MILWAUKEE COUNTY
# Complete Communities

**Transportation Planning Project**
Phase One
county.milwaukee.gov/CompleteCommunities

# Transportation Safety Assessment Report

**Milwaukee County Department of Transportation / Director's Office**

# About the Report

Reckless driving has reached crisis levels in Milwaukee County. Our pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, motorcyclists, and motorists demand and deserve an effective plan to address reckless driving and reach their destinations safely. This report aims to explore the various aspects of traffic safety and roadway inequities present in our county. From fatal and serious injury crash trends to personal accounts and robust public feedback, we will take a closer look at the opportunities the county can take to make all our journeys safer. By shedding light on key statistics and elevating community voices, we hope this report can launch Milwaukee County into a commitment towards equitable solutions in our transportation system and help to save lives.

# Contents

# Acknowledgments

Milwaukee County would like to acknowledge all who participated in Phase One of the Complete Communities Planning Project. The engagement and analysis presented in this report were steered by our committee members (listed here) made up of traffic safety advocates, community volunteers, public officials, and technical experts. Lastly, we would like to thank the members of the public for their participation, feedback, and support in making this a collaborative process.

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# Letter from MCDOT Director

In 2023, Milwaukee County took an historic first step to make all roadways in our county safer for all users. As a major milestone, we are proud to present Milwaukee County's first-ever Transportation Safety Assessment Report, the initial deliverable from the Milwaukee County Department of Transportation's Complete Communities Transportation Planning Project.

Reckless driving is a pervasive equity issue and a threat to public health. To become the healthiest county in Wisconsin by achieving racial equity, Milwaukee County must address the reasons why severe traffic crashes occur. A collaborative and widespread approach is imperative to identify sustainable solutions.

Throughout 2023 we laid the groundwork for these efforts by partnering with municipalities through our Safe Streets Roadshow, a series of 22 public engagement meetings that provided residents and roadway users in each municipality multiple opportunities to provide feedback about street safety, reckless driving, and how they navigate their day-to-day mobility. The roadshow was an opportunity for Milwaukee County and municipal leaders to hear residents' concerns and ideas about transportation safety and planning in their communities. Roadway safety is a shared responsibility and reducing traffic violence to achieve our goal of zero deaths on Milwaukee County roadways by 2028 requires this level of collective action.

Residents expressed significant concerns about high speeds, the rules of the road not being enforced, and their personal safety while walking, biking, or taking transit. Many residents called on us to effect systemic change to make our roads safer and more accessible.

Data from the last five years supports these concerns as Milwaukee County's fatal crash rate is on the rise while the U.S. national average fatal crash rate has slightly decreased. We also know that 56% of all fatal or serious injury crashes involve a mode other than an automobile (motorcycle, bicycle, pedestrian) in addition to an automobile. There is an undeniable urgency to reverse these tragic trends.

With grant funding from the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) from the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) and Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT), Milwaukee County has been working in partnership with Chicago-based MUSE Community + Design and their consultants at WSP, leaders in Vision Zero and Complete Streets policy, public engagement, strategy, and communication. Their ongoing and successful work for the City of Chicago is highly similar to what we are experiencing in Milwaukee now.

In 2024 we will initiate Phase Two of our Complete Communities Transportation Planning project with additional federal funding from our Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) grant. Within the coming months, we will develop a countywide Comprehensive Safety Action Plan (CSAP) and support and coordinate with participating municipalities to develop their own CSAPs.

While this Transportation Safety Assessment Report informs us about what has been happening on Milwaukee County roadways in recent years, the CSAPs will detail coordinated plans of action about how we will address it. In full transparency, residents can follow our progress by visiting the Complete Communities website at **county.milwaukee.gov/CompleteCommunities**.

I encourage you to read this report thoroughly, share it with others, and engage with our efforts to make every roadway throughout our communities safe, accessible, and equitable.

Sincerely,

**Donna Brown-Martin**
**Director of Transportation**
**Milwaukee County**

# WHY WE'RE HERE

The Milwaukee County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) is proud to present the first-ever countywide Complete Communities Transportation Planning Project for Milwaukee County. We recognize the urgency which all county officials must take to increase multimodal safety and reduce reckless driving on our roadways. Feedback from residents all throughout our county and corresponding crash trends have made it clear:  safety is the number one priority.

# Milwaukee County Crash Trends

**Severe traffic crashes are preventable. We must understand where and why they happen first.**

Traffic crashes take a large human toll in places across the country. This crash trends analysis is meant to establish a baseline and further understand the impacts, causes, and nature of crashes. These initial findings are meant to complement and support the lived experiences we have heard from Milwaukee County residents through the engagement process. By better understanding crash locations, contexts, and contributing circumstances, we can begin to develop strategies to develop safer streets.

**This initial analysis includes:**

- 5-Year Crash Baseline by Mode (2018-2022)
- Crash Trends
- Geospatial Trends
- People Impacted by Crashes
- Trends by Municipality
- Systemic Safety Analysis

## 81 People Die Every Year in Milwaukee County Crashes

In the past five years, Milwaukee County had an average of 81 fatal crashes per year and 464 Fatal and Serious Injury (KSI) crashes per year. On average, around 23 fatal crashes per year involve pedestrians or bicyclists, nine involved motorcycles, and the remaining 50 only involved occupants of motor vehicles.

In other words, almost one in four KSI crashes involved a bicyclist or pedestrian. While only about 1% of motor vehicle crashes resulted in a fatal or serious injury, around 23% of motorcycle, 22% of pedestrian, and 11% of bicycle crashes resulted in a fatal or serious injury.

| Annual Average, 2018-2022 | All Modes | Motorist | Motorcycle | Pedestrian | Bicycle | Non-Motorized (Pedestrian + Bicycle) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Fatalities | 81 | 50 | 9 | 20 | 3 | 23 |
| KSI Crashes | 464 | 293 | 54 | 100 | 18 | 118 |
| All Crashes | 21,493 | 20,645 | 238 | 449 | 161 | 610 |
| % Fatal or Serious | 2% | 1% | 23% | 22% | 11% | 19% |

Table 1. Baseline Crash Rates in Milwaukee County, Wisconsin
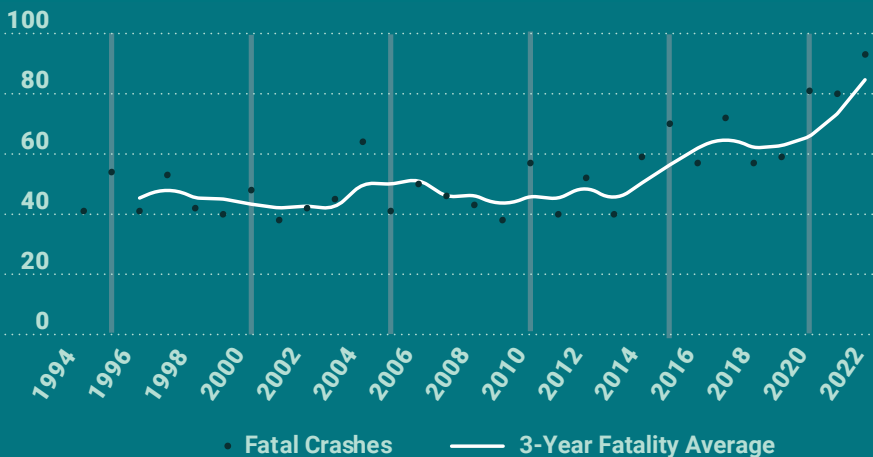
# Crash Trends in Milwaukee County

Nearly 30 years of crash data in Milwaukee County show that Fatal and Serious Injury crashes have been decreasing as a whole since 1994. Fatal and Serious Injury crashes are the primary focus of traffic safety efforts, since these crashes are often similar in nature and have the biggest impact. While Fatal crashes are more rare, they often have similar patterns and characteristics to serious injury crashes.

Unfortunately, progress toward reducing Fatal and Serious Injury crashes has stalled since around 2010. Additionally, *fatal crashes* have been on the rise since around 2014, with a sharp increase in 2020-2022 during the COVID-19 pandemic. The causes and nature of this increase in crashes has been the subject of our data analysis and community engagement efforts.

**Fatal and Serious Injury crashes have fallen since 1994, but progress has stalled.**

Fatal and Serious Injury Crashes

Fatal and Serious Injury 3-Year Average

Fig. 1 Fatal and Serious Injury Crashes in Milwaukee County Since 1994

**Fatal crashes are on the rise since around 2014.**

Fatal Crashes     3-Year Fatality Average

Fig. 2 Fatal Crashes in Milwaukee County since 1994

Milwaukee's fatal crash rates are lower than the United States and OECD (high-income country peers) averages. However, Milwaukee County has seen a greater increase in fatal crash rates. Fatal crash rates in Milwaukee County are 1.4 to 1.5 times higher than they were in the year 2000, while the United States and OECD average has declined since 2000.

These findings were discussed in Milwaukee County's Safety Working Group (SWG) and Public Advisory Committee (PAC) meetings. Participants suggested many potential sources of this increase, including increases in distracted and aggressive driving and cuts to public transit service.

**Milwaukee County's fatal crash rates are lower than the U.S. and other high-income countries average.**
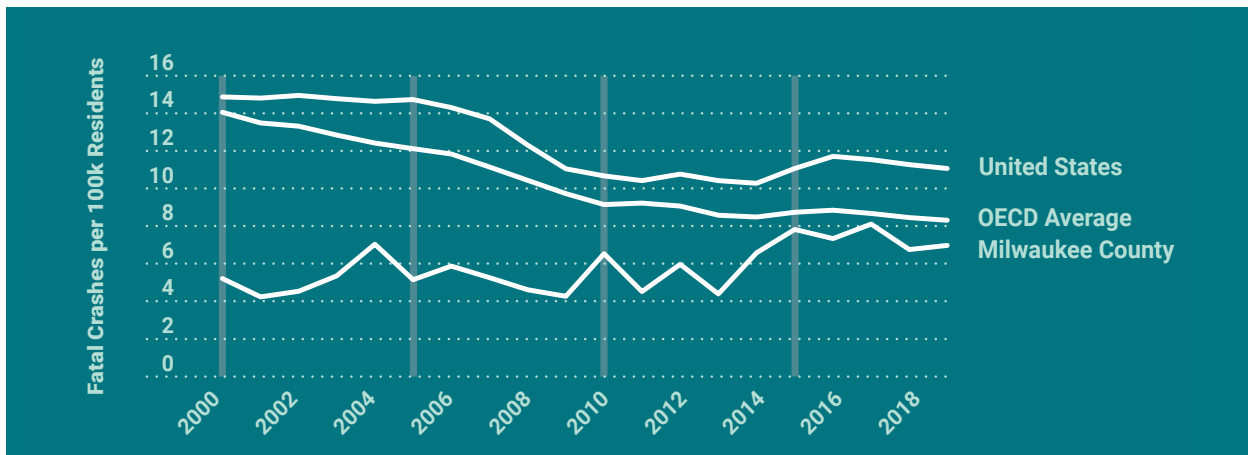


Fig. 3 Fatal Crash rates per 100,000 residents in Milwaukee County, the United States, and OECD peers.

**Fatalities are increasing in Milwaukee County as U.S. and other high income country peers trend downwards.**
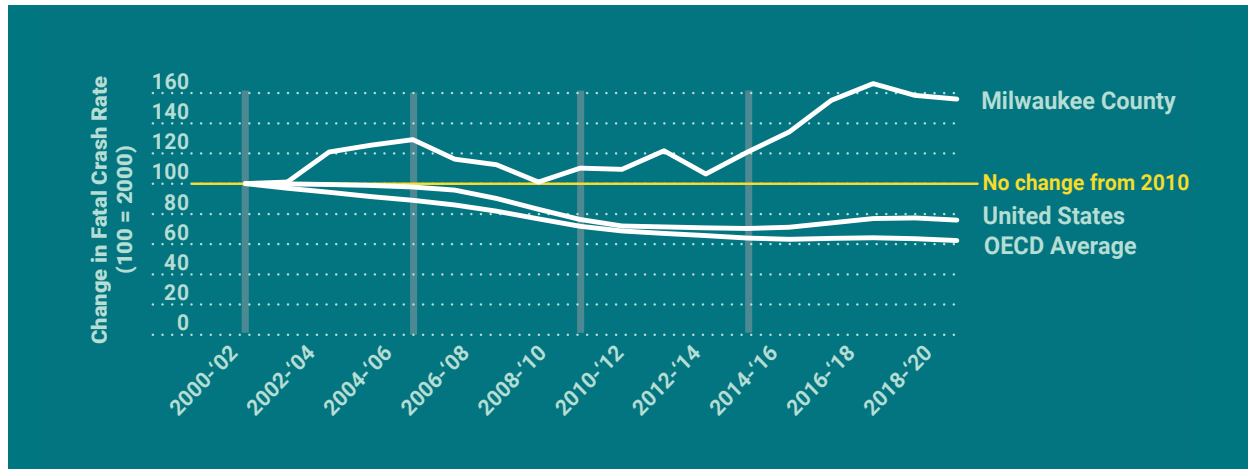


Fig. 4 Change in Fatal Crash Rates per 100,000 population, indexed to the year 2000 using 3-year rolling periods
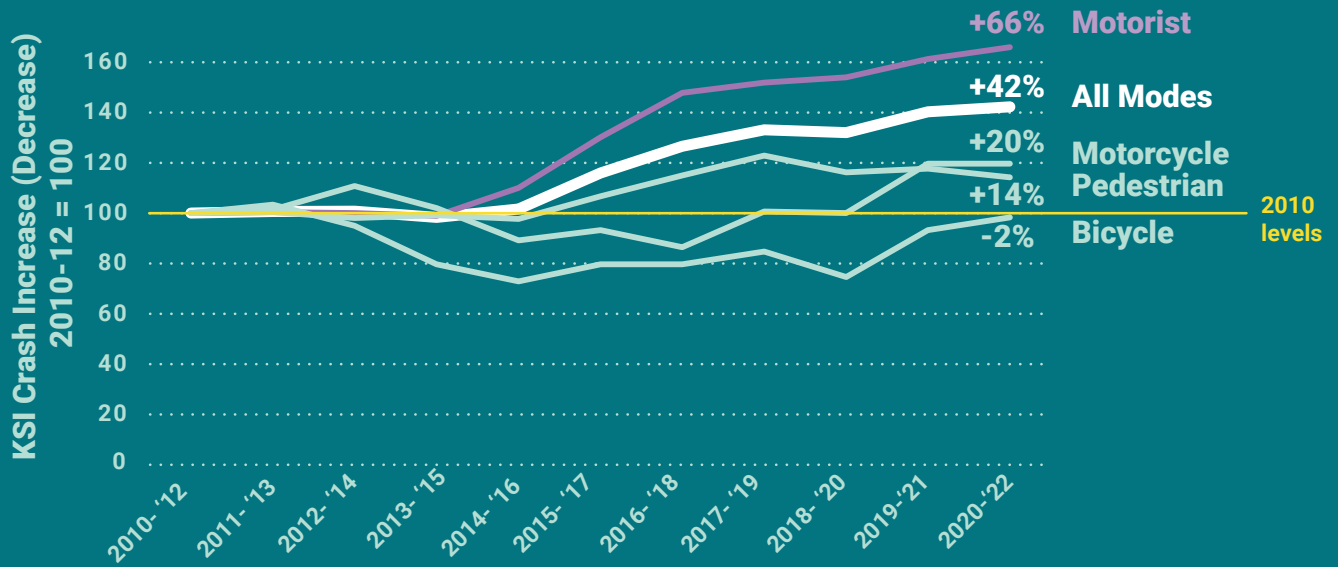
Fig. 5 Fatal and Serious Injury Crash Trends by Mode

Fatal and serious injury crashes have increased on average by about 42% in 2020-2022 as compared to 2010-2012 levels (because of the variation from year to year in smaller categories, we have grouped data into 3-year periods to better understand trends). Motorist crashes (excluding motorcycles) led the increase, with an overall 66% increase in crashes over 2010-2012 levels. Only bicycle fatal and serious injury crashes declined somewhat.

## Countywide Trends

The impact of crashes is not felt evenly throughgout Milwaukee County. To better understand these disparities, crash trends were summarized at the Census Tract level using 2010 Census Tract boundaries, using fatal and serious injury crashes from 2013-2022.

The data show that fatal and serious injury crashes are most densely concentrated in the core parts of Milwaukee County--primarily the City of Milwaukee, and in particular the northwest parts of the city. Many of these tracts were also High Vulnerability Census Tracts, which are defined by Milwaukee County's Evaluating Vulnerability and Equity Model. This model uses the Social Vulnerability Index, an index developed by the CDC combining dozens of socioeconomic variables.

Crashes tended to also increase modestly in these areas, although there is some variation from tract to tract where crashes increased or decreased. Several outlying areas also saw increases in fatal and serious injury crashes.

Fatal and serious injury crashes involving people walking or biking were also concentrated in the urban core, including Downtown Milwaukee and inner ring neighborhoods, primarily High Vulnerability Census Tracts. When this data was normalized based on the number of people beginning a walking, biking, or transit trip, there appear to be disproportionately more bicycle and pedestrian crashes in High Vulnerability Census Tracts in the northwest part of the County, as well as tracts within West Allis.
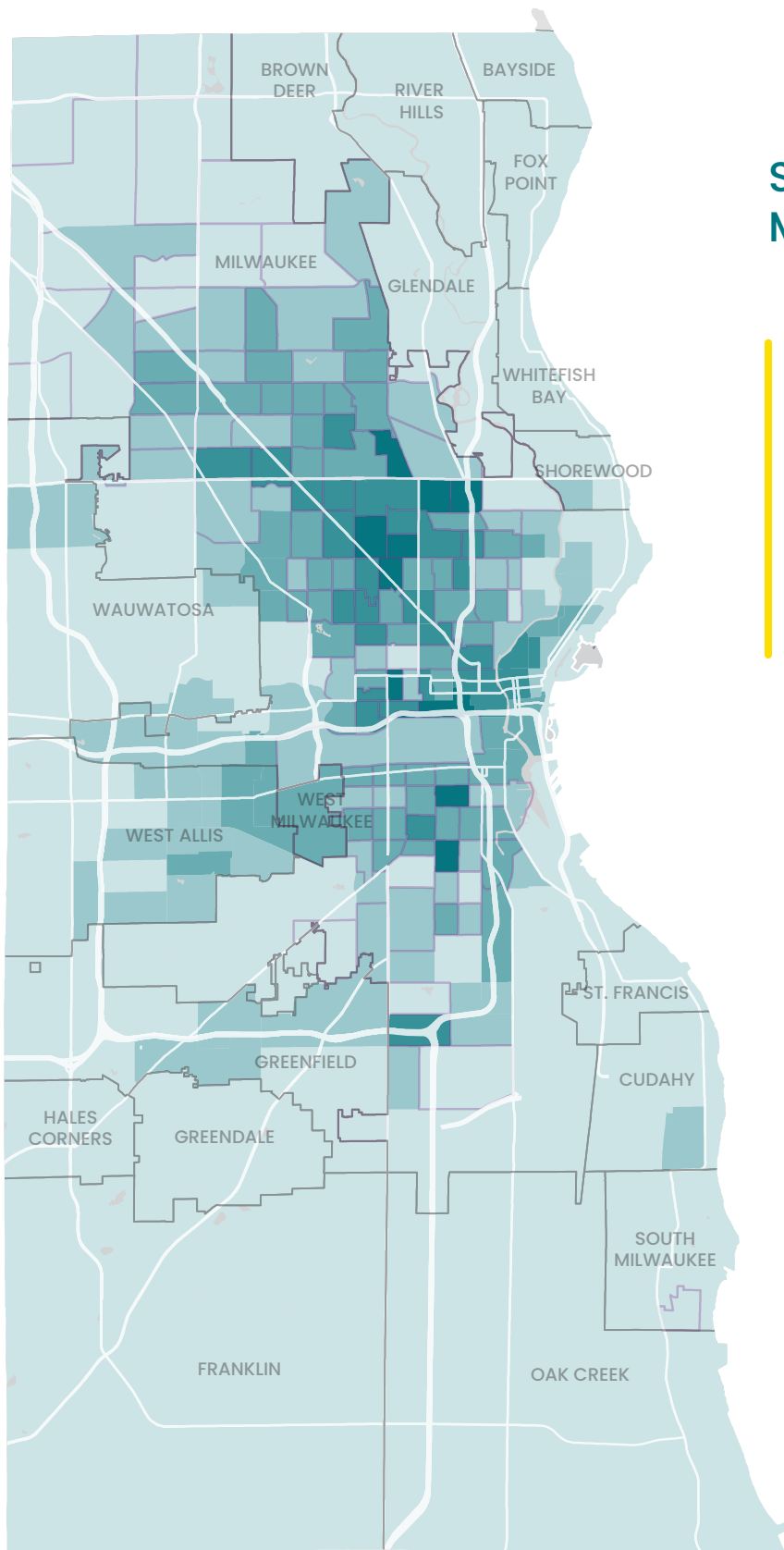
# Severe Crashes in Milwaukee County

**The average Census Tract had around 3 fatal or serious injury crashes per square mile from 2013-2022.**

**Fatal and Serious Injury Crashes are concentrated in the City of Milwaukee, particularly in the northwestern portion of the City.**

## Fatal & Serious Injury Crashes per Square Mile

- 20 or less
- >20 to 40
- >40 to 80
- >80 to 120
- 120 or more
- High Vulnerability Census Tracts

2 miles

Fig. 6 Fatal and Serious Injury Crashes per Square Mile by Census Tract
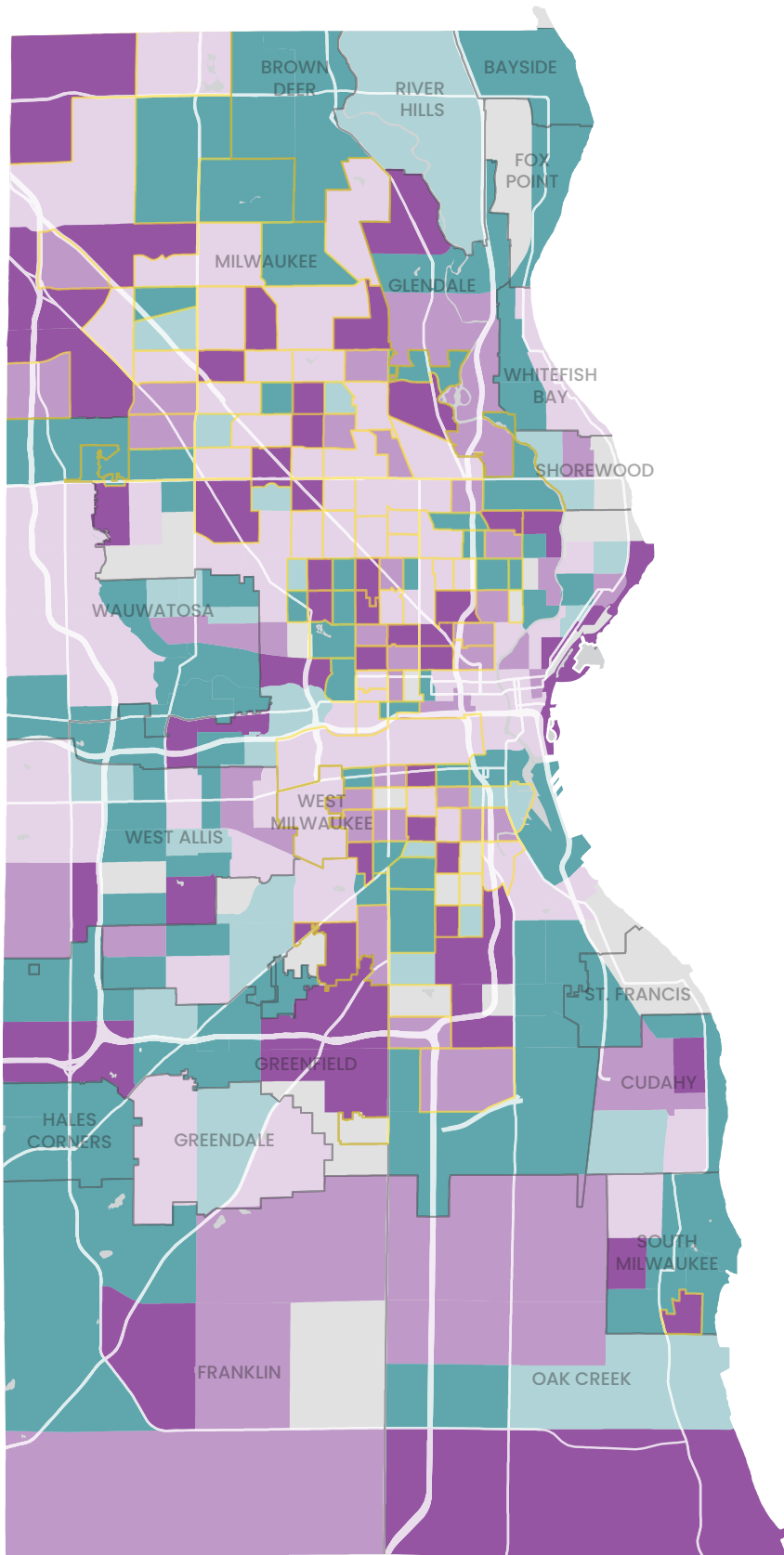
# Where Crashes are Getting More Severe

**In the 5-year periods between 2012-2017 and 2018-2022, fatal and serious injury crashes increased in most parts of the County, with the largest increases in urban core areas and some outlying areas.**

**Percent Change in Fatal & Serious Injury Crashes: 2012-2017 vs. 2018-2022**

| | |
|---|---|
| < -5% | Decrease |
| >-5-5% | Steady |
| >5-50% | Modest Increase |
| >50-100% | Large Increase |
| >100% | More than Double |
| | Insufficient Data |
| | High Vulnerability Census Tracts |

2 miles
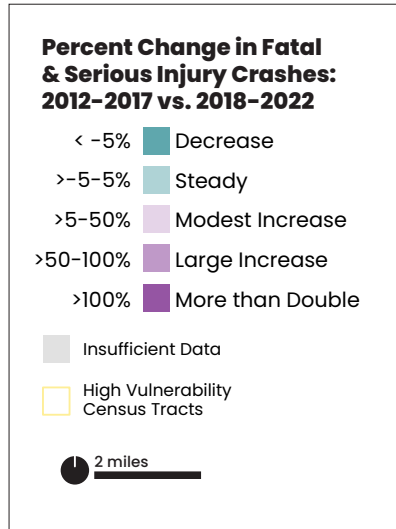
Fig. 7 Change in Fatal and Serious Injury Crashes by Census Tract
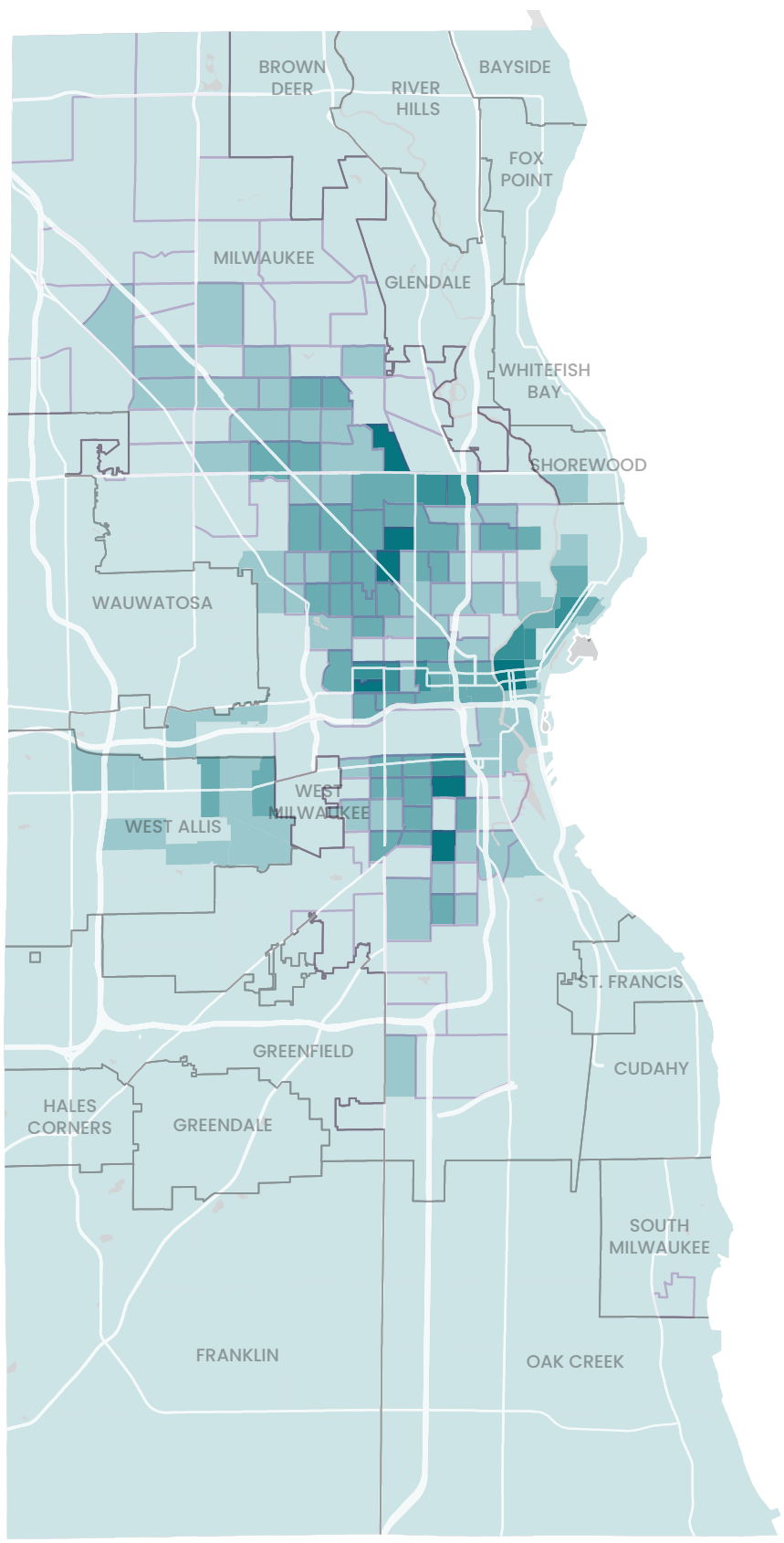
# Severe Crashes for Cyclists and Pedestrians

Bicycle and Pedestrian crashes are focused in urban core and inner-ring neighborhoods, primarily in Milwaukee.

**Fatal & Serious Injury Bicycle & Pedestrian Crashes per Square Mile**

- 10 or less
- >10 to 20
- >20 to 40
- >40 to 60
- 60 or more
- High Vulnerability Census Tracts

2 miles

Fig. 8 Non-Motorized Fatal and Serious Injury Crashes per Square Mile by Census Tract
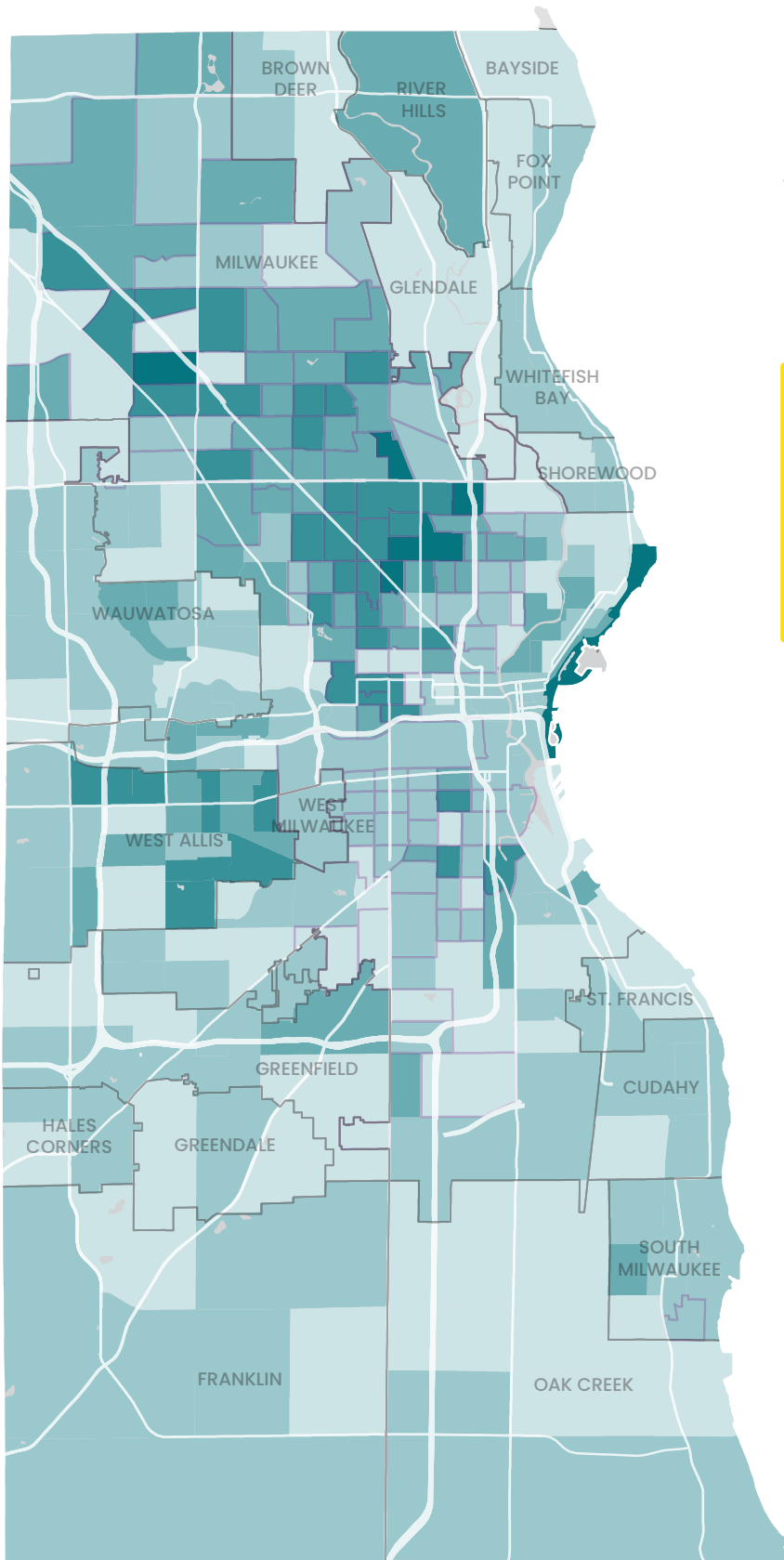
# Bike and Pedestrian Crashes Based on Where People Bike and Walk

Normalizing the number of biking and walking crashes by the estimated walking and biking activity shows that some of the most disadvantaged areas are even more disproportionately impacted by pedestrian and bicyclist crashes.

**Fatal & Serious Injury Bike/Ped Crashes per 1 million bike, ped, or transit trips**

- .3 or less
- >.3 to .80
- >0.8 to 1.5
- >1.5 to 3
- 3 or more
- High Vulnerability Census Tracts

2 miles

Fig. 9 Non-Motorized Fatal and Serious Injury Crashes per 100 million walking, biking, or transit trips.

# Crash Inequities in Milwaukee County

**KSI Crash to Population Ratio**

More crashes than expected

**Age Group**

Fig. 10 Proportion of Fatal & Serious Injury Crash Victims by Age Group Relative to Population for Milwaukee County

**Sex**

Male **1.4x**
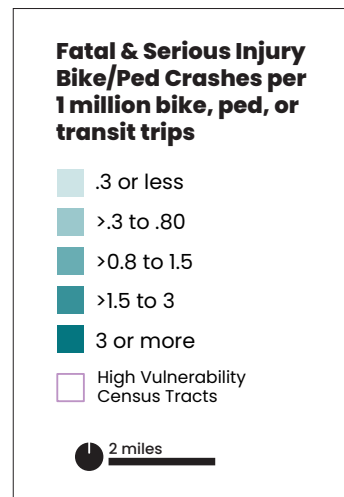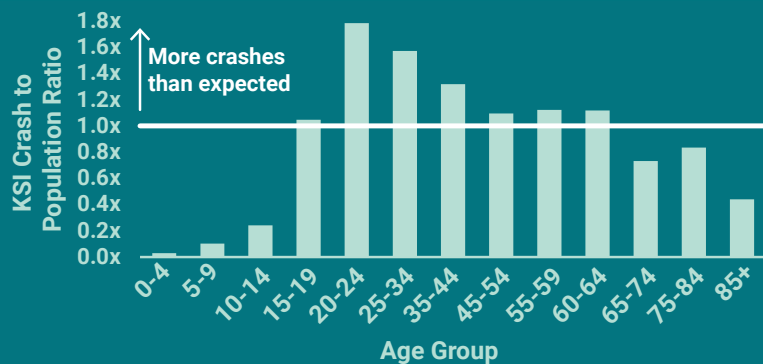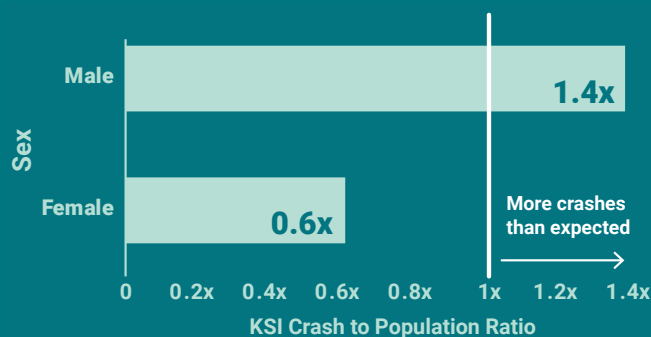
Female **0.6x**

More crashes than expected

**KSI Crash to Population Ratio**

Fig. 11 Proportion of Fatal & Serious Injury Crash Victims by Sex Relative to Population for Milwaukee County

**Fatal Crash Relative to Population**

More crashes than expected

U.S.
Milwaukee

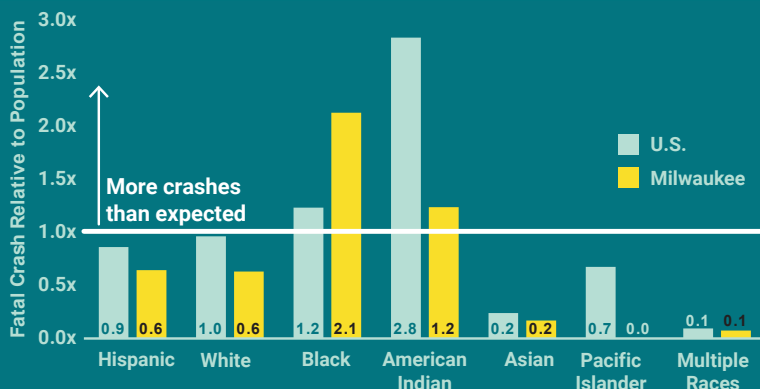| | Hispanic | White | Black | American Indian | Asian | Pacific Islander | Multiple Races |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| U.S. | 0.9 | 1.0 | 1.2 | 2.8 | 0.2 | 0.7 | 0.1 |
| Milwaukee | 0.6 | 0.6 | 2.1 | 1.2 | 0.2 | 0.0 | 0.1 |

Fig. 12 Proportion of Fatal Crash Victims by Race/Ethnicity Relative to Population for Milwaukee County

The impacts of crashes are not felt evenly between population groups. To better understand the relative impact of crashes, the crash data was normalized based on the demographics of Milwaukee County by age, sex, and race/ethnicity.

People aged 20-24 were the most disproportionately over-represented group, with around 1.8x the share of fatal and serious injury crashes to population. Age groups 25-34 and 35-44 were also disproportionately impacted.

Men were also more likely to be killed or seriously injured in crashes in Milwaukee County -- about 1.4x more likely on average. While men are slightly over half of Milwaukee County's population, 70 percent of people killed or seriously injured in crashes in Milwaukee County were men.

In Milwaukee County, Black or African American individuals were more than two times likely to be killed in a fatal crash than the population average, and Native American individuals were 1.2 times more likely, according to federal crash data. In the period from 2017-2021, Black individuals were 56% of crashes, despite only being 26% of the County's population.

# Systemic Safety Analysis

Systemic Safety Analysis is a proactive screening of the relative crash risk of various roadway attributes.

This analysis is used to produce a Countywide risk score. To measure systemic risk, 10 years of Fatal and Serious Injury (KSI) crash data were joined to surface (non-Interstate) streets. The share of KSI crashes to the share of centerline miles indicates the relative overall risk of streets with a particular attribute in the Countywide network. Anything with a ratio of higher than 1 indicates that there are disproportionately more crashes compared to centerline miles for streets with that attribute or grouping of attributes.

Mobility needs and patterns vary across the County. Street types may be relatively safe in certain areas, but have higher risks in other areas where more people are walking or biking. As a result, in order to better understand the differences in crash prevalence across the County, it's important to understand how land use and demographics impact crashes.

Three Area Types were developed for this analysis, including Urban, Urban Transition, and Suburban areas based on population and jobs density, the age of building stock, and the size of blocks, with the densest and oldest parts of the County categorized as Urban and less dense, newer parts of the City categorized as suburban.

High Vulnerability Census Tracts were also used to identify areas in the County with higher needs. High Vulnerability Census Tracts are based on the CDC's Social Vulnerability Index and include many factors like poverty, language isolation, and low vehicle access. The combination of area type with vulnerable tracts shows that crash disparities aren't just a function of more land use and development, but also the underlying demographics and needs of the community. Across all area types, streets in Vulnerable tracts are two times as likely to have a fatal or serious injury crash.



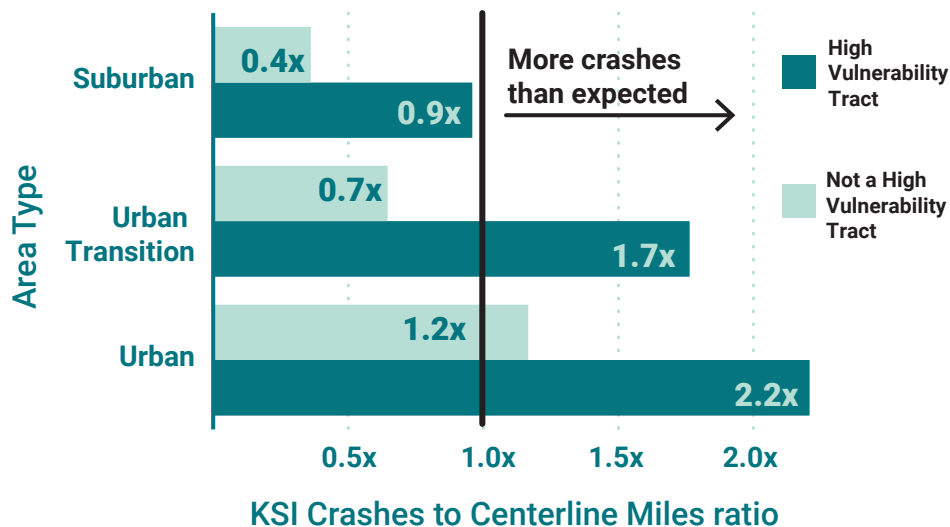Fig. 13 Area Type and Social Vulnerability Risk Factors

# Area Type and Equity Context



**Area Types**

- ■ Urban
- ■ Urban Transition
- ■ Suburban
- ▨ High Vulnerability Census Tracts
- ● 2 miles

Fig. 14 Map of Area Types and High Vulnerability Census Tracts

# Street Characteristics

A roadway's Functional Class describes a street's role in the overall transportation network. Excluding Interstates and Expressways, Major Arterials (also known as Other Principal Arterials) and Minor Arterials have a disproportionate share of crashes, while Local and Collector streets have relatively few crashes.

Off-peak speed data was obtained from Replica, which blends cell phone and Connected Vehicle data to understand speeds. For surface streets, roadways that had a typical off-peak speed of 30 to 40 miles per hour posed the greatest overall risk, greater than streets with a typical speed of more than 40 mph. This may be related to the fact that roads with design speeds and speed limits around this speed range are occurring in areas with more pedestrians and bicyclists.

In general, one-way streets with two or more lanes of traffic and two-way streets with four or more through lanes had disproportionately more risk. Most one-lane one-way streets are Local residential streets with little traffic. While three-lane two-way streets do show a higher risk, there are relatively few streets with uneven lanes.
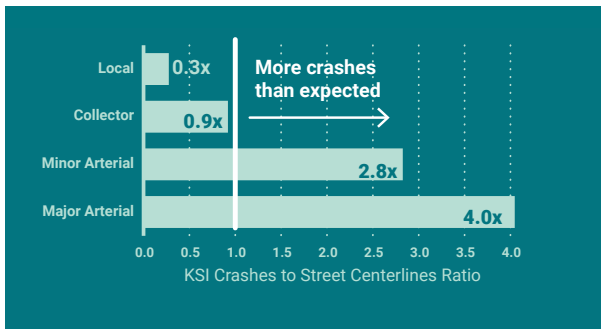
Fig. 15 Functional Class
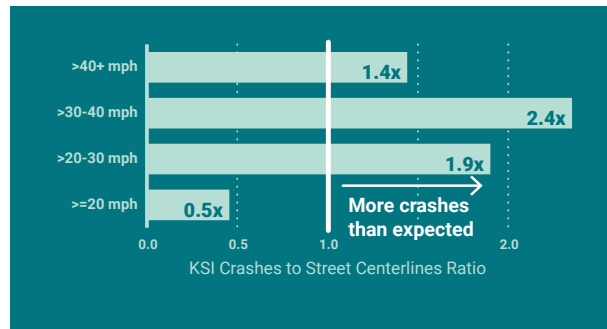
Fig. 16 Observed Off-Peak Speeds
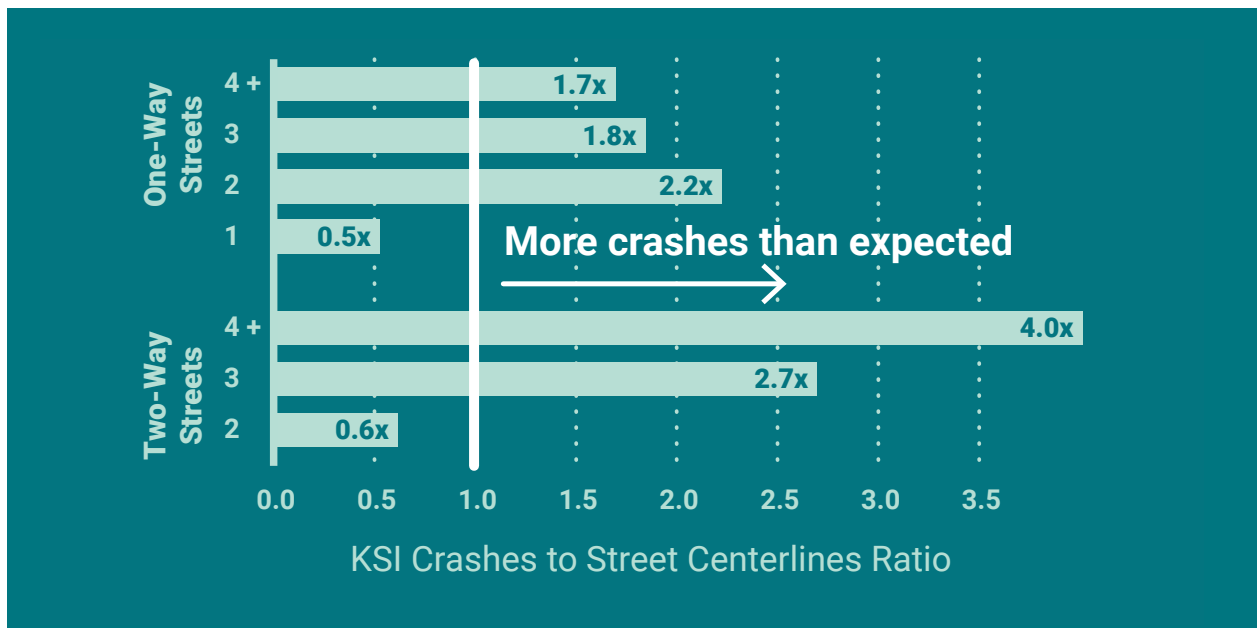
Fig. 17 Direction & Number of Through Lanes

There is a very direct relationship between traffic volumes and crash risk. Streets with fewer than 5,000 vehicles per day (about 76% of the County's surface streets) had about average risk. Roadways with more than 5,000 vehicles per day had a higher than average risk.

Finally, the presence of a bus stop also had a strong impact on the relative number of crashes along a street. Streets with a bus stop were 3 times more likely to have a fatal or serious injury crash. MCTS bus routes are often located on busier streets due to higher residential density and proximity to jobs and other destinations; these land use characteristics generally yield higher pedestrian activity as well, which can increase the number of crashes if other safety countermeasures are not introduced to slow traffic speeds.
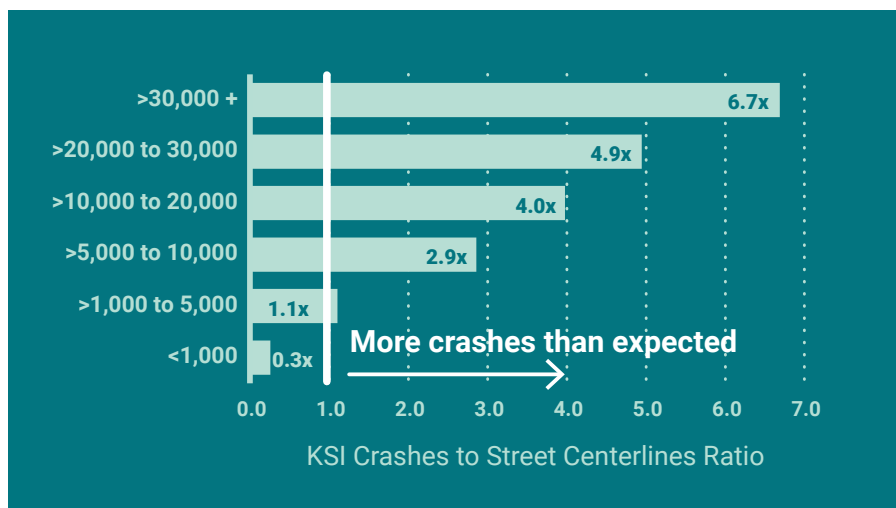


Fig. 18 Average Annual Daily Traffic
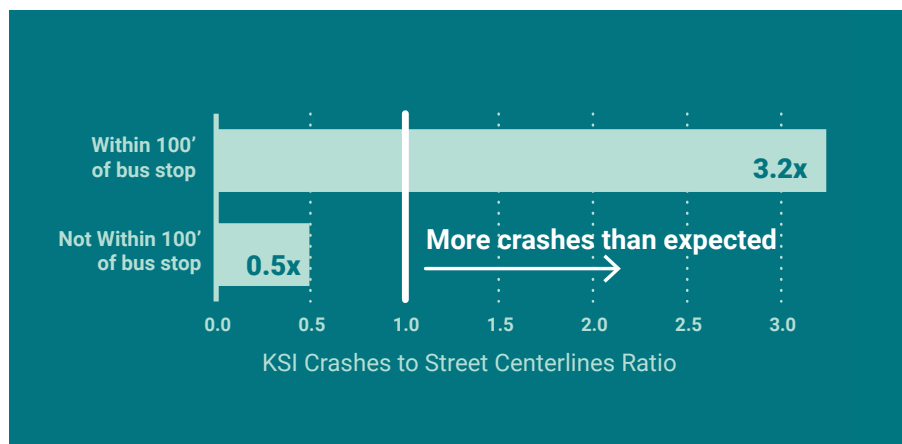


Fig. 19 Proximity to a Bus Stop

# Crash Risk Score



Fig. 20 Map of Risk Scores in Milwaukee County

| Attribute | Category | Pts |
|---|---|---|
| Social Vulnerability and Area Type | Not Vulnerable | 0 |
| | Vulnerable of Other Area Type | 1 |
| | Vulnerable Urban | 2 |
| Functional Class | Local | 0 |
| | Collector | 0 |
| | Minor Arterial | 1 |
| | Major Arterial | 1 |
| Lane configuration | Two-Way 2 lanes | 0 |
| | Two-Way 4+ Lanes | 2 |
| | One-Way 2+ Lanes | 1 |
| AADT | Under 5,000 | 0 |
| | 5,000-10,000 | 1 |
| | 10,000-20,000 | 2 |
| | 20,000+ | 2 |
| Observed Speeds | Under 20mph | 0 |
| | 20-30 mph | 1 |
| | 30-40 mph | 2 |
| | 40+ mph | 1 |
| Bus Stop Proximity | Not Near Bus Stop | 0 |
| | Near Bus Stop | 1 |
| Maximum Points Possible | | 10 |

Table 1. Risk Score Criteria

Risk Score

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 0 | | 4 | |
| 1 | | 5 | |
| 2 | | 6 | |
| 3 | | 7+ | |

High Vulnerability Census Tracts

2 miles

These street characteristics were used to create an aggregate risk score by street. The purpose of the scoring system, shown in Table 3 and Figure 20, is to help develop priorities for safety improvements in the Milwaukee County network, understanding that there are limited resources for safety improvements.

This scoring system should not necessarily be interpreted as causal crash factors. To be clear, this analysis is not suggesting that the solution to reducing crashes is to eliminate higher-AADT roadways or bus stop locations. The primary purpose is to identify locations that should have the highest priority for proven crash countermeasures.

The results of this preliminary network screening help to put Milwaukee County's crashes in context. Despite the fact that crashes are increasing and found everywhere, they are concentrated in areas with the highest risk scores -- over half of KSI crashes occurring on the top 11% of streets.

**Approximately 51% of crashes happen on 11% of streets** with the highest overall risk score.

| Risk Score | KSI Crashes / Mile / Yr. | KSI Crashes (2013-22) | Centerline Miles (approx.) | % of KSI Crashes | % of Centerline Miles |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 0 | 0.2 | 239 | 1,275 | 6% | 41% |
| 1 | 0.5 | 362 | 680 | 9% | 22% |
| 2 | 1.1 | 453 | 398 | 11% | 13% |
| 3 | 1.8 | 397 | 225 | 10% | 7% |
| 4 | 3.0 | 526 | 178 | 13% | 6% |
| 5 | 4.6 | 746 | 163 | 18% | 5% |
| 6 | 7.5 | 783 | 104 | 19% | 3% |
| 7+ | 9.3 | 540 | 58 | 13% | 2% |
| All Streets | 1.3 | 4,046 | 3,081 | | |

Table 2. Risk Score Summary Information

The highest risk streets have a crash rate **46.5 times higher** than the lowest risk streets.
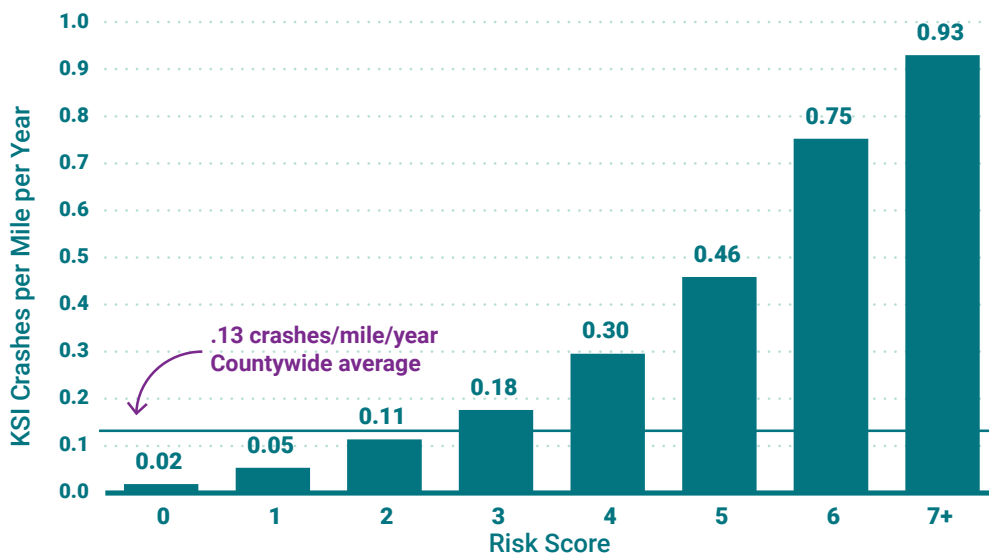


Fig. 21 Fatal and Serious Injury (KSI) crashes per mile per year by Risk Score category (2013–2022 data)

# WHAT WE'VE HEARD

# Engagement Objectives and Methodology

**Milwaukee County is a region composed of 19 municipalities, each with their own communities, neighborhoods, perspectives, and values. But every resident knows an intersection or corridor that is especially dangerous, regardless of what neighborhood they live in.**

Understanding these locations and how users feel on the roads will help the County prioritize important safety solutions. To build this baseline, we created a countywide public engagement process meant to capture these differences, and in the process found unifying and actionable themes.

Throughout the engagement period, we asked Milwaukee County residents to share when and where they experience recklessness on the roadway to better understand where solutions can be prioritized. Reckless driving and its resulting traffic crashes have deadly impacts on Milwaukee County communities, especially those who walk, bike, or ride the bus.

While the crash data can paint a picture of where crashes might occur, everyday accounts, such as the one below, are real-life examples of the effects of dangerous roadway conditions, sometimes referred to as traffic violence. Traffic violence is often perceived to be the result of individual decisions, but crashes and crash fatalities are preventable with effective roadway designs, policies, education, and infrastructure.



> I wish drivers slowed down and looked out for pedestrians and bikers. Pedestrians and bikers also need to be careful and not just dart out into a car's path. We all need to look out for one another.

# Milwaukee County's Safe Streets Roadshow

## Meeting Communities Where They Are

**Completing the Story**

### ENGAGEMENT

Connecting with residents and gathering honest feedback are imperative for building the complete story in an equitable manner.

### DATA

Milwaukee County can get a sense of hot spot locations from available crash data, but even these data are imperfect and only part of a complete story.

**WHAT WE LEARNED**

Milwaukee County delivered at least **one meeting per municipality**, engaging people where they feel safe and unsafe.

**The public meetings had the same objective throughout**–getting baseline understandings of traffic violence at the countywide scale and within a community context, bringing residents along in the process.

## MAPPING MOBILITY

**What would safer streets mean for your community!**

The Milwaukee County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) has launched a new safety initiative. The Complete Communities Transportation Planning Project is an effort to **increase multimodal safety** and **address reckless driving** across all 19 municipalities in Milwaukee County.

**Milwaukee County / _____** (municipality)
**would have the safest streets in Wisconsin if...**

*Write your answers below using a sticky note or a marker.*
*Then use the dots to share your travel patterns in Milwaukee County*

Help us understand your travel patterns in Milwaukee County:

● **BLUE DOT** = I travel here often.

● **RED DOT** = I wish I could travel here, but the traffic conditions are too dangerous.

Scan here to learn more and fill out a survey on our website!

Hoja de ejercicios de seguridad vial: **Milwaukee**

Mapa en la parte posterior →

1. Usando un marcador, identifique la calle o los pasillos donde se siente inseguro mientras viaja.
2. Marque una "X" en el mapa donde haya sido testigo de una conducción imprudente. Puede marcar tantos como desee.
3. ¿Qué modo se siente más inseguro cuando se viaja?
   ☐ Coche (manejando)  ☐ Coche (Pasajero)  ☐ Bici
   ☐ Caminar/rodar  ☐ Tomar el autobús  ☐ Patinete  ☐ Otro: _____
   ¿Por qué? _____
4. Moverse por mi comunidad sería seguro si...

## WHAT WOULD SAFER STREETS MEAN FOR YOUR COMMUNITY?

**Complete Communities is an effort to increase multimodal safety and address reckless driving across Milwaukee County.**

**Visit county.milwaukee.gov/CompleteCommunities or use the QR code above to learn more!**

MILWAUKEE COUNTY
Complete Communities

WHAT WOULD SAFER STREETS MEAN FOR YOUR COMMUNITY?

**Safe Streets Roadshow**
**This way**

¿QUÉ SIGNIFICARÍAN CALLES MÁS SEGURAS PARA SU COMUNIDAD?

¡Únase a nosotros el jueves 24 de agosto en Milwaukee para el Vision Zero Safe Streets Roadshow para compartir y aprender más!

# Techniques and Strategies

To understand county perspectives, we used a multi-pronged approach to understand group experiences and gather actionable feedback regarding traffic violence and multimodal safety. Within every community, we co-hosted at least one public meeting in coordination with municipal staff and community partners to ensure meeting locations were accessible, public, and convenient for residents. Easy-to-understand activities were created to engage meeting participants regardless of community, age, or preferred mode of travel.

# Project Partners

**Milwaukee County owes much of its success in reaching over 600 community members to the partnership of public stakeholders organized through the Public Advisory Committee.**

The Public Advisory Committee (PAC) was a community steering body comprised of neighborhood leaders, advocates, and non-profits representing a Countywide range of travel modes and traffic safety interests. Member organizations in the PAC were provided a stipend for their participation in Phase One supporting engagement efforts, reaching constituents, and providing feedback and oversight on draft deliverables.

# Spreading the Word

TMJ4, the Milwaukee-area news affiliate of NBC, was instrumental in amplifying the message about the engagement process. Through their year-long effort, "Project: Drive Safer," they continuously reported on issues regarding reckless driving and traffic violence, keeping the dialogue going in the community.



**Milwaukee County ready to take next steps to make streets safer**

**More bump-outs or speed humps? What the community wants to make Milwaukee County roads safer**

**Most common type of deadly car crash in Wisconsin does not involve another vehicle**

# Key Findings and Opportunities

We gathered feedback about reckless driving from across the County and the call to action is undeniable. After listening to and learning from community members, residents, and County roadway users, four improvement areas arose as top concerns. These four themes will guide Milwaukee County and its 19 municipalities through the next phases of action planning, infrastructure delivery, and traffic violence mitigation.

Milwaukee County residents want to navigate their communities safely, regardless of their travel mode, but many have found that recent spikes in traffic violence and reckless driving are threatening the ability to simply get around.

Feedback was collected and categorized into four opportunity areas to help guide Milwaukee County's next actions. These opportunity areas demonstrate findings from this feedback while serving as opportunity areas for future exploration for Phase Two.
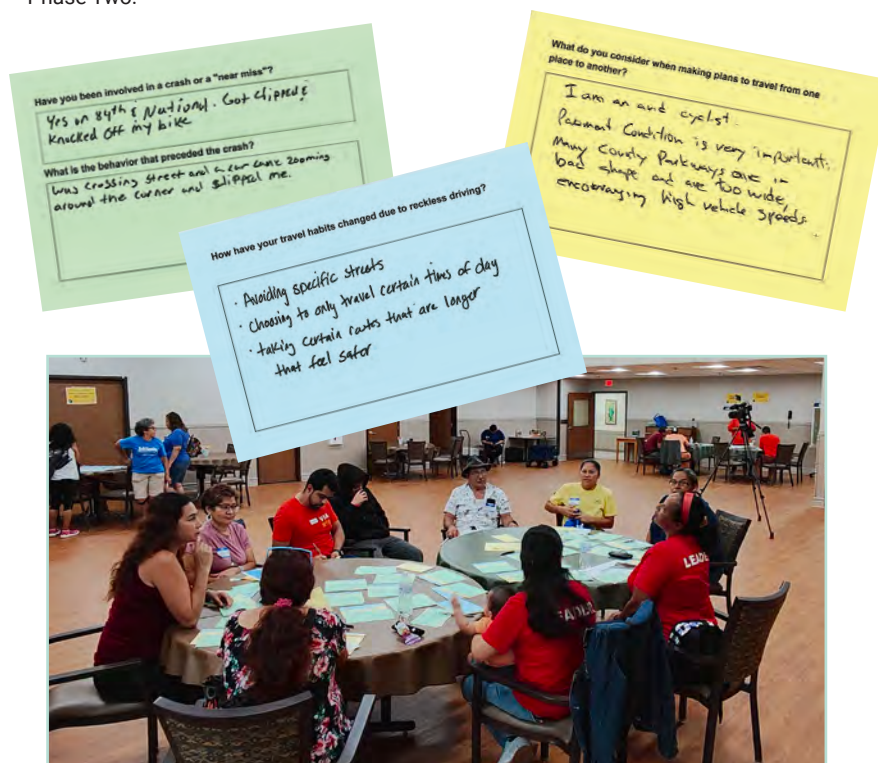


*On August 24th, 2023, Milwaukee County held one of the first-ever Spanish-only governmental public meetings thanks in large part to VIA Community Development Corporation's partnership.*

## Opportunity Areas

**1**

**Education, Policy, and Enforcement**

**PAGE 29**

**2**

**Observed Behaviors and Locations**

**PAGE 30**

**3**

**Infrastructure and Interventions**

**PAGE 34**

**4**

**Personal Travel Habits**

**PAGE 35**

# Education, Policy and Enforcement

**Streets would be safer if:**

[there was] more education on the impact of reckless driving.

Many residents discussed policy and enforcement issues as broader, systemic ways to address safety concerns. Policy-related feedback often addressed the root cause of unsafe driving behaviors, while comments on enforcement pushed for more accountability for bad behavior.

*Our team hosted Safe Streets Roadshow meetings in libraries, community centers, restaurants, and open gathering spaces to get first-hand accounts of reckless driving. We asked people where they travel, how they get there, and their level of safety and comfort on the street.*

Residents expressed desires for a shift in culture around the way safety is perceived. To address the root of reckless driving, we heard suggestions that mental health access, social emotional learning, youth and family programs, and activities for youth can provide solutions. There was also an emphasis on how normalizing the use of transit, walking, and cycling as modes of transportation can help shift the culture away from car-dominance and reduce harms of unsafe driving.

**Streets would be safer if:**

people came to see biking and walking as normal modes of transportation.

**Streets would be safer if:**

existing laws were enforced.

Enforcement was a common topic among residents who feel that reckless driving behavior has become uncontrollable. While many comments about enforcement suggested increasing citations and police presence at unsafe intersections and streets, others encouraged the use of technological enforcement methods such as red-light cameras and other photo-enforcement measures. The push for enforcement often related to the desire to curb behaviors such as speeding, running traffic lights, and disregarding stop signs.

# Observed Behaviors and Locations

**The most common type of feedback gathered during engagement was the mention of specific locations that feel unsafe to residents or where residents have witnessed unsafe behaviors.**

Many also discussed witnessing distinct behaviors that contributed to a lack of safety. Not only do these comments supplement crash data findings, they also substantiate these findings in the cases where there are similarities.

The overwhelming majority of aggressive behaviors that residents witnessed involve speeding or disregard for traffic controls. Residents pointed out that speeding is particularly harmful to pedestrians and often leads to near-misses or actual crashes. Many speculated that impatience is one of the root causes of these behaviors. Another frequent behavior that residents witness is drivers passing on the right, which poses a threat to pedestrians crossing the street or cyclists in the roadway or bike lane.

> Near misses regularly. Lack of attention. Too fast and impatient, blowing through stop signs and lights…

> [I've witnessed] several near misses with people who are speeding, tailgating, or running red lights.

*W. Juneau Ave. & N. Doctor Martin Luther King, Jr. Dr.*
*Milwaukee, WI*
*Westown Neighborhood*
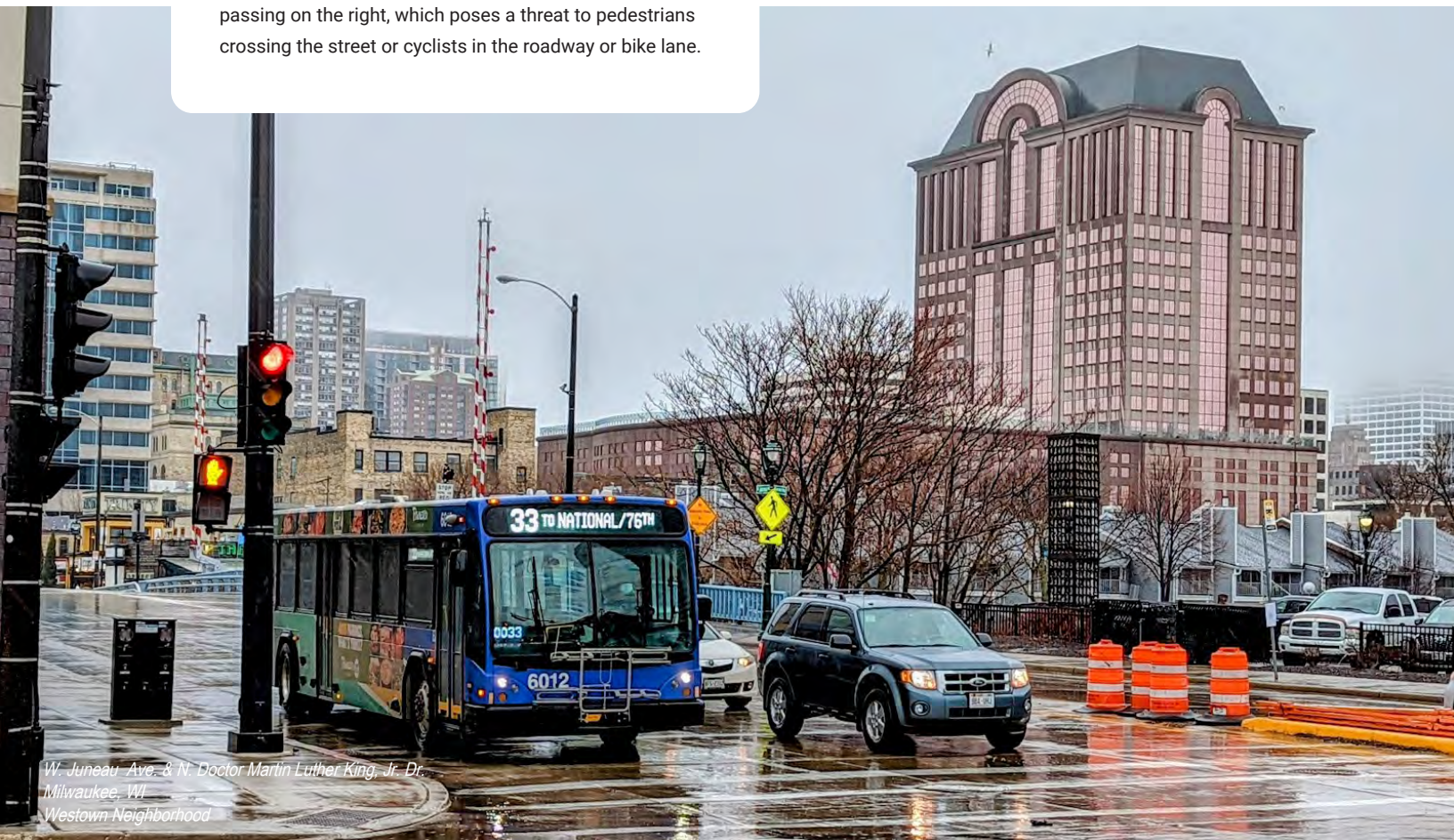
# Observed Instances of Reckless Driving

**Hotspots represent locations that residents indicated as locations where they have witnessed reckless driving.**

Fewer observations

More observations
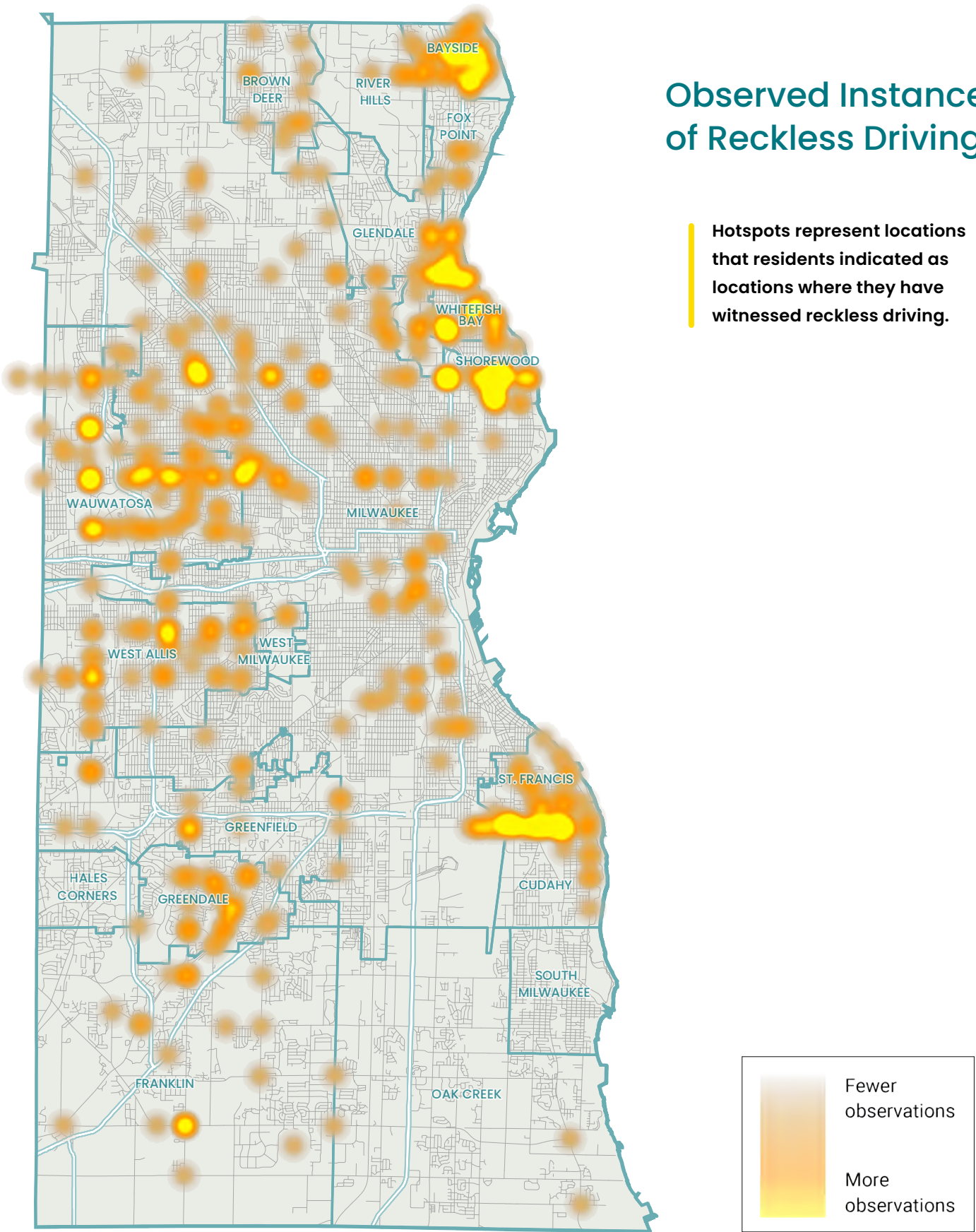
Fig. 22 Locations where residents have witnessed reckless driving.

Fig. 23 Most frequent corridors mentioned in public meetings
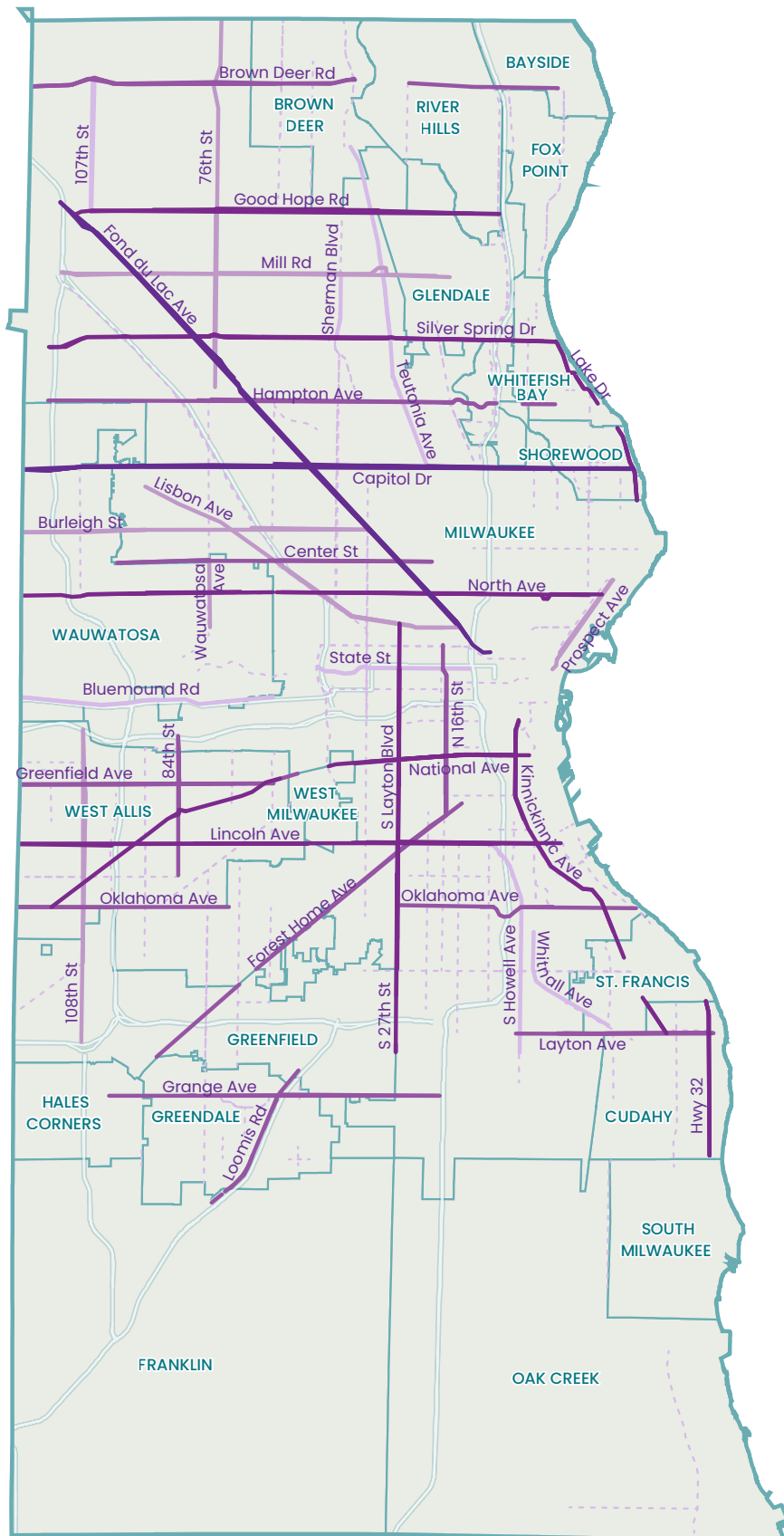
# Residents' Corridors of Concern

**Corridors documented by residents as unsafe, displayed based on their prevalence in community feedback.**

## Top Corridors of Concern

1. **Capitol Drive**
2. **Fond du Lac Avenue**
3. **Kinnickinnic Avenue**
4. **Good Hope Road**
5. **Silver Spring Drive**
6. **National Avenue**
7. **North Avenue**
8. **Lincoln Avenue**
9. **Lake Drive**
10. **Layton Boulevard (S 27th Street)**

- - - - Corridors Less Frequently Mentioned

# High Crash Risk Corridors & Residents' Corridors of Concern

**High risk corridors overlayed on top of streets identified as dangerous, collected from the Safe Streets Roadshow. Streets with higher crash risks align with community observations.**

**Risk Score**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 0 | | 4 | |
| 1 | | 5 | |
| 2 | | 6 | |
| 3 | | 7+ | |

— Community-Identified Safety Issue

High Vulnerability Census Tracts

2 miles

Fig. 24 High risk corridors overlayed on top of all corridors documented in public meetings

# Infrastructure and Interventions

Most of the locations that residents called out as unsafe include streets or local highways that are very wide, allowing for high-speed traffic and other dangerous driving behaviors. Though interstate highways and expressways were not evaluated in this study, many of the local highways that residents mentioned fall under the jurisdiction of WisDOT or MCDOT. There is a community-driven interest in improving road infrastructure and adopting physical interventions to create safer and more accessible transportation options in Milwaukee County.

Residents had many ideas on ways to improve street design to enhance safety in their communities. Speed humps and traffic circles were the two most frequently named solutions for traffic calming throughout Milwaukee County, but many participants thought of solutions beyond the typical speed hump. Other design solutions include more bump-outs, right-sized street widths, dedicated lanes for cyclists or buses, or improved infrastructure maintenance.

Along with the streetscape improvements, many residents advocated for dedicated cycling infrastructure such as protected bike lanes and a more complete bike network. Residents noted that coordination across municipalities and neighborhoods will be necessary to make proper bike connections that are safe and easy to navigate.

## Community-supported Infrastructure Interventions



**Speed Humps**



**Improved Infrastructure Maintenance**



**Traffic Circles**



**Bump-Outs**



**Right-Sized Street Widths**



**Dedicated Lanes for Cyclists or Buses**

# Personal Travel Habits

The feedback in this category underscores the importance of safety, convenience, and responsible behavior in shaping personal travel habits in Milwaukee County. It also highlights a growing recognition of the benefits of public transportation and the need for infrastructure improvements to support alternative modes of travel.

Many people choose active modes of travel only when they are convenient and safe. Residents understand the benefits of multimodal travel but will avoid walking or biking trips if routes require traveling through busy intersections and dangerous streets. When taking trips through such areas are necessary, people are taking various defensive measures to enhance their safety, such as waiting longer at intersections, being extra vigilant when crossing streets, and prioritizing crosswalks and designated pedestrian areas. Due to these extra precautions, the convenience of driving will often trump someone's travel choice who would otherwise opt to walk, bike, or take transit.

Even while driving, many people avoid traveling at night, traveling where there is active roadway construction, traveling along or across wide streets, traveling during inclement weather, and traveling to other communities that are unfamiliar. Many people have altered their travel routes due to concerns about reckless driving, safety, and traffic congestion in all areas of Milwaukee County. They are taking different routes, avoiding specific streets and neighborhoods, being more cautious, and sometimes choosing alternative modes of transportation to mitigate these concerns and ensure their safety while traveling in the county.

⚠ Avoiding Locations

⚠ Avoiding Travel at Certain Times

⚠ Changing Modes

⚠ Being Extra Vigilant While Traveling

⚠ Adopting More Defensive Riadway Behaviors

# Community Assesment

## Dominant Feedback Theme in Each Municipality

Across Safe Streets Roadshow meetings, residents discussed several different concerns. Those concerns that were most prominent in each municipality are represented as the "Top Theme." While this assessment demonstrates general concerns in each community, this feedback was often related to issues across Milwaukee County.



**Map labels:**
- Public policy
- Public policy
- Specific locations
- Public policy
- "[We need] better driving education."
- Specific locations
- Specific locations
- Traffic calming
- Roadway conditions & drivers' behavior
- Traffic calming
- "More protected bike lanes, bumpouts, medians, and full bus shelters"
- "[I have to] be mindful of reckless drivers."
- Timing & route change
- Improved streetscape
- Improved streetscape
- Enforcement
- "I am more anxious while driving, especially at night."
- Public policy
- Timing & route change
- Extra vigilance
- Traffic calming
- Specific locations
- Enforcement
- "Enforce speed limits."

**Top Feedback Theme**
- Infrastructure
- Behaviors + Locations
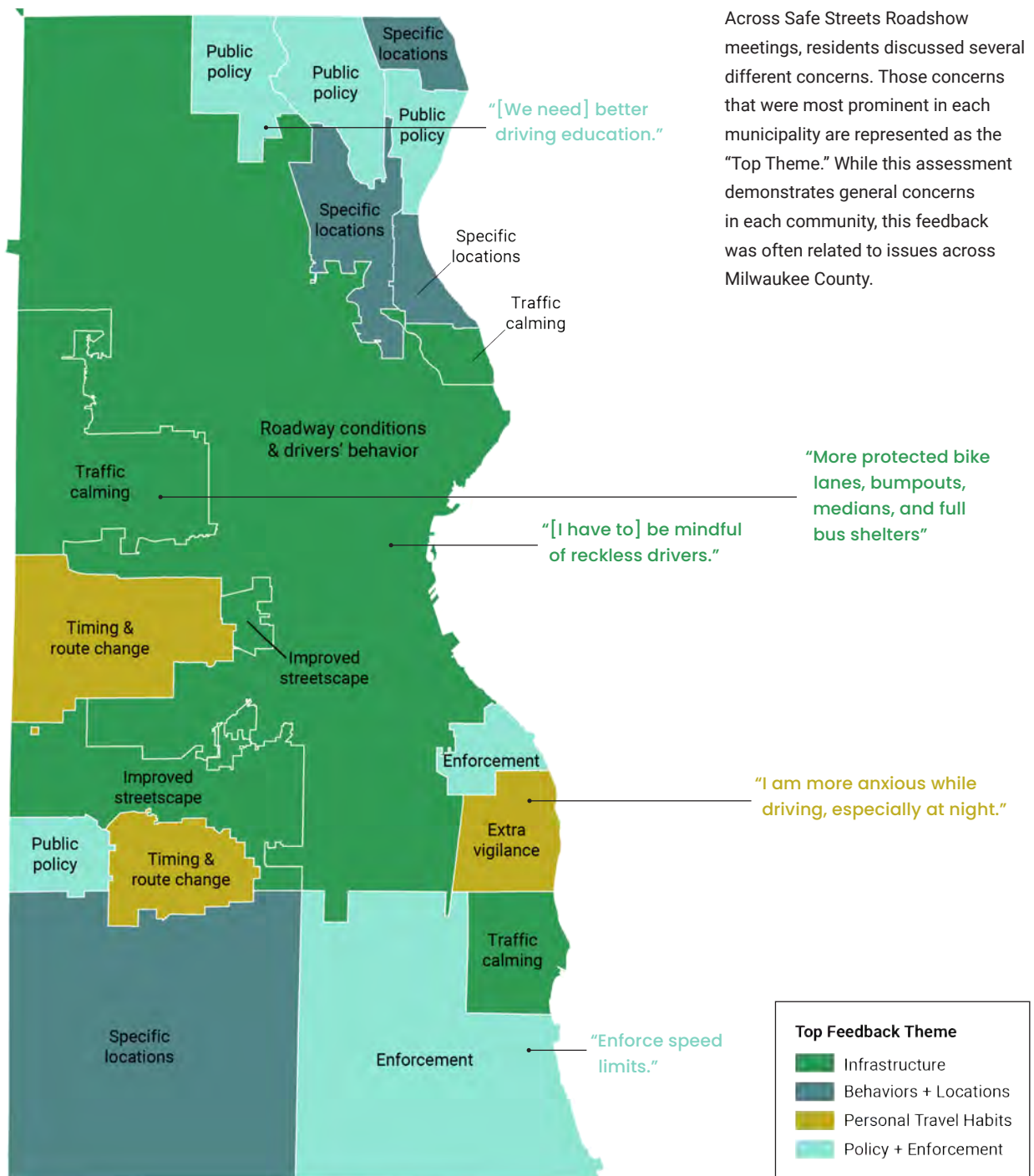- Personal Travel Habits
- Policy + Enforcement

Fig. 25 Municipal attitudes towards reckless driving and its solutions

# Crash Trends by Municipality

Crash trends vary significantly throughout Milwaukee County's 19 municipal boundaries. Land use, infrastructure, and socioeconomic characteristics have a major impact on these crash trends.

While the City of Milwaukee is the largest municipality and has the highest overall number of Fatal and Serious Injury (KSI) crashes, its crash rate per 100,000 residents is the third highest, behind West Milwaukee and River Hills, which have relatively small populations.

The share of fatal and serious injury crashes involving a pedestrian or bicyclist is at least 20% for the cities of Wauwatosa, Milwaukee, Greendale, St. Francis, South Milwaukee, Whitefish Bay, West Allis, and Hales Corners.

When comparing non-overlapping year groups 2013-2017 and 2018-2022, 8 of 19 cities saw a decrease in the number Fatal and Serious Injury crashes, and 10 saw an increase. The greatest increase was in Shorewood, which saw an increase of 129%.

| Municpality | Roadshow Meeting Date | Number of Attendees | KSI Crashes (2018–22) | Rate per 100,000 Residents | % Non-Motorized (Pedestrian + Bicycle) | % Change, 2013–17 vs. 2018–22 | Trend, 2013–2022 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Bayside | 7/13/23 | 20 | 4 | 18.3 | 0% | -43% | |
| Brown Deer | 6/8/23 | 10 | 21 | 33.6 | 0% | -43% | |
| Cudahy | 6/9/23 | 15 | 30 | 33.0 | 14% | 0% | |
| Fox Point | 8/18/23 | 14 | 2 | 5.8 | 0% | -67% | |
| Franklin | 7/12/23 | 30 | 58 | 31.5 | 15% | 14% | |
| Glendale | 7/12/23 | 7 | 49 | 73.4 | 6% | 53% | |
| Greendale | 6/14/23 | 7 | 14 | 18.9 | 25% | 17% | |
| Greenfield | 6/8/23 | 15 | 98 | 52.2 | 16% | 20% | |
| Hales Corners | 7/19/23 | 9 | 9 | 23.3 | 38% | -63% | |
| Milwaukee | 7/18/23 *(Good Hope Library)* <br><br> 7/22/23 *(Center St. Library)* <br><br> 8/9/23 *(Kosciuszko Park)* <br><br> 8/24/23 *(Sacred Heart - Spanish)* | 20 <br><br> 15 <br><br> 20 <br><br> 20 | 1,836 | 63.6 | 25% | 40% | |
| Oak Creek | 8/9/23 | 10 | 96 | 52.6 | 8% | 41% | |
| River Hills | 8/18/23 | 14 | 9 | 112.4 | 14% | 13% | |
| Shorewood | 6/15/23 | 18 | 16 | 23.1 | 19% | 129% | |
| South Milwaukee | 8/3/23 *(Community Night Out)* | 175 | 24 | 23.1 | 31% | -11% | |
| St. Francis | 8/3/23 | 11 | 18 | 39.3 | 25% | 50% | |
| Wauwatosa | 7/13/23 | 45 | 116 | 47.9 | 20% | -3% | |
| West Allis | 7/22/23 | 35 | 153 | 50.7 | 36% | 23% | |
| West Milwaukee | 8/18/23 *(National Night Out)* | 100 | 30 | 145.8 | 16% | -12% | |
| Whitefish Bay | 8/10/23 | 24 | 12 | 16.0 | 33% | -33% | |

Table 3. Municipality Meeting Data and Crash Rates. See Appendix for written assessment.

# Community Assessment
## By the numbers



### Brown Deer

| TOP THEME | DESIRES | TOP CORRIDOR |
|---|---|---|
| Public Policy | systemic change, traffic enforcement | Good Hope Road |
| **KSI CRASHES 2018-2022** 21 | **RATE PER 100,000 RESIDENTS** 33.6 | **% CHANGE, 2013-17 VS. 2018-22** -43% |

### Greenfield

| TOP THEME | DESIRES | TOP CORRIDORS |
|---|---|---|
| Improved streetscape | traffic calming measures | Layton Boulevard |
| **KSI CRASHES 2018-2022** 98 | **RATE PER 100,000 RESIDENTS** 52.2 | **% CHANGE, 2013-17 VS. 2018-22** 20% |

### Cudahy

| TOP THEME | CONCERNS | TOP CORRIDORS |
|---|---|---|
| Extra vigilance | speeding and distracted driving | Lake Drive, Kinnickinnic Avenue |
| **KSI CRASHES 2018-2022** 30 | **RATE PER 100,000 RESIDENTS** 33.0 | **% CHANGE, 2013-17 VS. 2018-22** 0% |

### Greendale

| TOP THEME | HABITS | |
|---|---|---|
| Timing, Route Change | avoiding driving on streets with reckless driving behavior | |
| **KSI CRASHES 2018-2022** 14 | **RATE PER 100,000 RESIDENTS** 18.9 | **% CHANGE, 2013-17 VS. 2018-22** 17% |



### Shorewood

| TOP THEME | DESIRES | TOP CORRIDORS |
|---|---|---|
| Traffic Calming Measures | traffic calming measures, improved bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure | Capitol Drive, Lake Drive |
| **KSI CRASHES 2018-2022** 16 | **RATE PER 100,000 RESIDENTS** 23.1 | **% CHANGE, 2013-17 VS. 2018-22** 129% |

# Community Assessment: by the numbers

## Franklin

| TOP THEME | CONCERNS | |
|---|---|---|
| Specific location interventions | speeding and distracted driving | |

| KSI CRASHES 2018-2022 | RATE PER 100,000 RESIDENTS | % CHANGE, 2013-17 VS. 2018-22 |
|---|---|---|
| **58** | **31.5** | **14%** |



## Bayside

| TOP THEME | DESIRES | |
|---|---|---|
| Specific location interventions | improved education on traffic rules and safety, low speed streets and traffic calming measures | |

| KSI CRASHES 2018-2022 | RATE PER 100,000 RESIDENTS | % CHANGE, 2013-17 VS. 2018-22 |
|---|---|---|
| **4** | **18.3** | **-43%** |



## Glendale

| TOP THEME | DESIRES | TOP CORRIDORS |
|---|---|---|
| Specific location interventions | safer trail systems and bicycle infrastructure | Good Hope Road, Silver Spring Drive |

| KSI CRASHES 2018-2022 | RATE PER 100,000 RESIDENTS | % CHANGE, 2013-17 VS. 2018-22 |
|---|---|---|
| **49** | **73.4** | **53%** |

## Wauwatosa

| TOP THEME | DESIRES | TOP CORRIDORS |
|---|---|---|
| Traffic calming measures | traffic calming measures, improved bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure | Capitol Drive, North Avenue |

| KSI CRASHES 2018-2022 | RATE PER 100,000 RESIDENTS | % CHANGE, 2013-17 VS. 2018-22 |
|---|---|---|
| **116** | **47.9** | **-3%** |

# Community Assessment
## By the numbers



*City of Milwaukee Spanish Language Meeting*

### Milwaukee

| TOP THEME | HABITS | TOP CORRIDORS |
|---|---|---|
| Traffic conditions | avoiding streets that feel unsafe and have large volumes of traffic | Capitol Drive, Fond du Lac Ave, Lake Drive, S 27th Street (Layton Blvd), North Avenue, Lincoln Avenue, Good Hope Road, Silver Spring Drive, Kinnickinnic Avenue |
| KSI CRASHES 2018-2022 **1,836** | RATE PER 100,000 RESIDENTS **63.6** | % CHANGE, 2013-17 VS. 2018-22 **40%** |



### West Allis

| TOP THEME | DESIRES | TOP CORRIDORS |
|---|---|---|
| Timing, Route Change | protected bicycle infrastructure, traffic calming measures | Lincoln Avenue, National Avenue |
| KSI CRASHES 2018-2022 **153** | RATE PER 100,000 RESIDENTS **50.7** | % CHANGE, 2013-17 VS. 2018-22 **23%** |



*South Milwaukee's Community Night Out event*

### Hales Corners

| TOP THEME | DESIRES | |
|---|---|---|
| Public policy | greater accountability through traffic enforcement and education | |
| KSI CRASHES 2018-2022 **9** | RATE PER 100,000 RESIDENTS **23.3** | % CHANGE, 2013-17 VS. 2018-22 **-63%** |

### South Milwaukee

| TOP THEME | DESIRES | |
|---|---|---|
| Traffic calming measures | traffic calming measures, improved pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure | |
| KSI CRASHES 2018-2022 **24** | RATE PER 100,000 RESIDENTS **23.1** | % CHANGE, 2013-17 VS. 2018-22 **-11%** |

# Community Assessment: by the numbers

## St. Francis

| TOP THEME | CONCERNS | TOP CORRIDORS |
|---|---|---|
| Enforcement | reckless driving and crashes | Kinnickinnic Avenue |
| **KSI CRASHES 2018-2022**<br>**18** | **RATE PER 100,000 RESIDENTS**<br>**39.3** | **% CHANGE, 2013-17 vs. 2018-22**<br>**50%** |



## Oak Creek

| TOP THEME | HABITS | |
|---|---|---|
| Enforcement | taking extra caution or avoiding specific streets and intersections | |
| **KSI CRASHES 2018-2022**<br>**96** | **RATE PER 100,000 RESIDENTS**<br>**52.6** | **% CHANGE, 2013-17 vs. 2018-22**<br>**41%** |

## Whitefish Bay

| TOP THEME | DESIRES | TOP CORRIDORS |
|---|---|---|
| Specific location interventions | improved bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure | Lake Drive, Silver Spring Drive |
| **KSI CRASHES 2018-2022**<br>**12** | **RATE PER 100,000 RESIDENTS**<br>**16** | **% CHANGE, 2013-17 vs. 2018-22**<br>**-33%** |

## Fox Point & River Hills

| TOP THEME | CONCERNS | |
|---|---|---|
| Public policy | social pressure among drivers | |
| **Fox Point** | | |
| **KSI CRASHES 2018-2022**<br>2 | **RATE PER 100,000 RESIDENTS**<br>5.8 | **% CHANGE, 2013-17 vs. 2018-22**<br>**-67%** |
| **River Hills** | | |
| **KSI CRASHES 2018-2022**<br>**9** | **RATE PER 100,000 RESIDENTS**<br>**112.4** | **% CHANGE, 2013-17 vs. 2018-22**<br>**13%** |



*West Milwaukee's National Night Out event*

## West Milwaukee

| TOP THEME | DESIRES | TOP CORRIDORS |
|---|---|---|
| Improved streetscape | safer pedestrian crossings and traffic calming measures | Lincoln Avenue, National Avenue |
| **KSI CRASHES 2018-2022**<br>**30** | **RATE PER 100,000 RESIDENTS**<br>**145.8** | **% CHANGE, 2013-17 vs. 2018-22**<br>**-12%** |

# WHAT WE CAN DO

# Safe System Approach

Reckless driving is just one roadway behavior of many that can lead to deadly crashes. Milwaukee County is committed to reducing the impacts of reckless driving as well as the other dangerous traffic behaviors present on our streets.

| Safe System | Prevailing Approach |
|---|---|
| Deaths and Serious Injuries are Unacceptable. | Deaths and Serious Injuries are just another unfortunate cost of our transportation system. |
| Humans Make Mistakes. | Humans need to act and react perfectly in every situation to accommodate transportation system. |
| Humans Are Vulnerable. | Humans (people walking, biking, or rolling) are not treated as fundamentally different from motor vehicle occupants. |
| Responsibility is Shared. | Individual road users bear more responsibility for their actions than policymakers, planners, engineers, and the automotive industry. |
| Safety is Proactive. | Safety improvements are implemented only after a crash or multiple crashes occur. |
| Redundancy is Crucial. | The transportation system relies on a single safety countermeasure that could fail. |

Table 4. Safe System vs. Prevailing Approach

The US Department of Transportation's Safe System Approach is a new framework that guides road safety in the United States. While USDOT's adoption of this approach is relatively new, it incorporates many of the core concepts and principles of the traffic safety movement that have been the successful forces behind significant crash reductions in many countries. While the Safe System approach seems sensible, it is a fundamental change from prevailing attitudes around road safety.

To learn more about the Safe System approach, visit **transportation.gov/NRSS/SafeSystem**.

## Safe System Objectives

### Safer people

Focused on education, enforcement, and behavioral activities that instill safe actions by all road users.

### Safer Speeds

Set speed limits that are safe for the context, and encourage safe speeds through education, reminders, and equitable enforcement.

### Safer Vehicles

Improve the safety of vehicle systems – not just for people inside vehicles, but for others outside the vehicle as well.

### Safer Roads

Using roadway design to limit the impact of human mistakes and facility safer travel, especially for people that walk, bike, or roll.

### Post-Crash Care

Post-Crash Care: Improve emergency medical responses to crashes to save lives, improve victim outcomes, keep first responders safe, and reduce secondary crashes.

# Prioritizing Complete Communities Improvements

## Implement Prioritized Street Improvements

The High Risk Network analysis demonstrates that over half of the County's crashes are occurring on just 11% of streets. This shows that while crashes in Milwaukee County may be a daunting problem, it can be addressed by focusing on a relatively small portion of the County's streets.

Developing a prioritized list of safety improvements is an important next step to improving safety. These projects could take the many forms, from major corridor improvements to lower-cost systemic improvements. The relative benefit and cost of these improvements, existing maintenance and project activities, local preferences and engagement, and equity would all be considered in developing a list of projects.

### Major Corridor Improvements

Major corridor improvements are large projects meant to improve the highest crash corridors. Strategies such as road diets, corridor access management, adding medians and refuge islands, extending curbs, adding sidewalks and side paths, and rebuilding intersections are often combined to slow speeds and increase safety for all users. These projects can be implemented with streetscape and other multimodal improvements, such as bicycle lanes, bus lanes and queue jumps, and improved transit stops. Because of the cost and time it takes to execute major corridor improvements, these efforts should be focused in areas with a significant crash history. Milwaukee County could play a coordinating role in helping identify projects that cross or share municipal boundaries.

### Quick Build Improvements

Quick build improvements are meant to be rapidly deployed at higher crash corridors or intersections as a way of demonstrating the feasibility of road diets and other traffic calming measures without more expensive activities like extending curbs or adjusting drainage. Quick build improvements can still create a significant safety benefit through road diets, reduced speeds, and increased visibility and awareness. Quick build projects can be implemented alongside maintenance activities, such as a city's street resurfacing program, with very little additional cost. City crews can make adjustments to quick build projects as they are needed, and when funds become available, more permanent improvements can be constructed.

### Low-Cost Systemic Countermeasures

Low-cost systemic countermeasures – policy or infrastructure changes that apply to the broader roadway network – spread low-cost treatments and improvements across many locations within an area. While these countermeasures may have a modest impact on safety, they come at a relatively low cost. These countermeasures could include things such as upgrading traffic signals, adjusting crosswalk signals to prioritize pedestrians, or area-wide speed limit reductions.

# Increase Multimodal Activity

During meetings with the Safety Working Group and Public Advisory Committee meetings, participants noted that increases in fatal and serious injury crashes appeared to coincide with cuts to public transportation funding for Milwaukee County, thus leading to subsequent decreases in transit ridership.

Data from the National Transit Database overlaid with crash statistics appear to confirm this hypothesis. Furthermore, a comparative review of metropolitan areas shows that cities with the highest levels of transit ridership also share the lowest overall crash rates.

Increasing multimodal activity -- people walking, biking, and taking transit -- is an important part of the Complete Communities strategy. Fewer people driving will result in fewer crashes overall. Strategies to increase walking, biking, and transit use also result in safer streets. For example, protected bike lanes or transit lanes implemented alongside a road diet can increase convenience of both of those modes while also reducing crashes.
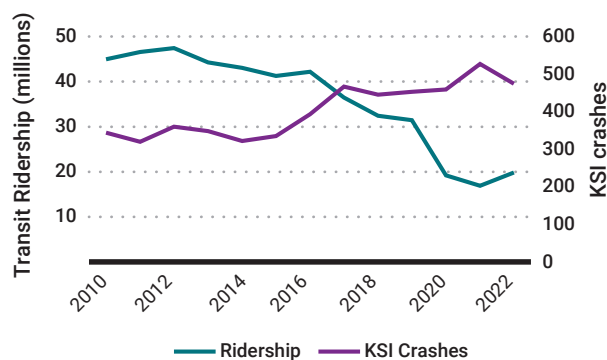


Fig. 26 Fatal and Serious Injury (KSI) crashes vs. Transit Ridership in Milwaukee County
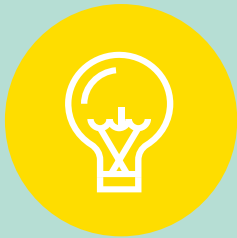
# Collaborate and Build Trust

Community engagement and partnership with non-profits and other public agencies has been a key part of the Complete Communites Strategy from the start.

Desktop analysis alone cannot tell us all of the safety issues in a community and often leads to gaps in understanding. Community engagement is essential, whether identifying or prioritizing needs or designing individual improvements. The County and its partners should continue to listen to community voices when developing solutions. This includes communities often left unheard in public processes, such as those who speak languages other than English and members of the disability community.

While Safer Streets are a key component of the Safe System approach, encouraging safer behaviors is also important. Public marketing campaigns can help change minds and feelings about reckless driving. Investment in school-based educational programs such as Driver's Education or Safe Routes to School can also instill and promote safer driving, walking, and bicycling at earlier ages. Certain enforcement activities can also be helpful, although they should be used judiciously and with equity and community safety in mind. Strategies like automated speed and traffic signal enforcement with graduated or income-based citations can help make safer behaviors more ubiquitous without being a community burden. Better training and education for law enforcement on traffic laws, cultural competency, and crash investigation can help improve safety and build community trust.

Coordination between the County and the municipalities is also important. The City of Milwaukee has an active Vision Zero program and has been developing a Complete Streets guide and new approach to speed management. Lessons and strategies from these efforts will be informative to the rest of the County. Furthermore, there is a need for inter-jurisdictional coordination, particularly on high priority corridors that cross or are situated on a municipal boundary.

*E. Wisconsin Ave. & N. Jackson St.*
*Milwaukee, WI*
*East Town Neighborhood*



*S. 92nd St. & W. National Ave.*
*West Allis, WI*



*E. Capitol Dr. & N. Oakland Ave.*
*Shorewood, WI*



*N. 87th St. & W. Watertown Plank Rd.*
*Wauwatosa, WI*
*Milwaukee Regional Medical Center*



*S. Lake Dr. & Oak Leaf Trail*
*St. Francis, WI*

# What's Next

**The Complete Communities Transportation Planning project is just getting started. Here's what's coming next.**

### 1

### Countywide Policy and Programs Review

Take an inventory of Countywide policies and programs to bring them in alignment with the Safe System approach. Working with Parks, Department of Health and Human Services, law enforcement and public safety, and Milwaukee County Transit System can help identify opportunities to encourage safer behaviors.

### 2

### Countermeasures Toolkit

Use national best practices and proven safety countermeasures to create a toolkit of context-appropriate countermeasures for Milwaukee County. The countermeasure toolkit can also include education, enforcement, and policy initiatives that improve safety for all road users.

### 3

### Countywide Comprehensive Safety Action Plan (CSAP)

Continue engagement and data analysis efforts to develop a Countywide strategy for achieving zero fatal crashes and serious injuries. The CSAP will have a list of prioritized projects and will make the County and any municipality eligible for Safe Streets and Roads for All Implementation funding. The CSAP can also help reposition existing transportation funding sources to support a safer transportation system.

W. Pierce St. & S. 37th St.
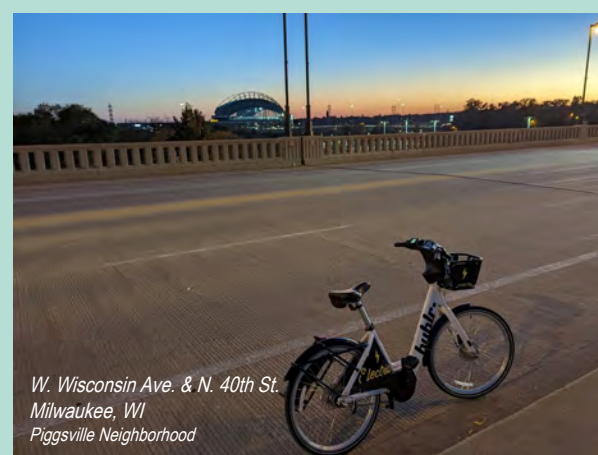Milwaukee, WI
Silver City Neighborhood


Broad St. & Northway
Greendale, WI


Milwaukee Ave. & 10th Ave.
South Milwaukee, WI


W. Lincoln Ave. & S. 9th St.
Milwaukee, WI
Lincoln Village Neighborhood


W. Wisconsin Ave. & N. 40th St.
Milwaukee, WI
Piggsville Neighborhood

## 4

## Supportive Municipal Action Plans

Local governments own most of the roadways in Milwaukee County and are in a position to meaningfully improve safety on local roads. The County will work with municipal governments to develop individual action plans that help identify needs and priorities for each municipality within the County. Similar to the Countywide strategy, the municipal Safety Action Plans will include recommendations for in-street infrastructure improvements, policy changes, education and enforcement that are applicable to each municipality's needs.

## 5

## Engagement and Collaboration

Listening to the community will continue to be essential to identifying and prioritizing safety strategies in the County. The Safety Working Group and Public Advisory Committee will continue to provide crucial connections to the community.

## 6

## Performance Measures and Accountability

As the Countywide CSAP and supportive municipal action plans are developed and implemented, it will be important to track progress and outcomes. Performance measures are a key feedback loop to understand whether the plan is working and how and where to make adjustments in order to achieve safety goals.

# Appendix

### Bayside

From 2018-2022, there were 0 fatal and 4 serious injury crashes in Bayside. The average annual fatal and serious injury crash rate from this period was 18.3 per 100,000 residents. Fatal and serious injury crashes decreased by 43% in this period as compared to the previous 5-year period. None of the fatal and serious injury crashes involved people walking or bicycling, and none of the crashes were in High Vulnerability Census Tracts.

### Brown Deer

From 2018-2022, there were 1 fatal and 20 serious injury crashes in Brown Deer. The average annual fatal and serious injury crash rate from this period was 33.6 per 100,000 residents. Fatal and serious injury crashes decreased by 43% in this period as compared to the previous 5-year period. None of the fatal and serious injury crashes involved people walking or bicycling, and 19% of the crashes were in High Vulnerability Census Tracts.

### Cudahy

From 2018-2022, there were 0 fatal and 30 serious injury crashes in Cudahy. The average annual fatal and serious injury crash rate from this period was 33.0 per 100,000 residents. Fatal and serious injury crashes not increase or decrease in this period as compared to the previous 5-year period. 17% of the fatal and serious injury crashes involved people walking or bicycling, and 0% of the crashes were in High Vulnerability Census Tracts.

### Fox Point

From 2018-2022, there were 0 fatal and 2 serious injury crashes in Fox Point. The average annual fatal and serious injury crash rate from this period was 5.8 per 100,000 residents. Fatal and serious injury crashes decreased by 67% in this period as compared to the previous 5-year period. None of the fatal and serious injury crashes involved people walking or bicycling, and none of the crashes were in High Vulnerability Census Tracts.

### Franklin

From 2018-2022, there were 2 fatal and 56 serious injury crashes in Franklin. The average annual fatal and serious injury crash rate from this period was 31.5 per 100,000 residents. Fatal and serious injury crashes increased by 14% in this period as compared to the previous 5-year period. 14% of the fatal and serious injury crashes involved people walking or bicycling, and none of the crashes were in High Vulnerability Census Tracts.

### Glendale

From 2018-2022, there were 3 fatal and 46 serious injury crashes in Glendale. The average annual fatal and serious injury crash rate from this period was 73.4 per 100,000 residents, which was greater than the Countywide average of 55.2. Fatal and serious injury crashes increased by 53% in this period as compared to the previous 5-year period. 8% of the fatal and serious injury crashes involved people walking or bicycling, and 6% of the crashes were in High Vulnerability Census Tracts.

### Greendale

From 2018-2022, there were 1 fatal and 13 serious injury crashes in Greendale. The average annual fatal and serious injury crash rate from this period was 18.9 per 100,000 residents. Fatal and serious injury crashes increased by 17% in this period as compared to the previous 5-year period. 29% of the fatal and serious injury crashes involved people walking or bicycling, and none of the crashes were in High Vulnerability Census Tracts.

### Greenfield

From 2018-2022, there were 7 fatal and 91 serious injury crashes in Greenfield. The average annual fatal and serious injury crash rate from this period was 52.2 per 100,000 residents. Fatal and serious injury crashes increased by 20% in this period as compared to the previous 5-year period. 16% of the fatal and serious injury crashes involved people walking or bicycling, and none of the crashes were in High Vulnerability Census Tracts.

### Hales Corners

From 2018-2022, there were 1 fatal and 8 serious injury crashes in Hales Corners. The average annual fatal and serious injury crash rate from this period was 23.3 per 100,000 residents. Fatal and serious injury crashes decreased by 63% in this period as compared to the previous 5-year period. 44% of the fatal and serious injury crashes involved people walking or bicycling, which is greater than the Countywide average of 23%. None of the crashes were in High Vulnerability Census Tracts.

### Milwaukee

From 2018-2022, there were 323 fatal and 1,513 serious injury crashes in Milwaukee. The average annual fatal and serious injury crash rate from this period was 63.6 per 100,000 residents, which is greater than the Countywide average of 55.2. Fatal and serious injury crashes increased by 40% in this period as compared to the previous 5-year period, greater than the Countywide average of 29%. 25% of the fatal and serious injury crashes involved people walking or bicycling, which is greater than the Countywide average of 23%. 70% of the crashes were in High Vulnerability Census Tracts.

### Oak Creek

From 2018-2022, there were 15 fatal and 81 serious injury crashes in Oak Creek. The average annual fatal and serious injury crash rate from this period was 52.6 per 100,000 residents. Fatal and serious injury crashes increased by 41% in this period as compared to the previous 5-year period, greater than the Countywide average increase of 29%. 8% of the fatal and serious injury crashes involved people walking or bicycling, and none of the crashes were in High Vulnerability Census Tracts.

### River Hills

From 2018-2022, there were 0 fatal and 9 serious injury crashes in River Hills. The average annual fatal and serious injury crash rate from this period was 112.4 per 100,000 residents, greater than the Countywide average of 55.2. Fatal and serious injury crashes increased by 13% in this period as compared to the previous 5-year period. 11% of the fatal and serious injury crashes involved people walking or bicycling, and none of the crashes were in High Vulnerability Census Tracts.

### Saint Francis

From 2018-2022, there was one fatal and 17 serious injury crashes in Saint Francis. The average annual fatal and serious injury crash rate from this period was 39.3 per 100,000 residents. Fatal and serious injury crashes increased by 50% in this period as compared to the previous 5-year period, greater than the Countywide average of 29%. 22% of the fatal and serious injury crashes involved people walking or bicycling, and 13% of the crashes were in High Vulnerability Census Tracts.

### Shorewood

From 2018-2022, there were 2 fatal and 14 serious injury crashes in Shorewood. The average annual fatal and serious injury crash rate from this period was 23.1 per 100,000 residents. Fatal and serious injury crashes increased by 129% in this period as compared to the previous 5-year period, greater than the Countywide average of 29%. 44% of the fatal and serious injury crashes involved people walking or bicycling, and none of the crashes were in High Vulnerability Census Tracts.

### South Milwaukee

From 2018-2022, there were 1 fatal and 23 serious injury crashes in South Milwaukee. The average annual fatal and serious injury crash rate from this period was 23.1 per 100,000 residents. Fatal and serious injury crashes decreased by 11% in this period as compared to the previous 5-year period. 25 of the fatal and serious injury crashes involved people walking or bicycling, which is slightly higher than the Countywide average of 23%. None of the crashes were in High Vulnerability Census Tracts.

### Wauwatosa

From 2018-2022, there were 13 fatal and 103 serious injury crashes in Wauwatosa. The average annual fatal and serious injury crash rate from this period was 47.9 per 100,000 residents. Fatal and serious injury crashes decreased slightly by 3% in this period as compared to the previous 5-year period. 18% of the fatal and serious injury crashes involved people walking or bicycling, and 2% of the crashes were in High Vulnerability Census Tracts.

### West Allis

From 2018-2022, there were 24 fatal and 129 serious injury crashes in West Allis. The average annual fatal and serious injury crash rate from this period was 50.7 per 100,000 residents. Fatal and serious injury crashes increased by 23% in this period as compared to the previous 5-year period. 35% of the fatal and serious injury crashes involved people walking or bicycling, which was greater than the Countywide average of 23%. None of the crashes were in High Vulnerability Census Tracts.

### West Milwaukee

From 2018-2022, there were 2 fatal and 28 serious injury crashes in West Milwaukee. The average annual fatal and serious injury crash rate from this period was 145.8 per 100,000 residents, nearly three times greater than the Countywide average of 55.2. However, fatal and serious injury crashes decreased by 12% in this period as compared to the previous 5-year period. 17% of the fatal and serious injury crashes involved people walking or bicycling. 93% of the crashes were in High Vulnerability Census Tracts.

### Whitefish Bay

From 2018-2022, there were 2 fatal and 10 serious injury crashes in Whitefish Bay. The average annual fatal and serious injury crash rate from this period was 16.0 per 100,000 residents. Fatal and serious injury crashes decreased by 33% in this period as compared to the previous 5-year period. 33% of the fatal and serious injury crashes involved people walking or bicycling, greater than the Countywide average of 23%. None of the crashes were in High Vulnerability Census Tracts.

# Sources

**Wisconsin Crash Data:**

Wisconsin Traffic Operations and Safety (TOPS) Laboratory

**National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) FARS Data:**

https://cdan.dot.gov/query

**Milwaukee County GIS:**

https://county.milwaukee.gov/EN/Administrative-Services/Land-Information-Office-old/GIS-Data-Downloads

**Milwaukee County Evaluating Vulnerability and Equity (EVE) Model Classification:**

https://www.arcgis.com/apps/dashboards/dd99406eb64f49c991e1314673e249b9

**2017–2021 U.S. Census/American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates:**

https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/technical-documentation/table-and-geography-changes/2021/5-year.html

**2020 Census Tracts:**

https://www.census.gov/geographies/mapping-files/time-series/geo/tiger-data.html

**Replica (AADT, Observed Speeds, Bike/Ped Activity Estimates):**

https://www.replicahq.com/

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county.milwaukee.gov/CompleteCommunities