



Office of the City Manager

WORKSESSION

June 11, 2013

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From:  Christine Daniel, City Manager

Submitted by: Andrew Clough, Director, Public Works

Subject: goBerkeley Pilot Program – Parking Rate and Time Limit Options

SUMMARY

This is a follow up to information previously presented to the City Council regarding the Berkeley Transportation Action Plan (B-TAP), now renamed goBerkeley, which is a project funded by grants from MTC and the Federal Highway Administration. The goals of goBerkeley are to improve on-street parking availability, and expand the use of transportation alternatives by businesses, residents, and visitors during the 2-year pilot period. This report presents an overview of the recommended options and next steps to make parking rate and time limit changes within the goBerkeley pilot areas (Elmwood, Telegraph/Southside, and Downtown) that meet project goals.

Basis for Development of Options

Staff developed recommended options for parking pricing and parking time limits in each of the pilot areas (Attachment 1: Parking Rate and Time Limit Options) based on parking demand data and survey responses from over 200 business owners, 380 employees and 130 shoppers (Attachment 2: Summary Parking Data and Survey Results).

Staff have also consulted with the Downtown Berkeley Association (DBA), Telegraph Business Improvement District (TBID), and Elmwood Merchants Association (EMA) through small group meetings and door-to-door visits to their members. The City's Technical Advisory Group, which includes the Berkeley Police Department, Information Technology and others, reviewed the data and survey results and helped develop the options for each commercial area.

Public Feedback and Comment

These options were presented and discussed with the public in multiple public meetings. On May 7, 2013, the goBerkeley Community Advisory Group reviewed the Parking Rate and Time Limit Options, and the City's Transportation Commission reviewed the options on May 16, 2013. Public workshops were held on May 22, 2013 in the Elmwood at the Claremont Library, on May 29, 2013 in the Telegraph/Southside area at the Trinity United Methodist Church, and on June 3, 2013 in Downtown Berkeley at the Berkeley Public Library Main Branch Community Room.

Overview of Parking Rate and Time Limit Change Options

The proposals, which are described in detail in Attachment 1, recommend that the public and City Council consider several new parking pricing options:

- **Progressive Rates** at on-street meters would be similar to the current rate structure at City parking garages, whereby the second hour is more costly than the first hour, and the third hour is more expensive than the second. These rates allow for longer parking stays, but include disincentives for longer parking in order to maintain parking turnover which supports on-street availability.
- **Premium Area & Value Area Rates** set parking meter rates higher in areas of particularly high demand (Premium Areas), and offer lower rates and longer time limits in nearby blocks (Value Areas) which have lower parking demand for value-conscious customers.
- **Peak Period Pricing** can be used when parking demand is particularly high during a particular time period. Parking rates might increase only during the peak hours in a commercial area (e.g. \$2.00/hr 12:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.) and return to standards rates (\$1.50/hr) at all other times.

In response to public and merchant requests, the Options recommend extending time limits in many areas to enable customers to park for longer to complete their business. Proposals include extending time limits to 2, 3, 4, or 8 hours, depending on the particular parking demands and land uses in the area. Simply extending time limits can have negative impacts by reducing parking turnover. However, when implemented in conjunction with parking pricing, longer time limits increase convenience for customers while parking prices work to encourage turnover.

- **Extend time limits to 2 hours in high demand areas** to balance requests for longer time limits while preserving parking turnover.
- **Extend time limits to 3, 4 or 8 hours** at lower demand on-street areas and lots, depending on demand.

In Berkeley, some of the periods of highest parking occupancy occur when there is no parking enforcement in effect. This is not surprising, but it reduces convenience for some visitors and can damage the perception of commercial areas as attractive destinations. For instance, parking on many blocks of Downtown Berkeley fill to capacity every evening at 6:00 p.m. when parking enforcement ends. Visitors arriving after 6:00 p.m. may drive excessively searching for scarce parking or may decide to avoid the area entirely. For this reason, staff recommends consideration of longer hours of enforcement:

- **Evening:** Extend hours of enforcement from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. in certain areas by implementing standard metered rates or a flat rate.
- **Sunday Meters:** Enforce parking fees in on-street meters and lots on Sundays by implementing standard metered rates or a flat rate.

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

The Elmwood, Telegraph/Southside and Downtown Berkeley are three of the major commercial areas that make Berkeley an attractive place to live, work, visit, shop, and dine. From October 2012 – April 2013, staff collected data to assess current parking conditions, quantify the community's transportation issues, and develop options for improvement. The data collection included an inventory of parking regulations, a diagnostic parking occupancy survey to assess current demand levels, and a survey of business owners, employees and shoppers. Over 200 business owners, 380 employees and 150 shoppers responded to the survey. Details are provided in Attachment 2: Summary of Parking Data and Survey Results.

Major Issues Identified through Public Process and Data Collection

The following are major issues identified through parking demand data collection, surveys of parking users, and feedback from business owners:

On-Street Parking

- On-street parking spaces on some streets are over-subscribed (full) and regularly unavailable to customers and visitors, while parking spaces on other streets are mostly empty.
- Time limits at most on-street spaces are felt to be “too short” for many visitors to complete their business.
- Parking regulations, including time limits and legal parking, are an inconsistent “patchwork”, and confusing to the majority of drivers.

Off-Street Parking

- There is available capacity at the City's Telegraph/Channing Garage and Oxford Way Garage, while the Center Street Garage has limited capacity available.
- Many visitors report being unaware of the City's parking garages and lots. The Telegraph/Channing Garage and Oxford Garage are unknown options to many.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF OPTIONS

The Parking Rate and Time Limit Options were developed based on a set of guiding principles, which are in turn based on the policy goals of the City of Berkeley's General Plan Transportation Policies and goals of the stakeholders in the pilot areas.

Policy Goals

- Congestion related to searching for a parking space should be minimized to reduce both emissions and vehicle miles traveled.
- The City is willing to test the effects of parking rate and time limit changes on parking supply and demand (General Plan T-40).
- The City's parking resources should be managed as a connected system of on-street metered spaces and off-street parking garage and lot spaces.

Guiding Principles for Managing the Parking Supply

Metered parking spaces should be:

- for customers and visitors (General Plan T-34, T-35)
- available close to your destination
- clear about parking rates and regulations
- allow enough time for customer needs

Metered parking spaces should not be:

- for commuters or employees - unless there is ample available capacity (General Plan Policy T-35F)
- guided by the goal of generating citation revenue
- over-used, which generates circling and frustration
- under-used, which may indicate that the regulations don't match customer needs

City garage and lot spaces should be:

- for medium and long-term parkers
- prioritized for non-commuters (General Plan Policy T-34C, T-35D)
- available at a reasonable distance from destinations

City garage and lot spaces should not be:

- over-used so that there is no access or cause frustrating search
- under-used

PILOT APPROACH

The goBerkeley Parking Pilot is a two-year test of the ability of parking rate and time limit adjustments to meet the City's policy goals and guiding principles. An overview of the pilot's implementation schedule is shown in Attachment 3: Projected goBerkeley Program Timeline, which has been updated from the version provided to Council in March 2013^a. This Attachment provides new details regarding the proposed steps to ensure a smooth implementation of the goBerkeley Parking Pilot, including approvals from the City Council, coordination within the City, public participation, and risk management.

To date, staff have developed Recommended Options for each of the pilot areas (see Attachment 1: Parking Rate and Time Limit Options) based on parking demand data, survey responses and consultation with area merchants and their Business Improvement District agencies. The options were presented to the public in four major public meetings in May and early June 2013.

Based on feedback from the public and merchants, and collection of additional detailed parking data, the Options will be refined into Recommended Parking Rates and Time Limits Plans for each neighborhood. The recommendations will be presented in three more public workshops in July and August 2013.

If adopted, and enabled by the City Council, the parking changes will be implemented in late September 2013. The changes will be accompanied by extensive public education and notification efforts, including a mobilization of “parking ambassadors”. A large-scale public education campaign will be carried out during July – September 2013 to ensure the public is fully aware of the changes. Activities will include:

- **goBerkeley website** www.goBerkeley.info (active in July) will include detailed maps and information about the new parking rates and time limits and when they will go into effect. Notifications will also be posted on the City of Berkeley’s website.
- **New parking meter stickers** will inform users about new rates and time limits, and provide information about other parking options.
- **Flyers and post cards** will be distributed by specially-trained outreach “street teams” in the weeks before and during implementation.
- **Outreach in partnership with the DBA, TBID and Elmwood Merchants** to notify their members through email and ambassadors.
- **Email notifications** will be distributed to established community lists.
- **Posters and maps** will be provided to businesses to prominently display affected areas, rates, time limits and how to get more information.
- **Dynamic message signs** will be placed at major approaches to the commercial districts informing drivers that parking changes are imminent.
- **Press releases and media materials** will be provided to media outlets and newsletters.

Once the first round of parking changes are implemented, goBerkeley will carry out extensive data collection to gauge the impact of the changes, and staff will continue to conduct community outreach. If parking behavior is not fully optimized by the September 2013 changes, goBerkeley will implement a second round of parking adjustments in April 2014. The results of these changes will be evaluated in September 2014. Implementation of additional program elements, such as driver information and improved on-street signage, may extend the pilot program past September 2014.

At the end of the Pilot, staff will present the results of data collection and community feedback to the public and City Council for an evaluation on whether to transition to a permanent parking management program or conclude the pilot.

PERFORMANCE CRITERIA AND DECISION GATES

The progress of the parking changes will be measured by comparing key indicators to performance criteria. Adjustments will be made to parking rates, time limits and regulations to achieve the desired performance criteria. These performance indicators will be provided to the public and City Council, and will form the basis for evaluating the effectiveness of the parking changes.

Criteria		Indicator
Optimal parking availability, “sweet spot”	~2 available spaces per blockface	65-85% average parking occupancy
Reduce overtime stays, “meter feeding”	Parking duration < or = posted time limits	Comparison of average parking duration to posted time limits
“Spillover” to residential areas	Minimize shift of demand from metered spaces to nearby residential spaces	Measure number of residential vs. non-residential parkers in residential areas
Reduce congestion related to search traffic	Decrease in search time	Average search time and parking occupancy
Business, resident and visitor satisfaction	Majority approve of parking conditions	Business, resident and visitor feedback surveys

PARKING PILOT ORDINANCE

The goBerkeley Pilot requires the establishment of a streamlined process to enable parking rates to be adjusted and “tailored” during the pilot period. Currently, all changes to parking fees must be made by City Council through a Fee Hearing. This introduces a 2-3 month lead time to implement any fee changes, which would weaken the pilot program’s ability to adjust prices and time limits based on observed parking behavior.

To provide the timely flexibility needed for the parking pricing pilot, staff has developed an Ordinance which provides the City Manager with the authority to adjust parking rates, within strict parameters approved by the City Council, in order to achieve optimal parking availability (Attachment 4: Summary of Draft Parking Pilot Ordinance). The Ordinance would only be in effect during the pilot’s duration and would “sunset” in September 2015. The Ordinance is based on similar ordinances in Redwood City, San Francisco, New York City, Los Angeles, and Santa Monica. Through this enabling Ordinance, the City Council would establish minimum and maximum rates, limits to the amount of each rate change, limits to the frequency of price adjustments, and requirements for public notification prior to rate changes. If the Council has no objection to this approach, the Ordinance could be presented as early as July 2, 2013

Additional goBerkeley Program Elements

The goBerkeley Parking Pilot is just one component of the larger goBerkeley Transportation Program. Several complementary programs are currently underway or will be implemented in coordination with the pilot parking changes:

Employee Commute Benefits Program

The goal of the goBerkeley Employee Commute Benefits Program is to reduce the number of commuters who drive their personal vehicles to work in the Elmwood, Southside, and Downtown Berkeley (General Plan T-34, T-35). This is being done through travel coaching and valuable financial incentives.

Travel Coaching

City staff and the project's public outreach and marketing consultants will target individual businesses whose employees have indicated through their survey responses that they are willing to try alternative travel modes. Face-to-face visits will identify barriers to using alternative modes and provide customized information about the resources for biking, walking, transit and ridesharing.

Employee TDM Benefits

To provide further incentives for employees to change their travel habits, the goBerkeley program will offer free one-year AC Transit EasyPasses, and deeply discounted City CarShare memberships.

The travel coaching and employee commute benefits programs are already underway. Travel coaching and open enrollment for transit passes and carsharing began in May. AC Transit EasyPasses and City CarShare memberships will be distributed to enrolled employees in July 2013. A second open enrollment period will be provided in spring 2014 (see Attachment 3: Projected goBerkeley Program Timeline for details).

Automated Data Collection / Enforcement RFP

The goBerkeley pilot is planning to test new technology to ascertain its capabilities to:

- 1) Automatically collect parking data that could form the basis of a permanent, cost-effective parking management system, should the City choose to continue after the pilot (General Plan T-35C); and
- 2) Improve the efficiency of parking enforcement (General Plan T-31, T-35).

In June 2013, goBerkeley will issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) for a system/equipment that can provide one or both of these functions. The selected vendor will carry out a rigorous test of available technology against the requirements and performance standards developed by the Departments of Public Works, Police, and Information Technology. If successful, the technology would be put into operation in spring 2014 to collect data or perform parking enforcement, and hopefully do both. Details on the procurement of automated data collection / enforcement technology is shown in Attachment 3.

Enhanced enforcement capabilities will be particularly useful for Police Department staff to mitigate any potential impacts of the proposed parking options, such as "spillover" parking into residential areas and decrease in turnover due to meter feeding. The goBerkeley data collection program will document the extent of these impacts for presentation and discussion before enhanced enforcement is deployed.

Driver Information Signage Improvements

The initial set of parking rate and time limit changes will include changes to meter stickers and updates to existing signage. However, goBerkeley recognizes that there

could be substantial improvements to on-street parking signage that will reduce driver confusion, congestion and improve safety by:

- 1) Clearly identifying the parking rate and time limit of on-street spaces to a driver in a moving vehicle (see example in Attachment 5: Seattle On-Street Parking Signs); and
- 2) Directing drivers to the City's available and under-utilized parking garages.

Driver information improvements will require input from drivers, the Police Department, adjudication and businesses. Improvements could occur in Spring 2014 to coincide with the adjustment phase of the goBerkeley Parking Pilot.

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Attachments:

- 1: Parking Rate and Time Limit Options
- 2: Summary of Parking Data and Survey Results
- 3: Projected goBerkeley Program Timeline
- 4: Summary of Draft Parking Pilot Ordinance
- 5: Seattle On-Street Parking Signs

^a Berkeley Transportation Action Plan: Update on Parking and Transportation Demand Activities, March 5, 2013:
www.cityofberkeley.info/Clerk/City_Council/2013/03Mar/Documents/2013-03-05_Item_18_Berkeley_Transportation_Action.aspx