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## Standard Sees Third-Quarter Growth

Standard Parking Corp. has announced third-quarter 2006 revenue (excluding reimbursed management contract expense) and gross profit grew approximately 4% and 10%, respectively, as compared with the third quarter of 2005.

Pre-tax income increased by 55%. Third-quarter earnings per share were \$0.44, an increase of 10% over the 2005 third quarter.

James A. Wilhelm, President and Chief Executive Officer, said: "We are very pleased with this quarter's results as the business continues to execute on all levels. We added 23 net new locations during the quarter and now exceed 2,000 total. At the same time, we maintained our 92% retention rate for existing business for the 12 months ended September 30."

A sculpture, designed to provide tranquil sight and sound with the movement of rain-water, utilizes W.S. Tyler's Egla-Twin and Doka-Mono architectural woven-wire cloth. The "Liquid Zone" sculpture, which has the appearance of swimming whales, is located at Southern Connecticut State University. It is designed with a series of stainless steel channels and vertical surfaces in which collected rainwater trickles through channels. Two different designs of Tyler wire cloth were used because of the desire for varying weaves and apertures. Egla-Twin was chosen for the special optic effects created by its "twin" wires and for its flexibility. Doka-Mono offered additional aesthetic value to the structure with its transparent, yet reflective appearance.



## Structural Steel Addresses 13% Nationwide Growth in Demand

Recognizing increased demand for structural steel on construction projects throughout the United States, members of the industry are taking action to ensure that steel continues to be readily available for every type of project.

Every level of the structural steel supply chain — producers, service centers, fabricators and erectors — has been working with architects, engineers, general contractors and developers to supply steel in a timely manner. Efforts to continue prompt supply of product and services have included:

- Early Involvement — Architects, engineers, contractors and developers are finding that a true key to ensuring that their projects run smoothly and their structural steel satisfies the project schedule is the early involvement of fabricators in the design and planning process.

- Flexible Solutions — Industry members also are taking a proactive approach to providing flexible solutions for material acquisition through the involvement of steel service centers. As with the early involvement of fabricators, the work of service centers has been instrumental in helping designers and builders complete projects in a timely, cost-effective way.

- Steel Solutions Center — Offered as a no-charge service through the American Institute of Steel Construction, the Steel Solutions Center has aided hundreds of projects in providing conceptual solutions and technical expertise. In addition, the Steel Solutions Center can assist in the identification of particular section shapes available from area service centers and producing mills. For more information, log on to [www.solutions@aisc.org](http://www.solutions@aisc.org).

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Since 2000

# The 'People Box'

BY THOMAS J. FEAGINS, P.E.

**T**he first and last experience almost everyone has at a real estate development is the disposal, then the retrieval upon departure, of their vehicle. More than 90% of those who occupy the "people box" in most real estate developments arrive by personal transportation vehicles. Parking designers are full of opinions as to what is best and what is merely acceptable when it comes to this disposal and retrieval process. I'd like to share my perspective, which is based on my operational and design experience over the past 50 years.

A "car box" is a three-dimensional box into which spaces are fit; most often they are called parking garages, decks, facilities or ramps.

A "people box," also known as a "parking generator," can be further described as an office building, sports venue, shopping

center, airport, hotel or medical center. The length, width and height helps determine its efficiency and the potential number of cars that may be parked inside the box. The dimensions also influence customer acceptance and project cost.

Geometric requirements by cities, as well as owners and developers, also have influenced the efficiency of a parking facility. A space width of 8.5 feet, compared to 9.0 feet, is approximately a 6% reduction in capacity. Dimensional issues on run length and number of bays usually influence the maximum or the minimum length and width of the parking box.

The parking box can fit under or adjacent to the people box. When parking is located under the people box, parking efficiency is usually reduced. Parking boxes with functional plans of four bays offer greater flexibility — and usually more efficiency — than three- or two-bay facilities as far as inter-floor travel is concerned when sloping floors are used. The length and width of the box, of course, determines tier or floor plate size. In turn, the number of spaces on a typical floor can then be resolved.



Various buildings in the Greenway Plaza area of Houston show several parking boxes adjacent to people boxes. The building on the lower left is a hospital with a 12-story parking garage. Images courtesy of Walter P Moore.

# vs. the 'Car Box'

One of my first concerns when designing a parking facility is to determine available opportunities for inter-floor travel of drivers. Usually it is by means of sloped floors or segregated ramps that connect the parking levels. These options must work best for a given floor plate size as well as the number of spaces the facility may contain.

## Parking Demand and Supply

It is best to over-supply than to under-supply parking spaces. By under-supplying parking, the people box is restricted as to the maximum "people population" it can accommodate. There can never be enough parking spaces.

Around 1980, the personal computer revolution got into full swing, and specific software packages were used in the design of both the parking and people boxes. Parking box designers used these new tools to better take into consideration differences in parking demand in different people boxes.

Office planners also changed demand by creating office space designs that increased density, resulting in more people occupying the people box. Naturally, this increased parking demand.

Today, the people box is often big, but the car box is even bigger. This has challenged my architect friends to soften the parking box's visual effect on a real estate development. As a result, the exterior and interior appearances of the parking box have improved dramatically in the last 25 or so years. The initial point of arrival and final departure is the parking box, not the people box.

## Site Planning Issues

Developers of large-scale, mixed-use projects with multiple people and car boxes should engage a parking consultant in the early planning stages. Decisions such as location shape and relationships between the separate boxes need to include a parking consultant with experience in the owner's operational issues.

Understanding the benefits as well as the pitfalls of shared parking must be taken into account when multiple boxes are in proximity to one another. Too often the boxes are regarded as stand-alone phases without consideration of the overall planning goal.

How the boxes are phased needs to be contemplated carefully. Function flow of autos becomes much more complicated when a series of boxes (both people and auto) are planned, so that they connect via automobile ramps.

Expansion capabilities of the parking box, either horizontally or vertically, also needs to be considered in the site planning phase. Horizontal expansion is usually cheaper and the parking garage can be made taller on a smaller footprint where feasible. If an additional people box can be built adjacent to or within walking distance of an existing parking box, a problem can arise.

Now permit me to really stir the pot. Within the parking box can be valet parking spaces, self-park parking spaces, handicapped spaces, visitor-only areas, carwash services and access card-only areas. So within the overall parking box exist a number of sub boxes. Their size and location and how or if they connect to one another must be considered during the conceptual stages of a project.



When parking ratios climb to 3.6 car spaces per 1,000 s.f. of net rentable area in the typical office building, the parking box becomes much larger than the people box.

## A Better Place to Park

In the 1970s, the largest parking garage in the world opened in Chicago with approximately 9,600 spaces. That number has been eclipsed several times since. Today, our firm is involved in the planning of more than 37,000 spaces in eight projects in one city. With the continued interest in mixed-use projects, as well as other mega real estate projects with multiple parking and people boxes, the need for professionals experienced in all things parking will continue, especially as designs get more and more complex.

Most U.S. cities will continue to depend on the automotive vehicle as the major means of arrival to their people boxes for the foreseeable future. Simply put, the world deserves a better place to park.

The National Parking Association formed the Parking Consultants Council (PCC) in 1972. Its success, as well as that of other similar organizations, continues to enhance the parking industry as a business that takes professional experience.

The PCC accepts members whose primary means of support is derived from parking consulting activities for which they are paid a fee. Today, most developers and designers of real estate projects appreciate and recognize the benefits gained from the use of qualified parking experts.

Thanks to a select group of parking professionals who focus on functional, pleasing parking boxes, that better parking place is already here.

Thomas J. Feagins, P.E., is a Principal and Managing Director of Parking for Walter P. Moore. He also is a Founding Member of the National Parking Association's Parking Consultants Council. He can be reached at [TFeagins@walterpmoore.com](mailto:TFeagins@walterpmoore.com)

PT

# For Charlotte, P by S

BY JOHN VAN HORN

**“C**lunky old parking meters? Puh-lease! That look is so 1990’s. 1990s. This fall, the Charlotte Department of Transportation’s Park It! office is unveiling a sleek new look on several of its Center City streets. New parking pay stations will replace individual coin parking meters at three uptown locations ...”

Thus began the flyer that accompanied pay by space to Charlotte, NC. The installation was the culmination of nearly two years of trials by the city’s Department of Transportation, working in conjunction with Central Parking, Charlotte’s on-street program manager.

The public relations piece took a page from Madison Avenue, stressing the “style and look” of the new equipment and playing on the season by using terms such as “fall fashion” and “the benefits of being fashion forward.”

According to Clement Gibson, the department’s special programs manager, they wanted an opportunity to provide a service to the community.

“We are installing the meters in areas whose residents and visitors are ‘technologically savvy,’” she said. “Initial reaction is all positive.

“What do they like most? Credit card usage. People just don’t carry a lot of change, and our rates are \$1 an hour. With meters, it was coins or you were out of luck,” Gibson said. “The new machines take the cards, as well as coin and our Park It! tokens, and make it much easier for visitors to park in the central city.”

The city is installing a total of 42 machines, which will replace about 300 of its 1,000 meters. “We focused on high-traffic areas where the need was greatest.”

The units provide a cleaner streetscape, more options for parkers, and tremendous information availability with connectivity with the main office through a cellular/Internet network, Gibson added. “We know instantly when a machine is having a problem and can fix it. A broken meter waited until someone reported it.”

After the test period, users asked the city when installation was going to go forward. “They actually wanted the new equipment.”

Before the start-up, Gibson personally visited the merchants in the area to describe the new system and how it was going to work. “We wanted to be sure they understood what was happening and how it would positively affect their businesses. We also had agents in the area to help people with the new machines for the first two weeks. They served as ‘civic ambassadors’ and were extremely helpful during the transition period.

“I will say,” noted Gibson, “that we had very few problems. There is always a shake-out period, but the public took to the new machines right away. We are becoming more technologically adept. We use ATMs, cell-phones, pump our own gas, and even in some places check out our own groceries. Plus, Charlotte is becoming center of technology for the Piedmont area. Our residents embraced the new system almost immediately.”

Although the manufacturers say the machines will replace up to 10 meters, the city averaged 6 to 7 meters per unit.



# is 'Fashion Forward'



time is extended. And there is no need to return to the car and leave the receipt on the dash.

"This adds to the convenience," Gibson said. "That's what it's all about."

The solar-powered machines made for a less complicated installation. "Most of the areas are in direct sunlight, and of course Charlotte has great weather," Gibson said. "However, we may have to hard-wire some of the machines that will be located in 100% shaded areas. As of now, however, there has been no problem with the solar power."

Enforcement officers get a list of unpaid spaces on their cellular-enabled device (PDA, cellphone, etc.) and can go directly to spaces in violation and issue citations. They don't need to check each space or each vehicle.

"My suggestion is that the credit card facility is the major convenience feature for the machines," Gibson said. "There is less need for a bill acceptor if you have a credit card reader. It keeps the unit cost down and makes them easier to maintain. Although our installation is new, so far we are extremely pleased."

One nice feature, Gibson added, is that people can add time to their parking ticket if they desire. They take their receipt with them, go to any pay-by-space machine, enter the "add-time" number and the amount of additional time they want, and their parking

**The city of Charlotte chose Digital Payment Technologies' "Luke" pay-by-space machines.**

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# SLC Writes Tickets by Hand; System Is Fully Automated

BY JOHN VAN HORN

**S**alt Lake City's Gary Griffiths had a problem. He was having an average of 2300 of his parking citations reduced or dismissed by the court each month typically because of errors, lack of photo's or timeliness on the part of the parking enforcement officer. He was also at a point where he needed to replace the hand held units his officers used.

In addition, he was unable to have an automated system for all his enforcement staff. While his on street parking enforcement officers did carry automated equipment, the police, airport, and others wrote tickets by hand. This caused data input issues.

After some research he decided to replace his hand held ticket writing equipment with a technology that allows all his officers to actually write their tickets by hand, and simultaneously have the data downloaded to his central office in a digital form.

The System, called VShield, uses a paper-based citation, without a handheld computer and still delivers real time citation automation. Its web-based service delivers mobile citation issuance, work flow automation, enterprise application integration, third-party data base interaction and real time mobile messaging.

The system delivers real time citation specific messages right to the officer's cell phone. It allows enforcement supervisors to manage their officers, as they are carrying out their duties. They will now know, at any point in time where their officers are and how they are performing. Hearing officers can view essential citation data as it happens and see what the officer saw when the citation was written. Citation recipients gain immediate web-based access to their citation and know with surety what the citation was for, where they were when they received it and how they can pay for it online.

"We have a special "pen" that the officers use to write the

tickets," says Griffiths, head of the city's compliance division. "The pen captures the data and transmits it through the officers' cell phone, in our case its Nextel/Sprint, to our central office. If needed, the officer can take a photo of the car at the site, including a shot of the license number or of a violation (too close to a driveway, in front of a hydrant). That photo is tied to the citation, along with a date time stamp and GPS location. Also, the officer can add a voice record such as telling the hearing officer that the violator drove off before he was able to give them the citation."

"It means that there are few if any errors. Training is almost nonexistent, since the officer simply fills in the data on the citation. We can have officers trained and writing citations in a few minutes. This is particularly beneficial for those like the police who only write a few tickets in the course of their duties. And it means that everyone is using the same system."

"With our previous system, the data about the ticket was downloaded into our central system nightly. So if a person wanted to pay their citation on they day they received it, it was impossible since the hearing officer didn't have any data on the ticket. Now that information about the ticket is there in real time."

"We had an interesting incident. A person came in to pay their ticket, and as the hearing officer was looking at the original citation, he noticed that the vehicle had a second citation, one that had been written five minutes before. Seems the person had parked in a handicapped parking area while they were visiting city hall to pay their first ticket, and got a second one. Both citations were collected

at the same time."

The pen has a built in battery and a life of about 10 hours. That means that it will run an entire shift. They are recharged overnight and ready for the next day.

"We had a few complaints from some of our officers about using the hand helds, they are heavy and there is the second piece of the package, the printer. We also had a loss problem. Officers



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**Now our dismissal rate is around 335 a month, a reduction of 87%.**

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would leave the units on the roof of the vehicle and drive off. We would have a broken unit. Those issues have all disappeared

The biggest concern for Griffiths was the voided tickets. "With over 2000 tickets a month being voided or reduced, and considering that our officers write about 10,000 a month, that's as if we have two full time employees that aren't earning their keep. Now our dismissal rate is around 335 a month, a reduction of 87%."

If an officer happens across a vehicle that has an issue (stolen, numerous

unpaid violations, etc) the central system will send a text message to the officer's phone and notify them of the problem so appropriate action can be taken.

Financially it's a boon for the city. Not only are they collecting more citation revenue (that wasn't our intention, says Griffiths) but their investment in equipment is about 65% less than with previous systems.

"Technology moves quickly," Griffiths adds. "Our citation writing equipment would become obsolete and we would be forced to replace it. I don't see this happening so quickly with the new system." "Paper is easy to change."

The system was developed by Velosum. For more information you can log on to [www.velosum.com](http://www.velosum.com).

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## The Ergonomic Ticket

The City of Chicago has done considerable work in the ergonomics of parking citations. Through their research they have developed a parking ticket so that it ran vertically rather than horizontally (making it easier to hold). They designed it so it could fit into the officer's back pocket making it more convenient.

The new ticket also reduced the amount of officer handwriting involved in issuance (and also errors) by providing pre-populated fields (the most issued violations, the most cited vehicle makes, the most cited plate types, etc.)

Griffiths has redesigned his citation based on the Chicago model and is extremely excited about instituting the new ticket this month.

Parking Today has been in contact with the City of Chicago and will have an article next month on the details of their unique design.

# Parking Security



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Circle #46 on Reader Service Card

# 'Max Headroom' and Other Sorrows ...

Editor, Parking Today:

The October issue had been kicking around my desk, I finally picked it up, and the 1,000-word (approximate) article grabbed me. That topic - how deceptively complex parking is - dogged me for my 10 full-time and more part-time years in the business.

Case in point is in the "We Brits Have Been Shoupistas" article, where Peter Guest states: "My daughter recently parked in a two-hour zone and got a ticket for illegal parking. The zone started at 8 a.m., and the ticket was written at 8:30 a.m. The ticket should never have been written. ..."

Oh really? Assuming she was parked overnight (the author does not state), or from at least 6:29 a.m., then the ticket may very well be correct. It all depends on how they defined the "rate structure." Anyone who thinks parking isn't complicated should be given a primer in "Rates Programming & Setup." The stuff the industry has required of Pay on Foot & Fee Computer pay-on-foot and fee-computer manufacturers is unbelievable.

I remember a favorite of mine. Wayne Boyce (then with Apcoa in Dallas) structured his rates in a downtown garage to get some added business from jury duty patrons. If you got in before 8 a.m. and parked all day, you got a discounted rate (park more, pay less). If you came in later, or if you left earlier, you actually paid quite a bit more than a transient that parked all day.

Boyce increased his overall revenue because he understood the market segments, and he knew a rate was whatever you want it to be - like an airline seat. I bet you could probably get a

whole article out of rates, probably even one a month from different market segments (Airport / Hospital... how about the hotels!). Have folks send in their wackiest rates.

Another reader contest: I always find it interesting when a parking garage or operation is featured in a movie. How about a Parking Today "Academy Award" for best appearance by a parking facility or operation in a feature film or TV show? "All the President's Men" comes to mind first, this being election season. There have been cop shows that feature nailing the perp using parking card access system audits.

My personal favorite, though, was a 1980s sci-fi flick from Britain called "Max Headroom," in which an online PARC system battle resulted in the creation of the title character, named after the last thing the victim saw - an automated parking gate with a yellow warning sign stating, "Max Headroom - 6 feet 10 inches."

John Clancy

Our favorite is "Fargo," where one of the killers ends up creating mayhem in a snow-covered parking deck. After killing someone on the roof, he must have lost his ticket, so he decided he would take out the attendant on the way out. That bullet in his shoulder may have had something to do with his "peckish" mood. Editor

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# UA Is First North American Site for Units That Save Energy, Reduce Emissions

The University of Akron is the first North American organization to utilize the technology of a power-supply optimizing unit that results in more environmentally friendly and cost-efficient lighting.

The Ohio university's Office of Parking Services is installing a Varmatic LightMaster, produced by Lighting Dimensions of Scotland, in each of its four main parking decks. The units will conserve a total of approximately 1,000 megawatt hours of electricity annually, which is a 24% overall increase in efficiency. They also will extend the lives of lamps used in the deck.

According to Parking Services Director Jim Stafford, one unit is installed and the remaining installations was to be completed by the end of the year.

"At current energy prices, the units will save the university more than \$76,000 annually and will have paid for

themselves in less than two years," Stafford says. "And the positive impact of this initiative will extend far beyond the university, because these units will help to reduce emissions of carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide gases."

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a lamp than it does to keep it lighted, the Varmatic LightMaster works primarily by releasing the amount of power needed to light the lamp and then reducing the power in a controlled fashion, while maintaining lamp stability and high-quality light output.

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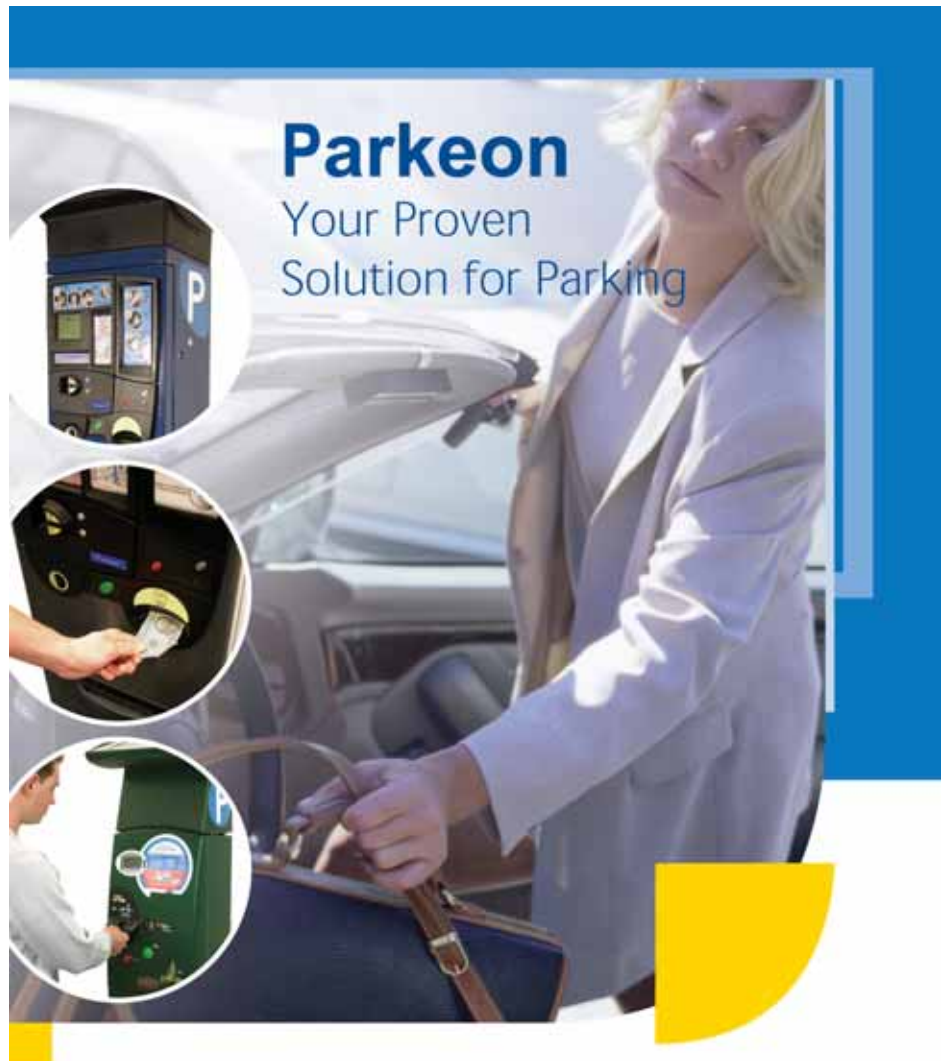
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## Meter Changes Raise Cash, Ire

White Plains, NY, is converting its parking meters to pay stations. The move is meant to take the sting out of paying for 'round-the-clock parking in a city with a newly robust night life by giving people different ways to pay. So far, the switch seems to have elicited as many complaints as kudos, leaving lots of confused and annoyed people pressing buttons or waiting to pay to park when they'd rather be somewhere else.

The city spent about \$250,000 over the past seven years on new multispace or electronic single-space meters, Parking Commissioner Albert Moroni said. These newest machines accept credit cards, bills and coins, and make change. The city's goal is to install them in all 12,500 parking lot and garage spaces in the next 10 years, he said.

"It's going to save us money in the long run," Moroni said, explaining that when people pay by credit card, the city gets the revenue instantly, and that cash also gets credited to city coffers faster from centralized pay stations than from individual meters.

"Collecting the money is very labor-intensive. We'll have more \$1 and \$5 bills and less coins. We pay a fee to have our coins collected and weighed. Cities all across the country are doing this. The wave of the future is electronic funds for parking."

Parking revenue also is expected to increase just because there should be fewer "meter-beaters," or people who fail to pay, because not having change for the meter won't matter.



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