

Downtown Parking Lot Management Business Plan

City of Norman

Department of Public Works

Traffic Control Division

Adopted: August 1, 2013

Revised: January 1, 2016



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I. INTRODUCTION

Norman's historic downtown functions as the commercial center of the community - the "Heart of Norman" - including government, financial institutions, law firms, churches, and many retail and restaurant establishments.

The decline in retail activity of the 1970's and 80's began to be reversed in the new millennium and has resulted, once again, in a vibrant downtown that is both a local and regional attraction. This vibrancy and renewed interest in the area created a parking demand that could not be met with the existing public parking supply.

To address this shortfall, the Norman City Council commissioned a Parking Study to measure both existing and future parking demand, and to develop recommendations for efficient parking management in the area. The study, which was conducted by the firm of Carter - Burgess, recommended the construction of a new pay-by-the-hour parking lot and identified the most suitable location to be along the south side of Gray Street, between Peters Avenue and Crawford Avenue.



Construction of the lot was completed in two phases. Phase 1 began in the fall of 2006 and was completed on January 30, 2007. It provided 104 spaces to the general public at no cost to the user. It did not take long for the lot to operate at or near capacity, reaching 80% occupancy sixty days after the opening and nearly 100% twelve months later. More than 50% of the users were long-term parkers who worked in the Downtown area.

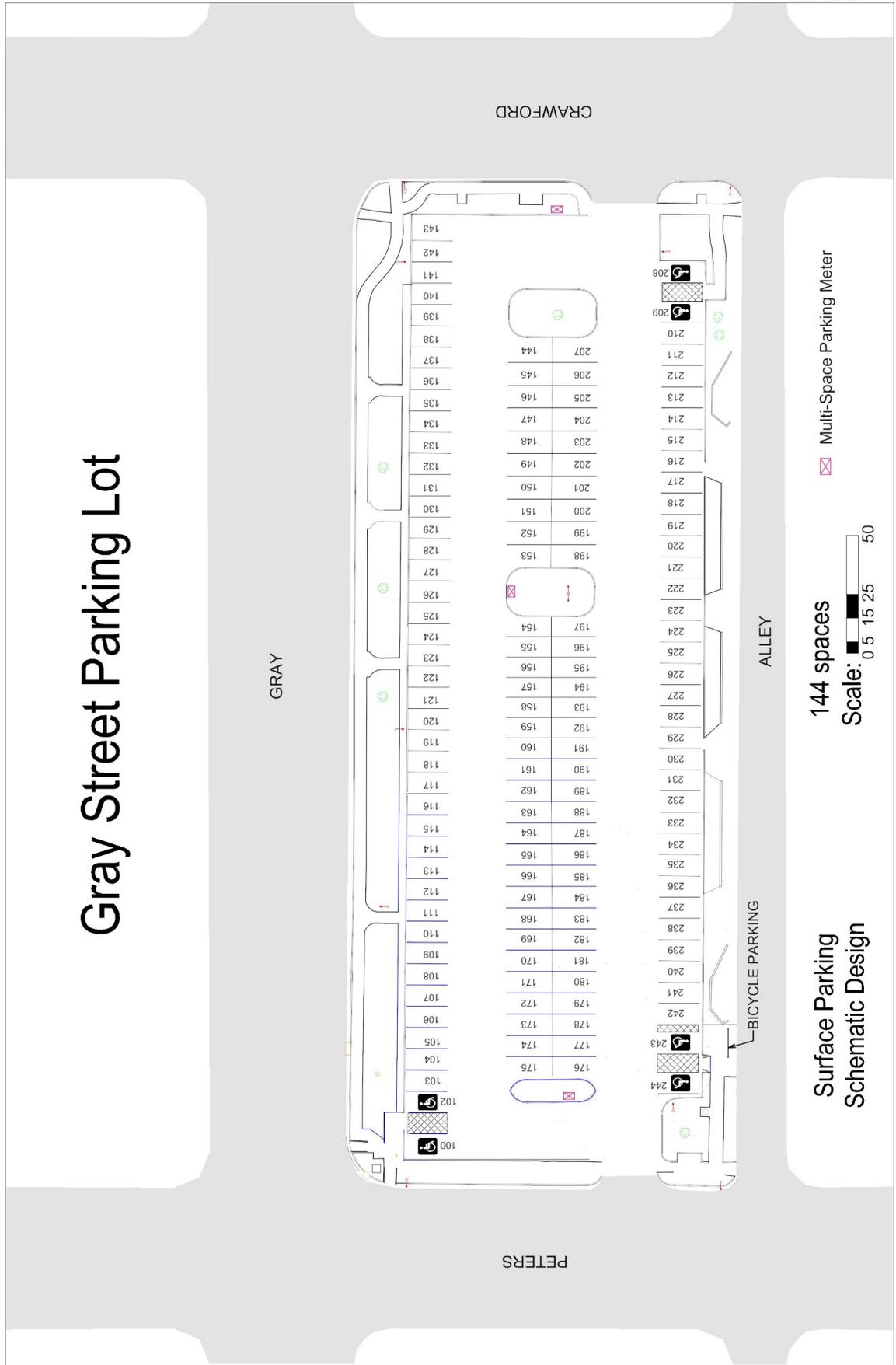
Phase 2 construction began in the summer of 2012 and was completed in November of the same year. Phase 2 added 40 more spaces and increased the total capacity of the lot to 144 spaces.

In order to provide adequate and convenient parking for both Downtown employees and customers, the Downtown Merchant Association requested that the City of Norman implement a parking management system that requires customers to pay for the use of the lot. The specific recommendations made by the association serve as the backbone of this Business Plan.

This business plan details the strategies and payment options available to customers, employers, employees and visitors who park on the Gray Street Parking Lot which is owned and maintained by the City of Norman.

The plan is designed to maximize both the level of convenience experienced by all users as well as the efficient use of the lot.

Figure 1 - Downtown Gray Street Parking Lot



II. PARKING MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

The parking lot is managed to accommodate a wide range of users visiting, working or doing business in Downtown Norman. Different payment options are offered to meet the specific needs of individuals. For the short-term user visiting Downtown, there are three conveniently located multi-space parking meters that can be used to pay for one or multiple hours of parking. For the long-term daily user, there are permits available for lease annually. For individuals with disabilities, there are a number of accessible parking spaces reserved for their use at no cost. No matter the situation, the Parking Management System for the Downtown Parking Lot is flexible, versatile and convenient for all users.

A. Parking for the Disabled

The Downtown Parking Lot was designed as an accessible parking lot for physically disabled users. There are a total of six parking spaces reserved for drivers with disabilities (one more than the minimum required by the Americans with Disabilities Act).

The spaces are clearly signed and marked. They are located in the most convenient areas of the parking lot and offer accessible routes that connect the parking space aisle to the adjacent sidewalk system. There are spaces in groups of two at the northwest, southeast, and southwest corners of the parking lot. Customers using these spaces are exempted from any of the hourly fees and can park for the entire day.



B. Multi-Space Parking Meter

The city purchased a parking management system from New Jersey - based Parkeon using a no-interest loan from the Norman Downtowners Association and Republic Bank that will be paid back by the City of Norman using part of the revenues collected by system.



The system includes three conveniently located multi-space parking meter stations. The system can tell Parking Enforcement Officers which spaces have been paid and which are either expired or not paid.

The meters are state-of-the-art, digital, ticketless multi-space meters which are designed specifically to deliver exceptional performance while concurrently delivering a low cost of ownership over the life of the product.

The meter has superior capabilities and incorporates 'best in breed' parking technology, making it easy to maintain and highly reliable. The hardware solution for pay-by-space parking operations, supports pay-at-any-space, credit/debit card, pay-by-cell, and coin transactions. The units are PCI-compliant and feature a secure intelligent cash box system, ensuring the highest levels of funds and data security.

Extremely weather and vandal-resistant, the meters provide a versatile, secure space management system that is linked wirelessly to the meter management system using proven, secure wireless technology to provide real-time status reporting, transaction authorization, and occupancy/compliance information to a central management system.

The system is recognized as an industry leading benchmark solution, and has received numerous design awards. The sleek, modern, slim-line exterior is constructed from high grade steel making it highly resistant to vandalism and vibration as well as a range of climatic conditions.

The meters utilize 'solid state technology' – simplifying technology upgrades and parts exchange. The modular construction of the machine's internal components facilitates rapid servicing and allows for a simple and cost-effective upgrade path over the course of the equipment's lifespan.

The current system was implemented such that the multi-space parking meter stations became operational in August of 2015.

a) **Signing**

The location of each parking meter station is signed for easy recognition.

b) **Operation**

- Unit will operate with solar panels to allow solar charging regardless of meter location relative to the sun. So, unpredictable interruptions in service are not a concern.
- The display allows payment prompts guiding the user through the payment process
- The display and keypad support a dedicated information key and screen for on-screen help and instructions
- The display backlight and contrast automatically adjust to ambient light and temperature conditions
- The coin entry slot accepts all US coins
- The unit does not accept bills
- The unit will accept Visa and MasterCard
- The meter supports real-time credit card processing, with authentication within 15 seconds in most situations
- Display messages are customizable



c) Payment Options

The New Multi-Space Parking Meter Stations in the Gray Street Downtown Parking Lot accept the following as a means of payment:

- Coins
- Credit / Debit Cards
- The system also has the capability to accept pay-by-cell phone payments (Whoosh!)
- Validation Codes

Coins

Hourly parking can be purchased using coins. The meters accept nickels, dimes, quarters, and dollar coins. Customers can purchase multiple hours of parking at a rate of 25¢ per hour.



Credit / Debit Cards

The meters accept Visa or MasterCard for hourly purchase transactions and support real-time credit card processing, with authentication within 15 seconds in most situations. There is a minimum credit card charge for parking in order to accommodate all of the various credit card transaction fees paid by the City of Norman on each transaction. Minimum credit card charge is 75¢ (or 3 hours).



Pay-By-Cell Phone

One of the more convenient features of the new system offers customers the option to pay for the use of the lot using a cell phone using Whoosh!. Any customer may take advantage of this payment option offering the features shown below:

- The Whoosh! mobile phone app can be downloaded from the App Store onto an iPhone or the Google Play Store onto an Android device
- Users register their license plates and credit card with the Whoosh! system through the app or through www.whooshstore.com
- Non-Android or non-iPhone users can access Whoosh! by visiting its mobile web site - m.whooshstore.com
- To pay for parking, you simply open the app or mobile web site on your phone, select your vehicle, choose the closest meter to your vehicle, and choose the amount of time you want to park



Validation Codes

The Parkeon Validation Codes System gives the City the capability to provide validated parking at the pay stations. In this case, those desiring to pay for others parking would visit the City, pay for the specified amount of time, and the City would create a code choosing from many different parameters to help provide a convenient parking experience for its customers.

- City staff have access to the system 24/7/365
- The system is password protected
- Parking staff creates and manages all codes
- Codes can be assigned the following attributes: specific description, usage restriction, and code definition
- Full back end reporting

Benefits of the system include:

- Gives merchants a mechanism for validating customer parking and employers for employees
- Validated parking can be given to attendees of special events
- Can be a significant customer service tool

C. Permit Parking

For Downtown employers and employees, the City also offers the option of purchasing a twelve-month permit for \$450. Customers who prefer this option will be able to park in a designated area of the lot that includes 41 spaces clearly signed for permit holders.

There are 41-spaces available for permit parking (Spaces 103-143). Permit parking fees are discounted by 25% over the equivalent cost of hourly daily parking. Customers interested in this option must complete a permit parking application. Spaces will be leased to interested Downtown area businesses and employees according to the following lottery process.



1. The City of Norman will advertise the spaces annually on the City of Norman website, Channel 20, and in a mailing to downtown businesses.
2. Interested potential lessees must submit an application for a leased space at the City Clerk's Office with contact information and number of spaces desired. Applications for spaces will be accepted until noon on December 15 of every year.

3. The City Clerk’s Office will put all of the names into a bag and draw names one by one five days after the application due date. If applicants are interested in multiple spaces, and there are spaces remaining after all interested parties are assigned a single space, a second round of names will be drawn. If there are interested parties whose names were not drawn, those names will be drawn again for order of priority on a waiting list. The City Clerk’s Office will maintain the waiting list in case of a cancelled or unexecuted lease.
4. After the lottery is completed, the applicants will be notified that they were selected and be asked to come to the City Clerk’s Office to execute the lease and pay the annual rent. Leases must be executed prior to the last work day of May or the space will be considered forfeited and the City Clerk’s Office will contact an applicant on the waiting list.
5. After the leases are executed, City staff will provide reserved parking permits to each lessee for display in their vehicles.
6. The leases will expire on the last day of December and the lottery will be held again for the next year’s leases.

III. PARKING FEES

Hourly Parking Rates

| Day | Hours | Maximum Hours | Cost |
|-----------------|--------------------|----------------------|--------------|
| Monday - Friday | 8:00 am to 5:00 pm | 9 | 25¢ per hour |

Permit Annual Rate

| Day | Hours | Maximum Hours | Cost |
|-----------------|--------------------|----------------------|----------------|
| Monday - Friday | 8:00 am to 6:00 pm | 10 | \$450 per Year |

IV. ANTICIPATED NET REVENUE

A. Revenues

Revenue from the parking meter system comes from two sources; meter fees and expired meter citations. Using historical data, the revenue is anticipated to be approximately \$53,450 per year. The following assumptions are made:

a) Meter Fees

Total Number of Parking Spaces = 144

Spaces Reserved for Disabled Users = 6

Spaces Reserved for Permit Parking = 26

Spaces available for the General Public = 97

Hours of Operation = 8,760 hours per year per space (261 days per year / 5 Days per Week / 9 Hours per Day).

Occupancy = 15%

Projected revenue:

Permit Parking = \$18,450 per year

Meter Transactions (including Whoosh! and Validation Codes) = \$25,000 per year

b) Meter Citations

Total Revenue from Meter Citations = \$10,000 per year
(1,000 citations at \$10 per citation)

B. Expenses

The annual cost of operating the new Gray Street parking management system is \$11,725 and includes the following items:

- Parking Management (licensing, remote internet access, system hosting, etc..) - \$2,000 per year
- Credit Card Transaction Fees - \$4,280 per year (40 daily transactions average @ \$0.41 per transaction)
- Pay-By-Cell Fees - \$3,445 per year (20 daily transactions average @ \$0.66 per transaction)
- Regular Meter Maintenance - \$2,000 per year

C. Net Revenue

The projected parking meter revenue minus the expenses associated with operation, maintenance and enforcement of the new system, is expected to generate a net revenue of \$41,725.

