

To: Mr. Andrew Kulak  
From: Tara Helms, Varun Kumar, Gabby Wilber, Patrick Gatewood  
Date: March 25, 2016  
Subject: Report Project Proposal Memo

The purpose of this memo is to propose research regarding the issue of parking on campus. We will identify methods of investigation, provide potential solutions, address audiences that are relevant to the issue, and provide questions that remain to be addressed.

## **Introduction**

Virginia Tech Parking Services has long been criticized for the way it handles parking at the university. With a student body that is rapidly increasing in size and parking lots being demolished to make way for new academic buildings, it is time to reexamine the unsustainable way parking is managed by Virginia Tech.

## **Potential Improvements**

*Relax ticketing policies:* Many drivers who have received an orange-enveloped parking ticket agree that Parking Services tickets drivers too aggressively. In some cases, drivers can be ticketed for parking in a spot for less than five minutes. This policy may generate a lot of revenue for Parking Services, however it does not bode well for student happiness. Relaxing these ticketing policies could lead to a better public opinion of Parking Services, and students may be more likely to follow parking rules if they are satisfied with the way Parking Services operates.

*Expand Blacksburg Transit:* Nobody wants campus to become cluttered with unsightly parking garages. Students are currently encouraged to park at high-capacity lots that are very far from the center of campus (i.e. The Cage). However, many students do not take advantage of these lots due to the time it takes to travel to campus from the parking lots. If the BT is expanded, students may be more likely to take advantage of these lots.

Additionally, if the BT is further expanded, students may not have to drive as much, as the buses could be more easily accessible. Buses currently are also not reliable, given how many times during peak hours they are full and refuse additional students from boarding. This lack of reliability encourages more students to drive, and could easily be fixed by balancing how many clients BT has with how many they can manage.

*Create more short-term spots:* Many spots in lots such as the bookstore and GLC lot are fought over for short-term parking. Often, students looking to grab a to-go meal from a dining hall inadvertently force students looking for day-long parking into other lots. Traffic flow and parking may be aided by adding a few short-term spots around dining halls. These spots could be more rigorously monitored by Parking Services in order to collect more revenue from students who misuse these spots.

*Redistribute F/S and C/G spots:* Many students complain about the number of open F/S spots they see throughout the day while they circle the lots to sometimes not even get a spot. Accidents have occurred in the parking garage as well as other lots around campus. Although they are minor, students shouldn't have to fight over spots when there are other parking spots not being utilized throughout the day. Redistributing the assigned spots in the lots around campus would allow for more students to park, being the majority of those who fill the spots during the day.

## **Research to Conduct**

*Resources:* Much of our research can be conducted online. The VT survey system is a good tool to easily get students' opinions on our proposals. We can also examine the Virginia Tech and Blacksburg Master Plans in order to get an idea of what plans, if any, exist for parking updates. Other online research may be conducted.

Research can also be done into why parking is the issue that it is. The group can investigate how many parking passes are sold compared to how many parking passes are available on campus. If the numbers do not match, it is much easier for the group to make a factually based recommendation to Virginia Tech. Expanding off of this, many more freshman were accepted into the university this year, creating the potential for a worse parking situation in the coming years. The group can research if Virginia Tech plans to change their system to accommodate the increased amount of people, and if so, what their changes will be.

Overcrowding is an issue that is starting to affect our school in many ways, and parking is not an exception. A large amount of the group's research will be looking into how Virginia Tech aims to deal with the issue of overcrowding in an immediate and proactive way.

## *Timeline:*

- Delegate project tasking (in class March 28)
- Primary research
- Secondary research
- Status report (due April 8th)
- Report draft (due April 15th)
- Initial oral presentation (in class April 18th)
- Revised report (due April 20th)
- Final oral report (April 20-22)

## **Audiences**

Parking and Transportation: [parking@vt.edu](mailto:parking@vt.edu)

Richard McCoy, Associate Director Parking Services: [rimccoy@vt.edu](mailto:rimccoy@vt.edu)

Jeri A Baker, Director of Parking and Transportation: [jab518@vt.edu](mailto:jab518@vt.edu)

Ashley J. Snider, Customer Service Assistant: [ajenn07@vt.edu](mailto:ajenn07@vt.edu)

Tim Sands, President: [president@vt.edu](mailto:president@vt.edu)

**Questions**

What is the budget Virginia Tech has for parking?

What times/days are parking most difficult? And who is it affecting the most?

If expansion were to occur, where would we likely be able to build more parking lots?

In terms of budget, what are the major tradeoffs for more parking or an expanded bus schedule?

**Resources**

<https://survey.vt.edu/survey/>