

From: [Jennifer Argelander](#)
To: [All Alders](#)
Subject: Support for Agenda item 75
Date: Monday, December 9, 2024 7:49:26 PM

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Dear alders,

I support Agenda Item 75 (legistar 86251). This idea of charging fees for special events in public parks will not really make a dent in the City's budget and **should be removed from the City's budget**. Charging for parking will adversely affect residents of Madison from using our beautiful parks. It would not be equitable for everyone to pay the same fee, so those less able to pay will be adversely affected. In addition the parking fee will discourage many park visitors who are not attending the special events from coming to the parks. That would include parents with children, dog owners using the dog parks (Of which I use twice a day and pay for registration to use them), people who are not able to walk or bike to parks usually, and visitors who just want to picnic in the parks. If there are fees, people will park their vehicles on the surrounding streets and nearby parking lots causing an inconvenience to the neighbors living near the parks. Many might travel farther in order to visit parks that don't charge for parking which will add to traffic congestion and air pollution. Please remove this proposal to charge for parking in parks from the City's budget.

Thank you.

Jennifer Argelander
1715 Erie court
Madison, WI 53704

From: gordian@nym.hush.com
To: [All Alders](#)
Subject: Support Agenda item 75, Legistar 86251
Date: Sunday, December 8, 2024 4:18:22 PM

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Mon. Nov. 25, 2024

Madison Common Council Members,

I would like to reply to two of the comments made in opposition to Agenda item 75, Legistar 86251. Although I disagree with their arguments, I thank them for taking the time to contribute to the discussion of this issue.

Linda Lehnertz writes, "Many of the submitted comments reflect a mistaken belief that park users would be charged for parking..." [1]

Her assertion can be tested by looking at the special events parking at Vilas Park. According to the City, "Initial ideas for the pilot program suggest charging to park a vehicle during home Badger football games, in the north lot of Vilas Park, while continuing to provide the south lot as free three-hour parking. ". [2] It is easy to predict that Badger fans will park in the free south lot and pay themselves the \$35 parking fee [3] to take a walk across the park. Regular park visitors will arrive to find limited free parking but plenty of paid parking. Park visitors who wanted to park in the north parking lot will find only paid parking stalls there. The story will be the same as the pilot program spreads to other parks.

Linda Lehnertz writes, "The pilot itself would raise a minimal amount of funds, but that is because it is a pilot. " [1]

By how much would the pilot program need to expand to raise a significant amount of money? The estimated \$23,900 per year in net parking fees is only 0.0055% (55 millionths) of the City's \$431,703,759 2025 Operating budget. [4] Raising these numbers by a factor of 100 yields 0.55% (55 ten thousandths) of the City's \$431,703,759 2025 Operating budget. These higher numbers are a still small but a somewhat more significant fraction of the City's 2025 Operating budget. The number of parking places used to estimate the pilot program's revenues totals 145. 132 spaces are for special events parking, and 13 spaces are for commuter parking. [3] If parking fees remain the same as those used to estimate the pilot program's revenues, the number of paid parking spaces would have to rise to 14,500 (145 * 100) in order to make even a somewhat more significant contribution to the City's Operating budget revenues. 14,500 paid parking spaces is not a prediction; it is an indicator of the scale of the problem being addressed. This simple exploratory calculation shows that regular park users would be paying parking fees when the pilot

program is expanded.

Linda Lehnertz writes, "And while the budget is okay for the moment, in just 2 years it is projected that another \$10M will be needed." [1]

She is right. There will be great pressure on City departments to come up with increased fees. The pilot parking fee program can be seen as the thin entering wedge for a greatly expanded policy of charging park visitors for parking.

Josh Olson asks a number of important questions that the pilot program needs to answer, "What are the tradeoffs? How many less visitors does the zoo get during this time? What are the demographics of visitors to the zoo during this time? Does it meaningfully change? Do they complain about the parking? Do they park on the street outside of the zoo?" [1]

The answers to all of these questions depend on the elasticity of demand for parking at City parks. Elasticity of demand is the slope of the demand curve across a range of prices. The pilot program by itself cannot and will not provide that information because it only tests one price point. The numbers used to estimate the pilot program's revenues are \$35 for event parking and \$50 for commuter parking. [3] That information is not adequate for determining the elasticity of demand; a range of prices is needed.

The economic law of supply and demand tells us that a parking fee will discourage some park visitors. Parents with small children, dog owners visiting dog parks, and people who are not able to walk or bike to parks usually drive. So do visitors who picnic in the parks. Some people will visit parks less often or not at all. The pilot program cannot and will not tell us how many people that is.

Equity is also an issue here. The same fee can be a speed bump for the wealthy but a locked gate for the many who live from paycheck to paycheck.

Some of the opponents of Legistar 86251 allude to non-monetary problems. Three non-monetary problems that parking fees might worsen can be summarized here.

- * Some people will be discouraged from visiting the parks or visit parks less often.
- * Other people will park their vehicles on surrounding streets and in nearby parking lots, inconveniencing the parks' neighbors
- * Drivers might travel farther in order to visit parks without paying parking fees. In doing so they will add to traffic congestion and air pollution.

Josh Olson is the only one who asks how paid parking at City parks might worsen those problems.

I thank all readers who have taken this deep dive into the issue of paid parking at Madison's parks

and the commenters who took the time to offer their thoughts on the issue.

Don Lindsay

SOURCES:

[1] Public comments 12.2.2024:

<https://madison.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=13595482&GUID=912A918E-AD29-4DE9-932D-14BEC8B7FBD0>

[2] Blog post Madison Parks Paid Parking Pilot Program Proposal
November 14, 2024 7:15 AM

<https://www.cityofmadison.com/parks/blog/?Id=32319>

Accessed 20241118:

"Initial ideas for the pilot program suggest charging to park a vehicle during home Badger football games, in the north lot of Vilas Park, while continuing to provide the south lot as free three-hour parking. "

[3] Estimated revenues:

"On 11/21/2024 at 7:50 AM, "CJ Ryan" <CRyan@cityofmadison.com> wrote:

"Hi Don,

"On your first question - yes, we estimated parking revenues based on stalls by fees. Here's the backup math:

"Badger Games: 132 stalls, 6 games, \$35 per stall

"Commuter Parking: 13 stalls, 12 months, \$50/month

"Other events: a placeholder for other ideas that may come up during the pilot

"Gross revenue estimate of \$39,000

"Net revenue estimate of \$23,000"

[4] Madison 2025 budget

<https://www.cityofmadison.com/finance/documents/budget/2025/operating/OpEx2025-AdoptedAmendments.pdf>

From: [Sheila Martin](#)
To: [Evers, Tag](#)
Cc: [All Alders](#); [Mayor](#)
Subject: Parking in City Parks
Date: Monday, December 2, 2024 9:17:44 PM

Some people who received this message don't often get email from sheila0725@sbcglobal.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Dear Alder Evers,

Thank you for your proposed amendment to eliminate the proposed trial of charging people to park at our city parks. I couldn't agree more that charging parking to utilize an otherwise free community resource would hurt the most vulnerable members of our community. The free zoo, Vilas swimming beach, Goodman Pool, playgrounds, and more are utilized by so many as a wholesome, fun way to enjoy Madison's outdoor spaces. I appreciate your discernment around this issue and recognition that the small amount of revenue it would raise would be far overshadowed by the negative impacts to our community.

Appreciatively,
Sheila Olk Martin
Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Alder Evers, District 13" <noreply@cityofmadison.com>
Date: December 2, 2024 at 2:05:06 PM CST
To: sheila0725@sbcglobal.net
Subject: **District 13: Renewal and Refocus, New Midtown Captain, Parking in City Parks**
Reply-To: "Alder Evers, District 13" <noreply@cityofmadison.com>

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[City of Madison](#)



Front entrance of the City-County Building on a sunny day



Renewal and Refocus, New Midtown Captain, Parking in City Parks

Hi Everyone,

Renewal has been a theme for so many since last month's election. Turning off the news, processing the fear felt by many, sensing the anxiety over the unknown. Ways of responding, getting outdoors, connecting with friends and family, volunteering to help others.

The Thanksgiving holiday we just celebrated reminds us that gratitude can be a superpower, helping us to refocus.

There's much to look forward to in the new year. For one, there will be a very important WI Supreme Court election next spring. This is not an exhortation to bypass any residual grief. Rather, it's a reflection that retreat in moments like these, though natural and healthy, even strategic, is necessarily temporary. There comes a time when we turn our attention to what we can do, letting go of past disappointments and moving forward with the gift of hope. That's the message of Rebecca Solnit's, [Hope in the Dark](#), a book written two decades ago but just as relevant in this present moment.

After all, as James Baldwin noted: "Not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced."

Now on to some key updates.

New Midtown Police Captain

Four of the six neighborhoods in District 13 are served by the Midtown Police District. Up until recently, Jason Freedman has served as the Midtown Captain. Jason just retired to take on a new position as police chief in a different city. I very much appreciate Jason's service to District 13, and wish him much success in his new post.

Shannon Blackamore is taking over as Midtown Captain. I very much look forward to a successful collaboration. Captain Blackamore recently [posted](#) on the MPD Blog about a recent rash of thefts from autos. These are, by definition, crimes of opportunity and can be easily prevented by a healthy dose of common sense.

Parking Fees in City Parks

I have introduced an [amendment to rescind the paid parking pilot](#) from our recently passed operating budget. The pilot would raise revenue by \$23,900,

a miniscule portion of our overall budget. The idea for this came from exercise in which city agencies were asked for ways to achieve a 5% reduction in their annual budgets. This exercise was put forth in order to prepare for the possibility that the referendum did not pass. The Parks division introduced this idea of charging parking fees in city parks as a revenue enhancement, along with other ideas such as privatizing Goodman Pool, with the understanding these would only be pursued in the event of a budget emergency should the referendum fail.

However, because an idea was raised on how to reduce the Parks budget in an exigent circumstance does not mean the idea was a good one or an idea that we ought to pursue if we can otherwise avoid it.

Thankfully, the referendum did pass. Consequently, we do not need to make painful cuts to services. We have options and we have a cushion against the realities of our ongoing structural deficit. Which means we have time to get a better deal from the state to permanently address the fundamentals of our structural deficit. Yes, we need to be smart with our money and wise with our spending. But the whole idea of charging to park in our city parks is not something we need to study right now. To do so would take an immense amount of staff time to pursue an objective that's entirely counter to their overall mission. Pursuing this study would require our short-handed staff to utilize scarce resources to pursue something they don't want to do. Parks Superintendent Eric Knepp stated from the very beginning that this effort would be contrary to current policy. As noted in one of the Whereas clauses in my amendment, "establishing a paid parking program would be a significant change in how the Parks Division manages City parkland."

Yes, it's true we could charge people to park at Goodman Pool, but should we, knowing the pool attracts low-income families who cannot afford membership at a private pool? We could charge people to park at Brittingham Park, but should we, knowing this park is one of the most diverse in terms of its user base? We could charge people to park at Wingra Park, but should we, knowing people come from all over the county to fish, paddle board, and kayak in this beautiful urban respite?

It's important to remember that user fees are revenue enhancers, often viewed as alternatives to taxation. However, like many forms of taxation, user fees are often regressive. In this instance, imposing parking fees at Vilas Park on game days would make it very difficult to distinguish between low-income families going to the free Henry Vilas Zoo from wealthy Badger football fans headed to Camp Randall.

Some are arguing that free parking at our city parks subsidizes space for greenhouse-gas emitting vehicles, that such subsidies incentivize people to drive instead of walking, biking or using public transportation. True, there is a social and environmental cost to free parking anywhere, whether it's in our parks or on our city streets, but charging a user fee taxes that access in a manner that would be problematic for those of lesser means.

I welcome ongoing discussion about parking. For example, I'm open to the idea

we should do away with parking minimums on development projects. And I'm also open to a broader discussion about limiting the number of parking spaces as we develop new parks or reconstruct existing parks. But now is not the time to begin charging for parking in our parks.

Residents are to be congratulated for supporting our referendum, not bushwhacked with the prospect the city will begin charging folks a fee for parking in our otherwise free city parks.

Here are the rest of this week's updates:

Boards, Commissions, and Committee Meetings

Note: This is not a complete list of meetings for this upcoming week. All meetings and their details can be found at the [Meeting Schedule page](#).

- **Finance Committee:** The Finance Committee meeting will take place on Monday, December 2, at 4:30 p.m. in virtual format. Agenda items include removing the paid parking pilot program and an update on internal audit projects.
 - [Meeting Details](#)
 - [Meeting Agenda](#)
 - [Register for Public Comment](#)
 - [Watch Online](#)
- **Plan Commission:** The Plan Commission meeting will take place on Monday, December 2, at 5:30 p.m. in virtual format. Agenda items include implementing revisions to the Urban Design Commission ordinance and development-related requests in District 1,4, 7, 12, 14, and 17.
 - [Meeting Details](#)
 - [Meeting Agenda](#)
 - [Register for Public Comment](#)
 - [Watch Online](#)
- **City-County Homeless Issues Committee:** The City-County Homeless Issues Committee meeting will take place on Monday, December 2, at 5:30 p.m. in virtual format. Agenda items include presentations on evictions and eviction resources, as well as the implications of the Grant Pass v. Johnson SCOTUS ruling.
 - [Meeting Details](#)
 - [Meeting Agenda](#)
 - [Register for Public Comment](#)

- [Watch Online](#)
- **Committee on Aging:** The Committee on Aging meeting will take place on Wednesday, December 4, at 2:30 p.m. in virtual format. Agenda items include approving funds to support older adult programming.
- [Meeting Details](#)
- [Meeting Agenda](#)
- [Register for Public Comment](#)
- [Watch Online](#)

If you would like more information about becoming a member of a City board, commission, or committee, please visit [the page linked here](#).

Public Information Meetings

- [Nakoma Road Sidewalk 2025, Monday, December 2:](#) This project will install a sidewalk on the south side of Nakoma Road, closing a gap in the pedestrian network. This will involve bumping out the curb and removing most parking spots on the south side of Nakoma Road. There is no sanitary or water work anticipated, but storm sewer work will be necessary. No properties will be assessed for this project. There is a virtual public information meeting scheduled for 5:30 p.m., Dec. 2, 2024, via Zoom. Registration prior is required.
- [Meyer Avenue Reconstruction, Tuesday, December 3:](#) A public information meeting is scheduled for this project at 6 p.m., Dec. 3, 2024, via Zoom. Registration prior is required. Details on the project design, construction schedule, residential impacts, and special assessments will be discussed. The presentation will be posted on this website for anyone unable to attend.
- [Playground Workshop, Thursday, December 5:](#) Madison Parks will replace five existing playgrounds in 2025, and neighbors are invited to attend a virtual playground workshop! Parks staff will present an overview of the playground replacement program and ask for input on design decisions. Join Parks staff at a virtual community meeting on Thursday, December 5 at 6:00pm via Zoom - REGISTER IN ADVANCE.

Announcements and News Releases

- [Hundreds of new affordable units get funding from City of Madison:](#) Hundreds of proposed new income- and rent-restricted apartments will receive financial support from the City of Madison's Community Development Division after another round of Affordable Housing Fund awards were approved by the Common Council. [posted November 27, 2024]

- [Update: Reconstruction to Pause Until Spring Due to Cold Weather](#): Due to cold weather the remaining work within the Doty St and Martin Luther King Jr Blvd intersection has been rescheduled for the Spring of 2025. R.G. Huston will perform this work as temperatures allow in Spring of 2025. Learn more about the... [posted November 27, 2024]
- [Public Health Alerts Community to Rising Pertussis \(Whooping Cough\) Cases Ahead of Holidays](#): Public Health Madison & Dane County is urging everyone to be aware of the ongoing pertussis (whooping cough) outbreak ahead of upcoming holiday season. [posted November 26, 2024]
- [50th Anniversary celebration of Madison Arts marks banner fundraising year](#): The Madison Arts Commission (MAC) is proud to celebrate 50 years of dedication to public art and community art-making and invites the community to join in on the celebration in early December. [posted November 25, 2024]

Please [visit the City news webpage](#) to find additional news and announcements and to subscribe to receive notification of news releases as they are posted.

Events

- [Virtual Open House: Southwest Area Plan, Tuesday, December 3](#): If you are unable to join the in-person open house to kick off the Southwest Area Plan process, you can join Planning, Engineering, Transportation, Parks, and others in a virtual open house on December 3, 2024, from Noon to 1:00pm. There will be a brief presentation at the start, but feel free to drop in and stay for a few minutes or the entire time to ask questions about the process.
- [Mobile Vaccination Clinic: Catholic Multicultural Center, Tuesday, December 3](#): We're hosting mobile vaccination clinics throughout the county in partnership with community organizations! All vaccines are free to those eligible. Read more to learn more.
- [Virtual Open House: Southwest Area Plan, Tuesday, December 3](#): If you are unable to join the in-person open house to kick off the Southwest Area Plan process, you can join Planning, Engineering, Transportation, Parks, and others in a virtual open house on December 3, 2024, from 6:00pm to 7:00pm. There will be a brief presentation at the start, but feel free to drop in and stay for a few minutes or the entire time to ask questions about the process.
- [In-Person Open House: Southeast Area Plan kickoff event, Wednesday, December 4](#): Join Planning, Engineering, Transportation, Parks, and others at an open house on December 4, 2024, from 6:00-7:30 p.m. at LaFollette High School Cafeteria and Commons, 702 Pflaum Road. There will be a brief presentation at the start, but feel free to drop in and stay for a few minutes or the entire time to learn about the Southeast Area Plan and other upcoming projects in the Southeast Area.

- [Virtual Open House: Southeast Area Plan, Thursday, December 5](#): If you are unable to join the in-person open house to kick off the Southwest Area Plan process, you can join Planning, Engineering, Transportation, Parks, and others in a virtual open house on December 5, 2024 from Noon to 1:00pm. There will be a brief presentation at the start, but feel free to drop in and stay for a few minutes or the entire time to learn about the Southeast Area Plan and other upcoming projects in the Southeast Area.
- [Madison Arts Commission 50th Anniversary Celebration, Thursday, December 5](#): The Madison Arts Commission invites you to its 50th Anniversary celebration at the Madison Children’s Museum on December 5th at 4:00pm. This event will be family-friendly and include live performances by VO5 and others, as well as arts activities with artists.
- [HolidayFest Arts & Crafts Fair, Saturday, December 7](#): Join us for the 25th annual HolidayFest Arts & Crafts Fair held the first Saturday in December each year. Over 80 vendors from the Midwest will be selling their handmade goods. Shop for a variety of jewelry, baskets, garden art, cards, pottery, woodwork, baby gifts, soaps, balms, lotions, knitwear, paintings, home décor and more! It's the perfect place to find a unique gift for that special someone!
- [District 11 Book Club with Stu Levitan, December 11](#): For our next District 11 Book Club on December 11th, Stu Levitan will give an illustrated talk on Madison in the 1970s, adapted from his forthcoming book, Madison: The Illustrated Sesquicentennial History, Volume 2, 1932 to 1979.

Additional upcoming events can also be found on the [City events calendar](#).

That's all for now.

Take good care and stay safe this holiday season.

Tag

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From: [Josh Napravnik](#)
To: [Evers, Tag](#)
Cc: [All Alders](#)
Subject: Parking - 86251
Date: Tuesday, December 3, 2024 2:19:08 PM
Attachments: [image.png](#)
[image.png](#)

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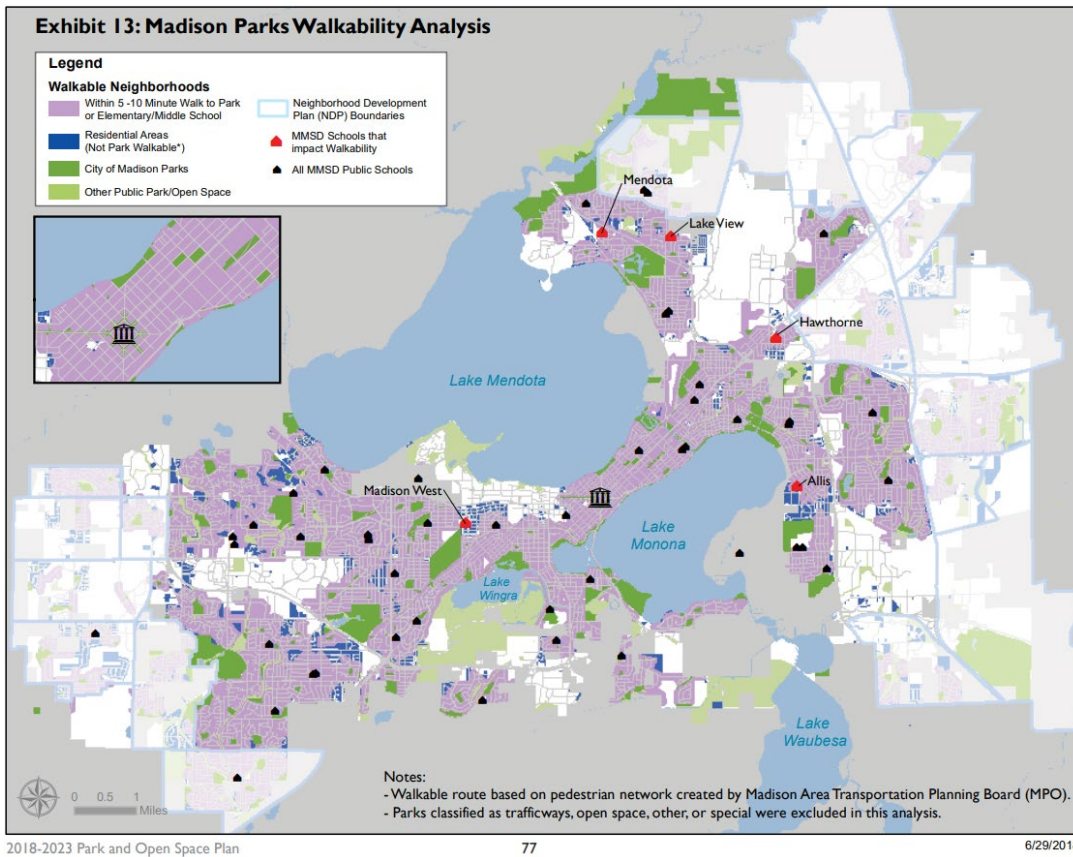
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Hi Tag,

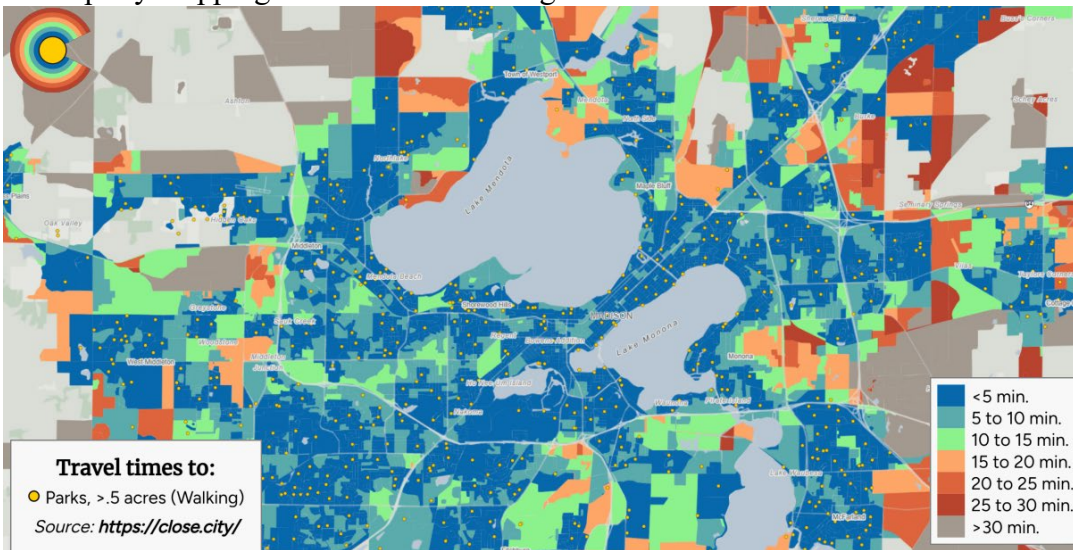
I wanted to email to say that I am in support of the pilot program that will add fees for parking. Free parking ironically incentivizes and subsidizes the driving of polluting cars to greenspaces. Adding reasonable parking fees can help reduce the amount the City subsidizes driving. For example, the Wilson Street garage is already subsidizing drivers \$240/mo/parking space. Recent park budgets also have a lot of money going towards parking lot maintenance/construction.

Regarding parking for special events, Warner Park has around 800 parking spaces and the Mallards have 36 home games a year. Even a modest special event rate of \$10 could net \$275,000 per year for the City. Badger fans parking at Vilas for football games prevent people from parking for the zoo anyways. Wingra Park regularly has boat trailers parked in the grass over the parking spots that limits access to the pathway and harms the grass. Having drivers pay their fair share seems valuable here. A Commuter/Polluter Fee that can help with park maintenance would make sense.

I also see that a lot of opponents are making equity arguments. However, the City's own research on this in 2018 showed that walkability is not a problem in most of the City and stated that "The City provides community **park service area coverage for approximately 97% of all areas of residential land use..**"



Third-party mapping shows similar findings -



So, what exactly are we providing when we provide 24/7 free parking to all City parks? Are we making the parks more green by expanding the percentage of the parks that are covered with surface lots? Are we helping the lakes combat surface run-off by paving more of the parks? Are we allowing more people to enjoy the parks by adding parking to parks that are already within walking distance?

I hope that we can find a way to start to address the high cost of free parking in the City by allowing the pilot to move forward.

Thanks,
Josh Napravnik

From: [Josh Olson](#)
To: [All Alders](#)
Cc: [Rummel, Marsha](#)
Subject: Legistar 86251 - Keep the Parking Pilot
Date: Tuesday, December 10, 2024 7:54:35 AM

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Hi Alders,

I'm re-upping my support for the proposed parking pilot for Wisconsin Football game day parkers. It looks like it generates revenue from non-Madison residents, which is a nice tradeoff for the congestion that the cars bring into the area.

After a whole year of budget deliberations it seems inadvisable to table a revenue positive pilot project. If it's truly a bad idea, it doesn't need to be extended into a full project. That's what pilots are for and I hope that Parks is ready to gather the right data to allow you all to make informed decisions. The goal itself is laudable and saying no to money now and making cuts to programs that do affect Madisonians in a couple years is poor decision making.

Parking Benefit Districts have helped neighborhoods in Austin, TX and Pittsburgh, PA generate hundreds of thousands in revenue each year that the communities use to improve their neighborhood. This looks like additional sidewalks, beautification projects, additional patrols, block parties, etc. We should be looking at these and determining if we can have that positive impact here, and that starts with continuing this pilot as planned.

Josh Olson

From: sluysb@aol.com
To: [Finance Committee](#); [All Alders](#)
Subject: Agenda Item 35
Date: Monday, December 2, 2024 12:49:40 PM

Some people who received this message don't often get email from sluysb@aol.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

To: All Alders, Finance Committee
From: Beth Sluys, District 18
Date: 02 December 2024
RE: Parking Pilot Program Funding
Legistar: 86251

Agenda Item: 35

Please vote YES for the amendment for the Pay to Park in the Parks pilot project.

As a Northside resident, I am aware that the Mallards baseball games are “special use” events that often use most of the parking in Warner Park. In meeting with neighbors, I have heard that it removes their use of the park to use the accessible playground and the fishing pier area near the Rainbow Shelter. There is no parking available.

In 2015, during a National Public Radio story, Vern Stenman (Big Top Sports and Entertainment, Inc.) reported that he increased the number of attendees to 200,000 per year at Mallards games. I am sure that has increased over time. Given that number and the base rate of \$8 per ticket (not including all the other ticket prices or concession sales) they gross at least 1.6 million dollars. If our Parks Department needs to net 24,000 dollars, then why not amend the lease contract between parks and Big Top S&E to include a small percentage of the ticket sales each year to cover parking lot rentals?

It seems that for weeks on end during the Summer months, the parking lots at Warner Park are used for special events and we, the public taxpayers, pay for the park, the parking lots and ongoing maintenance and then are unable to use the parking lots. This is only more prevalent as the second franchise of women’s softball has been added. These games are yet more times over the course of the Summer months that parking opportunities are removed from the public for special event parking.

Please consider an amendment to the current rental agreement with Big Top to include a rental fee (% of ticket sales) for all of the parking lots and include a fee to use the football field next to the stadium when it is in use by Big Top each Summer.

Thank you.

