

## Frequently Asked Questions- Walton Arts Center & City of Fayetteville Parking Initiative

### What is actually going on right now regarding parking in the Dickson Street area?

Walton Arts Center and the City of Fayetteville are seeking ways to improve parking ease and efficiency on Dickson Street. Mayor Lioneld Jordan will be asking the Fayetteville City Council to consider an ordinance that would allow Walton Arts Center to manage the three lots surrounding the Center.

### Will the lots be paid or free?

Though the ordinance has not been drafted, the intention is to charge for parking during peak times (like evenings and event hours). This will help to turn the lots over on a regular basis to open up spaces for Dickson Street patrons and will pay for the cost of staffing the lots.

The concept we will propose for discussion includes the following:

- WAC will lead the effort to develop a Dickson St. parking map and communication plan
- Public Parking lots will remain free during the weekday hours
- Competitive fees will be charged during peak parking times (evenings & weekends)
- Suggested fees will be \$3 - \$5
- WAC will staff the lots to provide premium customer service and help people find parking

### How does charging for parking make it more efficient?

Charging for parking, in conjunction with making people more aware of the various parking lot options, increases efficiency in two ways: First, it ensures that the lots turn over and people who aren't patronizing Dickson Street don't keep their cars there for an extended period of time. Second, charging competitive fees will more evenly disperse cars. This will allow Dickson Street's available parking to be better utilized.

Also, by managing the lot, Walton Arts Center can provide the great customer service we provide inside our building to the parking lots. We can put up signage, hire staff to direct traffic, inform drivers when the lots are full and educate the community on surrounding parking options. We also hope to encourage people to be resourceful and environmentally conscious. For example, we may consider incentives for those willing to carpool, install more bike racks or discuss shuttle options with our partners and neighbors.

### How does this issue affect WAC's decision on future locations?

The Walton Arts Center is not moving—we have invested major resources in our Fayetteville buildings over the past year and plan to actively use them as our home for many years to come. As the region grows, the Walton Arts Center will consider expansion opportunities. But the parking initiative is about serving our patrons today so we can continue to draw visitors to the Entertainment District. By managing the lots and the traffic flow, we can make parking easier, which will provide a better overall experience.

### How will the parking restructuring affect annual festivals like BBQ, Springfest or Oktoberfest?

These events are important to the economic development of Fayetteville and the region, and we do not see this proposal interfering with them. The city will retain ultimate ownership of the lot and we expect these festivals to continue using the lot as they have.

**Will the spaces be allocated for people attending WAC events only?**

The lots will remain available to all Dickson Street visitors. Walton Arts Center may, as part of managing the lots, reserve some parking spaces for donors and/or season ticket holders. .

**How much money does WAC anticipate making and how will the money be used?**

We are only in the beginning phases of planning so we don't have formal projections. But our intent is to cover the cost of staffing and management. The WAC is a non-profit organization with less than half of ticket sales going toward a \$9 million operating budget; we must raise the other half from donors, sponsors and grants. If there is net revenue, it will be used for upkeep of the facility, programming and promotion of the Entertainment District at large.

**Isn't this going to drive traffic away from Dickson rather than bringing traffic to it?**

We don't anticipate that at all. Dickson Street is a premier entertainment destination. Although we don't have the details of times and rates, we know that we won't be charging all of the time. The goal is to make parking less burdensome, and we believe that by charging a flat rate during peak times, there will be more spaces available for those who are willing to pay for a prime spot. For others, we will help raise awareness about all of the parking options—both free and paid.

**What has research about comparable markets shown?**

Entertainment districts all around our region utilize paid parking including Little Rock, Tulsa and Eureka Springs. In theater districts in the Midwest cities like Omaha, Ashville and Charlotte, parking fees are similar and these districts are all thriving.

**What are next steps of this proposal?**

The Mayor will lead the efforts to draft an ordinance which will include a municipal process with public hearings and input. Details of the plan are currently being discussed and we will consider a variety of factors including the schedules, fees, safety of visitors, staffing and equipment. The WAC will solicit feedback from our patrons and the business community through public meetings and website/social media.

**What about the University students that don't have anywhere to park?**

Unfortunately, parking at the University is a problem just as it is for Dickson Street patrons. We know that the University is working on this problem and are in conversations with them about their plans.

**What is the WAC's involvement in the long term parking plans?**

We hope, as the City of Fayetteville seeks long term solutions to the parking problem, to be an active and engaged partner.

**I need more information and/or would like to share my opinion. How do I do that?**

You can send an email to [feedback@waltonartscenter.org](mailto:feedback@waltonartscenter.org). All emails will be acknowledged within several business days.