Demonstrators gather on City Hall plaza. Credit: Courtesy of Gustavo Quiroga

LOCAL NEWS

Hundreds Respond To Walsh's Comments About Bike And Pedestrian Safety

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TINA MARTIN

Hundreds of people rallied on City Hall Plaza this morning for Boston bike to work day — and wanted to make sure mayor Walsh got the message about safer roads.

The group took issue with the following comments he made on WGBH News' Boston Public Radio Tuesday:

> "There's a lot of talk about what the city is doing to make everything safer — pedestrians need to be safer," Walsh said. "Pedestrians need to put their head up when they're walking down the street, take your headphones off … you've got to understand, cars are going to hit you."

> "We need to coexist together on the roads of our city … we need to start following the rules," Walsh said. "People need to be more cognizant of the fact that a car is a car. Even bicyclists, when you're riding; a car can't stop on a dime."

On Wednesday, the Massachusetts Vision Zero Coalition sent Walsh a letter criticizing his comments, calling for better action to protect Boston's streets, and inviting Walsh to join them for a silent vigil on Friday morning.

Rally organizers held a silent vigil for victims of traffic violence Friday and then hand delivered a petition to Mayor Walsh. The petition demands that the mayor do more to make roads safer for people walking and on bikes.

In a press release mayor Walsh said that is exactly what he's doing by investing $4 million in the upcoming fiscal year for for improvements that include new bike lanes along beacon street and Commonwealth Ave.

He mentioned in Tuesday's interview that the residents were placing too much blame on his administration to solve the problem.

"A lot of people were pointing the finger at me and at the City for not doing enough — we're doing everything we can," Walsh said. "It's a big city, there's a lot going on."

BOSTON PUBLIC RADIO

Mayor Walsh Says Bicyclists, Pedestrians Share Blame In Accidents