

TRANSIT AND PARKING COMMISSION COVER SHEET

AGENDA ITEM F.1.	MEETING DATE Oct. 12, 2006
ITEM Parking ramp bus shuttle	
ID Number 04688	Council report back due date: N/A
OTHER REFERRALS AND ACTIONS TAKEN TO DATE: (Asterisk indicates lead agency.) N/A	
STAFF DISCUSSION OF ITEM:	
<p>Purpose: The Parking Utility is investigating the use of a bus shuttle system that circulates among the Utility's five parking ramps. The purpose of this bus shuttle is to facilitate the redistribution of demand between high- and low-use facilities. If we are successful, we will use our parking ramps more efficiently and delay building more ramp capacity while providing better service to our customers.</p> <p>Targeted customer profiles: Commuters and other long-term parking customers will benefit due to the price difference of under-utilized facilities and over-utilized facilities. Commuters need service at the beginning and end of the average workday. Since the parking rates at these ramps are linked to demand, customers parking at popular ramps such as Government East or Campus will be paying considerably more (\$1.10/hr) than the rates charged at less convenient facilities such as Overture ramp (\$.70/hr) and Capitol Square North (\$.80/hr). Some parking customers could save the \$.40/hr. fee difference if there were an easy/cost-efficient method to access the other ramps. In an average month, a commuter driving to work every day and parking at Overture Ramp vs. Government East could save about \$64 in parking fees.</p> <p>Students and others that arrive at the Campus ramp during midday only to find it full, need an alternative place to park that is cost-effective and easy to use.</p> <p>Shoppers and others on short-term errands want to find parking available at a reasonable rate within reasonable walking or commuting distance. There may be shoppers and other short term parking customers that avoid coming downtown because they believe there is no parking available.</p> <p>Metro pass holders can ride the bus at no additional cost to them. Pass holders include the University of Wisconsin, City of Madison and MATC. These customers can use the shuttle as a circulator and help the Parking Utility fund its operation. While rush hour service on State Street is frequent, service at midday is infrequent and pass holders can use this as a circulator.</p> <p>Costs, revenues and price: Government East ramp near the Municipal Building and the Campus ramp near the UW Library Mall have historically filled up between the hours of 10 am and 2 pm on weekdays during the school year. State Street Capitol, Overture and Capitol Square North ramps rarely fill up except during special events. The extra capacity in these ramps provides an opportunity to generate sufficient funds to pay for this service if there is enough latent parking demand to fill all of our ramps to occupancy levels of between 80% and 90%. Our bondholders will remain protected if this program is financially self-sufficient. Metro has estimated the cost of the proposed system at \$125,000. Other funds will be necessary for advertising.</p>	

Revenues can come from cash fares or from bus pass holders. Pass holders, including riders of the "free" campus bus represent 80% of Metro's rides. When a pass holder rides the Parking Ramp Shuttle, Metro will credit the fee paid against the cost of the service. The UW for instance pays \$.88 for every ride by a UW pass holder. This revenue will be credited against the cost charged to the Parking Utility by Metro. The amount of revenue generated by pass holders is unknown at this time.

The cash fare will be the standard \$1.50. Since cash fares represent only 20% of Metro's business, we would not expect much revenue from cash fares. Riders displaying a current parking ticket from one of our facilities will ride the shuttle at no additional cost to them.

Routes and schedule:

One bus will operate 11 hours a day on weekdays during the school year. It will not operate on holidays.

The Peak Hour service bus will circle the outer loop on proposed 10-minute headways and will connect the following facilities: Government East, Capitol Square North, State Street Capitol and the County ramps (see map). It will be one block from the Brayton lot and Overture ramp. Since it's targeted audience is commuters and other long-term parkers, it will operate from 6:30 am to 8:30 am and then again from 3:30 pm to 5:30 pm. These customers can save over \$60/month and free up space in overcrowded ramps by switching to lower cost, underutilized ramps.

The mid-day route will serve the shorter-term customers such as students using the Campus Ramp. It will operate 8:45 am to 3:15 pm. and will connect Campus, Buckeye Lot, State Street Capitol and Overture facilities. The route will have approximately 10-minute headways. These customers can save \$. 40/hour and find vacancies between 10 am and 2 pm.

Transit resources:

Metro has sufficient bus and driver resources to run a bus 11 hours a day on weekdays to support the parking ramp shuttle initiative. Multiple Metro buses operating during peak hours would be cost prohibitive for Metro due to the required spare ratio and the cost of buying new buses.

Recommendations:

The Parking Utility recommends the mid-day and peak period ramp shuttle service described above. We believe it will redistribute demand among our facilities and help fill our excess capacity. The added revenue generated through latent demand has the potential of funding this initiative. A trial period beginning in January 2007 and running to summer will provide an opportunity to review its success including the financial implications.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS:

The cost of a parking ramp shuttle would be financed primarily with Parking Utility funding. Additional funding may come from non-parking riders and pass holders. If the excess capacity at underutilized facilities is filled up to the 80 – 90% level this initiative will be financially self-sufficient.

MATERIALS PRESENTED WITH ITEM:

Map of proposed ramp shuttle route.

PREPARED BY:

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SIGNED:

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DATE: 10/5/06