

News Release

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Designing for Human Nature: How Psychology Can Improve Transportation Safety

Meridian, ID – Engineers consider many things when designing a road for safety: *Is the road in the city or country? How much traffic does it see? How fast is traffic moving? How many intersections are there, and where are they?*

But, what about the psychology that affects how people behave when behind the wheel?

Join the Community Planning Association of Southeast Idaho (COMPASS) as we welcome Dr. Ben Barton from the University of Idaho to delve into how understanding human nature can be used to improve transportation safety.

On Monday, August 3, Dr. Barton will share his research and expertise into how our own behaviors lead to transportation injuries, and how engineers, planners, and psychologists can use that information to reduce deaths and serious injuries on Idaho's roadways.

The presentation is free and all are welcome.

- Monday, August 3, 2026
- 5:30 pm Meet and Greet
- 6:00 – 8:00 pm Presentation
- COMPASS, 700 NE 2nd Street, Meridian, First Floor Board Room
- Free! RSVP: jgallup@compassidaho.org or 208/475-2226

COMPASS will also host Dr. Barton for a more technical presentation, *"The Human Side of Transportation Safety: Behavioral Science for Planners and Engineers,"* on Tuesday, August 4, from 9:00 – 11:00 am at the same location. This presentation is also free and open to the public.

Dr. Benjamin Barton is a Professor and Chair of the Department of Psychology and Communication at the University of Idaho. His research primarily focuses on the causes and prevention of unintentional injuries, including injuries sustained on the transportation system.

COMPASS is the forum for regional collaboration in southwest Idaho that helps maintain a healthy and economically vibrant region, offering people choices in how and where they live, work, play, and travel. Among other programs, COMPASS conducts regional transportation planning and budgets federal transportation funding for Ada and Canyon Counties.

These presentations are offered by COMPASS as part of its annual education series. For more information on this and other education series events, visit <https://compassidaho.org/public-events/#EdSeries>.

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