COMMUTER SERVICES UPDATE
ALMA ALLRED, DIRECTOR, COMMUTER SERVICES, U OF U

Van pool program. About four years ago, Utah Transit Authority (UTA) contacted the U about creating a van pool program. UTA didn’t have vans available at that time, but they are now in the process of matching people who travel to and from the U more than 400 miles per month. It is hoped that each van pool will take 10-12 cars off campus. Commuters from Summit County, Box Elder County, and other outlying areas are being matched. The van pool service can be paid for by a simple payroll deduction, estimated to be about $50 per month if the van is driven approximately 600 miles per month with 12 people in the van pool. Allred is not aware of other universities that have adopted this type of system because of the nature of schedules at universities—not a lot of people start and stop at the same time.

U Car Share. The U Car Share program—open to faculty, staff, students, and the larger community—allows members (it’s free to join at www.ucarshare.com) to reserve a car on an hourly basis for $4.99/hour. Since the program was initiated last fall, statistics show that one of the four cars on campus is rented on average 44 times per week.

Parking. About 20 years ago, there were approximately 18,000 permitted parking spaces on campus. Now, there are 12,344, including hospital parking. Even though there are now a lot more students, faculty, and staff, there is only a 76 percent occupancy rate for those spaces—clear evidence that fewer people are driving to campus.

Next Community Forum Meeting:
July 8, 2010, 4:30 – 6:00 p.m.
Mattsson Board Room
540 Arapeen Drive
Free parking is available directly west of the building.

AGENDA:
• Update on University Street project
• Trails update from the Utah Museum of Natural History

Note: One or two additional discussion items will be added closer to the date. Please watch for updates on www.unews.utah.edu/?action=neighbors

The following items were discussed at the April 8, 2010 Community Forum:

• Update on University Street project
• Trails update from the Utah Museum of Natural History

Note:
One or two additional discussion items will be added closer to the date. Please watch for updates on www.unews.utah.edu/?action=neighbors

What is the frequency of campus shuttles? Could they all go in one direction?

We have some shuttles that are full all the time, and others that aren’t. Ridership numbers depend on which route the shuttle is taking. In the areas that don’t get as much usage, services are reduced, but Commuter Services still tries to get them around those areas at least three times per hour. Most of the shuttles go in loops so it’s important that they don’t all go in the same direction, since that would be problematic for those going just a short way in the opposite direction.
Will the renovation be treated as a project that goes through the city's requirements for remodeling?

Yes; they are required to get permits for the work they do just as any other city resident would. They have already begun working with people at the city to get that process underway.

UNIVERSITY STREET PROJECT

TIM HARPST, TRANSPORTATION DIRECTOR, SLC
DAN BERGANTHAL, TRANSPORTATION ENGINEER, SLC

Salt Lake City (SLC) is making inroads in pedestrian/bike safety, and is furthering the city's master plan. One project to that end, which has been scheduled for some time, is a resurfacing and restriping project on University Street from 200 South to 400 South. The restriping may also include the block from 100 South to 200 South in order to provide extended bicycle lanes. This bike route has been on the city's master plan since 1993.

The city expects the project, which is scheduled for early summer, to be completed within two to three weeks. They are currently collecting data to determine the best configuration to accommodate the bicycle lanes as well as bus stops and crosswalks. The volume of traffic along that stretch of road is fairly low (5,000 vehicles per day compared with between 13,000 and 20,000 on 1300 East). The city feels that this volume can be accommodated with the options they are considering. They are working with UTA and the University to arrive at the best plan for buses along that route including shelters and pull outs. In addition, the city council is looking into changing a city ordinance that would allow specific businesses to maintain certain bus shelters, including trash collection, in exchange for ad space. Bus shelters near the university may be good candidates for this type of endeavor. Neighbors can be assured that SLC will invite public comment if they pursue the idea of shelters and will not make any changes to the road until they feel it works for residents, businesses, and the university.

Could a similar project be undertaken along University Street between South Temple and 100 South?

University Street narrows along that block and doesn't allow room to accommodate a bike lane unless parking on the west side of the street is removed, which would create a problem for those who visit the park and need to be able to park their vehicle. SLC will look into what could be done at that location.

What is the property owners' involvement? Will they be notified of meetings?

The city will notify property owners of any public meetings and welcomes feedback from residents.

What is the funding source?

City money that has been set aside for road maintenance as well as a capital improvement fund will be used for this project.

What is in the SLC Master Plan for bikes entering campus via Foothill Blvd., Sunnyside Ave., or Wasatch Blvd.?

There are bike lanes on Guardsman Way and Wakana Way and a north/south path to University Street off of Foothill Blvd. is proposed. There are also bike lanes proposed on 800 East, 900 East, and 1100 East along Sunnyside Avenue. Wherever there is a resurfacing project planned, the city will consider restriping the road for better pedestrian and bike safety.

Is the study of Foothill Blvd. by UDOT complete? Have there been any conclusions?

Yes; this is surprising because there was a lot of public resistance to the project when it was first proposed. A lot of people thought the purpose of the project was to put in the bike lane, but it was actually a result of an audit done by residents and experts charged with determining safety improvements for pedestrians along that street. The street was originally a state highway managed by the Utah Department of Transportation (UDOT), and was transferred to Salt Lake City two years ago. “Hawk beacons” – the first of their kind in the state – have been installed. They make it possible for pedestrians to stop the flow of traffic when they want to cross the street. Traffic flow resumes thereafter.

The highest volume of traffic was found on the narrowest section of 1300 East. The restriping of the street to one lane in each direction and a center turn lane has allowed a better traffic flow and made a bike lane possible on the north end. The city also expects traffic accidents to decrease along that stretch of road. It usually takes about three years for enough data to make a determination. While the configuration of University Street will not be the same as that of 1300 East, the city hopes the new striping and bike lanes will have similar success.

Salt Lake City hopes to get federal funding in the future to rebuild 1300 East north of 500 South to South Temple. If this happens, the city will take the opportunity to move curbs and redefine parking to support some of the businesses in that area.

Is the study of Foothill Blvd. by UDOT complete? Do any conclusions exist?

Yes; this is surprising because there was a lot of public resistance to the project when it was first proposed. A lot of people thought the purpose of the project was to put in the bike lane, but it was actually a result of an audit done by residents and experts charged with determining safety improvements for pedestrians along that street. The street was originally a state highway managed by the Utah Department of Transportation (UDOT), and was transferred to Salt Lake City two years ago. “Hawk beacons” – the first of their kind in the state – have been installed. They make it possible for pedestrians to stop the flow of traffic when they want to cross the street. Traffic flow resumes thereafter.

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Are there any more specific plans to deal with the traffic on Foothill Blvd.?

The study of Foothill Blvd. by UDOT did not result in any clear conclusions. We will invite someone from UDOT to provide an update on the study at a future Community Forum.

UPCOMING ON CAMPUS

Red Butte Garden's summer concert line-up is amazing! Although some shows are sold out, many are not. Here's a partial list of those still open. A complete list is online at www.redbuttegarden.org or call (801) 585-0556.

July 7
Joan Baez with Guy Clark

July 13
Bare Naked Ladies with Kris Allen

August 1
Mary Chapin Carpenter

August 22
A Prairie Home Companion with Garrison Keillor