



City of Santa Barbara
Airport Department

Meeting: 11/26/18
Agenda Item No. 9

DATE: November 26, 2018
TO: Airport Commission
FROM: Aaron Keller, Interim Airport Director AK
SUBJECT: Preparations for Holiday Airport Parking Demand

RECOMMENDATION:

That Commission receive a presentation about the preparations taking place in anticipation of holiday season travel and increased demand for parking at the Airport.

DISCUSSION:

The holiday season at SBA begins shortly before Thanksgiving Day and extends until after the New Year. In particular, the Thanksgiving week is characterized by very heavy passenger volumes during the day before Thanksgiving (Wednesday) and the following Sunday as many arrive home in time to return to work and school on Monday. The Hanukkah and Christmas season also brings a few days of exceptionally high travel volumes. Without prior planning, demand for parking at the Airport would quickly exceed capacity during peak times. Besides customer frustration and a poor reflection on the Airport, a lack of available parking can lead to operational issues for airlines if passengers fail to board their flights.

Holiday Employee Parking

In October, Airport staff began working with Republic Parking on a strategy to mitigate a likely shortage of parking in the long-term lot during peak periods. As in years past, the most logical first step is to temporarily relocate employee vehicles from the long-term lot. There are approximately 130 regular employees that use the long and short-term lots, however, never all at the same time. Nonetheless, relocating employees during the holidays can easily improve the situation for departing passengers. Still, relocation of employees was not sufficient to maintain available parking for passengers in 2017, rather the Airport directed vehicles to the "overflow lot" on Fredrick Lopez Road, near the corner of Hollister Avenue in the immediate days before Thanksgiving and Christmas. The Airport expects this possibility again in 2018.

For the holidays, Republic Parking has leased three 12-passenger vans for a terminal shuttle service. Employees will be directed to park in the parking lot at 495 S. Fairview Avenue at the NE Hangars, in the vicinity of FedEx. This is more convenient for employees compared to prior years when the Lopez/Hollister overflow lot was used for this purpose. It is roughly a 3-minute ride to the airline terminal from the NE Hangars via

Fairview Avenue. A minimum of two vehicles will shuttle employees to and from the airline terminal at 15-minute intervals, nearly 24 hours a day. The third vehicle will assist at peak employee shift-change times, and also will be used to shuttle passengers to and from the Lopez/Hollister overflow lot, in the event that the long-term lot reaches capacity, and passenger vehicles must be directed there. Ample signage has been placed at key locations for employees, and will be deployed in the event of passenger vehicles being directed to the overflow lot.

New Service Initiative

In addition to planning for capacity issues in the parking lots, Airport staff examined customer service amenities provided during the holidays. It is a time of the year when many residents and visitors are traveling for the first, and possibly only, time during the year. Infrequent travelers may find holiday travel particularly stressful and unpredictable. While the Airport's long-term parking lot is very conveniently located as compared to most airports, it still may represent a significant challenge for passengers traveling with luggage, groups, small children or elderly family members. As a new service initiative, Republic Parking will operate a four-passenger golf cart with a luggage rack to shuttle passengers and bags to and from the airline terminal. The cart is decorated with festive holiday lights for visibility. This service will be provided between 5 am and 8 pm daily.

PREPARED BY: Business Development/Properties