

## What is a Greenway?

A Greenway is a 'green' thoroughfare that gives priority to pedestrians, cyclists, rollerbladers, skateboarders, and other human-powered forms of transportation. It might take the form of a waterfront promenade, such as Morgantown's Caperton trail, a nature trail, or an urban walk along established city streets.

Greenways offer increased opportunities for urban recreation, while providing alternative ways to move through a city. They can enhance the experience of nature and city life, increase property values, reduce traffic congestion, and improve the personal health of community members. A well-planned network of connecting Greenways allows safe and pleasant human-powered movement throughout a city.

Greenways on existing municipal streets often allow motor vehicle traffic, but give priority to human-powered transportation. They might use **traffic-calming** measures, such as traffic circles or boulevard bulges to slow motor vehicles to the speed of a person on a bicycle or rollerblades, allowing all to share the same street in safety. They often feature on-street pedestrian amenities such as **water fountains, public art, or public benches**, to make for pleasant and interesting urban walks. Tree planting and **landscaping** efforts can help 'green' the routes, providing an oasis of nature amidst the concrete and pavement typical of many urban areas.

## Why Sunnyside?

Sunnyside sits nestled between WVU's downtown campus, Evansdale campus, and law school. It has long been a favorite location of students seeking housing near campus. The area boasts medium density housing for a young, active, and social community, but suffers from problems common to student neighborhoods: a deteriorating rental housing stock, and complaints of excessive noise, trash, partying, vandalism, illegal residents, and insufficient parking.

I envision two Greenways connecting WVU's Downtown and Evansdale campuses. The first would run through lower Sunnyside and Seneca, primarily along Grant Avenue; the second through upper Sunnyside and Evansdale, along Jones Avenue and Riverview Drive. These two would form an important part of Morgantown's developing alternative transportation network, and play a key role in re-establishing a livable mixed community in Sunnyside. They would encourage residents to travel through town using human-powered options instead of motor vehicles, resulting in decreased traffic congestion and a healthier environment and population.



Traffic circle

# Campus Connectors:

## *A Proposal for Sunnyside Greenways*

By Michael Bomford



Boulevard bulge and bench (top)



Public art and fountain (right)

Cycle signal (bottom)



From a presentation to a Citizens for Responsible Development Forum on the Future of Sunnyside, December, 2001

## The Grant Avenue Greenway

The **Grant Avenue Greenway** would run from WVU's new Life Sciences building to the Evansdale campus. It would connect with the Caperton trail, and the trail planned for the third phase of the Square at Falling Run. Grant Avenue already has the advantage of being a relatively flat, low-traffic street. A few changes could make it a Greenway:

1. Sidewalks would be installed along both sides of the entire length of the street.
2. Motor vehicle traffic would continue to move only in one direction, but the street would be opened to human-powered traffic moving in both directions.
3. On-street use of rollerblades and skateboards would be permitted.
4. Traffic calming measures would be installed to slow motor-vehicle traffic.

A rough path already exists on the hill between the west end of Grant Avenue and the President's House. This path would be properly drained and surfaced with crushed limestone or cedar mulch. A staircase would be installed at the top of the path, where the hill is steepest. A bicycle rack would be placed at the base of the hill for cyclists wishing to walk up the hill, and narrow ramps would be placed along the staircase, for those who choose to walk their bicycles to or from the Evansdale campus. Switchbacks could allow dedicated cyclists to bike to the top. Lighting would be installed along the path for nighttime use. At the President's House this path would join with an existing path offering access to the Evansdale greenhouse, library, engineering, agriculture and forestry buildings.

## The Jones Avenue Greenway

The **Jones Avenue Greenway** would run from Falling Run to the Evansdale campus. It would connect the Square at Falling Run with the residential areas of upper Sunnyside and Evansdale, and WVU's law school, football stadium, and Evansdale campuses. Like Grant Avenue, most of Jones Avenue is flat, with little traffic. The biggest challenge in creating a workable Greenway along this route would be in converting the steep, narrow section near the south end of Jones Avenue to allow two-way human-powered traffic to cross Stewart Street and connect with Falling Run.

Overcoming this hurdle would allow human-powered traffic to travel the wide, quiet, relatively flat street past the North Avenue Firehall, where it connects with a path leading past WVU's Law School to a staircase down to Riverview Drive. The installation of a narrow ramp along this staircase would allow cyclists to walk their bicycles down to Riverview Drive. A pedestrian or cyclist-activated crossing light at University Avenue would enable a safe crossing to the wide, quiet, level street leading through the residential area of Evansdale to the President's House, where the two proposed Greenways would merge.

