

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

OK NW/



To: Jim Scholl, City Manager
From: Norman Whitaker, Director / Transportation; John Wilkins Director / Parking
Date: November 2, 2015
Subject: Resolution to Approve Free Holiday Transportation and Parking 2015

Action Statement:

This is a request for approval of a resolution to provide 2 days Free Holiday Public Transportation service in the City of Key West and the Lower Keys; Wednesday, December 23 and Thursday, December 24, 2015 with no scheduled bus service on Friday, December 25.

And also, 3 days of Free Metered Parking in the City of Key West beginning Wednesday, December 23 through Friday, December 25, 2015.

The Free Holiday Transportation service and Free Metered Parking promotes use of public transportation in our community and encourages shopping for holiday goods at local businesses and merchants in Key West and Marathon thus stimulating the local economy.

Project History:

The City of Key West has offered Free Holiday Public Transportation service and Free Holiday Parking since the 1990's. In the past, this experience has proven to assist with promoting use of public transit service as well as providing for additional passengers, while also reducing traffic during a high volume traffic time of the year.

This Free Holiday annual event provides an incentive for individuals who ordinarily would not use public transit to do so, because it is FREE. When a new passenger has a positive experience – we often times gain a new customer.

Additionally, the City of Key West Transportation Department acknowledges all local businesses for their demonstrated commitment to the community through perseverance of good and bad economic times by continuing to provide goods and services to our citizens, residents and visitor populations in the City of Key West. The City of Key West supports local businesses by providing the Free Holiday transportation service from Key West to Marathon; and, thereby encourages shoppers to buy from local businesses.

Free Holiday Metered Parking has been offered during the Holiday Season as an economic stimulus for local businesses in the past and encourages local residents to shop in the downtown commercial district.

Last but not least, use of public transit helps everyone by reducing emissions in the environment and reducing our carbon footprint for improved air quality. The American Public Transit Association is quoted here by stating that "one full bus eliminates up to 29 vehicles on our roadways". The Free holiday season is a great opportunity for people to try public transportation for a few days, and perhaps continue to use it after the FREE period.

Advantages:

The City offers a FREE period to allow residents and visitors to use public transportation service, thus providing opportunities to those who ordinarily would not use public transit and possibly increasing ridership throughout the year.

The opportunity promotes clean and green living options by reducing vehicle emissions as well as the number of vehicles on our highways during this busy time of year. Public transportation is a very important part of the preservation of resources and protection of our delicate environment. By reducing automobile use and increasing public transit use - we can achieve one of our many goals identified by the City's commitment to GREEN living and sustainability.

The City businesses should see some increase in sales from locals and visitors who would otherwise spend money to park.

Disadvantages:

There is a loss of revenue to be considered for the Free Holiday Public Transportation service. That cost is based on prior December 2014 activities at \$1,310.00 / day / all routes and is estimated at a loss of \$2,620.00.

And also, the loss of revenue from the Free Metered Parking based on the prior average volume of transactions on the days surrounding these 3 days would be an estimated loss of \$8,000 to \$10,000 per day.

Recommendation:

To approve the resolution which provides for Free Holiday Transportation Service in the City and Lower Keys service areas and Free Metered Parking in the City of Key West, from December 23 through December 25, 2015. Also please note that as a reminder to the public, that there is NO bus service on Christmas Day, December 25, 2015.