Synopsis of Focus Group and Discussions to date and Issues which require a new focus/new approach or revision from 2003 Policy and Practice:

**2003 goals:**
Implement policies which create an improved transportation system which:

- reduces inefficiencies and personal time lost
- expands transportation options
- enhances campus movement without penalty or inhibition
- enhances visitor and outside community member access and participation in the University
- reduces the negative impacts of our transportation system on the environment
- supports sustainable development patterns
- fosters a ‘sense of place and identity’ in the community and region

**2003 Recommendations:**

- significant increases in the prices of parking permits in the context of a tiered system with higher value on spaces located closer to the core while offering reduced cost, alternatives for those who choose not to bring cars to core campus
- a feasibility study for the construction of a multilevel parking facility integrated into campus and consistent with TDM principles to provide for current needs and campus growth.
- development of efficient and effective emergency ride, carpooling, and vanpooling
- significant investment to improve the frequency, dependability, and accessibility of the Campus Shuttle and Wildcat Transit:
- review and tightening of parking permit eligibility requirements and assurance of intelligent, fair, and energetic enforcement
- aggressive efforts to increase the housing supply on or near campus and to obtain the funding needed to complete the railroad underpasses and Loop Road
- improvements to traffic flow on Main Street through investments in better traffic signals, intersection design, and manual traffic control.
Slide 2 - Discussion Points used this Spring

**University of New Hampshire**

**Transportation Policy Committee**

**15 Year Review**

1. **How do current policies and practices...**
   - reinforce institutional principles of sustainability and the walking campus?
   - respond to existing conditions and mobility needs?
   - position the campus and its community for future mobility and development needs?
   - accommodate visitors and prospective community members?

2. **In which areas/services have we effectively met our goals?**
3. **In which transportation and mobility areas have we not met our 2003 goals or visions?**
4. **What realities/trends were not envisioned 15 years ago and call for policy adaption?**
5. **Which policies or practices should be re-tested and re-worked?**
6. **What data would you like to see prepared to inform new policy or practice?**

6. **Moving forward, what is the most important transportation policy issue is for UNH-Durham?**

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Slide 3 – Focus Group Key Feedback Points

**University of New Hampshire**

**Transportation Policy Committee**

**15 Year Review**

**Focus Group Key Feedback Points**

1. Car storage policies/practices/pricing - *eclipsing commute issue*
2. Comparator parking permit $ revisit – remains key uncompleted goal – and prime
3. Visitor Accommodation – not keeping up with need - $ acceptance-
4. Coordinated Event Schedule Management and active Managing Peak (EMS)
5. Maturing/expanding enforcement hours/strategies/lot assignment
6. Campus Connector level of service declines *must be reversed*
7. Outreach and Information – *remains a weakness* – *good investment*
8. Pedestrian density requires more active management and infrastructure
9. Intra-campus vehicle movement growing – must be more actively discouraged
10. Other:
   - enhance parking technologies, EV infrastructure, sophomore eligibility
Transcript of Discussion:

Today’s discussion starts with melded notes from two discussion groups; prior TPC meeting discussions and feedback over past two months.

Looking at the 2003 Recommendations Summary, we’ve done some things well….(Main Street, Transit improvements, ZipCar, ) Other things we have not succeeded in (permit pricing and car/vanpooling). We have a mixed record but a very active attempts and general successes including grant funding and project execution except for a few known points.

Used questions above as starting point for Focus Group discussions.

Arrived at 10 major themes (any missing?). We will start our 30 minute discussion looking at what we heard from focus groups and – input from an invitee – Matthew Plumlee, Senior Lecturer in Computer Sciences. He was a TPC member from 2001-3ish and I reached out to him…Hoping he can add some independent historical context and perspective to the conversation.

Starting Point: the Questions we asked TPC members and Focus Group attendees

(#5)Staff will be reviewing the transcripts of Forums and working on piecing together datasets to help this Committee formulate any revisions to policies and practices

(#6) What is the most important policy and issue?

Key Elements Heard from Focus Groups:

1) **Car Storage Policies/Practice/Pricing (new)**
   from the lens of 2001-2003 when we developed these polices our exclusive focus was on mobility as a commuting problem – commuter access (car and transit). We did not envision that sitting here 15 years later with the influx of new student (resident) units we would be focusing an equally land use/management/pricing/TDM issue relating to:
   a) **car storage on campus**: we have had a lot more cars come into Durham (Campus and town) that are from new residents. They are not necessarily being driven commuter hours M-F (sometimes they are). They are primarily a storage issue and our policies are silent to car storage…we have no real policy goals/issues
   b) **intra-campus/intra-Town trips** that result from the ownership of a car and temptation to use for convenience – a challenge to UNH systems when this use happens weekdays and peak hours
2) Parking Permit Pricing/Comparator Pricing (2003 fundamental remains fundamental)

Is it still a primary importance that the University continue to revisit commuter parking pricing? In 2003, we said we need to increase that dramatically – proposing more than six different systems to do so (Proximity based, equity based, etc) that would dramatically increase ....through a tiered system(s) etc. We have tried and made incremental progress in terms of commuter parking and more substantial progress in terms of residential pricing (inflation adjusted table to be created)

Note: Historical Practice (by decades of UNH Presidents): Whatever Faculty pay (AAUP negotiated), staff and commuters will pay the same.

Universally, the focus groups said that this is still the fundamental issue – the market failure/below market price of commuter parking permits on campus at UNH. The TPC should reiterate this as a policy recommendation to the President and it should stay on the table to make progress in future negotiations.

3 Visitor Parking Accommodation

We have focused on and been successful in increasing visitor parking spaces and access on campus. It is several hundred more than we started in 2001 but everyone in discussions also felt that UNH is bringing more visitors to campus. Visitors being defined as ‘pure’ visitors ie people who do not have faculty, staff, commuter or emeritus permits – and who do not live with walking or Campus Connector ride to campus. I.e. visitors who come to events or venues. Although we have not proved it, the additional parking we have added has been subsumed by our additional visitor events which happen for more hours/more days of the week than in 2003. Dirk noted that there are more special events which generate this demand.

One new issue is that we were hearing for the first time that every single visitor should be paying some contribution for parking (either directly or via their host/sponsor). For example, even setting an example that even Admissions visitors should pay – assuming that ensured that a convenient space was available. Everybody should be paying into the system (UC Davis example). [This is not the case right now with all UNH events, athletics events etc at this time – also some athletic events that collect $ that $ does not stay in the parking system]

Our level of management and sophistication needs to adapt to these changes. We have a disjointed system. There is an acknowledgement, though not a process agreement that we need to revisit this system and coordinate it so that (conceptually) parking for all events and users 24/7 is managed comprehensively and logically by a single entity.
Feedback

Pesci: when I have heard comments from visitors that come to campus – the place runs great M-F but individuals who have come during (generic special event weekends and evenings) state is like a different world and uncoordinated, poorly planned. Wish we could make special event parking work as well as the system runs Monday through Friday

Question 1 – Long Term Trend Regarding Lot Management

Burroughs (undergrad student): Are you pushing to making every single lot a pay lot – 7 days a week?

Pesci: that’s a radical concept – abolishing permits and going to a pay per use system.

Burroughs (undergrad student): Do you think you will be pushing that concept of visitors paying even on weekends?

Pesci: We did take a baby step to that with weekday evening and weekend expansion of visitor lot payment hours.

Logically, looking forward, more of our lots are going to need to be regulated for more hours – whether that means via permit or payment – but as a macro answer to your question is inevitably yes....that is a logical growth of parking demand in a constrained supply. Ie some systems where it is a permit lot M-F and evenings and weekends it is a pay per hour lot (hybrid system to accommodate commuters using their permits but then off-permit hours is a pay per hour system)

May: I think it really all depends on what the purpose of the money is? If we’re going to charge rates or permit prices, the arching question is what are we needing the money for (transportation system maintenance including transit). DST: The plan was always (and is in existing policy) that we want to get vehicles off the campus (traffic, congestion etc) the $ would cause people to make smarter choices – ie ride the bus which would face increased demand....

Pesci: There is the money side – but there is also the TDM side – it is both. In any urban area, parking becomes regulated more hours at a higher price point as a city develos, densifies etc

Burroughs (undergrad student): Have you change since the evening and weekend price changes in Lot C?

UTS: Yes. We are hearing from groups like Johnson Theaters and others having events during those periods that hey are pleased there are more spaces available for their visitors evenings
and weekends. The Mast Road and West Edge students are no longer relocating private vehicles to core campus Visitor lots and parking them from Friday evening through Monday morning absorbing the visitor spaces. (note: they can still do this – and are doing this – in permit lots) so this has only been a marginal impact on student convenience.

Burroughs (undergrad student): This has brought in all this money – why make more changes?

Pesci: We’re not proposing more changes at this time. I heard you ask about long-term direction. We feel comfortable where we are at on this issue.

DST: We are looking out 1-3-5-15 years....There are no more changes being proposed for September 2018.

May: If, in fact, we decided to build a parking deck on the Campus Crossing Lot, in order to afford the debt service and the operations of that we would have to charge 24/7. That would be a new and different model that would be purpose driven. Right now we are still in discussions with the developer over what will happen on adjacent properties.

If we do move to a system with increased permit, meter, prices in a lot of respects is on the backs of the students we would have to build a case to the students in terms of what the system investments will provide. Macro – the realization that not every student owns, stores or drives a car. Many choose to do but there is a percentage that choose not to. System must balance the assignment of these costs.

Just like a certain # of Faculty/Staff that live on the bus routes but choose to drive. We are always trying to affect marginal shifts in those communities.

#4 Coordinated Events Scheduling EMS

The concept of managing the confluence of events to reduce peaks. We have capacity – but we are constrained with peak event and day capacity. We have tried many ways over the years working with class scheduling etc. We are making a new major step forward with the Event Management System (EMS). This will be a tool that will allow UTS to more actively and proactively reach out to encourage hosts to schedule a non-peak times. It will enable UTS to assist with event scheduling to reduce peak crunches – encourage people to choose alternates.

This could be a quantum step forward. Peaks now – Thursdays in Spring

This is essentially TDM! – Managing the peak demands.

We really need to rename that acronym to be PTDM – Parking & Transportation Demand Management.
This is a UNH-Manchester issue - they do this now with overflow parking agreements and management of peak days. Actively managing the shell game.

# 5 Maturing/Expanding Enforcement Hours and Strategies.

(talked about prior in terms of enforcement hours)

New consideration... At this point UNH does not actively assign lots with permits. Many schools do. Should UNH move to a system of active permit lot assignment as opposed to our active hunting (universal lot) system. This is a sophistication or more complex system that UNH may need to consider to affect traffic and or reliability of parking availability. It might be something we move to in phasing.

# 6 Campus Connector System Level of Service Degradation

We have heard this at the last two TPC meeting and in forums that the CC (especially east-west) standards have declined and or are below what the community feels is necessary to effectively provide an alternative to core campus parking. General concurrence that high frequency east-west service is critical to system success and that it has degraded due to resource ($, driver) reductions and, very importantly, due to increased traffic on the Main Street corridor (much of which is being generated by intra-town private vehicle traffic in a self-affecting negative feedback loop).

UTS has taken steps this semester to reverse those resource reductions.

Although we have NextBus we are hearing about buses arriving as predicted but the bus being so crowded as to not allow any new boarding. This creates unreliable service and bad customer service.

This service has been a linchpin of our intra-campus/town mobility and universally, the Focus groups have said this is not meeting the need and we need to raise the bar. It relates to more than just money – it relates to traffic on Main Street, driver staffing challenges – a myriad issues and throwing money at it will not necessarily make it work. We have heard this message clearly and it will be reported as a finding.

(service frequency/travel time comparison 2001-2010-2017 to be developed)

# 7 Outreach and Education

We have heard frequently that information is not getting out clearly and consistently. Why don’t you do more promotion? This has been a chronic weakness...it is not our strong point.
Cacophony of vectors. We are better than 5-10 years ago but we feel that we could and should be doing more – unsure of limitations other than available staff struggle to maintain operations and have little time for outreach.

**#8  Pedestrian Density and Changes Require Enhanced Ped Infrastructure**

Many shared observations regarding dramatic increases in level of pedestrian activity, No surprise given 2,500 increase in beds in town. We have lots of real data showing ped volumes having increased 200-300% in last 10 years. Speaks to us needing to consider better management of pedestrian pathways, flows and street crossings. We know that ped volumes are impacting traffic flow (although this causes traffic calming) We need to affect pedestrian behavior to encourage bunched crossing instead of endless single queues. This challenge impacts our transit system efficiency (not just private traffic). We are looking at review of appropriate investments in behavior and infrastructure to make things work more smoothly

**#9  Intra-Campus Private Vehicle Use Growth and Need to Discourage**

There is feeling that there is too much intra-campus private (and maybe U-plate departmental) vehicle movement. Too many vehicles being used to get around campus. Some percentage of this is perceived convenience of the driver instead of need. We need to double down on the ‘park once’ campus concept. We are creating a lot of our problems with unnecessary vehicle circulation, hunting around campus and in east-west trip generation.

**#10  Ongoing Adaptation of New Technology**

1) Why don’t we have a ‘NextBus’ of parking technology? We have been working on small pilot projects with IOL but we may need to bring this up a notch – but it takes money!

2) **EV Infrastructure** – we are working (waiting for VW mitigation money). Our strategy focus now is to build this into Visitor parking lots in an incremental way and also to consider the expansion of EV into departmental fleet

3) Should the Prohibition on freshman resident permits be expanded (or restored) to include sophomore. (It used to include sophomores here until around early 1990s. but that changed as parents wanted their kids to get jobs to help subsidize the school cost)

* we would be naïve to think there are not a lot of freshmen that have private (non-UNH) parking in Durham (ie Depot Lot)....we should have reality based policies.

Other Feedback: Jim Lawson (Town Councilor) participated in Focus Group 1 and offered several unique perspectives for us to keep in mind:
1) **We should base our future policies (10-15 years out) on a trendline of continuing expansion of private housing expansion in Durham.** Except for one more project coming in next few years we will not see the same quantity increase in student housing in Durham moving forward. This speaks to us ensuring that our new policies are updated to the current and future student locations:
   a. Newmarket has seen dramatic decline
   b. Dover growth and burst coming in next few years?

2) **Integration of transportation issues between Town and University gets even tighter.** We have made great progress on this in terms of coordinating policies and practices and pricing. (Our comparator institution list will also include market prices for parking in Durham)

3) **Increasing seniors moving into Durham....what does that mean for our shared system (pedestrian and transit)?**

**Matt Plumlee Thoughts as TPC Alum:**

Matt has been on UNH campus since 1991 and was a key player in helping us with data and development of 2003 policies.

**Feedback:**

- Helpful to know that it feels better back in late 90s. There was much more parking hunting back then as a F/S. In recent years it is infrequent
- Tuesday-Thursday 10:30-11:00 parking pressure is still high but it used to be a wider range of times – and far more intense hunting
- The bus system is definitely a lot more usable
- ZipCar – is it still here? Not much promotion lately....
- The Dirt Lot has relieved a lot of pressure – hopefully is less expensive to maintain
- Class scheduling has not changed much – still compressed M-R and esp Tues and Thursday

Ideas for some of the things that have been said......

What about the campus in terms of pedestrian walkability/safety?

- Lighting is better
- There are more safe paths to walk on including walk trail to West Edge

Still think that the pedestrian ways are not considered adequately when buildings are designed and built – this could use better emphasis with more conversation between designers. Example is Kingsbury – there are areas where the stairways should be bigger/approach paths are too tortured.
Now that we almost have begun to incrementally complete South Drive we should consider parking and or parking structures as part of that completion. Need to ensure there is strong pedestrian connections to core Library Way. Do we really need vehicle parking at back Field House? Consider visitor parking along South Drive to also serve as event/stadium parking.

There is a lot more biking infrastructure which is nice.

I have a really positive outlook on how things have been done.

Finally, we want to go roundtable and give everyone here a chance to address the #1 question in the list:

Moving forward what is the most important transportation policy issue for us?:

MP/David May: Pricing adjustments have to be done in consideration with capacity. Core capacity is at a max. When we have influx of people for certain events we have to juggle and find places for people to park. In many respects we are not a good host... Better for guests to arrive with a sense of order and successful parking. You do no benefit if you don’t charge them and in exchange for that they find anarchy. Every visitor would gladly pay a reasonable amount to find a spot and not be stressed (John Larson FG 1 feedback). A stressful experience is far worse. This can be worked on by the host purchasing the space in advance – we have this system in place with UTS now – lot is assigned and guest code is provided. Expand and improve this. The hotel analogy – increasingly the hotel guest experience comes down to the first interaction with the front desk... and results in the satisfaction of the experience comes down to that check-in.

42:20: Once you get your car parked, this campus is beautiful, people are nice, all services are great. It’s that moment of where do I park and how to I get where I need to go.

DST.

Managing Peak Events(EMS)

One of the challenges is balancing the peak flow of events. We do not have a total capacity we have a peak management problem. Hopefully the EMS system will assist with that issue. We can handle campus tours. We can give them almost reserved drive in parking spaces – but not when you have five open houses etc.

Dynamic Technology

We need more visitor spaces on campus on core campus. To do that we might have to reassign certain F/S/Commuter lots. At what point is that acceptable, controversial, good for institution? What if Lot X were to become (permanently or temporarily during events or with dynamic technology) were to be visitor....le on Thursdays in spring this F/S lot is Visitor?
Don’t we do that now with UROP and closing off lots? On a limited basis we do – but UTS is just resounding (and not influencing) peak events.

The Campus is at its capacity for a lot of these reasons (more cars, more students with cars jockeying around, there is a lot of traffic) but for all intensive purposes, most if not all of our lots are full without any events going on....(core). (when not actively managed). Unless we increase the capacity.....

Bencks: so, you increase the capacity but 3 out of the 5 days its not used by those visitors....so people will get accustomed to filling those spaces every day – what have we gained? The spaces would still not be available for visitors. Assuming that building more capacity is going to improve the situation – we know that is not the case. It can’t just be building more spaces.

May: we need to increase capacity for Visitor parking. Yes, there are some days it is not needed

Pesci: I think there is universal agreement in terms of the need to improve the visitor experience and accommodation. How we do it is the question.

Bencks: I don’t agree we are not good hosts. When people are planning an event they start with the assumption there is going to be parking..then they think of the room and the food – they think about parking at the last movement. I think it should be the other way around. If you invite people to this campus, do you know where people are going to park?

We all agree that EMS is critical to long-term success from a host, safety and security issue. Knowledge of knowing who is here and what is going on.

Commencement/Move in Day is a ‘10’ don’t bring your car to campus. What is a 2 or 3? Is a typical day in summer a zero? DST: Every Thursday-Friday in month of April is a 6...

How many of the F/S in room feel and know that? (few) If there was some incentive for bus takers on Thursday to encourage – Do we even get that message across to the average f/s?

Our feedback loop to the community is not happening. Communication is as significant if not more so that capacity.

What other critical issues?

- Sophomore eligibility? Think that’s a really bad idea because this is when sophomore start to want/need to get jobs/experience and venture out to get jobs. How would you control permits that are for the Gables because there is no way to control sophomore living with a sophomore or junior? This would be based on eligibility. Concern that we would lose occupancy. On the other hand, we can’t fill jobs on campus.
• Students are very upset with parking office. What changes could we do that would be a positive? Students would really like it if we did get a parking garage...but doubt they would like it if 24/7 pay.

• Does West Edge work for a storage situation? Yes. Should we move CDL site to Goss to restore full capacity to West Edge site – it would cost $ but is it worth it to restore 160 spaces?

• Campus Journal Parking Feasibility Article 2003 – laid out model of what it would cost to build structure –we can update the article. The storyline is still at the same place because of the below market rate pricing. It comes back to the painful reality of revenue/cost of such facilities. (the assigned parking element of the 2003 proposal was rejected by the President at the time).

Remember that in 2003 no one was carrying cell phones....Things change.

Thank you for your input and participation.

To be Continued at Next TPC in September:

- comparator parking price update/Parking Productivity
- first draft of new policy changes that should be thrown on the table for discussion
- possible public forum in October (or some social media forum)
- follow up at TPC in November
- goal that new President will get recommendations at end of year.

Session ends at 1:05 recording run time (2:00pm)