



# MIAMI BEACH

OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER

LTC NO. 285-2014

LETTER TO COMMISSION

TO: Mayor Philip Levine and Members of the City Commission

FROM: Jimmy L. Morales, City Manager

DATE: August 15, 2014

SUBJECT: **LICENSE PLATE RECOGNITION (LPR) PARKING ENFORCEMENT UPDATE**

2014 AUG 15 PM 5:04  
CITY CLERK'S OFFICE

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The following serves as an update to LTC No. 257-2014, dated July 24, 2014, regarding the deployment of License Plate Recognition (LPR) parking enforcement.

The use of LPR parking enforcement integrations allows for multiple payment platforms, including pay by plate at pay stations, monthly permits at municipal parking facilities, and pay by phone service. LPR parking enforcement consists of handheld units and mobile (vehicle mounted) devices. Omnipark, the City's service provider for LPR handheld units and a leader in LPR technology, has no other customer with as many payment options allowed as in Miami Beach. This, coupled with the aforementioned set of payment options, places Miami Beach on the leading edge of a fully integrated LPR parking enforcement program.

While the variety of payment options has made it easier for customers, it has created some enforcement challenges. In particular, the LPR handheld devices have to be able to account for all three payment systems. In the past, parking enforcement officers could simply look for a receipt on a dashboard or a parking decal on the windshield. Now they have to rely on the handheld device.

As previously reported, unfortunately, the system has experienced some glitches. Omnipark's software began manifesting system bugs, including "freezing" requiring a hard reboot (removal of the battery), spontaneous rebooting, or delays/interruptions in communication.

Since my last communication on this matter, I have gained firsthand experience with some of the LPR handheld system challenges. I went on parking enforcement patrol with a parking enforcement specialist (PES) and Assistant City Manager Kathie Brooks. We observed several problems with the handheld device, particularly in reading the letters and numbers on the license plate, and reached out to the vendor to make sure everything was being done to address these matters. We also instructed the Parking Director to continue to monitor system performance firsthand through patrols with officers.

Staff and Omnipark have daily communications where system updates and diagnostics are evaluated, implemented, and debriefed after field testing. The "debugging" process is somewhat complex and system "fixes" do not always yield the intended outcome, which then requires further analysis and testing. However, overall, these efforts have yielded positive results in the form of reduced incidents of freezing, spontaneous rebooting, or delays/interruptions in communications. While there are still some units

with incidental occurrences, users (PES) report overall improvement with system functionality as well as increased processing speed. Parking enforcement personnel continue to be very helpful in reporting these issues.

Omnipark has reaffirmed their commitment to resolve all issues quickly and will deploy a representative to assist in this effort. Of course, we will continue to hold Omnipark accountable and ensure their system performs to our satisfaction. In the event the problems are not resolved to our satisfaction, we will pursue all contractual and legal remedies, including termination of the contract.

Lastly, I am glad to report all mobile (vehicle mounted) LPR equipment, system functionality, and operability are performing as expected. Apparently, the technology in the vehicle mounted LPR system is more advanced and reliable. This may prove to be a long term solution, although it raises some logistical issues we would need to work out.

I will continue to provide you with updates on this matter as it progresses. If you should have any questions, please contact Saul Frances, Parking Director via email or at extension 6483.

c:     Kathie Brooks, Assistant City Manager  
       Patricia Walker, Chief Financial Officer  
       Mark Taxis, Assistant City Manager  
       Joe Jimenez, Assistant City Manager  
       Marcia Monserrat, Special Projects Coordinator  
       Saul Frances, Parking Director