



Item: Resolution 10006 - Authorizing rates for monthly meter parking permits, increasing the parking immobilization “boot” fee, and increasing the fee for special use zone meter bags

From: Wendy Thomas, AICP, Deputy Director, Planning and Community Development

Initiated By: Parking Advisory Commission

Presented By: Mike Haynes, AICP, Director of Planning and Community Development

Action Requested: City Commission adopt Resolution 10006

Public Hearing:

1. Mayor conducts public hearing, calling three times each for proponents and opponents.
2. Mayor closes public hearing and asks the will of the Commission.

Suggested Motions:

1. Commissioner moves:

“I move that the City Commission (adopt/deny) Resolution 10006.”

2. Mayor calls for a second, discussion, and calls for the vote.
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Recommendation: On March 5, 2013 the City Commission set the public hearing for March 19, 2013, to consider Resolution No. 10006 adopting rates for monthly meter parking permits, a rate increase for the parking immobilization “boot” fee, and increasing the fee for special use zone meter bags.

Notice: The public hearing notice was published in the *Great Falls Tribune* on March 10, 2013. Planning Staff also contacted the Business Improvement District (BID) and the Downtown Great Falls Association to solicit input on the proposed resolution.

Background:

At the December 4, 2012, City Commission Work Session, City staff updated the Commission on the parking program. The staff provided the Commission with information on: ideas to enhance the customer’s experience, the program’s use of technology, costs to maintain the parking garages, and recommended updates on costs/fees associated with the program.

Meter Permit Parking Program

As part of the adopted Downtown Master Plan, the community recommended that a parking study be undertaken in order to assess the condition of the parking program and consider recommendations to improve the operation of the program. On January 14, 2013, Walker Parking Consultants released the final draft of the parking study. The study made several recommendations including replacing some of the parking meter zones with time limited zones while maintaining the core district with metered parking. Walker notes that a result of this type of change would be a decrease in the utilization of the parking garages/lots. Another recommendation from a national parking expert, Dennis Burns, Kimley-Horn, was to implement a parking meter pass program in outlying areas that would increase utilization of the on-street meters, but not result in a mass shift of vehicles from the garages to parking on the street in front of existing businesses in the periphery of the parking district.

Staff is proposing a flexible permit program where parking would only be allowed on block faces where utilization rates are historically low. The block faces would not be static, but variable and could be adjusted on a monthly basis. The goal of the program would be to increase the utilization of on-street parking in low use areas, while having a flexible program that could change based on the input of parkers, property owners, and business owners. Meter parking permits would not be issued for blocks where there is a history of reasonable meter utilization. Underutilized parking exists on a number of blocks where weekly revenue is less than one dollar. Parking professionals are encouraging the City to take steps to encourage use of this public resource.

A map depicting designated block faces where the parking meter permit program may be implemented was sent to the Downtown Great Falls Association and the Business Improvement District soliciting input and ideas on the potential program. The comments staff received focused mostly on the cost of the proposed permit. Business owners stated that they would not want the program to include high demand/utilization blocks.

Staff recommends a fee of \$20 for a monthly meter permit. The fee is equal to four days of parking at the posted meter rate of \$.50/hour. The rate is less than the \$25 fee charged for a monthly pass to park in a surface lot. Given the distance between downtown's major employers and locations of the underutilized block faces included in the program, staff does not anticipate these charges will have a significant impact on utilization rates in existing lots or the parking garages. The BID Board recommended a price of \$15 for a monthly meter permit.

Increasing the Immobilization ("Boot") Fee

Official Code of the City of Great Falls Title 10, Vehicles and Traffic, specifies the procedures for immobilizing a vehicle. Section 10.50.020 states an immobilized vehicle shall not be released by the city until the immobilization fee is paid, together with payment of all outstanding parking fines, or posting of a bond as allowed by Section 10.50.040. The current fee for installing and removing a parking boot is \$25. The fee does not cover the direct and indirect costs associated with installing and removing the boot. The Parking Advisory Commission has requested that the City Commission consider a boot fee commensurate with the actual costs associated with booting a vehicle. City staff and Standard Parking staff tracked the time it took to process a booted vehicle, from beginning to end. Based on the case study, staff is recommending that the boot fee be increased to \$140.00. The fee would cover only the direct (staffing) and indirect (portion of operating expenses) costs incurred in the booting process.

Special Use Zone Meter Bags

The Parking Advisory Commission requested staff reexamine the cost for meter bags. Meter bags are addressed in Title 10, Vehicles and Traffic, 10.48.260. The bags are installed at the request of contractors or business owners to allow contractors to park at a metered space without having to adhere to the two hour limit. These spaces are generally located in premium locations for the convenience of the contractor. The proposed fee of \$4/day would equal the cost to pay the meter for an 8 hour time period. The Parking Advisory Commission adopted a policy that does not charge contractors for meters that are removed for construction of a covered walkway when required by the Building Division in order to ensure public safety.

Concurrences: N/A

Fiscal Impact: Staff anticipates the proposed parking program fee changes will assist the Parking Enterprise Fund by promoting the maximum utilization of a public resource, on-street parking, and ensure that program costs are paid by program users.

Alternatives: The City Commission could deny the requested action.

Attachments/Exhibits:

Resolution 10006

Map of Downtown Parking District

RESOLUTION 10006

A RESOLUTION ADOPTING RATES FOR MONTHLY METER PARKING PERMITS, A RATE INCREASE FOR THE PARKING IMMOBILIZATION “BOOT” FEE AND INCREASING THE FEE FOR SPECIAL USE ZONE METER BAGS

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WHEREAS, City Code Section 10.48.290 sets forth that parking meter rates are to be established by resolution; and,

WHEREAS, blocks within the Downtown Parking Meter District are underutilized; and

WHEREAS, the City Commission adopted Resolution 8731, on June 6, 1995 to allow monthly parking passes be issued for a rate of \$18.00 in a defined area between 4th and 5th Streets between First Avenue South and Second Avenue South; and,

WHEREAS, City staff, in concurrence with the Parking Advisory Commission, has recommended that the City Commission approve a modification in parking meter rates to create areas where customers can park at meters on a daily basis by obtaining a valid Monthly Meter Parking Permit for that area; and,

WHEREAS, to provide demand driven pricing for parking in the Downtown Parking District, the Monthly Meter Parking Pass use areas are flexible in their location and may be changed with the approval of the Parking Advisory Commission; and,

WHEREAS, an immobilization fee is provided for in Official Code of the City of Great Falls, Section 10.50.040; and

WHEREAS, the immobilization fee is currently \$25; and

WHEREAS, a study was conducted to determine the time and cost to report, install and remove a boot from a vehicle in violation of the City Code regarding payment of parking tickets; and

WHEREAS, it was found that the fee charged does not cover the cost to report, install and remove a boot from a vehicle; and

WHEREAS, the City Code Section 10.48.190 states that special use zone permit fees shall be set by the City Commission; and

WHEREAS, the rate charged for a meter bag is \$3.00 per day; and

WHEREAS, the Parking Advisory Commission has requested that the City Commission consider raising the fee to cover the revenue that a meter would generate over the course of an eight hour enforcement day; and

WHEREAS, the City seeks to have a solvent parking program where revenue should cover costs.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF GREAT FALLS, MONTANA:

1. That the City Commission of the City of Great Falls does hereby approve a monthly rate of \$20.00 for the Monthly Meter Parking Permit; and
2. That the City Commission of the City of Great Falls does hereby approve an immobilization fee in the amount of \$140.00, and
3. That the City Commission of the City of Great Falls does hereby approve a meter bag daily rate of \$4.00.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED BY SAID CITY COMMISSION that this Resolution shall become effective immediately upon its passage and approval.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the City Commission of the City of Great Falls, Montana, on this 19th day of March 2013.

Michael J. Winters, Mayor

ATTEST:

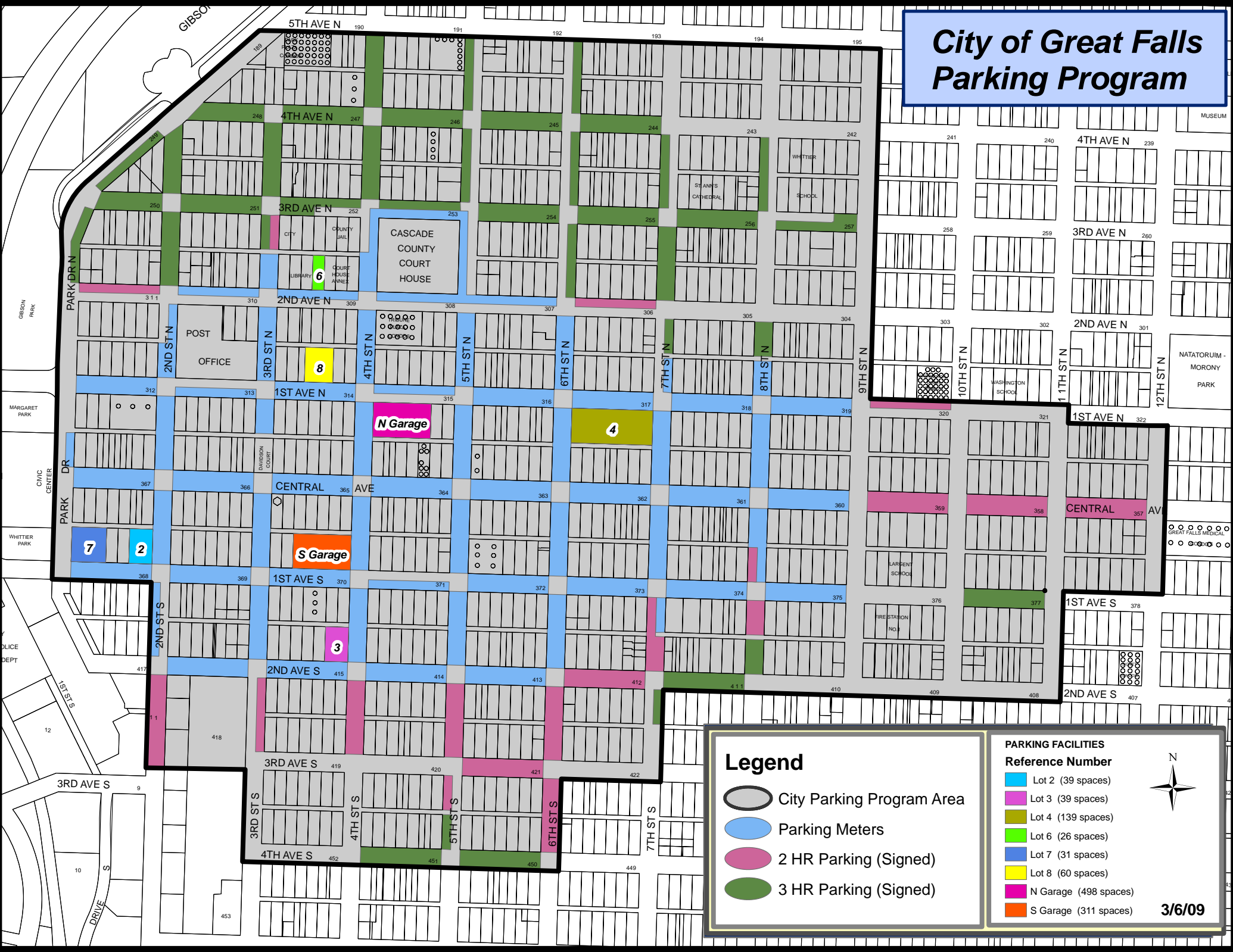
Lisa Kunz, City Clerk

(SEAL OF CITY)

APPROVED FOR LEGAL CONTENT:

David L. Nielsen, Interim City Attorney

City of Great Falls Parking Program



Legend

- City Parking Program Area
- Parking Meters
- 2 HR Parking (Signed)
- 3 HR Parking (Signed)

PARKING FACILITIES	
Reference Number	Capacity
	Lot 2 (39 spaces)
	Lot 3 (39 spaces)
	Lot 4 (139 spaces)
	Lot 6 (26 spaces)
	Lot 7 (31 spaces)
	Lot 8 (60 spaces)
	N Garage (498 spaces)
	S Garage (311 spaces)

3/6/09