

Response to Resolution R-315764 Affirming Safety as the Highest Transportation-Related Priority

Mobility Board
September 3, 2025
Item 4



Office of the Independent Budget Analyst



Overview

- Council passed resolution affirming safety as City's highest transportation-related policy on September 2024
 - Resolution also directed IBA to analyze current policies and provide recommendations regarding street safety
- IBA's Office met with stakeholders, departments, and community members, and reviewed policies and procedures relating to Vision Zero
- IBA Report 25-15 provides recommendations for CP 200-07 and CP 200-08, and several other safety improvement recommendations

Community Groups Concerns and Ideas

Representatives appreciate City goals but express concerns on funding and internal processes

- Representatives recommended:
 - Use of more Quick Build projects
 - Incorporation of Vision Zero and Complete Street concepts to Street Design Manual and future projects
 - Development of a Speed Management Plan
 - Dedicated Vision Zero coordinator
 - More analysis and transparent reporting on outcomes
- Ensuring right-of-way improvements are implemented in proactively and include community input is key

Council Policies Related to Vision Zero

CP 200-07: Marked Crosswalk Criteria at Uncontrolled Locations

- Ensures pedestrian crossings are strategically placed, equipped with necessary safety enhancements, and protected from arbitrary removal
- Aligns with Vision Zero, but some criteria and thresholds may hinder pedestrian safety improvements
- IBA recommends CP 200-07 be updated to:
 - **Shift from to a proactive safety approach by implementing pedestrian demand forecasting when considering installation of crosswalks**
 - **Require automatic safety assessments in areas with major land-use changes**
 - **Create Vision Zero Priority Zones where crosswalks can be preemptively installed based on risk factors (e.g., past crashes, near-miss data, high-speed corridors)**
 - **Expand safe crossing enhancements beyond high-traffic areas by allowing interim solutions**
 - **Reduce crosswalk removal risks by requiring Vision Zero Safety Audit before removals**

Council Policies Related to Vision Zero *(cont'd)*

CP 200-08: Criteria for Installation of Stop Signs

- Provides criteria that must be met for intersections to be considered for installation of stop signs
- Criteria prioritize collisions, visibility, and traffic volume over pedestrian and bicycle safety
- Council Policy does not reflect current and pedestrian and bicycle safety priorities
- IBA recommends CP 200-08 be updated to:
 - **Clearly explain process for evaluating locations for stop sign installations**
 - **Reassess criteria in light of current pedestrian and bicycle safety priorities**
 - **Provide a more formalized process for appealing an adverse decision**

City Auditor Re-Review of Pedestrian Safety Audit

Three of eight recommendations remain open

- Three remaining recommendations include:
 1. Transportation Department should develop a policy for evaluating the impacts of high-crash and systematic analysis programs
 2. Transportation Department should evaluate large pedestrian-related infrastructure projects for at least the effect on speeds, volumes, and crash data
 3. The City should create or assign a Vision Zero coordinator
- **When funding becomes available, IBA recommends prioritizing implementation of open recommendations, especially adding/designating a Vision Zero Coordinator**

Lessons from Hoboken, NJ

Though different from San Diego, many lessons can be taken from Hoboken

- Key takeaways include:
 - Focus on speed reductions – Citywide speed limit is currently at 20 mph
 - Have strong street design guidelines – Hoboken had a Complete Streets policy for several years, which was supplemented with a specific Street Design Guidelines Document
 - Vision Zero Task Force – includes internal and external stakeholders
- It took numerous years for Hoboken to both implement Vision Zero elements and achieve significant results

Lessons from Hoboken, NJ *(cont'd)*

San Diego is implementing many of the steps Hoboken took

- Transportation is already implementing various speed reduction strategies in line with recent passage of AB 43.
- In April, Council approved several reductions to speed limits in business activity zones
- Transportation is currently working on a Speed Management Plan, anticipated to be released by the end of 2025.

Lessons from Hoboken, NJ *(cont'd)*

The City is implementing many of the steps Hoboken has taken

- Planning is working on Street Design Manual following the completion of Complete Streets Policy
 - Draft released in December 2024
- Ensuring a fully updated Street Design Manual includes a complete streets framework is critical to ensure safety improvements are prioritized and developed in the right-of-way
- The City has a complex network of different neighborhoods, each with different needs and street types. Specific plans (community plans, Mobility Master Plan, etc.) should focus on *what* is included in the right-of-way. The Street Design Manual should cover *how* the right-of-way should be designed and improved.

Lessons from Hoboken, NJ *(cont'd)*

The City is implementing many of the steps Hoboken has taken

- Regarding the Street Design Manual include, IBA recommends:
 - **Planning Department should update various master plans to incorporate specific safety improvements based on needs of particular communities; future community plans should consider designating specific corridors for various travel modes to comply with the Complete Streets Policy**
 - **Transportation and Engineering & Capital Projects Departments should use the Street Design Manual and adhere to its guidelines when designing projects within the right-of-way.**
 - **These departments should use the Mobility Master Plan, community plans, and other planning documents when making decisions about what projects to include in the right-of-way. When deviating from these plans, additional public outreach should be conducted prior to installation.**

Lessons from Hoboken, NJ *(cont'd)*

The City is implementing many of the steps Hoboken has taken

- The City formed separate internal and external working groups that focus on Vision Zero integration.
 - Mobility Board – External
 - Mobility Governance Group – Internal
- Given the City's characteristics, having a separate staff-only board is appropriate given how often departments need to meet to ensure Vision Zero elements are incorporated in City projects
- **City Planning should consider coordinating joint meetings between the two groups on an annual or semi-annual basis.**

Quick Build Projects

Best Practices and Implementation Challenges

- Quick Build Projects do not typically require a full CIP process
 - Can be brought to fruition on a shorter timescale and could allow engineers to study designs after implementation
- Both Transportation and E&CP have a thorough understanding of quick build concepts and designs
- There are too many projects for current Transportation staff to maintain, and there are no dedicated resources to quick build implementation within the current Transportation Budget
 - Most Quick Builds must be done on overtime, which is limited

Quick Build Projects *(cont'd)*

Best Practices and Implementation Challenges *(cont'd)*

- Reassigning funding in Transportation Department to support quick build projects could lead to unintended consequences
 - When existing Transportation teams are reassigned, existing assets are further neglected, leading to deferred maintenance and increased capital needs
 - The City does not have the capacity to maintain new safety assets, sometimes rendering them unsafe or unusable
- Most effective way to improve deployment and development of additional quick build solutions is to increase resources
 - This may not be realistic in the near term due to current fiscal condition of the City
- **IBA cautions that there are likely unintended consequences associated with redeploying existing resources within Transportation**

Affording New Improvements

Parking reforms could be a potential revenue source for improvements

- City is considering various parking reforms
 - Revenue from increased meter rates (Feb 2025) will likely reimburse parking meter funds
 - Additional parking meter revenues generated within parking districts must go to enhanced activities within those areas that improve parking related items
- Safety improvements in the right-of-way should be considered eligible expenditures for parking revenues
 - This would create a closer nexus between ensuring availability of parking space and development of new assets
- **As part of parking reform measures, IBA recommends including right-of-way safety improvements as eligible projects, and ensuring future budgets support these projects with revenue derived from enhanced parking meter revenues**
 - Potential equity concern – not all areas that need safety projects have parking meters

Conclusion

- IBA met with various stakeholders, departments, and other community members
- Reviewed various policies and procedures relating to Vision Zero
- Although some policies can be updated, the City has already implemented many changes necessary for Vision Zero
 - Will likely take years to see results of City's progress
- IBA makes specific recommendations regarding to CP 200-07 and CP 200-08, and several other recommendations on other safety improvements