The U-PASS is a flexible package of transportation benefits that allows students, faculty, and staff to choose from a variety of commuting options at a greatly reduced price. Metro, Community Transit, and the University of Washington have formed a partnership to bring about this innovative transportation management program, which is currently in the third year of a three-year demonstration period. This report provides an analysis of the second year (1992-93).

The U-PASS benefits the entire University population of 50,000 either directly, by providing flexible transportation options, or indirectly, by reducing traffic congestion and parking demand and improving air quality. Those who choose to participate pay a low fee for a U-PASS sticker, which is affixed to the back of their University identification card. For the first two years, the U-PASS cost $20 per quarter for students and $27 for faculty and staff. In the fall of 1993 the prices rose to $24 per quarter for students and $33 for faculty and staff.

The U-PASS gives access to all elements of the program:

- Metro and Community Transit
- Free carpool parking
- Subsidized vanpools
- Night Ride shuttle
- Ridematch
- Bicycle facilities
- Merchant discounts
- Reimbursed Ride Home
- Discount daily parking passes

**Program Goals**

The U-PASS program was designed to meet a number of goals: 1. Provide better transportation services to University commuters; 2. Decrease the number of vehicle trips and in turn the need to replace lost parking with new parking facilities; 3. Achieve a 75 percent U-PASS participation rate; and 4. Mitigate potential traffic impacts of University growth.

**Funding**

The total U-PASS budget during the three-year demonstration period (October 1991 to September 1994) is approximately $18 million. It was originally estimated that income from pass sales would cover 40 percent of the U-PASS costs. Higher participation rates, however, have resulted in user fees covering over 50 percent of the costs. Parking permit revenue funds an additional 30 percent. To achieve this funding level from the parking system, parking permit fees

**U-PASS Funding Sources**

- User fees: 50%
- Parking fees: 30%
- Other UW sources: 20%
(which include a complimentary U-PASS) were increased from $24 to $40 per month for faculty and staff, and student daily pay parking rose from $0.75 to $1.50. The rest of the program is funded from a variety of University sources, including parking fines.

The Washington State Legislature supported the U-PASS program with $800,000 for one-time capital improvements during the 1991-93 biennium. This money funded the following:

- Roadway improvements for buses $230,000
- Passholder safety improvements $210,000
- Parking improvements for carpools $65,000
- Bicycle facilities improvements $295,000

**U-PASS Effectiveness**

The effectiveness of the U-PASS program is measured by participation rates, changes in vehicle trips, and changes in people's choices of commute modes.

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<thead>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty/Staff</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL CAMPUS</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>76%</td>
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</table>

**Participation**

During the 1992-93 academic year, U-PASS participation averaged 34,400 per quarter, with a high of nearly 40,000 in the fall of 1992. Student participation reached a high of 81 percent in autumn quarter 1992. The campuswide average participation rate of 72 percent during the first year rose to 76 percent in the second, surpassing the three-year goal of 75 percent.

**Vehicle Trips**

The number of vehicles coming to campus during morning rush hours (7-9 a.m.) has decreased 17 percent, from 7,800 before the U-PASS to 6,456 in October 1992. Trips leaving campus in the peak afternoon hours (3-6 p.m.) have maintained a decrease of over 8 percent.

**Mode Choice**

(Note: The percentages presented in this paragraph come from a mode choice survey administered only two months after the program began in 1991. Based on other indicators discussed below, the SOV figures are expected to drop even further in the 1994 survey.)

The most dramatic shifts in commute modes occurred with single-occupancy-vehicle commuters and bus riders. Before the U-PASS, the dominant commute mode was driving alone (33 percent), followed by transit at 21 percent. Since the U-PASS began, the numbers have switched: 33 percent of campus commuters come by bus, and only 23 percent drive alone. The number of students driving alone has dropped by almost half, from 26 percent to 14 percent of the student population. At the the same time, the percentage of students commuting by transit has risen from 21 to 35.

**Results by Program Element**

The results of individual U-PASS program elements are discussed below.

**SOV Permits/Parking Utilization**

The number of people with drive-alone parking permits has decreased by 24 percent since the U-PASS program began in autumn 1991. Parking lot utilization has decreased 15 percent (from 94 percent before the U-PASS to 79 percent in 1992).
**Transit Ridership**
Community Transit has reported ridership increases of 22 percent on weekday routes coming to the University District since the U-PASS began. Metro has estimated that UW student, faculty, and staff ridership has increased by *over 55 percent* systemwide, or 2.6 million trips annually.

**Metro Ridership**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1991</th>
<th>1993</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>![Bus Illustration]</td>
<td>![Bus Illustration]</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

[One bus = 500,000 riders]

Since September 1991, Metro has added 50,000 annual hours of service to University routes. Another 7,000 hours will be added in February 1994. Community Transit has added 7,000 annual hours and has expanded park and ride lot capacity. The amount of service hours that Metro and Community Transit have added is based on contracts with the University.

**Carpools/Vanpools**
Since the start of the U-PASS program, the number of carpool permits is up 20 percent, while the number of informal daily carpools has increased by over 18 percent. Over 900 carpools park on campus each day. Vanpools have increased from eight to a peak of 27, with 240 riders participating.

**The Night Ride**
The Night Ride is an evening van service that picks up students, faculty and staff on campus and delivers them to their destinations in nearby neighborhoods. Ridership in 1992-93 increased 60 percent over the first year, for an average of 233 passengers per night or 39 riders per hour.

**Bicycling**
Installation of 160 bicycle racks and 150 bicycle lockers was completed in June 1993, bringing the total campus inventory to 660 bicycle racks and 218 lockers. Other campus improvements include new bike paths, signage, and curb cuts. Most of the money for these improvements came from the state legislature, as noted under "Funding."

**Merchant Discounts**
Forty-four merchants offered discounts to U-PASS holders in 1992-93. In return, they received free publicity in fliers, brochures, and advertisements. This element of the program was designed as an incentive to purchase a U-PASS. It particularly targets students living on or near campus who do not commute regularly.
FACULTY/STAFF FEATURES
Faculty and staff are eligible for two U-PASS services not available to students: the Reimbursed Ride Home program and discount daily parking passes. These features provide both flexibility and convenience for the commuter.

REIMBURSED RIDE HOME
An average of 17 faculty and staff per month (up from 15 per month the first year) used this feature, an emergency taxi service for those who find themselves unexpectedly stranded on campus. The University pays for 90 percent of the taxi ride up to 50 miles per quarter. The average fare was $15.36. The number of passengers represents 0.4 percent of the faculty and staff U-PASS holders. Although the program is infrequently used, 35 percent of the faculty and staff with a U-PASS consider it an important feature.

DISCOUNT DAILY PARKING PASSES
Discount daily parking passes are available to U-PASS participants for $1.25 each and allow those who usually leave their cars at home to drive alone up to twice a week without paying full parking rates ($4.50 per day). Non-U-PASS participants can also purchase these passes but pay the full rate of $2.25 each. This feature of the program has been an important incentive for faculty and staff to turn in their drive-alone permits.

INFORMATION AND MARKETING
The Transportation Office hosts several transportation fairs over the year. New students and employees receive program materials at orientation sessions or by mail. Program brochures, newsletters and seasonal fliers are mailed and/or stocked at nine commuter centers around campus. Advertisements and articles in campus papers keep the program in the public eye.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION
The monitoring and evaluation system includes annual traffic surveys, a biennial telephone survey conducted jointly with Metro and Community Transit, and monthly monitoring of each U-PASS element.

AWARDS
The U-PASS program has won awards both locally and nationally. The Bullitt Foundation's Oil Smart program has honored the U-PASS two years in a row as an outstanding overall transportation program. In September 1992, the Association for Commuter Transportation (ACT), a national group of 1,800 individuals and organizations committed to exploring commute issues, awarded the U-PASS program its leadership award, ACT's highest honor. In addition, in 1992 the American Public Transportation Association named Metro the best large public transportation system in North America, in part for its work on the U-PASS program.

COMMENTS
The Transportation Office welcomes comments on the U-PASS program. Letters should be addressed to the Transportation Office, FJ-08, University of Washington, Seattle, WA 98195. Or call (206) 543-0450.