

Denver Vision Zero

James Owens, Acting Administrator

Tuesday, December 3, 2019 | Denver, Colo.

AS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY

Thank you, Mayor Hancock, and thank you to the City of Denver: the Denver Vision Zero staff, the Department of Public Works, and the Denver Police Department; the Denver Regional Council of Governments; the Colorado Department of Transportation; the Federal Highway Administration; and the Federal Transit Administration.

NHTSA's top priority is safety on our roads, and we are strong supporters of the Vision Zero and Road to Zero movements. It cannot be acceptable that more than 36,000 lives were lost on our roads last year.

Denver Vision Zero came about when the community saw an issue and decided to act. Of particular concern is the safety of vulnerable road users – bicyclists, motorcyclists, and pedestrians. These three groups represent 56% of Denver traffic deaths so far, this year.

This echoes what we are seeing nationally: A rise in the number of fatal crashes in urban areas, as well as more fatalities among pedestrians and cyclists.

That has to change. Every fatal crash represents a life lost, with a lasting impact on families and communities that will never be the same.

Our roads need to be safe for everyone using them, no matter if you're in a car, on a bike, using a scooter, or walking. Every person should be able to go to work, visit family, run errands, or travel to school without fearing for their safety.

I am proud to stand here with state and local leaders and organizations committed as we work toward one common goal: No more road fatalities. We can do so much more when we work together, pool our resources, and share our knowledge.

NHTSA is pleased to be able to partner with states and local governments on campaigns like this. Combining education with tough laws and effective enforcement works.

Our agency is actively working to improve safety for pedestrians and cyclists. We have numerous resources and tools available for states and law enforcement to address pedestrian and bicyclist safety. We also are examining current and planned research and resources related to these vulnerable road users.

NHTSA is working with the Federal Highway Administration to develop pedestrian safety initiatives – uniting some of our federal efforts and resources to more effectively tackle this problem. We appreciate this partnership and Administrator Nicole Nason's commitment to this important issue.

I appreciate the leadership and support of our Secretary, Elaine Chao, who believes deeply in our safety mission. Her support for this lifesaving work is invaluable.

Our message today is simple: In order to share the road, you need to pay attention. Because it may be the difference between life and death.

