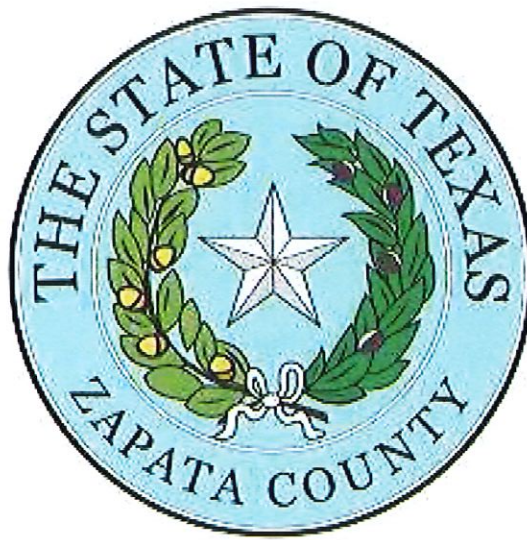


COMPREHENSIVE SAFETY ACTION PLAN



Zapata County

200 7th Avenue, Zapata, Texas 78076

Table of Contents

Resolution	3
Planning Structure.....	4
Safety Analysis	4
Engagement and Collaboration	6
Policy and Process Changes.....	8
Strategy and Project Selections	9
Progress and Transparency	10

RESOLUTION

Zapata County

Comprehensive Safety Action Plan Resolution

Resolution for Adopting Comprehensive Safety Action Plan for Zapata County

Recognizing the urgent need to enhance roadway safety for all residents and travelers in our region, we affirm the importance of developing a Comprehensive Safety Action Plan that identifies and addresses the systemic causes of traffic-related fatalities and serious injuries. Grounded in the principles of the Safe System Approach, this plan will prioritize data driven solutions and infrastructure improvements that promote safer mobility for pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and commercial vehicle operators.

As part of this commitment, the County of Zapata, Texas, has set a clear and measurable safety target: to reduce roadway fatalities and serious injuries by 30% by the year 2035, with a focused emphasis on improving safety conditions along major roadways throughout the county. This target will guide our investment strategies, policy reforms, and project prioritizations as we work collaboratively to build a safer transportation network for all.

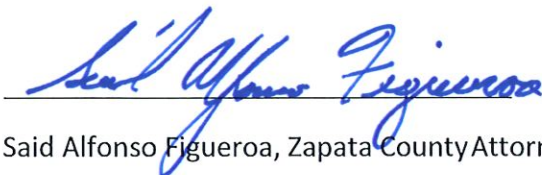
Passed, approved, and adopted by the Zapata County Commissioner's Court this 5th day of May 2025.

Acknowledgement:



Judge Joe Rathmell, Zapata County Judge

ATTESTED TO:



Said Alfonso Figueroa, Zapata County Attorney

PLANNING STRUCTURE

To ensure accountable oversight and effective coordination in the development, implementation, and monitoring of the Comprehensive Safety Action Plan, Zapata County has designated the Zapata County Commissioners Court as the official planning and governance body for this initiative. The Commissioners Court, as the county's governing authority, is composed of elected officials who represent the interests of the community and possess the institutional knowledge and authority to guide infrastructure, policy, and safety-related decisions.

The Commissioners Court will provide strategic leadership throughout the Action Plan process by:

- Overseeing the allocation of resources and prioritization of safety initiatives;
- Reviewing safety data and performance metrics to inform decision-making;
- Facilitating coordination among county departments, local stakeholders, and relevant transportation agencies;
- Ensuring alignment with regional and state transportation safety goals;
- Promoting public transparency and engagement through regular updates and open meetings.

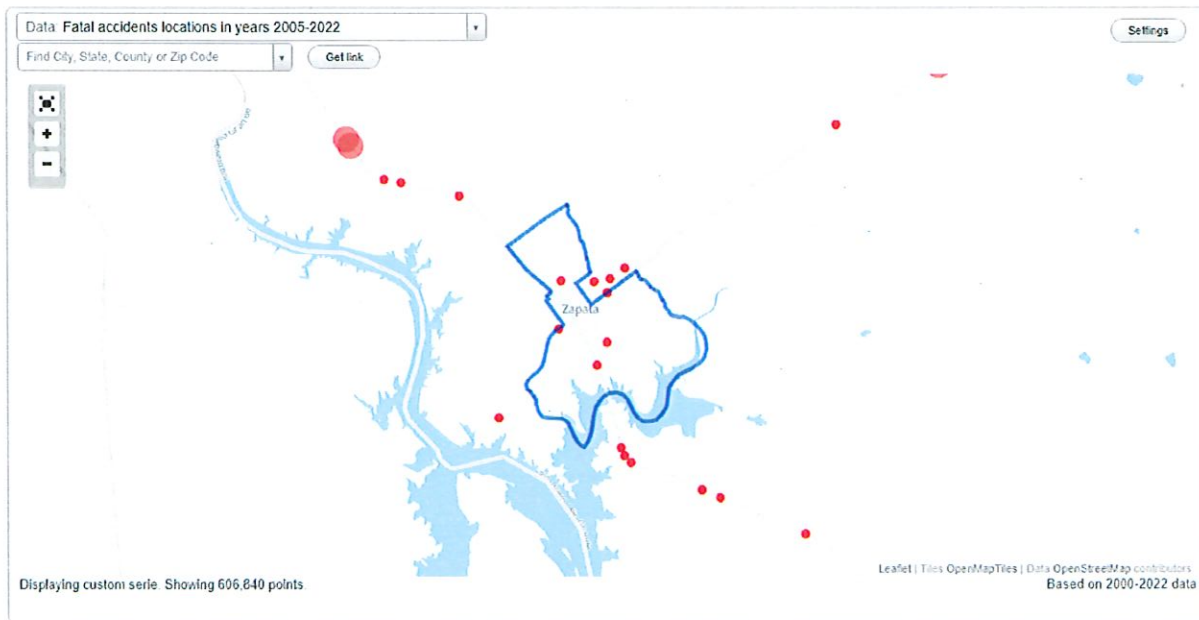
This centralized planning structure reflects the county's commitment to a coordinated, system-wide approach to roadway safety and ensures that all phases of the Action Plan are grounded in accountable and representative leadership.

SAFETY ANALYSIS

Zapata County, Texas, faces significant roadway safety challenges, as evidenced by recent crash data. According to the Texas Department of Transportation's 2023 report:

- Fatal Crashes: 2
- Fatalities: 2
- Suspected Serious Injury Crashes: 4
- Suspected Serious Injuries: 4
- Suspected Minor Injury Crashes: 27
- Suspected Minor Injuries: 44

- Possible Injury Crashes: 6
- Possible Injuries: 15
- Non-Injury Crashes: 48
- Non-Injuries: 121
- Unknown Severity Crashes: 2
- Unknown Injuries: 7
- Total Crashes: 89



These figures highlight the pressing need for targeted safety interventions in the county.

High-Injury Network Identification:

Preliminary analyses indicate that major roadways such as U.S. Highway 83 and State Highway 16 are critical corridors with elevated crash frequencies. These routes are vital for regional connectivity and economic activity but have also been the sites of severe incidents. For instance, a recent crash on SH 16 near Zapata resulted in multiple fatalities and injuries, underscoring the urgency for safety enhancements on these highways.

Contributing Factors:

Several factors contribute to the high incidence of crashes in Zapata County:

- Speeding: Excessive speeds on rural highways increase the severity of crashes.
- Impaired Driving: Alcohol and drug impairment remain significant issues.
- Distracted Driving: The use of mobile devices and other distractions contribute to driver inattention.

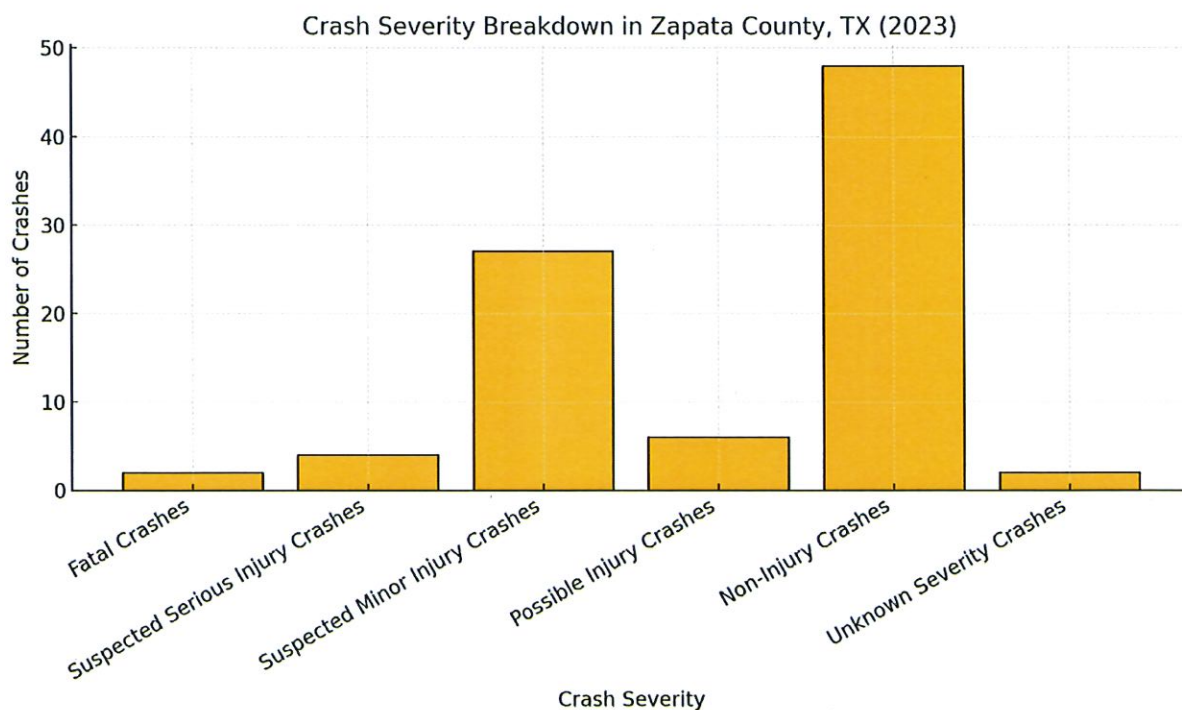
- Lack of Infrastructure: Limited pedestrian crossings, lighting, and signage exacerbate safety risks.

Data Sources and Methodology:

This analysis utilizes data from the Texas Department of Transportation's Crash Records Information System (CRIS) and local law enforcement reports. Geographic Information System (GIS) tools were employed to map crash hotspots and identify high-risk areas.

Next Steps:

The findings from this safety analysis will inform the development of targeted strategies and projects aimed at reducing roadway fatalities and serious injuries by 30% by 2035. Emphasis will be placed on infrastructure improvements, policy changes, and community engagement initiatives.



ENGAGEMENT AND COLLABORATION

The success of the Zapata County Comprehensive Safety Action Plan relies on active engagement and meaningful collaboration with the community and key stakeholders. From the

early stages of planning through implementation, Zapata County is committed to a transparent, inclusive process that incorporates public input, interagency coordination, and local expertise.

Community Engagement Strategy

Zapata County will implement a multi-modal engagement strategy to ensure residents have opportunities to participate and provide input. Planned outreach activities include:

- Public town halls and open houses hosted in accessible community centers;
- Bilingual surveys (English and Spanish) distributed online and in print to capture diverse perspectives;
- Focus groups with vulnerable populations, including youth, older adults, and individuals with disabilities;
- Outreach via local media, schools, and churches to ensure broad awareness.

Feedback gathered through these efforts will inform key decisions in identifying safety priorities, selecting project locations, and shaping policy recommendations.

Stakeholder Coordination

Zapata County will coordinate closely with a range of partners to align efforts and maximize impact. These include:

- Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) for data, technical guidance, and project alignment;
- Zapata County Sheriff's Office and local emergency responders to integrate enforcement and post-crash care strategies;
- Local school districts to address safety concerns related to school zones and student travel;
- Regional planning entities and transportation engineers to ensure technical feasibility and consistency with broader plans;
- Community-based organizations to reach underserved and at-risk populations.

The Commissioners Court will oversee interagency coordination, ensure regular updates are shared publicly, and promote accountability through quarterly progress briefings.

Alignment with Existing Plans

Zapata County will align this Action Plan with regional transportation plans, hazard mitigation plans, and other ongoing planning efforts. Overlapping jurisdictions and agencies will be invited to participate in the planning process to avoid redundancy and ensure shared ownership of outcomes.

POLICY AND PROCESS CHANGES

A critical component of the Zapata County Comprehensive Safety Action Plan is the identification and advancement of policy and process changes that support a culture of safety and prioritize the prevention of roadway fatalities and serious injuries. Through this plan, the County will assess current standards, regulations, and operational procedures that influence roadway design, traffic enforcement, and transportation planning.

Assessment of Current Policies

Zapata County will undertake a formal review of existing local policies and procedures, including:

- Roadway design standards and signage criteria;
- Speed management policies, particularly on rural highways and in high-risk zones;
- Right-of-way permitting procedures;
- School zone traffic controls and crossing guard protocols;
- Emergency response procedures related to post-crash care.

This assessment will be conducted in consultation with contracted county engineers, TxDOT representatives, law enforcement, and planning staff to identify where existing policies may unintentionally deprioritize safety.

Proposed Improvements

Based on the policy review and stakeholder feedback, Zapata County will explore the following improvements:

- Adopting **Complete Streets principles** to ensure all road users—pedestrians, cyclists, motorists, and those with mobility limitations—are safely accommodated;
- Revising roadway classification and speed-setting practices using **context-sensitive design**;
- Enhancing **interdepartmental coordination** to embed safety metrics into capital improvement planning and project scoping;
- Institutionalizing the use of **safety impact assessments** in all roadway project reviews;
- Establishing a formal process for incorporating public safety complaints and crash data into infrastructure maintenance decisions.

Implementation Commitment

The Commissioners Court will lead the adoption of revised policies through local ordinances or administrative guidelines. As part of the plan's implementation, staff training and interagency collaboration will be emphasized to ensure that changes are applied consistently and equitably across the county's transportation network.

By institutionalizing safety-first policies and aligning decision-making processes with national best practices, Zapata County aims to create a lasting shift toward proactive, prevention-focused roadway management.

STRATEGY AND PROJECT SELECTIONS

Based on the findings from the county-wide safety analysis and stakeholder input, Zapata County has identified a comprehensive set of strategies and countermeasures designed to address the most pressing roadway safety issues within its jurisdiction. These projects are informed by crash data, community priorities, and proven interventions aligned with the Safe System Approach.

Prioritization Framework

Zapata County has developed a **prioritization matrix** that considers the following criteria:

- Crash severity and frequency
- Presence of vulnerable road users (e.g., pedestrians, cyclists, schoolchildren)
- Proximity to underserved communities
- Potential for quick, low-cost implementation
- Alignment with long-term capital planning and maintenance cycles

Projects are categorized into short-term (1–2 years), mid-term (3–5 years), and long-term (6–10 years) implementation phases to ensure staged deployment and resource optimization.

Selected Strategies

The following strategies have been selected for inclusion in the Action Plan:

Infrastructure Countermeasures

- **Reconfiguration of high-crash intersections** with improved signage, lighting, and signal timing
- **Installation of pedestrian refuge islands, crosswalks, and flashing beacons** in school zones and high-pedestrian areas
- **Roadway re-striping and traffic calming devices** along residential corridors to reduce speeding
- **Widening road shoulders and installing rumble strips** along rural segments of US Highway 83 and State Highway 16
- **Installation of guardrails, reflective pavement markers, and advanced warning signage** on curves and rural stretches

Behavioral and Operational Strategies

- **Enhanced speed enforcement initiatives** in collaboration with local law enforcement
- **Public safety education campaigns** focused on seatbelt use, impaired driving, and distracted driving
- **School-based outreach** to promote safe travel habits among students and families
- **Driver awareness programs** for commercial vehicle operators who frequently traverse regional freight corridors

Technology and Data

- **Deployment of mobile radar feedback signs** in speeding hotspots

- **Crash data system upgrades** to allow for real-time reporting and better integration with TxDOT systems
- **Feasibility study for vehicle-to-infrastructure (V2I) pilot project** in collaboration with regional partners

Project Listing and Timeline

A detailed list of specific projects, estimated costs, and anticipated timelines will be developed during the next phase of planning. Each proposed intervention will be geolocated within the county's high-injury network and evaluated based on potential impact and feasibility.

PROGRESS AND TRANSPARENCY

To ensure accountability, community trust, and continuous improvement, Zapata County is committed to establishing a clear framework for tracking progress and maintaining transparency throughout the life of the Comprehensive Safety Action Plan.

Performance Measurement

Zapata County will implement a performance monitoring system that evaluates the impact of implemented strategies using key metrics, including:

- Annual number of roadway fatalities and serious injuries
- Crash frequency and severity along identified high-injury corridors
- Completion rates of short-, mid-, and long-term projects
- Public engagement reach (e.g., number of survey respondents, attendees at outreach events)
- Policy and procedural changes adopted by the Commissioners Court

Performance will be assessed annually using a combination of TxDOT's Crash Records Information System (CRIS), local enforcement reports, and community feedback mechanisms.

Public Reporting

The County will publish an **Annual Roadway Safety Progress Report** that summarizes:

- Data trends and outcomes
- Project implementation updates
- Challenges encountered and adjustments made
- Community feedback received
- Upcoming actions and revised priorities

These reports will be posted to the official Zapata County website and made available at public offices such as the county courthouse and libraries.

Transparency Measures

- A dedicated **roadway safety webpage** will house the full Action Plan, progress reports, maps, and contact information.
- Quarterly updates will be presented during public Commissioners Court meetings and archived online.
- A public feedback form will remain open year-round to collect community concerns or recommendations related to roadway safety.

By institutionalizing these transparency and performance practices, Zapata County aims to build public confidence and ensure the Action Plan remains a living document that evolves in response to data, outcomes, and public needs.

