Bothell Campus Joint Task Force to Address Parking and Transportation Issues

A one-year rate proposal for parking and transportation on the Bothell campus of Cascadia Community College and the University of Washington has been forwarded to the campus community for feedback. The proposal, which was developed and endorsed by the newly formed Bothell Campus Parking and Transportation Task Force would reduce transit passes – called “UPASS” – to $72, while increasing daily, quarterly, and annual parking permits to $4, $125, and $505 respectively for Fall quarter 2010. Other quarterly two and three day, carpool, motorcycle, and half-time permits would increase in a similar proportion. Parking meter rates would also increase from $1.00 to $1.50 per hour. The Task Force considered a two-year rate scenario, but decided to defer the second year pending additional information and planning over the next year.

Parking on the Bothell campus is currently operating near maximum capacity. With enrollments of both schools predicted to increase significantly, additional funds are needed for future construction of parking facilities as well as maintenance of existing facilities. Over two thirds of the 2,000 parking spaces on the campus are in parking garages, and any new parking would need to be in the form of costly parking structures. Maintenance reserves required to preserve existing structures is estimated at $500,000 per year. The cost to provide an additional 500 garage parking spaces – only a portion of the additional parking required for the campus at full build out identified in the campus master plan-- is estimated at almost $900,000 per year over 30 years.

The proposed rates which would increase the cost of parking and decrease the cost of the UPASS, would correct an imbalance that saw UPASS prices exceed the cost of parking a vehicle. By reducing the UPASS rate to $72 – a rate equal to the 2 day parking permit -- task force members hope to create an incentive for many to turn to alternative transportation, reducing the number of expensive garage spaces needed over the long term. Compliance with City of Bothell Planned Unit Development (PUD) expectations and Washington State Commute Trip Reduction goals are external driving forces which also compelled the task force to take action.

The 17-member Bothell Campus Parking and Transportation Task Force is a joint group composed of students, faculty, and staff from Cascadia Community College (CCC) and University of Washington Bothell (UWB). The task force was established in March of this year to provide broad representation for reviewing parking and transportation policies that affect the campus community. Members of the task force were appointed by the CCC President and the UWB Chancellor. The task force has already met four times in the month of April to review parking and transportation rates. During that time, they determined that the parking and transportation system is not financially sustainable under the current rate structure, nor does it provide incentives for reducing single-occupancy vehicle trips. Parking rates have not been increased since 2007. Parking and transportation systems on the Bothell campus and the campuses of all State of Washington public colleges and universities are to be financially self-sustaining. The proposed parking rate schedule is scheduled to be presented to the UW Board of Regents and the CCC Board of Trustees at their respective May and June meetings.

The task force will also be working on ways to improve and make transportation alternatives more attractive and accessible.

You can find additional information regarding this article and details of the proposed parking rate increase at http://www.uwb.edu/admin/transportation/parking in the “Hot Topics” box.

Feel free to submit comments and questions to John Shaheen, UWB Auxiliary Services Manager at jshaheen@uwb.edu.