



Traffic Engineering Division

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Date: February 3, 2011
To: Transit and Parking Commission Members
From: Traffic Engineering
Subject: Additional Bus Parking for Intercity Buses/Removal of Meters – Memorial Union, Langdon Street

OVERVIEW

UW Transportation Services staff contacted Traffic Engineering in early January 2011 informing us that Greyhound would begin providing service (10 buses daily) at the Memorial Union beginning on January 17, 2011. UW Transportation staff was concerned that the additional buses would contribute to existing problems related with intercity buses already serving the Memorial Union (e.g. buses double-parking and blocking crosswalks) and they wanted the City to help remedy this issue as Langdon Street is in the City's right-of-way. Shortly thereafter, Traffic Engineering was contacted by Memorial Union staff, Badger Bus and Van Galder Coaches management; each concerned that addition Greyhound services on Langdon Street would result in congestion and gridlock on Langdon Street.

Traffic Engineering met with City Attorney staff to determine legal options for regulating intercity buses usage of city street curb space. The City Attorney Office found that the City does have certain regulatory powers over intercity buses and traffic safety issues in an August 2010 legal finding regarding intercity buses. At this meeting, the assistant city attorney further explained that the City could change traffic regulations (parking signs) at this location to maintain safety; however, it would be legally problematic to prohibit a specific intercity bus carrier from using a particular curb space.

After receiving this advice from the City Attorney's office, Traffic Engineering found that the best way to help remedy this problem in the short-term would be to maximize the usage of curb space in front of the Memorial Union—hopefully reducing buses double-parking and parking in the crosswalk and the associated danger to pedestrians. Four 15-minute intercity bus spaces were installed on Langdon Street (see plan) on January 18th.

Unfortunately, this new plan resulted in the removal of six motorcycle and two automobile parking meters and loss of Parking Utility revenue. However, Traffic Engineering felt that increasing bus parking capacity clearly made this section of Langdon safer for pedestrians and motorists.

Traffic Engineering considers the new Bus Parking on Langdon a trial and is still researching alternatives to intercity bus congestion issues.