

Near Miss Analysis

Arlington County

January 2024 through July 2025

Sam Thomas



Introduction and Purpose

This report is an analysis of the data collected through the Near Miss and Dangerous Locations Survey developed by Northern Virginia Families for Safe Streets (NoVA FSS). This report focuses on analyzing survey data in Arlington County between January 2024 and July 2025. NoVA FSS has prepared and published this report for the informational benefit of local jurisdictional traffic and police authorities, policymakers, and the general public.

The purpose of this report is to identify and analyze locations on Arlington County's roads where people report feeling unsafe while walking or bicycling, in order to promote safety improvements in those areas. Both structured (e.g., report attributes and locations) and unstructured (e.g., report descriptions and comments) survey data were considered in this analysis.

NoVA FSS welcomes suggestions on how the Near Miss survey can be improved. We hope to continue raising awareness of this survey throughout Arlington and the greater Northern Virginia area so we can continue to highlight problem areas and recommend ways to improve public safety. We welcome ideas and volunteers to help us achieve this goal.

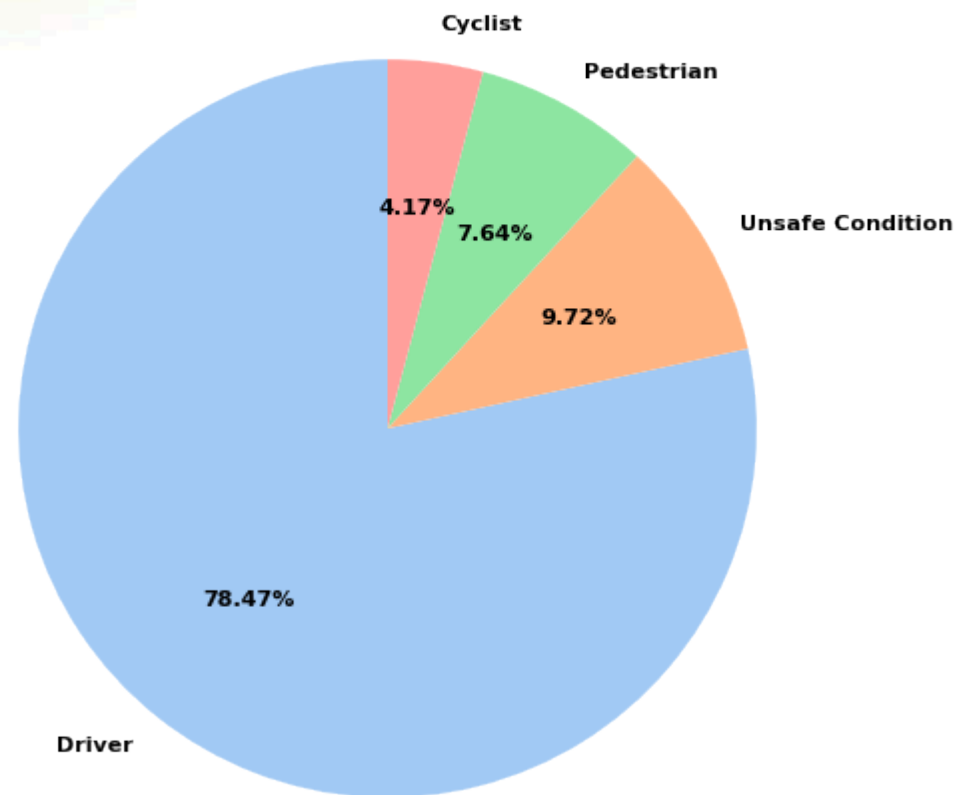
Executive Summary

- Near Miss (NM) survey reports in Arlington County were analyzed between January 2024 and July 2025 to identify data trends and locations where people report feeling unsafe while walking or cycling.
- Dangerous driver behaviors– such as failure to yield, distracted driving, and speeding– were major contributors to near miss incidents.
- Many reports involved children, and those that did often cite a failure to yield as a major contributing factor.
- Near Miss reports tend to highlight recurring incidents occurring during prime commuting hours in the mornings and evenings.
- The Near Miss reports citing infrastructure factors as contributing to the report, often mentioned poor visibility and inadequate traffic control and safety measures.
- The majority of the NM reports occurred along 25 or 30 MPH roadways, often in residential areas.
- Several neighborhoods in Arlington County having a high number of reports were included as case studies, along with detailed maps and anecdotal incident descriptions. These case studies often highlight unsafe driver behaviors which suggests a need to increase traffic enforcement
 - Also, a need to improve pedestrian & cyclist infrastructure

Who Is Involved in Near Miss Reports?

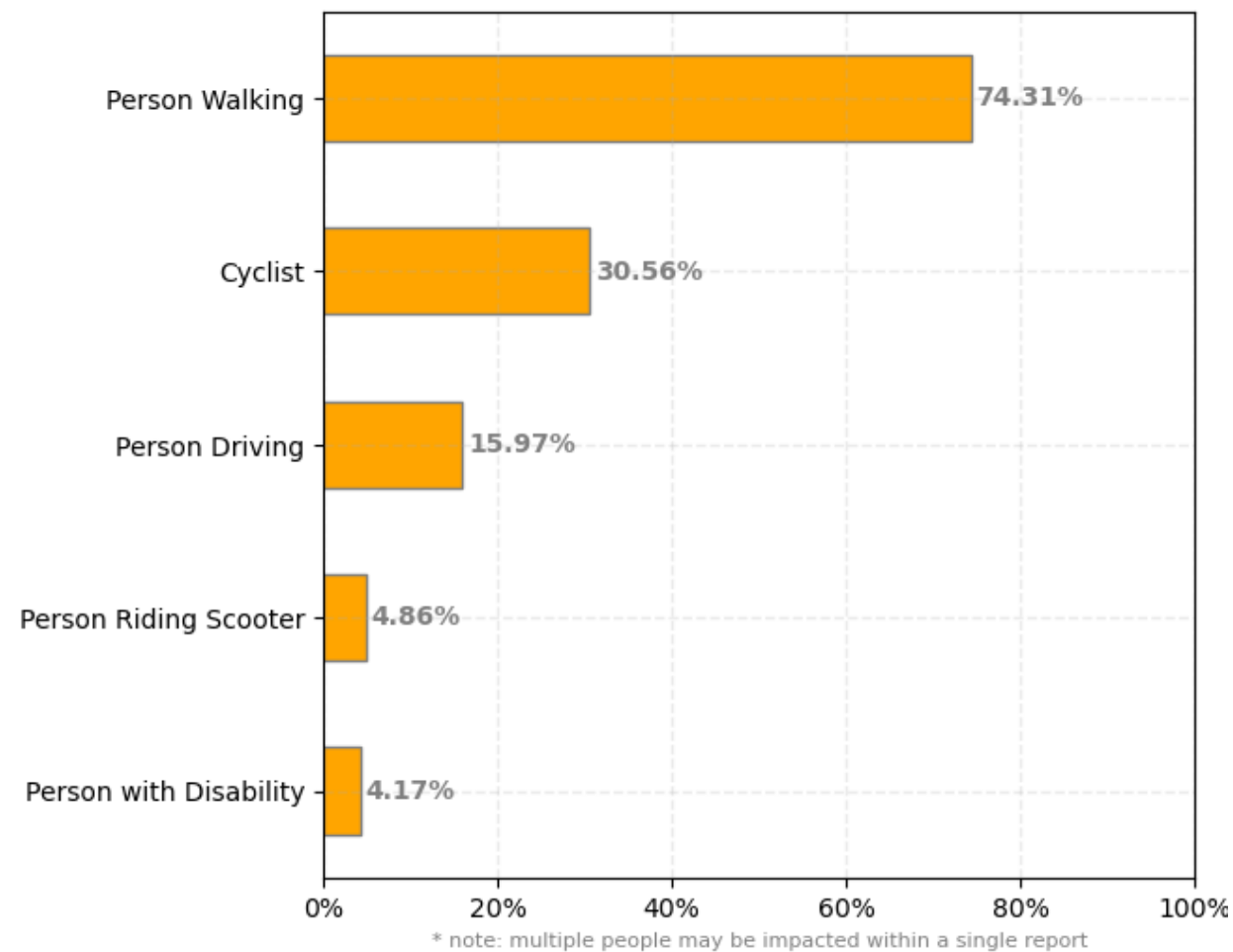
What is Being Reported?

Arlington County
January 2024 - July 2025



Person Impacted

Arlington County
January 2024 - July 2025

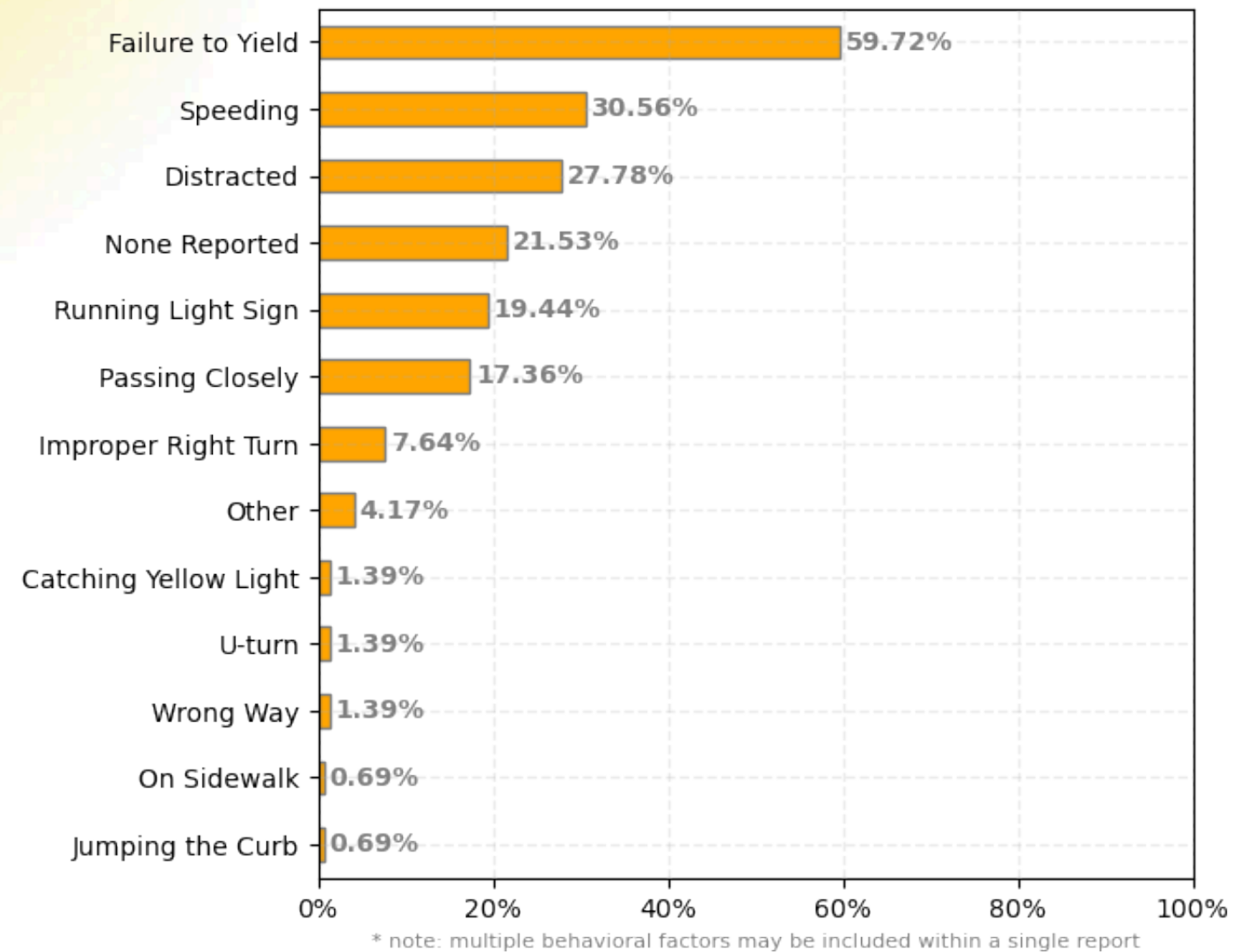


- Most Near Miss reports in Arlington County center on drivers or unsafe roadway conditions.
- Pedestrians and cyclists are the largest groups of people affected in the reports.
- A minority of reports center on pedestrian and cyclist behaviors.

Behavioral Factors

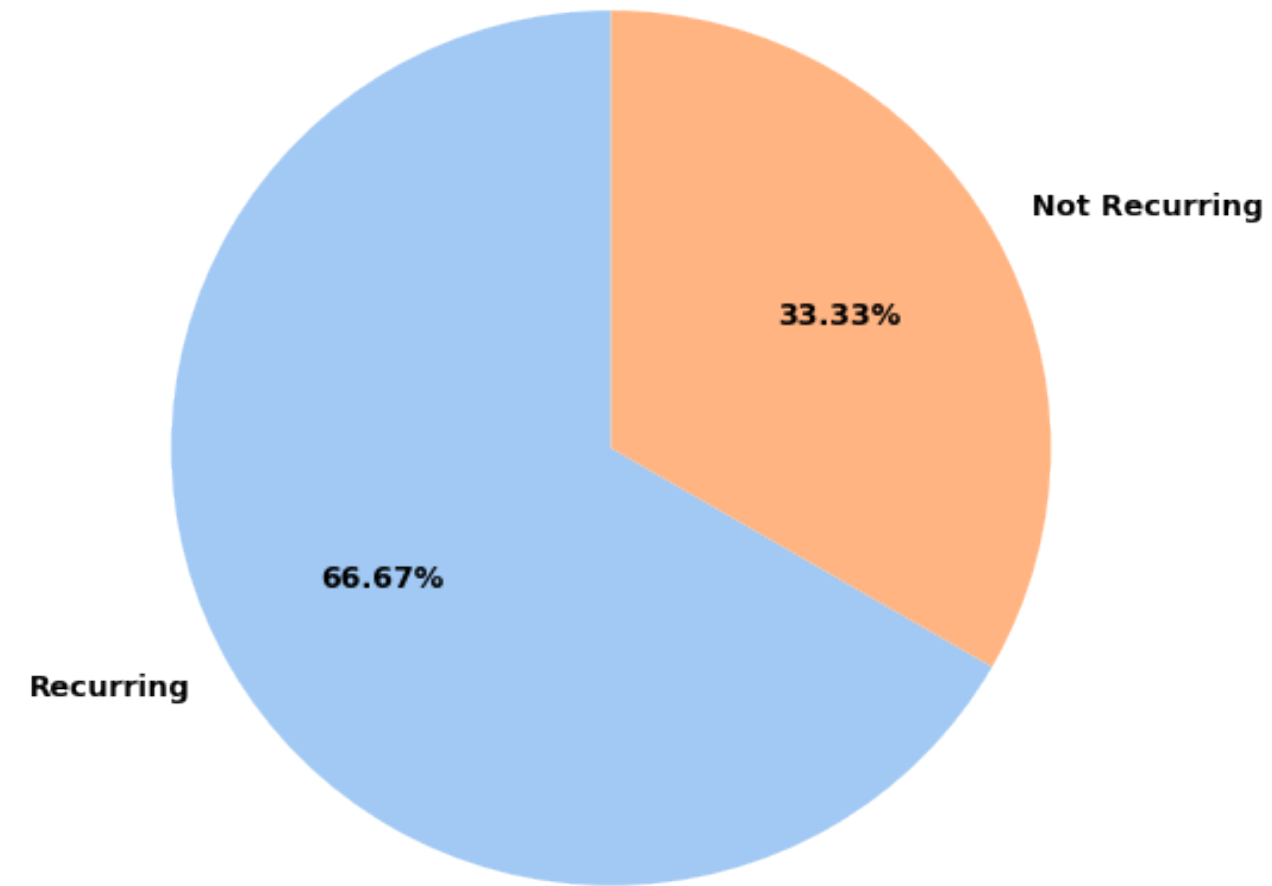
Driver Behavioral Factors

Arlington County
January 2024 - July 2025



Recurrence of Incidents

Arlington County
January 2024 - July 2025

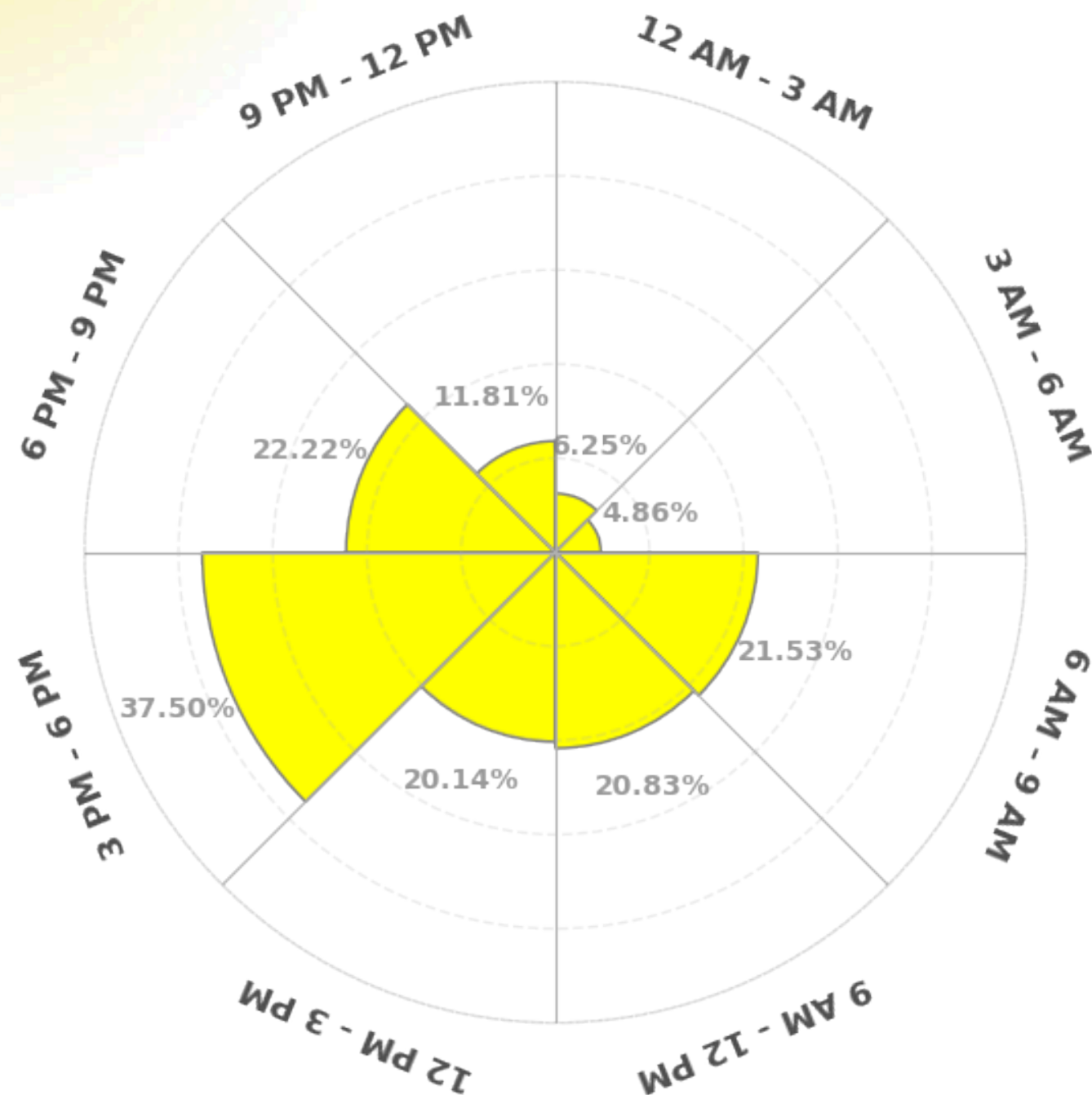


- Unsafe driver behaviors such as failure to yield, speeding, and distracted driving are highly prevalent.
- A majority of reported incidents are recurring.
- While only a minority of reports center on pedestrian behavior, some reports highlight unsafe pedestrian actions such as crossing outside of designated crosswalks and/or crossing against the pedestrian signal.

Time of Day

Time Periods

Arlington County
January 2024 - July 2025

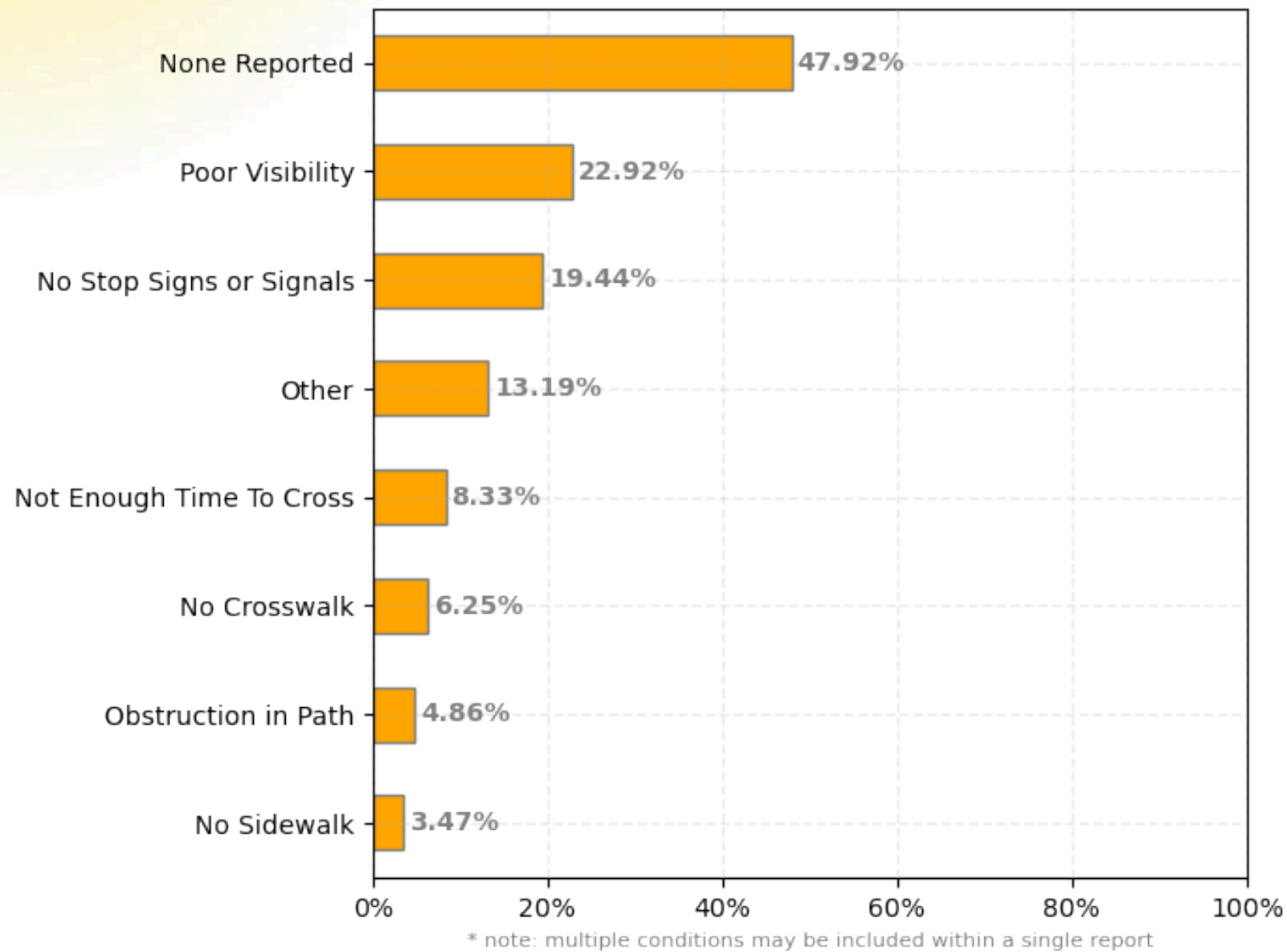


- The most prevalent time period for Near Miss reports in Arlington is 3 PM to 6 PM, with an approximately equal distribution of reports for all other times during the morning through evening.
- Many Near Miss reports occur during prime commuting hours in the evening, when roadways tend to be busiest.

Unsafe Conditions

Unsafe Conditions

Arlington County
January 2024 - July 2025

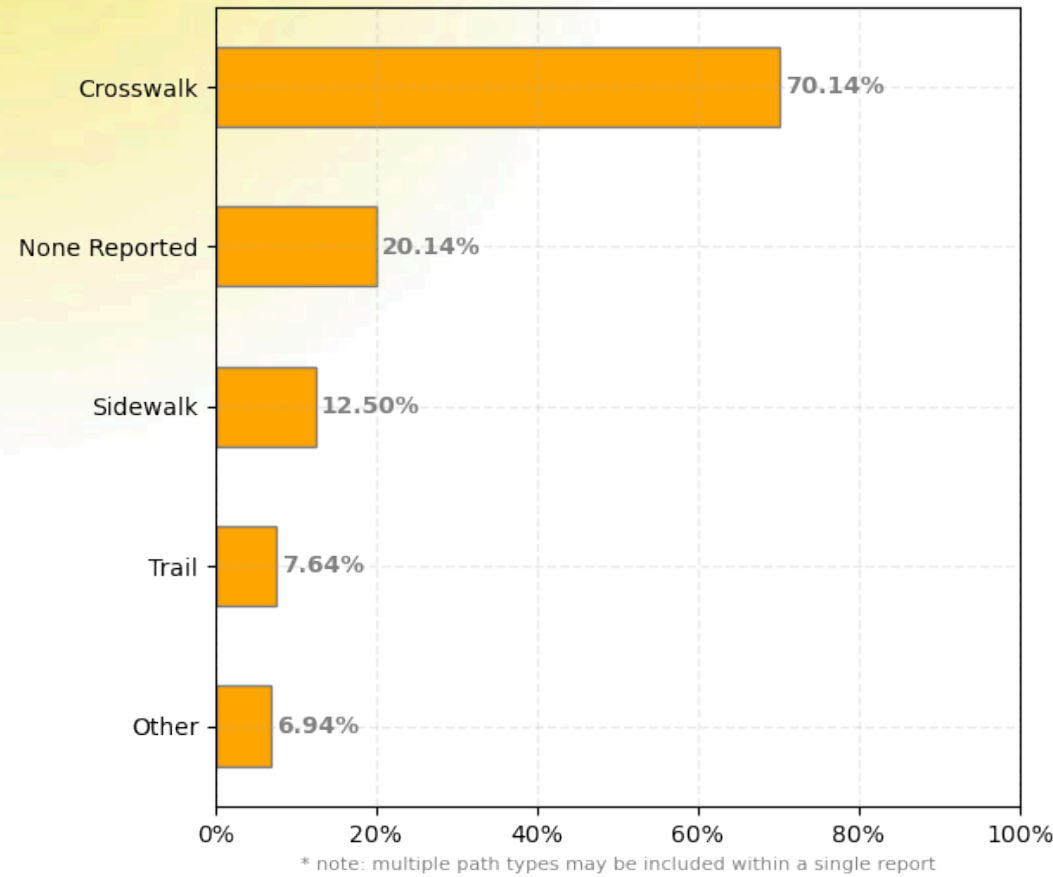


- Many reports do not highlight any unsafe roadway conditions, suggesting that behavioral factors (speeding, failure to yield, and distracted driving) are bigger contributors to near misses.
- Regarding infrastructure issues, poor visibility and a lack of stop signs or signals are often reported as unsafe roadway conditions contributing to near misses.

Where Do Near Misses Occur?

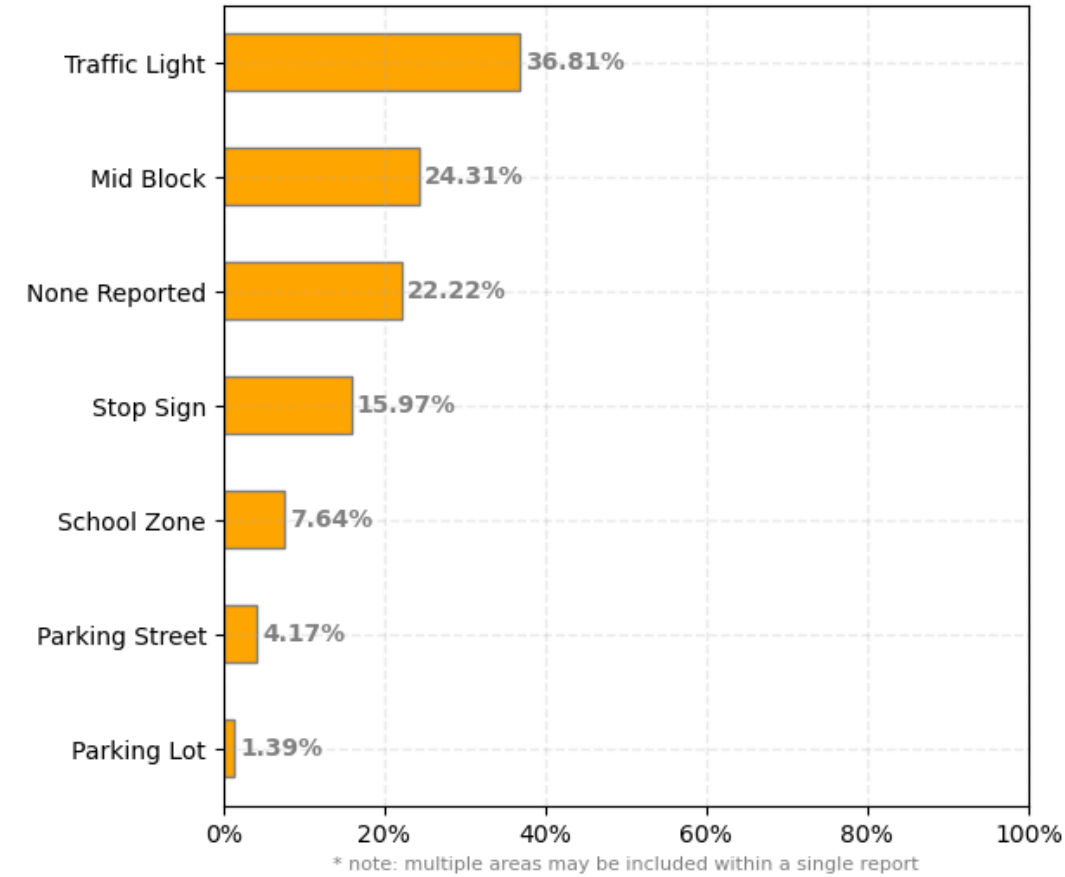
Path Type

Arlington County
January 2024 - July 2025



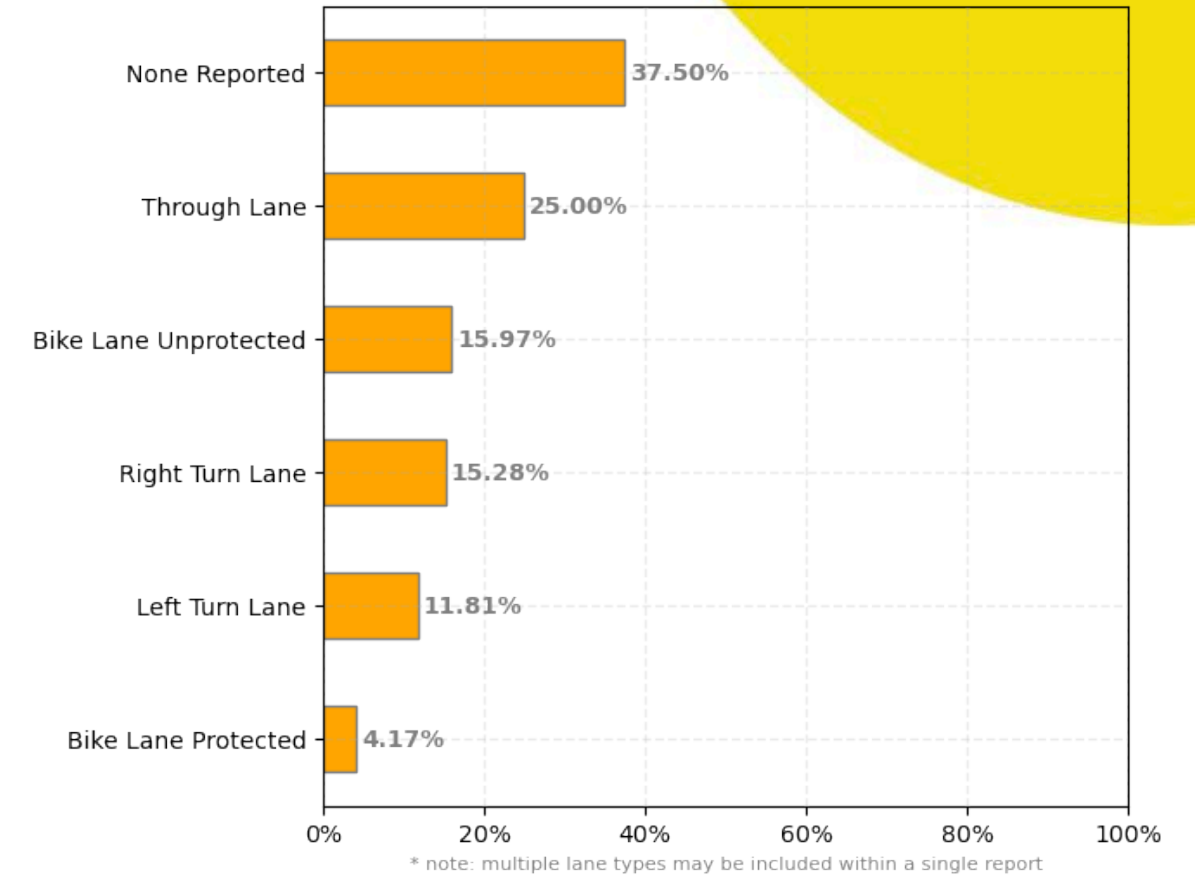
Roadway Area Type

Arlington County
January 2024 - July 2025



Travel Lane Type

Arlington County
January 2024 - July 2025

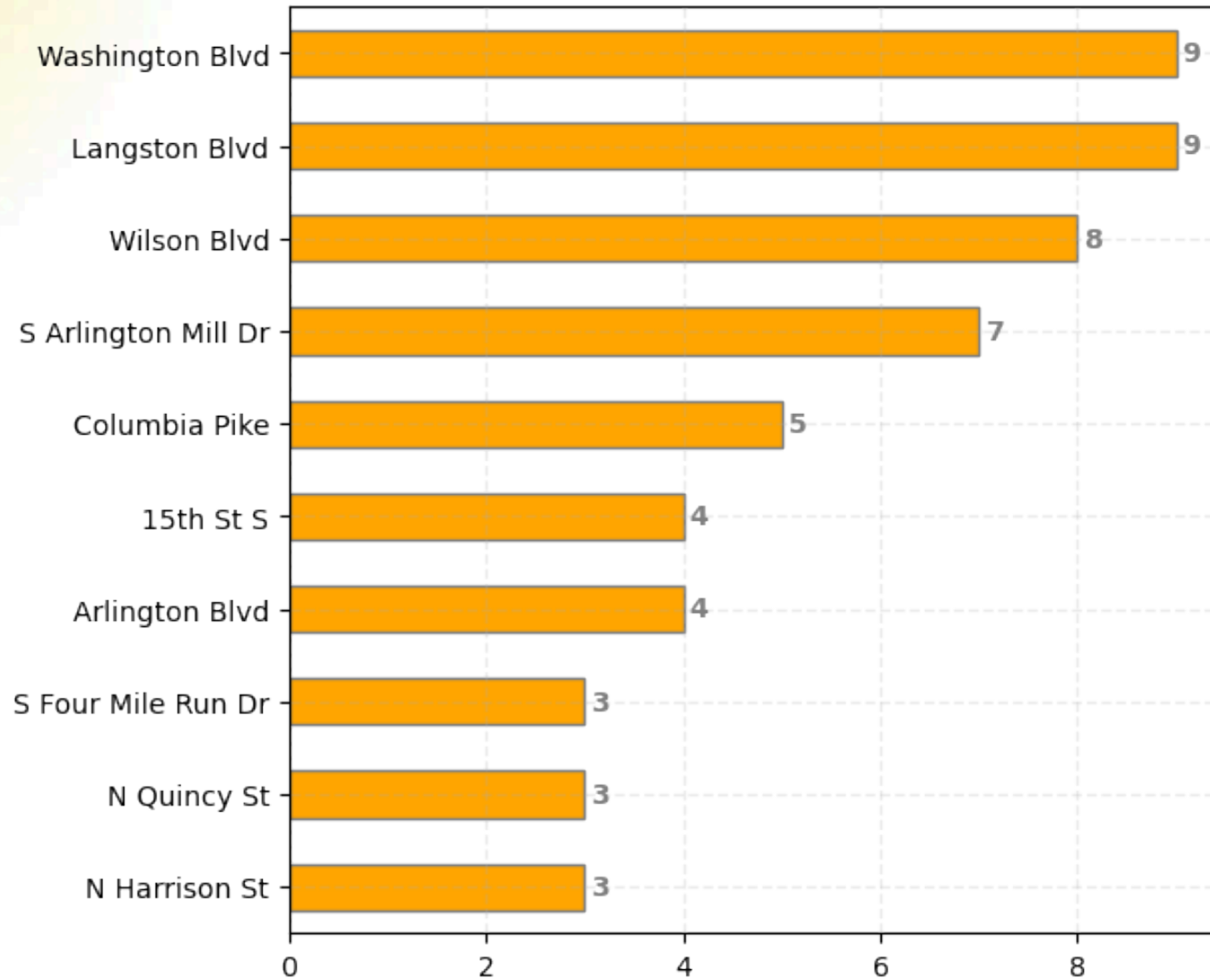


- The majority of near misses occur within a crosswalk, with reports along sidewalks and trails also frequent.
- Many reports occur at traffic lights, with some mid-block incidents also mentioned.
- Most reports do not identify a travel lane type, but through lanes and unprotected bike lanes are most prevalent.
- More near miss reports involve right-turn lanes versus left-turn lanes.

Top Roadways

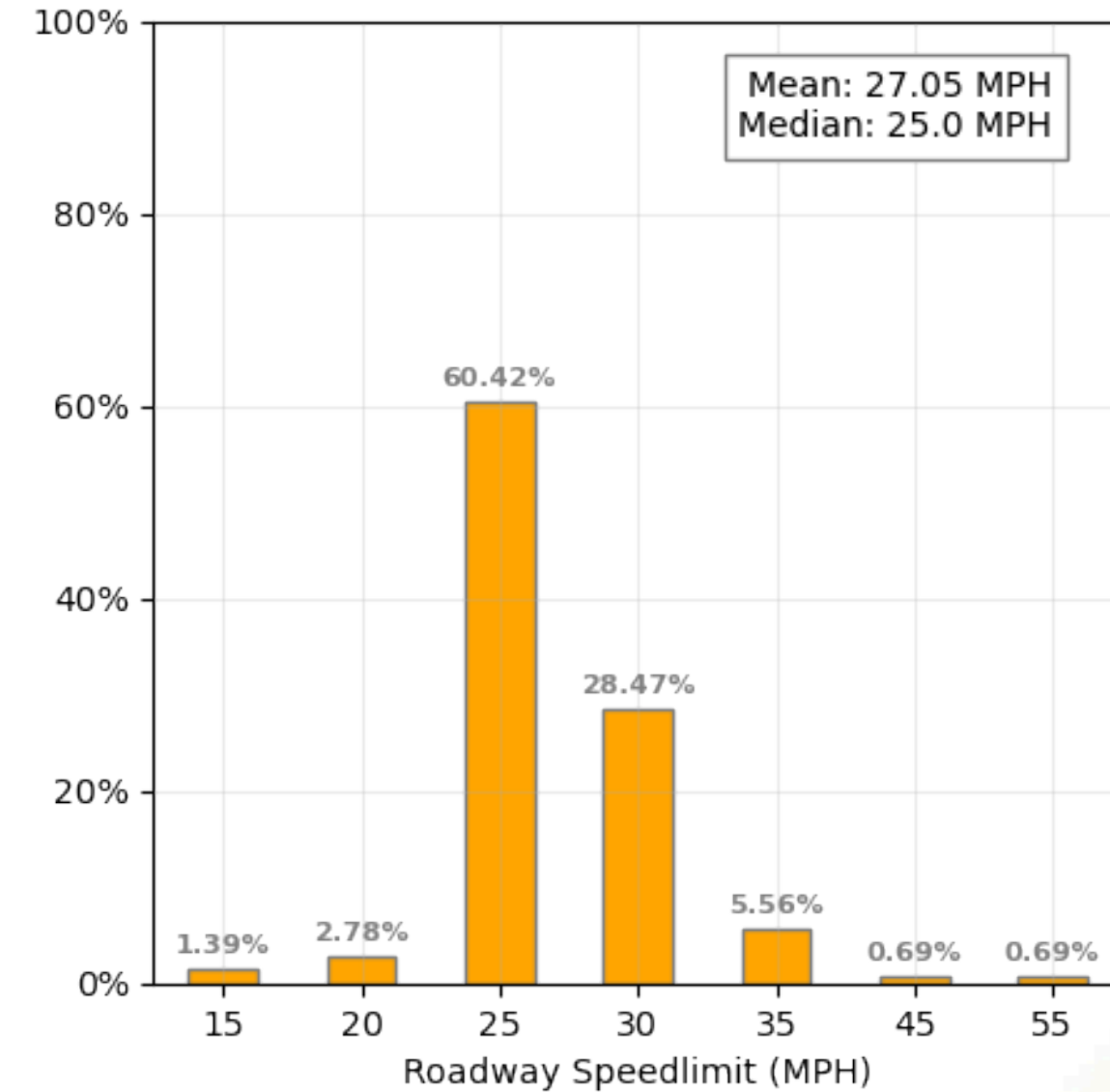
Top Roadways for Near Miss Reports

Arlington County
January 2024 - July 2025



Roadway Speed Limits of Near Miss Reports

Arlington County
January 2024 - July 2025

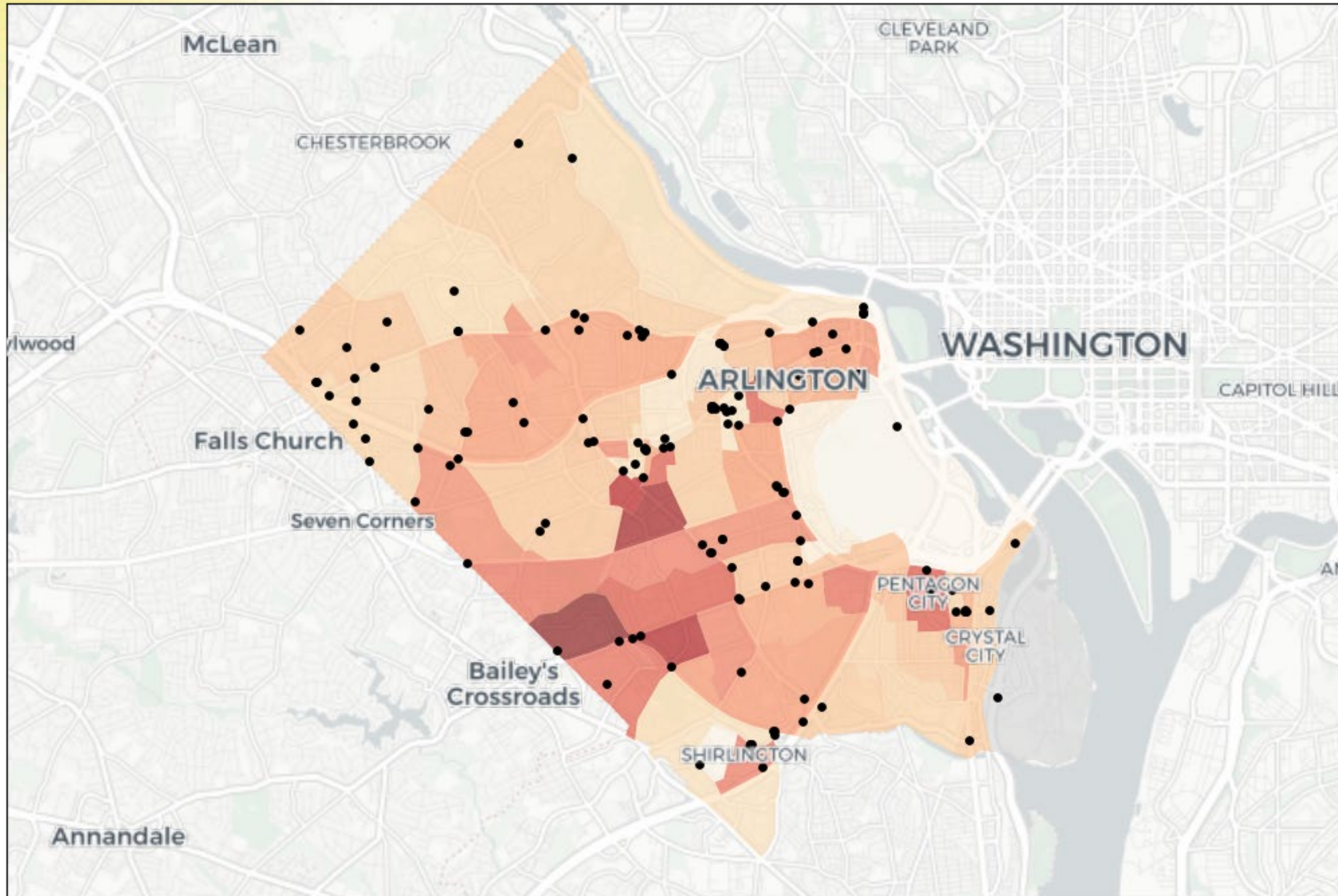


- Washington Blvd., Langston Blvd., and Wilson Blvd. are the top roadways for Near Miss reports in Arlington.
- A majority of near miss incidents occur on roadways with a speed limit of 25 MPH, but many drivers apparently elect to often speed on such roads.

Socioeconomic Vulnerability

Arlington County

Socioeconomic Vulnerability Index (SVI) vs. Near Miss Reports***

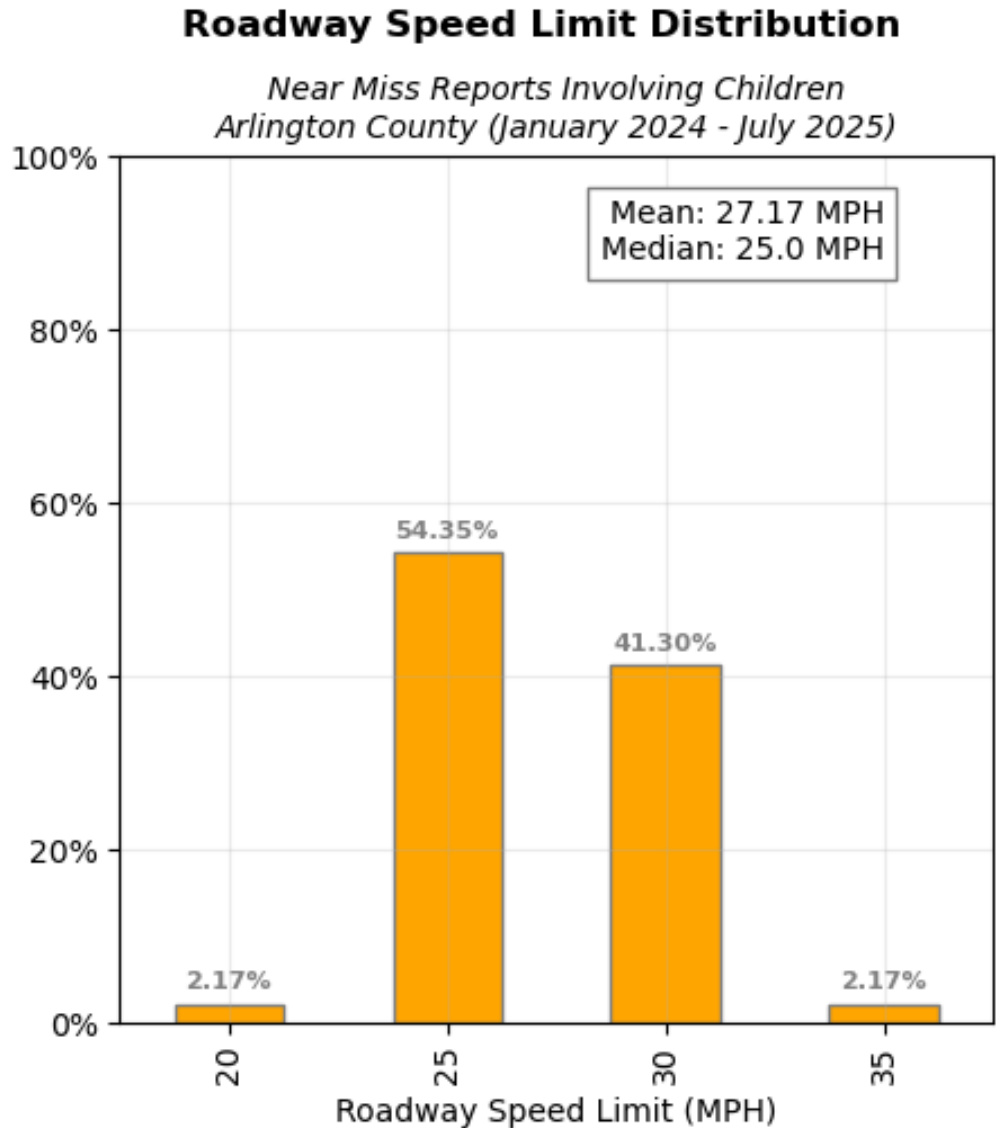
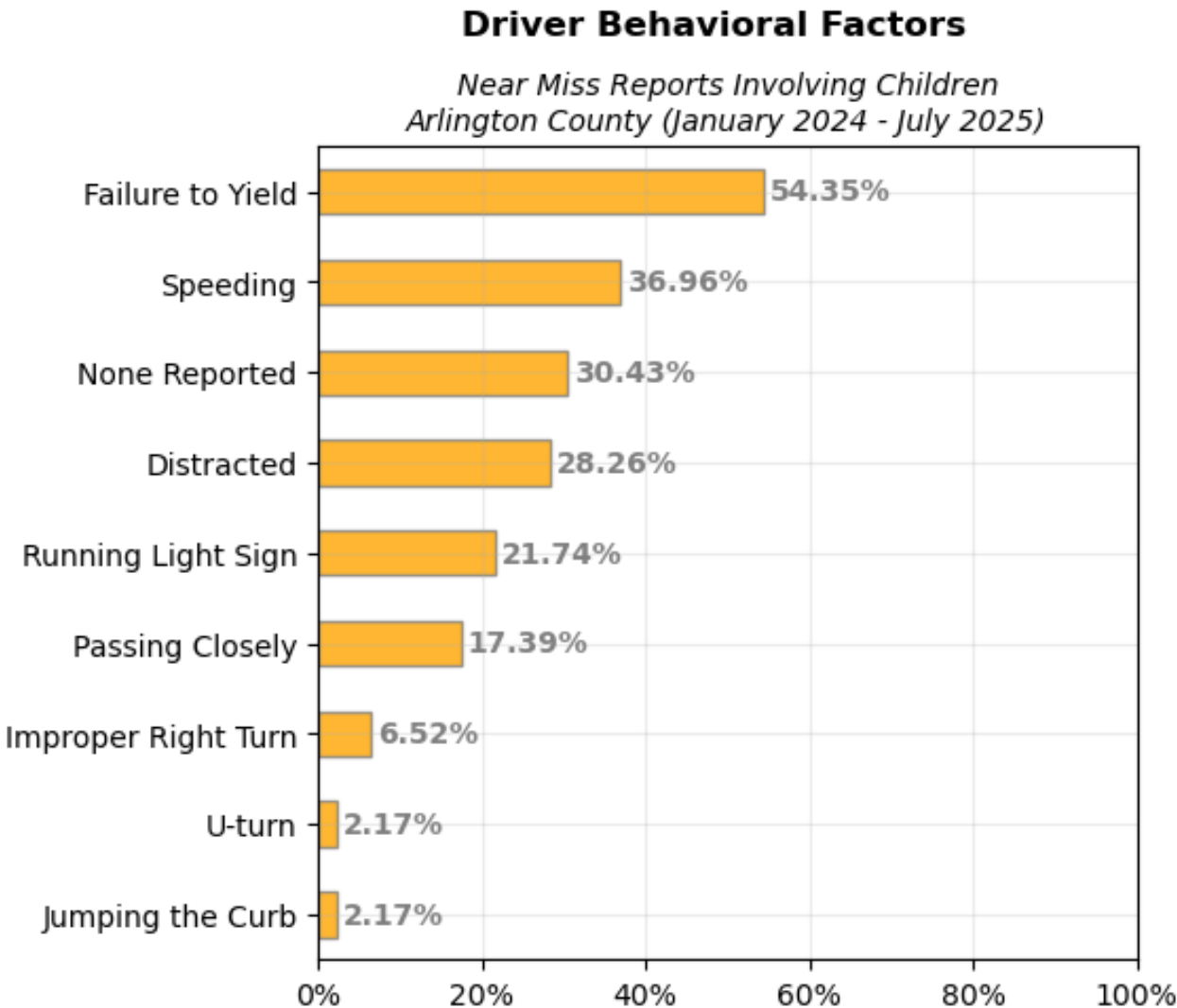


This map overlays Near Miss Reports in Arlington County on top of the CDC's Socioeconomic Vulnerability Index (SVI). Dark and light red correspond to higher and lower SVI levels, respectively.

Areas with the with the highest socioeconomic vulnerability tend to have the lowest number of reports, suggesting NoVA FSS needs to improve awareness of the Near Miss survey in these areas as an advocacy tool for change.

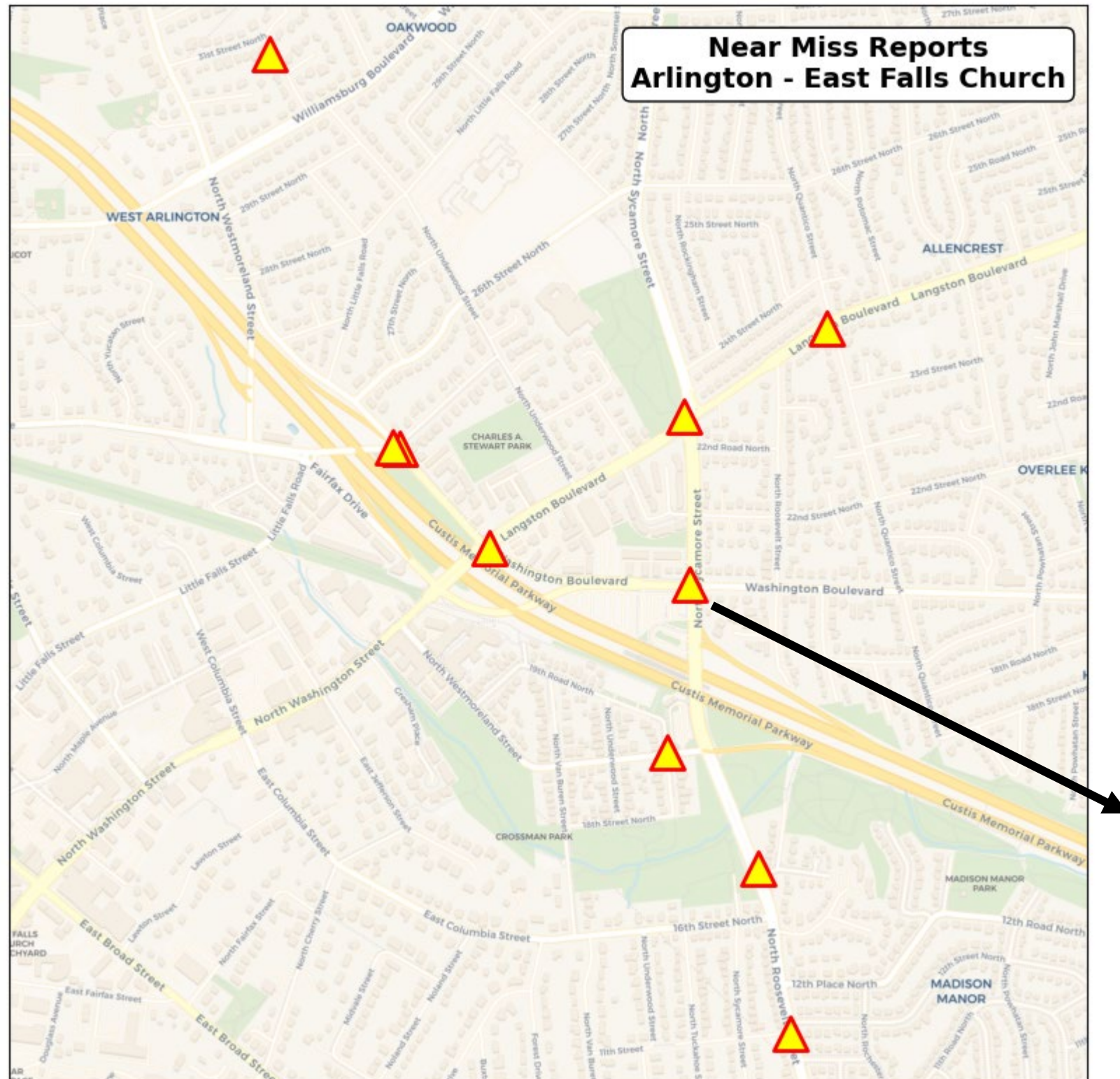
Children

- **32%** of Near Miss reports in Arlington County affected children between January 2024 and July 2025
- The top roadways in Arlington County having multiple Near Miss reports involving children were:
 - S Arlington Mill Dr
 - Washington Blvd
 - 2nd St S
- Most reports were along 25 and 30 MPH roads, and involved dangerous driving behavior such as failure to yield, speeding, or distracted driving.



Arlington-East Falls Church

Case Study

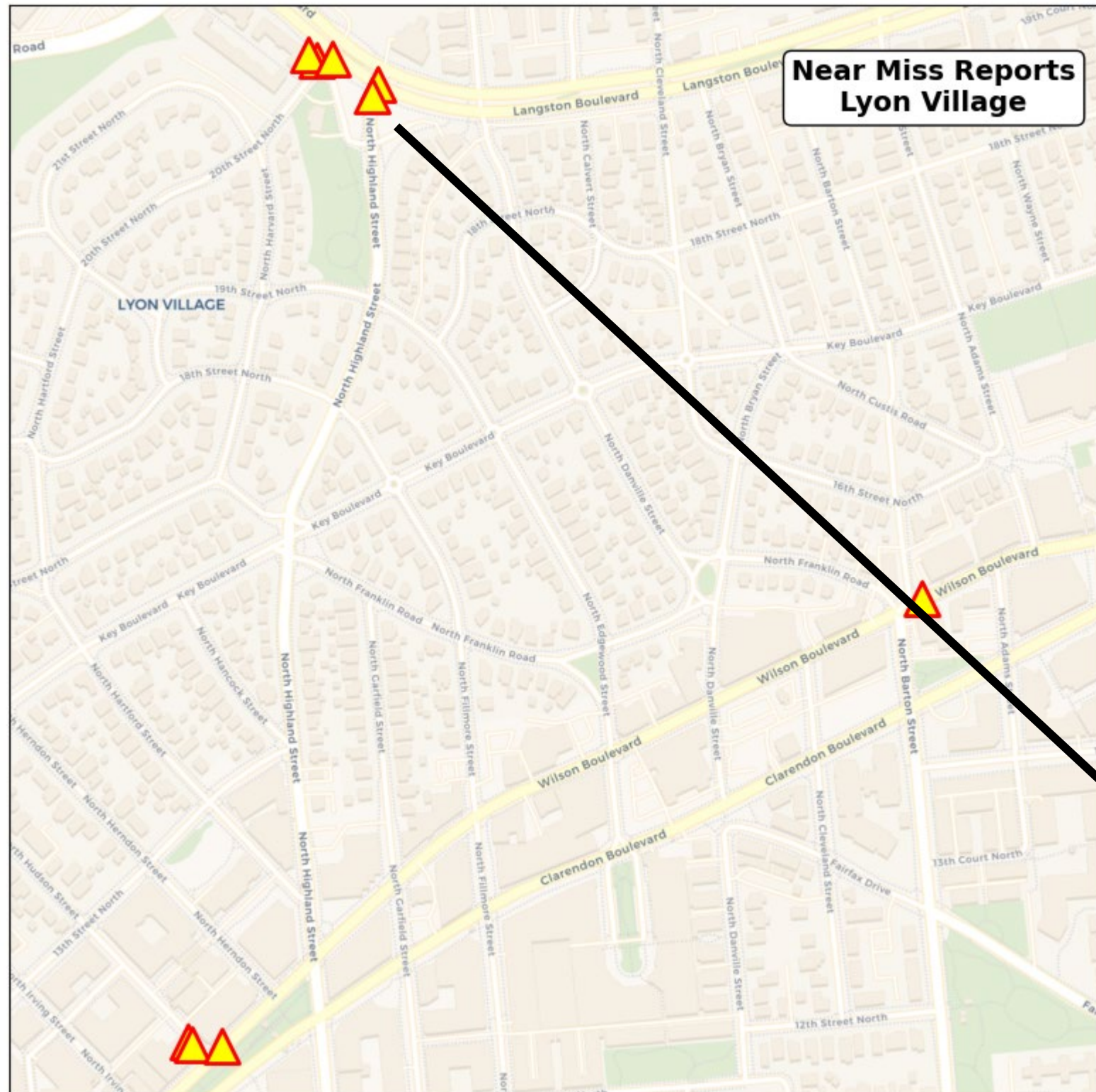


- Reports in this neighborhood frequently highlight:
- Unsafe driving behavior such as failure to yield at crosswalks, speeding, distracted driving, and ignoring signage.
 - Lack of traffic enforcement and police presence contributing to the frequency of unsafe driving behavior.



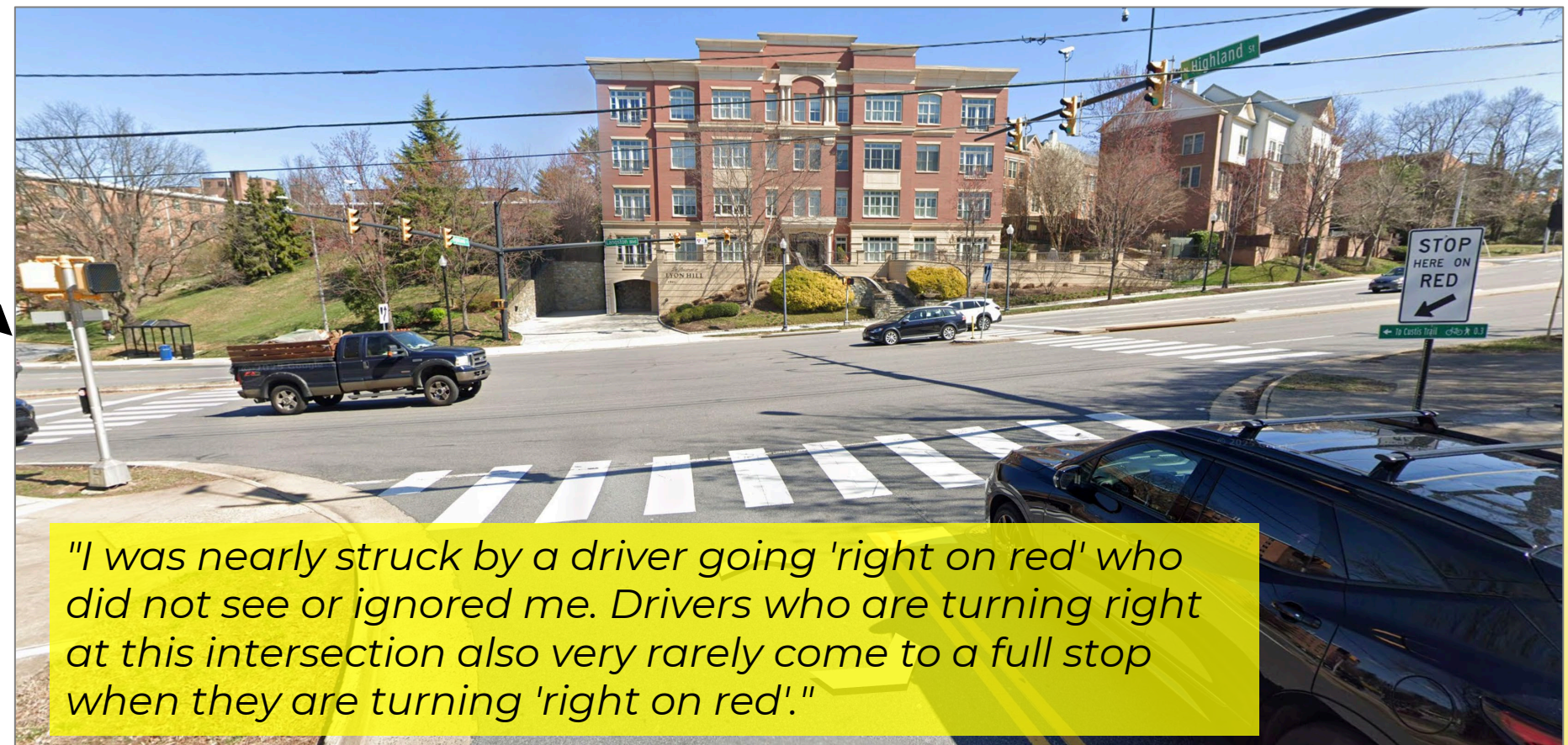
Lyon Village

Case Study



Reports in this neighborhood frequently highlight:

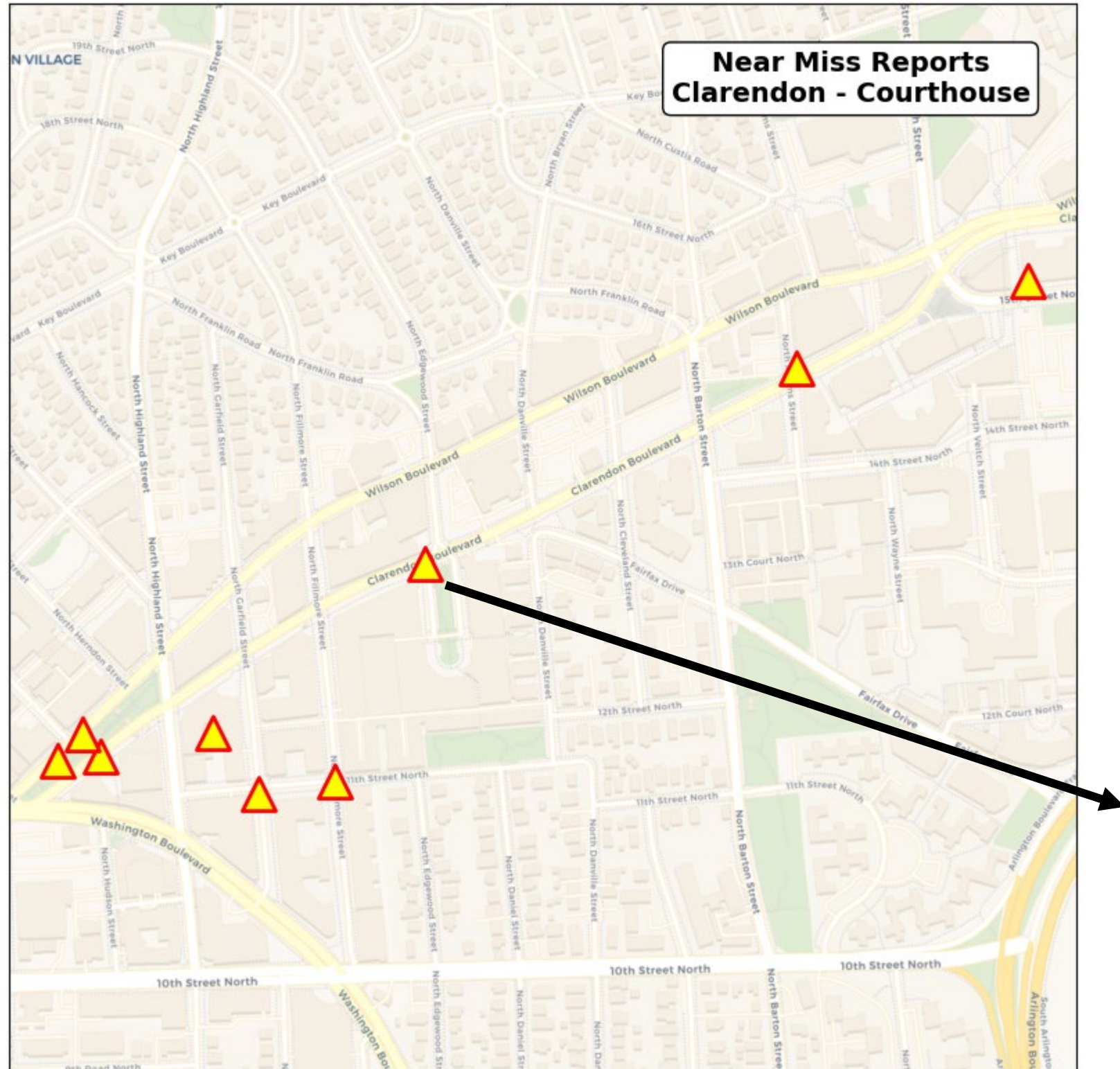
- Unsafe driving behavior such as failure to yield, speeding, running red lights, and improper right turns.
- A need for increased traffic signage (such as no right on red at traffic lights).
- A need for improved traffic signal timing to allow for pedestrians to safely cross.



"I was nearly struck by a driver going 'right on red' who did not see or ignored me. Drivers who are turning right at this intersection also very rarely come to a full stop when they are turning 'right on red'."

Clarendon-Courthouse

Case Study: Demonstrating the Value of a Tactical Quick Build Thanks DES!



Reports in this neighborhood frequently highlight:

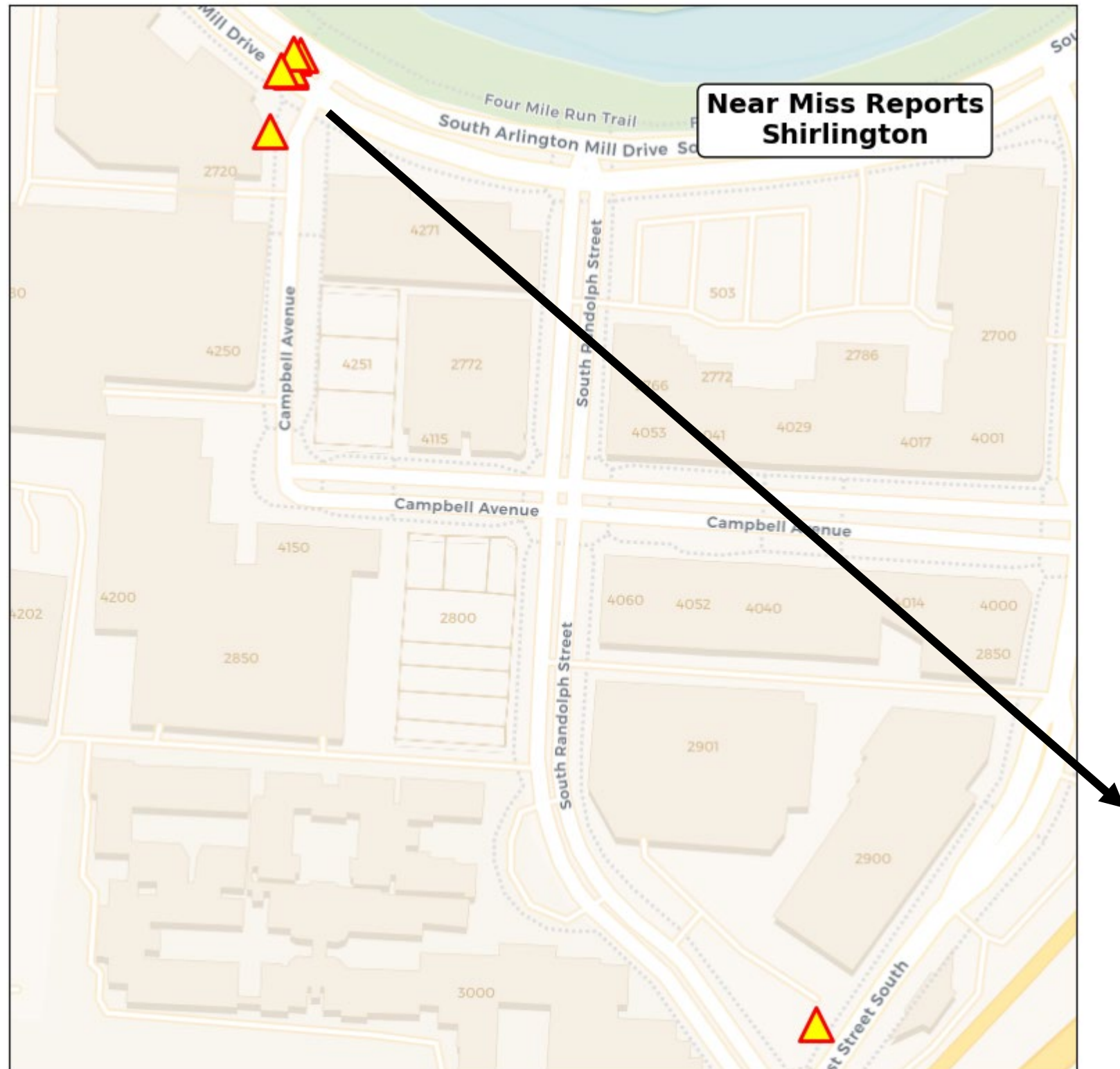
- Unsafe driving behavior such as failure to yield at crosswalks, running lights, and ignoring traffic signage.
- Use of side streets to bypass major intersections, increasing dangers in residential areas.
- Poor lighting along walking paths increasing risk at night, especially near busy areas such as metro stations and daycare centers.
- Obstructions along bike lanes increasing dangers posed to cyclists.



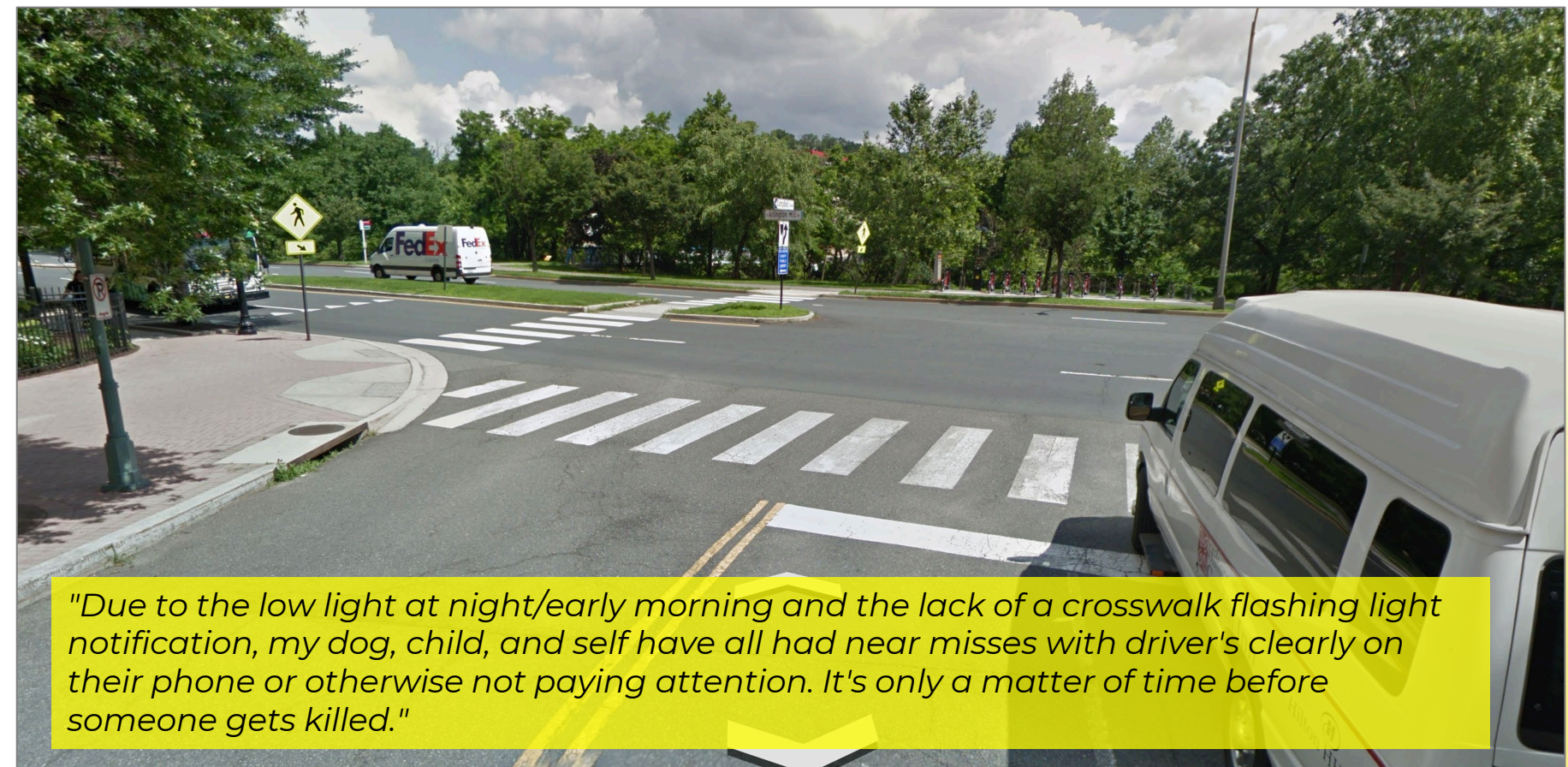
"Car turning right through the bike lane didn't look and nearly hit me. This happens constantly at this intersection. The bike lane is colored black from all the bikers who have had to slam on their brakes and skid to a stop to avoid being hit. I've had near misses here at least three times in the last month alone. ... I consider the parked cars between the bike lane and road a visual obstruction."

Shirlington

Case Study

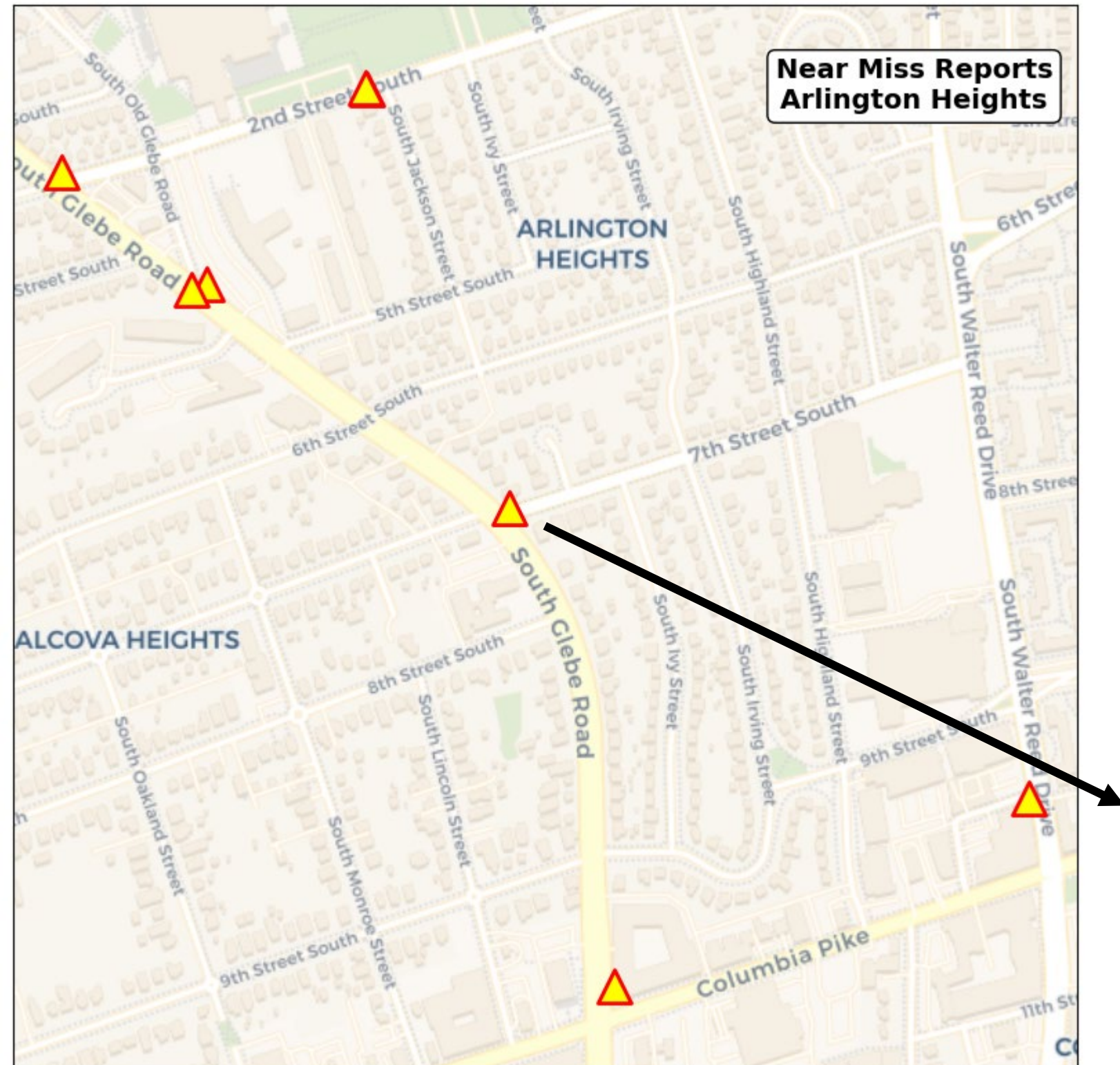


- Reports in this neighborhood frequently highlight:
- Unsafe driving behavior such as failure to yield, speeding, and distracted driving.
 - Unsafe roadway conditions such as a lack of lights and signage, poor lighting along walkways, and obstructed visibility.
 - A need for increased traffic law enforcement to improve safety.



Arlington Heights

Case Study



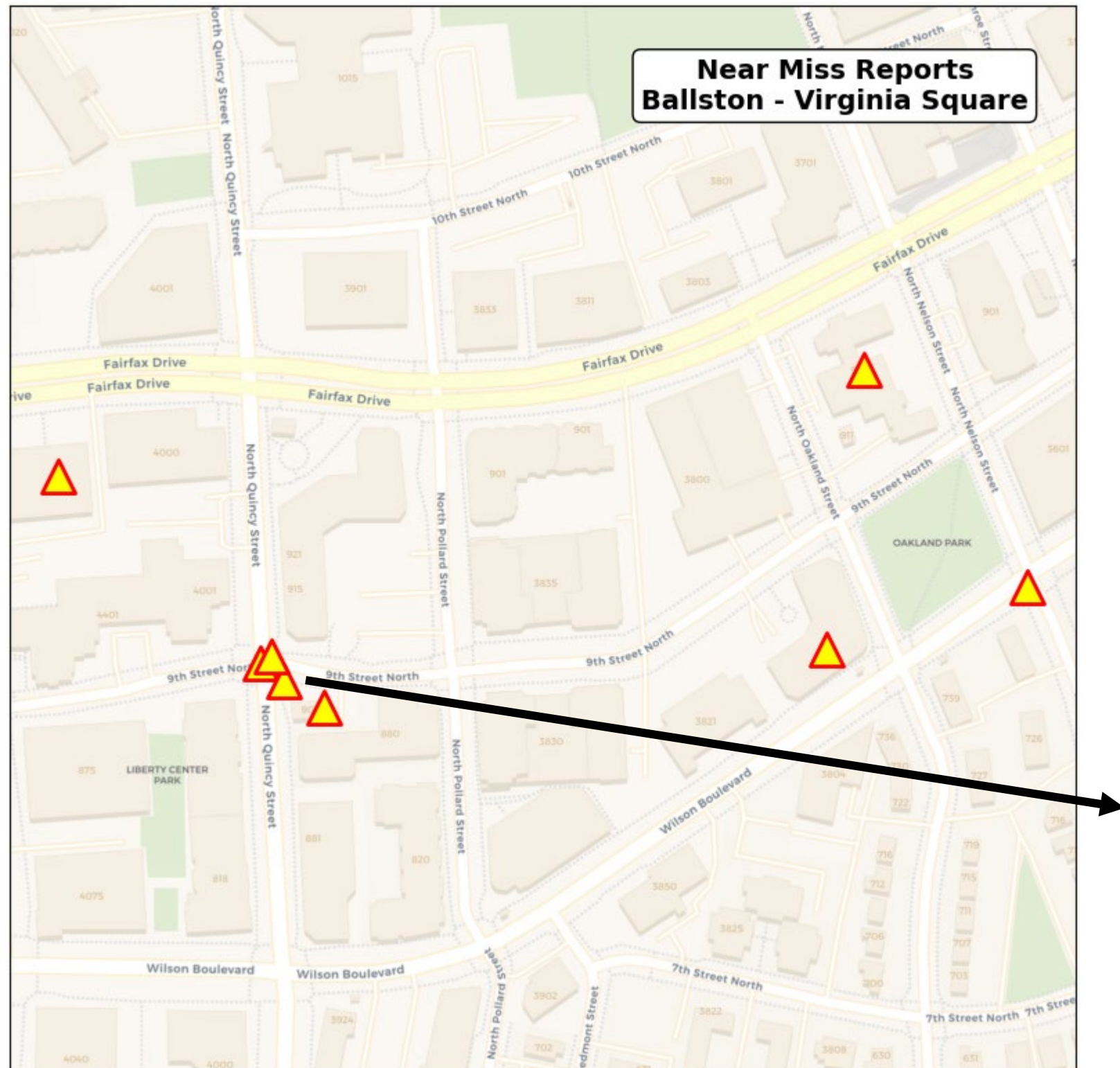
Reports in this neighborhood frequently highlight:

- Unsafe driving behavior such as failure to yield, speeding, aggressive driving, and ignoring traffic signage.
- Obstructed visibility caused by buildings, overgrown shrubs, and road design features.
- A need for flashing lights or signals for crosswalks along busy roadways to increase safety and visibility.



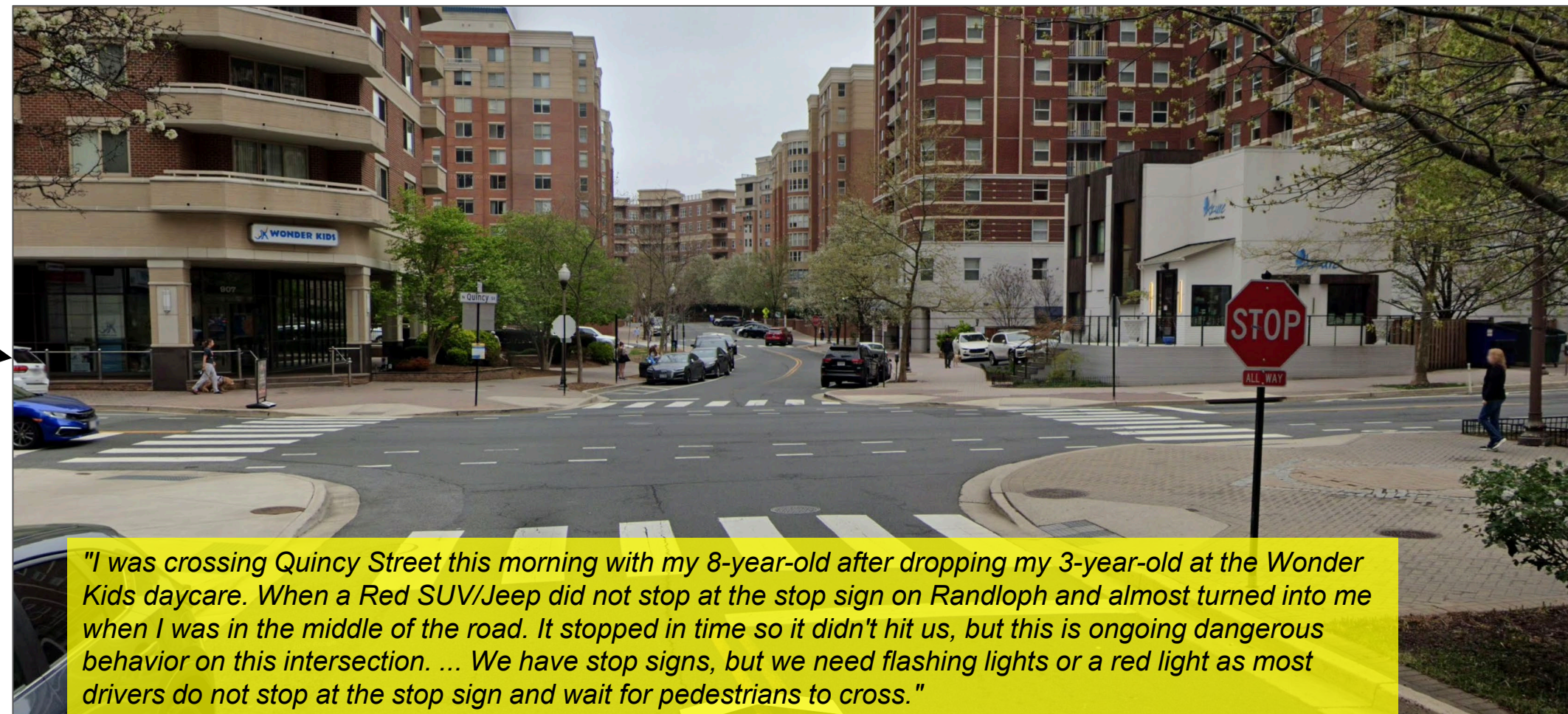
Ballston – Virginia Square

Case Study



Reports in this neighborhood frequently highlight:

- Unsafe driving behavior such as stop sign violations, failure to yield to pedestrians and cyclists, and distracted driving.
- Obstructions in bike lanes caused by double-parked vehicles.
- Poor visibility, especially at night, due to inadequate lighting.
- The need for increased traffic law enforcement, red light cameras, and flashing pedestrian crossing beacons and stop signs.
- Clearer lane markings, especially in bike lanes.



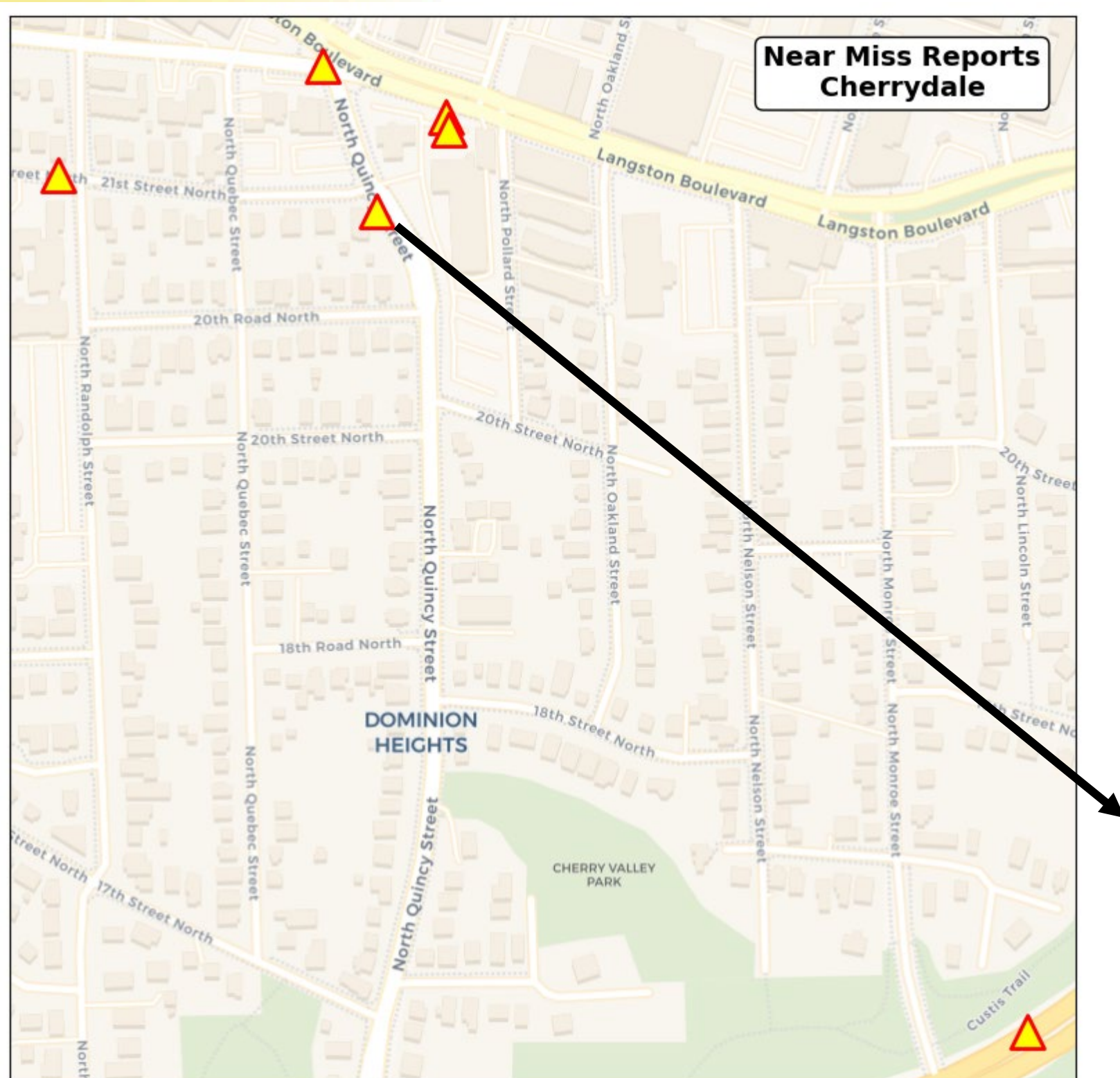
"I was crossing Quincy Street this morning with my 8-year-old after dropping my 3-year-old at the Wonder Kids daycare. When a Red SUV/Jeep did not stop at the stop sign on Randolph and almost turned into me when I was in the middle of the road. It stopped in time so it didn't hit us, but this is ongoing dangerous behavior on this intersection. ... We have stop signs, but we need flashing lights or a red light as most drivers do not stop at the stop sign and wait for pedestrians to cross."

Cherrydale

Case Study

Reports in this neighborhood frequently highlight:

- Failure to yield to pedestrians at crosswalks and red lights.
- Aggressive driving.
- Obstructed visibility caused by trees and shrubs.
- Gradual, wide turns (such as the right turn from Langston onto North Quincy) encouraging fast driving in pedestrian-dense areas.
- The need for more sidewalks, traffic-calming measures, improved roadway designs, and visibility improvements (such as pruning trees and shrubs along roadways).



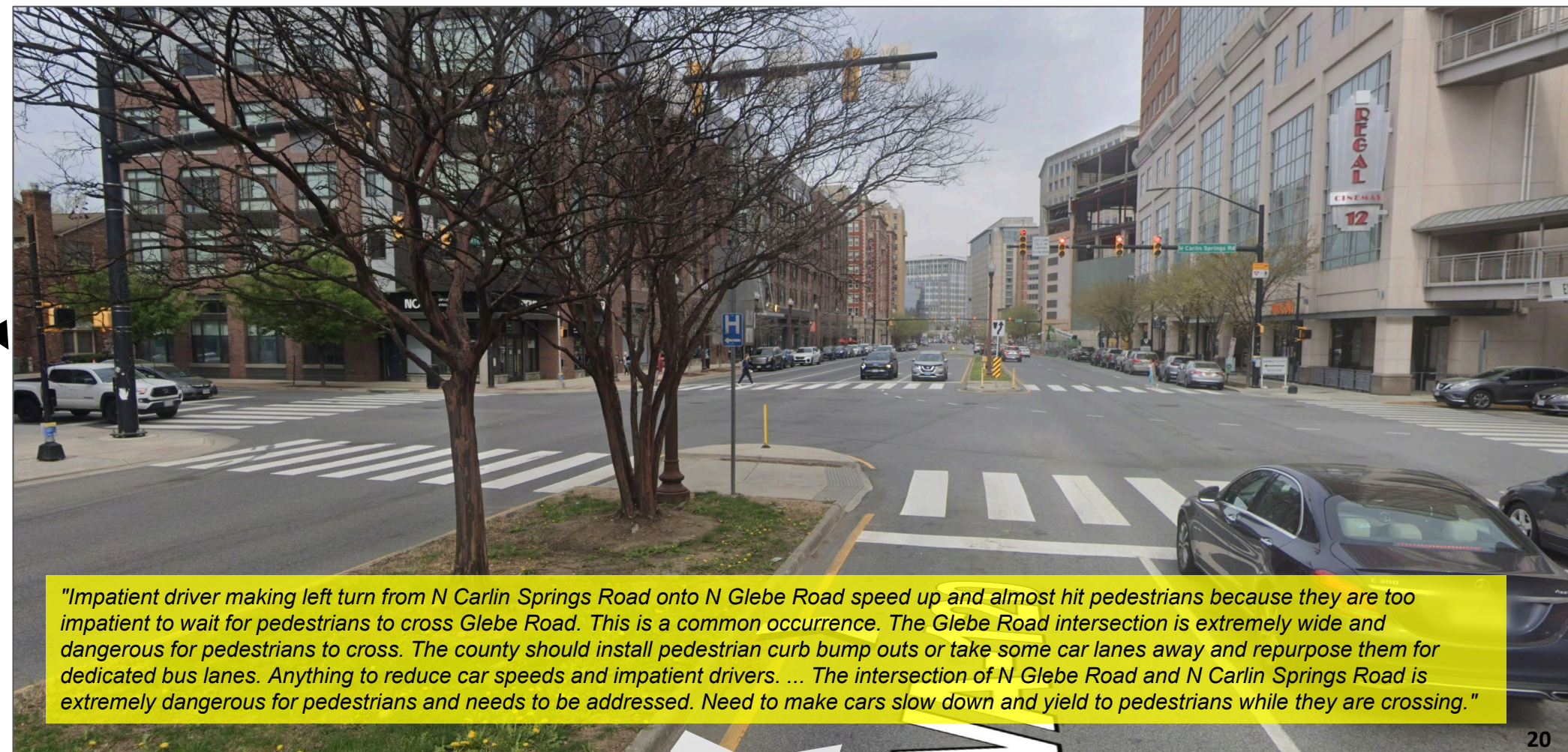
"When driving north on Quincy, there is a tree in the median that blocks visibility of pedestrians using the crosswalk from west to east. I had to slam the brakes yesterday to avoid hitting a pedestrian in the crosswalk that I did not see until the last minute because the tree blocked her from my sight. Fortunately, I was driving at a careful speed and deliberately looking for people in the crosswalk, so I was able to stop in time. And she was also being careful about crossing. But this might have turned out differently with a different driver and pedestrian."

Bluemont

Case Study

Reports in this neighborhood frequently highlight:

- Unsafe driving behavior such as failure to yield, speeding, aggressive driving, and distracted driving.
- Wide intersections making pedestrian crossings more dangerous.
- Median designs causing drivers to make awkward turns, interrupting traffic flow and resulting in increased risks to both drivers and pedestrians.
- The need for increased traffic enforcement measures (such as cameras and signage), improved visibility, and roadway redesigns.



Calls to Action Across NOVA – *reduce pedestrian / cyclist fatalities by 10% in 2026 vs 2025*

- As of August 2025, NOVA recorded 10 pedestrian / cyclist fatalities on its roads
- A 15% reduction in serious injuries should also be set as a 2026 goal vs. 2025 results

1. Increase efforts to reduce vehicle speed on high crash corridors, such as Washington Blvd, Langston, Wilson, etc.
 - a) e.g., create more < 25 mph speed limits on residential roads,
 - b) implement more vigorously the practice of “complete street” designs which protect pedestrians
 - c) support safe transit and bicycling alternatives, and
 - d) install truly “quick” build projects even more quickly on high-risk roads
 - e) Near Miss Case Studies identify previously know and/or emerging dangerous locations to fix
2. Increase driver, pedestrian and cyclist safety campaigns during late summer through the fall
 - a) Elevate awareness campaigns for drivers, pedestrians and cyclists regarding increased vulnerable road user crashes on roadways between 5pm - 10 pm
3. Improve traffic enforcement via technology to supplement the police
 - a) Support legislation to broaden the use of speed safety cameras, stop sign cameras, etc. installed in residential communities based upon KSI crash data from VDOT.



References

Data Sources:

- Northern Virginia Families for Safe Streets – Near Miss Survey
- VDOT – Roadway Details
- US CDC – Socioeconomic Vulnerability Index
- US Census Bureau – Cartographic Boundaries
- Arlington County Department of Environmental Services – Neighborhood Boundaries

Basemaps:

- Carto Voyager
- Carto Positron

Streetview Images:

- Google Earth



Thank you!

