



**News from
Office of the City Administrator**

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City of Oakland Rolls Back Evening Meter Hours, Steps Up Enforcement of Disabled Person Parking Placards to Help Offset Revenue Loss

Oakland, CA — Effective immediately, the City of Oakland will stop parking meter enforcement after 6 pm, eliminating the two-hour extension to 8 pm enacted by the City Council in July as a budget-balancing measure. Starting today, parking at meters throughout the City will be enforced between 8 am and 6 pm, Monday through Saturday. Meter rates and parking violation fines increased in July will remain in effect.

The rollback in meter enforcement hours is projected to result in a loss of about \$1 million in revenue, which is anticipated to be offset by adding 250 parking meters citywide, opening the Pacific Renaissance garage for residential use at night, authorizing additional billboards, redirecting parking garage revenue to the General fund, selling advertising space on the back of parking receipts and increasing enforcement against the illegal use of disabled person parking placards.

Stepped Up Enforcement of Disabled Placard Fraud

In downtown Oakland alone, several hundred vehicles displaying disabled person parking placards are parked at metered spaces on a daily basis. It appears that many drivers and/or passengers of these cars are improperly using disabled person parking placards issued by the DMV. Such misuse impedes qualified placard users from finding convenient parking near their destination; the City Council has estimated that this results in the loss of about \$150,000 in parking revenue per year.

“People with disabilities who have a legitimate need for disability parking privileges are greatly affected by those who abuse these privileges,” said Christine Calabrese, ADA Programs Coordinator in the City Administrator’s Office. “There is growing support in the disability community to increase penalties for the use or display of disabled person parking placards or license plates that are stolen, expired, issued to a person who is now deceased, or otherwise invalid. Oakland’s enhanced enforcement will assist people with disabilities by making parking spaces available to people who legitimately need them. Many disabilities are not apparent, so stepped up enforcement will also help restore the confidence of other drivers in the integrity of the system, reducing instances when qualified persons are suspected of using disabled person parking placards inappropriately.”

In an effort to curb the illegal use of disabled person parking placards, the Oakland Police Department and the Parking Enforcement Unit have begun conducting “sting” operations to verify the validity of the placards displayed at parking meters.

According to state law, persons who have been legally issued a disabled person parking placard by the DMV may park in a metered space without paying the meter; to do so legally the placard holder has to be present in/at the vehicle when the vehicle is being parked in a metered space or is being driven away. Additionally, upon request by a parking enforcement officer or a police officer, the placard holder must present a state-issued disabled person identification card which certifies that the placard belongs to that person. If the driver or passenger is unable to prove legal ownership of the placard, it will be confiscated and forwarded to the DMV, and the City of Oakland will issue a \$335 citation.

People with disabilities are advised to ensure that they have their state-issued identification card in their possession when using their placard, and to be ready to present the identification card upon request to a parking enforcement officer or a police officer.

Minimum Purchase Eliminated at Multi-space Parking Kiosks

In an effort to enhance the convenience of parking meters, the City has now eliminated the requirement to purchase a minimum amount of time at the multi-space parking meters (kiosks) when using a credit or debit card. With this new policy, anyone paying with a credit or debit card will be able to buy time in increments identical to using coins. This new policy is now in effect at all multi-space parking meters.

As announced last summer, drivers are also allowed to use unexpired time on a parking receipt purchased at any of the City’s multi-space meters at any meter anywhere in Oakland. Under the old system, each time a driver parked in a space they were required to purchase a new receipt, regardless of how long they parked there. The receipts were previously not transferrable from parking space to parking space.

Other Parking Improvements Underway

The City of Oakland is seeking to continuously improve its parking policies and customer service. The Parking Division is currently in the process of selecting a vendor to upgrade its antiquated and overtaxed telephone system, which has been the source of many customer complaints. The new system will feature a simple and user-friendly menu of services, include a pay-by-phone option, and provide better, more streamlined customer service in English, Spanish and Chinese. It is expected to be in service by February 2010.

In addition, City staff will develop a comprehensive, strategic citywide parking policy for consideration by the City Council next year.

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