

A Report to the Maryland General Assembly

Regarding

Transportation -Vision Zero - Establishment
(House Bill 885, Chapter 377, Acts of 2019)

The Maryland Department of Transportation

MSAR# 12327

December 2020

This report is written in response to language contained in House Bill 885, Chapter 377 of 2019, which requires:

“On or before December 31 each year, the Department shall submit a report on the status of Vision Zero to the Governor and, in accordance with §2-1246 of the State Government Article, the General Assembly.”

MDOT EFFORTS

“The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) is a customer-driven leader that delivers safe, sustainable, intelligent, and exceptional transportation solutions in order to connect our customers to life’s opportunities.” This is MDOT’s mission statement, and MDOT places a significant emphasis on safety in every aspect of what we do. MDOT is forming new initiatives and building on key established efforts to drive towards the Vision Zero goal of zero vehicle-related deaths or serious injuries by 2030:

- The Maryland Department of Transportation Motor Vehicle Administration’s (MDOT MVA) Maryland Highway Safety Office (MHSO) is the central point of coordination for safety programs at all levels of government and the private sector and is responsible for identifying and implementing countermeasures to reduce fatalities and serious injuries on Maryland’s roadways. The Director of the Highway Safety Office, the State’s premier expert on roadway safety, is charged with overseeing Maryland’s extensive network of safety programs and planning, and continues to serve as the Vision Zero Coordinator. The director reports to the MDOT MVA Administrator, who also serves as the Governor’s Highway Safety Representative, and is focused on advancing the goal of zero vehicle-related deaths or serious injuries by 2030.
- The Vision Zero coordinator and MHSO staff continue to be engaged in ongoing dialogue with other states and jurisdictions. In 2020, the MHSO participated in virtual trainings and workshops held by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), the Governor’s Highway Safety Association (GHSA), and other state highway safety offices. These presentations/trainings focused on a variety of behavioral programs that can be implemented to reduce motor vehicle crashes and fatalities. As a member of GHSA’s research committee, the MHSO Director reviews and recommends to the MDOT MVA Administrator projects that will help identify new safety countermeasures that can be adopted on a state and local level.
- MHSO is carefully reviewing the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and how that may be influencing driver behavior in order to modify outreach and enforcement efforts to respond to those developments.
- The Vision Zero coordinator continues to serve as a member of the Statewide Emergency Services Advisory Committee and planning committees, working closely with local Metropolitan Planning Organizations (i.e. Washington Council of Governments and Baltimore Metropolitan Council) to coordinate highway safety efforts in those regions.

- The MHSO conducted a series of highway safety seminars throughout 2020 to engage local stakeholders on current highway safety topics and innovations.
- A new communications campaign titled “Be the Driver” focuses on educational messages to drivers related to impaired driving, occupant protection, pedestrian safety, and other behaviors that can reduce crashes and save lives on Maryland’s roadways. Additionally, the Street Smart and Look Alive pedestrian safety campaigns continued in the metropolitan areas of the State.
- MDOT MVA and the MHSO are currently working with Anne Arundel County, Baltimore County, Baltimore City, Carroll County, and Howard County to assist in their local highway safety plan development, several of which are nearing implementation. Cecil County, Harford County, and Washington County are also updating their local Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP) to 2021-2025 and the City of Salisbury recently implemented a Vision Zero-based SHSP.
- The website dedicated to Vision Zero and all of the State’s highway safety information, resources, and initiatives is: <https://zerodeathsmd.gov>.
- The Maryland State Police (MSP) maintain the State’s crash report data. MSP posts data quarterly on Maryland’s Open Portal website: <https://opendata.maryland.gov/>.
- The MHSO utilizes MSP crash data to provide standardized reports on the MDOT MVA website: <https://mva.state.md.us/safety/Pages/mhso/benchmark-reports.aspx>. These benchmarks provide basic information such as the day, time, driver and pedestrian demographics, and other characteristics of motor vehicle crashes in the State. This data is then used to target enforcement and education efforts across each of the emphasis areas outlined in the SHSP.
- The MHSO, Maryland Transportation Authority (MDTA) and MDOT State Highway Administration (SHA) closely collaborate on all safety-related objectives. The MHSO and MDOT SHA are using police crash report data to identify corridors where traffic crashes are closely aligned with needed infrastructure improvements and concerns with driver behavior. This data, along with community input, is used to inform and prioritize engineering, enforcement, and education, to make these efforts as effective as possible.
- In 2020, through a collaboration with Baltimore County Police Department, MHSO held virtual trainings for local law enforcement officers to improve enforcement of Maryland’s pedestrian safety laws.
- In the summer of 2019, MDOT SHA released their Context Driven Access and Mobility for All Users guidance document. This approach is being incorporated into MDOT SHA’s Pedestrian Safety Action Plan (PSAP) which will complement the pedestrian portion of the state’s SHSP and help to meet the unique needs of pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit riders. The PSAP provides a proactive approach that balances access needs created by the surrounding land-use and mobility needs. Safety, land use, environmental issues, culture, and community livability are all considered as critical factors in the planning, design, construction, and operation of transportation infrastructure. These tools help MDOT SHA to

identify issues and develop solutions tailored to unique contexts to reduce fatalities and injuries on Maryland's roadways, and directly supports the Vision Zero approach. Through FY2020, over 90 Context Driven projects have been completed in Montgomery County alone, including signal upgrades, ADA upgrades, crosswalk upgrades, speed reductions, and lane reductions.

These efforts continue to be undergirded by the Maryland SHSP. Led by an Executive Committee consisting of leadership from multiple state agencies (MDOT, MSP, Maryland Department of Health, and Maryland Institute for Emergency Medical Services Systems), the new (2021-2025) SHSP focuses on strategies and actions to help Maryland reach zero fatalities by 2030. The fatality and serious injury goals and their interim targets, which are set in the SHSP, are aligned with those reported to NHTSA through the Highway Safety Plan (HSP) and to the Federal Highway Administration through the Highway Safety Improvement Plan (HSIP). These plans outline the projects and programs Maryland will utilize to improve highway safety. The Federal Highway Administration requires the reporting of the number of fatalities, the fatality rate, the number of serious injuries, the serious injury rate, and the total number of non-motorized fatalities and serious injuries. These metrics serve as the performance measures used to track the State's progress. The federal funding agencies have indicated that targets included in these plans should be based on existing data to allow for a realistic evaluation of the State's safety programs.

The next implementation of the SHSP begins January 1, 2021 and goes through December 31, 2025. The SHSP reflects the mandated fatality goal, and Maryland's commitment to zero fatalities and serious injuries. However, the interim targets will continue to be based on recent trends and will help focus highway safety resources on existing and emerging infrastructural and behavioral priorities to eliminate roadway deaths and serious injuries. Maryland's Highway Safety Plan will continue to outline the State's highway safety programs and spending and is posted on the MDOT MVA website: <https://zerodeathsmd.gov/about-us/maryland-strategic-highway-safety-plan/>. The 2021-2025 SHSP will be posted in January 2021.