

Aspen Hill Vision Zero Study

In November 2019, the Planning Board approved the Aspen Hill Vision Zero Study. This effort identifies a broad range of solutions—from specific intersection improvements to area-wide policies and strategies—that comprehensively addresses traffic safety in Aspen Hill. Individual traffic safety recommendations are prioritized based on existing safety risks and potential impacts, supported by data collected for the study and from county databases.

Forest Glen / Montgomery Hills Sector Plan

Aligned along a two-mile segment of Georgia Avenue (MD 97) between two central business districts, this plan addresses multimodal safety and access issues that are common among the County’s major highways. In cooperation with the State Highway Administration, the plan builds upon the previous master plan’s boulevard concept for Georgia Avenue with recommendations to improve pedestrian and bicycle comfort, safety accessibility, and connectivity within the plan area that reflect today’s values and modern strategies. Among the first of the County’s plans to pilot a pedestrian level of comfort analysis, this plan strives to make significant changes in the walking network based on objective, quantifiable criteria. This plan is currently under review by the County Council.

Pedestrian Master Plan

The Montgomery County Planning Department launched its first Pedestrian Master Plan to improve pedestrian conditions countywide. The plan will identify strategies for making streets safer and more accessible for pedestrians. This project is a recommended activity in the County’s Vision Zero Two-Year Action Plan.

Pedestrian Level of Comfort Map Draft

The Planning Department is laying the foundation for the Pedestrian Master Plan by developing a pedestrian network and creating a methodology for assessing how comfortable different areas of the county are for walking. Check out the progress of this map at mcatlas.org/pedplan.

Vision Zero Toolkit

The Montgomery County Planning Department is developing a detailed document for community members to explain Vision Zero concepts and crash mitigation strategies for common crash risks. A draft toolkit is under review by the department.

Fire Department Access Performance-Based Design Guide

The Fire Department Access Performance-Based Design Guide addresses evolving fire department access issues and balances these requirements with the needs of pedestrian and bicycle safety and the protection of natural resources. By identifying safe and sustainable design considerations for fire department access, street intersections, and streetscapes, the design guide streamlines the development review process and will improve the quality of life in Montgomery County. Issued by the Montgomery County Department of Permitting Services, the design guide was produced in collaboration with the Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service, Montgomery County Department of Transportation, and the Planning Department.

Development Approvals

A number of regulatory approvals will contribute substantially to advancing Vision Zero in the County, including:

- Battery Lane District, Bethesda
- Bethesda Metro Tower, Bethesda
- Cabin John Village, Potomac
- Park Potomac, Potomac
- Poplar Grove, Germantown
- Strathmore Square, Grosvenor
- VOB, White Flint
- Westbard Shopping Center, Westbard



MONTGOMERY PLANNING VISION ZERO





▶ What is Vision Zero?

Vision Zero is a proven approach to preventing roadway-related deaths and severe injuries. It represents a fundamental change in how we plan and design our roads, shifting from a focus on maximizing motor vehicle efficiency to ensuring that our roads are safe regardless of whether travel is by car, bus, bicycle or foot. Vision Zero recognizes that people will sometimes make mistakes and that our roads should be designed to ensure those inevitable mistakes do not result in severe injuries or fatalities.

Through its 2016 County Council resolution, Montgomery County committed to eliminating traffic fatalities and severe injuries. In 2017, the County Executive released an initial two-year action plan of activities to advance the County toward Vision Zero. Upon completion of the two-year action plan, the County will prepare a ten-year action plan to eliminate traffic fatalities and severe injuries by 2030.

▶ The Planning Department's Role in Vision Zero

Vision Zero is a multidisciplinary effort that requires the support of all County agencies to be successful. The Montgomery County Planning Department has an important role to play in Vision Zero and can support Montgomery County's program with community engagement, stakeholder facilitation, data analysis and a focus on long-term visioning.

- 1 **Master Planning:** Through master planning, Montgomery Planning engages the community to re-envision our auto-oriented roadways as safe, complete streets for walking, bicycling and driving.
- 2 **Development and Capital Projects:** The Montgomery County Planning Board helps to implement the safety recommendations in master plans by reviewing proposed development and capital projects.
- 3 **Data Analysis:** The Planning Department has extensive data collection and analysis resources to identify roadway characteristics that create safety challenges and to propose proven changes to improve safety.
- 4 **Community Support and Engagement:** The department provides support for building a Vision Zero constituency.

Learn more at: montgomeryplanning.org/visionzero

▶ Accomplishments in 2019

Planning Department Work Plan

To support the successful implementation of Montgomery County's Vision Zero policy, the Montgomery County Planning Department has developed a work plan that identifies the tasks that the department will be working on to advance Vision Zero. See more at montgomeryplanning.org/visionzero.

Hired a Vision Zero Coordinator

The Planning Department has hired its first staff person focusing on Vision Zero, to start work in January 2020. This person will coordinate all Vision Zero activities for the department.

Complete Streets Design Guide

The Planning Department is partnering with the Montgomery County Department of Transportation to develop a Complete Streets Design Guide. A draft guide is nearing completion and a public review will be conducted in early 2020. When complete, the guide will provide policy and design guidance to governmental agencies, consultants, private developers, and community groups on the planning, design, and operation of roadways for all users.

Veirs Mill Corridor Master Plan

In April 2019, the County Council approved the Veirs Mill Corridor Master Plan. This plan recommends short-term strategies to provide continuous walkways and bikeways, improve access to transit and increase connectivity to community facilities and neighborhood uses. In the long-term, the plan recommends the transformation of Veirs Mill Road from a motor vehicle-dominated corridor to a safe, efficient and comfortable complete street that serves all users. To aid this transformation, the plan recommends reduced lane widths, reduced target speeds and additional safe crossing opportunities.

MARC Rail Communities Master Plan

In April 2019, the County Council approved the MARC Rail Communities Master Plan. This plan recommends speed reductions and a road diet along a section of Middlebrook Road, adjacent to Seneca Valley High School.