



Vision Zero

MISSION STATEMENT

Human life takes priority over mobility and other objectives of the road system. Human error is inevitable and the transportation system should be designed to anticipate error so the consequences are not serious or fatal injuries. Through the use of data-informed and equitable approaches, Montgomery County will systematically update the roadway network and utilize targeted education and enforcement to build a culture of safety to eliminate serious and fatal collisions from Montgomery County roadways by 2030.

LINKAGE TO COUNTY RESULT AREAS

- **Safe Neighborhoods**
- **Easier Commutes**

PROGRAM CONTACTS

Contact Wade Holland, Vision Zero Coordinator at 240.777.2623, Michael Paylor of the Department of Transportation at 240.777.2190, Capt. David McBain of the Department of Police at 240.773.5952, Neil Greenberger of the Public Information Office at 240.777.6532, or David Gottesman of the Office of Management and Budget at 240.777.2627 for more information regarding this initiative's operating budget.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Vision Zero is an international movement that relies on data-informed and equitable approaches to improve the design of roads, conduct targeted education and enforcement, and change policies to end serious and fatal traffic crashes. Montgomery County adopted Vision Zero as the successor to the successful Pedestrian Safety Initiative in 2016. The County's Action Plan recommits the county to improving pedestrian safety and expands the collaborative effort to improving safety for drivers and cyclists. The goal of the 2020 Action Plan is to reduce serious and fatal collisions by 40 percent compared to the prior 2012-2016 average. The target will be achieved by completing 32 action items in the areas of engineering, enforcement, education, traffic incident management, and law/policy/advocacy. To learn more about Vision Zero and to read the 2020 Action Plan, visit <https://montgomerycountymd.gov/visionzero/>.

RESULTS

Preliminary 2020 data show 203 serious and fatal collisions, a 45 percent reduction from the 2012-2016 average. To continue moving towards our long-term goal of zero serious and fatal crashes, the top ten County-maintained roadway segments along the High Injury Network (HIN) were identified and studied, with short-, mid- and long-term improvements to be implemented by the Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT). Improvements along Middlebrook Road were completed and studies for four additional HIN corridors are ongoing. MCDOT continued installing protected bicycle lanes across the county with construction ongoing for the Bethesda Loop. Educational efforts have been conducted in HINs, pedestrian collision hot spots, as well as targeted to high-risk groups. These efforts were conducted in coordination with enforcement efforts and have been used to change unsafe pedestrian and driver behaviors. Engineering improvements, along with education and enforcement, have modified perceptions of risk and responsibility on the roads and sidewalks.

The County Executive recommends \$95.1 million in FY22 expenditures in support of Vision Zero. The FY22 Recommended Operating Budget includes \$47.8 million for Vision Zero initiatives. In addition, the Capital Improvements Program (CIP) includes \$47.3 million in expenditures for FY22.

Services dedicated to improving traffic safety include general program offerings, as well as targeted services. These services address current critical needs and the desired outcome of reducing serious and fatal collisions. Below are some of the major County government programs currently supporting Vision Zero:

Department of Transportation

- Continued expansion of pedestrian signals to increase visibility and safety - High-Intensity Activated crossWalk beacons (HAWKS) were installed at Muddy Branch & Harmony Hall, Aspen Hill Road & Northgate Shopping Center, Tuckerman Lane & The Bethesda Trolley Trail, Willard & The Hills Plaza, Democracy & Davis Library, Democracy & Walter Johnson HS, Summit & Brookfield, Muddy Branch & Suffield, and 6705 Rockledge Drive. Pedestrian Beacons were installed along the new PEPCO Natural Trail at Schaeffer, Black Rock Rd, Germantown Rd, and Darnestown Rd, and beacons were also installed at MacArthur & Dunrobbin, MD 97 & Fenwick, Dale & Dartmouth, West Cedar & Cedarcrest, Rockville Pike & Avondale, and Georgia Ave & Veirs Mill Rd. Additionally, a new full signal with pedestrian signal was constructed at Wisteria & Crystal Rock adjacent to the new Seneca Valley HS. The State Highway Administration (SHA) installed a traffic signal at Georgia Ave and May Street and River Road and Braeburn Parkway.
- Conducted Bus Stop Audits along corridors throughout the County: Middlebrook Road, Rockville Pike, Randolph Road, and Wheaton Central Business District (Georgia Ave, University Blvd W, and Veirs Mill Rd) that focus on HIN corridors and seek to improve safety and accessibility for transit users.
- Constructed a road diet along Middlebrook Road and installed a new, physically and spatially buffered two-way bicycle facility including the County's first shared platform.
- Increased the ability of students to walk or bike to school safely through improved facilities as part of the Safe Routes to Schools program. Also, evaluated and assessed traffic and operational safety issues at County schools.
- Participated in the regional Street Smart pedestrian safety education campaign. The campaigns use transit shelters and bus advertising throughout the County to promote safe pedestrian behaviors and to raise awareness of drivers and pedestrians about the importance of bicycle and pedestrian safety. The twice yearly, four-week media campaigns are also coordinated with targeted enforcement actions. Since FY16, this campaign was modified and broadened to a County-wide, year-round effort to also reach the teen and senior populations. During the coronavirus pandemic, Street Smart developed and delivered social media messaging related to traffic safety issues and the pandemic.
- Implemented traffic calming improvements by installing pedestrian refuge islands, curb extensions, speed humps, and improved signage and markings, such as current projects under design or construction on Wickham Road, Old Baltimore Road, Arlington Road, Lockwood Drive, Brunette Avenue, East Franklin Street, Lambertson Drive at Belgrade Road, Ray Drive at Gist Avenue, Spring Street at Fairview Road, and Grubb Road at Lyttonsville Road. Where traffic calming has been employed in areas with collisions, there has been a measurable reduction in speeding and a 44 percent reduction in pedestrian collisions.
- Implemented pedestrian signal timing improvements to provide pedestrians with more time to safely cross streets. This program has thus far completed retiming of all County pedestrian signals.
- Improved sidewalk connectivity to transportation, commercial, and employment areas, and medical facilities throughout the County.
- Provided curb ramps for sidewalks and other accessibility barriers on County roadways through the ADA compliance program.
- Construction began on the Bethesda Loop bike projects with the Capital Crescent Surface Trail and Woodmont Avenue phase I underway in late fall 2020.
- Designing an extension to link the end of the existing Metropolitan Branch Trail in Takoma Park to the Silver Spring Transit Center.
- Education and outreach efforts continued during the COVID-19 pandemic. In the fall, MCDOT hosted five socially distant

bicycle rodeos, hosted four "Walking Wednesdays" to provide safe and active walking and biking activities to families at MCPS food distribution centers, and expanded use of social media.

- Conducting evaluations of pedestrian and bicycle facilities in eight of the County's twenty-eight Bicycle and Pedestrian Priority Areas (BiPPAs) and construct improvements to pedestrian and bicycle connectivity and safety in these BiPPAs.
- Updating lighting, signing, marking, and signals standards and investigating complete street guidelines that seek to address crucial Vision Zero core concepts.
- Coordinated with M-NCPPC to review and approve trail crossings and intersections, projects that enhanced safety at many mid-block crossings throughout the County.
- Coordinated with the State Highway Administration (SHA) to implement many safety improvements throughout important High Injury Network corridors in Wheaton and Aspen Hill. The improvements involve many of Vision Zero's core principles of a safe and forgiving infrastructure that accommodates and protects all users.
- Performed corridor lighting studies designed to determine lighting sufficiency and needs to improve safety for drivers, pedestrians and bicyclists. Coordinated with SHA as appropriate on lighting improvements.

Department of Police

- Manage and analyze a database of collision data used to inform policy and program decisions through the Police Traffic Division, such as the identification of high crash locations, locations for traffic calming improvements, and groups and areas at high risk of being involved in serious and fatal collisions.
- Prioritize enforcement of pedestrian safety and traffic safety laws in the High Injury Network and areas around elementary, middle, and high schools in coordination with MCDOT's pedestrian safety education activities.
- Ran a successful Holiday Alcohol Task Force from November 2020 to January 2021 with 262 arrests for driving under the influence (DUI) of alcohol and/or drugs. During the task force, no DUI-related fatal collisions occurred.
- Coordinated with municipal, MDTA, and State Police for joint efforts to address excess speed and car races during the coronavirus pandemic.
- Continue to implement countywide speed, red light, and school bus camera enforcement to slow traffic to posted speed limits.
- Overall, enhanced enforcement of pedestrian and traffic safety laws helps modify perceptions of risk and responsibility on the road, can change behavior and contribute to building a culture of safety.
- Montgomery County Police have been instrumental in helping reduce the number of pedestrian collisions by:
 - o Administering special pedestrian crosswalks, operating safe streets corridors, holiday and school enforcements; and
 - o Dedicating regular on-duty police enforcement in HINs to issue warnings to pedestrians and motorists.

Public Information Office

- Elevated Vision Zero events, campaigns, and safety messaging through timely press releases, media advisories, and posts on social media.
- Continue the bilingual education of the public, in cooperation with Montgomery County Police Department and all departments represented on the Vision Zero Steering Committee regarding the three main causes of fatal and serious-injury crashes:
 - o distracted drivers
 - o impaired drivers, cyclists and pedestrians;
 - o crosswalk issues, i.e., drivers turning right (or left) into pedestrians and pedestrians crossing mid-block on major roadways.

**County Executive's Vision Zero Initiative - All Funding Sources
FY22 CE Recommended Capital Improvements Program and Operating Budget**

| Department | Project/Program | FY22 Recommended |
|---|--|-------------------------------------|
| <i>Capital Improvements Program (CIP)</i> | | |
| Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission | Trails: Hard Surface Design and Construction | \$ 300,000 |
| | Trails: Natural Surface & Resource-based Recreation | 500,000 |
| | Trails: Hard Surface Renovation | 700,000 |
| | Vision Zero | 700,000 |
| | Total M-NCPPC | \$ 2,200,000 |
| Department of Transportation | Pedestrian Facilities/Bikeways | 32,035,000 |
| | Intersection and Spot Improvements | 2,000,000 |
| | Pedestrian Safety Program | 3,500,000 |
| | Traffic Signals | 5,335,000 |
| | Guardrail Projects | 315,000 |
| | Neighborhood Traffic Calming | 310,000 |
| | Streetlighting | 1,370,000 |
| | Streetlight Enhancements CBD/Town Center | 250,000 |
| | Total Department of Transportation | \$ 45,115,000 |
| | | Total FY22 CIP \$ 47,315,000 |
| <i>Operating Budget (PSP)</i> | | |
| Department of Transportation | Community/Transportation Safety | 4,748,098 |
| | Transportation Infrastructure Construction & Maintenance | 15,958,537 |
| | Transportation Policy, Planning, and Project Development | 1,605,067 |
| | Transportation Management, Operations and Emergency/Storm Response | 6,805,958 |
| | Total Department of Transportation | \$ 29,117,660 |
| Department of Police | Police Enforcement for HIAs - Overtime | 180,000 |
| | Police Enforcement for HIAs - Data Analyst | 102,017 |
| | School Safety Program/General Fund | 6,281,341 |
| | Automated Traffic Enforcement | 12,085,713 |
| | Total Department of Police | \$ 18,649,071 |
| | | Total FY22 PSP \$ 47,766,731 |
| TOTAL FY22 RECOMMENDED EXPENDITURES (CIP & PSP) | | \$ 95,081,731 |

Source: CE Recommended FY22 Operating and Capital Budgets

Note: Safety is a central element of the mission of these departments and nearly all of their programs contribute to achieving Vision Zero. The programs with a significant emphasis on safety are listed above. It should be noted that these programs are also addressing other needs as well.