MOTION

TRANSPORTATION

Traffic violence in Los Angeles is a serious problem. In 2022, 312 Angelenos lost their lives to traffic violence, the most in more than 20 years; as of September 2, 2023, there have been 206 deaths. Most traffic deaths and serious injuries result from identifiable and preventable causes, including excessive speed, and drunk and distracted driving. Despite this fact, traffic crashes are commonly referred to as "accidents," which implies that they are unanticipated and unpreventable, when all too often this is not the case.

Many agencies, such as the Federal Highway Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation and National Highway Traffic Safety Association, have adopted policies to use the terms "crash," "collision," and "incident" instead of the term "accident" when discussing traffic crashes. On June 30, 2021, the California Department of Transportation issued a memo to adopt such a policy and provided the following definitions:

- *Accident* is an incident that happens unexpectedly and unintentionally or an incident that happens by chance and without deliberate cause.
- *Collision* is an impact between objects, persons, animals, or other obstacles.
- *Crash* is a violent collision between objects, typically of one vehicle to another or of an obstacle.
- *Incident* is a distinct event, such as a crash, fire, or shooting.

The use of the term "accident" is inappropriate and disrespectful to victims of traffic violence, particularly in cases where motorists intentionally crash into other vehicles, bicyclists or pedestrians, or when a collision results from reckless behavior, such as drunk driving or street racing. While there may be limited instances that justify use of the term "accident," the City's use of more deliberate terminology can better support the design and implementation of safety countermeasures to address the factors that lead to traffic violence. Furthermore, this change will align the City with other state and federal entities who have already adopted this change in support of greater accuracy and consistency.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the City officially adopt the terms "crash," "collision," and "incident," in lieu of the term "accident" when discussing traffic crashes in any document or communication, except for instances where the City Attorney deems it necessary to use "accident" in litigation and related matters.

I FURTHER MOVE that the Department of Transportation, the Los Angeles Police Department, the City Attorney, the Department of Public Works, the Recreation and Parks Department, the General Services Department, and any other department that operates motor vehicles, report within 90 days regarding implementation of this new policy.

PRESENTED BY: _____
BOB BLUMENFIELD
Councilmember, 3rd District

SEP 27 2023

SECONDED BY: _____

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