

# VISION ZERO LOS ANGELES

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



### **What is Vision Zero Los Angeles?**

Vision Zero Los Angeles represents a citywide effort to eliminate traffic deaths in the city of Los Angeles by 2025. Vision Zero makes human life the highest value in our road system, and has two goals: a 20% reduction in traffic deaths by 2017 and zero traffic deaths by 2025.

### **Are traffic collisions really a big problem in Los Angeles?**

Yes. Traffic collisions are the leading cause of death for children between the ages of 2 and 14 in Los Angeles. Approximately 200 people in Los Angeles die due to traffic collisions every year— one of the highest fatality rates for a major urban area in the United States.

### **Don't bad drivers and distracted pedestrians make it impossible to eliminate traffic collisions?**

Vision Zero will not eliminate traffic collisions—it aims to eliminate traffic deaths. A core principle of Vision Zero is that people driving, walking, and bicycling will make mistakes on the road, but we have the responsibility to implement strategic safety programs and improvements that ensure that these mistakes do not result in death.

### **What about distracted pedestrians on their smartphones? What are you doing about that?**

A focus on distracted pedestrians will not help the many people who are hearing- and vision-impaired to no fault of their own. Instead, our goal is to create environments where people of all abilities can feel safe while moving around. Vision Zero achieves this by targeting dangerous driving behavior and holding accountable those who have accepted the serious responsibility for controlling a heavy, fast-moving, and potentially lethal object.

### **What will Vision Zero actually do to bring down traffic deaths?**

Vision Zero will reduce traffic deaths by making safety improvements on our most dangerous streets, as well as focusing on education and enforcement that is proven to change dangerous behavior. Collisions will still occur, but we can reduce deaths by decreasing the *amount* of fatal collisions, the *severity* of those that do occur, and raising awareness about this issue.

### **Isn't a goal of "zero traffic deaths" simply unrealistic?**

Zero traffic deaths is a lofty goal to accomplish within a decade, but then so was President Kennedy's 1961 goal of taking a man to the moon within a decade-- and that took only seven years. We have the tools and knowledge to reach our goal of zero traffic deaths; now we only need collaboration and perseverance. To paraphrase President Kennedy's famous speech, we choose Vision Zero "not because it is easy, but because it is hard; because this goal will serve to organize and measure the best of our energies and skills, because this challenge is one that we are willing to accept, one we are unwilling to postpone, and one we intend to win."

### **What does it mean that Vision Zero is a "data-driven" approach to traffic safety?**

A "data-driven" approach is one that looks at all available data that informs where injuries are occurring most frequently and examines the conditions that are causing these collisions. The City of Los Angeles has already begun by using data generated from the most recently available five years of collision reports to create the [High Injury Network \(HIN\)](#), which identifies the streets in Los Angeles with the highest injury rates. Our next step includes conducting an in-depth analysis on these collision reports with existing environmental, or "built environment" data (such as street width, presence of street lights, etc.), which will inform our Vision Zero Action Plan.

### **What types of changes will we see happening on the street?**

There are many safety improvements in the engineering toolbox and implementation will be specific to the needs of each street and issue. For example, the implementation of [curb extensions](#) may be an option. Curb extensions not only gives pedestrians a shorter crossing, but also gives all users a better organized street.

### **Why does Vision Zero focus so much on people walking and bicycling?**

Vision Zero prioritizes our most vulnerable road users. This means people walking and bicycling, and also children and the elderly. These groups are disproportionately more likely to die if they are involved in a collision with a car, and they are most likely to see their quality of life diminished in the absence of safe streets. Since almost two-thirds of pedestrian deaths occur on just 6% of our streets, targeting these areas first will bring significant results in a short a period of time.

### **Will Vision Zero make it harder to get around Los Angeles?**

Vision Zero makes getting around Los Angeles easier. Whichever mode of transportation you choose, being able to navigate a safe street network improves the quality of life in Los Angeles and ensures that people can carry out daily activities with less fear that a serious traffic collision will occur.

## **If Vision Zero is a transportation issue, why does it involve so many other city departments?**

Safety is never achieved in isolation. Think of a home—it takes a combination of Los Angeles city departments like Building and Safety, Fire, Police, Water and Power, and many others to keep residents safe. The same holds true when our residents travel throughout the city on our streets, and for that reason, many partners are at the table.

## **Which city departments are most involved in Vision Zero?**

Five particular city departments taking the lead on Vision Zero: Transportation, Police, Engineering, Fire, and Street Services. But there are many essential partners working with us, including Los Angeles Department of Public Health, Los Angeles Unified School District, Department of City Planning, and a host of local community organizations. See the [Mayor's Executive Directive](#) for a full list of partners involved in Vision Zero.

## **Why is the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) involved with Vision Zero?**

The heart of LAPD's mission is to keep the people of Los Angeles safe, and Vision Zero's goal of eliminating traffic deaths aligns perfectly with what police officers do every day. LAPD and the Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT) are co-chairs of the Vision Zero Executive Steering Committee, and will be working closely on Vision Zero in the years ahead. In addition to collaborating on traffic safety, Vision Zero will be looking at how to enhance existing LAPD collaborations with community partners like Safe Routes to School.

## **How is Safe Routes to School involved with Vision Zero?**

[Safe Routes to School](#) works to make our roads safer for students who walk and bike to school and looks to increase the overall numbers of students travelling to school using these healthy modes. Vision Zero has already used data to identify the 50 most vulnerable schools in need of safety improvements. It is currently working with Safe Routes to School and LAUSD to make sure the needs of these schools are prioritized.

## **I'm all for Vision Zero! How can I get involved?**

Welcome aboard! You can start by learning more about the national Vision Zero network and the Los Angeles Vision Zero Alliance [here](#). There are excellent community organizations participating in making our streets safer for everyone. After learning about them, we encourage you to reach out to one that best matches your interests.