



Parking Technical Advisory Group

747 Market Street; Room 537

Meeting #70 – September 19th, 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 9/5/13 meeting as written.

4:15

City of Tacoma Staff Update

Eric Huseby, Parking Services Manager for the City, gave an update on a couple of City initiatives:

- Paystation Performance update: All of the sim cards in the paystations have now been replaced. The T-Mobile cards are allowing all of the paystations to perform better than previously. Not only are the machines not going down, but the average transaction time has dropped from 9s to 7s.
- UWT Area changes update: The rollout of changes around UWT continues to go well with parked cars receiving detailed information on the changes. There are also chalk circles, signs around paystations, and other tools to catch regular users' attention. So far the changes are being generally well received. The system goes live tomorrow, 9/20/13.

4:30

Dock Street Time Stays – Final Decision

At the prior meeting the advisory group tentatively recommended moving all stalls along Dock Street to a 5-hr time stay M-Sa, 8AM-6PM. The issue was revisited at this meeting to confirm the decision. While there was still some concern about creating a multitude of zones each having their own set of rules throughout the City, the general feeling was that Dock Street was different from the other areas evaluated to date and had a geographic separation making it more difficult to inadvertently misuse the system. As the technical advisory group moves forward, they agreed that they needed to be cautious about creating an overly complex system.

The group discussed what a roll out of these changes might look like and when to make the adjustments. Some general points came out of this discussion:

- Make the change sooner rather than later, but not between Thanksgiving and Christmas.
- Continue to advertise the ability to take the time with you, but only within the same zone.
- Information passed out should highlight the increased flexibility for parking system users with the only additional restriction being all day parking on Saturdays. (The PTAG noted

that there are numerous off-street options for longer Saturday stays, including a Museum of Glass garage with low occupancies.)

The advisory group finalized its recommendation to change all stalls along Dock Street to a 5-hr time stay M-Sa, 8AM-6PM.

4:45 Next Steps for the County City Building Area

The group next returned to the discussion of the County-City Building Area. At the last meeting the group decided to limit their area of review to:

- North Boundary: South side of S. 9th from existing paystation boundary at the east end to Yakima at the west end.
- East Boundary: The west side of Yakima starting at S. 9th St. running south to Brazill St. Then moving to the east side of Yakima running south to S. 13th St.
- Southeast Boundary: The south side of S. 13th St. running from Yakima to Tacoma Ave. Then turning south along the west side of Tacoma Ave until S. 15th St. Finally, heading down the south side of S. 15th St. eastward back to the existing paystation boundary.

The group confirmed both their desire to limit the area of review and to divide the area into a short-term stay area and a long-term stay area. Generally, the short-term area is from S. 13th to the north as far west as Tacoma Avenue and S. 11th north east of Tacoma Avenue.

The mapping data indicated that there was one block face of unregulated parking within this area – the east side of 1100 block of Court E. The PTAG discussed the potential implications of adding short-term stay regulations within this area. While there were concerns about potential impacts to residents nearby, there was also a recognition that these stalls would be most quickly filled by “parking insiders” – employees and other long-term parkers who know just where to park. As long as the new regulations did not start until 8AM, any residents in the area would have at least as many parking options as currently. The group agreed that within this short-term parking area, all stalls should be regulated.

There was some further discussion about the presence of businesses and residences in the greater short-term area. While there are only a handful of actual retail frontages there are a number of office/service type buildings, including many associated with government services and offices supporting these government services.

The group revisited the discussion of who the customers are around the County-City Building. While the building is typically open until 4:30, there seem to be some key non-employee users:

- People called to jury duty – need long term stays, but County provides off-street and alternative transportation options
- People taking care of short-term business like firearm licenses, paying tickets, etc. – typically need 90mins or less
- People attending County Council public meetings – often take about 2hrs, but many in early evening/late afternoon
- People coming to court dates – many of which have a “cattle call” at 9AM and/or 1:30PM with length of stays of about 2½ hours or less

In addition many employees work on a 8AM-4:30PM shift, though this is not universal.

The PTAG discussed options for length of stay and coordinating this with occupancy drops near the end of the day. The high occupancies dropped significantly by 2PM-ish and were low on nearly every block face by the 4-5PM hour.

The PTAG tentatively decided to recommend a 2hr time limit with 8AM-4PM hours of operation. The PTAG noted that this would allow users to park at 2PM until 10AM the next morning – allowing a great deal of flexibility for residents and afternoon/evening parkers.

The group noted that there were two unusual groups of parking system users in the short time stay area that have not been as present in other areas – jury parkers with court issued parking permits and official vehicles, particularly law enforcement vehicles. The group had concerns about the impacts of the unregulated jury parking and felt they should likely be phased out. In addition there were concerns about removing a large number of parking stalls from the system 24hrs a day for official vehicles only. The PTAG agreed to revisit these issues at the next meeting.

The group moved its discussion to the long-term stay area, and specifically evaluated the area near Bates Technical College – immediately adjacent to the County-City Building.

The group expressed some concerns about the ability to monitor longer time stays since the enforcement officer passes would need to be more spread out. In addition, there were some questions about who would be served with the additional parking capacity if occupancies were lowered.

A couple of ideas regarding time limits were proposed to start discussion:

- 5hr limits – Would allow for long-term parking but would require people to move their vehicles rather than parking all day. For any employees using this parking during the day, this would likely mean moving their vehicles at lunch.
- 2hr limits with permits allowing a longer time stay – Would allow for tighter controls on the number of longer term parkers in any given area while also freeing up some parking for visitors. For long term parkers like employees, students, or residents this would allow for longer term parking but would provide an incentive (in the form of a permit fee) to find another option first. There were some questions about who would be eligible to buy the permits, pricing and other details.

While the group was open to either option the underlying question was whom the changes would serve. It was noted that the Bates students complained about the parking, but found a way to work within the system after a month or two.

This issue was to be revisited at the next meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:10PM with the next meeting on October 3rd to discuss recommendations to the County-City Building Area.