



**CALIFORNIA  
SAFE ROADS**

# THE TRAFFIC SAFETY NAVIGATOR

**December 2020**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The Traffic Safety Navigator is the 2020–2024 California Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP) e-newsletter. The newsletter provides SHSP updates along with insight into best practices for implementing strategies that reduce traffic fatalities and serious injuries on California's roadways.

## **REFLECTING ON PROGRESS THIS HOLIDAY SEASON**

On behalf of the SHSP Steering Committee, we want to wish you all a happy and safe holiday season. As we look ahead to the new year, it's important to take a moment and reflect on the achievements of our Challenge Area Teams. Over the summer, the SHSP update process evolved to provide a bolder, more focused approach making the SHSP more reflective of new thoughts and safety strategies. Our sixteen Challenge Area Teams have developed more than 40 strategic action items and have been instrumental in making progress towards implementation. Acknowledging the invaluable expertise and patience they have exhibited throughout the year, we truly appreciate their commitment to ensuring safety on all public roads in California.

# SHSP PIVOT

In summer 2020, state transportation leaders recognized a bolder and more focused approach was necessary to combat the rise in fatalities and serious injuries that have occurred on California roadways since 2010. Four Guiding Principles have been incorporated into the SHSP update process to further improve safety:

## 1. Integrate Equity

The SHSP will formally integrate equity into all aspects of the plan to address institutional and systemic bias. This will ensure that the processes, strategies and outcomes of the SHSP serve all, but particularly vulnerable and traditionally underserved populations.

## 2. Double Down on What Works

The SHSP focuses on implementing proven safety countermeasures that are highly effective in reducing fatalities. These are highlighted in technical resources from the Federal Highway Administration's [Proven Safety Countermeasures](#) as well as the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's [Countermeasures That Work](#).

## 3. Accelerate Advanced Technology

As technology development rapidly increases, the SHSP encourages advanced technology in and on our roadways by forming new partnerships with technology providers, health and safety groups, manufacturers and government partners to prioritize safety.

## 4. Implement a Safe System Approach

The Safe System Approach aims to eliminate fatal and serious injuries for all road users through a holistic view of the roadway system. The SHSP embraces the following six principles of this approach, which place additional responsibility on agencies to account for human error within the design and operations of our roadways:

- **Death or serious injury is unacceptable**

While no crashes are desirable, the Safe System Approach prioritizes crashes that result in death and serious injuries since no one should experience either when using the transportation system.

- **Humans make mistakes**

People will inevitably make mistakes that can lead to crashes, but the transportation system can be designed and operated to accommodate human mistakes and injury tolerances to avoid fatalities and serious injuries.

- **Humans are vulnerable**

People have limits for tolerating crash forces before fatality and serious injury occurs; therefore, it is critical to design and operate a transportation system that is human-centric and accommodates human vulnerabilities.

- **Systems Approach**

All stakeholders (transportation system users and managers, vehicle manufacturers, etc.) must ensure that crashes don't lead to fatal or serious injuries.

- **Redundancy is crucial**

Reducing risks requires that all parts of the transportation system are strengthened so that if one part fails, the other parts still protect people.

- **Safety is proactive, not reactive**

Proactive tools should be used to identify and mitigate latent risks in the transportation system rather than waiting for crashes to occur and reacting afterwards.

## HIGH PRIORITY AREAS

The following areas have been identified as high priorities because they represent the greatest opportunity to reduce fatalities and serious injuries across the state:



Lane Departures



Impaired Driving



Aggressive Driving/Speed Management



Pedestrians and Bicyclists



Intersections

[Learn More](#)

## CALTRANS CREATES NEW DIVISION OF SAFETY PROGRAMS

On May 19, 2020, Caltrans demonstrated its commitment to protecting the safety of all road users by forming a new Division of Safety Programs, headed by Rachel Carpenter, Chief Safety Officer. Since then, Caltrans has embarked on developing a holistic safety program that focuses on the SHSP's four Guiding Principles. Under Carpenter's direction, staff in the newly established Employee Safety Program Coordinator and Safety Education Coordinator positions will provide statewide leadership and coordinate safety efforts throughout Caltrans and with its external partners.

This new division elevates Caltrans' bold and ambitious pursuit of its vision for zero fatalities and serious injuries on California's roads.

[Learn More](#)

# INTRODUCING CALTRANS DIRECTOR TOKS OMISHAKIN

Toks Omishakin was appointed the 33rd Director of the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) by Governor Gavin Newsom and sworn in October 2019. As Director, he manages a \$15 billion budget and nearly 21,000 employees. He came to Caltrans following eight years with the Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT).

Director Omishakin's transportation vision for California features a safe, sustainable, and multimodal transportation system that builds on strong local partnerships. Transformative innovation will also be needed to achieve zero traffic-related deaths and reduce GHGs by 40% by 2030. He encourages a Caltrans culture of innovation and taking intelligent risks in which all local communities are heard and share in the benefits of Caltrans projects.

Omishakin is completing a Ph.D. in engineering management from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville; has a master's degree in urban and regional planning from Jackson State University; and a bachelor of arts in engineering technology from Mississippi Valley State University. Born in Knoxville, Tennessee, Director Omishakin and his wife have two children.

## GET INVOLVED



### WE CAN'T DO IT WITHOUT YOU

The SHSP is just the start. The 5 Es of traffic safety need to work together to implement the strategies developed in the SHSP. Involvement in an SHSP Challenge Area Team is a direct way to influence countermeasures selected to improve safety. Volunteers are needed for all challenge areas.

[Get Involved](#)



### SHARE YOUR STORIES

We want to know about your successful implementation of traffic safety countermeasures! We will be highlighting success stories on the SHSP website and in future newsletters.

[Share your Story](#)



### SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE TOPICS?

We want to know what topics are of interest to California! Complete our simple feedback form to provide suggestions on future newsletter topics.

[Submit Feedback](#)

To stay up-to-date on SHSP news, subscribe [HERE](#).

## WHAT IS THE SHSP?

The California Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP) is a comprehensive, statewide transportation safety plan which provides a framework for reducing fatalities and serious injuries across all travel modes and on all public roads. Started in 2005, the SHSP is updated regularly to ensure continued progress and to meet changing safety needs. Currently, over 580 safety stakeholders from over 230 public and private agencies and organizations work together on this effort under the guidance of the SHSP Executive Leadership and SHSP Steering Committee. The SHSP addresses the 5 Es of traffic safety: Engineering, Enforcement, Education, Emergency Response, and Emerging Technologies. In response to a desire for bolder, inclusive actions, the 2020–2024 SHSP includes a new set of guiding principles to further improve safety on California Roadways.



### VISION

Safe public roads  
across California



### MISSION

Ensure safety for  
all modes of travel  
on California's  
public roads



### GOAL

Toward Zero  
Fatalities and  
Serious Injuries

[Learn More](#)

## MORE INFORMATION

For more information about the California SHSP, please visit  
<https://dot.ca.gov/programs/safety-programs/shsp>

Questions? Comments? Email to [SHSP@dot.ca.gov](mailto:SHSP@dot.ca.gov)