



AGENDA NO: B-1

MEETING DATE: September 15, 2021

**AGENDA CORRESPONDENCE
RECEIVED BY THE PUBLIC WORKS ADVISORY BOARD
FOLLOWING POSTING OF THE AGENDA IS ATTACHED
FOR PUBLIC REVIEW PRIOR TO THE MEETING**

Janeen Burlingame

From: Lynda Merrill [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, September 14, 2021 4:12 PM
To: PWAB; Greg Kwolek
Subject: Suppor for letter from Erica Crawford, Chamber of Commerce

Dear Chairman, PWAB members and Mr. Kwolek, director.

I have just read the excellent letter sent by Eric Crawford and found it to be a through examination of the Parking situation in Morro Bay. She states the Chamber supports paid parking and I agree that it is the best solution to many of the problems, especially along the Embarcadero. I hope you

consider Ms Crawford's well thought out study.

Thank you all for volunteering for this important board we value your service.

Sincerely, Lynda Merrill

35 year resident

advocate for clean public restrooms particularly for women and children and zero litter in our City

Janeen Burlingame

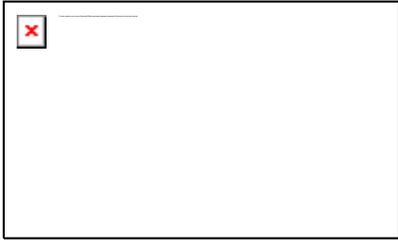
From: Erica Crawford [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, September 14, 2021 1:32 PM
To: PWAB; Greg Kwolek
Cc: Dana Swanson; Tim Cowan
Subject: PWAB Agenda Item B-1
Attachments: Morro Bay Chamber Analysis and Position on Paid Parking_September 2021.pdf

Hello PWAB Members and Mr. Kwoleck,

Please find comments for tomorrow's agenda item B-1 in the attached document.

Thank you,
Erica

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Erica D. Crawford
President/CEO
Morro Bay Chamber
w: 805.772.4467
m: 917.378.2454





Morro Bay Chamber Analysis and Position on Paid Parking

Background and Analysis

In July 2020 the Morro Bay Chamber of Commerce affirmed its support for paid parking in selected areas of the community. This position of support was made in the context of the Chamber's recommendations for fiscal recovery and sustainability, and to enhance access to the community's waterfront assets. Put simply, the city's current free parking lots are non-performing real estate assets that require maintenance but are being provided free of charge. The City of Morro Bay's Harbor Department and property and sales tax payors cannot afford to maintain nor upgrade essential visitor services, including coastal access. Concurrently, there are no dedicated and reliable revenue sources to provide for maintenance of the streets, sidewalks, bathrooms, sanitation facilities, parking lots and other essential facilities to support our robust visitor economy which features Tourism Occupancy Tax (TOT) growth trending at 5% annually over the last ten years.

The City has over 1.1 million square feet of streets, parking lots, sidewalks, pedestrian pathways and bike paths along the Embarcadero from the Rock to Tidelands Park. All of these require regular maintenance and rehabilitation but have no identifiable long-term funding sources. Required maintenance and depreciation on these existing facilities is approximately \$250,000 per year. "Free" parking is not "free" to the City.

There are also many access deficiencies such as dirt parking at the Rock Beach Parking Lot (and the correlative erosion into the bay), lack of adequate sidewalks (both in terms of adequate width and extent), incomplete portions of the Harbor Walk (many of which are the City's responsibility), inadequate and unsafe access to Coleman Beach and Rock Beach, inadequate erosion control, and inadequate planting and landscaping (both for functional and ornamental purposes). Unless and until a reliable funding program is established these deficiencies will not get addressed. "Free" parking also reduces the turnover in prime customer spots that exacerbate already impacted parking areas. Paid parking also provides a funding source for pedestrian and bicycle facilities to encourage non-auto forms of transportation.

Paid parking in coastal communities is the norm, not the exception. Morro Bay is, in fact, the outlier amongst the group having no paid parking and no adopted policies and programs to fund beach access strategies. A review of waterfront and beach communities on the Central and South Coast (Monterey County, San Luis Obispo County, Santa Barbara County, Ventura County, Los Angeles County and Orange County) indicates that at least the following communities have paid parking as part of their beach and waterfront access programs: Pismo Beach, Malibu, Pacific Palisades, Venice, Capitola, Playa Del Rey, San Pedro, Huntington Beach, Seal Beach, Long Beach, Hermosa Beach, Manhattan Beach, Santa Monica, Port Hueneme, Avila Beach, Monterey, Pacific Grove, Isla Vista, Del Mar and Pacifica.

Locally, both Avila Beach and Pismo Beach have paid parking as part of their beach and waterfront access programs, with each having gross parking revenues of \$500,000 to \$550,000 per year. The draft Parking Study prepared for Morro Bay believes that full implementation of a paid parking program would net over \$200,000 per year. Based on actual operating results for Avila Beach and Pismo Beach, the Chamber believes that those estimates are conservative.

There is an existing policy of the Chamber to support paid parking along Embarcadero Road, at City beach parking lots, and at premium locations. The draft General Plan/LCP contains Policy Circ-4.2 stating that the City "...may seek a Coastal Development Permit to establish paid public parking spaces with reasonable rates in appropriate places." The draft parking study prepared for the City has affirmed that this is a desirable strategy from the parking supply management standpoint.

To be sure, there have been numerous suggestions for the institution of paid parking in the community. Arguments made against paid parking have included the enforcement costs, merchant resistance, a belief that there is no net revenue for park parking, or that the city is legally obligated (by the Coastal Commission or others) to provide free parking to any and all persons. The 2007 Parking Management Plan commented that paid parking "...was determined to be ineffectual as a component of the parking management strategy because the most critical demands for parking occur for very brief periods (over 1-hour periods mid-day) and in very limited locations (the core blocks within the Embarcadero). When utilized in areas such as these, metered or paid parking can create the unintended consequence of actually deterring needed commerce. Second, pay-for-parking may not offset the costs associated with the acquisition and maintenance of devices and equipment, or related personnel and operational resources, and could have negative impacts on the City budget." The Chamber believes the 2007 parking study is now outdated and the current parking study is better suited to meet the city's current and future needs.

Position

Free public parking is in fact not free. There is a direct cost to maintain parking and accessibility, and without the necessary funds, existing access and parking facilities will only continue to diminish and degrade. The lack of funds to provide for access and maintenance of existing parking can be remedied via a paid parking program which will result in the funding to provide for necessary service and facilities in order to maintain and enhance coastal and waterfront access and parking areas.

Paid parking should be part of an overall waterfront and beach access improvement program, with net revenues dedicated to the waterfront. Under such a program premium Embarcadero parking and parking at The Rock should all be paid parking. Free access could continue to be provided from free outlying parking lots with shuttle service to ensure affordability. Avila Beach and Pismo Beach have successfully implemented such programs. The City's draft parking study is the first important step in making this happen.

Therefore, the Chamber continues to support paid parking on the Waterfront area, including off-street lots and on-street spaces, with a pricing program that has higher rates at the premium locations, with some lower cost and free spaces at locations that are served by the local transit Trolley. Current parking fee programs can also have dynamic pricing with high pricing during peak days, seasons or hours. It can fund access improvements and fund maintenance that are now unfunded. Based on the number of existing and potential off-street parking spaces in comparison to those in Pismo Beach and in

Avila, the revenue received from those agencies from their paid parking programs, and rates that the Coastal Commission considers “affordable” and “non-discriminatory” potential gross revenue from a paid parking in prime off-street lots in Morro Bay could be \$225,000 to \$400,000 per year. This would close the gap for required maintenance of existing facilities, and provide construction funds and/or matching funds for needed improvements. Now that the Parking Study has affirmed the feasibility and desirability of this approach, an Access Management and Enhancement Plan should be commenced to start the next phase of this process.

Janeen Burlingame

From: Ric Deschler [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, September 13, 2021 10:34 AM
To: PWAB; HAB; PlanningCommission; TBID; Council
Subject: Parking Management Plan comments
Attachments: Parking Study Comments Sept 2021.docx

Attached are my comments about the Parking Plan. Please see that each board, commission, and the City Council receive this in their packets when it is discussed by them.

Thank you.

Ric

September 2021 Parking Management Plan

Dear Advisory Boards, Commissions, and Members of Council:

Success is such a royal pain in the side. We have just too many people parking on the Embarcadero during lunch hour on the weekends. Putting in parking meters or time restrictions is not going to free up one of those parking spaces at lunch time! The only option is to close half the restaurants on the Embarcadero if you want those spaces available 😊

“As a visitor destination, the City recognizes that the peaks, valleys, and relatively small area experiencing a parking impact may mean that active efforts to manage parking throughout the year may not warrant the investment in time and resources for limited periods and locations.”

That is about the only true and useful statement in the whole Parking Management Plan.

It is the time-honored complaint that if I can't park at the door of the place I want to go, then there is a parking problem.

If business owners and their employees take up too many parking spaces (as noted in the report), the business community should deal with that issue, not the city. That should be why they have several business organizations down there. The visitors and local patrons of the Embarcadero should not be forced to pay for parking year-round because of a few poorly managed business operators.

I understand the desire to have more parking available on the Embarcadero. Paid parking is just going to squeeze out the middle- and lower-income patrons that have made the Embarcadero a success for decades. I also realize that that is what some people want, a higher/wealthier class of people that will spend more while they are here. This has been made very evident with the ridiculous desire to redevelop the Hungry Tiger location with a 5-star hotel and a faddish entertainment center smack in the middle of the Embarcadero. Can you say Carmelization? Those plans, of course, will wipe out a significant number of existing parking spaces (not addressed in this report).

An aside from the parking plan, the City has been going down the wrong path with the plan to develop an entertainment center at the Centennial Stairway. That should be uptown or someplace else, not in the center of an already impacted and successful business area. You already have a problem with too many people on the Embarcadero. You want to draw them to the other business areas of town. There will still be plenty of them patronizing the Embarcadero. Also, that does not fit the fishing village image we pretend to be at that location. Nor is it environmentally “sound” to be projecting that onto the water. Stop trying to copy other places and recognize our unique assets.

For decades the citizens have been emphatic that the Rock parking area stay as “rustic” as possible. That has been one of the primary reasons, besides cost, why locals don't want it paved. The addition of bumpers and barriers was a good idea but the idea of paid parking, just like allowing camping at the Rock, is atrocious.

Before you fall for the scheme of paid parking, look closely at the usage figures. There is no parking problem mid-week and off-season. Why inflict this expense on everyone year-round just because of Saturday lunch hour?

If, heaven forbid, you do install paid parking, why make this assumption?

"5.Assumes paid parking seven days a week except for 12 holidays per year."

Hello! The biggest parking issues are on the holidays so why would you exempt them? This isn't like downtown SLO where most businesses are closed on holidays. This is when parking on the Embarcadero is most impacted!

Shelve this plan with extreme prejudice and look to add new lots near by possibly with shuttles for weekend lunch hour. Please, don't put your foot in the door with a "2-year pilot program". It will be a huge waste of time, money, and goodwill and we will probably lose people to Cayucos and Cambria.

Thank you for your time and consideration of these comments.

Ric Deschler