

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

DRCOG Board Approves Taking Action on Regional Vision Zero

June 18, 2020 (Denver, CO) – Traffic related deaths and severe injuries are a critical and preventable public health epidemic and a social equity issue in the Denver region. In 2018, 242 people were killed and 1,866 people were seriously injured on our region’s roadways. In order to respond to the issue, the Denver Regional Council of Governments Board of Directors officially adopted the [Taking Action on Regional Vision Zero](#) plan on June 16, 2020, after a final vote of the Regional Transportation Committee. The board is made up of 58 elected officials from 10 counties in the Denver Metro area.

Regional Vision Zero is a safety approach with the core principle that it can never be ethically acceptable that people are killed or seriously injured when moving within the road transportation system. Vision Zero switches safety from being solely the responsibility of roadway users, to a shared responsibility of system designers and people on the road. It is inevitable that roadway users will make mistakes, so roads should be designed to ensure these mistakes do not result in severe injuries or fatalities.

“We are grateful for the board’s thoughtful discussion and approval of this important plan for the region,” says Douglas Rex, executive director at DRCOG. “Vision Zero is an initiative that benefits everyone, and we are eager to work with state and local governments to implement the best practices to make our region’s roadways safer.” The Vision Zero approach is fundamentally different from the traditional traffic safety approach in American communities in six ways by:

- Reframing traffic deaths as preventable
- Integrating human error to the approach
- Focusing on preventing fatal and severe crashes
- Establishing safe systems prioritizing human life when designing a road network
- Applying data driven decision making
- Establishing road safety as a social equity issue

At its core, Taking Action on Regional Vision Zero is a toolkit for local governments to use to plan their own implementation of Vision Zero principles in their communities. The plan also sets out action initiatives and an implementation timeline and measures that will help track regional progress towards safety improvements. The plan was guided by robust public engagement over the last year, including a crowdsourced map of safety issues around the region, as well as intensive data analyses of killed and serious-injury crash statistics over a five year period in the region.

The adoption of the plan, while a major milestone, is just the first step in getting the region towards zero traffic deaths. The plan implementation work has already begun on some of the near-term action initiatives. DRCOG is partnering with the Colorado Department of Transportation to allocate funding towards safety projects, convening a Regional Vision Zero working group and supporting the Federal Highway Administration in hosting safety workshops. DRCOG is beginning to strategize for a public education campaign that will launch next year to support the plan’s action initiatives. DRCOG has also

begun the process of a new and complementary effort, a regional Complete Streets Toolkit that will assist local governments in designing safer streets for all users.

To kick off the planning process, last summer DRCOG interviewed residents from around the region about traffic-related issues and the importance of Vision Zero for the region. Watch the full video [here](#). To view the map developed in the plan that identifies roadways in the Denver region with the highest number fatal and serious-injury crashes, visit this [site](#). For more information, visit the [Regional Vision Zero page](#) on DRCOG's website.

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The Denver Regional Council of Governments is a planning organization where local governments collaborate to establish guidelines, set policy and allocate funding in the areas of transportation and personal mobility; growth and development; and aging and disability resources.