Contributing to the health and well-being of the University of Washington and neighboring communities by reducing traffic congestion and improving the regional transportation system

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON COMMUTER SERVICES
ENHANCING

The University of Washington’s Transportation Management Plan (TMP) identifies strategies that enhance access to campus by all transportation modes. The U-PASS transportation program is the cornerstone of the TMP, and our focus is on limiting the number of vehicle trips made to the University. This program has been so successful that driving to campus is an option chosen by a minority of commuters. The “greener” transportation modes—those with lower environmental impacts, lower carbon emissions, and fewer community impacts—dominate the commute choices of University of Washington students, staff, and faculty.

For over a decade, the University of Washington has published an annual report on the U-PASS program. This year, the U-PASS Annual Report has been produced by Commuter Services—a new office that brings together the functions of Parking Services and the Transportation Office. The creation of Commuter Services is enabling the University of Washington to fully manage transportation with an integrated, whole-system approach, building on past success and continuing our leadership in transportation demand management.

The U-PASS Annual Report provides information for measuring the program’s performance during the year; highlights its activities, initiatives, and achievements; and outlines its direction for the coming year.
MEETING OUR GOALS

In 2007, the U-PASS program continued to meet the goal of encouraging faculty, staff, and students to walk, bicycle, use transit, and rideshare rather than drive alone. The U-PASS program contributes significantly to the health and well-being of neighboring communities by reducing traffic congestion and improving the regional transportation system. This award-winning program continues to be recognized as a model for other employer transportation programs, both locally and nationally.

Top Five Transportation Management Strategies

1. Manage transportation demand by increasing the price of parking faster than the price of greener transportation options.
2. Expand parking pricing incentives to give faculty and staff reasons to consider other transportation options.
3. Purchase more transit service from providers.
4. Continue to implement a marketing approach that targets geographic areas.
5. Integrate pedestrian and bicycle facilities and programs into the fabric of the campus and neighboring communities.

TRAVEL TO THE UNIVERSITY DISTRICT

Despite a 24 percent growth in employee and student population since 1990, today’s University-related peak hour traffic remains below 1990 levels, and more than 75 percent of the campus population commutes using a greener transportation mode than driving alone.

Commuting Mode Choices

Travel patterns of University faculty, staff, and students are measured through a biennial survey, last conducted in fall 2006. A full report on this survey is available on the U-PASS web site at http://www.washington.edu/commuterservices/programs/upass/reports.php. The U-PASS program was implemented in 1991; the most recent mode split information for the University prior to program implementation was obtained in 1989.
**VEHICLE TRIPS**

The University is committed to limiting the number of vehicle trips made by faculty, staff, and students to minimize adverse effects on our neighbors and on the region.

The Campus Master Plan identifies a number of monitoring activities regarding vehicle trips. An annual campus traffic count records total vehicle trips made on to and off of campus for a week in October. The fall 2007 report shows a continuing decline in vehicle trips:

![Average Peak Trips](image)

Vehicle trips made by employees and students also continue to be significantly below the peak period limits identified in the campus master plan. Here, vehicle trips are calculated using estimates of trip behavior from a transportation survey of these two population groups, which is conducted every two years. Results of the 2006 survey indicate that in fall 2006, employees and students traveled less frequently to the U District and less frequently during peak periods. This, combined with a significant decline in student carpooling, led to much lower estimates of vehicle trips.


**U-PASS PARTICIPATION**

During 2007 the average number of U-PASSes in use was approximately 45,000, an increase of 24 percent from 1991. Eighty-three percent of students, and 70 percent of employees participated in the U-PASS program in 2007.

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<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>25,170</td>
<td>31,250</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty and Staff</td>
<td>11,350</td>
<td>13,820</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>36,520</td>
<td>45,070</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SOV permit holders may receive a complimentary U-PASS with their parking permit. In 2007, approximately 750 students and 2,800 faculty and staff received these complimentary U-PASSes, and these complimentary U-PASSes are included in the figures above. Data for 2007 represent averages for the fall, winter, and spring quarters of the 2006–07 academic year.
U-PASS PROGRAM

FUNDING
The 2007 U-PASS annual budget was approximately $13 million, with more than 90 percent of that cost attributed to service contracts with local public transportation providers. User fees covered almost 60 percent of the program costs, while revenue received from the sales of parking permits covered about 32 percent. Revenue from parking fines and other UW sources accounted for the remainder.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>U-PASS OPERATING BUDGET</th>
<th>$</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Administration/Monitoring/Miscellaneous Programs</td>
<td>554,000</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing and Public Relations</td>
<td>224,000</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transit Service Contracts</td>
<td>11,855,000</td>
<td>91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carpool/Vanpool/Ridematch</td>
<td>125,000</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NightRide Shuttle</td>
<td>196,000</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedestrian and Bicycle Improvements/Other</td>
<td>76,000</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES</td>
<td>$13,060,000</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

OPERATING FUNDING AND REVENUE
User Fees | $7,642,000 | 59% |
Parking Fine Revenue | 220,000 | 2%  |
Parking Fees | 4,185,000 | 32% |
Other UW Sources | 1,012,000 | 8%  |
TOTAL OPERATING FUNDING REVENUE | $13,060,000 | 100% |

PROGRAM ELEMENTS
The U-PASS program provides a valuable package of flexible, low-cost transportation choices for faculty, staff, and students. It includes unlimited access to public transit, and a parking management component that subsidizes carpool and vanpool parking rather than single occupancy vehicles (SOVs). The U-PASS program recognizes that many people must drive to campus from time to time, so discounted parking is made available to people who commute by other options most of the time. U-PASS also rewards bicycling and walking through programs that challenge students and employees to adopt these modes whenever possible. The U-PASS program also includes discounts on bicycle and pedestrian safety equipment, an emergency ride home program for employees, the NightRide shuttle, discounts on Zipcar, and the Merchant Discounts program. Each element is important in helping University employees and students overcome barriers to using green commute modes by expanding the options available to them.
U-PASS works.

The 2006 Transportation Survey indicated that 96 percent of students, 96 percent of faculty, and 93 percent of staff were very satisfied or somewhat satisfied with the U-PASS program.

Public Transit
The most frequently used benefit of U-PASS is free, unlimited rides on King County Metro, Community Transit, and Sound Transit buses. More than 60 routes throughout King and Snohomish counties serve the University District, with more than half of these coming directly to campus.

King County Metro estimates that UW Seattle campus U-PASS holders took about 8,800,000 trips in 2006–07, approximately 9 percent of all Metro Transit trips. U-PASS holders also took about 560,000 Community Transit trips (an estimated 6 percent of that transit agency’s total) and approximately 612,000 trips on Sound Transit during the year (approximately 5 percent of their total).

Train
Sound Transit’s Sounder commuter trains serve faculty, staff, and students traveling between Tacoma and downtown Seattle and between Everett and downtown Seattle. A U-PASS provides full-fare coverage; this is a value of up to $9.25 roundtrip per day.

Walking
Six percent of faculty, four percent of staff, and 33 percent of students walk to campus. For short trips, walking is the most reliable commute mode. In some cases it is faster than transit, as it is unaffected by traffic conditions.

Commuter Services held the fourth annual WalkIn campaign in May 2007. The challenge rewarded 440 participants for making a total of 16,865 walks of 10 minutes or more by walking to work, walking to meetings, taking a walk at lunch, and walking to errands. The event also included noontime activities for walkers and seminars on the benefits of walking. Eighty-five people took the WalkIn challenge for the first time.

Bicycling
For people who live within a mile and a half of campus, door-to-door biking is as fast as driving and travel times are more predictable. According to the 2006 U-PASS Survey, 13 percent of faculty, 7 percent of staff, and 7 percent of students commute to the UW by bicycle.

The UW accommodates bicyclists by providing almost 740 bicycle racks with a total capacity for more than 6,100 bikes. The University has more than 590 bicycle locker rentals in 31 campus locations—the largest university bike locker program in the US.

Commuter Services partners with the Hall Health Center to offer a selection of discounted bicycle lights and helmets to U-PASS holders. U-PASS holders can also receive discounts on bicycle parts and accessories at four area bike shops through the U-PASS Merchant Discounts Program. The UW Commuter Services partners with the Property and Transport Services department to sell as many as 100 abandoned bikes back to faculty, staff, students, and the community each year (67 abandoned bikes sold in 2007).

In 2007, U-PASS sponsored the fourth annual Ride in the Rain Bicycle Challenge, a campaign to encourage faculty, staff, and students to adopt bicycling as a year-round commute option. A total of nearly 860 participants joined more than 90 teams to ride approximately 6,210 roundtrips between their homes and campus during the month of January. Included among the participants were more than 140 new bike commuters. At an awards luncheon, prizes were given to the teams reporting the most trips, most miles, and most new bike commuters. A special “Soaked to the Gills” traveling trophy was awarded to the team reporting the most trips made in the rain.
Ridesharing
The University of Washington promotes RideshareOnline, the regional ridematch system that matches drivers and riders within King, Snohomish, and Pierce counties. In 2007, the University renewed its contract with AlterNetRides to provide ridematching to each of the Husky home football games as well as an additional ridematching service for commuters.

Vanpools
During the 2007 calendar year, an average of 30 vanpools were in operation with more than 220 U-PASS holder participants. Prior to the U-PASS, only eight vanpools, with a total of 80 participants, commuted to campus. U-PASS holders who commute to campus from 10 or more miles away receive up to $40 per month toward the cost of their Metro, Community Transit, Kitsap Transit, or Island Transit vanpool fare.

Emergency Ride Home
The Emergency Ride Home program allows faculty and staff U-PASS holders who unexpectedly need to go home, go to their child’s daycare, or work late to call any taxicab and be reimbursed for 90 percent of the fare, up to 50 miles per quarter. The program helps assure people who leave their cars at home that they will have transportation if an emergency arises. In 2007, an average of seven faculty and staff U-PASS holders used the program each month.

Zipcar
The University partners with Zipcar, a private membership-based car sharing program, to help reduce SOV commute trips to campus. People who would otherwise drive to campus for personal or work-related errands may use one of 15 Zipcars on or near campus instead. U-PASS holders receive a waiver of the application fee and a discount on hourly rates. In 2007, 2,354 U-PASS holders were active members. A total of 19 departments were signed up for departmental Zipcar memberships.

Merchant Discounts
In 2007, 42 local and national merchants participated in this program to provide discounts to U-PASS holders. Merchants receive free publicity in U-PASS marketing materials including advertisements, listing in the U-PASS web site, and seasonal promotions.

NightRide
NightRide is an evening van service that picks up riders at five locations on campus and drops them off at destinations in nearby neighborhoods. The service is provided nine months of the year (fall, winter, and spring quarters), from 8:00 pm to 12:15 am Sunday through Thursday, and is operated by a private vendor under contract with the University. More than 24,000 rides were taken on NightRide in 2007, an average of almost 160 rides each day the service was operated. The average cost per ride to operate NightRide was $13.29.

Flexible Work Arrangements
Commuter Services partners with the Work/Life Office in the Human Resources department to support teleworking and compressed work week schedules as a means of eliminating commute trips. The 2006 Transportation Survey found that 32 percent of faculty and 10 percent of staff eliminate traveling to the UW at least once every other week by working from home or an alternate site. In addition, 21 percent of students eliminate trips to campus by studying at home.
MANAGING THE DEMAND FOR PARKING

Managing the demand for SOV travel through product pricing is a key component of the U-PASS program. The inception of the U-PASS program was accompanied by a 50 percent increase in the cost of parking.

The University has maintained a policy of controlling the rise in U-PASS fees and keeping them significantly lower than the cost of parking. Today, the cost of a U-PASS for employees is about one-fourth the cost of a parking permit. To maintain this relationship that favors modes other than driving alone, parking fees have been raised faster than U-PASS fees. Parking and U-PASS rates stayed the same from 2006 to 2007.

**PARKING RATES**

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quarterly permits</td>
<td>$72.00</td>
<td>$108.00</td>
<td>$196.32</td>
<td>$212.82</td>
<td>$232.86</td>
<td>$254.76</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gate-issued daily parking</td>
<td>$4.00</td>
<td>$4.00</td>
<td>$8.00</td>
<td>$9.00</td>
<td>$10.00</td>
<td>$11.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montlake lot (daily parking)</td>
<td>$.75</td>
<td>$1.25</td>
<td>$2.75</td>
<td>$4.00</td>
<td>$4.00</td>
<td>$5.00</td>
</tr>
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**U-PASS RATES (QUARTERLY)**

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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Faculty &amp; Staff U-PASS</td>
<td>$27.00</td>
<td>$48.96</td>
<td>$52.62</td>
<td>$57.00</td>
<td>$61.80</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Student U-PASS</td>
<td>$20.00</td>
<td>$35.00</td>
<td>$37.00</td>
<td>$41.00</td>
<td>$44.00</td>
<td></td>
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The effect of this pricing strategy has been a reduction of 41 percent in the number of SOV parking permits since the program’s inception. In addition, the number of parking spaces used has declined as faculty, staff, and students have shifted away from driving alone. Although demand for parking varies depending on the area of campus and time of day, commuter parking lot utilization overall has decreased from 87 percent in 1990 to 71 percent in 2007.

**Single Occupancy Vehicle and Commuter Parking**

**SINGLE OCCUPANCY VEHICLE PERMITS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1990</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Faculty and Staff Permits</td>
<td>6,440</td>
<td>3,900</td>
<td>3,790</td>
<td>3,750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Permits</td>
<td>1,030</td>
<td>480</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>680</td>
</tr>
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</table>

**COMMUTER PARKING UTILIZATION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1990</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spaces Available</td>
<td>11,530</td>
<td>11,490</td>
<td>11,520</td>
<td>11,410</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Spaces Used</td>
<td>10,080</td>
<td>8,290</td>
<td>7,980</td>
<td>8,040</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parking Utilization</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
One of the strategies of the University's TMP is to increase the percentage of commuters who pay to park each time they drive to campus, rather than provide a bulk discount for unlimited parking using a permit. A variety of programs encourage commuters to turn in their SOV parking permits by providing discounts for parking on campus less often.

**Pay-Per-Use Parking**

The Pay-Per-Use-Parking (PPUP) program charges drivers, through payroll deduction, each time they park. Program participants receive messages about their parking use each pay period, reminding them that each additional day they park incurs an additional fee. The PPUP incentive-based pricing program encourages participants to “mix-up” their commute by walking, bicycling, and using public transit when they can. Almost 2,520 individuals participated in the PPUP program in October 2007 (compared to 2,380 in 2006), and each participant parked, on average, 7.6 days per month (compared to 7.5 days in 2006). The fee for occasional carpools was $0.35 to $0.45 per rider per day, depending on the number of people in the vehicle and the location where the vehicle was parked on campus. Since fees were introduced in 2004, carpool parking on campus has declined from approximately 2,720 to 1,510 vehicles. However, the number of SOV permits has declined over the period as well (see previous page), resulting in a decrease in vehicles on campus.

**Individual Commuter Tickets**

Individual Commuter Tickets (ICTs) allow faculty and staff to park on campus at a discounted rate if they drive on average two days per week or less. The rest of the time their U-PASS allows them to use another transportation mode to get to campus. In 2007, the cost of ICTs for individuals who hold a U-PASS was $3.06 (faculty and staff who don’t purchase a U-PASS can also buy ICTs at the cost of $5.20 each). In 2007, close to 174,510 ICTs were sold, averaging approximately 700 tickets used per business day. More than three-quarters (78%) of ICTs were bought by U-PASS holders.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CARPOOLS</th>
<th>1990</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Permit Carpools</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>1,610</td>
<td>1,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily Carpools</td>
<td>760</td>
<td>1,100</td>
<td>410</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL CARPOOLS</td>
<td>1,460</td>
<td>2,720</td>
<td>1,510</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL DAILY PARTICIPANTS</td>
<td>3,600</td>
<td>5,750</td>
<td>3,390</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 2007, the monthly carpool fee was $18. Occasional carpools are provided discounted parking upon presenting the required number of U-PASSes together with current Husky Card™ Accounts at designated campus locations. The fee for occasional carpools was $0.35 to $0.45 per rider per day, depending on the number of people in the vehicle and the location where the vehicle was parked on campus. Since fees were introduced in 2004, carpool parking on campus has declined from approximately 2,720 to 1,510 vehicles. However, the number of SOV permits has declined over the period as well (see previous page), resulting in a decrease in vehicles on campus.

**Hold That Lot**

Faculty and staff who decide to give up their SOV parking permit and use a different commute option can have their lot assignments held for up to six months. This program feature affords employees the opportunity to try a different commute made while retaining the ability to return to their preferred parking location.

**Montlake E1 Parking Lot**

Instead of purchasing a parking permit, faculty, staff, and students may use their Husky Card™ to debit their account $2.78 to park in the Montlake E1 parking lot (or pay $5.00 if they use cash). By having to pay for only the days they drive, commuters are encouraged to find other ways to commute when driving is not necessary.

**Carpools**

The University recognizes two types of carpools—carpools holding permits and occasional carpools. Permitted carpools agree to travel together to campus three or more days a week and can park in an assigned campus lot.
MARKETING AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

U-PASS keeps the University community informed about their transportation choices through marketing efforts that feature the benefits of using a mode other than driving alone. Commuter Services uses a variety of channels to reach its constituents, evaluating carefully the messages best conveyed through electronic or print media. U-PASS continues to refine its distribution strategy to target key audiences at the times when they are most likely to be making commute decisions. For example, within a month of starting a job at the University, every new employee receives a welcome email from Commuter Services with information and links to U-PASS services and programs.

The popular and useful U-PASS User’s Guides are produced each year in a student version and a faculty and staff version. The First Year Programs Office distributes student U-PASS guides to over 8,000 freshman and new transfer students during formal orientation sessions that feature an informative discussion about transportation choices. U-PASS also partners with First Year Programs and undergraduate peer advisors to offer a series of “One Bus Away” tours designed to show new students how easy it is to get around Seattle without a car.

The Benefits Office provides printed copies of the faculty/staff U-PASS guides to all new UW employees at the time of their orientation, as do dozens of departments who offer new employees unit-specific orientations. Both faculty/staff and student versions of the U-PASS guides are available online and at nine commuter information kiosks across campus.

The Commuter Services website continues to offer up-to-date information on the U-PASS program and parking on campus while evolving to reflect the changing world of Transportation Services at the University of Washington. The Commuter Services site provides visitors, faculty, staff, and students a single access point for the information they need to make decisions on how to get to campus and where to park if they have to drive. It also helps visitors and the University community better understand how the inter-related Transportation Services programs connect, driven by a shared mission of Moving People and Moving Things.

In addition to the shared mission of keeping campus moving, Transportation Services is committed to an array of products and programs that make it easier for the campus community to make environmentally sustainable choices in living, working, and getting around.

As part of this effort, U-PASS is a partner in a pilot project showcasing the nation’s first-ever system of auto-checkout electric-assist bikes. This project will begin operations on campus in fall 2008. Partially funded by a Washington State Department of Transportation grant, the cutting-edge ebike system will significantly enhance the U-PASS program. Providing the option of inexpensive, convenient intra-campus transportation promises to further reduce the number of cars coming to campus each day as well as reduce car and truck use within campus. The project also reflects the U-PASS program’s position as a leader and innovator in employer transportation programs.
To request an additional copy of this report contact:

upass@u.washington.edu

206.685.1543

Campus Box 351105

3901 University Way NE

Seattle, WA 98105

Copies are provided to state and local governments, neighborhood and business associations, faculty, staff, students, and other interested parties.

This report is also available on the U-PASS web site:
www.washington.edu/commuterservices/programs/upass/reports.php

We welcome your comments. Please contact:

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Email: cgilman@u.washington.edu
Phone: 206.685.4380

Web site: www.washington.edu/commuterservices/