

RICK WILLIAMS CONSULTING

Parking & Transportation

PO Box 12546

Portland, OR 97212

Phone: (503) 459-7638

E-mail: rick@rickwilliamsconsulting.com

Bend Downtown Stakeholder Advisory Committee (DSAC) Draft Recommendation Guiding Principles for Downtown Parking Management JULY 21, 2016

I. INTRODUCTION

This memorandum outlines a recommended draft set of Guiding Principles for the management of parking in downtown Bend. The outline below represents input taken from the Bend Downtown Stakeholder Advisory Committee (DSAC) at its May 25 and June 20, 2016 work sessions with the consultant. These proposed Guiding Principles are reflective of the intent, purpose and priorities of the DSAC for managing parking in the downtown



The DSAC approved this draft on July 21, 2016. Moving forward, these draft Guiding Principles for Bend Downtown Parking will be presented to additional downtown stakeholders through a series of small group interactions, in an effort to obtain feedback to the DSAC such that final refinements can be made to the Guiding Principles and presented to the Bend City Council for endorsement later in the public process.

In the discussion below, recommended principles are supported with comments derived and/or paraphrased from DSAC work sessions. These comments are listed in *italics* following many of the recommendations.

II. WHAT WE HEARD – STAKEHOLDER INPUT

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

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

- Get the right parker to the right stall – make a place for each user of downtown.
- Educate and encourage appropriate use and only penalize repeat offenders.

In association with:

Anne George (Public Involvement)
Kittelson & Associates, Inc.

- Assure convenient, affordable, and available parking for visitors, customers and downtown employees and downtown residents.
- Ensure that priority users of each area within downtown have access to the available supply.
- Ensure safe, affordable parking for employees and residents without displacing customers.
- Clearly communicate how and where to find appropriate and available parking.
- Provide for an integrated on- and off-street system that works for all users and supports and encourages a successful public/private partnership.
- Integrate and encourage alternative modes, particularly biking.
- Anticipate and respond to increasing demand for access to the downtown.
- Ensure that the public parking system pays for itself.

III. OBJECTIVE STATEMENT

The objective of parking management in downtown should be:

“To support a vibrant, diverse, attractive, and uniquely identifiable downtown. The components of this plan need to be simple and intuitive for the user. The parking system must be safe, secure, financially sound and well-integrated with all modes of access to downtown. Access to downtown should not be cost-prohibitive to downtown users.”

Consistency with DSAC input:

- *A vibrant, economically healthy downtown core.*
- *Livability of neighborhoods / great neighborhoods*
- *Make sure parking is safe.*
- *Make it easy for people to find where they need to go.*
- *Accommodating and affordable to all users.*

IV. GUIDING PRINCIPLES – ELEMENTS OF PARKING MANAGEMENT

The Guiding Principles outlined here are summarized under theme categories. Ideally, these will establish a basis for consensus and provide near- and long-term direction for parking management in the downtown. The principles are presented at this time in no particular order or priority.

1. CITY ROLE AND COORDINATION

- a. **Primary Role (City of Bend)**. The City's primary roles in providing parking are to;
- **Prioritize and plan for customer/visitor access downtown and**
 - **Facilitate residential and/or guest access in immediately adjacent neighborhoods.**

The cost for providing parking, especially off-street, is very high. The City cannot be responsible for providing parking to all users. The City role must prioritize the public system for customers and visitors. Deliveries must be accommodated to assure continuous business activity.

Consistency with DSAC input:

- *Customers, visitors and shoppers are the priority users of the on-street system.*
- *Downtown core is for customers.*

- b. **Primary Role (Private Sector)**. Employee and downtown residential parking should be led by the private sector and through partnerships where the City can reasonably participate (financially or programmatically).

The private sector must take a lead role in providing transportation and parking options for downtown residents and employees, The City must complement the private sector role by providing safe, reliable, and effective non-auto access to downtown.

Consistency with DSAC input:

- *Customers, visitors and shoppers are the priority users of the on-street system.*

- *The City needs to lead, but all users and beneficiaries should have a role in the implementation of parking management.*

c. Centralized Management. Centralize management of public parking to ensure optimal use of its supply.

The City needs to provide focused, coordinated, and strategic attention to daily management of the supply it owns and deliver near- and long-term parking solutions that include participation from private sector owners/operators of parking. This should be implemented through a Parking Services Division, led by an adequately supported and qualified Parking Manager.

Consistency with DSAC input:

- *Need options, management and structure.*
- *The City needs to lead, but all users and beneficiaries should have a role in the implementation of parking management.*

d. Effective Communications. High-quality, user-friendly communications to ensure easy access for customers and visitors to appropriate and available parking near their destination.

The City's Parking Services Division must ensure that signage and wayfinding leads downtown visitors and customers to available parking supplies that are suited to their destination and time-stay needs. This may require real-time monitoring and communication of available public supplies. Parameters of use (e.g., length of stay, pricing, etc.) must be clear and concise and not detract from the image of downtown. To the highest degree possible, communications systems should be reliable and easy to use and understand.

Consistency with DSAC input:

- *Make it easy for people to find where they need to go.*
- *Better utilization of the parking structure.*
- *Change the perception ... that it's hard to park downtown.*
- *Well-communicated.*
- *Easy to understand and use.*
- *Inconsistent signage for access (after hours).*

- *Insufficient number of signs and confusing signs with small words – need larger font*
- *Attractiveness, quality and variety of downtown shops and restaurants.*

e. Stakeholder Support. Ensure that a representative body of affected private and public constituents routinely informs decision-making.

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

Consistency with DSAC input:

- *Need broad public engagement.*
- *Collaborative spirit.*
- *Balanced program –make all users happy.*
- *Downtown parking education for new and potential businesses.*

f. Coordinated Management. Manage parking in a manner that supports the unique character of existing and emerging downtown districts and neighborhoods. Where appropriate, administer parking by defined area or district.

The downtown comprises several unique economic enclaves (e.g., the core, areas with adjacent parks and periphery, and buffer areas in commercial areas and neighborhoods). As the areas differ economically, so too do the character and needs of their patrons. This may require a management approach tailored to each area, known as management by parking district or area. Parking in commercial zones should be prioritized for visitors and employees. Parking in residential zones should be prioritized for residents and their guests. To be successful the City must coordinate with varying entities that vie for parking (e.g., businesses, residents and public agencies). This type of approach assures that priority users will be accommodated first.

Consistency with DSAC input:

- *The City should serve as the focal point for parking management.*

- *The City needs to lead, but all users and beneficiaries should have a role in the implementation of parking management.*
- *Make sure parking is safe late at night/early morning for customers, employees and business owners in the parking garage and perimeter lots.*

2. PRIORITY USERS

a) **On-Street System (downtown).** The most convenient **on-street parking** will be prioritized for the customer/visitor (short-term trip).

The on-street parking system in the downtown must be formatted in a manner that assures turnover and minimizes conflicts between the priority user of an area and other users. The City will use base zoning in parking districts (e.g., commercial zone versus residential) zone to facilitate and support reasonable definitions of priority users. For the most part, employees and downtown residents should not park on-street, particularly when demand for customer/visitor parking is high. When demand is low and/or surpluses of parking exist, the City can accommodate non-priority users in the on-street system for interim periods.

Consistency with DSAC input:

- *City needs to balance zoning and access provisions*
- *Downtown core is for customers.*
- *A balance of needs between business and residents.*
- *Minimize conflict.*

b) **On-Street System (immediately adjacent neighborhoods).** The most convenient **on-street parking** will be prioritized for residents and their guests.

As with on-street parking in the downtown, neighborhood parking must be formatted in a manner that assures priority access and minimizes conflicts between the residential users in a neighborhood and other users. Residential areas may include buildings such as churches or a public library. Their users are also considered residents and their guests. The City will use base zoning in parking districts (e.g., commercial zone versus residential) zone to facilitate and support reasonable definitions of priority users. For the most part, employees should not park on-street, particularly when demand for parking by neighborhood residents and guests is high. When demand is low and/or

surpluses of parking exist, the City can accommodate non-priority users in the on-street system for interim periods.

Consistency with DSAC input:

- *City needs to balance zoning and access provisions.*
- *Employees are parking in the neighborhoods.*
- *Downtown periphery is fine for employees, depending on time of day.*
- *A balance of needs between business and residents.*
- *Minimize conflict.*
- *Minimize spill over.*

c) On-street Turnover. The on-street parking system is a finite resource and will be managed to provide a rate of turnover that supports “district” vitality.

Most users of the downtown favor on-street parking. This premium on-street parking resource needs to be managed to provide a rate of customer and visitor turnover that supports downtown and district vitality. With this principle comes the recognition that growth in downtown parking demand will, over the longer term, need to be accommodated in off-street locations. Longer-term patron and employee parking must be managed so as not to conflict with customer parking, particularly on-street. On-street parking must be managed according to demand and time-stays conducive to priority customer need. This will be supported by parallel efforts by the City and private sector to increase alternative mode options.

Consistency with DSAC input:

- *Time limits for all users.*
- *Current time limits produce good turnover.*
- *Get employees out of customer supply.*
- *Extend time limits to later in the day (beyond 4:00 PM).*

d) Off-street System. Coordinate off-street parking resources (public and private) to meet employee and downtown resident demand that cannot be met by safe and reliable walking, biking, riding transit, and carpooling/ridesharing.

All parking strategies, particularly for employees and residents, should be coordinated with the City's broader transportation demand management goals and objectives to ensure that users have reasonable options available for access (which includes auto, transit, bicycle, walk and ridesharing). This effort should be pursued as a partnership between the City and private sector businesses.

Consistency with DSAC input:

- *Not a lot of people know about the employee pass program.*
- *Parking garage is not affordable for employees.*
- *Encourage shared parking.*
- *Need a successful partnership between City and private sector.*
- *Need an employee transportation and parking plan.*
- *Need better use of garage.*

3. ACTIVE CAPACITY MANAGEMENT

a) Optimize Utilization. Manage the public parking system using the 85% Occupancy Standard to inform and guide decision-making.

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

Consistency with DSAC input:

- *Hit the 85% balance as closely as possible.*

b) Resolve Constraints. Parking demands in excess of the 85% Occupancy Standard will require best practice strategies to minimize parking constraints.

Strategies that will be identified in the Downtown Parking Management Plan will be triggered by the 85% Rule. The City and the Parking Advisory Committee will be committed to moving forward with recommended strategies when parking demand requires them. Changes to the status quo can be

difficult, but continued constraints in parking and access will adversely impact the downtown's success and ability to absorb growth.

Consistency with DSAC input:

- *Hit the 85% balance as closely as possible.*
- *Need options, management and structure.*
- *The City should serve as the focal point for parking management.*

c) Shared Off-street Parking. Encourage shared parking in areas where parking is underutilized. This will require an active partnership and effective communication with owners of private parking supplies.

Private parking facilities in some downtown locations may be underutilized. Efforts should be made to facilitate shared use agreements between different users (public and private) to direct parking demand into these facilities, in order to optimize the utilization of existing parking resources. Parking data collected by the City should include capacity assessments within private facilities.

Consistency with DSAC input:

- *Employees out of customer parking*
- *Need an employee transportation and parking plan.*
- *Encourage shared parking.*
- *There are a lot of underused and empty lots.*

d) Capacity Expansions. Capacity will be created through strategic management of existing supplies (public and private), reasonable enforcement, leveraging parking with alternative modes, and new supply.

Active effort must be made to manage the parking system on a daily basis. This will require partnerships with the private sector to leverage existing off-street supplies and to coordinate management in a manner that supports the development and growth of alternative modes. It is understood that capacity within the parking supply can be achieved through strategies that increase turnover and/or encourage alternative mode use, as well as code provisions and regulations that govern the creation of parking. These types of actions should be fully evaluated prior to pursuing building new parking supply.

Consistency with DSAC input:

- *The City needs to lead, but all users and beneficiaries should have a role in the implementation of parking management.*
- *People are parking in bike lanes and no enforcement action against it.*
- *Time limits for all users.*
- *Need for education about the parking system.*
- *Balance zoning and access provisions.*
- *Need options, management and structure.*

4. INFORMATION SYSTEMS (SUPPLY & CUSTOMER-BASED)

Supply-based

a) Monitor & Report Utilization. Implement performance measurements and reporting to facilitate decision-making.

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

Consistency with DSAC input:

- *Hit the 85% balance as closely as possible.*
- *A balanced program that ensures access to priority users.*
- *Need monitoring of use.*

Customer-based

a) Product Quality. Provide and manage a safe, reliable, user-friendly and attractive on- and off-street parking and communications system, This will be provided in a manner that complements the quality of downtown and attracts visitors and customers to downtown.

The parking system and its supporting programs should be of a quality level that reflects the quality of downtown Bend itself. On-street parking should be uniformly managed and enforced to assure an intuitive, reasonable sense of the allowed time stay. Off-street facilities (surface and structured) should be of uniform quality and identity to create a clear sense that the user is

protected and free from harm (safety), convenience, understandability and coordination with the pedestrian environment. Communications systems should be cutting edge, professional and effectively coordinated. All systems (e.g., signage, electronic equipment) should, to the highest degree possible, be reliable and easy to use and understand.

Consistency with DSAC input:

- *System needs to be well communicated.*
- *Easy to use.*
- *People need to feel safe.*
- *Simplicity and communication.*
- *Change the public perception of parking – that it is too hard to park downtown.*

b) System Communications. Improve existing and create new information resources (outreach, education, maps, websites, apps, etc.) for use by the public and private sectors. Communications systems must be uniform and strategically coordinated.

Efforts to improve understanding, awareness, and ease of use of the parking and access system should be upgraded. A clear schedule should be maintained for the dissemination of information. This could be coordinated through a partnership between the City, the Downtown Bend Business Association and other entities. High quality communication and marketing materials should be integrated into a comprehensive package of services to accurately inform and guide the parking public into the on- and off-street parking system.

Consistency with DSAC input:

- *Make it easy for people to find where they need to go/do.*
- *Better utilization of the parking structure – seems to be a marketing issue.*

c) Branding & Wayfinding. Augment and expand the existing wayfinding system for the downtown that links parking assets and provides directional guidance, preferably under a common brand/logo.

Parking resources should be clearly identified and explained through branding and signage, increasing understanding of how to access on- and off-street

parking resources. A common brand unifies marketing materials, signage systems, and other communications and simplifies customer recognition and use of the system.

Consistency with DSAC input:

- *More signage for people coming off the highway.*
- *Insufficient number of signs.*
- *Confusing signs with small font.*

5. INTEGRATION WITH OTHER MODES

a) Downtown Multi-modal. Encourage and facilitate increasing percentages of use, particularly by employees, of alternative travel modes to free up parking capacity.

Vehicle parking should not be the only access option, particularly for employees. Every parking stall occupied by an employee means a lower rate of turnover and less access for customers and visitors. Employees should be given reasonable access to parking, but encouraged to use alternative modes that include walking, biking, transit, and ridesharing. Nearby residents should be encouraged to use Bend's sidewalk and trail system to access downtown. Community members from greater distances should be encouraged to bicycle and ride transit for downtown access. Providing safe and reliable non-auto modes of access to downtown (walking, biking, transit), relieves pressure on the parking system, enhances the attractiveness of downtown, and accommodates nearly all types of users. This will require active partnerships with the private sector.

Consistency with DSAC input:

- *A parking management system that recognizes and encourages transportation alternatives and alternative modes.*
- *Great non-motorized transportation infrastructure (bike lanes, etc.)*
- *Augment existing non-motorized transportation infrastructure.*
- *Improve access options.*

b) Bicycle Parking. Increase bike parking on- and off-street to enhance the broader bicycle network.

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

Consistency with DSAC input:

- *A parking management system that recognizes and encourages transportation alternatives and alternative modes.*
- *Augment existing non-motorized transportation infrastructure.*
- *Improve access options – (concern for pedestrian and bicycle safety).*

c) Connections to Remote Vehicle Parking. Explore remote parking locations and transit/bike connections to minimize the need for new parking structures.

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

Consistency with DSAC input:

- *Get employees out of customer supply.*
- *There are a lot of underused and empty lots.*

6. PLANNING FOR FUTURE SUPPLY

a) Planning & Funding. Planning for future parking supply needs will be strategic and routinely evaluated to ensure the City is ready to respond to growth, recognizing that funding for new growth will require a varied package of funding resources (and partnerships).

The City must plan for its supply needs and initiate long-term planning efforts to assemble funding and partnerships necessary to those needs. Future needs in "parking supply" includes parking for bicycles, as well as cars and multiple modes should be addressed in any system. When considering supply

needs, all modes of access should be evaluated in the effort to increase access to downtown.

Consistency with DSAC input:

- *The City needs to lead, but all users and beneficiaries should have a role in the implementation of parking management.*
- *Property owners should provide parking or pay fee-in-lieu.*

7. FINANCIAL VIABILITY

a) **Fiscal Stewardship. All parking operations must be financially sustainable.**

Parking revenues should cover the cost of operations as well as providing reasonable surpluses of revenue to ensure the highest quality access product, customer convenience, system maintenance, safety, and service delivery. This will require multiple sources of revenue for parking operations, maintenance and system growth. Revenue sources can include leases, enforcement fees, hourly rates and other user fees, urban renewal and/or partnerships with the private sector.

Consistency with DSAC input:

- *The City needs to lead, but all users and beneficiaries should have a role in the implementation of parking management.*
- *Don't want to outprice minimum wage employees for parking.*
- *The passes – not a lot of people know about it so passes not utilized fully – otherwise it's a good program (no awareness).*
- *Parking system should pay for itself.*
- *Property owners should provide or pay fee-in-lieu.*