



Press Release

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**The Coalition for Smarter Growth and Immigrant Group CASA Launch Joint Campaign for Safer Streets for Bailey's Crossroads**

Fairfax County, VA – Amid an increase in pedestrian and bicyclist deaths and injuries in Fairfax County and across the region, with particular risks being faced in some of the county's immigrant communities, the Coalition for Smarter Growth (CSG) and immigrant advocacy organization CASA are launching the Safe Streets for Bailey's Crossroads campaign to engage and organize the local community in advocating and winning safer streets and improved access to walking, biking and accessing transit and services.

This campaign has been made possible by a generous grant to CSG and CASA by the Mobility Fund, a consortium of national foundations. The grant was one of just a few awarded nationwide following a very competitive process. See Mobility Fund's [announcement here](#).

The Bailey's Crossroads community is home to a large immigrant population where many residents rely on walking, biking and using the bus to get to work and their daily activities. Yet, the main arterial roads are unsafe because of the lack of sidewalks, few safe crossing options, bus stops without crosswalks, and heavy high-speed traffic. Just ten weeks ago, a [pedestrian was struck and killed](#) by a driver in a location lacking a safe sidewalk.

"The Rt. 7 corridor in the Bailey's Crossroads community is a notoriously dangerous place for people walking, biking, and taking the bus," says Sonya Breehey, Northern Virginia Advocacy Manager for the Coalition for Smarter Growth, "We are excited to team up with CASA a trusted

community partner and leading immigrant advocacy organization to help local residents win the safety improvements that are long overdue.”

The [Fairfax County Department of Transportation](#) (FCDOT) and the [Virginia Department of Transportation](#) (VDOT) have identified the Route 7 corridor as a high risk corridor for vulnerable road users based on years of data showing the high numbers of fatalities and serious injuries. Yet, no significant investments in safety improvements have been made to stem the traffic fatalities and injuries that plague residents trying to navigate their community on foot or by bike.

“At CASA, we see our role as empowering community members to win positive change in their communities,” says Eduardo Zelaya, CASA’s Regional lead organizer for Virginia. “We’ve worked with the Culmore community and the region on immigration and health issues and we see street safety as a critical health and safety concern for our residents.”

**Resident quote:**

“My name is Jose Castillo and I am from El Salvador. I immigrated to the US about eight years ago. Fairfax County has been my home ever since, specifically in the Culmore area. About six years ago, I became an active member of CASA.

Today, I am here as a resident of Culmore or Bailey's Crossroads, expressing my concern in the area where I buy my food, go to the laundry, and even work. Every day, you can see the risks within the area.

There has been an increase in accidents due to the speed of drivers and the lack of signaling vehicles. Unfortunately, there have already been human losses due to such a problem. As part of the community, I raise my voice with the sole objective of safeguarding the physical safety of people who travel on this road by eliminating and reducing risk factors. I am writing to you to request support for our community and prevent fatal accidents or other unfortunate situations.”

Jose Castillo is one of the local residents serving on the stakeholder advisory committee for the campaign. Also joining the committee and helping the campaign are the [Fairfax Alliance for Better Bicycling](#), [Fairfax Families for Safe Streets](#), and other community activists. The groups will seek to work with county elected officials and staff, as well as VDOT to expedite urgently needed near-term safety fixes, as well as more permanent redesign of Route 7 for improved safety, taking advantage of plans for bus rapid transit in the corridor.

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The [Coalition for Smarter Growth](#) is the leading organization in the Washington, DC region dedicated to making the case for smart growth. Our mission is to advocate for walkable, bikeable, inclusive, transit-oriented communities as the most sustainable and equitable way for the region to grow and provide opportunities for all.

With over 122,000 lifetime Latino, immigrant, and working-class members across 46 US states, [CASA](#) is the foremost immigrant organization in the mid-Atlantic region and a national leader in supporting immigrant families and ensuring that all individuals have the core support necessary for full participation in society. Now a national immigrant powerhouse, CASA creates change with its powerbuilding model blending human services, community organizing, and advocacy in order to serve the full spectrum of the needs, dreams, and aspirations of members. Visit us at [www.wearecasa.org](http://www.wearecasa.org) and follow us on Twitter at [@CASAforall](https://twitter.com/CASAforall).