



2020 END-OF-YEAR CHAIRMAN'S REPORT TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

In January of this year, Mayor Eddie Moran reorganized the Reading Parking Authority Board of Directors by appointing five new members. The Mayor tasked the new board members with restructuring and implementing his administration's policy of the four pillars: safe streets/neighborhoods, education and workforce development, community development, and responsible leadership and integrity. The Mayor requested the Reading Parking Authority set the "gold standard" that other boards could follow in the future.

In the last 12 months, the board of directors, management team, and rank-and-file employees with the assistance of professional consultants transformed the Reading Parking Authority into a reliable community partner. The board has made significant progress in rebranding the RPA, improving operational efficiencies, and implementing best practice policies.

During this time, the world experienced the global COVID-19 pandemic that resulted in an unprecedented health crisis and had profound economic implications. The RPA was no exception to the effects of COVID-19. The Authority's primary goal during the pandemic was to continue providing parking services while keeping our employees safe. Like many organizations, we had to adapt to increased operational expenses due to COVID-related costs. At the same time, we experienced significant revenue loss because special events were canceled and many workers started telecommuting instead of working in their downtown offices. In an effort to mitigate the effects of lost revenue, we took as many proactive steps as possible resulting in over \$700,000 in costs savings. During this challenging time, the RPA staff rose to the occasion to continue providing essential services and adapting to these new realities as a team.

This report outlines Reading Parking Authority's major initiatives, new operational efficiencies, public initiatives, community partnerships, and policy statements. These new initiatives and policies have helped rebrand the Reading Parking Authority as a strategic partner in the revitalization of our city. While self-assessment, change, and growth are continuous, much has been done in 2020 toward fulfilling the Mayor's directives.

NEW MAJOR INITIATIVES

- Adopted new organizational by-laws replacing 1978 by-laws
- Approved a 5-year strategic plan
- Began 13 million dollar repair/improvement projects to garages and facilities
- Purchased surface lots from Reading Redevelopment Authority that were previously leased (creating operational savings)
- Completed parking workshop for board members and senior staff
- Completed a successful external audit (the first in over 5 years)
- Reorganized staff structure and updated job descriptions



NEW PUBLIC INITIATIVES

- Installed 20 new pieces of public art at South Penn and 4th& Cherry garages in collaboration with Berks Arts
- Expanded street sweeping program by 60 blocks in East Reading area
- Collaborated with DoubleTree hotel to develop new roof dining

OPERATIONAL IMPROVEMENTS

- Revised employee handbook*
- Saved \$733,826 to improve cash flow during height of COVID-19 pandemic
- Increased staff training
- Completed integration of Park Hub system

NEW POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

- Established or revised the following policies and procedures:
 - Restricted capital reserve account*
 - Public participation in board meetings*
 - Record retention*
 - Background checks on post-offer employment*
 - One-year prohibition of board members seeking RPA employment*
 - Employee Whistle Blower*
 - Employee complaint and communication process*
 - Charitable donation*
 - Right-to-Know *
 - Personnel policy*
 - Budget policy*
 - Multiple contracts*
 - Corporate sponsorship and naming rights of facilities*
- Creation of Diversity/Inclusion Committee
- Standardized pricing for monthly contracts

*Approved by board resolution

NEW COMMUNITY AND GOVERNMENTAL PARTNERSHIPS

- Engaged with City Auditor on cooperative audits
- Evaluated and created City Shade Tree Commission tree-planting/maintenance program
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- Partnered with YouthBuild program of United Community Services to beautify surface lots with mulching, painting, and weeding
- Collaborated with Penn Street farmers market
- Provided space for free COVID-19 testing by PA Department of Health and other community partners
- Entered into intergovernmental agreement with Reading Area Water Authority
- Created Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) agreement with Reading Downtown Improvement District
- Amended Parking Cooperation Agreement with annual payments to the City of Reading
- Entered into Temporary Parking Agreement with Reading School District to provide parking relief during COVID stay-at-home orders
- Partnered with Rudden Family Foundation for “Free Essentials Fair” events

2021 PLANNED INITIATIVES

- Implementation of Comprehensive Parking Plan
- Residential Parking Permit and increased residential off street parking for residents

As a board directors, we are very proud of what has been accomplished this year and believe we have met the Mayor’s directive to reshape this organization. This could not have been accomplished without the professionalism and commitment from our management staff (Nathan Matz, Mike McGrath, Bart Ganster, and Kristen Stubblebine), our supervisors, and our rank-and-file employees. In addition to our employees, the board would like to acknowledge the support and guidance received from our solicitor Mahlon Boyer, human resources consultant Danielle Reardon, parking industry consultant Larry Cohen, and others who have shared their professional institutional knowledge. We also want to acknowledge our ratepayers and the citizens of Reading for their patience and support as we underwent significant changes this year. The Reading Parking Authority will continue to build public trust with our community as we finish 2020 and look forward to an even more productive 2021.

Respectfully Submitted

Frank B. Denbowski
Chairman, Reading Parking Authority Board of Directors