



**DOUGLAS COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
WORK SESSION**

**Wednesday, April 17, 2024
(In Office and Remote)**

A G E N D A

(Times listed are estimates and may fluctuate depending
on length of discussion.)

Time*

1:30 p.m. **Engineering Assessment of Fatal Crash at Highlands
Ranch Pkwy and Venneford Ranch Rd**

**Discussion of Presentation for April 23rd Speaking
Engagement**

Property Tax Rebate Update

Executive Session

2:30 p.m. **Legal Update**

Agenda Item

DATE: 4/17/2024

TO: DOUGLAS COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

THROUGH: DOUGLAS J. DEBORD, COUNTY MANAGER

FROM: JANET HERMAN, P.E. PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR

CC: MATT WILLIAMS, P.E. ASSISTANT PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR ENGINEERING
ZEKE LYNCH, P.E. TRAFFIC DIVISION MANAGER
SERGEANT JEFFERY BURKE DOUGLAS COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE PATROL
DIVISION – TRAFFIC AND MOTOR UNIT SUPERVISOR

SUBJECT: **Highlands Ranch Pkwy and Venneford Ranch Rd Fatal Crash March 6, 2024**

SUMMARY

Based on the preliminary crash assessment and information from the crash report, it appears that the crash involving a pedestrian that occurred on March 6, 2024, at the Highlands Ranch Parkway and Venneford Ranch Road intersection, was a tragic crash. The driver of the vehicle has been charged with:

- C.R.S. 42-4-1402 (2)(c) Careless Driving Caused Death
- C.R.S. 42-4-1402.5 (2) Careless Driving Caused Serious Bodily Injury to a Vulnerable Road User
- C.R.S. 42-4-604 Failed to Obey Traffic Control Signal

BACKGROUND

Highlands Ranch Parkway is a 6-lane major east-west arterial with a posted speed limit of 45mph. Venneford Ranch Road is a 2-lane collector with a posted speed limit of 35 mph. Both roadways have sidewalks and bike lanes. The intersection of Highlands Ranch Parkway and Venneford Ranch Road is controlled by traffic signal. The average daily traffic on Highlands Ranch Parkway is over 30,000 vehicles per day. The 85th percentile speeds are 51 mph westbound and 48 mph eastbound.

On the morning of March 6, 2024, a juvenile male on a one-wheel scooter was crossing north to south in the east crosswalk when he was struck and killed by an eastbound driver in the far-right lane who failed to stop at a red traffic signal indication.

Following all fatal crashes, public works traffic conducts a post-crash analysis to determine if the traffic control devices are properly installed and functioning correctly as well as assess if there are any additional corrective measures that could be implemented to reduce similar

crashes in the future. That report is typically completed a few months after the crash report is finalized.

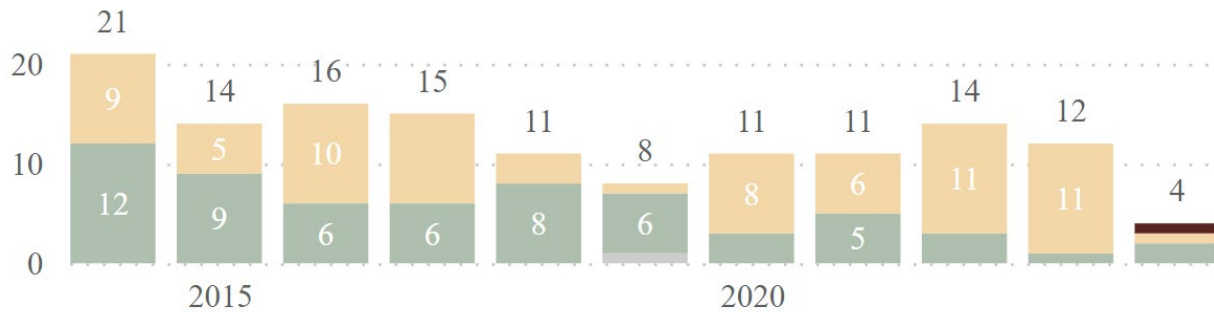
Based on our preliminary assessment, all traffic control devices were installed correctly and functioning properly at the time of the crash. This intersection averages two crashes annually with 23 total crashes occurring over the past 10-year period from 2014 to 2024 YTD. There were two vehicle injury crashes, one in 2015 and one in 2018. Prior to the fatal pedestrian crash on March 6, there was one non-injury pedestrian related crash during this same timeframe. When compared to other similar intersections, the Highlands Ranch Parkway and Venneford Ranch Road intersection has a Total and Severe Level of Service of Safety of One (LOSS I) which Indicates a low potential for crash reduction.

During the same 10-year period from 2014 to 2024YTD, contributing factors for all crashes occurring on roadways within unincorporated Douglas County included young drivers less than 24 years old (31%), speeding (15%), weather (12%), and impairment (5%). For pedestrian crashes, young drivers were considered a contributing factor in 22% of crashes and speed is a factor just 3% of the time.

The following chart shows the severity of pedestrian crashes on roadways in unincorporated Douglas County (2014 to 2024YTD).

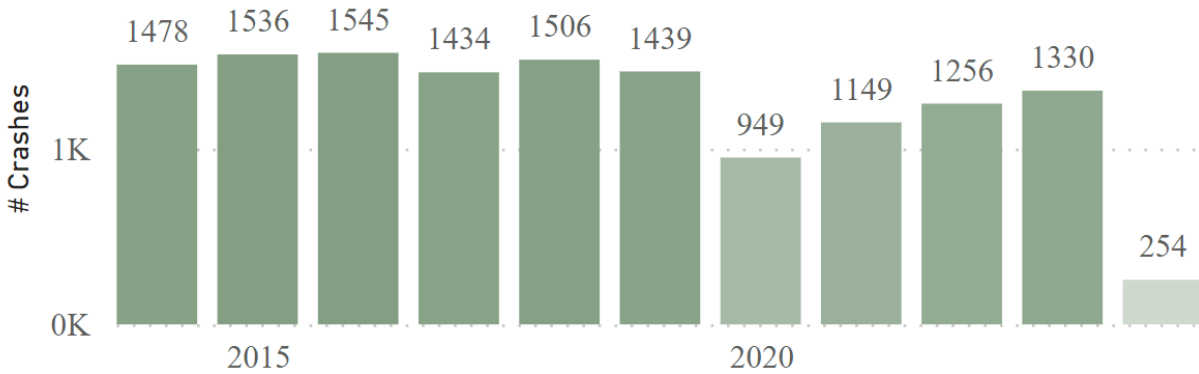
Pedestrian Crashes by Year

● Unknown ● No Injury ● Injury ● Fatal

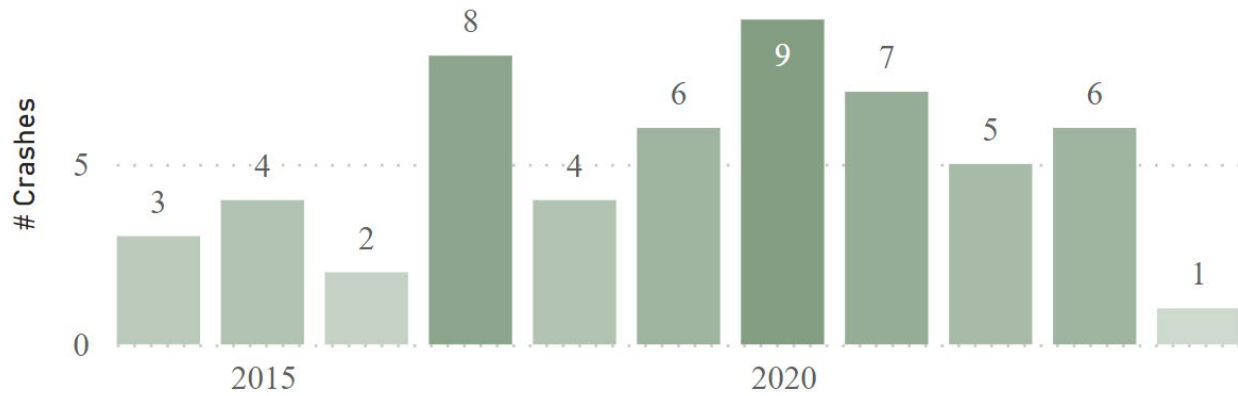


The following charts show the total, fatal, and injury crashes by year occurring on roadways in unincorporated Douglas County.

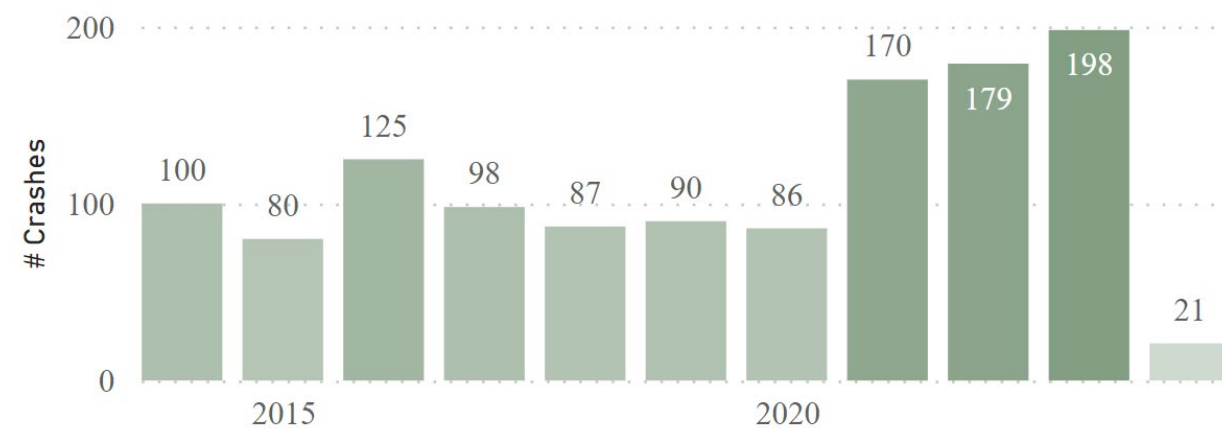
Total Crashes by Year



Fatal Crashes by Year



Injury Crashes by Year



DISCUSSION

There has been an outpouring of community support following this unfortunate fatal crash. Residents have expressed concerns about pedestrian safety, speeding, red light running,

motorists failing to stop at stop signs, illegal passing, not stopping for school buses, and difficulty turning left into and out of neighborhood streets that do not have a traffic signal.

Many have suggested improvements such as additional lighting, signage, flashing lights, increased law enforcement, crossing guards, flashing cross walks, audible warnings, speed studies, school studies, school zones, a comprehensive county-wide pedestrian safety program, prioritizing areas with crashes and near schools, increasing signal walk times, heightened driver awareness campaigns, providing better designated pedestrian paths, installing planted median islands, creating pedestrian median refuges, enhancing crosswalk visibility, installing redlight cameras, installing speed bumps, and intersection improvements at:

- Venneford Ranch Road and Highlands Ranch Parkway,
- Venneford Ranch Road and Thistle Ridge Road,
- Venneford Ranch Road and University Boulevard,
- Quebec Street and Lincoln Avenue/University Boulevard, and
- Highlands Ranch Parkway and Broadway.

The County has implemented numerous safety measures associated with mitigating speed and providing safer crossings for pedestrians. The County deploys mobile radar feedback trailers throughout the County, as requested and in concert with the Sheriff's office to give drivers notification of excessive speed. These radar feedback trailers have proven to be effective, as long as the trailers don't sit in one spot for too long. The County has found that permanent radar feedback signs lose their effectiveness over time.

The County has also added twenty-eight high visibility midblock crosswalk locations in the County. Twenty-six are rectangular rapid flashing beacons and we are upgrading the remaining two flashing beacons to RRFB's this year. We typically add two new RRFB locations per year. The locations of the RRFB's are determined by a detailed pedestrian matrix which considers existing conditions, number of pedestrians, crashes, speed, volume, gaps in traffic, width of crossing, crossing sight distance, proximity to destinations and distance to alternate crossing locations.

The County will be testing an advanced warning system at the westbound approach of Lincoln Avenue and Third Street. Due to a larger than normal level of crashes at this intersection, the County is installing the advanced warning system which will notify westbound drivers that the signal further ahead will be turning red and prepare to stop.

RECOMMENDATION

County staff recommends working in partnership with the Sheriff's office and our Communication and Public Affairs Department on a comprehensive county-wide pedestrian safety program and heightened driver awareness campaign. These types of programs have proven to be effective as is evidenced with the click it or ticket and drinking and driving campaigns which have had a large effect on compliance.

County staff also recommends a more focused approach on Highlands Ranch Parkway due to its width (6-lane arterial) and infrequent spacing of signals between Fairview Parkway and Broadway, which may lead to driver complacency. Installing advanced warning signs prior to the traffic signals at Venneford Ranch Road, Windsor Way and Burntwood would give an extra level of notification to drivers when an upcoming signal will be turning red.

Installing red light cameras and speed cameras may help with compliance as well, however, staff has been told that the County does not currently have a system in place for dispute resolution for tickets given via camera. The fines associated with these tickets are very low, and point deduction is not allowed, per state law.

End

Agenda Item

DATE: APRIL 17, 2024
TO: DOUGLAS COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
THROUGH: DOUG DEBORD, COUNTY MANAGER
FROM: MARTH MARSHALL, BUDGET DIRECTOR
SUBJECT: PROPERTY REBATE UPDATE

Staff will provide an update on the property rebate letter.