



## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Members of City Council

**From:** Jane S. Brautigam, City Manager  
Molly Winter, Executive Director, Community Vitality  
Kathleen Bracke, GO Boulder Manager, Transportation Division, Public Works Department

**DATE:** December 22, 2015

**RE:** Update to Civic Area Parking Changes

### Purpose

On Dec. 2, 2015, City of Boulder staff emailed background information to council members about the Civic Area parking changes, which will go into effect in January 2016. Since that initial correspondence, the city has been evaluating further input from the public, the Library Commission, and other interested parties in order to address resident concerns.

The purpose of this memorandum is to:

- I. Provide a brief background on the Civic Area Parking Changes
- II. Review Library Commission feedback on the announced Civic Area parking changes;
- III. Summarize parking alternatives for city employees;
- IV. Outline planned data collection and evaluation methods to monitor the changes;
- V. Share a general timeline and plans for updates to commissions and council; and,
- VI. Summarize outreach and education efforts about the Civic Area parking changes.

For further information, please refer to the updates and web links to existing resources listed on the Civic Area webpage at: <https://bouldercolorado.gov/civic-area>

### I. Background

The upcoming changes to the Civic Area parking lots were announced by the City of Boulder in early November. The details of the new Civic Area parking plan can be reviewed in Attachment

A (Poster Map of changes), Attachment B (FAQs), and Attachment C (Response letter to residents).

To briefly review, the impetus behind the upcoming changes to the Civic Area parking lots is three-fold:

1. To support design changes that will make the Civic Area a more vibrant and welcoming gathering spot for the community (as part of the Community, Culture & Safety projects);
2. To improve access to the library and other city services housed in the Civic Area; and
3. To enhance and support the use of multi-modal travel options by City of Boulder employees.

## **II. Library Commission feedback**

To solicit feedback on the parking changes, Executive Director of the Department of Community Vitality Molly Winter and additional city staff presented a summary to the Library Commission on Dec. 2, 2015.

This presentation summarized existing challenges in the Main Library parking lot on Arapahoe Avenue and explained how the new parking program will address those challenges to ensure sufficient parking availability for library users.

The commissioners appreciated the work of city staff and understood the underlying rationale to better manage the parking to provide greater access to the library for the greatest number of patrons. The commissioners did, however, raise some concerns on behalf of library users.

The commissioners sought assurances from city staff that the upcoming parking changes would be convenient, accessible and understandable to library users. To address these concerns, city staff explained the targeted public outreach and education efforts the city is utilizing to ensure library users are informed about the changes.

The library commissioners were very interested in staff providing updates as the program is implemented. Staff has committed to review the initial data monitoring results of the parking changes at the Library Commission meeting on April 6, 2016. (These results will also be shared with City Council by city staff as soon as they are available. City staff continues to report updated monitoring results on a regular basis throughout 2016.)

The commissioners also expressed concern that city employees will take up a disproportionate amount of the shared spaces. The staff team explained that the city believes that with better enforcement of parking limits – and increased turnover – there will be a sufficient number of spots available. As explained later in this memo, staff will be closely monitoring the utilization of shared parking spaces in the civic area to make sure the public has sufficient access to the library and Civic Park.

Lastly, the commissioners were very interested in exploring the potential of locating a parking kiosk within the library. To address this idea, city staff is working with the kiosk vendor to

explore the possibility and limitations of such a placement. The commissioners also suggested incorporating an introductory free parking promotion with the change, and maximizing the use of education and warning tickets. Parking ambassadors stationed in the Library Lot will be handing out both coupons and educational material beginning on Jan. 19, 2016, which is the first day the new parking changes will go into effect for both the public and city employees. (More information about the Parking Ambassador Program is described in Section IV of this memo.) City staff will be considering the feasibility of these suggestions and will be reporting back on these items to the Library Commission at its April 6, 2015 meeting.

### **III. Parking alternatives for city employees**

Prior to the announcement of the Civic Area parking changes, city staff rolled out several pilot programs to offer alternatives to city employee parking in the Civic Area parking lots.

Currently, there are 60 city employees participating in an initial Travel Demand Management (TDM) pilot program that began in November and runs through December 2015. The TDM pilot programs ask the volunteer participants to use an alternative form of transportation to and from work on certain days of the week.

The TDM pilot programs include the following features:

- i. A concierge service for trip planning assistance;
- ii. A \$1/day parking cash-out incentive; and,
- iii. Available satellite parking locations.

Satellite parking locations include the traditional CDOT and RTD park and ride lots. In addition, new satellite parking locations have opened up at the EcoCycle/Resource Yards at 6400 East Arapahoe and the garage at Alpine and Broadway (formerly the Boulder Community Hospital).

Each city employee pilot program participant has been asked to complete a pre- and post-survey, as well as travel diaries, to track which travel modes they are using. The results of these initial pilot programs will be tallied at the end of December.

After the Civic Area parking changes take effect, the city will begin to track the number of employees who choose alternative modes of travel. A factor that also may influence travel choices after the parking changes take effect is the increase in City of Boulder employee parking fees in the civic area from \$2 to \$3 per day as well as increased enforcement through the pay by plate program. The city will also continue data monitoring with the initial pilot program participants.

Based on the results from these evaluation steps, the TDM programs will be adjusted as needed. For example, if the city employee demand for the new satellite parking lot increases, the city will consider opening up more spaces at these areas to accommodate more downtown employees.

#### **IV. Data collection and evaluation methods**

The city has baseline data on existing parking demand in the Civic Park area for weekday daytime, weekday evening, and weekend daytime time periods. The existing demand was calculated based on 2014 commute mode split data, parking observations conducted on two average days in the Fall 2014, and modal data from the 2012 Boulder Valley Survey for recreational and social trips. The analysis also included parking/access demand projections based on the future plans for the Civic Area, including land uses, programming and events.

Additional parking observations were made in November and December 2015 to augment the 2014 data. This new data on the Civic Area parking lots includes a wide range of parameters:

- i. Weekdays and weekends use;
- ii. Time-of-day parking demand;
- iii. Visual observation counts of patrons parking in the Main Library lot on Arapahoe Avenue, but not going into the Library; and,
- iv. Civic Area patrons parking in the surrounding neighborhoods.

The baseline data above will be compared to data collected in February 2016, after the parking changes are in place. The February 2016 data counts will involve three days of parking utilization data collection both within the Civic Area lots and in the surrounding neighborhoods.

Specifically, staff plans to evaluate:

- Before and after assessment of parking in the surrounding neighborhoods;
- Before and after parking data within the civic area parking lots;
- Employee satellite parking lot information;
- Data from the parking kiosks and ticket information;
- Survey data from the civic area employees regarding travel choices; and
- Feedback received from the public and library users.

#### **V. Timeline and plans for updates to commissions and council**

Based on these sources, staff will present an initial update to the Library Commission and Downtown Management Commission at their meetings in April 2016. City Council members will also be provided a written update of the findings.

The April update will include the initial results of the data collection surveys, feedback regarding the city employee TDM programs to date, and discussion about any adjustments that might be recommended by staff. These recommendations will be based on whether the parking changes are effectively achieving the overarching goals of making the Civic Area a more vibrant and welcoming gathering spot for the community and improving access to the library and other city services housed in the Civic Area.

City staff will continue to monitor the feedback and effectiveness of the new parking changes throughout the spring and summer of 2016, including the impact of any changes made during the April analysis. City staff has already communicated to the public that up to 45 spaces in the Civic Area lots may eventually be eliminated to accommodate potential design configurations for the upcoming enhancements to the Civic Area as part of the Community, Culture and Safety projects. When an exact number of spaces to be eliminated are determined, City Council will also be updated. There will be no elimination of Civic Area parking spaces until at least the summer of 2016 in conjunction with the beginning of construction on the core park of the Civic Area.

In the 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter of 2016, staff will make a presentation to City Council regarding the first half-year results of the parking changes and the results of the pilot TDM programs for city employees, including recommendations about potential program changes. Additional updates to the commissions will also be presented as needed.

## **VI. Outreach and education efforts**

Last week, city staff confirmed that the parking changes will take effect on Tuesday, Jan. 19, 2015. This date has been selected to coincide with the first business day following the Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday weekend. This date was also selected to coincide with the first day that the new parking kiosk meters will be up and operational. All new signage for the Civic Area lots and the kiosks will also be in place on this date.

Staff has implemented broad outreach and education efforts for Civic Area patrons and city staff. Here is a list of the comprehensive efforts that have implemented throughout November and December:

- The initial [news release](#) was distributed to media, city employees and council members on Nov. 9, 2015;
- A coordinated public outreach campaign included updates to the city's [Civic Area website](#), e-newsletters for [City Planning](#) and the [Library](#), a standardized email response to community members with questions about the changes, and the posting of public [poster maps](#) in city buildings;
- Information about the parking changes were shared with surrounding facilities including Alfalfa's Market, the Presbyterian Manor senior housing facility, Mustard's Last Stand, and other downtown Boulder businesses and organizations;
- Internal meetings were held with city staff at work sites throughout the Civic Area campus to explain the parking changes; and
- Message training with front desk staff took place at many of the city facilities in the Civic Area, which included the option for staff to [distribute educational materials and handouts](#) summarizing the changes.

A number of outreach efforts are in the final development phase and will be rolled out the next few weeks. These efforts include the following items:

- Channel 8 aired a [segment](#) about the parking changes during the [December 18, 2015 broadcast of Inside Boulder News](#). This update was also distributed on the city's social media platforms;
- Additional information will be updated to the [Parking Services webpage](#) and the [Library website](#) to coordinate with the first week of the parking changes in January;
- Information about parking requirements will be incorporated into library meeting room reservation confirmation emails that are sent to patrons who apply to use meeting space in the Main Library;
- Entry signage will be installed at both Main Library and New Britain Building parking lot along Arapahoe Avenue, and at the Municipal Building/North Library lot on Canyon Boulevard to inform customers of the new parking options; and,
- Instructions and time period limits will be posted to the kiosks, including instructions how to “pay by plate.” Civic Area customers will be required to enter their license plate number into the kiosk to activate the first 90-minutes of free parking and any additional paid parking time.

Finally, in order to ease the transition to the new parking system, the city will initiate a Parking Ambassador program, which will station trained part-time employees in the Civic Area lots beginning on Tuesday, Jan. 19, 2016, the first day the parking changes take effect. The goal is to provide one-on-one education and assistance to individuals parking in the Civic Area lots during the first weeks of the new parking management system. Ambassadors will inform individuals about the changes and assist Civic Area customers with the activation of the “pay by plate” kiosks. Ambassadors will also distribute free parking coupons and educational materials to first-time parking customers. Parking enforcement officers will also assist in the education campaign during the first few weeks of implementation. Warning tickets will be issued for the first violation. Patrons will be issued parking tickets for subsequent violations.

For further information, please contact Molly Winter, [winterm@bouldercolorado.gov](mailto:winterm@bouldercolorado.gov), or Kathleen Bracke, [brackek@bouldercolorado.gov](mailto:brackek@bouldercolorado.gov).

Attachment A: Poster Map

Attachment B: FAQ Public Handout

Attachment C: Constituent Response



# Public Parking Changes

Effective January 2016\*

To improve access to public parking, the City of Boulder is launching a new parking program in the Civic Area.

## Attachment A : Poster Map

- **NEW:** Spaces in **RED LOTS**, which include (1) Library (Anapahoe Ave.), (2) Municipal Building/North Library (Canyon Blvd.) and (3) New Britain will become **SHARED** spaces for both the public and city employees. Shared spaces in **RED LOTS** feature free parking the first 90 minutes with the option to pay for an additional 90 minutes.
- **NEW:** Spaces in **PURPLE**, which include (4) Park Central lot and the eastern portion of the (2) Municipal Building/North Library lot remain for public parking only, but will include the same availability as **RED LOTS**: 90-minutes free + 90-minutes paid.
- **NEW:** Shared spaces in both **RED** and **PURPLE** lots will require the public to enter your license plate into pay station kiosks located in all lots.
- **NEW:** No more than three hours per parking session in a calendar day in **RED** and **PURPLE** lots except for city employees displaying valid daily paid parking permits. Visitors may park in Civic Area lots more than once per day but will only receive up to 90 minutes of free parking on the first visit and time cannot exceed three hours per parking session. Return parking for a new parking session will be charged at a rate of \$1.25/hour for credit card or 25 cents/12 minutes for cash.
- Visitors who need to park for more than three consecutive hours may utilize the public parking garages (in **ORANGE**) located north of the Civic Area. Downtown garage rates apply.
- Managed parking hours will run from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m., Monday to Friday, with Saturday and Sunday free.
- There will be **NO CHANGES** to (5) Senior Center parking lot (in **TURQUOISE**). Parking will remain available to seniors.
- To help customers with these changes, city parking ambassadors will be stationed in one or more parking lots in January 2016 to assist drivers with questions and use of the new pay station kiosks.



\* Up to 45 spaces total will be removed from Lots 1 & 2 starting in Summer 2016 to accommodate Civic Area construction and long-term park changes. Further information about exact timing and schedule of parking spot removal will be forthcoming.

For more information please visit: <https://bouldercolorado.gov/civic-area> Updated 12-10-2015

## Attachment B: FAQs Handout



# CITY OF BOULDER CIVIC AREA PUBLIC PARKING CHANGES

### What is happening?

In January 2016 the City of Boulder will begin an enhanced parking program that will improve access to the Civic Area.

### Why does the Civic Area need an enhanced parking program?

The Boulder community is investing in the Civic Area to make it an attractive and accessible area for residents and visitors to gather. Improving parking access in adjacent lots creates an opportunity for more people to use the park and public facilities.

### Who will be affected by these changes?

The changes will affect all visitors who drive to and park in the Civic Area. This includes Civic Area visitors, library patrons, city services customers, and City of Boulder employees.

### How will it work?

Under the new program, you will receive 90 minutes of free public parking in the Civic Area, and you will be able to purchase an additional 90 minutes. If you park longer than the three hour time limit during one parking session, you may receive a \$15 ticket.

You can return to the Civic Area for additional parking sessions, if you need to visit more than once in a calendar day. However, you will only get up to 90 minutes free the first time you park during a day and each parking session cannot exceed three hours. Return parking for a new parking session will be charged at a rate of \$1.25/hour for credit card or 25 cents/12 minutes for coin.

If you need more than three hours in a parking session, you can use the public parking garages north of the Civic Area.

Managed parking hours will run Monday to Friday from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. Saturday and Sunday parking will be free.

### How will the city enforce the new rules?

As part of the parking program, City of Boulder Parking Services will install new parking meter kiosks in the Civic Area lots in January 2016. You will need to use the kiosks to begin the first 90 minutes of free parking and to purchase up to an additional 90 minutes, if needed.

The parking meter kiosks will be different from those used in the downtown area. In the Civic Area, the kiosks will be "pay by plate," requiring license plate entry to begin the transaction.

These changes will support enforcement of parking rules and encourage compliance, turnover and improved access for patrons.



### What if I need help using the new kiosks?

To help customers with the enhanced parking program, city parking ambassadors will be stationed in one or more of the Civic Area parking lots in January 2016 to assist with questions about using the new pay station kiosks.

### Which lots are included in the enhanced parking program?

The changes will impact the following lots:

- Main Library (Arapahoe Ave.)
- Municipal Building/North Library (Canyon Blvd.)
- New Britain Building (Arapahoe Ave.)
- Park Central (Arapahoe Ave.)

The West Senior Center parking lot will remain unchanged.

A detailed map of the changes is available by going to the Civic Area website at <https://bouldercolorado.gov/civic-area> and scrolling down to the Civic Area Parking Changes headline and clicking on the MAP link.

### When will the enhancement program begin?

The changes take effect in January 2016.

### What if I have more questions about the parking changes?

You can learn more about the parking enhancements by visiting the city's Civic Area (<https://bouldercolorado.gov/civic-area>) webpage. Or you can submit questions about Civic Area Parking through Inquire Boulder at ([www.bouldercolorado.gov/civicareaparking](http://www.bouldercolorado.gov/civicareaparking)).

Revised 12-1-15



## Attachment C: Response Letter

Version 12.02.2015 10 AM

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

Thank you for your correspondence to City Council related to parking in the Civic Area in downtown Boulder. All nine City Council members received your email. You may hear directly from one or more council members in response to your email. However, please understand that council members are unable to reply to every email.

This response is provided to you by city staff, and may not represent the opinions of individual council members.

First, there are a few clarifications that have resulted from the public feedback the city has received since announcing the original plan:

1. While the design configurations for the Civic Area will likely result in the loss of some parking spaces once construction begins in the summer of 2016, the removal of the “employee only” designation on the remaining spots is expected to make more spaces available for the public. Community members will now have the opportunity to park in the Municipal Building/North Library lot (off Canyon Road) and the New Britain lot (off Arapahoe Avenue just east of the Main Library lot). These lots will now be shared with city employees; previously these lots were reserved, either entirely or partially, only for employees.
2. Seniors will continue to have access to free parking for senior services at the West Senior Center parking lot at 9<sup>th</sup> Street and Arapahoe Avenue, as before. ADA parking spaces in lots throughout the Civic Area will remain in place.
3. There will be a change related to three dedicated senior patron spots in the Main Library lot; these will be removed as part of this plan. However, the city believes that by eliminating employee-only spots in many parking lots and opening up those additional lots to shared public parking, seniors will be gaining parking options rather than losing them. This will be an area of particular focus, however, as the city evaluates the program during its first few months.

The feedback the city is receiving continues to shape the implementation of these changes, which will take effect in January, and we appreciate your interest in this issue.

In the event that some additional background is helpful, the impetus behind the changes is two-fold: to support design changes that will make the Civic Area a more vibrant and welcoming gathering spot for the community and to improve access to the library and other city services that are housed there.

The design changes are being made possible by a three year 0.3% sales tax that voters approved in November 2014 to invest in Community, Culture & Safety projects. The changes to the layout of the Civic Area will result in more green space and other features but also necessitate the removal of up to 45 parking spaces.

To prepare for these changes, the city began researching existing Civic Area parking challenges and possible solutions.

The current configuration for the parking lot near the Main Library on Arapahoe Avenue is not working well for library patrons or residents needing to access other city offices in the Civic Area. The current free three hour time limit is not easily enforced. Vehicles that park in the Main Library lot cannot be accurately tracked for time they spend in individual spaces because there is no metering system in place. Parking enforcement officers have had to rely on manual “tire chalking” or direct observation to identify violators. This approach is both inefficient and ineffective in that it leaves gaps in vehicle monitoring. As a result, parking time limits are often abused, resulting in less frequent turnover of parking spots.

With the new parking system beginning in January 2016, city staff anticipates there will be increased turnover of parking spots. New "pay-by-plate" parking kiosks will allow for more efficient and improved enforcement by parking officers. Those who wish to park in the area will be required to enter a license plate number into one of the parking lot kiosks to activate free and paid parking. Instructions on how to properly use the “pay-by-plate” kiosks will be provided at the kiosks.

In addition, the city will reduce free parking from three hours to 90 minutes. The free parking time limit reduction is based on the results of a survey of library use that indicated the majority of library patrons stay less than 60 minutes. Therefore, the 90-minute limit will still meet the needs of a majority of our library patrons who stay less than 60 minutes. The city will continue to allow patrons the option to park up to three hours by purchasing another 90 minutes. Visitors may park in Civic Area lots more than once per day but will only receive up to 90 minutes of free parking on the first visit and time cannot exceed three hours per parking session. Return parking for a new parking session will be charged at a rate of \$1.25/hour with a credit card or 25 cents/12 minutes if paying with coins.

The city is aware that additional changes or clarifications may be necessary as the new parking system is implemented. City staff will be monitoring lot usage regularly as the changes take effect. This evaluation will continue throughout the first several months.

In addition, to further ease the impact of the loss of overall spaces, the City of Boulder is piloting alternative mode options for city employees who currently park in the Civic Area. These programs include city employee satellite parking options, intermodal transportation options, and incentives for employees who choose to not park in the Civic Area.

There is additional information about the Civic Area project and parking changes at <https://bouldercolorado.gov/civic-area>, including a link to a newly created Frequently Asked

Questions section, which provides additional information on other common questions. For more information on parking options, visit <https://bouldercolorado.gov/parking-services>.

If you have questions regarding transportation options such as transit, walking, and biking to the Civic Area, please contact the city's GO Boulder program at [www.GOBoulder.net](http://www.GOBoulder.net).

Again, thank you for your feedback. We value the engagement of our community and appreciate the thoughtful questions and suggestions we have received regarding parking in the Civic Area.

Sincerely,

Molly Winter  
Executive Director, Department of Community Vitality