

What is Going on in the GHS parking lot?

By Lilly Phillips and Kamryn Casebeer

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If you know, you know.

The Golden High School parking lot has been a topic of conversation in recent weeks with the new school year starting and if you're someone who drives to and from school every day, you might understand why. It can take up to 30 minutes just to get out of the parking lot at the end of the day. Students have expressed annoyance about the price of parking passes, and many students don't even get a pass. And we were wondering, what can we do about this? Is there even a solution at all? So, we interviewed our very well known Community Liaison, Mitch, about this topic.

The first thing that we talked to Mitch about was the prices of the parking passes here at Golden, in which he told us that the Jeffco district sets the price of \$125, and that they have no control over the prices. But, GHS does set the price of the tickets that we receive, which are \$20. He told us that, "Golden gets the money from the tickets, it normally goes into the security budget which goes to the security cameras, radios, the golf cart and repairs for that." Some people have suggested the idea of simply expanding the parking lot which would help with supplying more parking spots, but with the surroundings of our school, it's hard to do that. We have a creek on one side of our campus, which means we can't expand it on that side. It would also become a flood hazard for the surrounding neighborhood if we filled the creek. "The trees are beautiful, the courtyard has been here since the old school, so everything has been planned here with a purpose." Mitch stated.

Unfortunately, our parking lot is too small to provide a spot or parking pass to everyone, which is what causes people to park here without a parking pass, or even park in the grass or on a sidewalk. This ends up being a problem when these students get ticketed, and as much as kids don't like being ticketed, Mitch and the security guards don't enjoy it either. "We also like when you're here at school so there's that happy balance." Even though Mitch has to ticket cars sometimes, his main priority is just having us all at school.

However, fortunately for the people who didn't get parking passes, Mitch sent an email which maps out other places students can park near the school. And even though not everyone can get a pass, the school tries to accommodate students as much as possible. He talked about multiple resources such as public transportation like the RTD bus stop right in front of our school, Jeffco school buses, and carpooling with your peers. If you didn't get a pass this year or aren't driving, the



school is going to continue the lottery in the following years. Mitch stated that, “This was the first year that we did the lottery, everyone [juniors and seniors] followed directions and filled out the form by 3:15 on the day that it was due, all the seniors were guaranteed a spot and all the juniors



were guaranteed the lottery. Around the first 140 people got high school spots, the next 40 people got parking on 24th street.”

Mitch told us that the school tries to never have to tow any cars, but they unfortunately have to give out tickets and occasionally boot cars. “We’ve towed one car in like 10 years.” Every year, we get more freshmen in the school and these past few years the freshmen classes have gotten exceedingly big, so as these

students turn 16 and start driving, there's not enough space in the parking lot for everyone. This is why it is important to follow the rules that GHS has set in place in order to keep it fair for the students who got a pass. When sophomore’s, and even juniors start driving and couldn’t get a pass, they still want to park at school so that they can go to lunch with their friends, and leave school for things like sports and work without getting picked up by their parents, which is understandable, but it then becomes a problem because there isn’t enough parking space for everyone, even the students with passes.

“I think people love living in Golden,” is what Mitch says when asked about how the school became this populated. As much as we love Golden, the amount of students continues to rise and it becomes a problem not only for students, but for our teachers and administration as well. We asked Mitch about how the amount of parking tickets that go out become less and less as the school year goes on, and he said, “Security has a hard job because there's only three of them. They're in charge of lots of things and in an ideal world, we'd have someone just in charge of parking all the time, but that's not the case. It's an issue we fight every day so they get kind of over it too, because it's the same kids, same people just not following the rules, which becomes frustrating.” In the end, there's not much that can be done to make the parking lot less of an inconvenience, besides following the rules.

The student parking lot is not the only problem here right now because our staff is currently going through the same problem.

According to Principal Graham, there are 73 parking spots available in the staff parking lot for our



staff, four handicapped spots, and two for the STRIDE clinic nurses. Mitch told us that we have around 117 staff members at GHS, therefore, 38 staff members that don't have parking spots. This leads to our teachers and administrators parking on the grass behind the school, and in the student parking lot, which leads to our parking situation.