

Walk Talk Week 4

Speaker: Christine Acosta, Vision Zero Hillsborough

Christine founded Pedal Power Promoters, LLC in 2014 to advocate for bicycle-friendly initiatives in Tampa Bay; she served as Walk Bike Tampa's executive director. Her work as a walk/bike activist began when her father's immobility during illness illuminated for her how Tampa's cars-only approach to transportation impacts the health and safety of our community.

Vision Zero Hillsborough is a county policy established with the goal of reducing traffic fatalities and serious traffic injuries to zero. This is a road safety philosophy developed in Sweden in 1993 with the data-driven argument that present road design is the main cause of the global road safety crisis.

Vision Zero thinking:

- Multimodal – including pedestrian, bicycle, and public transportation use in planning roads will make all users safer.
- Equity – lower income members of the community are left out of cars-only road design; planning needs to include multimodal options for those without car access.
- Design error vs. human error – acknowledging that humans make mistakes, use speed reduction, narrowed traffic lanes, protected pedestrian routes, Complete Streets, lighting, landscaping, and signage to better direct human behavior.
- Cost – many Vision Zero tools require little or no money to implement. Funding is also available from several federal and state grants.

Our county:

- 10.1 traffic deaths per 100,000 residents are nationally. 12.7 in Hillsborough (an average of 33 more people die in Hillsborough crashes than national average).
- 75% of fatal crashes occur on roads with posted speeds 40mph+

Challenges:

- While Vision Zero communities across the country and world have seen notable drops in traffic fatalities on redesigned roadways, Tampa's traffic fatalities have increased. In New York City, for example, the mayor enthusiastically adopted Vision Zero and can demonstrate significant crash reduction; Tampa's Mayor Buckhorn declined interest in Vision Zero. Tampa's government does not include a dedicated public health role.

Next step:

- **Educate the community on Vision Zero's goals and advantages. Demand our elected leaders include Vision Zero thinking in public planning.**

Walk Talk is designed to create a collective and collaborative voice for pedestrian safety advocacy. The goal is give us a common language and background for demanding traffic improvements from our elected government.

- Walk Talk coordinators: Emily Hinsdale (emilyhinsdale@gmail.com); Meghan Steiner
- Thank you to The Dessert Spot at Toffee to Go for hosting our event.