

## How Road and Bridge Improvements Save Lives

Nearly 43,000 people are killed in highway crashes each year in the U.S., and more than 3.5 million are injured. Highway crashes are the leading cause of death of people six to 28 years of age and are the cause of more permanent impairments than any other type of accident. Nearly a quarter of a million people died on our highways from 2001 to 2005.

Studies show that increased investment in road and bridge improvements at the local level saves lives. Where appropriate, making road lanes and shoulders wider, adding medians and improving bridges are just a few of the improvements that have been shown to cut fatalities significantly. Highway safety information on this fact sheet is based on data obtained by TRIP from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. Data are the latest available.

- Every \$100 million invested in highway safety improvements will result in approximately 145 fewer traffic fatalities over a 10-year period.
- Approximately 500 people are killed annually in crashes at rail-highway crossings.
- About 12,000 people are killed annually in traffic crashes involving collisions with a fixed object such as a tree, guardrail, utility pole, curb, or light or support pole.
- Listed are key local road and bridge improvements evaluated over a 20-year period by FHWA and the related reduction in fatality rates.

### Improvements at Intersections

Turning lanes and traffic channelization  
Sight distance improvements  
New traffic signals

### Reduction in Fatality Rate

47 percent  
56 percent  
53 percent

### Bridge Improvements

Widening a bridge  
New bridge  
Upgrade bridge rail

### Reduction in Fatality Rate

49 percent  
86 percent  
75 percent

### Roadway Improvements

Construct median for traffic separation  
Widen or improve shoulder  
Realign roadway  
Groove pavement for skid treatment

### Reduction in Fatality Rate

73 percent  
22 percent  
66 percent  
33 percent

### Roadside Improvements

Upgrade median barrier  
New median barrier

### Reduction in Fatality Rate

66 percent  
63 percent

---

TRIP  
1726 M Street, NW, Suite 401  
Washington, DC 20036  
Phone: (202) 466-6706 Fax: (202) 785-4722  
trip@tripnet.org