



Chapter 4: Safety and Security

4.1. Introduction

The 3-C transportation planning process must address both the safety and security of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users. Federal guidelines define safety as “freedom from unintentional harm,” and define security as “freedom from intentional harm.” Strategies to address safety and security will at times differ significantly from one another and require coordination between different agencies but will more often overlap and involve members of the same agencies. Therefore, RMS 2052 considers safety and security both simultaneously and individually.

The following sections discuss the various agencies involved in safety and security planning in the El Paso region and present local, regional, and state plans and programs that are currently in place.

4.2. Safety

“Safety” in the transportation planning context typically refers to the mitigation of traffic crashes, transit accidents, and other unintentional events resulting in fatalities, injuries, or loss of property on the transportation network. The FAST Act first introduced a national goal for safety to significantly reduce fatalities and injuries on all public roadways. The following sections highlight recent coordination efforts and plans to enhance safety across the region.

4.2.1. Regional Safety Coordination

Safety planning, reducing the number of crashes, and decreasing the number of fatalities and injuries on the transportation network involve several different projects and programs, ranging from improving the operational efficiency of the transportation network to influencing driver behavior. TxDOT, NMDOT, and EPMPO play the lead roles in transportation safety planning, but several nontraditional stakeholders should be included in the transportation safety planning process, including:



- State agencies responsible for safety data collection and management (TxDOT and NMDOT, Texas State Police – Highway Safety Office)
- Regional and local transportation agencies.
- First responders, fire and rescue, and EMS.
- State and local law enforcement.
- Transit agencies.
- Motor vehicle departments.
- Federal agencies
- The non-governmental highway safety community (e.g., AAA).

4.2.2. Regional Crash Analysis

EPMPO emphasizes the use of transportation safety data in evaluating safety issues and planning for the implementation of safety improvements. Federal requirements highlight the use of a data-driven approach to planning for safety. TxDOT manages and makes available the Crash Record Information System (CRIS), while NMDOT provides crash data through the Statewide Traffic Records System. This data is information from crash reports submitted by law enforcement responding to crashes. The data includes the crash location, contributing factors, driver, vehicle, and vulnerable road user characteristics.

EPMPO performed a crash analysis using the TxDOT and NMDOT data to benchmark crash rates by crash types and to determine the crash hotspots within the region. According to the crash data, a total of 112,697 crashes were recorded across the MPA from 2019 to 2023, averaging more than 22,500 crashes annually. The highest number of crashes occurred in 2022, coinciding with the return of travel activity following COVID-19 disruptions, while the lowest was in 2020, reflecting reduced travel during the pandemic. Spatial analysis reveals that crash hotspots are concentrated in urbanized areas, particularly Downtown El Paso and along major corridors such as IH-10, SH 20, US 62, Loop 375, US 54, and US 85.

4.2.3. Borderplex Safe Mobility Plan

In November 2025, EPMPO adopted the Borderplex Safe Mobility Plan, a regional action plan focused on eliminating fatal and serious injury crashes and improving safety for everyone who travels in the Borderplex including drivers, pedestrians, cyclists, transit users and people using mobility devices.

In 2023, about 213 people in the El Paso region were seriously injured or killed in crashes and roughly 23,500 crashes occurred across the region. Many are preventable. The BSMP uses extensive crash data, traffic patterns and road-condition analysis to pinpoint high-risk corridors and guide programs and priority improvements that address both systemic and



site-specific safety issues. The plan strengthens the region’s connected transportation network and fills gaps in bicycle, pedestrian and transit infrastructure.

EPMPO is currently working with the Vision Zero Committee to oversee progress, track performance, and support local partners in delivering safety projects, corridor studies, and infrastructure improvements. The plan will engage stakeholders across the region and help municipalities access funding for priority projects. The EPMPO will review and update the plan periodically to keep data current, respond to evolving community needs, renew partnerships, and strengthen the region’s commitment to safer streets.

4.2.4. Texas Strategic Highway Safety Plan

Adopted in 2022, the Texas State Highway Safety Plan (SHSP) envisions “a future with zero traffic fatalities and serious injuries” and a mission of “Texans will work together on the road to zero traffic fatalities and serious injuries”.

The plan identifies safety concerns and classifies them into seven key emphasis areas. The plan describes the trends in fatalities within each emphasis area, defines a specific target for 2035, and suggests strategies that should be undertaken to achieve the performance targets that are tailored to the unique circumstances of crashes within each emphasis area.

The strategies recommended in the SHSP should provide the basis for countermeasures that EPMPO considers addressing crash types and locations, as well as driving behaviors, which are responsible for the greatest number of crashes in the El Paso region – particularly those resulting in serious injuries or fatalities.

4.2.5. New Mexico State Highway Safety Plan

Adopted in 2021, the New Mexico SHSP identifies actions and strategies to be undertaken over a five-year period to reduce traffic deaths and incapacitating injuries on the states surface transportation system, with the vision statement “Safe Mobility for Everyone.”

Using the “4E” approach of engaging stakeholders and participants from Engineering, Enforcement, Emergency response, and Education, the NM SHSP is intended to “coordinate traffic safety programs across the state, identify priorities and strategies, and provide a common measure and approach in traffic safety efforts for all roadway users.” The plan identifies ten high priority emphasis areas, and ten priority emphasis areas based on the number and severity of crashes in New Mexico and stakeholder input for data from 2013 to 2019.

4.2.6. Transit Safety



Transit safety is guided through Public Transportation Agency Safety Plans (PTASP). These plans are developed based on federal regulation 49 CFR Part 673, which requires operators of public transportation systems that receive federal funds under the FTA Urbanized Area Formula Grants (Section 5307) and rail transit agencies subject to the FTA State Safety Oversight (SSO) program, to develop an Agency Safety Plan (ASP) that includes the processes and procedures to implement a Safety Management System (SMS). SMS is a comprehensive, collaborative, and systematic approach to managing safety.

The *Sun Metro Agency Safety Plan* was last updated in October 2024 to its current version (Revision 5). The approved plan meets all federal requirements and includes policies for safety management and assurance, safety risk management, risk-based inspection and safety promotion procedures, and emergency preparedness and response planning. The Sun Metro ASP is reviewed annually or if changes or modifications are made to the system.

The El Paso Transportation Authority (ETA) *Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan* was most recently updated in February 2026. The document is available directly from the agency by request and meets all federal requirements for PTASPs. The ETA PTASP includes policies for safety, a safety plan, compliance certification, and planning coordination processes. The PTASP is reviewed annually by the ETA Agency Safety Plan Committee, with an updated plan finalized each November.

4.3. Security

Planning for transportation security seeks to mitigate or avoid harm to the transportation network inflicted either intentionally by people (such as terrorist acts or criminal activities), or circumstantially through natural disasters such as hurricanes, earthquakes, or other weather events. Security planning is carried out by multiple levels of government and involves all four phases of emergency management: preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation.

In support of state, regional, and local security goals and objectives, the primary role of the MPO is to facilitate coordination between agencies responsible for transportation security, including law enforcement, emergency response, transit agencies, and homeland security departments.

To ensure that federal funds will be available for improving security of the regional transportation system, it is important that these national performance goals, as well as the federal planning factors, are considered and incorporated into the development of local goals, objectives and performance measures. The following sections highlight recent coordination efforts and plans to enhance security across the region.

4.3.1. Texas Division of Emergency Management



The state emergency management program is coordinated by the Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM). This program is intended to ensure the state and its local governments respond to and recover from emergencies and disasters. The program also implements plans and programs to help prevent or lessen the impact of emergencies and disasters, as well as programs to increase public awareness about threats and hazards.

The TDEM also coordinates emergency planning and administers disaster recovery, hazard mitigation, and homeland security grant programs in the State of Texas. Updated in 2023, the Texas Emergency Management Plan describes how the State will mitigate the effects of, prepare for, respond to, and recover from hazards to public health and safety, including natural disasters, technological accidents, homeland security threats, and other emergency situations. The plan designates the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) as the primary State agency responsible for coordinating all transportation related emergency management activities and designates TxDOT as a support agency for transportation related emergency management activities.

4.3.2. New Mexico Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (DHSEM)

The State of New Mexico All-Hazard Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) establishes the New Mexico Emergency Operations System. This system organizes the state’s response to emergencies and disasters while providing for the safety and welfare of its citizens. The plan assigns functional emergency management responsibilities to state departments, agencies, boards, and commissions.

The EOP identifies the State Department of Transportation as the primary State agency responsible for coordinating all transportation related emergency management activities, with support from the General Services Department, the Environment Department, Department of Military Affairs, Department of Public Safety, State Police Division, and Motor Transportation Division.

The plan also identifies key agencies and organizations that will support DHSEM’s emergency management responsibilities and outlines each entity’s role in resource contribution to transportation-related emergency management activities.

4.3.3. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Hazard Mitigation Plans

The purpose of FEMA’s Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) is to “help communities implement hazard mitigation measures following a Presidential major disaster declaration.” All counties in the MPA have completed a FEMA-approved Hazard Mitigation Plan, and although Otero County’s plan is currently expired, they are in the process of working on a new plan, as noted on the DHSEM New Mexico website.



4.3.4. Texas & New Mexico Continuity of Operations Plans (COOP)

Continuity of Operations Plans focus state energy and resources on plans that minimize the impact of natural and man-made disasters on state operations. Texas DPS and the New Mexico DHSEM provide technical assistance to local agencies or organizations wishing to establish a COOP.