

The Oakland Press (<http://www.theoaklandpress.com>)

List of Michigan's most dangerous intersections includes six in Oakland County

By Mark Cavitt, mcavitt@digitalfirstmedia.com, [@MarkCavitt](#) on Twitter

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Oakland County has grabbed four of the top five spots on the list of Michigan's most dangerous intersections for 2016.

The annual list, "Michigan's Top 20 Most Dangerous Intersections", is published by Michigan Auto Law based in Farmington Hills.

The 2016 version of the list includes over 4,600 intersections ranked in order of the "most dangerous" in relation to the number of motor vehicle accidents.

[RELATED: See the Top 20 here, michiganautolaw.com](#)

[RELATED: See the entire list here, michiganautolaw.com](#)

Most dangerous intersections, Oakland County

(with overall ranking, number of accidents in 2016)

- 14 Mile Road and Orchard Lake Road, Farmington Hills (1, 163)

"This intersection was new to the No. 1 spot of the state's most dangerous intersections in 2016," said Steven Gursten of Michigan Auto Law. "It is an intersection that was modified from a traffic light to a roundabout during the 2015 construction season. Roundabouts still remain a safe alternative, as only 27 of the 163 total crashes at Orchard Lake and 14 Mile resulted in injuries, a very low rate compared to traditional traffic lights."

- Telegraph Road and 12 Mile Road, Southfield (3, 145)

"Telegraph has always been a well-known, high-speed/high-traffic road in metro Detroit," Gursten said. "The Telegraph/12 Mile intersection is even more so, given its proximity to Northwestern Highway and I-696."

- Pontiac Trail and M-5, Commerce Township (4, 144)

“As reported widely by local media last year, this intersection had the highest overall crashes in 2015,” he said. “The Road Commission for Oakland County installed fences as an experimental solution last June to slow down drivers and reduce the number of crashes.”

- I-75 and Big Beaver Road, Troy (5, 134)

“Unfortunately, this interchange saw a 46 percent increase in total crashes in 2016 compared to 2015,” Gursten said. “Use caution this summer as major construction along I-75 in Oakland County may affect this area and cause additional congestion.”

- Southfield Road and 11 Mile Road, Lathrup Village (11, 99)

- I-75 and M-59 interchange, Auburn Hills, (13, 92)

Intersections with most injuries, Oakland County

(overall ranking, number of car accident related injuries in 2016)

- Highland Road and Pontiac Lake Road, Waterford Township (1, 42)

- I-75 and M-59 interchange, Auburn Hills (7, 31)

- Telegraph Road and 12 Mile Road, Southfield (T-8, 30)

- Crescent Lake Road and Highland Road, Waterford Township (10, 29)

- Orchard Lake Road and 14 Mile Road, Farmington Hills (T-11, 27)

Car accident numbers and other statistics for each intersection were provided to Michigan Auto Law attorneys by the Michigan State Police Traffic Crash Reporting Unit. [RELATED: Michigan State Police Traffic Crash Reporting, michigan.gov/msp](#)

The unit collects motor vehicle accident reports from local law enforcement to identify what intersections had the highest number of reported car crashes.

“Intersection” is defined as any road with a traffic signal, four-way stop or roundabout.

[In 2015, according to The Michigan State Police, 67 people were killed in motor vehicle crashes in Oakland County](#), second only to Wayne County with 191 people killed. Southfield had the most crashes in Oakland County with 3,378 while Auburn Hills had the most fatal crashes at six.

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The Macomb Daily (<http://www.macombdaily.com>)

'Dangerous' intersection article lacked meaningful analysis of data

By Dennis Kolar, Special to Digital First Media

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We were disappointed to see the story in the March 30 edition of the Oakland Press that purported to identify the “most dangerous” intersections in Michigan. We believe the article did not provide an accurate analysis of the data, leading to a misrepresentation of the situation.

It is unfortunate that the crash data vaguely referenced was not properly analyzed and explained. In fact, we strongly disagree with the conclusion that the 14 Mile/Orchard Lake roundabout is the “most dangerous” intersection in the state.

Since it opened, that roundabout has seen zero crashes resulting in serious injuries or fatalities.

Sadly, this story cited only a local law firm as its source. The reporter did not contact any of the agencies with jurisdiction over the intersections in question or any organization with the capability to properly analyze the data.

This is particularly troubling for three reasons: First, we are the road agency with jurisdiction over a number of the intersections cited — journalistic practice suggests we should have been a primary source for the story.

Second, we have long been a leader in crash data analysis, and spend a tremendous amount of time studying and analyzing crash data. Finally, the law firm that was the source for the story provided no real analysis of the crash data, which lead to inaccurate and misleading conclusions on their part — conclusions that were not questioned by the Oakland Press, despite the fact that the conclusions were provided by a firm which would seem to benefit from crashes.

The Road Commission for Oakland County (RCOC), with the assistance of the Transportation Improvement Association (TIA), has long studied crash data in order to identify where to spend our scarce funding in a way that has the greatest impact on safety. However, this requires more than simply identifying the intersections with the most crashes.

In fact, that number is not very useful. We know that intersections that carry the most traffic will likely have the most crashes. What is more important to us is the crash rate — the number of crashes compared to the traffic volume. Intersections with high crash rates are of much greater concern to us.

The other critical factor that this story does not take into consideration is crash severity. Not all crashes are the same. When we analyze crashes, we want to know where the serious-injury crashes are occurring.

The story fails to mention that injuries from crashes are categorized as A, B or C, with A being serious injury and C being very minor injuries. The story failed to point out that none — not a single one — of the injuries at the Orchard Lake/14 Mile roundabout was a serious injury.

In fact, this story misses the whole point that roundabouts, including the one at 14 Mile/Orchard Lake are considered far safer than signalized intersections exactly because they greatly reduce the likelihood of serious injury crashes.

Jim Santilli, chief executive officer of TIA, summed it up this way: “Crash data is a critical tool that can help guide important road decisions. However, the data is only valuable if it’s properly analyzed. That was not the case with the information put out by the law firm.”

We at the Road Commission rely heavily on data to guide our project selection and design decisions. However, this also requires that we, with the help of TIA, take the time to properly study and analyze the data to ensure that we are getting the real story.

It’s a shame the Oakland Press did not do that, and instead used inflammatory language.

Dennis Kolar is Managing Director, Road Commission for Oakland County.

URL: <http://www.macombdaily.com/opinion/20170414/dangerous-intersection-article-lacked-meaningful-analysis-of-data>

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