* WalkWise is a program of the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) that focuses on improving safety for people as they walk or bike.
* The 20-minute interactive WalkWise presentation educates participants about traffic safety rules and best practices to walk or bike safely and to make themselves less vulnerable to vehicle traffic. The pedestrian safety initiative was developed by the Center for Urban Transportation Research at the University of South Florida.
* WalkWise is part of the larger goal of Target Zero – Florida’s initiative to reduce the number of deaths and serious injuries on roadways to zero.
* The FDOT District Five Office of Safety launched WalkWise in October 2023 along U.S. 92, a four-lane road between Daytona Beach and DeLand traveling through Tiger Bay State Forest which is home to several facilities for disadvantaged populations, such as the First Step Shelter for the homeless.
* Many people who visit the facilities to access services or who are released from a nearby jail do not have cars and travel by foot or bicycle, despite the high-speed traffic. A shelter resident, while walking to a bus stop on her way to work, was struck and killed in a vehicle crash, inspiring the launch of WalkWise to that area.
* FDOT has made several infrastructure changes to improve safety in the corridor, such as providing nighttime lighting, installing pedestrian crossing warning lights, and moving the bus stop.
* Those attending the WalkWise presentation receive safety kits, which include fluorescent-colored safety vests, lighted armbands, bicycle lights, and other safety information.
* Presentations are given regularly at two homeless shelters, the First Step Shelter in Daytona Beach and the Bridge Shelter in DeLand, as well as Tomoka Correctional Institution, the state prison in Daytona Beach.
* Safety kits have also been provided to the Volusia County Branch Jail and were distributed during an outreach event at the Votran Transfer Station, the main bus station in Daytona Beach.
* Since WalkWise was launched in 2023, about 20 presentations have been given to more than 700 people. An additional 600 safety kits have been distributed at the jail.