



# NHTSA

NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION

*Is everyone safe walking?*  
**How equity intersects with pedestrian crashes**

*Distracted Driving Summit  
Norfolk, VA; Aug 18-19, 2022*



**Historic context for ‘vulnerable’ roadway users**

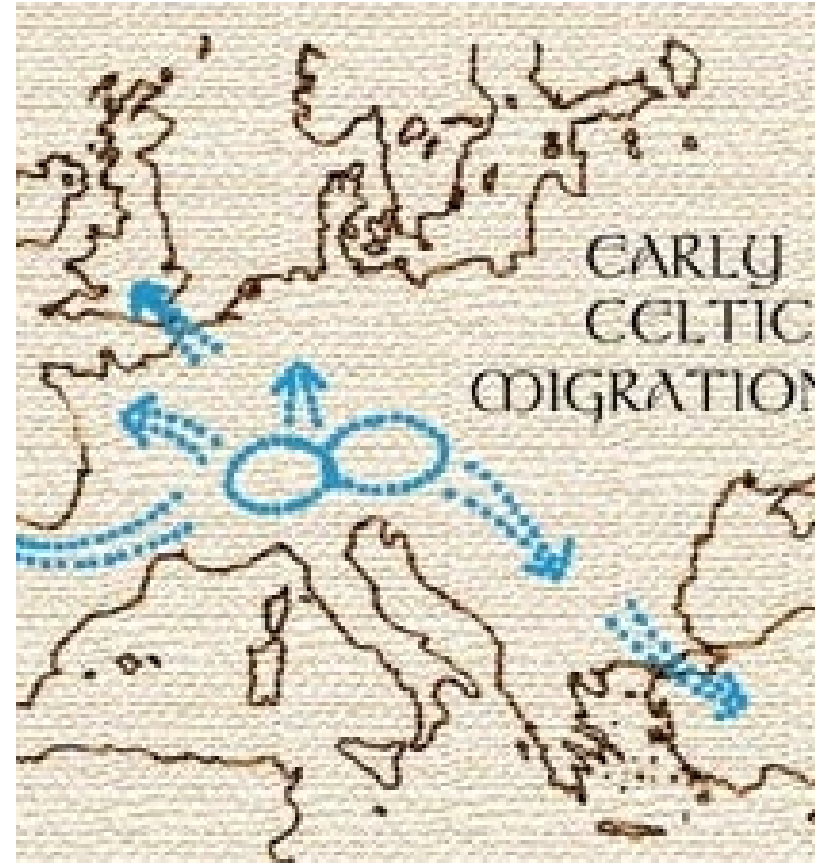
**Our current crash epidemic**  
**Digging into disparities**

**What’s working?**  
**What’s not, and why?**

**BIL, SSA and the National Roadway Safety Strategy**

**Your challenge, and promising pathways**





Walking: a brief history

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#### An American Schooner Wrecked.

KINGSTON, Jamaica, Sept. 12.—The American schooner Mildred E., from San Blas for New York, stranded here yesterday. She is reported to be a total wreck. The cargo has been salvaged and the crew are going home. Trouble is arising over the wreckers looting the vessel.

#### FATALLY HURT BY AUTOMOBILE.

Vehicle Carrying the Son of ex-Mayor Edson Ran Over H. H. Bliss, Who Was Alighting from a Trolley Car.

H. H. Bliss, a real estate dealer, with offices at 41 Wall Street, and living at 235 West Seventy-fifth Street, was run over last night at Central Park West and Seventy-fourth Street. He was injured fatally.

Bliss, accompanied by a woman named Lee, was alighting from a south-bound Eighth Avenue trolley car, when he was knocked down and run over by an automobile in charge of Arthur Smith of 151 West Sixty-second Street. He had left the car, and had turned to assist Miss Lee, when the automobile struck him. Bliss was knocked to the pavement, and two wheels of the cab passed over his head and body. His skull and chest were crushed.

Dr. David Orr Edson, son of ex-Mayor Edson, of 38 West Seventy-first Street, was the occupant of the electric cab. As soon as the vehicle was brought to a standstill he sent in a call to Roosevelt Hospital for an ambulance, and until its arrival did all he could to aid the injured man. When he was taken to the hospital Dr. Marny, the house surgeon, said that Bliss was so seriously injured that he could not live.

Smith was arrested and locked up in the West Sixty-eighth Street Station. It is claimed that a large truck occupied the right side of the avenue, making it necessary for Smith to run his vehicle close to the car. Dr. Edson was returning from a sick call in Harlem when the accident happened.

Mr. Bliss boarded at 235 West Seventy-fifth Street. The place where the accident happened is known to the motormen on the trolley line as "Dangerous Stretch," on account of the many accidents which have occurred there during the past Summer.

The New York Times

Published: September 14, 1899  
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# National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act of 1966

*Legislative History*



U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE  
1966

Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards

National Speed Limit

EMS Star of Life

Seat Belt and CPS Laws

Zero tolerance (21+) drinking laws

Crash testing and safety campaigns

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# our nation's crash epidemic

- Est. **31,270 people** were killed in the first 9 months of 2021
- Increase of **12%** over same period in 2020
- Most at-risk populations are Black (+23%) and Native American/indigenous (+28%) compared to overall increase of 7.2%
- Impoverished/underserved communities most at risk
- Fatality rate increased to **1.36 fatalities per 100 million VMT**

US Traffic Fatalities and Fatality Rate in First 9 Months of 2021



# Why is this happening?

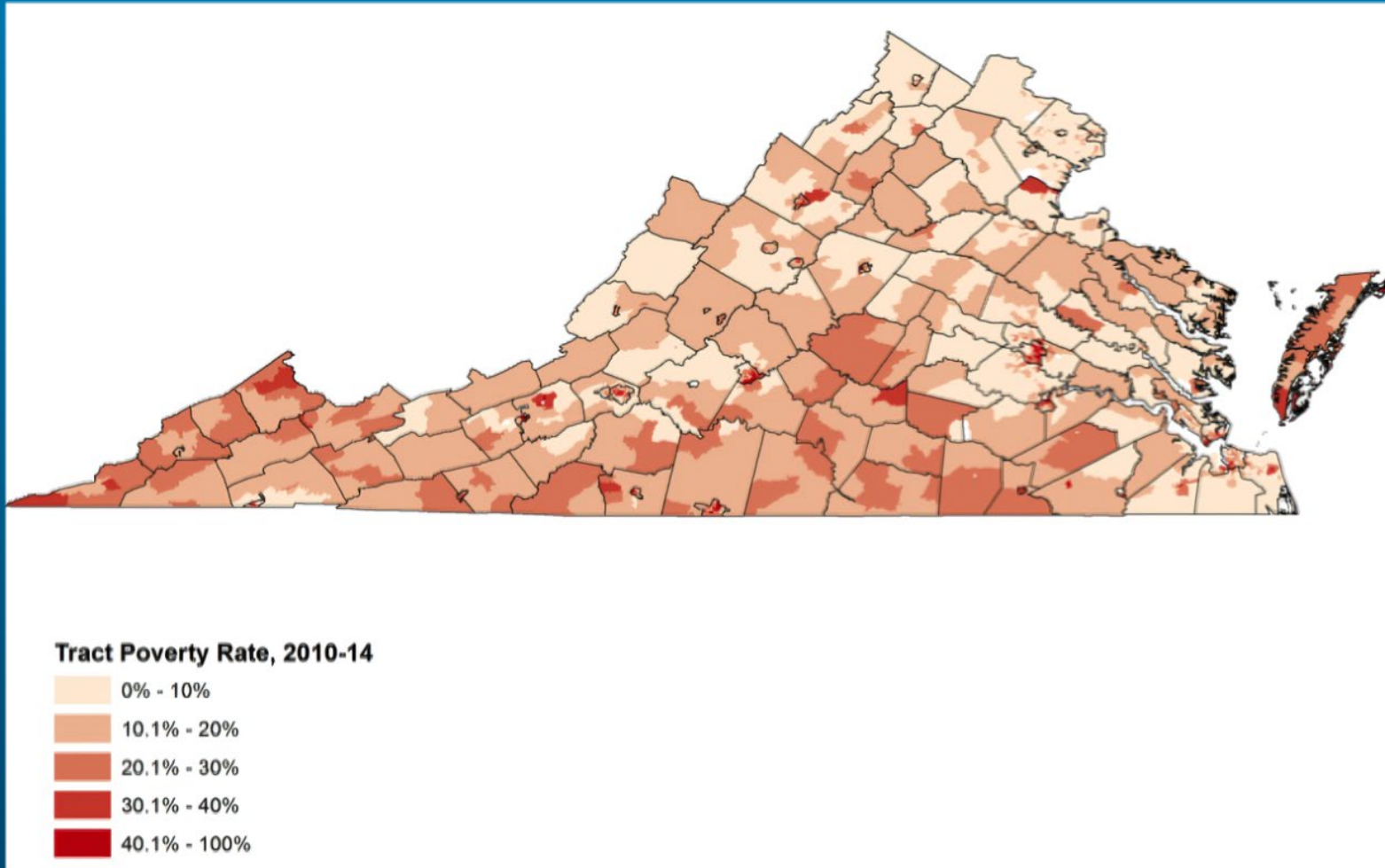
*NHTSA analyses of behavioral factors suggest:*

- faster driving, excessive speeding;
- decrease in seat belt use;
- higher drug and alcohol use rates;
- increased phone use;
- larger vehicles safer for occupants in crashes, but not for vulnerable roadway users

*Deterrence from HVE and consistent messaging was also less apparent.*

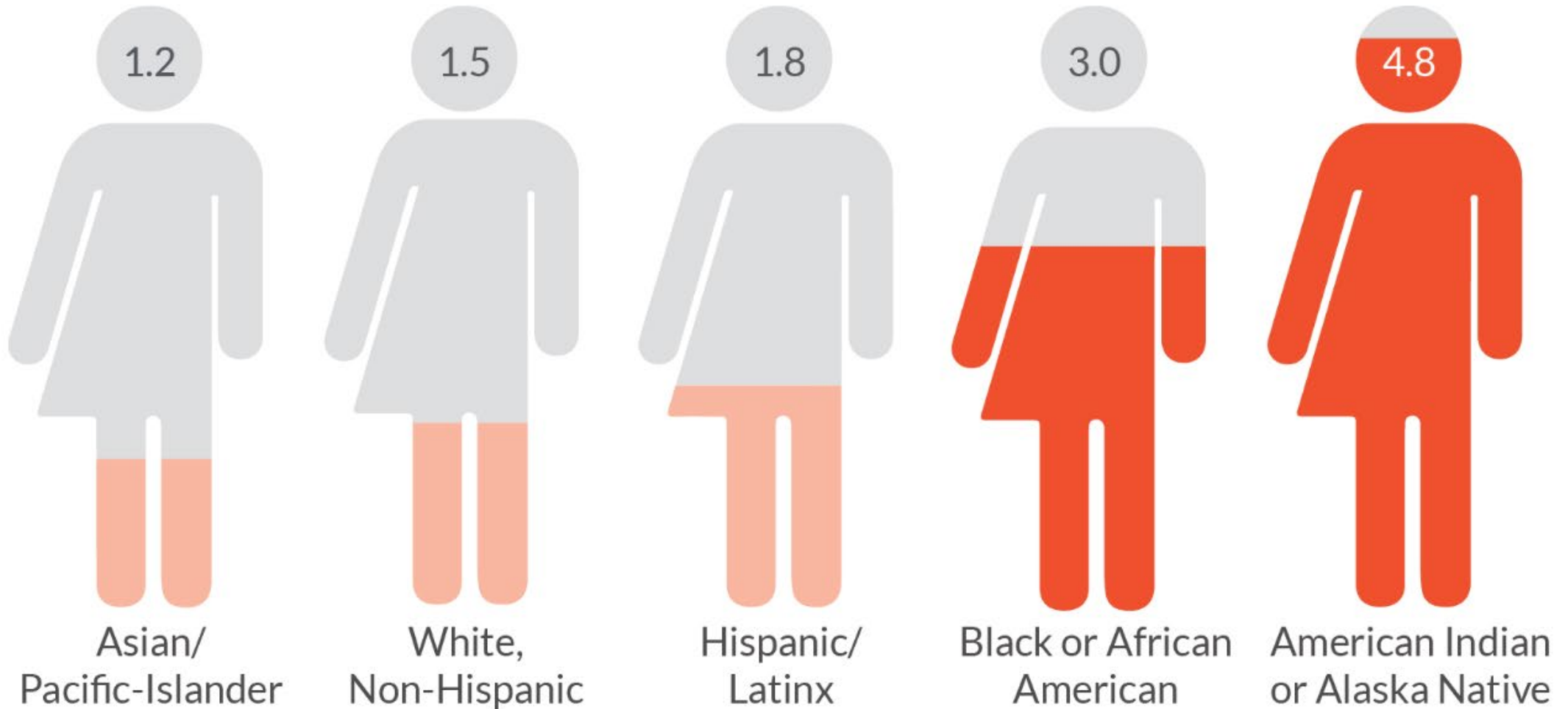


# your zip code *matters*



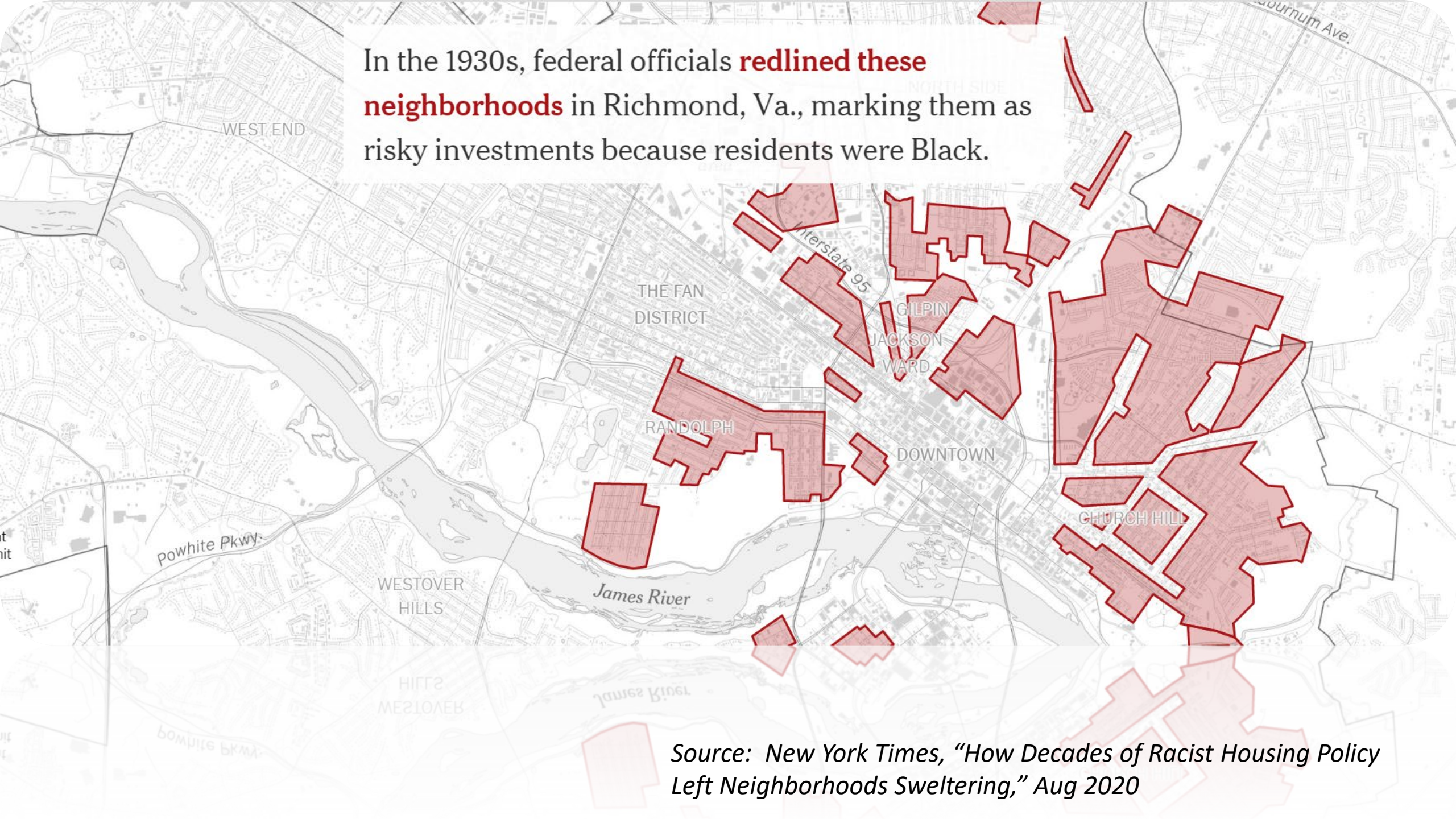
# People of color, particularly Native and Black Americans, are more likely to die while walking than any other race or ethnic group

*Pedestrian deaths per 100,000 by race & ethnicity (2016-2020)*





In the 1930s, federal officials **redlined these neighborhoods** in Richmond, Va., marking them as risky investments because residents were Black.

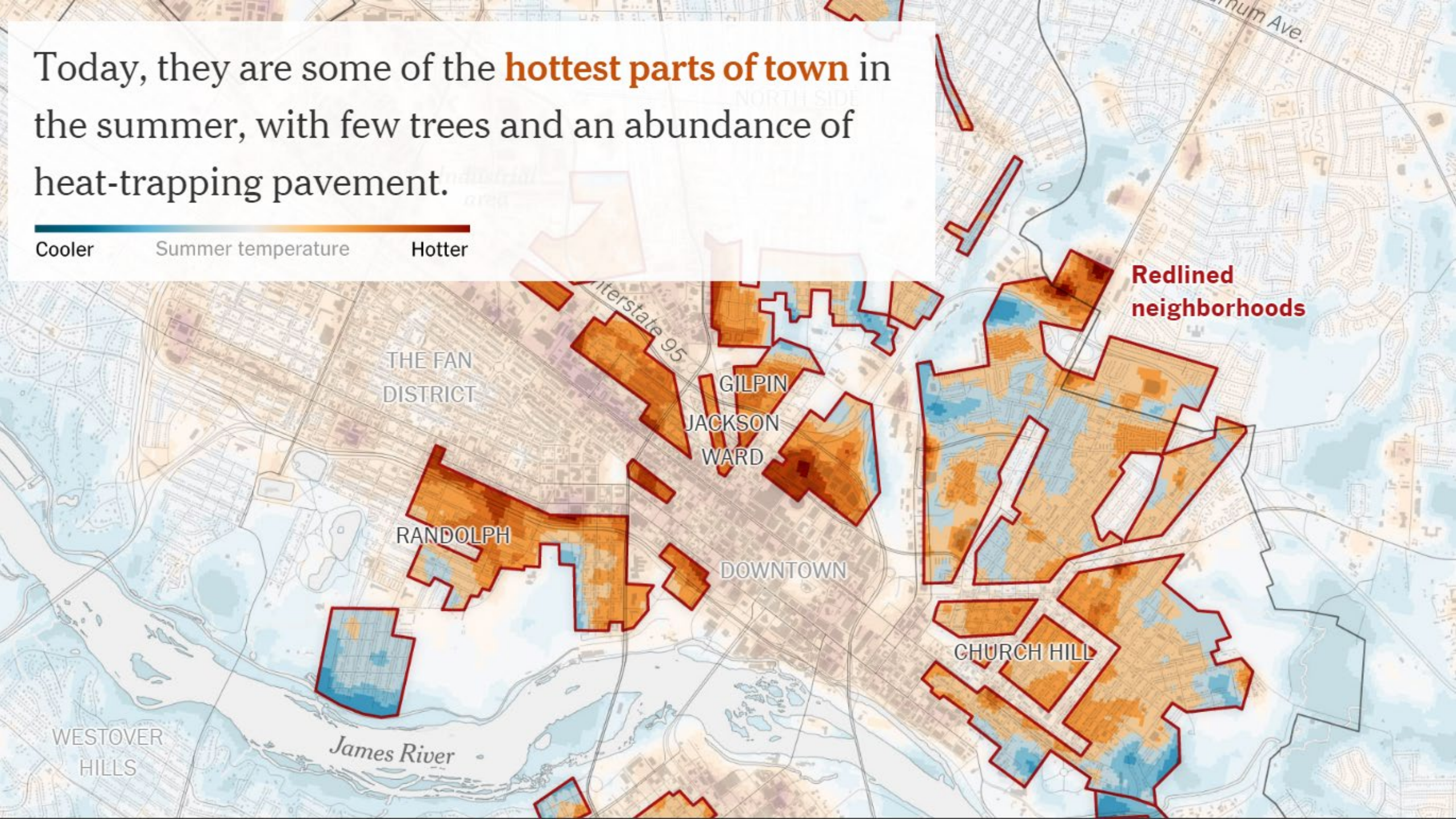


Source: New York Times, "How Decades of Racist Housing Policy Left Neighborhoods Sweltering," Aug 2020



Today, they are some of the **hottest parts of town** in the summer, with few trees and an abundance of heat-trapping pavement.

Cooler Summer temperature Hotter







**It is difficult for Black people in redlined communities to walk when they can't breathe, whether due to polluted air or police violence. Black residents in redlined urban spaces find it difficult to walk when living in communities impacted by neighborhood violence or built environments characterized by green apartheid.**

**LAWRENCE T. BROWN**

**@AMERICAWALKS**



# Pedestrian safety: what we know WORKS

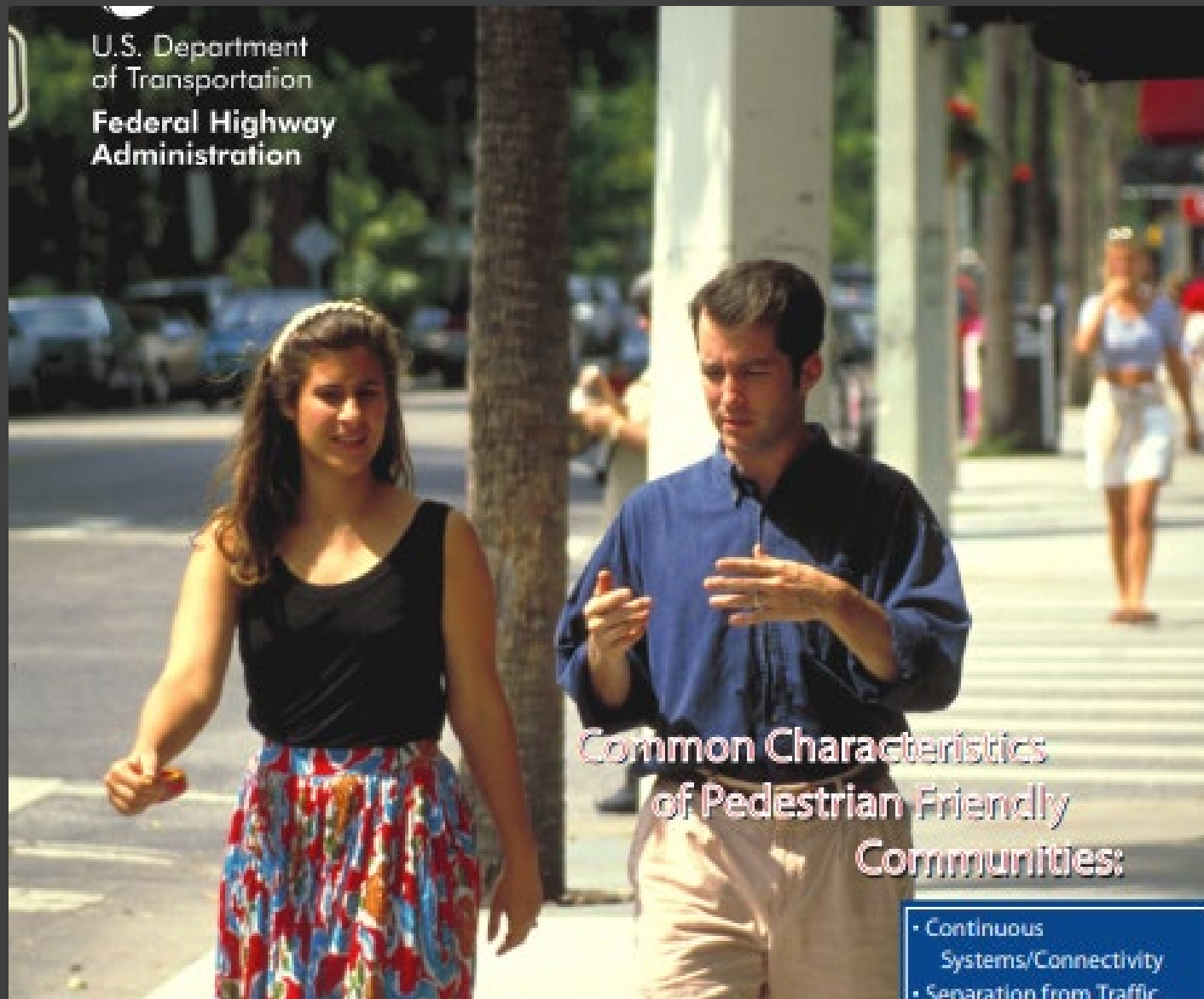
- Locally-driven and customized to the community
- Active synchronicity of engineering, planning, education, EMS, enforcement
- Meaningful public involvement
- Strategies informed by experiential understanding



EVERYONE'S A  
PEDESTRIAN



U.S. Department  
of Transportation  
**Federal Highway  
Administration**



**Common Characteristics  
of Pedestrian Friendly  
Communities:**

- Continuous Systems/Connectivity
- Separation from Traffic





# Equity Defined

The consistent and systematic **fair, just, and impartial** treatment of *all* individuals, including individuals who belong to **underserved communities** that have been *denied* such treatment, such as:

- Black, Latino, and Indigenous and Native American persons, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders and other persons of color
- Members of religious minorities
- Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ+) persons
- Persons with disabilities
- Persons who live in rural areas
- Persons otherwise adversely affected by persistent poverty or inequality

[Executive Order on Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government.](#)

# National Roadway Safety Strategy: a commitment to zero deaths



U.S. Department of Transportation

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PRIORITIES ▾

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## National Roadway Safety Strategy

The United States Department of Transportation National Roadway Safety Strategy (NRSS) outlines the Department's comprehensive approach to significantly reducing serious injuries and deaths on our Nation's highways, roads, and streets. This is the first step in working toward an ambitious long-term goal of reaching zero roadway fatalities. Safety is U.S. DOT's top priority, and the NRSS represents a Department-wide approach to working with stakeholders across the country to achieve this goal.

[READ THE NATIONAL ROADWAY SAFETY STRATEGY](#)



Rain coming



8:15 PM  
3/1/2022





# Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Highlights

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- 5-year authorization (FY2022-2026) with significant \$\$
- States submit a Highway Safety Plan (HSP) triennially (formerly annually) to facilitate long-term planning.
- State's highway safety planning processes must include *meaningful public engagement* with affected communities.

# While we wait for the implementing rule...

## *what can we do NOW?*

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- Problem identification: including demographic analysis/community assessment?
- Project planning: involving traditional and non-traditional/representative stakeholders?
- Project outreach: accessible/meaningfully engaging?
- Project implementation and evaluation: involving the right expertise?



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# Developing a Framework for Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility (DEIA) in Traffic Safety Programs

Our vision of  
an equity  
framework

Inventory of  
current work  
on equity

Gap analysis

Develop  
resources

Training  
programs

Collaboration  
between  
NHTSA,  
States and  
academic  
experts

# Data Walks

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“We have seen data walks spur dialogue between community stakeholders who use data as the anchor to ground conversations around solving neighborhood problems.”

- *The Urban Institute*



# *Tactical Urbanism*

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Pop-up bike lanes

Temporary traffic  
circles

Parklets



## *Inclusivity with differently abled roadway users*



Disabled people, seniors, and children are disproportionately affected when it comes to road safety. Disabled people use transit more, walk more and are less likely to drive, with both working and non-working disabled people less likely to own a car than those without disabilities.





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Thank you, in community.

Shannon Hughes  
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