

May 20, 2011

Phil Kiser, Parking Commission
City of Great Falls
PO Box 5021
Great Falls MT 59403

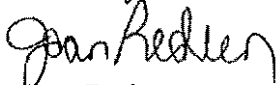
RE: Public Drug Construction

Dear Phil:

The Board of Directors of the Great Falls Business Improvement District support the construction of the Public Drug Building downtown and believe that any fees associated with bagging of meters during the construction period should be waived.

Thank you.

Sincerely,



Joan Redeen

On behalf of the Board of Directors
Great Falls Business Improvement District

cc: Wendy Thomas
Nick Oswood, Oswood Construction



B U S I N E S S I M P R O V E M E N T D I S T R I C T

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MAY 18 2011

CITY OF GREAT FALLS
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

17-May-11

Via e-mail and U.S. Mail

City of Great Falls
Attn: Ms. Wendy Thomas, AICP
Deputy Director Planning & Community Development
P.O. Box 5021
Great Falls, Montana 59403-5021

Re: Public Drug Building
Great Falls, Montana
Parking Fees

Ms. Thomas:

This letter is in regards to the \$2 per parking spot per day fee Oswood Construction Company ("OCC") is being assessed for the parking spots blocked by the construction of the Public Drug Building at 324 Central Avenue (the corner of Central Avenue and 4th Street) for our client, Public Drug Company ("PDC").

Prior to bidding this project back at the beginning of December, 2010, both OCC and the Project Architect (L'Heureux, Page, Werner PC) tried to contact the City regarding the requirements for this project, without success. The original intent of this project was to remove as little sidewalk as possible and just use fencing to protect pedestrian traffic on the sidewalk to minimize the cost. During our meeting with the City of Great Falls on 25-Feb-11, the Great Falls Public Works Department requested that additional sidewalk be replaced as part of this project. The City stated this sidewalk had been damaged as a result of the fire and subsequent demolition of the old bank building on the site. We do not understand why it was not addressed at that time either with the demolition contractor or the insurance company; none-the-less, PDC agreed to have us replace this sidewalk at a cost of \$9,914. It should be noted that PDC did not own the building that was demolished—they purchased the property after it was cleared. Since the sidewalk had to be removed, this pushed pedestrian traffic on Central into the parking spaces, so the City requested that a boardwalk be constructed. While it is not required by code, the boardwalk is additional protection for pedestrians, and OCC and PDC also absorbed this cost. On 4th Street, the original plan was to divert traffic across the street, but pedestrians continued to walk through the construction zone or in the road. OCC had already erected fencing and the City was kind enough to erect concrete barriers to divert foot traffic, but, again, it blocks parking spaces. Now, even after OCC and PDC covered the cost of the boardwalk and of the sidewalk replacement requested by the City, the City is charging us for the loss of parking. We were told that this was to cover the cost of the "bags" to hide the meters, but OCC removed the meters in order to replace the sidewalk—no bags are required. We do not believe that the City is justified in charging us for the spots that are being blocked due to their requests for additional sidewalk replacement and the boardwalk.

The Public Drug Building is an exciting addition to downtown Great Falls. PDC has decided to stay downtown because of their long company and family history here. Unfortunately, staying downtown has cost PDC more than if they had relocated elsewhere in Great Falls. This is the first large project, the first new commercial building downtown in years. The current City regulations regarding parking are adequate for small remodels, but do not address large projects where the City must make some concessions to facilitate construction. The City should encourage investment in our downtown district rather than levying additional costs. We understand that the City's parking budget is strapped, but this site was previously a vacant lot, generating neither parking fees nor much tax revenue. The new Public Drug building will, in the long run, be a boon for the City through increased taxes and increased parking fees. We hope this project is the start of much needed investment in our historic downtown. We ask that the City reconsider charging Public Drug Company "bagging fees" for the duration of this project and refund the fees we have already paid. This project is scheduled to be complete by November; however, OCC will endeavor to restore the sidewalk so the City can reinstall the meters as quickly as possible—provided that there is no danger to pedestrians.

Thank you,



Nicholas R. Oswood, Project Manager

OSWOOD CONSTRUCTION COMPANY

cc. Mr. Tim Peterson, L'Heureux Page Werner, P.C.
Mr. Todd LePard, Public Drug Company