



Planning Commission Staff Report

August 24, 2016

Item 8.e.

SUBJECT: Informational Update on Downtown Parking Strategy and Implementation Plan

**APPLICANT/
PROPERTY OWNER:** City of Pleasanton

PURPOSE: Accept an update on the Downtown Parking Strategy and Implementation Plan

LOCATION: Downtown Pleasanton

GENERAL PLAN: Retail, Highway, and Service Commercial; Business and Professional Offices; High Density Residential; Medium Density Residential; Other Public and Institutional; Parks and Recreation; Public Health and Safety; Wildland Overlay

SPECIFIC PLAN: Downtown Specific Plan – Various

ZONING: Various

EXHIBITS: [A. Draft Downtown Pleasanton Parking Strategy and Implementation Plan, dated June 16, 2016](#)

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff seeks comments from the Planning Commission and the public on this draft of the Downtown Parking Strategy and Implementation Plan (Parking Plan), and will incorporate suggestions before scheduling the matter for final review by Planning Commission and consideration of adoption by City Council.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Staff has been working with Fehr & Peers (a transportation planning consulting firm) to draft a Parking Plan to identify strategies to more effectively manage and increase the parking supply in Downtown Pleasanton. The Parking Plan discusses: existing parking conditions; increasing the parking supply, including the feasibility and cost of developing a parking structure; influences that affect parking conditions, parking demand management strategies; an implementation plan for management of the existing parking supply; and policy/Municipal Code updates.

BACKGROUND/HISTORY

City Council authorized staff to prepare the Parking Plan at its October 6, 2015 meeting. At the December 15, 2015 City Council meeting, staff provided an update on the plan and parking solutions that were implemented to date, or that would be implemented in the short-term. Staff recently received a draft of the Parking Plan (dated June 16, 2016), and provided an update to the City Council at the July 19, 2016 meeting in order to receive preliminary feedback.

At that July 19 meeting, City Council expressed general support for the Parking Plan and indicated that having a sufficient supply of parking in close proximity to Main Street is integral to the viability and success of Downtown. Other comments focused on exploring alternate locations for parking (e.g., reuse of sites with buildings that have outgrown their useful life close to Main Street), and integration of the plan with the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan that is currently being updated. City Council also indicated that parking that is created should be provided at no charge, and improvements should continue to be made to the Transportation Corridor to increase parking. Laura Olson, Executive Director of the Pleasanton Downtown Association (PDA), also expressed support for the plan and provided feedback on the design of new parking signs intended to direct visitors to areas where there is available parking.

Staff is now providing the report to the Planning Commission for comments in conjunction with other outreach efforts (e.g., with the PDA, Economic Vitality Committee) in advance of returning to Planning Commission and then to City Council with the final report for adoption.

STAFF REVIEW/ANALYSIS

The Downtown Parking Strategy and Implementation Plan dated June 16, 2016, Exhibit A to this report, was developed with the objective of identifying how to best ensure sufficient and convenient parking would be available in the Downtown area, both in the near-term and the long-term. The Parking Plan discusses: existing parking conditions; increasing the parking supply, including the feasibility and cost of developing a parking structure; influences that affect parking conditions, parking demand management strategies; an implementation plan for management of the existing parking supply; and policy/Municipal Code updates, all of which are discussed in further detail below.

Existing Parking Conditions

The commercial area of Downtown has approximately 3,320 parking spaces, including both on-street and off-street, public, and private parking supplies. The City's 2008 acquisition and improvement of the Alameda County Transportation Corridor has resulted in additional paved parking spaces and additional unpaved spaces. The Downtown Specific Plan indicates there are approximately 843,000 square feet of commercial space within the Downtown, resulting in a parking ratio of 1 space for each 250 square feet of building floor area.

In the aggregate, there is a sufficient number of parking spaces Downtown to accommodate typical peak existing demand. However, most of the *off-street* parking is on private property and is not available for general use by the public. The Parking Plan identified that although on-street parking in the core commercial area closest to Main Street was parked at capacity, on-street parking on the periphery of Downtown was typically available, even at peak times. This suggests a high potential for implementing parking management solutions to better utilize the most desirable parking spaces in the core while directing some of the parking demand to the less-utilized spaces on the periphery.

The existing conditions analysis also identified both pedestrian and bicycle related barriers, which contribute to inefficient parking space utilization and increased parking demand. Steep grades adjacent to the Transportation Corridor, vacant lots and fences create barriers that impede pedestrian access to and from parking lots, and narrow sidewalks discourage walking. Barriers that discourage bicycling include gaps in bicycle facilities both approaching Downtown and within the Downtown and limited and inconvenient bicycle storage and parking.

Travel Behavior

The Parking Plan identifies the travel behavior of visitors to Downtown using anonymous Global Positioning System (GPS) data. Approximately 85% of total trips to Downtown have a trip origin in the Tri-Valley (Dublin, San Ramon, Pleasanton, or Livermore). On weekdays, the highest proportion of trips (32%) originates in Hacienda and Northeast Pleasanton. On weekends, trips from Dublin and San Ramon represent the greatest proportion, followed by northeast Pleasanton. The times of day that have the highest percent of trips are mid-day (10:00 am to 3:00 pm) at 39%, and late afternoon/evening (3:00 pm to 7:00 pm) at 33%.

Transit or shuttle service to and from Hacienda and/or the Stoneridge Shopping Center area could provide added convenience to people who currently drive into Downtown. The preponderance of weekday trips from Hacienda and Northeast Pleasanton also suggests that enhanced bike connections to Downtown may reduce parking demand.

Way-Finding Signage

Based on the GPS data used to compile travel behavior, the Parking Plan proposes way-finding signage (both vehicular and pedestrian) to direct visitors to under-utilized parking areas, with the objective of making it easier for motorists to identify where to turn to access public lots, and facilitating pedestrian access to and from parking lots. Staff has started to implement this task by removing existing signs and fabricating and installing new signs.

Future Growth Demand Scenarios

With the objective of identifying the number of parking spaces that would be needed in the future, the Parking Plan evaluates parking demand over the existing supply based on three growth scenarios: commercial growth only, residential growth only, and mixed-use growth across three rates of growth:

- low (5% increase in commercial square footage and/or 100 additional residential units);
- medium (10% increase in commercial square footage and/or 200 additional residential units); and
- high (15% increase in commercial square footage and/or 500 residential additional units).

As shown in Table 1, approximately 45 to 1,020 additional parking spaces may be needed to accommodate anticipated demand. The growth anticipated in Downtown and its associated parking demand should be updated once an update to the Downtown Specific Plan is adopted.

Table 1: Parking Supply Increase Necessary to Maintain 85% Occupancy Across Varying Growth Scenarios

<i>Scenario</i>	<i>Low</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>High</i>
Commercial	Up to 60 spaces	Up to 190 spaces	Up to 330 spaces
Residential	Up to 45 spaces	Up to 230 spaces	Up to 800 spaces
Mixed-Use	Up to 185 spaces	Up to 465 spaces	Up to 1,020 spaces

Supply Management Strategies

The Downtown Specific Plan currently identifies two sites as potential locations for parking garages: within the parking lot of the City Library (400 Old Bernal Avenue), and a portion of the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC) property located adjacent to the City Library. The City is currently exploring the feasibility of developing parking facilities at these locations as part of the Civic Center Master Plan preparation process and in ongoing discussions with SFPUC.

In an effort to more broadly explore the feasibility of developing a Downtown parking garage, the Parking Plan identifies three additional sites for a three- to four-level parking structure: the Workbench True Value site (636 Main Street), the Bank of America parking lot (west of 337-349 Main Street), and the Inklings Coffee and Tea surface parking lot (530 Main Street). Each of these is described in further detail below (and associated costs are summarized in Table 2). Staff notes that these sites represent just a sample of potential parking structure development sites in Downtown, and are intended to illustrate representative structure configurations, capacities, and costs.

- **Workbench True Value Site** – The Workbench True Value site is located at 636 Main Street, and is currently used as a surface parking lot with approximately 53 spaces. An existing driveway provides access to an area of the site where there are 30 additional parking spaces. These 83 spaces would need to be removed should a parking garage be constructed on this site, and vehicular access from Main Street would be prohibited to maintain a comfortable pedestrian environment on Main Street. A parking structure could yield a total of approximately 135 parking spaces, resulting in a net increase of 50 spaces beyond existing conditions.
- **Bank of America Site** – The Bank of America parking lot is located on the southeast corner of W. Angela Street and Peters Avenue (west of 337-349 Main Street), and consists of approximately 89 surface parking spaces. Depending on the size and number of levels of a parking structure at this location, up to 465 spaces could be constructed. Of the three options, a parking structure at this site could be optimal from a cost and locational perspective.
- **Inklings Coffee and Tea Site** – The Inklings Coffee and Tea site is located at 530 Main Street, south of Division Street, and is currently used as a surface parking lot

with 82 spaces. If a structure were to be constructed on this site, vehicular access from Main Street would be prohibited. Schematic plans indicate a parking garage on this site could comprise approximately 200 parking spaces, resulting in a net increase of 120 spaces.

The Parking Plan estimates the costs associated with construction of a parking structure in the San Francisco Bay Area; however, it should be noted that these costs do not include land acquisition, design services/architecture, or permitting costs. Also, these estimated costs factor in the number of subterranean spaces (approximately \$39,000 each) versus above-grade spaces (approximately \$23,000 each).

Table 2: Parking Structure Estimated Cost

	Estimated Cost	Average Cost Per Parking Space	Average Cost Per Net New Parking Space
Workbench True Value Site	\$3,800,000	\$29,000	\$74,000
Bank of America Site	\$3,300,000 to \$12,600,000	\$28,000 to \$29,000	\$34,000 to \$39,000
Inklings Coffee and Tea Site	\$5,500,000	\$29,000	\$49,000

Note: These costs do not include land acquisition, design services, or permitting costs.

Staff plans to explore the possibility of adding the SFPUC property and other potential locations for parking structures (e.g., the City-owned parking lot on Peters Avenue between St. Mary Street and Division Street) to the Parking Plan, as well as potential locations for non-structure parking.

While construction of a parking structure would increase the overall parking supply in Downtown Pleasanton, the expenditure associated with such a proposal makes it a costly undertaking. A more cost-effective strategy may be to implement parking *management* strategies (discussed in further detail below) to more efficiently use the existing parking in Downtown.

Other supply management measures identified in the report include: work with Alameda County to identify overflow parking areas at the fairgrounds for use by ACE train users, thereby freeing up parking spaces to the east of the ACE station for Downtown visitors, modify parking restrictions for loading zones to allow for general parking during off-peak delivery times, create a parking plan that identifies parking that could be utilized during infrequent peak periods or special events, establish a parking benefit district that allows parking revenue to be used to increase parking supply and provide improvements, identify businesses with private lots and work with these property owners to allow public parking through indemnification and/or maintenance agreements, and use the remainder of the Transportation Corridor to construct an employee-only parking lot.

The Parking Study also recommends that the City work with private lot owners to develop shared parking agreements among adjacent businesses in underutilized lots to increase overall

availability of on-street parking. Shared-use parking involves the allocation of existing parking spaces for use by businesses with different operational hours and/or functions. The Parking Plan indicates that shared-use parking would be an effective way to manage the existing parking supply located Downtown because many uses have complementary use patterns (for instance, banks and restaurants typically experience peak demand for parking at different times). Shared parking would also be cost-effective in that it doesn't require construction, and there are no associated costs such as land acquisition, construction, and maintenance that would be incurred to create new parking supply.

Parking Demand Management Strategies

The Parking Plan identifies key parking demand management strategies described in further detail below.

- City Strategies to Implement
 - *Parking Management Focus* – designate an existing City staff person to create an “information center” to consolidate information for businesses and the public regarding alternative transportation methods, work with Downtown businesses to reduce trips and minimize parking impacts, and administer a Transportation Management Association (TMA) that enables small employers to provide commute alternatives to employees.
 - *Measures to Encourage Use of Other Travel Modes* – Implement improvements to encourage bicycle access to Downtown, including short-term bicycle parking near storefronts and restaurants, work with property owners to colocate bicycle parking in existing parking lots nearest to Main Street, partner with groups to provide valet bicycle parking at special events, install a bicycle repair station in a convenient location such as the Lions Wayside Park or City Library to encourage employees and visitors to ride their bicycles to Downtown, work with Livermore-Amador Valley Transit Authority (LAVTA) to increase the frequency of Downtown-bound bus lines at key travel times, work with LAVTA to provide a free or reduced shuttle or connector bus between Downtown and Stoneridge Shopping Center and/or Hacienda, and disseminate information about ridesharing/carpooling services for employers and employees within the Downtown, and implement other improvements to encourage employees and visitors to ride their bicycles to Downtown.
 - *Strategies to Manage Parking Locations* – Designate parking lots specifically for employees on the periphery of Downtown to increase on-street spaces in the vicinity of retail shops and restaurants, charge for parking in the most desirable but least available locations and also provide parking on the periphery of Downtown at no charge, and install digital parking occupancy signs that display the number of vacant spaces, which would work in conjunction with parking specific wayfinding signage.
 - *Enforcement Strategies* – Consider reducing parking time limits on Main Street to encourage more frequent turnover (where longer time limits could be provided on side streets or off-street parking lots), and enforce existing time limits on Main Street.

- Employer Strategies
 - *Measures to Encourage Use of Other Travel Modes* – Encourage businesses to provide employees with subsidized transit passes and/or allow employees to deduct transit passes from paychecks before taxes as a pre-tax incentive, provide a cash subsidy to employees who commute by bike, encourage businesses to provide bicycling equipment and/or raffle prizes, gift cards or other incentives to employees, require projects involving building expansion or new construction to include changing rooms with lockers and showers.
 - *Strategies to Manage Parking Locations* – If employee parking lots are identified, then provide the opportunity for employees to register for parking permits to access off-street lots near Downtown, incorporate valet parking, particularly for uses such as restaurants, and provide designated carpool or vanpool spaces.

Updates to Downtown Specific Plan

The Parking Plan suggests amendment of the Downtown Specific Plan to allow for parking pricing. A current Downtown Specific Plan policy restricts the installation of parking meters within the Downtown area, but the Parking Plan indicates that parking pricing is often an effective strategy to manage existing parking supply to distinguish parking locations that are in demand versus those that are more often available. As mentioned in this report, the City Council at its July 19, 2016 meeting indicated that parking should be provided free of cost.

Implementation Plan

To successfully manage parking supply and demand in Downtown Pleasanton, the Parking Plan organizes parking demand management strategies (summarized above in this report) that can be implemented in the immediate future, in the near-term, and in the long-term, and distinguishes between those that manage the existing parking supply, increase parking supply, and involve updates to City policy documents such as the General Plan, Downtown Specific Plan, and the Pleasanton Municipal Code. A tiered cost system (high, medium, low) related to each strategy is combined with an “effectiveness” rating. For example, a parking structure is rated as a high monetary cost item with a high level of effectiveness, whereas installation of short-term bicycle parking is rated as a low cost item, and as a supportive measure.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice of this item has been published in The Valley Times, was noted in the Pleasanton Weekly, and was shared on the City’s social media accounts (e.g. Twitter). At the time this report was prepared, staff has not received comments regarding the Parking Plan outside of staff-initiated outreach efforts.

SUMMARY/CONCLUSION

The draft Parking Plan enclosed with this report identifies parking management and supply strategies to make vehicular parking more accessible to visitors and employees of Downtown Pleasanton. Since commencing this study, staff has worked on the following measures to improve parking availability in Downtown Pleasanton:

- Enforcement – Since March 2016, the Police Department has issued over 130 enforcement tickets to vehicles parked in time-restricted parking stalls longer than the

allowed time. Staff expects continued enforcement to result in greater turn-over of parking, particularly within the spaces that are subject to greatest demand.

- Employee/Event Parking – The area abutting the Union Pacific Railway line between Division Street and St. Mary Street (the lot used by the DeMolay organization) has been resurfaced with an aggregate rock material to provide temporary parking, resulting in 46 parking spaces. These spaces are intended for use by employees or for patrons of special events.
- First Street Parking Spaces – 52 parking spaces have been marked on First Street.
- Wayfinding Signage – Staff has begun to fabricate and install new wayfinding signage to direct visitors to under-utilized parking areas and implementation will occur in Summer of 2016.
- Paving within Transportation Corridor between Neal Street and W. Angela Street – The area of the transportation corridor between Neal Street and W. Angela Street has been paved to improve parking efficiency and minimize dust.

Staff will continue to make improvements to the Parking Plan as the plan is reviewed by bodies such as the Planning Commission, Economic Vitality Committee, and other interested parties.

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