



Suggested Strategies for Improving Campus Pedestrian Safety Virginia Association of Chiefs of Police (VACP) November 2017

Given the large amount of traffic running through and around Virginia’s campuses, and the increased numbers of college students, faculty, and staff who are walking and bicycling for commuting, physical activity and recreation, pedestrian injuries remain a concern for campus law enforcement. This page provides resources to assist you in planning policies, educational and enforcement strategies.

The [Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center](#) is an excellent resource for campus improvement in this area. This site is funded by the [U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration](#) and maintained by the Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center within the [University of North Carolina Highway Safety Research Center](#).

The Center provides a campus [pedestrian safety toolkit](#) with extensive information on campus [education](#) and [enforcement](#) strategies and [plans and policies](#) including [examples](#) and downloadable spreadsheets of campus pedestrian and bicycle plans and studies and more detailed information on notable campus pedestrian safety interventions. The following strategy recommendations were abstracted (11/18/17) from the [Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center](#).

[Suggested Campus Pedestrian Safety Plans and Policies](#)

- Review annual pedestrian and bicycle crash data for trends in the locations, times, and types of crashes;
- Use automated technologies and manual counts to count pedestrians and bicyclists at representative locations within and at the boundary of campus – to represent exposure for crash analysis and show how walking and bicycling levels at specific locations change over time as transportation facilities and land uses change;
- Conduct a campus travel survey every one to three years for information about student, faculty, and staff commute mode shares, attitudes towards walking and bicycling, barriers to walking and bicycling, and suggestions for pedestrian and bicycle improvements;
- Inventory walking and bicycling infrastructure in the campus - to document when pedestrian and bicycle facilities were improved and evaluate the suitability of walking and bicycling along and across campus-area roadways;
- Document pedestrian, bicycle, and driver behaviors. Field observations can target behaviors that may lead to pedestrian and bicycle crashes, such as drivers speeding, drivers failing to yield to pedestrians in crosswalks, drivers not giving bicyclists adequate space when passing, pedestrians crossing against traffic signals, and bicyclists disobeying traffic control;

- Collect these data at regular intervals to benchmark progress.

Campus Pedestrian Safety Education Strategies

- Incorporate pedestrian and bicycle safety messages and materials into orientation activities at the beginning of the school year;
- Work with local bicycle organizations to offer on-road bicycle safety training;
- Distributing pedestrian reflection materials, bicycle lights along with other bicycle safety materials;
- Create a bicycle and pedestrian ambassador program to exemplify safe cycling and walking and distribute safety materials;
- Distribute local walking/ biking maps that include bicycle and pedestrian safety and security tips.
- Conduct a [pedestrian](#) and bicycle safety campaign through newspaper, radio announcements and social media;
- Encourage students and other citizens to report unsafe pedestrian conditions to a website or phone hotline;
- Expand educational efforts that target drivers to travel at safe speeds, yield to pedestrians in crosswalks, and pass bicyclists slowly and at an appropriate distance.

Campus Pedestrian Safety Enforcement Strategies

- Offer night escort service, night shuttle, and emergency telephones throughout campus as well as shuttle stations and nearby parking areas;
- Establish a Pedestrian Safety Month or targeted time frame for heightened enforcement to improve pedestrian safety - this effort targets distracted driving, speeding, and failure to yield to pedestrians. Police display purple ribbons on patrol cars during the month of increased pedestrian safety enforcement activity;
- Use dedicated bicycle patrol officers to enforce pedestrian- and bicycle-related laws – issue warnings and tickets for pedestrian- and bicycle-related infractions - starting by issuing warnings at the beginning of the school year and issuing tickets later in the school year;
- Implement targeted enforcement efforts that focus on streets and intersections with known pedestrian and bicycle safety problems - these enforcement efforts may focus on reducing drivers speeding, drivers not yielding to pedestrians in crosswalks, pedestrians crossing against signals, bicyclists disobeying signals, bicyclists not riding with lights at night, and other behaviors that lead to crashes.

Additionally, NHTSA's [Pedestrian Safety Enforcement Operations: A How-To Guide](#) (2015) provides the following information on promising practices.

Effective Pedestrian Safety Enforcement Operations

- Collaborate with partners in business, civic organizations, and government agencies to expand resources and establish community buy-in;
- Coordinate with the judiciary to alert officials to planned operations and to verify that operations comply with local laws;
- Coordinate with engineering representatives to ensure locations are suitable for operations;
- Establish and nurture relationships with the media to increase the likelihood that positive messages will reach the public;
- Use public outreach (via partners wherever possible) to inform the public of program plans, enhancing public acceptance and increasing pedestrian safety awareness;
- Select appropriate locations for operations based on crash data, community input, logistical, and other considerations;
- Train officers in program goals, objectives, and procedures;
- Encourage integration of the procedures in daily operations;

- Brief all participating officers before operations begin on local laws pertaining to crosswalks and pedestrians;
- Begin a new enforcement effort by primarily issue warnings instead of citations;
- Conduct frequent operations and incorporate pedestrian safety into routine enforcement activities;
- Deploy radar/LIDAR units to collect information on speeding in conjunction with pedestrian infractions;
- Consider using video cameras to record infractions and to provide additional evidence;
- Ensure officers have educational materials to distribute which explain the nature and purpose of the operation;
- Cite both drivers and pedestrians, but focus on drivers, as they are the less vulnerable population;
- Prepare officers and key program personnel to anticipate and respond to complaints;
- Develop evaluation procedures that measure outputs (e.g., citations) and outcomes (e.g., reduced crashes, heightened awareness);
- Communicate results widely with partners, the media, and the public;
- Follow-up with the judiciary to make systematic improvements; and
- Follow-up with traffic engineers to make site changes or improvements (e.g., moving signage or painting crosswalks).

A Sampling of Additional Resources *

National Pedestrian Safety Campaign Guide (2011)

https://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/local_rural/pedcampaign/guide.cfm

Virginia Safe Routes to School http://www.vdot.virginia.gov/programs/tea/Rt2_school_pro.asp

Investigating and Improving Pedestrian Safety in An Urban Environment (2014)

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5005641/>

Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety on a College Campus; Crash and Conflict Analyses with Recommended Design Alternatives for Clemson University (2009)

http://tigerprints.clemson.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1552&context=all_theses

Crashes on and Near College Campuses: Comparative Analysis of Pedestrian and Bicyclist Safety (2014)

<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/01944363.2014.978354?src=recsys&journalCode=rjpa20&>

Development and Evaluation of A Social Marketing Approach to Reduce Pedestrian Injury Risk (2016)

http://injuryprevention.bmj.com/content/22/Suppl_2/A106.2

University of Colorado Pedestrian Safety Committee Final Report (2010)

https://www.colorado.edu/pts/sites/default/files/attached-files/pedestrian_safety_committee_report.pdf

University Community Concerns Lead to Traffic Safety Improvements

<https://vtnews.vt.edu/articles/2015/03/031815-vpa-safetyimprovements.html>

Pedestrian deaths are up in Tennessee: Be safe on campus (2015)

<https://news.vanderbilt.edu/2015/02/27/pedestrian-deaths-are-up-in-tn-be-safe/>

Campus Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety Plan – JMU

<http://www.jmu.edu/bikepedplan/files/final-repot-28apr14.pdf>

Pedestrian Safety - Virginia Tech <https://police.vt.edu/safety-security/safety-tips/pedestrian-safety.html>

Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety Week – VCU 2013

https://news.vcu.edu/article/Bicycle_and_Pedestrian_Safety_Awareness_Week_on_campus

Pedestrian Safety - VCU <https://police.vcu.edu/stay-safe/pedestrian-safety/>

VCU Ranks First in US for Traffic Safety Initiatives – 2014

https://www.campusafetyemagazine.com/news/virginia_commonwealth_u_ranks_1st_in_us_for_traffic_safety_initiatives/

*Please feel to share additional resource links for Virginia initiatives with VACP and we can update this posting.