The Road to Zero Deaths: The Modern “Mobility” Conversation
Roads were designed with cars, and only cars, in mind.
The way we get around has changed and is changing.

Our thinking hasn’t, yet.
The good news is that the number of fatal crashes since 1975 has declined due to a variety of factors:

- Stronger laws
- Changing Behavior
- Safer Vehicles

The bad news is that fatal crashes have increased over the last few years.

There were 37,461 fatalities in 2016. It's the highest number since 2008.

That's a fatal crash every 14 minutes.
In 2016, bicyclist and pedestrian fatalities hit their highest levels in 20 years. Of all deaths, bicycle and pedestrians have also increased the most since 2010.

Changing demographics and year-to-year changes in weather may have something to do with these numbers, but…

Source: 2001-2015 FARS data
Roads are designed for cars.

Inevitably, that leads to conflict between cars and everybody else.

**Mobility** = An understanding that there are a lot of ways to get around, and that everybody has the right to get around safely.
Setting a goal of zero people killed:

- Toward Zero Deaths
- Vision Zero Initiative
- Road to Zero
- Target Zero
- Pedestrian Plans
According to a 2015 survey from the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety, 4 in 5 drivers support their state adopting a vision to reduce the number of people killed in crashes to zero.

Translation? It’s not motorist vs other road users. We all realize that we ARE those other road users, at times.
Vision Zero Tenets

1. Loss of life is not an acceptable price to pay for mobility.

2. 94 percent of crashes involve human choice or error. Humans are fallible. You can’t get around that.

3. Instead of faulting road users such as drivers or pedestrians, we should address infrastructure design, vehicle technology, and enforcement.
What do Vision Zero strategies address?

- Changes to the built environment through design and infrastructure
- Changes to the traffic safety culture
- New technologies employed by cities, as well as emerging technologies in vehicles.
What changes?

Re-design roadways to reduce speed, reduce conflicts, or for safer movement.

In urban areas, this may involve road diets, road markings, or signal timing.

In less dense areas, it may involve sidewalks/share-use paths or better lighting.
One-third of traffic fatalities related to speed.

Speed increases crash risk, as response time decreases and stopping distances increase with the increasing speed of a vehicle.
Speed

Speed increases crash severity.

This is particularly dangerous for pedestrians.

Struck at 25 mph: 12% chance of death

Struck at 45 mph: 60% chance of death

Source: AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety, ProPublica
Do as I say, not as I do…

We need to change traffic safety culture – there are always deadly consequences.

Education and public engagement build awareness and develop social norms.

But also, new or stronger laws:

Primary seatbelt
Ignition Interlock
Automated Enforcement
Overwhelming Public Support for Most Safety Measures

One exception: Automated enforcement

Source: AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety, 2017

*2009 survey
Vision Zero: Technology

Data & Technology

- Accident Web Reporting
- Crowd-sourcing
- Transponders on fleet vehicles
- Vision Zero Compliant Vehicles
What about the self-driving car?

- We are a LONG way from autonomous vehicles.
- Current safety tools are an improvement, but still flawed.
- Many drivers don’t want these features
Always look when you change lanes - AAA

Despite massive improvements in car safety technology, you still need to keep your eyes open.

A new AAA report finds that car safety options often work most of the time, but drivers need to be aware of the limitations they have.

"AAA's tests found that these systems are a great tool," said AAA managing director of automotive engineering.

New cross traffic alert systems often fail, warns AAA.
Getting to Zero

1. Unfinished business in shifting the curve

2. Both physical changes to the roadway and cultural changes are needed.

3. Technology shows promise in mitigating crashes and saving lives, but we can’t “wait” for technology to solve our problems – that day may never come.