FTA RESEARCH
FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION

REPORT SUMMARY

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Transit Administration

Mobility Enhancements on a Multi-Nodal Urban Campus

Background

Nearly 74,000 trips per day are made by students, faculty, staff, visitors and patients to and from the University of Mexico's (UNM) three campuses and the nearby Central New Mexico Community College (CNM). The area is Albuquerque's largest activity center and traffic generator and includes academic centers, a hospital complex, athletic venues, and a science and technology park.

Two separate UNM transit operations provide no-cost shuttle services for university students, faculty, and staff. UNM Parking and Transportation Services (PATS) operates shuttles internal to the Main Campus and to remote parking areas on the North and South campuses. The UNM Hospital (UNMH) shuttle serves hospital staff, visitors and patients from remote parking lots to the Hospital or other nearby UNMH medical service locations. The two UNM shuttle operations are separate and unique systems, including their administrative, planning, and operating environments. CNM provides some free parking for its students but does not operate any shuttles of its own.

Objectives

The purpose of this study was to identify successful Travel Demand Management (TDM) strategies and programs at several multi-nodal urban universities that could be implemented at UNM to improve transit operations and increase alternative mode utilization. The project also examined mobility enhancements (primarily transit) and alternatives for multi-modal utilization and multi-nodal coordination of both internal transit service at UNM and that provided by Albuquerque's ABQ Ride system.

Findings and Conclusions

A wide range of transportation options were identified in the seven multi-nodal campus case studies which were examined. However, it was difficult to assess strategies and their impact on programs and operations because much depends on the institutional commitment to sustainability efforts, the campus setting, the campus location, student density, and the level of institutional financial support for transportation programs.

Connectivity among campuses is a common issue among multi-nodal campuses. Significant challenges emerge for campus transportation planners to not only provide their own services across extended areas but to also coordinate their services with other metropolitan or regional transportation operators. The literature review yielded little information on the interaction of various modes such as walking, bicycling, transit, and auto, particularly for those campuses characterized as having more than one geographic location.

Benefits

Transportation services are essential to a university's quality of life, environmental values, and its ability to attract new students, faculty, staff, and to encourage the community's interaction with its features, services, and events. Successful implementation of TDM measures helps UNM to address its sustainability goals. A merged, unified, connected shuttle system could enhance UNM services through greater administrative and service efficiencies and enhanced connectivity among its campuses. Stable funding of UNM transportation services would enable UNM to sustain and enhance current services and fund much-needed vehicle replacement goals.

Project Information

FTA Report No. 0041

This research was conducted by Geri Knoebel, James Brogan, and Jerome Hall of the Alliance for Transportation Research Institute at University of New Mexico. For more information, contact FTA Program Specialist Charlene Wilder at (202) 366-1077, Charlene.Wilder@dot.gov. All FTA research reports can be found at **www.fta.dot.gov/research**.