

DOWNTOWN

Summary:

Analysis shows that there is not a shortage of parking Downtown; there is more than enough existing parking supply to accommodate current demand and anticipated demand for the next 5 years. (In fact, even at the peak period, the time when most parking is demanded, less than half of Downtown's spaces are being utilized.) The reason downtown parking does not function efficiently is due to the manner in which we allocate and price public parking. Here are recommendations to address the issue:

Parking supply

Increase the proportion of publically available spaces in the core of Downtown (Note: these spaces do not need to be publically owned; rather, these are spaces that available to anybody, regardless of their destination. For example, the McGurn Garage is publically available parking, while the library parking lot is not)

- Problem: Some of the most valuable spaces in the prime locations are not available to the public. These spaces should be turning over frequently to support customers for downtown businesses, instead they are either vacant, or used for long-term parking by the city/county
 - There are 18 spaces around Downtown reserved for use by City/County Commissions and the City Charter Officers. There are additional spaces reserved for the Sheriff's Office and for the various Constitutional Officers.
 - At a minimum, these spaces should be available to the public after 5pm (or when the offices close for the day) and available to the public all day on the weekends. City Commission was supportive of examining this issue
- City Hall lots should be available to the public (at a minimum) on Fridays/weekends/evenings and holidays.
 - Needs improved signage to let people know when the lot is available for public parking
 - Spaces should be signed and metered as off-street parking.
 - Consider using a multi-space meter, as opposed to metering each space individually
- The front portion of City Hall parking lots should be public parking during the day. Consider relocating City employees to the rear lots (which are currently signed for use by the Commerce building)
 - City employees can also be relocated to Parking Lot #2 and/or to the City-owned parking garage.
 - Offer City employees the opportunity to cover this \$20-month expense via payroll deduction. (This is an issue to be worked out with Finance/Purchasing Dept.)
- Estimated time frame for implementation: 3 – 6 months. Estimated costs: \$540/meter + installation costs

Paid vs. Free

Parking fees should be designed to support a constant turnover and availability of the prime on-street spaces within the downtown core. Longer term parking should be directed to parking lots, parking garages, and to the perimeter of Downtown. Currently, Gainesville's fee structure works against the professed goals/desires for how the community wishes Downtown parking would function

- Parking is a commodity and basic rules of supply and demand apply.
- The goal is that patrons should be able to find an open parking space at any given time.
- Currently, the most convenient park is free, while less convenient parking is charged. Not surprisingly, patrons fight for the free, convenient spaces while other spaces sit empty. This creates a perception that there is no parking Downtown
 - The closest most convenient spaces are highly valued and should cost more than the less convenient spaces. Patrons can determine what value they put on

- convenience and either they wish to pay a premium to park directly in front of their destination, or if they would rather park slightly farther away for a lower price. This pricing structure
 - Additionally, time limits and fee structures should be used to direct long term parking into surface lots and garages, where there is an ample, underutilized supply of parking spaces. This will ensure that there are always on-street spaces available for customers and visitors to downtown.
- All the free spaces in the Downtown core and surrounding the City and the McGurn garages should be metered
- Meters should be in effect until at least 8 pm
 - To discourage early dinner traffic or restaurant/bar employees from monopolizing the most desirable spaces all night
 - Explore utilization of “master” meters, paying via cell phone and other technology in implementing paid parking Downtown
- Rich & Assoc. recommends the following rate schedule:
 - On-street core spaces: \$1.00/hr (2 hour limit)
 - On-street non-core spaces: \$0.25/hr (4 to 10 hour limit)
 - Off-street lots (core) \$0.75/hr (3 hour limit)
 - Parking Garage \$0.50/hr (no time limit)

Demand vs. Supply

- Currently no a need for additional structured parking within the next 5 years
 - Existing garages can accommodate the excess demand that on-street parking and surface lots cannot
 - However, the McGurn garage will reach functional capacity in roughly 5 years
- City may want to conduct periodic occupancy counts to monitor the situation and explore whether additional parking supply is needed in the future

Signage

- Implement a program with consistent signs directing people to key locations and to off-street parking
- Currently, so such signage exists, which leads to congestion as visitors circle the area searching for both their destination and for parking
- Examples of signage content and hierarchy are provided in the parking study. PWD can incorporate them into the aesthetic being developed under the current wayfinding signage project
- Implementation time frame: 12 – 24 months. Costs: approx. \$50,000 for signage program

Enforcement

- Increased use of meters will make it fairly obvious when a vehicle is in violation
- As plate data is entered into the handheld unit, it should indicate if the vehicle has received a violation in the past X days
 - If not, issue a “courtesy ticket” to inform customer of the time limit and direct them to off-street parking that is meant for users with longer trips in the Downtown area
 - Good PR tool
 - Supported by City Commission
- Research City ordinances to determine if they limit parking to a max. 2 hour limit on metered blocks. If not, amend the ordinances to do so
 - Will prevent meter feeding and encourage turnover of spaces
- Mon-Fri, metered spaces should be enforced later than 5pm (up until 8pm) to help prevent bar and restaurant staff from monopolizing the prime on-street spaces during the night-time peak

COLLEGE PARK/UNVIERSITY HIEGHTS

Summary: The issues and solutions for this study area are less straightforward than for Downtown. (This is because Downtown actually does contain an adequate supply of parking to meet demand, and merely lacks proper management/implementation strategies. However, issues are more complex in CPUH.) In both College Park and University Heights there is very little publically available parking, and of this publically available parking, most is privately owned. Since the City has little/no ownership of the parking supply, it is fairly limited in its ability to influence policies and behaviors.

College Park

- Issue: lack of publically available parking. Typically want at least 50% of parking to function as “publically available” parking. Only 13% of parking supply is publically available. As a whole, the area approaches functional capacity for parking (at the daily max, 80% of spaces are occupied.) However, many blocks already function at extreme parking deficits with demand greatly exceeding supply
 - Recommendation:
 - City/CRA should pursue opportunities to add additional publically owned and/or publically available parking supply
 - City/CRA may construct a parking structure
 - Consider public/private partnerships. If private development is planning to construct structured parking, the City/CRA could fund the incremental costs associated with building a larger structure that would accommodate new publically available parking
 - Pursue more opportunities for structured parking
 - When building new parking capacity, keep in mind that from the public-sector perspective, economic development will be best served by focusing on the non-residential parking supply
 - When building structured parking, costs make it economically unfeasible to turn a profit for solely residential parking. To cover costs, a parking structure requires multiple tickets and a turnover of parking spaces. Residential parking follows a longer-term parking pattern, and rates would have to exceed \$1000/month per space in order to support carrying costs.
- Issue: anecdotal evidence of non-residents fraudulently obtaining parking decals
 - Recommendation:
 - City should address issues with residential permitting system and ensure people are not able to fraudulently obtain parking decals
 - Including random enforcement sweeps
 - implement signage program to make citizens and visitors aware of long term and short term parking opportunities, and where theses publically available parking opportunities are located
- Issue: City regulations may hinder efforts to improve parking conditions
 - Recommendation: City should review Code requirements and potentially make changes
 - Code currently restricts parking as a primary use, which would prohibit development of a stand alone paring structure.
 - If a parking structure is being constructed as part of a development project, the Code should not mandate parking maximums. This limits the ability to “oversize” a parking structure in order to provide parking not only for the development, but also for additional publically available parking supply

- Evaluate code requirements for the minimum amount of parking development are required to provide

University Heights

- Issue: lack of publically available parking. All off-street parking lots are privately controlled, and none of this parking is publically available
 - Recommendation: Need to seek ways to increase the supply of publically available parking. (50% of supply should be publically available)
 - Seek partnerships to allow daytime public parking and potentially nighttime resident parking, particularly on any new facilities constructed on Shands sites
 - City/CRA should pursue opportunities to add additional publically available parking supply, particularly structured parking
 - Consider public/private partnerships. If private development is planning to construct structured parking, the City/CRA could fund the incremental costs associated with building a larger structure that would accommodate new publically available parking
 - CRA/City may construct parking structure
 - Pursue more opportunities for structured parking. Note: economic development from the public sector perspective will best be served by provided non-residential parking supply
 - On-street parking that is presently un-marked, such as along SW 2nd Ave, should be metered so that it is available to visitors and customers and not monopolized by residents/employees
 - Other on-street parking should also be designated and/or metered
- Issue: Utilization of parking is quite low during the day (20% - 30% of spaces occupied). Parking utilization is quite high at night (80% during the daily peak period), approaching functional capacity. This is largely residential demand, and there are 10 blocks with significant parking deficits.
 - Recommendation: Seek partnerships to allow for shared parking facilities, used by businesses/the public during the day, and reserved for residents in the evenings
- Issue: Anecdotal evidence that non-residents are able to fraudulently obtain residential parking decals
 - Recommendation: City should address issues with residential permitting system and ensure people are not able to fraudulently obtain parking decals
 - Periodic enforcement sweeps recommended
- Issue: City regulations may hinder the ability increase the parking supply.
 - Recommendation: City should address code requirements that hinder parking solutions. Parking can still be provided in a manner that is acceptable to aesthetical and urban design-oriented goals for the area
 - Code currently restricts parking as a primary use, which would prohibit development of a stand alone parking structure.
 - If a parking structure is being constructed as part of a development project, the Code should not mandate parking maximums. This limits the ability to “oversize” a parking structure in order to provide parking not only for the development, but also for additional publically available parking supply
 - Evaluate code requirements for the minimum amount of parking development are required to provide
 - Evaluate code requirements for all structured parking to include “liner buildings”. These uses cannibalize the parking supply in the structure and may be economically unfeasible for a variety of other reasons as

well. Other solutions should be considered to mitigate aesthetics and urban design issues associated with parking structures

- Issue: inadequate signage
 - Recommendation: implement signage program to make citizens and visitors aware of long term and short term parking opportunities, and where these publically available parking opportunities are located
- Note: the major generator for future parking demand will be AGH redevelopment – it is assumed this site has the capacity to provide on-site structured parking to accommodate the new demand it will generate