I want you to imagine a city where no one dies or is seriously injured in a traffic crash. Hard to do, isn’t it? Here in Houston, we know it’s possible. In Houston, we can prioritize safety over convenience. No loss of life is acceptable and we can prevent people from dying on our roadways. Everyone deserves to get where they are going and return home safely. Everyone deserves to move with dignity, not fear of getting hit or shame for feeling like they do not belong on our streets. Globally, safe streets are recognized as a human right.

On the following page are 1,153 names of people who died in traffic crashes in the five years from 2014–2018. Each of their names is a reason to end traffic deaths. You do not need my statements or press conferences for us to come together and put an end to traffic violence, you need only look at those names. One is more than enough.

This is why I am committed to Vision Zero. We have asked people across Houston “what is an acceptable number of traffic deaths for your family?” The answer is always zero. Zero traffic deaths for every family, zero traffic deaths for everyone. This is Vision Zero. And in Houston, we are committed to Vision Zero with a goal to end traffic deaths and serious injuries by 2030.

Committing to Vision Zero requires more than words. It demands the measurable actions and strategic implementation outlined in this Vision Zero Action Plan.

As your Mayor, I am committed to this goal, and I pledge to end traffic deaths and serious injuries. Our city agencies and regional partners are committed to this goal. But we cannot do this without you. We need everyone to contribute to preventing tragedies on our streets, and I am asking each of you to join me in making this commitment. Together, we will make Houston’s streets safe for everyone.

Mayor Sylvester Turner
IN MEMORIAM
Remembrance of Victims

Victim Name

Victor H. 13
Vlad H. 2
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The Vision Zero Action Plan is the start to implementing the City of Houston’s long-term commitment to safe streets for our most vulnerable road users. The Vision Zero Action Plan incorporates input from the Vision Zero Executive Committee, Task Force, and Data and Communications Subcommittees, and insight from community members. The Action Plan builds on existing plans, namely Plan Houston, Resilient Houston, and the Climate Action Plan, and policies including the Complete Streets and Transportation Plan, and the Walkable Places and Transit Oriented Development ordinances. The success of this plan does not rest in one City department or partner agency. It is a citywide, multiagency collaborative. The City will focus efforts on City-owned streets while working in tandem with Harris County and Texas Department of Transportation on streets they own. The Vision Zero Action Plan outlines where the City will make proactive investments, prioritizing safe systems and safe speeds impacted by traffic deaths and serious injuries.

We will accomplish Vision Zero on multiple paths at the same time: quick implementation and long-term programming to create the paradigm shift necessary to make Houston’s streets safe and accessible for people of all ages and abilities. This Action Plan identifies 50 actions that the City will take to eliminate traffic deaths and serious injuries by 2030. All 50 are important and contribute to shifting our mobility paradigm. Release of this plan marks day one of implementation.

To focus our efforts, the City, its partners, and the community have identified 13 priority actions for implementation. These are the foundational changes we must make for the rest of the plan to have meaning. While the goal is 2030, the priority actions will be the focus of a three-year span from 2021–2023. The City will update the Vision Zero Action Plan in the future to guide the initiative as it evolves.

Houston needs your help implementing the Vision Zero Action Plan. Make it known that everyone has a right to safe streets. Bring to light the challenges and barriers experienced by those disproportionately impacted by traffic deaths and serious injuries. While the goal is 2030, the priority actions will be the focus of a three-year span from 2021–2023. The City will update the Vision Zero Action Plan in the future to guide the initiative as it evolves.

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VULNERABLE ROAD USERS

Vulnerable road users are those most at risk in traffic, mainly those unprotected by an outside shield, and those who are more susceptible to be seriously injured in a traffic crash. This includes seniors, children, and people walking, using a wheelchair, and biking.

TRAFFIC CRASH (NOT ACCIDENT)

The term “incident” implies nothing could have been done to prevent the event from happening. Traffic deaths and serious injuries are preventable accidents for which proven solutions exist and so they are crashes, not accidents.

ACCESIBLE STREETS

Accessible means that streets are accessible for people with disabilities. Design solutions for accessible streets must provide space, time, and protection for people with disabilities. Accessible in this context does not mean opening streets for cars, increasing driveways and curb cuts, or expanding roadways in the name of vehicle capacity.

EQUITY

Equity in the context of Vision Zero includes addressing social and spatial disparities in transportation systems. Social factors, including race and income, and spatial components, such as land use and how much street space we dedicate to vulnerable road users, are priorities for ensuring equitable approaches and outcomes on our streets, sidewalks, and bikeways.

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VULNERABLE COMMUNITIES

Social vulnerability refers to the potential negative effects on communities caused by external stresses on human health. The Center for Disease Control (CDC) maintains a Social Vulnerability Index (SVI) database to help local officials and planners identify a plan for communities that will most likely need support before, during, and after public health emergency. CDC SVI uses U.S. Census data to determine the social vulnerability of every census tract based on 15 factors related to socioeconomic status, household composition, minority status, and transportation.

This dataset was used to identify the most vulnerable communities in Houston. Crash data in this plan are from 2014-2018 unless otherwise noted.
Houston Streets are for Living

Around the world everyone has a right to safe, accessible streets and sidewalks. When we provide safe, accessible streets and sidewalks, we create opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to move, gather, distance, express, protest, explore, celebrate, and live.
Houstonians deserve to move around this great city with dignity, without fear of being hit while crossing a street.

Every other day someone loses their life in a traffic crash on Houston streets. Three people each day suffer from severe, life-altering injuries. Lives lost and serious injuries are unnecessary traumas for those involved and their family and friends. We can prevent people from dying and being seriously injured on our roadways.

Traffic deaths and serious injuries involve a variety of contributing factors and happen in communities throughout Houston. Factors such as vehicle speed and dangerous driving behaviors, like disregarding stop lights, distracted driving, and impaired driving, play a large role in fatalities and serious injuries. Socially vulnerable communities have a higher number of traffic deaths and serious injuries per resident compared to less vulnerable communities. Some socially vulnerable communities have been identified by Mayor Sylvester Turner’s Complete Communities program, which seeks to provide quality services and amenities to under-resourced neighborhoods. Vision Zero Houston will prioritize equitable investments in communities disproportionately impacted by traffic deaths and serious injuries to ensure safer, accessible streets and intersections.

With this commitment to Vision Zero, Houston joins a global network of cities making long-term commitments to prioritize safe streets and to adopt policies that value human life more than vehicle speed. Houstonians deserve to move around this great city with dignity, without fear of being hit while crossing a street. Ending traffic deaths and serious injuries is as much about saving lives as it is about creating safe, accessible streets where people feel they belong.
For Houston to be a healthy place to live with equitable access to all this great city has to offer, we must end traffic deaths and serious injuries. No longer will we accept any loss of life by traffic crash. Zero. We can prevent people from dying on our roadways. This requires a shift in the way we think about our streets.

Streets are not just for cars. Streets are public spaces. They are shared, social places. They are for people. Yes, people make mistakes. And in a safe transportation system that prioritizes people and human life, those mistakes do not result in death or serious injury. This is the mobility paradigm we must build.

We will rethink traffic and mobility in Houston to put human lives first, especially raising the value of lives in vulnerable communities who have been disproportionately impacted by traffic deaths and serious injuries. We will prioritize human life in our transportation system, offering a balance through opportunities for all modes of mobility: walking, biking, using a wheelchair, riding transit, and driving. We will focus on street design and safe systems, speed management, communication and engagement with our communities, and evaluation and programming.
HOUSTON HIGH INJURY MAP LAYOUT

Nearly 60% of traffic deaths and serious injuries occur on just 6% of Houston’s streets. This is identified as the High Injury Network and helps the City to start making safety improvements where severe crashes are highest. Socially Vulnerable Communities contain 23% of Houston’s streets yet 53% of High Injury Network streets. These are the City’s highest priority safety improvement corridors.

Socially Vulnerable Communities are represented as census tracts above the 75th percentile for the overall summary tract ranking, indicating greater vulnerability based on socioeconomic, household, minority, and transportation variables. See Socially Vulnerable Communities definition on page 07 for more information.
Our Vision: Zero Death on our Streets

Houston streets will be safe for everyone who walks, bikes, uses a wheelchair, or drives. Houston streets and sidewalks will be inviting and accessible for people with varying abilities, for children, and for seniors. Houston streets will support the value of all communities, resulting in a more equitable city. Achieving this vision, Houston streets will serve as the catalyst for healthy and resilient neighborhoods.
To create a safe, equitable, accessible street network, make walking and biking safe, make connecting to transit safe, and make driving safe, actions will build on key principles outlined in Mayor Turner’s August 2019 Executive Order. Houston’s Vision Zero strategy will be grounded in a holistic and strategic approach, leadership and collaboration, equity and equitable outcomes, comprehensive data and analysis, and transparency and accountability.

**Goals**

We will end traffic deaths and serious injuries and create safe, equitable, accessible streets for people walking, rolling, and biking, driving, and connecting to transit.

**Principles**

To create a safe, equitable, accessible street network, make walking and biking safe, make connecting to transit safe, and make driving safe, actions will build on key principles outlined in Mayor Turner’s August 2019 Executive Order. Houston’s Vision Zero strategy will be grounded in a holistic and strategic approach, leadership and collaboration, equity and equitable outcomes, comprehensive data and analysis, and transparency and accountability.
Approaches

1. **We will rely on community engagement and communication** to inform best practices and truly hear the voice of our communities when working on site-specific solutions. We will meet people where they are and solicit input from residents in an ongoing dialogue about Vision Zero projects, priorities, and safety concerns. We will be transparent and shift the ways we communicate about road safety and crashes without blaming victims for injuries and fatalities that occur on our city streets.

2. **We will evaluate and program strategies to shift our culture and focus on strategic funding for multimodal safety projects.** We will implement Safe Routes to School programming and collaborate with K-12 schools to provide safety and mobility curricula. We will use data to inform metrics and ensure measurable benchmarks to improve safety for all road users in all parts of the City.

3. **We will focus on safe speeds and speed management to save lives and prevent serious injuries.** We will lower speed limits to fit context, such as decreasing speeds on streets where there is multimodal activity and crossing conflicts occur. We will manage vehicle speed in the High Injury Network first. We will use design as a tool to support and enforce safe speeds and continue advocating for legislation which allows for alternatives enforcement options.

4. **We will prioritize saving human lives through street designs and safe systems which accommodate the inevitability of human mistakes.** We will put first the safety of vulnerable road users who walk, bike, use a wheelchair, or wait for the bus or train. We will identify high-risk roadway features and evaluate every City roadway reconstruction project for multimodal safety needs. We will use a proactive, systems-based approach to prioritize safety improvements. We will use data to better understand how current conditions affect certain communities, including economic and racial justice implications and impacts on vulnerable road users. We will prioritize street safety improvements in vulnerable communities disproportionately impacted by traffic deaths and serious injuries.

5. **We will prioritize saving human lives through street designs and safe systems which accommodate the inevitability of human mistakes.** We will put first the safety of vulnerable road users who walk, bike, use a wheelchair, or wait for the bus or train. We will identify high-risk roadway features and evaluate every City roadway reconstruction project for multimodal safety needs. We will use a proactive, systems-based approach to prioritize safety improvements. We will use data to better understand how current conditions affect certain communities, including economic and racial justice implications and impacts on vulnerable road users. We will prioritize street safety improvements in vulnerable communities disproportionately impacted by traffic deaths and serious injuries.

6. **Ending traffic deaths and serious injuries requires leadership and collaboration.** The City will be a Vision Zero champion and hold itself accountable for communicating and implementing this Vision Zero plan. The City will sustain our commitment to prioritizing street safety through a collaborative working group. Each City department, partner agency, community member, and user of our streets will take responsibility in the role they play in street safety.

7. **Ending traffic deaths and serious injuries requires leadership and collaboration.** The City will be a Vision Zero champion and hold itself accountable for communicating and implementing this Vision Zero plan. The City will sustain our commitment to prioritizing street safety through a collaborative working group. Each City department, partner agency, community member, and user of our streets will take responsibility in the role they play in street safety.

8. **Ending traffic deaths and serious injuries requires leadership and collaboration.** The City will be a Vision Zero champion and hold itself accountable for communicating and implementing this Vision Zero plan. The City will sustain our commitment to prioritizing street safety through a collaborative working group. Each City department, partner agency, community member, and user of our streets will take responsibility in the role they play in street safety.

9. **Ending traffic deaths and serious injuries requires leadership and collaboration.** The City will be a Vision Zero champion and hold itself accountable for communicating and implementing this Vision Zero plan. The City will sustain our commitment to prioritizing street safety through a collaborative working group. Each City department, partner agency, community member, and user of our streets will take responsibility in the role they play in street safety.

10. **Ending traffic deaths and serious injuries requires leadership and collaboration.** The City will be a Vision Zero champion and hold itself accountable for communicating and implementing this Vision Zero plan. The City will sustain our commitment to prioritizing street safety through a collaborative working group. Each City department, partner agency, community member, and user of our streets will take responsibility in the role they play in street safety.
Priority Actions

The following actions are Houston’s first for implementation; they set the stage for a meaningful Vision Zero strategy. These actions will be continually informed by data from reports and community members. The complete action list, including lead and supporting agencies, starts on page 23.

COMMUNICATION

- Report Vision Zero efforts and effectiveness with a public-facing dashboard and an annual report card.
- Implement a citywide communication campaign on street safety to celebrate the reality that people use different modes of transportation to get around Houston.
- Train city employees about how to speak to public and media about crashes.

SAFE SYSTEMS

- Reframe the City’s transportation planning tools: shift citywide standards to Multimodal Level of Service and prioritize Vision Zero goals in the Infrastructure Design Manual (IDM).
- Evaluate every City roadway reconstruction project for multimodal safety needs and opportunities at project inception.
- Identify high-risk roadway features and develop templates to simplify consistent safety redesigns.

SAFE SPEEDS

- Determine vehicle speeds that are safest for all people using the street and then design the street to support that speed.
- Use design as a tool to support and enforce pedestrian right-of-way at intersections and crosswalks.
- Use signal timing to maximize safety and comfort of all modes over vehicle throughput.

PROGRAMMING

- Redesign 10 locations on the High Injury Network every two years and implement reconstruction within the following fiscal year.
- Construct at least 50 miles of sidewalks each year.
- Construct at least 25 miles of high-comfort bicycle facilities each year.
- Inventory and prioritize street improvements within a half-mile of transit centers to improve safety and access for persons with a disability.

Making the Vision a Reality

Vision Zero is a strategy based in measurable actions and equitable outcomes. The goal to eliminate traffic deaths and serious injuries will be achieved only through implementation of comprehensive approaches and targeted actions.

Acronyms in Actions

ARA: Administration & Regulatory Affairs
DON: Department of Neighborhoods*
EMS: Emergency Medical Services*
FIN: Houston Finance Department*
FMD: Fleet Management Department*
H-GAC: Houston-Galveston Area Council
HHD: Houston Health Department*
HPB: Houston Parks Board
HPD: Houston Police Department*
HPL: Houston Public Library*
HPW: Houston Public Works*
LGL: Houston Legal Department*
MOPD: Mayor’s Office for People with Disabilities*
PDD: Planning and Development Department*
TIRZ: Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone
TSR: Together for Safer Roads
TxDOT: Texas Department of Transportation

*City of Houston Department
COMMUNICATION

Approach 1

Communication

1.1 Report Vision Zero efforts and effectiveness to the public:

- Create public-facing dashboard, updated no less than every three months with Vision Zero metrics, project timelines, and response periods for transportation infrastructure-related requests (Examples: outstanding sidewalk program requests, responses/feedback on qualitative data, and turnaround times).

- Develop an annual report card on action plan progress and measures. Build a culture of responsibility for meeting metrics or addressing changes that will be made to help meet metrics in the future. The first report card will be due 12 months after release of this Vision Zero Action Plan.

1.2 Provide publicly accessible ways for residents to contribute qualitative data regarding street safety and risks, including expansion of 311 system.

There should be an app or some other easy way for residents to report near misses.

— Let’s Talk Houston Online Platform

I would love to see a dashboard that tracks every death and serious injury.

— Let’s Talk Houston Online Platform

Goal

Overarching

Lead
HPW

Support
PDD, ARA

There should be an app or some other easy way for residents to report near misses.

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Implement a citywide communication campaign on Vision Zero street safety:
- Celebrate the reality that people use different modes of transportation to get around Houston.
- Prioritize crash locations and causes identified in the High Injury Network. (Examples: intersections are crosswalks, even if unmarked; yield to pedestrians; no right turn on red).

Train city employees about how to speak to the public and media about crashes. Create materials and resources in multiple languages.

We need to be open to where we find data. Stories and experiences are just as valuable as crash records. We can’t find out where and why people avoid a certain location that they deem extremely unsafe unless we ask.
— Virtual Open House

Media could be much more balanced when talking about crashes. Stop blaming the victim.
— Let’s Talk Houston Online Platform

There is a real need for the public and the agencies to understand the priority to equitably make walking and biking safer in many areas.
— Virtual Open House

A crash isn’t necessarily an accident. Stop calling it one.
— Let’s Talk Houston Online Platform

Create more opportunities for general stakeholder collaboration in City of Houston planning and implementation of mobility projects, overcoming issues of disenfranchisement.

Include grassroots organizations and community leaders in Vision Zero committees to provide guidance on equity and equitable outcomes in Vision Zero work.

There is a real need for the public and the agencies to understand the priority to equitably make walking and biking safer in many areas.
— Virtual Open House

A crash isn’t necessarily an accident. Stop calling it one.
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Create more opportunities for general stakeholder collaboration in City of Houston planning and implementation of mobility projects, overcoming issues of disenfranchisement.

Include grassroots organizations and community leaders in Vision Zero committees to provide guidance on equity and equitable outcomes in Vision Zero work.
Develop and disseminate educational resources to equip new drivers with information on how to be safe on Houston streets, emphasizing unsafe behaviors identified in the High Injury Network.

Develop and disseminate new education resources for walk, bike, and bus safety for K-12 students.

Vision Zero should include education, especially drivers who are new to Houston.
—Virtual Open House

So much to do. Please coordinate with Harris County, METRO, and anyone else who can help.
—Let’s Talk Houston Online Platform

We need to enhance and re-emphasize Driver Education programs, as well as Bicycle Safety programs.
—Virtual Open House

Coordinate with TxDOT and H-GAC on a Houston-focused education campaign to target impaired driving.

Work with the State to include Vision Zero language and resources on reducing traffic fatalities in Defensive Driving course.
APPROACH 2

Safe Systems

Reframe the City’s tools for transportation planning:

- Prioritize Vision Zero goals in the Infrastructure Design Manual (IDM): safety of vulnerable road users, speed control, accessibility for people with disabilities and of all ages, prioritization of pedestrian and bicycle mobility, and safe access to transit.

- Shift citywide Traffic Impact Analysis standards from Vehicle Level of Service to Multimodal Level of Service.

Evaluate every city roadway reconstruction project for multimodal safety needs and opportunities at project inception. Identify a street safety implementation project budget that includes long-term maintenance costs and prioritizes safety for people walking, biking, using a wheelchair, and connecting to transit.

2.1

Let’s change the way we plan. Shifting the traffic impact analysis from vehicle level of service to multimodal level of service is a great early priority!

—Let’s Talk Houston Online Platform

2.2
Identify high-risk roadway features correlated with specific, recurring severe crash types for each mode. Develop templates to address scales of safety redesigns (low-cost/quick wins; heavy lifts/big impact). Address multiple corridors and intersections with similar characteristics of streets identified in the High Injury Network and incorporate redesign with every city project.

Expand fatal crash review board to multidisciplinary group of City departments:
- Intentionally recruit and review representation by departments to ensure members routinely use modes other than driving and therefore have a genuine perspective and respect for people walking, biking, and riding transit day-to-day across Houston.
- Understand the most severe crashes occurring in the city by reviewing crash reports of High Injury Network fatalities and publicly-submitted reports. Evaluate crash reporting procedures to improve data collection methods (linked to 1.1).

There are people whose lives are forever changed due to negligence on the roads. They shouldn’t have to be a fatality to be counted. —Let’s Talk Houston Online Platform

Safer access to our mobility infrastructure includes investment in our walkability infrastructure. We need to identify the high density pedestrian areas in the city, the quality of the walking networks, and the associated crash data in those areas. —Virtual Open House

How can the tech industry contribute to this vision? Don’t they have useful data? —Virtual Open House

Utilize Connected Vehicle/Internet of Things data sources to inform near misses and other unreported conditions (linked to 1.2).

Give higher consideration to planning, design, and engineering firms bidding for city roadway projects who attend training programs/webinars on safety and mobility.

Create a user-friendly Pedestrian Access Route audit tool to enable the public and City to collect uniform, useful sidewalk condition data (linked to 1.2).

Make the Vision a Reality: Actions
Require construction sites to provide safe and convenient pedestrian, bicycle, wheelchair and transit access.

2.9

Lead
PDD, HPW

Support
METRO, TxDOT, Harris County, Permitting

Goal
Walking, Biking, Rolling

Perform systematic review of all trail/street crossings, recommend safety improvements, and implement all trail crossing improvements.

2.10

Lead
PDD, HPW

Support
HPW, METRO, METRORail

Goal
Bike

Coordinate all bike network and transit network extensions with bikeshare services.

2.12

Lead
PDD, HPW, METRO, Harris County, Permitting

Support
HPW, FDD, TxDOT, MOPD

Goal
Transit

Coordinate with METRO on design criteria (METRO Transit Design Guidelines) for waiting space, signage, and wayfinding for transit centers, bus and rail stops, and park and rides. (Example: Find My Stop)

2.11

Lead
METRO

Support
HPW

Goal
Transit

Construction zone crashes and fatalities are out of control. Houston’s Vision Zero should address construction area safety!

— Virtual Open House

Trail crossing improvements would be a big benefit. Would love to see some improved on the Columbia Tap Trail.

— Let’s Talk Houston Online Platform

Make Houston area vehicle fleets the safest in the nation.

2.13

Lead
FM

Support
TSR, FMD

Goal
Driving

SAFE SYSTEMS

Fleet vehicles are everywhere. How can they be included in Vision Zero to make our streets safer?

— Virtual Open House

Establish and enroll Houston-area businesses in Safe Fleet Management Program.

2.14

Lead
TSR

Support
FMD

Goal
Driving

● Use technology to track speed in City fleet vehicles and other interested fleets.

● Inventory fleet management practices of City departments to determine vehicle coordinators, GPS, and number of vehicles.

● Amend administrative policy 2.2 to address crashes, speeding, and employee Motor Vehicle Records.

Use technology to track speed in City fleet vehicles and other interested fleets.

Inventory fleet management practices of City departments to determine vehicle coordinators, GPS, and number of vehicles.

Amend administrative policy 2.2 to address crashes, speeding, and employee Motor Vehicle Records.

Inventory fleet management practices of City departments to determine vehicle coordinators, GPS, and number of vehicles.
Designate citywide freight network.

Collaborate with Vision Zero Texas cities about traditional police enforcement of traffic violations and alternative enforcement options. Generate next steps for working with communities on their vision for enforcement.

Join with law enforcement and legal system, including prosecutors and defense attorneys, to analyze traffic citations and court convictions. Use findings to inform enhanced penalties for serious driving offenses, such as killing another road user, driving under the influence, running red lights, and repeat offenders.

Incorporate Vision Zero goals into the Mayor’s Police Reform Task Force recommendations.

There is so much more that we can be doing to increase safety proactively by design instead of reactively by enforcement.

— Virtual Open House

There absolutely needs to be a culture shift on our roads.

— Let’s Talk Houston Online Platform

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APPROACH 3

Safe Speeds

We need safer crosswalks with better signaling, better lighting, and more time to cross.
— Virtual Open House

Re-evaluate the Neighborhood Traffic Management Program and expand to a shared street implementation program which prioritizes people walking and biking and includes countermeasures to slow vehicle speeds. Target program availability to socially vulnerable communities.

Revisit crosswalk and sidewalk policies:

1. Establish criteria for regularly spaced safe crossings on major streets.
2. Establish enforcement mechanisms for residential sidewalk maintenance, including providing means for residents to report hazardous conditions (linked to action 1.2).
3. Revisit striping maintenance.

Restriping should be part of every pedestrian improvement project. Just updating faded paint can make a big difference.
— Let’s Talk Houston Online Platform

3.1

3.2

SAFE SPEEDS

Houston Vision Zero Action Plan
Making the Vision a Reality: Actions

Houston Vision Zero Action Plan
Making the Vision a Reality: Actions
Design streets to support and enforce pedestrian right-of-way at intersections and crosswalks. Include automatic pedestrian phases as default at signalized intersections with guidelines for where push buttons are appropriate.

Determine safest vehicle speeds for all street users and then design the street to support that speed:

- Match design speed and posted speed limit to the specifics of the street: land use context, roadway characteristics, activity level and conflict density. Slow speeds for streets that serve multiple modes with high potential for crossing conflicts, medium speeds for moderate activity and some crossing conflicts, high speeds only where there are no crossing conflicts and pedestrian/bicycle facilities are well-separated from vehicle traffic.

- Start with High Injury Network corridors.

The lights should be timed so that higher speeds aren’t rewarded.

—Let’s Talk Houston Online Platform

Use signal timing practices to maximize safety and comfort of all modes over vehicle throughput. Prioritize Leading Pedestrian Intervals, pedestrian-only phases, and protected left turn phasing. Consider where traffic signals are appropriate, and minimize permitted left turns and two-stage pedestrian crossings.

Changing from 30mph to 25 mph would make a wonderful difference in safety and comfort while walking and biking.

—Virtual Open House

Lobby for state authority to establish a 25mph default speed limit on city residential streets and 30mph speed limit on all other city streets.
Approach 4

Programming

Redesign 10 locations on the High Injury Network every two years and implement reconstruction within the following fiscal year (linked to 2.3).

- Prioritize socially vulnerable communities and locations identified by the Special Task Force on Intersection and Sidewalk Safety for Persons with Disabilities.
- To inform redesign, meet communities where they are.
- Publish list of locations and progress on public-facing dashboard (linked to 1.1).

Set aside capital projects funding to include multimodal safety projects. Establish mechanism to ensure funds go to safety and maintenance of safety infrastructure (either stand-alone projects or to be included as portions of projects meeting additional City goals).

When you can’t see an entire intersection clearly, the street is unsafe. —Virtual Open House

Consider “quick and cheap” projects that can be done with paint and plastic and replicated across the City. —Virtual Open House

4.1

4.2
Leverage outside funds (including METRO, TIRZ, and Management Districts) for pedestrian and bicycle improvements for every roadway project along transit routes and in TIRZs and Management Districts.

Construct at least 50 miles of new sidewalks each year. Start by prioritizing corridors along the High Injury Network, in the City’s existing sidewalk programs, and in socially vulnerable communities.

Establish a pipeline of projects to be funded with federal Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) money through TxDOT and other funding opportunities.

Create a “quick planning” program to assess all council districts every two years for low-cost pedestrian safety improvement projects.

Develop a pedestrian/sidewalk plan to target investment in walkability infrastructure. Start by focusing efforts in the High Injury Network and high-density pedestrian areas.

Use analytics to identify and build out the best 25 miles of new protected bike paths. This will potentially add connections to the Bayou Greenways.

Install at least 25 miles of high-comfort bicycle facilities every year in street right-of-way or on City-owned public land. Year 1 Projects start with 11th and Patterson.

Implement a citywide Safe Routes to School program which proactively improves walking and biking access to school. Find priority partners in socially vulnerable communities and where students are already walking or biking frequently.

How can additional funding outside the City of Houston (including METRO, TIRZ, and Management District funds) be leveraged and/or aligned to support implementation of future Vision Zero projects?

— Virtual Open House

Goal Walking, Rolling, Biking

Priority
Inventory sidewalks and street crossings within a half mile of transit centers and light rail stops. Use crash and transit ridership data, and other available information, to prioritize safety improvements and access for persons with a disability.

Support implementation of METRONext by fast-tracking complementary projects that improve access to and from transit stops.

Complete Streets should be a design requirement for all new construction or rehabilitation projects.

Drivers have so many distractions and distractions kill.

Drivers have so many distractions and distractions kill.

Update requirements for developers:
- Upgrade bus stops when development projects touch bus stops.
- Integrate opportunities for public transit and bikeshare into every new development, regardless of whether a stop exists, to accommodate potential future transit expansion. (linked to action 2.1)

Design City of Houston street reconstruction projects so that every bus stop is built to METRO specifications.

Evaluate feasibility of road diets/reassignment of lanes on streets targeted for repaving in the City’s Street Rehabilitation Program, including but not limited to corridors identified in the High Injury Network and Houston Bike Plan.

Adopt Hands Free ordinance that prohibits the use of all electronic hand-held devices while operating a vehicle.

Complete Streets should be a design requirement for all new construction or rehabilitation projects.

Drivers have so many distractions and distractions kill.

Update requirements for developers:
- Upgrade bus stops when development projects touch bus stops.
- Integrate opportunities for public transit and bikeshare into every new development, regardless of whether a stop exists, to accommodate potential future transit expansion. (linked to action 2.1)
Evaluation and regular reporting are necessary to track progress and benchmark success of Vision Zero and the commitment to end traffic deaths and serious injuries. The City will maintain a public-facing data dashboard with key Vision Zero data and release an annual report measuring progress against the goals and metrics set forth in this plan.

1. Change in traffic deaths and serious injuries by mode, by demographics and neighborhood, normalized by population.
2. Percentage of High Injury Network with new street safety improvements. List improvements made, including the number of intersections and treatment type and miles of four, six, and eight-lane streets converted to safer configurations.
3. Percentage of drivers exceeding the speed limit and median speeds on select streets.
4. Percentage of street safety improvements in communities disproportionately impacted by traffic deaths and serious injuries.
5. Commute mode share.
6. Total number and percentage of street reconstruction projects with multimodal safety needs and improvements made to address needs.
7. Percentage of traffic stops based on top contributing crash factors on Houston streets. Include driver characteristics.
8. Miles of sidewalk and bikeways constructed and maintained, include High Injury Network streets.
9. Number of community members reached by Vision Zero engagement activities.
10. Number and type of agencies and community members represented on Vision Zero working groups.
Community Engagement

Vision Zero will be achieved in Houston because of our communities’ advocacy for safer streets.

Houstonians have expressed the desire for healthy and equitable neighborhoods supported by a safe, multimodal transportation network. Community members have voiced their traffic safety concerns and worked closely with the City to address streets and intersections in their neighborhoods. Houstonians’ voices are represented and amplified in the City’s commitment to Vision Zero. Those voices drive this strategic action plan to end traffic deaths and serious injuries. Our communities deserve safe streets.
The Voice of the Community

To introduce Vision Zero to the community and hear their street safety priorities, the City hosted two virtual open houses, an online engagement platform, and socially-distanced outreach at transit centers over the course of the summer and fall 2020. Virtual open houses consisted of online discussion sessions about how the City should focus its efforts to improve dangerous streets and intersections. An online engagement platform, hosted online indefinitely, encourages people to interact with a map, complete a survey, and see what other Houstonians are saying about safer streets. Outreach at transit centers, completed twice at two separate locations, created opportunities to engage people who are not connected virtually. Meeting the community where they are is critical to meaningful engagement, especially to reach people who do not have access to technology. However, in-person interactions were limited due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Engagement at transit centers took place outside and followed protocols to maintain health and safety while still offering opportunities to talk to people who may not otherwise be reached.

LEARN MORE
LettstalkHouston.org/vision-zero

CONCERNS WE HEARD

| Streets and intersections feel most unsafe when there is no designated space to walk, bike, use a wheelchair, or wait for the bus. |
| Lack of safe crossings |
| Excessive distance between crosswalks |
| Drivers failing to yield |
| Speeding is the number one locational concern. |
| Other top concerns are: |
| Lack of sidewalks |
| Visibility issues |
| Controlling street designs |

Priorities we heard:

- Streets without sidewalks
- Areas with a high number of crashes, regardless of injury severity
- Locations with high traffic volume
- Areas with a high number of serious injury crashes
- Areas with a high number of fatal crashes
- Proximity to schools

STREETS AND INTERSECTIONS

- 47% Walking
- 28% Driving
- 20% Biking
- 3% Using a wheelchair

Streets and intersections feel most unsafe when there is no designated space to walk, bike, use a wheelchair, or wait for the bus.

Speeding is the number one locational concern.

Other top concerns are:

- Lack of safe crossings
- Excessive distance between crosswalks
- Drivers failing to yield

Concerns, priorities, and actions we heard are compiled from online engagement sessions, the Vision Zero interactive map and Vision Zero survey.

ACTIONS WE HEARD

- Support and enforce pedestrian right-of-way at intersections and crosswalks
  Priority Action 3.3

- Collect, analyze, and use data to understand trends of crashes and disproportionate impacts on certain populations
  Priority Actions 1.1, 2.3
  Actions 2.4, 2.6, 2.17

- Build out low-stress, regional bike network
  Priority Action 2.2, 4.8
  Action 2.19, 3.12, 4.3

- Create a direct, connected network of sidewalks and crosswalks
  Priority Actions 2.2, 3.3, 4.5, 4.11
  Actions 2.9, 3.2, 4.6

- Adopt citywide policies that prioritize the safety of people walking
  Priority Actions 2.3, 4.4
  Actions 2.9, 4.2, 4.3, 4.10

- Connect walking and biking spaces to transit facilities
  Priority Action 4.11
  Actions 2.12, 4.52

- Develop budget and funding strategies to prioritize the safety of people walking and biking
  Priority Action 3.2
  Actions 2.14, 2.22, 4.20

- Adopt citywide policies that lower speed limits and enforce speed control
  Priority Action 2.4
  Actions 2.17, 4.10

- Implement automated enforcement technology
  Priority Action 2.15
  Actions 2.16, 4.19

- Enhance safety for people walking in different weather conditions
  Priority Action 5.2
  Actions 3.7, 4.21

- Implement strategies to create bike routes
  Priority Action 2.2
  Actions 2.12, 2.14

- Support low-stress bike lanes
  Priority Action 2.2
  Actions 2.14, 2.16, 2.17

- Implement strategies to manage speeding
  Priority Action 2.4
  Actions 2.15, 4.10

- Support non-motorized transportation
  Priority Action 2.2
  Actions 2.12, 2.14

- Support walking and biking in local areas
  Priority Action 2.2
  Actions 2.13, 2.15

- Support programs and policies that provide incentives for non-motorized travelers
  Priority Action 2.4
  Actions 2.15, 4.10

- Implement high-visibility enforcement
  Priority Action 2.4
  Actions 2.15, 4.10

- Support walking and biking programs and policies
  Priority Action 2.2
  Actions 2.13, 2.15

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- Support programs and policies that provide incentives for non-motorized travelers
  Priority Action 2.4
  Actions 2.15, 4.10

- Implement high-visibility enforcement
  Priority Action 2.4
  Actions 2.15, 4.10

- Support walking and biking programs and policies
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With over 2,000 comments from Vision Zero engagement, the community’s concerns, priorities, and recommendations are clear. The City of Houston will continue to use the interactive map, survey results, and conversations with our communities as we develop street safety projects throughout Houston. Dangerous intersections where near miss incidents occur are not included in crash reports, so it is important to know where people feel unsafe and which intersections they avoid. It is critical to know neighborhood priorities, because each neighborhood has a unique set of needs and interests. The community’s voice will continue to shape projects that will make Houston streets safe for all.

Keep talking to us

Release of this Vision Zero Action Plan marks the next stage of community engagement efforts to guide implementation. Not only do you have a role in sharing our streets safely with everyone, but you have the expertise as well. You know your community best. Tell us about streets and intersections where you feel unsafe or that you avoid because they are dangerous. Share with us what safe streets mean to you. Work with us on solutions that match realities in your neighborhood. We need your support, your knowledge of your community, and your guidance.
Vision Zero Houston Partners

**Vision Zero Executive Committee**

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