

Downtown Parking – Systemwide Modifications

Feedback from Arlington Econ Dev / Transportation Staff & Waltham Traffic Engineering Staff Compiled by Julie Mercier, Community Development Director

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OVERVIEW

Arlington:

- Implemented paid parking in public lots and on-street, established Parking Benefit District in 2016
- Pricing scheme: \$0.50/hour & can park all day; first 15 minutes free for on-street meters (abused)
- Employees & Residents can purchase permit to use municipal lots; Town not keeping track of data
- Don't use Mobile Apps but plan to launch PayByPhone soon

Waltham:

- Has had some form of paid parking since 1980s; Currently, on-street is free and there are 23 kiosks in public lots; modifications proposed to add paid parking on-street where prime spots are
- Pricing scheme: \$2 for 12 hours; used by many commuters (Staff think this is way too cheap)
- All parking revenue goes into Parking Meter Fund, separate from General Fund
- Offer Monthly (\$35), Yearly (\$350), Senior (\$5) and Resident Permits
→ we may want to consider Senior Citizen Permit for nominal fee
- Use PayByPhone App – it's very popular

KIOSKS

1. Vendor Review

- a. IPS (Arlington leases on-street & multi-space meters)
 - i. Mechanical / Maintenance / \$ Collection: solar panels don't charge well, screens bake in sun & unreadable; many issues with coin jams, many contested tickets – vendor response terrible
 - ii. Customer Service: terrible, Arlington outsourced to 3rd party (RepublicParking)
 - iii. Data Collection: very disappointing; financial back-end is robust but not user friendly and doesn't connect space # w/payment info or time – as a result, staff have not tracked utilization and do not know if changes are needed
→ Not Recommended
- b. Parkeon (Waltham owned kiosks in past)
 - i. Mechanical / Maintenance / \$ Collection: needed fixing constantly, \$ collection was awkward
 - ii. Customer Service: closest person in NY, would charge \$1000 per visit
 - iii. Data Collection: good back-office reporting
→ Not Recommended unless issues described have been resolved
- c. VenTech (Waltham owns kiosks now)
 - i. Mechanical / Maintenance / \$ Collection: solar panels don't have many issues; bills/receipts jam during rain – system sends email to staff; Waltham has part-time repair/collection person on staff
 - ii. Customer Service: local MA person available, very responsive
 - iii. Data Collection: good data provided but they don't really use it
→ Recommended – Waltham loves them

2. Type of Kiosk
 - a. Pay & Display (Arlington): many complaints about back & forth, need to allow Mobile App in order to mitigate this
 - b. Pay By Space (Waltham): striping and signage are costly, people don't remember #s

3. Payment Methods
 - a. Arlington meters: coins & CC, launching mobile app soon
 - b. Waltham meters: nickels, dimes, quarters, bills, CC & mobile app BUT no change given

4. Mobile Apps – PayByPhone (Arlington interviewed many vendors and selected PayByPhone, Waltham and MBTA use PayByPhone)
 - a. Contract
 - i. Contract Fee can be paid for by municipality or passed through to end user
 - ii. Waltham passes \$0.25 through to end user; required to have 1,000 transactions per month – given 3 months to build up to that number, now exceed it easily
 - b. Promotional Materials provided by PBP can be attached to kiosk so users know how to download and use App
 - c. Interface w/Kiosk Vendor - 3rd vendor needed to communicate between VenTech & PBP
 - i. Waltham uses Conduent, contract paid for by ticket revenue
 - ii. Not the same as LPR, but probably could coordinate with it
 - ➔ This part was confusing to me; will need to research further

PARKING BENEFIT DISTRICT

Arlington has one, Waltham does not

Issues: not set up properly locally (set up when Treasurer was elected official and not an accounting professional), so accounting is unclear – as a result, it's taken a long time for Town to spend \$

Revenue: 100% net revenue goes into PBD; revenue exceeds expectations by tens of thousands

Feedback from Businesses: ready to see benefits of Parking Benefit District

Recommendations: make sure Town Treasurer or Accountant is member of Committee; set up allocation plan from the get-go

KEY TAKE-AWAYS

Arlington

- Kiosks and PBD are win-win ➔ more parking available & more \$\$ to invest in downtown
- Set up Mobile Apps right away; PayByPhone recommended b/c used by MBTA
- Do not underestimate importance of maintenance, collection & customer service for kiosks
- "Parking is a scarce resource and should pay for itself"

Waltham

- Parking Benefit District ability to reinvest downtown makes the case for paid parking
- Premium parking should cost more
- Pay By Plate is best method; wish they had it
- "Paying for parking is paying for peace of mind"