

Vision Zero and Safe Routes to School: Partners In Safety



Safe Routes
to School
National
Partnership



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Overview

In the past decade, two separate traffic safety concepts with origins in Europe have been taking hold in communities across the United States: Safe Routes to School and Vision Zero. At their core, both initiatives are comprehensive campaigns using a mix of engineering, education, and smart enforcement to improve the safety of people and transportation.

Concerns about safety are often a major deterrent to parents considering whether to allow their children to walk or bike or to principals considering implementing a Safe Routes to School program. In the early days of Safe Routes to School, most initiatives began at a single school in a community, due to the tireless advocacy of a parent or school champion. A key tool of Safe Routes to School continues to be a walk or bike audit – where the environment around a school is surveyed and assessed to identify trouble spots and recommended infrastructure and programmatic improvements.

Vision Zero is a comprehensive approach to eliminate all traffic fatalities and serious injuries. Through collaboration across government agencies and stakeholders,

Vision Zero communities commit to preventing traffic deaths through a series of principles and action steps to make streets safe for everyone. While Vision Zero is not focused exclusively on safety for biking and walking, its data-driven focus on vulnerable users frequently leads to a particularly positive impact on people walking and biking, children, and seniors. Vision Zero plans frequently include lowering speed limits, redesigning streets so they are safe for all users, utilizing data to prioritize locations for infrastructure improvements and traffic enforcement, and implementing educational campaigns to reduce risky behaviors. Vision Zero policies first popped up in the United States in 2014, starting in New York City and San Francisco and quickly spreading to more than 20 U.S. cities.

Vision Zero initiatives can also benefit from the involvement of Safe Routes to School advocates. Some unique things they can bring to the table:

- Experience with increasing rates of walking and biking through encouragement and education.
- Involvement from parents and young people, who can tell compelling stories about safety challenges they face on the way to school and in everyday life, and who can be effective champions and advocates.
- Information about where kids and families avoid walking due to dangers—which would not show up in data assessments solely focused on crashes if no one is walking there—along with maps from walk audits showing where families would like to walk if it was safe.

Vision Zero Cities Per [Vision Zero Network](#)

The cities listed here have a clear goal, the commitment of a public official, a plan or strategy in place, and the engagement of key departments. Cities with an asterisk (*) are considering Vision Zero.

ALASKA

Anchorage

CALIFORNIA

Fremont
Long Beach*
Los Angeles
Sacramento
San Diego
San Francisco
San Luis Obispo
San Jose
San Mateo*
Santa Ana*
Santa Barbara
Santa Cruz*
Santa Monica*

COLORADO

Boulder*
Denver

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Washington, DC

FLORIDA

Fort Lauderdale
Tampa*

GEORGIA

Macon

ILLINOIS

Chicago

LOUISIANA

New Orleans*

MARYLAND

Montgomery County

MASSACHUSETTS

Boston
Cambridge

MICHIGAN

Ann Arbor*

MINNESOTA

St. Paul*

MISSOURI

Columbia

NEW YORK

New York City

OREGON

Eugene
Portland

PENNSYLVANIA

Bethlehem
Philadelphia
Pittsburgh*

TEXAS

Austin
Houston*
San Antonio

VIRGINIA

Alexandria

NORTH CAROLINA

Asheville*

SOUTH CAROLINA

Greenville*

WASHINGTON

Bellevue
Seattle

Safe Routes to School advocates can benefit from understanding Vision Zero and engaging in these efforts to help improve safety for kids. This resource highlights the potential benefits from closer alignment between Safe Routes to School and Vision Zero, explains how to get involved, and offers examples of what Safe Routes to School advocates can push for in Vision Zero action plans that would improve safety for children. It is based on the experiences of Safe Routes to School National Partnership staff and advocates working in several major cities to advocate

for Safe Routes to School funding and active transportation policy—including making connections between Vision Zero and Safe Routes to School. Other cities around the country have examples of alignment between Safe Routes to School and Vision Zero, but for the purposes of this publication we are focusing on the California cities of Los Angeles, Santa Ana, San Francisco, and San Jose, plus Portland, Oregon, and Washington, DC.

“The District Department of Transportation saw Vision Zero as an opportunity to give some extra momentum and impetus to our Safe Routes to School efforts. Also, Safe Routes to School is an established program that provides DDOT an additional way to engage DC Public Schools and the Office of the State Superintendent of Education in partnership for Vision Zero implementation.”

– JONATHAN M. ROGERS
VISION ZERO PROJECT MANAGER
DISTRICT DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Safe Routes to School and Vision Zero: Common Elements but Different Approaches

Safe Routes to School and Vision Zero look different in every community. The table at right is meant to capture a general picture of these initiatives, and not all aspects will be universally applicable to or true of every community.

	SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL	VISION ZERO
Prevalence	Approximately 20,000 schools nationwide	Approximately 20 cities nationwide
Leadership	Bottom-up: often (but not always) starts at an individual school	Top-down: starts with a mayoral or city council commitment
Essential partners	School/school district personnel Parents and PTAs Public works/planning/transportation department Law enforcement Public health department	Elected officials Public works/planning/transportation department Law enforcement Public health department Advocates and community organizers Victims and loved ones of victims involved in traffic crashes
Population focus	K-12 students, families, school personnel, and the community surrounding the school	All transportation users
Key strategies	The Six E's: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Evaluation – assessing the needs at the school and collecting data to measure impact •Engineering – adding sidewalks, doing traffic calming, and other infrastructure improvements •Education – teaching kids safe walking and biking behaviors •Encouragement – implementing walk to school days, walking school buses, and other events •Enforcement – partner with law enforcement and community groups to reduce the frequency of crime and traffic safety problems •Equity – Ensure that equity concerns are addressed throughout to benefit low-income families and people of color. 	Six key policies and practices (from the Vision Zero Network): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Build and sustain leadership, collaboration, and accountability •Collect, analyze, and use data •Prioritize equity and engagement •Lead with roadway design that prioritizes safety •Manage speed to safe levels •Maximize technology advances, but don't overlook low-tech solutions
Population focus	K-12 students, families, school personnel, and the community surrounding the school	All transportation users
Settings	Urban, suburban, or rural	Primarily cities in the U.S. at this point (though some counties and states are looking at it)
Primary intended benefits	Improved safety around schools Higher rates of biking and walking to school Improved health for children Less traffic congestion near schools	Improved safety across the community Reductions in traffic deaths and injuries

A Matter of Scale: Why Safe Routes to School Can Be Amplified by Vision Zero



Vision Zero provides an opportunity for Safe Routes to School advocates to tap into a broader initiative that is politically connected and often very visible and high-profile. Concerns about safety are often a major deterrent to parents considering whether to allow their children to walk or bike. For principals considering implementing a Safe Routes to School program, safety challenges can either be a deterrent or the impetus to take action.

In the early days of Safe Routes to School, most initiatives began at a single school in a community, due to the dogged advocacy of a parent or school champion—often spurred by a specific safety concern over speeding cars or lack of sidewalks. A key tool of Safe Routes to School continues to be a walk or bike audit, where the environment around a school is surveyed and assessed to identify trouble spots and recommended infrastructure and programmatic improvements. These programs could be hampered by lack of volunteer engagement or long waits until grant funding could support expensive upgrades like sidewalks.

In recent years, some communities have started to think about Safe Routes to School on a larger scale, conducting walk audits at multiple schools and prioritizing improvements across an entire school

district or city based on need. While today there are many communities taking this more comprehensive approach to Safe Routes to School, these initiatives can struggle for attention and resources against many competing school and local government priorities.

These struggles can be mitigated by tapping into Vision Zero. To be considered a Vision Zero City, the national [Vision Zero Network](#) requires that the mayor or a top official has publicly and officially committed to Vision Zero to eliminate traffic fatalities and serious injuries. That leader must build on their commitment by engaging key city departments in developing a Vision Zero plan or strategy and must also engage community members in planning efforts.



Having the mayor publicly commit to improving traffic safety and reforming transportation policies and planning to prioritize people and safety brings resources, staffing, and coordination between city agencies that might not otherwise be possible. In addition, Vision Zero efforts are an important turning point for many city departments of transportation to prioritize safety above other transportation considerations. If advocates can participate in Vision Zero action planning processes and successfully make the case for prioritizing children and improvements around schools, it can bring visibility and potentially additional funding and improvements or actions that benefit Safe Routes to School.

Because Vision Zero seeks to make systemic changes to improve safety, it can also help Safe Routes to School efforts move toward a community-wide approach that prioritizes programs and improvements at schools with the greatest safety needs, based on data, rather than a school-by-school or project-by-project approach. This data-driven approach can help concentrate Safe Routes to School resources for programming or infrastructure improvements at schools most in need of safety improvements.

Safe Routes to School initiatives can also benefit from the larger policy changes emphasized by Vision Zero that might not be possible at the individual school level.

“A big part of the conversation is acknowledging that safety should be the number one priority at this point and that convenience is not the be-all and end-all. Traffic congestion and flow of traffic is not the number one priority for us anymore.”

— Cory Wilkerson
ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION COORDINATOR
CITY OF SANTA ANA, CA

For example, a key tenet of Vision Zero is reducing speeds on roads—through reducing speed limits, designing roads for lower speeds, and enforcing speed limits—because the faster a car is going, the more likely a person hit by a car is to be killed.

While speeds are generally lower in school zones, those zones only usually extend a small distance along the road the school sits on, meaning that children walking from surrounding neighborhoods must do so on higher-speed roads. A complex set of federal and state laws and engineering practices governs changing speeds, often making it impractical to lower speed limits on individual streets around schools where many children are biking and walking. However, through Vision Zero, several cities have pursued state legislative changes to give them greater control over setting speed limits that are safe for everyone or to allow the usage of automated speed enforcement (such as speed cameras) to reduce speeding. This has the potential to be very beneficial for Safe Routes to School initiatives.



Strength in Addressing Equity Together



As data-driven approaches with the goal of improving health and safety, both Safe Routes to School and Vision Zero have recognized that different demographic groups face different challenges, and that low-income communities and communities of color experience both health and injury inequities. In recent years, Safe Routes to School initiatives specifically called out Equity in the list of “E’s” that summarize the key components of a Safe Routes to School program.

This prioritization is necessary because there are significant disparities in safe infrastructure for walking and biking. Underinvestment in safe infrastructure such as sidewalks and street lighting in low-income neighborhoods, combined with decisions to cut through these neighborhoods with highways and to locate facilities with heavy truck traffic within or near them, creates unsafe conditions. Low-income children are also twice as likely to walk to school, thus increasing their exposure to the poor infrastructure. And, the rates for people killed while walking are significantly higher for low-income people and people of color. To reverse these trends and improve safety for children, it is absolutely critical that Safe Routes to School programming and infrastructure be prioritized at lower-income schools.

This is a concern shared by Vision Zero, and data analyses performed by many Vision Zero cities clearly shows the disproportionate needs in low-income communities or communities of color. The collision analysis performed by Santa Ana found that collisions were more likely to happen in areas with higher concentrations of poverty, lower education levels, and large youth and Latino populations.

San Francisco determined that while only 33 percent of the city’s streets are in low-income neighborhoods and communities of color, 47 percent of the High Injury Network – those streets prioritized due to high rates of collisions – are in those same communities.

People Killed While Walking by Income



Governing, August 2014

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“In San Francisco, concerns about traffic safety are the top three reasons why parents don’t let their children walk or bike to school. No matter how much you encourage families to walk and bike to school, many will not do so if the streets aren’t safe. Thankfully we can change that. Road design dictates behavior, and we can design a system that is inherently safe.”

— Cathy DeLuca
POLICY & PROGRAM DIRECTOR
WALK SAN FRANCISCO

The data-driven approach that Vision Zero emphasizes helps ensure that investments are targeted where the highest levels of injury crashes take place. Even so, further number crunching is often needed to determine which of those locations are in the greatest need of investments. In Los Angeles, the High-Injury Network encompasses six percent of the city’s streets, which account for 65 percent of all serious injuries or fatalities of people walking or biking. That is still a significant number of streets, so to identify the most pressing needs for immediate attention, the city is creating a scoring matrix that incorporates the severity of collisions, whether children or seniors were involved in the collisions, and social and health equity factors about the neighborhoods. This ensures that as resources are poured into improving safety and eliminating traffic deaths, they are first directed to neighborhoods with greater percentages of children, older adults, people of color, immigrants, people with disabilities, or low-income households.



Safe Routes to School and Vision Zero both use enforcement activities to deter risky behaviors and improve safety. But without thoughtful implementation, enforcement efforts meant to improve safety can disproportionately target low-income people and people of color. For example, in March 2017, the Chicago Tribune found that twice as many citations of bicyclists were being written in African-American communities than in white or Latino areas. This difference may be due to racial profiling or targeting of communities of color. In addition, unsafe bicycling behaviors are often a product of lack of safe infrastructure: for example, if there is no bike lane, a bicyclist may choose to bike on a sidewalk to avoid biking in busy traffic. Such enforcement leads to a lack of trust from community members and can undermine efforts to increase healthy transportation use and improve safety. Fines from traffic tickets can have a disproportionate financial effect depending on income and can be devastating for low-income families.

The Vision Zero plans for Portland and Los Angeles address equity in infrastructure and enforcement head-on. Portland’s Vision Zero plan leads with equity as the first of its guiding principles, pledging that infrastructure improvements will be prioritized in Communities of Concern (which are census blocks in the top quartile of 10 different equity indicators such as low-income household and poor vehicle access) and that Vision Zero enforcement efforts will not result in racial profiling. Through Vision Zero efforts in Los Angeles, advocates have asked that the Los Angeles Police Department take a pledge on anti-biased policing and make publicly available maps of infractions by neighborhood. In addition, to build trust and relationships between the community and officers, there are “Ask an Officer” Vision Zero events with police officers holding events in neighborhoods to answer questions about Vision Zero. Transparency with the public and stakeholders will be a critical part of ensuring adherence to these commitments.



How to Get Involved in Vision Zero

While the Vision Zero process will look somewhat different in every community, generally it formally begins with a commitment from the mayor or the city/county council in the form of a directive, a speech, or a resolution. That commitment usually is made after a lot of work by advocacy groups and safety experts to educate city leaders about the scale of the problem and how Vision Zero can serve as a solution. A Vision Zero commitment should call for the elimination of all traffic deaths and serious injuries within a specific period of time, and calls for the creation of a Vision Zero action plan or a task force to create such a plan.

The next step is the creation of an action plan, which lays out a series of strategies, policies, and infrastructure priorities that will help the city make progress in reducing traffic deaths and injuries. The creation of the action plan usually includes a series of meetings between government agency representatives, as well as public hearings or stakeholder meetings to get input from the public.

Once an action plan is developed, cities move to the implementation phase of Vision Zero: carrying out the action plan and monitoring progress. Many cities issue annual reports on their accomplishments through Vision Zero, and may also update the action plan every couple of years.

It is never too late, or too early, to make the case for how Safe Routes to School and Vision Zero relate to each other and to advocate for specific Vision Zero strategies to help protect children.

In communities that are not yet pursuing Vision Zero, reach out to other advocates for safe walking, biking, or transportation and discuss the need for such a policy to see if a coordinated campaign to push for a Vision Zero commitment is possible. Utilize safety data to help make your case. For example, the Los Angeles Vision Zero Safe Routes to School plan highlights that children under 18 account for nearly 20 percent of all people injured or killed while walking or biking in the city, and traffic collisions are the leading cause of death for children ages 5 to 14. When meeting with elected officials and policymakers to discuss Safe Routes to School, talk about Vision Zero and the importance of a comprehensive approach on safety to getting more kids and families to walk and bike to and from school across the entire community.



This map shows the correlation between crashes involving children of various ages (indicated by colored dots) and the location of school zones (indicated by red shaded areas) in Los Angeles. Image: Los Angeles Department of Transportation, Vision Zero Initiative, *Safe Routes to School Action Plan and Progress Report* (November 2016).

In communities that have announced a Vision Zero focus or where an action plan is underway, or even already created, get involved in the process. Contact the mayor or city council member who made the announcement and ask to be connected with the city's point person on Vision Zero. Make an appointment to meet with the staffer to discuss your Safe Routes to School efforts and make recommendations about how the Vision Zero plan can address Safe Routes to School needs. Ask if you can be included on a stakeholder advisory group or a task force that is helping create or monitor the action plan. In many cities, the local bike or walking advocacy group is already engaging in Vision Zero and can be a good resource for how to get involved.

Supporters of Safe Routes to School can also facilitate important community input from parents and young people into Vision Zero plans and initiatives, and help hold city officials accountable for achieving their stated goals, aligning resources to those goals, and ensuring that data and processes are transparent and open to the public. Many Vision Zero initiatives include public hearings or events to get input from the public during the creation of the action plan or to update on the progress of the plan. These are the perfect opportunities to make your case.

Attend these meetings and events as often as possible and testify about the needs for Safe Routes to School efforts. Try to turn out other parents, students, and school personnel to help amplify your message. Write up your recommended improvements as a draft Vision Zero action plan and submit it to the city—if possible, see if principals or other key school leaders will co-sign your letter. There may also be a Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee or a Traffic Safety Committee in your city where Vision Zero items are routinely discussed. Review agendas for these committees and attend when appropriate to speak up about how Safe Routes to School and Vision Zero should be working together.



“For Vision Zero to be successful, we need people advocating for safe streets for everyone, especially for children walking to and from school. In Los Angeles, the top 50 schools identified as priorities for Safe Routes to School funding are all within a quarter-mile of the city’s High Injury Network. Advocating for Vision Zero is advocating for Safe Routes to School.”

— Brian Oh
TRANSPORTATION PLANNER
LOS ANGELES DEPARTMENT
OF TRANSPORTATION

Advancing Safe Routes to School through Vision Zero

Many existing Vision Zero action plans have clear strategies or policies that support Safe Routes to School and improving safety for children and families. Safe Routes to School advocates can draw upon the examples below to develop a list of recommendations to push for in their own community's Vision Zero undertaking. The majority of these recommendations have the potential to address disparities and equity.

Prioritize children as vulnerable users and schools as key destinations

When developing a Vision Zero action plan, cities generally start by mapping locations of serious injuries and fatalities to identify where clusters of collisions are occurring. From there, cities identify streets and intersections that will be prioritized for infrastructure improvements, enforcement, and programming. Safe Routes to School advocates can help ensure that the results of the data analyses are supportive of safety improvements around schools by pushing for the inputs to include an examination of when collisions involve children and to include locations of schools, parks, and other key destinations for families. Advocates can also request that data be gathered and analyzed specifically for all schools in the community to identify those with the greatest safety risks. Some examples of this approach include:

- The city of **Los Angeles** examined a wealth of data on all schools in the district—including collision rates, number of kids living within walking and biking distance of the school, percentage of children receiving free and reduced meals (a measure of poverty), and whether prior Safe Routes to School funding had been received—to identify the 50 schools that were at

the highest need for Safe Routes to School interventions and more traffic enforcement. They continue to track trends in collisions involving young people near schools during arrival and dismissal time.

- **Washington, DC** gathered and analyzed all safety and injury data for people walking and biking in the vicinity of all DC Public Schools and public charter schools, prioritizing at least three schools each year for improvements. They also convened a day-long summit for 150 teens to ask for their input about Vision Zero messages, street design, and safety.
- When **Santa Ana** did its initial data analysis, they pulled together data on the location and severity of collisions and the density of the area. All collision maps included the locations of schools and parks to help the city identify locations that were candidates for future Safe Routes to School grant applications.
- **Portland** created three lists of the 20 streets with the highest rates of motor vehicle, pedestrian, and bicycle crashes, respectively. Overlaying those three lists of streets resulted in a total of 30 streets and 30 intersections that make up the High Crash Network. The city is prioritizing projects along the network first in Communities of Concern and where improvements will make it safer for vulnerable users—specifically, children, older adults, and people walking or biking.



“We need complete, connected, and comfortable routes to school – which really translates to our entire safe transportation system. Safe Routes to School advocates should get engaged in Vision Zero and its comprehensive safe systems approach because improving the inherent safety of the entire transportation system creates a supportive environment for children to walk and bike to school.”

— Dana Dickman
TRAFFIC SAFETY SECTION MANAGER
PORTLAND BUREAU OF TRANSPORTATION



Increase investments in Safe Routes to School and establish a dedicated Safe Routes to School coordinator

The data analysis conducted through Vision Zero should provide the rationale for focusing safety improvements around schools and destinations that kids and families frequent. Given that Vision Zero starts from the top and has the commitment of the mayor or city council, it can bring new funding to Safe Routes to School efforts. This can be groundbreaking for Safe Routes to School initiatives that may be relying on infrequent grant funding to make improvements, one school at a time. Another way of advancing Safe Routes to School is to ask for a city or school district position dedicated to Safe Routes to School, allowing coordination and progress across all schools in the city. A number of Vision Zero plans include ambitious levels of infrastructure improvements around schools, including:

- The Vision Zero plan for **San Jose, California**, proposes constructing \$5 million worth of Safe Routes to School improvements around schools participating in the city's Safe Routes to School program, called Walk & Roll SJ.
- **Los Angeles** focuses its efforts first on its 50 high-priority schools, pledging to install 180 high-visibility crosswalks at all schools by the end of 2017, completing Safe Routes to School safety plans at each of the 50 schools by 2020, and to implement those plans in all of the high-priority schools by 2025. The city even created a separate Safe Routes to School Vision Zero action plan to go into greater depth with their approach to improving safety for kids and around schools.
- **Montgomery County, Maryland**, already has a county Safe Routes to School coordinator, and its draft Vision Zero action plan calls for expanding Safe Routes to School to all schools in the county.
- **San Francisco's** Vision Zero plan promises to expand Safe Routes to School through outreach and partnerships with the city Department of Public Health.
- **Santa Ana** is utilizing its Vision Zero data on collisions and priority corridors to feed into a comprehensive citywide Safe Routes to School plan. They will update Safe Routes to School maps for every school by conducting walk audits and will prioritize projects on corridors that link multiple schools that are also Vision Zero priorities.



Reduce speeding and speed limits around schools

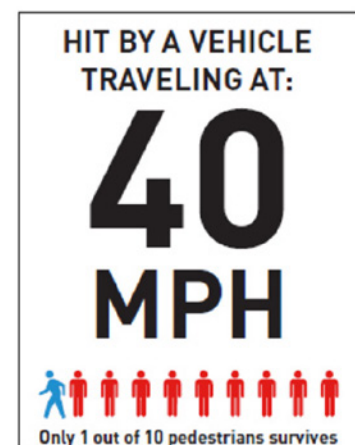
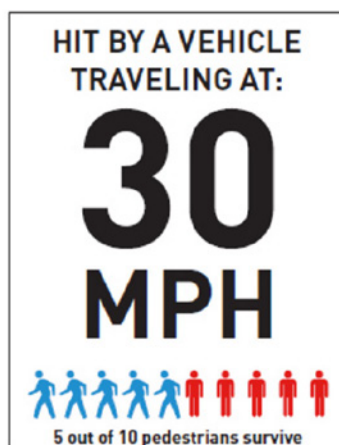
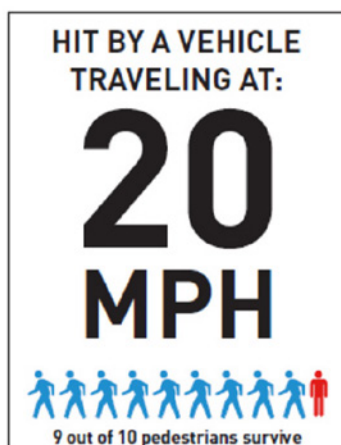
Vehicle speed affects safety in two key ways: the faster a vehicle is going when it collides with a person, the greater the odds that the person will be killed. In addition, drivers have less time to see and react to avoid a collision at higher speeds. Because children are shorter and smaller, they are even more vulnerable to these effects of speed. A key Vision Zero strategy is to reduce speed limits on streets and to improve enforcement to ensure that more drivers obey the speed limit. Safe Routes to School advocates can ask that these efforts be prioritized around schools. Examples of this approach include:

- **San Francisco** and **San Jose** are partnering to advocate for state legislation that would give them the authority to utilize automated speed enforcement (such as safety cameras). They cite the experience in New York City, where schools with speed cameras have experienced a 13 percent decrease in traffic-related injuries.
- **Portland** sought and received the state's authorization to pilot speed safety cameras in high-crash corridors and will be asking the state to give it the authority to reduce speed on all Portland streets to safe levels.
- **Washington, DC** has proposed a rule to allow it to reduce speeds in school zones to 15 mph from early morning to late at night, and to create safe speed zone areas in other parts of the city with lower speeds.
- **Los Angeles** pledged to install 100 school safety zones, where the speed limit will be reduced to 15 mph, by 2025.

Offer comprehensive bicycle and pedestrian safety education to all children

Infrastructure improvements alone will not be enough to eliminate all traffic-related deaths and injuries. One of the “Six E’s” of Safe Routes to School is education—teaching children safe behaviors for walking and biking. Vision Zero offers an opportunity for Safe Routes to School advocates to ask that those efforts be expanded beyond individual schools to all schools. Several action plans include this initiative at some level:

- **Portland** calls for engaging middle and high school students in traffic safety through Safe Routes to School, starting in Communities of Concern, and empowering young people as leaders to promote safe transportation in their communities.
- **Washington, DC** now provides universal bike skills training for all second graders in public school, and indicates they will create a traffic safety curriculum and mandate its teaching in all elementary schools.
- Given the size of the **Los Angeles** Unified School District, the Los Angeles Vision Zero plan stages its approach, pledging to hold 3,000 in-class safety trainings by 2020 and integrating safety trainings into the middle and high school curriculum for all schools by 2025.
- **San Francisco** indicates it will expand its middle school bicycle education to additional schools and add an elementary school component.



Engage community groups in Vision Zero and Safe Routes to School

Education and enforcement initiatives help foster safe driving, walking, and bicycling efforts, but the messages need to reach all parts of the community. Community groups can be an effective means of reaching different audiences, and it is particularly important to engage trusted messengers for communities of color and low-income neighborhoods. Several Vision Zero action plans identify funding sources to support community-based outreach:

- **Los Angeles** is awarding \$500,000 in grants to community-based organizations to engage residents and educate them on traffic safety. Funding is prioritized to neighborhoods along high-injury corridors and for engagement that is culturally competent and linguistically appropriate.
- **Portland** has created a community grant program targeted to Communities of Concern to support street design visioning, outreach, and education. For example, within weeks of two fatalities on the same street within hours of each other, Portland provided a rapid response grant to two community-based organizations to host culturally-relevant and multilingual classes and trainings about traffic safety for community members.
- **Washington, DC** will utilize a portion of each year's revenue from automated traffic enforcement—about \$600,000 in 2017—to provide grants to nonprofits and agencies partnering to advance Vision Zero. One recent grant went to support a local nonprofit to do bicycle education and provide free safety equipment to young people biking in the lower-income wards of the city.



Pursue unique approaches that will advance safety for kids and families

While there are core strategies and policies found in most Vision Zero action plans, cities also often identify actions unique to their specific circumstances. These ideas could be replicated in other communities as well:

- **Washington, DC** has an internal directive to use Complete Streets principles in road repair and design. Through Vision Zero, the city is proposing codifying it into law and modifying it to put the safety of vulnerable travelers (including children) as the top priority of street design.
- **Santa Ana** is taking the bold step of reclassifying their main arterials, which are subject to county requirements, as lesser streets, allowing them to reduce the number of car lanes and add protected bike lanes, pedestrian refuge islands paired with crosswalks, and other infrastructure to slow traffic and improve safety for people walking and biking.
- **Los Angeles** will work with driver's education providers to expand the curriculum to address "mobility education" – ensuring that young drivers are familiar with how to drive around people walking and biking—and will petition the state to incorporate these principles in a meaningful way into drivers' licensing exams.
- **Washington, DC** has a significant and growing number of charter schools, and many existing buildings are repurposed as schools. DC's Vision Zero plan requires city agencies to work together to develop transportation plans for any new school facilities.

Conclusion

While it may be daunting for a busy Safe Routes to School advocate to consider getting involved with Vision Zero, the potential payoff is great. The engagement of multiple city departments and support from the top for Vision Zero can help steer more funding to infrastructure and programming and supportive policies that significantly improve safety across an entire city.

Safe Routes to School advocates who do not engage in helping shape their city or county's Vision Zero effort would be missing out on a valuable opportunity for a more comprehensive approach to making it safer for more kids to walk and bike to school and in daily life.



Additional Resources

More information on Vision Zero, from the Vision Zero Network:

Fact Sheet: How does Vision Zero differ from the traditional traffic safety approach in US communities? <http://visionzeronetwork.org/project/1673/>

Moving from Vision to Action: Fundamental Principles, Policies & Practices to Advance Vision Zero in the US.

http://visionzeronetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/MinimumElements_Final.pdf

Vision Zero resolutions or directives in referenced communities:

Los Angeles mayor's directive: <https://www.lamayor.org/mayor-garcetti-signs-vision-zero-executive-directive-end-traffic-deaths-la>

Montgomery County Council resolution on Vision Zero: https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/COUNCIL/Resources/Files/res/2016/20160202_18-390.pdf

Portland City Council resolution: <http://efiles.portlandoregon.gov/Record/7812846/>

San Francisco Board of Supervisors resolution: <http://visionzerosf.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/BOS-VZ-Resolution.pdf>

Vision Zero action plans in referenced communities:

Los Angeles, CA overall Vision Zero plan: <https://ladot.maps.arcgis.com/apps/Cascade/index.html?appid=08f9539abeff495fba281faa2b6cd197>

Los Angeles, CA Safe Routes to School Vision Zero action plan:

<http://saferoutes.lacity.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/SRTSACTIONPLAN-PROGRESSREPORT.pdf>

Portland, OR: <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/transportation/71730>

Santa Ana, CA: <http://santa-ana.org/smsa/>

San Francisco, CA: <http://visionzerosf.org/about/two-year-action-strategy/>

San Jose, CA: <http://sanjoseca.gov/documentcenter/view/42849>

Washington, DC: <http://www.dcvisionzero.com/action-plan.html>





Safe Routes
to School
National
Partnership

www.saferoutespartnership.org



Advancing Safe Routes to School Through Vision Zero



PRIORITIZE
children as
vulnerable road users
and schools as
key destinations

REDUCE
speeding and speed limits
around schools

ENGAGE
community groups
in Vision Zero and
Safe Routes to School

OFFER
comprehensive
bicycle and
pedestrian safety
education to
all children

INCREASE
investments
in Safe Routes
to School and
establish a
dedicated
Safe Routes
to School
coordinator

PURSUE
unique approaches
that will advance safety
for kids and
families in your
community.

For more information on how Safe Routes to School advocates can partner with Vision Zero to improve safety and increase walking and biking in your community, see our report, [*Vision Zero and Safe Routes to School: Partners in Safety.*](#)

Vision Zero and Safe Routes to School: Partners in Safety

Why should Safe Routes to School and Vision Zero programs work together to amplify shared transportation safety goals and strategies?

Safe Routes to Schools focuses on making it safer for more kids to walk and bike to school. Vision Zero works to eliminate all traffic deaths and serious injuries.

What opportunities are there for Safe Routes to School and Vision Zero advocates to collaborate to improve safety and advance equity together?

How can Vision Zero efforts help move Safe Routes to School programs toward a data-driven, community-wide approach that prioritizes areas with the greatest safety needs?

How Communities Are Advancing Safe Routes to School Through Vision Zero

Use data to identify high crash areas

Portland, OR analyzed streets with highest rates of motor vehicle, pedestrian, and bicycle crashes, and overlaid the three lists of streets to develop a map of 30 streets and 30 intersections that make up the High Crash Network.

Offer bicycle and pedestrian safety education to all children

Washington, DC now provides universal bike skills training for all second graders in public school, and indicates they will create a traffic safety curriculum and mandate its teaching in all elementary schools.

Direct funding to schools with the greatest need

Los Angeles, CA is focusing its efforts first on its 50 high-priority schools, pledging to install 180 high-visibility crosswalks at all schools by the end of 2017, complete Safe Routes to School safety plans at each of the 50 schools by 2020, and implement those plans in all of the high-priority schools by 2025.

Reduce speeding around schools

San Francisco and **San Jose, CA** are partnering to advocate for state legislation that would give them the authority to utilize automated speed enforcement (such as safety cameras).

Engage the community in Vision Zero and Safe Routes to School

Los Angeles CA is awarding \$500,000 in grants to community-based organizations to engage residents and educate them on traffic safety. Funding is prioritized to neighborhoods along high-injury corridors and for engagement that is culturally competent and linguistically appropriate.

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