

**Vision Zero Status Update
(Chapter 377, Acts of 2019)**

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

**Maryland Department of Transportation
Motor Vehicle Administration**

**MSAR #12327
January 2024**

This report is offered 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.”

SAFE SYSTEM APPROACH

The United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) uses a Safe System Approach as the guiding paradigm to address roadway safety. The Safe System Approach has been embraced by the transportation community as an effective way to address and mitigate the risks inherent in the United States’ enormous and complex transportation system. It works by building and reinforcing multiple layers of protection to both prevent crashes from happening initially, and to minimize the harm caused to those involved when crashes do occur. It is a holistic and comprehensive approach that utilizes the following six principles to provide a guiding framework to eliminate crashes that result in death and serious injuries.

- Humans Make Mistakes
- Humans Are Vulnerable
- Responsibility is Shared
- Safety is Proactive
- Redundancy is Critical

The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) announced in 2023 it is now an Ally in Action with the National Roadway Safety Strategy (<https://www.transportation.gov/NRSS>), a U.S. Department of Transportation initiative to bring agencies and stakeholders across the country together to share ideas and best practices to save lives on the nation's roadways. The initiative sets a national vision for safety and identifies courses of action based on core objectives of safer people, safer roads, safer vehicles, safer speeds, and the highest standards in post-crash care.

MDOT EFFORTS

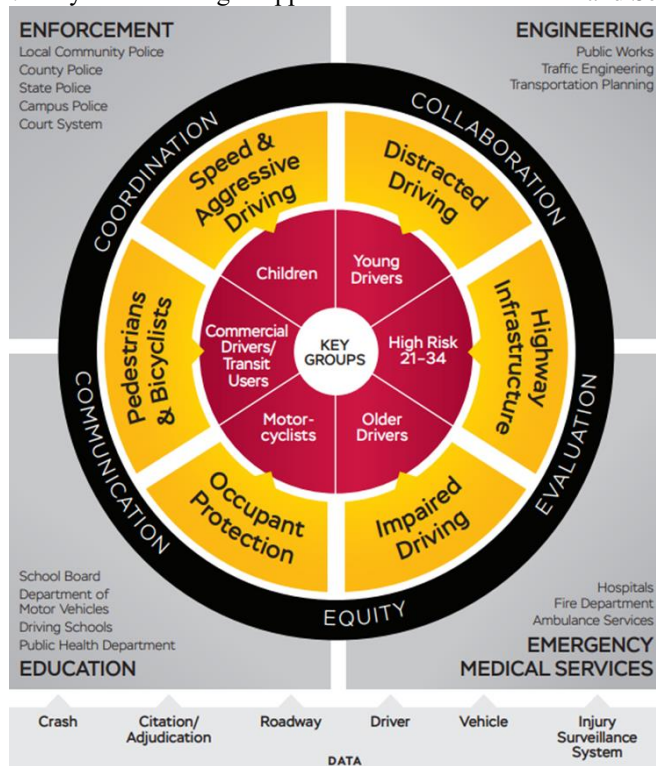
MDOT is a customer-driven leader that delivers safe, sustainable, intelligent, and exceptional transportation solutions to connect our customers to life’s opportunities. In every activity, MDOT places a significant emphasis on safety, and continues to form new initiatives and build on key established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

- The Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration’s (MVA) Highway Safety Office is the central point of coordination for safety programs at all levels of government and the private sector. MVA’s Highway Safety Office helps to identify and implement countermeasures to reduce fatalities and serious injuries on Maryland’s roadways. The Director of MVA’s Highway Safety Office 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 Director reports to the 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 Director reviews and recommends to the Administrator projects that will identify new safety countermeasures that can be adopted on a state and local level.

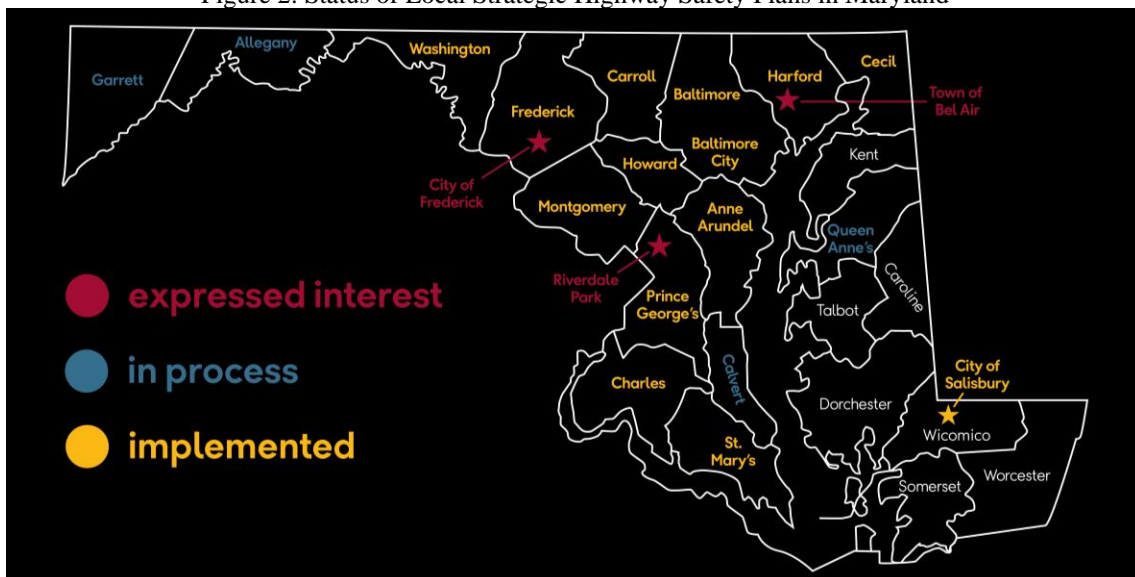
- MVA's Highway Safety Office Director continues to serve as a member of the Statewide Emergency Services Advisory Committee and planning committees, working closely with local Metropolitan Planning Organizations (i.e. Washington Council of Governments and Baltimore Metropolitan Council) to coordinate highway safety efforts in those regions. These efforts include the continued use of the *Street Smart* and *Look Alive* pedestrian safety campaigns. Additionally, the Washington Council of Governments continued to authorize grant funds as part of the Transportation Planning Board's Regional Safety Program. Several of those grants supported Maryland-based projects.
- MVA's Highway Safety Office staff continue to be engaged in ongoing dialogue with other states and jurisdictions to learn best practices and innovative ideas. In 2023, the Highway Safety Office participated in trainings and workshops held by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), the Governor's Highway Safety Association, 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. In addition, the MVA's Highway Safety Office hosted its annual Highway Safety Summit in April. Over 250 attendees participated in workshops that focused on vulnerable road user (VRU) safety, impaired driving, occupant protection, and other highway behaviors.
- In an effort to continue to raise public awareness with safe driving campaigns, MVA's Highway Safety Office's communications campaign *Be the Driver* was expanded to include multiple program areas. The *Be the Driver* campaign focuses on educational messages related to impaired driving, occupant protection, VRUsafety, 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 2024, MVA's Highway Safety Office 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 Maryland Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP). Each of these highway safety programs are 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 with a mission to strengthen and enforce driving laws and educate the public about safe driving behaviors.

Figure 1. Maryland's Strategic Approach to Reduce Fatalities and Serious Injuries



- MVA and the Highway Safety Office continue to work with local jurisdictions on the development of local Strategic Highway Safety Plans. Figure 2 below displays the status of all local plans across the state.

Figure 2. Status of Local Strategic Highway Safety Plans in Maryland



- The website dedicated to Vision Zero and all the State's highway safety information, resources, and initiatives is zerodeathsmd.gov. This site now includes a variety of highway safety information and resources, including password protected law enforcement training videos and crash data for the previous calendar year. New in 2023 is an interactive dashboard providing regular updates of motor vehicle fatalities across the State.
- MVA's Highway Safety Office utilizes Maryland State Police (MSP) crash data to provide standardized reports on the zerodeathsmd.gov 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 aid targeted enforcement and education efforts across each of the emphasis areas outlined in the SHSP.
- MVA's Highway Safety Office, the Maryland Transportation Authority, and the State Highway Administration (SHA) closely collaborate on all safety-related objectives. MVA's Highway Safety Office and SHA use 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.
- The SHA is focused on contributing to Vision Zero efforts. By creating the Context Driven Guide for highway safety, SHA is providing a framework for roadway design and creating an actionable plan, the Pedestrian Safety Action Plan (PSAP), to improve roadway safety and balance access and mobility in all settings throughout Maryland – from urban cores to rural areas – by developing a toolkit of safety improvements and providing training to practitioners and the public. Through the PSAP, SHA will work with communities to improve pedestrian safety by identifying challenges, setting goals and objectives, focusing on areas of need, setting priorities, and taking action.
- The PSAP also will leverage SHA's responsibility for engineering and evaluation of the State's transportation network. This focus will complement existing VRU safety programs overseen by MDOT to harness the collective benefit of the 4 E's: Enforcement, Engineering, Education, and Emergency Medical Services. The plan's ultimate goal is to make State roads safer for vulnerable road users.
- As required as part of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, SHA completed a Vulnerable Road User (VRU) Safety Assessment to be included as part of the State's Strategic Highway Safety Plan.
- A VRU Safety Assessment is a comprehensive statewide examination aimed at understanding the transportation safety challenges faced by VRUs. The assessment utilizes a data-driven approach to evaluate the safety performance for pedestrians and cyclists, analyzes and identifies high-risk areas, consults with various stakeholders, and develops a plan to improve safety for those travelers at specific locations or throughout the entire system on both State and local roads.

- The VRU Safety Assessment was built on the PSAP. Specifically, the PSAP provides a framework for addressing VRU safety concerns across the SHA's road network, not including local roads. With additional years of crash data, guidance for our local agency partners, and another round of consultation with interested parties, the VRU Safety Assessment lends further support to our efforts to apply the Context Driven Guide's philosophy to make Vision Zero a reality.

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, Maryland State Police, 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 current 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 [zerodeaths.gov](https://www.zerodeaths.gov) website.