

Downtown Parking Management Plan



Port Townsend, Washington

**Prepared By
Kittelson & Associates, Inc.**

**In association with:
John D. Edwards, P.E., Transportation Consultant**

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KITTELSON & ASSOCIATES, INC.
TRANSPORTATION PLANNING/TRAFFIC ENGINEERING

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Port Townsend, Washington

Prepared For

City of Port Townsend, Washington

Waterman & Katz Building

181 Quincy Street, Suite 301

Port Townsend, WA 98368

Prepared By

Kittelson & Associates, Inc.

610 SW Alder, Suite 700

Portland, OR 97205

(503) 228-5230

In association with:

John D. Edwards, P.E., Transportation Consultant

3912 Sheldon Drive

Atlanta, GA 30342

Project Manager: Judith Gray

Project Principal: John Ringert

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PARKING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Kristen Anderson, Chief of Police
Bill Erickson, Port Townsend Police Department Volunteer
Sue Arthur, Business Owner
Tim Caldwell, Chamber of Commerce
Mark Cole, Resident and Business Owner; Main Street Association
Larry Crockett, Port of Port Townsend
Julie Duke, DASH
Sam Kyle, Property Owner
Mari Mullen, Port Townsend Main Street Association
Kris Nelson, Business Owner
Dave Robison, Northwest Maritime Center
Michelle Sandoval, City Council
Marilyn Staples, Business Owner
Dave Turissini, Jefferson Transit
Scott Walker, Transportation Advisory Board

CITY STAFF

Kenneth Clow, Public Works Director
David Peterson, City Engineer
Jeff Randall, BCD Director

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CONSULTANTS

Kittelson & Associates, Inc., Transportation Planning & Traffic Engineering
John D. Edwards, Transportation Consultant, Inc.

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Section 1

Executive Summary

Executive Summary

The public parking system in Downtown Port Townsend is an important and valuable resource. The constrained land supply in Downtown, coupled with competing uses for public right of way, make the parking system a valuable asset.

The purpose of this parking management plan is to optimize this important resource in a way that helps to support the community's vision for Downtown. This plan addresses management measures to support appropriate use of the public parking system; updated development code requirements for appropriate future parking development; measures to meet funding needs for future access improvements; and, integration within the general access system to encourage balanced transportation options.

POLICY, PLAN, AND DOCUMENT REVIEW

The background studies and documents reviewed show that parking issues have been a concern to all sectors of the community for quite some time. The need for adequate parking is understood, but is often in conflict with urban design and transportation goals. Port Townsend's development code is intended to provide for adequate parking, while reducing barriers to economic development and historic preservation. Experience has revealed some drawbacks in some of the code elements that the city may want to reevaluate. Through the development and implementation of the parking management plan, it will be necessary to find a balance between competing needs for adequate parking and other transportation and community goals.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

The community involvement process provided a diverse set of voices and perspectives regarding the parking system. These revealed some differing and at times conflicting opinions about what would be best for the community. Such disagreements about downtown parking characteristics and solutions are not unique to Port Townsend. In most downtowns there are many conflicting viewpoints. The purpose of the community involvement process, in combination with the review of policies and other plan documents and the comprehensive data analysis, is to seek opportunities to implement improvements that better achieve the overall goals and vision for downtown. The stakeholder interviews, customer survey, public meetings and PAC involvement provided an important sense of priorities and concerns about Port Townsend's parking system.

TECHNICAL ANALYSIS

Some of the key issues and opportunities that arose from the system analysis and/or community involvement are summarized below.

Long-Term Parking

Employees who filled out the questionnaire indicated a higher degree of frustration with parking than visitors. Currently, about half of the public parking spaces in downtown are designated for 24-hour parking; the remaining half are designated for short-term use. During weekdays most of the available parking capacity in downtown was in long-term parking areas, such as Monroe Street and the Skate Park lot. However, it appears that many employees and business owners use the short-term parking, either exceeding the time limit (which is a violation), or moving to another short-term space within downtown (which is legal).

It is important to provide employees with good access to their jobs. If measures are taken that further restrict parking access for employees, offsetting measures should be undertaken to enhance other access options or parking locations.

Short-Term Parking

Visitors to Port Townsend tended to report a generally positive experience with parking in downtown. However, residents who attended the public meeting indicated frustration with downtown parking, many saying that they avoid downtown during the peak tourist season.

The utilization study showed that parking peaks shortly after noon on weekdays and Saturdays. Promoting off-peak hours to local residents may improve the experience for residents who want to shop downtown, while spreading the peak period over the course of the day.

Short-term parking is intended to accommodate people in town to shop, dine, or other recreational activities. The Main Street association has estimated that each downtown shopping space generates approximately \$150 to \$300 per day in retail sales revenue. As such, preserving the short-term parking for shoppers should be a priority for Port Townsend.

Park & Ride Lot

The Jefferson Transit park-and-ride lot is an underutilized parking resource for downtown. If it could be drawn in to serve downtown parking demand, it would effectively increase the supply of downtown parking by nearly 25% (270 spaces in addition to the existing 1,145 spaces downtown). Improving utilization of the lot is identified as a goal in the comprehensive plan and in other documents relevant to parking. But utilization remains very low except during large special events. Recent changes in the transit schedules and routes make the park-and-ride lot a better option for going downtown. However, most people will continue to drive downtown as long as the parking is free.

Currently, Jefferson Transit emphasizes the park-and-ride lot/shuttle service for visitors. Relocating the visitor center to the lot will help to increase visibility toward this end. However, there are probably more opportunities for success by emphasizing its use by commuters. A combination of stick (paid parking, stricter enforcement downtown) and carrot (increased shuttle frequency, reduced fare) is probably needed to get good utilization of the park-and-ride lot.

Paid Parking

Paid parking is a significant tool to manage parking, but it is not without difficulties and detractors. Concerns were raised that that paid parking would compromise the small town atmosphere of Port Townsend. There is also a negative perception of paid parking as a way for the city government to raise revenue.

Recent technology advances in paid parking systems create many opportunities for flexible programs that are well suited to Port Townsend's seasonal demand fluctuations. Further evaluation would be needed to work out costs and revenue requirements to create a system that can support itself. It should not be expected to generate any significant revenue.

A simpler and smaller scale option for paid parking would be to charge for existing public surface lots using a permit system. For instance, the parking lot on Tyler Street currently accommodates

approximately 17 vehicles, virtually all of them all-day parkers. At \$50 per month per space this lot could contribute \$10,000 toward improvements, such as paving and striping the lot, or making other access improvements.

New Parking Supply

Given the high peak period utilization in the study area, coupled with development plans that will increase parking demand and reduce supply, it is likely that some new parking will be warranted in downtown. Options for new supply include: increasing the amount of on-street by converting to angled parking; developing new off-street surface parking; and, developing off-street structured parking. Each of these options has challenges and trade-offs.

As was noted earlier, converting to angled on-street parking introduces trade-offs with bicycle conditions. Further, narrowing the travel way might preclude center street loading, making it necessary to provide curb face loading zones. This would partially offset the gains of converting to angled parking.

Opportunities for new surface parking lots are limited by the scarcity of land in downtown Port Townsend. One potential option would be to relocate the Skate Park and return the location to serve parking. There are also private land holdings that could potentially be acquired and developed for parking, or leased from the owners. Any new surface parking lots should probably be considered interim, as the scarcity of land would make these likely future redevelopment sites. Impacts to the urban landscape will also need to be considered to ensure that the active pedestrian-friendly environment is not compromised.

Finally, there are options for providing parking in structures. Cost is probably the biggest barrier for structured parking. Typical construction costs for structured parking are on the order of \$20,000 per stall, requiring around \$150 in revenue per month per stall to cover costs. Still, certain locations may have conditions that are conducive for a parking garage or deck parking. Private/public partnerships may prove to be a viable opportunity for structured parking in downtown.

Alternative Mode Access

The most significant opportunity to reduce parking demand in downtown is to shift demand to the park-and-ride lot. Most downtown access would then be via transit, although the lot is close enough for walking or bicycling downtown, especially in good weather during the peak summer months.

Port Townsend has a relatively high degree of bicycle activity, supported by generally light traffic conditions on most streets, and some bicycle lanes on major streets accessing downtown. Field observation revealed only limited bicycle parking. While it is not possible to quantify a direct correlation between bicycle parking and mode share, the limited observed bicycle parking and comments from the community indicate that increasing bicycle parking would be an effective improvement.

Pedestrian conditions are good in Port Townsend, with sidewalks and stairwells providing good connectivity. Further, slow traffic and driver courtesy make pedestrian crossing conditions safe and comfortable. There are some locations where sidewalks are not currently provided (e.g., Quincy Street north of Washington Street). Also, in several locations sidewalks are interrupted at the access points into parking areas. These pose opportunities for improving pedestrian conditions.

Enforcement

Port Townsend's volunteer enforcement program has been a significant improvement over the previous conditions, when the lack of resources limited the ability of the police force to enforce parking. And the stricter enforcement has coincided with a drop in the number of complaints about enforcement. The field data collection and anecdotal evidence from locals indicate a significant amount of violation occurs in the time-restricted parking spaces. More consistent enforcement is an essential part of optimizing downtown parking resources.

Parking Code Changes

There are two types of code changes that could be adopted as part of a downtown parking management plan. First, changes should be adopted to close the current loophole that allows long-term parkers to move their vehicles to avoid the time restriction. The loophole undermines the ability to truly preserve premium parking for customers of downtown. Further a system that requires (even implicitly) employees to move their cars throughout the day results in frustration for employees and lost productivity for employers. It is important to note that such code changes would further constrain employee parking in downtown, and some offsetting measure may be needed to ensure adequate employee access.

The second area where code changes may be warranted is in the land development code. It may be necessary to review code requirements such as minimum parking ratios, waivers and exemptions for historic properties, fee-in-lieu options, and bicycle parking requirements to support future development that is consistent with community goals for downtown.

RECOMMENDED PARKING MANAGEMENT PLAN

The specific measures that comprise the Downtown Port Townsend Parking Management Plan are identified below. A phased approach to implementation is provided, including near-term, intermediate, and long-term actions. Guidelines for implementation and for on-going monitoring of parking conditions are also provided.

MISSION STATEMENT

Use a variety of approaches to maximize parking in an efficient manner that considers all users, while strengthening the commercial historic districts, protecting the historic and community character, and enhancing pedestrian accessibility.

PHASE 1. NEAR-TERM ACTIONS (WITHIN ONE YEAR)

Administrative Steps

The intent of these steps is to establish an organizational structure and tools that will support adoption, implementation, monitoring, and updates to the parking plan.

1.1 Appoint a *Parking Manager*

A key component of any effective management plan is the designated *point person*. The City should create a Parking Manager designation, which could be an existing staff person, to ensure that the parking in downtown is monitored and that adopted strategies are appropriately implemented to proactively manage parking.

- 1.2 Establish a *Parking Advisory Committee*
An Advisory Parking Committee should be established with the express purpose of spearheading the implementation of the Parking Management Plan and maintaining on-going evaluation of parking issues within in Downtown Port Townsend. The committee would make recommendations regarding parking zone boundaries and parking fees. The Advisory Committee would work in cooperation with the City Parking Manager to proactively address parking issues.

Parking Management and Access Steps

The intent of these steps is to optimize the use of the existing parking and access systems. Parking management measures are integrated with measures that improve and encourage alternative access modes.

- 1.3 Reevaluate the short-term and long-term parking areas. Specific changes should be linked to other actions, such as enforcement, paid parking, and transit options. Changes could include conversion of 24-hour parking to short term, and/or provision of some three- or four-hour parking areas. If increased enforcement more effectively preserves designated short-term parking for customers, it may be appropriate to maintain the number of long-term spaces.
- 1.4 Develop an integrated education and Transportation Demand Management (TDM) program. The program should link parking with other transportation options. Program elements could include:
- An updated parking map for downtown
 - Educational materials about the value of customer parking to discourage abuses by long-term parkers
 - Reinforcement of the environmental benefits of leaving your car at home
 - Activities to promote non-motorized transportation
 - Transit discount programs for business owners and employees
 - Promote off-peak shopping for local residents
 - Information on “unbundled” lease agreements
 - Education for employers who provide employee parking
- 1.5 Increase the number of bicycle parking spaces and facilities, including covered bicycle parking. The purpose of this action is to improve the safety, security, and convenience for bicyclists and to reinforce the value of biking as a transportation mode.
- 1.6 Develop a *Pedestrian Improvement Plan* for Downtown. The pedestrian improvement plan should include locations, priorities, and design for new sidewalks, landscaping, lighting, and benches.
- 1.7 Clarify purpose and management guidelines for special parking categories. These include:
- Construction vehicles: Develop criteria for managing construction activities and special use requests of parking spaces
 - Loading/special business uses: Review the designation of loading zones and special business special needs

- ADA parking spaces: Review the number, location, and regulations.
- Recreational/oversized vehicles: Review criteria, regulations and signage for management and locations of RV and oversized vehicle parking

Parking Supply Steps

- 1.8 Identify opportunities to increase angled on-street parking. Opportunities should be evaluated for potential conflicts with traffic, bicycle, and loading uses. Back-in angled parking could be considered as well.
- 1.9 Formalize shared arrangements with private lots. The purpose of this action is to gain public access to private parking for visitors as well as residents and employees.
- 1.10 Establish a “parking bank” with private lot owners to gain public access to private parking for residents and employees.

PHASE 2 INTERMEDIATE ACTIONS (2 TO 5 YEARS)

These are high-priority actions that are intended for longer-term implementation due to the time required for implementation.

Parking Management Measures

- 2.1 Increase enforcement of short-term time limit spaces.
 - Modify parking time limit restrictions to make it illegal for individuals working in the core to move their vehicles within the core to avoid the two-hour limit.
 - Establish a policy of waiving fines for first-time violators. The purpose is to mitigate potential customer relations impacts from increased enforcement by ensuring that adequate information is provided regarding parking and other access options. A parking map should be issued to all violators when enhanced enforcement is initiated.
 - Increase enforcement staff in order to improved consistency throughout the week. Consider use of part-time paid extra help in the peak season rather than full time employees.
 - Extend parking enforcement to Saturdays.
 - Prohibit voiding tickets by enforcement officers, instead requiring ticketed individuals to go through a formal adjudication process.
 - Purchase handheld computers and software for automated tracking and record keeping.
 - Establish parking ticketing benchmarks identifying the number of tickets that enforcement personnel should be writing daily. Parking ticket revenue should be expected to help pay for enforcement personnel.
 - Institute paid parking in short-term zones.
- 2.2 Implement Paid Parking
Investigate the use of paid parking to 1) encourage alternate modes and use of the park and ride lot; 2) discourage use of short-term parking by employees; and 3) generate revenue for parking services and other downtown improvements. An investigation should identify the following:

Phasing of paid parking implementation:

There would be many decisions to make for paid parking. Most cities start with the on-street system because that's the priority for customers. However, Port Townsend should consider starting with one or more of the most convenient surface lots. These are publicly owned assets that are currently serving only a few users. This would provide an opportunity to see and respond to public reactions and evaluate appropriate fee amounts. It would establish Port Townsend "in the business" of paid parking to begin setting up the revenue system. And it could generate money to support enforcement. Paid parking for the on-street system could be phased in with the benefit of experience from the limited off-street program.

Revenue Collection Mechanisms

Some options for pricing parking are identified below, along with general features. Cost estimates are provided for the purpose of comparison only. More investigation would be needed.

- Parking permits: Low expense; good for long-term parkers, surface lots.
- Pay-and-display (kiosks): Low tech, low cost; good for surface lots, short-term or long-term users.
- Meters: good for on or off-street. Relatively high installation cost (\$300 to \$500 per stall) and more maintenance costs. Good enforcement mechanism.
- Pay stations: Good for on or off-street. Relatively high installation costs (\$5000 to \$8000 per block face or lot). Emerging technology, so limited experience, but they appear to have lower maintenance than meters. Very good flexibility for seasonal fees, credit cards, bill acceptance. Good enforcement mechanism.

Amount of Parking Fees

As indicated above, installation of paid parking systems can have high initial expenses, as well as on-going maintenance. A realistic evaluation of revenue potential for paid parking in Port Townsend must be evaluated with respect to the seasonal fluctuations in parking demand. Parking prices should also be compared to transit prices so that transit is maintained as an attractive option, especially for commuters.

- 2.3 Establish a separate parking fund to ensure parking revenues go support the parking and access system.
 - Parking revenue sources would include the following:
 - Parking fines
 - Paid parking revenues
 - Fee-in-Lieu revenues
 - Expenses covered by the Parking Fund would include:
 - Enforcement costs
 - Acquisition and development of parking facilities
 - Parking maintenance
 - Other downtown streetscape improvements
- 2.4 While most businesses in the historic district find the Farmers Market and craft fairs valuable to the general business climate, it would be desirable to seek out long-term locations for the

Farmer's Market and craft fairs that do not significantly reduce available parking in the downtown core.

- 2.5 Work with Washington State Ferries so that any expanded service considers on-land impacts.

Alternative Access Steps

- 2.6 Begin implementation of Pedestrian Improvement Plan developed under Action 1.6.
- 2.7 Work with Jefferson County to maximize use of park-and-ride lot and increase transit ridership. Activities should be closely tied to TDM measures (Action 1.4). These measures will be most effective if they are implemented in combination with stricter enforcement and paid parking downtown. Specific actions include the following:
- Work with Jefferson Transit to develop discount transit fare programs
 - Extend Transit service hours in the summer
 - Promote the improved Transit service and new logo to residents; provide “specials” for locals
 - Move visitor center to Park and Ride to increase visitor usage; promote the visitor experience of taking the shuttle to downtown

Parking Supply Steps

- 2.8 **Modify Parking Requirements in the Land Development Ordinance**
The intent is to ensure that new developments participate in accommodating increased parking demand; to increase flexibility for developers so that parking requirements are not a barrier to development; and, to provide a funding mechanism to support the City in providing public parking/access.

The following code items should be evaluated:

- Minimum parking ratios for commercial development should be based on actual parking demand per developed commercial property in downtown and should always consider shared parking where possible.
 - The fee-in-lieu policy should be tied to the cost to accommodate new demand.
 - Consider a graduated fee structure for the fee-in-lieu policy to provide developers flexibility, but to ensure adequate resources to accommodate new demand.
 - Establish maximum parking ratios for downtown, equivalent to 125% of the minimum.
- 2.9 Work with the Port of Port Townsend to evaluate options for increasing the supply of and public access to parking.
- 2.10 Develop public/private partnerships with private lot owners to improve parking facilities, including paving and restriping private parking lots, and construction of new facilities.
- 2.11 Begin developing a *Financing Plan for Parking and Access Improvements*.
The priority of the Parking Management Plan is to make the most efficient use of existing resources. However, in the long term there will be a need to make improvements, including develop additional parking to meet increased demand and to replace existing parking that will be lost to redevelopment. The City should establish a financing plan as a proactive step for long-term parking and access improvements.

PHASE 3. LONG-TERM ACTIONS (FIVE+ YEARS)

3.1 Acquire property and develop public surface parking

3.2 Identify a suitable location for new seasonal or permanent parking facilities

On-Going Actions

The recommendations identified in this section should be implemented and revisited on an on-going basis by City of Port Townsend staff or the parking manager. Regular monitoring will be needed to accommodate changes in development patterns, parking needs, and available resources. The following actions are recommended as a framework for on-going monitoring and modification to the parking system.

3.3 Conduct Yearly Utilization Analysis

A yearly update of the parking utilization analysis should be conducted. The analysis should be expanded to include private parking as well as public parking. The analysis could be limited to the peak hour of the peak season. Care should be taken in selecting the study period to ensure appropriate data and findings. For the most direct comparison to this study, the study period should be on a weekday and a Saturday in July or August between noon and 2 p.m. Special events should be avoided. Aerial photography could be used for counting cars, though it would have to be supplemented with field counts in areas obscured by roofs, shadows, or trees.

If monitoring reveals parking utilization of 85% or higher, conduct a duration analysis to determine if time stays in public short-term parking areas are consistent with desired uses. If the duration analysis reveals that time stays are too long, the first priority will be to decrease time stays. Some potential strategies are listed below. Though each measure should be considered, it is likely they would not all be implemented.

Measures to Decrease Time Stays

- Increase the level of enforcement.
- Convert some signed time limits to metered time limits.
- Public information campaign to discourage use of short-term parking by employees.

Measures Affecting Parking Availability

- Increase the supply of short-term parking.
- Convert public lots to Customer Parking with two-hour maximum stays.
- Obtain shared parking agreements to expand public access to private parking areas.
- Implement or increase parking fees.
- Create new parking supply.

3.4 Conduct Regular Duration/Utilization Analysis

At least every five years, conduct duration/turnover analysis in targeted areas to assess the effectiveness of enforcement and to identify shifts in demand characteristics of parking users. Depending on the findings of the analysis, increased enforcement or modification of time limits to better accommodate demand characteristics may be needed.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Implementation of the parking measures described in the plan requires a number of agencies working together to ensure the best results. Recommended measures 1.1 and 1.2 would create two additional participants – the City Parking Manager and the Advisory Parking Committee -- specifically for the purpose of implementing this plan, and ensuring on-going monitoring and management. Typically, implementation of a parking plan would include the following participants who would be active in various components of the parking management plan:

- Parking Manager
- Parking Advisory Committee
- Public Works
- Building and Community Development
- Main Street Association
- Nonmotorized Transportation Committee
- Chamber of Commerce
- Jefferson Transit
- Police/Parking Enforcement

Table 3 lists each recommended measure and identifies the party with the major responsibility for spearheading its implementation. Parties with a significant supporting role are also indicated.

TABLE 1 IMPLEMENTATION ROLES

Action		PM	PAC	PW	BCD	MS	NTC	CC	JT	PE
Phase 1										
1.3	Modify the short-term and long-term parking areas	X								
1.4	Develop an integrated education and Transportation Demand Management (TDM) program					X		O	O	
1.5	Increase the number of bicycle parking spaces and facilities			O			X			
1.6	Develop a <i>Pedestrian Improvement Plan</i> for Downtown.			O		O	X			
1.7	Clarify purpose and management guidelines for special parking categories	X		O	O					
1.8	Identify opportunities to increase angled on-street parking	X		O						
1.9	Formalize shared arrangements with private lots	X	O			O		O		
1.10	Establish a "parking bank"	X								
Phase 2										
2.1	Increase enforcement of short-term time limit spaces	O								X
2.2	Implement paid parking	X	O	O		O				
2.3	Establish a separate parking fund	X		O						
2.4	Seek out long-term locations for the Farmer's Market and craft fairs			O		X				
2.5	Work with Washington State Ferries on expanded service planning	O		O	X					
2.6	Begin implementation of Pedestrian Improvement Plan			X						
2.7	Develop transit and park-and-ride programs	O		O		O	O	O	X	
2.8	Modify Parking Requirements in the Land Development Ordinance	X	O	O	O	O		O		
2.9	Partner with the Port for increased supply and access to parking	O		O	X					
2.10	Develop public/private partnerships	O		O	X			O		
2.11	Develop a <i>Financing Plan for Parking and Access Improvements</i>	O	O	X	O	O	O	O	O	
Phase 3										
3.1	Acquire property and develop public surface parking	O		X						
3.2	Identify a suitable location for structured parking	O		X						
3.3	Conduct yearly utilization analysis	X				O				
3.4	Conduct regular duration/utilization analysis	X				O				
Parking Manager (PM) Parking Advisory Committee (PAC) City Public Works (PW) Building and Community Development (BCD) Main Street Association (MS) Nonmotorized Transportation Committee (NTC)		Chamber of Commerce (CC) Jefferson Transit (JT) Police/Parking Enforcement (PE) X Lead Role O Significant Supporting Role								

Section 2

Introduction

Introduction

The public parking system in Downtown Port Townsend is an important and valuable resource. Parking is an essential element of the access system needed to develop and sustain the vitality of the core. The constrained land supply in Downtown, coupled with competing uses for public right of way, make the parking system a significant asset.

The purpose of this parking management plan is to optimize this important resource in a way that helps to support the community's vision for Downtown. This plan addresses management measures to support appropriate use of the public parking system; updated development code requirements for appropriate future parking development; measures to meet funding needs for future access improvements; and, integration within the general access system to encourage balanced transportation options.

REPORT ORGANIZATION

The issue of parking is not new in Port Townsend. The Comprehensive Plan, which identifies the land use and transportation goals for Port Townsend, includes several policies specifically related to parking. In addition to the Comprehensive Plan, numerous studies and analyses have been conducted addressing parking and other access issues in Port Townsend. The document review is summarized in **Chapter 3**, along with a set of objective statements to help guide the planning process. Input from the local community was garnered through a combination of committee involvement, stakeholder interviews, public meetings, and a customer survey. The community involvement process and key issues identified are summarized in **Chapter 4**.

While the document review and community involvement provided insights into the historic issues, activities, and perceptions, a system evaluation was conducted to provide a technical measure of the current system operations. **Chapter 5** describes the findings of the analysis, as well as a qualitative assessment of transit options, parking enforcement, and future parking needs. The primary parking issues facing Port Townsend, as determined from the document review, community involvement, and technical evaluation are summarized in **Chapter 6**, along with a comprehensive set of strategy alternatives for both existing and future system needs.

Finally, **Chapter 7** outlines the recommended measures to address existing and future parking needs. The recommended strategies are organized in a phased implementation plan that includes funding considerations, policy changes, alternative mode enhancements, and an implementation framework.

Section 3

Policy, Plan, and Document
Review

Policy, Plan, and Document Review

As a part of the Parking Management Plan, the Consultants have reviewed the following relevant policies, studies, and plans:

- 1996 Comprehensive Plan (updated)
- Port Townsend Land Development Code
- A “discussion paper” entitled “Parking in Downtown Port Townsend,” 1988.
- 1989 Parking Resolution issued by the Chamber of Commerce
- Various documents from an ad hoc committee on parking, including an employee survey, parking issue statement, and parking study.

1996 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN, UPDATED IN 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, AND 2002

The Transportation Element of the *Comprehensive Plan* contains several general statements that illustrate a general philosophy toward transportation in general, and travel mode options in particular. The Transportation Element of the Comprehensive Plan contains the following Overall Transportation Goal:

To develop a safe, integrated, multi-modal public and private transportation system for the efficient movement of people of all abilities and goods, with cost-effective facilities and minimum environmental impact.

The plan identifies improvements in the multi-modal system as plan objectives, such as encouraging the use of the park-and-ride lot for employees and visitors, and preference for parking management over new facilities. In addition, the following specific policies are contained in the section on Parking Management:

Policy 7.1: Encourage private developers to address parking demand by participating in the cost of shared parking facilities, agreement with others for the joint use of parking spaces and through the use of bicycles, carpools, transit, and the Park-and-Ride facility.

Policy 7.2: Encourage private and public employers to provide bicycle parking facilities on or near their properties.

Policy 7.3: Develop and implement reduced parking requirements in order to: encourage new development and the adaptive reuse of historic structures; limit the construction of new impervious surfaces; and provide for parking needs.

7.3.1 Review, and where appropriate, reduce off-street parking requirements for new commercial development.

7.3.2 Reduce parking requirements to provide incentives for the revitalization, adaptive reuse, and preservation of existing historic structures within the Downtown Parking District and commercial zones lying within the National Register Historic District.

- 7.3.3 Distinguish between areas where non-motorized transportation should be encouraged as a top priority (*i.e.*, the National Register Historic District), and areas that are likely to be more auto-oriented (*i.e.*, the Gateway Commercial District).

Policy 7.4: Implement parking strategies that maximize the ability for the greatest number of people to use the Downtown, emphasizing the accommodation of “person trips” rather than automobile parking places, thereby minimizing adverse traffic and parking impacts on the Commercial Historic District.

Policy 7.5: Develop a Parking Management Plan that encourages short-term and discourages long-term (*i.e.*, 4 or more hours) parking in the Commercial Historic District and other commercial areas, to ensure vital retail activities.

Policy 7.6: Property owners should be responsible for providing parking and for managing parking demand generated at the site, to avoid any spillover parking on neighboring properties and streets.

Policy 7.7: Develop parking lot design standards that assure pedestrian friendly parking facilities by providing protected pedestrian links between parking facilities and employment and other service centers, arterials, transit facilities, and green space.

Policy 7.8: New and redeveloped residential areas should be planned to accommodate adequate off-street parking. This will encourage narrower streets.

Policy 7.9: Parking and driveways should be prohibited on arterial streets unless a determination is made that adequate right-of-way exists to provide mobility, safety and alternative modes of transportation.

Policy 7.10: Develop and promote incentive programs that enable property owners to reduce parking demand.

Policy 7.12: Continue to maintain existing on-street parking in neighborhoods where off-street parking in neighborhoods is inadequate, by protecting parking first for residents, and second for customers and visitors.

Policy 7.13: Manage the supply and location of off-street parking in commercial areas to support a balance of travel modes consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

Policy 7.14: Consider parking pricing policies for on-street parking to reduce parking impacts in the Downtown and to promote alternative transportation modes (*e.g.*, Park-and-Ride facility, bicycles, etc.).

In general, the policies listed above are aimed at developing and managing the parking system to support the overall transportation and development goals, especially within the downtown. Most of the policies emphasize, or at least support, transportation alternatives and reduced parking demand (policies 7.1, 7.2, 7.4, 7.7, 7.10, 7.13, and 7.14). Policy 7.5 specifies that parking in the Commercial Historic District should give priority to short-term parking in order to support a vital retail environment. Long-term parking in this district is to be “discouraged.”

1988 DISCUSSION PAPER ON DOWNTOWN PARKING

Parking issues have long been at the forefront of discussion and action for downtown stakeholders. A discussion paper was provided by city staff that discusses parking issues in downtown Port Townsend. The paper provides some history of parking conditions in downtown, including the 1971 City zoning

ordinance that set forth specific off-street parking requirements for additions to existing buildings and new buildings, as well as the installation of parking meters and their subsequent removal in 1983.

The discussion paper outlined a number of strategies under the following categories: Better Management, Improved Regulation, Development of Future Supply, and Implementation and Funding measures. Several of the recommendations dealt with changes in parking recommendations for new development. Other recommendations included establishing parking time limits, strengthening enforcement, and encouraging employees to park in peripheral areas.

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE PARKING RESOLUTION, 1989

In a draft resolution from July 1989, the Port Townsend Chamber of Commerce made the following two recommendations to the City Council:

Recommendation #1: that the following be implemented immediately in order to ease the parking congestion of the downtown area:

1. Re-stripe existing parking areas to maximize usage;
2. Adopt a on-way street plan to maximize diagonal parking;
3. Initiate diagonal parking on Washington Street; and,
4. Initiate an employee parking plan that includes peripheral parking lots with free and frequent bus shuttles into the downtown area.

Recommendation #2: that the following issues of usage and vacant spaces be addressed/adopted as soon as possible in order to clarify downtown parking requirements:

- a. Changes of use in pre-1971 structures not be subject to parking requirements,
- b. New use of vacant space in pre-1971 structures not be subject to parking requirements;
- c. New construction that contributes significantly to the historic nature of the downtown be granted a reduction in parking requirements; and,
- d. Because the Chamber recognized the ramifications of conversion of vacant space and change of usage without parking requirements, it also urges the development of a comprehensive long--term parking plan including, but not limited to a PBIA (Parking Business Improvement Authority) to address future parking needs.

1999 - 2001 PARKING EFFORTS

In the fall of 1999 an ad hoc parking committee was formed at the suggestion of Police Chief Kristen Anderson. Participants have included merchants, downtown business owners and residents, city and Jefferson County staff, Main Street board members, Jefferson transit staff, members of the non-motorized committee, and downtown non-profit organizations.

As part of the ad hoc committee, the Main Street organization, in cooperation with the City's planning staff, circulated an employee parking survey. The Main Street survey indicated little support by downtown employers for park and ride parking, especially with the 30-minute shuttle headway. Attitudes on parking enforcement were evenly split -- 50% want more, 50% want none. It was noted that

an overall parking strategy was needed. As a result of these efforts, a parking enforcement program using volunteer enforcement personnel was instituted by the Police Department. Other recommendations included designating employee parking areas and developing a public relations campaign (a brochure and parking map was developed).

Land Development Code

Port Townsend's Land Development Code (LDC) dictates the requirements of property owners seeking to develop or redevelop property. The code sets minimum parking requirements for such developments, including new development, redevelopment, and changes of use. The minimum parking required for most commercial uses in Port Townsend is in the range of 3.3 to 5 spaces per 1,000 square feet. These ratios are consistent with requirements in many communities, except for downtown areas where rates are often reduced sharply or eliminated altogether.

Exemptions, reductions and waivers of parking requirements for properties within the historic downtown (zoned C-III, Historic Commercial) are provided to account for the relative scarcity of available land, to encourage more efficient use of available parking, and to support economic development and, urban infill, and historic preservation goals of the city. Developers also have an option to pay a fee in lieu of providing on-site parking. The fee is currently set at \$3,660 per stall, with funds being deposited into a "parking improvement fund."

Developers also may have opportunities to reduce parking requirements through obtaining "joint use" agreements, whereby a binding legal agreement is executed between property owners whose establishments have complementary use patterns (for example, a church would have high demand on Sundays, and a bank would have high demand during weekdays, affording a potential opportunity for joint parking).

The parking requirements for development in Port Townsend are generally higher than typical downtowns. Excessive requirements can be an impediment to new development or redevelopment because of the high cost of providing parking. In Port Townsend, the opportunities for exemptions and waivers appear to be significant, particularly for historic properties. In fact, some recent experience has shown that the exemptions have resulted in difficulties obtaining lease agreements because of a lack of dedicated parking.

The fee-in-lieu option provides some flexibility for developers while still providing some means (funding) to accommodate increased demand. Further, it provides a revenue source for the city to build public parking, which is more efficient than private parking. The concept of fee-in-lieu programs is very popular and there is growing interest among jurisdictions. But the experience is quite mixed. Kittelson & Associates recently conducted a survey of jurisdictions with fee-in-lieu programs. The survey revealed some of the lessons learned from other cities, and some of the factors that make successful fee-in-lieu programs. Port Townsend may wish to consider modifications to its fee-in-lieu program, based on the experiences reported in the survey.

SUMMARY OF DOCUMENT REVIEW

The background studies and documents reviewed show that parking issues have been a concern to all sectors of the community for quite some time. This set of documents reveals the inherent conflicts and compromises in downtown development with respect to parking. The need for adequate parking to

support vital communities is understood, but is often in conflict with urban design and transportation goals. Port Townsend's development code is intended to provide for adequate parking, while reducing barriers to economic development and historic preservation. Experience has revealed some drawbacks in some of the code elements that the city may want to reevaluate. While there is general support for gaining more through management, parking enforcement, a primary element of parking management, is sometimes perceived as undermining the community atmosphere of downtown. And while increased use of the park and ride lot is an oft-stated goal, the presence of free parking in downtown effectively precludes the necessary shift in mode choice. Through the development and implementation of the parking management plan, it will be necessary to find a balance between competing needs for adequate parking and other transportation and community goals.

Section 4

Community Involvement

Community Involvement

Local perceptions of parking were garnered through three primary mechanisms: interviews with key stakeholders in downtown; an open house type public meeting focused on dialogue with local residents; and, a questionnaire distributed at several local businesses to get input from residents and visitors on their parking experience. These activities supplement the engagement of the Parking Advisory Committee, which was formed to ensure that the development of the parking plan is consistently guided by local needs and perspectives. In addition, written comments from citizens were forwarded from city staff, and the police department provided complaint forms.

STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

Direct interviews were held with key stakeholders in the vitality and livability of downtown. The interviews were designed to cover a broad range of perspectives, with representation from the following sectors:

- Port Townsend Marketing Director
- Police Chief
- Peninsula College
- Main Street Association
- City Council
- Jefferson Transit
- DASH
- Downtown Building Owner
- Chamber of Commerce
- City Operations, Street/Sewer
- Port of Pot Townsend
- Downtown Business Owner
- Non-motorized Transportation Committee

The main objective of the interviews was to provide an opportunity for candid dialogue about parking concerns and suggestions for improving conditions. The interviews revealed a wealth of information on individual desires and perceptions about existing parking and its current use. As one might suspect, there was considerable contradiction in both the nature and extent of any problem, as well as the best solutions to carry forward. Some of the more consistent recurring themes were:

- The need to better utilize the existing parking;
- The desire to keep Downtown Port Townsend as a traditional historic downtown;
- The problem of providing enough parking for the summertime peaks without making parking management burdensome in the winter when demand is low; and,
- The need to produce a parking management plan that can be adopted and implemented.

The conflicting statements about downtown parking characteristics and solutions are not unique to Port Townsend. In most downtowns there are many conflicting viewpoints. The purpose of the community involvement process, in combination with the review of policies and other plan documents and the comprehensive data analysis, is to seek opportunities to implement improvements that better achieve the overall goals and vision for downtown.

PUBLIC MEETINGS

A public meeting was held in late August 2003 to report on the preliminary findings of the data analysis, and to hear concerns and suggestions from the local community. The meeting was relatively well attended, with approximately 30 to 35 attendees.

After a discussion of the data collection and analysis, there was considerable discussion of the type and extent of mitigations that should be implemented. Concerns were expressed about the potential for paid parking, many of which were focused on the mechanisms of paid parking, rather than the principle of paid parking. For instance, aesthetic impacts of parking meters were a concern, as well as installation and maintenance costs. There were also concerns about charging for parking and potential impacts on retail sales. There were also questions about the need for paid parking, given that the parking constraints are limited to a few months of the year. Still, the point was made that paid parking would be essential to getting better use of the park-and-ride lot.

There was considerable discussion of parking enforcement as well. Most of those who spoke had concerns about rigorous enforcement being a detriment to the friendly atmosphere of downtown. Police Chief Anderson pointed out that complaints about enforcement declined after they adopted a more regular enforcement program. The consultants identified some options for softening the public relations impact of parking enforcement.

Finally, many of those attending the meeting felt that the solution to parking issues in downtown would be to develop a parking structure. Some optional locations for a structure were discussed. It was also brought up that structured parking typically costs around \$20,000 per stall to construct, and normally require an income on the order of \$150 per month per stall if amortized over 20 years. While a parking structure may be suitable for Port Townsend at some time, the resource requirements are considerable.

The need for more bicycle parking was also raised. Although it was not a lengthy focus of discussion, a desire for more bicycle parking was clearly stated and a significant point of the public meeting. As was noted earlier, relatively limited bicycle parking was observed in the downtown. In many instances, additional bicycle parking could be provided without significant impacts to the motor vehicle parking system. The bicycle parking requirements under the Non-motorized Transportation Plan will also help to increase the supply of bicycle parking in downtown.

CUSTOMER/VISITOR SURVEY

An attitude survey on parking was taken in Port Townsend, Washington from August 22, 2003 through September 2003. The purpose of the survey was to determine the public perception of the parking situation in downtown Port Townsend, in particular from visitors who are unlikely to attend a public meeting. Visitors (approximately one million annually) make up a large percentage of trips during the summer season when parking is a problem. Parkers responded to several questions in the survey, such as:

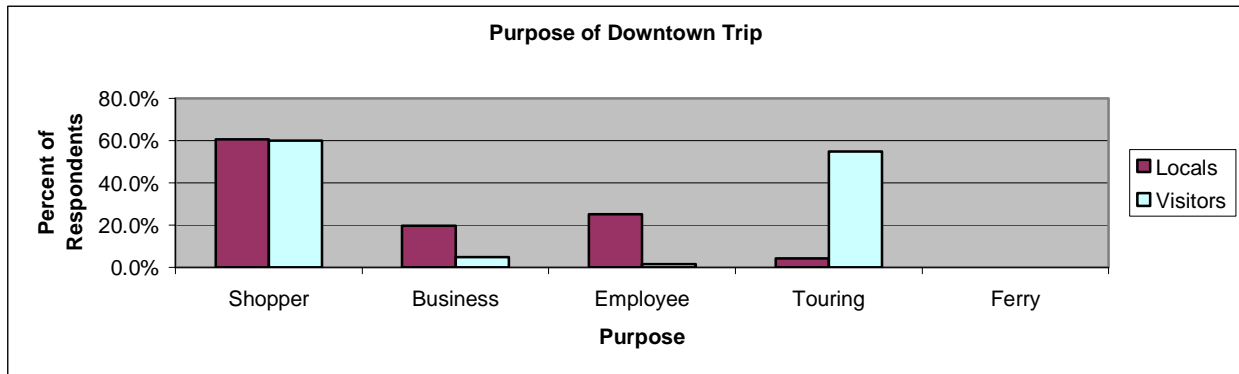
- Are you a visitor or a resident?
- What is the purpose of your trip downtown: shopper, business, employee, touring, or ferry?
- Where did you park: on-street, public lot, or private lot?
- How often do you visit downtown: every day, weekly, occasionally, or almost never?

- Was your parking “experience” easy, somewhat difficult, difficult, or impossible?
- If you marked “difficult” or worse, please explain: not enough, hard to find, inconvenient, or not close enough?
- Overall, how would you rate your parking experience: better, about average, below average, or worse?

A space for comments and suggestions was also provided and encouraged.

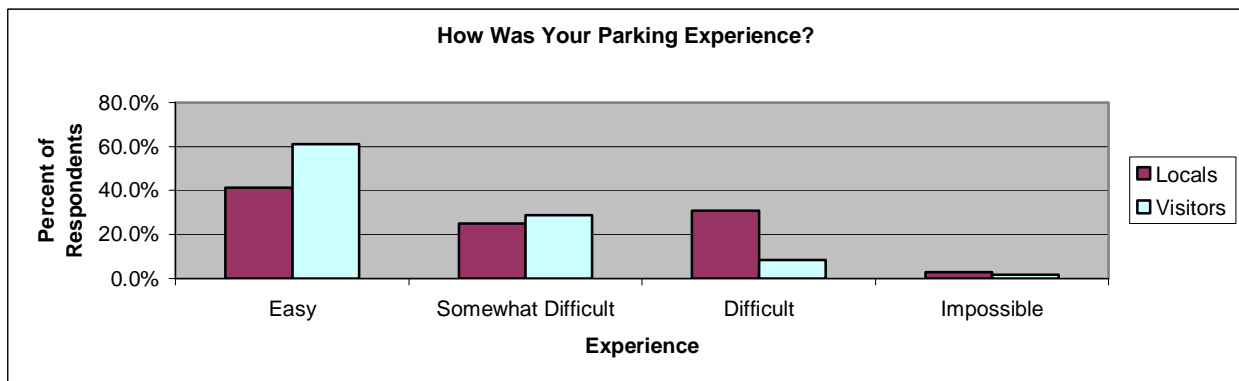
The survey results were broken down into two categories based on whether the respondent was a visitor or a local resident. Of the 131 respondents, 53% were locals, 45% visitors, and 2% did not specify. The most frequently cited reason to visit the downtown was to shop, with approximately 60% of visitors and locals claiming it as a purpose for their trip (see Chart 3). *Note: chart answers may not add up to 100% because not all respondents answered all questions and many respondents answered questions with one or more answers.*

CHART 1 TRIP PURPOSE



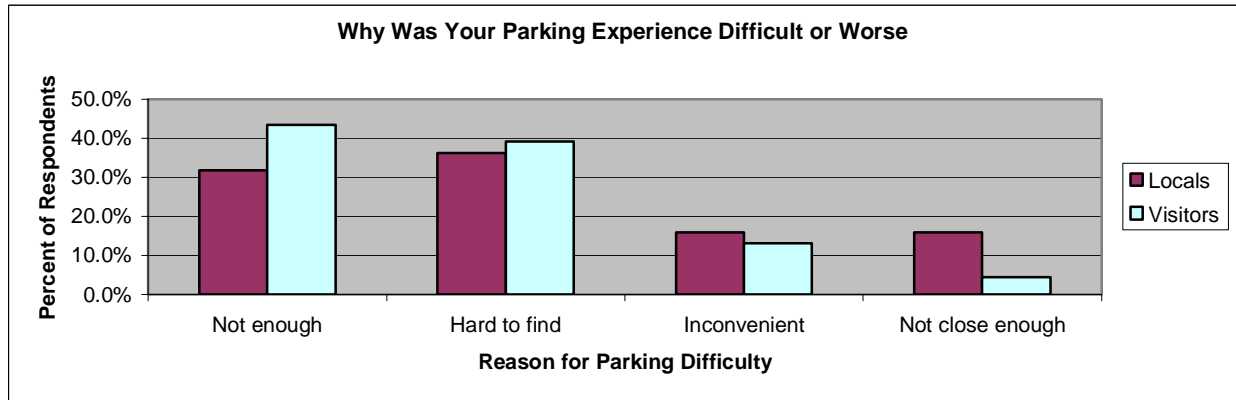
The parking experience of different trip makers (visitors and locals) varied greatly between visitors and locals. As shown in Chart 4, visitors were much more likely to describe their parking experience as easy (61%) when compared with locals. In comparison, 31% of locals reported parking to be difficult, compared to 9% of visitors.

CHART 2 PARKING EXPERIENCE



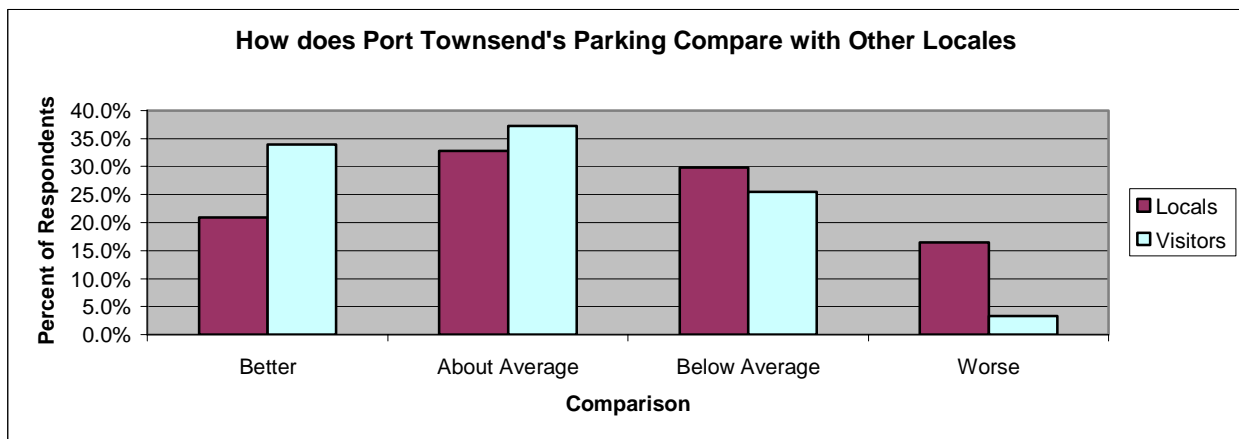
For those who did not have a positive parking experience the most common reasons were inadequate supply of parking spaces (32% of locals and 44% of visitors) and difficulty finding spaces (36% of locals and 39% of visitors) (see Chart 5).

CHART 3 WHY WAS YOUR PARKING EXPERIENCE DIFFICULT OR WORSE?



When asked to compare their experience in Port Townsend with other locales, visitors thought much better of Port Townsend than locals with 34% claiming it was better than an average city’s parking situation. Only 21% of locals thought it was better than average (see Table 4).

CHART 4 COMPARISON TO OTHER CITIES



Overall, visitors thought better of the current parking situation than the residents. This may result from a combination of different expectations. Many respondents noted that the parking is better than average when compared to Seattle or San Francisco but worse than average compared with other towns of Port Townsend’s size. While the survey was targeted at shoppers, downtown employees may have filled it out as well and the local dissatisfaction could reflect a shortage of long-term parking.

SUMMARY OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

The community involvement process provided a diverse set of voices and perspectives regarding the parking system. These revealed some differing and at times conflicting opinions about what would be best for the community. Such disagreements about downtown parking characteristics and solutions are not unique to Port Townsend. In most downtowns there are many conflicting viewpoints. The purpose of

the community involvement process, in combination with the review of policies and other plan documents and the comprehensive data analysis, is to seek opportunities to implement improvements that better achieve the overall goals and vision for downtown. In summary, the following concerns and priorities were identified through the process:

- It is important to better utilize the existing parking;
- It is important to keep Downtown Port Townsend as a traditional historic downtown;
- The seasonal fluctuations in parking demand pose special problems. Providing enough parking for the summertime peaks can make parking management burdensome in the winter when demand is low;
- The parking management plan that results from this process must be both adopted and implemented.
- Concerns were expressed about the potential for paid parking, including the appropriate equipment, potential impacts on retail sales, and the seasonal changes in demand. The point was made that paid parking would be essential to getting better use of the park-and-ride lot.
- There was considerable discussion of parking enforcement. Some expressed concerns that rigorous enforcement might diminish the friendly atmosphere of downtown.
- The option of proving a parking structure was discussed, with some suggestions about locations. While a parking structure may be suitable for Port Townsend at some time, the resource requirements of approximately \$20,000 per stall are currently cost prohibitive.
- The need for more bicycle parking was also raised. Although it was not a lengthy focus of discussion, a desire for more bicycle parking was clearly stated and a significant point of the public meeting.
- In the customer survey, over 70% of the visitors rated parking as “better” or “about average” in comparison to other localities, which is clearly a favorable perception of the situation in Port Townsend;
- Residents surveyed indicate a more negative experience with the parking situation than visitors, suggesting a different level of expectation among local residents, and possibly frustration for employee parking; and,
- Most respondents who rated parking as “Difficult” said it was primarily “Hard to find” or that there was “Not enough”. This was especially true among visitors. Improved signage and way finding may be a low cost opportunity to improve parking conditions.

Section 5

Parking System Evaluation

Parking System Evaluation

In order to provide a quantitative assessment of parking conditions, a comprehensive data collection and analysis effort in downtown was undertaken. The results of the data collection and analysis are described in this section. The following elements are included in the analysis:

- Parking system inventory;
- Parking utilization and duration;
- Anticipated future needs; and,
- Current parking management programs, including enforcement and public information.

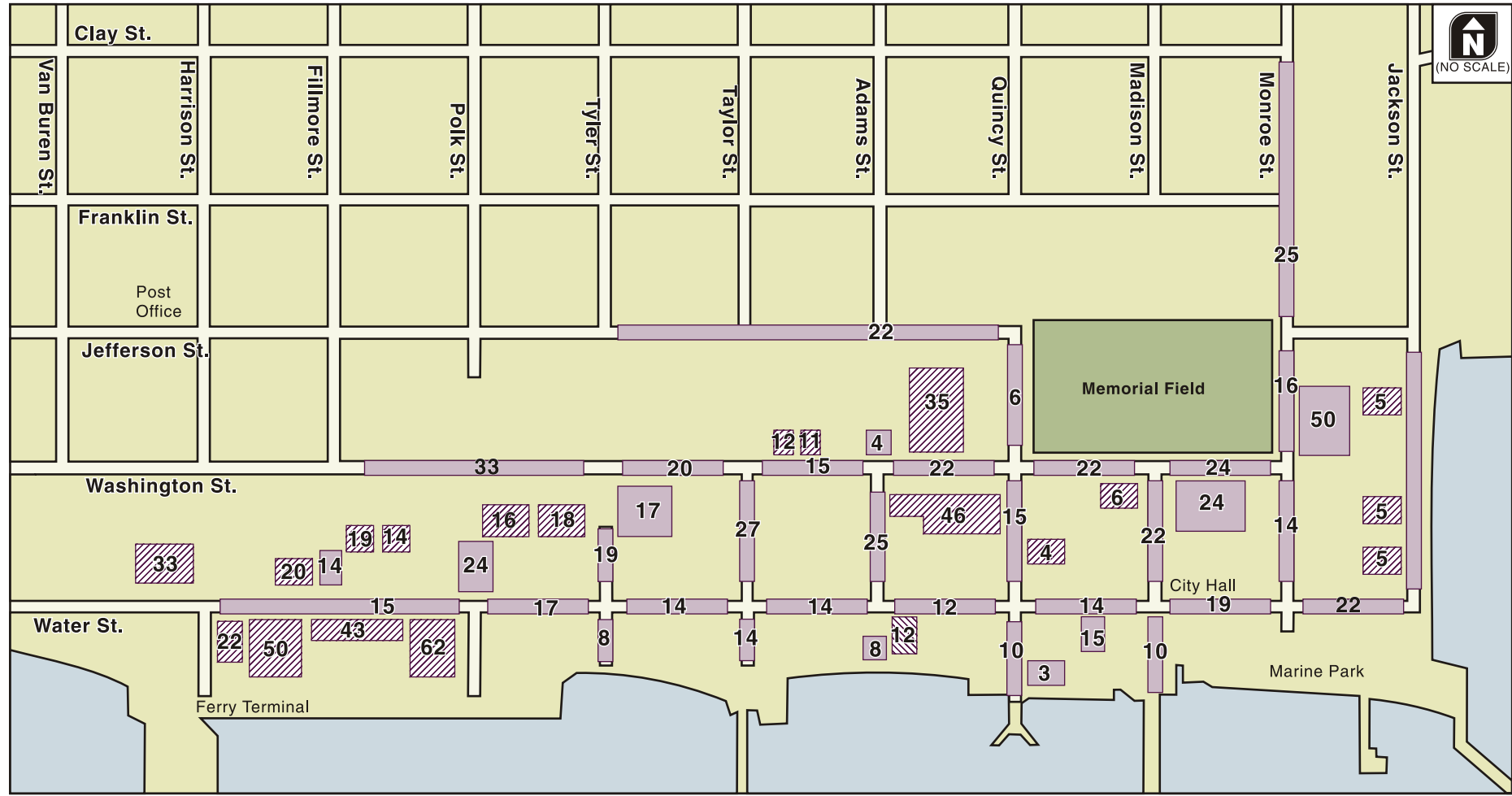
PARKING INVENTORY

The parking inventory includes all on-street, off-street public and off-street private spaces available to meet parking needs. Table 2 summarizes the parking inventory for the study area. The table also shows the parking supply at the Jefferson Transit Park & Ride lot. Although this parking area is outside of the study area, it is relatively well connected via transit service and is frequently noted as a resource to serve downtown parking needs.

The inventory count identified 1,145 spaces within the downtown study area, almost evenly split between on-street and off-street spaces. The high proportion of on-street spaces is somewhat unusual – typically, on-street spaces represent a much smaller portion of the total parking supply (25% to 40%). The majority of spaces are public (owned by the City), primarily on-street spaces (530). Approximately 455 spaces are private – or “accessory” – parking spaces, which are associated with specific properties and are only available for employers and customers. Figure 1 shows the locations of on-street and off-street parking in downtown Townsend.

TABLE 2 EXISTING PARKING RESOURCES FOR DOWNTOWN PORT TOWNSEND

Ownership	Type	On-Street	Off-Street	Total
Downtown Public	<i>Short Term</i>	290	60	350
	<i>Long Term</i>	240	100	340
	Total	530	160	690
Downtown Private		0	455	455
Downtown Total		530	615	1,145
Jefferson Park & Ride		0	270	270
Total Parking Resources		530	885	1,415



LEGEND

- # Public Parking Spaces
- # Private Parking Spaces

Parking Inventory

FIGURE 1

It is helpful to compare Port Townsend with communities of similar size. Based upon a population of 7,000, one would normally expect 525 to 550 spaces so; one can see that Port Townsend has about twice the number of spaces as an average downtown. However, the high rate of tourism in Port Townsend results in much higher parking needs than in most communities.

On-Street Truck Loading

Port Townsend does not have designated curb truck loading/unloading zones in the downtown. Instead, large trucks stop in the center of the street for loading and unloading. The major streets in Downtown Port Townsend have relatively wide travel lanes so that vehicle traffic is able to maneuver around the trucks. Because traffic speeds are slow, these operations appear to occur without diminishing safety.

If more conventional curbside loading were to be installed, there would be a loss of approximately two to three parking spaces for each loading area. For Port Townsend, it would likely be necessary to provide such loading areas every two blocks on each side of the street. This would result in the loss of approximately 24 to 36 spaces in the downtown core.

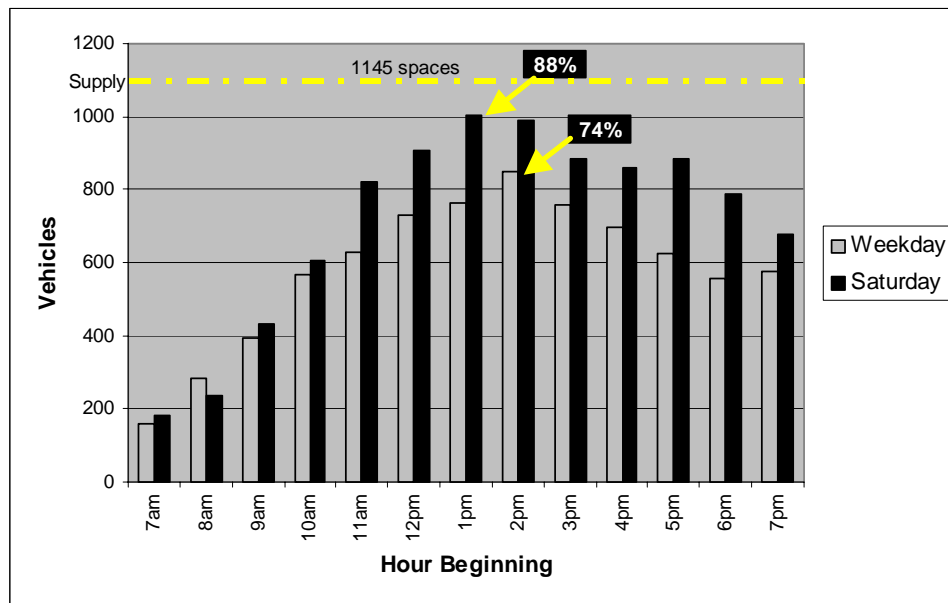
PARKING UTILIZATION

An evaluation of parking usage during the peak period was conducted in order to determine whether parking supply is appropriate and/or adequate. Parking utilization is a measure of the occupancy level of the parking system at a given point in time. The purpose of this survey is to determine the "peak usage" of all the parking spaces during the peak hour of the day. Parking concerns in Port Townsend are strongest during the summer, when there is a high influx of tourism and recreational activities in downtown. The analysis was designed to reflect "typical peak conditions", meaning that study periods were identified that did not have any significant events, but that would give a good representation of the peak seasonal demand. Major events, such as the Rhododendron Festival or the Wooden Boat Festival have significantly higher demand, but are discrete events generating specific event traffic and parking conditions.

According to city staff, significant tourism usually begins in July and peaks in August. The July counts were conducted to reflect "shoulder" peak conditions. Parking counts were conducted throughout the study area on a typical weekday and Saturday in July (July 10 and 12) between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m. The hourly parking counts for both the weekday and Saturday conditions are shown in Chart 5. (Note that these counts include parking in the downtown study area; the Haynes Street Park and Ride lot was not included.)

As Chart 5 shows, parking demand is higher on Saturday than on the weekday throughout most of the day. The peak parking demand occurred on a Saturday between 1 and 2 p.m., when over 1,000 vehicles were parked downtown, corresponding to approximately 88% of the total downtown parking capacity (1,145 downtown parking spaces). Typically, a downtown parking area is considered to be at its effective capacity when utilization reaches around 85%. On that basis, Downtown Port Townsend is effectively full during the peak hour on Saturday. Moreover, utilization of the on-street parking was extremely high at 94% during the peak hour. This indicates a shortage of parking and the result is many frustrated drivers circulating through the street system looking for a space to park.

CHART 5 JULY PARKING OCCUPANCY COUNTS

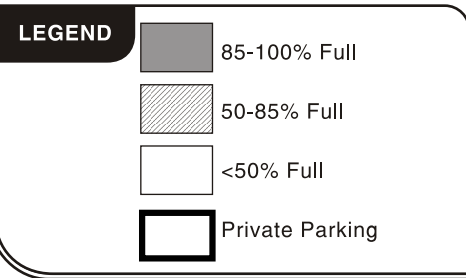


The weekday peak hour occurred between 2 and 3 p.m., when approximately 850 cars were observed, reflecting 74% overall utilization. The utilization was relatively constant for private and public off-street and on-street parking.

An important aspect of parking usage is the geographic dispersion of parking occupancy. This indicates where on-street and off-street facilities are constrained. In such areas, the peak use could be so high that potential customers begin to look elsewhere or even forego shopping in downtown. Figures 2 and 3 show peak hour parking utilization by location throughout the study area. The figures show those locations that were “effectively full” (85% or higher utilization); moderately full (50 to 84% utilization); and, underutilized (less than 50% full).

As Figure 2 shows, during the weekday peak hour all of the on-street supply was essentially full on Water and Washington Streets from Fillmore Street to Madison Street. So even though the overall system was not at its effective capacity, most locations along the two primary corridors were full. Most of the north-south streets were full as well. Off-street lots between Harrison and Quincy were effectively full. The remaining unused capacity east of Madison Street indicates that parkers tend to use these streets and lots for overflow parking.

Saturday’s usage pattern, shown in Figure 3, indicates an even more congested situation on both Water and Washington Streets extending from Harrison Street to Monroe Street, and all north-south cross streets. During this period a substantial portion of the public off-street parking supply was being used for a Farmers Market, which simultaneously generates considerable parking demand. As such, parking occupancy was very high on Jefferson Street between Tyler Street and Quincy Street, and on Monroe Street.



**Weekday Peak Hour Parking Utilization
 July 2003, 2-3 pm**

**FIGURE
 2**



LEGEND

- 85-100% Full
- 50-85% Full
- <50% Full
- Private Parking

**Saturday Peak Hour Parking Utilization
 July 2003, 1-2 pm**

**FIGURE
 3**

It should be emphasized that the conditions reported in the above analysis reflect the peak hour of the peak season. During most of the year, and even during other hours of the peak day, conditions are not as constrained as the analysis indicates. Nevertheless, the system shows considerable constraint at times when demand is highest.

Park and Ride Lot Utilization

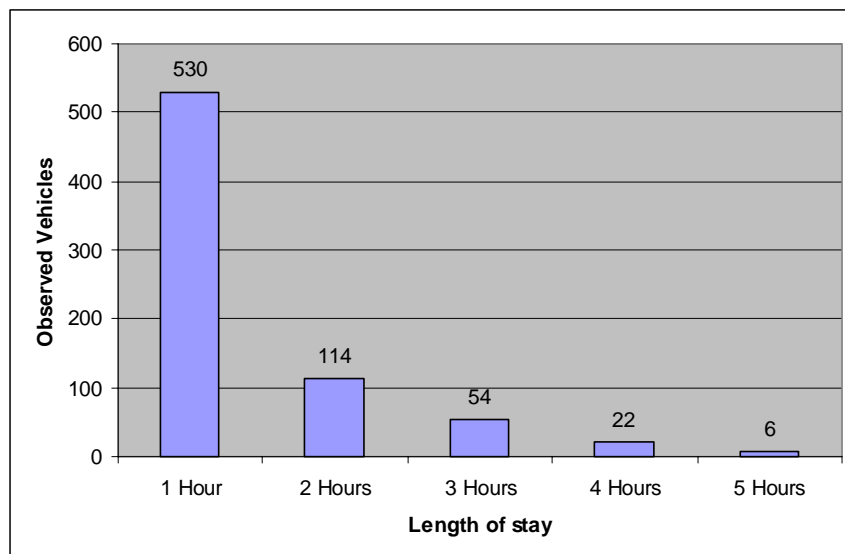
There are approximately 270 spaces at the Jefferson Transit park-and-ride lot. Increased use of the lot is a goal expressed in the 1996 Comprehensive Plan and nearly every other document that was reviewed related to parking and other downtown transportation matters. Currently, the park-and-ride lot serves as an important resource during major events. For the largest events, shuttle service frequency is increased. However, under typical non-event conditions, the facility gets very little use. Recent observations revealed approximately 20 vehicles parked at the site at 8:30 a.m. and 4 p.m. during a typical weekday in August. According to Jefferson Transit managers, this is consistent with normal operations.

PARKING DURATION AND TURNOVER

Parking duration is a measure of how long parkers remain in a space; within the two-hour time limit zone, the parking duration provides an indication of how well the parking enforcement program is working. Turnover rates measure how many times a space "turns over" (i.e. used by different vehicles) during a given time period. A desirable turnover on-street parking is six to eight vehicles per space per day in a retail district.

Parking duration/turnover counts were conducted on a typical Friday in July (July 11) for approximately 170 short-term and 60 long-term parking spaces to determine the duration of stay and turnover for each. The average duration on the 2-hour stalls was 1.4 hours, and on average, these spaces had turnover rates of 4.3 vehicles per day. This turnover rate is somewhat lower than desirable for downtown retail areas. The lower turnover rate is partially explained by a high degree of violation of the signed time limits. Although the average duration was below the signed time limit of two hours, a relatively large percentage of vehicles exceeded the time limit. Chart 6 shows observed duration of stay for the two-hour parking areas.

CHART 6 DURATION OF STAY, 2-HOUR PARKING SPACES



A total of 726 vehicles were included in the analysis of the two-hour spaces. As Chart 6 illustrates, 644 vehicles (89% of all observed vehicles) had duration of one or two hours, while the remaining 11% had observed duration of three or more hours. These violations have a disproportionate impact on the overall parking capacity. A single vehicle parked for six hours occupies a parking space that should be used by at least three or more vehicles during the time period. In this way, the eleven percent of the parkers in violation of the time limit used 27% of the parking capacity in terms of *space hours*. Figure 4 indicates those areas where violations were most prevalent. The figure shows that the highest rate of violation was on Washington Street between Tyler and Taylor Streets, where more than 20% of vehicles on were in violation of the time limits. Violations also tended to be high in the small “street stub” parking lots on Polk, Fillmore, and Adams Streets.

Duration/turnover counts were also conducted at the following 24-hour parking areas: the public lot on Monroe Street (by the skate park), on Washington Street between Quincy and Madison Streets, and at the lot on Tyler Street between Water Street and Washington Street. The average duration and turnover rates are summarized in Table 3.

TABLE 3 DURATION/TURNOVER, 24-HOUR PARKING SPACES

Parking Area	Number of Spaces	Ave Turnover	Ave Duration
Monroe Street Lot	29	3.5	1.5
Washington Street, Quincy to Adams	14	4.9	1.6
Tyler Street Lot	19	1	8.0
Total	62	3.1	3.5

As Table 3 shows, the analysis suggests that two of the 24-hour parking areas serve primarily short-term parking. However, in response to field observation and anecdotal evidence to the contrary, a closer inspection of the data was undertaken that revealed a higher degree of long-term parking than the numbers suggest. Specifically, on Washington Street, there were many instances of vehicles that parked in a specific space for multiple hours, left for one or two hours, and returned later. So, while there was technically “turnover”, the spaces appear to be accommodating a fair amount of long-term parking. This is true to a lesser degree at the Monroe Street lot, where parking tends to accommodate a fairly high degree of short-term parking, likely accessing the adjacent retail stores.

Caveat for Using Duration / Turnover Analyses

In evaluating the analysis of parking duration and turnover, it is important to note that the analysis does not capture vehicles that move from one space to another within the study area. The City's parking ordinance allows a person to move his/her car to an adjacent block to avoid the time limit regulations. This loophole undermines the intended purpose of the two-hour zone, which is to preserve parking for short-term parkers. As such, the analysis of parking duration and turnover should be considered conservative, and a higher proportion of long-term parkers are using the two-hour spaces.



LEGEND

Percent of Vehicles in Violation

- Light Blue: 10 - 20%
- Pink: >20%

$$\frac{\#\#}{\#\#} = \frac{\text{Duration (hours per vehicle)}}{\text{Turnover (vehicles per day)}}$$

Weekday Parking Duration & Turnover

FIGURE 4

POTENTIAL FUTURE SYSTEM CHANGES

Several projects are planned for the downtown area that would result in increased parking demand, decreased supply, or both. A detailed analysis of the parking impacts of future projects is beyond the scope of this study. However, some consideration should be given the general nature and scale of anticipated changes in the downtown parking system.

City Hall Annex

The City Hall Annex was recently approved and will result in a net loss of approximately ten spaces, according to city officials (some of the 26 spaces in the existing parking lot will be replaced by new on-street and off-street parking). The annex is being combined with seismic upgrades to the historic City Hall and will increase the floor area to accommodate City staff currently working at the Waterman Katz building. The planned move of city offices will not directly result in a net increase in parking demand, but rather relocation of demand from the existing city offices at Water Street and Quincy Street. However, once vacated, the Waterman-Katz office space will likely be filled with new active uses, which could generate some additional parking demand.

Maritime Center

The planned Maritime Center is also expected to have impacts on the already constrained parking system. The degree of parking impacts is uncertain and will depend on the types and scale of activities that occur there. Project planners have indicated that the facility will be geared toward educational activities serving existing tours and school groups, rather than generating significant new parking demand. Parking requirements for Center have not been finalized. Development of the Maritime Center may result in a loss of some parking spaces on Water Street east of Monroe Street. If the Maritime Center does not provide parking, any additional demand from the Center will have to be accommodated on already constrained parking resources.

Port of Port Townsend Master Plan

The Port of Port Townsend is located directly east of Jackson Street, adjacent to the study area. Some Port property is occasionally used for parking during large events, but generally Port property is used for Port activities. The Port master plan indicates considerable potential development in the future that will increase commercial and tourist activity in the eastern end of downtown considerably, particularly in combination with the planned Maritime Center. While the Port is not technically included in the study area, important considerations regarding future Port activities include the following:

- There may be potential to use Port property for additional parking to serve downtown. While it would be effectively “private” parking, it is a potential resource for perimeter parking.
- Increased activity at the Port could significantly increase activity and associated parking demand.
- Even if parking demand is accommodated on the Port property, increased activity at the Port, coupled with the planned Maritime Center, will tend to shift the “center of gravity” of downtown away from Taylor Street toward Monroe Street.

Downtown Skate Park

A skateboard park is located in downtown within the public parking lot east of Monroe Street. The location was originally considered interim, but recent funding secured for improvements is tied to this

specific location. The improvements would likely make this location a permanent home for the park; it is also likely that the improvements would result in some further loss of parking spaces.

The skateboard park is an important and well-used facility for youth recreation in Port Townsend. However, the loss of parking is significant, particularly given the already constrained conditions in downtown. Further, the premium nature of this location for downtown retail vitality will be enhanced with the Maritime Center and Port of Port Townsend activities. Despite the value of the skate park, the negative impacts on the future downtown parking situation should be carefully considered prior to making the location permanent.

On-Street Parking and Bike Lanes Trade-offs

The public street right of way serves a variety of needs of the transportation system, including bicycle travel, sidewalks and other walkways, motorized travel, and on-street parking. The dedication of the limited right of way must balance between these competing needs. Many communities, including Port Townsend, have conflict demands for bicycle travel and on-street parking. In Port Townsend, some streets are of adequate width to either increase parking or provide dedicated bicycle lanes.

The 1998 Non-Motorized Transportation Plan shows Washington Street and Jefferson Street as future Class II Bike lanes. The Bikeway System Plan as contained in the Non-Motorized Plan is viewed as a long-term goal. At this point, there are no plans for any changes to Jefferson Street from the current situation, under which cars park on the south side of Jefferson between Taylor Street and Quincy Street.

Washington Street from the fountain (Taylor Street) east to Monroe Street is not striped for bike lanes and there are no plans to do so, as the current situation seems to accommodate all uses fairly well. On the south side with the parallel parking there is room for a car and a bike. On the north side with the angle parking there is not room to stripe a bike lane and a travel lane, but vehicle travel is slow, making these appropriate for shared use between bicycles and vehicles.

This spring Port Townsend completed improvements to Washington Street from the fountain up to the Post Office (Harrison Street). There was not room to have a bike lane both up and down the hill and keep the parking. It was concluded that a bike lane down hill was not as critical here as cars will be traveling slower and bicycles can be in the travel lane going downhill. On the north side of Washington Street just west of Tyler Street, there is a short section (approximately 150 feet) of road length that currently has a narrow bicycle lane. There is enough room for a few more parking spaces but not bike lane and parking. Whether to allow parking or have a bike lane for that 150-foot section has been an issue of considerable discussion. The council voted to follow the guidance of the non-motorized plan for now, but seeks an evaluation as part of this parking study before determining a final solution.

EXISTING PARKING MANAGEMENT EFFORTS

Port Townsend has several management measures currently in place that affect the use and overall utilization of the parking system. Some of the key elements are described below.

Enforcement

Of all the parking management techniques available to make parking efficient, time limit enforcement is the most effective tool. In downtown Port Townsend, parking enforcement is a volunteer effort under the supervision of an ex-police officer who is also a volunteer. The volunteer program was initiated as a

result of the ad hoc parking committee activities from 2000. Prior to that, parking enforcement was rare because the police force simply did not have the adequate resources to devote to it.

A measure of the effectiveness of parking enforcement is: (1) the percent of violations of on-street parkers and the number of tickets written daily. The duration analysis indicated that 11% of the observed vehicles in the two-hour zone were in violation of the time limit. This is relatively high, although it may vary, because enforcement does not occur every day and locals tend to figure out and capitalize on any patterns.

Another measure is the number of tickets written per enforcement officer per day. Typically, a full-time enforcement officer should write between 30 and 60 tickets per day, depending on city size and the aggressiveness of the program. Assuming enforcement occurs six days per week, a single officer would be expected to write between 9,000 and 18,000 tickets in a year. In Port Townsend, the total number of tickets issued in 2001 was 1,337, increasing to 1,787 in 2002. This suggests that parking enforcement is relatively light in the downtown, which is usually expected with a volunteer program, and is consistent with the findings of the duration analysis.

While parking enforcement is a critical issue for downtown parking management, the potential negative impacts of enforcement are also important to consider. Consistency is probably the most important feature of a parking enforcement program to ensure acceptance in the community. According to the police chief, complaints about parking have been reduced since the enforcement program was initiated, probably because people have a better idea to expect some enforcement. Nevertheless, some shoppers, both visitors and residents, have strong negative reactions to parking enforcement. If Port Townsend makes a decision to increase the aggressiveness of its parking enforcement program, measures can be taken to soften negative impacts with visitors, and to educate residents about the value of the short-term parking and options for accessing downtown.

In addition to the public relations impacts, revenue is an important consideration. It is not recommended that Port Townsend use parking enforcement as a net revenue source. However, it is desirable for parking programs to be self-supporting. It is often possible to generate sufficient revenue from parking enforcement to pay for the parking enforcement program. The net benefit of such a program is not in the revenue, but in a better managed parking system.

Parking Education and Promotion

If parking conditions in downtown Port Townsend are to be optimized, it will take the concerted effort of the downtown business owners, merchants, employees, and the City. A key element in solving the problem is to educate the users about the value of the parking system and the priorities for the on-street spaces. Some efforts have already been made by Port Townsend Main Street with the publication of a downtown parking map. This effort, while having a temporary impact, must be repeated again and again. Other promotional efforts such as articles in the local media on the “value of on-street parking” and the need to keep on-street spaces for customers are needed to explain the value of the system. These were identified above as supporting elements of an increased enforcement campaign.

Signing is another promotional tool. Many two-hour time limit signs were observed in the on-street zone. Signing for off-street public and private spaces was not as prevalent and was often obscured by

foliage and other signs. The Monroe Street parking lot (skate park) is one example of a public lot that would benefit from clear signage indicating that it is open to the public.

Accessible Parking

Port Townsend has approximately 20 parking spaces reserved for persons with disabilities. Ten of these are in private parking lots and are enforced by city parking enforcement personnel. The remaining accessible spaces are located primarily on-street, with what appears to be a reasonable distribution pattern. Utilization of the accessible spaces is generally low, suggesting that the overall number of spaces is adequate. However, violations of the use restriction were relatively common and pose a negative impact on access for disabled persons. Vehicles without the disabled permit were frequently seen using the accessible spaces. This problem was most often noticed in front coffee shops where customers often require only a short stay. An effective remedy might be to make sure that there are 15-minute spaces located where there is this type of short-term demand, possibly locating them adjacent to accessible spaces.

Section 6

Non-Motorized Access
Options

Non-Motorized Access Options

The Port Townsend parking system is one component of a larger system of access serving downtown. While the focus of this study is motor vehicle parking, it is important to view the parking system within the context of the overall system of access options, including bicycle, pedestrian, and transit options.

PEDESTRIAN ENVIRONMENT

Port Townsend has one of the most pedestrian-friendly downtowns seen by this consultant. There are a few gaps in the sidewalk system, but sidewalks are provided on most streets. Stairwells provide pedestrian connections between Water and Washington and Jefferson Streets, where the steep grade would be a natural barrier. And traffic speeds are slow and drivers are courteous, displaying an exceptionally high propensity to stop and allow pedestrians to cross at any location of a downtown street. Moreover, the character of the downtown is friendly and there is considerable sidewalk traffic and ground level activity.

A good pedestrian system is important in downtown parking systems because it increases the acceptable parking area for most destinations. Parkers generally have a higher tolerance for walking distance where good facilities are provided and the environment is safe, comfortable, and inviting.

Some potential improvements to the sidewalk system include closing gaps (e.g. Quincy Street north of Washington), and improving sidewalks at parking access points (e.g. Quincy Street at the Bank of America parking lot entrance). These locations may limit accessibility, especially with regard to ADA requirements. An overall evaluation of ADA compliance is outside the scope of this study, but should be conducted to identify specific locations for improvements.

BICYCLE SYSTEM

A relatively high degree of bicycle activity was observed during visits to Port Townsend. While there is not an extensive network of dedicated bicycle lanes, slow vehicle travel speeds are conducive to a good bicycle environment. Despite the relatively high use of bicycles, it appears that bicycle parking is in short supply. As part of the Nonmotorized Transportation Plan policies, Port Townsend requires development of bicycle parking for new buildings. These requirements have not yet been incorporated into the Land Development Code, although there are provisions to encourage developers to provide some bicycle parking. Given the relative low cost and low impacts of bicycle parking, the city would likely see considerable benefit from improving bicycle parking facilities in downtown.

As was noted previously, there has been much discussion in Port Townsend about the trade-offs between providing more vehicle parking and providing dedicated bicycle lanes. A specific quantitative evaluation of the access impacts is difficult to make. Transportation models do not accurately predict mode split impacts from facility improvements such as bicycle lanes. The provision of bicycle lanes on Washington Street and/or Jefferson Street would reflect an incremental improvement, rather than providing a new connection or overcoming a physical barrier. As such, it would not be expected to significantly increase the number of bicycles. However, it is easy to see that removal of parking spaces would have a direct reduction in the access capacity for motor vehicles.

The addition or loss of eight parking spaces will not in itself make or break the parking system, nor will a short section of bicycle lane alter the general travel patterns for the community. Choices between on-street parking and bicycle lanes should be made at a system-wide level. In combination with other planned developments in downtown that are expected to exacerbate an already constrained parking system, steps that diminish the parking supply should be viewed in the context of the cumulative effects of planned projects.

TRANSIT OPTIONS AND THE PARK & RIDE LOT

Jefferson Transit operates two local bus routes and a downtown shuttle service, all of which connect the Jefferson Transit park-and-ride lot to Water Street in downtown. The shuttle operates with 20-minute headways between 8 a.m. and 7:40 p.m. on weekdays; service begins at 10 a.m. on Saturday and Sunday. The local service routes operate with longer headways and reduced service hours. The earliest shuttle is scheduled to leave the park and ride lot at 8 a.m. and arrive at the Water Street/Adams Street intersection at 8:40 a.m. Single trip fares are \$0.50; monthly passes for adults range from \$18 to \$32.

The park-and-ride lot has approximately 270 parking spaces that are available free of charge. As indicated in the discussion of parking utilization, the lot gets very little use except for during major events, when it is well used and shuttle service is increased. Transit planners are currently emphasizing the park and ride lot for visitors, rather than commuters because tourists are considered to have more flexibility in their schedules to absorb the added travel time of using transit. There are plans to relocate the visitor center to the park and ride lot to make it a more convenient option for visitors.

It should be noted that most communities emphasize park-and-ride facilities for commuters, rather than visitors. This is in part because of the education component that is necessary for a park and ride lot; visitors are less likely to be aware of the general parking conditions and would have to understand the location of the parking lot; the type, schedule, and cost of shuttle service; and the drop off locations within downtown. Also, visitors are likely to drive directly to look for a parking space and only use the park and ride lot if downtown parking is too full. By this time, visitors will likely experience a high degree of frustration if they are expected to drive back to the park and ride lot, and then take the shuttle downtown.

An additional and probably most important consideration is the cost of the park-and-ride/shuttle option versus parking downtown. At this time, there is no paid public parking in downtown. The shuttle costs \$1 per person for a round trip. This provides a clear disincentive to using the shuttle and park and ride. The disparity in cost is larger for tourists, who are more likely to arrive in groups.

Relocation of the Visitors' Center to the park and ride lot is intended to increase usage of the lot. The transportation element of the Comprehensive Plan strongly suggests increasing transit options and full use of the park and ride lot.

TRANSPORTATION DEMAND MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS

Transportation Demand Management (TDM) refers to measures that are taken to alleviate impacts of transportation impacts. In a TDM program a system of incentives and disincentives, both direct and indirect, are implemented to affect changes in travel choices, such as travel time, mode, or vehicle occupancy. Measures might include provision of bicycle lockers, carpool matching services, and preferential parking for carpoolers.

The City of Port Townsend does not have a formal TDM program. However, Elevated Ice Cream has a TDM program called Alternative Transportation Incentive Program, or “A TIP”. The purpose of the program is to provide an incentive for employees to “not park cars downtown.” Employees can earn *Town Dollars* or transit passes for using an alternative to driving downtown, including walking, taking transit, getting dropped off, or bicycling. The owners of Elevated Ice Cream estimate that their program eliminated 600 cars parked in downtown during the four months from June to September 2002, with a cost of under \$500 in incentives.

Section 7

Key Issues

Key Issues

Port Townsend's downtown area is somewhat unique in that the peak parking demands only occur during a few months of the year so that the overall parking supply is underutilized during other months. Generally, one can expect constrained parking conditions from June through September. During these times, downtown parking reaches near-capacity occupancy levels during the weekday peak hour and is effectively full during the Saturday peak hour. In addition, some merchants and property owners point to yearlong shortages in certain areas of downtown.

The evaluation described in this memorandum has yielded the following conclusions:

- The parking system in downtown Port Townsend has very high utilization during the peak hours of the peak days. In particular, Saturday parking appears to be at its effective capacity.
- There are divergent opinions about the existing and/or extent of any parking problem. Visitors in particular tend to rate parking conditions favorably. Many residents feel that any problems are seasonal because parking is generally easy except during the summer. However, some merchants and property owners point to yearlong shortages in certain areas of downtown.
- Seasonal fluctuations in parking demand require strategies that are sufficiently flexible to be appropriate for peak and off-peak conditions.
- There is a high degree of long-term parking in the retail core, including employees and shop owners who move their cars to avoid the two-hour time limit, and a high degree of violations that may be related to relatively inconsistent enforcement.
- The Jefferson Transit park-and-ride lot is underutilized except during major events. The potential to increase its utilization is limited by the availability of free parking. Current efforts regarding park-and-ride lot are targeted toward tourists, which may further limit the potential effectiveness of this facility.

Some of the key issues and opportunities that arose from the analysis and/or community involvement are summarized below.

LONG-TERM PARKING

Employees who filled out the questionnaire indicated a higher degree of frustration with parking than visitors. Currently, about half of the public parking spaces in downtown are designated for 24-hour parking; the remaining half are designated for short-term use. During weekdays most of the available parking capacity in downtown was in long-term parking areas, such as Monroe Street and the Skate Park lot. However, it appears that many employees and business owners use the short-term parking, either exceeding the time limit (which is a violation), or moving to another short-term space within downtown (which is legal).

It is important to provide employees with good access to their jobs. If measures are taken that further restrict parking access for employees, offsetting measures should be undertaken to enhance other access options or parking locations.

SHORT-TERM PARKING

Visitors to Port Townsend tended to report a generally positive experience with parking in downtown. However, residents who attended the public meeting indicated frustration with downtown parking, many saying that they avoid downtown during the peak tourist season.

The utilization study showed that parking peaks shortly after noon on weekdays and Saturdays. Promoting off-peak hours to local residents may improve the experience for residents who want to shop downtown, while spreading the peak period over the course of the day.

Short-term parking is intended to accommodate people in town to shop, dine, or other recreational activities. The Main Street association has estimated that each downtown shopping space generates approximately \$150 to \$300 per day in retail sales revenue. As such, preserving the short-term parking for shoppers should be a priority for Port Townsend.

PARK & RIDE LOT

The Jefferson Transit park-and-ride lot is an underutilized parking resource for downtown. If it could be drawn in to serve downtown parking demand, it would effectively increase the supply of downtown parking by nearly 25% (270 spaces in addition to the existing 1,145 spaces downtown). Improving utilization of the lot is identified as a goal in the comprehensive plan and in other documents relevant to parking. But utilization remains very low except during large special events. Recent changes in the transit schedules and routes make the park-and-ride lot a better option for going downtown. However, most people will continue to drive downtown as long as the parking is free.

Currently, Jefferson Transit emphasizes the park-and-ride lot/shuttle service for visitors. Relocating the visitor center to the lot will help to increase visibility toward this end. However, there are probably more opportunities for success by emphasizing its use by commuters. A combination of stick (paid parking, stricter enforcement downtown) and carrot (increased shuttle frequency, reduced fare) is probably needed to get good utilization of the park-and-ride lot.

PAID PARKING

Paid parking is a significant tool to manage parking, but it is not without difficulties and detractors. Concerns were raised that that paid parking would compromise the small town atmosphere of Port Townsend. There is also a negative perception of paid parking as a way for the city government to raise revenue.

Recent technology advances in paid parking systems create many opportunities for flexible programs that are well suited to Port Townsend's seasonal demand fluctuations. Further evaluation would be needed to work out costs and revenue requirements to create a system that can support itself. It should not be expected to generate any significant revenue.

A simpler and smaller scale option for paid parking would be to charge for existing public surface lots using a permit system. For instance, the parking lot on Tyler Street currently accommodates approximately 17 vehicles, virtually all of them all-day parkers. At \$25 to \$50 per month per space this lot could contribute \$5,000 to \$10,000 toward improvements, such as paving and striping the lot, or making other access improvements.

NEW PARKING SUPPLY

Given the high peak period utilization in the study area, coupled with development plans that will increase parking demand and reduce supply, it is likely that some new parking will be warranted in downtown. Options for new supply include: increasing the amount of on-street by converting to angled parking; developing new off-street surface parking; and, developing off-street structured parking. Each of these options has challenges and trade-offs.

As was noted earlier, converting to angled on-street parking introduces trade-offs with bicycle conditions. Further, narrowing the travel way might preclude center street loading, making it necessary to provide curb face loading zones. This would partially offset the gains of converting to angled parking.

Opportunities for new surface parking lots are limited by the scarcity of land in downtown Port Townsend. One potential option would be to relocate the Skate Park and return the location to serve parking. There are also private land holdings that could potentially be acquired and developed for parking, or leased from the owners. Any new surface parking lots should probably be considered interim, as the scarcity of land would make these likely future redevelopment sites. Impacts to the urban landscape will also need to be considered to ensure that the active pedestrian-friendly environment is not compromised.

Finally, there are options for providing parking in structures. Cost is probably the biggest barrier for structured parking. Typical construction costs for structured parking are on the order of \$20,000 per stall, requiring around \$150 in revenue per month per stall to cover costs. Still, certain locations may have conditions that are conducive for a parking garage or deck parking. Private/public partnerships may prove to be a viable opportunity for structured parking in downtown.

ALTERNATIVE MODE ACCESS

The most significant opportunity to reduce parking demand in downtown is to shift demand to the park-and-ride lot. Most downtown access would then be via transit, although the lot is close enough for walking or bicycling downtown, especially in good weather during the peak summer months.

Port Townsend has a relatively high degree of bicycle activity, supported by generally light traffic conditions on most streets, and some bicycle lanes on major streets accessing downtown. Field observation revealed only limited bicycle parking. While it is not possible to quantify a direct correlation between bicycle parking and mode share, the limited observed bicycle parking and comments from the community indicate that increasing bicycle parking would be an effective improvement.

Pedestrian conditions are good in Port Townsend, with sidewalks and stairwells providing good connectivity. Further, slow traffic and driver courtesy make pedestrian crossing conditions safe and comfortable. There are some locations where sidewalks are not currently provided (e.g., Quincy Street north of Washington Street). Also, in several locations sidewalks are interrupted at the access points into parking areas. These pose opportunities for improving pedestrian conditions.

ENFORCEMENT

Port Townsend's volunteer enforcement program has been a significant improvement over the previous conditions, when the lack of resources limited the ability of the police force to enforce parking. And the stricter enforcement has coincided with a drop in the number of complaints about enforcement. The field

data collection and anecdotal evidence from locals indicate a significant amount of violation occurs in the time-restricted parking spaces. More consistent enforcement is an essential part of optimizing downtown parking resources.

PARKING CODE CHANGES

There are two types of code changes that could be adopted as part of a downtown parking management plan. First, changes should be adopted to close the current loophole that allows long-term parkers to move their vehicles to avoid the time restriction. The loophole undermines the ability to truly preserve premium parking for customers of downtown. Further a system that requires (even implicitly) employees to move their cars throughout the day results in frustration for employees and lost productivity for employers. It is important to note that such code changes would further constrain employee parking in downtown, and some offsetting measure may be needed to ensure adequate employee access.

The second area where code changes may be warranted is in the land development code. It may be necessary to review code requirements such as minimum parking ratios, waivers and exemptions for historic properties, fee-in-lieu options, and bicycle parking requirements to support future development that is consistent with community goals for downtown.

Section 7

Parking Strategy
Alternatives

Parking Strategy Alternatives

Under existing conditions, many local residents, employees, and visitors experience frustration with parking conditions during peak periods. Given the already high parking utilization during peak periods and the anticipated development in downtown, parking frustrations will only increase in downtown without a proactive approach toward mitigation. However, there are diverging views of the extent of the problem and the best approach to resolution. Also, there are different opinions on whether a certain degree of parking “shortage” should simply be tolerated during the peak tourist season.

In an effort to identify the parking management approach that best fits Port Townsend, potential measures have been divided into three general categories. Each has its own primary emphasis, as well as specific benefits and challenges. The three alternative approaches are:

1. **Management emphasis:** Under this approach, it is assumed that a certain degree of parking pressure is tolerable during the peak season. This approach would not include large public investments in new parking supply, nor would it require ambitious changes in behavior and attitudes among downtown employees and residents.
2. **Alternative mode emphasis:** A major goal of this approach would be to increase the transit mode share by gaining better utilization of the park-and-ride lot. This approach seeks to achieve significant changes in behavior and would be most effective with implementation of paid parking.
3. **New supply emphasis:** These measures would accommodate existing and future demand primarily through increasing the supply of parking. While it would not require significant behavioral changes, it is the most expensive approach and could be inconsistent with transportation goals in the Comprehensive Plan.

MANAGEMENT EMPHASIS

This approach emphasizes management of the system without additional facilities or significant investments. The benefits of the management emphasis approach are that it is relatively low cost; most elements could be implemented within a year; it is adaptable to large fluctuations in parking demand; and, it generally reflects the adopted policies of the Transportation Element of the Comprehensive Plan. The challenges are that it does not provide for significant future growth, and it relies on changing behavior to be most effective. Its success largely depends on substantial cooperation of downtown employees and employers.

This approach would include the following elements:

- Modify the parking code to make it illegal to move a vehicle within the downtown area to avoid the time limit regulation.
- Designate some three- or four-hour parking in public surface lots.
- Increase the enforcement level of time limits, especially on Saturdays when demand is highest.

- Investigate opportunities to increase and improve the efficiency of the parking supply. Options include the south side of Washington Street between Taylor and Monroe Streets and the north side of Water Street between Madison Street and Jackson Street.
- Pave and stripe existing public parking lots, such as the “Back Alley” lot on Tyler Street south of Washington Street.
- Seek a public/private arrangement for the parking lots between Taylor and Polk Street in order to redesign these areas to maximize parking capacity.
- Seek formal shared parking arrangements with private parking owners such as Swain’s, Bank of America, and Salmon Club.
- Increase the number of bicycle parking spaces in downtown.
- Relocate the Farmer’s Market to a non-parking area, given that Saturday is the highest demand period. Memorial Field is one option to be considered.
- Develop Transportation Demand Management programs. Work with business owners to encourage alternative transportation modes. The Elevated Ice Cream example is a good model.
- Establish a “parking bank” with private lot owners. The city would maintain a list of parking locations and contacts for privately owned parking spaces that are underutilized and available for lease.
- Review parking requirements in the LDC including minimum requirements; requirements for historic versus new properties; and, bicycle parking requirements.
- Modify the LDC to impose a graduated fee structure for the fee-in-lieu option, whereby one or two spaces can be opted out at low cost (such as the current \$3,660) but for large numbers of stalls, the fee increases so that the City is in a better position to absorb the new demand.
- Publish a new parking map for circulation to all business owners and employees. The map should emphasize the value of on-street parking and identify optimal locations for employee parking.
- Promote off-peak hour parking for local residents.

ALTERNATIVE MODE EMPHASIS

A primary goal of the Alternative Mode Emphasis approach is to achieve higher utilization of the park and ride lot. Paid parking in downtown would almost certainly be necessary for this to be successful. While there are many concerns about the effects of charging for parking, there can be many positive outcomes as well, and it can be implemented in a way that is conducive to a vital retail environment. This strategy would include a more aggressive parking enforcement program as well. Both the fee structure and the enforcement program could be flexible to reflect the seasonal levels of demand.

A major benefit of this approach is that it would make better use of the existing 260 parking spaces at the park and ride lot. Costs should be moderate, because meters normally pay for themselves. If Port Townsend wishes to reduce parking rates and enforcement during the non-peak periods, an evaluation of revenue impacts will be needed. This approach also reinforces the adopted policies of the Transportation Element of the Comprehensive Plan, and is a more effective way to encourage multi-modal transportation to the downtown area. It would also provide a source of revenue for the parking

enforcement program, which would allow the enforcement personnel to become a full time paid employees.

A significant challenge of this approach is that it relies on behavioral changes. Specific disadvantages are the increase in regulation, possible complaints about paid parking, and more "hassle" for residents during off-season periods when parking is plentiful.

Many of the elements of the Management Emphasis approach would be incorporated in this strategy as well, such as modifying the LDC code, increasing bicycle parking, making it illegal to move a vehicle to avoid the time limits, and creation of a parking bank. The following additional measure would be included:

- Institute on-street paid parking within the historic commercial core.
- Increase parking enforcement to include weekends. Full-time employees would likely be required.
- Work with Jefferson Transit to provide discounted transit passes for businesses or organizations that provide a transit pass to all employees.
- Actively educate and assist in the development of employer based TDM programs.
- Encourage property owners to "unbundle" parking from lease agreements. By charging for parking as a separate line item in lease agreements, tenants see the direct cost of providing parking to employees and are encouraged to consider alternatives. This helps to overcome the illusion that parking is "free."
- Construct sidewalks on Jefferson Street north of Washington Street.
- Improve pedestrian facilities at street stub parking lots by formalizing and narrowing the access points.
- Establishment a separate parking fund for meter revenues, fines and in-lieu-of parking funds for the purpose of financing programs and improvements related to parking and other access modes. A goal would be to have the parking system be self-supporting. It should not be expected to generate revenue for other services.

NEW SUPPLY EMPHASIS

The third level includes an aggressive parking development program. This approach assumes that existing and future parking demand will be met by the provision of additional facilities - and that only minimal changes in lifestyle habits related to transportation modes can be expected to occur.

Benefits of this approach are that it would accommodate some additional future parking needs with minimal changes in behavior. Facilities would be convenient for a wider variety of users. It also minimizes the potential loss of business due to constrained parking conditions.

A disadvantage of this approach is that it is generally inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan policies that encourage multi-modal transportation and reduction of automobile traffic. It would require substantial initial investment, with limited benefits in the short term. It also may increase the amount of land dedicated to parking.

The elements of this program would include the following:

- Convert to angle parking in on-street areas.
- Relocate the skate park and return to full parking use.
- Evaluate construction of parking structures, including a parking deck off of Tyler Street south of Washington Street.
- Establishment of a separate parking fund, as in the alternative mode option, but limit use of funds to acquisition and development of parking facilities.

SUMMARY OF STRATEGY ALTERNATIVES

The strategy approaches outlined above help to distinguish among priority alternative for downtown parking management. The elements included in the three alternative approaches are not mutually exclusive. They can and should be mixed and matched to form a suitable package for Port Townsend.

Section 8

Parking Management Plan

Parking Management Plan

This section presents the specific measures that comprise the Downtown Port Townsend Parking Management Plan. A phased approach to implementation is identified, including near-term, intermediate, and long-term actions. Guidelines for implementation and for on-going monitoring of parking conditions are also provided.

MISSION STATEMENT

Use a variety of approaches to maximize parking in an efficient manner that considers all users, while strengthening the commercial historic districts, protecting the historic and community character, and enhancing pedestrian accessibility.

PHASE 1. NEAR-TERM ACTIONS (WITHIN ONE YEAR)

Administrative Steps

The intent of these steps is to establish an organizational structure and tools that will support adoption, implementation, monitoring, and updates to the parking plan.

1.1 Appoint a *Parking Manager*

A key component of any effective management plan is the designated *point person*. The City should create a Parking Manager designation, which could be an existing staff person, to ensure that the parking in downtown is monitored and that adopted strategies are appropriately implemented to proactively manage parking.

1.2 Establish a *Parking Advisory Committee*

An Advisory Parking Committee should be established with the express purpose of spearheading the implementation of the Parking Management Plan and maintaining on-going evaluation of parking issues within in Downtown Port Townsend. The committee would make recommendations regarding parking zone boundaries and parking fees. The Advisory Committee would work in cooperation with the City Parking Manager to proactively address parking issues.

Parking Management and Access Steps

The intent of these steps is to optimize the use of the existing parking and access systems. Parking management measures are integrated with measures that improve and encourage alternative access modes.

- 1.3 Reevaluate the short-term and long-term parking areas. Specific changes should be linked to other actions, such as enforcement, paid parking, and transit options. Changes could include conversion of 24-hour parking to short term, and/or provision of some three- or four-hour parking areas. If increased enforcement more effectively preserves designated short-term parking for customers, it may be appropriate to maintain the number of long-term spaces.
- 1.4 Develop an integrated education and Transportation Demand Management (TDM) program. The program should link parking with other transportation options. Program elements could include:
 - An updated parking map for downtown

- Educational materials about the value of customer parking to discourage abuses by long-term parkers
 - Reinforcement of the environmental benefits of leaving your car at home
 - Activities to promote non-motorized transportation
 - Transit discount programs for business owners and employees
 - Promote off-peak shopping for local residents
 - Information on “unbundled” lease agreements
 - Education for employers who provide employee parking
- 1.5 Increase the number of bicycle parking spaces and facilities, including covered bicycle parking. The purpose of this action is to improve the safety, security, and convenience for bicyclists and to reinforce the value of biking as a transportation mode.
- 1.6 Develop a *Pedestrian Improvement Plan* for Downtown. The pedestrian improvement plan should include locations, priorities, and design for new sidewalks, landscaping, lighting, and benches.
- 1.7 Clarify purpose and management guidelines for special parking categories. These include:
- Construction vehicles: Develop criteria for managing construction activities and special use requests of parking spaces
 - Loading/special business uses: Review the designation of loading zones and special business special needs
 - ADA parking spaces: Review the number, location, and regulations.
 - Recreational/oversized vehicles: Review criteria, regulations and signage for management and locations of RV and oversized vehicle parking

Parking Supply Steps

- 1.8 Identify opportunities to increase angled on-street parking. Opportunities should be evaluated for potential conflicts with traffic, bicycle, and loading uses. Back-in angled parking could be considered as well.
- 1.9 Formalize shared arrangements with private lots. The purpose of this action is to gain public access to private parking for visitors as well as residents and employees.
- 1.10 Establish a “parking bank” with private lot owners to gain public access to private parking for residents and employees.

PHASE 2 INTERMEDIATE ACTIONS (2 TO 5 YEARS)

These are high-priority actions that are intended for longer-term implementation due to the time required for implementation.

Parking Management Measures

- 2.1 Increase enforcement of short-term time limit spaces.
- Modify parking time limit restrictions to make it illegal for individuals working in the core to move their vehicles within the core to avoid the two-hour limit.
 - Establish a policy of waiving fines for first-time violators. The purpose is to mitigate potential customer relations impacts from increased enforcement by ensuring that adequate information is provided regarding parking and other access options. A parking map should be issued to all violators when enhanced enforcement is initiated.
 - Increase enforcement staff in order to improved consistency throughout the week. Consider use of part-time paid extra help in the peak season rather than full time employees.
 - Extend parking enforcement to Saturdays.
 - Prohibit voiding tickets by enforcement officers, instead requiring ticketed individuals to go through a formal adjudication process.
 - Purchase handheld computers and software for automated tracking and record keeping.
 - Establish parking ticketing benchmarks identifying the number of tickets that enforcement personnel should be writing daily. Parking ticket revenue should be expected to help pay for enforcement personnel.
 - Institute paid parking in short-term zones.
- 2.2 Implement Paid Parking
- Investigate the use of paid parking to 1) encourage alternate modes and use of the park and ride lot; 2) discourage use of short-term parking by employees; and 3) generate revenue for parking services and other downtown improvements. An investigation should identify the following:

Phasing of paid parking implementation:

There would be many decisions to make for paid parking. Most cities start with the on-street system because that's the priority for customers. However, Port Townsend should consider starting with one or more of the most convenient surface lots. These are publicly owned assets that are currently serving only a few users. This would provide an opportunity to see and respond to public reactions and evaluate appropriate fee amounts. It would establish Port Townsend "in the business" of paid parking to begin setting up the revenue system. And it could generate money to support enforcement. Paid parking for the on-street system could be phased in with the benefit of experience from the limited off-street program.

Revenue Collection Mechanisms

Some options for pricing parking are identified below, along with general features. Cost estimates are provided for the purpose of comparison only. More investigation would be needed.

- Parking permits: Low expense; good for long-term parkers, surface lots.
- Pay-and-display (kiosks): Low tech, low cost; good for surface lots, short-term or long-term users.

- Meters: good for on or off-street. Relatively high installation cost (\$300 to \$500 per stall) and more maintenance costs. Good enforcement mechanism.
- Pay stations: Good for on or off-street. Relatively high installation costs (\$5000 to \$8000 per block face or lot). Very good flexibility for seasonal fees, credit cards, bill acceptance. Good enforcement mechanism. Take up far less space than individual meters do collectively and are more aesthetically pleasing.

Amount of Parking Fees

As indicated above, installation of paid parking systems can have high initial expenses, as well as on-going maintenance. A realistic evaluation of revenue potential for paid parking in Port Townsend must be evaluated with respect to the seasonal fluctuations in parking demand. Parking prices should also be compared to transit prices so that transit is maintained as an attractive option, especially for commuters.

- 2.3 Establish a separate parking fund to ensure parking revenues go support the parking and access system.
- Parking revenue sources would include the following:
 - Parking fines
 - Paid parking revenues
 - Fee-in-Lieu revenues
 - Expenses covered by the Parking Fund would include:
 - Enforcement costs
 - Acquisition and development of parking facilities
 - Parking maintenance
 - Other downtown streetscape improvements
- 2.4 While most businesses in the historic district find the Farmers Market and craft fairs valuable to the general business climate, it would be desirable to seek out long-term locations for the Farmer's Market and craft fairs that do not significantly reduce available parking in the downtown core.
- 2.5 Work with Washington State Ferries so that any expanded service considers on-land impacts.

Alternative Access Steps

- 2.6 Begin implementation of Pedestrian Improvement Plan developed under Action 1.6.
- 2.7 Work with Jefferson County to maximize use of park-and-ride lot and increase transit ridership. Activities should be closely tied to TDM measures (Action 1.4). These measures will be most effective if they are implemented in combination with stricter enforcement and paid parking downtown. Specific actions include the following:
- Work with Jefferson Transit to develop discount transit fare programs
 - Extend Transit service hours in the summer
 - Promote the improved Transit service and new logo to residents; provide "specials" for locals
 - Move visitor center to Park and Ride to increase visitor usage; promote the visitor experience of taking the shuttle to downtown

Parking Supply Steps

2.8 Modify Parking Requirements in the Land Development Ordinance

The intent is to ensure that new developments participate in accommodating increased parking demand; to increase flexibility for developers so that parking requirements are not a barrier to development; and, to provide a funding mechanism to support the City in providing public parking/access.

The following code items should be evaluated:

- Minimum parking ratios for commercial development should be based on actual parking demand per developed commercial property in downtown and should always consider shared parking where possible.
- The fee-in-lieu policy should be tied to the cost to accommodate new demand.
- Consider a graduated fee structure for the fee-in-lieu policy to provide developers flexibility, but to ensure adequate resources to accommodate new demand.
- Establish maximum parking ratios for downtown, equivalent to 125% of the minimum.

Parking Supply Actions

2.9 Work with the Port of Port Townsend to evaluate options for increasing the supply of and public access to parking.

2.10 Develop public/private partnerships with private lot owners to improve parking facilities, including paving and restriping private parking lots, and construction of new facilities.

2.11 Begin developing a *Financing Plan for Parking and Access Improvements*.

The priority of the Parking Management Plan is to make the most efficient use of existing resources. However, in the long term there will be a need to make improvements, including develop additional parking to meet increased demand and to replace existing parking that will be lost to redevelopment. The City should establish a financing plan as a proactive step for long-term parking and access improvements.

PHASE 3. LONG-TERM ACTIONS (FIVE+ YEARS)

3.1 Acquire property and develop public surface parking

3.2 Identify a suitable location for new seasonal or permanent parking facilities

On-Going Actions

The recommendations identified in this section should be implemented and revisited on an on-going basis by City of Port Townsend staff or the parking manager. Regular monitoring will be needed to accommodate changes in development patterns, parking needs, and available resources. The following actions are recommended as a framework for on-going monitoring and modification to the parking system.

3.3 Conduct Yearly Utilization Analysis

A yearly update of the parking utilization analysis should be conducted. The analysis should be expanded to include private parking as well as public parking. The analysis could be limited to the peak hour of the peak season. Care should be taken in selecting the study period to ensure appropriate data and findings. For the most direct comparison to this study, the study period should be on a weekday and a Saturday in July or August between noon and 2 p.m. Special events should be avoided. Aerial

photography could be used for counting cars, though it would have to be supplemented with field counts in areas obscured by roofs, shadows, or trees.

If monitoring reveals parking utilization of 85% or higher, conduct a duration analysis to determine if time stays in public short-term parking areas are consistent with desired uses. If the duration analysis reveals that time stays are too long, the first priority will be to decrease time stays. Some potential strategies are listed below. Each measure should be considered for potential implementation.

Measures to Decrease Time Stays

- Increase the level of enforcement.
- Convert some signed time limits to metered time limits.
- Public information campaign to discourage use of short-term parking by employees.

Measures Affecting Parking Availability

- Increase the supply of short-term parking.
- Convert public lots to Customer Parking with two-hour maximum stays.
- Obtain shared parking agreements to expand public access to private parking areas.
- Implement or increase parking fees.
- Create new parking supply.

3.4 Conduct Regular Duration/Utilization Analysis

At least every five years, conduct duration/turnover analysis in targeted areas to assess the effectiveness of enforcement and to identify shifts in demand characteristics of parking users. Depending on the findings of the analysis, increased enforcement or modification of time limits to better accommodate demand characteristics may be needed.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Implementation of the parking measures described in the plan requires a number of agencies working together to ensure the best results. Recommended measures 1.1 and 1.2 would create two additional participants – the City Parking Manager and the Advisory Parking Committee -- specifically for the purpose of implementing this plan, and ensuring on-going monitoring and management. Typically, implementation of a parking plan would include the following participants who would be active in various components of the parking management plan:

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| • Parking Manager | • Public Works |
| • Parking Advisory Committee | • Building and Community Development |
| • Nonmotorized Transportation Committee | • Main Street Association |
| • Chamber of Commerce | • Jefferson Transit |
| • Police/Parking Enforcement | |

Table 4 lists each recommended measure and identifies the party with the major responsibility for spearheading its implementation. Parties with a significant supporting role are also indicated.

TABLE 4 IMPLEMENTATION ROLES

Action		PM	PAC	PW	BCD	MS	NTC	CC	JT	PE
Phase 1										
1.3	Modify the short-term and long-term parking areas	X								
1.4	Develop an integrated education and Transportation Demand Management (TDM) program					X		O	O	
1.5	Increase the number of bicycle parking spaces and facilities			O			X			
1.6	Develop a <i>Pedestrian Improvement Plan</i> for Downtown.			O		O	X			
1.7	Clarify purpose and management guidelines for special parking categories	X		O	O					
1.8	Identify opportunities to increase angled on-street parking	X		O						
1.9	Formalize shared arrangements with private lots	X	O			O		O		
1.10	Establish a "parking bank"	X								
Phase 2										
2.1	Increase enforcement of short-term time limit spaces	O								X
2.2	Implement paid parking	X	O	O		O				
2.3	Establish a separate parking fund	X		O						
2.4	Seek out long-term locations for the Farmer's Market and craft fairs			O		X				
2.5	Work with Washington State Ferries on expanded service planning	O		O	X					
2.6	Begin implementation of Pedestrian Improvement Plan			X						
2.7	Develop transit and park-and-ride programs	O		O		O	O	O	X	
2.8	Modify Parking Requirements in the Land Development Ordinance	X	O	O	O	O		O		
2.9	Partner with the Port for increased supply and access to parking	O		O	X					
2.10	Develop public/private partnerships	O		O	X			O		
2.11	Develop a <i>Financing Plan for Parking and Access Improvements</i>	O	O	X	O	O	O	O	O	
Phase 3										
3.1	Acquire property and develop public surface parking	O		X						
3.2	Identify a suitable location for structured parking	O		X						
3.3	Conduct yearly utilization analysis	X				O				
3.4	Conduct regular duration/utilization analysis	X				O				
Parking Manager (PM) Parking Advisory Committee (PAC) City Public Works (PW) Building and Community Development (BCD) Main Street Association (MS) Nonmotorized Transportation Committee (NTC)		Chamber of Commerce (CC) Jefferson Transit (JT) Police/Parking Enforcement (PE) X Lead Role O Significant Supporting Role								

Section 8

Conclusions

Conclusions

This parking management was developed to support the local values and vision of downtown Port Townsend. The parking management strategies were identified to optimize the use of the existing parking in Downtown and to create a framework for more efficient future development. The strategies include policy recommendations, enhancements for alternative modes, management recommendations, and on-going monitoring measures.

Implementation of the parking management plan provides definition of the intended use and purpose of the parking system; manages the supply and enforces the parking policies; monitors the use and responds to changes in demand; and, maintains the intended function of the overall system. It is also intended to promote sustainable economic vitality through ensuring convenient parking for customers and visitors to downtown, while also supporting access needs for employees and merchants.

In order to remain effective as conditions change, on-going monitoring of the parking system will be needed. Annual monitoring should be conducted of peak hour occupancy; regular duration and turnover analysis is also recommended. A monitoring plan was provided, including procedures and standards to gauge performance and to guide modifications. Adherence to the monitoring plan will help to ensure that this plan remains effective in the future.