

Thank you so much for gathering this evening to remember the lives of the 22 people who were victims of road traffic violence here in Durham.

In July, Allison's loving husband, Matt, was killed on his bike at this crosswalk by a speeding car. The car hit him in front Allison and their two young children, while they were biking home from the Museum of Life and Science. The driver kept speeding on with the bike still attached under his vehicle.

This has been an unimaginable loss for their family. Four months later, their 2 year old daughter still asks where dada is and their 4 year old son is trying so hard to understand what happened.

Allison is devoted to renewing her children's sense of safety and to keeping Matt's memory alive. And that is why coming together like this is so important. It helps us honor those we have loved and lost and to feel supported by our community in the wake of such senseless tragedy.

Matt and Allison were best friends and he was the most devoted father to their children. He was caring, brilliant, humble, creative, conscientious, and silly. He enjoyed spending time with his family above all else.

Matt was following all of the safety rules the day he was hit, and yet this horrific tragedy happened. Other traffic-related tragedies have happened to 21 others so far this year in Durham. We cannot let this continue.

Coming together also reminds us of the need to take action. This means advocating for better prevention measures, such as advocating for the city to fulfill the promise of the Vision Zero Resolution for safer roads. Tonight's visual representation of how to narrow the trail crossing to two lanes, thereby slowing traffic, is a reminder that there are immediate actions the city can take to save lives. We also need to ensure the state is holding people accountable with appropriately serious legal responses to those culpable for road deaths and injuries.

Again, thank you for coming together to remember Matt and the nearly two dozen victims of road crashes this year. Thanks to Bike Durham and the larger community for providing support to the families impacted, and for promising to take action to ensure safe streets for all of us.