

University of Arkansas Transit and Parking Q and A

The following information is being provided in response to Transit and Parking's online survey, which was conducted during March of 2018.

- 1. Could we have more parking lots and more parking garages?** At this time, we will be reconstructing remote parking so that it will accommodate an additional 732 vehicles. In addition, lots 35 and 38 will be reconstructed so that they can accommodate an additional 72 vehicles. We know that more parking spaces are always desirable, but everything comes with a price tag. To build a parking lot it costs more than \$6,000 per parking space. To build a parking garage it costs more than \$23,000 per space. This does not include the cost of the land that it would be built upon; nor does it include the annual expenditures that must be spent to maintain the parking. That does not mean that the university will never add additional parking options. It just means that it can get very expensive (in the millions of dollars) and that it must be carefully planned.
- 2. Is there any chance that we could have better signs and more of them?** Better signage is an improvement in the works. The university has a wayfinding plan that calls for improving signs as one approaches the university and for improving signs on campus. But we must work with the university to make sure signs are consistent in their messaging and in their design. If they weren't it would create unnecessary confusion. Making improvements of this nature takes some time, and the improvements often must be phased in over the course of a couple of years. In addition, signs cost much more than one might realize. Putting up new signs for parking areas alone can cost hundreds of thousands of dollars. As a result, new signs must be carefully planned and budgeted, and that is true whether we are replacing old signs or putting up signs in addition to the ones that already exist. For more information click on the [Wayfinding Plan](#).
- 3. Can we add more bus routes? Can we add more buses?** We certainly can, but that comes with an additional cost as well. Without securing any additional funds, Razorback Transit would have to discontinue some services to provide others. At this time Razorback Transit is maximizing its bus capacity during peak hours. To add new routes would diminish the frequency of bus runs on current routes, cause longer waits at bus stops,

and potentially longer ride times on the bus. In addition, each new Razorback Transit bus costs more than \$400,000. Funding new routes and adding new buses would be a major expenditure and could not be done with the current budget. In the future, if the money is available, such changes would be considered as the need arises, but would only be made if it were the wisest use of tax dollars and the wisest use of your money.

4. **Can the lighting in parking lots and on campus be improved?** This is a safety issue that is given high priority. You will want to know that as lights get old and begin to fail, that they are regularly replaced with more efficient burning lights. In addition, in some areas the university has to position lights so that they will light up the desired area, but not shine on the homes of private residents who live near university property. Some areas on campus that need better lighting are in parking lots and are the responsibility of Transit and Parking. Other areas are away from lots and fall under the responsibility of the university as a whole. But either way, your concerns about poor lighting are being heard. If you see a light that is out or an area in need of more lighting, you may report it to facilities management.
5. **Why don't you cut the cost of parking permits?** This is directly related to the first four questions. To have enough money to maintain all of the existing university lots and garages each year, and to provide what is needed to support everything we do (signs, buses, lights, etc.), money must come in to Transit and Parking. Permit fees cover only a portion of the cost of providing parking services to the campus.
6. **Why don't you cut the cost of parking citations?** For two reasons. One is the same as the answer to question 5. But the other reason is that the cost of each ticket must be enough to discourage parking illegally. The lower the cost of the citation, the more instances of illegal parking. In the past, every time the cost of citations has gone up, the number of parking violations has gone down. To put it another way, the goal isn't to get your money; the goal is to insist that everyone park where they should.
7. **What can be done to alleviate the problems that come with traffic in Harmon Avenue Garage?** The times of heaviest traffic congestion on campus are the times in which traffic is most difficult in Harmon Avenue

Garage. At other times, entering and leaving the garage is not a problem. This matter will be greatly alleviated when Transit and Parking can go to a License Plate Recognition system (LPR), which would allow for the removal of the gates that control the exiting of the garage. At this time, however, we do not have an exact date for when that will be in place.

8. **Why can't more parking lots be closer to classes?** A decision was made years ago to coordinate parking efforts so that the heart of campus does not become more congested than it already is. A number of permits are sold for student resident reserved (red), and for faculty/staff reserved (blue) and many of those take up a lot of parking and/or contribute to traffic issues on the main part of campus. The university, in conjunction with the Transit, Parking, and Traffic committee, has consistently sought to discourage bringing thousands of additional vehicles in to the heart of campus each day, because it would create many more issues than it solves. Other universities have also found this to be true.
9. **Why can't my parking permit be used in other lots at times when those other lots are not full?** While you may see openings in other lots during a regular school day, the high numbers of permit holders who do not have access to that particular lot or garage prevent us from allowing parking in such an area. In short, if we said yes to everyone with this request it would result in an overflow of the lot in question, and would deny a space to those who come later who have a permit for that area.
10. **Why isn't parking enforcement more consistent and fair?** During the last school year (2016-2017) the Transit and Parking Department issued 6,822 warnings in situations that warranted a citation. It is typical for the department to issue many warnings in any given school year. In addition, any customer can share a complaint about a particular incident and also has the right to seek to resolve a matter through the appeals process. You may go to [Citation Appeal Information](#) on the Transit and Parking website for more information.
11. **If I paid for a permit, why do I have to move my vehicle during certain sporting events?** Certain parking lots, as well as Meadow Street Parking Garage, were actually funded and constructed by the athletics department. In those areas, your permit is good except for the times in which the space

is needed for athletic contests. Your parking permit actually costs less because the athletic department funded and constructed much of the parking on campus. If they had not done this, the cost of the lots would have been the responsibility of Transit and Parking, and that would have made permits more expensive.

12. **Can you improve customer service?** We always work to accommodate the needs of any motorists who come to campus and we can follow up on any legitimate complaint a person may have. We have found, however, that most investigations in to complaints of this nature reveal that a disgruntled customer has been a source of rudeness, cursing, yelling, or threatening language. Investigations verify this by video surveillance and/or by those who witness the interaction. In short, if anyone has a complaint, it is best to be able to demonstrate that you have tried to resolve the manner with the highest level of courteousness and civility. Students who create a disturbance or act in a threatening manner are subject to referral to the student conduct system or arrest.

13. **Can we go back to parking after 5 p.m. for free?** There are many individuals who ask this because, understandably, they like the idea of free parking after 5 p.m. for those who do not have a permit for designated areas in garages or lots. On the other hand, there are just as many who hold permits for garages and elsewhere who like the idea that their permit is worth more (i.e. can be used until 8 p.m.) They also like the idea that those spaces remain available to them after 5 p.m.

14. **Can we go back to parking with the front of the vehicle facing out?** That is a possibility but it involves several variables. The Transit and Parking Department is currently exploring each one.

15. **Could bus routes be added that go to other towns in Northwest Arkansas?** At this time, Razorback Transit does not have resources available for establishing such routes. Anyone needing such a ride, however, does have the option of using Ozark Regional Transit, which travels throughout the Northwest Arkansas area. Ozark Regional Transit shares bus stops with Razorback Transit in Fayetteville at the NWA Mall, Hillcrest Towers, Biomass, and Lot 56. For more information, go to <https://www.ozark.org>.