

Answers to WBC 2026 Walking and Biking Survey by Commissioner Tracy Kosolcharoen

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.	I would encourage the completion of fully-separated walking/biking trails such as Tamien Innu. This is a project that we know will be very safe, as it does not share the road with cars. As someone who spent a decade with no car walking and taking transit in NYC and SF, I feel that the most-used bike/ped paths are ones that do not share the road with fast-moving vehicular traffic. We have seen very high usage of the Regnart Creek trail (I recall it was in the high hundreds daily). This means the community finds this type of trail useful, and would likely find similar fully-separated trails useful. Public statements and actions: <i>Since becoming a Planning Commissioner, Tracy has demonstrated actions which are counter to recommendations of biking and walking experts. On July 14, she made a motion to recommend any projects in the Active Transportation Plan be removed that may impact street parking, cause lane reduction (even to streamline traffic), or involve separated bike lanes. This included the streets which are on the commute paths for our students. Tracy has openly advocated against separated bike lanes in all locations in Cupertino.</i> <i>We have no record of her support or advocacy for any past or current bike/ped projects, including any trails. Tracy is running together on the Better Cupertino slate with and votes in step on the Planning Commission with Santosh Rao, who has been very outspoken in his antipathy toward walking and biking. Better Cupertino candidates such as Ray Wang and Liang Chao are also generally opposed to almost every walking and biking improvement other than painted bike icons ('Bike Boulevards') and signs.</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?	According to the vision zero report [sic], from 2012-2021 there were two pedestrian fatalities on Bollinger, 3 pedestrian injuries, and 5 bike injuries. According to the vision zero dashboard, there do not appear to be any additional fatalities recently other than what was covered in the report. Given this data, it seems that safety enhancements can and should be explored. In the Active Transportation Plan, which I helped to approve this year on the Planning Commission, somehow, Bollinger pedestrian improvements seem to fall to 39 or lower on the priority list. I would absolutely work to see if these items can be prioritized higher on the ATP list, as well as understand whether further Bollinger-related improvements are needed. Pedestrian safety crosswalk enhancements, traffic calming, and repainting brighter bike lanes, possibly with clearly-painted buffers, could be good near-term fixes before long-term changes are available. Public Statements and Actions: <i>Tracy voted as a Planning Commissioner to support the Active Transportation ranking (prioritization) and project list as-is without changes to prioritization of any Bollinger Road improvements.</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?	Yes, this is one of my concerns with the Active Transportation Plan, as documented in the previous question. On the Planning Commission, I have called for giving higher ATP priority to intersections that have historically had fatalities or serious injuries. However, as there are many stakeholders in this project, this feedback does not seem to have been incorporated into the final version. Ultimately, I think having the ATP is better than no plan for bike and pedestrian safety, but the way projects end up on this list is unclear. My understanding is that the council has the ability to choose which projects on the ATP get worked on. If elected, I would absolutely work to prioritize projects that have maximum potential to benefit safety based on historical accident data in the Vision Zero. The critical road crossing and intersection improvements cannot wait to be chosen by chance. They must be intentionally elevated and selected. Public Statements and Actions: <i>Tracy voted as a Planning Commissioner to support the Active Transportation ranking (prioritization) and project list as-is without changes to prioritization of improvements listed in the Vision Zero or Local Road Safety Plan high-KSI (killed or severely injured) list.</i>
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?	It's a great question and I agree that adding sharrows and signage to a street do little to change its bikeability. I would want the city to think strategically about its citywide bike network to understand which routes are important and worth investing in, rather than simply designating streets as a "bike boulevard." I have been a proponent of the city investing in bike counters to understand which areas are in need of better support. From there, it can potentially be identified which key small neighborhood streets might qualify as high-priority bike boulevards. Those streets could qualify for traffic calming measures to help drivers stay at slower speeds safe for bikers. Public Statements and Actions: <i>Tracy voted as a Planning Commissioner to support the Active Transportation project list as-is, including new projects including sharrows.</i>
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?	Bike Ped Commission serves an important function and should remain separate. I continue to feel that Planning Commission should, as it does in other cities, also hear any items pertaining to roadways and transit. This is to provide additional perspective on the same item. In the VTA Citizens Advisory Committee, we also hear agenda items for bike-related projects. We should not fear additional feedback on transportation-related items, but embrace it as a way to gather a more holistic viewpoint
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?	Minor clarification to this question – per the memo, the De Anza bike lanes are considered to be buffered bike lanes, not a fully-separated Class IV bike lane. Please also reference page 61 of the ATP for the definitions that I am using. I did see the data on De Anza accident reduction after the bike lane buffering, and that is an important step forward in accident reduction. I believe roadway and transportation decisions are a case-by-case situation, and it is hard to opine without specifics. That said, in general, I support painted buffered bike lanes, as they reduce accidents but still allow the emergency shoulder lanes to be used if cars need to yield to an emergency vehicle, or we have a mass evacuation event. I do think we need to be thoughtful and try to avoid eliminating the use of the emergency shoulder lane. On fully separated bike lanes -- the community has expressed a lot of concern over evacuation-constrained areas. For evacuation-constrained areas, we should explore bike solutions that do not permanently constrict key arteries, as the shoulder lanes can become much-needed car lanes or lanes for emergency vehicles during an evacuation event. For other areas, I believe Cupertino needs to pause to see how the existing Stevens Creek separated lanes fare and how the community responds. I believe the role of council is to listen to all residents involved, and work to thoughtfully plan out what the map of Cupertino bike routes should look like in a manner that the community can agree on. Public statements and actions: <i>Since becoming a Planning Commissioner, On July 14, 2026 Tracy seconded a motion to recommend any projects in the Active Transportation Plan be removed which may involve separated bike lanes. This included the streets which are on the commute paths for our students. She has been vocal in her ongoing opposition to physically bike lines using the (disproven) theory they would affect emergency response times.</i> <i>There is no record of Tracy's support or advocacy for buffered bike lanes, including the ones on DeAnza Boulevard. She is running jointly on the Better Cupertino slate with and votes on the Planning Commission nearly always with Santosh Rao, who led the opposition to the DeAnza buffered 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?	I think people should be aware that the projects are largely grant-funded. That said, the city has limited staff resources, so every project is a choice as to how we want our city to spend that time, whether the project is fully grant-funded or not. <i>(Note: Staff generally only oversee outside consultants on bike/ped projets. The consultant fees are part of any project cost and included in the grant funding.)</i>
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.	I currently serve as Chair of the VTA Citizens Advisory Committee. On this committee, I have personally expressed support for many bike and pedestrian improvements. For example, last month we discussed the FY 2025 2016 Measure B Bicycle and Pedestrian Education and Encouragement Program Activities, and I learned that the City of Santa Clara was able to double the number of students walking/biking to school through encouragement activities. There is a lot of learning we can and should do from other cities. On the Cupertino Planning Commission, I have approved and expressed support for many of the safety improvements in the Active Transportation Plan. As previously stated, the plan also has some areas that need refinement. Safety of our residents is a top priority for me, and we should always look to improve the safety of our roads for all methods of travel. Public statements and actions: <i>On July 14, 2026 as a Planning Commissioner, Tracy seconded a motion to recommend any projects in the Active Transportation Plan be removed which may involve separated bike lanes. This included the streets which are on the commute paths for our students—including Miller, a 35 mph road currently using sharrows.</i> <i>There is no record of Tracy's support or advocacy for any bike projects in Cupertino, including trails or buffered lanes, or projects associated with the VTA committee Citizens Advisory Committee. She is running on the Better Cupertino slate with Santosh Rao, who is outspoken in his opposition to improvements in biking and walking.</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?	When we make discretionary changes to our city, it must be in partnership with the community. I would only support a project with removal of on-street parking if the neighbors also want it. Otherwise, I would explore alternative safety enhancements that the community can agree on.