

September 2014
The Subject of Parking

This report is to provide a summary of what has been discussed in the Transportation Alternatives Group (TAG). The TAG discussions included the suggestions received through email and generated by the committee over the last year. Parking is a problem that has existed since the 1960's and while we may not make it disappear, with a concerted effort working together it may be possible to continue to improve parking on the main campus. There are two major groups that park on campus, **employees and students**.

Students - At this time students have the greatest difficulty parking on campus. This is due to the number of students per space. Over 25% of the spaces have been taken out of the pool for employees and carpool. Allowing employees to park in carpool the first two weeks further restricts the access for students. Students pay a fee for a parking permit and also pay a fee that is passed through to MTD to subsidize student access to public transit. Of the 13,500 students on the main campus 6,400 (less than half) purchase a parking permit. Over 7,000 students use the alternatives of parking off campus, riding the bus, walking, biking, skateboarding or motorcycle.

Employees - This report is mostly applicable to employees as students are already utilizing alternative transportation for a large percentage of their trips. There have been no direct deterrents or incentives to employees to driving single occupancy vehicles (SOV) to campus. Employees that use alternatives do it to save money, (car pool or van pool) a desire to be "green" or because it is easier than driving.

As you read this report the complete comprehensive proposal for parking is being prepared. **The proposal will be taken to TAG, PC and CPC within the next month.** This is a summary to provide some understanding of what has been discussed and what will be included in the proposal. *If you want to be part of the discussion join TAG.* **The next TAG meeting, when the preliminary proposal will be presented, is Friday, October 10 (noon-2pm).**

BACKGROUND

Why not add more parking spaces? There are many issues that make this option impossible to implement; but the three primary issues are:

1. **Regulatory/Circulation** - This involves the Coastal Commission, City of Santa Barbara (City) and Caltrans. The planning for access from the freeway and by the streets to the Mesa, beach and Westside neighborhoods that surround the College, as well as the College itself were not designed for the volume of traffic at peak times. As you know exiting the freeway and the surface traffic on Bath, and Castillo is tough in the morning and afternoon.
 - a. The exit southbound at Castillo is backed up due to the volume of traffic that needs to go right on Castillo. This is exacerbated by the congestion at the Cliff and Montecito intersection.



- b. The northbound exit at Bath is just as bad due to the congestion at the Haley intersection backing up on the off-ramp.
 - c. Caltrans and the City both have plans that are coordinated with the Coastal Commission, but do not include improvements for the on- or off-ramps or surface streets.
 - i. Caltrans concern is that more parking on the campus will bring more cars creating more congestion on the freeway.
 - ii. The City has to look at circulation on all streets for all residents in the area and will not allow more parking at the College if it impacts surface traffic. There is a belief in the City that it is the number of parking spaces that drives the street traffic; therefore unless the College decreases the number of parking spaces congestion will remain unchanged.
 - d. The Coastal Commission is an appointed body that has it's own agenda, **but always takes the recommendations of the City and Caltrans into their decisions.**
2. **Resources/Funding** – The state has set into Ed Code that parking cannot be funded from General Fund dollars. This leaves one method for funding the installation, repair and maintenance of parking, **fees**:
- i. **Students:** The state has set the maximum that the state can charge students for “Parking and Transportation” at \$70 per student per semester for Fall and Spring and \$40 for summer or intersessions. The cap for parking alone is \$50 (out of the \$70) per student per semester for Fall and Spring and \$25 (out of the \$40) for summer or intersessions. The College has chosen, through participatory governance, to do the following:
 - 1. **Parking Fee:** The College has charged the students a fee for parking permits; this is limited to allow for the public transit fee paid to MTD through student fees.
 - 2. **Student MTD Pass:** By limiting the fee for parking permits the students have been able to apply the remaining through student vote to MTD. This has allowed MTD to expand their service to the students. It is safe to say that without this support thousands of our students would not have access to the campus.
 - ii. **Employees:** The College has not charged employees for parking. The state has set the maximum that the state can charge employees for “Parking and Transportation” at \$70 per student per semester for Fall and Spring and \$40 for summer or intersessions. **The cap for parking alone is \$50 (out of the \$70) per student per semester for Fall and Spring and \$25 (out of the \$40) for summer or intersessions.**
 - 1. Fees can be used as a **deterrent** to reduce the number of cars driving to campus and/or



2. Fees can be used to **support an incentive plan**, alternative transportation, etc.
3. **Land** – As you know the College has no room for expansion of classrooms or parking. The open land has been labeled as Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Area (ESHA) or committed to mitigate previous expansion. We cannot go higher or lower to add parking either. The College is coming to terms with the inability to provide growth on the Main Campus.

One possible solution discussed in TAG for reducing parking demand for employees is an incentive plan. An incentive plan is in the process of being developed and will be brought through consultation this fall. Some of the basic components of the plan are highlighted below. An **incentive plan** would reward individuals who utilize **alternative transportation (see below)**. Alternative transportation per this document is defined as not commuting to campus in a single occupied vehicle (SOV).

Funding for Reducing Parking Demand: There is no current funding; the concept proposal is for the College to seed the project through the allocation of ending balances for the first couple of years while a method of ongoing funding is developed.

FEES – Ultimately some of the funding for the incentive plan may include charging fees for parking for all employees. The fees for employees and students are capped by Ed code to \$50 per semester and \$25 for summer. **Students currently pay \$33.25 for parking and \$30.00 for MTD per semester and \$20.00 each for summer session.**

Disincentives – Paying fees automatically reduces the demand for parking. It goes without saying people look for alternatives to paying for parking. **It is important to provide viable alternatives that reduce or eliminate the cost of parking.**

It is important to acknowledge that without a **TRANSPORTATION/INCENTIVE PLAN COORDINATOR** position it is not feasible to maintain a transportation/incentive plan.

Please remember that the points below are just highlights. The plan and implementation timeline will be presented, discussed and developed at the TAG meetings, the final proposal will be brought to consultation, your participation at the TAG meetings is welcome. This report includes many of the suggestions from the transportation alternatives group as well as from the campus at large. Not all of the suggestions are being considered for implementation at this time.

ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION

1. **Shuttles – parking off campus and transporting to campus:** There have been many alternatives explored for parking off campus, these are all included in the TAG report that was referenced in the attached write-up:
 - a. **Funding for Shuttles** – Cost varies greatly from site-to-site and on whether the staffed by SBCC or contracted out.
 - b. **Wake Shuttle (one idea)** - The parking could be free for participants at the Wake, There would be no cost for the spaces. In addition to the cost, the logistics of acquiring the vehicles, hiring the drivers and/or contracting the service to another entity has to be resolved.
 - c. **Garden Street Shuttle** – A promising shuttle involves the beach lot at the corner of Garden and Cabrillo. The electric bus comes to the harbor or it is close enough to **bicycle or walk** reducing the demand for a shuttle bus. This still needs City approval, the installation of a bike storage structure and an agreement with MTD, but is hopefully moving forward. There is conflict with Funk Zone parking requirements.
 - d. All of the **other venues** besides Wake (e.g. churches, Elings Park, Las Positas fairgrounds) required a fee for the spaces that would add additional cost and also had restrictions on days and times of use that conflicted with our needs. There is also the concern from the county and City with increased usage of the freeway ramps at Las Positas.
 - e. **Utilization** – this is the biggest obstacle to implementing offsite parking. The most severe parking problem is limited in scope to the first part of each semester. There will need to be incentives/disincentives to keep people from driving.

2. **Bicycles** – The issues identified with bike ridership are **the hill of, bike storage** and the **safety of the roads**.
 - a. **The hill** can be addressed in several ways.
 - i. First by installing **bike storage facilities**, there have been a couple of locations identified for bike storage that would not require climbing the hill.
 1. On campus at the Sports Pavilion,
 2. And at the bottom of the steps at Cliff and Rancheria streets.
 - ii. **Electric bikes** for riding to work and up the hill. This mode of transportation is becoming more popular. Electric bikes provide power assist to get up the hills and easier peddling all-around.



- b. **Bike Storage** – Would also be available on top of campus on both East and West Campus. Bike storage for the Wake Center could encourage increased use of the shuttle.
 - c. **Safety of the roads** – This is both a **short term** and a **long-term** project.
 - i. **Short term** –
 - 1. The City (and SBCC) has applied for a grant to extend the bike path down Cliff to Loma Alta.
 - 2. The City has agreed to put paving the path from Rancheria up to the curve on the fire road into their LRDP. This would help with Coastal Commission approval and get the bikes off Cliff Drive between Rancheria and Loma Alta for East Campus access.
 - 3. Provide bike route information to the College community.
 - ii. **Long-term** – Work with the City and Caltrans to improve Castillo underpass.
 - d. **Bike share and electric bike rentals** are options being considered. This would provide local transportation for commuters.
 - e. **Bike Center** – Provide additional repair facilities and assistance with repairs. The College is in discussion with BICI Centro to bring their services on campus.
3. **Vanpool or Carpool** – The College has an active vanpool and reserves 18% of the spaces for carpool. The College has recently committed resources to managing the vanpool. The services and website are in the process of being updated. Please go to <http://www.sbccc.edu/commute/> for additional information.
4. **Bus Ridership** – The last time SBCC offered bus passes for employee’s four employees took advantage of this. Possible ways to renew this partnership:
- a. Work with MTD to implement “**smart cards**”.
 - i. Record usage to allow for “pay as you go” option.
 - ii. Allow for reimbursement to employees.
 - b. As with the students **by majority vote** the employees could vote for a bus pass. This would require each employee to pay a parking fee each semester and summer session.

COMMUTER SUPPORT

People using alternative transportation need to be assured of a ride home in case of an emergency or for local transportation during the day (dental or medical appointments, shopping, intercampus transport to Schott or Wake, etc.).



1. **Local Transportation:**

- a. **Electric Cars** – the cars would be checked out on an as needed basis. The projection is for one each for the East, West, Schott and Wake campuses.
- b. **Electric bikes** – the electric bikes would be checked out on an as needed basis for local transport.
- c. **Bicycles** – the bikes would be checked out on an as needed basis for local transport.
- d. **Emergency rides home** - There are currently options in place through Transportation that covers this occurrence.

In addition there may be other ways the traffic congestion may be reduced at peak times. These are more costly or difficult to implement.

2. **Parking Sensors** – Install parking sensors at each parking space to collect occupancy data. The barrier to this option is the cost of installation and ongoing software license fees. Parking sensors would allow for:

- a. Potentially move towards **real-time demand based pricing**. As spaces became scarce the price per space would go up.
- b. This would also **provide location data**, where the open spaces are located in real time.

3. **Class Scheduling** – There are times when the campus is underutilized. There are many reasons for the underutilization and Ed Programs is looking at the following proposals to determine if they are feasible. Proposed schedule changes are:

- a. **Stagger start times** – This would decrease pressure on the access roads and also free up spaces as instructors vacated the staff lots. E.g. Start every 10 minutes from 7:30 to 8:20, then maintain staggered times through the day.
- b. **Classes on Friday and Saturday** – Schedule classes on Fridays and Saturdays, reducing classes offered from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM Monday through Thursday.
- c. **Offer credit and non-credit** classes at Schott and Wake during open times. This would move some classes off the main campus during peak times.