

2016 Portland Traffic Safety Report

May 2017

visionzeroportland.com



PBOT
PORTLAND BUREAU OF TRANSPORTATION

Contents

Introduction	3
Recent trends.....	4
Key contributing factors	6
Recent trends: by mode	8
Recent trends: by location	12
Key safety initiatives.....	13
How we gauge our progress.....	15
About crash data	16

Introduction

One death on our city streets is one too many

Portland families deserve safe streets on which to walk, bike, use mobility devices, access transit, and drive. PBOT is working to eliminate traffic-related deaths and serious injuries by 2025 through its Vision Zero Action Plan, available at www.visionzeroportland.com.

PBOT views every life saved and every serious injury prevented in pursuit of this goal as a victory.

City of Portland contact

Dana Dickman, Safety Section Manager, Active Transportation & Safety Division
dana.dickman@portlandoregon.gov
503-823-5785

Recent trends

Between 1986 and 2000, it became far less likely that Portland residents would be seriously injured or killed in a traffic crash. During this period, Portland’s trend was much more positive than the country as a whole.

In more recent years, Portland has been losing ground. Since 2010, the likelihood of a serious injury or a death has increased in Portland. In conjunction with the local increases, 2015 and 2016 saw the largest two-year national increase in traffic deaths in 53 years. This trend underscores the need for Vision Zero—we must be aggressively proactive in improving the safety of our streets.

Traffic deaths
per 100,000 people

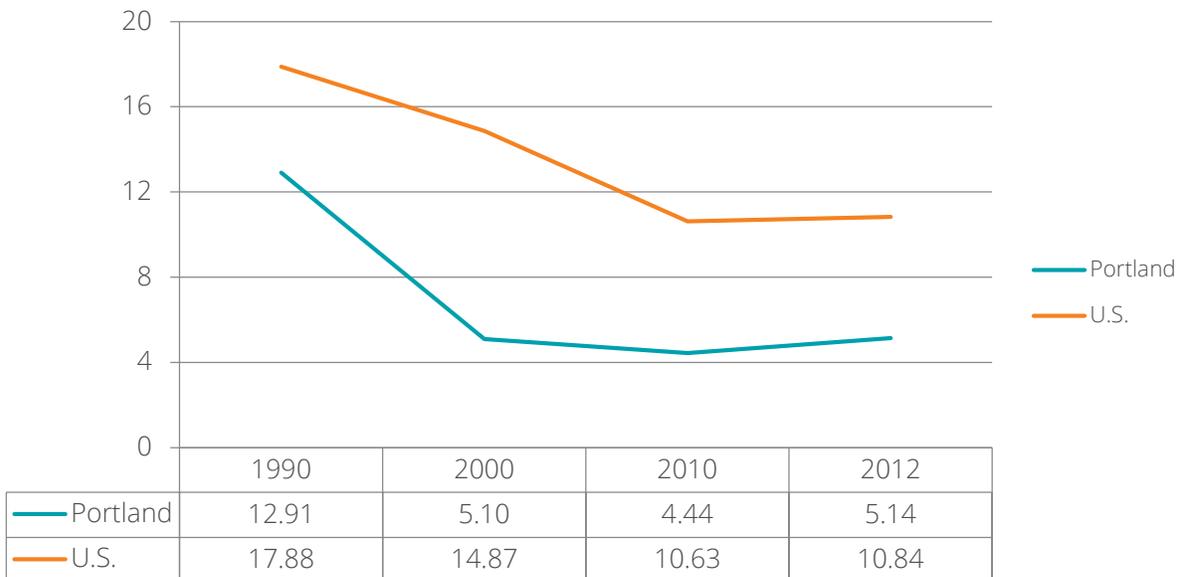


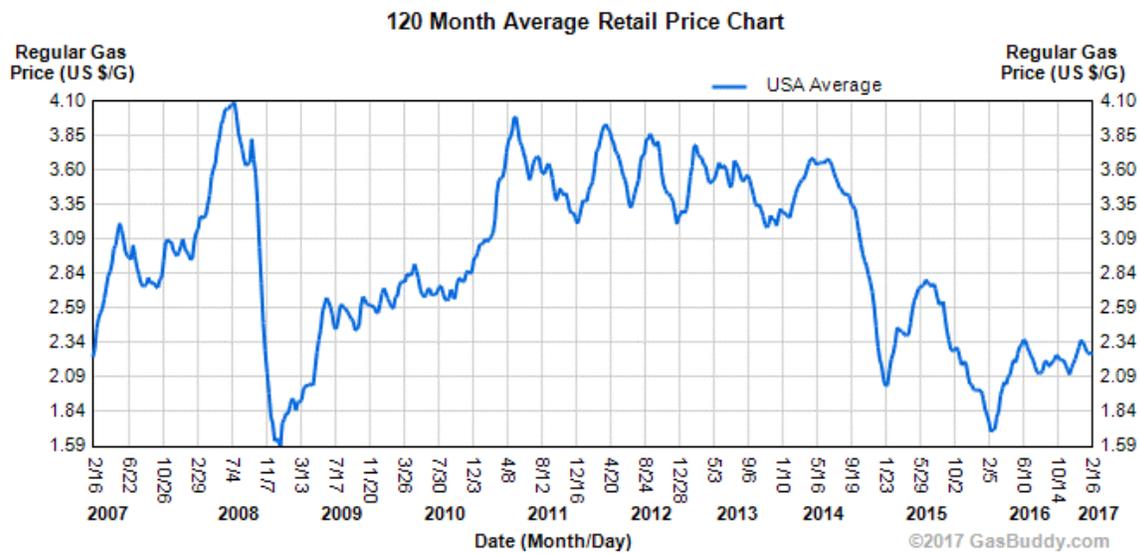
Figure 1 Traffic deaths per 100,000 residents

Source: US Census, Federal Highway Administration

During 2016, traffic deaths included three teenagers between the age of 15 and 17. Fifteen-year-old Fallon Smart was killed by a person driving more than 70 MPH down the center turn lane on SE Hawthorne Blvd. 16-year-old Samuel Chiriac died when the person driving the car he was in attempted to pass another person driving in a sharp curve and departed the street. A person driving while drunk killed 17-year-old Austin Hrynko as he rode his bicycle on a residential street.

Another important national trend relates to the decrease in prices of gas. Research indicates a direct correlation between lower gas prices and larger numbers traffic deaths.¹ These findings correlate with Portland’s experience. For example, in 2008, there was a significant increase in gasoline prices. Also in 2008, there were the fewest traffic deaths of any year on record. Local records have data since 1925. 2015 and 2016 saw the longest period of low gas prices in a decade and the largest national increases in traffic deaths in more than 50 years.

The correlation of low gas prices with increases in traffic deaths is present because people tend to drive more when gas is less expensive. In addition, people tend to focus less on gas saving techniques such as driving more slowly. Low gas prices have many societal benefits, but effects on traffic safety is one of the key concerns that they present.



¹ landdevelopability.org/ChiWebPublications/Chi%20et%20al%202015_AJPH_gasoline%20price%20and%20traffic%20safety.pdf

Key contributing factors

Personal behavior choices were a common thread in all 44 traffic deaths in 2016. 55% of deaths involved intoxication by at least one party, 32% involved excessive speed, and 14% involved hit and run.

DUII

In 2016, 24 of 44 traffic deaths were listed as involving at least one person who was under the influence of intoxicants. This means that at least 55% of deadly traffic crashes involved at least one person who was under the influence of intoxicants. According to Portland Police, the actual percentage of DUII involvement may be higher because intoxication is one reason that people driving leave the scene of serious crashes. The resulting hit and run investigation may locate the person who was driving when they are no longer intoxicated, which can lead to under-reporting of DUII involvement.

- 13 of 24 DUII crashes involved only alcohol
- 6 of 24 DUII crashes involved only THC, including the use of concentrated THC products
- 6 of 24 DUII crashes involved the victim's intoxication
- 2 of 24 DUII crashes involved both THC and alcohol
- 2 of 24 DUII crashes involved methamphetamines
- 1 of 24 DUII crashes involved multiple legal and illicit drugs

Speed

Speed is a significant factor in crash severity. About 80% of Portland's traffic deaths and serious injuries occur on just 19% of our streets that are posted at 30 MPH or higher. A person is 25 times more likely to be killed on a Portland street posted at 35 MPH or higher compared to a street posted at 25 MPH or slower, on a per-mile-of-street basis.

Street and lane departure

Street and lane departures occur when a person driving does not maintain vehicle position within a lane and either crosses into oncoming traffic or drives off a street into a tree, utility pole, down a bank, or into a body of water. Street and lane departures result in 40% of traffic deaths in Portland. These departures often relate to a combination of factors such as speeding, distraction, and DUII.

Low-light conditions

Portland has many days that include dark or low-light conditions for long hours. Data shows that 73% of Portland traffic deaths involving people walking occur during low-light and dark conditions. It is critical that people walking and driving operate with care in low-light conditions and that people walking take reasonable steps to be visible as the City works to provide adequate lighting in high-conflict traffic conditions.

Distractions

Distraction remains an important safety factor for traffic safety in Portland. Several deadly crashes this year involved a person driving who, just prior to a crash, was distracted with amenities in the car, activities in their surroundings, or other factors that took their attention from the street in front of them.

However, it is noteworthy that in 2016, Police investigations did not cite the use of cell phones as a factor in any deadly crashes for the year. Police investigations include questions to the person driving about cell phone use, examination of the cell phone on scene, and examination of the cell phone in the regional FBI lab. There are some outstanding cases due to the work load at the FBI lab. However, to date none have shown cell phone use during or just prior to the crash and the outstanding cases are not expected to return a positive result for cell phone use.

Recent trends: by mode

In 2016, 44 people died in traffic crashes in Portland. This was the most total traffic deaths of any year since 2003. The same number of people in cars and trucks were killed in traffic crashes in 2015 and 2016, while people on motorcycles, walking and riding bicycles died in greater numbers in 2016 compared to 2015. The 44 deaths involved:

- 20 people in cars or trucks
- 6 people on motorcycles
- 13 people walking
- 5 people riding bicycles

People in motor vehicles

There were 20 deadly crashes that took the lives of people in cars and trucks. These crashes were characterized by DUII, excessive speed, and inattention issues. Some of these deaths may have been precipitated by a debilitating medical event prior to the crash.

People riding motorcycles

There were 5 motorcycle deaths in 2016. All of these deaths involved either excessive speed, DUII or both on the part of the motorcycle rider and in one case the at-fault person driving in the crash. Speed and intoxication are a long-term trend associated with people who die while riding motorcycles; in the past decade, more than 75% of deaths of people riding motorcycles involved DUII.

People walking

There were 13 people who died while walking on Portland's streets in 2016. As with other modes, intoxication on the part of the person driving or walking, excessive speed, and inattention were primary factors in deaths of people walking.

Of note were the 4 people walking who died while crossing an interstate freeway. It is possible that suicide was a factor in some of these crashes. While suicides are not considered traffic deaths, the event will not be classified as a suicide without specific evidence about the intent of the person walking involved.

People biking

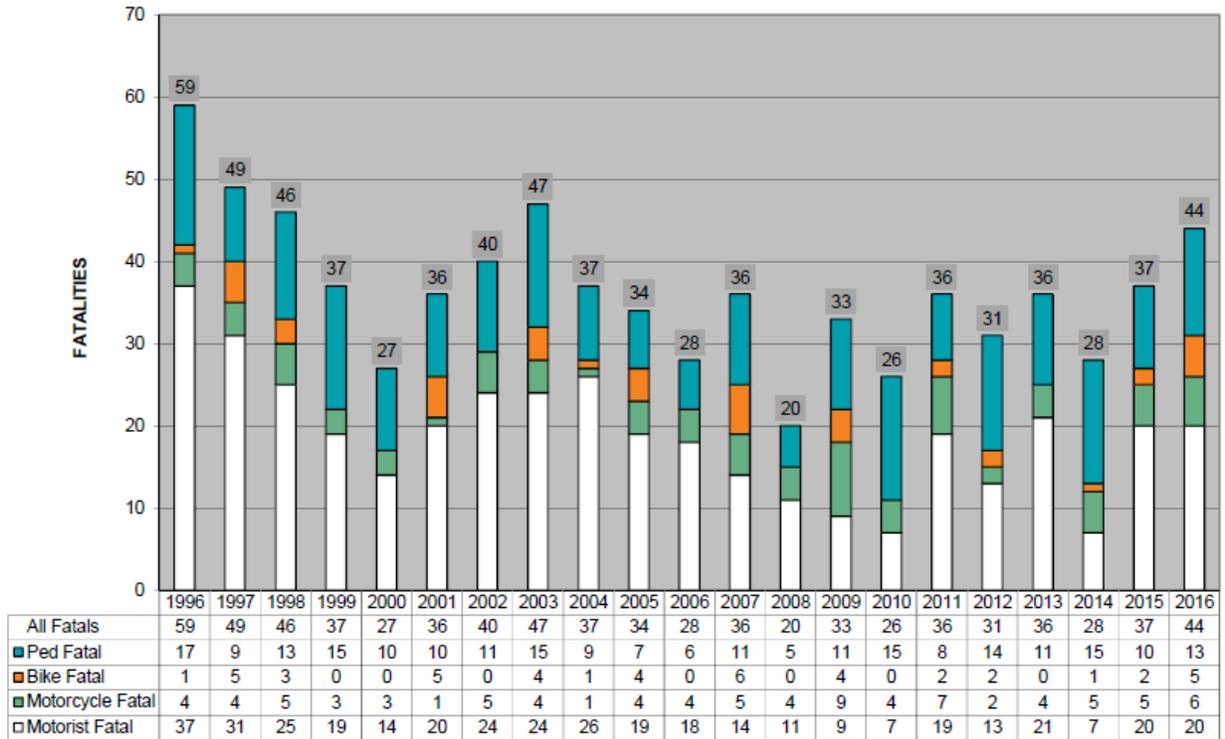
A total of 5 people died while biking in Portland in 2016, a near-record number. The largest number of deaths involving people biking occurred in 2007 when 6 people were killed while riding their bicycle. In 2016, five people died while biking; of these, two were cases where there was a lack of due care on the part of the person driving or biking. One was a crash where a person driving a large truck turned right and collided with a person riding on a bike. Two were DUII crashes. The DUII crashes resulted in the death of a 17-year-old man who was riding his bicycle on a quiet residential street in East Portland and a 77-year-old man out for a ride in Southwest Portland. In both cases, the people driving had a history of DUII convictions.

Complete list: 2016 Portland traffic deaths

Date	Mode	Crash location	First name	Last name	Age
1/12	Walking	SE Division & 156th Ave	Francis	Weaver	84
1/17	Walking	I-5 & SW Hood Ave	Jaweed	Rehman	58
1/23	Motorcycle	NE Airport Way & 145th	Nick	Chernyavskiy	20
2/4	Driving	SE Mt Scott & 104th	Ronnie	Davis	45
2/13	Driving	NE Halsey & 157th	Peter	Gefre	26
2/18	Driving	NE Marine Dr & 159th	Weldu	Misgna	38
3/6	Driving	NE Glisan & 139th	Alexander	Keppinger	26
3/18	Walking	NE Glisan & 117th	Amber	Lapine	34
3/19	Biking	SE Center & 142nd	Austin	Hrynko	17
3/19	Walking	NE Cully & Mason	Patrick	Curry, Sr	58
3/26	Walking	I-5 & Lombard	Apolinar	Montez	25
3/28	Driving	SE McLoughlin & Harold	Micahel	Jose	26
3/31	Motorcycle	SE Powell & 48th	James	Ritchie	37
4/2	Driving	SE Johnson Creek & 37th	Gyula	Hatos	54
4/5	Motorcycle	I-5 Morrison Bridge on-ramp	Sean	Leichner	48
4/16	Motorcycle	SE 92nd & Crystal Springs	Raymond	Redfin	53
4/18	Walking	SE 82nd & Davis	Michael	McBurney	45
4/22	Driving	SE Holgate & 92nd	Thomas	Swan	49
4/24	Driving	SE Foster & 134th	John	Ritter	47
4/26	Driving	7800 NE Columbia	James	Lambert	94
5/12	Driving	3100 N Greeley	Troy	Adamson	51
5/30	Biking	6300 SW Multnomah	Andrzej	Kurkowski	77
6/5	Driving	I-5 S @ Janzen Beach	Benjamin	King	44
7/2	Motorcycle	SE 82nd & Schiller	Aaron	Rufener	45
7/9	Driving	N Rosa Parks & Delaware	Diana	Miller-Dixon	58

Date	Mode	Crash location	First name	Last name	Age
7/30	Biking	SE Flavel & 82nd	Lydia	Johnson	25
8/5	Biking	SE 112th & Mt. Scott BLVD	Karla	DeBaillie	49
8/5	Driving	NE 82nd & Webster	James	Duston	69
8/8	Walking	HWY 26 east of tunnel	unknown	unknown	31
8/12	Motorcycle	NE Lloyd & 7th	Jonathan	Albee	24
8/30	Walking	SE Hawthorne & 43rd	Fallon	Smart	15
9/4	Walking	SE Division & 124th	Damon	Burton	61
10/13	Driving	SE Division & 139th	Robin Marie	Parks	35
10/17	Driving	SE Holgate & 118th	Jesus	Cortez-Espino	29
10/29	Biking	St Johns Bridge & NW Bridge Avenue	Mitchell	York	55
11/10	Walking	HWY 26 at tunnel	Christopher Brian	Rea	53
11/25	Walking	SE Stark & 160th	Tony	Joy	75
11/30	Driving	N Basin & Emerson	Kyle Andrew	Cline	47
12/7	Walking	SE Division & 156th Ave	Myit	Oo	51
12/7	Walking	SE Division & 87th	Rohgzhao	Zhang	65
12/10	Driving	NE Columbia & 80th	Zachary	Nold	26
12/24	Driving	NE MLK & Alberta	Jeanne	Lincoln	88
12/25	Driving	SE Mt Scott & 103rd	Samuel	Chiriac	16
12/26	Driving	I-405 NB to Kirby Ave offramp	Maurice	Starks	30

TRAFFIC FATALITIES IN PORTLAND
by mode of travel
1996-2016



Recent trends: by location

High Crash Network

One of Portland's most significant transportation safety lessons learned in the last decade has been the relationship between arterial streets and crashes. The majority of serious crashes in the Portland area occur on arterial streets. In the Portland Metro region, you are 4.3 times more likely to get in a serious crash on an urban arterial street that runs through the city than on a highway, such as I-5, I-205 or I-84. The Portland Bureau of Transportation has designated the worst of these arterial streets as part of a High Crash Network. These 30 streets, representing just 8 percent of Portland's street network, were the site of 57 percent of traffic deaths in 2016.

East Portland

East Portland, including all crashes on or east of 82nd Ave, is bisected by 15 of Portland's 30 High Crash Network streets. In 2016, East Portland had 24 of the 44 Portland traffic deaths. These deaths involved 11 people in cars or trucks, 7 people walking, 3 people riding motorcycles, and 3 people riding bicycles.

Key safety initiatives

PBOT has several safety initiatives underway in response to these safety trends, with Vision Zero being the overarching framework.

Vision Zero

Vision Zero is Portland's goal to eliminate deaths and serious injuries by 2025. The Vision Zero Action Plan, adopted by Portland City Council in December 2016, identifies 32 actions Portland will take to meet this goal. Learn more at www.visionzeroportland.com. Vision Zero is also one of six major goals in PBOT's Portland Progress II, a near-term work plan for the bureau.

Crossing safety

Safety for people walking and using mobility devices is a high priority for PBOT, especially on arterial streets. As most deaths involving people walking occur when people are crossing a street, PBOT is focused on improving crossing safety. With the help of federal grants, state funds, and local partnerships the Bureau is rolling out a significant number of crosswalk improvements.

Speed limits

The relationship between speed and deadly and serious crashes is well established. As speeds increase, so too do crash rates. Higher driving speeds mean that people travel farther down a street before they are able to hit the brakes. Once people engage the brakes, faster speeds result in greater distance required to bring a vehicle to a stop. Once vehicle speeds exceed 35 MPH, people walking struck by a car are more likely to die than survive. For this reason, PBOT is working to align the posted speed limits of our streets with the potential conflicts on them. We are pursuing requests to the Oregon Department of Transportation's Speed Control Board to lower posted speeds on local streets, individually and through an administrative process.

Speed enforcement

Posted speed limits alone are not enough to control speeding on our streets. Enforcement is a critical component to the equation. PBOT works closely with Portland Police to find

ways to most efficiently enforce traffic laws. To this end, the City of Portland was given legislative authority, in 2015, to use speed safety cameras to enforce speed limits on our High Crash Network streets. These cameras enforce speed limits on our most dangerous streets 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The system uses signage to help people driving notice that the streets are photo enforced and to show both the posted speed limit and people's current rate of speed. We want people driving to know the streets where speeds are photo enforced, so that they drive the posted speed.

How we gauge our progress

PBOT measures our safety progress on safety rates compared to population. We do this because it answers the question, "Given the way we live our lives, what's the likelihood that one of these tragedies could happen to me, a family member, neighbor, or friend?" Many communities still measure safety performance based on the miles driven in the city. Measures that relate to miles driven can mask serious safety issues as driving increases. Vision Zero holds that every serious injury and death is unacceptable. As such, we should measure the real impact on people instead of a measure based on how much we drive.

About crash data

Every day, there are more than 20 million miles travelled in the City of Portland by motor vehicle, motorcycle, bicycle, mobility devices, and walking. This translates into hundreds of millions of human interactions each day. Portland uses crash data from two main sources, the Oregon Department of Transportation and the Portland Police Bureau. The official crash record for the State of Oregon is compiled by the Oregon Department of Transportation. There are typically between 10,000 and 12,000 reported crashes in Portland each year. Portland receives the complete official crash record approximately ten months after the end of the year reported. For example, 2013 crash data was made available in November of 2014. This official record is made of two parts, self-reported crashes and police crash investigations.

In Oregon, crash participants are required to submit the Oregon Accident and Insurance Report form if the event involves direct contact with a motor vehicle and there is an injury or at least \$1,500 in property damage. These forms are the source for a large majority of the crashes in the official record. The second source are police crash investigations. Due to resource constraints, only the most serious crashes are investigated by police. Portland Police will investigate a crash involving a person walking or biking if that vulnerable traveler is transported in an ambulance. If there is not a vulnerable traveler involved, they will investigate a crash if a crash participant is entered into the trauma system by an emergency responder while on-scene.

For data on crashes resulting in deaths, PBOT uses information provided by the Portland Police Bureau. Using Police data allows for more up-to-date information about traffic deaths.

For national comparisons, PBOT uses data from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). The FHWA compiles records from official crash records from around the nation. The national record has a longer lag between the end of the reported year and when data is available. As of this report, national death and injury data is available through 2012.

<https://www.nhtsa.gov/staticfiles/nti/pdf/811597.pdf> - Pedal Application Errors, NHTSA

In compliance with Civil Rights laws, it is the policy of the City of Portland that no person shall be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination in any City program, service, or activity on the grounds of race, color, national origin, or disability. To help ensure equal access to City programs, services, and activities, the City of Portland reasonably provides: translation and interpretation services, modifications, accommodations, auxiliary aides and services, and alternative format. For these services, complaints, and additional information, contact 503-823-5185, use City TTY 503-823-6868, or use Oregon Relay Service: 711.