



Joint Labor-Management Committee Commute Options & Parking **COMMITTEE REPORT 23-10**

Date: November 16, 2023
To: JLMC-COP
From: Staff
Subject: Projects and Activities Report

JLMC-COP Members	
Employee Organization Primary Members	
Charles Leone, SEIU, Chair	
Leticia Gonzalez, AFSCME, Second Prov. Chair	
Billy Brockway, LAPCOA	
Esteban Lizardo, LIUNA	
Management	
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Patricia Huber, CAO, First Prov. Chair	
Paula Dayes, Personnel	
Emily Mayeda, GSD	
Employee Organization Secondary Members	
Charley M. Mims, LAPMA	

DISCUSSION:

Following are COMMUTEwell Program project and activity updates from April to September 2023.

A. Operational Updates

Human Resources and Payroll (HRP) Project Update

The City is continuing its work with the new service provider, Workday, to implement a new payroll system and replace the City's current system, PaySR. The human resources (HR) component of the system is already live and the payroll component (which includes the benefits functionality) was scheduled to go live at the end of the year, but has been delayed for an additional six months until June 2024.

The HR component of the project had a moderate impact on the Employee Benefits Division, however, the upcoming payroll component will have a significant impact on the Division's programs, especially the COMMUTEwell Program. COMMUTEwell staff are deeply involved in the configuration, testing, and implementation of the new system to ensure it meets the needs of the program. The City decided to delay implementation citing the need to continue testing the system and to better prepare employees. This decision seems prudent given the experience COMMUTEwell staff had testing program-related payroll components. The major components of the program's payroll needs have been accounted for, but there would be a significant benefit to additional time for testing and improving the administrative processes performed by staff and employees. Staff will continue to provide updates to the JLMC-COP.

End of Temporary Parking and Introduction of Provisional Parking at Figueroa Plaza

As the City returns to normal operations, the Department of General Services (GSD) has begun phasing out free parking availability. On October 6th, 2023, GSD emailed a City-wide memorandum announcing the end of free parking at Figueroa Plaza effective November 1, 2023. This change followed similar actions at the City Hall East and Piper Technical Center parking garages. In a similar fashion, the free parking program was replaced by the provisional parking permit program administered by the COMMUTEwell office. Provisional permits allow the City to issue parking permits above the capacity of a given parking location due to the wide use of hybrid scheduling, and those permits can be rescinded if employees return en-masse to offices creating a deficiency in garage capacity. COMMUTEwell staff work closely with GSD to determine a relatively conservative number of provisional permits that can be offered at each location. Provisional permits are administered consistent with the Special MOU and are issued akin to seniority permits. To that end, staff has cleared the waitlist for all other permit types at Figueroa Plaza: upper management, carpools, and electric vehicles. Since the start of the provisional permit program in March 2023, COMMUTEwell staff have issued 1,978 parking permits with 347 of them being provisional. These numbers are expected to increase further after the completion of provisional permit offers at Figueroa Plaza.

Parkable Pilot Program

On December 6, 2021, the JLMC-COP approved the proposed draft engagement/promotion campaign elements as provided by the program's consultant, Steer, which includes the Carpool Pilot program. The Carpool Pilot program is focused on the utilization of a software-based system called Parkable for reserving and managing carpool parking spaces at the Personnel Department's Medical Services Division (MSD) parking garage, a relatively smaller and easier-to-manage parking location. The Parkable app allows drivers to have real-time visibility of parking spaces and reserve a parking stall at 520 E. Temple St. on the day they plan to travel to the office.

An email invitation to participate in the Carpool Pilot program was distributed to Personnel employees on August 22, 2022. The office received a total of 6 interested employees who did not have an eligible carpool that would meet the requirements of the permit. After launching the system and seeing low engagement, the pilot program was expanded to solo commuters on September 26, 2022. A live webinar was held by Parkable to demonstrate how to use the app. A recorded webinar was also provided to those who were not able to attend.

The Parkable app's registration rate was 81%, as out of 21 invited members, 17 employees created an account in Parkable. The overall program duration average occupancy was 18% and in March and April 2023, maximum stall occupancy was 60%. The month of March had an average of 2 sessions per day between Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday. There have been a total of 5 (35%) active members who are repeat parkers. During the pilot program, there have been a total of 109 sessions. The Carpool Pilot Program concluded on April 21, 2023.

Several challenges occurred during the course of the Carpool Pilot program. Low employee engagement resulted from employees still working from home and the inability to find eligible carpool members. The most common reason employees backed out of the program was the MSD permit's Special Parking MOU bi-weekly parking fee of \$25.30. Since many Personnel employees work a hybrid schedule, they have found that other parking options, such as a metered stall and a nearby parking lot, are more cost-effective at a maximum of \$6 per day. Additionally, there was little incentive for Parkable participants to use the app or the designated stalls when they could easily find a vacant spot that is more accessible within the parking lot.

The current Special Parking MOU needs more flexibility in order to conduct another pilot program for it to be successful. If the successor Special Parking MOU described in JLMC-COP Report 23-07 is adopted, Article 12 will allow for the administration of limited parking/transit trial initiatives. For better engagement and sampling, it is necessary to consider daily parking rates, expand the eligibility requirements, and offer a wide population of employees the opportunity to participate.

Tax-Advantaged Spending Accounts

The Employee Benefits Division (EBD) currently offers benefits-eligible employees four distinct tax-advantaged spending accounts. Tax-advantaged spending accounts allow employees to contribute pre-tax dollars from their paychecks to an account established for particular types of expenses. The four spending accounts currently offered are as follows:

- a healthcare flexible spending account (HCFSA) for eligible health-related expenses for employees and their dependents;
- a dependent care reimbursement account (DCRA) for daycare expenses for eligible dependents;
- a transit spending account (TSA) for public transportation expenses;
- and a parking spending account (PSA) for parking expenses incurred at non-employee lots.

The EBD currently contracts with HealthEquity (formerly WageWorks) to administer these accounts, however, the agreement with HealthEquity will expire at the end of 2024. The EBD is preparing requests for proposals (RFP) for these services, to be implemented for 2025. The last procurement process commenced in 2018 and solicited proposals that encompassed all four spending account types. For the upcoming procurement process, the EBD will allow proposers to bid for only the HCFSA and DCRA, only the TSA and PSA, or all account types. This may be beneficial for the City's transit programs because there are firms that specialize in TSA and PSA functionality that don't support HCFSA and DCRA programs. The TSA/PSA component of the RFP will seek to improve the following:

- Parking permit management - A system to replace the existing legacy MyParc program, which no longer functions reliably or efficiently.

- One-stop enrollment/reimbursement - A single system that will allow employees to enroll in the TSA/PSA programs, change their deductions, and request transit reimbursements without needing to go through the EBD’s third-party administrator as an intermediary, which is the current practice.
- Improve compliance and rules management - Proactive enforcement of program contribution and balance limits.
- Overall enhanced customer service - Ability to consolidate all commuter benefits into a single portal or online hub to reduce barriers to benefit adoption.

The scope of this RFP will be broader than what the City has solicited in the past with the hopes of meaningfully enhancing services. Depending on the proposals received, there may be components of the scope of work that will be subject to JLMC-COP approval, particularly if there are costs to be borne by the Ridesharing Trust Fund. Staff aims to release the RFP in January 2024 with one or more proposals selected in the Spring. Staff will provide ongoing updates to the Committee.

COMMUTEwell Incentive Utilization

The table below provides an overview of quarterly COMMUTEwell incentive utilization by quarter from the last quarter of 2022 through the third quarter of 2023. The Bike/Walk Program had a growth of Q2 participants after the increase in transit incentive and possibly due to the common increase in summer gas/commute prices. Employees are not able to participate in transit programs if they have permitted parking and for this reason, the incentive program is currently experiencing a decrease in participation in transit programs due to the increase in permit issuance. From the first to second quarters of 2023, transit utilization has decreased 80% but permit issuance increased by 62.6%. Less can be said about the most recent quarter where participation remained about the same, with a decrease in only 10 participants and \$11,250 less in expenditures. The first quarter of 2020 had almost triple the expenditures and quadrupled the participation in the third quarter of 2023 reporting. Staff will continue to provide this and other data to the JLMC-COP at its regular meetings.

Quarter	Bike/Walk Participants	Bike/Walk Cost	Transit Participants	Transit Cost	Total Participants	Total Cost	Average Cost Per EE
2023-Q3	78	\$23,100	1,139	\$200,107	1,216	\$223,207	\$184
2023-Q2	62	\$17,200	1,101	\$189,084	1,163	\$206,284	\$177
2023-Q1	54	\$16,700	992	\$172,405	1,045	\$189,105	\$181
2022-Q4	67	\$19,650	939	\$159,375	1,006	\$179,025	\$178
2022-Q3	57	\$7,750	791	\$90,006	848	\$97,756	\$115
2022-Q2	35	\$5,100	616	\$68,191	651	\$73,291	\$113
2022-Q1	33	\$5,300	587	\$66,876	620	\$72,176	\$116

B. Communications and Customer Service

City Hall Office

The Employee Benefits Division office has now opened its doors to walk-ins following the 2023 Open Enrollment season. Employees are still encouraged to make appointments using the online system to help manage workload and allow staff to prepare for employees ahead of their appointments, maintaining an efficient and positive customer experience. With the surge of permit issuance at the City Hall and Piper Tech locations, the Division saw a significant increase in appointments scheduled in the second quarter; with Q1 coming in at 424 appointments and Q2 seeing 783 appointments (almost double). With the surge of permit issuance at locations where appointments are not needed (such as Figueroa Plaza and Police Headquarters Facility), the office has seen fewer employees, with Q3 coming in at 396 scheduled appointments. Although these were the scheduled appointments, the office regularly sees walk-ins at approximately the same rate as the scheduled appointments. While in-person appointments are just one avenue for employee support, they are a helpful barometer for identifying trends in customer service activity. To manage the increased program activity, the EBD management cross-trained staff in other sections to assist the COMMUTEwell Program on an interim basis.

COMMUTEwell Program Website - Following is the website activity for www.LACOMMUTEwell.com for the third quarter of 2023:

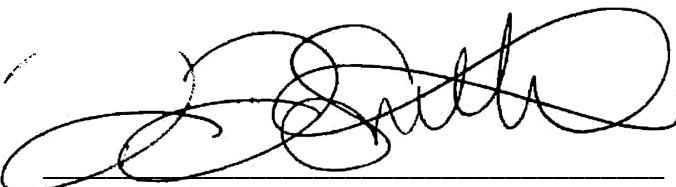
Website Traffic	
Unique Visitors	7,044 (+16% year-over-year)
Page Views	21,921 (+3% year-over-year)
Direct Source Visits	65.5%
Top Five Pages Accessed	Views
A. Home	4,459
B. Seniority Waitlists	3,559
C. Parking	2,175
D. Request Seniority Parking	1,290
E. Ridesharing	1,267


C. Staffing

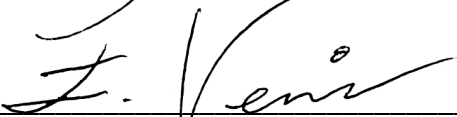
Targeted Local Hire (TLH) - On August 16, 2023, Martina Serrato was hired to fill the TLH Office Trainee position. Ms. Serrato is currently working with the vanpool program and processing

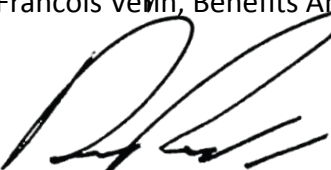
parking permits, transit reimbursements, and other administrative duties. The following table is a summary of staff positions supporting the COMMUTEwell Program:

Position Authority	Incumbent Class	Function	Staff Member
Personnel Department - Management Staff			
Chief Personnel Analyst	Chief Benefits Analyst	Division Chief	Paul Makowski
Senior Benefits Analyst II	Senior Personnel Analyst II	Program Manager	Daniel Powell
Personnel Department - Full-Time COMMUTEwell Positions			
Senior Benefits Analyst I	Benefits Analyst	Parking Program Coordinator	Anna Ancheta
Benefits Analyst	Benefits Analyst	Vanpool and Rideshare Coordinator	Francois Verin
Benefits Specialist	Benefits Specialist	Program Support Supervisor	QueJonne Cross
Administrative Clerk	TLH Office Trainee	Program Administrative Support	Martina Serrato
City Attorney			
Deputy City Attorney IV	Deputy City Attorney IV	Counsel	Charles Hong

Submitted by: 
 QueJonne Smith Cross, Benefits Specialist


 Anna Ancheta, Benefits Analyst


 Francois Verin, Benefits Analyst

Reviewed by: 
 Daniel Powell, Senior Personnel Analyst II

Approved by: 
 Paul Makowski, Chief Management Analyst