



Transportation Safety Planning – National and Idaho Context

Safety is a national transportation performance goal area, but more importantly, it is the number one priority for all transportation system users. For this reason, every state Department of Transportation (DOT) and metropolitan planning organization (MPO) is investing in programs and projects to reduce fatalities and serious injuries. Idaho is addressing transportation safety through a “Toward Zero Deaths” approach, which focuses on zero fatalities and the promise to move residents and visitors to their destinations safely. Many different stakeholders play a role in achieving this commitment, with transportation planners leading the way on stakeholder coordination, crash data analysis, prioritizing and programming investments, and tracking and evaluating results.

To assist States and MPOs improve transportation safety, including progress toward zero deaths goals, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Offices of Safety and Planning sponsored a series of *Transportation Safety Planning (TSP) Workshops*. In April 2017, the Idaho Transportation Department (ITD) hosted a workshop with participants from the Idaho MPOs and the FHWA. The workshop provided an opportunity to collaborate on transportation safety and integrate safety in the transportation planning process. The effort consisted of a workshop to discuss strategies and opportunities for collaboration; a follow-up webinar to discuss further opportunities and challenges; and a peer exchange webinar to share successful practices in other states and broaden collaboration.

Idaho’s Transportation Safety Planning Strengths

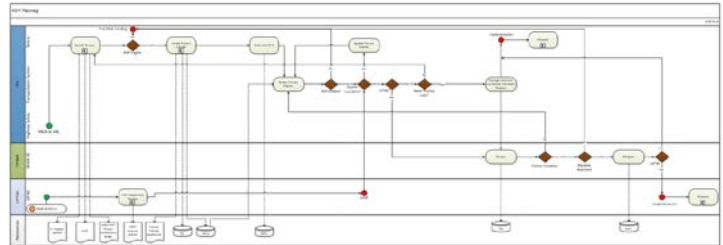
The *Transportation Safety Planning Workshops* effort complimented and highlighted the safety planning work already underway in Idaho and provided new ideas for moving forward. Areas where Idaho excels in transportation safety planning include:

- The ability and expertise at MPOs to analyze crash data to prepare reports and identify priority locations or projects.
- The availability of crash data and analysis functionality through the WebCARS crash database to conduct safety planning.
- Identified opportunities to include safety in other transportation projects and within the context of long range transportation plans.
- Availability of resources through the [Local Highway Technical Assistance Council](#) (LHTAC) to coordinate with local jurisdictions and identify safety improvements off the state system.
- Integration of safety into public involvement activities through an ITD Procedures Manual, [Project Outreach Planner](#), and Communications Portal.

Idaho's Best Practices in Transportation Safety Planning

Story Maps: Story maps allow the department to combine authoritative maps with narrative text, images, and multimedia content. They are also a good way to ensure stakeholders and the public easily understand ITD's goals and information. The maps are (and will be) used for long-range, corridor, and modal project planning activities. Safety, which is one component of the map, and allows end-users to understand the safety issues on a corridor in conjunction with other transportation needs. Story maps are available on the [IPlan site](#), a collaborative site used by ITD to collect and distribute information on the system network.

HSIP Flow Charts: ITD developed a flowchart to provide a transparent process, showing how Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) projects are selected and evaluated and how HSIP funds are distributed. One element of the chart detailed the process for identifying and funding safety projects through LHTAC and the other element described the same information for the ITD project identification process.



Local Assistance: LHTAC administers the [Local Highway Safety Improvement Program \(LHSIP\)](#) to provide local jurisdictions with resources to reduce fatalities and serious injuries on public roads. Approximately \$3.7 million is available annually and to incentive participation, LHTAC develops a list of eligible jurisdictions, provides crash data, and supplies a toolbox of countermeasures for intersections, roadway departures, and traffic signals. LHTAC is also updating its data collection capabilities, using grant funds to collect volume data. In addition, they are also starting to put resources into local road safety plan development.

Next Steps for Transportation Safety Planning in Idaho

- **Interaction** – Institute more regular communication between FHWA, ITD, the MPOs, and LHTAC on transportation safety issues and needs.
- **Transportation Safety Planning** – Develop regional safety plans and better incorporate safety elements into the long range transportation plan.
- **Tools** - Continue information sharing, training, and technical assistance on ITDs available safety data and analysis methods and other resources.
- **Advanced Analysis** – Take advantage of predictive analysis tools and high accident location (HAL) lists as a way to identify safety improvements.
- **Local Road Safety** – Provide trainings, information, data, and other opportunities to encourage MPOs to take advantage of LHTAC resources.
- **Public Involvement** – Utilize the Communications Portal to collect information from the public on safety.