

Town Hall Q & A

QUESTION: Are there any plans to add more covered bike parking to campus?

U-M has been working to respond to the campus community's interest in various types of bike parking facilities, including covered parking. In addition to a desire for covered parking at residence halls, there is a lot of interest in locating facilities near the destination of the commute as well. A number of factors are evaluated to determine best places to invest in bike parking. There are a number of factors that need to be considered when deciding where best to install covered parking. These include monitoring existing capacity and determining the need for additional parking, as well as the need for maintaining fire access lanes and service vehicle access. In many cases, it is more cost efficient to provide bike parking under existing protection and building overhangs. These and other factors are considered as Parking and Transportation Services is continually coordinating with the University Planner's Office to determine the most appropriate location for this investment.

QUESTION: Why are renovation projects not considered for LEED certification?

To support sustainable design concepts, all new construction with a budget over \$10,000,000 are required to adopt Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Silver certification. However this standard does not always apply and is not appropriate for every campus project.

There are a number of standards besides LEED which U-M meets voluntarily to increase the energy efficiency and overall sustainability of buildings on campus. One example is requiring large building projects to exceed the American Association of Heating, Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE)90.1-2007 standard by 30%.

QUESTION: Emergency ride to provide staff and faculty a way home if they've taken the bus or carpoled is a great service. However another gap which could be addressed by the university is the evening service provided by buses.

There is a local effort underway to expand the Ann Arbor Transportation Authority (AATA) into a more regionally operated transportation system. In this effort, a five year plan for service expansion has been proposed. This plan calls for expanded service hours, increased bus frequency, and adjusting routes to make source to destination trips more direct. University of Michigan employees and students can ride AATA buses for free through the "M-Ride" program.

QUESTION: How is AirRide as being promoted as another option to transport University guests to and from the airport?

AirRide is an AATA service promoted by U-M which provides a bus connection to the Detroit Metro Airport. U-M is working to further promote this service as an option for people travelling on business by adding it to the Concur travel system and website. Additionally, the Health System is promoting AirRide to patients as way to get to their appointments.

QUESTION: Many waste reduction efforts target residence halls, unions, and other larger entities within the university. How are waste management and green purchasing decisions being promoted or implemented at the department/office scale?

Procurement identifies Green Purchasing options on their website. Additionally, the Waste Reduction and Recycling office is working on a Back to Basics campaign to bring informational signage to buildings throughout campus. Staff members from this office are also always available to meet with those interested by attending staff meetings or holding a brown bag session on recycling.

Additionally, there are a few newer initiatives which seek to change the behavior within smaller scaled areas of the University. The Sustainable Lab and Sustainable Workplace programs encourage an interested individual or individuals to lead their coworkers through an exercise resulting in reduced energy use and waste based on their behaviors within that facility. The Planet Blue Ambassador program reaches out to students and staff to support a deeper understanding of the University Sustainability Goals and encourage behavioral change and leadership in sustainability.

COMMENT: The Planet Blue Ambassador program is an excellent way to educate the campus community around sustainable behavior. These ambassador programs should continue to be extended into the staff and faculty realm so that commitment so supported by students can be continued with staff and faculty.