



CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF CHICAGO

COUNCIL CHAMBER

CITY HALL—ROOM 300
121 NORTH LASALLE STREET
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60602
TELEPHONE: 312-744-6567

ALDERMAN, 32ND WARD
2657 NORTH CLYBOURN AVENUE
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60614
TELEPHONE: (773) 248-1330
FAX: (773) 248-1360

- COMMITTEES, RULES AND ETHICS
- EDUCATION AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT
- HOUSING AND REAL ESTATE
- HUMAN RELATIONS
- SPECIAL EVENTS AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Contact: Paul Sajovec, 32nd Ward, (773) 248-1330

March 5, 2014

Mayor Emanuel Announcement That Revised Parking Meter Contract Shows Better Than Expected Savings Is Flawed And Misleading

The Mayor’s press release regarding an update to a financial analysis of the revised deal, prepared by Navigant, purporting to demonstrate savings to City taxpayers paints a flawed and misleading picture of the actual implications of the changes made to the parking meter lease deal in 2013. Today’s press release further demonstrates the administration’s inability to understand the important role that street parking spaces serve in facilitating mobility and access to the City’s wealth of retail, restaurant, and entertainment offerings.

Characterizing a significant decline in meter utilization rates in areas with extended evening hours from those estimated in advance of the revised meter lease as a “savings” to taxpayers is simply misleading. This characterization belies the fact that there are real economic and social costs to extending paid parking hours later into the evening, in some cases to as late as midnight. Residents who may have otherwise parked downtown or in River North to attend a restaurant, theater show, movie, visit friends, or engage in various other activities, but who chose not to because of the extended hours, certainly incurred other costs. Such costs include taxi fares, off street parking fees, and the opportunity costs associated with opting to stay at home. Add to these costs the decline in customers for such businesses resulting from the reduction in the utilization of street parking spaces in the evening hours and the negative implications of the extended hours easily eclipses the reduced amount that people are paying into meter boxes.

At the same time the report claims that it is a good thing that fewer taxpayers are parking in the evening hours downtown and in River North, the report also claims significant benefits from free Sunday parking. The report estimates the “savings” to taxpayers from free Sunday parking at \$8.7 million based upon an amount the was previously collected on Sundays. However, the report overlooks or simply ignores that removing Sunday parking fees alters the utilization patterns of metered parking spaces in ways that make parking less convenient for residents and less beneficial for businesses. A service, such as street parking, that is provided free of charge is invariably over utilized. If this were not the case there would be no need for metered parking. Rather than allowing the meters to promote the turnover of spaces on Sundays for the benefit of nearby businesses, drivers burdened with the valid concern that they may not find another space once they abandon the one they have, are now incentivized to leave their cars in spaces on Sundays for extended periods. Further, the report notes that people who may have previously used metered parking on Saturdays appear to be shifting to Sundays, which can’t help retail stores, restaurants, and other attractions on what is typically one of the busiest, if not the top, days for sales.

This latest report update simply underscores how poorly the Administration understands and appreciates the important role that the effective management of street parking spaces plays in neighborhoods across the City.

For more information contact: Alderman Waguespack’s office at (773) 248-1330

###