

Safe Highway Design for *Older Road Users*

NTSB

Dick Schaffer, FHWA - November 9, 2010



The 65 and older age group will grow from:

- 2006: 37.3 million
- 2010: more than 40 million
- 2020: 55 million
- 2030: nearly 71.5 million older persons
(1/5 of the US population)

Older Road Users

- Increase in older drivers and pedestrians
- Desire to keep their independence and also access transit
- View mobility as a right, even with cognitive and physical limitations

Physical and cognitive impacts of aging:

- Vision
- Hearing
- Neck movement
- Flexibility
- Walking speed
- Road and speed awareness

1998 Older Driver Highway Design Handbook

- First practical information source on Older Drivers
- Recommendations on design, operations, and traffic engineering
- Pedestrians included (Intersections)

2001 Highway Design Handbook for Older Drivers & Pedestrians

- Expanded data and recommendations on older pedestrians and drivers
- Based upon recommendations from local and State level practitioners
- Now have an FHWA Older Driver training course (taught by the Resource Center)

2011 Highway Design Handbook for Aging Road Users

- Incorporates new research and 2009 MUTCD
- Expands range of applications in 2001 Handbook
- Identifies innovative techniques/best practices
- Format changes -- including a web-based version
- Improves access to info and use by professionals for all road users

Handbook retains focus on 5 categories of roadway features:

- *Intersections*
- *Interchanges*
- *Roadway segments*
- *Highway Construction/work zones*
- *Highway Rail Crossings*

Sample Countermeasures

- Reduce right turn radii
- Accommodate pedestrians
- Place traffic signals and road stencils
- Provide pedestrian refuges
- Promote countdown pedestrian signals

Contact Information

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