



Center for Injury Research and Policy



THE UNIVERSITY
of NORTH CAROLINA
at CHAPEL HILL

ROADWAY SYSTEMS & DRIVERS TECHNICAL REPORT

A Safe System Guide for Transportation: Successful Examples from Communities in the U.S.

SEP 2024

607 14th Street, NW, Suite 701
Washington, DC 20005
202-638-5944
AAAFoundation.org

© 2024 AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety

Title

A Safe System Guide for Transportation: Successful Examples from Communities in the U.S.

(September 2024)

Authors

Jeffrey P. Michael, Theresa J. Chirles, & Shannon Frattaroli

Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health Center for Injury Research and Policy

Luana Broshears, Jeffrey Paniati, Jeffrey Lindley, & Steve Kuciemba

Institute of Transportation Engineers

Alicia Romo, Jessica McDonough, & C. Y. David Yang

AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety

Foreword

Applying the Safe System approach to transportation systems has gained solid traction from communities in the United States during the past several years. U.S. cities, counties, and states that implemented the Safe System approach have experienced safety improvements with the ultimate goal to achieve zero crash deaths.

Recognizing the potential of the Safe System approach to change how we view and utilize the transportation system in the U.S., the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety began a project in 2022 with the goal of facilitating successful adoption of the Safe System concept and its principles. The first result of that project, a report titled “A Safe System Guide for Transportation: Sharing this Approach to Lead Your Community to Action” was published in November 2023 with recommendations for effectively communicating the importance and the benefits of Safe System policies and roadway improvements.

This report is the second outcome of the project that provides guidance for communities to understand “how” to implement the Safe System approach by capturing lessons learned from early adopters and with six case studies to assist jurisdictions that are in the early stages of the Safe System approach implementation.

This report is a product of a cooperative agreement between the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety and Johns Hopkins University, with support from the Institute of Transportation Engineers and the University of North Carolina. The information presented in this document will be a useful resource for transportation safety advocates and stakeholders in both public and private sectors.

C. Y. David Yang, Ph.D.

President and Executive Director

AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety

Jeffrey P. Michael, Ed.D.

Distinguished Scholar

Johns Hopkins University

About the Sponsor

AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety
607 14th Street, NW, Suite 701
Washington, D.C. 20005
202-638-5944
www.aaafoundation.org

Founded in 1947, the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety in Washington, D.C., is a nonprofit, publicly supported charitable research and educational organization dedicated to saving lives by preventing traffic crashes and reducing injuries when crashes occur. Funding for this report was provided by voluntary contributions from AAA/CAA and their affiliated motor clubs, individual members, AAA-affiliated insurance companies, and other organizations or sources.

This publication is distributed by the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety at no charge, as a public service. It may not be resold or used for commercial purposes without the explicit permission of the foundation. It may, however, be copied in whole or in part and distributed for free via any medium, provided the Foundation is given appropriate credit as the source of the material. The AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety assumes no liability for the use or misuse of any information, opinions, findings, conclusions, or recommendations contained in this report.

If trade or manufacturer's names are mentioned, it is only because they are considered essential to the object of this report and their mention should not be construed as an endorsement. The AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety does not endorse products or manufacturers.

Table of Contents

Figures	vi
List of Abbreviations and Acronyms	vii
Introduction	1
The Safe System Approach	2
Safe System Approach Principles.....	2
Community-Building – The Foundation for Implementation of the Safe System Approach	6
Champion	7
Influencers	7
Implementors	7
Supporters.....	8
Section 1: A Comprehensive Framework for Implementing the Safe System Approach.....	11
Data Collection and Methodology	11
Phase I: Getting Started.....	13
Phase II: Building Support.....	19
Phase III: Institutionalizing the Safe System Approach.....	23
Phase IV: Sustaining the Safe System Approach	27
Moving Forward	30
Section 1 References	31
Section 2: Case Studies	32
Menlo Park, California	34
McKenzie County, North Dakota	40
West Hartford, Connecticut	46
Madison, Wisconsin	52
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.....	58
State of Massachusetts	64

Figures

Figure 1. Safe System Approach Principles and Elements.	4
Figure 2. Key Roles to Establish, Support, and Implement a Vision Zero Goal by Following the Safe System Approach.	6
Figure 3. Format for Case Studies	33

List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

AAA	American Automobile Association
AARP	American Association of Retired Persons
Caltrans	California Department of Transportation
CRC	Climate Resilient Communities
DRE	Drug Recognition Experts
DVRPC	Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission
EMS	Emergency Medical Services
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
GIS	Geographic Information System
ITE	Institute of Transportation Engineers
LRSP	Local Road Safety Program
LTAP	Local Technical Assistance Program
MADD	Mothers Against Drunk Driving
MassDOT	Massachusetts Department of Transportation
MPO	Metropolitan Planning Organizations
NDDoH	North Dakota Department of Health
NDDOT	North Dakota Department of Transportation
NDHP	North Dakota Highway Patrol
PMT	Project Management Team
RPAs	Regional Planning Agencies
RSAs	Road Safety Audits
SHSP	Strategic Highway Safety Plan
SS4A	Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A)
SRTS	Safe Routes to School
UGPTI	Upper Great Plains Transportation Institute
USDOT	United States Department of Transportation
WisDOT	Wisconsin Department of Transportation
VZFAs	Vision Zero Focus Areas

Introduction

This report is part of a AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety–funded effort being conducted in collaboration with Johns Hopkins University, the University of North Carolina Highway Safety Research Center, and the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE). The goal of this project is to facilitate successful adoption of the Safe System approach by increasing understanding of factors affecting Safe System adoption. The project consists of two phases; this guidance document pertains to the second phase:

- Phase 1: Developing and disseminating guidance materials to assist safety advocates in educating the community about Safe System elements and in adopting Safe System principles to improve traffic safety.
- ***Phase 2: Developing and disseminating guidance documents to help communities incorporate the Safe System approach into their efforts to reduce transportation fatalities and serious injuries.***

This report provides guidance for communities to understand “how” to implement the Safe System approach by capturing lessons learned from early adopters and developing guidance to assist jurisdictions who are in the early stages of their journey to adopt a Vision Zero goal and/or implement the Safe System approach. Through engagement with jurisdictions of different sizes and complexity, this guidance provides an **understanding of the roles, responsibilities, and relationships** needed to develop, implement, and sustain a community-based effort to improve transportation safety.

The intended audience for this guidance includes state, regional, and local transportation, public safety, and planning professionals; appointed and elected community leaders; safety advocacy organizations; and other stakeholders involved in adopting, implementing, and sustaining use of the Safe System approach in their community.

Purpose of this Guide

The purpose of this guide is to help stakeholders involved in adopting, implementing, and sustaining the use of the Safe System approach to understand how to get started with building partnerships that will be necessary for a comprehensive Safe System, and how to overcome potential obstacles.

The Safe System Approach

The Safe System approach is an innovative process for leading change and acting to reduce fatalities and serious injuries on our nation's roadway systems. The goal of the Safe System approach is to improve safety and eliminate fatalities and serious injuries for all roadway users through a seamless alignment between organizational policies, operational programs, and strategic improvement projects.

Conceived in Europe more than 30 years ago, the Safe System approach is now in widespread use in Europe, Australia, and New Zealand, and increasingly in other countries, including the United States. Countries that were early adopters and implementors of the Safe System approach have seen dramatic reductions in roadway system fatalities (greater than 50 percent) over the last 30 years.¹ The U.S. Department of Transportation has adopted the Safe System approach as part of the National Roadway Safety Strategy.

Safe System Approach Principles

The Safe System approach is framed around the six principles described below:

Death and Serious Injuries are Unacceptable

For far too long, fatalities and serious injuries to roadway system users have been regarded as the inevitable consequence of having a high-quality roadway system to effectively move people and goods. The human-centered Safe System approach challenges this assumption and supports the notion that death and serious injuries on the roadway system are unacceptable and that zero is the only acceptable goal for these negative outcomes. Implementation of the Safe System approach is less focused on reducing crashes and more focused on reducing death and injury.

Humans Make Mistakes

Human beings are imperfect and even the safest of drivers and other system users will predictably make mistakes. A core premise of the Safe System approach is that these mistakes, which we know that all system users make, should be expected and anticipated, and not result in fatalities or serious injuries. When designing the system, we must consider opportunities to help users avoid making mistakes.

Humans are Vulnerable

Human beings are fragile and easily injured, particularly by impact forces resulting from kinetic energy, which is a function of mass and speed. Much effort has been devoted over the last several years to protect drivers and passengers by making vehicles stronger and more crashworthy, and by managing crash forces inside the vehicle with seat belts and air bags. Because vulnerable road users, such as pedestrians and bicyclists, do not have the same protection, there is a particular emphasis in the Safe System approach on lowering traffic speeds and reducing opportunities for vehicles and pedestrians to come into conflict by separating them in time and/or space.

Responsibility is Shared

Traditional road safety practice has placed a great deal of emphasis on getting those who use roads—drivers, pedestrians, bicyclists, and others—to behave in a safe manner. The Safe System approach extends the responsibility for road user safety to roadway designers and operators.

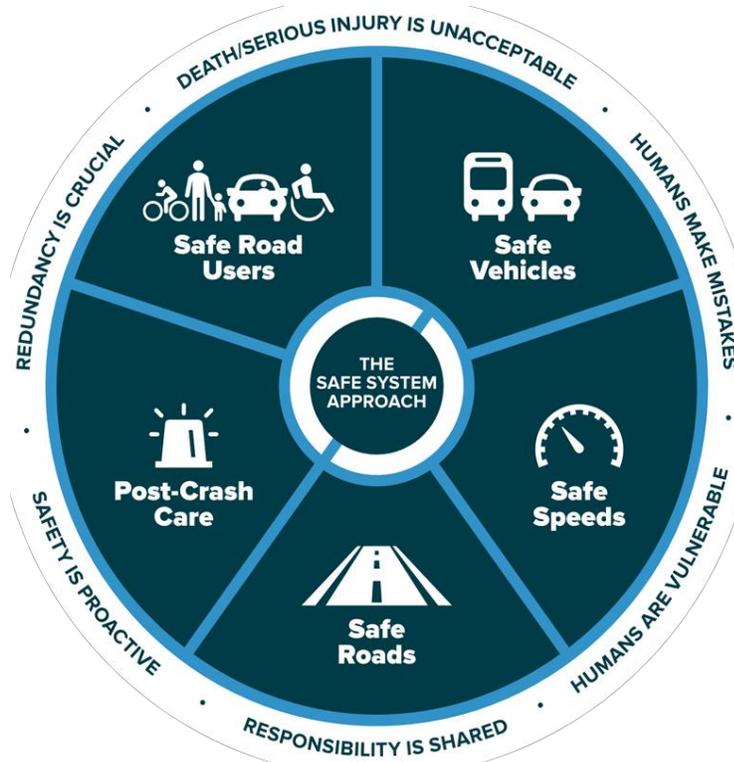
Safety is Proactive

Traditional road safety practice has focused on improving locations where crashes, serious injuries, and fatalities have occurred. The Safe System approach seeks to proactively identify and mitigate risks before crashes occur. Known safety problems are systematically removed or mitigated.

Redundancy is Crucial

A Safe System provides layers of protection in case one part of the system fails. For example, many new vehicles have lane departure warnings, which work together with shoulder rumble strips and guardrails to reduce the negative outcomes associated with run-off-the-road crashes. These types of mutually reinforcing safety countermeasures are at the heart of the Safe System approach.

A Safe System applies these principles through five system elements as shown in Figure 1.



Safe Road Users of all types.

Safe Vehicles include vehicle design elements, safety features, and use of advanced technologies.

Safe Speeds that consider kinetic energy levels and injury tolerances for all users present.

Safe Roads that include design and operational features that help keep all road users safe.

Readily available and effective **Post-Crash Care** when crashes do occur.

Figure 1. Safe System Approach Principles and Elements. Source: FHWA.

In adopting the Safe System approach in a community, it is crucial that organizations responsible for roadway system investment, design, and operations prioritize the need for collaboration with others in the community, including law enforcement, public health, and safety advocates to achieve the necessary levels of system redundancy and effectiveness. Roadway agencies need to overcome potential resistance by emphasizing the importance of involving people from various agencies in building a guiding coalition that empowers organizations to adopt a safety culture that puts safety first and foremost in all decisions they make.

A critical concept is that these five elements and the six principles **need to work together as a complete system**, rather than a collection of independent pieces.

For more detailed information on the Safe System approach, refer to the following references:

- USDOT National Roadway Safety Strategy webpageⁱⁱ
- FHWA Zero Deaths and Safe System webpageⁱⁱⁱ
- ITE Safe System approach webpage^{iv}
- World Resources Institute Report “Sustainable and Safe: A Vision and Guidance for Zero Road Deaths”ⁱ

Community-Building—The Foundation for Implementation of the Safe System Approach

Implementing the Safe System approach at the community level requires close collaboration among those with influence over the five key Safe System approach elements—*safe roads, safe road users, safe speeds, safe vehicles,* and effective *post-crash care*. In most communities this will include the transportation or public works department, the law enforcement community, and those responsible for emergency response. Moving the Safe System approach forward to generate long-term wins and consolidating gains also requires working with elected officials and advocacy groups. Establishing, supporting, and implementing a Vision Zero goal by following the Safe System approach requires several key roles: champion, influencers, implementors, and supporters.¹

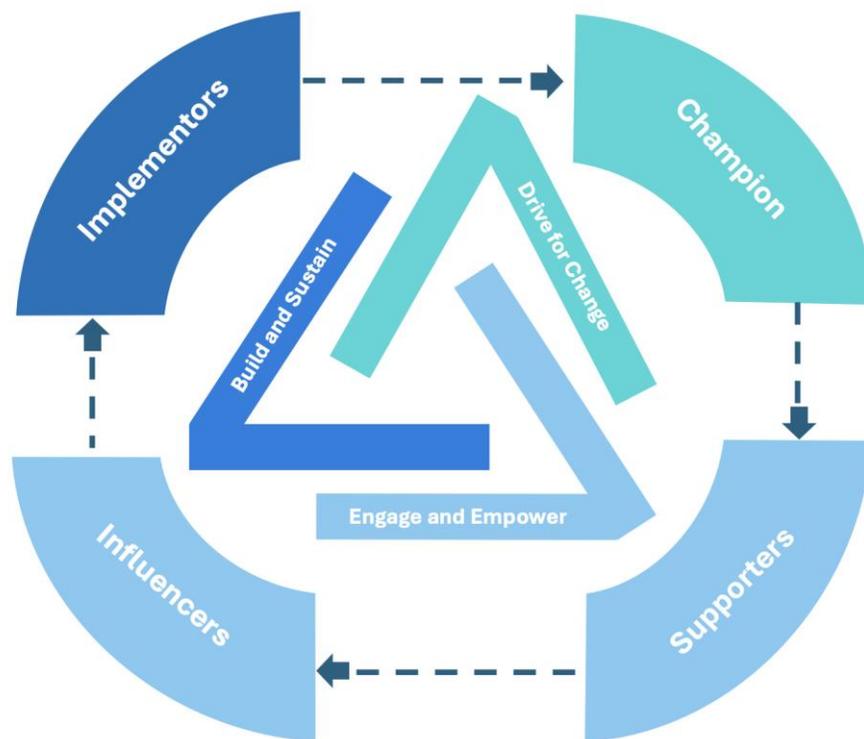


Figure 2. Key Roles to Establish, Support, and Implement a Vision Zero Goal by Following the Safe System Approach.

¹ The roles defined in this document, while not identical to those (Champions, Leaders, Partners, Stakeholders) outlined in the Strategic Highway Safety Plan Implementation Process, are in close alignment and are mutually reinforcing. In both processes there is a Champion who is instrumental in rallying support, Implementors (or Leaders) who have first-line responsibility for advancing the effort, and Influencers and Supporters (Partners and Stakeholders) who are key members of the coalition and necessary to advance safety goals, programs, and projects.

Champion

Typically, the most visible champion for improving safety and/or adopting a Vision Zero goal in a community is a key elected official. Often this is the mayor or a council member who, through personal experience or community engagement, acknowledges the tragic loss of life from traffic violence and its devastating impact on the communities and families they serve. The authority, respect, and visibility this individual has in the community provides the rallying point for the adoption of a Vision Zero goal and the establishment of a transformative safety program. Besides inspiring others to follow a new direction and implementing change, this individual also plays an important role in controlling or influencing the resources—personnel and financial—needed to implement the Safe System approach within their jurisdiction. Having ongoing support from elected officials is critical for the long-term sustainability of the program; however, as further discussed in this report, a “grass roots” approach where community organizations or transportation, public safety, and planning professionals lead the beginning of Safe System approach implementation is also possible. See Case Studies at the later portion of the report for examples of Champions leading the implementation of Safe System approach in their communities.

Influencers

Advocates in the community share a goal of reducing crashes and play an important role in supporting the champion and helping to influence public opinion in support of community goals to improve safety. Interested members of the community can help identify community needs, assist with strategic safety priorities, advise elected officials, and support safety celebrations. The types of advocacy groups may vary across communities but could include Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD), school or child advocacy groups such as parent-teacher associations, biking enthusiasts or a bike lobby, pedestrian advocates, community safety and mobility groups, representatives from underserved communities or disadvantaged populations, disability advocates, senior programs, and others. Influencers can powerfully convey the devastating toll of losing loved ones in tragic traffic crashes and compel urgent action among their constituencies to amplify awareness of safety issues within the broader community.

Implementors

Those responsible for the planning, design, operation, and maintenance of transportation systems often have first-hand experience in the adoption and implementation of the Safe System approach. In all cases, transportation and/or public works play a central role. They are directly responsible for **safe roads** and have significant influence over **safe speeds** and **safe road users**. Transportation professionals are pivotal to the cultural shift that is necessary for adoption of the Safe System approach. Often, these transportation officials must collaborate with and gain support from the broader set of stakeholders responsible for transportation decisions

and funding, including the State and/or county transportation agencies, metropolitan planning officials, transit authorities, and others.

The law enforcement community is another key implementor. Achieving *safe speeds* and influencing *safe road user* behavior requires close coordination between transportation and law enforcement efforts. For one of the interviewed municipalities, the police department led a series of workshops with the public works staff that resulted in collaboration for the development of local Safe System strategies. Providing effective response times to incidents for *post-crash care* while navigating through new roadway designs requires engagement of the fire and emergency medical services (EMS) community. Working with them is important to resolve issues that may arise with narrower, tighter street designs and ensure that Safe System improvements do not impede emergency response times.

Supporters

For the Safe System approach to be adopted and implemented in its broadest form, it must have support from many others in the community. These include school leaders, public or occupational health officials, park and recreation entities, and other influential community groups such as communication and media groups. The level of engagement, responsibility, and influence from these groups will vary from community to community. In some cases, these groups may have been involved as influencers from the onset. In others, the champion or implementors may need to bring these groups to the table, help them understand the importance of making transportation safety a priority, and gain their support. Investing time in cultivating and sustaining these relationships is an important step in the process of communicating the vision, reaching diverse audiences, and inspiring people to embrace a holistic Safe System program. Examples of supporters and their roles are described below:

- **Transit:** Collaboration with the local transit agency can assist in ensuring safe access to transit services, complement infrastructure investments focused on ADA accessibility and shelter programs, and create a channel for ridership data exchange.
- **Public health:** Safe System interventions provide safe active transportation opportunities that improve community health. Also, partnerships with public health stakeholders to develop messaging that bring a personal aspect to traffic fatalities have been successful. Local hospitals can be helpful partners as they can provide post-crash data from trauma centers, improving understanding of contributing factors to crashes.
- **Schools:** The safety of school age children is a strong driver of continued political support. Schools can support implementation of the Safe System approach

through education and, in some cases, by providing funding for road safety improvements near schools.

- **Parks:** Coordination with parks departments is beneficial for planning and implementation of greenways and bicycle trails to separate pedestrians and bicyclists from vehicle traffic.
- **Housing:** Housing partnerships with programs that provide safe housing and services for people experiencing homelessness and mental illness can help address pedestrian fatalities.

A Safe System has enormous potential because it engages a broad range of community partners in reducing the consequences of roadway crashes. Responsibility for safety is shared, and partners understand how their role contributes to a comprehensive Safe System. The key players for implementing the Safe System approach are summarized below.

Who Needs to Be Involved? Key Takeaways

Establishing, supporting and implementing the Safe System approach involves several key roles:

Champion

Typically leads adoption of a Vision Zero/Safe System approach goal and controls or influences personnel and financial resources. Examples of community champions include:

- Mayor
- City Council Member

Influencers

Play an important role in supporting the champion and helping to influence public opinion. Examples of community influence include:

- Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD)
- School or child advocacy groups (e.g., parent teacher associations)
- Biking enthusiasts or a bike lobby
- Pedestrian advocates
- Community Safety and Mobility Groups
- Senior Programs
- Representatives from underserved communities or immigrant populations
- Disability advocates

Implementors

Those with responsibility for the transportation system have front line responsibility for adoption and implementation of the Safe System approach. Examples of community implementors include:

- City/Council public works and regional planning organizations (e.g., Vision Zero manager, engineers, planners, transportation policy advisor, street maintenance staff, fleet staff, human resources staff)
- Law enforcement (e.g., traffic enforcement team manager, police department communications manager)
- Fire department/EMS

Supporters

Stakeholders from a range of community groups can help build support for broad implementation of the Safe System approach. Examples of supporters include:

- Federal and state partners (e.g., Federal Highway Administration, state department of transportation, state safety commission)
- Transit
- Public health
- Schools
- Parks
- Communications staff and media
- Other supporters (e.g., office of people with disabilities, Housing agency, universities, non-profit organizations, data and software providers)

Section 1: A Comprehensive Framework for Implementing the Safe System Approach

Data Collection and Methodology

To develop this guidance, interviews with key stakeholders were conducted to better understand how local municipalities got started in implementing the Safe System approach, what degree of collaboration was required, and how they overcame obstacles. The meetings included representatives from a variety of locations in the United States that have taken steps to adopt Safe System principles and elements, including some who are in early stages and others that have made further progress. Municipalities of various types, sizes, and geographic locations were selected to participate in the discussion:

- **Meeting 1:** Representatives from ten different cities and counties with various levels of experience deploying Safe System approaches in California, Delaware, Iowa, Maryland, Michigan, Nevada, Oregon, Texas, and Wisconsin

The following four discussions were held with jurisdictions that have successfully deployed Safe System approaches:

- **Meeting 2:** Stakeholders from various agencies in Fremont, California (population between 150,000 and 400,000)
- **Meeting 3:** Stakeholders from various agencies in Bellevue, Washington (population under 150,000)
- **Meeting 4:** Stakeholders from various agencies in Hillsborough County, Florida (population over 1,500,000)
- **Meeting 5:** Stakeholders from various agencies in Houston, Texas (population over 400,000)

As outlined above, representatives from states, cities, and counties of various sizes were included across the five meetings. The stakeholders that participated in these meetings included elected and appointed officials, advocates, practicing transportation professionals including planners and engineers, public health professionals, school professionals, and park and recreation professionals.

The stakeholder discussions showed that the basic process for implementing Safe System principles and elements is very similar regardless of local jurisdiction type (city, county, metropolitan planning organization), size, or geographic location. Common steps among these agencies included creating a culture and vision for change, then collaborating across organizations to act, creating quick wins, and finally, building upon and sustaining the implemented changes.

Based on the discussions with these Implementors, this chapter focuses on guidance on the collaboration aspects of implementing the Safe System approach, highlighting examples from various sizes and types of municipalities.

There is no “one-size-fits-all” approach— each municipality used different strategies to move through the four phases of implementing the Safe System approach— ***getting started, building support, institutionalizing the Safe System approach, and sustaining the Safe System approach.***

Phase I: Getting Started

Key elements for successfully getting started are **leadership, ready implementors, and taking action.**

There are numerous paths a local municipality can follow to begin implementing the Safe System approach, and there is not one right answer for how to do so. The process can have a top-down or bottom-up approach. A top-down effort might have a strong commitment from an elected official, such as the mayor/mayoral candidate or council member, whereas a bottom-up approach might come from community organizations or transportation, public safety, and planning professionals who encourage elected officials to prioritize safety.

Leadership

In many of the cases reviewed for this report, the champion for implementation of the Safe System approach was the mayor or a council member who leveraged their authority, respect, and influence to create a vision for change. Motivation for leaders to embrace the Safe System approach varied. In some cases, elected officials promoted transportation safety as part of their election campaign and invested in Vision Zero/Safe System approach projects when they are elected. Other communities created a powerful coalition with elected officials who had experienced personal tragedy from a traffic crash. High-profile community fatalities can also motivate elected officials to create a sense of urgency for change, with safety becoming part of their agenda. External factors may also influence adoption of Vision Zero and the Safe System approach. When a neighboring state, county, or municipality builds new infrastructure and demonstrates quick wins with the Safe System approach, it can provide a convincing and legitimate case and even a sense of competition that can be an effective impetus for public officials to move a program forward.

Community leaders can also be motivated by a respected voice from within the community. In one jurisdiction, a group of parents became strong advocates for embracing the Safe System approach near schools, spurring action by elected officials. (See Case Study for [Menlo Park, CA](#))

Leadership can come from non-elected officials as well. Senior transportation leaders or public health officials may be exposed to the safety challenges being faced by the community and how Vision Zero and the Safe System approach have been successfully adopted and applied elsewhere. For example, in one community, the actions of a motivated county engineer who observed the extent to which traffic fatalities had become a public health emergency initiated a cascading effect that raised awareness of the need for change and got other people interested and involved. This widespread

concern resulted in the development of a safety action plan and a shared organizational culture based on the Safe System approach. (See Case Study for [McKenzie County, ND](#))

Ready Implementors

Ready implementors, typically practitioners from transportation, planning, or public works departments, are often the focal point for moving the Safe System approach forward in a jurisdiction. People in these groups typically take ownership of safety outcomes as system stewards and work diligently to find opportunities to improve safety and revitalize a city or county. Transportation practitioners may have been exposed to Vision Zero and the Safe System approach through professional networks or connections with state or federal transportation agencies and might be well-prepared with the knowledge and technical guidance to take on the challenge of reducing fatalities and serious injuries. Ready implementors often play a key role in early efforts by providing background information about transportation safety and the importance of embracing the Safe System approach to support decisions of elected officials. Efforts from ready implementors can result in the inclusion of Safe System principles and the tailoring of strategies to align elements of various programs, plans, and projects.

Taking Action

Community action embracing Vision Zero and the Safe System approach often starts with the adoption of a policy resolution. Recognizing that transportation safety is the top priority and acting accordingly to realign financial resources to focus on safety outcomes are important early steps to get the community started. However, initial implementation of the Safe System approach requires more than the ability to demonstrate new knowledge, skills, and behaviors to change management frameworks. It must also move forward with actions that are visible to both the stakeholders and the community to make the change stick.

Sometimes these actions grow from existing safety programs and plans. Several communities that were interviewed have a history of being committed to transportation safety, and collaboration with internal and external partners has been embraced for a long time. For example, one county has been working on safety programs with local communities since the 1970s. With a history of embracing safety, incorporating Safe System principles and elements into the existing safety program was the next logical step. The county collaborated with the metropolitan planning organization to develop a safety plan with long-term and short-term safety interventions to eliminate traffic fatalities and serious injuries.

In other municipalities, Safe System strategies were incorporated into existing plans and policies that already had political support and community buy-in. For example, Vision Zero and Safe System approach action plans can be integrated into a Strategic Highway Safety Plan (See Case Study for [Massachusetts Department of Transportation, MA](#)), a

strategic mobility plan, a transit plan, complete streets policies, or traffic calming policies.

Another way local municipalities can get started is by incorporating Safe System principles and elements in a pilot project or projects that respond to a high-profile traffic crash or known safety problems in the community. Early Safe System efforts should focus on projects where data provides evidence of significant payoffs (i.e. the low hanging fruit). This is a way to demonstrate quick wins that can support the creation of a rollout plan to fully implement Vision Zero and the Safe System approach. Initially, the municipality may not have a specific budget for this type of effort and many need to use quick-build programs^v or other low-cost approaches to get started.

Quick-Builds and Safe Speeds

One example of how to expedite Safe System improvements and support safe speeds across a municipality is the installation of quick-build traffic calming and pedestrian and bicyclist enhancement projects. To ensure deployment at a lower cost and in a quicker timeframe, improvements can use pavement markings and flexible delineators rather than traditional materials such as concrete and asphalt. Projects can include curb extensions, pinch points, traffic circles, chicanes, median refuge islands, and signing and marking upgrades. One city was able to build 13 protected intersections in a short period of time using these techniques. This demonstrated the value of the Safe System approach and helped build community support. It is important to ensure close collaboration between the municipality transportation/public works staff, emergency services staff, and the public to provide solutions that meet the community's needs and accommodate emergency response vehicles.



*Separated bike lane with quick-build curb extension using pavement markings and flexible delineators.
Source: ITE.*

Incorporating the Safe System approach into other transportation-related projects is another way to get started. One community, for example, had improvements to stormwater collection and drainage systems that resulted in a full-scale street redesign program, providing an opportunity to incorporate Safe System approach elements in street redesign. Another local municipality invested in vulnerable road user safety and

active transportation projects when the public health community had momentum on housing and climate initiatives.

There is no single way to get started. An effective approach is to leverage existing opportunities and initiatives and to be creative in finding ways to make the commitment to the Safe System approach real and visible in the community.

Getting Started: Key Takeaways

There are different paths to get started on the Safe System journey and there is no one right answer for how to do so. Most often, efforts will start from the top-down with a champion, but other times it is more of a bottom-up approach from the implementors. However, once a community's Safe System journey starts, there are some key ingredients for success:

Leadership

In many cases, this champion has been the mayor or a council member, often moved to action as a result of a precipitating event such as the loss of life of a family member or constituent in a crash. In other cases, a respected voice from within the community (an implementor or influencer) has been able to gain the ear of a politician to spur action. Ultimately, having political and leadership support is critical to get implementation of the Safe System approach off the ground in a community.

Ready Implementors

Advancing the Safe System approach requires support and engagement from implementors with responsibility for the transportation system and access to knowledge, tools, and resources. The transportation or public works department must be on board if the Safe System approach is to begin to move forward in a jurisdiction.

Taking Action

It is important for those involved in adopting and implementing the Safe System approach to take the time to learn about how this approach differs from traditional safety thinking and to begin to build a safety culture that embraces a Safe System mindset. In addition, having a project or projects (responding to a precipitating event if there has been one), showcasing how adoption of the Safe System approach can make a difference in the community is an essential step in getting started. Using a “quick build” approach can be ideal for getting something on the ground quickly, demonstrating benefits, and providing room for adjustment. It should be noted that a project does not need to be a single change at a single location. It may involve a more systemic series of treatments at multiple locations. The goal is visible action following Safe System approach principles.

Phase II: Building Support

Four key ingredients in building successful Safe System coalitions were identified from across the jurisdictions interviewed: ***starting simply, understanding others' perspectives, engaging the community, and celebrating and sharing success.***

Once implementation of the Safe System approach starts, building support within a community is critical. Champions and implementors must work hand-in-hand to establish a community culture with a broad coalition of supporters of the Safe System approach.

The goal is to have the “hearts and minds” of a range of stakeholders committed to the principles of the Safe System approach. Significant effort needs to be devoted to building the partnerships that will be critical to the long-term success of a Safe System coalition.

Starting Simply

Focusing on simple, practical messaging and objectives can ensure stakeholders understand their role and do not get overwhelmed. The Safe System approach is very broad, and getting organizations on board can be difficult. For example, public health agencies often have other pressing priorities (e.g., the COVID-19 pandemic) and can be reluctant to take on new initiatives that require commitment of their time and effort.

Explaining how each stakeholder can contribute by prioritizing safety strategies that are manageable for them is important. Planning for change requires being honest and transparent about the potential impacts to projects. If they are new to the Safe System approach, the champion and implementors may have to devote significant up-front time educating them about Safe System principles and elements and their role in identifying accepted means for planning and initiating a project or effort.^{vi} Diplomatic persistence to get stakeholders involved is important.

Understanding Others' Perspectives

Partners have different roles in the Safe System, but all stakeholders must work towards the same shared goal to reduce fatalities and serious injuries. However, the beliefs and expectations of each partner can vary. Understanding each partner's roles and interests (e.g., bike ridership, walkability, accessibility, emergency response times, safe routes to school, mass transit ridership, etc.) is important to create successful, lasting partnerships. To successfully engage and retain partners, you must meet them where they are. You must fully understand their interest and ensure that you create a win-win collaborative partnership.

Engaging the Community

It is particularly important to understand the needs, perspectives, and lived experiences of the community impacted by initiatives to build their support and trust. Tailoring strategies to circumstances, people, and their environment can create robust practices where the diversity, equity, and inclusion of a community is truly embraced through the Safe System approach. When working with the community, the champion and implementors should seek to understand local underlying needs rather than making assumptions, and slowly earn their trust by continually monitoring any external impacts. Examples of how to raise awareness and get community buy-in include getting involved in student engagement activities, health district forums, and community events.

Most people relate to safety concerns when threats and risks feel personal. Communications that stress the humanitarian element of traffic safety statistics using campaigns that demonstrate the importance of road safety to local communities can build community support. For example, one municipality launched a campaign asking people to personally consider the consequences of traffic safety, including questions such as “How many people do you think die on our roads each year?” “How many should die?” and “What if one of those instances involved one of your loved ones?”

In some cases, the community may not have a good understanding of Vision Zero and the Safe System approach. There is a need for communications staff to translate to people in the community how proposed Safe System interventions can improve safety. Successful examples of implementation of the Safe System approach include local and regional agencies with capacity to communicate, to regularly share safety messages, and to coordinate meetings with external partners. Another example of successful collaboration at a local municipality includes strong partnerships with the media on how to frame deaths on the roadway (e.g., refer to crashes rather than accidents, avoid omitting details such as the absence of a crosswalk within half a

[A Safe System Guide for Transportation: Sharing this Approach to Lead Your Community to Action](#)

The purpose of the Phase 1 guide is to assist local decision makers, transportation professionals, and community advocates in effectively communicating with the public about why the Safe System policies and engineering approaches are necessary, how they work, and how they benefit everyone who uses the roads.



mile when pedestrian was killed). It is important to ensure there is a unified voice when talking about the Safe System approach.

Ongoing communication should be conducted with the community to build trust by gathering input and reporting on the intent of a project, progress, and expectations. For example, participation of public works and planning staff in school board meetings has been successful in creating a safe environment where parents feel comfortable. Another example is a local municipality that includes safety messages in weekly community electronic newsletters. Vision Zero pledges, yard signs, diverse outreach, interactive mapping outreach tools, social media campaigns, and online questionnaires have also been successful in engaging the community. Communicating expectations is an important aspect to make the community confident that their needs are addressed.

Rebranding programs can help ease conversations with the community. Messages at a local municipality, for example, refer to “engineering improvements” as “paint saves lives,” refers to “enforcement improvements” as “consistent and fair,” and refers to “engagement” as “one message, many voices.” Hosting public events for community members who have been victims of traffic crashes, such as the World Day of Remembrance, are also important to effectively communicate the importance of Vision Zero/Safe System approach interventions and build community support. Another example of successful messaging is the inclusion of the names of all members of the community that lost their lives in traffic crashes in the local municipality Vision Zero plan.

For public outreach examples, please refer to Case Studies for [Madison, WI](#); [Massachusetts Department of Transportation, MA](#); [McKenzie County, ND](#); [Menlo Park, CA](#); [Philadelphia, PA](#); and [West Hartford, CT](#).

Celebrating and Sharing Success

Safety events to celebrate successful outcomes resulting from the implementation of the Safe System approach have been effective in building support and momentum for continuing the effort. These events can take many different forms. Creating safer routes to school for children, implementing new cycling facilities, or improving infrastructure at a hazardous location can all provide opportunities to reinforce the importance of investments in the Safe System approach. When it comes time to “cut the ribbon” or celebrate the success of a project, it is important to make sure that all partners are included and recognized. While they may have been in more of a support role, sharing the stage and the spotlight with partners helps sustain broad support and reinforces the commitment needed to make collaborative efforts last.

Building Support: Key Takeaways

Building support for the Safe System approach within a community will require intentional effort on the part of the champion and the implementors to bring in a wider range of influencers and supporters as partners in the effort. An initial project can provide a great way to start to engage these stakeholders.

Depending on the nature of the project it may require partnership with other city departments (police, fire, EMS) or perhaps the focus of the project (school, walk, bike) will attract a particular segment of the advocacy community.

Leveraging a project can be a great way to build or enhance existing relationships, create shared experiences, and to share success. It can also be the gateway to build a broad coalition and Safe System approach program. Some keys to building support:

Starting Simply

You should be clear about what you need from the partner organization. If they are new to the Safe System approach, you may have to devote significant up-front time educating them about the Safe System approach elements and the project or effort. You should be clear on what you need from them and make sure the initial “ask” is not too big or unrealistic given other demands on their resources.

Understanding Others’ Perspectives

While this can sound very parochial, creating successful, long-lasting partnerships requires understanding the needs and motivations of your partners. You must evaluate the “ask” from the partner’s perspective and ensure you are meeting their needs as well as your own.

Engaging the Community

Making sure that the community truly embraces the Safe System approach is fundamental. Working with the community to understand their needs rather than making assumptions can help earn their trust. Rebranding programs in a positive way can help ease conversations with the community.

Celebrating and Sharing Success

When it comes to time to “cut the ribbon” or celebrate the success of a project, make sure that the partners are included and recognized. While they may have been in more of a support role, sharing the stage and the limelight is a great way to build lasting support.

Phase III: Institutionalizing the Safe System Approach

Successful institutionalization of the Safe System approach involves ***building a sustainable coalition*** and ***securing resources***.

A policy, program, plan, or project are examples of initial actions to start and build support for the Safe System approach. The next step is to move from adoption to institutionalization, so that progress does not become contingent on one person or one administration. Institutionalization of the Safe System approach in existing processes and programs is also important for long-term financial support.

Building a Sustainable Coalition

As efforts move from building support to institutionalizing the Safe System approach, coalition building must transition from ad hoc to sustained. This requires structuring a multi-disciplinary partnership that can provide necessary support over a period of years while the Safe System approach is implemented. Some jurisdictions have leveraged an existing safety coalition, while others created a new entity.

Taking advantage of existing relationships can be a great way to quickly start implementing the Safe System approach. Creating a new entity has the advantages of offering a single point of accountability, bringing new perspectives within a steering committee, and building frameworks, functions, and processes specifically for the purposes of implementing the Safe System approach. In several municipalities engaged in these discussions, Vision Zero Implementation groups were created, and a Vision Zero coordinator was designated. These implementation groups typically conduct safety data analysis, develop safety plans, work on project prioritization and implementation, and lead collaboration efforts with internal and external partners.

Being strategic about how to bring partners in is critical. Often, the champion, implementors, and a few influencers are early partners of a coalition. Others, typically supporters, are brought on later in the process. In creating a new coalition, it is important to establish clear ground rules and communication early in the process. This may be easier to establish with a core group of supportive stakeholders first.

Frequent coalition meetings are important. Several of the municipalities involved in our interviews conduct monthly meetings to share information, review progress, identify new safety concerns, and prioritize improvements. Frequent meetings help stakeholders build a personal connection with other stakeholders, which increases motivation and commitment. Workshops and summits are also channels for successful collaboration between peers from different communities, regions, states, or even nations. One municipality engaged in our interviews sent staff to Sweden and Denmark to learn best

practices for Vision Zero projects in order to become more receptive to local safety projects goals and objectives.

Regularly tracking progress and reporting back are also key activities among successful coalitions. One municipality, for example, adopted a 3-year strategic plan to foster collaboration between the state and the county. The municipality reviews their operational plan every year in-between these longer program oversight periods.

Successful partnerships result from recognizing that transportation agencies have limited resources. Even counties that are early Safe System adopters may vary in the extent of their coverage and capacity. Some counties are responsible for building and maintaining local streets and need to coordinate with cities if installing sidewalks. This is another example of why building coalitions is important in managing expectations and dependencies for the successful implementation of infrastructure projects within a region.

Securing Resources

The long-term success of the Safe System approach will require dedicated resources, both people and funding. Successful jurisdictions have identified individuals from within the implementing entities and, in some cases from the mayor's office, to encourage consensus and commitment to Safe System approach efforts. These

Safe Streets and Roads for All

The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, also known as Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, established the new Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) discretionary program to fund initiatives through grants to prevent roadway deaths and serious injuries. The SS4A program supports USDOT's National Roadway Safety Strategy.

Eligibility:

- Counties, cities, towns, transit agencies, and other special districts that are political subdivisions of a state.
- Metropolitan planning organizations
- Federally recognized Tribal governments

Grant Types:

- Planning and Demonstration Grants: Federal funds to develop, complete, or supplement a comprehensive safety action plan. Demonstration activities that inform the development of a new or existing action plan are also eligible activities for this grant.
- Implementation Grants: Federal funds to implement projects and strategies identified in an action plan to address a roadway safety problem. Projects and strategies can be infrastructure, behavioral, and/or operational activities.

More information on the SS4A page: <https://www.transportation.gov/grants/SS4A>

change leaders may have full- or part-time positions depending on the size and complexity of their jurisdiction, but they provide the necessary cooperative attitude to incorporate several viewpoints into a Safe System approach effort.

In addition, Safe System programs or projects will require planning and managing procurement strategies for implementation. Typically, much of the allocated budget will come from the transportation or public works department, but contributions may also come from partner entities.

Often, receiving a grant can be the initial opportunity for a municipality to implement the Safe System approach. The USDOT Safe Streets and Roads for All^{vii} (SS4A) discretionary program, for example, funds regional, local, and Tribal initiatives through grants to prevent roadway deaths and serious injuries. The SS4A program provides funding for two types of grants: Planning and Demonstration Grants to develop, complete, or supplement a comprehensive safety action plan, and Implementation Grants to support projects and strategies identified in an action plan that address a roadway safety problem. Grant funds can be a great way to supplement dedicated budgets or to jump start a Safe System program, but it is difficult to sustain momentum without longer-term dedicated resources.

Small jurisdictions may struggle with the capacity to apply for federal funding to develop a safety plan or implement projects. Public engagement can also be expensive for smaller municipalities. Help can sometimes be found by working with neighboring larger jurisdictions that have more revenue, greater experience, and whose values and skills are aligned with the Safe System approach.

Institutionalizing the Safe System Approach: Key Takeaways

While an initial project can be a great way to get started and build support for the Safe System approach, long-term success will only come when the Safe System approach is fully “institutionalized.” This can take several forms.

Building a Sustainable Coalition

The Safe System approach must be embraced in the “hearts and minds” of a broad range of partners and stakeholders. This requires either finding an existing safety coalition that can be leveraged or creating a new entity. There are advantages and disadvantages to both approaches. In either case, being strategic about how to bring partners in is critical. Some entities may be “must-haves” because of authorities or resources, while others may be brought on later in the process. In creating a new coalition, it is important to establish clear ground rules and communication early in the process. This may be easier to establish with a core group of stakeholders first.

Securing Resources

The long-term success of the Safe System approach will require dedicated resources, both of people and dollars. Successful jurisdictions have identified individuals from within the implementing entities and, in some cases, from the mayor’s office, to serve as the focal point for Safe System approach efforts. Budget must also be dedicated to support the implementation of a Safe System approach program or projects. Grant funds can be a great way to supplement dedicated budgets or to jump start a Safe System approach program, but it is difficult to sustain momentum without dedicated resources.

Phase IV: Sustaining the Safe System Approach

This section summarizes how municipalities found solutions to overcome common challenges and obstacles for sustaining a Safe System effort by ***using an evidence-based approach, preparing for the long haul, fully committing to the Safe System approach, and overcoming resistance to change.***

Implementing the Safe System approach in a municipality is not an easy endeavor, as the hard work of building relationships, securing funding, planning, designing, and implementing projects or initiatives takes place, strategies for continued motivation are needed to keep the momentum going.

Use an Evidence-Based Approach

Fatalities and serious injuries are a result of a complex series of events. It is critical to take an evidence-based approach when developing programs and setting goals and targets. While a single fatal crash or a high-crash location may provide a catalyst, it is important to fully understand the broader safety impacts and build a comprehensive program of systemic interventions that progressively produce meaningful results.

Prepare for the Long Haul

Producing significant results takes time. One of the challenges faced by municipalities adopting the Safe System approach is an expectation of immediate results and inevitable criticism if fatalities and serious injuries do not immediately decrease. A few communities have experienced an increase in traffic fatalities right after the adoption of Vision Zero/Safe System approach. For example, several municipalities faced a spike in crash fatalities during the COVID-19 pandemic, resulting in skepticism about Vision Zero and the Safe System approach.

Many external factors contribute to crash trends moving in an upward or downward direction. Dedicated effort and resources are required to realize the benefits of safety programs over an extended period. It takes time to move forward with a program or a project, and for results of those efforts to begin to accrue. It is important to prepare all stakeholders for the long haul. This is particularly important when it comes to communities working towards safety goals regardless of barriers. Community education efforts need to include understanding of the level of effort and challenges involved in eliminating injuries and fatalities on our roads.

Commit to the Safe System Approach

Long-term positive change requires a continuing commitment to the Safe System approach core principles. This can be challenging in an environment of political turnover, leadership change, or shifting priorities. Jurisdictions that have been successful have institutionalized their safety efforts in a way that make them less susceptible to deviation from the course by these inevitable changes.

While having a political champion can be critical for getting started with the Safe System approach, it can become a liability for sustaining this approach if the effort becomes too closely associated with a single political view or directly related to a political agenda. It is essential that, as the effort grows, “ownership” moves away from this champion and be shared among career staff and coalition members. Long-term integration into programs and policies can help this transition.

Staff turnover can be another challenge for continued support of the Safe System approach. Agency staff and elected officials leave their roles and there is a constant need to rebuild relationships. Building communication channels through early partnerships can make it easier for new staff to step in and build upon prior relationships and accomplishments. Further, regular meetings and celebrations of safety outcomes, as well as documentation of safety efforts and performance metrics, are key to sustaining long-term partnerships.

Local municipalities can face the need for stronger state support. Traffic fatalities within local jurisdictions often occur on state-maintained roads, and the lack of collaboration with state offices can be an obstacle for allocating safety funding on these roads. Successful collaboration with the state requires adopting a performance management component to frequently report back and be accountable.

Overcome Resistance to Change

Embracing a Vision Zero mindset, building a safety culture, and embracing the Safe System approach will be challenged by some communities, and perhaps met with professional skepticism. Community resistance to change can be an obstacle, especially when change happens fast. One local municipality that implemented a quick-build

Federal and State Partners

Federal and state agencies are important partners to support safer roads and safer vehicles. Some communities may struggle to address some of these safety issues internally. Despite efforts to increase funding for infrastructure projects, there is often a limitation on what can be done at a local level. Collaboration with federal and state partners can help raise awareness about negative safety impacts of larger and heavier vehicles, particularly in their interactions with vulnerable road users.

initiative faced resistance from a community reluctant to approve a decision to remove traffic lanes to reduce speeding behaviors and accommodate the needs of vulnerable road users at the expense of sacrificing mobility and inducing additional congestion. The municipality overcame this challenge by creating a mobility task force and a comprehensive transportation plan with additional components focused on reducing traffic congestion. A mobility commission was formed to oversee a mobility plan that would ensure the municipality addressed mobility concerns, as well as safety outcomes. In addition, strong collaboration with schools and public health stakeholders proved important to justify quick-build improvements that would improve the safety of school children and increase community health and happiness.

Being willing to think differently and ambitiously is key for successful implementation of the Safe System Approach. An example of a successful innovative partnership between public and private sectors is the use of video data to identify near-misses. However, collaborating with external partners to bring innovative strategies and technology can be a challenge for local municipalities, especially due to the uncertainty involved and the “this is what we have always done” mentality. Persistence and sound evidence of seizing opportunities to upskill resources can be effective in overcoming this obstacle

Internal collaboration, however, can be a bigger challenge than collaborating with external partners. For example, engineers may not agree with what they heard in early discussions about the Safe System approach. Sometimes these first exposures to the concept involved a high level of advocacy and included criticism of current infrastructure design standards and speed limit setting processes aimed at increasing roadway capacity.

Another example mentioned by the local municipalities participating in this project is the reluctance of the police department to embrace the Safe System approach and collaborate closely with the community. Such resistance may be due to earlier exposure to Vision Zero promotions that presented the Safe System approach as an alternative to traffic enforcement rather than as a complement. Most of the municipalities that contributed to this project also noted that getting the fire department involved is one of their biggest challenges. A successful example of collaboration with the fire department in one community helped overcome initial concerns regarding the potential impact of Safe System strategies on emergency response times. Engagement of the emergency response community by the Vision Zero coordinator allowed the fire department to better understand the overall impacts the Safe System approach could have on safety in the community and how they could contribute. It also made sure their concerns about emergency response times were heard and appropriately addressed. In all cases, listening to the concerns from external partners being persistent and committed to advancing the Safe System approach were critical to overcoming initial resistance.

Moving Forward

Adopting and implementing the Safe System approach requires a safety culture shift for most communities. It starts with a mindset that deaths and serious injuries are unacceptable and embraces the realities that humans will make mistakes and that humans are vulnerable. It continues with adopting a safety culture built around shared responsibility, proactive efforts, and system redundancy—***safe roads, safe road users, safe speeds, safe vehicles, and effective post-crash care.***

Implementing a Safe System approach is founded on coalition-building that leads to action. This guide provides a framework and guidance for ***Getting Started, Building Support, Institutionalizing, and Sustaining the Safe System Approach.*** These lessons learned are drawn from the experiences of a wide variety of jurisdictions of differing sizes and geographies. The guidance captures the commonalities running through each of these jurisdictions' experiences while recognizing that each community is unique with its own set of challenges and opportunities, and that there is no "one-size-fits-all" way to move forward with the Safe System approach.

The hope is that this document can inspire communities to make reducing and, ultimately, eliminating traffic fatalities and serious injuries a priority and allow those just getting started to learn from those who have come before them.

References

- ¹ World Resources Institute. (2018). *Sustainable and Safe: A Vision and Guidance for Zero Road Deaths*. Retrieved from <https://www.wri.org/research/sustainable-and-safe-vision-and-guidance-zero-road-deaths>.
 - ² U.S. Department of Transportation. (2022). *National Roadway Safety Strategy (NRSS)*. Retrieved from <https://www.transportation.gov/NRSS>.
 - ³ U.S. Department of Transportation. (2023). *Zero Deaths and Safe System*. Retrieved from <https://highways.dot.gov/safety/zero-deaths>.
 - ⁴ Institute of Transportation Engineers. (2022). *Safe System Resources*. Retrieved from <https://www.ite.org/technical-resources/topics/safe-systems/>.
 - ⁵ Institute of Transportation Engineers. (2022). *Pandemic Quick Builds: Lessons Learned and What Comes Next*. Retrieved from <https://www.ite.org/pub/?id=24EB7703-A754-E9C3-AD6E-A41504B0E6A6>.
 - ⁶ AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety. (2023). *A Safe System Guide for Transportation: Sharing this Approach to Lead Your Community to Action*. Retrieved from <https://aaafoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/202311-AAAFTS-Safe-System-Approach.pdf>
 - ⁷ U.S. Department of Transportation. (2022). *Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A)*. Retrieved from <https://www.transportation.gov/grants/SS4A>.
-

Section 2: Case Studies

To assist communities in seeing how the framework and guidance presented in the first section can be put into practice, the second section of this report provides six case studies highlighting jurisdictions of differing size, complexity, and character across the United States. These case studies summarize each jurisdiction’s journey in embracing Vision Zero and advancing the Safe System approach. Figure 3 provides an overview of the format that each case study follows—each includes an introductory page describing the characteristics of the community and key lessons from their experience; pages two through five correspond to each jurisdiction’s progress through the four phases described in the framework; and a final page that provides any additional relevant information about the jurisdiction, a link to additional resources, and corresponding references.

Figure 3. Format for Case Studies

<p>Page 1: A description of the jurisdiction, their Vision Zero adoption and target dates, challenges faced, safe system focus areas, funding, and key lessons learned</p>	Case Study Location					
	Community Highlights					
	Community Description	<p>Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet consectetur adipiscing elit rhoncus donec nec, proin malesuada tristique sociosqu quam volutpat mollis aptent eros. Vestibulum elementum curabitur cubilia vitae dui tellus auctor congue, facilisis cursus luctus sapien</p>				
	Vision Zero Adoption	Vision Zero Target				
	20XX	20XX				
	Challenges	<p>Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet consectetur adipiscing elit rhoncus donec nec, proin malesuada tristique sociosqu quam volutpat mollis aptent</p>				
	Safe System Focus	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Area 1</td> <td>Area 3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Area 2</td> <td>Area 4</td> </tr> </table>	Area 1	Area 3	Area 2	Area 4
	Area 1	Area 3				
	Area 2	Area 4				
	Funding	<p>Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet consectetur adipiscing</p>				
Lessons Learned						
<p>Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet consectetur adipiscing elit rhoncus donec nec, proin malesuada tristique sociosqu quam volutpat mollis aptent eros. Vestibulum elementum curabitur cubilia vitae dui tellus auctor congue, facilisis cursus luctus sapien commodo nibh aptent, habitasse ornare porttitor pulvinar himenaeos magna euismod.</p>						

<p>Page 2: The jurisdiction's experience with leadership, ready implementors, and taking action</p>	Phase 1: Getting Started	
	Leadership	
	<p>Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet consectetur adipiscing elit rhoncus donec nec, proin malesuada tristique sociosqu quam volutpat mollis aptent eros. Vestibulum elementum curabitur cubilia vitae dui tellus auctor congue, facilisis cursus luctus sapien commodo nibh aptent, habitasse ornare porttitor pulvinar himenaeos magna</p>	
	Ready Implementors	
	<p>Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet consectetur adipiscing elit rhoncus donec nec, proin malesuada tristique sociosqu quam volutpat mollis aptent eros. Vestibulum elementum curabitur cubilia vitae dui tellus auctor congue, facilisis cursus luctus sapien commodo nibh aptent, habitasse ornare porttitor pulvinar viverra lobortis pharetra porta orci sodales commodo</p>	
	Taking Action	
<p>Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet consectetur adipiscing elit rhoncus donec nec, proin malesuada tristique sociosqu quam volutpat mollis aptent eros. Vestibulum elementum curabitur cubilia vitae dui tellus auctor congue, facilisis cursus luctus sapien commodo nibh aptent, habitasse ornare porttitor pulvinar himenaeos magna euismod. A rhoncus erat libero ridiculus accumsan habitant facilisi ultricies mollis fermentum dui, sem viverra lobortis pharetra porta orci sodales commodo elementum mauris, sapien cum venenatis augue proin montes vel congue parturient vestibulum</p>		

<p>Page 3: The jurisdiction's experience with starting simply, understanding others' perspectives, engaging the community, and celebrating success</p>	Phase 2: Building Support	
	Starting Simply	
	<p>Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet consectetur adipiscing elit rhoncus donec nec, proin malesuada tristique sociosqu quam volutpat mollis aptent eros. Vestibulum elementum curabitur cubilia vitae dui tellus auctor congue, facilisis cursus luctus sapien commodo nibh aptent, habitasse ornare porttitor pulvinar</p>	
	Understanding Others' Perspectives	
	<p>Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet consectetur adipiscing elit rhoncus donec nec, proin malesuada tristique sociosqu quam volutpat mollis aptent eros. Vestibulum elementum curabitur cubilia vitae dui tellus auctor congue, facilisis cursus luctus sapien</p>	
	Engaging the Community	
<p>Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet consectetur adipiscing elit rhoncus donec nec, proin malesuada tristique sociosqu quam volutpat mollis aptent eros. Vestibulum elementum curabitur cubilia vitae dui tellus auctor congue, facilisis cursus luctus</p>		
Celebrating and Sharing Success		
<p>Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet consectetur adipiscing elit rhoncus donec nec, proin malesuada tristique sociosqu quam volutpat mollis aptent eros. Vestibulum elementum curabitur cubilia vitae dui tellus auctor congue, facilisis cursus luctus</p>		

<p>Page 4: The jurisdiction's experience with building a sustainable coalition and securing resources</p>	Phase 3: Institutionalizing the Safe System Approach	
	Building a Sustainable Coalition	
	<p>Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet consectetur adipiscing elit rhoncus donec nec, proin malesuada tristique sociosqu quam volutpat mollis aptent eros. Vestibulum elementum curabitur cubilia vitae dui tellus auctor congue, facilisis cursus luctus sapien commodo nibh aptent, habitasse ornare porttitor pulvinar</p>	
	Securing Resources	
<p>Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet consectetur adipiscing elit rhoncus donec nec, proin malesuada tristique sociosqu quam volutpat mollis aptent eros. Vestibulum elementum curabitur cubilia vitae dui tellus auctor congue, facilisis cursus luctus sapien commodo nibh aptent, habitasse ornare porttitor pulvinar himenaeos magna euismod. A rhoncus erat libero ridiculus accumsan habitant facilisi ultricies mollis fermentum dui, sem viverra lobortis pharetra porta orci sodales commodo elementum mauris, sapien cum venenatis augue proin montes vel congue parturient vestibulum</p>		

<p>Page 5: The jurisdiction's experience with using an evidence-based approach, preparing for the long haul, committing to the Safe System approach, and overcoming resistance to change</p>	Phase 4: Sustaining the Safe System Approach	
	Use an Evidence-Based Approach	
	<p>Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet consectetur adipiscing elit rhoncus donec nec, proin malesuada tristique sociosqu quam volutpat mollis aptent eros. Vestibulum elementum curabitur cubilia vitae dui tellus auctor congue, facilisis cursus luctus</p>	
	Prepare for the Long Haul	
	<p>Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet consectetur adipiscing elit rhoncus donec nec, proin malesuada tristique sociosqu quam volutpat mollis aptent eros. Vestibulum elementum curabitur cubilia vitae dui tellus auctor congue,</p>	
	Commit to the Safe System Approach	
<p>Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet consectetur adipiscing elit rhoncus donec nec, proin malesuada tristique sociosqu quam volutpat mollis aptent eros. Vestibulum elementum curabitur cubilia vitae dui tellus auctor congue, facilisis cursus luctus sapien commodo nibh aptent</p>		
Overcome Resistance to Change		
<p>Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet consectetur adipiscing elit rhoncus donec nec, proin malesuada tristique sociosqu quam volutpat mollis aptent eros. Vestibulum elementum curabitur cubilia vitae dui tellus auctor congue, facilisis cursus luctus sapien commodo nibh aptent, habitasse ornare porttitor pulvinar himenaeos magna</p>		

<p>Page 6: Any applicable additional information about the jurisdiction and references for each case study</p>	Additional Information	
	<p>Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet consectetur adipiscing elit rhoncus donec nec, proin malesuada tristique sociosqu quam volutpat mollis aptent eros. Vestibulum elementum curabitur cubilia vitae dui tellus auctor congue, facilisis cursus luctus sapien commodo nibh aptent, habitasse ornare porttitor pulvinar himenaeos magna euismod. A rhoncus erat libero ridiculus accumsan habitant facilisi ultricies mollis fermentum dui, sem viverra lobortis pharetra</p>	
	References	
	<p>- Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet consectetur adipiscing elit rhoncus donec nec, proin malesuada tristique sociosqu quam volutpat mollis aptent eros. Vestibulum elementum curabitur cubilia vitae dui tellus auctor congue, facilisis cursus luctus sapien commodo nibh aptent, habitasse ornare porttitor pulvinar himenaeos magna euismod. - A rhoncus erat libero ridiculus accumsan habitant facilisi ultricies mollis fermentum dui, sem viverra lobortis pharetra porta orci sodales commodo elementum mauris, sapien cum venenatis augue proin montes vel congue parturient vestibulum</p>	

Menlo Park, California

Community Highlights

Community Description	Menlo Park is a city in San Mateo County within the San Francisco Bay Area of California. It has approximately 34,000 people and is home to corporate headquarters of numerous venture capital, private equity, financial services, law firms, and other professional service companies focusing on technology. Menlo Park is located at the heart of a regional transportation network, bounded by freeways and transit systems that connect the city to San Francisco and San Jose. Menlo Park has 28 public, private, and charter schools.	
Vision Zero Adoption	Vision Zero Target	
2016	2040	
Challenges	In Menlo Park, vulnerable populations (people walking and bicycling) are overrepresented in fatal and serious crashes, particularly people of color. Factors contributing to fatalities and serious injuries in Menlo Park include unsafe speeds, older pedestrians, younger bicyclists, downtown areas, impaired driving, and state-owned roadways ¹ . Many of the major roads are state highways—SR-82 (El Camino Real), SR-114 (Willow Road), SR-84 (Bayfront Expressway)—which have a significant portion of Menlo Park’s collisions and traffic, and require complex interactions between the city and the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans).	
Safe System Focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe users • Safe roadways • Safe vehicles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe speeds • Post-crash care • Planning and culture
Funding	Menlo Park stays up to date on relevant grant opportunities and proactively pursues funding for safety projects. The city’s Safety Action Plan includes a list of potential safety funding opportunities from federal, state, and local levels.	

Lessons Learned

- Implementing the Safe System approach can be motivated by strong community leaders. In Menlo Park, commitment to safety began with a group of organized parents that heavily advocate for road safety near schools.
- Starting from a community that was already committed to making safety a priority resulted in the city adopting a Vision Zero policy and development of a Vision Zero Action Plan¹ with strong stakeholder and community engagement.
- Holding meetings in both English and Spanish provided opportunity for various members of the community to actively participate in the process.
- Engaging stakeholders and elected officials in several meetings throughout the development of the Vision Zero Action Plan was key to get their perspectives and buy in.
- The strong relationship between the city staff, stakeholders, community groups, and elected officials led to the development of a Safety Action Plan that includes strategies to advance its safety goals and institutionalize safety practices in its policies, programs, and operations. The Safety Action Plan identifies responsible parties and timelines for all actions.
- Starting partnerships and creating a Vision Zero coalition are not enough to sustain the Safe System approach. The Vision Zero coalition should meet regularly to oversee and facilitate delivery of safety projects and programs, holding all parties accountable for their commitments to advancing safety.

Phase I: Getting Started

Leadership

- Traffic deaths and serious injuries cause tragic personal loss for family and friends and significantly impact the Menlo Park community. The impetus for changes can start with safety concerns that personally affect people. Menlo Park has a group of organized parents that heavily advocate for road safety near schools. Elected officials and key representatives who are involved in those efforts are also council members.
- Prior to Vision Zero efforts, Menlo Park had already prioritized safety through an established Safe Routes to School (SRTS)² program.
- Menlo Park's commitment to Vision Zero began with the adoption of a Vision Zero policy in the General Plan Circulation Element in 2016,³ which was incorporated into the 2020 Transportation Master Plan. Initially motivated by community groups, implementation of Vision Zero and the Safe System approach in Menlo Park was led by the city Public Works staff.

Ready Implementors

- One key element for implementation of Vision Zero in Menlo Park was their partnership with community-based organizations, particularly Climate Resilient Communities (CRC) and SRTS Task Force.

Action

- In 2024, Menlo Park adopted the Vision Zero Action Plan, which affirms their goal to eliminate all traffic fatalities and serious injuries by 2040. The city will do this through the creation of a Safe System.

Phase II: Building Support

Starting Simply

- Menlo Park's efforts to improve safety had been happening prior to Vision Zero efforts through a range of plans and infrastructure projects. Citywide and neighborhood plans established the foundation for safety planning in Menlo Park. The Vision Zero Action Plan builds on these past and ongoing efforts.
- The development of the Vision Zero Action Plan included critical input from stakeholders and the community. Further, the city also collaborated with the SRTS Task Force, a group that had started years before Vision Zero efforts, to gather input from the school community.

Understanding Others' Perspectives

- An interdisciplinary group of stakeholders provided input on the Vision Zero Action Plan through three virtual meetings. The stakeholder group included representatives from Menlo Park Planning Division, Menlo Park Police Department, Menlo Park Fire Protection District, SRTS, Menlo Park Complete Streets Commission, San Mateo County Transit District, and CRC.
 - The initial meeting introduced the stakeholders to Vision Zero and the Safe System approach, discussed the process of developing a Vision Zero Action Plan, and provided an overview of the current state of traffic safety in the city. The second meeting explored safety emphasis areas and candidate systemic safety strategies. The last meeting provided an opportunity for discussion of priority projects and strategies.
 - The stakeholder group provided key insights that ultimately informed the development of the Vision Zero Action Plan.
- In addition, Public Works staff held three meetings with the Menlo Park Complete Streets Commission, which provided an opportunity for elected and appointed officials to discuss Vision Zero, the current state of traffic safety in Menlo Park, and recommended safety strategies to accomplish the city's safety goals.

Engaging the Community, Celebrating, and Sharing Success

- Building on the Planning Division's ongoing work to develop the city's first Environmental Justice Element,⁴ the city engaged with CRC to help extend the outreach for the plan to engage populations in Menlo Park in historically underserved areas of the city (Belle Haven) and with groups that are more likely to experience collisions.
 - CRC led the development of one community listening session and four community workshops, two in English and two in Spanish, to gather input on the safety-related experiences of Belle Haven residents. To highlight the importance of holding meetings in two languages, the workshops in Spanish had higher attendance than the workshops in English.
 - All engagement sessions were held in-person.
 - The initial listening session and workshops discussed roadway safety conditions in Menlo Park. The final workshops gathered input from the meeting participants on how the city should prioritize safety.
 - Overall, the community agreed with the safety concerns presented by the city and supported the proposed Vision Zero recommendations.
 - While engaging residents from Belle Haven, the team encountered challenges to keep the team focused on road safety discussions due to the several other longstanding unaddressed issues in the neighborhood. Having a moderator that brought the group back to the focus of the meeting was important for a successful discussion.
- The city also conducted four targeted meetings with the Safe Routes to School Task Force and the senior community, where representatives asked questions about and commented on Vision Zero Action Plan development.
- In addition, a community pop-up event at a local farmers market was hosted by the city to inform residents of the Vision Zero Action Plan, where residents shared their safety concerns and desires.
- The City of Menlo Park continues to communicate Vision Zero progress and engage with the community. Examples of activities include advice from the Police Department on how to navigate the event of a crash,⁵ Complete Streets project updates,⁶ guides to teach pedestrian and bicyclist safety,⁷ safety tips for pedestrian safety month,⁸ bicyclist community events,⁹ and other activities.

Phase III: Institutionalizing the Safe System Approach

Building a Sustainable Coalition

- The strong relationship between the city, stakeholders, and community groups led to the development of a Safety Action Plan that includes 48 strategies to advance its safety goals and institutionalize safety practices in its policies, programs, and operations. The plan is organized into six core elements: safe users, safe roadways, safe vehicles, safe speeds, post-crash care, and planning and culture, and identifies responsible parties and anticipated timeline for every action.
 - The Menlo Park Safety Action Plan recognizes that, in addition to the five Safe System approach elements, planning and culture must be a core element of the plan. The planning and culture element includes leadership and commitment, meaningful engagement, data and analysis, funding, development review, and under resourced and underserved communities as key categories.
 - Menlo Park's Safety Action Plan establishes specific actions related to leadership and commitment, such as the creation of a Vision Zero coordinator and working group, and the development of Safe System training program for city staff.
- The responsible parties for strategies in the Safety Action Plan are:
 - Public Works—Transportation: Leads the overall implementation of the action plan
 - Public Works—Other Units (Engineering, Maintenance): Primarily accountable for coordination on specific actions within their areas of responsibility
 - Police—Traffic: This is the strong partner to the Public Works—Transportation group for enforcement and education actions; the city is leveraging an existing coordination meeting between transportation and traffic to review the action plan on a monthly basis
 - Police—Records: Oversees the city's collision and traffic stop records for tracking data and information on an ongoing basis
 - Other City Departments: A few actions involve coordination with Library and Community Services, Community Development, and others, but these tend to be focused

Securing Resources

- Menlo Park is committed to staying up to date on relevant grant opportunities and proactively pursuing grant funding for the most competitive projects. The Safety Action Plan describes responsible parties for funding actions, such as the following:
 - Project evaluation framework: Development of a project evaluation framework, which prioritizes funding based on fatal and serious injury crash reduction opportunities, especially for under-resourced and underserved populations
 - Grant funding: Proactive pursuit of grant funding to implement projects from the Vision Zero Action Plan
 - Safety in Capital Improvement Program projects: Institutionalization of safety considerations in all project types to systematically implement safety improvements through operations and maintenance efforts
- The Safety Action Plan lists several funding sources, including the following:
 - Federal: SS4A Grant Program; Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program; Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity; Highway Safety Improvement Program; Active Transportation Program; Metropolitan Transportation Commission's One Bay Area Grant Program
 - State: SB-1 Transportation Funding; Caltrans Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant Program; California Office of Traffic Safety; Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities
 - Local: City of Menlo Park Transportation Impact Fees; City/County Association of Governments of San Mateo County's Transportation Development Act, Article 3; City/County Association of Governments of San Mateo County's Transportation Fund for Clean Air; San Mateo County Transportation Authority's Measure A & W Programs

Phase IV: Sustaining the Safe System Approach

Use an Evidence-Based Approach

- The development of Menlo Park's Vision Zero Action Plan was informed by data-driven analysis. Using data on traffic collisions, the city identified its high collision corridors—approximately 20% of streets in Menlo Park that experience over 90% of serious injuries and fatalities. Based on this information a systemic, proactive approach to roadway safety resulted in a set of six emphasis areas that organized proposed safety solutions across the city's transportation system.
- Moving forward, Menlo Park's Safety Action Plan describes specific actions and responsible parties to continue data collection and analysis:
 - ACT Menlo Park process: Menlo Park has an online and mobile application called ACT Menlo Park, which allows users to report non-emergency issues from a smartphone, tablet, or desktop computer. One of the actions for the city is to review the ACT Menlo Park process for reporting resident concerns to ensure that it includes effective tracking of safety hazards and requests for safety interventions and establish a data-driven approach for evaluating the reports/requests.
 - Safety + asset data: Update and maintain the city's GIS inventory
 - Innovative data: Explore opportunities to use innovative data collection and analysis approaches, such as crowdsourcing or video detection data
 - Data dashboard: Create a data dashboard and update schedules to provide regular progress updates on Vision Zero implementation

Prepare for the Long Haul, Commit to the Safe System Approach, and Overcome Resistance to Change

- Safety implementation requires ongoing, long-term commitment from the city, with different areas of focus over different time horizons.
- Starting partnerships and creating a Vision Zero coalition are not enough to sustain the Safe System approach. The city's Vision Zero committee or task force made up of key stakeholders and community members meets regularly to oversee and facilitate delivery of safety projects and programs, holding all parties accountable for their commitments to advancing safety.
- Sustained support from key safety partners is essential and can be achieved through regular updates on action plan progress, consultation early in the implementation process to gather suggestions and feedback, and project bundling to align safety goals with other partner projects.
- Continued communication with stakeholders and community members in collaboration with the Complete Streets Commission builds trust and support for the city's safety goals through strategies such as communication across diverse channels, publication of factsheets on action plan progress, and regular public conversation on the topic of safety.

Additional Information

- Menlo Park plans to update the Vision Zero Action Plan every three to five years to assess whether new direction is needed as conditions within the city and the region change.
 - Successes and challenges:
 - **Building community support**
 - **Sailing while building the ship:** While the city was working on the Vision Zero Action Plan, they were dealing with a lot of requests to address specific issues and numerous ongoing projects. This became clearer as time went on, but the city did not stop implementing safety improvements while developing the plan. They stayed focused on the data (i.e., existing collisions or speeding patterns) to inform improvements when the Action Plan was not finalized.
 - **Pilot projects:** Menlo Park has started several pilot projects, including roadway reconfigurations on Middle Avenue and Middlefield Avenue, as well as intersection upgrades using bollards and striping at places such as Menlo Avenue/University Drive and Alma Street/Willow Road. Using pilot projects helped keep things moving while developing the Vision Zero Action Plan. One challenge was that tracking all the pilot projects takes a considerable amount of work and can turn a single project into multiple projects.
 - **Vision Zero Action Plan cannot be all things to all people:** Menlo Park is working to use Vision Zero as the primary lens to review requests from residents; however, it does not address every question that city staff gets. During development of the Action Plan, the city made it clear that certain questions would not have a definitive answer from the Action Plan, but the plan would help them focus on the challenges that were most important.
 - **Building trust:** Building community trust, especially in historically underserved areas, is key to implementing the Safe System approach equitably.
 - Coordination with an independent fire district: The independent fire district is a unique configuration. The Menlo Park Fire Protection District serves Menlo Park, East Palo Alto, Atherton, and some unincorporated communities. As a result, coordination on things such as curb radii and traffic calming can be more involved and more public than it might otherwise be.
- Additional resources for [Menlo Park, California](#)

References

- ¹ City of Menlo Park. (2024). *Vision Zero Action Plan*. Retrieved from <https://menlopark.gov/files/sharedassets/public/v/5/public-works/documents/transportation/transportation-projects/menlo-park-vision-zero-action-plan-final.pdf>
- ² City of Menlo Park. (n.d.) *Safe Routes to School*. Retrieved from <https://menlopark.gov/Government/Departments/Public-Works/Transportation-Division/City-Safe-Routes-to-School-program>
- ³ City of Menlo Park. (2016). *General Plan*. Retrieved from <https://menlopark.gov/files/sharedassets/public/v/1/community-development/documents/general-plan/circulation-element-adopted-20161129.pdf>
- ⁴ City of Menlo Park. (n.d.) *Environmental Justice Element*. Retrieved from <https://menlopark.gov/Government/Departments/Community-Development/Planning-Division/Comprehensive-planning/Housing-Element/2023-2031-Housing-Element-Update/Environmental-Justice-Element>
- ⁵ City of Menlo Park. (2024). *A Crash Aftermath Guide from the Menlo Park Police Department*. Retrieved from <https://menlopark.gov/News-articles/Public-safety/20240304A-Crash-Aftermath-Guide-from-the-Police-Department>
- ⁶ City of Menlo Park. (2024). *City Transportation Projects Updates*. Retrieved from <https://menlopark.gov/News-articles/Public-safety/20240207City-transportation-projects-updates>
- ⁷ City of Menlo Park. (2024). *A New Guide to Teach Pedestrian & Bicyclist Safety in Menlo Park*. Retrieved from <https://menlopark.gov/News-articles/Public-safety/20240207A%C2%A0new-guide-to-teach-pedestrian-bicyclist-safety-in-Menlo-Park>
- ⁸ City of Menlo Park. (2023). *Safety tips for Pedestrian Safety Month*. Retrieved from <https://menlopark.gov/News-articles/Public-safety/20230918Safety-tips-for-Pedestrian-Safety-Month>
- ⁹ City of Menlo Park. (2024). *Spring Bike Events Throughout San Mateo County*. Retrieved from <https://menlopark.gov/News-articles/City-news/20240501Spring-bike-events-throughout-San-Mateo-County>

McKenzie County, North Dakota

Community Highlights

Community Description	McKenzie County is located in western North Dakota, and is the largest county in the state by area. It has a population of approximately 15,000 residents. McKenzie County hosts a significant portion of the Bakken Formation, making it a crucial area for oil transportation and logistics. This has led to a substantial increase in road and rail traffic, fundamentally shaping the county's infrastructure and economic development.
Safe System Adoption	Safe System Goal
2021	Not Stated
Challenges	McKenzie County had the worst road fatality rate in the nation in 2014. As a leader in oil and gas production in North Dakota, McKenzie County attracts significant development and traffic associated with the energy industry. Together with Williams and Mountrail County (adjacent oil and gas-producing counties), the three counties accounted for 42% of truck involved fatal and injury crashes in the state of North Dakota from the period of 2015 to 2019. ¹
Safe System Focus	Safe roads (focus on roadway infrastructure improvements)
Funding	“McKenzie County Safety Projects” were awarded USDOT SS4A Implementation Grants in 2022. In addition, one-half of the state Highway Safety Improvement Program funds go to local system projects.

Lessons Learned

- Getting started and embracing the Safe System approach does not necessarily mean developing a Safe System comprehensive plan. Starting with small projects focused on the priorities of the municipality can result in successful safety improvements. McKenzie County started with a focus on systemic road infrastructure improvements to address the urgent safety concerns that made them the municipality with the highest fatality rates in the nation in 2014.
- Emergency responders and maintenance staff have an important role in the Safe System, particularly in smaller counties. Their field experience and engagement with several jurisdictions is needed for a better understanding of safety concerns.
- McKenzie County departments embraced Vision Zero and the Safe System approach following the North Dakota adoption of a Vision Zero initiative. Although there is no official McKenzie County Vision Zero or Safe System plan, county departments are engaged in sharing state Vision Zero efforts with their communities.
- North Dakota Department of Transportation (NDDOT) plays a very important role in guiding McKenzie County in institutionalizing and sustaining the Safe System approach. The state works closely with county representatives to gather their input and address their concerns in the state Vision Zero plan. NDDOT developed a North Dakota Local Road Safety Program to guide each region in North Dakota to compete for available safety funds.
- One successful example of the multi-department, multi-disciplinary, multi-agency collaboration for implementing Vision Zero and the Safe System approach in McKenzie County is that “McKenzie County Safety Projects” were awarded USDOT SS4A Implementation Grants in 2022.

Phase I: Getting Started

Leadership

- High traffic volumes associated with the demand generated by the energy industry in McKenzie County resulted in a high number of fatalities, particularly involving trucks. These safety concerns motivated the McKenzie County Public Works Administrator to take action.

Ready Implementors

- McKenzie County's Road & Bridge and Engineering Department led safety efforts, supported by the Emergency Management Department, Sheriff's Office, and NDDOT.

Action

- McKenzie County needed to quickly implement roadway infrastructure improvements to address safety concerns resulting from high truck traffic associated with the oil and gas industry. The county focused on systemic road infrastructure improvements and started by conducting a data-driven analysis to efficiently identify risk and assign safety strategies to all roadways and intersections across the county.
- McKenzie County's County Roadway Safety Plan was adopted in 2021 and was utilized as a starting point for specific safety improvements on the county highway system. With the plan, the county committed to making roads safer for the public and reducing fatalities and serious injury crashes on county roadways.

Phase II: Building Support

Starting Simply

- Although embracing the Safe System approach and committing to eliminating fatalities and serious injuries, McKenzie County did not have the ability to develop a comprehensive Safe System plan. Instead, the Road & Bridge and Engineering Department developed an initial plan (County Roadway Safety Plan) with focus on systemic road infrastructure improvements, supported by the Emergency Management Department, Sheriff's Office, and NDDOT. A review of crash data from 2015 to 2019¹ in McKenzie County revealed the following:
 - 81% of the severe crashes occurred on the rural local roadway system
 - 42% of the severe rural intersection crashes involved a right-angle crash
 - 77% of the severe rural non-intersection crashes were lane departure crashes with the majority (69%) being single-vehicle crashes
 - 53% of the rural severe non-intersection crashes occurred on a curve, while curves account for less than 11% of the rural roadways
- To start addressing the immediate road safety concerns, the County Roadway Safety Plan focused on addressing two critical emphasis areas: lane departure crashes and intersection crashes. Low-cost, high-impact safety strategies that could be applied systematically were a priority. Examples of safety improvements included enhanced edge lines, shoulder rumble strips, centerline rumble strips, chevrons, advanced curve warning signs, speed advisory signs, upgraded signs and markings, streetlights, and review of sight distance.

Understanding Others' Perspectives

- Emergency responders have an important role in the Safe System, particularly in smaller counties. Their field experience and engagement with several jurisdictions is needed for a better understanding of safety concerns. McKenzie County Emergency Management Department works closely with other county departments, jurisdictions within the county, and NDDOT to advance the Safe System approach. As an example, when oil spills and rollovers represented a safety concern, the Emergency Management team worked with NDDOT to investigate the issues. Speed limit reductions on McKenzie County roads were a result of this collaboration.
- Public Works Maintenance staff also bring important perspectives from the field. They were highly involved in the development of the County Roadway Safety Plan and continue to provide input to inform safety efforts.

Engaging the Community, Celebrating, and Sharing Success

- During the development of the County Roadway Safety Plan, McKenzie County engaged the community to better understand the safety concerns along county roadways. They developed a wiki-map, an interactive online map, that the public could use to place a pin on a map and add a comment about a roadway safety concern at that location.
- Local agencies, Upper Great Plains Transportation Institute (UGPTI)/North Dakota Local Technical Assistance Program, and industry partners were invited to provide comments as well.
- The county engages with the community through multiple sources: McKenzie County website, social media, newspaper, and radio. McKenzie County Emergency Management also interacts with the community through social media posts, several of them linked to NDDOT Vision Zero social media post plan.² Vision Zero updates, successes, and opportunities to participate in meetings and events are shared through this channel.
- Further, to extend the work of Vision Zero initiative to local municipalities, NDDOT has Vision Zero Outreach Coordinators.³ They serve as points of contact for community leaders and the public. Their focus is local events and programs.
- Support from NDDOT safety strategies is essential for a smaller county. While McKenzie County focuses on creating a safety plan to address roadway infrastructure concerns, it engages on behavioral safety strategies led by NDDOT including Seat Belts, Impaired Driving, Distracted Driving, Speed & Aggressive Driving, Young Drivers, Vulnerable Users, Aging Drivers, and Winter Driving.⁴ For example, as part of Vision Zero efforts, North Dakota moved from a secondary to primary seat belt law that went into effect in August 2023⁵ and allowed law enforcement to stop and issue a seat belt citation to someone for not wearing a seat belt.

- In addition to providing support with Vision Zero resources, NDDOT organizes a Vision Zero Partner Conference⁶ every year. The conference includes presentations, updates on Vision Zero progress, and an awards ceremony to recognize those who show outstanding service and dedication to reduce roadway fatalities and serious injuries in the state. The awards ceremony recognizes state and local law enforcement, transportation representatives, engineers, public health representatives, and other traffic safety agencies with the following awards:
 - Commemorative Coin: Law enforcement officers with commitment to enforcing and promoting traffic safety laws
 - Beyond the Traffic Stop: Law enforcement officers with outstanding investigative skills
 - Media Awards: Reporters/news organizations that have been fair, balanced, and informative in reporting transportation/traffic-related issues.
 - Child Passenger Safety Technician Awards: Technicians and/or instructors for their commitment to child passenger safety.
 - Vision Zero School of the Year Award: Recognizes a school for its dedication establishing a culture of personal responsibility where motor vehicle fatalities are viewed as preventable.
 - Outreach Awards: Individuals and/or organizations with remarkable outreach and education to support Vision Zero.
 - Honor Roll Awards: Outstanding service to the community, information technology, safety, public affairs, and/or consumer education programs.
 - Infrastructure Individual of the Year Award: Individual that improves infrastructure safety to roadways, bridges, or bicyclists and pedestrians.
 - Infrastructure Project of the Year: Project that improves infrastructure safety for roadways, bridges, or bicyclists and pedestrians.
 - Appreciation Awards: Individuals and/or organizations who actively work to support Vision Zero.
 - DRE Officer of the Year: DRE officer who excels in conducting drug evaluations and provides educational awareness about the dangers of drug use and drugged driving.
 - Traffic Safety Officer of the Year: Officer who has displayed effort for traffic safety through enforcement, community education, and training

Phase III: Institutionalizing the Safe System Approach

Building a Sustainable Coalition

- Staff rotation can be a concern, especially in smaller municipalities. Documentation of safety efforts in McKenzie County (e.g., results of systemic safety analysis, safety plans, proposed countermeasures, recommended next steps) are essential for a successful safety coalition.
- Staff turnover from different local municipalities within the county can also be a concern for sustaining a safety coalition. McKenzie County Emergency Management staff started coordinating directly with city/town mayors to ensure consistency in safety efforts.

Securing Resources

- McKenzie County's County Roadway Safety Plan led to the development of the 2022–2028 McKenzie County Highway Safety Improvement Capital Plan. Those documents served as the basis for the county's application to USDOT's SS4A program. "McKenzie County Safety Projects" were awarded SS4A Implementation Grants in 2022. As a continued effort to address critical safety concerns, the SS4A grants will focus on systemic safety improvements that address rural safety problems including right-angle intersection crashes, lane departures, and non-intersection crashes along a curve. Proposed improvements include enhanced pavement markings (e.g. edge lines), signing improvements (e.g., advanced curve warnings, upgraded chevrons), shoulder and centerline rumble strips, streetlights, and a separated bicycle and pedestrian path.
- In addition, NDDOT's Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP) dedicates at least one-half of the Highway Safety Improvement Program funds to local projects.

Phase IV: Sustaining the Safe System Approach

Use an Evidence-Based Approach

- The McKenzie County Roadway Safety Plan was based on detailed analysis of crash data to identify the root cause issues of fatal (K) and severe injury (A) crashes. In addition, data from the community engagement process resulted in 326 responses, which were used to enhance the safety analysis process by flagging locations that had been identified with a safety concern.
- Safety data is constantly obtained from the state to guide decisions in the county. Data sources include NDDOT, North Dakota Department of Health (NDDoH), North Dakota Department of Public Instruction, North Dakota Department of Human Services, North Dakota State Highway Patrol (NDHP), UGPTI, North Dakota Office of Attorney General State Toxicology Laboratory, and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

Prepare for the Long Haul, Commit to the Safe System Approach, Overcome Resistance to Change

- Embracing Vision Zero and the Safe System approach in McKenzie County is a result of NDDOT's Vision Zero initiative:
 - In January 2018, NDDOT, NDHP, and NDDoH, with support from the North Dakota Governor's Office, launched the Vision Zero initiative to reduce motor vehicle crash fatalities and serious injuries in North Dakota to zero. North Dakota's SHSP requirements are met through the administration of North Dakota's Vision Zero initiative.
 - The core of the Vision Zero Leadership Structure includes state and local stakeholders, including local education institutions and community representatives, local enforcement, local engineering stakeholders, local public health and human services staff, local elected officials, local road maintenance staff, local traffic safety advocacy groups, and local transportation planning professionals.
 - There were five regional input meetings during the development of the 2024 Vision Zero plan, four were in-person and one was virtual for those who were not able to attend in-person. Almost 200 stakeholders participated in-person or virtually to share their traffic safety experiences, review traffic safety data, identify Priority Emphasis Areas, and discuss potential implementation strategies.
 - The 2024 Vision Zero Plan was developed in coordination with the North Dakota Local Road Safety Program (LRSP), both of which are based on the Safe System approach. NDDOT adopts the LRSP strategy, recognizing that most local road jurisdictions have limited institutional capacity and resources for robust traffic safety planning. The LRSP contents are the result of a data-driven process, with a goal to reduce severe crashes by documenting at-risk locations, identifying effective low-cost safety improvement strategies, and better positioning each region in North Dakota to compete for available safety funds. The list of specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-bound action items from the LRSP are used to track progress for implementing the LRSP and guide advancement of the Safe System approach in North Dakota's local jurisdictions, including McKenzie County.

Additional Information

- Based on the experience from McKenzie County, advice for similar agencies working to implement the Safe System approach is summarized below:
 - Work closely with your state Department of Transportation. They can provide informational resources and funding opportunities for safety improvements.
 - Consider involvement from broad and diverse partners. North Dakota's economy prompted NDDOT to assure participation from the agriculture and oil industries during the development of the Vision Zero strategy.
 - Safety investments should be informed by data, and over-represented populations such as Native American communities need to be included in the process.
- Additional resources for [McKenzie County, North Dakota](#)

References

- ¹ McKenzie County. (2021). *McKenzie County Roadway Safety Plan*.
- ² North Dakota Department of Transportation. (2024). *North Dakota Department of Transportation Organic Social Media Post Plan*. Retrieved from <https://visionzero.nd.gov/uploads/7/January2024OrganicSocialPostPlan.pdf>
- ³ North Dakota State Government. (n.d.) *Vision Zero Outreach Coordinators*. Retrieved from <https://visionzero.nd.gov/partners/regionalcoordinators/>
- ⁴ North Dakota State Government. (n.d.) *Vision Zero Strategies*. Retrieved from <https://visionzero.nd.gov/strategies/>
- ⁵ North Dakota State Government. (n.d.) *Primary Seat Belt Law*. Retrieved from <https://visionzero.nd.gov/strategies/OccupantProtection/Law/>
- ⁶ North Dakota Department of Transportation. (n.d.) *Vision Zero Partner Conference*. Retrieved from <https://visionzerond.com/>

West Hartford, Connecticut

Community Highlights

Community Description	West Hartford, Connecticut, has a population of around 64,000 people. This suburban town is known for its vibrant center that combines retail and residential spaces uniquely, making it a popular local destination. West Hartford features a well-planned road network with major routes such as Interstate 84 and Route 44 facilitating easy access to neighboring cities and attractions. The town also has numerous public transportation options, including bus, bus rapid transit, and commuter rail.	
Vision Zero Adoption	Vision Zero Target	
2023	2033	
Challenges	From 2018 to 2022, the number of fatal and serious crashes in West Hartford more than doubled, and more than half of the fatal and serious injury crashes occurred on the same 17 miles of roadway. ¹	
Safe System Focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety practices and policies • Safe design • Safety culture • Safety data 	
Funding	The Vision Zero Action Plan includes a comprehensive list of projects to be prioritized and the respective funding sources (or where additional funding, staffing, or legislative support is needed). In 2023, the Town of West Hartford was awarded USDOT SS4A grants to “Conduct Demonstration or Other Supplemental Planning Activities” for their Speed Management Pilot Program. The town is pursuing a 2024 SS4A grant applying actions from its Vision Zero Plan.	

Lessons Learned

- If a formal plan is not in place yet, it is important to start somewhere. The urgency in addressing safety concerns in West Hartford led to the adoption of Vision Zero prior to the development of an Action Plan.
- Taking advantage of existing plans and policies related to Vision Zero helps build the foundation for a Vision Zero Action Plan. Reviewing Vision Zero plans from peer communities is also very helpful to build the framework of a new plan.
- Getting started and planning ahead can be key for success when “right place, right time” funding opportunities become available.
- Although the Action Plan is finalized, members of the Vision Zero Task Force from the town and community will continue meeting with a Vision Zero Advisory Committee to review and comment on the town’s efforts to complete the Action Plan’s recommendations.
- It takes time to implement the Safe System approach and reach the goal of eliminating road fatalities and serious injuries. However, it is important to get the community on board and explain how the Safe System approach can have meaningful impacts. Seeing change, especially in the first year of implementation of a Vision Zero Action Plan, is critical for the community to start seeing real physical changes. Quick build improvements are examples of implementing change visible to the community as you build the foundation of a Safe System.

Phase I: Getting Started

Leadership

- The Town of West Hartford had experienced an upward trend in fatal and serious injury crashes. In December 2022, West Hartford was mourning the recent loss of two pedestrians struck by vehicles in the days leading up to the holiday. The community protested for safer streets where a pedestrian was killed in a hit and run crash. On Christmas Day, a violent head-on crash took the lives of three West Hartford residents, which was a tipping point for town and police officials. That day, the mayor announced the creation of a Vision Zero Initiative in West Hartford.
- Led by the Town Manager and the Director of Community Development, town staff proposed a Vision Zero Initiative in Support of Safe, Health and Equitable Mobility with the goal of eliminating fatalities and severe injuries on West Hartford streets by 2033.
- In January 2023, the Town Council unanimously adopted the proposed Vision Zero Initiative.²

Ready Implementors

- Following adoption of the Vision Zero Initiative, the mayor appointed a Vision Zero Task Force to produce a Vision Zero Action Plan.
- The Task Force included the Town Manager, Director of Community Development, police, fire, engineering, public relations, public works, and the new town Office of Equity Advancement. The Task Force also had several volunteer residents with varying backgrounds including people with expertise in planning, media, disability rights, high school students, bicycle and pedestrian advocates, public health, and a behavioral specialist.

Action

- In March 2023, the town formed Vision Zero subcommittees to address the four key themes: practices and policies, safe design, culture, and data. Each subcommittee had a town liaison.
- In May 2023, the town selected a consultant team to help develop the Vision Zero Action Plan.
- The Vision Zero Action Plan was finalized and approved in January 2024.¹

Phase II: Building Support

Starting Simply

- There was urgency to address safety concerns in West Hartford with the upward trend in fatal and serious injury crashes. Committing to Vision Zero was the first step, even though the process to accomplish the goal of eliminating fatalities and severe injuries on West Hartford streets was not developed yet.
- West Hartford already had other plans that addressed mobility challenges, such as a Complete Streets Policy and Annual Reports,³ Maintenance and Protection of Traffic Policy,⁴ Plan of Conservation & Development,⁵ West Hartford Center Infrastructure Master Plan,⁶ Bicycle Facilities Plan⁷, Bicycle Friendly Community Application,⁸ Neighborhood Street Traffic Calming Program,⁹ and Sidewalk Policy,¹⁰ as well as a few transit and road diet studies.
- Instead of starting from scratch, the Vision Zero Task Force identified existing policies related to Vision Zero, which served as the foundation for the development of recommendations specific to Vision Zero.
- In addition, to develop a framework of the Action Plan, the Vision Zero Task Force reviewed plans from peer communities.
- During the development of the Vision Zero Action Plan, the Task Force identified numerous safety concerns and proposed that each should be evaluated individually. This caused town staff to become overwhelmed and slowed implementation plans. To address this issue, a simpler, more focused approach that would utilize Road Safety Audits (RSAs) and smaller roadway assessments was included in the Action Plan.

- RSAs are an important way to assess safety conditions. The RSA team, which included town staff, community stakeholders, and a consultant team, selected the road segment along Park Road from Quaker Lane South to Prospect Avenue¹¹ to be the first location for a comprehensive RSA. Moving forward, although not having staff resources to conduct RSAs frequently, town staff committed to conduct two RSAs per year using a template developed by the consultant team.

Understanding Others' Perspectives

- To create a transportation system and culture that supports safe, enjoyable mobility options for all, especially the most vulnerable members of the community who experience disproportionate injury and death on roadways, the town has adopted Safe System approach principles.
- The different perspectives of the Vision Zero Task Force made sure to add layers of interest and expertise to assist with the partnerships of the Safe System approach.
 - During the development of the Vision Zero Action Plan, discussions strived for agreement, but consensus was not needed to move forward.
 - For the purposes of the Vision Zero Task Force, “consensus” was defined as the point where all members agreed on the best option for the group even if it was not each member’s personal favorite.
 - During the meetings, Task Force members used green, yellow, and red cards to indicate stance of support, neutral, or object. It is important to note that the consultant team did not provide feedback, just collected it. They did not steer the Task Force’s decisions.
 - If consensus could not be reached, then 2/3 of Task Force members present must have agreed on a decision for it to be considered a group recommendation. Any members who did not support the recommendation could prepare a separate written statement. All opinions were part of the meeting summary.

Engaging the Community, Celebrating, and Sharing Success

- Public engagement was a key element during the development of the Vision Zero Action Plan, focused on the following:
 - Raise awareness of Vision Zero and the town’s approach to traffic safety, building the foundation of a positive safety culture
 - Gather input from the community regarding traffic safety issues
 - Build consensus around recommendations and momentum to implement through shared responsibility; an important element was that the Vision Zero Task Force included a mix of Town of West Hartford staff and residents, people who are both impacted by and responsible for implementing Vision Zero policies and actions, which gave each member ownership of actions
- During the development of the Action Plan, the following strategies were used to engage the community:
 - A multilingual public survey
 - A web map where participants could identify locations where they felt safe, unsafe, or have an idea related to roadway safety
 - Two public meetings, including a final meeting to present the recommendations and solicit feedback
- The project team developed digital resources introducing the Vision Zero Action Plan and opportunities for community input. The main channels for distributing marketing materials were email and social media.
- The Town also developed a Vision Zero webpage² that includes information about the town’s Vision Zero Initiative, schedule to develop the Action Plan, as well as the town’s Vision Zero meeting agendas, presentations, and minutes.
- Local media attended public meetings and published articles¹² about the project.

Phase III: Institutionalizing the Safe System Approach

Building a Sustainable Coalition

- The Vision Zero Action Plan was developed as a roadmap to achieve zero roadway fatalities and serious injuries in West Hartford by 2033. It identifies a list of over 70 projects, mostly quick builds, to be completed by 2025. The Vision Zero Action Plan incorporates Vision Zero Focus Areas (VZFAs) to strategically determine where improvements in the street network are most needed. These areas are outlined in two distinct maps: VZFA Streets—which targets major roads—and VZFA Neighborhoods—which focuses on residential streets within neighborhoods. The prioritization of these areas is based on their presence on the High-Injury Network, areas that have garnered significant public input via the Webmap Survey, and locations within Transportation Equity Zones.
- The Vision Zero Task Force was tasked with developing the Action Plan from May 2023 through January 2024 through the following activities:
 - Act as a liaison to organizations and agencies, sharing information and soliciting feedback to inform the Action Plan
 - Identify actions specific to members' organizations or agencies
 - Conduct community engagement
 - Develop the vision, goals, policy recommendations, actions, performance measures, and recommendations to get to zero
 - Continue as ongoing champions for implementation of the Action Plan actions within Task Force members' organizations or agencies, as applicable
 - Attend 9 out of 12 meetings from May 2023 through January 2024
- A subgroup of the Vision Zero Task Force, the Town Project Management Team (PMT) continuously ensured populations most impacted by traffic crashes (i.e. youth, seniors, transit-dependent) and key governmental entities were involved in the development of the Action Plan. The PMT served as facilitator of public meetings and provided opportunities for brief public comment or announcements relating to agenda items at the end of each meeting.
- Task Force members were always encouraged to interact and share outside of formal Task Force meetings.
- Although the Action Plan is finalized, the coalition will continue to work together and will continue the collaboration, coordination, and commitment to achieve the goal of eliminating fatal and severe injury crashes on West Hartford's roadways by 2033. Members of the Vision Zero Task Force from the town government and the community will continue meeting with the Vision Zero Advisory Committee, which will act as a steering committee to review and comment on the town's efforts to complete the Action Plan's recommendations.
- Continuous collaboration with the Capital Region Council of Governments and the Connecticut Department of Transportation are also important aspects of a sustainable coalition in West Hartford.

Securing Resources

- Planning ahead can be key for success when “right place, right time” funding opportunities become available.
- The Vision Zero Action Plan recommended camera enforcement and demonstrated that there were several areas where fatal (K) or severe injury (A) crashes occurred that could have been prevented with speed reduction.
- A few weeks prior to the USDOT SS4A grant solicitation deadline, the State of Connecticut passed legislation allowing camera enforcement.
- The town spent about three weeks working with its Vision Zero consultant to develop a SS4A grant application. Support from the Capital Region Council of Governments was important during the development of the SS4A grant application.
- In 2023, the Town of West Hartford was awarded SS4A grants to “Conduct Demonstration or Other Supplemental Planning Activities” for their Speed Management Pilot Program. The grant covers installation of cameras and additional staff needed to manage the program.
- The Town is pursuing a 2024 SS4A grant applying actions from its Vision Zero Plan.

Phase IV: Sustaining the Safe System Approach

Use an Evidence-Based Approach

- Developed by community and agency leaders and led by a team of consultants, the Vision Zero Action Plan is data-driven, human-inspired, bold, innovative, and action-oriented. Crash data from Connecticut’s Statewide Data Repository was used to inform strategies and actions in the Action Plan.
- In addition, the Action Plan includes recommendations on how West Hartford will improve and diversify its data sources, collection strategies, analysis, and data reporting to make better decisions about roadway safety.
- For the speed management pilot program, the Office of the State Traffic Administration will provide guidance to the town regarding determination of appropriate locations for the camera installation. Need for camera deployment must be demonstrated based on data.
- Transparency is a key element of West Hartford Vision Zero efforts. The Town developed a Vision Zero Crash Dashboard¹³ to display locations of crashes and relevant statistics to the public.

Prepare for the Long Haul

- Since the early stages of Vision Zero adoption in West Hartford, the mayor said “nobody wants this implementation done more than the elected officials” and “I wanted things done tomorrow.” The mayor followed with “it’s systemic... there’s a big picture.”¹⁴ The Vision Zero Task Force worked with the understanding that the process for eliminating roadway fatalities and serious injuries takes time since the town does not control all of the roads, data needs to be provided, the community needs to be engaged, funding needs to be secured, and actions need to be implemented.
- The Vision Zero Action Plan is intended to be a living document and may change over time as the town implements the actions. The Annual Report may steer decision making for changes to the Action Plan.

Commit to the Safe System Approach

- The Vision Zero Action Plan was developed with the Safe System approach as a foundation. The Task Force focused on a holistic solution that does not seek to prevent all collisions, but rather serious and fatal crashes. It assumes people will not have perfect behavior, and it will be proactive about it. Members of the Vision Zero Task Force mentioned that the Vision Zero Initiative in West Hartford follows the data, “not just the loudest and most powerful voices” and that creating plans based only on the loudest voices, “traditionally that has not resulted in a reduction of fatalities and serious injuries.”

Overcome Resistance to Change

- Although most West Hartford residents were happy with the Vision Zero Action Plan recommendations, there was frustration from a few community members. Many residents had the perception that the town can change roadways quickly and eliminate roadway fatalities and serious injuries quickly.
- The final planned Vision Zero Task Force meeting occurred two days after a pedestrian was fatally hit by a car in West Hartford. Since the community had been involved in the development of the Action Plan for the previous year, they found it unacceptable that someone was still dying on the town’s roads. The meeting was filled with residents’ frustration about the town’s “inaction.”
- To address these concerns, West Hartford activated one element of the Vision Zero Action Plan for implementation within the first year: planned quick builds, mostly related to crash response, speeding, and bicycle or pedestrian issues. The Town convened a crash response team to examine the factors involved in any serious incident to prevent a recurrence. The crash response team of representatives from various town departments—including police, fire, engineering, public works, and public relations—met the week following the fatal crash to discuss immediate quick-build improvements.

Additional Resources

- The town just adopted their Vision Zero Action Plan, and they know there is a lot of work ahead. Town staff is excited about making positive changes and works well together. Their goal is to improve safety through a transparent process, always engaging the community. Although the SS4A grants will ensure the first months of the Speed Management Pilot Program are funded, the long-term goal is to use revenue from the program to make it self-sustained.
- The town hired a new full-time Civil Engineer to assist with planning and implementation of the Plan's Engineering Actions.
- Additional resources for [West Hartford, Connecticut](#)

References

- ¹ Town of West Hartford. (2024). *West Hartford Vision Zero Plan 2024*. Retrieved from https://resources.finalseite.net/images/v1711987172/westhartfordctgov/cscftehvm10sesgz8cp/WHVZActionPlan_FIN_AL.pdf
- ² Town of West Hartford. (2023). *Town of West Hartford Vision Zero Initiative*. Retrieved from <https://www.westhartfordct.gov/town-departments/engineering/visionzero>
- ³ Town of West Hartford. (2015). *West Hartford Complete Streets Policy*. Retrieved from <https://www.westhartfordct.gov/town-departments/planning-zoning/complete-streets>
- ⁴ Town of West Hartford. (2022). *Maintenance and Protection of Traffic Policy*. Retrieved from <https://www.westhartfordct.gov/town-departments/engineering/resources>
- ⁵ Town of West Hartford. (2020). *Plan of Conservation & Development*. Retrieved from <https://www.westhartfordct.gov/town-departments/planning-zoning/plan-of-conservation-development>
- ⁶ Town of West Hartford. (2022). *West Hartford Center Infrastructure Master Plan*. Retrieved from <https://www.westhartfordct.gov/town-departments/planning-zoning/west-hartford-center-infrastructure-master-plan>
- ⁷ Town of West Hartford. (2016). *Bicycle Facilities Plan*. Retrieved from <https://resources.finalseite.net/images/v1581354327/westhartfordctgov/v2y6gxnfp8tx9rzjd2zt/Bicycle-Facilities-Plan.pdf>
- ⁸ Town of West Hartford. (n.d.) *West Hartford Bicycling*. Retrieved from <https://www.westhartfordct.gov/visit-us/bicycling>
- ⁹ Town of West Hartford. (2022). *Neighborhood Street Traffic Calming Program*. Retrieved from <https://www.westhartfordct.gov/town-departments/engineering/transportation/neighborhood-street-traffic-calming-program>
- ¹⁰ Town of West Hartford. (n.d.) *West Hartford Sidewalks*. Retrieved from <https://www.westhartfordct.gov/town-departments/engineering/transportation/sidewalks>
- ¹¹ Town of West Hartford. (2023). *Park Road – Road Safety Audit*. Retrieved from <https://resources.finalseite.net/images/v1708439127/westhartfordctgov/nfwng4tecaq8fy0lf9oe/ParkRoad-RoadSafetyAudit.pdf>
- ¹² NBC Connecticut. (2023). *First draft of West Hartford Vision Zero action plan out for public input*. Retrieved from <https://www.nbcconnecticut.com/news/local/first-draft-of-west-hartford-vision-zero-action-plan-out-for-public-input/3166163/>
- ¹³ Town of West Hartford. (n.d.) *West Hartford Vision Zero Crash Dashboard*. Retrieved from <https://westhartford.maps.arcgis.com/apps/dashboards/687d096215ef4dd0b4dcf2e09cb062fc>
- ¹⁴ We-Ha.com. (2024). *West Hartford's Vision Zero Action Plan Nearly Ready for Implementation, Including Immediate Changes*. Retrieved from <https://we-ha.com/west-hartfords-vision-zero-action-plan-nearly-ready-for-implementation-including-immediate-changes/>

Madison, Wisconsin

Community Highlights

Community Description	Madison is the capital city of Wisconsin, located in the south-central part of the state. It has a population of approximately 269,000 residents. Madison has the highest number of parks and playgrounds per capita among the top 100 U.S. cities and is distinguished by its extensive network of bike trails. It is one of only five communities to earn a "Platinum Bicycle Friendly Community" rating ¹ from the League of American Bicyclists, highlighting its commitment to cycling infrastructure and culture.	
Vision Zero Adoption:	Vision Zero Target:	
2020	2035	
Challenges	Increase in fatalities due to the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly in low-income communities and communities of color; disparities in traffic enforcement citations.	
Safe System Focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement speed management to realize safer speeds • Address top-risk locations and populations • Take an active role to affect change in vehicle design, features, and use • Accelerate research and adoption of technology; double down on what works • Implement new approaches to public education and awareness 	
Funding	Local budget development is a collaborative, multi-step process that involves city agencies, the Finance Committee, and Common Council. In 2022, their "Forward to Vision Zero – Madison" submission was awarded supplemental planning grants and in 2023, their "Forward to Vision Zero – Madison, Safe System for Vulnerable Roadway Users" were awarded USDOT SS4A Implementation Grants.	

Lessons Learned

- Strong leadership from elected officials was critical for the implementation of the Safe System approach in Madison. The city committed to Vision Zero in 2020.
- The city has a multi-disciplinary, multi-department Vision Zero Steering Team, which includes 10 city departments, and 45 additional supporting stakeholders. The Vision Zero Steering Team ensures that stakeholders understand their role, do not get overwhelmed, and recommit to safety each day.
- With strong community engagement and a data-driven/equity-centered outreach, the community continues to embrace the Safe System approach and agrees that increasing safety is most important, even if travel is slightly slower or less convenient.
- Getting buy-in from staff at all levels is important for the sustained success of Vision Zero. With collaborative leadership from key staff at the Vision Zero Steering Team, the city is institutionalizing the Vision Zero philosophy and the Safe System approach in the design and operations of transportation infrastructures.
- In the future, the city would like to expand its cooperation with Public Health Madison & Dane County for more comprehensive safety data collection and analysis. Further, the city will strengthen partnerships with the industry to benefit from technology innovation, such as proactive safety assessment through video analytics, smartphones, and connected vehicles to identify locations for potential improvements based on near-misses and speeding data.

Phase I: Getting Started

Leadership

- The Vision Zero initiative started in 2020 after Common Council members and the mayor, who are passionate about transportation safety, were elected. City leadership are strong advocates and supporters of the Safe System approach, with some of them having experienced personal tragedy from traffic fatalities.
 - “We must prioritize safety over speed. We must prioritize safety over shaving a few minutes off our commute. We’re talking about the deaths of someone’s mother or father, someone’s child, someone’s friend.” – Mayor Satya Rhodes-Conway (from Madison Vision Zero action plan)²
- Other factors that motivated Vision Zero and Safe System approach implementation in Madison included the increased number of traffic fatalities due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the high anticipated population growth between 2010 and 2040 as the fastest growing region in the State of Wisconsin (which would result in more traffic conflicts on Madison’s roads).

Ready Implementors

- Madison reaffirmed the city’s commitment to Complete Streets in 2009³ and had a history of designing streets to accommodate all modes of travel. For example, the city’s first parking protected bike lane was built along South Bassett Street in 2019.⁴
- At the direction of the mayor and Council the Complete Green Streets Initiative had the following goals:
 - City of Madison’s Complete Green Streets Initiative was tasked to lead decision processes that were used to determine what actions should be taken in the construction and reconstruction of city streets.
 - Led by the Department of Transportation, stakeholders initially involved in the Complete Green Streets Initiative included engineers, planners, policymakers, law enforcement, emergency response teams, public health professionals, and community leaders. The Initiative resulted in the development of a Complete Green Streets Guide.⁵
 - The Complete Streets Initiative was essential to address the controversial topic of allocation of street space in Madison. For example, extension of the original parking protected bike lane along South Bassett Street was proposed, along with the construction of a protected intersection at West Washington Avenue. The project would require removal of parking spaces to provide adequate sight distance of cyclists for automobiles. With public outreach, the Complete Green Streets Initiative team conveyed the message that spending a few more minutes looking for parking could make a difference between life and death for people biking. The project was ultimately approved and built in 2021.⁶

Action

- In 2020, the Madison Common Council adopted Madison’s Vision Zero goal and the Vision Zero staff team was tasked with developing a Vision Zero Action Plan, which incorporates a Safe System approach.
- Two years of collaboration between a Vision Zero Steering Team, a multi-disciplinary Stakeholder Task Force, and community members resulted in the final 2020–2035 Vision Zero Action Plan.

Phase II: Building Support

Starting Simply

- The city believes that it is necessary to move beyond traditional understandings of our transportation system, typically led by transportation planners and engineers, and expand the list to all of those with responsibility within Safe Systems.
- At the direction of the mayor's office, a Vision Zero Steering Team was created, and initially included the following city departments: Mayor's Office, Traffic Engineering, Transportation, Madison Police Department, Engineering, Fleet Services, Metro Transit, and Public Health Madison & Dane County, with Traffic Engineering leading the initiative.
 - Later, staff from the Finance Department and Neighborhood Resource Teams joined the Vision Zero Steering Team.
 - The list of additional city departments and government agencies, as well as other city committees and organizations partnering on Vision Zero is extensive.⁷
- The city focuses on the following Safe System factors to achieve the goal of zero fatalities and severe injuries:
 - Safe Streets: Speed reduction, improvements on High-Injury Network Streets, pedestrian and bicyclist network connectivity, street lighting
 - Safe People: Expand alternatives to driving, build a traffic safety culture, education and outreach
 - Safe Vehicles: Promote vehicle safety technologies, provide defensive driving training
 - Safety Data: Improve data collection, transparency, and communication; use data to inform equitable decision making
 - Safety Focused Enforcement: Focus on times and locations with the greatest impact on serious injury crashes, limit pretextual stops, prioritize enforcement of speeding and DIU, implementing training for officers regarding traffic safety and implicit bias

Understanding Others' Perspectives

- Some partners have bigger priorities at certain times. For example, the public health partners were focused on COVID-19 efforts during the pandemic. Vision Zero Madison understood their limitations during that time and focused on simple, practical messaging and objectives of how they could be involved during that time. This was important to retain these partners. Public health partners were part of the Vision Zero Steering Team and provided input to strategies in the action plan, such as committing to collaborating with the Traffic Engineering Department to improve safety data.

Engaging the Community

- "Accountability" is one of Madison Vision Zero's principles. The city has clear goals and objectives and engages the community in outreach and collaboration to make Vision Zero a success.
- Crash data only tells part of the story. Engaging with the community is an opportunity to learn about residents' lived experience with transportation safety and the realities of mobility in and around Madison.
- Engagement cannot be meaningful without targeted engagement to historically underrepresented communities, particularly communities of color.
- During the development of the Vision Zero Action Plan, the city had an engagement project called "[Let's Talk Streets](#)," which integrated community voices in the design and function of city streets. "Let's Talk Streets" included community listening sessions to understand their likes, dislikes, and what they would change about the streets of Madison. Community surveys and small group workshops were then convened to ensure the community agreed with the initial thoughts resulting from the listening sessions. This phase also included focused engagement in collaboration with a grocery store. At the end of these community outreach efforts based on discussing Vision Zero and Safe System approach, most community members agreed that increasing safety is most important, even if travel is slightly slower or less convenient.
- After adoption of the Vision Zero Action Plan, the city continued to engage the community through various community events such as "[Parks Alive!](#)" Also, often times, when a location is identified for review due to safety concerns, the city conducts neighborhood meetings to gather community input about what is needed and ensures project decisions are rooted in shared community values.

- Other examples of community engagement activities in Madison include:
 - World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims: Press conference organized by the Mayor’s Office, Traffic Engineering, and the Transportation Department in partnership with community stakeholders to honor victims, raise awareness of the impact of traffic deaths in Madison, and garner support for traffic safety measures.
 - Be Bright at Night Campaign: Promotes cyclist safety by distributing lights and reflective materials through partnerships between the City of Madison Traffic Engineering, other agencies, and volunteers, including direct interactions on the street to install lights on bicycles.
 - You are Loved Campaign: Launched over Valentine’s Day to enhance traffic safety awareness and promote safe travel practices among pedestrians, bicyclists, and drivers.
 - Yield to Pedestrian Campaign: Educates all crosswalk users, including bikers, pedestrians, and drivers, about their rights and responsibilities, emphasizing the importance of drivers yielding to pedestrians, particularly when turning.
 - Safe Routes to School—Walk/Bike Education and Encouragement: Collaboration with community partners to provide bicycle and pedestrian safety education to students and teachers, including specific curricula and activities such as the Walking School Bus, supporting an increase in interest post-pandemic.

Celebrating and Sharing Success

- The city shares successes due to safety improvements in their Vision Zero quarterly newsletter, citywide blog posts, and website news releases. In addition, they take advantage of exciting city and community events to talk about Vision Zero efforts. One example is the Vision Zero Holiday Tree.

Phase III: Institutionalizing the Safe System Approach

Building a Sustainable Approach

- The city is currently moving from adoption to institutionalization of the Safe System approach, so that progress does not become contingent on one administration. The main coalition, the Vision Zero Steering Team, includes 10 city departments: Mayor’s Office, Madison Department of Transportation, Traffic Engineering, Engineering, Fleet Services, Metro Transit, Public Health Madison & Dane County, Finance, Neighborhood Resource Teams, and Madison Police Department. The Traffic Engineering Division has been leading the efforts and was able to secure staff buy-ins and is institutionalizing the Vision Zero philosophy and the Safe System approach in its design and operations of the city’s transportation systems.
- The city coordinates safety efforts with the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT). In the 2023–2023 SHSP,⁸ WisDOT adopted the Safe System approach and required each county in the state to have a community-level, multi-disciplinary traffic safety commission. The local traffic safety commission should include representatives from WisDOT, law enforcement, education, medical field, legal community, board supervisors, civic leaders, safety advocates, local news, a highway safety coordinator, and a highway commissioner. The traffic safety commission must meet at least quarterly and review crash data and other safety-related matters. Based on data and citizens’ input, the traffic safety commission makes recommendations to WisDOT.

Securing Resources

- The City of Madison has a capital budget and an operating budget.⁹ The operating budget funds daily operations, community-based organizations that deliver services on behalf of the city, and other costs such as supplies and equipment. The capital budget funds physical infrastructure including roads, bike lanes, building improvements, affordable housing developments, and other projects. Budget development is a collaborative, multi-step process that involves city agencies, the Finance Committee, and Common Council.
- In 2021, the Traffic Engineering Division integrated other safety-related programs and formed and significantly grew the new Safe Streets Madison Program¹⁰ to implement traffic safety measures in a fair and equitable manner to eliminate traffic deaths and serious injuries on city streets. The city approved over 150 projects since the new program was implemented.
- The city had developed a comprehensive initial Vision Zero Action Plan and applied for supplemental planning grants when they saw the opportunity to fund projects through the USDOT SS4A program. In 2022, their “Forward to Vision Zero – Madison” submission was awarded supplemental planning grants and in 2023, their “Forward to Vision Zero – Madison, Safe System for Vulnerable Roadway Users” was awarded implementation grants through SS4A.

Phase IV: Sustaining the Safe System Approach

Use an Evidence-Based Approach

- “Data-Focused” is one of Madison Vision Zero’s principles. Safety decisions in Madison are data-driven, which allow the city to identify trends and investigate issues that can be addressed systematically rather than limiting the scope of analysis to isolated incidents. Data is also used to prioritize allocation of safety resources. Most of the data is compiled and distributed by the Traffic Operations and Safety Laboratory based at the University of Wisconsin–Madison, which includes a database of police reports. A High-Injury Network was developed as a result of this collaboration with the university.

Prepare for the Long Haul, Commit to the Safe System Approach, and Overcome Resistance to Change

- Prior to the adoption of the action plan, there was a considerable amount of skepticism and resistance for Vision Zero in Madison.
- “Safety” is one of Madison Vision Zero’s principles. The 2020–2035 Vision Zero Action Plan acknowledges that implementing safety interventions might require removal of parking spaces, narrowing of travel lanes, or reduction of the number of travel lanes, which can impact parking availability and motor vehicle travel times. However, the plan acts as a value statement by redefining safety as the priority in the city’s transportation system.
- “Vision Zero’s prioritization of safety over the efficient movement of vehicles means that drivers may have to wait in traffic for longer periods of time to allow those walking to safely cross busy streets, or spend a few more minutes looking for parking because of an added bicycle lane. These small changes, however, may mean the difference between life and death for people walking, biking and driving.” (from Madison Vision Zero Action Plan)
- After adoption of Vision Zero, the city faced challenges with virtual engagement as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. They lost the ability to continue to build and sustain relationships. The city started receiving criticism since overall crashes were not decreasing. Crash fatalities and severe crash injuries spiked during the pandemic. It was not until a couple of years later that trends showed that the most severe crashes were decreasing.
- With strong community engagement and data-driven outreach, the community continues to recommit and embrace the Safe System approach and agrees that increasing safety is most important, even if travel is slightly slower or less convenient.
- In addition, the Vision Zero Steering Team continues to develop practical messaging and objectives, and collaborates with stakeholders to understand their role, do not get overwhelmed, and recommit to safety each day.
- The city will continue to release comprehensive Vision Zero progress reports⁶ and Vision Zero annual updates¹¹ to ensure accountability for fully implementing the Vision Zero Action Plan.

Additional Information

- Advice for similar agencies wanting to incorporate the Safe System approach in SHSPs: When coordinating with various stakeholders, rather than focusing on the terminology of the Safe System approach (e.g., specific elements) focus on the commonsense things that will bring down the fatalities and serious injuries by using the principles of the Safe System approach. Agreeing to the principles and how to get there would likely result in successful stakeholder collaboration and development of a comprehensive SHSP.
- Additional resources for [Madison, Wisconsin](#)

References

- ¹ The League of American Bicyclists. (2024). *Bicycle Friendly Communities*. Retrieved from <https://bikeleague.org/bfa/community/>
- ² City of Madison. (2022). *Vision Zero Madison Action Plan*. Retrieved from https://www.cityofmadison.com/transportation/documents/vision-zero/Action%20Plan_FINAL.pdf
- ³ City of Madison. (2009). *Reaffirming the City's commitment to Complete Streets and directing staff of various agencies including but not limited to Planning & Development, City Engineering, Traffic Engineering and Metro to follow to the extent possible Complete Streets concepts*. Retrieved from: <https://madison.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=1068354&GUID=0D8D388F-1566-453A-8933-429A95FB294C&Options=ID%7CText%7C&Search=16250&FullText=1>
- ⁴ City of Madison. (2019). *Bassett Street Corridor Transportation Plan*. Retrieved from <https://www.cityofmadison.com/transportation/documents/2019-02-11BassettFinalReport.pdf>
- ⁵ City of Madison. (2022). *Complete Green Streets Guide*. Retrieved from <https://www.cityofmadison.com/transportation/documents/complete-green-streets/CGS%20Guide%20Final.pdf>
- ⁶ City of Madison. (2023). *Vision Zero Madison Progress Report*. Retrieved from https://www.cityofmadison.com/transportation/documents/vision-zero/2020-2022%20Vision%20Zero%20Progress%20Report_compressed.pdf
- ⁷ City of Madison. (n.d.) *Vision Zero Madison Partners and Stakeholders*. Retrieved from <https://www.cityofmadison.com/transportation/initiatives/vision-zero/partners-and-stakeholders>
- ⁸ Wisconsin Department of Transportation. (2023). *Strategic Highway Safety Plan 2023 – 2027*. Retrieved from <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1uxzbCcmztzTJKKvtBqyyNbHdIs8P78NzT/view>
- ⁹ City of Madison. (n.d.) *Budget*. Retrieved from <https://www.cityofmadison.com/finance/budget>
- ¹⁰ City of Madison. (n.d.) *Safe Streets Madison*. Retrieved from <https://www.cityofmadison.com/trafficEngineering/SafeStreets.cfm>
- ¹¹ City of Madison. (2024). *2023 Annual Operation Report*. Retrieved from <https://www.cityofmadison.com/transportation/documents/2023%20Madison%20Transportation%20Operation%20Report.pdf>

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Community Highlights

Community Description	<p>Philadelphia, located in southeastern Pennsylvania, is the state's largest city with a population of approximately 1.6 million people. It is renowned for its rich historical heritage, notably being the site where the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution were signed. The city's transportation network is highly developed, featuring an extensive system of roads, highways, and public transit options including buses, trolleys, subways, and regional rail services. Philadelphia's grid street layout facilitates navigation and contributes to its comprehensive urban planning.</p>
Vision Zero Adoption:	Vision Zero Target:
2016	As quickly as possible, in support of the Regional Vision Zero 2050 goal ¹
Challenges	<p>Philadelphia experiences high fatality rates compared to their peer cities that adopted Vision Zero, especially in neighborhoods where most residents live below the poverty line. Speed is the number one contributing factor in determining if a crash is fatal in Philadelphia, and it accounts for 40 percent of fatal and serious injury crashes in the city. On average, five children are reported to be involved in crashes daily in the city, and vulnerable users (people walking, riding motorcycles, and biking) are disproportionately killed on Philadelphia streets (46%).</p>
Safe System Focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equity • Safe streets • Safe people • Safe vehicles • Safety data • Vision Zero for Youth
Funding	<p>In the Vision Zero Action Plan, the city has a comprehensive list of Vision Zero projects and grants that will be used to fund each project. Philadelphia was awarded SS4A Implementation Grants in 2022 for the “Philadelphia Vision Zero Capital Plan” application. In 2023, the city was awarded SS4A Implementation Grants for the “Complete & Safe Streets Philadelphia: Vision Zero High-Injury Network Corridors” application.</p>

Lessons Learned

- In larger cities, having strong leadership from elected officials can help get Safe System efforts started and a multi-disciplinary coalition formed.
- Using existing Vision Zero action plans from around the country that could provide the basis of a new city's action plan is important. It is also crucial to start simply rather than overthinking the draft action plan.
- Engaging the community during the development of a plan and after improvements are in place is key to overcome resistance to change. Providing electronic and printed resources in multiple languages is effective in providing equal participation opportunities for the entire community.
- Working with the media on messaging around traffic crashes has a measurable impact on public support for improvements to make roads safer for everyone.
- Sharing accomplishments regularly, such as annual reports, tools for visualization of improvements, in-person project showcases, and website and social media posts helps build community understanding and support of the Safe System approach.
- Detailed action items, responsible parties, as well as frequent coalition meetings, are key for sustaining stakeholder collaborations.
- A comprehensive data-driven plan provides a strong basis for grant applications.
- Understanding that commitment and recommitment to Vision Zero and the Safe System approach are necessary will help cities continue to make progress in the long term.
- Making community outreach and education part of the Vision Zero planning process can help address anticipated community resistance to automated enforcement programs.

Phase I: Getting Started

Leadership

- One of the most populous cities in the United States, Philadelphia was experiencing one of the highest rates of traffic-related deaths compared to other peer cities, especially in neighborhoods where most residents live below the poverty line. Further, Philadelphia had the highest rates of chronic diseases among large U.S. cities, particularly in low-income neighborhoods.² Designing streets to promote safe active transportation became a priority in Philadelphia.
- In 2016, the mayor signed an executive order setting a target of zero traffic-related deaths by 2030.³ The mayor also established an Office of Complete Streets to ensure multimodal considerations would be the core of the city's Vision Zero efforts. In addition, the mayor created a Vision Zero Task Force, which was charged with developing a three-year Vision Zero action plan.

Ready Implementors

- At the direction of the Mayor, the Vision Zero Task Force was formed by the following:
 - City of Philadelphia staff (Mayor's Office, Managing Director's Office, Managing Director's Office of Transportation & Infrastructure Systems, Department of Public Health, Department of Streets, Fleet Management, Licenses & Inspections, Planning & Development, Philadelphia Police Department, Office of Complete Streets/Office of Multimodal Planning, Risk Management, and Water Department)
 - African American Chamber of Commerce
 - American Automobile Association
 - AARP Pennsylvania
 - Asociación Puertorriqueños en Marcha, Inc.
 - Center City District
 - Clean Air Council
 - Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC)
 - Pennsylvania Department of Transportation
 - People's Emergency Center
 - Philadelphia Association of Community Development Corporations
 - Philadelphia Parking Authority
 - School District of Philadelphia
 - Public Health Management Corporation
 - Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority
 - University City District

Actions

- In 2017, a three-year Vision Zero Action Plan² was adopted in Philadelphia, outlining Vision Zero's near-term goals.

Phase II: Building Support

Starting Simply

- With a Vision Zero Task Force in place, developing the plan was the next step for implementation of Vision Zero in Philadelphia. The Task Force was focused on not overthinking the plan—there were example action plans from around the country that could provide the basis of their action plan. As a result, Philadelphia’s first Vision Zero Action Plan was created within 120 days. It did not need to take years to develop it, but it did take concerted focus.

Understanding Others’ Perspectives, Engaging the Community

- The Vision Zero Task Force engaged Philadelphians across the city during the development of the 2017 Vision Zero Action Plan, with community organizations being part of the task force that developed the plan. The Task Force served as liaison between the community and the stakeholders, informing the development of the Vision Zero Action Plan guiding principles.
- After the draft Vision Zero Action Plan was completed, three tools were created to collect public input: Vision Zero Draft Action Plan Comment Form, Vision Zero Traffic Safety Map, and Vision Zero Traffic Safety Survey, published on the Vision Zero Philadelphia website at the time. To ensure that neighbors without internet access could participate, printed activities—translated to Spanish, Chinese, and Russian—were brought to community events. Between March and July 2017, Philadelphia neighbors were engaged through 44 community events, including neighborhood association meetings, Police District meetings, block parties, as well as at festivals across the city.
- Messaging from the media about traffic crashes involving people walking and biking has a measurable impact on public support for improvements to make roads safer for everyone. The City of Philadelphia, in partnership with the DVRPC’s Regional Safety Task Force, held a panel in 2020 with members of the local press to highlight best practices for reporting on crashes and how to provide context and data on the systemic nature of crash problems. Each year, the city continues to build understanding about Vision Zero among local press as a tool to change public perception and better inform Philadelphians about traffic safety.
- Messaging around Vision Zero progress is important to overcome community resistance. When pedestrian fatalities increased during the COVID-19 pandemic, the city focused on communicating the reduction of fatal and serious injuries where safety interventions were implemented rather than focusing on the overall fatality rates in Philadelphia. For example, reporting the progress due to Complete Streets projects (reduced fatal and serious injury crashes by 34%, and total injury crashes by 20%, compared to the High-Injury Network trends from 2012–2022⁴) was essential to continue community support of Vision Zero solutions.

Celebrating and Sharing Success

- Major accomplishments for Safe System efforts in Philadelphia are listed in annual reports,^{5,6,7,8,9} to provide accountability, transparency, and overall status updates for the community. Examples of completed and proposed safety strategies in Philadelphia include road diets, separated bike lanes, neighborhood slow zones, signal progression to support lower speed limits, automated speed enforcement, speed cushions around schools, bus lane enforcement, automatic red-light enforcement, effective messaging into Vision Zero communications, support of transportation options that reduce driving, fleet purchases and upgrades, and data-driven safety analysis.
- The city hosts events to celebrate the impacts of several projects, including Safe System projects. One example is the Operations Transformation Fund Project Showcase,¹⁰ hosted at a local library in 2023. Project teams displayed their work to city staff and community members through posters, visualizations on computer monitors, handouts, photographs, and demonstrations. The showcase is a chance for community members and residents to see “behind the curtain” of municipal government and understand the impact of city projects. One of the highlighted projects was the city’s “Reducing Barriers in the City’s Traffic-Calming Request Program,” which showed the importance of a more accessible, inclusive, and transparent Traffic Calming Program to ensure safer speeds and safer streets.
- The city also has a StoryMap⁴ that provides a powerful set of before–after results for Complete Streets projects over the last few years and show how Complete Streets projects transform safety in Philadelphia.
- The city’s Vision Zero website¹¹ and social media are also good channels for celebrating and sharing success in Philadelphia. Residents can sign up for the Vision Zero newsletter.¹²

Phase III: Institutionalizing the Safe System Approach

Building a Sustainable Coalition

- Tasked with eliminating all traffic fatalities and serious injuries on Philadelphia’s streets by 2030, the Vision Zero Task Force is the steering committee of the city’s Vision Zero program and works to implement the Action Plan.
- One important factor to sustaining Safe System approach efforts in Philadelphia is the well-structured set of strategies for the Vision Zero Task Force. The action item, description, and responsible agency are listed in the Vision Zero Action Plan for each Vision Zero Action Plan component (safe speeds, safe streets, safe people, safe vehicles, and safety data).
- Another key item that results in continued efforts and collaborations is frequent meetings. The Vision Zero Task Force sub-committees meet quarterly or bi-monthly.
- In addition, strong political will and public support for ambitious and transformative policies are important characteristics for sustaining Safe System efforts in Philadelphia.

Securing Resources

- Securing resources in the early stages of Vision Zero adoption was a challenge since Vision Zero did not have dedicated funding. Other than a small budget for branding, all safety data analysis and proposed strategies were developed in-house.
- Over the three years since adoption of their first Vision Zero Action Plan, the Vision Zero Task Force brought state and local government officials side-by-side to work with community and advocacy groups to work towards a goal of zero traffic deaths. In 2020, the city adopted its second Vision Zero Action Plan.¹³ For each project, the Action Plan identifies the lead agency and grants that will be used to fund the project.
- In combination with the 2020 Vision Zero Action Plan, the city developed a Vision Zero Capital Plan,¹⁴ which identifies priority locations on the High-Injury Network to inform safety improvements over the next five years. Although important to the process, the High-Injury Network is not the only criterion to fund projects; the city evaluates other plans (e.g., Transit Plan) and other factors (e.g., equity) to select projects for implementation.
- Having a comprehensive Vision Zero Capital Plan was a strong basis for securing resources such as grant funding. The City of Philadelphia was awarded SS4A Implementation Grants in 2022 for the “Philadelphia Vision Zero Capital Plan” application. In 2023, the city was awarded SS4A Implementation Grants for the “Complete & Safe Streets Philadelphia: Vision Zero High-Injury Network Corridors” application.
- Although resources for safety strategies are sustainable, sustaining maintenance has been an ongoing concern in Philadelphia. One strategy to overcome this issue is to have a balance between quick-build and permanent safety projects.

Phase IV: Sustaining the Safe System Approach

Use an Evidence-Based Approach

- The city understands that eliminating traffic-related deaths on Philadelphia streets requires continual, data-informed prioritization of city streets. Crash data and demographic data were used to inform development of both 2017 and 2020 Vision Zero Action Plans, as well as the Vision Zero Capital Plan.
- The city supports the Regional Vision Zero 2050 goal for the Delaware Valley Region and has access to other data-driven guidelines developed by the DVRPC, such as the Philadelphia Crash Analysis Standards & Recommendations report.¹⁵

Prepare for the Long Haul

- The development of the 2020 Vision Zero Action Plan provided an opportunity to reflect on what was achieved in the first three years, reassess what had worked and what had not worked, and renew the city's commitment to eliminating traffic fatalities in Philadelphia.
- During the development of the second Vision Zero Action Plan, the global COVID-19 pandemic, an escalating economic recession, and unrest tied to systemic racism and police brutality were taking a toll on Philadelphia. In July 2020, Philadelphia reached the highest number of traffic fatalities in a single month since the city committed to Vision Zero.
- The 2020 Vision Zero Action Plan used a Safe System framework to look beyond the immediate conditions of a crash and focus across connected systems to prevent all fatal crashes.

Commit to the Safe System Approach

- In addition to the Vision Zero Task Force, four sub-committees were created:
 - Safe Streets & Speeds
 - Safe People
 - Safety Data
 - Transformative Policy
- The 2020 Vision Zero Action Plan is human-centered, acknowledges that “human life is our highest priority,” and includes several photos and personal stories of Philadelphia residents that were killed in traffic crashes.
- Understanding that commitment and recommitment to Vision Zero and the Safe System approach are necessary will help Philadelphia make progress in the long term. In 2024, the mayor signed a new executive order recommitting Philadelphia to the goal of reaching zero traffic fatalities.^{16,17} Part of that recommitment is drafting a new five-year Action Plan and Capital Plan.

Overcome Resistance to Change

- One of the city's transformative policies to implement the Safe System approach in Philadelphia is automated enforcement. The city made community outreach and education part of the Vision Zero planning process to help address anticipated community resistance. Not all resistance was overcome, but people have largely embraced the program.
- The city gave a 60-day warning period to allow residents to adjust to the new system. During this period, a bilingual public information campaign to alert residents and better inform the public about the purpose of speed cameras (to save lives) was conducted. A series of videos and blog posts in English and Spanish were distributed via geo-targeted advertising placement to reach people living or driving by each of the camera locations. The campaign reached over 250,000 people through Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. The campaign placed over 1,000 ads on radio and throughout the city. Following the campaign, the city conducted focus groups to better understand which elements of the campaign's messaging were effective and will use this information to inform future campaigns about automated enforcement and Vision Zero. By law, fees collected from automated enforcement are invested back into traffic safety improvement projects in Philadelphia.

Additional Information

- The City of Philadelphia was awarded SS4A Implementation Grants in 2022 and 2023. A few lessons learned from grant applications that can be followed by similar jurisdictions include the following:
 - **Start early:** This grant can fund so many different types of projects. It is important to start early getting ideas together. Leave time to iterate and think about how you can combine different types of projects into a single application.
 - **Stay true to your action plan:** Have a plan—do not fudge it. This grant is a great opportunity to create an action plan, and it is important for successful implementation applications to have a plan in place before applying. Keep your application focused on your action plan and make sure proposals stay true to that plan. All projects should be on your High-Injury Network and supplemental planning activities, or demonstration projects should relate to action items in the plan.
 - **Select a focus:** Think about a theme for your grant to help focus the projects included. Philadelphia’s first SS4A was focused on our Vision Zero Capital Plan, and the second application was based on responding to rising bicycle fatalities in the city.
 - **Diversify your request:** You can apply for supplemental planning, demonstration, and implementation within the same grant application. The City of Philadelphia has developed diversified requests that request funding in all three categories and project proposals are scalable based on funding availability.
- Additional resources for [Philadelphia, Pennsylvania](#)

References

- ¹ Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission. (n.d.) *Regional Vision Zero*. Retrieved from <https://visionzerophl.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Vision-Zero-Update-2018.pdf>
- ² City of Philadelphia. (2017). *Three-Year Vision Zero Action Plan*. Retrieved from <https://visionzerophl.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Vision-Zero-Three-Year-Action-Plan-2017.pdf>
- ³ City of Philadelphia. (2016). *Executive Order No. 11-16 Office of Complete Streets and Vision Zero Task Force*. Retrieved from <https://www.phila.gov/media/20210602144917/executive-order-2016-11.pdf>
- ⁴ City of Philadelphia. (2023). *Complete Streets Projects Transform Traffic Safety*. Retrieved from <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/fc5cd38e377448aa8616d7d61ddd4a34>
- ⁵ City of Philadelphia. (2018). *Vision Zero Year One Update*. Retrieved from <https://visionzerophl.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Vision-Zero-Update-2018.pdf>
- ⁶ City of Philadelphia. (2019). *Vision Zero Year Two Update*. Retrieved from <https://visionzerophl.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Vision-Zero-Update-2019.pdf>
- ⁷ City of Philadelphia. (2021). *Vision Zero Annual Report 2021*. Retrieved from <https://visionzerophl.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Vision-Zero-Annual-Report-2021.pdf>
- ⁸ City of Philadelphia. (2022). *Vision Zero Annual Report 2022*. Retrieved from <https://visionzerophl.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Vision-Zero-Annual-Report-2022.pdf>
- ⁹ City of Philadelphia. (2023). *Vision Zero Annual Report 2023*. Retrieved from <https://visionzerophl.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/Vision-Zero-Annual-Report-WEB-10-27-23.pdf>
- ¹⁰ City of Philadelphia. (2023). *The City celebrates the impact of 29 Operations Transformation Fund projects*. Retrieved from <https://www.phila.gov/2023-06-28-the-city-celebrates-the-impact-of-29-operations-transformation-fund-projects/>
- ¹¹ City of Philadelphia. (n.d.) *Vision Zero*. Retrieved from <https://visionzerophl.com/>
- ¹² City of Philadelphia. (n.d.) *Vision Zero Newsletter*. Retrieved from <https://visionzerophl.com/news/newsletter/>
- ¹³ City of Philadelphia. (2020). *Vision Zero Action Plan 2025*. Retrieved from <https://visionzerophl.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Vision-Zero-Action-Plan-2025.pdf>
- ¹⁴ City of Philadelphia. (2020). *Vision Zero Capital Plan 2025: High Injury Network Priority Projects*. Retrieved from <https://visionzerophl.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Vision-Zero-Capital-Plan-2025.pdf>
- ¹⁵ Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission. (2018) *Philadelphia Crash Analysis Standards & Recommendations*. Retrieved from <https://www.dvrpc.org/reports/17068.pdf>
- ¹⁶ City of Philadelphia. (2024). *Executive Order No. 4-24 Office of Multimodal Planning and Vision Zero Task Force*. Retrieved from <https://www.phila.gov/media/20240326162110/Executive-Order-2024-04.pdf>
- ¹⁷ City of Philadelphia. (2024). *Mayor Parker Recommits Philadelphia to Zero Deaths Ahead of Vision Zero Conference*. Retrieved from <https://www.phila.gov/2024-03-25-mayor-parker-recommits-philadelphia-to-zero-deaths-ahead-of-vision-zero-conference/>

Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Community Highlights

<p>Community Description</p>	<p>Massachusetts is situated in the northeastern United States within the New England region and has a population of approximately 6.9 million residents. Massachusetts is home to America's oldest subway system, the Boston Subway, which is a key component of the region's public transportation network. Transportation is the primary source of greenhouse gas emissions by the economic sector within the state. The state is covered by 13 Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) and Regional Planning Agencies (RPAs). Statewide transportation is overseen by the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT).</p>
<p>Safe System Adoption:</p>	<p>Safe System Target:</p>
<p>2023</p>	<p>Varies by Location</p>
<p>Challenges</p>	<p>Riskier road user behaviors following the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in increased speeding and impaired driving–related serious injuries and decreased seat belt use rate.</p>
<p>Safe System Focus</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement speed management to realize safer speeds • Address top-risk locations and populations • Take an active role to affect change in vehicle design, features, and use • Accelerate research and adoption of technology; double down on what works • Implement new approaches to public education and awareness
<p>Funding</p>	<p>The state provides resources to support the Safe System approach in local municipalities. In addition, MassDOT partners with communities throughout the commonwealth to support projects and programs for the SS4A federal grants.</p>

Lessons Learned

- Having regional and municipal associations and the state Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP) participating in the development of the SHSP is key for establishing communication with local jurisdictions.
- Given the size of a state, holding virtual meetings can be an effective way to provide equal opportunity for participants from all regions.
- Making stakeholders aware of their key role, and supporting them through funding, helps to keep them engaged.
- States play an important role in providing informational and funding resources to guide institutionalization of the Safe System approach in local municipalities.
- Focusing on the actions that can eliminate road fatalities and serious injuries can be more effective for public engagement than focusing on the structure and terminology of the Safe System approach.
- Not all stakeholders agree with strategies to be included in the SHSP. Stating main initiatives in the SHSP and developing a more detailed action plan, with specific roles for each stakeholder group, is helpful. Constant coordination with different groups is needed to ensure that the Action Plan continues to represent all needs.

Phase I: Getting Started

Leadership

- The Commonwealth of Massachusetts developed their 2023 SHSP¹ with strong coordination with local communities. The effort to support municipalities and other public entities to address safety locally and regionally was motivated by the fact that approximately 80% of Massachusetts roadways are under local jurisdictions, and more than 60% of fatalities and serious injuries occurred on local-owned roadways.
- Per Federal Legislation, the SHSP is to be updated every five years. The Traffic & Safety Section within the MassDOT Highway Division led the development of the SHSP.

Ready Implementors

- An Executive Leadership Committee comprised of leaders from 18 agencies affirmed the Safe System approach framework for the SHSP and led the efforts to develop the plan. The members of the Executive Leadership Committee included the following:
 - Executive Office of Elder Affairs
 - Executive Office of Health and Human Services
 - Executive Office of Public Safety and Security - Highway Safety Division
 - Federal Highway Administration
 - Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration
 - Massachusetts Association of Regional Planning Agencies
 - Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority
 - Massachusetts Chiefs of Police Association
 - Massachusetts Council on Aging
 - Massachusetts Department of Fire Services
 - Massachusetts Department of Public Health
 - Massachusetts Department of Transportation Highway
 - Massachusetts Department of Transportation Planning
 - Massachusetts Department of Transportation Rail and Transit
 - Massachusetts Department of Transportation Registry of Motor Vehicles
 - Massachusetts Municipal Association
 - Massachusetts State Police
 - National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

Actions

- The five-year SHSP for Massachusetts was adopted in 2023.
- “Despite the name Strategic Highway Safety Plan, the plan does not solely focus on highways as defined by interstates and freeways, but all roadways—neighborhood local roadways, main streets, municipal roads, and state roads regardless of jurisdiction and functional classification.”¹

Phase II: Building Support

Starting Simply

- The SHSP was developed by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts through a multi-step process that engaged 270 people.
- Key members of the Executive Leadership Committee, Massachusetts Association of Regional Planning Agencies, Massachusetts Municipal Association, and Massachusetts Chiefs of Police Association led communication with local municipalities and requested their participation in the development of the SHSP. With support from those associations and the University of Massachusetts LTAP, all 351 cities/towns in the state were included in the process.

Understanding Others' Perspectives

- Led by MassDOT's Traffic & Safety Section, several meetings were held throughout the development of the SHSP. Local municipalities were mostly represented by their Department of Public Works, Planning Department, and Police Department.
- All meetings were held virtually to give equal opportunity for all jurisdictions to participate.
- Although an important first step, inviting multi-disciplinary, multi-agency local representatives to participate in meetings is not enough to get them engaged in the process. Understanding each stakeholder's perspective and role in the Safe System approach is key. For example, MassDOT had always worked closely with the Massachusetts Department of Public Health; however, making them aware of their key role as data providers, as well as supporting them through funding for data linkage projects, helped to keep them engaged.
- Although speed safety cameras are proven safety countermeasures,² opposing views on automated enforcement bills exist. Currently, Massachusetts General Law does not permit the use of automated enforcement. Understanding the interest from local communities in implementing automated enforcement, the commonwealth is working with municipal partners in order to develop pilots to test technologies and develop recommendations for legislature approval. Pilot projects must account for equity and have safety as the sole focus of automated enforcement efforts.

Engaging the Community

- Beyond state–municipal coordination, the 2023 SHSP highlights how external partners and private industry can contribute to improving safety. No single actor can achieve Safe System goals alone, and stakeholders from the community, philanthropy, and business all play important roles.
- Having associations of local agencies as part of the Executive Leadership Committee helped with outreach of community representatives in the development of the SHSP.
- MassDOT has a history of building a relationship with the community and listening to their concerns. For example, in 2018, MassDOT recommended the removal of protected bicycle lanes along the Longfellow Bridge to better accommodate plow trucks to clear snow off the bridge. After community engagement, MassDOT reversed plans and maintained the protected bicycle lanes along the bridge. Local agencies continue to work with MassDOT to provide bicycle connectivity to the Longfellow Bridge protected bicycle lanes.³

Celebrating and Sharing Success

- Celebrating stakeholders and community members for their contributions to improving safety is important to foster relationships. MassDOT's Safe Routes to School (SRTS)⁴ program, for example, hosts a Yard Sign Design Contest for students to use their creativity to help promote safe roads for cyclists and pedestrians in their communities. Further, the SRTS program hosts an Annual Awards Ceremony that brings together champions from all over the commonwealth to celebrate schools, community partners, Crossing Guards, and award winners. Another contest that is the highlight at MassDOT's Moving Together Active Transportation Conference is the Roadway Safety Video Contest,⁵ which recognizes high school video submissions.

Phase III: Institutionalizing the Safe System Approach

Building a Sustainable Coalition

- The Executive Leadership Committee is a multi-disciplinary, multi-agency coalition ensuring all voices are heard from a variety of stakeholders in all locations in the state.

Securing Resources

- Members of the Executive Leadership Committee provide resources to support institutionalization of the Safe System approach in local municipalities. A few examples are listed below:
 - Mass in Motion:⁶ Community resources from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health that provide informational resources for safe, active transportation in the commonwealth
 - Safe Speeds:⁷ MassDOT, provides informational resources and funding opportunities to municipalities, examples are listed below:
 - Shared Streets and Spaces Grant Program: A funding program that supports quick-launch improvements to public health, safe mobility, and strengthened commerce in Massachusetts municipalities.
 - Learn about Speed Management: Informational resource hub for data-driven speed management.
 - Procedures for Speed Zoning on State Highways and Municipal Roads: Municipal toolkit to help local partners address safety issues.
- MassDOT partners with communities throughout the commonwealth to support projects and programs for SS4A⁸ federal grants. In 2022, over \$30 million were awarded to MPOs and municipalities in Massachusetts (\$6.5 million in Action Plans and over \$24 million in Implementation), which covered all MPOs and RPAs. In 2023, local communities in Massachusetts were awarded over \$22.2 million.

Phase IV: Sustaining the Safe System Approach

Use an Evidence-Based Approach

- A data-driven analysis is the basis for identifying high-risk locations in the commonwealth. Data used to identify areas for safety improvements included sources and tools such as the Fatality Analysis Reporting System,⁹ Fatality and Injury Reporting System Tool,¹⁰ Massachusetts IMPACT database,¹¹ Massachusetts Department of Public Health,¹² Massachusetts 2020 Census,¹³ Massachusetts Safety Belt Usage Observation Study,¹⁴ Massachusetts Youth Health Survey,¹⁵ Massachusetts Injury Surveillance Program,¹⁶ and Massachusetts Registry of Motor Vehicles Crash Data System¹⁷ and Merit Rating Board Citation Data.¹⁸ Data analysis is “jurisdiction-agnostic;” safety issues are addressed regardless of the jurisdiction.
- Initially, meetings were organized around 14 emphasis area topics identified from the previous SHSP, which generated 400 ideas for input into the new SHSP.
- Following USDOT’s adoption of the Safe System approach, MassDOT leadership embraced the Safe System approach. From that point, the 400 ideas were synthesized during five virtual meetings, which were organized by Safe System approach elements: Safe Roads, Safe Speeds, Safe Road Users, Post-Crash Care, and Safe Vehicles. The ideas were then presented to the Executive Leadership Committee and all stakeholders involved in the development of the SHSP.
- From these meetings, the ideas were further distilled and prioritized into six core initiatives with actions aligned with the Safe System Approach:
 1. Implement speed management to realize safer speeds
 2. Address top-risk locations and populations
 3. Take an active role to affect change in vehicle design, features, and use
 4. Accelerate research and adoption of technology
 5. Double down on what works
 6. Implement new approaches to public education and awareness

Prepare for the Long Haul, Commit to the Safe System Approach, and Overcome Resistance to Change

- Structuring the five virtual meetings based on the Safe System approach elements resulted in an unintended perception that the Safe System approach downplays the important role of law enforcement. MassDOT maintained the meeting structure and found other ways to engage law enforcement. Community advocates also felt like safety concerns such as distracted driving and the use of seatbelts were not well represented in the five Safe System approach elements.
- In addition, since the Safe System approach does not explicitly mention equity, several stakeholders mentioned the need for an equity focus in the SHSP. Even though following Safe System principles and addressing all elements will most likely drive improvements to environmental justice areas, and the data-driven approach to identifying top-crash and top-risk locations did guide improvements to environmental justice areas, the fact that it is not a Safe System approach element created some resistance.
- Meetings were helpful in gathering stakeholder input, identifying gaps and identifying additional stakeholders that need to be involved in this conversation. During a post-crash care-themed meeting, the need for full cell coverage in the state for more rapid response time was indicated as a need, but representatives from telecommunications were not part of the meeting.
- Although the SHSP includes safety initiatives framed on the Safe System approach, mostly resulting from a data-driven analysis and stakeholder meetings, the specific actions will be included in an Action Plan being developed. To sustain the Safe System approach and ensure the plan includes all important strategies, MassDOT continues to work with groups that did not feel as represented in the SHSP initiatives and will incorporate their recommended strategies in the Action Plan.

Additional Information

- Advice for similar agencies wanting to incorporate the Safe System approach in SHSPs: When coordinating with various stakeholders, rather than focusing on the terminology of the Safe System approach (e.g., specific elements) focus on the commonsense things that will bring down the fatalities and serious injuries by using the principles of the Safe System approach. Agreeing to the principles and how to get there would likely result in successful stakeholder collaboration and development of a comprehensive SHSP.
- Additional resources for [Massachusetts](#)

References

- ¹ Commonwealth of Massachusetts. (2023). *2023 Massachusetts Strategic Highway Safety Plan*. Retrieved from <https://www.mass.gov/doc/massachusetts-shsp-2023/download>
- ² Federal Highway Administration. (n.d.) *Proven Safety Countermeasures*. Retrieved from <https://highways.dot.gov/safety/proven-safety-countermeasures>
- ³ City of Cambridge. (2023). *Main Street Safety Improvement Project*. Retrieved from <https://www.cambridgema.gov/streetsandtransportation/projectsandprograms/mainstreetsafetyimprovementproject>
- ⁴ Commonwealth of Massachusetts. (n.d.) *Safe Routes to School*. Retrieved from <https://www.mass.gov/safe-routes-to-school>
- ⁵ Commonwealth of Massachusetts. (n.d.) *Roadway Safety Video Contest*. Retrieved from <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/roadway-safety-video-contest-results>
- ⁶ Commonwealth of Massachusetts. (n.d.) *Mass in Motion*. Retrieved from <https://www.mass.gov/orgs/mass-in-motion>
- ⁷ Commonwealth of Massachusetts. (n.d.) *Safe Speeds*. Retrieved from <https://www.mass.gov/safe-speeds>
- ⁸ United States Department of Transportation. (n.d.) *Safe Streets and Roads for All: All Year's SS4A Grant Awards*. Retrieved from <https://www.transportation.gov/grants/ss4a/cumulative-awards>
- ⁹ National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. (n.d.) *Fatality Analysis Reporting System*. Retrieved from <https://www.nhtsa.gov/research-data/fatality-analysis-reporting-system-fars>
- ¹⁰ National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. (n.d.) *Fatality and Injury Reporting System Tool*. Retrieved from <https://cdan.dot.gov/query>
- ¹¹ Commonwealth of Massachusetts. (n.d.) *IMPACT*. Retrieved from <https://apps.impact.dot.state.ma.us/cdp/home>
- ¹² Commonwealth of Massachusetts. (n.d.) *Department of Public Health*. Retrieved from <https://www.mass.gov/orgs/department-of-public-health>
- ¹³ Commonwealth of Massachusetts. (2020). *Massachusetts 2020 Census*. Retrieved from <https://www.sec.state.ma.us/census2020/index.html>
- ¹⁴ University of Massachusetts Amherst. *2022 Massachusetts Safety Belt Usage Observation Study*. Retrieved from <https://www.mass.gov/doc/2022-massachusetts-safety-belt-usage-observation-survey/download>
- ¹⁵ Commonwealth of Massachusetts. (n.d.) *Massachusetts Youth Health Survey*. Retrieved from: <https://www.mass.gov/lists/massachusetts-youth-health-survey-myhs>
- ¹⁶ Commonwealth of Massachusetts. (n.d.) *Injury Surveillance Program*. Retrieved from <https://www.mass.gov/injury-surveillance-program>
- ¹⁷ Commonwealth of Massachusetts. (n.d.) *Massachusetts Registry of Motor Vehicle Crash Data System, 2019-2021*. Retrieved from: <https://gis.massdot.state.ma.us/topcrashlocations/>
- ¹⁸ Commonwealth of Massachusetts. (n.d.) *Merit Rating Board Citation Data*. Retrieved from: <https://www.mass.gov/merit-rating-board-mrb>