

BUILDING A COALITION OF LOCAL, REGIONAL, STATE, AND FEDERAL STAKEHOLDERS TO IMPROVE REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY

DESTINATION: SAFE

Objective

Destination: Safe is a coalition of local, regional, state, and Federal stakeholders within the bistate Kansas City area working to improve regional transportation system safety. The goals of the coalition are to:

- Establish the region's transportation safety priorities;
- Coordinate the region's safety planning activities;
- Develop and implement regional strategies to improve transportation system safety; and
- Assist the implementation of statewide safety efforts in Kansas and Missouri into action at the local level.

The Mid-America Regional Council (MARC), the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the greater Kansas City area, was instrumental in establishing *Destination: Safe* and continues to provide key support to the coalition.

Destination: Safe expands beyond MARC's boundaries and includes Johnson, Leavenworth, and Wyandotte counties in Kansas and Cass, Clay, Henry, Lafayette, Jackson, Johnson, Platte, and Ray counties in Missouri.

Approach

In 2003, the region's Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) *Transportation Outlook 2030* established safety as one of four regional transportation goals. This reflected an increased emphasis on safety at the local level. During this same time, Missouri was in the process of developing its Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP) titled, *Missouri's Blueprint for Safer Roadways*, while Kansas currently is developing its SHSP. With safety elevated in the LRTP and statewide safety efforts occurring in Kansas and Missouri, MARC aligned its initiatives with those of both states and organized a coalition of local and regional stakeholders to coordinate safety efforts at the regional level. The coalition is known as *Destination: Safe*.

Destination: Safe is co-chaired by officers from the Missouri State Highway Patrol (MHSP) and the Kansas Highway Patrol (KHP) and includes members of various law enforcement agencies, engineers, safety advocates, public health officials, trauma room nurses, transit coordinators, public works managers, emergency service providers, bicycle/pedestrian advocates, local officials, planners, and others. The Coalition is developing a regional safety plan and guiding regional safety efforts.

Leadership meetings are held bimonthly and provide a forum for local safety stakeholders to discuss transportation system safety and influence regional safety priorities. Ad hoc working committees meet on an as-needed basis.

Current committees are focused on child passenger safety, law enforcement, and public information. All *Destination: Safe* meetings are open to the public.

MARC, a member of the Coalition, provides meeting facilities, services, and expertise in multijurisdictional coordination, communication, and planning to actively support *Destination: Safe* and its initiatives.

Regional Safety Plan

Destination: Safe is guiding the development of a regional transportation safety plan. An early version of this plan, or blueprint, is contained in the Safety Element of the

Figure 1. 2006 *Destination: Safe* Coalition Meeting



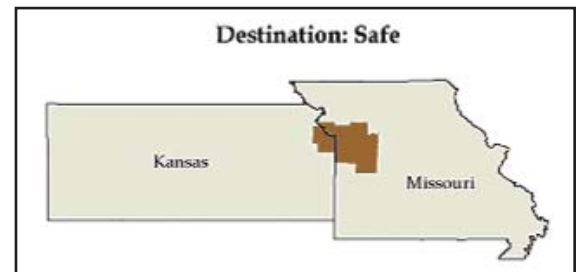
region's LRTP, Transportation Outlook 2030 Update. In 2006, the Coalition will ask to amend Transportation Outlook 2030 Update to incorporate the finalized regional safety blueprint by reference.

While the process of updating the regional safety plan is under discussion by the Coalition, current thoughts are that the plan will be reviewed and updated on a biannual basis to coincide with alternating updates of the region's LRTP.

Priority Issues

The *Destination: Safe* coalition has identified six priority areas:

1. Unbelted motorists;
2. Impaired drivers;
3. Aggressive drivers;
4. Pedestrians;
5. Youth and young adults; and
6. Transportation safety data.



In cooperation with the “Missouri Arrive Alive” and “Kansas Safer Driving, Safer Roads” campaigns, *Destination: Safe* coordinates media outreach efforts in the region consisting of billboard and public service announcements promoting safe driving behaviors, including the use of safety belts.

Two targeted enforcement campaigns were made with the support of the Coalition – an impaired driving campaign in October 2005 and an aggressive driving campaign in April 2006. These campaigns are in addition to normal law enforcement efforts and national campaigns like “Click It or Ticket,” “You Drink You Drive You Lose,” etc. The MSHP also maintains an impaired driving simulation vehicle for use in area school programs. MSHP allows this vehicle to be loaned to other local jurisdictions, including those in Kansas provided they are trained in its use.

An enforcement initiative to promote pedestrian safety currently is being researched.

Supporting strategies for the recently added priority areas – youth and young adults and transportation safety data – have been identified with some strategies concerning collaboration and coordination already being implemented. One strategy targeted at improving crash data has included MARC's participation in the Traffic Records Coordinating Committees in Kansas and Missouri.

The Coalition is working to develop a prioritized list of specific projects that, when completed, will improve safety in the region. This predefined list of projects will then be implemented as funding is identified and made available. Currently, project lists of this nature are primarily determined by district engineers and limited to infrastructure. The Coalition is developing a process for the public to also submit safety projects. In this way, a broader list of projects will be identified and a wider range of stakeholders will be involved, although it might appear to be a capacity increase. Judgments will have to be made about what is and is not consistent with the adopted regional growth policies.

Resources

Destination: Safe is a coalition of over 45 organizations with access to a broad range of expertise from health care and emergency medical services, to law enforcement, planning, engineering, and education. Funding for the Coalition's activities, as well as funding for implementing safety projects, is complicated by the web of jurisdictions involved.

The Missouri Department of Transportation (MoDOT) has provided \$2 million statewide to implement specific safety strategies. This funding is divided among Missouri's 10 districts. *Destination: Safe* is helping direct the use of District 4's (Kansas City region) funding allocation. The Coalition is continually working with its member jurisdictions to create or identify additional funding sources.

As an indication of the level of cooperation among *Destination: Safe* members, large agencies (Missouri State Highway Patrol, Kansas Highway Patrol, Kansas City, Missouri, Police Department, etc.) have funded some of their *Destination: Safe* projects internally, allowing state funding grants to be used by smaller jurisdictions that have fewer resources.

Outcome

The primary outputs of *Destination: Safe* are increased coordination and collaboration among member organizations and increased public involvement in transportation safety.

Performance Measures

Systematic performance measures for the Coalition as a whole and for specific projects have not generally been identified. A fatality goal for the region has been set and participating enforcement agencies have tracked citations during the two recently conducted special enforcement campaigns.

Support from local officials and local decision-makers make *Destination: Safe* possible and keep safety a high priority in the region.

Figure 2. Impaired Driving Simulation Vehicle

