

**Town of University Park  
Transit Task Force Public Forum  
Tuesday, February 9, 2021  
7:30 PM – 9:00 PM**

- Meeting notes are in blue bulleted text below each agenda item.
- Video of the transit task force public forum is available at <https://www.upmd.org/320/Watch-Virtual-Town-Hall-Forums>.

**Agenda**

1. Introductions

In attendance were Mayor Len Carey, Town Clerk Andrea Marcavitch, Emily Alvarez, Emily Ryan, and Joe Thompson, and Carol Weese. Task Force members Kelly Hilovsky, David Tully, and Carol Weese were excused and unable to attend. Several members of the public also attended portions of the forum.

2. Approve notes from 1/12/21 Meeting

Notes from the 1/12 meeting were approved without objection.

3. Background: How did we get here?

Mayor Carey and Joe Thompson described the history of University Park's transit and paratransit programs. Joe Thompson described the process the Transit Task Force followed reviewing the program as directed by the Town Council. For more information on the Transit Task Force's activities, see the agendas and notes posted on the Town's agenda center, here: <https://www.upmd.org/agendacenter>

4. Description of Transit Options

Task force member Emily Alvarez, Emily Ryan, and Joe Thompson described the transit options likely to be presented in a draft report to the Town Council on 3/15/21. See Appendix A for the options presented at the public forum.

5. Public Comment and Discussion

Several members of the public attended the task force public forum and provided the following comments (summarized and paraphrased):

- There was much appreciation that the task force recognized qualitative benefits such as social and option benefits.

- Public comments supported the idea that paratransit is a core value of the town.
- The use of the words "equity" and "subsidy" in the options matrix generated discussion, with one member of the public noting the reliance of low income residents on public transportation and another noting that all public transportation is a subsidy and is not self-sufficient.
- One member of the public asked why a rideshare like GoGoGrandparent is better than signing up with MetroAccess or a different car service.
- There were some concerns raised that Helping Hands University Park is a volunteer organization and therefore its ability to manage a task of this magnitude depends on the quality and availability of volunteers. One way to address this in the report is to clarify that HHUP is a "committee of the town," receiving town funds and supported by town personnel.
- Meeting participants cautioned that returning to a smaller bus or van from the current fully accessible CDL models could pose an Americans with Disabilities Act compliance issue if a smaller bus doesn't have a wheelchair lift, even if that service is infrequently used now.
- One member of the public mentioned that they did not like the option that would require ID to ride the bus, and other participants agreed with this statement.
- One person mentioned that if UP were to charge a fee to ride the bus that it would have to be cheaper than parking at the Metro (\$5/day).
- Public comments emphasized that the Town bus service is an important amenity for UP residents, regardless of individual household use of the bus.
- Post-pandemic ridership is unknown, although it can be assumed to be less than ridership before the pandemic.
- To review these comment summaries and many others, see video of the transit task force public forum at [www.upmd.org/publicforums](http://www.upmd.org/publicforums).

## Appendix A: University Park Transit Options Matrix for Public Forum

Blue text = things we can measure / calculate

Orange text = things we may need to better understand (interviews, maybe a survey)

Option		Strengths	Limitations
A	Status Quo (Bus Transit and Paratransit)	Inertia, environmental benefits, amenity value, option value, social value	Very expensive - low ridership, Limits other budget priorities, equity - subsidies only go to limited populations, large administrative burden on small government, pandemic effect makes limitations worse, limited available workforce (CDL, irregular hours)
A1	Status Quo with User Fee	Budget revenue	Likely not possible to charge high enough user fee to fully offset program, additional administrative burden.
A2	Status Quo with Reduced Service (Fewer Transit Stops, No Evening Service)	Modest cost reduction	Inconvenience to transit users
A3	Status Quo with Extra Bus in Evening Transit Rotation	Convenience for transit users	Increased mileage and cost, availability of drivers
A4	Status Quo with Alternating PG Plaza and CP Transit Stops (or more flexible destinations?)	Convenience for transit users	Increased town administrative burden, increased mileage and cost
A5	Status Quo with Transit Stop at CP, Not PG Plaza	Connection with Purple Line	Additional mileage and cost.
A6	Status Quo with Transit GPS Tracking	Convenience for transit users	Cost for GPS hardware and maintenance, increased administrative burden
A7	Status Quo with Transit ID Check	Eliminates free riders	increased administrative burden
A8	Status Quo with Transit Reservation System	Certainty about transit users and schedule	increased administrative burden
A9	Status Quo with PG County Partnership on Gas and Maintenance	Operations and maintenance savings	Maintenance timing not in town control, have to drive slightly further to gas station
A10	Status Quo with Electric Non-cdl buses	Environmental benefits, revenue from selling old buses	Need to purchase electric buses, increased maintenance costs
A11	Status Quo with Expanded Service to CHE and CP Residents for Fee	Increased revenue	Additional mileage and cost. Increased administrative burden
B	Bus Transit, HHUP Managed Contract/Rideshare Paratransit	lower town administrative burden, some budget savings, maintains amenity, option, and social values	high budget cost, low ridership, ignores pandemic effect, limited available workforce (CDL, irregular hours)
C	Contractor Managed Transit and Paratransit	Lower day to day administrative burden on town, can sell buses, reduced O and M costs, maintains social and amenity values, potential budget savings	Decreased environmental benefits? Loss of option value, Less control over day to day operations and communications. budget savings?, Lost social value, Lost leverage over contract cost increases, does not recognize pandemic effect
D	No Transit, HHUP Managed Contract Paratransit	Budget savings, low administrative burden on town, pandemic effect, aligns well with HHUP priority; more practical for para transit users (may increase ridership)	lose environmental benefits and amenity and option and social values
E	Smaller Bus (No CDL) Transit, HHUP Managed Contract Rideshare Paratransit	modest budget savings; can sell buses; maintains amenity (partial), option, and social values; environmental benefits; more practical for para transit users (may increase ridership)	high admin burden on town, low ridership, pandemic effect, need to purchase van, HHUP continuity if performing town function,
F	Smaller Bus (No CDL) Transit and Paratransit	Some budget savings no CDL; environmental benefits, amenity value (partial), option value, social value; can sell buses	Still Very expensive, Crowds out other priorities, subsidies only go to limited populations, large administrative burden on small government, low ridership, ignores pandemic effect; need to purchase van