

# SAFETY UPDATE: REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY ASSESSMENT

---

Janie Nham  
TPB Transportation Planner

TPB Community Advisory Committee  
April 9, 2026

# Agenda

---

- 01 Regional Response to Safety Trends
- 02 ATE Effectiveness
- 03 Recommendations



# Background

---

- In July 2020, the TPB adopted Resolution R3-2021 that “reaffirms road user safety as a top priority and prioritizes the implementation of projects, programs, and policies to reduce the number of fatal and serious injury crashes on the region's roadways.”
  - The resolution identified four areas for jurisdictions to focus efforts: increase seat belt use, reduce unsafe speeds, and reduce impaired and distracted driving
- In October 2024, the TPB held a Regional Safety Summit where the TPB made several recommendations to support roadway safety including:
  - An evaluation of the region’s progress against R3-2021
  - A compilation of research on the effectiveness of Automated Traffic Enforcement (ATE)
- From June 2025 through February 2026, staff conducted an assessment of regional strategies and a white paper of ATE effectiveness
- An update of the 2020 Regional Safety Study was also pursued throughout 2025



01

# REGIONAL RESPONSE TO SAFETY TRENDS

---

Regional Inventory of Roadway Strategies

# The Safety Assessment spotlights regional safety concerns

Adopted in July 2020, R3-2021 identifies road user safety as a top priority and urges its members to prioritize the implementation of projects, programs, and policies to reduce roadway fatalities and serious injuries.

Four key safety areas were identified as behaviors for jurisdictions to address:



**Speeds**



**Distracted Driving**



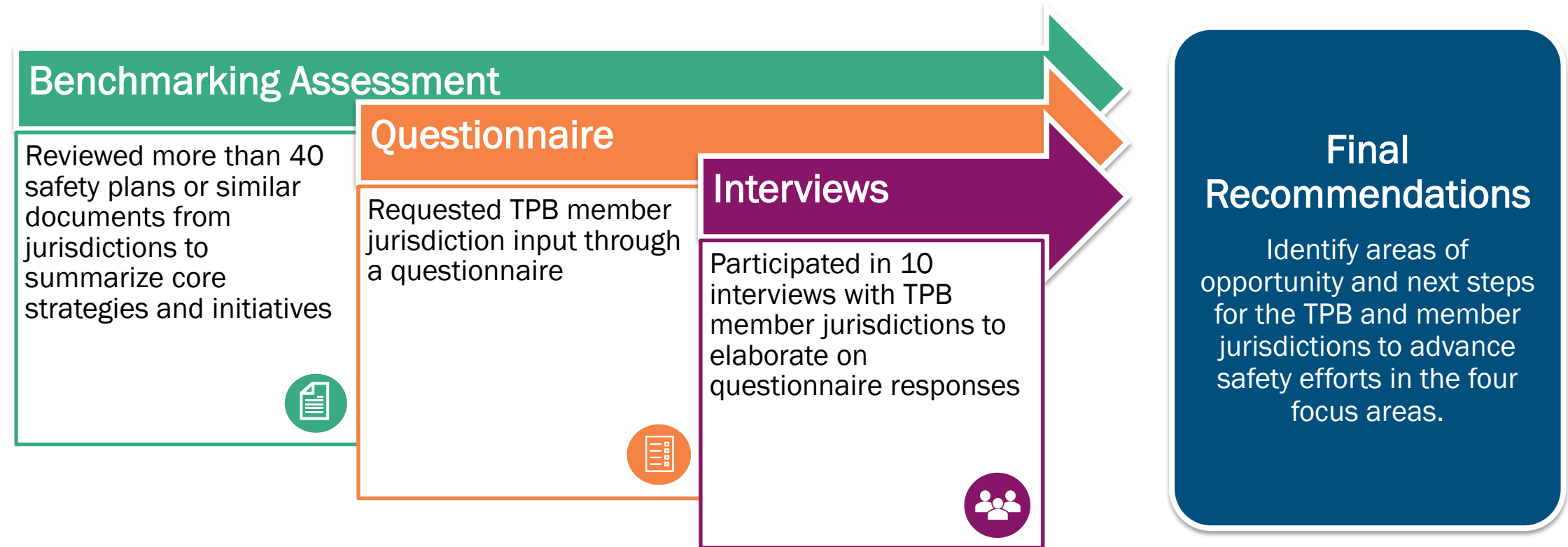
**Impaired Driving**



**Seatbelt Use**



# Three touchpoints with jurisdictions were used to understand safety alignment



# Key Findings

---

# Key findings highlight themes that were consistently identified through all three touchpoints



**Theme 1:** Most jurisdictions are adopting safety planning and agency culture norms



**Theme 2:** Speed reduction countermeasures in the Resolution are used most frequently by local jurisdictions



**Theme 3:** Impaired driving and unbelted driving countermeasures are typically led by police departments and State Highway Safety Offices



**Theme 4:** Local governments, state DOTs, and police departments share common ground to address distracted driving





**Theme 1: Most jurisdictions are adopting safety planning and agency culture norms**



## Theme 1: Most jurisdictions are adopting safety planning and agency culture norms

### Plan Creation

- Most TPB jurisdictions are advancing Safety or Vision Zero Action Plans.
- Alexandria, DC, Montgomery County, Prince George's County, Arlington County, and Rockville have more mature Vision Zero programs.



15 of the 22 TPB jurisdictions have

- already completed a Plan
- are developing one now
- have secured funding to begin the process





## Theme 1: Most jurisdictions are adopting safety planning and agency culture norms

### Limited Safety Staff

- Limited safety staffing constrains jurisdictions' ability to deliver comprehensive safety programs.
- Larger jurisdictions typically have 1–3 staff dedicated to safety.
- Smaller jurisdictions often rely on a single staff member with safety added to other duties.



77% of questionnaire respondents listed "staffing shortages" as a barrier, but many interviewees cited the RRSP as critical safety funding for addressing their gaps.





## Theme 1: Most jurisdictions are adopting safety planning and agency culture norms

### External and Internal Coordination

- Effective safety project delivery depends on strong internal and external coordination.
- Engaging partner agencies and internal divisions is time-intensive.
- Sustaining participation beyond core job responsibilities remains a challenge.



Despite 17 jurisdictions documenting their emphasis on collaboration as a goal, 70% of questionnaire respondents listed “interdepartmental coordination” as a barrier





**Theme 2: Speed reduction countermeasures in the Resolution are used most frequently by local jurisdictions**



## Theme 2: Speed reduction countermeasures in the Resolution are used most frequently by local jurisdictions

### Traffic Calming Efforts

- Jurisdictions primarily use traffic calming to manage speeds on local roads.
- Common treatments include crosswalks, curb extensions, and speed bumps/tables.
- Key challenges include emergency responder buy-in and limited prioritization methods for treatment locations.



20 jurisdictions highlight traffic calming measures in their documents, and 77% of questionnaire respondents listed them as effective.





## Theme 2: Speed reduction countermeasures in the Resolution are used most frequently by local jurisdictions

### Road Diets

- Some jurisdictions are implementing road diets, often supported by before-and-after studies.
- More than half of respondents view road diets as effective.
- Public and political pushback drives careful site selection and targeted communication.



The City of Rockville has found success through transparent before and after results and messaging other benefits of road diets, such as the economic benefits to local businesses.





## Theme 2: Speed reduction countermeasures in the Resolution are used most frequently by local jurisdictions

### Police Department Collaboration

- Safety outcomes improve when planners and engineers collaborate with police departments.
- Common coordination includes crash data sharing, Automated Traffic Enforcement (ATE) placement, and fatal crash reviews.



The City of Alexandria finds success through their collaborative efforts with the Alexandria Police Department, which together review fatal and severe injury crash data to determine next steps.





## Theme 2: Speed reduction countermeasures in the Resolution are used most frequently by local jurisdictions

### Automated Traffic Enforcement

- Automated Traffic Enforcement (ATE) is widely viewed as an effective speed management tool across DC, Maryland, and Virginia.
- Many Maryland and Virginia jurisdictions want to expand ATE to high-injury networks and all-hour operations but are constrained by state regulations.



16 jurisdictions are using ATE in some capacity, and 69% of questionnaire respondents listed speed cameras as effective.





## Theme 2: Speed reduction countermeasures in the Resolution are used most frequently by local jurisdictions

### Speed Limit Reductions

- Some jurisdictions have lowered posted speed limits on select roadways.
- Speed limit reductions alone are perceived as minimally effective.
- Effectiveness increases when paired with traffic calming and roadway design changes.



Based on the questionnaire and interviews, many respondents felt that speed limit reductions alone were not an effective strategy to reduce speed.





**Theme 3: Impaired driving and unbelted driving countermeasures are typically led by police departments and State Department of Motor Vehicles**



**Theme 3: Impaired driving and unbelted driving countermeasures are typically led by police departments and State Department of Motor Vehicles**

## Police Department Focus on Impairment

- Jurisdictions largely defer impaired and unbelted driving strategies to police departments.
- Police impaired driving efforts center on education, marketing, and targeted enforcement.
- Tactics include midnight patrols, deploying strategic enforcement, and coordination with bars and vendors.



The questionnaire revealed that media campaigns and providing ride share programs and/or late-night transit service are typical deployed impaired driving countermeasures





**Theme 3: Impaired driving and unbelted driving countermeasures are typically led by police departments and State Department of Motor Vehicles**

## Ignition Interlock

- Ignition interlocks are not actively addressed by transportation or police departments.
- Only two jurisdictions note support for ignition interlock efforts in formal documents.
- Both planners/engineers and police defer ignition interlock requirements to the courts.



62% of questionnaire respondents were unsure of the use of ignition interlocks in their jurisdiction, and 23% did not implement them.





**Theme 3: Impaired driving and unbelted driving countermeasures are typically led by police departments and State Department of Motor Vehicles**

## Seatbelt Laws and Campaigns

- Seat belt enforcement is challenging in states where violations are a secondary offense.
- Limited enforcement authority contributes to low effectiveness.
- Most efforts rely on Click-It-or-Ticket grant cycles or social media messaging.



Only 1 jurisdiction was identified as supporting state-level primary seat belt legislation in their documentation.





**Theme 4: Local governments, state DOTs, and police departments share common ground to address distracted driving**



## Theme 4: Local governments, state DOTs, and police departments share common ground to address distracted driving

### Dynamic Messaging

- Dynamic messaging was cited as highly effective in reducing driver cellphone use.
- Police data-informed strategic placement to maximize impact.



A partnership between DDOT and DC HSO led the strategic placement of distracted driving trailers with dynamic, community-focused messaging





Theme 4: Local governments, state DOTs, and police departments share common ground to address distracted driving

## Co-benefits of Safety Countermeasures

Local governments are highlighting safety countermeasures like centerline hardening, curb bump-outs, speed humps, road diets, bike lanes, and other traffic calming measures to combat distracted driving. In the event of a distracted-driving-related crash, other safety countermeasures can lessen the impact and reduce the chance of death or serious injury.



02

# AUTOMATED TRAFFIC ENFORCEMENT EFFECTIVENESS

---

Automated Speed and Red-Light Enforcement White Paper

# Purpose of the ATE Assessment

1. How effective is automated traffic enforcement (ATE), especially speed and red-light cameras, in reducing severe crashes?
2. What practices can ensure fair, reliable, and publicly supported implementation of ATE throughout the region?



**Evaluates** the safety performance of speed and red-light cameras using regional, national, and international evidence.



**Identifies** the program design features that influence fairness, reliability, and long-term public support.



**Synthesizes** lessons learned across D.C., Maryland, and Virginia to highlight factors that shape effective implementation.



**Provides** a shared knowledge base the TPB can use to support regional understanding of ATE and its role in broader safety strategies.



# Proven Countermeasure

---

NHTSA and FHWA identifies ATE as a proven countermeasure for reducing fatal and severe crashes.



[NHTSA](#) states that ATE cameras supplement traditional speed management strategies and helps reduce speeding behaviors. NHTSA rates speed camera effectiveness as five out of five stars.



[FHWA](#) identifies these systems as a Proven Safety Countermeasure, with studies showing a 20 to 37 percent reduction in fatalities and injuries.





# Crash Reduction

Automated enforcement consistently reduces crashes, with measurable benefits across regional, national, and international programs.

## Metropolitan Washington Region

- **Montgomery County, MD**  
39% reduction in likelihood of KSI crashes in enforced corridors
- **Alexandria & Fairfax**  
Programs show early reductions in localized crash risk
- **Washington, D.C.**  
~30% reduction in injury crashes near early camera sites

## Other US Cities

- **Large U.S. Cities Study**  
21% fewer fatal red-light running crashes. 14% fewer fatal crashes overall at signalized intersections
- **New York City (24/7 Program Expansion)**  
8% reduction in injury crashes during overnight/weekend periods
- **Bellevue, WA**  
Sustained low crash rates at school-zone camera sites

## Global Evidence

- **France**  
25–35% fatal crash reduction (varies by roadway type)
- **Italy**  
32% overall reduction in crashes following speed camera rollout





# Speed Management

Automated enforcement reliably reduces excessive speeding and curbs the most dangerous high-end speed behaviors.

## Metropolitan Washington Region

- **Montgomery County, MD**  
10% reduction in mean speeds
- **Alexandria, VA**  
14–30% speed reductions in school zones within first weeks
- **Fairfax County, VA**  
15–27% drop in violations in first year

## Other US Cities

- **New York City**  
30% decline in speeding violations after 24/7 operation began
- **Philadelphia**  
Roosevelt Blvd: >90% reduction in excessive speeding violations
- **Bellevue, WA**  
Continuous long-term decline in school-zone speeding violations

## Global Evidence

- **Australia, France, Finland, Norway, Netherlands, UK**  
50–70% reduction in vehicles exceeding limits by >15 km/h (~10 mph) and 2–10 km/h (~1–6 mph) reduction in average speeds
- **Italy (Motorways)**  
Significant reductions in mean speed and extreme speeding following deployment



03

# PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS

---

# Proposed Near Term TPB Priority Recommendations

---

The project team identified five potential priority recommendations that can be implemented in the near term to address common needs across member jurisdictions:

1. **TPB Safety Subcommittee Meeting on Enforcement Collaboration** - TPB will hold an “Invite Your Enforcement” safety subcommittee meeting focused on coordination between DOTs and law enforcement.
2. **Impaired Driving Strategies** – TPB will compile and share a concise set of regional best practices on impaired driving prevention.
3. **Technical Assistance for Small Agency Staff** – TPB will contact member agencies with smaller staff to identify safety technical assistance needs that TPB can support.
4. **Before-and-After Analyses** – TPB will inventory project studies that conducted before-and-after evaluations, then synthesize results, methods, and metrics
5. **Ticket Reciprocity and Broader ATE Deployment** – TPB will coordinate with COG to promote enabling broader deployment in MD and VA (beyond school zones, work zones, and buses) and encourage ticket reciprocity as a legislative priority.



# Proposed Member Jurisdiction Recommendations

---

The project team identified five potential priority recommendations for member jurisdictions:

1. **Participate regularly in TPB Safety Subcommittee meetings** to hear from agencies with similarly sized safety staff and share challenges.
2. **Develop an inter-departmental safety working group** to include staff from other departments at the local agency, such as maintenance, design, construction, and others.
3. **Further advance RRSP projects** that would benefit from additional/continued work after completion. Explore best practices for post-project follow-up and identify scalable ways to monitor implementation.
4. **Establish monthly or quarterly fatal and serious injury crash review teams.** These are used by several local governments and cited as an effective method to increase stakeholder collaboration with enforcement and EMS.
5. **Review existing before and after studies** (or identify gaps or barriers for conducting one) to improve consistency and inform future evaluations.



## Janie Nham

TPB Transportation Planner

[jnham@mwkog.org](mailto:jnham@mwkog.org)

[mwkog.org](http://mwkog.org)

---

777 North Capitol Street NE, Suite 300  
Washington, DC 20002



National Capital Region  
**Transportation Planning Board**