



November 7, 2024

TO: Jeff Mihelich, City Manager

FROM: Bryan Barnett-Woods, AICP, Vision Zero Coordinator

BB

VIA: Emad Elshafei, P.E., Chief of Traffic and Transportation
Craig Simoneau, P.E., Director of Public Works

ELS EE

SUBJECT: Vision Zero Post-Crash Inspection – September 24, 2024, 380 Hungerford Drive (MD 355)

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide a report for the inspection conducted by city staff after the fatal pedestrian crash on September 24, 2024. 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; and assesses whether the streetlights are working and whether lighting is sufficient. Additionally, the Public Information Office (PIO) 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.

As recommended, 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.

September 24, 2024, 380 Hungerford Drive (MD 355) Crash

On September 24, 2024, at approximately 9:12 PM, a motorist struck a pedestrian crossing northbound Hungerford Drive north of Beall Avenue, at 380 Hungerford Drive. The crash resulted in life threatening injuries for the pedestrian who was transported to Suburban Hospital and later succumbed to those injuries. Hungerford Drive is a state-owned and maintained roadway. The Montgomery County CRU is currently investigating the crash.

Vision Zero Post Crash Inspection – September 24, 2024, 380 Hungerford Drive

Page 2 of 4

Post Crash Inspection Findings and Response

DPW staff completed its post-crash inspection between September 25 and October 4, 2024. Staff inspected Hungerford Drive between Beall Avenue and the signalized intersection and entrance to 430 Hungerford Drive.

Signage and Pavement Markings - Two “No Standing Anytime” signs at 401 and 416 Hungerford Drive are faded and have lower reflectivity. Part of the crosswalk at Beall Avenue is missing but is otherwise visible. At the intersection with 430 Hungerford Drive, the stop bar at the driveway to 430 Hungerford Drive is in poor condition.

DPW staff has reported the deficiencies to MDOT SHA. All other signs are visible, reflective and in good condition. All other pavement markings are in good condition.

Roadway Pavement and Sidewalk – There is a sidewalk trip hazard on the sidewalk surrounding a manhole lid on 387 Hungerford Drive. There are two utility patches at 380 Hungerford Drive, two of which are in the roadway and third on the sidewalk. The utility patches are not hazards.

DPW staff has reported the deficiencies to MDOT SHA. All other sidewalks, curb ramps, and roadway pavement are in good condition.

Intersection Signals– The traffic signal timings, crosswalk buttons and pedestrian signal heads, and the firehouse preemption operate as programmed. The traffic signal at 430 Hungerford Drive also operates as programmed.

Streetlights– The streetlights on Hungerford Drive do not have any voltage issues and are operational. Staff indicated the street lighting along Hungerford Drive is adequate for safe travel.

Public Outreach – The Public Information Office (PIO) prepared and posted Rockville Vision Zero PSA’s for pedestrian and motorist safety. These messages focused on pedestrian using marked crosswalks and motorists being vigilant while driving at night and in inclement weather. These messages were released through the City’s social media and other channels. Additionally, a Vision Zero PSA was added to the October 6 newsletter.

Enforcement – The RCPD has added this section of Hungerford drive to their Daily Patrol Enforcement List. The RCPD has also advised the Traffic Unit to enforce vehicle traffic and pedestrian violations in this area when calls for service permit.

Crash history along Hungerford Drive between Beall Avenue and 430 Hungerford Drive

Under the city’s Vision Zero program, this section of Hungerford Drive is not identified as a High Injury Network (HIN) segment. HIN segments have had at least four fatal or serious injury crashes within the past five years. Data used to identify the HIN as well as complete the Vision Zero crash analysis is collected from the Automated Crash Reporting System (ACRS), which is managed by the Maryland State Police and includes crash reports since 2015 from the Maryland State Police, Montgomery County Police, Gaithersburg Police, Rockville Police, and the Maryland-National Capital Park Police. Updated data is uploaded to the Data Montgomery website each week; the city’s Vision Zero website also includes a link to this updated data.

Vision Zero Post Crash Inspection – September 24, 2024, 380 Hungerford Drive

Page 3 of 4

Between January 1, 2015, and October 1, 2024, there have been 51 crashes on Hungerford Drive between the Beall Avenue and the signalized intersection and entrance to 430 Hungerford Drive. Of these, there was one fatal crash, 15 reported injury crashes, and 35 reported property damage crashes. Three of the 51 crashes involved a pedestrian. One of the pedestrian crashes, the crash from September 24, 2024, was a fatal crash and the other two were reported suspected minor injury and possible injury, respectively. Of these, three property damage and one fatal crash occurred along this segment in 2024.

Past improvements to area and future planned improvements

Hungerford Drive (MD 355) is owned and maintained by the Maryland Department of Transportation State Highway Administration (MDOT SHA). MDOT SHA has not made any improvements to this segment of Hungerford Drive over the past five years.

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 Hungerford Drive between Beall Avenue and the entrance to 430 Hungerford Drive. 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 inclusion of a project does not represent a commitment to implementation.

This section of Hungerford Drive is also included in Montgomery County's ongoing Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) projects for both the Veirs Mill Road BRT and the MD 355 BRT. The Veirs Mill Road BRT is currently in the 95% design plan phase. Montgomery County Department of Transportation anticipates that construction will begin in fall 2025. The MD 355 BRT project is currently at 30% design. MCDOT anticipates beginning the final design phase in early 2025. A BRT facility along this section of Hungerford Drive includes other improvements for pedestrian and bicycle access and mobility.

In 2022, DPW staff completed a feasibility study analyzing the Beall Avenue and Maryland Avenue intersection and the Beall Avenue and the Hungerford Drive intersection. MDOT SHA staff were included in the feasibility study process and the completed study was shared with MDOT SHA. The study identified the Beall Avenue complete streets improvements between Hungerford Drive and N. Washington Street which have been recently completed and will support the Bloomberg Philanthropies Asphalt Art project, which is expected to be completed by the end of 2024. This study also included recommendations to provide a "flashing left" arrow for northbound Hungerford to westbound Beall Avenue motorists, and to relocate the bus stop on southbound Hungerford Drive further south. Moreover, the concept plans for this study included high-visibility, continental style marked crosswalks along all pedestrian crossings at the Beall Avenue and Hungerford Drive intersection. Currently, there are standard transverse crosswalks along all crossings at the intersection. DPW staff has requested MDOT SHA update the existing crosswalks at the Beall Avenue and Hungerford Drive intersection with high-visibility continental style crosswalks.

MDOT SHA has an ongoing pedestrian safety program known as the Pedestrian Safety Action Plan (PSAP), which is a component of the state's larger initiative, "Context Driven," which strives to implement multimodal roadway safety improvements with consideration of land uses abutting the roadway and recognizing the trade-off between access and mobility. This segment of Hungerford Drive is

Vision Zero Post Crash Inspection – September 24, 2024, 380 Hungerford Drive

Page 4 of 4

an 85th percentile prioritized PSAP corridor. DPW staff has requested a meeting to explore future traffic safety and pedestrian improvements along this corridor. Lastly, MDOT SHA is conducting the “Pedestrian and Bicyclist Fatality Infrastructure Review,” consistent with state law. This review will be shared with DPW and be posted to the MDOT SHA website.

Conclusion and Next Steps

DPW staff completed its Vision Zero post-crash inspection for the fatal pedestrian crash that occurred on September 24, 2024. Staff shared the inspection results with MDOT SHA and has requested the state take the following actions:

1. Replace the faded “No Standing Anytime” signs at 401 and 416 Hungerford Drive.
2. Replace the stop bar at the intersection at 430 Hungerford Drive.
3. Repair the sidewalk trip hazard at 387 Hungerford Drive.
4. Replace the traditional transverse crosswalk markings with high-visibility continental style crosswalk markings at the intersection of Beall Avenue and Hungerford Drive.

The PIO has shared additional information with the community to encourage pedestrians to cross the street at marked crosswalks and motorists to use headlights and extra caution when driving at night or in inclement weather. The RCPD has added this section of Hungerford Drive to their daily patrol enforcement list.

DPW staff will follow up with MDOT SHA regarding the improvements to request a timeline for implementation. Additionally, DPW staff and RCPD 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 Hungerford Drive.