

Update Parking Strategies from Downtown Parking Study and Management Plans.

A. Policy and Code

STRATEGY 1 **completed**

Formalize Guiding Principles as policies in the parking and transportation system plan.

Update: Principles included in the 2019 Parking Study were accepted by the City Council and have guided work of City staff.

STRATEGY 2 **completed**

Adopt the 85% Rule as the standard for measuring performance of the parking supply and triggering specific management strategies and rate ranges.

The 85% Rule is an operating principle and parking industry standard. When occupancy rates routinely reach 85% in the peak hour, more *intensive and aggressive* parking management strategies are called for. The purpose is to provide a specific benchmark of system performance that triggers discussion of on-going strategy implementation.

Update: Upon Adoption of the Parking Study Council adopted the 85% rule which is used as a benchmark for City staff in analyzing, implementing, and evaluating subsequent strategies

STRATEGY 3 **completed**

Revise current parking code requirements for new commercial and residential development in the downtown to be reflective of local demand and supportive of new growth and supportive of a new fee-in-lieu policy/code.

Update: City Council modified its fee in-lieu policy via [Resolution 2020-18](#), reducing the fee to \$3,000. [Ordinance 2056](#) refined central business district parking requirements, exempting parking requirements for upper story residential conversions of historic buildings. This incremental implementation is a placeholder to be reevaluated upon when Council or the Urban Renewal Agency Board begins evaluation of adding parking supply.

STRATEGY 4 **Waiting**

Develop a reasonable schedule of data collection to assess performance.

A foundational element of this parking management plan is the facilitation of decision making with accurate data. As such, a system for routine data collection should be established. The system does not need to be elaborate, but it should be consistent and structured to answer relevant questions about occupancy, seasonality, turnover, duration of stay, patterns of use, and enforcement. Parking information can be collected in samples, and other measures of success can be gathered through third-party data collection and/or volunteer processes. Data can be used by the City and stakeholders to inform decisions, track use, and measure success.

Update: COVID-19 created atypical parking conditions through 2020. City staff intend to prioritize regular parking data collection as needed going forward.

B. Improve On-street Parking

STRATEGY 5 (partially completed)

Replace all coin operated meters with pay stations.

Currently there are 448 on-street parking in the downtown that require payment for up to 3 hours of parking. This supply is a mix of parking pay stations (covering 126 stalls) and single head coin operated meters (322 stalls). Pay stations accept both coins and credit cards, single head meters take only coins. The rate for parking is \$1.00 per hour.

By beginning a program to transition coin meters to pay stations the City will markedly improve the customer experience in the downtown and, likely, increase revenue generation as those currently using coins will select higher time stays with the use of a credit card. Also, the pedestrian amenity area on the sidewalk will improve with the removal of the meter poles.

Update: Urban Renewal Agency authorized purchase of fourteen (14) additional pay stations, completing replacement of all coin-only meters on east-west downtown streets. Upgrades to the user interface for legacy pay stations is planned for Spring 2022.

STRATEGY 6 (Waiting)

Clarify “rules of use” for 10 and 30-Minute parking stalls.

Currently there are fourteen 10-Minute and five 30-Minute stalls in the downtown. The City should repost these signs with added language noting that the time limits are only in place between 8AM and 5PM Monday through Saturday. This will communicate to customers that these stalls would be available for longer term parking during any of the non-posted hours (i.e., evenings, Sundays). The overall capacity of the on-street system would improve with this clarification.

Update: Strategy 5 is pending implementation

STRATEGY 7 (in progress, COVID for curbside pickup)

Evaluate existing loading zone stalls to convert (as appropriate) to “combination” stalls.

Some loading zone stalls are signed “all days, all hours.” These types of loading zones are very inefficient if they are signed in this manner and, then, sit unused on evenings and weekends. The City should work with delivery companies and street-level businesses to strategically evaluate if hours can be shortened to allow use of underutilized loading zones for customer uses (e.g., “Loading Zone, 8AM – 5PM, M-F” or “Loading Zone, 6AM – 10 AM, all days.” This maximizes curb space for customers while maintaining access for business loading and unloading.

Update: COVID-19 required quick policy implementation of ad-hoc loading zones throughout the downtown. Staff will refocus on permanent conversions going forward.

STRATEGY 8 (In progress)

Better integrate on- and off-street parking. Consider incorporation of new brand/logo into on-street signage. See Signage/Logo Strategy 17.

A new brand/logo can be incorporated into the on-street system as a means of integrating the on- and off-street systems. This would require coordinating changes in the on-street system to the branding listed under Signage/Logo Strategy. Example city is Springfield, Oregon (at right).

Update: Faded parking signage replaced in the summer of 2021. The City has a quote from Rick Williams consulting to perform the branding and wayfinding component of this Strategy. The City intends to assign this project to Community Engagement Coordinator, starting November 1st.

STRATEGY 9 (Waiting)

All on-street parking stalls on *commercial streets* should be clearly striped. This will create better order and convenience for users.

Among the notable challenges observed by the consultant team in numerous cities is on-street striping that is inconsistent, out of date, and at times confusing. Industry best practices indicates that that lack of clear striping and signage leads to a high rate of illegal parking. Effective striping will communicate “you can park here,” reduce incidents of damage to vehicles, and encourage compliance. Although most streets where parking is allowed in Hood River have striping, some don’t, and the condition of markings in some areas could be updated.

STRATEGY 10 (completed)

Allow a controlled number of employees to park within the on-street system in areas with lower occupancies. Price on-street permits at a premium compared to off-street lots.

Data from the 2018 data collection study shows parking is available on streets outside the high turnover core zone. Allowing some employees to park within these underutilized 3-hour stalls would allow the City to take better advantage of an existing parking resource. The number of employees authorized to park in these areas should be controlled to ensure that the overall occupancy rate does not exceed 85% and does not adversely impact parking options for downtown customers.

Update: City offers off-season on-street parking permits, limited to areas of the downtown with lower occupancies. On street parking areas were revaluated and shifted to streets that experienced lower utilization rates to reduce parking rates in high demand parking spaces prioritized for visitor and customer parking. This allowed for on street usage in lower demand areas of downtown and improved access in higher demand locations.

STRATEGY 11 (Completed)

Deploy pay-by-app technology that allows customers to pay for parking through a mobile application using their license plate and a credit card.

Pay-by-app was identified as a high priority improvement through the public outreach process. By downloading an app and entering license plate information and a credit card, many residents and frequent customers to downtown will have a much more efficient method of paying for parking in Downtown. Currently, this technology is best suited for use in systems that also have pay stations available for infrequent users who do not have the ability or desire to download an application for very limited use (such as tourists or others without access to a smartphone). This action should follow deployment of handheld LPR enforcement to ensure enforcement officers have a tool to enforce a license plate-based payment system.

Update: City switched to pay-by-plate metering and use of handheld LPRs in Spring of 2021. City is studying implications of changing downtown permits to being plate based. A major challenge is the large number of downtown employers who swap parking permits between multiple employees or customers. To avoid a major disruption to this practice, legacy pass holders have been allowed to maintain their parking privileges while staff designs a program to phased out physical passes over time.

C. Improve Off-Street Parking

STRATEGY 12 (Pending)

Rename all publicly owned/controlled lots by address.

As with branding, the name of parking facilities is extremely important in messaging. Names like State Lot or Front Lot do not communicate useful information to users, particularly those who are less than familiar with the downtown.

Industry best practices for naming off-street parking facilities suggest using an address or intersection associated with the main auto ingress point to a facility. Portland, Oregon and Boulder, Colorado do a good job of branding and identifying facilities by location— names like 10th & Walnut or 4th & Yamhill (see photo at right). These easily and intuitively communicate not just a location, but, coupled with the system logo, a brand that can be integrated into web communications, apps, wayfinding, and other materials.

Hood River’s current facility naming/identification format is not customer friendly or informative. The City should consider renaming its facilities as part of a broader effort to make the parking system more intuitive and easier to use. As shared use facilities are developed and integrated into the City system, they can be added to the naming system.

Update: The City has a quote from Rick Williams consulting to perform this work. The City intends to assign this project to Community Engagement Coordinator, starting November 1st.

STRATEGY 13 (Waiting)

Routinely calibrate current pricing of off-street parking, hourly and monthly (for employees), based on demand (e.g., 85% Rule) – “variable rate pricing.”

Variable-rate pricing uses rates to influence behavior. Facilities with low demand or in less convenient locations are priced lower than those with high demand or near high traffic destinations. Effective use of variable-rate pricing results in better distribution of users across facilities, particularly those that are underused. This is a method to strategically manage the off-street facilities for employees.

Update: Strategy 13 is pending implementation

STRATEGY 14 (Waiting)

Confirm that all City-owned off-street facilities comply with ADA parking requirements.

All City-owned off-street facilities should be compliant with ADA parking requirements. This may require additional designated ADA stalls, depending on the facility’s size, slope, access route planning, signage, and number of stalls.

Update: Strategy 13 is pending implementation

STRATEGY 15 (Waiting)

Bring all City-owned parking lots up to a uniform standard.

Given the proximity of the four City-owned parking lots to the downtown core, it is recommended that all lots maintain the same high standards for paving, striping, lighting, signage, and overall appearance. Consistency among the lots will support a positive and convenient user experience and reinforce the logo and branding approach recommended in Strategy 17 below.

Update: Strategy 15 is pending implementation

STRATEGY 16 (In progress)

Identify off-street shared use opportunities based on data from the 2018 parking study. Establish goals for transitioning employees (e.g., 50 employees), begin outreach to opportunity sites, negotiate agreements, and assign employees to facilities.

The majority of parking in the downtown is off-street in privately-owned assets. Of the 780 stalls on 35 lots in the study area, just 238 are open to the public. In other words, 70% of the off-street supply is private. Per the 2018 downtown parking study, there are significant surpluses in the off-street supply, even at peak times. The number of empty parking stalls in existing private off-street facilities during the peak hour ranges from 344 (weekday) to 418 (weekend). This presents an opportunity for Hood River as this unused supply is a resource that could be captured to manage and support future parking demand growth.³

Update: The City has approached a number of its larger off-street parking owners and has drafted a shared use agreement that can be used to memorialize shared parking agreements with owners that would like to take advantage of the program.

STRATEGY 17 (In progress)

Create a critical-path timeline to improve the current parking signage system and logo. Incorporate logo into on-street meter signage, at all City-owned lots and shared supplies, and in marketing and communications.

Guiding Principle C.1. encourages the City to “Create a wayfinding system for the downtown that links parking assets and provides directional guidance, preferably under a common brand or logo.” It is recommended that a simple stylized “P” (using the City’s colors) be created and extended throughout the public parking system as the parking brand. Examples using a stylized “P” are provided below.

This brand can then be used at parking sites and, ideally, as part of a wayfinding system throughout the downtown. It can also be incorporated into on-street meter/pay station signage, as well as downtown marketing and communications such as maps, websites, etc.

Update: The City has a quote from Rick Williams consulting to perform this work. The City intends to assign this project to Community Engagement Coordinator, starting November 1st.

STRATEGY 18 (In progress)

Design, create, and upgrade existing parking website with information for customers and employees.

Communication with the public, including locals, visitors, and employees, will be critical to the success of management strategies. Parking locations, rates, hours of operation, connections to transportation options, etc. should be marketed and communicated via a continually updated City website. The more information

people have when it comes to parking, the better. Piggybacking on **Strategy 17**, the City's parking logo and brand should be incorporated on the website.

Update: The City intends to assign this project to Community Engagement Coordinator, starting November 1st.

STRATEGY 19 (In progress)

Solicit firms to establish wayfinding and/or dynamic signage systems in the public right of way, integrated with the off-street system using City parking brand developed in Strategy 17.

Many cities brand their public parking facilities and use dynamic signage in the public right-of-way. Whereas Strategy 17 develops a logo/brand that would be applied to on-street meter signage and off-street lots, wayfinding and dynamic signage systems are located in the public right-of-way and at key access portals into the downtown to inform customers and direct them to available parking.

Dynamic signage can be linked to occupancy information collected at individual or multiple parking sites, usually through loop detector/parking counter systems. This information is displayed at building entry plazas and/or at major roadway entry portals. The signs provide an address or facility name and real-time stall availability. Portland, OR, and San Jose, CA are good examples (see photo at right). Dynamic signage can also complement parking apps and can be linked in real time to smartphones and/or websites.

Update: The City has a quote from Rick Williams consulting to perform this work. The City intends to assign this project to Community Engagement Coordinator, starting November 1st.

STRATEGY 20 (In progress)

Transition to online permitting, with all permits linked to a single license plate.

Online permitting eliminates the need to mail/distribute physical permits and allows users to manage their vehicle and renew permits through an online system. Permitting by license plate requires an enforcement system capable of checking permit status in real-time. Online permitting can be expanded from employee permits to residential permits if such an option were established in the future.

Update: City is studying implications of changing downtown permits to being plate based. A major challenge is the large number of downtown employers who swap parking permits between multiple employees or customers.

D. Improve Access and Integration with Other Modes

STRATEGY 21 (Waiting)

Expand bike parking network to create connections between parking and the downtown to encourage employee bike trips and draw customers to downtown businesses. Consider strategically locating bike corrals at intersections where better pedestrian visibility is needed.

When we talk about parking management, we're not just talking about cars. Communities throughout Oregon support bicycling as a key sustainable transportation strategy. Hood River can become a city that encourages a "park once" philosophy, where people park their vehicles and then bike or walk to shop, dine, and recreate in the downtown. Providing adequate bicycle parking can also expand the capacity of the overall parking supply. Bike racks are a visible indicator of a bike-friendly community.

Update: Strategy 21 is pending implementation

STRATEGY 22 (Waiting)

Consider initiating a pilot program to test feasibility/viability of an e-bikeshare or e-scooter program in the downtown.

The City should take the lead to partner with a new technology vendor to evaluate market readiness of a lower cost mobility option for the downtown. Current data suggests such technologies are not yet market viable in Hood River due to its size and densities. A pilot allows the City to test specific user and viability assumptions through a partnership between the City and a vendor. Such a program would require some level of public subsidy.

Update: Strategy 22 is pending implementation

STRATEGY 23 (Partially Complete)

Collaborate with Columbia Area Transit (CAT) to estimate costs to improve transit and/or shuttle service to and from Downtown Hood River to achieve a 5% commute mode split. Coordinate with strategies under New Capacity.

Update: The City funded free CAT bus passes for all downtown employees and resumption of the downtown trolley as part of its FY2021-22 Adopted Budget.

STRATEGY 24 (In progress)

Eliminate parking within 20 feet of crosswalks where there is a need for improved pedestrian visibility.

Pedestrian safety was identified as a key community priority as part of the public outreach process, and strategically eliminating several parking stalls located adjacent to intersections with high pedestrian crossing volumes can improve the safety and comfort of pedestrians. Improved signalization improvements, “pedestrian scrambles”⁸ and other controls can be evaluated as well.

E. Residential Parking**STRATEGY 25 (Waiting)**

Conduct outreach and information efforts in neighborhoods to explain the parking management plan and how the City intends to preserve residential parking in neighborhoods affected by any type of commercial parking spill over.

Changes to parking management in the commercial zone of the downtown could cause issues related to more employees seeking parking in residential areas. In anticipation of this, the City should begin an outreach and education process to residents and businesses in adjacent neighborhoods. The City already has provisions for the formation of neighborhood permit districts (see 10.42.020 of the City Code).

Update: Strategy 25 is pending implementation

STRATEGY 26 (Waiting)

Expand future parking data collection to ensure that Chapter 10.42 of the City code (related to residential parking district) is supported with information on the impacts of possible commercial district spillover into residential districts adjacent to downtown.

10.42.020 of the code notes that a residential parking district may be formed when the number of vehicles of non-residents parked legally or illegally on a street in the district is equal to thirty percent (30%) or more of the legal on-street parking capacity of the street. To date, the City has not conducted evaluations to determine whether high numbers of downtown users are parking in residential areas and whether such behavior is adverse to residents.

Update: Strategy 26 is pending implementation

F. New Capacity

STRATEGY 27 [Complete]

Reconfigure the current fee-in-lieu program to better reflect and clarify the City's intent and purpose for the program and set expectations for use of such funds. Additional fund resources should be explored concurrent with this update to provide a full funding package for future parking development. This could include (but not be limited to) Urban Renewal, Local Improvement District (LID), and fees for use.

Update: The interim fee in lieu program has been implemented pending additional study related to expanding parking supply. Upon further investigation of capital resources needed to expand its parking supply, the fee in lieu program shall be reevaluated to align with a greater finance methodology and supply program.

STRATEGY 28 [Complete]

Begin to identify off-street parking locations outside the downtown that could provide for employee use. This might include commercial areas directly adjacent to the downtown or areas more remote to downtown, linked by transit or shuttles.

This strategy would identify and eventually procure (through lease or purchase) off-street parking outside the downtown that would provide employee parking linked by shuttle or transit. This would serve to mitigate current peak parking constraints

Update: Columbia Area Transit operates a park-and-ride on Wasco loop regularly served by fixed route transit.

STRATEGY 29 [In progress]

Finalize cost forecasts for preferred parking supply (remote systems and new garage) and transit/shuttle system options.

As evidenced by the 2018 study, Hood River's on-street parking supply in the downtown core is constrained. Though a number of the recommended strategies will likely mitigate this and provide a framework for better active management, the City may wish to explore expanding access capacity with new parking supply and/or transit. Though costly, a parking garage and transit development are two ways to create new capacity. For either of these measures, active participation and planning is necessary to determine appropriate funding tools, management, marketing, etc.

Update: Urban Renewal Agency budgeted \$3,000,000 for FY2021-22 for preliminary design and business plan for structured parking on the Columbia Lot.

STRATEGY 30 [Ongoing]

**Explore and develop funding options for maintaining the existing parking supply and funding future growth.
(in progress)**

A wide range of funding sources and revenue streams could be used to implement an enhanced parking management plan and develop new parking or transit capacity in Hood River. Given the costs of new infrastructure, considering new funding mechanisms is prudent.

Update: The City is always evaluating new sources of revenue to allocate costs equitably among individual users of public resources.

STRATEGY 31 (In progress)

Expand capacity as necessary and feasible.

Successful completion of previous tasks related to site identifications (for remote and new parking supply), partnership and costing with CAT to understand route, frequency, coverage and link implications, and funding sources will inform this strategy and support its ability to strategically respond to new capacity demand.

Update: Urban Renewal Agency budgeted \$3,000,000 for FY2021-22 for preliminary design and business plan for structured parking on the Columbia Lot.