

CITY OF SEBASTOPOL CITY COUNCIL
AGENDA ITEM REPORT FOR MEETING OF: May 7th, 2024

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To: Honorable Mayor and City Councilmembers
From: John Jay, Associate Planner
Subject: Consider adoption of Vision Zero Resolution, direct a staff member to join the Sonoma County Vision Zero Advisory Committee

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RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Climate Action Committee has recommended that the City Council consider the Vision Zero Resolution from the Sebastopol Climate Action Committee for adoption and appoint a city staff member to join the Sonoma County Vision Zero Advisory Committee (SCVZAC). Staff recommends adoption of the Resolution, but does not recommend appointment of a staff member to the SCVZAC due to staff capacity and budget considerations.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The Transportation working group of the Climate Action Committee has been working on a draft resolution for Vision Zero principles for the City to consider for adoption over the past 5 months. They presented this draft resolution at their March 12, 2024, meeting where the committee provided feedback and changes to the draft resolution which is now presented to the City Council this evening.

BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION:

According to the Sonoma County Transportation Authority, Sonoma County has seen more fatal and serious injury crashes per capita than any other county in the San Francisco Bay Area, with 176 traffic fatalities and 924 crashes with severe injuries between 2016 and 2021.

Traffic safety is a requirement for expanding participation in zero carbon active mobility, such as increased biking. SCTA and Sonoma County jurisdictions have worked together to prioritize surface transportation safety and have set a collective goal to end traffic deaths and severe injuries on our roadways by 2030 through adoption of the Sonoma County Vision Zero Action Plan (VZAP) in March 2022.

The creation of the VZAP was a collaborative effort led by SCTA, the Sonoma County Department of Health Services, and the Sonoma County Vision Zero Advisory Committee (VZAC) which includes local cities and towns, law enforcement, health care providers, climate change leaders, and advocacy groups. Sebastopol was part of this process.

On December 13th, 2023, the U.S. Department of Transportation announced \$817 million from President Biden’s Bipartisan Infrastructure Law for 385 Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) grants. SCTA, in partnership with jurisdictional partners, has been awarded \$1,060,000 in SS4A planning funds as part of this grant.

The cities of Cotati, Healdsburg, Petaluma, Rohnert Park, Santa Rosa, and the Town of Windsor have embraced Vision Zero to guide their transportation infrastructure decisions. The Climate Action Committee suggests it is time for the City of Sebastopol to formally adopt Vision Zero Principles and reap the benefits from the actions, including grant funding for programs such as SS4A, contacts and opportunities provided by participating in the Vision Zero movement in Sonoma County.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH:

This item has been noticed in accordance with the Ralph M. Brown Act and was available for public viewing and review at least 72 hours prior to the scheduled meeting date.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no financial impact with the adoption of the Resolution. There would be staff costs if a staff member were assigned to attend future meetings of the Sonoma County Vision Zero Advisory Committee.

OPTIONS:

1. Adopt the proposed Resolution, but do not appoint a staff member to the SCVZAC (Staff recommendation)
2. Adopt the proposed Resolution and appoint a staff member to the SCVZAC (CAC recommendation)
3. Adopt the proposed Resolution with modifications the City Council sees fit
4. Decline the request to adopt the proposed Resolution and not appoint a staff member to the SCVZAC

ATTACHMENTS:

Vision Zero letter of support
Vizion Zero Resolution

APPROVALS:

Department Head Approval: Approval Date: 4/25/24

CEQA Determination (Planning): Approval Date: 4/25/24

The proposed action is not a project under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

Administrative Services (Financial) Approval Date: 4/29/24

Costs authorized in City Approved Budget: Yes No N/A

Account Code (f applicable) _____

City Attorney Approval: Approval Date: 4/30/24

City Manager Approval: Approval Date: 4/29/24

This letter of support was submitted digitally.

Dear Mayor and Council Members of the City of Sebastopol.

The City's Climate Action Committee recommends that you adopt the attached resolution to endorse the Sonoma County Vision Zero Action Plan (VZAP) and direct a staff member to join the Sonoma County Vision Zero Advisory Committee.

According to the Sonoma County Transportation Authority, Sonoma County has seen more fatal and serious injury crashes per capita than any other county in the San Francisco Bay Area, with 176 traffic fatalities and 924 crashes with severe injuries between 2016 and 2021.

Traffic safety is a requirement for expanding participation in zero carbon active mobility. SCTA and Sonoma County jurisdictions have worked together to prioritize surface transportation safety and have set a collective goal to end traffic deaths and severe injuries on our roadways by 2030 through adoption of the Sonoma County Vision Zero Action Plan (VZAP) in March 2022.

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It is time for the City of Sebastopol to formally adopt Vision Zero Principles , and reap the benefits from the actions, contacts and opportunities provided by participating in the Vision Zero movement in Sonoma County.

Zeno Swijtink
Lead
Transportation Working Group
Sebastopol Climate Action Committee

Postscriptum of Sources for factual statements in Resolution

1. Between 2014 and 2020, there were 2 reported pedestrian fatalities, 31 reported crashes involving pedestrians, 30 reported crashes involving bicyclists and 23 vehicle crashes that resulted in severe injury in the City of Sebastopol. (Sonoma County [Vision Zero Data Dashboard](#))
2. Eight percent of all Sonoma County trips are made on foot or on bicycle. (Sonoma County [Vision Zero Action Plan](#), pg 6)
3. 100% of traffic-related deaths between 2011-2020 in the City of Sebastopol fell upon bicyclists and pedestrians. (Sonoma County [Vision Zero Data Dashboard](#))
4. Driving at unsafe speeds and failure to follow right-of-way rules are the primary causes of traffic crashes in the City of Sebastopol. (Sonoma County [Vision Zero Data Dashboard](#))
5. The City of Sebastopol includes four of Sonoma County's High Injury Intersections (Florence Ave/Healdsburg Ave; Healdsburg Ave/Pitt Ave/Harrison St; Ragle Ave/Bodega Ave/Ragle Rd; and S Main St/N Main St/Sebastopol Ave/Bodega Ave). (Sonoma County [Vision Zero Action Plan](#), pg 67)
6. The City of Sebastopol includes two roads in the High Injury Network (N Main St/S Main St/Main St and Sebastopol Ave.), one of which borders an Equity Priority Community. (Sonoma County [Vision Zero Action Plan](#), pg 63)
7. Equity Priority Communities, especially those who have reduced access to transportation or who travel without using private vehicles are most impacted by traffic fatalities and severe injuries. (Sonoma County [Vision Zero Action Plan](#), pg 27)
8. Transportation accounts for almost 60 percent of GHG emissions in Sonoma County with the burning of gasoline and diesel fuel for transportation as the leading cause of GHG emissions in this sector. (Sonoma County [Greenhouse Gas Inventory 2020 Update](#))
9. It is proven that vehicle speed is one of the most important factors determining severity of injury or fatality when a pedestrian or bicyclist is struck by a vehicle, and that traffic calming techniques provide an effective approach to slowing vehicle speeds. (Sonoma County [Vision Zero Action Plan](#), pg 19)

RESOLUTION NUMBER: -2024
CITY OF SEBASTOPOL
A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SEBASTOPOL
ADOPTING VISION ZERO PRINCIPLES

WHEREAS, one death on our streets is one too many; and,

WHEREAS, between 2014 and 2020, there were 2 reported pedestrian fatalities, 31 reported crashes involving pedestrians, 30 reported crashes involving bicyclists and 23 vehicle crashes that resulted in severe injury in the City of Sebastopol and,

WHEREAS, only eight percent of all Sonoma County trips are made on foot or on bicycle, but 100% of traffic-related deaths between 2011-2020 in the City of Sebastopol fell upon bicyclists and pedestrians; and,

WHEREAS, driving at unsafe speeds and failure to follow right-of-way rules are the primary causes of traffic crashes in the City of Sebastopol; and,

WHEREAS, the City of Sebastopol includes four of Sonoma County's High Injury Intersections (Florence Ave/Healdsburg Ave; Healdsburg Ave/Pitt Ave/Harrison St; Ragle Ave/Bodega Ave/Ragle Rd; and S Main St/N Main St/Sebastopol Ave/Bodega Ave) and two roads in the High Injury Network (N Main St/S Main St/Main St and Sebastopol Ave.), one of which borders an Equity Priority Community; and,

WHEREAS, Equity Priority Communities, especially those who have reduced access to transportation or who travel without using private vehicles are most impacted by traffic fatalities and severe injuries; and,

WHEREAS, on December 3, 2019 the Sebastopol City Council adopted a City Council Resolution declaring a climate emergency and committing to ongoing actions to restore a safe environment; and

WHEREAS, on January 7, 2020 the City Council approved the creation of a Climate Action Subcommittee; and

WHEREAS, transportation accounts for almost 60 percent of GHG emissions in Sonoma County with the burning of gasoline and diesel fuel for transportation as the leading cause of GHG emissions in this sector; and

WHEREAS, choosing active transportation options like walking and biking also decreases mortality and morbidity from obesity-related diseases such as heart disease and diabetes, and creating safer streets is likely to encourage more active transportation, thereby increasing population health; and

WHEREAS, the City of Sebastopol has been a leader in championing bicycle and pedestrian safety improvements within its city limits; and

WHEREAS, the City of Sebastopol has adopted "Complete Streets" policies, which require that the City design transportation projects for the safety and convenience of people walking, bicycling, and taking transit as well as driving, and has made significant investments in improving bicycle and pedestrian

facilities as part of the regular Capital Improvement Program (CIP) process; and other ongoing initiatives in Sebastopol, including Safe Routes to School programs, Street Smart Sebastopol, and the Local Road Safety Plan are supportive of the Vision Zero goal; and

WHEREAS, in June of 2022, the Sebastopol Climate Action Committee adopted a work plan with a transportation goal to “Make biking, walking, and other active transportation options safer and easier by implementing a complete streets approach to street design” with a subgoal to “Review [Sonoma County Transportation Authority’s] Vision Zero Report and adopt a Vision Zero Resolution that identifies actions Sebastopol will implement to eliminate traffic fatalities”; and

WHEREAS, the resolution is consistent with the following General Plan Goals and Policies:

- **Policy CIR 1-4:** Promote public education and participation in transportation issues and decision making.
- **Policy CIR 2-27:** Prioritize the improvement of roadway pedestrian crossings throughout the community, particularly in accident-prone areas.
- **Policy CIR 3-1:** Recognize the role of streets not only as vehicle routes but also as parts of a system of public spaces, with quality landscaping, street trees, and bicycle and pedestrian paths.
- **Policy CIR 3-2:** Prioritize the quality of life for Sebastopol residents and visitors over vehicular traffic movement.
- **Policy CSF 2-16:** Vigorously support the implementation of the adopted Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan regarding trails, bicycle improvements, and other recreational improvements. And,

WHEREAS, surveys conducted by the Sonoma County Vision Zero Advisory Committee in 2021 and 2022 found that 67% of community members across Sonoma County responding to the survey indicated enhanced safety features like protected bike lanes, and streets designed to slow traffic are the most favorable measures to addressing these challenges; and,

WHEREAS, it is proven that vehicle speed is one of the most important factors determining severity of injury or fatality when a pedestrian or bicyclist is struck by a vehicle, and that traffic calming techniques provide an effective approach to slowing vehicle speeds; and

WHEREAS, there are many proven traffic calming street treatments that can be implemented at a range of costs to reduce vehicle speeds and create safer conditions for pedestrians and bicyclists; and

WHEREAS, a commitment to Vision Zero is a commitment to life and equitable opportunity for people in the City of Sebastopol.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City of Sebastopol City Council hereby adopts Vision Zero as a comprehensive and holistic approach to eliminating traffic fatalities and severe injuries.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City of Sebastopol will put equity at its forefront when setting goals and implementing Vision Zero actions, aiming to reduce harm for the most vulnerable users of the City of Sebastopol’s roadway system by giving serious consideration to the benefits of infrastructure that increases safety for people who do not drive, which often includes elders, youth, low-income residents, and people living with disabilities.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City of Sebastopol will strive to collaborate with the Transportation Working Group of the Sebastopol Climate Action Committee, and relevant community groups, as these groups identify additional high priority roadways, intersections and other bicycle and pedestrian safety concerns within the city and will strive to identify, evaluate and seek funding to implement potential solutions in these areas.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City of Sebastopol will strive to prioritize Vision Zero principles as funding and resources allow in its routine road planning, design, construction, and maintenance, including:

1. review speeds and posted limits at High Injury Intersections (HIN) within city limits and set context appropriate speeds and implement speed mitigation measures based on findings and legislative authority;
2. update street design standards when appropriate to reflect the latest research and best practices around safety and Complete Streets, with an emphasis on serving diverse road users of all ages and abilities;
3. prioritize routine facility maintenance for all modes, particularly pedestrians and bicycles (e.g., crosswalk and bike lane restriping, cutting of vegetation along shoulder areas) along the HIN;
4. and work with partners that own, manage, design, and regulate streets within its jurisdiction to implement Vision Zero Action Plan strategies.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City of Sebastopol will strive to prioritize Vision Zero principles as funding and resources allow for future projects, including:

1. traffic calming and protective measures, including but not limited to speed limits, speed tables, crosswalks, protected bike lanes, traffic diverters, chicanes, choke points, textured surfaces, road diets, and bicycle boulevards, at high priority roadways and intersections;
2. low-cost quick-build projects that allow rapid implementation and evaluation of bicycle and pedestrian safety improvements in priority streets and intersections;
3. tracking of traffic injuries and fatalities to monitor the City's progress toward key actions outlined in the Sonoma County Vision Zero Action Plan;
4. comprehensive strategies that promote a culture of safety, such as: engagement that prioritizes Equity Priority Communities; working with schools to promote safe, active transportation for students; working across city departments to identify and implement strategies to create a culture of street safety; and strategies to eliminate impaired driving by partnering with the County of Sonoma Department of Health Services to engage with local businesses around responsible beverage service and seeking opportunities to expand and promote alternative transport services with night-time hours.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT, The City of Sebastopol City Council hereby adopts a Resolution approving the following,

VOTE:

Ayes:

Noes:

Abstain:

Absent:

APPROVED: _____
Diana Gardner Rich, Mayor

ATTEST: _____
Mary Gourley, Assistant City Manager/City Clerk, MMC

APPROVED AS TO FORM: _____
Larry McLaughlin, City Attorney