



Parking Management Advisory Task Force

747 Market Street; Room 537

Meeting #54 – January 3, 2013, Notes

4:10 Meeting called to order by Co-Chairs

Rollie Herman, one of the co-chairs, called the meeting to order.

4:15 Guiding Principles Discussion

[RH] reviewed the updated Guiding Principles. The new list of principles added numbers 10 through 15. At the meeting in early December, the group had finalized a draft version of the new principles. At this meeting, they are being considered in context of the other principles from earlier in the parking discussion.

The full list of principles is:

1. While numerous users need parking in downtown, the priority customer in the public supply is the customer/visitor who uses downtown to shop, dine and recreate. This parker represents a key component of downtown's existing and future growth and vitality and must be accommodated.
2. Make downtown accessible to all users through multiple travel modes.
3. Make downtown parking user-friendly – easy to access, easy to understand.
4. Assure that affected downtown stakeholders are involved in decisions about parking policy.
5. Make downtown parking more convenient and accessible for the priority user – the customer.
6. Provide a "parking product" in the downtown that is of the highest quality, and safe, to create a positive customer experience.
7. On-street parking should be recognized as a finite resource and managed to assure maximum access for the priority customer.
8. Manage the public parking supply using the 85% rule.
9. Encourage alternate travel modes (e.g., transit, bike, walk and ridesharing).
10. Integrate public on- and off-street parking to better serve the priority customer.
11. Manage public off-street parking strategically to serve short and long term parkers while assuring the priority customer is not denied access.

12. Market public off-street parking as a uniquely identifiable system.
13. Position off-street parking as the most desirable option for short term parking.
14. Recognize the public parking system as a facet of economic development.
15. Manage the integrity of the parking system with an understanding of systemic and fiscal impacts.

The task force discussed the context and potential overlapping principles. While some minor adjustments were discussed, no changes were made to the list.

The task force adopted the updated guiding principles.

4:40 Revised Logo

[RH] presented the updated logo based on the feedback from the prior meeting. The logo has been integrated into the meeting agendas.

The task force approved the revised logo for use on Tacoma Parking materials.

4:45 On-Street System Review

David Schroedel, a consultant, reviewed some of the information presented at the last meeting regarding on-street occupancy. He also presented information from May and June when the task force last discussed on-street occupancies and potential changes.

The task force shared their observations of the data, what they expected and what was unexpected. The issues are summarized below:

1. Lots of short-term parkers between S. 11th & S. 13th throughout the paid area.
 - a. Unclear if these are all customers, clients & visitors or employees shuffling cars.
2. There are fewer cars parked on the outskirts of the paid area.
 - a. May present opportunity to encourage people park in more underparked areas.
3. Data was more complex and interesting than expected.
4. The 11th to 13th corridor was expected to have a heavy lunch hour, but didn't expect the area to be at capacity at 8AM.
5. Afternoon/evening parking occupancies in key entertainment/education areas ticked up expectedly.
 - a. Particularly true around the north end of Pacific Avenue and near UWT.
6. ADA usage needs to be evaluated to determine how much of the occupancy is actually paying customers.
7. Market Street and Court C from 17th to 21st does not reflect parking task force experiences.
 - a. Area under construction during data collection.
 - b. May need to recollect data post-construction.
 - c. Consider collecting data later into the evening to better understand options.
8. Pacific Avenue from 17th to 21st is parked up from 10AM on.
 - a. Higher occupancy for longer than expected.
9. Lots of red and orange everywhere.
 - a. This is good in that it means people are using the system.
 - b. Need to address overparked areas though because it also means clients cannot get to businesses.
10. Surprised at how effective the paid system is at removing employees from the parking around City Hall – Market, St. Helens & Broadway between 7th & 9th.

Since there was so many areas exceeding 85% occupancy, the task force discussed options regarding raising rates. One proposal was to raise rates throughout the paid area to an undetermined amount. To determine an amount, the task force would ask a consultant to review the data and pressures to the system to determine an appropriate rate.

In response to this proposal the task force had a number of thoughts:

- To further reduce pressure on the parking system, consider reducing the time stay to 90-minutes, particularly along Pacific Avenue between 17th & 21st.
- To further reduce pressure on the weekend, consider ending the pay for 2hrs, get all day promotion. The task force pointed out that we did not have data for Saturdays, but anecdotally the area around UWT was heavily parked. Also under consideration could be pay for 4hrs, get all day or simply a pay-by-hour with no maximum number of hours.
- There was a sense that the downtown construction projects were going to cause confusion and anxiety about getting downtown and the parking system. Therefore, it may make sense to wait until next year when a number of the projects would be complete.
 - Building off this, some members thought that waiting 2 more years could be beneficial to avoid a sense that the City is trying to fix its budget with parking system revenues.
- While no specific amount of cost increase was proposed, there were concerns that \$0.25 would not be enough to change behavior. The task force generally had concerns with large increases in the rate.
- The task force pointed out that the on-street system does not operate in a vacuum. The off-street system must be balanced with the on-street system to provide an alternative to parking on-street. Appropriately priced off-street parking is likely to reduce demand on the on-street system.

The task force agreed to continue discussing a potential rate increase at a future meeting because a significant majority were interested in exploring it.

Two under-utilized areas were identified – around City Hall and the “Notch” near UWT. Because of concerns about data, schedule, advertising and pay station locations. The task force decided not to consider making changes to these areas at this time.

During Rick Williams presentation of the data last month, he pointed out the underparked area along Dock Street. His suggestion was to consider making a change to the length of time allowed to a 3-, 5-, or 10-hour time stay. After some discussion, the task force decided to explore a 5-hour time stay as part of it's changes.

When considering specific areas that were over parked, the south and north ends of Pacific Avenue both needed more capacity in the evenings. Around UWT, this appears to be mostly students coming for evening classes. At the north end of Pacific, it appears to be restaurant staff filling stalls before going on shift. To address this, the task force was willing to further explore extending paid hours as late as 8PM with a potential extension in the number of hours that could be purchased.

There was no public comment period as no members of the public were in attendance.

The meeting was adjourned at 6PM with the next meeting on January 17th.