



Draft Positions from the ACTS Policy and Legislative Subcommittee

ACTS 2026 Positions

1. Framework Policy

The Advisory Council on Traffic Safety endorses and supports the Minnesota Strategic Highway Safety Plan along with the companion Triennial Highway Safety Plan as the framework for the focus areas, strategies and tactics to address our state's most pressing traffic safety needs.

The Advisory Council recommends the state provide the necessary authorities, resources and staff to fully implement the plan, including ongoing funding for regional and local traffic safety efforts like Safe Road Zones and county-based traffic safety coalitions.

The Advisory Council believes the plan was developed with sufficient feedback, reflects sound transportation policy including the safe systems approach, recognizes the range of roadway users and their vulnerabilities, and provides a linkage between existing and new additional traffic safety efforts.

2. 2026 Critical Needs

A. Speed Reduction - Speed makes everything worse and speeds on Minnesota roads are too high leading to more fatalities and injuries for drivers, passengers and other people in the roadway.

The Advisory Council recommends the state pursue the following policy and funding strategies to reduce excessive speeds on Minnesota roads:

i. Ensure sufficient law enforcement grant funding is available to increase speed enforcement.

Law enforcement has increased traffic enforcement over the past two years. Much of this increased activity was funded through state grants. An enforcement presence reduces speeding. Preliminary fatalities are down in 2025. Support is needed to continue this trend.

- ii. Support a progressive penalty structure that includes increased fines, penalties, required education and other control measures like intelligent speed assist for repeat and excessive speed offenders.

Elements of a progressive penalty structure include:

- A progressive fine structure that dramatically steps up for repeat offenses and/or speeding more than 20 miles per hour over the posted speed.
- Mandatory defensive driver education for third time offenders.
- Mandatory driver's license revocation or installation and use of intelligent speed assist for four-time offenders or driving more than 100 miles per hour.

- iii. Increased focus on and funding for roadway calming with emphasis on low cost, rapid deployment, functional roadway features like raised crosswalks/speed tables, reduced lane widths, and radar-feedback devices.

These measures are more readily added to existing roadways, reduce speeds – particularly in urban areas, and help prevent intersection run-throughs.

- iv. Increased focus on measures to prevent or reduce the severity of lane-departure crashes like cable median barriers and rumble (murmur) strips.

These measures reduce the frequency and impact of roadway crashes often related to excessive speed, distraction or fatigue.

- B. Distraction - Modify the Criminal Vehicular Homicide and Criminal Vehicular Operation statutes to specifically include “use of an electronic device while driving.”

Distraction, most frequently caused by an electronic device, remains a serious contributing factor to severe crashes. Statutes addressing penalties for causing severe injuries or death need to include distraction as a factor.

- C. Impairment – Fully authorize the use of roadside oral fluid testing as a preliminary screen for suspected drug impaired driving.

- D. Vulnerable Roadway Users

- i. Clarify the school bus stop arm language to address the need for vehicles to stop while the stop arm is being deployed.

There is a need to clarify what is required of vehicle operators to ensure vehicles do not pass or move around school buses while the stop arm is being deployed, an action which immediately precedes students moving off the buses into the roadway.

- ii. Address the fatal and serious injury crash risks of any allowed use of the shoulder of paved highways by ATV/UTVs.

These vehicles are not designed for roadway use and increased conflict with other motorized roadworthy vehicles has a significant potential to increase life changing crashes on Minnesota highways.