



SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Executive Summary General Plan Text Amendment

HEARING DATE: MAY 18, 2017

Date: May 11, 2017
Case No.: 2014.0556GPA
Project Name: Vision Zero: Proposed General Plan Amendments
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Recommendation: Recommend Approval

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GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT

The proposed Ordinance amending the Transportation and Urban Design Elements of the San Francisco General Plan to implement the City's Vision Zero policy regarding pedestrian safety.

The Way It Is Now:

1. The Transportation Element of the General Plan does not directly reference the City's Vision Zero Policy.
2. Policies 19.1, 23.1, 23.8, 25.1, 25.2, 25.3, 25.4, 25.5, 25.6, and 27.8, and Objectives 23 and 25 are inconsistent with the City's Vision Zero policy.

The Way It Would Be:

1. Policies 18.1, 18.2, 18.3, 26.1, 26.2, 26.3, 26.4, 26.5, and Objectives 18 and 26 would be added to the Transportation Element and of the General Plan to reflect the City's Vision Zero policy.
2. Policies 23.1, 23.8, 23.10, 25.1, 25.2, 25.3, 25.4, 25.5, 25.6, and 27.8, and Objectives 23 and 25 would be amended to be consistent with the City's Vision Zero policy.

BACKGROUND

In 2014, the City adopted a Vision Zero Policy to eliminate all traffic fatalities by 2024 and called on City departments to identify specific actions which could help the City to achieve Vision Zero. In response, the Planning Commission passed Resolution 19174, which outlined specific actions the Department could take to achieve Vision Zero, including updating the policies and objectives of the General Plan. The

proposed Ordinance includes changes to the Transportation Element and the Urban Design Element to reflect the City's Vision Zero Policy.

The proposed amendments also support numerous projects and programs that were led or supported by the Planning Department to improve pedestrian and bicycle safety including the Better Streets Plan, WalkFirst, the Pedestrian Strategy, the Bicycle Strategy, Green Connections, the Vision Zero Two Year Action Strategy, and specific streetscape and public realm plans.

ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS

Vision Zero

Vision Zero is a commitment to eliminating traffic fatalities and creating a culture that prioritizes traffic safety. What began as an initiative in Sweden in 1997, cities across the world are working to achieve Vision Zero through the design of streets, education and outreach campaigns, enforcement programs, and policy changes.

San Francisco is consistently voted one of the best cities for walking in the country. However, San Francisco continues to experience a high loss of life each year. There are significant inequities and costs associated with injuries. More than 70% of severe and fatal injuries occur on just 12% of City streets, and these injuries are concentrated in communities with higher percentages of residents that are low-income, seniors, disabled, non- English speaking, and immigrants.

In 2014, the City adopted a Vision Zero policy to eliminate all traffic deaths by 2024. Through the coordinated effort of the Vision Zero Task Force, the City is working to achieve Vision Zero through a combination of engineering measures, education campaigns, targeted enforcement efforts, and policy changes.

Planning Department's Role in Vision Zero

The Planning Department plays a key role in developing plans, policies and designs which can improve pedestrian and bicycle safety and can help the City to achieve Vision Zero. In June 2014, the Planning Commission passed a resolution in support of Vision Zero. The resolution outlined specific actions the Department could take to achieve Vision Zero, including updating the policies and objectives of the General Plan.

Currently the General Plan does not reference Vision Zero nor does it reflect recent citywide efforts to improve safety for people walking and riding bikes. The proposed amendments are significant because the Planning Department through our review of development applications and capital improvements makes consistency findings with the General Plan, and other City agencies reference the General Plan when proposing street changes.

Interagency Collaboration

The General Plan amendments proposed for adoption (see Exhibit B) represents a close collaboration between numerous city agencies including the Municipal Transportation Agency and Department of Public Health, and incorporates feedback received from members of the Board of Supervisors, City

agencies, community members, the Pedestrian Safety Advisory Committee, the Pedestrian Safety Task Force, the Vision Zero Task Force, and the Vision Zero Coalition.

On October 20, 2016, the Planning Commission voted to recommend approval of an ordinance to amend the General Plan. However, on January 10, 2017, the Board of Supervisors rejected the legislation. Since that time, Planning Department staff has conducted briefings with all interested members of the Board of Supervisors and has conducted additional outreach through the Vision Zero Task Force, the Vision Zero Coalition and the Vision Zero Committee. Based on the feedback received, the following changes have been incorporated into the Ordinance (see Exhibit B).

- Add language under Policy 23.10 to state that demand-activated traffic signals should not be used on streets except where there is a need to prioritize transit or there is no significant pedestrian traffic.
- Add language to Policy 25.5 to emphasize that streetscape and public realm plans will be developed in collaboration with community members.
- Add language to Policy 26.2 to emphasize that Vision Zero improvements will be implemented citywide.
- Incorporate the map of Key Waking Streets by reference so that it can more easily be modified as new data becomes available.

RECOMMENDATION

The Department recommends that the Commission recommend *approval* of the proposed Ordinance and adopt the attached Draft Resolution to that effect.

BASIS FOR RECOMMENDATION

The Planning Department supports the proposed amendments because they will ensure that the General Plan appropriately reflects the City's Vision Zero policy. Vision Zero is a commitment to create a culture that prioritizes traffic safety and to ensure that mistakes on the roadway don't result in serious injuries or death. The City and County of San Francisco adopted Vision Zero as a policy in 2014. Numerous city agencies and departments have adopted a resolution in support of Vision Zero and identified near and long term actions that could help the city achieve this goal. Further, the proposed amendments will fulfill the direction outlined in the Planning Commission 2014 resolution to update the policies and objectives in the general plan to help achieve Vision Zero.

REQUIRED COMMISSION ACTION

The proposed Ordinance is before the Commission so that it may recommend adoption, rejection, or adoption with modifications to the Board of Supervisors

IMPLEMENTATION

The Department determined that this ordinance will not impact our current implementation procedures.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The proposed amendments are not defined as a project under CEQA Guidelines Section 15060(c) and 15378 because they do not result in a physical change in the environment.

PUBLIC COMMENT

An initiation hearing was held on April 13, 2017 and there was no public comment. Additional public comment will be taken at the Planning Commission hearing on May 18, 2017 and any subsequent adoption hearings that will be held relating to this amendment.

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| RECOMMENDATION: Recommend Approval |
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Attachments:

1. Exhibit A: Draft Planning Commission Resolution
2. Exhibit B: Ordinance Adopting General Plan Amendments
3. Exhibit C: Planning Commission Resolution 19895 Initiating General Plan Amendments