

# OVERVIEW OF ROAD SAFETY ASSESSMENT (RSA) TRAININGS

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## WHAT IS A ROAD SAFETY ASSESSMENT (RSA)?

An RSA is the process of assessing the safety of roadways (including sidewalks, cycle lanes, etc.) for both motorists and vulnerable road users (VRUs), both by reviewing available data and the physical environment. The RSA helps team members to experience and understand the roadway and safety risks from a VRU perspective. It can also help gain a deeper insight into how the facility functions before pursuing funding for improvements, realizing that safety is proactive, and redundancy is critical.

## WHY THE FOCUS ON VULNERABLE ROAD USERS (VRUS)?

VRUs are anyone walking, biking, or rolling by non-motorized forms of transportation on public roads or in work zones. Between 2014 and 2021 there were an estimated 3,172,000 VRU trips in Kansas. In that same time period, there were over 1000 fatal or suspected serious injury crashes involving VRUs in Kansas, 85% of which happened on local roads, not state highways. As noted in the Safe System Approach, this is unacceptable. The Kansas Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP) has a goal to support communities making safety-conscious decisions through local VRU RSA training. It is important to remember that mistakes happen all the time, but those without the protection of a vehicle are much more likely to be seriously injured or killed when struck; responsibility for eliminating these crashes is shared by everyone.

## WHY RSAS MATTER

- Improve road safety and reduce accidents.
- Identify safety issues before crashes occur.
- Enhance infrastructure for all road users, including vulnerable ones.

## WHO IS ON AN RSA TEAM?

Team members could include safety professionals; law enforcement; local government and/or public health officials; persons with disabilities and people who regularly walk, bike, and roll; maintenance staff; and community representatives; in other words – you! Ideally the team would be the smallest number of people who can bring all the necessary knowledge and experience to the process.

## WHERE ARE RSAS CONDUCTED?

RSAs can be conducted wherever there is a need. Some potential locations include being on the high injury network (where crashes have occurred), on the high-risk network (where crashes are likely to occur), along a school route, or a future route. The Kansas VRU Safety Tool considers several of these factors. The location could be site-specific or along an entire route. For this training, it is expected that one location will be selected in each of KDOT's six districts.

## HOW IS AN RSA PERFORMED?

A location is identified, data is collected, the team is selected and meets, a field review is conducted, findings are analyzed and reported, recommendations are discussed, and a report is written. A prompt list for the field review can be used for the team to be reminded of items to consider, such as context (business district, school, neighborhood, transit area, tourist area, etc.), appeal, connections to other facilities, accessibility, and functionality. The goal is to have layers of protection to keep all road users safe.

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## WHEN WILL THE RSA BE CONDUCTED?

The timing of an RSA field review can be whenever the team is available, but depending on the circumstances, the timing may affect observations. For example, in a school area, before or after school will provide student insights; or if crashes are occurring in hours of darkness, that would be a good time to review the location. Generally, a half day is appropriate for the field review and discussion of observations.

## THE RSA PROCESS



### 1. Identify the Location – Project Owner

*Prioritize sites with safety concerns.*

### 2. Collect Data – Project Owner

*Collect and analyze relevant data (crash data, traffic volumes, and existing conditions) and community feedback to prepare for RSA*

### 3. Select Multidisciplinary RSA Team – Project Owner

*Include diverse disciplines (e.g., engineering, law enforcement, public works)*

### 4. Meet with RSA Team – Project Owner & RSA Team

*RSA team makes introductions*

### 5. Conduct Field Review - Project Owner & RSA Team

*Conduct on-site evaluations at appropriate times, conditions to assess safety concerns*

### 6. Review & Analyze Findings - Project Owner & RSA Team

*Note potential safety concerns and contributing factors*

### 7. Discuss Recommendations - Project Owner & RSA Team

*Discuss, suggest and prioritize practical, cost-effective safety improvements.*

### 8. Write RSA Report - Project Owner & RSA Team

*Document observations, conclusions, and recommended actions.*

### 9. Present & Incorporate Findings – Project Owner

*Present to decision makers, explore funding options and plan for implementation.*

## KEY EXPECTATIONS FOR RSA TEAM MEMBERS:

- **Active Participation:** Engage fully during site visits and discussions.
- **Collaboration:** Work closely with a multidisciplinary team.
- **Data-Driven Insights:** Use crash data and field observations to inform recommendations.
- **Community Engagement:** Communicate findings effectively to stakeholders.