PARKING SYSTEM

FORMATION STUDY

BOROUGH OF SOMERVILLE, NJ

August 18, 2008

LEVEL G ASSOCIATES, LLC

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PARKING SYSTEM FORMATION STUDY

BOROUGH OF SOMERVILLE, NJ

August 18, 2008

A. EVALUATION & COMPARISONS

1. Inventory - By New Jersey standards, the Somerville parking system is on the small side. The system contains 1,010 parking spaces – 394 on-street and 616 off-street.

For more information see Table 1 and Table 2.

2. Operating Expenses – Despite its decentralized organizational structure and economy-scale budget, the borough operates a respectable and fairly efficient parking system.

Annual "Cost per Space":	Somerville	$134
	Waterbury, CT	$237
	Morristown, NJ	$348
	Hartford, CT	$455
	Bloomfield, NJ	$539

For more information see Table 3.

2. Revenue – Parking system income has progressed steadily over the past three years but is on the low side in a peer comparison. In 2008 it is projected that the Somerville parking system will collect $410,000 in income yielding an annual "income per space" estimate of $411 ($410,000 ÷ 998 revenue generating spaces = $411 per space per year).

Annual "Income per Space":	Somerville	$411
	Bayonne	$464
	Trenton	$516
	Metuchen	$533
	Bloomfield	$610

For more information see Table 4 and Table 5.

3. Net Income – A more indicative measure of a parking system's effectiveness is net income. Somerville's annual "net income per space" factor of $277 is good.

Decentralized or inefficient parking systems are known to have "net income per space" factors under $100.

The following table shows parking system income for the past three years and the calculation for the "net income per space" factor.

	2006	2007	2008 (projected)
Collections	$177,758	$199,471	$213,500
Parking Fines (estimated)	172,277	177,197	180,000
Smart Cards / Permits	13,164	14,927	16,500
Totals	$363,199	$391,595	$410,000
Income per Space			$ 411
Cost per Space			(134)
Net Income per Space			$ 277

4. Enforcement - A parking system must walk a fine line when it comes to parking enforcement – too much enforcement can promote bitter feelings from parkers and the borough may be perceived as being overly antagonistic. This situation usually does not sit well with downtown merchants either. Not enough enforcement can lead to parking abuses and be financially unsound because a.) income from fines will be low, and b.) parking meter collections will suffer because people will realize that they can "get away with" not putting money in the meter.

Of all the municipalities we have surveyed, the Town of Morristown seems to have achieved the best balance of parking enforcement. The parking authority and the SID have a good working relationship and maintain an open dialog on all parking issues. Short-term meters are checked 3 or 4 times per day and permit spaces or long term meters are checked 1 or 2 times per day. Over the past three years they have averaged 18,300 tickets per year, or 11.4 tickets per enforceable space.

Translating this rate to the Somerville parking system would yield an annual ticket output of 11,514 (1,010 enforceable spaces x 11.4 per space = 11,514).

The number of tickets issued in Somerville in 2006 and 2007 has been 10,121 and 10,094, respectively.

Therefore, we estimate that current enforcement levels are about 14% below the ideal level. We also believe that issuance levels over 12,000 annually would be perceived as excessive by customers and business owners.

We concur with the Bier recommendation to increase fines to $25, $30, and $40 for overtime parking, meter feeding, and prohibited parking, respectively.

5. Collections - An examination of current meter revenues compared to parking rates and hours of operation indicates a 37.2% operating efficiency:

Annual Income if All Meters are Occupied And Paid 100% during Normal Operating Hours	$557,981
Reported Income – Latest 12 month Period	$207,410
Operating Efficiency	37.2%

Based on our knowledge of parking activity in downtown Somerville and the New Jersey market, we believe the 37.2% operating efficiency is on the low side. In the parking industry there are a number of reasons that may explain low meter operating efficiencies including too many inoperable meters / poor maintenance, theft of coins, or vandalism to name a few. However, based on our observations the most likely reasons for low efficiency in Somerville are:

- little or no parking occupancies in middle and most remote portions of municipal lots, and;
- low customer compliance due to uneven enforcement or predictable enforcement routines.

B. PRELIMINARY OPERATING PROGRAM

The goal of the operating program will be to consolidate all parking functions to a single operating unit with a unit director who will oversee and supervise all activities of the unit.

It is recommended that changes to the existing parking system and policies be implemented on an incremental basis to minimize negativism and confusion. The following list indicates the main 16 recommendations of the Bier report along with Level G Associates' (LGA) thoughts for implementation:

1.	Change parking staffing / structure	Phase One
2.	Use DPW office to house new parking unit	Phase One
3.	Establish job descriptions	Complete (in Bier report)
4.	Prepare operating manual	Phase One
5.	Convert meters to sealed canister system	Phase Two (LGA recommends new collection procedures as part of Phase One)
6.	Double 10 hour meter rates from $1 to $2	Phase Two

7.	Double 1 hour off street meter rates to 50¢	Phase Two
8.	Triple 12 hour commuter rate from $1 to $3	LGA recommends changing from $1 to $2 in Phase One (current NJ Transit lot rate is $3 per day)
9.	Increase fines as described in A.4 herein	Phase One
10.	Collect meters on a "per lot" / "per zone" basis	Phase One
11.	Issue additional parking tickets up to 19,200/ yr	Too high (LGA recommends cap of 12,000 tickets / year)
12.	Re-establish permit parking	Phase Two
13.	Relocate Lot 7 multi space meter	Phase One
14.	Improve signage / wayfinding	Underway
15.	Prepare / Distribute parking brochure / map	Phase One
16.	Establish routine lot inspections	Phase One

The two step implementation program offers more manageable reform while keeping parking rates and enforcement in the CBD at their current levels.

C. ECONOMICS

If the above changes are instituted, the Phase One parking program will consist of a simplified 8 point program as follows:

- Change parking staffing / structure / using DPW office to house new parking unit
- Prepare operating manual
- Change collection team / procedures / create collection zones[1]
- Double 12 hour commuter rate from $1 to $2
- Increase fines as described in A.4 herein
- Relocate Lot 7 multi space meter
- Prepare / Distribute parking brochure / map
- Establish routine lot inspections

From a staffing and operational standpoint the Bier report recommends: 1) assigning the Assistant Borough Engineer to be the Parking Director on a part time basis; 2) replacing the two current meter collectors with a cross trained individual who will enforce, collect, and repair parking meters; 3) replacing the two current clerk / bookkeepers with a Secretary / Bookeeper on a part time basis, and 4) maintain the current PEO.

Table 6 shows three possible parking unit configurations – the current configuration, the Bier report configuration described above, and a third model that is a hybrid of the two

[1] During the Phase One operation (before parking meters are converted to a "sealed" system) it is recommended that the new cross-trained employee be accompanied by Officer Yarnell or another member of the PD during collections. It is further recommended that coin bags be crimped and weighed before dropping off at the bank as recommended in the Bier report.

configurations. We believe the hybrid model can effectively accompany the recommended Phase One program.

In Year 1 the economic impact of the Phase One program is estimated as follows:

Revenue from fine increase	+	$ 59,520	source: Bier report
Revenue from commuter rate increase	+	$ 8,500	source: LGA estimate
Additional manpower (hybrid model)		(14,860)	see Table 6
Taxes / Benefits / Expense related to hybrid		(8,322)	source: LGA estimate
Prepare / Distribute Parking Brochure		(2,500)	source: Bier report
Relocate Lot 7 Multi-space & Shelter		(2,500)	source: LGA estimate
Net Economic Impact – Year 1	+	$ 39,838	

Adding in a modest and likely volumetric increase in collections along with the purchase of a new enforcement vehicle / pick-up truck (Ford Ranger or similar), the Year 2 economic impact is estimated as follows:

Collection Increase – volumetric	+	$ 28,500	source: LGA estimate
Revenue from fine increase	+	$ 59,520	source: Bier report
Revenue from commuter rate increase	+	$ 8,500	source: LGA estimate
Additional manpower (hybrid model)		(14,860)	see Table 6
Taxes / Benefits / Expense related to hybrid		(8,322)	source: LGA estimate
New Pick-up truck		(20,000)	source: LGA estimate
Net Economic Impact – Year 2	+	$ 53,338	

It is recommended that the Phase Two program be reevaluated after year 2 to determine the best implementation plan. The rate increases contemplated for Phase 2 can possibly be coordinated with the announcement of the new parking garage project. In our experience, customers and stakeholders are more accepting of rate increases when they are accompanied by a related capital improvement.

D. ESTABLISHING THE PARKING UNIT

Three recommended forms of parking unit are listed below along with some advantages and disadvantages of each.

Option 1. Place the parking unit within an existing borough department.

This is the simplest way to establish a parking unit and is a common choice among smaller cities and towns. When no traffic or transportation division exists, the most

logical departments to accept the parking unit are either Public Works, Engineering, or Police.

Advantages:
> Integrated into an existing "working" department
> Easy set-up and budgeting within existing framework

Disadvantages:
> Parking may be pushed aside when more pressing departmental issues arise
> No strong identity for parking unit
> Financials of unit may be "blurred" within the larger departmental reporting

Option 2. Create a "Parking Department".

Slightly more complicated than Option 1 because a new department is created for budgeting and "departmental" accounting purposes. Still, relatively simple to establish.

Advantages:
> Stronger identity, better definition
> Separate accounting makes it easy to gauge financial performance

Disadvantages:
> PT employees may still be pulled when staffing or "work order" conflicts arise
> Revenues are deposited to general fund and may not return to improve parking

Option 3. Create a "Parking Utility".

Most involved option will require separate accounting, auditing, and financial reporting similar to Somerville's separate "Sewer Utility Fund".

Advantages:
> Strong unit identity
> Revenues are deposited to Parking Utility accounts to be used for Parking Utility purposes and improvements
> Easier to develop working relationships with entities such as NJ Transit who require parking system auditing apart from other municipal functions.

Disadvantages:
> PT employees may still be pulled when staffing or "work order" conflicts arise
> Low accountability for PT director (typically managed by FT director)
> Debt service can only be deducted from borough's "gross debt" if the bond program is shown to be "self-liquidating purpose" – it is possible this will not be the case.

Based on past experience and our knowledge of the Borough of Somerville we believe either Option 2 or Option 3 will serve the borough well. However, because of anticipated future growth and the role of parking in the borough's redevelopment plans we consider Option 3 "Parking Utility" the preferred alternative.

Because of the complexities and attention to detail required to responsibly pursue parking facility development and parking system growth the unit director position should eventually become a full time position. It is recommended that the borough plan to accommodate this transition within 18 to 36 months of formation of the parking utility.

Table 7 presents a recommended 10 step program for establishing the Somerville Parking Utility. Appendix A is a sample ordinance adopted by the Borough of Belmar, NJ establishing their parking utility in 2005.

TABLE 1
MUNICIPAL PARKING SUPPLY
BOROUGH OF SOMERVILLE, NJ
As of July 18, 2008

	12 minute Limit 1¢ = 12 min	30 minute Limit 50¢ per Hr	1 hour Limit 50¢ per Hr	2 hour Limit			3 hour Limit 25¢ per Hr	10 hour Limit $1 = 10 hrs	12 hour Limit $1 = 12 hrs	Resident Parking Only	Totals
				Free	25¢ per Hr	50¢ per Hr					
On-Street Meters	14	4	136		71	119			50		394
Lot No. 1							120	54			174
Lot No. 2							54	76			130
Lot No. 3								15			15
Lot No. 4							113				113
Lot No. 5				7						5	12
Lot No. 6							36				36
Lot No. 7							30	106			136
Totals	14	4	136	7	71	119	353	251	50	5	1010

TABLE 2
PARKING SYSTEM COMPARISON
NEW JERSEY MUNICIPALITIES

	Number of Parking Lots	Number of Parking Garages	Number of On-Street Spaces	Number of Off-Street Spaces	Total Spaces
Somerville	7	0	394	616	1010
Bloomfield	9	0	557	702	1259
Bayonne	11	1	1045	455	1500
Fort Lee	3	0	1180	548	1728
Metuchen	11	0	254	1630	1884
Trenton	2	2	900	1350	2250
Morristown	12	3	701	2656	3357
Princeton Junction	8	0	0	3650	3650

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TABLE 3
"REAL" OPERATING COST ESTIMATE
EXISTING MUNICIPAL PARKING OPERATION
BOROUGH OF SOMERVILLE, NJ

1	Salary	See note 1 - below	$54,378.91
2	Payroll Taxes & Benefits	Estimated 56% of Line 1	$30,452.19
3	Maintenance	Source: Borough of Somerville	$15,232.00
4	Lighting	LGA estimate	$14,058.00
5	Insurance & Administrative	LGA estimate	$12,500.00
6	Supplies & Miscellaneous	LGA estimate	$7,500.00
7	Vehicle / Fuel Charge	10 miles per day x 58 cents / mile	$1,485.00
	Total		$135,606.10
	Number of Spaces		1010
	Annual "Cost per Space"		$134.26

Note 1 - Total Salary determined as follows:

Duty	Personnel	Annual Rate	Est. Annual Man-hours	Annual Expense
Administrative	B. Nally	$71,187	208	$7,118.70
Collections / Maintenance	T. Calabrese	$65,735	312	$9,860.25
	P. Weston	$54,863	312	$8,229.45
Enforcement	J. Yarnell	$43,347	1170	$24,382.69
Clerical / Bookeeping	M. Martz	$39,201	156	$2,940.08
	S. Sibilia	$36,955	104	$1,847.75
Estimated "Real" Salary				$54,378.91

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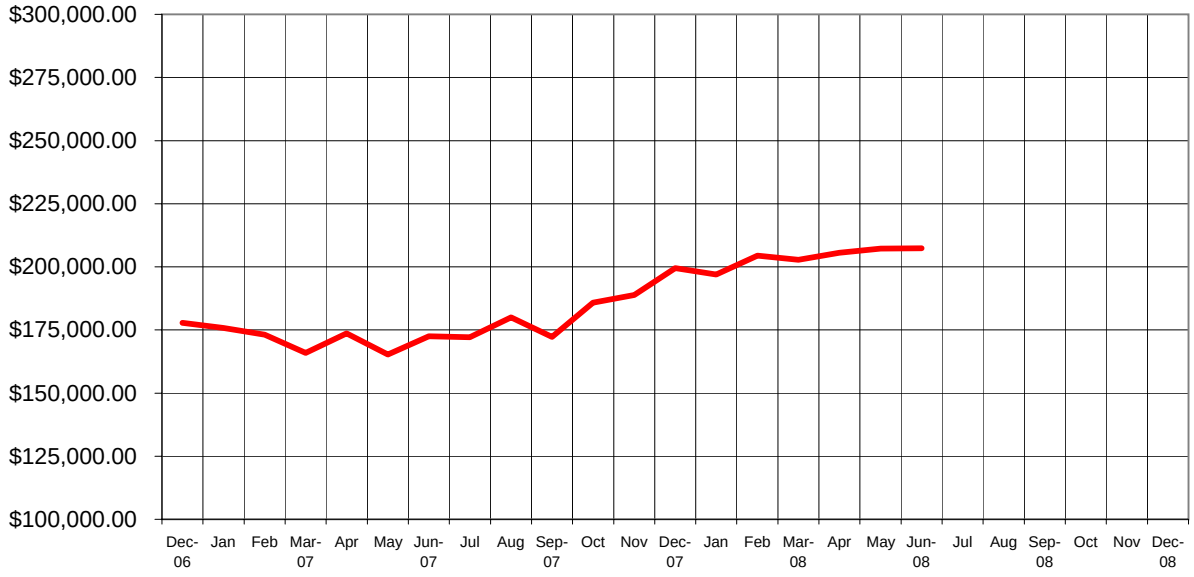
TABLE 4

REVENUE SUMMARY
SOMERVILLE (NJ) PARKING SYSTEM

	2006	2007	2008 (projected)
Meter Collections*	$177,758	$199,471	$213,500
Parking Fines (estimated)	$172,277	$177,197	$180,000
Smart Cards / Permits	$13,164	$14,927	$16,500
	$363,199	$391,595	$410,000

TREND OF METER COLLECTIONS



* *See Table 5 for monthly totals*

TABLE 5
MONTHLY METER COLLECTIONS
WITH 12 MONTH TOTALS
BOROUGH OF SOMERVILLE, NJ

Monthly Collections

	2006	2007	2008
Jan	$19,820.49	$17,820.83	$15,274.28
Feb	$11,852.39	$9,242.97	$16,756.21
Mar	$19,692.71	$12,465.30	$10,774.19
Apr	$12,423.65	$20,081.91	$22,906.60
May	$22,377.59	$14,124.95	$15,755.59
Jun	$11,013.13	$18,245.45	$18,453.25
Jul	$17,870.06	$17,487.61	
Aug	$14,623.17	$22,363.16	
Sep	$16,088.33	$8,433.26	
Oct	$15,987.46	$29,563.31	
Nov	$14,039.36	$17,111.64	
Dec	$1,969.43	$12,530.90	

12-Month Totals

	2006	2007	2008
Jan		$175,758.11	$196,924.74
Feb		$173,148.69	$204,437.98
Mar		$165,921.28	$202,746.87
Apr		$173,579.54	$205,571.56
May		$165,326.90	$207,202.20
Jun		$172,559.22	$207,410.00
Jul		$172,176.77	
Aug		$179,916.76	
Sep		$172,261.69	
Oct		$185,837.54	
Nov		$188,909.82	
Dec	$177,757.77	$199,471.29	

TABLE 6
STRAIGHT SALARY ESTIMATES
PARKING SYSTEM FORMATION STUDY
BOROUGH OF SOMERVILLE, NJ

EXISTING

Title	Duty	Parking Unit Work Load	Personnel	Annual Rate	Est. Annual Man-hours	Annual Expense
Asst. Boro Engineer	Administrative	4 hours per week	B. Nally	$71,187	208	$7,118.70
Fire Superintendent	Collections / Maintenance	6 hours per week	T. Calabrese	$65,735	312	$9,860.25
Asst. Fire Superintendent	Collections / Maintenance	6 hours per week	P. Weston	$54,863	312	$8,229.45
Police Officer	Enforcement	4.5 hours per day	J. Yarnell	$43,347	1170	$24,382.69
	Clerical / Bookeeping	3 hours per week	M. Martz	$39,201	156	$2,940.08
		2 hours per week	S. Sibilia	$36,955	104	$1,847.75
	Estimated Straight Salary					**$54,378.91**

BIER REPORT

Title	Duty		Personnel	Annual Rate	Est. Annual Man-hours	Annual Expense
Parking Unit Director	Administrative	14 hours per week	B. Nally	$71,187	728	$24,915.45
PEO / Parking Specialist	Collections / Maintenance / Enforcement	40 hours per week	T/B/D	$25,000	2080	$25,000.00
Police Officer	Parking Enforcement	4 hours per day	J. Yarnell	$43,347	1040	$21,673.50
Secretary / Bookeeper	Clerical / Bookeeping / Customer Service	10 hours per week	T/B/D	$30,000	520	$7,500.00
	Estimated Straight Salary					**$79,088.95**

HYBRID STRATEGY

Title	Duty		Personnel	Annual Rate	Est. Annual Man-hours	Annual Expense
Parking Unit Director	Administrative	12 hours per week	B. Nally	$71,187	624	$21,356.10
PEO / Parking Specialist	Collections / Maintenance / Enforcement	20 hours per week	T/B/D	$35,000	1040	$17,500.00
Police Officer	Parking Enforcement / Collection Supervisor	4.5 hours per day	J. Yarnell	$43,347	1170	$24,382.69
Secretary / Bookeeper	Clerical / Bookeeping / Customer Service	8 hours per week	T/B/D	$30,000	416	$6,000.00
	Estimated Straight Salary					**$69,238.79**

TABLE 7
Steps to Establishment of the

Somerville Parking Utility

1. Contact DCA – Division of Local Government Services to relay intentions and to seek general and procedural guidance.

2. Contact NJ Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) to begin process of acquiring hi-tech ticket issuing devices and access to State ticket tracking / payment system.

3. Establish the separate and collective parking facilities that will compose the "parking system" to be operated by the utility. You may wish to exclude underperforming assets such as Lot No. 3.

4. Begin the process of collecting and recording parking revenue on a "per facility" basis.

5. Establish, on paper, the employees of the utility, including the new civilian "Parking Enforcement Officer" description. This will assist in the AOC processing request described in (2) above.

6. Establish accounting template for the Parking Utility. Accounting should be as a separate unit (similar to an enterprise fund or the current Sewer Utility fund). The resultant "surplus" or "deficit" of the Parking Utility shall carry into the municipal budget as miscellaneous revenue or a budget appropriation, respectively. See NJSA 40A: 4, et. seq. for additional information. Also see Note (b).

7. Program the Somerville Parking Utility into the 2009 budget process.

8. Revise the borough's "cash management plan" (required per NJSA 40A: 5-14) to reflect the new utility.

9. Prepare a new chapter in the Borough's General Ordinance titled "Somerville Parking Utility". The new chapter shall set forth a description of the new unit including, but not limited to, Establishment, Powers, Operation, and Disposition of Funds. See note (c).

10. Adopt the new chapter / revised ordinance by resolution (see Belmar sample supplied under separate cover).

Note (a) - *See NJSA 40: 48-2, 40: 60-25.1, 40A: 9-154, and 40: 62 for additional statutory requirements.*

Note (b) - *Contact borough auditor for additional guidance.*

Note (c) – *Contact borough attorney for additional guidance.*

APPENDIX A

ORDINANCE 2005 – 05

AN ORDINANCE CREATING THE BELMAR DEDICATED PARKING UTLITY FUND IN CHAPTER XXXVI OF THE REVISED GENERAL ORDINANCES OF THE BOROUGH OF BELMAR, IN THE COUNTY OF MONMOUTH, NEW JERSEY

WHEREAS, the Borough of Belmar now desires to amend and supplement specific provisions with regard to the creation of a municipally operated parking utility which is to be established in Chapter XXXVI of the Revised General Ordinances of the Borough of Belmar; and

WHEREAS, the establishment of a Parking Utility will enable the Borough to shift the parking enforcement duties from the Police Department to a civilian parking enforcement unit, freeing up police officers to perform more traditional law enforcement functions. By making such a shift, the Borough will also be able to use high-tech electronic devices provided through the Administrative Office of the Courts ("AOC") for the issuance of summonses. These electronic devices (which the AOC will only make available to municipalities that use civilian parking enforcement personnel) will not only reduce the time it takes to issue parking summonses manually, but also eliminate the enormous amount of time that our Municipal Court personnel spends manually entering this information into the Court's computer system; and

WHEREAS, the consolidation and combination of the existing and future parking facilities of the Borough of Belmar under a single municipally owned and operated Dedicated Parking Utility Fund, herein after referred to as Belmar Parking Utility, will benefit the Borough of Belmar in the development, control and regulation of the parking facilities in the Borough so as to make more efficient and optimal use of available parking, to encourage shared parking, and thereby minimize the need for additional parking, and encourage a more orderly, safe and efficient flow of traffic and use of streets within the Borough; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and the Borough Council have determined that it is in the best interests of the Borough of Belmar to establish the Belmar Parking Utility, to operate what is known as a Public Parking System which will serve to consolidate, combine and establish future public parking in the Borough of Belmar for the purposes hereinbefore stated; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the Borough of Belmar, County of Monmouth, New Jersey, that the Borough of Belmar Revised General Ordinances are hereby amended and supplemented to include a new Chapter XXXVI, as follows:

CHAPTER XXXVI

BELMAR PARKING UTILITY

36-1. Establishment. It is hereby created and established in the Borough of Belmar, County of Monmouth, State of New Jersey, which is a public body corporate and politic, and in accordance with New Jersey Statutes N.J.S.A. 40:48-2 and 40:60-25.1, a Utility which shall be known as the Belmar Parking Utility. The Belmar Parking Utility shall operate the Belmar Public Parking System which shall include all on-street parking and off-street parking facilities, including but not limited to parking spaces, parking lots and parking structures, now owned by the Borough of Belmar or which may be acquired or constructed by the Borough of Belmar in the future. The Belmar Parking Utility shall also be responsible for enforcing all laws, ordinances, rules and regulations applicable to the Belmar Public Parking System.

36-2. Powers. The Belmar Parking Utility, which constitutes an agency of the Municipality, exercising public and essential governmental functions shall have all of the powers necessary or convenient to carry out and effectuate the purpose and the provisions of the New Jersey Statutes, including without limitation, the power to issue temporary and/or permanent debt in accordance with the Local Bond Law, NJSA 40A-2, et seq.; the right to accept contributions; and the right to enter into contracts for labor and materials; the power to receive grants or other financial assistance from the County, State or Federal Government; to cooperate with any other municipality or the County or other agencies in leasing or managing any parking facility; to purchase any and all insurance necessary for the protection and safety of the operation of the Utility; to enter into such agreements or other instruments as may be necessary for the efficient operation of the Utility; and to maintain and operate the utility on a self-liquidating basis.

36-3. Operation. The Belmar Parking Utility shall be organized accordingly and in accordance with relevant Municipal Ordinances approved by the Mayor and Borough Council and under the direction of the Borough Administrator according to the Revised General Ordinances; the operation of the Belmar Parking Utility shall be allocated as follows:

a) The operation, management and staffing of the Belmar Parking Utility shall be under the direction of the Department of Administration;

b) The Department of Public Works shall be responsible for the maintenance, construction and improvement of all capital operations of the Belmar Parking Utility;

c) The Department of Finance shall be responsible for the collection of fees, investments of monies and all such financial operations including expenditures of the Belmar Parking Utility;

d) The position of "Parking Enforcement Officer" in accordance with and as defined by N.J.S.A. 40A:9-154.7 and 40A:9-154.8 shall be created within the Borough of Belmar in the Department of Administration.

36-4. Disposition of Funds.

a) In accordance with N.J.S.A. 40A:5-15 all monies received by or on behalf of the Belmar Parking Utility shall be paid to the Treasurer who shall deposit all such receipts within 48 hours.
b) An annual Dedicated Parking Utility Budget, including and accounting of income and expenses of the Utility, shall be prepared in accordance with relevant provisions of the Local Budget Law-N.J.S.A. 40A:4 et. seq.
c) Any provisions of the Pubic Utilities Law-N.J.S.A. 40:62 et. seq., which are applicable, shall be complied with.
d) Any provisions of the Local Bond Law-N.J.S.A. 40A:2 et. seq., which are applicable, shall be complied with.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED that the Borough Clerk is hereby authorized and directed to file an authorized copy of this Ordinance with the Director of the Division of Local Government Services.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED that all ordinances and parts of ordinances inconsistent with the provisions of this Ordinance be and the same are hereby repealed; and this Ordinance shall take effect 20 days from date of publication after final passage.