

















UNT | SCHOOL OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS
Department of Public Administration

# PEDESTRIAN SAFETY IN TEXAS

## STATEWIDE CRASH TRENDS AND SPATIAL PATTERNS IN THE DALLAS–FORT WORTH REGION (2016–2025)

**URBAN PLANNING STUDENT REPORT**

FALL 2025

# Pedestrian Safety in Texas:

## Statewide Crash Trends and Spatial Patterns in the Dallas–Fort Worth Region (2016–2025)


**Student Contributors**

(*Listed alphabetically by last name*)

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***About This Report***

This report was developed as a collaborative student research project in PADM 3230 – *Visualization of Urban Place, Space, and Policy*, offered in Fall 2026 by the Urban Policy and Planning Program at the University of North Texas.

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Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), Crash Records Information System (CRIS), 2016–2025.

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report examines pedestrian safety in Texas from 2016 through 2025, focusing on statewide crash trends, pedestrian fatalities, and spatial patterns of pedestrian crashes in the Dallas–Fort Worth (DFW) region. The primary data source is the Texas Department of Transportation's (TxDOT) Crash Records Information System (CRIS), which contains detailed information on traffic crashes, including their location, time, and severity (TxDOT, 2026). From 6.24 million reported traffic crashes during the ten-year period, we identified and analyzed 79,893 pedestrian-involved crashes, involving 7,513 pedestrian deaths. We examined changes in pedestrian crashes and fatalities over time, compared population-adjusted fatality rates across major Texas counties and cities, and used Geographic Information Systems (GIS) to identify areas with high concentrations of pedestrian crashes in ten selected DFW cities.

The findings highlight several important pedestrian safety concerns. Pedestrians accounted for nearly one in five traffic fatalities in Texas during the study period. Pedestrian crash severity increased sharply during the COVID-19 pandemic, followed by a decline in pedestrian fatalities in recent years. However, these improvements have not been consistent across cities. Dallas recorded the highest population-adjusted pedestrian fatality rate among Texas's six largest cities, while Houston stood out for its upward trend in pedestrian deaths over the decade.

Using pedestrian crash locations, we developed heatmaps for ten DFW cities to identify high-risk pedestrian crash zones. A closer examination of these areas revealed recurring concerns related to wide arterial roads, inadequate pedestrian crossings, intersection design, freeway access points, and mismatches between land use and pedestrian infrastructure. These findings provide useful insights for planners and transportation officials working to improve pedestrian safety and advance Vision Zero goals of eliminating traffic deaths and serious injuries.

## KEY FINDINGS

1. **Pedestrians account for nearly one in five traffic deaths in Texas**. During 2016–2025, pedestrians represented approximately 19% of all traffic fatalities, despite pedestrian-involved crashes accounting for only a small share of reported traffic crashes.
2. **Pedestrian crash severity increased sharply during the COVID-19 pandemic**. Despite a substantial decline in reported traffic crashes in 2020, pedestrian deaths increased. The number of pedestrian deaths per 100 reported pedestrian crashes rose from 8.29 in 2019 to 11.36 in 2021.
3. **Pedestrian fatalities have declined in recent years, but pedestrian crashes remain high**. Texas recorded decreases in pedestrian deaths in both 2024 and 2025. However, the number of reported pedestrian crashes has not shown a similar downward trend.
4. **Dallas has the highest pedestrian fatality rate among Texas's six largest cities**, with an average of 5.0 deaths per 100,000 residents annually.
5. **Houston recorded the highest number of pedestrian deaths among Texas's six largest cities**, with a substantial increase over time. Pedestrian deaths in Houston increased by 53% between 2017 and 2024, reaching their peak in 2024, even though fatalities declined nationally after 2022.
6. **Roadway design and surrounding land use emerge as important concerns in high-risk pedestrian crash zones.** Common characteristics include wide, multi-lane roads, inadequate pedestrian crossings, and intersections with large turning radii that allow faster vehicle turns and create long, dangerous crossings for pedestrians. Many of these locations are surrounded by commercial strip malls, gas stations, convenience stores, big-box retailers, and residential developments, particularly multifamily housing, that generate substantial pedestrian activity but lack adequate pedestrian-friendly infrastructure. Another concern is freeway access points, where vehicles transition from high-speed highways onto local streets with pedestrian activity, creating potential safety conflicts.

# 1. STATEWIDE PEDESTRIAN CRASH TRENDS

## 1.1 Pedestrian fatalities have declined from their peak, but crashes remain high

Between 2016 and 2025, Texas recorded approximately 6.24 million traffic crashes and 39,783 traffic fatalities, including 79,893 pedestrian crashes and 7,513 pedestrian deaths (Table 1). Pedestrian deaths increased from 715 in 2016 to a peak of 848 in 2021, an increase of 18.6%. Encouragingly, pedestrian fatalities declined in both 2024 and 2025, although the number of pedestrian crashes has not shown a similar downward trend.

## 1.2 Pedestrian crashes are much more likely to result in death than traffic crashes

Pedestrian crashes are particularly dangerous because pedestrians are more vulnerable to serious injury or death in a collision. During 2016–2025, Texas recorded approximately 9.4 pedestrian deaths per 100 reported pedestrian crashes, compared with 0.64 traffic deaths per 100 reported traffic crashes (Table 1). Pedestrians accounted for approximately 19% of all traffic fatalities during this period, or nearly one in five traffic deaths. This share was slightly higher in Texas than the national average (19.33% versus 18.0% in 2024).

The high share of pedestrian fatalities is particularly concerning given that walking accounts for a relatively small share of travel in the United States. According to the 2022 National Household Travel Survey (NHTS), walking accounted for 6.8% of all trips and only 0.62% of total person-miles traveled nationally (FHWA, 2024). Yet pedestrians accounted for 17.7% of all U.S. traffic fatalities in 2022, compared with 19.07% in Texas (Table 1). These figures suggest that pedestrians in the United States face a disproportionately high fatality risk relative to how little they walk.

## 1.3 The COVID-19 period marked a sharp increase in pedestrian crash severity

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Texas experienced a substantial decline in traffic crashes but an increase in pedestrian deaths. Between 2019 and 2020, total traffic crashes declined by approximately 16%, and pedestrian crashes also decreased. Despite fewer crashes, pedestrian deaths increased from 699 to 736. Consequently, the number of pedestrian deaths per 100 reported pedestrian crashes rose sharply from 8.29 in 2019 to 11.05 in 2020, reaching 11.36 in 2021 (Table 1). This indicates that reported pedestrian crashes became more severe during the pandemic period. Higher traffic speeds and changes in travel patterns may have contributed to this increase, although further analysis is needed to establish the causes.

**Table 1: Trends in Traffic Crashes and Pedestrian Fatalities in Texas (2016–2025)**

| Year | Total Crashes | Total Traffic Fatalities | Overall Crash Fatality Rate (%) | Pedestrian Crashes | Pedestrian Deaths | Pedestrian Crash Fatality Rate (%) | Pedestrian Share of Traffic Fatalities (%) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2016 | 632,305 | 3,794 | 0.60% | 8214 | 715 | 8.70% | 18.85% |
| 2017 | 620,868 | 3,727 | 0.60% | 8056 | 642 | 7.97% | 17.23% |
| 2018 | 629,256 | 3,657 | 0.58% | 8024 | 662 | 8.25% | 18.10% |
| 2019 | 649,105 | 3,622 | 0.56% | 8433 | 699 | 8.29% | 19.30% |
| 2020 | 546,108 | 3,898 | 0.71% | 6660 | 736 | 11.05% | 18.88% |
| 2021 | 633,784 | 4,456 | 0.70% | 7462 | 848 | 11.36% | 19.03% |
| 2022 | 635,601 | 4,410 | 0.69% | 7896 | 841 | 10.65% | 19.07% |
| 2023 | 639,182 | 4,291 | 0.67% | 8184 | 842 | 10.29% | 19.62% |
| 2024 | 634,262 | 4,159 | 0.66% | 8481 | 804 | 9.48% | 19.33% |
| 2025 | 618,768 | 3,769 | 0.61% | 8483 | 724 | 8.53% | 19.21% |
| **Total** | **6.24 million** | **39,783** | **0.64%** | **79,893** | **7,513** | **9.40%** | **18.88%** |

# 2. REGIONAL AND CITY-LEVEL PATTERNS

## 2.1 Pedestrian fatalities vary substantially across Texas counties

Among Texas's ten most populous counties, Harris County recorded the largest number of pedestrian deaths (1,535) during 2016–2025, accounting for approximately one-fifth of all pedestrian fatalities statewide (Figure 1). However, Bexar County had the highest average annual pedestrian fatality rate (3.54 deaths per 100,000 residents), followed by Dallas County (3.41) and Harris County (3.24) (Table 2). Within the Dallas–Fort Worth region, Dallas and Tarrant counties recorded considerably higher fatality rates than Denton and Collin counties.

## 2.2 Pedestrian fatality rates vary considerably across Texas cities

Among Texas's six largest cities, Houston recorded the largest number of pedestrian deaths (959), followed by Dallas (652) and San Antonio (630). However, after accounting for population size, Dallas had the highest average annual pedestrian fatality rate, with 5.0 deaths per 100,000 residents, followed by San Antonio (4.39) and Houston (4.16) (Table 3).

High pedestrian fatality rates are not limited to the largest cities. Among the cities examined, Beaumont stands out with an average annual fatality rate of 5.73 deaths per 100,000 residents, exceeding even Dallas. Tyler (3.87) and Odessa (3.76) also recorded relatively high rates among cities with populations of 100,000–200,000. Among cities with populations of 200,000–500,000, Corpus Christi had the highest fatality rate (3.62) (Tables 4 and 5).

## 2.3 Pedestrian fatality trends differ across major Texas cities

Houston stands out for its substantial increase in pedestrian fatalities over the past decade. Between 2017 and 2024, pedestrian deaths increased by 41, from 78 to 119, an increase of 53% (Figure 2). Austin, Dallas, and San Antonio also experienced substantial increases during this period. However, pedestrian fatalities nationally have declined for three consecutive years since 2022 (GHSA 2026), and Texas recorded declines in 2024 and 2025. A similar downward pattern is evident in several major cities, particularly Austin, Dallas, and San Antonio, following their peaks in 2022. Houston shows a different pattern, with pedestrian deaths reaching their highest level in 2024 despite the broader declines. Although pedestrian deaths in Houston decreased in 2025, they remained considerably higher than at the beginning of the decade.

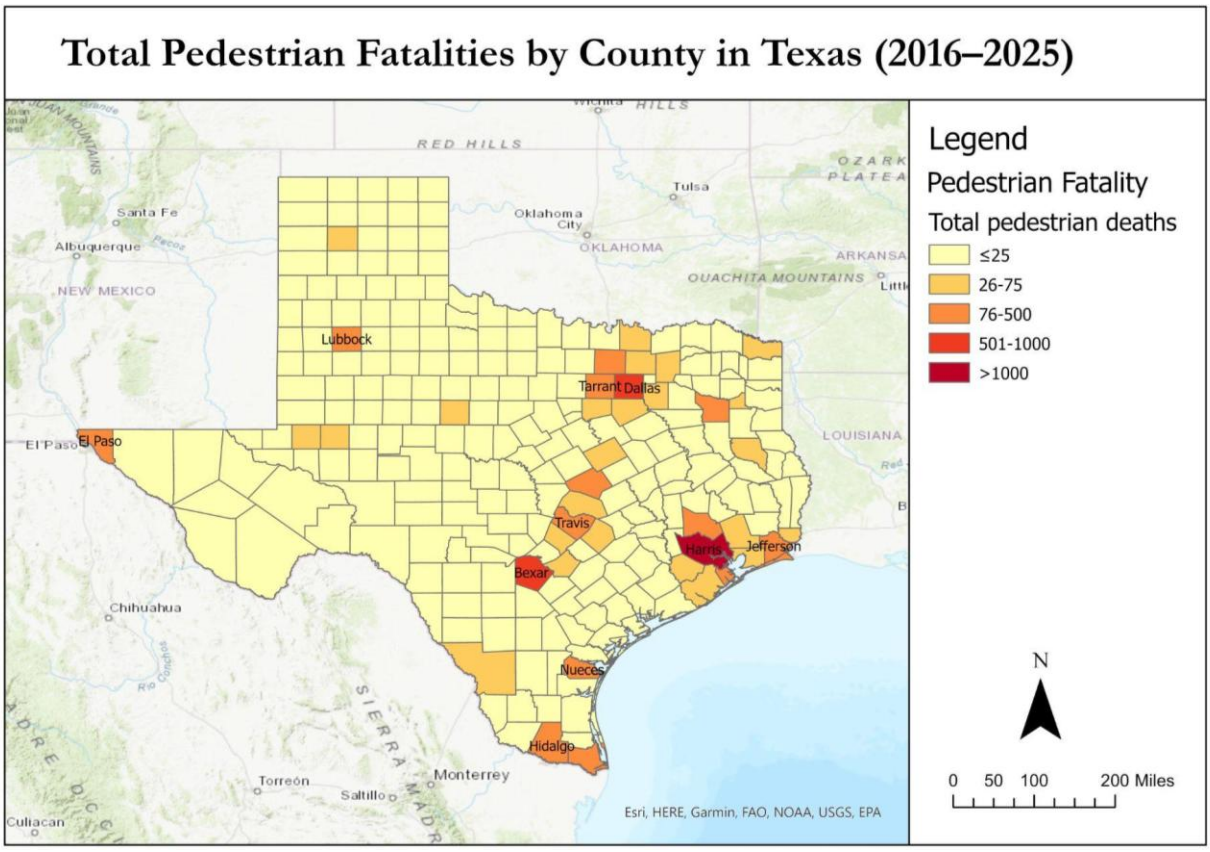



Figure 1: Total pedestrian fatalities by county in Texas (2016-2025)

**Table 2: Pedestrian Crashes, in Texas's Ten Most Populous Counties (2016–2025)**

| County | Population (2020) | Total Pedestrian Deaths | Total Pedestrian Crashes | Average Annual Pedestrian Fatality Rate (per 100,000 Residents) | Fatality Rate Rank |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Bexar | 2009324 | 712 | 9326 | 3.54 | 1 |
| Dallas | 2613539 | 892 | 9878 | 3.41 | 2 |
| Harris | 4731145 | 1535 | 18767 | 3.24 | 3 |
| Travis | 1290188 | 414 | 4543 | 3.21 | 4 |
| El Paso | 865657 | 226 | 2793 | 2.61 | 5 |
| Tarrant | 2110640 | 515 | 5605 | 2.44 | 6 |
| Hidalgo | 870781 | 155 | 1827 | 1.78 | 7 |
| Denton | 906422 | 95 | 1378 | 1.05 | 8 |
| Fort Bend | 822779 | 64 | 1070 | 0.78 | 9 |
| Collin | 1064465 | 68 | 1456 | 0.64 | 10 |

**Table 3: Pedestrian Crashes, Fatalities, and Fatality Rates in Six Most Populous Cities: 2016-2025**

| City | Population (2020) | Total Pedestrian Deaths | Total Pedestrian Crashes | Average Annual Pedestrian Fatality Rate (per 100,000 Residents) | Fatality Rate Rank |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Dallas | 1304379 | 652 | 6752 | 5.00 | 1 |
| San Antonio | 1434625 | 630 | 8538 | 4.39 | 2 |
| Houston | 2304580 | 959 | 13033 | 4.16 | 3 |
| Austin | 961855 | 359 | 4296 | 3.73 | 4 |
| Fort Worth | 918915 | 340 | 3117 | 3.7 | 5 |
| El Paso | 678815 | 205 | 2559 | 3.02 | 6 |

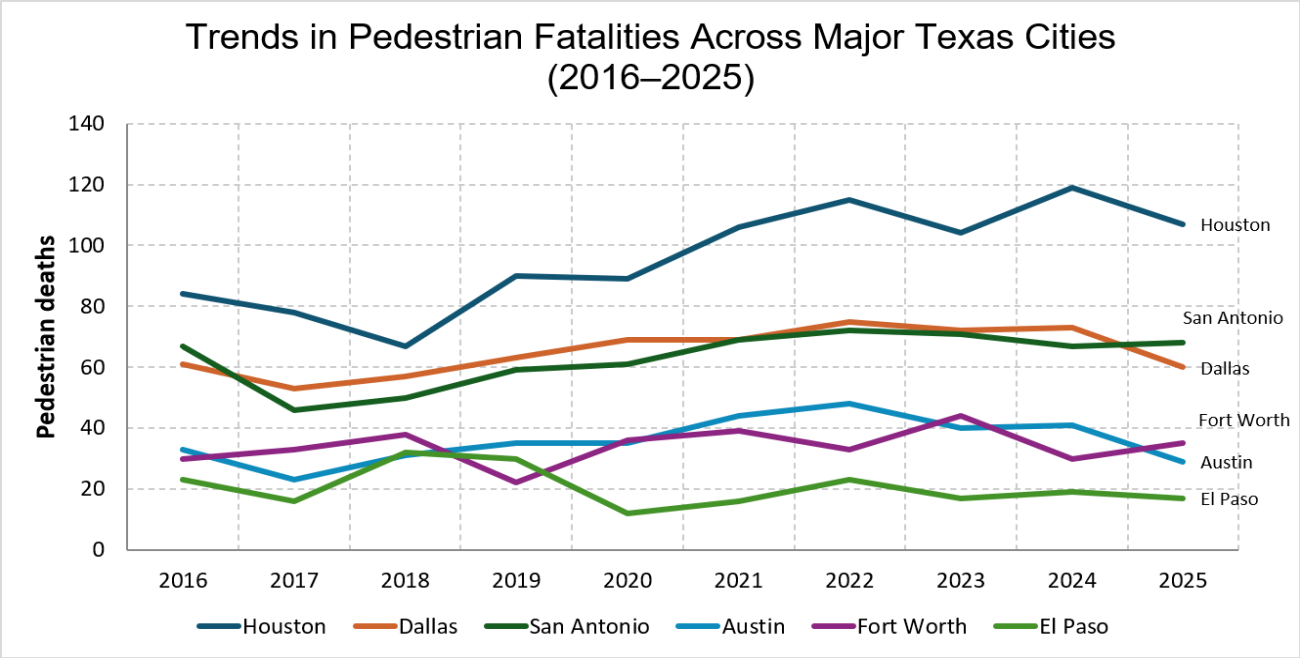


Figure 2: Trends in pedestrian fatalities across major Texas cities (2016-2025)

**Table 4: Pedestrian Crashes, Fatalities, and Fatality Rates in Cities with population 200,000-500,000: 2016-2025**

| City | Population (2020) | Total Pedestrian Deaths | Total Pedestrian Crashes | Average Annual Pedestrian Fatality Rate (per 100,000 Residents) | Fatality Rate Rank |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Corpus Christi | 317863 | 115 | 1286 | 3.62 | 1 |
| Lubbock | 257141 | 80 | 975 | 3.11 | 2 |
| Amarillo | 200393 | 55 | 727 | 2.74 | 3 |

*(See the full list in Appendix)*

**Table 5: Pedestrian Crashes, Fatalities, and Fatality Rates in Cities with population 100,000-200,000: 2016-2025**

| City | Population (2020) | Total Pedestrian Deaths | Total Pedestrian Crashes | Average Annual Pedestrian Fatality Rate (per 100,000 Residents) | Fatality Rate Rank |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Beaumont | 115282 | 66 | 560 | 5.73 | 1 |
| Tyler | 105995 | 41 | 354 | 3.87 | 2 |
| Odessa | 114428 | 43 | 430 | 3.76 | 3 |
| Midland | 132524 | 41 | 348 | 3.09 | 4 |
| Waco | 138486 | 37 | 483 | 2.67 | 5 |

*(See the full list in Appendix)*

# 3. WHERE ARE PEDESTRIAN CRASHES CONCENTRATED IN DALLAS-FORT WORTH REGION?

## 3.1 Mapping High-Risk Pedestrian Crash Zones Across DFW Cities

To identify areas with high concentrations of pedestrian crashes, we conducted a GIS-based Kernel Density analysis of reported pedestrian crashes from 2016 to 2025 in ten Dallas–Fort Worth (DFW) cities: Dallas, Fort Worth, Arlington, Irving, Garland, Grand Prairie, Plano, McKinney, Lewisville, and Denton. Using geocoded crash locations from TxDOT's Crash Records Information System (CRIS), we developed heatmaps to visualize the spatial distribution and density of pedestrian crashes within each city. Kernel Density analysis identifies areas where crash locations are clustered more closely together, with higher density values indicating greater concentrations of reported crashes (Figure 3-13). These maps help identify high-risk pedestrian crash zones and provide a basis for examining common roadway design and land use characteristics associated with these locations.

## 3.2 Common Roadway Design and Land Use Factors in High-Risk Pedestrian Crash Zones

The following observations highlight common roadway design and land use characteristics that may contribute to pedestrian safety problems, with examples from selected locations across the DFW region.

1. **Wide, multi-lane roads with long pedestrian crossing distances:** A very common characteristic of high-risk pedestrian crash zones is the presence of wide, multi-lane arterial roads designed primarily for automobile movement. High vehicle speeds, long crossing distances, and narrow medians make it difficult for pedestrians to cross safely and increase their exposure to moving traffic. Examples include Webb Chapel Road at Timberline Drive in Dallas (Figure 14) and West Pioneer Parkway (Spur 303) in Arlington (Figure 19).
2. **Limited crosswalks along busy commercial corridors.** Several high-risk pedestrian crash zones have long stretches of roadway without crosswalks, despite having shops, restaurants, convenience stores, and residential areas on both sides. Such design factors make pedestrians cross midblock rather than walk considerable distances to the nearest intersection. This pattern is particularly evident along East Lancaster Avenue and East Berry Street in Fort Worth (Figure 17-18), Shaddy Brook Lane (Dallas) (Figure 15) and sections of South Cooper Street in Arlington (Figure 20).

3. **Poor intersection design:** Another common characteristic of high-risk pedestrian crash zones is the presence of intersections with large corner radii, wide turning lanes, and long pedestrian crossings. These design features facilitate faster vehicle turns but create more difficult and potentially unsafe crossing conditions for pedestrians. North Belt Line Road at West Northgate Drive in Irving is a clear example, with large turning radii, a wide intersection, and a narrow pedestrian median (Figure 21). Similar concerns are evident around Park Lane and Greenville Avenue near DART Park Lane Station in Dallas (Figure 16). In addition, narrow medians provide inadequate refuge for pedestrians crossing wide, multi-lane roads, particularly when they cannot complete the crossing in a single signal cycle. A good example is the intersection of West Pioneer Parkway (Spur 303) and South Cooper Street in Arlington (Figure 19).
4. **Surrounding land use factors and lack of pedestrian infrastructure:** A recurring concern in high-risk pedestrian crash zones is the concentration of multifamily housing and commercial land uses, including convenience stores, shopping centers, and big-box retailers, along busy arterial roads with inadequate pedestrian crossings. While these land uses generate substantial pedestrian activity, the surrounding road infrastructure often fails to accommodate people walking between nearby destinations. South Cooper Street (SH 157) in Arlington, particularly south of UT Arlington, provides a clear example (Figure 20). Similar conditions are evident at North Belt Line Road and West Northgate Drive in Irving, where multifamily housing and commercial establishments are located around a major intersection with long pedestrian crossings (Figure 21).
5. **Highway and freeway access points:** Several high-risk pedestrian crash zones are located near intersections immediately adjacent to freeway exits, where vehicles transition from high-speed highways onto local streets. These intersections often involve heavy turning traffic, large turning radii, and busy pedestrian crossings. Vehicles exiting freeways may also maintain relatively high speeds as they approach streets serving nearby businesses, restaurants, and residential areas. Examples include East Berry Street near I-35W in Fort Worth (Figure 18), West Centerville Road near I-635 in Garland (Figure 23), and Forest Lane near I-635 in Dallas, University Drive (US 380) in Denton (Figure 22).

**Dallas**

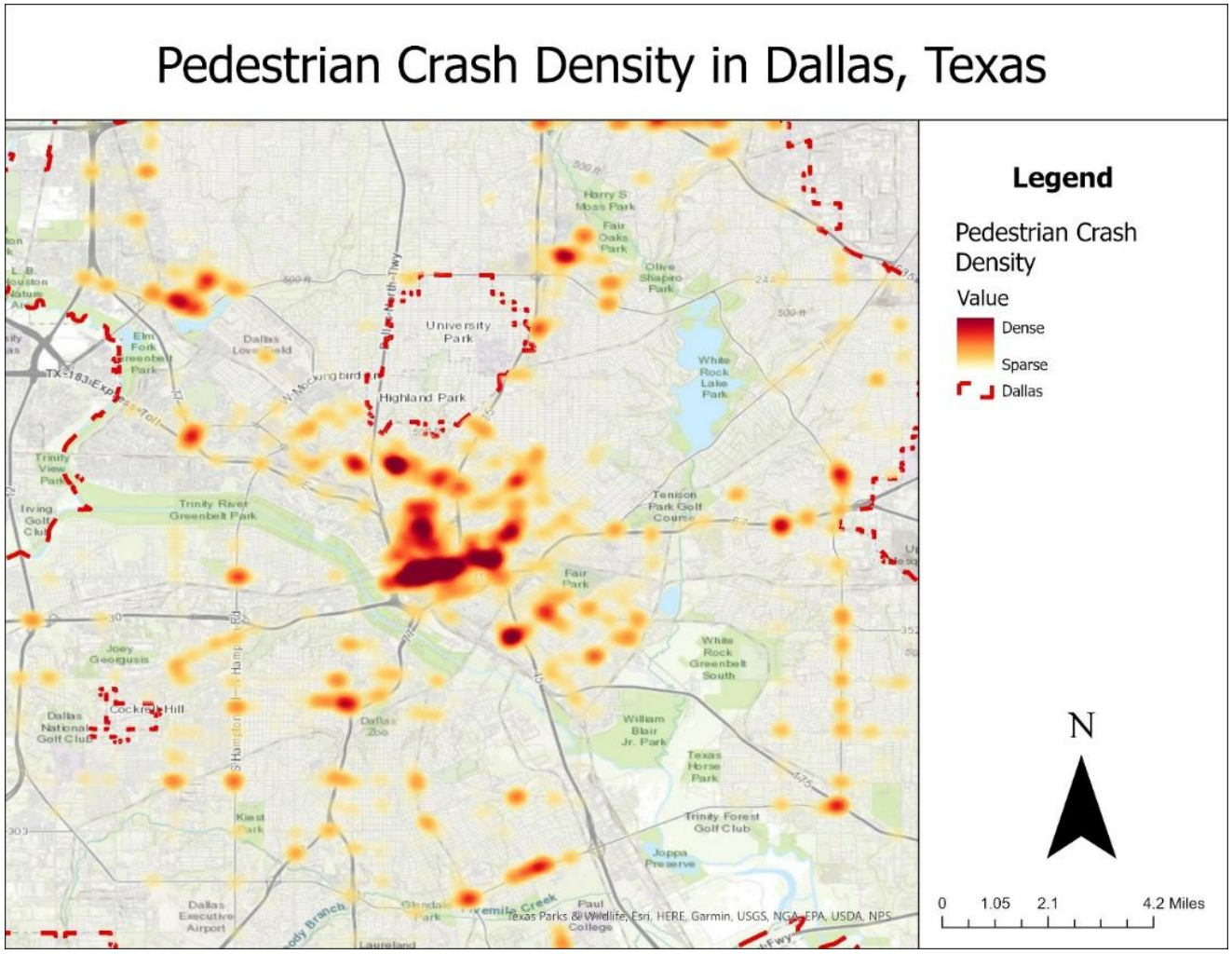



Figure 3: Pedestrian Crash Density in Dallas

**Fort Worth**

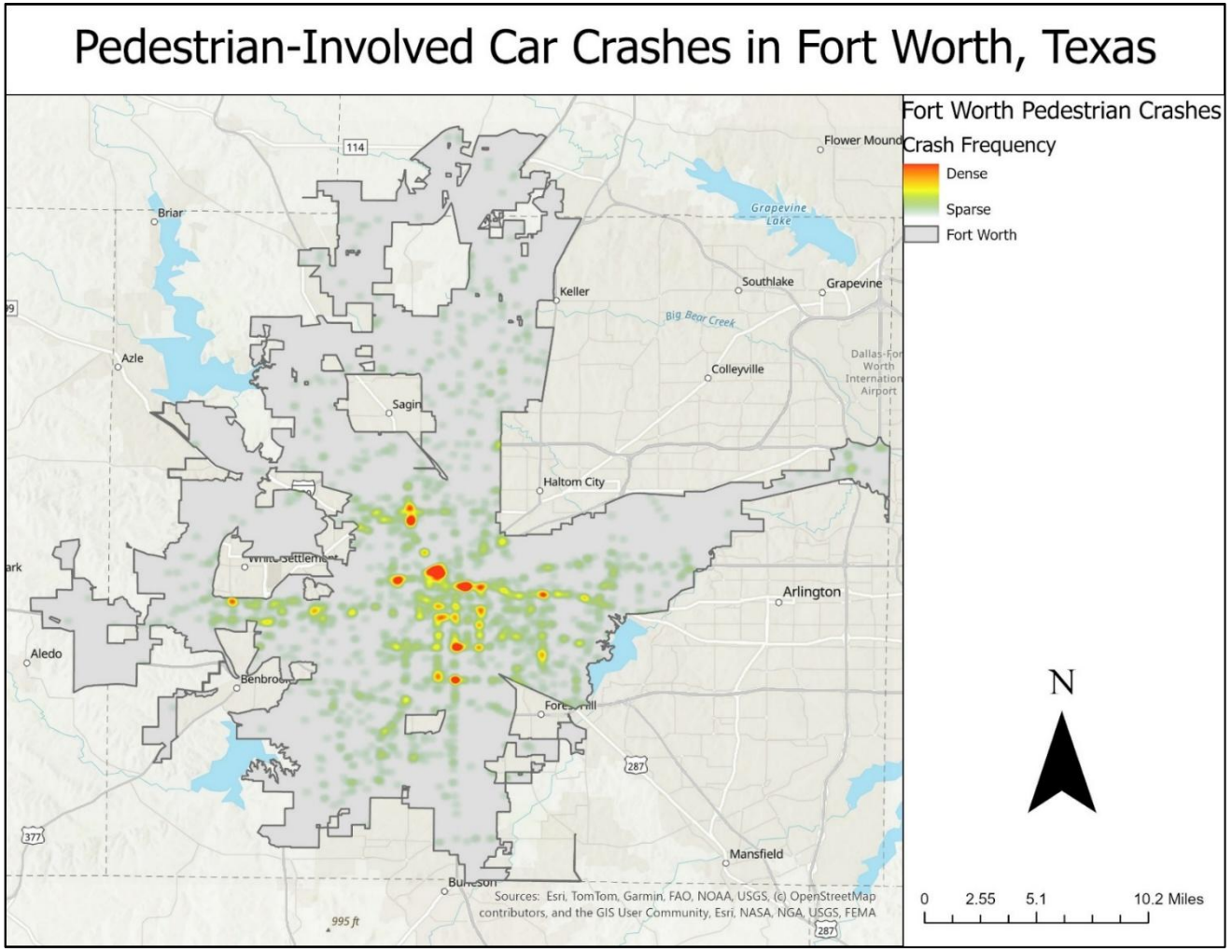



Figure 4: Pedestrian Crash Density in Fort Worth

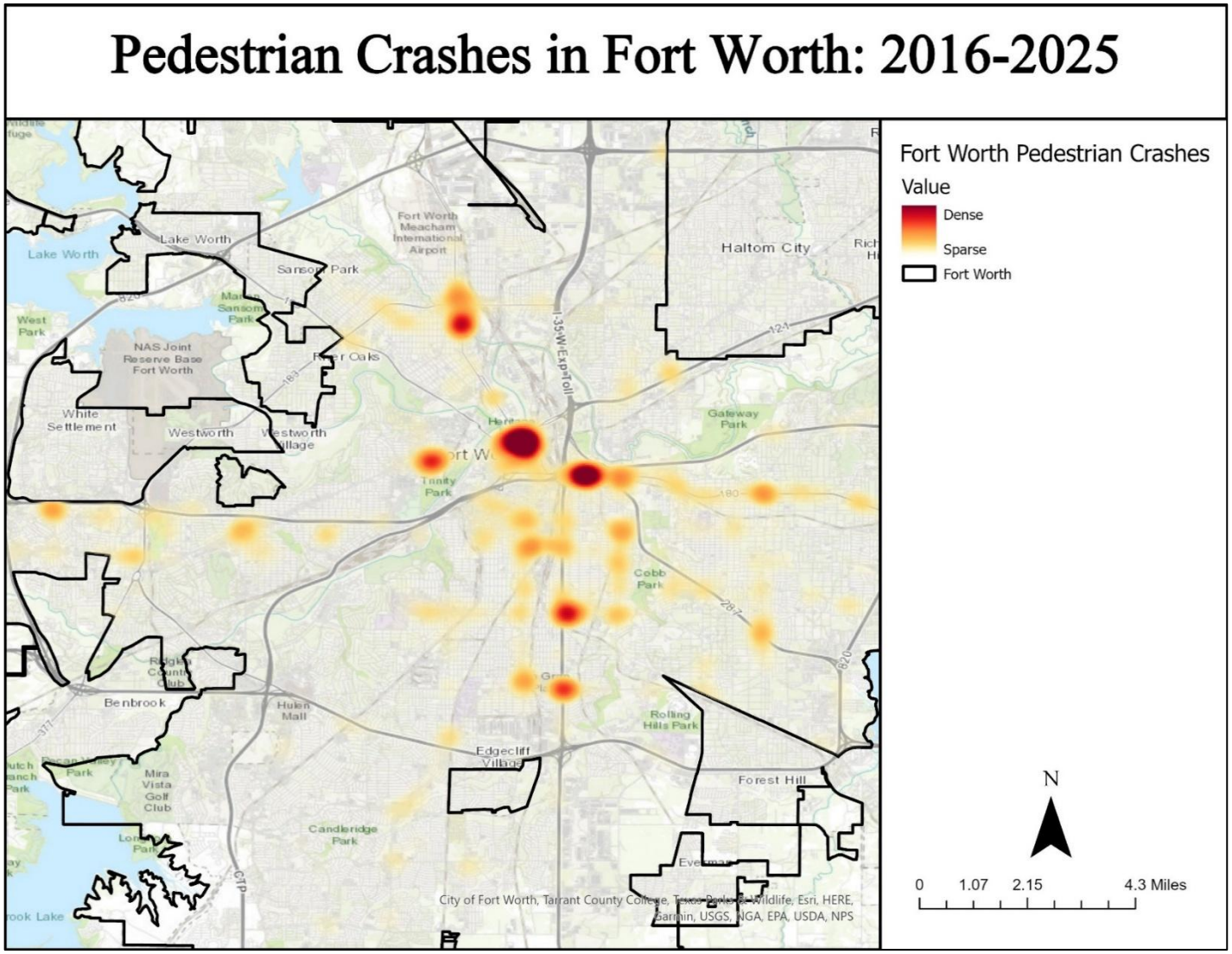



Figure 5: Pedestrian Crash Density in Fort Worth

**Arlington**

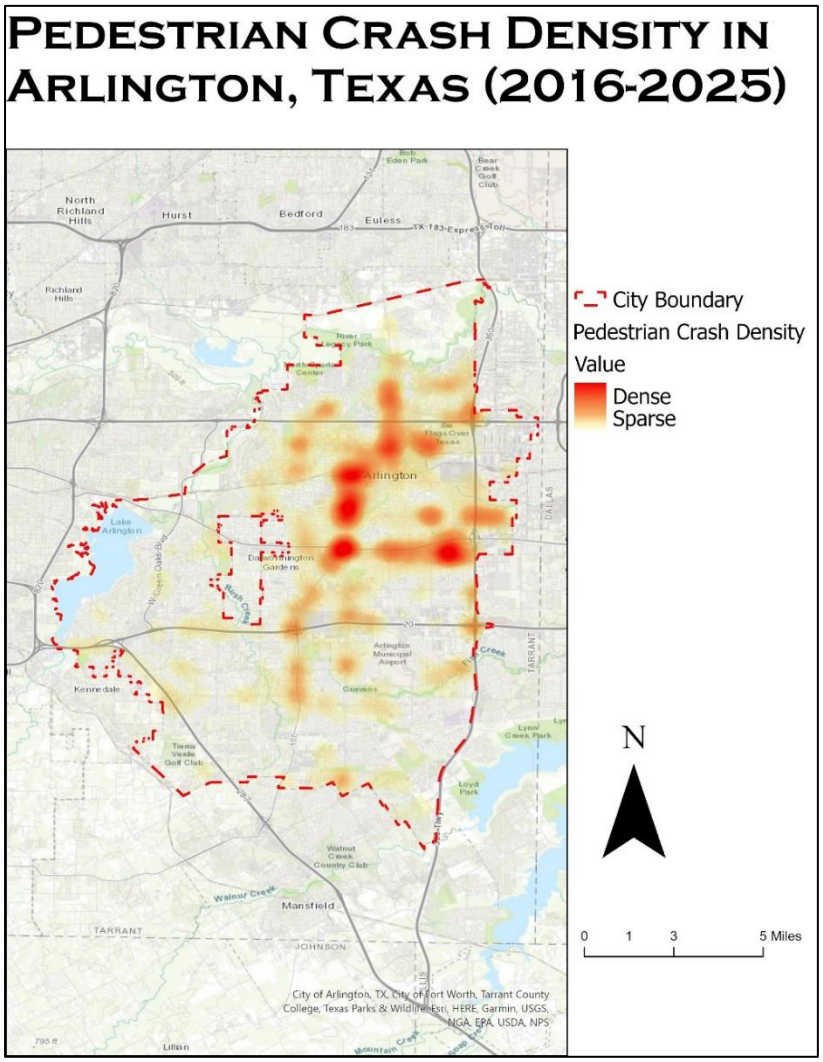



Figure 6: Pedestrian Crash Density in Arlington

Irving

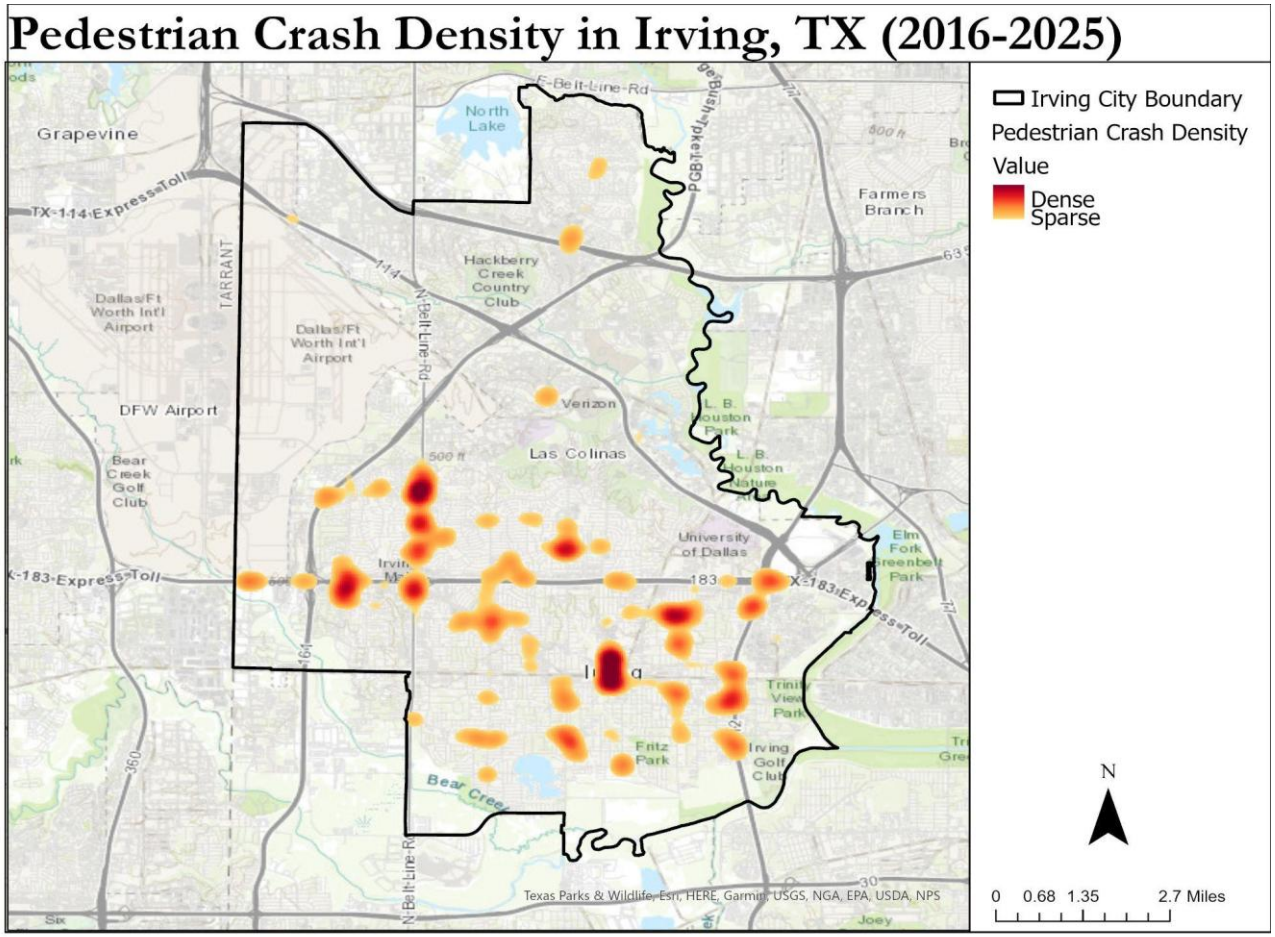



Figure 7: Pedestrian Crash Density in Irving

**Denton**

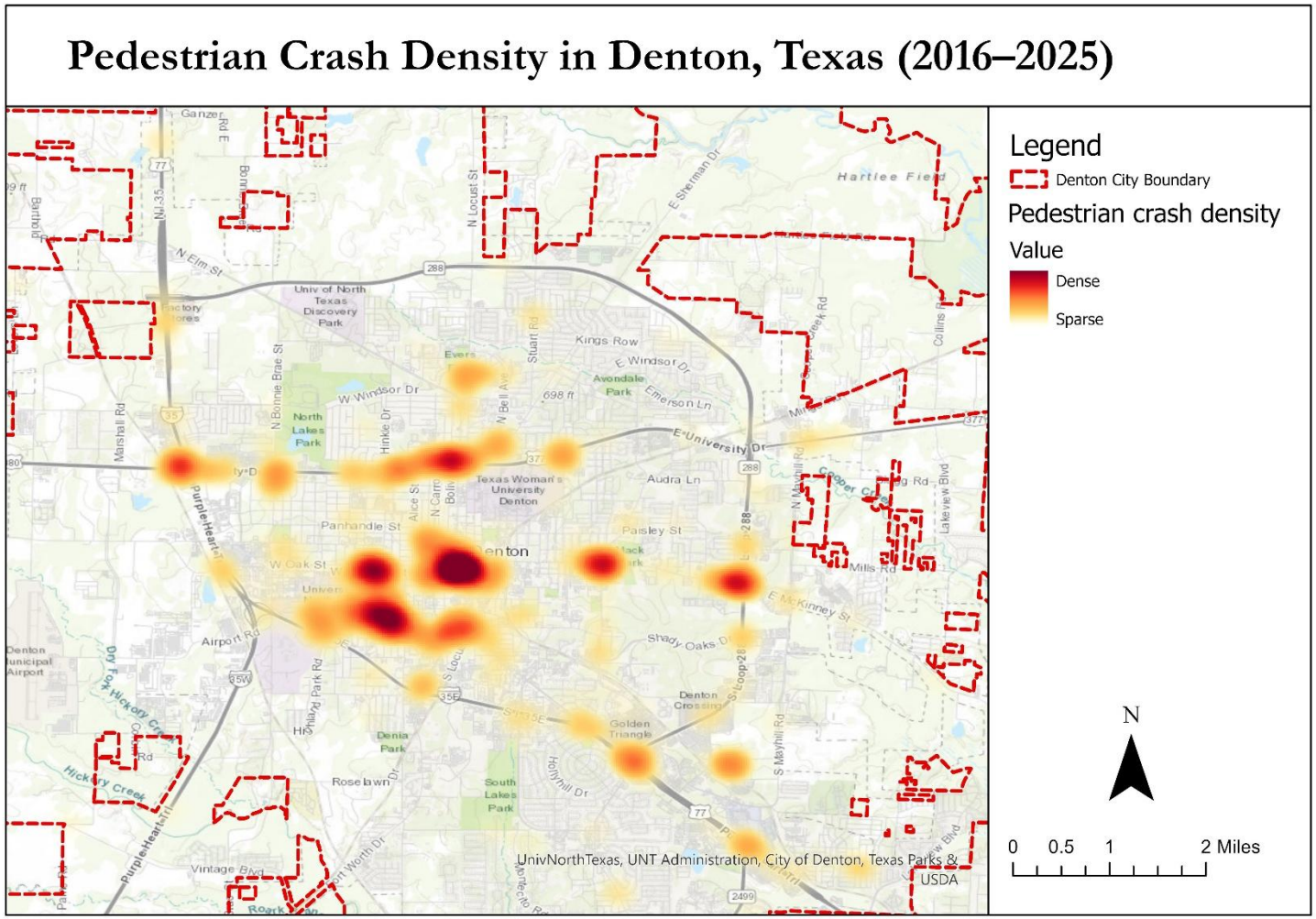



Figure 8: Pedestrian Crash Density in Denton

**Garland**

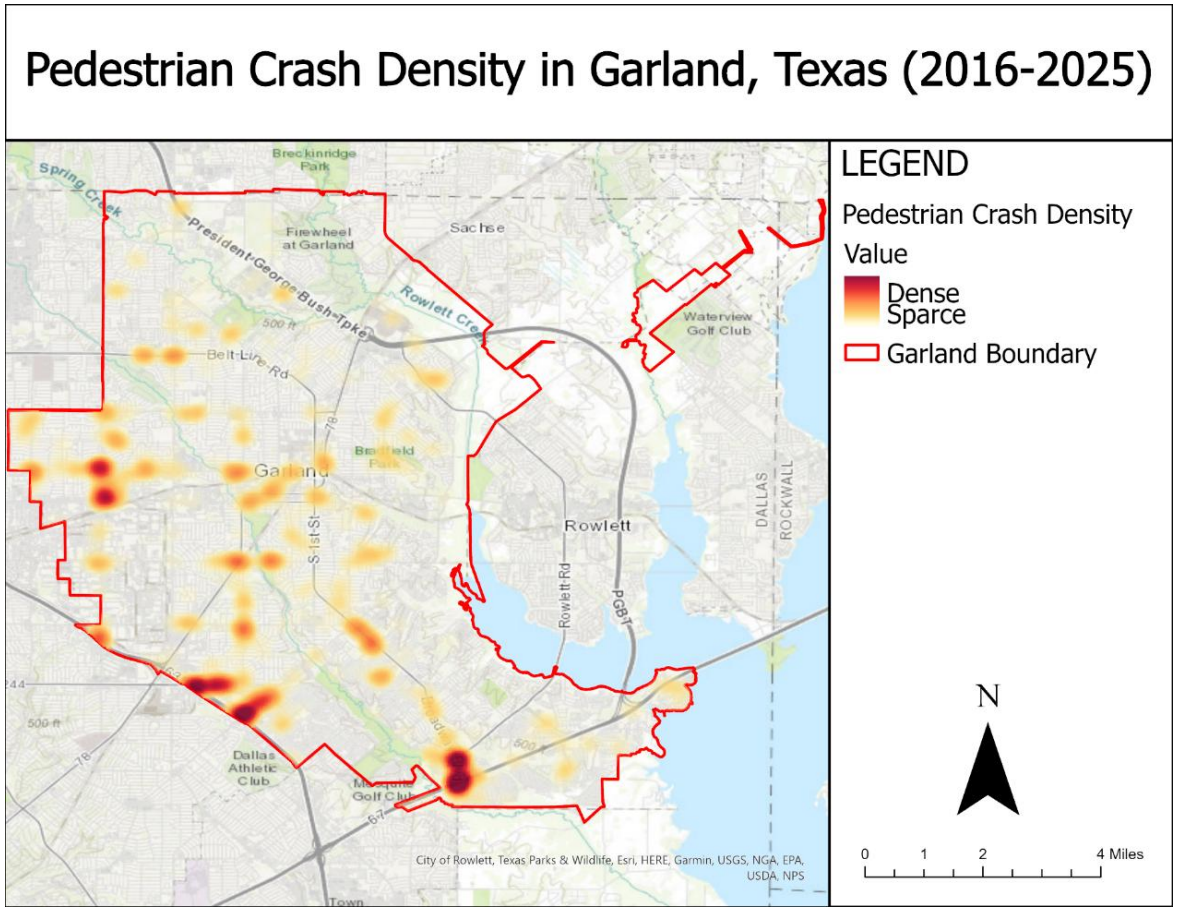



Figure 9: Pedestrian Crash Density in Garland

**Lewisville**

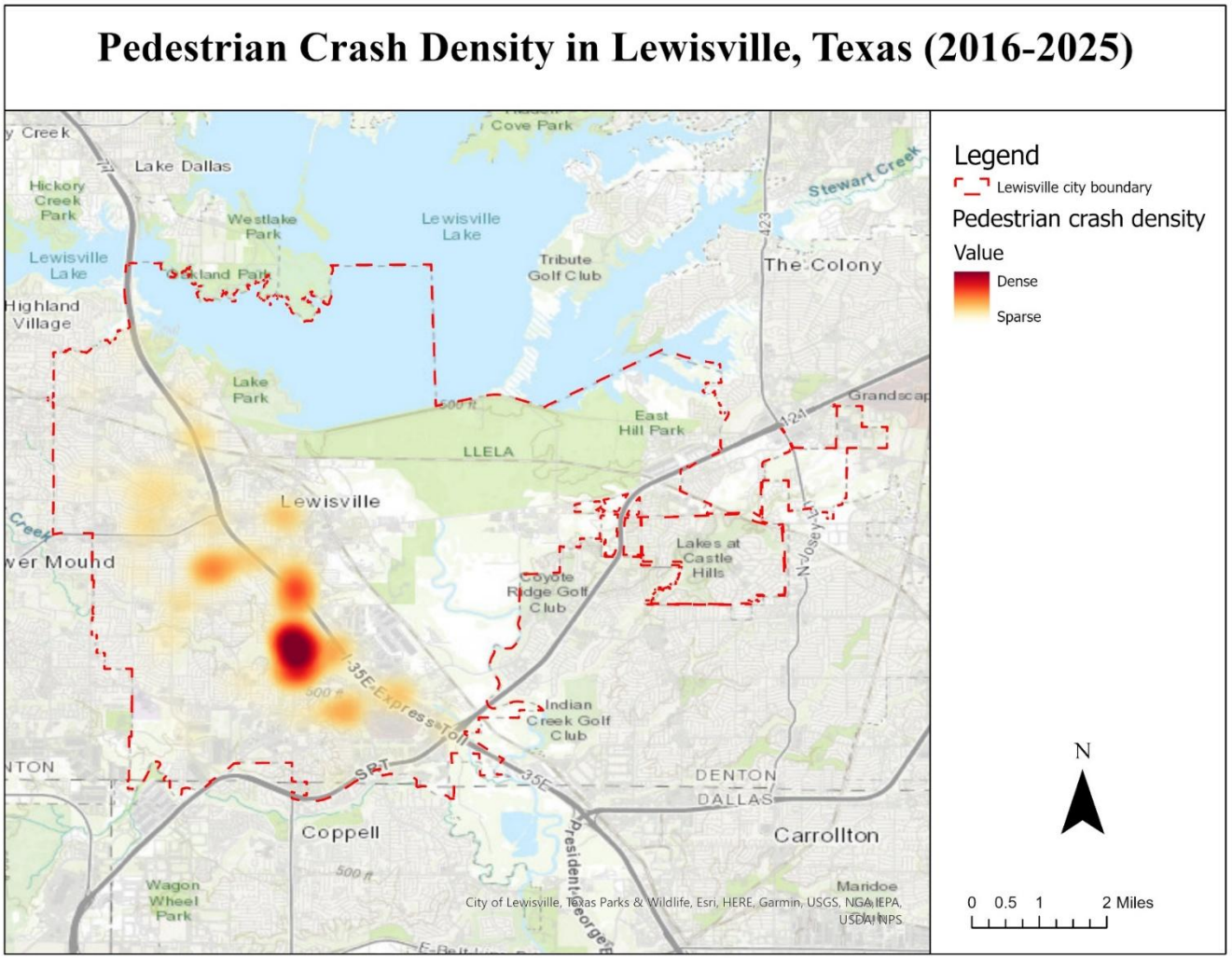



Figure 10: Pedestrian Crash Density in Lewisville

**Plano**

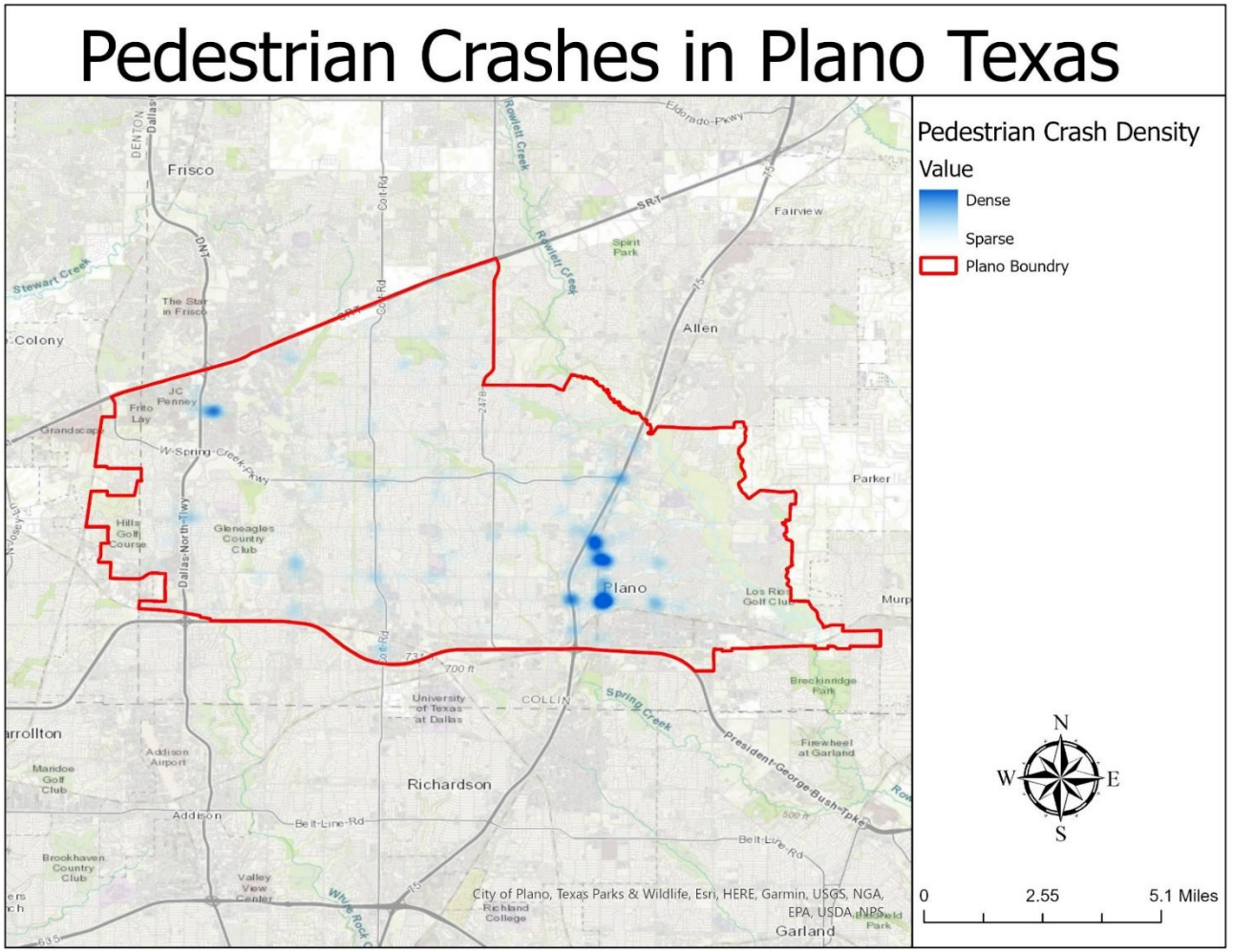



Figure 11: Pedestrian Crash Density in Plano

**McKinney**

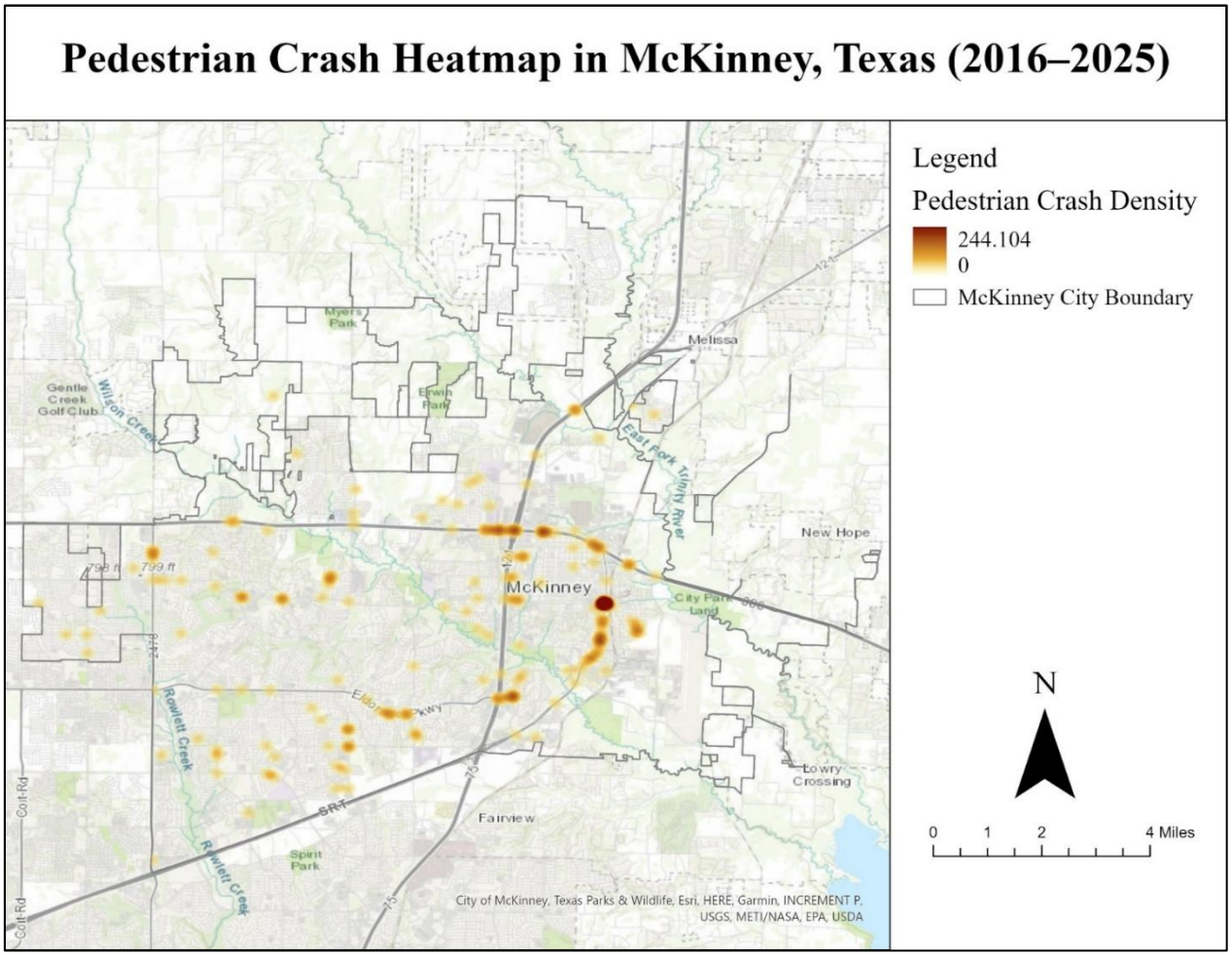



Figure 12: Pedestrian Crash Density in McKinney

**Grand Prairie**

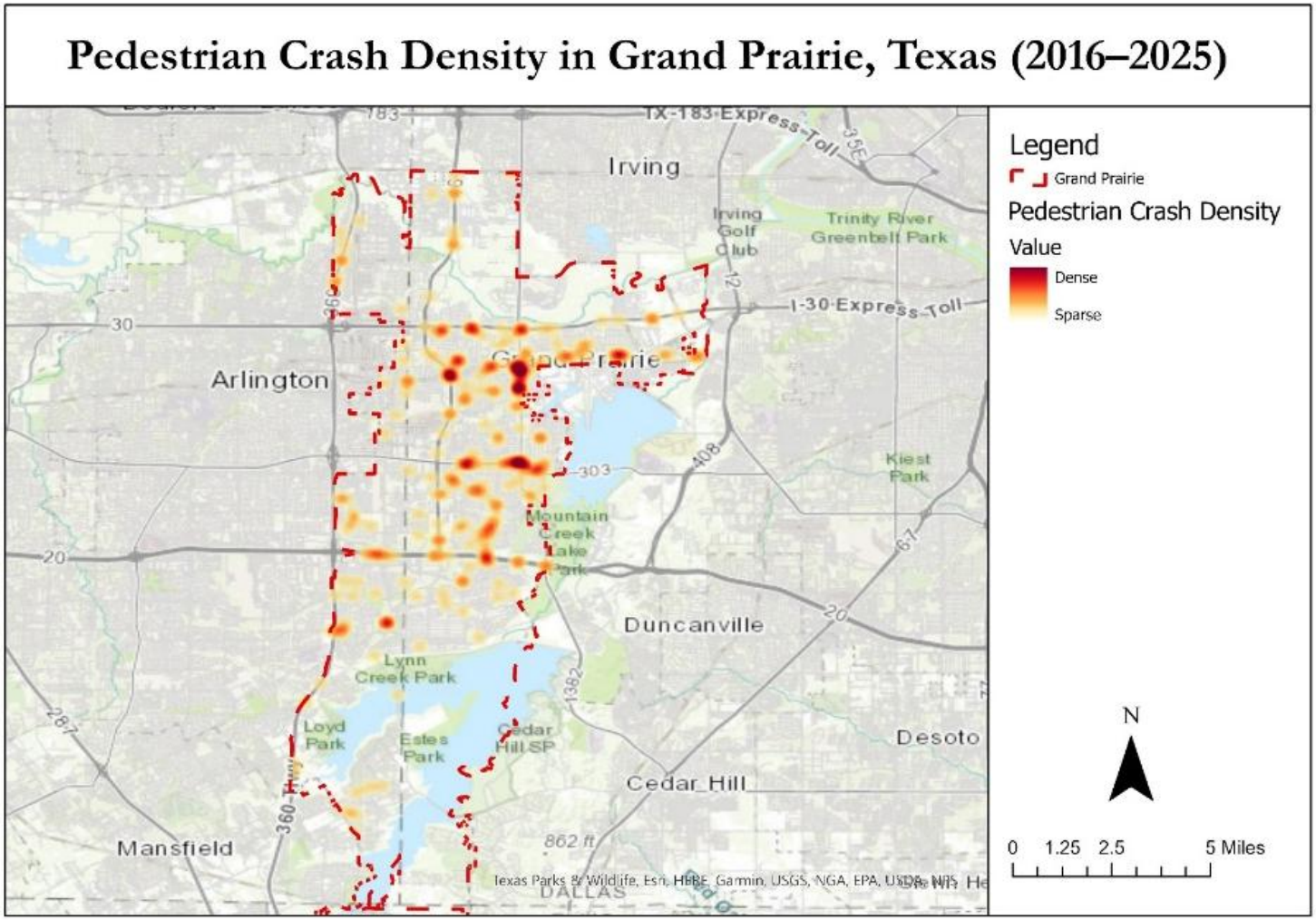



Figure 13: Pedestrian Crash Density in Grand Prairie




Figure 14: Webb Chapel Road & Timberline Dr intersection (Dallas)




Figure 15: Shady Brook Lane (Dallas)




Figure 16: Greenville Ave & Park Lane intersection (Dallas)




Figure 17: East Lancaster Avenue and Riverside Drive (Fort Worth)




Figure 18: E Berry St (near I-35) Fort Worth




Figure 19: W Pioneer Parkway (Spur 303) and S Cooper St in Arlington




Figure 20: S cooper St (SM 157) Arlington

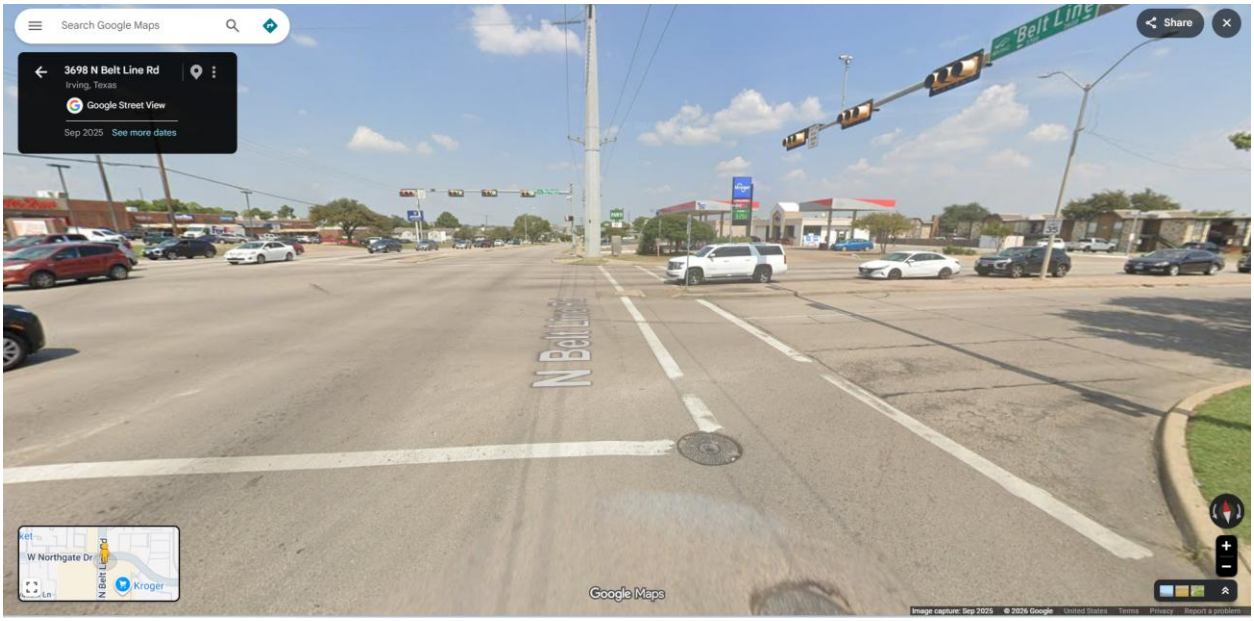



Figure 21: N Belt Road & W Northgate intersection Irving




Figure 22: University Dr (Denton)




Figure 23: West Centerville Road between Broadmoor Drive and the Lyndon B. Johnson Freeway (Garland).

## Moving Toward Safer Streets

Pedestrian safety remains an important challenge in Texas, despite recent declines in fatalities. Our findings highlight significant differences across cities and identify common roadway design and land use concerns in high-risk pedestrian crash zones throughout the Dallas–Fort Worth region. In particular, wide arterial roads, inadequate pedestrian crossings, intersections designed primarily for vehicle movement, and commercial corridors with substantial pedestrian activity deserve greater attention.

Improving pedestrian safety requires looking beyond individual crash locations and considering how streets are designed and how surrounding land uses influence pedestrian activity. We hope these findings will help local governments, planners, and transportation agencies identify areas for further safety assessments, prioritize pedestrian-friendly improvements, and advance Vision Zero efforts to eliminate traffic deaths and serious injuries.

## Limitations and Considerations

Several limitations should be considered when interpreting the findings. First, the analysis relies on crashes reported in TxDOT's Crash Records Information System (CRIS). Not all pedestrian crashes are reported to law enforcement or recorded in the database, so the actual number of pedestrian crashes may be higher than reported. In addition, some CRIS records have missing or invalid geographic coordinates. Although these records were retained in statewide and local statistics when their geographic information was available, they could not be included in the GIS heatmaps. Consequently, the spatial analysis may not represent all reported crashes.

Finally, the heatmaps identify areas where pedestrian crashes are concentrated, but do not directly measure crash risk relative to pedestrian activity. More detailed safety assessments are needed to investigate these locations and determine appropriate countermeasures to reduce pedestrian crashes.

# Appendix

**Table 6: Pedestrian Crashes, Fatalities, and Fatality Rates in Cities with population 200,000-500,000: 2016-2025**

| City | Population (2020) | Total Pedestrian Deaths | Total Pedestrian Crashes | Average Annual Pedestrian Fatality Rate (per 100,000 Residents) | Fatality Rate Rank |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Corpus Christi | 317863 | 115 | 1286 | 3.62 | 1 |
| Lubbock | 257141 | 80 | 975 | 3.11 | 2 |
| Amarillo | 200393 | 55 | 727 | 2.74 | 3 |
| Arlington | 394266 | 83 | 1179 | 2.11 | 4 |
| Laredo | 255205 | 50 | 1041 | 1.96 | 5 |
| Garland | 246018 | 48 | 659 | 1.95 | 6 |
| Irving | 256684 | 49 | 657 | 1.91 | 7 |
| Plano | 285494 | 22 | 528 | 0.77 | 8 |
| Frisco | 200509 | 7 | 231 | 0.35 | 9 |

**Table 7: Pedestrian Crashes, Fatalities, and Fatality Rates in Cities with population 100,000-200,000: 2016-2025**

| City | Population (2020) | Total Pedestrian Deaths | Total Pedestrian Crashes | Average Annual Pedestrian Fatality Rate (per 100,000 Residents) | Fatality Rate Rank |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
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| Tyler | 105995 | 41 | 354 | 3.87 | 2 |
| Odessa | 114428 | 43 | 430 | 3.76 | 3 |
| Midland | 132524 | 41 | 348 | 3.09 | 4 |
| Waco | 138486 | 37 | 483 | 2.67 | 5 |
| Round Rock | 119468 | 28 | 230 | 2.34 | 6 |
| Killeen | 153095 | 35 | 427 | 2.29 | 7 |
| Denton | 139869 | 32 | 457 | 2.29 | 8 |
| Brownsville | 186738 | 42 | 637 | 2.25 | 9 |
| Lewisville | 111822 | 25 | 280 | 2.24 | 10 |
| Abilene | 125182 | 27 | 339 | 2.16 | 11 |
| McAllen | 142210 | 29 | 672 | 2.04 | 12 |
| Mesquite | 150108 | 29 | 461 | 1.93 | 13 |
| Pasadena | 151950 | 26 | 422 | 1.71 | 14 |
| Grand Prairie | 196100 | 33 | 329 | 1.68 | 15 |
| Richardson | 119469 | 20 | 297 | 1.67 | 16 |
| Edinburg | 100243 | 15 | 150 | 1.5 | 17 |
| Wichita Falls | 102316 | 15 | 249 | 1.47 | 18 |
| Carrollton | 133434 | 14 | 214 | 1.05 | 19 |
| Sugar Land | 111026 | 11 | 184 | 0.99 | 20 |
| League City | 114392 | 11 | 145 | 0.96 | 21 |
| College Station | 120511 | 9 | 355 | 0.75 | 22 |
| Pearland | 125828 | 9 | 189 | 0.72 | 23 |
| McKinney | 195308 | 12 | 236 | 0.61 | 24 |
| Allen | 104627 | 5 | 128 | 0.48 | 25 |
| The Woodlands | 114436 | 1 | 32 | 0.09 | 26 |

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