



PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION 20141103-5A

Date: November 3, 2014

Subject: Vision Zero Task Force

Motioned By: Nancy Crowther

Seconded By: Girard Kinney

Recommendation

Creation of a Vision Zero Task Force to address traffic safety in Austin.

Description of Recommendation to Council

Vision Zero is a campaign to develop strategies to holistically address traffic safety for all road users with the aim to achieve zero fatalities and zero serious injuries.

Create a Vision Zero Task Force

The Pedestrian Advisory Council recommends that City Council establish a Task Force to explore safety issues, national and international best practices, and to develop recommendations for a comprehensive initiative to prevent all deaths and serious injuries on Austin's roads. This study group should represent the diverse array of stakeholders affected by such a zero-deaths initiative and has the support of the following departments, groups, boards, and commissions:

- *AARP*
- *ADA Access and Sidewalk Task Force*
- *ATX Safer Streets*
- *Austin Fire Department*
- *Austin Police Department*
- *Bicycle Advisory Council*
- *Bike Austin*
- *Capital Metro*
- *Crossroads Coalition*
- *Mayor's Committee for People with Disabilities*
- *Planning and Development Review Department*
- *Urban Transportation Commission*
- *WalkAustin*

Rationale:

Summary

This memorandum recommends that City Council establish a Task Force to provide recommendations on creating a Vision Zero initiative in Austin. Vision Zero sets the goal of eliminating deaths and serious injuries on Austin's roads through a comprehensive approach that includes design, enforcement, education, and evaluation. A Vision Zero initiative supports and builds on Imagine Austin and the Complete Streets policy. It also creates a framework for the recommendations in the City's 2012 Traffic Fatality Report, which called for a Consolidated Mobility Safety Plan to reduce traffic-related deaths.

A Council-created Task Force should research and consider traffic fatality and injury data, current safety initiatives, and national and international best practices to devise a traffic safety strategy with the goal of reducing traffic fatalities and serious injuries in Austin to the only acceptable number: zero.

Persistent problem despite existing initiatives

Despite safety improvements for users of motor vehicles, traffic injuries and deaths remain a persistent problem. In the decade from 2004 through 2013, 634 people were killed in Austin traffic. Even as vehicles have gotten safer for their occupants, traffic injuries and deaths have increased for people outside the protection afforded by safer vehicles. Increased risk of injury or death for pedestrians is a frightening national trend - across the US, pedestrians accounted for 14 percent of all traffic fatalities in 2012, up from 11 percent in 2007 - and is especially severe in Austin where pedestrians make up around a third of all traffic fatalities. In 2012, Austin ranked seventh in the number of pedestrians killed in U.S. cities with populations over 500,000, with a fatality rate of 2.97 pedestrians killed per 100,000 residents (National Highway Traffic Safety Administration).

These traffic deaths have not gone unnoticed. In addition to the recently adopted Complete Streets policy, the city has passed several ordinances that address traffic safety, including a no texting law, a distracted driving law, and a 3 foot passing law. The City has a Safe Routes to School program focused on making it safe for children to walk and bike to school (“Safe Walk Safe Bike”) and is currently preparing a Pedestrian Safety Action Plan. The Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) calls for an annual active transportation safety summit. The Austin Walkability Summit similarly focused on legal rights and enforcement to increase safety of people who walk in Austin. Following the 2014 SXSW drunken driving incident that killed four people and injured almost two dozen, Police Chief Acevedo called for a Traffic Safety Symposium. These laws and initiatives aim in the right direction but, as the 2012 Traffic Fatality Report identifies, a more comprehensive approach coordinating these individual efforts is needed.

Vision for the future

Imagine Austin envisions an Austin that is more walkable, bikeable, and transit-friendly. It calls for a well-connected and safe transportation network that provides an array of options for the needs and capabilities of the diversity of Austinites as well as supporting complete communities across the city.

The recently adopted Complete Streets Policy moves the city closer to Imagine Austin’s vision, calling for a transportation network that expands safe and convenient mobility choices. This policy specifically cites safety as a fundamental component for arriving at complete streets and for encouraging people to make active transportation choices. A policy for zero deaths and serious injuries sets a target for safety efforts and changes the focus to safety as the first and foremost consideration in our transportation network.

Achieving zero deaths or serious injuries will be a challenge, although the holistic approach titled Vision Zero has proven effective internationally and nationally at leading to impressive gains in safety. It started in Sweden in 1997, has been adopted in cities throughout Europe, and has begun to take hold in the United States. In Sweden road deaths have been reduced by half since 2000 (The Economist, Feb. 2014). At its core, Vision Zero holds that there is no acceptable number of traffic-related deaths or serious injuries. Importantly, it acknowledges that people will make mistakes and works towards preventing those mistakes from being fatal.

Vision Zero is effective at improving traffic safety because of its multifaceted approach. The responsibility for safety begins with the design, operation, and use of roads. If road users aren't obeying rules or if injuries occur, the system needs to be engineered in such a way that compliance with safety becomes the easiest option. Vision Zero works toward zero deaths and serious injuries through data-driven approach that identifies how collisions occur, which informs how safe facilities for all users should be designed, how to more effectively enforce dangerous behavior, and how to best educate all road users. Outcomes of these efforts are monitored and evaluated over time to best target the causes of serious injuries and death.

Vision Zero creates a goal to work toward and connects existing efforts

A focus on safety is aligned with existing initiatives, as well as supporting other goals, such as complete, people-friendly streets that provide mobility and a sense of place. Vision Zero is a multi-disciplinary, multi-pronged approach with a focus on safety as the primary objective of transportation systems.

Comparable cities have implemented policies that reduce traffic fatality and serious injury rates more effectively than Austin by incorporating Vision Zero initiatives. Austin has a history of developing long-term goals as bold as zero traffic deaths: Zero Waste and No-Kill policies in animal shelters are multi-faceted approaches working toward goals that once seemed impossible. Vision Zero similarly provides a strong, unifying goal that connects existing traffic safety efforts and encourages better coordination among departments and more efficient, targeted use of resources.

Recommended groups to participate in Vision Zero Task Force

The Pedestrian Advisory Council believes pedestrians, bicyclists, children, the elderly, transit riders, drivers, and multiple agencies and departments are necessary to achieve the diverse expertise necessary to comprehensively address safety.

The Pedestrian Advisory Council recommends the following groups as potential participants in the Vision Zero Task Force. The following groups highlight the diverse technical and subject-matter expertise required to address traffic safety in a comprehensive manner:

- Pedestrian Advisory Council
- WalkAustin
- AARP
- ADA Access and Sidewalk Task Force
- Mayor's Committee for People with Disabilities
- ADAPT
- Bike Austin
- Bicycle Advisory Council
- Crossroads Coalition
- ATX Safer Streets
- Mothers Against Drunk Driving
- Safe Kids Austin
- Community Action Network
- Ending Community Homelessness Coalition (ECHO)
- Urban Transportation Commission
- Police Department
- Fire Department
- Planning and Development Review Department
- Transportation Department
- Public Works Department
- Health and Human Services Department
- Capital Metro
- Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization

- Texas Department of Transportation, Austin District
- Federal Highway Administration, Texas Division
- Texas A&M Transportation Institute
- University of Texas Center for Transportation Research
- Urban Land Institute
- Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission

Sources

City of Austin. (2013, April 15). City of Austin 2012 traffic fatality report. Retrieved from http://austintexas.gov/sites/default/files/files/Traffic_Safety_Report.pdf

City of Austin. (2012, June 15). Imagine Austin comprehensive plan. Retrieved from <http://www.austintexas.gov/sites/default/files/files/Planning/ImagineAustin/webiacpreduced.pdf>

The Economist. (2014, February 26). The Economist explains why Sweden has so few road deaths. Retrieved from <http://www.economist.com/blogs/economist-explains/2014/02/economist-explains-16>

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. (2014, April). Traffic safety facts, 2012 data: pedestrians. Retrieved from <http://www-nrd.nhtsa.dot.gov/Pubs/811888.pdf>

Vote

The Pedestrian Advisory Council operates with a consensus-based model. No opposition was expressed. There were 31 members present.

Attest:



Nic Moe
Project Subcommittee Chair



Robert Anderson
Staff Liaison



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1-866-227-7443 | Fax: 512-480-9799 | TTY: 1-877-434-7598
aarp.org/tx | aarptx@aarp.org | twitter: @aarptx
facebook.com/AARPTexas

November 3, 2014

Nic Moe
Project Subcommittee, Chair
Pedestrian Advisory Council
One Texas Center, 5th Floor
505 Barton Springs Road
Austin, TX 78704

Re: Vision Zero

Dear Mr. Moe:

I am pleased to offer AARP's support for the creation of a Vision Zero Task Force. We support the Pedestrian Advisory Council's goal of establishing a group of volunteers to research citywide practices to ensure zero deaths and zero serious injuries occur within Austin's roadways, and for recommendations to be advanced to City Council.

I am acutely aware of the gravity of the problem. From 2004-2013, 635 people have died in traffic; 30% of traffic fatalities are pedestrians.¹ There have been numerous efforts in recent years to improve traffic safety in Austin. But, these efforts remain largely un-coordinated despite a recommendation in the 2012 Traffic Fatality Report to create a Consolidated Mobility Safety Plan for Austin. AARP is similarly concerned with the unacceptably high number of people dying in traffic, particularly our most vulnerable road users. AARP has paid much attention, nationally, statewide and in municipalities around the country on the safety issues. We partnered with the Planning and Development Review Department to initiate the recently adopted Complete Streets Ordinance for the City of Austin. But, we also recognize that it will take years to retrofit our street network for complete streets principles, and that engineering is only one facet of the safety issue.

We are eager to assist in the effort to identify methods for Austin to improve the safety of its roadways. We believe a Task Force composed of diverse stakeholders and the appropriate department and agency representation is a positive next step to holistically combat the problem of traffic fatalities. We also welcome an individual representing the elderly community be appointed to the Task Force.

Thank you for focusing on this important issue.

Sincerely

Jessica Lemann
Associate State Director of Outreach & Advocacy, AARP Texas

¹ According to the Austin Police Department Traffic Analyst. Pedestrian data exists only from 2008 onward.



Austin Fire Department

"Our Mission Goes Beyond Our Name"

4201 Ed Bluestein, Austin, TX 78721
www.CityofAustin.org/fire

November 5, 2014

Nic Moe
Project Subcommittee, Chair
Pedestrian Advisory Council
One Texas Center, 5th Floor
505 Barton Springs Road
Austin, TX 78704

Re: Vision Zero

Dear Mr. Moe:

I am happy to support to the Pedestrian Advisory Council in your effort to demonstrate the need for a City Council-created Task Force to investigate traffic safety issues within our community.

The aim of Vision Zero to achieve zero deaths and zero serious injuries within our roadways is a laudable goal. I appreciate community interest in the safety of our community. Through our Operations and Medical Operations divisions, we are the first responders to vehicular collisions within Austin.

For this reason, I welcome the opportunity to participate in a Vision Zero Task Force in order to identify strategies to reduce traffic fatalities within Austin. When feasible and as time allows, Austin Fire Department will provide fire personnel to offer technical assistance in the development of Task Force recommendations.

I look forward to future opportunities for collaboration and wish you luck in your efforts to make Austin safer for everyone.

Sincerely,

Harry Evans, Chief of Staff
Austin Fire Department



BOARD/COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

Bicycle Advisory Council

Recommendation Number: 20141021-003A – Vision Zero

WHEREAS, Austin has experienced an average of 63.6 deaths per year since 2004; and

WHEREAS, pedestrians account for approximately one-quarter to one-third of all traffic fatalities every year; and

WHEREAS, City of Austin recently adopted a Complete Streets Policy, Ordinance 20140612-119, with a major focus on safety for all road users; and

WHEREAS, streets are the public realm and should be designed to a higher standard as beautiful, safe and comfortable places for all people, in order to equitably support the common good and the Imagine Austin Vision statement: “Austin Values and Respects its People”; and

WHEREAS, multiple initiatives and events have focused on the need for improvements to traffic safety, including: Distracted Driving Ordinance, City of Austin “Safe Walk Safe Bike” Initiative, 3’ Passing Law to protect bicyclists, Community Healthy Improvement Plan, Austin Walkability Summit, Traffic Safety Symposium, 2012 Traffic Fatality Report, Pedestrian Safety Action Plan, among others; and

WHEREAS, no city plan comprehensively addresses the multifaceted nature of traffic safety for Austin and the 2012 Traffic Fatality Report specifically recommends development of a Consolidated Mobility Safety Plan for the city; and

WHEREAS, Vision Zero has been adopted or is being developed by multiple U.S. cities, including: New York, San Francisco, Chicago, Miami, and Los Angeles; and

WHEREAS, Vision Zero aims to achieve zero fatalities and zero serious injuries in the roadway, and has successfully reduced fatalities and serious injuries in cities where it has been implemented;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Bicycle Advisory Council supports the creation of a City of Austin Traffic Safety Task Force to investigate opportunities to improve traffic safety toward a goal of zero fatalities and zero serious injuries.

Date of Approval: 11/3/2014

Attest: _____  _____



BIKEAUSTIN
Austin's Cycling Association

Position Statement: Vision Zero

October 31, 2014

Nic Moe
Project Subcommittee, Chair
Pedestrian Advisory Council
One Texas Center, 5th Floor
505 Barton Springs Road
Austin, TX 78704

Dear Mr. Moe:

Bike Austin is pleased to offer this letter of support to the Pedestrian Advisory Council's (PAC) effort to have City Council establish a Vision Zero Task Force. We support your goal of establishing a group of volunteers to research citywide practices to ensure that zero deaths and zero serious injuries occur within Austin's roadways, and for its recommendations to be advanced to City Council.

The PAC presentation on September 24 to the Bike Austin board underscored the current state of the problem. From 2004-2013, 635 people have died in Austin traffic — pedestrians accounted for 30% of these traffic fatalities and 2% were bicyclists.¹ On average, Austin is outpacing the nation in the rate of bike-ped deaths. For example, the National Transportation Safety Board recorded 33,561 highway fatalities for 2012, of which 4,743 (14.1%) were pedestrians and 726 (2.1%) were bicyclists.²

Bike Austin recognizes that the overall issue of safe streets is critical to all users. Cyclists need safe pedestrian facilities at the start or end and even during their cycling trips. We are keenly aware that a lack of appropriate infrastructure, education, and expectations for all users creates conflict and unsafe conditions. Two of Bike Austin's strategic goals are shaping infrastructure and the growth of the bicycling movement, and we believe a comprehensive approach to eliminating fatalities for all transportation users is critical for the achievement of these goals.

There have been numerous efforts in recent years toward improving traffic safety in Austin. However, these efforts remain largely un-coordinated despite a recommendation in the 2012 Traffic Fatality Report to create a Consolidated Mobility Safety Plan for Austin.

Bike Austin is similarly concerned with the unacceptably high number of people dying in traffic, particularly our most vulnerable road users. In 2007, Bike Austin was a part of the Street Smarts Task Force, which resulted in recommendations to improve roadway safety for bicyclists. In 2014, we remain committed to these recommendations for all road users and support coordinating work through a unified safety policy such as Vision Zero.

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BIKEAUSTIN
Austin's Cycling Association

We are eager to assist in the effort to identify methods for Austin to improve the safety of its roadways. We believe a positive next step is the creation of a task force composed of diverse stakeholders and with departmental and agency representations. Working together, we can holistically combat the problem of traffic fatalities. We also recommend that an individual from the bicycling community be appointed to the task force.

Thank you for focusing on this important issue.

Sincerely

Carol Reifsnyder
Bike Austin – Interim Executive Director
The future of Austin Cycling starts here.

¹ According to the Austin Police Department Traffic Analyst. Pedestrian data exists only from 2008 onward. Bicyclist data exists only from 2007 onward.

² <http://www.nts.gov/data/index.html>

November 4, 2014

Nic Moe
Project Subcommittee, Chair
Pedestrian Advisory Council
One Texas Center, 5th Floor
505 Barton Springs Road
Austin, TX 78704

Re: Vision Zero

Dear Mr. Moe:

I am happy to support the Pedestrian Advisory Council in its effort to demonstrate the need for a City Council-created Vision Zero Task Force to investigate traffic safety issues within our community.

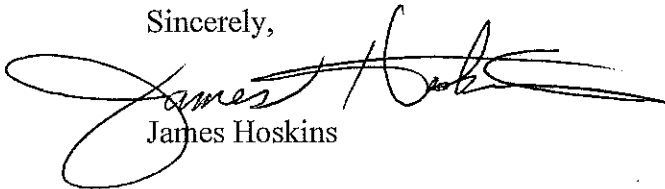
The aim of Vision Zero to achieve zero deaths and zero serious injuries within our roadways is an admirable goal, and our motto at Capital Metro of "safety first" demonstrates the seriousness with which we consider this issue. Currently, we have a number of programs in place to reduce accidents and injuries in our roadways, including safety training for all of our bus operators. We also participate in a number of public safety campaigns, including TxDOT's recent *Talk/Text CRASH* distracted driving and Holiday Sober Ride campaigns.

Unfortunately, even with its current safety initiatives, Austin has one of the highest per capita traffic fatality rates in the nation. Vision Zero, where it has been implemented, has proven successful at reducing traffic fatalities and serious injuries through comprehensive, data-driven evaluations and action plans.

For this reason, I welcome the opportunity to participate in a Vision Zero Task Force in order to identify strategies to reduce traffic fatalities within Austin.

I look forward to future opportunities for collaboration and wish you luck in your efforts to make Austin safer for everyone.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "James Hoskins", with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

James Hoskins

Capital Metro
Manager of Safety
2910 E. 5th Street
Austin, TX 78702
512-369-6026 Office
512-808-7143 Mobile



BOARD/COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

Mayor's Committee for People with Disabilities

Recommendation Number: 20141013-03B – Vision Zero

WHEREAS, Austin has experienced an average of 63.6 deaths per year since 2004; and

WHEREAS, pedestrians account for approximately one-quarter to one-third of all traffic fatalities every year; and

WHEREAS, City of Austin recently adopted a Complete Streets Policy, Ordinance 20140612-119, with a major focus on safety for all road users; and

WHEREAS, streets are the public realm and should be designed to a higher standard as beautiful, safe and comfortable places for all people, in order to equitably support the common good and the Imagine Austin Vision statement: "Austin Values and Respects its People"; and

WHEREAS, multiple initiatives and events have focused on the need for improvements to traffic safety, including: Distracted Driving Ordinance, City of Austin "Safe Walk Safe Bike" Initiative, 3' Passing Law to protect bicyclists, Community Healthy Improvement Plan, Austin Walkability Summit, Traffic Safety Symposium, 2012 Traffic Fatality Report, Pedestrian Safety Action Plan, among others; and

WHEREAS, no city plan comprehensively addresses the multifaceted nature of traffic safety for Austin and the 2012 Traffic Fatality Report specifically recommends development of a Consolidated Mobility Safety Plan for the city; and

WHEREAS, Vision Zero has been adopted or is being developed by multiple U.S. cities, including: New York, San Francisco, Chicago, Miami, and Los Angeles; and

WHEREAS, Vision Zero aims to achieve zero fatalities and zero serious injuries in the roadway, and has successfully reduced fatalities and serious injuries in cities where it has been implemented;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Mayor's Committee for People with Disabilities supports the creation of a City of Austin Traffic Safety Task Force to investigate opportunities to improve traffic safety toward a goal of zero fatalities and zero serious injuries.

Date of Approval: October 13, 2014

Record of vote: 7-0

Attest: _____

Dolores González



City of Austin

Founded by Congress, Republic of Texas, 1839
Planning and Development Review Department
One Texas Center, 505 Barton Springs Road, 5th Floor
Austin, Texas 78704

October 21, 2014

Nic Moe
Project Subcommittee, Chair
Pedestrian Advisory Council
One Texas Center, 5th Floor
505 Barton Springs Road
Austin, TX 78704

Re: Vision Zero

Dear Mr. Moe:

I am pleased to extend my enthusiastic support to the Pedestrian Advisory Council in your effort to demonstrate the need for a City Council-created Task Force to investigate traffic safety issues within our community.

The aim of Vision Zero to achieve zero deaths and zero serious injuries within our roadways is a laudable goal. The Planning and Development Department performs a critical role in providing for the safety and health of our community through the planning and design process. Further, Vision Zero is supported by the Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan through the Healthy Austin Priority Program. It also is consistent with the Plan's vision to build complete communities where individuals are safe and are comfortable using non-motorized transportation modes.

Unfortunately, Austin has one of the highest per capita traffic fatality rates in the nation. Vision Zero, where it has been implemented, has proven successful at reducing traffic fatalities and serious injuries through comprehensive, data-driven evaluations and action plans.

I welcome the opportunity to participate in a community conversation to reduce traffic fatalities. I will support the effort by enabling my staff to participate in the process and to help perform research to support data-driven solutions through the Task Force.

I look forward to future opportunities for collaboration and wish you luck in your efforts to make Austin safer for everyone.

Sincerely,

Greg Guernsey, Director
Planning and Development Review Department



BOARD/COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

Urban Transportation Commission

Recommendation Number: 20141014-03C – Vision Zero

WHEREAS, Austin has experienced an average of 63.6 deaths per year since 2004; and

WHEREAS, pedestrians account for approximately one-quarter to one-third of all traffic fatalities every year; and

WHEREAS, City of Austin recently adopted a Complete Streets Policy, Ordinance 20140612-119, with a major focus on safety for all road users; and

WHEREAS, streets are the public realm and should be designed to a higher standard as beautiful, safe and comfortable places for all people, in order to equitably support the common good and the Imagine Austin Vision statement: "Austin Values and Respects its People"; and

WHEREAS, multiple initiatives and events have focused on the need for improvements to traffic safety, including: Distracted Driving Ordinance, City of Austin "Safe Walk Safe Bike" Initiative, 3' Passing Law to protect bicyclists, Community Healthy Improvement Plan, Austin Walkability Summit, Traffic Safety Symposium, 2012 Traffic Fatality Report, Pedestrian Safety Action Plan, among others; and

WHEREAS, no city plan comprehensively addresses the multifaceted nature of traffic safety for Austin and the 2012 Traffic Fatality Report specifically recommends development of a Consolidated Mobility Safety Plan for the city; and

WHEREAS, Vision Zero has been adopted or is being developed by multiple U.S. cities, including: New York, San Francisco, Chicago, Miami, and Los Angeles; and

WHEREAS, Vision Zero aims to achieve zero fatalities and zero serious injuries in the roadway, and has successfully reduced fatalities and serious injuries in cities where it has been implemented;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Urban Transportation Commission supports the creation of a City of Austin Traffic Safety Task Force to investigate opportunities to improve traffic safety toward a goal of zero fatalities and zero serious injuries.

Date of Approval: 10.14.15

Record of Vote: 4-0-0-3

Attest: [Signature]

(Staff or board member can sign)



*We are advocates for a reduction in drunk driving
through improved transportation and parking options.*

ATXSaferStreets.org

ATX Safer Streets endorses the Pedestrian Advisory Council's plan to pursue a Vision Zero goal based on the New York City plan of the same name.

Since 2002 Austin has had 251 pedestrian and cyclist deaths, with nine of those occurring within six weeks in early 2014 around the time of ATX Safer Streets' inception. Recently The National Complete Streets Coalition ranked Austin 24th out of 51 metropolitan areas. The report "Dangerous by Design" ranked on a Pedestrian Danger Index that calculated how safe streets were.

Many of these deaths were considered preventable. Austin's infrastructure is struggling to meet the needs of our burgeoning population, and while much attention is put on how to address our increasingly congested streets, less emphasis has been put on creating a more walkable city.

We believe that the Vision Zero plan will be invaluable in saving lives here in Austin, and we put our full faith in the Pedestrian Advisory Council to achieve that end.

Sara LeVine
Founder
ATX Safer Streets
sara@atxsaferstreets.org
512-905-3597

November 2, 2014

Nic Moe
Project Subcommittee, Chair
Pedestrian Advisory Council
One Texas Center, 5th Floor
505 Barton Springs Road
Austin, TX 78704

Re: Vision Zero

Nic,

WalkAustin is proud to offer our support to the Pedestrian Advisory Council. We support your goal of establishing a group of volunteers to research citywide practices to ensure zero deaths and zero serious injuries occur within Austin's transportation network, and for recommendations to be advanced to City Council. The Vision Zero effort aligns perfectly with the goals of WalkAustin.

The 2012 Walkability Summit launched a new focus on pedestrianism for the City of Austin. From that Summit WalkAustin and the Pedestrian Advisory Council were launched. I have been thrilled by the reception of both groups within the community and with the incredible partnerships that are forming between our organizations.

There are truly troubling traffic fatality statistics in Austin and we need to work to correct the problem. From 2004-2013, 635 people have died in traffic; 30% of these traffic fatalities have been pedestrians.¹ And, while there have been numerous efforts in recent years to improve traffic safety in Austin, these efforts remain largely un-coordinated despite a recommendation in the 2012 Traffic Fatality Report to create a Consolidated Mobility Safety Plan for Austin. I greatly appreciate the focus of the Pedestrian Advisory Council to address the traffic safety problem in Austin. WalkAustin is similarly concerned with the unacceptably high number of people dying in traffic, particularly our most vulnerable road users.

We are eager to assist in the effort to identify methods for Austin to improve the safety of its roadways. We believe a Task Force composed of diverse stakeholders and the appropriate department and agency representation is a positive next step to holistically combat the problem of traffic fatalities. WalkAustin is able to commit significant resources to assist in this effort.

Thank you for focusing on this important issue.

Sincerely



Founder, WalkAustin

¹ According to the Austin Police Department Traffic Analyst. Pedestrian data exists only from 2008 onward.