

WVU Transportation and Parking Plan

West Virginia University is a large university in a relatively small town. Students, faculty and staff need access to the campus to attend classes and perform their jobs. However, the absence of an extensive transit system means that most of that access is through use of a private automobile and generally confined to a few roads that are undersized for the amount of traffic carried. The congestion and pollution resulting from the use and concentration of so many automobiles as well as the cost to the individual commuter and cost of providing parking creates challenges for the University, its employees and students and the community of Morgantown.

A parking and transportation plan for the University cannot solve all of the problems resulting from the size of WVU and limited community infrastructure. The cooperative working relationship that exists between WVU and local governmental bodies is important in identifying more complete solutions. It is also important that WVU make explicit its assumptions about its institutional role in addressing transportation and parking issues and its plan for dealing with these issues.

WVU's efforts to improve transportation and parking further the goals of the University's 2010 Plan. The campus and its infrastructure are supportive of: Goal 1, Attract and graduate high quality students; Goal 2, Recruit and retain a high-quality faculty committed to the land-grant mission; Goal 3, Enhance the educational environment for student learning; and Goal 5, Improve West Virginia's health, economy and quality of life. The plan may also contribute to the health and wellness of the campus community and surrounding area.

Among the assumptions that influence a parking and transportation plan are these.

WVU student enrollment will continue to grow reaching 30,000 by 2010. Almost 28,500 of these students will attend the Morgantown campus.

WVU's faculty and staff will also increase in number although not at the same rate of growth as students. Much of the faculty and staff growth will be dependent on external funding. A higher growth rate is expected on the Health Sciences Center campus than on other campuses.

The number of visitors to campus will continue to increase, especially as the patient-load at the Health Sciences Center and Ruby Memorial Hospital increases.

Transportation, congestion and parking are components of the quality of life for students, faculty and staff. In addressing these areas, the implications of changes for the quality of life should be considered.

It is the collective responsibility of the WVU community to help mitigate the problems that the campus and community face with traffic congestion. Such mitigation may require that individual faculty, staff and students choose alternative means of transportation to reduce congestion.

The assumptions that guided development of the specific recommendations of the Transportation and Parking Committee follow. The revised assumptions, which were shared with the campus in January for comment, are in bold. The specific recommendations are now being shared for campus comment and recommendations.

Transportation Assumptions and Recommendations

- 1. WVU supports an integrated multi-modal transportation system where all modes of transportation (transit, motor vehicles, bicycles and pedestrians) and transportation impacts are considered in campus decision-making.**

In support of this assumption, we recommend that:

- a. When planning a change in one mode of transportation, the impact of that change on other modes be specified and reviewed by the appropriate University body prior to making the proposed change.
 - b. Whenever possible, modes of transportation be integrated. Thus, the construction of new roads on campus should include bike lanes, sidewalks, appropriate signage, safe crossings, adequate lighting, etc. that comply with the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD).
- 2. Reliable, effective and user-friendly mass transit systems are required to reduce congestion on campus and in Morgantown while providing employees and students access to campus. Information about transit alternatives needs to be clear and easily available to students, faculty, staff and the public.**

In support of this assumption, we recommend that:

- a. The appropriate WVU officials work with Mountain Line and other appropriate transit systems to further develop transit schedules that meet the needs of students and employees.
 - 1) In developing such schedules, the needs of students and employees who live some distance from campus as well as those who live closer to campus merit consideration. Bus routes that may serve or link with other bus lines serving the needs of those living in Pennsylvania or

West Virginia counties around Greater Morgantown have been suggested.

- b. The appropriate WVU officials work with local, state and federal officials to support the funding of transit expansion in the greater Morgantown area.
- c. The persons and /or offices within the University responsible for marketing and publicizing transit systems be clearly identified and charged with that responsibility. Marketing is a recurrent theme in our assumptions and recommendations, and we feel it is extremely important to accurately disseminate transportation and parking information.
- d. A transportation video be developed and periodically updated, highlighting the different transportation options available on campus. The video could be shown at New Student Orientation, University 101, Housing and Residence Life, available on the WVU web site, and any other appropriate source.
- e. A transportation website (transportation.wvu.edu) be created so that all information about transportation is made available at one, easy-to-remember location. A web site for parking (parking.wvu.edu) already exists as a place where parking tickets may be paid, permits renewed, as well as information about parking areas is available. The current webpage, <http://www.wvu.edu/transportation/>, does not contain information about pedestrian safety, bike usage, and could contain more information. This should serve as a transportation information hub that is user-friendly and well publicized.
 - 1) The web site could include a link to the Mountain Line ON-Time Ticker (<http://www.busride.org/>) and to a site for the PRT. The PRT site could be used to provide information about PRT outages.
 - 2) All sites should be periodically updated to assure the currency of the information provided. The legend that appears on some sites indicating when a site was last reviewed or changed should be added so users may judge the currency of information.
- f. Brochures be developed and printed that contain information about transportation and parking options on campus. The brochures could be distributed to students and /or employees at New Student Orientation, Benefits Orientation, New Faculty Orientation, campus fairs, and may be appropriate to e-mail in a pdf form to all students and employees. Departments should be encouraged to distribute the brochure to incoming graduate students who may not attend an orientation session.
- g. User-friendly features that be considered include “smart stations” that advise readers of the time before the arrival of the next PRT car or bus, signs noting the time required by bike or foot to reach a destination, etc.

- h. Periodic surveys of user satisfaction with existing transit systems be conducted as a means of assuring that the transit systems are user-friendly.

3. Mass transit systems need to be accessible to disabled students and employees as well as to the able-bodied.

In support of this assumption, we recommend that:

- a. Existing mass transit methods be reviewed to assure their accessibility.
- b. Proposals for additions to existing mass transit be reviewed to assure their accessibility and compliance with ADA requirements.
- c. The review should include persons with expertise in services to the disabled such as the WVU Office of Disability Services, Occupational and Physical Therapy, etc.
- d. When appropriate, referrals may be made to the Mountain Line, which has arrangements for accessible transportation. (See “Accessible Services” link at <http://www.busride.org/>)

4. The PRT is among the mass transit alternatives currently available on the WVU campus and a portion of Morgantown. The PRT should be maintained at a level where it will continue to provide reliable transportation among campuses.

In support of this assumption, we recommend that:

- a. PRT fees increase as needed to support the PRT infrastructure in support of the plan for PRT maintenance and improvement.
- b. The strategic plan for the PRT be periodically up-dated and shared with the appropriate bodies including the advisory committee whose formation is recommended below. The strategic plan should include the planned use of funding and the areas of greatest need.
- c. Grant funds and other external funds should be sought for both maintenance and improvement of the PRT.
- d. The PRT staff have proven to be effective in obtaining grant funds. To further enhance their effectiveness and provide support for grant-seeking in other transit areas, the addition of a grant-writer or use of graduate students/assistants to develop grant applications should be considered.
- e. The operational hours of the PRT be reviewed. Such review should include a cost-benefit analysis of extending the daily hours of the PRT as opposed to increasing the frequency with which buses run selected routes.

It should examine the need for Sunday hours during the semester. Additionally, the review should examine the needs of faculty, staff, graduate students and community members for PRT services or replacement bus service during holidays and semester breaks when classes may not be in session.

- 1) It has been suggested that the faculty and students from various departments and units of the University may be able to be of assistance in addressing issues associated with the PRT.
 - f. Shuttles from park-and-ride parking lots or the Caperton Trail to PRT stations be explored as a means of reducing the number of cars on campus by providing ease of access to the PRT. The effectiveness and utilization of the shuttle from the Coliseum to the Engineering PRT station should be included in this review. The need for continued service via this shuttle during times classes may not be in session but employees are still working should be included in this review.
 - g. Lighting around and leading to PRT stations should be reviewed to assure the safety of those using the PRT. Signage for the PRT and maintenance of the platforms should also be periodically reviewed.
 - h. The availability of the PRT through the use of WVU ID cards should be more widely publicized to faculty and to graduate students paying full fees. Many faculty and graduate students may not realize that they may use the PRT without charge.
5. **Because parts and other components for the PRT are increasingly difficult to locate due to the PRT's age, maintaining the PRT may require the development of alternative guidance mechanisms, etc.**

In support of this assumption, we recommend that:

- a. The PRT staff continue their efforts to work with industry representatives and others, including WVU's faculty, staff and students, who may be able to suggest and/or develop the alternatives needed.
- b. Information about the PRT's reliability needs to be shared with the campus community more frequently. There is the perception among some that the PRT is not a reliable form of transportation although the data about the PRT indicates that it is.
 - 1) A monthly report of reliability data available online and through the media may be a way to address this issue.
 - 2) When the PRT does experience breakdowns in service, faster communication with patrons and more rapid arrangements for alternative service is sought by many who use the PRT.

- c. As alternative mechanisms are developed, the likelihood of replacement in the future should be considered, given rapid technology changes.
- 6. While the PRT student fee should continue to provide significant support for the operations of the PRT, the costs of major up-grades to PRT equipment will need to be supported by grant funds and other sources.**

In support of this assumption, we recommend that:

- a. Expansion of the PRT to serve additional areas of the campus and community be pursued if grant funding is available for such expansion. However, the cost of such expansion is so significant that we do not recommend that it be solely or primarily funded by student fees. The fees that would need to be charged would likely be disproportionate to the benefit that students would receive.
 - b. Should funding to support expansion of the PRT be obtained, careful consideration needs to be given to the impact new stations would have on all modes of transportation. The goal of such expansion should be to reduce congestion. That may mean that new stations may have parking garages attached and be located at sites that would result in cars not coming to campus as their drivers use the PRT.
 - c. An advisory committee that includes student, faculty and staff users be created for the PRT. Such a committee could be a subcommittee of the advisory committee described below under recommendation 30. Given the important role that student fees play in the support of the PRT, it is appropriate that students be provided with an opportunity to offer advice and feedback about PRT services.
 - d. There be exploration of a transit pass for community members that would allow them to ride both a Mountain Line bus and the PRT for one monthly fee.
- 7. Increases in student enrollment and the development of park-and-ride options will require supplemental bus transportation.**

In support of this assumption, we recommend that:

- a. The creation of park-and-ride lots be explored by WVU and with the various governmental bodies that have an interest in such lots. The Metropolitan Planning Organization, Mountain Line and the Morgantown Parking Authority have expressed interest in the creation of such lots. WVU's efforts should complement and supplement their activities.
- b. Transportation from and to park-and-ride lots be provided for students and employees. WVU's efforts to provide such transportation should complement and supplement services provided by the Mountain Line.

- c. Transportation from and to park-and-ride lots be frequent enough to meet the needs of students and employees and that the transportation be available at times that correspond to class and work schedules.
 - d. The appropriate siting of park-and-ride lots be carefully studied. The lots need to reflect the commuting patterns of students and employees and provide easy access to transit to campus. It may be that surveys and/or the analysis of possibilities by WVU geography faculty and students could help identify desirable alternatives.
 - e. WVU publicize the existing Morgantown Parking Authority spaces for long-term parking to serve the needs of residential students who may only need access to a car on weekends. If governmental and private efforts are not sufficient to meet the long-term needs, WVU should investigate the creation of WVU-managed and maintained lots to meet this need.
- 8. The Mountain Line will be an increasingly important part of transportation to and among campuses. Additional limited bus routes through and among campuses may be needed to supplement the PRT and existing Mountain Line services.**

In support of this assumption, we recommend that:

- a. The appropriate University officials recommend to the Mountain Line the creation of an advisory committee that includes students and employees and current users of the Mountain Line. Since WVU is the Mountain Line's main customer, frequent communication through a more formal mechanism may help the Mountain Line to better meet the needs of those associated with WVU and help WVU constituencies better understand any limitations faced by the Mountain Line.
 - b. The appropriate WVU officials and the advisory committee periodically review the usage of existing routes and suggestions for additional routes.
- 9. Transportation needs to be available to students during the hours that they may reasonably be expected to be involved in University-associated activities. This will require transportation support until the time that evening classes end, the WVU Libraries close and the conclusion of WVUp All Night.**

In support of this assumption, we recommend that:

- a. WVU explore development of a shuttle program that would transport University members to requested locations within a specific area of Morgantown. This system would require students, faculty, and staff to call a dispatch office and provide their ID number or equivalent in order to request pick-up and provide a destination throughout the defined Morgantown area. Upon pick-up, the shuttle driver would verify the person's identity. Each University member would have a certain number

of rides per semester determined by a specific fee, and may be permitted to bring one guest. Similar programs exist at other campuses, such as the University of Pittsburgh.

- b. WVU work with Mountain Line to add more buses on the Campus PM route and to extend the Campus PM route to at least 3:30AM. We also recommend that WVU work with the City of Morgantown and local business owners to develop more transportation options for students and residents of Morgantown during late hours of the night.
- c. The PRT remain in operation later into the evening giving students another transportation option in the later evening hours. It may not be economically feasible to keep the PRT functioning until the close of the libraries or WVUp All Night; however, we feel another reliable transportation option needs to be provided

10. WVU needs to work with appropriate governmental bodies to increase the number of bike lanes, sidewalks, etc. that provide alternative means of transportation. WVU also needs work with the appropriate governmental body to assure the maintenance of sidewalks, including the removal of snow and ice.

In support of this assumption, we recommend that:

- a. Information be gathered about the number of students and employees who currently use bicycles to commute to and around the campus and the number who may be interested in doing so. For those who currently commute by bike, at least the following information should be gathered.
 - (1) The route (s) used to commute. In particular, information is needed about whether bike commuters using roadways to commute, the Caperton Trail, Decker's Creek Trail, a combination, etc.
 - (2) The months of the year when bicycling is used as a major mode of transportation to the campus.
 - (3) The times of day when bike commuting occurs.
 - (4) The issues or problems faced by the commuter.
- b. Bike trails begin and end at several accessible locations around Morgantown. Particular attention should be paid to creating accessible locations that will lead between the Caperton Trail, Decker's Creek Trail and campus. Additional transit may be required between those locations and campus to encourage bike use.
- c. Covered parking and bike lockers be created for bicycles on campus. Among the areas where lockers might be created are residence halls and PRT stations. When possible, shower facilities for cyclists should also be created.

- d. WVU also encourage the creation of covered parking and bike lockers at other locations in the community. WVU may wish to work with the Morgantown Bike Board in encouraging community amenities to facilitate biking.
- e. WVU explore the creation of a fleet of inexpensively rented or free bicycles or mopeds distinguishable by color that are available on campus for short-term use. Such systems have been created at the University of Colorado and University of Montana among other campuses.
- f. Appropriate signage for bicyclists and pedestrians be provided on campus. The signage should be consistent with the MUTCD standards for signs. Bike lanes on roadways should also be striped to alert bikers and motorists to their location. It may also be necessary to create bike dismount zones on campus to reduce conflicts between cyclists and pedestrians.
- g. An education program about safety issues concerning bicyclists, pedestrians and motorists be implemented on campus. WVU faculty, staff and students knowledgeable in this area should be utilized to develop the program. Certified bicycle safety instructors and literature available from the League of American Bicyclists (www.bikeleague.org) may be helpful in developing educational programs.
- h. WVU explore with local governmental bodies regulations concerning snow and ice removal on pedestrian walkways and their enforcement. The liability issues associated with the failure to remove snow and ice from public walkways should also be explored.
- i. WVU identify ways on campus to better distinguish crosswalks for pedestrians and drivers. This may take the form of improved signage, paving materials that distinguish crosswalks from the roadway or pedestrian-activated crossing lights that are embedded in the pavement. Traffic engineering expertise should be sought as to the best solutions.
- j. WVU work with local governments and the Department of Highways to improve crosswalks frequently used by students and employees. This may include the addition of the items identified in i, above. It may also include countdown signals for pedestrians.
- k. WVU develop periodic publicity campaigns to highlight available bike paths and pedestrian walkways and encourage their use. The campaigns may include identifying trails on campus maps, recognizing individuals who use these means of commuting, etc.

11. WVU needs to assure that there are adequate sidewalks, safe crosswalks, appropriate signage, etc. on campus and that the infrastructure supporting pedestrians is appropriately maintained. When building new roads on campus, bike lanes with appropriate signage should also be provided.

In support of this assumption, we recommend that:

- a. Attention initially be focused on those crosswalks that have been identified as providing the greatest risk. These may include:
 - In front of the Mountainlair
 - In the loop area (lighting and crosswalk, someone also mentioned that trimming or removing the hedge on the Life Science side, may improve visibility)
 - The entire Health Science Center
 - Crossing Monongahela Boulevard from the Coliseum to Creative Arts Center
 - Van Voorhis Road
 - Chestnut Ridge Road
 - Beechurst Avenue
 - Don Knotts Boulevard
 - Patteron Drive
 - University Avenue on the Evansdale and Downtown campuses.

A walkability audit should be conducted to pinpoint areas of concern. In deciding how to deal with areas of concern, expertise on campus including that provided by the West Virginia Local Technical Assistance Program housing in the WVU Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering should be utilized. Such an audit might identify and prioritize existing locations on and around the campus where improvements are needed.

Some of these crosswalks are the primary responsibility of WVU. Other crosswalks are the responsibility of a governmental body and WVU will need to work with that government to improve the crosswalks.

- b. The review of crosswalks include assuring that appropriate signage has been installed, visual obstacles eliminated or reduced, ADA requirements met, etc. Some of the alternatives that should be considered are identified above in 10 i.
- c. WVU policy be that no parking lot or structure be built without properly designing and completing sidewalks, stairs, lighting, bike paths and walkways to the buildings/facilities. Pedestrian friendliness should be considered in all parking areas and new construction. Generous sidewalks, safe cross walks, traffic calming, landscaping, street lamps, bike lanes, facilities, trash receptacles, pull-offs, shelters, benches and environmental impact should be planned in the design stages of all new

- construction or renovations. Smart growth planning and design should be encouraged.
- d. WVU encourage local governmental bodies to adopt requirements like those in 11,c for parking lots or structures built.
 - e. Previous studies or groups that are vested in walkability and biking be consulted on an on-going basis and, when appropriate, their efforts be partnered with those of the University. Among those who may be consulted is the West Virginia Department of Transportation Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator. It may also be appropriate to hire consultants to assist with improving walkability and biking.
 - f. Improvements be made to assure that campus crosswalks are marked and lighted. National studies indicate that most injuries and fatalities involving pedestrians occur as pedestrians attempt to cross streets and a disproportionate number are at night.
 - g. WVU work with appropriate governmental bodies to assure that sidewalks are provided in residential developments targeted toward students, that those sidewalks are maintained and that they are connected to destinations and pedestrian facilities wherever possible.
 - h. WVU work with the appropriate governmental body to explore creating crosswalks at mid-block locations on long thoroughfares, such as Monongalia Boulevard and Van Voorhis Road. Mid-block crosswalks have two effects: they slow down traffic in the immediate vicinity, and they discourage pedestrians from crossing between cars. Traffic calming tools such as raised crossings or plateau crossings with light activation should be used in all appropriate cross walks.
 - i. A comprehensive walking and biking plan should be developed to include education, enforcement, and encouragement elements in addition to engineering and planning work. The plan should include proposals for improved educational programs, enforcement work, and encouragement projects. The plans may be developed through local task forces, which could include members from bicycling groups, local police, planning agencies, public works departments, school districts, and safety groups.
 - j. A webpage with maps and descriptions of the walking and biking paths be available online. It may be appropriate for such a site to be a joint WVU-City of Morgantown effort. The site may include the ability to submit concerns or issues regarding the paths.
 - k. WVU pursue Department of Transportation and other available grant funding to fund bicycling and walking improvements.
 - l. Campus administrative responsibility for the construction and maintenance of bike racks and lockers should be clearly assigned.

Funding responsibility for sidewalks and any other infrastructure around parking lots and structures should also be clearly assigned.

- m. When planning construction on campus, pedestrian paths around and/or through construction sites should be considered and efforts to assure pedestrian safety implemented.

Parking Assumptions and Recommendations

- 12. There is insufficient land and other resources to meet all the parking needs of WVU students and employees. While WVU will continue to provide significant parking resources, it cannot provide parking in immediate proximity to the student's classroom or employee's workplace for every student or employee who may request a parking permit. Given this, WVU's efforts will need to be supplemented by other public and private resources.**

In support of this assumption, we recommend that:

- a. Key WVU officials establish an ongoing dialogue with governmental bodies such as the City of Morgantown, Westover, Star City, Monongalia County and Greater Morgantown Metropolitan Planning Organization to determine how their combined resources can improve the parking situation/problems in the region.
- b. Key WVU officials establish a continuous dialogue with the Morgantown Chamber of Commerce, local churches, businesses, and nonprofits to determine how their combined resources can improve the parking situation/problems in the region.
- c. Key WVU officials encourage private developers of housing designed to accommodate WVU students to include transit to campus in the amenities offered by their development as a means of reducing on-campus parking demands.

- 13. WVU's parking plan must be developed in concert with the plans of the Greater Morgantown Metropolitan Planning Organization, Morgantown Parking Authority, City of Morgantown, Department of Highways and other appropriate governmental bodies.**

In support of this assumption, we recommend that:

- a. Key WVU officials should establish a "Regional Parking Committee" that encompasses representatives from the public, private, and nonprofit sectors. The goal of the committee will be to meet on a regular basis to discuss solutions to the region's parking issues.

- b. WVU must ask for input from governmental units before it finalizes the Parking Plan. The goal is to seek "buy-in" from other entities about the assumptions and recommendations of the plan and establish a means by which these entities will assist in the plan's implementation.
 - c. WVU educate its employees and students on regional government proposals that may serve to improve the transportation and parking infrastructure, such as the 2030 Regional Transportation Plan and funding needed to support it.
 - d. WVU should encourage the development of bus and/or High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes in any roads built redesigned as a part of the 2030 Plan or any other initiative.
- 14. Increasing population in the Morgantown area, which has not been accompanied by expanded traffic infrastructure, has resulted in increased congestion. To reduce congestion, park and ride systems must be developed and on campus parking rates developed with consideration of market rates so that alternatives are financially attractive to employees and students.**

In support of this assumption, we recommend that:

- a. WVU explore the replacement of additional vehicles in the University fleet with "clean" vehicles as a means of reducing air pollution.
- b. In encouraging students and employees to make use of alternatives to the single-occupant vehicle, WVU communicate the actual costs associated with some modes of transportation. Actual costs may include the below.
 - (1) The American Public Transportation Association has indicated that in a two-adult household in which one adult relies on public transportation rather than a car to commute, an average of \$6,200 a year is saved.
(http://www.apta.com/media/releases/070109_energy_report.cfm retrieved on March 12, 2007)
 - (2) The actual costs of constructing a parking lot or structure include the opportunity costs associated with land use, environmental impacts, greenhouse gases produced through the use of automobiles, etc.
- c. WVU explore the creation of a program that will provide a subsidy to employees from state-funded allocations to use to support parking or its alternatives.
 - (1) The purpose behind such a program is to encourage the use of alternatives to the single-occupant vehicle by placing all modes of transportation on an equal basis in terms of institutional support. Those who wish to continue to drive a single-occupant vehicle could

use the subsidy to defray their parking costs. Those who chose to use mass transit, bicycling or walking could use the subsidy in the way that they wished. An annual stipend of \$100.00 to each employee regardless of their mode of transportation would cost the institution approximately \$640,000.

- (2) The program could alternatively be designed to be something like the programs that pay employees a monthly stipend not to drive, like that offered by Stanford University.
- d. Alternative class and work schedules designed to reduce congestion at peak hours be explored.
- (1) Offering a coordinated range of day-time General Education Curriculum courses on both the Downtown and Evansdale campuses should be reviewed. This would allow students living in residence halls to stay on the campus where they live. Rather than having many students commute to another campus to take a GEC course, it may be preferable to have one faculty member commute to another campus to teach the course.
 - (2) WVU consider actions that would result in an increased distribution of courses throughout the day. Some campuses limit the number of courses that a given department may offer during peak class times. For example, a department may be required to offer 40% of its classes outside the peak hours of 10:00 am to 3:00 pm. This reduces the demand for classrooms as well as transportation and parking during the peak hours.
 - (3) Increased use of flex schedules including four-day work weeks for employees may reduce the demand for transportation and parking. Such schedules could also have the advantage of keeping University offices open for more hours, which may help meet the needs of non-traditional students.
 - (4) Tele-commuting one or more days per week for some employees may also be an appropriate way to reduce transportation and parking demands.

15. WVU and its Parking Office must be effective and comprehensive in advising students, staff, faculty and visitors of off-campus parking alternatives and on-campus parking regulations. This may require WVU to make campus constituents aware of parking alternatives at off-campus locations, such as those provided by the Morgantown Parking Authority.

In support of this assumption, we recommend that:

- a. Online information about parking alternatives and regulations be accessible to visitors to campus as well as to students, staff and faculty.

- Information for visitors should be easily accessible and provide the information that may be needed by those not familiar with the campus.
- b. Signs in parking lots and structures identify critical elements for potential parkers, including the following:
 - (1) The kind of permit required to park in the lot/structure. Color-coding could be used to communicate this kind of information.
 - (2) The hours that parking restrictions are in effect.
 - (3) The consequences of illegally parking.
 - (4) The phone number to call if a car has been towed.
 - (5) The phone number of the Parking Office.
 - c. Detailed parking regulations be made more available to those applying for a parking permit or the extension of a permit. Such regulations, at a minimum, should be available online. A printed or electronic pamphlet of the regulations should be forwarded to those renewing a permit as well as those initially receiving a permit.
 - d. Job applicants be advised to explore transportation and parking alternatives as a part of the process of considering a position. Such applicants would include faculty members and staff members and both those beginning their initial employment with WVU and those transferring from one WVU position to another.
 - e. A list of non-WVU parking alternatives and/or links to such alternatives be compiled and made available to visitors, students, staff and faculty. The list should include contact information and, when available, parking rates, etc. At a minimum, public parking facilities should be listed. Parking lots maintained by non-profit or private organizations should also be invited to have their information listed.
 - f. The owners of non-WVU lots and structures be encouraged to post telephone contact numbers to call when a car has been towed. Students have complained about the difficulty of learning how to retrieve vehicle towed from such lots.
 - g. The Parking Office refer students and employees with disabling conditions who contact them about parking permits to the appropriate office with which such requests should originate.
 - (1) If the disabling condition is a permanent one, the Parking Office should provide information about and/or the forms needed to obtain a West Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles Mobility Impaired Placard or Plate. The Parking Office should also provide information about the process for obtaining a WVU parking permit in addition to the West Virginia permit.

- (2) If the disabling condition is a temporary one, the Parking Office should refer students to the Office of Disability Services and employees to the appropriate office to obtain information about a temporary campus permit. The Office of Disability Services has a web site that provides useful information:
<http://www.wvu.edu/~socjust/disability/accessibleparking.htm>

16. WVU's parking resources will include a mix of permit lots and metered lots. Metered lots will be primarily used to meet the needs of students and visitors to campus.

In support of this assumption, we recommend that:

- a. Policies be developed to strongly encourage short term utilization of metered parking

17. WVU's parking operations should be self-sufficient. Thus, parking fees must generate enough income to pay for the development and maintenance of parking lots and garages, shuttle bus or other transportation associated with parking lots, staff needed to patrol the lots and administer the program and other costs associated with the parking program.

In support of this assumption, we recommend that:

- a. A strategic plan and supporting budget projections be developed periodically and up-dated annually for transportation and parking services and shared with the advisory committee described below. Greater transparency with regard to revenue and expenditures is needed to justify parking costs to employees and students.
- (1) It may be appropriate for the budget to reference the other sources of support used to fund transportation expenses as opposed to parking and parking-related expenses. For example, the University budget rather than the Parking Office budget funds the free use of the Mountain Line by students and employees.
- b. The University's Legal Counsel review the uses that may be made of various sources of income supporting parking. In particular, the use of parking fees to support shuttle buses from park-and-ride lots to campus should be reviewed.
- c. The current reliance on parking citations to support parking operations be examined. Citations currently provide approximately 35% of the Parking Office budget. Such heavy reliance on fine limits the financial ability to pursue other alternatives that may also curb illegal parking such as gated lots.
- d. Alternative methods of collecting fines associated with parking citations received by employees, citizens and vendors be devised. At present, the

only alternatives are denial of permit renewal for employees who have permits and/or referral to magistrates court.

e. The allocation of the Parking Office budget among functions and their effectiveness be reviewed. (See also recommendation 30)

(1) Many indicate, for example, that the enforcement staff has well-known patrolling patterns that make them somewhat predictable and reduce their effectiveness in identifying those illegally parked.

(2) Allocations to support communication and marketing may be helpful to the campus community in learning about transportation and parking alternatives.

18. WVU's parking fees may be increased periodically to keep pace with rising costs.

a. Increases in parking fees should reflect several factors including the following:

(1) The income needed to support the self-sufficiency of parking based on the strategic plan and supporting budget documents described above.

(2) Consideration of market rates for other public and private parking.

(3) Grant or other funding received that may assist in reducing rates.

(4) The goal of reducing congestion on and around campus by reducing the number of single-occupant cars.

b. Notice of planned increases needs to be provided in sufficient time for those currently parking in WVU lots to make other arrangements if they do not wish to pay a proposed higher rate.

19. It is appropriate to charge differential rates for WVU's parking depending on such features as the quality and nature of the parking lot, the portability of the parking permit and the closeness of the lot to campus buildings.

In support of this assumption, we recommend that:

a. Annual parking permit fees reflect the below features:

(1) Proximity to campus buildings. The rates for parking that is close to campus buildings should be higher than the rates for parking that is more distant.

- (2) The nature of the lot. It should cost more to park in a garage than a surface lot and more to park in a paved surface lot than a gravel surface lot.
 - (3) If special features such as gated lots are introduced, the fees for those lots should be higher than those for lots without gates.
 - (4) The turnover goals for metered lots. Many metered lots charge a reduced rate for more limited use to encourage patrons to turnover parking spaces more frequently.
 - (5) Reduced rates for car pool members as a means of encouraging car pooling.
 - (6) Subsidized rates be explored for those employees whose work shifts do not allow them to make use of park-and-ride lots and whose income and family size qualifies them for assistance like TANF or food stamps.
- b. The fees charged for park-and-ride lots be the lowest fees charged for any parking. The fees should include the cost of shuttle buses transporting those parking at the lots to campus and /or other income reallocated to support that function.
 - c. The desirability of issuing permits for non-prime hours be explored. Some campuses issue permits at a reduced rate to students and shift workers for late afternoon and evening hours when employees are less likely to be using the permitted lot.
 - d. The issuance of car pool permits should be explored for all garages and lots. There are several features of car pool permits on other campuses that we recommend be considered.
 - (1) Reduced rates to encourage car pools. On some campuses, the rates for three- and four-person car pools are less than those charged for two-person car pools.
 - (2) Preferential parking spaces for those who car pool.
 - (3) Institutional division of the cost of a car pool permit among all car pool members so a member does not need to assume the responsibility of collecting from his/her fellow riders.
 - (4) The ability of a car pool member to opt out of the arrangement during the three to six months after the start of the car pool and be issued his/her original permit.

- (5) With the exception of the provision specified in #4, those identified as members in a car pool should generally not be allowed to purchase individual permits until the next renewal period.
 - (a) An exception to this may be appropriate if a car pool member changes positions within the University and his/her campus changes as a result.
- (6) When monitoring compliance with car pool requirements, consideration should be given to those who may drop off car pool members at campus locations other than the lot in which they park.
- e. The feasibility of creating car pool incentives for students should also be considered.

20. Given the self-sufficient nature of parking, fees must equal or approach the cost of the parking and parking services provided. While some redistribution may be appropriate, those parking in gravel lots, for example, should not pay an inappropriately high fee so as to keep costs artificially low for those parking in garages.

In support of this assumption, we recommend that:

- a. Parking fees for similar quality parking be roughly comparable. Thus, all those parking in garages should pay roughly comparable rates.
- b. Parking be seen as a common good. Thus, as the assumption indicates, some redistribution is possible to serve the common good.

21. WVU needs to comply with applicable federal, state, county and city laws and regulations in developing parking, including the Americans with Disabilities Act.

In support of this assumption, we recommend that:

- a. The appropriate WVU officials conduct a periodic review of compliance with the applicable regulations that deal with parking.

22. To encourage the use of alternative transportation means, adequate parking spaces and appropriate amenities should be made available for motorcycles, motorbikes, motor scooters and bicycles.

In support of this assumption, we recommend that:

- a. Parking personnel inventory all parking lots on campus and identify useable space in each lot for non-passenger car spaces. These inventories should be reviewed and plotted periodically to ensure that needs are met. These spaces may need to be in highly visible locations to deter potential theft and vandalism.

- b. All non-passenger vehicles be registered with the Parking Office via an online web site. Owner and vehicle information should be recorded to include make, model, and serial number of any non-passenger vehicle being used on campus. Registrations could last one academic year.
- c. Racks or some other device to which a bicycle, motor bike, or scooter can be secured should be provided in each parking area identified and approved for such parking by the Parking Office. Where possible, the areas should provide overhead cover.
- d. Issuing permits for motorized alternatives be explored. Some campuses require a permit for motorcycles, motorbikes and motor scooters. Other campuses issue a permit at a reduced price to those who use this means of transportation in addition to having a permit for a car.

23. Students and their parents will continue to be educated about the challenge of having cars on campus. Efforts will continue to develop transportation alternatives that make cars less necessary for students, faculty and staff.

In support of this assumption, we recommend that:

- a. All University tours for prospective students include the information about transportation and parking and the availability of alternative means of transportation to the single-occupant automobile.
- b. A letter be sent to parents prior to the start of fall semester each year highlighting the transit and other transportation alternatives available and discouraging students from bringing cars to campus.
- c. The Parents' Club Newsletter be encouraged to include an annual article about transportation and parking. While the focus may change from year to year, it would be desirable for the article to emphasize transportation alternatives (mass transit, bikes, etc.) as a means of discouraging students from bringing cars to campus.
- d. Content on parking and the consequences of illegally parking be considered for inclusion in activities such as New Student Orientation, Honors Orientation, residence hall sessions and University 101 as well as any new employee orientation. This content could be a part of or parallel that recommended under 2d and 2f in Transportation (see above).
- e. The Off-Campus Housing Office be provided with materials for distribution to students through the Off-Campus Housing Fair and other means that encourage students to consider access to campus when renting off-campus housing.

- f. There be publicity about students who do not drive a single-occupied car to campus as a means of highlighting alternative transportation and recognizing those students who make use of such alternatives.

24. Existing parking spaces eliminated to serve another purpose, such as construction sites for new buildings, should usually be replaced at no cost to the parking program. The funding for new buildings should generally include the funding needed to construct parking for the building occupants and visitors. When a parking lot is created where another function or service existed, parking fees may be required to assist with the costs of creating an alternative location for that service.

In support of this assumption, we recommend that:

- a. In approving the construction site for a new building, the impact of that site on parking be explicitly reviewed. If the site will eliminate existing parking, the cost of replacing that parking should generally be included in the construction budget.
- b. When a new building is built on a site that does not presently provide parking, the parking for the occupants of that building be explicitly considered. Construction funds may need to include the provision of parking.
- c. When an existing structure is demolished to create a parking lot or structure, the use of parking fees to pay a portion or all of relocation costs for that function or service be considered. We anticipate that there will be few instances when existing structures that need to be replaced are demolished to create parking.

25. Contractors or others working on University property should be required to make arrangements for employees to park at an off-campus site through the contractual agreements WVU makes with them. While portions of parking lots may need to be temporarily taken out of service as construction staging areas, construction employees should not park in campus spaces denying access to those spaces to University employees and students.

In support of this assumption, we recommend that:

- a. WVU require that bid documents for projects clearly indicate:
 - (1) Parking for contractor employees is the responsibility of the contractor.
 - (2) Contractor employees cannot park in permit only parking spaces.
 - (3) With construction projects in high-density areas of the campus, contractors be required to arrange for off-site parking with employees bussed to campus.

26. When auxiliary units make use of University parking spaces, there should be appropriate reimbursement of the costs associated with such use.

- a. The need for profit-generating events such as Intercollegiate Athletics or entertainment events to reimburse some of the infrastructure costs associated with the use of parking lots and structures be explored. The lots and structures have generally been constructed with the parking permit income generated. It seems appropriate that others making use of the lots who do not hold permits in them contribute to infrastructure support.
 - (1) Such reimbursement could occur by charging a fee for those who park in the lot. The income from that fee should generally be provided to the Parking Office.
 - (2) Reimbursement could occur by charging a surcharge on ticket prices with the income generated provided to the Parking Office.
 - (3) Reimbursement could occur through negotiated agreements that support a portion of the infrastructure costs for utilized lots. Such agreements should include the escalation of fees to reflect increases in permit costs.
 - (4) Parking charges that do more than reimburse the infrastructure costs and reflect market rates should also be considered.
- b. A sub-committee of the on-going advisory committee described below be created to explore alternatives and develop a specific recommendation.
- c. The impact of the use of parking spaces during regular working hours should be considered in agreeing to requests from auxiliary or other units for on-campus parking.

27. Penalties for repeated violations of parking regulations are a means of deterring such violations. Sometimes parking tickets received for illegal parking in permitted lots are viewed by repeat violators as the equivalent of a parking fee rather than a deterrent to illegal parking. Towing for unpaid parking tickets will be used as an additional deterrent for those who park illegally in permit lots. Should this prove to be an insufficient deterrent, towing for tickets, whether paid or unpaid, may need to be introduced at some future time.

In support of this assumption, we recommend that:

- a. Up-to-date and easy to read parking maps, hours, rules and regulations be widely disseminated and readily available throughout the campus.

- b. Towing not occur until an offender has accumulated 5 or more unpaid citations for illegally parking in a permit lot.
 - c. When the 5th unpaid citation on a particular vehicle is warranted, the citation be placed in a RED envelope as a means of calling the offender's attention to the possibility of towing.
 - d. Unpaid citations accumulated prior to the start of the towing policy be counted towards towing eligibility no later than three months after the towing policy has been put into effect. During that three-month period, appropriate efforts should be made to notify those with citations that their vehicle is eligible for towing if they do not resolve the existing unpaid citations and any new citations that they may have received.
 - e. A "Will Tow" list be generated and posted at least weekly on the parking website so that offenders can determine if they are eligible for vehicle towing. To the extent possible, the list should be up-dated daily. Failure to post the license number of a vehicle eligible for towing does not mean that the vehicle may not be towed so long as good faith efforts have been made to up-date the list.
 - f. To the extent possible, special notification of towing eligibility be given to repeat offenders within the University community through means like an automated e-mail alert whenever a vehicle becomes towing eligible. Failure to provide such notification does not mean that a vehicle may not be towed since it is the vehicle owner's/ driver's responsibility to be aware of and pay the citations received.
 - g. To retrieve a towed vehicle, violators must pay or make arrangements to pay all outstanding citations.
 - h. The university pursue legislative authority to use booting in advance of towing so another alternative will be available.
 - i. Progressive discipline or other appropriate methods be used when an employee has a practice of repeatedly not paying parking citations. Some employees have parking citations ranging from multiple hundreds of dollars to more than a thousand dollars. Discipline is appropriate for employees who do not behave as responsible members of the University community.
- 28. Parking fines will continue to be the primary deterrent for illegal parking in metered lots. Should this prove to be an insufficient deterrent, towing may need to be introduced in metered lots in the future to deter a consistent pattern of illegal parking.**

In support of this assumption, we recommend that:

- a. Up-to-date and easy to read parking maps, hours, rules and regulations be widely disseminated and readily available throughout the campus.
- b. WVU explore having metered Pay Stations accept credit / debit as a means of payment in order to help decrease the number of unpaid citations accumulated simply because someone does not have cash / change on their person. Several comments were received indicating the Morgantown Parking Authority systems might serve as a model.
- c. The option of implementing towing in metered lots be explored if other efforts to curb illegal parking are unsuccessful. The Student Government Association should be consulted in the process of deciding whether to tow from metered lots.
- d. The conversion of permit lots used largely by students to metered lots be explored while considering the needs of both undergraduate and graduate students. Metered lots may most efficiently utilize the parking space available.

29. Parking lots and garages should be designed to fit with the surrounding environment and include plantings and other landscaping features that add to the attractiveness of the campus. Parking lots and garages also need to provide sufficient lighting to assure safety and security and sidewalks to provide safe access.

In support of this assumption, we recommend that:

- a. The impact parking lot and structure entrances and exits may have on pedestrians, surrounding residential areas and traffic patterns be considered when siting lots and structures.
- b. WVU make use of plantings and other landscaping features to add to the attractiveness of existing and new parking lots and structures. The costs of new lots and structures should include funding for landscaping features. It may be appropriate to make use of the University's landscape architecture program in designing enhanced landscaping.
- c. WVU assure that there is adequate lighting in and around parking lots and garages and on the access paths and roads to the lots and garages.
- d. WVU assure that crosswalks and sidewalks leading to parking lots and structures protect the safety of the pedestrians who may use them. This includes assuring that there is appropriate snow and ice removal, etc.
- f. The use of video camera surveillance, emergency phones, etc. be explored as a means of increasing the security in and around parking lots and structures.

Through our review of transportation and parking, the Committee became aware of other areas that merit further attention. These do not fit easily within the assumptions that guided our recommendations. However, we wish to forward them for consideration.

30. As student enrollment and the campus grow, the demands on transportation, parking and public safety increase. While the relationship between parking and public safety has served the campus well, it may be appropriate to create a position for a transportation and parking director, who may focus solely on these areas.

In support of this area, we recommend:

- a. The creation of the position of Transportation and Parking Director to be filled through a national search.
- b. A review of the current staff assignments in the parking and transportation units. The use of technology may permit the reassignment of personnel to areas like grant-writing, marketing and other helpful functions.
- c. Consideration of the need for a position like the Transportation Demand Coordinator positions being created on other campuses as a means of encouraging the use of public transit and other transportation alternatives and of examining non-transportation means of managing demand such as flex-time, telecommuting, etc.
- d. Consideration of the need for a position(s) focused on communication with users, including electronic communication.
- e. Consideration of the need for a traffic engineer, either as a University employee, shared employee with local government(s) or consultant.
- f. The formation of an on-going advisory committee composed of representatives of campus constituencies and others to provide advice and counsel to the Transportation and Parking Director.
 - (1) Membership on the advisory committee should be determined in consultation with elected constituency heads.
 - (2) The committee needs to meet frequently enough during the year for committee members to be advised of possible developments and engaged in the process of revising existing services and developing new ones.
 - (3) At times, it may be appropriate to form ad hoc committees on particular issues or to represent the needs of particular constituencies.

The advisory committee on the PRT recommended above may be one such ad hoc group.

- g. The feedback received through this planning process suggests that there is an on-going need to provide faculty, staff and students with an opportunity to directly forward suggestions or express concerns. This could be accomplished in several ways.
 - (1) There could be periodic surveys of satisfaction on campus with transportation and parking services.
 - (2) There could be periodic invitations to comment.
 - (3) The online equivalent of a suggestion box could be developed so that suggestions and concerns could be shared.

We wish to acknowledge our review of one area mentioned by some on campus that is not a part of our recommendations. Some suggested that freshmen and/or sophomore students be prohibited from bringing vehicles to campus as a means of solving transportation and parking problems. While this might help solve those problems, the committee does not believe it to be a feasible alternative for several reasons, including the following.

- (a) Some students commute to WVU from outside the greater Morgantown area. Alternative transportation is often not available from these communities. Were these students not allowed to drive to Morgantown, they might be unable to attend the University.
- (b) Many students pay for their education through part-time employment. Until the Morgantown-area mass transit system is more fully developed, private vehicles are often the only means of commuting to a job in Morgantown or in the student's home community.
- (c) While individual Parents' Clubs sponsor buses that travel to selected non-West Virginia locations during breaks and at the end of semesters, no such alternatives exist for West Virginia residents. Thus, many students need their vehicles to return home during breaks, etc. Through discussion with the Mountain Line, we've learned of the legal impediments to establishing a mass transit route that would meet this need.
- (d) Students living off-campus in many areas report that the absence of grocery stores and other basic services close to them requires their use of a car. They report that using mass transit to obtain these needed services is time-consuming and confusing.
- (e) It is not clear that such a prohibition could be enforced, especially for students living off-campus.

While we are not recommending that students be prohibited from bringing vehicles to campus, we have several recommendations that would serve to discourage students from bringing vehicles to campus and educate students and their parents about this issue.

May 11, 2007