

City of Lafayette Staff Report

For: City Council
By: Parking Committee (Tom Chastain, Bill Loudon, Matt Branagh)
Meeting Date: May 23, 2016
Subject: Parking Solutions for Immediate Implementation

Purpose

Approve the attached list of action items and authorize staff to implement them.

Introduction

The Parking Ordinance Committee ("Committee") provided a progress report to the City Council at the September 28, 2015 meeting and introduced the concept of a parking strategy and management system. At that meeting, the Council asked the Committee to prepare a list of action items that could be implemented immediately to improve the parking situation in the downtown. The Committee has prepared the attached list based on feedback from the Police Chief and discussions during the Committee meetings.

Short Term Parking Solutions

The attached list of action items are intended to improve the use and efficiency, and encourage turnover of existing public parking spaces in downtown Lafayette. To supplement the table is a memorandum from Chief Christensen. Note that the Police Department has budgeted funds in the upcoming fiscal year to implement the majority of the Committee's recommendations.

Item 8 in the attached table is a recommendation to reduce the daily fee at the 949 Moraga Road parking lot from \$5 to \$2 a day. The Police Department monitored occupancy in this City lot for well over a month and determined that occupancy rates have fallen to less than 60%. This long-term parking lot is intended to serve downtown employees and carpoolers and, clearly, the \$5 rate is too high. A City Council resolution is needed to effect this change; that resolution is on the consent calendar.

Response to City Council Questions and Direction

In addition to a request to return with a list of short term solutions, Council asked several questions about downtown parking and the strategy. Below are the Council's questions and the Committee's responses.

Planning for the Future

- Envision how the community will change in the next 10-20 years with an increase in the number of residential units in the downtown. How do we create projects that will discourage car ownership? How do we craft those regulations? What are other communities doing in this regard? TransForm may have grant funds to assist.

This will require additional study. The Committee would like to ensure that any reduction in required parking does not create unintended consequences. Two specific policies included in the draft strategy are:

- 1. Study the establishment of parking maximums for residential development in the downtown.*
- 2. Study the establishment of parking reductions for properties that are in close proximity to public transportation.*

Smart Meters and Pucks

- *Is there any possibility of installing smart meters that change the price of parking depending on the time of day with a real time demand/value correlation? Has there been any consideration for a tiered parking system with cheaper parking further out (Berkeley model)? Can the smart meters come online sooner than the ordinance?*

Yes, smart meters are available and can be installed. The decision to implement smart meters will be one of cost and input from the Police Department and the Circulation Commission. Currently, the City has some data from the existing meters which would allow us to adjust pricing manually and on a less frequent basis than smart meters. The utility of this type of technology may not yet be of value to the City given the existing on-street meters are relatively under-utilized.

- *City Council indicated interest in sensors also known as “parking pucks” that would allow outsiders to know where available parking is located and wanted residents to be able to see real time parking availability. What is the possibility of getting the pucks soon?*

The Committee has determined that the sensors will be useful only if they are installed in private lots and on the street; i.e., in all downtown parking spaces. Currently, given the availability of free parking in private lots, there seems to be less demand for the on-street parking spaces. The Police Chief also advises that the current generation of pucks tend to malfunction often.

The usefulness of the pucks relates more to collecting occupancy data and less to locating parking availability. When implemented, the use of demand-based pricing will ensure that there is turnover of the on street parking spaces. The use of a more reliable generation of pucks or cameras that provide occupancy data as well as parking availability is a long term goal of the strategy.

In Lieu Fees

- *Why are we not collecting the in-lieu fees? Are they too high?*

Here are the reasons.

- 1. The fees are high*

The current in lieu fees are \$36,900 a space in the Downtown Core and \$19,200 a space in the East and West Ends. While these fees are realistic and based on the cost of purchasing land and constructing a parking structure (Core) and a surface lot (East and West Ends), small businesses consider them to be very high, especially because they are to be paid as a lump sum up front.

- 2. The process is unpredictable*

The process by which the City decides whether to accept in lieu fees is discretionary, and therefore unpredictable. First, an applicant must seek a variance from the parking

standards from the Planning Commission. At that point, a determination is made whether (1) a reduction in parking will be granted, (2) how much of a reduction will be granted, and (3) if the in-lieu fees will be applied (there is discretion up to 20% pursuant to 6-603 (c) LMC).

The recommendation from the Committee is to restructure the implementation of the fee so that it is predictable and fair. Some thoughts include allowing a lump sum for new development up to a certain percentage before having to go to a Commission or some empirical standard to measure when the parking reduction would be granted. Another consideration would be to amortize the payment over time.

Incentives to Businesses and Property Owners

- What incentives would be useful for connecting parking lots (e.g., maintenance or street sweeping or other reasonable cost items)? Highlight those ideas that can be easily incentivized.

The Committee is in the process of developing incentives that can be offered to businesses that opt into the strategy and make their lots available to all. Examples include the City taking over maintenance and liability of the parking areas once they are made available to the public, as in the case of the Plaza Way Overlay.

Additional Parking

- If it is beneficial to create more parking, where should the parking be located, how much would be needed and how much would it cost?

As a first step, the Committee recommends that spaces that have been leased to individual businesses in existing public lots be reclaimed as public parking. Secondly, the Committee recommends that the City enter into partnership with the private sector to increase the supply of public parking in new developments, as in the case of Lafayette Mercantile. Thirdly, the Committee has found, through inventory and occupancy studies, that the City already has a significant amount of parking in the downtown. The problem is not how much parking the downtown contains; it's where the parking is located, how accessible it is and how it is regulated or restricted. That is why a management strategy is being considered rather than the costly solution of a centralized parking garage that would cost millions of dollars, could significantly alter the character of the City, and given the linear nature of the downtown, may not be able to serve as many customers as desired. Additional public parking in surface lots could be considered as land becomes available, but the ultimate goal is a shared parking strategy which will allow for better, more efficient utilization of existing and new parking resources.

Recommendation

Approve the list of action items and authorize staff to implement them.

Attachments

1. Parking Solutions for Immediate Implementation
2. Staff report from Chief Christiansen to the Parking Ordinance Committee

Parking Solutions for Immediate Implementation

No.	Location of Spaces	Task	Comments	Reasons	Recommended by/Fiscal Impact
1	Golden Gate Way, between First Street and Second Street	Restripe the spaces and install two-hour parking meters.	The 24 on-street spaces in the western half of this block currently exceed the standard length and restriping could create an additional 2 spaces. The spaces east of the library will remain unchanged.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Need for turnover of heavily-used spaces near the library. 2. Abuse of timed spaces - people move car a few feet to get rid of chalk marks. 3. Savings in time and costs associated with enforcement. 	Police Department \$5,000: budgeted for FY16-17
2	Lafayette Circle (east), from Mt. Diablo Blvd. to Hough Ave.	Install two-hour parking meters. Remove one non-standard space east of 100 Lafayette Circle.	The 24 on-street spaces are located between the La Fiesta Square and Fiesta Lane retail centers; both have metered spaces in their private parking lots. As a result, employees tend to park on the street preventing use by customers.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Need for turnover of heavily-used spaces. 2. Abuse of timed spaces - people move car a few feet to get rid of chalk marks. 3. Savings in time and costs associated with enforcement 	Police Department \$24,000: budgeted for FY16-17
3	Carol Lane, from Mt. Diablo Blvd. to Berta Lane/Marlene Drive ¹	Install two-hour parking meters between Mt. Diablo Blvd. and Marlene Drive; and four hour meters beyond	The 26 on-street spaces are used by employees of nearby businesses thus preventing use by customers. To mitigate the loss of long term spaces, consider making the future 16-space City lot next to Ace Hardware a long term parking lot.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Need for turnover of heavily-used spaces. 2. Abuse of timed spaces - people move car a few feet to get rid of chalk marks. 3. Savings in time and costs associated with enforcement. 	Police Department \$10,000: budgeted for FY16-17
4	First Street,	Increase the daily rate for	There are 12 on-street spaces in	Pricing consistent with other	Police Department

¹ It is staff's understanding that the Chamber of Commerce Board has endorsed all the recommendations of the Parking Committee except for this item.

Parking Solutions for Immediate Implementation

No.	Location of Spaces	Task	Comments	Reasons	Recommended by/Fiscal Impact
	between Mt. Diablo Blvd. and Deer Hill Road	long term metered spaces on First Street from \$1 to \$5.	this block.	on-street long term metered spaces near BART, i.e., Oak Hill Road and Happy Valley Road.	No additional cost
5	Dolores Drive, from freeway south to Mt. Diablo Blvd.	Install \$5/day long term meters.	These 15 on-street spaces are currently unregulated (no time limits, no meters) and are used by BART patrons and downtown employees.	Pricing consistent with other on-street long term metered spaces near BART.	Police and Planning Departments (feedback received from public workshops) \$15,000: budgeted for FY16-17
6	Via Roble, from the freeway to 1013 Via Roble	Post signs limiting parking to two-hours.	BART patrons and downtown employees are parking their cars in these unregulated on-street spaces at the entrance to the Happy Valley Highlands neighborhood.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Deter long term parkers in the residential area 2. Improve safety in the neighborhood. 3. Allow use of the spaces by residents and their guests. 	Police and Planning Departments (feedback received from public workshops)
7	Happy Valley Road, from the freeway to Deerhill Road	For a test period of six months, reserve the 40 on-street spaces for Lafayette residents and install "Permit Parking Only" signs. If the spaces are fully occupied during that period, consider making the arrangement permanent.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ This would be a first come, first served system. ▪ Establish a system for people to register their license plates; there will be no limit to the number of people who can register (Planning Dept) ▪ Police Department will check to make sure the license plate is registered to a Lafayette address and will add it to the 	Benefit to Lafayette residents.	City Council No additional cost; however, Police and Planning staff will devote time to this effort

Parking Solutions for Immediate Implementation

No.	Location of Spaces	Task	Comments	Reasons	Recommended by/Fiscal Impact
			<p>list of "approved cars".</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The parking enforcement officers will use License Plate Readers (LPR) to make sure the cars are permitted to park there. A citation would be issued if the car is not registered in Lafayette. ▪ Meter fees would still need to be paid and no additional funds would be collected for the program. ▪ A City Council resolution would need to be adopted to allow that road to have permit parking and signage would need to be installed on the street as well as at each meter. Signage should be able to be removed in case the program is not successful and is abandoned. 		
8	949 Moraga Road City lot	<p>Reduce fee from \$5/day to \$2/day.</p> <p>Change hours to 9AM to 6PM</p>	The Police and Planning Departments have observed that since the \$5/day fee was imposed, occupancy in this lot has plummeted to less than 60%.	It appears that a \$5 a day charge is too high for downtown employees.	<p>Police and Planning Departments</p> <p>No additional cost</p>
9	Throughout	Establish a \$1 minimum	Coins can still be used for time	Service charges constitute 40c	Police Department

Parking Solutions for Immediate Implementation

No.	Location of Spaces	Task	Comments	Reasons	Recommended by/Fiscal Impact
	downtown	payment for all credit card meters.	periods of less than 1 hour.	of every \$1 collected from credit card meters.	No additional cost
10	N/A	Authorize staff to proceed with an update of the 2010 Parking Inventory and Occupancy Survey and expand the limits of the survey area to cover the entire downtown.	Hire two to three interns to undertake the task.	To establish a baseline of data that will be used to implement the parking management strategy.	Planning Department. \$12,000: budgeted for this task in FY16-17
11	N/A	Work with existing banks and similar uses to allow public access to parking after business hours.	The Committee is working with Regional Parking's Bob Power who has reached out to Wells Fargo.	Increase the supply of parking for the public.	Planning Department No additional cost
12	City owned parking lots (Gazebo and Oak Hill/Mt. Diablo)	Terminate leases with private businesses unless parking is required as a condition of City approval. Install parking meters.	Gazebo: 50% of meters at \$2/day for area employees; 50% at \$1/hour. Oak Hill: Two hour parking meters.	Restore public use of City-owned lots	Police and Planning Departments Police has budgeted \$15,000 for installation in FY16-17 for metering 11 spaces in the Oak Hill lot. Meter installation costs average \$1,000/meter.



City of Lafayette Staff Report

Date: April 4, 2016

To: Lafayette Parking Committee

From: Eric Christensen, Police Services Manager 

Subject: Recommended changes to current parking regulations

Introduction

Within the City of Lafayette, the police department has a role in recommending changes to the various parking policies within the city. The police department also has a role in enforcing the various regulations that are passed by the City Council that affect parking within the City of Lafayette. In speaking with the staff members of the police department, there are a few changes that we would recommend to improve parking within the City.

All Credit Card Meters

The police department recommends the following changes:

- **Change in Regulation.** Modify all credit card meters to require a minimum purchase of one dollar to allow a credit card transaction to be completed. Currently, a credit card charge cost the city approximately forty cents per transaction. By allowing charges at less than a dollar, the city loses any revenue that would be achieved by offering this convenience. Each meter still accepts coins, so the user has the choice to use coins or their credit card to pay the meter.
- **Fiscal Impact.** Reduce the number of losses we experience by eliminating credit card transactions below one dollar. There will be no additional costs to the city for this change (only requires employee time to modify the meters).

Golden Gate Way (Between First and Second Street)

The police department recommends the following changes:

- **Space Re-Striping** – The parking spots in this area are too large, allowing for multiple vehicles parking in designated spaces. The spaces should be re-marked to standard sized spaces. This will make it reasonable to enforcement of single-space use regulations. Currently, drivers share parking stalls because of their size, resulting in three vehicles parking in two spaces – a violation for one of the three vehicles. This will result in the creation of two additional parking stalls.
- **Change in Regulation.** This area is currently marked and regulated as a two-hour parking zone. We recommend the commission seek approval from the City Council to replace this with metered parking spaces. We recommend the installation of coin-operated meters along this roadway. *This will require a modification by the City Council of the current regulations regarding this roadway.* By transitioning to metered parking along this roadway, we make enforcement easier for our parking officers. It is also consistent with the meters that are

currently installed along Mt. Diablo Boulevard. This encourages space turn-over in the parking areas surrounding the library. The police department recommends the meter enforcement time and the rate remain consistent with the meters currently in the downtown (9a – 6p, \$1.00/hr.).

- **Fiscal Impact.** The installation, maintenance, and enforcement of these meters will be the responsibility of the police department. Installation will be done by using equipment that we currently have in storage. This area would not be suitable for the use of credit-card parking meters. The project will require the installation of 14 poles along the route. The total cost for this project will be less than \$ 5,000.00. The police department has budgeted for this in its FY 16/17 Budget.

Lafayette Circle (Between Mt. Diablo Boulevard and Hough)

The police department recommends the following changes:

- **Space Removal.** At the entrance to the parking lot of the office complex (Chamber Office) at 100 Lafayette Circle, there is a non-standard parking space to the east of the driveway. This space should be removed and painted red. The use of the non-standard space routinely blocks the entrance to the complex and creates a safety hazard for vehicle along the road and entering/exiting the parking lot. ***This will require a modification by the City Council of the current regulations regarding this roadway.***
- **Change in Regulation.** The parking spaces along this route are currently regulated by a two-hour parking limit. The police department recommends transitioning this to coin-operated two-hour metered parking. Over the recent months, the parking lots to either side of these spaces have been changed to paid parking by their owners. This transition has resulted in shifting employee parking to the city-owner spaces along the route. These spaces are not turned over, as employees must simply move their car slightly during their shift to have “moved” their car in keeping with the current regulations. The transition to meters would encourage the use of the spaces by customers to the local businesses. The police department recommends the meter enforcement time and the rate remain consistent with the meters currently in the downtown (9a – 6p, \$1.00/hr.). ***This will require a modification by the City Council of the current regulations regarding this roadway.***
- **Fiscal Impact.** The installation, maintenance, and enforcement of these meters will be the responsibility of the police department. Installation will be done by using some equipment that we currently have in storage (meter housings). This area would be suitable for the use of credit-card parking meters. The project will require the installation of 18 poles along the route. The total cost for this project will be approximately \$ 24,000.00. The police department has budgeted for this in its FY 16/17 Budget.

Carol Lane (Mt Diablo to Marlene)

The police department recommends the following changes:

- **Change in Regulation.** This area is currently regulated as a two-hour parking zone. The police department recommends changing the 26 on-street spaces to metered parking spaces with coin-operated meters. The police department recommends the spaces between Mt. Diablo and Carol Lane be regulated as short-term (2 Hr.) and the remaining meters as mid-term (4 Hr.) meters. The police department recommends the meter enforcement time and the rate remain consistent with the meters currently in the downtown (9a – 6p, \$1.00/hr.). ***This will require a modification by the City Council of the current regulations regarding this roadway.***
- **Fiscal Impact.** The installation, maintenance, and enforcement of these meters will be the responsibility of the police department. Installation will be done by using equipment that we

currently have in storage. This area would not be suitable for the use of credit-card parking meters. The project will require the installation of 20 poles along the route. The total cost for this project will be approximately \$ 10,000.00. The police department has budgeted for this in its FY 16/17 Budget.

First Street (Between Deer Hill and Mt. Diablo)

The police department recommends the following changes:

- **Change in Regulation.** This area is currently served by credit card meters and designated as long-term BART parking. The police department recommends the City Council increase the rate for these meters to five dollars per day (currently one dollar). This modification will make all long-term parking along the Deer Hill Corridor consistent.
- **Fiscal Impact.** This modification will not result in any additional costs to the city.

City Parking Lot (Oak Hill at Mt. Diablo)

The police department recommends the following changes:

- **Change in Regulation.** Eleven of the parking spots in this lot are currently regulated with two hour parking restrictions. The police department recommends these eleven spots be transitioned to credit card parking meters. The meters should be set with a short-term (2 HR) parking restriction, consistent with the other meters in the downtown. The police department recommends the meter enforcement time and the rate remain consistent with the meters currently in the downtown (9a – 6p, \$1.00/hr.). *This will require a modification by the City Council of the current regulations regarding this roadway.*
- **Fiscal Impact.** The installation, maintenance, and enforcement of these meters will be the responsibility of the police department. Installation will be done by using some equipment that we currently have in storage. This area would be suitable for the use of credit-card parking meters. The project will require the installation of 6 poles in the parking area. The total cost for this project will be approximately \$ 15,000.00. The police department has budgeted for this in its FY 16/17 Budget.