

Summary of 8/23/16 Parking Workshop Notes

What is “parking management?”

Parking management describes a variety of strategies that

- encourage more efficient use of existing parking facilities,
- improve the quality of service provided to parking facility users, and
- improve parking facility design.

The current conditions consist of:

- Permitted spaces (in lots)
- Parking meters
- Timed spaces
 - Five hour
 - Two hour
 - 90 minutes
 - 24 minutes
- No weekend or evening enforcement

In the downtown core, there are over 1,050 spaces.

The peak time is between 11:00 am and 2:00 pm. During that time, the most impacted spaces are the five- and ten-hour spaces, with the 90-minute spaces close behind. The five- and ten-hour spaces are roughly 77% full at peak time, and the 90-minute spaces are roughly 66% full at peak time.

Permitted spaces, though nearly sold out, are only 60% full at peak time.

Problems with current conditions (based on input from workshop)

- There is a lack of handicap parking (and location of existing spaces is poor)
- Outdoor dining patios have impacted parking
- Library lacks dedicated parking
- Parking signs should also be in Spanish
- Business owners and downtown employees are taking customer parking
- The closest parking is free; charging for parking furthest away
- Perception that the parking attendant can be “bribed”
- People are parking inappropriately--in privately owned lots and permitted spaces
- Perception of business owners being penalized for having their businesses downtown (because they have to pay for parking, versus places like Walmart or Pear Tree Shopping Center)
- Need to clarify signage for time limits (there are different time limits on same street, for example)
- Perceived as dangerous to walk to parking lots (at night)
- Jurors don’t follow instructions

- 90 minutes is either too long or not long enough, depending on your opinion
- 24 minutes is random—why 24?
- Transients are living in vehicles and shuffling between on-street parking spaces

Factors that will likely impact parking in the future

Courthouse relocation: the new courthouse, when built, will also have a dedicated parking lot for employees and jurors. Anticipate completion date—at least five years from now.

Downtown Streetscape Project: Few, if any spaces will be lost. However, State Street will become much safer for pedestrians and there will be additional bike racks and wider sidewalks.

Reuse of current courthouse: the current courthouse is owned by the County and the State, so the reuse of this building will largely depend on those agencies. The use will determine how much traffic is associated with it.

Future development: Whether it's a new hotel downtown or the rehabilitation of the Palace Hotel, future development may impact parking. Any plan developed now will need to be flexible enough to work with whatever happens.

Electric vehicle chargers: Tesla donated four electric vehicle chargers to the City of Ukiah that will be installed in the public parking lots.

Central garbage collection: A goal of the City's is to have one or more centralized garbage locations for downtown businesses who are not able to store garbage onsite. This will prevent dumpsters and toters from being stored on the sidewalks and streets, will keep the downtown cleaner, and will provide a valuable service to the businesses.

Antiquated parking meters: The City's meters are obsolete. Parts can no longer be obtained for them and there are no extras to replace broken ones. If the City is to keep a metered system, new meters will need to be purchased.

2008 Parking Study

In 2008, a comprehensive parking study was performed. That study included an inventory of the existing conditions, an analysis of opportunities and constraints, and provided recommendations. A summary of some of those recommendations follows:

- Improve parking signs and maps
 - Some of this was done; could still use improvement
- Eliminate on-street permit parking
 - This was done; there are no longer permitted spaces on the streets
- Create additional diagonal parking on School Street
 - This was not done. However, a recent analysis has determined that by adding diagonal parking on School Street between Stephenson and Seminary, 11 spaces could be gained. This change will be made in the near future.
- Update parking rate structure
 - This has not been done. Permit fees have not changed since 2002.
- Update parking fines on an ongoing basis
 - Parking fines were recently adjusted, but had not been changed since the early 2000's.

- Oversell permits by 10%
 - This has not been done, but is a good solution. Permit lots would become first come, first serve unless a premium was paid for a dedicated space. This could alleviate the problem that the lots are only 60% full at peak time.
- Re-establish on-street parking where driveways have been abandoned
 - This has not been completed. There are still curb cuts (without parking) where driveways no longer exist.
- In public lots, replace meters with kiosks
 - This has not been done. Kiosks were popular when the 2008 study was done and have fallen out of favor for a number of reasons. If the lots are to be controlled, there are now more effective and user-friendly ways to accomplish it.
- Convert 90-minute parking to two-hour parking and add kiosks
 - This has not been done. Again, kiosks are no longer viewed as a viable solution. However, meter technology and even meter-less technology have significantly evolved. Some places even have a parking app for smart phones with no meters at all.
- Eliminate five-hour parking and expand 10-hour parking on periphery of downtown
 - This has not been done.

Possible solutions (based on feedback from workshop)

- Controlled lots with kiosk (or gated entry where users would enter their permit or pay for the amount of time they use)
- If metered, offer first 30-90 minutes free
- Facilitate juror parking (make it easier to understand and/or more centralized...not necessarily closer to the courthouse)
- Offer discounts for employees to incentivize appropriate parking
- Use revenue from meters to improve lots and downtown
- Use signage to free up loading zones and restricted spaces after 5pm and on weekends
- Offer validated parking
- Use an escalating fee schedule as a deterrent
- Look into parking app (used in Miami) instead of meters
- Need to educate employers to help keep closest spaces available for customers
- Need to incentivize appropriate usage
- Need better signage and education regarding parking permits
- Facilitate permit process – get application online
- May be able to pick up a few parking spaces by utilizing the center median on Seminary

Next Steps

- Ad hoc committee will process community input
- Develop recommendations
- Present to City Council
- Implement