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**USDOT Secretary Buttigieg Joins Roadway Safety Foundation in Honoring Seven  
Life-Saving Projects with 2021 National Roadway Safety Awards**  
*FHWA-RSF Awards Salute 'Highway Heroes' Who Make Their Communities Safer*

WASHINGTON – U.S. Secretary of Transportation Pete Buttigieg, on behalf of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), joined the Roadway Safety Foundation (RSF) today in presenting seven life-saving projects with National Roadway Safety Awards in a virtual ceremony hosted from Capitol Hill.

Representing some of the very best highway safety practices, the seven winners were selected from a nationwide field of applicants for the awards, which are sponsored jointly by FHWA and RSF. Begun in 1999, the biennial program honors projects and programs that cost-effectively help the nation achieve progress toward eliminating highway fatalities and serious injuries.

“Congratulations to today’s seven honorees for the remarkable work they’ve done to protect the traveling public,” said Buttigieg. “They are proof that we have no shortage of willpower or good ideas for improving roadway safety.”

Preliminary data from the [National Highway Traffic Safety Administration](#) show that 38,680 people died in motor vehicle traffic crashes in 2020 – a 7.2 percent increase from 2019. This increase occurred despite a 13.2 percent decrease in vehicle miles traveled due to the pandemic and is the highest number of fatalities since 2007.

“Projects like these save lives by significantly discouraging dangerous driving,” said Greg Cohen, Executive Director of the Roadway Safety Foundation. “Countless future travelers, whose lives and limbs will be spared by these innovations, will owe an unknowing debt of gratitude to today’s honorees. We urge DOTs across the nation to look at Bellevue and other awardees’ innovations and replicate them wherever possible”

Applicants were encouraged to nominate projects and programs that are innovative, effective and cost efficient. The awards covered two categories: A) Infrastructure and Operational Improvements, and B) Program Planning, Development and Evaluation.

From dozens of entries, a highly credentialed, expert panel of judges selected the seven winners and three honorable mentions. The winners are:

- **Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT)** for its use of smart **Work Zone Safety Technologies for Arterial Roads**, which are burdened with higher fatality rates than interstates. FDOT studied the use of Active Work Zone Awareness Devices (AWADs), which employ radar in combination with LED signs to warn drivers of upcoming work zones, displays their travel speed and delivers safety messaging. FDOT went a step further by linking the AWADs to drivers using the Waze navigation app. The initiative’s impressive results include vehicle *speeds entering arterial work zones dropping by 10.6 percent, safe driving behavior increasing by 39 percent, and risky driving declining by 34 percent.*
- **North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT)** for its **Long-Life Pavement Markings Safety Initiative** to reduce lane departure crashes, a major safety challenge in a state where 14,000 fatal and serious-injury lane departure crashes occurred between 2015 and 2019. Designed to help drivers better see markings when driving on curvy roads, in inclement weather or at night, NCDOT tested the long-life markings on more than 400 miles of roadway, recording an overall *13 percent reduction in lane departure crashes.* The long-life markings also are designed to provide at least five to seven years of adequate retro-reflectivity and pavement delineation, as compared with approximately two years from standard markings, thereby being more cost efficient in the long term.
- **Village of Whitefish Bay, WI** for its **Community-Wide Safety Improvements.** Confronting a decade-long increase in crashes involving the most vulnerable road users, the Milwaukee suburb deployed a series of low-cost solutions to reduce risks to pedestrians and cyclists. These included dynamic speed feedback signs, “yield to pedestrian” signage, design changes such as high-visibility crosswalks, installation of median in the center of highways, lengthier pedestrian intervals at signals and better street lighting. A simple but noteworthy improvement is the installation of “Danish Offsets.” Widely deployed in Denmark, crosswalk paths are oriented to provide more direct sight lines for pedestrians to observe oncoming vehicles. *Since 2015, community-wide crashes are down 39 percent* and signs point to a continued downward trend.
- **City of Bellevue, WA** for its application of a **Video Analytics Program** that is helping achieve tangible progress toward the city’s Vision Zero commitment. Prevailing practice in highway safety management typically relies on backward-looking crash data, an inherently reactive process. By contrast, Bellevue is utilizing cutting-edge video analytics to identify safety challenges in near-real-time, enabling the city to proactively address those challenges. The smart technologies convert raw video from existing traffic cams into flow, speed and conflict event data. In addition to identifying hot spots, Bellevue’s video analytics program also provides rapid insight on how countermeasures perform. As just one example, Bellevue made traffic signal operations changes at 124<sup>th</sup> Avenue Northeast and Northeast Eighth Street and observed a *60 percent reduction in critical conflicts* at the intersection.
- **Broward Metropolitan Planning Organization** for its innovative **Complete Streets Master Plan**, which is measurably improving safety on Wilton Drive in the Fort Lauderdale area and promises similar benefits on other local roadways. With the single highest number of pedestrian fatalities in the entire nation (1,675 between 2010 and 2019), Broward worked with localities and other stakeholders to redesign the bustling Wilton Drive, eliminating a vehicular travel lane in each direction in order to install buffered bike lanes, mid-block crossing medians, wider sidewalks, better lighting and other improvements. Witnessing a *66 percent decrease in bicycle and pedestrian crashes and a 75 percent reduction in severe-injury and fatal crashes* – alongside a 50 percent improvement in corridor travel times – Broward is moving forward with similar improvements for 20 other projects.
- **California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)** for its transformative **2020-2024 Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP)** to reverse a trend of rising fatalities and injuries on state roads. With an average of 10 people dying every day on California roads, Caltrans created a highly targeted approach to safety with its SHSP update. It designates high-priority challenge areas, expands and

diversifies membership of the SHSP committee, implements the program with innovative tools, and evaluates progress on a continual basis. Four newly adopted guiding principles undergird the SHSP: Integrate equity, implement a safe system approach, double down on what works, and accelerate advanced technology. The plan is instrumental to the state achieve no traffic fatalities and serious injuries by 2050.

- **Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) and Texas A&M Transportation Institute (TTI)** for its all-new **Safety Scoring Tool**. With fatalities on Texas rural non-interstate roads occurring at twice the rate of other Texas roads, TxDOT partnered with the Texas A&M Transportation Institute to develop a user-friendly means of evaluating the safety performance of rural highway design elements. The scoring tool assesses the total effects of changes in lane and shoulder width, horizontal and vertical curve geometry, clearances to objects, and other factors. The tool is now required for all rural two and multi-lane non-access controlled projects, ranging from routine maintenance to complete reconstructions, fostering a proactive, rather than passive or reactive, approach to safety.

The honorable mentions are: **The Florida Department of Transportation** for its Local Technical Assistance Program to improve the skills and increase the knowledge of the transportation workforce on roadway safety via virtual training and technical assistance; the **Montana Department of Transportation** for its reconstruction of an antiquated segment of U.S. Highway 89 that provides a key entrance to Glacier National Park; and the **Town of Portland, Ct.** for its formation of a grassroots Complete Streets Group to coordinate with local officials in writing, adopting, and implementing a Complete Streets Policy.

Winners were selected by an expert panel of judges from a variety of disciplines. For complete details on each of the winners, and for more information on the national awards program, visit [roadwaysafety.org/awards](http://roadwaysafety.org/awards).

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The Roadway Safety Foundation is a 501(c) (3) charitable and educational organization. Our mission is to reduce the frequency and severity of motor vehicle crashes, injuries, and fatalities through improvements to roadway systems and their environment