



City of Santa Barbara

Downtown Parking Committee

Communications and Operations Subcommittee
Tuesday, June 30, 2015
Downtown Parking Enhanced Public Outreach Plan

Objectives

- Improve Downtown Parking's ability to provide the public and merchants with up-to-date information about the Downtown Parking system, including parking availability, major projects, service disruptions, maintenance, service changes, emergency incidents, and parking-related news.
- Advertise Downtown Parking services, such as parking permits and pre-paid cards, and highlight parking options for downtown attractions and events.
- Optimize and re-vitalize existing connections and relationships with the downtown community.

Current Practice

Downtown Parking's website contains information about parking facilities, locations, rates, hours of operation, and permit availability, along with general program information. This information is updated regularly, and we recently added a real-time parking map optimized for mobile devices.

DTP announces major construction and maintenance projects by publishing stories in City News in Brief and the Downtown Santa Barbara newsletter and emails, issuing media releases, posting signage in the affected lots, and visiting nearby businesses to distribute project information.

Strategy

Distribute information through multiple channels in order to reach a wide audience and enable DTP to target communications to subsets of customers (e.g. the general public vs. a subset of permit holders) as needed. DTP will distribute information through the following channels:

- Parking Facilities: look for opportunities to improve directional signage inside and outside of the lots and garages.
- Media and community partnerships
 - Leverage relationships with merchants and organizations in the downtown area to distribute information (e.g. Downtown Santa Barbara, Chamber of Commerce, etc.).



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- Increase frequency of print and online advertising campaigns.
- Website: create a newsfeed and post announcements on the DTP home page.
- Email
 - Direct communications w/ individual customers.
 - Permit holder mailing lists for information specific to these customers.
 - General public mailing list for announcements and news.
- Social media
 - Post regular updates about services, disruptions, events, maintenance, and other news to Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.
 - Respond to customer inquiries and comments either via social media or by providing the customer with a phone number to call to discuss further.
 - Highlight downtown attractions and events; provide links to community partners.

Implementation

- Parking Facilities
 - Perform site visits with stakeholders, including merchants and the DPC
 - Explore opportunities to add interior directional signage during painting projects.
- Media and community partnerships
 - Meet at least annually with marketing staff from Downtown Santa Barbara, City TV and others.
 - Identify appropriate occasions for print/online advertising.
 - Encourage local businesses and merchants to link to online DTP resources, such as the real-time parking map and social media sites.
- Email
 - Update Monthly and Commuter Permit applications to include a line for email address.
 - Solicit email addresses from existing permit holders, either by phone or mailing. Enable permit holders to opt-in to account and service-related emails (e.g. lot closures, rate changes, etc.) as well as more general informational emails (upcoming events, news, etc.).



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- Add a link to the DTP website to allow any interested party to sign up for email updates.
- Produce and send informational emails as needed.
- Website
 - Add a newsfeed. Update the newsfeed regularly with information about closures, service changes, maintenance, events, etc.
 - Add an option to sign up for email alerts.
 - Add links to social media sites.
- Social media
 - Request approval of social media strategy from Public Works Director and City Administrator's Office.
 - Create accounts on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.
 - Include social media toolbars on DTP website.
 - Update each site 2-3 times per week.
 - Encourage

Evaluation

- Monitor analytics to evaluate the effectiveness of the program.
- Monitor lot occupancy and permit sales to determine whether the information provided to the public is affecting parking behavior.