

MEMORANDUM

To: Mr. Eric Anderson

From: Parking Management Advisory Task Force
Steph Farber, Co-Chair
Rollie Herman, Co-Chair
Judi Hyman, Co-Chair

Date: June 14, 2011

Re: Parking Management Recommendations #7



The Parking Management Advisory Task Force [PMATF] continues to meet semi-monthly, including one meeting a month with a public comment period. Since the paystations have "gone live" on September 20th, 2010 we continue to get feedback about the system and ideas on tweaks to the system that different interest groups would like to see.

The PMATF was asked to focus on creating a system that would be consistent with the guiding principles of the previous stakeholder group. This means a system that:

- Prioritizes the customer/client/visitor as the desired on-street parker,
- Ensures 15 percent vacancy of on-street stalls, and
- Is easy to understand for visitors and others new to the system.

The resulting parking system is intended to be a dynamic system that can respond to changing circumstances in downtown Tacoma over the years. With this in mind, the system will be flexible so that adjustments can be made to the configuration to ensure a long-term focus on best serving customers, clients and visitors to Tacoma.

This year, the PMATF has seen the addition of four new members to round out the eleven-member task force. Over the past few months, the task force has been reviewing issues surrounding Saturday parking and the existing on-street permit system. It is important to remember that while the paystations went live in September, citations were very limited until January. With the change to full enforcement in January, the task force has focused on data and changes since then. As part of this review, the task force has the following recommendations:

No New On-Street Permits Types:

During the preparation for the rollout, the task force evaluated a variety of on-street permit types. As part of the memo provided to you on August 24, 2010, the task force recommended three types of on-street permits be used to help users navigate the system:

- All Day Permits
- Special Event/Barricade Permit
- Delivery/Courier Permit (implemented as an Overtime Permit)

As part of this discussion, the task force evaluated and recommended against creating the following permit types:

- Public/Government Vehicle Permits
- Carpool/Vanpool Permits
- Residential Permits in the paystation area

Following the implementation of the paystations on September 20, 2010, the task force received some requests from residents to create a residential permit within the paystation area. One of the stated purposes was to minimize the need for residents to “feed the meter” on the weekend, when there was less demand for parking in parts of downtown. As you are aware, many of these concerns were resolved when you implemented the task force’s November 8, 2010 recommendation to shift to an all day option for Saturdays.

Unfortunately, there are still concerns among residents who want greater flexibility for them within the system. To address these concerns, the task force considered a variety of options, including an on-street restricted/residential zone permit [RPZ]. A white paper prepared by Bluewater Consulting considered the way RPZs had been implemented in the following cities:

- Albuquerque
- Atlanta
- Boise
- Boulder
- Denver
- Portland
- Sacramento
- Salt Lake City
- San Francisco
- Seattle
- Vancouver, BC
- Vancouver, WA

None of these cities had implemented RPZs in a mixed use zone or in their downtown cores. The task force feels that this data helps support the idea that the downtown core should prioritize the customer, client and visitor parkers for its on-street system. None of the considered on-street permits would further this guiding principle. In addition, should residences be provided on-street within the downtown core, it would likely crowd out all other users due to the sheer number of people living downtown.

The task force recommends that the City maintain the limited types of on-street permits issued and continue to look for other solutions to residential parking.

Create a Pilot “Off-Off Permit”:

In considering the challenges of residents within the existing on-street parking system, the task force recognized the need to provide some solution for residents who may not have sufficient parking for their vehicles.

One of the few options available to current residents is to purchase space in an off-street facility. However, the primary time that residents need the space is when the off-street facilities are at their lowest occupancies. Despite this, the only pricing structure is based on 24-hour garage usage – about \$130 per month.

To remedy this, the task force recommends piloting an off-peak, off-street permit type, an “Off-Off Permit.” This permit would allow the purchaser to park in reserved spaces in a specified off-street facility during non-peak hours. If the parker chose to leave their car there during the peak hours they would simply be billed at an appropriate rate. City staff has suggested integrating this permit with the existing Republic garage permits to avoid creating an additional process and staff associated staff demands. Some key components to the permit would be as follows:

- Conveniently located reserved stalls (first floor or similar)

- Permit includes parking 4PM-8AM, Monday-Friday; All Day Saturdays, Sundays & Holidays
- Aggressively priced below the on-street cost of parking during Off-Off Permit hours (\$20-35?)
- If a car with an Off-Off permit is left during peak hours a remittance envelope should be left for the owner with billing at garage daily rate or below
- Quarterly reporting of permit purchases & usage

This permit is designed to address the residents' primary time needs by providing a secure location convenient to their residences. While the permit is designed around the residents' needs, it is important to note that the permit is not limited to only residents, but anyone who feels they need the garage space during similar hours.

Create Pilot for Saturday Garage Coupons:

The task force also undertook a review of Saturday occupancy data from this spring. While it is clear there are some areas of downtown with less than the desired 15 percent vacancy, there were other areas with significantly greater vacancies as well. The task force considered dividing the downtown into districts on Saturdays however this would increase the complexity of the system for visitors. Increasing the price or reducing the allowed stay system-wide was also considered in order to achieve greater vacancies in the parking hot spots, but this would further increase vacancies in the under parked areas. Instead, the task force looked for alternatives that would not complicate the existing on-street system.

One of the ways to start moving long-term parkers off the street on Saturdays is to offer them competitively priced off-street alternatives. In order to target specific groups who would be interested in reduced rate Saturday parking, the task force recommends implementing a coupon style discount for the off-street parking along the following lines:

- Priced below the cost of on-street all day parking (<\$1.50)
- Pilot the program to the Broadway Center for its youth symphony groups arriving Saturday mornings (restarts in fall)
- Quarterly reporting of permit purchases & usage

To determine their effectiveness, the task force will review both the Coupon and Off-Off pilots regularly.

Approved as presented by

Eric Anderson
City Manager
City of Tacoma

6/21/2011
Date