



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

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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 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 2019 data show 265 serious and fatal collisions, a 28 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- and long-term improvements to be implemented by the Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT). During the 2018-19 Action Plan, MCDOT improved pedestrian crossings by installing pedestrian beacons and setting a 3.5 feet per second crossing standard at all traffic signals. MCDOT continued installing protected bicycle lanes across the county including the first protected intersection in the Mid-Atlantic. 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 \$98.6 million in FY21 expenditures in support of Vision Zero. The FY21 Recommended Operating Budget includes \$54.7 million for Vision Zero initiatives. In addition, the Capital Improvements Program (CIP) includes \$43.9 million in expenditures for FY21.

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. Four additional beacons are planned for installation in 2020. Pedestal Beacons were installed along the new PEPCO Natural Trail at Schaeffer, Black Rock, MD 118, and MD 28.
- Conducted Bus Stop Audits along corridors throughout the County: Middlebrook Road, MD 355, Randolph Road, and Wheaton Central Business District (MD 97, MD 193, and MD 586) that focus on HIN corridors and seek to improve safety and accessibility for transit users.
- Increase the ability of students to walk or bike to school safely through improved facilities as part of the Safe Routes to Schools program. Also, evaluate and assess traffic and operational safety issues at County schools.
- Participate 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. Undertook partnerships to conduct Street Smart Virtual Reality Challenge safety campaigns at Westfield Wheaton Mall, Westfield Montgomery Mall, Veterans Plaza, and Blair High School and with the Maryland Highway Safety Office on more Street Smart safety outreach campaigns.
- 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.
- Implement 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, ahead of the November 2019 deadline.
- Improve sidewalk connectivity to transportation, commercial, and employment areas, and medical facilities throughout the County.
- Provide curb ramps for sidewalks and other accessibility barriers on County roadways through the ADA compliance program.
- Built the first protected intersection in the Mid-Atlantic region at Second Ave and Spring Street in Downtown Silver Spring. The rebuilt intersection allows pedestrians and bicyclists additional protection from turning vehicles and crossing time. Increasing cycling usage has been correlated with increased safety in other cities. The narrower travel lanes have also reduced speeds in the corridor, especially at key locations where islands have been installed to benefit pedestrians. Other safety benefits include shorter crossing distances for pedestrians, islands to improve pedestrian safety and visibility, corner islands to reduce turning speed, and floating transit stops which remove the conflict between cyclists and buses making service stops.
- Design and construct an extension from the end of the existing trail in Takoma Park and the Silver Spring Transit Center through the Metropolitan Branch Trail project.
- Conduct both countywide and targeted pedestrian safety education campaigns in HIN's and police district hot spots by

coordinating with enforcement actions by Montgomery County Police Department, the creation of a 30-member volunteer brigade to conduct bilingual education on the streets, and bilingual education teams to reach at-risk groups within the High Incidence Areas. High school pedestrian safety education was expanded through the Walk Your Way Program and the "YOLO Walk Safe" Campaign with expanded use of social media and school partnering. Additionally held the Don't Be Distracted contest to raise awareness of the dangers of driving distracted. Conducted a Public Service Announcement campaign in Spanish on Univision reaching Hispanic populations by zip code focused on pedestrian and driver safety information. A similar program has been scheduled for Telemundo.

- Conduct 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.
- Began coordination 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.
- Target 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.
- Continue to implement countywide speed, red light, and school bus camera enforcement to slow traffic to posted speed limits.
- Engage shoppers in parking lots with the "Shop with a Cop" program, where police distribute high-visibility shopping bags and safety tip brochures to address pedestrian collisions that occur in parking lots.
- Work with property managers and property owners to implement improvements that will improve pedestrian safety in parking lots, where 30 percent of the County's pedestrian collisions occur.
- 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. From calendar year 2012 to calendar year 2019, MCPD increased the number of citations and warnings given to drivers violating pedestrian safety by 192 percent and pedestrians by 17percent.
- 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

- Coordinated with Police, Transportation, Fire and Rescue, and the County Executive's Office the "Be Safe, Be Seen" campaign in the fall to alert drivers and pedestrians about the dangers that come with reduced daylight. The campaign reached 10,000 residents at high traffic commuter stations and county high schools.
- 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 FY21 CE Recommended Capital Improvements Program and Operating Budget		
Department	Project/Program	FY21 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	300,000
	Trails: Hard Surface Renovation	550,000
	Vision Zero	500,000
	Total M-NCPPC	\$ 1,650,000
Department of Transportation	Pedestrian Facilities/Bikeways	29,953,000
	Intersection and Spot Improvements	2,000,000
	Pedestrian Safety Program	2,750,000
	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	\$ 42,283,000
		Total FY21 CIP \$ 43,933,000
<i>Operating Budget (PSP)</i>		
Department of Transportation	Community/Transportation Safety	4,935,800
	Transportation Infrastructure Construction & Maintenance	16,910,506
	Transportation Policy, Planning, and Project Development	2,109,346
	Transportation Management, Operations and Emergency/Storm Response	6,665,947
		Total Department of Transportation
Department of Police	Police Enforcement for HIAs - Overtime	180,000
	Police Enforcement for HIAs - Data Analyst	93,023
	School Safety Program/General Fund	6,537,533
	Automated Traffic Enforcement	17,250,964
	Total Department of Police	\$ 24,061,520
		Total FY21 PSP \$ 54,683,119
TOTAL FY21 RECOMMENDED EXPENDITURES (CIP & PSP)		\$ 98,616,119

Source: CE Recommended FY21 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.