



Madison's Central Business Improvement District (BID)

MEMO

Date: April 10, 2012

To: Members of the Transit & Parking Commission
Bill Knobeloch, Parking Operations Manager
David Dryer, Traffic Engineer and Parking Manager
Anne Monks, Assistant to the Mayor

From: Mary Carbine, Executive Director
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Re: Proposed Parking Rate Increase – BID response to staff comments

Dear Members of the Transit & Parking Commission,

The Business Improvement District (BID) thanks the TPC for slowing down the discussion of the parking rate increase to allow for more dialogue, analysis, and public input. We appreciate the good ideas and discussion from TPC members, Parking Utility staff, and the public at the March 14 meeting. We were glad to see the ideas addressed in the memo prepared by Bill Knobeloch for your April 11 meeting, and have the responses below.

FYI, link to BID Board memo for March 14 meeting:

<http://legistar.cityofmadison.com/attachments/ab42b4ee-ea9c-4bba-b407-0dac866081af.pdf>

BID response to staff comments for April 11 meeting:

1) Overall:

- We think there are still unanswered questions and a need for more holistic analysis of downtown parking, the Parking Utility's costs and revenues, and the economic development impacts of parking rates.
- What is the projection for future parking rate increases if all of the ramps identified for replacement are replaced by the utility in the proposed timeframe? Does the Parking Utility intend to request a rate increase every three years? Where are rates projected to go to accomplish these replacements?
- In its usage and revenue projections, has the Parking Utility accounted for potential loss of customers and revenue due to rate increases? (For example, major employers choosing to relocate to where they can find free parking and thus lower overall occupancy costs, or potential reduction in hourly customers due to higher gas prices and continued recession).

2) Specific:

RE: #3. Special Event POE Parking (p. 4) on Staff Memo, the BID's suggestions were not simply to either maintain the special event rate or develop a system where parkers not attending the event can pay a lower rate. The BID recommended that the Parking Utility create a specific plan to **accommodate and communicate** with parking customers who are not attending special events. BID gave several specific suggestions to improving the communication system and to direct non-event parkers to other options (signage, adding special event parking info to the real-time parking availability website). Also, in the future can garages be modified and new equipment used to reserve certain stalls for short-term parkers?

While staff report a relatively low level of complaints during the special event POE parking for recent WIAA basketball tournaments, it should be noted that staff may not hear from customers who experience a parking system and price structure that is inequitable and unfriendly to the purpose of their visit. They simply don't come back.

While staff notes that the UW and Alliant Energy Center (AEC) do not have a method to charge different parkers different rates during a large POE event, this is not an apples-to-apples comparison. The UW and AEC do not have shopping, dining and service businesses that draw non-event customers to the area, so a different method of charging different customers isn't needed. In contrast, downtown Madison does have restaurants, retail and service businesses whose current and potential customers are not accommodated under the present system. Furthermore, the idea of sending short-term, non-event parkers to "other facilities" has a chilling effect on current and potential customers of downtown businesses. These parking customers should be accommodated at facilities that are conveniently located to their destinations.

RE: #4, Keep the current pole meter at \$1.50 – Could staff provide more detail? What was used to calculate the "opportunity cost"? Where are the projected pole vs. multi-space meter locations for 2012-beyond, and what are usage levels at these locations?

RE: #5, Increase on-street meter enforcement hours to create turnover for businesses open after 6pm. It should be noted that the suggestion was to do so in very specific areas such as near Overture (which staff has recommended), and (using the multi-space meters) during specific hours, i.e., special events, to provide options for short term non event parkers. It was also noted that it would be very important to discuss length of the parking allowed. 90 minutes would be enough for retail but not restaurant dinner customers, who might need 2 hrs.

RE: #6, Create a differential price for essential vs. non-essential use of meters. The staff suggestion of not permitting parking of vehicles for advertising purposes is a good one as long as it would address the uses of concern (i.e., parking of semis for days during protests last year).

RE: #9, Return some of the parking citation and parking fee revenues to the Utility: We believe this should continue to be explored. Do we know how much annual revenue this is? How much would need to come back to the utility to make the cost of enforcement revenue-neutral?

The BID is interested in working with parking Utility staff so that further discussion can occur in positive ways. Thank you, and please contact me if you have questions or would like to discuss.