

New Traffic-Signal Timers Solve Downtown Parking Problem

Written by GUEST CONTRIBUTOR Dick Deep
Thursday, 04 August 2011

Locating parking spots downtown, long a problem in Steamboat Springs, has been made much easier with the addition of the five now-parked traffic lanes of U.S. Highway 40. The asphalt lanes were replaced with concrete last year and, as part of the \$5.6 million project, new signals were installed. A traffic-engineering firm in Denver was contracted by the city to coordinate the devices to achieve optimal lack of flow.



"We are absolutely amazed at the efficiency," gushed Bean Bell, Steamboat Springs city engineer. "We were told at the outset that achieving complete gridlock--without cross-traffic signals thrown into the mix--was an impossible dream, but here, it's reality.

"And now, with CDOT installing fiber optics, we will be able to pinpoint vehicles that have been motionless for hours and quickly dispatch code-enforcement officers to issue parking tickets," added Bell.

Parking fines are not the only monies filling city coffers thanks to the new signals; sales taxes also are up.

"Downtown is booming, even through the shoulder seasons," said Trashy Barnyard of Lame Street Steamboat. "People are buying food, drinks and new clothes as the kids grow out of them, when they'd normally just be driving through town."

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Ski Corp executives and the City Chamber Resort Council Association are discussing ways to collect lodging taxes from motorists spending the night in their cars on Lincoln Ave.

"These could be the fixed revenues we've been needing for our Fly-By Steamboat program," noted I.M. Flyinhigh, Intracourse airline director.