



**Montgomery County Vision Zero
Equity Task Force
Meeting #1 Summary**

March 7, 2019

Purpose of the Meeting

This was the first Equity Task Force Meeting for the Montgomery County Vision Zero Plan. Montgomery County developed an Equity Task Force as part of the implementation of the two-year Vision Zero Action Plan. The Task Force is comprised of county staff and members of the Pedestrian, Bicycle, Traffic Safety Advisory Committee (PBTSAC), other organizations, and residents. The goals of the Task Force are to define what equity means within the context of Vision Zero and then based on that definition, determine what action items should be developed in the areas of engineering, education, and enforcement. The first meeting consisted of a brief training around equity as well as an interactive activity to engage the attendees of what equity means in the Montgomery County context.

Meeting Information

The meeting was held on Thursday, March 7, 2019 from 7pm – 9pm at the Executive Office Building in the Auditorium. The Executive Office Building is located at 101 Monroe St, Rockville, MD 20850.

Attendance

Approximately 15 members of the Equity Task Force attended the first meeting. These attendees included residents, members of PBTSAC, staff of MCDOT, MCCPTA, M-NCPPC, SVHS PTSA, Community Vision for Takoma, and Germantown Pedestrian Safety. Many attendees lived in the Silver Spring and Germantown communities. (See attached sign-in sheet)

Format

1. Introduction

During the introduction, the task of the meeting was defined: What does equity look like for Vision Zero and how do we know if we accomplished it? How do we apply an equity lens for Vision Zero? Wade Holland and Sarah Dickinson from Montgomery County along with the members of the project team, Veronica O. Davis, Mei Fang, Jazmin Kimble, Chanceé Lundy, and

Cipriana Eckford, introduced themselves. The microphone was then passed around the room for the members of the Equity Task Force to give brief introductions. They stated their name, city of residence, affiliation, and reason for attendance.

2. Ground Rules

Wade stated the ground rules and goals of the evening.

Goals:

1. Define equity.
2. Define an equity lens for the county's long-term Vision Zero strategy.
3. Lay the groundwork for the county's long-term Vision Zero strategy.

3. County's Presentation

Wade gave a presentation on the background of Montgomery County, in which attendees were able to ask questions towards the end of the presentation. Montgomery County is the 17th wealthiest county and one of the most educated counties in the United States. In 2012, the population reached a milestone of over 1 million people. There have been increases in the Black/African American, Asian, and Hispanic communities. Within the county there are populations that are concentrated in certain areas. Montgomery County has a high average household income of \$90,000-\$95,000. While the county is wealthy, there are still pockets of poverty and large income disparities.

There is a growth in senior population. By 2040, the state of Maryland is projecting the county's senior population to be 20% of the total. As a goal of Vision Zero, how do we move this population around? As the senior population grows, there will be an increase in diversity. Wade showed analysis of residency and the immigration population where 25% are Native Marylanders, 42% are Native (Outside of Maryland), and 33% are immigrants. A large portion comes from Ethiopia, Cameroon, and El Salvador. 394,000 residents (40%) speak a language other than English at home.

He discussed households in Montgomery County that receive SNAP benefits including areas like Glenmont, Germantown, and Gaithersburg. He showed

analysis of students that receive free and reduced meals by elementary school, middle school, and high school. The need in schools is growing. Public transportation patterns were discussed. There is a higher usage around WMATA Metrorail lines. Average user spends around 30 minutes in a vehicle. Fourteen percent of MoCo workers that are age 16 and over take public transit to work.

For attendees to view the maps presented they can visit: stat.montgomerycountymd.gov/. From there they will see the community dashboards that contains the Community Explorer, Community Quality, and MC Insights.

Wade asked if anyone wanted to discuss anything further. An attendee talked about importance of understanding the rate and growth of the community in the past and near future and how we should have access to that information. They gave Silver Spring as an example and how the planning board plans have 10,000 new homes to live in within the next 10 years. Wade talked about doing population projections.

Vision Zero Principles were discussed: Vision Zero does not mean that any crashes will occur but if a crash does occur, they will happen at a low enough speed that it will result in minimal injury and no fatality. Wade talked about the different survival rates of a person being struck by a car going 25mph, 30mph, versus 40mph. Majority of high-speed roads are controlled by the state of Maryland. Fifty-two percent of fatalities are on those roads. It's about culture change and working to redesign those roads.

Montgomery County is the first Vision Zero county in the US. About 35 cities have a Vision Zero plan. New York City is credited as the first city. The second city known for Vision Zero is San Francisco. Wade explained the complete street approach and the different components of a complete street. He discussed the Two-Year Action Plan: Engineering, Enforcement, Education, Traffic Incident Management, and Law, Policy, and Advocacy.

4. Equity Exercise & Discussion

Two questions were posted on flip chart paper on opposite sides of the room: What does equity look like if we are able to achieve it? How do you define equity for Montgomery County? Attendees were to post their answers on Post-It notes and place them on both papers. Nspiregreen explained the

exercise, giving the attendees 10 minutes to answer both questions. After a few minutes, Nspiregreen collected the papers and read off the answers from the Post-It notes and note cards.

This opened up a discussion. Attendees raised questions about how do you measure equity? Many agreed that equity is definitely a resource issue. Resources should be distributed where needed the most. Wade mentioned that we talk about need but how do we define it? The importance of pedestrians was discussed and how everything ends with pedestrians. There's a risk for people that don't have access to cars. There's poor pedestrian infrastructure. An attendee asked if there are outlying areas where there is not much of a focus of people walking around. Resources should be allocated to make it more walkable.

There was a back and forth conversation of education versus engineering. Many believed that education can be a useful tool, but engineering has a high importance. The principle is primarily engineering.

Based on the discussion the big themes that emerged as well as differences of priority are:

1. Resources should be allocated to communities to remedy inequities in multimodal transportation based on income, ethnicity, and employment.
 - a. How does the high injury network factor into prioritization?
 - b. High density areas versus the high injury areas?
 - c. Where they need to go "the most", but how to define the most?
2. People walking and biking should be the priority.
 - a. Walking: Prioritizing where there are a high number of people walking (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)
 - b. Driving: If most of the fatal crashes are people in vehicles where does that get prioritized?
 - c. Does Montgomery County allocate resources to the modes with the most fatalities?
3. Focusing the attention on students and older adults, two vulnerable groups.
 - a. Slow speed zones?

4. Education versus engineering.
 - a. Which should have a higher priority?
 - b. Can you do both at the same time?
5. Equity in terms of law enforcement.
 - a. A ratio of at fault people walking and biking versus cars.
 - b. Who is being enforced?

5. Upcoming Meeting

Wade ended the discussion and mentioned the next upcoming meeting. Aiming for the next meeting to be held in Silver Spring/Wheaton area. The discussion topic will be the squeaky wheel: balancing demand versus data-driven projects. How do we approach need? Do we tell them to wait? Do we need to invest in that place?

a. Equity Exercise – Unedited Comments

Montgomery County Vision Zero Equity Task Force	
Thursday, March 7, 2019	
What Does Equity Look Like If We Are Able to Achieve It?	
High population density would tend to need more resource/focus with regards to vision.	
Equal survival rates across modes of transportation.	
Comparable severe and fatal injury rates regardless of demographic.	
MoCo will provide safe, equitable active transportation options resulting in families requiring 1 car (or none) and singles no car needed.	
In practice, each community's roads and sidewalks have features that are adapted to the specific characteristics of those communities and enable safe mobility.	
Complete streets in all the urban centers.	
Measures varies by area of county.	
Focus resources where most needed.	
1st projects funded are in high incidence areas, with special attention paid to "equity map" and based on vision zero principles.	
Pedestrians before car.	
Equity = people of all parts of the county having fair access to resources they need.	
Residents all over MoCo are safely accessing multiple modes of transportation to reach their destinations quickly and conveniently. Poor people have rich opportunities to get around.	
More emphasis and effort where required as driven by data. (E.G., high rate of accidents warrants more focus for each type of accident [pedestrian, bike, driver])	
Equity looks like: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Informed residents - Safe/safer communities - Everyone's voice/concerns are considered and taken into account for their households communities - All neighborhoods have a fair shot of living safe, healthy and peaceful 	
Fair, safe, convenient travel for residents who need it more.	
MoCo citizens have support to get where they want to go. Support = infrastructure, \$ assistance, transit options, safety info.	
Zero fatalities, including in communities that are most affected.	
Funding and resources are allocated (for projects) based on need (eg high incidence areas), rather than locations of political power (eg wealthier neighborhoods that are more "connected").	

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How Do You Define Equity for Montgomery County?

Allocating resources to evenly distribute quality of life.

Equity means all communities and people have the ability to go where they want and need to safely

For MoCo Vision Zero, equity means that access to safe, convenient, affordable streets and transportation is readily available and opens doors to jobs and education for everyone.

Everyone's voice is heard, considered, taken seriously.

Resources need to go where they are needed the most.

Investments in areas that are historically underserved. Not just "equal" investments but investment to achieve equality.

Safe passage.

Integrates planning efforts with affordable housing.

Equity and vision zero "lens" applied to all funding divisions and projects.

Varies by area of county and density of development. Top level: Red, Orange, Yellow, Green

Equity = Equal access to services as driven by need.

Equity in MoCo = residents in Silver Spring receiving the same education, public transit access, and opportunity as someone in Bethesda.

Resources allocated to communities to remedy multimodal inequities in transportation opportunities based on income, ethnicity, employment.

All the different areas in the county get whatever they need so that pedestrians feel safe.

Resource utilization that favors no mode of transportation.

MoCo uses transportation as a pro-active tool to level the playing field for access to opportunity, focusing on 'closing the gaps'.

Ensuring that, when pursuing Vision Zero policies, we take into account and appropriate enough resources for communities that are disproportionately affected.

Funding for safe transportation correlates to the need.