

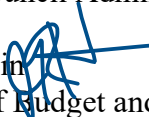



March 22, 2024

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

TO: Jennifer A. Jenkins
Council Administrator

Colette R. Gresham, Esq.
Deputy Council Administrator

THRU: Josh Hamlin 
Director of Budget and Policy Analysis

FROM: David Noto 
Legislative Budget and Policy Analyst

RE: Policy Analysis and Fiscal Impact Statement
CR-009-2024, School Pedestrian Safety Workgroup

CR-009-2024 (*Proposed and introduced by:* Council Members Fisher, Olson, and Watson)

Assigned to the Education and Workforce Development (EWD) Committee

A RESOLUTION CONCERNING SCHOOL PEDESTRIAN SAFETY WORKGROUP for the purpose of establishing a Workgroup to study improving school pedestrian safety; providing for the purpose of the Workgroup; providing for the composition of the Workgroup; proving for the staff and technical support for the Workgroup; providing for the issuance of a certain report; and generally regarding the School Pedestrian Safety Workgroup.

Fiscal Summary

Direct Impact:

Expenditures: Minimal.

Revenues: No anticipated impact.

Indirect Impact:

Likely favorable.

Legislative Summary:

CR-009-2024,¹ proposed by Council Members Fisher, Olson, and Watson, was introduced and referred to the Education and Workforce Development (EWD) Committee on February 1st, 2024. This resolution would create the Child Pedestrian Safety Workgroup to meet and propose solutions to the County Council to make County roads safe for pedestrian travel, and children walking to school, in particular.

The Workgroup shall be comprised of the following members:

1. Two (2) parents who have a child attending Prince George's County Public Schools to be appointed by the County Council,
2. Two (2) School Board Members to be appointed by the County Council,
3. One (1) current Prince George's County police officer to be appointed by the County Council,
4. One (1) municipal elected official to be appointed by the County Council,
5. One (1) municipal mayor to be appointed by the County Council,
6. One (1) designee from the Prince George's County Superintendent of Schools to be appointed by the County Council,
7. One (1) designee from the Prince George's County Department of Public Works to be appointed by the County Council, and
8. Two (2) engineers from the Office of Engineering and Project Management to be appointed by the County Executive.

Members are not compensated for their work outside of the entitled reimbursements for expenses under the Standard State Travel Regulations, as provided by the County Budget.

The Workgroup is tasked with studying methods of improving child pedestrian safety and reducing child pedestrian accidents, enforcing speed limits, reducing distracted driving, reducing distracted walking, educating pedestrians and drivers on rights and responsibilities of all road users, remarking crossing indicators, and creating marked crossing indicators, and determining how the County's municipalities can utilize unused funds for crossing guards to improve child pedestrian safety.

Current Law/Background:

Recently, an automobile struck three (3) pedestrians, resulting in the death of a five (5) year-old and a ten (10) year-old while they were walking to school.² The Children's Safety Network calculates an average of sixty-seven thousand one hundred and twenty-four (67,124) child pedestrian injuries each year between 2005-2010 nationwide.³

¹ [CR-009-2024](#).

² [Identities of Riverdale Elementary students killed in crosswalk crash released \(fox5dc.com\)](#)

³ <https://www.childrenssafetynetwork.org/infographics/walking-safe-child-pedestrian-safety>

Section 506 of the Charter for Prince George’s County provides that “[T]he Council or the County Executive may appoint, for designated periods, one or more temporary advisory boards of citizens of the County who shall assist in the consideration of County policies and programs.”⁴

In 2019, the County established a Vision Zero Program, which seeks to achieve a reduction in the number of fatal and serious injury crashes to zero by 2040⁵. The Vision Zero concept was developed in Sweden in the late 1990s and is now present internationally. Several U.S. cities have established Vision Zero programs since 2012, including Chicago, New York City, Los Angeles, Fort Lauderdale, and Boston⁶. Regionally, the District of Columbia, the City of Alexandria, Montgomery County, and the State of Maryland have all established programs.⁷ Vision Zero relies on data-driven approaches to improve the engineering of the road, conduct targeted education and enforcement, and change laws to improve driver behavior and increase penalties for dangerous conduct on the roads. Vision Zero utilizes a comprehensive, multidisciplinary, collaborative, and data-driven approach to end pedestrian, bicyclist, and motorist fatalities and serious injuries.⁸

According to a presentation given by Vision Zero to the Prince George’s County Council in 2019, between 2014 and 2018, there were over 15,000 car crashes per year in the County, with 470 people killed. About 67% of crashes in the County occurred between seven in the morning and seven in the evening.⁹

Resource Personnel:

Amanda Denison, Chief Legislative Officer

Discussion/Policy Analysis:

CR-009-2024 would establish a workgroup to propose solutions to improve child pedestrian safety in the County that could include programs, public education, and legislation. The Workgroup is also tasked with examining the causes of child pedestrian accidents, enforcing speed limits, reducing distracted driving, reducing distracted walking, educating pedestrians and drivers on rights and responsibilities of all road users, remarking crossing indicators, and creating marked crossing indicators.

An impetus for the establishment of this workgroup was the death of two children on their way to school at Riverdale Elementary School on Riverdale Road in November of 2023 when they were struck by a van while crossing the street at a crosswalk¹⁰. In the aftermath of this tragedy, the

⁴ Charter for Prince George’s County, [Section 506](#).

⁵ [Prince George's County Council - Reference No. CR-059-2019 \(legistar.com\)](#)

⁶ [Vision Zero Prince Georges \(arctis.com\)](#)

⁷ [Prince George's County Council - Reference No. BR 11142019a \(legistar.com\)](#)

⁸ [Vision Zero Prince Georges \(arctis.com\)](#)

⁹ [Prince George's County Council - Reference No. BR 11142019a \(legistar.com\)](#)

¹⁰ [Identities of Riverdale Elementary students killed in crosswalk crash released \(fox5dc.com\)](#)

Prince George's County Police Department (PGPD) pledged to hire more crossing guards, although they have acknowledged that they have had difficulty in hiring enough crossing guards to provide support for children walking to school throughout the County. According to PGPD, there are at least 108 locations countywide that need crossing guards. Furthermore, PGPD speculated that this tragedy would have occurred even if a crossing guard had been present¹¹. Therefore, it is reasonable to believe that this Workgroup would be focused on considering additional measures for traffic calming, such as speed humps, chicanes like curb and sidewalk extensions or garden boxes, decreasing the number of vehicle travel lanes for pedestrians to cross via lane narrowing, traffic circles, and median barriers.

Fiscal Impact:

Direct Impact: Adoption of CR-009-2024 is not likely to have a direct fiscal impact beyond the entitled reimbursements for expenses for workgroup members under the Standard State Travel Regulations, as provided by the County Budget.

Indirect Impact: Adoption of CR-009-2024 is not likely to have any indirect fiscal impact.

Effective Date of Proposed Legislation:

The proposed Resolution shall be effective upon its adoption.

If you require additional information or have questions about this fiscal impact statement, please call me.

¹¹ Ibid