

DES MOINES TRANSPORTATION SAFETY COMMITTEE

SEPTEMBER 10, 2024

AGENDA

Agenda for the Des Moines Transportation Safety Committee scheduled for 7:30 a.m., Tuesday, September 10, 2024, in the Board Room at the Municipal Service Center, 2nd Floor, 1551 E Martin Luther King Jr Parkway.

Transportation Safety Committee Rules and Procedures

1. The Transportation Safety Committee is an advisory body to the City Council.
2. Staff will be given time to present the background on each item.
3. Guests are then allowed to speak, with each speaker allowed a maximum of 5 minutes.
4. All comments are to be germane to the issue under consideration and speakers are to maintain a courteous manner.
5. The audio of this meeting will be recorded.

CALL TO ORDER AND DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM

APPROVING THE AGENDA, AS PRESENTED AND/OR, AS AMENDED.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Approval of August 2024 Minutes

NEW BUSINESS

1. Williams/E 42nd Street Traffic Calming
2. Center Street Traffic Calming
3. Hull Street Traffic Calming
4. 2023 Complete Streets Report

ADJOURNMENT

NEXT MEETING

October 8, 2024 – Regular Meeting

ITEM #1: Williams/E 42nd Street Traffic Calming

BACKGROUND:

Resident along Williams and E 42nd contacted Traffic & Transportation in April 2021 to relate speeding and safety concerns from E University Avenue to Easton Boulevard. The traffic calming process was initiated by Council Member Westergaard. Data collected in June 2021 were within accepted parameters for a 35 mph street. Following a credible speed analysis, the speed limit was lowered to 30 mph in October 2021.

The Traffic Calming Program states that average daily traffic (ADT) volumes should be greater than 500 vehicles per day but less than 4,000 vehicles per day and speed studies should show at least 15% of the vehicles exceeding the posted speed limit by at least 5 miles per hour. Technicians from Traffic & Transportation erected two radar units along the corridor to collect speed & volume data for a 72-hour period in December 2023.

Roadway Characteristics

Speed Limit 35→30 (Oct. 2021)
Right-of-way mostly 60' (50'-70')
Pavement 30'
Corridor Length 1 mile
Land Use Residential, mixed use @ Easton, open space flanking Four Mile Creek
Parking Permitted on west on Williams, on east on E 42nd
Sidewalks Several large gaps, programmed infill on west side of Williams (FY 26/27)

Data Collected

Volume: 3,600-4,000 vpd
Peak Hours: 7/8 AM & 3/4 PM
Average speed: 33 mph
85th percentile: 36-37 mph

This street qualifies for traffic calming.

Staff attended a neighborhood meeting May 14, 2024 to present data, explain and explore possible traffic calming devices, and answer questions. The concept plan was presented and approved at the same meeting. Traffic & Transportation vetted the proposal through Police, Fire, Public Works & DART.

The Williams/E 42nd traffic calming cover letter and concept plan were mailed May 20 to 56 addresses with frontage along Williams Street and E 42nd Street between E University Avenue and Easton Boulevard. Courtesy copies of the letter and concept plan were also sent without a survey card to 17 owners of property that are not owner occupied. 23 survey cards were postmarked to Traffic & Transportation by the June 7 due date. 18 (or 78% of) respondents supported installation of nine speed humps on Williams Street and E 42nd Street. Projects supported by at least 60% of respondents will be considered for implementation through the City of Des Moines Traffic Calming Program.

The next step in the process is to present the project and recommendations to the Transportation Safety Committee for comment and recommendation. If approved, the goal is to install the traffic calming devices during the 2027 construction season.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the Transportation Safety Committee approve this project concept.

ITEM #2: Center Street Traffic Calming

BACKGROUND:

Members of Woodland Heights Organization along Center Street contacted Traffic & Transportation in November 2023 to relate speeding and safety concerns from 28th to 31st. The traffic calming process was initiated by Council Member Mandelbaum. Data was collected in December 2023.

The Traffic Calming Program states that average daily traffic (ADT) volumes should be greater than 500 vehicles per day but less than 4,000 vehicles per day and speed studies should show at least 15% of the vehicles exceeding the posted speed limit by at least 5 miles per hour. Technicians from Traffic & Transportation erected two radar units along the corridor to collect speed & volume data for a 72-hour period in December 2023.

Roadway Characteristics

Speed Limit	25
Right-of-way	60'-64'
Pavement	34'
Corridor Length	¼ mile
Land Use	Residential N, school S
Parking	Permitted on N & S
Sidewalks	Complete along Center

Data Collected

Volume: 1,900-2,000 vpd
Peak Hours: 8 AM & 3 PM
Average speed: 25-27 mph
85 th percentile: 30-32 mph

This street qualifies for traffic calming from 28th to 30th only.

Staff attended a neighborhood meeting June 18, 2024 to present data, explain and explore possible traffic calming devices, and answer questions. The concept plan was presented and approved at the same meeting. Traffic & Transportation vetted the proposal through Police, Fire, Public Works & DART.

The Center Street traffic calming cover letter and concept plan were mailed July 10 to 19 addresses with frontage along Center Street between 28th Street and 31st Street. Courtesy copies of the letter and concept plan were also sent without a survey card to 6 owners of property that are not owner occupied. 8 survey cards were postmarked to Traffic & Transportation by the July 26 due date. 6 (or 75% of) respondents supported installation of three speed humps on Center Street. Projects supported by at least 60% of respondents will be considered for implementation through the City of Des Moines Traffic Calming Program.

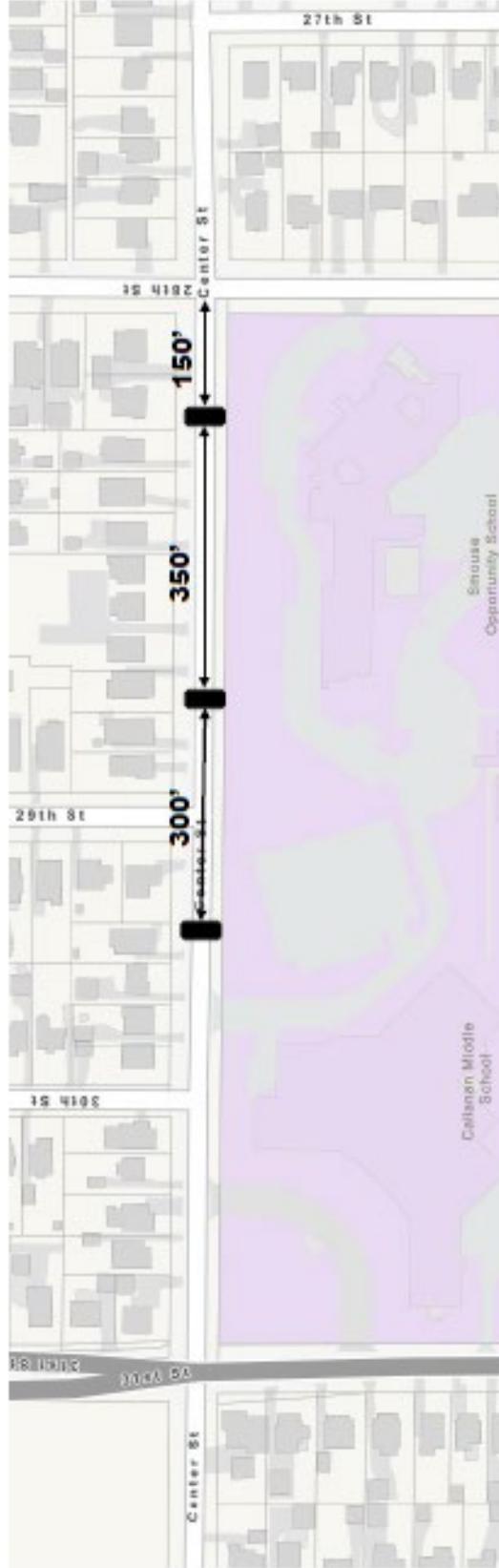
The next step in the process is to present the project and recommendations to the Transportation Safety Committee for comment and recommendation. If approved, the goal is to install the traffic calming devices during the 2027 construction season.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the Transportation Safety Committee approve this project concept.

Center Street Traffic Calming Concept Plan

28th Street to 29th Street = 650'



Proposed
Speed Hump

Dimensions are approximate. Exact locations TBD in the field, to avoid conflicts with driveways and stormwater drainage.



ITEM #3: Hull Street Traffic Calming

BACKGROUND:

Finley Elementary leadership contacted Traffic & Transportation in January 2023 to relate speeding and safety concerns from 2nd to Cornell. The traffic calming process was initiated by Council Member Westergaard. Data was collected from 2nd to Cornell in January 2023 and Cornell to North Union October 2023 (upon request from Council member Westergaard following a crash involving a child further to the east).

The Traffic Calming Program states that average daily traffic (ADT) volumes should be greater than 500 vehicles per day but less than 4,000 vehicles per day and speed studies should show at least 15% of the vehicles exceeding the posted speed limit by at least 5 miles per hour. Technicians from Traffic & Transportation erected four radar units along the corridor to collect speed & volume data for a 72-hour period.

Roadway Characteristics

Speed Limit	25
Right-of-way	50'
Pavement	26'-27'
Corridor Length	½ mile
Land Use	Residential, school, business
Parking	Prohibited N & S
Sidewalks	Gaps on south side west of Findley

Data Collected

Volume: 2,700-3,800 vpd
Peak Hours: 7/8 AM & 3 PM
Average speed: 22-29 mph
85 th percentile: 26-34 mph

This street qualifies for traffic calming, except Oxford to Cornell.

Staff attended a neighborhood meeting July 11, 2023 to present data from 2nd to Cornell, explain and explore possible traffic calming devices, and answer questions. The concept plan for 2nd to North Union was presented and approved by consensus at the July 9, 2024 meeting. Traffic & Transportation vetted the proposal through Police, Fire, Public Works & DART.

The Hull Avenue traffic calming cover letter and concept plan were mailed July 17 to 45 addresses with frontage along Hull Avenue between 2nd Avenue and North Union Street. Courtesy copies of the letter and concept plan were also sent without a survey card to 17 owners of property that are not owner occupied. 10 survey cards were postmarked to Traffic & Transportation by the August 2 due date. 7 (or 70% of) respondents supported installation of six speed humps on Hull Avenue. Projects supported by at least 60% of respondents will be considered for implementation through the City of Des Moines Traffic Calming Program.

The next step in the process is to present the project and recommendations to the Transportation Safety Committee for comment and recommendation. If approved, the goal is to install the traffic calming devices during the 2027 construction season.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the Transportation Safety Committee approve this project concept.

City of Des Moines

2023 Complete Streets Report



INTRODUCTION

The 2023 complete streets report is the 5th annual installment following adoption of the revised Complete Streets Policy in November 2018. With the baseline data established in 2019, this report continues to document trends in the established performance metrics. As with all new efforts, Complete Street policy implementation will take time to reach optimal efficiency.

Policies and procedures established by Complete Streets (CS) and MoveDSM play an increasingly important role in developing project concepts and the way projects are reviewed and received by elected officials and the public. Its efficacy can be measured by its application in 2023.

DATA DASHBOARD

The data dashboard provides a snapshot of CS efforts in 2023 and quantifies Des Moines' progress in attaining the goals laid out in MoveDSM. Several of these objectives will take years, even decades, to accomplish. Annual reports track incremental progress towards accomplishing long-term goals, to:

- Ensure safe and comfortable places for people to walk to schools, transit and commercial areas
- Create an all ages & abilities bicycle network that provides access within reach of all residents
- Promote equity by investing in historically underserved environmental justice neighborhoods
- Implement data-driven solutions that increase safety and network reliability
- Promote mental and physical health through active transportation

Construction Projects Completed in 2023

Several projects were completed in 2023. Some highlights include:

- **Western Ingersoll Sewer Separation Phases 1-3** creates and upgrades critical sanitary sewer infrastructure; adds raised protected bike lane from 35th to 41st (north) and uphill conventional bike lane/downhill sharrows on 35th from Ingersoll to University
- **5th Ave (Cherry to Grand) & Grand Avenue (2nd to 5th) One-Way to Two-Way Conversion** improves vehicular circulation, transit operations and bicycle safety in the heart of downtown
- **University Avenue Rehabilitation** from 31st to 39th, including 5-lane to 3-lane conversion, addition of buffered bike lanes and passive pedestrian crosswalk with median refuge at 35th
- Rehabilitation of **2nd Avenue bridge** over Des Moines River, including space reallocation to accommodate 11' trail on east, connecting Neal Smith and (future) Central Place Levee Trails
- 5-lane to 3-lane conversion of **Ingersoll Avenue** from 14th to MLK, introducing parking to both sides of an evolving commercial and entertainment corridor and creating buffered bike lanes
- **Levee Improvements Phase B** removes & replaces 1,175 LF Meredith Trail to raise levee; grades 5,500 LF for trail from SW 5th to Coleman Bridge
- **Closes Creek Storm Sewer Phase 3** creates critical capacity to eliminate future flooding, eliminates 900 LF sidewalk gaps and reconstructs Franklin with buffered bike lanes
- Update **North Valley Drive Railroad Crossing**, improving safety with raised crosswalk at Walnut Creek Trail crossing and creating safe route to Hanawalt by extending sidewalk to 56th
- **Guthrie Sidepath** from E 21st to Hubbell (including I-235 interchange) creates safe mobility option in an underserved area for recreational or utilitarian trail access
- 3-lane to 2-lane conversion of **SW 11th Avenue** from MLK to DART, adding buffered bike lanes

City of Des Moines

2023 Complete Streets Report

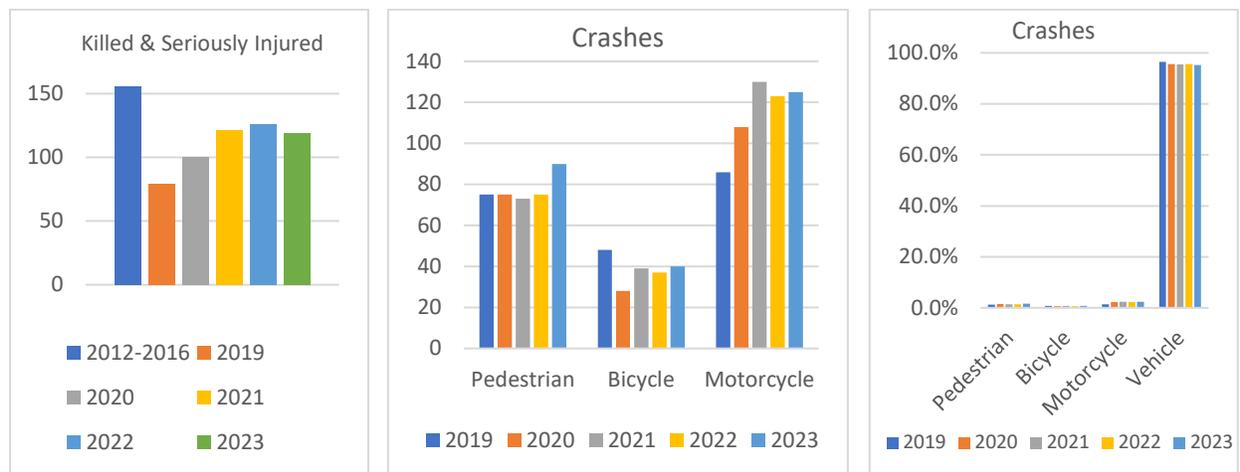
Projects Where Some CS Elements Were Not Implemented

The backlog of legacy projects that were planned and developed before MoveDSM codified *Project Design and Implementation* (MoveDSM, p. 79) is nearly cleared, allowing the CS policy to be implemented more consistently and effectively in 2023. A couple projects completed in 2023 represent missed opportunities:

- 130 LF sidewalk not constructed on E 1st as part of DMPD parking lot construction
- 250 LF sidewalk not constructed on High and 150 LF sidewalk not constructed on 19th as part of Ingersoll Run Outlet Sewer Phase 28 Segment 3

CRASH DATA TRENDS

With crash data documented in CS Reports from 2019-2023, it is possible to see the start of emerging trends. However, five years represents a small data set overall and it is important not to draw conclusions based on this short duration. These trends will continue to evolve over time. The COVID-19 pandemic has left an indelible mark on many sectors, including driving behaviors and safety outcomes.



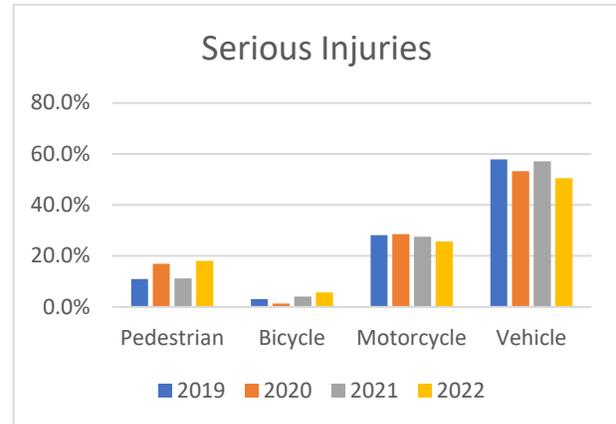
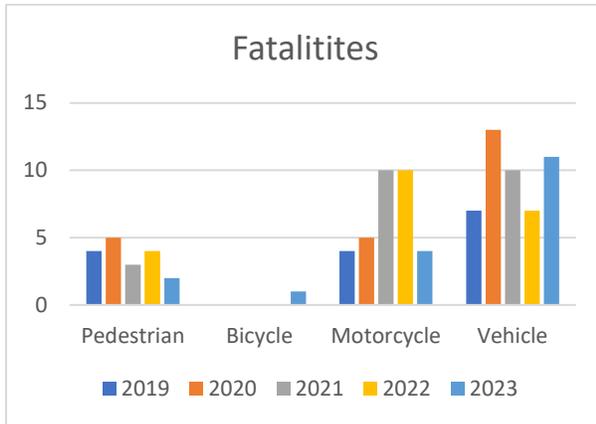
Vehicle crashes consistently represent more than 95% of all crashes. Unfortunately, vulnerable users remain disproportionately represented among those killed or seriously injured in crashes.

MoveDSM analyzed data from a 5-year window from 2012 to 2016. The benchmark established was an average of 156 people killed or seriously injured each year. Recent years have seen much lower totals. Those killed or seriously injured (KSI) rose 2019-2021. KSI crashes fell in 2022-2023. This may signify that Des Moines has crossed the hump of increased crash severity ushered in by the COVID-19 pandemic and is course-correcting on its journey to eliminate all fatal and serious injury crashes by the year 2040 as contemplated in the Vision Zero Transportation Safety Action Plan.

Emerging Crash Trends

- Pedestrian crashes spiked 20% in 2024
- Bicycle crashes have remained level for 3 years
- Motorcycle crashes are trending higher
- Vehicle crashes are trending lower, down 10% over 5 years
- 12 of 18 fatalities occurred on Iowa DOT roadways

City of Des Moines 2023 Complete Streets Report



Other Data Trends

- 16.6% increase in total miles of on- and off-street trails from 2020 to 2023
- Public and private projects have filled 15+ miles of Priority 1 sidewalk gaps in the last 5 years
- FAILURE TO YIELD RIGHT OF WAY: LEFT TURN increased by 15% in 2023 as the major cause of crashes
- The percentage of calls where the first unit arrives within 4 minutes continues to rise – 71.6% in 2019 to 75.1% in 2023 – even as emergent call and total calls continue to increase
- Traffic calming inquiries have risen consistently from 14 in 2019 to 44 in 2023

DART Benches

The City of Des Moines contract with Creative Outdoor Advertising of America (COAA) for bus benches, bench pads and related advertising services in the City right-of-way ended on September 30, 2022. 55 benches were removed from bus stops and an additional 52 benches were removed in previous years or where there is no longer a stop.

Des Moines Area Regional Transit Authority (DART) will continue to provide bus stop amenities by installing replacement benches at some of the locations where the COAA benches were removed.

The City of Des Moines approved a [license agreement](#) with DART in April 2023 for the placement of bus benches and in some locations, trash receptacles and concrete pads. New DART benches were placed at [21 locations](#).



Creative Outdoor Advertising Bench



New DART Bench

City of Des Moines 2023 Complete Streets Report

In the short run, this has led to a reduction in the number of stops with seating, from 101 in 2022 to 49 in 2023. Route changes resulting from the Walnut Street Bridge replacement account for the additional reduction in bench inventory in 2023. The new benches are better suited to transit stops and reduce private advertising in the public right-of-way. In the long run, DART will continue to add benches based on ridership, feasibility, and available funding.

Fatal Injury Crashes

There were 17 crashes resulting in 18 fatalities in 2023. While fewer fatalities than occurred the last few years, each life lost represents unimaginable suffering and anguish for loved ones of the deceased.

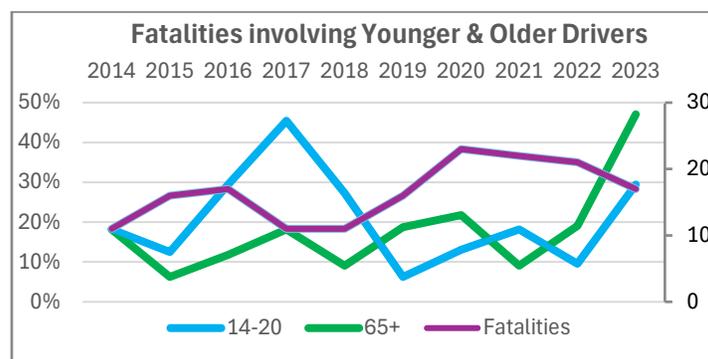
9 crashes were speed related. 10 crashes involved drivers under the influence of drugs (7) or alcohol (3). The deceased include several vulnerable road users

- two people walking – both walked into traffic on a state highway
- one person biking – struck by a vehicle that failed to stop at a stop sign
- four people riding a motorcycle
 - 1 struck by an object dropped from a pickup truck
 - 1 in a chase pursued by law enforcement
 - 1 in a multi-vehicle crash involving a disabled vehicle
 - 1 struck by a vehicle that failed to stop at a stop sign

[Vision Zero](#) espouses a new vision for safety:



2023 also saw a significant spike in the number of fatalities involving younger and older drivers. Future monitoring will determine if there is a causal relationship or if this is simply a statistical anomaly.



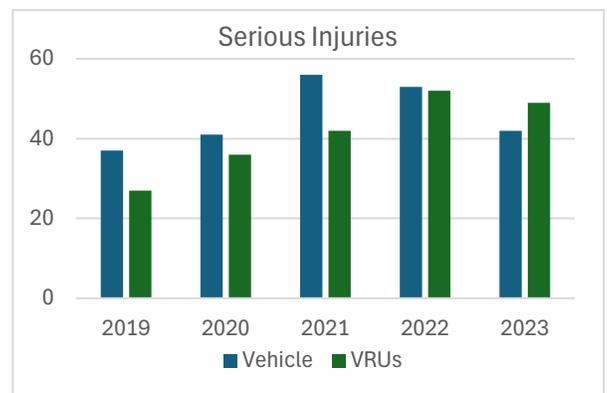
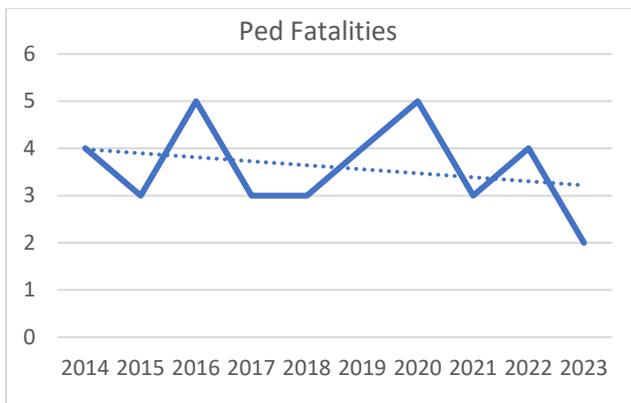
Engineering and road design can solve many issues. Yet, behavioral choices are the root cause of many of the crashes listed above. As Des Moines embarks on its [plan](#) to eliminating fatal and serious injury crashes on all our streets by 2040, data shows that it will take efforts and cooperation from all sectors to reach this ambitious goal.

City of Des Moines 2023 Complete Streets Report

[Dangerous By Design](#) is a publication of Smart Growth America and the Complete Streets Coalition that explores our nation's streets, that are designed primarily to move cars quickly at the expense of keeping everyone safe. The most recent data available (2022) benchmarks a 40-year high in the number of people who were struck and killed while walking, a 75% increase in these deaths since 2010. Nationally, 45 out of every 100,000 ER visits were for a pedestrian injury.

Approximately 1 person per 100,000 people dies each year walking in the Des Moines-West Des Moines, IA Metropolitan Area. 2018-2022 saw a 6% increase in pedestrian fatalities over 2013-2017. Yet, it remains one of the safest of the top 100 metros, which average just over 2 deaths per 100,000 people.

In Des Moines, the epidemic of pedestrian fatalities is less pronounced than at the national level. Over the last decade, the municipal rate dropped from approximately 2 to 1.5 deaths per 100,000 people.



Serious Injury Crashes

Vulnerable Road Users (VRUs) continue to represent an increasing percentage of serious injuries. For the first time since starting Complete Streets reporting in 2019, VRUs represent the majority of serious injury crash victims. Pedestrians represent 36% of serious injuries in the last 5 years.

Rankings

A recent [Allstate publication](#) ranks Des Moines as the 18th safest metropolitan area among the 100 most populous urban areas based on driver behavior. The metro ranked well for hard braking (4th) and high speed (16th), but 83rd for phone handling.

For years [Iowa has struggled](#) to pass hands-free driving laws, which is the law in 34 States. From 2014 to 2023, 78 people in Iowa were killed by distracted drivers using a cellphone or other handheld device. Another 5,016 were injured. Despite widespread support for the legislation, state lawmakers have failed to pass a ban on motorist handheld use of cellphones.

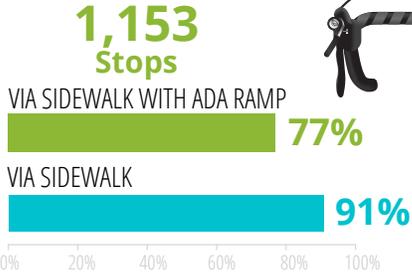
The impulse towards complacency or to let well enough alone is easy when moving the needle towards a safer transportation network. While generally positive, this ranking points to an obvious policy solution to save lives. Messaging around safety needs to complement engineering and design solutions.



2023 COMPLETE STREETS DATA DASHBOARD

ACCESS

PERCENTAGE OF TRANSIT STOPS ACCESSIBLE



3.96 mi
On-street Facilities

TOTAL MILES OF ON-STREET BICYCLE FACILITIES STRIPED/ CONSTRUCTED IN PAST YEAR

4.15 mi
off-street facilities

TOTAL MILES OF OFF-STREET BICYCLE FACILITIES CONSTRUCTED IN PAST YEAR

BIKE FACILITIES CONSTRUCTED WITHIN ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE (EJ) AREAS IN THE PAST YEAR

12 EJ Tract | **7** Non-EJ Tract

TOTAL MILES OF ON-STREET AND OFF-STREET BICYCLE FACILITIES

153.42 miles

39.55 | **113.88**

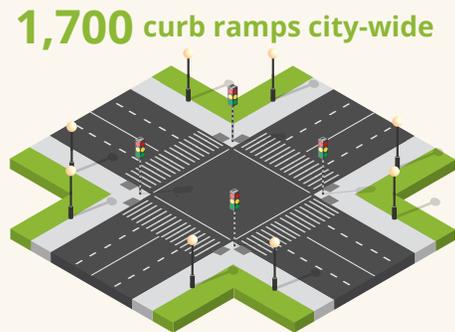
On-Street Trails | Off-Street Trails

MILES OF NEW AND REPLACED SIDEWALKS CONSTRUCTED



1,054
existing miles

NUMBER OF NEW/REPLACED CURB RAMPS INSTALLED



NUMBER OF MARKED CROSSWALKS ADDED

1 continental
0 standard

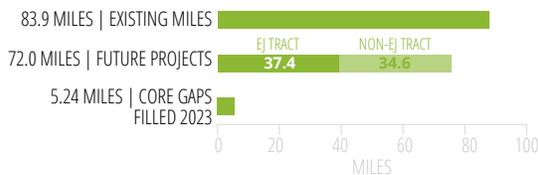
800 existing crosswalks city-wide

TOTAL MILES CONSTRUCTED OF THE PRIORITY 1 SIDEWALK GAPS IDENTIFIED IN MoveDSM IN 2023



180 miles
Priority 1 Sidewalks identified in MoveDSM

TOTAL MILES CONSTRUCTED OF THE CORE BICYCLE NETWORK GAPS IDENTIFIED IN MoveDSM



156 miles
Future Core Bike Network

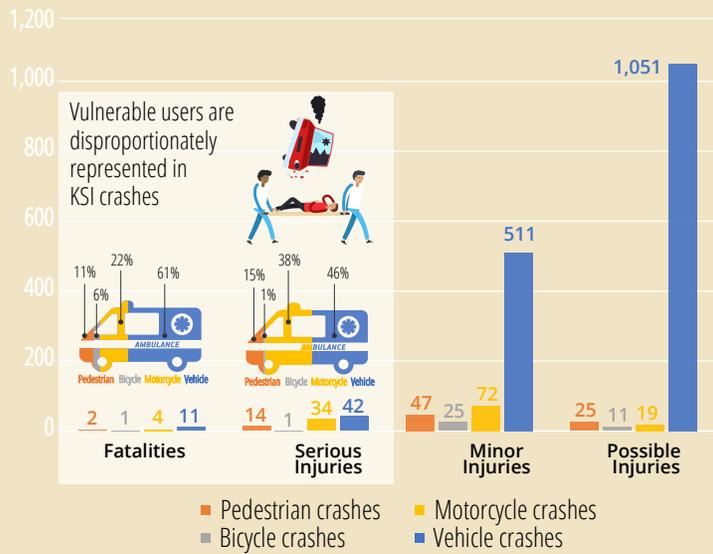
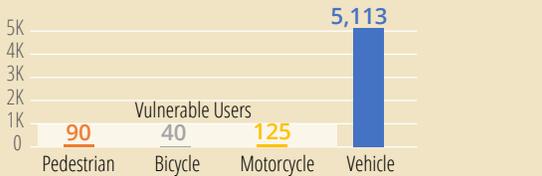




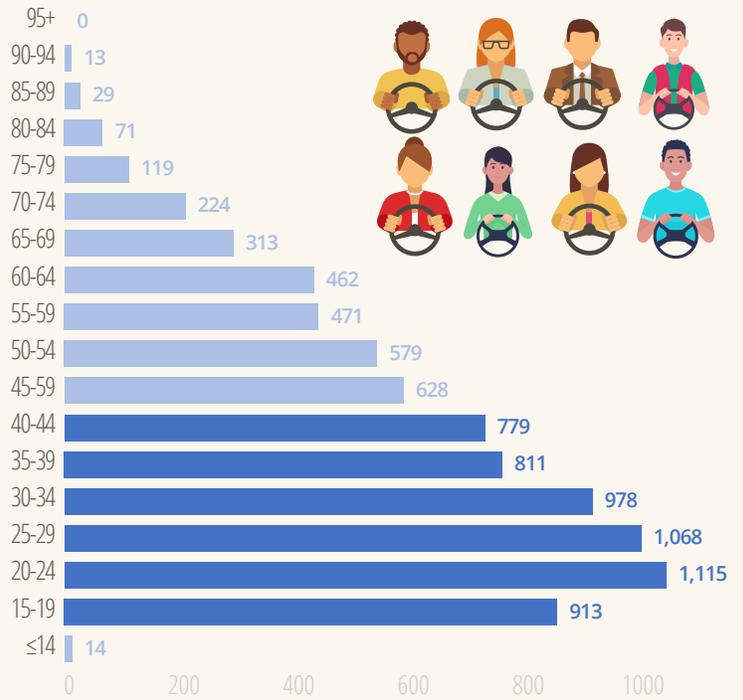
2023 COMPLETE STREETS DATA DASHBOARD

SAFETY

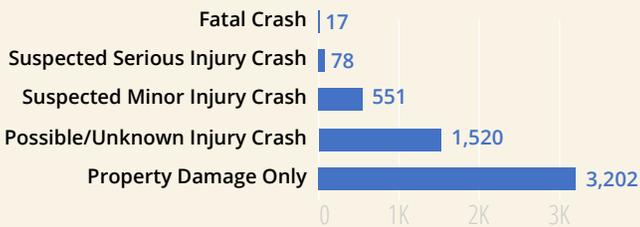
CRASHES (5,368)



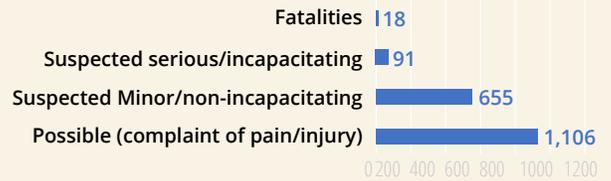
CRASHES BY AGE COHORT



CRASH STATUS (5,368 CRASHES)



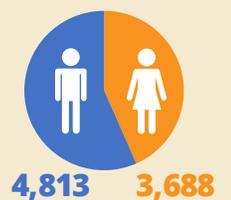
INJURY STATUS (1,870 INJURIES)



MAJOR CAUSE (> 100 CRASHES)



CRASHES BY GENDER

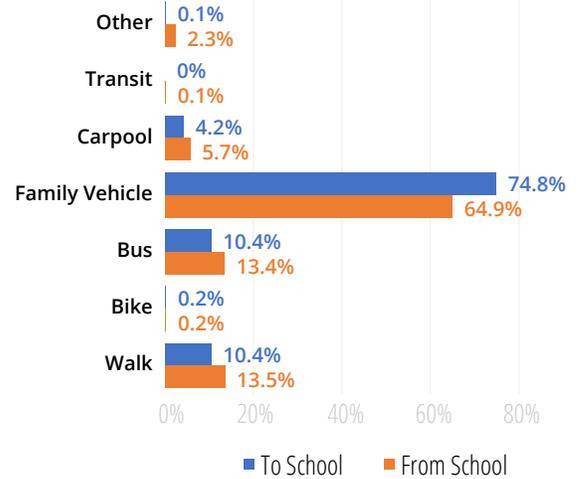




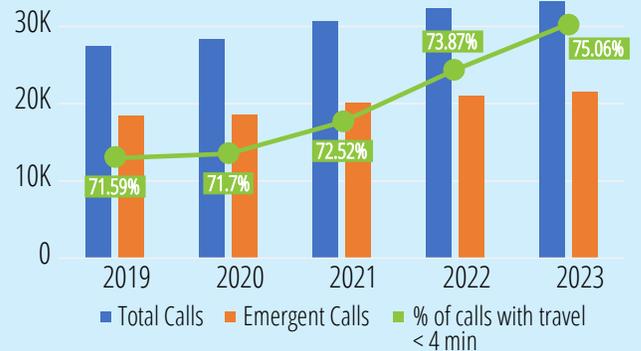
2023 COMPLETE STREETS DATA DASHBOARD

SAFETY

RATE OF CHILDREN WALKING OR BIKING TO SCHOOL
2022 DATA. NO DATA COLLECTED IN 2023.



EMERGENCY RESPONSE



HEALTH

PERCENTAGE OF RESIDENTS IDENTIFIED AS OBESE (2023)

US	33.6%
Iowa	37.4%
DSM Metro	36.0%
DSM City	37.4%

PUBLIC INPUT

- PUBLIC INPUT**
- 12 Transportation Safety Committee Agenda Items
 - 11 Traffic Calming Program Projects
 - 44 Traffic Calming Program Requests
 - 4 CIP Project Public Meetings

NUMBER OF APPROVED AND DENIED EXCEPTIONS TO COMPLETE STREETS POLICY

- 0 exception requested
- 0 exception approved



EQUITY

CIP PROJECTS COMPLETED WITHIN EJ AREAS
35 CIP Projects completed in 2023

19 EJ Tract | **16** Non-EJ Tract