

RIVERCOG SAFE STREETS AND ROADS FOR ALL (SS4A) COMPREHENSIVE SAFETY ACTION PLAN

Study Advisory Committee 2

Attendees

- Eric Couture, Killingworth First Selectman
- Cindy Lignar, Chester First Selectwoman
- John Hall, The Jonah Center
- Grayson Wright, CTDOT Intergovernmental Affairs
- Kevin Tedesco, CTDOT Intergovernmental Affairs
- Brendan Geraghty, River Valley Transit
- Stuart Popper, Cromwell Planning & Development

RiverCOG: Robert Haramut, Marcos Gonzalez, Sam Gold

FHI Studio: Michael Ahillen, AICP, Hannah Brockhaus AICP

Tighe and Bond: Collene Byrne, PE

Summary

Robert Haramut, RiverCOG Project Manager welcomed attendees. Michael Ahillen, Project Manager from FHI Studio led a presentation which covered the following topics, assisted by Collene Byrne from Tighe and Bond.

- Project Overview and Update
- Existing Conditions
 - Basemapping
 - Safety Analysis
- Goals and Vision
- Coming Up Next

More detail on these topics is available in the presentation; the following presents a summary of the discussion items.

Safety Analysis

- It was clarified that regardless of number of vehicles in the crash, for the purpose of total tabulating total crashes in the region, one crash is counted.
- Eric Couture asked if the frequency of time of crashes relates to sunset time. During the winter months sunset is 4:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. vs 7:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. in the summer. Collene responded that this isn't reflective based on an analysis of all crashes. If the analysis only considered pedestrian crashes that would be the case.

- Cindy Lignar asked about wrong way crashes getting a lot of headlines across the state. Collene Byrne clarified that since this analysis doesn't include limited access highways there wasn't a strong prevalence of wrong way crashes but agreed with the state-wide trend.
- Brendan Geraghty was surprised about the relatively high proportion without seatbelts. Collene Byrne noted that the chart was reflective of the fatal and serious injury crashes, reflecting that for those outcomes the rate of noncompliance with occupant restraint is higher. The team clarified that the analysis did include ramps to the limited access highways.
- Eric Couture said he was not surprised by the Killingworth locations, particularly noting the Route 148 intersections with dirt roads.
- It was noted that planned projects overlap with the top 25 crash locations. That will be documented in the existing conditions memo.
- Eric Couture noted that there are no Chester locations on either map. He specifically flagged Route 148 through Chester, and particularly the Route 9 intersection is challenging. Cindy Lipnar also was surprised that that location did not arise. Michael Ahillen noted that there are 4 communities that don't have representation on either of the maps, which is good news from a data standpoint but it's relative. Municipal profiles (for all RiverCOG municipalities) will be in the final plan.
- There was a comment regarding the mile marker identified corridors where they do not correspond with cross streets. Going forward the team will look for additional means to translate mile markers to key identifying points outside of the distance.
- John Hall asked about coordination of this information with the Middletown SS4A corridor plans. The team committed to providing that information and calling it out within the municipal profiles.

Vision Zero Commitment Action Statement (Draft)

- After a discussion of policy approach for addressing crashes, Michael discussed the importance of principles such as redundancy is critical.
- Brendan asked about comparison between RiverCOG crash rate, Connecticut, and the U.S. as a whole as a means of understanding the impact of a year such as 2040 vs 2045. Michael Ahillen noted that finding a balance over time and the variation with low crash volumes is tricky at a regional level.
- Eric Couture asked about realistic lead times for making roadway improvements, requiring DOT coordination for design and implementation. He referenced the timeline of the project involving stop lights off of Route 9. 2040 seems appropriate given it is 15 years after the plan would be published but would be something to consider.
- John noted that having attended meetings of the state's Bike-Ped Advisory Committee, they have flagged that sometimes challenges exist with regard to coordination with CTDOT on maintenance projects and what design improvements may be made with regard to sidewalks and bike facilities.
- Grayson Wright clarified some of the components of CTDOT programming:
 - Within the VIP Paving Program, modification to only 11' travel lanes and 10' turn lanes is standard. The incorporation of bike lanes is contingent upon the space remaining at that point since less than 4' bike lanes are not typically advised. That

may ultimately be determined in coordination with the municipality, but local maintenance of those pavement markings would be required. Moreover, he stated, there could be a determination of logical termini and independent utility of the segment in question. ADA Ramps and crosswalks would be typically standard. Since the VIP Paving Program is defined as curb-to-curb width there are strict limitations on what can be included.

- He noted that sometimes improvements may be phased, such that paving would come first and next construction season come back to the ramps.
- Recently the Commissioner put out an engineering directive causing a lot more consideration of Complete Streets infrastructure for ongoing and future projects. Additionally, an Intersection Control Evaluation policy is forthcoming such that if an intersection is altered in a substantial way, those intersections on state roads are subject to an evaluation to consider traffic configuration, roundabouts, etc.
- Brendan Geraghty noted that the new DOT Complete Streets policy and directive is having a positive impact on increasing public transit infrastructure (shelters, signs, benches etc).
- Michael Ahillen provided clarification about regional and municipal vision zero policies and whether fatalities and serious injuries on limited access highways would be a failure of vision zero, in response to municipal representative questions. Typically it would not, due to the explicit focus on non-limited access highways in the policy. He noted that they are still issues that municipalities should focus on but the policy recognizes that the municipalities cannot control those roadways.
- Cindy asked whether a trail project could pursue SS4A funding. Michael noted that if there's alignment on the street, that could be one aspect of a SS4A implementation grant. Purely recreational trails would not be applicable. Rob Haramut agreed that identifying synergies with safety issues would make that an option. Chester, Haddam, and East Haddam will be coordinating on that effort.