Parking Task Force
FINAL REPORT

March 31, 2010

PARKING TASK FORCE MEMBERS

#	Name	Department	Title
1.	Bennett, Daniel	Public Safety and Police Services	Director
2.	Bonen, Andre	Housing and Residential Life	Director, Housing Facilities
3.	Bramble, John	Dining Services – McNair Hall	Supervisor
4.	Chaphalkar, Nik	Student Body	Student
5.	Elicerio, Katie	Student Body	Student
6.	Fritz, David	Graduate Student Government	Student
7.	Harrison, Randal	Graduate Student Government	President
8.	Horsch, Ellen (Chair)	Administration	Vice President
9.	Karau, Jarrod	Administrative Information Services	Director
10.	McKenzie, Andy	Green Campus Enterprise	Student
11.	Niemi, Andy	Facilities Management	Manager, Grounds
12.	Rovano, John	Facilities Management	Director
13.	Rudiger, Brenda	Alumni Relations	Director
14.	Sproule, William	Civil & Environmental Engineering	Professor
15.	Talbot, Nicole	Undergraduate Student Government	Student

CHARGE

The Parking Task Force was charged by the President to review and evaluate the current university parking registration and enforcement system. Make appropriate recommendations for changes to best suits the needs of the institution.

Committee Tasks:

1. Determine the number of parking lots and parking spaces available.

2. Review the current procedures for assigning parking spaces to students, staff and faculty.

3. Evaluate the functionality and effectiveness of existing parking gates.

4. Evaluate existing vehicle registration and re-registration procedures and explore the possibility implementing registration/parking fees.

5. Evaluate existing method for the issuance of visitor parking passes and handicapped parking placards.

6. Evaluate current parking ticket violations and associated fines.

7. Evaluate existing equipment and procedures for the issuance of parking citations.

8. Create an appeals process for contested parking citations that will be efficient and effective.

9. Establish collection procedures for persons delinquent in paying their parking citations.

GENERAL OVERVIEW OF PROCESS

The Task Force met weekly, except for holiday and semester breaks, to review and discuss the charge and nine tasks. Later, the fourth task was divided into two for a total of 10 tasks.   Agendas and summary notes are available for each meeting. The tasks were delegated between individual members of the Task Force or to subcommittees of the Task Force.

The Task Force met with the President early in the process. To gather as much information as possible, the Task Force presented on November 18, 2009 to the University Senate. The Task Force also sought input from the campus community (Lode, Tech Today, and "Meet and Greet" by USG) during fall and spring semester, conducted a Parking Survey in February of 2010, investigated and spoke with other universities, and visited Northern Michigan University. The Task Force held a Campus Open Forum on March 2, 2010 and a final Senate Presentation on March 17, 2010 in an effort to gather any additional input, share findings, and provide preliminary recommendations. To provide a framework for the recommendations, the Task Force responded to each task below.

RESPONSES TO EACH TASK *(The tasks were reordered and Task #4 was divided into two tasks)*

TASK 1: Determine the number of parking lots and parking spaces available on Main Campus

- Number of spaces: 4,600+
  - Faculty and Staff (900 on Main Campus) – 860 spaces
  - SDC (Faculty, Staff, Commuters) – 1,260 spaces
  - Residential Life – 1,000 spaces
  - Commuters (including Graduate Students) – 800 spaces
  - Visitors – 120 spaces
  - Parking Meters – 160 spaces
  - Daniell Heights – Lower Heights 150 Spaces; Upper Heights 300
- Number of registered vehicles: 5,800+ (the a one-time registration process does not provide the most accurate count while an annual registration would provide an updated count).

TASK 2: Evaluate existing vehicle registration and re-registration procedures

- There are four departments involved in parking registration.
  - Registrar's Office is responsible for vehicle registration and parking passes for Graduate Students and Commuter Students. The students register online and registering a vehicle is free. A parking pass costs $25 per semester or $50 per academic year. Parking passes are mailed in advance or available from the Registrar's Office. Graduate Students must pay a fee for a parking pass during the summer.

- DHH Housing Facilities Office is responsible for vehicle registration for all resident hall students. The students register online. There is no registration or parking fee. Parking passes are in the student's welcome packets or available from the Housing Facilities Office.

- Daniell Heights Housing Facilities Office is responsible for vehicle registration for all Daniell Heights residents. The residents register online. There is no registration or parking fee. Parking passes are available from the Daniell Heights Office.

- Public Safety and Police Services is responsible for registration of vehicles for faculty, staff, and visitors. The faculty or staff member provides a completed Status Form obtained from Human Resources to Public Safety and Police Services to register a vehicle. There is no fee to register or park. Visitors register vehicles at Public Safety and Police Services.

TASK 3: Review the current procedures for assigning parking spaces to students, staff and faculty

- For faculty and staff every attempt is made to assign parking as close to the work place as possible.

- Graduate Students are assigned to lots 5 or 34.

- Commuter Students are assigned to all commuter lots.

- Residence Halls students are generally assigned by the number of credit hours earned.

- Daniell Heights residents are provided one space per apartment.

TASK 4: Explore the possibility of implementing registration/parking fees that could be used towards parking or a parking structure

Before recommending implementing a registration and/or parking fee, the Task Force felt it was imperative to determine the revenues and costs of parking on campus.

- Michigan Tech Parking–Annual Operation and Maintenance Costs is approximately $780,000 per year or $170 per space. This figure falls within the published U.S. range for Operating and Maintenance costs for surface lots of $150 to $200 per space. These costs are made up of the following:
  – Parking Registration and Information
  – Enforcement
  – Snow Plowing and Snow Removal
  – Lighting
  – Repairs
  – Painting
  – Parking Meters and Gates
  – Personnel with Parking Administration Responsibilities

- Michigan Tech Parking – Annual Revenues is approximately $330,000 and is made up of the following:
  - Graduate & Commuter Student Parking Fees
    ($25/semester, $50/year) $ 90,000
  - Parking Meters $ 20,000
  - Pay Lots (Visitor & SDC events) $100,000
  - Parking Fines (Collected) $120,000

TASK 5: Evaluate existing method for the issuance of visitor parking passes and handicapped parking placards

Day or week visitor parking passes are available to departments on campus from Public Safety and Police Services and the Housing Facilities Office. It is not regulated. All requests for handicap placards are referred to the Michigan Secretary of State's Office.

TASK 6: Evaluate current parking ticket violations and associated fines

Currently, meter violations are $5, lot violations are $20, and handicapped parking violations are $25.

TASK 7: Evaluate existing equipment and procedures for the issuance of parking citations

Housing Facilities and Public Safety and Police Services currently issue parking citations. Handwritten citations, issued by Student Enforcement Officers, are forwarded to Public Safety and Police Services. These citations are then entered into Banner manually. Handheld Autocites are approximately 20 years old and the software is designed to work with Windows 95 and is stored on 3.5 floppy discs. The system is not efficient and handheld citation equipment is out dated.

TASK 8: Create an appeals process for contested parking citations that will be efficient and effective

At this time there is not a current appeal process that provides consistency and fairness. Currently a parking citation is voided by appealing to the Director of Housing Facilities or the Public Safety and Police Services Department. An appeals process will provide a fair and consistent way to deal with parking citations. The Task Force reviewed other appeals processes from other Universities and developed an appeals process with an appeals board.

TASK 9: Establish collection policies and procedures for persons delinquent in paying their parking citations

Collection policies and procedures were developed for those delinquent in paying their parking citations. Delinquent citations are sent to Accounting Services who sends out a notice. The person has 120 days to pay. If the citation is not paid during this time, Accounting Services sends it to a collection agency. The agency tries to collect from the person for up to one year. If the citation is not paid after one year, it is sent to a different collection agency for another year. No cases have gone beyond this point.

TASK 10: **Evaluate the functionality and effectiveness of existing parking gates.**

The age of the existing gates ranges from 2 to 20 years old. The costs are approximately $14,000 per year in maintenance, plus the costs of additional parts and supplies as needed. Replacement gates would cost approximately $6,000 per gate. Gates offer some deterrent to unauthorized parking, but vehicles circumvent the gates by going around them on a fairly regular basis. Due to age, many of the gates operate unreliably. The gates are ineffective at letting only authorized vehicles to park in lots.

KEY ISSUES AND IDEAS

The Task Force discovered from the campus community that the key issues are convenient parking, vehicle registration process, costs and revenues of parking, parking enforcement, and campus aesthetics. Many ideas were provided, including shuttle buses, adding additional lots, a parking structure and developing programs to reduce parking needs.

The Task force reviewed the hundreds of comments from faculty, staff, and students, many of which concentrated on a parking structure. Most students, faculty, staff, and visitors want or need convenient parking. They would like to reduce walking distances and have protection from weather. However, there is very little land available for surface parking so a structure would need to be located on an existing surface parking lot. More green space and open areas needs to be considered as well.

The Task Force found that the typical costs for a parking structure are as follows:

- Annual Operations and Maintenance
  - Surface Lot: $150 to $200 per space

- Construction (assuming that you own the land)
  - Surface Parking: $1,500 to $3,500 per space
  - Above Ground Structure: $10,000 to $20,000 per space
  - Underground Structure: $25,000 to $40,000 per space

The case could be made to build a parking structure or structures on campus but there are many questions to consider. Where? How many spaces? Who would park in new structure? When should it (they) be built? How will we finance the construction of a structure? Can a private company build and operate a structure on campus? The answers to these questions are beyond the experience and expertise of the Task Force.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Establish one Parking Department where policies and procedures for those delinquent in paying parking citations can be developed. One Parking Department would also allow for a better allocation of parking based on demands.

- Implement an Annual Vehicle Registration

- Open Parking – remove gates and designate lots for each group: faculty/staff, graduate students, commuters, and residents.

- Develop Visitor Parking Lot(s) with fees based on parking duration (per hour, rather than a flat fee).

- Increase parking fines from current levels of $5 to $20 for meter and lot violations.

- Increase handicapped parking space violations from $25 to between $50 and $100 and increase enforcement efforts.

- A costs/benefits review on upgrading the Autocite system

- Implement the formal appeals process developed by the Task Force (Attachment I).

- Implement an annual parking fee that is at least as much as graduate students and commuters pay that could be used towards parking initiatives.

- Retain a Parking Consultant. The role of the consultant would be to determine future parking needs, help develop a program of transportation alternatives to reduce parking needs, provide guidance with sustainable parking design and management approaches, and provide guidance with parking policy issues, new parking technologies, collection and enforcement of delinquent fines, and parking structures and surface lots.

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