

Quarterly Newsletter

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Vision Zero Action Plan Demystified

While most people have heard the words “Vision Zero Action Plan” mentioned, it is still unclear to many what it is. For Madison, our Action Plan is a dynamic and ever-changing document that focuses on ways to eliminate all traffic-related deaths and severe injuries in this community by 2035.

Many elements contribute to a successful Vision Zero Action Plan. Often a city will include a statement of dedication to the mission, an explanation of why Vision Zero is important to their city, data specific to roadway use and incidents, a High Injury Network Map developed from that data, strategies and actions to reduce and eliminate potential harm, and information about implementation and accountability. Often that includes a commitment to provide annual accountability report that outlines the actions taken to accomplish the goals and strategies.

An effective Action Plan also requires a strong and well thought out “vision” with a realistic timeline of actions and purposeful goals. For all of that to work, a lot of collaboration and support is needed from City agencies, local and state organizations, stakeholders and each of the community members.

The Vision Zero movement acknowledges that everyone has the right to move safely in their communities and any loss of life is unacceptable. That means that the only appropriate goal for Madison is ZERO traffic-related deaths and severe injuries all while working to increase safe, healthy, and equitable mobility for all road-users.

One death is too many.

Read Madison’s new [Vision Zero Action Plan](#) approved by the Common Council on March 29, 2022.

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Cover Image from City of Madison Action Plan



Implementing Vision Zero - Making Safe Streets Improvements

Recently, the City of Madison Common Council approved the creation of a new program, Safe Streets Madison. This program prioritizes the equitable distribution of improvements focused on eliminating serious and fatal crashes, and aim to close gaps in the walking and biking network. The recently adopted City Budget realigned several initiatives and their funding under Safe Streets Madison which will now be included in guiding that overall mission. Those programs include Vision Zero, the Neighborhood Traffic Management Program, Pedestrian Bicycle Enhancements, and Safe Routes to School.

Safe Streets Madison proposes projects to the Transportation Commission for final

review. Recently, the commission approved fifty-one new safety projects for city streets. Of these projects, all but one location appears in the High Injury Network.

The first phase of those greenlit projects include a variety of small to medium size improvements like:

- flashing beacon lights for crosswalks
- islands or bumped out curbs
- improved signing and marking

Two projects include a trial of the “centerline hardening” concept, which intends to slow down vehicle speeds at crosswalks and improve the visibility of people in crosswalks. These trial locations will occur at the intersection of N. Park St. & Regent St. and

the intersection of W. Johnson St. & N. Frances St.

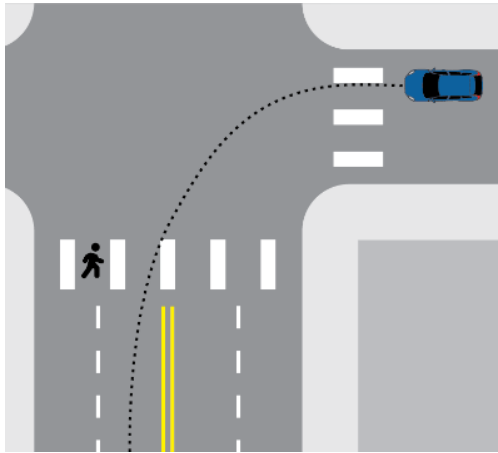
Safe Streets Madison project approvals also include eleven location evaluations for potential speed reductions later in 2022.

Those locations include:

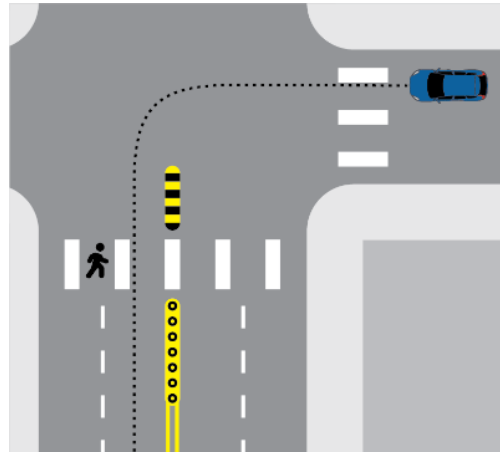
- John Nolen Dr., west of North Shore Dr.
- Cottage Grove Rd., near Flora Ln. & Meadowlark Dr.
- E. Washington Ave, east of Stoughton Rd.
- Mineral Point Rd., west of Whitney Way
- Frisch Rd.
- Old Sauk Rd., Beltline to Westfield Rd.
- Dutch Mill Rd. & Femrite Rd.
- Pierstorff St. & Pearson Rd.
- Portage Rd.
- Segoe Rd.
- Westfield Rd.

Centerline Hardening Graphic

Image source: [Insurance Institute for Highway Safety](https://www.insuranceinstitute.org/press-releases/2019/04/23/centerline-hardening/)



Before center line hardening: cars can take faster turn at a diagonal, increasing risk for pedestrians.



After centerline hardening: extending the centerline past the crosswalk encourages drivers to slow down and blocks the diagonal path.

With additional projects preparing for presentation to the commission later this year, Madison can anticipate a change in the culture surrounding safety. Creating a safer city for every one of its residents, visitors and businesses is the priority that guides Safe Streets Madison.

For more information on Safe Streets Madison including information on approved projects and potential future projects, visit the [Safe Streets Madison](https://www.cityofmadison.com/safestreetmadison/) webpage.

Mapping For A Safer Future - Madison’s High Injury Network

The creation of a High Injury Network (HIN) is an integral part of Vision Zero. The HIN uses city-specific crash data to determine where focused resources are needed to eliminate potential serious and fatal crashes. It’s the first step in determining and developing new projects and programming.

A typical HIN consists of a collection of connected roadway corridors, a “network”, and evaluates the number of people killed and severely injured in traffic crashes.

The [methodology PDF](#) for the High Injury Network was developed in collaboration with the University of Wisconsin’s Traffic

Operations and Safety Laboratory, and was overseen by the Transportation Commission. The methodology breaks apart each network segment and intersection, then uses collected crash data to evaluate crash frequency and severity. Madison’s current High Injury Network map was created using data collected from 2017-2019, and includes 4,590 intersections and 8,855 roadway segments. The High Injury Network methodology is repeatable and updated from year to year.

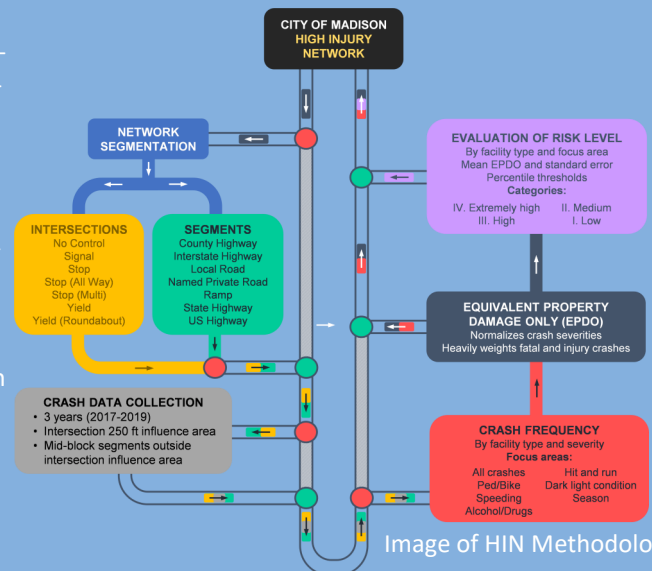


Image of HIN Methodology

Capital Projects for 2022 — Implementing Vision Zero

Street design is integral to the safety of everyone who uses our streets. Design refers to the elements that make up city streets, from sidewalks to travel lanes, signs & road markings to transit stops. When deciding on design for a new roadway, or re-designing an existing one, it is important to consider the impacts that a community receives from its streets. A key concept of Vision Zero is that street design should be forgiving and account for human error. While we each have a responsibility to make safe choices on our streets while moving in and around our city, mistakes do happen. Vision Zero believes that the result of those errors should not result in a life-changing injury or death.

Projects for 2022

The City of Madison is developing a number of large projects that will include roadway

changes that create safer streets and a safer city. During all larger reconstruction and resurfacing projects, the City looks to be proactive in street designs that promote safe, accessible mobility for all. Whether these projects occur in the High Injury Network or not is less important when you consider that all projects offer an opportunity to further the goals and mission of Vision Zero.

Current approved projects include:

- **Cannonball Path Extension** – This extension will continue the multi-use path through to its connection at the Wingra Creek Path. This project will allow path users an alternative to Fish Hatchery Rd., which has several segments on the High Injury Network.
- **University Ave** (Shorewood Blvd/Hill St. to University Bay Dr./Farley Ave) – This

two year reconstruction project will recreate the northern half of University Ave in 2022. Improvements include a new overpass on University Bay Dr. for the Blackhawk Path, new sidewalks adjacent to the railroad tracks, accessible curb ramps, narrowed lanes and traffic signal improvements.

- **Old Middleton Rd.** – This reconstruction project includes improved street crossings, buffered bike lanes, some new sidewalk segments and additional traffic calming features.

The City of Madison is focused on incorporating key design elements and solutions that improve safety while making sure all people, no matter their chosen mode of transportation, can get where they need to go.

John Nolen Drive – Implementing Vision Zero

The John Nolen Drive Reconstruction Project focuses around safety for all: bicyclists, pedestrians and motorists. Approximately 45,000 vehicles and 4,000 bicyclists along with many additional pedestrians travel on John Nolen Drive every day. It has and will continue to be a main artery to our downtown while providing an experience along the shoreline to enjoy our beautiful City for generations to come.

Historically, John Nolen Drive is identified on the City of Madison Vision Zero High Injury Network which lists streets that have observed serious and fatal crashes over the years. The City will explore design alternatives that will improve safety along the roadway.

Safety improvements being considered include:

- Creating a more urban, slow speed, street design context
- Enhancing pedestrian and bicycle crossing areas
- Adding space between different modes of travel
- Lowering Speed Limit

One challenge of the street portion is the tight right-of-way staff have to work with,

while fitting in use for bikes, vehicles, pedestrians and greenspace.

“There is not a lot of room on the causeway to provide ideal treatment. We will have to be very creative to fit it all in, but it’s a challenge we’re positive in overcoming,” City of Madison Engineering Division Principal Engineer Chris Petykowski said.

The work for John Nolen Drive between North Shore Drive and Olin Avenue includes:

- Reconstruction of six bridges along the causeway
- Lane configuration and cross section changes
- Expansion of the existing path to separate bike path and pedestrian lanes
- Shoreline reconstruction along Lake Monona
- Enhanced Pedestrian and bike crossings of John Nolen Drive
- Storm sewer reconstruction

While the John Nolen Drive Reconstruction project designing phase is underway, the Lake Monona Waterfront Project will also be a major project the JND team will need to collaborate with to transform the popular area of downtown transportation.

Visit the [project page](#) for more information.



Image of John Nolen Drive

Making Madison Streets Safe for All

Making Madison streets safe for everyone, regardless of age, physical ability, or transportation choice is a key initiative for the Department of Transportation. Each year, there are over 100 people who are killed or seriously injured on Madison's streets. That is a statistic – but each one of those deaths and injuries represents a son, daughter, brother, sister, mother, or father who no longer comes home. Families are forever changed.

Madison can and must do better.

Fatal and serious injury crashes are preventable. We can build a transportation system that prioritizes safety - rather than speed and convenience. The whole City is embracing the Vision Zero Action Plan, and the Department of Transportation is using a Safe Systems Approach which acknowledges:

- Humans make mistakes that can lead to serious crashes
- The likelihood of severe injury increases dramatically with higher speeds
- Although safety is a shared responsibility, the City must take a lead role as the people who design, build, and maintain the streets

- A proactive approach is needed - rather than waiting for events to occur and reacting
- Fatalities or serious injuries are not an acceptable trade for faster speeds and mobility
- It is critical to identify and understand crashes and make data driven decisions
- Vision Zero must be centered in equity so all residents have safer mobility

The completion of the Vision Zero Action Plan is an important step forward but the work has only just begun.

Together, we can make Madison's streets safer for everyone.

Sincerely,



Thomas W. Lynch PE PTOE PTP AICP
Director of Transportation
City of Madison

Vision Zero is a data driven strategy intended to eliminate traffic deaths and severe injuries on city streets by 2035.

The City of Madison Vision Zero initiative strives to improve safety for all roadway users throughout the city and improve the identified high injury intersections, all in an effort to prevent avoidable fatal crashes.

Safety starts with all of us.

We can't control human error, but we can help create more forgiving infrastructure and change systems to prevent crashes from being serious and fatal.

www.cityofmadison.com/VisionZero



April is Distracted Driver Awareness Month

Since 2021 City of Madison fleet drivers do not use handheld OR hands-free devices on the road. You can adopt this safe driving practice too!

Anything that takes your attention from the road, and your hands from the steering wheel, is distracted driving.

#JustDrive #DontDriveDangerous



THREE SECONDS



“Nearly 80% of crashes and 65% of near-crashes involved some form of driver inattention within three seconds before the event.” (NHTSA)

Graphic by the National Highway Traffic Safety Commission

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