

CIRCULATION AND PARKING PLAN

Circulation and Parking Plan for the University of Alaska Fairbanks

Fairbanks, Alaska
March 2004

Section 2

Introduction

The 2002 Campus Master Plan for the University of Alaska Fairbanks established five primary goals for the campus, with an emphasis on access and circulation for the university and surrounding community. In order to achieve these goals, the Campus Master Plan identified 25 actions ranging from landscaping and signing improvements to developing new facilities. Several of the 25 actions pertain specifically to parking and multi-modal circulation. Implementing these actions is intended to improve the efficiency of the parking system, mitigate vehicular access and circulation deficiencies, and improve pedestrian connectivity and continuity.



The purpose of the Circulation and Parking Plan is to provide additional guidance toward implementing those items in the Campus Master Plan that relate to transportation. To this end, UAF formed the Circulation and Parking Subcommittee (CPS) to identify specific issues and mitigation measures needed to address near-term and long-term needs related to pedestrians and bicycles, the UAF shuttle system, motor vehicle circulation, and the parking system. CPS and the consultant firm of Kittleson and Associates, Inc. undertook a public involvement process, including two public meetings and an on-line survey posted on the UAF web site. CPS members also received and provided additional comments directly.

The UAF campus serves many different and overlapping constituent groups. The most frequent users of the campus are the students, faculty, and staff, some of whom are also residents on the campus. These every-day users of the campus require regular access to multiple areas of the campus, including housing,

classrooms, research facilities, and dining services. In addition, the university plays a role in the recreational, educational, and cultural activities of the broader Fairbanks community. The campus also attracts a large number of visitors, including informal visitors coming to see the UA Museum or other attractions, academic visitors to UAF research facilities, as well as vendors or families of students.

A successful circulation and parking system must serve the needs of each of these constituent groups by providing clear and convenient connections among the many attractions and activities on campus. For the occasional users, the circulation and parking system should be clear and simple to understand so that those unfamiliar with the campus are easily able to get to their destinations.

Besides the different needs of the user groups, the climate and terrain in Fairbanks present unique challenges that must be considered in the Circulation and Parking Plan. Due to the cold temperatures and steep terrain in some locations, walking distances and proximity to parking are of significant concern to many users. The need for electrified spaces during freezing weather increases the cost of providing parking. The need for snow removal impacts all roadways, walkways, and parking areas throughout the winter.

PROJECT BACKGROUND

University of Alaska Fairbanks adopted the *2002 Campus Master Plan* to provide a framework for future growth and development on the UAF campus. The importance of the transportation system in the master planning process is evident in the five goals identified as the foundation of the Campus Master Plan:

- Create an efficient and attractive campus environment conducive to learning.
- Improve community access to the UAF campus.
- Make vehicle circulation and parking simple and direct.
- Promote safe and efficient travel throughout campus for pedestrians and non-motorized uses.
- Highlight natural assets of campus and the unique northern environment.

Upon adoption of the Campus Master Plan, UAF formed a Circulation and Parking Subcommittee (CPS) as a step toward implementing the Campus Master Plan. CPS enlisted a consultant team led by Kittelson & Associates, Inc. (KAI), a national transportation planning and traffic engineering firm, to provide technical support in developing a Circulation and Parking Plan that supports the five Campus Master Plan goals.

In addition to the Campus Master Plan Goals, KAI conversations with the CPS revealed priorities and concerns that helped set a general framework for the identification and evaluation of strategies. Those themes include the following:

- Provide access to both part-time and full-time students.
- Improve multi-modal access within the campus for pedestrians and bicycles, as well

as motor vehicles.

- Provide a balanced parking system for staff, faculty, students and visitors.

The goals and objectives stated above provide the basis for identifying and evaluating near-term and long-term circulation and parking strategies and improvements.

PROJECT PROCESS

The Circulation and Parking Plan was developed to achieve the goals and objectives established by the Campus Master Plan and the CPS. KAI conducted extensive data collection and analysis to form the basis of the issue and strategy identification. The consultant team worked closely with the CPS to identify appropriate study periods, locations for traffic and parking counts, and anticipated campus growth and development. Two public meetings invited input and comment from the community, including one meeting targeted at the student population (held at the Wood Center) and a second meeting held at the Noel Wien library in order to focus on general community input. In addition, an on-line survey was posted on the UAF web site, which asked for comments and suggestions about all circulation modes and the parking system. CPS members also received directly and provided additional comments. Input provided through these forums was integral to the development of the final plan. Two public meetings were held on campus to present the final version of the circulation and parking plan. Written comments that were provided after those meetings are summarized in Appendix A of this document.

SCOPE OF THE REPORT

Figure 1 shows a map of the developed UAF campus, and Figure 2 shows the campus core area included in the study and identifies the primary activity area:

Residential Area: the area, located north of Yukon Drive, which is primarily residence halls and apartments;

Lower Campus Area: the main campus area south of Yukon Drive which has the most dense and varied mix of activities, including residence halls and apartments as well as some classes and administration;

Recreation Area: the area north of Tanana Drive and south of Yukon Drive, which includes the Patty Center and athletic facilities; and,

West Ridge Area: the area west of the main campus including the UA Museum and much of the research and science program.

The map also shows primary roadways on campus and highlights some of the larger parking areas and shuttle stops on campus. These are critical nodes in the circulation and parking systems. The ability for users to have convenient access to and among these locations is a focus of this analysis.

The UAF Campus Master Plan recognized the need for a multi-modal transportation system serving all members of the UAF community and Fairbanks area. Transit, walking, and bicycling are all key modes of transportation for the UAF campus. The circulation system plan includes non-motorized modes (walking and bicycling), personal automobile travel, and the UAF shuttle system. Each of these modes is discussed separately in the following sections, followed by a discussion of signage and way-finding enhancements to simplify access for the regular campus population and visitors alike.

As one of the steps in developing this traffic and circulation plan, KAI conducted a thorough technical evaluation of the pedestrian, bicycle, motor vehicle, shuttle, and parking systems serving the existing UAF community, as well as anticipated changes in infrastructure and campus population. The recommendations provided in this plan provide a framework for addressing the existing and future deficiencies for circulation and parking.

Figure 1: UAF Campus Map

[\(larger map\)](#)

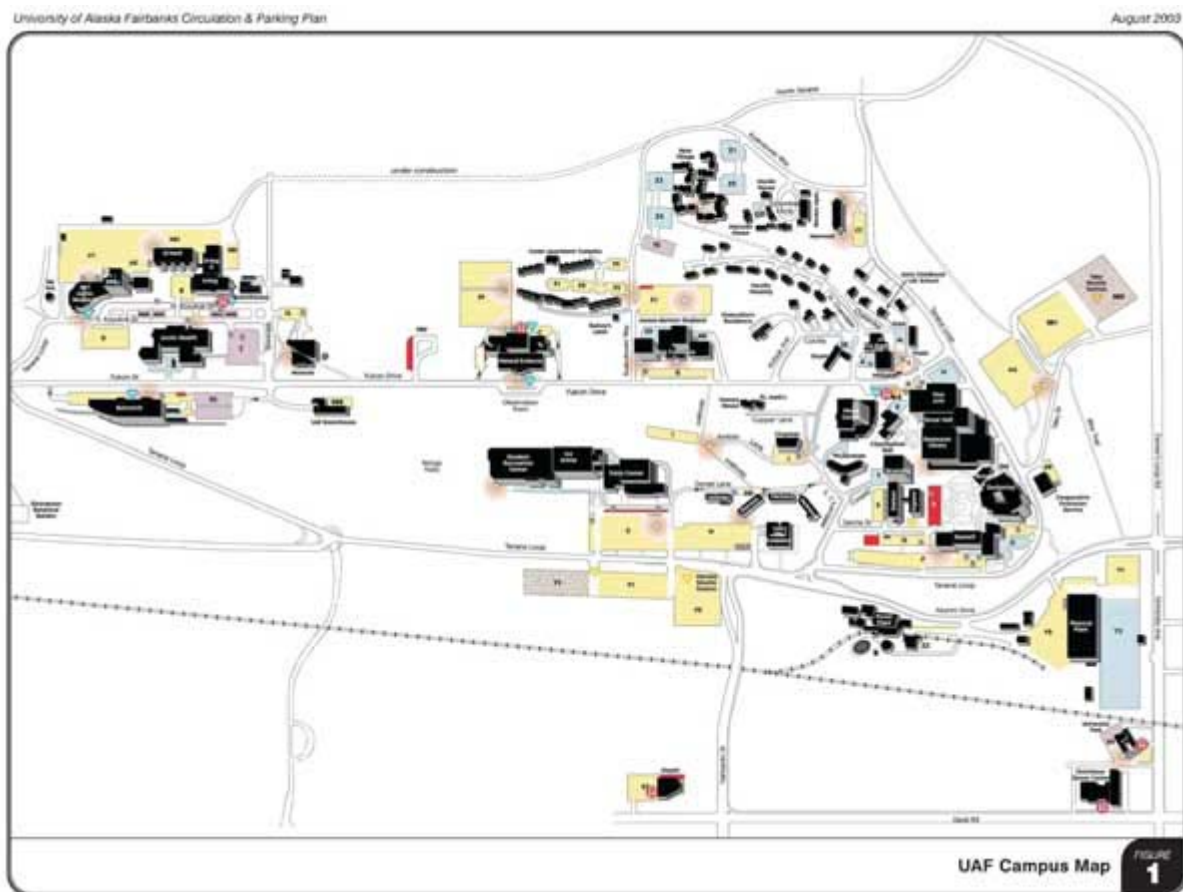
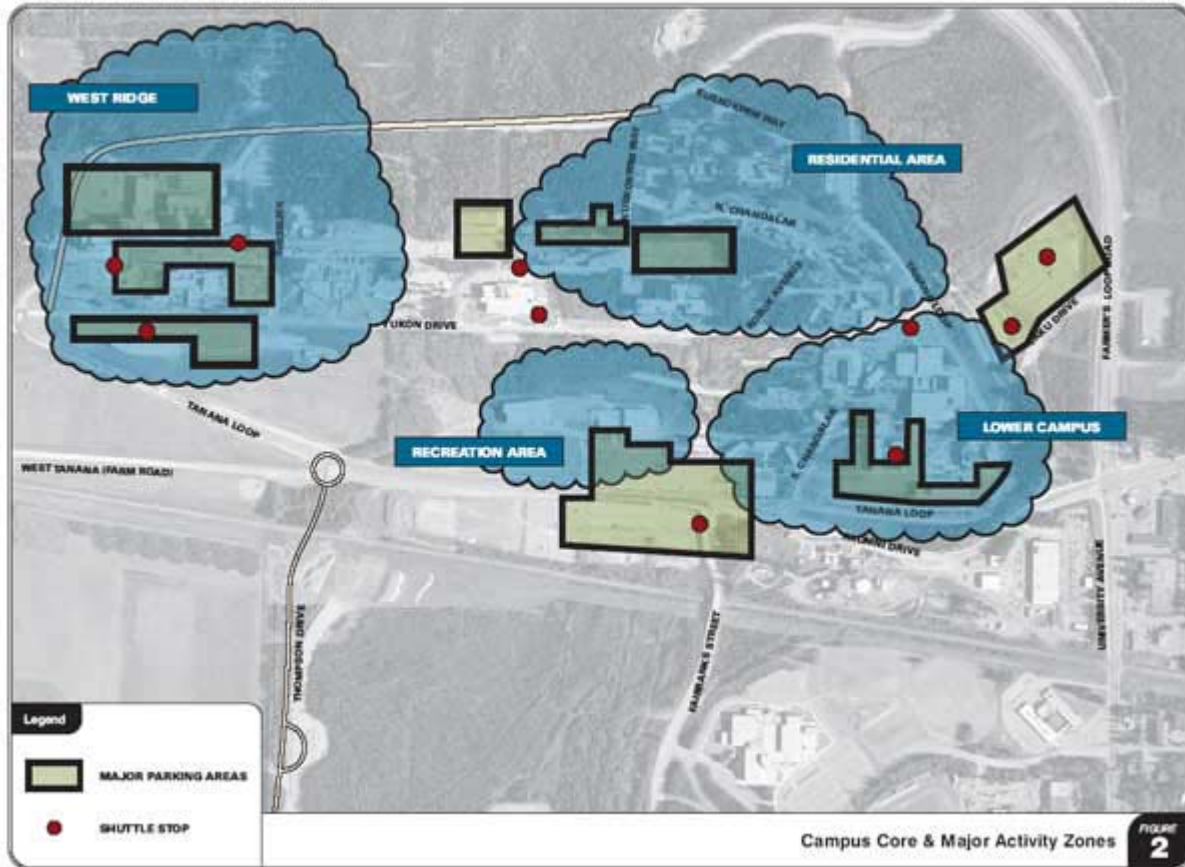


Figure 2: Campus Core and Major Activity Zones

[\(larger map\)](#)



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