



Madison Area Bus Advocates

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Keep Madison Parks Parks, Not Parking Places

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August 1, 2011

We believe that Madison's Parks Department has a special responsibility to safeguard our environment, the health of our citizens and our economy. According to the Parks web site, Parks uses ... "equitable standards when planning, preserving and maintaining our resources to reflect community and neighborhood heritage, needs and changing interests." That means Parks should give more weight to public or non-motorized transport. Paving and parking need to be more limited, separated from rec fees, and there needs to be more information about pedestrian, bicycle and transit access on web sites and in event announcements. To level a playing field that is now tilted toward the use of private automobiles, we suggest that the Parks Department:

1. **Limit parking** Many of Park parking lots have now become informal Park & Ride lots for commuters who have little interest in the Park itself, denying true Park patrons the ability to use parking spaces the way they were intended. Parks should correct this situation by adding meters, limiting parking to two hours, or having similar policies that discourage long-term parking lot use. Charging for parking can encourage people to use non-motorized or public transportation while potentially raising revenue for enhancing Parks facilities.
2. **Un-bundle parking costs from other parks fees.** Currently, when people are charged a rec or user fee, they are being forced to subsidize car use whether or not they use cars themselves. Instead, frugal people should be able to choose not to use their cars and not to subsidize someone else's car use whether it be for carrying a canoe, holding golf clubs or something else.
3. **Increase bus user accessibility to the Parks by posting good bus directions on Park websites, event flyers, and other announcements.** Currently, directions are almost exclusively for auto use, neglecting the fact that most Parks can be reached by sidewalks and public transit. When they even exist, bus directions tend to be vague and clueless as to differences in bus service according to the time of day and day of the week.
4. **All events that use Madison parks should be required to include pertinent bus information in any announcement.** This should be a condition for a permit.
5. **Orient entrances toward sidewalks, not parking lots.** After reaching a Park, for a bus rider to be confronted with a massive ocean of asphalt before getting to green or being able to enter a building is a major disappointment. Welcoming buildings need to be oriented toward the street, not the parking lot.