



New On Street Parking Pay Stations Will Make Parking Downtown Easier

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For Immediate Release

VICTORIA, BC – Last night, City Council approved replacement of Victoria's 1,900 single head parking meters with 250 multi-space, computerized on street pay stations to make parking easier and more inviting for residents and visitors downtown.

"We're excited to introduce a more convenient way to pay for short-term parking," said Mayor Alan Lowe. "The new multi-space pay stations will greatly enhance the parking experience downtown, providing more payment options for customers and continued use of the City's popular refundable parking card."

The new technology, expected to be fully rolled out by spring, will enable drivers to purchase parking time from any meter station downtown by noting their parking space number, without having to return to their vehicles to display a ticket. An education campaign is being developed to inform the public on how to use the new pay stations. Twenty-five meters are expected to be installed early in the New Year for testing and training purposes.

Payments can be made by coin, credit card or parking card. The new meters will accept the City's existing parking cards that refund unused time. New cards will be available for sale at City Hall when the new system comes on line. A "pay by cell phone" feature will also be introduced in future.

To accommodate the new technology, existing parking meter heads will be removed and posts will be retrofitted with new signage displaying parking space numbers. The number of pay stations installed on a street will depend on the size of a city block, but typically there will be one meter for every six – eight parking spaces.

Solar-powered, the new pay stations are environmentally friendly, do not require direct sunlight, and eliminate the use and disposal of batteries. In addition to being selected for their ease of use, five language capability and modern, streamline appearance, the new meters are made of vandalism-resistant material and corrosion-free stainless steel. The reduced number of meters and improved security features should decrease the vandalism and theft experienced with traditional parking meters.

Wireless communication will also make it possible to transmit data in real-time, allowing staff to maintain a constant overview of the operating condition, usage, and payment transactions of all meters. Parking officers will carry wireless handheld devices and will issue parking tickets when necessary.

The supplier is AParc Systems of Richmond, BC who distribute the German-manufactured Siemens product. Siemens is a world leading engineering company that has been developing and delivering multi-space parking meters for the past 15 years.

The new system will cost close to \$3 million and will include new pay stations, staff training, handheld operator devices, signage and installation. The City has no plans in the immediate future to increase on street parking rates, and parking will continue to be free at meters and parkades on Sundays and statutory holidays.

The purchase of the new technology is part of the City of Victoria's Parking Strategy, approved in 2007, which aims to making parking more user-friendly, safe and attractive for residents and visitors downtown. For more information, visit: www.victoria.ca/cityhall/pdfs/prkstp_ovrvw2.pdf?zoom_highlight=parking+strategy

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