Fall 2022 Forum Q&A

# Other/Ops

* Can we make a social media for parking updates, such as a full deck, proceed to your backup?
  + We currently maintain Facebook and Twitter pages. We will email and text subscribers for emergency parking issues, such as relocation. You can enroll in text notifications at go.vcu.edu/parkingalerts.
* Could you please paint floor numbers within the stairwells of all decks? I asked last time and was told yes; however, it hasn't been done.
  + This is a work in progress and a long-term goal of ours. While our specific ETA is not known at this time, we expect to complete this by next summer.
* Must so many VCU-owned/marked vehicles park so close to the elevators? Recently I've observed that in Laurel Deck, they take up many of the parking spaces on multiple levels near the elevators, causing subscribers to park further away.
  + Parking spaces are on a first come, first serve basis, and departments pay the same amount as subscribers.
* Could you please elaborate more on the availability of reciprocal parking? The P&T website seems to indicate that reciprocal parking is now available to everyone provided space is available, and parking is occurring within designated times. As an RTD deck subscriber, I have historically been told reciprocal parking is not available to us, but if any subscriber group needs reciprocal parking, it is us. Our building locations are not within convenient distance to either campus.
  + Reciprocal parking privileges do apply to RTD Deck subscribers. You can view your accessible facilities and timeframes at <https://parking.vcu.edu/parking/faculty-and-staff/reciprocal-parking/>.
* Event parking for VCU and best practices
  + Subscribers can access their designated parking facility during special events (unless notified via email in advance) in addition to reciprocal parking locations that do not apply to that event. For instance, reciprocal parking lots are great alternatives to utilize during special events.
* For occasional parkers, are there plans to allow us to use the 8th Street deck during the week - or at least on the weekend for work-related functions?
  + Due to the demand on Eighth Street Deck, there are no plans to allow single-use daily permits on that deck. Paying the visitor rate would be the only way to park on the deck without a permit for that location.
* Why do the entrance ticket machines go out of service?
  + Very rarely does this happen. Please contact us at [parking@vcu.edu](mailto:parking@vcu.edu) to elaborate further on this concern.
* If someone pays in advance and goes out sick, are they allowed to receive their money back? There should not be a grace period.
  + No, parking is an auxiliary and sells parking based on availability, so if a permit is sold, that permit cannot be sold to someone else regardless of when it is used.
* Why does my tag not allow me in and out of my backup deck?
  + Please contact us at [parking@vcu.edu](mailto:parking@vcu.edu) so that we can explore this concern further, as your permit and/or VCU ID should allow subscribers into their reciprocal parking location at their designated times.
* When is the entrance to Leigh and 10th Street at the Medical Campus bookstore and N deck going to be opened?
  + It is our understanding that this intersection will remain closed at Leigh St with no anticipated date for re-opening.
* Weekends used to be a time when people could visit the library at no parking cost to do research. Can VCU see an exemption for certain spaces so that we can welcome researchers to campus with convenient free parking?
  + We are not considering free parking within our facilities at this time; however, visitors may secure parking in a nearby deck for $2/hour.
* VCU needs to put underground or rooftop parking on one of these buildings they keep building for EMPLOYEES!!!!! I know that patients need better options as far as parking; however, VCU needs their employees to function as a hospital and we need to be able to get to work without worrying about spending another 20 minutes on a bus when we just got out of traffic!!
  + Parking is considered during the planning phase of new developments on campus. However, we are particularly limited in terms of space downtown. The I Deck was recently opened this past summer and offers closer proximity to the health system.
* Can the exhaust fans in the elevators be cleaned? They do not move much, if any air, especially in the heat of the summer.
  + Thank you for this question. Our parking operations team has added this to their maintenance list to evaluate.
* Can a stop be placed on the number of spaces sold per parking location? When we pay to park, we expect to be able to park in that location, not somewhere else, due to the full deck. Even when the new pricing goes into effect, you still get the funds through other avenues, so please be fair and allow paying customers to get what they pay for.
  + There is a designated number of parking spaces that can be sold per location based on usage, capacity, etc., and we perform daily counts in our facilities to help confirm these numbers. If you’re referring to the “lot full” sign being illuminated in a Monroe Park Campus facility, this does not apply to subscribers but hourly parkers and visitors.
* When will cameras be installed in the parking decks for security/safety reasons?
  + Cameras have been funded for each deck and signed off on for each location except D Deck.
* Can weekly permits be issued for N deck for EV drivers, as this is the only lot that offers chargers?
  + We are looking to add chargers in the I Deck as well. Please contact us at [parking@vcu.edu](mailto:parking@vcu.edu) to determine if there is availability for you to relocate to N Deck as an EV subscriber.
* Is assigned spots in parking garages possible?
  + Due to the nature of our parking operations, assigned parking spaces are not possible within our facilities.
* Do VCU board members pay for parking when they come to campus for their meetings?
  + VCU Parking and Transportation does not provide free parking for any individual or group.
* Along the lines of safety, have mirrors been considered to help with blind spots when coming around a corner?
  + This is a recommendation we will evaluate for feasibility; please contact us to determine the deck in reference.
* Is there any possibility of increasing the handicapped parking on the lower levels? When elevators are down, stairs can be difficult for some.
  + We will be mindful to increase handicapped parking using temporary spaces during this type of construction, if necessary, to accommodate subscribers. As a reminder, you can call 804-828-7091 for deck transport when elevators are inoperable.

# Pricing

* Why isn't there a discounted rate for Part-time and PRN employees?
  + Hourly non-benefitted employees, defined as employees limited to 29 hours or less on average per week over a 12-month period and earn $13 per hour or less, are eligible for the discounted part-time permit. You can learn more at <https://parking.vcu.edu/parking/faculty-and-staff/options-and-rates/>.
* Do we foresee any reduction in parking fees?
  + It is unlikely we will be able to reduce parking fees, as the cost of maintaining the parking facilities continues to rise. We do closely monitor our fees, and if we have the opportunity to hold parking fees flat year-to-year, we will.
* I am a veteran utilizing VA tuition assistance, and they cover parking passes. My question is, how can the P&T department become enrolled in the system to charge VA directly for parking passes?
  + The student counselor must submit the invoice to our department from the Tungsten System. The counselor should know how to process invoices. If not, then have the counselor contact our Finance Team at parkfinance@vcu.edu.
* Do you foresee a cap on the annual parking increases? When the staff doesn't get raises every year, but the price of parking goes up regardless, it feels like paying the university for the privilege of working here.
  + We understand your concern. Parking fees are based on the cost of maintenance and the cost of the services we provide. Unfortunately, these costs tend to go up each year, necessitating raising parking fees.
* Why is parking so expensive, $1056 per year?
  + Parking fees are based on the cost of maintenance and the cost of the services we provide. Rates are carefully calculated to cover these costs, and increases are only requested if there is a financial need.
* Should we expect to see another increase?
  + We analyze our parking fees each spring and determine the next fiscal year’s fees in March/April.
* Will you be discussing the parking increase and how you will be a contributing factor to the cost?
  + We analyze parking fees in the spring and will address our fee structure during the spring forum.
* Rates have generally gone up 1% - 2% across the board for parking options. How do you justify a 33% increase in the daily parking pass?
  + The daily permit rate increased by $2 to remain in alignment and comparable with the cost of a monthly permit, which also increased last year. Daily permit holders experience cost savings if they park five or fewer times over a two-week period.
* How much is parking in a deck?
  + Employee parking rates can be found at <https://parking.vcu.edu/parking/faculty-and-staff/options-and-rates/>.
* Are there any conversations happening around making the pricing of permits/subscriptions more equitable? (Recognizing that a standard price can be much more prohibitive for students and full-time employees making <$40,000, for example, than someone at a higher salary range.)
  + At this time, there are no plans for VCU to consider a salary-based parking price model.
* Why do we have to pay VCU to park when we work to take care of the community that supports VCU (health & academic)? A decrease in cost is much appreciated but I have worked in larger cities with larger hospitals and this has not been an issue.
  + As a self-supporting entity, VCU Parking and Transportation must charge parking fees to offer services to subscribers, such as administration, security, transportation, maintenance, etc.

# Subsidy

* As a dual-employed MCV + VCU physician, will I get the parking benefit?
  + This benefit is offered by VCU Health System directly. If you are paid by the Health System and classified as a VCUHS team member, you should qualify. Please reach out to HR4U at VCUHS to confirm your eligibility.
* Why was the A lot not on the list of lots that will be subsidized??
  + A Lot will be part of the subsidy offered by VCUHS.
* Will VCU consider implementing a similar parking fee reduction to what VCUHS employees recently received?
  + We are aware of VCU Health System’s recent announcement to offer a 50% parking subsidy to eligible employees. VCU Health System’s team member benefits remain independent of VCU’s. A parking subsidy is not under consideration for VCU employees at this time. Employees interested in reducing their parking costs are encouraged to consider our alternative commute options, such as reduced single-day/weekly permits, carpool/vanpooling, GRTC park-and-rides, and more. You can learn more about these options at [commute.vcu.edu](https://parking.vcu.edu/alternative-transportation/).
* For those whose parking was taken out of VCU paycheck, can we switch to MCV paycheck moving forward?
  + Please contact us at 828-PARK or parking@vcu.edu.
* VCUHS parking subsidy - I work for the school of medicine and I have to participate in ALL VCUHS training and abide by their policies and we aren't getting this subsidy?
  + Please contact HR4U at VCUHS for eligibility; however, VCU Health System’s team member benefits remain independent of VCU’s.
* Will 1/2 A lot parking fees be covered by the hospital under the benefits for full-time employees
  + A Lot will be included in the subsidy offered by VCUHS.

# MPC Parking

* What are you doing for parking at broad and Belvedere?
  + The B&B Deck, as we call it, is owned by the Real Estate Foundation and managed by VCU Parking & Transportation. The ongoing project was initially scheduled to end by July and was delayed several times due to supply chain issues. At this point, we hope to open the deck sometime in December. Subscribers who have parking in that location have been relocated to the West Broad Street Deck or one of the Henry Street Decks to ensure they have parking for the fall semester. We apologize for the inconvenience, but it was out of our control.
* When will construction on the Broad Street (and Harrison St) Deck end? It continues to affect efficient parking.
  + The parking deck assessment repairs should be completed by the end of January.
* I have tried to park at the W. Broad St. parking deck with my parking pass and have been unable to enter due to the "lot being full", despite being able to see clearly inside that sections of the parking lot are roped off (I assume for an event?), and no alternative parking was communicated as available in advance. What should I do in that situation? I paid a lot of money for a parking pass, so it is a bit frustrating when I can't even use it.
  + The “lot full” signs do not apply to subscribers, only hourly parkers. If you have a permit for a location with a “lot full” sign illuminated, you may still enter using your permit.
* What efforts will be made in the future to improve communication? (WBSD subscribers only received one email on August 26 stating that repairs would be taking place from August 29 through September 4 on levels 4-6; however, repairs are still ongoing as of today (October 14) and have been on other levels as well, yet we have not received any further communication.)
  + We apologize for the communication gap. We try to communicate construction projects as soon as they are confirmed; however, due to delays or re-scheduling outside of our control, this information is not always relayed effectively. We have communicated this feedback to our operations teams.
* What can be done to help people leave the W. Broad deck from 5-6 PM? It is increasingly difficult to get from the deck to the street.
  + Unfortunately, with how the deck meets the city streets and how close the intersections at Broad Street are, there is not much we can do. I would certainly recommend using the Shafer Street side of the deck to exit in the afternoon.
* As a West Main parking deck subscriber, where are we supposed to park when our deck says "lot full" with no prior email notifying us of this (like there usually is with the Cary St. deck change) or when events are held in Altria, causing decks to be filled by non-subscribers?
  + This signage does not apply to subscribers. You can still park in the deck as a subscriber when this sign is illuminated.
* Regarding inclement weather, last year, there were some days when the West Broad deck had ice inside from snow that had fallen off cars or blown inside. Is it possible to address that if it happens again?
  + Thank you for sharing this concern. We will be mindful of the snow/ice clearing during the winter months and try to minimize impacts to vehicles as much as possible.

# Students

* When will the spring semester parking permits go on sale?
  + Spring semester permits are currently available online.
* Not really a question, but the cost of the student 24/7 housing parking shouldn’t be $430 if we can only park on two floors in the deck. And one of them is outside. We paid to have access to a parking deck, so if we can only park inside, then it should only cost the cost of one floor. 430 divided by 5 is 86, so it should only be $86.
  + Ultimately, you paid to have access to parking at VCU, whether it be on a specific level or even the top floor of a parking garage or even a surface lot. The cost of parking is based on the cost of maintenance and overall needs to run the parking and transportation operation at VCU.
* Why are housing students only allowed to park on two levels?
  + This rule was put into place considering the theory that housing students are parking their vehicles for more long-term periods. This rule is currently under review.
* As a student, I have a parking pass at the west main deck. However, I am also employed by the MCV hospital and need to park there. Unfortunately, VCUs current guidelines do not allow me to purchase two parking passes at the same time as I am not a full-time employee nor can students utilize reciprocal parking. Is there some solution to this problem?
  + As a parking subscriber on the MPC campus, there are times you can take advantage of reciprocal parking on the MCV campus. Please visit our website to find this information. Our recommendation would be to purchase a permit on the campus you intend to be on most often and then utilize the Pulse to travel between the campuses.
* Do students who picked that parking spot during the fall 22 semester get a discount or at least something for not being able to park there for almost half a semester?
  + As a parking subscriber, you may be relocated to an alternate facility based on need, construction, access, etc. This contingency is included as part of our guidelines, and students are presented with this information prior to purchasing their permit.
* Why are housing students unable to park freely in any VCU lot or garage?
  + Our parking system is complex, accommodating more than 17,000 parkers daily. Assigned parking allows us to manage inventory more efficiently to create a more positive experience for everyone.
* How was the housing student parking rate determined?
  + We use the cost of the commuter permit as a base for the rate for 24-hour parking.

# Enforcement

* What are they doing about people parking taking up two spots at once?
  + Our enforcement team will typically place warnings on vehicles clearly occupying more than one parking space.
* Have analyses of permit holders been conducted to see who is actually using decks and at what frequency?
  + We conduct occupancy counts multiple times each day, which are what drive our decision on how many permits we can sell during a semester.
* Non-EV drivers park in the designated EV spots - in particular, the handicap spot is being consistently used by non-EV drivers even though there are many other handicap spots available in N deck. What enforcement steps can be taken to ensure appropriate use/parking for the EV spots?
  + When installing EV spaces, we are required to go through DEB review (Division of Engineering & Buildings) before we can renovate a parking garage to add EV stations. One of their requirements is that at least one EV station be ADA-accessible. Ultimately right now, that space is dual-use; it can be used by a person with a state-issued ADA handicap placard or by someone with an EV vehicle. We are looking into what we can do to better utilize this space in both the N Deck and West Broad Street Deck.
* Any thought to restricting oversized vehicles to surface lots? Some longer vehicles extend quite far out into the travel lanes, which can make it difficult/impossible for two cars to pass each other within the decks.
  + This is not under consideration at this time; however, oversized vehicles are not permitted within “compact car” parking spaces.
* Will VCU Police keep patrolling Leigh St. in the mornings to help with a pedestrian crossing? There are a lot of people unsafely walking across Leigh St. in the early morning. It is dark and hard to see them.
  + Yes, VCU PD will continue their presence out on Leigh Street. This location will continue to be a primary focus for officer visibility.
* Can we watch people's speeds?
  + VCU Police encourage anyone experiencing speeding drivers to report the activity. A first step would be educating the community about the concerns around speeding on parking decks and the consequences of doing so. In partnership with Parking and Transportation, both entities can seek to inform the community and then seek to enforce the infractions when applicable.
* Why aren't there mirrors on the turns within the parking decks?
  + We will consider this request and conduct a feasibility study for possible installation.
* Will there be cameras installed in O Lot?
  + We currently have several cameras installed at O Lot.

# MCV Parking

* Why are employees being denied the option to change lots?
  + Unfortunately, we do not have space in all locations to be able to accommodate changes, as we do receive more requests to change spaces than we have spaces.
* With the added traffic and construction near A-Lot and since A-Lot is a Leased lot, will VCU consider getting out of the Lease/Contract before it expires?
  + A Lot subscribers will eventually be relocated to the new I Deck. Current construction at the 7th Street bridge is limiting the amount of space we are able to use in the I Deck, so we are waiting for construction to be complete, which will take at least another year.
* What are the plans to make the walkway to the I Street Deck safer?
  + The only concern I am aware of is how ice will be handled in the winter. This walkway is a priority to keep clear during the winter to help keep a safe path of travel.
* I can never find an open EV charger in the N deck. What plans are there to expand access in the short term to meet the demand?
  + We are currently looking at adding chargers in I Deck and may also start charging a small hourly fee to help encourage subscribers not to use the chargers all day, every day.
* Is there any future construction for garages, and if so, what is the time frame?
  + At this time, no, since the I Deck was just recently completed.
* Is it possible to have a parking assistant in the I Deck during peak access times?
  + We are not aware of issues requiring an assistant, so there are no plans at this time.
* When is 10th by N deck going to be repaved? The potholes are very deep and hard to maneuver around.
  + We have been told that this should be done in the next couple of months.
* What innovations are being set up with contracted facilities (such as those serving One Capitol Square) to support reduced onsite schedules?
  + Off-site locations are not providing any alternatives for reduced schedules, so parking options remain the same.
* What is the new deck across I-95 for?
  + This is the I Deck. A Lot subscribers will relocate to this area once construction on the 7th St. bridge is complete, which allows us to use the full deck.
* Parking lot maintenance is poor in A Lot; why are there continually massive craters that aren't handled?
  + This is a city-owned lot, so we are limited in what we can do. While we continue to fill in the potholes, rain does continuously wash them out.
* I saw in the news that there was going to be construction on A lot...any time frame for this, and when will we have to move?
  + We do not have any information on when this will happen; however, this is one of the reasons the I Deck was built, and A Lot subscribers will likely transition to the I Deck.
* Is A Lot going to be paved/ repaired anytime soon? I imagine that even though it's a rented lot, it doesn't mean repairs can't be done.
  + The city does not have any intention to repave this lot since the lot is slated to be developed in the near future.
* How can I transfer to the A lot?
  + Transfers are dependent on availability. You may contact customer service to see if space is available for you to move to the A Lot.
* Will more security be available at A-lot station? There is notably less security there than A Lot ?
  + VCU Parking and Transportation has and will continue to patrol this lot along with VCU PD. We have also been looking at securing a mobile camera for security with this lot.
* The potholes and gravel piles in A Lot are significant, as is the damage they can inflict on the underside of a vehicle. If they can not be repaired, perhaps the cost of parking in A Lot should be lowered or eliminated.
  + The request to fill potholes is entered as soon as discovered. In the coming years, A Lot is scheduled for redevelopment, and this will not be an active VCU parking location.
* Is A lot Main station only provided security from an outside vendor? I never see VCU security during peak hours in the morning or during the time to get off.
  + Security at A Lot is fulfilled jointly by RMA, VCU Police, and VCU Parking and Transportation.
* There are a lot of cars parking in A lot at main street station without VCU parking passes; when I get to the lot after 10 am, there are barely any spots left. Is anything being done to monitor the parking down there? Where am I supposed to park if I come in one day and there isn't a spot for me?
  + A Lot Main St. is not only used by VCU since this is a leased location. SP+ does patrol this lot and checks that vehicles without a valid VCU permit do have a valid payment.
* If you are parking in A lot, why does it matter which A lot area you park in? (Main Street or the other lots)
  + We do have a limited number of leased spaces in A lot Main St. The areas are separated to make sure that the number of vehicles that we have parked in that lot does not exceed the amount agreed upon with the lease.
* Also, why did the parking at the coliseum deck close? We need more availability to park and VCU did away with that deck as an option??? Why??
  + We leased 300 spaces at the Coliseum Deck from the City of Richmond. The city contacted us around October 2021 and notified us that our lease was being terminated effective at the end of that year. The explanation given was that the city needed the parking back as the GRTC transfer station was being moved to the large parking lot directly east of the Coliseum Deck and those subscribers parking there had to move to the Coliseum Deck. When we did our analysis of the parking spaces available in the system, we did not need to replace the Coliseum Deck, so subscribers were moved throughout the system from the Coliseum Deck. With the addition of the new I Deck, we have plenty of space in the parking system on the MCV campus to accommodate everyone.
* Do we have an estimated completion date for the construction around the I Deck? Thank you.
  + Construction on the I Deck is completed; however, we are not able to use it fully until construction on the 7th Street bridge is completed. This construction will not be completed for at least another year.
* When will the zebra stripe crosswalk painting be completed around the AOP building? The entrances and exits are very dangerous for pedestrians, with a blind turn and no warnings for pedestrians
  + The area around the AOP building is not controlled or managed by VCU Parking.
* How long will it be before the VDOT project on 7th street is completed?
  + This work is being completed by VDOT. We do not expect the work to be completed for at least another year.
* An update about the construction happening near the I lot; thank you.
  + This work is being completed by VDOT. We do not expect the work to be completed for at least another year.
* When will the scanning entry gates be installed at O Lot?
  + There is currently no plan to have entry gates installed at O Lot.
* Are there plans to reopen the northbound lane of 10th St. in front of N Deck?
  + As far as we know, at this time, there are no plans to reopen that lane. Our understanding is that discussions are ongoing between VCU and VCU Health.
* Will you ever be able to recognize long-term VCU employees (20-25+ years and above) with the first choice of parking locations?
  + At this time, that is not under consideration.
* Is it possible to increase the handicapped parking spaces on the lower level floors of the parking garages, like N Deck? When the elevator is out, it is difficult to maneuver the stairs for many people.
  + That is something we can look at, but it isn’t something that is likely to move fast, as it would require restriping of the entire garage to remove handicap spaces on the upper floors and add them below due to the different size requirements.
* In N Deck, can the end spaces be taken out so that it allows more room for turning the corners to next level? Large vehicles use these spots, thus creating blind spots and difficulties in maneuvering around the vehicle, this is extremely dangerous!
  + We can take a look at this, but what is more likely is that we will turn them into compact spaces as we did on the Eighth Street Deck.
* I am an operator at the steam plant on Oliver Hill Way, and I pay to park. I thought it a good idea since the neighborhood isn't safe, and I liked the gated option. Recent changes, however, keep the gate open all day for anyone to drive into the parking area without a badge. We have a new pedestrian gate we must pass through from the parking lot. Why must I pay for parking when others don't?
  + Permits are required by everyone parking in VCU lots. Vehicles parked in VCU lots without a valid permit are subject to citation. We do not have the ability to control the gate at the Physical Plant.
* D Deck traffic in the morning between 6-7 am is horrific. It makes D Deck parking not convenient and not worth the hassle. Is there any discussion on how to fix this?
  + We are currently in the process of getting new gate equipment and are also looking at upgrading to LPR technology instead of the current hangtags. In the meantime, we do ask that everyone use all five entrances rather than trying to just enter the express entrance near the top.
* The morning backup from D Deck goes all the way down the 95 exit ramp at Broad and 14th. Can't the D deck gates be open for a certain time in the morning? Backup starts around 6:30 to 7:30 every morning. Arriving at different times doesn't matter.
  + We are currently in the process of securing new gate equipment and are also looking at upgrading to LPR technology instead of the current hangtags. In the meantime, we do ask that everyone use all five entrances rather than trying to just enter the express entrance near the top. Leaving the gates open during the morning does cause other issues, including causing problems when subscribers leave the deck at the end of the day.
* Is the parking office willing to be flexible with staff members to temporarily move them into the D-deck garage when subscribers typically park in I lot and A lots, for instance? Our technologists in one of our clinical laboratories are working forced overtime for four (4) twelve(12)-hours shifts; they usually work 8-hr day shifts. This would not seem to be a great imposition to allow or staff to park in the garage (around 15 or so employees), and grant them the same rate as their current parking lot. This shows some empathy and understanding for their situation and gives them a minor recompense for their efforts to help keep some of our laboratory operations afloat while we are in the midst of a critical staffing shortage. Keep in mind these employees have had to adjust a lot of aspects of their lives, such as childcare, to help. The ease of getting to their vehicle in a quick manner is a small reward in the scheme of things for their incredible efforts. Keep in mind that the security escort service is not always timely, which has been suggested previously.
  + Situations can be reviewed as needed. Please have your department reach out to parking for review. If any accommodation is made, you would need to pay the rate for the area that you are parking in.
* The need for discounted city parking for those working in One Capital Square.
  + Unfortunately, we do not have the authority to influence city parking rates.
* Is there a possibility to implement a process for those in I Deck to be moved closer to the building in which they work based on the aforementioned statement?
  + You may contact parking to see if you are able to be changed to another location; however, parking changes are based on availability.
* Is it possible to update the signage in the 8th street deck to indicate that compact cars must fit in front of the marked line on the concrete? Many larger vehicles use compact spots, making the deck more dangerous for everyone.
  + We will ensure our enforcement team more closely monitors the vehicles parking in these locations. Should a parked vehicle impede access for others, it will be ticketed.
* Can the lighting elements be replaced in N deck so that there are not all these "dark" areas?
  + Over the course of the next several months, we will be upgrading all of our facilities to LED lighting, which should help this situation on N Deck.
* Who can subscribe to O Lot? It is paved, has fencing, security guards, rain shelters, and benches, and only some people get to use it. Why is that?
  + VCU Health System employees can subscribe to O Lot, as this lot is completely subsidized by VCUHS.
* Is anything going to be done to reduce the traffic backlog by A-lot?
  + Due to the location of A Lot, we are limited as far as options to reduce traffic at this time.
* D deck- Why is there such a delay with the readers scanning your parking pass? Sometimes it reads quickly and the arm raises, and other time I feel like I have to move my pass.
  + We monitor our equipment often for issues. We will soon be upgrading the equipment at the gates here, which should result in faster ingress.
* I had to leave campus for a work-related errand today, and it took me an hour to find parking when I returned. I am assigned to A Lot Main St. While there were 2-3 open spots, they weren't large enough for a car to actually use. Is there any plan to give out fewer passes for this lot? How is it acceptable for us not to be able to use the parking lot we pay for?
  + We conduct parking facility occupancy counts daily and are careful as not to over-subscribe to facilities. Should you continue to experience this issue, please reach out to us immediately at 828-PARK (7275).
* With regard to EV chargers, how can the few existing spots in the N deck be reserved for EV cars only?
  + We welcome your suggestion and will discuss the feasibility of this recommendation among leadership.
* How can EV drivers use the N deck on a weekly permit basis, as this is currently not an option?
  + Those wishing to use the N Deck to charge can press the “i” button to receive access to this facility. There is currently no limit to the number of times for EV charger users.

# Transportation

* Can you please address the bus schedule-we have students who miss classes on the MCV campus due to buses not showing up (bus has been over an hour late on occasion), the app/websites showing incorrect information, bus drivers stopping to in the middle of the route to get off the bus and talk to other drivers, buses passing stops with students waiting, etc?
  + We work diligently to ensure that buses run as smoothly and consistently as possible throughout each day. We’d like to hear more from you, specifically, if you would email us at [RamRide@vcu.edu](mailto:RamRide@vcu.edu), as the mention of being over an hour late on occasion is concerning. While we’re not without hiccups in RamRide’s service, an hour late is not something that is acceptable. We’d like to be able to drill down into what you’ve witnessed, including the detail of when and where, so that we can monitor that area more closely. It takes eyes on the road, in the field, and on our buses to monitor the whole experience and your specific feedback to constantly monitor and improve the service we provide.
* There have been multiple occasions where I have waited thirty minutes for a bus. Multiple of my employees who get off late at night have to do the same as well. Many being females who are not comfortable. When addressed with you guys previously The security assigned to transport employees explained that they do not take people to O lot. My question is what changes will be made to ensure employee safety late at night at the bus stop. What changes will be made to ensure efficient transportation to Parking decks/ lots.
  + With lower ridership in later hours comes fewer buses assigned to a route. While we know that increases wait times, we do make available a RideSystems app for guests to monitor the status of the buses. This can help you make decisions like staying indoors just a moment longer until the bus is nearby. Security remains in O Lot to ensure the safety of guests and property. Finally, as to the 30-minute wait time, later in the evening, you should experience something more along the lines of 15-20 minutes at most. Please email us at [RamRide@vcu.edu](mailto:RamRide@vcu.edu) to follow up with specific times you are waiting so that we can keep a close eye on the service we are providing.
* Is there a way to add a shuttle stop at the Broad St. West Hospital location? Working in buildings that are not close to CHOR you rush to get out the door. If there was a stop at West Hospital that could accommodate those staff members also.
  + A stop closer to the West Hospital would be a hazardous situation, based on our evaluation. Unfortunately, we cannot share a Pulse stop with GRTC for a number of reasons, and we are very fortunate that we can utilize the area in front of CHoR. That said, it is the plan that the bus stop at CHoR will return to 11th Street outside Sanger Hall in February. This, at least, will provide one last street to cross.
* Would it be possible to identify a covered loading area for MCV staff? The shuttles could all pick up and drop off at the same covered/protected location, so we are not exposed to the elements just walking to the shuttle stop. I have panic attacks thinking about how I’m going to get to my car on a rainy day if I’m going to get soaked just walking to the shuttle stop at 11th/Clay.
  + We would love to provide shelters for all guests to wait for buses, but that is not a feasible option at this time due to ownership of the property where our stops are or anticipated changes. It is something we work toward in the future. Take, for example, O Lot, and I Deck, as we consider the whole in new projects. Specifically to your mention of 11th/Clay, there is a shelter there also, but there will never be a covered pavilion to get every guest there. A communal stop is ideal from a number of angles (and why we look forward to the return of Sanger Hall’s stop); however, a covered space is just not a feasible solution given the options on the table.
* Is there another spot that can be used for picking up A-lot parkers? It causes a huge traffic mess.
  + A Lot Oliver Hill is extremely challenging just before Broad. Every explored alternative requires the risky ask of having guests cross a major street and increasing further safety threats.
* Are the buses cleaned nightly?
  + Yes. They are cleaned between shifts and nightly and as needed during a staff member’s assignment.
* Why is the bus stop so far away for commuters from A-lot station? We recently got a message saying that due to construction, the Ram Bus has temporarily moved closer, so why not keep it there permanently?
  + The intent is to keep that stop there permanently. We are awaiting a few items to be cleared up, but the goal is to keep the bus stop where we’ve moved it to. It should better serve us regarding safety and future construction traffic projects on the docket.
* Why is the A-Lot Oliver Hill Bus stop being moved when in the email with the new stop, it still shows the bus passing by the lot? I would think that if the bus can drive on the road, they should be able to stop on the road.
  + A Lot Oliver Hill’s stop will remain. The email message sent out was pertaining to the Main Street Station stop. Unfortunately, a staff member placed the sign in the incorrect location.
* I park in the "O" lot. During peak times, I think you should have two buses running back-to-back, so there is enough room for everyone to sit down and also be on time for work. Two buses should be at the stop together, so we are not packed in there and unable to be comfortable. Or at least have buses that run closer together. The wait time in the afternoon especially is ridiculous.
  + More on this one to come prior to our forum.
* Can a shelter and some benches be installed at the A Lot stop for foul weather and long waits? It would be helpful to have shelter and some benches for when the buses are 20 minutes apart or riders are carrying packages that may absorb water or may be heavy.
  + Unfortunately, we are not able to put a shelter in place for either A Lot stops due to the fact that we are a lessee and have no control over the sidewalk or lot’s provisions.
* Do you have an update on the O lot bus stop and if it will go back to the front of Sanger. If so, when?
  + We are coordinating with the teams impacting the Sanger bus stop area and expect to be back there on or around February 2023.
* Why is there no RamRide between Lot A and Monroe Park?
  + We rely on our partnership with GRTC. In an effort to reduce the duplication of services, we encourage all to utilize the Pulse.
* I have health issues and would like to know if we could get a bench at the 8th St. deck.
  + We will evaluate this request; however, due to infrastructure, this may not be feasible. If you are an ADA subscriber, please contact us so that we can discuss alternate options.
* Are masks still required on the Shuttles?
  + No, masks are no longer required.
* Why is A lot bus stop moving? Why are there two A lots?
  + A Lot Oliver Hill’s Stop remains in place. A Lot Main Street’s Stop has moved to accommodate upcoming street closures due to construction.
* What happened to the ALOT express shuttle? Why did this stop?
  + A Lot’s Express Shuttle was discontinued when buses could be filled to 100% capacity. This was put in place to account for lower capacity during the pandemic and give some relief to those that might wait for the next bus. Strong consideration is being given to reinstating at least one Express bus on A Lot after monitoring of the latest stop and route change is complete.
* Can VCU expand the technology in the app to better understand the needs of the riders? The app might allow a “request a ride” feature or some way to indicate the user’s intent to use the shuttle service as they approach a shuttle stop. The shuttles could remain stationary until they receive a notice that there are potential riders waiting.
  + While this is a great idea, the service has to flow for those who would not be able to notify the drivers of their presence via an app.
* Is it possible to establish an evening bus schedule for those who work late and don't want to wait in the dark for too long?
  + Strong consideration has been given to a “stated” bus schedule over the years. We never want to put something out there that is not adhered to 100%, however. With the current traffic concerns that plague A and O Lot’s routes, namely in the Oliver Hill and Broad and 14th and Broad areas, a printed schedule would only set an expectation that would not be met at all times for all riders. This continues to be an avenue we explore, especially as we work to free ourselves from Broad Street in the coming years.
* Will you all be activating the bus trackers again so that we will know where the buses are en route to help us time our arrivals at the bus stops?
  + Bus trackers are activated; however, it must be noted that they are down from time to time. While this is much less frequent than it used to occur after some work with our provider, it is still not acceptable. That said, with the rollout in the future of a new bus app, we hope and plan that bus tracking will be an issue of the past very soon.
* Will smaller shuttle buses ever run when VCU is closed, but the hospital is open? It is challenging crossing the streets and going to the hospital from A lot. People are getting on 95 on both sides as we cross the street.
  + We are currently in the process of implementing a limited RamRide route that will run during VCU closures; however, subscribers will still need to relocate to an alternate parking deck.
* What is the plan to replace the current RamRide buses with 100% electric ones?
  + Infrastructure does not currently support a 100% electric fleet nor does the recent acquisition of new buses that are diesel powered. We are exploring the future of a more sustainable operation; however, we are merely in the beginning stages of exploring the possibilities.
* Can the black shuttles go to the I deck? As we move into winter, crossing the bridge that is under construction will continue to be unsafe. We are already walking single file and consistently get wet (now) when it is raining because the cars do not slow down, and the water pools where the bus lets us out.
* Why does the O lot bus not stop at A lot when we are standing outside to go to work? The drivers do not look at you they just pass you by. Why is that?
  + O Lot buses are scheduled to stop at A Lot unless there is an A Lot bus that is right behind them. We will work with the team to make sure this service is being provided.

# Alt. Trans

* Is there any consideration being given to offering alternative transportation discounts? Many places offer limited monthly parking permits (@3 days) at a discounted price for those who primarily bus or bike but have to, occasionally, drive to work. This kind of program incentives people to use alternative transportation.
  + Parking and Transportation is currently looking at ways to improve the carpool program. Subscribers can turn in their parking passes for a one-time pack of day passes. We would like to potentially have passes for those who use alternative transportation but are exploring the best way to do so and have everyone register for the program. For now, if you’d like to get the most out of alternative transportation commuting, we suggest [signing up for Ridefinders](https://ridefinders.agilemile.com/), where you can track your work commute and gain points, giving you access to hundreds of deals in the Richmond area for services, restaurants, museums, and more. You will also get 4 FREE emergency rides home covered per year.
* Will VCU add electric vehicle charging stations to each parking deck, level, and open-air lots? If not, what is the plan to add more stations?
  + We will try our best to expand electric vehicle charging as much as we can and as demand increases. This expansion is sometimes limited by our availability to run electrical conduit to all these parking spots, and if a surface-level lot may not be around much longer, we won’t be adding EV charging to it. If you’re interested in what lies ahead for some parking lots and decks, please check out the [ONEVCU Master Plan](https://issuu.com/vcuadministration/docs/onevcu_masterplan_final_med_res_web). If you’re looking for electric vehicle charging in Richmond, you can find an [entire map at this plug-share site](https://www.plugshare.com/directory/us/virginia/richmond).
* How is VCU transportation addressing challenges around carbon emissions?
  + VCU signed on to the [American College and University Presidents’ Climate Commitment](https://news.vcu.edu/article/vcu_president_michael_rao_signs_national_climate_commitment) in 2010. We are working our hardest to be able to provide alternative transportation options to the VCU community, as [transportation is now the number one emitter of carbon emissions in the United States.](https://www.epa.gov/greenvehicles/fast-facts-transportation-greenhouse-gas-emissions) If you’d like to see all the options for alternative transportation, visit [our commute homepage](https://parking.vcu.edu/alternative-transportation/). If you have questions about alternative commuting options, please reach out to commute@vcu.edu.
* Can VCU explore smaller, more eco-friendly shuttle options? There is a great opportunity to have more vehicles, non-CDL drivers, and possibly tax breaks on EV vehicles
  + VCU is keeping a close eye on what becomes available as [Virginia adds more laws and incentives](https://afdc.energy.gov/laws/all?state=VA) each year regarding electric cars and buses. As we are able, we are transitioning pieces of our fleet to electric. However, this is a process, and we want to make sure we do it correctly and with the proper infrastructure available. [Excellent things are happening in Virginia, though](https://www.virginiamercury.com/2022/09/21/what-virginia-wants-to-do-with-100-million-in-electric-vehicle-charging-money/), so keep up with us!
* Do you have any influence on bikeable paths? I ride in on Jackson St.- a common bike route for people who live in the north side of the city- and have to climb curbs and ride over the grass to get to Larrick Center.
  + For the most part, the City of Richmond owns and manages all the streets in the area. However, they are currently redoing a number of plans, including the [Richmond Connects Transportation Plan](https://planrva.org/wp-content/uploads/Presentation-Richmond-Connects.pdf). View that PDF for a timeline of what’s currently being worked on and how to get your comments about infrastructure improvement directly to the people in the city that have influence over them.
* Following up on a previous question: could a bike parking rack be placed at A Lot? This is the terminus for the main north-south bike lane from Northside, and bike parking there would allow me to take the shuttle or walk up the hill on broad street, avoiding that dangerous section on bike.
  + A Lot is actually a lot that VCU leases and does not own. Therefore, it likely isn’t a place where we would invest in bicycle parking but is something we can explore. For now, I would park your bicycle at the Farmer’s Market, which is just two blocks down on 17th Street. The Farmer’s Market parking is also a very public area, ensuring that your bicycle will be safer during the day or when you’re away from it. If you’d like to discuss this bicycle parking further, you may contact RamBikes at rambikes@vcu.edu
* Are there bike racks in the parking decks? Can one use the shuttles if they park their bikes in the parking deck?
  + There are bike racks located in some parking decks. For instance, there is a rack in Henry Street Deck as well as the 8th street deck downtown. The map of all bike racks on the campus, including racks owned by the city, can be found [using this ARCGIS map](https://www.arcgis.com/apps/mapviewer/index.html?layers=3db481543d8e48068e49ad16f991585b). It was last updated at the end of 2021 by the Alternative Transportation Coordinator. If you park in a parking deck, you can use a shuttle.
* When will the GRTC 5 bus run at a 15-minute interval again? this has been an issue for months?
  + While we support GRTC and want everyone to utilize it, there is currently minimal flexibility over the schedule due to staffing levels; however, GRTC is committed to increasing staffing and is making all efforts to promote positions, train drivers, and fill routes as efficiently as possible.
* What is the plan to add solar panels with battery storage to open-air parking lots? This would provide coverage for the vehicles and power to the electric vehicle charging stations.
  + This is currently not a consideration at this time; however, we have noted this recommendation.