



Vision Zero

MISSION STATEMENT

Through the use of data-informed and equitable approaches, Montgomery County will systematically update the roadway network and build a culture of safety through purposeful education and enforcement campaigns to eliminate serious and fatal collisions from Montgomery County roadways by 2030.

LINKAGE TO COUNTY RESULT AREAS

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

PROGRAM CONTACTS

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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 2030 Action Plan is to eliminate serious and fatal collisions by 2030. The target will be achieved by completing 45 action items in the areas of complete streets, multi-modal future, and culture of safety. To learn more about Vision Zero and to read the 2030 Action Plan, visit <https://montgomerycountymd.gov/visionzero/>.

RESULTS

There were 244 serious and fatal collisions in 2021, a 34 percent reduction compared to the pre-Vision Zero five-year average (2012-2016). To continue moving towards our long-term goal of zero serious and fatal crashes, the Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) continued reviews of roadway segments along the High Injury Network (HIN) including Randolph Road near Veirs Mill Road, Crabbs Branch Way, and Shady Grove Road. MCDOT is partnering with the State Highway Administration (SHA) to make Georgia Avenue and Connecticut Avenue in Aspen Hill safer for people walking and biking. MCDOT continued installing protected bicycle lanes across the county with construction ongoing for the Bethesda and Silver Spring Loops. 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 and Council approved \$123.1 million in FY23 expenditures in support of Vision Zero. The FY23 Approved Operating Budget includes \$53.8 million for Vision Zero initiatives. The Capital Improvements Program (CIP) includes \$69.3 million in expenditures for FY23. See the table below for detailed expenditure information.

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) and traffic signals. Over 30 new beacons and signals have been installed by the County and State since Vision Zero began.
- Conducted Bus Stop Audits along corridors throughout the County that focus on HIN corridors, areas with high transit volume, and seek to improve safety and accessibility for transit users.
- 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 behaviors and raise awareness 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. 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 continued on the Bethesda Loop bike projects with the Capital Crescent Surface Trail and Woodmont Avenue phase I underway.
- Designed 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. MCDOT hosted a Vision Zero Youth Ambassador program with over 30 high school students to create the next generation of traffic safety leaders and develop projects that impacted safety in their communities.
- 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 Operations 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 2021 to January 2022 with 284 arrests for driving under the influence (DUI) of alcohol and/or drugs. During the task force, one DUI-related fatal collision occurred (which was not on a day the task force was working).
- 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:
 - administering special pedestrian crosswalks, operating safe streets corridors, holiday and school enforcements; and
 - 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:
 - Distracted drivers
 - Impaired drivers, cyclists and pedestrians
 - 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		
FY23 CC Approved Capital Improvements Program and Operating Budget		
Department	Project/Program	FY23 Approved
	<i>Capital Improvements Program (CIP)</i>	
Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission	Trails: Hard Surface Design and Construction	\$ 500,000
	Trails: Natural Surface & Resource-based Recreation	500,000
	Trails: Hard Surface Renovation	1,500,000
	Vision Zero	500,000
	Total M-NCPPC	\$ 3,000,000
Department of Transportation	Pedestrian Facilities/Bikeways	51,451,000
	Intersection and Spot Improvements	2,544,000
	Pedestrian Safety Program	4,720,000
	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	\$ 66,295,000
Total FY23 CIP		\$ 69,295,000
	<i>Operating Budget (PSP)</i>	
Department of Transportation	Community/Transportation Safety	5,511,220
	Transportation Infrastructure Construction & Maintenance	17,090,527
	Transportation Policy, Planning, and Project Development	3,438,760
	Transportation Management, Operations and Emergency/Storm Response	7,523,184
	Total Department of Transportation	\$ 33,563,691
Department of Police	Police Enforcement for HIAs - Overtime	479,279
	Police Enforcement for HIAs - Data Analyst	112,207
	School Safety Program/General Fund	7,347,013
	Automated Traffic Enforcement	12,316,800
	Total Department of Police	\$ 20,255,299
	Total FY23 PSP	\$ 53,818,990
	TOTAL FY23 APPROVED EXPENDITURES (CIP & PSP)	\$ 123,113,990

Source: CC Approved FY23 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.