



Comprehensive Safety Action Plan

Ouachita Council of Governments



SAFE STREETS & ROADS FOR ALL (SS4A) Safety Action Plan Executive Summary

August 2024



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Ouachita Council of Governments

SAFE STREETS & ROADS FOR ALL (SS4A) **SAFETY ACTION PLAN**

“Disclaimer: This correspondence and the information contained herein is prepared solely for the purpose of identifying, evaluating, and planning safety improvements on public roads which may be implemented utilizing federal aid highway funds; and is therefore exempt from discovery or admission into evidence pursuant to 23 U.S.C. 407”

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1.0 Introduction

Safe Streets and Roads for All Program

The Ouachita Council of Governments (OCOG) was awarded funding to prepare a Comprehensive Safety Action Plan (SAP) through the [Safe Streets and Roads for All \(SS4A\) program](#). The program was funded by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) to fund improvements and strategies to prevent fatalities and serious injuries of all roadway users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, public transportation users, motorists, and personal conveyance/micro-mobility users. The BIL provides \$5 billion over 5 years, 2022-2026. The program supports a goal of zero roadway deaths using a [Safe System Approach](#).

In September 2023, OCOG, in coordination with local government partners, began development of the SAP for safer streets and roadways across Ouachita Parish.

“Development of the Safety Action Plan is the first step in identifying challenges and solutions to help make our roadways safer for everyone. The Safety Action Plan’s purpose is to improve roadway safety by significantly reducing or eliminating roadway fatalities and serious injuries through safety action plan development and project implementation focused on all users. This includes pedestrians, bicyclists, public transit users, and motorists.”¹

To identify safety needs, this SAP identifies high-crash and high-risk locations and factors contributing to crashes. Additionally, this SAP prioritizes potential projects and strategies to address safety concerns. SAP elements are identified in **Figure 1**.

This Safety Action Plan was adopted by OCOG on May 3, 2024. The SAP Final Report is posted and publicly available at <https://northdelta.org/ss4a/>. With the adoption of the SAP, local jurisdictions within Ouachita Parish can apply for Implementation and Demonstration funding through the SS4A discretionary grant program.

This Executive Summary summarizes key findings from the Final Report.

¹ [Safety Action Plan \(SS4A\) | OCOG](#)

Figure 1: SAP Elements

Self-Certification Eligibility Checklist

An Action Plan is considered eligible for an SS4A application for an Implementation Grant or a Planning and Demonstration Grant to conduct Supplemental Planning/Demonstration Activities if the following two conditions are met:

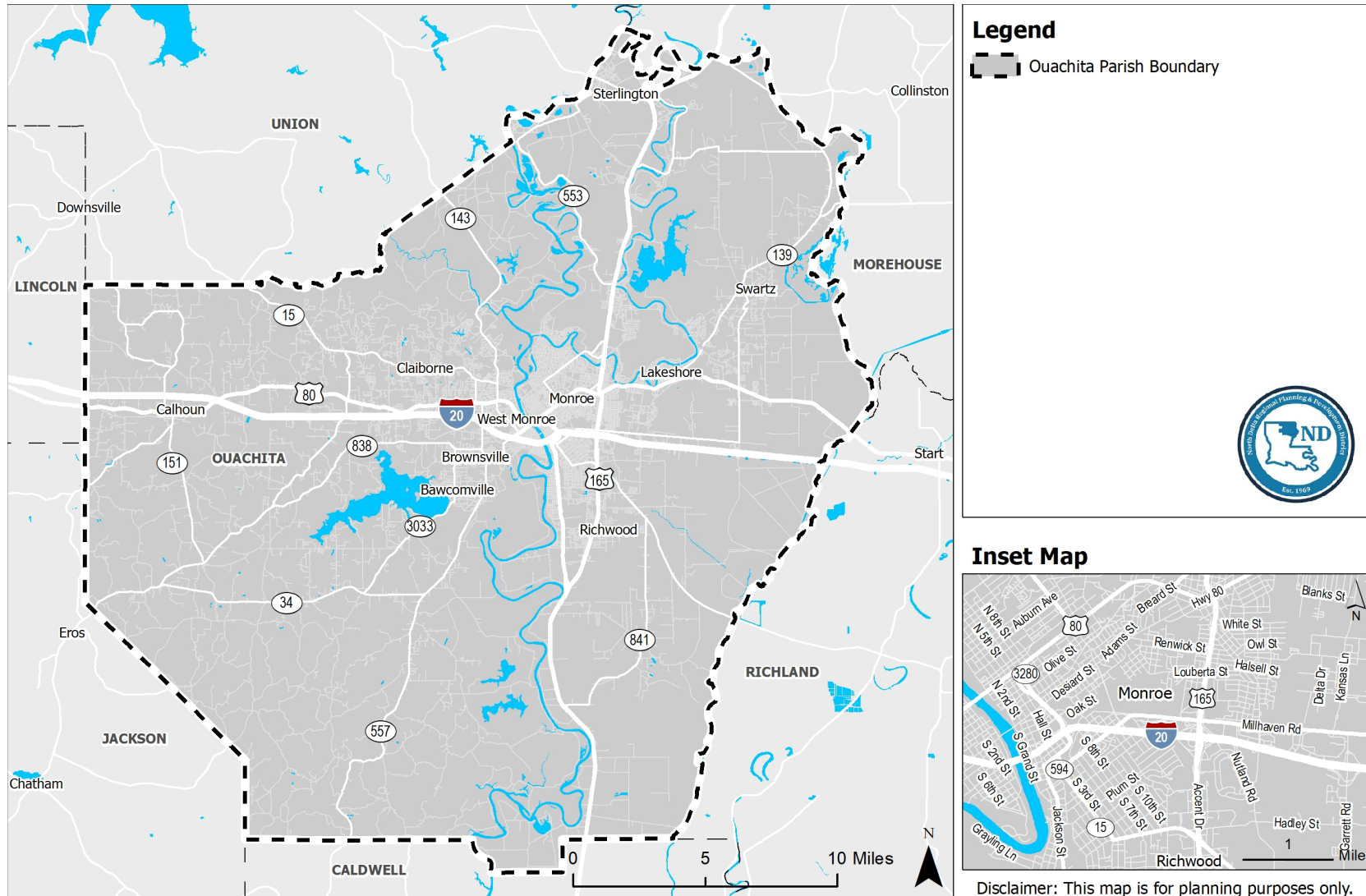
1. You **MUST** answer "YES" to items **3, 7, and 9** below; and
2. You **MUST** answer "YES" to **at least four of the six remaining** items **1, 2, 4, 5, 6, or 8**.

OCOG SAP Plan Elements

	YES	NO		YES	NO
1. Leadership Commitment & Goal Setting	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	6. Policy & Process Changes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Planning Structure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	7. Strategy & Project Selections	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Safety Analysis	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	8. Progress & Transparency	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Engagement & Collaboration	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	9. Action Plan Date	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Equity Considerations	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			

Safety Action Plan Study Area

Figure 2: Study Area



Safety Commitment Resolution

A Safety Commitment Resolution was adopted by OCOG on May 3, 2024. The Resolution confirms the commitment by the CMPDD to improve safety on the region's transportation system for all users, establishes a goal toward eliminating deaths and serious injuries by 2040.

Ouachita Parish Leadership Commitment

Ensuring safe, accessible, and desirable transportation in the region is central to North Delta Regional Planning and Development District/Ouachita Council of Government's (OCOG) mission. It is important to OCOG that residents and workers in Ouachita Parish can use a transportation system designed to accommodate all users safely, regardless of age and ability. Safety will be incorporated as part of the entire transportation network and ultimately achieve our long-term safety goal of zero fatalities and serious injuries by Year 2040.

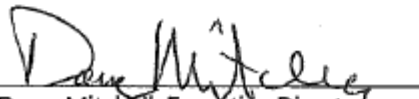
As members of OCOG, my colleagues and I are deeply concerned about transportation safety within Ouachita Parish. From 2017-2021 our region had 328 fatal or suspected serious injury crashes. Additionally, there were 79 fatal and suspected serious injury crashes involving pedestrians and 11 involving bicyclists. These incidents are tragedies for the victims, their families, and their friends, and they have profound, devastating impacts in our communities.

Fatal and serious injury traffic crashes are preventable and OCOG is committed to making transportation safer for residents and visitors within the Parish. The Safe Streets for All (SS4A) Safety Action Plan is an important first step toward ending these avoidable deaths and injuries. As a data-driven, comprehensive, and actionable approach, the Safety Action Plan is designed to improve safety throughout the entire transportation network and achieve our long-term safety goal of zero fatalities and serious injuries by Year 2040.

Safe travel is not exclusive to a specific set of the community. Everyone should arrive at their destination alive and unharmed, regardless of where they live, their age, or preferred mode of transportation. OCOG cannot achieve our goal without the support and engagement from local partner agencies and their communities. Residents of the area can improve the safety of our roadways every day.

OCOG prioritizes safety through various aspects of our work, including plans, studies, and funding. Despite these efforts, roadway crashes are increasingly depriving individuals of their lives. The trend, tragically, is moving in the wrong direction.

The Safety Action Plan will help our communities consider a broader approach to safety on the Ouachita Parish transportation network. Though our work doesn't end with this action plan, I am confident it will help us reduce the number of serious traffic incidents, and it will lay a solid foundation for achieving zero roadway fatalities and serious injuries.


Doug Mitchell, Executive Director


Mayor Staci Mitchell, Chairperson

2.0 Safe System Approach

The FHWA² states that:

“Reaching zero deaths requires the implementation of a Safe System approach, which was founded on the principles that humans make mistakes and that human bodies have limited ability to tolerate crash impacts. In a Safe System, those mistakes should never lead to death. Applying the Safe System approach involves anticipating human mistakes by designing and managing road infrastructure to keep the risk of a mistake low; and when a mistake leads to a crash, the impact on the human body doesn’t result in a fatality or serious injury. Road design and management should encourage safe speeds and manipulate appropriate crash angles to reduce injury severity.

There are six principles that form the basis of the Safe System approach:

- Deaths and serious injuries are unacceptable
- Humans make mistakes
- humans are vulnerable
- Responsibility is shared
- Safety is proactive
- Redundancy is crucial

Safe System Elements

The FHWA defines five (5) elements that comprise a Safe System Approach. These are:

- Safe Roads
- Safe People
- Safe Speeds
- Safe Vehicles
- Post-Crash Care



To address fatalities and serious injuries, the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) strongly encourages transportation agencies to consider widespread implementation of [Proven Safety Countermeasures](#) to accelerate safety goals. The strategies are designed for all road users and all kinds of roads. Countermeasures include speed management, intersections, roadway departures, multimodal, and crosscutting. Additionally, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) has developed a [Highway Safety Countermeasures Guide](#). The SAP includes a Countermeasure Toolbox in Section 5.4 that includes some of these key countermeasures.

² [Zero Deaths and Safe System | FHWA \(dot.gov\)](#)

3.0 SAP Process and Stakeholder Engagement

The SAP followed the process in **Figure 3**. Key tasks during the process included Technical Committee and stakeholders meetings, public engagement, visioning, safety analysis, equity analysis, and project prioritizations and recommendations.

Figure 3: SAP Development Process



SAP Technical Committee

To guide development of the plan and provide equal representation across the region, a Technical Committee was formed. The committee was comprised of transportation professionals from the OCOG. The Technical Committee met regularly to discuss plan development, approve outreach materials, review plan findings, and provide input on local priorities and project selection. The Technical Committee is also responsible for plan implementation and monitoring.

Public and Stakeholder Engagement

The SAP included a comprehensive and robust public engagement campaign. Stakeholders throughout the region were engaged throughout the process and is summarized below:

Phase 1 of the public engagement for the SAP including a listening and learning phase where the team captured input from stakeholders

Goals:

- Introduce the proposed Regional Comprehensive Transportation Safety Action Plan (Safety Action Plan)
- Gather feedback to help identify an overall safety vision, goals, and priority safety locations

During Phase 1, between November 16, 2023, and January 1, 2024, 89 people took the MetroQuest online survey that asked participants to identify priorities for behavioral and infrastructural risk factors associated with safety within the region. In person events for Phase 1, where the team engaged with 133 participants, are listed below:

<p>Monday, November 27, 2023 12:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. Ouachita Parish Main Library Monroe, LA</p>	<p>Tuesday, November 28, 2023 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Ouachita Valley Branch Library West Monroe, LA</p>	<p>Tuesday, November 28, 2023 5:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. West Monroe City Hall – Tree Lighting Event West Monroe, LA</p>
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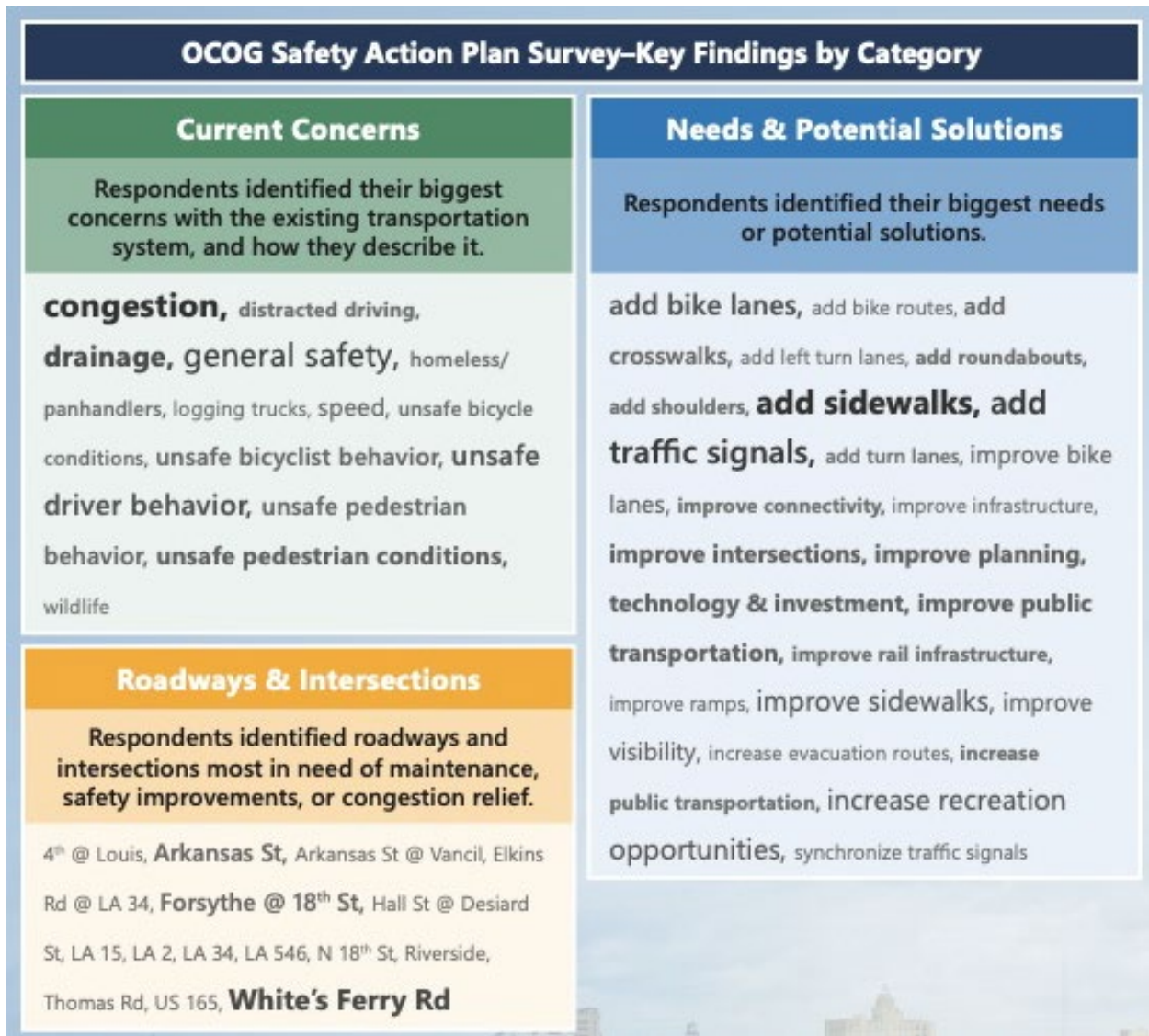
Phase 2 of the SAP included similar outreach methods (MetroQuest online survey, Technical Committee, and in-person meetings in Monroe and West Monroe to elicit feedback on potential strategies to mitigate safety concerns that were discovered during Phase 1 analysis and outreach. During February 27, 2024, and March 14, 2024, 79 people completed the MetroQuest Survey and the team engaged with 41 participants on **Tuesday March 5, 2024**, at the in-person events listed below:

<p>9:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. Ouachita Parish Public Library – Main Branch 1800 Stubbs Avenue Monroe, LA 71201</p>	<p>2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. Ouachita Parish Public Library – Ouachita Valley Branch 601 McMillin Road West Monroe, LA 71291</p>	<p>5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. West Monroe City Council Chambers 2305 N. 7th Street West Monroe, LA 71291</p>
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Phase 3 included an online period for public review of the draft SAP.

Figure 4 on the following page shows a summary of keyword findings from the listening and learning phase.

Figure 4: Phase 1 Key Findings



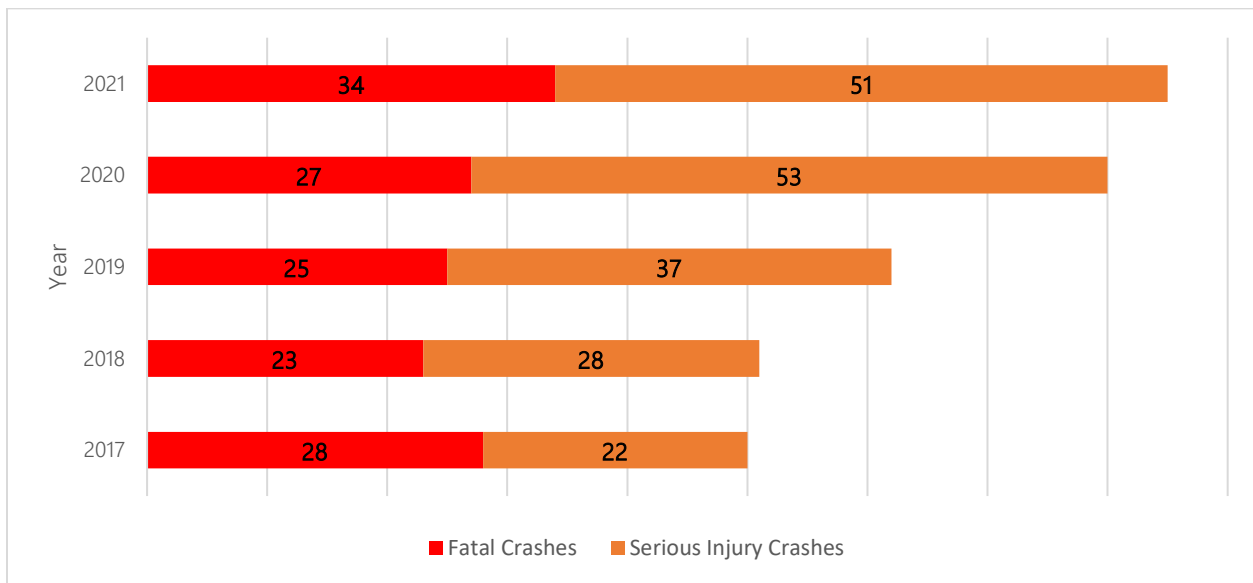
4.0 Safety Analysis Results

The crash analysis uses five (5) years of crash data provided by the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development's (LADOTD) Center for Analytics and Research in Transportation Safety (CARTS) tool.

From 2017 through 2021, 27,943 crashes were reported within Ouachita Parish.

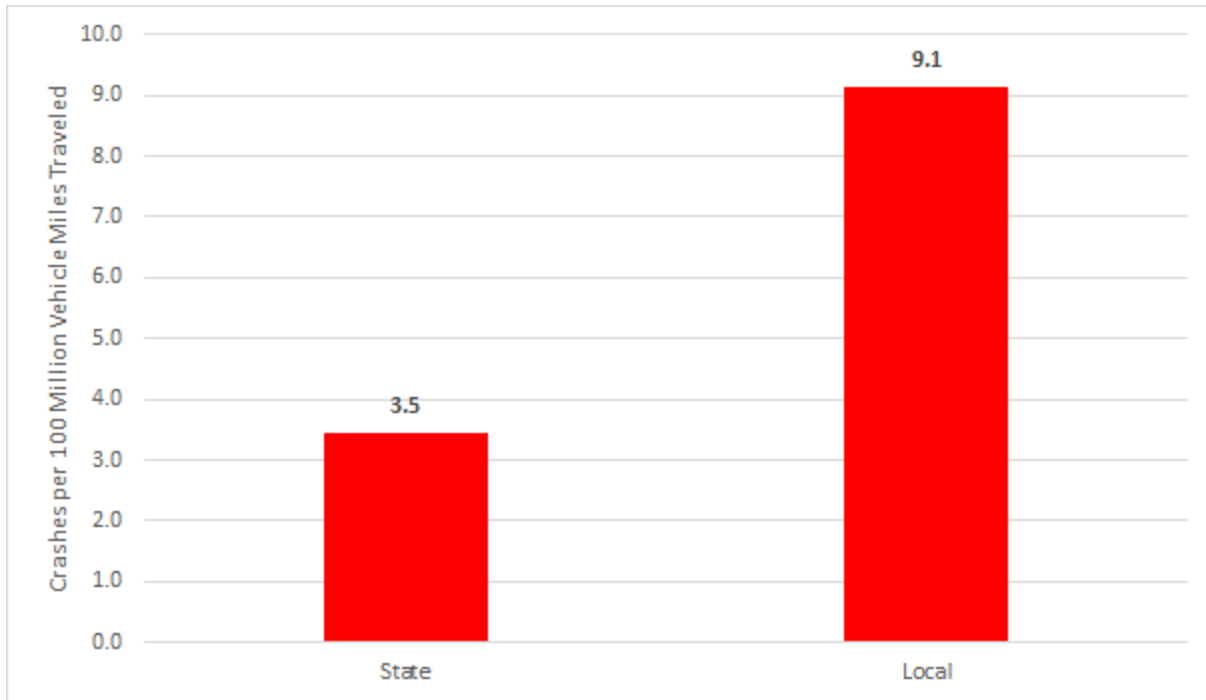
Shown in **Figure 5**, there were 137 fatal crashes and 191 serious injury crashes reported in the parish from 2017 through 2021. **Figure 6** shows the fatal and serious injury crashes on local and state roads.

Figure 5: Fatal and Serious Injury Crashes by Year



Source: CARTS, 2023

Figure 6: Fatal and Serious Injury Crashes by Road Ownership



During the five-year analysis period, the most common crash types among the fatal and serious injury crashes were single vehicle (51 percent), right angle (16 percent), and rear end (14 percent) crashes, contributing to over four-fifths of fatalities and serious injuries. **Table 1** presents the fatal and serious injury crashes reported from 2017 through 2021 by crash type and year.

Table 1: Fatal and Serious Injury Crashes by Crash Type and Year

Crash Type	Year					Total
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	
Single Vehicle	19	33	38	41	35	166
Right Angle	11	7	7	10	17	52
Rear End	6	6	7	14	12	45
Head On	5	1	3	8	8	25
Angle - Left Opposite Direction	4	2	2	4	3	15
Sideswipe - Same Direction	2	1	2	0	5	10
Angle - Left into Flow	2	0	1	2	0	5
Sideswipe - Opposite Direction	0	1	1	0	1	3
Angle - Left Overtake	1	0	0	0	1	2
Angle - Right into Flow	0	0	0	1	1	2
Other	0	0	1	0	1	2
Angle - Right across Flow	0	0	0	0	1	1
Total	50	51	62	80	85	328

Source: CARTS, 2023

Driver Age and Driving Under the Influence (DUI)

The analysis also considered driver age, particularly those involving older drivers (age 65 or older) or younger drivers (age under 25). The analysis also considers whether alcohol was involved in fatal and serious injury crashes. The results of this analysis are displayed in **Table 2 and Table 3.**

Older and younger drivers were involved in approximately 16 percent and 29 percent, respectively, of the fatal and serious injuries crashes reported during the five-year analysis period.

Table 2: Driver Age and DUI in Fatal and Serious Injury Crashes

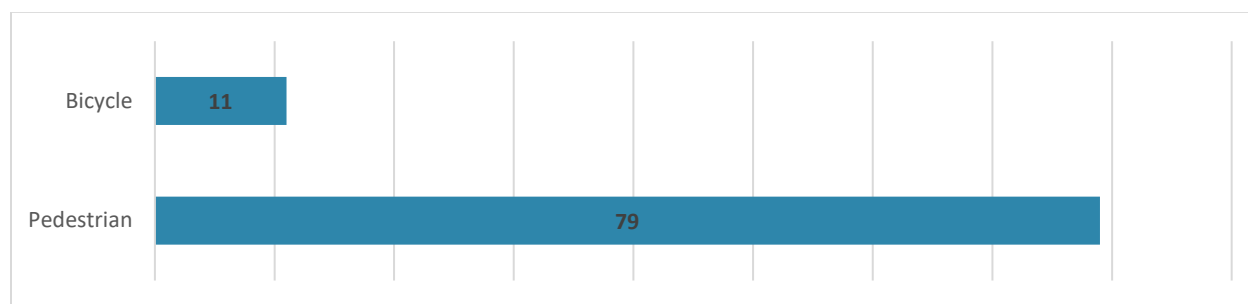
Demographic Information	Year					Total
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	
Older Driver	8	8	11	13	13	53
Younger Driver	14	10	21	23	27	95
Alcohol Involvement	11	11	8	13	22	65

Source: CARTS, 2023

Pedestrian and Bicycle Crash Summary

Of the fatal and serious injury crashes from 2017 through 2021, there were 79 pedestrian crashes and 11 bicycle crashes in Ouachita Parish, shown in **Figure 7**. Forty-eight (48) of the pedestrian-involved crashes were fatal and thirty-one (31) resulted in serious injuries. The bicycle-involved crashes resulted in five (5) fatal crashes and six (6) serious injury crashes. Alcohol was involved in fifteen (15) pedestrian crashes and four (4) bicycle crashes.

Figure 7: Bicycle/Pedestrian Fatal and Serious Injury Crashes, 2017–2021



Source: CARTS, 2023

The greatest number of pedestrian-involved crashes resulting in fatalities or serious injuries occurred along:

- US 165 between Richwood Rd 2 and I-20
- US 80 between LA 840-6 (North 18th St) and Washington St/Lamy Ln

Nearly 80 percent of pedestrian crashes and 55 percent of bicycle crashes occurred during dark conditions which indicates a need for increased lighting along roadways with bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

High Injury Network

The High-Injury Network (HIN) analysis identifies locations with historical safety concerns to guide local investments in infrastructure and safety programming. Two (2) separate HINs were developed: one focused on all roadway users and the other on vulnerable road users (bicyclists and pedestrians).

Each HIN consists of roadway segments and intersections that experience the crash frequency of fatal and serious injury crashes and are shown in **Figure 8**.

Segment Analysis

The segment analysis identified the top 25 segments in Ouachita Parish with the highest frequency of fatal and serious injury crashes. The following process was used to determine those segments:

1. Segments with at least one fatal and/or serious injury crash were sorted based on the number of fatal and/or serious injury crashes.
2. While maintaining the order of fatal and serious injury crash frequencies, segments were then sorted based on the number of total injury crashes (this included all injury classifications).
3. Segments were then sorted based on the total number of crashes, while maintaining the order established in the prior steps.

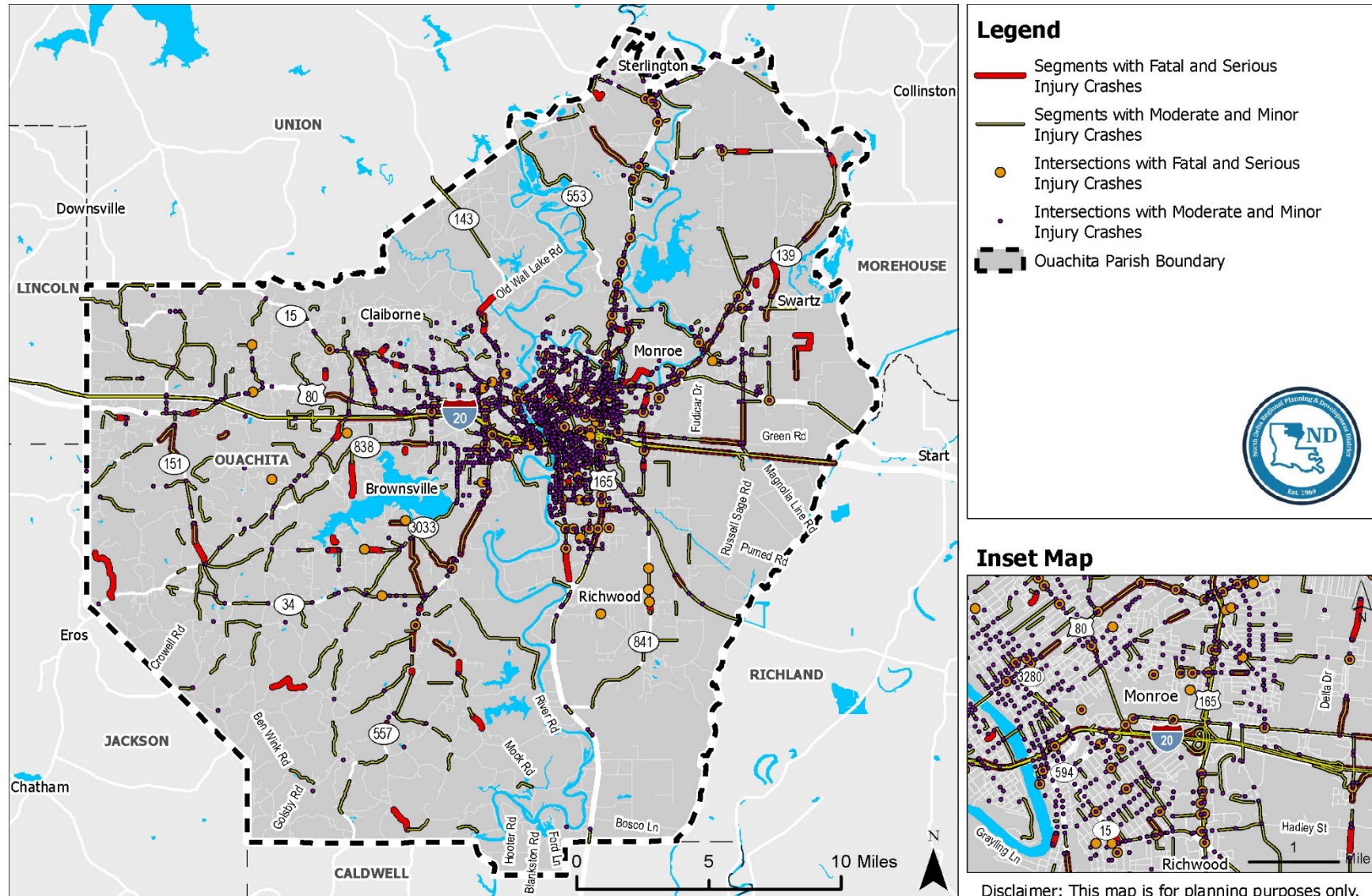
Intersection Analysis

The intersections analysis identified the top 25 intersections in Ouachita Parish that has the highest frequency of fatal and serious injury crashes, using the same process discussed for segment crashes.

Vulnerable Road Users HIN

The vulnerable road users HIN consists of segments and intersections that experienced bicycle and pedestrian fatal and serious injury crashes within Ouachita Parish from 2017 through 2021. Only segments and intersections that experienced at least one (1) fatal or serious injury vulnerable road user crash were considered.

Figure 8: High Injury Network – All Users



5.0 Equity Considerations

Equity is a central guiding principle in the process of identifying the HIN, engaging stakeholders, and determining project priorities within the SS4A program. The program strongly emphasizes inclusive public outreach and input gathering. Data sets provided by the FHWA and Census Bureau are used to identify and locate equity populations so that fairness and equity can be considered in safety solutions. The equity analysis employed in this effort incorporates the communities required by the FHWA through TDCs and APPs. Additionally, the plan incorporates an EJ element to identify areas which are a Community of Concern (CoC) and specific and equitable safety strategies tailored to their needs. This EJ analysis uses the same ACS year that was used to determine the TDCs.

Equity Areas for the plan included TDCs, APPs, and CoCs. This data was used to develop an assessment of equity concerns in the study area. These Equity Areas were also used during the project prioritization process which is discussed later in this report. An analysis was conducted for each Equity Area in the study area to determine which areas experience a disproportionate number of specific crash types and/or severities when compared to the overall network. The results of the Equity Area analysis are displayed in **Figure 9**.

Ouachita Council of Governments

Safe Streets & Roads for All

Figure 9: OCOG Equity Area Analysis

	Total Crashes	Percent of Crashes	Centerline Miles	Percent of Miles	Are Crashes Disproportionate?
Study Area	27,943	100.00%	1,915	100.00%	
TDC Areas	20,535	73.49%	889	46.44%	Yes
APP Areas	21,054	75.35%	869	45.36%	Yes
CoC Areas	20,685	74.03%	938	48.95%	Yes

	Fatal Crashes	Percent of Crashes	Centerline Miles	Percent of Miles	Are Crashes Disproportionate?
Study Area	137	100.00%	1,915	100.00%	
TDC Areas	84	61.31%	889	46.44%	Yes
APP Areas	92	67.15%	869	45.36%	Yes
CoC Areas	89	64.96%	938	48.95%	Yes

	Serious Injury Crashes	Percent of Crashes	Centerline Miles	Percent of Miles	Are Crashes Disproportionate?
Study Area	191	100.00%	1,915	100.00%	
TDC Areas	141	73.82%	889	46.44%	Yes
APP Areas	149	78.01%	869	45.36%	Yes
CoC Areas	132	69.11%	938	48.95%	Yes

	Motorized Crashes	Percent of Crashes	Centerline Miles	Percent of Miles	Are Crashes Disproportionate?
Study Area	27,502	100.00%	1,915	100.00%	
TDC Areas	20,155	73.29%	889	46.44%	Yes
APP Areas	20,669	75.15%	869	45.36%	Yes
CoC Areas	20,350	73.99%	938	48.95%	Yes

	Non-Motorized Crashes	Percent of Crashes	Centerline Miles	Percent of Miles	Are Crashes Disproportionate?
Study Area	441	100.00%	1,915	100.00%	
TDC Areas	380	86.17%	889	46.44%	Yes
APP Areas	385	87.30%	869	45.36%	Yes
CoC Areas	335	75.96%	938	48.95%	Yes

Note: Crashes are disproportionate if the percentage of total crashes that occur in an Equity Area exceeds the percent of roadway miles within the Equity Area compared to the total roadway network.

Source: CARTS, 2023; Replica, 2023

6.0 Strategies and Solutions

The SAP recommends projects and strategies that can be implemented to make the streets and roads safer in Ouachita Parish.

Prioritized Project Lists

Safety projects were prioritized by a variety of factors. **Table 6.2** in the report shows the criteria and weights that were utilized to prioritize the identified projects. This methodology is intended to support the previously stated goals and objectives and was developed using input received during Phase 1 of the public outreach. The full scores of the project prioritization process are displayed in **Appendix C**. The project prioritization tables allow locals to see the top safety locations and potential strategies on how to address.

Safety Countermeasures Toolbox

Additionally, a safety countermeasures toolbox was developed. This toolbox can be used to improve safety within Ouachita Parish. A safety study should be conducted at a location to determine which countermeasures are appropriate for the type and severity of crashes experienced at that location. Countermeasures are displayed in **Table 6.4** and discussed in more detail in **Appendix D**.