

## Parking woes force Boise attorneys from downtown

By: Sharon Fisher July 9, 2018 1 Comment



It's moving day at the law firms of Mauk Miller & Hawkins, and Skinner Fawcett, and parking is one reason why. Photo by Sharon Fisher

Downtown Boise attorneys are moving out of town, and they say parking is one reason why.

MSBT Law, which has been in the Banner Bank building at 10<sup>th</sup> and Bannock since 2006, is moving when its five-year lease is up, and parking is the reason, said Paul Turcke, shareholder and president. The company, which has 15 employees, nine of whom are attorneys, pays \$2800 a month for parking.

"Those rates are going to keep going up," he said. "So between that and the ever-rising rates for rent in downtown Boise, we looked around the periphery."

MSBT has been located in the downtown core since its founding in 1993. It's moving to Glenwood and State, after considering other sites such as Parkcenter Boulevard. "If you move slightly out of the downtown core or the edge, it's possible to find surface parking included in base rent," Turcke said. His new location includes free parking, as well as lower rent.

While Turcke wouldn't provide details on what he was paying, "anyone who does basic research can figure it out," he said. The firm now pays \$21.50 per square foot in the Banner Bank building. "I doubt we could renew at that rate," he said. "Rents in Class A in Boise are in the \$23 to \$24 per-square-foot range." Properties the firm looked at on Parkcenter and around the Hewlett-Packard campus on Chinden Boulevard were in the \$15 to \$18 per-square-foot range, and included parking, he said.

Parking is also getting scarcer in downtown Boise, Turcke said, noting that he has twice lost parking spaces because buildings were constructed on the lots. He now parks at Bannock and 11<sup>th</sup>, the site of a proposed new mixed-used project across from the Boise Cascade building. "People who have surface parking downtown, those spots are going to get gobbled up," he said. In addition, anecdotally even people who pay for parking can't always find spaces. "My understanding is that they oversell parking by 20 percent," he said. "It's a common practice, because you're not going to have every permit holder on the property."

"Parking is a struggle," agreed Valynn Jensen, legal assistant for Mauk Miller & Hawkins PLLC, as movers worked at the firm's office at 515 S. Sixth St. The firm has had trouble with parking since the Inn at 500 Capitol opened in January 2017, she said. While parking wasn't the specific reason the firm was moving – its building was purchased – both Mauk Miller and Skinner Fawcett LLP, in the same building, chose new sites on Parkcenter Boulevard because parking was more available there, she said.

Capitol City Development Corp. (CCDC), which is attempting to encourage downtown commuters to think of alternatives to driving, raised its monthly parking rates Feb. 1 from \$140 to \$175 on the Idaho Street garages and from \$120 to \$140 on its other garages. CCDC hourly parking increased from \$2.50 to \$3 per hour, though free one-hour parking remained.

Small firms can't always pass on the costs of parking to their clients, Turcke said. "Large, regional law firms, as overhead increases, still find Boise very attractive, comparatively speaking," he said. "We represent a lot of local governments. We act as city attorneys for small cities. We don't have clients we can pass on the increased cost of living in downtown Boise very comfortably. Our clients are places like Eagle and Fruitland and Mountain Home."

Some larger companies have found downtown parking to be enough of a problem that they've moved to suburban sites in the Treasure Valley at least partly due to parking. Most notable is human capital management company Paylocity Corp., which is moving in July from the C.W. Moore Plaza and U.S. Bank building to Meridian's Ten Mile Crossing business park at 10 Mile and Franklin. "Finding parking for 200 employees was a challenge," said Jay Schedler, vice president of human resources. "We had to use multiple parking lots on multiple streets, and every time we added people we had to add more parking spots. That was problematic at 200, and very problematic at 400."



Jay Schedler

Parking was also expensive, costing approximately \$100 per employee per month, Schedler said. In addition to the other advantages of constructing a building that's centrally located and easier to expand, the company now gets free monthly parking, he said.

Tweet

Tagged with: MAUK MILLER MSBT LAW PARKING PAUL TURCKE

### ABOUT SHARON FISHER



Sharon Fisher is an Idaho Business Review staff writer, covering financial institutions, technology, and business development. She holds a bachelor of science in computer science from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, and a masters in public administration and graduate certificates in geographic informational analysis and in community and regional planning from Boise State University. She likes explaining things and going to meetings. Join me on Twitter at @IBR\_SLFisher.

### ONE COMMENT



*ernest@betterideagroup.com*  
July 9, 2018 at 9:04 am

I used to live in a community where they fought parking issues. Sadly, many residents couldn't differentiate between going to a built up area with opportunities for lots of things available in a small area and a typical suburbia situation where you drive between appointments.

Many young attorney's embrace an urban environment where they can enjoy walking to multiple venues. MSBT may leave but firms that want to hire These young professionals will rise up and enjoy the growth that comes from young minds