

**JOURNAL OF COMMISSION PROCEEDINGS**  
**December 1, 2025 -- Special City Commission Meeting**  
**Civic Center Commission Chambers, Room 206 -- Mayor Reeves Presiding**

**CALL TO ORDER: 4:00 PM**

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**ROLL CALL/STAFF INTRODUCTIONS:**

City Commission members present: Cory Reeves, Joe McKenney, Rick Tryon, and Susan Wolff. Commissioner Shannon Wilson was excused.

Also present were City Manager Greg Doyon and Deputy City Manager Jeremy Jones, City Attorney David Dennis, Planning and Community Development Director Brock Cherry and Deputy Director Lonnie Hill, Finance Director Melissa Kinzler, Police Captain Doug Mahlum, and Deputy City Clerk Darcy Dea.

**AGENDA APPROVAL:**

There were no proposed changes to the agenda by the City Manager or City Commission. The Commission approved the agenda as presented.

**CONFLICT DISCLOSURE/EX PARTE COMMUNICATIONS:**

None.

**PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS**

None.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**2. DOWNTOWN PARKING PROGRAM DISCUSSION.**

Planning and Community Development Director Brock Cherry reviewed and discussed a short PowerPoint presentation – Downtown Parking Program Options - [available in the City Clerk's Office].

Director Cherry reported that two immediate issues include a deficit that continues to grow monthly and how to address the long-term parking strategy. The Downtown Parking Program has a monthly recurring deficit of \$15,000 to \$20,000. By the end of January 2026, the total shortfall is expected to surpass \$100,000, and no sustainable funding source

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has been identified to address it. Downtown businesses, visitors, and community residents will have a significant voice in any long-term changes to the parking system. Engagement is already in progress and staff will continue to seek input throughout this process.

Structural and policy changes must begin now to prevent the deficit from growing further. The current shortfall will require the Downtown Parking Program to be reconciled with an undetermined funding source and include repayment, so each month of delay increases the amount that must eventually be repaid. Once the immediate financial crisis is under control and the program stabilizes, the City will expand and strengthen public involvement so downtown businesses, and the wider community can help shape the long-term future of the Downtown Parking Program.

The City's Downtown Parking Program has operated for decades with limited resources, aging infrastructure, and a reactive management approach. Under its current structure, the program has not generated enough revenue to fund routine operations, enforcement, or maintenance. It has remained functional in recent years through one-time support from the Downtown Urban Renewal District and CARES Act funds.

City staff anticipated the worsening financial picture and initially viewed Downtown Tax Increment Financing (TIF) as the only viable, temporary bridge to sustain operations for a limited period while revenue improvements and structural changes were implemented. In coordination with the Parking Advisory Commission (PAC), staff sought to strengthen revenues and stabilize the system, as outlined in the attached Ideal Parking Program Memo. However, after consultation with the City's TIF legal counsel, Dorsey and Whitney, it was confirmed that TIF dollars cannot be used to subsidize operational personnel costs such as enforcement, cashiering, or facilities management. This removed the primary mechanism that staff expected to use temporarily to cover the deficit while long-term improvements were made.

Staff understand that downtown businesses, property owners, and members of the public may be concerned that recommendations are being presented before a more extensive engagement process is completed. Under typical circumstances, staff would take more time to gather broad community input before bringing forward changes of this scale. The Downtown Parking Fund's financial condition does not allow for that timeline. The fund is experiencing significant monthly losses, and each month of inaction adds another \$15,000 to \$20,000 to the deficit. If the City does not take immediate steps to stop the losses, the shortfall will continue to grow and eventually require support from the general fund to cover the accumulated debt.

Because of this reality, each option presented includes immediate actions that must occur to stop the losses and stabilize the program. Once the fund is no longer in crisis, staff will expand public engagement and work closely with the PAC, downtown businesses, property owners, and the broader community to shape the long-term direction of the parking system.

The only item that the City Commission can officially decide on tonight is cancelling the SP+ contract.

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Staff have evaluated the program's financial condition, the legal limitations on its funding, and the operational challenges identified over the past year. Three clear pathways are available:

**Option #1:** This option temporarily retains SP+ on a month-to-month basis and stabilizes the program by implementing targeted rate, fine, and penalty adjustments. It halts ongoing monthly losses while preserving the current operating structure and level of service. This approach also provides time to develop broader policy solutions without disrupting existing service delivery.

**Option #2:** This option terminates the SP+ contract and transitions parking system management to the City under a one-year pilot program. By eliminating the program's largest cost driver, it may accelerate modernization efforts. However, this approach requires the City to rapidly build staffing and operational capacity, which it currently lacks. As a result, a decline in the existing level of service is anticipated during the transition.

**Option #3:** This option terminates the SP+ contract and suspends most enforcement and operations while a long-term strategy is developed. It offers maximum flexibility for planning and stakeholder engagement but introduces significant uncertainty and the highest short-term operational and financial risks. During this period, the existing level of service would be effectively eliminated, and businesses would no longer be able to rely on regular parking turnover. Staff also anticipate an increase in nuisance activity, as vehicles may remain parked indefinitely in certain areas. Enforcement responsibilities would be shifted to the Police Department, whose current capacity to manage these issues is limited.

These options represent the immediate steps required to prevent the Downtown Parking Program from further financial deterioration, while allowing the City to rebuild the system through deliberate engagement once the crisis is stabilized. Last year, 5,100 courtesy tickets were issued. A former software provider was pointing out people who had violations connected to vehicles that they did not own any longer and required the ticket to be paid, even though it was just a courtesy ticket. The software provider did not catch that because no one else in the industry does that and was unique to the city. However, having the software does not cover the cost of administering courtesy tickets.

Director Cherry commented that he has the administrative authority to allow free holiday parking; however, he thinks it would be inappropriate given the current financial situation for that decision to fall on him and implementing that program could potentially add another \$10,000 to the deficit. He concluded that City staff's recommendation is Option 1A; however, the city and downtown businesses need to make the decision together.

Commissioner Tryon requested to ask City staff questions about the presentation prior to the vote. He inquired about the current balance of the downtown parking fund, if the proposed rates, fees, and penalties increases associated with Option 1 would reduce or help the deficit, how the monthly deficit of \$15,000 to \$20,000 is accounted for, the cost adding personnel for Option 2 and what happens to the downtown parking fund if the city were to operate the parking enforcement.

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Finance Director Melissa Kinzler responded that the cash balance of the parking fund is (\$8,000) without November's payroll. The city accounts for the monthly deficit of \$15,000 to \$20,000 through the general fund. All expenses in the parking fund would remain if the city were to operate the downtown parking enforcement; however, it would need to be kept separate from other funds.

Director Cherry added that increasing the proposed rates, fees, and penalties associated with Option 1 would help initially to get the city get through strategic decision making until changes are implemented. With regard to Option 2, it would cost approximately \$20,000 a month to add personnel; however, that would be after the initial onboarding.

Commissioner McKenney explained that he put together an additional Option 4 after posting of the agenda and inquired when the appropriate time would be to discuss it.

City Attorney David Dennis responded that the appropriate time to discuss Option 4 would be after public comment.

City Manager Greg Doyon explained that he does not believe if the city raised the fees that it would recover from the deficit. City employees will cost more than contract employees because of the benefits and compensation package. The parking fund has struggled for a long time because it is a complicated issue. People do not like parking fees and businesses do not like the fact that there is no enforcement downtown. The parking system in place is not paying for itself, and he is concerned that the city is already dipping into the general fund. His recommendation is to stop the bleeding by charging what it costs to operate the current program. There is a safety component to a parking program and there is a cost whether there is a parking program or not. Parking cannot be solved, it can only be managed, and management includes flexibility that is consistent with what is happening with behaviors downtown. Manger Doyon concluded that he supports Option 1.

**Commissioner Wolff moved, seconded by Commissioner Tryon, that the City Commission direct City Staff to prepare Rates, Fees, & Penalties increases associated with Option 1A regarding the Downtown Parking Program as presented.**

Mayor Reeves asked if there were any comments from the public.

**Brett Doney**, Great Falls Development Authority, echoed what Manager Doyon and Director Cherry said about everyone needing to take responsibility and downtown groups working together. The current parking system will never work with inflation and needs to be revamped. Mr. Doney expressed support of a time management system that offers free street parking with heavy enforcement and putting some of the city lots out for a Request For Proposals (RFP) for high quality development. He requested that the Commission dedicate the time to really dig into this, not do a quick fix and let it go away.

**David Snuggs**, City resident, commented that he owns and operates several businesses downtown, is a founder of My Neighbor in Need and was on the PAC in 2017. In 2019, an idea was brought up to take the Downtown Parking Program away from the city, create a non-profit organization designed to benefit the community, structure it with 12 volunteer board members and each would be required to work full-time one month of the year in

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management to take responsibility off the city. Whatever the cost of the current staffing needs through SP+ would be the sponsorship from the city to the non-profit to hire those individuals under their umbrella. Part of the contract with SP+ for the last 60 days could also allow board members to job shadow with them. The only one making money from day one is SP+, while the city struggles. The idea was to create a community ambassador program with free parking for the first 15 minutes, issue a \$5.00 courtesy ticket for any additional 15 minutes, eliminate the profit SP+ receives and give it to a non-profit organization. The \$7,000 a month that the city is spending to offset parking seems high.

**Laramie Smovir**, City resident, commented that the current system is out of date; however, the city already has the tools to fix it. The Passport Parking app modernizes the system without adding too much equipment, hassle or confusion. Ms. Smovir suggested the following: eliminating the old meters; giving 30 to 60 minutes of free parking but requiring users to check in through the app and if drivers do not check in, they would receive a non-compliant citation, just as overstaying a meter.

The app also offers time expiring warnings and users can extend the session remotely. It is fair, convenient, keeps experience user friendly, increases revenue and people are more likely to comply because the option to pay is quick and easy. Voluntary compliance adds up and helps close the revenue gap without relying on heavy-handed enforcement. Also, progressive pricing encourages turnover in areas where there is high demand and nudges long-term parkers to move along or choose a more appropriate location. The app allows tailoring of those rates by zone, which means more could be charged for high traffic curb side spots for the progressive charging and keep them open or available while offering longer free periods or low flat rates in underused areas. With technology the city currently has, the city could adjust these rates dynamically over time based on real data because the analytics and data built into the Passport Parking app provides the city real-time view of how each zone is performing, where demand is highest, where spots sit empty and how long people are staying.

The city should also be using reasonable digital permits, which are also a part of the app the city currently has, that allows people to park in designated zones long-term. The city could end the SP+ contract immediately and transition to a single or dual enforcement agent using the Passport Parking system. All of this would significantly reduce costs, improve efficiency, increase revenue, keep enforcement in-house and community oriented and better fund ongoing maintenance. It would not be necessary to pause enforcement during the holidays if it offered the built-in first hour all year long.

Solutions need to be practical and sustainable. Leveraging the tools that the city currently has, eliminating unnecessary contracts, using data to inform policy, and aligning pricing with demand could stabilize the downtown parking program. Ms. Smovir concluded that she supports Option 2.

**John Mack**, City resident, commented that he has been operating two downtown businesses under the same roof for eight years. There is a revenue problem, not a parking demand problem. The city's proposed solutions treat the symptoms, not the root cause, and are not researched-backed. The decision should be made with the goal of continuing

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to revitalize downtown, not from a short-sided standpoint of doing whatever the city can do to stop the financial bleeding today.

The current approach to downtown parking is inadequate because people hate meters and paid parking. The city is losing up to \$20,000 a month and spending \$60,000 a month to enforce parking in a downtown that is often half empty. Paid parking in low demand areas actively detours visitors and the most important discussion in downtown parking design is occupancy or demand for parking spaces. The city is focused on the emergency financial situation it is in today and the recommended solutions would make downtown parking even less appealing to residents. The focus should be shifted away from the emergency financial situation to an acknowledgment that there has been great growth downtown over the last few years towards the goal of revitalization. Roseburg, Oregon was in a similar situation to that of the city and voted to eliminate all its parking meters. Research by the International Downtown Association, Strong Towns and Mainstreet America agreed that using parking primarily for revenue generation conflicts with downtown revitalization goals.

Mr. Mack suggested removing the paid parking meters immediately and shifting enforcement action to a free two-hour parking in all the metered spots. He added that there is already license plate reader technology to do this efficiently. The city's proposal to allow free downtown Christmas parking is evidence that this group knows more people will shop downtown if there are no parking fees. The pilot program for the free summer program in 2024 was a success and was repeated this year because it was a success. There was a 144% increase in garage parking during that pilot program and parking garages could be a creative solution to this problem.

**TJ Ferrin**, Ferrin's Furniture, commented that his issue is that SP+ is the largest deficit for the city to overcome and the contract with them should be canceled immediately. Mr. Ferrin expressed support of Option 2B. Self-policing could be a consideration if Option 3 is decided on because business owners are aware of the vehicles parked by their business and the city could have a contract with a towing company. Mr. Ferrin mentioned that he liked Option 4 as well.

**Andy Ferrin**, Ferrin's Furniture, commented that he owns seven businesses downtown and sees a lot of traffic in that area. Mr. Ferrin expressed support of Option 2B because it is the best of both worlds and pushes it onto the city. Central Avenue is where there is a high volume of traffic and where the core of where turnover needs to happen. He requested that the Commission pass the free parking for the holidays.

**Kellie Pierce**, Director of the Business Improvement District (BID) and Downtown Association, explained that there is great concern from downtown businesses and property owners about what is going to happen. Her origination is one of the two accredited Main Street programs in Montana with the National Main Street program. The statistics are there and increasing fees and fines are going to drive patrons away. There is an incredible business community downtown that works together to support each other. The new business coming in on the corner of third and first avenue south is going to impact the parking in front of Ferrin's Furniture and Hoglund's Western Wear. There is extra parking

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downtown, facilities are not maximized, a lot of potential to happen and she would hate to see parking be the demise of it.

**Billie Olson**, Cascade County resident, inquired about the cost of breaking a third-party contract because switching to a third-party costs more money. Ms. Olson suggested that welding students could install the old parking meters, and, for transparency, two business partners could collect the money from the meters. Towing vehicles would be a great solution so that it won't tax the court system.

**Alison Fried**, Owner of Dragonfly Dry Goods, commented that she has been in business downtown for 32 years. At least 50% of the people ask her or staff a question about parking. She has had a VIP program since the implementation of the Passport Parking program two years ago and pays the parking fee for customers who have questions or problems with parking. There is enforced parking for two hours, but you must pay for it, we could do enforced parking on the streets not paid. For every 50 cents she spends, she spends another 45 cents on a convenience fee, for a total of 95 cents for every 30 minutes that she's paying for a customer. Parking has not worked for 32 years, there has not been a good way to manage it, and the city should start over and revamp what is done step by step because it cannot keep doing the same thing. The community consensus is that they want two hours' free parking.

**Jayson Olthoff**, City resident, PAC, commented that he runs the What's Happening Great Falls Facebook Group and has posts and surveys about parking issues. No matter what decision is made, the city needs to educate and have the downtown business owners own it because they are the ones that benefit from customers. The city cannot keep kicking the can down the road and needs to come up with a solution that works. The statistics he has are available if needed.

**Inge Buchholz**, Inge's Fashions, commented that parking meters are needed downtown because people in the apartment buildings park around downtown business, especially on the weekends, which takes revenue away from those businesses. Ms. Buchholz explained every city in Europe has parking meters downtown and people do not complain about paying high rates. Some of her customers are elderly and they do not like walking to the kiosk to pay for parking. Ms. Buchholz suggested working together because the system needs to be changed and it needs to be customer friendly.

**Bradly Wilcott**, City resident, commented that he likes the two-hour parking and understands that funding and enforcement are issues. People might take advantage of parking for hours if the meters are not there. There must be an option to keep it affordable and make it work for everyone.

Written correspondence was received from **John Barnes**, owner of Tracy's Diner and Electric City Catering, via December 1, 2025 email, commented that there needs to be additional time to develop thoughtful ideas regarding the parking situation, the city must maintain a way to enforce the two-hour parking limit and the existing agreement with the current parking management company should be terminated.

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Written correspondence was received from **Dawn Marsh**, Brush Crazy, via November 30, 2025 email, commented that extending the time limits on downtown parking would be helpful and free downtown parking would be ideal for her customers.

Written correspondence was received from **Terry Bjork**, via November 30, 2025 email, expressed support of Option 1A and he opposed any of the options that entail doing away with paid parking altogether that allows people to take up prime spots all day.

Written correspondence was received from **James Knutson**, via December 1, 2025 email, commented that he does not go downtown because of parking meters.

Mayor Reeves asked Commissioner McKenney to present his Option 4.

Commissioner Tryon stepped out at 5:37 p.m. and returned at 5:39 p.m.

Commissioner McKenney explained that the decisions tonight are to determine whether to cancel the SP+ contract or explore higher rates. Option 4 is a long-term plan that needs to be worked on over the next six months to a year. It is a streamlined, business-friendly strategy that modernizes downtown parking, eliminates meter fees, supports local merchants, reduces city costs, and makes downtown more welcoming for residents and visitors. It includes free on-street parking (no meters, no fees), and replaces them with free, time-limited curb parking. It eliminates future meter fee increases and removes a major barrier to downtown visits. It ends the common excuse “I avoid downtown because of the meters,” and keeps downtown competitive with other free-parking areas throughout town. It makes smarter use of downtown land because several City-owned surface lots are under-utilized.

Option 4 allows the city to sell select lots for private infill development, bringing new housing, mixed-use spaces, and more activity downtown without raising taxes. The city would retain a small number of strategically located lots to support short-term visitors, mobility needs, and transitions during redevelopment. It would support merchants through garage promotion. Garages are not heated or cooled, but they provide meaningful protection from snow, wind, rain, hail, and icy conditions. Merchants can promote garages as the best weather-protected option. Citizens could show their garage tickets to merchants to receive discounts and validations and there could be seasonal and event-night promotions.

Commissioner McKenney summarized that Option 4 works by eliminating meter fees, bringing free on-street parking to downtown, supporting merchants through garage promotions, reducing city parking costs, encouraging private redevelopment and creating a more vibrant downtown.

Mayor Reeves asked Director Cherry and Manager Doyon what their opinions were with regard to Option 4 and eliminating parking meters.

Director Cherry responded that he has heard two versions of eliminating the parking program tonight. One is mad max, where the city is not involved in time enforcement of



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two hours. He sees promise in having timed two-hour enforcement program; however, it would need to be determined how to fund and enforce it. Director Cherry expressed concern about the undesired activity if the city were to mad max it without any enforcement. The business community would have to be willing to accept that behavior because on-street enforcement is administered by the police and not code enforcement.

City Manager Greg Doyon added that the city will never satisfy the funding part of the parking program and be able to manage or enforce it. The city has several unutilized spaces and in time, those spaces will be needed. Selling city space is very expensive to get back. It seems most people were interested in no fees with enforcement; however, the cost is the issue with that. There also seems to be hesitation for third party enforcement and both parking garages are not in the best shape. There was a TIF allocation several years ago; however, the city was never able to implement some of the preventative maintenance things in the garages. His initial thought was to mad max it because it would encourage people to utilize the garages, which would generate enough revenue to meet the needs of the garages; however, it could ultimately frustrate those in the downtown area. A compromise could be the two-hour free on street parking with some mechanism of enforcement; however, City staff would have to cost that out for the Commission.

Mayor Reeves inquired if there would continue to be discourse and dialog about how to fix the Downtown Parking Program if Option 1, along with its elements, were approved tonight.

Manager Doyon responded that the PAC has struggled with this and expecting something is going to change is hard when there are external factors that impact businesses' perception about parking. If the City can tap into the ideas and suggestions from the public tonight in a facilitated forum, it might be able to pivot that into an actual long-term solution that people may not be excited about but can live with it. The outcome he heard the most tonight was to allow free two-hour parking with enforcement, but how we get there will take some work.

The immediate issue that cannot be ignored is the impact this has on the general fund, and it cannot be allowed to continue. This would mean cancelling the contract, getting proposals externally with a model the city would want to move forward with over the next year and determining what the cost would be for the city. Manager Doyon added that he believes it will cost more for the city to employ people to do that work.

Mayor Reeves asked if there was any discussion amongst the Commission.

Commissioner Wolff commented that there is not a parking problem, there is a human behavior problem. People will walk from a parking garage to get to where they want to go. There needs to be more handicapped parking downtown, especially if the kiosks are kept and the city needs time. Business owners need to work with and bring the City Commission and PAC proposals on how they think this issue can be best handled. There is an urgency for the general fund now and there is not enough money to upgrade the technology in the parking garages. The city has lost a lot of revenue because there is not good enforcement and collection systems.

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Commissioner Tryon explained that what is being decided tonight is whether to go to a month-to-month contract with SP+ for a period or cancel the contract. He has always said that the city has a parking program so it can pay for a parking program, which does not make a lot of sense to him. His preference would be to remove the meters and kiosks, provide free two-hour parking 24/7, 365 days a year, enforced on a two-or three-hour-time limit and have the city totally out of the parking enforcement business. However, the city would have to be involved somehow. He is going to vote for the motion on the table, Option 1A, because it seems like the responsible thing to do. This would mean a sharp increase to park downtown for a period; however, a much better solution needs to be determined by January or February. He also likes Commissioner McKenney's Option 4 because it is a good framework to work from.

Commissioner McKenney commented that he believes Option 4 is all the Commission's ideas, not just his.

There being no further discussion, Mayor Reeves asked the Deputy City Clerk to remind the Commission of the motion.

Deputy City Clerk Darcy Dea recalled that Commissioner Wolff moved, seconded by Commissioner Tryon, that the City Commission direct City Staff to prepare Rates, Fees, & Penalties increases associated with Option 1A regarding the Downtown Parking Program as presented.

Commissioner McKenney received clarification that the other motions associated with Option 1 are coming up after this vote, there are no contract cancellations associated with Option 1A, and it preserves temporarily the contract in place.

Commissioner Wolff inquired if the contract is month-to-month.

Director Cherry responded that the contract in place is month-to-month as the city continues longer range, strategic discussions and the status quo would remain with the increased rates. Options 2, 3, and 4 would cancel the contract today. When it comes to cancelling the contract, what City staff is trying to prevent is the immediate deficit increase. He is not a proponent for kicking the can and watching the problem grow; however, maybe there is value in allowing for additional time if there is quality coordination and conversation, such as tonight. Director Cherry clarified that the contract can be cancelled at any time.

Commissioner Wolff inquired if this would be the time she could amend the motion to include a time frame and other details.

City Attorney David Dennis responded that a consensus of the Commission would withdraw the motion.

It was the consensus of the Commission to withdraw the main motion.

**Commissioner Wolff moved, seconded by Commissioner Tryon, that the City Commission direct City Staff to prepare Rates, Fees, & Penalties increases associated**

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**with Option 1A regarding the Downtown Parking Program as presented and that the Parking Commission and the downtown community, both businesses and residents, approach the Commission within three months with a proposal on how they want to see parking in the City of Great Falls in the future.**

Commissioner McKenney commented that he is reluctantly in favor of the motion; however, he will vote for it. Option 4 is outside the box and provides a total reset of how downtown parking is handled. He believes it is the consensus of the Commission and many in the audience that the Commission takes Option 4 seriously and that the PAC will take it into consideration.

Manager Doyon explained that three months is a little short considering the holiday season for those individuals to get together and actively go through this. He requested that the Commission consider expanding that. It is better to give a little more time than less time to have a better product to bring back to the Commission.

Commissioner Wolff asked staff what the preferred time frame would be.

Director Cherry responded that if the city continues to receive the quality and volume of engagement that it has already received, the next steps would be to have one or two facilitated open house discussions to find the comprehensive make-up of the system, distribute an online survey to provide feedback, then it could be packaged as something that utilizes the existing PAC. Director Cherry suggested allowing the PAC and downtown community until the end of April to provide a proposal because this is a busy time for downtown business. By the time these fees are implemented, and staff prepares to go forward with Option 1, other plans could be considered. This is just for right now because of the deficit and not wanting to put increased pressure on the general fund.

It was the consensus of the Commission to withdraw the current motion on the floor.

**Commissioner Wolff moved, seconded by Commissioner Tryon, that the City Commission direct City Staff to prepare Rates, Fees, & Penalties increases associated with Option 1A regarding the Downtown Parking Program as presented and that the Parking Advisory Commission and the downtown business owners and residents bring a proposal to the City Commission no later than April 30, 2026.**

Mayor Reeves inquired if there needed to be additional public comment.

City Attorney Dennis responded that there does not need to be additional public comment.

There being no further discussion, Mayor Reeves called for the vote.

Motion carried 4-0.

**Commissioner Tryon moved, seconded by Commissioner Wolff, that the City Commission direct City Staff to prepare changes and amendments to the Downtown Parking Program:**

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- **To eliminate Courtesy Tickets**
- **Maintain current booting requirements and fees, but eliminate the mailing notification requirement; and**
- **Sunset the 15-minute Courtesy Parking Program**

Mayor Reeves asked if there were any comments from the public. Hearing none, Mayor Reeves asked if there was any discussion amongst the Commission.

Commissioner McKenney commented that he does not think this motion is necessary because the initial motion moved this forward.

Mayor Reeve inquired if this is a temporary framework for downtown parking.

Director Cherry responded that this is as temporary as the City Commission makes it. The elimination of courtesy tickets is because there are portions of code, which speaks to courtesy tickets; however, with Option 1A, the recommendation is that it is essentially deleted and has an initial fee type to it. The other two items are not dependent on the fee schedule that is associated with the first motion, and he does not see any conflicts. The 15-minute courtesy parking program is a program for businesses to buy a \$400 space annually. With Option 1, City staff is looking at having to increase that to \$1000. This was problematic and required more administration costs without providing a tangible benefit to the users.

Mayor Reeves commented that he can support this knowing it is a temporary framework policy.

Commissioner Tryon commented that he is confused as to why this motion is needed.

Director Cherry responded that currently, per city code, booting cannot happen until there are five unpaid parking tickets that are over 30 days old. The ability to boot sooner is fiscally less impactful and devastating for those who are not compliant with the program. This motion allows for booting sooner, without that additional time after five parking tickets and the city code would need to be changed.

There being no further discussion, Mayor Reeves called for the vote.

Motion carried 4-0.

**Commissioner Wolff moved, seconded by Commissioner McKenney, that the City Commission allow free Downtown Holiday Parking beginning December 15<sup>th</sup> and ending December 28<sup>th</sup> 2025.**

Mayor Reeves asked if there were any comments from the public.

**Brett Doney**, Great Falls Development Authority, received clarification that parking would still be an agenda item on the December 2, 2025 work session so staff can confirm the direction being taken tonight.

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**Inge Buchholz**, Inge's Fashions, expressed support of allowing free downtown holiday parking beginning December 15 and ending December 28, 2025.

Mayor Reeves asked if there was any discussion amongst the Commission.

Commissioner Wolff commented that people start shopping earlier than December 15<sup>th</sup> and would like to see it expanded from Thanksgiving through Christmas.

Commissioner Tryon inquired how the parking fund incurred a \$10,000 cost for free parking during the holidays and the impact to how it is paid back.

Planning and Community Development Deputy Director Lonnie Hill responded that there is an impact on revenue of approximately \$10,000 in the month of December and suspending revenue for a couple of weeks is a major impact.

Director Cherry further responded that the impact adds to the deficit and that is why it is important to understand that it is short term for the holidays.

Commissioner Wolff inquired if in the future there could be higher fees and fines so that the December hit can be spread out across the year, so it does not hit the general fund.

Director Cherry responded that there is a chance that things will be operating differently by next Christmas.

There being no further discussion, Mayor Reeves called for the vote.

Motion carried 4-0.

Director Cherry announced that there is a sign-in sheet for those interested in being contacted to continue this conversation.

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**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Commission, **Commissioner Tryon moved, seconded by Mayor Reeves, to adjourn the special meeting of December 1, 2025, at 6:26 p.m.**

Motion carried 4-0.

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Mayor Cory Reeves

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Deputy City Clerk Darcy Dea

**Minutes Approved: December 16, 2025**