

Answers to WBC 2026 Walking and Biking Survey by Councilmember JR Fruen

Cupertino has made progress on safe walking and biking in the past ten years, though we fall short on our Vision Zero goals. What do you consider the most important bike or ped project the city should work on to improve safety for our residents? Why? Please be specific as to the location and improvements you would encourage.	The completion of the Class IV bike lanes on Stevens Creek Boulevard (Phases 2A and 2B), which are currently under construction will improve street safety, most especially for cyclists, from Wolfe Road at the former Vallco Mall all the way to (ultimately) Mary Avenue at De Anza College. Intersections along this route are among some of the most dangerous in the city based on existing incident data. The rest of our major streets network needs to follow so that other injury and collision hotspots, such as along Bollinger Road, Stelling Road, Foothill, Homestead, and Miller all deserve renewed attention so that the full network of connections will enable more people to get safely from point A to point B anywhere they need to go in Cupertino. To the extent possible, those streets should also offer Class IV bike lanes. Separately, the build out of the Tamien Innu will increase real pedestrian alternatives that deconflict those walking through Cupertino from vehicular traffic at intersections. It would be great to eventually also get the Carmen Road Bridge built. Public statements and actions: <i>JR Fruen has been vocal about his support for safer walking and biking infrastructure, including specific projects which have come to a vote before the City Council. Prior to becoming a Councilmember, he supported vocally the Regnart Creek Trail.</i>
With the study on Bollinger Road to address the multiple resident deaths and myriad of safety issues on that street cancelled (despite posing no cost to the city), how would you respond to residents that are concerned about safety while using that street?	I would seek to revive the study so that the city council can make an informed choice among the options the study sought to provide to improve the overall safety of Bollinger which contains several unusually dangerous intersections. It is known that San Jose, which is also participating in the effort, is ready to restart this process at any time. Outside of that study process, based on existing data, I would seek to add better crossing protections (from an RRFB or PHB to a stop sign to a traffic signal) at Alderbrook and Bollinger, which is uniquely dangerous because of the limited lines of sight from Alderbrook. I would also seek to add other traffic calming features on Bollinger where speeding is a routine problem and/or utilize AB 43 to reduce the speed limit, along the lines of the successful speed reduction efforts on South Blaney Avenue. Public statements and actions: <i>While a councilmember, JR Fruen voted to keep the fully funded Bollinger Road study.</i>
The city's 2024 Vision Zero Plan commits the city to have zero residents killed or seriously injured (KSI) on our roads by 2040. However, the criteria used to rank projects in the new 2026 Active Transportation Plan (ATP) makes projects on streets with the highest KSIs to be ranked low enough to likely to never be built. Without these projects, Vision Zero goals cannot be met. How would you resolve this dilemma?	Based on communications with staff, the ATP is tentatively scheduled for adoption by council in the next two months. I would work with Councilmember Mohan to reprioritize rankings to favor projects on streets with the highest KSIs. If we are unsuccessful in that effort, then presuming I have a majority with candidates Seema Lindskog and John Tang, I would add revision of the ATP project prioritization, or outright prioritize the projects in question for the City Work Program and the Capital Improvement Project list in the budget (respectively).
The new Active Transportation Plan (ATP) has many highly ranked projects which include "Bike Boulevards", which means adding only signage and sharrows to streets. Sharrows and signage have been shown to have no effect on safety, and in large studies to actually decrease safety and increase accidents. In 2024, CalTrans stated sharrows should be "a last resort", and "are not a dedicated bike facility". How would you remedy this issue in the ATP, or do you think Cupertino should continue to plan for more sharrows on our streets?	In alignment with my answer to Question 3 above, I would reprioritize or seek to amend the ranking methodology as part of the City Work Program by revisiting the ATP if these sorts of projects remain highly prioritized in the ATP that council ultimately adopts later this year. I do not think that we should generally continue to plan more sharrows or bike boulevard signage unless there are no other reasonable options--and even then, we need to improve their visibility. We should, instead, be spending these precious resources and making grant applications for, other, higher-impact projects that are aimed at our highest KSI sites and streets.
Do you think the Bike Ped Commission's duties should be folded into the Planning Commission's mission, or become a subentity of the Planning Commission (like a committee), or a remain independent? Do you think that the Planning Commission should be a second reviewer on all Bike/Ped projects? Why or why not?	No, the Bicycle Pedestrian Commission should remain independent of the Planning Commission. Grant application eligibility remains tied, for certain purposes, or is enhanced by, the existence of an independent advisory commission whose members are chosen based on their interest in or expertise in biking and walking. The Planning Commission, by contrast, is mandated by the Government Code and has principal responsibility for land use-related matters. Though the two are related, making safer streets demands that walking and biking not take a back seat to zoning, development standards, and the overarching policies in the General Plan. Accordingly, the subject-matter of walking and biking deserves its own dedicated commission. Moreover, the BPC should not be regarded as subordinate or secondary to the Planning Commission. Its recommendations should generally move directly to council without being filtered or watered down by unnecessary Planning Commission review. Personal statements and actions: <i>While a councilmember, JR Fruen has publicly stated that the Bicycle Pedestrian Commission should remain independent and not secondary to the Planning Commission.</i>
The data on the newly installed separated buffered bike lanes on DeAnza Boulevard shows that they reduced accidents by half compared to prior years, and decreased travel time for cars. This is one example of how separated lanes improve safety for all residents and do not reduce car throughput. Other studies and data show they do not harm emergency response time. How have you supported separated bike lane projects in Cupertino, and how will you in the future to gain these benefits for residents?	As a councilmember, I voted for the CIP budget allocations the created these buffered bike lanes, as I did the extension of the Stevens Creek Boulevard Class IV bike lanes now under construction and successfully worked with my council colleagues to ensure a victorious 3-2 vote so that they remained Class IV bike lanes with concrete barriers rather than plastic bollards. Likewise, I voted for the protected bike lanes on Vista Drive serving Lawson Middle School as well as the bike-ped improvements along Tilson and Finch serving Cupertino High School. My track record on these projects is unwavering and demonstrates success. I will continue to push for key safety improvements like these that allow our most vulnerable roadway users to get around Cupertino without fear, without injury, and without a car. Public statements and actions: <i>While a councilmember, JR Fruen voted to install protected and separated bike lanes.</i>
Eighty percent of the cost of bike/ped projects in Cupertino have been paid by county, state, and local grants, though often anti-active transportation advocates cite "cost" as the reason not to improve our streets. How would you change this narrative?	Continuously explaining where the funding for these projects comes from at council meetings and through outward-facing communications channels (city newsletters, councilmember newsletters, social media, and coffee talks) is central to improving the public's understanding of funding and funding impacts. As projects commence or are completed, posting signage noting how the project is/was funded would also raise in situ awareness. This practice is common for other public works projects both in Cupertino and elsewhere. We maintain a sign, for instance, near the regulation-sized basketball court in Wilson Park that notes how the project came to be. I would love to launch a podcast-style series of explainers on a YouTube channel to cover topics like this provided that time permits.
How have you personally advocated for improved walking or biking in Cupertino or the surrounding areas? Examples could include specific Safe Routes to School work (not just attending meetings), supporting new infrastructure through signing a petition, or advocating for improvements by speaking as a resident at a City Council or at a Bicycle Pedestrian Commission meeting.	In addition to the projects I championed, voted for, or saved in answer to Question 7 above, before I won a seat on council, I reliably spoke at council meetings in support of a host of bike-ped projects, including staying up until the early hours of the morning to speak and push for the authorization of the Regnart Creek Trail. I've also supported adding the ATP to the City Work Program--a campaign promise I was able to fulfill while in office--in order to build on the separate (and effectively expired) Bicycyle Plan and Pedestrian Plan. I have also previously undertaken legal representation to protect then-BPC Commissioner Erik Lindskog from demands for his recusal from any votes on the Regnart Creek Trail. Public statements and actions: <i>The above actions have been verified.</i>
The City's 2024 Vision Zero Plan states the city should "Prioritize multimodal safety and quality of service over...on-street parking." All improvement projects are different, but can you give an example of a past or future project with the removal of on-street parking which you support?	I have previously supported the removal of on-street parking on Vista Drive in support of the protected bike paths serving Lawson Middle School. I would support focused removal of on-street parking in safety improvements for Bollinger Road where parking often contributes to line-of-sight problems that make the street more dangerous for users of all modes of transportation. We are fortunate that we have already prohibited parking on our major thoroughfares like Stevens Creek Boulevard and De Anza Boulevard as the removal of parking along SCB in San Jose and Santa Clara continues to be a major sticking point in the Stevens Creek Corridor Vision Study Public statements and actions: <i>The above actions have been verified.</i>