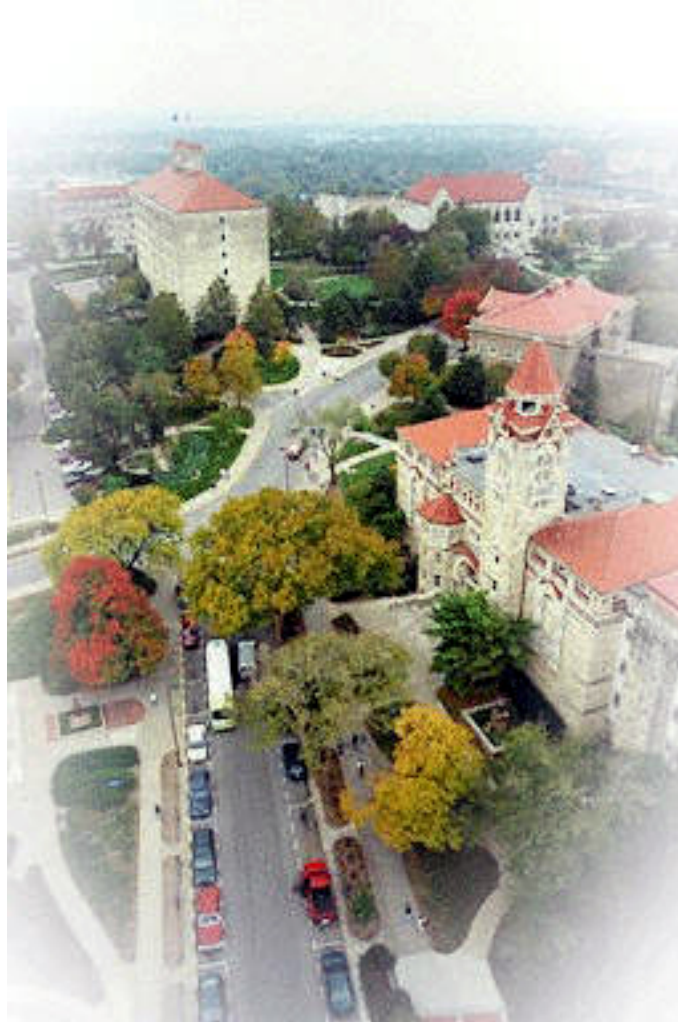


THE UNIVERSITY OF KANSAS

THE TRANSIT TASK FORCE REPORT
TO THE
PARKING COMMISSION AND PROVOST



SEPTEMBER 1, 2005

Executive Summary

Parking and transit have been under significant scrutiny at the University of Kansas for over a decade. Increased pressure from the growing number of development projects on the campus, growth in the numbers of students and faculty at the University, the increased number of vehicles on the campus with the resulting congestion, and the limited amount of available parking have contributed to mounting pressures on the parking system at the University. The existing student transit system provided through KU on Wheels has also experienced problems on campus with declining ridership, environmental and quality concerns with the use of old buses, the lack of accessible buses on fixed routes, and limited knowledge that faculty and staff can use the student system.

In the “Ten-Year Parking Strategy Final Report” that was completed in March of 2005 by Chance Management Advisors, CMA challenged KU to “rethink” the way the campus addresses parking and transit and to rise to the expanding needs of the campus in a manner that is consistent with the level of quality expectations for the major research institution status that KU has achieved.

Accordingly, the Provost appointed a Transit Task Force in May of 2005 to include representation from students, faculty, staff, KU on Wheels and the City. The Task Force was given the charge to conduct a transportation study to review legal issues, options for providing services, proposed routes, estimated costs, and methods for recovering costs. One of the first objectives identified for the Task Force was to consider the various possibilities for the coordination of transit efforts between KU, KU on Wheels and the City Transit System.

The Task Force maintained its focus on the directive given by the Provost to address the provision of transit service that would be the best option for KU. While research and discussion included the extensive evaluation of options to coordinate efforts with KUOW or the City transit system, the Task Force came to recognize the many advantages (both in terms of financial impact and levels of service) of a coordinated system. Early on, the leadership of the Task Force recognized that the critical issue of governance would require resolution before being able to move forward with the details of possible routes and funding sources.

The Task Force met on a weekly basis throughout the summer, meeting with representatives of the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), KDOT, the City, and other university transit systems to gather information and evaluate the possible options. Pat Weaver, of the KU Transportation Center, led the group through an intensive process to identify core values and a vision for the expanded transit system at KU. Identification of the service characteristics that would be required for an expanded system of transit followed in the process and included the goal of expanded, accessible service that would be available to the entire KU

community. Finally, a financial analysis of the models under consideration and discussions of possible route options helped to complete the picture.

The Recommended Action Plan of the Task Force addresses the following:

- It will be extremely difficult to provide an expanded transit system at KU (under the desired service characteristics defined by the Task Force) without federal funding to purchase buses (80% federal funding, 20% local match).
- In order to access federal funding to acquire buses, KU must, at a minimum, coordinate efforts with the City Transit System, which is currently the single designated funding recipient within Douglas County. The Task Force recommends implementing the coordination of efforts with the City, at a minimum, through a Memorandum of Agreement.
- The City currently uses the entire federal allocation available for transit operations for a community the size of Lawrence and any attempt by KU to access these operations funds would have a negative political impact within the community. Involvement in state and federal grant programs primarily for capital funds means that KU will need to work with the City to leverage its collective political clout for funds for buses and facilities, freeing a larger portion of local funds for expanded operations.
- The mechanism for accessing federal funds requires both on-campus expertise, including students, and a KU administrative initiative to work directly with the City and the Metropolitan Planning Organization.
- Priority: A consultant should be hired as soon as possible. The immediate technical expertise of consultants, KU administrators, students, City officials, and legal counsels will be required to assist in the implementation process for the administrative structure, federal funding requirements, funding options and the next phase of work for details for the system and the provision of services (routes, headways, etc.). Deadlines for the federal funding cycle are quickly approaching. In-kind matches, property for facilities, or investments in multi-modal options (such as Park-and-Ride) need to be assessed in the very near term.
- Implementation of the system will require a phased approach over a number of years. The process for application for federal funding is lengthy and will need to be pursued over multiple years to acquire the entire fleet of buses that KU will require. Until that time, it will be necessary to operate on a lease basis for the provision of buses, at a higher cost of service. Service to the new Park-and-Ride lot for Fall 2006 would be the anticipated start of the phased-in system.
- Providing significant student participation in a decision-making role within the new system, creating a “fare free” system that is universally accessible, and providing evaluations of costs and benefits to students as information unfolds will help to maintain student support for the expanded system.

- Strategies for implementation of the expanded transit system must be closely coordinated with the policy recommendations of the Parking Commission. Parking rates and policies will need to be structured in a manner to promote the use of remote parking and transit.

The University of Kansas
Members of the 2005 Transit Task Force

Danny Kaiser, Chair

Barbara Armbrister	Research Director, Administrative Services
Anton Bengtson	Student, Sustainability Task Force, KU on Wheels
Jason Boots	Student, Student Senate
Angela Carlon	Student, Chair, Transportation Board
Lindy Eakin	Vice Provost for Administration & Finance
Leslie Eldridge	Student, Student Senate
Cliff Galante	Transit Administrator, City of Lawrence
Blake Huff	Student, former KUOW coordinator
Donna Hultine	Director of Parking Services
Danny Kaiser	Asst. Dean of Students, Chair of City Transit Adv. Bd.
Peg Livingood	Project Manager, Design & Construction Mgt.
Jim Long	Vice Provost for Facilities Planning & Mgt.
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Dot Nary	Research Asst., Bureau of Child Research
Aaron Quisenberry	KUOW Advisor, Assoc. Dir. Org. & Leadership Ctr.
Kathy Reed	Admin. Specialist, University Governance
Nick Sterner	Student, Student Body President
John Stobaugh	Professor, Pharmaceutical Chemistry
Ken Stoner	Director of Student Housing
Mike Wildgen	City Manager

Others Participating in the Process:

Ralph Oliver	Chief, Public Safety Office
Jim Modig	Director, Design & Construction Management
Tom Waechter	Asst. Director, Design & Construction Management
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Dan Johnson	Office of General Counsel
Marynell Jones	Student, proxy
Teri Herberger	KUCR, proxy
Kathy Jansen	Proxy
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Cindy Terwilliger	FTA Deputy Regional Administrator, Region 7
Paula Schwach	FTA Regional Counsel, Region 7
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Nimisha Agrawal	Student, DCM student intern
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Jim Van Sickel	KDOT, Office of Public Transportation

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Nicole Denney	Student, proxy
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Margretta deVries	Parking Department
Christine Fosher	Proxy
Chris Keary	Proxy
Bob Bourne	Director, CyRide transit system, Ames, Iowa

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for her leadership throughout the process (and most especially in the Visioning
and Value discernment process)

Margretta de Vries for her assistance in keeping minutes of the meetings

Representatives from the Federal Transportation Administration, Region 7 Office:
Mokhtee Ahmad, Cindy Terwilliger, Paula Schwach and Leah Russell for their
continued support and assistance

Representatives from KDOT, Office of Public Transportation: John Rosacker and
Jim Van Sickel for their willingness to meet with us

Bob Bourne, Director, CyRide of Ames, Iowa for his travel and time in Lawrence
to share his knowledge from many years in leading a successful transit system

Representatives from the universities of Nebraska at Lincoln, Iowa State, Iowa,
Missouri and Missouri State for their hospitality and willingness to share the
experiences gained from their systems