

QUESTIONS REGARDING PARKING CONSIDERATIONS

The two offices that will be impacted the most by the parking changes are the Tax Office and the County Clerk's office, as such we have attempted to compose a list of all the concerns and questions of the two offices, not just from a logistic or operational view, but also from the employees' perspective.

PBO, FMD, the County Attorney's Office, and HRMD have heard the concerns and questions of the Tax Office and County Clerk. Your concerns are valid, and we have provided some answers below. We understand concerns generally to be the following:

- The time it takes to park and ride the shuttle to the office;
- Shuttle operational issues (breaking down, heating and AC, safety) and employee well-being when faced with adverse situations;
- Communication regarding the plan and operations as well as appropriate contact persons in case of issues;
- Ability for supervisors to allow employee flexibility in shifts and time worked to account for additional time to take shuttle;
- Changes occurring at existing lot at 5501 Airport and issues resulting from those changes;
- Customer service continuity; and
- Perception of fairness among employees in distributing parking locations.

The County has allocated \$200,000 in FY19 to provide a parking and shuttle solution for employees at North Campus. This solution includes leasing a remote parking lot and contracting with a shuttle provider that currently provides commute solutions to several Austin-area employers. Employees who drive should expect to plan for a small addition of time to their commute to account for the travel time between the remote lot and North Campus. The decision as to who will park at the remote lot is outside of PBO's purview and will be left up to department management. PBO is committed to working with the departments to help identify creative and equitable solutions, such as rotating the employees who park remotely, for example.

As a reminder, Travis County offers free transit passes on Capital Metro to all employees. In addition to this County-paid parking and shuttle solution, all employees have the ability to park at the North Lamar Transit Center at no charge and take the Route 350 bus to North Campus.

The Highland Station on the Red Line offers an additional option to employees, who can transfer to the Route 350 bus or request a drop off by the vendor shuttle.

LOGISTICS

- 1. Has anyone tested the shuttle route to determine the estimated time it will take to wait for a shuttle, load, drive, unload and repeat?**
 - The chosen shuttle provider will be required to have experience in the Austin area and test the route prior to start so that we have an estimated time that will be shared with all employees.
- 2. How many passengers will the shuttle be able to take at one time? Will there be additional shuttles operating at “peak” times so employees don’t have to wait for the shuttle to make several trips before they get on?**
 - The shuttles are expected to be 14-passenger vans. The County will work with the shuttle provider to obtain an appropriate number of shuttles running simultaneously to meet the need.
- 3. What is the maximum time an employee will be expected to wait for a shuttle?**
 - We will work with the shuttle provider to develop an estimate. This information will be shared with employees as soon as it is available.
- 4. Will there be clear signage in the onsite and offsite parking lots to designate who can park and where?**
 - FMD will determine the best way to introduce signage for wayfinding.
- 5. Will additional signage be added for guidance on how to enter and exit without the use of 53 ½ St?**
 - FMD will determine whether to add signs to the North Campus entrances.
- 6. What happens if a shuttle breaks down? How long will it take for a new shuttle to come?**
 - The shuttle provider will answer these questions as part of the contracting process. As soon as an answer is finalized, it will be shared with employees.
- 7. Has an analysis been done on the parking impact of the second construction project scheduled for the Tax Office expansion?**
 - The new tax office expansion is currently on hold while relocation options for the department are considered and evaluated.
- 8. What happens if a shuttle does not have adequate heating or air conditioning? How long will it take for the shuttle to be replaced?**
 - Adequate heating and air conditioning will be a performance metric for the shuttle provider contract.
- 9. Can county vehicles be parked offsite to provide additional spaces or do all county vehicles have to stay onsite?**

- The Parking Contract will permit county vehicles to park off-site but whether to do so will be determined by the department that owns the vehicle in conjunction with FMD Security.
- 10. Will TCSO employee vehicles currently parking at 5501 Airport Blvd. be allocated a portion of the onsite spaces or will they be parking offsite? Who determines this?**
- PBO has spoken to TCSO and anticipates TCSO participation in the offsite shuttle program.
- 11. Will TCSO county vehicles currently parking at 5501 Airport Blvd be allocated a portion of the onsite spaces or will they be parking offsite?**
- Please see answer to #9 above.
- 12. What parking options do we have for employees and retirees using the health clinic services, attending benefits meetings or attending training/new employment orientation?**
- As short-term visitors to North Campus, these employees and retirees would not participate in the off-site shuttle and would share public access parking with North Campus customers as they currently do.
- 13. Can a shuttle be added to the Highland Station to reduce the wait time for employees traveling from the North Lamar Transit Center or by rail?**
- The shuttle provider will be required to stop at Highland Station at the request of an employee.
- 14. What options are recommended for how to manage the use of Airport Blvd. as a Polling Place, both in terms of the increased traffic and the increased need for accommodations for disabled persons? If we are not able to use Airport Blvd., will PBO be willing to fund necessary leases to use facilities for polling places?**
- As discussed with County Clerk’s Office senior management, PBO is willing to discuss funding for alternatives to using 5501 Airport Blvd as a polling place, for training purposes, and for Central Receiving. PBO will work with the County Clerk’s Office to recommend a course of action for the Commissioners Court to consider.
- 15. What options are recommended for how to conduct training for election poll workers, which results in increased traffic to the facility and the increased need for accommodations for disabled persons? If we are not able to use Airport Blvd., will PBO be willing to fund necessary leases to use facilities for training?**
- Please see answer to #14 above.
- 16. What options are recommended for managing Election Night processes, which are currently handled through a “Central Receiving” model? If the recommendation is to revert to the former Receiving Substation model, will PBO be willing to fund the**

required staff, equipment, location rental (if applicable) and supplies to manage this model?

- Please see answer to #14 above.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

- 1. With the new traffic flow in the onsite parking lot, will pedestrian walkways be evaluated and reconfigured to ensure the safety of employees and customers? How soon will this be done?**
 - FMD will outline walkways for safe pedestrian crossings in the parking lot.
- 2. Is there adequate lighting in the morning and evening that covers all of the areas in which vehicles may be parked in the offsite parking lot?**
 - Yes, there is adequate lighting in the remote parking lot.
- 3. Who is responsible for security at the offsite parking lot? What times frames will security be available at the offsite parking lot?**
 - FMD will be responsible for security for the offsite parking lot.
- 4. If a vendor is responsible for security, who is responsible for monitoring the vendor? Handling employee complaints?**
 - Not applicable; please see answer to #3 above.
- 5. Our existing onsite parking is monitored by cameras (24/7), FMD security personnel and constables. In addition, employees have security available to escort them to their vehicles at any time. Will the same type of security be available for the offsite parking?**
 - No cameras will be present. Security personnel will be present during peak hours.
- 6. Will there be an emergency phone in the offsite parking lot?**
 - There are no plans to install an emergency phone in the remote parking lot; however, the County is planning to provide security services at the site during extended working hours.
- 7. If the security of the offsite parking is different, what happens if employees complain that they are being subjected to a different level of risk, whether real or perceived, based on their assigned parking?**
 - Complaints should be directed to an immediate supervisor and follow the department's usual reporting chain of command.
- 8. Where will employees report safety and security issues such as break ins, stolen vehicles, or vandalism? Is reporting and enforcement the responsibility of the department? The county? APD?**

- Employees should report safety and security issues to FMD. Break-ins and stolen vehicles must be reported directly to APD by the individual whose car is vandalized or stolen, with a copy to FMD.
- 9. Where will employees report issues related to safety in and around the shuttle?**
- As the security manager, FMD is responsible for safety and security issues.
- 10. What happens if employees are alone and uncomfortable riding the shuttle by themselves?**
- We hear your concerns about riding alone and feeling uncomfortable. The shuttle provider will be required to have a policy to assign drivers to a specific route so passengers feel a greater sense of security.
- 11. What happens if employees are injured in the offsite parking lot? Who is responsible and how is this reported?**
- Travis County is responsible, and the injury should be reported through the normal Workers' Compensation channels.
- 12. If there is an accident involving the shuttle bus does this fall under workers comp or by some other County insurance?**
- This falls under Workers' Compensation. Policies regarding workers' compensation are found in Travis County Code, Chapter 110, Subchapter E.
- 13. What happens if there is an accident when an employee is moving a vehicle from offsite to onsite parking because of a late shift? Does this fall under workers comp? Is the employee paid for the duration of time it takes to deal with the accident? Is any property damage covered by County insurance.**
- Situations like this one will be handled on a case-by-case basis. There is currently no clear policy for this type of situation.
- 14. Will the shuttle pickup area have an overhead covering to protect employees from the elements?**
- The off-site parking lot does not provide covered areas but the County will negotiate with the shuttle provider to make multiple drop-offs within the parking lot during nighttime hours and in inclement weather to shorten the distance to the employee's vehicle. A definitive answer will be forthcoming.
- 15. If employees need to access their vehicle quickly and choose to park in the neighborhood, what is our responsibility in regards to the safety of our employees and their vehicles?**
- Travis County is not responsible for employee transportation to and from the office, regardless of mode. The County Attorney's Office can answer further questions regarding liability.
- 16. What happens if a neighbor confronts or threatens an employee directly about a problem, whether real or perceived, and the employee feels unsafe?**

- Complaints about issues occurring off county property or the county lease lot should be relayed as appropriate to Austin Police Department.

PARKING ASSIGNMENTS

1. What criteria can be used to determine who parks onsite versus offsite?

- Individual departments are expected to determine which of their employees will park in the remote parking lot. PBO will work with the departments to identify creative and equitable solutions, if requested. It would also be beneficial for impacted departments to develop that policy together with the assistance as needed of FMD Parking, HRMD, and/or County Attorney.

2. Will preference be given to individuals who have a business need to come and go at the Airport Blvd. facility with frequency?

- Please see answer to #1 above.

3. Will departments in the building use the same criteria?

- Please see answer to #1 above.

4. If different criteria are used, what happens when employees complain about being treated differently from county employees in another department? Who does the employee complain to and how are the complaints resolved?

- Individual departments are encouraged to develop their parking solutions in collaboration. However, departments are headed by independently elected and appointed officials. Complaints should be directed to an immediate supervisor and follow the department's usual reporting chain of command.

5. How is compliance with parking assignments enforced?

- FMD will be enforcing parking assignments. Employees will be notified as soon as the parking policy is finalized.

ACCESSIBILITY

1. What happens when an employee who has a disabled parking plate or placard arrives to work and all of the disabled parking spaces or the close in parking spaces are full?

- Current practices involving disabled parking access and complaints regarding this issue will continue according to Travis County Code, Chapter 113. Questions about changing procedures should be directed to FMD.

2. Will additional disabled parking or other designated reserved spaces be available for these employees?

- Current practices and parking availability will continue. Complaints should be directed to the appropriate resource according to Travis County Code, Chapter 113. FMD will also monitor ADA parking spaces for proper usage. If full, FMD will find a solution on site.

- 3. Will the employee be required to visit a physician and submit an ADA accommodation for a reserved space as they have done in the past?**
 - Current practices involving disabled parking access will continue according to Travis County Code, Chapter 113.
- 4. If an ADA accommodation is submitted, how quickly can reserved parking be added? In a previous experience, we had a request submitted on 1/19/17 and the sign wasn't installed until 8/17/17. Will employees have to wait 8 months for accessible parking?**
 - Eight (8) ADA parking spaces are provided at the 5501 Airport Blvd parking lot. If additional spaces are required, FMD will provide more ADA parking spaces based on a COA code analysis.
- 5. If there is no reserved parking and employees with early morning shifts are legally parking with the appropriate plate or placard in all of the disabled parking spaces, how can we accommodate customers, including those coming to the building to apply for or renew disabled or disabled veteran license plates/placards?**
 - ADA parking spaces must be used by an ADA permit holder. FMD will monitor the ADA parking spaces. If additional spaces are required, FMD will provide more ADA parking spaces based on a COA code analysis.
- 6. Will employees who would not normally be eligible for onsite parking use accessible parking offsite or are we required to provide all accessible parking onsite?**
 - The remote parking lot will not be re-striped to provide additional accessible parking spots. Please clarify the question—we are not sure to whom “employees who would not normally be eligible for onsite parking” refers.
- 7. Will the shuttle be accessible to those who require a lift, ramp, have trouble with steps?**
 - Those who require accessible parking will be accommodated at 5501 Airport. The standard shuttle vehicle is not equipped for a lift or ramp. Vehicles that include accessibility features are higher cost and have a reduced number of seats available per vehicle.
- 8. What happens if we allow all employees with a disabled plate or placard to park onsite and other employees complain that this is unfair?**
 - Employees who believe that it is unfair for a disabled employee to park onsite may direct complaints following the department's usual reporting chain of command.
- 9. What happens if we think an employee is misusing a plate or placard in order to gain access to onsite disabled parking? As an employer, are we able to ask questions to determine if a placard is being misused?**
 - This situation should be reported to law enforcement.

10. What happens if a Tax Office employee processes an application for plate or placard for an employee and questions whether the employee is eligible? How do we handle these complaints?

- If a medical doctor has requested the plate or placard, there should be no questions.

OPERATIONS

1. How will we address the impact of offsite parking on our turnover rate, which is already high? How do we encourage employees to stay when other employers with the same pay has available parking?

- PBO is working with the tenant departments at 5501 N Airport Blvd to craft short-term and long-term solutions to the capacity issues at this site. We expect to be able to present a plan to Commissioners Court for their consideration in the coming months.

2. If our turnover rate increases, how do we make sure we have enough employees to meet customer demand for each shift?

- Turnover rates are the result of many factors (e.g., low unemployment, pay, personal reasons) and not just the availability of parking. Departments facing high turnover rates should work with HRMD to determine the causes of the turnover and ways in which to address it.

3. What do we do about the additional time it takes to travel downtown for meetings, training, employees IDs? Will there be a shuttle available to take employees downtown?

- There will be a small amount of additional time required to travel downtown if an employee is parked in the remote lot. A shuttle is not provided to travel between downtown and North Campus. It is expected that individual departments will appropriately handle employee travel time. Employees also have access to free Capital Metro transit passes that provide access between North Campus and Central Campus by using Route 7, which provides buses on average every 15 minutes.

4. How do we maintain continuity of service to customers if there is lost productive time due to parking?

- While it is anticipated that there will be an adjustment period, we expect that employees will adjust their travel times to account for the off-site parking like they adjust their travel times to account for school traffic, road construction projects, and special events requiring road closures. We encourage departments to allow for an adjustment period for their employees who are parking remotely.

5. **What is the cost of lost productive time due to parking and how does this impact department budgets?**
 - There should be no loss in productive time due to the temporary change in parking location. Employees will need to account for a small addition in travel time to work so that they arrive on time. Additionally, not all employees travel to work by car.
6. **How do we accommodate shift change requests due to the additional time it takes to park? What criteria do we use to determine who is eligible for a shift change when there are multiple requests and we are not able to honor all of them?**
 - Individual department management will handle shift change requests as governed by their internal policies and procedures so that customer service levels are adequately maintained.

COMMUNICATION

1. **When will information about the parking plan be communicated to employees and who is responsible for answering their initial questions about how this will work?**
 - Some information about the parking plan has been communicated to the members of the North Campus Security Committee via the monthly North Campus Security briefings and through the recent online survey. As soon as the County is ready to execute the parking lease and shuttle contract, the parking plan will be communicated to employees. Questions about the lease itself can be directed to FMD, while questions about the shuttle will be answered by the shuttle provider, who will provide the County with a customer representative.
2. **How will the county communicate information about parking to the departments? To the public?**
 - We propose creating an email list of all North Campus users and sending out regular email notices to all affected employees about the parking plan, including the criteria as determined by North Campus departments, the progress of the construction, and any forthcoming facility and parking changes. We also propose announcements at Commissioners Court and a notice on the County website regarding parking to notify the public. On-site signage may also be recommended.
3. **Who is responsible for ongoing communication about parking?**
 - In consultation with the County project manager and FMD, PBO will send out regular email notices to affected employees.
4. **Where do departments and employees go to find the answers to questions or report complaints?**

- If employees have questions that are not answered by the County website or email updates, they should direct them to FMD. Complaints should be submitted following the usual reporting chain of command in each department.

TIME AND ATTENDANCE

- 1. How are attendance policies enforced, especially if the shuttle times are unpredictable or if employees are having to wait for the shuttle to make multiple trips before they get on a shuttle?**
 - If shuttle times are unpredictable, the shuttle provider will be required to bring a plan to Travis County to improve its on-time performance. If employees find shuttle times unpredictable, they should contact FMD, who will manage the shuttle contract and can investigate.
- 2. When is an employee considered “at work” for the purpose of time and attendance when they are using offsite parking?**
 - Department management is responsible for the management of its employees. PBO cannot answer this question.
- 3. What if the employee has to wait a long time for a shuttle or a shuttle breaks down. Is that time compensable? Are they “on time” for work? How would this even be tracked by supervisors?**
 - Please see answers #1 and #2 above.
- 4. If employees with late shifts request time to move their car in the afternoon or evening when additional onsite parking becomes available, is the time compensable?**
 - Within reason. Compensable time is managed by each department.
- 5. If employees are asked by the county to move their car because they have not complied with their assigned parking, is the time compensable?**
 - Within reason. Compensable time is managed by each department.
- 6. What happens if employees who require accessible parking are unable to report to work on time due to lack of available parking that meets their specific needs? What are the adverse impacts and how do we maintain the perception of fairness within the team while protecting privacy?**
 - Questions about adding disabled parking spaces should be directed to FMD. Individual departments will continue to address internal questions of fairness.
- 7. What happens when employees are having to take additional leave in order to attend routine appointments? For example, a weekly physical therapy appointment that would normally take 1 hour of leave now requires 1.5 hours for those who are required to use offsite parking. How will this impact employees with workers comp injuries who are currently only allowed 2 hours for workers comp medical appointments?**

- Questions about compensation and time off should be directed to the appropriate resource, such as HRMD. Many employees currently ride the bus and rail and must allocate more time to travel than by car, so the same rules should apply.
- 8. What do we do when employees complain that the offsite parking is adversely affecting their attendance and their coworker who has onsite parking is not affected?**
 - Please see answer to #2 above.
 - 9. What do we do when employees struggle to meet performance expectations for dependability due to parking and how does this impact Performance Based Pay?**
 - Commissioners Court has not approved funding for Performance Based Pay for FY 2019. Departments will be expected to manage their employees as per their internal policies and procedures and Travis County Code, as applicable.

MORALE AND WORK-LIFE BALANCE

- 1. What can we do as an employer to address issues related to the existence of parking “have” and “have nots” that will be created once parking is assigned?**
 - As with any employee benefits, Travis County will ensure that information is shared timely, individuals are evaluated appropriately, various options related to parking area shared, and the process and criteria are clear and transparent. At this point, there have been no decisions made on allocating parking.
- 2. What happens when a long time employee who has had available parking (some for up to 15 years at the Airport location) is unable to work an 8-hour shift because the time it takes to park and ride the shuttle makes it impossible to meet their personal responsibilities such as child or elder care?**
 - As with all employees, departments should try and work with employees regarding flex scheduling to address work-life balance concerns.
- 3. How do we provide support to employees who must take on additional expenses related to extended child or elder care? We have a large number of entry-level employees and most of them can’t afford to live in Austin. Adding to their commute time may result in costly late fees from their daycare.**
 - Travis County understands that all of our employees have different work-life balance needs, and because of this, we encourage them to visit with their departments regarding how best to balance their needs versus the needs of our Travis County residents and the services our citizens expect. Travis County offers various free and subsidized transportation solutions, as well as flex scheduling options which may meet the needs of the employees while meeting the needs of Travis County.

- 4. How do we provide support to employees who are concerned about being available to their child or parent in an emergency?**
 - The shuttle provider will have an on-call feature for pick-up throughout the work day that can get an employee to their vehicle in a reasonable amount of time.
- 5. How do we address the stress level and job satisfaction of employees who rely on their lunch hour to run errands, get allergy shots, go to school to eat lunch with their child or volunteer?**
 - Department should try and work with employees regarding flex scheduling.
- 6. How do we address the stress level and job satisfaction of employees who take pride in being on time for work and are now tardy due to the limited availability of parking?**
 - Departments are expected to address stress level and job satisfaction in the manner they normally would.
- 7. How do we address the tensions that will inevitably happen between coworkers when people who use offsite parking or public transportation struggle to arrive on time and negatively impact their coworkers?**
 - Departments are expected to handle these tensions as they otherwise handle tensions between or among co-workers. EAP might also be a valuable resource.
- 8. Where will employees who bring their lunch eat? We currently have inadequate break room space. This will get worse if more people bring lunch because they don't have the time to get their car or they are afraid to lose their parking space.**
 - Unfortunately, there is no short-term solution to undersized break rooms. Since lack of space is already an issue, departments should already be working with FMD to address the issue, including having submitted a space request to FMD as part of the FY 2019 budget process. PBO is working with the departments on long-term solutions for space over the coming months.
- 9. Where will employees who don't bring their lunch eat when there are few affordable options within walking distance and their lunch time is now cut because of having to ride the shuttle to get their vehicles?**
 - Department management is encouraged to manage employee lunch hour expectations and work with employees to achieve department-wide work-life balance.
- 10. Will additional discounted transportation options or partnerships be available to employees who need to travel short distances during the workday (car2go, ride-share, the free ride etc.)?**
 - Travis County offers free transit passes on Capital Metro to all employees. No additional discounted transportation options are currently available.

2. **How will tardiness due to the shuttle system impact our lines and customer wait times?**
 - Employee tardiness, regardless of the reason, can impact customer wait times and lines. We encourage departments to adjust and enforce internal policies of on-time arrival and tardiness as they can to achieve departmental and County goals of customer service.
3. **How do we help our employees provide good service if their day starts with additional transportation frustrations caused by offsite parking?**
 - There are many circumstances that can result in an employee arriving at work in a sense of frustration. Departments are encouraged to continue to assist their employees in representing Travis County well in all their interactions with the public.
4. **What happens when customers can't find parking? Who responds to customer complaints about parking? Will the complaints be tracked?**
 - If customer complaints become numerous, they should be submitted to FMD. Departments should also encourage walk-in customers to take their business online, if possible.
5. **When a customer has a 2 – 3 hour wait in our office, and parks in an employee parking space, do we ticket the customer? Track the person down to move the vehicle? How does this impact their experience with our office?**
 - FMD will assign parking zones for employees and visitors. FMD would work with the customer and the employee in this case.
6. **How do we deal with the increased accidents and physical and verbal altercations that happen in the parking lot when customers are literally fighting over parking spaces? This currently happens now and it is directly related to how crowded the parking lot is.**
 - Current security provisions will continue to be provided by FMD and Constables.
7. **Will there be on-site in person assistance provided by County staff with managing traffic flow during times of peak congestion?**
 - No on-site in-person assistance is contemplated at this time.

NEIGHBORHOOD

1. **What do we do if a resident of the neighborhood calls or comes into the office to complain about a vehicle parked in front of their residence or blocking a driveway? Where are the complaints sent?**
 - Complaints about vehicles blocking a driveway should be directed to APD. Residents should call 311 and report the vehicle. Departments should inform employees not to block driveways. Parking on a public street is entirely legal.

PBO has met with neighborhood associations to let them know in advance that construction will be occurring on Travis County property, so neighborhoods are aware of the upcoming activity. Any other complaints neighbors have should be directed to the Austin Transportation Department or 311.

- 2. What if the neighbors have other complaints about other problems, whether real or perceived, near their homes such as speeding in the neighborhood, litter found in yards, loud car radios in the morning, babies being woken up by car doors slamming?**
 - We encourage all Travis County employees to be good neighbors and trust that departmental leadership will talk to their employees about being courteous to surrounding neighbors when parking on street. Any complaints neighbors have should be directed to the Austin Transportation Department or 311.