

The Bus Stops Here!



PARKING & TRANSPORTATION NEWS

Big Thank You to ASUNM!

UNM Parking and Transportation Services (PATS) is adding four new buses to its transportation fleet. Two of the buses are already in operation, with two more expected to arrive any day. The two newest buses are being funded by state legislature dollars (\$265,000) which were allocated after the ASUNM Lobby Committee lobbied for them at the State Legislature through the UNM Office of Government and Community Relations.

“We heard the need from students,” said ASUNM President Ashley Fate. “It made sense that it would be an initiative we would take on.”

The new buses are critical to providing the needed access to the UNM campus – the core mission of the PATS operation.

“It is exciting to be able to partner with the students on campus in order to help meet their parking and transportation needs,” said Cynthia Martin, PATS Program Planning Manager. “We want to give a big shout out to Ashley Fate and all the ASUNM student lobbyists who helped convince the State to fund new buses. I’m not sure we could have done it without their valuable efforts. The new buses enable us to provide the best service we can for our 2.7 million rides a year transportation operation.”

Using biodiesel fuel, the new vehicles average between 6 to 12 miles-per-gallon – an unimpressive-looking figure, until the single-shift and stop-start nature of shuttle operations is considered.

“Biodiesel was an obvious choice” said Alexander Aller, PATS Transportation Manager. “Right now, 100% of our large shuttles are alternatively fueled with either biodiesel or CNG. Although we have a small fleet, we are pleased to contribute to efforts that reduce carbon emissions, dependence on foreign oil, and the pace of global warming.”

The reception to the new vehicles has been favorable

around campus. All four of the buses are 49-passenger Thomas Built ‘Safe-T-Liners’ painted with the distinctive UNM design.

“The new buses have pretty much blended in seamlessly with the rest of the fleet,” said Aller.

PATS’ ongoing drive for sustainability drove the selection of the new buses as biodiesel engines are cleaner than their predecessors.

“We could have continued maintaining our existing fleet,” Aller said, “but older vehicles are far less reliable and more expensive to operate and maintain. Plus, the publicized overall environmental footprint associated with biodiesel is notably smaller than fossil fuel.”

As part of PATS’ long-term strategy, which includes the acquisition, use, preventative care and maintenance of cleaner transportation technologies, the new buses are expected to serve the UNM community for the next 10 to 15 years.

“Operating safely, efficiently, and effectively with minimal energy usage is at the top of our agenda,” said Aller.

