



**CALVERT
COUNTY**
Maryland

CALVERT COUNTY STRATEGIC ROADWAY SAFETY PLAN

2023-2025





Prepared by the Calvert County Traffic Safety Council Steering Committee

Calvert County Department of Public Works*

Calvert County Sheriff's Office*

Maryland State Police Barrack "U"

Calvert County Department of Planning & Zoning

** Lead agencies*

INTRODUCTION

According to the U.S. Department of Transportation’s National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), an estimated 42,915 people died in motor vehicle crashes during the 2021 calendar year. That number reflects a 10.5% increase from the 38,824 killed along U.S. roadways the previous year, including bicyclists, pedestrians and those behind the wheel or riding as passengers in a wide variety of motor vehicles. The National Safety Council (NSC) estimates that a total of 46,270 people lost their lives in motor vehicle crashes in 2022. This estimate also includes deaths in parking lots and private roadways, numbers that are not reflected in NHTSA data. These numbers are staggering, averaging more than 126 deaths each day.

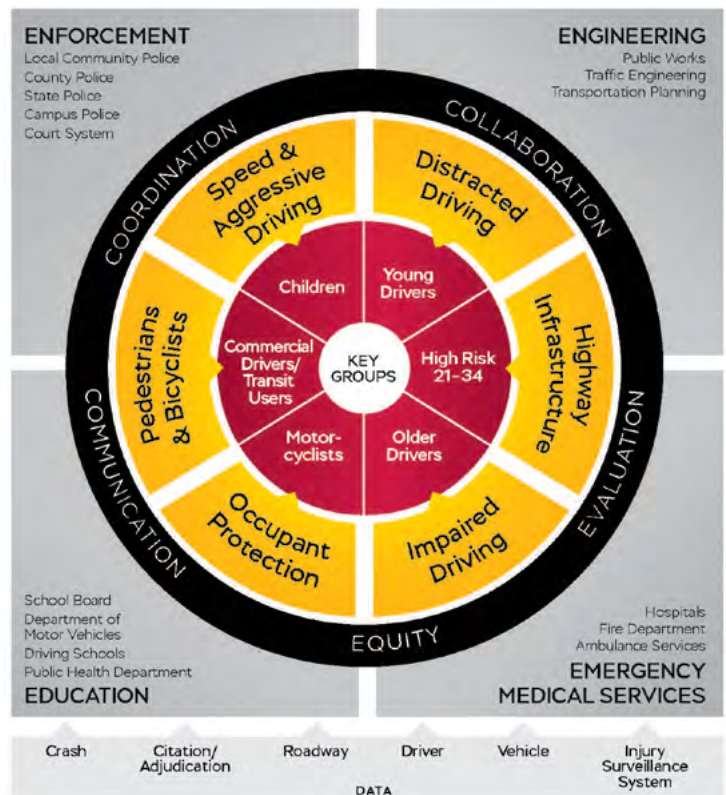
Maryland’s most recent statistics are similarly eye-opening. From 2020 through 2022, years when many people were able to eliminate a commute due to the ability to work from home, fatal crash numbers unexpectedly increased by 7% from 2019 to 2020. These numbers decreased slightly in over the next two years, with 564 deaths documented.

Maryland’s Vision Zero: Reducing Road Fatalities

Maryland has committed to reducing road fatalities by adopting a [Safe System Approach](#) to address and mitigate the risks inherent on our roadways. This approach works by building and reinforcing multiple layers of protection to both prevent crashes from happening and minimize the harm caused to those involved when crashes do occur. The Maryland General Assembly passed a Vision Zero bill in 2019 that was signed into law by Governor Hogan. The law set a goal of zero motor vehicle-related fatalities or serious injuries by 2030, which is supported through the [Maryland 2021-2025 Strategic Highway Safety Plan \(SHSP\)](#).

Maryland’s SHSP is a multi-disciplinary approach that directs a variety of strategies, including driving behaviors, legislative initiatives, technology implementation and re-evaluating previous roadway designs. Highway safety partners from a wide network of organizations are engaged in directing efforts to reduce serious crashes and fatalities, including those at the county and municipal levels. These partners represent first responders, traffic engineers, data analysts, public works officials, public health officials, planners, non-profit program managers and other stakeholders and subject matter experts.

Maryland’s Highway Safety Office directs statewide efforts to focus on five emphasis areas (EA) that have been determined as the behavioral causes of motor vehicle crashes and fatalities: speed and aggressive driving, distracted driving, impaired driving, occupant protection, and pedestrians and bicyclists.



Strategies and action steps have been developed to direct efforts to decrease crashes, injuries and fatalities, which are supported through emphasis area teams representing law enforcement, engineering, EMS services and education programs. Data collection and analysis efforts provide the cornerstone for decisions made on crash trends and future programs. Special vehicles such as farm equipment, school system vehicles, transit stops, advanced driver assistance systems (ADAS), autonomous vehicles, commercial motor vehicles, railroad crossings and rural communities are examples of the types of road users included in the evaluation.

Maryland officials strongly encourage and incentivize local jurisdictions' efforts to develop county and municipal-based roadway safety plans. A local SHSP is meant to benefit that jurisdiction, allowing them to strategically share resources and evaluate traffic safety planning efforts. The development, implementation and evaluation of a local SHSP is also a means to build connections that may save time and facilitate successful applications for grant funding opportunities.



Vision

To prevent fatalities and serious injuries on Calvert County roadways.



Mission

To engage a committed network of individuals through the Calvert County Traffic Safety Council as representatives from the enforcement, engineering, education and EMS communities who will use a strategic, safe system approach to implement traffic safety programs that will reduce the frequency of serious and fatal roadway crashes.



Problem Identification

The Calvert County Strategic Roadway Safety Plan was developed by reviewing crash and citation data. Information was provided by the Maryland Highway Safety Office and other partners.

Developing the Calvert County Strategic Roadway Safety Plan

The Calvert County Board of County Commissioners approved the development of a local Strategic Highway Safety Plan in February 2023. The plan will be considered a Strategic Roadway Safety Plan (SRSP), with the Calvert County Department of Public Works and the Calvert County Sheriff's Office leading a steering committee for an interim 2023-2025 plan. That timeframe will allow for alignment with the development of the next Maryland 2026-2030 plan. The SRSP Steering Committee includes representatives from the Maryland State Police Barrack "U" and the Calvert County Department of Planning and Zoning.

The Calvert County Traffic Safety Council (CCTSC) was reinstated and will provide input on the status of approved SRSP strategies and implementation of action items. CCTSC representatives include individuals from the following Calvert County departments: Community Resources (Transportation, Calvert Alliance Against Substance Abuse and Office of Aging); Planning & Zoning and Public Works, as well as the Calvert County Sheriff's Office, Calvert County Health Department and the Calvert County State's Attorney's Office. In addition, non-county agencies are represented, including the Chesapeake Region Safety Council, the Maryland State Police Barrack "U," Calvert County Public Schools and the Maryland Department of Transportation, State Highway Administration. The CCTSC team members will meet on a quarterly basis to share highway safety information and provide input on the SRSP's progress.

The SRSP will follow the Maryland SHSP model and typical strategic planning processes, incorporating

Calvert County’s roadway safety mission and vision, along with overall goals by 2030. Individual emphasis areas and the associated problem identification, targets and strategies are listed in the plan. It will be published on the county website and made available upon request. Action steps for the strategies and evaluation metrics will be developed, continuously monitored and updated as needed.

About Calvert County Roadways

Calvert County’s roadways are owned and maintained by the Towns of North Beach, Chesapeake Beach, the Calvert County Department of Public Works (DPW) and Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA). The current distribution of road maintenance responsibilities in the county is county (63%), state (18%), private ownership (16%) and municipalities (3%) .

Calvert County typically accounts for 1.5% of the state population and 1.3% of the vehicle miles traveled (VMT) in the state of Maryland.

Calvert County Crash Summary

| | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 5-Year Avg. | % |
|--------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|------|-------|-------------|-------|
| Fatal Crashes | 9 | 5 | 6 | 10 | 8 | 8 | 0.7 |
| Injury Crashes | 407 | 366 | 347 | 275 | 299 | 339 | 30.4 |
| Property Damage Crashes | 796 | 884 | 771 | 671 | 720 | 768 | 68.9 |
| Total Crashes | 1,212 | 1,255 | 1,124 | 956 | 1,027 | 1,115 | 100.0 |
| Total Fatalities | 10 | 6 | 6 | 11 | 8 | 8 | - |
| Total Injured | 603 | 527 | 517 | 382 | 411 | 488 | - |

Calvert County Overall Data

A review of the most recent crash and citation data from 2017 through 2021 available from the Maryland Highway Safety Office (MHSO) revealed that the number of total crashes, along with property, injury and fatal crashes, decreased significantly from 2017 through 2019. However, a closer look at the 2020 and 2021 data documents revealed that while the number of overall crashes decreased from 2019, the number of fatalities occurring in those years increased. This trend aligns with other jurisdictions and national crash data for 2020 through 2021.

More specifically, the data for Calvert County showed a five-year average of eight traffic fatalities annually, however those numbers varied from 6 (1.1% of state fatalities) in 2019, to 11 (1.9%) in 2020, and 8 (1.4%) in 2021. The number of serious injuries over the past three years in Calvert County has been steady at 38 each year. Other overall data of note includes a five-year average of 1,115 total crashes, including 339 injury crashes – resulting in 488 people injured (including pedestrians and bicyclists), of which 20 people were unbelted.

The number of traffic citations issued in Calvert County decreased significantly from 9,648 in 2019 to 9,155 in 2020 and 7,446 in 2021. These citations were issued by either Maryland State Police or the Calvert County Sheriff’s Office (primary law enforcement agency) anywhere within the county’s boundaries, regardless of roadway ownership.



EMPHASIS AREAS AND STRATEGIES

The Calvert County SRSP priorities and activities are intended to be accomplished within the time frame of the plan. The action items are organized around the SRSP's five emphasis areas of speeding and aggressive driving, distracted driving, impaired driving, occupant protection and vulnerable road users, as documented by three-year (2019-2021) data, unless otherwise noted.

Speeding and Aggressive Driving

Data & Problem Identification

- Three-Year Data: 2 speeding related fatalities
- Five-Year Data: 87 speeding related crashes
- Five-Year Data: 29 of those crashes resulted in injuries
- Three-Year Data: 5 serious injuries
- Speeding citations comprised 51.6% of all citations in 2021
- Average of 4,620 speed citations issued (2.9% of all Maryland issued/1.3% of state VMT)

Aggressive driving fatalities in Calvert County during the past three years have remained relatively constant, with one occurring in 2019, one in 2020, and zero in 2021. Serious injuries resulting from such crashes in the county have stayed about the same, ranging from two in 2019 to two in 2020 and three in 2021. Aggressive driving crashes occurring in 2021 accounted for less than 1% of all fatalities and 1.8% of all serious injuries in the state.

Aggressive driving citations are rarely issued because a driver must be observed committing three or more specific infractions to qualify under the aggressive driving statute. An average of six citations were issued in Calvert County (five in 2019, seven in 2020 and seven in 2021).

During the past three years, Calvert County averaged two speeding-related fatalities per year. Serious injuries resulting from such crashes in the county over the past three years have leveled after a decrease, ranging from eight in 2019 to four in 2020 and four in 2021.

Speeding citations comprised 51.6% of all Calvert County citations in 2021. Speeding citations issued in Calvert County varied during the three-year period, with 4,960, 5,059 and 3,842 issued in 2019, 2020 and 2021, respectively.

Strategies

- Request and analyze crash and citation data to determine priority enforcement, engineering and outreach locations and populations of highest risk.
- Conduct enforcement of egregious or unsafe speeds using available measures.
- Identify best practices for rural roadway infrastructure design related to increasing safe traveling speeds.
- Engage Calvert County Traffic Safety Council partners in using available highway safety media resources, including those focused on newer vehicle and roadway technologies.
- Implement data-driven education for vulnerable and high-risk populations.

Distracted Driving

Data & Problem Identification

- Three-Year Data: 2 distracted related fatalities
- Five-Year Data: 556 distracted related crashes
- Five-Year Data: 190 of those crashes resulted in 229 injuries
- Three-Year Average: 17 serious Injuries

The three-year trend data was similar. The number of injury crashes decreased in 2021 to 177, slightly less than the 190 five-year average. More than a quarter were rear-end crashes, followed closely by angle and fixed-object crashes. An average of 42% (221 of the 517 crashes) were in intersections or intersection involved. Approximately one-third of the at-fault drivers were under age 25 and 60% were male. Crashes occurred throughout the day, peaking at 5 p.m.

Distracted driving citations issued in Calvert County decreased from 793 in 2019 to 427 in 2021. This significant decrease was not unusual across the state during the COVID years.

Strategies

- Request and analyze crash and citation data to determine priority enforcement, engineering and outreach locations.
- Conduct enforcement of distracted driving-related laws, including Move Over Law.
- Identify engineering practices to keep drivers' attention focused on the roadway.
- Engage Calvert County Traffic Safety Partners to make use of available resources, including social media and national campaign resources.
- Implement data-driven educational programs for high-risk and vulnerable populations.



Impaired Driving

Data & Problem Identification

- Three-Year Data: 3 impaired related fatalities
- Five-Year Data: 133 impaired related crashes
- Five-Year Data: 37 of those crashes resulted in 53 Injuries
- Three-Year Data: 7 serious injuries
- Five-Year Data: 546 DUI arrests
- 3.5% of state's DUI arrests (1.3% of state VMT - 582/604/452 – 2019-21)

An average of three impaired driving fatalities occurred from the 2019 through 2021 years in Calvert County. Fatalities from such crashes have oscillated, ranging from two in 2019 to five in 2020 to one in 2021. Serious injuries resulting from such crashes in the county over the same time period have remained relatively constant averaging seven for the same three-year period. In 2021, 12.5% of all fatalities and 18.4% of all serious injuries in Calvert County resulted from impaired driving crashes.

During the same period, impaired driving arrests have seesawed in Calvert County, ranging from 582 in 2019 to 604 in 2020 and 452 in 2021.

Strategies

- Request and analyze crash and citation data to determine priority enforcement, engineering and outreach locations.
- Increase enforcement of impaired driving laws (both alcohol and drug-related).
- Engage Calvert County Traffic Safety Partners to make use of available resources, including social media and national campaign resources.
- Implement data-driven educational programs for high-risk and vulnerable populations.
- Identify resources for crash data on county and municipal roadways.
- Determine optimal engineering countermeasures to address locations of concern by prevalent crash types (such as installing rumble strips to prevent run-off-the-road accidents).

Occupant Protection

Data & Problem Identification

- Three-Year Data: 3 unrestrained fatalities
- 95.4% seat belt use in 2022 (above state average)
- Child safety seat and seat belt citations: 332 issued in 2021

During the three-year period of 2019-2021, there were 15 motorized vehicle involved fatalities where the seat belt usage was known at the time of the crash. Of those, only five were belted. The MHSO conducts a seat belt usage survey each June along state, county and municipal roadways in each county and Baltimore City. In 2022, the observed seat belt usage rate for Maryland among drivers and front seat passengers of all vehicles was 92.7%, while the overall observed seat belt usage rate for Calvert County was 95.4%.

Strategies

- Request and analyze crash and citation data to determine priority enforcement and outreach locations and high-risk populations.
- Conduct enforcement of occupant protection laws (for all populations).
- Engage Calvert County Traffic Safety Partners to make use of available resources, including social media and national campaign resources.
- Implement data-driven educational programs for high-risk and vulnerable populations.



Vulnerable Road Users

Data & Problem Identification

Calvert County's most vulnerable road users include pedestrians, motorcyclists, older drivers and young drivers.

- Pedestrian fatalities and serious injuries have remained relatively low and constant over the previous three years, averaging one each year.
- Unauthorized vehicles (including golf carts, dirt bikes, four-wheelers, etc.) operating on the roadway resulted in an average of one fatality or very serious injury each year.
- Motorcycle rider fatalities have remained almost steady over the past three years, with one fatality in 2019 and two each in 2020 and 2021. Serious injuries averaged five each year.
- Fatal crashes involving older drivers in Calvert County averaged one each year. Serious injuries have been relatively low, averaging four each year. Over the past three years, the number of traffic citations issued to older drivers in Calvert County has seen a significant decrease from 401 in 2019 to 314 in 2020 and 301 in 2021. It should be noted that activities out of the home for older individuals decreased significantly during the 2020 and 2021 years due to state and county implementation of COVID-related restrictions.
- In 2021, there were two fatalities involving young drivers in Calvert County. Young driver fatalities in the previous years were lower, at one each year. Serious injuries due to crashes involving younger drivers decreased from 12 in 2019 to six in 2020 and five in 2021, likely due to classes being conducted virtually and the lack of after-school sports activities due to COVID restrictions.

Strategies

- Conduct public awareness campaigns directed to those who use off-road vehicle users such as dirt bikes, golf carts, four-wheelers, etc.)
- Conduct public awareness campaigns and seek other opportunities directed at pedestrian and bicycle safety.
- Share outreach and education programs available for young drivers, older drivers, and motorcyclists.



SUMMARY

The objective of Calvert County's Strategic Roadway Safety Plan is to provide structure and a focused approach for the Traffic Safety Council (TSC) in pursuit of reducing the number of serious crashes and fatalities in Calvert County. Specific action steps for the TSC have been identified and will be tracked in the future to quantify gains and identify areas which require additional attention. The intent of this initial plan is for it to be considered a living document subject to augmentation and deduction, predicated on the efficacy of the previously stated procedures. Ultimately, the collective goal is zero deaths and zero serious crashes. This plan shall serve as the blueprint for interagency coordination and communication in order to fulfill this purpose.

ACRONYMS

| | |
|-------|--|
| ADAS | Advanced Driver Assistance Systems |
| BOCC | Calvert County Board of County Commissioners |
| CCTSC | Calvert County Traffic Safety Council |
| CCSO | Calvert County Sheriff's Office |
| DPW | Calvert County Department of Public Works |
| EMS | Emergency Medical Services |
| MSP | Maryland State Police |
| MDOT | Maryland Department of Transportation |
| MHSO | Maryland Highway Safety Office |
| NHTSA | National Highway Traffic Safety Administration |
| P&Z | Calvert County Department of Planning and Zoning |
| SHSP | Strategic Highway Safety Plan |
| SRSP | Strategic Roadway Safety Plan |
| VMT | Vehicle Miles Traveled |