

CIRCULATION AND PARKING PLAN

Circulation and Parking Plan for the University of Alaska Fairbanks

Fairbanks, Alaska
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Section 10

Conclusion

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The recommendations in this plan form an integrated set of strategies designed to help achieve the transportation goals set forth in the UAF Campus Master Plan. Individual strategies are mutually reinforcing and form a comprehensive program of improvements. The planned Tanana Loop completion is a critical component of the plan, as it will open up opportunities for shifting parking to the perimeter, enhancing the multi-modal environment of Yukon Drive, and simplifying shuttle system routing.

While the strategies will be most effective as a fully integrated system, most of the strategies, implemented independently, will provide considerable benefits that can be enjoyed through every phase of the plan implementation.

Non-Motorized Circulation System

The existing pedestrian and bicycle facilities provide basic access to most areas of campus. Each of the individual improvements recommended begin to close existing gaps and improve safety and connectivity to enhance the multi-modal environment, as set forth in the Campus Master Plan. Considerable improvements in comfort, safety, and convenience for non-motorized travel will be gained through construction of wider sidewalks on Yukon Drive, and pedestrian improvements near the Taku and Nenana parking lots. Similarly, construction of bicycle lanes on Tanana Loop would create a continuous circuit to provide a framework for a campus-wide bicycle network.

Motor Vehicle System

The motor vehicle system is still the dominant mode of access to UAF and a primary means of circulation within campus. The completion of Tanana Loop will significantly alter the internal campus circulation opportunities, including a reduced role for Yukon Drive for motor vehicle travel, as well as intersection alignment improvements at the Tanana Loop/Yukon Drive intersection.

Shuttle System

The existing shuttle system has made considerable gains in service reliability in recent years, followed by increased regular ridership. Service to the Taku/Ballaine and Nenana Lots tends to be frequent and well-received, there are some capacity problems connecting West Ridge to Lower Campus, and certain activity zones do not currently have regular service (e.g., the residential area). Several measures were identified to improve capacity, reliability, and route connectivity. These include the likely need for additional fleet vehicles in order to improve service frequency on certain routes. In general, incremental modifications will be adequate to address gradual changes in population and other activities. However, as parking facilities are shifted toward the campus perimeter, as indicated in the Campus Master Plan, the reliance on the shuttle system is expected to increase dramatically and will likely require a more comprehensive change in the overall route structure. This plan identifies a bi-directional route system for consideration to address this anticipated change in the campus layout. Funding opportunities have also been identified to support continued improvements for the shuttle program. In addition, UAF should work with FNSB Transit to increase ridership on campus.

Parking System

The parking system assessment showed that the overall campus is approximately 76% full during the peak hour. While this is not high enough to be considered “at effective capacity,” the analysis, coupled with community input, revealed considerable parking pressures in specific areas, such as West Ridge and Lower Campus. At the same time, there is unused capacity in the Taku, Ballaine, and Nenana lots. The parking permit modifications recommended in this plan were developed to distribute parking demand more evenly by providing options that meet different needs and preferences. Additional parking facilities will be needed to accommodate the growing campus population and to replace parking that is lost to redevelopment or conversion to open space and pedestrian areas. Several potential sites for future parking facilities are identified in this plan.

Long-Term Considerations

While many specific improvements have been identified in this plan, it is flexible by necessity. Many future investments will have to be evaluated based on the opportunities, priorities and specific needs of the time. UAF should anticipate updating the Circulation and Parking Plan as the campus environment changes in relation to population growth, new building development, and additional infrastructure investments.