

Transportation

\$25 per year to finance that construction.

"I was surprised mainly that most people are willing to pay more for parking to finance parking decks. When we laid that out on the table, we ran into lots of opposition," said John Gardner, UNC transportation planner since March 1987, in a July interview.

"There's just not much land left. We're operating under a lot of constraints. We know people are unhappy, and they have reason to be unhappy, but there's a limited amount of money (for more parking and more buses)," said Gardner.

Parking on campus is much cheaper at UNC than many schools because it's controlled by the University rather than an outside company, he said.

"The parking spaces are all subsidized (based on costs to build a parking lot with revenue bonds, which are repaid over 20 years) even though people don't realize that," Gardner said.

"The University is moving toward not having control over parking," Howes said. When he came here 18 years ago, \$10 to \$15 bought a permit for any spot on campus, Howes said, and that price hasn't changed drastically since.

Most faculty respondents live within five minutes of a bus route but don't ride them, Gardner said, possibly because they are able to get relatively inexpensive parking permits.

"Based on that, our permits are underpriced, especially on North Campus. We have to realize that people are going to get permits just because they have access to them," Gardner said.

Parking decks were suggested at Manning Drive next to Craige Residence Hall or across from Carolina Inn on McCauley Street or next to the law school and Institute of Government on Ridge Road.

The minimum cost for building one space in a deck is \$6,000, or \$6 million for 1,000 spaces, Gardner said. With site work to make the deck attractive, the cost for a deck at Craige would be \$12.5 million for 1,500 spaces.

Surface parking is considerably cheaper at \$1,500 to \$2,000 per space, but there simply is no space left, unless drastic steps suggested by some people such as converting Coker Arboretum into parking spaces are taken, Gardner said.

Parking decks don't make sense until land value reaches \$500,000 an acre, he said, and UNC has reached that point. They must be combined with an increase in fees, he said.

"If we started today and just had to build parking spaces on the land we already have and charge what we are now, we just couldn't do it," he said.

The top rate for a parking space for the year is \$258, Gardner said, but in any other city, that would only buy a space in a gravel lot on the edge of town.

"It's as clear as it ever was that there's not enough parking or sites for building. If we're going to continue parking we need decks," he said.

Buses are better option

While Gardner said he was surprised at how few faculty said in the survey they ride the bus, 49 percent of all students had ridden Chapel Hill Transit to campus. 14 percent of undergraduates ride five or more times a week, and 24 percent of

graduate and professional students ride three or more times a week.

In the survey, students suggested shorter headways on bus routes (the interval of time between buses on a specific route) and better evening bus service, and Chapel Hill Transit has reacted to those suggestions with route changes for the fall.

Town and University officials agree that making the bus service receptive to Chapel Hill's needs is crucial to the town's future.

Buses are the best solution to getting cars off the road, they say. Other systems such as car- or van-pooling are relatively unknown to students, according to the survey. Most had never heard of Tri-A-Ride, a matching service for carpoolers.

Stevens Systems, a consulting firm in Greensboro, rated the carpooling services in Winston-Salem, Greensboro, Charlotte and Chapel Hill, and Chapel Hill came out on the bottom, Gardner said, although the town should be a prime spot for the service because of its relatively short travel distances.

But David Bonk, the town transportation planner, said students'

schedules are not conducive to carpooling because carpooling leaves students without flexibility. Buses remain a better choice, he said.

"Public transit in the form of buses is less restrictive (than carpooling)," Bonk said. "It's not as beneficial as a car, but if you can't get the 6:10 trip, you can always get one at 6:20 or 6:30."

"We could drastically reduce traffic if we increase the use of buses a little," Rimer said. "If we were able to shift people out of their automobiles and into public transportation, we wouldn't have a problem. We have to reduce peak traffic, which is the biggest problem, not the average traffic."

"We have to get people on buses by denying them other opportunities," Howes said. "That's the way you're going to make it more attractive and at a reasonable cost."

Park-and-ride lots don't work very well because the wait for buses, especially at night, is often too long, Rimer said.

"What we suggest is doing a demand-activated system where people call for a bus (to pick them up)

plus a regular schedule," Rimer said. "That would alleviate the fear people have of being trapped by park-and-ride lots."

"You can't get people to use something if it isn't convenient. If that means running at cost-inefficiency for a while, so be it, to get people out of their cars."

Satellite campus suggested

There has also been talk recently of a satellite campus at Horace Williams Airport, because the University's space needs to continue to grow in spite of a cap on enrollment.

"The University land by the airport is a tremendously valuable asset," Howes said. "That makes it not economically sensible to keep an airport out there. It's large, well-located and relatively close to campus. It reminds me of the Centennial Campus (at N.C. State University)."

Suggestions for making such a campus accessible include a light rail system or a bus route connecting campus to Merritt Mill Road and out to the airport, located at the inter-

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IMPORTANT NEWS

Registration & Card Pick-up:

Students can register for a MEAL PLAN and pick up their MEAL CARD in Carolina Court (formerly the Commons—lower level Lenoir Hall) beginning Saturday, August 27, from 10am–5pm and continuing Mon.–Fri., Aug. 29–Sept. 2, from 9am–6pm.

After this time you can register for the meal plan during regular office hours (8:30am–6pm) on the second floor of Lenoir Hall. Remember that there is a \$100 minimum per semester purchase requirement set by the University for students that live in residence housing.

To Off-Campus Students, Faculty & Staff:



CAROLINA DINING SERVICE invites you to open up a MEAL CARD ACCOUNT. An account can be opened for as little as \$25 and you can add to it anytime during the semester. This will give you the flexibility of being able to dine with us whenever you need to catch a meal on campus, as often or as little as you would like!

UPCOMING EVENTS

A Taste of N.C.

Come enjoy a real southern feast highlighting dishes that have made N.C. famous. This special theme dinner is set for Sept. 20th at Lenoir, Chase, and the Cutting Board.

Grand Opening of the CAROLINA COURT

 Come celebrate a special grand opening of the CAROLINA COURT in the lower level of Lenoir Hall. Formerly called the Commons, the Carolina Court features an exciting array of fast food options including made to order heroes, specialty grill sandwiches, whole pizza pies or pizza by the slice, fresh baked gourmet cookies, ice cream, and Colomb soft serve yogurt. A great week of activities and specials is set to begin Sept. 12th. 

FOR THE WHOLE SCOOP about what's going on with your Student Dining Service read "Tar Heel TableTalk," Carolina Dining Service's student newsletter. Look for it in your rooms!