

STAFF SENATE
University of Wyoming
Resolution No. 188

Sponsored by the Compensation Committee

A RESOLUTION CONCERNING THE PROPOSED PARKING PLAN

1 WHEREAS, President Dubois stated in a memo dated November 13, 1999, to the
2 Parking Review Committee (see Addendum A), describing his parking improvement
3 recommendations, that "our parking rate structure should reflect not only the relative
4 convenience of the parking purchased, but also the ability to pay"; and

5 WHEREAS, Staff Senate supports the President in his efforts to resolve the long-
6 term parking issues; and

7 WHEREAS, Staff Senate recognizes that there is no perfect solution to the
8 parking issues, but in addition, does not visualize any real improvements in parking as a
9 result of the current proposed plan and permit increases; and

10 WHEREAS, President Dubois has solicited our comments in regard to the
11 proposed parking plan; and

12 WHEREAS, approximately one-half of staff earn \$25,000 or less, with half of
13 those earning \$20,000 or less, which severely impedes their ability to purchase permits at
14 proposed costs; and

15 WHEREAS, numerous staff who cannot afford the proposed permit costs will be
16 forced to use the remote free shuttle; and

17 WHEREAS, the remote free shuttle will not meet the needs of many employees
18 who have off-campus obligations and commitments throughout the day; and

19 WHEREAS, the remote free shuttle system will not operate during hours when
20 large numbers of crucial employees work (very early mornings and late nights); and

21 WHEREAS, Staff Senate agrees with President Dubois's early recommendation
22 and the basic premise on which it was founded, of a stratified system of parking permit
23 costs based on income level, (see Addendum A); and

24 WHEREAS, it is essential that sufficient permits are purchased in order to
25 generate the necessary funds to improve the parking situation; and

26 WHEREAS, an affordable stratified system of permit cost would in all likelihood
27 make it possible for more employees to be able to afford to purchase permits;

28 THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that Staff Senate respectfully recommends
29 that President Dubois's recommendation and basic concept of a stratified system of
30 parking permit costs based on income level, be revisited and reconsidered, and then used
31 to develop an affordable system of parking permit costs, as one viable solution to the
32 parking problems on campus.

Res 188
ADDENDUM A

Go to Comments at bottom of page to send email about campus parking.

November 13, 1999

To: Mr. George Krell, Director of Physical Plant and Chair, Parking Review Committee

Re: More Suggestions for Parking Improvement on Campus

Dear George:

As you may recall, in spring of 1998, I asked the Parking Review Committee to study the current condition of campus parking and to make recommendations to address our most serious parking problems. The Committee's recommendations were aimed principally at reducing the gap that exists between the number of available parking spaces on campus (slightly over 4,100) and the number of permits sold to faculty, staff, and students who want parking (slightly over 7,200). The Committee suggested constructing new surface lots and parking structures on campus and acquiring additional space for off-campus lots on properties adjacent to the campus (along 9th and Lewis Streets). No major changes were recommended in our structure of parking fees or fines, the designation of parking lots, the use of parking meters, or the initiation of alternative transportation options.

Subsequently, I developed a set of eleven additional ideas for consideration, including the creation of additional parking spaces through the conversion of Iverson and Lewis Streets to one-way streets. Campus response to those ideas generated nearly as many additional good ideas and brought to light additional considerations that need to be considered in any set of solutions.

I have now spent a good deal of time reviewing the various comments received during the past academic year. I have also read and considered an assessment of innovative approaches to campus transportation planning, *Finding a New Way: Campus Transportation for the 21st Century*, published by the University of Colorado Environmental Center and the Colorado Office of Energy Conservation. The attached "checklist" of elements of successful Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Programs comes from that publication (Attachment 1).

I'm determined to get the parking issue resolved by the end of the current academic year. As the University President, I need to spend most of my time working on the things that matter—like our budget—but it's time to get the parking situation off my desk.

As you know, more than 90 percent of our student respondents to the ACT Student Opinion Survey (administered in 1994, 1996, and 1998) continue to tell us that they are dissatisfied with campus parking. I also hear complaints from faculty and staff, who waste valuable time and effort looking for parking. This issue will continue to fester unless we think outside the box a bit. We need to find a creative way to diminish the number of cars on the core campus without spending UW dollars needed for other purposes and without adversely affecting all the neighborhoods around us.

Although we could imagine attempting to solve all campus parking problems, that approach is

probably unrealistic. Instead, I believe we need to focus on addressing the most serious problems first. As best I can tell (subject to your feedback), the following items constitute our most serious problems:

1. We have multiple parking-permit designations that are often confusing and limit the use of available spaces by those seeking to park. The best example of this is along Fraternity/Sorority Row where areas designated for "F" permits limit the use of spaces by others, especially other students housed in nearby on-campus housing. However, as a general principle, our parking allocation system is based on the status of the individual seeking parking (e.g., faculty, staff, on-campus student, commuting student, Greek resident, vendor, etc.). That system tends to restrict, rather than create, the flexibility characteristic of sound transportation management systems. For instance, a staff member unable to find an open "A" spot is not able to use an adjacent open "C" spot.
2. Because of the multiple permits that can be used in certain lots, our signage is sometimes confusing. Visitors, in particular, don't know where to park without risk of a citation. Although we have a procedure for dealing with visitors who do receive citations, it is not a "public friendly" approach. We need to have clear and consistent signage for visitors so they know from the moment they enter the campus where they can park and for how long.
3. We have a significant unsatisfied demand for parking—both hourly and daily—in the vicinity of the Coe Library and Knight Hall. Only 77 spaces exist along the one block area on 13th Street between Iverson Avenue and the Wyoming Union and down the alley that runs behind Knight Hall, yet we distributed more than 1,800 citations in this area.
4. We have a significant unsatisfied demand for parking in the large lots to the east of Wyoming Union and Half Acre Gymnasium where 503 spaces drew 2,154 citations.
5. We have a significant unsatisfied demand for parking in the area of the residence halls and Greek houses. The worst situation appears to be just to the north of Washakie Center where 215 spaces yielded 3,789 citations. (Parking north of Crane-Hill Cafeteria appears to be more adequate, where 437 spaces produced only 598 tickets—slightly over two citations per day during the academic year).
6. We have a significant unsatisfied demand in the parking lots around the Law School and the Fine Arts Building, where 354 spaces produced 1,421 citations.
7. We have a significant unsatisfied demand at the Cooper Mansion parking lot where 93 spaces drew 538 tickets.
8. We have ample parking in some of the most impacted areas, but the spaces go underutilized. Examples include parking for fraternity residents behind the houses along Willett Drive and parking to the east of the Arena Auditorium.

How best can we approach these problems? The purpose of this memo is to propose some new ideas for dealing with our parking problems. I am sending these ideas to you for review and comment by the Parking Review Committee. Are these ideas realistic and workable? What refinements or alternatives would make more sense?

As I indicated at the time we began this discussions, I do not want to have the Parking Review Committee tell me that any given idea might be unpopular. What we need are ideas that will actually address the problem. However, as you will see from the discussion below, many of the solutions I propose depend upon the use of economic incentives and an increase in parking fees and fines. If the Parking Review Committee can identify alternative non-economic mechanisms that will work just as well, I am open to receiving those suggestions.

What follows is a series of actions I would propose as part of a comprehensive strategy to deal with the parking issue:

Expand Parking Capacity on a Limited Basis. Although we could always benefit from creating more parking spaces, we have to balance that solution with the costs involved and the damage caused by the elimination of green space. For that reason, I believe that we should create only a limited number of new spaces through two principal means: a) continued exploration with the City of Laramie of the feasibility of creating diagonal parking along Iverson and Lewis Streets; and b) continued expansion of spaces along Lewis Street as properties become available.

After looking at the available data, the creation of 200 additional spaces on the "Frisbee Field" south of the Corbett Building is not an acceptable, cost-effective alternative. The principal need for parking in the area of the residence halls is for students residing in White, Downey, McIntyre, and Orr Halls, and in the Greek Houses. It appears doubtful that students from these areas will significantly alter their behavior with the availability of more spaces some distance away. We also need to alter the incentive structure and provide a convenient way for students to access their cars. More on that later.

Create Parking Flexibility. As noted above, our current system is based largely on the status of the individual holding the parking permit (*e.g.*, faculty, staff, resident student, commuting student, etc.). Each of our parking lots attempts to allocate the available spaces based upon reasonable estimates of the demand for the available spots by permit holders. That's not an irrational system, but it does constrain the use of available slots. In any event, I believe that we can alleviate some of the frustration we currently experience with parking by trying to increase the flexible utilization of available spaces. That means:

- Elimination of most of the existing categories of parking permits and replacement with three basic permit types: Core, Periphery, and On-Campus Resident.
- Implementation of an incentive-based system (see discussion below and Attachments 3 and 4) that would result in the apportionment of parking permits based upon an individual's weighing of the relative cost and convenience of having one kind of permit versus the other.
- Installation of a limited number of 30- and 60-minute parking meters around campus (to be enforced only during the crowded daytime hours). The meters would be installed in areas frequented by campus visitors or where members of the campus community may need parking only for a limited period. A key area for the use of meters would be along 13th Street near Coe Library, Knight Hall (Student Services), and the Wyoming Union.

(**Note:** Subject to a final decision to be made at the end of fall semester, I have directed Parking Services to open the parking area around Fraternity/Sorority Row to all permit holders to see whether additional flexibility there can alleviate parking demand near the high-rise residence halls. As an incentive for moving additional cars off of Fraternity/Sorority Row, more than one hundred spaces located behind the fraternity houses along Willett Drive have been designated as free private parking for the residents of—and visitors to—those houses.)

Modify the Incentive Structure. The current structure of fees and fines does not provide a sufficient incentive to avoid illegal parking. In addition, any attempt to redirect parking demand to underutilized lots or alternative means of transportation will fail unless there is a financial incentive for faculty, staff, and students to consider alternatives. Accordingly, I believe we need to consider a significant modification of our current incentive structure, with the following components:

- *Overall, parking permit and parking citation rates must increase significantly. Our current permit rates (\$25 per year for faculty/staff and \$10 per year for students) are ridiculously low and simply not sufficient to affect an individual's transportation and parking decisions. I'm not sure precisely what the permit costs should be, but—at least for purposes of discussion—we need monthly rates that are high enough to be noticed. For instance, if the monthly rates for premium parking spots were to rise to as high as \$20, \$25, and \$50 for students, staff, and faculty, respectively, we could expect considerable interest in whatever options we might make available for discounted rates (*e.g.*, more remote lots, carpooling, shuttle bus transportation, etc.).

- *Our parking rates should be stratified to reflect the convenience attached to each parking lot. For instance, it should cost more to park in the campus core (*e.g.*, Prexy's Pasture, the lot east of the Wyoming Union) than it does on the periphery (*e.g.*, along Lewis Street) or at a remote lot (see discussion of shuttle system, below). Based upon the analysis of the ratio of parking permits to citations issued, "core" lots would certainly include all of those within the boundaries of Ninth Street, Iverson Avenue, 15th Street, and Lewis Street on the West Campus, and the two A/C lots currently serving the Law School and the Fine Arts Building on the East Campus.

- *Our parking-rate structure should encourage ride-sharing; employees or students who share a ride to campus with other employees or students should receive significantly discounted parking fees. (Ride-sharing programs typically also provide participants with a limited number of one-day permits for use on those days when car-pooling does not work out). The attached table shows how Cornell University structured its permit charges to reflect the relative convenience of the parking lot and to provide incentives for car-pooling (Attachment 2). A proposal of how UW might restructure its parking fees to provide an incentive that would help redistribute our parking demand is also enclosed (Attachment 3). In this proposal, basic parking rates are reduced by 50% per permit and then participating ride-sharers split the cost equally. In the case of two persons riding together, this amounts to a 75% discount on the cost of a permit had it been purchased by an individual acting alone. As an example, I have included Attachment 4 with specific dollars assigned to each category. This is only to make clear the possible incentives we could provide for ride-sharing and parking in peripheral lots. With this example, I am not specifying what the actual permit costs should be. It is clear that they have to be high enough to serve as an incentive for individuals to change their current driving/parking behavior.

*Since the calculation of relative cost and benefit will be dependent upon available income, our parking rate structure should reflect not only the relative convenience of the parking purchased, but also the ability to pay. For that reason, it makes sense to institute stratified parking fees that differentiate, in general, by income level. Our current system does this to some extent by charging faculty and staff more than students. Although we may presume that most of our students have low incomes when compared to faculty and staff, income levels among faculty and staff (including members of the administration) vary widely. A modestly tiered structure is suggested: 1) students and employees earning under \$25,000; 2) employees earning \$25,000-50,000; and 3) employees earning in excess of \$50,000. (Of course, I recognize that such a system does not reflect total family income, but it is simply not possible or practical to attempt to assess precisely the ability to pay).

*Our permit structure should recognize that many faculty, some staff, and most students do not travel to campus every single day of the week, and that some may only need to use a vehicle on an occasional basis. Permit books that contained a limited number of one-day parking passes to be used at the discretion of the purchaser should be made available.

Provide a Park-and-Ride Alternative. I'm told that the existing shuttle bus system, which serves student populations living west of 22nd Street (including the Spanish Walk Apartments) serves over 90,000 riders per year. The success of that effort suggests that alternative transportation will be utilized under some circumstances. It is a reasonable guess that the vast majority of the riders are students who find the service more convenient and less hassle than attempting to finding a parking space on campus. At the same time, an aborted attempt in 1994 to develop a park-and-ride program (using the parking lot at 30th and Willett) enjoyed more limited success (about 100 riders per day)—probably because it was catering to a different clientele (*i.e.*, faculty and staff living a greater distance from campus, with more daily demands for convenient access to their vehicles) and operating under the same structure of fees and fines as we have today.

For a park-and-ride option to be successful, it appears that two elements must be present. First, there must be a financial incentive that makes it more attractive than purchasing a permit or incurring the risk of a citation. Second, it must be extremely convenient, so that individuals on campus who need access to their vehicles during the day can get to their cars when they need to do so.

Thus, in combination with a significant adjustment of our structure of fees and fines, I am proposing a park-and-ride program that involves development of a shuttle bus system that would run on a rapid cycle (*e.g.*, every 10 minutes) between the War Memorial Stadium parking lot at 22nd and Willett and the campus core throughout a significant portion of the working day (*e.g.*, 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.).

Parking at the stadium lot would be free, thereby encouraging maximum utilization of the shuttle. Appropriate shelters would need to be constructed to provide weather protection. To avoid conflict with evening or weekend athletic events, free use of the stadium lot would be authorized only during the operating hours of the shuttle.

The design of the shuttle route would have to be based upon the highly focused goal of redistributing our parking demand and avoid the temptation to provide customer service that picks up and drops off

riders at every building. It makes little sense to route a remote shuttle to the Animal Science/Molecular Biology Building where parking appears to be ample. Instead, it makes most sense (at least to me) to have a shuttle running from the proposed remote lot at 22nd and Willett straight down Willett with just four stops—Fine Arts/Law School; Wyo Hall; Arts and Sciences; and Wyoming Union—before the direct return trip to the remote lot. (See Attachment 5.) Such a route can be accomplished easily within a 10-minute period. If the route could be completed within the 10-minute cycle maximum, additional stops in front of the Agriculture Building and Ross Hall might be considered.

Any shuttle transportation option must recognize that employees may have occasional emergencies that require the immediate use of a car. One idea we could consider is to make available a limited number of University vehicles at the Wyoming Union for check-out on an emergency basis by individuals who are participating in ride-share or remote-parking options. Rules would have to be established to discourage abuse of such a system.

A logistical issue that also would need resolution is whether and how such a shuttle bus route could be squared with the practice of the Prep School using the lawn and street area to the south of the Education Building for recess and exercise. Minimally, an automatic gate at the site of the current daily street blockade would have to be installed. Other measures to ensure the safety of the children or identification of an alternate play area would need to be discussed.

Dealing with Student Residence Hall Parking Demand. Although implementation of the options discussed above would help redistribute parking demand on the main campus, none of them would deal with our most serious parking problem—excess demand in the area of the student residence halls. The original report of the Parking Review Committee suggested (p. 13) that the campus would have to create 407 additional spaces for resident students simply to achieve the average ratio of 1.03 (between the number of permits sold and the number of available spaces) that exists among Rocky Mountain comparator institutions. Currently, we sell to on-campus resident students nearly 450 more permits than we have spaces for them to use. Not only does this put pressure upon the street parking that is available in adjacent neighborhoods, but it also results in an incredible number of citations issued to students. As noted above, in the parking areas surrounding the major high-rise residence halls, nearly 4,000 citations are issued annually.

One interim measure to attempt to deal with this situation is noted on p. 4 of this document. By opening up parking along Fraternity/Sorority Row previously designated exclusively for use by “F” permit holders and by reserving private parking for the fraternities located along Willett street, it is hoped that some measure of additional parking flexibility can be achieved. Whether and to what extent that effort will prove successful will depend upon cooperation from the Greek residents to make full use of the free spaces provided to them, and upon residence-hall students becoming aware of the availability of spaces along Fraternity/Sorority Row. Results of fall semester use surveys of the area should prove instructive. Early indications are that the fraternities are not making full use of the spaces made available to them.

Beyond this relatively modest measure, a combination of additional measures will probably be necessary, including:

- *Severely limiting the number of permits sold so that it more closely approximates the number of available spaces. Under such a system, it would be possible to give preference to returning students over incoming freshman.

*Provision of a tangible financial reward (*e.g.*, \$50) to a pre-determined number of resident students willing to park their vehicles in a secure, remote lot from Monday through Friday during the semester. We would need to figure out a way to “enforce” this arrangement so students don’t simply take the incentive and then park on the street of an adjacent neighborhood. Obviously, there will also be issues related to ensuring students’ access to their vehicles when they need them and safe transportation to and from the residence hall area to the remote lot.

Other Measures. Among the many ideas that surfaced during the discussion of parking options, there was near unanimity that a large number of parking spaces are consumed on a daily basis by UW vehicles. Currently, there are several hundred spaces being taken up by “service” vehicles . (Approximately 92 vehicles are assigned to the Physical Plant; the colleges and other units have about 200 more.) It is my understanding that the existing policy limits the presence of such vehicles on the central campus for more than two days at a time before they must be moved to a specified storage lot. Unfortunately, it has been difficult to enforce this regulation effectively. Part of our future effort should be a complete inventory of these vehicles to determine which ones need to be on campus, and which can be moved to remote storage. Indeed, I think a strong argument can be made that departmentally-owned vehicles should not be permitted to park on campus at all unless departments purchase the permits that are required of everyone else.

If these ideas make some sense—and I welcome your hard critique—then we can move toward working on the details of implementation. I imagine that much of your discussion will focus on the details, such as the actual cost of the permits and why folks will find that objectionable .From my vantage point, the question should be whether the proposed permit costs would actually alter parking and transportation behaviors, and thereby contribute to bringing our parking demand in closer alignment with our parking supply. If your Committee does not care for my proposed system of economically-based incentives, what alternatives might you suggest that would achieve the same outcome just as effectively.

I realize that some may regard the measures proposed as fairly radical. On the other hand, our parking problems will not see any relief unless we try something different than we have in the past. The status quo is unacceptable and incremental changes won’t work.

Obviously, I want to make some progress on the parking issue during the current academic year. Your prompt attention to this matter is appreciated. Thanks.

Sincerely,

Philip L. Dubois

President

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