



SMAC Talk

Speed Management Advisory Cooperative Newsletter
JANUARY 2026



Cooperatively, we can SMAC down speeding!

A Note from Janine

Greetings, SMAC-ers,

As we begin the new year, SMAC is not just refining *what* we're trying to change about speeding, but *how* we work together to do it. Members were clear in our last meeting: our purpose is to take on speeding as a complex, cultural problem that demands a comprehensive, public-health-informed approach, and our mission is to define that problem clearly, bring more voices to the table, and translate shared learning into coordinated action across the state. To support that work, we are aligning our leadership structure and meeting rhythm to emphasize continuity, shared responsibility, and realistic expectations—pairing volunteer leaders with WTSC staff, clarifying roles and deliverables, and alternating main group and workgroup meetings to maintain momentum without overburdening members.

As we look ahead, instead of making resolutions, I invite you to choose one word that reflects what you believe is most essential for SMAC's success this year— whether it's *culture*, *consistency*, *courage*, *collaboration*, or something else entirely. That word can serve as a personal compass for how you contribute to our shared collaborative purpose: making it no longer acceptable to exceed the speed limit, and ultimately, saving lives.

I continue to be inspired by your willingness to tackle this complex work, to question how things have either “never been” or “always been” done, to think about how to change systems, and to recognize the absolute necessity of having many hands, hearts, and heads engaged in this work. I *am* making at least one resolution this year—to round out the SMAC membership to include additional community sectors (youth, civic/volunteer organizations, religious/fraternal organizations, youth-serving organizations) and to expand membership in the schools, healthcare, and business sectors. It'd also be phenomenal to engage more elected leaders to help leverage our recommendations into action! Your help in finding and recruiting folks is always welcome!

I hope your holiday season was restorative and you're ready for another year of creating change! Happy New Year!



Sincerely,

Janine

Dr. Janine Koffel
WTSC Program Manager

Learning From Fatal Crashes to Save Lives

Why formalizing fatal crash reviews matters for SMAC and a Safer-System Approach

As SMAC members know, understanding *why* fatal crashes occur is essential to preventing the next one. The [Washington Traffic Safety Commission's 2026 agency request bill on Fatal Crash Reviews](#) would formalize and strengthen a structured, multidisciplinary process for examining fatal crashes to identify contributing factors that can be addressed through policy, engineering, enforcement, education, and system design improvements.

This matters directly to SMAC's strategic planning work, which relies on fatal case reviews to surface patterns, system gaps, and modifiable risks—particularly those related to speed, roadway context, and human behavior. While the bill does not assign blame or reopen investigations, it would improve consistency, coordination, and learning across agencies, supporting a safer-system approach. SMAC members who see value in this type of upstream learning can help by staying informed, discussing the bill's implications within their organizations, and sharing insights—when appropriate—about how fatal crash review findings inform effective speed management and injury prevention strategies.

Washington Earns a "Good" Rating for Traffic Safety Laws

Advocates for highway and auto safety's 2026 roadmap recognizes the State's commitment to saving lives

The Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety released [2026 Roadmap to Safety](#) yesterday ranking states by their traffic safety laws. If states have the optimal laws that seem to make it safe for drivers in a specific category, they are graded as “good.” If they have some optimal laws but could do more to make it safer for a category, they are graded as “caution.” And if there are no optimal laws in place or potentially only one, they are graded as “danger.”

Washington is one of only five states (plus DC) who received a good rating for our traffic safety laws!

The report (linked above) provides details on which laws they examined. Thank you to everything you do to improve safety on Washington's roadways.

Speeding Up Strategies to Slow Speeds & Save Lives

[Register for the webinar on January 29, 2026, at 11 a.m. PST](#)

Join National Vision Zero and national leaders as they reflect on the past decade of progress and (so far) unfulfilled potential to use proven, existing speed management tools to improve people's safety on the streets. Vision Zero Network Visiting Senior Research Fellow, Ivan Cheung, who led development of this pivotal 2017 [National Transportation Safety Board \(NTSB\) speed management report](#), will lead an in-depth discussion on two key safety tools getting increasing attention: speed safety cameras and Intelligent Speed Assistance. He'll be joined by safety experts from NTSB and the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS), who will share evidence, arguments and policy approaches to help communities embrace these proven safety strategies.

Thank You

A special thank you goes to Judge Lina Portnoy (Ret.), Shelly Baldwin (WTSC), Mark McKechnie (WTSC), and Moses Garcia (TSRP Coordinator) for their contributions to this month's newsletter.

Submit Newsletter Content

We'd love to know what's happening in your line of work or local community in regard to speed management, and to hear about any pertinent information that would be applicable to the SMAC membership. Submit any content you'd like included in *SMAC Talk* to Janine by the third Monday of each month.

Speed Management Advisory Cooperative - Est. 2024

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