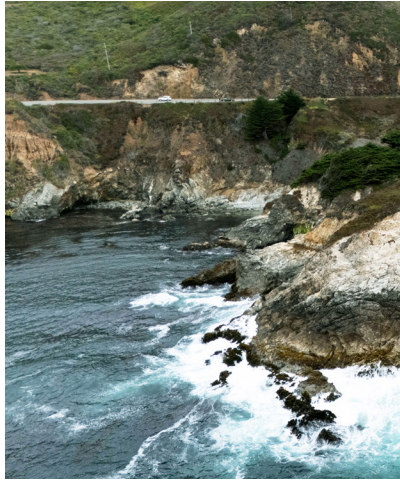


MONTEREY COUNTY REGIONAL VISION ZERO SAFETY ACTION PLAN



Complimented by existing safety action plans
for the cities of Monterey, Salinas, and Seaside



Acknowledgments

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Key Acronyms & Definitions

TAMC: Transportation Agency for Monterey County

FHWA: Federal Highway Administration

SS4A: Safe Streets and Roads for All

USDOT: United States Department of Transportation

VRU: Vulnerable Road User

HIN: High Injury Network

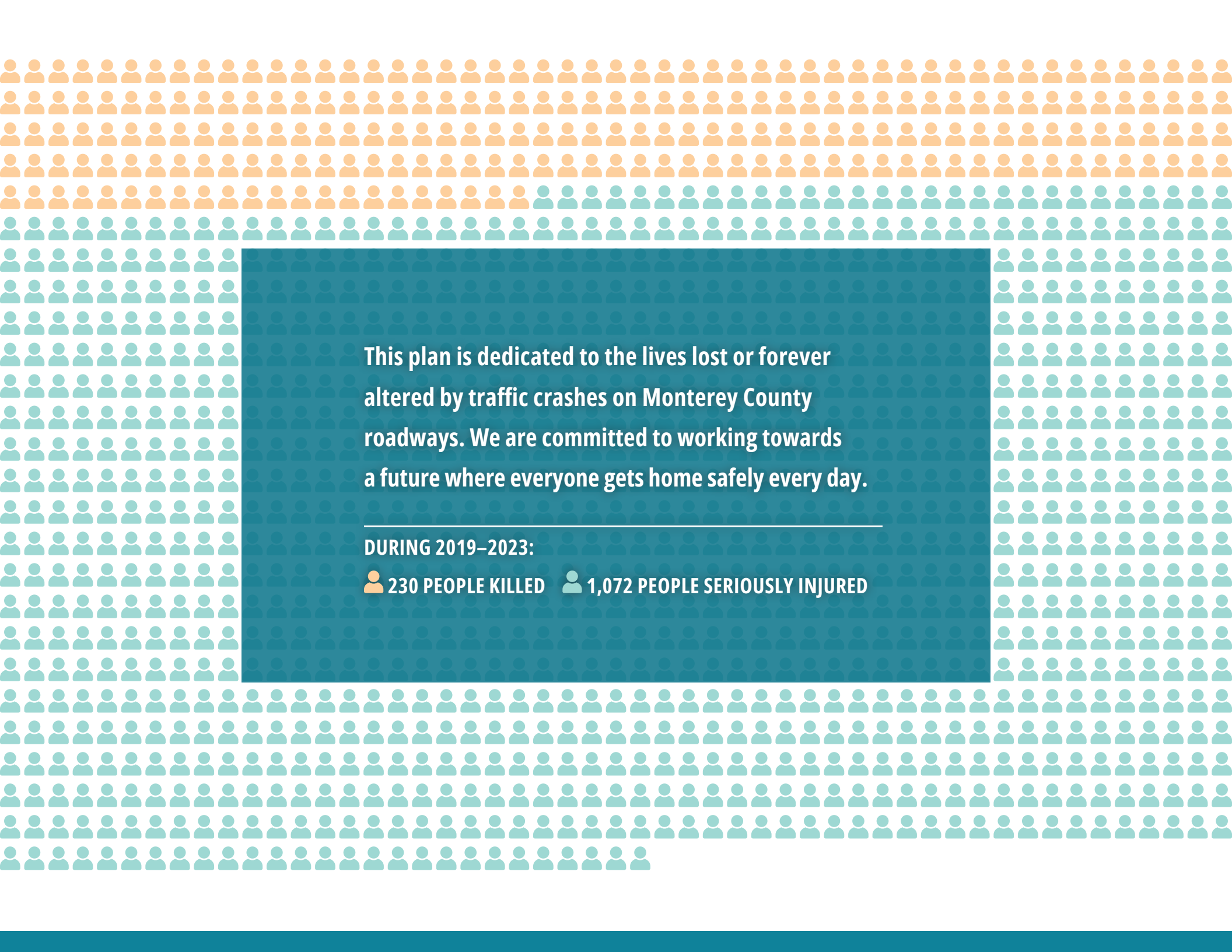
PDO: Property Damage Only

Rural: For purposes of this plan, the term “rural” refers to unincorporated areas of Monterey County

Fatal Crash: One or more participants died from injuries sustained, within 30 days of the crash event

Serious Injury Crash: For purposes of this plan, the term “rural” refers to unincorporated areas of Monterey County





This plan is dedicated to the lives lost or forever altered by traffic crashes on Monterey County roadways. We are committed to working towards a future where everyone gets home safely every day.

DURING 2019–2023:

 230 PEOPLE KILLED  1,072 PEOPLE SERIOUSLY INJURED

Executive Summary



Traffic crashes in Monterey County take a heavy human toll. On average each year, more than 300 people are killed or severely injured while walking, biking, or driving on the county's transportation network in Monterey County. These outcomes have a lasting impact on individuals, families, first responders, and our entire community.

The Transportation Agency for Monterey County (TAMC) partnered with local agencies and stakeholders across the region to develop this Monterey County Regional Vision Zero Safety Action Plan, aimed at making it safer to travel on city streets and county roads. While the plan's recommendations are centered on locally owned and maintained roadways within the county, safety concerns are region wide and must be addressed through partnership, collaboration, and a shared understanding of our safety goals. Importantly, TAMC does not own, maintain, or operate roadways; instead, this plan provides a countywide framework—grounded in data and best practices—to guide coordinated action among member agencies.

A data-driven study of Monterey County safety trends revealed clear patterns that will help focus solutions. Crashes resulting from a driver leaving their lane or the roadway account for about half of fatal and severe injury crashes countywide. Crashes involving risky behavior such as impaired driving, aggressive driving and speeding are a major contributor to high-severity outcomes. These findings reinforce the need to prioritize strategies that reduce the most serious harm—through safer speeds, safer roadway design, and programs that prevent high-risk behavior—while focusing investments where they can save the most lives.

Ultimately, this plan is a call for coordinated, sustained action. It outlines proven strategies and tools, identifies opportunities for partnership and alignment across jurisdictions, and establishes a roadmap for measuring progress over time—so TAMC and our partner agencies can move steadily towards our shared vision where everyone gets home safely.

We believe that everyone deserves to travel safely. TAMC has set an ambitious and achievable goal to reduce fatal and serious injuries by 30% by 2030 with the ultimate goal of eliminating fatal and serious injuries by 2040.

 **50%**
OF FATAL AND SEVERE INJURY CRASHES INVOLVED A DRIVER LEAVING THEIR LANE OR THE ROADWAY, OFTEN ON CURVES

 **MORE THAN 70%**
OF FATAL AND SEVERE INJURY CRASHES INVOLVED RISKY BEHAVIORS, SUCH AS IMPAIRED DRIVING, AGGRESSIVE DRIVING, AND/OR SPEEDING

 **60%**
OF FATAL AND SEVERE INJURY CRASHES OCCURRED ON 6% OF MONTEREY COUNTY'S ROADWAY MILES

CHAPTER 1:

The Importance of Traffic Safety in Monterey County



Monterey County is a scenic and economically diverse region located on California's Central Coast, known for its extraordinary natural beauty and strong economic foundation. Spanning approximately 3,700 square miles, the County stretches from the shores of Monterey Bay and the dramatic seaside cliffs of Big Sur, through the rich mosaic of farms and fields that extend from the Pajaro River through the Salinas Valley to uniquely striking landscapes such as the Santa Lucia Highlands, Arroyo Seco, Lake San Antonio, and Pinnacles National Park.

Ensuring the safety of those who live, work, and visit Monterey County is especially critical due to the unique traffic patterns generated by its two primary economic drivers: tourism and agriculture. Tourism is one of Monterey County's strongest economic drivers, generating approximately \$3.1 billion in spending at local businesses each year.¹ The combination of unfamiliar drivers, distracted sightseeing, congestion during peak seasons, and increased pedestrian and bicycle activity creates distinct safety challenges that require careful roadway design, clear signage, and proactive traffic management.

Along the coast, the County is home to world-renowned destinations including Monterey, Carmel-by-the-Sea, Pacific Grove, Marina, Seaside, and Pebble Beach. Attractions like the iconic 17-Mile Drive, through Pebble Beach and Pacific Grove, draws millions of visitors each year, with travelers coming from across the country and around the world to experience whale-watching, kayaking, golfing, wine tasting, and historic coastal towns. Farther south, Big Sur's sweeping ocean views, redwood forests, and rugged terrain define the region's iconic scenic character. This level of visitation brings significant seasonal surges and daily fluctuations in traffic volumes, placing added demands on the County's roadways.

Inland, the Salinas Valley anchors the County's agricultural economy. Salinas — the County seat — along with Soledad, Gonzales, Greenfield, and King City form the heart of one of the most productive farming regions in the nation. The Valley produces a significant share of the country's strawberries, lettuce, broccoli, and other fresh produce, forming the backbone of Monterey County's agricultural strength.

An extensive transportation network connects these diverse landscapes and communities. California State Route 1 traverses the County along the Pacific coastline, while U.S. Highway 101 serves as the primary north-south corridor through the Salinas Valley. Additional state routes — including 183, 156, 68, 146, 25, and 198 — provide vital east-west and regional connections that support residents, visitors, agricultural operations, and freight movement.

¹ The Economic Impact of Travel in Monterey County 2024 | Prepared by Dean Runyan Associates

The County's economy reflects its geographic diversity and location along California's Central Coast. Agriculture and tourism are the primary economic drivers, supported by strong sectors in education, government, healthcare, and the military. Major employers include leading agricultural growers and shippers throughout the Salinas Valley; hospitality, recreation, and visitor-serving businesses along the coast; the County of Monterey and regional school districts; California State University, Monterey Bay; the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center at the Presidio of Monterey; and key healthcare institutions such as Community Hospital of the Monterey Peninsula and Natividad Medical Center. Together, these industries form a stable and dynamic economic base for the County.

Given this geographic scale, economic diversity, and high level of visitor and freight activity, a safe and reliable transportation system is foundational to Monterey County's long-term prosperity. Transportation safety is not only a transportation objective — it is an economic and quality-of-life strategy.

With tourism serving as a major component of the County's economy, roadway safety is essential to sustaining visitor confidence

and protecting the overall travel experience. Coastal destinations experience seasonal surges and daily fluctuations in traffic volumes, often involving unfamiliar drivers navigating scenic corridors, which include winding coastal highways, scenic pullouts, and pedestrian-heavy town centers. These unique travel patterns increase exposure to risk, making a safe and reliable transportation system vital not only for protecting lives, but also for preserving the strength and reputation of the County's multibillion-dollar visitor economy.

In the Salinas Valley, transportation safety is closely tied to the strength and reliability of the agricultural industry. Rural roadways regularly accommodate a complex mix of heavy trucks, farm equipment, and commuter traffic — often operating simultaneously, particularly during peak harvest seasons. Because agriculture depends on timely and efficient goods movement, maintaining a safe transportation environment is critical to protecting workers, minimizing disruptions, and ensuring that Monterey County's produce reaches regional, national, and international markets without delay.

A safer transportation system strengthens Monterey County by improving access to jobs,

schools, healthcare, and essential services for residents who commute between inland communities and the coast. Reliable and safe travel supports daily mobility, reduces barriers to opportunity, and enhances overall quality of life.

Prioritizing transportation safety also supports sustainable, balanced growth. Communities with dependable infrastructure are better positioned to attract business investment, support freight movement, and accommodate future development. By strengthening connectivity and reliability across its 3,700 square miles, Monterey County can protect lives while reinforcing economic resilience and long-term prosperity.



Monterey County Demographics

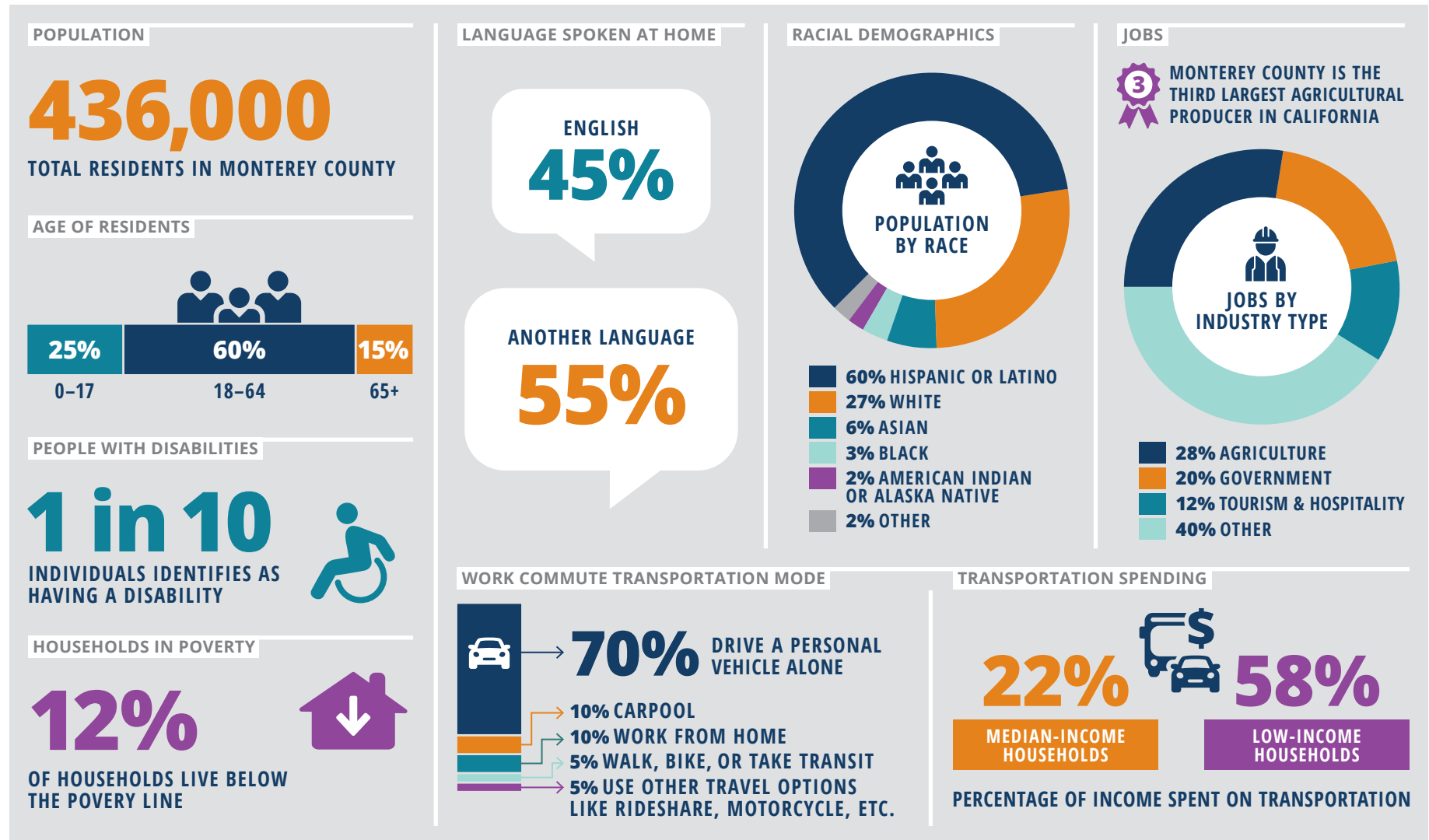


FIGURE 1. DEMOGRAPHICS OF MONTEREY COUNTY

Sources: 2020 U.S. Census and 2019-2023 American Community Survey data

CHAPTER 2:

Foundations for Decision-Making



TAMC believes that everyone deserves to arrive home safely. In 2024, TAMC set out to develop this Regional Vision Zero Safety Action Plan to provide the framework to address roadway fatalities and serious injuries in Monterey County.

In addition to this Regional plan, TAMC supported the development of safety action plans for nine participating cities and the unincorporated County. Individual agency plans provide a localized look at the unique safety needs and priority projects that are important within each community. In contrast, this Regional plan provides a broad view of the safety needs across the entire region, and outlines high priority strategies for addressing risky behaviors and reducing crash risks on a regional scale.

TAMC developed these plans with funding through a grant awarded by the U.S. Department of Transportation through the Safe Streets and Roads for All program (SS4A). In addition to the nine participating cities, three cities have existing safety plans that were developed through separate city-led efforts. The Regional Plan and local agency plans were developed to complement one another. Together, they provide a coordinated and comprehensive roadmap for improving safety and saving lives throughout Monterey County.



FIGURE 2. REGIONAL AND AGENCY-SPECIFIC PLANS

Guiding Principles

OUR SAFETY VISION AND GOAL

TAMC and Monterey County believe that everyone deserves to travel safely. To achieve this vision, TAMC has set an ambitious and achievable goal to reduce fatal and serious injuries by 30% by 2030 with the ultimate goal of eliminating fatal and serious injuries by 2040.

This Monterey County Region Vision Zero target was officially adopted by the TAMC Executive Board on March 25, 2026.

WHAT IS VISION ZERO?

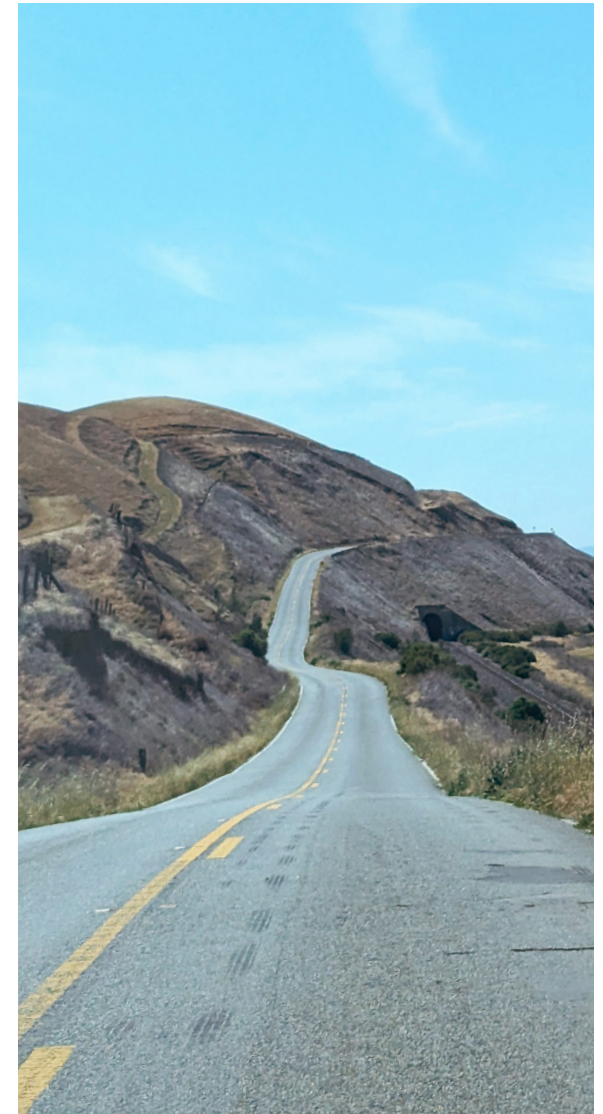
Vision Zero is a global strategy to eliminate traffic deaths and serious injuries in a certain timeframe by treating them as preventable events. In the U.S., the Vision Zero strategy led to the adoption of the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) Safe System Approach – a holistic roadway safety guide that recognizes that humans make mistakes, that our transportation network should be designed to prevent fatal mistakes from happening in the first place, and to minimize the injury severity when a crash does occur.

WHAT IS A VISION ZERO SAFETY ACTION PLAN AND WHY NOW?

Every year, approximately 40,000 people lose their lives traveling on U.S. roadways. From 2019 to 2023, 1,046 crashes resulted in someone being killed or seriously injured while traveling in Monterey County.

These are not merely statistics – these are members of our community, our family, friends, kids, neighbors, and colleagues. Monterey County is committed to reducing and eventually eliminating these roadway deaths and serious injuries in our region. This commitment takes shape with effective strategies, policies, programs, and projects that can be implemented by the County and partner agencies to reduce the risk of fatal and serious injury crashes. This plan, in coordination with the people and plans developed for each agency in Monterey County, will help us achieve our ambitious regional Vision Zero goal together.

**Zero is our goal.
A safe system is how we get there.**



WHAT IS THE SAFE SYSTEM APPROACH?

The Safe System Approach is a framework for effectively managing the diverse inherent risks within the transportation system. As part of this approach, multiple layers of protection are created to prevent crashes and reduce harm when crashes do occur. It is centered on the idea that we all have a role to play in creating a safer transportation system, and achieving Vision Zero requires that we all do our part to keep ourselves and others safe.

THERE ARE SIX KEY PRINCIPLES OF THE USDOT SAFE SYSTEM APPROACH:

1. Death and Serious Injuries are Unacceptable
2. Humans Make Mistakes
3. Humans are Vulnerable
4. Responsibility is Shared
5. Safety is Proactive
6. Redundancy is Crucial

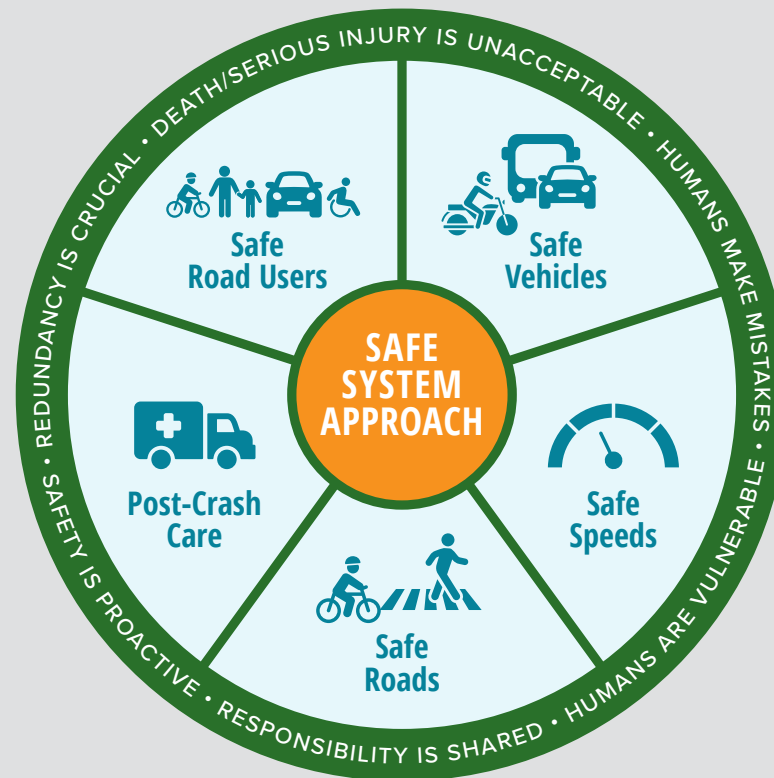


FIGURE 3. USDOT SAFE SYSTEM APPROACH

Each of the six key principles in the Safe System Approach are supported by five main objectives:

1	Safer People		Consider and address the safety of all road users, including those who walk, bike, drive, take transit, or travel by other modes.
2	Safer Roads		Engineer roads to prioritize the safety of all road users, especially vulnerable road users, to minimize human mistakes, and to account for injury tolerance.
3	Safer Travel Options (Safer Vehicles)		Expand the availability of safer travel options, including multimodal transportation networks, safe and reliable transit options, and advanced vehicle design and technologies.
4	Safer Speeds		Promote safer speeds through context-appropriate roadway design, education, outreach, and enforcement.
5	Post-Crash Care		Enhance the survivability of a crash by making it easier and faster to receive emergency medical care and access trauma centers, create a safe working environment for emergency responders, and prevent secondary crashes.

While not yet an element of the USDOT Safe System wheel, the concept of Safer Land Use is gaining attention across the industry, and several states including California, Oregon, and Washington are considering adding it as a sixth element of the Safe System Approach. Land use decisions shape many aspects of the transportation system, including the ability for people to choose safer travel options and make fewer and shorter trips, reducing their exposure to crash risk.

SAFER VEHICLES EQUALS SAFER TRAVEL

When comparing modes of travel, passenger vehicles consistently demonstrate a significantly higher fatality rate than bus and rail systems. Figure 4, provides an analysis of the rates at which people are killed when traveling by mode. Across the years reviewed, the fatality rate for occupants of personal vehicles remains 25 to 75 times greater than that of passengers traveling by railroad or bus, respectively.¹ This difference highlights an important safety reality: traveling in a personal car carries far greater risk per mile than using public transportation. The contrast emphasizes why making it easier and safer to access transit remains such a critical focus for transportation agencies working towards reducing fatal and serious injury crashes.

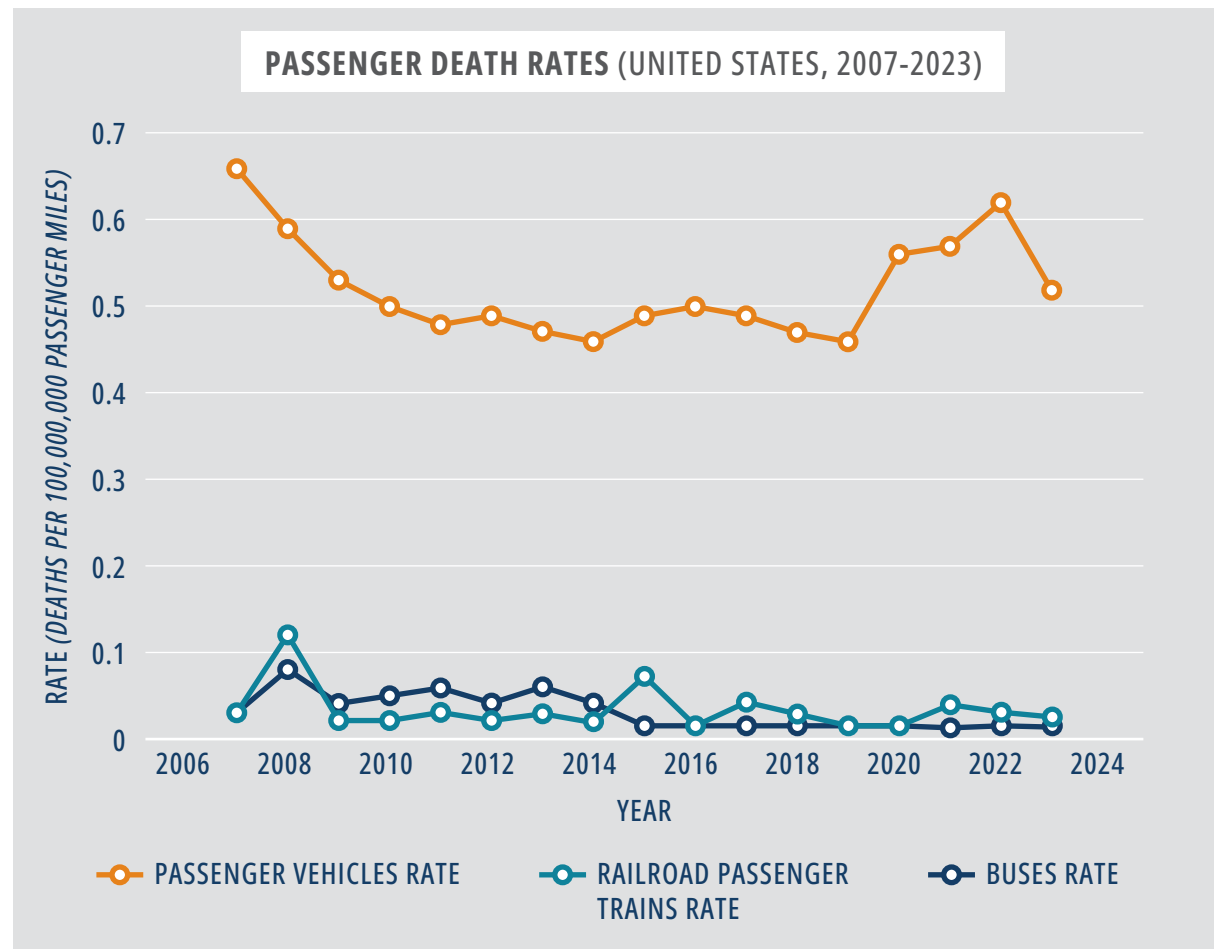


FIGURE 4. PASSENGER DEATH RATES BY MODE

¹ <https://injuryfacts.nsc.org/home-and-community/safety-topics/deaths-by-transportation-mode/>

DISCOVERING OTHER WAYS TO TRAVEL

Recognizing the higher risks associated with traveling in personal vehicles highlights the importance of considering mode shift as part of a comprehensive safety strategy. Encouraging and supporting a shift from single-occupant vehicle travel to safer modes — such as transit, rail, carpooling, walking, and biking where appropriate — can meaningfully reduce overall crash severity at a system level. Public transportation not only has lower per-mile fatality rates, but it also reduces the total number of vehicles on the roadway, which can decrease exposure to conflicts and lower the likelihood of severe collisions. By expanding access to reliable transit and creating viable alternatives to driving alone, communities can reduce risk, improve mobility options, and move toward a transportation system that is safer for everyone.

PROTECTING PEOPLE THROUGH SAFER SPEEDS

Creating safer and appropriate posted speeds on our roadways is one of the most effective and immediate ways to reduce severe crashes and save lives. Speed directly influences both the likelihood of a crash occurring and the severity of its outcome. At higher speeds, a driver's field of awareness narrows, making it more difficult to detect and respond to potential conflicts. Increased speed also lengthens stopping distance, reducing the margin for error and increasing the likelihood of a collision. Most critically, higher speeds dramatically elevate the risk of severe injury or death for people walking or biking. Even small reductions in speed can significantly improve crash outcomes by reducing the likelihood of fatal or life-altering injuries.

Because speed is a factor we can actively manage through thoughtful roadway design, the development of consistent, context-sensitive policies and procedures, and targeted education programs or campaigns for new drivers as well as experienced drivers who may benefit from a refresher, represents a proactive opportunity to improve safety for all roadway users.

Prioritizing safer posted speeds deserves focused attention as a practical, evidence-based strategy to create transportation networks that protect all users and support healthier, more livable communities.

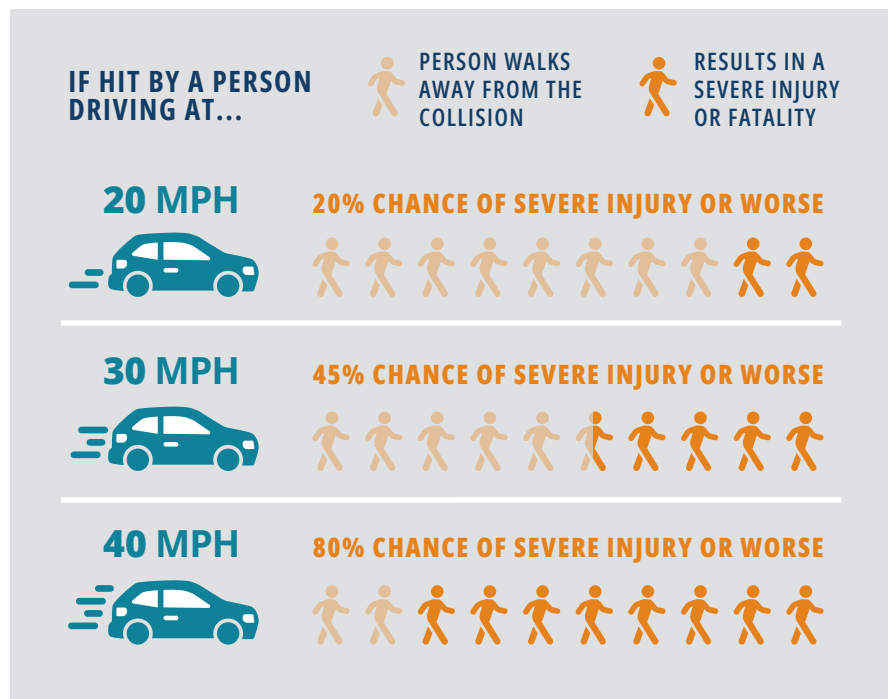


FIGURE 5. PEDESTRIAN INJURY OUTCOMES BASED ON VEHICLE IMPACT SPEEDS

Source: NHTSA Countermeasures that Work, Pedestrian Safety, Understanding the Problem.

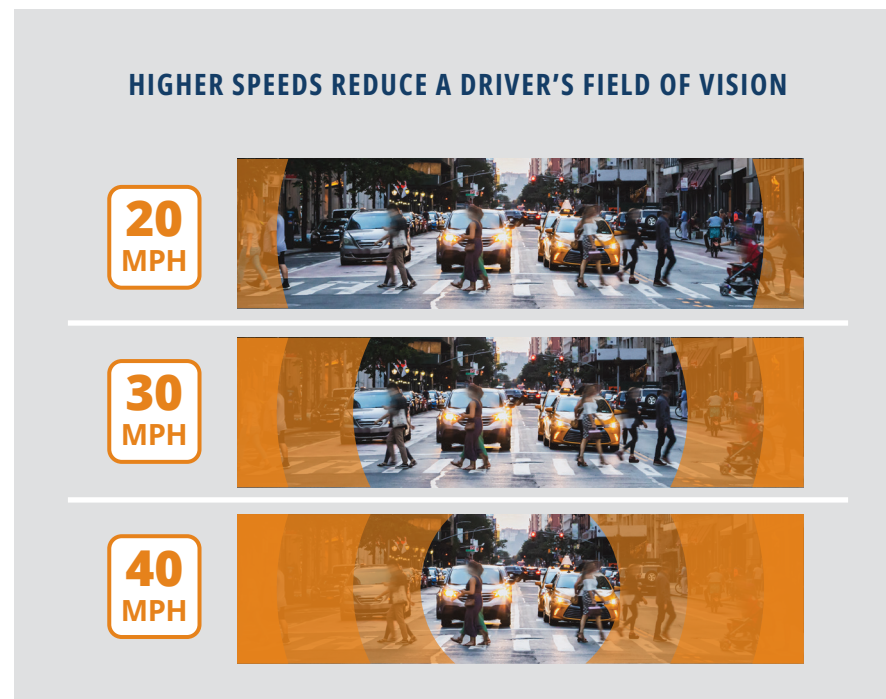


FIGURE 6. EFFECT OF SPEED ON A DRIVER'S FIELD OF VISION

CHAPTER 3:

Developing this Plan



The development of this Plan reflects a coordinated, countywide effort to combine federal guidance, local expertise, and community input into a unified approach for improving roadway safety.

Through collaboration with regional partners, technical analysis, and extensive public engagement, the process identified key safety challenges and shaped strategies that respond to both data and lived experience. Together, these efforts establish a strong foundation for advancing a shared vision of safer streets across Monterey County.

Plan Development Process

To help local agencies develop plans and implement roadway safety improvements that incorporate the Safe System Approach, a once-in-a-generation federal grant program known as Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) was developed to award demonstration and implementation funds to state and local agencies. The SS4A Grant Program is funded by the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act starting in fiscal year 2022 and ends in fiscal year 2026. With SS4A funds, the TAMC has led the effort to develop regional, municipal, and rural county level action plans to help reduce and eventually eliminate fatal and serious injury crashes in Monterey County.



FIGURE 7. PLAN DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

To meet funding requirements, specific key elements must be incorporated into the development of a safety plan.

SS4A REQUIRED ELEMENTS OF A SAFETY ACTION PLAN:

- ✓ Leadership commitment to a “Zero” goal
- ✓ Involvement of a task force
- ✓ Data-driven safety analysis
- ✓ Robust public engagement
- ✓ Assessment of policies, programs, and processes
- ✓ Prioritized projects that reflect the Safe System Approach
- ✓ Ongoing transparency and reporting

TAMC VISION ZERO TASK FORCE

The Monterey County Vision Zero Task Force was comprised of safety partners across the community, including representatives from schools, medical and emergency response professionals, community organizations, public works, law enforcement, and fire departments. Three task force groups were created to capture the diverse area and varied needs in Monterey County – the South County, Peninsula, and Regional task forces. Task Force membership represented a balance of urban, rural, and regional perspectives. Participants shared their input and experiences traveling on the roadways for work, and within their communities and where they travel.

Each Task Force met three times during the project to provide technical insight on safety trends, emphasis areas, and implementation considerations.

Across all Task Forces, common themes included:

- Persistent concerns about speeding, distracted driving, and impaired driving
- Safety challenges on rural and regional corridors with high speeds and limited sight distance
- Growing conflicts involving e-bikes, micromobility, pedestrians, and heavy vehicles
- The need for better data access, interagency coordination, and funding support, particularly for smaller jurisdictions

This input helped shape and balance transportation needs across the region, ensuring consistency with flexibility to address local needs.

DATA-DRIVEN ANALYSIS

The cornerstone of this Plan is a data-driven evaluation of safety needs and effective solutions. This effort included a comprehensive review of reported crash data, listening to the lived experiences from community members, analysis of travel patterns, and demographics trends. Together these sources helped identify where and why fatal and serious crashes are happening. We then paired these findings with national research, best practices, and local knowledge to identify feasible, practical, locally supported ways to save lives. More information on the analysis and findings can be found in the Where and Why Are Traffic Crashes Happening and Plan of Action sections.

Regional Community Engagement

Community engagement was a foundational element of the process, ensuring that the Plan honors local safety concerns, lived experiences, and priorities across diverse geographies and populations. Engagement activities were focused in two phases between May and November 2025, including a total of 23 in-person events in 13 locations, shown in Figure 8.

PHASE 1 (MAY–JULY 2025)

Focused on identifying local transportation safety challenges, risk factors, and opportunities for improvement. Feedback gathered during this phase informed the development of prioritized emphasis area improvements, the High Injury Network, and preliminary recommendation concepts.

PHASE 2 (SEPTEMBER–NOVEMBER 2025)

Presented recommended emphasis areas, strategies, and potential projects for public review. Community members were invited to provide feedback and vote on safety priorities relevant to their local context.

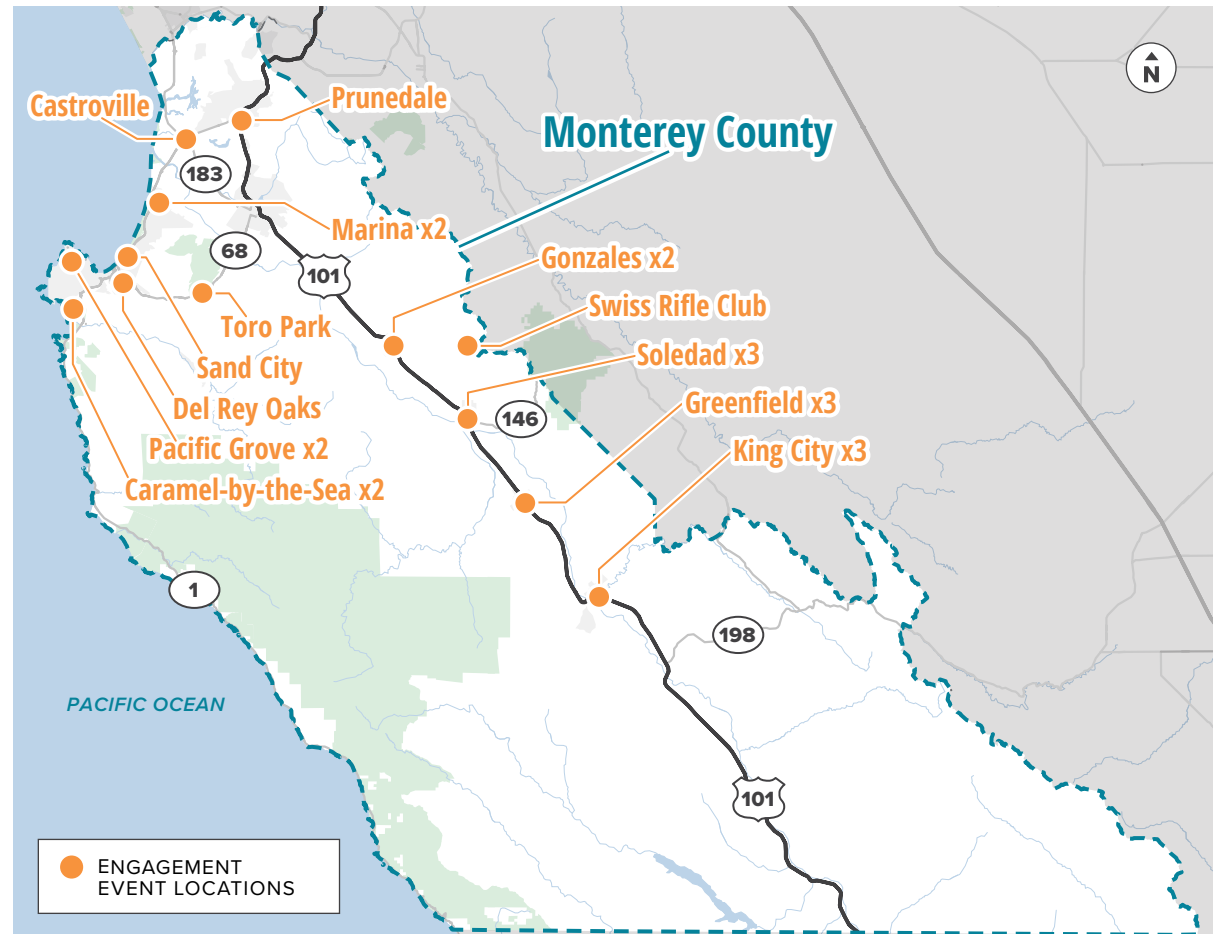


FIGURE 8. ENGAGEMENT EVENTS FOR PLAN DEVELOPMENT

Outreach activities included:

- Workshops and pop-up events in cities and unincorporated areas across the County
- Online surveys and interactive maps hosted on TAMC's website
- Multilingual materials, with all outreach content translated into Spanish
- Broad promotion via social media, email newsletters, partner agencies, and community calendars

Collectively, these efforts generated more than 600 comments from Monterey County community members. Approximately 47% of comments were received from unincorporated areas, with the remaining 53% from cities, reflecting strong participation across the region.

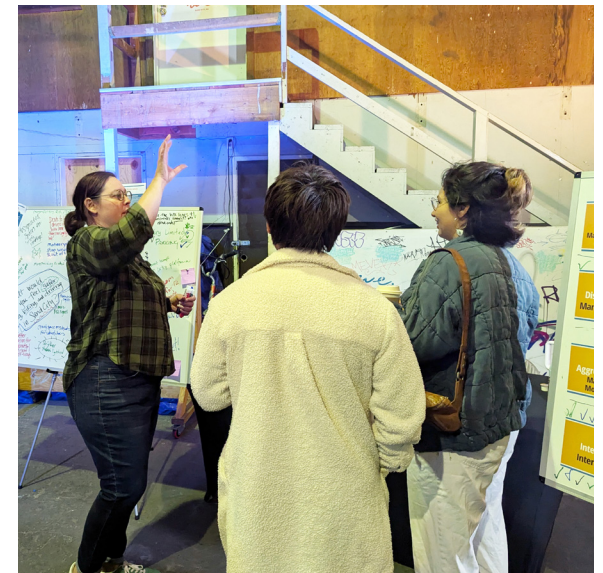
COMMUNITY SAFETY CONCERNS AND PRIORITIES

Communities across the region consistently identified similar safety challenges, including:

- Speeding and aggressive driving
- Distracted and impaired driving
- Unsafe walking and bicycling conditions
- Congestion and poor intersection control
- Inadequate lighting, visibility, and roadway maintenance
- Conflicts with heavy and commercial vehicles

Community members also expressed broad support for a range of safety improvements, particularly:

- Intersection upgrades (roundabouts, improved control, daylighting)
- Speed management strategies
- Enhanced pedestrian crossings and sidewalks
- Improved pavement markings, lighting, and maintenance
- Education and enforcement programs



During Phase 2, participants voted on a set of priority challenge areas. The highest ranked countywide priorities included aggressive driving, distracted driving, intersection safety, pedestrian safety, and bicyclist safety, followed by impaired driving and aging drivers.



TABLE 1. TOTAL NUMBER OF COUNTYWIDE VOTES FOR EACH CHALLENGE AREA

CHALLENGE AREA	TOTAL NUMBER OF VOTES
 Aggressive Driving	102
 Distracted Driving	99
 Intersections	80
 Pedestrians	75
 Bicyclists	61
 Impaired Driving	52
 Aging Drivers	34
 Young Drivers	15
 Motorcyclists	10
 Commercial Vehicles	14
 Occupant Protection	7
 Lane Departures	5
 Work Zones	3

INCORPORATING COMMUNITY FEEDBACK INTO THE PLAN

Community and stakeholder input directly shaped the Regional and local plans. Feedback from outreach activities and Task Force meetings informed the prioritization of challenge areas and the development of recommended strategies and projects tailored to local and regional conditions.

The community engagement process demonstrated strong interest and support for improving roadway safety across Monterey County. Residents, stakeholders, and partner agencies consistently emphasized the need for safer speeds, better infrastructure for people walking and biking, clearer rules and education around emerging mobility modes, and stronger coordination across jurisdictions.

The engagement results highlighted the value of combining crash data with lived experience. By grounding the Regional Vision Zero Action Plan in robust public engagement, TAMC is positioned to advance a shared vision of safer streets and roads for all users—urban and rural, young and old, residents and visitors alike.

CHAPTER 4:

Where and Why are Traffic Crashes Happening?

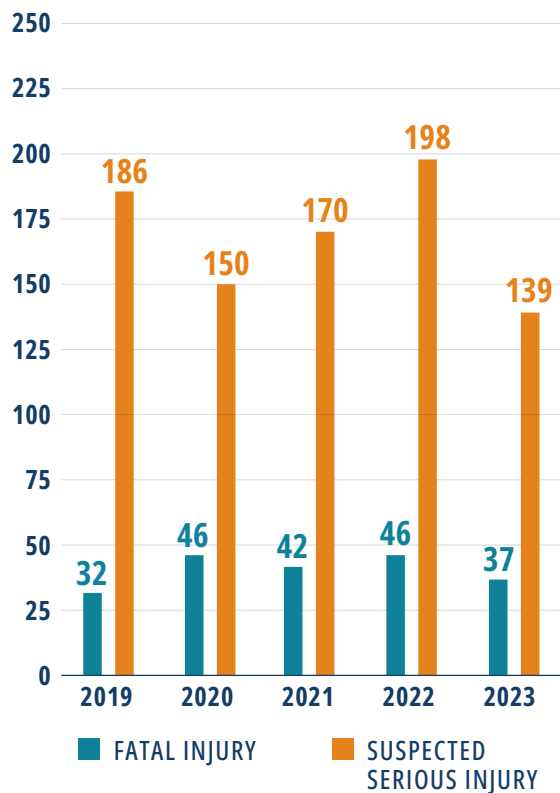
A comprehensive review of recent crash data reveals where the most severe traffic collisions are occurring across Monterey County and the factors that contribute to them. By examining crash types, roadway users involved, and contributing behaviors, clear patterns emerge that help explain the underlying causes of fatal and serious injuries. These findings, combined with the identification of high-risk corridors and key challenge areas, provide a focused foundation for targeting the strategies and investments that will have the greatest impact on improving roadway safety.



Regional Crash Trends

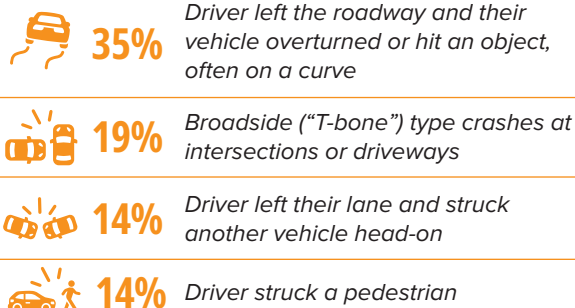
To understand traffic safety risks and needs, we studied reported crash data for the most recent five years of available data, spanning January 1, 2019 through December 31, 2023. Crashes with no reported injuries, also referred to as property damage only (PDO) crashes, were not included in the analysis, as we continue to focus on eliminating high severity crashes.

On average, there are **41 fatal crashes** and **169 severe injury crashes** each year across Monterey County.



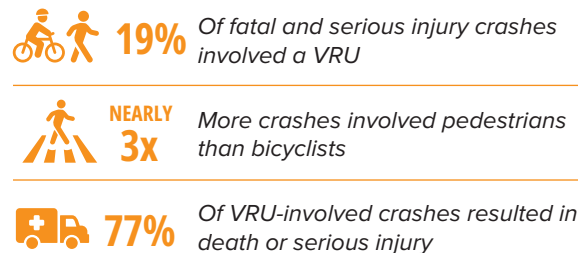
CRASH TYPES

Understanding the most common types of collisions that resulted in fatalities and serious injuries on rural roadways can help tailor safety improvements to address those patterns.



CRASHES INVOLVING VULNERABLE ROAD USERS

Vulnerable road users (VRUs) include both pedestrians and bicyclists.

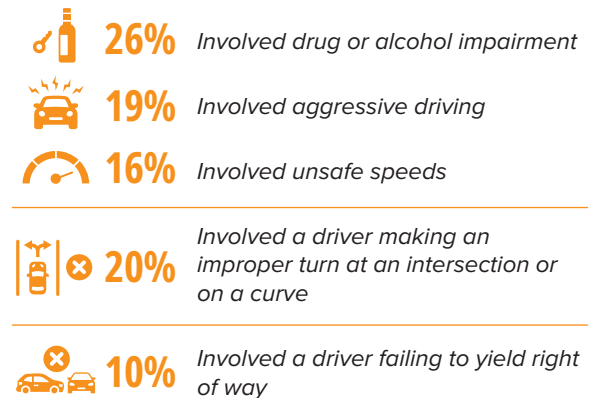


PRIMARY CONTRIBUTING FACTORS

Across the US, over 90% of crashes are the result of human error.

There is rarely a single cause of a crash, but rather a combination of factors related to the driver, vehicle, environment, or other road users. The following summarizes the factors reported as being the primary contributors to fatal and serious injury crashes.*

Risky driver behaviors are the most common contributing factors:



*Contributing factors often overlap and are not mutually exclusive.

HIGH INJURY NETWORK

The High Injury Network, or HIN, identifies the roadways that have experienced the highest number and severity of crashes. The HIN helps focus the safety priorities and investments in the areas with the highest need. A more detailed version of the HIN map shown in Figure 9 can be found on the [TAMC website](#).

Approximately 6% of countywide roadway miles are on the HIN. In comparison, over half (61%) of the fatal and severe injury crashes occurred on the HIN.

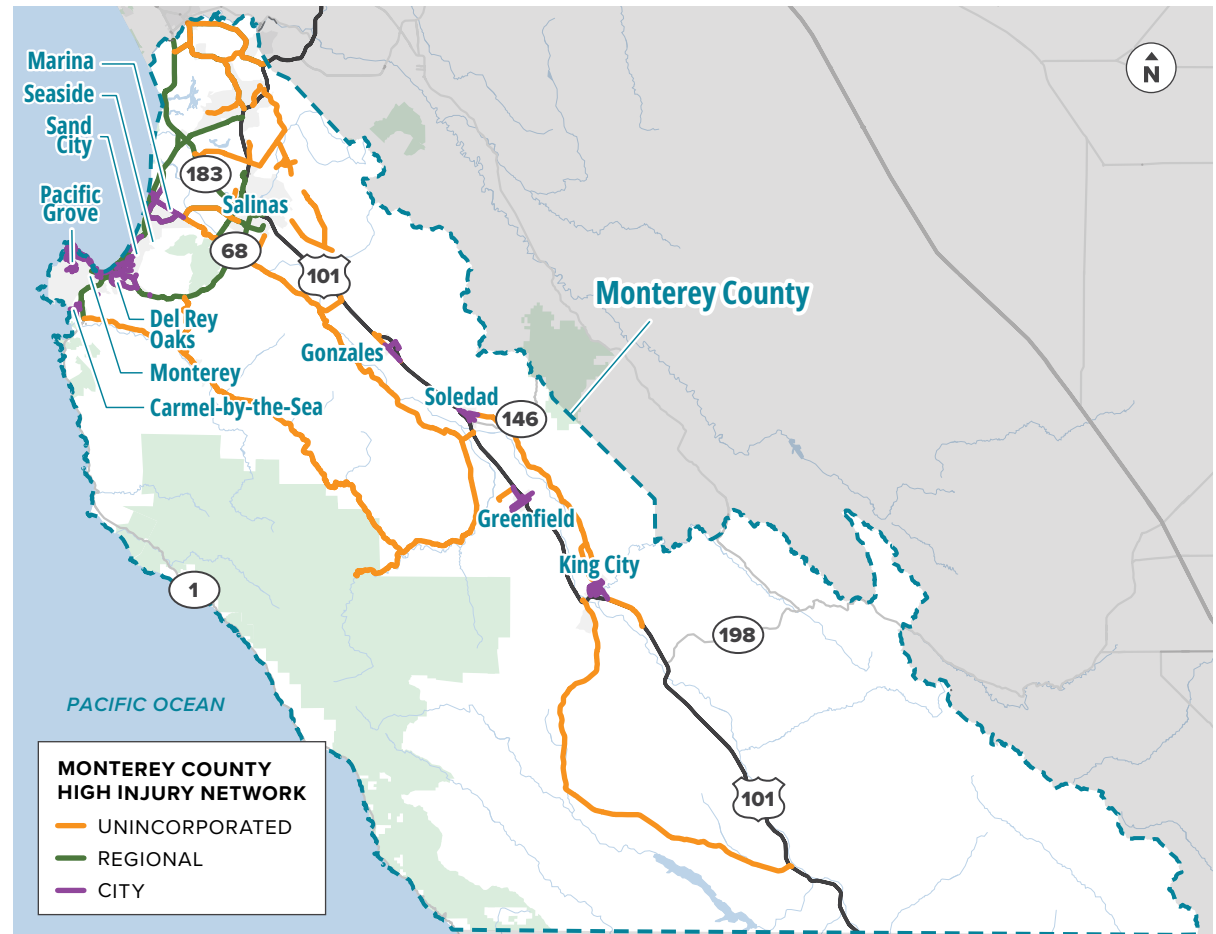
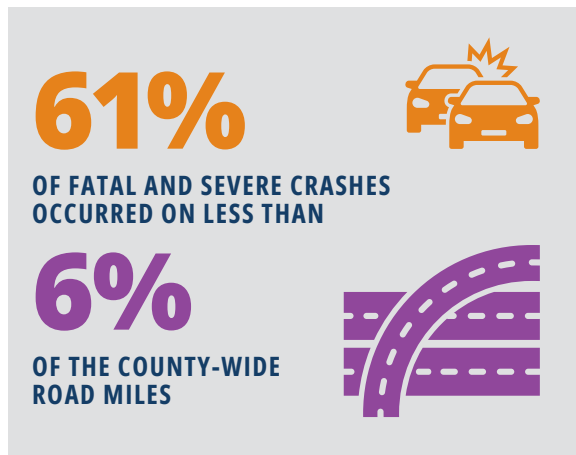


FIGURE 9. MONTEREY COUNTY HIGH INJURY NETWORK

Challenge Areas

Challenge areas are not locations. They represent the underlying crash patterns that are most contributing to fatal and serious injury crashes. In an environment of limited funding, we must focus our resources on the efforts that will make the biggest difference, and emphasis areas help us do that. Challenge areas provide a strategic framework for developing and implementing safety strategies, prioritizing capital projects, guiding enforcement and education.

We applied a data-driven approach to selecting challenge areas. We started with the list of 16 Challenge Areas outlined in the California Strategic Highway Safety Plan, and used local crash patterns and community input to select the subset that best reflect local needs.

The Regional challenge areas focus on human behavior and vulnerable road users, both of which affect the entire region and require coordinated, consistent strategies implemented across jurisdictions.

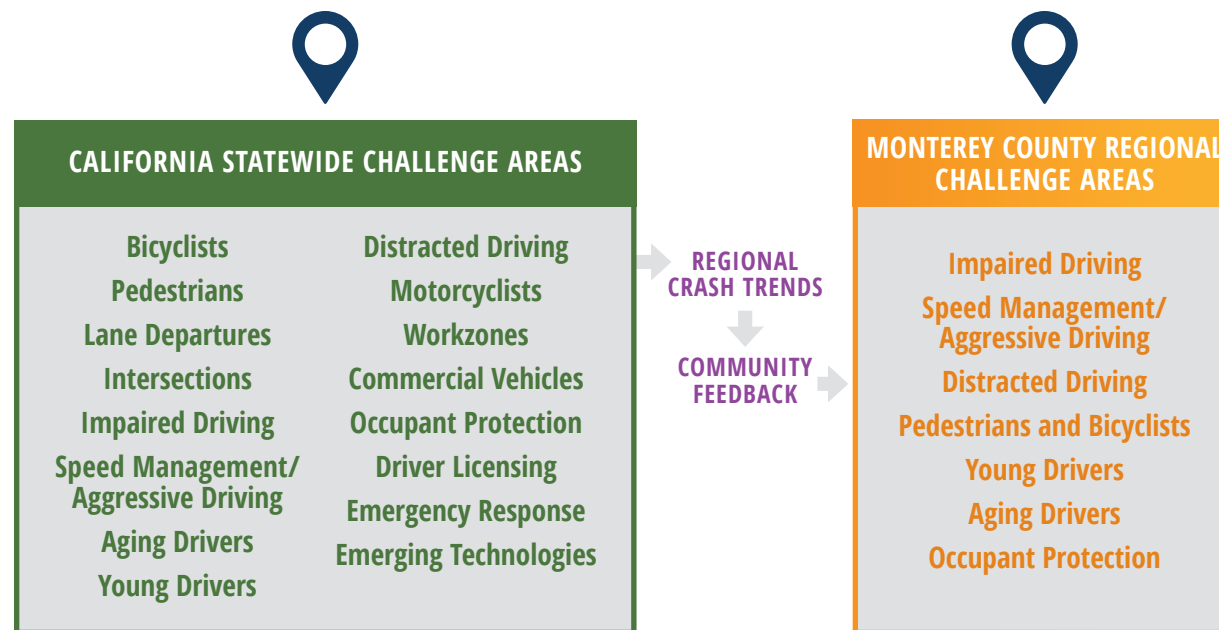


FIGURE 10. CHALLENGE AREAS FOR RURAL MONTEREY COUNTY

AGGRESSIVE DRIVING/SPEED MANAGEMENT

26%

OF REGIONAL FATAL AND
SERIOUS INJURY CRASHES
(LOWER THAN
STATEWIDE AVERAGE)

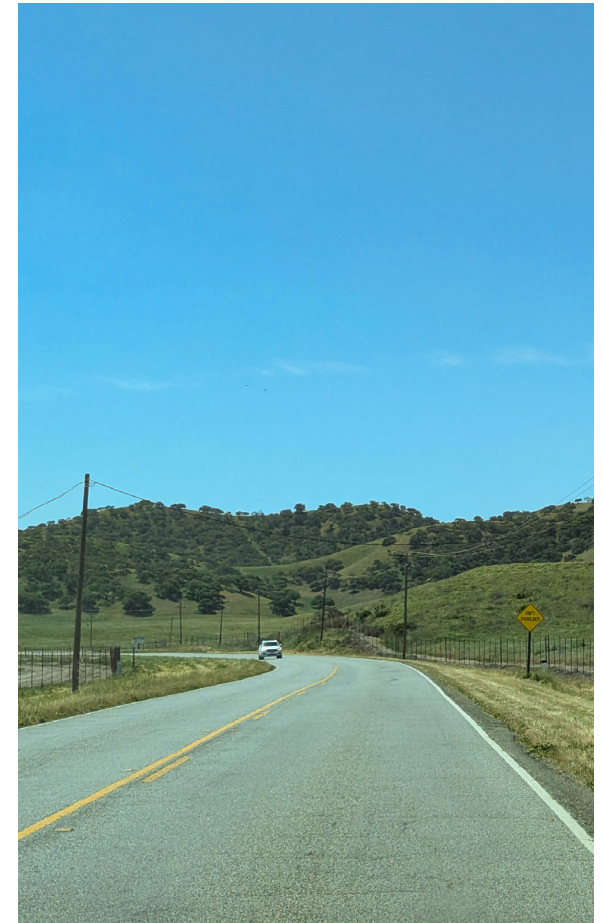


Aggressive driving includes driving at unsafe speeds, following too closely, disregarding traffic signals or signs, and reckless driving. The behaviors are frequently driven by impatience, stress, congestion, or a perceived need to “make up time.”

Speeding is often one of the most visible and measurable forms of aggressive driving, but it rarely occurs in isolation. Drivers who exceed speed limits are also more likely to engage in other risky behaviors such as tailgating, unsafe lane changes, rapid acceleration, failure to

yield, and running red lights. These behaviors compound one another, reducing reaction time, shrinking safe following distances, and creating unpredictable conflicts on the roadway.

Addressing aggressive driving requires more than responding to individual violations, it requires shaping a roadway environment, paired with enforcement, education, and a traffic safety culture that discourages these behaviors.



DISTRACTED DRIVING

5%

OF REGIONAL FATAL AND
SERIOUS INJURY CRASHES
(HIGHER THAN
STATEWIDE AVERAGE)



Distracted driving is one of the most preventable threats to roadway safety. It occurs whenever a driver diverts attention from the primary task of driving—whether to read or send a text message, adjust in-vehicle technology, eat, interact with passengers, or focus on something outside the vehicle. Distractions generally fall into three categories: visual (taking eyes off the road), manual (taking hands off the wheel), and cognitive (taking the mind off driving). Distracted driving is also one of the most underreported contributing factors to crashes, as it is difficult to confirm without a witness or confession.

When a driver is distracted, reaction time slows, situational awareness diminishes, and the ability to detect and respond to hazards is compromised. In just a brief moment of inattention, rear-end collisions, lane departures, or missed traffic signals can occur. These incidents can lead to crashes with severe outcomes, particularly for vulnerable road users such as people walking and bicycling.

IMPAIRED DRIVING

26%

OF REGIONAL FATAL AND
SERIOUS INJURY CRASHES
(HIGHER THAN
STATEWIDE AVERAGE)



Impaired driving involves operating a vehicle while under the influence of drugs or alcohol—whether illegal, prescription or over the counter—even if the driver is below the legal limit. Any level of impairment can slow reaction time, diminish judgement, and makes it hard to stay in a driving lane, obey traffic signals, or respond appropriately to hazards. Impairment is often associated with other risky behaviors, such as speeding, driving aggressively or not wearing a seatbelt, all of which increase the likelihood of crash severity.

PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLISTS

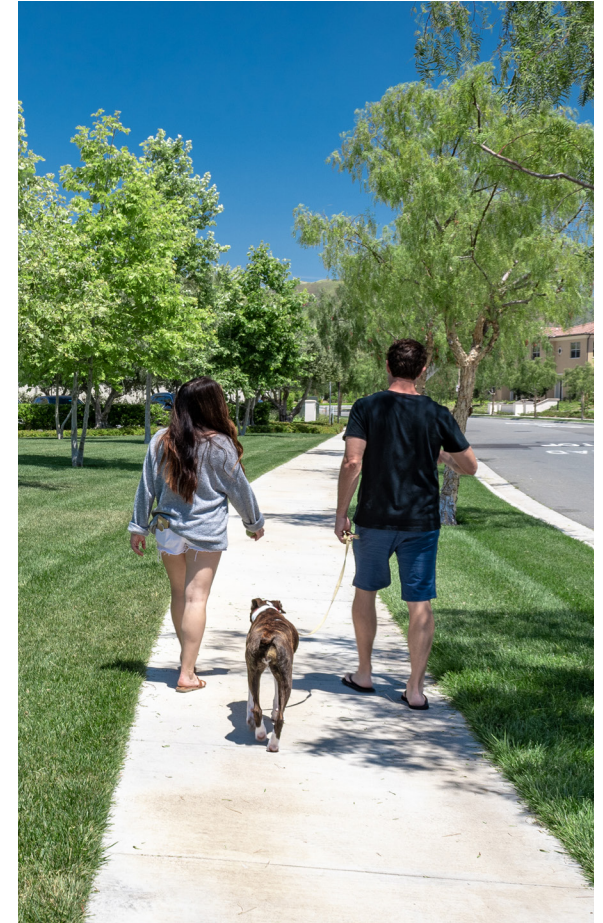
19%

OF REGIONAL FATAL AND
SERIOUS INJURY CRASHES
(LOWER THAN
STATEWIDE AVERAGE)



The term “vulnerable road users” is often used to describe bicyclists and pedestrians, which include people walking and using wheelchairs, and those riding bicycles, e-bikes, and non-motorized mobility devices. Even if their primary mode of travel is by car, everyone is a vulnerable road user at some point during their trip, whether to get to a bus stop, a parking spot, or even the mailbox. People walking and biking are more vulnerable because there is no physical protection between them and the crash, leaving them directly exposed in the event of a collision. As a result, crashes involving vulnerable road users are far more likely to result in fatal or life-altering injuries.

Crashes involving vulnerable road users most commonly occur at intersections and along roadways that lack safe, dedicated space for walking and bicycling. Areas with high levels of activity—such as near transit stops, school zones, shopping centers, and neighborhood centers—also tend to experience more of these collisions, largely due to a higher concentration of people walking and biking.



YOUNG AND AGING DRIVERS

27%

OF REGIONAL FATAL AND
SERIOUS INJURY CRASHES
(HIGHER THAN
STATEWIDE AVERAGE)



Monterey County's drivers span all age groups, from young and inexperienced motorists to older drivers who may have physical or cognitive limitations.

YOUNG DRIVERS (ages 15–20) are still developing critical decision making skills and often have limited behind the wheel experience, which can increase the risk of crashes, particularly those involving speed, distraction or peer influence. Comprehensive driver education can play a key role. High-quality programs that emphasize hazard recognition, defensive driving techniques, and the consequences of risky behaviors—such as distracted or impaired driving—help establish safe habits early.

OLDER DRIVERS (age 65+) require a different approach, one that balances support for continued mobility while addressing age-related

changes that can affect driving performance and injury tolerances. Older drivers tend to be safer and experienced, however changes in vision, reaction time and cognitive processing can make complex driving environments more challenging to navigate. Besides driving performance, injury outcomes tend to be more severe for aging adults when a crash does occur. Designing our roadways to account for these limitations, as well as increasing programs and policies that support education, training, and travel choices for aging adults can reduce the risk of crashes.

Investing in a transportation system that supports road users of all ages and abilities strengthens the overall safety culture of our community and ensures that everyone can travel more safely and confidently.

OCCUPANT PROTECTION

14%

OF REGIONAL FATAL AND
SERIOUS INJURY CRASHES
(HIGHER THAN
STATEWIDE AVERAGE)



Protecting roadway users begins with consistent seat belt use and ensuring children are secured in properly installed car seats. When seat belts are worn correctly, they help prevent ejection, distribute crash forces across stronger parts of the body, and significantly reduce the risk of severe injury or death.

For children, proper protection requires age- and size-appropriate restraint systems. Rear-facing car seats, forward-facing car seats with harnesses, and booster seats are designed to provide the level of support and positioning needed as a child grows. Correct installation and use are essential; improperly installed or misused child restraint systems can greatly reduce their effectiveness.

Targeted education, high-visibility enforcement of seat belt laws, and community outreach can improve compliance and save lives.

CHAPTER 5:

Plan of Action



Achieving Vision Zero by eliminating traffic deaths and severe injuries will take real action— doing nothing is not an option. However, agencies have limited resources, and we must focus on the efforts with the biggest safety benefits, measure progress, and make informed decisions to improve safety for everyone.

The recommendations in this plan are meant to guide future work, not commit to a fixed set of actions. They provide a foundation for pursuing funding and advancing project development over time as conditions change, new funding becomes available, projects are delivered, and more community input is received. In this way, the Safety Action Plan is not just a summary of current conditions—it's a practical tool to help TAMC make steady progress toward safer roads.

The following sections summarize the recommended strategies and infrastructure projects that have been proven to reduce crash severity and potential for saving lives across Monterey County. Additionally, the plan includes guidance for implementing recommended strategies and projects, as well as a framework for tracking performance and monitoring progress over time.

Past and Current Efforts

While this is the region's first comprehensive Vision Zero Safety Action Plan, many agencies across Monterey County have already taken important steps to improve roadway safety through plans, programs, and policies. These efforts provide a strong foundation for this plan of action and demonstrate a shared commitment to reducing fatalities and serious injuries.

Several cities developed and adopted Local Road Safety Plans (LRSPs) several years ago, including the Cities of Soledad, King City, and Marina. These agencies proactively made safety a priority in their communities and have been continuously advancing safety strategies and projects ever since.

Each jurisdiction within Monterey County has an adopted General Plan or Comprehensive Plan that includes safety-related elements. A smaller subset of agencies including TAMC, Pacific Grove, Seaside, and Marina, have formal municipal codes, design guidelines, or programs that explicitly incorporate safety principles, such as Complete Streets policies or sidewalk standards.

Several jurisdictions without formal safety action plans are still advancing safety through targeted initiatives. For example, Carmel-by-the-Sea and Soledad have undertaken emergency preparedness and evacuation planning efforts, while Greenfield has established a traffic safety commission to address local safety concerns and respond to community input.

TAMC-LED SAFETY EFFORTS

With input from community leaders, the Agency created the Transportation Safety and Investment Plan, which was proposed in 2014 to be funded by a 3/8% sales tax. After nearly two years of public engagement and consensus-building, a super-majority of Monterey County residents voted to approve the plan, on the ballot as Measure X, in November 2016. That vote elevated Monterey County to self-help status, which enables us to leverage state and federal matching funds, and enhance our ability to fix our roads to improve safety, access and mobility.

The sales tax went into effect on April 1, 2017, and was forecasted to raise \$600 million over 30 years. Of that amount, 60% is distributed to local cities and the county for road maintenance and safety projects. The remaining 40% is used for regional projects and programs. For fiscal year 2024/25, Measure X generated over \$39 million in revenues. This dedicated funding source enables all 12 cities and the County of Monterey to implement safety improvements in their local communities and is an eligible fund source for the safety projects and programs identified in the Monterey County Regional Vision Zero Plan.

In addition to dedicated Measure X funding for safety improvement projects, TAMC has been actively working to reduce serious injuries and fatalities through a broad set of ongoing initiatives.

- **EDUCATION EFFORTS** such as Bike and Walk Smart safety programs offered through the countywide Safe Routes to School initiative, which provides hands-on walking and biking education in partnership with schools across Monterey County, along with the countywide Safer Streets Together public awareness campaign that promotes safe driving, walking, and biking behaviors to reduce collisions.
- **ENCOURAGEMENT PROGRAMS** include Safe Routes to School activities such as walking school buses, operating in multiple communities including Del Rey Elementary (Seaside) and Santa Lucia Elementary (King City) in 2026, and traffic gardens, which are now installed at twelve school sites throughout the county, including King City, Greenfield, Soledad, Gonzales, Salinas, Seaside, Marina, Castroville, and Prunedale.

TAMC and its Safe Routes partners also distribute safety gear such as lights, reflectors, bike bells, and helmets at school and community events, and continue implementing regional bicycle wayfinding signage.

- **PLANNING INITIATIVES** further support Vision Zero through documents such as the Monterey Bay Area Complete Streets Guidebook (2013), the Monterey County Vision Zero Action Plan currently under development via a federal SS4A grant, Safe Routes to Schools plans to improve safety around 22 public schools, and the forthcoming Monterey County Active Transportation Plan and Level of Traffic Stress Analysis update.
- **PROJECT DELIVERY EFFORTS** include major active transportation investments such as the 28-mile Fort Ord Regional Trail and Greenway (FORTAG), including segments now under construction or in design, and roadway safety projects like State Route 156 / Castroville Boulevard and the Imjin Parkway Safety and Improvement Project.

- **FUNDING PROGRAMS** that advance Vision Zero include TAMC's Competitive Grant Program, which prioritizes projects with demonstrated collision-reduction benefits. TAMC staff also assist jurisdictions in pursuing external grant funding, including the Active Transportation Program and Sustainable Transportation Planning grants.
- **IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING TOOLS** such as the TAMC Collision Database, which informs data-driven safety improvements across the county.



Safe System Strategies

When we think of ways to improve safety, many people think only of engineering projects. However, through the Safe System Approach, we know that achieving Vision Zero will require a variety of efforts and investments that are much more broad than a list of capital projects.

THE STRATEGIES ARE INTENDED TO COMPLIMENT AND SUPPORT ENGINEERING PROJECTS IN THREE KEY WAYS:

1. Elevate the importance of traffic safety within our agency
 2. Make it easier to fund or build safety improvements
 3. Encourage safe behaviors and foster a stronger culture of traffic safety in our community
-

Table 2 lists the Foundational and Tier 1 recommended strategies that will help TAMC continue to prioritize safety and support partner agencies in their local safety efforts. The full table with all 22 strategies can be found in the Appendix.



Resources and Tools

Our understanding of safety strategies, their effectiveness, and best practices for implementation are continually evolving. The following state and federal resources may be useful when identifying safety strategies for a specific location, underlying risk, or crash pattern:

- [FHWA Proven Safety Countermeasures](#)
- [FHWA Proven Safety Countermeasures in Rural Communities](#)
- [NHTSA Countermeasures that Work](#)
- [USDOT National Roadway Safety Strategy](#)
- [Caltrans Local Roadway Safety Manual](#)
- [Safe System Roadway Design Hierarchy](#)

TABLE 2. TOP TIER SAFE SYSTEM STRATEGIES FOR MONTEREY COUNTY

STRATEGIES	TIER	TIER 1 CHALLENGE AREAS					
		 LANE DEPARTURE	 IMPAIRED DRIVING	 DISTRACTED DRIVING	 OCCUPANT PROTECTION	 AGING DRIVERS	 YOUNG DRIVERS
Prioritize funding and implementation of highly effective strategies and proven safety countermeasures that align with local and regional challenge areas.	Foundational						
Institute a “safety review” of all capital and private development projects to identify low-cost safety enhancements that can be incorporated into designs prior to construction	Foundational						
Establish a team to review all fatal crashes, determine contributing factors, and identify potential short-term safety improvements to mitigate crash risks	Foundational						
Develop standard design details and specifications for safety enhancements such as safety edge on shoulders, high-visibility signing and striping at unsignalized intersections, bicycle signals, RRFBs, curb extensions, pedestrian refuge islands, bike boxes, green conflict markings, etc.	Foundational						
Establish agency policy prohibiting risky behaviors while driving for businesses purposes (e.g., no cell phone use, don’t drive impaired or drowsy, drive the speed limit, etc.)	Tier 1						
Conduct education and awareness campaigns targeting risky driving behaviors such as speeding, impairment, distraction, not wearing a seatbelt, and failure to yield to pedestrians	Tier 1						
Conduct high visibility enforcement campaigns related to risky driving behaviors, pedestrian crossing compliance, e-bike/e-scooter use, etc.	Tier 1						



INTENDED PURPOSE



SECONDARY PURPOSE/DIRECT BENEFIT



INDIRECT BENEFIT

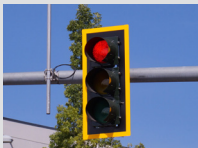


DOES NOT APPLY

SAFE SYSTEM TOOLBOX

By establishing a toolbox of proven safety countermeasures aligned with crash analysis findings, agencies can more effectively identify and implement strategies that reduce the severity of collisions. Safety countermeasures can be implemented in both rural and urban settings, with each strategy tailored to address the unique characteristics of its environment. Table 3 provides a few examples of proven safety countermeasures that can effectively reduce crash risk in urban and rural areas. A complete Safe System Toolbox can be found in the Appendix.

TABLE 3. SAFE SYSTEM TOOLBOX

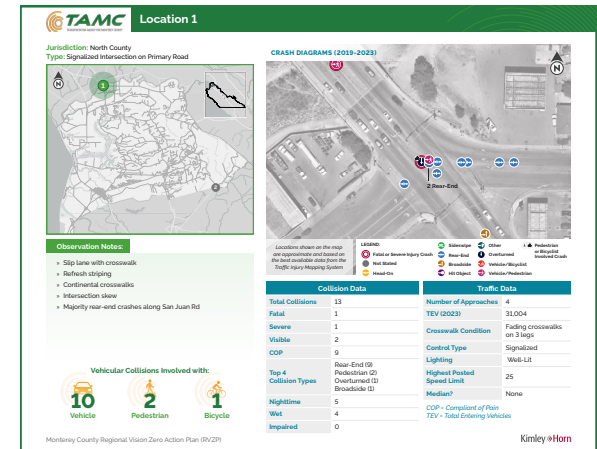
COUNTERMEASURE		DESCRIPTION	ESTIMATED CRASH REDUCTION	CONTEXT
Install crosswalk visibility enhancements		Improve visibility and shorten crossing distances at designated pedestrian crossings, either at intersections or mid-block locations.	Up to 40% reduction in pedestrian-involved crashes	Urban
Improve clear zone and install SafetyEdge	 Source: FHWA	SafetyEdge gently slopes the edge of pavement on rural roadways. When paired with a wide, flat clear zone, drivers can safely re-enter the roadway after leaving the travelway due to distraction, impairment, or avoiding a hazard.	Up to 20% reduction in road departure crashes	Rural
Install roundabouts		Roundabouts feature channelized, curved approaches that reduce vehicle speed and minimize conflict points, substantially reducing the risk of severe injury crashes.	Up to 82% reduction in fatal and serious injury crashes	Urban & Rural
Install speed feedback signs		Speed feedback signs provide drivers with real-time information about their speed as they pass the sign and encourage safer travel speeds. They can be installed temporarily or permanently.	Up to 10% reduction in crashes	Urban & Rural
Install intersection visibility upgrades		Improve the visibility of intersections with upgraded signing and striping. At signals, this includes warning signs, increasing the size of indications, and adding a reflective border to signal heads. At stop controlled intersections, this includes warning signs, pavement markings, delineators, and oversized stop signs.	Up to 15% reduction in crashes	Urban & Rural
Update signal timing, phasing, and preemption		Improve intersection safety and reduce red light running by evaluating and adjusting clearance intervals, pedestrian crossing times, and phasing details. Upgrading or installing emergency vehicle preemption technology can improve emergency response times, resulting in better post-crash care and less severe outcomes.	Up to 14% reduction in crashes	Urban & Rural

CASE STUDIES

Case studies provide real-world local examples of crash patterns and cost effective engineering solutions that mitigate those crash risks. TAMC and local agency staff can use these case studies as a reference when developing solutions to address future safety needs. The Appendix includes 24 case studies at locations across Monterey County, including a mix of stop-controlled and signalized intersections, rural two-lane highways, suburban streets, and downtown main streets.

Each case study includes the following:

- Collision history and crash diagram
- Traffic data
- Location characteristics
- Observation notes
- Street-view images
- Potential countermeasures that treat the crash risks
 - » Caltrans Countermeasure ID
 - » Estimated Crash Reduction & Safety Benefits
 - » Planning Level Cost Estimate
 - » Cost Effectiveness Evaluation (based on benefit-cost ratio)
 - » Effective Applications



TAMC Location 1
Project Name: Monterey County Regional Vision Zero Action Plan (RVZAP) Agency Name: Transportation Agency for Monterey County (TAMC)

Potential Countermeasure	LRSM / CMF ID ¹	Crash Reduction Factor	20 Year Safety Benefit ²	Preliminary CPOC ³	Estimated B/C ³ Range ³	Where is it Most Effective?
Retroreflective backplates	502	15%	\$855,000	\$26,400	Good	Retroreflective backplates are a low cost countermeasure that are most effective at intersections with frequent right-angle and rear-end crashes occurring because drivers cannot see the traffic signal early enough to safely navigate the intersection.
Dilemma zone detection with controller	4854	43%	\$2,451,000	\$160,000	Good	Dilemma zone detection are a low cost countermeasure that are effective in more rural/remote areas that have a high frequency of right-angle and rear-end crashes.
High visibility crosswalk	4123	39%	\$1,761,630	\$250,000	Moderate	High visibility crosswalks are most effective at intersections with multiphase traffic signals, school crossings, and double-right or right-turn.

¹POOR (<1.0), MODERATE (1-1.5), GOOD (1.6-4.0), AND EXCELLENT (>4.0)
²Local Roadway Safety Manual (LRSM)
³Crash Modification Factor (CMF)
⁴Crash Modification Factor (CMF)
⁵Crash Modification Factor (CMF)

Disclaimer: These initial costs represent planning level estimates only. Further detailed costs should be developed as construction timelines are developed and designs are refined.

Kimley-Horn

SAFETY TREATMENTS NEAR SCHOOLS, DOWNTOWNS, AND OTHER KEY BICYCLIST AND PEDESTRIAN DESTINATIONS



Safety treatments in downtown areas and near schools should reflect the higher presence of pedestrians and bicyclists, as well as the purpose of travel in these locations. These streets are more than vehicle corridors—they are community destinations where students walk or bike to school, families gather at parks and public spaces, and residents and tourists shop and access services. Because of this mix of users, roadway design should prioritize slower vehicle speeds, increased visibility, and safe, clearly defined spaces for people walking and bicycling.¹

When considering areas near schools, safety strategies must prioritize protecting children, who are more vulnerable and may act unpredictably in traffic environments due to their age, visibility, and developing judgment skills. Highly visible crosswalks, pedestrian-activated Rapid Rectangular Flashing Beacons (RRFBs), reduced speed limits, curb extensions, and enhanced signage help calm traffic and improve driver awareness. Continuous sidewalks and dedicated bike facilities are equally important, so students are not forced into travel lanes or unsafe crossings. These improvements support safe, direct, and comfortable routes to school for students of all ages and abilities.

In downtown areas, safety improvements should enhance walkability, provide clearly designated space for bicycle travel, and support local economic vitality. As community hubs where people shop, dine, work, and gather, downtown streets benefit from lower speeds, improved lighting, accessible curb ramps²,

well-marked crossings, and thoughtfully designed bike lanes. Dedicated bicycle facilities³ reduce conflicts between vehicles, pedestrians, and cyclists while encouraging more people to travel by bike. Designing streets to reflect their multimodal context creates vibrant, accessible centers that function safely for drivers while prioritizing the comfort and protection of people walking and biking.

By applying context-sensitive safety treatments in both school and downtown environments, communities can create streets that better serve everyone who relies on them. Thoughtful design that prioritizes slower speeds, visibility, and dedicated space for walking and bicycling not only reduces the risk of crashes but also supports healthier, more active transportation choices. When roadway improvements reflect how people actually use these spaces, they help foster safer routes to school, stronger local businesses, and vibrant community centers that are welcoming and accessible for all ages and abilities.

1 <https://ramudden.ca/digital/intelligent-road-safety-devices/rectangular-rapid-flashing-beacons-rrfbs.html>

2 <https://dot.ca.gov/programs/safety-programs/traffic-calming>

3 <https://www.peopleforbikes.org/news/americas-best-new-bikeways-2020>

Projects

As noted, TAMC does not own, maintain, or operate any roadways. However, as the regional transportation agency, TAMC plays a critical role for planning and financial funding of transportation projects. The following summarizes a few key regionally significant plans and projects that are planned for implementation in the next five years and are expected to significantly improve safety.



2045 METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION PLAN/SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES STRATEGY AND REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLANS

The Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG), the federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Monterey Bay region, is responsible for developing the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP). The MTP ensures that regional transportation planning agencies, including TAMC, align with federal transportation requirements and funding eligibility standards. As part of this process, the AMBAG prepares the 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (MTP/SCS) and associated Regional Transportation Plans (RTPs), which together establish a coordinated program of multi-jurisdictional transportation projects across the region.

The 2045 MTP/SCS (June 2022) includes an extensive list of constrained and unconstrained projects that directly or indirectly address roadway safety. Many of these projects focus on corridor improvements, intersection upgrades, active transportation facilities, complete streets elements, traffic calming measures, and multimodal connectivity, each of which aligns

with Vision Zero principles and the Safe System Approach. A review of the project list demonstrates that safety is a consistent theme across jurisdictions and modes, with investments targeting high-speed corridors, multimodal conflict points, and locations with known safety concerns.

The Monterey County 2026 Regional Transportation Improvement Plan (RTIP) (December 2025) was also reviewed to identify near-term, regionally significant projects planned for implementation within the next five years. The RTIP identified three priority regional projects that have substantial safety, multimodal, and system performance benefits:

- **SCENIC STATE ROUTE 68 SAFETY AND TRAFFIC FLOW PROJECT – PHASE 1:** Phase 1 of the SR 68 project will construct the first three of nine planned roundabouts and two of five planned wildlife crossings along the corridor. The initial roundabouts will be located at San Benancio Road, Corral de Tierra Road, and Laureles Grade Road. These improvements are intended to reduce severe crashes, improve traffic operations, and enhance safety for all users along a corridor with a history of high-speed and high-severity collisions.

- **US 101 SOUTH OF SALINAS – CHUALAR SEGMENT:** The Chualar Segment represents the first phase of the larger US 101 South of Salinas project. This phase includes construction of a new relocated interchange on US 101, a grade separation over the Union Pacific Railroad, and new frontage roads that incorporate bicycle facilities. The project improves safety by separating conflicting movements, reducing at-grade crossings, and enhancing multimodal access.
- **PAJARO/WATSONVILLE MULTIMODAL STATION:** This project will construct a new multimodal transit and intercity rail station in Pajaro, serving north Monterey County and providing a key connection to Santa Cruz County. The station will support safe transfers between future passenger rail service, transit, walking, and bicycling, improving regional mobility while enhancing safety for vulnerable road users.

The RTIP also prioritizes complementary multimodal investments that together form a connected, countywide transportation network. Projects such as the Marina–Salinas Multimodal Corridor, the SURF! Busway and Bus Rapid Transit Project, and the Fort Ord

Regional Trail and Greenway (FORTAG) advance high-quality transit service, dedicated bus lanes, and separated active transportation facilities linking Salinas, Marina, Seaside, Monterey, CSU Monterey Bay, and key regional transit hubs.

In South Monterey County, the King City Multimodal Transportation Center and South County Regional Transit Improvements strengthen interregional rail, bus, and active transportation connections. In North Monterey County, projects such as the G12 Corridor Improvements enhance regional gateway connectivity by integrating rail, bus, bicycle, pedestrian, and electric vehicle infrastructure. Along the Coastal Corridor (State Route 1), long-term mobility and climate resilience are addressed through the Highway 1 Elkhorn Slough Climate Resiliency Project and planning for future passenger rail service along the Monterey Branch Line. Collectively, these investments reinforce a safe, resilient, and multimodal transportation system across Monterey County.

The 2026 TAMC Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) confirms that Monterey County projects already draw from

a broad mix of sources, including federal formula programs, state programs, and local funds. Together, these projects advance a coordinated, multimodal transportation system that enhances safety, strengthens regional connectivity, and supports long-term mobility and resilience across Monterey County.

Working Across Boundaries to Save Lives

When traveling along a roadway, drivers do not recognize or differentiate between jurisdictional boundaries—they experience the road as one continuous system. The difference between city streets, county roads, and state highways is largely invisible to the public. What matters most is whether the roadway feels safe, consistent, and intuitive from one segment to the next. Because ownership and maintenance responsibilities change behind the scenes, delivering a seamless travel experience depends on strong coordination and partnership between agencies.

This collaboration is especially important at intersections where state highways meet local streets—such as Front Street and SR 146 in Soledad, SR 68 and South Main Street in Salinas, and US 101 at 5th Street in Gonzales. These locations serve as critical transition points between regional corridors and local community networks. They often function as gateways into cities, carrying high volumes of through traffic while also supporting local access for residents, businesses, pedestrians, and bicyclists.

By working together, TAMC, Caltrans, and local agencies can ensure corridors operate as cohesive, integrated networks rather than disconnected segments. Coordinated planning, design consistency, and aligned safety investments across jurisdictional boundaries are essential to maintaining safe, reliable, and predictable travel for all users. This collaborative approach strengthens the overall transportation system and helps create a safer, more connected environment throughout Monterey County.



Prioritizing Investments in Monterey County

Projects and strategies should be evaluated and ranked using a combination of the following criteria:

1	High Injury Network Focus	Highest priority should be given to projects located on or directly addressing corridors and intersections identified on the High Injury Network. These locations represent a disproportionate share of fatal and serious injury crashes and offer the greatest opportunity for measurable safety benefits.
2	Proximity to Schools and Youth Activity Areas	Projects near K–12 schools, childcare facilities, parks, and other youth-oriented destinations should be prioritized, particularly those that improve walking and bicycling safety. This includes improvements aligned with Safe Routes to School programs and corridors with documented student travel demand.
3	Vulnerable Road Users	Priority should be given to projects that improve safety for pedestrians, bicyclists, older adults, people with disabilities, and transit users. Locations with a history of pedestrian- or bicycle-involved crashes, or where vulnerable users are exposed to high-speed or high-volume traffic, should rank highly.
4	Transit Access and Multimodal Connectivity	Projects that enhance safety near transit stops, stations, and key transfer points should be prioritized to support safe access to transit and reduce conflicts between vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists.
5	Systemic Safety Opportunity	Projects that can be implemented systemically across corridors, neighborhoods, or jurisdictions, such as daylighting, traffic calming, signing and striping upgrades, and pedestrian crossing enhancements, should be prioritized due to their ability to proactively reduce risk before crashes occur.
6	Equity Considerations	Projects serving communities disproportionately impacted by traffic injuries or with limited access to safe transportation options should be elevated. Equity considerations should include socioeconomic factors, access to transportation, and historic underinvestment.
7	Feasibility and Readiness	Project readiness, cost-effectiveness, ease of implementation, and compatibility with planned roadway or capital projects should be considered to maximize near-term safety benefits.

Application of the Prioritization Framework

TAMC and its partner agencies can use these criteria to:

- **Align local project lists with regional Vision Zero priorities**
- **Screen and rank candidate projects for funding**
 - » **Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A)**
 - » **Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP)**
 - » **Active Transportation Program (ATP)**
 - » **Complete Streets initiatives**
 - » **Safe Routes to Schools (SRTS)**
- **Promote consistency and transparency in decision-making across jurisdictions**

By applying this prioritization framework, TAMC and its partners can strategically advance safety investments that deliver the greatest impact, protect the most vulnerable users, and move Monterey County closer to the shared goal of eliminating traffic fatalities and serious injuries.

For projects located on the State Highway System, TAMC and partner agencies will need to coordinate closely with Caltrans to advance project development, ensure consistency with state policies and standards, and implement safety improvements effectively across jurisdictions. This will provide for safety improvements that function as cohesive, integrated elements of the broader transportation network.



Funding Sources

Implementing focused safety strategies and projects will require assembling funding from multiple levels - federal, regional, state, and local, based on project type (capital vs. programmatic), sponsor eligibility (TAMC vs. local jurisdictions), and readiness (quick-build vs. construction).

FEDERAL FUNDING SOURCES

Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) – US Department of Transportation

The Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) program is a limited duration federal funding source for advancing Vision Zero and Safe System strategies. Funded through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, SS4A allocates approximately \$1 billion annually from 2022 through 2026 to support safety planning and implementation efforts led by local governments, counties, metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs), and other roadway owners (excluding state DOTs).

The program includes two grant types:

- **Planning and Demonstration Grants:** typically ranging from \$100,000 to \$1 million, available to any eligible agency to develop, complete, or supplement a Comprehensive Safety Action Plan.
- **Implementation Grants:** generally ranging from \$1 million to \$20 million, available to agencies with an adopted safety action plan, such as the TAMC Vision Zero Action Plan. Eligible projects and strategies can be infrastructural, behavioral, and/or operational activities.

The SS4A program requires a 20 percent local match, which may include in-kind contributions such as staff time. For TAMC and its member jurisdictions, SS4A presents a significant opportunity to fund data-driven policies, transportation safety programs, and capital projects identified in the VZAP. Prioritized strategies including systemic infrastructure countermeasures, Safe Routes to School initiatives, education and enforcement campaigns, and other programmatic safety improvements, are well positioned to compete for SS4A implementation funding.

Highway Safety Improvement Program - (HSIP)

The HSIP is a federal funding program that provides each state with a lump-sum fund dedicated to improving roadway safety. These flexible funds may be used on highways or bridges eligible for federal funding, facilities for non-motorized transportation, and other eligible safety-related improvements.

In California, local HSIP funding primarily supports infrastructure projects with nationally recognized crash reduction factors. Eligible safety improvements include, but are not limited to, new or upgraded traffic signals, guardrail installation or enhancements, pedestrian facility improvements including flashing beacons, marked crosswalks, rumble strips, signing and striping upgrades, and other countermeasures identified in the Caltrans Local Road Safety Manual.

Projects that take a systemic approach, target locations on the High Injury Network (HIN), and align with the emphasis areas identified in the TAMC Vision Zero Action Plan (VZAP) are particularly competitive for HSIP funding. The RTIP identifies HSIP as a commonly used funding source across the region.

HSIP call-for-projects cycles in California typically occur every one to two years. Eligible applicants include cities, counties, and federally recognized tribal governments within the State of California. The next HSIP Cycle (Cycle 13) is anticipated to open in September 2026.

Additional information about HSIP can be found through the Federal Highway Administration or through Caltrans' Local Assistance Program.

INFRA Competitive Grants – FHWA

The INFRA program (the Nationally Significant Multimodal Freight & Highway Projects program) supports larger-scale, regionally significant corridor projects that demonstrate safety, mobility, and economic benefits. Projects that integrate safety improvements with freight, transit, and multimodal access, particularly along major corridors, may be competitive for INFRA funding when a strong regional or national benefit can be demonstrated.

Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA)

The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), also known as the Bipartisan

Infrastructure Law (BIL), signed into law by President Joe Biden on November 15, 2021. The IIJA provides approximately \$1.2 trillion nationwide, with significant new funding dedicated to improving safety, resiliency, equity, and multimodal transportation across all levels of government.

In addition to establishing the Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) program, the IIJA expanded and created multiple competitive and formula-based funding programs that can support roadway safety, active transportation, transit, and environmental mitigation projects. Notably, the law allocates approximately \$30 billion over five years for competitive grant funded programs such as RAISE (formerly BUILD), to implement projects that improve safety, state of good repair, sustainability, and multimodal connectivity.

Transportation Alternatives (TA) Set-Aside – FHWA

For TAMC and its member agencies, the Transportation Alternatives (TA) Set-Aside is a federal funding source available to support smaller-scale, community-focused transportation improvements within Monterey County. Administered through the Surface

Transportation Block Grant (STBG) program under the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), TA funds can be used for pedestrian and bicycle facilities, Safe Routes to School projects, recreational trails, and related safety and community enhancements.

The TA Set-Aside represents an important funding opportunity to advance local walking and bicycling improvements identified through planning efforts, particularly in areas with high pedestrian activity, near schools, and along key neighborhood connections. Eligible projects may include sidewalk and bikeway improvements, crossing enhancements, traffic calming elements, and other low-cost safety treatments that improve comfort and accessibility for all users and abilities.

Fiscal Year 2026 Contract Authority has established \$1.498 billion in funding, which is the total estimated national Transportation Alternatives apportionment across all states.

STATE OF CALIFORNIA FUNDING SOURCES

Active Transportation Program (ATP) – Caltrans / California Transportation Commission

The Caltrans Active Transportation Program (ATP) is a statewide funding program established in 2013 that consolidates several former federal and state active transportation programs into a single, competitive funding source. ATP supports projects that increase walking and bicycling, improve safety and mobility for non-motorized users, enhance public health, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Eligible projects include bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure improvements, active transportation planning efforts such as Safe Routes to School plans, and non-infrastructure programs focused on education and enforcement. ATP funding is available on an annual basis, with a call for projects typically released in the spring. Additional information on program eligibility, application cycles, and guidance is available through Caltrans.

SB 1 Programs (Road Repair and Accountability Act)

Senate Bill 1 (SB 1), the Road Repair and Accountability Act, establishes a dedicated, long-term funding source to reinvest in California's transportation system. The program is designed to improve roadway safety, address deferred maintenance, expand multimodal travel options, and support the State's climate and sustainability goals.

SB 1 funding is allocated on an annual basis through a mix of formula and competitive programs. Roughly half of the revenue, approximately \$26 billion over the life of the program, is directed to the state highway system, while the remaining funds support local streets and roads, transit agencies, and the expansion of pedestrian and bicycle networks across California. These investments allow jurisdictions to systematically address aging infrastructure and implement safety-focused improvements on both state and local facilities.

Key SB 1 funding categories that support safety and multimodal improvements include:

- **Local Streets and Roads Maintenance and Rehabilitation (\$1.5 billion annually):** Formula funds provided to cities and counties to improve pavement conditions and implement safety upgrades such as restriping, resurfacing, and traffic calming.
- **Bicycle and Pedestrian Projects (\$100 million annually):** Funding distributed primarily through the Active Transportation Program to support new and improved sidewalks, crosswalks, bike lanes, and shared-use paths.
- **Local and Regional Planning Grants (\$25 million annually):** Grants that support planning, project development, and coordination efforts that advance safety, mobility, and multimodal goals.

State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)

The State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) is California's primary multi-year funding program for major transportation capital investments on both the State Highway System and local roadway networks. The program is funded through the Transportation Investment Fund and other state and federal sources and is updated on a biennial cycle.

STIP programming follows a structured process that begins with the release of a proposed funding estimate in July of odd-numbered years, followed by adoption of the final fund estimate by the California Transportation Commission (CTC) in August of that year. This process informs project selection and funding commitments for a multi-year period.

STIP funds are typically used to advance larger-scale projects that improve system performance, including capacity enhancements, operational improvements,

and multimodal corridor investments. Projects that demonstrate clear safety benefits, particularly those that reduce fatal and serious injury crashes while also addressing regional mobility and connectivity needs, are well positioned for STIP consideration. The Monterey County RTIP identifies STIP as an important funding source for regional project delivery.

California Office of Traffic Safety Grants

The California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) offers annual grant funding to support traffic safety programs aimed at reducing fatalities and serious injuries. Eligible applicants include public agencies, while nonprofit organizations may apply with a public entity serving as the grant host. Applications must demonstrate a documented safety need using local crash data.

OTS grants primarily support non-infrastructure strategies aligned with Vision Zero goals, including education, enforcement, emergency response, and public awareness programs. Priority program areas include

impaired and distracted driving, pedestrian and bicycle safety, occupant protection, motorcycle safety, emergency medical services, police traffic services, roadway safety, traffic records, and safety-focused communications.

RTIP AND TIP PROGRAMMING AS THE BRIDGE TO CONSTRUCTION

This safety action plan should function as the framework for project development. As projects advance in design and readiness, they can be positioned for inclusion in future Regional Transportation Improvement Programs (RTIPs) and Transportation Improvement Programs (TIPs). The 2026 RTIP demonstrates that Monterey County already programs a wide range of funding sources including HSIP, ATP, STIP, and SB 1, creating clear pathways from planning to implementation.

LOCAL AND PARTNER FUNDING SOURCES

Local Transportation Revenues and Agency Capital Programs

Local funds play a critical role in advancing safety improvements. They are essential for meeting match requirements, implementing quick-build safety projects, upgrading striping and signing, optimizing signal timing, and delivering other near-term safety enhancements. In addition to supporting smaller, immediate improvements, local funding provides the flexibility to address emerging safety needs and pilot innovative countermeasures. Demonstrating a local match commitment also strengthens competitiveness for federal and state grant programs and can significantly accelerate project delivery by allowing agencies to initiate preliminary work while pursuing external funding.

Development Impact Fees and Mitigation Programs

Development-related funding can support safety improvements in growth areas and along corridors with documented safety needs. As new development generates additional travel demand, these funding sources can help deliver infrastructure upgrades that proactively address safety risks for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit riders. Eligible investments may include intersection improvements, multimodal facility enhancements, signal upgrades, traffic calming measures, and other countermeasures identified through a data-driven safety analysis.

This safety action plan provides a defensible framework for identifying safety deficiencies and prioritizing mitigation investments tied to new development. It also supports consistent application of impact fees and development conditions, ensuring that growth contributes meaningfully to safer transportation outcomes while complementing local, state, and federal funding efforts.

Monitoring Performance

A core element of Vision Zero is the commitment to accountability and transparency, ensuring that Monterey County's progress toward eliminating fatal and serious injury crashes can be measured, monitored, and communicated clearly to the public. Performance measures provide the framework for tracking that progress over time and evaluating whether the strategies and investments outlined in this Plan are producing meaningful results.

As strategies and projects are implemented, it is important to regularly monitor countywide safety performance to determine the effectiveness of those efforts, and make adjustments to future investments and priorities, as needed.

Moving forward, TAMC will use the following performance measures to track the successful implementation of this plan.

Regional number of fatal and severe injury crashes (total)

Regional number of fatal and severe injury crashes involving:

- Aggressive driving
- Impairment
- Distraction
- Pedestrians and bicyclists
- Younger and aging drivers
- Unrestrained occupants

These performance measures will be tracked and shared annually. TAMC is in the process of establishing a regional crash database that will allow for more timely, accurate, and accessible local crash data, and will also allow for improved regional data sharing capabilities.





A Call to Action

We all have a shared responsibility to keep ourselves and others safe when we travel. Infrastructure matters, but so do the choices we make every day. Whether you are behind the wheel, on a bike, or walking, each of us plays a role by slowing down, staying alert, and respecting the rules of the road. Together, we can build a culture where getting home safely is the expectation, every time, for everyone.