

Photo: David Yee for Berkeleyside, 12/09/2016

## Street Trauma Prevention: Implementing Vision Zero at the Berkeley Fire Department

Prepared by Mike Wilson  
Commissioner  
Disaster and Fire Safety Commission  
February 28, 2024



Megan Schwarzman with Oliver Wilson, age 11 months, January 2016.





Photo: Mike Wilson

Transported to Highland Hospital Level 1 Trauma Center.

- 5 pelvic fractures
- 36 rib fractures
- R side Pneumothorax
- L side Hemopneumothorax
- Orbital/facial fracture
- Clavicle fracture
- Lacerated liver
- Multiple abrasions
- Severe internal bleeding



Photo: Wikipedia



Photo: American Association of Medical Colleges

## Highland Hospital Trauma Center, ICU, multiple surgeries

“After the crash, time was precious. The trauma surgeon later told her, had it taken five minutes more to get to Highland, she wouldn’t have lived.”

Emily Raguso, *Berkeleyside* (Dec 9, 2016) Unstoppable: Berkeley cyclist’s miraculous recovery after crash that nearly killed her.





Photo: Mike Wilson

Fire Station 2, March 22, 2016

Most of Engine 2, Truck 2, Medic 2, Medic 5, Battalion 2  
They saved Meg's life on Feb 2, 2016.



Photo: Mike Wilson

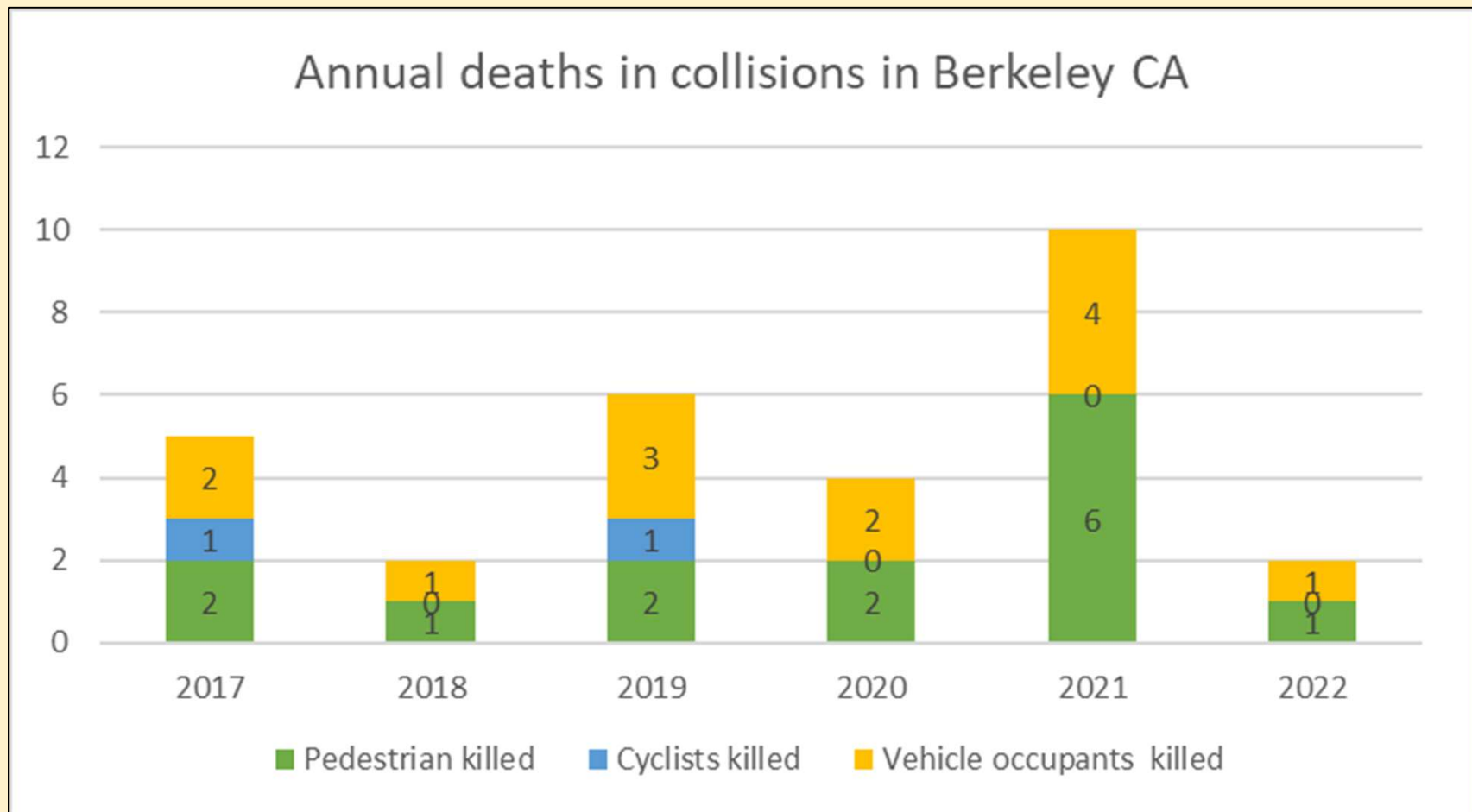
A Celebratory Dinner at Station 2, March 22, 2016





Photos: Mike Wilson

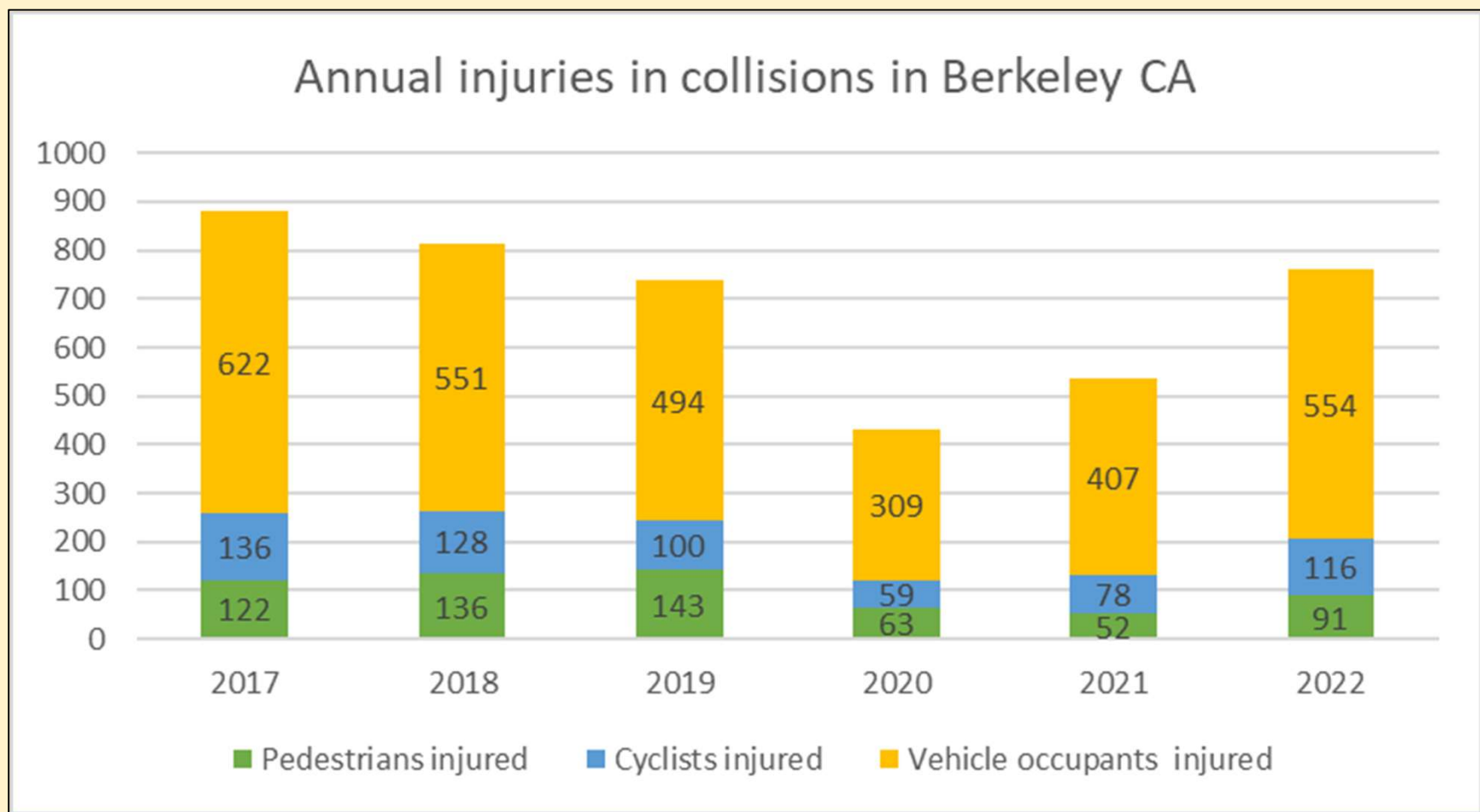
Berkeley Fire Department and Highland Hospital  
saved this family. Our recovery continues.



Annual average of 5 collisions causing fatal injuries to vehicle occupants, cyclists and pedestrians, 2017-2022.

Source: UC Berkeley SafeTREC Transportation Injury Management System (TIMS)  
Query & Map <https://tims.berkeley.edu/tools/query/index.php?clear=true>





Annual average of 694 collisions involving injuries to vehicle occupants, cyclists and pedestrians, 2017-2022.

Source: Collisions Stats tab of the Berkeley Police Transparency Portal - Traffic Safety website: (<https://bpd-transparency-initiative-berkeleypd.hub.arcgis.com/pages/traffic-safety>).



Photo: Mike Wilson



Photo: Mike Wilson

## Average Annual Injuries in Berkeley

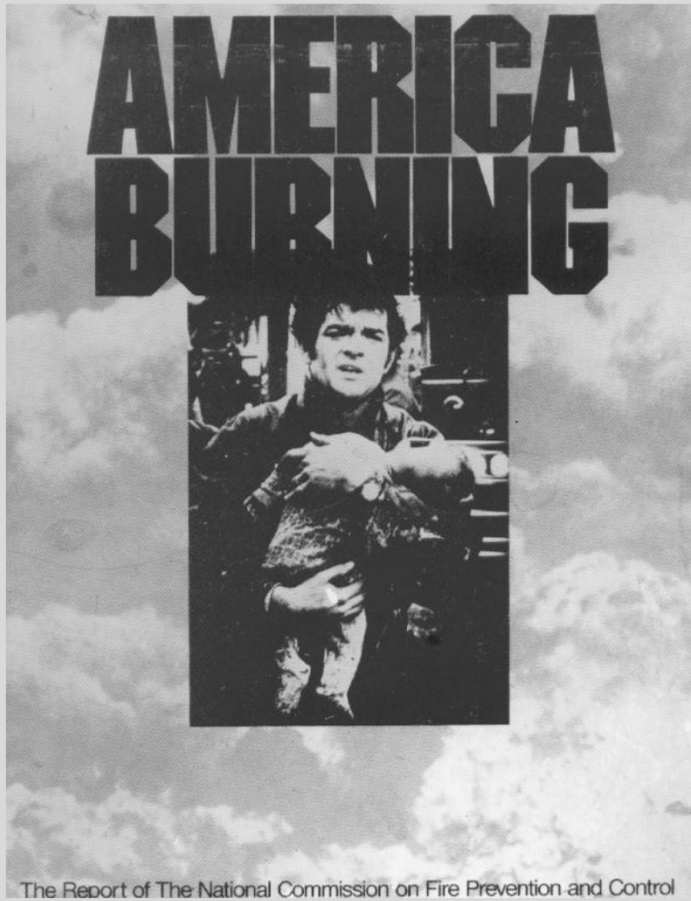
Vehicle occupants, cyclists  
and pedestrians in collisions:  
694 per year, 2017-2022

Persons in structure fires:  
2 per year, 2010-2022

Fire data: <https://firecares.nfors.org/departments/74866/berkeley-fire-department?page=1>

Collision data: <https://bpd-transparency-initiative-berkeleypd.hub.arcgis.com/pages/traffic-safety>





## **America Burning: 50 Years of Fire Safety and Prevention (1973)**

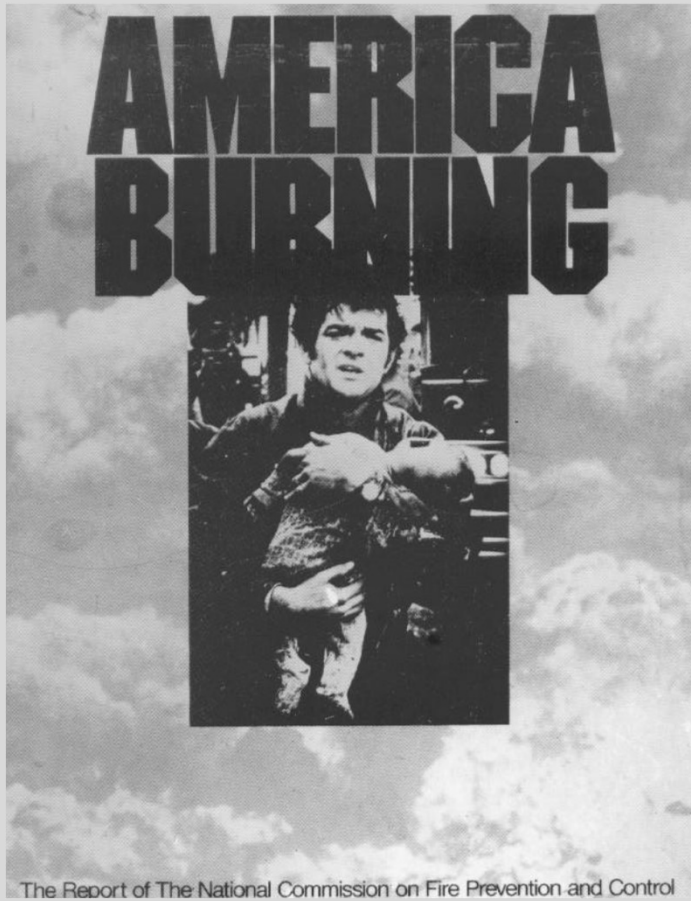
Launched the U.S. Fire Administration and National Fire Academy under the Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974

May 4, 2023 marked the 50th anniversary of the release of *America Burning*, the National Commission on Fire Prevention and Control's comprehensive study of fire safety and prevention.

“Currently, about 95 cents of every dollar spent on the fire services is used to extinguish fires; only about 5 cents is spent on efforts...to prevent fires from starting. Much more energy and funds need to be devoted to fire prevention, which could yield huge payoffs in lives and property saved.”

“Clearly, fire safety lags behind other considerations, such as aesthetics and economy, in the design of buildings.”

America Burning, Prevention Needs Priority. pp. 7 & 71  
<https://www.usfa.fema.gov/blog/america-burning-50th-anniversary/>



## **America Burning: 50 Years of Fire Safety and Prevention (1973)**

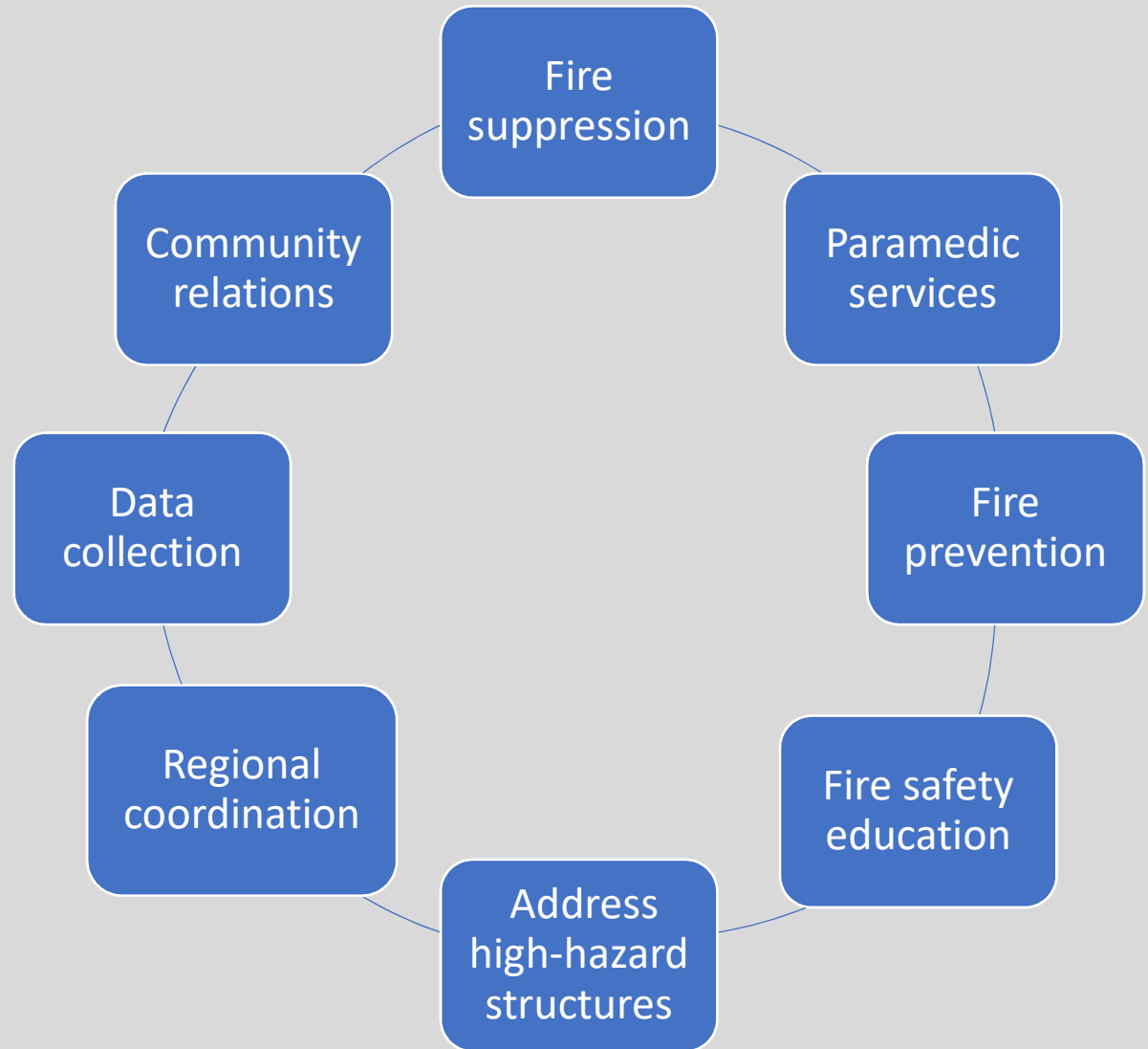
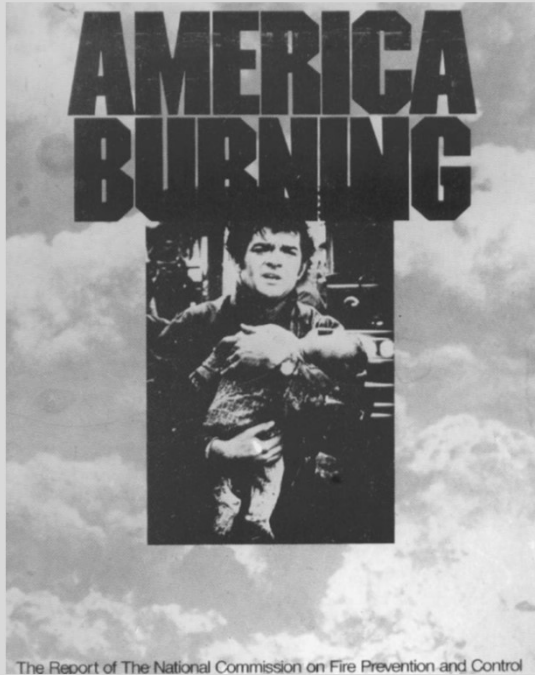
In 1796, the city of New Orleans, then a Spanish province, passed an ordinance against the use of wood roofs.

“The public interest justifies these intrusions on individual liberty.”

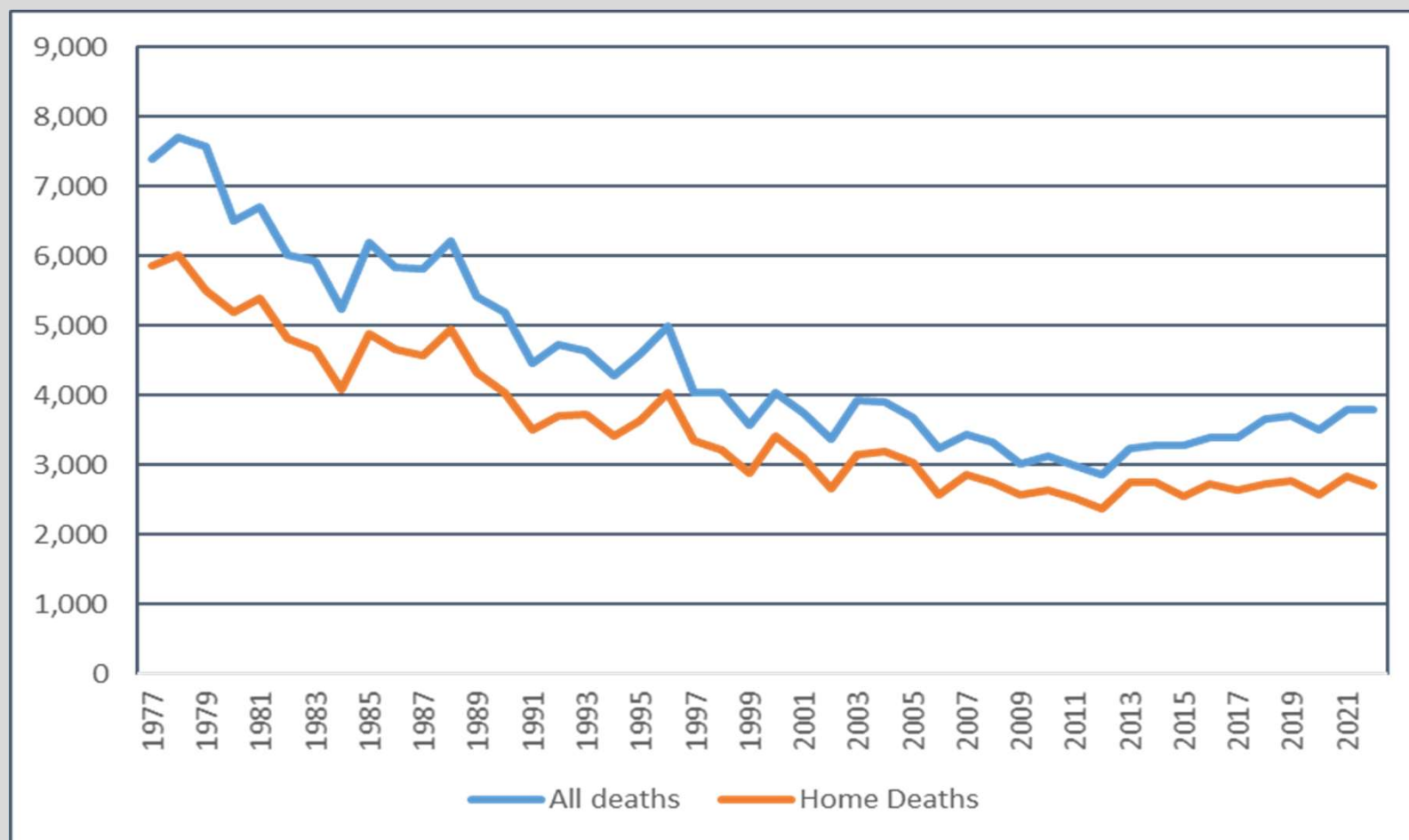
“The Commission recommends that all local governmental units in the United States have in force an adequate building code and fire prevention code or adopt whichever they lack.”

America Burning, Prevention Needs Priority. p. 79  
<https://www.usfa.fema.gov/blog/america-burning-50th-anniversary/>





Fire departments must build a comprehensive approach to fire safety.



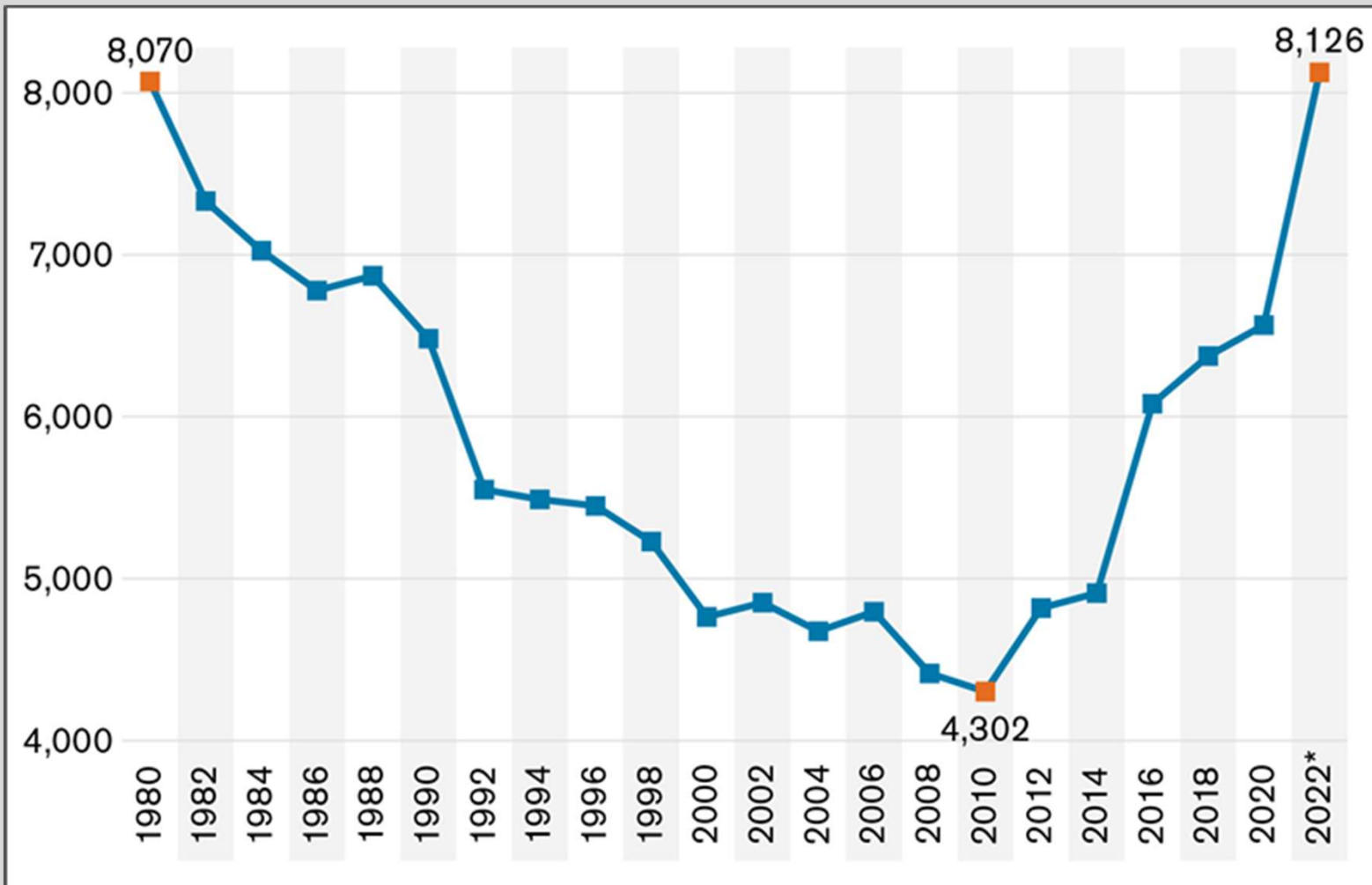
## All U.S. Civilian Fire Deaths and Home Fire Deaths, 1977-2022\*

~5,000 fewer deaths between 1979 and 2012 = 64% decline over 33 years.

\*2,451 deaths on 9/11/2001  
not included in "All deaths."

Hall, S. (November 2023). Fire loss in the United States during 2022. Quincy, MA: National Fire Protection Association. <https://injuryfacts.nsc.org/home-and-community/safety-topics/fire-related-fatalities-and-injuries/>





## U.S. Pedestrian Fatalities, 1980-2022

An 89% increase between 2010 and 2022, after a 40% reduction, 1980-2010

\*2022 is projected based on 6 months of data.

Governor's Highway Safety Association (2023). Pedestrian Traffic Fatalities by State—2022 Preliminary Data [Pedestrian Traffic Fatalities by State: 2022 Preliminary Data | GHSA](#).

## In Berkeley, Pedestrians and Bicyclists are Uniquely Vulnerable

- Severe and fatal collisions disproportionately affect pedestrians and bicyclists. Residents report that they walk or bike for 40% of trips, but pedestrians and bicyclists suffer 60% of severe and fatal collisions.
- Drivers operating at unsafe speeds and failing to yield at crosswalks are the two most common violations contributing to severe and fatal collisions, amounting to 33% of incidents over the period 2011-2020.
- While 71% of Berkeley residents report being interested in relying on bicycles for daily use, most are too concerned about safety to act on this choice.

City of Berkeley, Vision Zero Annual Report, June 2022. [https://berkeleyca.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2022-06-28%20Item%2023%20Vision%20Zero%20Annual%20Report\\_0.pdf](https://berkeleyca.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2022-06-28%20Item%2023%20Vision%20Zero%20Annual%20Report_0.pdf). (p. 13).

City of Berkeley, Vision Zero Annual Report, June 2022. *ibid* (p. 14).

Berkeley City Manager Dee Williams-Ridley (June 29, 2022). Consent Calendar on Vision Zero Annual Report, 2021-2022. Environmental Sustainability and Climate Impacts [https://berkeleyca.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2022-06-28%20Item%2023%20Vision%20Zero%20Annual%20Report\\_0.pdf](https://berkeleyca.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2022-06-28%20Item%2023%20Vision%20Zero%20Annual%20Report_0.pdf). (p. 3).



Berkeley must now apply the lessons of fire prevention to preventing street trauma.

Principle 1.  
Quick Response  
Times are  
Essential to  
Save Lives.



Photos: Mike Wilson



WM1



Principle 2.  
Trauma prevention  
is also essential.

Bancroft and Fulton  
where Meg was run  
over from behind.

Photos: Mike Wilson

## Slide 18

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**WM1**

Wilson, Michael@DIR, 5/22/2023





Photo: Mike Wilson

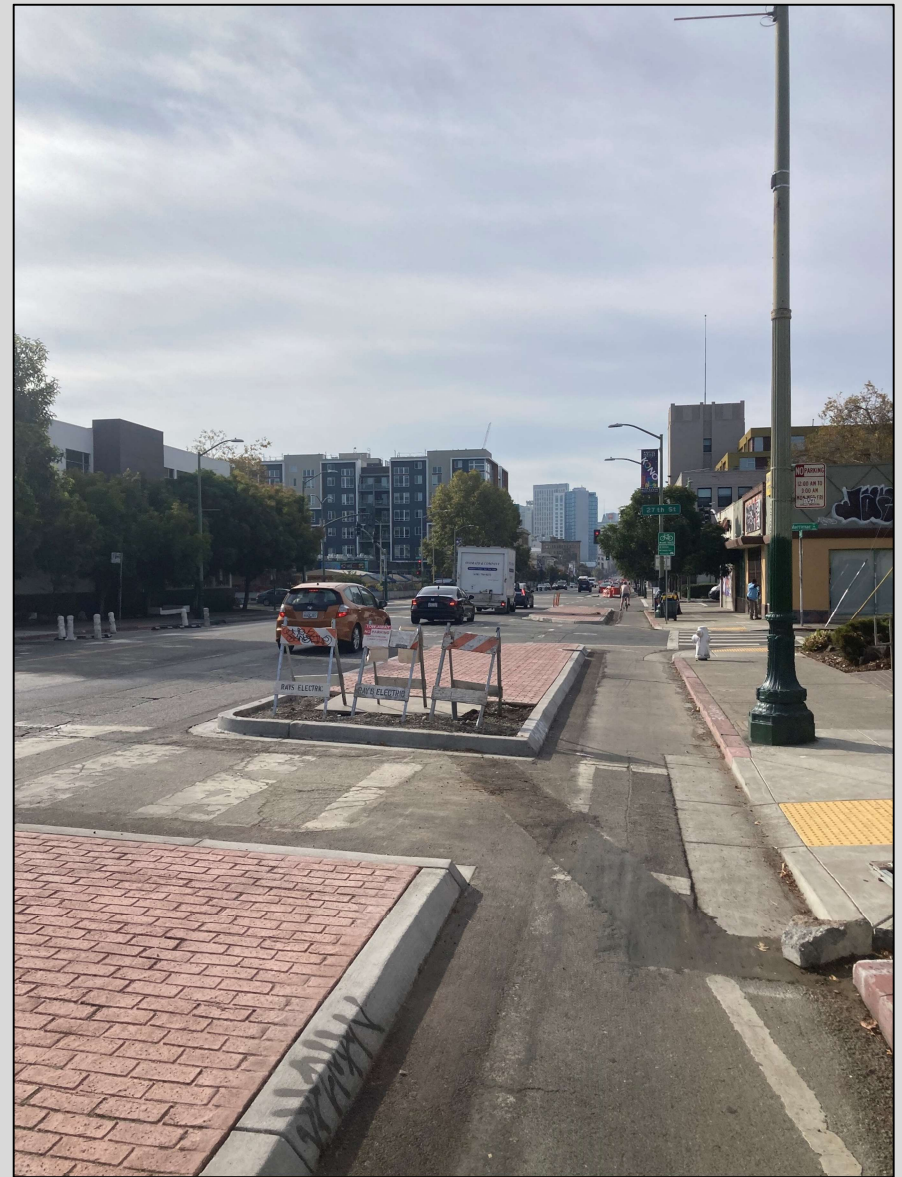


Photo: Mike Wilson

Designing safer streets for walkers and cyclists greatly reduces serious injuries and fatalities, including for vehicle occupants.



# STAND DOWN FOR SUICIDE PREVENTION & AWARENESS

MAY 22-26



California Fire Service  
Behavioral Health Task  
Force: Fire Service Stand  
Down, May 22-26

Under SB 542 (Stern) CA  
created a rebuttable  
presumption that PTSD  
in firefighters and peace  
officers is a work-related  
injury and thus  
compensable under  
workers' compensation.

Safer streets that prevent severe injuries and fatalities  
are also essential for firefighter wellness.

# STAND DOWN FOR SUICIDE PREVENTION & AWARENESS

MAY 22-26



SB 542 (Stern) Oct 1, 2019:

*“Trauma-related injuries can become overwhelming and manifest in post-traumatic stress, which may result in substance use disorders and even, tragically, suicide.”*

*“The fire service is four times more likely to experience a suicide than a work-related death in the line of duty in any year.”*

Safer streets that prevent severe injuries and fatalities are also essential for firefighter wellness.





Advocating for safer streets is squarely within the Fire Department's public safety mission and builds on decades of success in fire prevention.



## MOTION

The Disaster and Fire Safety Commission will:

- (1) Establish a Vision Zero work group that will adopt the February 28, 2024 Vision Zero briefing document as an overarching framework; and,
- (2) In consultation with a representative of the Transportation and Infrastructure Commission, the Vision Zero work group will draft a recommendation to Council requesting additional resources for the Department to establish a Street Trauma Prevention (STP) program, which will coordinate with other City departments and commissions, including the Disaster and Fire Safety Commission, to integrate the Department's perspectives on both prevention and response into the City's traffic safety projects related to Vision Zero and other policies.