

Assessing NYC's Street Safety: Declining Fatalities but Persistent Injuries

While pedestrian deaths reached record lows, recent data shows persistent rates of serious injuries—prompting renewed discussion of street safety strategies.

NEW YORK, NY, UNITED STATES, July 21, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- While New York City has seen a decline in pedestrian fatalities, data shows an increase in serious injuries.



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Jeff Korek

In the first half of 2025, New York City recorded 87 total traffic fatalities—a 32% decline from 2024's 128 deaths, marking the lowest level since records began in 1910. Pedestrian deaths specifically fell to 51, down from 63 in the same period last year.

Examining the Less Visible Side of Pedestrian Safety

Behind these encouraging fatality numbers lies a stark reality: pedestrian injuries are surging across the city. Roughly 3,000 New Yorkers suffer serious injuries because of vehicle hits each year — eight per day, on average, or almost 60 a week.

Pedestrian injuries in New York City increased by over 10% from 2022 to 2023.

Brooklyn saw a 20% increase in serious pedestrian injuries, while Queens experienced a 21% surge. [Every week, 17 pedestrians lose limbs, organs,](#) or suffer other life-changing serious injuries.

Throughout 2024, a New Yorker has been killed or seriously injured in a traffic crash almost every day in the congestion relief zone.

"The city is essentially declaring victory while thousands of New Yorkers are still being injured on our streets," said Jeff Korek, Past President of the New York State Trial Lawyers Association and Senior Trial Partner at GLK Law, a leading advocate for pedestrian safety. "We've become so focused on preventing deaths that we've ignored the epidemic of serious injuries that destroy lives and devastate families. A pedestrian who loses a limb or suffers traumatic brain injury hasn't 'won' just because they survived."

The Bus Lane: A Law Ignored

Compounding the safety crisis is the Adams administration's failure to implement the Streets Plan of 2019, which legally mandates the construction of 30 miles of bus lanes annually. In 2024, the city built only 13.5 miles of protected bus lanes—less than half the required amount. This shortfall puts not only bus riders at risk but also contributes to the congestion and chaotic traffic patterns that endanger pedestrians.

The Streets Plan, passed by the City Council in 2019, was designed to create safer streets through dedicated bus lanes, protected bike lanes, and improved pedestrian infrastructure. However, since 2022, [the city has built only 23.1 miles of protected bus lanes](#), far short of the required 80 miles through 2024.

"The law is clear, but the execution is lacking," Korek noted. "When authorities ignore legally mandated safety measures, they're essentially gambling with people's lives. Every delayed bus lane project means more pedestrians forced to navigate dangerous intersections and more opportunities for serious injuries."

The Legal Reality for Injury Victims

For New Yorkers injured in pedestrian accidents, the legal landscape remains complex. Despite the city's knowledge of dangerous intersections and persistent accident patterns, victims often face lengthy battles with insurance companies and city agencies to receive fair compensation for their injuries.

"Insurance companies love to point to the city's 'improving' safety record to minimize claims," Korek explained. "But when you're representing someone who's lost a limb or suffered brain trauma, those statistics ring hollow. The reality is that serious pedestrian injuries are on the rise, and victims deserve full compensation for their suffering."

A Call for Comprehensive Reform

As the city approaches the November election, Korek is calling for a new phase of Vision Zero that measures success not just in lives saved, but in injuries prevented and quality of life protected. This includes accelerated bus lane construction, enhanced intersection safety measures, and improved emergency response protocols.

"We need to stop celebrating half-victories," Korek concluded. "Every New Yorker deserves to walk our streets without fear of life-altering injury. Until we address the full scope of this crisis—from the surge in serious injuries to the failure to implement legally mandated safety measures—we're failing in our most basic duty to protect our neighbors."

About Jeff

Jeff S Korek, a past President of the New York State Trial Lawyers Association, is the Senior Trial Partner at GLK LAW, specializing in personal injury, and medical malpractice law with nearly 40 years of experience. Renowned for his expertise in handling complex injury, accident and

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