2015

City of Ashland, Oregon
Downtown Strategic Parking Management Plan

PROJECT SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PARKING MANAGEMENT

FINAL REPORT
January 6, 2016

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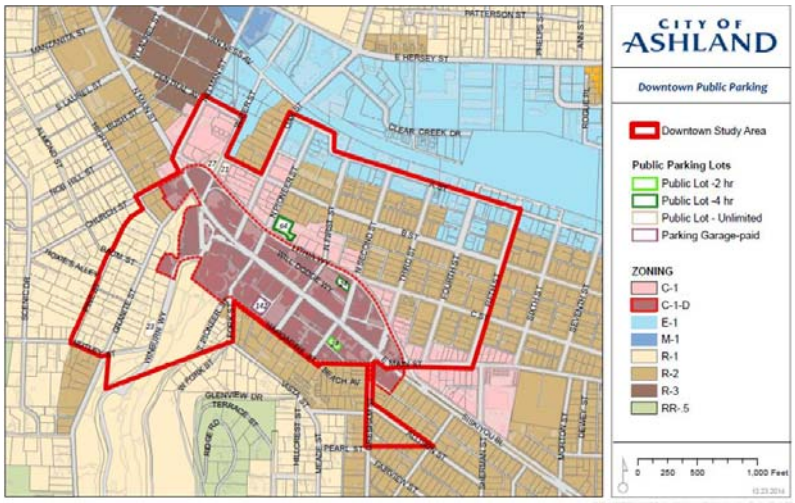
A. ACTIONS & IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE

I. BACKGROUND

In 2013, the City of Ashland commissioned a study to evaluate the state of parking in the downtown. The study was conducted by Community Planning Workshop and the University of Oregon, and analyzed use, occupancy, and demand for customer and employee parking throughout the downtown, and developed an initial set of recommended strategies and programs.[1] The project study area is illustrated in **Figure A**.

Figure A
Project Study Area



The City subsequently determined that developing a more targeted parking plan for the downtown core would be beneficial, both as a guide to daily management and as a template for future decision-making. To this end, the City engaged Rick Williams Consulting to work with its Downtown Parking Management and Circulation Ad Hoc Advisory Committee to compile a complete, simple, and effective set of operating strategies for management of the City's downtown parking supply.

The Advisory Committee includes representatives of the business and development sectors, citizens, City staff, City Commissions, and the City Council. The study entailed in-depth discussions with the Advisory Committee and other community stakeholders to develop a comprehensive parking management plan that responds to the unique access environment, goals, and objectives of Downtown Ashland. This was coupled with an evaluation of existing downtown parking policies, standards, and actual usage.[2] The parking management plan and its development process are summarized in this report.

[1] See: *Ashland Downtown Parking Management and Multi-Modal Circulation Plan -October 2014*, (Community Planning Workshop and the University of Oregon).
[2] Usage data was derived from two sources: (1) *Ashland Downtown Parking Management and Multi-Modal Circulation Plan (October 2014)* and (2) Off-street usage data collected by Rick Williams Consulting (August 2015).

II. THE ROLE OF PARKING IN DOWNTOWN

A successful downtown has a clear sense of place, and comprises an exciting and attractive mix of uses and amenities. The role of parking is to support the realization of this vision. Simply put, *people do not come downtown to park.* They come to experience an environment that is unique, active, and diverse. A well-managed parking system helps make it safe, easy, and convenient for them to do so.

Discussions with stakeholders resulted in a number of desired outcomes for parking management. Parking management in downtown Ashland should:

- Support a "messy vitality" by creating a vital, active, and interesting downtown environment.
- Get the right parker to the right stall.
- Assure convenient, affordable, and available parking for visitors and customers.
- Ensure that parking in a district is managed to meet the needs of its priority users.
- Ensure reasonable and safe parking for employees.
- Communicate a clear sense of movement to parking options.
- Provide for an integrated system on and off-street (parking & pedestrians).
- Integrate alternative modes, particularly biking.
- Anticipate and respond to increasing demand for access to the downtown.

Parking is just one tool in a downtown's economic development toolbox, and must be managed to ensure an effective, efficient system of access that caters to the needs of priority users. In the case of downtown Ashland, the priority user for the City-owned parking system has been identified as the customer and visitor. The Advisory Committee concluded that the objective of parking management in downtown should be:

> *"To support the development of a vibrant, growing, and attractive destination for shopping, entertainment, recreation, living, and working. The components of this plan need to be simple and intuitive for the user, providing an understandable system that is affordable, safe, secure, and well-integrated into other access options (i.e., transit, bike and walk)."*

III. PLAN ORGANIZATION

The strategies outlined below are intended to spark discussion between the City of Ashland and downtown stakeholders on policies and actions that will support a vital and growing downtown.

We begin with a set of Guiding Themes and Principles developed by the Advisory Committee and designed to serve as a framework for decision-making. The principles encourage the use of parking resources to support economic development goals and to effectively serve the diversity of customers and visitors using the downtown.

Following this list, recommended parking management strategies are presented as a series of steps intended to follow a logical progression, with each action providing the groundwork necessary for subsequent actions.

Steps are divided into policy actions and operations, and further categorized as specific action strategies intended to be carried out in two phases that range from immediate to long-term.

As the City and its partners consider these strategies, discussion of the "who, what, and how" of implementation will be essential, and it may be determined that strategies should be reordered or implemented concurrently. Such refinements will be based on opportunities and challenges that arise, momentum, resource identification, and broader community input. The plan presented here is a template for a new approach to parking management in downtown Ashland, and changes and refinements can be expected.

IV. GUIDING THEMES AND PRINCIPLES

The development of Guiding Principles for parking in downtown Ashland supports creation of a parking system that facilitates and contributes to a vital and growing downtown. Guiding Principles are based on the premise that growth and development in the downtown will require an integrated and comprehensive package of strategies to support economic development and redevelopment. The ensuing parking plan becomes but one critical element of a larger coordinated package for economic growth.

The results of stakeholder input can be summarized as five Guiding Themes comprising seventeen Guiding Principles. Ideally, these will establish a basis for consensus and provide near - and long-term direction for parking management in the downtown.

A. CITY ROLE AND COORDINATION

1) Centralize management of public parking to ensure optimal use of the supply.

Parking issues are too complex and widespread for status quo approaches to management. The City needs to provide more focused, coordinated, and strategic attention to daily management and delivery of near- and long-term parking solutions.

2) Coordinate parking in a manner that supports the unique character of emerging downtown districts and neighborhoods. Where appropriate, manage parking by zone.

The downtown comprises several unique economic enclaves (e.g., the core, the theater district, the railroad area). As the areas differ economically, so too do the character and needs of their patrons. This may require a management approach tailored to each area, known as management by parking zone.

3) Ensure that a representative body of affected private and public constituents from within downtown routinely informs decision-making.

Active participation by those affected guarantees an understanding of and consensus on parking management and the "trigger" points for decision-making built into the parking plan. This is best accomplished through an established parking advisory committee that reviews performance, serves as a sounding board for issues, and acts as a liaison to the broader stakeholder community.

4) **Create a sense of security at all times, on-street and off-street.**

Public off-street lots should be maintained so as to not deter users due to poor design, pavement quality, or perceived security issues. Safe and well-lit links between parking areas and shopping, entertainment, and work sites should be planned for and provided.

B. PRIORITY CUSTOMER

1) **The on-street parking system is a finite resource and will be managed to provide a rate of turnover that supports "district" vitality.**

Most users of the downtown favor on-street parking. The parking management plan recognizes this premium on-street parking resource needs to be managed to provide a rate of customer and visitor turnover that supports downtown and district vitality. With this principle comes the recognition that growth in downtown parking demand will, over the longer term, need to be accommodated in off-street locations. Longer-term patron and employee parking must be managed so as not to conflict with customer parking, particularly on-street. On-street parking must be managed according to demand and time-stays conducive to customer need.

2) **The most convenient on-street parking will be preserved for the priority user – as defined by base zoning in the affected district.**

The on-street parking system in the downtown must be formatted in a manner that assures turnover and minimized conflicts between the priority user and other users. Ashland will use base zoning in parking districts (e.g., commercial versus residential) to facilitate and support reasonable definitions of priority users.

3) **Provide sufficient parking to meet employee demand, specifically in conjunction with other reasonable travel mode options.**

All parking strategies should be coordinated with transportation demand management goals and objectives to ensure that employees and customers have reasonable options available for access. For downtown Ashland, this should be initiated with efforts to encourage bicycling to the downtown, with longer term goals for transit/shuttles and ridesharing. This effort should be pursued as a partnership between the City and private sector businesses.

C. ACTIVE CAPACITY MANAGEMENT

1) **Manage the public parking system using the 85% Occupancy Standard to inform and guide decision-making.**

   The *85% Rule* is an operating principle for coordinating parking supply. When occupancies routinely reach 85% during peak periods, more *intensive and aggressive* parking management strategies are called for to assist patrons in finding available parking. The 85% Rule will facilitate reasonable and effective decisions regarding time stays, enforcement, and other decisions related to capacity management.

2) **Supplies in excess of the 85% Occupancy Standard will require best practice strategies to minimize parking constraints.**

   Several strategies identified in the plan are triggered by the 85% Rule. The City and the Advisory Committee are committed to moving forward with recommended strategies when parking demand requires them. Changes to the status quo can be difficult, but continued constraints in parking and access will adversely impact the downtown's success and ability to absorb growth.

3) **Encourage shared parking in areas where parking is underutilized. This will require an active partnership with owners of private parking supplies.**

   Numerous parking facilities in some downtown locations are underutilized. Efforts should be made to facilitate shared use agreements between different users (public and private) to direct parking demand into these facilities, in order to maximize existing parking resources.

4) **Capacity will be created through strategic management of existing supplies, reasonable enforcement, leveraging parking with alternative modes, and new supply.**

   Active effort must be made to manage the parking system on a daily basis. This will require partnerships with the private sector to leverage existing off-street supplies and to coordinate management in a manner that supports the development and growth of alternative modes. New parking supply becomes more feasible when all capacity options are maximized.

D. INFORMATION SYSTEMS (SUPPLY & CUSTOMER-BASED)

Supply-based

1) Use performance measurements and reporting to ensure Guiding Principles are achieved.

Committing to a routine and objective system of measurement and reporting ensures that decision-making will be informed. Key metrics include occupancy, turnover, average duration of stay, rate of violation, and customer input. Performance monitoring also provides a basis for routine evaluation of program effectiveness.

Customer-based

2) Improve existing, and create new, information and educational resources (outreach, education, maps, websites, etc.) for use by the public and private sectors.

Efforts to improve understanding, awareness, and ease of use of the parking and access system should be upgraded. A clear schedule should be maintained for the dissemination of information. This could be coordinated through a partnership between the City and a downtown business association.

3) Develop and implement a unique and creative wayfinding system for the downtown that links parking assets and provides directional guidance, preferably under a common brand/logo.

Parking resources should be clearly identified and explained through branding and signage, increasing understanding of how to access on- and off-street parking resources. A common brand that unifies marketing materials, signage systems, and other communications simplifies customer recognition and use of the system.

E. INTEGRATION WITH OTHER MODES

1) Encourage and facilitate increasing percentages of use, particularly by employees, of alternative travel modes to free up parking capacity.

Parking should not be the only access option for employees. Every parking stall occupied by an employee means a lower rate of turnover and less access for customers and visitors. Employees should be given reasonable access to parking, but encouraged to use alternative modes that include walking, biking, transit, and ridesharing. If Ashland develops a strong system of alternative mode options for employees, these will then become options for residents, visitors, and customers.

2) **Increase bike parking on and off-street to enhance the broader bicycle network.**

The City of Ashland's bike parking network should be as effectively formatted as the auto parking system. On- and off-street parking facilities for bicyclists are efficient and low-cost.

3) **Explore remote parking locations and transit/bike connections to minimize the need for new parking structures.**

As the City explores new parking supply options, scenarios should include remote locations connected by transit and bike networks. Such options may be more cost-effective than structured parking and/or may be necessitated by land supply constraints in the downtown.

V. RECOMMENDED DOWNTOWN PARKING MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

From discussions with the City and stakeholders, specific parking management strategies have been identified and are recommended for implementation. These recommendations are informed by evaluation of current policies and practices, information in the 2014 Community Planning Workshop report, and data collection in off-street facilities conducted by RWC in August 2015.

This report contains recommendations for changes in current management/organization and several near-term Action Strategies for the first 18-months of implementation (Phase 1). The timing of implementation outlined in this document assumes that Phase 1 work will *formally* begin in July 2016 and run through November 2017. However, some work should precede Phase 1 (January – June 2016) through work with an interim Parking Work Group led by current Public Works staff.

Phase 2 would begin in January 2018. *However, any and all strategies can be implemented on an accelerated schedule or be reordered based on opportunity and resources*. The proposed timeline is provided as a means to communicate a reasonable schedule and order of tasks.

The strategies recommended in this report will assist the City in more effectively managing its downtown parking supply and preparing for future growth. They are organized as follows:

- Policy and Organizational Action Strategies: Phase 1 (0 – 18 months)
- Recommended Parking Management Strategies: Phase 1 (0 – 18 months)
- Recommended Parking Management Strategies: Phase 2 (18 – 36+ months)

A summary of all recommended Strategies is attached as an Implementation Schedule at the end of this report.

A. POLICY AND ORGANIZATION ACTION STRATEGIES

These elements ensure that the goals of the parking management plan can be achieved by incorporating parking system management into the City's development policy. Grounding in the Guiding Principles and application of the 85% Rule as the threshold for decision-making connect the various policy elements. Centralizing the policy recommendations within a responsible and responsive Parking Services Division ensures that the life of the parking management plan extends beyond the first round of strategy implementation. It is recommended that the Policy Recommendations be adopted and implemented in the very near term.

STRATEGY 1:

Formalize the Guiding Themes and Principles as policies for downtown access within the parking and transportation system plan.

Implementation Timeline: Immediate to Near-Term (by July 2016)

Formalizing the Guiding Principles by incorporating them into the policy element of the City's parking/transportation system plan will inform decision-making and development of future public facilities. Incorporating these principles into City policy assures the intent and purpose for parking management, established through this study, is carried out over time.

Estimated Costs (STRATEGY 1):

It is estimated that costs associated with this strategy would be minimal and mostly expended in efforts of existing staff to develop resolutions and ordinances through routine city planning processes.

STRATEGY 2:
Adopt the 85% Rule as the optimum occupancy standard for measuring performance of the parking supply and triggering specific management strategies and rate ranges.

Implementation Timeline: Immediate to Near-Term (by July 2016)

In the parking industry, it is assumed that when parking exceeds 85% occupancy in the peak during peak periods, the supply becomes constrained and may not provide full and convenient access to its intended user. Once parking routinely exceeds that figure, the 85% Rule requires that strategies be implemented to bring peak period occupancies below 85%.

The parking inventory for Ashland revealed that existing peak occupancies within the core are often in excess of 85% for significant periods of the day. Having the 85% Rule formalized in policy will assure that a process for evaluating and responding to parking activity is in place.

Estimated Costs (STRATEGY 2):
It is estimated that costs associated with this strategy would be minimal and mostly expended in efforts of existing staff to develop resolutions and ordinances through routine city planning processes.

STRATEGY 3:

Establish a Downtown Parking and Transportation Fund as a mechanism to direct funds derived from parking into a dedicated fund.

Implementation Timeline: Immediate to Near-Term (by July 2016)

As the supply of parking becomes constrained, it will be important to direct funds into supporting transportation and access in the downtown. This can be done with existing and/or future parking revenue, or with new revenues generated as a result of implementing this plan. The Downtown Parking Fund should be dedicated to:

a. Debt service
b. Parking operations & administration
c. Lot/garage maintenance
d. Marketing and communications
e. Transportation Demand Management programs
f. New supply

It is recommended that such a fund be established as soon as feasible to ensure that new revenues are appropriately directed.

Estimated Costs (STRATEGY 3):

It is estimated that costs associated with this strategy would be minimal and mostly expended in efforts of existing staff to develop resolutions and ordinances through routine city planning processes.

STRATEGY 4:

Centralize Parking Management. Consolidate the management and administration of parking management within a single division for Parking Services.

Implementation Timeline: Immediate to Near-Term (by July 2016)

The success of any multi-faceted parking system is dependent on administration, management, and communication of the City's parking program. This includes daily management of facilities, oversight of third-party vendors, financial accounting and reporting, marketing/communications, customer service, and strategic and capital planning.

Ashland's existing administrative system for managing parking is spread across multiple departments, divisions, and commissions, which include Public Works, Community Development, Administrative Services, and Police. From a strategic management point of view there is no clear single point of responsibility for guiding the parking system in a manner that gives due diligence to the complexity of

the existing system and the level of technical and response capability called for in the Parking Management Plan.

Industry best practices recommend centralized management under the purview of a professional Parking Coordinator. Centralized management best supports the concept of an integrated parking system, as all elements of the parking system (off-street, on-street, enforcement, and oversight of any third-party provider) are consolidated within a single division and leadership structure. As such, administration and decision-making are structured to consider parking assets both individually and as a system. Resources can be managed in a tailored fashion where necessary and leveraged as appropriate and most efficient.

It is recommended that the City begin internal discussion on restructuring parking management into a single Parking Services Division.

A "downtown parking coordinator" will direct daily operation of the system, strategic implementation of policies and programs, and planning for growth.

Estimated Costs (STRATEGY 4):

At this time, the costs associated with restructuring parking management into a single operating division are unknown. There may be efficiencies, and there may be new costs (see Strategy 5, below). It is recommended that any new costs be supported by revenues derived from the parking system.

STRATEGY 5:
Develop a job description and submit a service package to create and hire a position of Downtown Parking Coordinator for the City of Ashland.

Implementation Timeline: Near-Term (by September 2016)

A single person should be assigned to oversee and manage all aspects of parking in the downtown, providing the community a single reference point for parking management. As stated in Strategy 4, consolidating parking operations within a single department under a Downtown Parking Coordinator creates administrative and operational efficiencies and seamlessly integrates on- and off-street parking, enforcement, and long-range strategic planning. It also provides a point of accountability and assures that adopted policy is fully implemented. The process for approving this type of service addition should be completed immediately to facilitate near-term hiring or restructuring of an existing position (see discussion below related to position options).

Ideally, this person will staff a representative stakeholder group (see Strategy 6) to routinely review parking activity in the downtown overall and by district. Information would be used to evaluate “action triggers” and implement appropriate strategies.

The Downtown Parking Coordinator will, at minimum, lead in:

- Coordinating and implementing all approved aspects of the Parking Management Plan.
- Oversight of all personnel (City and third-party) involved in the delivery of on-street, off-street or enforcement services in downtown municipal parking resources.
- Acting as liaison among businesses, users, and other agencies.
- Coordinating with Administrative Services in the creation of consolidated financial reporting systems for parking.
- Annual budgeting for parking services.
- Oversight of any third-party management agreements for parking operations or enforcement services in City facilities.
- Ensuring contract compliance by third-party parking providers.
- Coordinating with relevant Departments and Divisions necessary policy and code changes approved in the Parking Management Plan.
- Developing new signage and communications systems.
- Developing and implementing marketing and communications programs and their on-going delivery.
- Routinely assessing and recommending rate and fee adjustments based on demand dynamics.
- Oversee data collection efforts as defined by policy.
- Coordinating the transition to new parking revenue collection technologies necessary to implement performance-based pricing, as called for in Phase 2 of the Parking Management Plan.
- Development of RFPs for parking services, equipment, and technology.
- Coordination of review and selection of parking services, equipment, and technology providers.
- Assessment of other upgrades (e.g. signage, lighting, security, maintenance, enforcement) as necessary.
- Development and negotiation of contract agreements as necessary.
- Developing usage tracking and reporting systems to measure and monitor program success or failure.
- Troubleshooting program glitches.
- Hosting and facilitating the work of a Downtown Parking Advisory Committee.

Options for establishing this position include:

Option A:
New position/FTE

Ashland could establish a new position and solicit professionals from within the parking industry. The consultant team favors this approach given the complexity of the recommendations in the Parking Management Plan.

New technology, responsive demand management, financial management, communications, coordination and integration of on and off-street assets, monitoring/reporting, and community liaison functions, to name a few, will require an individual who has demonstrated, successful experience with managing multi-faceted municipal or private sector parking systems.

Option B:
An existing FTE & Contract Consultant

This model proved successful in Ventura, California. After adoption of a comprehensive parking plan in 2008, parking control was consolidated within a smaller number of departments, with an existing City employee assigned responsibility for coordinating operations and implementation of the plan. Through the reorganization process, it was determined that internal FTE capacity was available, and existing City staff could be utilized for the new position; ensuring that there was no additional burden on the parking fund. The reorganization process also identified the need to provide training and assistance to the Parking Coordinator to elevate their skill set to a level commensurate with new programs, services, and responsibilities called for in the parking plan.

To this end, the City of Ventura contracted with a professional parking and transportation consulting firm to provide ongoing training and mentoring to the new Parking Coordinator. The consultant also provided assistance in establishing reporting formats, operating protocols, organizational development, and additional implementation planning to the City. The consultant contract provided up to 20 hours per week in consulting assistance and was in place for one year following adoption of the new parking plan. The Ventura model has been very successful, and was pursued because internal staff capacity was available and engaging the consultant was seen as less of a burden on the parking fund budget.

Option C
Improvement of systems and protocols with existing staff

There are likely improvements in efficiency, coordination, and communications that could be made within the City's existing parking operations. These could include:

- Increasing the total FTE responsible for administration.
- Establishing a Parking Management Work Group, facilitated by a designated parking coordinator, that routinely reviews operations, performance, occupancy, and rates, and supports responsive and strategic decision-making.
- Designate a parking coordinator to oversee the work of a Parking Advisory Committee.
- Consolidate reporting and performance monitoring.

Though the City currently has staff involved in the downtown parking program, the existing parking management format does not have a central point of responsibility and reporting. This makes it difficult

for users to conveniently understand and maximize downtown parking options. This is of particular importance given the complex and dynamic nature of the parking strategies recommended in this plan.

For this reason, the consultant team recommends Option A or B. Additional discussion and costing may be needed to determine which option best fits Ashland's organizational structure.

Estimated Costs (STRATEGY 5):

As with Strategy 4, the costs associated with the restructuring of current management responsibilities into a single operating division under the leadership of a Parking Coordinator are unknown. It is recommended that any new costs be supported by revenues derived from the parking system.

***STRATEGY 6*:**
Establish a Downtown Parking Advisory Committee (DPAC) consisting of downtown stakeholders to assist in program implementation and review.

Implementation Timeline: Near-Term (consistent with hiring in Strategy 5)

The City should develop and approve a process through which a representative cross-section of downtown interests *routinely* assists the Parking Coordinator in the review and implementation of the Parking Management Plan. It is recommended that the City Council formally appoint members to the Parking Advisory Committee.

The stakeholder advisory process and a Parking Advisory Committee will assist the Parking Coordinator in implementing the parking management plan, review parking issues,; and advise City Council and other decision-making bodies on strategy implementation based on adopted policy for parking management and use dynamics identified for specific parking areas.

Once the Parking Coordinator is established, the process of review, evaluation, and decision-making with the DPAC can be formally initiated. A consistent schedule of meetings should be established using this plan as a template for discussion. .

Until a Parking Coordinator is hired, the City should consider a partnership with the Chamber of Commerce and the existing Downtown Parking Management and Circulation Ad Hoc Advisory Committee to form an interim Parking Work Group. This will ensure completion of the groundwork necessary to costing, scheduling, research and coordination of subsequent Phase 1 Strategies.

Estimated Costs (STRATEGY 6):

There should be no additional costs associated with this recommendation if it can be initiated as a volunteer effort, hosted by the City and/or downtown business interests. Once fully implemented, the DPAC process would be part of the task portfolio of the Downtown Parking Coordinator.

B. RECOMMENDED PARKING MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES: PHASE 1

This section details a range of operational enhancements that should be implemented within 18 months of Plan adoption.

STRATEGY 7:
Develop a reasonable schedule of data collection to better assess performance of the downtown parking supply.

Implementation Timeline: *Immediate (August/September 2015 – Completed)*
Near-Term (Spring and/or Summer 2016)
Long-Term (Based on strategic schedule)

A system for routine data collection will need to be established. To date, comprehensive statistical analyses of on-street parking (2014) and off-street parking (August 2015) have been completed. This has provided very good data for parking activity during the summer peak season, as well as potential shared use opportunities in off-street surface parking facilities located in or adjacent to the project study area. Conversations with the Advisory Committee indicated that a better understanding of off-peak data would also be useful, particularly as Phase 2 issues related to pricing are considered.

Objective and up-to-date data will help the City and local stakeholders make better informed decisions as the downtown grows and redevelops. The system does not need to be elaborate, but it should be consistent and routine and structured to answer relevant questions about occupancy, seasonality, turnover, duration of stay, patterns of use, and enforcement. Parking information can be collected in samples, and other measures of success can be gathered through third-party data collection and/or volunteer processes. A methodology for conducting parking inventory and data analyses is provided in Oregon Transportation & Growth Management's *Parking Made Easy: A Guide to Managing Parking in Your Community,* most specifically Chapter 7. The guide can be found at www.oregon.gov/LCD/TGM/docs/parkingprimerfinal71213.pdf. Data derived from these efforts can be used by the City and a future Downtown Parking Advisory Committee to inform decisions, track use, and assess success measures.

It is recommended that the City:

a. Work with an interim Parking Work Group (see Strategy 6 above) to develop a data collection schedule to address issues raised regarding peak and non-peak parking dynamics. Given the recent completion of both on and off-street occupancy studies, additional data collection could be done through sampling rather than all-day occupancy counting. The near-term data collection schedule should be completed no later than March 31, 2016.
b. Schedule and initiate a non-peak-season occupancy study for both on and off-street systems.
c. Conduct inventory and occupancy analyses no less than once every 24 months.

Estimated Costs (STRATEGY 7):

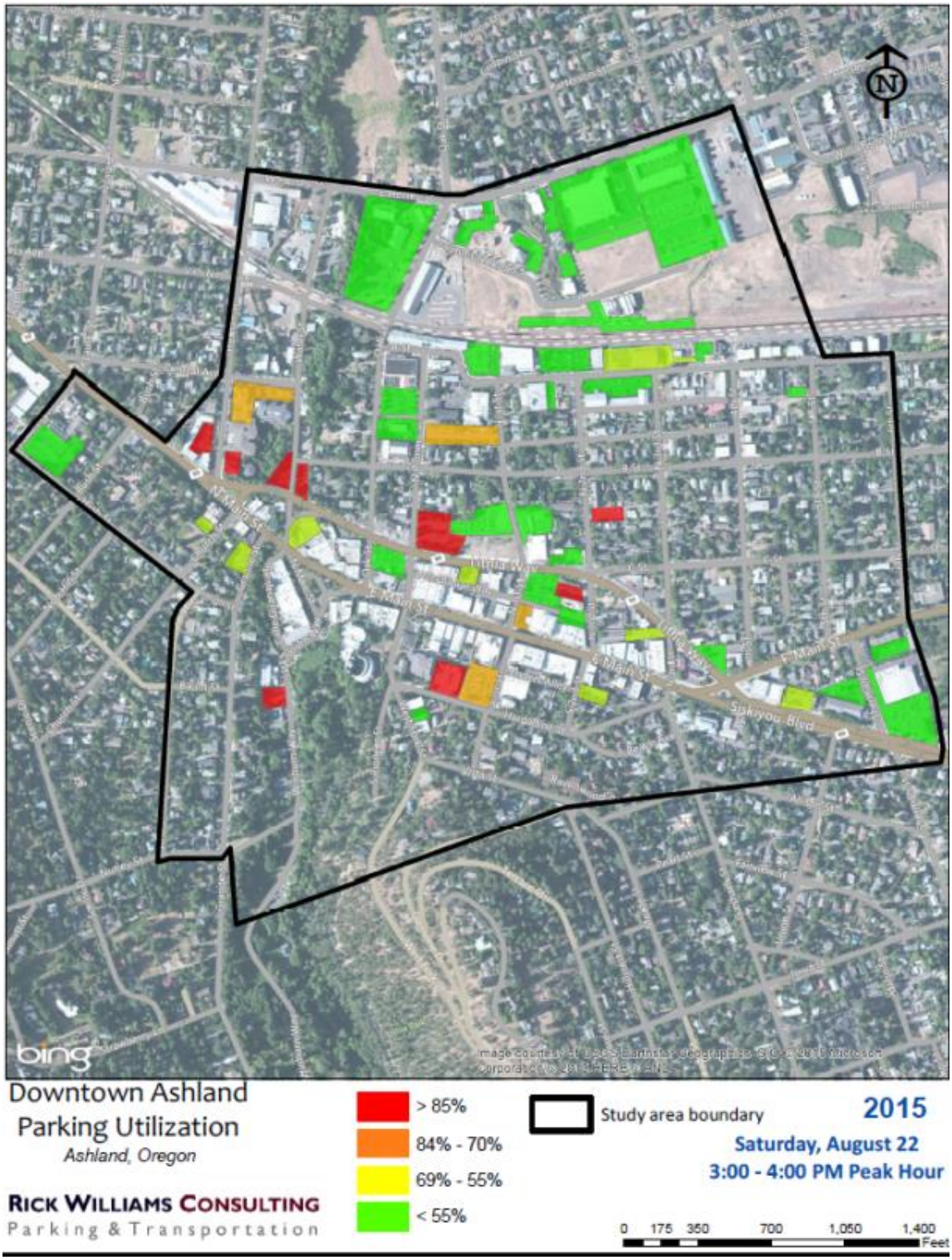
It is estimated that a data inventory and occupancy/utilization study would range from $20,000-$30,000 if conducted by a third-party consultant. Costs can be minimized in subsequent surveys given that the inventory/database would be built and through sampling and possible use of volunteers to collect data.

STRATEGY 8:
Identify off-street shared use opportunities and feasibilities based on data findings in Strategy 7. Establish goals for transitioning employees, begin outreach to opportunity sites, negotiate agreements, and assign employees to facilities.

Implementation Timeline: *Immediate: Short-listing sites (by February 2016)*
Near-Term: Outreach (February – July 2016)
Mid-Term: Negotiations and Assignment (August 2016 – December 2016)

A data collection effort by Rick Williams Consulting examined two days of occupancy activity in August 2015 (Friday 10/21 and Saturday 10/22). The study quantified actual hourly use of these facilities over a twelve-hour period each day. Fifty-one off-street sites comprising 1,998 parking stalls were surveyed. Findings from the study revealed that many sites are significantly underutilized, with an average total of approximately 1,000 stalls empty during peak periods of the day. The opportunity to direct downtown employees into these parking facilities would have a significant impact on on-street occupancies, particularly in areas where employees are using the on-street system and thereby denying customer/visitor use of the on-street supply. **Figure A** (next page) illustrates the findings of the off-street study.

Figure A
Peak Hour Parking Availability (Off-street Parking)



The interim Parking Work Group should consider the following for completion by February 2016, with later tasks transitioned to a Parking Coordinator and Downtown Parking Advisory Committee.

a) Use the data from the August 2015 parking study to identify a subset of the 51 facilities surveyed that could serve as reasonable shared use "opportunity sites." Criteria for determining sites could be proximity to downtown, a meaningful supply of empty stalls, pedestrian/bike connectivity, walk distance/time, safety and security issues, etc.
b) Based on the above, develop a short list of opportunity sites and identify owners.
c) Establish a target goal for the number of downtown employees to transition into opportunity sites.
d) Begin outreach to owners of private lots.
e) Negotiate shared use agreements.
f) Obtain agreements from downtown businesses to participate in employee assignment program.

Estimated Costs (STRATEGY 8):

It is estimated that costs associated with this strategy would be minimal and mostly expended in efforts of existing staff and volunteers to review and identify opportunity sites and conduct outreach to potential private sector participants. Planning in this regard may determine that funds are needed to create incentives and/or improve the condition of lots or pedestrian/bike connections.

STRATEGY 9:
Create a critical path timeline to a new parking brand that can be utilized at all City-owned lots and shared supplies and in parking marketing/communications.

Implementation Timeline: Near-Term (by December 2016)

Guiding Principle D. 3 (p. 8) calls for development and implementation of "a wayfinding system for the downtown that links parking assets and provides directional guidance, preferably under a common brand or logo." The intent of this principle is to create a brand that unifies the public supply of parking and is easily communicated, both at parking sites and, ideally, through a wayfinding system located throughout the downtown and on maps, websites and other communications and promotions.

The linchpin of any such program is a brand. It is recommended that the City and interim Parking Work Group engage a design firm to develop an attractive and recognizable "parking brand" for use by the City of Ashland at all of its public off-street facilities, and any shared use facility that offers visitor access. The design professional would:

a) Work with stakeholders and the City to create a new parking brand for Ashland.
b) Develop options and assist in developing a final recommended brand/logo.
c) Develop cost estimates for the creation and placement of new brand/logo signage packages at all City-owned off-street sites and shared use facilities.
d) Assist in signage creation.

Estimated Costs (STRATEGY 9):

It is estimated that engaging a design consultant to carry out the tasks identified above would range from $15,000 - $20,000.

STRATEGY 10:
Simplify on-street time stays. Consider incorporation of new brand/logo into on-street signage per input derived in Strategy 9.

Implementation Timeline: Near-Term (January 2017 - June 2017)

Multiple time stay designations in a downtown are often confusing to customers, particularly very short-term stalls (e.g., 5, 15, 30 and 60 minute stalls) that do not provide an adequate amount of time for a typical customer visit. Implementing this strategy will bring understandable and consistent time stays need to downtown (e.g., core versus theater and Lithia Park). Additionally, a new brand/logo can be incorporated into the on-street system as a means of integrating the on and off-street systems. This would require coordinating changes in the on-street system to the branding work in Strategy 9, which would have a recommendation developed by December 2016. This would be similar to the effort completed in Springfield, Oregon where a stylized P was created for the public parking system and incorporated into on and off-street signage. This is illustrated in the example to the right.

The 2014 Community Planning Workshop study outlined a series of recommendations for reformatting on-street time stays throughout the downtown. This work should serve as a template for action, with refinements developed through DPAC discussion, new data, and public input.[3] An initital timeline for action would be:

[3] See: *Ashland Downtown Parking Management and Multi-Modal Circulation Plan -October 2014*, (Community Planning Workshop and the University of Oregon).

a) Coordinate with Strategy 9 to determine brand/logo integration into new on-street signage (July 2016 – December 2016).
b) Identify/quantify changes to be made (July 2016 – December 2016)
c) Initiate formatting changes (January 2017 – June 2017)

- Eliminate 1-hour time stays, increase to 2 hours.
- All block faces with retail/office/restaurant should be 2 hours.
- Increase 4 hour stay options - assess feasibility of Residential Permits in select 4-hour zones – i.e., areas currently zoned R.
- Assess supply capacity (based on data update) for feasibility of employee on-street permit program(s) in 4-hour parking areas (**contingent on residential program).**

Estimated *Costs (STRATEGY 10):*

Based on information from other cities, estimated per unit costs for signage upgrades would be:

- *A standard signage package would have two poles with blade signs per block face – one at each end of the block with arrows pointing inward.*

Unit Costs- Signage

- *Only material costs are provided in these estimates.*
- *Pole unit cost = $470*
- *Blade sign unit cost = $30*
- *Unit cost for poles ($470) include hole boring and the pole*

STRATEGY 11:
Deploy new off-street signage package

Implementation Timeline: Near-Term (January 2017 - June 2017)

The new brand/logo developed in Strategy 9 would be incorporated into new signage packages to be placed at all City-owned public facilities. This would create a uniform and easily identifiable look for public parking, setting the foundation for future expansion of the brand into a downtown wayfinding system. Placement of the new off-street signage package should occur no later than June 2017.

Estimated Costs (STRATEGY 11):

The costs of the new signage system would be developed in Strategy 9.

STRATEGY 12:

Expand bike parking network to create connections between parking and the downtown to encourage employee bike commute trips and draw customers to downtown businesses.

Example: Interior Wall Racks

Implementation Timeline: Near-Term (October 2016 - June 2017)

When we talk about parking management, we're not just talking about cars. Communities throughout Oregon support bicycling as a key sustainable transportation strategy, and the Oregon Transportation Planning Rule requires it for new developments. Ashland has the benefit of a strong bike culture, a high number of local bike shops, and active efforts to expand the City and downtown's bike lane system. What the downtown may be lacking is sufficient "trip-end" bike parking amenities on-street, off-street, and in private buildings. Providing adequate bicycle parking will expand the capacity of the overall parking supply downtown.

Example: Bike Corral Ashland, OR

It is recommended that the City expand its approach to bike parking in the downtown to deliver a four-strategy approach. It is assumed that this approach would support current efforts to expand the City's bike lane network.
This effort should begin subsequent to the hiring of the Downtown Parking Coordinator (October 2016).

Example: Art Rack Baker City, OR

Elements of the four-strategy approach would include:

a) *On-sidewalk bike parking (October 2016 – December 2016)*. Identify locations for added bike parking within the pedestrian amenity zones.
b) *Bike corrals ((October 2016 – December 2016)*. Identify locations for additional bike corrals either in plaza areas or on-street and adjacent to high-traffic businesses.
c) *On private property (October 2016 – December 2016).* Identify areas on private property for bike parking improvements, especially for employees – e.g., interior bike cages, wall rack locations, and other secure areas.
d) *Identify funding/incentives and install (January 2017 – June 2017)* – Assemble funding sources necessary to implement a) – d).

Estimated Costs (STRATEGY 12)

The cost of an inventory of potential bike parking locations could be incorporated into the data collection portion of Strategy 7 above. Site identification could also be done through volunteer efforts and by working with downtown stakeholders and bike advocates. Costs are likely minimal.

Estimated unit costs for actual bike infrastructure:

- Staple or U racks: $150 - $200
- Wall Mounted racks: $130 - $150
- Bike Corral $1,200[4]
- Art Rack variable based on design

STRATEGY 13:
Evaluate and pursue on-street pricing in high occupancy areas (85%+).

Implementation Timeline: Near-Term (January 2017 - June 2017)

Recent data collection efforts have demonstrated that the on-street system routinely exceeds the 85% occupancy standard for sustained periods during the summer months. The Advisory Committee has indicated that less is statistically known about non-peak seasons. Strategy 7 addresses the need for additional occupancy and use data. Given that data collection would provide updated information for multiple seasons, it is recommended that the Parking Coordinator initiate a process with the Downtown Parking Advisory Committee to evaluate transitioning the downtown on-street parking system to paid parking.

Hourly on-street occupancy data can also be used to model potential revenue hours for different rate scenarios. Revenue hours can then be integrated into an expense/revenue pro forma to objectively estimate the feasibility of moving to an on-street pay-to-park program. Data derived from an improved inventory database and real-time use information will allow development of an accurate feasibility model.

Paid parking can support higher turnover within the system, yield higher compliance by employees directed to off-street locations so as not to compete for on-street parking with customers and visitors, create a more reasonable value relationship between parking and alternative modes, and provide

[4] Based on City of Portland, Oregon cost estimate for 6 staple racks (12 bike parking spaces), striping, bollards and installation.

revenue streams necessary to support operations, marketing/communications, program delivery, and infrastructure (e.g., new capacity).

Issues to examine, with supporting data, include:

a) Establish Parking Enterprise Fund (Strategy 3)
b) Update database (on-street counts/samples) (Strategy 7)
c) Develop expense/revenue model using occupancy data to estimate financial viability of new revenue collection technology.
d) Determine revenue collection technology that will best serve Ashland
   - Single meter vs pay station
   - Pay & Display vs Pay by Space
e) Consider/adopt seasonal pricing, using data sets to assist
f) Finalize pricing format
g) Finalize time stay format and hours of operation
   - Consider No Limit parking in current 4 HR areas
h) Solicit vendors for revenue collection technology

Estimated Costs (STRATEGY 13)

It is assumed here that the evaluation process would be incorporated into the routine schedule developed by the new Parking Coordinator and Downtown Parking Advisory Committee. Data collection efforts are a part of Strategy 7. General equipment costs for revenue technology are:

• Multi-Space Meters (pay stations)	$5,000 - $7,000 per unit (serving 8 – 14 spaces)
• Single-Space Meters	$500 - $700 per unit (serving one space)
• Back office support	Varies by system and software selected

STRATEGY 14:
Solicit firms to establish wayfinding and dynamic signage systems in the public right of way, integrated with the off-street system using City parking brand developed in Strategy 9.

Implementation Timeline: Near-Term (January 2017 - June 2017)

Many cities brand their public parking facilities and use dynamic signage in the public right-of-way. These systems inform customers and direct them to available parking. Portland, OR, and San Jose, CA are good examples (see photo at right).

Dynamic signage is linked to occupancy information collected at individual or multiple parking sites, usually through loop detector/parking counter systems. This information is displayed at building entry plazas and/or at major roadway entry portals. The signs provide an address or facility name and real-time stall availability.

The most successful programs tie into a parking brand incorporated into both the on-site and right-of-way signage. This provides customers a visual cue that translates from their first encounter on the roadway to being able to conveniently identify a parking location with available parking. Dynamic signage also complements parking apps and can be linked in real time to smartphones and/or websites. The idea behind branding the Ashland system with a name, logo, and marketing is to make it immediately recognizable to the customer.

An engagement with a wayfinding firm would bring an industry professional to:

a. Develop a signage package that incorporates a uniform design, logo, and color scheme into all informational signage related to parking (see Strategy 9).
b. Brand each off-street public facility, open to public access, with the established logo package.
c. Evaluate off-street facilities for installation of real-time counter systems that link to wayfinding signage.
d. Identify key entry points into the downtown for placement of informational signage.
e. Conduct cost feasibility analysis.
f. Establish installation schedule.

Estimated Costs (STRATEGY 14)

It is assumed that costing for wayfinding would be incorporated into the solicitation.

STRATEGY 15:
Deploy wayfinding system as developed in Strategy 14.

Implementation Timeline: Near-Term (June 2017 – November 2017)

Implements plan developed in Strategy 14.

Estimated Costs (STRATEGY 15)

Developed and approved through Strategy 14 process.

C. RECOMMENDED PARKING MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES: PHASE 2

This section outlines longer-term strategies. It is anticipated that Phase 2 efforts will take place between January 2018 and June 2019. These strategies build upon and are facilitated by work completed in Phase 1 (July 2016 – December 2017). Phase 2 focuses on data, capacity management, communications, capacity growth, and identification of funding sources.

Any and all Phase 2 strategies can be accelerated or moderated as necessary depending on community support and consensus, opportunity, and/or funding. The City and Downtown Parking Advisory Committee may elect to reorder strategies as opportunity dictates. As with Phase 1, all strategies outlined here will require consistent and dedicated management and coordination with active participation by the private sector.

STRATEGY 16:
Implement on-street pricing.

Work completed in Strategies 13 – 15 (Phase 1) will establish the timing for implementing on-street parking pricing. Initial steps will include outreach to potentially affected residential communities, and development of a marketing and communications plan to be rolled out in advance of on-street parking pricing. These action steps are outlined below.

Step A (Strategy 16)
Explore residential and employee permit programs (on-street)

<u>Implementation Timeline:</u> *Synched to pricing launch date*

Changes to parking management in the commercial zones of the downtown could cause issues related to employees seeking parking in residential areas. In anticipation of this, the City Parking Coordinator and DPAC should begin an outreach and education process to residents and businesses in adjacent neighborhoods. The purpose of this is to raise awareness and understanding of programs being developed, and to begin framing possible mitigation strategies and solutions if new parking systems in the downtown exacerbate parking problems in neighborhoods.

The most effective strategy to manage parking in neighborhoods adjacent to commercial/retail areas is an area permit program. Residents in areas zoned Residential (R) would be issued permits that allow unlimited parking on-street within the permit zone during specifically designated hours (determined through use data that would be assembled in updates per

Strategy 7). All other users (e.g., visitors and employees) would be limited to a time stay (e.g., 3 hours) or, if occupancy surpluses are indicated through data updates, through an additional employee permit.

Adjacent neighborhoods should be *allowed the option* of requesting an area permit program if spillover is considered to be a problem and constraints are identified through data collection updates. The City should be prepared to respond with an already approved Area Parking Permit Zone (APPZ) program. The program would prioritize on-street parking in residentially zoned neighborhoods for residents and visitors. Employee parking permits can be introduced into approved APPZs when parking surpluses are demonstrated and priority parking is assured. To this end, and in coordination with Strategy 16, the City should:

a. Develop and approve an Area Parking Permit Zone program.
b. Initiate outreach/education to neighborhoods on downtown parking management plan and area parking permit concept.
c. Be prepared to implement residential permit program in areas zoned R (if requested by neighborhood).
d. Assess supply capacity (based on data updates) for feasibility of employee on-street permit program(s) in residential permit areas, contingent on establishment of an APPZ for residential use.

Estimated Costs (STRATEGY 16 – Step A):

There should be no additional costs associated with the outreach and policy work associated with this task, as this work would be within the ongoing responsibilities of the Parking Coordinator and the DPAC. Costs associated with delivery of an Area Parking Permit Zone program will need to be further developed. Some cities charge users for the permit, at a rate that covers cost of management and administration. Other cities use parking revenue from the meter zone to underwrite the cost of an APPZ, viewing it as a cost of mitigation. Others use revenue from employee permits as a means to cover costs for residential permits. Any or a combination of these funding options will need to be further explored.

Step B (Strategy 16)
Develop a marketing / communications and new system roll out plan

Implementation Timeline: *Synched to pricing launch date*

Implementation of paid parking, a new brand/logo and new rules of use will come with many questions, which are best anticipated and proactively solicited. A clear plan for marketing and communicating the new system and its purposes, goals, and benefits will facilitate community awareness and understanding as well as acceptance if strategically addressed. The Parking

Coordinator and DPAC should develop a plan that incorporates any of the following elements deemed appropriate.

Goal

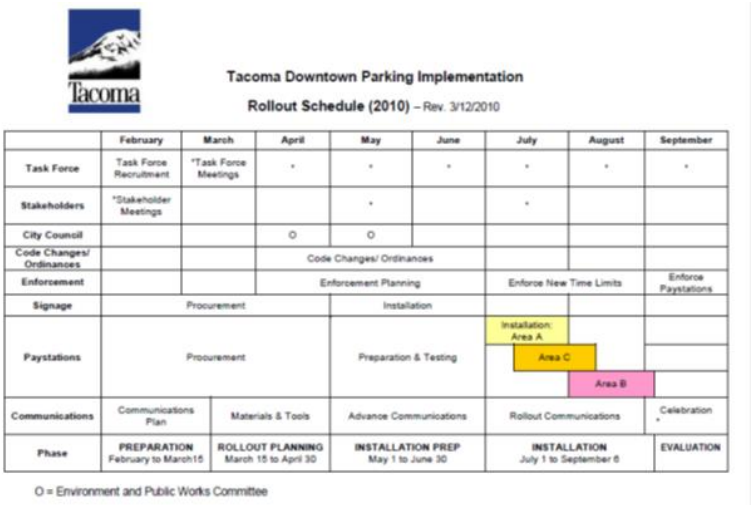
- Inform and involve the downtown business community—employers, merchants, employees, and customers—in preparing for implementation of new time limits and paid on-street parking.

Approach

- Enlist a subgroup of the Downtown Parking Advisory Committee to help design communications with downtown stakeholders and customers.
- Engage and update the downtown business community through credible partner organizations.
- Communicate with downtown customers and employees through merchants and employers.
- Provide friendly, timely response to persons who have questions/problems.

Materials & Tools

- Website/updates
- Letter to downtown businesses
- Fact sheet/map
- Presentation tools: PowerPoint, display boards
- Merchant/employer packet: "Customer Parking Kit"
- Point-of-purchase customer information
- FAQs (frequently asked questions)
- Posters
- Utility bill inserts
- Business cards: hotline number
- Meter graphics/instructions
- Pay Station demo video
- New signage: permanent, temporary (samples for merchants)
- List of off-street parking resources/rates
- Bicycle options



Sample: Pay to Park Rollout Schedule
Tacoma, Washington

- Transit options
- Grace period notice
- Interested parties e-mail list
- Website/links
- Social media: Facebook, Twitter, YouTube
- Order form (for more materials)
- Paid advertising

Target Audiences

- City policymakers (Council, Commissions, Task Forces)
- City staff
- Downtown Parking Advisory Committee
- Police Department
- Enforcement staff
- Downtown merchants/employers
- Downtown customers/visitors
- Downtown employees
- Downtown residents
- Neighborhood associations
- Business district associations
- Chamber of Commerce
- Oregon Shakespeare Festival
- News media
- Hard to reach audiences

Communications Partners

- Chamber of Commerce
- Neighborhood Associations
- Rogue Valley Transportation District (RTVD)
- Ashland Community Development
- Southern Oregon University
- Major employers

Community Briefings

- Organize a speakers' bureau to reach interested stakeholders in their regular group meetings.

Media Strategy

- Seek understanding and editorial support of local media outlets (print, radio, TV)
- Demonstration workshop/training session for media

- Monitor local media coverage – respond as needed.

Customer Support

- Pay station/meter demonstrations (established in contract with selected vendor)
- Customer parking cards to distribute to merchants/customers (option in contract)
- Hotline: single point of contact (established in contract)
- Grace period for enforcement during rollout
- Protocols and service levels for handling problems, complaints (established in contract)

Spokesperson(s)

- City spokesperson
- DPAC spokesperson
- Partner organizations

Estimated Costs (STRATEGY 16 – Step B):

Costs associated with a communications and rollout plan are difficult to ascertain at this time, as such costs would be a combination of time allocated by the Parking Coordinator and DPAC as well as time provided by existing internal City public relations and information resources. Some cities have opted to employ professional third-party public outreach/communications firms and/or added certain rollout functions to the responsibilities of the selected parking revenue collection technology firm(s).

Step C (Strategy 16)
Initiate on-street paid parking

Implementation Timeline: *January 2018 (launch)*

Work completed in Strategy 13 (Phase 1) will establish the format, type of technology, and timing for implementation of this strategy. Strategy 13 is scheduled to be completed in June 2017, leaving adequate time before the beginning of Phase 2 in January 2018 to:

a. Conduct outreach to the community (Step A)
b. Develop a marketing/communications plan (Step B)
c. Solicit vendor bids through an RFP process.
d. Evaluate proposals.
e. Award contract to preferred vendor.
f. Refine budgets and expense/revenue forecast model (Strategy 7).
g. Select a target launch date.
h. Launch.

Example: On-street Pay Station

Estimated Costs (STRATEGY 16 – Step C):

Estimated costs for a new on-street pay-to-park system were provided in Strategy 13. They are repeated here, below.

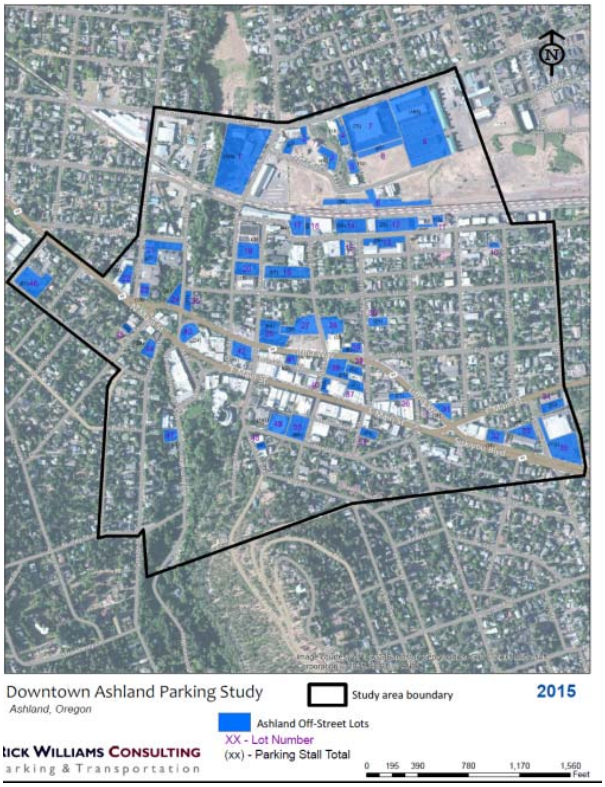
- Multi-Space Meters (pay stations) — $5,000 - $7,000 per unit (serving 8 – 14 spaces)
- Single Space Meters — $500 - $700 per unit (serving one space)
- Back office support — Varies by system and software selected

STRATEGY 17

Explore expanding access capacity – new parking supply and/or transit/shuttle options

Implementation Timeline: *January – June 2018*

As Ashland's downtown grows employment, residents, and visitors, existing supplies of parking and alternative mode access will need to be expanded. Adding bicycle trip capacity was discussed above in Phase 1 (Strategy 12). With implementation of paid parking, and possibly area permit programs, the City should evaluate other forms of access capacity as well, including new parking supply and improved transit and/or shuttle options. These types of capacity growth require sophisticated infrastructure and are very costly. It will be important for Ashland to give adequate time and effort to determine the most beneficial and cost-effective formats for increasing the capacity of the downtown access system. Planning for, and finding funding for, new capacity is time-consuming, so focused and objective evaluation will greatly facilitate decision-making before access constraints create adverse impacts on the downtown.



1. Identify new garage opportunity sites

One form of new access capacity would be adding to the current supply of parking through construction of a new parking garage and/or creation of new surface parking supply in a location outside the downtown and linked by transit or shuttle. The consultant team conducted an inventory of potential off-street parking opportunity sites in August 2015. These sites provide a starting point for evaluating potential sites in the downtown. A map of those sites is provided at right. To date there has been no evaluation of potential "remote" sites.

The Community Planning Workshop (2014) developed an initial database of existing parking occupancies in the downtown. Many areas of the downtown already exceed 85% occupancy in summer peak periods, and additional information on parking utilization will be developed in Phase 1 (Strategy 7). Additional data should be used to evaluate parking constraints and determine whether there is a deficit of parking downtown. This data will be useful in helping to "right size" any parking facility that might be developed.

It is recommended that the Parking Coordinator and DPAC initiate the following:

a. Establish desired parking "need" (w/ Strategies 7 & 13).
b. Evaluate locations where parking is possible downtown.
c. Evaluate "remote" sites that could be connected via shuttle/transit (surface lot option).
d. Evaluate public/private partnerships to develop supply.
e. Coordinate site evaluation with Community Development.
f. Coordinate with Ashland Chamber of Commerce, particularly through contacts with potential site partners in the private sector.
g. Engage local developers in evaluation process.
h. Narrow to feasible site(s).

2. *Explore shuttle/circulator connections (remote connector)*

As with an evaluation of new parking supply, it will be equally important to evaluate the cost and feasibility of new transit and/or shuttle capacity. Transit and shuttles could be especially valuable as a means to improve employee commute options, provide circulator links through downtown for visitors, and link remotely located parking supply.

The Parking Coordinator and DPAC should involve RVTD, Community Development, and the community in discussions regarding a transit option that would best serve the downtown and effectively shift an increasing percentage of trips onto a transit/shuttle system.

It is recommended that the Parking Coordinator and DPAC:

a. Evaluate route options.
b. Explore connections to remote parking in conjunction with parking supply evaluation
c. Determine desired levels of frequency/type of vehicle/seasonality.
d. Circulator shuttle or existing transit?

e. Coordinate with RVTD.
f. Narrow to preferred option(s).

Estimated Costs (STRATEGY 17):

The City and DPAC may want to retain third-party assistance in this process, particularly as regards the design and formatting of transit/shuttle systems. These systems will impact traffic and circulation and create land use issues related to transit/shuttle stops. Identifying and locating potential parking sites could be accomplished internally, with assistance from the Chamber of Commerce, local developers, and Community Development. As an estimate, the City could incur costs of $30,000 - $50,000 for route and system planning for a new transit/shuttle option. Some of this money could be used to cost the transit/shuttle option, which would reduce costing estimates for transit/shuttle described in Strategy 20 below.

STRATEGY 18
Develop cost forecasts for preferred parking supply and shuttle/transit system options.

Implementation Timeline: *June – September 2018*
Information derived from Strategy 17 will provide realistic data on parking and transit/shuttle enhancements that have community input and initial feasibility. Parking will have been evaluated as to location, size and format (garage or surface lot). Transit/shuttles will have been evaluated as to desired format, frequency, and routing.

Estimated Costs (STRATEGY 18):

Initial costing of garages/lots in the form of expense/revenue and financing pro formas can range from $5,000 - $7,500. This cost would be contingent on data and information already provided to a consultant from Strategy 19.

Rick Williams Consulting does not have expertise in costing transit/shuttle systems. These numbers need additional evaluation.

Estimated costs for new parking supply will range by type of supply. Estimates from projects recently completed in the Pacific Northwest are provided below.

- Structured Underground $35,000 - $45,000 per stall
- Structured Above Ground $20,000 - $25,000 per stall
- Surface Lot $ 5,000 - $ 7,000 per stall
  NOTE: Does not include operating cost or full cost of land

STRATEGY 19
Explore and develop funding options

Implementation Timeline: *September 2018 – March 2019*

A wide range of funding sources and revenue streams could be used to implement an enhanced parking management plan and develop new parking or transit capacity in Ashland. Given the costs new infrastructure, consideration of new funding mechanisms is prudent.

The list of potential sources here is not exhaustive, nor is these sources mutually exclusive. Funding for parking facilities, particularly garages, in emerging urban areas generally requires multiple sources.

The use of fees continues to evolve as various State laws or City ordinances are authorized. Implementation of fees should be reviewed by the City Attorney to determine their feasibility in light of applicable laws.

The funding options provided below assume a more detailed discussion of the role of the City in future funding of parking and transit, and public discussion regarding use of public funds to build and operate new systems.

Options Affecting Customers

User Fees
Many cities collect revenue through parking meters and/or sale of permits and direct it to parking or transportation development enterprise funds. Transit or shuttle riders pay in the form of monthly or daily fares. These funds can be used to construct/bond for additional parking or transit capacity.

Event Ticketing Surcharges

This would impose surcharges in conjunction with local and regional facilities (e.g., performing arts, sports, and concert arenas) to support development of access systems. Fees are generally applied to ticket costs.

Parking Fines

Revenues are collected for parking violations and a portion directed to parking development enterprise funds.

Options Affecting Businesses

Parking and Business Improvement Area or District (BIA or BID)

An assessment on businesses rather than property owners, these can be based on assessed value, gross sales, square footage, number of employees, or other factors established by the local legislative

authority. Salem, OR assesses a fee on businesses in its downtown Parking District to support parking services and future supply. Portland assesses a business income tax through the State of Oregon to support transit.

Options Affecting Property Owners

Local Improvement District (LID)

An LID is a property tax assessment that requires buy-in by property owners within a specifically identified boundary. LIDs usually result from a petition process requiring a majority of owners to agree to an assessment for a specific purpose—in this case, a parking facility or transit infrastructure improvement).

Options Affecting Developers

Fee-in-Lieu

Developers may be given the option to pay a fee in lieu of providing parking with a new private development. Payment of a fee-in-lieu provides the developer access entitlements to public parking facilities near the development site.

Fees-in-lieu can be assessed up to the full cost of parking construction. Generally, fees-in-lieu do not provide sufficient revenue to fully fund parking facilities, and are combined with other revenue sources

If an in-lieu parking fee is considered by the City, there needs to be greater policy clarity on the intent and purpose of the fee and the City's role in using the fees to either increase parking supply in the future or increase access capacity through enhancement of alternative mode programs. Lack of specificity in this regard limits discussion of the type of in-lieu fee developed, the rate itself and the programs and strategies that would need to be in place to implement desired outcomes. A useful guide to the diversity of fee-in-lieu programs and their advantages and disadvantages is Donald Shoup, Journal of Planning and Education Research, 18:307-320, 1999.

Public/Private Development Partnerships

Development partnerships are generally associated with mixed-use projects in which parking is used to reduce the cost of private office, retail, or residential development. Public/private development can occur through a variety of arrangements, including:

1. Public acquisition of land and sale or lease of land/air rights not needed for parking to accommodate private use;
2. Private development of integrated mixed-use development with sale or lease-back of the public parking portion upon completion; and

3. Responsibility for public sector involvement directly by the City, through a public development authority (PDA), or other special purpose entity such as a public facility district created for the project district or downtown area.

Options Affecting the General Public

General Obligation (GO) Bonds

Local jurisdictions may issue non-voted or voted bonds to develop parking or transit infrastructure, subject to overall debt limit requirements. With GO bonding, the municipality pledges its full faith and credit to repayment of the debt from general fund resources. In effect, general fund revenues would be reserved to repay debt that could not be supported by parking or transit revenues alone. Again, there may be imposed limits on the municipality for voter approved or non-voted debt.

Refinancing GO Bonds

This involves refinancing existing debt at lower rates, and pushing the savings from the general fund to debt coverage for new infrastructure. In these times of lower interest rates, the City of Ashland may have already maximized this option.

Revenue Bonds

Revenue bonds dedicate parking fees and other designated revenue sources to the repayment of bonds, but without pledging the full faith and credit of the issuing authority. Revenue bonding is not appropriate in situations where a local jurisdiction's overall debt limit is a factor and projected revenues are insufficient to cover required debt service.

63-20 Financing

A potential alternative to traditional GO bonds, revenue bonds, and LID bond financing, 63-20 financing allows a qualified non-profit corporation to issue tax-exempt bonds on behalf of a government. Financed assets must be capital and must be turned over free and clear to the government by the time bonded indebtedness is retired. When a municipality uses this technique to finance a public facility, it can contract for the services of a non-profit corporation (as the issuer) and a builder. The issuer acts on behalf of the municipality, but has no real business interest in the asset being acquired.

Community or Urban Renewal (Tax Increment Financing)

Though originally created for the limited purpose of financing the redevelopment of blighted communities, tax increment financing (TIF) has developed into an integral part of the revenue structure of many local governments. The rapid growth of TIF as an economic development technique of choice to finance land acquisition, site development, and property rehabilitation/revitalization began in the early 1980s. Tax increment financing can provide an ongoing source of local property tax revenue to finance economic development projects, and other physical infrastructure projects, without having to raise property tax rates. Moreover, TIF can leverage future general fund revenues to support the repayment

of property-tax backed debt, without having to go directly to voters for approval, and without violating debt limitations.

State and Federal Grants

In the past, a variety of state and federal grant programs have been applied to funding parking and transit infrastructure in business districts. In the current environment of more limited government funding, there may no longer be readily identifiable programs suitable for parking facility development, though transit may be more feasible.

General Fund Contribution

Local jurisdictions may make either one-time capital or ongoing operating contributions to a downtown parking or transit/shuttle program.

Estimated Costs (STRATEGY 19):

This is very much a process task, requiring research and conversations with City policy- and decision-makers and legal counsel, and discussion with a range of potentially affected stakeholders. For the purposes of this Plan discussion, it is assumed that costs would be absorbed internally by the City and the new Parking Services Division.

STRATEGY 20
Initiate new capacity expansion

Implementation Timeline: *June 2019*

This strategy would be catalyzed by completion of Strategies 17 – 19 and would complete Phase 2 of the downtown Strategic Parking Management Plan. By June 2019, the City and DPAC would have evaluated and researched the most effective option(s) for expanding access capacity in the downtown. This would be a capacity enhancement that provides the highest benefit to downtown in accommodating growth and funding through a package of finance options that are cost-effective and publicly supported.

VI. SUMMARY

The parking management strategies recommended here are intended to provide a template for action leading to a more efficient and organized parking system for the downtown. The strategies would be led by a Downtown Parking Coordinator with informed insight and direction from a representative Downtown Parking Advisory Committee.

The strategies envisioned here will be implemented over a minimum of three years, triggered by the 85% Rule and documented parking demand. Overall, the strategies are designed to "get the right parker to the right parking spot" in a manner that supports the Guiding Principles established as a part of this plan.

APPENDIX
ACTION STRATEGIES IMPLEMENATION SUMMARY

ACTIONS & IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE

Strategy Strategies	Phase 1 Immediate (0 – 6 months)	Phase 1 (6 – 18 months)	Phase 2 (18 – 36+ months)	Comment
POLICY ACTION STRATEGIES				
1 Formalize the Guiding Themes & Principles as policies for downtown access within the parking and transportation system plan.	✓			Provides decision-making framework and policy foundation for decisions/actions. Target by July 2016.
2 Adopt the 85% Rule as the optimum occupancy standard for measuring performance of the parking supply and triggering specific management strategies and rate ranges.	✓			The parking inventory for Ashland revealed that existing peak period occupancies within the core are often parked in excess of 85% for significant periods of the day. Having the 85% Rule formalized in policy will assure that a process for evaluating and responding to future parking activity is in place.
3 Establish a Downtown Parking and Transportation Fund as a mechanism to direct funds derived from parking into a dedicated fund.	✓			As the supply of parking becomes constrained over time, it will be important to direct funds into a specific account intended to support on-going transportation and access in the downtown.
4 Centralize Parking Management. Consolidate the management and administration of parking management within a single division for Parking Services.	✓			Centralized administration and management best supports the concept of an integrated parking system as all elements of the parking system (off-street, on-street, enforcement and oversight of any third party provider) are consolidated within a single division and leadership structure.
5 Develop a job description and submit a service package to create and hire a position of Downtown Parking Coordinator for the City of Ashland.	✓	✓		Consolidating parking operations within a single department or bureau under a Downtown Parking Coordinator creates administrative and operational efficiencies and seamlessly integrates on-street, off-street, enforcement and long-range strategic planning. Target by September 2016.

Strategy Strategies	Phase 1 Immediate (0 – 6 months)	Phase 1 (6 – 18 months)	Phase 2 (18 – 36+ months)	Comment
6 Establish a Downtown Parking Advisory Committee (DPAC) consisting of downtown stakeholders to assist in program implementation and review.	✓	✓		The stakeholder advisory process and a Parking Advisory Committee will: (a) assist the Parking Coordinator/Coordinator in the implementation of the parking management plan; (b) review parking issues over time; and (c) advise City Council and other relevant decision-making bodies on strategy implementation based on adopted policy for parking management and use dynamics identified for specific parking areas.
PARKING MANAGEMENT ACTION STRATEGIES (PHASE 1)				
7 Develop a reasonable schedule of data collection to better assess performance of the downtown parking supply.	✓	✓	✓	A system for routine data collection will need to be established. Conversations with the Advisory Committee indicated that a better understanding of "off-peak" data would also be useful, particularly as Phase 2 issues related to pricing are considered.
8 Identify off-street shared use opportunities and feasibilities based on data findings in Strategy 7. Establish goals for transitioning employees, begin outreach to opportunity sites, negotiate agreements, and assign employees to facilities.	✓	✓		The 2015 study of off-street lots quantified actual hourly use of these facilities over a twelve hour period each day. Fifty-one (51) off-street sites comprising 1,998 parking stalls were surveyed. Findings from the study revealed that many sites are significantly underutilized, with an average total of approximately 1,000 stalls empty during the peak hour of the day.
9 Create a critical path timeline to a new parking brand that can be utilized at all City-owned lots and shared supplies and in parking marketing/communications.	✓	✓		The intent is to create a brand that unifies the "public" supply of parking and is easily communicated; at specific parking sites and, ideally, through a system of wayfinding and guidance systems located throughout the downtown and in maps, websites and other communications and promotions.

Strategy Strategies	Phase 1 Immediate (0 – 6 months)	Phase 1 (6 – 18 months)	Phase 2 (18 – 36+ months)	Comment
10 Simplify on-street time stays. Consider incorporation of new brand/logo into on-street signage per input derived in Strategy 9.	✓	✓		The 2014 Community Planning Workshop study outlined a series of recommendations for reformatting on-street time stays throughout the downtown. This work should serve as a template for action moving forward.
11 Deploy new off-street signage package		✓		Implements Strategy 9.
12 Expand bike parking network to create connections between parking and the downtown to encourage employee bike commute trips and draw customers to downtown businesses.		✓		What the downtown may be lacking is sufficient "trip-end" bike parking amenities, both on-street, off-street and in private buildings. Providing adequate bicycle parking will expand the capacity of the overall parking supply downtown.
13 Evaluate and pursue on-street pricing in high occupancy areas (85%+).		✓		Data collection would provide updated information on use for multiple seasons; it is recommended that the Parking Coordinator initiate a process with the Downtown Parking Advisory Committee to evaluate a transition of the downtown on-street parking system to paid parking.
14 Solicit firms to establish wayfinding and dynamic signage systems in the public right of way, integrated with the off-street system using City parking brand developed in Strategy 9.		✓		These systems are designed and implemented as a means to inform and direct customers to available parking within a brand that communicates quality, cost effectiveness and convenience.
15 Deploy wayfinding system as developed in Strategy 14.		✓		Implements Strategy 14. No later than November 2017.

Strategy Strategies	Phase 1 Immediate (0 – 6 months)	Phase 1 (6 – 18 months)	Phase 2 (18 – 36+ months)	Comment
PARKING MANAGEMENT ACTION STRATEGIES (PHASE 2)				
16 Implement on- street pricing A. Explore residential and employee permit programs (on-street) B. Develop a marketing / communications and new system roll out plan C. Initiate pricing			✓	Completes the necessary outreach, data collection and planning for launching paid parking within the downtown on-street parking supply.
17 Explore expanding access capacity – new parking supply and/or transit/circulator options			✓	As Ashland's downtown grows employment, residents and visitors; existing supplies of parking and alternative mode access will need to be expanded.
18 Develop cost forecasts for preferred parking supply and shuttle/transit system options.			✓	Information derived from Strategy 19 will provide realistic data on parking and transit/shuttle enhancements that have community input and initial feasibility. Parking will have been evaluated as to location, size and format (garage or surface lot). Transit/shuttles will have been evaluated as to desired format, frequency and routing.
19 Explore and develop funding options				There are a wide range of potential funding sources and revenue streams that could be used to support implementation of an enhanced parking management plan in the Ashland downtown as well as to plan for and support development of new parking or transit capacity.
20 Initiate new capacity expansion				This strategy would be catalyzed by completion of Strategies 19 – 21 and would complete Phase 2 of the downtown Strategic Parking Management Plan.