



UNIVERSITY OF  
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UNIVERSITY SENATE

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November 7, 2013

Matthew Popkin  
2101 Van Munching Hall  
College Park, MD 20742-1821

Dear Mr. Popkin,

The Senate Executive Committee (SEC) considered "Establishing A More Sustainable Transportation Funding Model (Senate Doc. No. 12-13-21)" at its meeting on October 30, 2013. The committee had originally postponed review of this proposal until after the external review of the Department of Transportation. After reviewing that report, the committee considered this specific proposal more thoroughly. The SEC voted to return the proposal to you, asking for more focus and clarity in the suggestions. Specifically, the SEC raised concerns about the complexity of the suggestions, noting that the breadth of issues was too vast to permit charging a Senate committee appropriately with its review. We ask that you reconsider the elements of the proposal and submit (a) more focused proposal(s) based on specific issues and recommendations.

Thank you for taking the time to craft a proposal for Senate consideration. We ask that you submit a revised proposal to the Senate Office at [senate-admin@umd.edu](mailto:senate-admin@umd.edu). Should you have any questions about the SEC's decision, please do not hesitate to contact Reka Montfort at 301-405-5804.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "V. Novara".

Vincent Novara  
Chair

VN/rm



## University Senate PROPOSAL FORM

<b>Name:</b>	Matthew Popkin
<b>Date:</b>	September 20, 2012
<b>Title of Proposal:</b>	Establishing A More Sustainable Transportation Funding Model
<b>Phone Number:</b>	301-461-3210
<b>Email Address:</b>	<a href="mailto:mpopkin@umd.edu">mpopkin@umd.edu</a>
<b>Campus Address:</b>	6801 Preinkert Drive, Apt. 7312D
<b>Unit/Department/College:</b>	BSOS
<b>Constituency (faculty, staff, undergraduate, graduate):</b>	Undergraduate
<b>Description of issue/concern/policy in question:</b>	<p>The University of Maryland Department of Transportation Services (DOTS) is a self-support unit that currently operates under an unsustainable funding model. This is not much of a fault of their own, but rather campus goals and current funding practices that simply cannot support long-term planning and growth given the current funding system. DOTS presently receives funding from the following major sources: mandatory student fees (undergraduate and graduate), parking permits (students, staff, and faculty), and parking violations. (students, staff, faculty, and visitors). These revenue sources provide money for daily operations as well as the robust Shuttle-UM services offered across the campus, off-campus, and in the evenings.</p> <p>However, the University's Climate Action Plan states that the number of personal vehicles encouraged and even allowed to park on campus should be decreasing over the coming years, in an effort to expand and encourage ridership via public transportation, including, but not limited to, bus services, carpooling, vanpooling, metro, and biking. There is an inherent contradiction between how DOTS generates revenue and the goals that the campus seeks to attain. As parking spaces and permits are decreased, revenue decreases from that major funding source, decreasing the funding available for providing for and growing Shuttle-UM ridership, which is at an all-time high, increasing rapidly, and will continue to increase as more students, staff, and faculty need to access public transportation to cut</p>

	<p>down on personal vehicle use.</p> <p>The University’s Facilities Master Plan 2011-2030 update reinforces the goal of sustainable transportation, promoting development and growth of a campus bicycle infrastructure, “high quality Shuttle-UM” system, and use of other transportation modes other than personal vehicles, all while systematically reducing personal vehicle use on campus (See pages 45-46 of the Facilities Master Plan). The Transportation Subcommittee, which worked specifically on the transportation component on the Facilities Master Plan, of which I was a member, discussed the funding model to some extent, but realized that it was a larger topic than the committee could handle in the time it was given.</p> <p>In fact, funding bus routes was recently discussed during a Campus Transportation Advisory Council (CTAC) meeting in September 2012. Due to substantial increases in student ridership at the University of Maryland at Shady Grove, three park and rides (Bowie, Burtonsville, and Laurel) that primarily serve faculty and staff were set to be cancelled due to costs and demand at Shady Grove. This is one example of an inability to accommodate and service all areas that would ideally need to be serviced in order to adequately reduce the use of personal vehicles.</p> <p>The Purple Line, which will be arriving to campus at the end of the decade, offers much potential to accommodate the increased demand of an expanding Shuttle-UM service, but that is years away and unlikely to drastically impact the current predicament.</p> <p>There is a strong and relatively urgent need to reshape the long-term funding model to support Shuttle-UM and additional modes of transportation without the reliance upon revenues primarily from parking permits and violations or a substantial increase of student fees. Students cannot continue to keep picking up the tab to cover additional transportation funding, something to which University has committed itself for good reason.</p>
<p><b>Description of action/changes you would like to see implemented and why:</b></p>	<p>There is no easy solution to this unfortunately, so the following suggestions are steps that would hopefully produce a broader plan.</p> <p>1) Last year, the University Sustainability Council approved the formation of many task forces to develop plans to address different components of the Climate Action Plan. One of the groups was the Sustainable Transportation work group,</p>

specifically charged with the following:

*Short-term:*

- Develop a new DOTS business model that is in sync with their sustainability goals.
- Develop programs with DOTS to increase faculty/staff use of alternative transportation.
- Address increasing air travel emissions.
- Develop plan to reduce fleet fuel consumption.

*Long-term:*

- Seek innovative solutions to develop and encourage a carbon neutral transportation system for all faculty, staff, and student commuters.
- Seek innovative solutions to reduce air travel emissions.

However, for a number of reasons, this has yet to be formed. The Senate should strongly push for the formation of this critical work group.

2) Complementing the work group should be an external review of the DOTS business model by smart growth and business professionals, and we should utilize faculty in smart growth and the business school as well to weigh in and work on a sustainable solution. Funding public transportation has never been easy, and with increasing awareness, concern, and demand for sustainable transportation, innovation and re-evaluation of previous transportation financial models may be required.

3) DOTS should actively seek to partner with more communities, residents, and businesses in Prince George's County beyond students to the extent that there can be financial contributions for communal service. This is a good example of such an effort: <http://www.gazette.net/article/20120921/NEWS/709219538/0/gazette&template=gazette>

4) Instituting a fee for faculty and staff may be another part of the solution in order to cover additional bus routes serving faculty and staff needs without so heavily burdening students. This would certainly be unpopular, but if looked at on a larger scale, this could potentially allow faculty and staff to save money by not having to park on campus or pay for gas during their commute. Students currently pay for a majority of the transportation services, yet faculty and staff do make use of it. Not only is this unfair for students, but it also reduces the weight of staff and faculty transportation needs in the context of limited funding, as

	was the case with the recent park and ride route cancellation decision in September 2012.
<b>Suggestions for how your proposal could be put into practice:</b>	<p>The Senate should look into the status of the Sustainable Transportation work group to determine if that is the right place for this concern. If so, the Senate should set a deadline for which it is to be convened and then seek regular progress reports.</p> <p>The Senate should examine best practices across other cities and campuses for funding transportation.</p> <p>The Senate should review the implications and costs of a staff/faculty transportation fee.</p>
<b>Additional Information:</b>	See Climate Action Plan and Facilities Master Plan 2011-2030 update.

***Please send your completed form and any supporting documents to [senate-admin@umd.edu](mailto:senate-admin@umd.edu) or University of Maryland Senate Office, 1100 Marie Mount Hall, College Park, MD 20742-7541. Thank you!***