ELIMINATING TRAFFIC DEATHS IN LOS ANGELES BY 2025

AUGUST 2015
Dear Friends,

Every year, more than 200 people are killed while trying to move around Los Angeles. Nearly half of the people who die on our streets are people walking and bicycling, and an alarming number of them are children and older adults.

Our streets must be safer. Vision Zero is more than an approach to traffic safety management: it is an international movement, based on the fundamental principle that loss of life due to traffic collisions is unacceptable and preventable.

With Vision Zero, we can reduce the likelihood of death and severe injury through strategic, data-driven approaches to engineering, enforcement, education, evaluation, and community engagement.

We may not be able to prevent every collision, but we can — and must — take important steps that can make a difference and save lives.

My goal is to eliminate all traffic deaths in the City of Los Angeles by 2025. Achieving this ambitious objective will require us to engineer our streets for safety first; help ensure the public is more aware of how to stay out harm’s way; and better enforce our traffic laws. If we can realize this vision, children will be safer walking to school, families will be safer going to the park, and commuters will be safer getting to work.

In L.A., this movement has already begun. To help prioritize our efforts, we will focus initial work in places that have been identified as having the highest rates of collisions for people walking and bicycling.

Working together, we can eliminate traffic deaths and make Los Angeles a safer place for everyone traveling through our city.

Sincerely,

ERIC GARCETTI
Mayor
LOS ANGELES NEEDS VISION ZERO
Traffic collisions are a threat to public health and Angeleno’s quality of life

WHAT IS VISION ZERO
Introduction, mission, and vision

VISION ZERO GOALS
Making zero traffic deaths a reality

HIGH INJURY NETWORK (HIN)
Targeting safety improvements on our streets that have higher rates of collision

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ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE VISION ZERO LOS ANGELES
Vision Zero can be addressed through Engineering, Enforcement, Education, Evaluation, Partnerships, and Equity
Every year, more than 200 Angelenos lose their lives while traveling on city streets. The Vision Zero philosophy holds that these deaths are both unacceptable and preventable.

Vision Zero is a road safety policy that promotes smart behaviors and roadway design that anticipates mistakes such that collisions do not result in severe injury or death. In this regard, it promotes a culture of shared responsibility, where both designers and policymakers, not just the users, are held accountable for the deaths on our streets.

The Vision Zero concept originated in Sweden, where it was adopted as a national strategy in 1997. Since then, despite increased traffic volumes, the number of transportation-related deaths has dropped over 30 percent. Several cities throughout the U.S. have adopted the Vision Zero goal, including New York, San Francisco, Seattle, Portland, Chicago, San Jose, and San Diego. Many include a 10-year goal—more ambitious than the one set by Sweden—reflecting the urgency for taking actions to make our streets safer.
No traffic death should be considered acceptable or inevitable.

**Principles of Vision Zero**

- **Traffic Deaths are preventable and unacceptable.**
  Traffic deaths are not “accidents,” but preventable tragedies. Our efforts are based on proven solutions that consider the large variety of factors that contribute to risk such as the design of the street, location, and time of day.

- **Human error is inevitable and unpredictable.**
  The transportation system should be designed to anticipate error so the consequence of a collision is not severe injury or death. Continued technological advancement will play an important role, but it must be accompanied by retooling our streets.

- **Engineering, education, enforcement, evaluation, and equity are essential to a safe system.**
  The hallmark of success for Vision Zero is the coordination between all of the “E’s” and a multi-disciplinary approach to making our streets safer.

Human life takes priority over other objectives of the road system.

Our streets must be safe for people of all ages and abilities, traveling by all modes of transportation. Prioritizing people walking and vulnerable users such as children and older adults will enhance safety for everyone. Streets that are safe to walk on are also safe for people bicycling, accessing transit, and driving. We will retrofit and reconstruct our streets using both existing tools and pioneering new, innovative design strategies.

Speed is a fundamental predictor of crash survival.

The transportation system should be designed for speeds that protect human life. High vehicle speeds greatly increase the likelihood of death as the outcome of a collision.

Government policies at all levels should be coordinated to promote safety as the highest priority.

Many of the laws and regulations governing safety on our streets are determined at the State and Federal level. Appropriate legislative changes in Sacramento and Washington can enhance our efforts at the local level.

**Fundamental to the Vision Zero strategy is the design of a safe system where vehicles move at reasonable speeds.**

Speed is a fundamental predictor of crash survival. Research shows that increasing vehicle speeds from 20 mph to 40 mph increases the likelihood of a pedestrian death when hit from 10 percent to 80 percent¹. Slower speeds also increase the field of vision and allow for more time to react to unexpected situations on the roadway. For a five mile trip without interruptions, reducing the speed from 30 mph to 25 mph would add just two minutes to the total travel time. Two extra minutes is worth it to save a life.

Traffic collisions are a threat to public health and Angelenos’ quality of life.

The City of Los Angeles has made remarkable progress on crime, which has declined every year for the past 10 years. In fact, Los Angeles now has the lowest crime rate among all major cities within the United States\(^1\). Unfortunately, we’ve failed to make similar gains in protecting those moving throughout our city. In 2013, there were 201 traffic deaths, compared with 149 gang-related homicides.

Among peer cities that have committed to Vision Zero, Los Angeles has the highest transportation death rate.

Los Angeles is a large city, home to over 3.8 million people. There will inevitably be collisions when moving through a city this size. However, the City of New York, with a population of over 8.5 million, has become one of the safest large cities in terms of traffic deaths with a collision death rate almost half that of Los Angeles. Internationally, our peer cities have been able to achieve even more. London, Hong Kong, Tokyo, Berlin, and Stockholm all have lower traffic death rates than New York, which is the safest large city in the U.S.

While the traffic safety records of our peer cities have been improving over time, the same cannot be said for Los Angeles. The City has not seen a significant decrease in the number of people killed and severely injured from traffic collisions over the past ten years. Although many of our peer cities have recently formally adopted Vision Zero, most have been adopting street designs, policies, and programs proven to increase safety. In New York, for example, traffic deaths have decreased by 34% in areas where the City made major engineering changes, twice the rate of improvement at locations without changes.

An analysis of Los Angeles’ traffic safety data yielded the following conclusions:

In 2013, 978 people suffered severe injuries in collisions. 201 people were killed.

People walking and bicycling are over-represented among traffic deaths.

People walking and bicycling are involved in only 14% of all collisions but account for almost half of all traffic deaths. Although traffic laws are at times ignored by all types of street users, the consequences of infractions are most severe for people walking and bicycling because they are not likely to survive the impact of a vehicle moving at speeds greater than 30 mph. Over the past five years, there have been an average of 82 fatal pedestrian and 10 fatal bicycle collisions per year, accounting for 49 percent of all traffic deaths.

In a study on driver behavior, black pedestrians trying to cross the street were passed by twice as many cars and experienced wait times that were 32% longer than white pedestrians.

30% of those killed or severely injured while walking or bicycling in Los Angeles are youth and older adults. Older adults (over 65 years old) and youth (under 18 years old) are our most vulnerable populations, accounting for 30 percent of all bicycle- and pedestrian-related traffic deaths. In Los Angeles, traffic collisions are the leading cause of death for those between 2 and 14 years old and the number two cause of premature death among those between 15 and 25 years old. In re-engineering our streets, we should be emphasizing safety for all ages and abilities.

Safe streets are walkable streets. Streets make up about 15 percent of all the land area in the City of Los Angeles. They are our largest public asset, forming and reflecting the character of our neighborhoods, our people, and our City. By implementing policies that support Vision Zero, we can also achieve streets that promote walking, support economic vitality, and improve the environment.

Research has shown that there is a link between better health and moderate-intensity aerobic activity, like brisk walking. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that all adults engage in 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity a week, which has been shown to decrease the incidence of heart disease, diabetes, obesity, depression, and other health problems.1

Despite the benefits, only 21 percent of U.S. adults meet recommended guidelines for physical activity, and these rates are even lower among racial/ethnic minorities and low-income individuals.2 As shown in the map on page 19, where you live matters. Racial minorities are disproportionately represented in pedestrian traffic deaths.3 When it comes to walking, race has been shown to influence how drivers yield to people crossing the roadway.4 In addition, in many communities, high rates of crime and violence make walking a difficult transportation and/or exercise option.

1 Los Angeles County Department of Public Health, Office of Health Assessment and Epidemiology. 2012 California DPH Death Statistical Master File for Los Angeles City residents, compiled 7/31/15, L. Lieb.

2 Physical activity is defined as 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity every week and muscle-strengthening activities on two or more days a week. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2014). Facts about Physical Activity. http://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/data/facts.htm
4 Goddard et al. (2014)
VISION ZERO GOALS

1 Reduce citywide traffic deaths by 20 percent by 2017, prioritizing pedestrian deaths involving older adults and children

2 Eliminate traffic deaths citywide by 2025

To make zero traffic deaths a reality, we plan to employ every tool at our disposal. Mayor Eric Garcetti’s Executive Directive No. 10, Vision Zero, directs all City departments to collaborate and coordinate their actions to improve safety on our streets and sidewalks. We will also be reaching out to partner with other Vision Zero cities throughout the country to learn from and share best practices.

However, the work of government alone will not be enough to bring about the necessary changes. Vision Zero Los Angeles is a collaborative effort, and we look forward to partnering with the community to build support and accountability around our vision for safer streets.

Executive Directive No. 10, Vision Zero lamayor.org
HIGH INJURY NETWORK (HIN)

In order to reach the ambitious target of eliminating all traffic deaths by 2025, the City of Los Angeles is implementing a data-driven approach. Based on a methodology originally developed by the San Francisco Public Health Department to formalize their Vision Zero strategy, we’ve identified a network of streets where strategic investments will have the biggest impact in reducing death and severe injury. This High Injury Network uses the latest five years of collision data for all modes of travel, with an emphasis on streets that have a higher incidence of deaths and severe injuries. Our next steps include detailed crash profiling to inform our engineering toolkit, educational campaigns, and enforcement. For a more detailed look at the High Injury Network, visit visionzero.lacity.org.

HIN AND EQUITY

Los Angeles is a city with great health disparities that vary greatly depending on your income, education, race, where you live, and other social determinants. Many of the areas with the poorest health outcomes also have a disproportionate amount of severe and fatal injuries from traffic collisions. We can begin to address these inequities by prioritizing interventions to improve health outcomes in these areas of the City with most need.

Areas in blue are those identified by the Plan for a Healthy Los Angeles’ Community Health and Equity Index to be the most disadvantaged in terms of health outcomes. healthyplan.la
CONTINUED EFFORTS TOWARD SAFER STREETS

Even prior to Vision Zero, the City of Los Angeles has been tending to the safety needs of all roadway users as part of routine, day-to-day work. Several ongoing initiatives and plans lay the groundwork for Vision Zero Los Angeles. From the Safe Routes to School Strategic Plan and Crossing Guard program, to the Mobility Plan 2035 and the Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT) Strategic Plan, Great Streets for Los Angeles, safety is the “north star” that unifies the goals and objectives of these efforts.

Vision Zero Los Angeles will build upon ongoing work by creating a data-driven approach to safety improvements, including prioritizing areas of the City with the greatest need. This will better position us to take advantage of resources to fund and implement safety improvements, allowing us to reach our goal in a deliberate, objective manner that is focused on decreasing traffic-related deaths and life-changing injuries.
Safe Routes to School

School age children (under 18) account for 17% of all people fatally or severely injured while walking and bicycling in the City of Los Angeles. With the goal to improve public health and student achievement and eliminate traffic-related deaths and injuries, LADOT launched the Safe Routes to School Initiative in 2012. To make the most of City resources, LADOT created a Safe Routes to School Strategic Plan and developed a prioritization methodology for targeting the 50 Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) schools with the highest need, considering collision rates, the number of children living within walking and bicycling distance of each school, equity and health, and other indicators.

In 2014, LADOT was successfully awarded over $20 million from the State Active Transportation Program (ATP) to increase safety through street improvements around nine of the highest-need schools, develop complementary safety and education campaigns, and create school travel plans for the remaining Top 50 prioritized schools. In the near term, LADOT will work with administrators, educators, students, and parent leaders at each school to implement street improvements that will create a calmed traffic environment for children walking and bicycling to these schools.

Moving forward, education and encouragement programs, like annual Walk, Bike and Roll to School day events, will continue to offer students, school administrators, educators, and parents the tools they need to partner with LADOT and LAUSD on improving safer routes at the individual school level.

saferoutes.lacity.org

100% of the 50 schools prioritized for safety improvements lie along or fall within 1/4 mile of the HIN.
Crossing Guard Program

The Crossing Guard Program serves school-age children walking and bicycling to and from school. LADOT deploys approximately 400 crossing guards at Los Angeles Unified School District schools within the City of Los Angeles each day of the school year. The success of this program is credited to LADOT’s commitment to working together with department employees, school administrators, teachers and parents. These crossing guards do so much more than just assist with crossing elementary school age children through neighborhood streets and busy roads—they are the “eyes and ears” of our neighborhoods, reporting back to LADOT on safety issues. LADOT Crossing Guards ensure that students, as well as parents and caregivers, are visible in our neighborhoods and encourage all road users to follow traffic laws and practice safe behaviors.

ladot.lacity.org

Plan for a Healthy Los Angeles

The Plan for a Healthy Los Angeles is a new Health and Wellness Element of the city’s General Plan. The Plan elevates health as a priority in the city’s future growth and development. The Health Atlas, a data-driven analysis of health outcomes in Los Angeles, supports and prioritizes the goals, objectives, and strategies outlined in the Plan. The Health Atlas data highlights the geographic concentration of health disparities throughout Los Angeles, underscoring a key issue: the neighborhoods that Angelenos live in influence their health and well-being. A Community Health and Equity Index combines demographic, socio-economic, health conditions, land use, transportation, food environment, crime, and pollution burden variables into a single index to compare health conditions across Los Angeles.

healthyplan.la

Hit & Run Alert System

About 20,000 hit-and-run collisions occur in the City of Los Angeles per year, many involving deaths and severe injuries. The City of Los Angeles has launched a hit-and-run alert system that will notify followers of various social media platforms about vehicles and drivers involved in fatal and other severe hit-and-run collisions. The system will alert the public to critical information that could allow for the identification and location of people driving who are involved in hit-and-run incidents.

http://cd12.lacity.org/MediaRoom/News/LACITYP_029752

LADOT’s Strategic Plan

The Strategic Plan for LADOT, Great Streets for Los Angeles, is an unprecedented vision for creating great streets throughout Los Angeles. Great Streets for Los Angeles includes key objectives and timely milestones to enhance our City’s safety, livability, sustainability, and prosperity. Vision Zero, a key strategy of the Great Streets Plan, will bring together city and regional agencies to advance toward the goal of zero deaths in ten years.

ladot.lacity.org

LA Mobility Plan 2035

As the City’s General Plan Transportation Element, Mobility Plan 2035 provides the policy foundation for achieving a transportation system that balances the needs of all road users. The Plan emphasizes “safety first” and “streets as places” for people, including goals, objectives, and policies around roadway user vulnerability, complete streets design, safe routes to schools, and other key areas influencing street safety. It sets a goal of zero traffic deaths by 2035. The Mayor’s Citywide Executive Directive No. 10, Vision Zero, will accelerate this to zero deaths in ten years—by 2025.

la2b.org

Sustainable City pLAN

On April 8, 2015, Mayor Eric Garcetti released Los Angeles’ first-ever Sustainable City pLAN. The pLAN is both a roadmap to achieve “back to basics” short-term results while setting the path to strengthen and transform our City in the decades to come. The pLAN is made up of short term (by 2017) and longer term (by 2025 and 2035) targets in 14 categories that will advance our environment, economy and equity, including specific goals relating to safe, vibrant, well-connected, and healthy neighborhoods. The pLAN mentions Vision Zero specifically as a key sustainability strategy.

plan.lamayor.org

CONTINUED EFFORTS TOWARDS SAFER STREETS
ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE VISION ZERO
LOS ANGELES

The City of Los Angeles is implementing a multi-faceted approach to reach these targets, with a commitment to:

**Engineer and Plan** our streets to anticipate human error and minimize the consequences of mistakes;

**Enforce** traffic safety laws in areas that have high collision rates to protect our most vulnerable road users;

**Educate** the public through safety campaigns that reinforce positive driving, bicycling, and walking behavior;

**Evaluate and Monitor** our progress continuously to ensure we remain on-track to reach our targets;

**Partner** with the community, especially as we work toward implementing safety improvements at the neighborhood level; and

**Implement** with a focus on equity.
Spotlight on Data-driven Safety Studies in Los Angeles

This is not the first data-driven effort to increase safety in Los Angeles. Many other organizations have taken a hard look at the numbers and provided suggestions for improvement.


Students from the USC Marshall School of Business, in partnership with LADOT, completed an award-winning study of pedestrian- and bicycle-related collisions in Los Angeles. The report recommended encouraging public transit, adding additional infrastructure for people on bikes, and improving data collection when collisions occur.

Recently, the Los Angeles Times identified 817 intersections that have relatively high rates of pedestrian injuries and deaths after analyzing more than 665,000 traffic collisions in LA County from 2002 through 2013. The July 12, 2015 article also included a webmap to view the hotspot locations from the collision analysis.

www.losangeleswalks.org/pedcollisionmap/

http://s3.amazonaws.com/la-peDESTRIANS/
Partnerships

By announcing our commitment to Vision Zero, we join a growing coalition of U.S. cities committed to eliminating all traffic deaths while increasing safe, healthy, equitable mobility for all. Beyond our national borders, we also join the international movement toward zero traffic deaths, alongside the World Health Organization and the Global Road Safety Partnership. Our partnerships will allow us to leverage best practices and contribute to the state of knowledge on safe streets.

Here at home, the City of Los Angeles benefits from a rich network of community-based organizations committed to safe streets. With the High Injury Network as a guide, we look forward to partnering with our communities to build support around our vision for safer streets.

Organizational Structure: What comes next?

We are already on our way toward specific actions to achieve Vision Zero. There is no single department or agency that can accomplish this task alone. To ensure that City agencies are accountable and take the actions needed to successfully reach these goals, a Vision Zero Executive Steering Committee has been established to coordinate, implement and evaluate near-term and longer-term actions. The Committee meets quarterly and provides regular progress reports to the Mayor.

The Executive Steering Committee includes:

- Office of the Mayor
- General Manager, Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT) co-chair
- Police Chief Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) co-chair
- Los Angeles Department of Public Works, Bureau of Engineering (BOE)
- Los Angeles Department of Public Works, Bureau of Street Services (BSS)
- Los Angeles Fire Department (LAFD)
- Los Angeles County Department of Public Health (DPH)

Executive Steering Committee Immediate Actions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action Item</th>
<th>Lead Agency</th>
<th>Participating Agency</th>
<th>Target</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Define roles and responsibilities of Executive Steering Committee</td>
<td>Mayor’s Office, LADOT, LAPD</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>2015</td>
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<tr>
<td>Develop framework and accountability measures for Task Force</td>
<td>Mayor’s Office, LADOT, LAPD</td>
<td>BOE, BSS, LAFD, DPH</td>
<td>2015</td>
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<tr>
<td>Implement communications strategy and progress reporting</td>
<td>Mayor’s Office, LADOT, LAPD</td>
<td>DPH</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Address immediate traffic safety conditions through identifying priority corridors and implementing related safety improvements, education campaigns and enforcement strategies</td>
<td>LADOT, LAPD, BOE, BSS, LAFD, DPH</td>
<td>BSL, BCA, DOD, DOA, DCP, DONE, LAUSD, LAPD, METRO, LA County Sheriff</td>
<td>2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop uniform process for interdepartmental data collection and sharing</td>
<td>Mayor’s Office</td>
<td>LADOT, LAPD, DPH</td>
<td>2017</td>
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<td>Develop and coordinate long-term funding</td>
<td>Mayor’s Office, LADOT, LAPD, DPH</td>
<td>Task Force</td>
<td>2017</td>
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What can I do?

All Angelenos can take steps to make sure our streets are safe. When driving, slow down and refrain from talking on the phone or texting. When walking or using a bicycle, make sure to obey traffic signs and signals. Finally, when under the influence of alcohol, make sure you have a safe ride home. For updates on our progress toward zero traffic deaths, sign up for our mailing list at visionzero.lacity.org.

In addition, as you encounter safety issues throughout the City of Los Angeles, we encourage you to submit on-line service requests at myladot.lacity.org. You can even upload photos and mark an exact location on a map so that LADOT staff have a full understanding of your request. LADOT staff will be in contact and provide updates as to the status of your request.

For information on Vision Zero visit visionzero.lacity.org
e-mail visionzero@lacity.org
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