



RECOMMENDATION NUMBER 13

April 9, 2014

The Parking Technical Advisory Group (PTAG) just completed its annual review of on- and off-street short term parking rates. Using guidance from both Ordinance 27840 and our consultant Rick Williams 2013 White Paper we recommend the following changes to downtown parking rates:

- On-street metered area rate \$1.00 per hour (currently \$0.75 per hour). Maintain the current \$0.25 minimum purchase.
- Certain off-street City owned garages—Park Plaza North, Tacoma Parking Garage and Pacific Plaza Garage
 - 0-3 hours: \$2.00 (currently \$2.50 per hour)
 - 3-4 hours: \$4.00 (currently \$10.00)
 - 4-5 hours: \$8.00 (currently \$12.50)
 - 5-6 hours: \$12.00 (currently \$12.50)
 - 6+ hours: \$16.00 (currently \$12.50)
 - Evening rate: 5PM – 3AM
 - Flat rate capped at \$4.00 (currently \$5.00)
 - Early Bird Rate: to be determined by staff
 - Special Event Rate: to be determined by staff

Because the above rate changes are mutually beneficial they should be made at the same time.

OUTREACH

The recommendation, if accepted, would introduce a new parking “product” in to the downtown core. The lower off-street rates are expected to encourage parking off-street in City owned garages for four (4) hours or less. This is the first step in the integration of the on and off street parking system. There are additional parking initiatives underway however they are not directly impacted by this recommendation on rates. Therefore the PTAG recommends:

- The City’s Media and Communications Office work with the PTAG to create a positive message for distribution to The News Tribune and other social media outlets.
- Businesses should be contacted, as soon as practical by the City, to inform them of the new lower off-street rates for customers, clients and visitors who would like to shop/explore/do business/go to meetings for more than the two hours maximum that is allowed in any one spot on-street.
- We also recommend that the rise in on-street prices happen in conjunction with the lowering of off-street rates to both soften the additional cost of the pay stations as well as to help spread the word about the more inviting terms in the City garages.

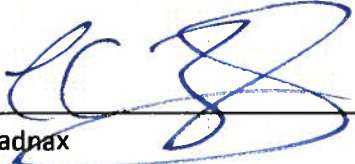


BACKGROUND

September 20, 2013 was the third anniversary of the introduction of paid on-street parking in the downtown core of Tacoma. The PTAG has reviewed occupancy data every year and it has shown that there are block faces which exceed the 85% guideline expressed in Ordinance 27840. The Rick Williams White Paper states that in addition to the "85% rule" we should also factor in the operating cost of the system. We have been aware of the major construction projects taking place on Pacific Avenue and believe that they will be completed by time any rate increase is put into place.

This review also gave us our first opportunity to look at the integration of the on and off street parking systems. One product that the City lacked was affordable parking for the customer, client and visitor who wish to stay more than two hours. In the past we have heard from merchants expressing the need for this product. Successful parking systems in other cities offer this product. Looking at data from the City owned garages, the PTAG saw that the vast majority of use was from parkers with monthly passes. We also noticed that the current daily rate structure favored longer term stays at the expense of the short term parker. There is presently excess capacity in the garages and we recommend a rate structure that would encourage those spaces to fill up with our prime parker, the customer/client/visitor to downtown. The proposed rate structure represents a shift of emphasis from encouraging long term transient parking (4+ hours) to one where the short term parker (0-4 hours) is prioritized.

Approved as presented by:



T.C. Broadnax
City Manager
City of Tacoma



Date