Making Walking Safer for Arizonans
by Kohinoor Kar and Mike Cynecki

An FHWA focus State speaks out about enhancing pedestrian safety through various innovations, including improved midblock crossings on multilane roads.

Pedestrian safety is a vital concern to State and local transportation agencies because of the severity of vehicle crashes that involve walkers. In Arizona, pedestrian-vehicle collisions comprise only 1 to 2 percent of total traffic crashes, whereas 13 to 20 percent of the traffic fatalities in recent years were pedestrians.

Achieving safe conditions for pedestrians (and eliminating crashes involving them) is especially challenging in urban and suburban areas with multilane roads and high speeds. Nationally, pedestrian fatalities are far more common in urban localities than in rural areas, often representing 25 to 40 percent of the total traffic fatalities.

One of the most significant challenges is improving the safety of midblock crossings on multilane roads. Crossings on roads with more than one lane in each direction involve a multiple-threat condition, where a motorist stopped for a crossing pedestrian creates a visual screen, blocking the view of motorists in adjacent lanes.

Although concern for pedestrian safety is paramount, almost equally important is a desire to make communities more walkable to promote healthy habits among residents and to help reverse the Nation's rising
obesity trend. Walking is the most universal form of transportation, and walkable neighborhoods can add to a metropolitan area's economic vitality because of commercial activity by pedestrians, including shopping, dining, banking, job access, etc. Moreover, walking is environmentally friendly because it eliminates the need to use energy produced by fossil fuels.

In 2003, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) identified Arizona as 1 of 13 pedestrian focus States and Phoenix as 1 of 5 focus cities. FHWA listed as focus States those with 150 or more pedestrian fatalities per year and a pedestrian fatality rate above the national average rate of 2.5 per 100,000 population. Focus cities were those with the highest total pedestrian fatalities. Accordingly, FHWA established a strategy to develop and implement pedestrian safety action plans in the focus States. (See "Spotlight on Pedestrian Safety" in the January/February 2012 issue of Public Roads and "Focusing on Pedestrian Safety" in the May/June 2008 issue.)

In 2007, after reviewing more current crash data, FHWA revisited its criteria for identifying focus States and cities. Four cities stayed on the list at that time: Chicago, IL; Los Angeles, CA; New York, NY; and Phoenix, AZ. Later, Washington, DC, was added and Detroit, MI, dropped off and then came back on again in 2011 when FHWA significantly modified the criteria for identifying focus cities and States.

The 2011 criteria for cities included having an average of 20 or more pedestrian fatalities per year over a 3-year period or a pedestrian fatality rate higher than 2.33 per 100,000 population. Focus States became those that contain a focus city. As a result, FHWA identified several additional focus cities and designated their States as focus States. Phoenix and Arizona stayed on the list because Phoenix continued to experience high pedestrian fatalities, primarily due to a large number of wide, high-speed roadways. Although those roads carry large volumes of traffic efficiently, they are not pedestrian-friendly, and those conditions cannot be easily changed.
The Arizona Response

The Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) responded to its FHWA designation as a focus State with the formation of a statewide pedestrian safety group including representatives from Federal, State, regional, and local agencies to discuss the issues and develop action plans. With support from FHWA, ADOT held four workshops related to pedestrian safety -- one in Flagstaff, two in Phoenix, and one in Tucson between 2006 and 2007. Then in April 2007, ADOT developed an Arizona-specific supplement to the FHWA guide, How to Develop a Pedestrian Safety Action Plan (FHWA-SA-05-12).

View the entire article at:

http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/publications/publicroads/12septoct/04.cfm
ADOT is partnering with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) on a new training course everyone should attend. “Design and Construction of ADA Facilities” is an interactive, 1-day course with instructors from both ADOT and FHWA that educates participants on compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Agencies that are involved in the design and construction of highways, roads, streets and other elements of the public right-of-way (ROW) should be trained on the legal and technical requirements for implementing Federal accessibility regulations and other requirements applied to the public ROW. District Engineers, Group Managers, Standards Engineers, Area Engineers, Designers, Plan Reviewers, Resident Engineers, Traffic Engineers, Project Managers, Contractors, Consultants, Construction Inspectors, and Maintenance Supervisors are encouraged to attend. There has been an increase in ADA complaints and lawsuits nationwide associated with transportation facilities. This class also addresses recent changes in the Public Right of Way Accessibility Guide (PROWAG).

Subjects covered in the training include: Laws and Regulations, Transition Plan and other agency requirements, Curb Ramps, Detectable Warnings and Truncated Domes, Pedestrian Crossings, Accessible Pedestrian Signals, Street Furniture, On-street Parking, Maintenance and Work Zones. In addition, a field exercise is included in the training (rain or shine) that gives participants hands-on experience from the mobility and vision impaired perspective by trying out wheelchairs and using white canes for the blind.

Feedback from participants describes this new ADA course as “informative”, “helpful”, “appreciative”, and “excellent”. Participants praise the hands-on field exercise as very valuable and “eye-opening”. Keep a look out for training dates now being scheduled across Arizona for 2013. Sign up through ADOT’s ITD Technical Training Program or LTAP to register.
Congratulations to the Fourth Quarter Road Scholar Graduates!

Congratulations to the following people for achieving satisfactory completion of Road Scholar Levels I. Level I consists of a total of 80 hours of class time. The AZ LTAP staff wishes to thank everyone for their hard work and efforts. Please continue to look out for new training in the near future or let us know if you are in need of additional training.

For more information on the Road Scholar program, please visit: http://www.azltap.org/About%20LTAP/Road%20Scholar%20web.pdf

2012- 4th Quarter RS Graduates

**Level I**
*Salt River Pima Maricopa Indian Community*
Carl Waldmann  
Vernon Soos Sr.  
Ernesto Ruiz  
Jennifer Gonzalez  
Matilda Dougi  
Allison Betone

*Yavapai County*
Jason James
AZ LTAP Calendar of Events
http://www.azltap.org/Calendar/calendar.html

AZ LTAP Scheduled Training:

Maintenance Math; November 19, 2012- Yuma
Construction Maintenance Safety; November 20, 2012- Yuma
BWTC/Flagger; December 4, 2012- Globe
Maintenance Math; January 16, 2013- Flagstaff
Intro to Survey & Grade Checking; January 16, 2013- Apache Junction

National Events:

December 2012 - National Drunk & Drugged Driving Prevention Month
www.stopimpaireddriving.org

December 12, 2012- January 1, 2013- Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over-National Crack down
www.stopimpaireddriving.org
Local Government Section

The Local Government Section reviews and processes or approves all project documents and reports submitted by local governments. This Section also reviews and gives ADOT approval to Design Concept Reports, Design Memorandums, Drainage Reports and other engineering-related documents as may be appropriate. The project required environmental analysis is reviewed by the Environmental Planner and approval is obtained from the Environmental Planning Group.

The function of the Local Government Section is to provide service to Counties, Cities, Towns and Tribal Governments in the area of programming, technical planning, scheduling, engineering expertise, project documents & construction plans reviews/approvals, coordination with FHWA, appropriate ADOT groups/sections, and provide project development guidelines. The Local Government Section is a part of the Statewide Project Management Group.

To find out more about the Local Government Section, visit
http://www.azdot.gov/highways/localgov/index.asp

http://www.azdot.gov/recovery/local_government_guidance.asp


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