

# EQUITY & The SAFE SYSTEM APPROACH

Zero is our goal. A Safe System is how we get there.

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Federal Highway Administration, Maryland Division

September 28, 2023



U.S. Department of Transportation  
**Federal Highway Administration**

**ZERO**  **IS OUR GOAL**  
A SAFE SYSTEM IS HOW WE GET THERE

# Presentation Overview

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Equity in US  
DOT and  
FHWA

2

Equity in the  
Safe System  
Approach

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Safe System  
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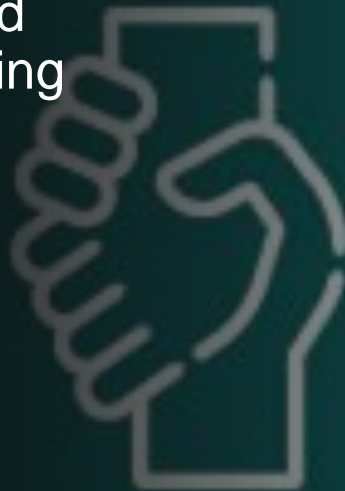
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Resources

# EQUITY

The consistent and systematic fair, just, and impartial treatment of all individuals, including individuals who belong to **underserved communities** that have been denied such treatment (EO 13985)



Black, Latino, Indigenous, Native American, Asian, Pacific Islanders, and other persons of color (BIPOC)

Members of religious minorities

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ+) persons

Persons with disabilities

Persons who live in rural areas

Persons otherwise adversely affected by persistent poverty or inequality

## **UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES**

Populations sharing a particular characteristic, as well as geographic communities, that have been systematically denied a full opportunity to participate in aspects of economic, social, and civic life. (EO 13985)

# Equality



# Equity



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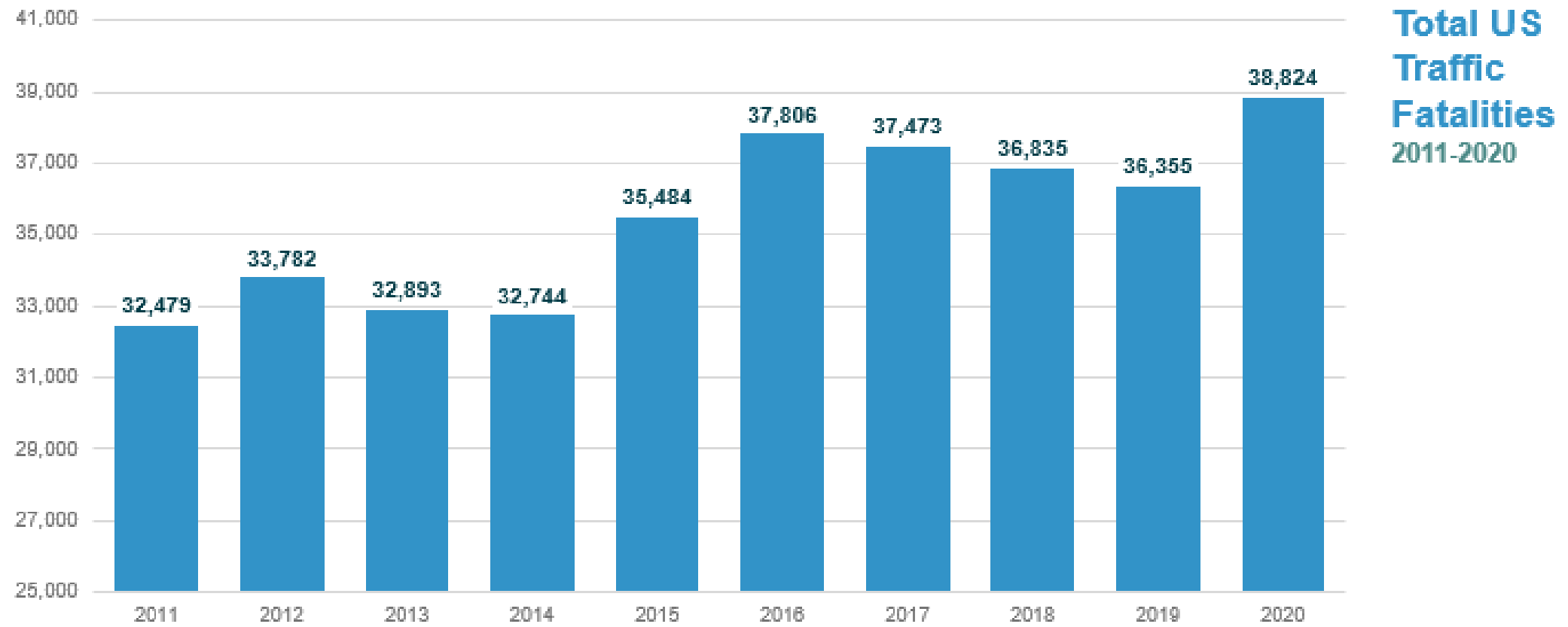
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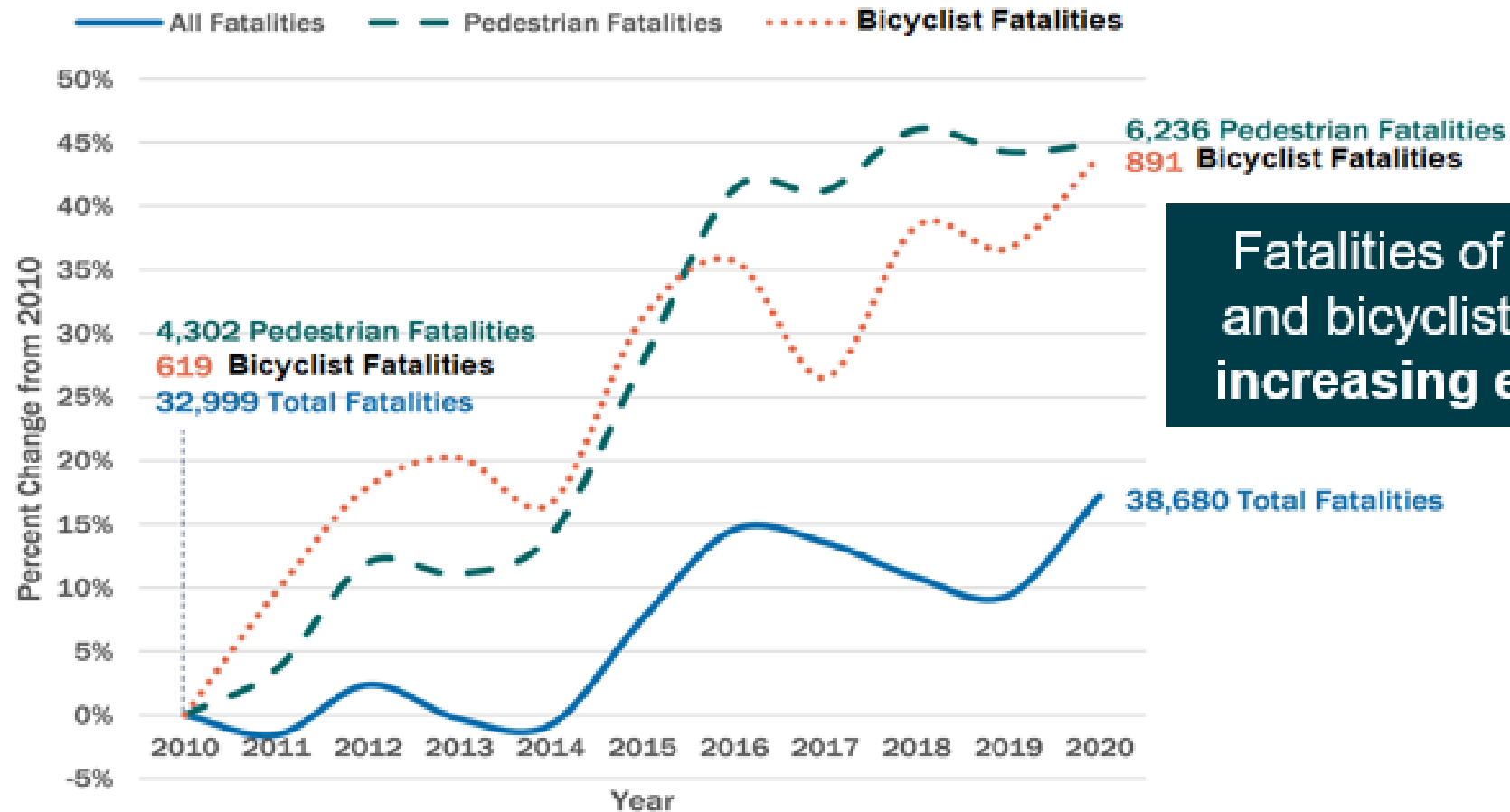
Conclusion &  
Resources

# THOUSANDS OF LIVES ARE LOST EACH YEAR





# WE HAVE A NATIONAL ROADWAY SAFETY PROBLEM



Fatalities of pedestrians and bicyclists have been increasing even greater

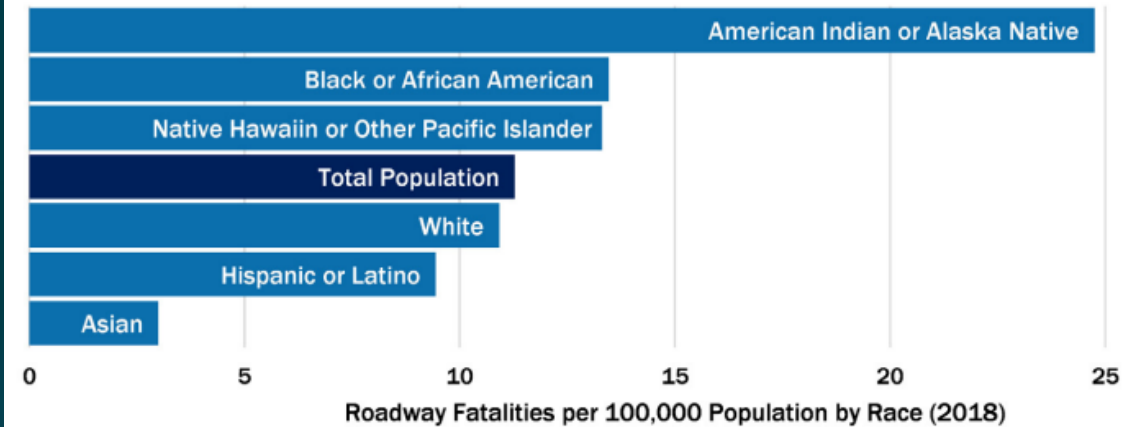
Source: Fatality Analysis Reporting System



## DISPARITIES

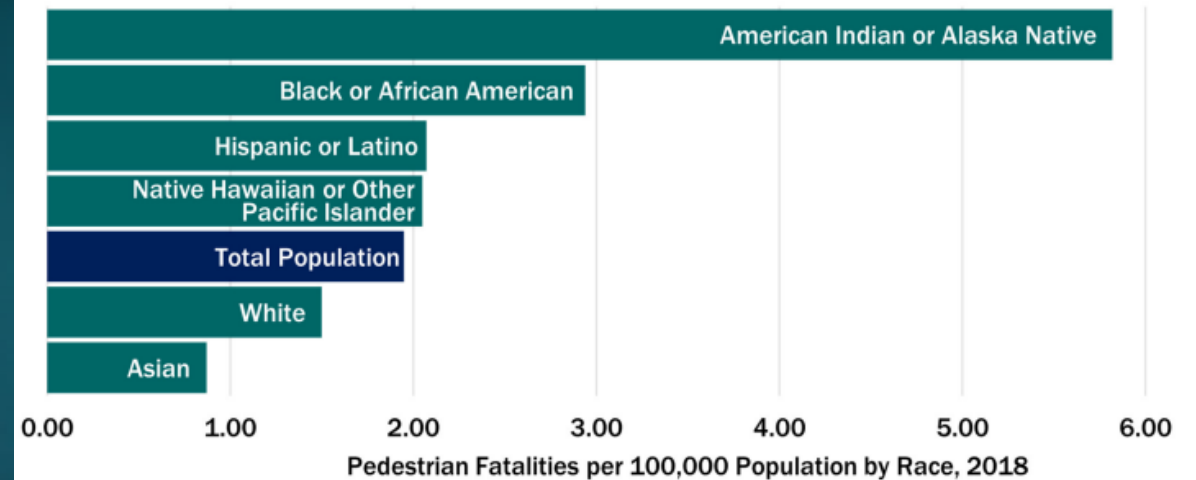
*“Traffic crashes are a leading cause of death for teenagers in America, and disproportionately impact people who are Black, American Indian, and live in rural communities. We face a crisis on our roadways; it is both unacceptable and solvable.”*

### Fatalities impact communities differently...

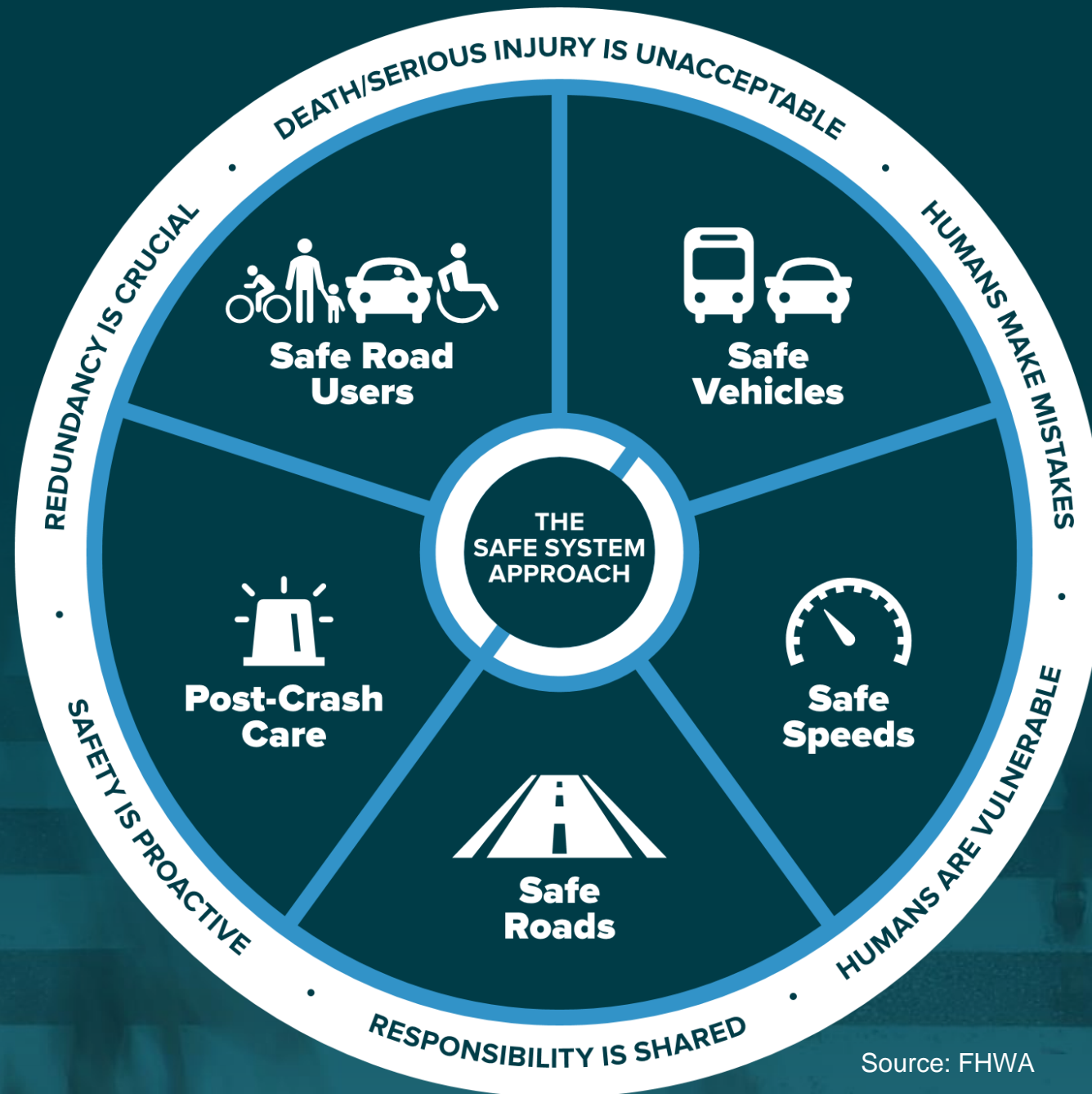


...particularly for people not in a vehicle.

### Fatalities Among Pedestrians



# THE SAFE SYSTEM APPROACH



Source: FHWA

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# THE 6 SAFE SYSTEM PRINCIPLES



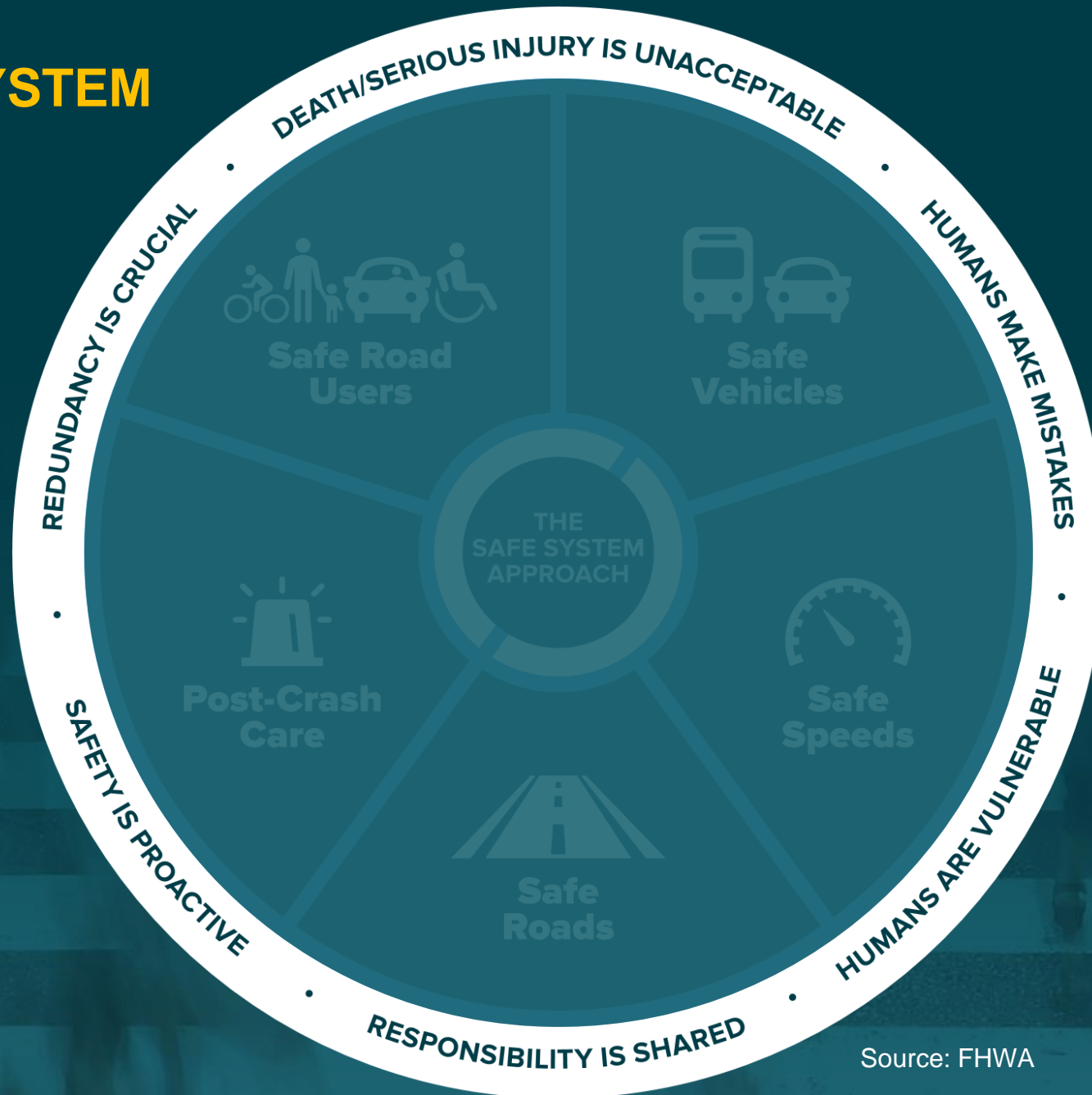
Death/serious injury is unacceptable



Humans make mistakes



Humans are vulnerable



Responsibility is shared



Safety is proactive



Redundancy is crucial

Source: FHWA



# DEATH/SERIOUS INJURY IS UNACCEPTABLE



Source: Vision Zero Network

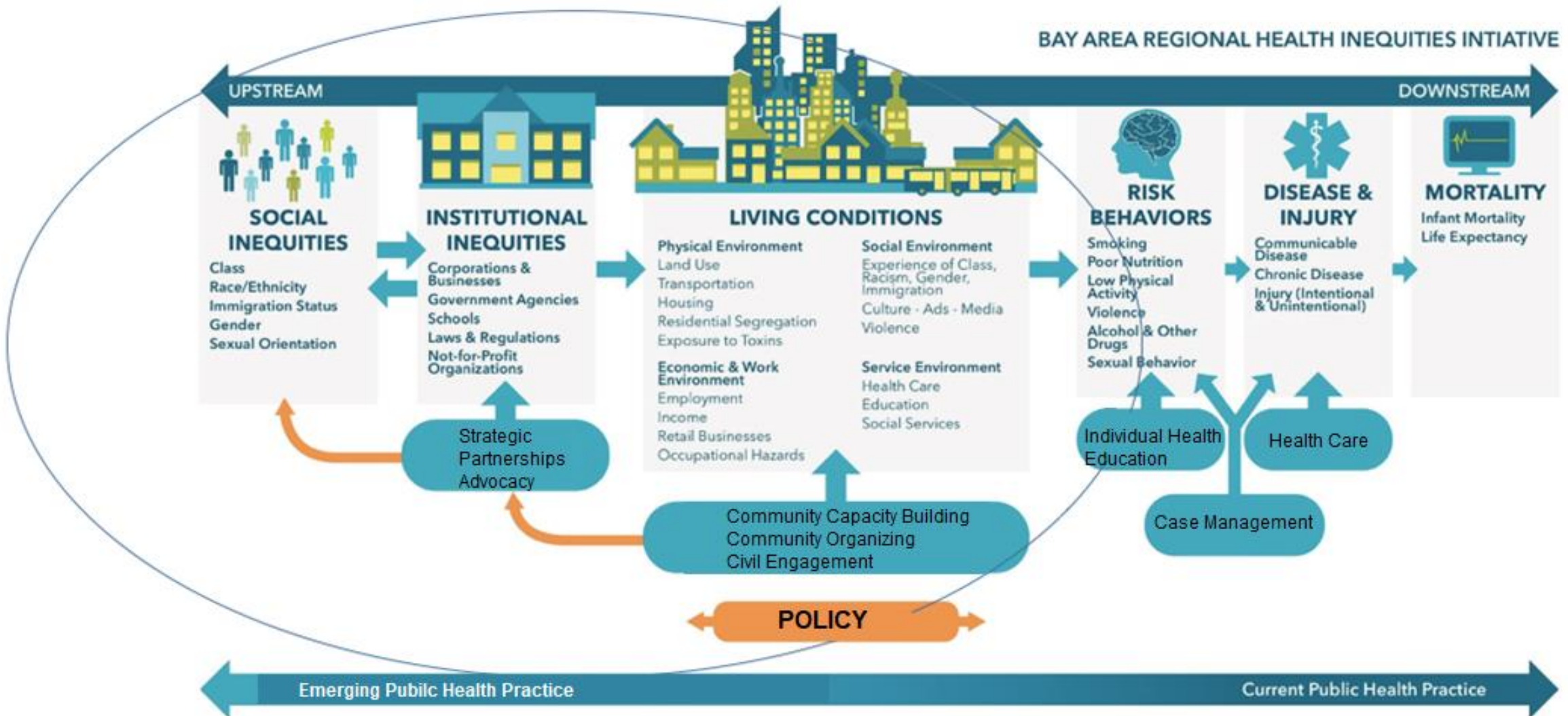


# HUMANS MAKE MISTAKES.



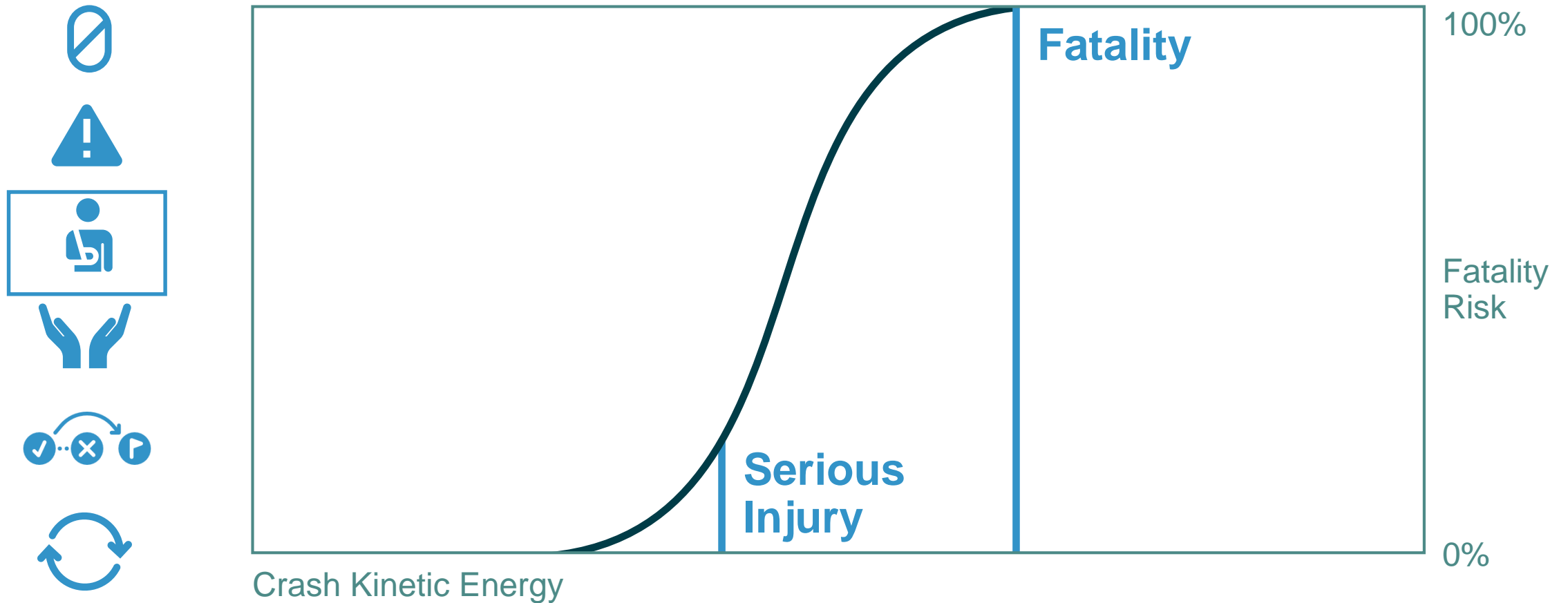
Source: Fehr & Peers

# A PUBLIC HEALTH FRAMEWORK FOR REDUCING HEALTH INEQUITIES





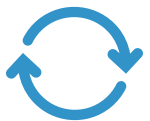
# HUMANS ARE VULNERABLE



## HUMANS ARE VULNERABLE PART 2



# RESPONSIBILITY IS SHARED



- **System managers**

- Planners, designers, builders, operators, maintenance workers

- **Vehicle manufacturers**

- **Enforcement personnel**

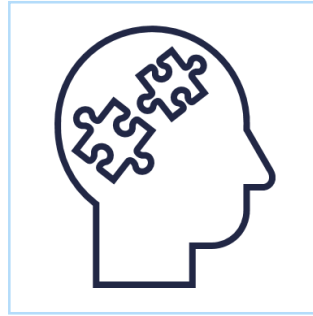
- **Traffic Incident Management personnel**

- **Everyone**

# ENGAGEMENT AND COLLABORATION ARE CRITICAL



Engage in meaningful  
public involvement



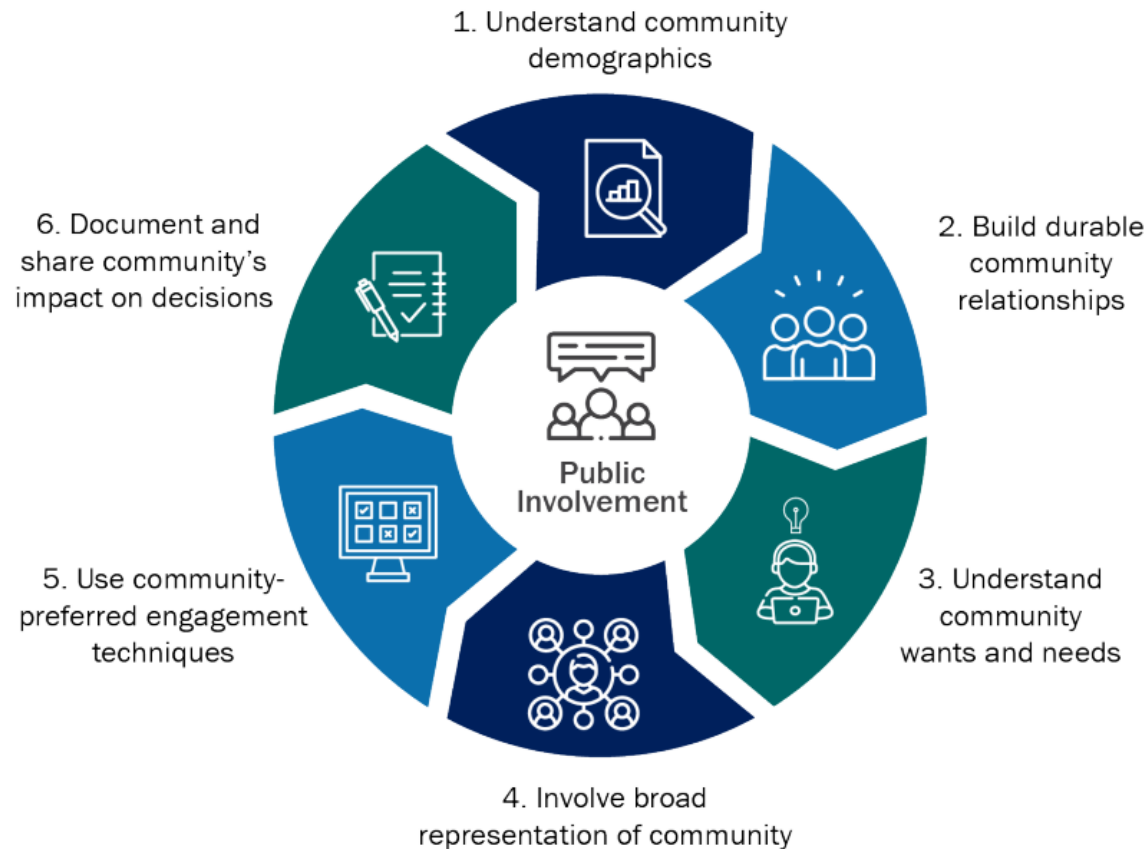
Coordinate with community  
members and experts  
outside of transportation  
(public health, housing,  
education)



Train, hire, retain, and  
promote individuals from  
underserved communities

# MEANINGFUL PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT IS A PART OF SHARED RESPONSIBILITY

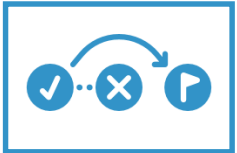
## Features of meaningful public involvement



USDOT defines meaningful public involvement as a process that proactively seeks full representation from the community, considers public comments and feedback, and incorporates that feedback into a project, program, or plan when possible. The impact of community contributions **encourages early and continuous public involvement and brings diverse viewpoints and values into the transportation decision-making process.**



# SAFETY IS PROACTIVE



**Identify risks**



**Mitigate risks**

# EQUITY IS PROACTIVE



**Identify risks  
based on equity  
screening**



**Mitigate risks for  
underserved  
communities**



# REDUNDANCY IS CRUCIAL



**Safe road  
users**



**Safe  
vehicles**



**Safe  
speeds**



**Safe  
roads**



**Post-crash  
care**

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# THE 5 SAFE SYSTEM ELEMENTS



Source: FHWA

# SAFE ROADS FOR USERS OF ALL AGES AND ABILITIES



Safe roads are designed and operated to:

1. Prevent crashes among all users
2. Keep impacts on the human body at tolerable levels
3. **Serve road users of all ages and abilities, including pedestrians, bicyclists, public transportation users, children, older individuals, individuals with disabilities, motorists, and freight operators.**

# PEOPLE FIRST



**Pedestrians**



**Bicyclists**



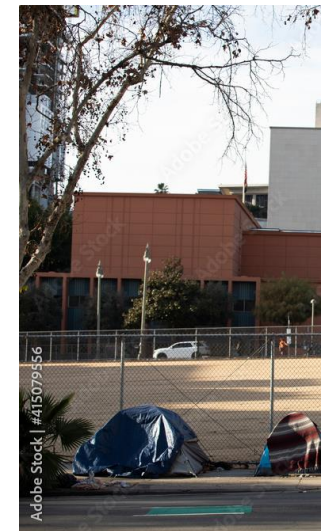
**Drivers and  
Passengers**



**Transit Users**



**People using  
assistive  
mobility  
technologies**



**People  
experiencing  
homelessness**



# UNIVERSAL DESIGN



The design and composition of an environment so that it can be accessed, understood and used to the greatest extent possible by all people regardless of their age, size, ability or disability.

The seven principles of universal design are as follows:

01

Equitable  
Use

02

Flexibility  
in Use

03

Simple  
and  
Intuitive  
Use

04

Perceptible  
Information

05

Tolerance  
for Error

06

Low  
Physical  
Effort

07

Size and  
Space for  
Approach  
and Use

# EQUITABLE FUNDING PROCESS



1

Prioritize equity factors in funding formulas and project prioritization

2

Assess how certain criteria may unintentionally exclude underserved communities and widen disparities

3

Provide additional resources, including capacity building and safety study funding, to underserved communities

4

Engage in meaningful public involvement



# ASSET MANAGEMENT



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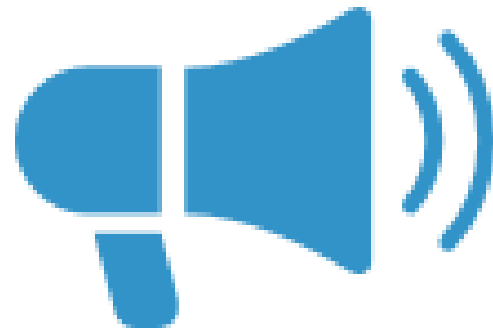
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## US DOT RESOURCES

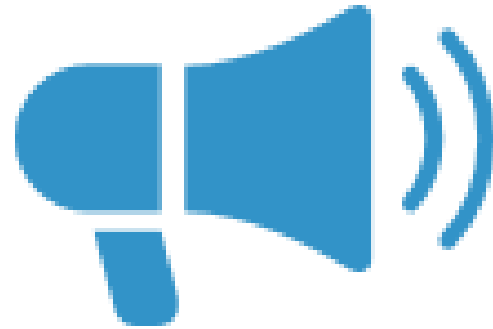


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### Equity

Find more resources at:

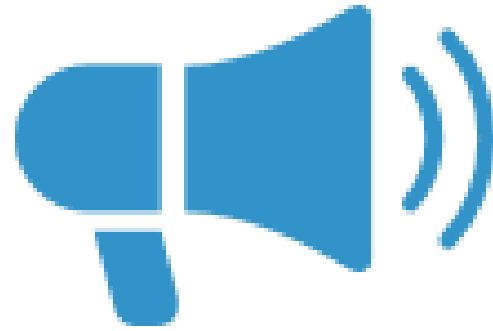
<https://www.transportation.gov/priorities/equity>



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### Safe System Materials

Find more resources at: [safety.fhwa.dot.gov/zerodeaths](https://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/zerodeaths)



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### **Equity in Roadway Safety Webinar Series**

<https://highways.dot.gov/safety/zero-deaths/equity-roadway-safety-webinar-series>



A blurred, teal-tinted background image showing a crowd of people walking down a wide staircase. The image is out of focus, emphasizing movement and a large group of people.

**Zero is our goal.  
A Safe System is how we get there.**