



Primer on the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP)



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Definitions

The following terms are used in this report:

DOT	Department of Transportation
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
HSIP	Highway Safety Improvement Program
MAP-21	Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21 st Century
MPO	Metropolitan Planning Organization
NPS	National Park Service
SHSP	Strategic Highway Safety Plan
TIP	Transportation Improvement Plan

Introduction

Moving visitors safely is a core concern of the National Park Service (NPS). The vast majority of visitors access park units by traveling on public roads (NPS-owned or otherwise), and units and regions are major roadway safety stakeholders. Needless to say, ensuring that the roads leading to and within park units are safe for the traveling public is important.

The Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) is a Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) program that funds State safety projects. States may use HSIP funds for infrastructure improvements that address safety concerns (e.g., intersection design, pedestrian crossings, retrofits to reduce wildlife/vehicle collisions) and for non-infrastructure projects (e.g., safety planning, data collection, enforcement and emergency services programs). The HSIP and associated Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP) development processes are prime opportunities for the National Park Service to highlight and build awareness of safety issues within or leading to NPS units, and to engage State DOTs in collaborative and mutually beneficial efforts to address them.

Background

HSIP is a core Federal-aid program funded through the FHWA and administered by State Departments of Transportation (DOTs). The program is a major funding source for addressing safety on the nation's public roads, including non-State owned public roads.

HSIP seeks to achieve a major reduction in traffic fatalities and serious injuries on all public roads through a data-driven, performance-based approach. It was first authorized in 2005 under the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient, Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) and subsequently extended under Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21). For Fiscal Year 2014, HSIP's estimated funding level was \$2.41 billion.

MAP-21 not only reauthorized HSIP, but also required the U.S. Department of Transportation (US DOT) to establish national safety performance measures on all public roads, regardless of ownership. Because these new performance measures will cover all public roads, States and Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) may soon have an additional incentive to consider partnerships with NPS units and regions. States may be particularly interested in partnering with NPS units and regions if they can contribute financially to local match requirements. The share of funding from HSIP for a typical project is 90 percent, with a 10 percent local match. NPS Park Base Operations funds and Federal Lands Transportation Program (FLTP) funds are eligible to count towards the local match for HSIP projects.

* <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/tpm/rule/safetyfactsheet.pdf>

Key Takeaways

- Participate in the HSIP and SHSP development and update processes. As owners and operators of public roads, NPS units and regions are key highway safety stakeholders.
- Identify infrastructure and non-infrastructure projects that improve highway safety and are eligible for HSIP funding.
- Become familiar with the SHSP to identify opportunities for involvement and alignment with State safety goals.
- Seek to build long-term, collaborative relationships with local cities, counties, and towns that may lead to joint project proposals and funding.



HSIP funding is programmed within a State based on the priorities established in the SHSP. An SHSP identifies a State's key safety needs and guides investment decisions towards strategies and countermeasures with the most potential to save lives and prevent injuries. States determine how to allocate HSIP apportionments based on the safety needs outlined in the SHSP.

Strategic Highway Safety Plan

To begin engaging States on potential HSIP partnerships, park units and regions should first gain a better understanding of State highway safety goals by reviewing SHSPs and becoming an active participant in SHSP updates. These plans identify highway safety problems and opportunities using a data-driven, performance-based approach, which could include NPS accident and injury data if NPS units or regions provide information to the State. The plans lead to a program of infrastructure or non-infrastructure activities to reduce identified safety problems. According to FHWA SHSP MAP-21 interim guidance:

The SHSP is a State's comprehensive transportation safety plan, based on safety data, developed after consultation with a broad range of safety stakeholders and approved by the Governor of the State or a responsible State agency.

The SHSP must demonstrate the following features:

- **A Consultative Approach** including all major safety stakeholders
- **Coordination** with other statewide and metropolitan transportation plans
- **Data Driven Problem Identification**
- **Consideration of Additional Safety Factors** such as road safety audits and locations of fatalities and serious injuries
- **A Performance-Based Approach** including goals and measurable objectives
- **Use of Effective Strategies and Countermeasures** proven to reduce or eliminate safety issues

As owners and operators of public roads, NPS units and regions are major transportation stakeholders and should be involved in the SHSP development process. HSIP authorizing legislation specifically acknowledges the inclusion of other Federal, State, local, and Tribal organizations as safety stakeholders in the development and updating of a SHSP (23 U.S.C. § 148). FHWA encourages safety stakeholders, such as NPS park units and regional transportation staff, to join SHSP committees, working groups, or emphasis area teams to assist in determining the goals and objectives of the plan.[†] By being an active participant in the State safety planning process, units and regions can communicate the benefits of potential safety investments on NPS roads and adjacent non-NPS facilities that provide access to visitors. Active engagement in State planning processes may lead to partnership and funding opportunities.

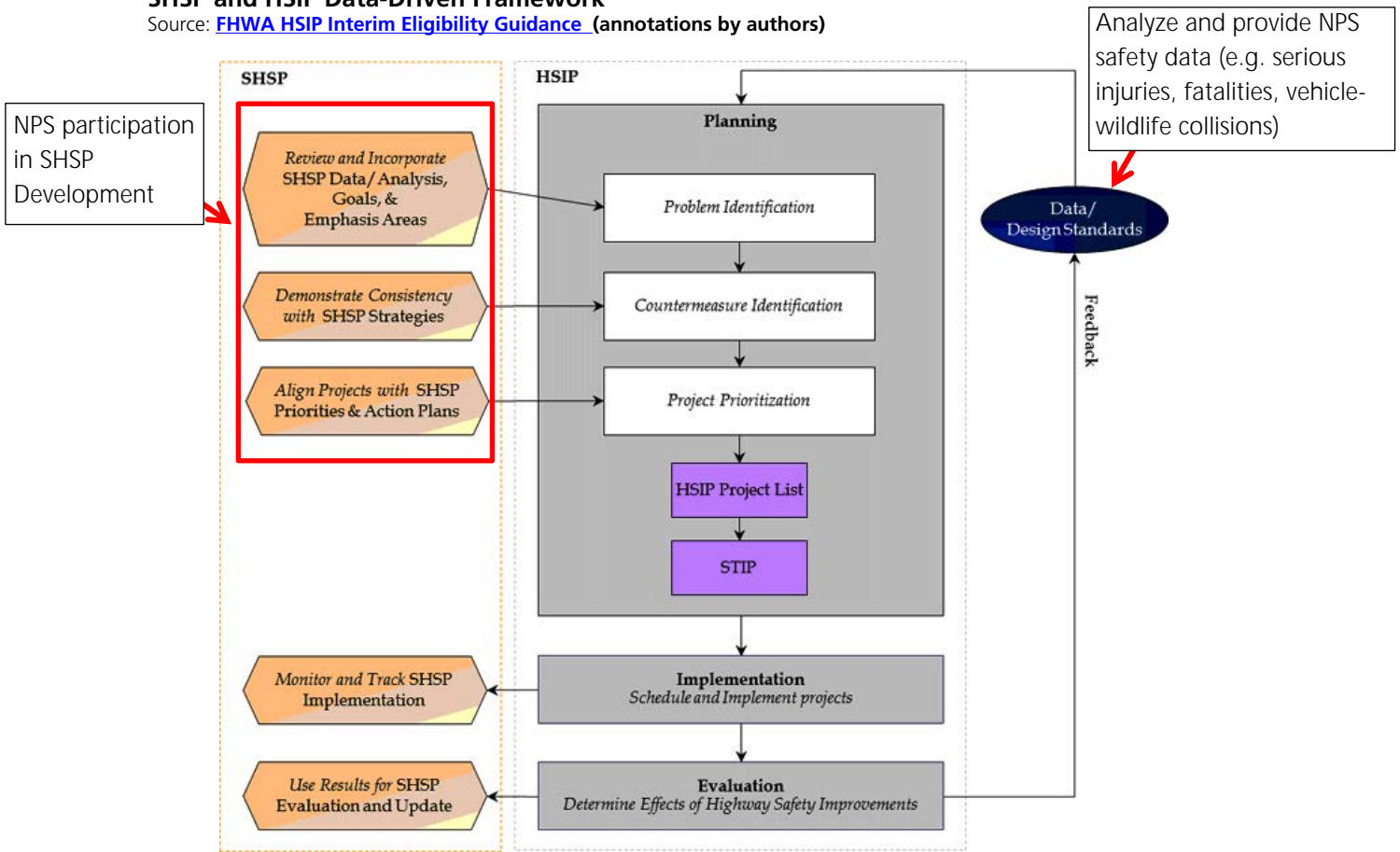
^{*} <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/map21/guidance/guideshsp.cfm>

[†] [FHWA SHSP Get Involved Flyer](#)

Data-Driven and Performance-Based Process

Figure 1 illustrates the ways in which data drives the prioritization and programming of highway safety improvement projects in the SHSP and HSIP. Projects are identified and assessed based on crash experience, crash potential, crash rate, and other important data elements.

Figure 1
SHSP and HSIP Data-Driven Framework
 Source: [FHWA HSIP Interim Eligibility Guidance](#) (annotations by authors)



Improvements to roads which lead to NPS units (NPS-owned or otherwise) that experience safety issues can help States achieve safety performance targets which apply to all public roads regardless of ownership or functional class. Through active coordination and engagement with local agencies, NPS units can bring safety data and potential safety projects to the attention of State DOT funders for consideration. There is significant potential for the National Park Service to work together with these organizations to develop projects that will lead to mutual benefits, and which could be jointly-funded through HSIP, National Park Service funds, and State or local sources.

Eligible Projects

State criteria for funding highway safety improvement projects may vary with State safety needs and priorities. Generally, for a project to be funded under HSIP it must improve a hazardous road location or feature, or address an identified highway safety problem. All projects must be consistent with the State's SHSP goals and objectives. Most HSIP-funded projects will be traditional infrastructure enhancements, but less common non-infrastructure projects may also be funded. HSIP also includes a special emphasis on retro-reflectivity projects.

Infrastructure Project Examples

An infrastructure project is anything that affects the basic roadway infrastructure. The following highway safety improvement project categories may be most relevant to park units:

- Adding or retrofitting structures or other measures to eliminate or reduce crashes involving vehicles and wildlife
- Elimination of a roadside hazard or obstacle
- Improvement for pedestrian and bicycle safety
- Intersection safety improvement
- Improvement of highway signage and pavement markings

Non-Infrastructure Project Examples

HSIP funds can support the implementation of existing or new non-infrastructure safety improvement activities. Non-infrastructure projects are eligible and subject to the same general Federal-aid requirements as infrastructure projects, but they have been less common historically. Some examples of relevant project categories are listed below:

- Transportation safety planning
- Safety data collection
- Conducting road safety audits
- Development and/or implementation of education, enforcement, or emergency medical services highway safety programs

Projects to Maintain Minimum Retro-Reflectivity

Projects that help maintain minimum levels of retro-reflectivity of traffic signs and pavement markings may be funded through HSIP even if they are not included in the SHSP. Retro-reflectivity improvements may be included as part of a larger HSIP project. FHWA encourages the use of other Federal-aid fund programs for system wide replacement projects rather than isolated signage issues.

Engagement

Park units and regions that wish to engage with State DOTs on highway safety issues should consider the following steps:

- Contact Jim Evans in the NPS Transportation Branch and your Regional Transportation Coordinator for support.
- Identify opportunities for involvement and alignment with State safety goal areas by becoming familiar with the current SHSP.
- Monitor the SHSP update cycle by reaching out to local, regional, and State partners, and by participating in the update process. Build awareness of potential NPS safety needs through data sharing and communication of regional transportation safety benefits.
- Seek to build long-term, collaborative relationships with local cities, counties, and towns that may lead to joint project proposals and funding.

Resources

[FHWA HSIP Web Page](#)

[FHWA HSIP Guidance](#)

[FHWA HSIP Apportionment Fact Sheet](#)

[FHWA HSIP Interim Eligibility Guidance](#)

[FHWA SHSP Web Page](#)

[FHWA SHSP Interim Guidance](#)

[FHWA SHSP Get Involved Flyer](#)

[FHWA Safety Notice of Proposed Rulemaking Factsheet](#)

[Resources for Non-Infrastructure HSIP Project Requirements](#)

[SHSP Community of Practice](#)

[23 U.S. Code 148 Highway Safety Improvement Program](#)

Links to SHSPs by State *

Alabama [HTML]	Kentucky [PDF]	North Dakota [PDF]
Alaska [HTML]	Louisiana [HTML]	Ohio [HTML]
Arizona [HTML]	Maine [HTML, PDF]	Oklahoma [HTML]
Arkansas [HTML]	Maryland [HTML]	Oregon [HTML]
California [HTML]	Massachusetts [HTML]	Pennsylvania [PDF]
Colorado [HTML]	Michigan [PDF]	Rhode Island [PDF]
Connecticut [HTML]	Minnesota [HTML]	South Carolina [HTML]
Delaware [PDF]	Mississippi [HTML]	South Dakota [PDF]
District of Columbia [PDF]	Missouri [HTML]	Tennessee [HTML]
Florida [HTML]	Montana [HTML]	Texas [PDF]
Georgia [PDF]	Nebraska [HTML]	Utah [HTML]
Hawaii [HTML]	Nevada [HTML]	Vermont [HTML]
Idaho [HTML]	New Hampshire [PDF]	Virginia [HTML]
Illinois [HTML]	New Jersey [HTML]	Washington [HTML]
Indiana [PDF]	New Mexico [PDF]	West Virginia [PDF]
Iowa [HTML]	New York [HTML]	Wisconsin [HTML]
Kansas [HTML]	North Carolina [HTML, PDF]	

*Because States update their SHSPs, these links are subject to change fairly frequently. Check here for the most up to date information: http://www.safety.fhwa.dot.gov/hsip/shsp/state_links.cfm

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