



THE TRAFFIC SAFETY NAVIGATOR

Summer 2023

The Traffic Safety Navigator is the 2020–2024 California Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP) e-newsletter. The newsletter provides SHSP updates along with insights into best practices for implementing strategies that achieve zero traffic fatalities and serious injuries on California’s roadways.

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CELEBRATING 2023 SHSP MILESTONES

Welcome to the summer 2023 edition of the Traffic Safety Navigator. Over the past several months, the SHSP has achieved significant milestones related to stakeholder engagement and increasing the visibility of the SHSP. More than 80 transportation safety executives gathered in Sacramento this spring for the very first SHSP Transportation Safety Summit, highlights of which are featured below. The SHSP Team is also pleased to share that the 2020–2024 California Strategic Highway Safety Plan has won two American Planning Association (APA) Awards. In the Sacramento Valley Section, the SHSP received the Award of Merit in the Best Practices Award category, which emphasizes results and demonstrates how innovative and state-of-the-art planning methods and practices help to create communities of lasting value. In the Northern Section (Bay Area), the SHSP received the Award of Merit in the Transportation Planning Award category, which honors efforts to increase transportation choices for all populations, reducing dependence on private automobiles and helping to ease congestion and reducing climate change impacts.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE 2023 SHSP TRANSPORTATION SAFETY SUMMIT

On May 31, 2023, Executive Management from federal, state, regional, and local agencies involved in transportation safety convened in Sacramento for the 2023 SHSP Transportation Safety Summit. In continuation of the conversations held during the [SHSP 2022 Virtual Fall Regional Workshops](#), the Summit provided Executive Managers with an opportunity to connect with executives from organizations across the state that are engaged in transportation safety to strengthen partnerships, discuss best practices, and share their input on the implementation of the SHSP. Topics discussed during the Summit included transportation safety trends, challenges and opportunities, as well as ways to strengthen the connections between safety planning, project prioritization, and investment decision-making. California State Transportation Agency (CalSTA) Secretary Toks Omishakin provided the keynote address, and the Fresno Council of Governments, the San Diego Association of Governments, Humboldt County, and the City of Fremont also shared best practices for saving lives on California's public roadways.



CalSTA Secretary Toks Omishakin delivering the keynote address



2023 SHSP Transportation Safety Summit attendees

A few key takeaways from the Summit are provided below:

There was a significant number of attendees from State agencies, as well as local and regional representatives, that continued the conversation around challenges for transportation safety. The challenges discussed during the Summit validated those that were identified during the 2022 Virtual Fall Regional Workshops, including:

- Lack of funding
- Restrictive and/or competitive fund sources
- Lack of staff resources and expertise
- Lack of timely and detailed data
- Lack of buy-in (cultural change needed within the organization)
- Lack of collaboration/partnerships, particularly with local agencies, CBOs, and the tribes
- Lack of policy implementation support that recognizes different geographic contexts and needs, particularly for rural areas
- Lack of public education to help encourage mode shift and promote a safety culture



2023 SHSP Transportation Safety Summit attendees engaging in roundtable discussions during the Summit

Summit participants collectively brainstormed possible strategies to address the above challenges, which are currently being discussed amongst the SHSP Steering and Executive Leadership Committees. Some key themes that emerged during the Summit include a desire for additional partnerships and sharing of best practices of transportation safety countermeasures, as well as a desire for improvements to data collection and analysis, all of which will enhance collaborative, performance-based decision-making. The input and recommendations received during the Summit will be categorized into three main areas: 1) possible new actions that can be included in the SHSP Implementation Plan, 2) enhancements to the overall SHSP and its processes, and 3) identification of policy-related challenges that are outside the purview of the SHSP, but that can be elevated to the appropriate partner agencies for additional consideration. The SHSP Team is excited by the momentum gained during this in-person event and will use it to further strengthen partnerships and achieve the Mission, Vision and Goal of the SHSP.

SAFETY SPOTLIGHT: LEAGUE OF CALIFORNIA CITIES

By Rene Guerrero, League of California Cities

California's transportation landscape is changing in ways not seen since the Model T rolled off the assembly line. New types of transportation, changing consumer preferences and behavior, an emphasis on environmental justice, and a rise in traffic fatalities are changing and challenging our perception of road safety.

Representing virtually every California city, the League of California Cities (Cal Cities) works with transportation professionals and policymakers to develop solutions that make roadways safer. Cal Cities CEO Carolyn Coleman sits on the SHSP's Executive Leadership; Rene Guerrero, a Cal Cities board member and former Public Works Department president, is a member of the SHSP Steering Committee. Cal Cities lobbyists also participate in numerous statewide committees and help update

the California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). Its [transportation policy committee](#) reviews a range of proposed state bills and regulations. A key part of the committee's mission is to prevent severe and fatal traffic crashes, eliminate injury inequities, and carefully mitigate any equity impacts. The committee also holds regular roundtables with transportation professionals to share best practices and strategies.

Cal Cities is widely recognized for its leadership in advancing [SB 1 \(Chapter 5, 2017\)](#), which provides funding to improve the safety and rehabilitation of local roadways. Cal Cities has helped craft and shape key transportation policies, including defining "safety corridors" as the 20% of a local jurisdiction's street with the highest injuries and fatalities and upending the [85th percentile methodology](#) to help cities reduce injuries and deaths from car accidents. To learn more, visit calcities.org.

WHAT'S NEW WITH VRU REQUIREMENTS

Caltrans is in the process of preparing a Vulnerable Road User (VRU) Safety Assessment as an addendum to the SHSP.

The Vulnerable Road User Safety Assessment is a new requirement from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL). The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has defined a VRU in the following ways:

- A non-motorist person – pedestrian, bicyclist, other cyclists
- Person on personal conveyance
- Injured person
- Highway worker on foot in a work zone

The FHWA's definition for a VRU excludes motorcyclists, which is a departure from some prior uses of the term that also included motorcyclists.

The VRU Safety Assessment will review and highlight statewide safety challenges for VRUs on all roads, so both the state highway and local roadway systems will identify a program of projects or strategies to address the identified issues.

The VRU Safety Assessment will build upon previous efforts in California. Data analyses have shown that most vulnerable road user crashes occur on local roadways and in urbanized areas in California. Caltrans is leading the development process, which also includes engagement with local partners throughout the state. Per requirements from the FHWA, the VRU Safety Assessment will be completed on or before November 15, 2023.

"All states are required to develop a Vulnerable Road User Safety Assessment as part of their Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) in accordance with 23 U.S.C. 148(1)."



GET INVOLVED AND SHSP RESOURCES



CHECK OUT THE SHSP CRASH DATA DASHBOARD

The California SHSP Crash Data Dashboard was developed to provide SHSP implementers with direct access to crash data to support data-driven implementation of the SHSP. The dashboard currently uses finalized crash data from the Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS) and the Statewide Integrated Traffic Records System (SWITRS) and allows users to customize reports by location and other characteristics, including whether a fatal or serious injury crash was within five miles of a tribal boundary.

New Addition: California SB 535 Datasets

To further integrate equity into the SHSP, the SHSP Team is excited to announce that the California SB 535 Disadvantaged Communities Dataset (2022) has been added to the Location tab within the SHSP Crash Data Dashboard. The map within the Location tab includes the census tract number, the percentage of the population living below twice the federal poverty level, and the number of fatal and serious injury crashes for each census tract meeting the SB 535 Disadvantaged Communities criteria. If you are unfamiliar with the Crash Data Dashboard, there is a user guide and videos in both English and Spanish.

[View Dashboard](#)



WE CAN'T DO IT WITHOUT YOU

The SHSP is just the start. The 5 Es need to work together to implement the actions developed in the SHSP. Involvement in an SHSP Challenge Area Team is a direct way to influence countermeasures selected to improve safety. Volunteers are needed for all Challenge Areas.

[Get Involved](#)



SHARE YOUR STORIES

We want to know about your successful implementation of traffic safety countermeasures! We will highlight success stories on the SHSP website and in future newsletters.

[Share Your Story](#)



SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE TOPICS?

We want to know what topics are of interest to California! Complete our simple feedback form to provide suggestions on future newsletter topics.

[Submit Feedback](#)



To stay up-to-date on SHSP news, subscribe [HERE](#).

WHAT IS THE SHSP?

The California Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP) is a comprehensive, statewide transportation safety plan which provides a framework for achieving zero fatalities and serious injuries across all travel modes and on all public roads. Started in 2005, the SHSP is updated regularly to ensure continued progress and to meet changing safety needs. Currently, over 580 safety stakeholders from over 230 public and private agencies and organizations work together on this effort under the guidance of the SHSP Executive Leadership and SHSP Steering Committees. The SHSP addresses the 5 Es: Education, Enforcement, Engineering, Emergency Response, and Emerging Technologies. In summer 2020, state transportation leaders recognized a bolder and more focused approach was necessary to combat the rise in fatalities and serious injuries that have occurred on California roadways since 2010. Four new Guiding Principles have been incorporated into the SHSP update process to further improve safety:

- 1. Integrate Equity**
- 2. Implement a Safe System Approach**
- 3. Double Down on What Works**
- 4. Accelerate Advanced Technology**



VISION

Safe public roads
across California



MISSION

Ensure safety for
all modes of travel
on California's
public roads



GOAL

Zero Fatalities and
Serious Injuries

[Learn More](#)

More Information

For more information about the California SHSP, please visit
<https://dot.ca.gov/programs/safety-programs/shsp>

Questions? Comments? Email to SHSP@dot.ca.gov