

Proven Safety Countermeasures

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has expanded its list of [Proven Safety Countermeasures](#) and you can probably find one or more that can be impactful for your roadway network. There are now 28 countermeasures promoted by the Office of Safety, arranged under the primary headings of Speed Management, Roadway Departure, Intersections, and Pedestrian/Bicyclist. Their online [booklet](#) provides a fact sheet for each countermeasure.

Local Road Safety Plans are a newer addition to the list. An LRSP can be as comprehensive or targeted as you find useful. It can cover part of your roadway network or all of it. You look at specific crash types or you can focus on behavior issues (like speeding) or you can take a comprehensive look at your traffic control devices. A good place to look for inspiration can be the Delaware Strategic Highway Safety [Plan](#).

You can follow any process you choose, but the Office of Safety [recommends](#) four basic steps: identify stakeholders, use safety data, choose proven solutions, and then implement them. The stakeholders you assemble will depend on the scope for your LRSP. The team should bring varied backgrounds and expertise together. A group-think mentality should be avoided and you want fresh perspectives, but all members must be solution oriented – this is no place for the venting malcontent.

For the lowest volume roads, data may be scarce, but you should assemble what you can. Requesting details of any reported crashes for the roads in question for the past three years is a good first step. Depending upon the scope of your LRSP, you may want to collect vehicle traffic volumes or even turning movement counts. You might even wish to count pedestrian and bike volumes during peak times. The data you should have will be driven by your scope a bit and your countermeasures should be driven by your data.

When you begin to choose safety countermeasures, relax a little. You don't have to include every countermeasure at once. Chances are if you do, you'll be unsure which ones are actually effective. The proven countermeasures are a good place to start looking, the Crash Modification Factor (CMF) [Clearinghouse](#) is another, and the Delaware Traffic Calming Design [Manual](#) is yet another, depending upon your scope. Choosing a small list of low-cost measures makes your plan manageable and you can expand it over time. Once you know what you want to do, develop an implementation schedule and take steps to ensure budget provisions are in place to make your plan happen.

An LRSP is one of those wash/rinse/repeat things, so don't feel you have to solve every problem right out of the gate. Look for low hanging fruit and start with those issues as a way of developing your process and building your team.

The Delaware T2/LTAP Center's Municipal Engineering Circuit Rider is intended to provide technical assistance and training to local agencies and so if you need help getting started with an LRSP, contact Matt Carter at matheu@udel.edu or (302) 831-7236.

