

METRO-MOBILITY TALKS

Designing For Pedestrian Safety

DEVELOPING GOOD PRACTICES TO ENHANCE SAFETY & ACCESSIBILITY

Nearly 5,000 pedestrians are killed in traffic related accidents each year and almost 70,000 are injured. Most of these deaths and injuries occur on roads designed with little attention for pedestrian safety.

In an effort to prevent such accidents in the Corpus Christi area, Corpus Christi Metropolitan Planning Organization (CCMPO) invited FHWA, local agencies and municipal committees responsible for pedestrian safety to participate in a two-day workshop entitled "Designing for Pedestrian Safety." The workshop, funded by the Federal Highway Administration, was hosted by the Corpus Christi MPO.

The free workshop was facilitated by Peter Eun, a safety engineer with the Federal Highway Administration Resource Center, and Pete Rusch, P.E., a highway safety engineer with Peter LLC. Eun and Rusch are among the country's top pedestrian safety experts.

The goal of the workshop was to make participants aware of issues that cause roads to be unfriendly to pedestrians and to learn about solutions that will make the community a safer and more pleasant place to walk.

The nearly 5,000 pedestrian deaths that occur each year represent about 12 percent of all traffic deaths. Most occur when a pedestrian crosses a road; pedestrians are rarely killed in "walkable environments".

The workshop included a "walking audit" of a problem area so that participants could better understand and identify obstacles to pedestrian safety. Participants then discussed potential short- and long-term solutions to the problems that were identified.

Planning elements discussed included land use, street connectivity, access management, site design, and level of service. The main goals of the workshop were to help traffic engineers and planners to: describe the influence of planning factors such as land use, street connectivity, access management, site design, and level of service; describe how pedestrians should be considered and provided for during the planning, design, work zone, maintenance, and operations phases; describe how human behavior affects interaction between pedestrians and drivers; and identify good practices and effective solutions to enhance pedestrian safety and accessibility.

Workshop sessions included information on sidewalk design elements that impact pedestrian safety; street-crossing principles; and street-crossing countermeasures that will improve pedestrian safety. Intersection geometry, intersections with traffic signals, and freeway interchanges and their impact on pedestrian safety also were discussed.

Day two of the workshop featured information on roundabouts, transit issues such as bus stop location and design, and reducing street width to enhance pedestrian safety without compromising capacity.

After the "walking audit," workshop participants met to problem-solve and brainstorm potential policy changes. They also discussed potential solutions and high-priority policy changes.

If you have any questions regarding this or other Metro-Mobility Talks articles please contact us at ccmpo@cctxmpo.us or visit our website at www.corpuschristi-mpo.org.