From: Linda
To: Finance Committee
Cc: Rummel, Marsha
Subject: Legistar 86251, parking pilot comment
Date: Monday, December 2, 2024 11:55:57 AM

I support the pilot program. Parking lots at some parks are often used by people who are not using the park. Where there is heavy use of park parking for non-park purposes there should be a charge.

If this resolution does pass, it is unlikely there will even be a feasibility study of charging for non-park use parking. If this resolution does not pass, Parks would at least need to study the concept and see how it could work. Either way, it does not affect the Parks overall budget.

The resolution states that "establishing a paid parking program would be a significant change in how the Parks Division manages City parkland." The Parks Division already charges for many park uses, including items such as the use of backstops, basketball courts, multipurpose fields, pickleball courts, and soccer fields. Since Parks already charges for a number of park uses, charging for non-park use parking is not a significant change.

Many of the submitted comments reflect a mistaken belief that park users would be charged for parking, which is not surprising given the media coverage of this issue. A number of submitted comments also referenced the small budget impact that the pilot would have and/or suggested that there is not a need for raising more funding since the budget referendum passed. The pilot itself would raise a minimal amount of funds, but that is because it is a pilot. Studying this issue could potentially raise more significant funding in future years. And while the budget is okay for the moment, in just 2 years it is projected that another $10M will be needed. Innovative programs such as this pilot are needed to help reduce future budget deficits. Proceeding with the pilot would reflect that City leadership may actually have an interest in reducing the property tax burden, and the pilot may well become an impetus for other innovative programs.

Respectfully Submitted,
Linda Lehnertz

From: John Nguyen
To: Finance Committee
Subject: File 86251 to remove the paid parking pilot
Date: Sunday, November 24, 2024 9:38:10 AM

Hello,

I'm a resident of the Dudgeon-Monroe neighborhood near Vilas Park where the parking pilot on game days would have taken place, and I am deeply upset by the proposal to cut the pilot from the 2025 budget.

Residents of this neighborhood subsidize an enormous amount of car storage space with both their dollars and the opportunity cost of the space taken up by parked cars, especially during game day when every square inch of the neighborhood is taken up by cars owned by out-of-town non-residents. The paid parking pilot on game days will recoup some of the subsidy we lavish on car parking, so that we can invest it in creating and maintaining wonderful places like Vilas Park and other means of transportation. I strongly urge you to withdraw this reactionary amendment and advance the game day rate pilot.

John Nguyen

From: Josh Olson
To: Evers, Tag; Martinez-Rutherford, Dina Nina; Finance Committee
Cc: Rummel, Marsha; All Alders
Subject: Save Parking for Park Users, not Gameday Commuters (keep the pilot!)
Date: Sunday, November 24, 2024 10:03:30 AM

Hi Alders Evers and Martinez-Rutherford and the Finance Committee,

I saw a motion to remove the planned parking pilot at Vilas. I'll summarize my main concerns and go deeper into detail below, but I think this is a mistake and the pilot should continue as planned.

1. As a pilot, and a pilot that supposedly generates revenue, I think it's bad practice to not test it to understand the tradeoffs based on the end results
2. The pilot was focused on Wisconsin football games. My understanding as a former resident of the Regent area is that on Gamedays a) there's a lot of congestion, b) people are able to charge $30/spot for parking on their private lots in Vilas, and c) for people who don't like Wisconsin football, it's a negative (but part of the deal for living in the neighborhood)
3. Parking Benefit Districts, which this could feasibly become, are boons to the surrounding community and tend to be positive for the neighborhood *if communicated effectively*

If this is all you read, thank you for your time. You should continue the pilot as planned.

...

1: For a council that just spent the whole year having to handle constituents frustrated with the levy limit increase, it's striking that we would immediately turn down a pilot that is revenue positive.
" This amendment anticipated the pilot would cost $15,100 in staffing, supplies, and equipment, and generate $39,000 in agency revenues."
Why does this generate revenue? How many hours of paid parking would there be? Can the revenue from this project be routed to Parks in a way that enhances the zoo/other parks?

What are the tradeoffs? How many less visitors does the zoo get during this time? What are the demographics of visitors to the zoo during this time? Does it meaningfully change? Do they complain about the parking? Do they park on the street outside of the zoo?

These and so many better questions that City Staff will probably think of are why it would be beneficial to study this. Is this a good idea or a terrible idea? Can we at least determine that, so if it's so awful we have evidence to point to in the future if someone tries to implement it again? If we stop the pilot here, we don't get to look at the complex tradeoffs of this system and understand if it's worth pursuing. Who knows, it could end up being a really great thing!

2: I lived on Mills and Spring for 2 years while attending UW-Madison. I walked through the Vilas neighborhood, typically to just around the zoo, on a daily basis. Gameday is a different beast. Thousands of Wisconsinites (and non-Madisonians) park in the neighborhood for

several hours, all for free. How do the residents feel about this?

For the ones that are savvy enough to realize you can get $100 for parking 3 cars on your lawn for those hours, they probably like it. But for everyone else, I would question if they enjoy it. The atmosphere is great if you love football, but not everyone does.

Why don't we have a "tax" for these non-Madisonians who are attending these games? Why should they get to park their car in our parks for several hours while they stand in the stadium? What happens to the families who wanted to go to the zoo, forgot there was a home game, and can't find parking in a reasonable distance for their toddler? Is this fair?

The media jumped on "FrEe PaRkInG gOiNg AwAy?!?!?" and ran with it, and I'm sorry you have to deal with that, but it should be noted that this project would explicitly help Madisonians (unless you were driving from other parts of the City, but I wouldn't know this because I bike or bus to the games now that I'm further away). We could do a better job explaining that.

3: Speaking of better for Madisonians, have you considered a Parking Benefit District (https://parkingreform.org/playbook/pbd/)? Cities like Austin, TX and Pittsburgh, PA have seen hundreds of thousands of revenues each year generated in small districts that charge market-rate parking. These revenues are explicitly directed back to those small districts to help enhance/improve the area.

This means sidewalk networks, extra patrol shifts, newer facilities. Things that if you asked for as a neighborhood would probably end up on some budget item for 2031.

Vilas is attractive because of Camp Randall, Regent, and Monroe. This area can be easily overparked. The local residents get nothing but congestion. Why not flip it on its head? If the area that's serviced by multiple bus routes and one of the best bike paths in the city is so popular for private vehicles, they can help pay their fair share for what makes it so attractive. We can stop subsidizing these drivers and direct funds to the neighbors who have to deal with them. The neighborhood can then use those revenues for better infrastructure, or block parties, or whatever they decide is most valuable.

In conclusion: there's a testable program, that generates money, that reduces things that people don't like (congestion, traffic, noise) for things that people do like (sidewalks, events, etc.). If I'm wrong about the benefits and the tradeoffs aren't worth it, feel free to put me on a pedestal and say "Josh Olson was wrong, and we aren't going to expand this program or do it again". But if I'm right, and we decided to not do the pilot, we are hamstringing ourselves for no reason.

Decisions like these have difficult tradeoffs, but I'm not seeing alders who are actively exploring what they are. Instead, they are trying to avoid the tradeoffs entirely. That's bad governance in my opinion.

Thank you,
Josh Olson

From: Marsha Cannon
To: Finance Committee
Subject: Support Agenda #35 - Remove Parks Division Paid Parking Pilot
Date: Monday, December 2, 2024 10:49:37 AM

Please support Agenda Item #35, Legistar 86251

As I understand it, Agenda Item #35 proposes to remove authorization for a paid parking pilot program and associated revenues and expenses from the Parks Division 2025 Adopted Operating budget.

The pilot addresses a very unpopular and unduly complex option to generate revenue for the Parks Division.

Please do not waste time on the current proposal. There are numerous other ways to raise funds for Parks.

Thank you,

Marsha Cannon (D18)
5 Cherokee Cir. Unit 202
Madison, WI 53704
608.251.1276 (land line, no text)