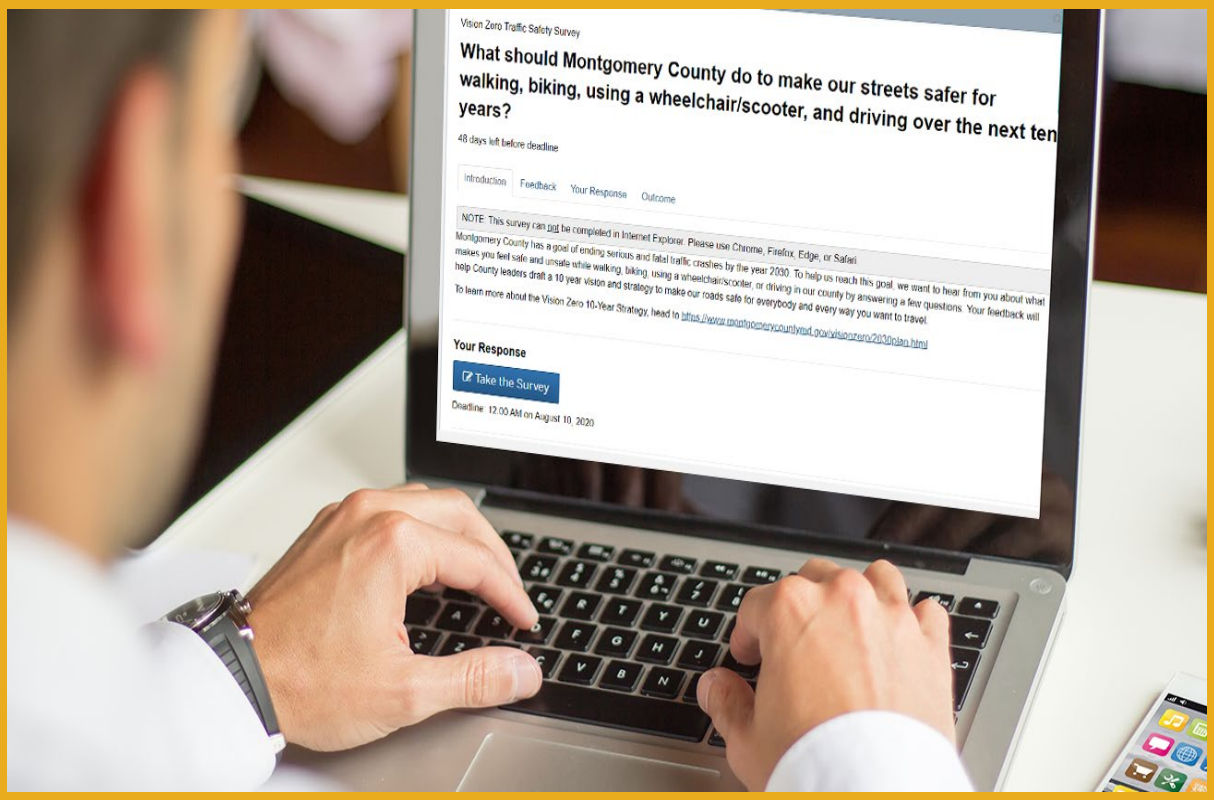
VISION ZERO 2030 PLAN
PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT



VISION ZERØ

ZERO TRAFFIC DEATHS IN MoCo

OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE
MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND

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About This Document

Community Feedback and Priorities for Safer Streets

Over the summer and fall of 2020, the Vision Zero program within the Office of the County Executive sponsored a series of surveys, interviews, meetings, letters to community organizations, and listening sessions (focus groups). The goal was to hear from a diverse array of resident perspectives on the current state of road safety and what they would like to see happen over the next decade to make the county's roads safer. The community feedback was summarized and provided to the workgroups developing the Plan during the workgroups' third meetings in November 2020 to incorporate as they developed the Plan's action items.

This document provides detailed analysis of the feedback received through the multiple outreach initiatives and supplements the Vision Zero 2030 Action Plan.

More Sidewalks


More Bike Lanes


Safer Crossings

Safe Bus Stop Access


More Communication

Less Speeding

Stopping for pedestrians

Community Priorities Executive Summary

Across all outreach efforts, the following were identified as top priorities for Montgomery County residents to improve road safety:

- **Building new and improving existing sidewalks.** Residents felt unsafe walking around the county because many neighborhoods lack sidewalks. For sidewalks along multi-lane roadways, residents felt unsafe walking on narrow sidewalks located adjacent to fast car traffic and having utility poles and other obstructions further shrinking space for pedestrians. Having more sidewalks with a buffer from car traffic was a common desire across communities, demographics, and outreach efforts.
- **Expanding the bikeway network.** Residents felt biking in the county was the least safe travel mode compared to driving and walking. Those wanting to bike more, but currently felt unsafe to do so, mentioned that bicycle lanes separated from car traffic would encourage them to bike in the county. The expansion of bike lanes next to the curb was a concern for people with disabilities. In conversations with people with disabilities, their top concerns with the new bike lanes were accessibility to the curb and sidewalk and navigation to and from floating bus stops.
- **More safe crossing opportunities for pedestrians and cyclists.** Community members noted that many parts of the county, particularly along highways, have long distances between crossings with a traffic signal or beacon present to stop cars as they attempted to cross. In listening sessions, participants mentioned they would cross outside crosswalks because the distance was too far to the nearest protected crossing.
- **Safer access to and from bus stops.** Transit riders had concerns about access and amenities at bus stops around the county. Bus stops along busy roads are not always located near an intersection or with traffic control device, making access on foot difficult. Riders would like to see more shelters and trees near stops to provide respite from the elements, trash and recycling receptacles, and potentially cameras to address crime.
- **More proactive and intentional engagement from the County Government**. For Resilience Montgomery community interviews and listening sessions, participants mentioned they were not aware or concerned people in their community were not aware of on-going government planning efforts and ways to interact with the County Government to provide feedback or resolve an issue. The County needs to use multiple communication channels (websites, surveys,

newsletters, town halls, etc.) and across multiple languages to ensure all voices are heard in the decision-making process.

- **Improving driver behavior for speeding and stopping for pedestrians**. Residents frequently mentioned drivers speeding and not yielding to pedestrians as the top unsafe behaviors on county roads. When ranking priorities in the survey, respondents were more supportive of lowering speed limits than expansion of automated enforcement. There was more support for automated speed enforcement than against, but perceptions about speed enforcement being about revenue than safety persist.

Other highlights from outreach efforts:

- **High satisfaction with ease of traveling in the county, but low rating for traffic flow**. Two out of three Montgomery County residents surveyed for the Community Livability Report were satisfied with the ease of traveling around Montgomery County. By mode, residents found walking the most satisfying at 58%, followed by public transportation (51%), personal vehicle (48%), then biking the lowest at 43%.
- **More telecommuting, less driving and transit use once the COVID-19 pandemic ends.** 63% of residents responding to the survey believed they will telework more after the pandemic ends compared to the amount of teleworking they did before the pandemic. 42% and 37% of respondents also felt they would be walking and bicycling more, respectively. The projected increase in telework, walking, and biking may be at the expense of other modes with 47% responding they will use public transit less and 38% driving less.
- **Word of mouth was a top source of information about county news.** Three out of four County residents go to the County's website to find information about County services and news followed closely by word of mouth at 73%.

Outreach Channels

To provide multiple feedback channels and meet the health protocols in place during the COVID-19 pandemic, three virtual campaigns were implemented.

Campaign	Dates	Target Audience
Online survey	June 18 to August 16	All county residents
Ambassador interviews	July 27 to August 14	Young, Black, Indigenous, People of Color, non-English speaking residents
Listening Sessions	August 13 to October 7	Traditionally underrepresented communities
Letters from Community Organizations	June 18 to August 21	Montgomery County based community organizations

Online Survey

The Vision Zero Coordinator sponsored an opt-in community survey at the launch of the 2030 Vision Zero Plan development on June 18, 2020. The survey was open for two months. To lower barriers to participation, the survey was available in four languages: English, Spanish, Amharic, and Chinese. The survey was promoted on County social media channels, sent to county boards, committees, commissions, community liaisons within the County's Minority Health Initiatives and the Community Engagement Cluster, and community organizations interested in traffic safety. During the two-months, 1,577 people provided a response with 1,562 responding in English, 14 in Spanish, and 1 in Chinese.

Resilient Montgomery Ambassador Interviews and Listening Sessions

Resilient Montgomery was developed by the Office of the County Executive in summer 2020 to get residents involved in the planning process for the Vision Zero and the Climate Action Plans that have not traditionally participated in these efforts. Lead by the Climate Change and Vision Zero Coordinators, there were two feedback efforts developed under the Resilient Montgomery banner. The Resilience Ambassador program trained five young adults to perform community interviews and the Resilience Montgomery listening sessions were one-hour focus group sessions. All interviewees and listening session participants were provided $20 as a thank you for their time. Overall, the efforts collected detailed feedback from 130 and 108 county residents,

respectively. The feedback was used to inform the creation of action items for both plans.

Letters from Community Organizations

Montgomery County Government sponsors over 80 boards, committees, and commissions (BCCs) to provide the Government with advice and oversight on a variety of issues ranging from Agricultural Preservation to Urban Districts. In addition, there are not-for-profit and advocacy organizations in the county with interest in community and traffic safety. As part of the initial community feedback phase of the Vision Zero 2030 Plan, the Vision Zero Coordinator wrote letters to 33 BCCs and other county organizations that may have an interest in sharing their thoughts on traffic safety. The Coordinator identified and sent a letter, sample letter in Appendix I, to 33 groups (22 County BCCs and 5 community organizations) in June and July 2020. With a requested return by August 2020 Twelve organizations responded.

Community Livability Report

In addition to the outreach efforts listed above, data from the Community Livability Report were analyzed to supplement the feedback collected. The Livability Report surveyed a statistically valid sample of county residents on their satisfaction with a variety of county services. The most recent surveys were performed in 2017 and 2019.

Participant Demographics by Channel

Each outreach effort engaged a different subset of residents in terms of age and race/ethnicity. The community survey was open to any resident and available in four languages, but those that opted in were majority White, Non-Hispanic and older compared to the overall county population. The disparity for opt-in community participation was not unexpected or uncommon, which is why additional outreach endeavors were planned.[1,2]

The community ambassador interviews and listening sessions were successful in reaching and engaging the intended audiences. The Resilience Ambassadors were all young adults and were able to bring in a younger audience with 87% of their interviews with people under the age of 24. The majority of young people interviewed identified as Black or African American, followed by 15% Hispanic and 13% Asian. Though the links and registration were open to anyone, each listening session was populated by the targeted group or neighborhood. Based on the self-identified age and race/ethnicity, the listening session participants were more diverse in age and race/ethnicity compared to the opt-in survey and the Resilience Ambassador's interviewees. A breakdown of participant demographics by race/ethnicity and age for each outreach effort is presented on the next page.

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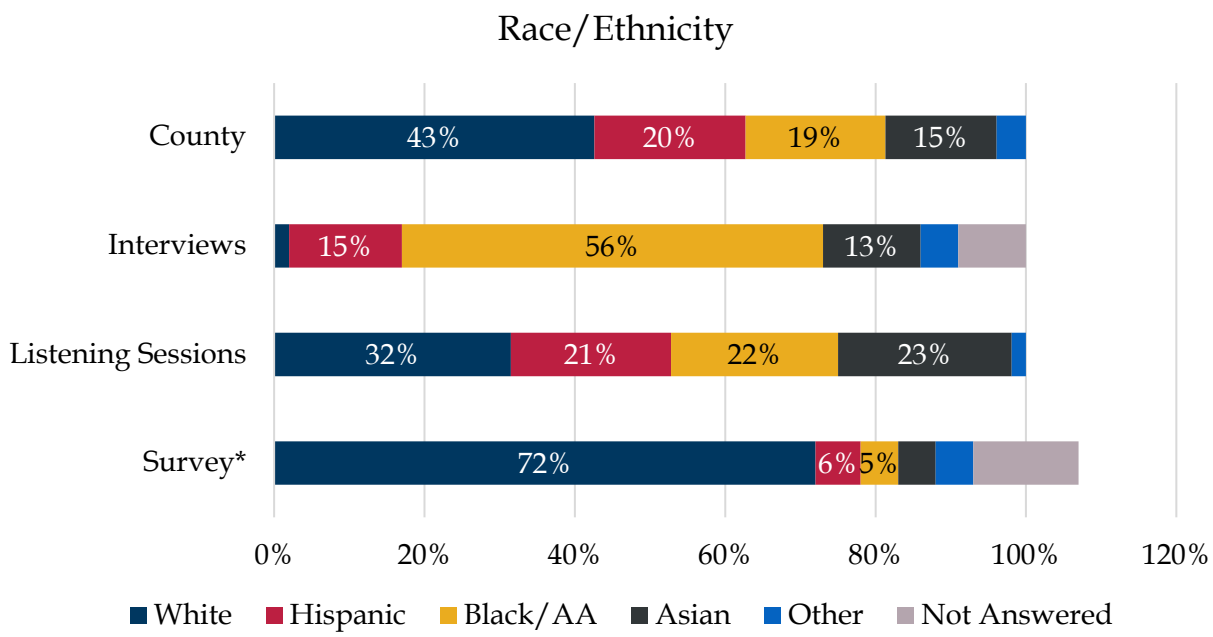
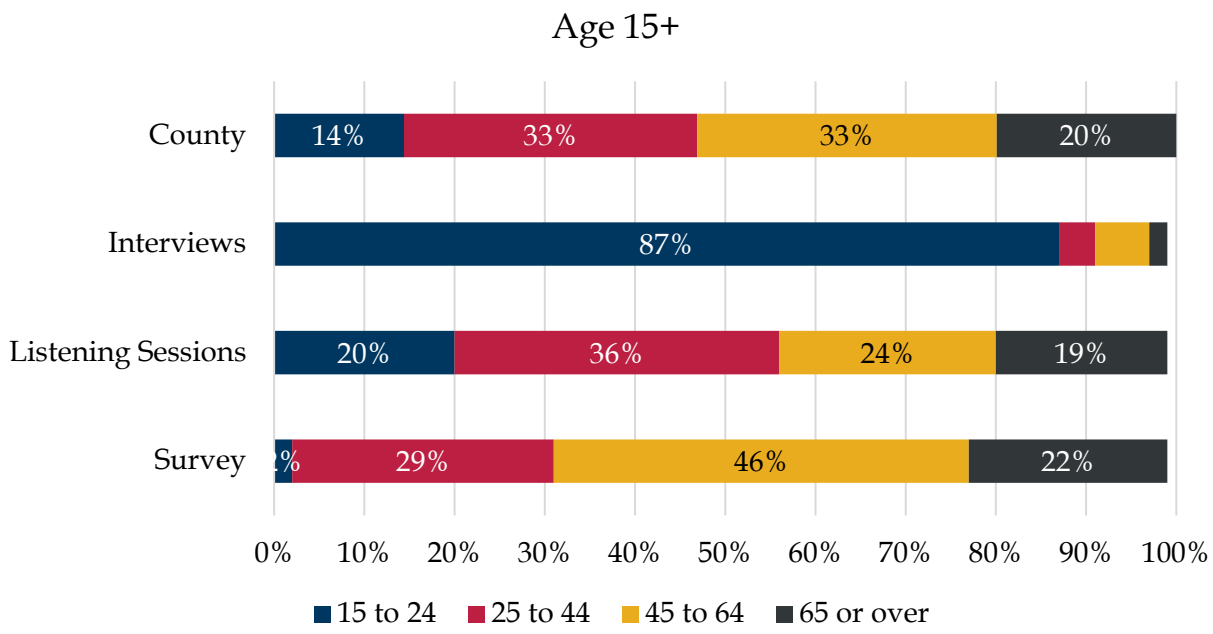
[1] Kuser Olsen, V. Beth, Gerald E. Galloway, and Matthias Ruth. "The Demographics of Public Participation Access When Communicating Environmental Risk." *Human Ecology Review* 24, no. 1 (2018). https://doi.org/10.22459/her.24.01.2018.06.

[2] Einstein, Katherine Levine, Maxwell Palmer, and David M. Glick. "Who Participates in Local Government? Evidence from Meeting Minutes." *Perspectives on Politics* 17, no. 1 (2018): 28–46. https://doi.org/10.1017/s153759271800213x.



*Participants in the survey could mark more than more race or ethnicity, so responses are > 100%.



Feedback Received by Outreach Channel

Vision Zero Opt-in Online Survey

The Vision Zero Coordinator sponsored an opt-in community survey at the launch of the 2030 Vision Zero Plan development on June 18, 2020. The survey was open for two months. To lower barriers to participation, the survey was available in four languages: English, Spanish, Amharic, and Chinese. The survey was promoted on County social media channels, sent to county boards, committees, commissions, community liaisons within the County's Minority Health Initiatives and the Community Engagement Cluster, and community organizations interested in traffic safety. During the two-months the survey was open, 1,577 people provided a response with 1,562 responding in English, 14 in Spanish, and 1 in Chinese.

The survey had six questions about roadway safety and three for the surveyant's zip code and demographic information. The nine questions were:

1. How safe do you feel doing the following in Montgomery County? (1=very unsafe, 5=very safe)? N/A = Not Applicable
    - Walking or using a wheelchair/scooter in my neighborhood
    - Biking in my neighborhood
    - Driving in my neighborhood
    - Walking or using a wheelchair/scooter in city and town centers
    - Biking in city and town centers
    - Driving in city and town centers

2. Over the past three years, has moving around Montgomery County become safer, less safe, or about the same?
    - Walking or using a wheelchair/scooter in my neighborhood
    - Biking in my neighborhood
    - Driving in my neighborhood
    - Walking or using a wheelchair/scooter in city and town centers
    - Biking in city and town centers
    - Driving in city and town centers

3. Before the COVID-19 pandemic began, what made you feel safe or unsafe while getting around Montgomery County on the average day?

4. The COVID-19 pandemic has changed our daily routines. Thinking about how you will get to work, school, stores, restaurants, etc. after the pandemic, will you

be doing more, less, or about the same of the following compared to before the pandemic?

- Walking or using wheelchair/scooter
- Biking
- Telecommuting
- Driving personal automobile
- Using public transit (Metro, Ride-On)
- Using taxi or rideshare (Uber, Lyft)
- Less in the future
- About the same
- More in the future
- Not sure

5. From the options below, select your top priorities for making traveling around Montgomery County safer.
    - Increase the number of automated speed and red light cameras
    - Building new bike lanes and sidewalks
    - Maintenance of existing sidewalks and roads
    - Adding traffic lights to intersections and mid-block crossing locations
    - Lower speed limits
    - Teach all school students how to safely ride a bike

6. What additional ideas and thoughts would you like to share about improving roadway safety in our county?

7. Please provide your zip code to ensure we are incorporating all voices from throughout the county.

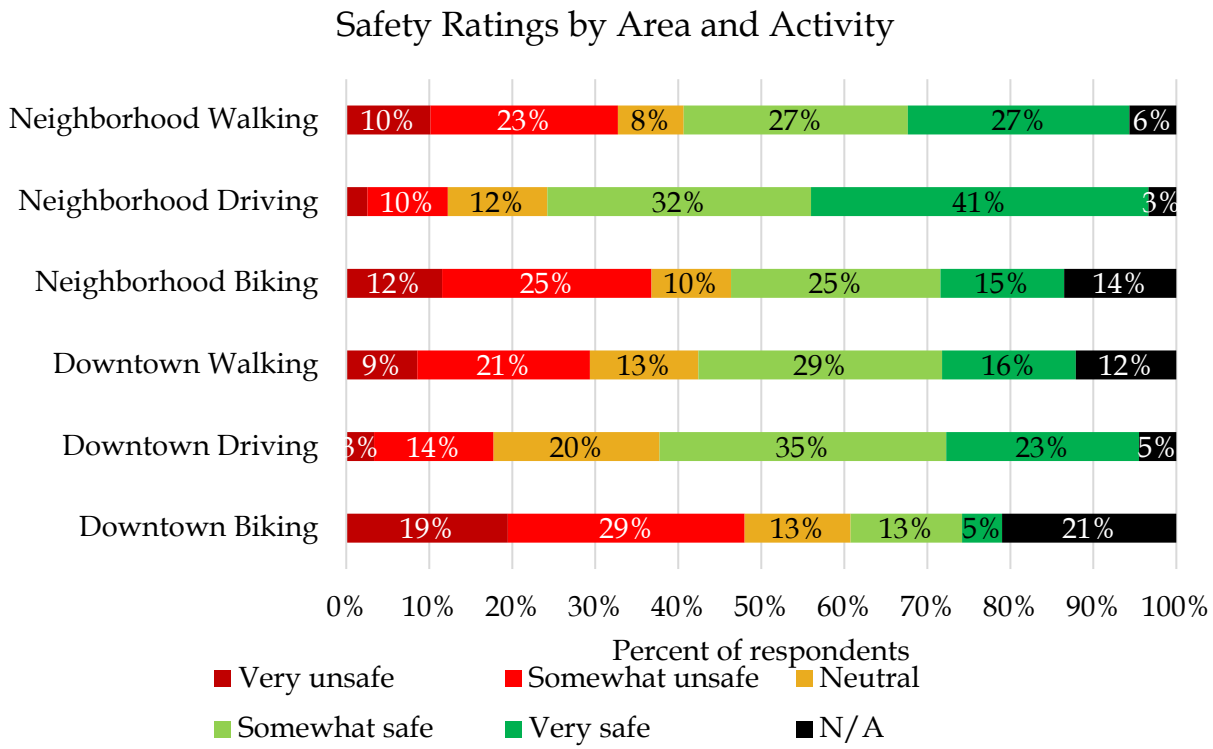
8. Your age
    - Under 18
    - 18 to 24
    - 25 to 44
    - 45 to 64
    - 65 or over

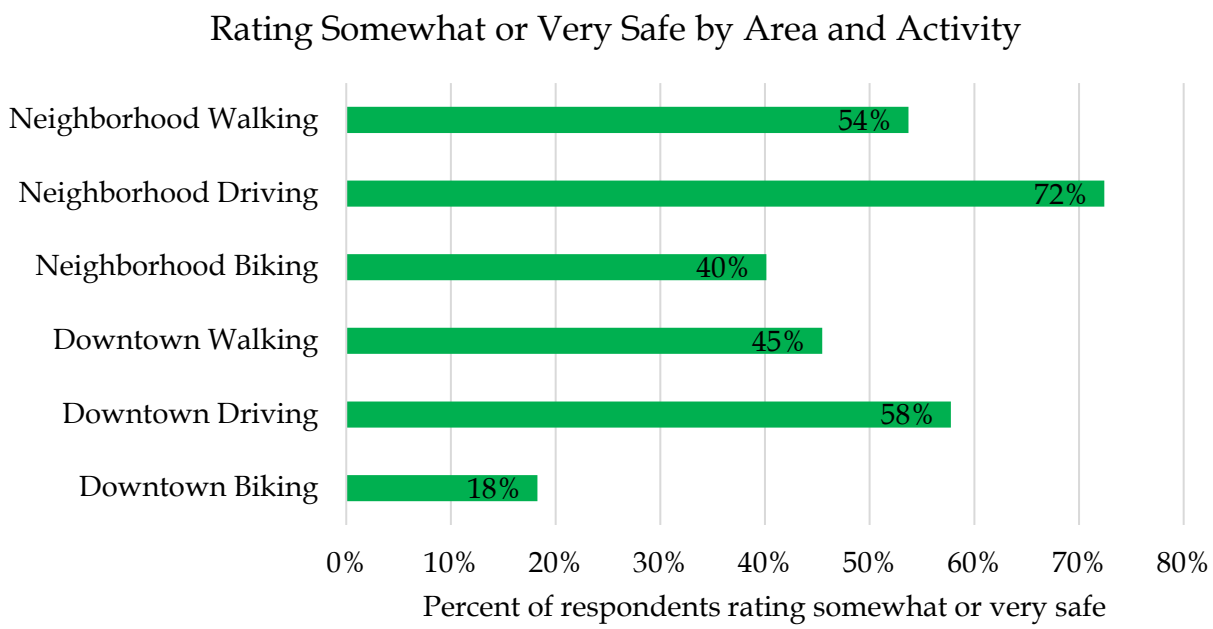
9. What is your race or ethnicity? (Select all that apply)
    - White
    - Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish

- Black or African American
- Asian or Asian Indian
- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Middle Eastern or North African
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- Other

Feeling of Safety by Area and Activity

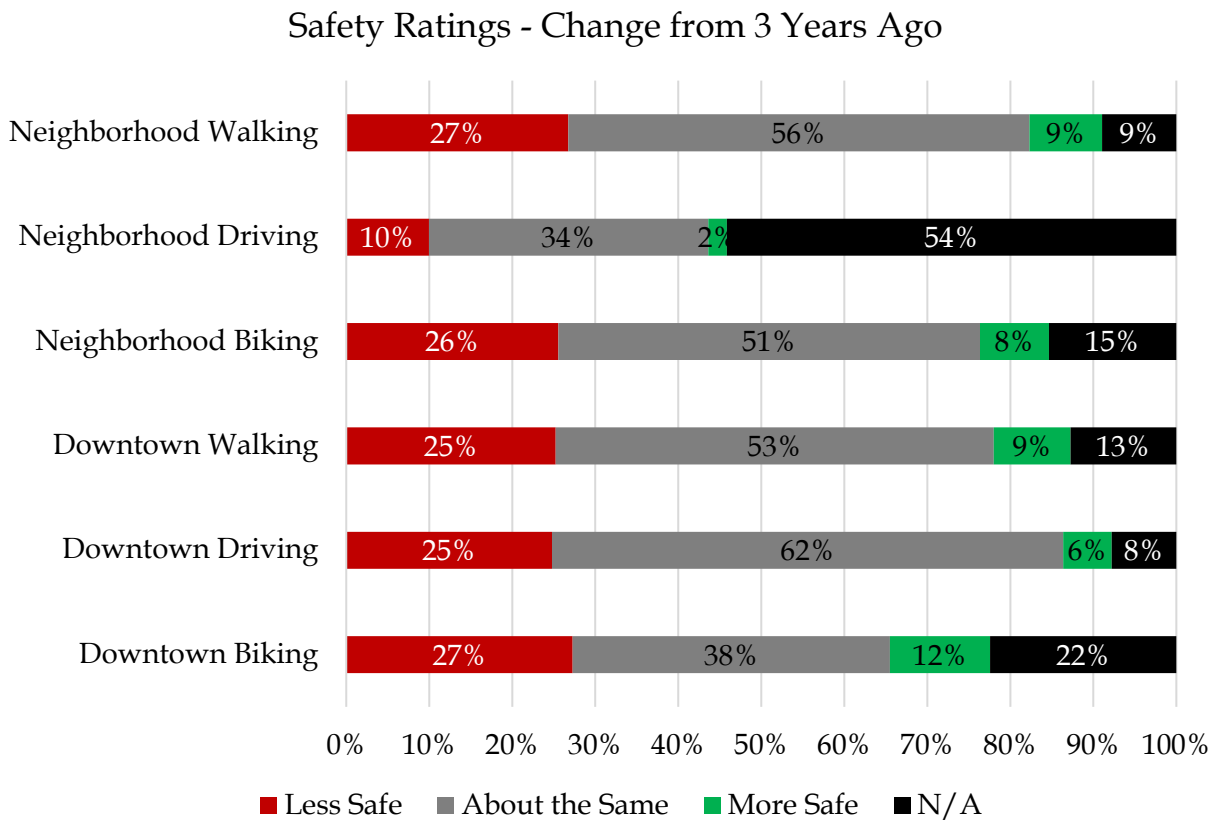
When asked how safe they felt driving, walking, or biking in their neighborhoods and downtown areas in Montgomery County, respondents felt safest driving followed by walking and biking. The activity rated the safest was driving in their neighborhood with 72% saying it was somewhat or very safe and the least safe was biking in downtown areas with only 18% rating it as somewhat or very safe. Over half of the respondents felt safe walking in their neighborhoods, but only 45% felt safe walking in downtown areas.




Rating Somewhat or Very Safe by Area and Activity
Neighborhood Walking
Neighborhood Driving
Neighborhood Biking
Downtown Walking
Downtown Driving
Downtown Biking
54%
72%
40%
45%
58%
18%
0%
10%
20%
30%
40%
50%
60%
70%
80%
Percent of respondents rating somewhat or very safe

Changes in Safety Over Past Three Years

The majority of respondents felt safety in the county was about the same compared to 2018 or provided no response. More respondents felt moving around the county was less safe over the past three years compared to those that felt safety had improved. Part of the perception of less safe streets could be attributed to more attention paid to fatal crashes since Vision Zero began. A local TV news story from January 2020 on pedestrian deaths in the DC region noted a perception that Montgomery County's roads were the most dangerous for pedestrians and cyclists in the DC area, but was not true based on crash data. The story noted that Montgomery County elected officials and public information officers elevate road safety as a priority and provide real-time updates regarding minor and serious crashes on social media in ways that neighboring jurisdictions do not. Per the article "that transparency, however, can lead to misperceptions when other local governments are less forthcoming."[3]

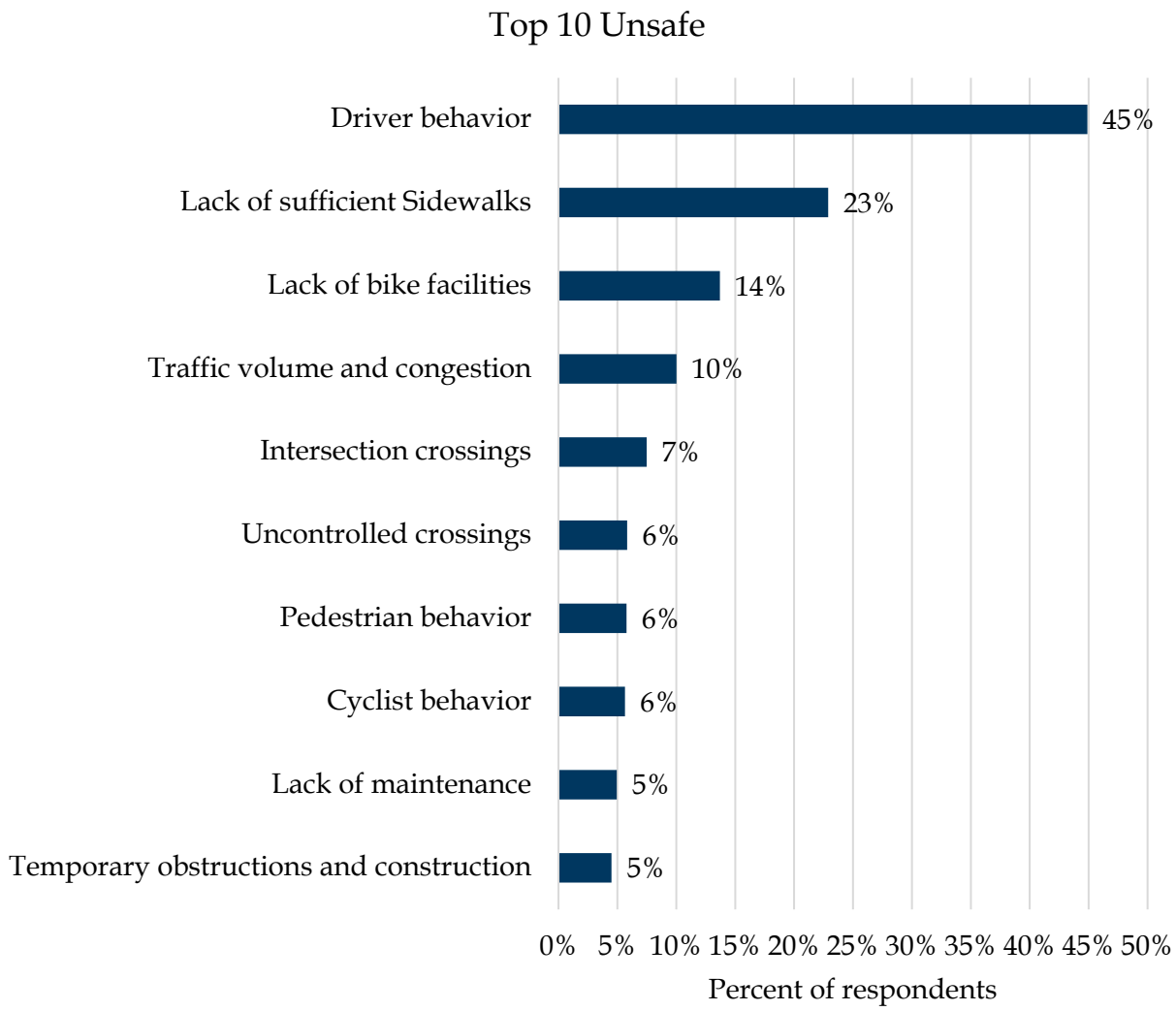


[3] Lewis, Kevin. "Despite Perception, Montgomery Co. Did Not Have the Most 2019 Pedestrian Deaths in the DMV." WJLA, January 30, 2020. https://wjla.com/news/local/despite-perception-montgomery-co-did-not-have-the-most-2019-pedestrian-deaths-in-the-dmv.

Unsafe while Traveling in Montgomery County

Residents taking the survey were given a free-form comment box to write out anything that made them feel safe or unsafe while traveling in the county. The answers were then coded based on the theme of the response. Because it was free text, respondents could list more than one safe or unsafe thing.

Forty-five percent of respondents said driver behavior, particularly speeding, made them feel unsafe while traveling in the county. Second, 23% of respondents mentioned the lack of sufficient sidewalks and third at 14% the lack of bike facilities such as protected bike lanes and bike trails made them feel unsafe.



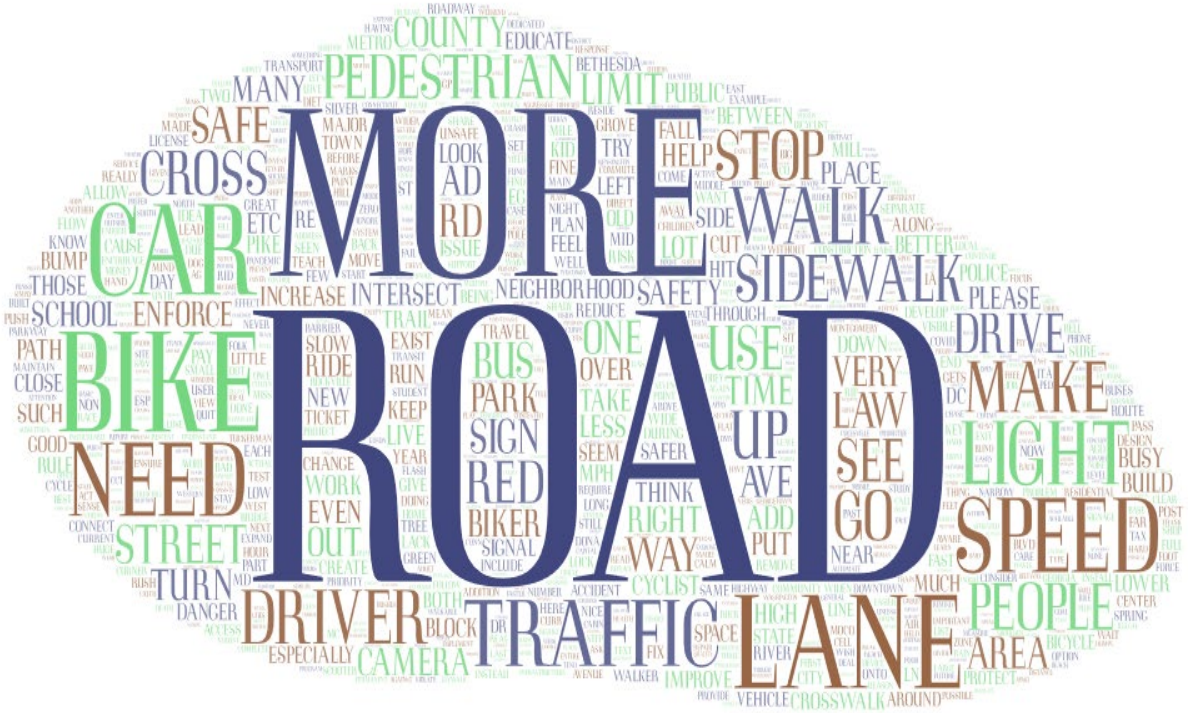
Priorities for the Future

Survey takers were prompted with six activities and asked to rank them in priority order in terms of making travel in Montgomery County safer. There were four engineering, one education, and one enforcement option. All four engineering options were the top choices followed by the education and enforcement options. The top two choices were improving the facilities for pedestrians and cyclists.

Rank	Activity
1	Building new bike lanes and sidewalks
2	Maintenance of existing sidewalks and roads
3	Adding traffic lights to intersections and mid-block crossing locations
4	Lower speed limits
5	Teach all school students how to safely ride a bike
6	Increase the number of automated speed and red light cameras

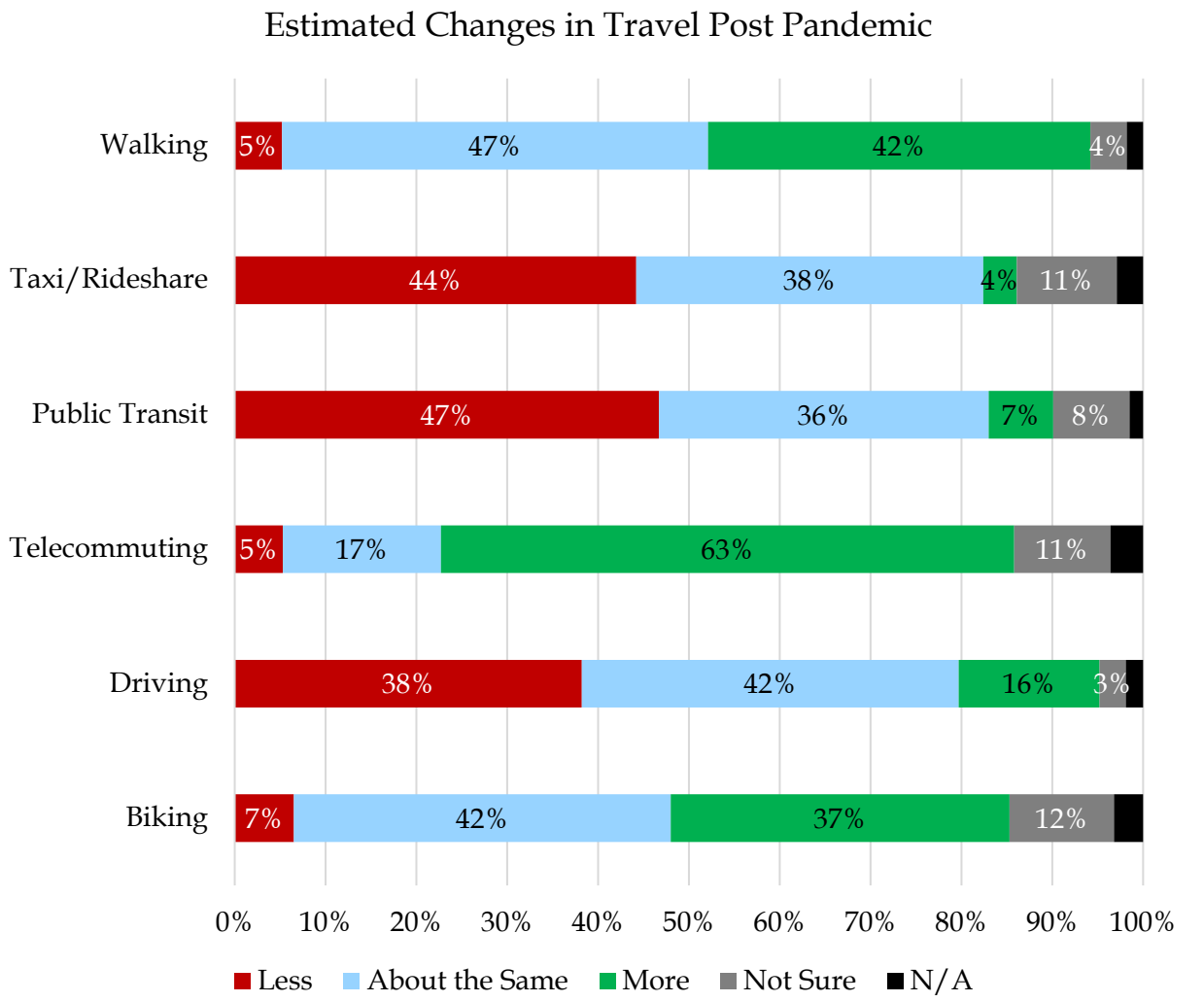
Additional Ideas

Question 6 allowed respondents to provide additional thoughts and ideas about making our roadways in Montgomery County safer. Similar to the results of the prioritization in question 5, the most common response was asking for more pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, specifically bicycle lanes.



Changes to Travel Patterns Post COVID-19

Outside of road safety, the project team wanted to see how residents imagined their travel habits changing after the COVID-19 pandemic. A majority of respondents believed they will telework more after then pandemic ends than they did before March 2020. The other modes with growth were predicted to be biking and walking. The modes with potential losses after the pandemic were taxi/rideshare (Uber and Lyft), public transit, and driving alone. These trends were similar to trends found in a DC regional survey sponsored by the Washington Metropolitan Council of Governments.[4]



[4] "Voices of the Region Survey," Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, March 16, 2021. https://www.mwcog.org/documents/2021/03/16/voices-of-the-region-survey-visualize-2045/.

Resilience Ambassadors Community Interviews

Summary

The Climate Planning and Vision Zero programs partnered to create the Resilience Ambassador pilot program in July 2020 in order to increase the representation of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (such as Latinx communities), immigrant communities, and income distressed communities in the County's climate and Vision Zero planning processes. Throughout the summer a group of five young adults interviewed County residents on five overarching topics: health and pollution impacts (with heavy emphasis on the COVID-19 pandemic), climate change and extreme weather events, travel safety, community safety, and priorities for the future. The Resilience Ambassadors held in-depth conversations with 130 people, with the majority of respondents identifying as female, under the age of 24, and Black/African American.

Based on common themes identified in the interviews, respondents stated they wanted a community where people care for and help each other, which leads to a better sense of community. In this future community, it is safer to get around using no emission vehicles, there are faster and more frequent transit services, and more safer sidewalks and crosswalks are available for those walking and biking. The County Government is much more responsive to all communities by providing more opportunities to provide input and provides more transparent communication about existing public input opportunities.

More about the program and interviews with the Resilience Ambassadors can be found on My Green Montgomery at https://mygreenmontgomery.org/2020/resilience-ambassadors-amplify-underrepresented-voices-through-community-outreach/.

Themes

Topics relevant to the creation of the Vision Zero 2030 Plan are presented below. For a summary of health and climate themes, see the Resilient Montgomery summaries on the Climate and Vision Zero webpages.

Desires for their Community

- **A safe, clean, healthy, affordable, and accessible place to live**. A peaceful county with less crime and violence; clean air; less carbon emissions; less waste and pollution. A county that provides more safe bus stops; faster buses; good public transportation; more accessible transportation throughout the county; safer walking, sidewalks, and crosswalks; fewer crashes, fewer total cars but more electric vehicles. Affordable housing and living; rental assistance for those in need; less poverty and homelessness.

- **A place to live that offers a sense of community**; that we feel pride to live in; where people help each other and care about each other; with County government helping those in need; a community that is well cared for; a community with a sense of humanity, respect, and joy; where people are making a better place for the next generation.
- **A county that provides a sense of place and places to have fun.** Respondents are looking for more opportunities for people to connect with each other; good recreational attractions and services; more fun things to do; more community events, festivals, and celebrations; new and renovated buildings and town centers; a place that knows its roots and keeps doors open to visitors.

Civic Engagement

- Respondents were happy to see civic engagement efforts like helping youth register to vote, but **across the board people wanted *more* from the County**.
- First, **more transparent communication and promotion concerning future events**. Many were unaware of events like town halls or concerned that their communities were unaware.
- Second, **more types of outreach and support for residents to raise their voices**. Many shared concerns about equity and access. Some populations do not have the time, resources, or language access to engage unless the county takes active steps to support them. Some suggested a "suggestion-box" style website, others wanted more surveys, still others suggested regular newsletters and emails (perhaps targeted to specific communities). Wraparound supports for town halls and meetings could also help.
- Third, the **County must take resident concerns seriously and make good faith attempts to act on them**. Some respondents felt stereotyped or shut-down when sharing their concerns with officials, and many were frustrated at perceived inaction even when they had raised issues repeatedly. There were also concerns with the relative lack of representation of Black, Indigenous, People of Color at high levels of government and other positions of power. There are trust issues between communities and county officials.
- Finally, the County **should improve access to voting and elevate marginalized voices** through public art projects (like murals) and billboards.

Transportation Concerns

- Respondents also mentioned **concerns about pollution from cars**, especially because of increased use during the pandemic. Solutions offered: subsidizing Electric Vehicles in the county and reducing traffic flow.

- **Public transportation is another area where heating and cooling systems needs to be installed.** Residents also saw the need of shelters for homeless people during cold winters and hot summers as they are at most risk.
- **Problems with public transit included accessibility (lack of access near homes, schools, places of employment), affordability, service quality, and timing issues that resulted in long commutes**. Many also mentioned unreliability of the transit schedule.
- **Issues with cleanliness** were cited as concerns both before and after (enhanced) during the COVID-19 pandemic. Solutions include: increasing private car use, staying at home, and providing hand sanitizer dispensers on transit. Many respondents, almost exclusively female, noted issues with sexual harassment, even assault, while on public transit or while walking at night. Solutions included: installing better lighting at night and cameras on transit.
- Respondents noted **concerns walking on busy roads** with sub-par sidewalks/crosswalks and reckless drivers. US 29 (Colesville Rd/Columbia Pike) was mentioned in a response as a particularly dangerous crossing. Solutions include: police directing traffic at dangerous intersections, infrastructural improvements (ex: speedbumps), and improved signage or driver's education.

Public Safety

- Respondents mentioned **police as either positive (effective, wanted more of) or negative (issues with profiling/racism/brutality).** Some thought police abused their power and could not be trusted to be called in an emergency situation and were not effective in schools. Others welcomed police presence in their neighborhoods, schools, and as forces to combat crime and traffic issues. Respondents mostly welcomed security guards in communities and schools.
- Other safety issue included crime rate (higher in certain neighborhoods), need for security cameras, gang violence, gun violence, school shooting fears, fear of assault in schools. Some respondents considered the County a safe place in general, but were able to cite times they felt unsafe.

Resilience Montgomery Listening Sessions

Summary

For gathering community feedback for the Vision Zero 2030 Action Plan and the Climate Action Plan, the Office of the County Executive hosted eight community focus groups between August 13 and October 7, 2020. The eight sessions were designed to gather feedback from traditionally underrepresented groups. Without hearing more voices during the planning process, the plans may not meet all the needs of the county or could unintentionally burden these communities. In reviewing previous outreach efforts and who had not been heard, the eight listening sessions were dedicated to outreach to limited English speaking households, Hispanic-Americans, African-Americans, Asian-Americans, people with physical and cognitive disabilities, residents making less than 50% of the area median income, and residents under the age of 35. To incentivize participation, a $20 thank you payment was provided for all that attended the entire session.

To ensure the feedback from both Resilient Montgomery outreach initiatives could be combined, the following questions were developed to start each conversation:

1. **Health/Pollution/COVID-19:** Before the Covid-19 pandemic began, what were your concerns about health and pollution for you and your family? What about now?
2. **Safe Travel:** Before the Covid-19 pandemic began, what concerns and challenges did you face travelling in your community? What about now?
3. **Climate Change and Extreme Weather:** What are ways that communities can tackle extreme weather, such as flooding and hotter days? What changes would you like to see?

Two additional questions were developed on community safety and future priorities, but were unused for the listening sessions due to time constraints.

4. **Community Safety:** On a typical day, what makes you and your family feel safe: (1) at home, (2) at work (or school/college), and (3) while travelling in Montgomery County?
5. **Priorities for the Future:** What kind of Montgomery County do you want to see in your lifetime? What would it look like for you?

All eight listening sessions followed the same meeting format. In the first 10-15 minutes the Vision Zero Coordinator, representing both planning initiatives for traffic safety and climate change, gave an overview of the planning efforts to date, how to use the virtual meeting platform, and then turned to the discussion questions. The rest of the hour was open for participants to share their thoughts and ideas either verbally or using the

meeting chat. Participants were given a survey link at the end of the meeting to provide any additional feedback. For the three non-English sessions, a translator was used to summarize the feedback from each participant during the session. All meetings were recorded and transcribed to allow for analyzing and categorizing attendee responses.

For more on the Resilience Montgomery listening sessions and summaries for health and climate answers, visit the Vision Zero webpage for the report.

Themes

Topics relevant to the creation of the Vision Zero 2030 Plan are presented below. For a summary of health and climate themes, see the Resilient Montgomery summaries on the Climate and Vision Zero webpages.

- **Need for new and wider sidewalks.** The most common request for improving traffic safety in the county was building new sidewalks and providing wider sidewalks along busy roads that are narrow and next to the travel lane.
- **Additional bike lanes, but need to address accessibility issues.** Participants mentioned additional bike lanes, particularly ones that provide separation from the car travel lanes, would help make biking more attractive and safer in the county. People with disabilities noted they were concerned current protected bike infrastructure, such as floating bus stops, compromised accessibility and need to be rethought or use a different strategy to improve safety and accessibility for all.
- **More protected crossings.** Common across the eight sessions were requests to provide more protected crossings using traffic signals and pedestrian hybrid beacons. Participants noted that jaywalking occurs when the distance to the nearest protected crossing is too far away.
- **Bus stop safety and amenities.** Participants that were frequent bus riders mentioned several areas where bus service and stops could improve to make riding the bus safer and more comfortable. For safety, participants mentioned the need for safe crossings to and from the bus stop. Having crossings with some way to stop cars would limit the need to cross dangerous roads without having to assume a car would stop for them. To address crime near bus stops, participants recommended new, bright lighting and potentially security cameras. For comfort, participants mentioned having more shelters, more trees, and regular snow clearing as important factors. For service, many noted the service cuts and limited capacity during the COVID-19 pandemic made using bus service difficult. There were also issues with bus schedule and real-time reporting reliability.

Letters from Community Organizations

Montgomery County Government sponsors over 80 boards, committees, and commissions (BCCs) to provide the Government with advice and oversight on a variety of issues ranging from Agricultural Preservation to Urban Districts. In addition, there are non-profit and advocacy organizations in the county with interest in community and traffic safety. As part of the initial community feedback phase of the Vision Zero 2030 Plan, the Vision Zero Coordinator wrote letters to BCCs and other county organizations that may have an interest in sharing their thoughts on traffic safety. The Coordinator identified and sent a letter, sample letter in Appendix I, to 33 groups (22 County BCCs and 5 community organizations) in June and July 2020. With a requested return by August 2020, 12 organizations responded.

While organizations responded with a variety of recommendations and requests, certain topics were popular across the 12 letters received:

- 10/12 mentioned the need for new or wider sidewalks across the county.
- 8/12 mentioned the need for new bikelanes – both separated bikelanes and bike trails. Two groups mentioned that the new separated bike facilities and floating bus stops can be confusing and may feel unsafe for pedestrians to enter.
- 7/12 mentioned the need for on-going education to drivers, pedestrians, and bicyclists about their responsibilities on the road. The messaging must be culturally and linguistically competent depending on the audience and geographic area.
- 6/12 mentioned the need for better streetlighting in the county, intersections in particular.

All 12 returned letters are published in their entirety in Appendix II.

Community Livability Report

The Community Livability Report provides the opinions of a representative sample of 1,075 Montgomery County residents. The most recent surveys were completed in 2017 and 2019. The margin of error around any reported percentage is 3% for all respondents. The full Community Livability Report as well as technical documentation can be found on the County's website at https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/OPI/survey2019.html.

Summary

Residents had high satisfaction with living in Montgomery County; 85% of residents rated the quality of life in Montgomery County as excellent or good. The ability to get around Montgomery County was important to residents as it was one of the top three priority areas, along with safety and the economy, out of eight areas for the coming two years.

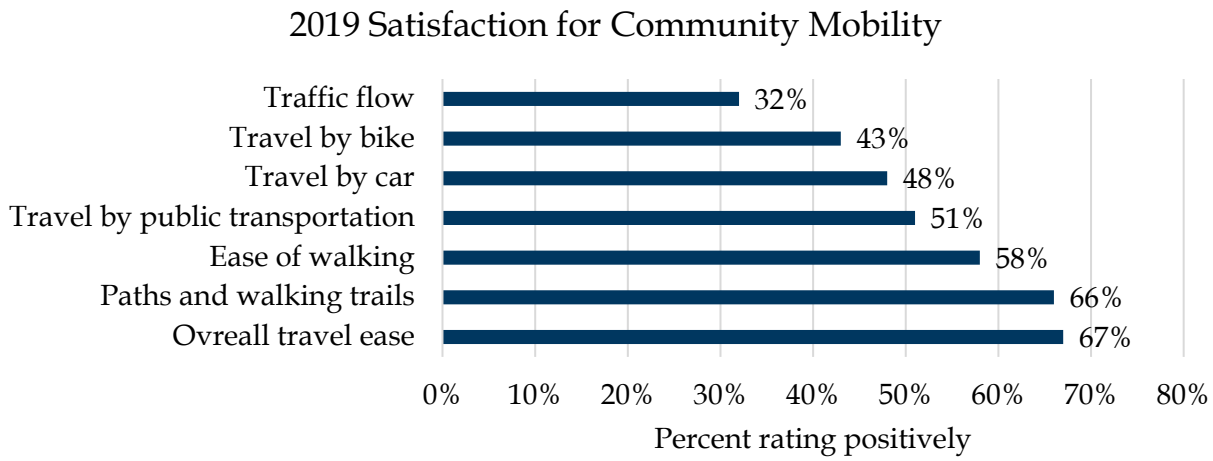
Relevant Questions from the Livability Report

For Vision Zero, the Community Livability Study provides the following relevant areas:

- Overall ease of travel
- Paths and walking trails
- Ease of walking
- Travel by bicycle
- Travel by public transportation
- Travel by car
- Traffic flow
- Traffic enforcement
- Street repair
- Street lighting
- Snow removal
- Sidewalk maintenance
- Traffic signal timing
- Bus or transit services
- Used public transportation instead of driving
- Carpooled instead of driving alone
- Walked or biked instead of driving
- Information sources

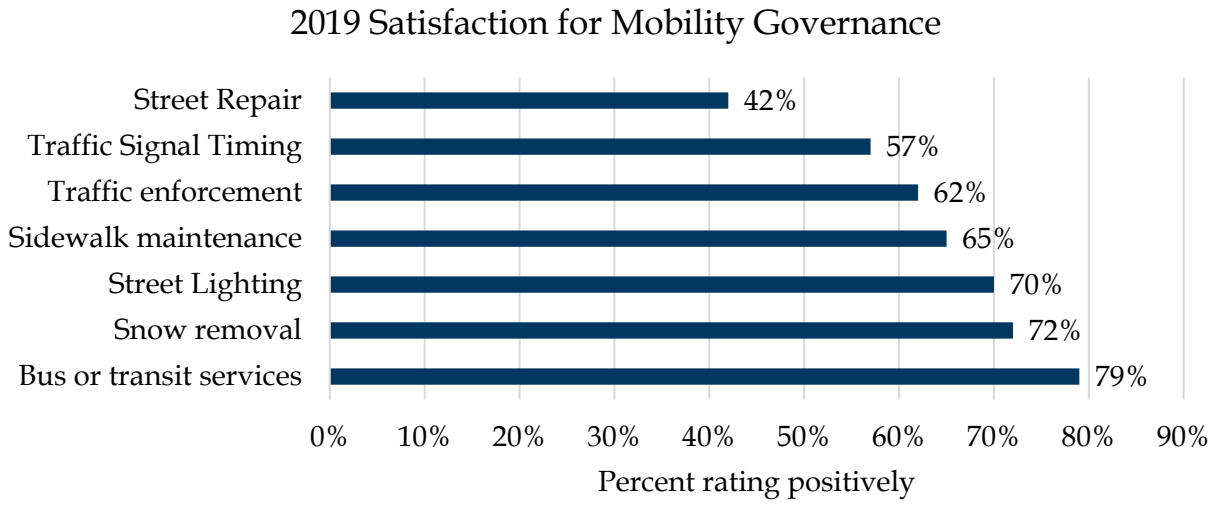
Ratings of Community Mobility Characteristics (% rating positively)

Two out of three Montgomery County residents surveyed were satisfied with the ease of travelling around the county. By mode, residents found walking the most satisfying at 58% followed by public transportation (51%), personal vehicle (48%), then biking the lowest 43%. Residents rated traffic flow poor as only 32% of respondents were satisfied. Traffic flow had one of the lowest satisfaction ratings across the survey and only higher than satisfaction ratings for cost of living and affordable quality housing availability.



Ratings of Mobility Governance (% rating positively)

The majority of residents surveyed had positive ratings for mobility services except for street repair which only 42% rated positively. Sidewalk repair was rated 23 percentage points higher than street repair.



Changes in Satisfaction Over Time

For ease of travel, County residents have become less positive about public transportation, more positive about travel by car, and unchanged about travel by bicycle. The deadly red line crash in June 2009 followed by years of disruptive maintenance programs may have affected satisfaction.

Other areas with significant changes over time include:

- Satisfaction with snow removal jumped from 60% positive rating in 2017 to 72% in 2019. Some of the change may be due to winters with fewer snowstorms in recent memory.
- Satisfaction with street repair declined 9 points from 2007 to 2019.
- Satisfaction with streetlighting increased from 61% in 2017 to 70% two years later. The increase may reflect that residents have noticed the new LED lighting that the County started to systematically upgrade starting in December 2018.

Topic	2007	2009	2017	2019
Overall ease of getting to the places you usually have to visit	NA	NA	60%	67%
Availability of paths and walking trails	NA	NA	62%	66%
Ease of walking in Montgomery County	NA	NA	53%	58%
Ease of travel by bicycle in Montgomery County	41%	43%	40%	43%
Ease of travel by public transportation in Montgomery County	60%	59%	45%	51%
Ease of travel by car in Montgomery County	32%	35%	47%	48%
Traffic flow on major streets	NA	NA	26%	32%
Traffic enforcement	55%	58%	58%	62%
Street Repair	51%	46%	41%	42%
Street Lighting	NA	NA	61%	70%
Snow removal	65%	65%	60%	72%
Sidewalk maintenance	NA	NA	57%	65%
Traffic Signal Timing	NA	NA	50%	57%
Bus or transit services	67%	68%	61%	79%
Used public transportation instead of driving	NA	NA	66%	70%
Carpooled instead of driving alone	NA	NA	42%	44%
Walked or biked instead of driving alone	NA	NA	58%	60%

2019 Results by Demographics (Years of Residency, Household Income, Race/Ethnicity, and Age)

How to read the following tables. Each column in the following tables is labeled with a letter for each subgroup being compared. The "Overall" column, which shows the ratings for all respondents, but no statistical tests were done for the overall rating. For each pair of subgroups ratings within a row (a single question item) that has a statistically significant difference, an upper-case letter denoting significance is shown in the cell with the larger column proportion. The letter denotes the subgroup with the smaller column proportion from which it is statistically different. Subgroups that have no upper-case letter denotation in their column and that are also not referred to in any other column were not statistically different.

Residents living in the county for more than 20 years and residents with an annual household income of $100,000 or more were less satisfied with ease of traveling across Montgomery County compared to newer residents and those making under $100,000, respectively. Non-Hispanic, white residents were less satisfied with ease of travel across Montgomery County and for all travel modes compared to Hispanic and/or other race residents.

Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)	Number of years in Montgomery County			Annual household income			Race/ethnicity		Age			Overall
	5 years or less (A)	6 to 20 years (B)	More than 20 years (C)	$49,999 or less (A)	$50,000 to $99,999 (B)	$100,000 or more (C)	White alone, not Hispanic (A)	Hispanic and/or other race (B)	18-34 (A)	35-54 (B)	55+ (C)	
Overall ease of getting to the places you usually have to visit	71% C	71% C	59%	76% C	77% C	59%	56%	79% A	73% B	65%	65%	**67%**
Traffic flow on major streets	29%	39% A C	27%	50% B C	35% C	24%	20%	46% A	30%	33%	33%	**32%**
Ease of travel by car in Montgomery County	52% C	53% C	41%	60% C	52% C	43%	35%	64% A	51%	48%	46%	**48%**
Ease of travel by public transportation in Montgomery County	54%	53%	48%	64% C	60% C	42%	42%	61% A	49%	50%	56%	**51%**
Ease of travel by bicycle in Montgomery County	42%	49% C	36%	65% B C	48% C	34%	35%	51% A	36%	50% A C	39%	**43%**
Ease of walking in Montgomery County	66% C	62% C	50%	68% C	66% C	51%	53%	64% A	64% C	59%	54%	**58%**
Availability of paths and walking trails	78% B C	67% C	59%	58%	77% A C	63%	66%	68%	76% B C	65%	61%	**66%**

Similar to trends with community mobility, ratings for mobility governance were lowest for residents living in the county for more than 20 years compared to those living in the county for fewer years. Residents 18-34 had higher satisfaction compared to older residents except for traffic enforcement, street repair, and snow removal where there were no significant differences by age. The only significant difference for satisfaction with traffic enforcement was for residents with a household income of less than $49,999.

Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)	Number of years in Montgomery County			Annual household income			Race/ethnicity		Age			Overall
	5 years or less (A)	6 to 20 years (B)	More than 20 years (C)	$49,999 or less (A)	$50,000 to $99,999 (B)	$100,000 or more (C)	White alone, not Hispanic (A)	Hispanic and/or other race (B)	18-34 (A)	35-54 (B)	55+ (C)	
Traffic enforcement	61%	66%	59%	72% B C	59%	61%	60%	65%	57%	63%	65%	**62%**
Street repair	50% C	48% C	33%	57% B C	39%	40%	34%	51% A	46%	44%	39%	**42%**
Street cleaning	73% C	66% C	56%	67%	61%	62%	58%	68% A	73% B C	63%	56%	**63%**
Street lighting	78% C	75% C	62%	74%	70%	71%	71%	71%	80% B C	67%	68%	**70%**
Snow removal	79% C	73%	69%	74%	72%	73%	73%	74%	76%	69%	75%	**72%**
Sidewalk maintenance	78% B C	67% C	55%	70%	68%	62%	65%	66%	73% B C	64%	61%	**65%**
Traffic signal timing	64% C	61% C	50%	69% C	65% C	50%	49%	67% A	65% B C	54%	55%	**57%**
Bus or transit services	82% C	84% C	73%	84%	77%	79%	72%	86% A	88% B C	76%	77%	**79%**

Newer and younger residents were more likely to use alternative transportation (walking, carpooling, or mass transit) compared to more established and older residents. Carpooling rates were higher for Hispanic and/or other race residents by 9 percentage points compared to White alone, not Hispanic residents.

Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)	Number of years in Montgomery County			Annual household income			Race/ethnicity		Age			Overall
	5 years or less (A)	6 to 20 years (B)	More than 20 years (C)	$49,999 or less (A)	$50,000 to $99,999 (B)	$100,000 or more (C)	White alone, not Hispanic (A)	Hispanic and/or other race (B)	18-34 (A)	35-54 (B)	55+ (C)	
Walked or biked instead of driving	83% B C	60% C	47%	55%	63%	61%	59%	61%	82% B C	55%	49%	**60%**
Carpooled with other adults or children instead of driving alone	45%	51% C	38%	40%	42%	48%	41%	50% A	58% B C	45% C	34%	**44%**
Used Ride On bus, Metrobus, Metro, MARC or other public transportation instead of driving	89% B C	75% C	55%	66%	67%	74% B	69%	72%	84% B C	71% C	58%	**70%**

Residents living in the county for more than 20 years were more likely to attend or watch a local public meeting compared to residents living in the county for less than five years. Overall, residents were tuned into reading or watching local news, with 75% of 18-34 year old residents, 86% of 35-54 age group, and 92% of the 55+ age group saying they do so.

Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)	Number of years in Montgomery County			Annual household income			Race/ethnicity		Age			Overall
	5 years or less (A)	6 to 20 years (B)	More than 20 years (C)	$49,999 or less (A)	$50,000 to $99,999 (B)	$100,000 or more (C)	White alone, not Hispanic (A)	Hispanic and/or other race (B)	18-34 (A)	35-54 (B)	55+ (C)	
Contacted Montgomery County elected officials (in-person, phone, email or web) to express your opinion	24% B	17%	24% B	17%	20%	24%	27% B	17%	20%	22%	25%	**22%**
Volunteered your time to some group/activity in Montgomery County	39%	38%	41%	28%	37%	45% A B	42%	39%	30%	46% A	41% A	**40%**
Attended a local public meeting	17%	23%	28% A	15%	22%	27% A	25%	22%	16%	27% A	26% A	**24%**
Watched (online or on television) a local public meeting	14%	31% A C	25% A	29%	28%	22%	16%	35% A	21%	25%	27%	**25%**
Read or watch local news (via television, paper, computer, etc.)	74%	84% A	92% A B	88%	86%	83%	83%	88%	75%	86% A	92% A B	**85%**

2019 Results by Regional Service Area

Ease of using public transportation was rated highest for Mid-County, B-CC, and Silver Spring Regional Service Areas. Ease of travel by bicycle was lowest in Silver Spring while ease of walking was rated lowest in Eastern Montgomery.

Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)	Regional Service Center					Overall
	Upcounty (A)	Eastern Montgomery (B)	Silver Spring (C)	Mid-County (D)	B-CC (E)	
Overall ease of getting to the places you usually have to visit	67%	67%	58%	67%	71% C	**67%**
Traffic flow on major streets	32%	38%	29%	38% E	28%	**32%**
Ease of travel by car in Montgomery County	42%	49%	42%	56% A C	51% A	**48%**
Ease of travel by public transportation in Montgomery County	40%	43%	54% A	62% A B	56% A	**51%**
Ease of travel by bicycle in Montgomery County	48% C	42%	30%	39%	46% C	**43%**
Ease of walking in Montgomery County	63% B	38%	61% B	55% B	61% B	**58%**
Availability of paths and walking trails	61% B	46%	78% A B	70% A B	69% B	**66%**

For mobility governance, the only area across all Regional Service Center regions to not be rated as majority good or excellent was street repair. Eastern Montgomery residents had lower positivity ratings compared to at least one other region for three out of eight areas.

Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)	Regional Service Center					Overall
	Upcounty (A)	Eastern Montgomery (B)	Silver Spring (C)	Mid-County (D)	B-CC (E)	
Traffic enforcement	64%	58%	54%	67% C	61%	**62%**
Street repair	44%	42%	40%	43%	41%	**42%**
Street cleaning	62%	54%	56%	63%	69% B C	**63%**
Street lighting	74% B D	52%	71% B	65% B	74% B D	**70%**
Snow removal	74% B	57%	74% B	73% B	73% B	**72%**
Sidewalk maintenance	66%	53%	60%	65%	70% B	**65%**
Traffic signal timing	57%	57%	61%	55%	58%	**57%**
Bus or transit services	83%	72%	80%	79%	79%	**79%**

Silver Spring Regional Service area residents had the highest use of walking, biking, and public transportation of the five regions. Only 35% of Eastern Montgomery area residents walked or biked instead of driving. Carpool rates were the same across the regions.

Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)	Regional Service Center					Overall
	Upcounty (A)	Eastern Montgomery (B)	Silver Spring (C)	Mid-County (D)	B-CC (E)	
Walked or biked instead of driving	49% B	35%	80% A B D E	63% A B	66% A B	**60%**
Carpooled with other adults or children instead of driving alone	45%	41%	41%	43%	47%	**44%**
Used Ride On bus, Metrobus, Metro, MARC or other public transportation instead of driving	59%	66%	85% A B D	69% A	76% A	**70%**

Residents in the Silver Spring Regional Service area were more likely to contact a Montgomery County elected official and attend a local public meeting compared to residents in the other four regions. Silver Spring area residents were less likely to report watching a local public meeting than UpCounty, Eastern Montgomery, or B-CC area residents.

Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)	Regional Service Center					Overall
	Upcounty (A)	Eastern Montgomery (B)	Silver Spring (C)	Mid-County (D)	B-CC (E)	
Contacted Montgomery County elected officials (in-person, phone, email or web) to express your opinion	20%	24%	30% A E	21%	21%	**22%**
Volunteered your time to some group/activity in Montgomery County	45% D	41%	35%	33%	43% D	**40%**
Attended a local public meeting	20%	29%	30% A	24%	25%	**24%**
Watched (online or on television) a local public meeting	28% C D	34% C D	17%	20%	26% C	**25%**
Read or watch local news (via television, paper, computer, etc.)	85%	88%	86%	90% E	80%	**85%**

Appendix I: Letter to Community Groups

OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Marc Elrich
County Executive

Andrew Kleine
Chief Administrative Officer

June 16, 2020

TO: [Chair Name],[Chair Title]
[Organization Name]

FROM: Wade Holland, Vision Zero Coordinator
Montgomery County Office of the County Executive

SUBJECT: Recommendations for Improving Roadway Safety through Vision Zero

Dear [Chair Name],

This summer begins the next chapter for Montgomery County's Vision Zero roadway safety program, and I am writing to request [group name]'s engagement and input as we develop our plan for the next ten years. Below you will find some background information and introductory questions posed to you to begin the conversation and consider in your organization's written response.

If you or your organization's members are not already familiar with the effort, Vision Zero is an approach to roadway safety that prioritizes human life over mobility and other objectives of the roadway system to ensure that our roads are safe regardless of choosing to travel by car, bus, bicycle or foot. A complete description of the program's history and actions to date can be viewed at https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/visionzero/.

Montgomery County is building from its existing Vision Zero efforts, which began in 2018, to develop a ten-year strategic plan to guide the County towards its goal of eliminating serious and fatal crashes by the end of 2030. Groups such as yours have unique insights into our communities' needs and your ideas will help us build a long-range plan that reflects the diversity of our County.

Your organization's written response is not limited to answering the following questions, but the topics below are posed to you to help kick-start the conversation.

- In your organization's view, what are the top five priorities for improving roadway safety?
- Considering the County's current roadway safety efforts, are there particular actions or investments that you would recommend the County do more or less of?
- What is currently lacking in our communities to make it safe to walk, use a wheelchair/scooter, bike, get to and from a bus stop or train station, and drive?
- What would need to change to get more Montgomery County residents to walk and bike?

In addition, we encourage your organization's members to take and share our community survey, which can be found at https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/visionzero/2030plan.html.

Please reach out to me if you have any questions about my request for your input, Vision Zero, or the development of the 10-year strategic plan. I am also available to meet and present to your organization.

To ensure I get your feedback incorporated for consideration, please respond by Friday, August 7.

Thank you,
Wade

Appendix II: Letters Received from Community Groups

Letters received by community organizations, listed in alphabetical order:

- Asian American Health Initiative
- Bethesda Transportation Solutions Advisory Committee
- Commission for Women
- Commission on Aging
- Commission on People with Disabilities
- Mid-County Citizens Advisory Board
- Montgomery County Bicycle Advisory Group
- Montgomery County Civic Federation
- Montgomery County Council of Parent Teacher Associations (MCCPTA) Safe Routes to School Subcommittee
- North Bethesda Transportation Management District Advisory Committee
- Rustic Roads Advisory Committee
- Wheaton Urban District Advisory Committee

Asian American Health Initiative Steering Committee

Dear Wade Holland,

The Asian American Health Initiative Steering Committee (AAHISC) is pleased to respond to your request for input to Montgomery County's Vision Zero roadway safety plan. The AAHISC welcomes and supports Vision Zero's efforts to advise the County towards its goal of eliminating serious and fatal collisions by 2030. Traffic safety is a shared responsibility amongst all who share the road- pedestrians, bicyclists, and drivers alike- and we appreciate you including us in this conversation to explore and gain insights into the Asian American communities' needs as it concerns traffic safety.

Our committee has been staying engaged on the issue of traffic safety, remembering the pedestrian fatalities that took place earlier this year in Rockville and Germantown. We must prevent these types of accidents in the future. Referencing the questions from your request letter to start our conversation, we have gathered our collective input on our recommendations. Mainly, there is a need for more culturally- and linguistically-competent education to Asian Americans about road and pedestrian safety with the understanding that roadway infrastructure and pedestrian etiquette may differ from their country of origin. With that being said, it was also noted that certain areas of the County have different resources which reflect the safety of their roads, such as poor maintenance of safety cameras and lack of adequate lighting at crosswalks in lower-income neighborhoods. It is our hope that the County provides an equitable approach to improving the safety of our roads.

We recommend the following recommendations for the County to consider as leaders draft the ten-year strategic plan to make our roads safe for the community:

1) Increase community outreach and education as well as opportunities for community feedback
    a. Increase funding for nonprofit organizations to conduct targeted outreach campaigns and culturally- and linguistically-competent education to Asian American communities to ensure community awareness of and buy-in for safety strategies across all road users
    b. Create a linguistically competent feedback mechanism to allow residents to inform the County of safety concerns in a timely manner

2) Encourage safe and equitable pedestrian-friendly environments
    a. Improve street lighting at crosswalks for better visibility to both drivers and pedestrians
    b. Incorporate additional stop signs in areas with a high concentration of pedestrians, especially near all schools in the County
    c. More continuous and accessible sidewalks with wider design
    d. Place median fences between busy roads to prevent jaywalking and to encourage residents to use designated crosswalks
    e. Increase wheelchair-accessible sidewalks at major interactions
    f. Additional bike lanes with improved signage for drivers when roads are shared by pedestrian and bicyclists

3) Improve data collection and dissemination efforts
    a. Collect race and ethnicity related data across system

We thank you for seeking our input on this important matter. We look forward to more opportunities to engage in the conversation of. We appreciate your commitment to our communities' safety and we look

forward to further communication from you about Vision Zero's progress and how to make our roads safer for all residents of Montgomery County.

Sincerely,

Nguyen K. Nguyen, PhD

Chair, AAHI Steering Committee

Hina Mehta, PhD, MBA

Vice-Chair Elect, AAHI Steering Committee

Bethesda Transportation Solutions Advisory Committee Members

Voting
Deirdre Robinson (Chair)
Matthew Keadle (Vice Chair)
Allison D. Lazare
Amanda Smith
Danielle Tenney
David Storper
Diane Yochelson
Eric Schroeder
Kathleen F. Krause

Deborah A. Michaels
Iftin Thompson
James Carlson
Joe Cox
Kenneth B. J. Hartman
Ryan Emery
Capt. Sean Gagen

To: Wade Holland
Vision Zero Coordinator, MCDOT

August 6, 2020

From: Deirdre Robinson
Chair, Bethesda Transportation Solutions Advisory Committee

Subject: Recommendations for Improving Roadway Safety through Vision Zero

This letter is in response to Mr. Wade Holland's request for recommendations from the Bethesda Transportation Management District (TMD) Advisory Committee on Vision Zero.

The Bethesda Transportation Management District (TMD) began on December 20, 1999, when Montgomery County signed a contract for Bethesda Urban Partnership (BUP) to operate the TMD, branded as Bethesda Transportation Solutions (BTS), with a mission of mitigating traffic in the Bethesda Urban District area and encouraging a shift of travel from single occupant vehicle (SOV) commutes to transportation options such as transit, carpooling, telework, bicycling or walking to work. The Bethesda Transportation Solutions Advisory Committee supports BTS and advises BUP and the Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) on transportation issues.

BTS works with Bethesda businesses, employees and residents to promote transportation initiatives, host events and provide communication on County services. BTS also assists employers and developers with filing Transportation Demand Management Plans. BTS provides commercial and residential property managers with monthly transportation information and updates to send to their tenants and hosts weekly events to assist employees and residents. BTS also helps MCDOT with downtown Bethesda surveys and site studies.

The Advisory Committee has identified the following priorities for improving roadway safety in Bethesda:

- Continued MCDOT focus and coordination with BTS on pedestrian and bicycle safety through education such as bike safety classes in each TMD area and "Be Safe, Be Seen" outreach events

(continued on next page)

- Continued crosswalk re-striping in Bethesda with additional crosswalks added where needed and enforcement of laws

- Support for the continuation of the streetscape in Bethesda to include lighting

- Support for the Vision Zero action item requiring new County fleet vehicles to have crash avoidance technology, including public transit buses, school buses, and County agency trucks and cars

- Support for all projects to enhance trails and shared use paths into Bethesda

- Support of the future Pedestrian Master Plan

- Support for continued MCDOT commitment to bikeways listed in the Bicycle Master Plan such as the Capital Crescent Trail Surface Route separated bike lanes and the "Bethesda Bike Loop" with separated bike lanes in downtown Bethesda

- Support continued MCDOT coordination with the State of Maryland and Federal Government on engineering projects that will enhance pedestrian and bicyclist safety

The Bethesda Transportation Solution Advisory Committee sincerely appreciates the opportunity to provide you with our Vision Zero priorities for the Bethesda TMD area.

Thank you,

Deirdre Robinson
Chair
Bethesda Transportation Solutions Advisory Committee

COMMISSION FOR WOMEN
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT CLUSTER

August 24, 2020

Wade Holland
Vision Zero Coordinator
Office of the County Executive

Dear Wade,

Thank you for reaching out to the Montgomery County Commission for Women and soliciting our feedback about Vision Zero. Our recommendations are below.

Crosswalks/Sidewalks/Walking:

- Increase allotted time to cross streets at busy intersections with timed crossings, i.e., consider walkers and those with toddlers.
- Before "improving" already in-existence walking areas, invest in creating new pedestrian use areas in low-income districts of need. There is a need for inviting tree lined walk areas, not just linear slabs of cement.
- Improve sidewalks in some areas so they are wider, and avoid obstructions that force people to walk in the street...especially in construction zones.
- Work to ensure that there enough crosswalks and that they are visible to both pedestrians and drivers.
- To get more walkers, we need more available and safe "green" paths. Another way is to open high school tracks (at designated times) to allow use by walkers. Post information as to "calories used" and "desired heart rate" (per age) with a single circuit around the track. It might also help to have simple "exercise" courses laid out in parks where residents are encouraged to safely move and expend energy.
- Work to ensure that there is adequate lighting for pedestrians in neighborhoods and near walking paths. Consider adding motion-sensor lighting for crosswalks at night.
- Add crossing guards at high-traffic areas during high-traffic hours (commuting times) to help guide pedestrian and car traffic
- Share information about walking and biking trails available and consider offering guided tours/walks.
- Add signage for pedestrians to read and stay informed just as there is signage for cars.

Traffic:

- Increase time for left turns from right lanes to reduce people running red lights. There are quite a few lights in the County that are barely yellow before they immediately turn red.
- Eliminate "turns allowed on red" at moderate to busy intersections as drivers are too busy watching for possible oncoming traffic before turning and not watching for pedestrians.

Signage:

- Keep signs visible on all highways. There are so many that are not clearly visible or otherwise difficult to read due to overgrowth of shrubbery or age. This creates a traffic hazard as drivers slow down to figure out their direction.
- Add multi-lingual education and outreach on buses and at bus stops in urban districts with higher pedestrian traffic, particularly in low-income neighborhoods.
- Consider creating and distributing posters or brochures with graphics about walking/riding bikes in the county.

Other:

- Consider distributing safety tools like reflective wear, flashlights/headlights, bike lights, umbrellas, and hats to pedestrians in areas where the most accidents have occurred.

If you need anything else, please do not hesitate to reach out to Jodi Finkelstein, Executive Director at Jodi.Finkelstein@montgomerycountymd.gov

Sincerely,

Nicole Y. Drew, Esq.
President
Montgomery County Commission for Women

Commissioners:

Donna Rojas – First Vice President
Diana Rubin – Second Vice President
Tiffany Boiman – Recording Secretary
Tazeen Ahmad
Isabel Argoti
Mona-Lee Belizaire
Tonia Bui
Ijeoma Enendu
Patricia Maclay
Patricia Swanson
Angela Whitehead Quigley
Meredith Weisel

Executive Director
Jodi Finkelstein

COMMISSION ON AGING

August 7, 2020

Wade Holland, Vision Zero Coordinator
Montgomery County Office of the County Executive
101 Monroe Street
Rockville MD 20850

Subject: Recommendations for Improving Roadway Safety through Vision Zero

Dear Mr. Holland,

The Montgomery County Commission on Aging (CoA) appreciates this opportunity to provide input into the *Vision Zero Initiative Action Plan* and the *Draft Complete Streets Design Guide*. The CoA is authorized by the Older Americans Act and was established by Montgomery County in 1974 to advise County government on the needs, interests, and issues of older adult residents, and to advocate on their behalf at the local, state, and national levels.

Given our perspective on issues affecting older adults, the CoA is pleased to offer our comments regarding both of these important and very much related initiatives. Our comments are based on reviews of the documents for both programs and a presentation to the "Getting All Around the County" stakeholders' group made by County staff on June 19, 2020. Along with our comments, we offer our views in response to the five trigger questions put forth in your June 16, 2020 memo.

Overarching Comments

By the year 2030, approximately 25 percent of the County's population will be over 60 years old. Therefore, it is very important that Montgomery County recognize and consider the growing number of older adults as the two reports evolve into substantive programs and projects. Ultimately the design, engineering, enforcement, and education and training aspects of the improvements resulting from these initiatives must reflect the growing needs of older adults who will walk, bike, take public transit, and drive on our County's roads and streets.

It is in this spirit that we ask the managers of the two initiatives to form an Advisory Working Group where the CoA, as well as other interest groups, would participate, on a regular basis, to help guide evolution and outcomes. An Advisory Working Group can assist in building a strong constituency for these initiatives and provide advocacy and education that would enable resulting improvements to be better accepted, supported, and promoted by all of our residents.

We also recommend a series of focus groups of older adults to assist you to better understand the needs of this diverse population. Older adults include healthy, robust individuals who are 60 plus, fragile individuals in their nineties, and everyone in between. In order that this diverse, older adult community can better understand the changes, we further recommend training to help these individuals to better utilize and safely navigate the new street environments. This is especially important because older adults are more mobile and are continuing to drive longer than in the past. Some seniors may eventually use self-driving electric vehicles and electric bicycles (either privately or public owned) to meet their mobility needs.

Vision Zero Initiative Action Plan

We applaud the County for conducting the Vision Zero Initiative. We believe that Vision Zero can shine a light on critical safety problem areas on our roads and local streets. This Initiative, coupled with the Complete Streets program, can lead to important, beneficial, and sustainable improvements.

Regarding Vision Zero, we offer the following comments and recommendations:

- Critical to Vision Zero are the Road/Pedestrian Safety Audits. We recommend that these audits be conducted specifically in areas where older adults live or gather. As an example, one area might be around Montrose Road and East Jefferson Street, where significant numbers of seniors live, walk, and drive. A second example involves urban areas such as downtown Silver Spring or downtown Bethesda. Obviously, there are other areas around the County where there are seniors living independently or in assisted living, nursing facilities, or group homes, or are visiting community centers or houses of worship. Any location where significant numbers of older adults walk, drive, use electric scooters/wheelchairs, or wait for public transit should be considered for audits.
- We suggest that the safety audits for the Vision Zero Initiative include situations that pose safety issues for older adults and discourage their use of sidewalks and bus stops. For example, scooters and bicycles left on a sidewalk or in a right-of-way can pose a significant hazard to older pedestrians. Floating bus stops that require an individual to cross a bike lane to reach the sidewalk are innovative, but they also pose safety risks to older adults, people who are blind or visually impaired, and people with mobility impairments. Finally, areas that attract a lot of activity because of restaurants or shops, but that lack safe drop-off zones, pose safety problems.
- We encourage efforts to create environments where cars, bicycles and pedestrians can operate safely and compatibly.

Draft Complete Streets Design Guide

The Draft Complete Streets Design Guide is also very informative and instructive. To this, we offer the following comments and recommendations:

- As a general comment, we recommend that the Guide describe how the Complete Streets design strategies specifically benefit older adults and meet the needs of this growing demographic who would like to travel easily, safely, and independently to and from their residences and activities.
- We recommend that the Guide segment the envisioned improvements according to different urban and less urban areas of the County, such as Silver Spring, Bethesda, Rockville (including Rockville Pike), Gaithersburg, Olney, Poolesville, Dickerson, Boyds, etc. These areas present different challenges and will require different approaches.
- It would also be helpful if the Guide included some illustrative scenarios to show how the concepts set forth might be applied to help older adults, school children, and bicyclists in both dense urban and less

dense areas of the County. Different hypothetical scenarios depicting these urban, less urban, and rural contexts would better illustrate the different needs of our dynamic community.

- We recommend that the Guide briefly discuss how the physical features identified to make streets and sidewalks more attractive will be safer for older adults who walk, bike, take a bus, drive, or dine outdoors.
- We recommend that the Guide recognize that self-driving vehicles and electric bicycles will become a greater part of the vehicle mix over the next ten years. Self-driving electric passenger buses, taxis, and personal vehicles will need to navigate the improved street designs envisioned in the Guide.

Responses to Questions Posed in June 16, 2020, Memo

Finally, we would like to respond to the questions that you posed in your June 16, 2020 memo to the CoA. While we understand that questions are intended to focus on walking and biking, it is important to also recognize that more and more seniors also will be driving.

Our responses to your questions follow:

• *In your organization's view, what are the top five priorities for improving roadway safety?*

The following is a list of our top five priorities for improving roadway safety:

1. Roadway lighting especially in areas near where older adults may live and congregate;
2. Street signs, pavement markings, and other roadway directional signs that are large, visible, and well-lit for everyone, especially at night;
3. Wider sidewalks with drop-off zones and crosswalks that are large and visible both for walkers and for drivers;
4. Pedestrian crossing signals that function well, respond appropriately, and are timed to accommodate older adults, especially at wider intersections; and
5. Better placement and management of bicycle and scooter parking sites along sidewalks to enable unobstructed and easily accessed walking spaces for older adults, especially between bus stops and senior community centers and living facilities.

• *Considering the County's current roadway safety efforts, are there particular actions or investments that you would recommend the County do more or less of?*

1. The CoA believes that there is still more that the County can do to improve street lighting and signage, especially at intersections. For example, some intersections with traffic signals are poorly lit, and in some areas, street signs are small, old, and hard to read.
2. More efforts should be made to have large, bright pavement markings that are painted at least twice a year. This will be especially important as more and more self-drive vehicles, both for public and private use, come into the mainstream vehicle mix over the next ten years. Some of these vehicles will be reliant upon quality pavement marking for lane guidance.
3. More effort can be made to separate cars, bicycles and pedestrians so that all can be safe.

• *What is currently lacking in our communities to make it safe to walk, use a wheelchair/scooter, bike, and get to and from a bus stop or train station, and drive?*

1. Narrow, broken and bumpy sidewalks, lack of sheltered bus stops without seating, unmanaged scooter and bicycle parking on sidewalks, and no secure place to store a bike impedes many older adults from attempting to access public transportation. I

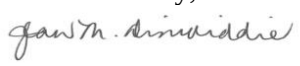
2. In addition, poorly maintained sidewalks and poorly marked, unsignalized, intersections along busy, heavily traveled roadways make walking and biking to bus stops less attractive, especially for older adults.
3. Bicycling along the sides of busy roadways, without wide bike lanes, is not only not conducive to safe bike usage, it could be deadly.
4. With regard to public transit services, we recommend that the County provide more innovative services for older adults who live in rural areas. In general, while the County provides various transportation options for older adults, rural northwest and northeastern sections of the County, distant from the major road corridors, have limited access to these resources. Due to the compounding factors of distance to services, little public transit, and limited resources, older adults who live in these areas depend on private transportation. Both safety and access issues for these more remote populations must be considered in planning for Vision Zero and Complete Streets. We suggest that the County investigate instituting a deviated fixed route/demand-response, small bus system in rural and urban communities with older and disabled populations, similar to the Ride-On Flex program offered down-County.

• *What would need to change to get more Montgomery County residents to walk and bike?*

1. There is no one action. We feel that there are many actions that the County can take to encourage more bicycle, pedestrian and public transit use and we believe we have provided our recommendations and suggestions in our comments above.

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute to the advancement and evolution of these important initiatives. We look forward to an ongoing partnership.

Sincerely,



Jean M. Dinwiddie, Chair
Commission on Aging

cc: Council President Sidney Katz
Council Vice-President Tom Hucker
Councilmember Gabe Albornoz
Councilmember Evan Glass
Councilmember Hans Riemer

July 1, 2020

The Honorable Marc Elrich, County Executive *Via: Electronic Facsimile*
The Honorable Sidney Katz, Council President
The Honorable Thomas Hucker, Council Vice-President; Chair, T & E Committee
Wade Holland, Vision Zero Coordinator

Re: Montgomery County Commission on People with Disabilities Comments and Additional Recommendations on Montgomery County Complete Streets, May 2020 and Vision Zero

On June 16, the Commission on People with Disabilities sent you recommendations regarding the Montgomery County Complete Streets document. Upon further discussion on the issues, we have additional comments. The Commission recommends that sidewalks generally, that take into consideration the needs of people with disabilities, and schools route safety should be the first priority as nearly everyone uses sidewalks or should have access to a sidewalk and not be forced to walk in the streets. One motivation for the Complete Streets Design Guide is the County's Vision Zero Action Plan which has a goal to eliminate traffic fatalities and serious injuries by 2030.

This past year there were severe accidents regarding grade school and high school students, and it Is noted that school safety issues are not addressed in the document. On page 207 of the Montgomery County Complete Streets draft, there are no safety speed targets for school zones while schools are in session. The document does not specifically address school safety standards. The guide is not specifically focused on schools and is a general level view of all streets. We recommend that school safety be addressed as part of Vision Zero planning.

Over the years the Commission has been sending numerous letters to advocate for people with disabilities, greater accessibility and transportation safety. The Commission has recommended to cease installation of the bicycle lanes and floating bus stops until a safer design can be developed or do alternative planning to accommodate bicyclists. Our comments don't just protect the lives of persons with disabilities but everyone. Vision Zero needs to seriously consider the impact of the design and how it is creating a dangerous situation for 98% of the public who will not be using the bike lanes. According to 2013-2017 ACS 5-year estimates, 1.1% of commuters in principal cities travel to work by bicycle. As gas prices decline the number of people who bike to work declines (Bloomberg article, Jan. 2019) which has been an ongoing trend. Sidewalk design is consistent nationally and internationally, which is critical for people with disabilities, especially individuals with low or no vision. Significant changes that have been proposed will create confusion for people who have come to know safely use the typical design of sidewalks.

The proposed design and in areas where it has been implemented significantly narrows the road and the parking area on the street requiring the driver to exit and passengers on the driver's side to exit the vehicle into traffic, passengers on the other side exit into the bike

lane. Bikes travel between 15 and 30 miles an hour creating a dangerous situation to get to the curb. The millions of dollars that will go to creating and maintaining the bikes lanes, not to mention the educational component to teach all residents about what all the new markings mean for drivers and pedestrians. This money should be supporting safety measures for the larger population rather than creating a street design that endangers their lives. It does not make sense and it doesn't serve the community as evidenced by the statistics we have sent over the past year. We would recommend that bike paths be installed similar to the C&O Canal that then leads to access to public transportation.

The design has another incredible flaw in that it assumes people live close to where they work. The average commute here is further because of the cost to live in this county. Bike lanes favor the upper middle class who can afford to live in neighborhoods near where they work. Improved sidewalks, access to public transportation, additional crosswalks, and affordable housing nearby public transportation would be a benefit a broader population. $600,000 townhouses near the Twinbrook Metro and the high-priced rental properties at Pike and Rose are just a few examples of the disparity that exists.

The Commission believes that the plan has zero vision about how we get around and unfairly endangers 98% of the population, and the most harm to people who move slower or differently due to age or a disability. Not to mention the people who wear noise canceling headphones and read their phones while walking.

It is our belief that there are other more important transportation issues such as Increased sidewalks in all neighborhoods, fixing potholes in roads and in general road maintenance. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this critical safety issue for our community. Please feel free to contact the Commission with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Seth A. Morgan, MD, FAAN, Chair

Attachment

c: Dr. Raymond Crowel, Director, DHHS
Dr. Odile Brunetto, Chief, Aging & Disability Services, DHHS

US Census American Community Survey

https://www.census.gov/library/stories/2019/05/younger-workers-in-cities-more-likely-to-bike-to-work.html

May 17 is National Bike to Work Day

MICHAEL BURROWS
MAY 14, 2019

Roughly 870,000 people report commuting by bicycle — many of them young and urban residents.

May 17 is National Bike to Work Day and events are held around the country to encourage people to commute by bicycle.

The most recent American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates covering the years 2013-2017 show that about 872,000 people, or 0.6% of all workers in the United States (Table S0801), bike to work.

The ACS asks workers about their primary method of transportation to work. This provides data about national commuting patterns, including biking to work.

May 17 is National Bike to Work Day and events are held around the country to encourage people to commute by bicycle.

Where is Bicycle Commuting Most Popular?

Biking to work is more common inside the principal cities of metropolitan areas (metros) than outside principal cities and outside metros.

According to 2013-2017 ACS 5-year estimates, 1.1% of commuters in principal cities travel to work by bicycle (Table S0801).

The share of workers biking to work declines away from the urban core. Outside of principal cities within metros, 0.3% of workers report biking to work. Outside of metros, 0.4% of workers commute by bicycle.

Who Bikes to Work?

Younger workers 16-24 years old report biking to work at greater percentages than older workers: 1.0% of workers 16-24 years old bike to work, while 0.7% of workers ages 25-44 and 0.4% of workers 45 and older commute by bicycle.

Table 1.
Percentage of Workers Biking to Work by Age and Geographic Division

Age group	Nation		Principal city of metro area		Metro area outside of principal city		Outside metro area	
	Percent	Margin of error (±)[1]	Percent	Margin of error (±)[1]	Percent	Margin of error (±)[1]	Percent	Margin of error (±)[1]
16-24 years old	1.0	<0.1	1.5	<0.1	0.7	<0.1	0.6	<0.1
25-44 years old	0.7	<0.1	1.3	<0.1	0.3	<0.1	0.4	<0.1
45 years old and older	0.4	<0.1	0.7	<0.1	0.2	<0.1	0.3	<0.1

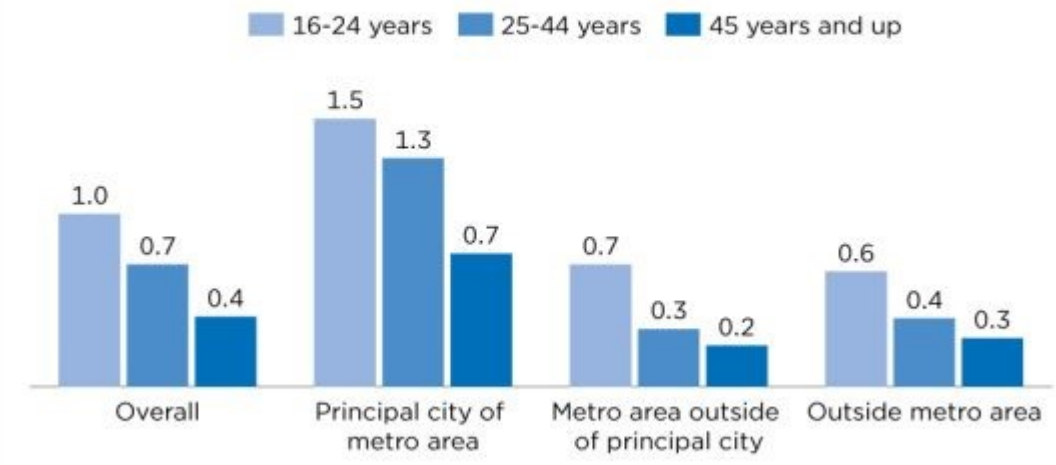
[1] A margin of error is a measure of an estimate's variability. The larger the margin of error in relation to the size of the estimates, the less reliable the estimate. When added to and subtracted from the estimate, the margin of error forms the 90% confidence interval.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2013-2017 5-year estimates.

Young workers in cities commute by bicycle at relatively high percentages, with 1.5% of 16- to 24-year-olds in principal cities of metros biking to work.

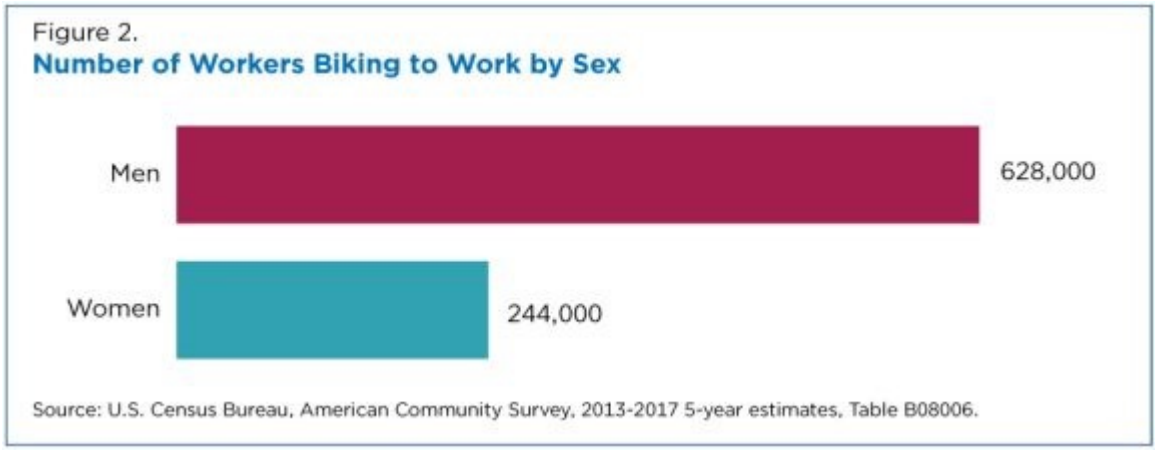
Although older workers inside and outside of metros bike to work at lower percentages than younger workers in the same areas, workers 45 years old and older living in principal cities of metros bike to work at a higher percentage than the national average.

Figure 1.
Percentage of Workers Biking to Work by Geographic Subdivision and Age Group



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2013-2017 5-year estimates.

More men than women commute by bicycle. Among workers in 2013-2017, about 0.8% of men (roughly 628,000) and 0.3% of women (244,000) bike to work.

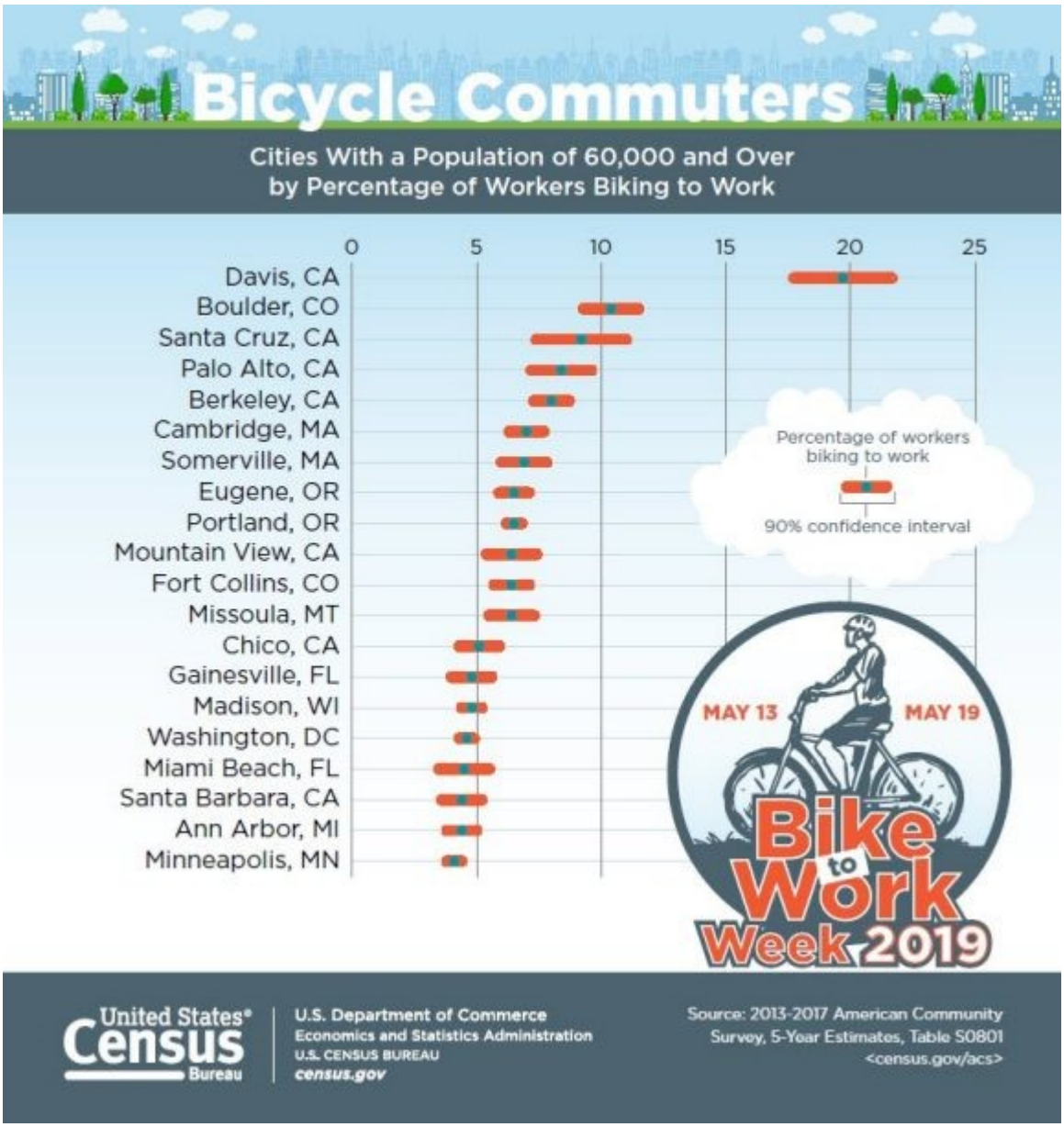


Top Bike Commuting Cities

Below is a list of 20 places with populations over 60,000 that are among those with a higher share of people who bike to work than the national average.

Some of the cities with large populations and notably high levels of bicycle commuting include Portland, Ore. (6.5%), and Washington, D.C. (4.6%).

Several places where bicycle commuting is more common than the national average are home to large college or university populations, including Davis, Calif., where almost 20% of workers say they commute by bicycle and Boulder, Colo. (10.4%).



The ACS offers a range of statistics related to commuting, as well as many other characteristics about the population.

For more information about this data source and others, visit the Commuting (Journey to Work) page at census.gov. Learn more about 2019 National Bike Month and Bike to Work Day and explore other trends in personal and household travel with the National Household Travel Survey.

Michael Burrows is a survey statistician in the Census Bureau's Social, Economic, and Housing Statistics Division.

Stats for Stories

STATS FOR STORIES | MAY 2019

National Bike Month: May 2019

In 2017, the Census Bureau estimated that about 837,000 workers in the U.S. bicycled to work, down from about 865,000 in 2012 and up from 665,000 in 2007.

MID-COUNTY CITIZENS ADVISORY BOARD

Date: July 22, 2020

To: Wade Holland, Vision Zero Coordinator
Office of the County Executive

From: Susanna Parker, Chair
Mid-County Citizens Advisory Board

Subject: MCCAB's Recommendations for Improving Roadway Safety Through Vision Zero Program

Thank you for reaching out to the Mid-County Citizens Advisory Board (MCCAB) for our input on the County's Vision Zero efforts and work moving forward. MCCAB discussed your letter at our last committee meeting, and our members had a wide array of suggestions and requests for the County to implement into the Vision Zero program. Some of these will require coordination with other organizations such as the State Highway Administration and the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, but MCCAB believes all are important steps in improving pedestrian safety and reducing fatalities on our County roads.

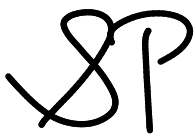
In the past few months MCCAB received a briefing from the 4th District of MCPD on their efforts to reduce pedestrian fatalities. MCPD took photographs of officers in plain clothes pressing walk signals, waiting at traffic lights, and using crosswalks, which were then placed all over the 4th District to educate pedestrians on roadway safety. MCCAB sees this as a great initiative that should be taking place throughout Mid-County and the County as a whole. We do believe that the signs will be more effective if they reflect the diversity of their regions across demographics; the people photographed should vary in sex, age, and race. People in wheelchairs or with other mobility devices should also be featured. Additionally, since our County is ethnically diverse, consider updating traffic signs to be multilingual. For example, in the County, our second-most spoken language is Spanish; our third is Mandarin. Montgomery County should have traffic signs in multiple languages, that vary based on the demographics of the region, so that more people will be able to understand and follow traffic safety regulations. On a related note, educational initiatives should also target the younger demographic. Teach children safe habits early on, and they will likely continue those into adulthood.

After the incident last year when several high school students were struck by a car while waiting at a bus stop, MCCAB believes all MCPS bus stops must be moved off high-speed roads. We also believe that Metrobus and RideOn stops should be shifted away from mid-block points and placed at intersections, and those intersections should have, at the very least, crosswalks.

In your letter, you asked what the County could do to encourage more people to walk and bike. Build the infrastructure to support doing so safely. Too many busy roads have narrow or no sidewalks, and there are too few bike lanes or even sharrows. The roads that do have sidewalks often have no buffer between pedestrian and roadway, not even a strip of grass. So MCCAB encourages the County to begin there. Install ADA compliant sidewalks with an appropriate buffer, preferably with street trees to act as a physical barrier between people and cars. Add more bike lanes, and paint them a different color to visually differentiate them from the main roadway. Build more pedestrian refuges in the medians of busy roads. If jaywalking is a problem, install median barriers to discourage mid-block crossings. In areas where vehicle/pedestrian encounters are more likely, remove visual impediments like tall plantings or obstructive signage.

There are other improvements MCCAB believes the County and State should consider: more rumble strips on high-speed roads to keep cars in the roadway; increase the usage of roundabouts where appropriate; and - as the technology is improved and recognition of POC during nighttime is equal to the recognition of white people - facilitate the increased usage of driverless cars. Finally, the County should be transparent in its Vision Zero expenditures and have logic and consistency in where and how money is spent.

Thank you for reaching out to the Mid-County Citizens Advisory Board, and for the work that you and Vision Zero are doing to improve pedestrian safety throughout the County. MCCAB looks forward to continuing to collaborate going forward.



June 26, 2020

To: Wade Holland
Montgomery County Office of the County Executive

From: Deborah Turton
Member, Montgomery County Bicycle Advisory Group

Subject: Recommendations for Improving Roadway Safety through Vision Zero.

Dear Wade,
After discussing roadway safety with the MCBAG group, we would like to offer you the following recommendations for improvement in the county.

1. We would like you to follow the plans and guidelines in the Montgomery County Bike Master Plan. This plan contains guidance and plans that were thoroughly vetted over the course of its development. However, while using the Master Plan, please do
    a. Update technologies and facility plans as new research becomes available.
    b. Remember that the primary goal is to increase connectivity.
    c. Refrain from using the master plan as a reason to block implementation of new bike facilities. If the costs and impacts outweigh the benefits of new facilities, it would be acceptable to implement interim upgrades until the recommendations of the master plan can be built.
2. Subject to master plan considerations, we recommend separation of different modes of transportation. i.e. people in cars should be separated from people on wheels and people on foot. All three of these groups travel at different speeds and for safety as well as convenience it helps if these groups are separated.
3. There should be an increase in educational efforts through driver's education and public service announcements about how to drive safely around vulnerable road users. We support the use of in school education of children to teach children how to bicycle and walk safely so they grow up understanding how everyone uses the roads.
4. There needs to be intersection improvements up to and including complete intersections along with enforcement to ensure that people use intersections lawfully and safely. The county should

    a. Enforce the stop lines at intersections so access to the crosswalk is not blocked.
    b. Enforce stopping on red lights before turning right.
    c. Enforce the law that pedestrians and bicycle riders have the right of way in crosswalks even when people are turning.
    d. Disallow right turn on red at certain dangerous intersections.
5. The county needs to strongly encourage companies to use telecommuting.

You also asked us how the county can encourage more people to move out of their cars and use biking, walking and scootering as a means of transportation. We have the following recommendations:

1. Fewer car parking facilities and more bike/scooter parking areas that are safe and protected.
2. More shower facilities in buildings
3. More low stress bike routes – see the master plan for priorities.
4. More protected bike lanes
5. Wider sidepaths and sidewalks to accommodate more people traveling outside of cars
6. Crosswalk signaling needs to be more consistent and easier to use.
    a. Nobody should have to press a crosswalk button if it doesn't change the car traffic pattern. The default should be that the crosswalk signals change with the traffic light signals without any input by people on the sidewalk. If the button must be pressed to allow enough time to cross, then a sign should state that clearly.
    b. Some indication for people to know that the button has been pressed and is working. Either a countdown to when the pedestrian light will change to walk or an indicator light that shows that the button is working.
    c. The countdown to 0 for the time remaining to cross should be timed with the yellow light at all intersections. Currently, the countdown ends at different times in the light cycle at different intersections. This is not about how much time is available to cross, but how that time interval is displayed to the crosswalk user. People move at different speeds. Accurate and consistent information is important so people can move more easily.
    d. Buttons should be placed so all people, no matter the method of transportation, can easily use them.
7. Vehicle sensors for traffic lights should be able to detect that a bike or scooter is waiting at the intersection. Equally helpful would be some indication that the light

will change for them along with clear markers of where the bike should be stopped. Here is a link to one idea of how that might work: https://bikeportland.org/2019/10/11/new-blue-light-for-bike-riders-part-of-detection-research-project-306124

8. People who walk, scooter or bicycle need wayfinding signs and places to rest. Getting lost when you're moving under your own power and more slowly than if you're in a car can cause real problems. In addition, rest benches can allow people to move further under their own power since they have a chance to take a break in a safe and comfortable spot.

Thank you for considering our suggestions to make Montgomery County a county that makes it safe and easy for all transportation users.

Deborah Turton

Montgomery County Civic Federation
Improving Roadway Safety Survey (via SurveyMonkey)
August 2020
Online at
https://docs.google.com/document/d/19sd1bTBuyNBXcuw1DVjEjkKwSW2eBelbFxcranXD_mM/edit?usp=sharing

Civic Associations Responding & Location

1. Park Hills Civic Association – Silver Spring
2. Sligo Branview Civic Association – Silver Spring
3. Maplewood Citizens Association – Bethesda
4. Chevy Chase West Neighborhood Association – Chevy Chase
5. Parkwood Residents Association - Kensington
6. McKinney Hills/Carroll Knolls – Silver Spring
7. Clarksburg Civic Association - Clarksburg
8. Norbeck Citizens Association – Silver Spring
9. Cherrywood Homeowners Association - Olney
10. Strathmore Bel-Pre Civic Association – Silver Spring
11. Kenwood Condominium HOA - Bethesda
12. North Bethesda Neighborhoods - Bethesda
13. Kensington Heights Civic Association – Kensington/Wheaton

Question 1. What are the top five priorities for improving roadway safety?

1st Priority

- More sidewalks
- More sidewalks
- Continuous bike lanes
- Clear, well-timed pedestrian crosswalks
- Large fines for mobile phone use
- Better connected network of slow streets & bike trails to get across County
- Street lights at the corner of Eton Rd and E. Wayne Avenue
- Uniform speed limit for cars
- Build the Montrose Pike Extension (railroad crossing is unsafe)
- Move school bus stops off of major commuter routes
- Approve new housing carefully as more people mean more cars
- ADA compliance
- Moratorium on construction until there is adequate roadway infrastructure
- Slower speeds

2nd Priority

- More enforcement of speeding
- Improved pedestrian safety
- On at dusk lighting on all major roads and pedestrian crosswalks
- Bicycle lanes

- Synchronize traffic signals to keep traffic moving efficiently
- Lower speed limits, especially on arterial roads
- Speed bumps & speeding monitors on East Wayne Avenue between Flower Avenue & Sligo Creek
- Keeping pedestrians, bikes and vehicles in their lanes
- Request SHA to put the Norbeck Road improvements back in the CTP with Sidewalks and Pedestrian Crossings
- Use barrier fencing to prevent pedestrians from jaywalking
- Continue public education of driver regarding speeding
- No bicycles on sidewalks-ever
- Pedestrian signalization that meets ADA requirements
- Ensuring safe pedestrian crosswalks

3rd Priority

- No right hand turns at school intersections
- Improved lighting
- Eliminate parking on major roads
- Sidewalks/paths that run parallel to mail thoroughfares
- Encourage teleworking and staggered business hours
- Arterial roads need to be narrowed
- Driveways on Eton Road so cars can park off street
- Enforce laws against driving without a license
- Proper maintenance of road surfaces
- Build the Corridor City Transitway
- Enforce pedestrian use of crosswalks at intersections
- More speed cameras
- More and improved—and covered—bus stops
- Improved visibility

4th Priority

- Dedicated lanes for bicycles
- Better traffic enforcement
- Install “Hawk Lights” at major pedestrian crosswalks
- Improved road shoulder and road widths
- Minimize school busing
- Safe routes to school for children
- Trim trees and brush on East Wayne Avenue
- Enforce jaywalking laws
- Complete the Purple Line and restore the Capital Crescent Trail
- Install crosswalk buttons at all major crosswalks
- More data, Improved study of accidents and traffic violations leading to mitigatin
- Raised striping or reflective bumps, green paint, raised walkways

5th Priority

- Greatly enhanced road maintenance & repair

- Bike lanes, more of them, more secure
- More red light cameras
- Improve visibility; clear overgrown branches and improve signage & visibility
- Utilize multiuse sidewalks and bike paths
- Relax zoning to allow for commercial development near housing
- Improve bus routes by increasing trips on routes; and add routes, free fares
- Encourage remote work
- Better signalization
- More policing

Question 2. Particular actions or investments you recommend more or less of?

1. Greatly enhance road repair and maintenance
2. More sidewalks and sidewalk maintenance; sidewalks along the Purple Line; additional covered bus stops
3. Dedicated bike lane along every major road
4. More crosswalks are needed, especially near bus stops
5. More bump outs; more automated speed cameras; lower speed limits; more sidewalks; greater traffic enforcement; more protected bike lanes; more open parkways
6. More sidewalks and bike lanes with electronically monitored cross walks, speed bumps
7. Better engineering of intersections; more uniform signage and lane markings
8. Stop removing projects from the CIP
9. Don't put sidewalks immediately adjacent to the curb on high speed arterials.
10. Required DOT staff to use public transit, walk or bicycle to work and to cross a street at least twice a day.
11. More speed cameras

Question 3. What investments are lacking?

1. ADA compliant sidewalks
2. Better and more continuous sidewalks; no way to get to small island bus stops; better and safer cross walks with lighting; flashing lights and raised sidewalks
3. Wide and continuous sidewalks
4. More sidewalks and well-marked bike lanes
5. Less distracted driving; increased fines and loss of license
6. Limited cross walks, traffic signs prioritizing pedestrians, wider sidewalks
7. Safe lanes for bikes
8. Sidewalks in Clarkburg region
9. Grade separated intersections with pedestrian walkways, crosswalks with traffic controls, complete the County bike network; not suitable for work commutes
10. Sidewalk maintenance
11. Mandate minimum width for sidewalks
12. Bicycles
13. Wider sidewalks; pedestrian signalization
14. More sidewalks

Question 4. What needs to change to get more residents to walk & bike.

1. Dedicated lanes for bicycles, more and improved sidewalks
2. Bide storage at Purple Line stops would encourage people to bike; more frequent buses, higher fees for commuter parking in Silver Spring and use that money to eliminate bus fares to metro/PL stops; passengers who ride the bus get a reduced fare on the train.
3. County should encourage communities and civic organizations to establish walking and bicycle groups in their jurisdictions
4. Safe passage and efficiency; more path construction
5. Incentives in a lower price of health insurance to encourage more walking
6. Slower traffic, narrower streets; state routes are dangerous and act as a barrier because they are difficult to cross by bike or foot
7. Protected walkways from weather
8. Year round moderate weather like in California.

July 28, 2020

Montgomery County Office of the Executive
Wade Holland, Vision Zero Coordinator

Dear Mr. Holland,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input for the recommendations for improving roadway safety through Vision Zero in the next phase of ten-year planning. The MCCPTA Safe Routes to Schools Subcommittee especially strives to apply Vision Zero principals in and around schools so that students are prioritized though safe walking/cycling routes and low speed streets for buses and drivers. Here are the answers to your survey:

The top 5 priorities for improving roadway safety in school zone areas are

1. Safe, protected sidewalks
2. Safe road crossings
3. Speed control (which might include automated speed enforcement and especially increased signage to discourage speeders near cameras)
4. Reallocation of road space from cars to people
5. Redundancy of routes to reduce pressure on residential streets during pick up and drop off

Particular actions/investments to do more of or less of include:

- Filling in missing sidewalks
- Making hazardous road crossings safe
- Coordinate better with schools and teaching school staff (especially principals) about Vision Zero goals
- Better coordination between MCPS, MNCPPC Planning Dept and Transportation Department

We are currently lacking the following items that would make our communities safe for walking, using a wheelchair, cycling, traveling to/from bus and train stations, and driving:

- wide, well-maintained sidewalks
- a strong network of protected bike lanes
- meaningful school zones that are consistent throughout the entire county
- appropriately placed, appropriately controlled road crossings

To encourage more walking and cycling, our county needs:

- To provide protected bike lanes
- Safe pathways that encourage kids to ride bikes
- To incorporate biking and pedestrian activity more purposefully into school construction, renovation and design
- Biking paths that lead to schools, libraries, rec centers, parks and other places kids can bike to in new neighborhood developments
- To increase enforcement of current speed laws more effectively

Sincerely,
Alison Gillespie, Chair of MCCPTA Safe Routes to Schools Subcommittee
Paul Carlson
Kristy Daphnis
Melissa Regan
Miriam Schoenbaum

North Bethesda Transportation Management District Advisory Committee
July 2020

- Bike facilities including protected bike lanes and protected intersections throughout North Bethesda to provide better connections and enhanced network including connections to existing bike facilities such as Woodglen Cycle Track/Bethesda Trolley Trail, Nebel Street, Executive Blvd, and Tuckerman Lane bike facilities (near Grosvenor).

- More facilities/improvements to separate modes -- drivers, pedestrians, cyclists, and scooter riders with a focus on meeting the needs of everyone no matter their age or abilities.

- Implementation of recommendations for bicycle and pedestrian facilities included in the BiPPA report for Grosvenor-Strathmore, the Bicycle Master Plan, and recent sector plans in North Bethesda (Twinbrook, White Flint 1, White Flint 2, Rock Spring Park, and Grosvenor-Strathmore).

- Education campaign – for drivers, pedestrians, cyclists, and scooter riders on the use of cycle tracks, protected bike lanes, and other facilities.

- Continued education efforts with focus on distracted driving initiatives and Safe Walk to School campaign.

- Continued enforcement efforts to address excessive speed, red-light running, and drivers not stopping for school buses.

- Intersection improvements to create safe and walkable, pedestrian-friendly environment including automated pedestrian signals and count down signals.

- Installation of crosswalks on all sides/legs intersections with the top priority being signalized intersections.

- Installation of traffic calming measures including pedestrian refuge islands, speed humps, curb extensions, HAWK signals, etc. in both business and residential areas.

- Installation of improvements to address ADA compliance.

- Elimination of hot right turns or slip lanes.

- Continued review of the need for streetlight improvements and monitoring of streetlight outages for timely repairs.

- Maintenance of landscaping around intersections, crosswalks, bike facilities, etc. to ensure clear lines of site for pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers.

- Review findings of bus stop audits to ensure safe access to and from bus stops both during day-light hours and at night.

- Continue to explore the application of new and emerging technology-based solutions to address the goals of Vision Zero.

RUSTIC ROADS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

September 1, 2020

Wade Holland, Vision Zero Coordinator
Montgomery County Office of the County Executive
101 Monroe Street, 2nd Floor
Rockville, MD 20850

Re: Recommendations for Improving Roadway Safety through Vision Zero

Dear Mr. Holland:

The Rustic Roads Advisory Committee appreciates the opportunity to comment on your upcoming ten-year plan. Thank you for the time you spent briefing us on this effort and answering our questions. We appreciate your support for maintaining the safety and character of the roads in the Rustic Roads program -- our roads are more than a means for "getting somewhere" -- they are an experience in and of themselves and are key to those visiting Heritage resources and supporting agritourism. We have roadway users of all kinds, including equestrians and farmers driving slow equipment that are rarely seen in other parts of the County.

The Committee discussed Vision Zero at our virtual meeting on July 23, 2020. To respond to your suggested question to us, our top five priorities for improving roadway safety on rustic roads are the following:

- Maintain the slow, safe, narrow character of the roads and bridges. Many rustic roads have had inappropriate widening occur during maintenance and we are trying to reverse that process. Wider roads lead to higher speeds, which lead to more crashes. Similarly, the narrow and one-lane bridges serve to slow traffic and protect those who are fishing, hiking, or riding bicycles and horses near or on the bridge.
- Preserve roadside trees and hedgerows on rustic roads, as they maintain the narrow character of the road and encourage lower speeds.
- Avoid installation of raised pavement markers down road centerlines, which are known to increase crashes and are also inconsistent with the character of rustic roads.
- Increase use of mobile speed cameras to help encourage slow traffic. We intend to work with the police to identify specific locations for these cameras under the new contract for such cameras.
- Find ways to call out "Share the Road" specifically where possible, since rustic roads are used by hikers, bicyclists, equestrians, farm equipment, and passenger vehicles. We have many bicyclists on our rustic roads in the Ag Reserve. These users are usually riding for exercise and pleasure, though some are commuting.

In talking with you, it became clear that crashes on rustic roads are more likely to involve roadway departures. We are supportive of appropriately placed signage with advisory speeds or chevrons warning of sharp curves to the extent that can help prevent such roadway departures. We would greatly appreciate receiving the analytic data on crashes related to rustic roads that we discussed with you, since our data currently comes from the County website and is somewhat limited in detail.

Thank you for submitting this project to our Committee for review. We look forward to working with you going forward. If you have any questions, you may reach us through our staff coordinator, Darcy Buckley, at 240-777-7166 or Darcy.Buckley@montgomerycountymd.gov.

Sincerely,

Robert J. Tworkowski, Chair
Rustic Roads Advisory Committee

Committee Members: Todd Greenstone, Laura Van Etten, Dan Seamans, Robert Wilbur, Kamran Sadeghi, Lonnie Luther, Leslie Saville (M-NCPPC)

cc: Stephen Aldrich, M-NCPPC
Jesse Cohn, M-NCPPC

WHEATON URBAN DISTRICT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Marc Elrich
County Executive

Luisa Montero-Diaz
Director

July 29, 2020

Wade Holland
Vlslon Zero Coordlnator
101 Monroe Street
Rockville, MD 20850

Dear Mr Holland:

As we are sure you are aware, there has been a recent increase in pedestrian fatalities in the Wheaton area and the Wheaton Urban District itself which has highlighted one of our Urban District's fundamental problems: **the lack of safe, connected, pedestrian and bike ways in and around our urban district.**

Wheaton will never fully emerge as a self-sufficient Urban District until this infrastructure is in place. WUDAC is glad to see that there is political traction behind mobilizing the State Highway Administration particularly because there are three state highways that transect the Urban District.

Specifically, we are responding to the request by SHA and the Council to identify the priority areas of concern within our District that are contributing to unacceptable dangers to our pedestrians and residents. In the past few months WUDAC has engaged with several neighborhood groups, community members and advocates and has created the attached map highlighting our biggest connectivity concerns.

Incidentally many of our labeled "Hot Spots" mentioned on the map are included in the County's *2015 Bicycle and Pedestrian Priority Areas (BiPPA) Report.* Furthermore, many are labeled "High" priority and "Short Term" implementation. Please note that while the sites are numbered in rough order of priority, all are critical to creating a safer community.

The report even goes on to mention: *"Wheaton CBD is the ideal BiPPA where investment in bicycle and pedestrian improvements has great potential to transform a community characterized by auto-centric infrastructure, heavy commercial activity, and a busy transit hub at its core."*

Therefore, WUDAC would like to request that the recommendations of the 2015 BiPPA Report, particularly those related to the "Hot Spots" map (attached) be funded and scheduled for implementation. We also request the development of a focused Wheaton Urban District BiPPA funding vehicle to ensure quicker and more direct action.

We invite you to attend one of our monthly meetings to discuss your thoughts on this matter and we thank you for your continued interest in this issue.

Best Regards,

William Jelen, WUDAC Chair

WHEATON


8
Develop Ped/Biker connection along Blueridge Galt to Nairn
Blueridge Ave.
7
Blueridge and Grandview
dangerous ped/bike crossing
due to large volume of car traffic
P
2
University and Elkin
Allow safe ped crossing
Hickerson Dr.
6
University and Amherst
No refuge area for pedestrians,
signal is not ADA compliant
Elkin St.
University Blvd.
Entire University Blvd
narrow sidewalks
little or no refuge for
bus stops or crossing
9
P
Triangle Ln.
Fern St.
Amherst Ave.
1
Crosswalk but no traffic
light or demand flasher
Ennalls Ave.
P
P
Grandview Ave.
Construction Area
4
Viers Mill and Ennalls
Allow safe ped crossing
Intersection needs evaluation
of right turn signaling and bus
stop location
3
Georgia Ave.
Reedie Dr.
M
Wheaton Station
Veirs Mill Rd.
P
Westfield Wheaton
5
Awkward, time consuming, unsafe,
non-aligned crossing of Georgia Ave
and Veirs Mill Rd
10
Mall ring road
marked bikeway

Office of the County Executive
101 Monroe Street
Rockville, Maryland 20850

CONNECT WITH VISION ZERO

3-1-1 **@VisionZeroMC**

montgomerycountymd.gov/visionzero

Alternative formats of this publication can be made available upon request.