

# TRANSPORTATION SAFETY CAREER PATHWAY SPOTLIGHT

## Career Pathway:

Joe has always had a love of transportation and it was only fitting that he became a transportation engineer after pursuing a bachelor's and master's degree in Civil Engineering from the University of Idaho. He enjoys all modes of transportation- walking, biking, motorcycling, even horseback riding! Using all of these different modes has certainly helped diversify his perspective as a designer. His career with Clackamas County began nearly 28 years ago after some time spent in consulting.



Joseph Marek

**Organization:**  
Clackamas County, OR

**Job Title:**  
Traffic Safety Program Manager

**Training/Education:**  
University of Idaho

**Degree/Certification:**

- B.S. in Civil Engineering
- M.S. in Civil Engineering

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## Becoming Involved In Safety:

While Joe has always been interested in safety, his interest started to progressively increase after he assumed the role of Staff Liaison for the Clackamas County Traffic Safety Commission in the mid-1990's. This group helped sharpen his focus on safety. Joe says, "safety resonated with me due to a severe crash that my family was in when I was very young resulting in severe injuries to my parents." One of his most important career achievements was leading the effort at Clackamas County to develop a Transportation Safety Action Plan in 2012.

The safety program has since grown, and the County now has a Traffic Safety Program with its own budget line as well as County-wide performance measures associated with fatalities that are reported quarterly. Joe shared that he has "an incredible team of professionals that help get all of the good work done".

## How do professional activities make a positive impact on society?

Joe suggests that leading the effort for a Transportation Safety Action Plan, participating in a road safety audit, and sharing traffic safety efforts and concerns at community meetings can really make a positive impact on local road safety. Joe provides this food for thought: "Traffic Safety starts with you! As I do my work, I believe that everyone deserves to get home safely to their family every night. I can set a good example by being a safe user of the transportation system regardless of my mode of choice. Also, I believe it is very important not to be judgmental about people since we do not know their situation when a crash occurs. People do not wake up in the morning with the intention of being in a crash. When we look at our own transportation system, we need to think about it from the user's perspective and, for a moment, cast aside our knowledge of standards to imagine what the road is not communicating to a driver that may be a contributing cause to a crash. Then, we can better figure out what we can do to improve it. Lastly, sometimes what we do might not work and it's ok to admit that and make changes".



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