



Pedestrian Safety: a Priority for New Jersey

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State of New Jersey

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Pedestrian Safety: a Priority for New Jersey

INTRODUCTION

New Jersey's Transportation Trust Fund ensures that we have a robust capital program that spurs economic growth while improving mobility and safety. This Administration's plan to reform, replenish and grow the Transportation Trust Fund is a testament to the high value we assign to achieving these goals. Over the next five years, the State will spend over \$16 billion on transportation projects that will improve the quality of life and safety of our residents.

Our priority is not only to ensure the safety of motorists and mass transit riders, but pedestrians as well. In a typical year, approximately 150 pedestrians lose their lives statewide. For each pedestrian fatality, two more are severely injured. Extensive research has shown that New Jersey follows the national pattern in which most pedestrian fatalities occur in urban or dense suburban areas. A majority of these accidents occur under conditions of darkness and away from intersections. Regardless of where these accidents happen, these incidents of pedestrian fatalities and injuries are simply unacceptable.

Until recently, the State lacked reliable information on pedestrian crash patterns for the state as a whole. Most previous analyses focused only on crash frequency and severity by location, rather than the patterns of behavior, crash circumstances or the demographic characteristics of the pedestrians and drivers involved. Today we have reporting procedures under way and new data management systems in place. The State is now in a position to monitor and map statewide pedestrian safety patterns and use this information as a basis for improving safety, increasing enforcement and developing pedestrian friendly programs.

The New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT), the Attorney General and the Motor Vehicle Commission (MVC) are investing in a variety of programs to improve pedestrian conditions, including facility improvements, education and enforcement efforts, planning and technical guidance. While the State has made progress, the risk to pedestrians in New Jersey remains too great. We must have a comprehensive statewide pedestrian safety initiative with a goal towards significantly reducing pedestrian accidents.

Fundamental to reducing pedestrian safety accidents in New Jersey is a change in driver behavior, incorporation of safety improvements on our state and local roads and a campaign to raise pedestrian safety awareness. The pedestrian safety initiative we are proposing incorporates comprehensive enforcement, engineering and education solutions.



SAFETY THROUGH ENGINEERING

Initiate Pedestrian Safety Improvements: \$50 million*

NJDOT will create a five-year fund to provide for pedestrian safety projects and improvements. This money will be used for intersection and sidewalk safety improvements and traffic calming measures. It will also fund new and high technology solutions to improve pedestrian accommodations such as overhead crosswalk illumination and high visibility crosswalk paint.

Roll out Safe Routes to School Program: \$15 million*

NJDOT has been a leader in developing this statewide program. This program provides funds to local governments to create safer walkways, bikeways and street crossings near schools. It also increases pedestrian safety awareness among motorists and school children.

Establish Pedestrian Safety Corridor Program: \$2.5 million*

This program will designate “Pedestrian Safe Corridors” based on accident history and estimated rates of exposure to motor vehicles/pedestrian conflicts. Once designated, NJDOT will deploy Safety Impact Teams and make recommendations for engineering improvements. These areas will also be targeted for enhanced education and enforcement measures.

Create Safe Streets to Transit Program: \$5 million*

As more people use mass transit, it is imperative that we provide the riders safe pedestrian access to the train or bus station. This program will identify risks based on crash history as well as develop and fund improvements.

*over five years

Improve Pedestrian Planning

NJDOT will review the current access permit process to incorporate pedestrian safety improvements when considering access permits on state highways. In numerous areas around the state, there is a direct correlation between the opening of new commercial development across a multi-lane highway and an existing residential area.

The access permit process provides an important window of opportunity to detect the creation of those new pedestrian routes and attempt to address the projected crossing behavior. In addition, NJDOT will account for and incorporate possible future pedestrian safety improvements into all of its appropriate projects.



SAFETY THROUGH ENFORCEMENT

Enforce Current Pedestrian Safety Laws on the Books

The Attorney General will collaborate with local and county prosecutors to ensure prosecution of failure to yield laws and to reduce the plea bargaining and downgrading of such offenses. The Attorney General will also work with the Administrative Office of the Courts to emphasize the importance of fully enforcing pedestrian safety laws.

Distribute Grants for Enforcement of Pedestrian Laws

Through the Division of Highway Safety, the Attorney General will issue \$1.5 million in grants to state and local law enforcement agencies to vigorously address pedestrian enforcement and safety.

Establish Statewide Traffic Safety Task Force

The Attorney General through the New Jersey State Police and in collaboration NJDOT has created the Safe Passages Task Force. This Task Force will undertake a number of innovative statewide initiatives aimed at improving traffic safety.



SAFETY THROUGH EDUCATION

Develop Statewide Driver Education Curriculum

MVC, NJDOT, the Attorney General's Office and the Department of Education are currently developing a driver's education curriculum. The curriculum will focus on the rights and the responsibilities of a driver and laws protecting pedestrians who cross our roadways.

Add Pedestrian Safety Information to the *NJ Driver Manual*

MVC will enhance the *NJ Driver Manual's* pedestrian safety information so that it more clearly and forcefully emphasizes the responsibilities of both motorists and pedestrians.

Incorporate pedestrian safety laws into the New Jersey driver examination

MVC will develop test criteria to evaluate driver knowledge of New Jersey's pedestrian safety laws.