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**PARKING STAFF RECOMMENDATION TO  
TRANSIT AND PARKING COMMISSION**

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**AGENDA ITEM: G.3.**

**MEETING DATE: January 15, 2008**

**ITEM: Snow Emergency and Premium Monthly Rate modifications**

**STAFF DISCUSSION OF ITEM:**

**DECLARED SNOW EMERGENCY PARKING RATES**

In 2001, the TPC approved a general rate modification that included provisions for operations and rates at structured facilities during snow emergencies. The purpose was to allow downtown residents to park off the street during declared snow emergencies while the streets were being plowed. The times used for "free" parking during declared snow emergencies are 1:00 AM to 7:00 AM. These are the times when most of the snow plowing is accomplished. With this December's heavy snowfall and motorist non-compliance with alternate side and snow emergency parking rules, it has become apparent that the City needs to do more to encourage downtown parkers to remove their vehicles from the street so that Streets can clear the snow in a more efficient manner. The current non-pay hours do not conflict with the Parking Utility's bond covenants that require no free parking, since system revenues are maintained. Many motorists who park during snow emergencies come in before 1:00 AM and/or leave after 7:00 AM, providing incremental system revenue to protect bond holders from financial harm.

The Mayor's Office, the City snow team and a number of Alders have been meeting to discuss snow removal and ideas for improvement. One of these ideas is to increase the number of hours that motorists can park without charge in the Parking Utility's structured facilities. This would allow motorists to arrive earlier in the evening and get an additional four hours of "free" parking.

The Parks Department is also considering opening up some of their surface lots to allow motorists to park off-street during declared snow emergencies. This is important since Parking Utility facilities are only convenient to motorists in the CBD area.

**PREMIUM MONTHLY PASS**

All monthly pass holders are required to leave the public parking facility at 6:00 PM (Overture) or 10:00 PM (others). Potential customers have complained that this puts us at a competitive disadvantage with other parking entities since they often price their monthly passes with 24/7 accessibility. This is especially important for people that work late or need overnight parking if they live downtown. Downtown condo owners sometimes have inadequate or very expensive parking options. This will give them another option. The 6:00 PM exit time for Overture was instituted to keep the facility near empty at the beginning of Overture events. A common Overture curtain time is 7 PM – 8 PM. When Overture customers arrive for events before curtain time, they often pay a \$4 entry fee and can exit with the ticket given to them at the entrance. When Overture was operating at near capacity (with over 200 Alliant Co. leased stalls), it was feared that Overture attendees would have inadequate parking if we opened up nighttime monthly parking. Now Overture operates at 50% occupancy during the normal daytime peak and is typically at 20%-40% during a typical nighttime peak. Monthly pass holders are not counted towards the 10% maximum long-term parkers dictated in the bond covenants. The Parking Utility or the pass holder can cancel with 30 days notice.

**FISCAL IMPLICATIONS:**

Snow Emergency rates: Unknown, it may have a neutral revenue impact

Premium monthly pass: Increased revenue of \$11 - \$171/month/pass holder

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION/RATIONALE:**

**SNOW EMERGENCY**

Expanding the hours of "free" parking during snow emergencies will cost the Parking Utility more in added maintenance and lost revenue. Vehicles bring in added snow/ice/salt to the ramp where it is often deposited (intentionally or unintentionally) on the driving surface causing maintenance issues and accelerated aging of the structures. Other parking customers unrelated to the snow emergency piggyback on the "free" parking by exiting during open gate times. It is impossible to distinguish between downtown residents and others for this "free" time because facilities are often unstaffed and customers can simply exit without paying during declared snow emergencies. We don't know the financial impact of increasing the "free" exit times. It depends on how many snow emergencies are declared and how many non-snow emergency customers exit during this same time period. Staff suspects that a 9:00 PM starting time would have much less financial impact than a 7:00 PM or 8:00 PM starting time due to loss of revenue from special event venues.

**Staff recommends a one-year trial period for a 9:00 PM to 7:00 AM declared snow emergency period at all structured facilities.** After one year, a financial analysis will be completed and parking rates will be adjusted to make up for any lost revenue. This will take place as soon as our software vendor can reprogram all of the entry/exit/cashier stations and the pay-on-foot stations. When this happens, the current snow emergency signage and PU web site will be changed to indicate the new times.

**PREMIUM MONTHLY PASS**

The Parking Utility needs to stay competitive with other parking entities by offering 24/7 monthly passes. Our nighttime occupancy is extremely low and we need to do something to better utilize our facilities.

**Staff recommends a Premium monthly pass be created and used at select facilities.** The price will be 110% of the non-resident/business monthly pass rate. The new Premium monthly pass rates would be:

- Cap Square North: \$129
- Government East: \$172
- Overture Center: \$130
- State St Cap: \$143
- Campus: \$172

These Premium passes would be offered first to current monthly pass holders and then to new monthly pass holders with a limit of 50 per facility. This initiative will be piloted at Overture garage since the required equipment is already in place and the current occupancy is very low.

**PREPARED BY:** Bill Knobloch

**DATE:** January 8, 2008