

2011–2012 NIGHTRIDE SHUTTLES ANNUAL REPORT

October 26, 2012

NightRide Shuttle Costs 2011–2012 including comprehensive program costs and hourly vendor charges

	Grayline* FY 2010-11	SP Plus FY 2011-12	% inc/dec
Cost per FY	\$175,442.12	\$197,260.30	12 ▲
Cost per passenger	\$8.28	\$4.79	42 ▼
Cost per operating hour	\$65.31	\$71.34	9 ▲

*mid-year price adjustment: 6 mos. At \$54.99/hour & 4 mos. At \$63.04/hour

INTRODUCTION

The University of Washington's NightRide shuttle service started in 1991 to help make walking to campus a more attractive choice by addressing student concerns about safety during the evening walk home.

The NightRide shuttles provide a safe and easy way for U-PASS members to get home at night within a one mile radius of central campus. The shuttles, which are operated by a third-party vendor, are funded through UW's U-PASS program with student fees comprising 80%, and faculty/staff fees accounting for the remaining 20%. The 2011 implementation of the Universal U-PASS enabled all UW students to have easy access to the NightRide shuttles and eliminated the need for ticket sales to non-U-PASS holders. UW students comprise the vast majority of ridership.

The NightRide program is governed by the Universal Student U-PASS Advisory Board and UW's Transportation Services department oversees the NightRide shuttles contract and operations. Hours of operation are 8 p.m. – 12:05 a.m. Monday through Friday during fall, winter and spring quarters. The service does not operate during the summer quarter or academic breaks.

2011-2012 REVIEW

The NightRide shuttle program experienced some significant changes in 2011–2012. Most notable was the acquisition of a new vendor, SP Plus Transportation, to operate the NightRide shuttles. SP Plus Transportation is a subsidiary of the national company Standard Parking whose local affiliate was awarded the NightRide contract after a competitive bid process. SP Plus assumed operation of the NightRide shuttles contract in September, 2011.

SP Plus Transportation brought some new and improved amenities to the NightRide program such as:

- A GPS tracking system that allows customers to track shuttle locations online
- Complimentary Wi-Fi on board each shuttle
- A new, uniform fleet of shuttle vehicles
- Improved vehicle signage
- Streamlined handling of lost and found articles

NightRide shuttles experienced a sharp rise in ridership in 2011–2012 from the previous two academic years – 94% increase from FY 11 and 58% increase from FY 10. It is thought that part of the reason for the increase is due to improved service from the new shuttles vendor, SP Plus.

A 2011 customer survey yielded a 98% satisfaction rate among NightRide customers. The reliability and safety of the NightRide shuttle is very high with no reported missed runs and only one minor vehicle accident in 2011-12.

Operationally, all west zone NightRide shuttles were aligned to operate using the same routing as the east zone shuttles beginning spring quarter, 2012. This service change helped alleviate overcrowding aboard east zone shuttles departing from the IMA facility where ridership demand is highest.

Predictably, NightRide ridership is highest during the winter months when weather is worst and hours of daylight are shortest.

LOOKING FORWARD: 2012–2013

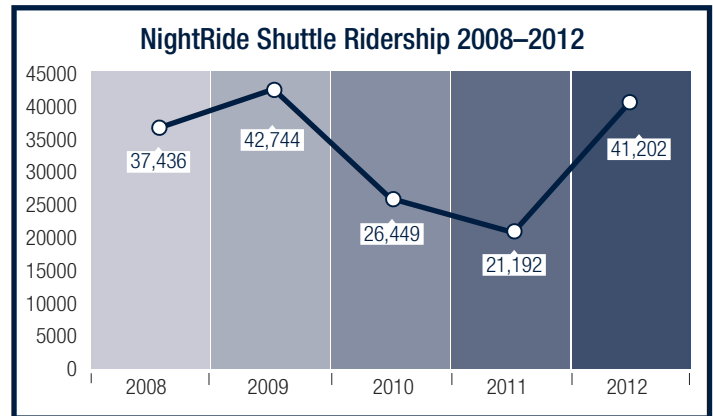
Goals for the NightRide shuttle in 2012–13 include:

- A customer survey in 2013 that continues to yield a satisfaction rate of 98% or greater
- Continued excellent service reliability and safety with no missed runs or accidents
- Improved coordination between NightRide and Nightwalk programs resulting in increased ridership

We look for continued improvements to the NightRide program in 2012–2013. A collaborative Lean project between the NightRide shuttles and the University of Washington Police Department's Nightwalk program will result in increased alignment between the two services. For NightRide, this will result in a change in its days of operation – the program shifted to a Monday through Friday schedule beginning fall quarter, 2012 instead of the previous Sunday through Thursday schedule. It is projected that ridership will be higher on Friday nights than on Sundays, which has traditionally experienced lower ridership than weeknights.

In addition to improved service alignment, other goals of the Lean project collaboration with UWPD include:

- Increased Nightwalk security escorts to NightRide shuttle stops
- Reduced customer confusion between the two programs
- Increased outreach efforts to UW students. Partnerships with UW libraries, Housing and Food Services and UW media resources will help promote the NightRide shuttle service to the UW community.



NightRide Shuttle Ridership 2011–2012

	East Zone	West Zone	Monthly Totals	# Days per Month	Avg. Riders per Day
September	184	65	249	2	125
October	3,334	1,828	5,162	22	235
November	4,138	2,465	6,603	21	314
December	1,749	1,349	3,098	11	282
January	3,634	1,716	5,350	19	282
February	4,135	2,040	6,175	20	308
March	2,258	1,336	3,594	15	240
April	2,889	2,437	5,326	22	242
May	2,440	2,606	5,046	21	240
June	254	345	599	5	120
Totals	25,015	16,187	41,202		

