



Oregon

Theodore R. Kulongoski, Governor

Department of Administrative Services

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July 17, 2009

Re: Parking Rate Increase

Dear Parking Customer,

Many state employees have expressed concern over the recent rate increase. Some have asked for more information on the need to raise parking rates at this time.

First, some background. In order to build rate increases into their budgets, agencies must prepare them well in advance of the following biennium. We requested this increase in the fall of 2007, long before the beginning of the current recession and the resulting financial crisis. Our administrator met with several state stakeholders to discuss the proposed rate changes, and found unanimous agreement that the increase is appropriate and needed. The DAS executive staff, including the director, also agreed to the rate changes.

We have taken a proactive approach in notifying all commuters of these changes. On April 26 and 27, 2009, we sent out an e-mail to all commuters, including those on our wait lists, and to all agencies, describing proposed changes to the administrative rules, which included parking rate increases. In that e-mail, we invited review of all documentation pertaining to these changes, which appeared on our Web site. We also invited everyone to submit comments. We scheduled and hosted two question-and-answer sessions on May 6 and May 7, to let people ask questions and share their concerns. We also held a public hearing on May 15, 2009, to invite public comments on the proposed changes. We extended the comment period to May 28, 2009, to allow for additional comment.

The most recent increase in parking fees occurred eight years ago. Parking fees pay for everything we do, since we receive no General Fund support or federal money. The cost of providing parking services has increased significantly during the past eight years in all the following categories:

- Marion County property taxes – we pay for every parking space that we rent to state employees
- Electricity to light parking lots and structures
- Water to maintain landscaping
- Elevator maintenance and repair
- Repair of access gates; maintenance and replacement as our structures age
- Labor and materials for sweeping the lots, picking up litter and removing trash, changing burnt-out lights, maintaining the landscaping, cleaning drains, maintenance on sump pumps and exhaust fans, removing graffiti, repairing cracks, signage, striping, and painting
- Grading the Yellow Lot twice a year to keep it useable
- Installation, maintenance, repair, replacement and monthly service fees for the Park and Pay machines, including credit card transaction fees, telephone lines and program software costs to provide daily parking payments on site

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- Office space rent, computer support, database maintenance, parking staff payroll, printing costs for parking permits, parking passes, day use permits, monthly invoices, annual renewal notices and mailing costs for these items
- Motor pool vehicle rental for enforcement staff
- Paying for new parking garages and lots in new buildings, such as the North Mall Office Building and the Eugene State Office Building
- Resurfacing parking lots, such as the Executive Parking Structure and the lot at the Portland State Office Building
- Payment for contracted services for parking enforcement at the Portland State Office Building

We worked with central payroll to make pre-tax deductions of parking fees to save employees money on parking expenses. We provide carpool discounts to encourage employees to ride together. We now offer pro-rated parking rates so that telecommuters and part-time workers only pay half-time parking rates.

For more than 10 years, we provided a free bus pass to Capitol Mall area employees, until the 2009 Legislature cut the program. Rather than let us keep the money, the Legislature used it to cover other essential services that DAS provides. We provide the Smart Commuter Program incentive parking passes for employees who do not drive to work, in order to avoid building more parking lots and structures.

DAS Parking and Commuting Services' goal is to continue to improve the parking lots and structures, including the Yellow Lot. We will do this with better signage and painting. We will address safety concerns, and will convert some bike room access to keycard locks. We will provide new bicycle racks and replace the old ones with a more serviceable model.

We hope you find this information useful, and we look forward to continuing our service to you and all our customers throughout the state.

Parking and Commuting Services
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