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Director-DDA

August 26, 2013

CITY OF ANN ARBOR
CITY CLERK

Subject: Safety and Convenience for accessible parking at the Thompson St Structure.

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My wife and I have lived in Ann Arbor 31 years. Over the years when we go downtown 80% of the time we park in the Thompson structure as it is within four blocks of places we most patronize. The first 25 years we didn't think much about accessibility parking, which is pretty typical I suppose. However, at present we both can only walk short distances, so my wife uses a power wheel chair and I use a scooter. Our car is a side ramp mini-van, which easily accommodates both the power chair and the scooter.

Currently there are:

1st level accessible from Thompson St.- 2 accessible metered parking spaces.

2nd level next elevator-6 accessible spaces; 3 are van accessible.

3rd level next to elevator- 2 accessible spaces; 1 is van accessible.

4th level next to elevator – 6 accessible spaces; 1 is van accessible.

There are only two accessible (metered) parking spaces on the first level, which offers a safe pathway for persons to access the sidewalk. There is considerable congestion at the location of the six 2nd level accessible parking spaces due to the convergence of incoming ramp traffic from Thompson St. , incoming traffic from Maynard St., and exiting traffics from the upper levels.

We have experienced serious safety concerns at this bottleneck and we ask you to review this as the location for so many accessible parking spaces when there only two on the first level and two on the third level.

Based on our own experience and observations of others with disabilities that park in this structure, we have the following suggestions for your consideration:

1. Relocate all or most accessible parking spaces to the 1st level. This would have less traffic and allow drivers to either pull in or back into best use access aisle. Travel to the the sidewalk does not require the use of the elevator or down a vehicle ramp. We are confident that DDA and Republic can make this change along with a plan to charge appropriately for parking fees.
2. The DDA currently uses the 8'(accessible car), and 8'(accessible van) configuration for accessible parking. If the DDA and Republic use the 8'(accessible car, 5'(accessible), 11'(accessible Van) configuration as permitted by federal 2010 Standards for accessible design, this would allow the van driver the choice of parking closer to the right or the left of the accessible van space depending on how a person with scooter/wheel chair needs to exit the van safely.
3. Remove 3 of the 6 accessible parking spaces closest to the Thompson St. up-ramp on the 2nd level and relocate them on the 3rd level to the right of the elevator, using the 8',5'11' configuration. This would eliminate the traffic congestion near the accessible parking on the 2nd level.

4. The parking beyond the up-ramp from Thompson St. have limited traffic that exits onto Maynard St. There are two spaces on the right facing the up-ramp and 6 spaces on the left as shown in the picture. Create 4 accessible spaces out of the present 6. The distance between the posts is 24 feet, so each space would be 12 feet wide. The two spaces facing Thompson St up-ramp could be made into two 11 foot accessible spaces.



The greater availability of mobility devices as well as a more independent aging population has allowed people with disabilities to be independent and engaged members of the community than they have in the past.

The relocation and re-stripping of accessible parking in the Thompson St. structure would be more convenient and a safer for persons with disabilities negotiating this structure, both as drivers and as "wheeled" pedestrians. We strongly encourage locating as many accessible parking spots on the first level, with better distribution of accessible parking on levels 2 and 3 to avoid congestion and bottlenecks.

We would be more than happy to discuss our experience and these suggestions with you and Republic parking. We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

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