



Testimony of the Mayor and Council of Rockville
SUPPORT
HB 254 – State Highway Administration – Pedestrian and Bicyclist Fatalities –
Infrastructure Review (Vision Zero Implementation Act of 2022)

Good afternoon, Chairman Barve and members of the House Environment and Transportation Committee. I am Bridget Donnell Newton, Mayor of the City of Rockville, and I thank you for the opportunity to share the City's comments on HB 254. We are thankful to Delegate Palakovich Carr for sponsoring this important legislation.

In July 2020, the Mayor and Council approved its Vision Zero Action Plan as a comprehensive approach to achieve zero fatalities and serious injuries from traffic crashes. The City supports HB 254 and its goals to stem the increase in traffic fatalities that are occurring across the State.

The City is proactively tracking data in locations where fatal crashes have occurred. Rockville has identified six roadway segments that are part of a High Injury Network – roadways that have had five or more crashes resulting in fatalities or serious injuries. All six segments are located along State-maintained roadways, with 52 fatalities and serious crashes. MD 355 has been especially challenging with 32 fatalities and serious crashes. Attached to our written testimony, is Rockville's December 7, 2021, letter to SHA, which includes our serious concerns and a request for assistance. We ask the Committee for assistance with receiving a timely response from SHA.

The State needs to use crash data to proactively develop safety solutions that will prevent the next car crash. The requirements for an infrastructure review and identification of corrective actions in HB 254 are a step in the right direction.

We ask that you incorporate the following amendments into the bill:

- Expand the criteria for investigations to include fatal *and* serious injury crashes.
- Require SHA to provide a timeline for the infrastructure review, when the remediation will occur, and prioritize short-term, medium, and long-term corrective measures.
- Require SHA to contact the municipality directly with the results of the infrastructure review.

In closing, HB 254 is urgently needed and will facilitate the development of traffic safety solutions that will create a safer environment for pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and transit riders using State roadways. We urge the Committee to provide HB 254 with a favorable report and forward the bill to the House for a vote.



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December 7, 2021

Mr. Gregory Slater
Secretary of Transportation
Maryland Department of Transportation
7201 Corporate Drive, P.O. Box 548
Hanover, Maryland 21076

Dear Secretary Slater:

The Mayor and Council are writing to you to request the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT)'s support to advance traffic safety in the City. We appreciate your efforts as Transportation Secretary to highlight a multidisciplinary approach to traffic safety; both the MDOT Motor Vehicle Administration's "Be the Driver" highway safety campaign and MDOT's "Walktober" events progressively call attention to best practices and encourage safer transportation for all modes of travel, as well as reinforce the State's "Zero Deaths Maryland" program. There are some updates and serious concerns that we want to bring to your attention.

Following the State's program, the Mayor and Council approved its Vision Zero Action Plan in July 2020 as a comprehensive approach to achieve zero fatalities and serious injuries from traffic crashes. The Vision Zero Action Plan is a high priority of the Mayor and Council and the City has evaluated the areas in Rockville that are more prone to crashes and a safety risk from a multimodal transit perspective. The City has identified six roadway segments that are part of a High Injury Network – roadways that have had five or more crashes resulting in fatalities or serious injuries. All six segments in the High Injury Network are along State-maintained roadways. These segments are listed below and shown on the attached map. We urgently request your support to help address these issues as more than 52 fatalities and serious crashes have occurred along these important roadways. MD 355 has been especially challenging with 32 fatalities and serious crashes.

The City continues to advance roadway safety projects along City-maintained roadways, including road diets, bicycle lanes, shared use paths, and pedestrian signals, among others. However, unless safety and engineering improvements are made along these major roadways, we will not be able to achieve our Vision Zero goals and prevent these unnecessary crashes and fatalities. On behalf of the City, we request that the MDOT State Highway Administration develop and implement roadway safety projects to improve safety for people driving, walking, bicycling, and using transit along the following road segments, in coordination with the City.

The table below shows the fatal or serious injury crashes during the period of 2016-2020 and depicts a troubling reality in that too many residents are being seriously injured and/or killed at these locations. We implore MDOT to prioritize these segments and make adjustments that will help protect the lives of our residents and visitors.

MAYOR
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Roadway Name	# of Fatal or Serious Injury Crashes	From	To
MD 355 (Rockville Pike).	17	MD 586 (Viers Mill Road).	Halpine Road.
MD 28 (W Montgomery Avenue).	8	Research Boulevard.	Mannakee Street.
MD 355 (Frederick Road).	8	Ridgemont Avenue.	Redland Boulevard.
MD 355 (Hungerford Drive).	7	College Parkway.	MD 586 (Viers Mill Road).
MD 586 (Viers Mill Road).	6	Midway Avenue.	Twinbrook Parkway.
MD 28 (First Street / Norbeck Road).	6	First Street Spur.	Avery Road.

Constructing roadway safety improvements in conjunction with the City’s efforts targeting traffic enforcement and enhancing motorist, pedestrian, and bicyclist education will work to achieve the State’s and the City’s shared objectives to improve transportation safety. The Rockville Mayor and Council is ready to partner with you to make these dangerous segments safer for motorists, pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit riders. We request the opportunity to meet with you to share ideas and user experience on ways these roadways can be improved and map out a strategic approach and timeline to address these issues before more lives are impacted.

Sincerely,

Bridget Donnell Newton
 Bridget Donnell Newton, Mayor

Monique Ashton
 Monique Ashton, Councilmember

Beryl L. Feinberg
 Beryl L. Feinberg, Councilmember

David Myles
 David Myles, Councilmember

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Rockville Mayor and Council

cc: Tim Smith, SHA Administrator
 Day file

High Injury Network 2016-2020

- High Injury Network
- Fatal Crash
- Serious Injury Crash

