

ITEM 10 – ACTION
December 17, 2025

PBPP: Annual Targets for Highway Safety and Transit Safety

Action: Adopt Resolution R7-2026 to approve regional highway safety targets and adopt Resolution R8-2026 to approve regional transit safety targets.

Background: The board will be asked to approve annual regional targets for transit safety and highway safety performance measures, as required by the federal performance-based planning and programming (PBPP) regulations for MPOs.

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NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION TRANSPORTATION PLANNING BOARD
777 North Capitol Street, N.E.
Washington, D.C. 20002

**RESOLUTION TO ADOPT ANNUAL HIGHWAY SAFETY TARGETS
FOR THE NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION**

WHEREAS, the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board (TPB), as the federally designated metropolitan planning organization (MPO) for the Washington region, has the responsibility under the provisions of the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act, reauthorized on November 15, 2021 when the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) was signed into law, for developing and carrying out a continuing, cooperative and comprehensive transportation planning process for the metropolitan area; and

WHEREAS, safety of all modes of travel is an important element of TPB's Vision, and a regional priority, with many of its member jurisdictions having adopted aspirational safety goals associated with Vision Zero and Towards Zero Deaths; and

WHEREAS, the provisions of the FAST Act continued the implementation of performance-based planning and programming to achieve desired performance outcomes for the multimodal transportation system, including the setting of targets for future performance by States and metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs); and

WHEREAS, the Federal Highway Administration issued a rulemaking for state departments of transportation (DOTs) and MPOs to annually establish data-driven highway safety targets and report progress on achieving the targets for the following performance measures: number of fatalities, rate of fatalities per hundred million vehicle miles traveled (VMT), number of serious injuries, rate of serious injuries per VMT, and number of combined non-motorized fatalities and non-motorized serious injuries; and

WHEREAS, though the federal regulations that designate the safety performance measures refer to them as the National Performance Management Measures for the Highway Safety Improvement Program, the performance measures are applicable to all public roads in the region from community streets to Interstate highways, and can properly be referred to as roadway safety targets; and

WHEREAS, the TPB has reviewed the safety performance measures and established data-driven regional safety targets annually since January 2018 and acknowledges that the number of fatalities and serious injuries on the region's roadways are unacceptably high, which is contrary to its own vision and the region's aspirations; and

WHEREAS, the TPB remains focused on acting on its priorities and achieving the region's aspirational goals of zero fatalities and serious injuries on its roadways and is using the federally-required annual regional highway safety targets and the process to evaluate the region's progress toward zero roadway deaths; and

WHEREAS, the TPB completed a regional roadway safety study in 2020 to identify the factors contributing to and the predominant types of fatal and serious injury crashes in the region and recommend projects, programs and policies the region should prioritize to improve safety outcomes on the region's roadways; and

WHEREAS, the TPB reviewed the findings of that study and adopted Resolution R3-2021 titled, "Resolution to Establish A Regional Roadway Safety Policy, and Associated Roadway Safety and Equity Policy Statements, to Reduce Fatalities and Serious Injuries on the National Capital Region's Roadways" on July 22, 2020 based on those findings; and

WHEREAS, the TPB, as described in Resolution R3-2021, urges its members to reaffirm road user safety as a top priority and prioritize the implementation of projects, programs, and policies, in an equitable and non-racist manner, consistent with the TPB's Equity Policy statement, that strive to reduce the number of fatal and serious injury crashes on the Region's roadways; and

WHEREAS, the TPB has, as part of Resolution R3-2021, established and funded a Regional Roadway Safety Program to assist its members to develop and/or implement projects, programs, or policies to equitably improve safety outcomes for all roadway users; and

WHEREAS, the TPB continues to support local, regional, and state level efforts to reduce fatalities and serious injuries and requests that its members continue to coordinate and share information on projects, programs, policies, and initiatives to improve safety; and

WHEREAS, the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT), the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), and the District Department of Transportation (DDOT) set their respective highway safety targets for the five-year period 2022 through 2026 by August 31, 2025, and MPOs are required to set highway safety targets for their metropolitan planning areas for the same period by February 27, 2026; and

WHEREAS, TPB staff have coordinated with officials at MDOT, VDOT, and DDOT to develop regional highway safety targets that are evidence-based, consistent with the targets submitted by each member state DOT, and reflective of the outcomes expected through the implementation of funded safety projects and policies; and

WHEREAS, these highway safety targets have been reviewed and recommended for TPB approval by the TPB Technical Committee.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board adopts the following set of highway safety targets for the National Capital Region, as described below.

Table 1: Regional Highway Safety Targets, 2022-2026

Performance Measure (5-year rolling average)	2022-2026 Targets
Number of Fatalities	253.0
Fatality Rate (per 100 million VMT)	0.588
Number of Serious Injuries	1,592.4
Serious Injury Rate (per 100 million VMT)	3.222
Number of Nonmotorist Fatalities & Serious Injuries	399.9



MEMORANDUM

TO: Transportation Planning Board
FROM: Janie Nham, TPB Transportation Planner
SUBJECT: Performance-Based Planning and Programming (PBPP) Regional Highway Safety Targets
DATE: December 11, 2025

This memorandum describes the National Capital Region's progress in implementing federal highway safety performance evaluation and target-setting requirements established by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). State departments of transportation (DOTs) and metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) are federally required to set highway safety performance targets and measure their progress towards those targets annually for their respective planning areas.

At its December 17, 2025 meeting, the TPB will be asked to consider and approve 2022-2026 targets for highway safety in accordance with federal PBPP requirements.

BACKGROUND

The Safety Performance Management Measures (Safety PM) Final Rule, issued by the FHWA on March 15, 2016, established target-setting requirements for State DOTs and MPOs. Safety PM complements a collection of rules that establish and refine the program structure and requirements of the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP), a Federal-aid program that requires States to improve highway safety on public roads using a data-driven, strategic approach focused on performance. Specifically, the Safety PM rule supports implementation of HSIP by requiring DOTs and MPOs to adopt safety performance targets annually for specific safety performance measures.

By requiring safety targets and ongoing evaluation of safety performance, the regulations aim to promote transparency and accountability, enable the tracking and understanding of progress on roadway safety, and facilitate informed transportation planning and investment decisions.

Rule Provisions

The Safety PM rule requires DOTs and MPOs to set safety performance targets in five performance categories and to measure progress towards those targets on a yearly basis (see, Table 1). The targets are reported as five-year rolling averages.

DOTs must establish and report targets each year by August 31 through their annual HSIP report, after which MPOs must set and report targets for the metropolitan planning area within 180 days. While the targets are set by State and regional agencies, they apply to all public roads within their respective areas regardless of ownership or functional classification.

Table 1: Highway Safety Performance Measures

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 Vehicle Miles Traveled (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 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 reported serious injury data

¹FARS: Fatality Analysis Reporting System

²HPMS: Highway Performance Monitoring System

Consequences

MPO targets are not evaluated by the FHWA, and there are no consequences for MPOs if they fail to meet their targets. The FHWA, however, will review how MPOs incorporate and discuss safety performance measures and targets in their long-range transportation plans and transportation improvement plans (TIPs) during quadrennial MPO certification reviews (the next such MPO certification process for TPB is anticipated to occur in 2027).

CALCULATION OF HIGHWAY SAFETY TARGETS FOR THE NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION

The TPB's approach for calculating regional highway safety targets relies on projections developed by its state DOT partners. To account for the different methodologies used by each state to develop projections for their respective portions of the region, TPB staff apply the following process to develop the proposed targets:

- identify a "sub-target" for the Maryland portion of the NCR based on MDOT's target setting approach. MDOT uses a two-pronged approach: targets that experience a decreasing trend over time are set using an exponential trend line for historical crash data. For targets that experience an increasing trend over time, a two percent decrease from the 2016-2020 five-year average is applied for each successive five-year average;
- identify a "sub-target" for the Virginia portion of the NCR by applying a modified version of VDOT's suggested MPO target setting methodology to the safety data for the Virginia portion of the NCR. TPB staff sets targets using a trend line for the previous ten five-year rolling averages;
- identify a "sub-target" for the District of Columbia portion of the NCR by directly incorporating DDOT's targets. DDOT sets its targets by applying a non-linear "power curve" trend line for several years of historical crash data;
- combine the three sub-targets into a set of initial regional targets;

- compare each performance measure's sub target with the corresponding target set last year; and
- select the lower (more aggressive) of the two targets as this year's target.

The targets for the number of fatalities, number of serious injuries, and number of non-motorist fatalities and serious injuries are calculated using this approach.

Rate targets (fatality rate and serious injury rate) involve an additional step where the sub-targets for Suburban Maryland, Northern Virginia, and District of Columbia are weighted according to their respective proportions of total regional VMT, before being combined into a regional target.

2020-2024 HIGHWAY SAFETY TRENDS

The TPB adopted highway safety targets for 2020-2024 in December 2023. Table 2 shows the National Capital Region's annual performance in each of the five federally-required performance categories during this period. Preliminary performance data for 2024 were provided by State agencies as FARS has not yet published information for that year.

Table 2: National Capital Region Highway Safety Trends, 2020-2024

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Change from 2023 to 2024
# of Fatalities	321	366	381	382	363 ¹	↓4.97%
Fatality Rate (per 100 MVMT)	0.873	0.900	0.882	0.876	0.832 ¹	↓5.02%
# of Serious Injuries	1,839	2,221	2,178	2,284	2,397	↑4.95%
Serious Injury Rate (per 100 MVMT)	5.003	5.464	5.043	5.235	5.491	↑4.71%
# Nonmotorist Fatalities & Serious Injuries	443	520	636	579	522 ¹	↓9.84%
Annual Vehicle Miles Traveled (100 M)	367.61	406.47	431.91	436.31	436.55	0.00%

¹ Fatality figures for 2024 are from preliminary state data pending release of 2024 FARS data.

The notable development in 2024 was that the region experienced a 5% decrease in the number of fatalities, the first decline since 2018. This total is still elevated compared to pre-pandemic levels when the average annual fatality count was 293 fatalities, but it appears outcomes are beginning to trend in the right direction.

The decrease is also reflected in the fatality rate. Since regional vehicle miles traveled (VMT) remained roughly the same as 2023, the five percent decrease in the number of fatalities also resulted in a five percent decrease in the fatality rate.

Serious injuries increased in 2024 by five percent, the second consecutive year of increase, and the serious injury rate similarly increased by five percent.

Non-motorist fatalities and serious injuries declined by roughly 10 percent between 2023 and 2024, the second year of continued to decline. In addition, the 2024 levels remain below the pre-pandemic annual average of 559 fatalities and serious injuries.

PERFORMANCE COMPARED TO 2020-2024 HIGHWAY SAFETY TARGETS

As a result of the region's roadway safety performance between 2020 and 2024, the region did not meet any of its highway safety targets (see, Table 3). Note that performance is reported as five-year averages, and although the region experienced decline in the number of fatalities, the fatality rate, and in the number of nonmotorist fatalities and serious injuries in 2024, the increases were not significant enough to offset performance between 2020 through 2023 in these categories.

Table 3: 2020-2024 Performance Actuals vs. Targets

Performance Measure (5-year rolling average)	Adopted 2020- 2024 Targets (Dec 2023)	Actual 2020-2024 Performance	Status
Number of Fatalities	253.0	362.6 ¹	Not met
Fatality Rate (per 100 million VMT)	0.588	0.872 ¹	Not met
Number of Serious Injuries	1,675.7	2,183.8	Not met
Serious Injury Rate (per 100 million VMT)	3.222	5.247	Not met
Number of Nonmotorist Fatalities & Serious Injuries	473.5	540 ¹	Not met

¹ Fatality figures for 2024 are from preliminary state data pending release of 2024 FARS data.

PROPOSED 2022-2026 HIGHWAY SAFETY TARGETS FOR THE NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION

Based on the projections for each performance measure, Staff proposes the following highway safety targets for 2022-2026 (see, Table 4). No comments have been received on the draft targets since the TPB was briefed on them at its November meeting.

Following adoption, the targets will be transmitted to the State DOTs in accordance with established written agreements for performance planning reporting.

Table 4: 2022-2026 Proposed Highway Safety Targets

Performance Measure (5-year rolling average)	Adopted 2021-2025 Targets	DRAFT 2022- 2026 Targets	Difference	Percent Difference
Number of Fatalities	253.0	<u>253.0</u>	0.0	0.0%
Fatality Rate (per 100 million VMT)	0.588	<u>0.588</u>	0.0	0.0%
Number of Serious Injuries	1,661.9	<u>1,592.4</u>	-69.5	-4.2%
Serious Injury Rate (per 100 million VMT)	3.222	<u>3.222</u>	0.0	0.0%
Number of Nonmotorist Fatalities & Serious Injuries	473.5	<u>399.9</u>	-73.6	-15.5%