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Feb. 1, 2008  
For immediate release

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## UC Berkeley Sends Pedestrian Safety Experts to California Neighborhoods

The Technology Transfer Program at the University of California, Berkeley is developing a new Pedestrian Safety Audit program. The recently awarded project aims to reduce the number of pedestrian injuries and fatalities due to collisions on California's local streets and highways. Funding for this program was provided by a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS), through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

California cities and counties have enjoyed OTS-funded Traffic Safety Evaluations since 1999. The project continues funding for that service, which sends engineering and enforcement experts to visit local agencies and make recommendations on how to improve traffic safety and incorporate best practices.

But this year the project has a new component that specifically targets pedestrian safety. This winter, Tech Transfer will establish a protocol that will become the Pedestrian Safety Audit Tool. The new tool will be used by pedestrian safety experts who will visit cities and counties to evaluate pedestrian safety conditions and make detailed recommendations for improvements.

"Well designed communities can encourage people to walk—but only if they feel safe walking," says Christopher J. Murphy, Director of the Office of Traffic Safety. "Addressing the enforcement, educational, and engineering issues can help save lives and create thriving communities."

The new Pedestrian Safety Audit Tool will allow Tech Transfer to immediately begin working toward that end. Tech Transfer plans to send its expert teams into the field as soon as spring 2008.

"The California Strategic Highway Safety Plan identifies pedestrian safety as one of the state's key challenges," says Laura Melendy, Tech Transfer director, "and that's exactly what we're addressing with this new project." The OTS grant totals \$879,393 and supports the project through fall 2009.

The Technology Transfer Program, a division of the Institute of Transportation Studies (ITS) at the University of California, Berkeley, bridges transportation research and professional practice to facilitate and support efficient and effective state-of-the-art transportation systems. They provide training, workshops, conferences, technical assistance and information resources in the transportation-related areas of planning and policy, traffic engineering, project development, infrastructure design and maintenance, safety, environmental issues, railroads and aviation.

ITS Berkeley is an internationally recognized center for research, education and scholarship in the field of transportation. The institute was created at UC Berkeley in 1948 by the California state legislature to support the design and construction of California's transportation system following World War II, with a mission to conduct research and provide instruction to a new generation of transportation professionals, and it still serves that mission today.