

City of Cambridge, Massachusetts
TRANSPORTATION, TRAFFIC, & PARKING COMMITTEE

Sullivan Chamber, City Hall 795 Massachusetts Ave., Cambridge, MA 02139

COMMITTEE MEMBERS:
Vice Mayor Denise Simmons
Councillor Minka vanBeuzekom, Chair

AGENDA

Time:	Tuesday, November 27, 2012, 5:30 PM	
Purpose:	The <i>Transportation, Traffic & Parking Committee</i> will conduct a public meeting to discuss completion of an on-street parking census; it's rationale, hurdles, costs and benefits.	Suzanne Rasmussen, Director of Environmental and Transportation Planning
Related Docs.	1. Policy Order requesting consideration for an on-street parking census.	
Time:	Tuesday, November 27, 2012, 6:00 PM	
	The <i>Transportation, Traffic & Parking Committee</i> will conduct a public meeting to discuss the City of Cambridge's comprehensive public metered spaces plan.	Susan Clippinger, Traffic, Parking & Transportation Director
Related Docs.	2. Response from Susan Clippinger, Traffic, Parking & Transportation Director -- to 3 city council "report items" asking for information/action re: parking meters throughout the city. 3. Awaiting Report Item Number 12-70 , regarding a report on accepting payment at parking meters via credit cards Awaiting Report Item Number 12-82 , regarding a report on the feasibility of implementing an initiative similar to the Boston Meter program; and Awaiting Report Item Number 12-118 , regarding a report on the possibility of installing "Pay by Phone" enabled meters.	



City of Cambridge

O-4
IN CITY COUNCIL
October 22, 2012

COUNCILLOR VANBEUZEKOM
COUNCILLOR CHEUNG
MAYOR DAVIS
COUNCILLOR KELLEY
COUNCILLOR MAHER
COUNCILLOR REEVES
VICE MAYOR SIMMONS
COUNCILLOR TOOMEY

- WHEREAS: The City of Cambridge has implemented many strategies to encourage bicycling and walking; and
- WHEREAS: Bike lanes and traffic calming have worked to make both activities safer and more enjoyable and with the result that a greater number of individuals are choosing to bicycle and walk within the city; and
- WHEREAS: A slow and gradual reduction of on-street parking will also continue to support individuals who choose to walk or bicycle; and
- WHEREAS: Similar to census data, knowing the number of on-street parking spaces (metered + unmetered + residential parking spaces) provides a base-line value for understanding how many cars presently park on the city's streets; and
- WHEREAS: Once a base-line value is established, the City may explore the feasibility of a slow and gradual reduction of on-street parking spaces (i.e. a 1% reduction in the number of spaces/year for 20 years) as another strategy that supports bicycling and walking throughout the city; and

WHEREAS: The use of public street space that has historically been used as on-street parking may then be rededicated to city street features such as bike lanes, traffic calming or wider sidewalk space that allows for tree plantings and a more enjoyable pedestrian experience; now therefore be it

ORDERED: That the City Manager be and hereby is requested to direct the appropriate City officials to explore the possibility of completing an on-street parking census and the impacts of a plan for the gradual reduction of on-street parking spaces over the next decades; and be it further

ORDERED: That the City Manager be and hereby is requested to report back to the City Council as soon as possible.

REFERRED TO TRANSPORTATION, TRAFFIC AND PARKING COMMITTEE ON THE MOTION OF COUNCILLOR KELLEY



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE • EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

Robert W. Healy, City Manager *Richard C. Rossi, Deputy City Manager*

795 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139

Voice: 617.349.4300 Fax: 617.349.4307 TTY: 617.349.4242 Web: www.cambridgema.gov

November 5, 2012

To the Honorable, the City Council:

Please find attached a response to Awaiting Report Item Number 12-70, regarding a report on accepting payment at parking meters via credit cards; Awaiting Report Item Number 12-82, regarding a report on the feasibility of implementing an initiative similar to the Boston Meter program; and Awaiting Report Item Number 12-118, regarding a report on the possibility of installing "Pay by Phone" enabled meters, received from Traffic, Parking & Transportation Director Susan Clippinger.

Very truly yours,

Robert W. Healy
City Manager

RWH/mec
Attachment



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
Traffic, Parking and Transportation
344 Broadway
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139

www.cambridgema.gov/traffic

Susan E. Clippinger, Director
Brad Gerratt, Deputy Director

Phone: (617) 349-4700
Fax: (617) 349-4747

MEMORANDUM

To: Robert Healy
From: Susan Clippinger
Date: October 23, 2012
Re: Responses to Parking Meter Council Orders

The following is in response to three Council Orders - awaiting report 12-70 on accepting payment at parking meters via credit card, awaiting report 12-82 on the feasibility of implementing an initiative similar to the Boston Meter Program, and awaiting report 12-118 on the possibility of installing "Pay by Phone" enabled meters.

The City is continuously working to improve its Parking Meter Program to achieve several goals:

- Making it easier for customers to pay without using quarters.
- Having flexibility to tailor hours and rates to meet the specific needs of each location.
- Simplifying and reducing the labor involved in collecting and maintaining the meters.
- Having the best information to perform financial audits.
- Having data about utilization.
- Receiving alerts when meters need repair.

Most of the City's on-street meters are very unsophisticated and only accept quarters. However, the City has 8 lots which have been upgraded to have pay stations which support the goals listed above. They all accept credit cards and their rates and hours are set to meet the business needs of each location. Even at one location the rates and the time limits can vary between day and evening use. The percentage of credit card use in each lot varies from a high in Harvard Sq of 97% to a low on Cambridge St of 70%. The average for all 8 lots is 84%. The pay stations in the 3 lots in Central Square on Bishop Allen Drive went online in October.

In addition to the lots we also have 3 streets (Church, Linden and Plympton) with pay stations. On Linden and Plympton the pay stations have been located on property at the back of the sidewalk to allow the sidewalk to be accessible. In analyzing our current program we find the multi-space pay stations are more cost effective in parking lots where one machine can serve a larger number of spaces than on a street.

Single space meters that take credit cards as well as coins, became available several years ago. The City did a trial installation of 50 of these meters on Garden Street from October 2010 to October 2011. During this trial about 69% of the transactions were made using a credit card.

Both single space credit card meters and pay stations come with increased operating costs as compared to a traditional meter. These costs include credit card processing and transaction fees, a communication fee, and a management or service fee for access to the detailed transaction, audit and reporting information. As of October all the lots will be equipped with pay stations. The on-street meters take quarters only.

In the trial on Garden St we learned that the operating costs for on-street single meters that can take a credit card payment is \$365/meter/year. 70% of that cost or \$256 is the credit card fees. Our current meters cost about \$6/meter/year in operating costs. Currently our average revenue/space is \$1,500 per year. We estimate that deployment of single space credit card meters citywide could cost about \$1.5 million in capital costs to purchase the equipment plus \$1million/year in ongoing operating costs. To support the increased operating costs a meter rate increase would be needed. Also the City has implemented the convenience fee model for departments accepting credit cards. The single meters in trial do not accommodate the convenience fee model.

Another payment option the City is looking into is a "Pay-by-phone" system, which allows people to set up a credit card account and pay for parking using their cell phone. One of the advantages of this system is that it does not require the purchase of new meters and credit card related fees would be paid by the parker rather than the City which supports the City's convenience fee model. The City's parking enforcement officers receive communication that the parking space has been paid for via their ticketing device. To implement this system in Cambridge we need to change the ticketing device to have real time communication. The ongoing data communication cost is approximately \$20,000 per year. The City would also have to get bids for this service as there are several vendors. Because of the higher cost associated with paying the credit card fees, the utilization of this system would be less than the pay stations and Garden Street trial.

The City of Boston currently has a system in place that uses a prepaid meter card, which allows parkers to purchase time at parking meters using a prepaid card that is inserted into a slot in the meter. This program has not lived up to Boston's expectations. The logistics of distribution and promotion and adding value to cards is more cumbersome than expected and does not provide the anticipated level of customer service. Boston's longer term plan is to use meters or pay stations that take credit cards. The current Cambridge parking meters have a slot in the outer meter housing to accommodate prepaid cards. However, the internal meter mechanism does not contain the card readers that are necessary for meter cards to work. The cost of installing readers for all the City's meters would be \$60,000. The City would also have to dedicate part of a staff person's time to manage promotion and distribution of the cards and to administer the program. Given Boston's experience we do not recommend this option.

The Department continues to review new meter technologies and initiatives as they come on the market and reviews the experience of other municipalities who have implemented these systems. We also carefully weigh these options against their financial costs. As promising opportunities become available we assess their appropriateness for Cambridge and make recommendations for implementation to the City Manager.



City of Cambridge

O-9
IN CITY COUNCIL
June 4, 2012

COUNCILLOR CHEUNG
MAYOR DAVIS
COUNCILLOR DECKER
COUNCILLOR KELLEY
COUNCILLOR MAHER
COUNCILLOR REEVES
VICE MAYOR SIMMONS
COUNCILLOR TOOMEY
COUNCILLOR VANBEUZEKOM

ORDERED: Accepting payment at parking meters via credit card was a strong topic of interest during the FY13 budget discussion; now therefore be it

ORDERED: That the City Manager be and hereby is requested to confer with the appropriate departments on the cost analysis of credit card meters and report back to the Cambridge City Council.

In City Council June 4, 2012
Adopted by the affirmative vote of nine members.
Attest:- Donna P. Lopez, Interim City Clerk

A true copy;

ATTEST:-


Donna P. Lopez, Interim City Clerk



City of Cambridge

O-11
IN CITY COUNCIL
June 11, 2012

COUNCILLOR CHEUNG
MAYOR DAVIS
COUNCILLOR DECKER
COUNCILLOR KELLEY
COUNCILLOR MAHER
COUNCILLOR REEVES
VICE MAYOR SIMMONS
COUNCILLOR TOOMEY
COUNCILLOR VANBEUZEKOM

WHEREAS: The City Council is always looking for innovative new ideas to improve the services it provides to its residents; and

WHEREAS: It has come to the attention of the Cambridge City Council that the City of Boston has had success with a parking meter payment program implemented last year that allows the use of pre-paid parking meter cards at 7,000 single space parking meters across the city; and

WHEREAS: The cards are purchased online or in person at the Office of the Parking Clerk at City Hall or the City Tow Lot and are available in the following amounts: \$5, \$25, \$50, \$75, or \$100; and

WHEREAS: As it appears many of the meters in Cambridge already have slots to read such cards, introducing an initiative like the Boston Meter Program would be a straightforward way to spare residents from the hassle of always carrying quarters; now therefore be it

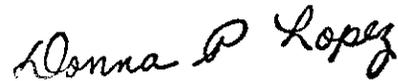
ORDERED: That the City Manager be and hereby is requested to confer with the Traffic, Parking and Transportation Department on the feasibility of implementing an initiative similar to the Boston Meter Program in Cambridge and report back to the Cambridge City Council.

In City Council June 11, 2012

Adopted by the affirmative vote of nine members.

Attest:- Donna P. Lopez, Interim City Clerk

A true copy;

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Donna P Lopez".

ATTEST:-

Donna P. Lopez, Interim City Clerk



City of Cambridge

O-10
IN CITY COUNCIL
September 24, 2012

COUNCILLOR VANBEUZEKOM
MAYOR DAVIS
COUNCILLOR DECKER
COUNCILLOR MAHER
COUNCILLOR REEVES
VICE MAYOR SIMMONS
COUNCILLOR TOOMEY

WHEREAS: The City of Cambridge is beginning to install the new type of electronic "Pay and Display" parking meters at various locations within the city; and

WHEREAS: These upgraded electronic parking meters provide improved customer convenience, help ensure a regular turnover of spaces in our high demand areas, and improve municipal maintenance and collection operations; and

WHEREAS: A key component of these meters being embraced by residents is the convenience of paying with cash or no-fee credit card; now therefore be it

ORDERED: That the City Manager be and hereby is requested to confer with the Department of Public Works and the Director of Traffic, Parking and Transportation and report back to the City Council on how the City can work to install "Pay by Phone" enabled meters that make it easier to pay for parking and avoid parking tickets. This meter feature allows customers to receive a reminder message via phone when meter time is almost up and then add time without returning to the meter (subject to time limit restrictions); and be it further

ORDERED: That the City Manager be and hereby is requested to communicate to residents via email, mailings, and a Frequently Asked Questions web page the positive nature and use of these new types of electronic meters.

In City Council September 24, 2012
Adopted by the affirmative vote of seven members.
Attest:- Donna P. Lopez, Interim City Clerk

A true copy;



ATTEST:-

Donna P. Lopez, Interim City Clerk