

# Advisory Committee of Council Staff Report



---

To Accessibility Advisory Committee  
Date Tuesday, December 17, 2024  
Subject **Vision Zero Guelph – Action Plan for Safe Streets Summary Report**

---

## Recommendation

1. That the AAC receive the Vision Zero Guelph – Action Plan for Safe Street Summary Report.
  2. That the AAC recommend that the Vision Zero Guelph – Action Plan for Safe Street Summary Report include their feedback as follows...
- 

## Executive Summary

### Purpose of Report

The Vision Zero Guelph - Action Plan for Safe Streets ("Action Plan") is document that will be received by City Council listing 68 cross-departmental actions that support the City's goal of reaching zero serious injuries and fatalities on Guelph roads. This Summary Report offers an overview of the Action Plan document as well as an excerpt of the full list actions.

### Key Findings

- The Action Plan seeks to meet City Council's endorsement of Vision Zero as part of the Transportation Master Plan and will be presented to City Council Committee of the Whole on March 4, 2025.
- The total number of people killed and seriously injured by vehicle collision between 2018-2022 was 101. This number is overrepresented by vulnerable road users including those who walk, bike, use mobility devices, and ride motorcycles.
- 83% Guelph's collision-related serious injuries and fatalities between 2018-2022 took place on 10% of Guelph's roads, mostly represented by roads designed for fast moving and high-volume vehicles and occurring at intersections.
- The Action Plan identifies existing City of Guelph plans, policies, and guidelines, and lists emerging practices and initiatives which support the City's goal of reaching zero serious injuries and fatalities on Guelph roads.
- The Summary Report provides an overview of key content found within the Action Plan and names its eight focus areas containing 68 cross-departmental road safety actions.

## **Strategic Plan Alignment**

Guelph City Council endorsed Vision Zero as part of the Transportation Master Plan (2022) recommendations. Vision Zero initiatives are supported by the City's Future Guelph Strategic Plan (2024-2027), and are also aligned with Guelph's Community Plan (2019), ensuring that people feel safe walking, jogging, wheeling, and riding their bikes through all corners of our city.

## **Financial Implications**

There are no immediate financial implications regarding the adoption of the Action Plan, however, its long-term implementation will require significant capital and operating costs. The achievement of each action depends on sustained funding from the City of Guelph and other government partners. The City will review the capital budget forecast annually and recommend projects that advance Vision Zero and ensure the operating budget provides the staff capacity for implementation.

---

## **Report**

### **Background**

Vision Zero is a road safety strategy to reduce the number of people killed and seriously injured on roads to zero. The City of Guelph endorsed Vision Zero as part of its Transportation Master Plan in 2022, and which supports the creation of a planning document that aligns with Vision Zero principals and builds upon the existing Community Road Safety Strategy.

This planning document, named the Action Plan, will be a public-facing document which seeks to introduce Vision Zero and the related Safe Systems approach, offer an overview of Guelph-specific collision and public health findings, and list cross-departmental actions that the City of Guelph will take to meet its commitment of reaching zero serious injuries and fatalities on its roads. The development of the actions has been supported by various City of Guelph departments and the City of Guelph's Vision Zero Steering Committee.

### **Vision Zero and the Safe System approach**

The concept of Vision Zero was first introduced in Sweden in 1997, and has proven to be very successful in reducing collision-related deaths worldwide. Today, Vision Zero has been widely adopted around the globe and is endorsed by 25 cities across Canada.

### **Vision Zero is built on these principles:**

1. No loss of life is acceptable on our roads.
2. Deaths and serious injuries are preventable.
3. Everyone makes mistakes.
4. People are vulnerable.

Vision Zero is guided by the Safe System approach which directs our attention towards a new way of understanding and addressing road safety that accounts for all road users and proactively addresses risk.

## **Guiding research**

The Action Plan is guided by road safety research and best practices, and includes the following foundational relationships:

- Globally, the rate of collision-related fatalities per capita tends to increase with the per capita rate of annual vehicle-kilometers travelled.
- Across North America, certain communities face higher levels of exposure to moving vehicles which increases their risk of collision-related injuries and fatalities. These include racialized groups, people with lower incomes, those who are unhoused, and people with disabilities.
- Higher speeds increase reaction distances and braking distances, which lowers survival rates. If a person walking is struck by a person driving a vehicle at 30 km/h, they have a 90% chance of survival. If the vehicle is moving at 50 km/h, the survival rate of the person walking drops dramatically to 15%.
- Road safety actions or countermeasures are most effective at a population level if they reduce and prevent the transfer of kinetic energy to the greatest number of people in ways that require little or no individual effort. This description of effectiveness is based on a public health framework called the Safe Systems Pyramid.

## **Guelph data**

- Between 2018 and 2022, the total number of reported collisions was 9,392. The total number of people killed and seriously injured due to these collisions was 101, of which 83% occurred on just 10% of Guelph's roads.
- Between 2002 and 2022, all injuries and fatalities due to collision have decreased for drivers but have not shown the same reduction for other road users. While only 12% of Guelph's residents walk, bike or use motorcycles for their daily commute, they account for 63% of all serious injuries and deaths.
- Arterial roads accounted for nearly 60% of collision-related serious injuries. Among collisions that involved people walking, 63% happened on arterial roads, while these same roads make up 23% of Guelph's road network.
- 72% per cent of all collisions in Guelph happen at intersections, as do most collisions involving vulnerable road users. 50% of all injuries to people who were walking occurred due to a vehicle making a left turn.
- The mortality rate for pedestrian and cyclist transport injuries is highest among those aged 75 years and older.

## **Focus areas**

The Action Plan names eight focus areas that contain a total of 68 cross-departmental road safety actions. Each focus area begins with a theme name and brief description of the theme. The full list of actions, along with timelines and deliverables for each, are included as an attachment to this report.

The Action Plan focus areas are as follows:

1. Plan better ways to grow. Driving is risky. We will create more ways to get around and make it easier to access everyday needs close to home, reducing the risks that come with driving.
2. Identify risk. We won't wait for a collision to happen before we act. We will proactively investigate, identify, and address the risk of collision-related injuries and deaths before they occur.
3. Protect vulnerable people. People who walk, bike, use mobility devices and ride motorcycles need protection. We will pinpoint where vulnerable road users are most at risk and install infrastructure that protects them from collisions with vehicles.
4. Design safe streets. All road users need to be safe on our streets. We will apply new design standards to roads we add or change, especially at intersections, to address known safety issues.
5. Reduce speeds. Speed predicts the survival rate of those impacted by a collision. We will prioritize actions that reduce vehicle speeds so that when collisions happen, fewer people will be seriously injured or killed.
6. Be data-driven. Data guides all our decisions. We have captured new risk based data sets and will actively pursue research partnerships to help analyze and interpret our data.
7. Work together. Road safety is a shared responsibility. We will collaborate with our partners to amplify road safety measures and communicate needs and solutions at the local, provincial, and national levels.
8. Learn together. Changing our streets starts with changing our mindset. We will be transparent about why we are making changes and create opportunities for people to view roads as shared public spaces that belong to all of us.

### **High Risk Network**

Every kilometre of Guelph's 600-kilometre street network was evaluated using known risk factors that increase frequency and severity of collisions causing serious injuries and deaths. This approach also accounts for historical collision data, prioritizing collisions that involved vulnerable road users. This approach was used to create Guelph's High-Risk Network, the first public map of its kind in Canada, and its use helps direct 10 of the 68 actions listed within the Action Plan.

### **Key Performance Indicators**

While achieving zero serious injuries and deaths is the ultimate goal of the Action Plan, there are several other indicators that were chosen to measure its effectiveness and success:

- Annual number of people killed/seriously injured per 100,000 population
- Percentage change in highest speeds along High-Risk Network
- Number of road safety audits performed
- Annual number of safety improvements installed on the High-Risk Network
- Kilometres of new, protected bicycle infrastructure constructed each year
- Resident awareness of Vision Zero

- User perception of safety by modality

## **Financial Implications**

None

## **Timeline and Consultations**

The Action Plan document is being designed to be an engaging and accessible digital PDF. The Action Plan will be completed by mid-January, 2025 to be received by City Council Committee of the Whole on March 4, 2025. Following this meeting, the final Action Plan is intended to be publicly available on the City of Guelph's Vision Zero webpage.

Moving forward, every year, City of Guelph will update its Vision Zero webpage with collision data, emerging trends, and progress towards Key Performance Indicators. Throughout this period, the City of Guelph's Vision Zero Steering Committee will continue to meet quarterly and support each partner's road safety efforts. In 2028–2029, the City will publish an update on our Action Plan progress, and adjust the Action Plan as needed to reflect current understanding and priorities.

## **Attachments**

Vision Zero Guelph - Action Plan for Safe Streets - Appendix Actions.pdf

## **Departmental Approval**

Steve Anderson, Manager Transportation Engineering

## **Report Author**

Nico Koenig, Transportation Safety Specialist

## **This report was approved by:**

Nico Koenig

Transportation Safety Specialist

Infrastructure, Development and Enterprise Services

519-822-1260 extension 4130

[nico.koenig@guelph.ca](mailto:nico.koenig@guelph.ca)