



**Parking & Transportation Committee meeting minutes**  
**September 28, 2016 at 9:00am**  
**549 Congress St.**

**Board members Present:** Kim Volk (Aurora Financial), Phil Haughey (MHR Management), Mike McDonald (North River Co), Jeff Packard

**Others:** Kevin Thomas (City of Portland DPW, Traffic Division), Asher Chappell & Jeff Laniewski (Unified Parking Partners), John Peverada (City of Portland Parking Division), Megan Doane (Portland Stage), Dawn Tully (volunteer), Alanna York (Head Games), Joseph Palacci (Pierre's of Exchange)

**Staff present:** Taffy Eaton, Amy Geren

**Minute 1.** Phil Haughey opened the meeting, welcomed everyone and asked for introductions.

**Minute 2.** Review and approve August 24, 2016 minutes: Phil made a motion to accept the minutes as presented. Mike McDonald seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous.

**Minute 3.** Update on Park and Shop expense reimbursement and responses:

Amy circulated her report – attached

- Refunded just over \$10,000 worth of returned stamps
- Public transportation will be a big piece of the parking study
- Temple St signed up 10-12 companies for validation programs. City garages, Ocean Gateway, Public Market and Portland Square garages all offer validation programs. Phil described how the validation program works.
- Mike has been asked where Portland Downtown stands with the City bringing the ticket forgiveness program back. John responded that the program will not be reinstated. There was no way to measure the success. Did people appreciate it? Abuse it? It cost the City \$600,000 annually. The City will use the money for other transportation and parking related work.
- Parking meters are in place in order to move people around the City
- Taking striping off where there are parking kiosks can accommodate more cars than where there are meters. Same for motorcycle, moped and scooter parking.
- Head Games is affected by the Park & Shop suspension. There are others businesses also being affected. Kim suggested Alanna talk to her constituents and contact Amy Geren with feedback and ideas towards a solution. This committee is working on where the greatest need is and what sort of need.
- Alanna suggested giving a parking discount for locals (Mainers) and downtown workers. Perhaps offer a shuttle from parking lots on the periphery of the City or downtown.
- It will take a while for Mainers to appreciate public transportation. METRO is improving their service with real-time apps to track buses.

**Minute 4.** Update re City's Parking & Transportation study: Amy

- The consultant has been selected. It is a 3-month study. Portland Downtown is contributing \$15,000 to expand the study to ALL of Downtown and the eastern waterfront. Contact Jeff Levine in the Planning Department at the City with concerns or questions.

- This committee will have an opportunity to discuss the study scope and requirements with Jeff at some point since Portland Downtown is a contributing funder
- Portland Downtown has also agreed to contribute \$15,000 towards a marketing campaign through a PEDPIP Grant with the City. If it appears that the City doesn't have capacity to run the campaign at this point, Portland Downtown will coordinate with GPCOG to conduct an independent study.
- City of Portland Planning doesn't feel there is a problem doing the study during the fall vs the summer.
- Wayfinding will likely be part of the study; Portland Downtown might be able to weigh in on this as a priority

**Minute 5.** Update on Technology upgrade by City of Portland Parking Department (Can parking be paid by an App?):

- John said that the handheld ticket writing technology will be in use soon. Customers can pay immediately on line (\$3 fee to pay online).
- A new app called Passport Parking will be rolled out the first quarter of 2017 to use to pay for meters. The program will be good for Downtown businesses because the business owner can pay on their customers' account too. Street parking rates will still be \$1 per hour, with a \$.25 upcharge per transaction. A business does not pay an upcharge if adding time to their customers' meter. The technology will allow messages to be sent to the customer alerting them of meter time running out.
- Unified Parking Partners will switch to this technology also
- The City might change the Parking Ordinance to say that parkers have to move their car to another block after 2 hours.
- "Wallet" is a pre-pay system for street parking
- Passport Parking will come to Portland Downtown committee meetings when the program is ready to roll out

**Minute 6.** ZipBike, PARKing day merchant comments, Sell Metro Tix at the Ferry Terminal, Misc. - Kim

- ZipBike - would this program affect Portland Bike Share? Kim will look into.
- The City uses UCar instead of ZipCar. It's a better program for City (they pay meter costs). Kim said ZipCar is focusing on the universities.
- PARKing Day comments – the program got push back from merchants so no spaces between Middle and Commercial St were used.
- METRO ticket sales at Casco Bay Lines ferry terminal – It would be handy because Bus 8 picks up at the terminal.

**Minute 7.** Other business –

- a) Design a project to pitch to Don Shoup - Casey is working on this.
- b) Add more bike corrals/racks Downtown?
  - I. They create more obstacles for snow clearing.
  - II. Off-street corrals are being worked on.
  - III. Leave parking meter posts once meters are removed and add D's with a fence cap to accommodate 2 bikes? John Peverada said removing the posts facilitates snow removal and beautifies the sidewalk, which was a directive from Portland Downtown years ago.
- c) Delivery/dual wheel trucks in the Old Port. Deliveries should be made before noon. John said they tried restricting delivery times years ago and it didn't work. Over the road truckers cannot accommodate restricted delivery times. Cisco can deliver without a receiver (middle of the night). It is time to revisit this problem. The Press Hotel is allowed to close down Market St for deliveries.
- d) Asher requested additional signage be installed pointing to parking lots off of Congress St. The current wayfinding signs do not. Portland Downtown will work with City to install additional signage. Signage can change as lots open and close. Is there a way to simplify?

**Next meeting:** Wednesday October 26<sup>th</sup>, 9:00am

Phil adjourned the meeting at 10:21 am.

Respectfully submitted,  
Taffy Eaton, Recorder

# Park & Shop Suspension Feedback

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## **Pre-suspension Downtown Survey Feedback**

Downtown business owners were sent an on-line survey in December 2015 to assess knowledge and use of the Park & Shop program, and how important they felt the program was to the bottom line of their businesses. Survey participants were asked for their suggestions for program improvement or ideas for a new program to encourage commerce Downtown.

There was a range of suggestions that spanned eliminating the program altogether to keeping a variation of the program. Some survey participants suspected the program would be more successful if it were marketed more aggressively and in conjunction with popular shopping events for greater visibility.

## **Alternatives to Parking**

Several respondents recommended focusing on alternatives to driving Downtown, and in fact felt discouraging parking Downtown to make the environment more pleasant and safe for pedestrians, bicycles and wheelchairs should become the focus of transportation and parking plans for Downtown. Suggestions for making this possible included the provision of a parking lot away from Downtown with either regular shuttle service or designated Metro service to Downtown.

## **Downtown Worker Parking Options**

Opening designated parking options for Downtown workers was suggested as a way to make Downtown parking more available for shoppers and business users. As well, increasing wayfinding to parking away from Downtown to support parking in one location and then walking or using regular Metro service to get around the peninsula was offered as a suggestion.

## **Managing the Parking Supply**

Some creative solutions to making garage parking more accessible to shoppers included charging businesses a flat rate each month to provide limited free parking to their customers, or invoicing businesses for usage based on a validation system. Other survey participants suggested adding more private parking options.

## **Metering**

There were many mentions of the current metering system prohibiting business Downtown, and many respondents provided suggestions for improvement within the scope of this system. The new metering stations that allow the use of credit cards seem to be well received by customers, and respondents made the suggestion to increase this technology. This parking technology, one respondent suggested, could potentially be used to apply shopping discounts retroactively at the pay station. There were also suggestions that the time limit could be increased to allow for more than two hours of parking, and rates could be reduced or could offer more value. In areas where individual coin meters have been replaced by metering stations, it was suggested that parking space lines be placed on the pavement to encourage more efficient use of space.

Several businesses noted the time period for required paid parking at meters was not representative of times when parking was highest in demand. There were several suggestions to begin required paid parking at meters later in the day and to extend the requirement later (i.e. 12 – 9 PM), as well as extend or eliminate the time limit for paid parking later in the evening (i.e. unlimited paid meter time after 5 PM). This fee structure would capture more night life and restaurant users, who arguably have the disposable income for entertainment and can better afford extended parking fees.

## Post-suspension Downtown User Feedback

Program user feedback was documented during the transition period through August 31, 2016, when the program was formally suspended. Unlike the digital survey, suspension feedback was not solicited and came to the office through e-mails, postal service, telephone calls, and in-person encounters. Responses were exclusively in reaction to the loss of the program, and often collected during Park & Shop sticker returns.

Despite consistent disappointment with the loss of the program, there were some constructive suggestions from businesses that were users of the program. One business owner noted that many garages tend to be full during the day for monthly users, but suspected there may be space available for night life downtown after business hours. We heard many requests for the return of the program in some form or another. Many program users expressed concern that the loss of the program will negatively impact business downtown, fearing that shoppers will go to the mall or other areas with readily available parking.

Below are two tables summarizing the responses given by type of business from business owners, and by type of contact from program patrons.

Suspension Response from Businesses	Type of Business
Garages are full during the day for prepaid reserved space that may be available for evening parking	Restaurant
Currently validates at the One City Center garage	Wealth management
Temple Street garage is popular	Wealth management
Hopes the program will be reinstalled after the year of cessation	Massage therapist
Difficult for clients of limited means and will detrimentally impact business	LCPC
Should increase rates rather than eliminating the program altogether	Spa
City needs a comprehensive plan that moves traffic along using metered, time-limited parking spots and designates some streets as one-way to increase parking advantage to small businesses	LCSW in the India Street Neighborhood

Suspension Response from Patrons	Type of contact
Used Park & Shops stamps for many years without the hassle of parking fees and believes the suspension will drive many people to outlying areas	E-mail
Given up going downtown	Twitter
The City of Portland should feel obligated to take on the responsibility of providing the program	Twitter

Disappointed and cautions that shoppers will go to the mall	Phone call
Cautions that the suspension will hurt local business	Phone call
Will go to the mall	Phone call
Exacerbated examples of disorderly conduct on public transportation on some routes: drunkenness; vomiting; foul language	In person