

Downtown Parking Lot Management Business Plan

City of Norman

Department of Public Works

Traffic Control Division

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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 in a once again 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.

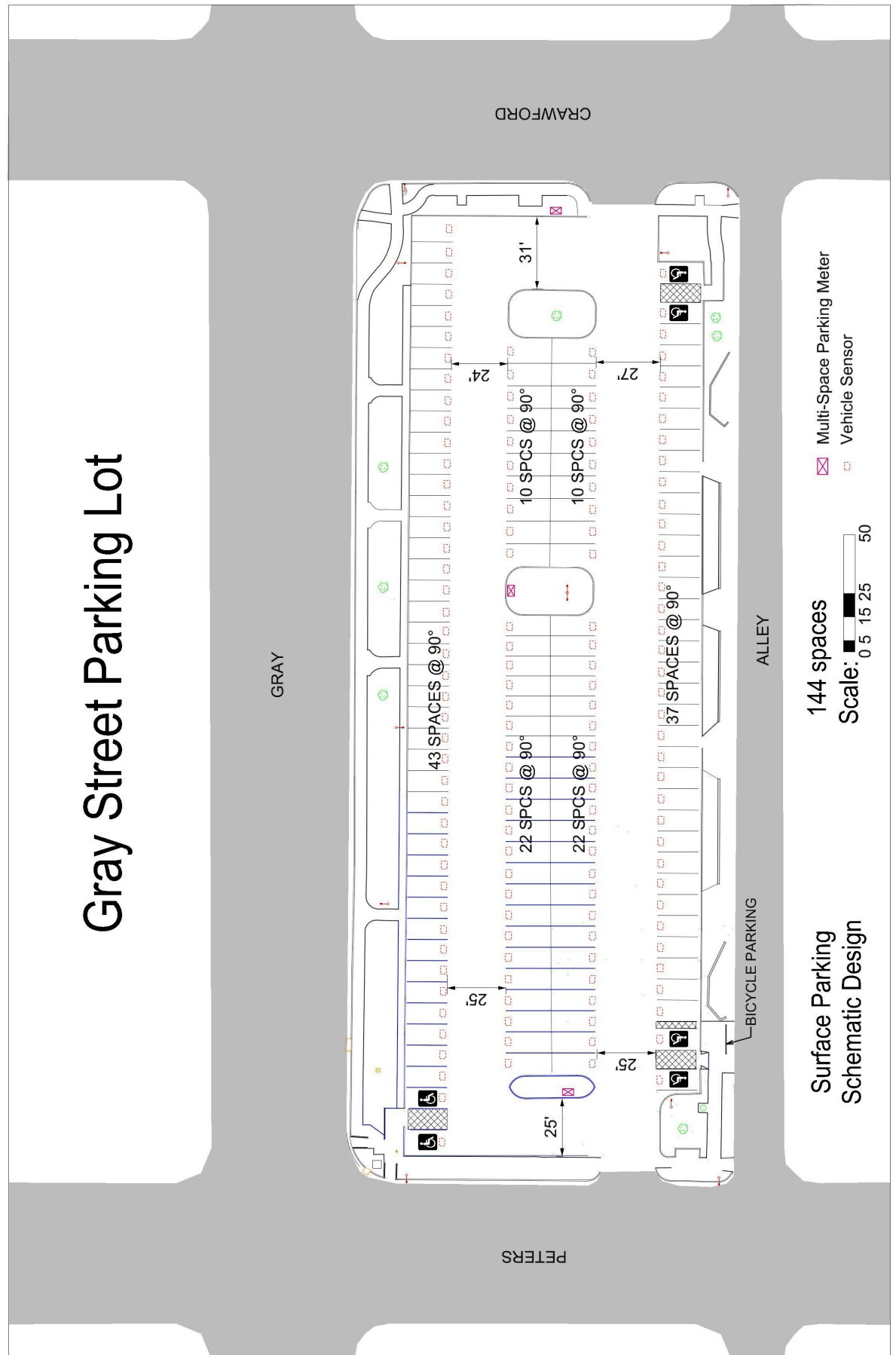
Phase 2 construction began in the summer of 2012 and was completed in November of the same year. Phase 2 added 40 more spaces and increased the total capacity of the lot to 144 spaces.

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 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 purchase. For the Downtown merchant wishing to offer customers and incentive to come back, there are tokens that could be offered to offset the cost of parking. 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 sensor-based system from Milwaukee, Wisconsin - based Duncan Technologies 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 and individual parking space sensors that can tell when spaces are vacant and also tell parking enforcement officers when cars have overstayed their paid time. The system links to a free smartphone app that both directs drivers to open spaces nearest their destinations, and alerts them when their meter time is about to expire so they can make a payment and avoid a ticket.

The meter is a state-of-the-art, digital, ticketless multi-space meter which is 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, smart card, coin and token 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, vibration and a range of climatic conditions. Twin 5mm stainless steel sliding lock bars enforce the vault lock further – even with no lock in place the vault defaults solidly to the closed position and is virtually impenetrable.

The meters are fitted with a solid-state, rugged, anti-glare touch sensitive keypad, while the meter display and keypad area are protected by an impact resistant, toughened 10mm thick polycarbonate plate for added vandal resistance. The entire screen is recessed well into the housing, sheltering it from direct blows and it is supported at the rear by a metal carrier plate.

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 system was implemented in phases with the multi-space parking meter stations becoming operational in February of 2013.

a) Signing

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

b) Operation

- Unit will operate with two 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 Cards
- Debit Cards
- Smart Cards/Tokens and the capability to accept pay-by-mobile phone payments

Coins

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



Credit 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. Each credit card transaction is assessed a 41¢ convenience fee that is paid by the City of Norman. Minimum credit card charge is 75¢ (or 3 hours).



Pay By Cell Phone

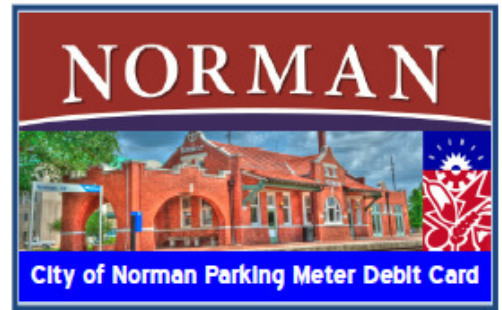
One of the more convenient features of the new system offers customers the option to pay for the use of the lot using a cell phone. To take advantage of this payment option, customers can enjoy the following payment features at phone number shown below:

- Registering for cell phone payment service is without a minimum contract period, registration charge or account maintenance fee.
- Pay by cell phone service has options for individual, family and business user accounts.
- Utilizing pay by cell phone service does not require the user to be at the meter to pay.
- Users have the option to receive payment reminders alerting them of their parking location and expiration time
- Register by calling 1-888-MPARK-GO (1-888-672-7546)



Smart / Debit Cards and Tokens

Customers can purchase Smart / Debit Cards from the City's Treasury Division located at 201 C Gray Street. The cards work like any Bank debit card and can be recharged when funds are depleted. Customers who come to the Downtown area on a regular basis may find this option to be the most convenient.



Tokens are also available for purchase from the City's Treasury Division. Each token has a value equivalent to 25¢ and are accepted at each of the meters. Merchants in particular are encouraged to consider the purchase of these tokens for refunds to customers as an incentive to return to the Downtown area for shopping, dining or entertainment.



C. Permit Parking

For Downtown employers and employees, the City also offers the option of purchasing a twelve-month permit for \$450. The permit will run from January 1st to December 31st. Customers who prefer this option will be able to park in a designated area of the lot that includes 26 spaces clearly signed for permit holders.

There are 26-spaces available for permit parking. 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. A check for the permit fee must accompany the application. Applications for spaces will be accepted until noon on December 20 of every year. If December 20th falls on a weekend day, the application will be due the Friday immediately prior to December 20th.
3. The City Clerk's Office will put all of the names into a bag and draw names one by one on the afternoon of December 20th. 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 December or the space will be considered forfeited and the City Clerk's Office will contact an applicant on the waiting list. The City Clerk's Office will return the permit fee checks to any applicants that were not selected.
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 - Sunday 365 days per year	All Day	24	25¢ per hour (1st hour free)

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 \$55,000 per year. The following assumptions are made:

a) Meter Fees

Total Number of Parking Spaces = 147

Spaces Reserved for Disabled Users = 6

Spaces Reserved for Permit Parking = 26

Spaces available for the General Public = 115

Hours of Operation = 8,760 hours per year per space (365 days per year / 7 Days per Week / 24 Hours per Day).

Occupancy = 15%

Projected revenue:

Tokens = \$5,000 per year

Smart Cards = \$5,000 per Year

Permit Parking = \$15,000 per year

Meter Transactions = \$20,000 per year

b) Meter Citations

Total Revenue from Expired Meter Citations = \$10,000.00 per year
(1,000 citations at \$10 per citation)

B. Expenses

The annual cost of operating the new Campus Corner parking meter system is \$166,401 and includes the following items:

- Auto Trax Parking Management (licensing, remote internet access, system hosting, etc..) - \$1,980 per year
- Wireless fee for Vehicle Sensors - \$8,760.00 per year
- Real Time Sensor Reporting Fee – \$5,247.00 per year
- Credit Card Transaction Fees - 8,760 per year (27 daily transactions average @ \$0.41 per transaction)
- Regular Meter / Sensor Maintenance - \$5,000 per year
- Sensor Battery Replacement – \$5,000 every five years

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 \$26,233.00.



V. AMENDMENTS

Because the needs of the surrounding Downtown businesses and their customers may change over time, the City Manager is authorized to make amendments to the Plan or to promulgate additional procedures for implementation of the Plan in furtherance of the intent of the Plan. In addition, the City Manager is authorized to execute documents in accordance with the Plan. Any amendment to the Plan will be filed with the Plan in the City Clerk's Office.