision or detailed information on the parties involved in the collision. The City has concerns that some collisions are not properly geocoded.	City's REMS collision database
		Establish a feedback loop such that key insights from crash investigations are shared with roadway designers and/or influence outreach and education. Consider the creation of an inter-agency rapid response team to immediately investigate the sites of collisions and make recommendations for near-term safety enhancements.	✓				
	Partnerships	Share data across agencies and organizations, including first responders and hospitals, to develop a holistic understanding of the safety landscape and improve accuracy.	✓				
		Connect with victims' families and the advocacy community to offer support and resources, and encourage partnerships with outreach and education.	✓				