



New wheels

Bus Operations offers expanded services

By AMANDA SMITH
THE BATTALION

New buses, on- and off-campus routes and expanded night and weekend services are debuting this semester as part of a long-term effort to make the Texas A&M Bus Operations more user friendly, University officials said.

Gary Jackson, manager of Bus Operations, said the changes will come gradually.

"We are doing some little things the students might not notice at first," Jackson said. "The student fee is not buying the buses. Students must understand that the administration did fork over \$6 million to fund these first few buses."

Bus Operations has added 10 new buses to the aging fleet of 59 buses, which includes 33 models dating back to 1982.

Jackson said the transportation fee revenue will help purchase up to

70 new buses during the next 10 years, allowing for the retirement of older buses.

"There are about 35 buses we want to replace," Jackson said. "There are several options for purchasing new buses, including a bond issue or gradually purchasing buses."

The new buses are equipped to hold approximately 35 seated passengers and 70 standing passengers, comparable to the older model buses.

Tom Williams, director for Parking, Traffic and Transportation Services, said the amount of bus riders will be monitored this semester.

"The challenge we have is to predict ridership," Williams said. "There are going to be days when more ride the bus and days when less ride the bus. With the construction, we are really trying to encourage the bus system."

See ROUTES on page 4B.

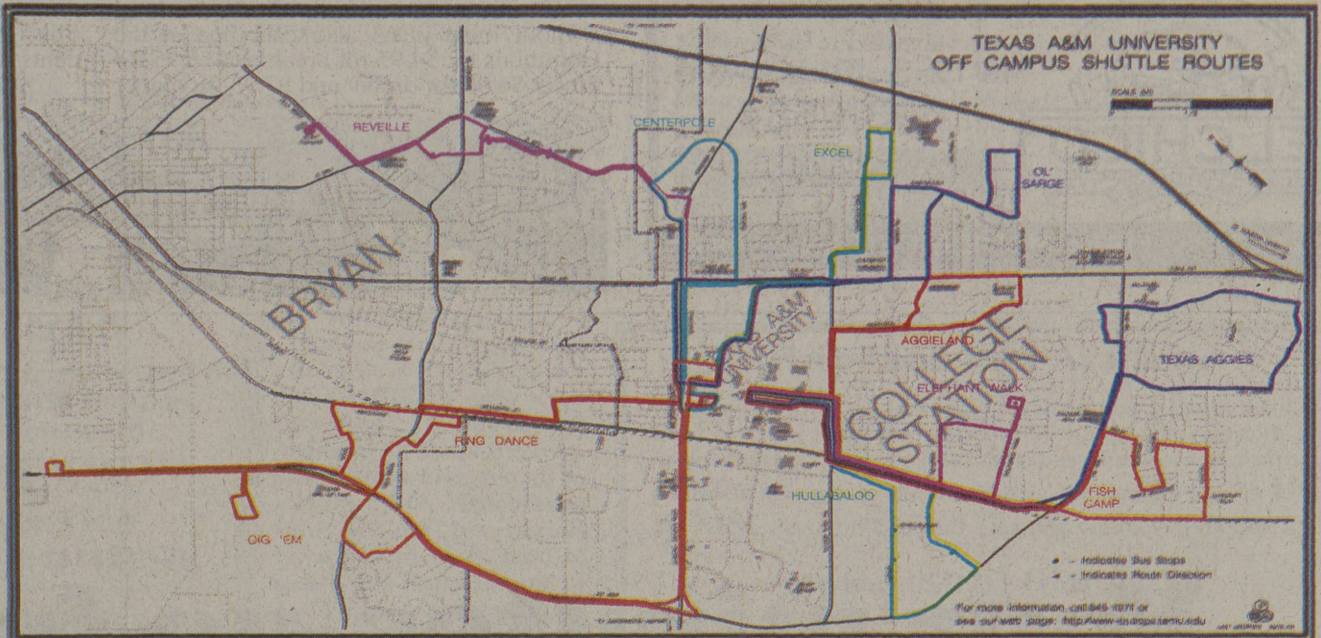
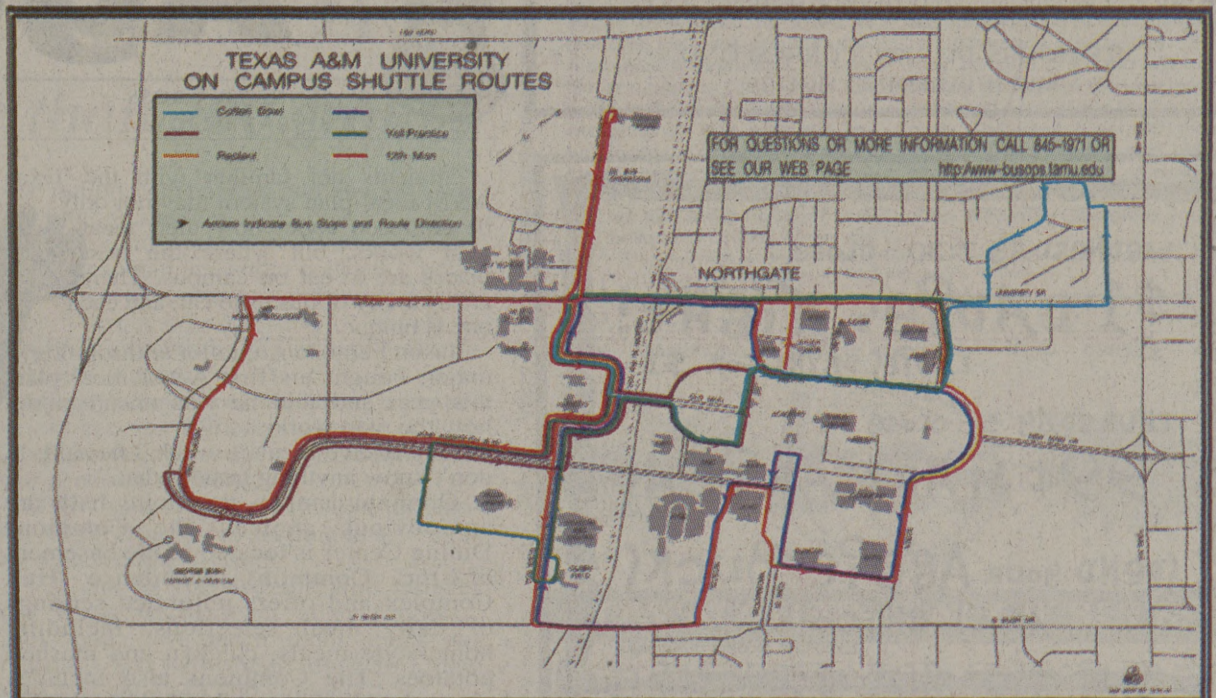


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