



For Immediate Release: Courthouse Corridor First Hour Free Courtesy Program Ends

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BOISE-- On Monday, March 9, the trial First Hour Free program for parking in the Ada County Courthouse Corridor will be discontinued. The program was managed by Capital City Development Corporation, Boise's redevelopment agency (CCDC), which owns and operates the Downtown Public Parking System.

In December 2007 the Ada County asked CCDC to implement a first hour free program as a courtesy to Courthouse visitors. Under the 10-month trial program, the county paid for the estimated full cost of the program based on the then-current rate of \$1.50 per hour. In August 2008 CCDC raised parking rates system-wide (to \$2.50 per hour) after a thorough analysis by CCDC's Parking Advisory Committee. CCDC advised the county that the new rates would be assessed when the trial program expired at the end of September 2008. Since October 2008, the County has declined to pay the full amount, which now averages about \$42,000 per month (approximately \$500,000 annually). CCDC maintained the program while discussions were underway, leading to a current balance due of over \$125,000. On January 19, CCDC advised the County that without full payment it would suspend the first hour program on February 2, later extended to March 5. Today CCDC notified the primary tenants in the corridor that the program will cease on March 9.

The popular First Hour Free program in all other downtown garages remains in place. CCDC offers the First Hour Free program in the downtown garages because the program is an economic development incentive of attracting visitors to downtown businesses. The cost of the first hour program downtown--about \$1.45 million in 2008--is offset by patrons, whose average length of stay is over 2.5 hours. No comparable development benefit exists in the Courthouse Corridor as 70% of visits there are for less than an hour.

Parking revenue from the two Courthouse Corridor parking facilities is pledged toward debt service on the bonds for those parking facilities. Those bond agreements never contemplated free or subsidized parking, and visitors paid the cost of parking from the opening of the Courthouse until the county-funded first hour free program commenced.

CCDC is an independent public development agency serving as a catalyst for quality private development through urban design, economic development and infrastructure investment with a goal of "building vitality in Boise's downtown." More information is online at [www.ccdboise.com](http://www.ccdboise.com).