**Thomas**

Tristain Thomas holds a painting of his family members on Sept. 13, 2022, in Appleton, Wis. The painting shows himself; his mother Azerine Thomas, top right; his sister Dwynetta Thomas, center; and his two children, 5-year-old Isaiah and 1-year-old Brooklyn. Thomas said the painting represents a wish for his family to be together after the death of his mother and sister. Dwynetta Thomas was killed on March 12, 2022 while driving down Milwaukee’s West Fond du Lac Avenue, which doubles as State Highway 145. Milwaukee residents have called on officials to make the urban highway safer. (Angela Major / WPR)

**Intersection4**Vehicles drive on West Fond du Lac Avenue at its intersection with West Congress Street on Sept. 14, 2022, in Milwaukee, Wis. West Fond du Lac Avenue doubles as State Highway 145 and contains several of the city’s most crash-prone intersections. On state highways, the Wisconsin Department of Transportation gets the final say on any plans to narrow lanes, add concrete bump-outs to protect pedestrians or add other traffic-calming infrastructure. The agency’s focus on smoothly flowing traffic complicates efforts to bolster safety in the neighborhoods that drivers speed through, according to city officials and grassroots advocates. (Angela Major / WPR)

**MKE fatalities.gif**

This gif shows the locations of recent traffic deaths in Milwaukee County, according to preliminary police crash reports compiled by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation and the University of Wisconsin-Madison — and plotted on a Google map. According to the data, at least 42 people died in traffic collisions along two highway stretches through the city of Milwaukee from January 2017 to July 2022. One highway is Fond du Lac Avenue, which is a part of State Highway 145 and runs northwest from downtown Milwaukee. The other is Capitol Drive, part of State Highway 190, which starts in Shorewood and runs west through Capitol Heights. (Screenshots from Wisconsin County Traffic Safety Commission Crash Mapping)

**Intersection3**

A Taco Bell at the corner of Milwaukee’s West Fond du Lac Avenue and West Congress Street is surrounded by a fence that was damaged during a fatal crash. West Fond du Lac Avenue doubles as State Highway 145 — a “connecting highway” that runs through the city. In 2017, 18 of Milwaukee’s 25 most crash-prone intersections sat on or near connecting highways. Sixteen of those high-crash intersections were on or near Fond du Lac Avenue or Capitol Drive, according to a report by the city Department of Public Works and Police Department. Photo taken on Sept. 14, 2022. (Angela Major / WPR)

**Intersection**  
Vehicles drive on Sept. 14, 2022, past a fence that was damaged during a crash on West Fond du Lac Avenue and West Congress Street in Milwaukee. West Fond du Lac Avenue, which doubles as State Highway 145, runs northwest from downtown Milwaukee and includes several of the city’s most crash-prone intersections. (Angela Major / WPR)

**Intersection2**

Vehicles drive on West Fond du Lac Avenue at its intersection with West Congress Street on Sept. 14, 2022, in Milwaukee, Wis. On March 12, 2022, Dwynetta Thomas, of Sheboygan, was driving down West Fond du Lac Avenue and tried to turn left onto Congress Street. A silver Volvo slammed into Thomas’ red Chevrolet Cobalt, killing her. West Fond du Lac Avenue and Capitol Drive both double as state highways as they cut through Milwaukee’s northwest side. At least 42 people died while driving on those “connecting highways” from January 2017 to July 2022, according to an analysis of preliminary police crash reports compiled by WisDOT and the University of Wisconsin-Madison. (Angela Major / WPR)

**Thomas2**

Tristain Thomas stands in Appleton Memorial Park on Tuesday, Sept. 13, 2022, in Appleton, Wis. Thomas’ sister, Dwynetta Thomas, died in a car crash on West Fond du Lac Avenue, which doubles as State Highway 145, in Milwaukee, near where she and Tristain grew up. Although much of Tristain’s family has left Milwaukee, they continue to discuss how to make Fond du Lac Avenue safer. Tristain wonders why the urban highway hasn’t been redesigned to prioritize safety, and why it looks “exactly the same” as it did in his youth. (Angela Major / WPR)