

Scenario 2E: Improving Safety for Vulnerable Users

BEN

April
2019

Ben is 78 years old and is retired. Until last year, he drove most places. Looking back, he can see his reflexes weren't what they once were but he never considered himself unfit to drive. Then the accident happened when another driver ran a red light and hit him broadside as he entered the intersection. With his car totaled and his confidence badly shaken, he decided to stop driving. Now he walks and takes the bus most places. But as someone who doesn't see that well and walks slowly, he worries every day that he won't be seen by the cars, buses and trucks on the busy street he crosses at least twice a day. After a number of near misses as a pedestrian and long waits on the curb, he is starting to spend more time at home, socializing less and relying on family and friends to get his needs met.

April
2039

Ben is 78 years old and is retired. At his recent physical, the doctor noted some of his reflexes had slowed and his vision had decreased. But thanks to the advanced technology now in vehicles and on the roadside, Ben is still safe behind the wheel. He feels comfortable driving knowing the smart signals are communicating with his car and every other car, making intersections much safer than they used to be. (With more and more self-driving cars on the road too, he expects to switch to one of those before too long, if he can afford it.) Even though he doesn't see well and moves slowly, he still finds walking in his neighborhood safe and enjoyable. He makes sure to carry his small safety transponder which alerts vehicles of all types – cars, buses and trucks, both automated and conventional – to the presence of pedestrians, bicyclists and other non-motorized users. Of all his worries, getting around safely and independently is not one of them.