



Improvements in vehicle crashworthiness, driver behavior and road design/operations have saved lives and reduced injuries; however, the nation continues to suffer more than 41,000 fatalities and three million injuries each year because of highway crashes. To reduce this toll, safety measures such as Safety Conscious Planning (SCP) should be pursued early in the planning process. SCP seeks to develop a set of transportation system safety strategies that make it more difficult for crashes to happen in the first place.

Who Is Responsible?

When it comes to transportation planning, a number of key groups are involved in the process, including the following:

- Transportation Planners (State DOTs and MPOs)
- Land Use Planners
- Transportation Engineers
- Road Designers
- Safety practitioners (highway and motor carrier safety professionals, law enforcement, et al)
- Researchers
- Transit Operators
- Any group that is concerned or involved with highway planning and/or safety

Responsibility for SCP lies primarily with transportation planners at the state and local levels because they make decisions that affect land use and transportation. However, if SCP strategies are to be comprehensive and fully integrated, planners must coordinate their activities with safety practitioners, researchers, partners and the public.

How To Get Involved

1. Gain management support.
2. Motivate partners to participate including the following:
 - ◆ *State DOT Planning, Safety and Operations*
 - ◆ *MPO Planners and Managers*
 - ◆ *Local Transportation Planners*
 - ◆ *Rural Planning Organizations*
 - ◆ *US DOT Field Staff*
 - ◆ *Highway Safety Offices*
 - ◆ *State and Local Law Enforcement*
 - ◆ *Motor Carriers*
 - ◆ *Transit Operators*
 - ◆ *Researchers*
 - ◆ *Roadbuilders*
 - ◆ *Contractors and Consultants*
3. Host a Safety Conscious Planning Forum. For assistance, contacts are listed below.
4. Develop and implement an action plan.

For more information, contact:

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Safety Conscious Planning: The Next Generation of Transportation System Safety Strategies

“Each statewide and metropolitan planning process shall provide for consideration of projects and strategies that will increase the safety and security of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users.”

TEA-21

“We have a long list of objectives to accomplish to reach our safety goals, and the Michigan SCP Forum helped us move in the right direction by heightening awareness and increasing effective communication, collaboration and coordination among all the partners.”

Betty Mercer, Michigan Governor's Representative for Highway Safety

"Safety is often listed as a priority but rarely receives the attention it deserves. It should be scientifically, seriously and significantly integrated into all transportation plans and projects."

Jill Hochman, FHWA

What Is Safety Conscious Planning?

For the first time, state and local departments of transportation and metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) are required by law to consider safety as a planning factor.

This raises the question: What is safety conscious planning (SCP)? It is a proactive approach for the prevention of motor vehicle crashes and unsafe transportation conditions.



SCP is achieved when:

1. All planning organizations routinely consider safety as an explicit planning priority that is integrated into all elements of project development and selection.
2. All planning organizations (public and private sector) have:
 - ✓ Practitioners trained in state-of-the-art safety techniques; and
 - ✓ Access to state-of-the-art safety planning tools.
3. Decision-makers are informed about the quantitative safety implications of all planning decisions, and they are reflected in decision-making.

A Progress Report

Tools and Resources

- A Safety Conscious Planning web site has been created. All products described in this brochure can be found at www.fhwa.dot.gov/planning/scp.
- In May 2000, the Transportation Research Board (TRB) hosted a meeting of interested professionals and produced an E-Circular (EC-025) describing the results and future activities.
- An informal coalition, known as the SCP Working Group, grew out of the May meeting. It serves as a clearinghouse for SCP information, identifies opportunities and promotes the development and implementation of promising initiatives.
- *"Considering Safety in the Transportation Planning Process"*— a set of guidelines based on best practices has been published.
- Research projects are underway to provide information and tools that will assist planners in the implementation of SCP.
- The Working Group members have developed a power point presentation for use in numerous conferences and association meetings with more planned in the future.
- A second TRB Circular has been published which includes a summary report of forum activities and a toolkit with forum planning guidelines.
- A leadership Conference was held to evaluate past forum activities and identify the priority actions necessary for continuing the implementation process.
- The Working Group has produced an action plan to document and track priority activities.

Future Strategies

- Identify methods and delivery mechanisms for sharing research information in user-friendly formats.
- Continue development of a clearinghouse.
- Conduct outreach and communications activities.
- Create SCP marketing tools.
- Develop and disseminate training workshops.
- Identify and assist forum candidates.

Forums

A series of statewide SCP Forums have been and continue to be conducted across the nation. The purpose of the forums is to facilitate a dialogue among "key players" within a state, region or metropolitan area including planning, safety, research and other interested professionals. The objective is to "jump start" the SCP process by initiating a dialogue, reviewing current planning processes and activities, identifying challenges, opportunities and resource requirements and creating an action plan.

The Forum Planning Process

The process is led by the chief planning agency within a specified area. The agency commits to host a planning meeting, invite key players, conduct the forum, document the results and follow up on action items.

"This statewide forum is the first of its kind in Maryland, but hopefully not the last. In fact, I'm going to insist that it's not the last. This is just the start of an ongoing process."

*Neil Pederson
MD State Highway Administration*