

# 2023 ST. LOUIS CITY & COUNTY CRASH REPORT

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## STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Trailnet's annual Crash Report is a tool for advocacy and education. Traffic violence and reckless driving are top-of-mind concerns in the St. Louis region, and yet, local crash data is notoriously difficult to access and parse. This document was created for you, our neighbors and leaders, to use in your own advocacy for safer streets.

**Please remember that each data point is more than a statistic.** Traffic crashes affect people—lives are lost, families are broken, humans are changed. Language matters when talking about traffic crashes. In this report Trailnet uses the terms, “pedestrian fatalities” or “car crashes,” but it is important to remember that each crash represents an interaction of people: people driving, people walking, or people riding a bike. Trailnet's work is grounded in making streets safer for everyone, and it is essential that we center this conversation around the humanity of the people affected by traffic violence.

To that end, going into the fourth year of the Crash Report, we wanted to supplement our crash data with personal accounts from the people who walk, bike, drive, and take public transit in St. Louis every day. From November 2023 - January 2024, hundreds of residents filled out Trailnet's public “St. Louis Street Stories” survey. We will share some of their responses below. We hope these stories help to further illustrate the daily, human impact of traffic violence.

As always, we encourage our media partners to adhere to a high standard when talking about traffic violence, using the Community Mobility Committee's Traffic Violence Toolkit as a guide.

For more information on how we compiled this report, see the methodology section on page 21.

Similar to previous reports, we will continue to show how roadway functional classification, speed limit, circumstances of crashes and other characteristics correlate with local crash statistics.

A special thank you to Trailnet members & donors for funding this report.

Learn more at [Trailnet.org](https://trailnet.org)

# YEAR-IN-REVIEW

646



PEOPLE WERE INJURED OR KILLED WHILE WALKING OR BIKING IN 533 REPORTED\* CRASHES IN ST. LOUIS CITY & COUNTY

476



225 CITY

251 COUNTY

PEOPLE WERE INJURED WHILE WALKING

133



49 CITY

84 COUNTY

PEOPLE WERE INJURED WHILE BIKING

36



8 CITY

28 COUNTY

PEOPLE WERE KILLED WHILE WALKING

ONE



PERSON WAS KILLED WHILE BIKING IN ST. LOUIS COUNTY

149



PEOPLE LOST THEIR LIVES, INCLUDING DRIVERS, DUE TO TRAFFIC VIOLENCE IN ST. LOUIS CITY & COUNTY IN 2023 - THIS IS UNACCEPTABLE

## TRAFFIC VIOLENCE

Traffic violence is an illness with clear symptoms and well-tested treatments. Across the St. Louis region crashes are the results of a broken system. Crashes happen on streets that are too wide, that were designed for drivers to move too quickly, in vehicles that are too large. They happen because drivers have limited access to education on how to drive safely, and because they aren't held accountable when they drive recklessly.

The treatments are layered. We need a built environment that caters to humans, not cars. We need to better educate new drivers. We need to find an equitable, safe and affordable way to enforce traffic laws. **We need up-to-date local and state policies that support Complete Streets, Vision Zero and more.**

A first step to treating traffic violence in our region is understanding the problem. The following section covers some of the most striking observations Trailnet made as we studied traffic violence trends in 2023, as well as some basic recommendations.

\*Note: We can only share data that has been reported to the State Highway Patrol. Many crashes go unreported. Many crashes result in injuries that can't be seen. Some crashes result in deaths months or years down the line. We recognize these gaps in the report as the unknowable but lasting impacts of traffic violence on human lives.

# YEAR-IN-REVIEW

## MAJOR TAKEAWAYS

# 28



PEOPLE WERE HIT AND KILLED BY DRIVERS IN ST. LOUIS COUNTY IN 2023, **THE MOST ON RECORD**

**1** 2023 was the deadliest year on record for people walking in St. Louis County. Twenty-eight people walking were killed by drivers in 2023. We need a coordinated and comprehensive response from County leaders, organizers and advocates to halt this devastating trend.

**2** Alternatively, in the City of St. Louis, we saw another decrease in the amount of pedestrian fatalities. While total crashes increased slightly from a record low in 2022, there are reasons to believe the City is headed in the right direction. With the signing of the St. Louis Safer Streets Bill (BB#120) in March 2023, the City allocated a record amount of money toward street safety and infrastructure. Plans are currently underway to implement street paving, roadway improvements and sidewalk improvements at the City's top crash locations and along its most dangerous corridors.



Signing of Safer Streets Bill BB#120

The City also completed construction on its first calm street on Louisiana Ave in 2023 and there are dozens of plans on the books to build out safe streets infrastructure across the City in the future. City leaders are appropriately focused on addressing traffic violence right now, and momentum is building.



Louisiana calm streets project

**3** Grand Blvd has been the most dangerous corridor for people walking in the City of St. Louis every year since 2020. Grand needs to be made as safe as possible, as quickly as possible. While the City of St. Louis is currently in the process of designing long-term safety improvements for Grand, many people may still be harmed before those improvements are constructed. Both St. Louis City and County need to ready quick-build, short-term responses for recurring crash hot spots. Inexpensive, temporary solutions can be deployed immediately while we wait for more permanent ones.



**TOTAL CRASHES INVOLVING A PERSON WALKING ON GRAND INCREASED FROM**

**21** IN 2022, TO **28** IN 2023.

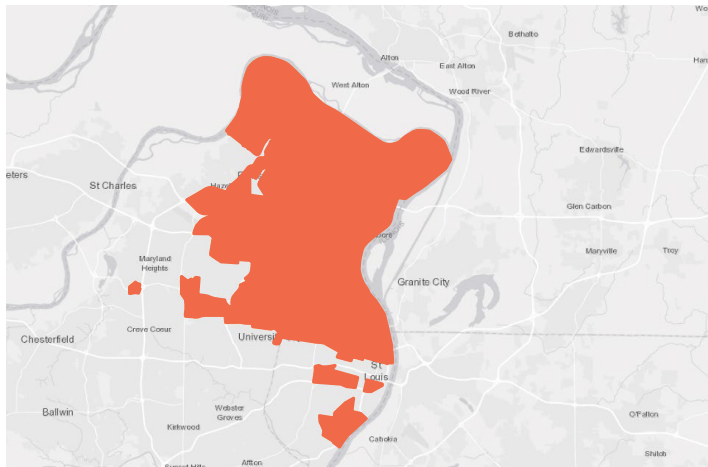


An intersection at Grand



# YEAR-IN-REVIEW

A DISPROPORTIONATE NUMBER OF CRASHES OCCUR IN PREDOMINANTLY **BLACK & MINORITY** AREAS IN ST. LOUIS CITY & COUNTY



## CITY

**86%** (OR 7/8) OF FATALITIES INVOLVING PEOPLE WALKING OCCURRED IN PREDOMINATELY BLACK & MINORITY AREAS

**61%** OF VEHICULAR FATALITIES OCCURRED IN PREDOMINATELY BLACK & MINORITY AREAS

## COUNTY

**54%** OF FATALITIES INVOLVING PEOPLE WALKING OCCURRED IN PREDOMINATELY BLACK & MINORITY AREAS

**50%** OF VEHICULAR FATALITIES OCCURRED IN PREDOMINATELY BLACK & MINORITY AREAS

**4** Once again, we saw a disproportionate amount of crashes in black and minority communities in the City and County. People in these communities are more likely to take public transit and less likely to own a car. They are also communities with widely outdated street infrastructure. More people in black and minority communities are traveling outside of cars where sidewalks and lighting are inadequate or lacking. It's clear that these communities require priority investments.



## SPEEDING

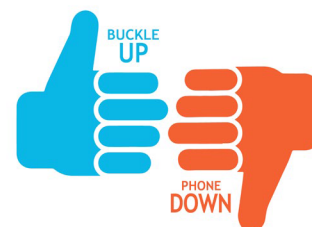
WAS THE TOP NOTED CIRCUMSTANCE FOR FATAL CAR CRASHES IN ST. LOUIS CITY & COUNTY IN 2023 (ALSO IN 2022).

**5** In 2023, the vast majority of fatal pedestrian crashes in St. Louis City (100%) and County (86%) took place on roads with speed limits marked 30 MPH or higher.

Speeding was the top circumstance reported for fatal car crashes in St. Louis City & County. These statistics reinforce national studies suggesting, intuitively, that the faster a person is driving, the more likely they are to seriously injure or kill a person walking, biking, or driving. Whether by lowering speed limits, building out safe streets infrastructure, standardizing drivers education or more strictly enforcing traffic laws, we must encourage slower, calmer streets. Even a difference of 5 mph can save a life.

**6** Distracted driving was reported as a contributing factor in 47 crashes

involving pedestrians in St. Louis City and County last year, and that number represents a fraction of distracted drivers on the road. With the passing of the **Siddens Bening Hands Free Law** in August 2023—following years of advocacy by the Missouri Hands-Free Coalition—Missouri became the 49th state to ban distracted driving. Enforcement and ticketing will begin in 2025. Trailnet and our statewide partners look forward to engaging the public on this new law, and down the line, tracking its impact.



Graphic : MoDOT & Missouri Coalition for Roadway Safety

# ST. LOUIS CITY

## OVERVIEW



**243**

PEOPLE AFFECTED  
+41 from 2022



**61**

PEOPLE AFFECTED  
+1 from 2022



**5382**

PEOPLE AFFECTED  
-41 from 2022

**8**

PEOPLE  
KILLED

-10

**225**

PEOPLE  
INJURED

+52

**10**

DAMAGED  
PROPERTY

-1

**0**

PEOPLE  
KILLED

-2

**49**

PEOPLE  
INJURED

+1

**12**

DAMAGED  
PROPERTY

+2

**46**

PEOPLE  
KILLED

-13

**5336**

PEOPLE  
INJURED

-28

In 2023, the City of St. Louis had its lowest number of total traffic fatalities since 2018. For the first time since 2014, there were fewer than 10 pedestrian fatalities in the City. The number of overall crashes in the City increased slightly to 243 from an all-time low of 202 in 2022. As compared to 2022, total bicycle crashes and car crashes resulting in personal injury or fatality remained relatively similar, with one more bicycle crash and 41 fewer car crashes in 2023.

## MOST DANGEROUS CORRIDOR

### GRAND BLVD

PRINCIPAL & MINOR ARTERIAL

LENGTH ..... 8.8 mi

POSTED SPEED ..... 25, 30, 35

BIKE FACILITIES ..... Partial



**11.5%**

of all pedestrian crashes in  
2023



**4 years**

This is the 4th year in a row  
Grand has been the most  
dangerous corridor for  
people walking in St. Louis  
City



**zero**

No fatal pedestrian crashes  
occurred on Grand in 2023,  
the first time since 2017

Grand Blvd was the most dangerous corridor for people walking in the City of St. Louis. Total crashes involving a person walking on Grand increased from 21 in 2022, to 28 in 2023. However, for the first time since 2019, there were no pedestrian fatalities on Grand in 2023. Grand was also the most dangerous corridor for people driving in the City, with a total of five people losing their lives in car crashes in 2023.

While relatively few people walking were killed on City streets in 2023, even one death is too many. The following circumstances and trends led to eight people walking being killed by people driving: All eight fatalities occurred on arterial roads. All eight fatalities were on streets marked 30 MPH or higher. (7 of 8 were on streets with posted limits of 35 MPH) Seven of eight fatalities occurred in dark conditions.

Fatal vehicular crashes were also significantly more common on high speed arterial roads. In 2023, 80% (37/46) of all vehicular fatalities occurred on arterials, with only one vehicular fatality on a local road. In comparison, in 2022, only 53% of vehicular fatalities occurred on arterials. The connection between vehicle speed and death was especially evident in the data we collected from vehicular crashes in 2023. **98% (45/46) of fatal vehicular crashes occurred on streets marked 30 MPH or higher. In comparison, only 62% of fatal vehicular crashes occurred on streets marked 30 MPH or higher in 2022.**

# ST. LOUIS CITY

## WALKING



# 243

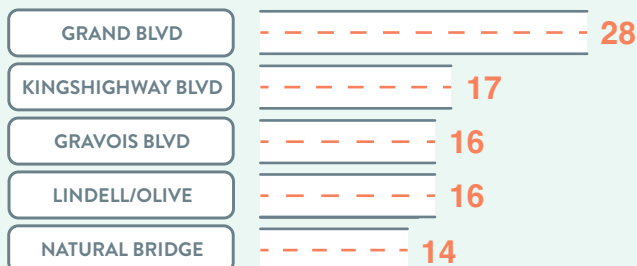
PEOPLE AFFECTED  
+41 FROM 2022

**8**  
PEOPLE  
KILLED  
-10

**225**  
PEOPLE  
INJURED  
+52

**10**  
DAMAGED  
PROPERTY  
-1

### TOP CRASH CORRIDORS



**35%** OF PEDESTRIAN CRASHES AND **50%** OF PEDESTRIAN FATALITIES OCCURRED ON **3 ROADS**:  
NATURAL BRIDGE, KINGSHIGHWAY, & GRAVOIS

### LOCATION ON ROADWAY

	PEOPLE AFFECTED	PERCENT AFFECTED
MID-BLOCK	<b>127</b>	<b>52%</b>
INTERSECTION	<b>116</b>	<b>48%</b>

### POSTED SPEED LIMITS



### FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION

ARTERIAL ROADS	<b>168</b>	<b>69%</b>
LOCAL ROADS	<b>35</b>	<b>14%</b>
COLLECTOR ROADS	<b>30</b>	<b>12%</b>
INTERSTATE, PARKING, ALLEY	<b>10</b>	<b>4%</b>

### TOP CIRCUMSTANCE OF CRASH



### FATAL CRASH DATA

**ALL** 8 of the fatal pedestrian crashes occurred on **Arterial** roads marked **30 MPH or more**

**7/8** of fatal pedestrian crashes occurred in **dark-lighting conditions**

# ST. LOUIS CITY

## BIKING



# 61

PEOPLE AFFECTED  
+1 FROM 2022

**0**  
PEOPLE  
KILLED  
-2




**49**  
PEOPLE  
INJURED  
+1

**12**  
DAMAGED  
PROPERTY  
+2

### BIKE FACILITY PRESENT?

	PEOPLE AFFECTED	PERCENT AFFECTED
NONE	31	51%
SHARROWS (SHARE THE ROAD)	15	25%
CONVENTIONAL BIKE LANE	8	13%
TRAIL CROSSING	5	8%
BUFFERED LANE	2	3%

### POSTED SPEED LIMITS

 SPEED LIMIT 30	23	38%
 SPEED LIMIT 35+	20	33%
 SPEED LIMIT 25-	18	29%

### TOP CRASH CORRIDORS

SKINKER/McCAUSLAND	5
ARSENAL	5
GRAND BLVD	4

**23%** OF BIKE CRASHES OCCURRED ON THESE **3 ROADS**

### FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION

ARTERIAL ROADS	40	66%
COLLECTOR ROADS	10	16%
LOCAL ROADS	10	16%
INTERSTATE	1	2%

### TOP CIRCUMSTANCE OF CRASH

 UNKNOWN	29	45%
 FAILURE TO YIELD	15	23%
 SIGNAL VIOLATION	7	11%

### LOCATION ON ROADWAY

INTERSECTION	34	56%
MID-BLOCK	27	44%

# ST. LOUIS CITY

## DRIVING (FATALITIES)



# 5382

PEOPLE AFFECTED  
-41 FROM 2021

# 46

PEOPLE  
KILLED

-13

# 5336

PEOPLE  
INJURED

-28

### POSTED SPEED LIMITS

	PEOPLE KILLED	PERCENT OF DEATHS
SPEED LIMIT 35+	39	85%
SPEED LIMIT 30	6	13%
SPEED LIMIT 25-	1	2%

### FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION

ARTERIAL ROADS	37	80%
INTERSTATE	8	17%
LOCAL ROADS	1	2%

### TOP CRASH CORRIDORS



**28%** OF DRIVING FATALITIES OCCURRED ON THESE **3 ROADS**

### TOP CIRCUMSTANCE OF CRASH

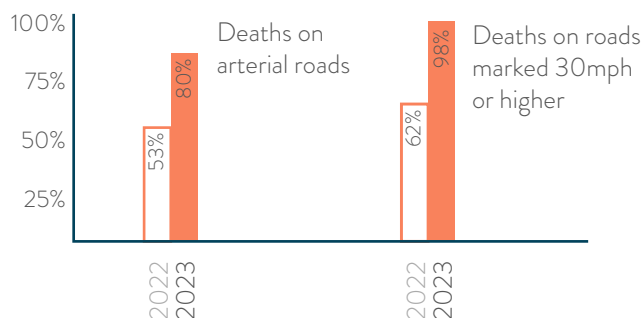


### LOCATION ON ROADWAY



### DEADLY CRASHES INCREASE ON ARTERIALS

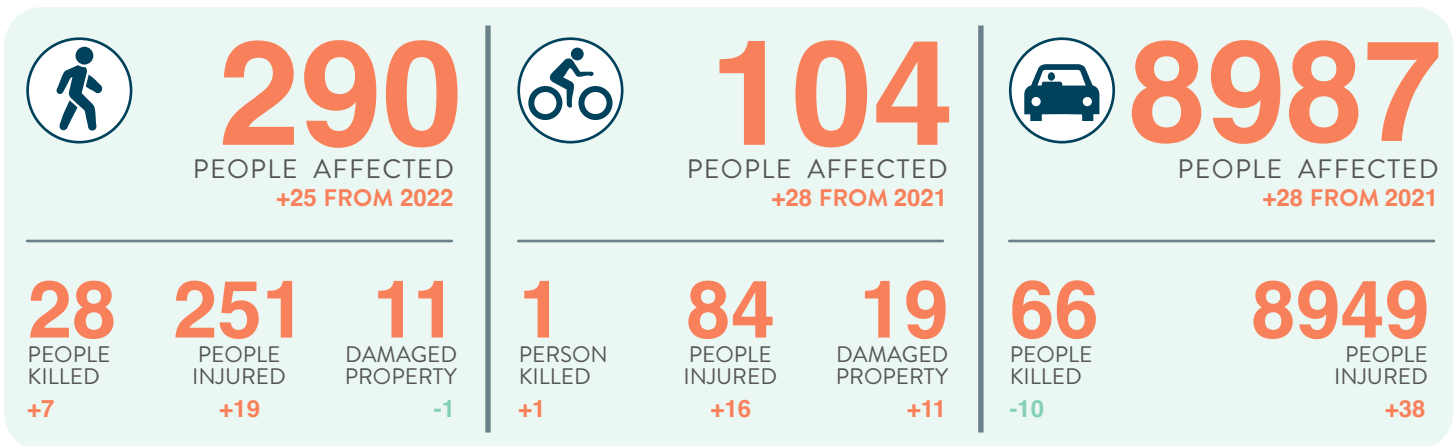
2023 saw a significant increase in the percentage of deadly car crashes occurring on high-speed arterial roads





# ST. LOUIS COUNTY

## OVERVIEW



**2023 was one of the most dangerous and deadly years for people walking and biking on record in St. Louis County.** Twenty-eight people walking were killed by drivers in 2023, making it the most deadly year on record for pedestrian fatalities in St. Louis County. Total pedestrian crashes were also significantly up compared to previous years, the 291 total pedestrian crashes is the second most dangerous year on record (304 total pedestrian crashes in 2016). Crashes involving people biking jumped to over 100 total bicycle crashes, the highest in five years, and a stark increase from the previous three years. Combined pedestrian and bicycle crashes reached a total of 395, the second highest total in 15 years.

## MOST DANGEROUS CORRIDORS

**HALLS FERRY/  
NEW HALLS FERRY RD**

*PRINCIPAL ARTERIAL*

LENGTH ..... 9.5 mi  
 POSTED SPEED ..... 35, 40 MPH  
 BIKE FACILITIES ..... none




# 5

PEDESTRIAN CRASHES (INCLUDING 1 FATALITY) OCCURED WITHIN 500 FEET OF EACH OTHER (BETWEEN DUNN RD AND TARGET DR, JUST NORTH OF I270)



# 14

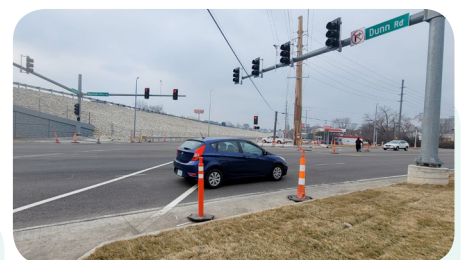
PEDESTRIAN CRASHES ON THIS ROAD IN 2023



# 2

PEDESTRIAN FATALITIES ON THIS ROAD IN 2023

**Halls Ferry/New Halls Ferry was the most dangerous corridor for people walking in St. Louis County in 2023,** with 14 total pedestrian crashes (2 more than St. Charles Rock Road in 2022) and 2 fatal pedestrian crashes. Of those 14 total crashes, 5 crashes (including 1 fatality) occurred in a roughly 500 ft section of New Halls Ferry between Dunn Rd and Target Dr, just north of Interstate 270. The density of these crashes amplifies the need for pedestrian infrastructure and traffic calming solutions on New Halls Ferry. It is evident that the current street design and infrastructure is not safe and conducive for the needs of the people walking (most likely Metro Bus riders) along this section of New Halls Ferry.



New Halls Ferry Road at Dunn Rd and Interstate 270

# ST. LOUIS COUNTY

WALKING



# 290

PEOPLE AFFECTED  
+25 FROM 2022

# 28

PEOPLE  
KILLED

+7

# 251

PEOPLE  
INJURED

+19

# 11

DAMAGED  
PROPERTY

-1

## TOP CRASH CORRIDORS



**22%** OF PEDESTRIAN  
CRASHES AND **14%** OF FATALITIES  
OCCURED ON THESE  
**6 ROADS**

## LOCATION ON ROADWAY

	PEOPLE AFFECTED	PERCENT AFFECTED
MID-BLOCK	<b>232</b>	<b>80%</b>
INTERSECTION	<b>58</b>	<b>20%</b>

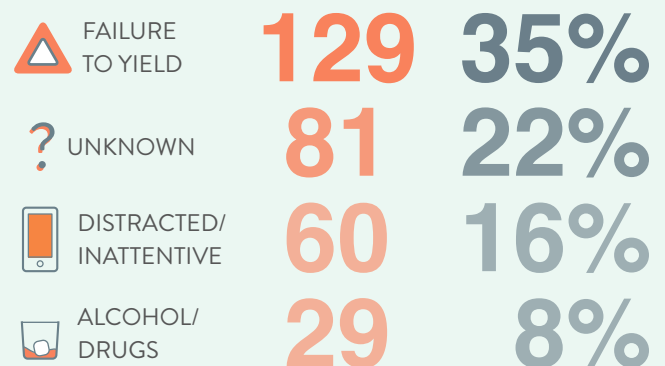
## POSTED SPEED LIMITS



## FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION

ARTERIAL ROADS	<b>162</b>	<b>56%</b>
LOCAL ROADS	<b>51</b>	<b>18%</b>
COLLECTOR ROADS	<b>31</b>	<b>11%</b>
PARKING LOTS	<b>25</b>	<b>9%</b>
INTERSTATES	<b>21</b>	<b>7%</b>

## TOP CIRCUMSTANCE OF CRASH



## FATAL CRASH DATA

**79%** (22/26) of fatal pedestrian crashes  
occurred on roads marked **35 MPH**  
or more

**86%** (24/28) of fatal pedestrian crashes  
occurred on **ARTERIAL ROADS**  
and **INTERSTATES**

# ST. LOUIS COUNTY

## BIKING



# 104

PEOPLE AFFECTED  
+28 FROM 2022

### TOP CRASH CORRIDORS



**24%** OF BIKE CRASHES OCCURRED ON THESE **3 ROADS**

**1**  
PEOPLE  
KILLED  
+1

**84**  
PEOPLE  
INJURED  
+16

**19**  
DAMAGED  
PROPERTY  
+11

### LOCATION ON ROADWAY

	PEOPLE AFFECTED	PERCENT AFFECTED
MID-BLOCK	<b>70</b>	<b>69%</b>
INTERSECTION	<b>32</b>	<b>31%</b>

### FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION

ARTERIAL ROADS	<b>62</b>	<b>60%</b>
COLLECTOR ROADS	<b>23</b>	<b>22%</b>
LOCAL ROADS	<b>19</b>	<b>18%</b>

### TOP CIRCUMSTANCE OF CRASH

FAILURE TO YIELD	<b>51</b>	<b>39%</b>
ALL OTHER TYPES	<b>30</b>	<b>23%</b>
UNKNOWN	<b>17</b>	<b>13%</b>
DISTRACTED/INATTENTIVE	<b>13</b>	<b>10%</b>
IMPROPER PASSING	<b>10</b>	<b>7%</b>
SIGNAL VIOLATION	<b>9</b>	<b>7%</b>

### POSTED SPEED LIMITS

SPEED LIMIT 35+	<b>50</b>	<b>48%</b>
SPEED LIMIT 25-	<b>28</b>	<b>27%</b>
SPEED LIMIT 30	<b>26</b>	<b>25%</b>

# ST. LOUIS COUNTY

DRIVING  
(FATALITIES)



# 8987

PEOPLE AFFECTED  
+28 FROM 2022

# 66

PEOPLE  
KILLED

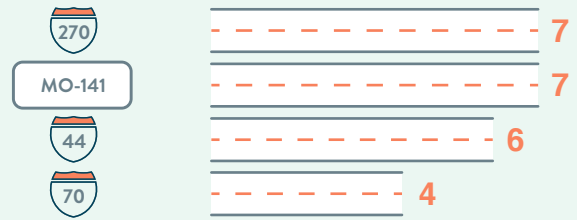
-10

# 8949

PEOPLE  
INJURED

+38

## TOP CRASH CORRIDORS



36% OF FATAL CAR CRASHES OCCURRED ON THESE **4 ROADS**

## LOCATION ON ROADWAY

MID-BLOCK	<b>58</b>	<b>88%</b>
INTERSECTION	<b>8</b>	<b>12%</b>

## POSTED SPEED LIMITS

	PEOPLE AFFECTED	PERCENT AFFECTED
SPEED LIMIT 35+	<b>59</b>	<b>89%</b>
SPEED LIMIT 25-	<b>4</b>	<b>6%</b>
SPEED LIMIT 30	<b>3</b>	<b>5%</b>

## TOP CIRCUMSTANCE OF CRASH

... ALL OTHER TYPES	<b>38</b>	<b>31%</b>
SPEED RELATED	<b>28</b>	<b>23%</b>
ALCOHOL/ DRUGS	<b>15</b>	<b>12%</b>
DISTRACTED/ INATTENTIVE	<b>14</b>	<b>11%</b>
IMPROPER PASSING	<b>12</b>	<b>10%</b>
? UNKNOWN	<b>8</b>	<b>6%</b>

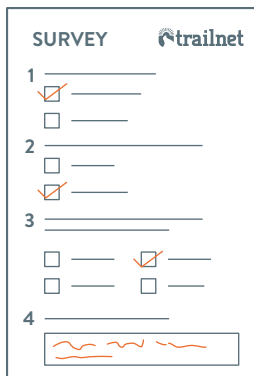
## FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION

INTERSTATES/ FREEWAYS	<b>32</b>	<b>49%</b>
ARTERIAL ROADS	<b>29</b>	<b>44%</b>
COLLECTOR ROADS	<b>4</b>	<b>6%</b>
LOCAL ROADS	<b>1</b>	<b>1%</b>

# STL STREET STORIES

## SINCE THE FIRST CRASH REPORT IN 2020,

Trailnet has heavily relied on data and analysis of crashes to help tell the story of increasing traffic violence in the region. Going into the fourth year of the Crash Report, we wanted to pivot away from the data-driven narrative and instead highlight personal accounts and experiences of people walking, biking, driving and taking public transit in St. Louis. We are calling these the “St. Louis Street Stories”.



To gather these stories, our team put together a short survey that had one major ask: **“TELL US YOUR STORY OR EXPERIENCES ON ST. LOUIS STREETS”**. We wanted to give people an open platform to speak their mind, tell their story and to simply share how they felt about roadway safety in St. Louis,

whether that be positive or negative. We are extremely grateful for all the stories, anecdotes, and experiences shared with us over the last few months.

The following section does not include all of the submissions we received on the “Street Stories” survey. If we included all of these stories, it would be over 15 pages of text. Our team opted to share stories that had similar themes (specific roads, overall narratives, etc.) and stories that we felt encapsulated the true experience of being someone who walks, bikes, and uses transit in the St. Louis region.



Route D Safety Demonstration : Trailnet organized on-site demonstrations to test pedestrian infrastructure and engage with residents for direct dialogue and feedback.

In addition to the hundreds of stories submitted by residents across the region, several op-eds and news stories highlighted the need for safer streets in St. Louis.

## PUBLISHED BY ST. LOUIS ELECTED OFFICIALS AND COMMUNITY ADVOCATES, THESE STORIES HELPED AMPLIFY THE IMMEDIATE NEED FOR PEOPLE-FIRST INFRASTRUCTURE AND POLICY.

In her op-ed in NextSTL, 8th Ward Alderwoman Cara Spencer noted several goals and solutions to end traffic violence in the City of St. Louis. In the RiverFront Times, Community advocate and B-Works staffer Evie Hemphill wrote about her experience biking in St. Louis and called for St. Louis City leaders to take actions that address the shortcomings in our bicycle planning and infrastructure. First Ward Alderwoman Anne Schweitzer wrote about her experience being “car-lite” for 6 months and shared several recommendations on ways to improve car-free commuting in St. Louis. These are the stories that got the attention of community leaders. We hope the following pages accomplish the same.



### I Challenged St. Louis Officials to Go Car-Free for One Day

That modest request proved too much for most local leaders

By Evie Hemphill

May 17, 2023 at 6:45 am



COURTESY EVIE HEMPHILL

Author Evie Hemphill with St. Louis BWorks Earn-a-Bike graduates at Patrick Henry Downtown Academy Elementary School.

Credit : River Front Times



# STL STREET STORIES

## CULTURE CHANGE

**I have had some of the worst experiences in over a decade and a half of biking in the past year.** I used to think that if something ever happened to me on my bike, it would be due to a combination of driver negligence and the poor infrastructure that empowers it. But the last three close-call incidents I've had weren't negligence at all, but because of someone irate behind a wheel chasing me on my bike. (Yes, three times.) I went from never experiencing anything like that to it happening multiple times in a season. I don't have a solution for this, but it's unacceptable. St. Louis has long faced a brain-drain problem of hemorrhaging talented and ambitious young people to our coastal and mountain-ranged peer cities, along with anyone who can afford to leave. As someone who so decisively stayed—choosing to build my life and home here, I'm beginning to look around and wonder if it's worth it. Biking isn't just exercise to me—it's a way to explore; it's how I relieve stress; it's what I've built my community around; it's my own small love letter to the environment. **If I can no longer safely enjoy the thing I love most, can I really call this place home?** We're at a crisis point in this city when it comes to traffic violence. We need serious and immediate action, and for it to happen we need all stakeholders to come together and push for change.

- Aubrey, Fox Park

**St. Louis has a great opportunity to be a bike friendly city, but the driver's reckless behavior endangers both cyclists and pedestrians.** The city's layout and geography are a great foundation to be one of the best bike friendly cities in the US, but the infrastructure and drivers are a huge detriment to achieving this.

- Anonymous respondent

**When I ride my bicycle in St. Louis, I am often at my happiest.** The goal is never specifically to ride for joy, because I use my bike for transportation and will have a destination in mind, but joy is derived from the experience of moving my body and taking in the fresh air. I love that there is often minimal car traffic, and the low inclines and St. Louis' mild weather makes riding accessible for many age groups and skill levels year-round. Unfortunately, Kingshighway, Grand, and other similar streets are so wide that it feels like a death wish to ride my bicycle on them, despite being the most crucial transportation connections between important destinations. I put my life on the line any time I make this choice to take these roads. I can put on all the safety gear and add as many lights as possible, but it will take one distracted/impaired driver or speeding cop car when I least expect it to kill me. **I have close calls in St. Louis more than any other city where I have spent significant time.** I know there are safer street infrastructure options that St. Louis is not prioritizing or considering.

- Jackson, Webster Groves



Photo credit: Angie Schmitt, The Atlantic, "Big Cars Are Killing Americans"

**Large, lifted trucks and SUVs make me feel unsafe.** I don't care if they are being driven by a safe driver; they are too big and I know how deadly they are compared to smaller vehicles, and their presence on the roads brings up the anxiety to another level.

- Christian, Gravois Park

# STL STREET STORIES

## CULTURE CHANGE

In respect to drivers, many of their smallest actions regularly imperil cyclists. **The burden of safety is unfortunately always placed on the cyclist.** The risk of death or serious injury is insanely higher for the biker than the driver. A driver doesn't need to pay as close attention to everything going on around their car. The car has been meticulously designed to protect the users. Drivers and their company are so safe, they now don't need to pay nearly the same amount of attention to their driving.

Cyclists, on the other hand, have only their skill, reflexes, and public trust separating them from serious injury or death. But the cyclist has to take in much more information as they are traveling on the streets than drivers do. They have to be acutely alert to the smallest of environmental changes because their lives depend on it. The little things matter. The more drivers can consider potential present users, the safer everybody will be. It can be very hard to see and near impossible to hear a cyclist when you are in a car.

**Simply sharing the burden of safety more equally between drivers, cyclists, and pedestrians would go a long way.** Promoting the notion that streets actually are for ALL will save lives.

- James, Southwest Garden

I live in Benton Park West and walk for pleasure and shopping most every day. This is a great walking neighborhood, except for having to cross Jefferson and Gravois Avenues.

**These are wide, fast, and lawless roads, and are scary to cross even for an able-bodied person like me.** Sometimes I have to break into a jog just to cross safely. I think there are inexpensive, practical solutions that could make a big difference - pedestrian islands, for instance. At the end of the day, though, improving the situation is about priorities - **how do we weigh the convenience of the motorist versus the health of the community and the safety of its people.**

- Matt, Benton Park West



Gravois at Oregon, where two people walking were killed in 2023

I moved very close to the intersection of South Jefferson Avenue & Utah Street in May of 2020, and ever since there has been at least 1 nearly fatal (at least by the time ambulances left) accident at that intersection every year since, in addition to multiple serious accidents. South Jefferson Avenue is in serious need of a road diet from Chouteau to I-55. I would love to see protected parking lanes, protected bike lanes (with connectivity to MetroBus, Metrolink, and to existing greenways), street/right of way narrowing, dedicated turn lanes, protected pedestrian crossings, middle islands, etc. **This could be a thriving walkable community if we were to slow down traffic, increase pedestrian walkability, increase driver safety & make it a more friendly environment for all of its users.** I do not want to see any more people dying or seriously injured from traffic accidents because our city fails to invest in essential infrastructure & prioritizes the flow of traffic over the safety and lives of its residents.

- Erica, Benton Park West



A satirical demonstration putting the onus on people walking to wear helmets when crossing S. Grand. The demonstration was placed after a person biking was killed by a speeding driver in 2022. Photo Credit: St. Louis Public Radio

# STL STREET STORIES

## DRIVER BEHAVIOR

As I've become more aware of how much car speeds impact the safety of those who use the road both in and out of cars, I've been driving more safely. I drive the speed limit and stop at stop signs. I was recently driving down Macklind, driving the speed limit and stopping at stop signs. This was apparently too slow for two other drivers who passed me. One went into the oncoming traffic lane to pass me on the left, and the other passed me at a stop sign on my right side to make a left turn. **It is very discouraging that by trying to drive safely, other drivers created even more dangerous situations.**

- Anonymous respondent

**The speeding, running stop signs and total disregard for driving conditions is terrible.** Too many lives have been lost in North County and Interstate 70 lately

- Jackie, Velda City

**47** PEOPLE HAVE BEEN KILLED WHILE DRIVING ON INTERSTATE 70 SINCE 2019 IN ST. LOUIS CITY & COUNTY

Many St Louis drivers blatantly ignore traffic laws - speeding, blowing through red lights, and ignoring stop signs. I see it every single day in all the neighborhoods I've lived in. **It is dangerous to other drivers, but it's a death sentence to pedestrians and cyclists.** The city has a lot of potential to be a great biking city, but without SAFE connected corridors, free from traffic violence, it will never get there.

- Anonymous respondent

**I've commuted to work on bike for a couple years now, and have had my share of issues with drivers being aggressive.** There have been two separate occasions where drivers have thrown stuff out their windows at me and I've been honked at and tailgated while riding multiple times as well. The infrastructure for biking leaves a lot to be desired. The routes I typically take have potholes in the bike lanes, especially on Grand south of Gravois. Drivers running red lights is a major issue. This isn't news to anyone who lives in the City and everyone I know adheres to the "wait a couple seconds after the light turns green to go" rule so you don't get hit by a red-light runner.

- Anonymous respondent

While biking down Arsenal between Kingshighway and Grand, traffic often uses the bike lanes to pass other cars. I've had to stop and pull over on my bike several times to avoid being struck by cars doing this. There needs to be some sort of traffic calming or dedicated bike lane infrastructure built along this route and many others in the city. I've also seen drivers use the bike lane along Union Blvd where they just run over the white plastic poles set up to designate the bike lane. **I often avoid riding in the city these days except for very early in the morning because I don't feel safe sharing the roads with city drivers.**

- Brian, Lindenwood Park



A reckless driver crashed into a building at Arsenal & Compton in 2021. A scene St. Louisans are all too familiar with  
Photo Credit: KSDK News



# STL STREET STORIES

## HIGH CRASH CORRIDORS

I was running across Grand at Russell and was almost hit by a car running a red light at 45 mph, they came within a few feet of hitting me. **Grand Blvd in particular is scary.** I would love to bike to where I work in Grand Arts Center from Tower Grove park but the idea of going through two interstate interchanges and biking on Grand is too risky.

- Ellie, Tower Grove South

I cross Grand at Hartford at least twice a day. **Rarely a day goes by where I would not have been hit by a car while crossing had I not delayed crossing** when the traffic signal changes and the walk sign is illuminated. Sometimes it's people driving through an "orange" light, sometimes it's people flatly disregarding the traffic lights, often passing stopped cars by using the turn lanes to run the light. Most days while driving on Grand between Arsenal and I-44 people just speed through red lights, I'm shocked that there aren't more car accidents or pedestrian deaths.

- Bobby, South Grand

I don't own a car and travel primarily by bicycle, foot, and public transit. On a bike, I almost never feel safe. The exception would be when I'm biking within Tower Grove Park or Forest Park. I've been hit on North Grand (I'm done biking on Grand until there is protected bike infrastructure), and **I've been targeted on my own relatively quiet street by a driver in an SUV who sped up, drove at me, and forced me off the road.** I constantly feel like motorists feel that I'm competing with them, though I'm just using the shared lane.

- Christian, Gravois Park

GRAND BLVD

**WAS THE MOST DANGEROUS CORRIDOR FOR PEOPLE WALKING AND DRIVING IN THE CITY OF ST. LOUIS IN 2023**

I live in Shaw and use my bike to get around South City. **I will do whatever I can to avoid biking on South Grand at all costs,** and though I can't avoid Shaw Blvd because I live on that street, it constantly scares me. On both these streets, cars drive well above the speed limit and frequently run red lights and stop signs. When I have ridden my bike on Grand, I have been passed too close by cars and had "near misses" essentially every time I ride on the street. Some form of traffic calming to reduce speeds on these roads and protected bike lanes, particularly on Grand, are desperately needed.

- Anonymous respondent



Current conditions at Grand & Chippewa, a high pedestrian crash location in St. Louis City. Notice extremely wide lanes, long crossing distances, and lack of traffic calming infrastructure (pedestrian islands, street trees, etc).

I was in the vicinity of the crosswalk on South Grand where a pedestrian was hit and killed in summer 2023. I was watching an outdoor movie at the pocket park on S. Grand. I no longer park my vehicle in such a way that I have to cross Grand to get to my office. I have seen too many vehicles run red lights and overtake using the on-coming lanes. **I witness accidents from my office window and can see how badly people are driving.** One of my neighbors was killed on his moped last year when a truck ran a light at an intersection further east of Grand. He was coming home from work as he did every day for years using the same route.

- Debbie, Forest Park Southeast

# STL STREET STORIES

## GRAVOIS ROAD

In terms of specific intersections, most of the intersections that feel the most dangerous are on Gravois. At these intersections you can only do so much to keep an eye on all the directions of traffic; as a result **there is an element of just “hoping for the best,” when deciding to cross here.**

- Christian, Gravois Park

One of the longest stretches of bike lanes runs on Gravois Ave, which (in theory or on paper) seems to be a convenient bike route, except that Gravois is one of the most dangerous streets to be on as a biker, pedestrian, or a driver. **The drivers on Gravois blatantly blow through red lights and stop signs - which is a death sentence for pedestrians and bikers (and drivers, really).** Additionally, because Gravois runs at an angle, many of the intersections are 6-way intersections with angles that are challenging to see other cars, let alone bikers or pedestrians. The bike lane, while marked, offers no physical barrier. **St Louis drivers have no regard for the bike lane markers, driving in bike lanes, passing cars on the right side using the bike lane, parking in the bike lane, driving through the bike lane to take turns at intersections.** They show no comprehension of what a bike lane is or how to act around it. This painted lane offers no protection to bikers. The driving on Gravois is dangerous for drivers in cars and I generally avoid driving on it in my car. I would NEVER bike on that road despite the fact that there is technically a painted lane for bikes.

- Anonymous respondent

I rode an electric scooter to work for six months. Almost my entire route was along Gravois, and I just stayed in the bike lane and obeyed traffic laws. Everybody I told was concerned that I was doing something very dangerous. I tried and failed to convince a coworker who lived nearby to join me. Most of the time it was fun and preferable to driving my car just 3 miles and bothering with downtown parking.

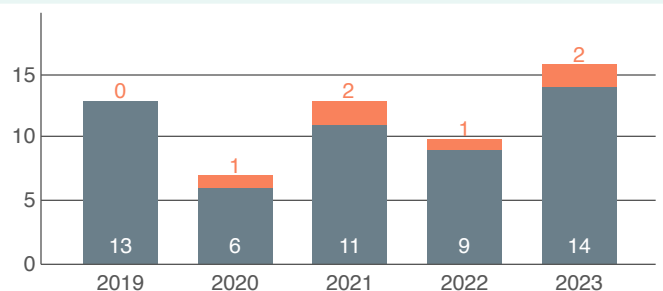
One time I angered a dangerously speeding (maybe hit 60 or 70 mph) driver by trying to make a left turn. I got out of their way, but I made the mistake of telling them off for being reckless. They threw trash at me, then followed me and attempted to intentionally door me. I still didn't back down, so they got out of their car and literally picked me up and threw me in the middle of California Ave. Luckily, I was unhurt. The police were absolutely no help.

**Huge, overbuilt roads like Gravois make drivers feel entitled to drive dangerously. The burden should be on traffic engineers to justify why an intersection doesn't need improved safety, and not for safety advocates to prove safe routes are needed by showing how much blood has been shed at a particular site.** For every crash, there are dozens of close calls and hundreds of area residents who have almost unanimously judged the existing infrastructure to be too unsafe to navigate outside a car. It impoverishes our communities to treat safe, comfortable transportation infrastructure as a luxury or engineering impossibility. The city budget needs to reflect that police only sweep up the mess after traffic violence; the way to prevent it is by investing in safe infrastructure.

- Erin, Benton Park West

### PEDESTRIAN CRASHES ON GRAVOIS SINCE 2019

PERSONAL INJURY ■  
FATAL ■





# STL STREET STORIES

## WALKING IN THE ST. LOUIS REGION

I live just off Olive and am legally blind. **Crossing Olive is no longer safe, too many people run the light** and as much as we have complained and even had the police watch the intersection we are always told there is not a problem. **Olive is a racetrack.** Sometimes it is actually safer to walk in the road than risk falling, especially since I have had two knee replacements and a shoulder replacement.

- Anonymous respondent

Drivers are the number one reason I feel unsafe in the region. I was hit by a driver pulling out of McDonald's. Not even a full year before, my son and I were hit by another driver pulling out of the Trader Joe's next to the McDonalds. I commute daily and am constantly being honked at and not given much space as cars zoom past. **There is little to no real infrastructure in this region. You can't win on the roads, and you can't win on the sidewalks** (the two most recent times I was hit, I was on the sidewalk, which I'm technically not even supposed to be on in business districts.) **I don't think there's any place in St Louis where I feel "safe".** When cars were blocked from Forest Park during lockdown, that was the most serene and safe it's ever felt.

- Anonymous respondent

I walk for exercise as well as for errands. The lack of sidewalks especially in suburban St. Louis County are a problem as is driver behavior. Yes, there are sidewalks along major routes so I can get to say, the grocery store, Starbucks or Tilles Park. But to get to those major routes (McKnight Rd, Manchester Rd.), **I first have to navigate roads without sidewalks, without shoulders and with speeding drivers who do not attempt to avoid walkers.** Specifically, Old Warson Rd, Hudson, Des Peres Rd. Drivers don't slow down or even attempt to avoid walkers or give us space even if there isn't a car coming from the other direction. More than once, I've jumped into the ditch on Des Peres Rd to avoid being hit.

- Anonymous respondent

Walking along Olive or trying to cross it is often fraught due to crosswalks being spaced very far apart, uneven sidewalks, and drivers turning right on red at intersections and not watching for pedestrians. **I can't imagine trying to safely navigate with mobility issues.** I have three teens who would like to bike to places that are nearby, but it isn't safe. There are very few bike lanes in my area and even if they were put in, I wouldn't want my kids biking near cars on streets like Olive where people drive fast. In general, we just need traffic calming devices all over the region to slow down cars for safety - **speed bumps in residential neighborhoods to slow down cars to make it safer for kids to play outside, bollards or even just paint to shorten widths at all crosswalks to increase pedestrian safety, center islands, narrower lanes, etc.**

- Anonymous respondent

I think the priority has to be slowing down the cars that dominate our public spaces, everything else comes after that. My kids and I have had close calls with being hit by a car while obeying all traffic rules while out walking. **Too many people have been injured or killed and too many of us walk, bike, or use public transit in fear.**

- Anonymous respondent



Current conditions at Kingshighway & Natural Bridge, a high pedestrian crash location in St. Louis City. Notice extremely long crossing distances, and terrible pavement conditions.

# STL STREET STORIES

## BIKING IN THE ST. LOUIS REGION

A driver once was so distracted on their phone that they jumped a hard curb on Clayton Road, drove on the pavement for a while, then straight into oncoming traffic before returning to their lane. **If I'd been biking 30 seconds faster, there's a good chance I'd be dead.** The lack of protected bike lanes on that stretch of road would have been partly to blame for that death.

- Anonymous respondent

I think in general we really need to reward people who choose to bike in St. Louis. It's better for the environment, better for your health, better for your finances, and connects you to your community. **However, sometimes when I'm biking in St. Louis, I don't feel rewarded, but instead I feel punished.**

- Anonymous respondent

I tried bike commuting for a few weeks in 2023 to reduce my carbon footprint - as it's only 6 miles to get to my office. Drivers consistently encroached on my space, nearly hitting me several times, despite taking marked Share the Road routes wherever possible. **The lack of protected lanes made the commute nerve wracking at best, and potentially deadly at worst. This culminated in being physically attacked by a motorist - who ran a stop sign and then tried to hit my bicycle with his truck when I shouted, then chased me down and assaulted me** (attempted to choke me with my helmet). I'm legitimately shaken - **I do not feel safe as a cyclist in our city.**

- Sam, Clifton Heights

The exciting growth around the Foundry and Armory are all but inaccessible to cyclists because they require riding on fast roads like Vandeventer around the Interstate 64 onramps or Forest Park Parkway. **I would love to bring my family to these places, but as a non-driver, they are inaccessible to my family.** It is downright depressing to be surrounded by beautiful trails and paying taxes to support Great Rivers Greenway but to not be able to access any of these amenities because they do not safely connect to City roads. We need to focus on building connections to greenways / pedestrian infrastructure. **I want the City and all city transit partners to consider lower-cost pedestrian infrastructure. We have all these grand plans, but they are taking too long and in the meantime people are dying in the roads.** If we can lay jersey barriers up the middle of south grand in dutchtown, we can align them to make a central cycle track. Beauty can come later. I just want to not die on my way back home to my kids.

- Danielle, Shaw

Cars honk at us for taking up the right lane when there are two lanes in one direction. Trucks slow down to blow exhaust on us. **I have found I experience the most harassment when I bike alone (as a female). When my teens or husband are with me, we receive less harassment but still some.**

- Jennifer, Webster Groves

**As a carless female in this city, it can feel hopeless to get around here sometimes.** I love to bike, but biking is completely out of the question for me as a commuting option unless St. Louis can create more streets that have a dedicated bike line, blocked off preferably by a solid concrete ledge, but at the very least by bollards and planters.

- Anonymous respondent

# METHODOLOGY

For this report, Trailnet analyzed bike, pedestrian, and vehicular crashes occurring on roads within the City of St. Louis and St. Louis County boundary in the year 2023. We pull data from the Missouri Statewide Traffic Accident Records System (STARS), which is managed by the Missouri State Highway Patrol. This data allows people to see when and where different types of crashes occurred. We compared several roadway characteristics that contribute to a roadway's functionality. Those characteristics include: roadway functional classification, posted speed limit, and location type, among other factors.

There are several important factors that Trailnet took into consideration when assembling this report. It must be noted that some of these statistics may be subject to change depending on numerous factors. For example, personal injury crashes may change to fatal crashes if the injuries suffered from the crash lead to the death of a person later in the year. All of the numbers and percentages you see in the report are the number of people affected by a crash, not the number of crashes that were reported. For clarification, there were 3,389 reports of fatal or personal injury car crashes in 2020, but the number of people affected in those crashes was 5,397.

Trailnet will also note that crashes of all varieties are severely underreported, especially crashes where no one involved is injured. It is important to know that the crashes in the report are only ones that were reported and documented by a law enforcement body and available to the public.

Within our analysis and maps we will point out a few small details on how we compile and analyze the crash data. For sections titled "Top Circumstance of Crash" an Unknown circumstance is a combination of circumstances noted as Unknown, None, or Other. A "Speeding Related" circumstance is a combination of circumstances noted as Speed Exceeded Limit and Too Fast for Conditions.

## FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION:

**Local** - Local roads are typically lower in speed limit (usually 25 MPH or lower), number of vehicles, and number of lanes. Neighborhood roads are considered local roads. Parking lots are also included in this category.

**Collector Road** - These roadways typically have higher speed limits (25 mph or 30 mph), and have more vehicles and more lanes than local roads. Examples of collector roads include St. Louis Avenue, Magnolia Ave, Sarah Street, as well as many of the streets in downtown St. Louis. Note: Minor and major collectors have been combined for this report.

**Arterials** - These roads range in speed limit. Arterials typically have speed limits around 30 - 35 MPH, while some arterials range up to 45 MPH. Excluding interstates, these roads have the highest traffic volumes and the most travel lanes (some up to 5 or 6 lanes). Examples of Minor Arterials include Delmar Blvd & Chouteau Ave. Examples of Principal Arterials include Kingshighway Blvd & Natural Bridge Ave. Note: Principal and minor collectors have been combined for this report.

**Interstates** - Interstates are designed and constructed with long-distance travel in mind. They have the highest posted speed limits, the most travel lanes, and the highest number of vehicles on a daily average. Interstates include: I-70, I-64, I-44, and I-55.

## HELPFUL DEFINITIONS:

**Traffic Violence** - Any incident that occurs on a roadway, which involves a vehicle and the injury or death of a person. This can refer to people walking, driving, or passenger who are injured, whether fatal or not.

**Complete Streets** - An approach to planning, designing, building, operating and maintaining streets that enable safe access for all people who need to use them including people walking, biking, driving, and taking transit of all ages and abilities.

**Vision Zero** - A strategy to eliminate all traffic fatalities and severe injuries, while increasing safe, healthy, equitable mobility for all.

# ABOUT TRAILNET

Trailnet is a 501c3 nonprofit based in St. Louis, Missouri, and is the region's voice for better biking and walking. Trailnet's mission is to foster healthy, active, and vibrant communities where walking, bicycling and the use of public transit are a way of life. Trailnet's work integrates public policy, urban planning, public health and community organizing into strategic initiatives that enhance the quality of life for all, regardless of their race, zip code, age or ability.

Streets for All - Trailnet envisions a more walkable, bikeable St. Louis region, with networks of streets and sidewalks that safely accommodate all users and modes of transportation.

If you have any question or comments on this report, please reach out to Trailnet at [planning@trailnet.org](mailto:planning@trailnet.org)

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## Data and Sources

[State of Missouri STARS Reporting](#)  
[U.S. Census Bureau](#)

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