

## **December 13, 2024 Report from Pedestrian Safety Task Force**

Attendance: Councilwoman Goldberg, Manager Hashmat, Charles Antinori (Teaneck Police), William Yarzab (NJ TPA), Mike Johnson (EZ Ride), Joseph Baladi (Bergen County), Lisa Lee (EZ Ride)

The Township of Teaneck has seen a concerning increase in pedestrian-involved incidents, including a recent fatal crash in November 2022. In this incident, a pedestrian was struck and killed while crossing an unmarked crosswalk in the rain during dusk hours.

Through the discussion, several high-risk areas for pedestrian safety were identified:

1. **Queen Anne Road:** This county-owned road runs through a residential area of Teaneck and was noted as a particular concern. The road is two lanes with a 35 mph speed limit, which can feel unsafe for pedestrians, especially at the frequent bus stops and crossings along the corridor.
2. **The Plaza area:** Another area of focus is the vicinity of The Plaza due to the proximity of nearby private high schools. The heavy pedestrian activity from students crossing the roads in this commercial district was identified as a safety issue.
3. **Lack of Sidewalks and Lighting:** The township is concerned about areas lacking adequate sidewalks and lighting, which can significantly impact pedestrian safety, especially in the evening and nighttime hours.

### **Proposed Pedestrian Safety Campaign**

To address these concerns, the township is partnering with the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority (NJTPA) and the EasyRide Transportation Management Association (TMA) to implement a comprehensive pedestrian safety campaign. The key elements of this campaign include:

#### **Kickoff Event**

The campaign will begin with a kickoff event to raise awareness and educate the community about the program. This event will explain the goals of the initiative and the various components that will be implemented.

#### **Safety Education in Schools**

A crucial aspect of the campaign will be safety education initiatives targeted at local schools, including both students and parents. This will help instill safe behaviors and awareness among the younger population, who are often pedestrians.

### **Distribution of Educational Materials**

The township, in coordination with the NJTPA and EasyRide, will distribute a variety of educational materials throughout the community. These will include lawn signs, tip cards, posters, and other resources to spread safety messages and information.

### **Pre- and Post-Campaign Observations**

To measure the effectiveness of the campaign, the partners will conduct pre- and post-campaign observations at the identified focus areas. This will involve monitoring pedestrian and driver behaviors to assess any changes in safety practices.

### **Community Engagement**

Engaging the community is a vital component of the campaign. The township plans to work closely with local block associations and community groups to distribute materials and gather feedback. Additionally, a virtual community meeting or focus group may be organized to directly hear from residents about their concerns and ideas.

### **Social Media and Communications**

The safety messages and information will also be disseminated through the township's official social media channels to reach a wider audience.

### **Community Involvement Opportunities**

Residents of Teaneck can get involved in the pedestrian safety campaign in several ways:

1. Requesting lawn signs or educational materials from the police department to display in their neighborhoods.
2. Attending any community meetings or events related to the safety campaign.
3. Sharing safety messages and information on social media to help spread awareness.
4. Providing feedback and ideas to the township on areas of concern or ways to improve pedestrian and driver safety.

### **Next Steps**

The township is committed to moving forward with this pedestrian safety initiative quickly. The next steps include:

Schedule Follow-up Meeting with Bergen County Officials

- Objective: Include Bergen County officials in the planning process for the pedestrian safety campaign, as several of the identified high-risk areas are on county-owned roads.

### Provide List of Potential Focus Intersections/Areas to EasyRide

- Objective: Share the list of high-risk intersections and areas of concern, such as Queen Anne Road and locations near schools, with EasyRide so they can conduct initial observations.

### Explore Opportunities for Community Engagement

- Objective: Investigate the feasibility of hosting a virtual community meeting or Facebook Live stream presentation to directly engage residents, gather feedback, and raise awareness about the safety campaign.

These next steps will help us transition smoothly from the initial planning discussions to actively implementing the pedestrian safety campaign in Teaneck. The township is dedicated to making swift progress in addressing the urgent safety concerns, all to create a safer and more welcoming environment for everyone on the road.