

****REQUEST FOR PUBLIC COMMENTS****

To: Bois Forte Tribal Members
Bois Forte Tribal Government Departments
From: Bois Forte Reservation Tribal Council
Re: Seeking Comments on Bois Forte Transportation Safety
Action Plan
Date: May 14, 2025



To submit comment(s)

The RTC is currently seeking comments from Bois Forte members and Bois Forte Tribal Government Departments and employees on the Bois Forte Transportation Safety Action Plan attached to this notice. **Please submit any comments or requests to the Executive Assistant, Bois Forte Tribal Government, via email (executiveassistant@boisforte-nsn.gov) or mail at 5344 Lakeshore Drive, Nett Lake, MN 55772. All comments are to be received no later than June 13th at 4:30 pm central time.**

Summary of the Safety Action Plan

The Bois Forte Safety Action Plan was prepared with funds from a 2023 Safe Streets and Roads for All grant award. The safety action planning process includes collaboration with a wide range of transportation safety stakeholders with the goal to eliminate fatal and serious injury crashes within the boundaries of the Bois Forte Reservation. The safety action plan was developed by using both a data-driven approach as well as a communicative and interactive input approach with the community and stakeholders, documenting at-risk locations, identifying effective and proven safety strategies, and recommending safety funds available through state and federal government programs.



To View Files

Bois Forte will utilize this report as a starting point for specific safety improvements throughout the Reservations roadway system and multimodal transportation network.

The RTC welcomes and appreciates your comments and feedback as it finalizes the Bois Forte Transportation Safety Action Plan.



BOIS FORTE BAND OF CHIPPEWA

SAFETY ACTION PLAN



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Executive Summary

The Bois Forte Safety Action Plan was prepared with funds from a 2023 Safe Streets and Roads for All grant award. The safety action planning process includes collaboration with a wide range of transportation safety stakeholders with the aim to eliminate fatal and serious injury crashes. The safety action plan was developed by using both a data-driven approach as well as a communicative and interactive input approach with the community and stakeholders, documenting at-risk locations, identifying effective and proven safety strategies, and recommending safety implementation projects to competitively position Bois Forte Tribe for transportation safety funds available through state and federal government programs.

Bois Forte recently completed a Transportation Safety Plan in 2023 that took a high-level review of crash data and community engagement. This safety action plan performs a deeper dive into all relevant transportation network safety concerns.

Introduction

The safety plan is supported by the Bois Forte Reservation Tribal Council. The overarching goal and focus of the safety plan is to reduce all crashes within the Reservation boundary and to eliminate fatal and serious injury crashes over the next 20 years. The transportation safety planning process includes performing a comprehensive transportation system analysis and engaging the Bois Forte community and stakeholders. Stakeholder and community feedback is used to identify areas of safety concern within the Reservation boundaries. By support and championship of the safety plan, Bois Forte agrees and will commit the necessary resources to provide a safe and reliable transportation network for all residents and non-residents from all walks of life within the Bois Forte Reservation.

The roadway and safety analysis, public engagement, and development of strategies and projects focus on all roadways and all users within the Reservation boundaries for this safety plan including tribal and non-tribal drivers, pedestrians, and bicyclists who travel the roadway system. Sections of the safety plan below outline the results of a comprehensive safety analysis that uses crash data to identify locations of safety concern and recommends strategic safety strategies to address concerns. Additionally, the comprehensive safety analysis uses feedback from stakeholders and community members to identify further locations of safety concern based on local knowledge.

Through safety plan development, the following tasks were completed:

- Review of crash data on state/federal, county, tribal and township roadways
- Summary of focus areas that incorporate priority crash types and other supporting information
- List of approved strategic safety treatments to address focus areas
- Prioritized list of safety concern locations that includes highest at-risk locations (data driven and stakeholder/community input)
- Prioritized list of safety projects using specific safety treatments to address specific safety concerns that can be used to pursue state and federal safety funds



Utilization of Plan

Bois Forte will utilize this report as a starting point for specific safety improvements throughout the Reservation-wide roadway system and multimodal transportation network. Aside from state and federal programs Bois Forte is currently familiar with, the Community Safety Action Plan will also help Bois Forte apply for the Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) Grant Program, to bolster security of Federal funding for continued improvements throughout the Reservation-wide transportation system. The SS4A Self-Certification Worksheet can be found in Appendix A.

The next critical action step for Bois Forte and the 2024 safety plan is to identify and prioritize suggested improvements. Improvements found herein will supplement Bois Forte Tribal Transportation Improvement Program (TTIP), either being added to the existing list of projects or as new safety projects.

Safety Plan Champion

The Bois Forte Public Works Division Director is assigned the Safety Plan Champion and is responsible for implementing the Bois Forte Reservation Transportation Safety Plan. The director will ensure safety project funding is allocated on an annual basis and projects are designed and constructed.

Bois Forte Public Works Division Staff:

- Director
- Program Support Staff

Table 1 lists the Safety Action Plan Leadership and Partner Agencies.

Table 1. Safety Plan Leadership and Partner Agencies

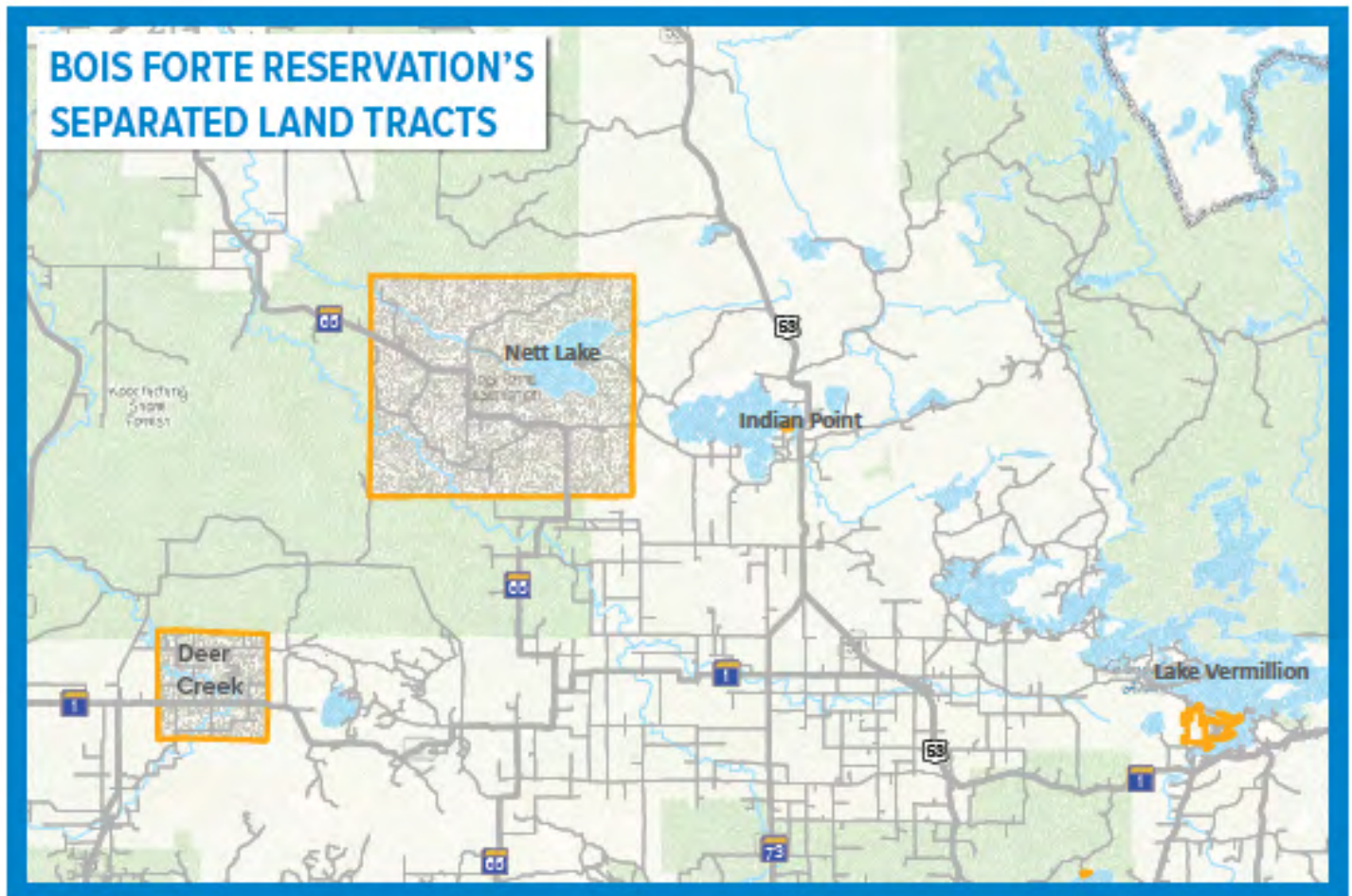
Safety Plan Leadership	Safety Plan Partners
Bois Forte Tribal Council	MnDOT
Bois Forte Public Works	St Louis County
Bois Forte Public Safety	Koochiching County
Bois Forte Planning	FHWA
Bois Forte Grant Management	John's Hopkins Center for Injury Research and Policy
	Midwest Assistance Program Inc.



Overview

The Bois Forte Band of Chippewa Reservation is located in extreme northern Minnesota, about 45 miles south of the Canadian border. The reservation is divided into three main sectors, Nett Lake, Vermilion, and Deer Creek; and one small sector, Indian Point. The largest section is around Nett Lake located in St. Louis and Koochiching counties. It is home to the majority of the Bois Forte Band members and the primary government offices. The Vermilion sector of the reservation is located on Lake Vermilion, near Tower in St. Louis County. Vermilion is home to additional Band members and to Fortune Bay Resort Casino. Deer Creek lies in Itasca County and currently no members reside in this section. Indian Point is part of a peninsula on Pelican Lake near Orr, MN in St. Louis County. (MN Indian Affairs Council) United States Census Bureau states in the 2020 Decennial Census there is a population of 984.

Figure 1. Bois Forte Reservation Land Tracts



Leadership Commitment and Goal Setting

Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Process

Development of the tribal transportation safety plan follows FHWA's six-step approach to proactively address safety concerns based on crash data and feedback received by the Project Management Team (PMT), stakeholders, and community feedback. The unique addition of PMT, stakeholder and community feedback in identifying safety concern areas is necessary to supplement limited data for tribal roadways. The PMT, with assistance from FHWA, has developed a comprehensive list of safety concerns and strategies to improve the Reservation-wide multimodal transportation network.

Reduce Fatal/Serious Injury Crashes

The Bois Forte Tribe is committed to reducing crashes and eliminating fatal and serious crashes across the Reservation. A formal resolution of support for the safety plan and goals was passed and can be found in Appendix C.

The goal of the community safety action plan is to eliminate fatal and serious injury crashes and reduce all crashes within the boundaries of the Bois Forte Tribe. The safety plan will lead Bois Forte toward that goal through crash data analysis, developing target setting measures, developing specific safety strategies, and identifying funding sources. This safety action plan uses a risk-based approach, prior crash data, and stakeholder/public outreach efforts to identify low, moderate, and high-need safety projects for specific at-risk road segments, curves, and intersections.

By the year 2045, Bois Forte's goal is to eliminate pedestrian or roadway fatalities and serious injuries reservation wide. Bois Forte will apply annually for a minimum of two (2) transportation improvement grant opportunities to reduce fatal and serious injury crashes. Bois Forte will improve pedestrian safety by 50% by implementing two (2) safety strategies by the year 2035. Bois forte will improve their collection of crash data by contacting the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) or Law Enforcement agency for data biannually. Within one (1) year, the Bois Forte staff will have a clear understanding of the crash data reporting process and will reach out twice per year for updated data.

Completion of the safety action plan will include all criteria required to pursue federal transportation funds, specifically Federal Highway Administration's Safe Streets and Roadways for All (SS4A) Grant Program.



Planning Structure

Establish Leadership

A Safety Plan Champion will advocate for the development, implementation, and routine evaluation of the safety plan. The Bois Forte Public Works Division Director has been identified as the Safety Plan Champion and will be assisted by TTP support staff. The Safety Plan Champion and support staff have the tools (safety plan) and a clear understanding of the importance of implementing specific safety strategies and treatments across the Reservation.

Convene a Project Management Team (PMT) – Planning structure

Through development of the safety plan, key transportation professionals have been assembled to form the foundation of the PMT and stakeholders. The PMT is responsible for developing the basis of the safety plan. The stakeholder group provides valuable feedback during the working group session and helps identify and prioritize locations and treatments. The gathering of multiple agencies or individuals to discuss transportation safety within the Reservation helps strengthen the relationships between the agencies/individuals and strengthens implementation efforts to improve the transportation network.

Table 2. Safety Action Plan Project Management Team

Agency/Organization	Representative
Bois Forte Public Works Division Director	Brian Whiteman
Bois Forte Grants Manager	Doris Isham
Bois Forte Director of Planning and Community Development	Carol Burr
FHWA Safety and Traffic Operations Engineer	Kristi Sebastian



Table 3. Safety Action Plan Stakeholder Group

Agency/Organization	Representative
Bois Forte Public Works Division Director	Brian Whiteman
Bois Forte Grants Manager	Doris Isham
Bois Forte Planning and Community Development Director	Carol Burr
Bois Forte Public Safety	Nikki Irving
FHWA Safety & Traffic Operations Engineer	Kristi Sebastian
FHWA Grants Project Manager	Curtis Jorgenson
John's Hopkins Center for Injury Research/Policy	Wendy Shields
BIA Police Dept Chief of Police	Jamie Burdick
BIA Police Dept	Donna Hoffer
Main Street America	Shane Hampton
Midwest Assistance Program Inc.	Mary Mullane
Midwest Assistance Program Inc.	Jason Towne
Nett Lake Elementary Superintendent	Peter Hardy
North Woods High School Principal	Kelly Engman
Big Woods Transit Director	Tom Spears
MnDOT District 1	Jim Miles
St Louis Co Emergency Services	Dewey Johnson
St Louis Co Traffic Engineer	Vic Lund
Koochiching Co Engineer	Trent Nicholson

Program Coordination and Sustainability

Communication amongst the PMT and Stakeholder Group is critical for the safety plan. Creating a collaborative team that shares a unified goal to improve the safety of the Reservation-wide multimodal transportation network allows information and insight to be shared effectively. Continuous coordination efforts and a willingness to engage the Bois Forte community to gather feedback allows community members to have their voices heard and know that they contributed to the development and future safety improvements to the roadway network.

Develop a Vision, and Goals

Collaborative development of goals allows Bois Forte to forward the common goal of improving safety of the transportation network. Reducing crashes and eliminating fatalities along the Reservation-wide transportation network is a goal Tribal leadership and supporting agencies support and strive to meet.

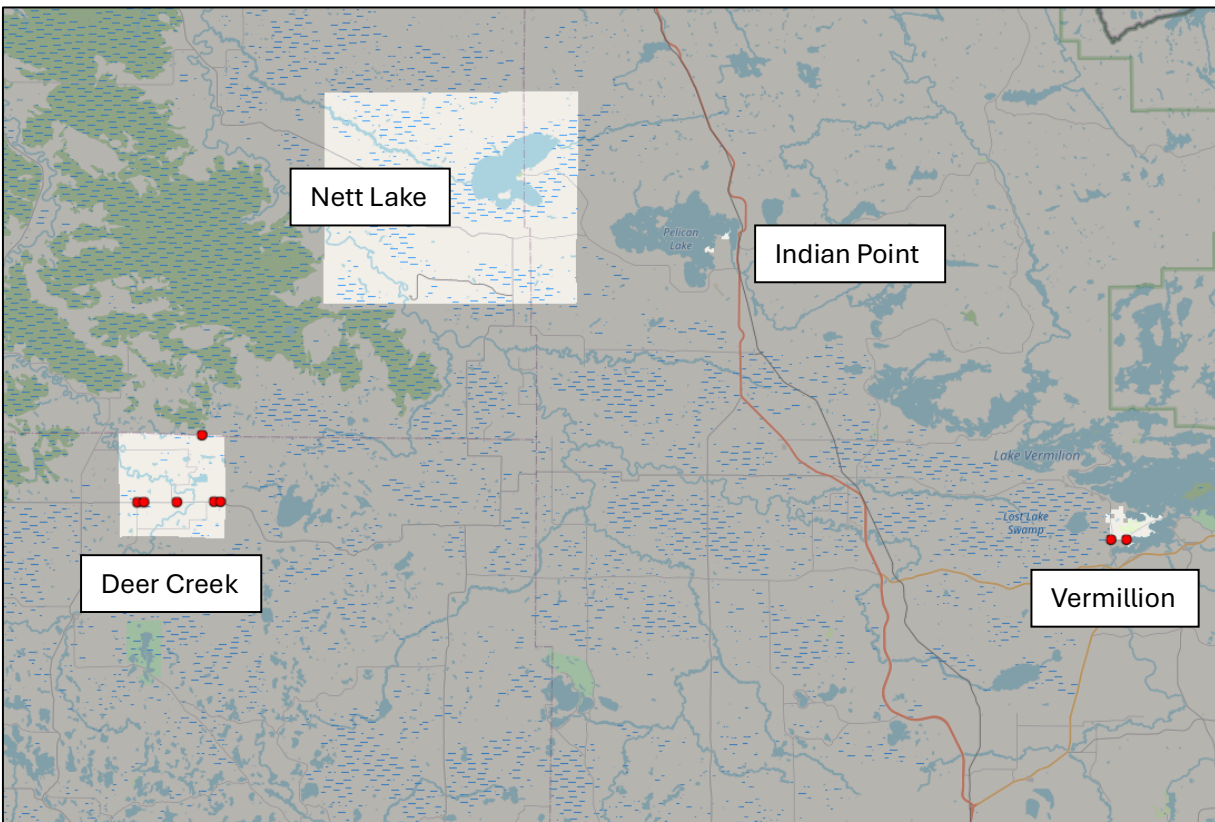
Gain Leadership Support

Development of the safety plan has support from Bois Forte leadership which has dedicated time and effort in the process by attending PMT meetings, stakeholder group meetings, and public outreach efforts. Bois Forte received funds to complete a Safety Action Plan through the Safe Streets and Roads For All Planning Program. In addition to the level of effort provided by Tribal staff, the Bois Forte Tribal Council approved a resolution of support.



Safety Analysis

Crash records from 2019 through 2023 were obtained using the Minnesota Crash Mapping Analysis Tool (MnCMAT2). During this five-year period, ten crashes were reported within the Bois Forte Band of Chippewa Reservation. Six of the crashes occurred within the Deer Creek sector and four occurred in Vermillion.



Two of the reported crashes were minor injury crashes, two were possible injury crashes, and six were property damage only crashes. There were no fatal or serious injury crashes reported from 2019 to 2023. It is important to note that there was a pedestrian fatality that occurred on December 17, 2024. The fatality occurred on Reservation Road near Tibbetts Trail.

Five of the reported crashes occurred on Minnesota Highways and five occurred on County Roads. There were no reported crashes on tribal roadways.

Through the engagement process, the project team learned that there were crashes that occurred within the reservation that were not reported through the Minnesota Department of Public Safety. The team explored alternative methods to obtain crash information. The team reached out to the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) police department and the St. Louis County Sheriff's Office to obtain any additional crash information that may be available. The team was told that there was not any additional information regarding crashes within the reservation.

The Bois Forte Band of Chippewa may be at a disadvantage while trying to secure competitive grants, as most grants are data-driven and use crash history as a metric to score applications. The tribe should work with the BIA to develop a better process for recording and accessing crash information with the reservation. While this is not unique to the Bois Forte Band of Chippewa, having complete crash records will put the Tribe in a better position to secure federal and state safety grants.



Engagement and Collaboration

Bois Forte has engaged with area residents to better understand existing issues and opportunities. The study process will connect community members and stakeholders to understand existing issues and confirm opportunities to improve safety for people who drive, walk, bike, or roll. The following in-person and online input opportunities helped inform recommended safety improvements.

Determine Focus Areas

The safety plan identifies a list of focus areas or areas that are important for roadway safety within the Bois Forte Reservation. Focus areas are crash themes that include the roadway characteristics and/or crash attributes contributing to the majority of fatal and serious injury crashes. Development of focus areas includes a systemic risk assessment using factors such as high crash locations. This traditional quantitative method is effective for transportation safety planning on state roadway systems but can be a barrier to local system participation because there are typically few to no locations that meet the state criteria for designation as “high crash” locations on the local system. Because of this barrier, non-traditional qualitative information from the PMT, stakeholder, and community helps determine focus areas through robust community engagement and feedback. The development of focus areas for this plan follows the model of the Minnesota Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP) which blended crash data analysis with input from stakeholders as part of an extensive group of public and project outreach.



Stakeholder Engagement

Bois Forte Tribal Staff had discussions with key audiences (e.g. tribal staff, emergency responders, etc.) Stakeholder engagement occurred throughout the project and included Tribal staff from a variety of programs including community development, public works, public safety, and grants. These individuals provided local knowledge and a thorough understanding of the Reservation’s transportation needs. Non-tribal stakeholders help to ensure the federal safety action plan process was being followed, relevant safety strategies were discussed, and potential funding sources were identified. All stakeholders contributed to the development of the plan and help lay the groundwork for the prioritized list of projects in this plan.

SahGiiBahGah Powwow

On June 8, 2024 a pop-up event was held in Nett Lake. The pop-up event allowed for Bois Forte staff to discuss all things related to transportation safety. Multiple individuals took the opportunity to identify specific locations thought to be unsafe. Staff engaged with 20+ people and received 13 completed surveys.



Lake Vermillion Powwow

A second pop-up kiosk took place June 29, 2024 at the Fortune Bay Casino (Lake Vermilion). Bois Forte staff again engaged with community members with the intent of gathering feedback on the existing transportation network. A total of 15 surveys were completed by community members at the one-day event. June 29, 2024 in Tower, MN staff engaged with 20+ people and received 15 completed surveys.

Community Survey

The online community survey was actively promoted and open for public input from early June through August 26, 2024. The survey asked for community opinions on transportation safety concerns, personal experiences using the Bois Forte transportation system, and optional demographic responses. The survey provided helpful insights regarding the community's experiences traveling on the Bois Forte reservation. The survey received 72 responses and 200+ open ended comments. A full summary is provided in Appendix D.

Technical and Engagement Workshop

An in-person workshop was held at the Fortune Bay Casino on January 23, 2025. The purpose of the workshop was to create a shared understanding of the Safety Action Plan process, solicit and share safety stakeholder perspectives to reduce severe crashes within Bois Forte, and develop an understanding of and collaboratively explore proven infrastructure strategies for plan consideration. Many stakeholders attended the meeting as well as tribal council leaders.

Tribal Council Presentation

The Bois Forte Community Safety Action Plan was presented to the Tribal Council on April 7, 2025 to request the adoption of a resolution.

Equity Considerations

Introduction

Motor vehicle crashes are a leading cause of death in the United States for the youth, elderly and minority populations. However, there is increasing recognition of the disparities in vehicle crashes among Native American populations and other minority groups, which has additionally led to increased attention to reducing these outcomes. Motor vehicle-related deaths are two to four times as likely for Native Americans compared to other ethnicities/races¹. There are several contributing factors that have been recorded, including the reduced levels of seatbelt use and the consumption of alcohol while driving. In addition, other contributing factors include inadequate transportation infrastructure and limited access to traffic safety education.

The lower level of maintenance on roadways, which are prevalent on many places in the United States including reservations, increase the risk of accidents, particularly in rural and remote areas. Moreover, disadvantaged communities often lack sufficient law enforcement presence to monitor and enforce traffic laws effectively². These deficiencies in transportation safety are not only a public health issue but also a matter of social equity. This equity review aims to

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- 1 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). (2023). Suicide Trends Among Adolescents — United States, 2000–2021. MMWR Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report, 72(2), 65-70. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/su6301a6.htm>.
 - 2 National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). (2023). Tribal Transportation: Addressing Road Safety and Infrastructure Issues. Retrieved from <https://www.transportation.gov>.

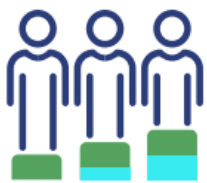


highlight areas for improvement by visualizing key data, alongside USDOT equity tools to provide a comprehensive analysis of the disparities in equity within and around the reservation.

The inclusion of equity is an essential aspect of the Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) guidance for safety action plans, as published by the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT). The analysis of equity enhances decision-making for programming road safety projects and pursuing discretionary funding.

Equity considerations, as described in Figure 2, are integrated into nearly every discretionary funding program within the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL). Under the Justice40 Initiative, 40 percent of the benefits of certain federal investments are targeted at disadvantaged communities. The Bois Forte Band of Chippewa is in a good position to qualify for federal funding because tribal reservations automatically classify as a disadvantaged community and therefore meet the federal policy of prioritizing funding through the Justice40 Initiative. The Transportation Equity Review assesses and identifies vulnerable populations in the Bois Forte Reservation, which are in Koochiching County, St. Louis County, and Itasca County, in northern Minnesota. These populations are more susceptible to being impacted by the safety risks of the transportation system. The Transportation Equity Review follows federal policies and guidance, and analyzes federal and state data resources.

Figure 2. Equity Considerations - A Component of the SS4A Plan (Source: USDOT)



Equity Considerations

Plan development using inclusive and representative processes. Underserved communities* are identified through data and other analyses in collaboration with appropriate partners. Analysis includes both population characteristics and initial equity impact assessments of the proposed projects and strategies.

* An underserved community as defined for this NOFO is consistent with the Office of Management and Budget's Interim Guidance for the Justice40 Initiative <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/M-21-28.pdf> and the Historically Disadvantaged Community designation, which includes U.S. Census tracts identified in this table <https://datahub.transportation.gov/stories/s/tsyd-k6ij>; any Tribal land; or any territory or possession of the United States.

BOIS FORTE EQUITY ANALYSIS

Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJST)

The CEJST is an interactive map-based tool that assesses burdens across eight categories, including climate change, energy, health, housing, legacy pollution, transportation, water and wastewater, and workforce development, to pinpoint disadvantaged communities that are overburdened and underserved. The tool is published by the White House's Council of Environmental Quality and may be found on the website.³

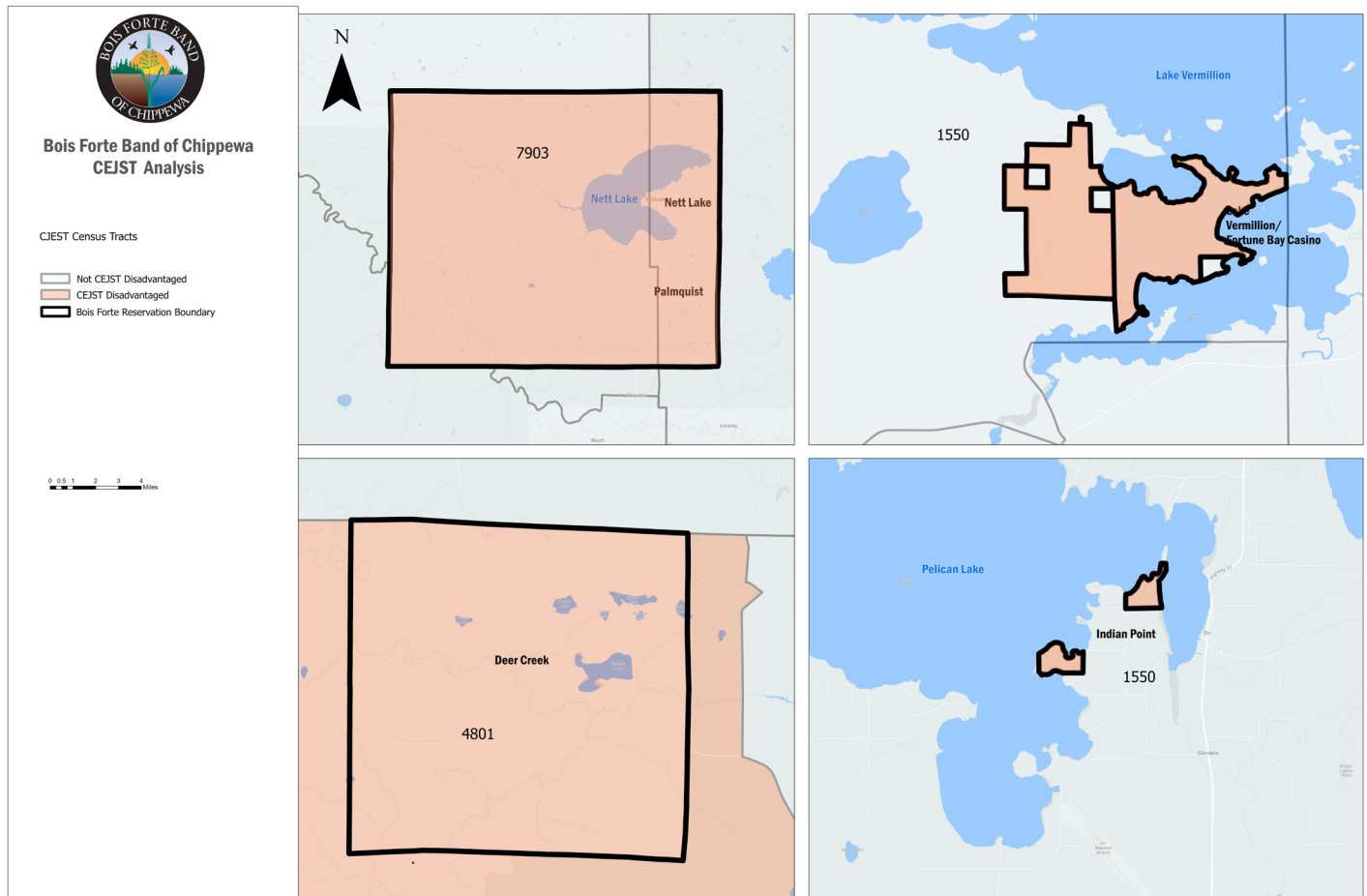
Unlike other federally published tools used to evaluate disadvantaged and vulnerable populations, the CEJST provides robust data recognizing Tribal Nations. As shown in Figure 3, Census Tracts 1550 in St. Louis County and 9030 in Koochiching County are considered partially disadvantaged because the Bois Forte Reservation boundary is within said tracts, and tribal reservations are inherently considered disadvantaged communities by the CEJST. The Deer Creek area of the Bois Forte Reservation is in Census Tract 4801 in Itasca County and is disadvantaged for several reasons according to the CEJST:

- Expected agriculture loss
- Energy cost
- Heart disease prevalence
- Low income

³ U.S. Department of Homeland Security. Screening tool. <https://screeningtool.geoplatform.gov/en/>



Figure 3. CEJST Tool Map of Bois Forte Band of Chippewa



USDOT Equitable Transportation Community (ETC) Explorer

The USDOT ETC Explorer is an interactive web tool that uses Census Tract data to display cumulative disadvantages and vulnerabilities. It tracks five main components of disadvantage:

- Transportation insecurity
- Social vulnerability
- Climate and disaster risk burden
- Environmental burden
- Health vulnerability

The ETC Explorer components listed above are comprised of numerous indicators, which are ranked by percentile against other census tracts nationally or state-wide.

Suitability of Pedestrian and Cyclist Environment (SPACE) Analysis

In general, transportation equity analyses rely on federal data resources such as census tracts to identify disadvantaged or underserved communities; however, because these census tracts do not align with tribal boundaries, the information is not as useful when prioritizing projects for tribal nations. Therefore, MnDOT's SPACE Analysis tool is utilized to provide a more granular understanding of disadvantaged communities.

MnDOT launched the SPACE Analysis tool in 2023, which is specifically tailored to prioritize and select transportation projects across the State of Minnesota. SPACE assigns a score of zero (0) to 100 on a hexagonal tessellation (pattern or grid) by layering publicly available data including demographic, safety, environmental justice, and trip generator datasets. The hexagon geometries provide a more organic and finer output of socioeconomic analysis, because roadways or other barrier features no longer define boundary lines, as they would under a typical Block Group or Census Tract analysis.

The SPACE score is defined by layering datasets and assigning the data to the corresponding hexagon. Below are the specific SPACE Analysis socioeconomic factors as grouped by dataset typology:

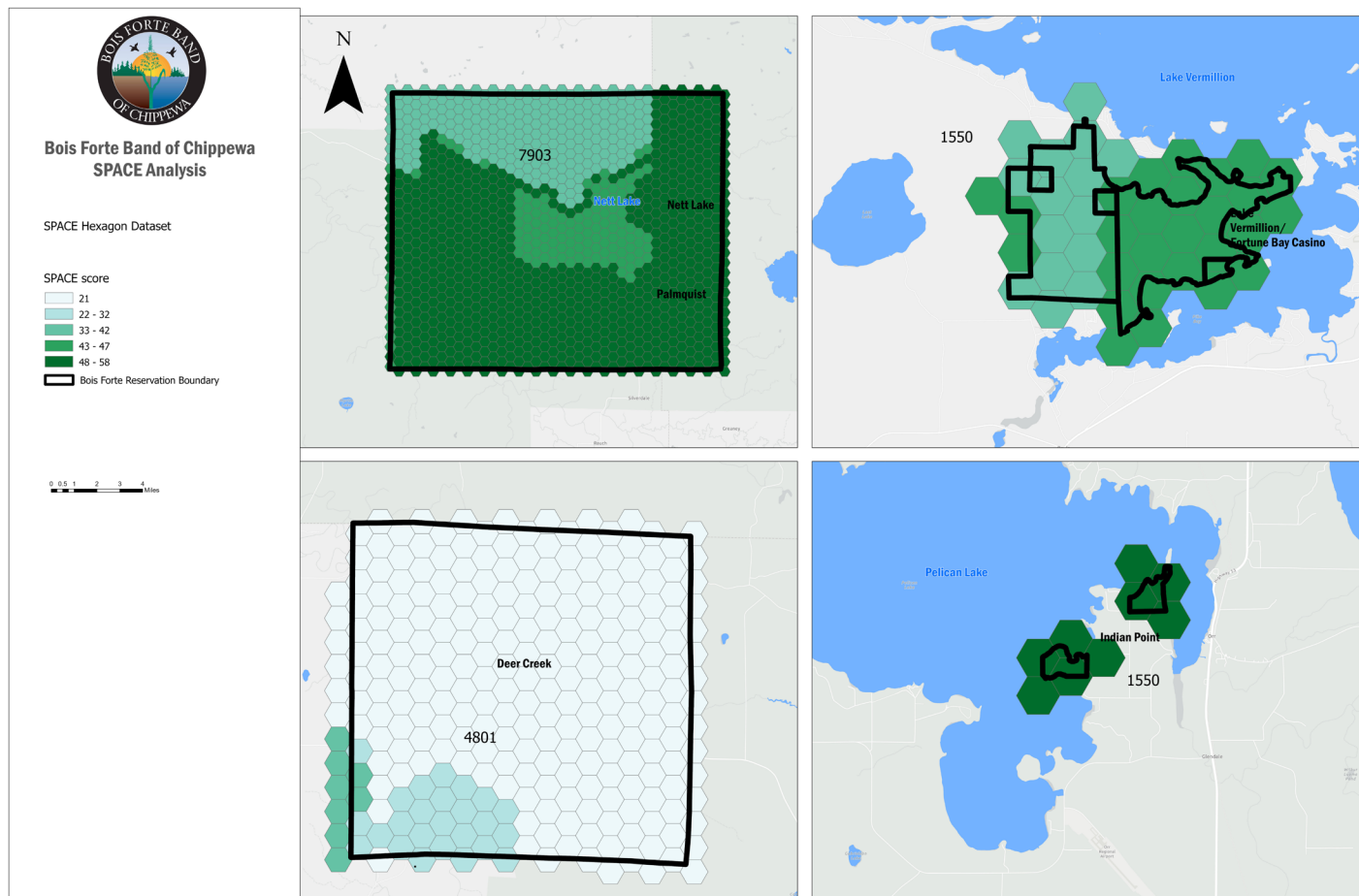


- Priority Populations
 - » Percent of population age 5-17 (dependent-aged) greater than average
 - » Percent of population age 65+ (dependent-aged) greater than average
 - » Percent of population foreign born greater than average
 - » Percent of population Native American greater than average
 - » Percent of population with disability greater than average
- Environmental Justice
 - » “Areas of Concern” by Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) Environmental Justice
 - » Unemployment rate greater than or equal to average
 - » Percent of population in poverty in urban areas greater than or equal to 25 percent
- Risk
 - » High risk trunk highway intersections for non-motorists
- Latent Demand
 - » Percent of workers commuting 15 minutes or less, greater than average
 - » Percent of workers commuting by transit greater than zero (0) percent
 - » Percent of workers commuting by walking greater than zero (0) percent
 - » Percent of workers commuting by biking greater than zero (0) percent
 - » Percent of workers with no access to a vehicle greater than zero (0) percent
- Trip Generators
 - » Greater than or equal to 25 percent of the population within a half mile of supermarket
 - » Within one mile of a K-12 school
 - » Within 500 feet of a bus stop
 - » Within an urban area
 - » Contains a state bicycle trail



As seen in Figure 4, three out of the four tribal boundaries of Bois Forte have a high SPACE score. A high SPACE score indicates that there is a higher concentration of disadvantaged or vulnerable populations including potential proximity to critical destinations for sustaining quality of life on the Bois Forte Reservation. The darker the shade of green in a location, the higher the risk of vulnerability to impacts and inequity of the multimodal transportation system, which impacts the probability of a fatal or serious non-motorist crash.

Figure 4. MnDOT SPACE Tool Map of Bois Forte Band of Chippewa



Areas of Persistent Poverty and Historically Disadvantaged Communities

Areas of persistent poverty (APP) include counties with consistently 20 percent or more of their population living in poverty according to 1990, 2000, and 2021 census data, or census tracts with a poverty rate of at least 20 percent based on the 2014-2018 American Community Survey data. None of the census tracts or counties in which the Bois Forte Reservation resides are considered APP.

A Historically Disadvantaged Community (HDC), as defined by the Justice40 Interim Guidance Addendum, can be census tracts identified as disadvantaged in the CEJST or any federally recognized tribe or tribal entity, regardless of land ownership. According to this definition, the Bois Forte Reservation and Itasca County Census Tract 4801 are HDCs. Table 4 shows levels of disadvantage across the three census tracts where the Bois Forte Reservation is located.

Table 4. Levels of Disadvantage Across Bois Forte Census Tracts

County	Census Tract	Historically Disadvantaged Community* (Y/N)	Area of Persistent Poverty (Y/N)	2020 Population^
Koochiching	7903	Partially	N	3,042
St. Louis	1550	Partially	N	3,653
Itasca	4801	Y	N	2,253
Total Population				8,948

*CEJST identified as disadvantaged

^U.S. Census Bureau 2020 Decennial Data Table

The Bois Forte Reservation is defined as a rural area by the U.S. Census. The estimated population for Bois Forte Reservation and Off-Reservation Trust Lands is 984 (see Table 5); however, the actual population is likely higher as the Native American demographic is identified as both Hard to Count (HTC) and a Historically Undercounted Population (HUP), per U.S. Census definitions.⁴

Table 5. Bois Forte Population Levels

County	Reservation Area	Bois Forte Reservation Population (2020^)	Percentage of Total Reservation Population
St. Louis County	Lake Vermillion Area	402	41%
Koochiching/St. Louis County	Nett Lake Indian Area	344	35%
Itasca County	Deer Creek Area	163	17%
-	Other Trust Land Parcels	75	8%
-	Total	984	-
-	% Disadvantaged Population	100%	100%

^U.S. Census Bureau 2020 Decennial Data Table

IMPACTING EQUITY

Considering equity for disadvantaged populations is an important task that demonstrates an understanding of Bois Forte's transportation system needs. The Tribe may consider using the SPACE tool when identifying and developing projects, particularly to understand how transportation improvement may impact the population in locations with a higher SPACE score. The Tribe can also use the CEJST tool to develop projects which consider challenges of tribal and other disadvantaged communities on the Reservation. These strategies will positively impact all, including disadvantaged and vulnerable populations by increasing multimodal safety of the transportation system to consider all users. Consideration of these populations on the existing network and in potential improvements will facilitate greater accessibility and autonomy to the community's mobility choices, improving safety for everyone.

4 U.S. Census Bureau. (2023, October). Understanding Undercounted Populations: Random Samplings Blog. U.S. Census Bureau. Retrieved December 13, 2024, from <https://www.census.gov/newsroom/blogs/random-samplings/2023/10/understanding-undercounted-populations.html>

Policy and Process Changes

The Bois Forte Tribal Safety Action Plan aligns with the framework, policies, and procedures of numerous other agencies at the local, state, and federal levels. Transportation safety is of critical importance to most jurisdictions, both nationally and locally. The safety plan builds upon policy and procedures as much as possible, and parallels many of the goals and objectives others are also working towards and co. Specific materials are listed below.

Federal/State

FHWA Transportation Funding Opportunities for Tribal Nations (2022)

The USDOT Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) issued a document outlining transportation funding opportunities for tribal nations through various programs including the Tribal Transportation Program (TTP) and the Tribal Transportation Bridge Program that are available through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL).

- Outlines an extensive list of programs that Tribal Nations can apply for.
- Provides one-pagers for each program with links to additional resources.

BIA Transportation Facilities Maintenance Handbook

The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) produced the Transportation Facilities Maintenance Handbook to offer guidelines and a methodology for Road Maintenance Programs that fall within BIA jurisdictions. The handbook covers a variety of topics including budgetary guidelines, environmental compliance measures, drainage and erosion control design, maintenance staff training and management guidelines, snow and ice control, reporting requirements, emergency relief, and equipment management guidelines.

Minnesota Highway Safety Plan (2023)

The Minnesota Highway Safety Plan (MN HSP) is a coordinated effort which involves a wide range of organizations and stakeholders to reduce crashes on all public roads within the state.

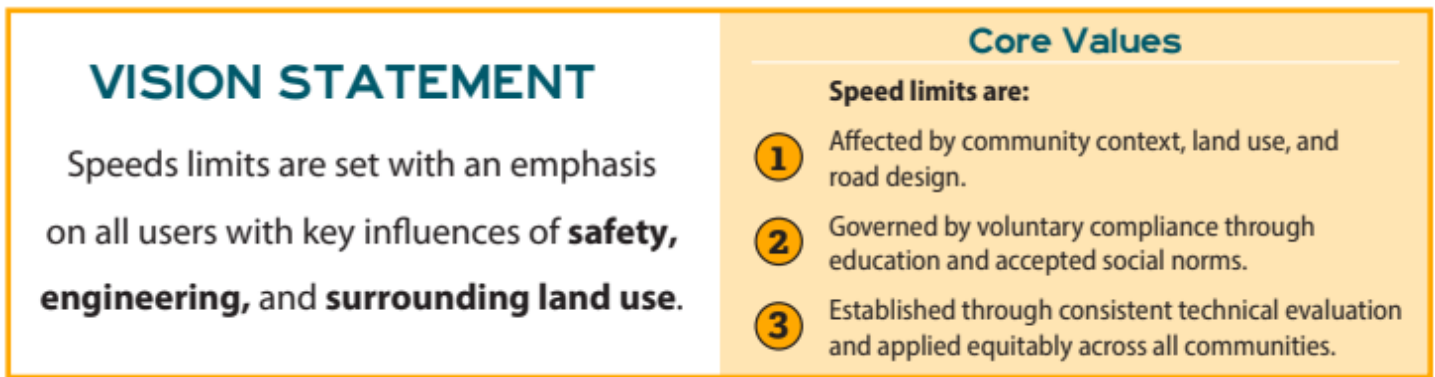
- Prioritize utilization of current, new, and emerging data to accurately identify root factors of crashes.
- Identify prevalent traffic safety problems and as a result, establish realistic goals to mitigate.
- Planning through collaboration amongst partners and continues throughout the year. Engagement with partners to set goals and select equitable performance measures, programs, and projects. These are monitored and adjusted accordingly.

Minnesota Statewide Speed Limit Vision Project (2020)

- Developed by technical and non-technical advisory groups across the state, the goal of the Statewide Speed Limit Vision Project is to ensure that “speed limits are set with an emphasis on all users with key influences of safety, engineering, and surrounding land use.”



Figure 5. Vision Statement and Core Values of the Speed Limit Vision Project



Regional

Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths Northeast Regional Strategic Plan (2019)

An offshoot of the statewide Minnesota Towards Zero Deaths (TZD) initiative, the mission of this regional strategic plan is to promote a culture and actionable steps towards zero deaths on the roadways of counties in the northeast region of the state. The plan uses existing crash data and documented driver behavior to engage and educate the public, officials, and first responders on safety risk mitigation efforts.

Minnesota District 1 Safety Plan (2025)

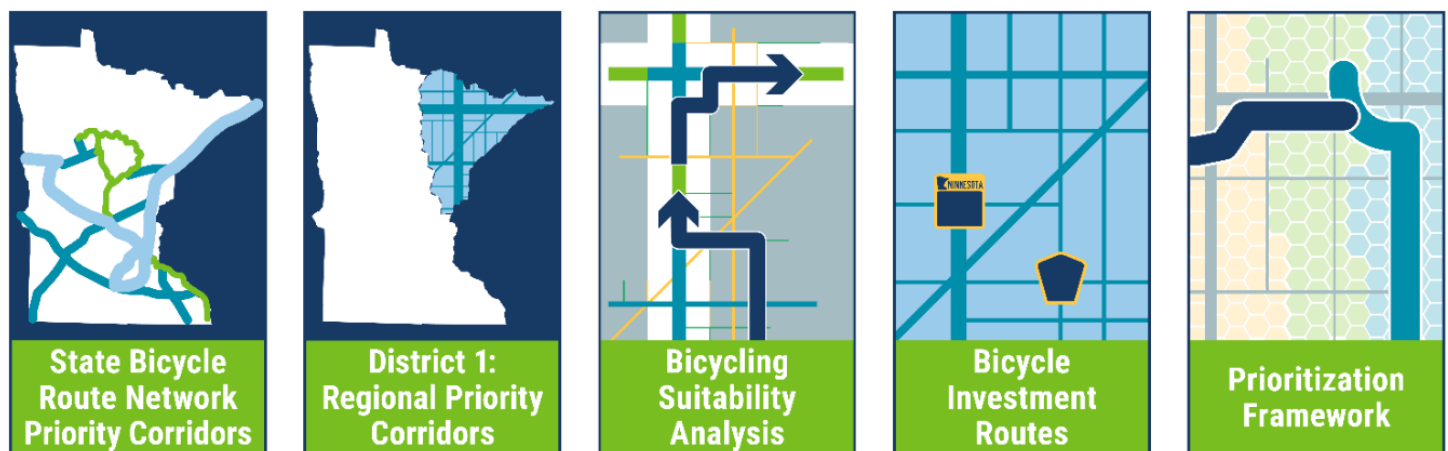
The latest Minnesota District 1 Safety Plan, which is on track to be issued in 2025, will outline a plan to address infrastructural safety concerns within the district and statewide. Projects will include pavement and bridge condition improvements, as well as updating signage, culverts, lighting, and pedestrian and bicycle facilities over the next ten years.

- Provides an overview of District 1, including a map of highway networks, and historic and projected performance in the district, to offer context for the impacts of proposed projects.
- Highlights investment strategies and planned investments over the next decade.
- Outlines the list of projects, categorized into investment types and sorted by year.

Minnesota District 1 Bicycle Plan (2019)

The Minnesota District 1 (D1) Bicycle Plan aims to prioritize MnDOT bicycle investments within the district and offers implementation strategies to achieve the goals and visions of the Statewide Bicycle System Plan (SBSP). Figure 6. Planning Process for the District 1 Bicycle Plan6 offers an outline of the planning process for the D1 Bicycle Plan.

Figure 6. Planning Process for the District 1 Bicycle Plan



St. Louis County Road Safety Plan (2020)

St. Louis County, in collaboration with the Minnesota Department of Transportation's State Aid Division, created the County Road Safety Plan for its roadways. This plan highlights county road segments, curves, and intersections that are at risk of future severe crashes and proposes targeted safety projects for each identified location.

St. Louis County Comprehensive Safety Action Plan (2025)

Following the guidelines of the SS4A program, St. Louis County is in the process of creating a Comprehensive Safety Action Plan with the intention of publishing it in 2025. This plan will take a wholistic approach to safety planning, analyzing existing crash data and projected risk factors, collaborating and engaging with stakeholders and the public, and incorporating equitable solutions that benefit everyone, including underrepresented populations.

Local

Bois Forte Comprehensive Plan (2010)

The Bois Forte Comprehensive Plan provides a road map for growth, development, redevelopment, and preservation within the tribal area.

- Designed to streamline the planning process and allow policy makers and stakeholders to have simplified procedures.
- Developed for annual review by the Tribal Council to determine if an amendment is needed.
- Focused on ensuring conservation of cultural, environmental, and historical areas.

Bois Forte Reservation Strategic Plan (2018 – 2023)

The Bois Forte Reservation Strategic Plan was developed by the Bois Forte Tribal Council in collaboration with the Bois Forte Tribal Government staff. It is designed to be a framework to strengthen the Bois Forte Band to achieve one vision.

- Developed based on the 2016-2020 plan.
- Reviewed annually and updated every five years.
- Highlights goals, objectives, and action plans for each department.

Bois Forte Reservation Transportation Safety Plan (2023)

This plan is an update from the 2019 Transportation Safety Plan and prioritizes strategies around Engineering, Education, Enforcement, and Emergency Response Services.

- Addresses ongoing safety efforts on the Reservation and identifies new or continuing strategies to improve transportation safety in the tribal community.
- Though comprehensive, the plan does not meet the criteria for the Safe Streets for America (SS4A) grant program. It is, however, being used to inform the SS4A Safety Action Plan that is currently in development for the Reservation.



Policy Recommendations

- Review funding opportunities outlined in the Transportation Funding Opportunities for Tribal Nations document.
- Assess existing policies to ensure that safety remains a priority in the progression of project development and maintenance. Document updated safety practices to make sure safety standards are up to date.
- Update the Bois Forte Comprehensive Plan, emphasizing and prioritizing a commitment to safety. The Tribe should set goals to reduce or eliminate all crashes by a specified date, in accordance with the TZD initiative.
- Review and incorporate strategies outlined in USDOT's Safe System Approach throughout Bois Forte policies. Key strategies to focus on include:
 - » Design with redundancies: ensure multiple safeguards for each risk mitigation measure.
 - » Accommodate human fallibility: anticipate behavior that could result in crashes and design transportation systems that reduce death and serious injuries when crashes occur.
 - » Share responsibility and promote inclusivity: include all stakeholders, from both private and public sectors, to encourage participation and gain insight from every user type.

Strategy and Project Selections

Identify Strategies

A list of proven strategies is developed to proactively address risk factors identified through the systemic roadway analysis, crash analysis, and identification of focus areas. Although some strategies are unfeasible, the full range of options is included. Review of agency partnership is also important, as many roadways within the Bois Forte Reservation are non-tribal however, Bois Forte maintains an interest by placing some non-tribal projects into their National Tribal Transportation Facility Inventory (NTTFI) in order to include in the Tribal Transportation Improvement Plan (TTIP). Inclusion of strategic non-tribal roads into the NTTFI and TTIP allows for the opportunity of Bois Forte to collaborate with non-tribal roadway owners to address safety concerns.

Each strategy and treatment identified in this plan is proven effective to address the risk factors identified. The CMF Clearing house database is used to assess key crash data trends such as lane departure and intersection crashes that represent the predominant type of crashes on the state and county system within the Reservation boundaries.

Prioritize and Incorporate Strategies

Once a prioritized list of locations and safety strategies were developed by Bois Forte staff, Tribal leadership was asked to review and approve the prioritized list. During this process, projects were added and re-organized to reflect leadership priority. The result is the list of Tribal Roadway Projects listed below.

Evaluate and Update

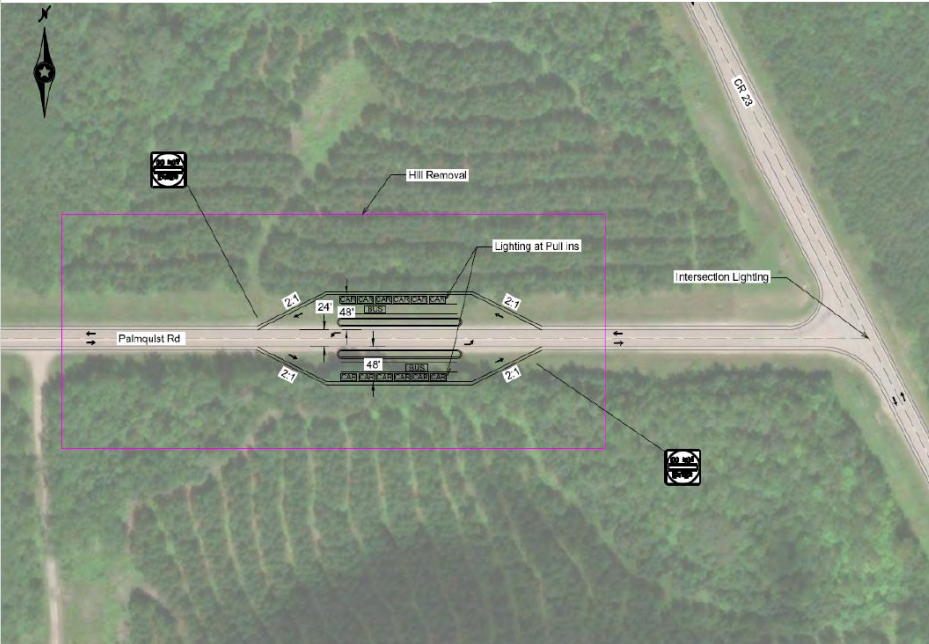
Successful safety plans monitor implementation progress. This helps provide accountability to the Plan Champion and keep stakeholders informed. This plan has been developed to ensure meetings are scheduled and implementation strategies and treatments are being followed through with. As safety strategies are implemented at specific locations, the opportunity for Bois Forte to re-prioritize its list of focus areas and strategies can be updated.



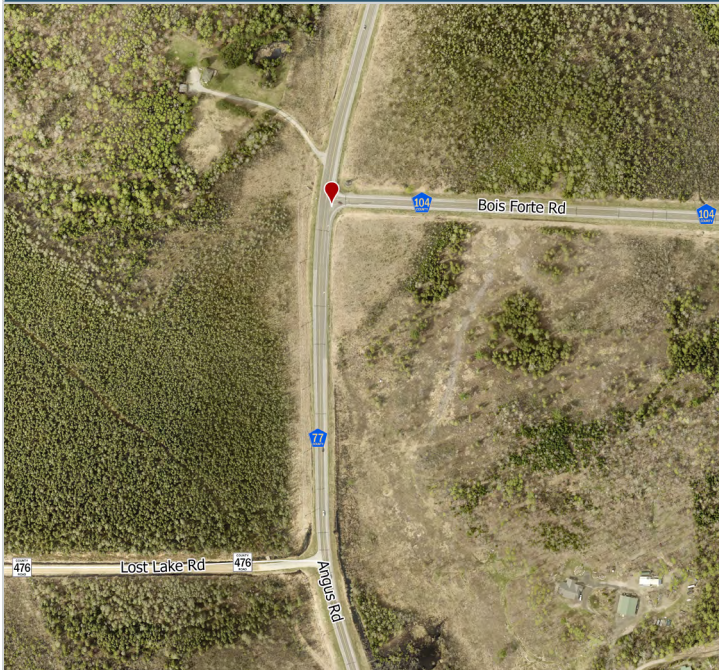
Tribal Roadway Projects

A list of tribal targeted locations with strategies/improvements is identified below. Improvements listed are solely for the purpose of identifying possible safety treatments/strategies to address each focus area. A full environmental evaluation process will need to be completed prior to selection of a preferred build alternative.

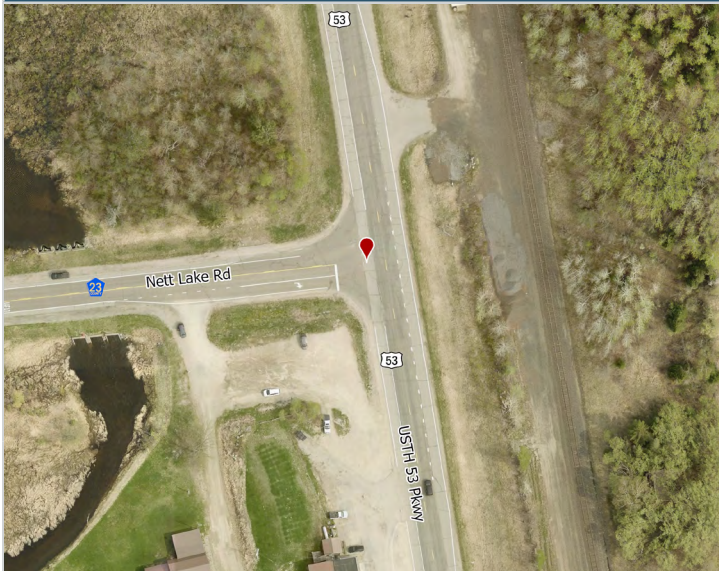
CORNER OF PALMQUIST RD AND NETT LAKE RD AKA SEVEN MILE CORNER

Location Map	Details
	<p>Concern</p> <p>The corner is the location of a school bus stop for parents to drop off/pick up students for bussing to and from Cook. This project would provide a safe place for parents to park/drop off their children at the school bus stop.</p> <p>Potential Treatment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a a designated pull-off with lighting on each side of Palmquist Rd. Include concept. • Add signage • Create shelter for students <p>Location</p> <p>Bois Forte Staff and Pop-up Event in Nett Lake</p> <p>Grant Opportunities</p> <p>Tribal Transportation Program Safety Fund (TTPSF), Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A), Active Transportation (AT), Safe Routes to School (SRTS), Highway Safety Improvement Plan (HSIP)</p> <p>Planning Level Project Cost Estimate</p> <p>\$715,000</p>

CORNER OF CR 77 (AGNUS RD) AND CR 413 (LAKE VERMILLION RESERVATION RD)


Location Map	Details	
	Concern	This intersection has a history of drivers running the stop sign traveling west on Lake Vermillion Road including sight distance issues.
	Potential Treatment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated T intersection with LED Stop Sign Transverse Rumble Strips
	Location Identified by	Bois Forte Staff and Pop-up Event in Lake Vermillion
	Grant Opportunities	HSIP, TTPSF, SS4A, Nationally Significant Federal Lands and Tribal Projects Program (NSFLTP), SS4A

CORNER OF US 53 AND NETT LAKE RD

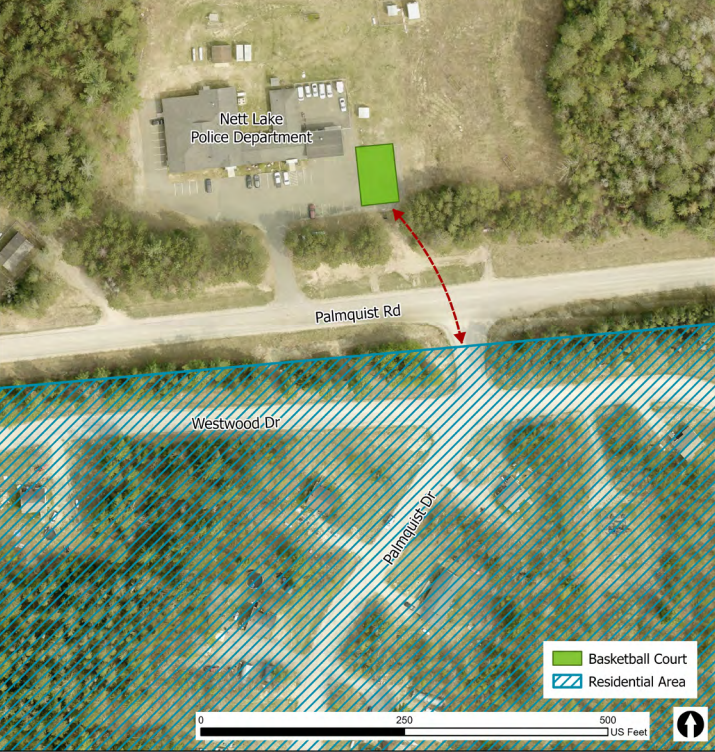
Location Map	Details	
	Concern	This intersection creates some issues as lanes are unclear if southbound vehicles are turning right at Nett Lake Road or to the businesses to the south.
	Potential Treatment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Restripe turn lanes so they are more defined Add pavement markings such as arrows
	Location Identified by	Bois Forte Staff and Stakeholder Group
	Grant Opportunities	TTPSF, HSIP, Local and Regional Project Assistance (BUILD), NSFLTP. SS4A




NETT LAKE RD AT PUBLIC WORKS BUILDING

Location Map	Details	
	Concern	The tribal Public Works building as well as the Community Food Shelf are located here. The speed should be reduced and 40 mph speed limit signs are missing. There is also no speed limit reduction ahead signs and a lack of turn lanes.
	Potential Treatment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add reduced speed ahead signs • Replace 40 mph speed limit signs • Add turn lanes
	Location Identified by	Bois Forte Staff and Pop-up event at Nett Lake
	Grant Opportunities	HSIP, TTPSF

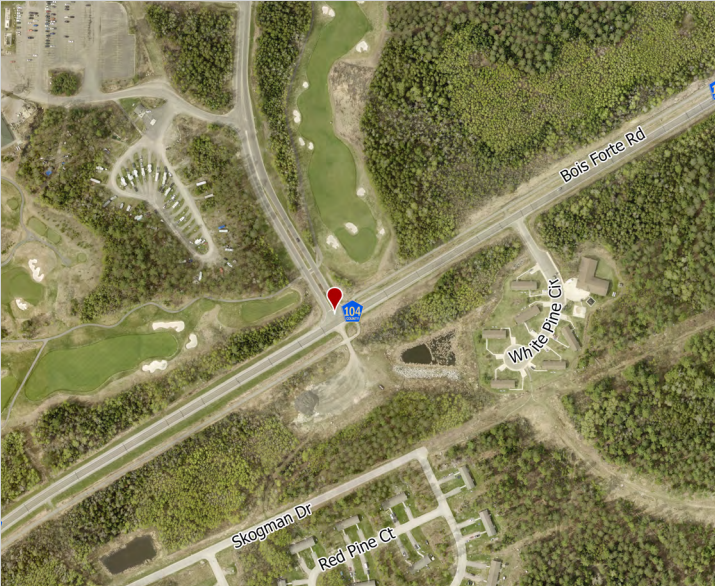
PALMQUIST RD AND PALMQUIST DR

Location Map	Details	
	Concern	Pedestrians cross Palmquist Rd to access the basketball court at the Nett Lake Police Department. There lacks a safe way to cross as well as lighting.
	Potential Treatment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon (RRFB) • Add lighting
	Location Identified by	Pop-up event in Nett Lake and Stakeholder Group
	Grant Opportunities	Active Transportation Infrastructure Investment Program (ATIIP), Transportation Alternative, SS4A, TTPSF

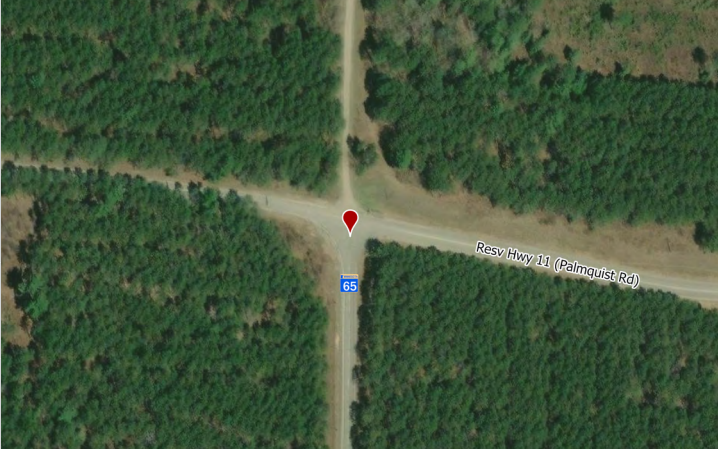
PALMQUIST NEIGHBORHOOD

Location Map	Details	
	Concern	There is a lack of lighting and pedestrian facilities in this established neighborhood.
	Potential Treatment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add lighting • Construct shared use path through neighborhood connecting community to crossing at Palmquist Road
	Location Identified by	Pop-up event in Nett Lake
	Grant Opportunities	TTPSF, HSIP, Transportation Alternative, ATIIP

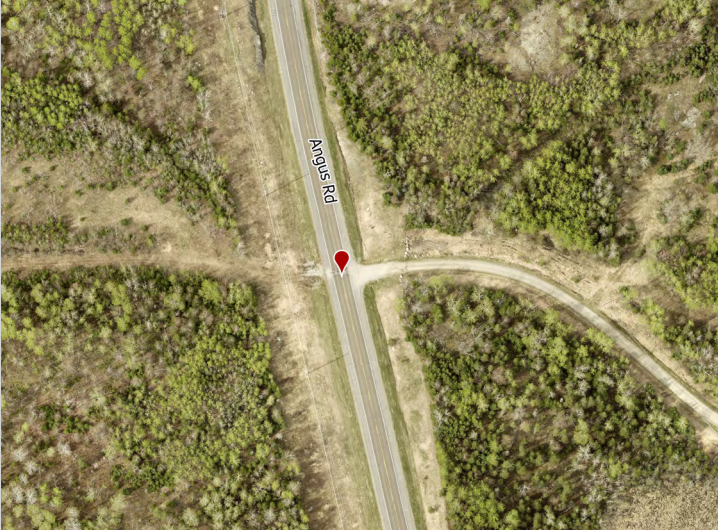
LAKE VERMILLION RESERVATION ROAD AND FORTUNE BAY INTERSECTION

Location Map	Details	
	Concern	This intersection is the entrance to the Fortune Bay Casino. Drivers tend to disobey the stop sign while exiting the Casino and there is a lack of turning lanes in general along Lake Vermillion Reservation Road as well as a lack of street lights.
	Potential Treatment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Streetlights • Turn lanes at intersections
	Location Identified by	Bois Forte Staff and Pop-up event in Lake Vermillion
	Grant Opportunities	HSIP, TTPSF, Tribal High Priority Projects Program

MN TH 65 AND RESERVATION HWY 11 (PALMQUIST RD)


Location Map	Details	
	Concern	This intersection has a need for lighting and a review of the traffic control.
	Potential Treatment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add lighting • Review traffic control • Roundabout • Realign intersection
	Location Identified by	Bois Forte Staff and Pop-up event in Nett Lake
	Grant Opportunities	TTPSF, HSIP, NSFLTP, SS4A

CR 77 (ANGUS RD)

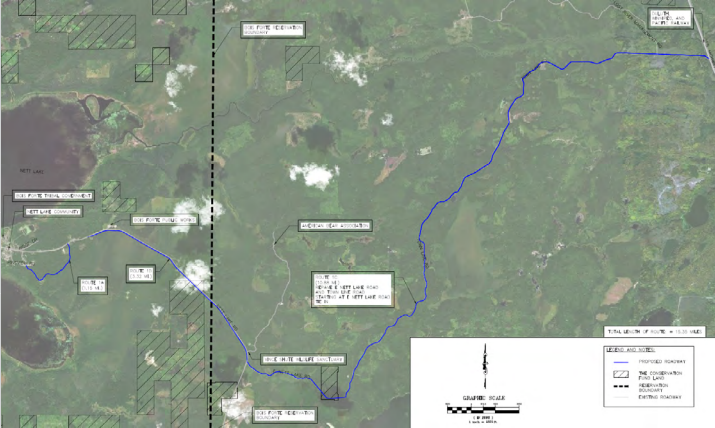
Location Map	Details	
	Concern	This section of CR 77 has a snowmobile crossing area, but trees and other factors create a blind crossing.
	Potential Treatment	Add snowmobile crossing signage
	Location Identified by	Bois Forte Staff and Pop-up event in Nett Lake
	Grant Opportunities	HSIP, SS4A



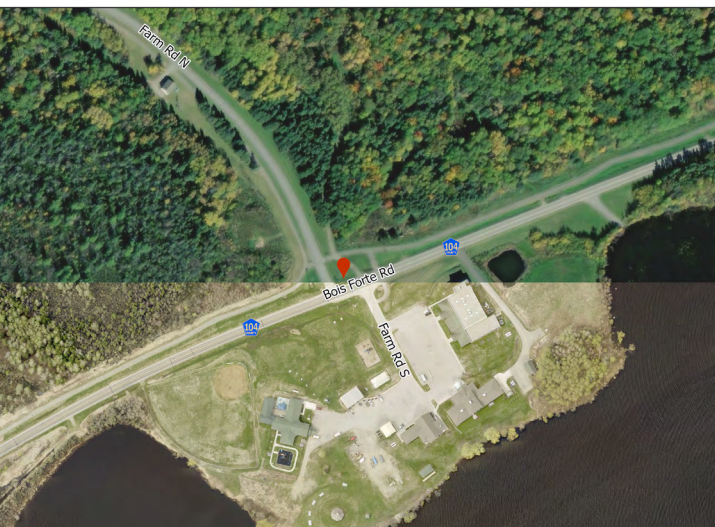
NETT LAKE VILLAGE

Location Map		Details	
	Concern	Much of the Nett Lake Village lacks pedestrian facilities for walking traffic.	
	Potential Treatment	Add pedestrian facilities to fill in gaps	
	Location Identified by	Bois Forte Staff, Online Survey, and Pop-up event in Nett Lake	
	Grant Opportunities	ATIIP, Transportation Alternatives, Safe Routes to School (SRTS), SS4A, TTPSF, Tribal High Priority Projects Program, HSIP	


NETT LAKE EVACUATION ROUTE

Location Map		Details	
	Concern	Due to limited entrance and exits to the Nett Lake community, an evacuation route is needed.	
	Potential Treatment	Creating an evacuation route. .08 miles of newly constructed roadway and remainder is paving existing roadway. Total route is 15.4 miles.	
	Location Identified by	Bois Forte Staff and Nett Lake Evacuation Route Feasibility Study	
	Grant Opportunities	NTSFLTP, BUILD, Promoting Resilient Operations for Transformative, Efficient, and Cost-Saving Transportation (PROTECT)	
		Planning Level Project Cost Estimate	\$34.8 million

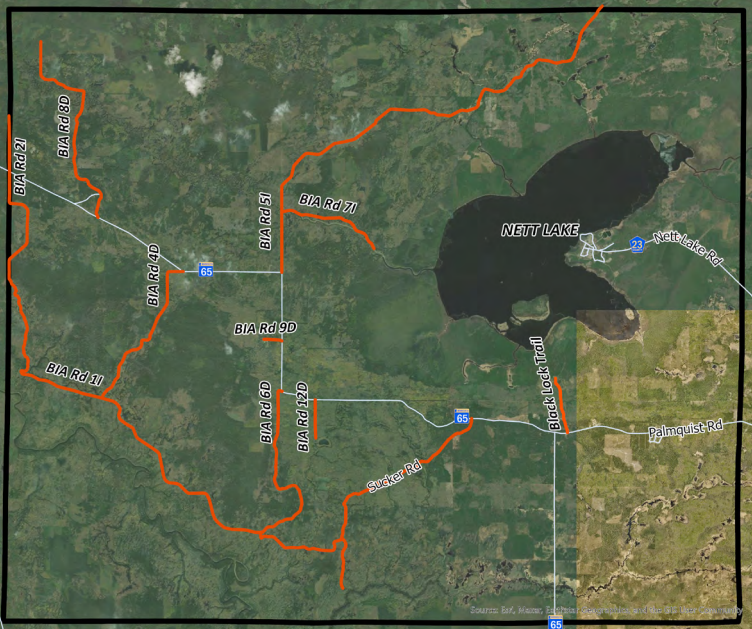
FARMERS POINT ROAD

Location Map	Details	
	Concern	Two separate tribal roads (Farmers Point Rd and Farmers Point Rd S) do not directly align along Nett Lake Rd resulting in increased conflict points. The situation also limits safe crossing opportunities for pedestrians and bicyclists.
	Potential Treatment	Possible realignment of existing tribal roadway with to better align Farmers Point Road and access road to Boys & Girls Club, RTC Office and Head Start.
	Location Identified by	Bois Forte Staff
	Grant Opportunities	TTPSF, HSIP, Tribal High Priority Projects Program, SS4A, BUILD

TURN LANES PROJECT

Location Map	Details	
	Concern	Nett Lake Rd is a two lane roadway that carries vehicular traffic to/from Fortune Bay Casino, Lake Vermillion Government Center, the headstart building, powwow grounds, and residential development. Vehicles traveling the roadway face operational and traffic flow issues while waiting for vehicles to cross traffic in order to access destinations.
	Potential Treatment	Additional of turn lanes at multiple locations along Nett Lake Rd.
	Location Identified by	Bois Forte Staff
	Grant Opportunities	HSIP, TTPSF, Tribal High Priority Projects Program, SS4A

FORESTRY ROAD IMPROVEMENTS

Location Map	Details	
	Concern	Bois Forte Band members use the forestry roads to access hunting lands, medicinal plants, berries, and other cultural important items/ areas. The existing forestry roads are highly susceptible to weather conditions and other factors such as beavers downing trees across the roads. There is concern tribal members use the roads only to be blocked when trying to return home.
	Potential Treatment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearing and grubbing of roads to make more accessible and allow for more sunlight to dry out wet spots along the roads. • Drainage management by adding and maintaining culverts • Regrading by adding aggregate to fill ruts and sinkholes.
	Location Identified by	Bois Forte Staff
	Grant Opportunities	TTPSF, NSFLTP, HSIP

Pursue Funding/Identify Projects

Funding pursuit is a critical component and outcome of the safety plan and is required to implement the suggested projects and forward Bois Forte goals found herein. Bois Forte will use the safety plan to pursue funding programs and to implement safety improvements throughout the Reservation-wide roadway system. Documenting and analyzing crashes, identifying locations where safety issues exist, and identifying safety strategies to address concerns, allows Bois Forte opportunities to submit federal and/or state program funding applications. Table 6: Tribal Eligibility Federal Funding Sources includes a list of federal funding sources both formula and discretionary (competitive), available to Bois Forte to address transportation safety issues and fund safety improvements.

Progress and Transparency

Safety Plan Targets

As part of successful transportation safety planning, a method to measure progress over time is critical. Bois Forte should ensure ongoing transparency with residents and stakeholders by providing annual reporting available and accessible to the public, including posting the safety plan online. Specific goals and performance targets will prepare Bois Forte to reach their goals, to reduce crashes and eliminate fatal and serious injury crashes over time.

The safety plan provides Bois Forte staff with a list of prioritized locations that have known safety issues and specific guidance on safety strategies to implement. Bois Forte's goal of reducing all crashes and eliminating fatal and serious injury crashes on all roads is achievable through the safety plan by working in cooperation with those involved closely in the safety plan's development.

Plan Summary

This plan was developed by Bois Forte and followed FHWA's process for developing safety plans. By following this process, Bois Forte will be able to pursue federal funding sources through multiple programs including the SS4A Program. Bois Forte leadership has committed time and resources to address fatal and severe crashes within the Reservation boundaries. Bois Forte TTP staff will be responsible for implementing safety strategies and updating the list of prioritized projects throughout the life of this plan.

A robust public engagement effort was completed as part of this plan and included community and stakeholder group input that identified safety concern locations and developed a list of prioritized tribal projects. By allowing the community to participate, the plan was able to build community support and empowerment.

Action Plan Date

April 2025.



Appendix A – Self Certification Worksheet



Appendix B – Tribal Tribal Eligibility Federal Funding Sources

HIGHWAY AND BRIDGE PROGRAMS: TRIBAL ELIGIBILITY				
Program	Funding (FY22-26)	New Program	Formula / Competitive	Purpose
Dedicated Tribal Programs				
Tribal Transportation Program (TTP)	\$3.01 B		F	Provide safe and adequate transportation and public road access.
Tribal High Priority Projects Program	\$45 M		C	Funding for those whose annual allocation of funding received under the TTP is insufficient to complete the highest priority project.
Tribal Transportation Facility Bridge Program / Bridge Formula Program (BFP) Tribal Bridge Set-aside	\$825 M		C	Replace, rehabilitate, preserve, protect, and construct new bridges.
Tribal Transportation Facility Bridge Program / Bridge Investment Program (BIP) Tribal Bridge Set-aside	\$200 M		C	Replace, rehabilitate, preserve, protect, and construct new bridges.
Tribal Transportation Program Safety Fund (TTPSF)	\$121 M		C	Prevent and reduce transportation-related injuries and fatalities on Tribal Lands.
Other Programs				
Accelerated Innovation Deployment (AID) Demonstration	\$10 M		C	Provide funding as an incentive to accelerate the deployment and adoption of proven innovative practices and technologies.
Active Transportation Infrastructure Investment Program (ATIIP)	\$200 M	NEW	C	Supports active transportation networks and spines such as safe bike paths and walking trails.
Bridge Formula Program (BFP)	\$27.5 B		F	Fund the replacement, rehabilitation, preservation, and construction of highway bridges.
Bridge Investment Program	\$12.5 B		C	Fund the planning and improvement of bridge condition, safety, efficiency, and reliability.
Charging and Fueling Infrastructure	\$2.5 B	NEW	C	Support deployment of EV charging infrastructure and hydrogen, propane, and natural gas fueling infrastructure.
Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP)			F	Reduce traffic fatalities and serious injuries on all public roads.
Other Programs				
Infrastructure For Rebuilding America (INFRA) (Nationally Significant Freight and Highway Projects)	\$7.25 B		C	Advance multimodal freight and highway projects of national or regional significance that improve the safety, efficiency, and reliability of the system.
Local and Regional Project Assistance (RAISE)	\$8.275 B		C	Fund transportation infrastructure projects with significant local or regional impact.



HIGHWAY AND BRIDGE PROGRAMS: TRIBAL ELIGIBILITY

Program	Funding (FY22-26)	New Program	Formula / Competitive	Purpose
National Culvert Removal, Replacement, and Restoration Grants	\$1 B	NEW	C	Improve or restore passage for anadromous fish.
National Infrastructure Project Assistance “Mega-projects”	\$5 B	NEW	C	Support multijurisdictional or regional projects of significance that may also cut across multiple modes of transportation.
National Scenic Byways	\$22 M		C	Fund improvements that merit national recognition for outstanding scenic, historic, cultural, natural, recreational, and archeological qualities.
Nationally Significant Federal Lands and Tribal Projects Program (NSFLTP)	\$275 M		C	Address significant challenges across the nation for transportation facilities that serve Federal and Tribal lands.
Pollinator-Friendly Practices on Roadsides and Highway Rights-of-Way	\$10 M	NEW	C	Support activities to benefit pollinators on roadsides and highway rights-of-way.
Promoting Resilient Operations for Transformative, Efficient, and Cost-Saving Transportation (PROTECT)	\$1.4 B	NEW	C	Support resilience improvements.
Reconnecting Communities Pilot	\$1 B	NEW	C	Restore community connectivity by removing highways that create barriers.
Reduction of Truck Emissions at Port Facilities	\$400 M	NEW	C	Reduce truck idling and emissions at ports.
Rural Opportunities to Use Transportation for Economic Success (R.O.U.T.E.S.)	\$2 B	NEW	C	Initiative to address disparities in rural transportation infrastructure.
Safe Streets and Roads for All	\$5 B	NEW	C	Support local safety initiatives to prevent transportation related deaths and serious injuries.
Strengthening Motility and Revolutionizing Transportation (SMART) Grant Program	\$500 M		C	Fund demonstration projects focused on advanced smart city or community technologies and systems to improve transportation efficiency and safety.
Transportation Alternatives	\$7.2 B		C	Fund a variety of generally smaller-scale transportation projects.
Wildlife Crossing Pilot Program	\$350 M	NEW	C	Reduce the number of wildlife-vehicle collisions and improve habitat connectivity.



Appendix C – Resolution of Support





Bois Forte

TRIBAL GOVERNMENT

RESOLUTION NO. 91-2025

WHEREAS, the Bois Forte Band of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe (the “Band”) is a federally recognized Indian tribe organized under the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934 and operates under the Revised Constitution and Bylaws of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe; and

WHEREAS, the lawful governing body of the Band is the Bois Forte Reservation Tribal Council (“RTC”), which has the inherent authority and responsibility to take action to promote the health, well-being, and general welfare of the Band and its members; and

WHEREAS, the Band is collectively working with the Federal Highway Administration to prepare a transportation safety plan (Bois Forte Safety Action Plan) as part of the Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) Program to address safety concerns throughout the Reservation; and

WHEREAS, the Safety Action Plan will include crash data analysis, development of target setting measures, development of specific safety strategies, and identification of funding sources with the goal of eliminating fatal and serious injury crashes and reducing all crashes within the boundaries of the Bois Forte Reservation; and

WHEREAS, the transportation safety plan will use all available crash data and stakeholder/public outreach efforts to identify low, moderate, and high-priority safety projects for specific at-risk segments, curves, and intersections; and

WHEREAS, by the year 2045, the Band’s goal is to achieve zero pedestrian or roadway fatalities and serious injuries across the Reservation; and

WHEREAS, the Band will apply annually for a minimum of two (2) transportation improvement grant opportunities to reduce fatal and serious injury crashes; and

WHEREAS, the Band will strive to improve pedestrian safety by 50% by implementing two (2) safety strategies by the year 2035; and

WHEREAS, the Band will improve their collection of crash data by contacting the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) or other law enforcement agencies for data biannually, and within one (1) year Band staff will have a clear understanding of the crash data reporting process and will reach out twice per year for updated data; and

Page 2 of 2
Resolution No. 91-2025

WHEREAS, the Band will allocate funds in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for safety specific projects with a goal to reduce fatal and serious crashes by 50% by the year 2035; and

WHEREAS, completion of the Safety Action Plan will include all criteria required to pursue federal transportation funds, including through the Federal Highway Administration's SS4A Grant Program.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Bois Forte Reservation Tribal Council hereby supports the development of the Bois Forte Safety Action Plan to identify specific safety strategies for at-risk transportation system locations with the goal of eliminating fatal and serious crashes within the boundaries of the Bois Forte Reservation by the year 2045.

Certification

We do hereby certify that the foregoing resolution was duly presented and enacted upon by a vote of 3 for, 0 against, 0 abstaining, with a quorum of 3 being present at a Regular Meeting of the Bois Forte Reservation Tribal Council held on April 7, 2025 at Nett Lake, Minnesota.

DocuSigned by:

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Shane Drift
Vice-Chairperson

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Tara Geshick
Secretary-Treasurer

Appendix D – Public Engagement Summary



Bois Forte Community Safety Action Plan

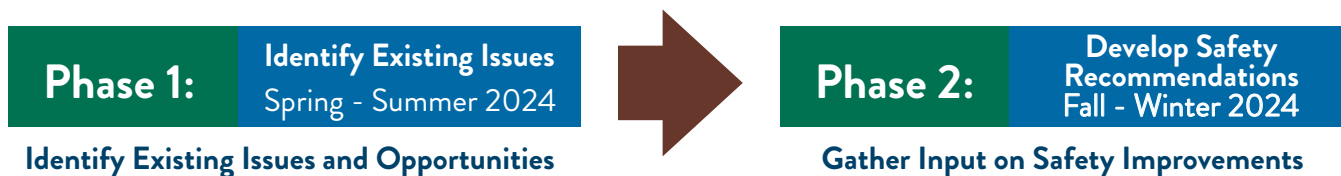


What is a Community Safety Action Plan?

The Bois Forte Community Safety Action Plan will identify the transportation needs and prepare a comprehensive strategy to prevent fatalities and serious injury crashes along roadways and streets within tribal jurisdiction. The study will make recommendations to improve safety for all users of the transportation system, including people who walk, bike or roll.

Engagement Will Inform the Study:

The study process will connect with community members and stakeholder to understand existing issues and confirm opportunities to improve safety for people who drive, walk, bike or roll.



What Engagement Has Occurred?

Bois Forte has engaged with area residents to better understand existing issues and opportunities. The following in-person and online input opportunities helped inform recommended safety improvements.



Stakeholder

Engagement

Bois Forte Tribal Staff had discussions with key audiences (e.g. tribal staff, emergency responders, etc.)



Pop-up Events

SahGiiBahGah Powwow - June 8 in Nett Lake. Engaged with 20+ people and received 13 completed surveys
Lake Vermilion Powwow - June 29 in Tower, MN. Engaged with 20+ people and received 15 completed surveys.



Community Survey

An online survey was promoted through tribal communication channels. The survey closed on August 26, 2024 and received 72 responses. A full summary of responses is provided below.



BOIS FORTE COMMUNITY SAFETY ACTION PLAN

COMMUNITY SURVEY SUMMARY (JUNE - AUGUST 2024)



COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS

The online community survey was actively promoted and open for public input from early June through August 26, 2024. The survey asked for community opinions on transportation safety concerns, personal experiences using the Bois Forte transportation system, and optional demographic responses.

72
Responses

200+
open ended comments



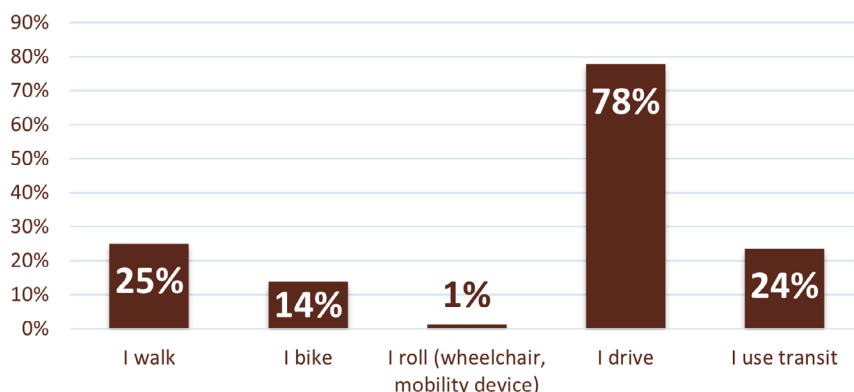
The survey provided helpful insights regarding the community's experiences traveling on the Bois Forte reservation and the results of the survey are summarized below.

HOW DO YOU TRAVEL?

How do you usually travel on the Bois Forte reservation?

Select all that apply.

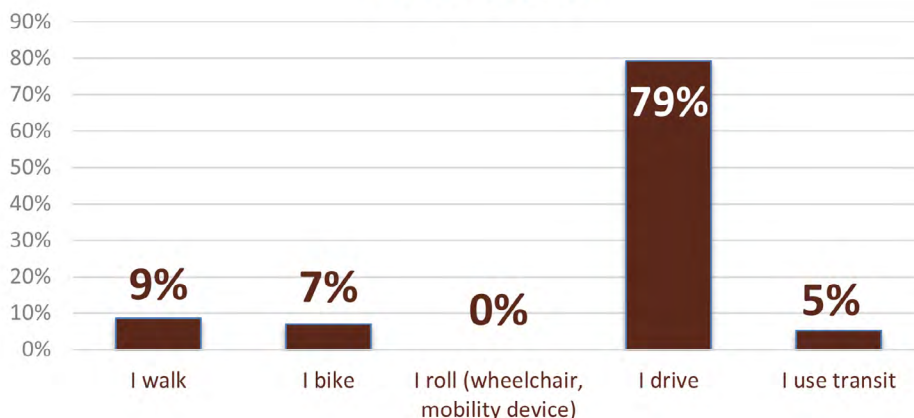
How do you usually travel on the Bois Forte reservation? (select all that apply)



What mode of travel do you use most often?

Choose your top option.

What mode of travel do you use most often?



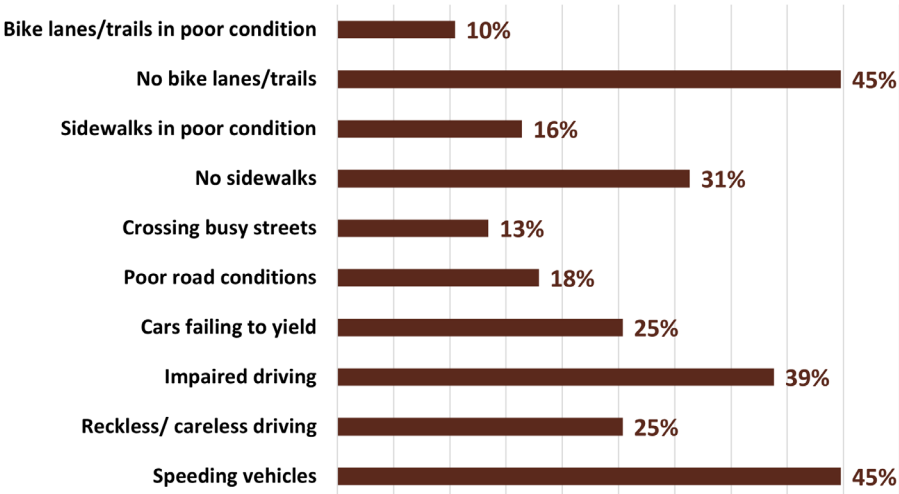
BOIS FORTE COMMUNITY SAFETY ACTION PLAN

COMMUNITY SURVEY SUMMARY (JUNE - AUGUST 2024)

What are your top transportation safety concerns in Bois Forte?

Choose your top three concerns.

What are your top transportation safety concerns in Bois Forte?



Where and why in Bois Forte do you avoid walking, rolling, biking, taking transit, or driving because of transportation related safety concerns?

Survey comments highlight the need for improved infrastructure, safer road conditions and increased pedestrian and cyclist safety measures. Themes include:

- **Road Conditions:** Poor road markings, lane divisions, potholes, uneven pavement, and construction make walking and biking hazardous.
- **Visibility:** Lack of lighting, especially at night, and blind spots contribute to safety concerns.
- **Pedestrian Infrastructure:** Absence of sidewalks, crosswalks, and clear demarcations creates dangers for pedestrians.
- **Wildlife:** Potential encounters with wildlife, such as dogs and bears, can be dangerous.

"No shoulders or walking paths/trails on the main road in and out of Nett Lake. It would be nice to walk/run/exercise."

"I stay away from the path that lacks proper signage and traffic signals, making it confusing and risky."

"Where the bus picks kids up on intersection of 23 and Palmquist needs to be better."

"We don't let kids ride bike on Tibbetts Trl. Too many speeding."

"There is no biking or walking path along the road all the way to the dam. And lighting is limited."

BOIS FORTE COMMUNITY SAFETY ACTION PLAN

COMMUNITY SURVEY SUMMARY (JUNE - AUGUST 2024)

TRANSPORTATION ISSUES AND CONCERNS

What ideas do you have for improving transportation safety in Bois Forte?

The survey received 50 suggestions for improving transportation safety. Ideas are summarized here:

The comments provide a wide range of suggestions for improving transportation safety in Bois Forte. Many of these ideas focus on enhancing infrastructure, improving traffic management, and promoting community safety. Key themes that emerged from the comments include:

- **Infrastructure Improvements:** Building sidewalks, bike lanes, and pedestrian crossings; improving road markings and signage; enhancing visibility with mirrors and lighting; and improving drainage systems.
- **Public Safety:** Conducting traffic safety education campaigns, and addressing wildlife safety concerns.
- **Transportation Options:** Increasing public transportation options, ensuring their reliability, and developing alternative routes.
- **Maintenance:** Conducting regular road maintenance to ensure smooth pavement and addressing issues like potholes.

Overall, the comments reflect a strong desire for a safer and more pedestrian-friendly environment in Bois Forte.

Have you been, or almost been, in a crash involving a vehicle, bicycle, or pedestrian in Bois Forte?

The survey received more than 90 comments about safety related incidents on the Bois Forte Reservation.

39% of survey respondents have been, or almost have been, in a crash.
43% of survey respondents have witnessed a crash.

The comments provide a detailed account of various accidents that have occurred in Bois Forte. These incidents involve vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians and often take place at intersections or busier roads. Key themes from public comments include:

- **Driver Error:** Many accidents are caused by driver error, such as speeding, distracted driving, failing to yield, and running red lights.
- **Pedestrian and Cyclist Errors:** Pedestrians and cyclists often contribute to accidents by jaywalking, not looking before crossing, or riding against traffic.
- **Intersections:** A significant number of accidents occur at intersections, highlighting the need for improved traffic control and signage.
- **Specific Roads and Locations:** Certain roads and locations, such as the intersection of Main Street and Elm Avenue or the C-Store in Nett Lake, are frequently mentioned as accident hotspots.
- **Blind Spots:** Blind spots at intersections and on specific roads can contribute to accidents.
- **Inadequate Signage:** Lack of clear signage or markings can lead to confusion and accidents. Speeding: Excessive speed is a common factor in many accidents.
- **Distracted Driving:** The use of cell phones or other distractions while driving can significantly increase the risk of accidents.

BOIS FORTE COMMUNITY SAFETY ACTION PLAN

COMMUNITY SURVEY SUMMARY (JUNE - AUGUST 2024)

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Do you have any other comments and/or concerns you'd like to share?

The survey received 38 additional comments and suggestions.

Comments provided transportation safety suggestions, including:

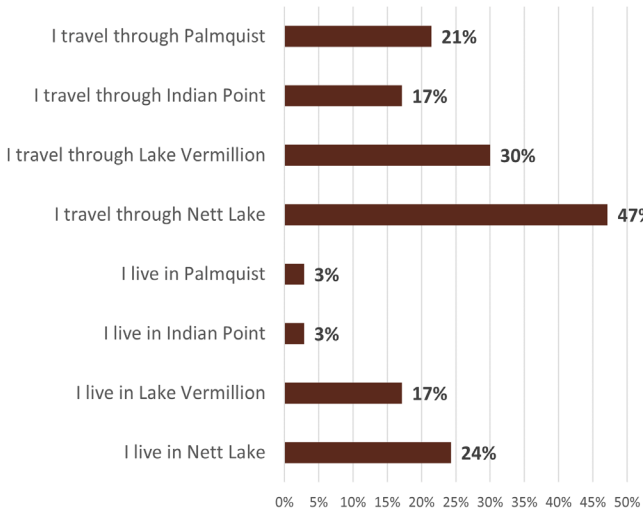
- **Infrastructure:** The comments emphasize the need for improved infrastructure, including sidewalks, bike trails, and additional lighting.
- **Traffic Management:** Many suggest stricter enforcement of traffic laws, increased police presence, and the use of rumble strips to slow traffic.
- **Safety:** Concerns about pedestrian and cyclist safety are prevalent, with calls for better lighting and safer walkways.
- **Maintenance:** Regular maintenance of roads, ditches, and sidewalks is highlighted as essential for safety.

Quotes to Highlight:

1. **Infrastructure Needs:** "Sidewalks are needed in the village - Nett Lake and Vermillion - Palmquist and Indian Point."
2. **Safety Concerns:** "There are several individuals that ride bike or walk around Nett Lake. I would like to see it safer for them."
3. **Lighting and Pedestrian Improvements:** "Just better walkways, bike ways, maybe some more lighting & walkway crossings. Need new lights (security) in Palmquist and Tower. Enforcement, educating public, no need to rush."

DEMOGRAPHICS

What best describes you?



What is your age?

