

ANCHORAGE, ALASKA
AR No. 2024-296, As Amended

1 **A RESOLUTION OF THE ANCHORAGE ASSEMBLY CALLING ON THE**
2 **MUNICIPALITY OF ANCHORAGE AND THE STATE OF ALASKA TO TAKE**
3 **ACTION IN RESPONSE TO A RECORD-BREAKING NUMBER OF PEDESTRIAN**
4 **DEATHS IN COLLISIONS WITH VEHICLES AND DECLARING OCTOBER**
5 **“PEDESTRIAN SAFETY MONTH.”**

6
7 **WHEREAS**, to date there have been 12 pedestrian deaths as a result of collisions
8 with motor vehicles in the Municipality of Anchorage during 2024, on track to be a
9 record for any calendar year; and

10
11 **WHEREAS**, in 2023 there were 11 deaths statewide and 13 in 2022¹; and

12
13 **WHEREAS**, our nation's streets are dangerous by design, designed primarily to
14 move cars quickly at the expense of keeping everyone safe; and, unfortunately, this
15 crisis will continue to get worse until those in power finally make safety for everyone
16 who uses our roads a top priority²; and

17
18 **WHEREAS**, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, acknowledging the
19 increase of pedestrian deaths, for the first time has issued a new rule to look at the
20 safety of pedestrians especially as related to the design and weight of current
21 vehicles³; and

22
23 **WHEREAS**, Anchorage is set to become one of the deadliest cities in America for
24 pedestrians with 4 deaths per 100,000⁴ in 2024; and

¹ <https://dot.alaska.gov/comm/pressbox/arch2023/PR23-0030.shtml>

² <http://smartgrowthamerica.org> (modified quote)

³ <https://www.nhtsa.gov/press-releases/nhtsa-proposes-new-vehicle-safety-standard-protect-pedestrians>

⁴ <https://smartgrowthamerica.org/dangerous-by-design/> (Metro Rankings)

Ranking the most dangerous metro areas

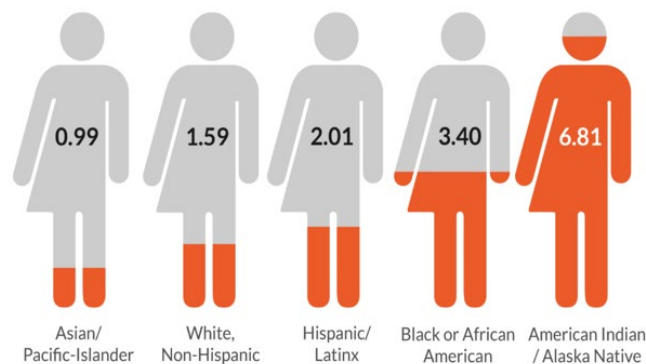
This report includes pedestrian fatality statistics and ranks the largest 101 metro areas. All are too dangerous. As with the 2022 edition of this report, we examine a five-year period (2018-2022) to get a broader sample size for each metro area. Long-term fatality rates are calculated by comparing the average rate from 2013-17 to the average for 2018-22.

Search:

Rank ↕	Metro Area	↕ Avg. annual pedestrian fatality rate per 100k people (2018-2022)	↕ Pedestrian deaths (2018-2022)	↕ Pedestrian deaths (2013-2017)	↕ Long term trend in fatality rate
1	Memphis, TN-MS-AR	5.14	343	186	2.37
2	Albuquerque, NM	4.83	221	138	1.78
3	Tucson, AZ	4.16	217	105	2.08
4	Bakersfield, CA	3.99	181	151	0.55
5(t)	Deltona-Daytona Beach-Ormond Beach, FL	3.96	134	107	0.53
5(t)	Baton Rouge, LA	3.96	172	99	1.57
7	Fresno, CA	3.89	196	111	1.60
8	Tampa-St. Petersburg-Clearwater, FL	3.75	599	500	0.39
9	Charleston-North Charleston, SC	3.66	147	97	1.05
10	Little Rock-North Little Rock-Conway, AR	3.63	136	62	1.93

WHEREAS, the data show that people of color as disproportionately impacted as pedestrians: black people are killed at more than twice the rate of white people, and American Indian and Alaska Native people are killed at over four times the rate of white people⁵; and

Pedestrian deaths per 100,000 by race & ethnicity (2018-2022)



Source: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, (2024), Fatality Analysis Reporting System.



WHEREAS, research shows that a pedestrian struck by a vehicle traveling at 40 MPH has an 85% chance of being killed, compared to a 40% fatality rate when the vehicle is traveling at 30 MPH⁶; and

WHEREAS, higher speeds make it harder for drivers to react: At 45 MPH, a driver requires about 360 feet to perceive a hazard and stop, compared to just 200 feet at 30 MPH; this extended stopping distance dramatically reduces a driver's ability to avoid a pedestrian, especially in urban environments where unexpected pedestrian

⁵ <https://smartgrowthamerica.org/dangerous-by-design/>

⁶ **AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety** (2011). *Impact Speed and a Pedestrian's Risk of Severe Injury or Death*.

movements are common⁷; and

WHEREAS, slower speeds improve pedestrian visibility: Drivers traveling at lower speeds have a wider field of vision, allowing them to better detect pedestrians, especially in complex, mixed-use areas, studies suggest that even a 5 MPH reduction can significantly improve driver awareness⁸; and

WHEREAS, slower speeds reduce crash severity: The kinetic energy involved in a crash increases exponentially with speed and lowering speed limits not only reduces crash frequency but also diminishes the severity of those that do occur, lowering the risk of life-threatening injuries⁹; and

WHEREAS, other cities are seeing success from reduced speed limits: Cities that have implemented speed reductions, such as New York City's Vision Zero initiative, have seen a significant drop in pedestrian fatalities; for instance, NYC saw a 22% decrease in pedestrian fatalities after lowering speed limits from 30 MPH to 25 MPH¹⁰; and

WHEREAS, the majority of pedestrian fatalities in 2024 have taken place on Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (AKDOT&PF) controlled roads with at least 4 lanes and speeds of 45 miles per hour; and

WHEREAS, "Pedestrian crashes are 100 percent preventable," said AKDOT&PF Commissioner Ryan Anderson in October 2023, and "We need to drive these crashes to zero by working together."¹¹; and

WHEREAS, the Municipal Traffic Engineer has the authority to lower speed limits when special hazards exist with respect to pedestrians or other traffic or by reason of weather or street conditions pursuant to AMC chapter 9.26; and

WHEREAS, changing light and weather conditions in August and persisting throughout the Fall have correlated with an increase in pedestrian deaths; and

WHEREAS, improved lighting has been an intervention deployed by AKDOT&PF in response to pedestrian fatalities along Tudor Road through the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) to provide more visibility of pedestrians from behind the sidewalk into the road; and

WHEREAS, the Municipality of Anchorage adopted a Vision Zero Action Plan in November 2018 and in the 2024 budget the Assembly funded and the Municipality hired a Vision Zero Coordinator to implement a strategy to eliminate all traffic fatalities and severe injuries while increasing safe, healthy, and equitable transportation for everyone; and

⁷ [American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials \(AASHTO\). *A Policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets \(Green Book\)*, Chapter 3, 2018.](#)

⁸ [National Transportation Safety Board \(NTSB\) \(2018\). *Pedestrian Safety Study*.](#)

⁹ [World Health Organization \(WHO\) \(2017\). *Managing Speed: A Road Safety Manual for Decision-Makers and Practitioners*.](#)

¹⁰ [\[nyc.gov/assets/visionzero/downloads/pdf/vision-zero-year-6-report.pdf\]\(https://nyc.gov/assets/visionzero/downloads/pdf/vision-zero-year-6-report.pdf\)](#)

¹¹ [<https://dot.alaska.gov/comm/pressbox/arch2023/PR23-0030.shtml>](#)

1 **WHEREAS**, since 2022, the Anchorage Assembly has advocated for Urban Safety
2 Corridors that would allow for the temporary reduction of speed paired with
3 enforcement and education to respond to dangerous road conditions; to date
4 AKDOT&PF has not completed its statewide manual to allow for such
5 implementation within the Municipality of Anchorage's urban environment; and
6

7 **WHEREAS**, the Mayor may issue an emergency proclamation where a civil or public
8 health emergency exists, AMC 3.80.030-.040; and
9

10 **WHEREAS**, Sacramento is considering a declared emergency in response to
11 pedestrian deaths¹²; and
12

13 **WHEREAS**, at the most recent AMATS Policy Committee meeting on September
14 19, 2024, AKDOT&PF represented that in response to the pedestrian fatalities it
15 would be working on a plan of action, but that it will take a couple of months before
16 that is complete;
17

18 **NOW, THEREFORE, THE ANCHORAGE ASSEMBLY RESOLVES:**
19

20 **Section 1.** To call upon the Municipality of Anchorage and the State of Alaska to
21 take action in response to pedestrian deaths and to report the specific actions back
22 to the Assembly no later than the next regular Assembly meeting on October 8,
23 2024.
24

25 Such actions of the Municipality of Anchorage and the State of Alaska may include,
26 but are not limited to:
27

- 28 A. Immediately installing improved lighting previously used by the HSIP
29 program along corridors where pedestrian fatalities have occurred or
30 those with similar defining characteristics;
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- 32 B. Lowering speed limits by at least 10 miles per hour, not to exceed 35
33 miles per hour, on corridors where fatalities have occurred or those
34 with the same defining characteristics and dedicate resources to
35 increased enforcement of speed along these corridors; and
36
- 37 C. Producing a public education campaign about the intersection of
38 pedestrian safety, motor vehicle speed, and road conditions.
39
- 40 **D. Increasing enforcement of traffic violations along identified**
41 **corridors (AMC 9.16 Rules of the Road) and of pedestrian use**
42 **of due care when using the roadway (Pedestrian Rights and**
43 **Duties, AMC chapter 9.20 and 13 A.A.C. Chapter 2).**
44

45 **Section 2.** That it hereby declares October "Pedestrian Safety Month" annually and
46 resolves to work with the Municipality of Anchorage and the State of Alaska to

¹² <https://cal.streetsblog.org/2024/09/18/sacramento-city-council-may-declare-emergency-over-traffic-safety>

1 educate the public about pedestrian safety and specific strategies to reduce the
2 likelihood of pedestrian deaths.

3
4 **Section 3. The Assembly urges prioritization of short- and long-term**
5 **changes to road design and operations that will encourage drivers to reduce**
6 **speed and use the road safely, including changes to traffic signal timing,**
7 **“road diet” strategies such as narrowing and removing travel lanes, and other**
8 **design interventions that increase safety for all road users.**
9

10
11 PASSED AND APPROVED by the Anchorage Assembly this 24th day of
12 September, 2024.
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16
17 _____
Chair

18 ATTEST:
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21 

22 _____
23 Municipal Clerk