



Terence J. Ryan  
Parking Director

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Eileen Donoghue, City Manager *EMD*  
**FROM:** Terry Ryan, Parking Director

**DATE:** April 29, 2021

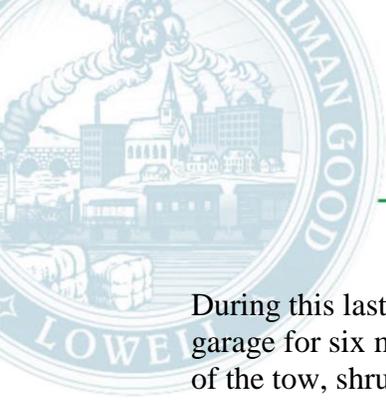
**SUBJECT:** MOTION RESPONSE Motion 11.14 – by C. Chau – Parking Policies/School Readiness at Garages

The City of Lowell has six parking garages and contain approximately 7,000 cars on a daily basis. Policies are in place to protect the customers who park their cars, to protect the cars parked and to protect the interests of the City and its citizens. It has never been the policy of City to allow the storage of cars within the garages or to require customers to move their cars every 72 hours. Periodically, LAZ personnel walk the garages identifying vehicles in the garage that are “dirty”, meaning that they have possibly been parked in the garage for an extended time. During the pandemic emergency declaration, this practice was put on hold because of the large amount of people working from home.

This past May, LAZ re-instated the garage walk thru’s following the process in place. Multiple attempts are made by LAZ to contact the owners of “dirty” cars to understand the situation of the car and if it should be moved. LAZ uses the owner provided emergency contact information to reach out to the owner of cars associated with a passcard, and transient cars are looked up by license plate. If after repeated attempts by LAZ to contact the owner, LPD is called to place a “72 Hour Tag” on the car and further attempts are made over the next 72 hours to contact the vehicle owner. If, after numerous attempts over a multi week period, a tow is ordered.

Multiple cars were towed in late June, with one issue, in which the owner contact information provided was obsolete, contact with the owner was not successful. Unnoticed by LAZ, but verified afterwards by video camera review, was the fact that the subject car had been moved by the owner during this process prior to a 72 hour tag issued, exiting the garage and returning to the same parking space, leaving LAZ to assume that it did not move. After a review of the situation, the Parking Dept. in conjunction with LAZ was able to work with the vehicle owner to rectify the situation.

Issues with this process have been identified and the Parking Dept. will be working with LAZ to tighten up the process for identifying ‘dirty’ cars, updating contact information of owners, working with customers to contact the garage if they need to park for an extended time and looking at pass card usage. Will this updated process be perfect, no, each case is different but the last thing the Parking Department wants to do is tow a car out of a garage by mistake.



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*Parking Director*

During this last tow in June, one vehicle was a stolen car from Pennsylvania that had been in the garage for six months and another car was inquired into by a person after the tow and when told of the tow, shrugged his shoulders and walked away indicating that it was possibly stolen and being hidden away in the garage. Maintaining a garage with active movement helps to prevent criminal activity, which is a priority of the Parking Dept.

In terms of the garages being ready for the upcoming school year, The Ayotte Garage holds 1,250 cars, enough to satisfy the needs of Lowell High School students and staff, construction workers and all City Hall employees with ample space for others. MCC will continue to utilize the Davidson Lot, Lower Locks Garage and the Leo Roy Garage and with the relocation of the District Court from Hurd St. to the New Judicial Center, Lower Locks has ample space.

Sincerely,

Terence Ryan

Parking Director