

# PIERCE COUNTY

Office of the County Council



July 27, 2022

## ***RE: Roadway Safety - Calling on the State of Washington to Improve Safety on the Pacific Avenue Corridor & Committing to a Pierce County Vision Zero Program***

We are deeply saddened and mourn the loss of another member of our community due to a vehicular collision. In this instance, a 13-year-old child, Michael Weilert, from Parkland, Washington, was struck and killed by a vehicle crossing Pacific Avenue with his bicycle in a marked crosswalk. Every traffic fatality is tragic and unacceptable. We must do more to prevent such tragedies from occurring in the future through greater emphasis on driver education, traffic law enforcement, and approaches to infrastructure design and engineering that better consider the safety of all transportation system users.

Pacific Avenue is a state highway under the control of the State of Washington. As such, we are calling for the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) to conduct a safety analysis of the Pacific Avenue corridor to identify opportunities to enhance visibility and safety at mid-block crossings and other areas of high pedestrian and bicycle use. We also request that WSDOT review the condition of signs, signals, and pavement markings in the Pacific Avenue corridor to ensure all are in a state of good repair. We are also asking WSDOT to examine opportunities to reduce speed and calm traffic within the urban portion of the corridor to better accommodate the density of housing and commerce, and the volumes of pedestrian, bike, and vehicular traffic.

The active enforcement of traffic laws is also essential to promoting the safety of roadway users. Consequently, we request the Washington State Patrol to increase traffic safety enforcement in the Pacific Avenue corridor. We also ask the Pierce County Sheriff's Department to resume its Traffic Safety Unit with an emphasis on pedestrian and non-motorized safety on county roadways as soon as possible.

Finally, we must do more at a policy level to improve the quality of life and safety of everyone who uses our roadways to walk, bike, roll, take transit, and drive. As members of the Pierce County Council, we are very committed to improving the safety of pedestrians, bicyclists, and other roadway users and to strive to eliminate traffic-related serious injuries and traffic deaths in our county. In furtherance of this goal, we intend to advance the development of focused roadway safety policies at the county level modeled after Vision Zero efforts at the state level and in other jurisdictions. The advancement of these policies will be a high priority in the months ahead.

Again, we express our deep condolences to the family of Michael Weilert and other families who have lost loved ones to traffic collisions on roadways in Pierce County. We all need to work together to use our roadways safer, eliminate distracted driving and ensure the safety of every user through better road design and calmer streets.

Respectfully,



Derek Young, Council Chair  
Council District 7



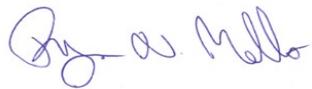
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Council District 5



Dave Morell, Executive Pro-Tempore  
Council District 1



Jani Hitchen, Councilmember  
Council District 6



Ryan Mello, Councilmember  
Council District 4