



Road to Zero Statement on Equity

A safe mobility system is the cornerstone of an equitable mobility system. In achieving our mission of zero traffic deaths by 2050, the Road to Zero Coalition acknowledges the disparities that exist in roadway safety and commit to doing better to improve safety for all system users. This statement aims to serve as groundwork for our engagement on the topic of equity in roadway safety, commit the Coalition to improved efforts of partnership, programming, and communications, and acknowledge the ways that we know roadway safety has contributed to undue harm or burdens to communities.

Safe mobility independence for all road users becomes a reality in a system that is equitable so that the goal of zero roadway fatalities can be achieved. The Road to Zero Coalition recognizes that we must

- Address existing disparities within roadway planning and policies and their implementation in order to achieve its mission of reaching zero roadway fatalities by 2050.
- Address existing disparities in the access, safety, mode choice and other mobility systems and advance policies that do not perpetuate those disparities.
- Address all vulnerabilities and disparities related to traffic safety to achieve the goal of zero, including eliminating any disparities or inequities in safety.

This statement is a reflection of our current knowledge and intention, and it may be revised in the future as new research and information emerge over time. It will continue to serve as a guiding principle in the Coalition's efforts, and it serves as a framework and guiding document for how the Coalition performs its own work and the ways in which it might influence the work of our members and other stakeholders in the roadway safety environment through policies, programs, and communications.

We as members of the Road to Zero Coalition have an obligation to address existing disparities and inequities within roadway safety in order to reduce roadway fatalities within a mobility system that is safe and accessible for all. Achieving this goal requires both internal efforts (e.g., evaluating how the Coalition is organized, managed, and performs) as well as external (e.g., examining the Coalition's programming, communications, and priorities).

Benefits to addressing transportation equity include enabling safe access to school, work, healthy food, healthcare, parks, and more, as well as supporting greater community involvement in roadway safety.

Road to Zero Coalition Commitments

To further our mission of achieving zero roadway fatalities by 2050 and address the inequities that we know exist within the practice of roadway safety, the Road to Zero Coalition commits to:

- Use our leadership, voice, and programming to discuss and encourage the reversal of the disproportionate impact of traffic fatalities and limited transportation access on all, including

Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) and low-income communities, older adults, and people with disabilities

- Expand and recognize the diversity of stakeholders and partners both within the Coalition and in other spaces where the Coalition and our members have influence and participation
- Use our position and platform to amplify and support the work, resources, and voices of those working on transportation equity to inform the national dialogue around roadway safety and give voice to those who have been marginalized or excluded by providing space for dialogue and stepping aside so others can lead when appropriate
- Identify gaps in roadway safety data, data reporting, and data analysis, and work with partners to identify ways to address those gaps
- Understand the historic and current barriers to transportation safety that are inequitable as they relate to roadway planning and share information about this with our members and partners through programming and communications
- Use the three pillars of the Road to Zero strategy to discuss and improve transportation traffic safety in a data-informed, holistic, and equitable manner
- Revisit and revise this statement as needed to reflect improved understanding and best practices and to be as transparent as possible in our journey to turn these commitments into action

Acknowledgment of Existing Conditions

Before engaging and confronting topics related to roadway safety and equity, the Road to Zero Coalition and our members must first acknowledge and name the ways in which we have contributed to undue harm and burdens, both intentional and unintentional, through our work in mobility and roadway safety. Many transportation decisions – from highway construction to law enforcement – have historically discriminated against people based on race and ethnicity, income, age, ability, sex, gender, language skills, immigrant status, and employment.¹ Personal histories and data continually support and demonstrate this. To sincerely and actively engage in a conversation about equity, the Road to Zero Coalition must confront that transportation decision-makers have underinvested resources in some communities as compared to others, such as BIPOC communities and have at times actively and passively discouraged meaningful community participation in project planning and implementation. As a result, our efforts and our members' efforts to improve road safety have contributed to a system with:

- Unsafe, incomplete, or inconvenient mobility networks, creating barriers to school, work, parks, healthcare, worship, and more

¹ https://pdxscholar.library.pdx.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1009&context=psy_fac

¹ <https://smartgrowthamerica.org/dangerous-by-design/>

¹ <https://rosap.ntl.bts.gov/view/dot/14700>

¹ <https://www.propublica.org/series/walking-while-black>

¹ https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/mplsbike/pages/3970/attachments/original/1476137957/MBC_Police_Citations_Report_Final2_small.pdf?1476137957

¹ <https://nyc.streetsblog.org/2020/06/22/nypd-targets-black-and-brown-cyclists-for-biking-on-the-sidewalk/#:~:text=%E2%80%9CIf%20people%20are%20riding%20bikes,to%20ride%20in%20the%20street.&text=The%20stats%20follow%20a%202014,were%20mostly%20Black%20or%20Latino.>

¹ <https://academic.oup.com/ej/advance-article/doi/10.1093/ej/ueaa090/5898389>

¹ https://www.washlaw.org/pdf/2018_09_13_unfair_disparity_fair_evasion_enforcement_report.PDF

¹ <https://www.consumerreports.org/car-safety/crash-test-bias-how-male-focused-testing-puts-female-drivers-at-risk/#:~:text=An%20average%20adult%20female%20crash,from%20male%20bodies%20in%20crashes.>

- Divided communities and created health disparities and unsafe conditions for BIPOC, women, older adults, children, and people with disabilities
- Limited usable data and weak data reporting that prevents us from meaningfully understanding underlying disparities
- Laws, policies and programs – established to improve road safety – that have resulted in unsafe and sometimes deadly interactions with law enforcement, as well as, undue financial burdens through inequitable application of fees and fines with rippling consequences
- Transportation networks that prioritize system efficiency for motor vehicles over accessible mobility for all modes
- The latest safety features and technology in vehicles not being included in standard packages, creating financial barriers for those looking to purchase safer automobiles
- Colleagues and stakeholders who have been silenced and marginalized as compared to others, such as BIPOC, women, and people with disabilities

The intent of the Road to Zero’s statement on Equity is to acknowledge the above consequences of decisions to date, learn from them, and commit the Coalition and our members to doing better going forward using this statement and the related resources as guideposts.

Safe networks for walking, cycling, taking transit, and driving result in improved economic, educational, and health outcomes for our system’s users and move us closer to our goal of zero fatalities. Our approach to road safety must account for the industry’s role in creating inequitable safety outcomes for BIPOC communities, women, older adults, children, and disabled people. In accepting this history, the Coalition will be poised to continue striving toward zero roadway fatalities by 2050 in a way that is balanced and equitable.