

PROBLEMS WITH PARKING

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Reporter**

Even if one doesn't bring a car anywhere near campus in the run of the day, I think it's a fair assumption that every UPEI student has at least heard that the campus has parking problems. We hear all about how it's nearly impossible to find a space during any regular hours, and hear the horror stories of having to park all the way in the parking lot of the Farmer's Market and other such locations. It's occasionally seen that the security force is incompetent when it comes to such issues, but what is the real scenario?

Recently UPEI had a consultant come in and look at the parking situation. The look included all aspects of parking management, the condition of the lot surfaces, the number of spots

there are per individual users, as well relevant infrastructure such as lights and, hopefully not so much at this time of year, such issues as snow removal. Overall, the report was pretty positive. There was nothing reported to be below standard. One of the only major issues reported was that if anything the university needs more barrier-free "blue" spaces. In fact, if anything, there may be

more spots than are called for.

Upon hearing such a report, the average user of campus parking is probably likely to raise a questioning eyebrow. That certainly wouldn't seem to be the case. Anyone will report that getting a spot beyond the hour of 10 AM is a difficult chore, and a solution certainly wouldn't be to all arrive an hour earlier, as that would merely

ribly consistent in terms of where to relocate parking spaces. So the problem may not be so much that there aren't enough spaces, but rather that they're not properly or conveniently placed. There is of course the factor that almost everyone wants that parking space that is close to the building they have class in.

In terms of paying for parking (a major complaint), Veale points out that to resurface a medium-sized lot can cost up to \$60,000--a lot of money, especially when compared to the cuts the university has sustained. The new MacLauchlan Arena parking lot has about 450 spaces, which is more than the old parking lot E (bulldozed to make way for the arena) ever offered. The hope is that the difference in peak hours between the university and the arena will allow ample availability to students.

With the construction of new buildings and repairs to existing ones that are going to occur over the next few years, there will be new parking. Though this doesn't offer much day to day now, it's still nice to hear. A new lot will be developed with the new residence, and more parking will be added on the north side of Blanchard hall. As the campus continues to grow, so will the demand for parking. This is partly due to the fact that majority of students live off campus, and thus bring their vehicles to campus for the day.

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make the problem occur earlier in the day. However, according to Allen Veale, the assistant manager of parking and building security, the problem really isn't in the fact there aren't enough spaces.

A major problem is that UPEI is a university that, despite appearances, is growing at a very rapid rate. However, due to the campus location, the only way to grow is out in a peripheral fashion. As more buildings and campus areas are developed, parking keeps getting pushed further and further back along the outside. However, because only certain areas are developed at one time, this means the changes aren't ter-