Safer Land Use

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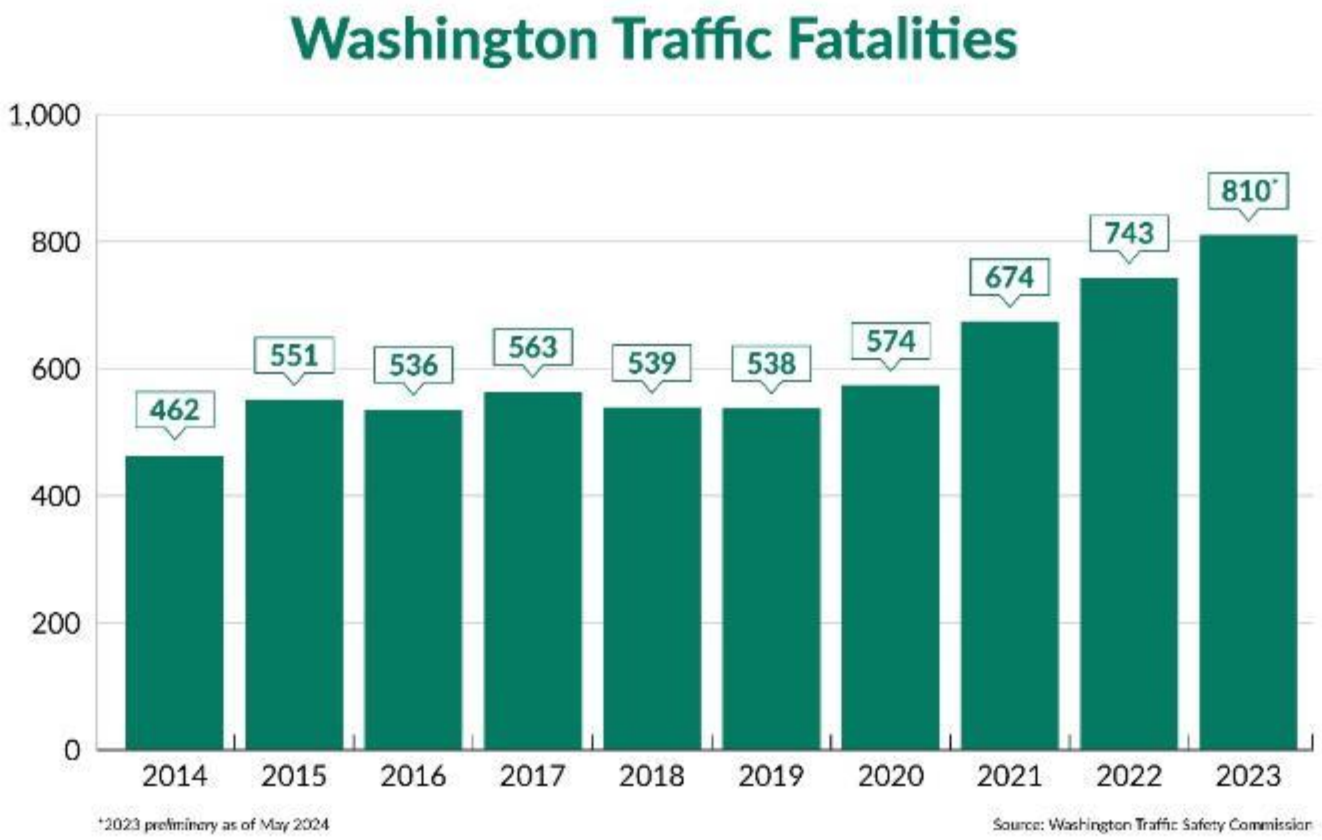
Safety challenges

We're not making the progress we need to reach Target Zero goals

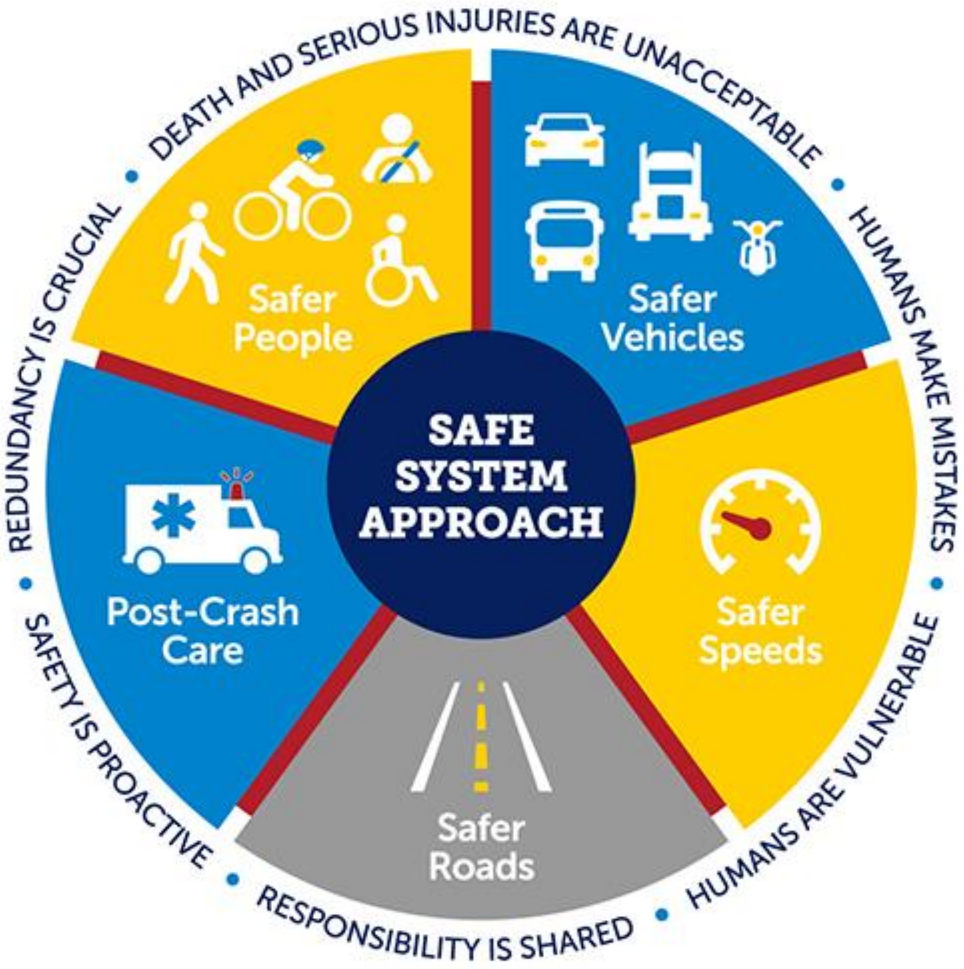
We're seeing increased:

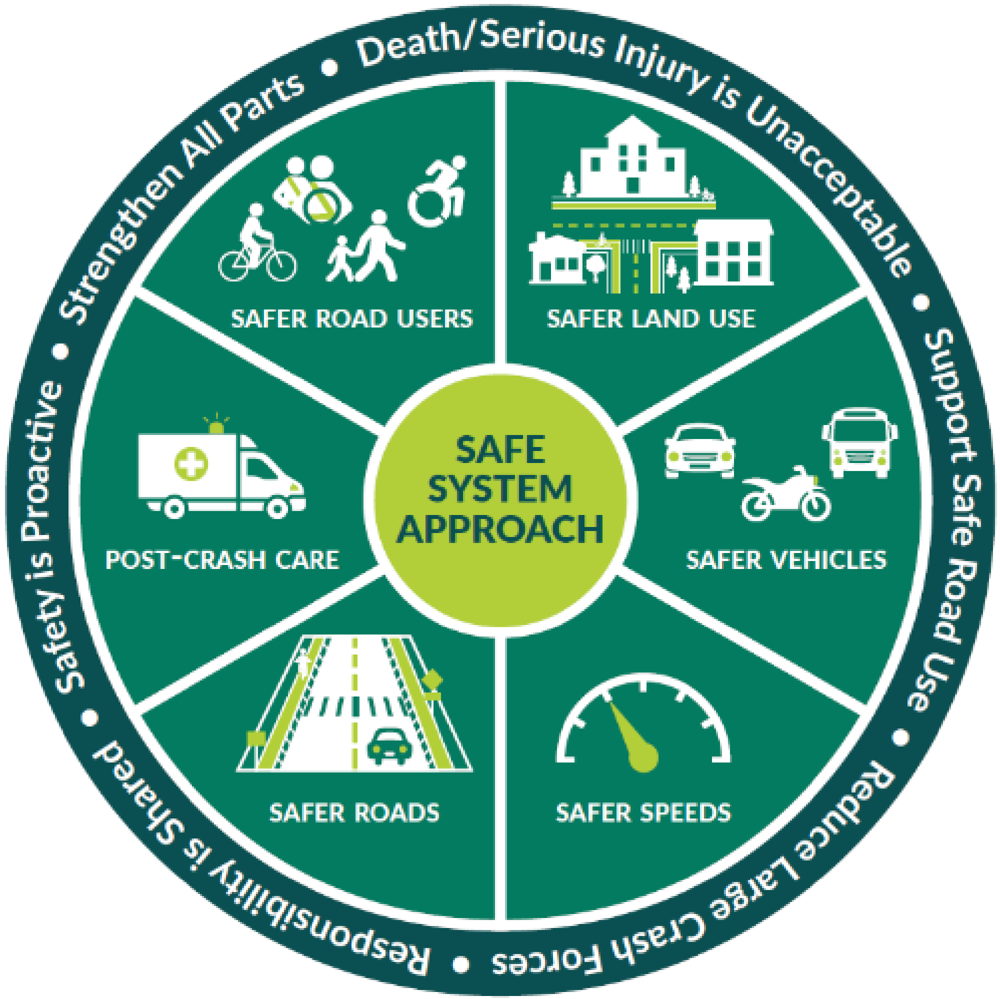
- Speeding
- Reckless driving
- Impaired driving
- Both on roadways and in work zones
- Happening statewide and nationally

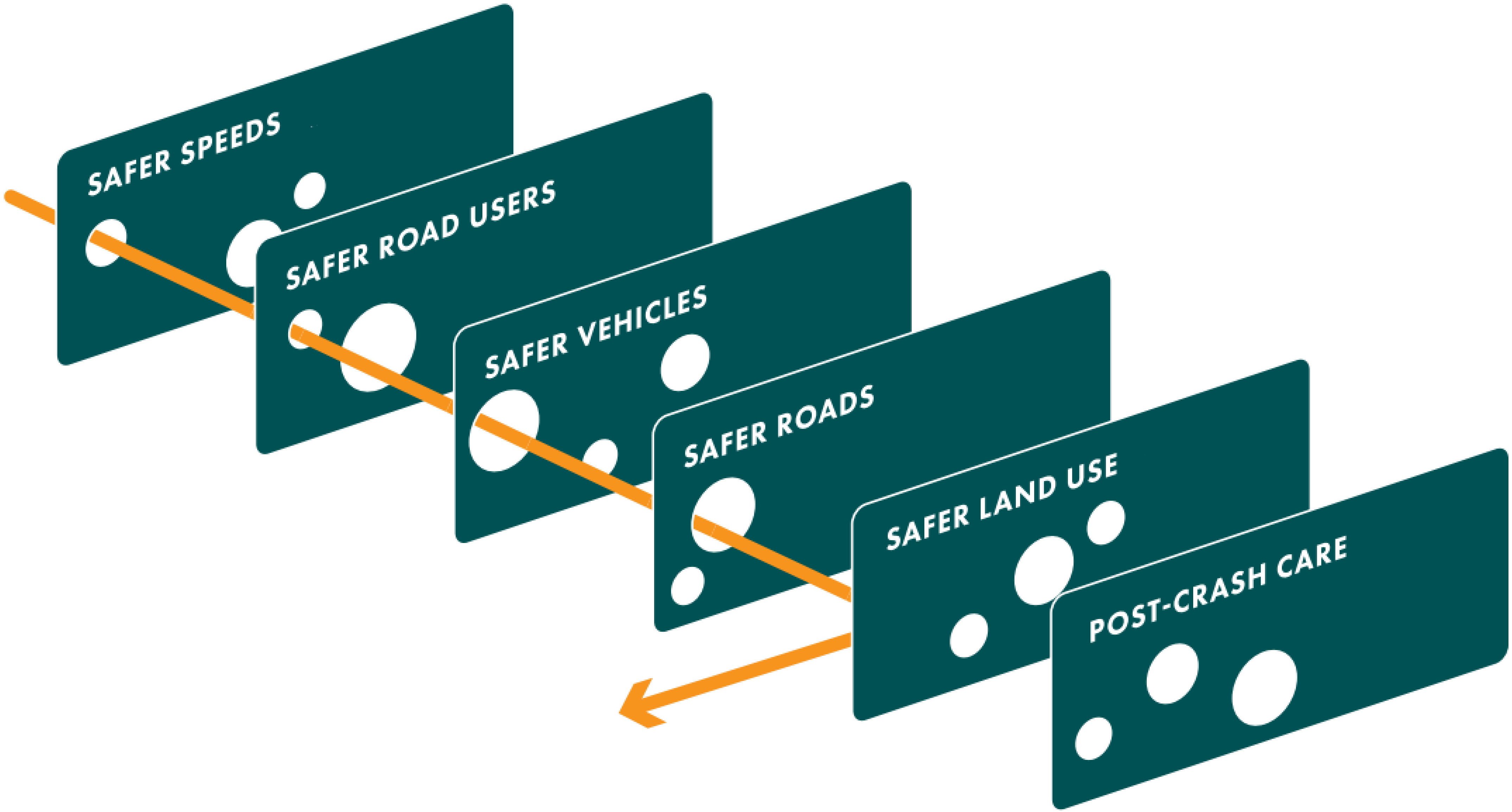
Is ~800 deaths a year acceptable, or are we ready to do something different?



Washington Safe System Approach






SAFER SPEEDS
SAFER ROAD USERS
SAFER VEHICLES
SAFER ROADS
SAFER LAND USE
POST-CRASH CARE

Safe System Approach

Traditional approaches to road safety	→	Safe System Approach
Focus on total crashes	→	Focus on fatal and serious injuries
Reduce the likelihood of crashes	→	Strengthen all parts of the system to reduce exposure, likelihood and severity of crashes
Road user has primary responsibility	→	A shared responsibility exist between those who design, build, operate and use the roads and vehicles.
Change individual road user behavior	→	Support safe road use
Safety is addressed after crashes occur	→	Safety is proactive
Roads are made as safe as practicable	→	Roads are self-explaining and forgiving to to reduce large crash forces

Safe System Approach

Exposure		Likelihood		Severity
• Decreased complexity • Reduce AADT • Think critically about conflicts	X	• Reducing crash types • Lane widths, lighting, curbs, shoulders, signals	X	• Reduce speeds • Angle crashes • Vehicle type/weight

Meet the WSDOT Land Use Team

Multimodal Planning & Data Division

↓

Tribal & Regional Integrated Planning

↓

Land Use Team

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Safer Land Use

Safer land use enables reduced car use and shortens travel distances, both of which reduce crash exposure.

Safer land use planning addresses the interactions between properties, roads, and facilities for walkers, rollers, transit, and commercial and other vehicles

It is important to consider and plan where people live in relation to where they need to travel and how they will get there safely.

WSDOT's Role in Safer Land Use

WSDOT does not regulate land use – but we recognize that land use decisions shape transportation outcomes. Our role is to support and align.

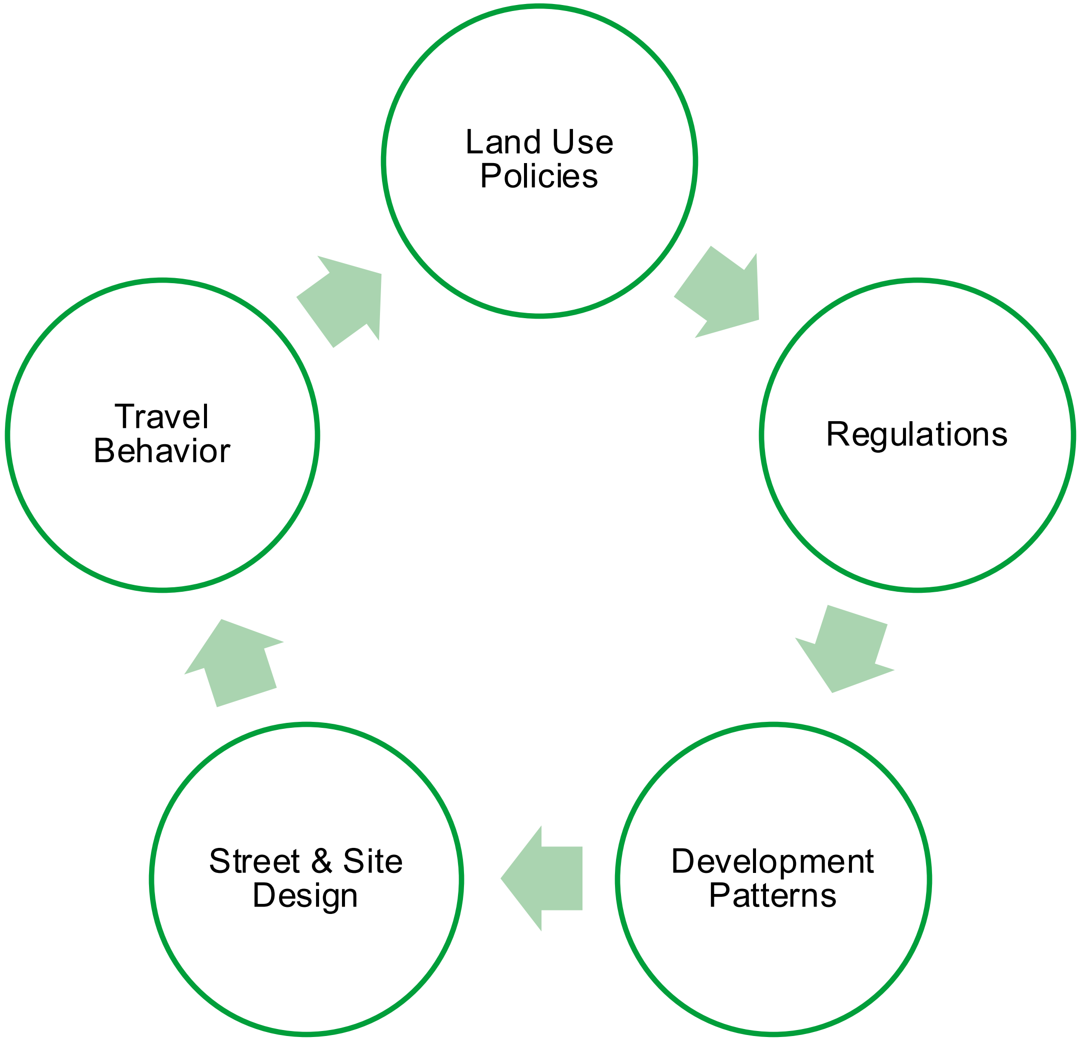
What we can do:

- Align transportation strategies with land use context.
- Highlight where land use contributes to exposure and risk.
- Provide planning guidance, data and tools.
- Regulate access to state system

What we can support:

- Local plans and policies that support transportation safety and multimodal access.
- Zoning and development regulations that advance transportation efficient communities.

What is Safer Land Use



Recognizes that the policies and regulations guiding land development – have a direct and lasting impact on how safely people move through their communities.

How Land Use Impacts Safety

Mode Choice

Decrease Exposure

Decrease Likelihood

Design and Operation

Self-Enforcing Roads

Decrease Severity

Decrease Exposure: *Mode Choice*

"What all crashes have in common is cars. When the public health community identifies a threat to public health, the first strategy is to separate people from that threat...

*...We should provide the people we serve with viable options to driving. Walkable and transit-oriented land use allows people to live, work and play without reliance on cars. Separating people from cars **with smarter, safer land use** saves lives."*

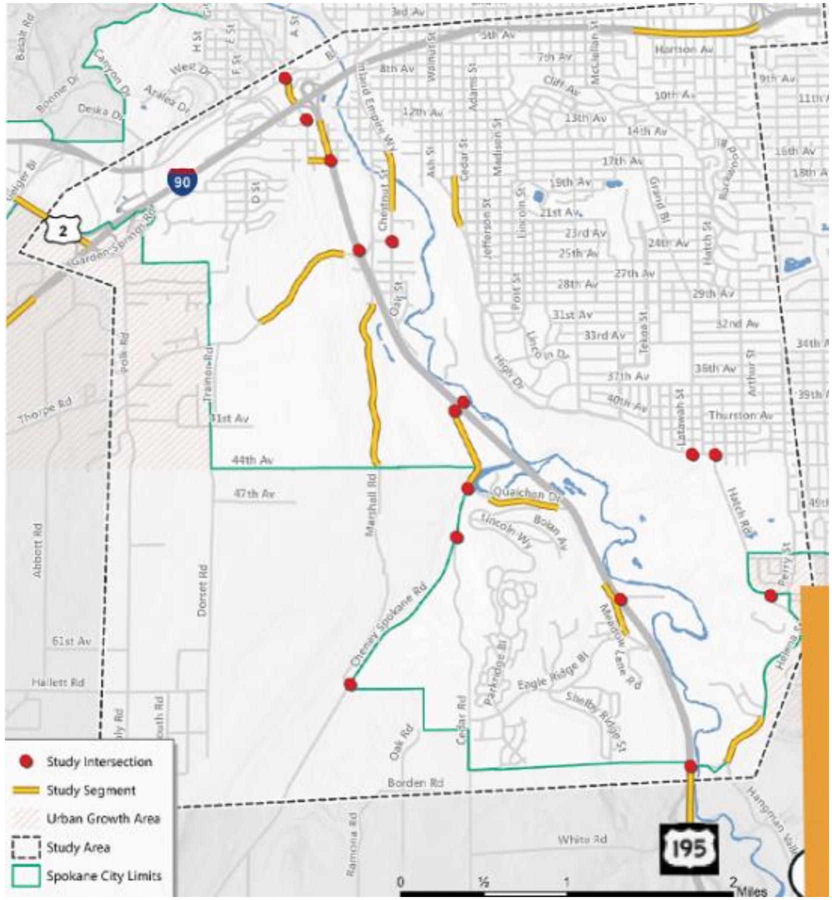
Former WSDOT Secretary, Roger Millar

Decrease Exposure:
Mode Choice

- Increase diversity of uses and proximity.
  - Shorter trips = less exposure
  - Accommodations for all modes

Decrease Likelihood: *Design and Operations*

- Public streets should reflect the land use around it.
  - Infrastructure should match purpose of the corridor and area priorities
  - Mismatches between design may increase risk (access mgmt.)



Decrease Severity:
Self-Enforcing Roads

- Align the priorities of adjacent land uses and roadway design.
  - Use human-scale design standards to influence behavior
  - Establish the context (speed) for safety; complimentary land use

Proximity = Decreased Risk

The more options created for people to live near daily destinations, the fewer and shorter their trips are, lessening the risk they face.

- Understanding the relationship between proximity of uses, vehicle-miles travelled, and risk.

- Bringing destinations closer reduces travel demand and increases viability of alternative travel options.

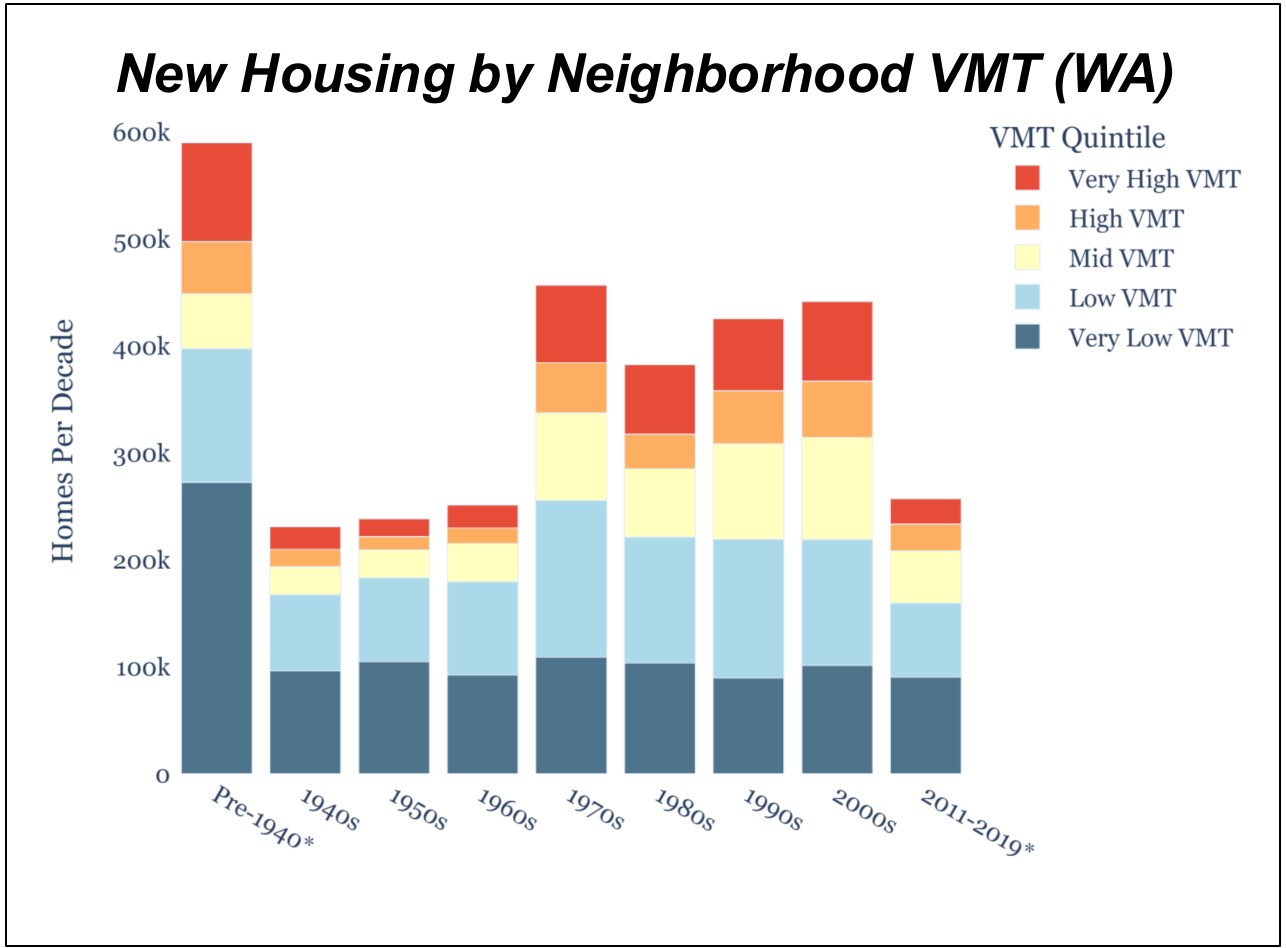
VMT and Housing

Higher VMT = More Exposure = Higher Risk

Where are we building?

- Between 2011-2019, 35% of all new housing built in in Very Low VMT areas.

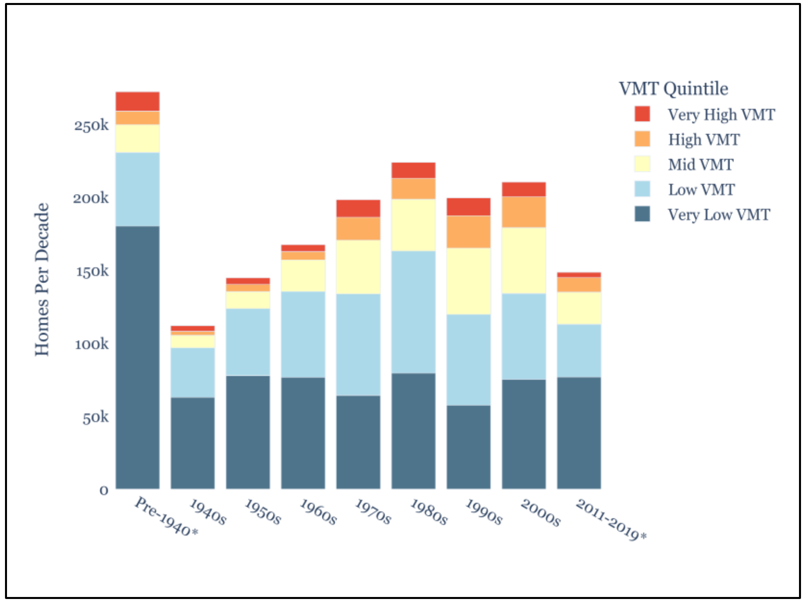
- Average neighborhood VMT for new housing production:
  - WA: 18.6
  - OR: 19.0
  - CA: 21.3
  - National: 23.3



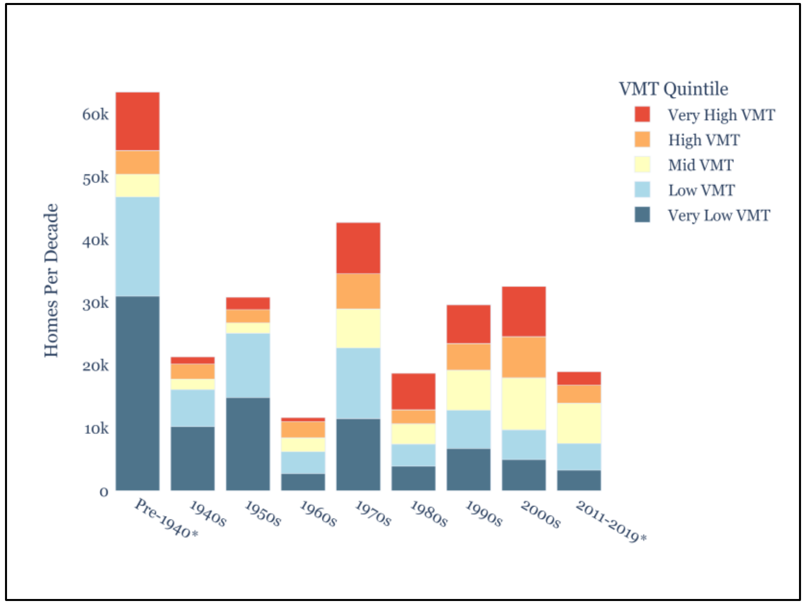
Source: Terner Center for Housing Innovation at UC Berkeley

*Despite our goals to build more housing, much is still being built in areas where people **must** drive – placing them at greater risk.*

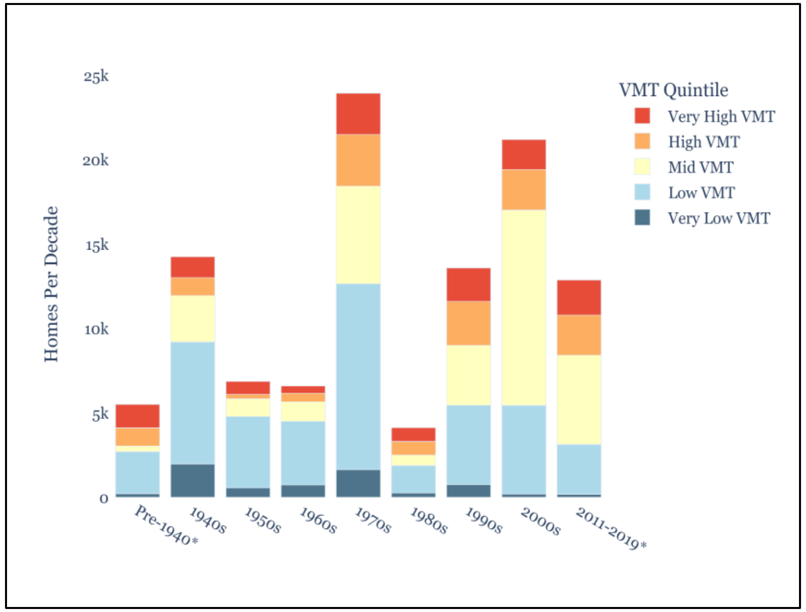
Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue



Spokane-Spokane Valley



Kennewick-Pasco-Richland



Source: Terner Center for Housing Innovation at UC Berkeley

RCW 47.01.440 - Adoption of Statewide Goals to Reduce VMT by 2050

Land Use Diversity Benefits

A mix of housing and services creates opportunities for increased mobility options and safer transportation outcomes.

Safer Land Use & Public Health

The results of community design and the built environment – is a key factor in the social determinants of health.

Proximity and land use directly influence access to schools, jobs, food, healthcare, and recreational spaces.

Low walkability and long travel distances are linked to higher rates of asthma, isolation, cardiovascular disease. (CDC, RWJF)

Source: Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion

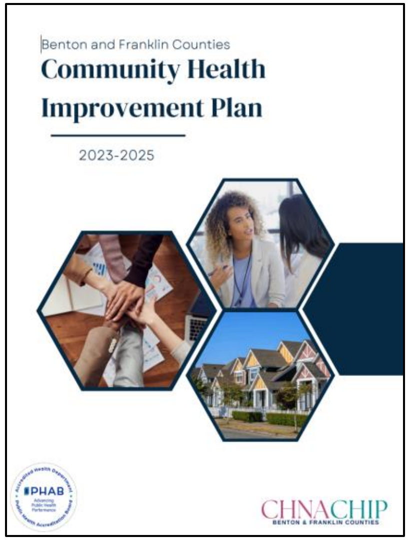
Safer Land Use & Public Health

Transportation Opportunities:

- Design for proximity and access
- Build and retrofit public streets for all ages and abilities
- Support active transportation and funding
- Coordinate with health agencies and districts (Safe Routes to School programs)

Public Health Opportunities:

- Support for safer land use strategies within Health Improvement Plans / Needs Assessments
- Engage in local planning process (Comprehensive Plans, Housing Plans, Transportation Plans)



Regulatory Factors

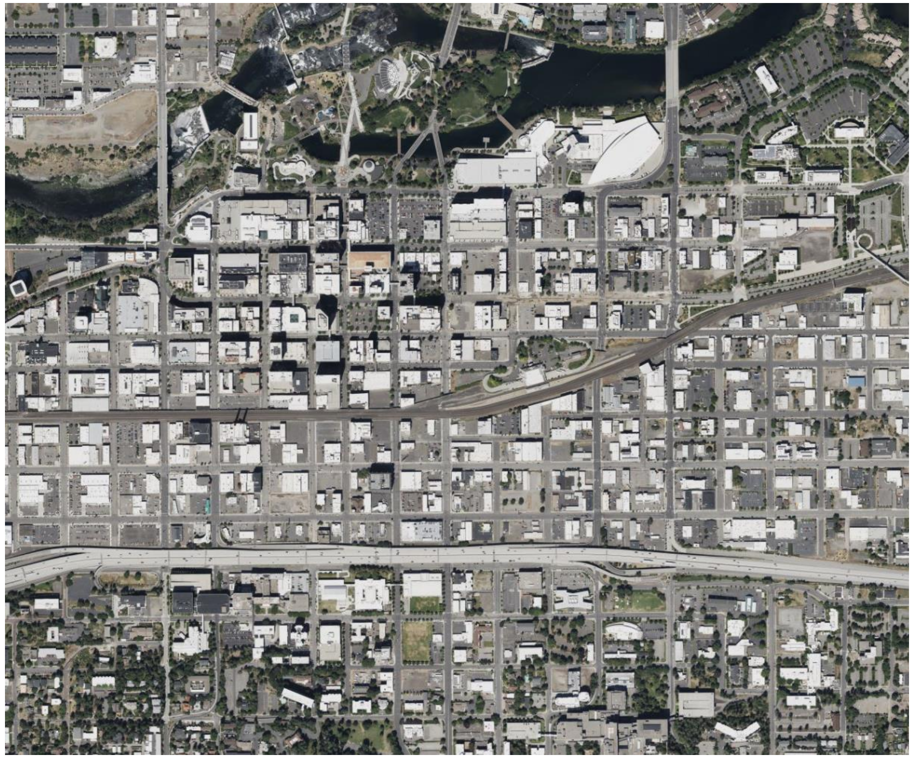
We can't fix transportation safety by looking only at roads. Land use policies and development decisions play a foundational role in the outcomes.

- **Zoning**: Rules that separate residential, commercial, and other land uses –often increasing travel distances and reducing accessibility.
- **Development Standards:** Regulations that govern how land can be developed and designed.
- **Parking Requirements**: Minimum parking mandates that reduce space for people-centered design.
- **Street and Block Length Standards**: Regulations that prioritize wide roads, long blocks, at the expense of pedestrian safety and overall mobility.

Local Examples of Safer Land Use Strategies

Spokane, WA

- **Missing Middle Housing Streamlining**
- **Off-Street Parking Requirements eliminated**



Pasco, WA

- **Street Connectivity Ordinance**
- **Zoning Updates to Increase Housing**

Shoreline, WA

- **Linking Land Use near High-Capacity Transit**

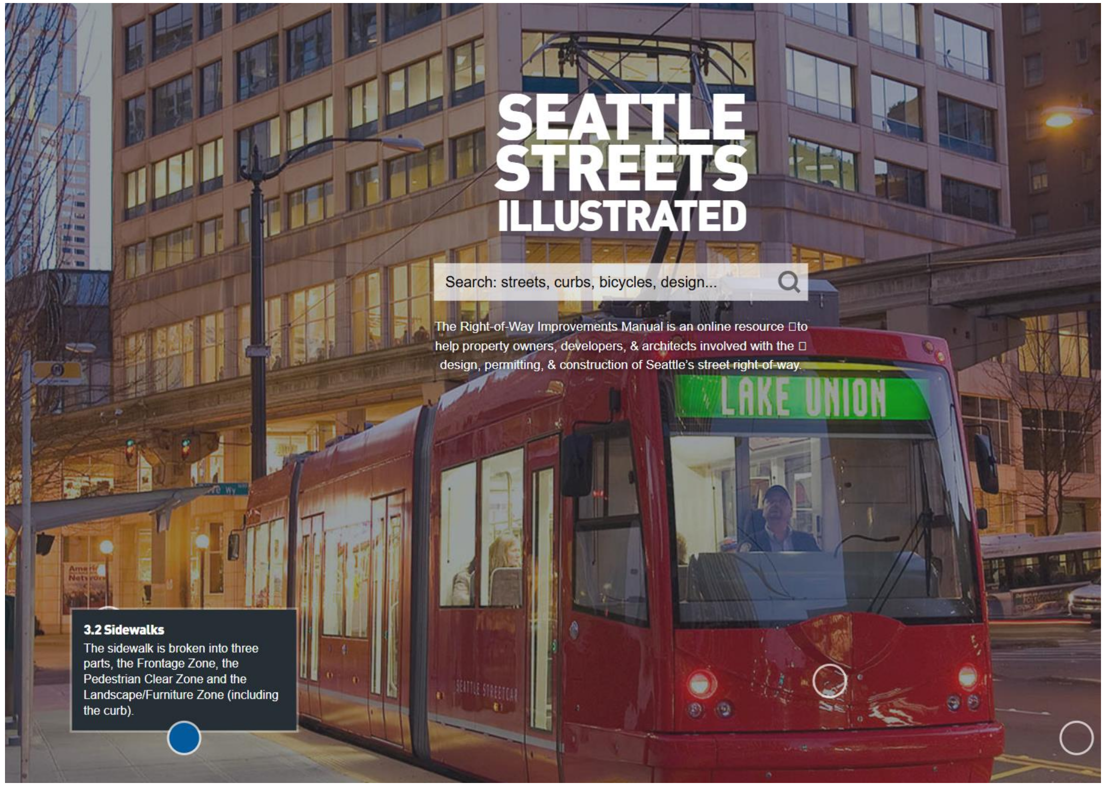
Redmond, WA

- **Transit Oriented Development**

WSDOT

Seattle, WA

- **Streets Illustrated**



Bothell, WA

- **Off-Street Parking Requirements eliminated**

Bothell lifts parking minimums to boost businesses and walkability

The City of Bothell has removed off-street parking minimums in an effort to boost business growth and walkability.

Legislation & Safer Land Use

Recent laws expand housing options in walkable and connected areas – reducing trip distances, increasing travel choices, and lowering risk.

- **HB 1110 (2023)**: Missing Middle Housing
  - More options for living closer to jobs, schools, transit
- **HB 1337 (2023): Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)**
  - **Promotes infill and living options in existing neighborhoods**
- **HB 1181 (2023)**: Climate + Resilience
  - Aligns growth strategies with transportation and environmental goals
- **HB 5466 (2024)**: Transit Oriented Development
  - Increases options for housing near high-capacity transit

Safer Land Use

Where do you see opportunities or barriers for safer land use implementation?

What is one decision related to zoning, street layout, design, that affects safety where you live or work?

What indicators should we use as success?

Questions?

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