



July 10, 2025

TO: Jeff Mihelich, City Manager

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SUBJECT: Vision Zero Post-Crash Inspection – June 18, 2025, Frederick Road (MD 355) and Watkins Pond Boulevard/Indianola Drive

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide a report for the inspection conducted by city staff after the fatal pedestrian crash on June 18, 2025. After a fatal crash in Rockville, the Montgomery County Collision Reconstruction Unit (CRU) manages the crash investigation and prepares the CRU crash report. Unlike property damage or minor injury crashes, this process can take months to complete. While the CRU prepares its report, the city conducts a Vision Zero Post Crash Inspection shortly after a fatal crash is reported.

The city's Department of Public Works (DPW) inspects the roadway pavement, sidewalks, curb ramps, signs, and pavement markings; confirms that the traffic signals and pedestrian signals are operating appropriately; assesses whether the streetlights are working and whether lighting is sufficient. Additionally, the Communications and Community Engagement Department (CCE) posts Vision Zero safety messages relevant to all modes of travel. Lastly, the Rockville City Police Department (RCPD) determines whether additional enforcement for pedestrians and motorists is necessary.

This memo, and subsequent Vision Zero post-crash inspection memos, will be posted on the City's Vision Zero webpage and be accessible to the public.

Additionally, as part of state legislation, the Maryland Department of Transportation State Highway Administration (MDOT SHA), will prepare a "Pedestrian and Bicycle Fatality Infrastructure Review". This review will be posted to the MDOT SHA website within six months of the crash.

**June 18, 2025, Intersection of Frederick Road (MD 355) and Watkins Pond Boulevard/Indianola Drive**

On June 18, 2025, at approximately 12:50 AM, a motorist struck a pedestrian just north of the intersection of Frederick Road and Watkins Pond Boulevard/Indianola Drive. The pedestrian died at the scene of the crash. The motorist attempted to flee the intersection but was stopped by police further north on Frederick Road. Frederick Road is a state-owned and maintained roadway, Watkins Pond Boulevard is a city-owned and maintained roadway, and Indianola Drive is a county-owned and maintained roadway. The Montgomery County CRU is currently investigating the crash.

Jeff Mihelich, City Manager  
July 10, 2025  
Page 2

### **Post Crash Inspection Findings and Response**

DPW staff completed its post-crash inspection between June 18, 2025, and July 3, 2025. Staff inspected the intersection of Frederick Road and Watkins Pond Boulevard/Indianola Drive, along Frederick Road approximately five-hundred feet north and south of the intersection, and along Watkins Pond Boulevard between Elmcroft Boulevard and Frederick Road.

Signage and Pavement Markings – There are four “No Standing Anytime” signs that are faded and have low reflectivity. These signs are on both sides of the road at approximately 15625 and 15551 Frederick Road.

DPW staff has reported sign deficiencies to MDOT SHA. All other signs are visible, reflective and in good condition. The stop bars, crosswalks, and lane lines are visible and in good shape.

Roadway Pavement and Sidewalk – There is a pothole in the center of the intersection of Frederick Road and Watkins Pond Boulevard/Indianola Drive. There is no sidewalk on the south side of Indianola Drive.

DPW staff has reported the pothole to MDOT SHA. The missing sidewalk segment was shared with Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT). All other sidewalks, curb ramps, and roadway pavement on both roads are in good condition.

Intersection Signals – The traffic signal timings, crosswalk buttons, and pedestrian signal heads operate as programmed. However, this signal is programmed to go into “Flash Mode” after 12:30 AM. In flash mode, the signal on the major street (Frederick Road) flashes yellow for motorists to yield, and the signal on the minor street (Watkins Pond Boulevard/Indianola Drive) flashes red for motorists to stop. The pedestrian signal cannot be activated at this time.

City of Rockville (City) staff has requested MDOT SHA to consider reprogramming the traffic signal at this intersection to not go into flash mode.

Streetlights– The streetlights are operational.

Public Outreach – The CCE Department prepared and posted Rockville Vision Zero Public Safety Announcements for pedestrian and motorist safety. These messages focused on pedestrians using marked crosswalks and crossing signals and motorists using headlights, wipers, and being vigilant while driving at night. These messages were released through the City’s social media and other channels.

Enforcement – The RCPD has added this section of Frederick Road to its patrol list for additional enforcement. Since the crash investigation is still ongoing, the RCPD is not specifically targeting any violation type, but conducting increased enforcement all around.

### **Crash history at Frederick Road and Watkins Pond Boulevard/Indianola Drive**

Under the city’s Vision Zero program, this section of Frederick Road is included in the High Injury Network (HIN). City staff requested the three-year crash history for this intersection from MDOT SHA. Between January 2021 and December 2023, there were 16 crashes at this intersection. There were zero crashes resulting in a fatality, two crashes resulting in a serious injury, six crashes resulting in a non-serious injury, and eight crashes resulting in property damage. Only one crash, which was a serious injury crash, involved a pedestrian (January 2023).

Jeff Mihelich, City Manager  
July 10, 2025  
Page 3

City staff has requested MDOT SHA to provide the “Pedestrian and Bicycle Fatality Infrastructure Review” when it is available.

### **Future planned improvements**

Frederick Road (MD 355) is owned and maintained by the Maryland Department of Transportation State Highway Administration (MDOT SHA).

The state’s Highway Needs Inventory (HNI) provides for a multi-lane reconstruction on MD 355 between Montrose Parkway and MD 124, including the segment of Frederick Road at Watkins Pond Blvd/Indianola Drive. The reconstruction also includes interchanges and transit improvements. It is important to note that the HNI is a technical reference and planning document which identifies highway improvements and addresses safety and structural problems that warrant major construction or reconstruction. The projects identified in this document represent only an acknowledgment of need based on technical analysis and adopted local transportation plans. The HNI is not a construction program, and the inclusion of a project does not represent a commitment to implementation.

This section of Frederick Road is also included in Montgomery County’s ongoing Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) projects for the MD 355 BRT. The MD 355 BRT project is currently at 35 percent design. MCDOT anticipates beginning the final design phase in the fall 2025. The 35% design plan for the MD 355 BRT along this section of Frederick Road includes a shared use path in the northbound direction, and wide sidewalk and cycletrack in the southbound direction. Other improvements include a new center median with pedestrian refuge on the north leg of the intersection.

### **Conclusion and Next Steps**

DPW staff completed its Vision Zero post-crash inspection for the fatal pedestrian crash that occurred on June 18, 2025. Staff shared the inspection results with MDOT SHA and MCDOT and has requested the state take the following actions:

1. Replace the faded “No Standing Anytime” signs on at 15625 and 15551 Frederick Road on both sides of the road.
2. Repair the pothole in the center of the intersection of Frederick Road and Watkins Pond Boulevard/Indianola Drive.
3. Consider changing the signal programming to eliminate the “flash mode” at 12:30 AM, which will allow the operation of the pedestrian signal after that time and throughout the nighttime.
4. Provide a sidewalk on the south side of Indianola Drive.
5. Provide the “Pedestrian and Bicycle Fatality Infrastructure Review” when it is available.

DPW staff will follow up with MDOT SHA and MCDOT regarding the improvements to request a timeline for implementation. Additionally, DPW and RCPD staff will coordinate with the Montgomery County CRU to obtain the crash report when it is available. Lastly, DPW staff will continue to track transportation safety concerns raised by the public regarding this section of Frederick Road.

BBW/kmc

cc: Day file