



# SAFETY GUIDE FOR **OLDER ADULTS**

# VISION ZERO ROAD SAFETY PLAN

## VISIONZERO

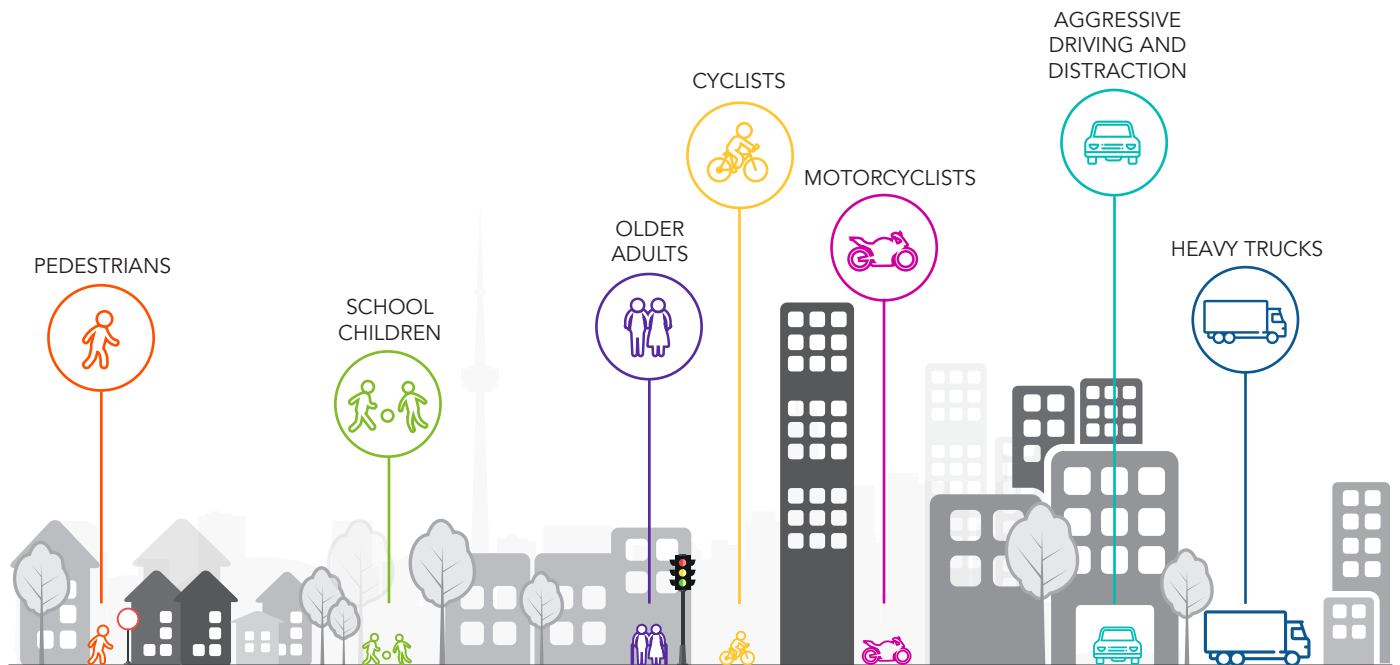
The City of Toronto's Vision Zero Road Safety Plan is a comprehensive action plan that aims to eliminate traffic-related serious injuries and fatalities on Toronto roads. It follows a safe-systems approach that continues to introduce more than 50 engineering, enforcement, education, engagement and evaluation focus actions

Modeled after a Swedish plan with the same name, Vision Zero is a multi-national road

safety project that adopts the fundamental belief that traffic-related serious injuries and fatalities are preventable.

**This brochure contains information for older adults about getting around safely by:**

- Walking
- Cycling
- Taking Transit
- Driving



# SENIOR SAFETY ZONES



Currently, 65 areas across Toronto have been designated as “Senior Safety Zones”. In Senior Safety Zones, crossing times are being increased even further to ensure the timing matches a comfortable walking speed for older adults. Other improvements being implemented in Senior Safety Zones and other priority areas in the City includes:



Signage alerting drivers to the presence of a Seniors Safety Zone



Longer walk signals that give people more time to cross



Enhanced crosswalks with zebra markings



Reduced speed limits



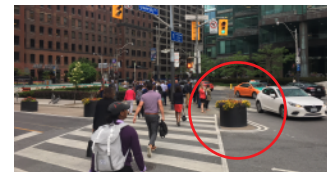
Automated speed enforcement



Red light cameras



Pedestrian head start signals



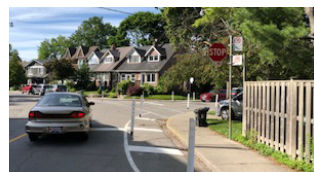
Extended curbs to reduce crossing distances



New sidewalks



New safe crossings



Safer intersection designs



Traffic calming measures

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# BENEFITS OF ACTIVE TRAVEL

As we get older, we may have slower reaction times, less balance, less muscle strength and reduced hearing or vision. Combined, these changes can make us less able to respond quickly when a hazard presents itself. Injuries, whether from a collision or a fall, can be more severe.

Physical activity can slow or even reverse some of these changes. Active travel – walking, cycling and even taking transit – are great ways to include physical activity in daily life.

## WHY CONSIDER ACTIVE TRAVEL?



### Improves physical health

Active travel can strengthen muscles and bones and keep joints flexible.



### Prevents falls

Staying active is one of the best ways to prevent falls.



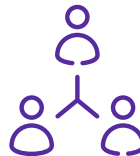
### Improves mental health

Active travel can boost confidence, mood and energy levels, while reducing anxiety and depression.



### Helps the environment

Fewer cars means less emissions and air pollution.



### Builds community connections

People who walk, cycle or take transit are more likely to interact with people in their community.



### Saves money

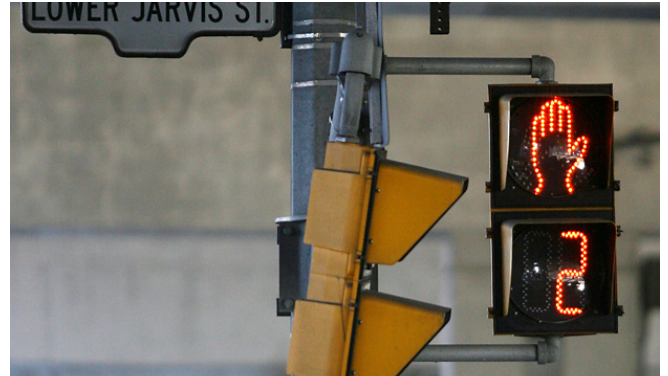
Walking, cycling or taking transit is far more affordable.

# PEDESTRIAN SIGNALS

**WHEN WALKING:** Pedestrians have the right-of-way once they are within a signalized intersection.

**WHEN DRIVING:** Drivers must yield to pedestrians throughout their crossing even after the light changes.

## AUDIBLE AND VISUAL PEDESTRIAN SIGNALS



### Walk

**Audible Signal:** CHIRP or CUCKOO

- Start crossing
- CUCKOO sound = You can cross in the north/south direction
- CHIRP sound = You can cross in the east/west direction



### Flashing Don't Walk

**Audible Signal:** SILENT

- Do not start crossing
- Finish crossing if already started



### Don't Walk

**Audible Signal:** SILENT

- Do not cross
- Push the button if a push button is present to request a walk signal and/or an audible walk signal



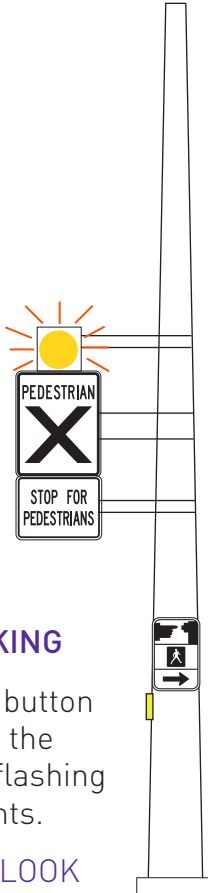
Pedestrian head start signals let people on foot start crossing the street before vehicles are allowed to go.

Toronto is installing accessible pedestrian signals (APS) with audible walk signals across the city to alert people with no or limited sight when it's safe to cross.

Where available, press and hold the push button for three seconds to activate the audible signal.

# PEDESTRIAN CROSSOVER (PXO)

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## WHEN WALKING

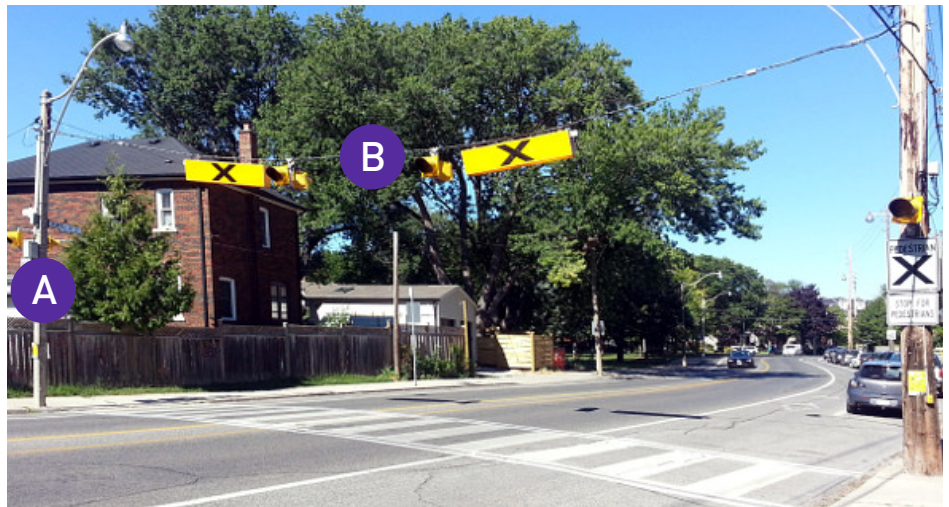
- 1) **PUSH** the button to activate the overhead flashing amber lights.
- 2) **WAIT** and **LOOK** for a break in traffic.
- 3) **CROSS** and **PROCEED WITH CAUTION**.

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## WHEN DRIVING

- 1) **BE ALERT**- Use extra caution approaching a PXO and **WATCH** for the flashing amber lights and people waiting to cross.
- 2) **STOP** and **YIELD** to the people crossing. **DO NOT** start moving until everyone has reached the sidewalk safely.
- 3) **STAY ALERT** - look for other people who may have entered the PXO.





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## CROSSING MID-BLOCK



Every year, 62 people on average are killed or seriously injured while crossing a street mid-block. If possible, avoid crossing mid-block and find the closest crosswalk to you in order to cross safely.

Not all mid-block crossings are considered high-risk. The following factors make the choice to cross mid-block more dangerous:

- Multiple lanes of traffic
- High traffic speeds
- Limited visibility and inadequate sightlines
- Low light or darkness

[Toronto's Municipal Code](#) applies to mid-block crossings and requires people walking to yield to those driving.

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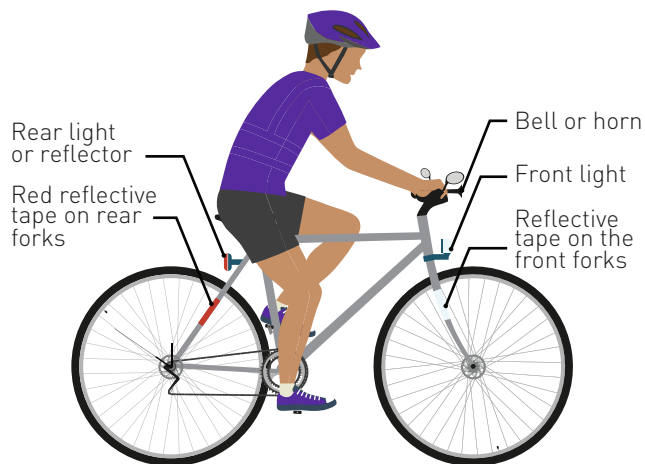
## CYCLING

Cycling is a great, low-impact way for older adults to stay fit and maintain independence.

Toronto has a growing network of protected bike lanes, quiet street routes through neighbourhoods, and multi-use trails.

### CYCLING AND THE LAW

The law requires that you equip your bike with:



### ONE METRE SAFE PASSING LAW

When passing a cyclist:

- Drivers are required to maintain a minimum distance of **one metre**.
- Whenever possible, drivers should change lanes to pass.



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# SERVICES FOR OLDER ADULTS



## WHEEL-TRANS SERVICE

### Has an injury or illness affected your mobility?

Your doctor can help you apply for Wheel-Trans service. Wheel-Trans offers two types of service. Your usual TTC transit fare applies:

- **Door-to-door:** Wheel-Trans customers who are not able to use the TTC's regular accessible services (bus, streetcar, subway) will receive door-to-door service in a Wheel-Trans vehicle.
- **Family of Services:** Wheel-Trans customers who are able to use the TTC's regular accessible services (bus, streetcar, subway) for some but not all trips will receive service in a Wheel-Trans vehicle for a portion of trips as necessary.

Contact Wheel-Trans at (416) 393-4111 or visit [www.ttc.ca](http://www.ttc.ca) for more information.

## RENEWING YOUR LICENSE

Ontario requires you to renew your license every two years once you turn 80. Visit [Ontario.ca](http://Ontario.ca) for more information.

## OLDER ADULTS & COLLISIONS

If you are 70 or older and you are involved in a collision that resulted in a conviction for a driving offence, you will be required to take a road test. Visit [Ontario.ca](http://Ontario.ca) for more information.

## RETIRING FROM DRIVING

Planning ahead and learning about local transportation options can reduce stress and make the transition from driving easier. In Toronto, alternatives to driving include:

- Walking, cycling or using a wheelchair
- Transit, including WheelTrans and the TTC's Community Buses, which stop at popular local destinations
- Car-pooling with friends and family
- Community organizations offering transportation for older adults, such as Toronto Ride
- Taxis and ride-hailing services (Uber, Lyft, etc.)

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## DID YOU KNOW?



Riding on the sidewalk is illegal in Toronto, except for children under 14 years of age. Research has found sidewalk riding to be more dangerous than riding on the road, due to the elevated risk from vehicles entering and exiting driveways. It also poses a risk to people walking.



The majority of serious cycling injuries are the result of falls. While wearing a helmet is not required by law for those 18 years of age or older, a properly fitted helmet, can reduce your risk of head injury.



Toronto has a [snow clearing service](#) for older adults who live in neighbourhoods where the sidewalks are not already plowed by the City. Call 311 for more information.



People using mobility devices such as motorized wheelchairs are considered pedestrians by law and should travel on the sidewalk.



If you are riding a bus between 9 p.m. and 5 a.m., you can ask the operator to let you off between stops.