Virginia Association of Counties

ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

SUBMISSION FORM

All submission forms must include the following information. Separate submission forms must be turned in for each eligible program. **Deadline: July 1, 2024.** Please include this submission form with the electronic entry. If you do not receive an email confirming receipt of your entry within 3 days of submission, please contact Gage Harter.

PROGRAM INFORMATION

County: Arlington County

Program Title: Vision Zero Program

Program Category: Transportation

CONTACT INFORMATION

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SIGNATURE OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OR DEPUTY/ASSISTANT COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Name: Mark Schwartz

Title: County Manager

Signature: _[DocuSigned by: signature]_
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Executive Summary:

Vision Zero is an internationally recognized strategy to eliminate all traffic fatalities and severe injuries while increasing safe, healthy, and equitable mobility for all. In May 2021, the Arlington County Board adopted a five-year Vision Zero Action Plan proposing 90+ action items to improve safety in key target areas and establishing tracking measures to evaluate progress. Arlington's Vision Zero program is an exemplary initiative because of its commitment to fostering community-wide partnerships, equitable and data-driven decision making, and innovation that can be replicated in other localities:

Partnering and Collaboration: The Vision Zero program has actively involved stakeholders who help identify and advance safety Arlington's initiatives. The program ensures collaboration across the DC/ Maryland/ Virginia region ensures thoughtful and coordinated safety planning across jurisdictional lines. Regular community communications and education, as well as annual feedback check-ins, foster community awareness and a growing safety culture in Arlington.

Program Implementation and Innovation: The program applies data and equity criteria to identify and prioritize projects ensure that we maximize safety benefits and resources. We established a Multimodal Engineering Safety Toolbox of safety treatments that can be applied at varying levels of funding and across different contexts allows us to be quick to respond to safety issues, as well as seek long term improvements. In addition, piloting new safety treatments or methods allows staff to test news things, collect data, and confirm whether these approaches should be applied again or removed.

A Model for Other Jurisdictions: The program is extensively documented on our robust website, and we are available to personally guide other localities as they begin or advance their safety journey.

Financing & Staffing: The program is funded through the Capital Improvement Plan. Dedicated Vision Zero staff exist to champion a data- and equity-driven approach to safety.

Program Results: Monitoring crash data, regularly tracking progress, and publishing before/after results demonstrates the program's effectiveness and areas for constant improvement.

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Problems & Challenges - Transportation Safety:

Every year on Arlington County roads, transportation-related crashes lead to an average of about 60 severe injuries and five deaths. These figures demonstrate the urgent need to address transportation-related crashes in Arlington County. The County has taken a stance that crashes are unacceptable and is implementing strategies to reduce these critical crashes to zero.

In 2019, the Arlington County Board adopted a resolution committing to a Vision Zero transportation safety strategy, giving a greenlight to the creation of a five-year action plan. Following a robust interdepartmental and community-driven effort, the County finalized its first Vision Zero Action Plan in 2021. During the creation of the plan, the team conducted an in-depth review of severe and fatal injury crashes to identify common circumstances involved in the County's most critical crashes. The most common factors were recognized as "key safety target areas" – areas where Arlington can improve safety through engineering, education, engagement, enforcement, and policy.

Driven to address these key safety target areas, the plan identified over 90 action items and a timeline to achieve the goal of eliminating severe and fatal crashes by 2030. While developing this plan, county staff recognized the importance of (1) community, stakeholder, and regional collaboration, (2) data-driven solutions, and (3) attention to equity in every program initiative to make the county safer for everyone that lives, works, or visits Arlington.

Partnering & Collaboration:

Local Stakeholder Partnerships & Collaboration:

Stakeholder involvement is another essential component of the Vision Zero program.

- **External Stakeholders:** Arlington's Vision Zero team manages an [External Stakeholders Group](#) to seek technical guidance from community leaders and industry professionals. The External Stakeholders Group is comprised of about 25 representatives from existing committees, commissions, community, and advocacy organizations. The group meets once a year to support and communicates through monthly messaging and updates. The group assists the Vision Zero team with education and engagement programs, as well as providing feedback and local insight.

- **Internal Stakeholders:** The Vision Zero team also engages an Interdepartmental Stakeholders Group consisting of representatives of various disciplines and departments within the County. The Interdepartmental Stakeholders Group meets every other month, collaborates on ongoing Vision Zero Action Items, and supports the Vision Zero team in cross-county communications. An example of interdepartmental collaboration is regular coordination with the Arlington County Police Department to ensure strategic, safe, holistic, and data-driven enforcement and education within the community—including support for launch and expansion of the County's [red light safety camera and speed safety camera programs](#).

- **Schools:** The Vision Zero program includes close collaboration with Arlington Public Schools. The County's transportation staff hosts monthly meetings with school staff, supplemented with ad-hoc communication when needed. In addition, the team finalized [Arlington's school zone guidelines](#) in 2021/22, which include specifications for setting speed limits in school zones. The

team subsequently updated the County Code to allow for permanent 20mph speed limits on neighborhood streets within 600 feet of a school access point. Working closely with faculty members at each school in the County, the team reviewed existing school zones, retrofitted them to align with the new guidelines, and addressed other safety needs in the process. Over the past three years, the Vision Zero team facilitated the update of all 40+ school zones in the county to match the new guidelines.

- **Virginia Department of Transportation:** About 20% of roadway centerline miles in Arlington are owned and operated by VDOT. This mileage includes major interstates (I-66 / I-395) and a few major arterial roads (Arlington Boulevard/Route 50, Langston Boulevard/Route 29, and Glebe Road). Anytime Arlington works on a VDOT-owned road, the County must coordinate plans and permits before taking action. The Vision Zero team hosts safety-focused meetings with VDOT on an ad-hoc basis to coordinate and advocate for safety needs and projects.

Regional Partnerships & Collaboration:

Arlington experiences traffic activity that not only affects residents but also impacts people who commute or visit from other places. Therefore, one of the County's goals was to maintain an effective partnership with neighboring jurisdictions, authorities, agencies, and other organizations to work on addressing safety concerns. The team is actively engaged in committees and program hosted by the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOG) to help achieve Vision Zero goals. MWCOG provides application-based funding through its Regional Roadway Safety Program, which Arlington County has relied on for several recent safety projects including (1) development of Traffic Garden

Guidelines to promote safe education spaces for kids learning to bike and scoot and (2) development of a regionwide, data-driven anti-drunk driving strategy and campaign.

Also at the regional scale, the Arlington County Vision Zero team participates in monthly coordination calls with the other local Virginia-Maryland-DC Vision Zero program coordinators. These calls allow for collaborative discussion and cross-jurisdictional support in achieving Vision Zero goals.

Community Partnerships & Collaboration:

The extensive outreach and engagement early in the evolution of Arlington's Vision Zero program established a strong foundation of community awareness and support. This community-centric approach continues to be a critical component of the program:

- **Annual Safety Feedback Engagement:** Each spring, the County hosts an annual community engagement focused on gathering longitudinal data on people's experiences and perceptions related to transportation safety. In addition to online engagement, the team places mail-in engagement stands at local libraries, hosts over five pop-up engagement events to meet people where they are (particularly in equity areas or on the county's High-Injury Network), and places sidewalk stickers, flyer, and lawn signs around the county to ensure a board, unbiased reach. Over the past three years, the Annual Safety Feedback effort has received over 1,400 people.

- **Critical Crash Mitigation Campaign:** Arlington also hosts an annual, county-wide Critical Crash Mitigation communications campaign aimed at changing human behaviors that can often lead to critical crashes. Each month focuses on a different safety target

area. For example, in May of this year the campaign was about slowing down in construction work zones. The Critical Crash Mitigation communications also includes in-street education signage to create awareness of the safety tool implemented and explain why it is effectively enhancing safety.

- **Monthly Newsletter:** To keep community members involved year-round, the Vision Zero team shares a monthly newsletter with program and project highlights. These newsletters reach over 2,000 subscribers and are provided in both English and Spanish.

Program Implementation & Innovation:

Data- and Equity-Driven Project Identification:

The Vision Zero program relies on data analysis to identify projects, initiatives, and polices that will effectively reduce transportation-related crashes. Vision Zero represents a transition from a historically reactive program (response after crashes happen) to both a responsive and proactive program (using data to identify and address risks to prevent crashes).
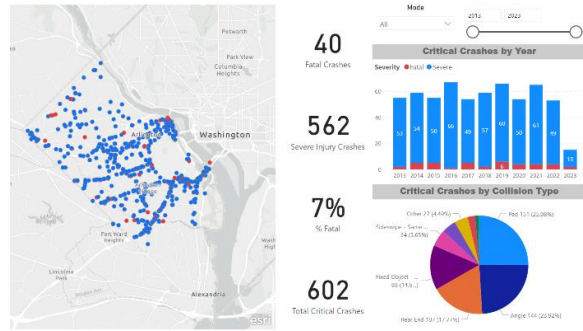
The Vision Zero team's <u>responsive</u> safety initiatives include:

- **Critical Crash Follow Up:** *Every quarter*, an interdepartmental team meets to review all critical crashes from the previous quarter and identify immediate action to address severe and fatal crash locations. The team keeps a running list of locations, needs, and actions to track each improvement and flag any repeat intersections.

- **Hot Spot Program:** *Every two years*, the team identifies crash hot spots using crash and near-miss data. The team then reviews each location in detail to identify and implement safety improvements.

- **High-Injury Network:** *Every three years*, the Vision Zero team updates the Vision Zero High-Injury Network (HIN), which identifies streets within the county that have a relatively high number of serious injuries and fatal crashes. The current HIN (adopted in 2023) uses data from 2018-2022. The network covers 52% of all fatal, severe, or injury crashes in Arlington and 6.8%

  of all roadways. Staff conduct walking safety audits of HIN corridors to identify quick fix/build improvements and ensure future planning efforts consider large scale corridor needs. The team also uses the HIN corridor designation to prioritize candidate projects for funding, as well as pop-up engagement activities and education campaigns.

- **Community Report-A-Problem:** *On a daily basis*, the team responds to transportation safety concerns reported by community members through the request for service portal. Staff review and triage community reports, which can then prompt an investigation, data collection, and implementation of recommendations. In 2023, County staff responded to about 6,000 public requests for safety issues.

Arlington's proactive safety initiatives include:

- **Systemic Assessments:** *On a semi-annual basis*, the Vision Zero team conducts systemic assessments of crashes or infrastructure to proactively improve safety. The systemic analysis

concept centers around identifying a safety issue in one location, then identifying and improving other similar locations to prevent crashes.

- **Safety Equity Analysis:** *In 2023,* the Vision Zero team published the [transportation safety equity analysis](). This data analysis carved a path forward for the Vision Zero program to:

    ARLINGTON COUNTY EQUITY LENS

    WHAT DO/DID WE DO?
    WHO BENEFITS?
    WHO IS BURDENED?
    WHO IS MISSING?
    HOW DO WE KNOW?

    - Be proactive in addressing infrastructure needs with an equity lens.

    - Prioritize safety projects in underserved neighborhoods.

    - Ensure that reporting channels are clear and accessible to all community members.

    - Track progress to reduce and rectify these disproportionalities over time.

- **Community Education:** The Vision Zero team is always working on community education, as described in the *Community Engagement & Communications* section below.

Engineering Safety Solutions:

We address the issues identified through the responsive and proactive methods listed about using Arlington's [Multimodal Safety Engineering Toolbox](). The Toolbox is a set of safety tools that can implemented through the following different scales of projects that Arlington delivers:

- **Signage, Marking, and Tactical Material Projects:** Signs warn road users of the presence of a crossing location. Pavement markings increase visibility and predictability of crossings or other roadway features. Tactical materials like flex posts or speed humps may

be used to direct, slow down, or block traffic for safety purposes.

- **Quick-Build Safety Projects:** These are small-scale construction projects to achieve a safety improvement. These projects are prioritized based on crash history, proximity to a school, location within an equity emphasis area, and complexity of construction.

- **Safety-Driven Capital Projects:** These are large-scale safety improvement construction projects. Previous Capital Projects have introduced new protected bike lanes, sidewalks, crossing enhancements, ramp upgrades, improved lighting, and enhancements to multimodal safety.
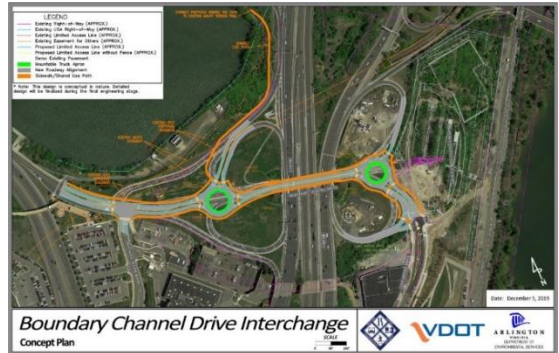
Safety Innovations:

When there are unique safety problems or issues that traditional transportation engineering tools or policies cannot solve, the team must innovate and test new, context-appropriate solutions. When we apply a new method for the first time, it is considered as a "pilot project." Each of these pilot projects involves detailed monitoring and data collection to track the impacts and effectiveness of the trial safety measures. The following are some of the ongoing safety pilot projects:

- Tactical Speed Humps Pilot: A project to reintroduce speed humps following a countywide moratorium with a focus on reducing speeds in 20mph school slow zones.

- S Glebe Rd & S Old Glebe Road Temporary Bus Platform Safety Pilot: A project that applies at temporary bus loading platform to allow for accessible boarding conditions alongside tactical safety improvements.

- Hardened Centerlines Pilot: A project that applies flex posts and miniature speed humps at intersections to encourage a wider turning radius, slow down turning vehicles, and increase visibility of pedestrians in crosswalks.

A Model for Other Localities / Jurisdictions:

Arlington's Vision Zero team has documented the program from the very beginning through the Vision Zero Action Plan. The Action Plan outlined goals and timelines for the program to complete which another locality may reference and adjust to launch their own program.

Additionally, Arlington's Vision Zero website is loaded with information about ongoing work and analysis. A specific example is Arlington's Vision Zero Multimodal Safety Engineering Toolbox. This document explains each engineering tool that the County typically uses to address safety and explains the context and considerations that staff assess when identifying and placing the tool. The document makes it easy for any person—a transportation professional or a community member—to understand how to engineer a street safely and communicate safety needs. Another example is the Maps and Safety Data page, which showcases the program's reliance on data. The analysis methodologies for these projects are available on the Vision Zero website along with a summary of the findings.

Every Vision Zero program is unique and requires an approach that will work in that respective community. The Vision Zero program in Arlington County can help guide other localities as they begin or advance their own journey.

Financing:

The Vision Zero program is funded through the Capital Improvement Plan. The robust data collection and analysis work, as well as strategic communications and outreach, are funded within the Strategic Network Analysis and Planning Program (funded at $1.2 million in the last two-year budget cycle). All small-scale safety construction projects are funded through the Safe Streets Improvements Program (funded at $3 million in the last two-year budget cycle). Any large-scale construction projects identified for safety improvements are budgeted into the Capital Improvement Plan individually. Other smaller scale activities and staff hours are covered under general operations funding.

Staffing:

The core Vision Zero Team is comprised of four team members within the Transportation Engineering & Operations Bureau. Vision Zero, however, is an all-county effort. The core team coordinates heavily with staff in across all county departments and teams to ensure that the goals and action items of Vision Zero are interwoven in all transportation plans, projects, and policies.

Program Results:

- **Before & After Studies:** Another way the Vision Zero team demonstrates a commitment to growth and improvement is through before and after studies. These studies review the efficacy of transportation safety mitigation measures by assessing data and conditions before and after implementation. Before and after studies have shown significant reductions in crashes at intersections where the team has installed safety improvements within the past two years, which lets us know that the improvements are effective. Other studies have shown little improvement, which prompt us to consideration different or additional improvement options.
- **Progress Tracking:** One of the core goals of Vision Zero is transparency and accountability. To communicate progress on each of our Vision Zero action items, the team publishes mid-year and

annual progress reports. The most recent is the 2023 Annual Report, see the graphic below for documentation of the results of the host of Vision Zero initiatives as described throughout this application. This year, the Vision Zero team also published an interactive Virtual Open House StoryMap, and we published an interactive program tracking dashboard to provide as up to date information as possible to the community.

Vision Zero Progress in 2023

Data & Evaluation
- Conducted **6** High Injury Network (HIN) **safety audits**
- Reviewed **70 critical crashes**
- Completed **before/after** analysis for **12** crash hot spots
- Completed review of **69** new and existing **hot spot** locations
- Updated the **HIN**
- Published and began implementation of the **Transportation Safety Equity Analysis**

Engagement
- Hosted **Annual Safety Feedback Activities** that had over **1,450** engagements
- Responded to **5,900+ public requests for safety issues** from the request for service tool
- Hosted **100+ safety-related classes/events** with **5,000+** attendees
- Relaunched the **critical crash mitigation campaign** with a new on-street component and **165,000+** views on digital content

Process & Organization
- Constructed **17 quick-build safety projects**
- Completed **4** new **safety-driven capital projects**
- Installed **14 slow zones / school zone retrofits** and planned **19** more
- Launched a tactical **speed hump pilot project on 3 school zone corridors**
- Developed a Vision Zero staff **training video**

Partnerships
- Collaborated with VDOT on **15** safety initiatives
- Conducted **475 child safety seat checks**
- Sold **2,300 iRide cards** for students to take public transit to/from school
- Added **53 micro-mobility corrals**
- Added options to **report scooter/ebike concerns, as well as construction-related concerns,** to Report a Problem

Resulting Infrastructure Improvements
- ✓ Installed **24 improvements** at **hot spot** locations
- ✓ Implemented **4 improvements** at **critical crash** locations
- ✓ Built **7 protected intersections**
- ✓ Installed Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFBs) at **5** crossings
- ✓ Built **6** new **traffic signals** and rebuilt/upgraded **9** signals
- ✓ Installed **1.15 lane miles** of separated bike lanes
- ✓ Built or installed **44 curb extensions**
- ✓ *Repaved* over **10,000** linear feet of new or enhanced safety design elements