

MORGANTOWN PARKING AUTHORITY

INTRODUCTION

Mission Statement - The mission of the Morgantown Parking Authority is to provide the City a convenient, safe, secure, and aesthetically pleasing parking experience. The Authority shall continually maintain, improve, and increase parking opportunities to meet the unique challenges that are present as the result of growth and development within the City.

Authority Members – William Byrne (Chairman), Charles McEwuen (Vice Chairman), Jeanne Hagan, Shane Mardis, and William Mayer

A Message from Your Parking Authority

It is the tradition of the Parking Authority to provide safe, clean, and accessible public parking for the Downtown B4 Zone. For this purpose, the Authority employs 14 (13 full time and 1 part time) professionals that service 2,139 parking spaces (9 surface lots, 4 multilevel facilities, and 14 City streets) 24 hours/6days a week. Though the 2,139 spaces only account for 49% of the total number of parking spaces available in the Downtown, each space is crucial to the success of the B4 Zone.

In 2008, the Parking Authority experienced (for the first time) a decrease in demand for *Student Parking Permits* for Fall Semester. However, it is reported that “mass transit” (Mountain Line and the PRT) are breaking records in the numbers of students using “mass transit” daily. The Authority views this as a very positive trend toward traffic relief in the Downtown Area. This trend should provide opportunity for non-student visitors to come Downtown and find ample parking.

Each year the Parking Authority and the Executive Director review our **Goals** to determine their achievement. The Authority then can assess situations and make corrections to keep with the vision of the mission. For 2008, the Parking Authority and the staff will be striving to accomplish the following:

1. Continue building on an established working relationship with all residential property owners to inventory the number of residents and their parking needs in the B4 Zone.
2. Work with the **Responsible Hospitality Project** to improve customer access to the Downtown between the hours of 5 PM and 10 PM.
3. Increase interaction with West Virginia University and the new Parking and Transportation Director. Identify mutual problems (as to the impact on the community) and assist with solution programs.
4. Continue work on long term solutions for extended and daily parking with the involvement of the mass transit system.

CURRENT PROGRAMS & SERVICES:

Pay-On-Foot Gate System Customer Services

This technology has enabled the Parking Authority to properly expand its role to manage the parking facilities toward a maximum capability. The following points illustrate the many tools this technology contributes to the daily management of 1,192 parking spaces in 3 multilevel facilities.

- Payments can be made to the station using cash (different denominations) or credit cards.
- Pay for time used and not having to speculate the time they visit the Downtown.
- Merchants have access to a validation program that gives their customers free parking for the first time.
- “Help Button”: If a customer has a problem at entry, exit, or pay station, they will have direct access to Parking Authority staff (24 hours/day) with a phone linked intercom system.
- Lot Full signs at the entrances to alert customers that there is available parking in each facility.
- Revenue controls in place to assist with accounting and increase profitability.
- Precise information concerning customer use during the business days for commerce forecasting.
- Special Event Parking available for activities in the Downtown, which allows the customer to pay one price for parking for the entire event and pay when they arrive.
- Efficiency of Space that allows increased hourly parking at peak times.

Parking Permit Program – Monthly Parking Permits has been offered for many years. The Authority has gotten more active with the program to promote more use of the available long term parking facilities. Currently, there are 900 monthly permits issued in the Authority’s long term facilities. This has successfully opened the short-term spaces to visitors to the Downtown. Monthly permits are very successful because:

- Cost savings up to 50% for a permit over paying a daily rate
- Encourage Downtown employees to park in the garages, not at meters used by those doing commerce.
- Established a program to assist the West Virginia Junior College students so that they do not park at 2-hour meters.
- Residential needs are increasing. Permanent or temporary residents can obtain a limited number of 24/7 permits to store their vehicle.

Partnership – It has been long recognized by the Authority that there is a partnership with all the entities that make the Downtown. This partnership is defined by the simple fact that any patron, visitor, employee, or any other stakeholder make the Authority’s customer base. The Parking Authority works closely with Main Street Morgantown on program development and new regulations that better defines “Public Parking”.

Farmer's Market returned in 2008 to the Parking Authority lot on Spruce Street, which has become a destination for hundreds of shoppers every Saturday morning from May 1st to November 1st. Authority personnel set up for the Market every Saturday morning and then dismantle and store materials needed for the event.

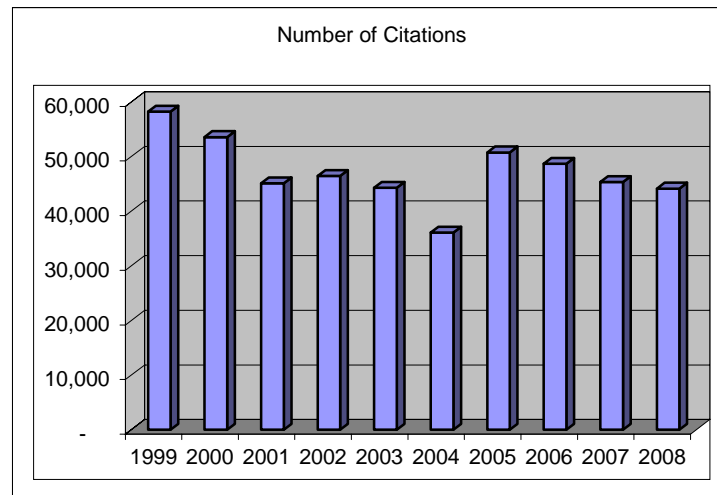
New Message Signs have been installed at the Spruce Street and University Avenue Garages. These signs display the number of open spaces in each facility as well as a message board to inform the public of daily activities in the Downtown.

Enforcement Program

It is estimated that the Parking Authority provides service to more than 7,000 vehicles in its 21-hour business day. Presently, the Authority has 2,139 spaces available in its system Downtown. The demands for parking particularly at peak times requires a program allowing everyone needing a space being able to find one.

The parking enforcement program is designed to accommodate the needs of the public in general and all of the stakeholders in the Downtown. Enforcement of City Codes and Regulations (related to parking) is what make the intentions of those codes and regulations work. The Authority constantly reevaluates this program to maintain positive results for the overall customer service.

It is estimated that less than 3% of the total customer base receives a citation. Below is a graph demonstrating the citations issued over the last decade and how the Authority's efforts to keep the number of citations to a minimum as the number of vehicles served per year increase. This year (2008) Parking Enforcement Officers have issued 44,150 citations compared to 45,324 (2007); 48,666 (2006); and 50,752 (2005).



RESOURCES

EMPLOYEES: Staff – Director and 13 Employees

The Executive Director reports directly to the Parking Authority. The Director oversees the operations, employee training, facilities management, public relations, capital improvements, and program development.

The 6 uniformed **Parking Enforcement Officers** regulate compliance of the parking rules, parking lot regulations, assist customers with any needed information, and provide security for patrons. Parking Enforcement Officers are on duty 24 hours 6 days each week. When classes are not in session, officers assist with facility maintenance.

Lot and Garage Maintenance has 4 staff members that clean all lots and garages (daily), perform repairs to facilities, maintain green space, provide meter repair, collect meter/gate revenue, and make daily bank deposits.

In the office a **Customer Service Representative** gives full attention to the walk up patrons or telephone with their concerns. The **Operations Manager** and the **Accounting Clerk** process violations, account for fine collections, process payments, research vehicle registrations, and send notices. This office (with the assistance of the Enforcement Officers) is responsible for collecting 92% of fines for all citations written, which is among the highest collection rates in the nation.

REVIEW OF PAST YEAR'S ACTIVITIES

Finances for Fiscal Year 2007-2008

Revenue

Time Parking Revenue	\$1,639,753	Current Assets	\$1,352,248
Fine Collection	475,393	Fixed Assets	7,322,813
Miscellaneous	28,000		
Total Revenue	\$2,143,146	Total Assets	\$8,675,061

Expenditures

Operating Expenses	\$1,113,578
Public Safety Bldg Bond	337,828
Wharf Garage Bond	341,000

Capital Outlay

Spruce Street Garage	\$74,000
Pleasant Street Garage	41,500

Total Expenditures - \$1,907,906

2009 FORECAST

Residential Demand

Downtown Morgantown remains a vibrant community that is prepared for development. A new direction is the residential models that have been brought to the City of Morgantown for consideration of approval. Unfortunately, the Parking Authority's experience and facilities are often overlooked in its ability to provide adequate service when new projects are proposed in or around the Downtown.

It is a proven fact that increasing the population densities in a Downtown will translate into a healthier business climate in a Downtown. This Authority is very prepared to meet all challenges that are associated with increasing population density in the B4 Zone. Long term parking for residents and short-term parking for visitors are very manageable with the present assets and planned projects.

Public and Private Parking Partnerships

Nighttime Entertainment still brings strong parking demands from 10 PM until 3 AM on Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays. The Parking Authority still confronts a number of challenges that are associated with "late night" usage. That demand has required an additional part-time staff member for enforcement and security. The Authority will remain engaged with the **Responsible Hospitality Project**. This initiative is working to change perception and increase Downtown commerce from 5 PM to 10 PM

SUMMARY:

This past year (2008), the Downtown B4 Zone was spotlighted by a proposed student residential development. Parking was one of the main topics in this spirited debate. Throughout the process, the following issues were realized:

1. Future Developments should provide a detailed parking program as part of the approval process.
2. In association with the City Planning Department, a strategy should be developed that will have the developer contribute to a bond program for parking expansion and improvement.
3. Prioritize parking arrangements for the student population in the B4 Zone. Presently, the Authority accommodates student commuters and residents from all over the area.
4. Outside the B4 Zone there are no systematic programs to coordinate parking to provide relief to neighborhoods.
5. Parking solutions throughout the City would have a very positive effect on traffic congestion.
6. Establishing new bus stops (around the Downtown) are vital to parking and traffic solutions.