

**Following are responses to questions raised at the March 30<sup>th</sup> AS Board meeting and in subsequent conversations or emails regarding accessibility and gender inclusive facilities in on campus housing:**

**1. What are your plans to address accessibility issues (ADA) in interior spaces for the next 10 years?**

The focus of the recently completed comprehensive FCA (facilities condition assessment) was on major facilities and systems. Accessibility, as a stand-alone topic, was not detailed. Upon recommendation of our FCA consultant, University Residences will be conducting a separate accessibility study, most likely securing a services contract before summer so the consultancy work can be completed over this summer. That information will inform us as to what recommended changes and adaptations can then be incorporated into the component development of forthcoming major renovations. That said, our department works very closely with the disability resources office so that as prospective and current student needs arise we can work out the best arrangement possible. That process allows us to adapt and refine spaces that may be accessible but perhaps need some minor changes.

**2. What are your plans to address accessibility issues (ADA) for exterior spaces for the next 10 years?**

The FCA did not delineate exterior accessibility recommendations as almost all of those are defined as being outside the scope of university residences' responsibility. However, we participate actively with WWU's Disability Resource Services (DRS), Facilities Management, and the office of Equal Opportunity to address external area needs in general, and with DRS and individual students to address immediate access and program needs. Campus facilities and planning staff and the University's Disability Advisory Committee are responsible for addressing accessibility concerns pertaining to exterior thoroughfares and sidewalks.

**3. How are you addressing Gender Inclusive Needs?**

Living Spaces:

- a. This fall we offered 24 spaces in Birnam Wood, 32 in Buchanan Towers, and 20 in Fairhaven.
- b. Next fall we will be offering 48 spaces in Birnam Wood, 32 in Buchanan Towers, 20 in Fairhaven and some spaces in Higginson and Highland.
- c. This fall we were able to meet all on-time requests. Late requests for any gender designation (M/F/GI) are handled consistently as long as we have bed spaces. Requests that came to us in early- to mid-September were more difficult to fill, as we had to assign all of our beds by then.
- d. Our placement of spaces is influenced by historical preferences stated by gender inclusive WWU advocates which indicated a preference to keep gender inclusive spaces in communities as much as possible (rather than scattering the gender inclusive spaces around campus), and ensure resident advisor staffing that fits the needs & goals of the gender inclusive program. Indeed, our experience seems to show that gender inclusive students in ResHalls prefer those goals, while gender inclusive students in Birnam Wood are more independent and don't share that same goal of community building.

- e. We can put spaces in the North end, e.g. Higginson, but the structure of those spaces does not allow for the same on-the-floor community building that the existing locations do. That said, we address those items on a case-by-case basis. We have been flexible with that.

Restrooms:

- a. Last year, at the request of the president, a campus review team released guidelines for campus gender neutral/inclusive restrooms. We remain committed to those guidelines.
- b. Our goal is to ensure that all public area restrooms are signed such that they are treated as gender inclusive.
- c. In Buchanan Towers, we have converted the restroom 407 to be a gender inclusive restroom.

More about gender inclusive housing:

- Each application for gender inclusive housing is reviewed to ascertain the applicant understands and supports of the mission and values of the gender inclusive program. This also allows us to more effectively work with the nuanced needs underlying each request.
- If any student was to report feeling unsafe, we have a follow-up care process to work with the roommates, suitemates or floor residents to identify the issues and work through a solution.
- From time to time roommates and suitemates who choose to reside in gender inclusive rooms have difficulties living together. As noted above, those are addressed through the residential care process. We are not aware of any situation (or it has not been brought to our attention) where students in gender inclusive housing have felt unsafe because of our living spaces, assignments methods, operating policies or staff action or inaction. Should they be brought to our attention we would respond promptly and carefully.
- Our most recent Quality of Life survey, which is available to all residents, did not indicate there are safety concerns with the gender inclusive housing cohort.
- Generally quarterly, the gender inclusive housing committee meets to review the program, any trends, issues, concerns, ideas, etc. There have been no items raised pertaining to the safety of students in gender inclusive housing. There were suggestions to add gender inclusive spaces on north campus. Those spaces will be added for 2017-18.

**4. Are there any outstanding (*understood as currently existing*) ADA-related facility concerns (interior and exterior)?**

There is an issue in Fairhaven Stack 11/12 where a door hardware device is being adjusted, and the door's actuator (auto opener) privilege is being added to one or two students' card.

The Edens Hall South exterior ramp has a remote Prox-enabled reader, but the door does not have an actuator. That job is in price estimating phase.

University Residences categorizes every room that is outfitted with assist/accessibility devices (hearing impaired, wheelchair, Prox, mobility impaired). A review of those rooms is in the planning stage where the criteria for each category as it applies to each of those rooms will be reviewed and either relabeled or retrofitted.

## 5. Are there any other changes to rates?

The Housing & Dining System consists of three components:

- i. University Residences,
- ii. Dining Services
- iii. Viking Union Facility Operations.

The **Viking Union** rate changes (e.g. building fee, room rental rates, etc.), are addressed through a separate request process via the director of the Viking Union/Student Activities.

**Dining Services** rates for resident diners (e.g. meal plans) are part of the 6% rate proposal for 2007-18. How that 6% breaks out between room and meal plan will be determined after rate negotiations with Dining Services have concluded. The dining rate request includes a contract-defined annual escalation (3.5%), a request to put funds towards the Real Food Challenge, funds to address the minimum wage increase, and funds to address additional compensation for non-student staff. Housing system management is reviewing each of these requests.

**University Residences** rates include not only the room and meal plan components noted earlier, but the conference and guest housing rates for the following “conference year” (October 2018 – September 2019). Those rates are not final but the rate of increase for those services will be in the range of the room portion of the 2017-18 academic year residential student rate increase.