Regional Transportation Safety Plan:
Findings and Recommendations

Portland, OR
Metro Region

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Background

• 2008 federal certification review FHWA recommendation

• MPOs across the country have struggled incorporating safety into the planning process

• FHWA sponsored workshop in fall 2009
Regional Vision for Safety

• One of the 6 Desired Outcomes

• 2035 RTP Goal
Getting Started

• Convened Regional Safety Workgroup
  – 2035 RTP performance target
  – State of Safety in the Region report
    http://www.oregonmetro.gov/safety
  – Regional Transportation Safety Plan
    http://www.oregonmetro.gov/safety
Regional Transportation Safety Plan

- Urban focused
- Data-driven
- Multimodal
- Focuses on fatal and severe injury crashes
- Identify recommendations to meet RTP targets
The Problem

• US roads
  – 2000 – 2009: 411,212 people killed
  – Average of one person killed every 13 minutes....24/7 for 10 years straight
  – Leading cause of accidental deaths
  – Leading cause of all deaths, age 15 – 34

• Metro region roads
  – 2007 – 2009: 159 people killed, 1,400+ severely injured
  – Societal costs of $958 Million/year
The Analysis

ODOT Statewide Crash data + Metro Regional Land Inventory System (RLIS) GIS data + Regional Traffic Model data = Metro’s State of Safety report (2012)
What are the general patterns?

- **Arterials** are the major safety challenge in the region
- **Alcohol/Drugs, Speed, and Aggressive Driving** are major behavioral factors to be addressed
- Higher **VMTs** = more serious crashes
- Streets with more **lanes** = higher serious crash rates, particularly for people walking
- Risk for people walking increases most **after dark**
- **Street lighting** is important for bikes and peds
Behavioral Factors

- Alcohol and Drugs
- Excessive Speed
- Aggressive Driving

**Workgroup Recommendation:** Convene safety service professionals (law enforcement, education, EMS etc.) to focus on these contributing factors.
Roadway class

- Arterial roadways are the major safety challenge in the region – for all modes.

**Workgroup Recommendation:** Develop arterial safety program to identify high severity crash arterials across the region.
Ped & Bike Crashes

• Most serious ped & bike crashes happen on arterials
• Wider roads are over-represented
• Nighttime & lighting are risk factors

Workgroup Recommendation: Address high risk factors for pedestrians and bicyclists, including crossings on multi-lane roads, lighting, crosswalk enforcement, and protected bicycle facilities.
What are we already doing?

- Building roadways to standards
  - Standards aren’t based on safety outcomes
  - We’ve been doing this 50+ years, it hasn’t led to safer roads.

- Safety as a criterion in all projects
  - Projects are selected for other reasons (congestion, economic development, multimodal access)
  - Safety “hotspots” are rarely addressed
Failed Regional Safety Pilot

• Emphasized implementation of Workgroup recommendations.
• 50/50 Funding partnership of state and regional dollars
• Focused resources on the most severe safety problems
• Target: reduce fatalities & severe injuries by 50% by 2035
What’s next?

• Potential future policy changes
• Integrating safety into all of Metro led planning activities
• Conduct similar safety data analysis in the Cleveland Metro region as comparison
• Focus on MAP-21 safety performance measures to advocate for more MPO safety resources
Questions

For links to Safety Plan and Report, visit
www.oregonmetro.gov/safety
or contact:
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