University Transportation Committee
September 27, 2010

Present:
Peter Dewey, Facilities Services Representative
Kristine Edens, Guest, EnviroIssues
Bob Ennes, Health Sciences Representative
Jan Fahey, Guest, Commuter Services
Celeste Gilman, Commuter Services
Steve Kennard, Real Estate Office Representative
Miranda Leidich, South Lake Union Representative
Luther Martin, WFSE Union Representative
April R. Millar, WSNA Representative
Jessica Murphy, Guest, SDOT
Patty Riley, UWMC Representative
John Vinson, UW Police Representative

Absent:
Jim Angelosante, Facilities Services Representative
Scott Baebler, Intercollegiate Athletics Representative
Sara Brydges, Commuter Services
Deborah Costar, HFS Director
Laura Davenport, SEIU 925 Representative
Jean Garber, Member-At-Large
Pamela Jordan, Faculty Senate Representative
Josh Kavanagh, Transportation Services Representative
Charles Kennedy, Associate Vice President of Facilities Services
Daniel Kraus, Member-At-Large
Madeleine McKenna, ASUW Representative, Ex Officio
Colin Morgan-Cross, GPSS Representative
John Schaufelberger, Faculty Senate Representative
Eric Shellam, ASUW Representative, Ex Officio
Anneke Stopperski, Disability Services Office Representative
Chuck Tresser, Faculty Council on Univ. Facilities & Services
Matt Weatherford, PSO Representative

Commercial Parking Tax Update

Ms. Gilman told the group that, to help maintain revenue for the U-PASS program, TS is continuing to work with the City for relief from the commercial parking tax. Ms. Gilman said
that recently the city council’s transportation committee passed an increase in the parking tax from 10 percent to 12.5 percent. Prior to approval, Councilman Licata introduced an amendment (not passed) that would have exempted UW from the increase. Ms. Gilman said that, although the amendment failed, she was encouraged by the committee’s discussion; there seemed to be a shift from scrutinizing UW’s finances to acknowledging the tax increase as a policy issue with very real impacts for TDM programs such as U-PASS. Ms. Gilman said that Mayor McGinn announced his budget proposal today. UW will continue to keep the pressure on, addressing the tax increase now through the budget process. The final outcome is still uncertain.

Mr. Ennes asked if there has been much media coverage on the parking tax increase. Ms. Gilman said that there has been quite a bit of media coverage and that she was on KUOW.

Central Plaza Garage Improvements

Mr. Dewey said that seismic work on the Central Plaza Garage will begin this week and continue through the end of the year. Seven hundred metal strips will be installed, connecting beams to columns, to make the garage more seismically capable, more survivable. To decrease the impact of the noise (100 decibels), sound-attenuating panels have been installed and drilling (the noisiest work) will be limited to 5:00 am - 9:00 am. CPG permit holders have been informed.

Mr. Ennes asked if any new columns will be added. Mr. Dewey said no, we will just be strapping existing columns. Mr. Ennes asked whether these CPG improvements are part of a larger program of seismic upgrades. Mr. Dewey said UW started making seismic improvements 13 to 15 years ago, including work on S1, Padelford, UW Tower, and the Triangle Garage.

UWalk Update

Ms. Gilman said that UWalk, a new online walking community, was launched last Friday, September 24 with a picnic on Rainier Vista. During the summer, a core group tested out the UWalk concept and helped us improve our website prior to the program’s official launch on Friday during Dawg Days. The September 24 event was both a celebration and a recruiting tool. About 180 attended, including many new students, and there were about 50 new sign-ups at the event. We fortuitously benefited from a large tent already set up on Rainier Vista for President Emmert’s picnic event to follow Freshman Convocation on the 26th. The UWalk launch included a band, root beer floats and offerings from sponsors (Pop Chips, Honest Tea, and Nunn). With UWalk, students, faculty and staff who walk can meet each other online, record their walks, tell stories and attend program events throughout the year.
Ms. Millar asked for clarification on the purpose of the program. Ms. Gilman replied that UWalk encourages all types of walking, whether commute walking, social walking at lunch, or walking to meetings. It is hoped that one type of walking will lead to another.

Mr. Dewey asked if UWalk has any safety messages about being alert when walking (e.g., not texting). Ms. Gilman said that no explicit safety messages have been conveyed yet, but there are plans to do so as the program moves forward. UWalk will build a community interested in walking to whom we can reach out with such targeted messages.

For more information, Ms. Gilman invited committee members to check the UWalk website at www.uwcommute.com/uwalk.

**15th Avenue Reconstruction Project**

Ms. Murphy, project manager for the 15th Avenue NE reconstruction, talked to the group about the project. Ms. Murphy said that the project is a complete rebuild of 15th, not just a repaving project. There will be concrete pavement from 15th to 50th, resurfacing of the roadway between 50th and 55th, and many improvements including curb ramps and bus bulbs, infrastructure upgrades, and pedestrian enhancements such as sidewalk widening and a new marked pedestrian crossing on the south side of 41st. Project design is nearing completion. SDOT does not yet have contractor bids. Later (early December) more precise project schedule information will be available.

Ms. Murphy said that the biggest impact will be felt in the first phase of the project (work from Pacific to 45th), scheduled for January to June 2011. More than 50 percent of work in the first phase will take place on the weekend. The second phase (45th to 50th) will start in June 2011 after commencement. The final phase (50th to 55th) is scheduled for late 2011.

Ms. Murphy said that during the daytime on weekdays one lane on 15th in each direction will be closed, but at night and on weekends all lanes in one direction may be closed. Bus zones will be closed or relocated, there will be just two stops between Pacific & 45th. Uniformed police officers will direct traffic as needed. Entrances to UW at 40th and 41st will be kept open, but there will be turning restrictions.

Mr. Ennes asked if there will be any utility shutdowns affecting Health Sciences and if the project will include traffic improvements on University or Brooklyn. Ms. Murphy said there will be no utility shutdowns affecting Health Sciences and that the scope of the project does not include traffic improvements on University or Brooklyn. Mr. Luther asked for more information about night and weekend work. Ms. Murphy said that night and weekend work will be necessary to complete the project. For work at intersections, bus trolley lines must be deactivated; this can
only be done on weekends when Metro has enough diesel buses available to take the place of trolley buses.

Ms. Leidich asked if buses will be rerouted during construction and if the project includes bus shelter upgrades. Ms. Murphy said buses will be rerouted on weekends, but there will be no bus reroutes on weekdays. There will be relocation of bus stops during construction. The project will lay down new foundations for bus stops, but Metro will put up the shelters. The project will widen sidewalks at bus zones, which will enhance bus stops. UW is independently funding a new bus stop at 42nd. Mr. Dewey told Ms. Murphy that UW may be able to do excavation for the bus stop at 42nd in December (before SDOT begins their main work in January) to try to work around each other. Mr. Dewey said the bus stop at 42nd will look similar to a bike shelter, with a translucent roof and brick fascia.

Mr. Luther asked if there will be the same number of bus stops at the end of the project. Ms. Murphy said that there are 4 stops on each side now, but at the end of the project there will be 3. Bus stops northbound at 41st and 43rd will be consolidated into a single stop at 42nd.

Mr. Dewey asked for elaboration on restriction of left hand turns onto 15th during construction, particularly at 40th and 41st. Ms. Murphy said that if traffic is required to turn right, we will have a “turn pocket” to make sure people can later turn left. Details will be worked out intersection by intersection. Mr. Dewey asked that when work is being done on 41st, to please make sure 40th is open and inform us so we can communicate with our customers. Mr. Dewey asked Ms. Murphy if we had provided her an event schedule. Ms. Murphy said she had a schedule for events in Meany. Mr. Dewey said there are also events in Kane and that some park in the CPG for basketball.

Ms. Leidich said that there is a new bus stop in the South Lake Union area, installed by Vulcan, that has maps and an exterior real-time arrival display. Ms Leidich asked if UW could adopt the bus stops along 15th to control their design, and install OneBusAway displays. Mr. Dewey said that UW is designing, constructing and paying for the bus stop at 42nd. Real-time arrival displays has not been discussed for the bus stop at 42nd; Mr. Dewey said he was unsure if we could do this, but it could be discussed and is technically possible in a space that is bulletproof. Ms. Murphy said the 15th Avenue NE project includes installation of underground conduit for real-time potential at the other stops. Ms. Murphy offered to show us the design on that so that UW could also set this up for the future. Ms. Leidich said she could give Mr. Dewey contact information for someone involved with the Vulcan-installed bus stop.

Mr. Dewey asked about pedestrian crossing when work is being done on the grade change. Ms. Murphy said that pedestrians may need to walk on the other side or walk up a block to cross. It
will be the contractor’s obligation to figure out a plan. If there are 4 pedestrian crossings at an intersection, 3 must be kept open. If 3 crossings, 2 must be kept open.

Mr. Dewey asked if there are plans for sharrows on 15th. Ms. Murphy said no, because 15th was not a road chosen for sharrows in the Seattle Bicycle Master Plan.

Mr. Vinson asked when the media campaign for the project will start. Ms. Leidich said that SDOT has already had a number of meetings about the project. Ms. Edens said that SDOT has met with businesses, neighborhood groups, the UWPD, Housing & Food Services, the South Campus Parking Committee and others. Ms. Edens also said that these groups will be revisited as the project moves forward, and that an open house for the public (perhaps at Gould Hall) is planned. Ms. Murphy said that SDOT has also talked to UW Capital Projects’ construction project managers. Ms. Murphy invited committee members to let her know if SDOT is missing a group and welcomed the committee’s further questions or input.

**Football Update**

The committee briefly discussed the special challenges of the November 18 UCLA game, a Thursday afternoon game during which regular campus business needs must be met while accommodating football parking.

Ms. Riley said that meetings for development of communication plans are ongoing, including one scheduled for later today. Ms. Riley said that she feels communications to the campus community should begin right away. UWMC employees not involved in patient care may be able to take vacation or exchange work days, but UWMC will not mandate this. The operating room does not want to close early, some surgeries are scheduled on Thursdays only, so postponing would unacceptably push surgery schedules out too far into the future. Ms. Riley expressed concern about the ability of operating room staff and other patient care staff to park, with E1 and Surgery Pavilion unavailable.

Mr. Dewey commented that, unlike for Saturday football games, Portage Bay Garage will be available for staff parking during the November 18th afternoon game. Regarding staff taking vacation or exchanging one day for another to avoid coming to campus on November 18, Mr. Dewey said that he thinks Mr. Kavanagh feels that it would be problematical for Transportation Services to tell departmental staff what to do; hopefully there will be a consensus among campus departments and a message suggesting flexibility for staff would be sent out by the UW administration.

**Additional Items**
None.

Meeting adjourned.
Project Information

15th Avenue NE Reconstruction—NE Pacific Street to NE 55th Street

Fall 2010 Publication

The Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) is planning to reconstruct most of 15th Avenue NE in the University District in 2011.

This paving project is funded by the "Bridging the Gap" transportation levy approved by Seattle voters in November 2006.

Project Location:
15th Avenue NE - NE Pacific Street to NE 55th Street

Project Description:
This project will rebuild 15th Avenue NE between NE Pacific and NE 50th streets with new concrete pavement and resurface the roadway between NE 50th and NE 55th streets.

Other improvements include:
- New curb ramps and curb bulbs to improve pedestrian mobility
- Sidewalk widening at bus zones (bus bulbs)
- Drainage upgrades
- Installation of a new marked crosswalk at NE 41st St
- New northbound left turn lane at NE 42nd St
- Upgraded street lighting system
- New electrical infrastructure for future transit improvements

Project Schedule:
- January-June 2011: NE Pacific to NE 45th St
- June-September: NE 45th to NE 50th St
- September-October: NE 50th to NE 55th St

More detailed schedule information will be provided prior to the start of construction. To follow the progress of this project, please visit the project web site at:

http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/pave_15thavene.htm

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