



Safe Streets Act of 2023 – No Turn on Red and Leading Pedestrian Intervals

Update to North Bethesda TMD Advisory Committee | February 11, 2026

Safe Streets Act of 2023

School Crash Reviews, Intersection Safety, and Automated Traffic Enforcement Action Plan

- 1. Safe Routes to School Crash Reviews.**
- 2. Installing No Right Turn on Red and Leading Pedestrian Intervals in Downtown, Town Center, and near schools/ parks/ transit.**
- 3. Developing an annual report for expanding automated traffic enforcement.**



Right Turn on Red Prohibitions and Leading Pedestrian Intervals

History of Turning on Red in the U.S.

Required nationwide in response to fuel shortages in the 1970s

- Allowing right turns at red signals started in California in 1939 and expanded to more states throughout the 40s, 50s, and 60s.
- In response to fuel shortages, the Energy Policy and Conservation Act of 1975 required states receiving federal funds to permit right turns on red lights.
- Prohibitions on right turns on red required a sign at the signal.
- A [1982 study by USDOT NHTSA](#) found an increase in right-turning vehicles striking people walking and biking.
 - From 1.5% to 2.3% for all pedestrian-involved crashes.
 - From 1.4% to 2.8% for all bicyclist-involved crashes.

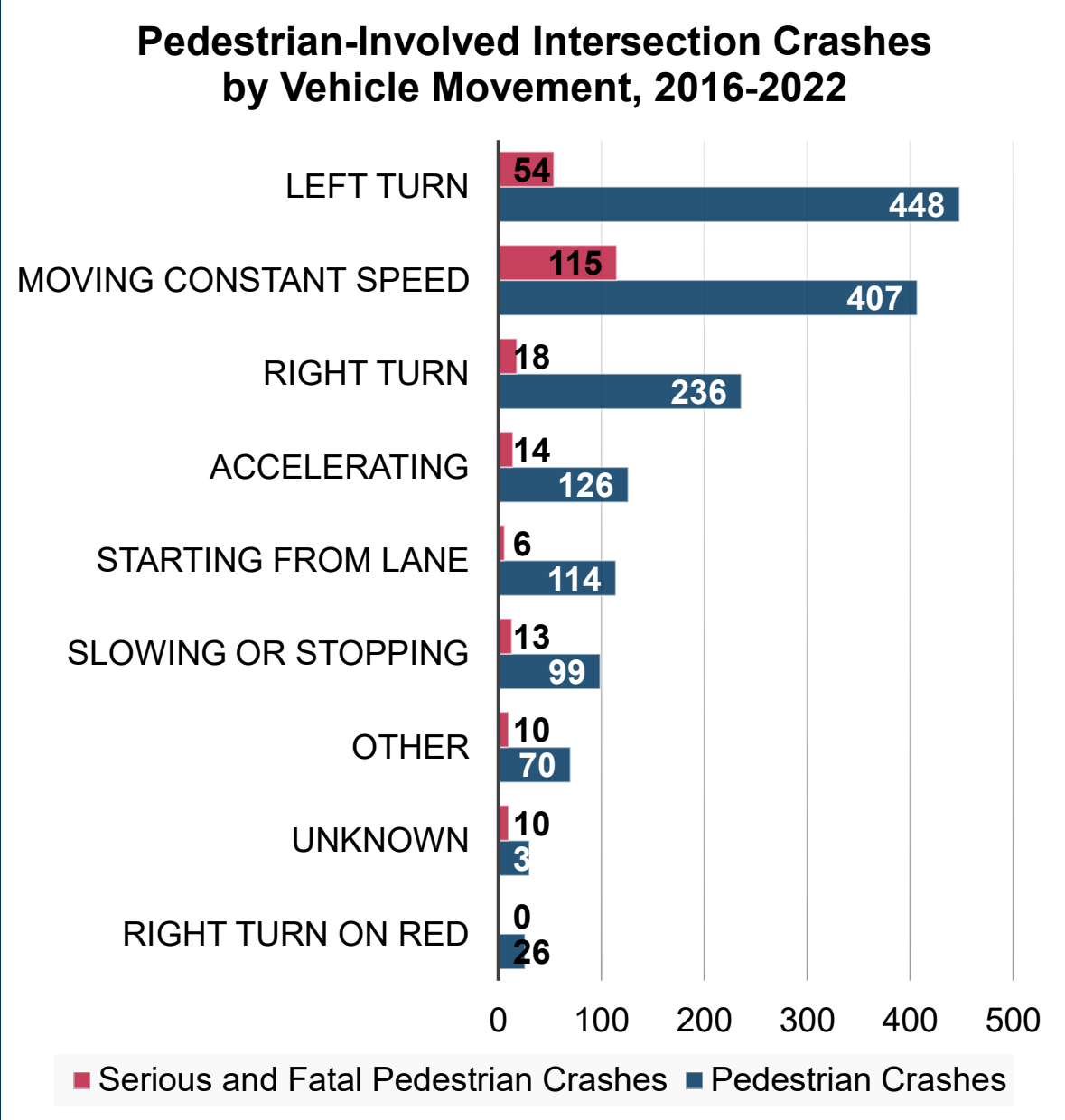


Right Turn on Red Crashes in Montgomery County

Cyclists more susceptible to right-on-red crashes compared to pedestrians.

There were 26 pedestrians and 19 cyclists struck when the driver of a motor vehicle was making a right turn on red between 2016 and 2022. That represented **0.8% of pedestrian and 2.1% of cyclist crashes**. Collisions involving left-turning vehicles and through-traffic movements are far more prevalent and show a dramatically higher occurrence of serious outcomes.

Some crashes marked as right turn, starting from lane, and accelerating may have a right-turn-on-red factor, but not tagged as such.



Leading Pedestrian Intervals (L.P.I.)

3 – 7 second head start for pedestrians.

- Allows pedestrians to establish themselves in the crosswalk prior to motor vehicle drivers entering the intersection.
- Listed as a Federal Highway Administration [*Proven Safety Countermeasure*](#) and reduces pedestrian-vehicle crashes at intersections by 13%.
- Additional safety benefit when paired with no turn on red in areas with high pedestrian volume.

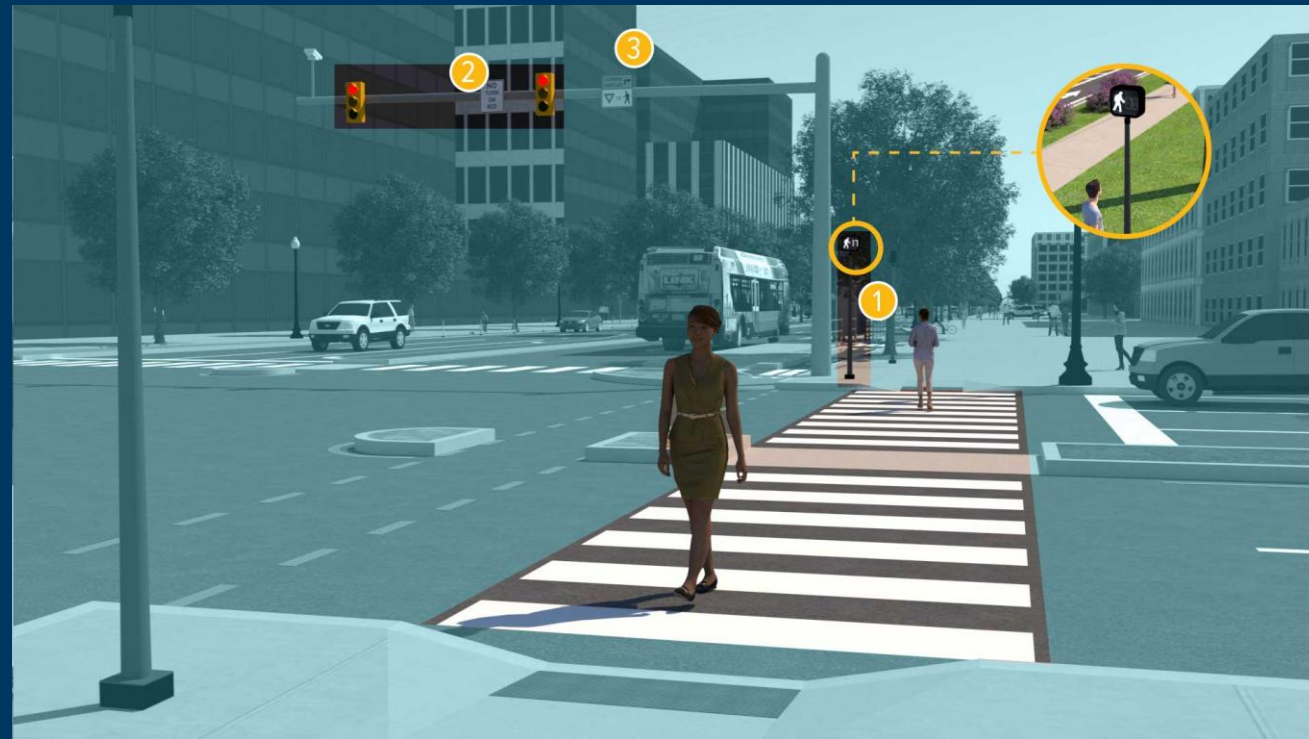


Image courtesy of MDOT [Context Driven Toolkit](#).

Installation in Specified Areas and Near Pedestrian Generators

Right turn on red prohibitions will not be installed if the installation “would significantly impair public safety.”

Right turn on red prohibitions at County owned traffic signals:

- Designated downtown areas defined in County code and master plans.
- Designated town center areas defined in County code and master plans.

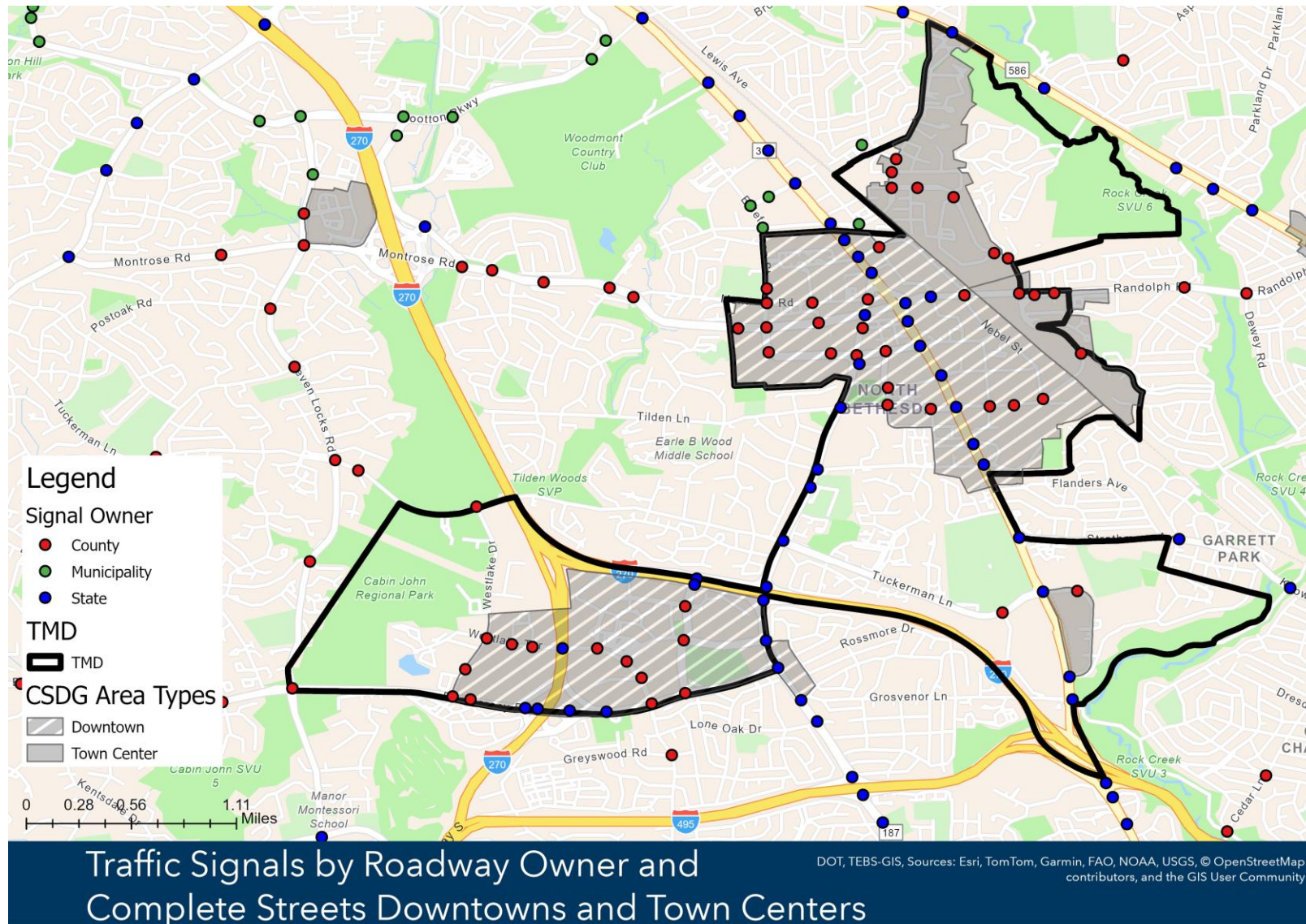
Providing Leading Pedestrian Intervals at County owned traffic signals:

- Designated downtown areas defined in County code and master plans.
- Designated town center areas defined in County code and master plans.
- Closest intersection within 1,300 feet of an access point of a school, park, rail station, library, bus rapid transit station, or community center frontage.

While County Code has explicit instructions on where to study and install, the County’s requirements do not and cannot override the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD).

- All no turn on red prohibitions must be signed.
- MUTCD provides 6 study criteria for engineering guidance. Implementors are not required to meet any of the 6 criteria prior to installation.

Example of Traffic Signals in North Bethesda T.M.D.



See all intersections covered under the Safe Streets Act [using this interactive map.](#)

Installations To-Date

Only 5 intersections pending installation out of 231 studied due to on-going or planned construction.

Right turn on red prohibitions at County owned traffic signals:

- 161 County-owned intersections met the criteria.
- 147 intersections have "No Turn on Red" signs installed.
- 12 intersections were exempt due to no vehicle turning conflicts during the pedestrian crossing phase, the intersection had no pedestrian crossing, or removed due to public safety impact.
- 2 intersections are pending installation.

Leading Pedestrian Intervals at County owned traffic signals:

- 231 County owned intersections met the criteria.
- 208 intersections have leading pedestrian intervals installed.
- 18 intersections were exempt due to no vehicle turning conflicts during the pedestrian crossing phase or the intersection had no pedestrian crossing.
- 5 intersections have pending installations due to on-going or planned signal projects.

Monitoring Phase

County Code only allows MCDOT to remove treatments if it “would significantly impair public safety.”

MCDOT has received inquiries at 25 locations; 23 intersections are still under review, one intersection has been modified, and one determined not to be fully within a Downtown or Town Center area.

Scenarios that would significantly impair public safety:

- Increase crashes and conflicts between non-motorists and motorists turning right on green.
- Intersection queues extend to next intersection resulting in conflicts at adjacent intersection.
- Queuing for right-turning vehicles increasing potential for rear-end crashes - no impact to pedestrians.



Save the Date for Safety Day 2026

Saturday, May 9

**850 Hungerford Drive, Rockville
(Carver Building Parking Lot)**

- Project of the Vision Zero Youth Ambassador program.
- Youth Ambassadors promote the event, design the activities, and recruit external vendors.
- Promotes roadway safety in a fun, festival environment.
- No admission fee.
- Free prizes and raffles during the event.





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Thank You

MontgomeryCountyMD.gov/VisionZero