



## RECOMMENDATION NUMBER 15

February 28, 2019

The Parking Technical Advisory Group (PTAG) has been doing regular monitoring of the parking system in downtown Tacoma and beyond. While much of the focus of public conversations is on the paid parking system, how the paid stalls work in coordination with the adjacent unpaid stalls receives far less public attention. We know that while some people will pay for the most convenient parking stall, other users will find the nearest free stalls that meet their needs, and still others will choose to find alternatives to driving and parking near their destination.

The PTAG attempts to take all these users and their behaviors into consideration when managing the parking system. The three guiding principles the PTAG has used since its inception to assist in managing downtown parking include:

- Manage on-street parking to a 15% vacancy or 85% occupancy to ensure there should always be one stall available on every block face.
- Keep the customer, client & visitor as the primary user of on-street parking to ensure maximum use of the right-of-way.
- Make the system easy to use and easy to understand to avoid misunderstandings for infrequent users.

The PTAG has come to realize that the current mix of parking regulations around UWT has created significant parking constraints that do not meet any of the above principles. To resolve the situation, the PTAG recommends the following changes:

- Institute a 3-hour unpaid zone on the following streets:
  - Court D, Fawcett Avenue, Court E, and the east side of Tacoma Avenue from S. 15th to S. 21st Streets, excepting those stalls that are already regulated by short term parking controls.
  - S. 15th Street, S. 17th Street, and S. 21st Street from Market Street to Tacoma Avenue, excepting those stalls that are already regulated
- Change from 90-minute paid to 2-hour paid along Jefferson from S. 17th to S. 19th Streets, with the potential to extend to S. 21st Street if the businesses along the frontage are generally supportive.
- Direct City Staff to create an Interim Use Pass to backfill underparked areas.

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- Add a 90-minute unpaid zone around the southwest corner of 23rd & Fawcett.

In addition resolving some of the UWT constraints, PTAG is also requesting increased enforcement around the Stadium Business District to assist in ensuring parking is being used as intended during construction.

## BACKGROUND

The PTAG reviews parking occupancy data approximately every two years. In the most recent review, there were consistently overparked areas around UWT, particularly west of Market Street where there were few parking controls. This area was becoming overparked by 9AM and was staying overparked throughout the day.

An overparked on-street situation leads to challenges for businesses to attract customers, increased illegal and unsafe parking practices, and lower use of the right-of-way. To remedy this, the PTAG has spent the past year talking with stakeholders and evaluating options.

After many discussions including with UWT and UWT student representatives, there is a clear demand for a parking product that can meet the needs of students with only one class. This has created the need for a product beyond the traditional 2-hour or 90-minute options typically used for customers, clients and visitors. This has resulted in the recommendation to create a 3-hour product outside of the core retail area that will allow for increased turn-over of these stalls and more opportunities for shorter-term parking. The goal is also to encourage users that need all-day options to either use off-street facilities, park outside of the core business district or choose alternative transportation modes. Since these changes and additional development may significantly alter the parking habits of the neighborhood, we do expect additional review of this area in the future.

The exception to the 3-hour need is on S. 23rd Street where the impact is of all-day parking driven by both UWT and construction. Due to the construction impacts immediately adjacent to operating business, a shorter time stay is necessary in a location where there are currently no restrictions. These limits were requested by the adjacent business.

Since the 3-hour product is proposed to extend to Tacoma Avenue, consistent with UWT's long-term growth plans, it is unclear how great the demand will be at the time of roll out. To combat a potential interim situation with lower parking occupancies, the PTAG is also asking staff to develop an Interim Use Pass that would allow for a modest level of on-street pass holders to park longer on specific blocks where there excess vacancies have been identified. By using an Interim Use Pass, it allows the on-street

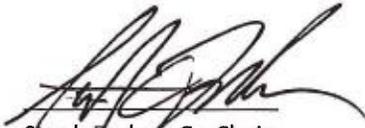
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system to stay consistent for the customers, clients and visitors. As demand for on-street stalls increases, the number of passes issued can be reduced.

During the creation of the Interim Use Pass, the PTAG encourages staff to consider how to make it as user-friendly as possible. To achieve this, we recommend focusing on how to issue and regulate passes as an extension of the on-street system. This could allow the greatest flexibility to respond to changing needs in the environment. Being able to purchase an all-day Interim Use Pass at a paystation may be an appropriate way to help balance seasonal or day-of-week demands. This type of flexibility may also allow an Interim Use Pass to be deployed as a tool on other block faces that may be underparked without adding significant complexity for occasional users: the customers, clients & visitors.

Finally, there has been much discussion around the constrained parking in the Stadium Business District. Despite this, there is a great deal of right-of-way construction taking place over the next 3-years that will make the parking environment unstable. The PTAG is concerned that a drastic change in parking regulations made during construction would further disrupt businesses. While the group will consider further changes once construction is complete, the interim solution is to provide improved enforcement of existing regulations.

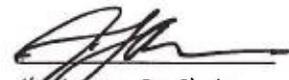
Respectfully presented by:



Steph Farber, Co-Chair

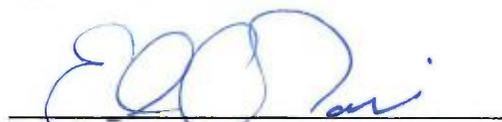


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4/23/19  
Date