



National  
Center  
for  
Rural  
Road  
Safety

## Overcoming the Unique Safety Challenges of Rural Roads Lifesavers 2021

Presented by:

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# Key Takeaways for Today

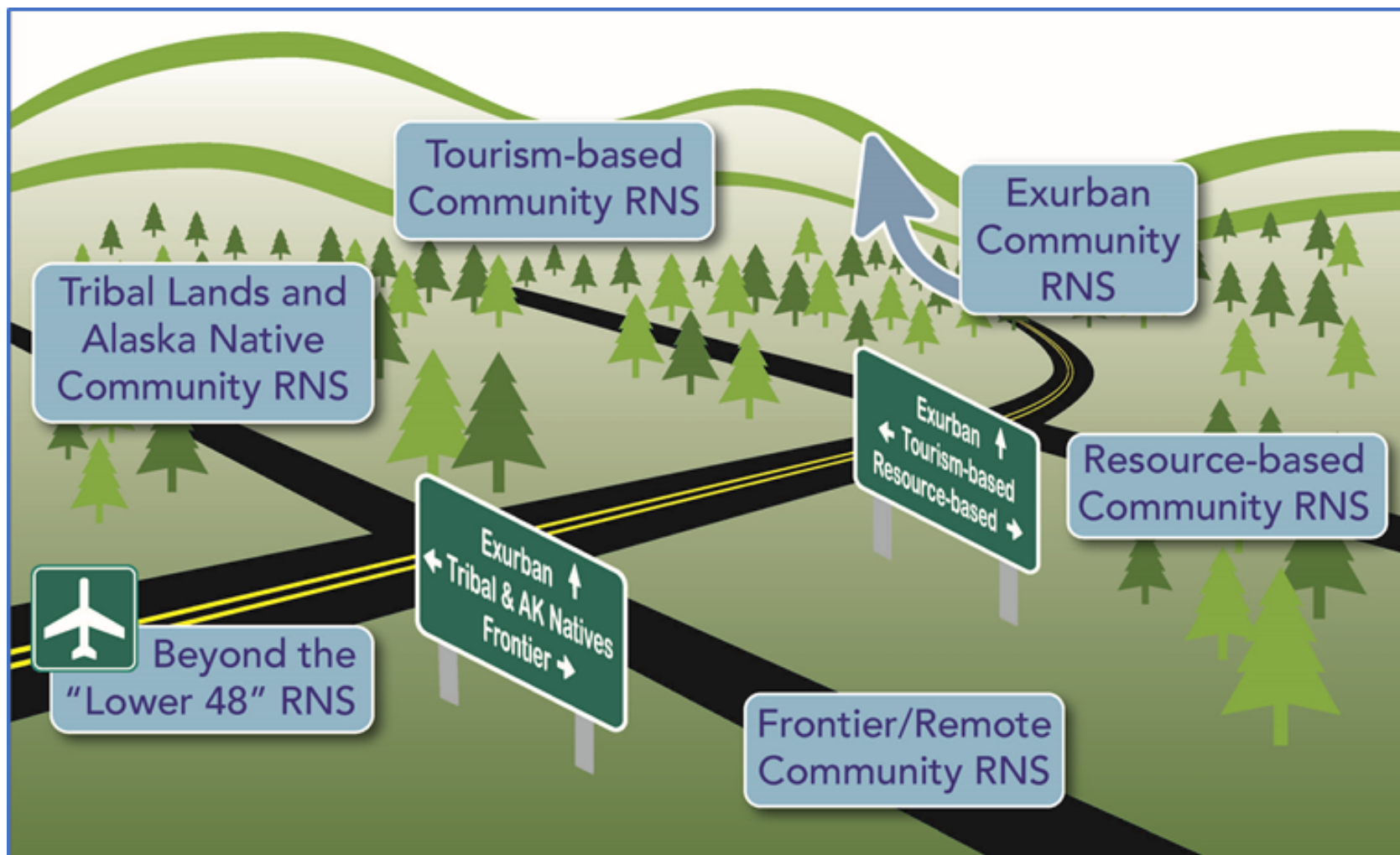
- Understand the rural story
- Know the importance of including rural areas as we strive for zero
- Identify the main points of Safety Culture and the Safe System Approach in a rural context
- Actionable items you can take to improve rural safety in your area







# The Rural Story: What is Rural?



Source: NCHRP 20-122







# The Rural Story: All Roads Are Not Created Equal







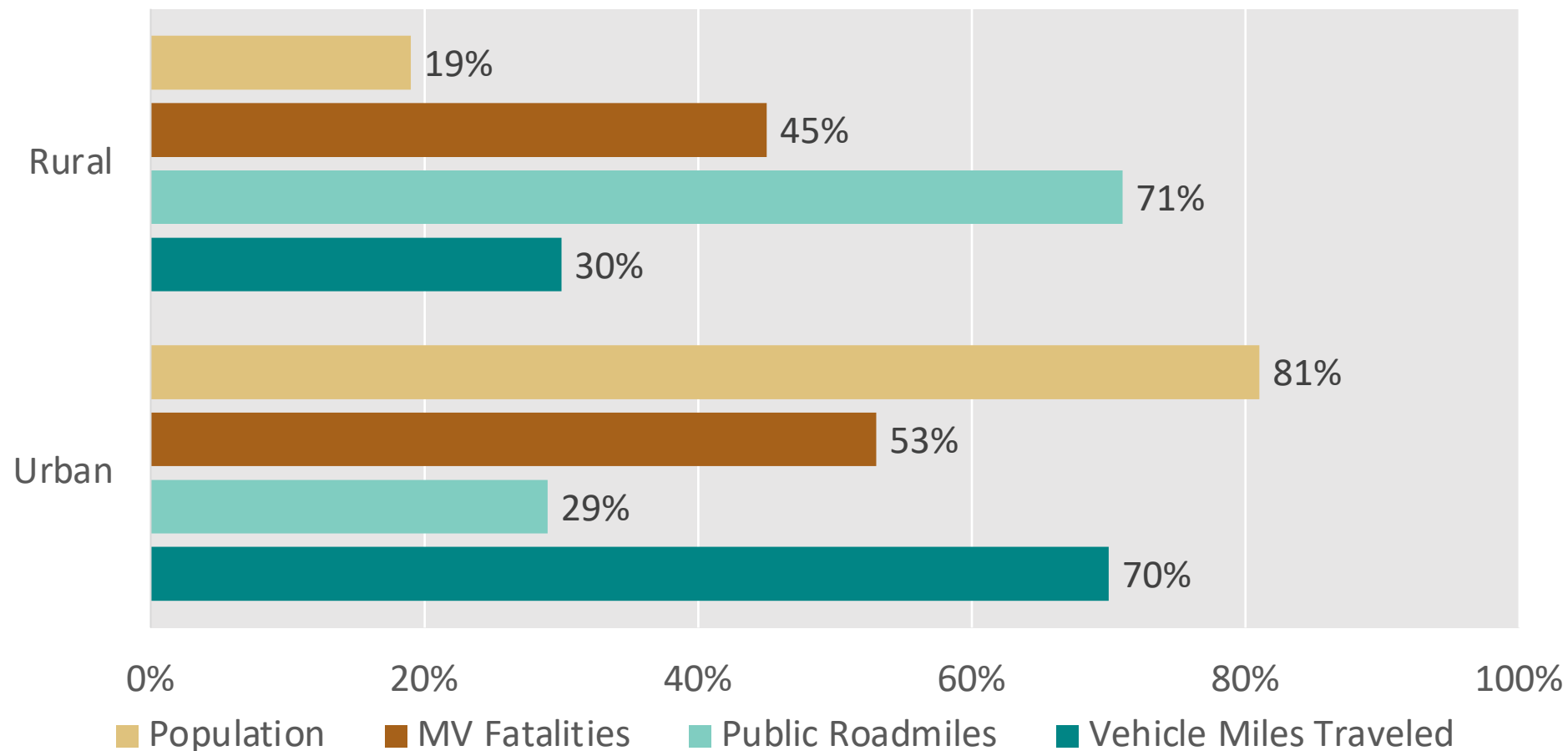
# The Rural Story: Exploring the Unique Challenges

- Less resources
- Lack of communication and power infrastructure
- Lack of data
- Severe weather
- Infrastructure challenges with unpaved roads and bridges
- Fewer alternative routes
- Less sustainable options for mobility due to distance and ridership





# The Rural Story: An Urban Comparison



Source: RSC ROUTES Webinar May 2020 – NHTSA Speaker

Data Source: FARS 2018 Annual Report File (ARF); 2010 Census; FHWA Office of Highway Policy Information, Highway Statistics 2018





# Why We Strive for Zero



There's No One Someone Won't Miss

Source: Transport Accident Commission Victoria, Australia

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k2tOye9DKdQ>

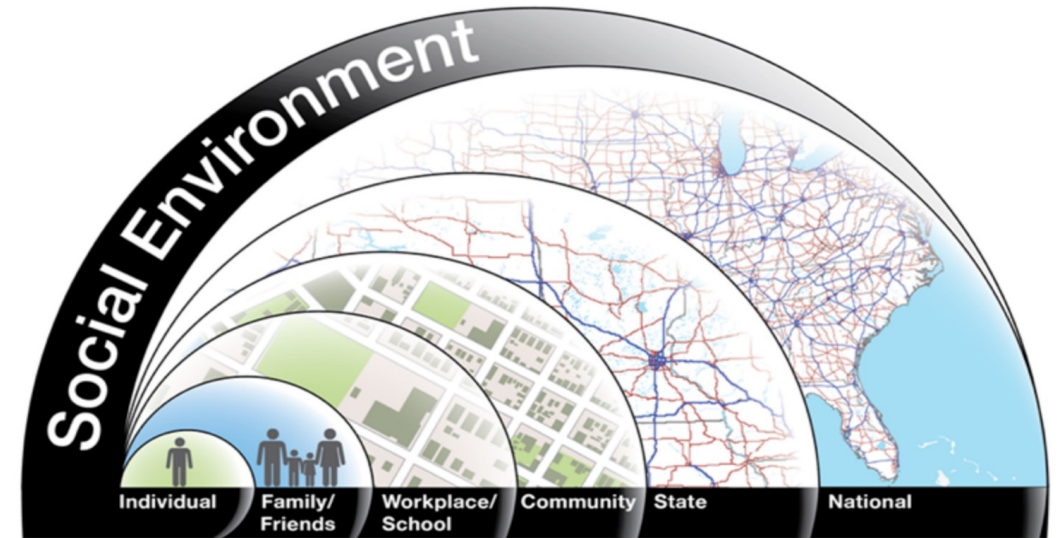




# Achieving Zero Starts with Promoting a Positive Traffic Safety Culture

Traffic Safety Culture:

The **shared beliefs**  
(including values,  
assumptions, etc.) of a group  
which affect **behaviors**  
related to traffic safety.



Source: Traffic Safety Culture Primer, CHSC





# Zero is our Goal. A Safe System is How we Get There



Accommodating human mistakes



Keeping impacts on the human body at tolerable levels



**Toward Zero Deaths<sup>®</sup>**  
National Strategy on Highway Safety

**VISION 4 ERONETWORK**







# The Safe System Approach





# The 6 Safe System Principles



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**Death/serious injury  
is unacceptable**



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**Humans make  
mistakes**



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**Humans are  
vulnerable**



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**Responsibility is  
shared**



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**Safety is proactive**



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**Redundancy  
is crucial**





# 5 Safe System Elements





# Comparing Approaches

## Traditional approach

Prevent crashes —————→

Improve human behavior —————→

Control speeding —————→

Individuals are responsible —————→

React based on crash history —————→

## Safe System approach

Prevent death and serious injuries

Design for human mistakes/limitations

Reduce system kinetic energy

Share responsibility

Proactively identify and address risks



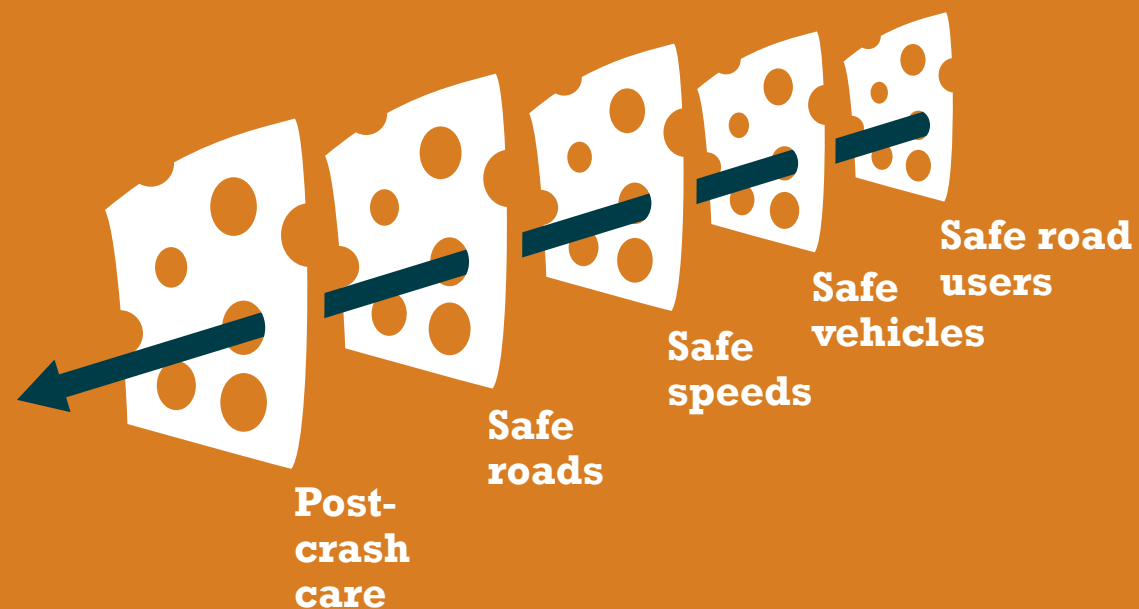


# The 5 Safe System Elements Create Redundancy

The “Swiss Cheese Model” of redundancy creates layers of protection



Death and serious injuries only happen when all layers fail





# Where Do I Start?

- Become a rural road safety champion
- Learn more about Traffic Safety Culture and Safe System Approach
- Find partners
- Double down on what works
- Always Remember your motivation

“Implementing the Safe System approach is our shared responsibility, *and we all have a role.*”

-FHWA

## Road SAFETY CHAMPION Program

Established by



National Center for  
Rural Road Safety



FORRWD

U.S. Department of Transportation  
Federal Highway Administration

30 people will die today from rural roadway departure crashes.  
**Let's save the people behind the numbers.**





# Resources to Explore on Your Rural Journey

National Center for Rural Road Safety

[www.ruralsafetycenter.org](http://www.ruralsafetycenter.org)

FHWA's Safe System Materials

[https://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/zerodeaths/zero\\_deaths\\_vision.cfm](https://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/zerodeaths/zero_deaths_vision.cfm)

Road to Zero

<https://www.nsc.org/road-safety/get-involved/road-to-zero>

Toward Zero Deaths & Traffic Safety Culture

<https://www.towardzerodeaths.org/traffic-safety-culture/>

Vision Zero Network

<https://visionzeronetwork.org/>

Center for Health and Safety Culture

<https://chsculture.org/>

FHWA Proven Safety Countermeasures

<https://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/provencountermeasures/>

NHTSA's Countermeasure that Work

[https://www.nhtsa.gov/sites/nhtsa.dot.gov/files/documents/812478\\_v5\\_countermeasures-that-work-a-highway-safety-countermeasures-guide-9thedition-2017.pdf](https://www.nhtsa.gov/sites/nhtsa.dot.gov/files/documents/812478_v5_countermeasures-that-work-a-highway-safety-countermeasures-guide-9thedition-2017.pdf)

FoRRRwd

<https://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/FoRRRwd/>

LRSP DIY Site

<https://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/LRSPDIY/>

Rural Opportunities to Use Transportation for Economic Success (ROUTES)

<https://www.transportation.gov/rural>







# Contact Information

***If you have any questions related to this presentation,  
please contact:***

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