



Scott Rogers <rogers@eauclairechamber.org>

Downtown parking work session

2 messages

Scott Rogers <rogers@eauclairechamber.org>

Mon, Jun 9, 2025 at 7:56 AM

Reply-To: Scott Rogers <reply-m754d7wl@eauclaireareachamberofcommerce.growthzoneapp.com>

To: rogers@eauclairechamber.org

To: Eau Claire City Council
cc: Stephanie Hirsch, Dave Solberg

We're writing to provide input as the City Council undertakes its work session on Tuesday this week regarding implementation of potential changes for downtown parking.

The Chamber's current [Business Issues Agenda](#) includes the following position related to downtown and parking:

Address downtown parking, traffic, and visitor experience. With continued new housing, business, arts, and entertainment development, downtown Eau Claire has become a vibrant, desirable destination and is a critical asset for the broader community. Given increased traffic, parking needs, and construction disruptions, this has led to challenges in managing parking and traffic. It's important for the city to work closely with the business community to ensure well-managed access and positive visitor experiences. This should include careful assessment of the issues and implementation of best practices, including:

- Improved management of parking: Centralized, customer-focused management of parking resources, better public communication and wayfinding for parking availability, consistent enforcement of parking regulations, and development of an overall plan that ensures adequate parking for visitors and employees without diminishing the attractiveness of downtown as a walkable destination. Consider enhancing parking alternatives like improved transit availability and attractiveness. Urgently address undesirable conditions of the Gibson Street Ramp. Fully engage businesses in decisions about parking regulations and fees. Consider street changes and improvements consistent with the needs to keep the downtown core attractive as a destination.

We appreciate the thoughtful process that Deputy City Manager Dave Solberg has undertaken to get business and resident input as recommendations for implementing the 2024 Parking Study are developed.

One significant concern we do have about the potential recommendations is the possibility that paid parking and other changes will be made before the management of parking is centralized. When the parking consultant delivered his report, he was quite clear about the critical need for this aspect of parking management, and emphasized that there is likely only one opportunity to get things right. Failing to establish revised management with clear leadership before implementing big changes could be compared to opening a retail store without hiring a manager. We strongly encourage the City Council to ensure that this aspect is addressed as step one in concert with any significant parking changes.

Thanks for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Scott

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