

CHAPTER 9

SAFETY

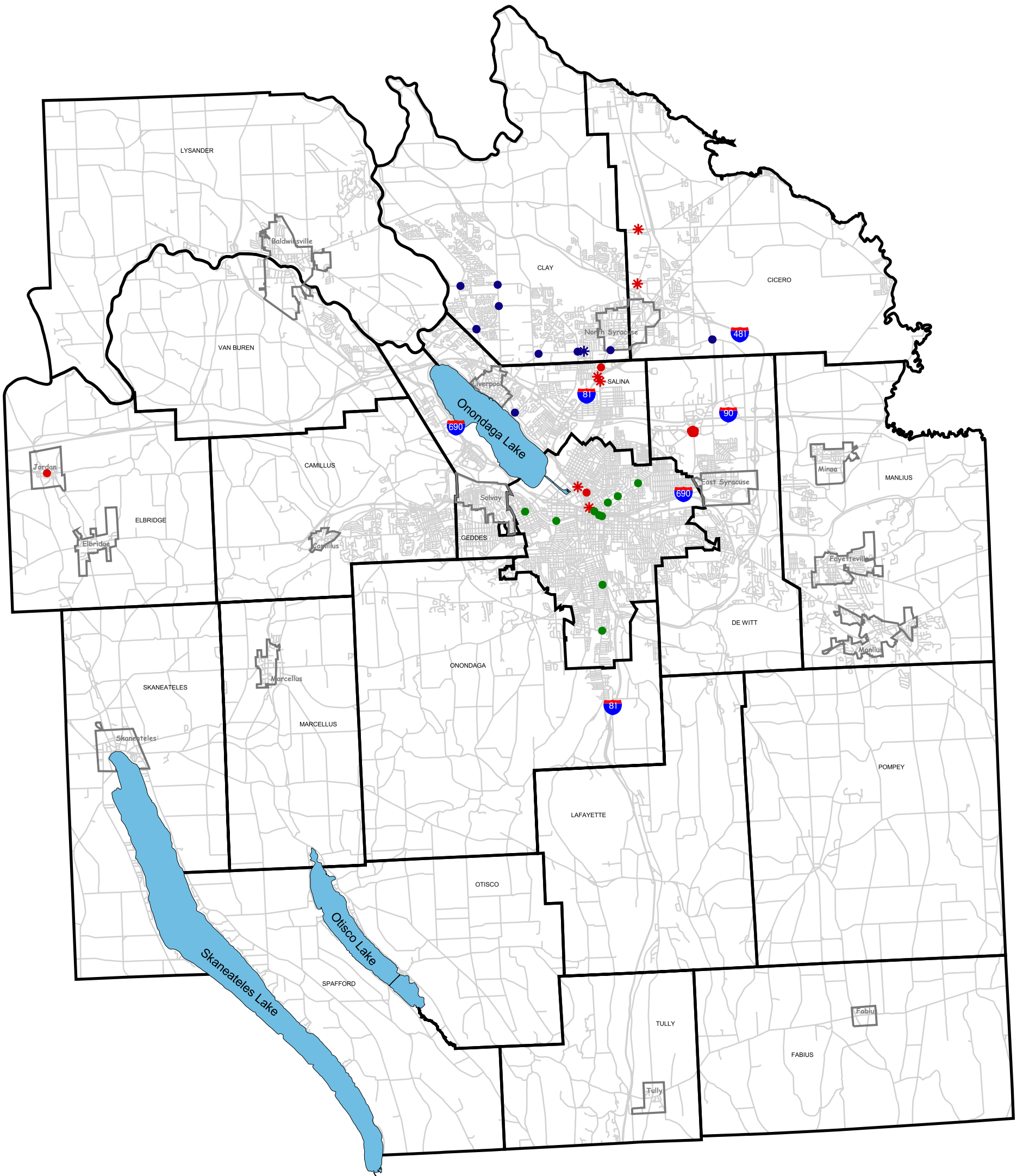
Introduction

Strategies to improve the safety of highway systems are often grouped in one of three categories: education, engineering and enforcement. Overall, traffic fatalities have declined in recent years, particularly when measured against the number of miles traveled per vehicle. National fatality rates have declined from a high of 5.5 fatalities per 100 million vehicle miles traveled (VMT) in 1966 to 1.6 fatalities per 100 million VMT in 1998. Statewide, the number of fatalities has decreased from 1,670 in 1995 to 1,585 in 1999. Much of this recent improvement results from increased education, enforcement efforts aimed at reducing the number of people driving with ability impaired and new vehicle safety systems such as air bags and anti-lock brakes (see Map 9-1 for high accident locations).

Accident Reduction

The Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council (SMTC) member agencies play a key role in reducing the number and severity of accidents, as well. Much of the local effort is directed at engineering improvements to the highway system itself. The ten highest accident locations for state roads, county roads and city roads in the SMTC study area are shown in Tables 9-1, 9-2, and 9-3. The presence of a high number of accidents does not always indicate a problem. A road with a large number of accidents may actually have a relatively low accident rate due to high traffic volumes. Other locations that have a low number of accidents may have a relatively high accident rate due to low traffic volumes.

The following tables list the most recent data for the number of reported accidents for state, county and city owned roads. The state owned roads (Table 9-1) are listed by rank instead of total number of reported accidents. The rank is determined by a calculation for severity index, not the number of accidents, that takes into account such data as fatalities and personal injury accident statistics, in addition to the number of accidents. The county and city ten highest accident locations (Tables 9-2 and 9-3) are identified through a different process based on the total number of accidents that occurred during the most recent period for which data is available. The accompanying map portrays geographically the accident locations highlighted in Tables 9-1, 9-2, and 9-3.



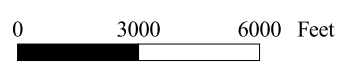
High Accident Locations in Onondaga County by Jurisdiction

Long Range Transportation Plan Update

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 Data Source: NYSDOT, OCDOT, CITY 1996-1999
 Prepared by SMTC, Jennifer Weldin
 March 6, 2001, UPWP Number: 3700

- City of Syracuse Accident Intersections
- Onondaga County Accident Intersections
- ✱ Onondaga County Accident Road Segment
- NY State Accident Intersections
- ✱ NY State Accident Road Segments
- ▭ Lakes
- Villages
- Towns
- Roads

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This map is for presentation purposes only. SMTC is not responsible for the accuracy or completeness of this map.

Table 9-1

Ten Highest Vehicular Accident Locations New York State Owned Roads 1999-2000		
Rank	Location	Total Number of Accidents
1	Route 11 between Concourse Road and Bailey Road	57
2	Route 11 at Elbow Road	29
3	Route 298 at Carrier Circle	149
4	Route 31 between Crabtree Road and Interstate 81	69
5	Route 11 between Malden Road and South Bay Road	199
6	Route 11 between East Circle Road and Hogan Road	86
7	Route 31 near Wegmans at Soule Road/ Interstate 481	88
8	Interstate 81 between Spencer Street and Court Street	79
9	Interstate 81 between Interstate 690 and Pearl Street	66
10	Interstate 81 at Spencer Street	74

Table 9-2

Ten Highest Vehicular Accident Locations on Onondaga County Owned Roads January 1996 – December 1998		
Location	Total Number of Accidents	Included in SMTC Accident Analysis Program
Route 57 at John Glenn Boulevard	77	*
Northern Boulevard at East Taft Road	55	
Route 57 at Wetzel Road	52	
Buckley Road at West Taft Road	49	*
West Taft Road at Bear Road	47	*
Old Liverpool Road at Electronics Parkway	46	
West Taft Road between Buckley Road and Allen Road	40	*
Morgan Road at Buckley Road	40	
South Bay Road at East Taft Road	39	*
Morgan Road at Wetzel Road	39	*
Source: New York State Department of Transportation.		
Note: The direction of the accident is unknown. The accidents listed may include bicycle and pedestrian accidents. Locations that are included in the accident analysis program are determined by Onondaga County. There are particular reasons why a given location may not be included in the accident analysis program.		

Table 9-3

Ten Highest Vehicular Accident Locations on the City of Syracuse Owned Roads January 1996 – December 1998		
Location	Total Number of Accidents	Included in SMTC Accident Analysis Program
Erie Boulevard at North Geddes Street	71	
Erie Boulevard at McBride Street	58	
East Seneca Turnpike at South Salina Street	58	
Erie Boulevard at North Townsend Street	54	*
James Street at Lodi Street	51	*
James Street at Teall Avenue	49	
James Street at Oak Street	48	
James Street at North State Street	47	
Milton Avenue at West Genesee Street	38	*
East Brighton Avenue at South Salina Street	38	
Source: New York State Department of Transportation.		
Note: The direction of the accident is unknown. The accidents listed may include bicycle and pedestrian accidents. Locations that are included in the accident analysis program are determined by the City of Syracuse. There are particular reasons why a given location may not be included in the accident analysis program.		

As part of the annual work program, the SMTC assists Onondaga County and the City of Syracuse in an accident surveillance analysis. The analysis is based on existing conditions rather than future conditions because it is virtually impossible to predict where future problems may be located. The analysis consists of identifying high accident locations on county or city streets, calculating accident rates by relating the number of accidents to traffic volumes and selecting the priority locations for more detailed study. The more detailed study looks at the history of accidents at a location and attempts to determine if the problem is correctable. Recommendations are then made to Onondaga County or the City of Syracuse for a given location.