



## BMTS Article Digest

November 2024 – January 2025

BMTS Pedestrian & Bicycle Advisory Committee Members:

The following is a compilation of articles that may be of interest to BMTS Pedestrian & Bicycle Advisory Committee members. This and past digests can also be accessed from the Pedestrian & Bicycle Advisory Committee page at <http://bmtsonline.com/about/committees>.

*Sights you get to enjoy while walking!*

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## Pedestrian & Bicycle Information Center (PBIC) Messenger e-Newsletter

Go to <http://www.pedbikeinfo.org/newsroom/newsletters.cfm>.

[Subscribe](#) to the new monthly PBIC Messenger. Send news for future issues to editorial team member [Linda Tracy](#).

## FREE Webinars

Go to <https://www.pedbikeinfo.org/webinars/>.

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## Come out and play in Broome County

Go All Out Broome County is your simple guide to hundreds of places and thousands of acres in your own backyard or just down the road. Easily locate hidden gems and local favorites then map your next outdoor adventure in Broome County. Go to [www.GoAllOutBroome.com](http://www.GoAllOutBroome.com).



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See the **Two Rivers Greenway Pedestrian & Bicycle Monthly Counting Reports** at <http://bmtsonline.com/data/bikeped-counts>.





Authorities say a man was fatally injured when he was hit by a vehicle while trying to cross a busy Binghamton highway.

According to city police, the incident occurred on Route 363 at Frederick Street around 6:50 p.m. Monday.

When police and fire medics arrived, the man who was struck by the car was found in the roadway. He was pronounced dead at the scene.

Investigators determined the 39-year-old man was attempting to walk a bicycle across the highway. He was crossing Route 363 although oncoming traffic had a green light.

The man's name was being withheld pending notification of relatives.

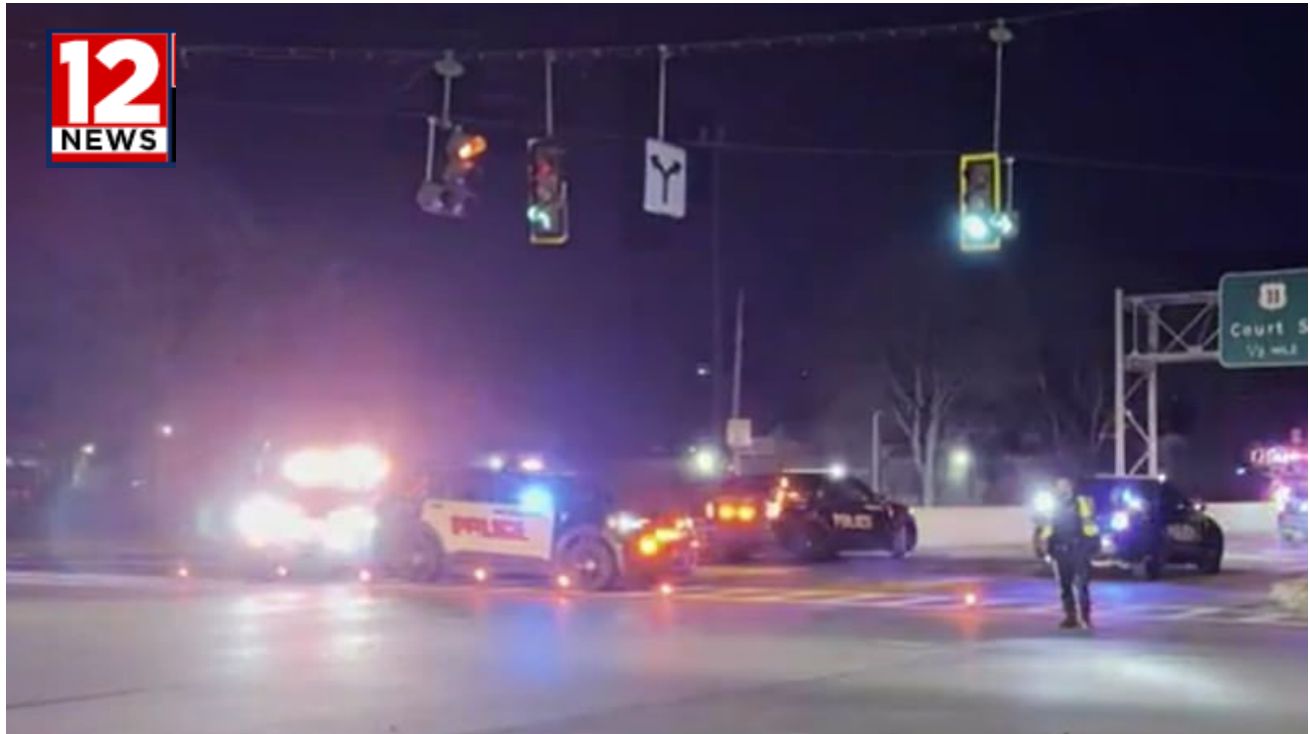
Binghamton police were assisted by the Broome County sheriff's department accident reconstruction unit and by the state Department of Transportation.

People with information about the incident may contact the Binghamton police detective division at (607) 772-7080.

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## Man walking bicycle across highway killed in crash



The Binghamton Police Department said one person was killed after being struck by a vehicle on Route 363 South on Nov. 18, 2024.(WBNG)

By Matthew Benninger

*Published: Nov. 19, 2024 at 11:18 AM EST | Updated: 57 minutes ago*

BINGHAMTON (WBNG) -- One person was killed in a crash on a Binghamton highway Monday evening.

The Binghamton Police Department identified the victim as a 39-year-old man. His name was not released.

Police said officers responded to Route 363 South at Frederick Street around 6:50 p.m. The victim was found on the roadway and pronounced dead at the scene by EMS.

The victim was trying to walk a bicycle across the highway and according to police, was crossing it against a green light with oncoming traffic.

The victim was then struck by a vehicle, knocked to the ground and struck by more vehicles, police said.

The investigation into the crash is ongoing. Anyone with information about the matter is asked to contact Binghamton Detectives at 607-772-7080.

The Broome County Sheriff's Office and the New York State Department of Transportation assisted officers.

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Stoop



Balconies / Porches



East Little Havana,

Active frontages lead to better health for senior citizens according to a Miami study. Source: Joanna Lombard

## HEALTH

# How walkable places lead to healthier people

Speck and Lombard outline the best research on how the built environment and health in CNU's On the Park Bench.

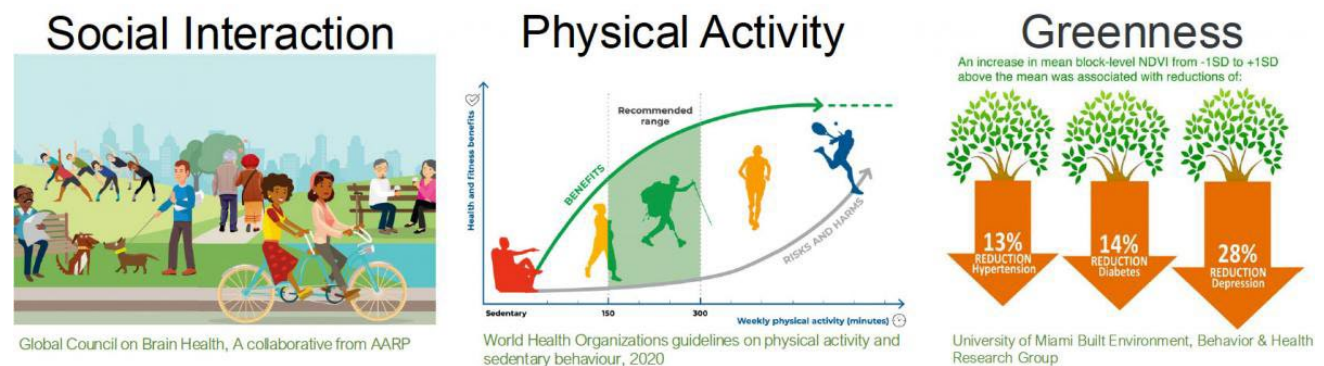
[ROBERT STEUTEVILLE](#) DEC. 5, 2024

Twenty years ago, [Urban Sprawl and Public Health](#) was published, marking a watershed in our understanding of how the built environment impacts human well-being. The book by Jackson, Frank, and Frumkin explained the science of how walkable places are better for your health than living in sprawl—and in the last two decades, the evidence has only grown stronger.

University of Miami architecture professor Joanna Lombard and urban planner Jeff Speck outlined this research on CNU's *On the Park Bench*. Lombard, who has studied this topic with the UM Built Environment Behavior & Health Research Group, describes three primary factors:

- Greater levels of **social interaction** are strongly associated with higher likelihood of survival. These findings remain consistent across culture, age, sex, initial health status, and cause of death.
- **Physical activity** decreases risks of heart disease, premature death, muscle wasting, 13 types of cancer, hypertension, type II diabetes, stroke, and depressive symptoms and increases aerobic capacity, muscle strength, and mobility.
- Higher **greenness** levels are associated with reductions of multiple disease outcomes including depression, dementia, stroke as well as benefits to cognition and well-being.

Walkable neighborhoods with buildings that relate to the street, destinations within walking distance, and good tree canopies and green spaces demonstrate all these virtues.



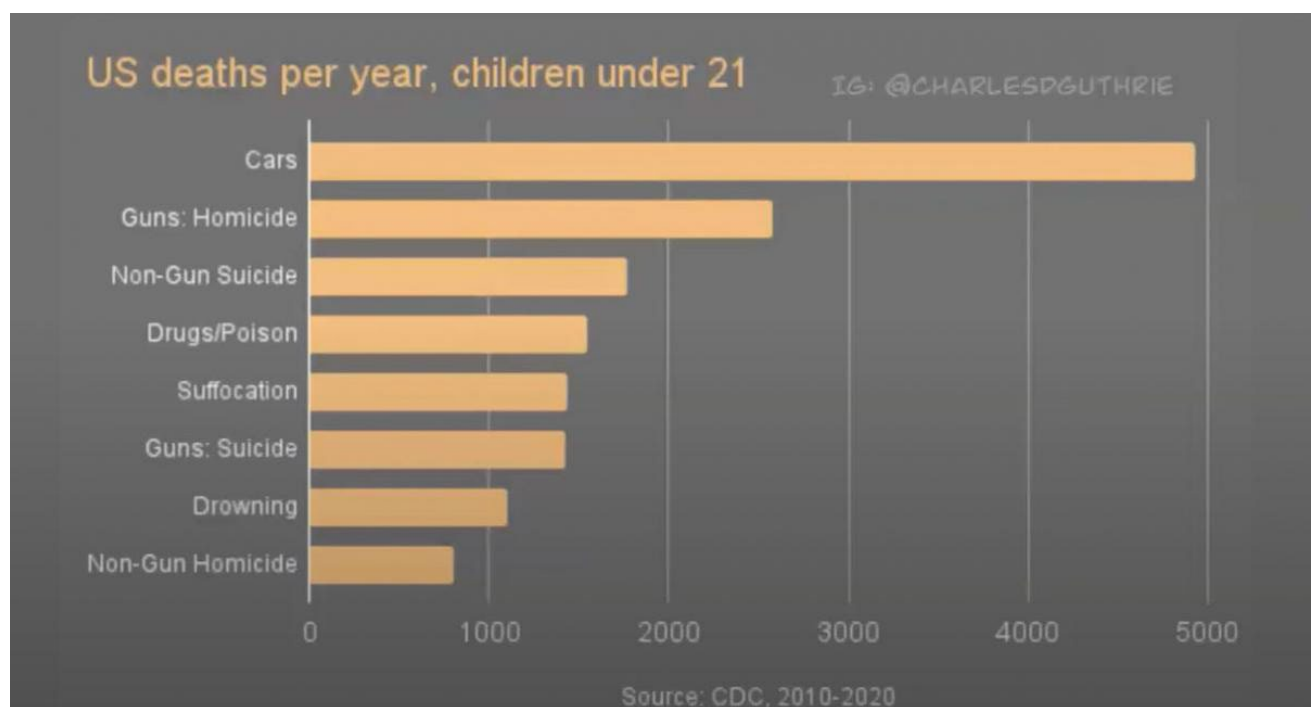
Source: Joanna Lombard

Social interaction has been studied for 60 years and consistently correlates with better health. Especially important are “weak ties,” informal connections between neighbors who wave and say hello, contributing to mental health and outlook. “Elders who lived in blocks with few positive front entrance features were 2.7 times more likely to have poor physical and mental functioning, compared to

elders residing on blocks with greater numbers of positive front-entrance qualities,” according to University of Miami research.

The UM research is not based on census blocks—like most health research—but urban blocks that correlate better to the physical characteristics of neighborhoods. That is how they determined that “a child living in a residential block was 1.74 times more likely to have conduct grades in the lowest 10 percent than a child living in mixed-use blocks.” Children with low conduct grades are associated with greater negative outcomes later in life.

Speck, the author of [Walkable City](#) and [Walkable City Rules](#), focused on an important health-related statistic that differs between walkable cities and sprawl: automobile crashes. This is by far the leading cause of death for children under 21, Speck shows—double the next cause, which is shootings and guns.



Source: Jeff Speck

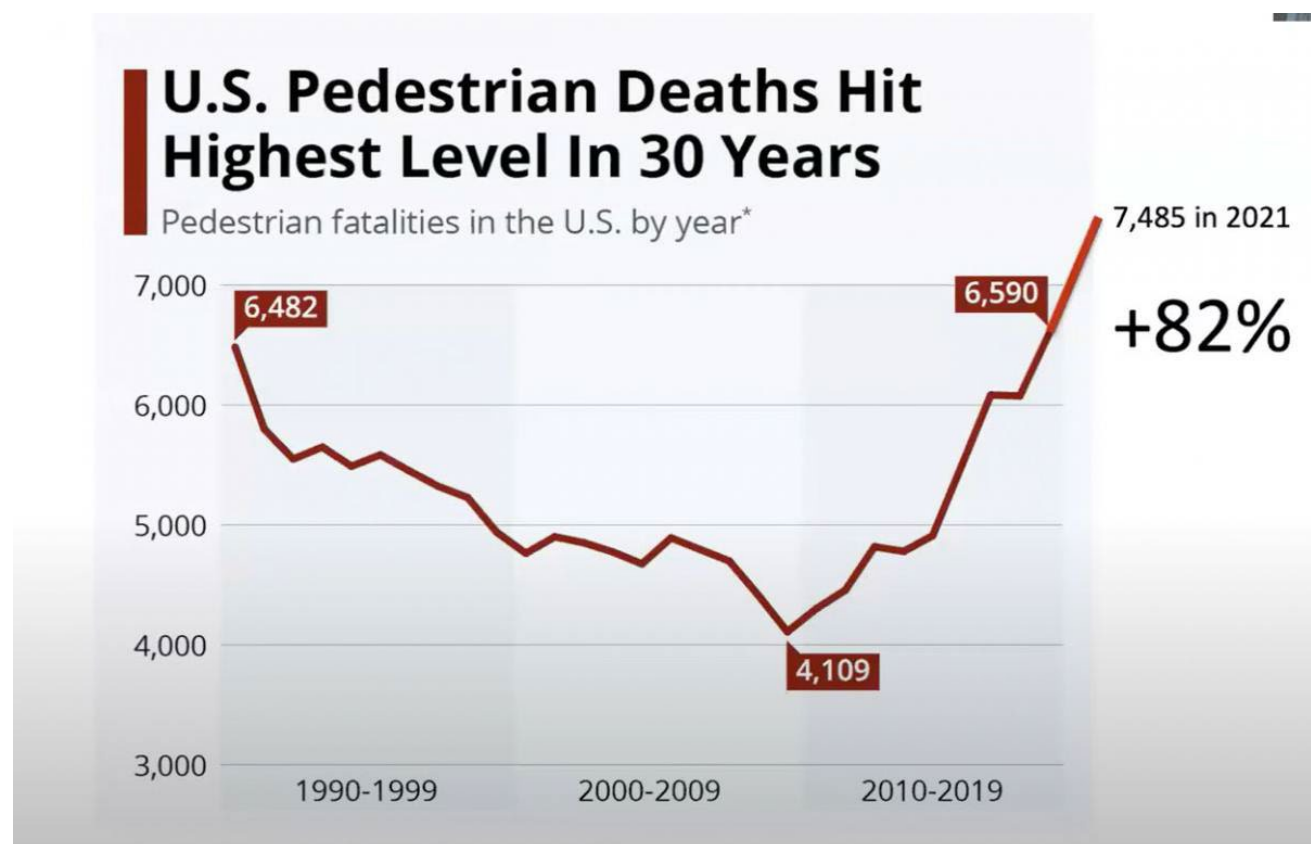
If you compare a walkable city like New York City with sprawl, the difference in automobile-related deaths (including pedestrians hit by cars) is astonishing. While New York City loses 3.9 people per 100,000 annually to automobile crashes, Hillsboro County, Florida, (a sprawling suburb of Tampa), experiences 67.5 per



100,000. “If you isolate the suburban environment, it is literally almost 20 times as bad as our more walkable places,” Speck says.

The greatest risk is to children, people who are economically challenged, and minorities. The injuries from automobile accidents, even more than the deaths, contribute to the nation’s health bills. “A lot of hospitals find that half of their business, if we can call it that, is car crash business,” Speck says.

The “suburbanization of poverty” is a big factor. Entire landscapes in the suburbs were designed with nary a thought for pedestrians. There are no sidewalks, the roads are inhospitable, and the distances are great. Planners assumed that everyone would drive, and yet, increasingly, people who live in the suburbs have to walk. “You see people crossing (these big arterials) as pedestrians,” Speck says. “This auto-zone has become the only affordable place for a lot of Americans.”



Source: Jeff Speck

In the US, automobile deaths have risen in the last decade and a half for one reason—pedestrian deaths have soared by 82 percent. Some factors, such as the



rise in cell phone use by drivers and more SUVs on the road (more deadly than sedans due to hood height), are out of the control of urban planners.

But the most important factor to pedestrian deaths is the speed of the automobile, Speck says—and that is something planners can influence. We need to design streets to slow traffic. What he calls a “[walkability study](#)” is the best tool to make changes, he says. That results in a plan to do things like: Remove unnecessary travel lanes, narrow overly wide lanes, build bicycle lanes, revert one-way to two-way streets, replace signals with stop signs when possible, tighten oversized intersections, plant street trees, and more.

Places that lead to all of these better health outcomes can be built using the Charter of the New Urbanism, and the Canons of Sustainable Architecture and Urbanism, two CNU foundational documents, says Lombard. “All of these principles are in the DNA of the Charter and the Canons,” she says.

See the entire video:





Rittenhouse Square in Philadelphia, an inviting park that exemplifies the qualities of safe spaces. Photo by Robert Steuteville

## PUBLIC SPACE

# Seven qualities of safe spaces

An American urban planner who was influential in the design of mixed-income neighborhoods enumerates the qualities of public spaces that feel safe and secure.

[ROBERT STEUTEVILLE](#) DEC. 12, 2024

People are hard-wired by thousands of years of evolution to react to the built environment in certain universal ways. That's true because the design of communities has a real impact on safety, health, and social relationships.

Over countless generations, our ancestors were attracted to places that enhanced their well-being and repelled by places that did not. In the days before civil lawsuits, modern health care and insurance, and police departments, one did not survive by ignoring signals from the built environment.

Regardless of actual danger in the modern world, people don't linger in places where their hair stands on the back of their necks. "Crime statistics may plummet,

but if people feel lost or trapped within a public space, unable to see or find a quick way out, they will avoid it,” notes Ray Gindroz, principal emeritus of Urban Design Associates,

Gindroz had a major impact on several American cities and influenced the design of mixed-income neighborhoods and affordable housing. He wrote an essay in the [Charter of the New Urbanism book](#) (1999 and 2013 editions), explaining the meaning of principle 21, which is stated thus: “The revitalization of urban places depends on safety and security. The design of streets and buildings should reinforce safe environments, but not at the expense of accessibility and openness.”

Gindroz redesigned many public housing neighborhoods to make them safer for residents. In the essay, he identifies seven qualities of safe spaces. Many of these qualities are inherent in the public spaces and neighborhoods that have been attractive and popular over generations and centuries. By virtue of these seven qualities, public spaces will continue to be the heart of civilization, and I repeat them in Ray’s words here:

1. **Human presence**

People in a public space must feel the presence of other people in the space and in the buildings surrounding the space. The sense that we are not alone and are being observed helps us to behave properly and feel safe. Windows are symbols of that presence, whether people are behind them or not. Mixed-use buildings help promote 24-hour presence.

2. **Congeniality**

The dimensions and scale of the space should encourage comfortable interactions among people.

3. **Humane protection**

Mechanical devices such as cameras and gates should be invisible. Where possible, police presence should be personal, on foot or bicycle, so police officers can interact with others.

4. **Visibility, light, and openness**

Open views that enable us to see other people and to be seen—by people driving by, as well as by others in the space—provide natural supervision. Light should ensure nighttime visibility.

5. **Order**

Coherent landscapes, streetscapes, and signs in both the public rights-of-way and bordering properties make a clear statement that a space is well-managed and safe.

6. **Connections**

Spaces must be perceived as part of an interconnected network of streets



and public open space, so we feel we have access to others who make the space safe.

**7. Legibility**

The clarity with which each space connects to the rest of the city helps us understand the form of the city, keeps us from feeling lost, and assures us that we are in control of our relationship with the city spaces and the people in them.

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Eastdale Village. Source: Kirchhoff Companies

## **DESIGN**

# **Main Street brings New Urbanism to New York State**

Eastdale Village in Poughkeepsie crosses a US highway with a four-block Main Street, drawing visitors with a strong sense of place.

[ROBERT STEUTEVILLE](#) DEC. 9, 2024

A new four-block Main Street crosses US Route 44 about two miles east of Poughkeepsie, New York. Eastdale Village is a first-of-its-kind development in Upstate New York, which boasts some of the nation's best old urbanism, but little New Urbanism.





restaurants. “I think it feels really good, we ended up with 15-foot sidewalks,” he says. “Every restaurant has tables. We have tree-lined streets, parallel parking, and market lighting that crosses the street from building to building. You know you have arrived at Eastdale.”

The design pushed boundaries in a few ways—one was crossing the two-lane highway, which required cooperation and compromise with the DOT. The intersection was improved with bulbouts and crosswalks, and the state allowed on-street parking to extend about a block from the intersection in both directions, on both sides. US Route 44 has no on-street parking in the region, even in the city. DOT insisted that the on-street parking be separated by one car length (with markings), so that cars could quickly pull in and out.

This highway has been the subject of commercial strip development since the 1950s.

Another unusual aspect is that businesses own their buildings. Instead of leasing retail space, business owners purchase fee-simple lots and build their shops with living spaces above. This innovative approach provides supplemental income and offsets mortgage costs with rent from upper-level apartments. This development also offers small incubator cottages that provide a low barrier to entry for start-ups, lining one side of the small green.



The plan for Eastdale Village. US Route 44 is shown in the middle, from top to bottom. Source: Kirchhoff Companies

“They have skin in the game,” Palladino says of the business owners. “It helps them build wealth. You see them decorating for the holidays, sweeping out front. They are so vested in what we are doing.”

The small buildings give the main street a fine grain of development, and the architecture and construction are carefully done, which impressed the Urban Guild jury. That’s a challenge to pull off in an area with little New Urbanism. Palladino used to work for Leyland Alliance, a new urbanist firm that has done projects up and down the East Coast, especially in the Southeast. Leyland built a small residential neighborhood called Warwick Grove in Warwick, New York, about 50 miles from Poughkeepsie. He brought in some of the skilled craftsmen from the Leyland projects and always focusing on education—like explaining the reasoning behind the details. That ensures the construction workers are personally invested in getting the details, which are important to the sense of place. Even if visitors do not know how a column should meet a beam, or about eave and window details, the careful design creates a sense of authenticity that contributes to enjoyment of Eastdale.

“The streets, sidewalks and greens of Eastdale Village are continually humming with the activity of locals and visitors who travel from throughout the Hudson Bay



region to dine, shop and enjoy the village’s lively atmosphere,” he says. *Note: I was on the 2024 Urban Guild Awards jury, along with Sara Bega of Bega Design Studio, Rock Bell, East Beach Development, and Andrew Von Maur, a design consultant and professor at Andrews University.*

Eastdale Main Street. Source: Kirchhoff Companies

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## SHADOWS IN THE SOUTHERN TIER: HIDDEN DANGER OF UNSEEN PEDESTRIANS



Traci Taylor | Published: December 18, 2024

Canva

Last week, in the early morning hours before sunrise, an incident unfolded along a road in Binghamton which led to a member of the Southern Tier community reaching out for help spreading a friendly reminder to area residents.

While navigating the dimly lit stretch of road, the woman encountered a situation that prompted her to raise awareness about the critical importance of visibility when traveling on or working near local roadways.

The community member tells us that she faced challenges seeing in the darkness when she suddenly came upon a figure dressed entirely in black, shoveling slush at the edge of a driveway. The person's dark clothing made them one with the shadows of the road and property, causing the woman to realize they were there only when they turned around, revealing their face and the glint of the shovel's handle in the faint light.

This incident is a good reminder of the risks associated with wearing dark clothing in low-light conditions, especially when venturing out on roads during hours when there isn't much daylight. The danger extends not only to individuals working in poorly lit areas but also to pedestrians, including children, who may inadvertently blend into the darkness while waiting for the school bus or engaging in activities near driveways after sunset.

When someone wears dark clothes that blend in with the surroundings, drivers have a hard time seeing them until they are nearly on top of them. To keep yourself and your children safe, consider opting for light-colored clothing or incorporating reflective elements to reduce the risk of accidents and ensure personal safety.

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## Fatal car vs pedestrian accident under investigation

By [Mikayla Carney](#)

*Published: Jan. 2, 2025 at 8:51 AM EST | Updated: 23 hours ago*

CITY OF NORWICH, N.Y. (WBNG) -- The Norwich Police Department said it is investigating a [fatal car vs pedestrian](#) accident on Cortland Street in the city on Wednesday.

The accident occurred around 8 a.m. when a vehicle struck a pedestrian on the sidewalk. A 12 News crew on the scene saw tire marks across the lawn of 20 Cortland Street. The wreck damaged the house's porch steps and street signs were seen plowed over.

The Norwich Police Department named the victim, James C. Wright, 68 who succumbed to his injuries on the scene. The driver, a 19-year-old, did not sustain injuries.

The investigation is ongoing.

The Norwich Police Department was assisted by the Chenango County Sheriff's Office Accident Reconstruction Team and the Chenango County District Attorney's Office.

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## DISCERNING CYCLIST TIPS

### The Perfect Bike Lane Needs These 5 Vital Features





BY LAWRENCE GOOZEE  
**UPDATED MAR 15, 2024**

It's easy to point out a bad bike lane, but what exactly are the qualities of a good bike lane? The [latest statistics](#) show that commuting by bicycle is gaining worldwide popularity, and for some, great infrastructure is in place to make this possible.

But those of us who aren't as lucky can't help but wonder what exactly we're missing out on.

In this article, we look closer at what makes a perfect bike [lane](#) and what makes one so bad that we'd rather put down our bikes and walk.

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## Why Bother With Bicycle Lanes?

Some may ask, "Why bother investing in [bike](#) lanes?" Cyclists can use roads like cars, so why do they need their own space? The truth is that [bike lanes benefit](#) everyone.

Firstly, they make cycling safer. According to one study by [People For Bikes](#), protected bike lanes reduce bike-related injuries by about 75%.

Cyclists aside, investing in [cycling can reduce](#) road congestion, lower emissions, and even have direct economic benefits, such as boosting retail performance.

And that's without considering the physical and [mental benefits associated with cycling](#). But with such positive results, why aren't more towns and [cities investing in cycle](#) lanes?

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## Common Bike Lane Mistakes

One common mistake [cities must fix when implementing bike lanes](#) is how they invest and allocate available funds. Simply throwing money at the problem won't fix anything. One such example is a bike lane in Kingston, known as the



'stupidest' in the UK. Defying common sense, the bike lane is split in the middle by a crossing. It's an accident waiting to happen.

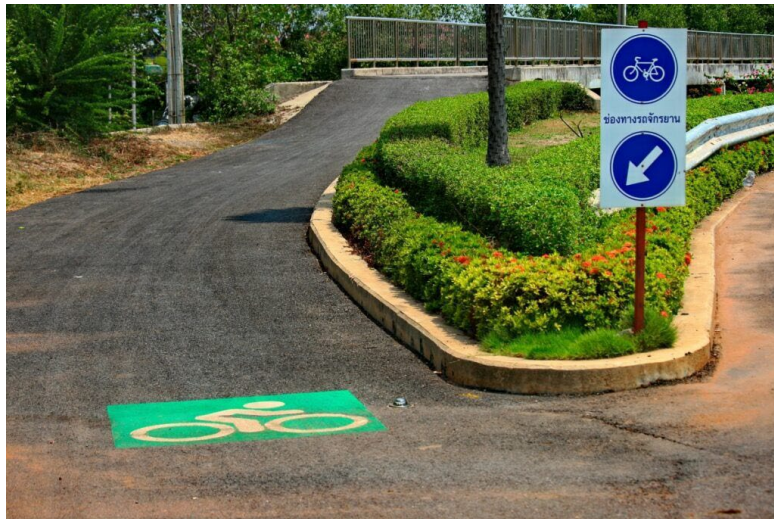
Another example can be found in Portugal, where a bike lane unexpectedly disappears into a busy road. This could result in cyclists suddenly finding themselves in some pretty fast-moving traffic, and even an experienced rider would be caught off guard.

The most common mistake regarding bike lanes is that they are built next to parked cars (see *example above*). This creates a horrible environment where cyclists live in constant fear of 'car-dooring', or in other words, a door suddenly being opened and causing a crash.

Bike lanes are often added to existing infrastructure without much thought with regard to safety and usability.

Bike lanes come in all shapes and sizes, but what do the best bike lanes have in common? Here are the top five features for building a perfect bike lane.

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## 1. Good Bike Lanes Are Separate

The best bike lanes are always separate. That means they're built away from the cars on the road and pedestrians on the sidewalk.

There are many ways to do this, like using bollards, curbs, or planters, but the best solution by far is to build them away from anything else. This makes it safer for everyone.

In an ideal world, every city can build a 'cycle superhighway' like in Helsinki, where bikes have priority and ride without the risks of being close to a road.

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## 2. Good Bike Lanes are Part of a Network

Bike lanes are good, but they become transformative when they're part of a network.

Designing a comprehensive network of bike lanes connected to itself and other [key destinations across a city](#) [helps encourage cycling](#) as a practical means of transport.

Bike lanes are most functional when they link together, forming a large, interconnected web, as roads do. When a good network is built, people cycle more frequently and can cycle greater distances.

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## 3. Good Bike Lanes are Wide

Good bike lanes are wide enough to accommodate more than one bicycle at a time.

Designing wide bike lanes of at least 5 to 6 feet doesn't just allow [cyclists to ride](#) side by side to have a chat, but it also makes it safer for them to overtake safely.

The main benefit of wider [bike lanes is that it's easier for everyone to ride](#) at their own speed, meaning more experienced cyclists or those with electrical assistance can overtake riders who want to cruise at a leisurely pace.

On top of this, it gives some wiggle room for those who might not be as stable on two wheels yet.

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## 4. Good Bike Lanes Have Clear Markings & Signage

Bike lanes that don't have clear markings to indicate the boundaries, right of way, or other important information are extremely frustrating to use. They're also potentially dangerous.



Painted lines sometimes separate bikes from fast-moving car traffic, so when they're worn out and no longer clearly visible, drivers might see them as an extension of the road. It's these blurred lines that pose a threat to the safety of cyclists.

In more complex bike lanes, where guidance is required at an intersection, clear signage is essential for guiding cyclists in the right direction, especially if it's not intuitive for a first-time user.

It's also vital that signage warn cyclists of potential hazards like concealed exits or sharp corners.



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## 5. Good Bike Lanes Are Well Maintained

After building a bike lane, the most important thing is maintaining it and preventing it from falling into disrepair.

This requires regular inspections to ensure the paint or markings remain visible and there is no path damage.

A smooth and well-maintained bike lane will keep cyclists safe and encourage others to try it out. The more user-friendly the bike lane, the more it encourages people to give it a try.

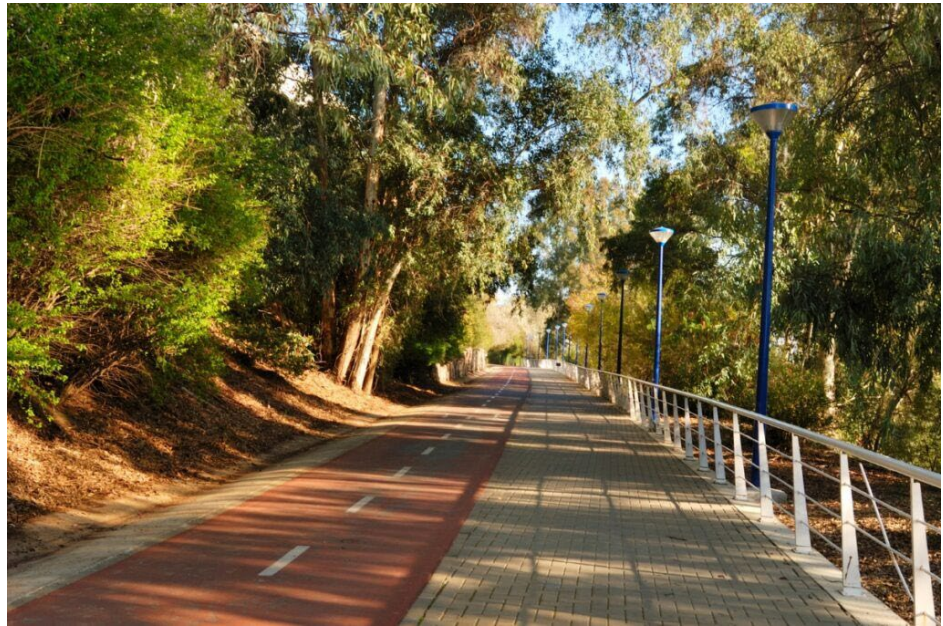


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Bike Lanes in Seville.  
(Image Credit: Canva Pro)

## Which Cities Are Getting Bicycle Lanes Right?

Fortunately, there are plenty of [cities doing it right when it comes to bike](#) lanes.



This photo from [Berlin](#) is a great example. The lane is separated from the road by bollards, protecting cyclists, and from the pavement by the curb, protecting pedestrians. It's unidirectional and marked clearly to avoid any confusion.

In another from [Cardiff Barrage](#), we can see a much simpler option where cyclists have loads of space and a smooth, clear surface with good visibility. Of course, the views don't hurt either.

Lastly, heading to [Sevilla](#), you can see the impact of a good bike lane network. Designed with "cohesion" and connectivity in mind, their [bike network now connects most of the inner city](#). The result? According to [Medium](#), the number of cycling trips increased by over [450%](#) on working days in just a few years.

It's amazing what a good bike lane can accomplish for mobility. There's never been a more important time to invest in alternatives to cars, and good bike lanes pave the way forward for sustainable transport.

With a combination of capital, good urban planning, and thoughtful design, bike lanes can transform cities for the benefit of everyone.

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