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Where ‘Vision Zero’ Is Working.

A dramatic reduction in traffic deaths in US cities is possible, despite huge headwinds. In some places, progress is starting to become visible.

When I was a reporter at the transportation advocacy publication Streetsblog, we used to do a little data exercise looking at places that had declared themselves “Vision Zero cities.” Vision Zero is an international safety campaign that aims to completely eliminate traffic fatalities and injuries. Like other journalists, we tried to determine if these civic pledges made any detectable difference in the number of roadway deaths.

At the time, in 2018 and 2019, it was very hard to tell. The data was noisy, especially at the city level. A lot of cities treated Vision Zero more as a declaration than the kind of radical change in policy it demands. Some traffic safety advocates were skeptical of Vision Zero’s prospects for success. And as US traffic fatalities continued to grow during the Covid-19 pandemic, many have remained so.

But some solid evidence is now emerging that it is working, or can work.

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Bloomberg CityLab

By Angie Schmitt

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