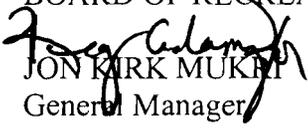


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CITY OF LOS ANGELES
DEPARTMENT OF RECREATION AND PARKS

February 18, 2009

TO: BOARD OF RECREATION AND PARK COMMISSIONERS
FROM: 
JON KIRK MURRELL
General Manager
SUBJECT: PERSHING SQUARE GARAGE - REPORT ON OPTIONS FOR INCREASING
THE EFFICIENCY OF THE PERSHING SQUARE GARAGE OPERATION

Background

At the December 11, 2008 meeting of the Board of Recreation and Park Commissioners (Board), the Board requested that the Department of Recreation and Parks (RAP) recommend options for increasing the efficiency of Pershing Square Garage (Garage) operations. As a result, RAP met with the Department of General Services (GSD) Parking Services staff to develop ideas and to explore possible options, summarized below:

1. Improved Garage Signage

Customers parking in any unfamiliar multi-level garage can experience difficulty locating the appropriate pedestrian exit for their desired destination. Improved customer signage at Pershing Square Garage would help make the Garage a more user-friendly facility and may encourage new customers to become return customers. RAP and GSD have been working with Council District 14 to improve Garage customer signage in connection with RAP support of Bringing Back Broadway efforts. RAP is in the process of ordering the first phase of signs for the Garage. The new signs are designed to improve customer way-finding inside the Garage and to assist them in locating the appropriate pedestrian exits.

The first new signs will be placed at the Olive Street, 5th Street and 6th Street Garage entrances. The signs will be to welcome visitors to the Garage and to direct customers to the escalators in the center of the garage. Installation of these signs is scheduled March 2009. RAP and GSD continue to work on the additional new signs to be placed at appropriate places throughout the Garage on all parking levels. The signs will direct customers to the appropriate pedestrian exits (Hill Street or Olive Street) for the Business District, Jewelry District and the Theater District. The estimated cost for these additional signs has not yet been determined and installation is targeted for Spring 2009. Additionally, RAP and GSD will continue to evaluate the need for additional signage and GSD will determine the estimated cost of upgrading the existing ones.

2. Upgrade Garage Parking Equipment

RAP and GSD is currently in the process of upgrading the existing Garage parking equipment, including hardware such as fee computers and ticket dispensers, and software that comprise the revenue control system for the Garage that have been in place for eight years. Upgrading Garage fee computers and revenue control equipment will help improve time efficiency for customers entering and leaving the Garage, increase parking system reliability, reduce breakage and reduce service interruption due to repairs. The estimated cost of the project is \$99,000 and the estimated completion is Spring 2009.

3. Add Credit Card and Debit Card Payment Capability to Parking System

Credit card and debit card payment capability offers greater payment flexibility to customers and may increase Garage use by those who prefer credit and electronic transactions over cash transactions. RAP and GSD have been in discussion about the need to add these capabilities to the revenue control system. The addition of credit card and debit card payment capability is included in the garage parking equipment upgrades addressed in Item Number 2 above.

4. Vehicle Stacking

GSD has done preliminary research on the concept of mechanical vehicle stacking systems (Systems) for RAP. The Systems allow vehicles to be stacked one on top of the other to make use of vertical space, permitting multiple vehicles to use the same space. Systems are commonly used with regular monthly or daily customers who do not need access to their vehicle during the day. Vehicle stacking systems require staff dedicated to the system to move vehicles. The second and third levels of the Garage do not have sufficient height to accommodate a vehicle stacking system. Staff continues to research mechanical vehicle stacking systems to determine practical applications for the Garage.

5. Re-Stripe Parking Stalls in the Garage to create additional stalls.

Re-striping regular-size parking stalls in a parking garage can create additional stalls. This improvement, converting parking stalls to compact size, was done by the previous parking operator on all levels. Currently, fewer than 3% of parking stalls are regular size stalls. These stalls are sold at premium price as reserved parking on P-1 level, and are always in demand. Following a review of the Garage parking layout, GSD recommends leaving these stalls in their current configuration.

6. Tandem Parking

Parking cars in tandem - one in front of the other - is one method sometimes used by parking facilities to maximize use of available space. Similar to the vehicle stacking method, tandem parking is commonly used with regular monthly or daily customers who do not need access to their vehicle during the day. Tandem parking requires additional staff to manage the process and

move vehicles which may generate additional liability, as staff would be handling vehicle keys and moving private vehicles. This method of parking may also create delays for customers leaving at peak times, as those parked in tandem fashion must wait as attendants move vehicles. Garage traffic may be impeded when vehicles are being retrieved. Based on staff estimates, approximately 80 additional spaces could be created in the Garage by using tandem parking in appropriate areas.

If all tandem parking was fully utilized on a daily basis the Garage could generate an estimated additional \$29,000 in annual revenue; if tandem parking was put in place and utilized at a rate of only 75%, the Garage would bear an estimated loss of \$51,000 in annual revenue.

7. Upgrade Lighting and Exhaust Systems at the Garage to Reduce Long-term Operating Costs

The Garage operates 24 hours per day and 7 days per week. Upgrading lighting and exhaust systems in the Garage may create substantial long-term energy savings. Additional research will be done by staff regarding the costs and feasibility of upgrading these items.

The Department of General Services, Parking Services staff keep themselves informed regarding trends and innovations in the parking industry. They are always evaluating potential improvements for Garage operations. GSD will keep RAP apprised of any new potential for operational efficiencies.

This report was jointly prepared by Vicki Israel, Assistant General Manager, Operations East and Carol Jacobsen, Senior Management Analyst, Finance Division.