

June 15, 2009

Mayor Chestnut
Commissioner Amyx
Commissioner Cromwell
Commissioner Dever
Commissioner Johnson

Dear Sirs,

We understand that the City Staff has forwarded some recommendations for changes to the fees, fines and hours of operation of the Public Parking System. As you may know, the City Manager requested input from the Downtown Lawrence, Inc. Board of Directors and our members. The recommendations you received were developed with that input. We want to officially go on record in support of the suggested changes. In addition, we would like to take this opportunity to provide some additional context for DLI's involvement in this process.

As an Enterprise Fund, we understand that the Public Parking Fund is structured to provide a revenue source that will finance the operation of all parking facilities owned by the City. We also understand that this fund provides the funding for staff including 3 police officers (foot patrol for downtown), parking control officers, a parking control technician, a maintenance worker, court clerks and part-time seasonal employees (for landscaping and beautification). It is also our understanding that the fund pays for office supplies, meters and parts, fuels, and trees, seeds and plants.

Some of our reasons for getting involved in crafting recommendations and promoting those recommendations to our members are: 1) to ensure the maximum availability of foot patrols for downtown; 2) enhance the beautification efforts, in particular, increased attention to litter control, specifically, cigarette waste; and, 3) clarify and improve parking signage to better assist visitors and residents in finding the appropriate place to park. The most common complaints we hear from visitors and from Lawrence residents revolve around the perception of safety issues, the cleanliness of Downtown and the difficulty finding parking. We believe that these are areas that must be addressed and could be addressed in part with some of the new revenue within the Public Parking System that will be generated through increased fees, fines and expanded hours.

For the record, DLI's objectives and recommendations are outlined in the attached document. While staff is not passing on all of our recommendations, we believe they have done a great assessment of the cost/benefit of the recommendations and have passed on the options that best address those objectives.

We thank you all for your willingness to serve on the City Commission and look forward to continuing to work together to make Downtown Lawrence the best it can possibly be. Please let Jane Pennington know if you have any questions. She can be reached at 842-3883 or director@downtownlawrence.com

Sincerely,

Dan Hughes, President, Downtown Lawrence, Inc. Board of Directors
Judy Billings
Chris Burger
Mary Cox
David Johanning
Peter Zacharias