



AGENDA REPORT



TO: Honorable Mayor & City Council

FROM: Councilmember Carroll Fife,
District 3

SUBJECT: Community Traffic Safety Pilot Program

DATE: November 2, 2023

RECOMMENDATION

Councilmember Carroll Fife Recommends The Council Adopts Resolution Declaring The City Council's Intent And Desire To Establish A 3-Year Pilot For A Short-Term Encroachment Permit Program That Allows Schools, Businesses, And Community Centers That Serve Vulnerable Populations To Apply For Temporary Encroachment Permits To Install Removable Traffic Safety Treatments And Create Traffic Calming Zones In The City's Streets And Directing The City Administrator To Hold At Least Two (2) Community Meetings In Areas Of The City Within Oakland Department Of Transportation's Identified High Injury Network To Solicit Feedback From Residents And Community Based Organizations And Assess Their Interest And Ability To Participate In The Pilot Program; And To Return To The Public Safety Committee Meeting On February 13, 2024 With A Report And Recommendations, Including The Following:

- 1. Information On Any Cities In California Or The United States That Have Successfully Implemented Similar Programs To Reduce The Number Of Traffic Accidents And Fatalities And Increase Safety For All Who Travel On Public Streets;**
- 2. Recommendations To Council About Legislative Or Administrative Changes Needed In Order To Implement A Similar Program In Oakland;**
- 3. Information Gathered From Residents And Community Based Organizations At Two Community Meetings Assessing Their Interest And Ability To Participate In The Pilot Program;**
- 4. An Analysis Of Staffing And Budget Needs In Order To Begin And Sustain The Pilot Program; And**
- 5. A Report Exploring The Feasibility And Developing A Plan And Timeline For The City Of Oakland To Become A "Vision Zero Network" Member City**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The proposed resolution for the establishment of a pilot program will expedite the implementation of pilot traffic calming measures in high-injury network corridors and near schools, with the goal of enhancing road safety for vulnerable populations. This program will enable interim responses for rapid deployment of quick-build traffic calming and enable community-based organizations and institutions to meaningfully drive proactive road safety efforts.

Currently, with an over \$400 million Department of Public Works backlog for road maintenance, a high volume of traffic calming requests through the 311 webpage, and short staff within the Oakland Department of Transportation, the city cannot respond to all traffic calming requests in a timely manner.

Residents within High Injury Networks are vulnerable to road-based traffic violence, many of which pose serious or fatal. This resolution would enable temporary measures until the Oakland Department of

Transportation can make permanent repairs. Applicants granted quick build permits will do so in direct collaboration with the Oakland Department of Transportation (OakDOT) and Public Works.

BACKGROUND/LEGISLATIVE HISTORY

Cities like Atlanta have successfully implemented innovative initiatives such as Tactical Urbanism to empower local communities in their quest for safer streets and vibrant public spaces. The Atlanta Department of Transportation (DOT) defines Tactical Urbanism as a cost-effective, short-term strategy designed to transform the use and ambiance of streets and public areas. These small-scale projects serve as stepping stones toward achieving long-term objectives related to street safety and public space design.

Tactical Urbanism projects are characterized by their temporary nature and the use of tactical materials, effectively showcasing the potential for enduring change. In the case of Atlanta, this program has made substantial contributions to the city's Vision Zero campaign while significantly bolstering pedestrian safety. Similar initiatives have achieved success across the United States.

A [Transit Research Board](#)¹ study encompassing 13 similar efforts demonstrated that such projects not only improved conditions for cyclists and pedestrians but also boosted activity in these areas, resulting in economic gains for small businesses and the local economy. Notably, four of these projects were executed in California, with funding sourced from diverse avenues, including foundations, local transit agencies, and internal discretionary funds. Furthermore, four of these projects were spearheaded by non-governmental and transit organizations, showcasing the diverse range of stakeholders contributing to these successes.

Community-based networks across the nation, such as the Better Bus Coalition in Ohio, MARTA Army in Atlanta, and TURBO in Nashville, work collaboratively with transit and city planning departments to create substantial, positive impacts. These collaborative efforts are driving positive change in urban areas, ultimately making them safer and more vibrant for residents and visitors alike. Other efforts nationwide are captured [here](#).²

Highlighting Initiatives in California: California has been at the forefront of implementing innovative projects to enhance road safety and community engagement. Notable examples include:

1. **Southern California Tactical Urbanism Projects:** Street Plans, in collaboration with Alta Planning + Design, successfully designed and implemented seven Tactical Urbanism projects as part of the Southern California Association of Governments' (SCAG) [Go Human](#)³ region-wide safety and encouragement campaign. These projects, carried out in 11 cities across the SCAG region during 2016-2017, encompassed various types, including open street events and demonstration projects. Such as pop-up bike lanes and temporary traffic circles or curb

¹<https://nap.nationalacademies.org/read/25571/chapter/1>

²<http://tacticalurbanismguide.com/latest/>

³<https://scag.ca.gov/go-human>

extensions. The initiatives were tailored to meet the specific safety goals of each city. SCAG's 2023 Go Human Community Hubs Grant Program offers funding opportunities for community organizations. This includes technical assistance to organizations applying for a quick built permit, providing rental equipment for temporary demonstrations, and paying permit fees. This program is funded by a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety, facilitated by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

2. **Shasta Living Streets:** [Shasta Living Streets](https://shastalivingstreets.org/tactical-urbanism-california-st-labs/)⁴ manages short-term projects aimed at fostering collaboration between residents, businesses, community-based organizations, and city leaders. These projects serve as opportunities to test and experience new city amenities, gathering input from the community about their preferences and ideas for adjustments. Since 2011, Shasta Living Streets has conducted numerous projects, including Open Street events, Parklet and Street Deck demonstrations, California Street Labs Downtown events and activities, and asphalt murals.
3. **Go Ave 26 in Los Angeles:** [Go Ave 26](https://officeofoffice.com/projects/go-ave-26/)⁵ featured temporary design installations along Avenue 26 between Figueroa and the Metro station. Informed by community outreach and engagement, this year-long project aimed to make access to and from public transit hubs along Avenue 26 easier, safer, and more welcoming. Led by community organization LA-Más, this initiative was sponsored by TransitCenter and involved collaboration with government agencies, transportation advocates, and community partners. The project faced closure due to a large increase in people using the space, which raised COVID-19 health concerns.
4. **Oakland's Paint the Town:** The City of Oakland Department of Transportation (OakDOT) runs the community-powered street mural program, Paint the Town⁶. This program invites residents to engage with neighbors, friends, and community organizations to create murals directly on neighborhood streets. It leverages partnerships with local nonprofit organizations, such as EastSide Arts Alliance and Safe Passages, to beautify Oakland streets, promote community unity, and advance racial justice goals.

These California initiatives exemplify a commitment to innovative approaches that prioritize safety, equity, and community engagement in the realm of urban planning and transportation.

Current Oakland Municipal Code outlines guidelines for short-term permits for minor (12.08.050) short-term encroachments (12.08.060) as well as permit procedure for minor encroachments (12.08.080) which states:

“The Director of Public Works shall refer each application for a minor encroachment permit to the Director of city Planning for review and comment. If a response or statement of delay is not received by the Director of Public Works within seven days, the approval of the Director of city Planning shall be assumed.

⁴<https://shastalivingstreets.org/tactical-urbanism-california-st-labs/>

⁵<https://officeofoffice.com/projects/go-ave-26/>

⁶<https://www.oaklandca.gov/projects/paint-the-town>

When such application for a minor encroachment permit and the details shown upon the accompanying sketch or plan have been reviewed by the Director of City Planning and comply with the terms of this title and any further requirements set by the Director of Public Works for public health, safety, and appearance, the Director of Public Works shall approve the application. Such approval constitutes granting of a conditional revocable permit for minor encroachment and such permit shall remain in effect as long as the permittee complies with all conditions established for the granting of such permit.”

This resolution asks the City Administrator to develop a plan to build upon previous efforts to do quick build during the COVID-19 shelter-in-place (12.08.250) period which enabled slow streets and encroachments, enabling multi-modal safe streets as well as guidelines from the Oakland Flex Streets program from Chapter 8.62 of the OMC.

This program expands the scope of the existing Oakland Municipal Code in two key dimensions. Firstly, it broadens the range of entities that can request quick-build permits to encompass schools and community-based organizations. Secondly, it accelerates the response timeline for permit requests, reflecting the urgency of addressing road safety concerns in a timelier manner.

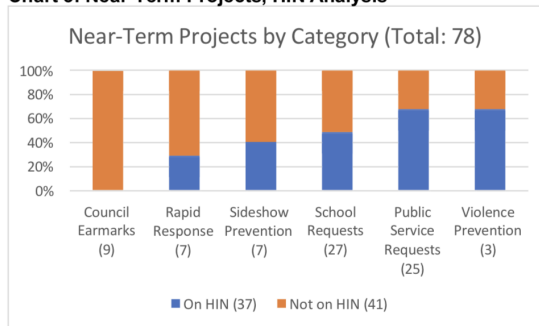
This effort aligns with the broader Vision Zero goals, a nationwide campaign to help jurisdictions reach a goal to eliminate all traffic fatalities and injuries while promoting safe and equitable mobility for all who travel on local streets. The Vision Zero Network includes 45 communities across the United States and 11 California Cities, including Alameda, Berkeley, San Jose and San Francisco. Criteria for membership include each jurisdiction establishing the goal of eliminating traffic fatalities and injuries, the Mayor clearly stating a commitment towards Vision Zero along with a timeline and a commitment of administrative departments taking the lead towards reaching that goal.

The City of Oakland has completed several steps towards realizing the Vision Zero goal including assessing the City’s current traffic safety situation and developing policies and programs to address safety at schools and a rapid response program after traffic fatalities. However, the benefit of becoming a Vision Zero city includes technical assistance, access to funding and guidance from partnering organizations and network cities.

Policy alternatives can include developing plans to address the immediate concerns within the High Injury Networks through the Oakland Department of Transportation by hiring a team of staff to do quick builds. The City Manager and City Council will do everything they can to support the Department of Transportation to expedite the hiring process.

Per the Oakland Department of Transportation, report as of 5/3/23, the following graph outlines near-term safety projects. The total number of projects are 78 with 27 coming from schools and nearly half located within the High Injury Network.

Chart 3: Near-Term Projects, HIN Analysis



*Does not include Speed Bumps

Several near-term projects are School Requests on the High Injury Network. Preventative safety improvements must be streamlined for Oakland’s students and vulnerable populations.

Table 8: Near-Term Safety Project by Program Type and Prioritization Approach

Program	Prioritization Criteria	2022 (N)
Oak311 (Public) Service Request	Crashes, Equity, Land Use	25
Rapid Response to Traffic Fatality	Traffic Death Locations	7
Speed Bumps	Residential Petition	52
Violence Prevention Pilot Locations	OPD Police Beats with High Violence	3
Council Earmark Locations	Council Discretion	9
Sideshow Prevention Pilot Locations	OPD-identified Locations with Large, Violent, Persistent Sideshows	7
School Safety Request	By Request of School Staff	27

The above table shows the various methods employed by the City of Oakland to address traffic safety. A quick-build program would allow for interim safety, education, and community engagement prior to the time-intensive construction project.

FUNDING SOURCES

Potential funding that City Administrations can research for projects of this kind can come from various sources including at the state level ([California Office of Traffic Safety](https://www.ots.ca.gov/grants/)⁷, CalTrans), local offices including discretionary city council funds and transportation commission dollars, and philanthropic grants.

In 2020, California's Active Transportation Program introduced a small-scale pilot program aimed at assessing the viability of supporting "quick-build" projects. This initiative was incorporated by the California Transportation Commission to evaluate whether such projects should be integrated into future Active Transportation Program (ATP) funding cycles. The pilot program's objective was to identify potential challenges and opportunities associated with these innovative projects, thereby informing future decision-making.

Additionally the U.S. Department of Transportation announced \$86 million in Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) [grants](https://www.transportation.gov/grants/ss4a/how-to-apply)⁸ to 235 regional, local and Tribal communities for planning and demonstration projects to improve safety and help prevent deaths and serious injuries on the nation’s roadways. These funds will help communities develop safety action plans, inform improvements along corridors with safety issues,

⁷<https://www.ots.ca.gov/grants/>

⁸<https://www.transportation.gov/grants/ss4a/how-to-apply>

use “quick-build” strategies to test out safety features such as separated bicycle lanes or curb extensions at intersections and more.

This makes clear that there are ample funding opportunities to support a pilot program and may even bring additional funds to the City of Oakland.

POLICY ANALYSIS

The potential pilot program seeks to build on the success of previous models such as that of the City of Atlanta Tactical Urbanism program. In order to assess the feasibility of a pilot program.

This resolution declares the intention of the Oakland City Council to develop a new program which allows community organizations, schools and businesses to implement interim traffic calming zones on nearby streets in order to prevent traffic fatalities.

This resolution directs the City Administration to conduct further research of cities across the country and the state of California that have developed similar programs and return to council with recommendations towards developing a plan for the City of Oakland. Analysis should include researching local, state and federal laws that can impact this program, a timeline for when the program can be administered and recommendations for staffing and budget needed to administer the program. In addition, City Administration should conduct two community meetings, in East and West Oakland, eliciting feedback from residents and local organizations gauging interest and ability to participate in the program. Staff should collaborate convening these meetings with relevant City Council member offices for outreach and planning. City Administration should return to the first Oakland Public Safety Committee meeting in February 2024 for discussion and action.

Finally, this resolution directs the City Administration to research necessary steps to become a Vision Zero Network City and return to council with recommendations on how to move forward.

FISCAL IMPACT

No fiscal impact associated with this resolution. There may be some administrative costs associated with pilot project approval. This resolution directs City Staff to determine associated costs and make budget recommendations along with suggestions for grants for which the City could apply.

PUBLIC OUTREACH / INTEREST

Outreach was completed through Transport Oakland and District 3 City Council Office to determine community needs among schools, community centers, and small businesses. The organizations engaged included KIPP Academy, Oakland Tech, Sequoia Elementary, Oakland High, Edna Brewer Middle School, and AC Transit. We will continue to engage with the community in the coming weeks.

COORDINATION

Consulted with the City Attorney, Department of Transportation, and AC Transit, Department of Race and Equity.

SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES

Economic: In the 2022 Safe Oakland Streets Initiative Annual Report⁹, the City analyzed nearly 2,000 injury collisions from 2012-2016 to understand the impacts on Oaklanders and how to effectively focus safety efforts. During that period, Oakland experienced a 76% increase in severe or fatal injuries, accounting for \$900 million in yearly costs of traffic crashes.

Environmental: In 2016, the City updated the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Thresholds of Significance Guidelines related to transportation impacts in order to implement the directive from Senate Bill 743 to modify local environmental review processes by removing automobile delay, as described solely by Level of Service or similar measures of vehicular capacity or traffic congestion, as a significant impact on the environment pursuant to CEQA and replace it with Vehicle Miles Traveled. The policy allows the City to prioritize funding for and implementation of more active transportation projects that encourage more sustainable modes of mobility and projects that prioritize the needs and safety for people (pedestrians, people on bikes, people on transit), rather than prioritizing vehicle throughput.

Race & Equity: The majority (60%) of crashes are highly concentrated on just 6% of the 800 miles of Oakland's city-maintained streets, identified as Oakland's HIN. Furthermore, the HIN generally overlaps with Oakland's map of priority neighborhoods as found in Oakland's Geographic Equity Toolbox. The toolbox prioritizes neighborhoods that may have been historically and currently underserved or excluded from City services and planning processes, by examining concentrations of people with demographic factors determined to have experienced historic and current disparities in accessing opportunities and resources. The neighborhoods with higher concentrations are designated as the highest-priority neighborhoods. Almost 95% of the HIN is located in medium to highest-priority neighborhoods, despite these same neighborhoods representing only about 40% of the City's total area.

As compared to all Oaklanders, Black Oaklanders are two times more likely to be killed or severely injured in traffic crashes, and three times as likely to be killed or severely injured while walking. Furthermore, 30% of streets in the majority of Asian census tracts fall within the City's HIN.

The City's commitment to advance racial equity is enshrined in Oakland Municipal Code (OMC) 2.29.170.17 to achieve equitable opportunities for all people and communities. Regardless of causes, the City seeks to work towards better outcomes — to eliminate and prevent disparities and reduce this source of health inequity and stress for Black and Brown communities. OMC Section 2.29.170. 2. (B) (12) specifically calls for the City to address racial equity in transportation by working to provide safe, efficient, affordable, convenient, and reliable mobility options including public transit, walking, carpooling, and biking.

ACTION REQUESTED OF THE CITY COUNCIL

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⁹ City of Oakland. "AGENDA REPORT." *City of Oakland Agenda Report*, 11 July 2023, <https://cao-94612.s3.amazonaws.com/documents/05.23.23-PWTC-23-0251-2022-Safe-Oakland-Streets-REPORT.pdf> Accessed 2 November 2023.

Temporary Encroachment Permits To Install Removable Traffic Safety Treatments And Create Traffic Calming Zones In The City's Streets And Directing The City Administrator To Hold At Least Two (2) Community Meetings In Areas Of The City Within Oakland Department Of Transportation's Identified High Injury Network To Solicit Feedback From Residents And Community Based Organizations And Assess Their Interest And Ability To Participate In The Pilot Program; And To Return To The Public Safety Committee Meeting On February 13, 2024 With A Report And Recommendations, Including The Following:

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For questions regarding this report, please contact Tonya Love, Chief of Staff for Councilmember Fife, at TLove@oaklandca.gov.

Respectfully submitted,

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