

TPC 08.14.13  
ITEM G.1.  
HAND-OUT

**Benishek-Clark, Anne**

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**From:** Mary Carbine [MCarbine@visitdowntownmadison.com]  
**Sent:** Friday, August 09, 2013 2:15 PM  
**To:** Benishek-Clark, Anne  
**Cc:** Woznick, Thomas  
**Subject:** For the TPC on Short Term Parking Item on 8/14 agenda  
**Attachments:** BID\_Vision\_Retail.pdf

Hello Anne/Tom,

Can you please forward below/attached to the members of the TPC? Thanks!

Dear Members of the Transit & Parking Commission,

I'm writing on behalf of the Central Business Improvement District (BID) about upcoming agenda item G. 1., Parking: Proposal to expand short-term parking at State Street Capitol Garage. The BID represents commercial property and retail, restaurant, service and entertainment business owners in the greater State Street and Capitol Square area. We support these businesses through programs such as the Downtown Madison Map & Guide, the Downtown Ambassador Program which provides visitor services, the visitdowntownmadison.com website, etc.

We are very excited to see options for more short-term garage parking being explored. The need for more short-term parking is a top issue for downtown businesses and customers. Prime shopping times, i.e., weekends and evenings, often coincide with special event parking. Customers/non-event parkers are frustrated to pay \$5 to park for 30 or 60 minutes just pick up a book, a prescription, or to grab lunch. Some customers avoid downtown altogether during events due to parking issues, and many retailers report drop-offs in business during events. With downtown retailers increasing challenged by online shopping, it is more important than ever to offer a *convenient* customer experience, including short-term parking.

Please see the attached BID Retail Strategy which expands upon the importance of parking and convenience for downtown retail (parking-specific recommendations on p. 5).

Please contact me if you have any questions, and we look forward to good discussion the 14<sup>th</sup>!

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**III. BID Recommendations to encourage retail business retention, expansion and recruitment, based on demonstrated actions and policies shown to improve retail and business mix in downtowns:**

- **Short term: Prioritize the downtown customer experience - Clean, Safe, Convenient**
  - Clean, well-maintained and attractive public spaces.
  - Safe and well-lit public spaces.
  - Convenient, good-value public parking focused on the customer experience:
    - Prioritizing cleanliness and safety of public parking facilities.
    - Maintaining and improving the vehicle parking supply.
    - Expanding short-term parking convenient to shopping/dining.
    - Improving the special event parking system to provide convenient options for non-event parkers.
    - Improving real-time information about where parking is available.
    - Improving the bicycle parking supply (beyond on-street parking).
  - Convenient access to and through downtown, vehicle and multi-modal. Includes strategic consideration of road closures and alternate access for events and construction.
  - Improved (not necessarily more) wayfinding signage to and through downtown, including better “trailblazing” signage to lead visitors to major attractions and parking.
  - Multi-platform communications to serve diverse populations: Adapt information sources to support the increased use of mobile devices without abandoning traditional communications (signage, print materials).
  
- **Medium term: Support business development and a quality business experience:**
  - Handbook for small businesses with customer-focused information resources about city policies, regulations, and services. This could be developed by city agencies in collaboration with business organizations, perhaps using the model of the Road Construction Survival Guide.
  - Process and customer service improvement for small business permitting and licensing.
  - Tenant Improvement or other incentive funding, e.g.:
    - Expand façade improvement grant program to include signage package or retail build-out
    - Update TIF policy to allow use of TIF for (non-food) retail build-out.
    - Explore incentive funding along the lines of the package of grants and forgivable loans implemented in Milwaukee (2010) to provide incentives for retailers to locate downtown.
  
- **Long term: Expand downtown resident and worker customer base.**
  - Recognizing that retail follows the market (it doesn't lead), it is essential to foster increased residential and workforce density in downtown. To attract neighborhood-serving retail and general goods and services, we need to significantly increase the market of residents and workers with disposable income in the central downtown. Currently, the visitor and student markets predominate in central downtown; these markets are inconsistent and don't generate demand for neighborhood-serving retail.