



Parking Technical Advisory Group

747 Market Street; Room 537

Meeting #67 – August 1st, 2013, Notes

4:10

Meeting called to order by Co-Chairs

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

The PTAG approved notes from the 7/18/13 meeting.

4:20

UWT Communications Plan

From the last advisory group meeting, City staff reworked some ideas for communications efforts associated with changes around UWT.

The three approved PTAG recommendations for this area are:

- Extend the time of enforcement to 8PM from 6PM
- Reduce the time limits to 90 minutes from 2 hours
- End Saturday's "Buy 2 hours, get 10" promotion

These changes would apply only to the following area:

- West side of Pacific Avenue between 17th and 21st.
- East and west side of Jefferson Avenue between 17th and 21st.
- North and south side of 19th Street between Market and Jefferson Avenue.
- North and south side of 17th Street between Jefferson and Pacific Avenue.

Carrie McCausland, Communications Specialist for the City of Tacoma, introduced her draft communications plan with a tag line, "Three years on the dot, we're still saving you a spot."

She went over the plan's objectives, target audiences and key messages. While the advisory group was generally supportive of the plan, they did recommend some changes.

The most significant component of the marketing efforts were the direct marketing to parkers over the week leading up to the change in rules. The City proposed to blanket cars in the area with flyers three times per day to make sure people were aware of the change. The advisory group also recommended the City consider warnings for those overstaying at first, including on the weekend.

There was also some discussion about making sure that there were door-to-door communications with businesses and groups promoting events in the downtown core. The concern was that those occasional users may just automatically assume it is 2hrs without reading the sign. A similar thing could happen for those occasional all-day users.

5:10 UWT Area Pre-Purchase Hours

[RH] pointed out that the current rules in the paid parking area mean that the paystations turn-off at 6PM and turn back on at 8PM so that people can pre-purchase time for 8AM the next morning. However, in the UWT area, the paystations will remain turned on until 8PM to accept payments for the same evening. He posed the question to the group, "What time should the UWT area paystations turn on for pre-purchase for the next morning, and does this necessitate changes in the rest of the paystation area?"

The advisory group discussed the reasons for the delay and shut off time as initially implemented. Primarily, the group did not want customers to accidentally buy time for the next morning thinking they needed to purchase time for that night. In other words, if someone is using the machine at 8:05PM the group did not want them to accidentally think they were purchasing time starting at 8:05PM.

The group noted that with the initial paystation roll out, the initial restart time for pre-purchase was 10PM. This was moved up to 8PM as residential customers stated that 10PM was too late and they were already in bed. More recently, the residents of the Cliff Street Lofts at S. 12th and A Street had informally requested that the advisory group consider moving the time even earlier than 8PM.

In considering the UWT area change, it was noted that there are a limited number of residents within the area impacted. For this reason, there was hesitancy to move the restart time too early as there were likely few users of this feature. Alternatively, some people felt that the area inside the impacted area and outside should be treated equally to keep things simple system wide.

In considering the area outside the UWT change, there was a recognition that there were more users of this feature. However, there was also a concern about evening events, specifically around the Broadway Center for Performing Arts. Many of their shows start at 7PM or later. The concern was that people arriving for shows would accidentally purchase time for the next morning and as occasional users they were more likely to have these challenges.

With these issues at the forefront, the advisory group passed a motion to:

- **Maintain restart time for pre-purchase in non-UWT area at 8PM**
- **Move the restart time for pre-purchase back to 9PM in the UWT area seeing other system changes.**

5:35 Public Comment

There were two groups that shared their thoughts on the parking system:

- South 6th & G Street/Yakima
 - Construction is causing parking congestion
 - There is insufficient parking available for customers of businesses
 - Employees are parking in stalls
 - The area is mixed use with residential and commercial
 - Ideally they would like to see 2hr limits with residential permits

- They were informed that a new residential permit program was being worked on therefore residential permits in the short term were unlikely
 - The commenters felt that even 2hr limits would be helpful
- Thought that the local hospital needed to do a better job of managing their parking needs for the hospital employees
- Question about The News Tribune Op-Ed
 - Is the City rolling out paystations around the County-City Building?
 - The op-ed had some inaccurate information. The technical advisory group has not made any recommendations in the area, but is considering all of the options. Based on information to date, it is unlikely that paystations will be a significant component of a solution around the County-City Building.

5:45 **County-City Building Area Review**

The advisory group returned to the discussion of how to move forward on resolving the challenges in the County-City Building Area. The advisory group received detailed stall information and length of stay data from consultant Rick Williams. This added to the data he had collected on occupancy and availability of stalls.

David Schroedel, a consultant, walked through a series of slides answering questions the advisory group had raised about the County-City Building area. Some of the information he went over:

- A simplified map showing block faces with parkers who are staying more than three hours and those with parkers staying less than three hours.
- Retail businesses in the area, almost all of which are on block faces with shorter actual time stays.
- Residential buildings in the area, about three-quarters of which are on block faces with longer actual time stays.
- Identification of block faces with occupancies over 85% for more than four hours a day – which is occurring on both blocks with time limits and those without time limits.
- There are some retail business facing long-term high occupancies despite having short actual stays.
- About half of the residential properties have long-term high occupancies on their block faces.
- It may make sense to not try and address or “fix” the entire area where data was collected as the data collection effort was really focused on trying to capture all the possible area. Additionally, it is difficult to predict impacts to streets outside of the area where data was collected.
- [DS] suggested focusing on the core area of the problem with the bulk of retail and civic uses while avoiding the higher density residential areas. He noted that the City is still a ways out on creating an on-street permit system for residents or others. This would allow the City more time to develop a well designed system.
 - The technical advisory group expressed reservations about not addressing some key areas that were clearly overparked. There was also concern that even if changes are kept well within the area defined there may still be overflow impacts.
 - This carved out area will need more discussion and was still under debate by the group.
- Additionally within the focus area there appeared to be two distinct areas:
 - Short-term parking needs immediately around County-City Building and Tacoma Avenue where retail is more prevalent.

- Longer-term parking needs around Bates Technical College and south of South 13th Street where there are more residences.
- The technical advisory group discussed some of the details of these boundaries and why there was a defined carve out along Tacoma Avenue south of South 13th. In particular, they wanted to make sure the needs of the worker retraining facility were considered. They will want to discuss these details further if they move forward with this approach.
- Finally, [DS] came back to the contrast of areas with high occupancies for more than four hours. He pointed out that those areas with high occupancies on block faces with time limits could be one of two scenarios:
 - Poor enforcement, which would lead to longer time stays; or
 - Too much demand, which would have shorter time stays.
- Those areas with longer time stays he suggested may just need improved enforcement. (It was noted that the data was collected in fall of 2012 so there may have been improvements in enforcement in the last several months.)
- Those areas with shorter time stays likely have more demand than can be accommodated by a free parking system. Since the time stays are already shortened to meet the demand of system customers, [DS] recommended the advisory group consider paystations in these areas.

The group agreed to come back and discuss the information in more detail at a future meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:05PM with the next meeting on August 15th to discuss recommendations to the County-City Building Area.