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 Subject: RE: Vision Zero Progress - February 2024  
 Date: Sunday, March 24, 2024, 4:52:27 PM  
 Attachments: [michael@cityofmadison.com](#)  
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Greetings Austin,

Thank you for taking the time to review the City's Vision Zero program and for sharing your thoughtful analysis and concerns with us! We appreciate residents like you who engage closely with us and hold us accountable to the commitments we've made to improve safety on our streets.

The City is committed to our Vision Zero goal of eliminating traffic deaths and serious injuries. Achieving this requires sustained effort over many years, and we did give ourselves a very aggressive target timeline of 2035. There were a lot of discussion on whether we should set such a lofty goal when we started the work, and we believe we should.

Since Mayor Satya and the Common Council launched our Vision Zero Initiative in 2020, we have been working very hard to tackle our traffic safety issues quite aggressively. For example, we designed and implemented a new Safe Streets Madison program and funded 237 safety projects so far, we reduced speed limits on over 60 miles of our major streets, we implemented a citywide 20 is Plenty program after piloting it in two neighborhoods, we conducted many public engagement and education events to promote a positive safety culture, and we collaborated with MPD and carried out numerous safety focused traffic enforcement campaigns targeting the City's High Injury Network. We have also been working with a large number of schools across the School District in developing school traffic safety plans and safe route to school plans. The recent fatal crash on Park Street was a tragic reminder of why this work is so important and our work is far from being done. We will continue to work tirelessly on this till we achieve our Vision Zero goal.

You are correct that if we look at all the roadways within the City limit, data shows that our progress is quite moderate. However, when we look at City-controlled streets—where the City has direct authority to implement engineering and operational changes—we do see significant safety improvements over time. Most notably, traffic fatalities on City controlled streets reduced by 50% since 2020. Please refer to [this staff presentation at the February 18 Transportation Commission meeting](#) for more information. To ensure transparency and clear communication with the public, we have also been working on our second Vision Zero Progress Report, to be released to the public this Spring. The report will also include a comprehensive set of safety data in addition to other datasets, and we are working on verifying all of them.

It's encouraging to see that many of the street design changes, traffic calming measures, and safety projects implemented under Vision Zero Madison are making a difference where they can be directly applied. We need to keep doing these and we need to do more. At the same time, it underscores the importance of partnership with state and county agencies to address safety on the broader transportation network.

Thank you again for taking the time to write and for your support to the City's commitment to making Madison's streets safer!

Best,  
 Yang

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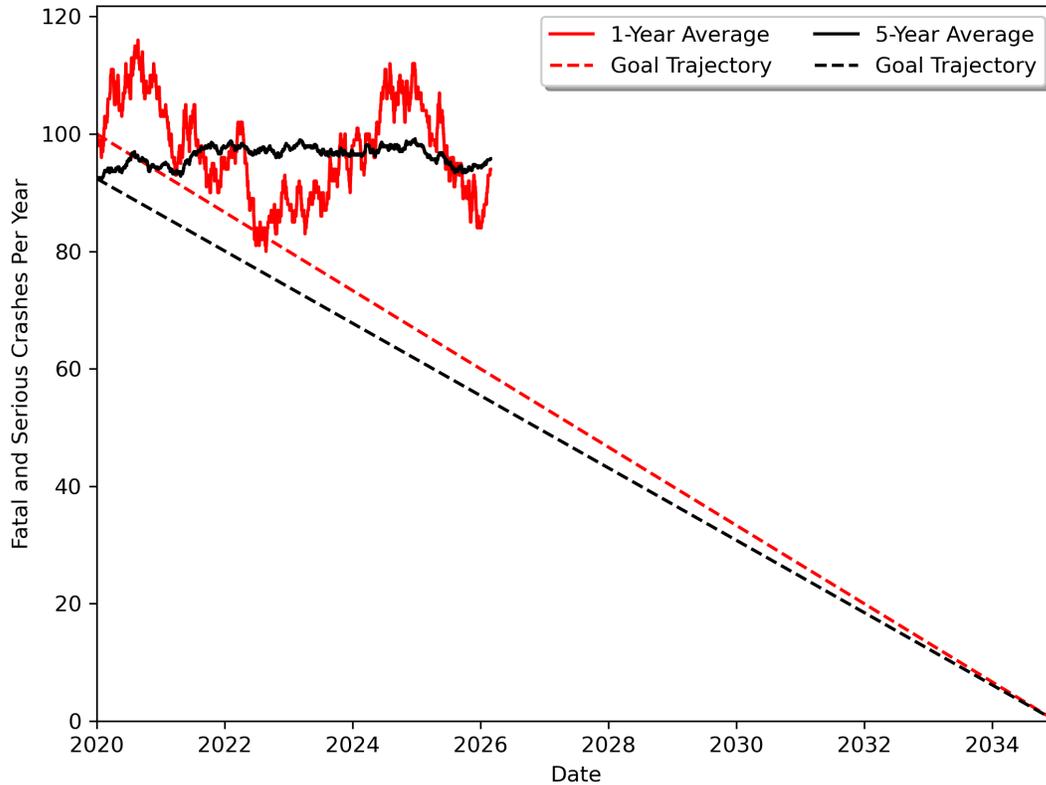
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 Subject: Vision Zero Progress - February 2024

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Hello,

In light of the recent tragic death on Park Street I felt compelled to take a look at the City's Vision Zero program and look at some data to see how well we're doing. It doesn't look good. Since its adoption in 2020, the long-term trend is essentially flat, with a very consistent ~95 fatal and serious crashes per year in Madison. Looking at the data, I wouldn't even be able to guess that we've got a safety improvement program at all. There's been no substantive reduction in incidents. We are absolutely not on track to meet our 2035 goal, and as a resident it seems like Madison is not taking this commitment very seriously.

### Madison, WI Vision Zero Progress



As an example, in [December 2020](#) the City proudly claimed at the very top of the Vision Zero web page that the program intended to eliminate traffic deaths and severe injuries on city streets by 2030. [Today](#), 6 years later, that goal has been kicked back 5 years to 2035, which is disheartening yet forgivable when taken on its own. But rather than headlining the program page as a proud mission statement, the deadline is now hidden in documents next to lines like "in 2035 the City of Madison will evaluate its progress". Overall, this doesn't seem like much of a hard commitment, it barely even seems like a goal anymore.

There are no milestones goals to confirm we're on the right trajectory. The last progress report on the page is through 2022, more than half the program's lifetime ago. That progress report (let alone the web page) has no chart akin to the one I provided, even though that data is readily available to the City and something along those lines would clearly communicate whether or not we're on pace to meet our goal (we aren't). It seems the only time the success or failure of the program will be held to account is nearly a decade from now in 2035 in a single all-or-nothing assessment, where whoever is in office at the time will be highly incentivized to kick the can again or bury the program entirely.

I believe the City needs to take a long, hard look at how sincerely we're pursuing the Vision Zero mission. It is a good goal and any progress is good progress, but it's not even apparent there has been progress. It's possible that the Vision Zero program has helped avert worse outcomes that would have otherwise occurred in its absence. But the trajectory we'd need to reach our goal now is much harsher than the trajectory that was needed in 2020, and it will only continue to get more demanding. It's better to course correct sooner rather than later. I implore the City to please begin to pursue the Vision Zero goal with the zeal and assertiveness required by both the difficulty of the task and the severity of the consequences.

Thank you,  
 Austin Griesbach