

# Capitola Parking Committee

## Summary and Recommendations

December 1, 2008

The following report reflects the unanimous view of the public members of the committee (residents and merchants), not the views of the City Council members who participated in meetings of the Committee, but did not vote on the recommendations.

### **Executive Summary**

We are making these recommendations as a long term solution to parking in the Village. Equally, we are making these recommendations as a revenue source for administering a parking program and expanding the availability of parking in the Village proper.

Specific Recommendations:

- Increase parking meter rates from \$1.00 per hour to \$1.50 per hour in the Village (i.e. no increase in Pacific Cove or the Cliff)
- Increase parking permits:
  - Business from \$25.00 to \$50.00 per year
  - Early parking 8:00 AM-10:00 AM– no change
  - Neighborhoods – no change
  - Village from \$25.00 to \$50.00 per year
- Total increase in annual revenue approximately \$210,000
- Review the administration of the Village Preferential Permit program and make minor changes to the Rules to reduce conflicts between residents, merchants and visitors and provide reasonable access to Village parking
- Develop and fund a long-term Parking Plan
  - Establish initial funding by allocating the applicable fractional portion of the above increases to a restricted fund to be used solely for the development of additional parking in the Village of Capitola.
  - Commission the resources to develop and implement the long-term plan.

Action Items

- The Council should establish a “Parking Commission” to:
  - Develop a long-term parking plan for the Village
  - Recommend funding for the Plan
  - Administer the long-term plan through the Council and City Staff
  - Identify resources and required actions to meet the Plan
  - Identify “Pay & Display” trial areas and evaluate their effectiveness (The expectation would be that if successful, this system would replace all meters over time.)
- Members of this Committee volunteer to participate on this “Commission”

## Background

The Council requested Councilman Begun and Councilman Graves to form a “Blue Ribbon Committee” from the community to address parking related fees and issues.

## Committee Organization

The organizational meeting was held at the Community Room of July 17, 2008.

- Members of the community and business owners were invited.
- Attendees at original or subsequent meetings:
  - Bob Begun – Councilman
  - Ron Graves – Councilman
  - Gary Wetsel – Merchant/resident
  - Carin Hanna – Merchant
  - Steve Woodside – Resident
  - Scott Stein – Merchant
  - Boris Seibert – Resident
  - Dennis Norton – Resident
  - Nels Westman – Resident
  - Linda Hanson – Resident
  - Ben Irao – Parking Enforcement
- Committee Officers
  - Chairman – Gary Wetsel
  - Vice Chairman – Steve Woodside
  - Secretary – Carin Hanna
- The Committee met six (6) times during the course of the summer & fall
- The Committee recognized that the priorities and desires of the residents and merchants are not always consistent. However they realize that we need to reach a common ground if we are to create a vibrant Village attractive to residents and supportive of compatible businesses and services for residents and tourist alike.

### Committee Charter

- To investigate and recommend to the City Council potential parking alternatives in the Village to include:
  - Parking meter usage and fees
  - Parking permit usage and fees
  - Best usage of available parking
  - Opportunities for additional parking
  - Parking alternatives
  - Recommend long-term direction
  - In conjunction with the above charter the group agreed that for every consideration or recommendation we need to understand “How a recommendation or consideration affects the Spirit of the Village of Capitola and the budget of the City of Capitola”.

## Summary Information

The Committee reviewed relevant and available information.

- Financial information is based on 2008 Budget (information on prior years and more details were also provided)
  - The City is expected to generate the following revenues in Fiscal 2009:

▪ Parking Meters	\$475,200
▪ Parking Permits	\$ 27,000
▪ Fines	<u>\$555,000</u>
▪ Total	<u>\$1,057,200</u>
  - Parking related expenses \$472,900
  - Net revenue in excess of expense \$585,200
    - Note indirect expenses are not allocated in above summary
  - 77% of parking meter revenues are generated in April through October
  - Pacific Cove accounts for only 7% of total parking fee revenue (when closed 6/15 to 9/15) and only 13% when open year round.
  - Parking meters (spaces)

▪ Cliff	75
▪ Pacific Cove	232
▪ Village	<u>184</u>
▪ Total	<u>491</u>
  - Permits

▪ Village	349
▪ Neighborhoods	677
▪ Early parking 8:00 AM to 10:00AM approx.	50
▪ Business Pac Cove	<u>50</u>
▪ Total	<u>1,126</u>
  - Parking meter rates vary between neighboring communities however it is a general observation that Capitola's are currently comparable Santa Cruz. However it should be noted that Santa Cruz and most other surrounding communities have greater available parking, including free parking areas.

## Observations

- Interesting to note that the City spends as much on parking enforcement as it receives in fines.
- Coin meter maintenance and collection fees continue to go up while the Pacific Cove lot has been free during the summer.

## Recommendations

- Parking meter fees
  - Increase parking meter fees from \$1.00 per hour to \$1.50 per hour and maintain a two hour limit in the Village. (i.e. no increase in Pacific Cove or the Cliff) (Expected increase in annual revenue \$200,000)
- The Committee specifically recommends the implementation of “Pay and Display” parking areas on a trial basis.
  - A specific area should be set aside, with the appropriate equipment, as a “Pay and Display” trial
  - The Committee believes that this methodology would provide:
    - The opportunity to introduce credit cards for payment
    - The implementation of various pricing scenarios to maximize revenue
  - The expectation would be that this system would replace all meters over time.
- The Committee strongly recommends that the City immediately begin the development of a “Long-Term Parking Plan” including funding requirements.
  - This Committee expresses its willingness to participate in the development of such a plan.
- Parking permit fees
  - Increase business permits from \$25.00 to \$50.00 (Expected increase in annual revenue \$1,250)
  - No change in Early Parking @ \$50.00
  - Neighborhoods no change @ \$25.00
  - Increase Village from \$25.00 to \$50.00 (Expected increase in annual revenue \$8,500)

## Village Preferential Parking Rules

- The Committee finds that some residents have obtained permits even though they do not qualify under the existing rules (e.g., some Village residents with two off-street parking spaces have obtained permits)
  - The Committee recommends that that City staff prepare an inventory of all Village residential units to ascertain whether the unit is eligible to purchase a Permit, and if so, how many.
  - The Committee recommends that the existing Resolution No. 3190, which establishes Village Preferential Permit Rules, be modified effective on January 1, 2009, to clarify and make minor adjustments designed to reduce conflicts between residential, business and visitor uses as follows:
    - The areas where Village Preferential Permits are invalid should be extended to include the 300 block of Capitola Avenue, and the seaside of the Esplanade up to Stockton Ave.

- The Permit eligibility area should be clarified, consistent with current administrative practice, to include the 300 block of Riverview Avenue between the trestle and Stockton Ave.
- Residential units within the Village Permit Eligibility Area which have two off street parking places should be eligible to purchase one transferable Pacific Cove parking permit.
- City staff should review the number and placement of loading zones, and increase the number of such zones to permit residents and businesses to have greater access to their properties.

#### Best use of available parking

- Better distribution of directions to available parking
- The Committee recommends that parking enforcement officers actively direct visitors to the Pacific Cove parking facility. Maps and similar aids should be provided
- The Committee strongly felt that the free parking at Pacific Cove from June 15<sup>th</sup> to September 15<sup>th</sup> should be retained
  - The Committee also suggests that the staff review the costs to maintain the Pacific Cove parking to the revenues generated for the balance of the year.
  - While it is impossible to quantify the value of this to the Village it is very clear that this lot was fully utilized during the free period
  - Many positive comments were received for visitors and merchants on the value of this free service.
  - *However not withstanding the above comments, the Committee would support the reinstatement of the discounted Pacific Cove parking fees as long as a portion of these revenues could be dedicated to funding a long-term parking solution.*

#### Opportunities for additional parking

- **There is 100% agreement that the Village “Parking & Traffic Distribution Problem” is a lack of available parking.**
- Every neighboring community has developed and implemented a long-term plan to provide adequate public parking.
- **The additional space at Lower Pacific Cove and/or City Hall is the last available space for additional parking. The Committee urgently recommends that the City retain both of these properties.**

### Parking Alternatives

- Valet Parking
  - The Committee requests the City staff to actively solicit proposals for valet parking services in peak summer months.
  - A designated drop off and pick up area would be needed
  - There is potential for merchant participation in the costs through purchase discounts or validation.

### Parking Enforcement

- Parking meter enforcement officers should be “Goodwill Ambassadors” to the Village and rewarded (compensated) accordingly.
  - While it is understood that their job is enforcement, this is not their only duty.
  - Their role should include answering parking questions, directing visitors to parking alternatives and being seen as goodwill ambassadors, not officers with a quota.
- It is also suggested that the current Community Volunteers be utilized during the summer months as Traffic Ambassadors where they could hand out parking maps and advice on parking to out of town visitors.

**The Committee specifically requests that a “Special Fund” (separate from the General Fund) be established to provide funding for a long-term parking plan. This fund should be initially funded with the applicable fractional interest that the recommended (or approved) rate increases bear to the current rate structure.**

### Summary

- The topic for this Committee is perhaps one of the oldest and most neglected problems facing the Village.
- The saying is that “to find a solution you must first admit you have a problem”.
- While this Committee had limited time and resources, it is our hope that the City will acknowledge we have a shortage of available parking and act on these recommendations. Most importantly, we recommend that the City immediately put in place the resources to develop and implement a long-term plan to INCREASE AVAILABLE PARKING IN THE VILLAGE.

Thank you,  
Blue Ribbon Parking Committee  
Friday, April 17, 2009

