VISION ZERO

NO TRAFFIC DEATHS BY 2030

Montgomery County Vision Zero Equity Framework

Working Draft – July 15, 2019

Background

In Montgomery County, severe and fatal traffic crashes are not distributed evenly across our neighborhoods. Communities with higher rates of poverty, persons of color, and younger residents have higher collision rates compared to the rest of the County. Hispanic and Non-Hispanic Black/African American residents have a 33% higher traffic fatality rate compared to Non-Hispanic White residents (see more details on page 9 of the Two-Year Action Plan). Because of these outcome disparities, Montgomery County Government and the Pedestrian, Bicycle, Traffic Safety Advisory Committee (PBTSAC) have created the Vision Zero Equity Task Force to better understand these disparities and make recommendations on improving safety for all residents.

Vision Zero Equity Statement

To achieve Vision Zero, Montgomery County will prioritize and allocate funding and resources to the communities that experience a disproportionate burden of traffic-related fatalities and serious injuries.

Guiding Principles:

- **Community Engagement:** Montgomery County will consider everyone's voices and concerns, which includes being proactive to engage communities that may not be currently represented in the process or make requests for safety projects.
- **Access:** Residents all over Montgomery County can safely access multiple transportation options to reach their destination.
- **High Injury Network:** Using a data-informed approach, Montgomery County will prioritize funding to the high injury network, with special attention to equity emphasis areas as defined by the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments and shown in the Vision Zero Two-Year Action Plan.
- **Address Historical Disinvestment:** Investments in areas that are historically underserved by transportation funding and projects that improve safety for people walking, biking, and using mobility assistive equipment (wheelchair, canes, etc.).

Equity Framework Considerations

ENGINEERING	
Data	• High injury network – How does the high injury network factor into prioritization? • High density areas versus the high injury areas?

	• High rate of crashes warrants more focus for each type of person involved in the crash (i.e. walking, biking, driving]) • Funding and resources are allocated (for projects) based on need (high injury network) coupled with equity emphasis areas (communities that have higher rates of poverty, young people, and persons of color) rather than locations of political power (eg neighborhoods that are more "connected").
Existence of Physical infrastructure	• Are there adequate sidewalks, bike infrastructure, bus stops, etc.?
Existence of vulnerable populations	• Neighborhood (Census tract) is in an equity emphasis area • Area is within the walkshed of a school • Area is within a quarter mile of senior or recreation center • Neighborhood (Census tract) has a high vulnerability senior population as identified by the Senior Vulnerability Study •
History of funding	• Did they have an engineering project to improve safety already? When? What?
Economic opportunity	• Are people looking for work? • Resources should be allocated to communities to remedy inequities in multimodal transportation based on income, ethnicity, and employment.
Modal Priority and crashes	• Prioritize vulnerable transportation modes (walking, bicycling, scooting, and persons using mobility assistive equipment) over driving. Protection for vulnerable roadway users can also improve safety for motorists. • Driving: If most of the fatal crashes are people in vehicles where does that get prioritized? • Does Montgomery County allocate resources to the modes with the most fatalities? • Determining whether or not we should approach crash-related deaths before injuries. Zero deaths and zero injuries

Strategy Priority	• Prioritize engineering solutions before education and enforcement. Vision Zero requires using a safe systems approach to eliminating traffic fatalities. • Education versus engineering. Which should have a higher priority? Can you do both at the same time?
Land Use	• Walking: Prioritizing where there are a high number of people walking, cycling, scooting, and persons using mobility assistive equipment (commercial areas, downtowns, etc) versus where people walking are being killed or seriously injured (suburban areas with longer blocks but lower total number of people walking) • Equity framework by planning zone
Audience	• Commuter or resident?

EDUCATION	
Prioritize children	• What about bike safety instruction for children as part of the curriculum? • Prioritize street teams in schools
Data	• How are educational campaigns affecting behavior? • Safe Routes to School – what are the obstacles for children walking to school? How can the program eliminate obstacles? • Ask people: "What would it take for you to do the right thing?"
Funding	• How much to put driver's education back in school?
Locations	• How are educational campaign locations selected? • Prioritize areas where there is a problem

ENFORCEMENT	
Data	• Explore other metrics than pre-crash behaviors, which blame the victim • Collecting data to better understand the root cause

	• Equity in terms of law enforcement - A ratio of at fault people walking and biking versus cars. Who is being enforced?
Others??	•

Other sections to be added as an appendix to the framework:

- How the County Government will utilize the equity framework in its current Vision Zero programs and in building the 10-year action plan.
- Section describing the task force, when and where it met, and its mission
- Section providing high-level data (maps and charts) showing the inequitable outcomes currently in traffic safety.