

City of New Rochelle
Department of Development

MEMORANDUM

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
THRU: Charles B. Strome, III, CITY MANAGER
FROM: Craig King, COMMISSIONER OF DEVELOPMENT
DATE: July 3, 2007
SUBJECT: Implementation of Parking Plan

This Implementation Plan for the improvements to the City of New Rochelle's parking assets is the next step following the completion of the Comprehensive Parking Plan by our consultants, Urbitran and Chance Management Associates. This study consisted of the following:

- An entire system review and inventory of parking in the Central Parking Area (CPA) and North Avenue
- An analysis of supply and demand
- A review of the financial status of the system, its ability to sustain itself financially and included recommendations for parking rate increases as needed
- An evaluation of the physical, management and operations functions of the entire system
- A series of recommended actions to improve the financial and operational performance of the City's parking system

Summary Findings of the Study

Parking Supply

In terms of parking supply, the Urbitran study found significant available capacity in all areas of the CPA except for the on street parking from Division Street to North Avenue between Huguenot and Main Street and at the Library and Library South lots. Even then, ample parking was available in these areas within a one-block walking distance. However, given the planned, mixed-use development in the CPA, Urbitran identified shortfalls for parking in the years 2010 and 2015. If all of this planned activity materializes, the City will require new parking assets and new approaches to parking management to accommodate the planned growth. This would include the construction of additional structured parking. However, it should be emphasized that

this assumes the maximum build-out discussed in the downtown development study by AKRF.

Surface Lots

Urbitran examined all of the parking facilities and found surface lots to be in fair to good condition. The structured parking facilities were generally in a fair- to good-state-of-repair as well, except for the Marina Lot, which requires significant rehabilitation. All lots require better signage, lighting and landscaping to make them more usable and attractive. The physical condition of the parking meters was found to be marginal and replacement was recommended.

Operations and Management

In terms of operations and management, Urbitran found the system to operate well, given its low-tech and low-overhead constraints. The parking system is not integrated and, in terms of revenue control, is manually controlled, with aged meters and unwired pay stations that take only cash.

Urbitran noted the issues with enforcement to be a problem within the parking system; field surveying found a wide amount of violations without tickets indicating a significant loss of income to the City as well as causing a reduction in space turnover.

Short-term Actions

After careful analysis of the Urbitran report, staff is recommending a phased plan for improvements to our parking system. Those actions include:

- Physical repairs to lots and garages to bring them to a state-of-good-repair
- New signage, lighting and landscaping
- Replacement of all meters with newer, more advanced models
- An upgrade of the pay stations at the Transit Center to allow for credit card payments
- The addition of new, dedicated CSOs in an effort to improve the enforcement issues detailed in the Urbitran report
- The addition of an annual review of overall parking utilization through contracted-out services

Capital Plan for Parking Improvements

Based on the recommendations from Urbitran and with careful consideration of the priorities, staff has proposed a comprehensive capital improvement plan for parking throughout the City (see **Chart 1**, “Parking Improvement Plan” for a schedule of these improvements.) In this calendar year, 2007, it is proposed to upgrade the Transit Center with pay stations that can accept credit cards.

In 2008, it is proposed that staff initiate a contract with a landscape architect for the lighting, landscaping and signage design for the first of the parking lots that receive improvements. This contract will be extended in subsequent years as the work on additional lots takes place. Also, in this year, it is proposed to purchase and replace all on-street meters and contract out the physical repair work for the Library South Lot.

Improvements to the parking lots will continue in subsequent years; this work includes repair of drainage issues and damaged concrete, patching of uneven surfaces, resetting of catch basins, restriping, etc. As physical improvements are made, new lighting, landscaping and signage will be added to each lot.

Hiring of Additional CSOs for Enforcement and Contracting for Analytical Work

Included in this phased plan are costs to have two, dedicated CSOs paid for to address the enforcement issues noted by the Urbitran study. Additionally, it is proposed to contract-out professional services to perform periodic analytical studies, including utilization review, for the parking system.

Funding the Short-Term Actions

Funding for the recommended improvements is proposed through a combination of permit rate increases and meter rate increases. In 2007, City Council approved permit rates. It is proposed the Council approve permit rate increases again in years 2009 and 2011. On-street meter rates are proposed to increase from \$0.75 to \$1.00 at the point at which all new meters are installed. Off-street meters in lots and garages (other than New Roc and the Transit Center) are proposed to increase from \$0.50 to \$0.75 in 2012, when improvements to all lots are completed. **Chart 2** outlines these revenue increases by facility.

The Urbitran analysis provided us with comparable rate structures from neighboring communities. The increase proposed for meters are competitive and our current permit rates were shown to be below the average for both residential and non-residential permits (see **Chart 3**.)

Chart 4 shows the effect of the proposed actions on the fund balance for the Railroad/Transit Center Enterprise Fund and takes into consideration existing and future operating and debt service costs, as well as the present financial position of the fund. The projections for 2008 show an increase in revenue from permit fee increases (effective in 2007) in the amount of \$59,000 and the proposed meter rate increases in the amount of \$66,000. The capital expenditure in that year (proposed upgrade of the pay stations to accept credit cards) in the amount of \$75,000 continues to leave the fund balance in a negative number. The proposed permit fee increase in 2009 (\$138,000) would bring the fund balance to a positive number.

In the Parking Enterprise Fund (see **Chart 5**), the new revenues from meter and permit fee increases ensures the continued financial stability of the Fund.

Centre Avenue Lot

Of note in this discussion is the Centre Avenue lot, which was not studied by Urbitran because, at the time, it was anticipated that this lot would no longer be in our portfolio (the City's lease on this lot had been terminated). However, there is now discussion about how the City might be able to preserve parking in this area and the Department of Development is seeking additional analysis on the costs, pricing and overall feasibility of such an acquisition.

Marina Lot

Also excluded from the improvements program is the Marina Lot because it is not part of the CPA or considered part of the downtown parking inventory. Although Urbitran cited the need for significant repairs at this facility, because no revenues are generated from this facility to the Parking Enterprise Fund, it is felt that these repairs should be an obligation of either the Marina Fund and/or the General Fund and will be proposed in the 2008 Capital Budget.

Longer-term Actions

Several other recommendations by Urbitran are considered by staff to be longer term in nature. It is recommended that the City consider the creation of a municipal parking authority or independent department, the addition of a full-time position as a parking analyst and the addition of meters around New Roc City. Staff has carefully considered, but does not recommend these changes at this time.

We are working with the BID to further analyze the longer-term need for expansion of the parking system. The feasibility of decking and expanding the Maple Avenue, Library, Huguenot/Centre and Centre/Huguenot Lots, if justified, are being looked at now. Also, relating to expansion, the Prospect Garage, as part of the proposed Simone development, will be a future part of the parking inventory to be considered.

The upgrade of the parking system technology into a highly functional system was also recommended and is being considered not only for the longer term, but also with each purchase of new hardware.

Next steps

In order to implement these recommendations for parking system improvements, the following actions would be presented for City Council approval as part of the 2008 Budget process:

1. Authorization to replace all on-street meters, starting in the Central Parking Area (CPA) and expanding outward and the facility improvements as shown in Chart 1.
2. Authorization to raise the on-street parking meter rates in the CPA from \$0.50 to \$0.75 once all the new meters are installed
3. Authorization to increase the meter rates at the Transit Center from \$0.75 to \$1.00
4. Authorization to increase the meters at New Roc Garage in 2008 from \$0.50 to \$0.75, subject to review by the Parking Board
5. Authorization to increase the time at on-street meters in the CPA from 1-hour to 2-hours
6. Conceptual approval to increase the parking permit fees in 2009 and 2011, as presented in this Plan

July 2, 2007