



# Needs Assessment Focus Group Meeting

April 2024



# Agenda

- **Why are we here**
- **About Safe Streets and Roads for All**
- **Safe Systems Approach**
- **About the OTO Safety Action Plan**
- **Community input to date**
- **Discussion prompts**
- **Next steps**

# Polling Questions





# Polling Questions



# Why are we here?



# Why?

- **To create a regional safety action plan, focusing on ways to enhance roadway safety for all users in the OTO planning area.**
- **Goal to prevent death and serious injuries on our roadways.**
- **Funded by a Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) grant from USDOT.**

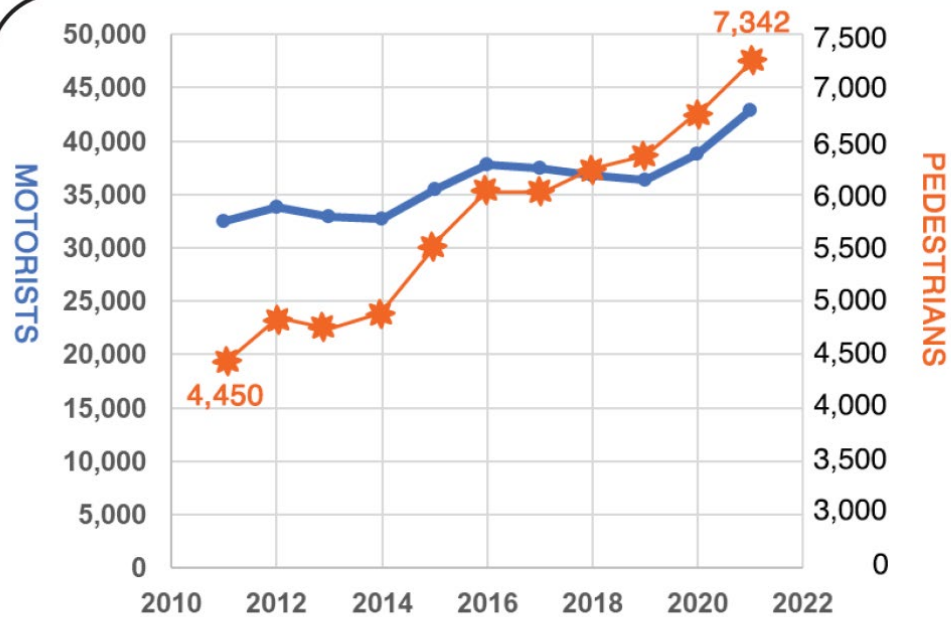
## Since 2020

- ↑ **Fatalities on urban roads up 16%**
- 🚶 **Pedestrian fatalities up 13%**
- 🚲 **Bicycle fatalities up 5%**
- 🚦 **Speeding related fatalities up 5%**

Source: National Traffic Highway Safety Administration

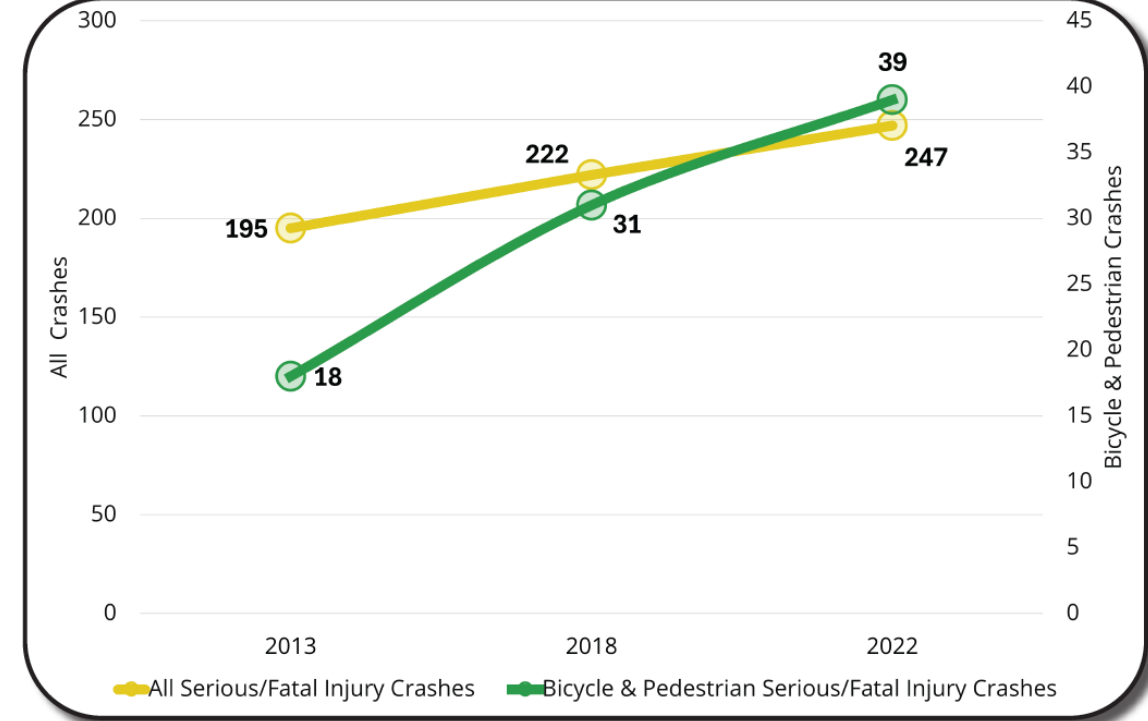
# Why?

Crash Fatalities by Year and Type



Source: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

OTO Fatal & Serious Injury Crashes (2013-2022)



# Why?

- **Vulnerable road users are at a much higher risk of being involved in a crash or traffic incident that seriously injures or kills them.**
- **Examples of vulnerable road users include:**
  - **Groups: elderly, children, unhoused, English as a second language, those with special mobility needs (mobility assistance devices, blind, deaf, etc.) and/or**
  - **Modes: those who walk, bike, or motorcycle**

## Vulnerable Road Users



# Why?

## Needs assessment of vulnerable road users

- **Vulnerable road users are also the ones most often underrepresented during the planning and design process of our transportation networks, which perpetuates the situation and continues to put them at a higher risk of injury or death on our roadways.**
- **We want to hear your perspective on the unique mobility needs of the groups with which you interact.**
- **We will have an opportunity to discuss in-depth later in this meeting.**

# Enter: Safe Streets & Roads For All



# About SS4A

- **Established from the 2022 Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and allocated \$5 billion from 2022-2026.**
- **Supports USDOT's goal of reaching zero roadway deaths.**
- **Program funds regional, local, and tribal initiatives through grants to prevent roadway deaths and serious injuries.**
- **This is a Planning Grant. There are also Demonstration & Implementation grants available once a plan is in place.**

*\$1-2 trillion bill with over \$5-billion over 5 years to SS4A*



<https://www.ozarkstransportation.org/ss4a>

# About SS4A

- **Planning Grants – to develop a safety action plan (this project!)**
- **Supplemental Planning Activities**
  - **Plan updates, road safety audits, follow up analysis, stakeholder engagement, education**
- **Demonstration Activities**
  - **Feasibility studies, MUTCD engineering studies, pilot programs (behavioral, operational or new technology)**
- **Implementation Grants**
  - **Implement strategies identified in the Safety Action Plan**
  - **Must have safety plan in place to be eligible**

## SS4A Timeline

- 5 years of funding
- Round 3 grant NOFO now open
- Closes 8/29/24
- 2 more funding cycles

# Safe Systems Approach



# Safe Systems

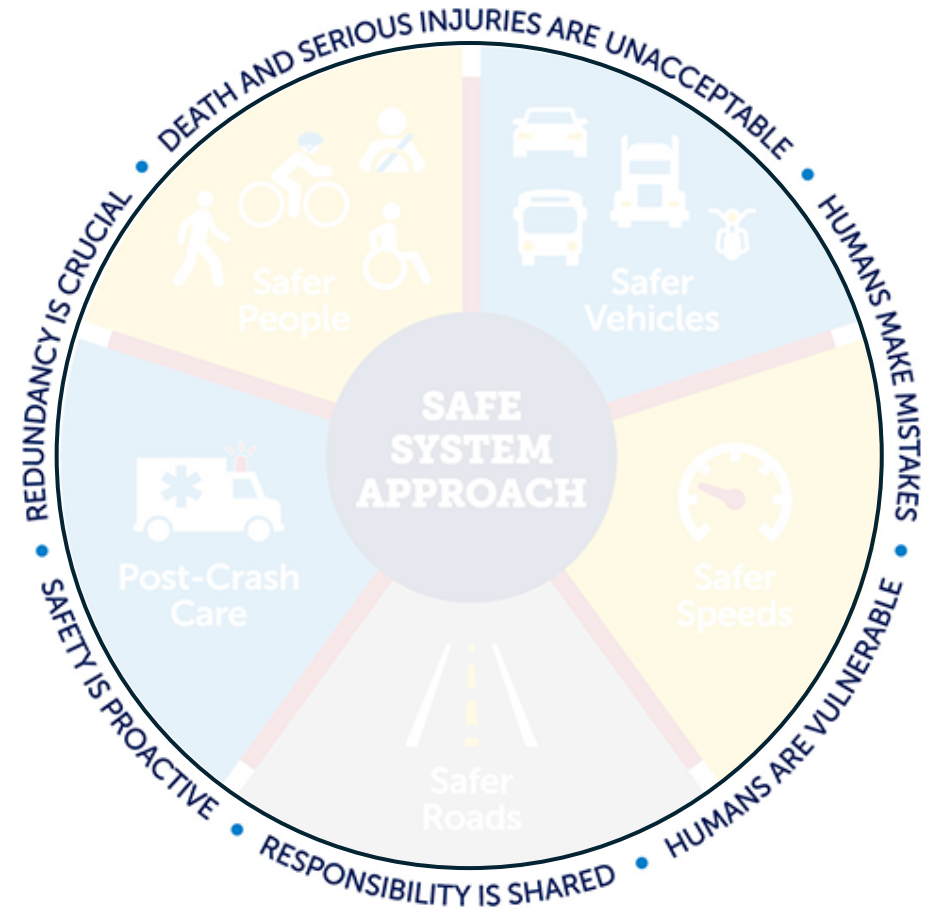
- **Guiding paradigm from USDOT to address roadway safety.**
- **A comprehensive approach: emphasis on human mistakes AND human vulnerability.**
- **A focus on: Infrastructure, human behavior, responsible oversight of the vehicle and transportation industry, and emergency response.**



# Safe Systems

## Principles of a Safe System Approach

- **Death and serious injuries are unacceptable**
- **Humans make mistakes**
- **Humans are vulnerable**
- **Responsibility is shared**
- **Safety is proactive**
- **Redundancy is crucial**



# Safe Systems

## Objectives of a Safe System Approach

- **Safer people**
- **Safe vehicles**
- **Safer speeds**
- **Safer roads**
- **Post-crash care**



# About the OTO Plan



# OTO Plan

- **Existing Conditions & Initial Input**
- **Needs Assessment**
- **Concept Refinement**
- **Draft Plan**
- **Final Plan Adoption**

## PLAN TIMELINE

### EXISTING CONDITIONS & INITIAL INPUT

Safety analysis & risk  
identification  
Community meetings &  
online survey  
**January - March 2024**



01

02



### NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Needs assessment  
Project development  
Prioritization  
**March - June 2024**

**We are here**

### CONCEPT REFINEMENT

Share initial safety project  
recommendations at open  
houses & a pop-up  
demonstration  
**July & August 2024**



03

04



### DRAFT PLAN

Draft plan review  
**September 2024**

### FINAL PLAN ADOPTION

Adoption by OTO Board of  
Directors  
**October - November 2024**



05

<https://www.ozarkstransportation.org/ss4a>

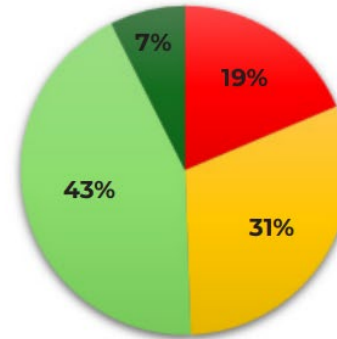
# Community Input to Date



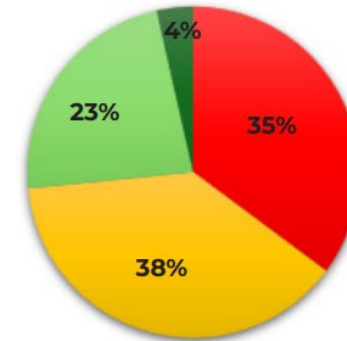
# Input

- **Drivers have the highest level of comfort**
- **Bicyclists have the lowest level of comfort**

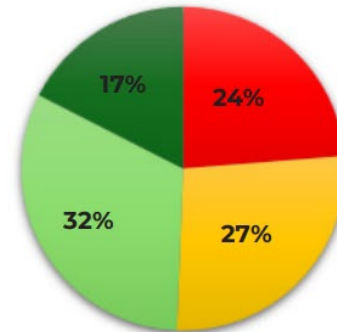
Comfort Level While Walking



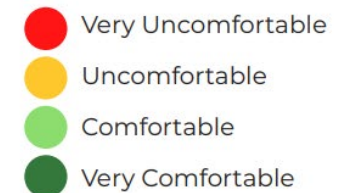
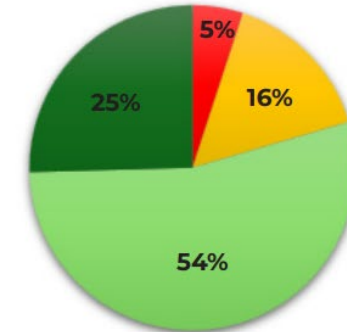
Comfort Level While Bicycling



Comfort Level While Using Transit

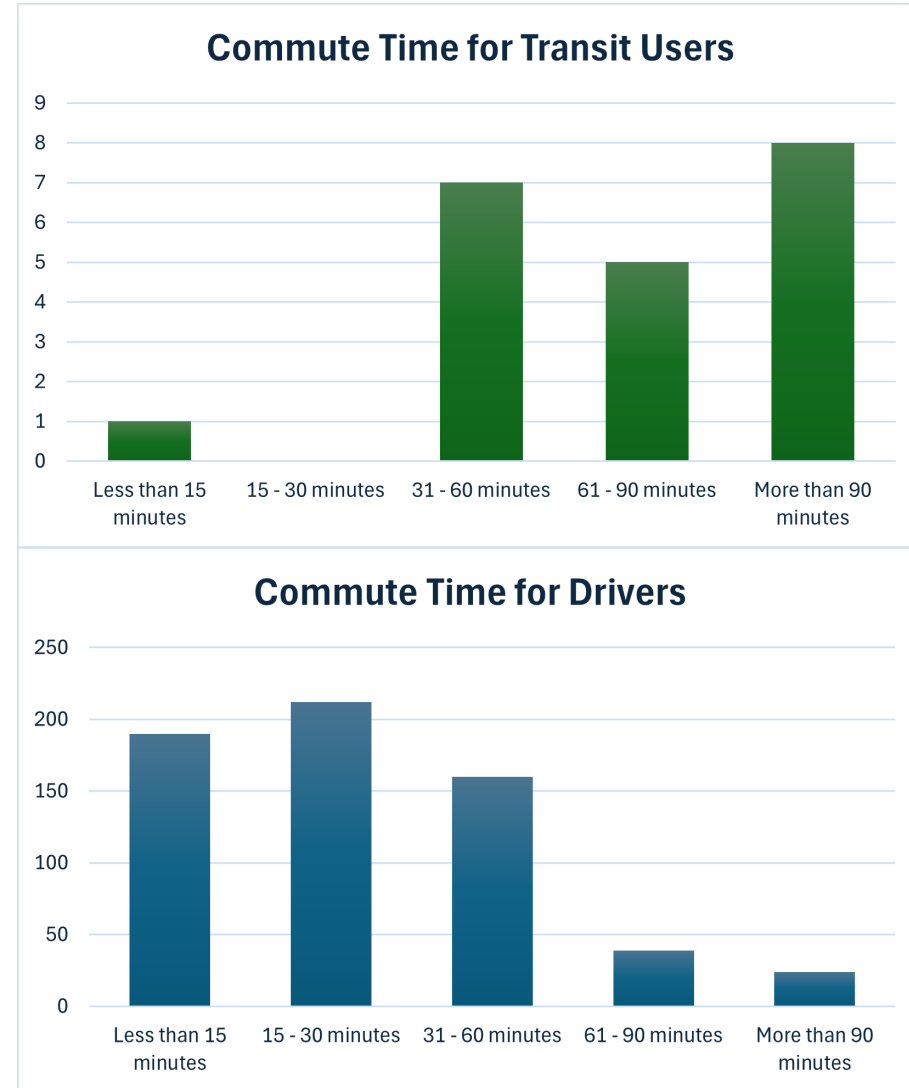


Comfort Level While Driving



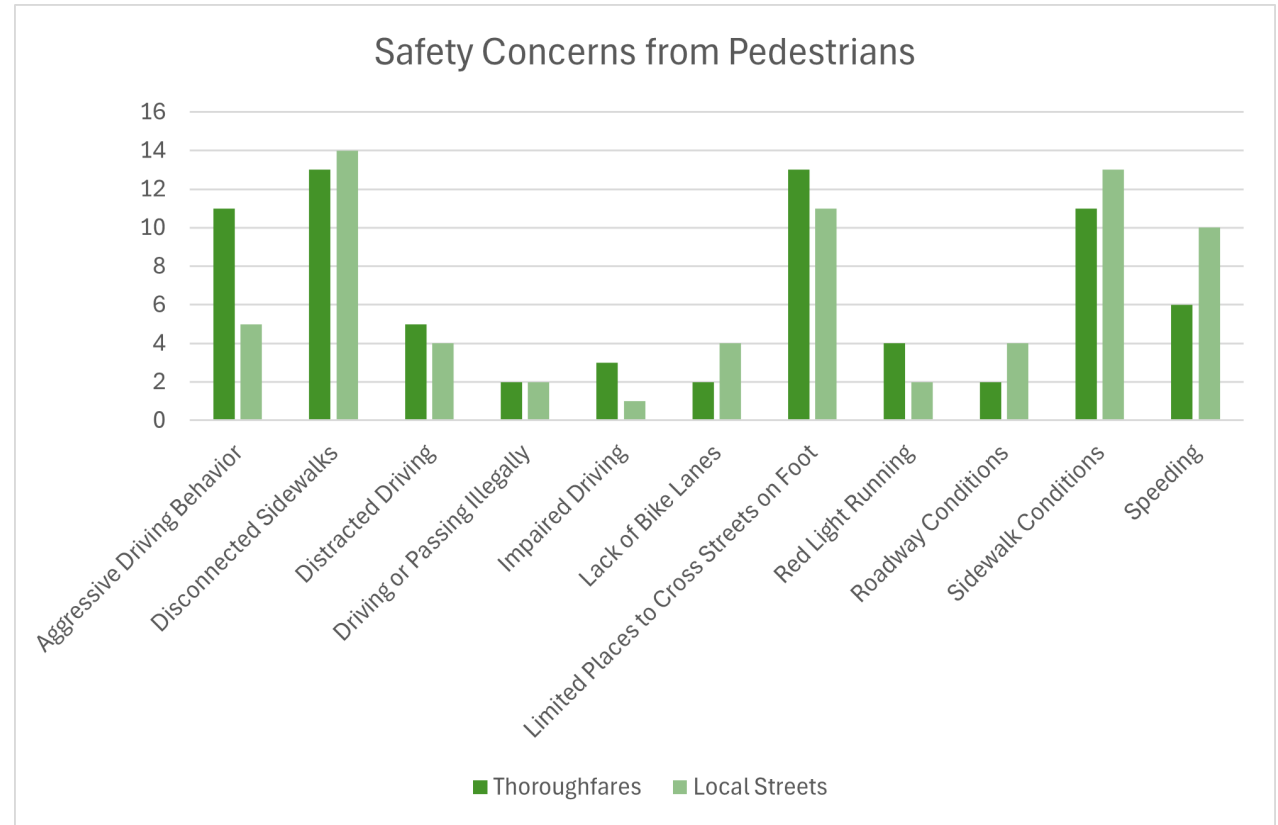
# Input

- **People who take transit have much longer commutes than those who drive to and from work**
- **Puts people who rely on transit at a disadvantage**
- **Discourages others from using transit**



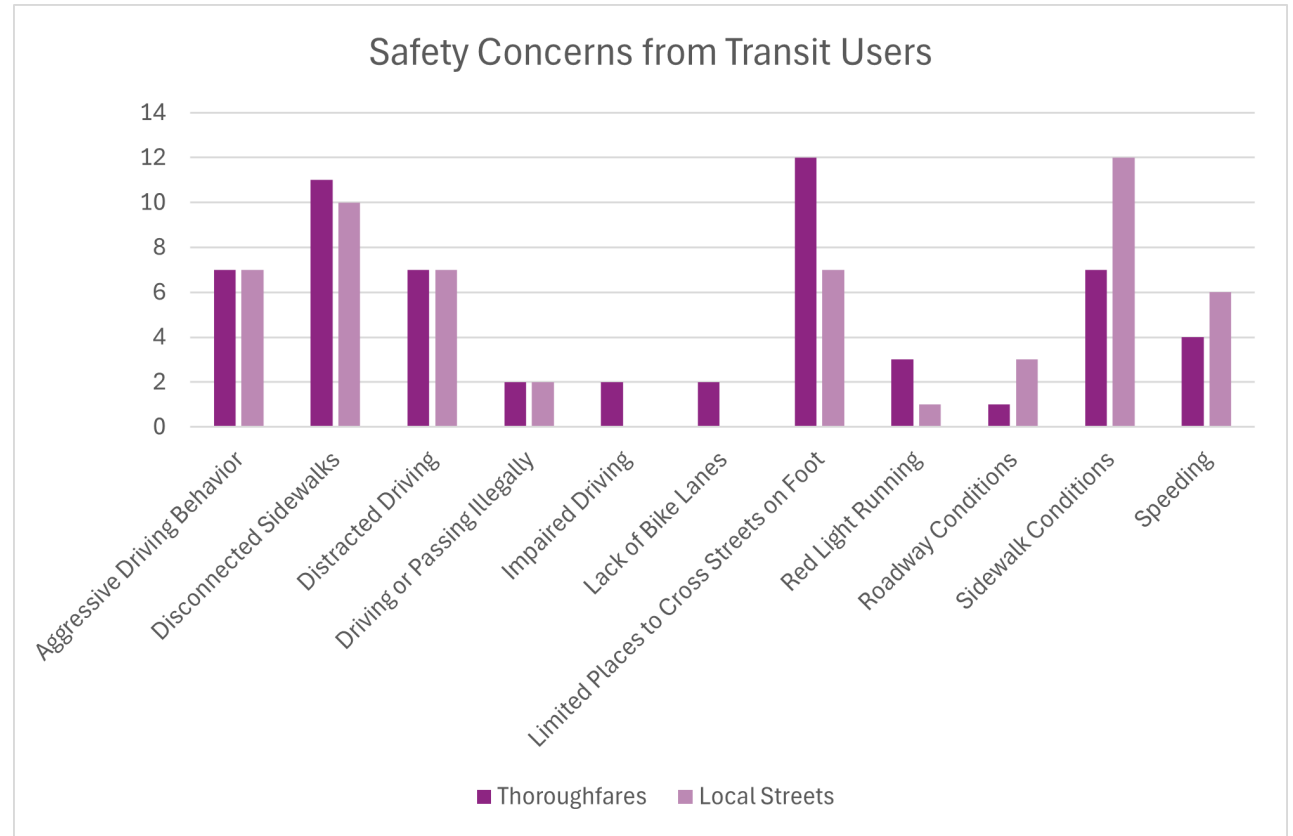
# Input

- **Pedestrians are concerned about sidewalks and limited places to cross streets, and dangerous driving behavior**



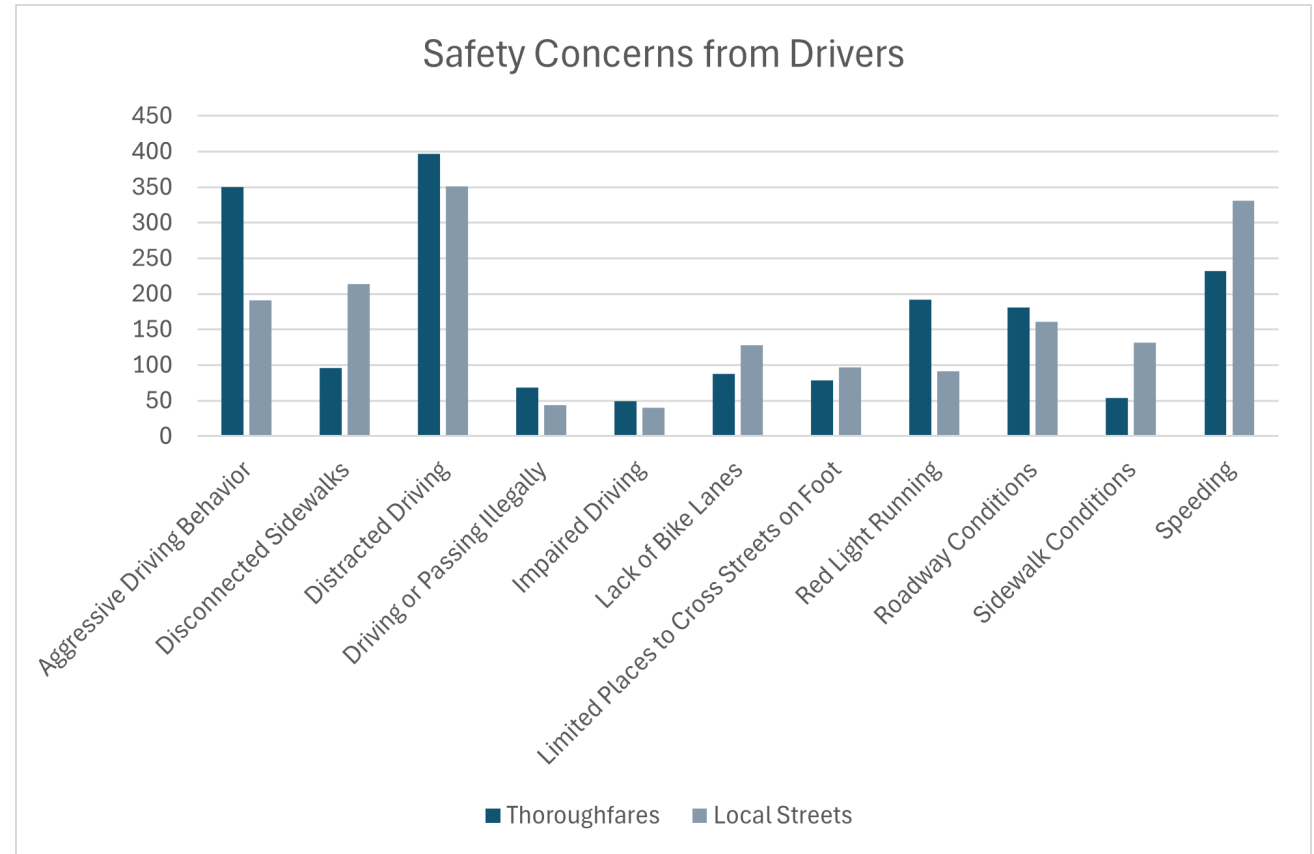
# Input

- **Transit users have similar concerns that pedestrians have**
- **people taking the bus are also pedestrians when walking to and from bus stops**



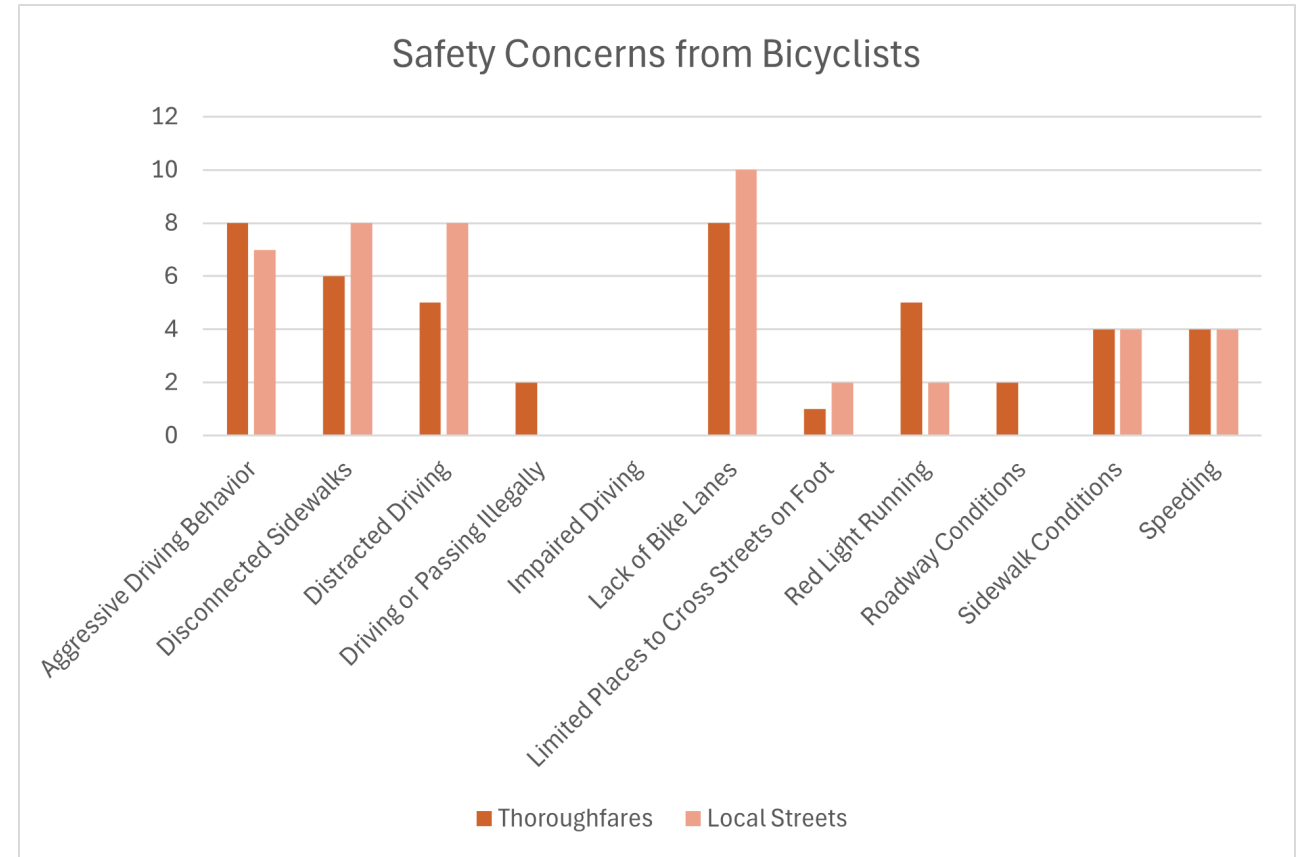
# Input

- **Drivers concerned about other drivers' dangerous behavior**
- **Less concern on pedestrian and bike infrastructure**



# Input

- **Bicyclists are concerned about lack of bike lanes, disconnected sidewalks, and dangerous driving behavior**
- **Bicyclists have to interact with drivers on streets and have no physical protection**



# Let's Discuss!



# Discussion

- **5 minutes of quiet reflection on questions/talking points**
- **Breakout groups – 5 minutes discussion for each prompt**
- **Report back to the larger group**

# Discussion

- **Specific transportation issues that the audience you represent experiences (or aspects that are helpful that should be more widespread)**
- **What are some important pieces of infrastructure to your audience (sidewalks, traffic-controlled crosswalks, audible ped crossings, etc.)**
- **Are there instances where your audience feels like they are not comfortably accommodated when they travel?**
- **What are your audience's safety concerns?**
- **Are there any transportation-related needs/desires from people you represent that they feel are overlooked?**
- **Other comments/general concerns**

# Discussion

- **Any enforcement specific topics that we should consider related to roadway safety in the region?**
- **Any education based topics that we should consider related to roadway safety in the region?**
- **Are there any transportation-related needs/desires from people you represent that they feel are overlooked?**
- **Other comments/general concerns**

# Next Steps



# Next Steps

- **Others from your agency you want to attend? April 18 – virtual format**
- **High Injury Network (HIN) – Lochmueller Group**
- **Late Summer – next round of engagement & workshops**
- **Draft plan early fall**

