

PEDESTRIAN FATALITIES ON URBAN ARTERIALS AT NIGHT

INTRODUCTION

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 7,388 pedestrians were killed on U.S. roads in 2021, which represented a 40-year high and an 80% increase since 2009. The majority of pedestrian fatalities—and almost all of their recent increase—has occurred on at night and on urban arterials. The AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety is working cooperatively with the Collaborative Sciences Center for Road Safety—a consortium of universities led by the University of North Carolina—to understand the factors driving this trend and strategies to combat it.

PROJECT GOAL AND PLAN

The goal of this project is to find ways to combat the increasing trend in pedestrian fatalities on urban arterials at night by cultivating awareness among the public and transportation professionals and building support for implementation of effective countermeasures. This project consists of two main phases of work.

Phase 1 will involve scoping analyses to develop and refine hypotheses regarding the elements contributing to pedestrian fatalities on urban arterials at night, beyond factors specific to the individual drivers and victims, with a focus on organizational, governmental, regulatory, and societal factors influencing pedestrian safety more broadly. A literature review will address these hypotheses, potential interventions and their documented effectiveness, and data and research gaps.

Phase 2 will involve additional analysis as determined by the findings in Phase 1, potentially utilizing collection of new data through interviews or focus groups or newly identified sources of data, to help fill gaps in understanding. A final report will summarize the findings regarding the key contributors to the increase in pedestrian fatalities, potential interventions, and recommendations for further research.

Project Team

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Period of Performance

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