

Advisory Council on Traffic Safety

Final Minutes

Wednesday, December 13, 2023

1:00 – 4:00pm

Humphrey School of Public Affairs, University of Minnesota
301 S 19th Ave, Minneapolis, MN 55455
Josie Johnson Community Room (Room 180)

Attendees

Appendix A lists all Council members, staff, and invited guests who were present at the meeting.

Call to Order

Vice Chair Diamond called the meeting to order at 1:06 p.m.

Welcome and Introductions

Chair's Welcome and Introductions

Vice-Chair Diamond welcomed members. Chair Hanson was unable to attend in-person but provided welcome comments virtually. All members and staff introduced themselves and the organization they were representing on the Council. No guests were introduced due to time constraints.

Approve Today's Agenda

Wojcik made a motion to approve the agenda with no changes, Aasen seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Approve Minutes from September 21 Meeting

Malinoff requested two changes to the September 21 meeting minutes: on page 5 update the spelling of Michele Severson's first name and replace "drivers" with "pedestrians" in her round robin update.

Wojcik made a motion to approve the September 21 meeting minutes with these changes. Shelton seconded the motion. Motion carried.

The final meeting minutes are available on the [September meeting webpage](#).

Commissioner's Welcome

Commissioner Nancy Daubenberger, Department of Transportation; Commissioner Bob Jacobson, Department of Public Safety; and Assistant Commissioner Maria Sarabia, Department of Health welcomed members to the Council and discussed the importance and impact of the Council.

Commissioner Daubenberger emphasized that traffic safety is a priority for MnDOT and that the legislature has provided Minnesota a unique opportunity to collaborate and give guidance. She also highlighted the importance of supporting each other.

Commissioner Jacobson mentioned that DPS' number one priority is traffic safety and that everything we do impacts others. He encouraged members to continue to work across agency lines and not work in a vacuum. He reminded the group that every life impacted by a serious or fatal crash is more than a number or data point—it is a person and the loss will forever change their friends and families lives.

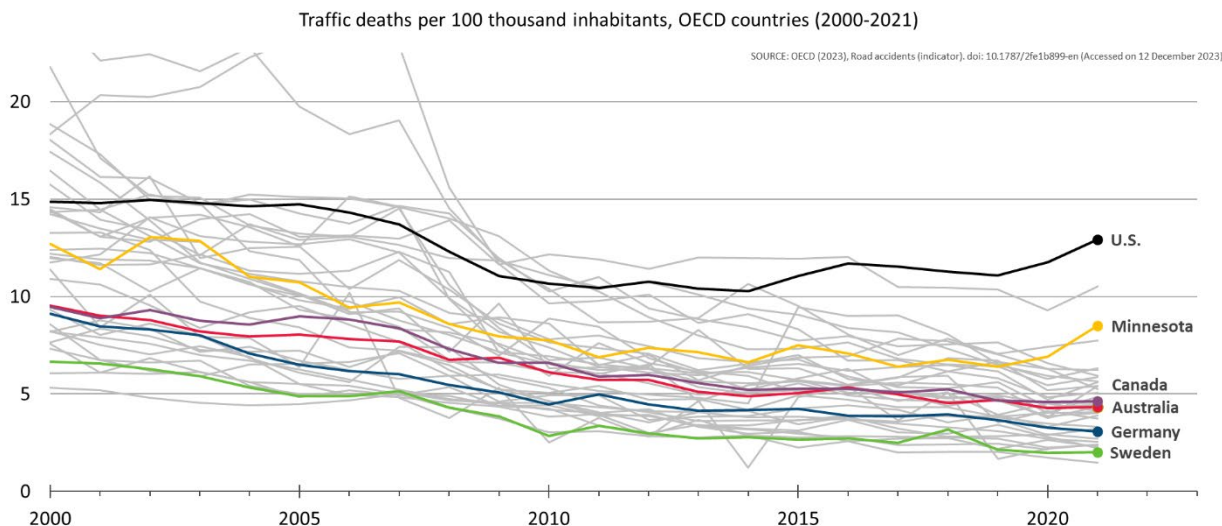
Assistant Commissioner Sarabia mentioned the importance of rural health care and reiterated the importance of MDH, MnDOT, and DPS working together to impact fatal and serious injury crash statistics.

State of Traffic Safety in Minnesota

Several presentations were given to provide members a baseline of traffic safety information as the Council starts its work. Slides for all presentations are available on the [December meeting webpage](#).

History and Background

Col. Matt Langer, Minnesota State Patrol, gave a history and background of crashes in Minnesota. Col. Langer reported that in 1969 there were 2,500 people killed in traffic crashes and that 1969/70 was the first year that crash facts included alcohol involved fatalities. He said that something new is going on our roads and we need to look at this. Col. Langer challenged the members to look down the road 53 years from now and noted that what we do now will impact the future. He also shared the following slide showing traffic deaths per 100 thousand inhabitants in OECD countries between 2000-2021.



Current Data Trends

Brian Sorenson, Minnesota Department of Transportation, gave a current data trend presentation. Sorenson highlighted that data is not a perfect representation of what is happening on our roadways but it can help. He reminded members that in 2016 the definition of “serious injury” changed, which led to a spike in the reports. He also reminded us that we have had a lot of successes. For example, there were a significant (-45%) reduction in crashes from 2003-2014 but then in 2014-2019 we plateaued (+1%); and unfortunately from 2019-present there has been a significant increase in fatalities (+22%). From 2010-2022 data, the highest number of contributing factors for severely injured and fatality crashes were severely injured crashes and fatalities were from impairment, speed, unbelted, and inattention. During this same time period 17% motorcyclist, 12% pedestrians, 9% commercial, and 4% bicyclists were

involved in fatal and severely injury crashes. And 50% of the crashes occurred at intersections, 30% were run off the road and 11% were head-on crashes.

Key takeaways include: the four most common behavioral factors involved in life changing crashes are impairment, speed, seat belt, and inattention; fatalities receded in 2022 and serious injuries have steadily increased since 2019; life changing crash factors that are trending up are impairment, speed, unlicensed and older drivers, and intersections; and that 40-50% of fatalities occur on county and city roadways.

Brian asked the members to consider the following homework:

- What data would be helpful for you and for this committee?
- How do we best use data to prioritize our efforts to most effectively reduce the greatest number of life changing crashes?
- How would you like to use the Data Analytics Center provided for in the 2023 Legislative Session?

ACTION: Members should send feedback on these questions to Stephanie Malinoff (completed since meeting).

20 Years of TZD: Then and Now

Kristine Hernandez, Statewide TZD Program Coordinator, gave a presentation on the Toward Zero Deaths (TZD) program. The Minnesota TZD program was modeled after Sweden's Vision Zero program and began in 2003. It was a unique program for Minnesota at the time that coordinated the traffic safety efforts of the Departments of Public Safety, Health, and Transportation. The vision of TZD was "to prevent fatalities and serious injuries on Minnesota's roads to get to zero" and the mission was "to move Minnesota toward zero deaths on our roads using education, enforcement, engineering and emergency medical and trauma services." There are eight regions in Minnesota with regional coordinators and law enforcement and child passenger safety liaisons in each area. The future of TZD will include both traffic safety culture and the Safe System Approach. The TZD program includes an annual conference and regional workshops/roundtables.

Disparities in Motor Vehicle Injury and Fatalities

Catherine Diamond, Minnesota Department of Health, gave a presentation on disparities in road safety. She commented that Minnesota sees low traffic fatalities and is considered one of the healthiest states, but also experiences high racial disparities in premature deaths, high school graduation and homeownership. Specific disparities include the following:

1. Where fatalities are occurring in Minnesota (location)
2. Gender (males are involved in more motor vehicle traffic deaths than women)
3. Older vehicles are involved in more traffic deaths (older vehicle leads to a more serious crash and lower income people are more likely to drive an older vehicle)
4. Race (American Indian are involved in more traffic deaths)
5. Age (people 20-24 years old, and those over 75, are involved in more traffic deaths)

Member Discussion

Members discussed the following: need for more data regarding pedestrians and traffic safety; obtaining additional information from hospitals; needing more data on motorcycle crashes; multiple distraction with new vehicle technology; the possibility to add new data collection (for example, asking on the crash report what was the driver doing right before the crash?); and looking into using technology as a solution such as AI. There was also some discussion around misunderstanding the school bus stop arm laws; urban vs. rural environments; the need for more information on disparities; and the public health

research by the Humphrey Institute
<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2590198223001525>.

Programmatic Updates and Associated Council Activities

Agency staff provided background information, descriptions of Council responsibilities, and recommend next steps for each of the following traffic safety programs.

Safe Road Zones

Shannon Grabow, Department of Public Safety and Ken Johnson, Department of Transportation discussed the 2023 legislation to designate, fund, and enforce Safe Road Zones throughout the state. Upon receipt of a local request, the transportation commissioner, in consultation with the commissioner of public safety, must consider designating a segment of street or highway as a Safe Road Zone. The segment must be evaluated for traffic safety concerns and ACTS must make recommendations to the commissioners on supporting the local authority with implementation. In addition, the commissioner of public safety must coordinate with local law enforcement to determine implementation of enhanced traffic enforcement. The legislature provided \$1,000,000 to MnDOT to fund safe road zones and another \$1,000,000 to DPS to fund enforcement within safe road zones.

Rural High-Risk Roadways

Grabow and Johnson also discussed the new legislation that will provide \$10,000,000 in fiscal year 2024 from the trunk highway fund for roadway design and related improvements that reduce speeds and eliminate intersection interactions on rural high-risk roadways. The commissioner must identify roadways based on crash information and in consultation with the Advisory Council on Traffic Safety under Minnesota Statutes, section 4.076, and local traffic safety partners. This funding is a one-time appropriation and is available until June 30, 2026.

Grabow and Johnson requested formation of a working group to help form the process and selection criteria for both Safe Road Zones and Rural High-Risk Roadways. Volunteers were solicited later in the meeting and noted below.

Discussion from the audience included whether the data shows high risk areas for truck drivers (yes), how private/public entities have worked together in the past (for example, highway 55 and highway 12), whether a safe route to school could be integrated into a safe road zone (yes, as far as staff are aware); and if the funding for these programs is enough to have a measurable impact knowing the costs of countermeasures such as J-turns and roundabouts (MnDOT is likely to evaluate anything that is installed through these programs).

Col. Langer asked if there is any data around safety impacts in cities that reduced speed limits to 25 mph. Members shared anecdotal stories; Malinoff and Nathan Drews referred to a recent report from the University of Minnesota: [Impact of Speed Limit Changes on Urban Streets](#).

Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP)

Whitney Mason, Department of Transportation introduced Tim Burkhardt, Alliant Engineering, who is the consultant working on the 2025-2029 SHSP plan. Ken Johnson gave an overview of the SHSP and reminded the group of the importance of this plan at both a state and local level. It sets statewide direction to reduce traffic fatalities and serious injuries for all roadway users and promotes partnerships to positively impact safety. There will be multiple engagement opportunities and the plan will be completed April 2025.

A request to form a working group to help with the SHSP efforts was made. Volunteers were solicited later in the meeting and noted below.

Council Administration

Working Groups and Subcommittees

Vice Chair Diamond noted that subcommittees must consist of Council members and working groups may include Council members and nonmembers. The Executive Committee is going to take some time to think about best way to structure and organization subcommittees and working groups as we move forward.

Volunteers were solicited to form the Council's first working groups on Safe Road Zones/Rural High-Risk Roadways and the Strategic Highway Safety Plan.

ACTION: Staff will follow up with working group volunteers shortly to discuss next steps.

Safe Road Zones and Rural High-Risk Roadways volunteers: Derek Leuer (Chair), Paul Aasen, Chelaine Crego, Cleven Duncan, Rahya Geisler, Shannon Grabow, Jim Kosluchar, Matt Langer, Mike Nicholas, Becky Putzke, Cheryl Quinn, Michael Ramos, Jeff Tate, Mark Vizecky, Andrew Witter, and Charles Young.

SHSP volunteers: Derek Leuer (Chair), Paul Aasen, Luis Flores, Chris Hartzell, Kristine Hernandez, Pete Hosmer, Lisa Kons, Matt Langer, Annette Larson, Whitney Mason, Kerry Meyer, Cheryl Quinn, and Michael Wojcik.

Operating Procedures

Mike Moilanen made a motion to approve the Advisory Council on Traffic Safety Operating Procedures as sent to members prior to the meeting. Langer seconded the motion. Motion carried. The final version is posted on the [Council website](#).

Public Comment

Public comment was solicited from members and guests. Comments included:

- Offering free drivers education to anyone 18+. All drivers need drivers education no matter what age as well as invest in alternative to driving.
 - Parents/guardians have little to no time to help kids with behind the wheel.
- There is a need for more data to better understand why unlicensed drivers are over represented.
- Recommendation to hear an update on the current Strategic Highway Safety Plan activities at a future meeting. More information about the SHSP, including the Vulnerable Road User Assessment, is available on the [MnDOT website](#).
- Need more work with ATV and snowmobile safety.
- Looking forward to the Teen Impact program in Minnesota.
- MnDOT will be splitting the work of the Statewide TZD Program Coordinator into two roles: one focusing on the advancement of TZD programming and the other focusing on communication, marketing, and branding. Kristine Hernandez will continue work on communication, marketing, and branding efforts and MnDOT will be hiring for someone to focus on the programmatic work. This position will be posted next week.

Adjourn

Chair Hanson thanked everyone for their time, attention, and involvement in traffic safety. Langer made a motion to adjourn, Paul Aasen seconded the motion. Motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 4:01 p.m.

The next Advisory Council on Traffic Safety meeting will be February 14, 2024 from 1:00-4:00pm in the Josie Johnson Community Room at the Humphrey School of Public Affairs on the University of Minnesota campus.

Appendix A: Attendance: Members, Staff, and Invited Guests

Member Name	Organization	Present		Not Present
		In-person	Virtual	
<i>Council Members</i>				
Aasen, Paul	Minnesota Safety Council	X		
Ali-Mumin, Abdirahman	Representing Vulnerable Road Users		X	
Cocking, Aaron	Insurance Federation of Minnesota		X	
Crego, Chelaine	Northstar Bus Lines (representing Minnesota Association for Pupil Transportation)	X		
Cummings, Sheryl	Minnesota Operation Lifesaver	X		
Diamond, Catherine	Minnesota Department of Health, Injury and Violence Prevention Section	X		
Hanson, Mike	Minnesota Department of Public Safety, Office of Traffic Safety		X	
Hartzell, Chris	City of Woodbury (representing League of Minnesota Cities)		X	
Hausladen, John	Minnesota Trucking Association	X		
Hernandez, Kristine	Statewide TZD Program Coordinator	X		
Hosmer, Pete	A+ Driving School (representing Minnesota Driver and Traffic Safety Education Association)	X		
Jacobs, Robert	CentraCare (representing Minnesota Statewide Trauma Advisory Council)	X		
Jeppson, Julie	Anoka County (representing Association of Minnesota Counties)			X
Kosluchar, Jim	City of Fridley (representing City Engineers Association of Minnesota)	X		
LaDoucer, Gene	AAA		X	
Langer, Matt	Minnesota State Patrol, Chief	X		
Larson, Annette	TZD Regional Coordinator	X		
Leidle, Reed	Safety Signs (representing contractors)	X		
Leuer, Derek	Minnesota Department of Transportation, State Traffic Safety Engineer	X (Ken Johnson attended in his place)		

Meyer, Kerry	American Bar Association, State Judicial Outreach Liaison	X		
Moilanen, Michael	Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe (representing tribal governments)	X		
Ostgaard, Gayra	Minnesota Department of Education			X
Putzke, Becky	Law Enforcement Liaison	X		
Quinn, Cheryl	Representing Vulnerable Road Users	X		
Ramos, Michael	Washington County Sheriff's Office (representing Minnesota Sheriff's Association)	X		
Schallberg, Heidi	Met Council (representing metropolitan planning organizations)	X		
Severson, Michele	Council on Disability	X		
Shelton, Kyle	Center for Transportation Studies, University of Minnesota	X		
Sorenson, Brian	Minnesota Department of Transportation, Office of Traffic Engineering	X		
Tate, Jeff	Shakopee Police Department (representing Minnesota Chiefs of Police Association)		X	
Witter, Andrew	Sherburne County (representing Minnesota County Engineers Association)	X		
Wojcik, Michael	Bicycle Alliance of Minnesota	X		
Young, Charles	Minnesota Department of Human Services		X	
<i>Council Staff</i>				
Dolan, Linda	Center for Transportation Studies, University of Minnesota	X		
Malinoff, Stephanie	Center for Transportation Studies, University of Minnesota	X		
Piper, Jackson	Center for Transportation Studies, University of Minnesota	X		
<i>Invited Guests</i>				
Commissioner Nancy Daubenberger	Minnesota Department of Transportation	X		
Commissioner Bob Jacobson	Minnesota Department of Public Safety	X		
Assistant Commissioner Maria Sarabia	Minnesota Department of Health	X		
Ken Johnson	Minnesota Department of Transportation	X		
Shannon Grabow	Minnesota Department of Public Safety	X		
Whitney Mason	Minnesota Department of Transportation	X		