

San Joaquin County Grand Jury



CENTRAL PARKING DISTRICT 2008/2009 San Joaquin County Grand Jury Case No. 01-08D FOLLOW UP FINAL REPORT

SUMMARY

The 2008/2009 San Joaquin County Grand Jury chose to follow up on prior year Case 04-07, City of Stockton Central Parking District (CPD). Jurors wanted to determine if the Central Parking District corrected the problems cited in the 2007/2008 Grand Jury Report. The Grand Jury also received a new complaint alleging one parking structure has a very long wait for monthly parking but several floors continually appear empty.

The Grand Jury found CPD has made significant progress towards implementation of the recommendations in the 2007/2008 report. However, some problems continue to exist. The problems preventing full implementation result from a need to replace aged software and a need for information technology support.

Further, the Grand Jury believes CPD needs to evaluate capacity of some highly utilized parking structures. The goal of evaluations is to more fully utilize capacity, maximize revenue for the City and better serve customer needs.

BACKGROUND

The CPD manages over 4000 parking spaces included in fifteen parking lots, five city-owned parking garages and one county-owned parking garage in downtown Stockton. Approximately 3200 spaces have been set aside for parking patrons who choose to purchase monthly parking passes. Applications for monthly parking are made to the CPD office by one of several methods. Although some of the parking spaces are available immediately, they are not necessarily in the most desirable locations near work sites. Applicants for the more desirable parking spaces must be placed on a waiting list.

The CPD, managed by the Stockton Revitalization Department, has one Supervisor, one Supervising Parking Attendant and an Office Assistant who have the responsibility of managing the operation and the distribution of parking spaces. There are approximately 35 parking attendants at the various garages and lots.

METHOD OF INVESTIGATION

Materials Reviewed

- City of Stockton Central Parking District Policies and Procedures Manual
- City of Stockton Central Parking District web site
- Implementation of Recommendations From the Grand Jury's Final Report on the Central Parking District – Case No. 04-07, letter to Grand Jury Foreperson from Director of Revitalization Department, City of Stockton, February 20, 2009

Interviews Conducted

- Director, Revitalization Department, City of Stockton
- Supervisor, Central Parking District, City of Stockton

Sites Visited

- Central Parking District office, City of Stockton

RECOMMENDATIONS: 2007/2008 GRAND JURY; 2008/2009 GRAND JURY FINDINGS

1. Develop a system of assigning parking spaces on a first-come first-served basis free from political pressure or favoritism influencing the assignments.

City of Stockton Response: The recommendation will be implemented in 90 days.

2008/2009 Grand Jury Finding: CPD has implemented this recommendation. A procedure is in place to date stamp applications or send confirmation by one of several methods, accurately confirm the applicant's place on the waiting list and notify applicants when a parking space becomes available. Additionally, CPD staff has the ability to estimate the length of time an applicant may have to wait for parking in a facility and suggest alternatives.

2. Develop a policies and procedures manual for all CPD office employees and the parking attendants.

City of Stockton Response: The recommendation will be implemented in 90 days.

2008/2009 Grand Jury Finding: CPD has implemented this recommendation. CPD developed a thorough, concise and well organized Policies and Procedures Manual.

3. Develop and publish an internal training procedure to detail how parking spaces are assigned.

City of Stockton Response: The recommendation will be implemented in 90 days.

2008/2009 Grand Jury Finding: CPD has implemented this recommendation. Currently, two CPD office staff members can assign parking spaces. Both are trained

and are following policy as described in the Policies and Procedures Manual. Intentional deviation from procedure requires disciplinary action.

4. Develop a procedure and documentation policy to ensure that all reasonable attempts are made to contact applicants on the waiting list.
City of Stockton Response: The recommendation will be implemented in 90 days.

2008/2009 Grand Jury Finding: CPD has implemented this recommendation. CPD office staff make repeated attempts to notify an applicant, by several methods, over a two-week period, before passing them over for the next person on the list. Attempts to contact applicants are recorded on a spreadsheet. Applicants are informed of their responsibility to update contact information as necessary.

5. Develop and publish a procedure for processing citizen complaints.
City of Stockton Response: The recommendation will be implemented in 90 days.

2008/2009 Grand Jury Finding: CPD has implemented this recommendation. The complaint procedure is detailed in the Policies and Procedures Manual available at the CPD office. Complaints can be submitted at the CPD office, a staffed parking facility, online at “Ask Stockton” (<http://user.govoutreach.com/stockton/faq/php>) or by mail.

6. Provide cross training to insure continuous operation of CPD.
City of Stockton Response: The recommendation will be implemented in 90 days.

2008/2009 Grand Jury Finding: CPD has implemented this recommendation. CPD rotates parking staff between facilities and shifts. The Policies and Procedures Manual adequately describes the process for cross training to ensure continued operation of parking facilities in case of an unplanned event.

7. Develop a “checks and balances” system for the reconciling of cash receipts collected from the parking garages to include two persons and also provide for daily processing of those receipts, in the absence of the supervisor or the other person, in accordance with accepted accounting practices.
City of Stockton Response: The recommendation will be implemented in 90 days.

2008/2009 Grand Jury Finding: CPD has implemented this recommendation. CPD has sufficient checks and balances in place to ensure accountability.

8. Develop a two-part receipt for applicants to validate the date and time of application.
City of Stockton Response: The recommendation will be implemented in 90 days.

2008/2009 Grand Jury Finding: CPD has implemented this recommendation. Applications hand delivered to the CPD office are date stamped and a copy given to the applicant. Applications submitted online, by fax and by mail receive a confirmation by the method in which they were submitted.

9. Post a large map in the CPD office lobby to identify the location of available parking areas.

City of Stockton Response: This map is currently being reproduced and will be installed in the lobby and in City structured parking lots within 30 days.

2008/2009 Grand Jury Finding: CPD has implemented this recommendation. A large map is posted in the CPD office lobby. Maps are available in structured parking lots and online.

10. Update the parking assignments at least monthly.

City of Stockton Response: The recommendation will be implemented in 90 days.

2008/2009 Grand Jury Finding: CPD has implemented this recommendation. Parking assignments are updated weekly.

11. Develop a backup system for the computer that tracks the automated garages. Have the IT department develop a disaster recovery procedure in the event of a catastrophic failure.

City of Stockton Response: The recommendation will be implemented in 90 days.

2008/2009 Grand Jury Finding: CPD has partially implemented this recommendation by performing routine backups to a separate hard drive. Nightly backups to a City of Stockton server have been delayed due to budget constraints. The City anticipates a twelve month delay before the recommendation will be fully implemented.

12. Insure that all programs are operated on a secure server not accessible by other departments.

City of Stockton Response: The recommendation has been implemented. All programs are now operated on a secure server and only accessible by Central Parking District staff.

2008/2009 Grand Jury Finding: CPD has partially implemented this recommendation. Most complex programs reside on a secure server with limited access. Some critical data resides on password protected personal computers and is backed up on a separate hard drive.

13. Develop a program that allows online applications, payments, and issuance of parking passes to accommodate anticipated future growth.

City of Stockton Response: The recommendation requires further analysis. The City's Information Technology Director is now researching software programs to replace the City's existing financial management software. Central Parking District staff will work with the Information Technology Director to investigate available technology to implement an on-line program that will allow for on-line applications, payments and issuance of parking passes. Staff will work to accomplish this within six months, although the City's process, as well as identifying a funding source, may result in additional time to install the program, train staff to use the new software, etc.

2008/2009 Grand Jury Finding: CPD has partially implemented this recommendation. Much of the application, notification and complaint process are available on line. Payments are billed automatically. However, the City of Stockton operates eighteen year-old financial software that has no provision for online payment.

14. (No recommendation #14 from the 2007/2008 Grand Jury)

2008/2009 Grand Jury Finding: A large number of unused parking spaces in highly utilized structures exist on any given day. Most unused parking spaces are sold to individuals and government departments who choose not to use them on a particular day. Grand Jurors regularly observed one structure that never operated at greater than 75% capacity.

RECOMMENDATIONS: 2008/2009 GRAND JURY

- 1. Ensure nightly backup of critical data to a City of Stockton server.**
- 2. Prioritize purchase and implementation of updated financial software that can accept online payments.**
- 3. Evaluate the number of sold spaces and the number of occupied spaces within all parking structures to maximize utilization, generate revenue for the City and better serve customers.**

RESPONSE REQUIRED

Pursuant to Section 933.05 of the California Penal Code:

The Stockton City Council shall report to the Presiding Judge of the San Joaquin County Superior Court, in writing and within 90 days of publication of this report, with a response as follows:

As to each finding, a response indicating one of the following:

- a. The respondent agrees with the finding.
- b. The respondent disagrees with the finding, with an explanation of the reasons therefore.

As to each recommendation, a response indicating one of the following:

- a. The recommendation has been implemented, with a summary of the action taken.
- b. The recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will be with a time frame for implementation.
- c. The recommendation requires further analysis, with an explanation of the scope of analysis and a time frame not to exceed six (6) months.
- d. The recommendation will not be implemented, with an explanation therefore.