



CITY OF LONG BEACH

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

PROPERTY SERVICES BUREAU, 333 W. OCEAN BLVD., LONG BEACH, CA 90802

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MAY 20, 2010

BELMONT SHORE PARKING AND BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT AREA COMMISSION MEMBERS
City of Long Beach
California

REFERENCE: 10-031BS

RECOMMENDATION: Request that staff research pay-by-phone options and prepare a report on pay-by-phone technology, enforcement, procurement and applicability for on-street and off-street metered parking payment in Belmont Shore.

DISCUSSION

On February 26, 2010, Commissioners toured downtown parking operations to evaluate the use of multi-space meter options. Both designs were found to be usable and adequate for the Park Avenue lot. An alternate electronic pay-by-phone system was also available in the lot.

City Staff has conducted a preliminary review of the technology and found that it is widely used by both public and private parking operators in both North America and Europe. The primary suppliers are Verrus and Parkmobile, but there are also some smaller vendors in the marketplace. They offer very similar services with comparable transaction fees.

Pay-by-phone registration can be done via phone or through the vendor website. Customers may manage multiple vehicles using license plate numbers.

PAY-BY-PHONE BENEFITS

Some general benefits of parking meter pay-by-phone are:

- Low cost startup using existing meter equipment.
- Customer convenience. No pay, then display.
- Extend time from anywhere.
- Receive text notification from system that time is expiring.
- Enter time in one-minute increments up to the max.
- Receipts via email or online statement.
- Ideal for business fleet use.
- Allows payment at broken meters.
- Enforcement is supported through broadcast of paid space and license number to handsets or Parkeon multi-space meters.

The ability for the system to remind customers that purchased time is about to expire, and to accept payment from any location would make it easier for customers to extend their time and reduce their chance of getting a ticket.

PAY-BY-PHONE COSTS

Even though equipment and startup costs are minimal for adding the pay-by-phone service as a payment option, both transaction and credit card fees apply. The vendor is paid a transaction fee for processing each meter transaction. Typically, this fee has two components: convenience fee of \$0.25 and \$0.10 text notification fee. In addition, credit card processing fees must be paid on all transactions. Transaction fees are typically passed on to the customer, though some cities choose to adjust rates and absorb the fees.

The only up-front investment is meter decals and handheld wireless devices to receive meter payment information for use by enforcement staff.

If the Commission approves this item, staff will research the technology, cost models, available vendors, enforcement considerations and present a report on the steps required to select a vendor for the service.

RECOMMENDATION

Approve recommendation.

Attachment