



NEWS RELEASE

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Date: December 18, 2014
TDD: 791-2639

PARK TUCSON INSTALLING NEW SMART METERS

The City of Tucson Department of Transportation's Park Tucson Division is modernizing its on-street parking program with the installation of new, solar-powered "smart" meters that accept credit, debit or smart (stored value) cards. The new smart meters, which also accept coins, will be wirelessly connected to a new smart-phone app—branded specifically for Tucson.

On Monday, December 22, 2014, Park Tucson will begin installing 500 smart meters in Downtown and at Main Gate Square near the University of Arizona campus. An additional 500 meters are scheduled to be installed later this month or in early January. Park Tucson installed 21 smart meters on November 26, 2014 on Sixth Avenue and on Pennington Street.

"The new smart meters will improve customer service for the parking public, better serve the needs of businesses and their customers, and contribute to the smart development of Tucson's rapidly developing urban center by making its parking system more efficient and generating additional revenue that can be reinvested in future mixed-use parking facilities," said Donovan Durband, Park Tucson Administrator.

Activating immediately upon installation, the smart meters feature a solar panel on the street side that recharges the meter's battery, and a large screen facing the sidewalk, which informs the parking customer the hours of operation, the time limit that applies to that parking space, the rate, the remaining time before expiration, and potentially information about local events—all of which can be programmed remotely from the Park Tucson office and applied to all the meters, or a subset of them, or even just one.

The meters, manufactured by IPS Group, replace meters that accept only coins and use up conventional batteries. The Fourth Avenue Business District will be metered for the first time starting in mid-January 2015, with the installation and activation of the same smart meters that will be used in the other business districts along the Sun Link Streetcar line. Cross-streets off of Fourth Avenue that have public parking spaces that are not restricted to residential parking will be metered as well, between Third Avenue and Sixth Avenue, with meters extending a little further east on Ninth Street and a further west on Seventh Street. Time limits will vary, with most of the metered spaces limited to two-hour visits and others to three hours. Several areas within the Fourth Avenue Business District will be designated for general permit parking rather than meters or residential permits, to allow opportunities for employees to find reliable parking.

The Fourth Avenue-area meters will only be enforced on weekdays from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Downtown and Main Gate meters will be enforced Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. The Main Gate area will move to seven-day meter enforcement in February 2015, specific date to be determined.

On Monday, January 5, 2015, the Downtown meter rate will increase to \$1 per hour, up from the current 50 cents per hour, which is one of the lowest hourly rates in the country.

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CITY OF TUCSON

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Park Tucson expects that its new smart-phone app will be operational by the end of this year. The app will allow users to not only pay for street parking, but also purchase transit fares—for Sun Link, Sun Van, and Sun Tran. It will be the first such app of its kind, offering customers the ability to pay for both parking and transit. The app will also make it easy for merchants to offer validated street parking.

New Park Tucson-branded smart cards will be available in early 2015 that will replace the meter cash keys that allow regular parkers to pay at the meters without needing change. Customers can obtain their own smart card at the Park Tucson office and purchase value to store on the card, drawing down the value when they park at the new meters. Customers with cash keys may bring them in and Park Tucson will transfer any remaining stored value to a new smart card.

For more information about the City of Tucson's new, modern parking meters, visit www.ParkTucson.com.

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