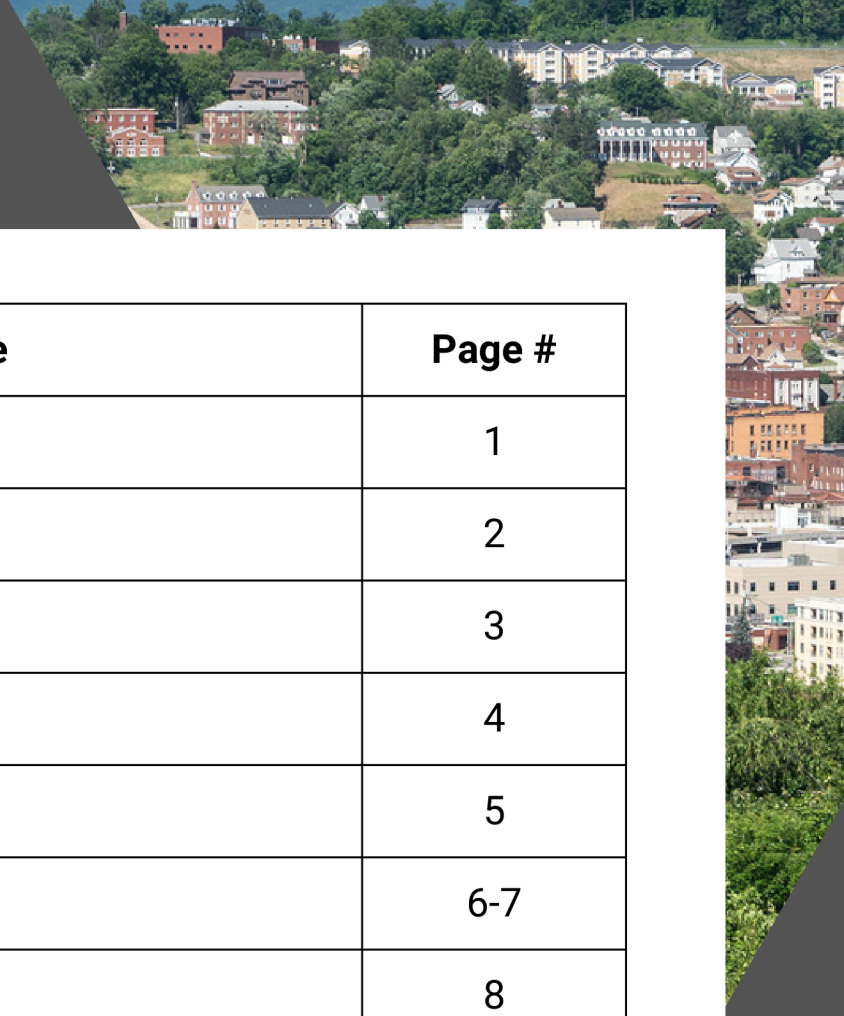
The City of
MORGANTOWN
The Journey Starts Here



2023 YEAR IN REVIEW

TABLE OF CONTENTS



Section Title	Page #
Introduction	1
Airport	2
Arts & Culture	3
BOPARC	4
City Clerk	5
City Manager	6-7
Communications	8
Development Services	9
Engineering & Public Works	10
Finance	11
Fire Department	12
Human Resources	13
Information Technology	14
Parking Authority	15
Police Department	16
Urban Landscapes	17
Special Thanks	18

INTRODUCTION



The City of Morgantown experienced a lot of growth and transition in the past year. We successfully navigated the relocation of multiple departments amidst major renovation projects, all while transferring to a new system for managing payroll processes, resulting in increased efficiency and enhanced productivity. Throughout 2024, we will continue to build off of the successes listed in this document and further our efforts to improve our services and become more transparent and accountable to our citizens by upholding our core values.

The information in this document is but a snapshot of the services city staff delivered to our citizens in the last year. Morgantown continues to be a leader in the state for its community engagement, which was pertinent to updating the comprehensive plan, dubbed *Morgantown 2033*. The City also saw great engagement from the community amidst the rebranding project, which resulted in a brighter and more welcoming brand image. These are just a few things that our community can be proud of as we navigate through 2024.



Airport

The Morgantown Municipal Airport serves North Central West Virginia and surrounding areas. The establishment of the Morgantown Municipal Airport (MGW) dates back to 1935 and is due in large part to the work and vision of city leaders, Today, MGW offers daily flights to Washington Dulles Airport (IAD) and Pittsburgh International Airport (PIT) in Pennsylvania accessing nearly 1,000 connecting flights to domestic and international destinations.

Airport Modifications

Security Checkpoint Upgrades including new screening equipment, family style restroom added to holding room, and new boarding gate for easier passenger flow. The screening area was in need of customer service upgrades to allow customers a more comfortable experience. The minor changes made during this project, provide some of those needs. Future funding is needing to provide more services such as phone and computer charging capabilities, paging system with music throughout terminal, etc.

Runway Extension Project

Phase 2 of the Runway Extension Project was completed in 2023 and included tree clearing and pond remediation. Phase 3 began in January, and includes excavation, gathering of material rock and demo of existing structures. Phase 4 is currently in the design stages. The timeline has currently been extended up to 7 phases.

Welcoming New Business

In 2023, construction of a new corporate hangar began at the airport. The hangar will provide aircraft storage, maintenance, and aircraft detailing for a potential business. this is the first of hopefully many new hangars and tenants to come to the airport. Additionally, a lease was secured and ground was broken for a new car wash and auto detailing facility, which will be located at the intersection of the Mileground and the Airport Entrance.



Arts & Culture

The Arts and Cultural Development Department strives to enhance the vitality of Morgantown and the quality of life for all residents and visitors by supporting an environment where arts and cultural organizations thrive, artists and culture bearers are celebrated and supported, and people of all ages enjoy opportunities for expression and experiencing the arts.

Ruby Amphitheater Programming

Over 42,000 people were in attendance of the Ruby Summer Concert Series throughout 2023, with reported visitors from over 12 different states. The Concert Series was voted Best Festival in the Best of Morgantown competition, for the second year in a row, as well as Runner up for Best Live Music Venue in the Best of West Virginia competition. Additionally, the new Ruby Movie Series was a success, with nearly 1,000 people in attendance throughout the duration of the programming.

Metropolitan Theatre Success

In 2023, the Metropolitan Theatre had a total attendance of just over 36,00 people. The year concluded with four back-to-back sold out performances by local artist Charles Wesley Godwin. The venue was voted Best Live Music Venue for the second year in a row in the Best of Morgantown competition, and it recently gained approval for the installation of new drapes and a full replacement of the lighting system.

New Museum Manager

Hiring a Museum Manager has allowed the Morgantown History Museum to create new rotating exhibits, like the recently-installed coal mining exhibit. The museum has started hosting events, such as the “Cookies and Cocoa with Santa”, which had over 100 people in attendance. They have also begun building mutual partnerships with other businesses in the community, most recently partnering with The Shack.



BOPARC's mission is to provide quality recreational services, spaces and experiences that inspire community engagement, connection and an appreciation for the natural world.

Upgrades to Wiles Hill Facility

BOPARC completed upgrades to the interior of the Wiles Hill Community Center and added to its programmatic options in order to improve visitor experience and provide opportunities for group engagement, spaces that promote community gatherings, and facilitate lifelong learning. Enhancements include Studio 287 upgrades, the addition of the Deb D. Palmer Gallery, replacement fitness equipment (old equipment was purchased in used condition almost 20 years ago), the addition of a community cafe, and additional program opportunities in the areas of arts, fitness, wellness, pottery and community events.

Continued Improvement of Parks

In 2023, BOPARC completed upgrades to the grass area at Krepps Pool, providing a larger space for patrons within the fenced area. Upgrades were also made to the ballfields at Krepps Park and White Park, including the installation of new fencing, replacement of auxiliary buildings, and grading and leveling of surfaces. Additionally, playground equipment was replaced and updated at King Street Park, Suncrest Mini Park, and Wiles Hill Park. Lastly, ADA accessibility improvements were made to the sidewalks at Jack Roberts Park and Wiles Hill Park.

Dorsey Knob Enhancements

The lodge at Dorsey Knob recently received a new deck, outdoor seating, and replaced wood siding, as well as aesthetic and code improvements. A significant land-slip was also repaired at Dorsey Knob Park in 2023. These enhancements were necessary in order to enhance rental opportunities and visitor experience as well as replace failing structural components.



City Clerk

The City Clerk's office reports to the City Manager and serves as the administrative support to City Council. The City Clerk is the Record Keeper of Council meetings and minutes, deeds, ordinances, resolutions, and more.

Fire & Police Swear-Ins

During 2023, the City Clerks office completed 6 Morgantown Fire Department and 7 Morgantown Police Department swearing of office ceremonies. Police officers and firefighters affirm the oath of office, expressing commitment and intent to respect the constitutional rights in discharging the duties of a law enforcement officer or firefighter.

Board & Commission Appointments

While the City Clerks office receives many applications for Boards and Commissions, during 2023 they completed and appointed 41 different members through oath of office ceremonies. The City of Morgantown relies on volunteers serving in these critical roles to help govern the city.

Municipal Government Week

Organized by our City Clerk's office as part of Municipal Government Week, students from Eastwood Elementary had the opportunity to explore a variety of city vehicles and more during the first-ever Touch a Truck event to learn more about municipal government operations! Staff members from the Police Department, Fire Department, Municipal Airport, IT Department, Engineering & Public Works, and Parking Authority participated.

Successful Election

The City Clerk's office facilitated another successful municipal election for City Council members in 2023. The Clerk enhanced advertising efforts with a banner across High Street, fliers in MUB invoices, and overall increased signage. Voter turnout was higher than years 2019 and 2022, and a voter satisfaction survey received positive responses!



City Manager

The City Manager is responsible for carrying out policy enacted by the Council, overseeing the administration of the City, and maintaining inter-governmental relationships.The City Manager's Office provides staff support for several City initiatives and can provide general information and direct you to the appropriate party as necessary.

Grant Funding

In 2023, the city received over 10 million dollars in grant funding to help assist with various projects. The city's grant writer recently secured funding for cancer screenings for our Morgantown Fire Department and received $6M in Congressionally Directed Spending (CDS) to fund a replacement facility for the current South High Fire Station, which is one of the largest projects of the year.

Cityworks Creation

The City Manager's office, through the GIS Division, has been in the process of implementing Cityworks asset management and digital access to permitting and business licensing in spring 2024. We have also had continuing success with GIS interns as we support real-world opportunities for students training in GIS.

New FOIA Policy

The City Attorney developed a new, improved policy for sending and responding to FOIA requests. The new policy streamlines the process and outlines the necessary steps in a more concise way. This will ensure that the City continues to operate transparently, while limiting the burden on staff in responding to these requests.



City Manager:
City Ambassadors

The City Ambassador program, a division of the City Manager's Office, supports a safe, vibrant, and welcoming environment in our historic downtown and riverfront area. Ambassadors help with litter control, safety escorting, resource referral, beautification projects, event staffing, and much more.

WVU Partnership

During 2023, the City Ambassadors gave their first tour to incoming WVU freshman. The 2-hour tour was launched in the Fall, with around 100 students and their mentors in attendance. The tour will now be offered to all incoming WVU students as part of the Welcome Week! Embracing Morgantown's town & gown relationship is vital to the development of the greater community.

City Clean-Up Events

Morgantown City Ambassadors continue to organize and implement large-scale downtown clean-ups on a regular basis along with City of Morgantown employees, local volunteers, sister agencies, and WVU organizations, including fraternities, sororities and Communications 112 students. Over the last year there were approximately 24 clean ups completed and 8,485 pounds of trash were collected between clean up events and routine cleaning.

Hospitality & Tourism

The Ambassadors continued to be present at nearly every City event, including the Arts Walks, Ruby Summer Concert Series, Moonlight Markets, the Ruby Movie Series, parades, Hops on the Mon, the Capitol Tree Event, new business Ribbon Cuttings, Handmade Market, Downtown Trick or Treating, Small Business Saturday, Wine and Jazz Festival, Tattoo Expos, WVU Diversity and Equity event, along with most Downtown merchant Pop-Ups and MAC events.



Communications

The Communications Department is responsible for unifying City employees and departments, promoting and strengthening city businesses and organizations, and ensuring that city council, public meeting, and event information is efficiently communicated to the Greater Morgantown area.

Full Rebrand of The City

In 2023, the Communications Department led an effort to update all of the City of Morgantown's branding elements. As a result, the City of Morgantown now has a new logo, tagline, style guide, and more. Some implementation of new branding elements has already begun and can be found on signage outside 430 Spruce St, decals on city owned vehicles, city flags, as well as first round of apparel for various departments.

Now on Instagram

The City of Morgantown finally has an official Instagram account! The City has upheld a presence on several digital platforms for many years, including Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and even Nextdoor - but it lacked an Instagram presence. Meanwhile, studies show that Instagram is one of the top 5 most used social media platforms on the Internet. Thus, creating an Instagram profile for the City of Morgantown was integral to reaching all necessary audiences. In just one year, the account has already garnered 1,000+ followers.

New MFD Account

Meta, the parent company of Facebook, unfortunately suspended the Morgantown Fire Department's account for unknown and unforeseen reasons. The Communications Department worked swiftly and proactively to recreate a Facebook account for the Morgantown Fire Department, which has already gained nearly 1,000 cumulative page likes and follows.



Development Services

The Development Services Department is responsible for assisting clients through all stages of the development process. Code Enforcement, a division of Development Services, ensures that buildings and rental units are safe for occupation.

Morgantown 2033 Plan

In accordance with State Code, municipalities in West Virginia are required to update their Comprehensive Plans every ten years. The last plan update for Morgantown was completed in 2013. Thus, staff finalized the Comprehensive Plan Update (Morgantown 2033) which was just adopted by City Council. The Comprehensive Plan includes important aspects that will impact how Morgantown looks and functions in the future.

Addressed Blighted Structures

Staff worked to address blighted structures in 2023, with several of them demolished or in the process of being demolished, including 1993 and 1997 Listravia Avenue, 461 Morgan Street, and 535 Richwood Avenue. Removing dilapidated structures is important to ensure that neighborhoods are not negatively impacted by careless property owners.

Collaboration with Main Street

Development Services staff worked with Main Street Morgantown and other stakeholder groups to facilitate the arrival of the US Capital Christmas Tree in Downtown Morgantown in November. Additionally, staff worked with Main Street Morgantown to launch the Morgantown ReStored Program, which enlivens underused properties through arts and creative placemaking.



Engineering & Public Works

The Engineering & Public Works Department is responsible for the design, supervision and inspection of all street, highway, sidewalk and bike path construction, management of city public right-of-ways and city-owned facilities; and the preparation and carrying out of traffic and crash analysis studies.

City Hall & Norwood Renovations

Construction is nearing completion on City Hall and the Norwood Fire station, which means staff will be transitioning back to these locations soon. These public facilities, which house integral functions of the City of Morgantown, had not undergone major renovations in nearly 50 years. The design phase is nearing completion on the Public Safety Building and the City Garage as well.

Woodburn Playground Completion

A full replacement of the Woodburn Playground was completed this year, including mobilization, demolition, excavation, drainage, asphalt, concrete paving, erosion and sedimentation control. The entire site received playground upgrades with new equipment and there are plans to improve parking, accessibility, and other park amenities in the future as well.

Paving Projects

In 2023, 9.57 miles of road were paved and repaired by our Public Works department. In addition, a number of sidewalks throughout the community were repaired/replaced.



Finance

The Finance Department administers Business Licensing, Taxation and City Service Fees and supports all other City departments by performing all budgetary, billing, collecting, and payment functions.

Updated Tax System

New World, the current DOS-based system used for running B&O taxes, is no longer sold and will soon no longer be supported. Thus, the Finance Department has signed an agreement to implement Edmunds GovTech, an improved system to replace New World.

Streamlined Services

In 2023, the Finance Department began the process of moving all business licensing to the Cityworks platform. Cityworks is a software that helps organizations automate business processes and gives agencies direct control of these functions. Designed to simplify applications for customers and streamline workflow for staff, Cityworks helps local governments deliver better service to their communities.

Clean Audit

The purpose of a municipal audit is to verify the accuracy of a city's financial statements by systematically examining the sources and uses of public funds. The Finance Department received an exceptionally clean audit in March 2023. Auditors identified no findings or compliance issues with the City of Morgantown's financial statements.



Fire

The Morgantown Fire Department (MFD) is comprised of 60 sworn members and one civilian Administrative Assistant. The Administrative side of the department consists of the Fire Chief, Fire Marshal and Operations Captain.

Cancer Screenings

Through collaboration with the City Manager's office, MFD received a grant to the amount of $57,000 to fund cancer screenings for firefighters, including multi-cancer early detection blood testing and comprehensive diagnostic ultrasounds. Statistically, firefighters are disproportionately affected by occupational cancer – it is the number one cause of firefighters' line-of-duty deaths. Firefighters are 9% more likely to get cancer than the general population, and 14% more likely to die from cancer than the general population. Thus, these cancer screenings were paramount to ensuring the long-term health and safety of our Morgantown firefighters.

Fire Station Updates

In 2023, renovations to the Norwood Fire Station began. Enhancements to the facility will allow for separate sleeping quarters for staff, a dedicated exercise area, and address drainage issues with the site. City administration also started the process of finalizing purchase and moving forward with design of a replacement facility for the South High Station, which would allow for a larger footprint to accommodate modern sized equipment and staffing levels.

Ladder Truck Replacement

According to the National Fire Protection Association, any service vehicle over 25 years old should be retired from service. MFD has solidified the acquisition of a brand new fire truck, which is replacing a 1996 ladder truck as a front-line vehicle.



Human Resources

The Human Resources (HR) Department manages payroll, the process of hiring new employees, medical and dental insurance forms, as well as working with all employees on questions related to all employee benefits.

New Human Resources Information System (HRIS)

In 2023, HR worked with Paylocity to create the City's HRIS. This new system will continue to streamlines processes like onboarding, recruiting and payroll for employees, managers, and administration as well as provide easy access to information like timecards and employee documents.

Health Now Administrative Services

The City completed an RFQ process to select a new third-party administrator for our employees' health insurance. The selected group, Health Now Administrative Services, gives employees the benefit of the Blue Cross, Blue Shield network, with the flexibility the City needs as a small, self-funded employer. The City is finalizing its first paperless benefit Open Enrollment period for its employees and retirees.

Paylocity

With the implementation of the new HR & Payroll system it will create a more streamlined way to manage all employee payroll processes. Employees are able to quickly view their paycheck, clock in and out, access messages, complete tasks, participate in trainings, and more.



Information Technology

The Information Technology (IT) department oversees the implementation, support, maintenance, repair and protection of data, network, and computer systems.

Additional Security Cameras

The installation of security cameras in key areas has become a principal area of focus for the IT department. ·In 2023, nearly 50 security cameras were installed across the downtown and wharf districts. In addition to installing security cameras, the IT department has updated the security systems for our facilities, including improved access control and more.

Increased Cyber Security

Arctic Wolf, a cyber threat detection and response system, has been implemented to monitor internet traffic and identify malware, spyware, and other threats to the City's cyber security. The system also includes security training for employees, which provides tips, guidelines, and quizzes to ensure that employees are doing their part in keeping the City's data safe.

Updated Networks

Currently, City Hall and the Norwood Fire Station are being renovated. In addition to structural and aesthetic modifications, the IT department has worked to update the networks at these locations.



Parking Authority

The Morgantown Parking Authority (MPA) works diligently to provide convenient, safe, clean, and accessible public parking for the downtown area. MPA continually maintains, improves, and increases parking opportunities to meet the unique challenges that are present as the result of growth and continued development in the City of Morgantown.

Donations for Citations

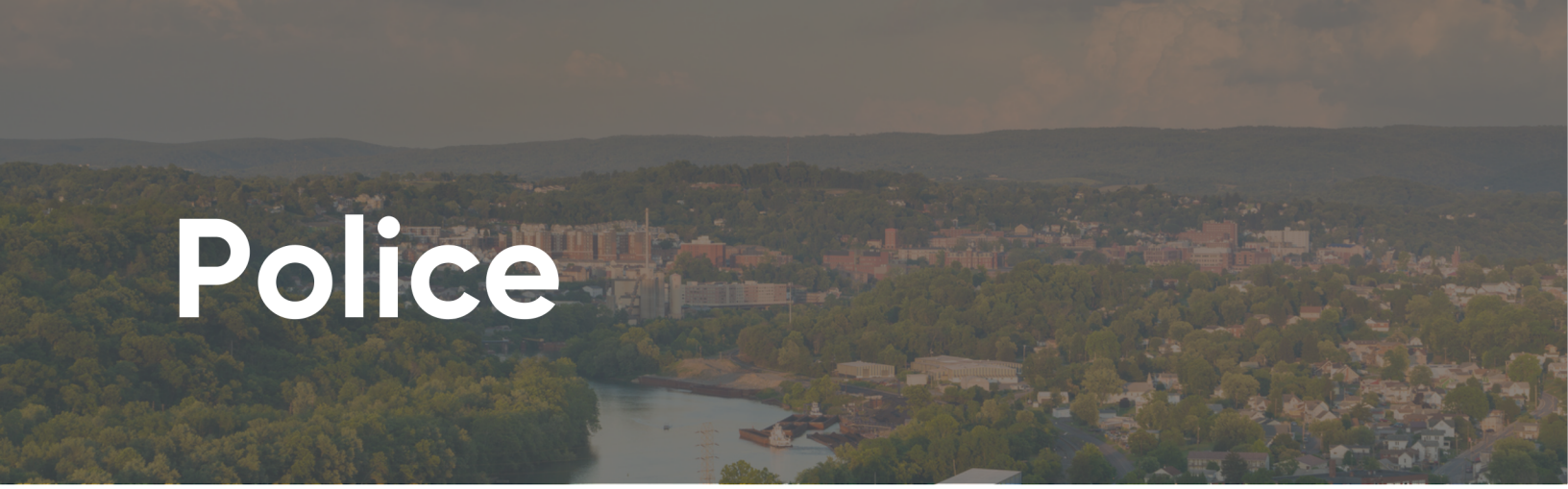
MPA facilitated a "Donations for Citations" food drive in which residents could have parking tickets excused with the donation of goods. A total of 95 citations were excused, and well over 100 food/personal items were collected and donated to Pantry Plus More.

Relaxed Enforcement

MPA continues to relax enforcement during special occasions in order to promote downtown businesses and programs. For example, parking is free during Arts Walks and holidays to encourage more traffic and activity in the business district downtown.

Increased Awareness

MPA's Operations Manager prepared a helpful packet containing detailed information regarding metered spaces, parking passes, ticket payment, and more. The packet was handed out to local business owners in order to help them better understand parking in Morgantown.



Police

The Morgantown Police Department (MPD) is a full-service law enforcement agency with an authorized strength of 76 sworn police officers and 12 civilian support staff. The department serves an area of approximately 11 square miles and a population of more than 30,000 residents.

Successful Recruitment Efforts

MPD hosted its first open house as a focused effort to recruit women as part of their 30×30 Pledge to have 30% of Police recruits be female by 2030. The open house welcomed women to learn about joining law enforcement MPD hired a total of 7 officers n 2023, and there are currently 3 recruits in the police academy.

Welcomed New Employees

MPD recently welcomed a new Deputy Police Chief and a Police Social Worker. The Police Social Worker position, which is brand new for MPD, was designed to serve as a bridge between the police and the community. As such, the Police Social Worker provides direct service and outreach to individuals who are unsheltered, experiencing mental illness, abusing substances, or otherwise facing crisis.

Sanctioned Drone Program

In 2023, MPD worked alongside the Mon Metro Drug Task Force to assist with the logistics of its drone program. Through MPD's responsibility agreement, the Drug Task Force was able to launch the program.

Restaffed the Special Services Unit

Former members of the Special Services Unit (SSU) unfortunately had to refocus their attention to Patrol due to low staffing of the department. However, in 2023, MPD has been able to at least partially restaff the Special Services Unit, allowing for more work with downtown businesses, events, and patrons.



Urban Landscapes

The Urban Landscapes Department works to promote the beautification of the city and to provide an aesthetically attractive environment in the City of Morgantown.

Hundreds of Flowers Planted

Urban Landscapes staff planted an estimated 250 flowers in baskets and approximately 220 flowers in pedlet planters. Overall, nearly 500 flowers were planted by the Urban Landscapes department in 2023.

Invasive Species Removal

Staff completed two major invasive species removal projects: one along the Mon River and Caperton Trail, and another along Deckers Creek. This created a more open view for trail users and businesses to see the waterways nearby.

Pleasant Street Trees

In coordination with GMS Land Design, staff completely overhauled all trees on Pleasant Street as a part of the streetscape project. Once old trees were removed, new flowering species were planted, including the Princeton Sentry Gingko, Snow Goose Cherry, Chinese Lilac, Brandywine Maple, and Ruby Vase Parrotia.

SPECIAL THANKS



We would like to thank all stakeholders involved in the achievement of these accomplishments, with special thanks to:

Morgantown City Council

Mayor Jennifer Selin
Deputy Mayor M. Joe Abu-Ghannam
Bill Kawecki
Louise “Weez” Michael
Danielle Trumble
Dave Harshbarger
Brian Butcher

Morgantown City Administration

City Manager A. Kim Haws
Assistant City Manager Emily Muzzarelli

MORGANTOWN
WEST VIRGINIA