

Road to zero: Manitoba road safety plan 2017-2020

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A new plan by the Provincial Road Safety Committee provides a vision for Manitoba to have the safest roads in Canada and lays the groundwork to one day achieving zero traffic fatalities on the roadways, Crown Services Minister Cliff Cullen and Infrastructure Minister Ron Schuler announced today.

The Road to Zero: Manitoba Road Safety Plan 2017-2020 – the first plan of its kind in Manitoba – adopts a Safe System approach for Manitoba which envisions a more forgiving road system that takes human imperfection and vulnerability into account and considers all parts of the road system holistically in developing solutions to eliminate injury and death, the ministers added.

The Safe System approach focuses on:

- safe roads – designing infrastructure that is forgiving of mistakes and protects vulnerable road users;
- safe speeds – ensuring that speed limits are safe and appropriate, and speeds are managed so that other parts of the system work as intended;
- safe road users – educating the public on the preventability of collisions and instilling a traffic safety culture; and
- safe vehicles – ensuring that vehicles are designed, manufactured and repaired as safely as possible.

“In Manitoba, we aspire to have a road system where emerging vehicle technology; road design, construction and maintenance; traffic safety legislation and enforcement; public awareness and safe travel speeds all contribute to reductions in traffic fatalities and serious injuries,” said Schuler. “This plan represents the collaborative work of many road safety stakeholders and by working together and consulting with the full range of road safety advocates, we are unified in our approach and collectively focused on the same priorities and goals.”

To align itself with current national and international best practice in road safety, Road to Zero also supports a Toward Zero future vision where roadways are free of traffic fatalities or severe injuries, Schuler added. It is an ethics-based approach for road safety which, at its core, holds the principle that it is unacceptable for anyone to be killed or seriously injured when moving within the transportation system, he noted.

“Our province is committed to identifying and implementing road safety strategies and solutions that work for Manitobans,” said Cullen. “The vision of the road safety plan is for Manitoba to have the safest roads in Canada and we are committed to one day achieving zero traffic fatalities on our roadways. This is a big step forward to achieving better outcomes for Manitobans and their safety on streets and highways.”

Road to Zero follows the Canadian Road Safety Strategy 2025 and seeks to accelerate previous downward trends in the rate-based number of fatalities and serious injuries on provincial and municipal roadways.

Road to Zero provides key priorities for the next three years for legislators, administrators, public works, law enforcement and the transportation sector to advance the road safety agenda in Manitoba.

Highlighted priorities include more co-ordinated research and planning between agencies within the Safe System, early adoption of automated vehicle technology, improved safety for vulnerable road users through smart road design, evolving Manitoba’s traffic safety culture, reducing driver distraction and impairment, increasing awareness of medically at-risk drivers of all ages, and examining new speed management strategies to lower risk, among others.

The Provincial Road Safety Committee was struck in 2015 and includes leadership from Manitoba Infrastructure, Manitoba Public Insurance, Manitoba Justice, Manitoba Health, and the Manitoba Association of Chiefs of Police.

Road to Zero: Manitoba Road Safety Plan 2017-2020 is available to the public via download from the Manitoba Public Insurance website at <https://www.mpi.mb.ca/en/PDFs/Road-To-Zero.pdf>.