

## Memorandum

**To:** Mike Geisel, City Administrator

**From:** Tom McCarthy  
Director of Parks, Recreation and Arts

**Date:** May 19, 2022

**Re:** Parking Update for Central Park

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Per the Parks, Recreation & Arts Committee of Council direction, I have investigated several options to address the parking concerns now that Gershman has indicated that they will no longer allow the city to use their parking lots in front of their building at 16150 Park Circle Drive, nor their parking garage free of charge, for City functions. From this point forward, they intend to contract with St. Louis Parking with the intention of monetizing their parking assets. This results in the effective loss of 348 parking spots and 20 spots reserved for their tenants.

We have also been informed that Staenberg Group is now also considering charging for the use of the Chesterfield Mall parking lot during for profit events. Most recently, in conjunction with the Country Fair event, Mammoth negotiated with TSG for a lump sum payment to allow free parking for the for the three-day event. For ticketed and paid events, I am not overly worried about people having to pay for parking for ticketed events, as this is the industry standard. I am, however, currently working with the Staenberg Group in an attempt to secure free parking at the Chesterfield Mall for the City's free concert series and community based special events. I will keep you informed as to how these discussions evolve.

My concerns are related to our free concert series and other Community events, like the Holiday Tree Lighting, the Fall Festival and Turkey Trot. With these lots potentially used as paid parking lots for our events, we have several options to deal with this.

**Option 1** Status Quo: Operating on the premise that The Staenberg Group will continue to offer free parking at the mall for our community events, we would do nothing and let people walk down from the mall, which is just shy of four tenths of a mile from the Mall parking lot to the security gates for the Amphitheater. This short walk takes about six and a half minutes to walk from the mall to the entry gates for our concerts and consumes less time than the alternative footprint if the event is out in the main Fairgrounds field.

**Option Two** Contract with Gershman: The City could elect to offer Gershman \$1,500 for each of our six free concerts and our two holiday festivals, assuming they would be willing to do that. I am waiting to receive a response from Gershman as to whether or not they would be willing to give us a better rate if we were to pay for eight events. I have requested that they consider a rate of \$1,000 per event/day as a discounted rate, obviously

contingent upon the approval of City Council. I expect Gershman to respond after the June meeting of their board. Our first free concert is June 18<sup>th</sup>.

**Option Three** Shuttles: The City could schedule shuttles for free concerts and our other large free events. Prices are as follows. A chartered bus at \$352 per hour and holds 50 people, a trolley that holds 35 people and cost \$110 per hour. Another, less comfortable and less costly option is a school bus for \$70 per hour, which seats 48 people. If we had five school busses for an event it would cost \$1,540 dollars for the 5.5 hours which we would need for a free concert. This would be fine for opening an event, as people arrive slowly prior to the event, but the busses would be unable to transport the mass of people leaving an event at the end of the evening when we have several thousand people leaving concurrently.

When the City acquired the additional 8 acres, one of the primary reasons for doing so was to address the parking concern. Everyone seemed consistent in assuring that there would not be any hardscape constructed on the center mass of acreage encircled by Main Circle\Park Circle Drive. There was, however, discussion of us using the two out-parcels adjacent to the Parkway for parking. Sufficient funds were included in the debt issuance for this purpose.

Please forward to PR&A for information, review and potential direction.

*McTeish* 2022-6-7