

May 12, 2021

Mr. Mark Schwartz
Arlington County Manager
Via e-mail: mschwartz@arlingtonva.us

RE: Vision Zero Action Plan

Dear Mr. Schwartz,

Committee Members

Eric Goldstein, Chair
Chris Yarie, Vice Chair
Pamela Van Hine, Recording Secretary
John Armstrong
Ian Blackwell
Jim Feaster
Elizabeth Gallagher
Eric Goodman
Patrick Kenney
Tom Kornis
Andrea Walker

I am writing on behalf of the Arlington County Pedestrian Advisory Committee (PAC) to encourage you to recommend that the County Board adopt the proposed Vision Zero Action Plan. The Pedestrian Advisory Committee has long been a supporter of the County adopting Vision Zero and has closely worked with staff in the development of this plan. I have served as the PAC's representative on the External Stakeholders Working Group, and the PAC has received numerous presentations from staff throughout the process of drafting the proposed action plan.

Vision Zero is an essential program to make our roads safer for all users, including pedestrians. Vision Zero appropriately recognizes that safety is *the* key factor that needs to be prioritized across our transportation network. Reducing the speed at which drivers travel and removing opportunities for human error to cause fatal and serious injuries is a critical part of this approach. The PAC has long advocated for such measures. Safety, of course, goes beyond the number of crashes and number of fatalities but includes making our streets *feel safe* for all users, including pedestrians. The Vision Zero program will give the County a new lens to evaluate the safety of all proposed projects in the County and will elevate the importance of transportation safety for all modes in the decision-making process.

The proposed action plan has the potential to fundamentally change and improve the safety of our transportation system. Action items, such as critical crash reviews (and, perhaps more importantly, the implementation of changes as a result of those reviews) and speed management, among the other important recommendations, can take us a long way toward reaching our Vision Zero goals. Similarly, updating guidelines and standards to focus on safety and review of our MOT guidelines for construction sites has long been important to the PAC, and we look forward to seeing these aspects of the plan be implemented. We also note the importance of the proposed multimodal toolbox. Ensuring that the tools included are appropriately developed and provide enough flexibility to address the many safety needs in the County is something the PAC looks forward to working with staff to develop.

Of importance, we note that the action plan is just the first step in accomplishing our Vision Zero goals. The county needs to allocate sufficient resources – staff time, operating budget funds, and CIP investments – towards implementing the goals in the plan. While the plan does not measure the amount of resources needed to be successfully implemented, an increase from what is currently available will be critical. Additionally, the PAC remains concerned about the lack of quantifiable metrics in the plan for making sure that we remain on target. We understand staff is concerned about being overly prescriptive, however without concrete measures for success, it will take significant attention and commitment from all stakeholders to ensure that we are on track to achieve our goals.

Lastly, I would like to commend Christine Baker and her colleagues in TE&O and DOT on the tremendous amount of engagement that occurred in the development of this plan. Staff allowed us to work with them every step of the way, both through the external stakeholders working group and by routinely attending PAC meetings to update us on the development of the plan and provide opportunities for us to provide meaningful feedback. Where staff disagreed with our suggestions, they provided meaningful comments in response. These efforts can serve as a model for future planning efforts of this nature.

We look forward to the adoption of this plan and continuing to work with staff to make our streets safer for all.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Eric Goldstein".

Eric Goldstein
Chair, Pedestrian Advisory Committee