

TOMPKINS COUNTY JOINT SAFETY ACTION PLAN

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

April 2025

TOMPKINS COUNTY AND TEN MUNICIPALITIES WITHIN TOMPKINS COUNTY, WITH SUPPORT FROM THE ITHACA-TOMPKINS COUNTY TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL (ITCTC) AND NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (NYSDOT), HAVE COME TOGETHER TO PREPARE A COMPREHENSIVE *SAFE STREETS AND ROADS FOR ALL (SS4A) JOINT SAFETY ACTION PLAN* TO ADDRESS COSTLY MOTOR VEHICLE CRASHES ON THE REGION'S TRANSPORTATION NETWORK.



LEADERSHIP COMMITMENT AND GOAL SETINGS

A Safety Action Plan provides recommendations and strategies to improve safety at identified locations and help eliminate deaths and serious injuries throughout the region, utilizing a comprehensive set of actions that address roadway characteristics and user behavior alike. The goal is to help make Tompkins County safer for all road users including people who drive, walk, bike, or ride transit. This Plan analyzes roadway characteristics, traffic volumes, and local crash data to understand the key factors affecting safety outcomes throughout the transportation network.



PLAN GOAL

Elimination of fatal crashes and a **50% reduction** in serious injury crashes by **2040**

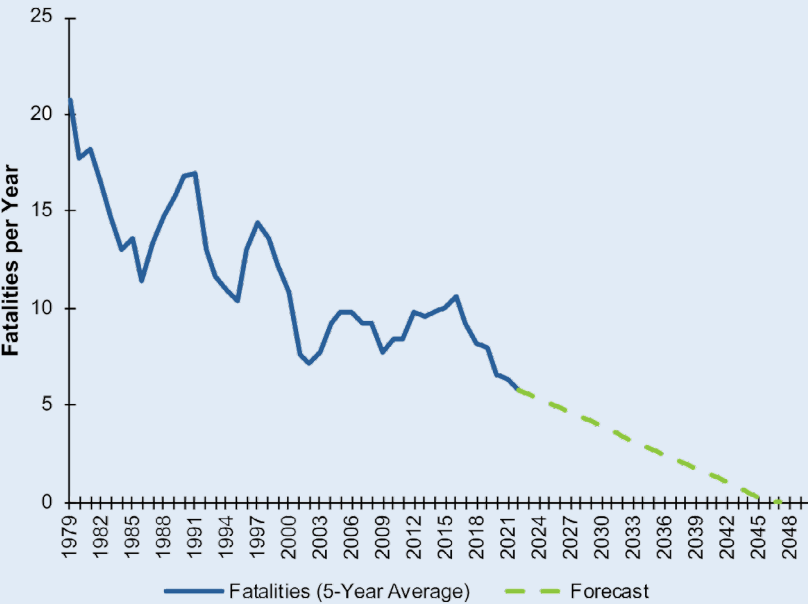


SAFETY ANALYSIS

With traffic fatalities in the single digits for the entire county, Vision Zero is truly within sight. To continue to build on this remarkable accomplishment, targeted, data-driven investments in traffic safety countermeasures can keep Tompkins County on track to achieve zero fatalities.

From the 1980s to the 2020s, regional crash fatalities showed a gradual decline at an average annual rate of three percent. Significant reductions in crash fatalities were first seen in the early 1980s, and then again in the 1990s, both followed by fluctuations natural for this smaller sample size. To account for these fluctuations, five-year averages for annual crash fatalities were calculated using this historical data to provide a simple forecast of future fatalities. Despite a plateauing in fatal crashes in recent years, the overall historical trend in the county points downward, potentially reaching zero before 2050.

Tompkins County Long-Term Trend of Fatalities (1979-2050)



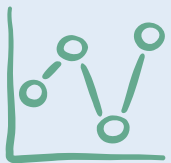
Source: [Fatality Analysis Reporting System \(FARS\)](#).

KEY FINDINGS



Tompkins County experienced **31 fatal crashes between 2019 and 2023**, and thousands more injury and property damage crashes, but these relatively few fatal crashes impose a greater substantial cost - collectively nearly **\$488 million** - than the cost of all injury crashes combined. Highway safety programs should continue a focus on the impacts of passenger vehicles. Most fatal crashes in Tompkins County involved a car, van, or pickup truck, with fewer fatal crashes involving motorcycles, trucks, or buses.

Geographic analysis shows the three jurisdictions with the highest number of crashes were **City of Ithaca** (3,475 crashes, 35.3% of geolocated crashes in the region), **Town of Dryden** (1,514 crashes, 15.4%), and **Town of Lansing** (1,278 crashes, 13.0%).



More crashes (53.9%) occur on roads identified as **urban rather than rural** (46.1%), but rural crashes are more severe and account for 60.3% of all fatalities and serious injuries. In urban areas, most crashes occur on minor arterials (21.9%).

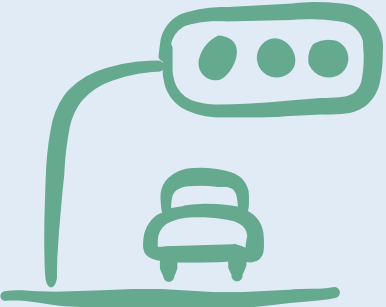


Crashes occur slightly more frequently on NYSDOT owned roads (44.3%), rather than locally-owned roads (37.5%).

Compared to the State of New York, **Tompkins County fared better from 2021-2023 in crash statistics**. The region's motorcyclist and bicyclist fatalities have remained constant. Persons injured in alcohol-involved crashes and distracted driving crashes **decreased faster** than on the state level.



An analysis of crash trends for the Emphasis Areas in New York's 2023-2027 SHSP shows areas in which fatalities and serious injuries had **long-term increases (2019-2023) in Tompkins County** and could be considered for prioritization; this includes **intersection crashes, distracted driving, motorcycle crashes**, and crashes involving **following too closely** or **disregarding traffic control devices**. Roadway departures (the most common crash type in the county), alcohol-impaired driving, nonmotorized road user safety, speeding, crashes involving older drivers, and crashes involving drivers under age 21 also still remain major traffic safety concerns.



Two approaches to safety data analysis were used to help determine where Tompkins County and its municipalities should be focusing safety efforts:

The Hotspot (Reactive) Approach

focuses on sites with the highest potential for safety improvement and is based on crash history, traffic volumes, site characteristics, and other factors.

The Systemic (Proactive) Approach

also focuses on sites with the highest potential for safety improvement but does so from a systemwide perspective. Common crash types and contributing factors represented in the data are identified, then locations where those contributing factors may arise are identified. This approach does not focus on crashes that have already happened.

EQUITY



Calculated equity scores for each 2022 Tompkins County Block Group were created by aggregating scores that corresponded to ten indicators. The calculations used 2018 - 2022 American Community Survey data for the following indicators:

Minority

Limited English proficiency

Disability

Elderly

Youth

Zero car households

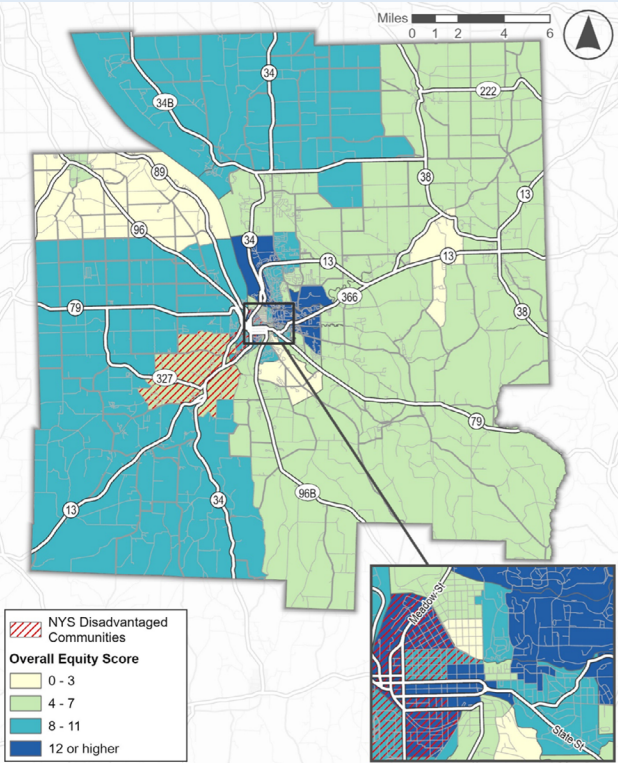
Single mother

Foreign born

Poverty

Educational attainment

Equity Assessment for Tompkins County, NY







This is a map of equity areas in Tompkins County. Block Groups with the darkest coloring and hatched lines are the areas with the highest equity considerations, and the Block Groups with light coloring and no hatched lines are the areas with the lowest equity considerations.

Overall, the total crash rate in equity communities was 18,187 per 100,000 residents, significantly higher than the 12,354 crashes per 100,000 residents in non-disadvantaged communities. These findings underscore the need for targeted investments and resources in these disadvantaged communities to improve roadway safety for the region's most vulnerable residents.

ENGAGEMENT AND COLLABORATION

Throughout this process, the project team worked with transportation safety stakeholders, state partners, and Tompkins County residents to gather feedback. There was also an interactive Feedback Map for public comments on safety issues and concerns. A public-facing online application was created to provide the public with detailed crash statistics for the County, which will continue to be available moving forward. The goal was to hear from members of the public and key stakeholders about their issues and ideas related to transportation safety.



	One-on-One Meetings (11)	One meeting with each municipality (virtual)	March & April 2024
	Multijurisdictional Meetings (3)	Complement one-on-one meetings, provide project updates (virtual)	May & October 2024; March 2025
	Advisory Group Meetings (2)	ITCTC, NYSDOT Region 3, Cornell Univ., Ithaca College, TCAT, etc. (1 in-person, 1 virtual)	August 2024 & February 2025
	Public Meetings (7)	Standalone or coordinated with existing events (4 in-person, 3 virtual)	4: July 2024 2: December 2024 1: April 2025

Key themes from the public engagement process included:

- Specific concerns around safety on major state roadways including NY-13 and NY-96, particularly as these roadways bisect downtowns, and contribute to speeding and unsafe conditions for pedestrians;
- Sight distance issues at geometrically abnormal intersections and areas with dramatic topography;
- Speeding concerns; and
- Interest in more pedestrian facilities, including sidewalks, crosswalks, and around crossings for existing and planned trails and at key destinations.

PLANNING STRUCTURE AND OVERSIGHT

Project Team meetings made up of representatives of the ten municipalities and Tompkins County, ITCTC, and NYSDOT Region 3 were held biweekly. Multijurisdictional meetings, which included the project team as well as other municipality staff, were held three times throughout the planning process in May and October 2024 and in March 2025. Multijurisdictional meetings also served as touch points with municipality representatives that were not able to join all biweekly meetings.



Advisory Committee meetings were held in August 2024 and February 2025 to engage key stakeholders outside of the municipal representatives throughout the study. These stakeholders were invited to join and participate in meetings to get updates on the study's status and to provide feedback on concerns and recommendations from their unique perspectives. These included the project team and additional staff, ITCTC, NYSDOT Region 3, Cornell University, Ithaca College, Tompkins Cortland Community College, Tompkins Consolidated Area Transit (TCAT), Bike Walk Tompkins, Downtown Ithaca Alliance, The Center for Community Transportation, Tompkins County Office for the Aging and Health Department, Upstate University Hospital Trauma Injury Prevention , City of Ithaca Vision Zero Partners, and State and local law enforcement agencies.



POLICY AND PROCESS REVIEW

After a review of current transportation safety policies and procedures related to Tompkins County, the Plan provides recommendations based on national best practices to reduce serious injuries and fatalities for the following topic areas:

Project Development

Complete Streets

Reduce Speed Limits

Vision Zero Action Plan & Data Monitoring

Design Standards

Safe Routes to School (SRTS)

Education

Traffic Violation Monitoring Systems

Speed Monitoring Displays

Vulnerable Road Users & Equity

Work Zone Safety

Data

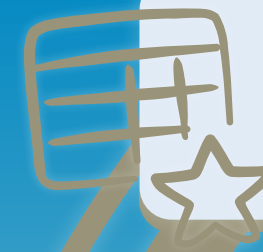


STRATEGY AND PROJECT SELECTIONS

This Plan provides a comprehensive set of projects and strategies to address the challenges identified in the Action Plan development process. These were determined by local data, best practices, stakeholder input, and equity considerations. All recommendations align with both the Safe System Approach and the New York SHSP. The projects and strategies are provided within three elements in the Plan:



Twenty-one profiles of priority locations, including project recommendations and cost estimates



Tables of Systemic Treatment Packages for Intersections, Pedestrians, Roadway Departures, and Speed Management that summarize NYSDOT-approved countermeasures

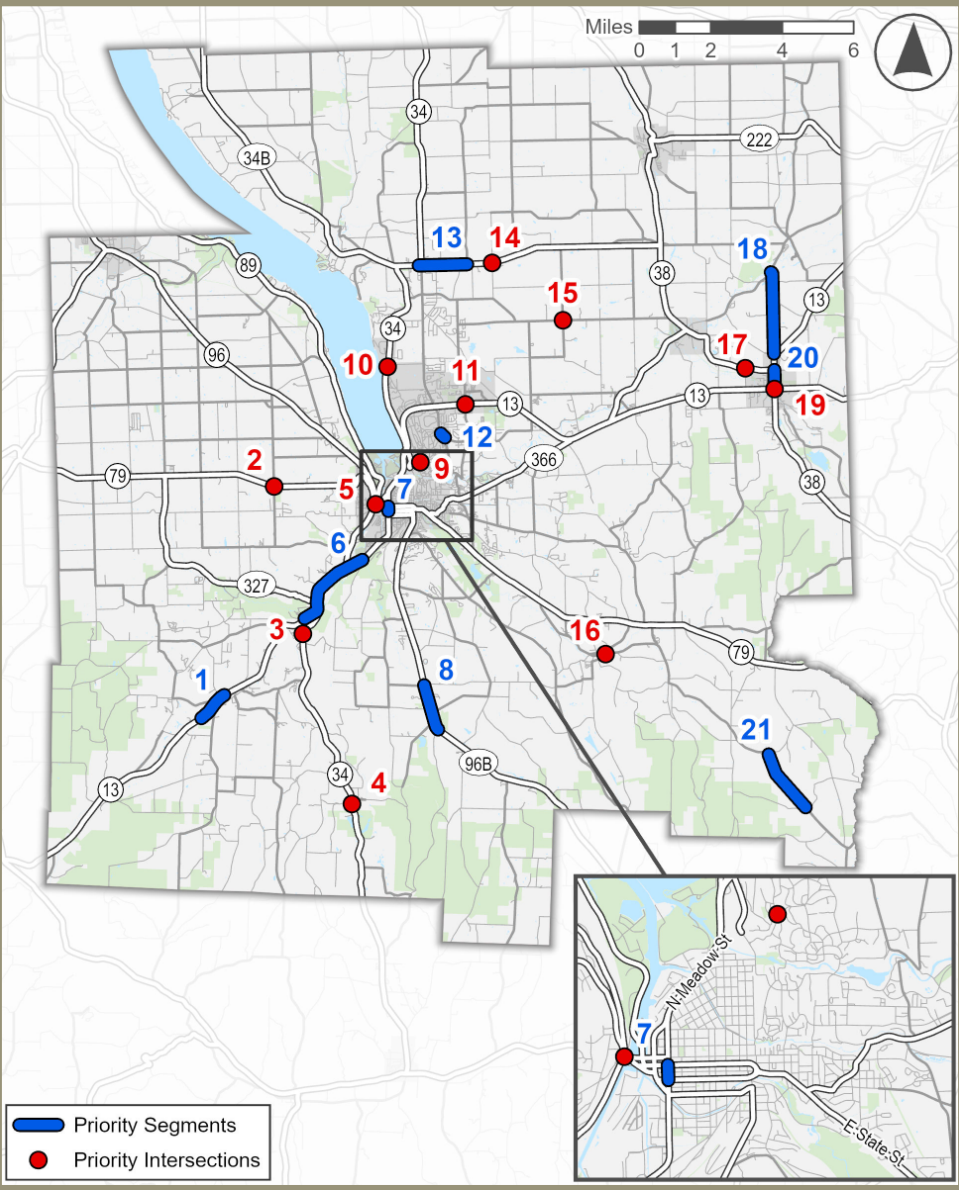


A table of tailored, recommended actions (organized by Emphasis Areas and strategies) with suggested action leaders, the associated safe system element, level of resources needed, and timeline

FINAL PRIORITY LOCATION NETWORK LIST

#	Location	Municipality	Population Center	Ownership	Type
1	NY-13 NB between Prootts Hill Rd & Main Street	Town of Newfield	-	NYSDOT	Segment
2	Mecklenburg Road (NY-79)/ Sheffield Road	Town of Ithaca	-	NYSDOT owns Mecklenburg Rd (NY-79); Tompkins County owns Sheffield Rd	Intersection
3	West Danby Road (NY-34/96)/ Decker Road	Town of Newfield	-	NYSDOT owns NY 34/96; Town of Newfield owns Decker Rd	Intersection
4	Station Road/Maple Avenue and Route 34/96	Town of Danby	West Danby CDP		Intersection
5	Floral Avenue/Elm Street/Hector Street	City of Ithaca	-	City of Ithaca	Intersection
6	NY-13 from the Town of Newfield/ Town of Ithaca Line to the City of Ithaca	Town of Ithaca	-	NYSDOT	Segment
7	NY-13 NB between West Seneca Street & West Green Street	City of Ithaca	-	NYSDOT	Segment
8	Route 96B from Miller Road to Michigan Hollow Road	Town of Danby	-	NYSDOT	Segment
9	Cayuga Heights and Wyckoff Street	Village of Cayuga Heights	-	Village of Cayuga Heights	Intersection
10	Cayuga Heights Road & East Shore Drive	Village of Lansing	-	Village of Lansing	Intersection
11	NY-13 & Warren Road	Village of Lansing	-	Village of Lansing	Intersection
12	Hanshaw Road	Village of Cayuga Heights	-	Village of Cayuga Heights	Segment
13	NY-34B NB between NY-34 & Van Ostrand Road	Town of Lansing	South Lansing CDP	NYSDOT	Segment
14	Peruville Road (NY-34B) & Scofield Road	Town of Lansing	-	NYSDOT owns Peruville Rd (NY-34B); Town of Lansing owns Scofield Rd	Intersection
15	Sheldon Road and West Dryden Road	Town of Dryden	-	Tompkins County	Intersection
16	Valley Road/Lounsberry Road	Town of Caroline	-	Tompkins County	Intersection

#	Location	Municipality	Population Center	Ownership	Type
17	Freeville Road (NY-38) & Springhouse Road	Town of Dryden	Brooktondale CDP	NYSDOT owns NY-38; Town of Dryden owns Springhouse Rd	Intersection
18	North Road between Fall Creek Road & NY-13	Town of Dryden/ Village of Dryden	-	Tompkins County	Segment
19	NY-13 & W Main Street	Village of Dryden	-	NYSDOT	Intersection
20	NY-13 NB between NY-38 & W Main Street	Village of Dryden	-	NYSDOT	Segment
21	Seventy Six Road between Yapple Road & Smith Road	Town of Caroline	-	Tompkins County	Segment



PROGRESS AND TRANSPARENCY METHODS



The Plan goal to eliminate fatal crashes and reduce serious injury crashes by 50% by 2040 will require a collaborative effort among the project team and stakeholders. Tracking and reporting measures will provide transparency in how the region is progressing towards the Plan goal and eventually to Vision Zero. The project team will produce a public, annual report with measures such as number of fatalities and serious injuries, as well as measures focused on what actions and recommendations are being implemented.

It is recommended that this Plan coordinates its update with the State-level plan updates in 2028. However, in the meantime, it should be treated as a living document that is continuously referenced and updated as needed.

Next steps for the project team include designating a Tompkins County SS4A Joint Safety Action Plan Vision Zero Coordinator and pursuing additional funding opportunities, including SS4A Implementation Grants.

