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San Francisco Bay Area Families for Safe Streets Urges Stepped-up Action on Vision Zero as National Report Calls for Zero Traffic Deaths

New Road to Zero Report Sets Goal to Eliminate Traffic Deaths in U.S. by 2050

Individuals in the San Francisco Bay Area whose lives have been forever changed by traffic crashes are urging local and state leaders to step up their important work to reach Vision Zero — zero traffic deaths and severe injuries — in light of last Thursday's release of a groundbreaking report setting a goal to eliminate traffic fatalities in the U.S. by 2050.

The report, [*A Road to Zero: A vision for achieving zero roadway deaths by 2050*](#), is the first of its kind in the U.S. and was developed by the RAND Corporation, a nonprofit, nonpartisan research institution, in partnership with the Road to Zero Coalition, which is led by the National Safety Council and includes the U.S. Department of Transportation, amongst other influential partners.

This historic call for action and urgency at the national level comes as traffic deaths reach staggering proportions, as more than 37,000 people lost their lives last year in the U.S. in traffic crashes — an average of 100 people lost each day in preventable crashes.

"The members of San Francisco Bay Area (SFBA) Families for Safe Streets know all too well about the epidemic of traffic violence," says Cathy DeLuca of Walk San Francisco, a pedestrian advocacy organization that supports the group. "They have lost children in crashes, they have survived serious crashes, and they have seen the lives of their loved ones changed forever in an instant." Families for Safe Streets members fight for street safety both locally and on the state level, to turn their grief into action. The Road to Zero report affirms what they know personally — that no one should die in traffic crashes.

"As someone who lost my son in a traffic crash, I'm encouraged to see leaders step up to call for action and urgency to end this senseless and preventable loss on our streets," says Alvin Lester, an SFBA Families for Safe Streets founding member whose son Arman was killed in 2014 in San Francisco. "Everyone deserves to be safe when they're walking to school, driving to work, or biking to the park. The only goal we can accept is zero traffic deaths, and we can get there."

The new national report asks: "What level of death on the roads should we as a society accept? How many of our own family members, classmates, neighbors, or people in our community losing their lives to crashes would be considered an appropriate number?"

“The answer is zero,” says Julie Mitchell, an SFBS Families for Safe Streets founding member whose son Dylan was killed while biking in San Francisco. “No family should have to go through what mine did.”

Vision Zero is not a simple slogan or PR tagline. As the report explains: “Adopting the Safe Systems approach involves a fundamental shift from the common assumption that crashes generally happen because of people’s behavior. Instead, a Safe Systems approach assumes that people will occasionally, but inevitably, make mistakes behind the wheel and that the overall transportation system should be designed to be forgiving so that these mistakes do not lead to fatal outcomes.”

“News flash: these deaths are preventable,” says Leah Shahum, Executive Director of the national Vision Zero Network, a member of the Road to Zero Coalition. “This report shows that 100 people dying each day — children, parents, grandparents, and other loved ones in our communities — is *not* some inevitable ‘price’ for mobility in today’s society. The truth is that we *know* what works to ensure safety on our streets, sidewalks, and bikeways. And we can and must work toward the only acceptable goal of zero traffic deaths.”

This national-level report reinforces the important work of Bay Area cities — like San Francisco, San Jose, Fremont, and Berkeley — that have adopted Vision Zero. ([Map](#) of the 30+ local Vision Zero communities.) In 2017, San Francisco saw the lowest number of traffic deaths in the city’s recorded history.

With this local success as an example, SFBA Families for Safe Streets calls on more cities in the Bay Area to adopt Vision Zero and commit to no loss of life on our streets. The group also urges the California State legislature to adopt regulation that will allow local jurisdictions to use lifesaving tools like speed safety cameras, which have been proven to significantly reduce speeding and fatal crashes.

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To learn more about San Francisco Bay Area Families for Safe Streets, visit sfbafamiliesforsafestreeets.org or contact us at familiesforsafestreeets@walksf.org.

To learn more about the Vision Zero and Safe Systems movements nationally, contact the Vision Zero Network (visionzeronetwork.org).

To learn more about Vision Zero in San Francisco and the work of advocates like Walk San Francisco, visit walksf.org or contact cathy@walksf.org.

To learn more about the Road to Zero Coalition and the new Road to Zero report, contact the National Safety Council (nsc.org/roadtozero).

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