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To Ashland Downtown Parking Advisory Committee
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From Robert Parker, Nick Meltzer, and CPW Team
SUBJECT SUMMARY OF INTERVIEWS WITH CASE STUDY CITIES

INTRODUCTION

Community Planning Workshop is working with the City of Ashland to conduct a downtown parking and multimodal circulation study. The study is intended to evaluate the effectiveness of existing downtown parking management, truck loading zones, and travel demand management strategies to improve the overall accessibility of downtown for visitor, employees, business owners and residents.

CPW identified six case study communities (Bend OR, Boone NC, Myrtle Beach SC, Park City UT, South Lake Tahoe CA, and Steamboat Springs CO) to better understand some of the issues pertaining to parking during peak season. We selected the cities because they had characteristics similar to Ashland—major seasonal use, a university, a vital core area, etc. The CPW team interviewed the selected cities' parking managers in order to gain knowledge regarding parking management policies and strategies used in the case study communities. The remainder of this memorandum summarizes our key findings.

FINDINGS

Many cities have specific peak season policies. Of the six cities researched and interviewed, only one did not have specific policies for peak tourism season. Some of these policies included:

- Installing parking meters for the duration of the peak season (March 15th through September 30th) and not having parking meters during the rest of the year, as done in Myrtle Beach SC.
- Closing off streets during peak season, either to parking and traffic or to both. This strategy was used in both Myrtle Beach SC and Park City UT.
- South Lake Tahoe CA makes available parking in places that are usually no-parking zones.
- Both Steamboat Spring CO and Park City UT offer a free trolley services to visitors parking away from the downtown area.
- Increasing wayfinding signage for the months of peak tourism. This particular strategy was used in Myrtle Beach SC.

Most cities have some type of employee permit system. These were implemented in a variety of fashions. Bend OR has both monthly and quarterly permits available to downtown

employees who make \$15.00 or less an hour. South Lake Tahoe CA has a special parking lot made specifically for employees close to the downtown area. In this case, employers pay for their employees' parking space.

South Lake Tahoe CA also offers free residential parking permits to its residents. While not specifically an employee permit system, something similar could be developed and tailored to respond to issues of employees parking in residential neighborhoods.

Voucher programs were found to be effective in multiple cities. A voucher system, through which a business provides its customers with parking vouchers or validation stamps, was a successful strategy in many of the cities interviewed. Both Boone NC and Bend OR have found such a program to be successful. In the case of these cities, patrons of a downtown business can get additional time for their parking space if it is paid or citations in time-limited parking can be waived if the person parking purchased something and can show the receipt.

In Bend downtown parking users who have received a citation can receive a 50% discount if they pay within 72 hours. Note that voucher programs are only relevant if the City chooses to implement a parking fee program.

All of the cities make informational resources available to downtown patrons. In regards to the information made available online, there was a wide range of resources. These included brochures, parking maps, and information on pricing, among other resources. Informational resources available, however, were inconsistent throughout the cities. Some cities had maps indicating where to park, while others had no maps at all. Only two of the cities had an online brochure. Many of the cities researched included information on pricing, if applicable. This suggests cities have customized their information strategies.

"Parking ambassadors", employees of the city standing close to points of interest of a particular city and helping visitors with questions about parking or any other destination, was one of Boone NC's strategies to providing information to its visitors.

Cities have used an array of pricing and enforcement strategies. The cities researched and interviewed presented a range of options for parking pricing and regulation enforcement, from paid on-street parking to free parking with hourly restrictions. Bend, Boone, and Steamboat Springs do not have paid on-street parking, rather opting for the enforcement of hourly restrictions. The only period in which visitors pay for parking in Boone is during football games, where a specific lot has spaces priced at \$20.00 for all day parking.

The other three cities studied have some type of paid parking. Myrtle Beach installs parking meters only during peak season. The city charges \$1.00 or \$1.50, for an hour of on-street parking depending on the location. All day parking is available for \$6.00. Park City has pay stations and charges \$15 per hour for on-street parking downtown. South Lake Tahoe has kiosks been installed near points of interest. Parking in the areas where kiosks are installed is costs \$2.00 an hour or \$10.00 for all day parking.

Cities use a variety of approaches and technologies for to make paid parking more convenient to patrons. These include:

- *Pay by phone technology.* In two of the cities interviewed, a system was put in place where visitors parking in privately managed garages could call and add time to their parking space. This strategy was used in both Bend OR and Myrtle Beach SC.
- *Seasonal parking meters.* Myrtle Beach SC only sets up their parking meters during peak tourism season.
- *Citations for time-limited parking.* Bend OR has done away with their parking meters and focused on time-limited parking and the citations that come from this. The parking manager for this city mentioned that implementing parking meters was too expensive and also mentioned that future technologies might make parking meters obsolete in the near future. Steamboat Springs CO is another city that does not have metered parking and instead opts for hourly parking.

METHODOLOGY

CPW conducted brief case studies to better understand parking policies for similar cities to Ashland. We selected cities that were similar size to Ashland, as well as the fact that each one had a peak season or specific reason for tourism that could cause parking issues in the downtown area.

The purpose of the case studies was to gain an understanding for some of the policies that the cities presented on their websites, as well as to gauge the level of information made available to patrons. We were particularly interested in informational resources for two reasons; 1) to understand how well their information campaigns worked for people not familiar with their downtown, and 2) to gain a better understanding of the current polices to better information the questions asked in the interview.

CITIES

The six cities selected were: Bend OR, Boone NC, Myrtle Beach SC, Park City UT, South Lake Tahoe CA, and Steamboat Springs CO. The following section includes information about each city, as well as why they were chosen for this study.

Table 1 – Selected Characteristics of Case Study Cities

City	Population (Visitors per Year)	Reason for Tourism
Bend OR	79,000 (2,000,000)	Outdoor Recreational Activities/Ski Resorts
Boone NC	17,000	College Town
Myrtle Beach SC	27,000 (14,000,000)	Beaches
Park City UT	8,000 (3,000,000)	Ski Resorts
South Lake Tahoe CA	21,000 (3,000,000)	Lake Tahoe/Ski Resorts
Steamboat Springs CO	12,000 (100,000)	Ski Resorts
Ashland OR	20,000 (410,000)	OSF/outdoor recreation

Bend OR (Pop 79,000)

Tourism is one of the largest aspects of Bend’s economy. Tourists from all along the west coast visit the city and the ski resorts along Mount Bachelor. Other recreational activities are available in the surroundings of the city. Microbreweries found in Bend also play a part in the city’s tourism. Over two million people visit Bend each year.

Boone NC (Pop 17,000)

The seasonal nature of college towns (where summers and other school breaks serve as off season periods) present a comparable environment to that of Ashland. The population of Boone is also comparable to that of Ashland.

Myrtle Beach SC (Pop 27,000)

Myrtle Beach is a popular destination for vacationers all along the east coast of the U.S. Around 14 million people visit Myrtle Beach each year. Myrtle Beach has earned the recognition of number one Family Beach in the U.S.

Park City UT (Pop 8,000)

Three major ski resorts in the area stimulate tourism. The Sundance Film Festival, the largest independent film festival in the country, also takes place in the city. More than three million people visit Park City each year.

South Lake Tahoe CA (21,000)

South Lake Tahoe is located along the southern shore of Lake Tahoe. The proximity to Lake Tahoe provides tourists opportunities for outdoor recreation. In the winter months, ski resorts also provide stimulation for tourism. About three million people visit Lake Tahoe each year.

Steamboat Springs CO (Pop 12,000)

The Steamboat Ski Resort on Mount Werner attracts many visitors to the city during the winter months. Steamboat Springs received around 100,000 visitors during the 2010-2011 and 2011-2012 ski seasons. The seasonal nature of tourism in Steamboat Springs makes it comparable to Ashland.

Table 1 summarizes various elements of the case study city's parking management programs.

Table 1. Summary of Parking Program Elements for Case Study Cities

Program Element	Bend, OR	Boone, NC	Myrtle Beach, NC	Park City, UT	South Lake Tahoe, CA/NV	Steamboat Springs, CO
Seasonal Policies	None	\$20 Parking lot spot for all day parking during football game days only	Close off one street Additional wayfinding Parking meters are installed: March 15 through September 30	Close off Main Street during the Art Festival in the summer	Open “no parking” areas	None
Employee Permit System	Paid for by employer, employee must earn \$15/hr or less, quarterly or monthly system	None	None	None	Specific parking lot for downtown employees Free residential permits to residents	None
Voucher Program	Voucher program for downtown business patrons, citation waived or have additional time added to parking 50% discount on citations paid for in 72 hours or less	Validation stamps for business patrons who have stayed longer than one hour.	None	None	None	None

Program Element	Bend, OR	Boone, NC	Myrtle Beach, NC	Park City, UT	South Lake Tahoe, CA/NV	Steamboat Springs, CO
Informational Resources	Detailed explanations of policies, but no maps	Website has maps of parking lots	Details on policies and pricing, but no parking maps	Maps of parking, informational brochure	Brochures and parking maps	Website has parking maps.
Parking Fees	No meters, hourly restrictions enforced	No meters, hourly restriction enforced	Seasonal meters ranging from \$1.00 to \$1.50 an hour depending on the location All day on-street parking available for \$6.00	Pay stations at \$.50 for 20 minutes of on-street parking	Kiosks near points of interest at \$2.00 per hour or \$10.00 for all day parking	No meters, hourly restrictions enforced
Paid Parking Technologies	Removed meters Call and add time to parking space	Removed meters, opted for hourly parking	Call and add time to parking space Seasonal parking meters	None	Kiosks for paid parking near points of interest	No meters, hourly restrictions in downtown instead