



City of Arts & Innovation

Transportation Board

TO: TRANSPORTATION BOARD **DATE: June 5, 2024**
FROM: PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT **WARD: 1**
SUBJECT: ESTABLISHMENT OF PARK RIVERSIDE DOWNTOWN VALET SERVICE

ISSUE:

Establishment of Park Riverside downtown valet service.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Transportation Board receives a report and recommends that the Mobility and Infrastructure Committee review the proposed establishment of Park Riverside downtown valet service.

BACKGROUND:

On July 1, 2023, Parking Services implemented new parking rates, new parking programs, expanded hours of operation, installed automated garage equipment, integrated the Park Riverside payment app for on-street and off-street parking, offered on-street and off-street validations, and added other parking related services. As Downtown Riverside continues to grow and flourish, existing and future business establishments have requested the City to establish an on-street downtown valet service.

There is currently no formal or authorized valet program within the public right of way.

DISCUSSION:

The Park Riverside downtown valet service would deliver an upscale customer experience for patrons visiting downtown. The program would minimize walking distances for downtown patrons electing to use valet services near a restaurant, business, or event they are patronizing or attending. The downtown valet service will operate in designated on-street zones and within alleyways established and approved by the Traffic Engineering and Parking Services Divisions.

Vehicles will be parked in public parking facilities, which may include on-street spaces, public surface lots, and/or public parking garages. Valet attendants will be present at valet stands and valet attendants will be at the vehicle staging areas to provide expedited service.

Valet attendants would trade positions to complete a transaction. When a vehicle is summoned a valet attendant at the vehicle staging area will immediately bring up the vehicle while at the same time a valet stand attendant will leave to backfill the spot vacated at the vehicle staging area. This methodology will allow for a spoke-and-hub operation where multiple valet stands can operate while utilizing one vehicle staging area.

The Park Riverside downtown valet service can be scaled up or down to meet the parking demands during weeknights, weekends, and special events. This operating model is purposely designed with additional valet attendants to deliver the following:

1. Increase the valet attendant's safety as they will not have to "run" through downtown to bring up a vehicle.
2. Decrease vehicle traffic accidents as valet attendants will not be "rushing" to bring up vehicles.
3. Increase security for customer vehicles as valet attendants will always be onsite with the staged vehicles.
4. Decrease customer wait times as the valet attendants are immediately "bringing up" the vehicle when summoned.
5. Increase customer convenience/satisfaction as drop off/pick up points can be different valet stands.
6. Increase public safety as customers do not have to walk as far to their destinations.

The Park Riverside downtown valet service will utilize a ticketless valet management system that will provide customer convenience through text-based communication (or through a link) and will not require an app to download. Customers will manage their own valet experience by:

1. Using their cell phone as their valet ticket (reducing vehicle theft and lost tickets)
2. Receiving 50%-100% off valet fee by validating at participating establishments (increasing clientele traffic to those businesses that market the valet service)
3. Requesting their vehicle ahead of time (avoiding checkout lines and reducing wait time)
4. Tracking vehicle status (valet management system provides vehicle status updates)
5. Pay and tip from phone (convenience of mobile payment apps, cash is optional)

Parking Services will manage the public right of way use permits for the valet station locations, oversee the on-street valet signs/curb markings, and designate the vehicle staging areas. Parking Services will provide the upfront cost to the valet software application, valet station equipment and supplies. The downtown valet operator will maintain the valet software application, valet application hardware, store/maintain the valet station equipment, and manage valet staff and daily operation. The valet operator must work harmoniously with the downtown parking operator (currently Parking Concepts Inc.) and Parking Services to plan and coordinate their daily and special event valet operations.

A Request for Proposal (RFP) will be published to obtain professional valet operators to submit their formal bids to operate the Park Riverside downtown valet service. The bids will be evaluated by panelists made up of City staff, downtown stakeholders, and downtown establishment/restaurant owners. Evaluation criteria may include, but would not be limited to:

1. Professional Qualifications (valet experience, municipality references, safety history, industry reputation, staff retainage/turnover rates, customer service, etc)
2. Financial Reporting (revenue deposits, invoice process, financial documents, etc)
3. Marketing (How will they promote the valet service, dedicated resources, present/past campaigns, etc)
4. Staffing (Breakdown how the staff will be screened, trained, allocated, scheduled, minimal staffing backup plan, uniform attire, etc)
5. Management and Support (Onsite supervision/management, accounting staff, human resources, risk management, safety manager, training coordinator, etc)
6. Logistics and Planning Techniques (explain process, who is involved, how is this managed, where is the equipment stored, how is the operation plan communicated, etc)
7. Customer Support (who can the customer contact, when are they available, located on/off-site, toll-free number, who handles claims, claims process, claims history, etc)

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:

This proposal follows **Strategic Plan Goal 6.2**, to “Maintain, protect and improve assets and infrastructure within the City’s built environment to ensure and enhance reliability, resiliency, sustainability, and facilitate connectivity,” and **Strategic Plan Goal 6.3** to “Identify and pursue new and unique funding opportunities to develop, operate, maintain, and renew infrastructure and programs that meet the community’s needs.” Additionally, proposed establishment of a downtown valet parking service relates to the cross-cutting threads as demonstrated below:

1. Community Trust: The Park Riverside downtown valet service will provide tangible value for the downtown community and visitors, enhancing the downtown experience, providing ease of parking, and increasing public safety.
2. Equity: The Park Riverside downtown valet service will be available to the public, and will be offered to all downtown establishments to participate in.
3. Fiscal Responsibility: The Park Riverside downtown valet service will follow a competitive bid process by publishing a Request for Proposal. The proposals will be evaluated by a panel represented by downtown stakeholder(s), business owner(s) and City staff. The Park Riverside downtown valet service will be budgeted through the operating expense of the Public Parking Fund.
4. Innovation: The Park Riverside downtown valet service will utilize text-based technology to best manage and communicate the valet process to the customers and establishments. The Park Riverside downtown valet service will highly visible, operate in strategic locations on-street with a high degree of flexibility to meet downtown daily demands and special event needs.
5. Sustainability & Resiliency: The Park Riverside downtown valet service will be subsidized by the Public Parking Fund. The hospitality industry and ancillary businesses will benefit from an influx of new clientele, which will generate tax revenues for the General Fund.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Even though the Park Riverside downtown valet service will generate revenue, it is not expected to deliver a net return as initial staffing costs may exceed the valet revenues. Staff plan to issue a user survey to assess initial demand for a valet program before the RFP is issued; however, more accurate operating costs will be determined through the RFP process and realized once the valet operation is in place. In addition, the actual revenues are not known until the program is fully operational and actual demand is realized. The program may eventually be net neutral but the added service may increase activity and attract more visitors to downtown which benefits businesses and generates additional tax revenue which is an overall benefit to the City.

Potential additional cost to provide the Park Riverside downtown valet service will be budgeted in the Public Parking Fund (570) in account number 4150000-421002 Professional Services – Valet Services.

Prepared by: Erik Lue, Public Parking Services Manager

Approved by: Gilbert Hernandez, Public Works Director

Attachments:

1. Potential Valet Parking Sites Map
2. Presentation