



SEATTLE CITY COUNCIL

Transportation and Utilities Committee

Agenda

Wednesday, June 2, 2021

9:30 AM

Remote Meeting. Call 253-215-8782; Meeting ID: 586 416 9164; or
Seattle Channel online.

Alex Pedersen, Chair
Dan Strauss, Vice-Chair
M. Lorena González, Member
Lisa Herbold, Member
Tammy J. Morales, Member
Debora Juarez, Alternate

Chair Info: 206-684-8804; Alex.Pedersen@seattle.gov

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Committee Website:

<http://www.seattle.gov/council/committees/transportation-and-utilities>

This meeting also constitutes a meeting of the City Council, provided that the meeting shall be conducted as a committee meeting under the Council Rules and Procedures, and Council action shall be limited to committee business.

In-person attendance is currently prohibited per Washington State Governor's Proclamation 20-28.15, until the COVID-19 State of Emergency is terminated or Proclamation 20-28 is rescinded by the Governor or State legislature. Meeting participation is limited to access by telephone conference line and online by the Seattle Channel.

Register online to speak during the Public Comment period at the 9:30 a.m. Transportation and Utilities Committee meeting at <http://www.seattle.gov/council/committees/public-comment>.

Online registration to speak at the Transportation and Utilities Committee meeting will begin two hours before the 9:30 a.m. meeting start time, and registration will end at the conclusion of the Public Comment period during the meeting. Speakers must be registered in order to be recognized by the Chair.

Submit written comments to Councilmember Pedersen at Alex.Pedersen@seattle.gov

Sign-up to provide Public Comment at the meeting at <http://www.seattle.gov/council/committees/public-comment>

Watch live streaming video of the meeting at <http://www.seattle.gov/council/watch-council-live>

Listen to the meeting by calling the Council Chamber Listen Line at 253-215-8782 Meeting ID: 586 416 9164

One Tap Mobile No. US: +12532158782,,5864169164#

Please Note: Times listed are estimated

A. Call To Order

B. Approval of the Agenda

C. Public Comment

D. Items of Business

1. Presentation: Vision Zero

[Supporting
Documents: Presentation](#)

Briefing and Discussion

Presenters: Sam Zimbabwe, Director, Allison Schwartz, and Jim Curtin, Seattle Department of Transportation


E. Adjournment



Legislation Text

File #: Inf 1820, **Version:** 1

Presentation: Vision Zero

A wide-angle photograph of a city street in Seattle. The street is lined with large, mature trees that have sparse green leaves, suggesting early spring. A dark blue SUV is driving towards the camera in the center of the road. On the left, a silver car is partially visible. Several pedestrians are crossing the street at a crosswalk. On the right, there's a bus stop shelter and a small dog on the sidewalk. A sign on the sidewalk reads "Look Out For Each Other" with icons of a car, a person, and a dog. The sky is clear and blue.

Vision Zero update

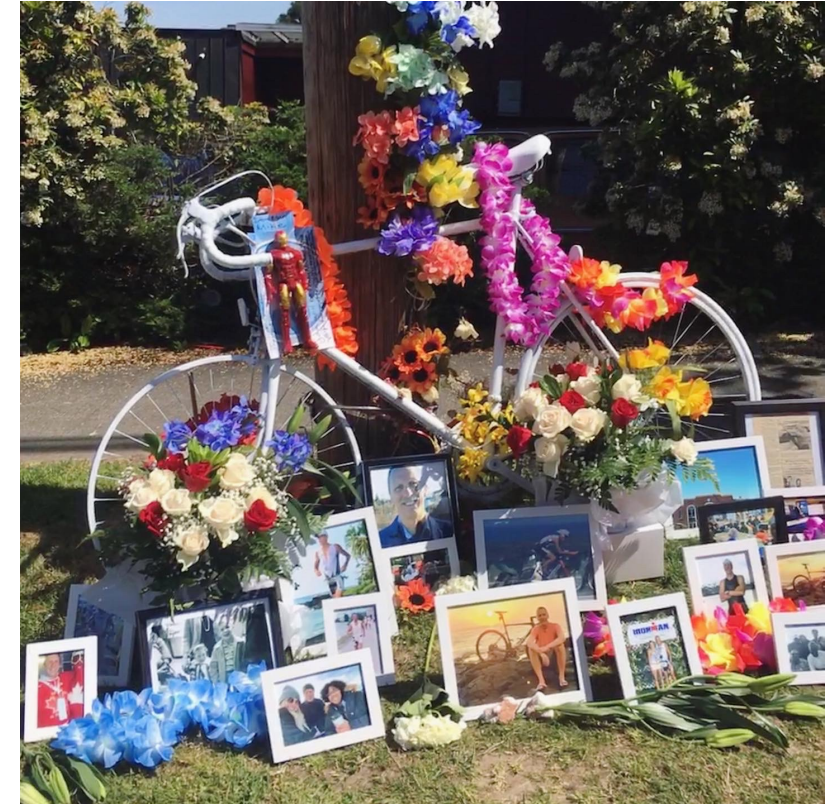
Moving toward a healthy, equitable, sustainable Seattle

Moment of silence

Since City launched Vision Zero 6 years ago

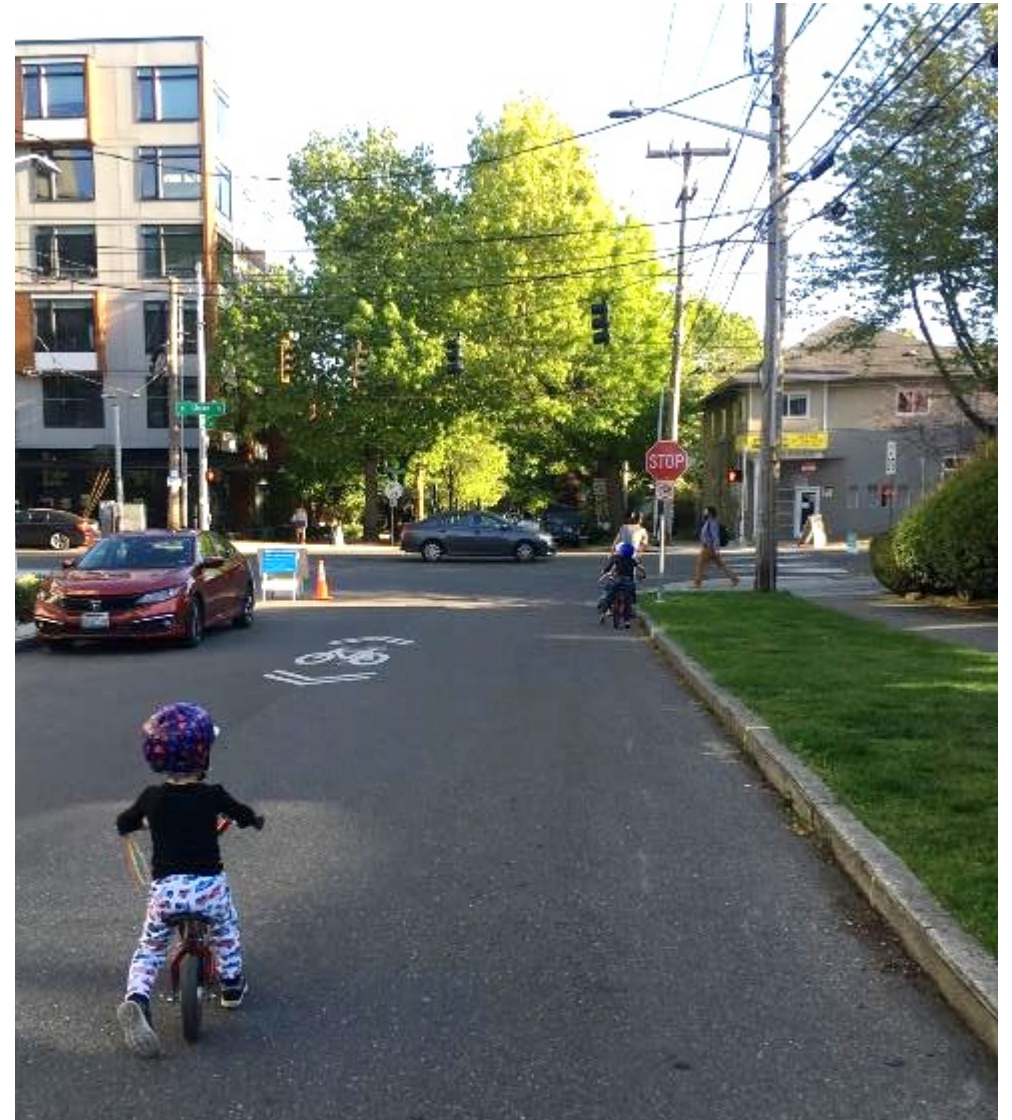
- **144 people have been killed** in traffic crashes
- More than **1,000 serious injury crashes**

Together, we affirm our support for safe and racially equitable streets. We acknowledge our commitment to end serious injuries and fatalities on our streets.



Presentation overview, key takeaways

- Street design matters and can advance safety, racial equity, and sustainability goals
- We are not getting closer to ending traffic deaths and serious injuries
- We can get there by using proven solutions and reducing reliance on strategies that aren't advancing goals



Same system, same outcomes

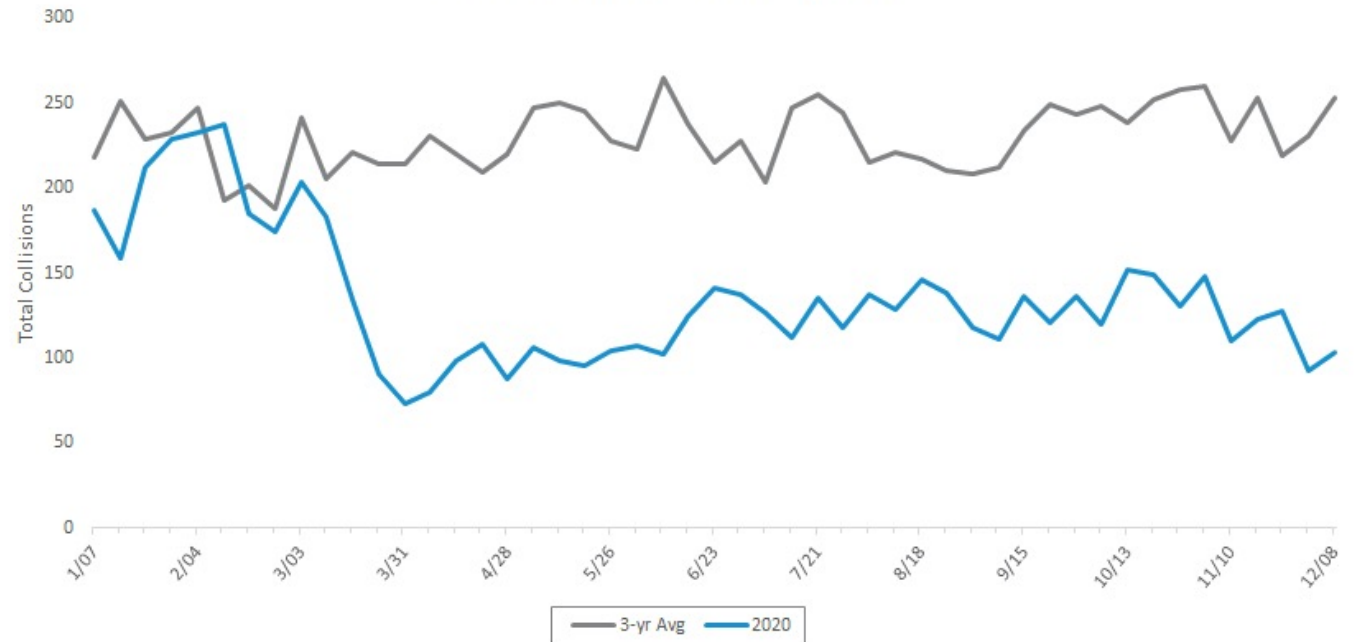
In a “normal” year, we see:

- 12,000 crashes
- 20 traffic deaths
- 160 serious injury crashes

In 2020, we saw:

- 7,100 total crashes
- 25 traffic deaths (prelim data)
- 144 serious injury crashes

Total collisions by week (2020 vs previous 3-yr avg)



The importance of safe street design

Many of our streets were designed to prioritize the fast movement of vehicles.

- 50% of fatal and serious injury crashes occur on 11% of street network
- Multi-lane, high speed, high volume arterials
- Since we launched Vision Zero:
 - Aurora Ave: 20 deaths, 49 serious injuries
 - Rainier Ave S: 5 deaths, 60 serious injuries
 - MLK Jr Way S: 7 deaths, 35 serious injuries
 - Lake City Way: 5 deaths, 23 serious injuries



People traveling on Rainier Ave S at Martin Luther King Jr Way S

Contributing factors to crashes

Street design is a key factor that influences behavior

Year over year, consistent contributing factors (human behavior):

- **Speed**
- **Impairment**
- **Distraction**
- **Failure to yield to pedestrian**

Hit and run crashes are increasing. This makes it hard to determine what happened/led to a crash and whether the person who fled was impaired.

	Hit & Run	Total Fatalities	%
2017	3	21	14%
2018	2	14	14%
2019	8	26	31%
2020	7	24	29%

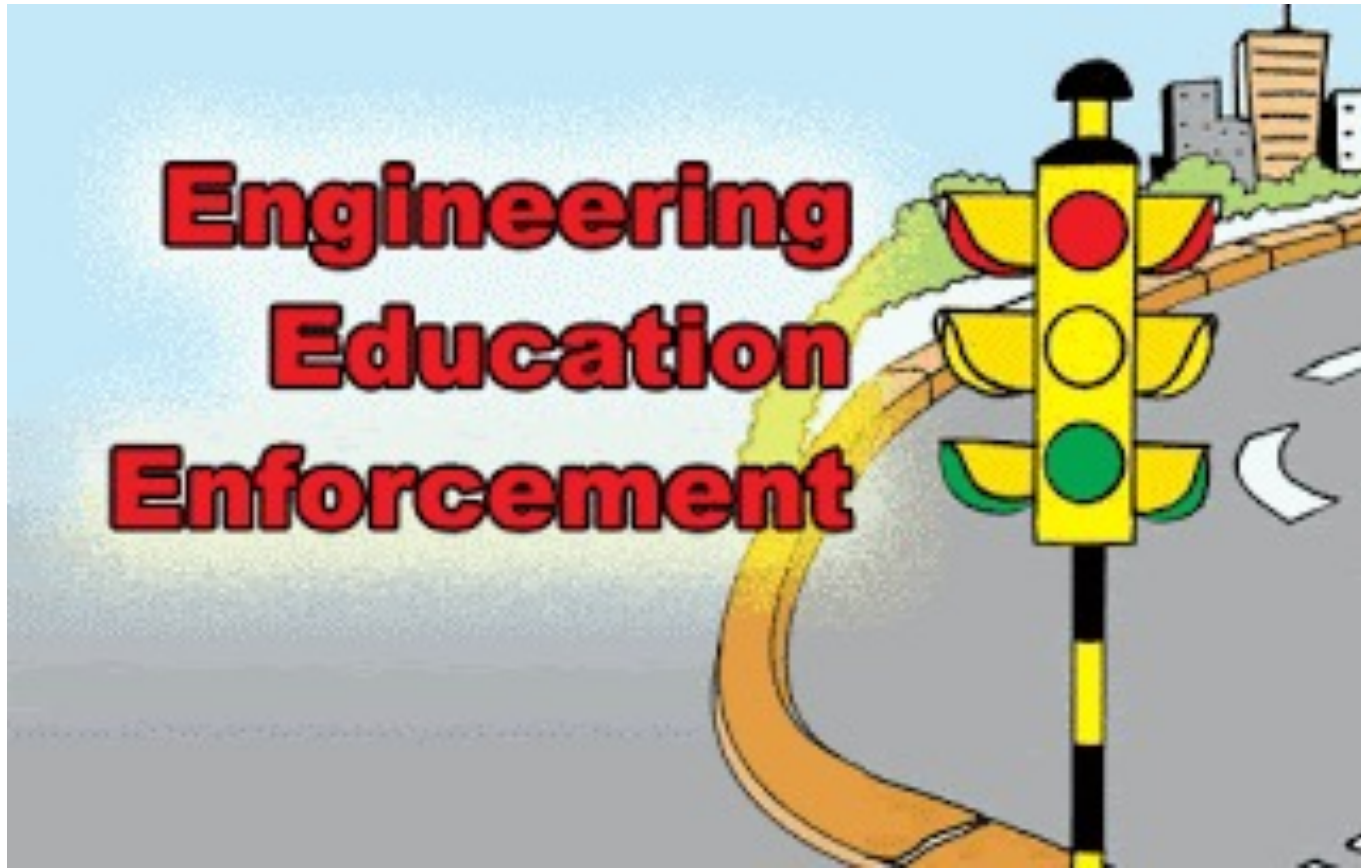
Vision Zero principles

- Traffic deaths are preventable (they are not “accidents”)
- Success does not hinge on individual actions, but on designing a safe system of self-enforcing streets.
- Account for human imperfection

In Seattle, our goal is to end traffic deaths and serious injuries on city streets by 2030.



Traditional approach to traffic safety



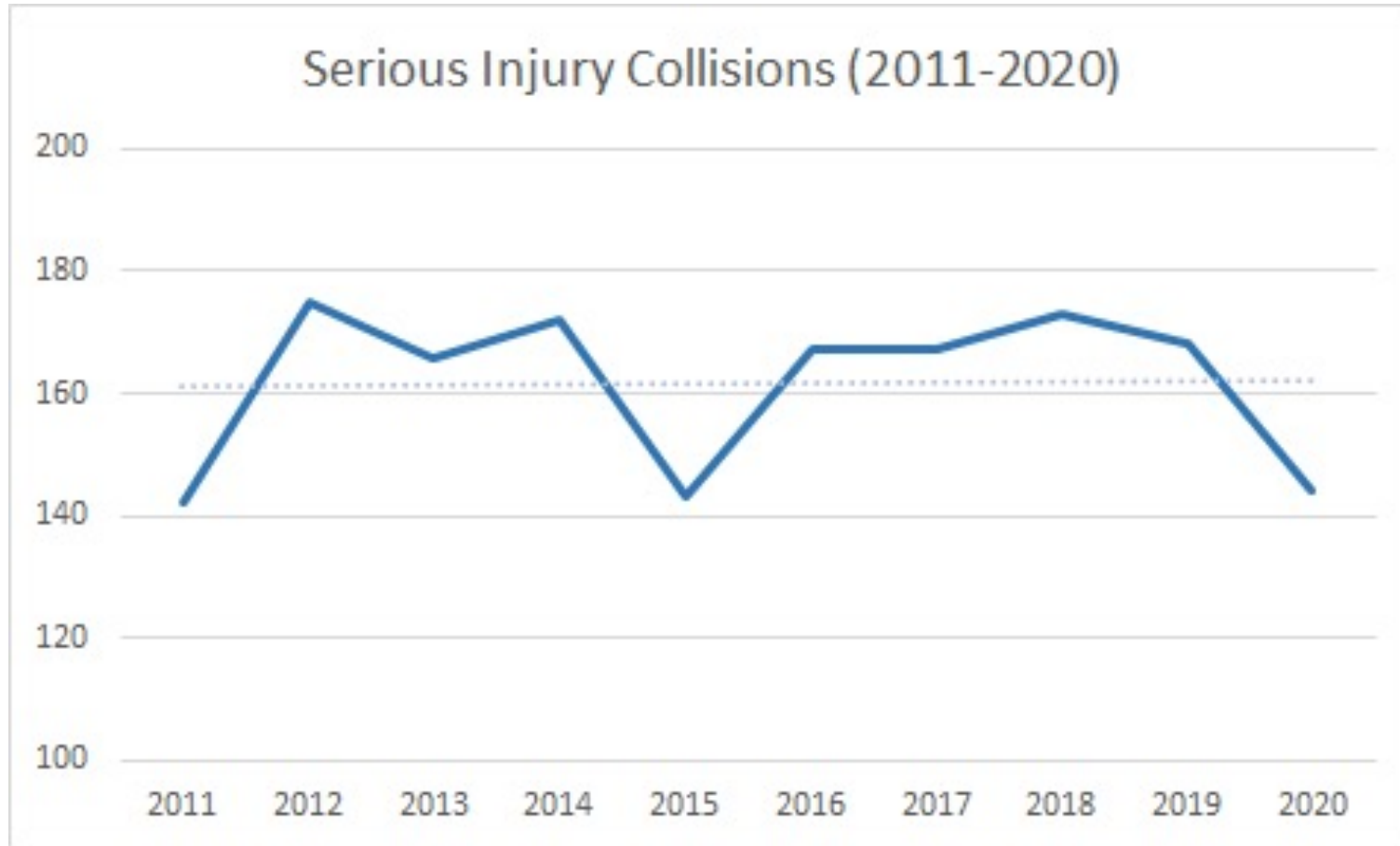
Where has this gotten us?

Closer to ending traffic deaths?

Overall traffic deaths increasing due to increasing rate of deaths of people walking and biking, while trendline for fatalities involving people in vehicles is decreasing.



Closer to ending serious injuries?



Looking at data from one year alone can obscure the bigger picture.

Despite a reduction in 2020, on average, we see 160 serious injury crashes a year.

Protecting the most vulnerable travelers?



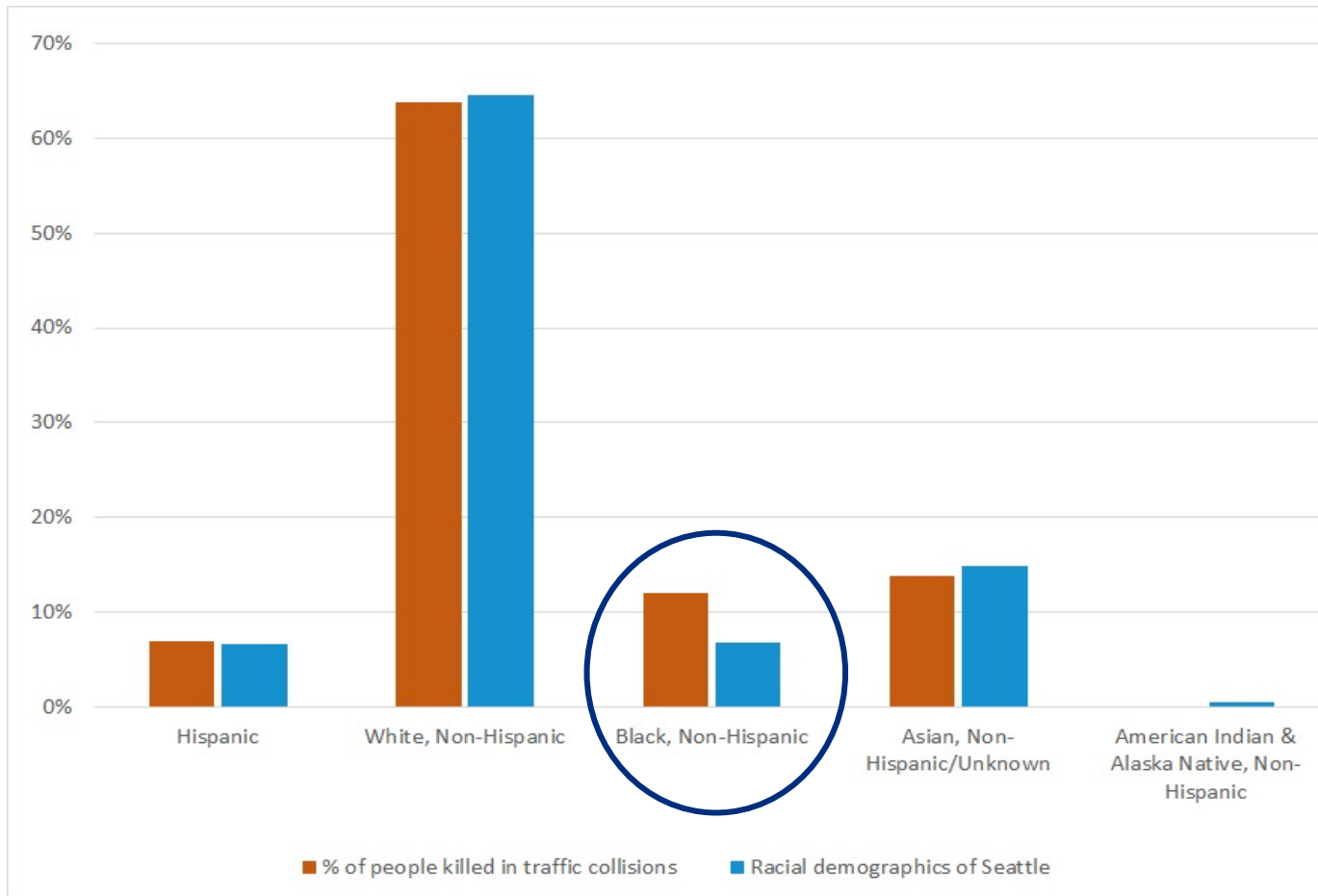
- People walking and biking (2018 – 2020): 7% of total crashes, but 66% of fatalities
- Average age of people walking who have died: 56 years old



- ~20% of people walking who have been killed also likely unhoused/experiencing homelessness

Closer to achieving racial equity?

Fatal collisions and race, 2015-2018

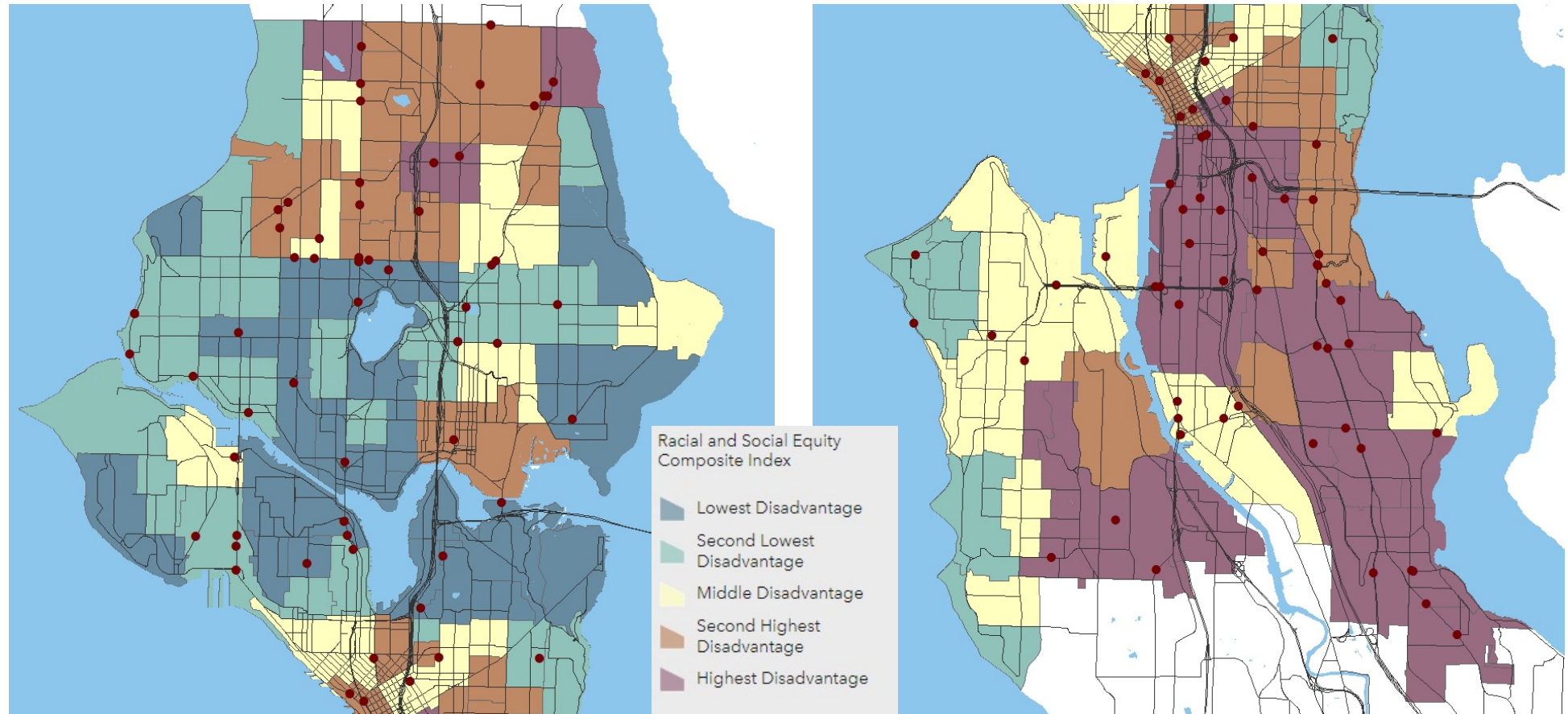


7% of Seattle population identifies as Black, but Black people make up 12% of those killed in collisions on city streets.

Highly disadvantaged communities are more affected

In the past 5 years, 31% of traffic deaths were in the 20% of Census Tracts that make up the most highly disadvantaged communities.

Traffic deaths: ●



Racial disparities in traffic enforcement fines and fees

2020 study commissioned by Seattle Office for Civil Rights:

- Analyzed 17 years of Seattle Municipal Court cases involving legal financial obligations (fines, fees, and other related costs imposed by court)
- 83% were traffic infractions
- In 2017, Black drivers in Seattle were issued 2.6 times more traffic infractions with legal financial obligations per capita than were White drivers

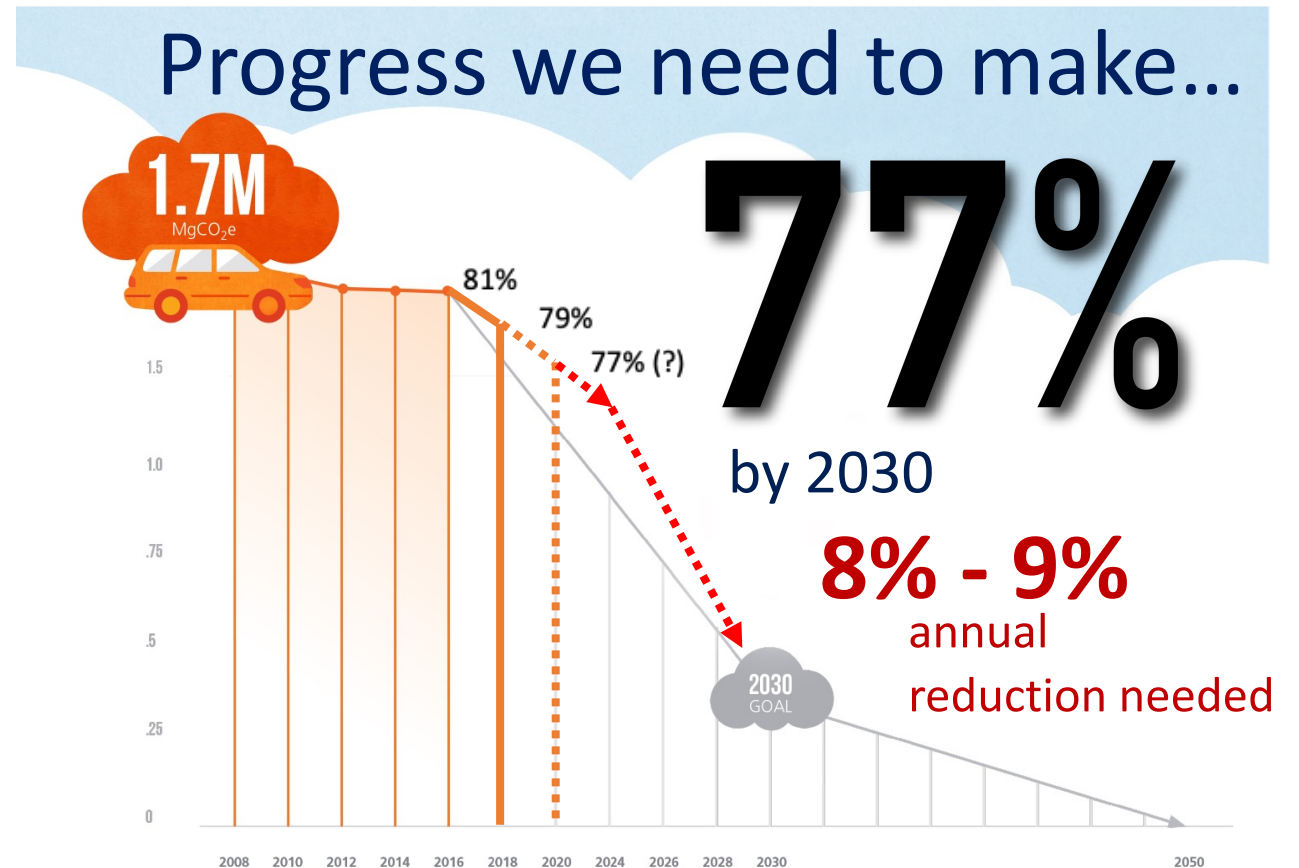
Sources:

[An Analysis of Court Imposed Monetary Sanctions in Seattle Municipal Courts, 2000-2017](#)

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2020-08-11/seattle-fines-and-fees-hit-black-residents-harder>

Closer to achieving our climate goals?

To meet Seattle's climate *and* safety goals, we must redesign our roads to encourage and support more transit, walking, biking, and slower speeds so we can reduce reliance on single occupancy vehicles.

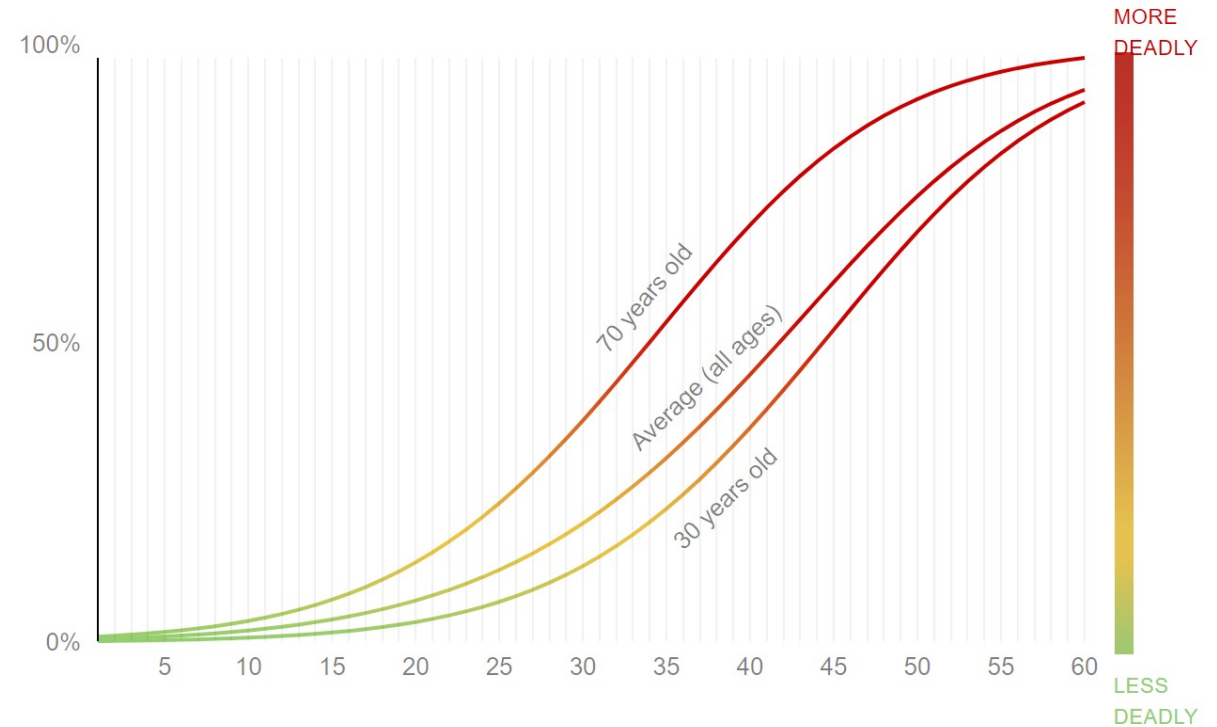


Let's do more of what works.

Slowing down to save lives

- 90+% of Seattle arterials are 25 MPH; all non-arterials are 20 MPH
- Partnering with WSDOT on state-owned arterials
- Lowering citywide speed limits, initial findings:
 - 20% decrease in injury crashes
 - 54% decrease top-end speeders

How vehicle speed affects survivability



Graphic: ProPublica. Data: AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety report.

Giving pedestrians a head start

- 30% of signalized intersections now have pedestrian head starts
- Surpassed 2020 goal (installed 300+); 60 more to come in 2021
- Reduction in turning collisions with people walking
 - 50% reduction for all injuries
 - 35% reduction in serious/fatal collisions



Redesigning streets

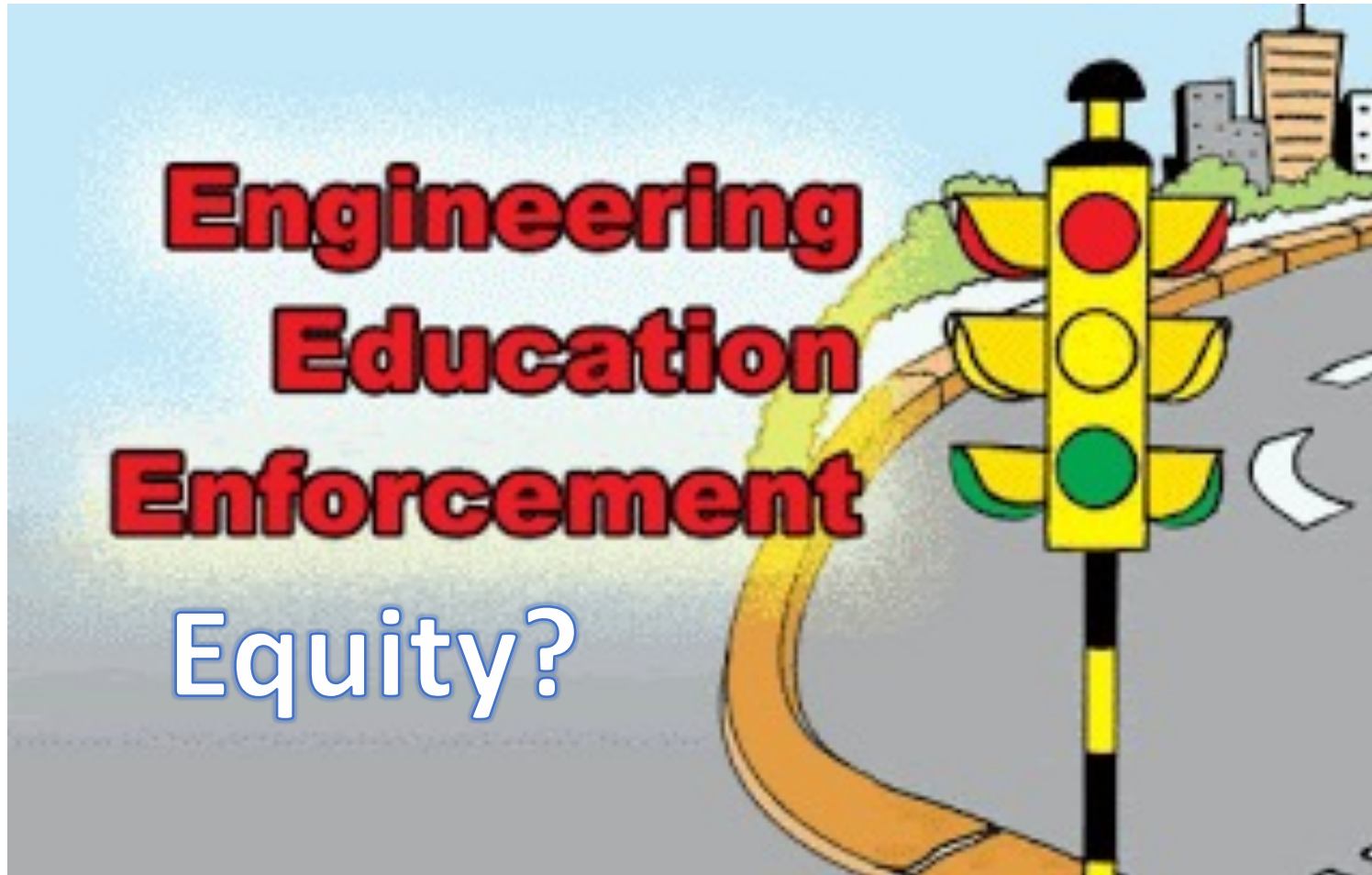
- Complete streets approach
- Using street design to manage speeds, reduce collisions, improve crossings
- Enhanced safety for all travelers

Street	ADT Before	ADT Change	Injury Collisions	Aggressive Speeding (40+ MPH)
Stone Way N	13,900	-6%	-33%	-75%
Fauntleroy Way SW	17,599	+0.3%	-72%	-13%
S Columbian Way	12,300	+15%	-19%	-46%
Nickerson Street	18,500	-1%	-20%	-93%
NE 125 th Street	13,600	+11%	-8%	-69%
N 130 th Street	13,298	+0.5%	-75%	-87%
Ellis Avenue S	9,855	-39%	-24%	-30%
Rainier Ave S (Phase 1)	21,600	-27%	-15%	-77%
NE 65 th St	14,390	+3%	-54%	-42%

Before and after data for street redesigns in Seattle (ADT = average daily traffic)

Where would we like to go?

Examining the traditional approach to traffic safety

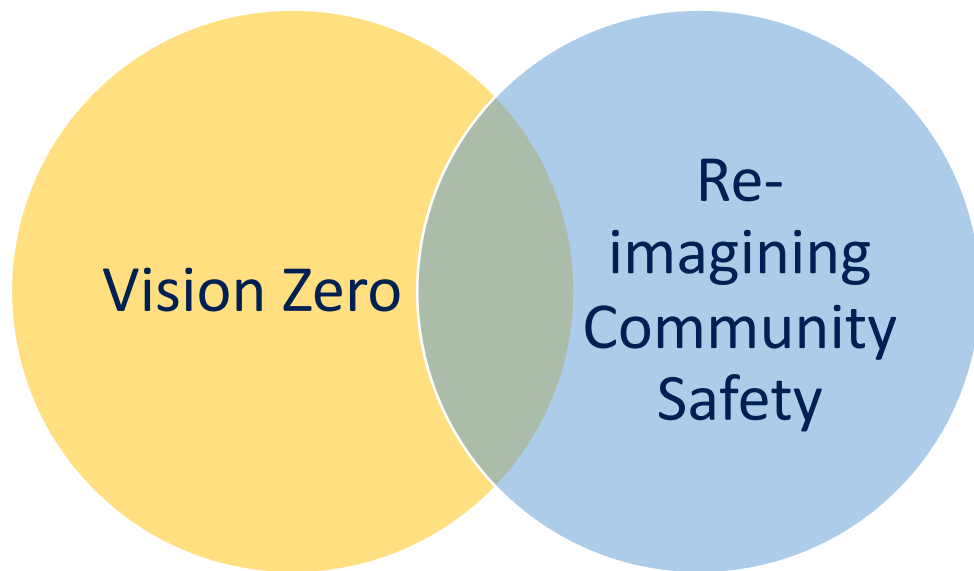


What have the consequences (intended and unintended) been?

Is this approach advancing Seattle's safety *and* racial equity goals?

How effective is each E?

Grounding this work in racial equity



We are learning more about

Disproportionate harm to Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) community members that has occurred by way of the traditional approach we've leaned on for traffic safety

Thinking about safety more holistically

It's not just about being protected from harm of traffic crashes.

And hoping to move toward

A new approach that can help us make progress on multiple city goals

Vision Zero and enforcement

- Re-imagining community safety: evaluating our approach with a racial equity framework
- Racial Equity Toolkit: automated enforcement (red light, school safety cameras)
- Active coordination with SPD

Move toward *self-enforcing* street design



Key challenges and opportunities

- Funding constraints
- Cost of crashes
- Do more of what's proven to work (less of what isn't)
- **It's possible.** Connection between safer streets, climate, affordability, racial equity



Questions?

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www.seattle.gov/visionzero

