

Memo

To: Members of the Citizen's Advisory Committee
From: Children's Hospital and Regional Medical Center
Date: October 30, 2007
Re: Status of Transportation Planning

The purpose of this memo is to provide the members of the CAC with a brief description of our progress in developing the Transportation Management Strategy that will be an integral part of Children's Major Institution Master Plan.

Children's transportation strategy is being designed to achieve three objectives:

- Minimize the number of vehicle trips generated by Children's;
- Limit the amount of parking on or near campus; and
- Provide a model of creative transportation alternatives in the context of global climate change.

CHILDREN'S RECORD

During the past five years, Children's has developed transportation programs that have steadily reduced the use of single-occupancy vehicles (SOV) by our employees, bringing that number down to 34%. Our current program includes free annual transit passes, 100% subsidy for van pools, on-site Flexcars, lockers, shower facilities and bike storage for bicycle commuters, and financial incentives for those who use alternative modes to commute to Children's. Since 2002, these measures have doubled the number of van pool riders, doubled the number of bicycle commuters, and reduced SOV trips by an average of 4% per year. As a result, Children's received the Commuter Challenge Diamond Award in 2003, and again in 2006.

STRATEGIES FOR THE FUTURE

As the hospital grows, we are planning to implement a range of innovative transportation strategies that go well beyond those currently in place:

1. Decentralize Services

Children's will bring outpatient services closer to families, and reduce future trips to campus, by building health clinics in Snohomish County, on the east side of Lake Washington, and in South King County. We have also decided to locate our rapidly growing research programs in the South Lake Union area, rather than at the hospital campus.

Status: The first of several research buildings has been completed at South Lake Union. Site selection for the outpatient clinics is well underway.

2. Provide Better Public Transit Service

Children's is working with Metro Transit to increase the level of service on the two existing bus routes that serve our campus and the surrounding community. Through a new agreement with Metro, Children's is sharing the costs of additional runs every day during peak hours for our shift changes.

Status: Expanded service on routes 25 and 75 were launched on September 24, providing 63 additional runs to our community each week.

3. Expand Shuttle Bus Service

Children's is working to extend the reach of public transit in northeast Seattle by creating a well-coordinated shuttle bus system to link Children's with major transit hubs, such as the Montlake Flyer Stop, 45th and University Avenue, the 3rd Avenue Transit corridor, the Ferry Terminal and King Street Station.

Status: The first phase of planning will focus on improvements that increase ridership among employees, medical staff, students and volunteers. During the second phase, the team will explore the viability of using shuttles to meet the needs of patients and their families and, potentially, other members of the communities surrounding our facilities. A meeting was held in early October with the University of Washington and other potential partners with the goal of coordinating our shuttle systems.

4. Create Pedestrian Safety Improvements and a "Flexbike" Program

Currently one out of every nine employees commutes to Children's by foot or on a bicycle. We intend to increase that number – and test an exciting new idea – by launching a "Flexbike" program that will make free bicycles available to our employees for trips that would otherwise require an automobile. The program will be modeled upon highly successful programs developed in European cities. Children's will be the first hospital to create such a program in the United States.

Status: Our current plan is to test the Flexbike concept at our South Lake Union Research Center and to implement the program at the hospital as soon as possible!

5. Enhance Financial Incentives

Children's is exploring its current mix of parking charges and financial incentives to determine how they could be enhanced to help meet the goals we have established.

Status: This work will be carried out in concert with the strategies listed above.

In addition to the strategies listed above, Children's is continuing to pursue potential partnerships with Sound Transit and Community Transit to develop remote park and ride lots, and exploring opportunities to create housing near the hospital for our employees and for the families of patients who require extended stays at Children's. We will provide the CAC with regular updates about these efforts as the work progresses.

In summary, Children's is determined to create a Transportation Strategy that sets a new standard for innovation and contributes to the search for new ways to improve mobility within the region. We would welcome suggestions from members of the CAC about additional ideas we should explore, and we look forward to updating you regularly on our progress.