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City Transportation Leaders Unite to Tackle Pedestrian Safety City DOTs and NYU launch study to make streets safer for those at highest risk

The National Association of City Transportation Officials, Inc. (NACTO) announced today that it is beginning a new study to tackle pedestrian safety issues in high-risk urban populations. Young children, the elderly, and the disabled are at higher risk on the streets. Young children lack judgment about traffic speed and signals. Older people and the disabled may walk more slowly, making it hard to cross safely. The study will identify key areas of concern for large American cities as they work to provide a safe walking environment for these populations. It will also suggest best practices and policies that can make walking safer. This joint study of pedestrian safety issues across large U.S. cities will be an invaluable resource in reducing fatalities on the roads.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration estimates that 4,881 Americans died in 2005 while walking to school or work, running an errand or just trying to incorporate some exercise into their daily routines. Almost three out of every four pedestrian fatalities occur in urban areas. Additionally, an estimated 64,000 people were injured in 2005 while walking. There is clearly room for improvement to make city streets in America safer and thus encourage this healthy, quiet, green mode of transportation.

The Pedestrian Safety and Potential High-Risk Groups in Large Central Cities: Issues, Tools, and Policy is a joint effort between NACTO and the NYU Wagner Rudin Center for Transportation Policy and Management and is funded by the Federal Highway Administration. Allison L. C. de Cerreño, Ph.D. and Hyeon-Shic Shin, Ph.D., are the primary investigators on the project.

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NACTO is comprised of transportation officials from major U.S. cities, including Atlanta, Baltimore, Boston, Chicago, Detroit, Houston, New York, Philadelphia, Phoenix, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Seattle, and Washington, DC. The group facilitates the exchange of transportation ideas, insights, and practices among large central cities while fostering a cooperative approach to key national transportation issues. This information enables cities to more effectively participate in regional and national transportation policy discussions, live up to their potential as our country's economic engines, and prepare for the possibility of being first responders in national security incidents.

The Rudin Center for Transportation Policy & Management was established in 1996 at New York University's Robert F. Wagner Graduate School of Public Service, and named in September 2000 in recognition of a generous gift to NYU in support of the Center. Its mission is to provide the tools for strengthening institutions and leadership within and across all modes of transportation, and for encouraging innovative thinking, discourse, and action on urban transportation policy, regionally, nationally, and internationally.