


West Virginia University
The Student Assembly - Student Government Association
Assembly Resolution: AR-2024-12-01
**AN ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION TO ENCOURAGE WVU
ADMINISTRATORS AND LOCAL OFFICIALS TO ADDRESS THE
CONCERNS IDENTIFIED IN THE FALL 2024 SAFETY AND
ACCESSIBILITY WALK**

Short Title:	Safety and Accessibility Walk Report
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Sponsor(s):	Lilly Henson, College Senator (Eberly) Andrew Indomenico, Senator Adeline Barbour, Senator (Eberly) Sydney Fleece, College Senator (Chambers) Jordan Kelly, College Senator (Eberly)
Contributor(s):	Maria Felsher, Intern Katherine Henry, Intern
Committee Endorsement:	Health and Safety
First Reading Date:	12/11/2024
Second Reading Date:	N/A-Intent to Fast Track
Date of Approval:	12/11/2024
Presidential Signature:	

Whereas, West Virginia University is “dedicated to providing a safe learning, working, and living environment for [its] students, faculty, staff, and visitors;” and¹,

¹ <https://safety.wvu.edu/>

Whereas, the West Virginia University Student Government Association mission statement reads, “We, the students of West Virginia University, desire to...help ensure that the personal freedoms and general welfare of the students within our University are protected;”² and,

Whereas, Board of Governors rule 1.6 prohibits discrimination, including: “failure to provide reasonable accommodation, consistent with state and federal law, to persons with disabilities;”³ and,

Whereas, according to the Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center, “...risk of pedestrian death is 5 percent at impacts of 20 mi/h, 45 percent at impacts of 30 mi/h, and 85 percent at impacts of 40 mi/h (3), indicating that decreasing average vehicle speed decreases injury severity and the probability of pedestrian fatality in the event of a collision;”⁴ and,

Whereas, according to the West Virginia Department of Transportation, in 2021 (latest collected data) there were 7,388 pedestrians killed in traffic accidents in the state, making a 12.5% increase from the previous year (2020); this is the highest pedestrian deaths since 1981 (7,837 deaths)⁵; and,

Whereas, in 2022, one person was killed in a motor vehicle accident involving a pedestrian in the city of Morgantown⁶; and,

Whereas, members of the Student Government Association asked students to mark on a printed map of the Downtown and Evansdale Campuses where they feel unsafe as pedestrians ⁷; and,

Whereas, on October 8, 2024, the West Virginia University Student Government Association conducted its fall Safety and Accessibility Walk, consisting of Sunnyside and Health Science Campus ⁸; and,

² <https://sga.wvu.edu/about/our-mission>

³ <https://policies.wvu.edu/finalized-bog-rules/bog-governance-rule-1-6-rule>

⁴ https://www.pedbikeinfo.org/cms/downloads/PedestrianLitReview_April2014.pdf

⁵ <https://shorturl.at/w2nLr>

⁶ <https://cdan.dot.gov/query>

⁷ See Appendix B

⁸ See Appendix A

Whereas, participants in the walk took note of broken/cracked sidewalks, missing sidewalks, missing/unlit lighting, lack of curb ramps, and lack of truncated domes on sidewalks.

Therefore, be it resolved by the Student Assembly of West Virginia University:

Section 1: recommends that the University and City of Morgantown investigate and address the safety and accessibility concerns detailed in Appendix A: Safety and Accessibility Walk Report

Section 2: requests that the University and the City provide regular updates on the status of the concerns outlined in the report, as well as any future plans to address them.

Section 3: Upon passage and approval, this legislation shall be forwarded to:

Mandates:

G. Corey Farris, Dean of Students
Dr. Thanh Le, Director, Student Engagement and Leadership (Advisor)
Gordon E. Gee, University President
Daily Athenaeum
Charlie Long, Student Body President
Abigail Browning, Student Body Vice President
Sherry St. Clair, Chief, University Police Department
Chuck Roberts, Assistant Vice President, WVU Facilities and Services
Ron Justice, Director, Local Government Relations
Sherry St. Clair, Chief, University Police Department
Jill Hess, ADA Coordinator, Division of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
Trish Cendana, Executive Director, WVU Housing and Residence Life
Drew Gatlin, Staff Engineer, City of Morgantown
Sam Miller, Maintenance Director, WVU Facilities and Services
Trish Cendana, Executive Director, WVU Housing and Residence Life
Stephanie Taylor, Strategic Initiatives, Vice President and General Counsel
Matthew Cross, Chairperson, Pedestrian Safety Board
Sean Manning, WVU News and Information Manager
Haley Orcutt, Executive Secretary

Appendix A- Safety and Accessibility Walk Report

Executive Summary

On October 8th, 2024, the West Virginia University Student Government Association conducted the Fall 2024 Safety and Accessibility walk alongside members of the University and City. The walk was divided into two sections: Sunnyside and Health Science Campus. The findings of these walks are summarized in this report. As with the Spring 2023, and Fall 2024 Safety and Accessibility walks, participants utilized the QuickCapture app. In total there were 73 results: there were 46 categorized reports and 27 uncategorized reports. The full database of reports can be found [here](#)⁹. While the walk was a success in terms of participation and reporting, the authors believe it is crucial for the City and University to develop more comprehensive assessment and reporting plans for safety and accessibility deficiencies, so that student involvement can shift from a need to a luxury. Findings that were of higher priority are bolded for convenience.

Collection Process

Electronic field reporting using geolocated photos ¹⁰ – developed by the City of Morgantown and first deployed in the Spring 2023 walk and used again for the Fall 2023 walk and Fall 2024 walk – continues to have large effects on the complaint submission and reporting process. The most obvious of these effects is an increase in the number of reports submitted. Previous walks generated, on average, several dozen reports for each event. The Fall 2024 walk generated over 70 reports, all of which were reported on the custom ArcGIS Quick Capture app.

⁹

<https://morgantownwv.maps.arcgis.com/apps/dashboards/a06645e8bea0419f8a6dd8eb345cc58b>

¹⁰ <https://arcg.is/1fTqXC0>

Subsequent to the walk, tabling alongside University Police was held at the Mountainlair and Life Sciences Building breezeway. The goal of this tabling was to allow students to show a physical representation of places they feel unsafe as a pedestrian on campus with maps of the Downtown and Evansdale areas of campus. Students were encouraged to place push pins on the maps where they feel unsafe, and many students had similar places in mind of where they feel unsafe, shown by the clusters of tacks on the maps.

Reports from Sunnyside

Accessibility Reports

- **Pedestrian crossing button is missing at the intersection.**
 - This is of high importance, as this is a very busy intersection

Lighting Reports

- Lighting requests were made all along Grant Avenue and some on McLane Avenue
- Lighting for the intersection between Campus Drive and McLane Avenue was requested, as it is coming over a hill and a turn next to a busier road.
- There is a light out on the intersection of 3rd Street and Grant Avenue.

Sidewalk Reports

There are numerous reports regarding sidewalks for the Sunnyside portion of Fall 2024 walk, many of which are on Grant Avenue.

- **The sidewalks all the way along Grant Avenue need to be repaired and maintained.**
 - **The sidewalk in front of Campus Lofts Rentals across the street from the Life Sciences Building has a section of cracks that are a tripping hazard.**
 - **These are of high importance, as it is nearly impossible to navigate the entirety of Grant Avenue**
 - There are two reports of sidewalks in need of repair on McLane Avenue on both sides of the 5th Avenue and McLane Avenue intersection.
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Crossings Reports

- **A cross walk was requested at 3rd Street and Beechurst by State on Campus apartments. This is an area with multiple apartment buildings and many students live on a very traffic- heavy road.**
- The crosswalk on Grant Street and Carson street should be repaired.

Reports from Health Science Campus (HSC)

Accessibility Reports

- There was one report requesting more push buttons to enter into the ground floor of HSC North.
- In the parking lots around the Children's Hospital, there were very few Detectable Warning Systems in place on the sidewalks, making it difficult for people with disabilities to use the sidewalks.
- There was a report of a sidewalk crumbling away, posing a potential tripping hazard, as well as a lack of a detectable warning system.

No Category Reports

- There were two unstable railing reports. One was on the side of HSC South, on a ramp near the market. The other was on the side of HSC North on the stairs leading up to the ground floor from a parking lot near the gardens.

Sidewalk Reports

- **All of the reports regarding sidewalks in the HSC area involved cracked or uneven sidewalks. This leads to a potential tripping hazard and makes it difficult for wheelchair users and people with other accommodations to get around the campus and parking lots.**
 - **The sidewalk complaints were mainly in the ADA lot and going around the Erma Byrd Biomedical Research Center and up the stairs to HSC North's ground level.**
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Crossings Reports

- There were only two reports regarding crosswalks on HSC; both are near the stairs leading up to the HSC North ground level in the parking lot. Both reports are requesting repaired sidewalks.

APPENDIX B- PEDESTRIAN SAFETY MAPS

Students were asked to pin where they felt the most unsafe on campus as pedestrians on maps of the Downtown and Evansdale Campuses.

