

**From:** Mary Carbine [mailto:mcarbine@downtownmadison.org]  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 05, 2009 3:47 PM  
**To:** Solomon, Brian; Webber, Robbie; Sanborn, Jed; retrotech@gdinet.com;  
ms.amanda.white@gmail.com; GaryPoulson@gmail.com; dhinz@att.net; smccabe@bus.wisc.edu;  
kmstreit@wisc.edu; mmmbergamini@facstaff.wisc.edu  
**Cc:** Knobeloch, Bill; Dryer, David; Verveer, Mike; Schmitz, Susan; Plant, Joel  
**Subject:** BID Board Letter re: Proposed Parking Rate Increase

Dear Members of the Transit and Parking Commission,

Attached please find a letter to the Transit and Parking Commission from the Board of Madison's Central Business Improvement District (BID) regarding the proposed Parking Rate increase. We look forward to good discussion at the March 10 public hearing. Please contact me with any questions.

(Bill, please note the suggested analysis on p. 2: "Analyze the budget impact of raising the Evening/Weekend Max to \$4 (from \$3) while keeping the meter enforcement times from 8am to 6pm and keeping the Special Event rate at \$4 rather than raising it to \$5." We hope this can be accomplished by the March 10 hearing. Thank you.)

Thank you,

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Mary Carbine  
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Madison's Central Business Improvement District (BID)  
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Madison, WI 53701  
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## Madison's Central Business Improvement District (BID)

### MEMO

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Date: March 5, 2009

To: Members of the Transit & Parking Commission  
Bill Knobeloch, Parking Utility  
David Dryer, Traffic Engineer and Parking Manager  
Joel Plant, Mayoral Aide

From: Mary Carbine  
Executive Director, Madison's Central Business Improvement District (BID)  
P.O. Box 71 Madison, WI 53701 t (608) 443-1973 f (608) 256-0333  
mcarbine@downtownmadison.org www.visitdowntownmadison.com

Re: Proposed Parking Rate Increase

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Dear Members of the Transit & Parking Commission,

The Board of the Business Improvement District represents property and business owners in the greater State Street and Capitol Square area, including 370 retail, restaurant, service and entertainment businesses, the majority locally-owned.

The BID Board has input on three areas of the proposed Parking Rate Increase:

#### 1. Special Event Parking Rates

The BID Board expresses great concern about:

- The lack of options for non-event parkers. This penalizes "regulars" – regular customers for parking and downtown businesses;
- The proposed Special Event fee increase from \$4 to \$5;
- The negative impacts of this rate increase, coupled with inadequate customer service for non-event parkers, for both downtown businesses and parking customers.

The BID Board understands the need for a special event parking system and rates. However, there is a gap in the system. It does not serve the parkers and customers who are NOT attending special events, and who are trying to patronize downtown businesses, go to the winter Farmer's Market, etc.

Parking customers coming downtown for dinner or pick up something at a store will most likely stay 1.5 to 2 hours. If they have to pay a \$5 special event fee, this translates into \$2.50/hr or more per hour, much higher than the normal parking fee per hour.

BID businesses receive many complaints from customers about the current \$4 cost of event parking when they are coming to shop or dine downtown. We hear from many parking/business customers who now avoid downtown because of this single factor. In the current economic downturn, while the Parking Utility is facing declining revenues, it is inadvisable to have a system that deters a broad range of customers from coming downtown and generating revenue for both the Parking Utility and downtown businesses.

Special events occur with great frequency and duration during key downtown shopping, dining and entertainment days and hours.

For example, on Saturday, February 14, many people were coming downtown to attend the Madison Winter Festival, and shop and dine for Valentine's Day. In this economy, our local retailers and restaurants depend more than ever on these events and "good weekends." On February 14, the Overture Ramp and State Street Capitol ramp – key ramps for State Street and Capitol Square area shoppers and diners - were tied up from noon through 8pm with special event parking.

The BID Board recommends that the Parking Utility:

a) Analyze the budget impact of raising the Evening/Weekend Max to \$4 (from \$3) while keeping the meter enforcement times from 8am to 6pm and keeping the Special Event rate at \$4 rather than raising it to \$5. Raising the Evening/Weekend Max could be preferable and have less negative customer impact than raising special event rates or extending meter enforcement.

b) Evaluate the number and frequency of special events, and ramps used, to apply more stringent criteria (is special event rate really needed so many hours at more than one ramp?).

c) Create a specific plan to accommodate and communicate with parking customers who are NOT attending special events. For example:

- Spaces in ramps reserved for short term parking in ramps
- Validation system to provide refund to short term (2 hours or under) parkers who receive validation at a downtown business
- Clear & consistent use of portable signage directing parkers to short-term, non-event parking.
- Using new technologies (programmable meters in ramps, electronic signage) to provide good customer service and boost revenue.

Having a special events list on the website is one element of communication, but it is not enough. It is unrealistic to expect parking customers to check a website before coming downtown to shop or dine. The Parking Utility needs to find ways to provide customer service and good communication to non-event parkers when they arrive downtown.

## **2. Hourly Meter Rates in Underutilized Areas:**

The Board encourages the Parking Utility to consider keeping the downtown meter rate at the current rate (\$1.25/hr) in areas where parking meters are underutilized. This could prevent loss of customers and revenues due to rate increases in areas where there is already lower demand.

### 3. Rates for meter hoods

The BID Board supports the revised staff proposal for meter hood rates.

The Board understands that meter hood rates need to be high enough to discourage non-essential use, to keep meters free for the public and customers. However, meter hoods are essential to the operations of some businesses (entertainment, hospitality). For example, some businesses have contractual obligations to provide parking space immediately adjacent to their building for equipment load-in/load out, and they have no option but meter hoods. For these businesses, the initial proposed meter hood rate posed an undue burden. We support the revised staff rate increase proposal.

The BID is interested in working 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.

On behalf of the BID Board,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mary Carbine". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping tail on the letter "i".

Mary Carbine  
Executive Director  
Madison's Central Business Improvement District (BID)  
(608) 443-1973 [mcarbine@downtownmadison.org](mailto:mcarbine@downtownmadison.org)

From: Lowe, Jon [<mailto:jon.lowe@usfood.com>]  
Sent: Thursday, March 05, 2009 4:47 PM  
To: Parking  
Subject: rates

Rates are already too high!!!!

Jon Lowe  
Territory Manager  
US Foodservice  
1-800-285-2442 ext 7360

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**From:** Jason and Kim Carlisle [<mailto:carlislejkm@yahoo.com>]  
**Sent:** Friday, March 06, 2009 9:58 AM  
**To:** Parking  
**Subject:** Parking Increase

March 6, 2009

To Whom It May Concern:

The recent notice from the Madison Transit and Parking Commission for a proposal to modify parking rates at the lots, ramps and on-street meters was met with a lot of frustration in my home. In today's struggling economy where things continue to cost more and more, I felt that because I park at a popular parking ramp downtown I was being penalized to come to work.

My husband and I drive an hour into Madison everyday for work; it is what is necessary to put food on the table. Car pooling was the best way to save money; however, this proposed \$50 increase to the Government East Ramp seems very extreme. I understand it is a prime location, compared to other ramps; however, monthly parkers shouldn't be the ones that are penalized for the increase. I do understand that even the city needs to make increases to their fees to help in this economy, and I could see a \$15 or \$25 increase, something gradual, but for some of us, this is basically equivalent to a half a day worth of pay. I also don't understand looking at the breakdown of increases, why it seems every other ramp is only getting increased slightly when compared to Government East.

I hope that when the board considers the increase, they think about the monthly workers and the fact that when they pay to park...they are paying just to go to work!

Sincerely,

Kimberly M. Curtis-Carlisle

**From:** Mike Greenhalgh [mailto:mikegreenhalgh@kellyfi.com]  
**Sent:** Friday, March 06, 2009 1:35 PM  
**To:** Parking  
**Subject:** Parking Increases

Rather than 20% increase why can't Governor Doyle share some of the Millions he gets in the Bailout money to help replace aging ramps in the City. Why do you always need to "Double Dip" and "Triple Dip" with federal, state and now local increases in a period of huge recession!!!! Now Doyle even wants to add a ½% sales tax for more transit programs-wow!!

Madison resident

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From: jdfritsch@charter.net [mailto:jdfritsch@charter.net]  
Sent: Friday, March 06, 2009 4:11 PM  
To: Parking  
Subject: Raising Parking Rates

To the Transit and Parking Commission -

I think it would be a mistake to raise the parking rates in the downtown area. I thought the city was trying to encourage people to come downtown and enjoy the cultural opportunities, shop the downtown businesses, and eat in the downtown restaurants. Raising parking rates only discourages people further from coming downtown.

I am a docent at the Madison Museum of Contemporary Art. We volunteers have to pay for all our own parking when we give tours and attend orientations and training sessions. To raise our parking rates is just another slap in the face, discouraging volunteerism.

I hope you'll think hard before commencing with this rate increase.

Very truly yours,  
John Fritsch

[jdfritsch@charter.net](mailto:jdfritsch@charter.net)

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**From:** Herl, Angela K - DOA [mailto:Angela.Herl@wisconsin.gov]  
**Sent:** Friday, March 06, 2009 1:44 PM  
**To:** Webber, Robbie; Parking  
**Cc:** Solomon, Brian; Sanborn, Jed; retrotech@gdinet.com; ms.amanda.white@gmail.com; GaryPoulson@gmail.com; dhinz@att.net; smccabe@bus.wisc.edu; kmstreit@wisc.edu; mumbergamini@facstaff.wisc.edu  
**Subject:** RE: Proposed parking rate increase

I take exception to your 'suggestions' regarding my concerns to the parking rate increase. After reading your responses, I've come to the conclusion that you, yourself, are not a mother. I've provided information below explaining why your suggestions are not reasonable.

The definition of emergency is below:

*Emergency – An unexpected situation or sudden occurrence of a serious and urgent nature that demands immediate action.*

Who are you to assume that a 'few additional blocks of walking would most likely not add much time' to my response in an emergency? You are not familiar with my children's medical conditions nor what I've experienced with them in the past.

Regarding the Community Car, can you provide a guarantee that this car will be available for my use at any given moment?

Have you used a cab lately? Are you aware of the amount of time it takes for a cab to arrive? Are you aware that many stops may or may not occur before you reach your destination? Am I to transport my child in this 'cab' when they're already in a fragile state and/or in need of immediate medical attention?

I'm somewhat shocked at your suggestion of arranging for another adult to 'be on call' if MY child has an emergency. My children are first and foremost my responsibility. Furthermore, you are assuming that I would have a person available to me. Most of the people I know work full time as I do.

Your comment about 'many parents do not have access to a car during the day' and 'many cannot afford to even own a car' is completely irrelevant to the matter at hand – raising the parking rate by 35%.

I find your responses insulting and nothing short of disturbing, irresponsible and unrealistic.

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**From:** Webber, Robbie [mailto:district5@cityofmadison.com]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 03, 2009 1:48 PM  
**To:** Herl, Angela K - DOA  
**Subject:** RE: Proposed parking rate increase

Angela -

If I could give you one of two suggestions to help you with your concerns about having access to a car in case of emergency:

1. Other ramps in downtown are considerably cheaper than Government East. The few additional blocks of walking would most likely not add much time to your response to an emergency.
2. Community Car has several cars in the downtown (including Block 89, across from Government East) that you could use if an emergency arises. A membership allows you to use any of the cars around town.
3. A cab would probably be considerably cheaper than paying for parking. My guess is that family emergencies don't arise so frequently that the cab bills would exceed monthly parking.

4. Ask your employer about Emergency Rise Home. Many employers participate in this, and I believe the State of Wisconsin does.

5. Combine bus and driving by parking at a remote location and driving the last portion. Many areas of Madison have excellent, frequent bus service which would likely add only a small amount of time to your emergency response, and then you could use the car for the rest of the trip. Biking the distance between your car and work in good weather would probably be even faster than the bus.

6. Arrange for another adult to be on call if your child has an emergency, and you cannot get home quickly enough. You could still take the bus, cab, bike, or drive from a farther location, but would know that someone else can be there within minutes.

Many parents do not have access to a car during the day. Many cannot afford to even own a car. Parking is a luxury in an urban environment, and is fairly inexpensive in Madison.

Our public parking ramps are paid for 100% through parking fees paid by users, and the ramps are aging. We must either rebuild them or sell them. If the ramps are sold to private interests, I would guess your parking fees would be considerably higher.

If you think the Parking Utility should sell the ramps instead of raising fees, I would support that. The City could then collect property taxes on the valuable urban land. But again, I'm guessing the daytime parking fees would be much higher with a private ramp.

Alder Robbie Webber  
Madison Common Council, District 5  
Transit and Parking Commission member

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From: Herl, Angela K - DOA [<mailto:Angela.Herl@wisconsin.gov>]  
Sent: Tuesday, March 03, 2009 10:08 AM  
To: Parking  
Subject: Proposed parking rate increase  
Importance: High

I am writing in response to a notice I received yesterday regarding raising the parking rates in the Parking Utility-operated lots, ramps and on-street meters.

I have worked for the State of Wisconsin in the downtown area since 1987 with the exception of a few years while I worked at the Department of Revenue on Rimrock Road. Some of those years, I lived downtown and walked to work. When I moved to Monona, I rode the bus. When I bought my first home, I rode the bus. When I started having children, I made the decision that it was important to have immediate access to my vehicle in case of an emergency. I started driving and succumbed to paying the outrageous parking fees charged by both private and public vendors in the downtown area. I currently park in the Government East ramp and pay \$133.00 monthly. According to the proposal, the rate will increase to \$180.00 monthly. This amounts to an increase of 35%.

I feel that I'm being placed in a position to choose between the safe-being of my children or going broke paying for parking. According to Governor Doyle, state employees will not be receiving further increases that normally amount to a minimal 1% - 2% per year. Expenses continue to escalate at a rapid speed; however, the salary does not and cannot keep up.

Please re-consider this unmanageable increase.

Many thanks,

Angie Herl



## Comments for the Proposal to Modify Parking Rates

I would like to comment on the proposed parking rate increase. I drive to work everyday and park at Government East only because my employer requires me to use my car for work. If that wasn't the case, I would surely ride the bus. When the rates were raised a couple of years ago, 2006, one of the main reasons given was to build a new ramp at Gov't East. Of course, it was not said when the ramp would be built but implied that it would be soon. When the last increase was instituted, why wasn't the full cost incorporated into that increase? or at least advise the public of when the next scheduled increases would occur. It would have been more palatable to say that the rates would be increasing every two years rather than coming back at "arbitrary" points in times and saying "we didn't ask enough the first time and we need even more money". Not only did the rates increase but how the fee increments were calculated was changed from 15 minutes to 30 minutes—in effect a second increase.

Now we have the additional cost of new meters brought into the mix which actually won't bring in a significant amount of new revenue. The installation of new meters should be put on hold for a few years or slowly incorporated. This is not the time to start making upgrades which may not be necessary yet.

I oppose a rate increase at this time without seeing written proposals, construction schedules, and cost of the improvements.

Sheila Sims  
6021 Roseberg Rd  
Madison WI 53719