Safety in Central Arkansas: Pedestrians and Bicyclists

Metroplan has studied pedestrian/bike crashes in the region for over 10 years. The information gained from these studies is provided to local jurisdictions, who determine local safety project priorities. While pedestrians and bicyclist fatalities only account for about 1% of total crashes in central Arkansas, they account for 12.6% of the total traffic fatalities. All persons are pedestrians at some point in their daily journeys, so pedestrian safety is important to all.

Did you know? From 2013–2017, about 1 in 8 fatal crash victims (12.6%) in central Arkansas was a pedestrian or bicyclist.

Central Arkansas Pedestrian and Bicyclist Crashes 2013–2017

Map-21 is the current funding and authorization bill that governs United States federal surface transportation policy and spending. It was passed by Congress on June 29, 2012, and President Barack Obama signed it into law on July 6, 2012.

Performance Management

A key and new feature of Map-21 is the establishment of a performance and outcome-based program. The states are required to invest resources toward the achievement of national goals for (1) Safety, (2) Infrastructure Condition, (3) Congestion Reduction, (4) System Reliability, (5) Freight Movement and Economic Vitality, (6) Environmental Sustainability, and (7) Reduced Project Delivery Delays.

Regional Performance Measures

Metroplan is responsible for tracking the first five performance measures for central Arkansas, and for assisting the state with reaching statewide targets. Metroplan has released a series of fact sheets on each performance measure. Metroplan is working with the Arkansas Department of Transportation (ArDOT) to identify policies and projects that can help reach targets.

For these studies, central Arkansas is defined as Faulkner, Lonoke, Pulaski, and Saline Counties.
Did you know? Males are more than twice as likely as females to be involved in a pedestrian or bike crash.

In the past, central Arkansas pedestrian and bike fatality rates have run higher than the U.S. average, but in the last two years the central Arkansas rate is lower than the national rate. The U.S. as a whole has seen pedestrian and bike fatalities increase over the five year period (2013–2017).

Blacks are involved in 43 percent of the ped/bike crashes while representing only 23 percent of regional population.

Reasons for higher crash rates among minorities may include: higher reliance on walking and public transit (due to lower rates of auto ownership), lack of pedestrian and bike infrastructure in low income areas, and lack of youth education on pedestrian and bike safety.

Did you Know? Central Arkansas averages 12 pedestrian and bicyclist fatalities each year.

NEXT STEPS

- Metroplan will update the regional pedestrian and bicycle crash analysis. The study will be used to recommend safety projects and priorities to member jurisdictions.
- Special attention will be given to intersections and corridors with high crash rates.
- A mid-block crossing will be studied on Cantrell Road (Hwy 10) in Little Rock.
- Metroplan has adopted state targets for safety.