A County’s Experience: Traffic Safety

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Southern county of Portland, OR metropolitan area

Clackamas County, Oregon
Background:

County Population of 415,000

Rural vs. Urban

People must drive further in rural areas to reach destinations and emergency response times can be longer than in urban areas. Speeds are also higher than in urban areas and there are fewer transportation options. As a result, rural areas are more susceptible to severe crashes than urban areas. As shown below, 45% of reported severe crashes occurred in rural areas, while 20% of the population lives in rural areas.*

*Clackamas County, TSAP 2019
The Problem

- The landscape and design
- Land use
- Access to emergency services and trauma centers
- Lack of mobility
- Lack of financial resources
Contributing Factors for Crashes

The most frequent contributing factors in reported crashes are:

- **Inexperienced Drivers**
- **Roadway Departures**
- **Aggressive Driving**

### Fatal and Serious Injury Crashes by Contributing Factor

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inexperienced Drivers</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roadway Departures</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aggressive Driving</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motorcyclists</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alcohol/Drug</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Drivers</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedestrians and Bicyclists</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The most frequent contributing factors to fatal and serious injury crashes are:

- **Inexperienced Drivers:** Crashes in which the driver was 25 years of age or younger.
- **Roadway Departures:** Crashes in which the vehicle left the roadway or crossed over the center line.
- **Aggressive Driving:** Crashes in which the driver was driving too fast for conditions, following too closely, failing to avoid vehicle ahead, or exceeding the posted speed limit.
- **Motorcyclists:** Crashes involving a motorcycle driver or passenger.
- **Alcohol/Drug:** Crashes in which the driver was under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- **Senior Drivers:** Crashes in which the driver was 65 years old or older.
- **Pedestrians and Bicyclists:** Crashes involving a person walking or bicycling.

*Clackamas County, TSAP 2019*
What makes a rural setting so hard?

- Curves: vertical and horizontal
- Lack of edge lines
- Dark, wet and snowy roads
- Hard to maintain a spread out system
- Lack of grid means intersections are sometimes oddly oriented.
Horizontal and Vertical Curves

Roads that hug the terrain.

*Clackamas County*
Lack of edge lines

Growth in LDA technology requires dual edge lines.

*Clackamas County*
Unlit winding roads

Dark
Wet
Snow

"Cold" by lakeewentworth licensed under CC BY-NC 2.0
Non-grid system

* Google Maps 2019
Standards that miss a little bit if not completely
What the big cities can do that we can’t:

- Set own speeds
- Camera Enforcement
- Pilot projects
- Specialists on the team

* “Red-light cameras now 24/7 to cut crashes, save lives” BY bc Gov Photos licensed under CC BY-NC-ND 2.0
The Opportunity

- Local road funds
- Create IGA’s
- Collaborative partners
- Under the radar
- Flexible government

* “A low flying RAF jet in the Yarrow Valley” by Walter Baxter licensed under CC BY SA 2.0

* Clackamas County
Collaboration is Essential

- Public Health
- Emergency Services
- Sheriff (separately elected)
- Other municipalities/towns
- Other local law enforcement
- State liquor license compliance team
- Nonprofits focused on health and addiction
So, what is that we do?

- Low cost, proven measures for infrastructure
- Working to establish a positive safe driving culture
- Investing local funds in road safety
- No fear of failure
Low cost improvements

COUNTERMEASURE SELECTOR

- Rumble Strips
- High Friction Surface Treatment
- Delineators
- 6" Edgeline
- Center Reflectorized Buttons
- Curve Signing
- Stop Signs
- Flashers
- Traffic Signal
Examples

* “Radar speed sign” by Richard Drdul BY CC SA 2.0

* “Centerline Rumble Strip” by SayCheeeeese

* Clackamas County

* Clackamas County
Vehicle Wraps

Clackamas County 2018
In the classroom

A Designated Driver is a FRIEND FOR LIFE!!

CALL A FRIEND STAY SAFE!

IF YOU DRINK & DRIVE
YOUR dog
WON'T KNOW WHY YOU DIDN'T COME HOME
In the auditorium
At events
Partners
Lessons learned

- Stay under the radar
- Keep things lean
- Get everyone to buy in, early.
- Tie into economic opportunities and safety (and not mode shift).
- Use microtargeting and social marketing principles.
Questions?
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