Panel Participants

- Benito Perez: BP
- Stephanie Dock: SD
- Christopher Quay: CQ
- DeAndre Henson: DH

Audio Link: https://drive.google.com/open?id=1gJmv2JmBEVoKWfppeaGpIr91jcvSL2xF

Start of Question Received Before Conference 13:45

What are the estimated costs?

BP: Right now, I do not know what that is going to look like. That is where we want to hear what does the market bear right now. It is something that we envision right now. What does that look like?

Source of funding

BP: Probably going to be local capital and operating. Depending on the innovations that are being proposed, we might have a chance to pitch this to the federal government. They may pitch in because we may set the standard for other cities to follow.

Estimated release

BP: We are expecting the RFP for the parking meter services contract sometime in FY19. Fiscal year. That means Oct 1st through Sep. 30th of next year. Somewhere in that window the RFP will come out. Within that RFP there will be a section covering this particular topic.

Implementation?

BP: That is where we will need your input. Is this something that is done in 3 – 6 months? Is it 18 months. I am not a developer. That is where we will need your feedback. What is a realistic timeline?

What technologies or other services does DDOT need to procure for this endeavor.

BP: That is where we need to hear from you. Do we need special sensors? Equipment that we post on streetlights? Is it something you are providing? Is it something we are providing? What does that look like?

What vendor currently maintains ParkDC?

BP: That is Eastbanc Technologies. They are in the District. If you want to touch base with them, I will leave that to you all.

Will the ParkDC app be transactional or informational?

BP: We want to enable both capabilities. That is where we need to hear from you what that would look like. How would we pull that off?

15:31 Question 1: Who is currently running the parking meter services? Is that Conduent?

BP [Aside]: This is being recorded. I would ask that you all submit all your questions via email to ddot.parking@dc.gov so that we can post the questions being asked so that everyone who is participated can see the responses at the same time.

BP: The incumbent that is maintaining our parking meter services is Conduent.

BP [Aside]: Open up to all other questions. Again, please submit questions via email so that we can document and everyone who is participating has the chance to see the responses.

16:19 Question 2: With the availability work you do in ParkDC today, is that being done in house? How are you doing that today?

BP: The availability information is part of our Penn Quarter/Chinatown multimodal value pricing pilot. That is done with our vendor, which is Conduent. With their proprietary approach, they have developed an API to show availability information.

16:45 Questions 2.1: So there are no additional sensors? This is like information from the meters?

BP: So right now, we have research out that you can access through the Transportation Research Board. Basically it is a propriety solution that takes sensor information. It is an asset light approach where we put one sensor for "X" number of spaces, used paid meter transactions, and citation information and using the blended proprietary solution that they have in order to show that availability on a block face level versus SFPark in San Francisco, where they did space by space, which they no longer do either, because they had some maintenance issues with their sensors.

17:26 Question 3: You talked about an app using several APIs at the moment? What are those APIs?

BP: So one is from the Penn Quarter/Chinatown project, there is the proprietary app that shows the availability information. And also coming from Conduent is parking meter asset API where our inventory and the policy associated with it.

17:48 Questions 3.1 What was the second one again?

BP: It is from our meter operating vendor who maintains our assets, so it is just the asset API that shows where they are at and what is the policy information.

18:02 Question 4 Kevin Curtis from Verizon. So is it fair to assume that there are curbsides for which there is no parking meter, so you need some ground truthing to understand availability so that if somebody is looking for information based on the policy you can make that suggestion through the ParkDC app and they can go to curbside XY and Z and park for so many hours?

BP: Yes, which brings up a good point on the direction that the agency is going. We are envisioning a future where we no longer need to have a parking meter out on the street. That would probably still involve different forms of assets to show that availability. What that looks like? That is where we need your feedback. What would that look like?

18:51 Questions 4.1 OK, the vision is that the ParkDC app become this centralized platform where policies, ground truth, ability to reserve, and the payment even, is all aggregated in one place for the end user and there is an API available for any third party that want to use that platform?

BP: Correct. Any additional questions or comments?

19:24 Question 5 You mentioned reservations earlier. Is there any place where you are actually experimenting with that today or...?

BP: Unfortunately no. We don't have that right now. Private sector does that on their own, and that is where we want to integrate that capability but even then the private sector is very disaggregated. Some people have an arrangement with certain providers. We want to find a way, how do we aggregate that all through one entity or at least find a way, if it can be aggregated to one entity, to be able to have a centralized location where we can refer people eventually to every single off street source. It may be ABC company only does the 40 garages here and CDF does the other 40. But find a way to aggregate. If it can't do the transaction directly, at least be able to refer to those entities, so we cover every single garage in the District.

20:15 Questions 5.1 The District doesn't have any garages they maintain?

BP: We do not own or maintain any of them in the District.

SD: I just wanted to clarify your question that you asked about. I'm Stephanie with DDOT. Were you specifically thinking about the reservation of garage space or on street space or were you thinking about wanting to ask for a reserving on-street spaces, more broadly speaking?

20:39 Question 5.2 I was thinking specifically around off-street facilities. But yeah, if you have any thoughts on doing reservations for on-street, I'd love to hear what you have been thinking.

SD: With your specific answer on the question, we do not do reservation except in the sense that, if you for example, have a moving truck that you need to reserve three on-street spaces to park the truck on the side. We do have a process...

21:01 Questions 5.2 You do that through the permitting process?

SD: Through the permitting process.

Unknown Attendee: The public space permitting.

SD: I just wanted to be make sure that we were clear that it is not real time data stuff and that is one of the data elements that Benito mentioned we would like to bring in.

BP: Which then begs the question as well, like you just said, is there a way to integrate the permitting process right on there, so that if you are at the spot and you need to reserve it later on that week, you can be right on a spot and say, I want to reserve this spot. You can geo-reference it or something to that effect.

21:35 Question 6 Along the same line of permits, the RPP program. Is the incumbent for the RPP program the parking meter services provider today or is it a separate RPP program running independent of the parking meter services provider?

BP: So the Residential Permit Parking (RPP) program is maintained and operated by the District currently. So we are the ones that do our field evaluation and determine where we should be doing residential parking. We are the ones who put up the signs. We are also the ones, who, through our partners at the Department of Motor Vehicles, issues the permits. The city is getting denser. There are more demands and pressures on Residential Permit Parking. We are going to be placed into a position

where we need to start doing dynamic pricing on Residential Permit Parking. So that is where, in order to do something like that, we need to get utilization information on those residential streets, so that way we can justify policy changes whether it is a dynamic or static price change. Something to the effect to better manage that residential curbside. Right now we manage that. But, that may be something that, if there is an opportunity through this, that may be something that could be explored.

22:46 Question 6.1 Would it be safe to say that currently the RPP program is more manual than automated or electronic in terms of being able to pull data from the RPP program via an API into this "warehouse" that we are envisioning, this aggregated "warehouse"?

BP: It is very manual at this point. Right now, the locations of the RPP would probably be part of curbside use API that we would ask... We have the raw data; we just need to QA/QC to clean it up and deploy that API. That is probably as far as that is right now. If you have ideas of where you could take it from there, that is where we ask you to chime in on that.

22:34 Questions 7 Can you share some of the current results that you saw from the dynamic pricing in Chinatown? Do you see more turnover with dynamic pricing? Do you see behavioral changes? What is the utilization rate of the app itself right now?

SD: On the question on how the program has gone in the Chinatown area, we are reviewing the final report this week and we will have that out in the near future. In general, we have seen positive effects. The goal of that project was to make it easier to find parking in the study area, while also supporting other modes of travel, recognizing how multimodal that area is. We feel like we have seen generally positive results in that direction. We are still gathering all of the data. The blocks are all moving in different sorts of ways. Some of the blocks we wanted to see more utilization on, some we wanted to see more turnover so we could deal with the high demand for that. We did five price changes. I think we could probably keep changing prices, and we are looking at how we will continue going forward with that. By and large a positive program that we think has had most of the desired results. The app has had decent uptake, particularly considering that it only covers the zone that currently only talks about the 100 block faces that are in that area. So you have to know to get the app and you have to know that you are going to be travelling to that area to really get people. I think I just saw the report. Are we at 300 downloads?

CQ: No, more than that. I can get you the exact figures. Right now I think we are in the thousands of downloads (3,462 on Apple Store and 1,722 on Google Play). I will get you those exact numbers. Considering that we only have that availability information for one neighborhood in the entire District. We can see that that will increase tenfold if we have information for the entire District.

SD: Or with the phase 2 with simply more information about areas outside. Right now all it tells you is pricing and availability for that zone, which is a lot more than we have been telling people in the past, but it is not as broad.

BP: The appetite is there from the public. We recognize that need. We figure that this may be the standard that is set for other cities. They may want to jump in on something like this and get the specifics. So we are leading the effort. We may even lead it for the entire region. So we will see how that goes, depending on what comes out of this.

Unknown Attendee: In support of that comment, we talk to a lot of DOTs around the country, and everyone is interesting in on-demand pricing.

26:49 Question 8 Given this expansion in the functionality of this curbside space with new types of sessions, new uses of that space, how do you anticipate accommodating that from an enforcement or compliance perspective? Is it the goal to use the existing parking enforcement technology to enforce a greater variety of session types? And how do you envision the compliance aspect of this integrating with the work here?

BP: The challenge with parking enforcement has been having accurate information on the curbside. So if we can start to have accurate information that is reliable, this will improve their enforcement capabilities. Now they will know what to expect. Secondly, depending on these various dynamic curb uses, that is where we need to hear your feedback on how we can improve the enforcement capability. Department of Public Works does manual enforcement. They have handhelds. They do some license plate reading. Is there other technologies that we can use? From DDOT's perspective, we manage the curbside; we do the policy and operations. We try to work to ensure the operations work for the customer's benefit that is clear and simple but is also clear and simple for our enforcement partners. Because if they don't understand and the public doesn't understand it, that is where we will run into problems. So we are looking at ways how to do dynamic pricing and management of the curbside, but also keeping it simple and straightforward for the public and for our enforcement.

28:39 Question 9 So is it fair to say that in view of the fact that Conduent is your business process outsourcer, looking at that process as a business process, that any solution that is brought to bear would also have to feed data through some kind of an API through the Merge platform, which is I think the platform they use on the back end, in addition to providing a mix of visibility data into the ParkDC app?

BP: So I will say, as I noted earlier on in the presentation, this will be a component of the new parking meter services contract. So, Conduent is our incumbent, but, again, this effort is going to be part of that full solicitation for the parking meter services contract.

29:20 Question 9.1 They will be one of the consumers?

BP: It will be determined based who is the actual winning incumbent. We don't know who that is.

29:27 Question 9.2 Yes, but whoever that is, they will be one of the consumers of some of this data.

BP: Yes.

29: 31 Question 9.3 As a part of their business process, or they could be providers?

BP: Yes, consumer, provider. It will be a two way street.

29:40 Question 10 Do you anticipate that the upcoming RFP will be awarded to a single vendor providing the full scope of services or do you anticipate that you may purchase components from different vendors?

BP: That is where I will throw it back to you all. At the end of the day, when that RFP goes out, if it is a sole provider or it ends up being a consortium of providers. Again, I can't answer that at this time. So that is something you all can have this conversation now.

30:25 Question 11 Data collection for existing curbsides, what you guys have done in Chinatown I think, is that something that would be included in the scope of work here or is that something that is going to be happening with the Office of Information and Technological Innovation?

BP: OITI has collected some data back in 2016, but there is the issue of QA/QC-ing it, but then how do we also ground truth, for that is a gap since that data collection point, because that is only a point in time. So how do we ground truth it to the present for one, and then maintain it going forward, integrating it to our workorder management system, so that way we can say this is our curbside use inventory as of this second and it is maintained in real time. So I think that would have to be born out in your ideas and your proposals as to how do we bridge that gap.

31:20 Question 11.1 What kind of assets are in that inventory?

BP: All our signage, all our meters.

31:37 Questions 12 What is the RFI due data and can it be extended?

BP: At this point we have it through the end of July. July 27th is the deadline, close of business, which is 4:45 PM.

32:04 Question 13 This may be a silly question, is the idea here that this API would be flexible and generic enough to accommodate, for example, scooters or a new thing that is happening at the curbside. A couple months ago dockless bikeshare. There is sort of this proliferation of technology at the curb that feels like it spans a wide spectrum of actors within the curbside ecosystem. Is it the goal that this is the backbone or infrastructure that is going to be used to enforce upcoming or is the bid going to be pretty narrowly focused on what is already there and the known needs?

BP: I want to say we are leaning toward the former. Because we are in the position where we have to manage the curbside and you are right there are all these other types of modes that are entering the space, and we still have to manage it all. So the more open and flexible the API can be, the much easier it will be for us to manage and transact to those various modes.

33:30 Question 14 I think you mentioned something about third party competitors for this app area. How are they doing? What are they doing differently? I am just kind of curious what the competition is.

BP: Right now we have our APIs that we make available, but beyond that, we'll have a difficult time answering that questions, because this is our first foray really to engage the private sector. We are going to provide the building blocks, like the APIs. We are not in the business of making apps and maintaining. We want to get the information out there and let the market go from there.

34:29 Question 14.1 OK. So this project is just purely building an API that other apps can use or other companies can use, like Toyota, like you mentioned?

BP: Well, one, we have the ParkDC app. We want to still maintain our foundational app. How that looks, if it is ParkDC powered by XYZ, we will leave that to the proposals. One is maintain that app, the other part is developing and maintaining all of those dependent APIs that we are looking for. How that is managed with the third parties, again, I leave that to the proposals.

34:54 Question 14.2 On the ParkDC app, is it the only parking app for DC?

SD: We initially reached out to a couple different vendors that we knew were already running real time type applications like this. So one that did choose to work with the API is VoicePark. So there are two apps available that will show you the real time availability in the Chinatown area. We did have a third party we had been talking to, and that ended up not coming through, which is part of the reason that we went to developing our own app to ensure that there would be availability given that this is still kind of a nascent space in transportation applications. So the baseline was there to support us to meet the promise we had made to the public that the data would be available as part of the project.

35:42 Question 14.3 OK, so we are making the data available for other app vendors to use?

BP: And how you manage that, we will leave that to your proposal.

35:50 Question 15 What is the District's thoughts on the third party access to those APIs or the control of access to those APIs? Do you anticipate it being completely public where there is anonymous access to the various aspects of the API or are you looking for a process for the registration and management of application vendors that would connect to the API? Is there a thought of that at this time?

BP: Not at this time. That is where we want to hear your thoughts on that space and that is where then we will need to go to legal and our Office of Chief Technology officer to see how that lines up. So again I would refer to District IT standards as a guidance on that. But at the end of the day, I wouldn't say no to any of your proposals at this time. At this point we have to receive what you are thinking and vet that through the process to see what we can and can't do.

SD: And I would say you will see examples of both approaches occurring within District government, so it is still a learning...

~36:50 Question 15.1 And we are seeing examples of both across the country in various cities that are trying to do this same idea of publicly disseminating information for third party app development. Some cities want tight controls, other cities, like San Francisco for example, just drop the APIs out there and say do what you want with it. I just wondered if you guys already had an idea of how you want this to be managed.

BP: Not at this time. And at the same time, the level of effort you will have to look at how you are going to monetize it from your end. So again, you need to let us know what you have in mind, what your thoughts on it, and we will see what we can and cannot do. So again, I can't answer beyond it at this time.

37:26 Question 16 But you are not against it, the administration piece of it?

BP: At this point, I can't say no without getting legal guidance. That is why we are doing this RFI processing, see what the market is thinking and how they would deliver something like this, so that we can provide that information upstairs to our legal team and our procurement team, and, between all of us together, figure out what can we and what cannot do. And then go from there to structure our RFP. Because then that is where we will be able to specify, you know, you cannot do XYZ. And those would be, what I didn't have earlier but would eventually be in the RFP, those special provisions.

38:25 Questions 17 So you mentioned monetization. Again, are there thoughts on monetization of theses data streams from the District's standpoint?

BP: I realize you have to find some way to make money of what you are doing.

38:38 Question 17.1 Right, the vendor needs to make money. But what about the District?

BP: I will leave it at that.

38:48 Question 18 Is the focus of the current availability information real time? How far in advance is availability information available?

SD: It is currently real time. I am trying to remember if it is updating every 1 minute or 5 minutes, so it is relatively close to real time. And that just has to do with how both how the backend and frontend of the solution are working. So how the data is feeding in from the field and being turned in to availability information and the time... you know there is also the process of getting that back out into information. So we are not currently putting out any sort of forecasts. Though, we do tell the public if you are looking at the pricing, the pricing generally reflects how behavior in the area has been, so if it is higher demand during a certain time, so there is already some indication that that block might be totally open but the next hour it goes up to the top price. I don't know if the people are savvy enough to figure that out, but it is meant to be that they can find a block anywhere. If you are trying to stay for a shorter period and you don't mind paying the higher rate, then go to the other one, but if staying for longer then go pay less money and go stay on a block that is normally lower in demand.

40:11 Question 18.1 So it sounds like you guys are open to the idea of predictive availability being at least one of many solutions to this problem. It feels at least intuitively like if the goal for ParkDC is to be the planning and mapping app for how you plan your trip and what you are going to do and understanding what you are going to do at origin rather than at destination, it feels like there is potential that you could see some increase in the effectiveness of the dynamic pricing by giving that information a little bit earlier.

BP: It would be exciting to see. Our mission at the end of the day is to improve the customer experience and the reporting experience, so however much more information we can provide to the public so that it can reduce, circling for parking if they do decide to drive, or changing their mode options to, as examples, metro, TNC, bike. However much more information we can provide to the public, it would be very well appreciated, where we want to move in that direction.

41:44 Question 18.2 So you are also open to multi-modal capabilities here? Incorporating transit information or tracking the use of residential permits and things like that.

BP: Our primary goal right now, and I'll be selfish here for our team, our focus here is more on the curbside, but our transportation demand manager would encourage multi-modal, so I wouldn't say no. How that would look without overwhelming the customer, I will leave that again in your hands as to what that would look like. I think in your conversation, I think helping answer your questions, with these APIs, how do you reduce this lag time? When you are dealing with all these different sources of information, there is a chance that you might slow down your backend system, so how do we bring all this information that is dealing with, eventually sensors, transactions, whatever it may be, trying to bring that in without reducing or eroding that real time-ness.

42:50 Question 19 Is this real time from your all's perspective or in terms of the app's responsiveness?

BP: I am looking at it at the end of the day from the customer's perspective. If they go to the app that is generally reliable within whatever the standard is for real time acceptability for the customer. That is also something I think needs to be defined, what is acceptable real time for a customer? Because I know, personally, instant is great, but I know that is not going to happen. For some people, their tolerance is it has to be instant. So how do we get to the majority of people and make most of them happy?

43:35 Question 20 And again, the anticipated date for this RFP is 3rd or 4th quarter of '19?

BP: All I can say right now is fiscal year '19. So somewhere in that window.

44: 00 Are there any other cities that you guys have looked at that kind of stand out, that you think, these guys are doing something great, we want to mimic that or take some of that from that city.

SD: We're the best (haha).

Unknown Attendee: Ironically Stephanie, that is true, because we actually talk about your on demand pricing program to a lot of customer around the country and it is being received very well.

BP: To answer your question, different cities have different things that work for them. You have Seattle. You have Arlington where they have a good understanding of their curb uses. You have SF Park which experimented in this area of dynamic pricing, which is where we got our start from. But going into this arena, I was just meeting with these other cities this week and they were like, we can't wait to see what you pull off. So, this is an opening for a national standard. And there is conversations as well on the national scale to develop a standard language for curbside parking information, so that, at the end of the day, some app or the OEMs, whether I come to DC and drive to New York or Philadelphia or whatever the city, that the app is providing the same language of information. So this might also set the tone for how do we... so in the transit arena, you have what started out as Google but is now the General Transit Feed specification. What would that look like on the parking/curbside end? So you have the players, the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO), the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) that are working in that space, the International Parking Institute (IPI) that is also working in that space. So those are areas to figure out how do you influence that conversation, that standard language. And this may be that opportunity to be the leading demo on deploying that standard language.

46:19 Question 21 Have you guys considered pricing these new types of curbside sessions, these sort of rapid pick up/drop off sessions or scooter or whatever the case may be?

BP: We are looking to how to how do we enhance our technology and capability so that if we do go down that road we are able to pull it off. I would say we are open to the idea. What we are trying to do with any of our policy operation actions is to make sure we are able to do data driven justification for our actions so that we are not just doing things on the fly and not being able to explain to the public in a very coherent data driven way. Whatever way we can move in that direction, to be more data driven, decision making and policy making and implementation, we want to move in that direction.

47:21 Question 22 Is it safe to assume there is a parking meter component to this parking meter RFP? Like a hardware on the street.

BP: Yes, there will definitely be a hardware situation which asks what that environment is, if it is parking meter, sensors, that will be left to the RFP to go into more detail. As well as then the private sector providing a proposal on what type of assets and technology. The only thing I will say is that we are trying to move toward a more asset light and minimally invasive solution. So meaning, like if you are putting cameras in the streets we want to minimize hard-wiring. I understand in some cases we don't have a choice, because the technology hasn't gotten there. You see, our Capital Bikeshare stations are solar powered, our current meters are currently solar powered versus hardwiring the equipment to the electrical grid. As we think about all these assets, we want to think about how we are asset light and minimally invasive. And also resilient. If sensors in the ground, you have to deal with snow and paving and plowing. Whatever assets we put on the ground, we have to think about the entire lifecycle and resiliency.

48:43 Question 23 So is it safe to say that some of the ideas we are talking about today in terms of mixed use curbside and the more forward-looking, Uber-type policy is a consistent theme throughout the bid, maybe one of the big themes of the bid, versus, like, meter replacement being the main objective?

BP: So I am going to actually stop right there, because now I think we are wading away from the RFI and going toward the parking meter RFP, which is still under development. I really don't want to, so I am going to stop it right there.

49:20 Question 24 Would discounts come into play? Validations, businesses allowing discount parking?

BP: I would throw it back to you, if that is something that should be explored.

49:36 Question 24.1 I don't know, is it guys? We are all kind of talking. Would that be something that you guys would want?

BP: That may be something you may need to look with the business improvement district, see their thoughts on it. I am not going to say yay or nay. If you have ideas in that arena, please go ahead. Anything further?

BP [Aside]: Unless there is anything else burning, I'll end it here. Any additional questions then the ones you have asked, I ask again please send them to ddot.parking@dc.gov. That way then we can ensure we have documented all the questions that were asked and we can respond to all of them together as one so that everyone that is participating in this RFI can see all those responses. We will post presentation and audio recording sometime next week so that you can rehear and those that did not participate can also have the opportunity to hear the conversation.

51:00 Question 25 Do you have a deadline on submitting questions?

BP: Yes. If you have any additional questions, comments, or concerns, you have until July 19th COB, which is 4:45 PM. If you have any additional questions submit to ddot.parking@dc.gov. We will answer shortly after. Proposals are due July 27th, close of business.

After Conference Question 1 Would you happen to have a list of the participant available yet? We are attempting to determine prospective consortium or partners with whom we can join forces in providing ground-truthing capabilities using our one-to-many camera sensor and parking management APIs.

BP: See below.

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