Across the country, planners and roadway designers are searching for innovative ways to keep people safe on public roads. Locally, that innovation comes in the form of an app and some cash. The City of San Antonio’s Vision Zero initiative partnered with USAA to launch the San Antonio Safest Driver Contest. The app-based contest will run from June 11, 2018 through September 3, 2018.

Participants are asked to download an app through the Apple or Android mobile stores and register a profile. The app then runs in the background and monitors the driving habits of participants. Participants can win $2,000 in a random drawing just for downloading the app. Eligible participants will be competing for the Overall Safest Driver, Least Distracted Driver, and Safest Military Driver. The City of San Antonio and USAA will award grand prizes in each of these categories worth $10,000.

He said the app uses the sensors in your phone and analyzes your driving behaviors such as fast acceleration, hard braking or phone distraction. This data will be used for the contest but it will also help city staff better understand driver behaviors and hopefully change some of those behaviors as people become more aware of their driving habits. The app also allows participants to indicate whether they were the driver, passenger, or riding the bus.

In addition to the top prizes, there will be 54 bi-weekly winners of $150 or $500 dollars all thanks to funding provided by USAA. Even though the contest is for the San Antonio Safest Driver, anyone over the age of 18 and living within the AAMPO study area, which includes Bexar, Comal, Guadalupe, and a part of Kendall County, is eligible to win. For more information or to participate, visit www.sasafestdriver.com. Good luck and drive safe!

"We’re looking to improve safety on our streets as well as our drivers through some healthy competition," said Art Reinhardt, Assistant Director with the City of San Antonio Transportation and Capital Improvements Department.
Summer is here and if you are traveling, please stay safe.

At our June Transportation Policy Board meeting, the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) asked the board for a resolution on projects for inclusion in the 2019 Unified Transportation Program (UTP). The UTP is TxDOT’s ten year plan that guides transportation project development and implementation.

One of the projects recommended for inclusion in the 2019 UTP is IH-35 North. TxDOT proposed to improve IH-35 North, of which sections are currently #31 and #58 on TxDOT’s top 100 most congested roadways. The improvements include the addition of two elevated travel lanes and one High Occupancy Vehicle lane in each direction from IH 410 North to FM 3009. The cost will be approximately $720M and could go to construction as early as 2020. Additional funding, around $730M, will still need to be sought out to expand other sections of IH-35. But, congestion relief on this major travel corridor – for people and for freight – is not too far down the road!

In June we also welcomed several new Board members. I look forward to working with them to keep our region moving.

Finally, thanks to everyone who took part in celebrating National Bike Month, the 22nd Annual Walk & Roll Rally, and the region’s first Vision Zero Summit. You can read more about these activities and other initiatives in this edition of Spotlight on Mobility.

Sincerely,

Kevin Wolff
Chair, Alamo Area Metropolitan Planning Organization
Bexar County Commissioner, Precinct 3
VIA Metropolitan Transit Board of Trustees member, Jordana Mathews, was appointed to represent VIA on both the AAMPO Transportation Policy Board and the AAMPO Executive Committee. For over five years, Ms. Mathews served as the Bexar County Director of Economic Development. This perspective will inform her decision making on transportation planning and economic development.

“The City of San Antonio and the region face mobility challenges ahead as we add over a million more residents,” Ms. Mathews says. “For nearly seven decades, our focus and resources have centered nearly exclusively on building highways and roads.”

She believes the region will need to continue making those investments but also needs to use every tool available to maintain mobility. Her vision for the region is an integrated, multimodal network.

“We need to be envisioning an integrated system of highways, HOV lanes, rapid transit corridors, bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure and innovative technologies and services,” says Ms. Mathews.

She looks forward to sitting on the board and helping to drive transportation policy and investments in the region.

The Alamo Area Regional Mobility Authority’s Chair Michael J. Lynd, Jr. will be representing the ARMA on the Transportation Policy Board. As CEO of Kairoi Residential, Mr. Lynd has supervised millions of dollars in capital improvement outlays and investment transactions. As the former Chief Investment Officer for The Lynd Company, Mr. Lynd’s unique perspective will enlighten the board’s transportation planning, resource allocation, and consideration of investments in the region.

VIA Metropolitan Transit Board of Trustees Vice-Chair, Patricia Rodriguez, has served on the VIA board since 2016 and recognizes the growing need for a public transit infrastructure that will help alleviate traffic congestion from a growing population.

“I believe the most critical transportation challenge facing the City of San Antonio and the region is the lack of adequate funding, especially for our mass transit system,” says Trustee Rodriguez. “Using my background in public finance, I hope to work with other board members to find solutions and move our region forward.”

Ms. Rodriguez looks forward to building a multimodal future alongside her peers on the board.

New Braunfels Mayor Pro Tem and District 5 City Councilman Wayne Peters has served on the City Council since 2014.

As a former Vice President for Shell Chemical Company, Mr. Peter’s experience in business management and strategic planning has guided New Braunfels through a period of unprecedented growth, including the passage of the 2013 bond.
On June 15, 2018, the Alamo Area held its first Vision Zero Summit. Vision Zero is the strategy to eliminate all traffic fatalities and serious injuries. Over 150 people from across Texas met at the Urban Ecology Center at Hardberger Park in San Antonio to learn more about their role in achieving a zero goal.

Months of collaboration made the Summit possible. The Alamo Area MPO worked with the local chapters of Women’s Transportation Seminar, American Planning Association, and Institute for Transportation Engineers as well as Vision Zero San Antonio on the day’s agenda and promotion. More than a dozen private sector companies contributed financial support and participated on the day of the program.

Guest speaker Leah Shahum laid the groundwork for the day. Founder and Director of the national Vision Zero Network, Leah defined Vision Zero as more than a slogan, reframed “accidents” as “crashes”, and emphasized the need for a Safe Systems approach to traffic safety.

Vision Zero: More than a slogan. Vision Zero is unequivocally not just a public relations campaign. It is a significant shift from the roadway safety status quo by recognizing that people will sometimes make mistakes and that the road system and related policies should be designed to ensure those inevitable mistakes do not result in severe injuries or fatalities.

Crash, not accident. An accident is something that cannot be foreseen or avoided. The Vision Zero approach, though, acknowledges that traffic losses are preventable. By reframing car “accidents” as “crashes”, Vision Zero underscores that transportation system designers, policymakers and other professionals know what works to ensure safety and can work toward the goal of zero traffic deaths.

Safe Systems approach. In the past, meaningful, cross-disciplinary collaboration among local transportation planners and engineers, policymakers, and public health professionals has not been the norm. In what’s called a Safe Systems approach, diverse and necessary stakeholders address the roadway environment, policies (such as speed management), behavior and technology not to eliminate every crash, but to lessen the severity of crashes.

Other speakers from the Alamo Area and from across the U.S. engaged the crowd on messaging, technology, local engineering practices and the ethics of new mobility options.

The summit earned accolades from attendees and raised the bar for traffic safety conversations in the Alamo Area.
When planning messaging for Vision Zero outreach, the Los Angeles Department of Transportation aimed to convince people that they are a part of the solution, not the problem.

“All of this is about change management, not even transportation. It’s about how to make our cities safer by leveraging technology and learning from each other. And this change is coming fast” –

Gabe Klein
Co-Founder of CityFi

“The biggest factor in whether a crash is survivable, fatal or life-debilitating is speed. We need to prioritize safety over speed. The way we design our streets matters” –

Leah Shahum
Founder and Director of Vision Zero Network

Shirley Gonzales
AAMPO Transportation Policy Board member and City of San Antonio Councilwoman Shirley Gonzales began championing Vision Zero in 2014.
The Alamo Area MPO kicked off National Bike Month with the 22nd Annual Walk and Roll Rally held on May 4th at Main Plaza. Despite heavy rain in the forecast, close to 250 people gathered at 8:00 a.m. for this yearly pop-up event to celebrate sustainable forms of transportation. Now that’s dedication! The event was filled with good music, fun contests, food, and most importantly, lots of information and resources geared towards active transportation in the Alamo Area.

Host, Randy Beamer with News 4 San Antonio and City of San Antonio District 5 Councilwoman Shirley Gonzales opened the event in front of the beautiful San Fernando Cathedral with remarks about the importance of active transportation to our community. Guests had the opportunity to visit informational booths to learn more about active transportation projects, initiatives, and resources in the region including the San Antonio River Authority’s San Pedro Creek Culture Park, Britton’s Bicycle accessories to increase visibility while walking or biking, and the South Texas Off Road Mountain-Bikers’ efforts on trail maintenance.

On May 18, the Alamo Area MPO partnered with the City of San Antonio Vision Zero Initiative, Bike San Antonio, Centro, SWell Cycle, and REI Co-op to host two energizer stations in support of National Bike to Work Day (BTWD). Local residents were encouraged to try commuting to work on their bicycle instead of driving. Volunteers celebrated their efforts at two energizer stations -- one at the AAMPO office and the second at the corner of 10th Street and Broadway across from Maverick Park. Approximately 50 cyclists were greeted at each location with breakfast items, coffee and a BTWD goodie bag stuffed with bicycle-friendly information. In support of BTWD, the MPO hosted a one-hour Street Skills class prior to BTWD to help local residents stay safe when riding a bicycle on the city streets.

MPO staff also spoke to families at Siclovia and at Safe Kids Day. Safe Kids Day is an annual event organized by the Safe Kids San Antonio Coalition and University Health System. Both were incredibly successful events attracting a good number of participants. We promoted and distributed safety information for children and adults on bicycle safety and proper helmet usage. Attendees were encouraged to place dots next to the goals that were most important to them and also to comment on what it would take to get them to consider walking or biking to work or school.

To wrap up bicycle month, the MPO’s Bicycle and Pedestrian Mobility Advisory Committees hosted a Walk and Bike Night on May 23 to share information about active transportation initiatives in the Alamo area. This event took place at the brand new Confluence Park and topics included the Bike Share Master Plan, Morningside Elementary School’s Bike Club, Walking School Bus Pilot program, trail maintenance & signage, and the Rivard Report’s Open Ciclismo Map.

We encourage you to enjoy the benefits of walking, bicycling and riding transit in our community. If you have any questions, contact Lily Lowder, our Active Transportation Planner at lowder@alamoareampo.org or (210) 227-8651.
The Spanish language is not a foreign language in the State of Texas or our region. On August 1, 2018, members of the public will be able to access information about the Alamo Area Metropolitan Planning Organization in Spanish from a direct link on our website’s home page.

Although there are several other languages spoken, in our region according to the American Community Survey (2009-2013), 194,097 people in our study area have limited English proficiency and primarily speak Spanish at home. It is our responsibility to actively involve these citizens so that no person is excluded from participation, denied benefits, or subject to discrimination based upon race, color, or national original.

The Spanish-only webpage includes all available Spanish language materials such as brochures, videos, infographics, policies and plans in one centralized location so that people do not have to dig through the English website content to find what they need or use computerized translation tools that can sometimes translate information incorrectly.

The AAMPO has been translating numerous documents and providing Spanish language services for many years but this will make translated information much more accessible online and allow for a better experience for members of our community who primarily speak Spanish. “We know that smart phone technology allows people to access information from virtually anywhere,” said Linda Alvarado-Vela, AAMPO’s Planning and Public Involvement Program Manager. “It makes incredible sense to compile all of our translated materials onto one easy to access landing page.”

This website will be updated regularly, and members of the public are encouraged to help spread the word with family and friends so that they stay informed about events, public meetings and ways to stay involved in the transportation planning process. You can access the page at www.alamoareampo.org/espanol.

If you have any questions, please contact Ambar Perez, Bilingual Public Involvement Specialist at (210) 230-6902 or perez@alamoareampo.org.
The Bicycle and Pedestrian Mobility Advisory Committees will be holding a joint meeting on October 2018. Please visit www.alamoareampo.org for more information.

Meeting dates, times, and locations may vary. Please confirm the meeting information with the agenda posted on our website or by calling us at (210) 227-8651. AAMPO meetings are accessible to persons with disabilities.

To arrange for special assistance or an interpreter, please call (210) 227-8651 or TDD 1-800-735-2989 (Relay Texas) at least five working days in advance. Las reuniones son accesibles a personas con discapacidad. Si usted necesita asistencia especial o un intérprete, llame al (210) 227-8651 o al TDD 1-800-662-4954 (Relay Texas) con cinco días hábiles de anticipación.