

**Town Center Parking Work session
February 25, 2016**

Comments shared by Parking and Property Owners/Operators

There is no such thing as “free” parking. Rent/debt on parking garages must be paid, and garages have to be staffed and maintained.

Eighty percent (80%) of users in the Town Square Garages use the two hour free parking validation.

Any initiative to establish the same rate pricing among the multiple garage owners in Town Center could be considered collusion.

Parking is only one component of a successful transportation plan, which should also include other modes of transportation, including pedestrian traffic.

Wayfinding signage needs to be improved.

Free parking can result in others using parking that businesses want to be available for their customers.

Town Center is “over parked”. There is sufficient parking, we need to better direct customers to that parking.

Businesses have the option to provide free parking to their customers by making the financial arrangements with garage owners/operators.

Structured parking costs approximately \$35,000/space, which impacts the financial feasibility of new projects and the cost of parking to customers.

Changing the City’s zoning ordinance to not “park” outdoor café seating would encourage more outdoor seating/ambiance.

The City’s Sign Ordinance is very restrictive. Businesses are not allowed to advertise off premises. The existing ordinance does allow for a large “P” (for parking) attached to the side of a building to direct customers to available parking.

Merchants and Other Parking Users

Town Center is at a competitive disadvantage on weekends, due to free parking at Rio, Pike & Rose and Crown.

Customers have difficulty finding and paying for parking.

Need better signage directing customers to Town Center including from Rockville Pike.

There is a perception that Town Center is unfriendly, due to the parking charges

Some merchants would like to see free parking for 3 or 4 hours, instead of 2 hours, with no validation required.

Parking should be free from 4 p.m. to 4 a.m. in garages and at meters.

Free parking on weekends.

Consider selling advertising in garages as a means to finance free parking.

Customers do not come back after they receive a \$40 fine for an expired meter.

Restaurants need parking for pick-up/carry out orders

The Wednesday Market on E. Middle Lane gave a boost to businesses mid-week.

Consider a common validation among all parking lots

Information on free parking with validation needs to be better advertised.

Employee parking is too expensive.

Relocate the Saturday farmers market to Town Square.

Predatory meter enforcement.

