

Draft Cover Memo to Council

To: City Council
From: Parking Advisory Board

The Downtown Kirkland Parking Study and Plan (October 2003) recommended the establishment of a Parking Advisory Board (p. 61) “ .. made up of a representative cross section of downtown interests...(to) a) assist the Parking Coordinator/Manager in the implementation of the parking management plan, b) review parking issues over time , and c) advise City Council on strategy implementation based on the Guiding Principles for parking management.” This memo addresses all three of these charges. First, we discuss measuring the need for parking that led to the implementation of pay parking in evening hours. Second, we discuss issues related to possible amendments to ParkSmart and funding for new parking supply. Third, we offer advice for building new parking supply. Our role is evolving as parking is seen as a solution to the decline of downtown retail, and our advice for building new supply needs to be reconciled by the Council along with the advice of others, such as the Downtown Advisory Committee.

Although it is widely perceived that more parking is needed in downtown Kirkland, the need is ~~not well supported by periodic quarterly~~ occupancy studies. ~~The data~~ show parking deficiencies occur ~~in primarily at noon times, the evening hours, and throughout the days~~ in good weather. Another measure of parking need is to apply parking requirements as called for in the zoning code to downtown blocks containing legacy buildings. This is reported in the memo from stakeholders on financing new parking supply (Attachment 1).

Comment [JW1]: I believe it is well supported and we should eliminate NOT.

Comment [JW2]: I would like to say: mid-day, in the evening and all day in good weather.

Attachment 2 describes the roll out of pricing parking in evenings (5 to 9 PM) in city lots that was implemented on March 16. ~~Making parking free during the daytime mitigated much of the opposition to pay parking in the evening hours. Interviews with 97 affected businesses in the downtown turned up only one business that felt they were not consulted or that the pay parking would effect their business negatively. Many good ideas were put forward that will be implemented now or in the future.~~

Formatted: Font: 12 pt

Comment [JW3]: I would like to make a more positive proactive statement: Interviews with 97 affected business in the downtown turned up only one business that felt they were not consulted or that the pay parking would effect their business negatively. Many good ideas were put forward by these business that will be implimented now or in the future.

Formatted: Font: 12 pt

Although we are moving to market-based pricing of parking off street, we still rely on regulation of on-street parking, by a two-hour time limit and prohibition of employee parking in the downtown core (ParkSmart). Attachment 3 proposes changes to ParkSmart to prohibit free employee parking in the Library garage of employees of new buildings that meet parking requirements. Although we considered a proposal to fine employees for employees who are chronic violators of ParkSmart, we do not propose it at this time. Nevertheless, we are concerned that ParkSmart regulations do not work well. The incentives are perverse. Unregistered employees and unregistered cars are hiding on street. We are seeking to modify business licensing procedures to improve the reporting of employees and their vehicles. ~~If in the long term, we would likewere~~ to price parking on street ~~and reduce thethere would be less~~ need for ParkSmart to manage employee parking by regulation.

Comment [JW4]: I would like to drop this last line. I am not sure that the two are linked.

The focus of Attachment 1 is on securing funding for new parking supply. Attachment 1 reports on input from stakeholders on how to secure new parking supply. The process of engaging stakeholders to enlarge the perspective of the PAB resulted in two recommendations: 1) do not price on-street parking until a firm commitment of new supply, and 2) partner with a developer rather than build a stand-alone garage. This second recommendation includes: be ready to partner by preparing a financing plan so that a developer is not delayed by the City. Although the stakeholders are not ready to price on-street parking now, they realize financing and building new supply will require pricing of on-street parking. Financing new ~~public parking supply will require~~ normally involves a mix of: 1) parking revenue bonds, 2) Local Improvement District bonds for an area within walking distance of the new parking, and 3) general revenue bonds.

Comment [JW5]: Rather than suggest what vehicle could be use let's just say- a mix of Public, Business, and Government funding. THIS IS TOO WATERY.

This approach to securing new parking supply differs somewhat from the retail study recommendations of the Downtown Advisory Committee, who call for building a new free-standing parking garage (a “build it and they (shoppers) will come” approach).

Attachment 4 is a report of results of a parking survey that employed a methodology called Stated Preference (SP). Respondents were asked to make a choice among parking options (on street, off-street lots, a new parking garage, and a free but distant on-street location). Characteristics of parking (price, walk distance, search time, time limit, and parking fine) were systematically varied. Forcing respondents to make a choice yields better data than the more traditional “importance” ratings. The results of the SP parking survey show the extent to which pricing parking on street will result in spillover to neighborhood/distant but free parking. The SP parking survey results indicate who will oppose pricing and who will support it. Younger, working persons are less receptive to pricing and will walk to avoid paying, whereas older retired persons are willing to pay for parking if it makes it more available. The parking survey also indicated how usage of a new garage varies by location.

Summary of recommendations

Implementation of pay parking in City lots in the evening hours is underway. Evaluation will be done.

Amendments to ParkSmart are proposed for your consideration. We do not want to allow employees of new buildings that meet parking requirements to park in the Library garage.

The City needs to exhibit a readiness to partner with developers to build new supply. This readiness includes pricing of on-street parking.