



## Travis County Commissioners Court Agenda Request

**Meeting Date:** August 12, 2014

**Prepared By/Phone Number:** Mark Gilbert, Sr. Planner/854-1161

**Elected/Appointed Official/Dept. Head:** Leroy Nellis, County Executive,  
Planning and Budget/854-9066

**Commissioners Court Sponsor:** Judge Biscoe

*[Handwritten signature: Ali for Leroy Nellis]*

### AGENDA LANGUAGE:

Consider and take appropriate action on Travis County employee parking issues in the central business district:

- a. Amendments to Chapter 11 of the Travis County Code (Parking Policy).
- b. Effective date for Commute Options Benefit Program

### BACKGROUND/SUMMARY OF REQUEST AND ATTACHMENTS:

On March 18, 2014, the Commissioners Court took action on employee parking issues in the central business district. Actions included 1) approval for the expansion of zoned parking to all county-owned parking facilities in the central business district; 2) approval of a new Commute Options Benefit Program; and 3) direction to return with amendments to Chapter 11 of the Travis County Code (Parking Policy) to reflect approved changes.

The parking implementation committee has rewritten language in Chapter 11 to reflect approved changes. Representatives from county departments affected by the changes provided input to ensure proposed amendments met their business needs. The committee heard from the Sheriff's Office, Justice of the Peace 5, Office of Children's Representation, District Clerk, Adult Probation, Pretrial Services, Drug Court, Domestic Relations, Counseling and Education Services, Office of Parental Representation, the County Clerk, District Attorney, and County Attorney. The committee believes the current proposed language meets county and departmental objectives.

**AGENDA REQUEST DEADLINE:** All agenda requests and supporting materials should be submitted as a pdf to the County Judge's office, [agenda@co.travis.tx.us](mailto:agenda@co.travis.tx.us) by **Tuesdays at 5:00 p.m.** for the next week's meeting.

The Commissioners Court also approved the Commute Options Benefit Program with direction to staff to implement the program effective October 1, 2014. This program will allow county employees in the central business district to forego access to county parking for a monthly benefit of \$100 gross dollars. Theoretically, this will promote alternative transportation among county employees while allowing future excess parking capacity to be leased out. To effectively implement this program, staff recommends delaying the implementation date of October 1<sup>st</sup> until full implementation of the zoned parking expansion, which is expected to eliminate the parking waitlist and should occur sometime in Fiscal Year 2015. Staff recommends re-evaluating employee parking management options in the central business district at that time prior to implementing a Commute Options Benefit Program.

#### **STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:**

Approve amendments to Chapter 11 of the Travis County Code (Parking Policy) and delay implementation of the Commute Options Benefit Program until completion of zoned parking expansion.

**ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES:** None.

#### **FISCAL IMPACT AND SOURCE OF FUNDING:**

No fiscal impact for amendments to Chapter 11, though implementation of zoned parking as soon of possible is critical to ensuring employees whose private leases have been eliminated can be accommodated successfully.

Delaying the effective date of the Commute Options Benefit Program will result in significant financial savings, as implementation prior to zoned parking expansion would result in a large number of employees participating at a cost of \$122 per month per employee without corresponding new parking capacity.

#### **REQUIRED AUTHORIZATIONS:**

Leroy Nellis, County Executive, Planning and Budget/854-9066

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## **Zoned Parking: Frequently Asked Questions**

On March 18<sup>th</sup>, 2014, the Commissioners Court voted in favor of expanding zoned parking to all facilities in the Travis County Central Campus.

Employees who currently have assigned parking in the Central Campus will transition to zoned access within the same garage or parking lot. These employees will receive a hangtag for general zone access to their garage or lot.

Waitlisted employees will slowly be allocated where additional space is available, as close to their place of work as possible.

### **Why is parking changing?**

County parking infrastructure is underutilized. The San Antonio and Granger Parking Garages, for example, are on average 30% to 35% vacant, respectively, based on multiple months of counts throughout the day. In fact, there are on average 400 vacant spaces in the county's central business district parking garages and lots.

At the same time, there is a waitlist of county employees to receive parking. Currently, there are 320 individuals waiting for parking access. Many of these individuals are forced to spend upwards of \$150 per month to purchase parking privately. This is particularly unfortunate given that audits verify that Travis County has space to accommodate them.

### **How does zoned parking accommodate more people?**

Employees work different schedules. In addition to working different hours, they take different sick days, vacation days, work-from-home days, lunch breaks, and have different off-site meetings. Many employees do not drive every day, opting to sometimes carpool, take transit, or get dropped off. As a result, assigned parking leaves many spaces vacant. Based on both studies and experience, we are certain that 20% to 40% more individuals can be accommodated through zoned parking.

### **How will this be implemented?**

Employees will continue to park in the same garage or parking lot as they do today. The Parking Administrator will issue the employee a parking hangtag for that specific garage or lot, which the employee will display in their vehicle.

In the beginning, only a few additional employees will be allocated parking. The Parking Administrator has been benchmarking utilization rates multiple times per day for parking garages and lots and will continue to do so as additional employees are allocated parking. Any additional parking allocations will be done gradually to ensure capacity is always available so that employees are always able to find a parking space in their assigned garage or lot.

**When is this happening?**

The start date planned for October 1<sup>st</sup>. Hangtags will be issued to employees in September.

**What if I forget my new hangtag?**

If you forget your hangtag, change your vehicle, use a rental vehicle, or other issues arise, contact the Parking Administrator.

**How will compliance be ensured?**

Facilities Management will monitor lots and garages every day to ensure compliance, looking for hangtags that indicate permission to park in a specific location, and cross-referencing with license plate data in questionable cases. If a vehicle does not have a hangtag, the Parking Administrator will investigate the situation.

**Will the Granger or San Antonio Garages be getting access control gates?**

Funding is available for access improvements, but these will not be added for initial implementation.

**I feel like I will waste a lot of time searching for parking.**

County experience with zoned parking in 700 Lavaca has proven that most employees park in the same space or adjacent spaces every day that they drive, regardless of arrival time. Satisfaction with the 700 Lavaca Garage has been universally positive.

**Will anybody still have an assigned space?**

No. All parking will be reorganized into three zones: an elected official zone, a business zone, and an employee zone.

**I still have other questions. Who do I contact?**

Please send your questions to [parking@co.travis.tx.us](mailto:parking@co.travis.tx.us) and staff will respond promptly.

# Chapter 11. Parking<sup>1</sup>

## Contents

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### **11.001 Purpose**

- (a) The purpose of this Chapter 11 is to:
- (1) codify the policy and associated procedures that Travis County uses to allocate limited parking resources;
  - (2) implement and enforce such policy and procedures in an efficient, transparent and effective manner; and
  - (3) provide parking facilities or arrangements for Travis County employees in a consistent, rational and equitable manner.
- (b) The scope of this policy is limited to County Parking Facilities located in the CBD.
- (c) This Chapter 11 will also be known as the “Parking Policy.”

### **11.002 Definitions**

In this chapter:

- (1) “Business Zone” means an area in a County Parking Facility set aside for the following users, subject to the Parking Administrator’s instructions and approval:
  - (A) Contractors: Individuals under contract with the County.
  - (B) Non-CBD County Employees: County employees whose primary place of work is outside of the CBD and who are on official business.
  - (C) County-Owned Vehicles.
  - (D) Others, including members of the Public.
- (2) “Carpool” means a group of two or more County employees riding in the same vehicle to their workplace at least three out of five County work days a week.

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<sup>1</sup> Chapter 11 was replaced by Travis County Commissioners Court on August #, 2014, Item ###.

- (3) “Central Business District” (“CBD”) means the downtown section of the City of Austin with boundaries of 3<sup>rd</sup> Street to the South, Martin Luther King Blvd. to the North, Congress Avenue to the East, Lamar Blvd to the West (including adjoining County owned tracts).
- (4) “Commissioners Court” means the Travis County Commissioners Court.
- (5) “County” means Travis County.
- (6) “County Executive” means the director, or equivalent, of the following County departments or offices whose primary location, on the date of adoption of this policy, is within the downtown central campus: Planning and Budget, Transportation and Natural Resources, Justice and Public Safety. This term will be extended to include any County Executive whose department or office relocates to the downtown central campus from another location in the County.
- (7) “County-Owned Vehicles” means those vehicles owned by the County or privately-owned vehicles covered by the County’s risk pool.
- (8) “County Parking Facilities” means the complete inventory of parking facilities located in the CBD.
- (9) “Elected and Appointed Officials” means County Executives and the individuals holding the following offices so long as the primary location of the office is within the downtown central campus: Auditor, Commissioner, Constable, County Attorney, County Judge, District Attorney, District Clerk, Judge (elected, associate, visiting), Justice of the Peace, Purchasing Agent, Treasurer, Director of Community Supervision and Corrections Division.
- (10) “Elected and Appointed Officials Zone” means a zone in a County Parking Facility set aside for Elected and Appointed Officials. The Elected and Appointed Officials Zone may be expanded or contracted, at the discretion of the Parking Administrator, to accommodate changes in usage of County Parking Facilities by Elected and Appointed Officials.
- (11) “General Zone” means an area set aside in a County Parking Facility for County employees other than Elected and Appointed Officials or Business Zone users.
- (12) “Parking Administrator” means the individual having the responsibilities described in 11.003(b).
- (13) “Specified Position” means:
  - (A) the position held by the highest-ranked assistant to each Elected and Appointed Official;
  - (B) the directors of the Domestic Relations and Intergovernmental Relations departments;

- (C) either a Judge's Court Reporter or a Judge's Bailiff/Court Operations Officer (but not both); and
- (D) ad litem positions.
- (14) "Transfer Request List" means the list of County employees who have requested a transfer from one County Parking Facility to another.
- (15) "Waitlist" means the list of County employees who do not yet have access to a County Parking Facility.
- (16) "Waitlist Number" means the serial number assigned to a County employee on the Waitlist.

**11.003 Administration of this Policy**

- (a) The County Executive responsible for County Parking Facilities is authorized to delegate the responsibilities and duties assigned to him or her in this Parking Policy to the Parking Administrator, including designees in his or her absence.
- (b) The Parking Administrator will manage the allocation of parking in County Parking Facilities according to this Parking Policy and perform the other duties assigned to him or her in this Parking Policy, including:
  - (1) maximizing use of zones;
  - (2) maintaining the Waitlist;
  - (3) maintaining the Transfer Request List;
  - (4) monitoring and enforcing allocation of parking; and
  - (5) providing process transparency by making this Parking Policy, the Parking Facility Inventory, and the Waitlist available on the County Intranet.
- (c) It will be the responsibility of the Human Resources Management Department to:
  - (1) inform new County employees of this Parking Policy; and
  - (2) advise the Parking Administrator of when a County employee terminates employment with the County or transfers to another department or office, within 30 days of termination or transfer.
- (d) It will be the responsibility of all County departments to provide to the Auditor's Office a report of the department's employee transfers, new hires, and terminations.
- (e) The Auditor's Office will provide to the Parking Administrator, on request, all departmental reports of employee transfers, new hires, and terminations so that the Waitlist may be updated.

**11.004 Control of County Parking Facilities**

- (a) Inventory. The Parking Administrator will update the County Parking Facilities on a regular basis.
- (b) Striping and Signage. The Parking Administrator will coordinate striping and signage of County Parking Facilities with the Director of Facilities Management. This responsibility will include painting and/or installation of appropriate signage on all spaces located within the County Parking Facilities. The Parking Administrator will arrange for signage that meets Texas statutory requirements that will allow for enforcement.
- (c) ADA Parking. The Parking Administrator will provide ADA-accessible parking spaces, in number and standards, that meet or exceed federal, state, and local legal requirements.
- (d) Enforcement. The Parking Administrator will enforce this Parking Policy based on regular monitoring of County Parking Facilities. If an employee finds an unauthorized parked vehicle, the employee may contact the Parking Administrator, who will take appropriate action to resolve the situation, including, contacting employees parking in incorrect zones, by placing warning tickets on vehicles that are parked in a County Parking Facility without proper authorization, towing and impoundment at the vehicle owner's expense.
- (e) Penalties. Misrepresentation by a County employee regarding the employee's eligibility to receive parking access out of Waitlist serial order as provided in 11.007(c), or failure to inform the Parking Administrator immediately upon expiration of the circumstances forming the basis for the exception, will result in the following penalties:
  - (1) For the first infraction, the employee will be reported, in writing, to his or her immediate supervisor, with a copy delivered to the employee's Elected or Appointed Official (or equivalent).
  - (2) For the second infraction, the employee will be reported in the manner described in 11.004(e)(1), and banned from parking in a County Parking Facility for one year.
  - (3) For the third infraction, the employee will be reported in the manner described in 11.004(e)(1) and banned from parking in a County Parking Facility indefinitely.
  - (4) Cumulative Remedies. Actions available in response to violations of this Parking Policy as described in this section are cumulative.

**11.005 Additional Parking Facilities**

- (a) Acquisition of Additional Properties. Within ten (10) business days of the closing of a real estate transaction in which the County acquires title to real



property in the CBD that includes an additional parking facility, the additional facility will be added to the inventory of County Parking Facilities.

(b) **Leased Parking Facilities**

- (1) Within ten (10) business days of the conclusion of a lease or license transaction in which the County acquires the right to use additional parking spaces in facilities owned by third parties, the additional facility will be added to the inventory of County Parking Facilities.
- (2) In the event a lease or license to use parking spaces in a third-party facility is terminated, the Parking Administrator will notify all employees who use that facility. Reallocation of parking spaces for affected employees will proceed in accordance with 11.007.

**11.006 Parking Access Restrictions**

- (a) **Contracts.** Parking access may not be allocated to vendors by contract unless this Parking Policy is amended. Vendors will be provided access to parking in the Business Zone, if available, on a first-come, first-served basis.
- (b) **Transfers.** Parking allocated to a County employee is for the sole use of the employee and may not be transferred.

**11.007 Allocation of Parking**

- (a) **Parking Database.** The parking database will include information necessary for the Parking Administrator to effectively manage the parking allocation system, including the Waitlist, if any.
- (b) **Allocation Procedures.** The Parking Administrator will assign employees allocated parking on the date of this Policy's adoption to the appropriate zone and inform the employee of the assignment. Parking access will be allocated to County employees in Waitlist Number order based on hire date, except as provided in 11.007(c). The Parking Administrator may allocate after-hour parking access to accommodate County employees who work during non-business hours (6 pm – 7 am).
  - (1) **Waitlist Number.** Each employee on the Waitlist will be given a Waitlist Number.
  - (2) The date of hire of the employee will serve as the effective date of that employee's entry onto the Waitlist.
  - (3) In the event multiple employees are hired on a given date, the names of the employees will be entered on the Waitlist in order of employee number (from lowest to highest), as designated by the Travis County Auditor's Office.
  - (4) When an employee is allocated parking, that employee's name will be removed from the Waitlist and the next employee on the Waitlist will move up.

- (5) Upon termination/expiration of a parking lease or license in third-party facilities in which an employee has been allocated parking, the Parking Administrator will place the names of affected employees back on the Waitlist, in the order described above (hire date, then employee number).
- (c) Exceptions to Allocation Procedures. The Parking Administrator will allocate parking in order as listed on the Waitlist, with only the following exceptions, in order of priority:
  - (1) Carpool. An allocation may be made out of Waitlist serial order to accommodate a Carpool.
    - (A) Documentation of members of the Carpool must be presented to the Parking Administrator as a precondition to receiving a Carpool allocation.
    - (B) The Parking Administrator will, from time to time, verify that each Carpool allocation is still being used by a Carpool of two (2) or more County employees. The Carpool allocation will be revoked if the Carpool ceases to exist and access will be reallocated to the employee listed next in order on the Waitlist.
    - (C) When one member of a 2-person Carpool receives parking access under 11.007(b), the remaining member of the Carpool will have ten (10) days to replace that member with another County employee; if no replacement is found within the time required, the Carpool access will be reallocated.
  - (2) Move to or from Specified Position. An allocation may be made out of Waitlist serial order to accommodate an employee who moves into a Specified Position. Allocation of access for Specified Positions will supersede the Waitlist and Transfer List. An employee who moves from a Specified Position will be placed on the Waitlist in the order specified in 11.007(b).

**11.008 Transfers between County Parking Facilities**

- (a) Transfer Requests. The Parking Administrator will default an employee's County Parking Facility preference or transfer request to the County Parking Facility that is located closest to the employee's workplace and has available parking access.
- (b) An employee may change his/her location preference by submitting a written request to the Parking Administrator.
- (c) The transfer list for each County Parking Facility will be sorted in the same order described in 11.007(b). Waiting times for County Parking Facilities will vary, depending on the total number of parking spaces in the facility and the facility's utilization rate.

- (d) When an employee accepts a transfer and receives a new parking permit, the employee must return the previously-issued permit within ten (10) business days or pay a permit replacement fee.

**11.009 Complaints; Access Issues**

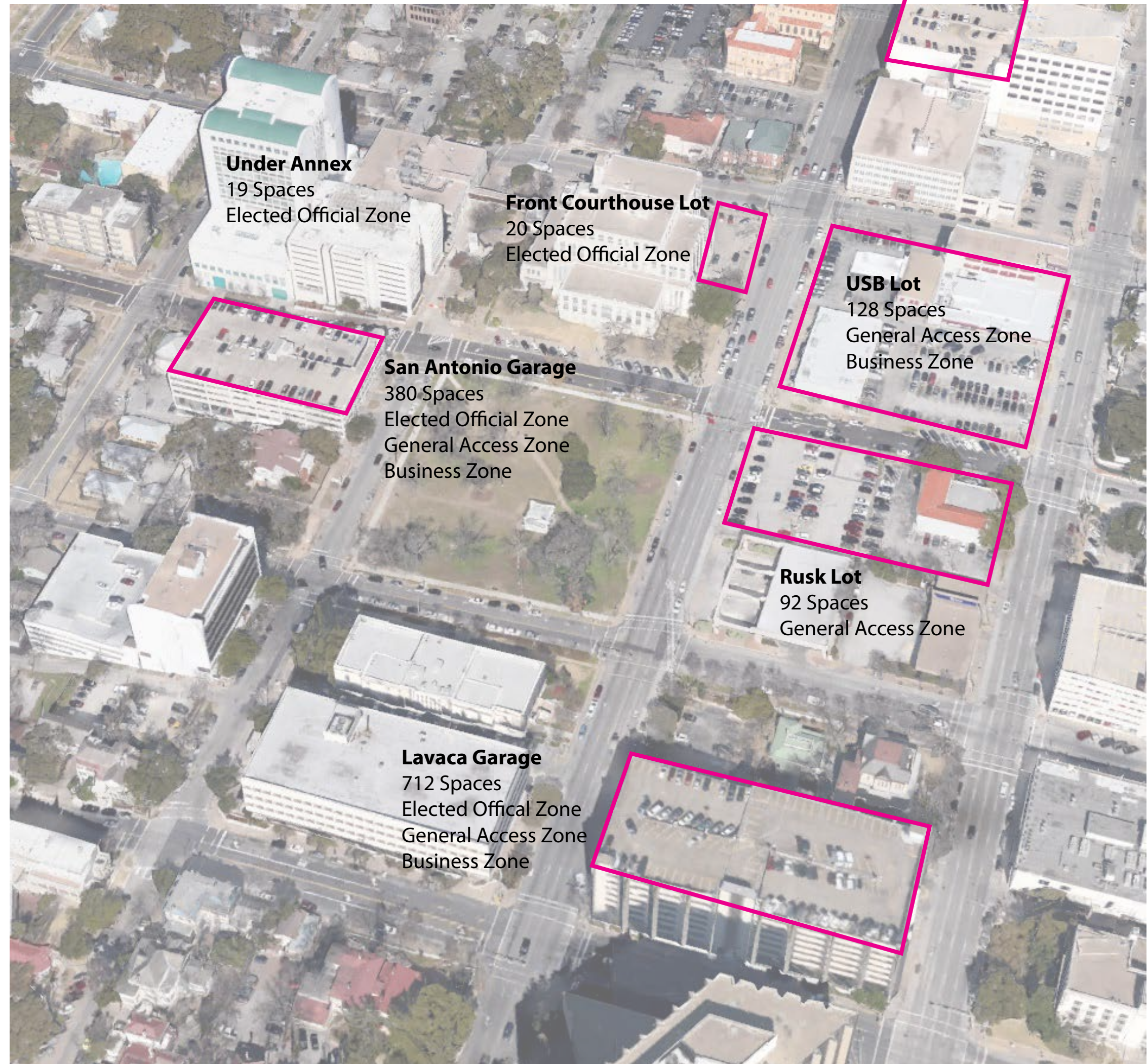
- (a) **Written Complaint.** When an employee believes that the Parking Administrator has erred in the allocation of parking access according to this Parking Policy, or has otherwise failed to manage the County Parking Facilities and/or to enforce this Parking Policy in a prompt, fair and conclusive manner, the employee may present the complaint in writing to the County Executive responsible for County Parking Facilities. The County Executive may affirm or modify the Parking Administrator's action, or refer the matter to the Commissioners Court.
- (b) **Access Issues.** If an employee is unable to find an available space in the County Parking Facility in which the employee has been allocated access, the employee will report the access issue to the Parking Administrator. The Parking Administrator will document the incident and provide to the employee an Affidavit containing the facts reported, which the employee must sign and return to the Parking Administrator promptly. If the employee is required to pay for parking as a result of the access issue, and requests a refund, the employee must submit the receipt showing the amount paid to the Parking Administrator, who will forward the Affidavit and receipt to the County Auditor for payment.

# Travis County Central Campus Parking Map

**EOB Garage**  
121 Spaces  
Elected Official Zone  
General Access Zone  
Business Zone



**Granger Garage**  
390 Spaces  
Elected Official Zone  
General Access Zone  
Business Zone



**Under Annex**  
19 Spaces  
Elected Official Zone

**Front Courthouse Lot**  
20 Spaces  
Elected Official Zone

**USB Lot**  
128 Spaces  
General Access Zone  
Business Zone

**San Antonio Garage**  
380 Spaces  
Elected Official Zone  
General Access Zone  
Business Zone

**Rusk Lot**  
92 Spaces  
General Access Zone

**Lavaca Garage**  
712 Spaces  
Elected Official Zone  
General Access Zone  
Business Zone

**Elected Official Zone:**  
Zone for Elected and Appointed Officials

**General Access Zone:**  
Zone for County Employees

**Business Zone:**  
Zone for Fleet Vehicles, Contractors, and Approved Individuals Conducting Official Business with Travis County



**PLANNING AND BUDGET OFFICE**  
TRAVIS COUNTY, TEXAS

700 Lavaca Street, Suite 1580  
P.O. Box 1748  
Austin, Texas 78767

**MEMORANDUM**

**August 5, 2014**

**SUBJECT: Projected fiscal impact for FY15 Commute Options Benefit Program**

Based on the January 2014 Transportation Survey which received over 1,500 employee responses (approximately 38% response rate), and data from the Transit Pass Program, we estimate 14% of downtown employees would likely participate in the Commute Options Benefit Program, which will provide cash in-lieu of parking access. According to survey results, roughly 9% of downtown employees ride transit 3 or more days per week to work. An additional 4% are dropped off, vanpool, bike, or walk at least 3 days per week. It thus makes sense that about 14% responded that they would be interested in the Commute Options Benefit Program, as they already commute to work more than half the time by means other than driving alone to work.

An additional 14% of respondents indicated that they would be interested in the Commute Options Benefit Program if they could pay to park on days they needed to drive. While this question did not address price elasticity of willingness to pay on certain days, we can assume that only a small portion of these respondents would be interested in participating if no changes are made to current day parking rates or the city's parking meter policy. There is no current proposal to change day parking rates in the 700 Lavaca Garage and there is no current proposal to permit daily parking in other downtown county-owned lots and garages. It is therefore unlikely that many of these respondents will in fact participate without policy changes.

For the reasons mentioned above, we expect between **13%** and **18%** participation from Travis County employees working in the downtown area. There are approximately **2,100** Travis County employees in the Central Campus, including Palm Square and the Medical Examiner's Office. The range of participation is thus expected to be between **273** and **378** employees.

Research performed by the County Auditor and Planning and Budget Office indicate a financial impact to the County of \$121.52 per participant (based on average salary) based on the Fiscal Year 2014 Budget Rules:

FICA OASDI	\$0.06	\$100.00	\$6.20
FICA Medicare	\$0.01	\$100.00	\$1.45
Retirement	\$0.14	\$100.00	\$13.67
Worker's Comp (clerical)	\$0.00	\$100.00	\$0.20
Supplement			\$100.00
			<b>\$121.52</b>

Planning and Budget would need to budget \$122 per month per participant, or \$1,464 per participant annually.

We project the fiscal impact of this program to be between **\$33,000** and **\$46,000 per month** until there is a surplus of parking spaces that can be allocated for private lease at market rates to recover program costs.