

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

**A Report to the Governor and the Maryland General  
Assembly**

**December 2021**

MSAR # 12327

The Maryland Department of Transportation  
Motor Vehicle Administration

The Maryland Department of Transportation Motor Vehicle Administration (MDOT MVA) offers this report in response to language contained in House Bill 885, Chapter 377, Acts of 2019. The language states:

*“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.”*

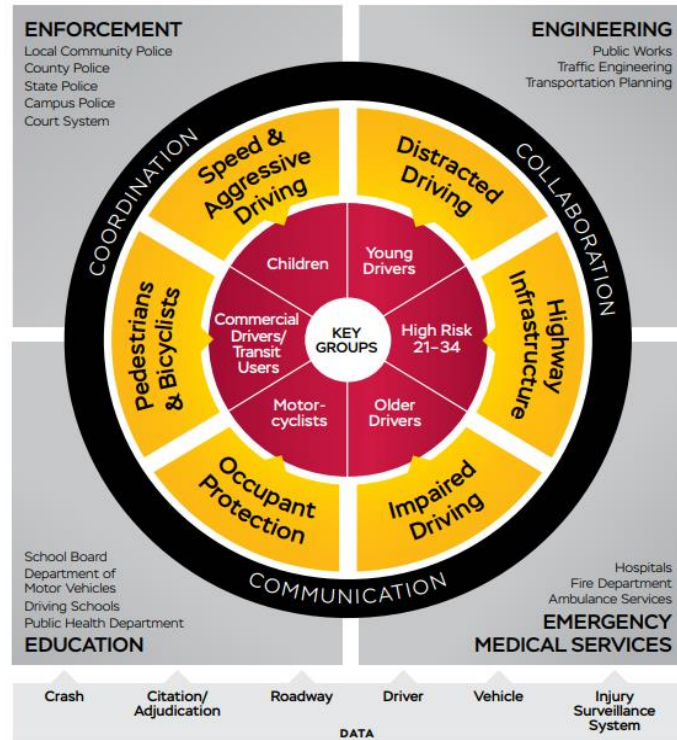
## **MDOT Efforts**

The MDOT is a customer-driven leader that delivers safe, sustainable, intelligent, and exceptional transportation solutions to connect our customers to life’s opportunities. In every activity, the MDOT places a significant emphasis on safety; this is done through continued efforts to form new initiatives and build on key established efforts to drive toward the Vision Zero goal of zero vehicle-related deaths or serious injuries by 2030. With that goal in mind, the MDOT has taken the following initiatives:

- The MDOT MVA Highway Safety Office (MHSO) is the central point of coordination for safety programs at all levels of government and the private sector. The MHSO helps to identify and implement countermeasures to reduce fatalities and serious injuries on Maryland’s roadways. The Director of the MHSO is 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 MHSO 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 MHSO Director reviews and recommends to the Administrator projects that will identify new safety countermeasures that can be adopted on a state and local level.
- The MHSO staff continue to be engaged in ongoing dialogue with other states and jurisdictions. In 2021, the MHSO sponsored several highway safety seminars, including a distracted driving summit series in April. These virtual presentations were attended by over 400 local, state, and national highway safety practitioners, engineers, and law enforcement officers. MHSO staff also 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 throughout the course of the year. These presentations and trainings focused on a variety of behavioral programs that can be implemented to reduce motor vehicle crashes and fatalities.
- The COVID-19 pandemic had a significant effect on highway safety. While vehicle travel was down significantly through 2020, and to a lesser extent continues to be down in 2021, the number of fatalities that occurred on Maryland’s roads was significantly higher in 2020 than in previous years. Despite the decrease in traffic, there were 573 fatalities on Maryland’s roadways in 2020. Increases in fatalities were not just limited to Maryland but were seen across the country and were attributed to an increase in risky driving behavior, notably speeding and impaired driving.

- The MHSO Director continues to serve as a member of the Statewide Emergency Services Advisory Committee and planning committees, working closely with local Metropolitan Planning Organizations, such as the Washington Council of Governments and the Baltimore Metropolitan Council, to coordinate highway safety efforts in those regions. These efforts include the continued use of the *Street Smart* and *Look Alive* pedestrian safety campaigns. Additionally, the Washington Council of Governments authorized \$250,000 in grants as part of the first Transportation Planning Board's Regional Safety Program. Several of those grants supported Maryland-based projects.
- The MHSO's communications campaign, *Be the Driver*, was expanded to include multiple program areas. *Be the Driver* focuses on educational messages related to impaired driving, occupant protection, pedestrian safety, and other behaviors that can reduce crashes and save lives on Maryland's roadways. As the result of several high-profile crashes over the past year, roadside emergency and child passenger safety were included as core elements of *Be the Driver*.
- Over the past year, and moving forward into 2022, the MHSO will continue to implement programs and activities based on NHTSA's Countermeasures that Work guidelines to reduce the number of crashes, injuries, and fatalities on Maryland's roadways. **Figure 1** below provides a graphic description of the components of the 2021-2025 Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP). Each of these highway safety programs will be addressed through collaborative partnerships among State and local government agencies, legislative and judicial leaders, regional authorities, and non- governmental organizations. Together, these agencies and professionals are collaborating as members of Maryland's Emphasis Area Teams (EATs) with a mission to strengthen and enforce driving laws and educate the public about safe driving behaviors.

**Figure 1**



*Figure 1. Maryland's Strategic Approach to Reduce Fatalities and Serious Injuries*  
 Data is the foundation for the SHSP's development, implementation of strategies, and progress tracking. The four Es are the cornerstones of the action plan that are driven by coordination, collaboration and communication amongst the six EA teams.

- The MDOT MVA and the MHSO continue to work with local jurisdictions on the development of local Strategic Highway Safety Plans. Currently, Anne Arundel County, Baltimore County, Baltimore City, Carroll County, and Howard County have recently been approved or are nearing completion of their respective plans. Cecil County, Harford County, and Washington County have updated their existing plans. Montgomery County and Prince George's County have continued to implement their existing SHSPs.
- There is a website dedicated to Vision Zero and all the State's highway safety information, resources, and initiatives. This refreshed site now includes newly available information, such as password protected law enforcement training videos and crash data for the previous calendar year.
- The Maryland State Police (MSP) maintain the State's crash report data. As of November 2021, monthly fatality numbers began to be posted, broken down by jurisdiction, crash type, and month, to the website as a critical resource for our safety partners.
- The MHSO utilizes MSP crash data to provide standardized reports on the website. 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

used to target enforcement and education efforts across each of the emphasis areas outlined in the SHSP.

- The MHSO the Maryland Transportation Authority, and the MDOT State Highway Administration (SHA) closely collaborate on all safety-related objectives. The MHSO and the 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 2019, the MDOT SHA began implementing its “Context Driven – Access and Mobility for All Users” version 1.0 guide that focuses on creating a safe, accessible, and balanced multimodal transportation system. A core tenet re-established in this guide was the need to appropriately balance accessibility and mobility. In this guide, the MDOT SHA established six context zones, ranging from urban core to rural, to ensure this balance is set to meet the specific needs of Maryland’s varied communities. The MDOT SHA began to pursue context-appropriate improvements that reinforce or newly implement the appropriate balance between accessibility and mobility.
- The Context Guide also encourages flexibility and innovation to develop low-cost, high-impact solutions for each unique area. Proactive countermeasures may include speed limit reductions, high-visibility crosswalks, signal timing adjustments, or several other proven safety strategies. Since 2019, the MDOT SHA has completed 216 proactive Context Driven projects Statewide.
- In 2020, the MDOT SHA launched a new web resource for related Context Driven activities. The Context Driven web portal provides access to an improved user-friendly online and printable version of the Context Guide, as well as a Context Driven Project Map and other features. Finally, the Context Driven web portal highlights other ongoing Context Driven efforts like the development of the MDOT SHA’s first Pedestrian Safety Action Plan. The plan, guided by principles established in Maryland’s SHSP and in the Context Guide, will identify areas of need and recommend safety countermeasures by employing a Context Driven approach which considers the appropriate balance between access and mobility based on how a range of customers use the roadway. The MDOT SHA anticipates completing the Plan in 2022. Other Context Driven efforts underway include trainings and the development of case studies.

Each of these efforts are supported by the framework of 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 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 and to the Federal Highway Administration through the Highway Safety Improvement Plan. 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 began January 1, 2021, and continues 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 website.