

# SAVING LIVES WITH SAFE STREETS

Vision Zero Traffic Crash Report 2021



**PBOT**  
PORTLAND BUREAU OF TRANSPORTATION

[visionzeroportland.com](http://visionzeroportland.com)

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# Portland Traffic Crash Report (2021)

In 2021, 63 people died in traffic crashes in Portland, the highest number of traffic deaths in any year since 1990.

Some of these deaths feel hauntingly familiar, as they follow patterns and trends from before the pandemic. Others feel different because the Covid-19 pandemic, and its tremendous impact on American life, is also a contributing factor to the rise in traffic deaths. This is a new and unexpected circumstance requiring our focus and attention.

The Portland Bureau of Transportation (PBOT) and its Vision Zero program aims to eliminate both traffic deaths and serious injuries in the city.

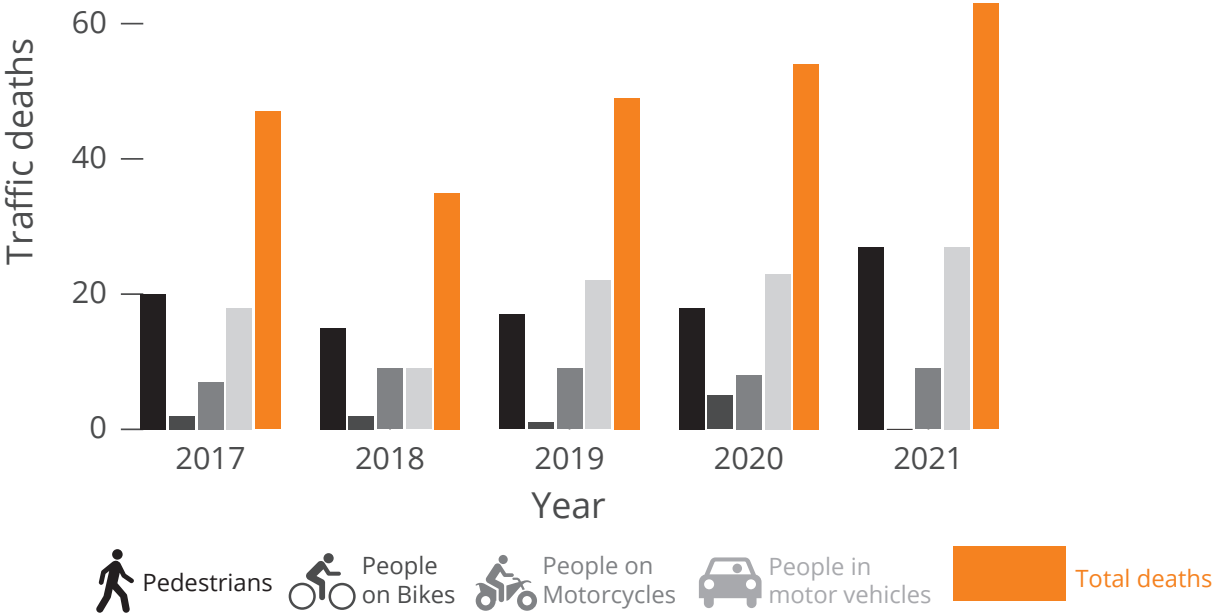
In Figure 1 (below) we've summarized traffic deaths by travel mode in the last five

years. Figure 2 provides the most recent data available on traffic deaths and serious injuries. Figure 3 shows the traffic death rate in Portland relative to the U.S. rate since 1990.

A "serious injury" is defined by the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) as "a non-fatal injury that prevents the injured person from walking, driving, or normally continuing the activities the person was capable of performing before the injury occurred."

Finalized data from 2017-2019 was provided by ODOT. Preliminary data for 2020-2021 comes from the Portland Police Bureau. No data is available yet on serious injuries from 2020-2021.

## Traffic deaths in Portland by travel option, 2017-2021



**Figure 1: Portland traffic deaths by travel option, 2017-2021**

Data: Portland Police Bureau (2020-2021), ODOT (2017-2019)

## Latest data for traffic deaths and serious injuries in Portland by travel option

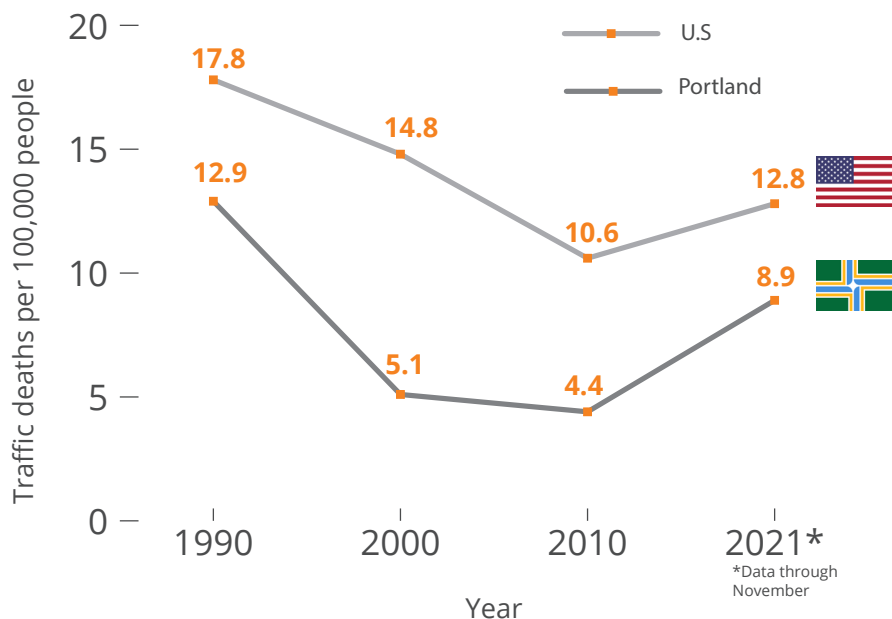
	Deaths			Serious injuries		
	2019	2020	2021	2017	2018	2019
<b>Pedestrians*</b>	17	18	27	49	32	35
<b>People in motor vehicles (including passengers)</b>	22	23	27	189	150	201
<b>People on bikes</b>	1	5	0	12	15	8
<b>People on motorcycles</b>	9	8	9	37	44	43
<b>People on transit</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	49	54	63	287	241	287

**Figure 2: Recent traffic deaths and serious injuries, by year**

Data: Portland Police Bureau (2020-2021), ODOT (2017-2019)

\*Includes people walking, using mobility devices, riding skateboards, and e-scooters.

## Traffic death rates in Portland relative to U.S., 1990-2021



**Figure 3: Traffic deaths per 100,000 people in the U.S. and Portland, 1990-2020**

Traffic deaths have increased nationwide and in Portland since 2010. National data for 2021 is available only through November.

Data: U.S. Census population estimates for 2020; National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and National Safety Council; Portland Police Bureau (2020-2021)

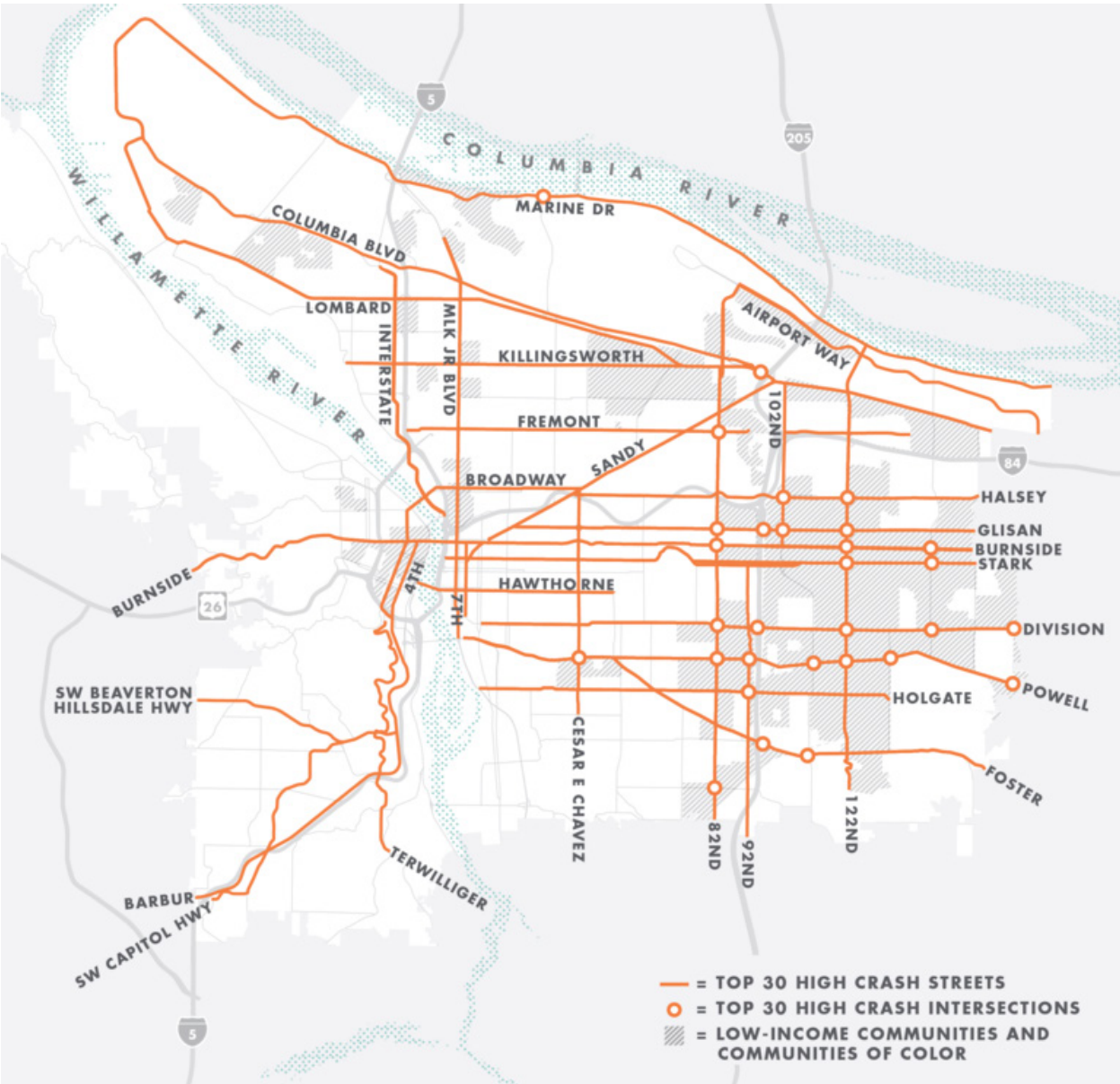
# High Crash Network Streets and Intersections

Sixty percent of deadly crashes in 2021 occurred on eight percent of streets in Portland. The High Crash Network comprises the 30 deadliest streets and intersections, based on crash data.

Equity Matrix score higher than 7, which indicate locations with relatively high proportions of individuals with these characteristics based on 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.

“Low-income communities and communities of color” refers to locations with an PBOT

More on the Equity Matrix can be found at: [What is the PBOT Equity Matrix?](https://www.pdot.gov/equity-matrix/)



**Figure 4: High crash streets and intersections in Portland**

An interactive map of this network and crashes is available at [map.visionzeroportland.com](https://map.visionzeroportland.com).

# People who died in traffic crashes in Portland in 2021



**Figure 5: People who died in traffic crashes in Portland in 2021**

The first names of traffic death victims and approximate location where these 63 deaths occurred on Portland streets. The 63 deaths illustrated here are based on preliminary data and subject to change. In addition to the names here, nine others died in crashes which are excluded under national reporting criteria. See “How crash data works” below for details.

Data: Portland Police Bureau

**The table below has detailed information on the 63 people who died in traffic crashes in Portland in 2021 as well as nine others who died under circumstances excluded from our reporting criteria.** Median age of traffic deaths in 2021 was 43 and ranged from 18-93. Of these deaths, 44 were male, 19 female. Additionally, 32 traffic deaths occurred on state-owned roads, including 12 on freeways.

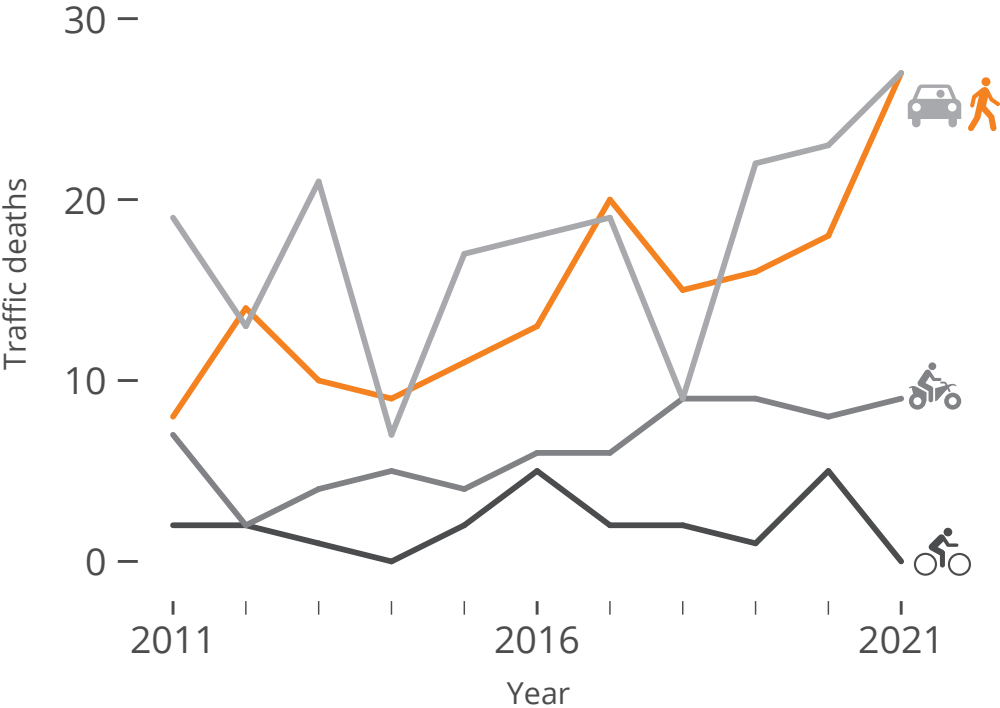
<b>Date</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Travel type</b>	<b>Approximate crash location</b>
1/1	Daniel Martinez-Vidals	19	Motor Vehicle	SE Division St & 112th Ave
1/9	Andrew Lucero	49	Pedestrian	N Denver Ave at Columbia Blvd
1/10	Charisa White	45	Motor Vehicle	SE Powell Blvd & 108th Ave
1/24	Eddie Larson	48	Motor Vehicle	7000 block of NE Marine Dr
1/28	Charles Patton	43	Motor Vehicle	N Columbia Blvd & Vancouver St
2/6	Joshua Stanley	34	Pedestrian	SE McLoughlin Blvd at Franklin St
2/6	Karen McClure	60	Pedestrian	SE Stark St & 136th Ave
2/7	Douglas Rosling II	40	Motor Vehicle	2700 block of NW Yeon St
2/8	Kenna Butchek	35	Motor Vehicle	5000 block of N Columbia Blvd
2/14	Antonio Amaro-Lopez	57	Motor Vehicle	Southbound I-205, Glenn Jackson Bridge
2/28	Jose Contreras	22	Motor Vehicle	SW Barbur Blvd & Hooker St
3/8	Morise Smith	21	Motor Vehicle	Northbound I-205, Glenn Jackson Bridge
3/8	Cecilia Hao	70	Motor Vehicle	Northbound I-205, Glenn Jackson Bridge
3/25	Inna Bosovik	36	Motor Vehicle	Eastbound I-84 near 82nd Ave
3/25	Susan Sturdavant	65	Motor Vehicle	Eastbound I-84 near 82nd Ave
3/31	Kfir Hen	47	Motorcycle	SE Barbara Welch Rd near 144th Ave
4/10	Stephen Looser	66	Pedestrian	NE 82nd Ave & Alberta St
4/11	Faustino Jurado	47	Pedestrian	NE 122nd Ave & Halsey St
4/17	John Thomas	58	Motor Vehicle	Northbound I-5 at N Greely Ave
4/17	Roy Yotty	57	Motor Vehicle	Northbound I-5 at N Greely Ave
4/19	Eddy Kolb	23	Motorcycle	N Marine Dr near Bybee Lake Rd
4/24	Anthony Tolliver	30	Pedestrian	NE 82nd Ave & Alberta St
4/29	Jamie Pallviny-Brown	43	Motor Vehicle	5100 block NE Cornfoot Rd
5/6	David Dentler	25	Motor Vehicle	NE Killingsworth St & Sandy Blvd
5/8	Meagann McComb	32	Pedestrian	NE Sandy Blvd & 149th Ave
6/14	Natalie Gray	20	Pedestrian	NE Marine Dr & 13th Ave
6/27	Jeremy Hudson	46	Motor Vehicle	NE Halsey St & 148th Ave
6/30	Delbert Downing	51	Motor Vehicle	NE Martin Luther King Jr Blvd & Columbia Blvd
7/1	Michael Gazeley-Romney	31	Motorcycle	NE Sandy Blvd & 162nd Ave
7/2	Joseph Samuel Teach	47	Motorcycle	SE Foster Rd & 102nd Ave
7/5	Michael Bute	34	Pedestrian	10000 block of NE 33rd Ave
7/5	Kim Chung	69	Motor Vehicle	SE Powell Blvd & 143rd Ave
7/31	Edgar Pizano	30	Motor Vehicle	NW Glisan St & 14th Ave
8/4	Alice Turowski	93	Motor Vehicle	NE Fremont St & 7th Ave
8/10	Kevin Ford	48	Pedestrian	NE Broadway St & 33rd Ave
8/19	Charles Engblom	44	Motorcycle	Eastbound I-84 near NE 28th Ave
8/22	William Anderson	48	Motorcycle	SE Martin Luther King Jr Blvd & Clay St
8/24	Bonnie Culver	38	Motorcycle	NE 185th Ave & Portal Way
8/28	Knysha Latreace Wesley	24	Motor Vehicle	7900 block of NE Marine Dr
8/28	Gregory James Beuving	50	Motor Vehicle	7900 block of NE Marine Dr

<b>Date</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Travel type</b>	<b>Approximate crash location</b>
9/2	Joseph Jay Reilly	35	Pedestrian	SE McLoughlin Blvd & Holgate Blvd
9/4	Samuel Gene Hambrick	34	Pedestrian	NW St Helens Rd & 63rd Ave
9/9	Douglas Allen Mooney	59	Motorcycle	NE 82nd Ave & Alderwood St
9/11	Austin Boyd	23	Pedestrian	SE César E. Chávez Blvd & Clinton St
9/20	Tai David Ung	29	Pedestrian	Eastbound I-84 near NE 28th Ave
9/29	Aaron Appleby	29	Pedestrian	2600 block of N Marine Dr
10/1	David Randy Lee	65	Pedestrian	5300 block of NE Lombard St
10/1	Ryan Dickenson	34	Pedestrian	SE Powell Blvd & 29th Ave
10/20	Ruby Lee Allen	66	Pedestrian	5300 NW Yeon Ave
10/23	Collin Page	18	Motorcycle	SE Holgate Blvd & 97th Ave
10/30	Tralee Ariel McClain	31	Pedestrian	2800 block of SE Powell Blvd
11/5	Laurie Lawyer	56	Pedestrian	N Going St & Interstate Ave
11/12	Carrie Lynn Simons	37	Pedestrian	Westbound I-84 at NE 122nd Ave
11/15	Jose Romero-Ramirez	52	Pedestrian	300 block of NW 23rd Ave
11/18	Keith Poppert	61	Motor Vehicle	Northbound I-5 near Fremont Bridge
11/20	Robert Joseph Leon	45	Pedestrian	SE 122nd Ave & Tibbetts St
11/24	Seksy Antonio	46	Pedestrian	128000 block of NE Marine Dr
11/24	Corine Buck	46	Motor Vehicle	N Martin Luther King Jr Blvd & Gertz Rd
12/5	Terrence Tombe	27	Pedestrian	Northbound I-205 offramp at SE Powell Blvd
12/16	Jessie Ugelstad	27	Motor Vehicle	N Lombard St & Chautauqua Blvd
12/16	Steven Alcorn Jr	36	Motor Vehicle	N Lombard St & Chautauqua Blvd
12/21	Vivian Gayle Phillips	70	Pedestrian	NE Fremont St & 43rd Ave
12/25	Jaimie Smith	23	Pedestrian	N Interstate Ave & Mississippi Ave
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1/8*	Jesse Strother	73	Motor Vehicle	SE Powell Blvd & 24th Ave
1/15*	Elizabeth Hawes	58	Pedestrian	I-205 at NE Halsey St overpass
1/20*	Mark Auclair	64	Motor Vehicle	NW Nicolai St & 25th Pl
1/25*	Jean Gerich	77	Pedestrian	SE Stark St & 19th Ave
3/19*	**	**	Pedestrian	N Crawford St & Philadelphia Ave
6/5*	John Rutherford	49	Pedestrian	MAX tracks near NE 68th Ave
8/3*	**	**	Pedestrian	Toyota Distribution Center, NE
11/21*	Neri Ramirez-Mendoza	20	Pedestrian	Parking lot, 4400 block of NE 122nd Ave
12/5*	**	**	Motor Vehicle	NE Lombard St & 45th Ave

\*Deaths which are excluded from Portland Vision Zero annual reporting. Factors that exclude these include: deaths that occurred in a parking lot, non-traffic collisions, or acts of suicide. See the next section on "How crash data works" for a full description of traffic death reporting criteria.

\*\*Information unavailable.

# Portland traffic deaths, 2011-2021



**Figure 6. Portland traffic deaths, 2011-2021**  
 Data: ODOT (2011-2019), Portland Police Bureau (2020-2021)

## Portland deadly crash patterns and trends

Since the launch of PBOT’s Vision Zero program in 2015, some trends have endured. Others are more recent and coincide with the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic. The number of traffic deaths in Portland in 2021 was the highest in 30 years.

What were the persistent trends we saw in 2021? Most were related to deaths on the High Crash Network, as well as crashes involving pedestrians and people on bicycles:

- In 2021, 60% of traffic deaths occurred on **Portland’s High Crash Network**, the 8% of Portland streets that account for most deadly crashes (see Figure 4 above). This mirrors the trend for 2017-2020 which saw an average of 60% of deadly crashes occurring on the High Crash Network. The range over that time

- period was 55-67%.
- In 2021, **pedestrians** made up 43% of traffic deaths, which was slightly above the average of 38% for 2017-2020. There was also a dramatic increase in the number of pedestrians who died, from an annual average of 17 for 2017-2020 and 27 in 2021.
- From 2017-2020 there were 10 deaths of **people biking**, ranging from 1-5 per year. No one died bicycling in Portland in 2021.
- **Speed and impairment** continue to be dangerous contributing factors in deadly crashes in Portland. (More information is provided below.)
- **Black and Latinx** community members continue to be over-represented in traffic deaths. (More information is provided below.)



In addition to the tragic and dramatic increase in traffic deaths in 2021, what other trends have we seen more recently?

We saw more crashes that killed pedestrians on industrial land and open space, more deaths of the houseless, more crashes on state facilities (including wrong-way crashes on interstates), and more hit-and-runs:

- **The highest death toll on Portland streets in three decades: 63.** The average over 2017-2020 was 46 traffic deaths per year, ranging from 35 in 2018 to 54 in 2020.
- Seventy percent (or 19 out of 27) of pedestrian deaths were **houseless community members**; and 33 percent (21 out of 63) of all traffic deaths were houseless community members. PBOT has not tracked the housing status of victims in the past, but these numbers in 2021 stood out and represent an alarming pattern we'll track more closely in the future.
- There were 32 traffic deaths (51%) on **state highways** in Portland, including 12 on interstates, compared with an annual average of 17 traffic deaths annually (36%) on all state facilities 2017-2020.
- In 2021, 12 pedestrians died in areas zoned for industrial land or open space, compared with fewer than four on average 2017-2020.
- Deaths from **hit-and-run crashes** more than doubled, with 14 people killed in 2021, compared to an average of 6.3. Nearly all of these deaths, 13 out of 14, were pedestrians.
- Three crashes that killed a total of six people in 2021 involved **vehicles traveling the wrong way on interstate freeways**, which is higher than an average of one or two wrong way-driving traffic deaths per year.

**Speed and impairment** continue to be dangerous contributing factors in deadly crashes in Portland. However, data is limited here because of the high number of hit-and-

runs as well as some fatal crashes still under investigation.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), when average speeds increase 1%, the risk of fatal crashes goes up by 4% and the risk of serious crashes rises by 3%. This is why they recommend urban speed limits should not exceed 50 km/h (approximately 30 mph). But as we know, many streets in Portland have speed limits at or above 30 mph, both on and off the High Crash Network. This year, 49 people (78%) died in crashes on roadways with posted speeds higher than 30 mph.

**Race and ethnicity** information is known for all 63 people who died in traffic crashes in 2021. This year, 17 of these fatalities were identified as Black, Indigenous, or people of color (BIPOC). This accounts for 27% of traffic deaths, slightly lower than city demographics, where approximately 29.4% of residents identify as any race other than white alone or non-Hispanic/Latinx (2019 Census American Community Survey estimates).

However, Portland's Black and Latinx communities were over-represented in these fatalities. Six people killed in traffic crashes were Black. This accounts for 9.5% of 2021 traffic fatalities, compared with the Black population of Portland which is currently 5.8%. The current Latinx population is 9.7%, but seven people—11.1%—who died in traffic crashes were identified as Latinx.

A majority of traffic deaths (76%) occurred in areas of Portland with high Equity Matrix scores (shown in the map on page 3).

## Fatal crash trends nationally

Portland is not alone in seeing a dramatic increase in traffic deaths in 2021.

Full year figures are not available yet, but already traffic deaths increased 18.4% nationally during the first half of 2021 compared to the first half of 2020. These numbers represent the highest number of traffic deaths in the first half of the year since 2006. It also the sharpest increase in any six-month period since the Fatal Analysis Reporting System (FARS) began recording data. From April to June 2021, approximately 11,225 people died in traffic crashes in the U.S., the highest number of fatalities during these months since 1990.

A similar trend is playing out in Oregon. Nearly 600 people have died statewide in traffic crashes according to preliminary data. That is a 15% increase from 2020 and the most traffic fatalities since 1989.

## Portland's response

The Portland Bureau of Transportation (PBOT) remains committed to installing proven safety treatments and expanding our partnerships to address complex new deadly traffic crash patterns. We follow a data-driven, equity-first approach. We make streets safer by protecting pedestrians, slowing speeds, redesigning streets, all while engaging community in this work.

We know that 60% of traffic deaths in the last five years occurred on streets in the High Crash Network. We continue to work with urgency to change the design of these streets in a way that slows travel speeds and protects pedestrians.

We also understand there is no single solution. There are a complex set of social factors that have contributed to the spike in traffic deaths since the onset of the pandemic. This includes lack of shelter, medical care, and social services for houseless people. PBOT's Vision Zero program will expand its partnership with Multnomah County's Public Health Department, the Homelessness Urban Camp Reduction Program, and other services in order to collaborate more closely to make our streets safer for some of Portland's most vulnerable community members.

**If you have questions about the data in this report, or how traffic deaths are tracked and reported, please contact Anamaría Pérez with our Vision Zero team at 503-823-3243 or [anamaria.perez@portlandoregon.gov](mailto:anamaria.perez@portlandoregon.gov). For media inquiries, contact Dylan Rivera at 503-823-3723 (office), 503-577-7534 (cell), or [dylan.rivera@portlandoregon.gov](mailto:dylan.rivera@portlandoregon.gov).**

## Appendix A: How crash data works

The Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) compiles the official crash record for the state using self-reported information and traffic crash investigations. For deadly crash data, PBOT also works directly with the Portland Police Bureau (see diagram).

PBOT uses national traffic crash reporting criteria which excludes people who die under the following circumstances:

- More than 30 days after a crash,
- Intentionally (suicide),
- In an act of homicide (a person intentionally crashes into another person),
- In a crash not involving a motor vehicle,
- From a prior medical event (e.g. a heart attack or drug overdose), or
- In a crash in a parking lot

PBOT excluded nine deaths from crash reporting in 2021 and four deaths in 2020 as a result of these criteria (see bottom of table above). Deaths are also excluded if a medical examiner determines that a person died of causes not directly attributable to a traffic crash, such as suffering a heart attack while driving.

Regardless of reporting criteria, PBOT uses all available data to determine our priorities for where we make safety improvements.