



GREATER IOWA CITY, INC.

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August 14, 2024

Mayor Teague and City Council
Attn: Geoff Fruin, City Manager
City of Iowa City
410 E Washington Street
Iowa City, IA 52240

Dear Honorable Mayor and City Council:

We are writing in support of the Iowa City Downtown District's (ICDD) request to revisit the on-street parking meter rates and establish night/weekend parking permits. As a business organization, we have heard concerns from business owners that the new rate of \$3/hr on-street may deter people from visiting downtown and patronizing local restaurants and retail shops. Moreover, the overall increase in parking rates directly impacts employees who work at downtown businesses who are now using more of their paychecks toward parking fees. The parking rate increase may drive employees to seek work in other areas of town where they do not incur this extra expense. Given the fierce competition for talent, this poses a significant challenge for downtown businesses, and we have already heard of employees asking business owners for raises to cover increased parking rates.

After more than a decade of unchanged parking rates, we realize the city needs to raise fees to cover increased expenses as well as pursue important community initiatives like the Fare Free bus program. ICDD's proposal to meet in the middle and reduce on-street parking rates to the staff recommended \$2/hr is prudent and your consideration and amendment would demonstrate your willingness to listen to the business community on this issue. Moreover, the establishment of night/weekend parking permits would maximize the investment already made in downtown parking ramps by keeping them full and provide a more affordable option for employees who work nontraditional hours and can't readily access public transit.

We appreciate your consideration of this matter and thank you for your commitment to creating a vibrant, accessible downtown where businesses can thrive.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nancy Bird".

Nancy Bird
President & CEO

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mackenzie DeRoo".

Mackenzie DeRoo
Senior Director of Advocacy