



Alexandria Families for Safe Streets

...because we're all pedestrians

October 18, 2021

Dear Mayor Wilson and Members of City Council,

Alexandria Families for Safe Streets (AFSS) is reaching out in sadness and outrage regarding the recent pedestrian deaths that have occurred in Alexandria. Just last month, Mr. Simon Merino was struck and fatally killed on Seminary Road at Fairbanks Avenue while walking in a marked but dangerous crosswalk, and Mr. Linn Emerick was struck on Cameron Street near the bike path at the curve that meets Commonwealth Avenue. Different environments, different conditions and situations, but both irreversible tragedy for families, friends, and our wider community.

If Alexandria is committed to Vision Zero, then we would like to see renewed attentiveness to achieve this goal by 2028 as the city's action plan states. 2028 is only seven years away. In particular, we ask that Complete Streets funding and staff be increased, to include three full time positions or more, commensurate with the work needed to address known safety issues within that timeframe.

As an example of action not taken to address a known safety issue, the intersection of Seminary Road and Fairbanks Avenue is an uncontrolled pedestrian crossing that was documented by AFSS volunteers in the summer of 2020, and **was prioritized by Complete Streets staff as the highest priority need for safety improvements of all the 450 uncontrolled crossings** our volunteer team identified throughout the community. This is a stretch of road that is known to be dangerous for pedestrians, has been known for several years, and yet no action - neither engineering nor signage nor even a lowered speed limit - has been taken to slow speeding drivers and increase street safety for vulnerable road users. Please take action now to improve pedestrian safety at this intersection and along this western stretch of Seminary Road. No family should have to grieve the loss of a loved one due to unsafe road conditions.

Traffic violence continues to take place across Alexandria, as well as in other jurisdictions across this region, and transportation planning and engineering are not occurring rapidly enough for families who are losing loved ones every year due to pedestrian crashes. We must fully invest in the implementation of our now decade-established Complete Streets Policy, strengthening and reinforcing that policy, if necessary. Please demonstrate the City's commitment to Vision Zero and saving lives today by providing additional staff and funding to accelerate implementation of known solutions to road safety issues.

Sincerely,
AFSS Board

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