



# La Crosse Police Department

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## Board of Public Works

**Staff Report:** Parking Fees for City owned parking ramps and lots

**Submitted by:** Assistant Chief Jason Melby

**Summary/Purpose:** To alter the existing fee structure for City owned parking ramps and lots where there is an hourly fee rate.

**Background:** Over the years the City of La Crosse has used several models of fee structures to use City owned parking structures and/or lots. Based on internal documents, it appears the fee structure came into place January 1, 2000. Since that time the rates have varied but there always has been a set amount of time that was "Free" to the user. Documents show that it has varied from 2 hours to 4 hours to our current 3 hours "Free". The last adjustment to the hourly use fee structure occurred in 2018.

The method of collecting the fees have also altered over the years. We have had coin operated parking meters, pay station gates and now currently operate on mobile applications for smart phones and electronic kiosks. With the current method of collection, there is a "Per transaction" fee that goes to a 3<sup>rd</sup> party vendor that supports the mobile payment application and a monthly service fee that goes to a different 3<sup>rd</sup> party vendor. Those fees are as follows: \$0.33 per transaction on the mobile application and \$1300.00 per month service fees for kiosks in the ramps.

The City's current parking fee rate is:

- Monday-Friday 6am to 6pm – First 3 hours free & then \$1 per hour every hour after that - \$8 max for a day.
- Monday-Friday 6pm to 6am – Free
- All weekends – Free

Over the years, the Parking Utility has fielded complaints of inconsistent, ever changing rates in our parking ramp; thus making things complicated and hard to understand.

**Fiscal Impact:** With the move to current payment method, it is currently costing the City of La Crosse \$0.33 per mobile transaction even when the individual is only in the ramp/lot for the 3-hour free parking. In general, we are averaging over 3500 mobile applications per month for the free 3-hour parking. This ultimately is costing the City approximately \$1155.00 per month or \$13,860.00 per year to allow people to park in the ramps for free. Additionally, the 3-hours of free parking does not help offset any of the monthly service fees for the kiosk for those who use the kiosk for the free 3-hours.

**Staff Recommendation:** In preparation for this, staff conducted a review of other communities that are situated similarly as La Crosse (City's that own parking structures/lots and are not privatized). Please see the table:

*Leaders in providing a safe and vibrant community.*

<u>CITY</u>	<u>CITY OWNED RAMPS/LOTS</u>	<u>HOURLY RATE</u>	<u>FREE PARKING</u>
Rochester, MN (124,321)	7	\$2/hr	N/A
Eau Claire, WI (70,129)	2	\$0.50/hr	N/A
Janesville, WI (66,023)	23 Surface Lots		Yes
Appleton, WI (76,248)	4	\$2 < 3 hours	N/A
Waukesha, WI (71,246)	2	\$2/hr	< 2 hours free
St. Cloud, MN (69,489)	5	\$1/hr	weeknights after 5pm +weekends
Racine, WI (77,608)	4	\$2/day	N/A
Oshkosh, WI (66,962)	18 Surface Lots	Permits Only	2 hour visitor in select lots
Madison, WI (501,000)	6	\$1-2/hr 24/7	N/A
La Crosse, WI (52,952)	5	3 Hours free, then \$1/hr	Weeknights 6pm-6am + weekends
Green Bay, WI (108,063)	3	\$0.85/hr	First 15 min. Weeknight + weekends
East Lansing, MI (46,854)	7	\$1/half hr	N/A

It is staff's recommendation that the City of La Crosse move to Monday – Friday 6am to 6pm \$1/per hour for the entire time while retaining the \$8.00/day max fee, Monday – Friday 6pm to 6am timeframe being free and the free weekends.

The justification is 4-fold:

1. It brings us more in line with other Cities.
2. By changing to a \$1/hour now, our rates would likely not need to be revisited for a significant period of time.
3. \$1/hour across the board is an extremely simple fee structure for users.
4. This removes the cost burden imposed on the City of La Crosse of the "3-hours free".

If this fee schedule is approved, the Parking Utility would begin working with our 3<sup>rd</sup> party vendors to make the needed changes to existing infrastructure, engage in public information and update all signage. An anticipated implementation date would be early in the first quarter of 2023.