

SCHOOL-RELATED CRASH REVIEW

Location: Watkins Mill Road at Stedwick Road

Crash Date: March 8, 2024

Crash Time: Approximately 8:00 AM

Local Case No.: 240011196

Review Date: December 17, 2024

Description of Incident

On Friday, March 8, 2024, at approximately 8:00 AM, a pedestrian was traveling across the west leg of the intersection in the crosswalk with a do not walk signal. A motorist traveling northbound along Watkins Mill Road, with a green signal, began making a left turn onto westbound Stedwick road and struck the pedestrian in the crosswalk. The crash report noted that the pedestrian had his head down and was looking at his phone just prior to the collision. Weather conditions were clear, the roadway surface was dry, and it was daylight. The pedestrian suffered minor injuries.

Figure 2 illustrates the crash location and direction of pedestrian and vehicle travel.

Location and Site Description

The subject location is the intersection Watkins Mill Road at Stedwick Road. Montgomery Village Middle School is located along Watkins Mill Road, one block north of the subject location. The subject location also falls within the walkshed for Watkins Mill Elementary School (ES), Stedwick Elementary School (ES), and Watkins Mill High School (HS). Montgomery Village MS, located at 19300 Watkins Mill Road, has a current enrollment of 773 students in grades 6th through 8th.

Montgomery Village School (MS)

The majority of student arrivals are between 7:30 AM and 8:00 AM and dismissal occurs between 3:00 PM and 3:20 PM.

Watkins Mill Road

Watkins Mill Road is classified as a “Town Center Boulevard” between Club House Road and Stedwick Road and is classified as a “Boulevard” between Stedwick Road and MD 355 (Frederick Rd). The road is approximately 40 feet wide and generally runs in the north-south direction along its approximately 4.2-mile alignment which runs between Clopper Road to the south and Blunt Road to the north. Watkins Mill Road has grass-buffered pedestrian facilities along both sides of the street within the vicinity of the subject intersection.

In the southbound direction approaching the school, Watkins Mill Road has a static 35 MPH speed limit sign approximately 1,800 feet north of the subject intersection and a School HIB Flasher with a posted speed limit of 25 MPH approximately 1,500 feet north of the subject intersection. The northbound direction has a static 35 MPH speed limit sign posted approximately 1.0 miles south of the subject intersection and a School HIB Flasher with a posted speed limit of 25 MPH approximately 150 feet north of the subject intersection. On-street parking restrictions vary between Stedwick Road and Club House Road. Refer to **Figure 1** in the attachments for additional details of the Watkins Mill Road segment.

Watkins Mill Road at Stedwick Road

The intersection of Watkins Mill Road at Stedwick Road is a signalized four-leg intersection. Stedwick Road is classified as a “Neighborhood Connector” to the east and a town center street to the west of the subject intersection. ADA-compliant pedestrian ramps are provided on all four corners of the intersection facilitating accessible crossing across all four legs along with the use of continental crosswalk markings. Watkins Mill Road northbound left turns operate in permissive phasing while the southbound left turns operate in exclusive-permissive phasing. Stedwick Road eastbound left turns operate in permissive phasing while the westbound left turns operate in exclusive-permissive phasing. Leading pedestrian intervals (LPI) are provided for each crossing but must be pushbutton activated.

The Watkins Mill Road corridor was evaluated to identify potential infrastructure, maintenance activities, and road user behaviors that contribute to increased safety risk at and in the vicinity of the school-related crash location. The Watkins Mill Road corridor was reviewed between MD 355 (Frederick Road) to the south and Cove Ledge Court to the north. Please refer to **Figure 1** for additional information.

Crash History

Crash data obtained from dataMontgomery provides information for twenty-two (22) incidents that occurred within the influence of the Watkins Mill Road at Stedwick Road intersection between May 2019 and September 2024. Six (6) collisions involved pedestrians and two (2) involved cyclists. Thirteen (13) of the collisions resulted in injuries. The incidents are illustrated on **Figure 3**.

Field Observations and Findings

Field observations were performed on Thursday, August 22, 2024, at approximately 12pm. Weather conditions were clear, and the roadway surface was dry. High pedestrian (all four legs) and automobile activity were recorded at this intersection during the time of observation. Conflicts were observed between pedestrians and turning vehicles. Motorists were observed making aggressive left turns during all red phases when the LPI provided the right of way to pedestrians.

Recommendations

Based on review of the Crash Report, field observations, and evaluation of existing infrastructure and traffic control devices, the pedestrian failed to obey the traffic controls. Reaction time, attentiveness, and field of vision also likely contributed to the collision. These factors may be improved by a variety of countermeasures outlined in the recommendations below.

1. Consider installation of centerline hardening to slow left-turning vehicles and increase visibility of pedestrians in the crosswalk. This forces motorists to focus on the conflicting crosswalk in addition to opposing thru traffic.
2. Consider revising signal phasing to address confusion and conflicts resulting from Exclusive/Permissive to Exclusive.

Site Photograph



Photo 1. West leg of intersection where crash occurred, looking east along Stedwick Road.



Figure 1 - Watkins Mill Road Corridor Observations

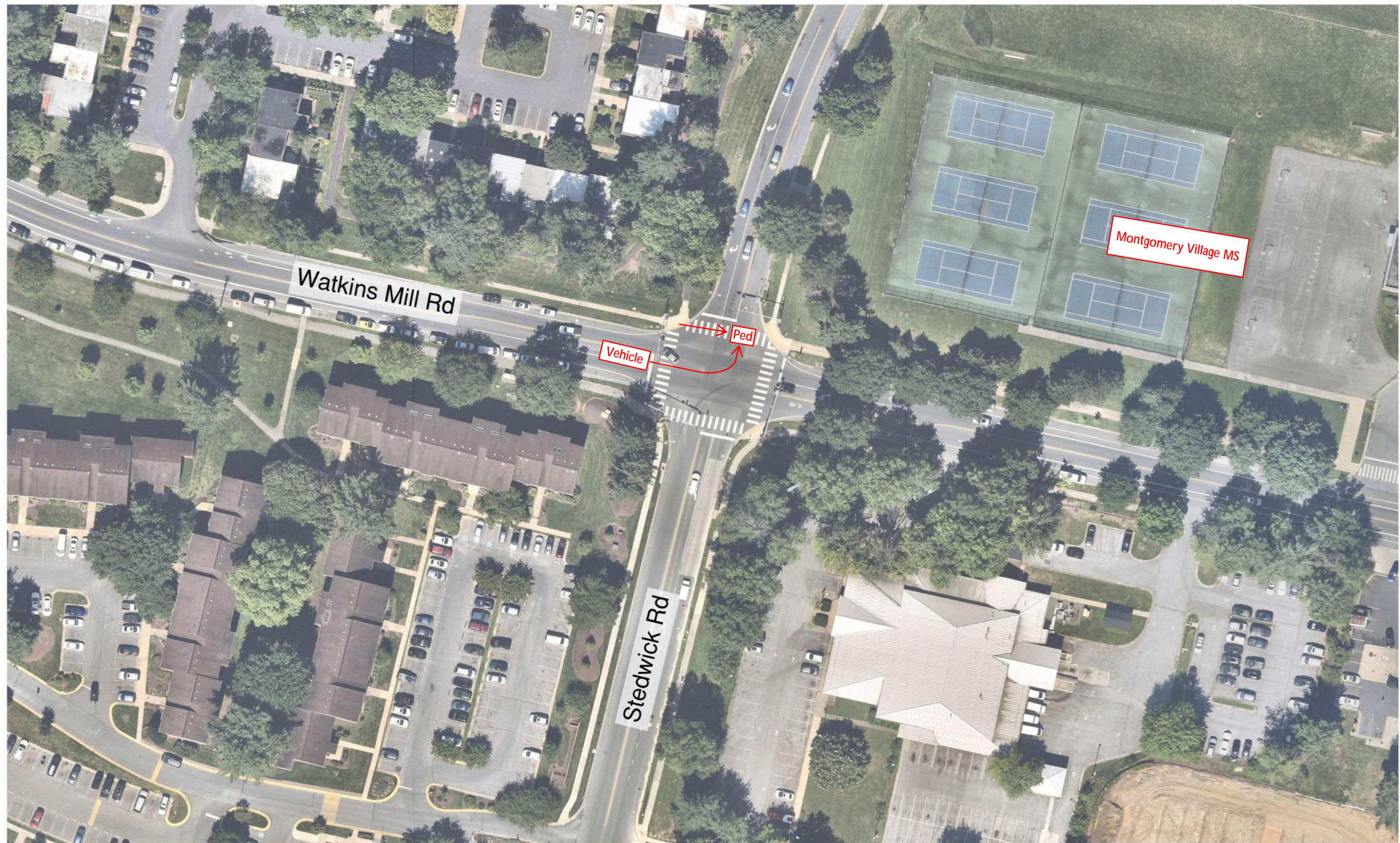


Figure 2 - Crash Diagram

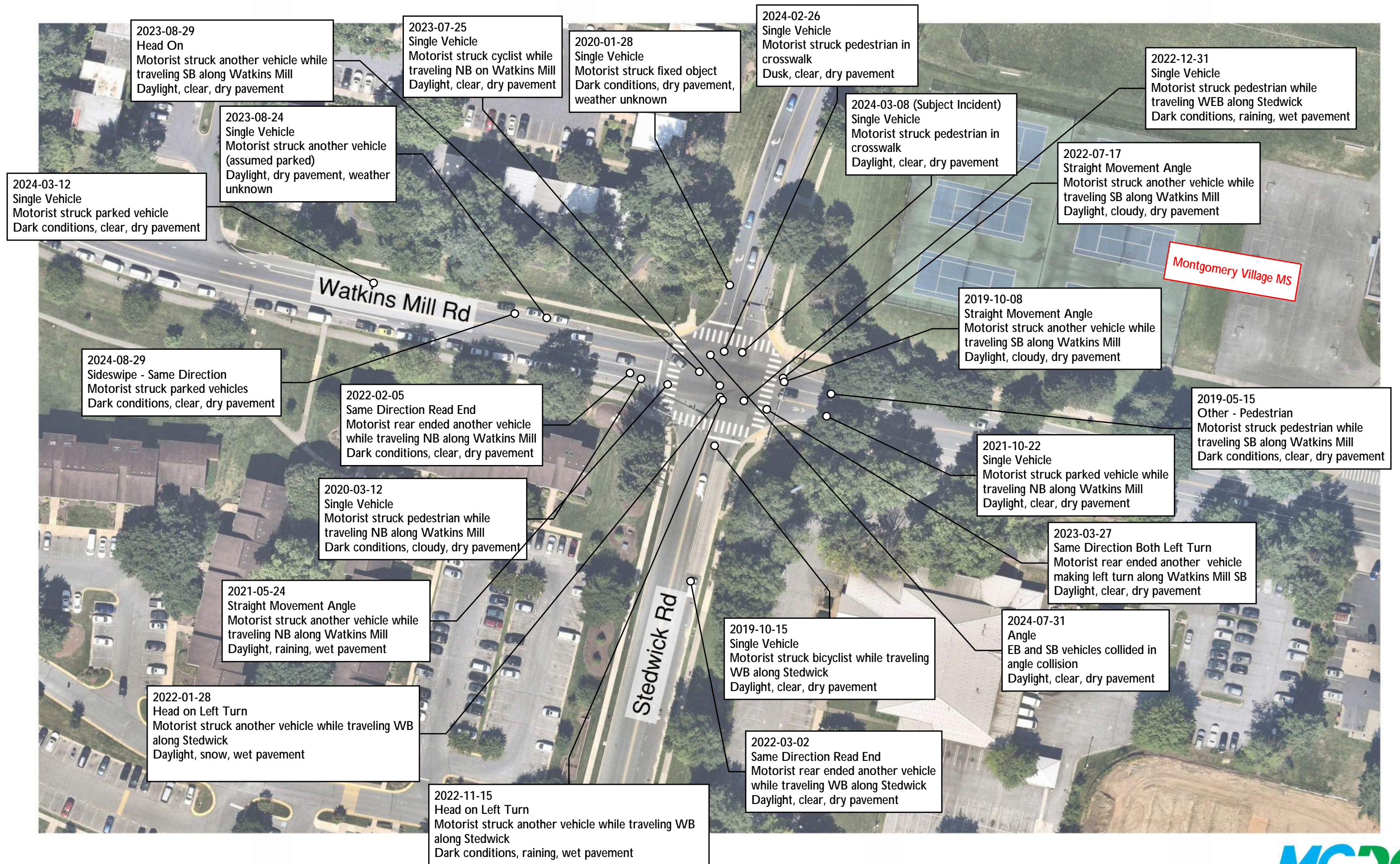


Figure 3 - Crash History (2019-2024)