



Office of the City Manager

WORKSESSION

January 27, 2015

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From:  Christine Daniel, City Manager

Submitted by: Andrew Clough, Director, Public Works

Subject: goBerkeley Pilot Results and Next Steps

SUMMARY

This report and presentation build on the [December 16, 2014 Information Report](#)¹ that presented the results of the goBerkeley Pilot Program and discussed potential post-pilot actions for Council to consider. It also provides the basis for a full discussion of the potential post-goBerkeley Pilot Program actions. Staff will develop actionable recommendations for Council to consider in March 2015 based on feedback received at this Worksession.

As the December Information Report shows, the goBerkeley Pilot Program achieved extremely positive results, creating better parking conditions, higher customer satisfaction with their parking experience, and greater use of transit, biking and walking. Based on the results and feedback from stakeholders and the Transportation Commission, staff are developing the following recommendations for Council consideration:

1. **Continue GoBerkeley Policies.** Based on measureable success and community satisfaction, and conditions that are known to be changing in commercial areas, continue to manage parking in Downtown Berkeley, Southside/Telegraph, and the Elmwood using the goBerkeley demand-responsive policies.
2. **Enable goBerkeley Tools Citywide.** Results in the Pilot Areas indicate that other commercial areas of Berkeley would likely benefit from demand-responsive parking management. To provide geographic equity, consider enabling the use of goBerkeley tools in all metered areas in the City, and direct staff to collect data and work with stakeholder groups to design appropriate programs.
3. **Invest in Alternative Transportation.** goBerkeley provides valuable incentives to Berkeley employees and residents to use transit, which results in significant reductions in driving and emissions. Consider establishing a policy that formally links parking management and transportation demand management.

¹ goBerkeley Pilot Results and Next Steps, 12/16/2014:

http://www.cityofberkeley.info/Clerk/City_Council/2014/12_Doc/Documents/2014-12-16_Item_38_goBerkeley_Pilot_Program.aspx

Staff presented the program evaluation results to the goBerkeley Community Advisory Group (including representatives of the Downtown Berkeley Association, Elmwood Business Improvement District, and Telegraph Business Improvement District) on November 6, 2014, and to the Transportation Commission on November 20. In addition, Community Open Houses were held on January 21 and January 22, 2015 in the Pilot areas (public comments will be provided to Council at the Worksession).

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

The goBerkeley Pilot Program began in July 2013 when its Transportation Demand Management (TDM) pilot launched with the distribution of 1,000 free transit passes and car sharing benefits to private employees in the pilot areas. In fall 2013, Council authorized staff to adjust parking rates and time limits based on data and community feedback to improve parking conditions. Prices and time limits at parking meters and municipal garages & lots in the pilot areas were adjusted 3 times since July 2013.

The 1-year TDM program ended in June 2014, and an evaluation of the program's effects was conducted. In September 2014, staff collected data on parking conditions to evaluate the effectiveness of the demand-responsive parking program. Both programs were found to meet the goBerkeley Pilot Program's goals of reducing congestion and emissions, as well as improving parking conditions. Detailed results of the TDM and parking evaluation were presented in the December 2014 Information Report.

Highlights include:

- The Pilot has improved parking availability in the formerly congested "Premium" areas of Downtown and the over-utilized Center Street Garage.
- Rate and time limit changes have led to better use of all available parking spaces in the Southside, including a 22% increase in the formerly under-utilized Telegraph Channing Garage
- More drivers are parking in the areas than before: the number of parking transactions at on-street meters has increased by 29% compared to pre-pilot conditions.
- 78% of drivers now report that it is very easy, easy or neutral to find a parking space, a 41% increase from pre-pilot surveys.
- Drivers appreciate the improved parking signage that provides time limits and rates in a clear and easy-to-read way.

As the program wraps up the pilot phase, Council should consider what to do next. When the Pilot Program was initiated, Council adopted a "sunset" clause in BMC Chapter 14.52 Parking Meters that will terminate the program on October 15, 2015, and require reversal of all changes made during the Pilot, including rates, time limits and signage. If the program is to continue, this clause would need to be amended.

To assist Council's consideration of possible next steps, the December 16 Information Report presented 4 options, representing the widest range of actions:

1. Terminate and revert to pre-pilot conditions (change rate, time limits, signs)
2. Terminate but keep current conditions (no change to rates, time limits, signs)

3. Continue goBerkeley in Southside, Elmwood and Downtown Berkeley
4. Continue in Southside, Elmwood and Downtown Berkeley, and enable for meters and lots Citywide.

As mentioned, staff presented the program evaluation results to the goBerkeley Community Advisory Group, and to the Transportation Commission in November 2014. In addition, Community Open Houses were scheduled for late January 2015 in the Pilot areas, and a supplemental report will be provided with feedback from these meetings.

The Community Advisory Group supported continuing and expanding demand-responsive parking Citywide. Attendees were very positive about the Pilot's data-driven and community-based approach and improved signage. They offered numerous anecdotes from their business members and customers about the improvements. At its November meeting, the Transportation Commission passed a motion to support Citywide expansion, and requested that staff provide a full fiscal analysis regarding whether the continuation and expansion could be "self-supporting" without grants. (M/S/C Zander/Gerhardstein; Ayes: Gerhardstein, Humbert, McCaughrin, Roberts, Thomas, Zander; Noes: None; Abstain: None; Absent: None)

Recommendations for Future Action

Based on the evaluation results, the feedback received from stakeholders, and the Transportation Commission, staff is requesting that Council consider and provide direction for developing the following recommendations.

1. **Continue GoBerkeley Policies.** Based on measurable success and community satisfaction, and conditions that are known to be changing in commercial areas, continue to manage parking in Downtown Berkeley, Southside/Telegraph, and the Elmwood using the goBerkeley demand-responsive policies.

goBerkeley will ensure that parking availability is continuously monitored and adjusted to meet the needs of the area. In some areas parking demand is increasing as the economy continues to recover, leading to lack of parking availability. If a parking lot or garage goes offline temporarily for construction (as will probably be the case in the coming year or so for the Berkeley Way lot and Center Street Garage), goBerkeley strategies could be used to manage demand so that Berkeley visitors are able to find parking spaces.

Even now, despite improvements, several Downtown blocks remain above the 65% - 85% target parking occupancy. In the Elmwood, parking conditions were "just right" 6 months ago, meeting the target conditions. However, the most recent data collection shows increased parking demand, which may benefit from further adjustments. Another round of adjustments could be carried out in September 2015 if Council authorized the continuation of the policy.

2. **Enable goBerkeley Tools Citywide.** Results in the Pilot Areas indicate that other commercial areas of Berkeley would likely benefit from demand-responsive parking

management. To provide geographic equity, consider enabling the use of goBerkeley tools in all metered areas in the City, and direct staff to collect data and work with stakeholder groups to design appropriate programs. Every area has its own particular parking and access issues – but all our commercial areas deserve an opportunity to make use of the best policy tools available to improve their parking availability and customer satisfaction.

The Pilot deliberately selected areas with high demand and low demand to test goBerkeley strategies in conditions that are common in the City. Places with very low occupancy and others with very high parking demand each benefited. This indicates that other commercial areas in Berkeley could probably benefit from demand-responsive parking management customized to their needs. In 2014, staff collected snapshot data in all commercial areas, and found that a number of them have less-than-ideal parking conditions, which might be improved by demand-responsive parking pricing and time limit adjustments.

Whatever the eventual demand-responsive programs, more active parking management can identify and fix out-of-date or inappropriate time limits, parking regulations and curb markings. For example, numerous out-of-date green zones (up to 24 minute parking only) were identified where the business that requested the zone was no longer there, and the parking space was no longer useful to most visitors. These spaces were converted to metered parking (2 or 8 hour) and helped improve parking availability.

During the Pilot, active monitoring of the areas led to rapid response to issues identified by City staff or the community, including replacing or updating parking signs and refurbishing curb markings. In addition, parking signage improvements at metered spaces are likely to increase driver satisfaction in all commercial areas.

3. **Invest in Alternative Transportation.** goBerkeley provides valuable incentives to Berkeley employees and residents to use transit, which results in significant reductions in driving and emissions. Consider establishing a policy that formally links parking management and transportation demand management. For instance, if new net revenue is generated by demand-responsive parking, a defined portion of the revenue (less costs) could be earmarked for TDM programs (transit passes, travel coaching) and capital investments to support alternative travel (pedestrian safety, bicycle infrastructure, transit stop and station improvements). Directing parking revenue to TDM and alternative transportation would require a change to BMC 14.52.110 Use of money deposited in parking meters and pay-and-display stations, to add this expenditure category to the existing 6 categories.

Implementation Considerations

Parking Program

The Pilot Program was supported by \$3 million in Federal, Regional and Air District grants which are no longer available. However, some of the on-going costs of the program are likely to be less than the start-up costs. A large number of new meters,

signs and other parking infrastructure are now in place; however new signage would need to be added in any expansion areas. City staff has streamlined installation and public outreach/notification processes; however one of the bases for the success of the pilot program was the intense amount of individual outreach conducted to businesses, community groups and individuals, as well as manual data collection efforts. All of this work was funded by the grants.

One area that could cost less is parking data collection if the City chooses to automate that collection. The City has several new options to collect the parking data; the goBerkeley Technology Pilot found that License Plate Recognition (LPR) equipment can be used to collect parking occupancy and turnover data at a lower cost than manual collection, while maintaining very high accuracy. Data available from our new parking meter and garage equipment also provides some valuable data at virtually no cost to the City. Staff has proposed acquisition of equipment, using grant funds, that would provide the data needed to adjust rates and time limits in the future.

Each implementation of goBerkeley in a commercial area would require 1-time costs for upgrade of meter technology, installation of new signage and “clean-up” of parking regulations and curb markings. In addition, the design of the initial parking changes to meet community needs would require meetings and discussions between City staff and stakeholders. On-going costs include data collection and community outreach.

The public involvement process established during the Pilot phase would continue, including meetings with community groups, email notifications, website updates, and publically-posted flyers. Staff would also continue conducting surveys of merchants, residents, employees and visitors regarding parking needs. Council would continue to receive notice 30 days in advance of proposed changes.

Funding Available for Parking Implementation

If the program continues to perform as it has in the pilot areas, it appears likely there may be revenue available for the continuation in the current areas and implementation in additional areas. Based on the Funding Agreement between the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Caltrans and the City, incremental revenue generated by the goBerkeley Pilot Program before June 30, 2016 (the date of the grant expiration) is restricted to defined parking and TDM investments. If the program continues to perform as it has during the pilot period, the revenues may be able to support 3 years of program costs to continue the program in the Pilot areas, and complete expansion to meters Citywide. However, these restricted revenue would not cover program costs beyond FY 2018; see Fiscal Impacts of Possible Future Action, below.

TDM Program

The Regional grants supported a fairly costly car sharing expansion, which was positive, but may not be the most strategic investment for the City going forward. The employee transit passes were popular, effective and relatively inexpensive. However, the cost to advertise, administer and maintain both the car sharing and transit pass program was

significant. Current City staff would not be able to continue the employee transit pass program, or any other TDM programs, without additional personnel or contractor help.

Funding Available for TDM Implementation

There is no funding source currently available to offer or administer the TDM benefits of goBerkeley.

Investing in the Parking and Transportation System

One of the most important lessons learned during the Pilot was the value of attention to the City's Parking and Transportation System. City staff was often thanked for new signs, prompt attention to parking issues, and setting time limits that allowed visitors time to complete their business. Drivers also appreciated the convenience of new meters that allowed credit card payment. This underscores the importance of dedicated staffing to ensure the success of any expanded program. Of course, dedicated staffing has a cost.

Current goBerkeley Investments in Parking and Alternative Transportation

As discussed in the December Information Report, grant requirements to invest pilot-generated revenue in parking improvements have already proved valuable. From implementation of the first rate changes in October 2013 to September 2014, the Pilot has generated almost \$1.37 million. Using this restricted revenue, the City has upgraded to "Smart" meters Citywide, reconstructed Berkeley Way and Elmwood Parking lots to increase the number of spaces and improve pavement conditions, and installed wayfinding signage to Telegraph Channing garage.

To adhere to the agreement with the FHWA, the City is required to invest in TDM measures and plans to use grant-restricted funds to improve bicycle infrastructure.

Continuing Returns on Parking and Transportation System Investments

FHWA restrictions on parking meter revenue expire at the end of FY 2016Based on current revenues, the goBerkeley increment from Southside, Elmwood and Downtown Berkeley is projected to be approximately \$2M per year, from approximately 1,700 metered spaces (or 47% of approximately 3,600 total metered spaces in the City.)

The goBerkeley Pilot Program is only one of many programs underway or planned in the Public Works Transportation Division. Additionally, the City Council has made a significant number of referrals to Transportation, all of which have benefits to the City. However, staff recommends that all of these programs and referrals be prioritized into 3 Tiers. This would enable staff to focus on program completion and ensure that each program receives the attention and resources to succeed. The following prioritization is offered for the Council's consideration, however, **please note that staff has not presented this prioritization to the Transportation Commission for their review and recommendation.**

Parking Programs – In Priority Order

Tier 1

- “State of Good Repair” for all parking meters, lots and garages
- Center Street Garage Reconstruction
- goBerkeley continued operation in Southside, Elmwood and Downtown Berkeley (if approved by Council)

Tier 2

- Phased implementation of goBerkeley parking management in other areas
- Pay-by-phone parking payment service

Tier 3

- Citywide RPP
- Parking availability information for drivers
- Signage clarity
- Partnering with private garages/lots to share parking resources.

Alternative Transportation/Transportation Demand Management

The goBerkeley program showed that parking and TDM can be effectively linked to meet the City’s goals of addressing climate change. The goBerkeley TDM pilot was effective in increasing transit usage and causing mode shift. In particular, the free 1-year bus passes for employees was very popular, and employees have asked for the program to continue. To this end, assuming funding is available, the City could continue to invest in activities to encourage a reduction in single-occupant vehicle usage, including:

- Employee and resident AC Transit Passes
- Subsidies for other transit (BART, Capital Corridor/Amtrak, etc.)
- Pedestrian safety, including traffic signal improvements, lighting, signage
- Bicycle facilities and parking
- Bikesharing
- Travel coaching (such as TransForm’s Travel Choice program)
- Streetscape and pedestrian amenities such as lighting, street furniture, sidewalk improvements

Some of the elements in parking and alternative transportation could be most efficiently accomplished by non-City entities (such as valet parking or streetscape improvements). In addition, the goBerkeley Community Advisory Group (CAG) was critical to the Pilot’s success, providing consolidated feedback, drawing attention to their constituents’ issues and being a conduit for public notification. As such, community stakeholder involvement is critical to decisions regarding prioritizing parking and transportation system improvements and representing their constituents. One approach is to create Parking Benefit Districts.

Parking Benefits Districts (PBDs)

Parking Benefits Districts (PBDs) are established to invest parking revenue in parking and transportation improvements. PBDs are in operation in Houston, Old Pasadena, San Diego and Portland. Often, parking revenue generated by the meters and garages/lots in that district is available for the district to allocate, after eligible expenses are deducted.

In a scan of cities where PBDs exist, PBDs often consist of an advisory board comprising a mixture of City staff and representatives of the business community and stakeholders in the area. This board prioritizes investments in the PBD and allocates funds to parking and alternative transportation projects. If necessary, the board may also hold contracts to perform services, such as buying transit passes, or parking valet services.

PBDs require resources to support financial accounting, public outreach, overall management, community meetings and legal input in order to operate. At this time, it is unclear what level of support City staff would need to provide and what level of effort a PBD would require of the businesses and institutions. A PBD pilot could allow City staff and stakeholders to determine the pros and cons of PBDs and whether they would be helpful for the vitality of the City overall.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Overall, the goBerkeley Pilot Program has led to reductions in emission and greenhouse gases. The continuation of the joint parking and TDM program will ensure that these reductions remain in place. However, transportation contributes to approximately half of Berkeley's greenhouse gas emissions, and the investment of funds in alternative transportation will actively move Berkeley towards its Climate Action goals.

Overall, initial data suggests that the goBerkeley program has led to a reduction in greenhouse gases such as Nitrogen Oxide, Carbon Dioxide; and particulate matter.

POSSIBLE FUTURE ACTION

Based on Council feedback offered by Council at this Worksession, staff will prepare specific recommendations for Council consideration and action at a Public Hearing in March 2015. The report will include a complete financial analysis of the cost of the recommendations and the recurring funding available to support them. Action items could include:

Action 1: To continue demand-responsive parking management, delete the sunset clause in Section 14.52.120(C-7) regarding Parking Meter and Pay-and-Display Station Fees, which currently states "The parking fee shall revert to the rates described in Section 14.52.120(A) and 14.52.120(B) 24-months following the adoption of Ord. 7,305-N.S."

Action 2: To enable demand-responsive parking management at meters Citywide, combine Sections 14.52.010(A) and 14.52.010(B) (Parking Meter Zones), which would

result in all parking meter zones being eligible for demand-responsive management, as regulated by parking rates described in Section 14.52.120.

The City would continue the standards of data collection, public outreach and notification, and submission of a report to Council before any changes take place.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF POSSIBLE FUTURE ACTION

The following is a preliminary analysis of fiscal impacts for Action 1 to continue the program, and Action 2 to enable the program at meters Citywide, in FY 2016 – FY 2018.

Item		FY 2016	FY 2017	FY 2018
Continue program only in Southside, Elmwood and DB	Personnel (Analysis, Outreach)	\$86,822	\$86,822	\$86,822
	Data Collection	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$30,000
	Signs and Decals	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000
	Notification	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000
	Meter Fees	\$140,768	\$154,845	\$170,329
	TOTAL	\$265,590	\$279,667	\$291,151
Continue Southside, Elmwood and DB + assume goBerkeley implementation in 2 areas per year	Personnel (Analysis, Outreach)	\$275,585	\$275,585	\$275,585
	Data Collection	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000
	Signs and Decals	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
	Notification	\$8,000	\$8,000	\$8,000
	Meter Fees	\$182,906	\$234,428	\$285,951
	TOTAL	\$576,491	\$628,013	\$679,536

Per the Funding Agreement with the FHWA, grant-restricted revenue is available to fund Action 2 through FY 2018.

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