

Defining “community benefit” when considering whether or not to assign a removal fee when a parking meter is permanently removed

DDA Approach to Reviewing Plans for Impacts to On-street Parking:

On March 4th, 2009 the DDA Board passed a [policy regarding removal of on-street public parking spaces](#) (paraphrased from the March 4, 2009 Resolution):

Resist efforts to permanently remove an on-street parking meter space unless a compelling broad community benefit can be established. It is not enough that the removal of a public parking space benefit a project – there must be a larger, community benefit.

In support of this, DDA staff will first encourage applicants to re-work the elements of their project that impact on-street meter parking. If this is not possible, DDA staff will work with City staff to review the proposed changes for community benefit.

In instances where an on street meter removal does not benefit the Ann Arbor Community, the DDA will assess the cost to replace the public parking space pursuant to the DDA policy referenced above and [City Council Resolution to Approve a City Policy Regarding Removal of On-Street Metered Public Parking Spaces](#).

The following outlines an approach to create consistency with what the DDA defines as “community benefit”

Fee waivers will only be granted in exceptional circumstances. First and foremost, elements impacting meter removal or relocation must benefit the broader community and not simply the project or property owner requesting a change.

To receive a fee waiver for the removal of a metered parking space, it is not enough that the benefit is offered on-site, it must be the element directly causing the parking space impact. Elements that can be relocated or are secondary to the cause of meter removal will not receive a fee waiver.

Space removal fees will not be waived or offset by relocating parking meters to any other location in the City public right-of-way, unless such meters are located on the parcel(s) associated with the development or project.

Broad Community Benefit may include:

- Elements that meet or exceed goals in DDA Plans, including the DDA Development Plan.
- Elements that meet or exceed goals in approved city plans.
 - An example of this may include creation of a new bicycle lane, pedestrian crossing, or pedestrian bump-out consistent with the City Non-motorized Plan.

- In some cases, elements that meet or exceed city best practices or public health and safety code may be compelling enough to be recognized as a community benefit, even if not explicitly conveyed in an approved plan.
 - An example of this may include the addition of a fire hydrant, if an alternative location isn't feasible as determined by the City Fire Marshal and DDA

To assess benefit, DDA staff will work closely with the City staff that implement these plans and best practices, ensure that the recommendations do in fact meet established goals, and that the suggested removal of parking meters is the only way to achieve the stated benefit.

Broad Community Benefit does not include:

- Elements that benefit only the project or property owner
 - This may include elements such as loading zones, curb cuts, trash collection, and localized stormwater treatments that serve only the proposed development. While these elements may mitigate potential issues, they mitigate issues caused by the development and are not a broad public benefit in and of themselves.
- Elements that are in conflict with city best practice and approved city plans, policy, and code

In considering community benefit, DDA staff must weigh the location and number of spaces impacted.

Questions to ask and weigh in review:

- Who is served by the meter relocation/impact? (project site/property owner or the broader community?)
- Do the elements impacting meters meet specific recommendations or goals outlined in DDA or City approved plans?
 - Is the proposed element, its location, and meter removal the only way to accomplish this goal? Could the impacting element be relocated and still accomplish an established goal without impacting on-street meters?
- Do the elements impacting meters align with best practice according to DDA and City staff?
- How significant is the impact to on-street meters, the public parking system, and the community? Does removal have a negative impact on surrounding businesses, residents, and overall accessibility?

The DDA may revisit and update this policy as necessary.