

BREAKING NEWS Latest: Pentagon to examine why Texas gunman wasn't reported

[Opinion](#) > [Commentary](#)

24

Police chiefs: Speed safety cameras in San Jose, San Francisco can save lives



San Jose Police investigate the scene of a fatal accident in March. (Jason Green/Bay Area News Group)

By **EDGARDO GARCIA** and **WILLIAM SCOTT** |

PUBLISHED: April 20, 2017 at 7:45 am | UPDATED: April 20, 2017 at 7:47 am

Last year 50 people in San José and 30 people in San Francisco tragically died due to traffic collisions. Each left behind a heart-breaking hole in their families and communities.

The cities of San José and San Francisco both have adopted a commitment, known as Vision Zero, to end traffic fatalities in our cities. Our law enforcement personnel, transportation engineers and public health experts are working together on engineering improvements, education and enhanced enforcement to improve overall road safety. Yet, traffic collisions because of speeding and other unsafe behaviors remain a serious challenge.

Speeding is the number one cause of severe and fatal injuries in both of our cities. The impact of speed on a fragile human body is exponential: A person hit by a car traveling at 20 mph has a 9 in 10 chance of surviving. At 40 mph, that person has only a 1 in 10 chance of surviving.

There is a proven technology that we know can make a difference: speed safety cameras. But our cities currently are not permitted to use them.

ADVERTISING



To address this, San José Mayor Sam Liccardo and San Francisco Mayor Ed Lee worked with Assemblymember David Chiu on AB 342. This proposed law will allow San José and San Francisco to conduct a five-year pilot program that employs speed safety cameras to supplement traditional traffic enforcement.

Using a data driven approach, the cameras would be used only on streets where there is a demonstrated incidence of collisions that result in severe injuries or fatalities.

Speed safety cameras are a proven safety technique in use by 142 communities in the United States. Studies show that employing the cameras results in fewer speeding vehicles and fewer deadly collisions.

Washington, D.C. experienced a 70 percent reduction in traffic deaths after installing speed safety cameras. Similarly, Portland, Oregon saw a 53 percent reduction in fatalities after implementing the technology.

This is a technology that complements traditional law enforcement and allows officers to focus on other dangerous behavior: The cameras effectively are a “force multiplier.” Experience in other communities that have deployed speed safety cameras including Seattle, Portland, and Washington, D.C. show that police staffing levels have not gone down since speed safety cameras were implemented.

AB 342 places strict policy requirements on public input and notification, data retention and usage and provisions for low-income drivers. This ensures a transparent program that incorporates best practices to address privacy and equity concerns while improving safety.

Now is the time for California to adopt technology that has a proven safety benefit in cities across the nation. Installing speed safety cameras in key locations will save lives in our two cities, and our pilot program will refine best practices for the Legislature to consider permitting broader implementation.

AB 342 passed one committee this week and goes before the Transportation Committee Monday. We urge the Legislature to pass it and allow our important pilot project to begin.

Edgardo Garcia is San José Police Chief and William Scott is San Francisco Police Chief. They wrote this for The Mercury News.



SPONSORED CONTENT

Improving Communities: How Target Is Supporting Non-Profits in Your City

By 

Find out how Target is partnering with local non-profits in your city to empower and educate.

Tags: [Traffic Fatalities](#)



Edgardo Garcia



William Scott

SUBSCRIBE TODAY!

ALL ACCESS DIGITAL OFFER FOR JUST 99 CENTS!

