



MISSOULA AREA TRANSPORTATION SAFETY SUMMIT TARGETS TRAFFIC CRASHES

Public invited to help reach goal of zero fatalities

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Every year, traffic crashes in the Missoula area cause eight fatalities, 143 incapacitating injuries and 519 other injuries. Planners with the Missoula Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) aim to reduce these numbers to zero fatalities long-term and at least 25 percent fewer severe injuries by 2018.

The effort will start with a Community Transportation Safety Summit, to be held Thursday, May 23, from 6-9 p.m. at St. Paul Lutheran Church at 202 Brooks St. Missoula area residents are invited to bring ideas and help develop strategies to reach the goals. Work at the summit will contribute to the development of a new Community Transportation Safety Plan, which will outline Missoula's strategies for reaching the goals.

Missoula area residents have identified reducing the social and economic costs of traffic crashes as an important goal in several local planning efforts. In response, the Missoula MPO applied for a grant through the Montana Department of Transportation to provide technical and financial assistance to develop the plan.

"Missoula's streets should be safe for all people, and we'll only get there by aiming for zero fatalities," said City Council representative Jason Wiener, who will introduce the issues at the summit. "We're happy to have MDT committed to this partnership to make it so."

Crash data for the Missoula area for the past 10 years show the most significant traffic safety issues in the Missoula area are crashes at intersections, unbelted drivers or passengers, alcohol and/or drugs and young drivers.

For more information on the plan development process to date, visit
[\(http://www.mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolvemissoulactsp/\).](http://www.mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolvemissoulactsp/)