For fall 2015 we asked the campus community:

What additional steps can the university take to encourage more students, faculty, and staff to take advantage of mass transit, ridesharing, and alternative forms of transportation; and

What can the university do to ensure that students, faculty, staff and campus guests, whose only option is to drive to CSUN, park on campus?

Would you be in favor of a modest increase in parking fees to fund construction of additional parking facilities?

The topic elicited more responses than any question previously posed on this site, including detailed suggestions that will be carefully considered with an eye toward possible implementation. A general overview of what you had to say is provided below, with thanks to everyone who responded.

**Mass Transit:** There is consensus that public transit to/from CSUN should be better. You pointed out that there are large areas that remain unserved or underserved by public transportation. Those who do use or have used mass transit describe it as frustrating, inefficient and time-consuming. Without express service to CSUN, many have to transfer several times, and that process is complicated by route schedules that are not synchronized. Some of you noted that the cost of public transportation had risen while service had declined. Others had safety concerns, calling public transport ‘gross’ and dangerous, especially for women.

Citing CSUN’s size as leverage, several of you called for closer collaboration with the MTA, LADOT and the city administration to improve service to CSUN, to resolve connectivity issues between the university and transit stations, to establish express service to certain areas, where high concentrations of CSUN students, faculty, and staff reside, and to make it cheaper or free for students. There were calls for a second transit hub to better serve all areas of campus, with tables and seating so that students could do homework while waiting for buses, and several of you opined that it should be easier to purchase Metro transit passes. Finally, one respondent advocated for subway service to the university.

**Communications.** You told us that CSUN should help educate the campus community about mass transit by posting transit information, through social media, and through information kiosks and campaigns. You suggested the information be included in freshman orientation and new hire orientation. Programs to get people to try transit were suggested, such as a ‘transit to school’ day, or making one day each week ‘metro day’ or ‘carpool day.’
Ridesharing + Carpooling: It is clear that the university has to do a better job of informing the campus community about these programs. Many of you indicated that you were unaware they existed, and suggested improved/expanded communications. Increasing the number of people taking part in these programs might address some of the concerns you raised about the functionality of the programs, given varying schedules and the broad area, throughout which students, faculty and staff are disbursed. You suggested an array of incentives to increase rideshare and carpool participation, including reduced rate parking and dedicated parking spaces. Other suggestions included launching an Uber-type service for CSUN, collaborating with Uber or Lyft, and including students in the guaranteed ride home program.

Biking + Walking: While a few of you pointed out that the San Fernando Valley heat did not make biking or walking viable options, others suggested ways to encourage biking or walking – for instance, making it a fitness challenge, or using CSUN’s influence to get bike lanes installed along key arteries to campus. Bike rental and bike sharing programs were encouraged, as were increased bike security and improved incentives for biking.

Some of you pointed out that the high cost of housing in the CSUN area forces people to live farther away; providing affordable housing near the campus would make biking and walking possible for more and would address some of the issues created by the number of vehicles travelling to/from campus daily.

Parking: Parking at CSUN can be an adventure and many of you shared your personal experiences to demonstrate. You made many interesting points, which we’ve tried to summarize below. The most repeated input: stop growing enrollment. Many of you raised concerns about the impact of continued growth.

Two primary factors were cited as reasons for parking off campus: price and availability. Many of you felt that any parking price increase would drive more people to park in surrounding neighborhoods. It was suggested that some park off-campus due to difficult campus ingress/egress. One example given: roadblocks to the north, which force more cars south, adding to congestion on southbound Etiwanda and on Nordhoff.

We also heard from some area residents, who painted a vivid picture of the issues they encounter due to the overflow of CSUN parking into their neighborhoods and in front of their homes, including trash and neighbors not being able to park at their homes or have their guests park.

While some simply felt that the only answer was construction of more parking – either going up (by replacing all lots with garages), going down (with underground parking), or making it a component of any building project going forward, others suggested that current resources could be used more efficiently to reduce the need for more. Several people suggested (cheaper) off-site parking, with shuttle service to campus. While some called for more parking on North Campus, others stated that a key problem with North Campus parking was a lack of shade, suggesting that solar panels would make it a more attractive option. Other suggestions included opening faculty lots to students later in the day (3:00 pm and later, for instance); metered lots with a three-hour limit to serve students coming to campus for only one class; a lot for guest parking only; assigning annual pass holders to a specific lot. There were many comments about better segregating staff and students, as well as the opposite – making all parking ‘first-come-first-served.’ Several ‘tiered’ parking schemes were also presented.
**Enforcement and Control:** You pointed out that parking issues are also safety issues, and there were several calls for better traffic enforcement. You described bikers ‘blowing through’ stop signs and parking lots, the added impact of skateboarders and cell phones, and drivers speeding through the parking garages. You asked for traffic controls to extend to pedestrians, to ease the gridlock caused by foot traffic preventing vehicles from exiting and entering parking lots and structures.

**Technology:** Many urged using technology to increase efficiency and reduce trawling for parking, primarily through implementation of smart parking (electronic signs showing the number and location of open spaces), and development of an app that would help to locate available parking spaces. A ridesharing/carpooling app was also suggested.

**Scheduling:** You suggested reducing or controlling the flow of people to campus. You brought up redesigning office and class schedules so as to better distribute arrival/departure times, and to reduce the number of cars to CSUN on any given day. Increased use of online and hybrid courses, flexible work schedules, video conferencing, and tele-commuting from home were highlighted as options to consider, as well as implementing a six-day schedule. One respondent suggested establishing satellite campuses.

**Shuttle Service:** You had plenty to say about shuttle services. You told us it needs to be: expanded (more hours of operation), extended (deeper into surrounding neighborhoods; a 5-10 mile radius was also proposed); more regular (spaced out better); more efficient. You asked for more drop-off points (and for polite drivers). It was also suggested that improved lighting on campus would make it safer to take the shuttle.

**Incentives:** You proposed an array of incentives. Examples include: discounted parking, discounted tuition, discounted textbooks, premium parking, priority registration, raffles, cash, free meals, free movie or VPAC tickets.

**Using CSUN Talent:** Finally, you suggested that the university could harness campus brain-power to address some of these issues through service learning projects; having CSUN engineers design an electric shuttle; by utilizing MBA students as consultants; having VISCOM work on marketing; having Kinesiology students work up a fitness plan, etc.