



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
AGENDA LETTER

Agenda Number:

Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
105 E. Anapamu Street, Suite 407
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
(805) 568-2240

Department Name: Community Services
Department
Department No.: 057
For Agenda Of: October 9, 2012
Placement: Departmental
Estimated Time: 1 hour
Continued Item: No
If Yes, date from:
Vote Required: Majority

TO: Board of Supervisors
FROM: Department Herman Parker, Community Services Director (805) 568-2467
Director(s)
Contact Info: Kerry Bierman, CFO Community Services (805) 568-3408
SUBJECT: Countywide Beach Parking Fees

County Counsel Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Auditor-Controller Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Other Concurrence: Planning and Development

As to form: Yes

Recommended Actions:

That the Board of Supervisors:

- a) Receive and file an update on potential County Beach parking fees and provide staff direction regarding continuing exploration of Beach Parking fees at County Beach locations;
- b) Receive and file an update on the County Park Commission's public meetings and action regarding potential Beach Parking fees at County Beach locations;
- c) Find that the recommended actions do not constitute a project under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15378, as the administrative activities do not have the potential to cause a significant effect on the environment, and direct staff to file the attached CEQA Notice of Exemption (Attachment 3).

Summary Text:

On May 17, 2011, the Board of Supervisors directed staff to develop possible alternatives for Beach Parking fees at County Beach parks for review by the Park Commission and then return to the Board with a recommendation from the Park Commission. Staff held three public workshops with the Park Commission regarding Beach Parking fees. On August 23, 2012 the Parks Commission unanimously voted in opposition of Beach Parking fees and did not recommend a fee structure for implementation.

Staff evaluated the possibility of implementing Beach Parking fees at seven County Beach locations. These locations include: Rincon Beach, Loon Point, Lookout Park, Arroyo Burro Beach Park, Goleta Beach Park, Ocean Beach Park and Guadalupe Dunes Park. A \$10 day use fee is currently in place at Jalama Beach Park. The initial analysis focused primarily on parking fees using automated pay stations at all seven locations. There are other methodologies for collecting fees, including a gated staffed kiosk, or a closed system; however, cost of installation would be higher as it includes additional hardware, software, equipment, conduit and trenching.

Preliminary financial estimates developed by staff indicated that potential Beach Parking fee revenue can range from approximately \$1.6 million to \$2.5 million annually, depending on the amount of the parking fee and if the fee is collected through a tiered or flat fee approach, respectively. The cost associated with implementing a Beach Parking fee program for the first year is estimated at approximately \$1.0 million. The cost of on-going operations after the first year is estimated at approximately \$800,000 annually. Therefore, net income to the County after the first year of implementation is estimated at approximately \$800,000 if a tiered fee option is selected. Implementation of Beach Parking fees at County Parks has the potential to create a new revenue stream which could support park operations and maintenance.

Background:

Over the past several months, staff gathered information from several agencies that provide public parking for a fee at beach locations, including the City of Ventura, City of Santa Barbara, City of Oxnard, State Beaches, and others. This research shows public parking fees being implemented by using a variety of pricing structures, different methods of collection, and enforcement times. These vary by location and season. Some agencies implement parking fees by utilizing a closed system, which is a manned kiosk with armed barricades that allow or prohibit entrance into the parking lot. Other systems utilize pay box stations or “iron rangers”, while others use automated pay stations that allow customers to pay by a numbered parking space. A cost effective option is an automated pay station.

Parking fees could be implemented using a tiered fee approach or a flat fee approach. A tiered fee approach will establish a maximum parking rate for the day that the patron would have to pay after three or four hours of parking. For example, the patron could pay \$2 /hour and \$2 for every hour thereafter for a maximum parking rate of \$8 for the entire day. This allows the patron to pay specifically for the time that they would like to spend at the Beach or park facility. Patrons who visit the park for an hour would only pay \$2 and not have to pay the entire \$8 for the day. With a flat fee for parking, the patron will pay the entire amount for the day whether they park for one hour or six hours. For example, a patron could park at a Beach facility and pay a \$4 fee for the entire day. An annual pass could also be an option.

Staff is requesting Board direction. If the Board would like to proceed with Beach Parking fees, staff would prepare a resolution to establish fees for each lot and hours of operations, prepare a budget for purchase of equipment, services and supplies, and begin the permitting process with the California Coastal Commission.

Parks Commission workshops

The Park Commission held three public workshops to gather input from the public. Staff gave a presentation on the various fee structure options (tiered fee or flat fee) for Beach Parking at each workshop. There was strong public opposition to fees at all three workshops. There were many

comments made regarding the impact of fees on low-income residents who cannot afford other recreational activities and come to County beaches because they are free. Other concerns were raised by surrounding neighborhood residents regarding traffic congestion, and restaurants who would see a decline in business if parking fees were implemented.

For discussion, staff presented a tiered fee structure and a flat fee structure for Beach Parking fees that would vary based on location. The chart below represents a summary of the fee structures:

Locations	Tiered Fee Structure	Flat Fee Structure
Arroyo Beach Park, Goleta Beach Park	\$2/hr (\$8 max)	\$4/day
Lookout Park, Rincon Park	\$1.50/hr (\$6 max)	\$3/day
Ocean Beach, Loon Point, Guadalupe Dunes	\$1/hr (\$3 max)	\$2/day

A summary of the number of meeting attendees and those that spoke in opposition to Beach Parking fees is noted below:

Meeting date	Attendees	Speakers	In Opposition
July 26, 2012 - Santa Barbara	63	18	16
August 16, 2012 - Santa Barbara	~150	60	60
August 23, 2012 - Santa Maria	~20	8	8

On August 23, 2012, the Parks Commission unanimously voted in opposition of Beach Parking fees and did not recommend a fee structure for implementation.

Survey results

The Community Services Department also issued an on-line survey to provide the department with additional information regarding visitation at County Beach locations. There were 1,338 survey respondents. A summary recap of the questions and answers (top 2) is as follows:

- 1.) Which County Beach do you visit most frequently? *Goleta Beach = 39%, Arroyo Burro 35%*
- 2.) How often do you visit that specific County Beach? *42% = weekly, 22% = Once per month*
- 3.) What activities do you participate in at your favorite County Beach? *73% Relaxing, 42% Visiting Restaurants*
- 4.) How long do you stay when you visit a County Beach? *2-4 hours = 44%, 1-2 hours = 41%*
- 5.) What improvements/amenities would you like to see at your County Beach? *40% Restroom upgrades, Upgraded picnic areas 16%*
- 6.) If a Beach Parking fee were charged, how much would you be willing to pay? *76% = I would stop visiting, 11% = \$1 per hour*
- 7.) What form of transportation do you use to visit the beach? *93% = car, 4% = Bike*
- 8.) What County Beach did you visit in the last 12 months? *Goleta Beach = 80%, Arroyo Burro = 73%*

Fiscal and Facilities Impacts: Budgeted: No

Fiscal Analysis:

Narrative: If Beach Parking fees were implemented, the Community Services Department estimates that the County could generate revenue of \$1.6M – \$2.4M depending on the selection of a flat fee or tiered fee option, respectively. Expenditures would be higher the first year because of one-time start-up costs and CEQA expenses. The first year of expenses are expected to be approximately \$1.0 million, and would decline in year 2 to approximately \$800,000. The net income to the County starting in year 2 is estimated at \$800,000 per year if a tiered fee option is selected.

Attachments:

Attachment 1 – Park Commission Minutes of July 26, 2012, August 16, 2012 and August 23, 2012

Attachment 2 – Public Comment Letters to the Parks Commission

Attachment 3 – CEQA Notice of Exemption

Authored by:

Kerry Bierman, CFO