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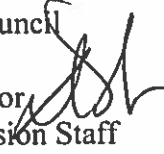
City of Detroit

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TO: The Honorable City Council

FROM: David Whitaker, Director
Legislative Policy Division Staff 

DATE: August 15, 2019

RE: **HOSPITAL PARKING FEES ANALYSIS**

LPD was tasked by Councilman Tate to provide a report regarding hospital parking fees and City Council's authority to mandate free parking for patients.

Parking fees have historically varied greatly depending on ownership, location, and the size of a hospital. Hospitals in suburban and rural areas typically provided free parking due primarily to lower land costs and more readily available free parking for the general public. Unfortunately, urban hospitals are more likely to charge parking fees because urban areas have the opposite circumstances, *i.e.* higher land acquisition costs, less available buildable land and lack of available free parking.

According to hospital officials, parking fees cover the cost of continuous maintenance and operation of the parking facilities¹. The fees also act as a deterrent for people who may want to utilize a large free parking structure to go to a nearby shopping center or to work². In many instances, most of the revenue generated from parking fees is used for staffing and maintaining the

¹ <https://canadianparking.ca/the-high-cost-of-hospital-parking/>

² <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/life/health-and-fitness/hospital-parking-fees-are-just-another-cost-of-sickness/article4201462/>

parking garage³. It has also been reported that any surplus revenue accumulated will go to enhancing patient care and investing in medical equipment⁴.

The City of Detroit regulates the number of parking spaces necessary for a particular land use through the Zoning Ordinance. For hospitals, the amount of parking required is based on the number of licensed beds available within the hospital⁵. Nowhere in any of the City’s parking regulations does the City mandate that any of the required parking spacing be made available to the public for free, nor do we believe it is within the City’s authority to do so. In many instances, especially where large amounts of parking is required, the cost of providing/constructing the spaces makes it cost prohibitive to provide free parking.

LPD did not find in its research where any other governmental entities mandated free hospital parking. However, our office did find where the hospital systems did initiate programs to mitigate the cost of parking for its patients and their families.⁶

In looking at the parking options available to patients and families visiting the hospital facilities, LPD found that except in one instance self-parking is available for free for patients and their families. The following table illustrates the parking availability:

Name	Location	Self-Park	Valet	Shuttle
DMC				
Children’s Hospital of MI	Detroit	FREE	\$10 \$5 handicap	FREE
Detroit Receiving (Central Campus) Medical Center	Detroit	FREE for patients and families with validation \$8 for up to 4 hours \$15 all day	\$10 \$5 handicap	FREE
Harper University	Detroit	FREE for patients and families with validation \$8 for up to 4 hours \$15 all day	\$10 \$5 handicap	FREE

³ <https://canadianparking.ca/the-high-cost-of-hospital-parking/>

⁴ <https://canadianparking.ca/the-high-cost-of-hospital-parking/> ; <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/life/health-and-fitness/hospital-parking-fees-are-just-another-cost-of-sickness/article4201462/>

⁵ Section 61-14-30 of Chapter 61 Zoning Ordinance and Section 1106.3 of the 2012 Michigan Building Code

⁶ A report by the American Health Association, called *Transportation and The Role of Hospitals*, published in November 2017, states that access to affordable transportation can help boost health outcomes and lower healthcare costs. The report offers several examples of what other hospitals around the country have done. Denver Health Medical Center has partnered with Lyft to provide vulnerable patients with transportation service to and from the hospital. Grace Cottage Family Health and Hospital in Townshend, VT collaborates with Green Mountain RSVP in a volunteer driver program. Taylor Regional Hospital in Campbellsville, KY operates a van service for patients in Taylor County and three neighboring counties. St. Mary Mercy Hospital in Livonia, MI offers a service called “Park & Ride,” that picks up patients, who need diagnostic services, physical medicine, rehabilitation and radiation services from Trader Joe’s, recreation centers, or local parks to drop them off at their appointments for free, as long as the patient lives in a designated area.

Sinai-Grace	Detroit	FREE	\$6; \$3 handicap; 50% Discount booklets available for purchase	N/A
Hutzel Women's	Detroit	FREE for patients and families with validation \$8 for up to 4 hours \$15 all day	\$10 \$5 handicap	FREE
VETERANS AFFAIRS MEDICAL CENTER				
John D. Dingell VA Medical Center	Detroit	FREE for Veteran Patients All others including employees \$10		N/A
HENRY FORD				
H.F (Campus)	Detroit	\$2.50; Reimbursement for research only visits	\$4; FREE at ER & Professional Bldg	N/A
Medical Center (New Center One)	Detroit	\$2 for up to 1 hour, \$1 every 20 minutes over 1 hour; \$12 per day; Parking reimbursement for research visits	\$10	FREE
ST. JOHN HOSPITAL				
ST J	Detroit	FREE	N/A	N/A

If there are additional questions, please advise.