



### **Seattle receives national recognition for child pedestrian safety work**

CHAPEL HILL, N.C. and SEATTLE, Wash. (October 10, 2022) – The National Center for Safe Routes to School is pleased to name the City of Seattle, Washington, the 2022 recipient of the U.S. Vision Zero for Youth Leadership Award. Seattle, through the impressive work of the Seattle Department of Transportation and Seattle Public Schools, distinguished itself as a leader in youth walking and biking safety.

“Seattle is working hard to prioritize safe walking and biking for the city’s youth,” said Nancy Pullen-Seufert, Director, National Center for Safe Routes to School, UNC Highway Safety Research Center. “This Award recognizes the commitment of Seattle’s local government, its transportation department and public school system to lead community-engaged, equity-focused efforts geared toward making a great impact on walking and biking safety for its youngest residents.”

Pullen-Seufert said the Award Committee was impressed by the creation of School Streets and Stay Healthy Streets that prioritize people rather than cars, citywide speed reductions and traffic calming measures, and creating a community-engaged equity plan specifically for the Safe Routes to School Program. Seattle Public Schools also plays a critical role in assuring that every elementary and middle school student receives walking and biking safety education.

“It is an honor to be recognized for our investments in safe routes to school and Seattle’s safety education program for public school students,” said Seattle Mayor Bruce Harrell. “While I’m proud of the improvements we’ve built so far, you can be assured that we will not be resting on our laurels when it comes to safety. Tragically, the number of people killed in car crashes has increased in recent years, and we must redouble our commitment to the goal of ending traffic deaths and serious injuries on city streets by 2030. While some say that this goal is too ambitious, there is no number of deaths which we can consider an acceptable goal, other than zero.”

“I am thrilled the National Center for Safe Routes to School has recognized Seattle’s work to improve safety for students walking, rolling, and biking to school, and am committed to working even harder in the future to support this goal,” said Seattle Department of Transportation Director Greg Spotts. “Since coming to Seattle, I have joined families and teachers on neighborhood walks and bike rides around schools. While people appreciate the safety upgrades we’ve built so far, they’ve also shown me that there is still a lot of work to do so that every family has a safe path to school.”

“Seattle Public Schools is proud to be one of the only districts in the country with such a robust bike skills program! We have many students whose first chance to ride a bike is in our elementary physical education classrooms,” said Dr. Brent Jones, Superintendent, Seattle Public Schools. “Our teachers help students become more comfortable with biking. These students get to experience the freedom and confidence that comes from learning how to safely ride a bike. That work – paired with safer streets for pedestrians and bicyclists – makes walking and biking to school a healthy and viable option for more families.”

The U.S. Vision Zero for Youth Leadership Award, now in its fourth year, recognizes cities that are leading the way in prioritizing children's walking and biking safety. Past recipients include the City of Los Angeles and L.A. Unified School District; New York City and its Vision Zero Task Force and the City of Fremont, CA. The Award is presented by the Vision Zero for Youth initiative, led by the National Center for Safe Routes to School with support from the Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center, the FIA Foundation, and the UNC Highway Safety Research Center.

The National Center for Safe Routes to School is presenting the award on October 12 at Dunlap Elementary School in South Seattle, as part of the school's Walk to School Day celebration. Seattle's work to improve child pedestrian safety will be featured in a forthcoming case study produced by the Center.

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### **Vision Zero for Youth**

Launched by the National Center for Safe Routes to School in 2016, the Vision Zero for Youth initiative encourages communities and elected officials to focus safety improvements and efforts to slow traffic speeds where children and youth travel. Starting with youth can be the spark that creates community support for a broader Vision Zero program to eliminate all traffic fatalities. The initiative includes resources, ideas for taking action, opportunities for city leaders to commit and national and international recognition programs. Support for the initiative is provided by the FIA Foundation, UNC Highway Safety Research Center, and the Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center. For more information about Vision Zero for Youth, visit [visionzeroforyouth.org](http://visionzeroforyouth.org).

### **National Center for Safe Routes to School**

Established in 2006, the National Center for Safe Routes to School helps communities change their culture around safe and active travel. Its role includes national coordination and technical assistance for US Walk to School Day and Bike to School Day, and providing tools, training, research and evaluation for safe walking and bicycling for children and youth. The National Center for Safe Routes to School served as US Federal Highway Administration's clearinghouse for the federal SRTS program for eleven years. It is located at the UNC Highway Safety Research Center, [hsrc.unc.edu](http://hsrc.unc.edu).

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