



## Fact Sheet: Central Florida & Pedestrian Safety

### PEDESTRIAN CRASH STATISTICS

These trends emerged from an analysis of Orange, Osceola, Seminole and Lake crashes from 2009-2015:

- Crash numbers dropped during the recession and have gone back up since the economic recovery. Overall motorist crashes involving injuries increased by 52% from 2009 to 2015, but pedestrian injury crashes have risen at a slower rate of 25% in the same time period.
- In Orange County, where the Best Foot Forward campaign has been in effect since 2012, pedestrian injury crashes dropped by 7% from 2014 to 2015, while crashes in Osceola, Seminole and Lake combined increased by 17%. This shows the effectiveness of a “Triple E” approach – combining low-cost Engineering with community Education and high-visibility Enforcement.
- Injury crashes for pedestrians age 19 and under dropped by 34%, while those age 50 to 64 increased by 57%. So most pedestrians who are getting hit are adults who have experience with navigating traffic situations, not juveniles.

Some things that can be done from a transportation perspective to improve pedestrian safety include:

- Adding sidewalks
- Installing medians or refuge islands (reduces mid-block pedestrian crashes)
- Installing lighting in key corridors or upgrading to brighter LED lighting (reduces pedestrian crashes and especially fatalities)
- Installing additional enhanced crosswalks at unsignalized locations (improves safety where pedestrians are already crossing)

### WHAT THE REGION IS DOING

**Major investments in walking and biking projects.** In the next five years, Central Florida will invest **\$595 million** in the region’s pedestrian, bicycle and transit network. These projects are aimed at addressing safety and public health. Improving pedestrian safety is a top priority for MetroPlan Orlando and local governments, including the City of Orlando and Orange County.

**Local government transportation planners, engineers, law enforcement, medical staff, school staff, crossing guards, and nonprofits are actively working together through the Best Foot Forward for pedestrian safety coalition.** This group was formed in 2012 and includes representatives from 25 organizations who meet regularly to coordinate pedestrian safety efforts with a Triple E approach. More details on page 3.

### WHAT METROPLAN ORLANDO IS DOING

**Putting people first by creating a regional Complete Streets policy.** MetroPlan Orlando is leading regional Complete Streets efforts and released a draft regional Complete Streets policy in December 2016. This approach considers the needs of all users, rather than building the street just for car use. This is a proactive step toward developing a regional program for evaluating opportunities to implement Complete Streets, selecting projects to advance, and providing guidance to local partners for a consistent approach in Complete Streets projects.

**Real-world Complete Streets testing and emphasis on context.** MetroPlan Orlando's draft policy focuses on assessing each street by its context – in other words, looking at how people use or want to use the street instead of who owns it and how it is classified. Before finalizing the regional Complete Streets policy, MetroPlan Orlando is testing it on several corridors in the region. After these pilot projects are complete, the policy will be tweaked based on lessons learned, strengthening the final Complete Streets approach.

**Regional and state coordination on Complete Streets.** MetroPlan Orlando is working closely with local government partners to ensure that the regional approach matches efforts that are already under way locally. Close coordination is also under way with the Florida Department of Transportation to ensure consistency with FDOT's statewide Complete Streets policy.

**A staff position dedicated to transportation and public health.** In 2016, MetroPlan Orlando created a transportation planner position to focus on using transportation to improve health, including safety. This is the first of its kind in Florida and emphasizes the organization's approach to plan holistically.

**Continuous analysis of pedestrian crash statistics.** MetroPlan Orlando regularly examines pedestrian crash data to identify trends and what can be done from an infrastructure and education standpoint to address underlying causes. In 2012, the organization released a Pedestrian Safety Action Plan. The plan includes a list of priorities for funding transportation solutions to reduce pedestrian crashes, and a comprehensive set of engineering, enforcement and education strategies for local governments to implement. Of the 16 corridors in the plan, nine have had safety studies completed or safety improvements made. MetroPlan Orlando has also conducted an analysis of high crash ZIP codes by pedestrian residence to see what trends would emerge. Results showed that many of the top 10 ZIP codes were in underserved communities. MetroPlan Orlando worked with Best Foot Forward to target educational programs and presentations to these communities.

## WHAT CITY OF ORLANDO IS DOING

Significant pedestrian safety and enhancement projects in the City of Orlando:

- **Orlando Walks Sidewalk Program:** Focuses on establishing an interconnected sidewalk network that helps improve public safety and encourages healthy living. The sidewalk program targets priority areas including sidewalk segment's proximity to schools, parks, bus routes, shopping, and SunRail stations. The City of Orlando has received \$6 million in federal grant funds to support this program, which is split into two phases. Phase 1 of the program has been completed, adding more than 25 miles of sidewalks throughout the city. Phase 2 began in June of 2015 and proposes to add 22 more miles of sidewalks, completing more than 150 sidewalk connections.
- **Colonial Overpass Project:** This bicycle and pedestrian overpass will provide a safe off street connection over a major arterial roadway between two areas of the Central Business District. This project will also help complete an off street trail through Downtown Orlando.
- **Pedestrian Crossing Enhancement Program:** Two rectangular reflective flashing beacon pedestrian crossings were installed on Lake Underhill Road, providing access between residential neighborhoods and Lake Underhill Park. The new pedestrian crossing experienced a driver yield rate of 45% to pedestrians crossing, which significantly improved pedestrian safety.
- **Complete Streets Policy:** In 2016 the City of Orlando adopted 20 Complete Streets policy elements into the comprehensive plan for all future road projects. These elements specifically address all

areas of transportation corridors to enable safe access for all users including pedestrians and bicyclists. These elements have recently been used in projects including the reconstruction of Bumby Avenue and the resurfacing of Westmoreland Road.

- **Orlando Main Street Bicycle and Pedestrian Study:** In 2017 the City of Orlando will be conducting a bicycle and pedestrian study for the Milk and Mills50 Main Street districts. This study will analyze pedestrian safety and recommend enhancement projects in an area with burgeoning commercial and employment areas.

**WHAT ORANGE COUNTY IS DOING**

Significant pedestrian safety and enhancement projects in Orange County:

- **INVEST in our Home for Life:** This program will provide \$15 million over five years for pedestrian safety projects at intersections and other selected locations that will enhance various features such as sidewalks, crosswalks, signals, turn lanes, updated signage and other necessary improvements.
- **Americana Boulevard Enhanced Pedestrian Crossings:** Two mid-block crossings were recently installed on Americana Boulevard between Texas Avenue and San Antonio Boulevard with pedestrian refuge islands and rectangular rapid flashing beacons (RRFBs), which pedestrians can activate by pushing a button. Additional pedestrian signals were also installed at the intersection of Americana and San Antonio Boulevards to cross the west leg of the intersection.
- **Pedestrian Safety Studies:** Studies to improve pedestrian safety are being done in three key areas: 1) Alafaya Trail and University Boulevard (recently completed); 2) Oak Ridge Road (nearing completion); and 3) Pine Hills Road (in progress). These studies will identify needs and recommend infrastructure enhancements that can be installed to improve pedestrian access and safety.

**WHAT BEST FOOT FORWARD IS DOING**

Best Foot Forward is currently active in Orange County. It will soon be expanding to Seminole and Osceola. These are the results from the program since June 2012.

**Evaluation: Measuring Progress by Tracking the Driver Yield Rate at Marked Crosswalk**

- Average yield rate at intersections with speeds 35 mph or less increased from 12% to 59%
- Average yield rate at intersections with speeds over 40 mph increased from 2% to 22%

**Enforcement:**

High-visibility crosswalk enforcement details called *Operation Best Foot Forward* have been held 16 times in partnership with Orlando Police Department and Orange County Sheriff’s Office. Tickets for not yielding to pedestrians in crosswalks are \$164 and three points on the license. The next *Operation Best Foot Forward* enforcement will take place in February 2017.

Totals Since June 2012		
Total Warnings: 4,145	Total Citations: 2,369	<b>Total Warnings &amp; Citations: 6,514</b>

### Education: Community Outreach

An important facet of Best Foot Forward is its community outreach. It's only through education that the community can learn about pedestrian laws and how individuals can contribute to improving pedestrian safety. The program has reached many with its safety message. Additionally, Best Foot Forward reaches a wider Central Florida audience by working with local media during *Operation Best Foot Forward* enforcement details and on occasions when pedestrian-related stories are being covered.

BFF Outreach	Since June 2012
# Contacts and inquiries	1,196
# Presentations	151
# Events	123
Educational materials distributed	168,206
Bumper stickers distributed	15,086

*Indicates total number of people who attended events where BFF exhibited or presented.*

### Media Coverage since June 2012

\$4,358,666 Earned Media Value  
95,445,282 Traditional Media Reach

### WHAT FDOT IS DOING

In September 2014, the Florida Department of Transportation enacted a statewide Complete Streets policy. Since then, FDOT has been working on integrating this approach into its internal manuals, guidelines and documents that govern all phases of transportation project development. More info on the FDOT website here: <http://www.fdot.gov/roadway/csi/default.shtm>

In FDOT District 5 covering nine counties in Central Florida, 115 miles of new lighting have either recently been completed or are currently under construction, with another 33 miles under design. The district has also begun an initiative to upgrade lighting at intersections across the area. More than 253 miles of state roads are being evaluated for intersection lighting additions or upgrades.

### BACKGROUND

Dangerous by Design reports were released by Smart Growth America in 2009, 2011, 2014, and 2017. The Orlando-Kissimmee-Sanford Metro Area has been named the most dangerous metro area for pedestrians in the nation since they began releasing this report. It's important to note that the 2017 report uses data that is two years old, and therefore does not fully reflect recent investments like SunRail. The report's Pedestrian Danger Index only takes people who walk to work into account, excluding transit riders (who are pedestrians), recreational walkers, and the 66 million tourists who visit Central Florida annually and also walk to get around.