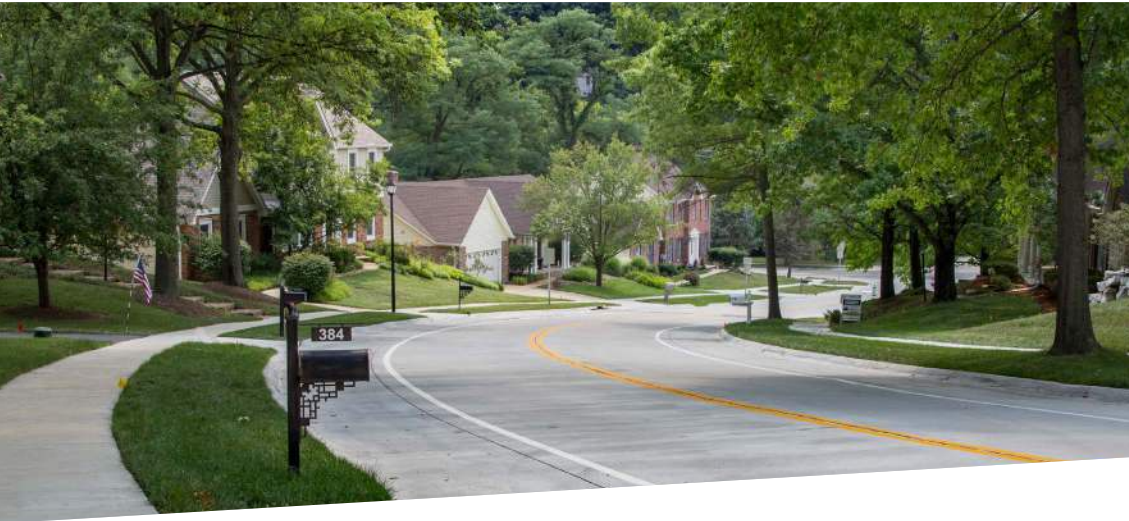**HRGreen** ®

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Safety Action Planning

A Process for Obtaining Funds and Delivering Projects to Provide Safe Transportation Systems

▶ **SAFETY ACTION PLANNING CONTACTS**

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Communities everywhere have recognized the need for making their transportation systems safer for all modes of travel.

With the introduction of new safety funding streams made available through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) as well as other state and local safety funding opportunities, there is a new urgency to compete for these funds. To become more competitive, the development of a Safety Action Plan can be beneficial to document and organize community data, public involvement measures, technical analyses, and project priorities.

Many times, communities already have some level of transportation safety planning in place through other community plans. Developing a specific Safety Action Plan builds upon and organizes data and initiatives from those previous plans to demonstrate the need for funding and readiness for implementation. A Safety Action Plan will position your community to compete for and win funding for transportation projects.
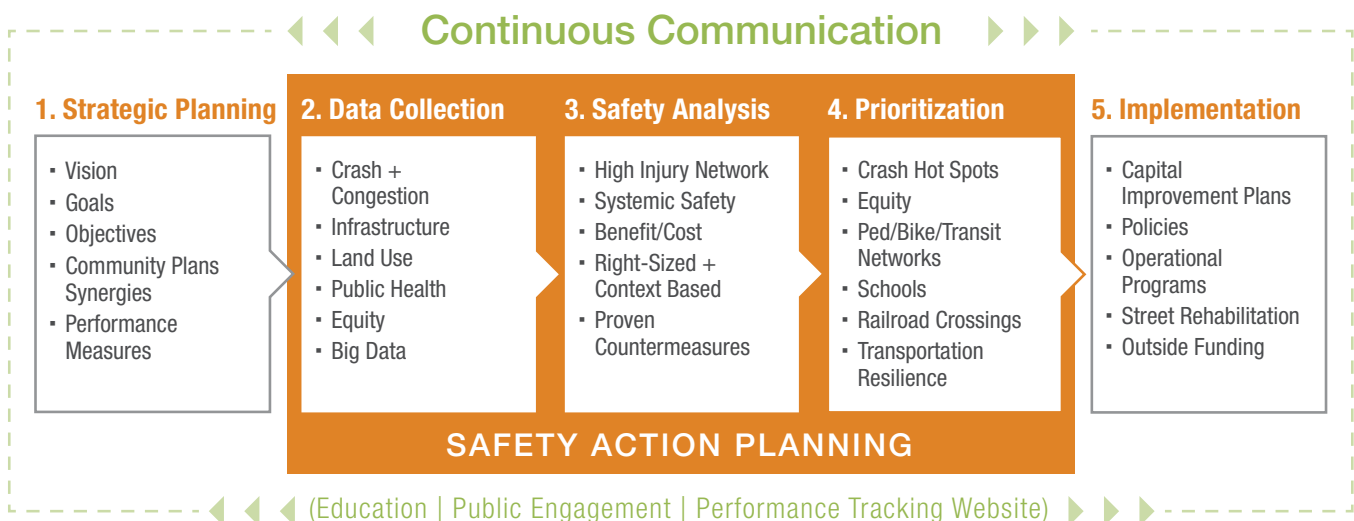
The following includes HR Green's approach to the development of a Safety Action Plan:

LEADERSHIP + COMMITMENT + VISION

As with any community plan, a Safety Action Plan should begin with a firm commitment from the community's governing board or council and ideally be championed by one or more agency departments to facilitate the development of the plan as well as on-going implementation. Many communities already have some form of a transportation safety committee that could be a good starting point for involvement in the process.

In some cases, like the new Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) grant program, having a stated commitment and standing committee in place along with a performance measurement process, is required to access safety plan and project funding opportunities.

LEADERSHIP | COMMITMENT | VISION

◀ ◀ ◀ **Continuous Communication** ▶ ▶ ▶

1. Strategic Planning	2. Data Collection	3. Safety Analysis	4. Prioritization	5. Implementation
• Vision • Goals • Objectives • Community Plans Synergies • Performance Measures	• Crash + Congestion • Infrastructure • Land Use • Public Health • Equity • Big Data	• High Injury Network • Systemic Safety • Benefit/Cost • Right-Sized + Context Based • Proven Countermeasures	• Crash Hot Spots • Equity • Ped/Bike/Transit Networks • Schools • Railroad Crossings • Transportation Resilience	• Capital Improvement Plans • Policies • Operational Programs • Street Rehabilitation • Outside Funding

SAFETY ACTION PLANNING

◀ ◀ ◀ (Education | Public Engagement | Performance Tracking Website) ▶ ▶ ▶

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1. Strategic Planning

Successful Safety Action Plans begin with a vision, often including moving a community towards zero transportation related fatalities. When developing the vision, understanding the elements involved with FHWA The Safe System Approach will provide communities with a better understanding of the multiple facets involved with improving transportation safety.

Goals and objectives are then developed based on the vision and should be coordinated with community plans already in place when applicable. Community plans can include Comprehensive, Strategic, Safe Routes to School, and/or other Transportation Plans. To track the goals and objectives of the plan, tangible performance measures should be developed to understand the effectiveness of the plan moving forward. A community should revisit the goals, objectives, and performance measures on a regular basis to understand the effectiveness of the plan attaining the vision. This timeframe could be an annual effort but will be dependent on the individual community.

The Vision Zero Network Vision, Strategies, Action: Guidelines for an Effective Vision Zero Action Plan provides additional guidance and best practices for transparent performance tracking.

CONTINUOUS COMMUNICATION

Open communication on all facets of the process with the public should be accommodated with an accessible, mobile-friendly, and multi-lingual website. The website provides opportunities for engagement through key contact information, educational materials, surveys, and map-based commenting tools. An important function of the website is the transparent performance measurement tracking as described above.

2. Data Collection

Document the current condition and vision of the transportation system including the safety and capacity of roadways, sidewalks, and bicycle facilities:

CRASH DATA

Available from a state's Department of Transportation (DOT) or local police department, crash data helps identify crash hot spots, trends in crash types, and causes of injury-related crashes.

TRAFFIC CONGESTION

Regional travel demand models and big data sources, such as Inrix and Streetlight data, help determine areas where additional lanes might be needed, as well as opportunities to reduce the number of lanes to accommodate multimodal transportation.

EXISTING TRANSPORTATION NETWORK

Routes for trucks, emergency responders, and public transit are mapped with streets, pedestrian and bicyclist facilities, and at-grade railroad crossings to understand the existing overall transportation network.
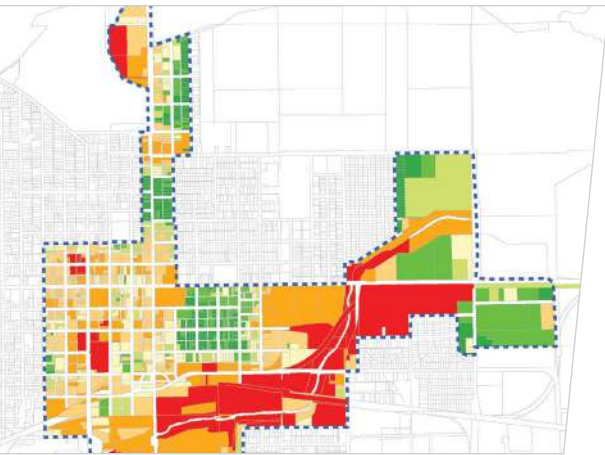
LAND USE

Existing and future land use maps provide context about a transportation network and how land use affects roadway corridors.

PUBLIC HEALTH/EQUITY

Metropolitan or regional planning commissions and local public health officials can often provide geographic location information, transportation system performance metrics, and predominant health concern data that impacts traditionally underserved populations.

COMMUNITY INPUT / CROWD-SOURCED DATA

Local government departments (i.e., public works, parks and recreation, police, and fire departments) and public engagement efforts provide important information that doesn't show up in other data (particularly pedestrian and bicyclist crashes and near-misses).

Public engagement efforts include the development and maintenance of a project website, including easy to use multilingual engagement tools, and partnering with local community and neighborhood groups to ensure maximum participation from all demographics in a community.

HR Green uses GIS mapping database tools to easily understand and provide context to the data described above.

3. Safety Analysis

The data and input received from the community will identify and prioritize safety improvements:

HIGH INJURY NETWORK

A geographically based High Injury Network will be developed to help identify the most pressing needs for safety improvements.

Specific safety improvements will be identified through benefit/cost and predictive safety analyses (following Highway Safety Manual methodology), comparing alternatives to determine right-sized, context-based solutions. Solutions (including the FHWA Proven Safety Countermeasures range from low-cost improvements such as leading pedestrian interval signal timing to significant geometric improvements like roundabouts or protected bike lanes.

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SYSTEMIC SAFETY ANALYSIS

The FHWA Systemic Safety Analysis process allows the geographic identification of higher risk roadway segments or spot locations within the community where safety improvements should be considered. Examples of systemic safety improvements include the addition of center or edge line rumble strips, lighting / signing of horizontal curves, or pedestrian crossing improvements.

The Safety Analysis will result in a set of projects that will specifically improve the safe movement of people regardless of mode of travel.

4. Project Prioritization

Aligning with the transportation goals of the community, safety projects could be prioritized or incorporated in several ways:

PEDESTRIAN + BICYCLIST NETWORKS

Safety projects are prioritized near schools, identified pedestrian and bicyclist networks, and transit stops to encourage more non-motorized travel by improving the safety and comfort of multimodal routes.

EQUITY

To ensure an equitable distribution of safety improvements throughout a community, projects are prioritized by geographical location considering underserved neighborhood boundaries and areas identified to have social detriments to health (poverty, unemployment, education, race, ethnicity, etc.)

RAILROAD CROSSINGS

At-grade railroad crossings present safety concerns for people crossing active railroad tracks and for those who need medical attention by emergency responders blocked by crossing trains. Crossings with safety performance issues or crossings with high occurrence of blocked traffic are key prioritization factors. The Railroad Crossing Elimination Program managed by the Federal Railroad Administration is a funding source for projects to remove, grade-separate, or improved at-grade railroad crossings.

TRANSPORTATION RESILIENCE

Extreme weather events directly impact the safety of a transportation system when critical emergency response or evacuation routes are blocked. The flood risk and redundancy of these routes are considered when developing priorities for improvements. Communities can leverage funding programs such as the new PROTECT Program to make their transportation systems more resilient, and ultimately safer.

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5. Implementation

The identified safety projects must be planned into capital improvement plans and operating budgets with short-, mid-, and long-term implementation strategies, likely competing with multiple other needs and initiatives that are equally important to the function and growth of a community.

POLICY + PROCESSES

Communities have the opportunity to support safety improvements through various operational programs, such as prioritizing street cleaning and snow removal for multi-modal routes. Specific policies, including Neighborhood Traffic Calming Programs, Crosswalk Policies, and Site Plan requirements for new developments, help to incorporate and maintain safety improvements identified through the safety analysis.

For significant safety improvement projects, it may be advantageous to apply for outside funding sources to help supplement local funding.

STREET REHABILITATION PROGRAMS

When streets are improved through traditional rehabilitation or pavement management programs (learn how HR Green tailors Pavement Management Plans to our client's individual needs), communities can look for opportunities to include safety improvement elements within the rehabilitation or reconstruction work. These programs are a great opportunity for systemic safety improvement implementation.

OUTSIDE FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

For significant safety improvement projects, it may be advantageous to apply for outside funding sources to help supplement local funding. There are several state and federal safety funding opportunities that communities or regions can apply for. Applications from communities with a Safety Action Plan will typically be more competitive due to the data, engagement, analysis, and project prioritization that is already in place.

The result of this process will be a Safety Action Plan that is tailored to a community's needs and provides a data-driven roadmap for pursuing funding, programming/ accelerating projects, and ultimately achieving a community's goals and vision for their transportation system.

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