

# PARKING PROGRAM GUIDELINES FOR STATE AGENCIES

## **Introduction: Parking and Parking Charges**

The Commute Trip Reduction Law of 1991 was designed to improve Washington's quality of life through the reduction of drive alone commuting. Reducing the number of drive alone vehicles will reduce traffic congestion, improve air quality, and decrease dependency on petroleum products.

In 1995, the Washington State Legislature passed the State Agency Commute Trip Reduction Law giving state agencies the flexibility to use internal funds to support their commute trip reduction (CTR) programs, the authority to implement parking fees at worksites as an element of their commute trip reduction programs, and direction on how the state will reduce its subsidization and allocation of employee parking.

The 1995 State Agency Commute Trip Reduction Program Law applies to all state agencies, not just those affected by the 1991 Commute Trip Reduction Law. **All** state agencies must review the parking situation at each of its worksites and, where needed, develop parking programs to meet the intent of RCW 43.01.240.

The Parking Program Guidelines for State Agencies were first adopted by the Interagency Task Force for Commute Trip Reduction in 1995 and are designed to assist state agencies to implement the parking elements of RCW 43.01.240 and RCW 43.01.225.

The directives of the RCWs include: *(Note: The language below is from the RCWs.)*

## **Agencies' Responsibilities**

- ◆ The Department of General Administration (GA) shall continue to establish and collect parking fees on the Capitol Campus. (RCW 46.08.172)
- ◆ To reduce the state's subsidization of employee parking, after July 1997 agencies shall not enter into leases for employee parking in excess of building (*zoning*) code requirements, unless authorized by the director of the Department of General Administration. (RCW 43.01.240 (3)) Note: Institutions of Higher Education are exempted from this RCW.
- ◆ In situations where there are fewer parking spaces than employees at a worksite, parking shall be equitably allocated, with no special preference given to managers. (RCW 43.01.240 (3))
- ◆ Agencies must establish a committee to advise the agency heads on the parking fee. The committee must, at a minimum, include representation from management, administrative staff, production workers, and state employee bargaining units. (RCW 43.01.240 (2))  
*(Note: Guidance on committee formation and the allocation of parking are provided in this document.)*

## Agencies' Rights

- ◆ CTR funds for state agencies no longer have to be appropriated by the Legislature. Agencies may use internal funds and/or parking fee revenues to support their CTR programs. (RCW 43.01.230)
- ◆ Agencies off the Capitol Campus may, as an element of their CTR programs, impose parking fees. The fees may only be used to support the agencies': a) CTR program; b) parking program; or c) lease or ownership costs for parking. (RCW 43.01.240 (2))

*Note:* Article 25.3 for Collective Bargaining states, "During the term of this Agreement, agency-administered parking rates charged to employees who work at facilities located off the Capitol Campus will not be increased from the facility parking rates in existence as of June 30, 2005."

- ◆ Agencies located on the Capitol Campus may impose a surcharge on the parking fees established by GA and may use those fees as described for agencies off the campus. (RCW 43.01.240 (1))
- ◆ Colleges and Universities: See RCW 28B.130.005-040 for Parking Fees and Transportation Demand Management authority.

## DEFINITIONS

**Parking Management:** Parking management is an approach that makes optimal use of available parking resources through the implementation of strategies such as preferential parking for carpools and vanpools, shared parking and zoned parking (instead of individually assigned parking spaces) reserved areas to meet specific needs, and a registration and enforcement program. Parking management strategies can change costs, supply, or demand to improve traffic flow, ease congestion, and save agencies money. Many of these strategies work best when they are part of an integrated trip reduction program or combined with transportation demand management strategies, such as carpooling, vanpooling and ride matching that reduce the use of single occupant vehicles.

**Preferential Parking:** Reserved and conveniently located parking spaces generally close to the building entrance for carpools and vanpools. This program element requires that a system be established to register carpool and vanpool vehicles, drivers and riders; that special spaces be designated; and that a monitoring system be implemented. This program element acts as an incentive by providing easy and highly visible recognition to carpools and vanpools.

**Shared Parking:** At multi-agency worksites, it is in the interest of the agencies and employees to "pool" the parking and establish one parking program for the entire complex. By instituting zoned parking at the same time, capacity is significantly increased for all participating agencies, regardless of the amount of parking specified in each lease.

Shared parking may include sharing with tenants other than state agencies or be based on time of day or uses. For example, agencies may pursue shared parking arrangements with churches, schools and other nearby businesses that use the parking facility at different times of the day or with a reduced need to use all of their available parking.

**Zoned Parking:** Rather than an assigned space for each individual, the parking area is open to all employees with no assigned spaces. Zoned parking areas can increase the actual capacity for parking between 20% and 40%. Such an approach allows more employees to park in an area because, on a daily basis, there are always employees who do not come to the worksite for a variety of reasons. Depending upon the size of the parking area, this program element may require that a system be established to register vehicles and drivers. It may also be necessary to develop a monitoring and enforcement system.

## **Parking Program Policies**

The following have policy implications and must be included in an agency's CTR and parking programs.

1. **Carpool defined:** A motor vehicle occupied by two (2) to six (6) people traveling together for their commute trip that results in the reduction of a minimum of one motor vehicle trip. Persons under 16 years of age commuting in a carpool do not count as carpool members because they do not eliminate a vehicle trip.
  - ◆ Taking children to and from day care or school does not constitute a carpool because no vehicle trip is eliminated.
  - ◆ Not all members of the carpool need to be state employees.
  - ◆ Family members commuting together are a carpool.
  - ◆ The driver of the carpool vehicle must be a state employee **if** the vehicle is to be parked in a state worksite parking lot.
  - ◆ Agencies may choose to allow different configurations for carpools. However, to qualify as a carpool on the state CTR survey, more than half the trip has to be made with two (2) or more persons over the age of 16 in the vehicle.
2. **Eligibility defined**
  - ◆ Employees (full time, part time, project, etc.)
  - ◆ Required number of times a week/month/quarter an employee must use an alternate commute mode to qualify for either CTR program subsidies for transit, vanpools, carpools, walking or biking or parking incentives such as preferential parking.
  - ◆ Required number of times an employee who uses an alternate commute mode can park free where there are parking fees, or in the preferred area where there are no parking fees.

## **Parking Program Guidance**

### **Background**

Because parking and commute options are related, it is important that the two programs are compatible. While it is possible to have parking without a commute trip reduction program, it is impossible to have an effective commute trip reduction program without a parking program. When parking is plentiful and free, there are few incentives for employees to use alternate commute modes. When parking is limited or costly, more employees will want assistance with commute options.

RCW 43.01.240 affects agency parking programs as follows:

- ◆ Parking spaces are to be allocated with no special preference given to managers;
- ◆ Agencies off the Capitol Campus may impose parking fees as part of their CTR program;
- ◆ Agencies shall have committees to advise directors on parking fees;
- ◆ Agencies shall not enter into leases for employee parking in excess of building code requirements.

### **Parking Programs Off the Capitol Campus**

Note: The parking program for employees of agencies **on** the Capitol Campus is addressed through a campus parking committee convened by the Department of General Administration.

Agencies with more than one worksite must develop an overall parking policy that provides guidelines for parking at all of their worksites. The guidelines are to include permissibility to charge for parking, the amount to be charged, the definition of what constitutes a carpool, distribution of parking spaces, eligibility for preferential parking, and other issues as determined by the agency. Once an agency's overall parking program is developed, each worksite would have the flexibility to develop individual parking programs within the limitations or conditions of the agency's overall parking policy.

Agencies with multiple worksites (in one or more counties) are advised to set up a system with a committee responsible for developing the agency's overall parking policies, plus committees at each worksite or group of worksites.

Ideally agencies will use their CTR committee as their parking committee. If using the agency's existing CTR committee, assess the membership to ensure that all the categories of employees are represented.

### **Parking Program Elements**

#### **1. Appoint a Parking Program Coordinator**

The role of the agency parking coordinator is to ensure that there is an overall agency parking program for all of the agency's worksites. The parking and the CTR program coordinators need to ensure that the two programs support and complement each other.

#### **2. Appoint a Parking Committee**

The role of the agency's parking committee is to develop the agency's parking program, even if the agency will not be imposing parking fees. The parking program must address all the directives in the parking RCW and be compatible with the agency's commute trip reduction program. While each agency must determine the makeup of the committee, the law directs that the membership if considering parking fees include at least:

- ◆ Management
- ◆ Administrative staff
- ◆ Production workers; and
- ◆ State employee bargaining units

Ways to establish a parking committee:

- ◆ One committee doing both CTR and parking
- ◆ “Umbrella” committee with subcommittees in regions or worksites (this is recommended for agencies with multiple worksites in one or more county)
- ◆ A subcommittee of the agency’s CTR committee;
- ◆ Two separate committees. Note: establish a process for coordination.

It is important that the role and authority of the committee members be clearly defined by the agency. It must be understood that the committee could, after careful deliberation, come to a conclusion that differs from the direction given by the director or management team. Since the committee is advisory only, agencies must allow the committee to be able to make recommendations that may differ from those established by the agency.

### 3. **Survey existing parking**

Before developing a worksite specific parking program, agencies **off** the Capitol Campus must assess the parking situation at each worksite to determine if there are fewer parking spaces than employees. If it is determined that there are fewer parking spaces than employees, a parking program must be developed.

Assessing the parking situation:

#### **Employees**

- ◆ Total number of employees at the worksite.
- ◆ Number of employees who have job-related requirements using their own car and need parking.

#### **Parking spaces available**

- ◆ *Total* number of parking spaces available. (Number of spaces included in the building lease **plus** any additional spaces.).
- ◆ Number of spaces currently zoned. What is the overbooking policy for zoned parking?
- ◆ If in a co-located worksite, what is the total number of spaces allocated to your agency?

#### **Current parking allocated for:**

- ◆ ADA (includes employees and visitors).
- ◆ Agency vehicles.
- ◆ Visitors – both short and long term.
- ◆ Employees.
- ◆ Ridesharing (carpools/vanpools, bicyclists, walkers, etc.). Can be determined by the number of alternate commute mode users registered in the agency’s CTR program, including drop-offs and flextime.
- ◆ Bicycle spaces: bicycle racks (covered, uncovered) and bicycle lockers.
- ◆ Other uses.

### Existing situation for surrounding parking

- ◆ Is the worksite located in or near a neighborhood? Shopping center? Church? Park and Ride? etc.
- ◆ Are there meters for parking around the worksite?
- ◆ Are there parking restrictions imposed by the local jurisdiction? (example: 1-hr parking signs)
- ◆ Where would employees park if not in the worksite lot?
- ◆ Other worksite/neighborhood demographics.
- ◆ Are there any existing issues with the surrounding parking?

### Parking costs to agency

- ◆ If charging employees for parking: (Note: All funds collected off the Capitol Campus must be deposited into the *State Agency Parking Account*, Fund 277, to be allocated back by OFM.)
  - ◇ What is the cost to employees?
  - ◇ How much is collected monthly? Yearly?
  - ◇ What is the cost to the agency?
  - ◇ How are the funds used?
- ◆ If not charging employees for parking:
  - ◇ Current cost of parking in current building lease (if known).
  - ◇ Current cost to the agency for leasing extra spaces for employees.
  - ◇ Current cost for employee reimbursement for parking.

## 4. Parking allocations

In situations where there are fewer parking spaces than employees at a worksite, parking must be allocated equitably, with no special preference given to managers. *RCW 43.01.240 (3) Note: Applies to agencies both on and off the Capitol Campus.*

- ◆ “Allocated equitably,” means all employees who want parking have equal access to a parking space.
- ◆ To ensure equal access to parking, allocate the parking in the following priority
  - A. Visitors. *Note: When calculating, consider the following:*
    - ◇ Special needs of the worksite, i.e. services the worksite provides to the public - customer needs
    - ◇ Are visits usually short or long? (Turnover rate)
    - ◇ Service vehicles, vendors
    - ◇ Training facility?
    - ◇ Other visitor needs
  - B. ADA requirements: number of parking spaces that must be set aside and assigned to vehicles with legal disability parking permits.
  - C. Agency vehicles. *Note: Ask the following questions:*
    - ◇ How many vehicles are in the space all day?
    - ◇ Could the space be utilized during the day for other parking uses?
  - D. Registered alternate commute mode users, i.e. carpoolers, vanpoolers.
  - E. Employees who have a special need for parking. *Note: To help determine the number, ask the following:*

- ◇ Is the employee required to have a personal vehicle for work assignments? If so, what percentage of the time? How many employees?
  - ◇ Does the employee's work require them to be "in and out" for business?
  - ◇ Are there other options available? Service such as Capital Courier? Shuttle? Agency vehicle? Taxi? Teleconferencing? Phone conference? Other?
  - ◇ If there is an agency CTR program, is the employee exempt from being officially affected by the local jurisdiction?
  - ◇ Other circumstances as determined by the agency.
- F. All other employees who want parking would have equal access to the remaining parking spaces. To ensure that managers are not given special parking preference, parking allocations may be allotted on seniority – either by length of time in state service or in the agency.

If the parking allotment is not by seniority, then parking allotments must be selected randomly. Processes for random selection include:

- ◇ Percentages by managers/employees;
- ◇ Percentages by divisions;
- ◇ Percentages by beginning start times;
- ◇ All employees included;
- ◇ As decided by the agency.
- ◇ A selection cycle:
  - Not less than quarterly, nor more than yearly;
  - All employee names in category F would be eligible for each random selection.
- ◆ Establish waiting list procedures. Select a percentage of extra employee names to make up the waiting list.
- ◆ Establish an appeals process for employees.
- ◆ If parking fees are in place, establish payroll deduction for employee parking.
- ◆ Establish a system for employee parking records.

## 5. When to Permit

- a) If parking fees will be imposed.
- b) If there are fewer parking spaces than there are employees.
- c) If there will be preferential parking for alternate commute modes.

## 6. Enforcement of Parking Rules

- ◆ Enforcement is key to the success of any parking program. Enforcement protects the rights of employees who are registered, paying for parking, on a waiting list or where the parking is limited or subject to unauthorized use such as in congested areas, or when many visitors are expected, etc.
- ◆ If enforcement is determined to be necessary, there must be a credible, visible enforcement program outlining the consequences for non-compliance. Consequences may include provisions for the suspension or revocation of parking privileges up to the impoundment of vehicles. Before posting towing signs at leased facilities, permission must be obtained from the landlord and employees must be made aware

of the parking program. Note: At most worksites imposing fees for noncompliance is not a feasible option because they are difficult to collect.

- ◆ Include provisions for hearing rights by employees related to impoundment, suspension or revocation of parking privileges or to fees. The enforcement plan must include an appeals process to review the circumstances surrounding any citation. Both the parker and the enforcing authority are to be given adequate time to comment before a final determination is made.
- ◆ Parking enforcement is not to include any formal disciplinary action.

## **Zoned Parking**

Zoned parking can provide at least 25 percent more parking because there are always absent employees. Rather than an assigned space for each individual, the lot is open to all registered parkers. Zoned, shared parking is required by General Administration at all newly leased co-located sites and recommended at single agency sites.

Implementing zoned parking:

- ◆ Survey existing parking: count how many empty spaces there are over at least a three-week period. Spaces should be counted several times a week and at least twice each day. Note the total number of spaces routinely empty. Determine what percent that is of the parking area and add that number of employees to the parking pool.
- ◆ Collect testimonials from agencies where zoned parking works, such as the Capitol Campus, Department of Health, Lacey Center, Point Plaza (east and west), and Capitol Court.
- ◆ Can establish more than one zone - preferential, “in and out”, shifts, etc.
- ◆ Start with a zoned parking pilot — three to six months.
- ◆ Start slowly - start with only five percent overbooking and work up every quarter.

## **Shared Parking Programs**

At multi-agency worksites it is in the best interests of employees to “pool” the parking and have one parking program for the entire compound or area.

- ◆ Agencies housed together in a facility are encouraged to work together.
- ◆ Shared, zoned parking means more parking for everyone.
- ◆ If unable to work together, each agency must clearly mark its own parking spaces.

## **Charging for Parking**

**RCW 43.01.240 (2) states:** “An agency may, as an element of the agency’s commute trip reduction program impose parking rental fees at state-owned and leased properties. Each agency shall establish a committee to advise the agency director on parking rental fees, taking into account the market rate of comparable, privately owned rental parking in each region.” Note for leased and state-owned facilities off the Capitol campus, collective bargaining contracts restricts the parking fee rate to those established at facilities prior to June 30, 2005.

**Voluntary parking fees:** An agency is not restricted from implementing a voluntary parking fee program. An example is the Department of Ecology in Lacey that has implemented a voluntary parking fee program for employees who choose to pay to park in the covered garage close to the building. An employee can choose to not pay for parking and is provided a parking area outside

the garage. Agencies off campus may choose to implement a voluntary parking program that offers an amenity for those volunteering to pay for parking, such as being able to park closer to the building or in a covered garage.

#### Establishing Parking Fees:

- ◆ To determine how much to charge.
  - ◇ Budget approach:
    - ⌘ Determine annual budget for CTR, parking, or parking lease costs.
    - ⌘ Determine internal funds identified by the agency for CTR program.
    - ⌘ Determine if there is a deficit between the budget and available funds.
    - ⌘ Determine number of parking spaces available.
    - ⌘ Determine number of parkers who will pay fee (could be higher than the actual number of parking spaces if using zoned parking).
    - ⌘ Divide the budget amount by the number of parkers by 12 months to determine the approximate monthly parking fee needed for programs.
  - ◇ Charge must be equal or lower than privately or publicly owned parking lots that may be located nearby.
  - ◇ Other as determined by the agency.
- ◆ Agency direction given to the committee established by the director or management team. Long-term goals (for CTR and parking) should be defined.
- ◆ Management support is essential and needs to be demonstrated.
- ◆ The agency's CTR and Parking programs need to complement each other.
- ◆ When considering parking rates:
  - ◇ What are the market rates within walking distance? Within a zone? Within a certain mileage? Private and public? Leased lots?
  - ◇ What are the agency's long-term goals:
    - ⌘ Target certain worksites?
    - ⌘ Meet drive alone goals at CTR affected worksites?
    - ⌘ Raise money for subsidies or other CTR incentives?
    - ⌘ Reduce parking supply or demand?
    - ⌘ Other?
  - ◇ What is the demand for parking at the worksite?
  - ◇ What other parking is available?
  - ◇ Are there safety concerns around the worksite?
  - ◇ Are there shift workers?
  - ◇ If not voluntary, will fees be charged to all employees?
  - ◇ Will there be exemptions? If yes, what criteria will be considered?
  - ◇ Will the fee be cost-effective for the agency/worksites?
  - ◇ How will the fees be used?

- ◆ If offering reduced or free parking for alternate commute mode, agencies must:
  - ◇ Establish eligibility criteria (definitions, number of times used, etc.) for all modes (carpool, vanpool, walkers, bicycling, compressed workweek, telecommuting, and public transit).
  - ◇ Establish a registration system.
  - ◇ Establish a parking pass program and define how many times a month an alternate commute mode user may park for free in the preferential parking area.
- ◆ If it is decided that parking fees (voluntary or not) will be imposed, develop a communication plan to inform employees of the charges and how they will be used.
 

Remember:

  - ◇ Keep employees informed as to why fees are being imposed.
  - ◇ Let employees know what will be offered with the fees that are collected, including any incentives. Incentives include bus and/or vanpool subsidies, preferential parking, reduced or free parking up to a determined number of times a month, incentives for non-motorized commuters, or any other action that encourages alternate mode use.
  - ◇ Point out the positives - environmental and social benefits.
  - ◇ Provide a process to address employee concerns.
  - ◇ Inform employees of the agency's parking enforcement plan.