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NEWS

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FROM HITCHING RACKS TO PARKING METERS ON UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA CAMPUS

MISSOULA---

Would you believe it? From hitching racks in 1898 to parking meters in 1969.

University of Montana physical plant director, J.A. Parker, announced this week that meters will be installed in the parking lot now in the final stages of construction on the east side of the new University Center.

Unlike the early facilities which arrested traffic for long periods of time while horse owners attended classes, the meter installation is designed to stimulate parking turnover to enable all motorists an opportunity to find convenient space near the Center.

With capacity of 167 vehicles, the completed lot will have a blacktop surface, a surrounding cement curbing, and landscaping of trees and shrubbery both on the perimeter of the lot and in planters within the parking area. Two convenient entrances on the north side of the lot provide access from the peripheral drive which borders the east side of the campus and extends north from E. Beckwith Ave. to the one-way couplet on Fifth and Sixth avenues.

Non-metered parking will continue to be available in areas adjacent to the Center lot, Parker pointed out.

Construction of the new lot will be completed in mid-October. The meter installation, believed to be the first by a Montana University System unit, is scheduled for early January to coincide with the planned opening of the Center. Funding of the program will be by lease purchase agreement based on meter revenues.

Parker also reported the completion of the initial phase of construction work on walks across the campus oval.

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The walks extend east-west and north-south to the oval perimeter and are raised to enable drainage. A blacktop covering over a rock base will provide support for a future brick application to match the walk surface in front of the Lodge. A flower bed was recently installed at the intersection of the walks in the center of the oval.

Construction on the walks, including the brick application, will be resumed when weather permits in the spring. Future work also will include the placement of sod along the walks to produce a more gradual slope in the grade for drainage.

Parker said the new walks will support emergency and service vehicles as well as heavy pedestrian traffic, and should help alleviate maintenance work involving the repair of oval grass and the removal of mud tracked into campus buildings.

He added the walk construction is part of the comprehensive campus plan which has been approved by both campus and alumni publics.

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