



"Increasing the Associated Students Motor Pool"

Proposed Motion: Approve NTE \$63,245.00 for the purchase of two AS Vehicles, one specifically for the AS Outdoor Center, being a nine passenger SUV and one specifically for AS use being a seven passenger mini-van.

Sponsor: Vice President for Business and Operations, Chelsea Ghant

Persons of Contact: Chelsea Ghant, Greg McBride, and Eric Alexander

Guest Speaker: Chelsea Ghant and Greg McBride

Date: 3/16/15

Attached Document

- 1) *Enterprise Usage Excel spreadsheet*
- 2) *AS Vehicle Review Statement*

Background & Context

"The A.S. Motor pool provides Associated Students' programs, support services, organizations, and Viking Union staff access to a variety of vehicles for outdoor recreation trips, cargo hauling, and passenger travel to meetings, conferences, and other events." (AS Vehicle Motorpool Policy) The AS Motor pool exists to provide low cost vehicles that support AS Program and Club travel needs. In order to keep the costs of travel for AS organizations low, the Associated Students subsidizes the costs of purchasing specialized vehicles that provide a specific utility to the whole organization. Demand for vehicles to support travel has been a growing concern over the years. Compared to other universities our motor pool is significantly small, and this was not always the case. Up until recently, Associated Student's Programs and Clubs also had access to a University motor pool that was managed by Facilities Management. The discontinuation of this program made the AS motor pool the only on campus alternative for AS Programs and clubs to access vehicles on campus. Other options for Programs and Clubs include utilizing Enterprise rental agency through Washington State contract or be reimbursed for using their own vehicle for approved transportation. Enterprise presents a particular challenge to the Outdoor Center. Vehicles available through this contract do not have a trailer hitch, which is necessary for pulling the Equipment Trailer, and Enterprise is tightening their policies to restrict vehicle use on gravel roads. Because of the limited options for rental vehicles and travel being a critical component to Outdoor Center Excursions Programming, the Outdoor Center Excursions reservations for vehicles receives a priority over other reservations.

The Outdoor Center has a critical need for vehicles to support their program. This is because travel is nearly always critical component to an excursion and the SUV is the only vehicle available to Excursions for pulling the equipment trailer. To accommodate this component, the Outdoor Center can reserve vehicles before other programs to ensure that they have a vehicle for their programming. This often limits the opportunities for clubs and other organizations to use AS Vehicles especially on weekends. The AS contracted with Enterprise Rental agency on a number of occasions to support travel (*See attached document*). This year The Outdoor Center's approach has been to reserve all the vehicles in advance, essentially undercutting other AS offices for any other weekend events. When conflicts do arise, or the OC offers multiple overlapping trips, they have resorted to the more expensive Enterprise Rent-A-Car option. This system has worked for OC, although not ideal. Meaning they must either decrease the amount of trips they run or come up with an alternate option for vehicle usage. There is numerous testimonial from different employees of the organization that urge for a larger motor pool. As it stands today, the AS motor pool is comprised of two vehicles (1SUV, 1minivan) and an equipment trailer. (*See attached document*)

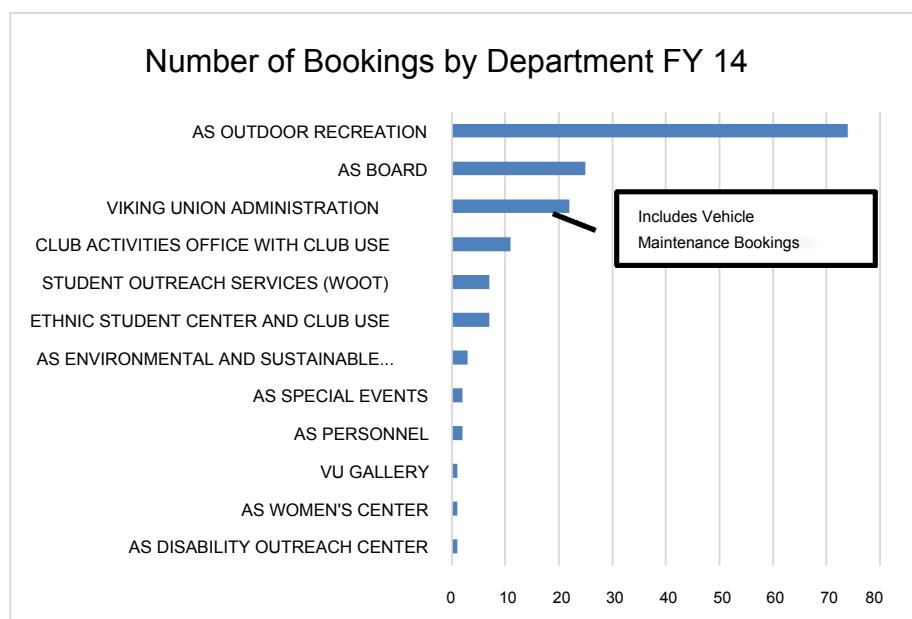
Summary of Proposal

The purpose of the AS Motor pool is to provide Associated Students programs, support services, organizations, and Viking union staff, access to vehicles they would not normally have readily access to. I am requesting that we **purchase two additional vehicles** to the current Associated Students Motor pool. I am requesting we purchase a nine passenger SUV that would be specifically for the Outdoor Center and one vehicle, seven passenger mini-van that would be specifically for the Associated Students. The **Outdoor Center are primary users of AS vehicles** and that regular travel in the back country is essential to the success of the program, **it was determined that it was necessary to supply the Outdoor Center with their own vehicle.** By ensuring the OC had regular access to a fleet of vehicles, would eliminate the monopolization of AS vehicles, and hopefully rectify the issue of students not being able to readily access the AS motor pool.

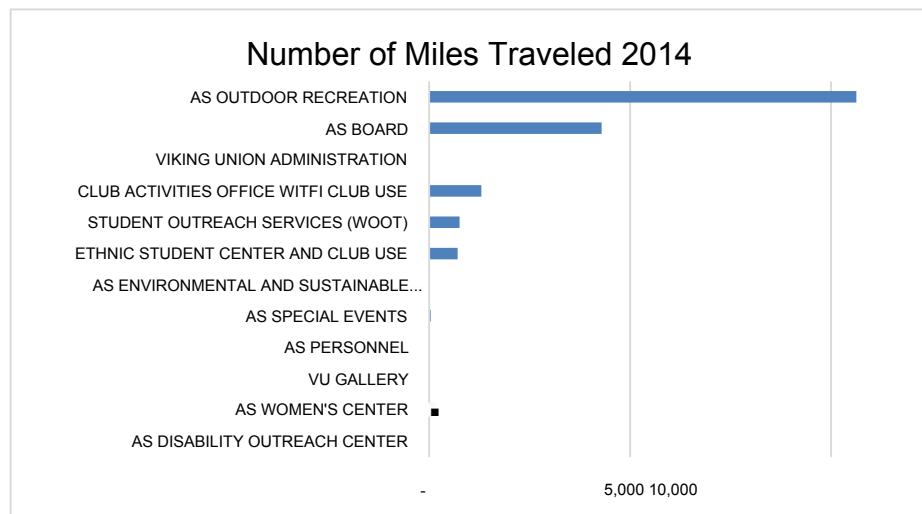
Vehicle usage has been steadily increasing from year to year. In 2011 OC Excursions spent a total of \$3,467.47 on vehicles and travel related experience, this increased to \$5,147.77 in 2012, and \$5,609.06 in 2013. This year is already on track to exceed all of these numbers, at \$3,373 through the end of January. This increase in usage is reflected in the OC's increased number of excursions; with 26 planned through the end of winter alone, 2 shy of the yearly total of 28 from last year. This spring the OC has planned their busiest quarter yet with 14 excursions and clinics, totaling to 40 trips for the year, an increase of over 40 percent from last year. These increases are a direct response to their high demand, with many trips filling up at the beginning of the quarter resulting in full waitlists and more who turn away. Making these trips possible with just the two AS vehicles and trailers poses an obvious challenge.

The graphs to the left show the numbers of bookings and miles that were billed to users of AS Vehicles for fiscal year 2014. Each booking corresponds to a vehicle use, often a whole day. The number of miles show the distance groups are traveling when vehicles are being used. A low number of miles indicates that a particular program is making short in town trips.

Clearly the Outdoor Recreation Programs, primarily Outdoor Center excursions, uses more vehicles and travels much further than any user group. In addition frequently the Outdoor Center excursions are using weekend dates for their programmatic travel.



If this proposal is approved the process for purchasing new vehicles will be facilitated by Western's Purchasing Department. They will determine the best option for purchasing vehicles from either local dealers or through a state contract depending on the required options for each vehicle. For instance, a state contract may be best for purchasing an SUV for the OC because state contract vehicle often have durable options like vinyl flooring not available to consumers. The timeline from approval to receiving new vehicles will be depend on the vendors and availability.



Upon receiving a new vehicle, accounts for maintenance and vehicle fuel cards will need to be set up with the university. At this time existing accounts for the SUV can be transferred to OC funding strings. The Outdoor Center will need to allocate funds for vehicle maintenance and vehicle fuel in their upcoming budget. This should be a small savings to the operating budget as expense for renting AS vehicles on a yearly basis should cover the operating costs of the two vehicles assuming the vehicle usage is comparable to previous years. The new SUV, the existing SUV and the equipment trailer would then be managed by the Outdoor Center similar to other pieces of programmatic equipment.

Fiscal Impacts

As of today there is \$63,245.00 designated dollars in vehicle replacement reserves and there is \$16,971.15 in vehicle reserve, for repair and replacement (See *attached document for vehicle costs*) the hope is to purchase two additional vehicles one specifically for the Outdoor Center and one specifically for the Associated Students use. We have enough dollars in our reserve account to purchase two additional vehicles and still have enough dollars to cover unforeseen vehicle expenses.

Rationale

I'd like to expand the motor pool to support more programmatic needs, and to elevate stress of reserving vehicles a conflict felt by multiple offices. As we continue to assess the impact of carrying a motor pool for the AS (excluding the Outdoor Center) we will work to determine the scope, need, and cost/benefit of this venture. Questions to consider include: Who should have access to the AS motor pool? How large of a motor pool is appropriate? What is the cost/benefit analysis for motor pool vs. utilizing our rental contract with Enterprise? These and other questions will be examined as we continue to determine the best and most responsible management of AS vehicles. As for now, the first step is to have an adequate motor pool fleet that meets the needs of students.