



Salisbury University's

PRESIDENTIAL CITIZEN SCHOLARS PROGRAM

PCS WHITEPAPER

ROAD SAFETY AND TRANSPORTATION EQUITY ON SALISURY'S WEST SIDE

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MEET THE SCHOLARS



LaMaree James

A senior graduating in May with a degree in Environmental Studies and a minor in Communications. On campus, serving as Cru's Community and Events and Prayer leader, organizing gatherings and fostering connections among students.



Stephora Cesar Alberi

Computer Science major with a track in Computer Network and Cyber Security, minor in Data Science and Mathematics, member of Upsilon Pi Epsilon, and Caribbean Student Association SGA Representative.



Andersen Herman

Chemistry major in the Pre-Health professional track, minor in Biology. Expect to graduate in May 2025. Leadership roles: Henson Student Leadership Advisory Council, Global Issues Fellow, and Summer 2024 Orientation Leader.

INTRODUCTION

Our Presidential Citizen Scholars (PCS) Capstone Project was to investigate road safety and transportation equity on the West Side of Salisbury, Maryland. Our primary collaborator was the City of Salisbury, especially the manager of transportation. The city of Salisbury wanted to work on the Vision Zero initiative. The goal of Vision Zero is to eliminate traffic fatalities and serious bodily injuries by 2030 (Vision Zero).

The City expected to receive a grant in the Spring of 2024, so they wanted to focused on the Westside of Salisbury to see how they can implement some features on the roads to improve transportation safety in the area. The Westside is a marginalized community with numerous Haitian and Hispanic immigrants. The city noticed a gap between their targeted population and the city. That is where we come in.

To aid in this effort, we created an anonymous, confidential Institutional Review Board (IRB) survey under protocol number 239 available in English Haitian Creole, and Spanish, to gain insight from the community to communicate their opinions as it relates to the safety of pedestrians, walkers, and cyclists.

Furthermore, we inquired about their most common transportation method. Additionally, we asked where they would like a bus stop added on the West side since not a single bus stop was present in the area during the survey collection process.

RESEARCH AND DATA COLLECTION

To encourage people to fill out the survey to get data, we first had to establish trust with the community because the immigrant population do not often trust government officials.

We distributed the survey on LinkedIn, Instagram, SU Today, Salisbury News letter, and Facebook.

To further promote the survey, we went to the World of Life center, a Haitian church on the Westside where many people were eager to take the survey.

We went to Culturefest. We participated in ThirdFriday downtown twice. The first time was to promote the survey, and the second was to promote the new bus added on the West side due to the survey data.

After collecting and analyzing the data, we shared it with the community, the City of Salisbury Council, the transportation manager team, Posters on the Bay, Shore Transit, and SUSRC.

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DATA RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

Delving deep into the data results of our survey, we divided our analysis between the entire population and a subset thereof. The subset, drawn from our population, consists of frequent visitors and potential residents of the West Side. Overall, we received responses from 273 participants in our survey. However, we require data from respondents who provided answers beyond question 1 ("Are you 18 years or older?") to conduct a meaningful analysis. Utilizing Jupyter Notebook and Python libraries such as pandas, numpy, and matplotlib, we successfully filtered out responses that only addressed question 1. Following this filtration, our survey comprised a total of 268 respondents who provided answers to subsequent questions, affording us the opportunity to analyze the data we truly seek.

Disclaimer

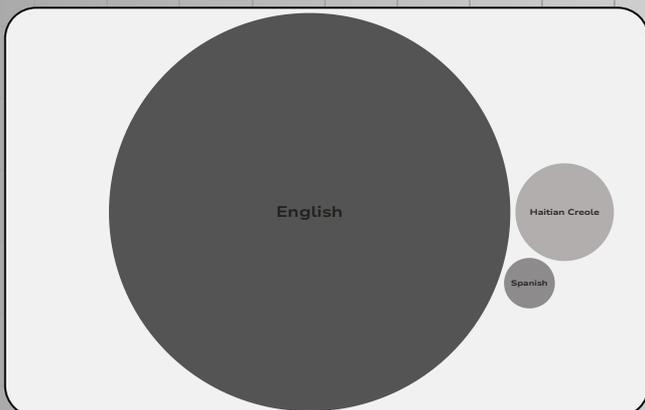
Before proceeding, it is important to note that in our survey, all questions were optional for respondents to answer. This means that respondents had the choice to skip any question they didn't wish to answer. As a result, you may notice variations in the total number of respondents for each question.

The Population

Among the 268 individuals who participated in our survey, we observed that 3% (249) responded in English, 6% (15) in Haitian Kreyol, and approximately 1% (4) in Spanish. In response to the question "Where is your place of residence?", 75% of the 240 respondents indicated that they live in Salisbury, MD, while the remaining 25% reside in other parts of the Eastern Shore such as Fruitland, Delmar, Pocomoke, etc., with only a few outliers.

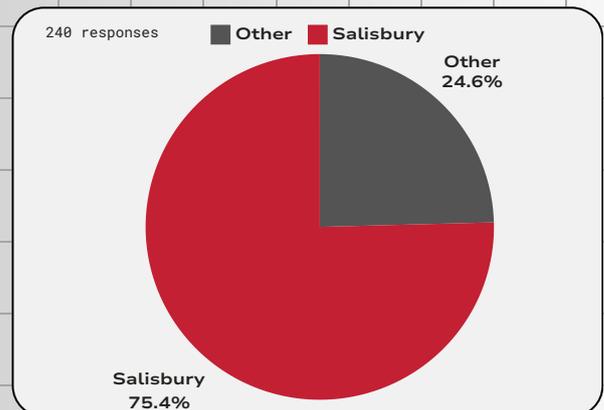
ROAD SAFETY SURVEY OUTREACH

The Road Safety survey received 268 total surveys in three languages: Haitian Creole (15), Spanish (4), and English (249).



WHERE IS YOUR PLACE OF RESIDENCE?

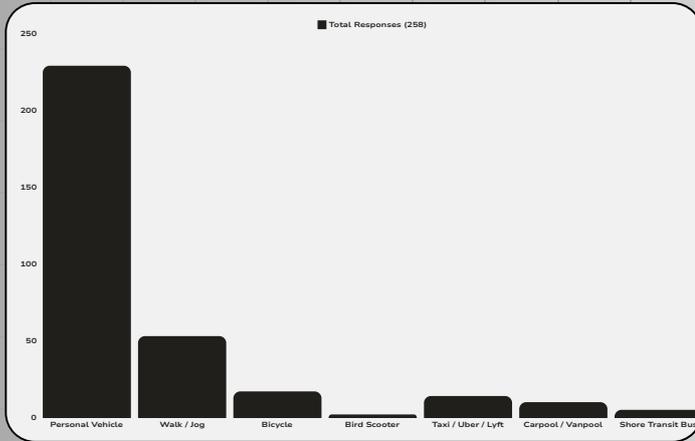
The first survey question was: "Where is your place of residence?"



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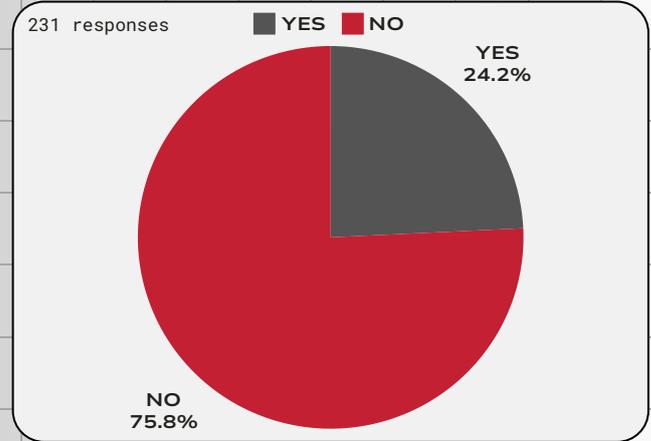
PERSONAL TRANSPORTATION:

"Generally, what is your most common form of personal transportation?"



ARE ROADS SAFE FOR WALKING?

In our survey, we ask: "Do you believe the roads on the West side of Salisbury are safe for individuals who walk in the area?"



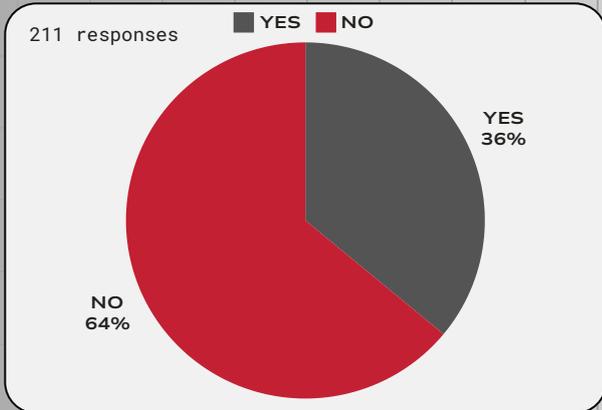
After that question, we asked participants about their preferred mode of transportation within the city. A total of 258 individuals responded, with 229 mentioning their personal vehicles as their primary mode of transportation, 53 indicating walking/jogging, 17 reporting bicycle usage, 14 mentioning taxi/Uber/Lyft services, 10 reporting carpooling/vanpooling, 5 indicating the use of the Shore Transit Bus (Eastern Shore Regional Transit Agency), and 2 reporting the use of Bird Scooters (as shown in Figure 2). Furthermore, when asked on question 5, "Do you believe the roads on the West side of Salisbury are safe for individuals who walk in the area?" 231 respondents answered. Among them, 76% (175) expressed concerns, indicating that safety

improvements are necessary for pedestrian safety, while the remaining 24% (56) believe the roads are currently safe for walking. Tracing back on respondents who identified as walkers/joggers, we analyzed that 38 out of 53 of those participants answered no to question 5. Similarly, for question 6, "Do you believe the roads on the West side of Salisbury are safe for individuals who bike in the area?" 211 participants answered, with 64% (135) of those responses answering no, indicating that safety improvements are needed for biking, while the rest of the 36% (76) answered yes, they believe the roads are safe for biking. Tracing back on respondents who identified as bikers, we analyzed that 10 out of 17 of those participants answered no to question 6.

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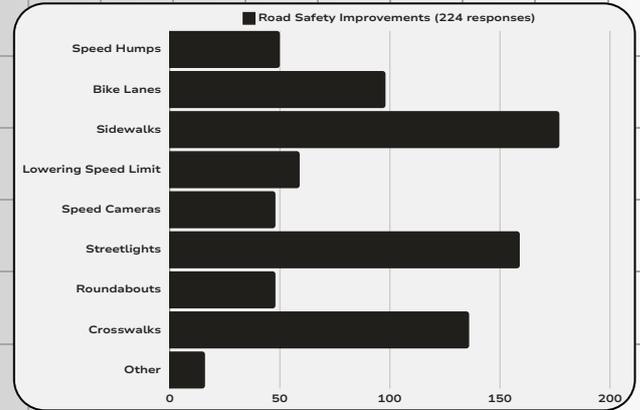
ARE ROADS SAFE FOR BIKING?

In our survey, we ask: "Do you believe the roads on the West side of Salisbury are safe for individuals who bike in the area?"



WHAT TO IMPLEMENT TO ROADS?

In our survey, we ask: "Which of the following would you like to see applied to improve road safety by calming traffic on the West side of Salisbury?"



Moving on to question 7, we asked our respondents on their preferred implementations to enhance road safety on the West side. Out of 224 responses, Sidewalks garnered the highest support with 177 selections, followed by Streetlights (159), Crosswalks (136), Bike lanes (98), lowering the speed limit (59), Speed humps (50), Roundabouts (48), and Speed cameras (48). Additionally, 16 respondents provided other suggestions.

Lastly, we shift the focus of our survey to bus stops. Upon developing these questions, we found that there were no known stops on the West side of Salisbury. Consequently, we asked our participants where they would like to see one added in the West Side. Out of 199 responses, the most popular choices were Cypress Road (Save A Lot parking lot) with 106 selections, Isabella Street

(Habitat for Humanity) with 102, Lake Street (Village of Hope and Homes on Johnsons Pond) with 92, Lake Street (Lake Street Park) with 84, Gateway Street (Gateway Village) with 70, and West Road (Westbrook Commons and Coty Cox) with 69. Additionally, 24 respondents felt no stops were necessary, while 14 provided other location suggestions.

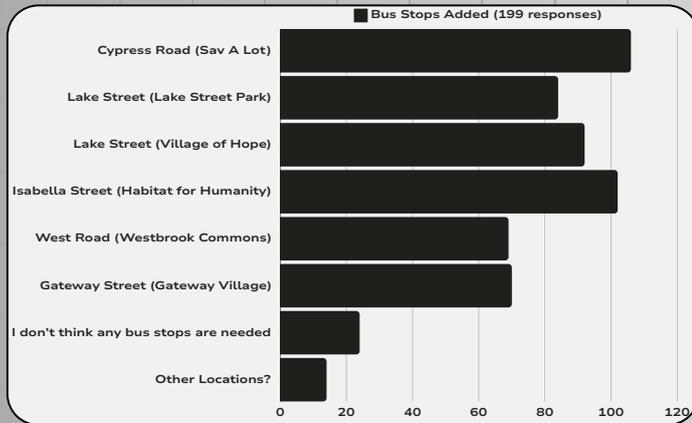
The Sample: Residents and Frequent Visitors

To thoroughly understand our target audience, we specifically sampled individuals who are frequent visitors to, or potential residents of, the West Side. In question 3 of our survey, we queried respondents about their frequency of visits to the West Side, aiming to identify those most impacted by its conditions. Participants rated their visit frequency on a scale from zero to four, where zero indicated never

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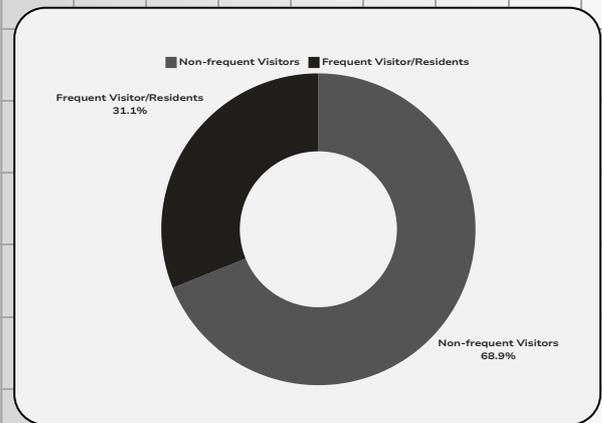
POTENTIAL BUS STOP LOCATIONS

In our survey, we ask: "Where would you like to see a bus stop added on the West side of Salisbury?"



TARGETED AUDIENCE

Of the 273 respondents surveyed, 85 indicated that they were frequent visitors or residents of Salisbury's West Side.



visiting and four indicated always visiting. Those selecting three or higher were categorized as frequent visitors or potential residents. From this analysis, we identified 85 such respondents. Among this group, 79 completed the survey in English, 5 in Haitian Kreyol, and only 1 in Spanish.

Qualitative Analysis

As part of our analysis, we have considered both quantitative and qualitative data. In addition to analyzing the numerical results, we took into account the comments and insights provided by our respondents. We asked them to share their thoughts on some of the questions in the survey and at the end we asked them for any additional comments regarding road safety in the west side overall. Some of the noteworthy comments we received include, "We need more

public transportation", "More public transportation would enhance pedestrian safety", and "We require more crosswalks and safer traffic signals". Moreover, we analyzed and filtered the comments made by individuals who were part of our frequent visitors/residents sample. Here are some notable comments that we analyzed: "There are no sidewalks or shoulders on Jersey Road or West Road extended or the side streets in the 'Reservation.' There are no streetlights, and it's very dangerous," "Children walking need better sidewalks and perhaps flashing signs," "New sidewalks are definitely needed. I often see people walking on the shoulder of the road because the sidewalks are messed up.", and in Haitian Creole "Paske manke twotwa, manke bis pou moun pran siw pran yo kote". Which



translates to “There’s a lack of sidewalks, lack of buses for people to take if you need to go somewhere.”

Going further into the qualitative context of the data, we utilized our Python library to perform word counts on significant terms. Our analysis revealed that "sidewalks" were mentioned 55 times, "bike lanes" 34 times, "bus" 22 times, "streetlights" 6 times, and "crosswalks" 17 times.

CALL TO ACTION

Join us in spreading the word about the newly implemented bus stop on Cypress Road! Our collaborative efforts have brought this vital transportation option to the West Side, thanks to engagements with key stakeholders like the City’s Department of Transportation

Manager, City Council, Mayor of Salisbury, Charles County Senator Arthur Ellis, Salisbury/Wicomico County Metropolitan Planning Organization, Shore Transit, and the county's Deputy of Transportation.

Now, let's ensure that everyone in the community knows about this resource. Help us distribute flyers in English and Haitian Creole to reach those who need reliable and accessible transportation options. Together, we can make a difference in our community by ensuring everyone has access to essential services.

FUTURE WORKS

Our project represents a significant step towards enhancing transportation accessibility and addressing

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community needs on the West Side. However, our aspirations extend beyond our current achievements. We envision future scholars leveraging our work as a foundation for broader initiatives within our community.

There are several avenues for future research and action that merit attention. Firstly, we encourage scholars to extend their efforts to engage with additional minority communities, specifically the Hispanic and Korean communities. By doing so, researchers can address road safety concerns specific to these communities and gather invaluable feedback to inform future interventions.

Furthermore, establishing connections and partnerships with county authorities is crucial for ensuring the equitable provision of resources throughout the entire West Side area. Future scholars should focus on fostering collaborative relationships with local government entities to advocate for and facilitate the implementation of transportation infrastructure and services that meet the diverse needs of the community.

In essence, we invite future scholars to build upon our project,

expanding its scope and impact to create a more inclusive and accessible environment for all residents of the West Side. By embracing these opportunities for collaboration and innovation, we can collectively work towards a brighter and more equitable future for our community.

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THANK YOU!

Stephora Cesar Alberi, Andersen Herman, and LaMaree James would like to express our appreciation to the following people who have contributed significant time and energy to our Presidential Citizen Scholars Capstone Project over the past three semesters. Thank you for your support and guidance!

COMMUNITY LEADERS

Will White (Former Transportation Manager, City of Salisbury)

Jon Wilson (Transportation Manager, City of Salisbury)

Reverend Roosevelt Toussaint (Senior Pastor at Word of Life Center)

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Dr. Carolyn Lepre (President of SU)

Dr. Laura Villalobos (SU Assistant Professor of Economics and Finance and Environmental Studies)



The Institute for Public Affairs and Civic Engagement (PACE) is a resource center where the SU community, local government, nonprofit and public groups can access knowledge and information. PACE draws on the interdisciplinary expertise of SU faculty, students, staff, and community partners. As a nonpartisan contributor, the Institute organizes projects and programs that are customized to fit the particular needs of the Eastern Shore community. For more information about PACE, visit www.salisbury.edu/pace (or email PACE@salisbury.edu).



The PCS Program prepares students to be community leaders through civic scholarship and community action. Over three semesters, Scholars meet with members of the community to identify and research an issue that will culminate in a Capstone Project. Scholars are supported through Salisbury University's Institute for Public Affairs and Civic Engagement (PACE) and the Office of the President. SU's highest purpose is "to empower students with knowledge, skills, and core values that contribute to lifelong learning and active citizenship in a democratic society." This elite program builds on SU's highest purpose by offering students of all majors and disciplines the opportunity to engage in the life of the community, develop habits of democratic citizenship, and become experienced civic leaders. The PCS Program operates under the direction and guidance of Ryan Weaver, PACE/IDIS Lecturer (rvweaver@salisbury.edu).