



U.S. Department of Transportation  
**National Highway Traffic Safety  
Administration**



# The Role of Law Enforcement In Supporting Pedestrian and Bicyclist Safety: An Idea Book



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<b>16. Abstract</b> In 2018 pedestrians and bicyclists accounted for 19 percent of all traffic crash fatalities in the United States. This report shares examples and ideas of how law enforcement can address pedestrian and bicyclist safety including real-world examples and resources. Law enforcement officers bring unique strengths to road safety and injury prevention programs. As first responders, they often witness the results of pedestrian and bicyclist safety problems firsthand, build contacts, gain information, and influence policy.			
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# Table of Contents

<b>Why Law Enforcement?</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>What Can Officers Do to Improve Pedestrian and Bicyclist Safety?</b> .....	<b>7</b>
Attend Pedestrian and Bicyclist Specific Training .....	7
Examine and Report Crash Data and Share Information .....	10
Identify Partner Opportunities and Shared Goals .....	12
Partner With Traffic Engineers .....	15
Engage the Community .....	17
Measure Results and Update Policies and Plans .....	22
<b>Next Steps for Pedestrian and Bicyclist Safety</b> .....	<b>25</b>
<b>Additional Resources</b> .....	<b>26</b>
Pedestrian and Bicyclist Training for Law Enforcement .....	26
Program Guidance.....	27
Enforcement and Education Program Websites .....	27
Research Studies and Evaluations .....	28
<b>References</b> .....	<b>29</b>

## Why Law Enforcement?

Communities across the United States are calling for increased road safety measures and protection as pedestrian and bicyclist fatalities continue to increase. People who walk and bike accounted for 19 percent of all traffic crash fatalities in the United States in 2018,<sup>1</sup> and many cities and States are experiencing upward trends where pedestrian and bicyclists account for as many as 33 percent of all traffic fatalities.<sup>2</sup>

Law enforcement officers bring unique strengths to road safety and injury prevention programs. As first responders to crashes, they often witness the results of safety problems experienced by pedestrians and bicyclists. Officers talk with and learn from their community about safety trouble spots during their time on patrol. Officers build relationships with community members who are valuable sources of information and contacts. Law enforcement officers can also be influential in shaping policy to support a culture of safety. Several studies have shown how law

enforcement coupled with public engagement and improvements to the built environment can improve safety-related behaviors, which may lead to crash reductions.<sup>3</sup> And law enforcement officers alone can enforce laws codified in State and local statutes and reinforce safe behaviors.

Given this, more communities are looking for ways to leverage the strengths of law enforcement to improve pedestrian and bicyclist safety. This report is intended to serve as an “idea book” to share evidence around effective roles that law enforcement personnel can take in pedestrian and bicyclist safety programs and practices. It also serves as a framework for

integrating pedestrian and bicyclist safety programs with law enforcement agencies by focusing on training, crash data reporting, identifying goals with partners, collaborating with traffic engineers, engaging the community, and measuring programs and plans. Each concept includes key considerations for next steps, real-world examples, and additional resources. Many of these approaches are interrelated and synergistic; they create a comprehensive approach. These programs and practices are strengthened by combined efforts of diverse, collaborative stakeholders who supplement the critical role law enforcement plays in pedestrian and bicyclist safety.

“Several studies have shown how law enforcement coupled with public engagement and improvements to the built environment can improve safety-related behaviors, which may lead to crash reductions.”



# What Can Officers Do to Improve Pedestrian and Bicyclist Safety?

## Attend Pedestrian and Bicyclist Specific Training

In many States, basic law enforcement training is approximately 16 weeks. About a week may be devoted to motor vehicle law and traffic crash investigation, and within that, many officers are fortunate to get even an hour of training time focused on pedestrian and bicyclist laws or issues.<sup>4</sup> Thus, it's common for officers to feel they do not know enough about the laws that may enhance pedestrian or bicycle safety, or how to enforce them.

Officers generally need consistent and frequent instruction on these key topics.

- Definitions pertaining to pedestrians and bicyclists
- Laws that affect the safety of interactions between pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists (such as yielding laws and passing laws)
- Equitable, safe, and effective enforcement methods and operations
- Language and communication about pedestrian and bicyclist issues to use when interacting with the public
- Tools to enhance the quality of crash data collection and reporting

In general, officers get little exposure to laws related to pedestrians and bicyclists. These are often nuanced and complicated, and enforcing laws and regulations is challenging without understanding specific statutes. Reluctance to address pedestrian and bicyclist safety issues is usually due to limited prior training and trouble interpret-



ing the applicable laws in different scenarios. Additionally, officers may be unfamiliar with the appropriate language needed to communicate these laws and may be hesitant to interact with the public when addressing issues. Informed language about pedestrian and bicyclist laws, including laws that define how motorists should interact with pedestrians and bicyclists, helps officers effectively communicate correct practices and educate the public.

Traffic laws change over time, like many aspects of the judicial system. While fundamentals can be learned through a specialized training, agencies can periodically offer refresher courses and use roll call time that reinforces new key messages or techniques to strengthen and retain knowledge within their departments. Ongoing professional development supports institutional memory as well as ensures that all law enforcement officers understand bicyclist and pedestrian safety.

**“** *Informed language about pedestrian and bicyclist laws, including laws that define how motorists should interact with pedestrians and bicyclists, helps officers effectively communicate correct practices and educate the public.* **”**

Law enforcement officers who have received instructional training specific to pedestrians and bicyclists tend to better understand pedestrian and bicyclist crash scenarios and are better prepared to apply the law in various situations, whether in crash prevention efforts or post-crash response.<sup>5</sup> They know the role that engineering, education, and enforcement can and should play in improving bicyclist and pedestrian safety.

### **Key Considerations:**

- What is the current state of knowledge of law enforcement personnel regarding pedestrian and bicycle safety?
- Does law enforcement leadership provide support for pedestrian and bicyclist safety and how is this support demonstrated?
- What programs or resources are available to learn more about pedestrian and bicyclist State laws and ordinances?
- Which key personnel or units would benefit from a refresher course on pedestrian and bicyclist State laws and ordinances?
- What is the best method for training or refresher course delivery (i.e., in-person workshop, roll call video)?
- Which other community members, departments, or units would benefit from learning about pedestrian and bicyclist issues (county or neighboring law enforcement units, engineering and planning departments, etc.)?

### **Principles in Practice:**

- Pedestrians and bicyclists comprise nearly one-third of crash fatalities each year in New York. Safety enforcement training is critical to sustain safety education and programming efforts that reduce crashes. With assistance from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, and as part of the State's "See! Be Seen!" campaign, a pedestrian safety law enforcement workshop offers hands-on training to advance tactics specific to pedestrian law enforcement and provide fundamentals of education and engineering strategies. Officers also participate in field exercises to learn more about pedestrian enforcement operations.<sup>6</sup>





- Wisconsin's Department of Transportation offers a Pedestrian and Bicycle Law Enforcement training to help officers improve and effectively manage traffic safety. The 2-day course covers laws related to pedestrians and bicyclists. The course empowers officers to conduct further training in their respective jurisdictions, and officers reported they feel more comfortable issuing safety citations after training. In addition, pocket cards with printed pedestrian and bicyclist safety laws are available for officers and the public for easy reference. A 12-hour Enforcement for Bicycle Safety training course is also available to supplement the basic training and focuses on bicyclist safety and bicyclist crash investigations.<sup>7</sup>



### Learn More:

- [The National Conference of State Legislatures: State Laws on Passing Bicyclists](#)  
Summary of legislation across States on motorist passing bicyclist laws.<sup>8</sup>
- [Insurance Institute for Highway Safety \(IIHS\): Bicycle Helmet Use](#)  
Map of State laws for bicycle helmet age requirements.<sup>9</sup>
- [NHTSA: Pedestrian Safety Enforcement Operations: A How-To Guide](#)  
Explanation of pedestrian safety enforcement operations (location, outreach, tactics for conducting operations, staffing, etc.) and case studies from six communities.<sup>10</sup>

## Examine and Report Crash Data and Share Information

Using crash data is key to developing effective pedestrian and bicyclist safety programs. Law enforcement agencies are in a unique position: They collect crash data when completing crash reports and provide other information as well as use crash data to help communicate and frame pedestrian and bicyclist safety issues.

In larger cities and other places that have experienced significant numbers of crashes over time, crash report data can help officers to see important trends in crashes involving vulnerable road users. Crash reporting captures key details including injury severity, the location of the event, demographics of the people involved, vehicle type and speed at impact, and other factors contributing to a crash. In a fatal or near-fatal crash, law enforcement officers may spend 40 to 60 staff hours or more investigating a crash scene. Information collected is vital to create a full, comprehensive picture of a crash scenario that can be analyzed to better identify and understand trends at the community level.

Many police agencies have an officer who specializes in accessing, managing, and analyzing local crash records. Fatal crash data can also be accessed via the national [Fatality Analysis Reporting System \(FARS\)](#)<sup>11</sup> data portal. FARS is a Federal database run by NHTSA that aggregates States' fatal motor vehicle crash injury data and can be filtered by vulnerable road users. Some States have also created State-level data portals that can be used to examine pedestrian and bicycle crash trends quickly and easily. North Carolina's [Bicycle and Pedestrian Crash Data Tool](#)<sup>12</sup> is a good example.

Police-reported crash records are not the only source of information or statistics on pedestrian and bicycle safety. Hospital

records, complaint records, and community input (such as surveys of perceptions of dangers or reports of near-miss events) serve as important data sources and may provide insights unavailable in crash data. Police often have access to other data sources, such as speed data from variable message speed signs or other instruments. A comprehensive data collection strategy using a standardized crash database and other available data sources creates a more accurate depiction of crash scenarios and related trends.

*“A comprehensive data collection strategy using a standardized crash database and other available data sources creates a more accurate depiction of crash scenarios and related trends.”*

An evidence-based approach to identify pedestrian and bicyclist issues and needs serves as the foundation for operations, outreach, and policies for safety programs. Sharing data with the community to communicate and frame pedestrian and bicyclist issues is important and may also lead to new insights around the nature of the problems and opportunities to address them. Transparent data-sharing to demonstrate the issue can also bolster community support for future enforcement operations, such as progressive warning operations to drivers failing to yield to pedestrians in marked crosswalks at specific locations or times of day. Local community organizations may also champion enforcement activities when the crash or speed data demonstrate real

challenges and critical need. Data-sharing as a communication effort can lead to stronger community engagement that can also help inform the development of goals and strategies to respond to pedestrian and bicyclist issues.

### **Key Considerations:**

- When, where, and how often are pedestrian and bicyclist crashes occurring? Can the crashes be visualized on a map? Do any clear patterns emerge?
- Are crashes occurring in places with other known safety concerns, such as excessive driver speeds?
- Who do crashes affect in the community?
- How complete are the crash data forms, and what variables are missing and cannot be analyzed?
- Are law enforcement officers and crash investigators completing the forms correctly, or are data and context missing?
- What other data sources or stakeholders are needed to identify problems and trends?

### **Principles in Practice:**

- [Vision Zero San Francisco](#) adopts a data-driven approach to safety, following the models of the San Francisco Pedestrian Strategy and the WalkFirst program. Using information collected by police officers, engineers, and health officials, the city can identify trends and patterns. Multiple websites allow residents, staff, enforcement officers, and advocates to access the information in usable ways and ensures transparency and accountability through the planning process. An updated monthly report summarizes traffic fatalities and the Vision Zero Fatality Reporting Map visually displays the data by location throughout the city.<sup>13</sup>
- Research shows that near-miss incidents deter bicyclists from riding, and close calls are overwhelmingly more frequent than collisions.<sup>14</sup> [Cyclist Video Evidence](#), based out of Alameda, California, offers a website resource for bicyclists, enforcement agencies, and others to share videos of close calls and submit incident reports. The free platform provides documentation for law enforcement and government agencies to analyze and map near-miss data to gain perspectives on the realities bicyclists face and identify danger zones for road safety improvement.<sup>15</sup>




### Learn More:

- [NHTSA: 2017 Fatal Motor Vehicle Crashes: Overview](#)  
Annual update of crash fatalities for all road users including pedestrian and bicyclist figures and trends.<sup>16</sup> Traffic Safety Fact Sheets are also available for pedestrians<sup>17</sup> and bicyclists.<sup>18</sup>
- [Governors Highway Safety Association \(GHSA\): Pedestrian Traffic Fatalities by State: 2017 Preliminary Data](#)  
Statistics and infographics about pedestrian traffic fatalities as of 2017.<sup>19</sup>
- [NHTSA: Data-Driven Approaches to Crime and Traffic Safety \(DDACTS\)](#)  
Location-based crime and traffic crash tool and model to determine effective methods for deploying law enforcement and other resources.<sup>20</sup>
- [NHTSA: Model Minimum Uniform Crash Criteria](#)  
Guideline identifies a minimum set of motor vehicle crash data elements and attributes that States should consider for their State crash data system.<sup>21</sup>

## Identify Partner Opportunities and Shared Goals

Law enforcement agencies recognize the value of partnerships and connections with the wider community. Community partnerships provide insights into key pedestrian and bicyclist issues and identify challenges and opportunities. Engaging a diverse coalition of community partners can result in a more comprehensive understanding of specific issues and how safety challenges can be addressed. Key community members can help leverage enforcement efforts, think about shared community values, and build and sustain strong relationships with law enforcement leadership and other community members.

A community network can offer new ideas, resources, or information that may not be learned via routine enforcement activities, data sources, or observations. It can also share anecdotal knowledge or background to help clarify issues.<sup>22</sup> Strong partnerships also support enforcement efforts, in that they reinforce the reasoning for enforcement activities to address safety issues, and may facilitate public education and awareness, policy development, and legislative advocacy.



A coalition of partners may include representatives from other organizations or departments within the community and offer an opportunity for cross-pollination of knowledge. This may include town engineering, planning, transportation, health, and parks and recreation departments, as well as communications and public information teams. The court system and district attorney may also be valuable allies to support goals and strategies as well as local universities and colleges with campus police or planning departments. Transit departments serve commuters who walk and bike to access areas and may offer additional insight. Other key partners may be from faith-based organizations, advocacy groups, school systems, parent-teacher associations, driver education programs, chambers of commerce, large employers, or organizations or people that represent traditionally underserved communities.

There are many ways that coalitions can work toward improving pedestrian and bicyclist safety. Sometimes, it begins with a simple agreement to meet on a regular basis and share news and resources about the issues. As coalitions build strength, they tend to mature in strategic planning and goal development, and integrate their activities into broader community initiatives and policy efforts, such as Strategic Highway Safety Plans.

### **Key Considerations:**

- What community assets can be used to improve pedestrian and bicyclist safety and mobility?
- Who is already meeting on this issue, and how are officers engaged with existing groups?
- What existing community groups can serve as a foundation?
- Who needs to be at the table? Who is not there already?
- How can officers engage community partners to exchange ideas and knowledge? What is the role of law enforcement within broader community partnerships?
- How can law enforcement efforts be aligned with broader community goals?

### **Principles in Practice:**

- The “Watch for Me NC” program aims to reduce pedestrian and bicyclist injuries and deaths through a comprehensive, targeted approach of public education, community engagement, and high-visibility law enforcement. It recently launched Action Planning Workshop sessions to help build capacity within communities. The Action Planning



Workshops invite community partners to attend day-long sessions of facilitated conversation and planning between local law enforcement agencies and key stakeholders. Community partners build local coalitions and identify stakeholder strengths and opportunities for taking the next steps to advance pedestrian and bicyclist safety. Each coalition outlines next steps for continued commitment to specific roles and activities for outreach to their broader community. Coalitions learn not only from their own local community members, but also from feedback and ideas from other regional partners.<sup>23</sup>

- Austin, Texas, developed a Pedestrian Safety Action Plan that recommends a holistic approach to improve pedestrian safety through engineering, education, evaluation, and enforcement. The city is also committed to the Vision Zero movement that works to reduce the number of fatalities or serious injuries resulting from traffic crashes to zero. The Action Plan recommends several enforcement activities in coordination with the Vision Zero Task Force team and leveraging ongoing efforts within the Vision Zero Plan. This includes educational campaigns and community engagement with the Vision Zero Program Street Team; exploring existing and potential city ordinances and State laws with a city staff working group; and law enforcement officer training for vulnerable road users. Within the larger context of Vision Zero programming, these action items introduce collaboration with existing partners currently working towards similar goals in the community.<sup>24</sup>



### Learn More:

- [Watch for Me NC: Action Plan Template](#)  
Action plan template to assist with planning coalition development, including identifying community stakeholders, events, and public outreach opportunities.<sup>25</sup>
- [Federal Highway Administration \(FHWA\): How to Develop a Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Action Plan](#)  
Guide to assist agencies to develop and implement a safety action plan to improve conditions for walking and bicycling through a multidisciplinary approach of community engagement.<sup>26</sup>



## Partner With Traffic Engineers

Planning, engineering, and public works departments commonly have the responsibility to design and maintain facilities to ensure the safety of all road users. The way facilities are designed can encourage or discourage safe and correct use of the road. For example, if push buttons to activate pedestrian signals are located too far away or are inaccessible for people in wheelchairs to reach, more pedestrians may travel against the signal. Poor roadway designs often increase the amount of non-compliance with traffic laws, increasing the burden on law enforcement who are called upon to respond to safety issues.

As eyes and ears of the community, law enforcement officers may identify traffic safety issues that can be corrected through changes to the built environment. When considering community partners, engineering and planning staff are key stakeholders as they are responsible for roadway configurations, plans for development or construction, and traffic operations and maintenance. A strong line of communication between enforcement and engineering bolsters both departments and allows for a better understanding of approaches that may be necessary to address pedestrian and bicyclist safety issues in the community.

Trying to enforce safe behaviors in areas where the roadway environment discourages safe behaviors will not likely lead to successful long-term compliance and can lead to a complaining public. For example, roadway configurations that have more than two lanes in each direction, speeds of 30 miles per hour or higher, and/or non-high-visibility marked crosswalks have been associated with lower compliance rates with driver yielding laws.<sup>27</sup> In these types of crossings, infrastructure changes may be needed to slow cars, enhance visibility, or shorten pedestrian crossing distances to help reduce the number

of noncompliant drivers that law enforcement would be needed to pursue.

Another common example that applies to this concept is when pedestrians cross midblock between two signalized intersections that are widely spaced apart. Attempting to encourage pedestrians to walk a long distance out of their way may be futile in truly changing their behavior at that location without a sustained (i.e., time- and resource-intensive), high-visibility enforcement effort. Partnering with engineers and planners to study the issue may lead to the installation of a legal midblock crossing or other infrastructure treatment that not only aids pedestrians in crossing safely but also reinforces where they should cross to be compliant.

A road safety audit to evaluate performance of an existing or future road or intersection to evaluate pedestrian and bicyclist safety can bridge law enforcement and traffic engineering approaches. Working together encourages a peer exchange of knowledge and ideas and can proactively address potential safety issues. This type of exchange also introduces a new partner within the community in which to build capacity and engage.

Sustained coordination and collaboration between law enforcement officers and traffic engineers can lead to meaningful results. Studies have shown that enforcement is effective in changing behavior for up to 6 weeks, but a combined approach between enforcement, education, and engineering can lead to more permanent behavior changes.<sup>26</sup> A feedback loop between engineering and enforcement can leverage expertise and strategies for changing the built environment while narrowing the focus on areas and behaviors where enforcement can advance safety and save lives.

### Key Considerations:

- How can law enforcement work with traffic engineers to share information? How can these collaborations become a routine part of each agency's operations?
- Where can enforcement make a difference in behaviors where the built environment also makes the correct behavior the easiest? Are there places where the "right" behavior is hard to do because of the way the facility is designed?
- How and when can enforcement officers help traffic engineering departments plan for improved roadway design to support safe behaviors?

### Principles in Practice:

- Greenville, North Carolina, employs a data-driven approach in which police officers collaborate with traffic engineers to review crash incidents to improve the built environment in higher risk areas. The city participates in the [Watch for Me North Carolina](#)<sup>28</sup> program, which aims to reduce pedestrian and bicyclist injuries and deaths through a comprehensive, targeted approach of public education, community engagement, and high-visibility law enforcement. Beside enforcement and education, engineering solutions are on the city's list of priorities for reducing crashes. Greenville recently installed traffic delineators limiting vehicular left turns, which has so far eliminated crashes at specific hotspots.



## Learn More:

- [Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center: PEDBIKESAFE](#)  
Intended to serve as an “Engineer in a Box,” this guidebook provides a 101 on roadway measures to improve safety and mobility, as well as example installations and an interactive tool to help determine appropriate measures for different roadway contexts.<sup>29</sup>
- [NHTSA: Countermeasures That Work: A Highway Safety Countermeasure Guide for State Highway Safety Offices](#)  
Summary of the effectiveness of various countermeasures for all types of risky road behavior and includes subsections on strategies for pedestrians and bicyclists.<sup>30</sup>
- [PBIC: Pedestrian Safety Action Plan Webinar Series: Safety Enforcement](#)  
Webinar review of enforcement strategies to develop a Pedestrian Safety Action Plan, including collaboration with engineering to create a “right design to invite the right use.”<sup>31</sup>

## Engage the Community

Community engagement and outreach to improve pedestrian and bicyclist safety is a major component to enforcement activities. Engaging the public is a two-way street for participatory learning and practice and provides insight into pedestrian and bicyclist safety issues within the community. Conversations with the community can also help clarify misperceptions, build trust, and identify new partnerships.

Active public engagement includes outreach to areas or groups that need support in either adopting or advancing safe behaviors. Law enforcement officers familiar with the community can identify champions to help encourage safe behaviors. In a train-the-trainer type model, enforcement may work with crossing guards or school resource officers (SROs), sworn law enforcement officers responsible for safety in







schools. School crossing guards can play a key role in promoting safe driver, pedestrian, and bicyclist behaviors at crosswalks near schools. A guard helps children develop skills to safely cross streets and visually notifies drivers of the presence of vulnerable road users. Outreach during crossing guard training would allow enforcement to reiterate laws, regulations, and safe behaviors to share in the field. SROs also benefit from outreach specific to pedestrian and bicyclist safety, and there are many examples of SROs holding educational or training events, such as bicycle rodeos, to increase safety by engaging families, caregivers, and school staff.

Enforcement officers can act as role models for safe behaviors to other drivers in the community. By yielding to pedestrians in crosswalks or providing safe passing distance to bicyclists while driving police vehicles, officers demonstrate the safe behavior. Officers can also model behavior for new infrastructure unfamiliar to road users, such as pedestrian hybrid beacons, shared lane markings, or bicycle signal heads. Enforcement agencies may

even hold campaigns or outreach events to inform the community of changes to the roadway design or signals that people will need to adapt to or learn how to use.<sup>32</sup>

It is important to take a thoughtful and holistic approach to public engagement. Education and outreach efforts should address all road users and not only pedestrians and bicyclists.<sup>33</sup> Officers should also be mindful of areas with infrastructure deficiencies that create challenges for people to walk or bike safely. Historically, many low-income communities and underserved populations have been left out of conversations about transportation planning and this has led to unsafe conditions where pedestrians and bicyclists are over-represented in crashes. Equity, access, and legacy issues, such as historical underinvestment in safe facilities for walking and bicycling, should be taken into consideration and may need to be part of the public engagement conversation.<sup>34</sup> Partnering with groups working within these communities and providing transparency and data can help public engagement strategies.<sup>35</sup>

Leveraging efforts with local media can also be an effective strategy to help distribute information and educational messaging. Local news outlets provide an outreach for increasing broad awareness. Media coverage can also help shape public perception, so it is important to consider how pedestrian and bicyclist topics are framed in the public conversation. Recent research has focused on editorial patterns in media coverage of bicyclist and pedestrian crash reporting, particularly on unintentional language choices and patterns that result in “victim blaming” of vulnerable road users. Working with communications teams can help refocus the conversation among enforcement and media outlets to reduce victim blaming and help identify potential solutions.<sup>36</sup> Additionally, law enforcement has an opportunity to prioritize pedestrian and bicyclist safety and set normative standards within their community in how they communicate these messages in the media.



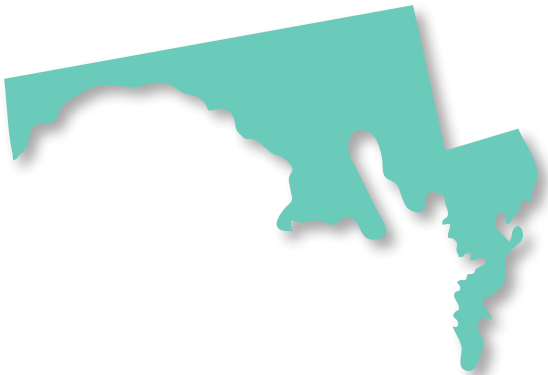
“ It is important to take a thoughtful and holistic approach to public engagement. Education and outreach efforts should address all road users and not only pedestrians and bicyclists. ”



### Key Considerations:

- Who should be engaged to help share safety information?
- What are the relationships between the law enforcement officers and the community they are seeking to engage on transportation safety issues? Is there a foundation of trust and respect that can support authentic community engagement around walking and bicycling safety issues?
- How can law enforcement officers frame messages in a way that is sensitive to the needs of the community and coordinated with broader outreach efforts?

### Principles in Practice:



- The Walk Smart campaign in Ocean City, Maryland, uses a collaborative approach to reduce the number of pedestrian crashes in a beach community that hosts more than 8 million visitors each year. Led by Ocean City Police Department and a task force of town officials, fire department representatives, local businesses, and other stakeholders, the campaign uses safety messaging in areas with high pedestrian volume, key intersections, and bus stops. The campaign features a cartoon of the iconic Maryland crab paired with pedestrian safety messages and is placed on transit and airplane banners, boat and roadside billboards, gas pump toppers, and television and radio public service announcements, and other methods for engagement. Toolkits for faith-based organizations, hotels, and condo rentals for personnel and visitors also help distribute messaging.<sup>37</sup>



- The [Watch for Me CT](#) program held a pedestrian safety awareness event in partnership with the New Britain Police Department. This interactive event included education and positive reinforcement for safe crosswalk behaviors, including coupons and other safety equipment materials. Signage and other visuals alerted and educated drivers. The New Britain Bees baseball team mascot attended and media covered the event. Bike Walk Connecticut, representatives from the New Britain Downtown District, and Safe Kids Connecticut also supported the event which took place during the seasonal farmer's market and reached more than 200 pedestrians.



- Dare County is located on the Outer Banks of North Carolina. Pedestrian and bicyclist transportation is common among the towns, not only as a mode of commuting, but also as a way to explore the coastal environment recreationally. The area experiences a summer tourist season when visitors add to the population of local residents and increase road traffic. To reach these temporary populations, enforcement distributes materials and places signage at major entry points into the area. During peak tourist season, many county businesses also hire seasonal employers. To better address this diversity, the county is building relationships with large local employers, such as grocery stores, to share road safety messaging with employees and within the stores. The Outer Banks International Student Outreach Program provides orientation to visiting students and includes information about pedestrian and bicyclist safety in a welcome handbook.

### Learn More:

- [National Center for Safe Routes to School: Enforcement](#)  
Ideas and resources for law enforcement outreach to enable children to walk and bicycle to school safely.<sup>38</sup>
- [FHWA: A Resident's Guide for Creating Safer Communities for Walking and Biking](#)  
Methods to influence community change via increased awareness and outreach.<sup>39</sup>

## Measure Results and Update Policies and Plans



Building enforcement goals into strategic plans and performance evaluations sets the expectation for action. It is also a way to measure results, track progress, identify successes and challenges, and build support for future decisions. Community values learned through public outreach efforts should help frame the goals. There may also be an opportunity to incorporate pedestrian and bicyclist safety goals into current policies and plans.

Measuring results is also important. Meaningful metrics can show the

program impact and build the case for ongoing support. Data collection from a wide variety of sources, beyond crash reports, may be helpful as behavior programs may take time for demonstrable results and community culture shifts.

“*Meaningful metrics can show the program impact and build the case for ongoing support. Data collection from a wide variety of sources, beyond crash reports, may be helpful as behavior programs may take time for demonstrable results and community culture shifts.*”

Enforcement operations can provide an opportunity to collect information and metrics. Operations conducted with some frequency provide a comparison analysis of programming efforts to help track progress. For example, an operations event to collect information about driver yielding rates to pedestrians, held during a specific period, such as during “Back to School” week, could yield two different sets of results if measured before and after the implementation of a year-long program. Enforcement operations could also be held more frequently, such as on monthly basis, in one specific area that has been selected for pedestrian and bicyclist safety and has been

a focus for regular, frequent programming. The same metrics should be collected over time for comparable and meaningful analysis.

Enforcement goals and programming results inform policies and plans and they can be incorporated on the local or State levels. In some cases, plans require metrics informed by enforcement agencies, such as Highway Safety Plans led by State Highway Safety Offices that require metrics on pedestrian and bicyclist fatalities.<sup>40</sup> Incorporating programming results and goals into policies can lead to greater support from

higher levels of government and may also lead to funding opportunities to support programming strategies.

As metrics, plans, and policies evolve over long-term efforts, it is important to build upon existing strengths, and this may include developing legacy plans to retain institutional memory and knowledge. Local safety plans, studies, and other area expertise may help inform program activities and next steps. There may be partnership opportunities with State Highway Safety Offices, non-profits, universities, and other researchers to help meet the challenges of ongoing evaluation activities.

### **Key Considerations:**

- What are the goals of existing law enforcement department plans and policies? Is there a way to incorporate pedestrian and bicyclist safety goals into existing plans and policies?
- What funding or other resources are needed to reach these goals?
- How is the community or agency tracking progress for pedestrian and bicyclist safety?
- What is the role of the State Highway Safety Office or other State and local sources of safety funds in supporting efforts? Is additional support available?
- How will efforts be documented to retain institutional knowledge?

### **Principles in Practice:**

- Durham, North Carolina, adopted pedestrian safety goals and performance measures within a law enforcement strategic plan. The plan measures enhanced traffic, pedestrian, and bicyclist safety and the number of pedestrian and bicyclist crashes and injuries. Initiatives to support the strategic plan include a citation data pilot program, intersection crash data hotspot inventory, pedestrian and bicyclist educational programs and materials, and enforcement operations for neighborhood crosswalks.<sup>41</sup>
- Some Watch for Me NC community partners joined a Joint Legislative Transportation Oversight Committee, which made legislative recommendations to improve safety for bicyclists and motorists. Community partners reviewed North Carolina House Bill 232 requiring the North Carolina Department of Transportation to study bicyclist safety laws. The working committee was tasked with evaluating existing traffic laws for potential revisions and made recommendations regarding legislative language, increased motorist passing bicyclist distance, bicyclist lighting requirements, and more.<sup>42</sup>



### Learn More:

- [FHWA: Guidebook for Developing Pedestrian and Bicycle Performance Measures](#)  
Helps communities develop performance measures to integrate pedestrian and bicyclist planning in ongoing activities.<sup>43</sup>
- [GHSA: Guidance for Developing Highway Safety Plans](#)  
Assists State Highway Safety Offices develop federally required annual highway safety plans which include performance metrics on pedestrian and bicyclist fatalities.<sup>39</sup>
- [FHWA: Noteworthy Local Policies That Support Safe and Complete Pedestrian and Bicycle Networks](#)  
Tools to develop policies that support safe and complete bicycle and pedestrian networks for all ages and abilities, and includes examples of policies supporting complete street networks.<sup>44</sup>
- [FHWA: Metropolitan Pedestrian and Bicycle Planning Handbook](#)  
Handbook covers integration of pedestrian and bicycle information into the metropolitan transportation planning process.<sup>45</sup>
- [NHTSA: The Art of Appropriate Evaluation](#)  
Guide that describes the benefits of evaluation and the steps involved.<sup>46</sup>

## Next Steps for Pedestrian and Bicyclist Safety

Law enforcement officers adopt multiple roles within their community and have diverse knowledge and skills that provide a comprehensive approach to building capacity, identifying strategies, and advancing plans and policies. Given their versatility, it is fundamental and advantageous for law enforcement agencies to support pedestrian and bicyclist safety. A combined approach between enforcement, engineering, and the wider community helps reinforce and sustain these efforts, as programs to promote behavior change and create culture shifts are ongoing with long-term interventions.

Extended programming with consistent operations does show results over time, as some research has shown. For example, some communities across North Carolina with continuous participation in the Watch for Me NC program have reported long-term benefits. A recent evaluation measuring the safety effectiveness of the statewide program estimated a 12-percent reduction in county-wide pedestrian crashes, in comparison to non-participant counties over a multi-year time period.<sup>47</sup> Beyond crash reductions and improved safety for walking and bicycling, participating law enforcement agencies also report stronger, more positive relations within their community, and greater awareness of the need for and opportunities to support vibrant communities where walking and bicycling are a safe and comfortable way of life.

The strategies outlined within this idea book offer a wide menu of options, examples, and resources to consider when taking steps to build a holistic approach to pedestrian and bicycle safety. It is important to consider community efforts to date and move forward with a process that effectively engages the knowledge and skill that law enforcement agencies bring to support safe and comfortable travel for all road users.

“The strategies outlined within this idea book offer a wide menu of options, examples, and resources to consider when taking steps to build a holistic approach to pedestrian and bicycle safety.”

## Additional Resources

The following list of resources provides a starting point for understanding the role of law enforcement, State and local practices, and research evaluating enforcement-related efforts.

### Pedestrian and Bicyclist Training for Law Enforcement

- [GHSA: A Right to the Road: Understand and Addressing Bicyclist Safety](#)  
National data to understand fatal bicyclist-motorist crash characteristics, with 30 action steps to help enforcement and local communities assess and improve their current bicyclist safety programs.<sup>50</sup>
- [NHTSA: Enhancing Bicycle Safety: Law Enforcement's Role](#)  
Two-hour self-paced video training for law enforcement to enhance bicyclist safety.<sup>48</sup>
- [NHTSA: Pedestrian Training for Law Enforcement](#)  
Self-paced interactive, computer-based training program to help law enforcement officers understand the factors associated with pedestrian crashes, develop meaningful countermeasures and enforcement strategies, and recognize the importance of complete and accurate crash reporting.<sup>49</sup>
- [U.S. Department of Transportation: Built Environment Strategies to Deter Crime](#)  
Webpage with approaches and strategies to promote community safety and physical activity, including walking and bicycling, through the build environment.<sup>50</sup>
- [International Police Mountain Bike Association Training for Law Enforcement](#)  
Website offering resources, networking opportunities, and training for public safety bicyclists.<sup>51</sup>



## Program Guidance

- [GHSA: Everyone Walks: Understanding and Addressing Pedestrian Safety](#)  
Series of webinars and a 2016 GHSA report on the status of pedestrian safety laws, research, programs, and funding. This report is comprehensive and includes links to many pertinent resources and agencies for community members new to the subject matter.<sup>52</sup>
- [NHTSA: Advancing Pedestrian and Bicyclist Safety: A Primer for Highway Safety Professionals](#)  
High-level overview of education, engineering, and enforcement treatments—and how they interact—to improve pedestrian and bicyclist safety. It includes a glossary of terms, key resources, and recommendations on ways that State and local agencies can develop integrated, comprehensive safety programs.<sup>53</sup>
- [NHTSA: Pedestrian Safety Enforcement Operations, A How-To Guide](#)  
Guidance document on strategies and techniques for planning, implementing, and evaluating pedestrian safety enforcement activities. Findings and recommendations are based on a brief review of the professional and scientific literature and interviews with 37 programs working on pedestrian safety enforcement.<sup>54</sup>
- [PBIC: An Overview of Automated Enforcement Systems and Their Potential for Improving Pedestrian and Bicyclist Safety](#)  
White paper explores the implications that automated enforcement systems, specifically red-light cameras and automated speed enforcement systems, can have on pedestrian and bicyclist safety.<sup>55</sup>

## Enforcement and Education Program Websites

- [New Jersey: Street Smart Pedestrian Safety Campaign](#)  
Website provides information regarding pedestrian-related laws in New Jersey and resources for enforcement such as palm cards, videos, a how-to guide on implementing Street Smart New Jersey campaign, and many bilingual resources.<sup>56</sup>
- [North Carolina Department of Transportation: Watch for Me NC Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Program](#)  
Website provides an overview of the North Carolina program, including annual reports and community profiles, links to educational and media materials, safety information, and resources for the media.<sup>57</sup>

## Research Studies and Evaluations

- [NHTSA: High-Visibility Enforcement on Driver Compliance With Pedestrian Right-of-Way Laws](#)  
Study evaluates driver yielding responses to a year-long, high-visibility enforcement program conducted in Gainesville, Florida.<sup>58</sup>
- [NHTSA: The Effect of High-Visibility Enforcement on Driver Compliance With Pedestrian Right-of-Way Laws: 4-Year Follow-Up](#)  
Follow-up report on the long-term impact of high-visibility enforcement operations in Gainesville, Florida.<sup>59</sup>
- [Effect of a Community-Based Pedestrian Injury Prevention Program on Driver Yielding Behavior at Marked Crosswalks](#)  
Summary of key behavioral outcomes related to a safety program Watch for Me NC, a safety demonstration program in North Carolina.<sup>25</sup>
- [NHTSA: Advancing Pedestrian Safety Using Education and Enforcement in Pedestrian Focus Cities and States: Chicago](#)  
Summary of pedestrian enforcement and education campaign conducted by the Chicago Department of Transportation.<sup>60</sup>

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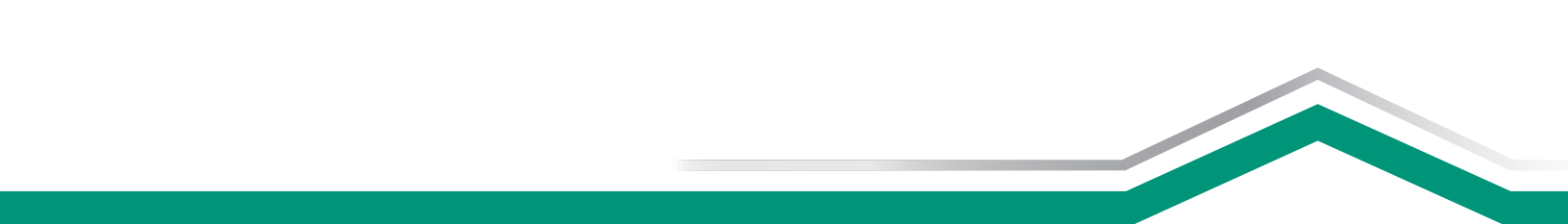
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