



New FHWA Resources Available to Assist States and Localities in Experimentation with New and Innovative Traffic Control Devices

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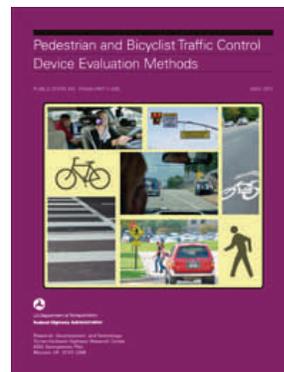
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Localities and States wishing to try out new and innovative traffic control devices that are not included in the *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices* (MUTCD) often face hurdles in doing so. The desire of the locality to quickly try out something that might improve safety and operations is sometimes at odds with the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) desire to ensure the safety and appropriate use of a device through a well-designed research plan that can provide concrete results on the proposed device's effectiveness.

A recently released report entitled *Pedestrian and Bicyclist Traffic Control Device Evaluation Methods* is now available to assist States and localities. This report offers traffic engineering practitioners information on how to evaluate roadway traffic control devices used by pedestrians and bicyclists. Though presented in the context of devices meant for pedestrian and bicyclist facilities, the guidance provided can be applied in a more general sense to evaluations of traffic control devices in all settings.

The evaluation methods report is designed for practitioners



(State transportation departments and county or city engineers and planners) but could also be helpful to traffic safety students and researchers. Personnel without specialized statistical analysis skills should be able to use the report. It presents a detailed plan for practitioners to follow from the initial problem identification stages to documenting the evaluation effort.

The first step of any evaluation is to clearly formulate the research question by identifying the motorist, pedestrian, or bicyclist behavior that poses a safety or operational problem. Candidate traffic control devices and other countermeasures can then be identified as

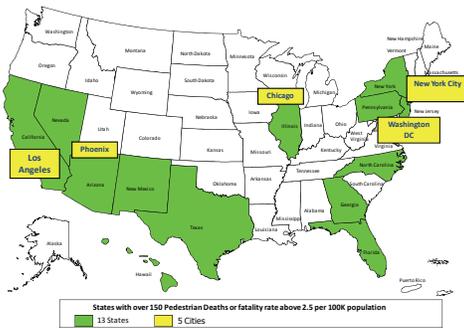
potential solutions to that problem.

The evaluation methods described in this report include user surveys or interviews, visibility studies, driving performance studies, observational traffic studies, and crash analyses. The selection of the appropriate evaluation method will consider cost, time, research aims, and available research equipment and staff.

Additionally, a significantly enhanced and updated "Official Rulings" area of the MUTCD Web site is now available and can be accessed by clicking on the "Official Rulings" link on the left side of the home page (<http://mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov/orsearch.asp>). It's a searchable database where you can obtain information about requests for changes, experiments, and interpretations related to the MUTCD that have been received by the FHWA. You can search the database in a number of ways and keyword searches for pedestrians and bikes has been included. As noted on the web page, information is still being added.

Update on FHWA's Pedestrian Safety Focus States and Cities Effort

In the Spring of 2004, the FHWA Safety Office decided to take a “focused” approach to safety, and pedestrian safety was one of the high priority areas identified. It was determined that the 13 states and five cities that met a certain criteria (see map at left) would receive extra attention in the form of free technical assistance and training.



Over the past 7 years the Safety Office has been working with the focus states and cities to provide free training (almost 200 courses) on designing safe pedestrian facilities and workshops that have led to

the development of pedestrian safety action plans (PSAP). Several states and cities have developed or are working on developing PSAPs, including the State of Florida. Florida is working on developing a state-wide PSAP and has created a project [website](#) to keep stakeholders informed. The purpose of the PSAP is to establish a framework to realize improved pedestrian safety performance through the following processes:

- Define the characteristics of the pedestrian crash problem in Florida
- Identify short term actions to improve pedestrian safety
- Identify longer term policy initiatives to sustain pedestrian safety improvements

- Identify opportunities for interagency and intra-agency coordination
- Provide an opportunity for elected leaders to support agency staff in implementing short and long term strategies

- Provide a framework for Florida DOT District Offices and local agencies to develop and implement local PSAPs

Since the focused approach has been working well, FHWA leadership decided to continue using it with some modification. Several new focus cities and a few new States have been selected (some have been dropped from the list) and will be announced in the near future.

FHWA Continues to Promote Proven Countermeasures to Improve Pedestrian Safety

As mentioned in the [Winter 2011 Pedestrian Forum Newsletter](#), the FHWA Safety Office released a memo two years ago strongly encouraging the states to adopt nine countermeasures that are proven to increase safety and implement them wherever it makes sense. There are two that are aimed specifically at improving pedestrian safety: medians/pedestrian refuge areas and walkways.

In order to assist engineers and practitioners in convincing policy makers to consider widespread use of these countermeasures, FHWA has undertaken a marketing effort aimed at drawing attention to the benefits of developing state/local policies.

As part of this effort, three new brochures have been developed and are available for viewing and printing on the Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Website Under [“Tools to Diagnose and Solve the Problem.”](#):

[-Pedestrian Countermeasure Policy Best Practice Report \(FHWA-SA-11-017\)](#): This report highlights State departments of transportation that have developed policies related to medians, walkways, and shoulders.

[-State Best Practice Policy for Walkways \(FHWA-SA-11-018\)](#) This flyer highlights three agencies that have implemented policies and plans that promote the inclusion of paved shoulders and walkways.

[-State Best Practice Policy for Medians. \(FHWA-SA-11-019\)](#): This flyer highlights three agencies that have implemented policies and plans that promote the inclusion of raised medians.



PBIC Announces Walk Friendly Communities

The Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center (PBIC) announced the inaugural round of [Walk Friendly Communities](#) (WFC). After evaluating applicant communities in several categories related to walking (including safety, mobility, access and comfort), PBIC has recognized the following 11 communities for their commitment to improving walkability and pedestrian safety:

Platinum Level [Seattle, Washington](#)

Gold Level [Ann Arbor, Michigan](#)

[Arlington, Virginia](#); [Hoboken, New Jersey](#); [Santa Barbara, California](#)

Silver Level [Charlottesville, Virginia](#); [Decatur, Georgia](#)

Bronze Level [Austin, Texas](#); [Charlotte, North Carolina](#); [Flagstaff, Arizona](#); [Wilsonville, Oregon](#)

Pedestrian injuries and fatalities remain alarmingly high in the U.S. at the same time that there is an increasing groundswell of support for active transportation across the country. Communities are channeling this support for livability and taking

advantage of the many benefits of walking — improved safety, environmental and personal health, reduced traffic congestion, enhanced quality of life, and economic rewards.

In an effort not only to recognize but to motivate “walk friendly” communities, applicants learn best practices through participating in the application process.

“The WFC designation recognizes communities that help set the bar in fostering and accommodating walking,” said Carl Sundstrom, WFC program manager. “We were pleased with the response we received for the first round of this new program and are very excited to see communities use this program to further their pedestrian efforts.”

League of American Bicyclists releases “Getting A Fair Share for Safety from the Highway Safety Improvement Program”

The League of American Bicyclists recently released a [report](#) designed to assist States and localities in funding their pedestrian and bike safety improvement projects. The Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) was created under the 2005 transportation authorization law, the [Safe Accountable Flexible Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users \(SAFETEA-LU\)](#), as one of the core Federal-Aid funding sources.

HSIP provides funding for safety projects aimed at reducing traffic fatalities and serious injuries. Although bike and pedestrian safety projects are eligible for HSIP funding, it has sometimes been difficult for states and localities to justify spending HSIP funds on projects that will improve

safety for these users because the related crashes are so infrequent.

This report examines some of the states that have successfully dedicated Federal safety funds to reduce bicycle and pedestrian fatalities and crashes. Examples of eligible projects include bike lanes, roadway shoulders, crosswalks, other intersection improvements and signage.

The document offers details on the following tips gleaned from local officials and activists who have been successful in obtaining funding under HSIP for pedestrian and bicycle-related projects:

- Understand the HSIP planning process.
- Cultivate internal advocates.

- Cultivate elected officials.
- Influence the Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP).
- Learn the project selection criteria.
- Collect crash/fatality data
- Announce the funding opportunity.
- Follow up.

Examples are included from Virginia, Florida, California, Hawaii, and New Jersey.



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This *Pedestrian Forum* is available on the Web at http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/ped_bike/pedforum/

To receive information on future newsletters, please use the e-subscription service provided on this site: <http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/esubscribe.cfm#ped>. Scroll down to “Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety” and select “subscribe” next to “Pedestrian Forum.”

Livable communities are a high priority of the U.S. Department of Transportation and the Obama Administration. A livable community is one that provides safe and convenient transportation choices to all citizens, whether it's by walking, bicycling, transit, or driving. Each year, unfortunately, pedestrian fatalities comprise about 12 percent of all traffic fatalities and there are approximately 4,000 pedestrian deaths. Another 70,000 pedestrians are injured in roadway crashes annually. The numbers are improving, but we still have a ways to go. Pedestrian safety improvements depend on an integrated approach that involves the four E's: Engineering, Enforcement, Education, and Emergency Services. The Pedestrian Forum highlights recent pedestrian safety activities related to the four E's that will help save lives.



New Safe Routes to School Noteworthy Practices

The National Center for Safe Routes to School just released the [*Safe Routes to School Noteworthy Practices Guide: A Compendium of State SRTS Program Practices*](#). In 2005, the United States Congress established the national Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program in Section 1404 of the SAFETEA-LU. Through a combination of engineering, education, encouragement, enforcement and evaluation strategies, the program was developed to address traffic safety, traffic congestion and air quality issues around schools, while also acknowledging the health benefits of active school travel.

The Federal SRTS program empowers states and local communities to choose to make walking and bicycling to school a safe and available everyday mode choice. Since the federal SRTS program was enacted, states have implemented their programs through a myriad of approaches.

The guide contains specific examples of noteworthy practices by state SRTS programs for consideration by state and Federal SRTS practitioners. It was completed in partnership with the National Center for Safe Routes to School (National Center) with funding from the FHWA SRTS program.

The noteworthy practices identified in the guide have been implemented by state SRTS programs. Noteworthy practices range from innovative ways to work with advocacy groups to streamlining authorization for projects. These noteworthy practices provide strategies for state DOTs to consider to effectively structure and deliver state SRTS programs.

As part of the development process, five key management areas were iden-

tified and were used to organize the practices within the guide:

- Program Structure
- Outreach and Education
- Project Selection
- Project Implementation
- Project Closeout

The management areas identified are key elements for the development and delivery of a state SRTS program. Practices identified in each area are intended to provide practitioners with suggestions to consider for their current and future program needs.