



Parking Technical Advisory Group

728 St. Helens; Room 16

Meeting #78 – February 6, 2014, 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 the 1/16/14 notes as written.

4:20 On-Street & Off-Street Rate Discussion

The discussion began with a refresher on the current rate structure and the proposed off-street rates tentatively agreed to at the last meeting:

Time Stay	Current On-Street Rate	Current Off-Street Rate	Proposed Off-Street Rate
1hr	\$0.75	\$2.50	=2hrs on-street
2hr	\$1.50	\$5.00	
3hr	N/A	\$7.50	FREE
4hr	N/A	\$10.00	TBD
>4hr	N/A	\$12.50	TBD

The group discussed the potential repercussions of this proposed rate structure for off-street. This structure would focus on those users staying 1.5 to 3 hours. This would likely result in a decrease in off-street transient revenues for the City, but these make up a very small fraction of the total revenues for the system.

The group reiterated its goals for the off-street system shifts as follows:

1. Keep the on-street stalls available for customers
2. Give longer term customers a competitively priced option for parking
3. Avoid undercutting monthly rates or transient rates for the full day
4. Encourage users to try out the garage who may be new to the off-street system

These goals were important as the group discussed rates for longer time stays. In discussion with City staff, an hourly rate for the fourth and greater hours equal to the rate for the initial 2hr period was proposed. This means under the current rate structure, the pricing would look as follows:

Time Stay	Current On-Street Rate	Current Off-Street Rate	Proposed Off-Street Rate
0-1hr	\$0.75	\$2.50	\$1.50
1-2hr	\$1.50	\$5.00	
2-3hr	N/A	\$7.50	FREE
3-4hr	N/A	\$10.00	\$3.00
4-5hr	N/A	\$12.50	\$4.50
5-6hr	N/A	\$12.50	\$6.00
6-7hr	N/A	\$12.50	\$7.50
7-8hr	N/A	\$12.50	\$9.00
8-9hr	N/A	\$12.50	\$10.50
9-10hr	N/A	\$12.50	\$12.00
10-11hr	N/A	\$12.50	\$13.50
11+hrs	N/A	\$12.50	\$15.00

This pricing structure makes the hourly rate a constant as well as the increment a constant. The higher rate for longer time stays may allow the City to make up some of the lost revenue in shorter time stays. There were some concerns expressed about labeling the 3rd hour as free or complementary. The marketing of this feature could either be highlighted or simply embedded in the price is the listed as \$1.50 for 3hrs.

City staff shared their concern about a higher rate for long stays than currently used. It was unclear how many of these stays there are presently. The group was open to cutting out the longer time stays and capping the hours at a smaller number.

Since the group had been talking about the potential to move on-street rates to \$1.00 per hour, the proposed rate structure was reiterated with these numbers:

Time Stay	Potential On-Street Rate	Proposed Off-Street Rate
0-1hr	\$1.00	\$2.00
1-2hr	\$2.00	
2-3hr	N/A	FREE
3-4hr	N/A	\$4.00
4-5hr	N/A	\$6.00
5-6hr	N/A	\$8.00
6-7hr	N/A	\$10.00
7+hr	N/A	\$12.00

The group discussed what an evening rate and a early bird rate would look like in this context. The current evening rate for after 5PM is a flat \$5 (or the equivalent of 2hrs at the current rate). The group guessed that this was particularly useful for people coming for entertainment that would have dinner and then go to an event, likely parking from about 5:30-9:30 – 4 hours.

The sense of the group was that this flat evening rate should likely not exceed the 4hr rate. In the above scenario, that would set the flat evening rate at \$4.

The evening rate is often used as a special event rate as well. **The advisory group left special event rate structure and timings up to City staff in order to provide maximum flexibility and the goal that the event rates facilitate and support events.**

In discussing the early bird rate, the current structure allows a parker arriving before 9AM to pay a flat \$8/dy – equal to about 3hrs of parking under the current rate structure. With the significant changes proposed to the rate structure, this would be priced at \$2 – which none of the parking advisory group members felt was appropriate for an all day parker.

The group discussed whether the early bird rate provided benefits consistent with their goals. In other words, why incentivize all day parking? The suggestion was that the early bird parking option helps fill the garage when it is under booked. The group discussed whether the early bird parkers would still park in the garage regardless of whether there was early bird rate. **After some discussion, the advisory group decided to keep the early bird rate. Furthermore, they felt that the existing \$8 was an appropriate discount setting the price point at roughly the same as 6hrs.**

There are also discounted rates on the weekends. There is an all day \$5/dy rate and a \$1.50 early bird Saturday rate. The advisory group did not discuss these rates further, but generally lumped them in with the special event rates.

The discussion moved to the on-street rate setting as this rate determines the rest of the off-street rate structure. Currently, the on-street rate is \$0.75 per hour with a \$0.25 minimum for 20min. The group had been considering moving to \$1.00 per hour.

The group discussed why this move would be warranted:

- Some areas of the system do not have sufficient occupancy
- The costs of running the parking system have risen
- The garage prices have been reduced to better accommodate the 2-3hr parker

The parking technical advisory group voted to tentatively recommend an increase in the on-street parking rate to \$1.00 per hour while maintaining a \$0.25 minimum purchase (for 15mins).

5:30 City Update

Eric Huseby, the City's Parking Services Manager, gave an update on several City items he has been working on. He covered the following items:

- He will be updating the City Council's Infrastructure, Planning & Sustainability Committee on March 26th @ 4:30PM in Rm. 248. He will be presenting the plan for the parking system in 2014. PTAG members are invited to attend.
- The City is evaluating parking related signage. This will include bringing in someone to keep up/help out. They will be updating signs where appropriate.
- The City has increased enforcement/information sharing on rules, etc south of S. 21st St. on Court C.
- The City continues to move forward with the County-City Building area
 - The recommendations have been forwarded to the City Manager
 - Currently reviewing existing signage
 - Working on paystation procurement
 - Doing additional outreach to more departments at CCB
 - Current rollout target is 9/22/14
 - Still have questions about addressing the Official Vehicle Parking
- On February 19th from 5-7:30PM at 1201 Pacific Avenue the City will be hosting a workshop on parking system branding. PTAG members are invited to attend.

5:35 Public Comment

There one merchant from the 700 block of St. Helens that shared her thoughts on the parking system:

- Tacoma Youth Symphony Orchestra [TYSO] impacts on Saturdays and Sundays since November
 - Parking up St. Helens and customers can't get to her business
 - Killing business on those days
 - Clearly TYSO as it started in November and has been continuous (& instruments)
 - Parking fills up by 9AM
 - There is some turnover, but packed with attendees and participants at mix of events during day
 - Would like to see additional loading zone stalls on St. Helens
 - City gave an overview of current activities:
 - Park Plaza North early bird coupon parking
 - Has ongoing conversation with Broadway Center about parking impacts.
 - Will revisit the conversation with appropriate groups.
 - Hesitant to add loading zone stalls, but more open to relocating existing stalls as appropriate.
 - Will take a look at existing loading zones on St. Helens
- Special event closures of St. Helens (and other streets) should be confirmed when event arrives
 - St. Helens was closed for an event on Broadway and St. Helens, but due to low turnout, St. Helens was not used for vendors
 - Find a way to open streets that are not needed
 - City gave an overview of current activities:
 - Evaluating its current event permitting protocols and systems
 - Will include this comment as part of the conversation
- The off-street parking system is too expensive; it should be priced less than on-street
 - Lower the off-street rates to be less than on-street
 - When asked if the merchant supported the proposed rate changes, the response was "100 percent"

The meeting was adjourned at 6:00 with the next meeting on February 20th.