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Students, PTTS adjust to new bus routes, parking

□ The new library and college of business on West campus cause less parking confusion than expected.

By **Stephanie Dube**
THE BATTALION

Students are successfully adjusting to the new bus routes and parking changes implemented this semester, A&M officials said.

Tom Williams, director of Parking, Transit and Traffic Services, said that although a few modifications may need to be made to the new bus routes, the changes are working well overall.

"There's always some confusion the first few days," Williams said, "but the buses are full, which is a good sign that students are using them."

Doug Williams, assistant director of PTTS, said the PTTS is currently reviewing the Fish Camp, Yell Practice and Old Army bus routes.

"We are gathering data to see what people want," he said. "We're exploring our options."

Tom Williams said the PTTS may alter these routes so that they stop in Parking Lot 72 rather than on the east side of Agronomy Road.

Instead of continuing to the Physical Plant and turning around there, these buses may use the parking lot to change directions, he said.

The changes are being considered because of student demand, he said. If the changes are implemented, the pavement in Lot 72 may have to be rebuilt to better accommodate the buses, Tom Williams said.

One change to the bus routes has already been established, Doug Williams said.

Originally, the Fish Camp route periodically detoured to Research Park when a student needed to be picked up there, he said. Eventually, however, the buses would pick up only one student on almost every round, he said.

"It was not prudent to continue this service because it was taking time away from the other students," Doug Williams said.

"We needed to improve the efficiency of the Fish Camp service, which was deteriorating, so we stopped picking up at Research Park."

PTTS is currently offering temporary van services to the park, he said.

In addition to bus route changes, students are also adjusting to changes in parking, Tom Williams said.

The PTTS had planned on having 500 additional spaces from the new recreation sports center parking available this semester, however, these spaces were not available because of delays in the recreation facility project, he said.

To help accommodate for this delay, the PTTS has 400 temporary spaces available in the gravel lot on the corner of Joe Routt and Olsen Road, he said.

When classes started, there were so many students attempting to use the temporary lot that many had to park on the grass, Tom Williams said.

"The lot filled and overflowed onto the grass and one student got stuck," he said. "However, many of the people parking

there did not realize they could park at Olsen Field."

Dr. Gary Trennepohl, executive associate dean of the college of business, said traffic on the west side will increase with the College of Business's new location.

"Students should allow extra time to get to the College of Business, especially the first few weeks," Trennepohl said. "There's a lot more traffic on this side of campus."

Tom Williams said that although there is a shortage of convenient, central campus parking spaces, there is not an actual shortage of parking spaces. Many of the parking spaces are on the west campus, which students may not categorize as convenient, he said.

Doug Williams said students may miss parking spaces by assuming all the spaces are taken.

"I urge students to check out all the possibilities on the parking map before they give up," he said. "They may be missing some spaces in the closer lots which may be available now that people are parking on the west campus."



Bart Mitchell/The Battalion

Senior BANA major **Chris Lovorn** drags his bike through a mud-laden parking lot on west campus Monday.



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