

# A Walk About

September 10, 2015  
Gaithersburg, MD



**Sponsored by the Pedestrian, Bicycle, and  
Traffic Safety Advisory Committee (PBTSAC)**



**PEDESTRIAN SAFETY**

County Department of Transportation staff see what it is like to walk with a visual impairment.



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Mr. Berliner seems to be working hard to move forward.



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Cindy's wheelchair tips to the side while traversing sloped driveways.



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Hazardous “cross slopes” can cause people to tip or lose their balance. Slopes should not exceed 2%.



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Apex curb  
cuts channel  
pedestrians  
into  
roadways.



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**PEDESTRIAN SAFETY**





Ideal  
pathway





We noticed obstructions in the sidewalk including street signs and utility poles.



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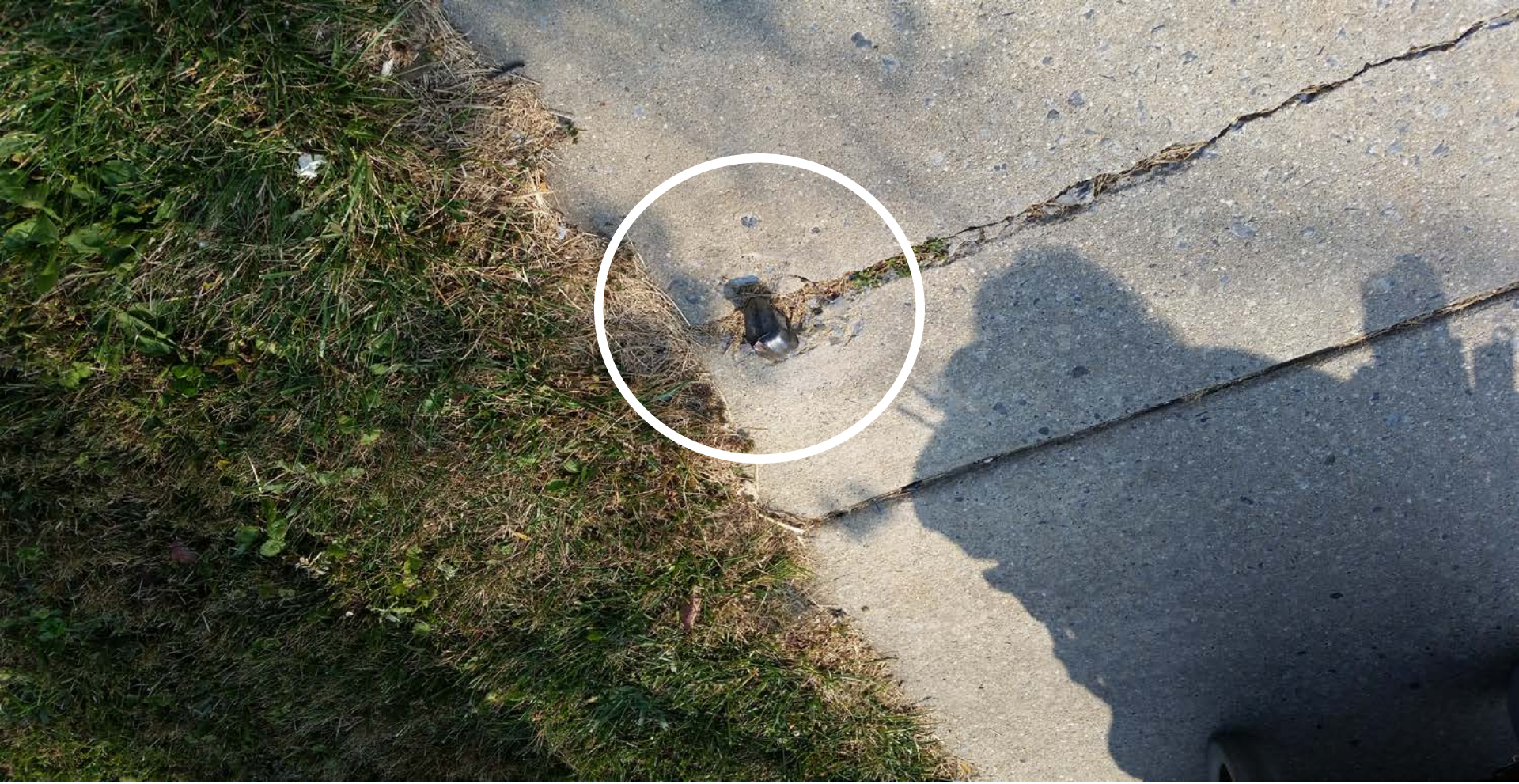


Sidewalks with uneven pavement challenge people using wheelchairs and people with low vision. Vertical differences should not exceed  $\frac{1}{4}$  in.



**PEDESTRIAN SAFETY**



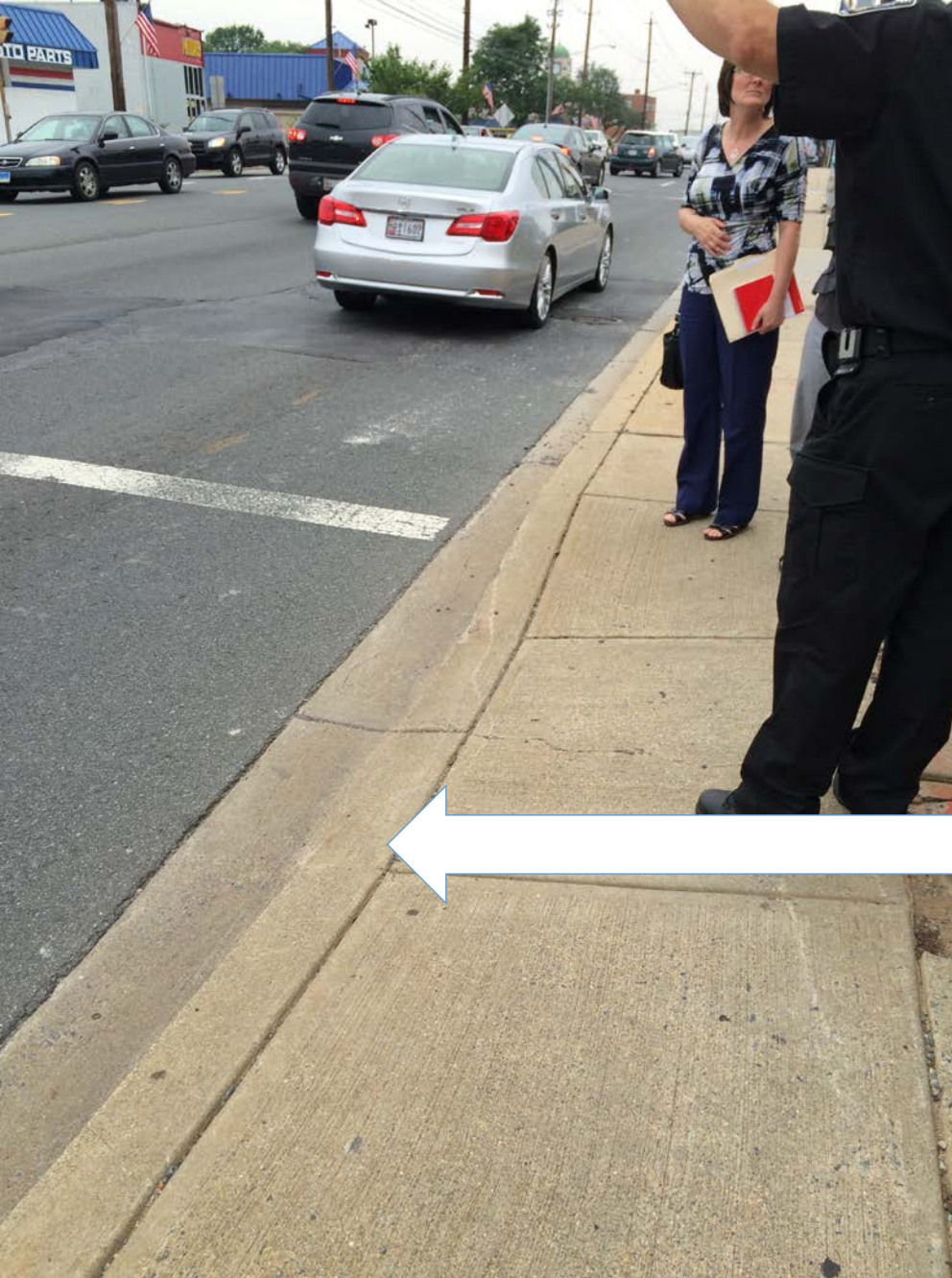


Objects in the sidewalk pose a hazard to everyone.



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Tight sidewalks and slopes pose hazards for people using wheelchairs.



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Wide sidewalks  
make it easier  
to be with  
other people.  
Sixty inches or  
wider is ideal.



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Often we could not access pedestrian signal buttons. Few signals were audible.



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Sometimes  
utility poles  
make call  
buttons  
inaccessible.



Pushbuttons should be located in predictable/consistent locations that are accessible.



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Here's a button  
that works!



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Earlier, we saw a man using a walker in the same lane of traffic Sgt. Scarff stood in.

Distance between marked crosswalks can create unsafe temptation.



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Confusing for  
pedestrians and  
drivers



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Walkway to the middle of traffic with no crosswalk or detectibles. If you couldn't see well or at all, would you know where to go?







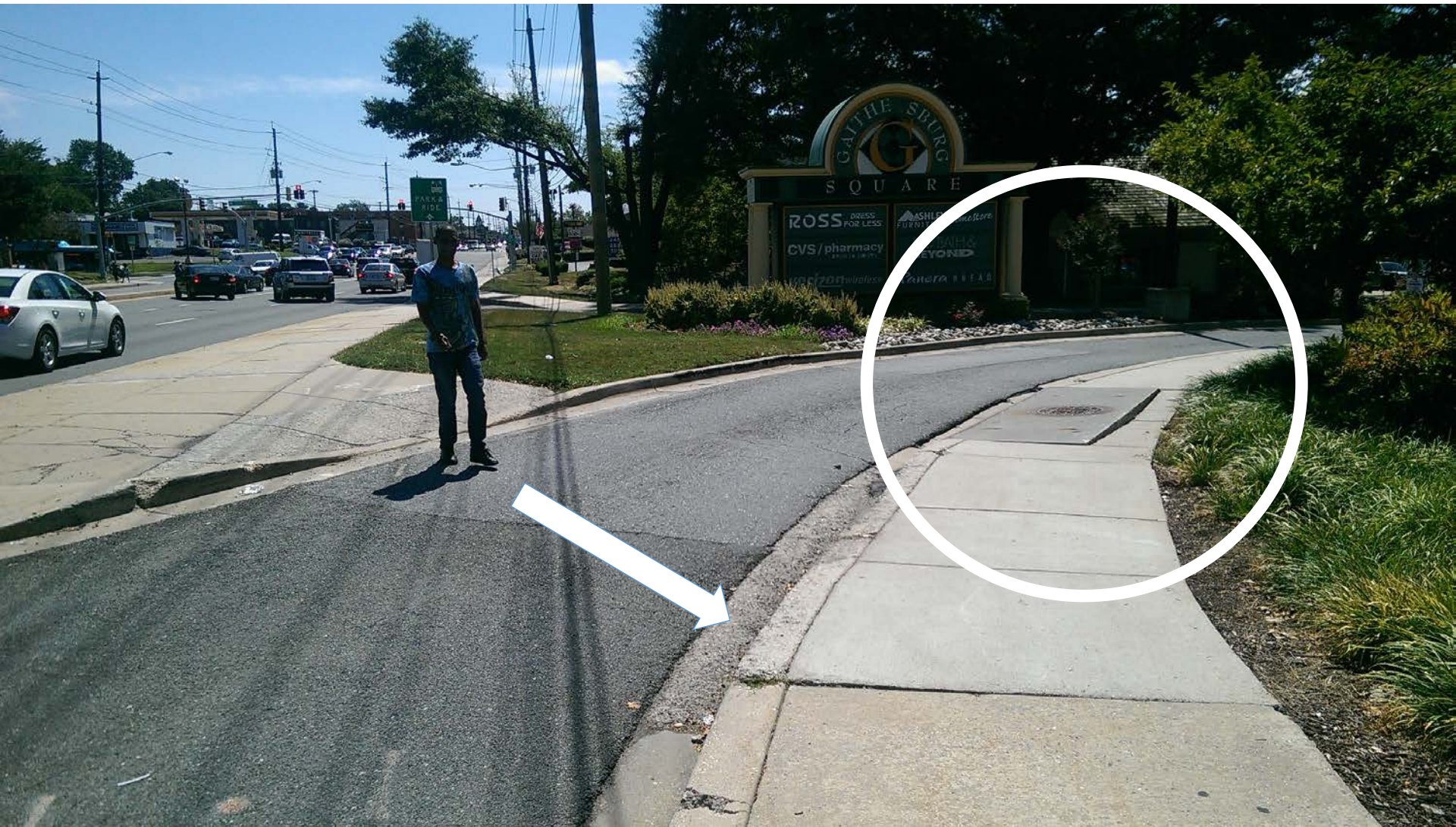
So what do you think could be done here?



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Obstructed sightlines for drivers. Lack of crosswalks and signage.



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Drivers and pedestrians both suffer when crosswalks aren't painted.



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Grass parkways between sidewalks and roads can create buffer zones that help keep people safe from stepping or rolling into traffic.



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Lack of crosswalks and tactile treatments



**PEDESTRIAN SAFETY**





Improperly placed  
walkways; lack of  
detectibles



**PEDESTRIAN SAFETY**





Oops! Stop  
lines after the  
stop sign.



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Pathway into  
traffic rather  
than sidewalk.



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Landscaping  
obstructs drivers'  
views of potential  
pedestrians



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Great example of ADA compliant construction, but hazardous materials remain from construction.



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Dealing with an  
unexpected  
mobility challenge!



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Back at Bohrer Park, we shared what we observed and brainstormed solutions.



**PEDESTRIAN SAFETY**



Ms. Wheelchair  
Maryland Kimberly  
Jordan-Gaskins seems  
hopeful that the  
County's pedestrian  
environment can be  
improved!



**PEDESTRIAN SAFETY**



**Ideas for action we heard include legislative & budget advocacy; public awareness; changes to the environment; professional training; and more.**

- Forward list of improvements needed to Councilman Katz per his request.
- Fix the confusing, two-ramp sidewalk adjacent to Gaithersburg Square.
- Connect with Gaithersburg about idea to more bus stops and add an accessible crosswalk on Odend'hal
- Re-do concrete and clean up construction materials at Perry Parkway and 355.
- Create some kind of safe haven for pedestrians trying to cross 355 between Chestnut and Odend'hal.



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## More ideas from our discussion

- Approach PEPCO about placement of utility poles and guide wires.  
(Committee task: identify locations of problem poles/wires.)
- Move pedestrian push button closer to the top of ramp at Odend'hal and Russell.
- Encourage pedestrians to call 311 to report problems they encounter and to follow up 2-3 weeks necessary with service request number as a reference.
- Monitor budgets related to 311, ADA improvements, sidewalks, signalization, and law enforcement.
- Advocate for a law requiring drivers to stop when pedestrians are *looking* to cross the street, not *in* the crosswalk as it is now.
- Seek input of senior and disability community groups in development of pedestrian master plan.



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# Timing is Everything: Idea for JCA's public awareness campaign

## **Drivers: Obey Maryland's "White Cane" Law!**

Yield right-of-way to pedestrians with guide dogs and those using wheelchairs, scooters, crutches, canes or walkers.

*Some people may have difficulty detecting oncoming traffic and need extra time to cross the road.*

*Perhaps we could include light-hearted illustrations like these?*



# PEDESTRIAN SAFETY