

City of Knoxville
Vision Zero Kickoff Meeting – February 22, 2022

1) Welcome (Mayor Kincannon)

- a) Glad to be fulfilling campaign promise
- b) Police provides daily updates on traffic accidents and fatalities
- c) Eager for stakeholders to share thoughts to create strong plan
- d) Traffic deaths are preventable – what can we learn from peers to save lives?
- e) Roundtable Introductions
 - i) VZ Steering Committee
 1. Mayor Indya Kincannon, City of Knoxville
 2. Amy Brooks, Knoxville-Knox County Planning
 3. Harold Cannon, City of Knoxville Engineering
 4. Lt. Tammy DeBow, KPD (traffic)
 5. Amber Ford, Knox County Health Department
 6. Mark Hairr, UTK (parking & transit)
 7. Cpl. Ron Humble, UTPD (traffic & special units)
 8. Christie Brown, TDOT
 9. Carly Pearson, Knox County ADA and Catalyst Consulting
 10. Bryan Hill, BikeWalkTN
 11. Chris Cherry, UTK
 12. Isaac Thorne, KAT
 13. Zoe Scott, BikeWalkTN
 14. Cpl. Billy Pike, UTPD
 15. Erin Gill, City of Knoxville
 - ii) Also in attendance
 1. Brian Blackmon, City of Knoxville
 2. Dawn Michelle Foster, City of Knoxville
 3. Grace Levin, City of Knoxville

2) Setting the Table

- a) Brian Blackmon: Office of Sustainability is managing VZ process logistics, but we run everything through Harold & Engineering
- b) Harold Cannon:
 - i) Lifetime of experience with Civil Engineering
 - ii) “us vs them” silo mentality is breaking down – we're better together
 - iii) Excited to customize multidisciplinary program with leaders in the room to make positive changes
 - iv) Engineering shares ethos with VZ: protect & serve the public
 - v) Now is the right time – trends of bike/ped and vehicle accidents, recent trends of speeding
 - vi) Solid commitment from department – not lip service. Many successes already:
 1. \$45m projects over next 3 years with multimodal components or bike/ped infrastructure
 2. Upcoming public workshops on tunnel development
 3. Working on reducing speed limits below 25mph
 4. Upcoming public workshops on bike/sidewalk/greenway plans
- c) Mayor Kincannon: it's not just engineering, enforcement, traffic calming – we need variety of solutions and strategies to solve the issue

3) Benchmarking & Process (Brian Blackmon)

- a) Will propose a schedule / process today, but nothing is set in stone – everything open to Steering Committee feedback
- b) VZ background

i) Goal of VZ: zero traffic deaths and serious injuries

ii) Traditional approach vs VZ approach:



1. Core tenets: systems are imperfect, have to plan for inevitable human mistakes, systems approach must incorporate multidisciplinary solutions (enforcement, engineering, education)

iii) Benchmarking process (Grace Levin)

1. Began benchmarking when Council passed resolution
2. Began by researching VZ Network resources, inc. guide for developing action plan
3. Compiled & benchmarked action plans of other communities
 - a. Looked at leaders like NYC and San Francisco
 - b. Looked at peers in TN and Southeast
 - c. Identified 7 communities similar to Knoxville and benchmarked their plans:
 - i. Document structure & supplemental resources
 - ii. Planning process
 - iii. Actions (recently compiled ~144 actions and are reviewing for our own process)
4. Brian Blackmon: also did outreach to peers where we had contacts. Didn't want to start from scratch

iv) Chris Cherry: how is equity embedded? Will impacted communities/users be represented in process?

1. Brian: yes, equity is embedded in every step of VZ guidelines and our process! We'll have more people active in working groups, but Steering Committee also includes City's Community Empowerment & Community Safety (not able to attend today).

c) Proposed Engagement

i) Outcomes

1. Scope: biggest problem areas (using existing and leveraging new data)
2. Identify: solutions (through Working Groups)
3. Commit: develop framework, timelines, and leaders for Action Plan

ii) Structure

1. Steering Committee: 15 multi-sector leaders who know who the people and organizations that should be involved in this process. 3 meetings/year. Can join Working Groups as well.
2. 3 Working Groups (Engineering, Education, Enforcement): as many people as needed. Steering Committee set "bumpers" for process, WGs fill in gaps.

iii) Additional resources (list of potential other organizations): who else needs to be added? Suggest others over the next couple months.

iv) Schedule

1. Feb: kickoff meeting (today)
2. Mar-May: interviews with Steering Committee & others to identify priorities/expectations AND baseline survey on actions (not final ranking – helps us bring in relevant stakeholders)
3. May: meeting with panels to educate Steering Committee on current status – history of VZ efforts / engineering successes / data in Knoxville
4. June: Steering Committee meeting with update on interviews/priorities

5. Aug: Education working group meeting
6. Sep: Engineering WG meeting
7. Oct: Enforcement WG meeting
8. Jan 2023: Steering Committee meeting to debrief on WGs and discuss ideas for action plan

d) Feedback

- i) Zoe Scott: how will WG meetings be structured?
 1. Brian Blackmon: charrette-style (presentation followed by breakout groups, and information recorded and analyzed later) with facilitation by COK staff
 2. Zoe: sounds good!
 3. Brian: with Climate Council, we used preliminary surveys to hone in on top priorities – those would probably be focus of WG conversations
 4. Bryan Hill: must be interactive so community is involved in design stage
- ii) Mayor Kincannon: important to note that while this dedicated effort will take place over next year, we won't stop actual work in the meantime– multimodal investment, Safe Routes programs, etc. Cumberland Avenue redevelopment is great example of multi-sector partnership and some VZ principles at work – it's about public safety, not how fast we can get places. We need to help the public understand value of multimodal street design. This is a shift in mindset – education may be most important part of process.
- iii) Chris Cherry: VZ program focuses on safety – does City have plan to integrate program with bike/ped plans, electric vehicles, etc? How
 1. Brian: The Climate Council's top 2 transportation goals are directly related to bike/ped and transit – we're already poised to integrate. Sustainability leading process enables us to lead multiple departments.
- iv) Bryan: is there a target year for achieving VZ?
 1. Brian: we defer to working groups and will know more at end of Year 1
 2. Mayor: we need to define scope of traffic crashes in our jurisdiction
 3. Lt DeBow: 73 fatal crash incidents & 79 individual deaths in 2021. Education is critical to get community to recognize impacts of preventable behaviors (road rage, etc) on both highways and pedestrian areas - enforcement is short-staffed. Also need non-vehicle users to understand rights and responsibilities.
- v) Carly Pearson: cycles greenways because of lack of bike lanes – need to expand, make safer, and interconnect better.
 1. Mayor: protected lanes are critical – feels safer

e) Next Steps

- i) Tomorrow: Sustainability will share minutes & Dropbox folder of compiled research
- ii) First week of March: Sustainability will contact Steering Committee members to schedule interviews & send baseline survey
- iii) May: Public education event on VZ and traffic safety/efforts meeting with panel of presenters – if anyone wants to speak, contact Brian
- iv) In meantime, please think of additional organizations/individuals to participate – share names with Brian so we can send survey

f) Q&A?

- i) Carly: do we have data on both incidents and injuries?
 1. Harold: TPO has both and is finalizing top locations in each Council district next week
 2. Carly: TPO publishes high-injury locations on website
- ii) Mayor: good news - new bike lane sweeper was funded and is now in procurement process!