

For Immediate Release

Date: August 14, 2025

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State and Local Leaders Announce Anti-Speeding Education Campaign, Highlight Actions to Reduce Speeding-Related Crashes

"Slow the Fast Down" Campaign Coincides with Start of New School Year, Two-Year Anniversary of Slow Down Sacramento Founding



WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW: State and local leaders announced the rollout of a statewide education campaign that calls on drivers to "slow the fast down" and "step off your gas," so that everyone will be safe.

SACRAMENTO – The California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS), California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), California Highway Patrol (CHP), Sacramento Police Department, City of Sacramento and non-profit Slow Down Sacramento gathered at Sacramento's Phoebe A. Hearst Elementary School to kick off the ["Slow the Fast Down"](#) education campaign. The campaign coincides with August's Back to School Safety Month and the return of Sacramento-area students, underscoring the need to slow down and be aware of more children outside riding bikes or crossing the street.

"Speeding is dangerous and puts everyone on the road at risk," OTS Director Stephanie Dougherty said. "Students, parents, teachers, and staff are safer when drivers slow down. Through the 'Slow the Fast Down' education campaign, we want to promote a culture of safe driving. Your daily choice to drive within the speed limit protects our youth and everyone in the community."

"Safety is Caltrans' top priority for the traveling public and highway workers," said Caltrans Director Dina El-Tawansy. "That's why Caltrans stands with its partners to support this important education campaign. When you slow down and stay alert, you're protecting your friends and community. Speeding and reckless driving is not just risky, it can be deadly. The life you save may be your own."

Last month, [AB 390](#) was signed into law, which expands the “Slow Down, Move Over” requirement to all stopped vehicles on the side of the road displaying flashing hazard lights or another warning device such as cones or flares. According to 2022 data from University of California at Berkeley’s Safe Transportation Research and Education Center, 221 people were killed on California roads in crashes involving parked or working vehicles.

TARGETING ‘VIDEO GAME-STYLED’ DRIVING: Last year, CHP officers issued over 18,000 citations statewide to drivers for speeding more than 100 miles per hour. To help crack down on speed and aggressive driving, the CHP unveiled a new generation of low-profile, [specially marked patrol vehicles](#) (SMPVs). Operating on the state’s busiest, high-risk roads, the CHP’s 100 low-profile Dodge Durangos blend in better with other vehicles on the road -- catching the most egregious violators before they endanger others on California’s roadways. Since the launch of the special initiative in May, CHP officers operating the SMPVs have issued over 10,000 speeding citations.

“Driving at excessive speeds is not only illegal, but also incredibly dangerous,” said CHP Chief Tyler Eccles. “When drivers choose to speed, they put themselves, their passengers and everyone else on the road at risk. Our top priority is the safety of the motoring public, and we will continue to enforce speed laws to prevent senseless tragedies and keep California’s roadways safe.”

WHY IT MATTERS: In 2023, 1,303 people were killed in speed-related crashes on California roads, accounting for 32% of all traffic deaths. According to this year’s [California Traffic Safety Survey](#), “Speeding/Aggressive Driving” was the biggest safety concern among nearly 80% of surveyed drivers. In 2023 alone, Sacramento had more than 49 fatal crashes that killed 55 people, 22 of which involved pedestrians. Unsafe speed was the leading primary crash factor.

In January 2022, a Phoebe Hearst parent was struck and killed during student pickup time. According to 2019-2023 data from UC Berkeley’s Transportation Injury Mapping System, the mile-long stretch of Folsom Boulevard between 48th and 65th streets, which includes the school’s location off 60th Street, saw more than a dozen crashes that injured a bicyclist or pedestrian.

CALMING TRAFFIC AND ELIMINATING FATAL AND SERIOUS INJURY CRASHES: Driving at unsafe speeds continues to be one of the top contributors to severe and fatal crashes, and the City of Sacramento is taking decisive steps to change that. As part of its commitment to a Vision Zero goal of eliminating transportation fatalities and serious injuries, the City is implementing safety improvements citywide including along Folsom Boulevard, lowering speed limits in eligible school zones, and expanding transparency through tools like the new [crash dashboard](#).

The City of Sacramento aims to calm traffic and expand safe walking and biking options along Folsom Boulevard. The project focuses on infrastructure improvements between 48th and 65th streets that will reduce speeding, add buffered bike lanes, as

well as update curb ramps and signals to improve pedestrian safety and protected left-turns for vehicles.

The efforts are part of the City's updates to the Vision Zero Action Plan, a series of strategies and actions to reduce fatal and serious injury crashes.

"We are currently updating our Vision Zero Action Plan to reflect the latest data and community priorities, ensuring our strategies remain focused, equitable, and effective," said City of Sacramento Transportation Division Manager Megan Carter. "Through our new Transportation Safety Initiative, we're accelerating street safety upgrades with quick-build projects to protect our most vulnerable road users. We're proud to stand with our partners at the Office of Traffic Safety, Caltrans, CHP, Sacramento Police Department, and community advocates in a united effort to reduce speeding and protect our communities."

To learn more about the City of Sacramento's Vision Zero Action Plan Update, visit <https://www.cityofsacramento.gov/public-works/transportation/vision-zero-transportation/sacramento-vision-zero-action-plan-update>.

OTS GRANT FUNDING: Last October, the [Sacramento Police Department](#) received a \$400,000 grant from the OTS to support its ongoing enforcement and education programs aimed at reducing serious injuries and deaths on Sacramento roads. Operations have focused on the most dangerous driving behaviors like speeding, street racing and sideshow activities.

"We are here to keep the community safe and hold people who drive dangerously and recklessly accountable for their actions," Sacramento Police Department Sgt. Ken Collier said. "By focusing on high-risk areas where speeding is a problem, we aim to reduce all dangerous driving behaviors, prevent crashes, and make our roads safer for everyone."

SLOW DOWN SACRAMENTO – A COMMUNITY CALL TO ACTION: This month marks the two-year anniversary of [Slow Down Sacramento](#), a local grassroots organization focused on road safety and encouraging people to commit to safer driving habits.

"Every resident shares in the responsibility to create safe streets," Slow Down Sacramento Founder Isaac Gonzalez said. "Our organization is about community and a call to act to foster a culture of safe, respectful and courteous driving behaviors within Sacramento."

'SLOW THE FAST DOWN' CAMPAIGN DETAILS: Fifteen-second public service announcements will run in English and Spanish on YouTube, gaming and streaming services and devices. Messages will also be displayed on digital billboards and transit shelters. Social media posts will emphasize the dangers of speeding for people walking and biking, and how just small changes in vehicle speed can significantly increase the risk of injury or death when struck by a vehicle. The social media messages also highlight



road improvements that slow down vehicles and help people cross busy roads. The campaign runs through Aug. 24.

Visit www.gosafelyca.org for more traffic safety information.

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