

# City of Madison Transportation Commission

## Action Item Detail – April 29, 2026

**Action Title:** Capitol East Area Paid Parking Test Zone

**Presenter:** Stefanie Cox, Parking Division Director

### Action Summary

This resolution authorizes the Parking Division to implement on-street paid parking zones in the Capitol East area as part of a test program under MGO 12.143(1). The test will feature different days and hours for paid parking than in traditional metered zones, use various payment technologies, and implement flexible rates that adjust according to demand.

### Background

The proposed test area is located in the Capitol East District near the South Livingston Street Garage. Over the past decade, this area has experienced significant growth, with new development and business activity increasing demand for on-street curb space.

Most of the current parking restrictions were established in 2018 following the development of the South Livingston Street Garage and The Spark Building and primarily reflect pre-COVID weekday demand patterns associated with traditional office use. As the area has evolved to include entertainment venues, hotels, residential developments, restaurants, and nightlife, curbside demand has shifted and intensified, particularly during afternoons, evenings, and weekends.

To better understand these changes, staff conducted outreach with area businesses, organizations, and stakeholders. This engagement helped identify operational needs and curbside challenges, which informed the development of a test approach that includes paid parking zones, flexible loading areas, and designated rideshare spaces.

### On-Street Paid Parking

The test will implement paid parking seven days a week from 10:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m., replacing the traditional 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. schedule. This adjustment aligns paid parking hours with current peak demand periods and is intended to improve availability and turnover during high-use times.

A three-hour time limit will be applied within these zones to support short-term parking needs and discourage long-term vehicle storage during peak periods, particularly during events.

The program will also test an asset-light approach to payment, including an app-based payment zone. A new payment kiosk will be installed in the area to evaluate its effectiveness as part of future system planning. In addition, the Parking Division is exploring the use of a second mobile payment provider to expand customer options and improve accessibility.

### Rates

On-street parking rates will begin at the current standard rate of \$2.00 per hour. As part of the test, we will evaluate a demand-based pricing model that allows rates to adjust based on usage patterns. This approach provides the ability to lower rates during periods of lower demand and increase rates during peak times to better manage availability and support efficient use of curb space.

## Equity Goal Impacts

A Racial Equity and Social Justice (RESJ) analysis of the proposed test, which found that paid parking may disproportionately impact lower-income individuals, particularly those with limited transit access or without smartphones. To help reduce these impacts, the Parking Division will provide information on travel options, including nearby free parking, Metro Transit routes, BCycle stations, and the MPO RoundTrip program, and will include a kiosk payment option to improve accessibility. A Capitol East webpage will also be created to share information and gather public feedback, and staff will monitor impacts throughout the test to inform future adjustments.