



Parking Pay Station Replacement Project

Public Involvement Plan

Introduction

People in Olympia care about parking and are very interested in any changes to the parking system. The goal of this project is to replace inconvenient, unreliable, high-cost to maintain and operate multi-space parking pay stations with single-space credit card capable meters, making parking in the downtown core more convenient and easy to understand. This public involvement plan will ensure that we communicate the intent, process, schedule, progress, impacts and end result of the project with our stakeholders, as well as give opportunity for comment and feedback along the way.

Stakeholders

- Customers
- Downtown Residents
- Downtown business owners
- Parking Business Improvement Area (PBIA)
- Olympia Downtown Association (ODA)
- City Council

Project Phases and Plan

- 1. Request for Proposals (RFP) Phase:** City staff has developed a request for proposal document that will seek proposals on new credit card parking meters, supporting communications and accompanying web-based backend software system.
 - a. PBIA, ODA, Council:** A selection committee made up of staff, PBIA, ODA and Council representation will evaluate proposals based on several criteria and rate them accordingly. This will give stakeholders the opportunity to be involved in evaluating and selecting a meter that will best suit the needs of Olympia.
 - b. Downtown Business Owners:** City Parking Services Field Representatives will visit all businesses fronted by pay station parking and hand out informational material about the project, talk with business owners, answer questions, and let them know how they can give comments about the project.
 - c. Customers:** Staff will issue a news release to coincide with release of the RFP to brief the public that this project will occur. Information will be posted to the City's website. A Twitter account will be utilized where appropriate to timely updates on project status.
- 2. RFP Field Demonstration Phase:** Based on the selection committee's recommendation, two respondents will field test their meters in Olympia.
 - a. Customers and Downtown Business Owners:** During this phase, staff will solicit feedback from customers and businesses via web survey and direct contact and will ask them to rate meters on usability and reliability. City staff will rate meters on ease of maintenance, programmability and back-end software system.
 - b. PBIA, ODA, Council:** The selection committee will review this information and make a final recommendation.
- 3. Construction Phase:** Work to install new meter poles and remove the pay stations will be a minor construction project and impacts to downtown will be minimal.

- a. *Downtown Business Owners:* As construction begins, staff will go door-to-door to businesses in affected areas to alert them that construction is about to begin and discuss any impacts and concerns. Any concerns by business owners during construction will be immediately responded to.
 - b. *Customers:* Staff will issue a news release when construction dates and details are known including locations of construction and possible impacts to parking. Staff will communicate daily project updates and parking impacts via a Twitter account and the City's website. Pay stations will be signed with information when they will be going "offline".
- 4. Implementation Phase:** As new parking meters come online we will give customers a grace period to learn the new system.
- a. *Customers:* Parking Services Field Representatives will use discretion in issuing citations in construction areas during the transition from pay stations to meters. For a short period of time after the switch customers will be given a grace period where no citations will be issued, but instead Parking Services Field Representatives will educate customers on the new meters.
 - b. *Downtown Business Owners:* City staff will solicit feedback from business owners about the new meters and ask them to report any problems or issues right away.
 - c. *Council:* Staff will closely monitor revenue and operating and maintenance costs of the new meters, as well as feedback or complaints received from customers and business owners and will report this information back to City Council annually after the project is completed.

Rebranding

This project will demonstrate how the City Council and staff listened to community concerns about the pay stations and are updating the parking system to make it more convenient and user-friendly based on this feedback. It provides an opportunity to rebrand Parking Services at the same time, with the goal of changing the inaccurate perception that Parking is interested in issuing as many citations as possible or that citations are issued unfairly. The vision of the Parking Program is to facilitate parking turnover in downtown and manage parking programs so that customers, employees, residents, and business owners can find the right place to park for their needs. We will seek ways to present Parking Services Field Representatives not as enforcers but as ambassadors who are there to educate and assist people with parking. Parking Services will seek the assistance of the City's Communication Services Division with this effort. As the details of the rebranding plan are developed, staff will update City Council and stakeholders on the progress.