Observations and Recommendations

Transportation Symposium
Listening
“I’d rather walk the mile because buses are packed.”

“I have to be at the bus stop on Aquarena by 8:00 to make a 9:30 class. I bail by 9:00 because I need time to walk back to my apartment to get my car to drive to campus.”

“I don’t have a car. I bike. I don’t want to cram onto a bus.”

“Riding a bike only takes 10 minutes – but it’s scary.”

“We recommend that Freshman don’t bring cars unless you have a job off campus.”

“University needs to be in the education business not a law enforcement agency.” [on banning bikes & skateboards]

“What’s C.A.R.T.S.?”

“People will cross Aquarena to catch an out-going bus to ensure a seat.”

“Most of my Freshmen friends’ parents don’t let them bring their cars to campus.”

“I didn’t know [_____].”
“It’s about options and convenience; it’s about having choices.”

“I buy a permit as a matter of convenience.”

“I sometimes ride the shuttle, but I also have a parking permit.”

“I drive from [ _____ ] everyday by myself.”

“I could park my car once, if I knew there was a convenient, direct internal circulator.”

“If you get on the Austin shuttle at the south [Slaughter Ln] stop, you’re standing. You cannot read the paper, work, etc.”

“There’s no signage to tell folks where the bus goes.”

“I get off work at 5:00, but the shuttle leaves at 5:00.”

“Students with disabilities are using the buses more, but it’s a problem because the buses are full.”

“I walk to campus from north LBJ because the bus isn’t convenient, but the sidewalks are uneven.

“I didn’t know [ _____ ].”
“We [City] have had a lot of multi-family permits.”

“70% of San Marcos residents live in rental properties.”

“We anticipate a 2013 construction start for the Aquarena overpass.”

“We are trying to move forward with the Aquarena bike trail.”

“We can re-time the signals; let’s coordinate.”
Preface

• 2 days of anecdotal data
• 60+ separate documents prior to visit

• What part of the elephant am I touching?

• Initial impressions of campus
  – Observations and opportunities (best practices)

• Elephant in the room
Infrastructure

• Street system – skeleton for other modes
  – Bus/Transit
  – Bicycles
  – Vehicles
  – Access to parking
Observations

• Capacity constraints – street system
  – Incomplete street system on south side of campus
  – One-way streets
  – Sessom serves both campus and thru traffic
  – Railroad crossings and access from I-35
  – Critical intersections
  – Traffic signals
Two-Way Vs One-Way
Observations

• Capacity constraints – street system
  – Incomplete street system on south side of campus
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  – Critical intersections
  – Traffic signals
Observations

• Capacity constraints - Transit service
  – Peak demand exceeds capacity (buses full with standees leaving passengers at stops)
  – Single bus terminal (N LBJ)
  – Congested streets and intersections
  – Railroad crossings
Opportunities

- Parking not fully utilized (spaces in Stadium and Bobcat Village lots remain underutilized)
- Grade separation project of Aquarena Springs Road and RR schedule for construction letting in 2013 and open for traffic in 2015
- Timing of traffic signals
- Complete streets standards
Opportunities

- New transit terminal on south side of campus (Woods)
- Performing Arts Center area plan
- Increase transit service
- Revise transit routes
- Relocation of commuter lot (C-6) to east side of campus
- Contract renewal for transit operations in 2013
- Potential for consolidation with local transit agency?
## Balancing Supply & Demand

### 5-Year Comparisons

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Fall 2009</th>
<th>Fall 2004</th>
<th>% Change</th>
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<tr>
<td>Revenue Hours/Day</td>
<td>317.78</td>
<td>15968</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Daily Quad Count</td>
<td>20440</td>
<td>533</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bus Laps through Quad</td>
<td>603</td>
<td>33.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Passengers per bus lap</td>
<td>64.3</td>
<td>29.83</td>
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<tr>
<td>Passengers per hour</td>
<td>30816</td>
<td>61.43</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fall Enrollment</td>
<td>3,154,252</td>
<td>2,424,278</td>
<td>30.1%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Annual Ridership</td>
<td></td>
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YEAR: 2010 — 2020
Observations and Opportunities

• Transit system is operating at or above capacity creating reliability and efficiency challenges
  – perform complete route structure analysis
  – develop public timetables to enhance reliability
  – develop a rolling 5 year plan so growth can be better managed

• Develop benchmarks and measure performance
Observations and Opportunities

- Transit system improvements/expansion must be implemented before surface lot spaces are removed so constituents have options

- Develop comprehensive communications plan so constituents are aware of options

- Aggressively pursue technology related options to enhance effectiveness, efficiency, reliability and customer awareness
Parking system appears to have sufficient capacity but there are lots that are underutilized

- develop permit assignment system that moves customers to the underutilized lots

Customer frustration because “their” lot is full

- manage customer expectations through education, collaboration and development of system to control demand in specific lots
Observations and Opportunities

• Develop comprehensive communications plan so constituents are aware of options

• Aggressively pursue technology related options to enhance effectiveness, efficiency, reliability and customer awareness
Perception vs. Reality

• Disconnect between student perceptions and manager views of shuttle service
  – Customer satisfaction benchmarking
  – Expectations management ("Arrive at your off-campus bus stop 40-60 minutes before your class begins")
Information and Communication

• Kudos on NextBus and automatic passenger counting, put on all buses
  – Archive and analyze this operational data for better management and planning
• Kudos on TxState iPhone app
• Need better accessibility of transportation and parking information on website
• Need performance reporting
  – “Critics can become your advocates”
Outreach

- Structure
  (One-stop shop)
- Communication
  (Education)
- Innovation
  (Technology)

- Parking
- Permits (students, faculty/staff)
- Citations
- Special Events
- Bus Info
- Car Sharing (eco/enviro)
- Car Pool/Van Pool
- Biking
- Orientation
- Access (maps) & Accessibility
- News (construction impact)
Performance Reporting

• “If you want more of my money, tell me specifically what I will get”
• Best practice, emerging in public sector, but just common sense
  – Private companies’ shareholder reports
• Qualitative data – customer satisfaction
• Quantitative data – reliability, schedule adherence, wait time, “left behinds”
Untapped Potential for Biking

• Natural environment (Springs, Hill Country)
• Compact campus development
  – 6,000 students within 10-minute bike ride (~1 mile)
• Environmentally-conscious students
• Public health awareness
• Supportive city staff
• “Captive” student audience who are looking for options
Need for Biking “Nudges”

• Better access to campus underway
• Need bike connectivity outside quad area
  – Provide faster alternatives than crowded sidewalks and plazas
• *Complete Streets* design policies
• Alternative Transportation / Demand Management Program
  – Dedicated staff person to build on success of Bike Cave
Details, details, details

• Encouragement programs
  – Bobcat Bike™ contest for freshman
  – Bike to campus day
  – Kudos on bike parking
  – Helmet fitting/giveaway programs
• Student leadership opportunities in bike club
• Bike route maps/info
• Bike tire channels on steps
• Shuttle to top of hill
• Positive enforcement / redirection
• Self-enforcement
Walking

• Kudos on compact, walkable campus
• Natural setting consistent with area
• More shade(?), green space
• Campus circulator shuttle
  – But very few internal circulating streets
• Public “hangout” green space
  – Penn State: Old Main Lawn
  – Univ. of VA: Quad
Possible Organization Structure

- **Transportations Systems**
  - Communications
  - Parking System
  - Bus System
  - Alternative Systems
    - Demand Management
      - Bikes
      - Skateboards
      - Car Share
      - Zip Car
  - Customer Service
  - Enforcement
  - Maintenance & Equipment
  - Contract Manager