

EUGENE CITY COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY



Work Session: Transportation Safety - Vision Zero and the Mayors' Challenge for Safer People, Safer Streets

Meeting Date: September 30, 2015
Department: Public Works
www.eugene-or.gov

Agenda Item Number: B
Staff Contact: Rob Inerfeld
Contact Telephone Number: 541-682-5343

ISSUE STATEMENT

Ensuring the safety of the city's transportation system is a priority. The draft Transportation System Plan includes a policy that seeks to eliminate transportation-related fatalities in Eugene. The City is participating in the Mayors' Challenge for Safer People, Safer Streets which was launched this past March by federal Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx. Many cities are embracing an approach towards safety called Vision Zero which calls for eliminating deaths and serious injuries on the surface transportation system. Community members in Eugene have also requested that the City adopt Vision Zero as its approach to transportation safety. At this work session, staff will provide an overview of Vision Zero and the Mayors' Challenge, cover what the City is already doing to improve safety on the transportation system, and request that the council pass a resolution in support of the Mayors' Challenge, and the City and its regional partners' efforts, to improve safety for people who walk, bike and use mobility devices.

BACKGROUND

The concept of Vision Zero first originated in Sweden in 1997, when the Swedish parliament adopted it as the official road policy. Founded on the belief that loss of life is not an acceptable price to pay for mobility, Vision Zero takes a systems approach to enhancing safety. Many cities in the United States, including Portland and Seattle, have embraced Vision Zero.

In March 2015, Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx challenged city leaders to raise the bar for bicyclist and pedestrian safety by joining a year-long [Mayors' Challenge for Safer People and Safer Streets](#) effort. Mayors and other elected city officials participate by leading a call to action and forming a local action team to advance safety and accessibility by taking on one or more Challenge activities which include Complete Streets, Fix Barriers and Educate & Enforce. As part of the Challenge, a mayor or other designated elected official makes a public statement about their city's commitment to making roads safe, convenient, and accessible for all users including pedestrians, bicyclists, and those using personal mobility devices. The Mayors' Challenge calls for cities to take action to improve walking and biking safety in one or more of the seven Challenge activities. Below is a list of some of the actions the City has taken or is working on within the different Challenge activities:

1. **Complete Streets:** The Complete Streets approach to transportation is implicit in TransPlan, the City's current Transportation System Plan (TSP). The draft Eugene TSP has a Complete Streets Policy:

Design, construct, maintain, and operate all streets to provide comprehensive and integrated transportation networks that serve people of all ages and abilities, promote commerce, and support the Envision Eugene Comprehensive Plan's vision for growth and development in a responsible and efficient manner. A "complete street" allows safe travel for automobiles and emergency responders, bicycles, walking, transit, and freight. In addition to fulfilling a street's basic transportation functions and providing access to properties, streets and sidewalks should be designed to be attractive, safe, accessible, sustainable, and healthy components of the City's environment.

The TSP calls for the City to articulate a process for implementing the Complete Streets policy including responsibilities for decision making and public review.
2. **Fix Barriers:** The City has completed an ADA Transition Plan that lays out how the City will bring over 12,000 curb ramps up to national standards as well as installing accessible pedestrian devices (APS) at over 200 signalized intersections that do not have them. The plan calls for installing around 350 improved curb ramps and adding APS to six signalized intersections every year from 2015 to 2021.
3. **Gather Data:** The City supports the [Central Lane MPO's bicycle and pedestrian counting program](#). Through the program, the MPO is investing in permanent bike counters and temporary counters that also count pedestrians. The City is also investing in permanent bike counters on new and rehabilitated path facilities. These counters provide the ability to track how progress is made toward goals of increasing walking and biking mode share in Eugene.
4. **Design Right:** City staff reviews pavement preservation projects for opportunities to add pedestrian and bicycle safety enhancements which are paid for with the pedestrian and bicycle component of the 2012 Pavement Bond Measure. Such projects include pedestrian crossing improvements and buffered bike lanes.
5. **Create Networks:** The draft TSP incorporates the Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan that was approved by the City Council in 2012 and which will serve as the blueprint for building a robust pedestrian and bicycle network over the next 20 years. Some key projects are already funded including a new pedestrian and bicycle bridge that will connect the Fern Ridge Path to Commerce Street, [NE Livable Streets](#) (network of bike boulevards and pedestrian crossing improvements in northeast Eugene), the [Jessen Path](#) (east-west path on south side of Golden Gardens Park from Beltline Path to Ohio Street), and the [Amazon Active Transportation Corridor](#) (two-way protected bikeway on West Amazon Drive, three new ped/bike bridges over Amazon Creek, extension of Amazon Path from 33rd Avenue to the south end of Tugman Park).
6. **Improve Laws:** There has been rapid change in the field of bicycle and pedestrian facility design since the [Design Standards and Guidelines for Eugene Streets, Sidewalks, Bikeways and Accessways](#) were adopted in 1999. The City has received a \$100,000 federal STP-U grant to create updated Multimodal Design Standards and will initiate the update process within the next year.
7. **Educate and Enforce:** The Eugene Police Department has begun to conduct crosswalk enforcement events with the first one taking place on Polk Street this past summer and

more planned over the next year. The City received an approximately \$10,000 grant from the Oregon Health Authority that is being used to launch a pedestrian safety campaign later this year focused on crosswalk compliance by drivers.

City staff is considering other options for furthering efforts on pedestrian and bicycle safety. One possibility is the creation of an internal work group focused on this issue.

The Central Lane MPO is about to start the development of a transportation safety plan that will cover the MPO area. Several City staff from different departments will be represented on the stakeholder committee. MPO staff is interested in the possibility of making Vision Zero a tenet of this plan.

RELATED CITY POLICIES

System-Wide Policy 2 in draft Eugene Transportation System Plan:

Consider safety first when making decisions. Strive for zero transportation-related fatalities by reducing the number and transportation severity of crashes through design, operations, maintenance, education, and enforcement.

COUNCIL OPTIONS

1. Approve the resolution supporting transportation safety efforts.
2. Not approve the resolution.

CITY MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION AND SUGGESTED MOTION

Move to adopt Resolution 5138 supporting transportation safety efforts.

ATTACHMENTS

- A. Resolution supporting transportation safety efforts

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Staff Contact: Rob Inerfeld
Telephone: 541-682-5343
Staff E-Mail: rob.inerfeld@ci.eugene.or.us