

Zeroing in on School Zone Safety

October 13, 2016

Edmonton's focus on school zone safety is paying off, as collisions and injuries have both fallen since the introduction of 30 km/h school zone speed limits in 2014. Collisions causing injuries to pedestrians and cyclists were reduced by 71 per cent from an average of seven in the school year before school zones were implemented to just two in 2015.

"The safety of our children is of utmost importance," said Bev Esslinger, Councillor for Ward 2. "The 30 km/h school zone speed limits and pedestrian-safety upgrades are moving Edmonton towards its long-term goal of Vision Zero."

Early in 2016, City of Edmonton safety engineers reviewed the 13 school zones for traffic safety using sophisticated video-analytics techniques and site visits. They identified concerns and chose new countermeasures tailored for each school. Over the summer, new countermeasures including pedestrian crossing lights, zebra crosswalks, driver feedback signs to mitigate speeding, and reflective poles on stop signs were installed, improving safety at these locations.

"When people see the focus on safety at schools like Elizabeth Finch, they want to know how soon they can have those measures put in at their children's school," says Bev Esslinger. "One thing we can do to improve safety is watch out for each other. And driving within the speed limit is something everyone can do to keep our most vulnerable road users safe."

"As school trustees we hear regularly from parents about the need for drivers to slow down and be careful around our schools. Safety is a top priority, so please slow down and don't speed. We want our children to arrive safely," said Edmonton Public Schools Trustee Cheryl Johnner.

The City will do safety analyses and then safety upgrades on 24 schools in 2017 and another 24 in 2018. School zone upgrades are part of the City's Road Safety Strategy to help Vision Zero Edmonton achieve its goal of zero traffic fatalities and serious injuries.

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