



PEDESTRIAN, BICYCLE AND TRAFFIC SAFETY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

January 2, 2013

The Honorable Isiah Leggett
County Executive
Executive Office Building (EOB)
101 Monroe Street, 2nd Floor
Rockville, MD 20850

Dear County Executive Leggett:

Thank you for your continued leadership and support of pedestrian, bicycle and traffic safety. As you are aware, we share your commitment to improve pedestrian safety and accessibility for everyone and remain dedicated to assisting you achieve your goal of making Montgomery County a model walkable community.

With these shared goals in mind, we write to inform you that at its November 1, 2012 meeting, members of the Pedestrian, Bicycle, and Traffic Safety Advisory Committee overwhelming voted to support the following resolution:

PBTSAC recommends to the County Executive that funding be increased for pedestrian education and bicycle programs without negatively impacting other pedestrian safety programs.

The Committee took this action for several reasons. Since 2008, the County has witnessed a successful decrease in pedestrian fatalities, partially as a result of your Pedestrian Safety Initiative and the work of many departments and community partners. These are significant achievements and should be recognized. However, in order to build off of this progress, the Committee believes that we must continue to strive for innovation and creativity in developing new education and outreach initiatives aimed at maximizing community engagement in conjunction with enforcement and engineering programs.

In 2011 and 2012, the Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) undertook several new initiatives in cooperation with the Montgomery County Police Department (MCPD), local schools and community partners. The Committee is pleased with the progress of these new initiatives and believes that they merit additional financial and staff support to increase their effectiveness and reach throughout the County. These new efforts include:

- A pedestrian safety campaign called “See Them See You” focuses attention on one of the most important factors in reducing crashes – visibility – by featuring ads that show the eyes of two County students with the slogan, “Hey You, I’m Looking at You.” DOT is currently working to add “Bright Eyes” posters on Ride On buses and coordinating with the Montgomery County Police Department through their “Shop with a Cop” initiative. These

Department of Transportation

initiatives are partly the result of efforts at Montgomery Blair High School, whose students made significant contributions to better educate their peers about pedestrian safety.

- Innovative education strategies in high incidence areas (HIA) have included pedestrian surveys, bilingual safety promotion teams, new curb markings, and a presence at special community events and festivals. These new strategies have been held in coordination with targeted enforcement campaigns aimed at both pedestrians and drivers by the MCPD.

With few financial resources devoted to them, these new efforts have shown tremendous results. They have received substantial earned media—extending the reach and impact of the safety messages. They have also garnered substantial community interest and support, and preliminary survey data and information from the MCPD shows that they have had a significant impact in reducing illegal crossings and other unsafe behaviors. MCDOT staff and MCPD officers that have been involved with the development of these programs, and the many volunteers and community members that have been involved in implementation, are to be commended.

Good work has assuredly been done, but more is required from all of us. The Committee believes that Montgomery County needs to continue to invest in new educational initiatives in order to avoid future tragic deaths, like that of Seneca Valley High School student, Christina Morris-Ward, in October. Our goal must be to strive for zero pedestrian deaths annually. As such, we seriously urge that additional funding be budgeted to expand these programs to additional schools, work places and communities while sustaining efforts in HIAs throughout the County.

Thank you again for your continued leadership and support in making Montgomery County a safe and prosperous community for all who live, work or travel through it.

Respectfully,



Erwin Mack, Chair
Pedestrian, Bicycle, and Traffic Safety
Advisory Committee



Darrel Droblich
Member

CC: Arthur Holmes, MCDOT
Councilmember Nancy Navarro



OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE
ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND 20850

Isiah Leggett
County Executive

February 8, 2013

Mr. Erwin Mack, Chair
Mr. Darrel Droblich, Member
Pedestrian, Bicycle, and Traffic Safety Advisory Committee
8107 Chester Street
Takoma Park, Maryland 20912

Dear Chairman Mack and Mr. Droblich:

Thank you for your letter of January 2, 2013, and your words of support for our Pedestrian Safety Initiative. I too am most pleased with the progress we have made improving safety for everyone – pedestrians, bicyclists, transit passengers, and motorists alike. The steady reduction in pedestrian collisions, especially serious ones, and fatalities, is testament we can indeed make our roadways safer.

However, our work is not yet done. We still have too many tragic events where our residents are either killed or injured in pedestrian collisions. I am committed to continuing our progress with an emphasis on education, engineering, and enforcement as we tackle the challenge of making our streets safer and more walkable for pedestrians. In the early years of the Initiative we made progress mainly through engineering improvements. The last eighteen months, we have greatly increased our efforts in education and enforcement.

I note the Pedestrian, Bicycle, and Traffic Safety Advisory Committee's call for the creation of an expanded, countywide pedestrian safety education program, combined with an expanded enforcement program, to address pedestrians and drivers in the entire county. I will consider this recommendation as I evaluate the many competing requests for what are still scarce County resources during the current FY14 Operating Budget development.

Thank you for sharing the committee's thoughts on this matter.

Sincerely,

Original signed by
Isiah Leggett

Isiah Leggett
County Executive

IL:vp

cc: Arthur Holmes, Director, MCDOT
Chief Thomas Manger, MCPD
Jennifer Hughes, Director, OMB