


To: Kristi Jefferson, Salida City Officials


5/17/24

Subject: Problems with Parking Enforcement Rollout

A cursory examination of the information on the ParkSalida.com website yielded several problems:

1. The first screen says the parking is enforced starting at 9 AM. See the screenshot below. Subsequent screens on the website and the street signage say 10:00. Regrettably, it also says 9 AM on the smartphone app. Which is it?

 On-Street Parking - 2 Hour Max 9 A... 8

 Parking Lot - No Overnight Parking 8

2. The green areas, constituting most of the parking lots downtown, are labeled “No overnight Parking” as shown above. Are you serious? Are you expecting everyone to move their cars from these lots every night? Do they get ticketed if they don’t? What is the fine? Won’t these relocated cars choke the downtown, which apparently allows overnight parking? Did you intend to say, “No Overnight Camping”?

A plan designed and executed with forethought and precision can still go awry. But these are obvious glitches that should have been caught before the rollout.

2-hour parking happened by default many years ago when meters were removed. Downtown was not yet a tourist hub, it was the center of commerce. I repeat my previous appeal: allowing the entire inventory of downtown street parking to remain 2-hour does not account for how people currently use the downtown. If you are instituting enforcement to help businesses, 2-hour parking enforcement will have the opposite impact. A mix of 4-hour and 30-minute parking, enforced, will enhance the visitor experience while better-accommodating downtown workers, businesses, and locals. 30-minute parking will also aid disabled parkers, by providing increased parking space turnover and availability.

A complaint I received from service workers: In Salida, crime, homelessness, drugs, and sexual crimes are on the rise. Yet you are instituting policies demanding service employees who work late to risk walking several blocks to their vehicles. Are you going to address this?

People sometimes park downtown, overindulge, and wisely decide to leave their car overnight. Will your new policies incentivize people to instead get behind the wheel when they shouldn’t?

In every situation, there is the risk of unintended consequences. This is the real world; you can’t address everything. But without thorough preparation, you are better off taking no action. The status quo of no enforcement is better than the plan you are rolling out. Do you not understand the unintended impact bad policies can have on our economy? Many businesses have already closed. Without a lucrative summer, many more will not survive next winter. Please think, plan, and proofread before you act.

Vince Phillips, Salida