



*New Mexico* DEPARTMENT OF  
**TRANSPORTATION**  
MOBILITY FOR EVERYONE



**target**  
**zero****NM**

# Choosing Your Role in Ending Traffic Fatalities

NADO National Regional Transportation Conference

July 20, 2026

# ZERO MEANS ZERO

## ZERO TRAFFIC-RELATED FATALITIES BY 2050



Target Zero is a transformative initiative that will coordinate all the transportation safety work currently underway and sharpen the department's focus on safety in all our work. Target Zero visions a transportation system where every journey is completed safely, with zero driving-related deaths or serious injuries.



Photo Courtesy of Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division  
<https://blogs.loc.gov/law/2023/10/descansos-roadside-memorials/>

# KEY PRINCIPLES OF TARGET ZERO IN NEW MEXICO:

HUMAN LIFE FIRST | DATA DRIVEN APPROACHES | EQUITY FOR ALL COMMUNITIES | ACCOUNTABILITY

1. **Safety and Human Life First:** NMDOT's efforts under Target Zero prioritize the safety and well-being of individuals using New Mexico's transportation system.
2. **Data-Driven Approach:** Target Zero in New Mexico relies on accurate data, analysis, and the strategies outlined in the Target Zero 2050 Implementation Plan to identify risks, implement effective measures, and track progress toward the zero-fatality goal.
3. **Equity:** Ensuring that safety improvements benefit all communities across New Mexico, with a focus on historically underserved or high-risk areas and road users, is a central tenet of Target Zero.
4. **Accountability:** NMDOT, along with other stakeholders, is accountable for their roles in implementing Target Zero strategies and creating safer roadways throughout the state.



# SAFE SYSTEM APPROACH

# SAFE SYSTEM PYRAMID



INDIVIDUAL  
EFFORT



EDUCATION



Driver education programs,  
Slow Down campaigns

ACTIVE MEASURES



Signals and signs, in-vehicle  
collision warnings, seatbelts,  
helmets

LATENT SAFETY MEASURES



Signal timing, leading pedestrian  
intervals, air bags, automated  
emergency braking

BUILT ENVIRONMENT



Roundabouts, curb extensions,  
raised crosswalks, sidewalks,  
bikeways

SOCIOECONOMIC FACTORS

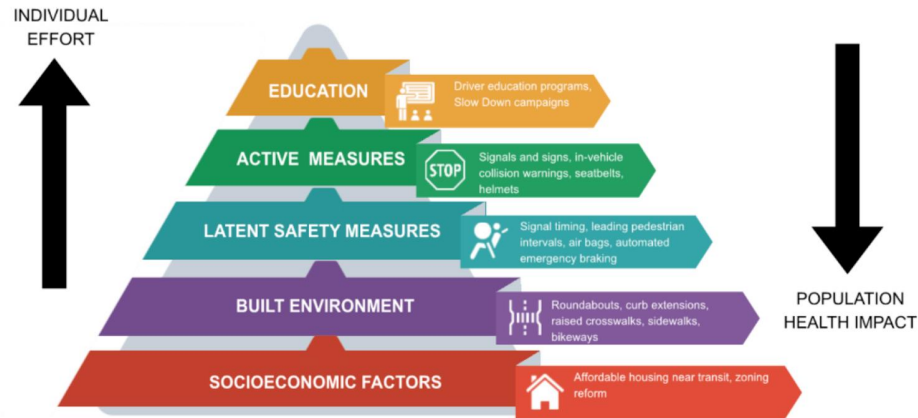


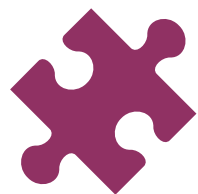
Affordable housing near transit, zoning  
reform

POPULATION  
HEALTH IMPACT

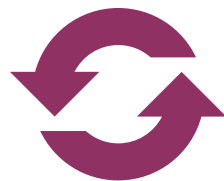


# HEALTH IMPACT AND HEALTH OUTCOMES





Create



Coordinate



Cultivate



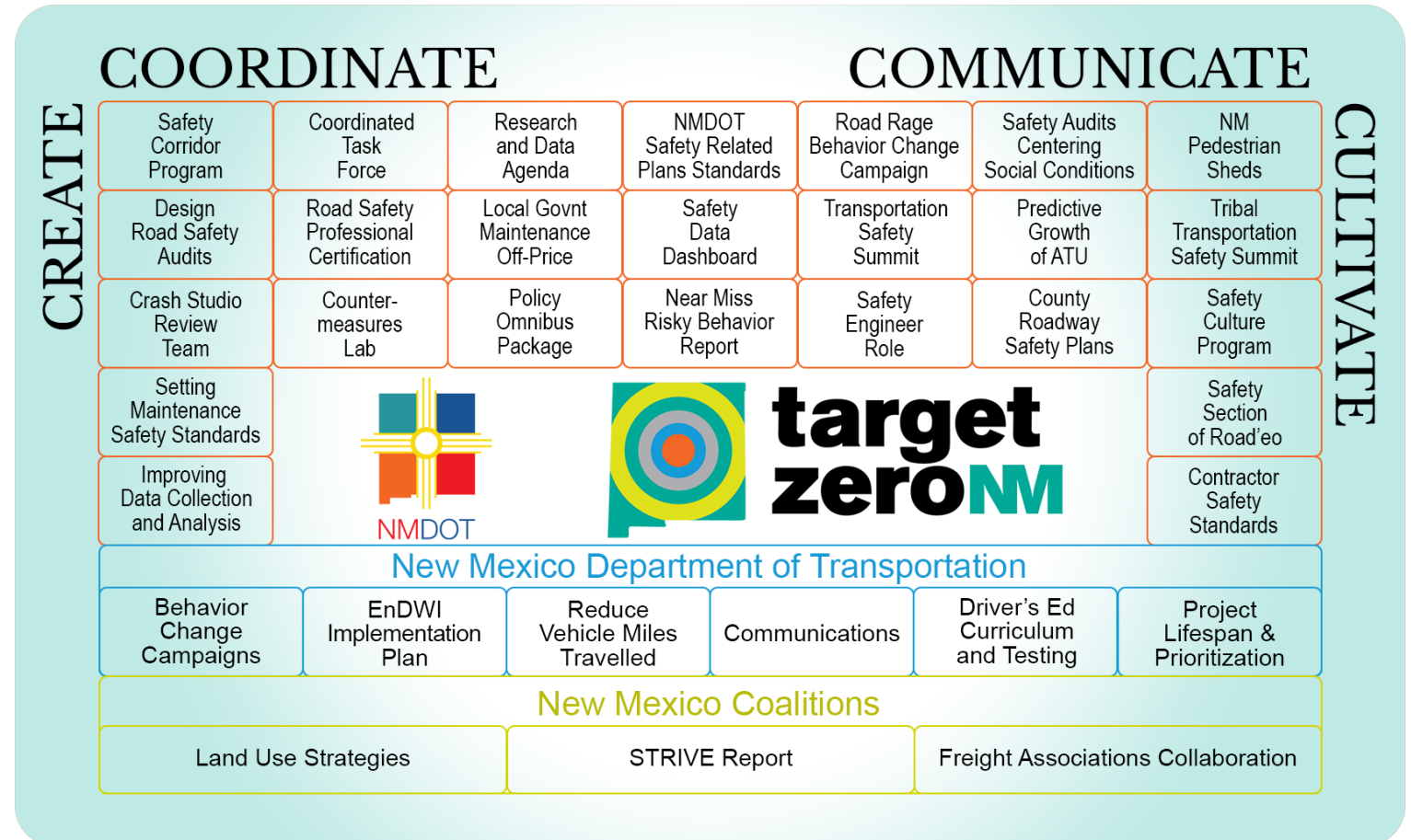
Communicate

THE ROLE OF  
TARGET ZERO

# TARGET ZERO ACTIVITIES



- Road Safety Professional Certification Academy
- Leadership in Safety Community of Practice
- Countermeasures Lab
- Policy Omnibus Recommendations
- Increasing Vision Zero Communities in New Mexico



# ROAD SAFETY PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATION and LEADERSHIP IN SAFETY COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE



- Organizational Change Model
- Each One Teach Ten
- Safety Champions Across NMDOT Divisions and Districts
- That One Guy

# COUNTERMEASURES LAB





Dear Secretary,

As you may know, New Mexico ranks #1 in Pedestrian Fatalities and has ranked such since 2012. Now is the time for us to move out of this top spot and make big moves toward having zero traffic fatalities in our state. We wish the answer to this was purely engineer based; that we could put up more lights and signs on our roads and create a safer, crash-free, environment. However, we know that the risk factors for traffic fatalities are most often social conditions—race, socio-economic status, housing status, education level, or involvement with social service institutions. To bring New Mexico to the dream of zero fatalities, we need cross-agency effort. We must identify the resources we need to impact the risk and resiliency factors of traffic fatalities.

NMDOT is leading this effort through the creation of the Target Zero NM initiative. This initiative will coordinate all the safety planning within NMDOT. It will amplify the behavioral change programs for traffic safety. It will improve traffic safety data collection and analysis. It will assess our roads and name the social conditions that are connected to the high traffic fatalities areas. And, finally, it will bring together leading minds across our state agencies to identify solutions.

NMDOT is creating the Countermeasures Lab. This think tank will be a group of professionals, across disciplines, that will identify the resources, policy, and solutions needed in New Mexico to mitigate risk factors and boost resiliency factors contributing to traffic fatalities in our state. The ideas that come out of this think tank are highly likely to influence not only traffic fatalities, but also child fatalities, public health outcomes, workforce development, educational attainment, public safety and more. Because the social conditions that impact traffic fatalities, impact multiple issues where New Mexico is ranking high.

# POLICY OMNIBUS RECOMMENDATIONS



- What are the policy and capital (human and financial) resources needed to reach zero fatalities in New Mexico?
- The data should tell us where the next fatal crash will occur, who will be in it, how it will occur and what NMDOT could have done/will do to prevent it?
- NMDOT Leadership Wish Lists
- Advocate Input
- Other State DOT Promising Practices
- Land Use Transition Team
- Countermeasures Lab
- Predictive Analytics Project

# INCREASING VISION ZERO COMMUNITIES IN NEW MEXICO

- Cohort of municipalities, counties, or tribes, pueblos or nations
- Each local government forms a multi-disciplinary group to join
- Include existing public health analysis Previously completed in the community
- Build together knowledge, nm specific tools for transportation safety, and receive support for vision zero plans
- Access to county level data
- Access to public health transportation safety researchers



- Transportation or Public Works Department
- Economic Development
- Health and Human Services
- Community Main Street or Chamber of Commerce
- Law Enforcement
- Emergency Response (Ambulance, Fire & Rescue, or Emergency Room)
- Schools
- Elected Official Champion for the work

## WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO GET TO ZERO FATALITIES

The solutions to ending traffic fatalities are not all engineering—we must work across disciplines. We invite you to form a team across the groups in your community to work on this effort.<sup>14</sup>



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# A Few Things to Keep at the Front of Action

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EFFORT



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POPULATION  
HEALTH IMPACT





## Statewide Reading Proficiency 2022-2025

*Yazzie-Martinez Subgroups  
Grades 3-8*

|               | All Students | Economically Disadvantaged | English Learners | Students with Disabilities | Native American Students |
|---------------|--------------|----------------------------|------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| 2022          | 34.5%        | 23.0%                      | 13.5%            | 9.4%                       | 18.9%                    |
| 2023          | 38.9%        | 26.6%                      | 17.7%            | 11.4%                      | 24%                      |
| 2024          | 39.7%        | 29.6%                      | 19.6%            | 12.5%                      | 26.4%                    |
| 2025          | 44.3%        | 34.6%                      | 21.6%            | 14.3%                      | 31.6%                    |
| 4-Year Change | +9.80%       | +11.60%                    | +8.10%           | +4.90%                     | +12.70%                  |

WE DID IT IN READING. WHY NOT IN TRANSPORTATION?





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