

# CITY OF OAKLAND

## AGENDA REPORT

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OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK  
OAKLAND  
2009 NOV 18 PM 12:48

TO: Office of the City Administrator  
ATTN: Dan Lindheim  
FROM: Community and Economic Development Agency  
DATE: December 1, 2009

RE: **Discussion and Possible Action on Draft Principles and Scope for a City-Wide Parking Study**

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### SUMMARY

Staff proposes a set of parking principles to guide a proposed citywide parking study. These principles treat parking primarily as an economic and community development tool, and secondarily as a revenue source for City. This is in keeping with industry best practices, though it may represent a perceived departure from current policy. Staff seeks input and comment from City Council before proceeding with a study which may lead to substantial changes to City paid parking regulations.

### FISCAL IMPACT

There is no direct fiscal impact of this report.

Council direction to proceed with a study will require funds for staff time and, potentially, consultant time over the next several months. If a consultant is retained, staff estimates this study will cost approximately \$200,000 over a period of six months. Staff will work to determine a source of funding, but none has yet been identified.

The implementation of any citywide parking policy changes will have financial implications, which cannot be determined during the policy development stages. Future reports requesting implementation of specific policies will include a comprehensive analysis of the costs and revenue implications. Any eventual changes to City parking policies may have positive or negative impacts to revenue collection from parking meters and parking enforcement.

In addition, adoption of parking policies that are intended to foster economic development may ultimately lead to increased economic activity and associated sales tax and other revenues to the City.

### BACKGROUND

Parking is an important component of Oakland's transportation and economic infrastructure. Public parking, whether on City streets or on public lots, is a resource that the City must manage

Item: \_\_\_\_\_  
Public Works Committee  
December 1, 2009

with care. Management of the parking supply has real benefits for the City, not only through the direct revenue of paid, metered parking, but also by enhancing the economic vibrancy of our neighborhood commercial districts and thereby generating sales and property taxes. While enhancing access via foot, bike, and transit is also integral to creating dynamic successful districts, there will always be a need for parking, and thus a need for appropriate parking policy.

The City of Oakland does not have a clearly articulated policy regarding the management of its parking supply, particularly around the issue of paid (metered) parking. This issue came to the fore when the City Council raised meter rates and lengthened meter hours in July 2009, an action which created great controversy in the community. Collection times were subsequently modified following community objections.

In direct response to the community interest in this issue, Council asked staff to advise Council on what actions would be appropriate. This report is intended to present a policy direction that Oakland may choose to take regarding its parking resources. We seek input, comments and suggestions from Council on a general philosophy and approach before proceeding to further define specific actions to change meter rates, hours, or any other regulations related to paid parking.

## **KEY ISSUES AND IMPACTS**

This report presents a draft policy direction; it proposes no immediate changes to Oakland's parking regulations. Actual changes to the City's parking policy will only be proposed after thorough study and review.

Any changes to Oakland's paid parking procedures which follow the study and adoption of a new parking policy will have direct impacts to the users of Oakland's parking resources. Eventual changes to rates, hours, time-limits or other parking controls may decrease or increase the costs to individual users. These policies will have indirect impacts on neighborhood businesses which rely on a dependable and affordable source of parking. For this reason, consultation with merchant groups and community organizations is an important component of any effort that leads to adoption of new parking measures.

Parking meter and enforcement revenue is an important source of funding for the City. Any potential changes in the parking policy will need to address the potential impacts, positive or negative, to City revenue. Implementation of any changes will necessarily be subject to an analysis of the costs and benefits to the City. As noted, however, enforcement and meter revenue are direct financial impacts. Indirect financial impacts include sales tax revenues, payroll taxes, property taxes, and general economic activity.

## **POLICY DESCRIPTION**

Staff proposes a policy that casts parking primarily as a tool to enhance economic and community development. Direct revenue generation is very important to the City, but it is a by-product - and not a direct driver - of the parking policy. Briefly summarized, the major principles of this approach follow:

### **Draft Parking Principles for the City of Oakland**

- **Parking should be actively managed to maximize use and economic development**
  - Parking should be treated as an asset that works to bolster the economic vitality of neighborhood commercial areas
  - Parking should be managed to achieve an approximate 85% maximum occupancy per block, so that there will always be some parking available to shoppers and visitors
  - Parking should be priced to achieve usage goals (“market pricing”); market prices may vary by area, and by time of day
  - Whenever possible, a portion of parking revenue should be reinvested directly back to neighborhood commercial district improvements, potentially through a mechanism such as a parking benefit district
- **Parking should be easy for customers**
  - Costs, rules and penalties should be easily comprehensible
  - A variety of fare media (prepaid cards, credit cards, cash) should be able available
  - If possible, and where appropriate, time limits should be avoided in favor of market pricing
  - The role of tickets should be minimized in generating parking revenue; it should be easier to pay parking fees, which may lower the incidence of tickets
- **Parking policy and regulations should help the City meet other transportation, land use, and environmental goals**
  - Pricing and policies should encourage a “park once” approach, rather than driving from store to store within a commercial district
  - Parking should be part of a multi-modal approach to developing neighborhood transportation infrastructure, which also includes bike, pedestrian and transit facilities.

### **Proposed Parking Study**

Staff proposes to proceed with a study that looks at the implications of using these general guidelines to review and refine Oakland’s paid parking regulations. Staff is evaluating two options: 1) retain a consultant with particular expertise in parking policy to perform the study, or 2) rely largely on in-house staff assisted by paid interns. In either case, we would proceed with the same general course, but the timeline may necessarily be longer in the case of a purely staff led effort. Funding availability and priority will determine which course we take.

Item: \_\_\_\_\_  
Public Works Committee  
December 1, 2009

Staff seeks to first refine the parking principles articulated above, and choose several (three to five) pilot study locations to determine how these principles would be translated into specific parking policies and regulations in various types of Oakland neighborhoods. Different neighborhoods have different parking dynamics caused in part by the supply of on-street and off-street parking, the predominant types of neighborhood businesses, and the quality of multi-modal access, to name just a few factors. Pilot study locations would be chosen to provide a full cross section of these conditions. The following is a proposed scope:

**Draft Scope of Parking Study:**

- Review of existing parking regulations and current history
- Review/recap and summary of City's goals and objectives
- Review of industry best management practices and principles in a developed urban environment
- Overview of potential pilot study locations and recommendations
- Updated Parking Principles for Council adoption
- Study Pilot Areas:
  - Determine Boundaries and Parking Supply
  - Chart Land/Business Uses
  - Collect Parking Data by location, time of day, days of week
  - Survey users and businesses
  - Summarize Data and Prepare Draft Recommendations
- Present Results and Recommendations to Stakeholders/Participants
- Present Final Draft Recommendations to City Council
- Revise Policies, Procedures, Ordinances
- Final Report, Recommendations and Conclusions

**Potential candidates for pilot study locations:**

Montclair	Temescal
Grand/Lakeshore Business Districts	Eastlake
Piedmont Avenue	Chinatown
Uptown District	Downtown CBD
Laurel District	Old Oakland
Fruitvale	Jack London District
Millsmont	

**Schedule:**

Select consultant/Identify stakeholders/Finalize scope of study	January 2010
Revised principles and policy recommendations	Spring 2010
Select/apply principles/policies to pilot areas	Summer 2010
Present findings and final recommendations	Fall 2010

Item: \_\_\_\_\_  
Public Works Committee  
December 1, 2009

## **SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES**

**Economic:** These parking principles intend to maximize economic benefits to neighborhood business districts, provide a fair and predictable cost of parking for consumers, and provide adequate revenue to the City of Oakland.

**Environmental:** These parking principles, if successfully implemented, will increase the efficiency of the current parking supply, and will have some positive impact on air pollution by decreasing the amount of driving (circling) required to find an available parking spot in congested neighborhood commercial districts.

**Social Equity:** These parking principles seek to balance the needs of neighborhood businesses, residents and visitors by imposing parking charges based on neighborhood-specific demand. A market pricing policy will generate the most income in already congested areas, and has the potential to provide revenue targeted to neighborhood specific transportation and parking improvements. At the same time, a market-based approach to pricing will tend to require lower parking rates (or none at all) in areas of lower parking demand, so areas of marginal economic vibrancy will not be disadvantaged with a “one size fits all” approach to parking regulation.

## **DISABILITY AND SENIOR CITIZEN ACCESS**

This report has no specific impact on disability and senior citizen access. Any parking policy changes will include provisions for handicapped parking, as well access via a variety of modes for those unable to use private automobiles.

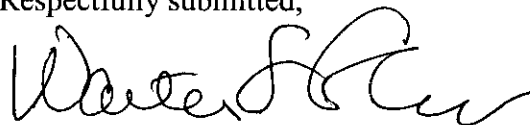
## **RECOMMENDATION AND RATIONALE**

Staff recommends that the City Council accept the draft parking principles presented in this report. Staff believes that this is the necessary first step of many to reforming parking policy in the City and, ultimately, reaching a community-supported reform of paid parking regulations.

**ACTION REQUESTED OF THE CITY COUNCIL**

Staff recommends that the City Council accept the draft parking principles presented in this report as the basis for a proposed study of parking policy changes for the City of Oakland, and directs Staff to identify funds for, and proceed with, the proposed study.

Respectfully submitted,



Walter S. Cohen, Director

Community & Economic Development Agency

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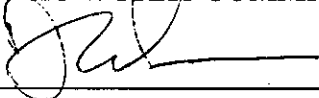
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APPROVED AND FORWARDED TO THE  
PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE:



Office of the City Administrator

Item: \_\_\_\_\_  
Public Works Committee  
December 1, 2009