



CITY OF SAN MATEO

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Agenda Report

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TO: City Council

FROM: Drew Corbett, City Manager

PREPARED BY: Public Works Department

MEETING DATE: October 18, 2021

SUBJECT:

Downtown Parking – Policy Update and Comprehensive Fee Schedule Amendment

RECOMMENDATION:

Adopt a Resolution to amend the Adopted 2021-22 Comprehensive Fee Schedule to Revise Downtown Parking Pass Fees and Hourly Parking Fees.

BACKGROUND:

The Council-approved Downtown Affordable Housing and Parking Garage project (Kiku Crossing) is scheduled to begin construction in early January 2022. The project will be built on the sites of the existing City-owned surface parking lots located at 4th Ave. and Claremont St. and 5th Ave. and Claremont St. Both existing parking lots have historically served as lower-cost parking for downtown workers, with the ability to park for up to 10 hours for \$0.25 per hour or purchase a monthly parking permit for \$40 per month. In contrast, parking rates in other nearby off-street locations are typically \$0.75 per hour or \$65 per month per the adopted Comprehensive Fee Schedule. Hourly parking and issuance of monthly parking permits at these two parking lots have been on a first-come, first-served basis, meaning low-cost parking has not necessarily been available to or utilized by low-income workers. The closure of these parking facilities creates an opportunity to re-evaluate the program and ensure the City's policy objectives are being achieved.

Maintaining Availability of Low-Cost Parking

Staff has evaluated options for continuing to provide lower-cost parking for downtown workers, reviewed City-owned parking facility rates, and the City's parking environment. Staff is recommending (1) implementation of revised parking fees and a parking pass program to allow for continued access to lower cost parking options for qualifying low-income individuals and (2) adjustment in pricing and parking zones in the downtown to better align with actual usage.

Low-Cost Monthly Permit Program

Implementation of a low-cost monthly pass valid at any City-owned parking garage or lot would better support low-income worker parking needs in the downtown area and would be made available to qualified individuals. Staff proposes to offer 10% of permits at each facility as a low-cost option and may adjust that as needed to ensure low-cost permits are available to customers who qualify. Individuals would be required to provide income verification through an acceptable proof of income document in line with existing City programs such as the Parks and Recreation Fee Assistance Program and the Residential On-Street Accessible Parking Program. Acceptable documents include:

- Notice of Action letter from their county of residence for Medi-Cal or Medi-Cal card with a valid issue or expiration date
- WIC (Women, Infants & Children) Voucher
- Eligibility letter from the county of residence for CalWorks
- Eligibility letter from the county of residence for General Assistance

If the above are not available, a W-2 form and income tax return or three recent, consecutive paystubs would be accepted and approved based on current San Mateo County income limits.

Additional Low-Cost Hourly Parking

To continue to provide some dedicated, low-cost hourly parking to those that may not need monthly parking passes, staff has identified 88 parking spaces on South Railroad Avenue between 5th and 9th Avenues. Currently, South Railroad Avenue has the same monthly permit cost as the 4th Ave. and Claremont St. and 5th Ave. and Claremont St. lots (\$40/month). However, the hourly rate on South Railroad (\$0.75 per hour) is higher than the Claremont parking lots.

Premium Parking Zone

Downtown San Mateo parking is divided into two zones: the central 'Premium' zone and the perimeter 'Value' zone. The Premium zone is in the core of the downtown, including the Central Parking Garage, and has slightly higher hourly rates and monthly parking permit costs. The higher cost is to encourage parking on the perimeter of the downtown to provide an opportunity for patrons to enjoy the walkable downtown environment.

Main Street Garage is currently defined in the perimeter 'Value' zone. Since the development of the downtown parking zones in 2016, the structure of downtown San Mateo has evolved and Main Street Garage is now within walking distance to major downtown attractions, such as Century Movie Theater, San Mateo Caltrain station, businesses along South B Street and businesses on the east side of South Railroad Avenue. Occupancy at Main Street Garage exceeds Central Garage during the early evening hours (3 pm-5 pm) and reaches a peak of 97% occupancy by 7 pm on weekends. On weekdays, peak occupancy at Main Street and Central Garage are nearly the same at 83% and 82%, respectively.

Currently, Central Garage and Main Street Garage are in two different parking zones and as such, have different rate structures, despite being comparably located and utilized. Main Street Garage currently has an hourly rate of \$0.75 per hour and a monthly permit cost of \$65. Central Garage rates are \$1.25 per hour and \$100 for a monthly permit.

Staff recommends adjusting the downtown parking zones to reflect current land use and parking utilization and to price Main Street Garage in a manner commensurate with usage and occupancy. Accordingly, staff recommends modifying the Comprehensive Fee Schedule to include Main Street Garage in the Premium parking zone and increase hourly and parking permit costs accordingly.

Summary of Recommendations

To implement the proposed actions, staff recommends adopting a Resolution to amend the 2021-22 Comprehensive Fee Schedule.

- Decrease the hourly parking rate on South Railroad Avenue between 5th to 9th Avenues to \$0.25 per hour
- Offer a low-cost permit option (\$40 per month) for the Monthly Downtown Parking Permit Program for qualifying low-income individuals
- Add Main Street Garage to the Premium parking zone and increase the hourly parking rate from \$0.75 to \$1.25 per hour and the monthly permit fee from \$65 to \$100 per month.

Future Consideration

The closure of the 4th Ave. and Claremont St. and 5th Ave. and Claremont St. lots reduces the downtown parking supply by 235 spaces out of a total of approximately 3,000 parking spaces. Based on current parking usage and monthly permit availability, staff believes the downtown parking supply is likely able to absorb the displaced vehicles currently parking in these locations. This is likely a result of many office workers continuing to telecommute during the COVID-19 pandemic. Staff will monitor parking demand and utilization and will explore other options to provide parking if additional parking capacity is believed necessary. Such other parking options may include establishing valet parking at existing garages to increase capacity during peak usage and identification of spaces in private parking that the City may lease for downtown permit holders. Staff will also evaluate locations where 10-hour parking may be added for all-day parking use in lieu of the former surface parking lots; one location for such consideration is converting the lower levels of Main Street garage from

3-hour short-term parking to 10-hour parking.

BUDGET IMPACT:

The recommended implementation of a low-cost monthly parking permit, reducing hourly rates for on-street parking on Railroad Avenue, and increasing hourly and permit parking rates at Main Street Garage are not expected to have a significant impact on the City's budgeted revenue.

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION:

Adoption of this resolution amending the 2021-22 Comprehensive Fee Schedule hourly and monthly parking rates and parking permit fee structure is not a project subject to CEQA, because it is an organizational or administrative activity that will not result in direct or indirect physical changes in the environment. (CEQA Guidelines Section 15378(b)(5).)

NOTICE PROVIDED

All meeting noticing requirements were met.

ATTACHMENTS

Att 1 - Proposed Resolution

STAFF CONTACT

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