RiverCOG

Comprehensive Safety Action Plan

Safe Streets and Roads for All

Policy And Process Recommendations

Technical Memorandum

TABLE OF CONTENTS

POLICY REVIEW

Introduction

The Policy and Process Memorandum reviews current transportation safety policies implemented in Connecticut, the Lower Connecticut River Valley (LCRV) Council of Governments (also known as RiverCOG), and local jurisdictions. For research purposes, transportation safety policy aims to:

- Promote safety among all road users
- Set standards of roadway design to promote vulnerable road users
- Achieve zero fatalities and zero serious injuries for all roadway users

This memorandum outlines current transportation safety policies and procedures and recommends new strategies based on best practices to reduce serious injuries and fatalities. First State, regional, and municipal policies are reviewed, according to the following topics:

- Project Development
- Complete Streets
- Vision Zero
- Speed Management
- Safe Driving
- Vulnerable Users
- Education
- Data & Monitoring

Policy recommendations are then outlined in table format with suggested agencies and timelines.

Statewide Policy & Process Review

Project Development

A number of CTDOT resources exist pertaining to funding, design, network planning, and safety, available in the online portal. Some resources are highlighted here and others are highlighted under the Complete Streets header.

Community Connectivity Grant Program

This program provides funding for local projects that focuses on enhancing the state's transportation network for all modes.

Road Safety Audit Program

The Road Safety Audit (RSA) program is run by CTDOT through the Community Connectivity Grant Program. The focus of the program is to make recommendations to improve pedestrian and bicycle

safety in select areas. The RSA program is intended to serve as the first step toward project funding and initiation on study area recommendations through grants provided through the Community Connectivity Program. There have been a number of RSAs conducted in the Lower Connecticut River Valley (LCRV) region through this program, including Deep River, Chester, Haddam East Haddam, and Portland.

Local Transportation Capital Improvement Program (LOTCIP)

Connecticut Public Act 13-239 established the Local Transportation Capital Improvement Program (LOTCIP)in June 2013. The program provides State funds to municipalities through Council of Governments (COG's) for transportation projects of regional significance, including reconstruction, pavement rehabilitation, sidewalk, bridge, intersection improvement, and multi-use trail projects. Projects must meet the eligibility requirements of the Federal Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) program. Roadway improvements must be located on a roadway classified as collector or higher (rural minor collectors, rural local roads, and urban local roads are not eligible). Sidewalks and multi-use trails may be eligible regardless of roadway classification, as are projects primarily proposing bridge/culvert improvements that meet specific criteria. The program was initiated to streamline projects not requiring standard State/Federal design oversight and approval. Projects that require this oversight are better suited for other funding sources. For projects funded under the LOTCIP, all design activities necessary to advance the project to construction are the responsibility of the Municipality.

Transportation Rural Improvement Program (TRIP)

The CTDOT Transportation Rural Improvement Grant Program, (TRIP) provides state funds to municipal governments for infrastructure improvements in rural areas of Connecticut. Activities may include transportation capital projects such as construction, modernization, or major repair of infrastructure.

Complete Streets

CTDOT Complete Streets Policy (2014)

The policy, adopted in 2014, establishes that the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT) will consider the needs of all users of all ages, abilities, and using all modes. Objectives and procedures to implement complete streets are identified, including alignment of transportation funding to encourage improvements benefitting non-motorized users, formation of a standing Complete Streets Committee, and several additional action items. The state's Complete Streets

Committee includes representatives from across disciplines and representation from all CTDOT district offices. This committee's tasks include training among other ongoing items.

CTDOT Complete Streets Controlling Design Criteria and Justification Process (2023)

In 2023, CTDOT implemented new Complete Streets design criteria to be incorporated into all projects. The Complete Streets design criteria is an expansion of CTDOT's Complete Street Policy, ensuring that every project includes a focus on pedestrian and bicyclist facilities and public transportation operations to create stronger intermodal transportation networks and improve safety.

CTDOT Quick Build Complete Streets Guidance

This program establishes a framework for municipalities seeking to implement demonstration projects on state roads, utilizing the CTDOT encroachment permit process, contingent upon adherence to CTDOT regulations and guidelines. Application process instructions as well as an overview of installation, evaluation, and feedback/ reporting are provided within the memo. It establishes that a CTDOT encroachment permit must be filed for such projects. This guidance streamlines the process for municipalities seeking coordination from CTDOT for complete streets quick build projects, especially since many candidate roadways for such projects are owned by the state.

Vision Zero

In 2021, the Connecticut General Assembly established a Vision Zero Council, an interagency working group tasked with developing statewide policy to eliminate transportation-related facilities and severe injuries. The Council members commit to and prioritize a Safe System Approach. Recommendations of the Council were passed in HB5917. It includes the following:

- Empowering municipalities to deploy automated traffic enforcement with significant oversight from CTDOT
- Requires more robust safety education be provided to drivers
- Requires consideration of recommendations from equity stakeholders in the annual capital plan development process
- Requires continuation of a public awareness campaign on the dangers of impaired driving

This has also led to the re-establishment of the Safe Routes to Schools program at CTDOT which provides on-demand education, bike and pedestrian safety curriculum, and awards a Vision Zero Program Distinction For Schools annually.

Safe System Approach

The principles of the Safe System Approach are:

- Death and serious injuries are unacceptable.
- Humans make mistakes.
- Humans are vulnerable.
- Responsibility is shared.
- Safety is proactive.
- Redundancy is crucial.

The objectives of a Safe System Approach:

- Safer People – Encourage safe, responsible driving and behavior by people who use our roads and create conditions that prioritize their ability to reach their destination unharmed.
- Safer Roads – Design roadway environments to mitigate human mistakes and account for injury tolerances, encourage safer behaviors, and facilitate safe travel by the most vulnerable users.
- Safer Vehicles – Expand the availability of vehicle systems and features that help to prevent crashes and minimize the impact of crashes on both occupants and non-occupants.
- Safer Speeds – Promote safer speeds in all roadway environments through a combination of thoughtful, equitable, context-appropriate roadway design, appropriate speed-limit setting, targeted education, outreach campaigns, and enforcement.
- Post-Crash Care – Enhance the survivability of crashes through expedient access to emergency medical care, while creating a safe working environment for vital first responders and preventing secondary crashes through robust traffic incident management practices.

Speed Management

Speed Limits

The Office of the State Traffic Administration (OSTA) within CTDOT is responsible for approving speed limits on all public roadways in Connecticut. Local Traffic Authorities (LTAs) in towns, cities, and boroughs can establish, modify, and maintain speed limits on municipal roads within their jurisdiction.

- Engineering Study Requirement: When establishing or modifying speed limits, municipalities must conduct an engineering study. This study assesses factors such as road conditions, traffic volume, accident history, and the presence of pedestrians.
- Pedestrian Safety Zones: Municipalities can establish Pedestrian Safety Zones in downtown districts or community centers without OSTA approval. These zones are intended to enhance safety in areas with high pedestrian activity.

- School Zones: The standard speed limit in Connecticut school zones is 20 miles per hour. Fines for violating speed limits in school zones are double the fine for the same violation outside of a school zone.

Automated Traffic Enforcement

Work Zones

In 2023, CTDOT conducted a one-year pilot program to flag drivers going over the posted speed limits in highway work zones. Based on the success of the pilot program, lawmakers agreed to let the policy become permanent starting in 2025. The policy includes mandatory signs warning drivers of the location of cameras and supervision by the Department to ensure that fines are not disproportionately drawn from lower-income neighborhoods.

Traffic Violation Monitoring Systems

Connecticut now allows municipalities to ticket drivers whose vehicles are documented going 10 miles per hour faster than the posted speed limit or running a red light. The law requires that towns submit plans for CTDOT approval before they can begin using red light or speed cameras. Those plans must be renewed every three years, during which time towns must submit reports to the DOT and state lawmakers on the number of fines issued and revenue they collected. Once municipalities receive permission to start installing cameras, they may operate them for up to three years before reapproval. In each location where cameras are installed, towns must issue only written warnings for the first 30 days before they can start fining violators $50 on a first offense and up to $75 for each subsequent offense, plus a $15 processing fee. CTDOT's rules for speed monitoring plans include written justification for each location, including traffic patterns and history of crashes; a prohibition on placing more than two camera systems in census tracts with the highest concentration of poverty; and no more than one camera systems where census tracts smaller than a quarter mile.

Safe Driving

Legal Framework

Impaired Driving: Connecticut Statute §14-227a prohibits a person from driving "while under the influence" of alcohol or drugs, or with an "elevated blood-alcohol content (BAC). The former is interpreted as his or her ability to drive is affected to an appreciable degree; the latter is interpreted, for drivers over 21, as a BAC level of 0.08. There are different BAC levels defined for drivers operating commercial vehicles and drivers under 21. All drivers convicted of DUIs face fines and prison terms. Moreover, penalties for first and second offenses include 45-day license suspension and ignition interlock device (more below). The law also provides for an education, intervention, or treatment program in exchange for dismissal of charges.

Ignition Interlock: In Connecticut, anyone caught for an alcohol-related driving offense is required to install an ignition interlock device if their BAC is 0.08 or higher.

Implied Consent Law: Statute §14-227b says that every person who operates a vehicle has consented to take a test to determine their blood-alcohol content, which can happen at any time.

Occupant Protection: A state law requiring all passengers in vehicles to wear their seatbelt went into effect in Fall 2021. The new legislation requires all backseat passengers to wear occupant protection, whereas the previous legislation only required for backseat passengers under 16.

Seat Belt Laws: Connecticut requires all drivers and passengers to wear seat belts, including in the back seat. The state participates in national campaigns like "Click It or Ticket" to increase seat belt usage and reduce unrestrained occupant injuries.

Enforcement

DUI Grant: A grant opportunity available to municipalities to engage in high-visibility DUI enforcement with a combination of extra DUI patrols and sobriety checkpoints. These are available for eligible dates based on National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) holiday mobilization campaigns and non-holiday expanded enforcement periods.

Vulnerable Users

The Active Transportation Unit at CTDOT was created to advance pedestrian and bicycle planning initiatives. It collaborates on multimodal projects and administers education and grant programs promoting bicycle and pedestrian safety.

Under Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, all public entities with fifty or more full time employees must have an ADA Coordinator or similar to ensure the public entity meets Title II responsibilities. These include policies and processes for non-discrimination, accessibility for facilities and programs, and development of transition plans.

Active Transportation Microgrant Program

The CTDOT in conjunction with Councils of Government in Connecticut has established this funding opportunity, the purpose of which is to provide organizations with funding for resources that advance safe, accessible, sustainable, and equitable walking, biking, and rolling in CT. Schools, school districts, municipalities, health districts, and 501©(3) nonprofits are eligible to apply and are limited to two grants in a 12-month period. Microgrants provide up to $5,000 for each eligible applicant on a rolling basis. The intended uses are non-infrastructure such as bike helmets, bike locks, bike maintenance training and materials, League Certified Instructors training, programs and events supporting bicycle and pedestrian safety, and safety vests.

Planning Documents

The state's Active Transportation Plan guides future improvements on state routes for a functional, equitable, and safety-focused active transportation network and recommend supportive programs

and policies. An updated version is currently in development and is anticipated to be finalized in winter 2025.

Legal Frameworks

Connecticut's Vulnerable User Law defines vulnerable users as pedestrians, bicyclists, highway workers, and others who use public ways without a motor vehicle. The law imposes fines on drivers who fail to exercise reasonable care and cause injury or death to a vulnerable user.

An Act Concerning Pedestrian Safety introduces new laws in Connecticut to protect pedestrians and bicyclists.

- Yielding to pedestrians at crosswalks: Drivers who fail to yield at a crosswalk when required are subject to a $500 fine. When violations result in crashes and fatalities there can be more substantial penalties and potentially criminal charges
- Dooring: This law prohibits a person opening a car door or leaving a car door open longer than needed so that it makes contact with a pedestrian or bicyclist on a sidewalk, shoulder, or bikeway. Violations of this provision are considered infractions.

Education

Safe Routes to School (SRTS), as established in 2005 and revised in November 2021 in accordance with the Federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), is intended to enable and encourage children, including those with disabilities, to walk and bicycle to school; to make bicycling and walking to school a safer and more appealing transportation alternative, thereby encouraging a healthy and active lifestyle from an early age; and to facilitate the planning, development, and implementation of projects and activities that will improve safety and reduce traffic, fuel consumption, and air pollution in the vicinity of schools. The Connecticut SRTS Program is sponsored by CTDOT and the Federal Highway Administration with the goal of enabling and encouraging all children, in grades kindergarten-twelve (K-12) to walk and bicycle to school through community technical assistance and safety education. Schools/ school districts or municipalities can register for SRTS once they've identified a champion. A variety of tools are available including walk audit, development of an SRTS plan, skills clinics, and participation in Walk to School Day.

The Connecticut Training and Technical (T2) Assistance Center at UConn offers training in complete streets design, Road Safety Assessments, ADA Self-Assessment and Transition Planning, Solving ADA Design Challenges with a Complete Streets Mindset, Sign Installation and Maintenance, Low-Cost Safety Improvements, and Safe Transportation for Every Pedestrian (STEP). This training supports bicycle and pedestrian safety. As an example, the T2 Center also completed a project where speed-feedback sign and speed management training was offered to all of Connecticut's 169 cities and towns at no cost to the local agency.

The CT Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety Outreach program has seen a 30% increase in annual spending since 2018 that includes the Watch for Me CT program, a bicycle and pedestrian safety outreach program funded by CTDOT. The state's commitment to bicycle and pedestrian safety has tripled from about $560,000 in 2020 to $1.6 million budgeted for 2024.

The CTDOT provides a grant for CT Children's Medical Center's Injury Prevention Center to fund the Watch for Me CT program. Watch for Me CT aims to increase the awareness of pedestrian and bicyclist safety issues and educate road users on the shared responsibility of staying safe on the roads.

The state also runs public awareness campaigns to reduce impaired driving, including the following:

- CTDOT National Teen Driver Safety Week
- CTDOT Real Lives campaign ("When Speeding Kills") for National Move Over Day
- CTDOT Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over campaign

Data and Monitoring

Several initiatives are ongoing through the CTDOT T2 Center.

- The Connecticut Safety Circuit Rider Program provides safety related information, training, and technical assistance to agencies responsible for local roadway safety. Services include (but are not limited to) coordination of RSAs, equipment loan, collection, and analysis of traffic data, delivery of training, and assistance in the development of local road Safety Plans.
- Connecticut Transportation Safety Research Center (CTSRC) collects and links data from multiple sources to create a comprehensive database for crash analysis and injury prevention which is publicly accessible: Connecticut CRASH. The Connecticut Roadway Safety Management System (CRSMS), developed by CTSRC, implements Highway Safety Manual methods to analyze crash data including modules for network screening, diagnosis, countermeasure selection, economic appraisal, project prioritization, and safety effectiveness evaluation.

Regional Policy & Process Review

Project Prioritization

Metropolitan Transportation Plan

Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) for the Lower Connecticut River Valley (LCRV) region defines the region's future transportation vision and outlines regional transportation funding priorities. The MTP also establishes goals, policies, and steps to help achieve that vision. All MPOs, must prepare a MTP with respect to the development of the metropolitan area's transportation

network, which includes short- and long-term strategies and is updated every four years. The LCRV region consults with federal, state, and local agencies when developing the MTP and provides the public with a reasonable opportunity to comment on the plan.

Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

The TIP is a list of federally funded transportation projects to maintain and enhance the transportation network of the region. All projects in the TIP are scheduled to receive funding within the next four fiscal years. The TIP includes a discussion of the TIP planning and development process, program descriptions, a financial plan, list of projects to be funded, and environmental justice review. The TIP also includes appendices that details projects by year, maps regional projects, performance-based planning and programming, Air Quality Conformity determination, comments, and certification.

Complete Streets

Lower Connecticut River Valley Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan (2022)

This plan provides information on existing conditions, opportunities, and challenges related to bicycle and pedestrian projects. It also provides a vision and goals, design guidelines, and "recommendations for implementing multi-modal improvements that will ensure a safe and efficient transportation network that enhances quality of life and economic vitality." The documentation included an overview of accomplishments, issues and concerns, and opportunities for each municipality in the region.

Local Policy & Process Review

Project Development

The town ordinances and subdivision regulations of several municipalities have identified guidance on the placement of pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, as highlighted below.

- Deep River, Clinton, Chester have ordinances allowing the municipality to require bikeways to be developed.
- Several towns have basic design guidelines for sidewalks and may establish criteria for easement requirements in order to build and maintain a sidewalk network (Killingworth, Old Saybrook, Old Lyme, Durham, East Hampton, Deep River, Durham).
- Old Saybrook also provides requirements for developments near transit stations to have shelters for convenient and safe user for transit riders. East Hampton also requires bus shelters in specific zones. In Clinton's Transit Oriented Development Overlays, transit access, pedestrian

convenience, and shared parking is encouraged in redevelopment of large properties to allow for a wide variety of transportation options.

- Some municipalities have requirements for sidewalks at all new developments as well as (in some cases) substantial changes to existing developments.
- Westbrook, Old Saybrook, Essex, East Hampton, Clinton, Chester, Killingworth, and Old Lyme promote the development of a connected sidewalk network through requirements for sidewalks on specific roadway classifications, districts, roads identified through planning studies, or using other distinctions like destinations, schools, or generally areas with high pedestrian activity expected.
- Some municipalities require bike parking in specific locations, including new developments, transit transfer stations, and park and ride lots.

Complete Streets

- Middletown (2012), Portland (2016), and Middlefield (2023) have adopted Complete Streets Policies.
- The Town of Durham created a Complete Streets Committee in 2023 to engage the community in advancing the creation of a network that suits users of all modes in the Town. Middletown has a Complete Streets Committee which works to enact the Complete Streets Plan (adopted in 2013).
- The Town of Westbrook Planning Commission adopted the Sidewalk/Pedestrian Plan in 2019 to assess the existing sidewalk system and close gaps and enhance the overall sidewalk system.
- Middletown has also developed a Traffic Calming Program to lower vehicle speeds, improve pedestrian safety, and reduce traffic diversions in residential neighborhoods.

Speed Management

Speed Limits

In Haddam, Middletown, and Portland, speed limits of 25 or 30 miles per hour have been established on roadways. Speed limits of 15 miles per hour have been established within distances of 500 feet of any schools in Haddam and Middletown.

Automated Traffic Enforcement

Middletown is installing traffic cameras in high-risk areas in 2025, including in areas with congestion and in school and pedestrian zones. These cameras fine vehicles exceeding speed limits by at least 10 miles per hour.

Vulnerable Users

In Cromwell, motorized scooters and pocket motorcycles are prohibited on public streets to ensure street safety of other transportation modes.

Old Lyme prohibits the use of motor buses and bus-type campers on select municipal streets to promote safe access for other modes of transportation.

Education

Safe Routes to School: Portland participates in the Safe Routes to School program, which aims to improve the safety of children walking and biking to school through infrastructure improvements and educational initiatives. Education events have occurred at schools in Haddam, East Haddam, and Hamden.

Portland's Complete Streets Committee launched a Pace Car Program in 2022 where drivers pledge to drive safely, courteously, and within speed limits. The campaign brought awareness on the risks involved with speeding and distracted driving.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The policy recommendations are informed by potential gaps and best practice review, which are outlined below. Lead agencies, relevant safe system approach elements, and timelines are identified.

Project Development

	Lead Agency	Partner Agency	Safe System Approach Element	Timeline
In collaboration with CTDOT, integrate complete streets planning into the routine preservation cycle, intersection upgrades, Vendor in Place projects, and Reconstruction projects			Safer Speeds, Safer Roads	Ongoing
Adopt the Safe Transportation for Every Pedestrian approach, which provides a structured approach to making streets safer for pedestrians, and in turn supports broader goals related to safety, sustainability, and community development.	Municipalities	RiverCOG	Safer Roads	1-2 years
Create and share educational materials for quick-build demonstrations (such as CRCOG's Tactical Urbanism Guide) to local member municipalities.	RiverCOG	Municipalities	Safer Roads	1 year
Prioritize safety-based projects within transportation planning programs and documents	RiverCOG	CTDOT	Safer Roads	1-5 years

Design Standards

Street design standards provide a systematic approach to developing safe, efficient, and welcoming streets for all users. Strong guidance can be developed and implemented with close engagement with community members and strong partners to lead and produce changes.

	Lead Agency	Partner Agency	Safe System Approach Element	Timeline
Incorporate complete streets strategies into design standards, ensuring that roads are designed to accommodate all users.	Municipalities	RiverCOG	Safer Roads, Safer Speeds	Ongoing
Pursue funding to support updating municipal street design standards with sensitivity to land use and community context, in collaboration with communities	RiverCOG	Municipalities	Safer Roads, Safer Speeds	1-3 years

Complete Streets

Complete streets frameworks are tailored by communities' unique processes and evaluate the street design components to augment quality of life, reduce roadway related fatalities and injuries, and create a welcoming and convenient environment for all. Partnerships and coordination among government agencies, community organizations, and community members are required to establish a system that effectively meets the needs of road users.

	Lead Agency	Partner Agency	Safe System Approach Element	Timeline
Develop complete streets policies that reflect community needs, prioritize the safety of vulnerable road users, and are actionable through strong partnerships with stakeholders.	RiverCOG	Municipalities	Safer Speeds, Safer Roads	1-3 years

	Lead Agency	Partner Agency	Safe System Approach Element	Timeline
Create a member agency working group to ensure complete streets policies are consistent with transportation plans.	RiverCOG	Municipalities	Safer Roads	1-2 years
Regularly assess street safety through audits and evaluations to identify potential hazards and address safety gaps for all road users.	Municipalities	RiverCOG	Safer Roads	1-3 years

Vision Zero

Vision Zero action plans allow communities to use a holistic framework to recognize that traffic deaths are preventable. Action plans, however, are the start of an on-going process of infrastructure improvements and data monitoring.

	Lead Agency	Partner Agency	Safe System Approach Element	Timeline
Develop and adopt Vision Zero Policies to help build consensus and make municipalities more competitive for grants.	Municipalities	RiverCOG	Safer Roads	1 year
Prioritize infrastructure improvements at locations that see the highest number of severe and fatal crashes.	Municipalities	RiverCOG	Safer Roads	5 years

Speed Management

Speed limits reflect the use-type of roadways and must be limited to lower the risk and severity of crashes. Factors such as intersections with other roadways, traffic volumes, road environment, and presence of vulnerable users can impact how speed limits are set. Generally, speed limits can play a valuable role in curbing dangerous human behaviors, reducing friction with other transportation modes, and creating a predictable road environment. The Office of State Traffic Administration allows municipalities to reduce speed limits below 25 miles per hour in pedestrian safety zones or where an engineering study recommends this change. Speed violation monitoring systems can help manage driver behavior through automated speed detection and enforcement. Speed monitoring displays provide real-time feedback to drivers and create immediate opportunities for driver reflection and behavior correction. The display heightens awareness, which can help prevent roadway crashes, encourage safe driving, and reduce speeding.

	Lead Agency	Partner Agency	Safe System Approach Element	Timeline
Collaborate with the State to include work zone speed safety cameras at priority locations within the RiverCOG region	RiverCOG	Municipalities, CTDOT	Safer Roads	Ongoing/ 1-3 years
Adopt policies formalizing the use of target speed as the design approach for municipal projects	Municipalities	RiverCOG	Safer Speeds, Safer Roads	1 year
Pursue speed limit reductions in locations with high pedestrian and bicycle volumes and on locations on the High Injury Network.	CTDOT	RiverCOG, Municipalities	Safer Speeds	1-2 years
Establish speed violation monitoring systems to ensure compliance with road safety laws and data collection for identification of road safety improvements.	Municipalities	CTDOT, RiverCOG	Safer Speeds	1-2 years
Pursue funding and municipal legislative approval in support of automated traffic enforcement	Municipalities	CTDOT, RiverCOG	Safer Speeds	1-2 years
Expand the use of automated traffic enforcement at top crash locations on the High Injury Network, especially if they are near school zones or locations frequented by pedestrians and cyclists.	Municipalities	CTDOT, RiverCOG	Safer Speeds	1-2 years
Install speed monitoring displays in neighborhoods with high pedestrian traffic or in school zones, to correct driver behavior in real-time.	CTDOT, municipalities	RiverCOG	Safer Speeds	1-2 years
Enforce lower motor vehicle speeds, especially in school zones.	Municipalities	RiverCOG	Safer Speeds	1-2 years

Vulnerable Users & Transportation Need

The state's State Highway Safety Plan (SHSP) recommends continuation of public awareness of vulnerable user safety issues (including Work Zone Safety), increased accessibility of education, establishing vulnerable road user safety and enforcement training to police officers, and conducting community engagement training for outreach with vulnerable road users. Moreover, best practices and SS4A guidance suggest prioritizing projects in areas of high transportation need. Work Zone Safety refers to the strategies and measures implemented to protect workers, drivers, and pedestrians within road construction and maintenance areas. Work zone safety includes the use of appropriate signage, barriers, traffic control devices, and speed reductions to mitigate risks associated with construction zones.

	Lead Agency	Partner Agency	Safe System Approach Element	Timeline
Increase promotion of vulnerable user safety through public campaigns, community outreach, and additional safety training.	RiverCOG, CTDOT	Municipalities,	Safer People	1 year
Prioritize protected infrastructure on critical gaps in the bicycle and pedestrian networks.	RiverCOG , CTDOT	Municipalities,	Safer Roads	1-5 years
Evaluate lighting and street conditions for safety improvements.	Municipalities		Safer Roads	1-3 years
Evaluate how project prioritization processes can incorporate transportation need as a factor.	RiverCOG, CTDOT	Municipalities, Tompkins County	Safer Roads	1 year
Employ proper training and use of safety protocols for workers.	CTDOT, municipalities	RiverCOG	Safer People	6-9 months

Education

Education can be a powerful tool in shifting driver behavior and attitudes to enhance road safety.

	Lead Agency	Partner Agency	Safe System Approach Element	Timeline
Increase education campaigns to promote safe road behavior and help the public understand risks and consequences of dangerous road behavior.	CTDOT, RiverCOG	RiverCOG, municipalities	Safer People	1 year/ ongoing
Create and sustain a public website that provides information, resources, training, and educational opportunities.	RiverCOG	Municipalities	Safer People	1 year
Collaborate with the State's Vision Zero Council and the Connecticut Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) on incorporating Vision Zero concepts into their new driver manual and license renewal mailings	RiverCOG	CTDOT	Safer People	1-5 years

Safe Routes to School

Safe Routes to School aims to provide safer and more comfortable ways for children to walk or bike to school. These programs feature engagement with local communities, parents, and school leadership to develop strategies for robust, consistent, and effective implementation. The CTDOT program, funded through 2026, is focused on non-infrastructure, particularly incentives, education and curriculum initiatives, which are free upon application. There is also a component dedicated for school specific walk audits and town-wide SRTS action plans. Municipalities should take advantage of all three opportunities.

	Lead Agency	Partner Agency	Safe System Approach Element	Timeline
Contact CTDOT for access to free bike and pedestrian incentives and education curriculum to enhance safety access for children.	Municipalities, School Districts, and or Schools	CTDOT	Safer People	1 year
Contact CTDOT to pursue walk audits at local schools (1 mile or less corridors on state highways)	Municipalities, School Districts, and/or schools	CTDOT	Safer People	1 year
Contact CTDOT to pursue town-wide action plans in partnership with schools, local transportation agencies, and community stakeholders.	Municipalities, school districts, and or schools	CTDOT	Safer People	1 year

Data

The Connecticut Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP) (2022-2026) recommends expansion of data collection on all public roads, which can include: pedestrian and bicycle count data and collection of data to assess secondary crash rates. Additional best practice recommendations include collaboration for vulnerable road user data collection strategies and continuation of Connecticut Crash Repository training for CTDOT staff, local municipalities, and RiverCOG.

	Lead Agency	Partner Agency	Safe System Approach Element	Timeline
Regularly review updated detailed crash analysis to identify trends, hotspots, and areas with serious injuries and fatalities incidents.	CTDOT	Municipalities, RiverCOG	Safer Roads	Ongoing

	Lead Agency	Partner Agency	Safe System Approach Element	Timeline
Adopt a proactive, ongoing data monitoring approach to identify and address high-risk locations and behaviors across the entire transportation system.	RiverCOG	Municipalities	Safer Roads	1 year
Collect data before and following safety improvements to analyze outcomes.	CTDOT	RiverCOG, municipalities	Safer Roads	Ongoing