

ITEM 9 – INFORMATION
November 19, 2025

PBPP: Draft Targets for Transit and Highway Safety

Background: The board will be briefed on the process for developing regional targets for transit safety and highway safety performance measures, as required annually by the federal performance-based planning and programming (PBPP) regulations for MPOs. The board will be asked to approve the final regional safety targets at its December meeting.



MEMORANDUM

TO: Transportation Planning Board
FROM: Janie Nham, TPB Transportation Planner
SUBJECT: Performance-Based Planning and Programming (PBPP) Regional Highway Safety Target Development Process for 2025
DATE: November 13, 2025

This memorandum provides an update on implementation of the federal performance-based planning and programming (PBPP) target-setting requirements under federal surface transportation regulations for the area of roadway safety. State Departments of Transportation (DOTs) and metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) are required to adopt highway safety targets and measure progress against those targets annually for their respective planning areas.

The TPB has adopted annual highway safety performance targets since 2018 in accordance with federal regulation. At the November 7, 2025 TPB Technical Committee meeting, TPB staff briefed committee members on the National Capital Region's progress in meeting its 2020-2024 highway safety targets and reviewed the process for establishing highway safety targets for the 2022-2026 period.

HIGHWAY SAFETY REQUIREMENTS

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) published the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) and Safety Performance Management Measures (Safety PM) Final Rules in the Federal Register on March 15, 2016. The Safety PM Final Rule added Part 490 to title 23 of the Code of Federal Regulations to implement the performance management requirements in 23 U.S.C. 150. The Safety PM rule supports the HSIP, as it establishes five-year rolling average safety performance measures to carry out the HSIP and to assess serious injuries and fatalities on all public roads. Together, these regulations are intended to improve data, foster transparency and accountability, and allow safety progress to be tracked at the national level. The process is intended to inform State DOT and MPO planning, programming, and decision-making for the greatest possible reduction in fatalities and serious injuries.

States and MPOs must fulfill the target setting requirements of the rulemaking. State DOTs are required to set statewide targets for five performance measures. Targets for the first three performance measures (number of fatalities, rate of fatalities, and number of serious injuries) must be identical to the targets set by the State Highway Safety Office (SHSO). Each target must represent the anticipated performance outcome for all public roadways in the state, regardless of ownership.

Subsequently, MPOs have up to 180 days to adopt highway safety targets for their MPO planning area. MPOs have two options in adopting highway safety targets. For each performance measure, the MPO may either agree to plan and program projects so they contribute toward accomplishing the state DOTs safety targets, or adopt a quantifiable target for the performance measure for the MPO planning area. MPOs are required to coordinate with the state DOT(s) to ensure consistency.

| Performance Measure | Description | Data Source |
|--|--|--|
| Number of Fatalities (5 year rolling average) | Total number of fatalities during a calendar year | FARS ¹ |
| Rate of Fatalities per 100 million VMT (5 year rolling average) | Ratio of total fatalities to VMT | FARS and HPMS ² (or MPO estimate) |
| Number of Serious Injuries (5 year rolling average) | Total number of serious injuries during a calendar year | State reported serious injury data |
| Rate of Serious Injuries per 100 million VMT (5 year rolling average) | Ratio of total serious injuries to VMT | State reported serious injury data ³ and HPMS |
| Number of Non-Motorized Fatalities and Serious Injuries (5 year rolling average) | Total number of fatalities and serious injuries during a calendar year | FARS and State serious injury data ³ |

¹ FARS: Fatality Analysis Reporting System

² HPMS: Highway Performance Monitoring System

DEVELOPMENT OF REGIONAL HIGHWAY SAFETY TARGETS

The TPB develops highway targets based on the targets developed and adopted by the three State DOTs of the National Capital Region (NCR). The methodology applies Maryland's target development approach to identify a "sub-target" for the Maryland portion of the NCR, applies a modified version of Virginia's suggested approach for its MPOs to identify a sub-target for the Virginia portion of the NCR, and incorporates the District of Columbia's target as a sub-target for the DC portion of the NCR. TPB staff then combine the three sub-targets into a regional target for the NCR, for each performance measure. In addition, based on board policy, if a calculated target is higher than the previous year's target, the new target is set equal to the previous target (i.e., capped) so as not to increase from the previous year's target.

There are no consequences outlined in the federal rule for MPOs not meeting their targets. However, the FHWA will review how MPOs are incorporating and discussing safety performance measures and targets in their long-range transportation plans and TIPs during MPO certification reviews.

DRAFT 2022-2026 REGIONAL HIGHWAY SAFETY TARGETS

The 2022-2026 regional highway safety targets are based on the targets adopted or in the process of being adopted by each state DOT, as modified by the TPB's policy for no increases in targets from the previous year (i.e., capped). The draft 2022-2026 targets will be briefed to the TPB at its November meeting. Comments will be taken through the end of November, after which the targets will be finalized for adoption at the TPB's December meeting.

Of note, the federal Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS) data for 2024 would typically have been available by now but has been delayed in publication until Spring 2026. Draft targets were developed using state data for 2024, which may be different from the published FARS data.