

## **ACTION 2- Improve Roadway Safety Features**

Using the crash analysis as a physical guidance, the Action Committee has created a list of priority safety features for road improvements. Local data reveals Roadway Departures as a significant cause of fatal accidents and crashes with serious injuries.

Many factors contribute to drivers leaving the roadway or straying from their lane. These include driver fatigue and drowsiness; distracted driving; poor traction between vehicles and road surfaces and poor visibility in adverse weather conditions. Driver fatigue can occur when long, monotonous stretches of highway reduce the driver's concentration. These factors are sometimes compounded by driving too fast. Improving road surface visibility is an Action Item the County can address in the short term with long range life saving benefits.

### **Sharp Turn Signage**

There are several signing options that road agencies should consider installing at a horizontal curve, especially curves with attributes that data or experience identify as potentially problematic. Agencies should apply signing devices uniformly, based on the sharpness of the curve. This uniformity provides drivers with a consistent message on which to base their expectations. The MUTCD provides specific recommendations and requirements for uniform application of many of these basic devices. The MUTCD requires that the use of warning signs shall be based on an engineering study or engineering judgment (additional info on Page 19-20).

### **Rumble Strips**

Rumble strips are an effective countermeasure for reducing roadway departure crashes. The noise and vibration produced by rumble strips alert drivers when they leave the traveled way. Rumble stripes is the term used for rumble strips painted with a “retroreflective” coating to increase the visibility of the pavement edge at night and during inclement weather conditions (additional info on Page 21).

### **Reflectors/Pavement Markings**

Adequately maintained retroreflective pavement markings improve nighttime highway visibility and reduce the risk of crashes by bouncing light from vehicle headlights off of the traffic control device and back toward the vehicle and the driver's eyes. This makes markings appear brighter and easier to see and read at night. Because the retroreflective properties of pavement markings deteriorate relatively quickly, highway agencies need to actively manage their maintenance, remarking as needed in order to ensure that they remain clearly visible at night (additional info on Page 23-24).

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### **Speed limits/Signage**

Two-thirds (65 percent) of these fatal crashes occur in rural areas according to the Department of Transportation. A data review of George County's fatal crashes shows speeding is a significant factor. The management of speed through appropriate speed limits is an essential element of highway safety. Appropriate speed limits are a prerequisite for effective and sustainable speed management. In terms of traffic law, speed limits should reflect the maximum reasonable and safe speed for normal conditions. If lower speed limits are desired, then engineering and other measures should be implemented that reduce speeds to a level that would support a lower limit (additional info on Page 22).