



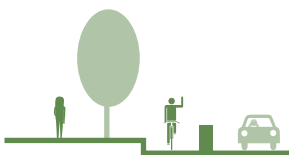
BACKGROUND:

SAFETY AND VULNERABLE USERS

Aspects of the built environment, such as street design, have an effect on the number and severity of traffic injuries and fatalities, particularly for vulnerable road users (people walking, cycling or using mobility devices). Injuries and fatalities most often occur on roads with higher speed limits and at intersections with no or limited safety measures. Densification and a mix of land uses are often introduced as strategies to increase active transportation. However, if they are not implemented along with proper safety measures, these practices fail to adequately address the safety of people walking and cycling. Pedestrian and cyclist safety should be at the forefront of all transportation planning and development activities.

What are the components of safer streets for vulnerable users?

Efforts to implement these practices should be focused on lower-socioeconomic neighbourhoods and vulnerable populations in order to work towards health equity, particularly because research has found that lower income communities are at a higher risk for traffic injuries and fatalities.



Safe street design features for pedestrians

Wide sidewalks with a direct, continuous clearway, refuge islands, pedestrian priority areas, and curb extensions create a safer environment for people walking.

Bicycle lanes and paths

Studies show that bicycle lanes with physical separation from traffic, and bicycle paths that are separate from the road are better for cyclist safety.

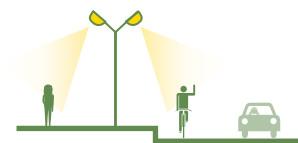


Safe and accessible pedestrian crossings

Includes elements such as refuge islands, curb extensions, accessible curb cuts and both tactile and auditory crossing warnings.

Traffic calming measures

Lower speed limits, speed humps, pinch points, and traffic circles reduce automobile speed.



Exterior lighting

Lighting on streets and outdoor paths can increase safety and use at all times of the day.

How can policy help enable safer built environments?



Adopt Vision Zero action plans. Create and implement Vision Zero road safety action plans focused on improving safety and reducing traffic-related fatalities and injuries. Within these plans, take a targeted approach and prioritize the safety of the most vulnerable road users.



Measure and monitor progress. Support and utilize research that measures the built environment's effect on the prevalence of fatalities and injuries.



Develop a collaborative process. Foster a sense of shared responsibility and collaboration among all road safety agencies and stakeholders.

Sample Canadian Policies that Improve Safety for Vulnerable Road Users

1. [Vision Zero Edmonton](#) - Edmonton's Road Safety Strategy (2016-2020) was the first Vision Zero plan in Canada
2. [Vision Zero Toronto](#) - A comprehensive five-year (2017-2021) action plan focused on improving safety and reducing traffic-related fatalities as well as serious injuries on Toronto's streets
3. [Vision Zero Montreal](#) - This plan presents actions geared towards safe use of streets.
4. [Vancouver's Transportation 2040 Plan](#) - This plan includes that goal of zero traffic related fatalities by 2040.
5. [Transport Canada Vulnerable Road Users and Heavy Vehicles Safety Measures report](#) - This report discusses potential countermeasures that could reduce injuries and fatalities among vulnerable road users in urban areas. "The intent of this report was to create a springboard for action, spark ideas, and introduce discussion points to support jurisdictions as they effectively address safety challenges within their communities."(pg. vii).