



Fairfax Families for Safe Streets  
LIVES DEPEND ON YOU



## Fairfax County's 13th pedestrian fatality in 2021

### Who

Nguyet Ly, Age 68

### What happened

Ms. Ly was hit by a vehicle making a right turn out of a business in the 5900 block of Leesburg Pike. She was taken to a hospital where she succumbed to her injuries later Monday evening.

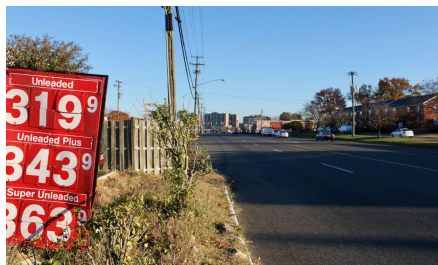
### When

Monday December 13 2021, around 11 a.m.

### Where

Ms. Ly was walking east in the westbound travel lane of Leesburg Pike at Magnolia Drive in the Mason District section of Fairfax County. **This section of Leesburg Pike is among the leading corridors in Fairfax County of pedestrian/vehicle crashes according to the Fairfax Active Transportation Plan Top 10 High Crash Rate Corridor map (3/16/21).**

This photo shows the direction Ms. Ly was likely walking (East view).



### Why

**There is no sidewalk, there are no safe, reasonable crossing opportunities either.**

VDOT installed a road sign alerting drivers to expect pedestrians in the 40mph roadway. By Virginia law, drivers are not required to stop on streets with posted speed limits above 35 mph.

VDOT placed the sign without any actual infrastructure to ensure a walking environment. During reduced traffic volumes in 2020 and 2021 as a result of the ongoing pandemic, streets are more open for drivers to speed and drivers are generally out of practice given the appropriate travel restrictions issued during pandemic lockdowns and increased prevalence of more sustainable work and commute options like telework.



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### How this could have been prevented

1. Installation and maintenance of a continuous sidewalk or multi-use path along Leesburg Pike to ensure that pedestrians and bicyclists can safely access retail establishments, bus stops, and the places they need to go in the Baileys Crossroads/Seven Corners area. **With slightly narrowed travel lanes and existing County right of way, there is space to accommodate a shared use path if bumped out from the existing curb.**
2. Installation and maintenance of high visibility crosswalks and ADA ramps across all side streets and driveway entrances on Leesburg Pike. Crosswalks indicate to drivers and other street users that pedestrians and cyclists are more likely to be present and helps to normalize walking and biking as a means of transportation.
3. Increased opportunities for crossing with safe accommodations like a HAWK signal, especially where sidewalks end mid-block. There is over 1,600 ft between marked and signalized crosswalks on this section of Leesburg Pike. That is equivalent to over 4 typical city blocks in the scale of Old Town Alexandria.
  - a. By Virginia law, a crosswalk exists, no matter if it is marked or unmarked, at the extension of sidewalk or curb lines from all approaches of an intersecting street.
  - b. A HAWK signal (pedestrian hybrid beacon) is the recommended treatment by FHWA for intersections that do not meet full-signal criteria, but where there is crossing demand, more than 3 total travel lanes, and high volumes of traffic. Other treatments may be applicable if other pedestrian safety features are installed (ex: Median refuge island with marked, high visibility crosswalks, and double sided installation on each curb approach and in the median island of a Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon.
  - c. These are especially critical to connect residents to bus stops that are located in mid-block locations as is the case near this intersection.
4. Narrowing of travel lanes on Leesburg Pike. Right now, the curbside lane in which Ms. Ly was walking measures approximately 16'. This is well over modern standards for acceptable, typical lane widths on non-interstate streets. Typical lane widths can vary from 10 ft to 13ft at most on an arterial. Larger lane widths encourage speeding.
5. Disallow parking of vehicles within 20' of a driveway or side street intersection, including on commercial properties. When sight lines are blocked for drivers, everyone suffers, including drivers, and crashes are more likely to happen and be more severe for those involved.



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6. Design streets to accommodate for all hours of the day. Reliance on peak commute hours to design streets with multimodal activity is an antiquated, unsustainable method of designing streets and should be reevaluated with the utmost urgency.
  - a. Designing streets to the worst 15 minutes of traffic is akin to buying a house to accommodate your entire extended family for the one time each year you host them for the holidays.
  - b. The additional street space in the non-peak hours leads to speeding and other related safety issues.
  - c. The impervious surfaces of wide, underutilized streets further exacerbates issues of water quality from stormwater runoff, air quality, and climate change with the urban heat island effect.