

# 2011 Off-Campus Safety Walk: Post-Report



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*University of Maryland, College Park*  
*October 31, 2011*



*"The overall goal is to make this a top-20 college town — just like we're a top-20 research university — and we will not continue to rise unless the surrounding area is attractive and vibrant."<sup>1</sup>  
—President Loh, University of Maryland*

### **Overview:**

The annual Safety Walks are intended to create a dialogue between undergraduate and graduate students, police, community leaders, and the University administration regarding safety concerns of students. This year, the Safety Walks was a joint effort of the Student Government Association (SGA) and the Graduate Student Government (GSG), along with the University of Maryland Police Department, Prince George's County Police, and City of College Park.

### **Objective:**

The goal of the Safety Walks is to address physical safety and perceived safety concerns on and around the University of Maryland campus, in order to improve the quality of life for all members of the campus community.

### **Routes:**

#### **Part 1: Both GSG and SGA Groups:**

- Start at Paint Branch Trail/Route 1 Bridge
- Walk along Paint Branch Trail toward University View
- Follow the series of paths that lead to the University View/Lot 11b
- Walk to Front of University View/Varsity
- Return to campus parking lot along trail paths

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<sup>1</sup> Abutaleb, Yasmien. "Loh's Task Forces Prepare to Deliver Reports." *The Diamondback*. September 13, 2011. <<http://www.diamondbackonline.com/news/loh-s-task-forces-prepare-to-deliver-reports-1.2588948#.ToKTsXNjFAE>>.

**Part 2a: Only GSG Group:**

- Start at north-west end of Graduate Gardens
- Walk along Rowalt Drive through Graduate Gardens Apartments
- Follow Guilford Drive, cross Route 1, turn north
- Walk along Calvert Road to College Park Metro entrance

**Part 2b: Only SGA Group:**

- Start at Commons 4
- Walk through Commons 4 toward Commons 3 and Route 1
- Follow Knox Road across Route 1 toward Rhode Island Avenue
- Walk back along College Avenue to Yale Avenue

**Summary:**

The Off-Campus Safety Walk occurred Thursday, October 20th, 2011 from 6:45pm to 8:55pm. The Safety Walk began with all participants assembled at the STAMP Student Union in Terrapin Rooms B and C for brief remarks by Matthew Popkin (SGA), Erin Bone Steele (GSG), and Chief of Police David Mitchell (UMPD).

The routes were planned using multiple survey methods to respond to areas where undergraduate students and graduate students had specific concerns. A charter bus was generously provided by the Department of Transportation Services to transport the group(s) from one area to another. All participants walked the first route, and then participants split into two sections; one walked in areas that were of concern primarily to undergraduate students, while the other walked in areas that were identified by graduate students. The nighttime walk provided the best opportunity to observe conditions and concerns that students perceive as unsafe.

Routes were planned to maximize coverage of areas of concern along the most logical walking paths. Although many organizations participate in both walks, the “on” and “off” division allows some participants to target areas that apply specifically to them. We recognize some routes have minor overlap between on-campus and off-campus properties. (Example: Campus Gardens is technically an on-campus property because the University owns the land; however, the private company Southern

Management Co handles management and resident issues.) We think it is appropriate to remind all walkers that members of the University community do not live their daily lives within property lines and regularly move from one entity's jurisdiction to another, sometimes just by crossing a street. We enjoy cooperation between University officials and community leaders in making these areas safer for everyone.

### **Media Coverage:**

<http://www.diamondbackonline.com/multimedia/video-walking-the-night-1.2659672-.TqpDUZwVKxE>

<http://www.diamondbackonline.com/opinion/guest-column-from-sketchy-to-safe-1.2643064-.TqpY2pwVKxE>

### **On-Campus Safety Walk Follow-Up:**

Throughout and after the walk, the SGA and GSG collected notes from participants to put together a list of action items regarding the campus environment. These have been tentatively marked with names of individuals or offices that may be responsible for responding to the stipulated concerns. Based on conversations held during the walk, we also have included additional thoughts regarding potential projects or ideas for the future.

**Part 1:**

| Concern               | Description                                                                                                                                                                     | Follow Up                                                      |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|
| Lighting Request      | Extremely dark on the trail stretching away from campus at the east side of the Paint Branch Trail underpass under Route; Add lights affixed to side of bridge or to power pole | Pepco/MNCPPC/City of CP?                                       |
| Fencing Request       | Fence along the side of Paint Branch Trail, east side of the Rte 1 underpass, has a large gap                                                                                   | MNCPPC/City of College Park?                                   |
| Grounds/Trail Hazards | Unmarked edge and short drop off along paved trail (behind AVWilliams/Energy Research Bldg). Possible solutions, paint stripe along edge, or filling in soil?                   | Facilities Management/MNCPPC                                   |
| Lighting Request      | Trail between Route 1 underpass and first campus blue light is dark, could use additional lighting to be consistent with trail leading up to The View bridge                    | Facilities Management/MNCPPC                                   |
| Lighting              | Pepco light along Route 1 (pole #818421-8161) light flicks on and off, mostly off. Also next light immediately south of this is out.                                            | Pepco                                                          |
| Lighting              | 2 red pole lamps out in front of The View: at the bus stop (pole #43) and in front of Pizza Autentica (pole #45)                                                                | Tiffany Gaines/View property company/City of CP/PEPCO          |
| Lighting              | 1 black lamp out at corner of Pizza Autentica                                                                                                                                   | Tiffany Gaines/View City of CP/PEPCO                           |
| Vandalism             | 2 lights vandalized in front of View 2                                                                                                                                          | City of CP has written work order                              |
| Scooter Parking       | Scooters parked in unmarked dirt area off sidewalk at back of The View. Only access is for them to drive on the sidewalk.                                                       | Tiffany Gaines/View                                            |
| Lighting              | Pole lamps out along the former Koohns Ford parking area alongside The View fence and near shared parking area                                                                  | Tiffany Gaines contacted Sabrina Hunt (View); breaker repaired |
| Lighting              | Light out on Koohns Ford side of View by maintenance door area                                                                                                                  | Tiffany Gaines/View                                            |
| Lighting              | Lights mounted on the wall at the View garage facing the stream                                                                                                                 | Tiffany Gaines contacted Sabrina Hunt (View); being examined   |

|               |                                                                                                                                                                  |        |
|---------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|
| Trail Concern | North of the pedestrian bridge to the View, near campus Lot 11b, the Paint Branch trail is extremely dark. (See "Additional Thoughts" section for more on this.) | MNCPPC |
|---------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|

**Part 2a:**

| Concern                | Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Follow Up                         |
|------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Lighting               | Pole lamp out at Graduate Gardens Bldg #4305                                                                                                                                                                                              | Southern Management               |
| Lighting               | Pole lamps out at Graduate Gardens Bldg #4312                                                                                                                                                                                             | Southern Management               |
| Lighting               | Pole lamp out at Graduate Gardens Building #4314                                                                                                                                                                                          | Southern Management               |
| Lighting               | Pole lamp out in Graduate Gardens at corner of Rowalt Dr & Guilford Dr                                                                                                                                                                    | Southern Management               |
| Lighting               | Light out at service entrance door fixed on side of Graduate Gardens building #4317                                                                                                                                                       | Southern Management               |
| Lighting               | Pole lamp out at Graduate Gardens building #4319                                                                                                                                                                                          | Southern Management               |
| Lighting Request       | Dark area in Graduate Gardens parking area of Rowalt Drive, has wooden pole which could accommodate a new light fixture                                                                                                                   | Pepco?                            |
| Lighting               | Pole lamp out at Graduate Gardens building #4323                                                                                                                                                                                          | Southern Management               |
| Crossing Light Request | Walking northbound on the southbound side of Route 1 (at Plato's Diner corner), there is no pedestrian walk signal. There is a walk light and call button for crossing east-west.                                                         | Bob Stumpff/City of CP            |
| Lighting               | Café-style lamp out on Route 1 by corner of Plato's diner                                                                                                                                                                                 | City of CP has written work order |
| Emergency Blue Light   | Blue light at emergency phone on Calvert Road out                                                                                                                                                                                         | UMDPS                             |
| Landscape              | Tree branches interfering with light at 4612 Calvert Road                                                                                                                                                                                 | City of CP has written work order |
| Traffic Signs          | Eastbound lane of Calvert Road Between Route 1 and Princeton Rd; the following signs must be raised so that the bottom of the signs are 7-ft above the sidewalk so as to not interfere with pedestrians: "Stop ahead" sign, "25 mph Speed | City of CP                        |

|               |                                                                                                                                                        |            |
|---------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
|               | limit" sign, "Caution School Zone" sign, "Raised Crosswalk" sign                                                                                       |            |
| Traffic Signs | Eastbound lane of Calvert Road at Rhode Island Avenue; raise the "Stop" sign so that it is 7-ft above sidewalk and does not interfere with pedestrians | City of CP |

**Part 2b:**

| Concern         | Description                                                                                               | Follow Up        |
|-----------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|
| Lighting        | Light out #8164173895 (work order was submitted by city and was reported to PEPCO)                        | City of CP/PEPCO |
| Lighting        | Light out under upper walkway of Commons 3                                                                | Pat Fitzhugh     |
| Police Presence | Changing/increasing police routes along Knox and Leonardtown with increased patrol units and Kubota       | UMDPS            |
| Lighting        | Replace incandescent streetlights with fluorescent streetlights (long-term goal, but as soon as possible) | City of CP/PEPCO |

**Additional Thoughts:**

- The Paint Branch Trail along campus has blue light emergency phones, police CCTV camera coverage, and enhanced lighting, all provided by the University. It is heavily trafficked by students. However, north of the pedestrian bridge to the View and south of the Route 1 pedestrian underpass, the trail is extremely dark, lacking any form of light. The darkness appears even blacker because it is in contrast to the well-lit section by campus. The trail seems to be part of the Maryland National Capital Parks & Planning Commission. It is not known whether MNCPPC Parks Police patrols these areas. Some mounted police and their horses have been seen in the summer months, but nothing is known about other methods or how regularly the area is traveled by Parks Police, or whether it can or should be traveled by UMD police or public safety officers. It is also unclear whether the trails are technically supposed to close at dusk, as many other trails do. If they close after dark, signs to that effect need to be posted where the lighting enhancements end, both north and south of the stretch shared with the campus. According to GSG Vice President for Legislative Affairs, the university has advertised the Paint Branch trail as a bicyclist

& pedestrian commuter route. Such advertisement would need to come with a warning about hours of availability if the route is technically unavailable after sunset (especially since many classes and work commitments end only after dark during short winter daylight hours).

- Improvements to the Calvert Road route to the College Park Metro are very nice. The area is well lit, has solar-powered blue light emergency phones, cameras giving the police a view of the area, and regular police patrols. People could be seen walking, jogging, and taking their dogs out. The SGA and GSG could help distribute postcards advertising this as the “Safer Route” to Metro.
- The new crosswalks added at Rossburg/Hartwick and Guilford intersection are great and give safer pedestrian access to the Graduate Gardens community. We would like to double check that it connects all the sidewalks that it needs to connect. (The GSG Vice President for Committee Affairs reports that it may cross to all sides of Guilford but not connect across Rossburg.)
- The Santa Fe building that has been abandoned is an immense eyesore and also has no lighting on for the side alley. While there are many issues involved in that property, restoring downtown College Park must involve revitalizing that property as soon as possible.
- Many students raised the issue a concern about the informal intersection between Jason’s Deli and the 7-Eleven. Students regularly cross there, and with the hill and multiple driveways, it is definitely a pedestrian hazard, and despite not being a designated or recommended pedestrian crossing area, it is frequently utilized as a crossing area. There were doubts as to the effectiveness of a crosswalk or pedestrian crossing light designation. We think additional consideration and ideas are necessary.

*Thanks to all who attended:*

David Mitchell, Chief of Police, UMPDS  
Howard Blake, Chief of Staff, UMDPS  
August Kenner, Sergeant, UMPDS  
Lisa Breeden, Program Management Specialist, Office of the Chief, UMPDS  
Christopher Jagoe, Major, UMPDS  
Marc Limansky, Captain, UMPDS  
Mark McGuigan, Building Security and Cameras, UMPDS  
Andrew Fellows, Mayor, City of College Park  
Stephanie Stulich, Councilwoman, City of College Park  
Steve Halpern, City Engineer, City of College Park  
Bob Stumpff, Director, Department of Public Works, City of College Park  
John Zacker, Assistant Vice President of Student Affairs, UMCP  
Cindy Felice, Director of Resident Life, UMCP  
Carlo Colella, Associate Vice President of Facilities Management, UMCP  
Pat Fitzhugh, Coordinator, Electric Shop, UMCP  
Alan Sactor, Assistant Director, Department of Environmental Safety, UMCP  
Edward Williams, Program Management Specialist, Landscape Service, UMCP  
Jaron Black, Officer, Prince George's County Police  
Marc Alexander, Captain, Prince George's County Police  
Miguel Core, Officer, Prince George's County Police  
Ernie Baker, Public Affairs Representative, PEPCO  
Anna Bedford, President, GSG, UMCP  
Erin Bone Steele, Vice President for Student Affairs, GSG, UMCP  
Blessing Okoroafor, Vice President for Committee Affairs, GSG, UMCP  
Matthew Popkin, Senior Vice President, SGA, UMCP  
Zane Adoum, Letters and Sciences Legislator, SGA, UMCP  
Heidi Biffel, Coordinator, Fraternity and Sorority Life, UMCP  
Tiffany Gaines, Coordinator, Off-Campus Housing Services, UMCP  
Allison Bennett, Coordinator, SARPP, UMCP  
Chris Leyden, Multimedia Reporter, The Diamondback

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