



Agenda Item Summary

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Submitted By

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Village Engineer

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Reviewed By

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Agenda Item Title

A Motion to Concur with the Transportation Commission's Recommended Processes and Elements to be Included in a Vision Zero Plan

Overview

The Transportation Commission's (TC) 2022 work plan included an item to make a recommendation for the processes and elements to be included in a Vision Zero (VZ) plan. In addition to all of the typical items included in a traditional VZ plan, the TC recommended including four specific elements in the VZ plan's development. Staff supports the recommendations from the TC with the exception of the TC's recommendation for the role of enforcement in the future VZ plan. Staff recommends enforcement be a key component and tool of the future VZ plan due to complaints regarding lack of driver compliance with existing traffic laws and pedestrian enhancements. The TC supports enforcement being used only to supplement recommendations of a VZ plan.

Recommendation

Approve the Motion.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends approving the Motion as modified by Staff to revise the TC's recommendation to remove their recommendation of "Whether and how traffic enforcement can best be used to supplement the Vision Zero plan as developed through the public engagement process and reviewed by the Village's Diversity, Equity, and Involvement office."

Fiscal Impact

There is no fiscal impact for establishing the processes and elements to be included with the Vision Zero Plan.

The FY23 Budget includes \$150,000 for creating a Vision Zero Plan in the Capital Improvement Fund, Public Works - Engineering, External Support account no. 3095.43780.101.530667. The Village will pay for the work upfront and be reimbursed the \$120,000 in grant funds from the State.

Background

At its June 14, 2021 meeting, the Village Board of Trustees discussed and adopted its goals for 2021-2023.

One of the goals for a vibrant, diverse neighborhood was to explore a Vision Zero plan for Oak Park for improved pedestrian safety. Ultimately the Board directed staff to present to the Transportation Commission a VZ plan for improved pedestrian safety on a timeline to be determined based on staff availability. The first step in this process is to recommend processes to develop a VZ plan and elements that should be included in the plan which was included in the TC's approved 2022 work plan.

At the February 8, 2023 meeting, staff presented recommendations for what would be included in a proposed VZ plan. Staff's recommendations include typical elements as well as elements more customized to suit the needs of the Village. In addition to the staff's recommendation, the TC recommended four items be included in the development of a VZ plan. A memo summarizing both the staff's and the TC's recommendations for the various process and elements of the VZ plan is attached. The four specific items being recommended by the TC are:

1. Adding and involving the Village's Diversity, Equity, and Involvement office in the development of the plan.
2. Identifying specific commissions to have possible involvement in the process of developing the Vision Zero plan. The commissions mentioned are: Disability Access Commission, Community Relations Commission, Board of Health, Aging in Place, and Environmental & Energy Commission.
3. Analyzing high-severity vehicle-on-vehicle crashes as it affects pedestrian and bicyclists route choices because of a perception the intersection is dangerous.
4. Whether and how traffic enforcement can best be used to supplement the Vision Zero plan as developed through the public engagement process and reviewed by the Village's Diversity, Equity, and Involvement office.

At their March 14, 2023, meeting the TC approved their recommendation on these items to be included in the VZ plan. Staff supports the TC's recommendations except for the recommendation for enforcement's role in the VZ plan. The TC recommends that enforcement should be used to supplement recommendations from a Vision Zero plan and that the role of enforcement is developed through the public engagement process and reviewed by the Village's Diversity, Equity, and Involvement (DEI) officer. While staff supports reviewing enforcement's role with the DEI officer, staff recommends enforcement be a key component and tool in any Vision Zero plan and implementation strategies adopted by the Village. Based on existing concerns expressed by the community over lack of driver compliance with existing traffic regulations, lack of drivers stopping for pedestrians in already enhanced or protected crosswalks, and concerns over unsafe driver behavior in general, Staff recommends that enforcement be part of the VZ plan. Staff recommends that the consultant developing the VZ plan reviews existing Police Department staffing and traffic enforcement policies and procedures to make recommendations for any appropriate changes which may be needed in order to improve traffic safety, especially for pedestrians or bicyclists.

Alternatives

The Board can delay action to gain additional information.

Previous Board Action

At the March 21, 2022, Village Board meeting, the Village Board approved the submission of a Statewide Planning and Research Program (SPR) Grant Application with the Illinois Department of Transportation for a Vision Zero Plan.

At the February 21, 2023, Village Board meeting, the Village Board approved an Agreement between the State of Illinois, Illinois Department of Transportation, and Village of Oak Park for a Vision Zero Plan in an amount not to Exceed \$120,000.

Citizen Advisory Commission Action

At its March 14, 2023 meeting, the Transportation Commission recommended the following items be included:

1. Adding and involving the Village's Diversity, Equity, and Involvement office in the development of the plan
2. Identifying specific commissions to have possible involvement in the process of developing the Vision Zero plan. The commissions mentioned are: Disability Access Commission, Community Relations Commission, Board of Health, Aging in Place and Environmental & Energy Commission
3. Analyzing high-severity vehicle-on-vehicle crashes as it affects pedestrian and bicyclists route choices because of a perception the intersection is dangerous
4. Whether and how traffic enforcement can best be used to supplement the Vision Zero plan as developed through the public engagement process and reviewed by the Village's Diversity, Equity, and Involvement office

Anticipated Future Actions/Commitments

Staff will present future items for an agreement with a consulting firm for creating the Vision Zero Plan and ultimately a proposed Vision Zero Plan as recommended by the Transportation Commission for approval.

Intergovernmental Cooperation Opportunities

None at this time.