

Frequently Asked Questions

Plaza Garage Enhancement Project

OVERVIEW

The Legislature has directed the Department of Enterprise Services to carry out a plan based on recommendations from a 2014 study [to improve parking on the Capitol Campus](#). The recommendations include improving Plaza Garage parking capacity and navigation.

The work:

- Increases parking spots by more than 100 by reducing the size of some stalls and decreases the amount of reserved parking
- Improves signage to help drivers and pedestrians navigate the garage
- Improves access to pedestrian walkways
- Adds employee visitor parking to the 'A' level of the Garage near the Maple Park entrance

CAPITOL CAMPUS PARKING

What do parking fees pay for?

A portion goes to the Department of Transportation for the state agency Commute Trip Reduction program, which provides the STAR Pass and emergency-ride home program. Fees also pay for Capitol Campus parking operations, utilities, maintenance, repairs, renovation, and enforcement. Portions allocated to taxes go to the state's general fund and local governments to be used for various public services.

Is DES raising parking fees?

As a [standard business practice](#), DES is currently evaluating an adjustment to parking fees in order to meet the demands of the Capitol Campus. This evaluation takes into consideration a number of factors including parking facility costs, change in demand for parking facilities, market rates for comparable parking facilities and properties, and available commuting alternatives. Per [WAC 200-200-290](#), DES will provide at least 60 days notice to Capitol Campus parkers including a 30-day comment period before rates are changed. The last adjustment to parking fees was in 2008.

Do legislators and their staff pay for parking?

Yes.

Why is there no parking at the new 1063 Building?

The bill creating the 1063 Block Replacement Project did not contain funding for the construction of a new parking facility to replace the 261 stalls lost with the demolition of the parking garage at the corner of 11th Avenue and Columbia Street. This is one reason for this project to increase parking in the Plaza Garage.



Will the 1063 Building create a parking shortage?

In late 2017 and 2018, 400 tenants will move into the new office building. This translates to more than 300 new vehicles seeking parking on the Capitol Campus and will have an impact on parking availability. DES will continue to follow the Capitol Campus Parking Strategy Implementation Plan to ease the demand on the parking supply for employees and visitors.

Why didn't the state build a new parking garage instead of restriping the Plaza Garage?

Building a new parking structure would cost millions of dollars and would greatly increase parking fees. Increasing parking in the Plaza Garage brings the best value to employees who park there.

Why is a state employee visitor lot being added in the Plaza Garage?

In the [2015 Parking Implementation Plan](#), DES is directed to increase visitor parking, in part, by limiting off-campus state employee use of visitor parking lots by making parking available in the East Plaza Garage for employees visiting the Capitol Campus for business and training.

Is smoking allowed in the Plaza Garage?

No. Smoking is not allowed in state facilities.

VEHICLE ACCIDENTS, DAMAGE AND SAFETY

What should I do if my car is vandalized or hit in the garage?

Should anything happen to your vehicle, contact your insurance provider. If you are involved in an accident and it's not an emergency, report it to the Washington State Patrol (WSP) at 360-586-1998. If there is an emergency in the garage, please call 911. If you believe the state is responsible for damage to you or your vehicle, you can [file a claim](#) with the Office of Risk Management.

What is the difference between a mid-size vehicle and an oversize vehicle?

Based on our classification of a mid-size vehicle (Honda CRV or similar), where the vehicle width is approximately 6 feet, the vehicle would fit into a [compact stall which is 8 feet wide](#). The larger vehicles like a Chevrolet Suburban are approximately 7 feet wide and while they dimensionally still fit, it doesn't leave much room to exit the vehicle.

Are there cameras in the Plaza Garage?

There is one camera in the Plaza Garage located at the entrance of OB2.

Can DES install more cameras in the Plaza Garage?

DES submitted a capital budget request for funding for additional security on campus including cameras for the Plaza Garage. We will not know if the request will be included in the budget until the end of the 2017 Legislative Session.

PARKING STALLS

What will the size of the stalls be after the striping?

When planning the re-striping project for the Plaza Garage, a DES study found 70 percent of parkers drive compact and medium sized vehicles and 30 percent drive large vehicles. Before the project began, all stalls in the Plaza Garage were approximately 9 feet wide. After the re-striping, 70 percent of the stalls will be converted from 9 foot stalls to 8 foot stalls.

Most of the outer ring of parking stalls on each level will remain 9 feet wide for those parkers who drive larger vehicles and will be identified as such.

How many new stalls will be added to the garage after the re-striping?

More than 100.

How many of the stalls will be reserved for agency vehicles?

DES is currently working with all agencies on the Capitol Campus to reduce the number of reserved stalls in all campus lots. As directed by the Legislature, the total number of reserved stalls will be converted from 1,609 to 925 by the end of the project.

How many reserved stalls are in the Plaza Garage?

There are currently 192 reserved stalls in the Plaza Garage.

Are you going to enforce oversize parking in the Plaza Garage?

At this time, we are recommending that only compact and midsize vehicles park in the standard size stalls. DES will be monitoring the use of both standard and oversize stalls. If there is a need for enforcement, DES will evaluate options for additional compliance measures.

Will you increase [Americans with Disabilities Act \(ADA\)](#) compliant stalls to meet the demand?

ADA compliant parking is increasing from 19 stalls to 35. Employees who are eligible for ADA or reasonable accommodation parking should work with their Human Resources office to determine the best option for them.

What does ADA compliant mean?

ADA compliance means that the size and dimensions of the parking area meet state and federal guidelines. The ADA stalls in the Plaza Garage are in accordance with the WSDOT standard plans [M-17.10-02](#).

Is a placard required to park in a reasonable accommodation stall?

DES does not require a placard for reasonable accommodation parking. However, if you feel you need reasonable accommodation parking, we recommend you work with your agency's Human Resources office to receive an assessment to best meet your accommodation needs.

Will there be more parking spaces for rideshares and vanpools?

The amount of reserved stalls for rideshare and vanpools is dependent on the need. If vanpooling and ridesharing increases through the Commute Trip Reduction program, reserved stalls for those vehicles will increase.

Will there be a designated area of oversize parking for vanpools?

During construction, existing vanpool signage was taken down. DES will re-evaluate where signage needs to be placed for vanpoolers and carpoolers that park in the Plaza Garage. In the meantime, we recommend that they attempt to park in the oversized stalls.

NAVIGATION IMPROVEMENTS

Traffic lanes that have traditionally been one way or two way are changing directions but signage identifying the changes are either confusing or non-existent.

DES has directed the contractor to post prominent, temporary signage when traffic lane directions change. Permanent signage will be posted further into the project.

Will the new, permanent signage direct parkers to vacant stalls?

The new signage will not direct parkers to vacant stalls or how to park. However, it will improve the flow of traffic.

Will the lighting be increased?

The lighting in the Plaza Garage was upgraded about four years ago, resulting in an energy saving of 1,792,855 kWh and a total annual utility savings of \$117,783. The current lighting runs with occupancy sensors that dim to 16W when the area is unoccupied, compared to an average of 86W when occupied. There are currently no plans to change the current lighting.

What are the hours of operation for the stair tower elevators?

The elevators in the Plaza Garage operate between 5 a.m. and 8 p.m.