

TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

TRANSPORTATION SAFETY AND SECURITY

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS



APPENDIX 2 OF 2
SCAG TRAFFIC SAFETY
LEADERSHIP SYMPOSIUM
WHITE PAPER

ADOPTED ON SEPTEMBER 3, 2020

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TECHNICAL REPORT

TRANSPORTATION SAFETY AND SECURITY APPENDIX 2 OF 2
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APPENDIX 2 OF 2

SCAG Traffic Safety Leadership Symposium White Paper

INTRODUCTION

Traffic safety is a serious issue in Southern California. The SCAG region, like California and the nation as a whole, experienced a period of annual declines in traffic-related fatalities and serious injuries until 2012 when they began to steadily rise. Although the region has made some progress on safety, 1,500 people are killed, 5,200 are seriously injured and 136,000 are injured in traffic collisions on average each year. About 73 percent of those killed since 2001 were in vehicles or on motorcycles, while the remaining 27 percent were walking or bicycling (disproportionate to their mode share). The numbers of both pedestrians and motorcyclists killed are the highest they have been for more than a decade.

On May 1, 2019, SCAG held a Traffic Safety Leadership Symposium (Symposium) that explored regional traffic safety issues and the policy and implementation tools available to local governments. Expert panelists highlighted local strategies to improve safety, including balancing equity and enforcement, education and outreach strategies, and safe street design. Designed for elected officials, city managers, and high-level planning staff, the Symposium's primary goals aimed to:

1. Encourage collaboration among local elected officials to support collision-reducing strategies;
2. Inform elected officials and high-level practitioners about traffic safety issues and solutions in the region; and
3. Motivate action at the local level through the *Go Human* Safety Pledge.

The purpose of this white paper is to summarize the discussion and findings of the Symposium for inclusion in SCAG's 2020-2045 Regional Transportation Plan/ Sustainable Communities Strategy (Connect SoCal).

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The 5-hour Symposium included four panel sessions with interactive roundtable discussions and exercises between each panel. The panel discussions included the following topics:

1. Equity Considerations in Improving Traffic Safety
2. Public Education Campaigns and Outreach Strategies
3. Designing Safer Streets Through Planning
4. Leading Change: The Role of Elected Officials

The format for first three panel discussions included the following:

1. Presentations by each panelist
2. Moderator-led question and answer (Q&A) session
3. Audience-led Q&A using the online Q&A and polling platform Sli.do
4. Interactive table exercise session in which audience members discussed a scenario related to the panel topic (refer to Attachment B).

The last panel included a brief presentation by each panelist, followed by a Q&A session.

WELCOMING REMARKS

SCAG's Acting Planning Director, Sarah Jepson, welcomed attendees by characterizing the Symposium as a more intimate setting than the General Assembly, providing an opportunity for in-depth discussion. Jepson described safety trends throughout the SCAG region by presenting data from SCAG's Transportation Safety Regional Existing Conditions report. This data describes how unsafe conditions disproportionately harm pedestrians and bicyclists – while non-motorized travelers initiate only 12% of all trips, they represent 27% of all fatalities.

Jepson also explained SCAG's role in improving traffic safety throughout the region. In addition to gathering and analyzing safety data, SCAG provides funding for local safety plans and demonstration projects. Many of these demonstration projects are coordinated and branded within the *Go Human* outreach campaign, which is focused on reducing collisions and encouraging active transportation. Jepson then outlined the next steps for the Symposium attendees, which included attending Sub-Regional Safety Workshops in the summer, as well as joining SCAG's Transportation Safety Working Group.

Jepson's remarks concluded with the Symposium's first table exercise, which

required the attendees to review SCAG’s Transportation Safety Regional Existing Conditions fact sheet in their respective county and discussed any surprises and lessons learned. Participants described specific issues in their own communities that may lead to crashes - one participant identified the “85th Percentile rule” as limiting their city’s ability to improve safety. California requires cities to set speed limits by identifying the maximum speed of 85% of drivers on each road segment.

SYMPOSIUM ATTENDANCE

A total of 99 people attended the Safety Leadership Symposium, including multiple attendees from each of SCAG’s six counties. As **TABLE 1** shows, 26 attendees did not represent any specific city or county, 25 attendees

represented Los Angeles County agencies, and 24 attendees represented Riverside County agencies. As it includes most of the SCAG region’s population, Los Angeles County was underrepresented at the symposium. In contrast, Riverside County was overrepresented, presumably due to the symposium’s location in the county itself.

Symposium attendees held a variety of professional roles across the public and private sectors. **TABLE 2** shows that most attendees represented the public sector. 37 elected officials attended, including one County Supervisor, five Mayors, and 31 City Councilmembers. 38 public sector staff members also attended the symposium, representing local, state, and federal agencies. 14 attendees represented the private sector, including eight nonprofit representatives and six business representatives.

TABLE 1 Symposium Attendance by County

Attendance	Los Angeles	Riverside	Orange	Imperial	Ventura	San Bernardino	N/A	Total
# of Attendees	25	24	11	7	3	3	26	99

Source: SCAG, 2019

TABLE 2 Symposium Attendance by Role

Attendance	Elected Official	City or County Staff	Business	Other	State or Federal Staff	Nonprofit	Total
# of Attendees	37	30	10	8	8	6	99

Source: SCAG, 2019

SAFETY COMMITMENT CARDS

SCAG distributed Safety Pledge Commitment cards for attendees to sign up and learn more about the how to design and build safer streets that promote walking, biking and community connection. The Safety Pledge encourages local governments to commit to improving safety in your community. Cities can choose to participate in a variety of ways depending on the unique needs of your community. Anything from adopting a Vision Zero plan, to hosting a pop-up safety demonstration, to implementing a safety outreach campaign can help make a difference. By committing to this pledge, the cities will be eligible to register for safety workshops and webinars and gain access to the Safety Pledge Toolkit. The commitment card also included a short survey for attendees to select topics of interest for the upcoming subregional safety workshops and webinars.

TABLE 3 Safety Pledge Commitment Cards – Survey

Topics	Interest
Vision and Planning	9
Research and Data	8
Public Education and Outreach Strategies	9
Engineering Solutions	11
Enforcement Strategies	9
Policymaking and Funding Opportunities	17
New Mobility Options and Safety Impacts	10

Source: SCAG, 2019

After the symposium, SCAG received a total of 22 commitment cards, which included 12 elected officials and the remainder from local cities, public agencies, and private entities. SCAG also created a webpage to solicit more sign-ups leading up to the safety workshops and webinars.

EQUITY CONSIDERATIONS IN IMPROVING TRAFFIC SAFETY [PANEL 1]

Traffic safety is an issue everywhere in Southern California, but people in low-income or disadvantaged communities are often disproportionately impacted. Expert panelists discussed strategies for ensuring equity in transportation planning and investments in low-income communities of color, as well as equipping local agencies with tools they need to help make roads safer for

TABLE 4 Speakers on Equity Considerations in Improving Traffic Safety

Name	Title	Organization
Jesi Harris (Moderator)	Inspiring Growth Manager	People for Mobility Justice
Paul Martin	Active Transportation Coordinator	Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA)
Dr. Destiny Thomas	Transportation Planning Associate II	Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT)
Mark Yamarone	Deputy Executive Director of Long Range Planning	Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro)

Source: SCAG, 2019

everyone who walks, bikes and drives. Topics in this panel included equitable approaches to enforcing traffic laws in Vision Zero initiatives, incorporating equity in long range transportation planning, promoting access in Equity Focused Communities, and partnering with law enforcement agencies to help understand which public behaviors to focus on during enforcement.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

#1: APPROACH VISION ZERO THROUGH THE 5 D'S TO THE 4 E'S OF STREET SAFETY

Vision Zero's foundational elements include the following four (4) E's: Education, Evaluation, Engineering, and Enforcement. People for Mobility Justice (PMJ) crafted additional elements to identify the current gaps in Vision Zero's 4 E's that focuses on saving the lives of pedestrians and cyclists who are disproportionately low-income and Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC), as well as address the unintended consequences of BIPOC who are heavily policed and displaced. PMJ's foundational elements of the 5 D's to street safety include the following:

- Decolonize - May our approach in any urban planning, design and decision-making be rooted in the ancestral land in which we work, live, and play to honor the indigenous people and the native flora and fauna. Additionally, we are committed to halting the colonial practices that displace our people to ensure that long-term residents will be protected and have full rights to stay in their communities be it as tenants, homeowners, or business owners.
- Decongest - May everyone have access to transportation and streets that support our full well-being and keep us alive.
- Decriminalize - May Black, Brown and Undocumented people have the freedom to move in public spaces without state harassment, deportation or death.
- Dignify - May the people who are houseless, have disabilities, are LGBTQIA+, work the streets (sex workers, street vendors, etc.) have

immense protection for their lives and the resources they need to support their well-being.

- Determination - May our BIPOC communities have the right to self-determination, which we define as ensuring that our voice and leadership are valued monetarily, from expert advice to implemented reality on our streets.

#2: APPROACHES FOR POLICE OFFICERS TO ENFORCE TRAFFIC LAWS

Funded by a SCAG Grant, OCTA's Partnerships with Police (PWP) program includes OCTA staff briefings to local Police Departments to share information that may help reduce crashes and insights on the most common behaviors leading to bicycle and pedestrian crashes within the County. The program is based on San Francisco's "Focus on the Five" campaign, in which officers prioritize enforcing the five most common causes of collisions and injuries (e.g., speeding, violating pedestrian right-of-way in a crosswalk, running red lights, running stop signs, and failing to yield while turning).

- OCTA staff also trains officers on laws governing pedestrian and bicycle safety. For example, drivers must treat every street corner as a crosswalk, including those without painted markings. Drivers also must provide at least three feet of space when passing any cyclist, and cyclists may ride in the center of any right-hand lane if they do not have more than 3 feet of space from moving or parked cars. By ensuring that officers understand these nuanced laws, OCTA's program is enhancing safety while also reducing cities' exposure to lawsuits alleging improper enforcement of traffic laws.

#3: APPROACHES TO DIGNITY-INFUSED COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Equity must involve racial justice, education must involve community engagement, and enforcement must involve non-police staff. For example:

- Resident crossing guards and citizen compliance staff can help enforce traffic laws under LADOT supervision. Community diversion programs and restorative justice officers also help ensure enforcement focuses on behavioral improvement rather than punishment alone. And, engaging in residents' native languages is also crucial in fostering mutual understanding with community members.
- Improved infrastructure and economic neighborhood change characterized by the influx of investment could lead to displacement and transportation agencies can be part of the contribution of gentrification. It is important that these agencies take proactive and collaborate active to prevent displacement. UCLA developed an anti-displacement strategy for LADOT, which included the following recommendations:
 - Adopt an "Index of Displacement Pressure" as an internal indicator for special project review and anti-displacement process;
 - Create internal accountability system through training and partnerships with planning and housing departments; and
 - Form and facilitate resident advisory councils to guide appropriate community engagement practices.

#4: TRANSPORTATION AGENCIES SHOULD ADOPT AN EQUITY FRAMEWORK

Although traffic safety is often discussed in relation to Los Angeles's affluent Westside, South Los Angeles includes 80% of the city's most dangerous roadways, encompassing an area which historically suffered from disinvestment.

- Metro recently adopted a framework to prioritize and enhance equity in its Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) based on the following four (4) pillars:
 - Define and measure – Develop a common basis to build an equity agenda, as well as pursue an inclusive conversation that commits

to working historically underserved community to establish meaningful equity goals.

- Listen and learn – Establish comprehensive, multiple forums to engage the community meaningfully and actively in defining, measuring and acting on equitable outcomes.
- Focus and deliver – Incorporate equity in the LRTP and partner with others to address issues of gentrification, displacement, and affordable housing.
- Train and grow – A new equity agenda that requires "top-to-bottom" ownership throughout the agency
- The equity platform focuses distributing funding in equity-focused communities (EFCs), which is the agency's county-specific counterpart to CalEnviroScreen's "disadvantaged community" designation.
 - Metro identified EFC's as census tracts with at least two of the following conditions - at least 80% of residents are nonwhite, at least 45% of households are low-income (earning less than \$35,000 annually), or at least 10% of households do not own cars. By this definition, roughly 30% of Los Angeles County residents live in EFCs.
- The LRTP identifies communities with inequities, as well as develops performance measures to assess Metro's impact on these communities.
 - The LRTP includes dozens of performance measures aimed at improving transportation in EFCs, including a reduction in collisions involving all modes. However, as individual cities control the street right-of-way, Metro encourages local elected officials to reach these goals.

PUBLIC EDUCATION CAMPAIGNS AND OUTREACH STRATEGIES [PANEL 2]

Whether campaigns are aimed at encouraging drivers to practice safe behavior, teaching people how to safely use e-scooters, or educating local communities about the importance of building safer streets, a little outreach can make a big impact. This panel discussed a variety of strategies through which local agencies and the private sector have improved traffic safety and raised awareness through the help of public education campaigns and initiatives. Topics in this panel included public safety campaigns on distracted driving, public education about e-scooter safety and rules of the road and collaborating with SCAG’s *Go Human* campaign to reimagine and redesign streets to promote walking, biking and community connection.

TABLE 5 Speakers on Public Education Campaigns and Outreach Strategies

Name	Title	Organization
Jennifer Zamora-Jamison (Special Speaker)	Founder	Decide to Drive
Demetria Espinoza (Moderator)	Senior Equity & Policy Manager	Safe Routes to School National Partnership
Doug Shupe	Corporate Communications & Programs Manager	Automobile Club of Southern California (AAA)
Tim Harter	Senior Manager of Government Relations	Bird
Rene Yarnall	Community Development Manager	City of San Jacinto

Source: SCAG, 2019

KEY TAKEAWAYS

#1: DISTRACTED DRIVING IS A FATAL THREAT

Jennifer Zamora-Jamison provided an opening statement to the panel about how distracted driving impacted her family. While reaching for a dropped cell phone, a distracted driver lost control of the car and collided head-on with Zamora-Jamison’s husband and daughter. Her husband died at the scene, and although her daughter survived the crash, she took her own life several years later.

- According to Doug Shupe (AAA), an average of nine (9) people are killed daily by distracted drivers, with actual fatalities likely higher due to hidden and unreported distractions involved in fatal crashes. Although phone companies have attempted to limit device use while driving, these limitations are difficult to implement, especially as employers such as Uber and Lyft require phone use while driving.
- Zamora-Jamison has worked to prevent similar tragedies from happening to others. For example, she advocated for California’s Assembly Bill (AB) 47, which would penalize drivers who are repeatedly caught holding a phone while driving.
- AAA’s “Don’t Drive Intoxicated” campaign aims to stigmatize distracted driving as comparable to driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
 - People can create a personalized pledge card online to share on social media to help spread awareness of the dangers of distracted driving.

#2: E-SCOOTER COMPANIES ARE EDUCATING RIDERS AND RESPONDING TO COMPLAINTS

According to Bird, over 38.5 million e-scooter trips occurred in 2018. Bird’s in-app rider education improves the experience of customers and concerned residents. Bird requires first-time customers to complete a tutorial and requires all customers to photograph their properly parked e-scooter at

the end of every ride.

- Bird's in- app geofencing capability restricts e-scooter operations based on local regulations, such as restricting parking and/or reducing speed automatically in certain areas.
- Bird also hired team members (bird watcher) to connect directly in the community to promote a safe and equitable service. Additionally, anyone can report bad parking and unsafe riding within the Bird app or via phone.
- Customer injuries on an e-scooter are more common in cities without safe bike infrastructure.
- Although Bird has not expanded to most rural communities, Bird expressed interest in partnering with cities such as San Jacinto to assess potential demand. Tim Harter (Bird) claimed that Bird is no longer expanding to cities without collaborating with local government officials first.

#3: CITIES ARE USING THE GO HUMAN FRAMEWORK TO ENGAGE RESIDENTS

"Envision San Jacinto" is a *Go Human* event, which temporarily closed a major downtown street to automobile traffic. The event helped residents imagine a pedestrian-oriented downtown.

- The City of San Jacinto conducted outreach in which local students designed the crosswalk art for the event. The crosswalks were later used for walk-to-school day the following month. The City emphasized the importance of conducting outreach in Spanish to ensure broader participation.
- The City created a video on the event, which included interviews with local business owners. Feedback on the event included the following:
 - Walking increases foot traffic in the area
 - Parklet improvements can provide additional seating

for downtown businesses

- According to a survey, 90% of attendees wanted the city to permanently close the street to cars
- This event supports the City's other active transportation initiatives, including a recently completed San Jacinto Trails Master Plan and an ongoing complete street planning process.

#4: CITIES SOLUTIONS TO REDUCE SPEEDING

The interactive table exercise involved the attendees to discuss how cities can prevent speeding violations in school zones. Suggestions included the following:

- Engineering the curb extensions at intersections to slow down traffic
- Conducting a Safe Routes to School Assessment
- Engage traffic enforcement and the local public works department
- Improve signage to clearly state when entering a school zone
- Restripe street and add new lane markings
- Add speed detection devices

DESIGNING SAFER STREETS THROUGH PLANNING [PANEL 3]

Local communities can access various tools to plan and implement infrastructure improvements that make streets safer for people who walk, bike and drive. An expert panel highlighted opportunities for funding, local success stories, and how technology can help cities gather data to inform regional planning efforts. Topics in the panel included infrastructure design that reduces roadway collisions, fatalities, and serious injuries, as well as using smart streets technology to track and analyze data to improve traffic safety.

TABLE 6 Speakers on Designing Safer Streets Through Planning

Name	Title	Organization
Eric Lewis (Moderator)	City Traffic Engineer / Transportation Division Manager	City of Moreno Valley
HP Le	Business Development Manager	Verizon Smart Communities and Venues
Richard Ke	Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) Manager	Caltrans Local Assistance
Ryan Stendell	Director of Community Development	City of Palm Desert

Source: SCAG, 2019

KEY TAKEAWAYS

#1: NEW TECHNOLOGY CAN IMPROVE LOCAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Verizon’s wireless and fiber optic networks can provide data on traffic and infrastructure conditions. Verizon acquired Sensity Systems, which provided new lighting, video, and sensor technology.

- Cities can acquire Verizon’s data to understand and address problems. Le explained Verizon’s emphasis on privacy, stressing the importance of community engagement around privacy concerns.

#2: CALTRANS’ LOCAL HIGHWAY SAFETY IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM AIDS CITIES

Caltrans Local Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) aims to reduce traffic fatalities and serious injuries. HSIP allocates funds to projects listed in the Strategic Highway Safety Plan, which is updated every five years.

- Between 2011 and 2018, HSIP allocated \$895 million to roughly 1,200 projects with expected benefits totaling \$11.6 billion dollars. Cities must create a Local Roadway Safety Plan by 2022 to receive future HSIP funds.

#3: CITIES ARE USING MULTIMODAL STREET DESIGN TO REVITALIZE COMMERCIAL AREAS

City of Palm Desert redesigned a major downtown street to improve safety and attract visitors. City officials noticed a large amount of “cut-through” traffic along the city’s main road, State Highway 111. In response, Palm Desert’s City Council studied ways to prioritize people over cars, eventually redesigning a major street to replace general purpose lanes with protected bike lanes and additional parking.

- The City’s success required substantial time and external support. Palm Desert began planning the project in 2013 but did not break ground until 2019. The project required collaboration between risk-averse staff and more imaginative staff, as street redesigns can result in unforeseen consequences and constituent backlash. SCAG also assisted the city by issuing a grant to pilot the proposed redesign as an 11-day *Go Human* demonstration.

LEADING CHANGE: THE ROLE OF ELECTED OFFICIALS [PANEL 4]

The audience learned from local elected officials who have successfully achieved traffic safety improvements in their jurisdictions. Elected officials shared local policies, programs and projects in creating safer and healthier streets. They also discussed their roles in leadership to inspire and lead change in reducing traffic collisions, as well as planning for disruptive technologies.

TABLE 7 Speakers on Designing Safer Streets Through Planning

Name	Title	Organization
Tom Kirk (Moderator)	Executive Director	Coachella Valley Association of Governments (CVAG)
Meghan Sahli-Wells	Mayor	City of Culver City
Robert Radi	Councilmember	City of La Quinta
Rex Richardson	Councilmember	City of Long Beach

Source: SCAG, 2019

KEY TAKEAWAYS

#1: ELECTED OFFICIALS MUST EMPATHIZE WITH CONSTITUENTS TO ACHIEVE SAFER STREETS

- Councilmember Rex Richardson (City of Long Beach) noted that safe streets advocates convey their message more effectively using “asset-based framing,” in which communication emphasizes humanity rather than systems or data. Councilmember Richardson demonstrated this strategy by describing how a child would experience unsafe streets in Long Beach.
- Councilmember Robert Radi (City of La Quinta) emphasized that constituents do not respond well to traffic safety jargon, and that elected officials should focus on creating a relatable vision for safer streets.
- Mayor Meghan Sahli-Wells (City of Culver City) implored audience members to undo car-centric street designs, which have led to “death, obesity, and pollution.” Sahli-Wells added that the City started a Safe Route to Schools (SRTS) program through a grant from the Los Angeles County Public Health Department, which allowed the City to hire a SRTS coordinator. Mayor Sahli-Wells explained that programs like SRTS provide youth with a lifelong enthusiasm for multimodal travel.



MAIN OFFICE

900 Wilshire Blvd., Ste. 1700
Los Angeles, CA 90017
Tel: (213) 236-1800

REGIONAL OFFICES

IMPERIAL COUNTY

1405 North Imperial Ave., Ste. 104
El Centro, CA 92243
Tel: (213) 236-1967

ORANGE COUNTY

OCTA Building
600 South Main St., Ste. 741
Orange, CA 92868
Tel: (213) 236-1997

RIVERSIDE COUNTY

3403 10th St., Ste. 805
Riverside, CA 92501
Tel: (951) 784-1513

SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY

1170 West 3rd St., Ste. 140
San Bernardino, CA 92410
Tel: (213) 236-1925

VENTURA COUNTY

4001 Mission Oaks Blvd., Ste. L
Camarillo, CA 93012
Tel: (213) 236-1960



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