

# Parking

The topic of parking was something that polarized opinions in the Visioning work and Juneau is not alone in the angst that results from community discussions regarding parking. As long as private motor cars are the dominant method of travel, parking will remain an issue for any community. Over the years there have been many studies related to parking in the downtown area, although these have mostly been limited to the Downtown District and the Aak'w Kwaan Village district. As areas of the wider downtown are redeveloped, the lots that provide parking will need to be shuffled around hoping to someday achieve the perfect parking status quo.

The downtown one-way system has implications for parking. Most Juneauites will have been drawn into the downtown parking game where, what is hoped will be only a two minute search for the ideal parking space immediately adjacent to the store, restaurant, office etc. that they are visiting, becomes a 10 minute drive around in loops of ever increasing size before settling for a space that is a 3-5 minute walk from their destination. Going directly to a parking garage would have been a quicker solution except uncertainty that there will be a short-term space or they you have the correct (or any) cash.

It is known that on-street parking in residential areas is subject to all day parking 'spill-over' from adjacent commercial uses. For example from Fifth Street to Chicken Ridge and Gastineau Avenue with workers from the downtown core, or the Casey Shattuck area from Federal Building workers. Residential Parking Zones have been recommended in the past to ensure residents have spaces and management policies that require parking payment and enforcement in the downtown core do not drive vehicles to unpaid parking spaces on just outside the management zone. Parking management has a cost which may not always be completely covered by fees.

Past CBJ studies and plans have noted that it is difficult to understand if there is a parking shortage until the use of short-term on-street spaces is limited to downtown business patrons rather than long-term parkers shuffling around short-term spaces every 2 hours.

Occupancy data from the Marine Parking Garage structure, the Downtown Transit Center structure suggests that even though more parking passes are sold than there are spaces there are currently available spaces between the two structures for the current demand.

The 2010 Downtown Parking Management Plan provides a good summary of the history of parking management in the Downtown area.

- Since the 60s at least one parking related study or report has been produced.
- In the past, there was a period where there was no parking requirement for new buildings in downtown Juneau
- Public parking has been significantly increased
- Parking meters have come and gone

- Perception that parking is hard to find still exists
- Parking studies over the years identify ‘a misuse of existing spaces, and not a shortage of parking overall’.

It should be recognized that surface parking is probably the cheapest to develop but as a land use it offers limited tax revenue to the CBJ. A cost of structured parking of \$50,000 per space is often used as a fair estimate based on the cost of the Downtown Transit Center and other engineering studies.

**Land Use Code parking requirements** – The CBJ Land Use Code provides minimum parking requirements with the number of spaces categorized by the use that will occur and then determining the size of the development (e.g. by square footage dedicated to a use, number of seats, number of dwelling units and bedrooms in those dwelling units). Some reductions are provided to residential parking requirements in the Juneau Geographical area which includes much of the Blueprint study area. In addition there various exceptions and overlay districts (PD1, PD2, and Fee-in-lieu) in the Downtown Core and Aak’w Kwaan Village district that provide relief from the parking requirements that apply elsewhere in the Borough. The Parking Districts serve two purposes:

- Recognize that a number of factors in downtown that should in theory contribute to reduced parking demand. These factors include the provision of transit from the Borough concentrating on the downtown area; higher residential densities combined with higher density of businesses/shopping/dining etc. resulting in a higher proportion of residents being within walking or cycling distance; the walkable nature of the downtown area.
- Provide a historic preservation incentive in the PD1 area; unless a building footprint is expanded then regardless of changes in use

There are three overlay districts that affect the amount of parking supplied off-street on private properties within the downtown area. The Downtown Parking District Map shows the existing Fee In Lieu of Parking District5 and the PD-1 and PD-2 Parking Districts. GRAPHIC TO BE ADDED

**PD-1 and PD-2 Parking Districts** - were adopted when zoning regulations were changed to apply parking requirements to the downtown area; previously, the downtown area was within a zoning district that had no off-street parking requirements. The PD-1 and PD-2 overlay zones were adopted to reduce the impact of this change on downtown properties. Within the PD-2 district, standard parking requirements are reduced by 30%. Within the PD-1 district, there is no parking requirement for any change of use of an existing structure, and the parking requirement for new construction is reduced by 60% from the normal requirement.

**Fee In Lieu of Parking** - property owners or developers may pay a one time fee to the CBJ in lieu of providing required off-street parking for a development or use. This program was developed in order to facilitate development and redevelopment of small, underutilized parcels in the downtown area that would not otherwise be able to meet their off-street parking requirements if developed. Fees collected under this program are intended to be spent on projects that either increase parking supply within the Fee In Lieu of Parking District or that reduces parking demand within the district.

**Parking Waiver** - Outside of those overlay district areas a further option of a parking waiver is provided with general criteria on the circumstances under which a waiver may be applied.

of the building, even if it would normally require additional parking, no additional parking is required. This means that reuse of historic buildings does not have the burden of providing the parking that a new building would.

There are also standards for the design of parking lots in the Land Use Code but these standards are relatively subjective especially in terms of aesthetics and rules on how they are to be situated relative to the buildings (e.g. 'parking lots should be attractively landscaped') and makes reference to Design Review Regulations that no longer exist. Both the Willoughby Plan and the Historic District Guidelines state how parking lots should not be located at the front of building but this is not a formalized requirement in the Land Use code and so is difficult to ensure during review of the site design in the permitting phase of a project. In the past, when there was a Design Review District, a Design Review Board would assess site design including parking lots for compatibility with design regulations including specified landscaping standards. With removal of these regulations there are no objective standards for parking lot design to be reviewed against – the cheapest option of simple paving parking areas is often the most tempting for a developer but it does little to raise streetscape aesthetics for the community.

**1999 Juneau Parking Study** - A 1999 study of parking in Downtown Juneau (Juneau Parking Study) attempted to estimate the surplus or shortage of public or private parking spaces in Downtown Juneau. This was based on generating a peak level of parking demand based on known land uses. The results suggested a shortage in the order of 2,000 to 4,000 parking spaces (these numbers are questioned in the 2010 Downtown Juneau Parking Plan). This is a huge number of spaces considering the size of downtown Juneau. The recommendations from the study can be summarized as:

- Additional parking lot to be provided with construction of centralized parking structures
- Surface lots should be used as temporary solutions or possible locations for future structures.
- Aggressive demand management
- More flexibility in how existing supply was shared
- Centralize management of Downtown parking
- Continuous monitoring of parking demand to determine success
- CBJ should work with State on shared development of solutions noting the high parking demand delivered by State operations.

**2010 Juneau Downtown Juneau Parking Management Plan** – The Parking Management Plan focused on addressing the management of the limited parking spaces available. It coincided with the construction of the Downtown Transit Center parking structure (DTC). The plan identified four parking management areas in the Blueprint Downtown study area and intended to address each area in progressing phases. The plan focuses on

Phase 1 which covers the Downtown Core and the Star Hill/Chicken Ridge residential neighborhoods. Phase 2 was to focus on the Aak'w Kwaan Village District; Phase 3, the Casey-Shattuck area; and Phase 4, the Highlands/JDHS. Overspill parking from the Federal Building was noted as an issue in the Casey-Shattuck area. ADD GRAPHIC OF MAP FROM PLAN

For the Phase 1 area three goals were identified:

- 1. Reduce the number of vehicles that are parked all day (long-term) in hourly (short-term) spaces.*
- 2. Ensure that both the Marine Park Parking Garage and the Downtown Transportation Center Parking Garage (under construction) are utilized at or near capacity year-round.*
- 3. Ensure that on-street parking spaces are available near all destinations at all times of the day for use by visitors who only need short-term parking.*

And three accompanying policies to help guide how the goals should be achieved:

- I. Manage on- and off-street parking resources so as to ensure that both long- and short-term parkers can find parking suitable to their needs at all times.*
- II. Manage parking as a component of a multi-modal transportation system, recognizing that adequate parking cannot be supplied at any destination in the downtown area for peak demand, and that walking, bicycling, use of shuttles/buses, carpooling, and other transportation tools are part of the solution to any parking problem.*
- III. Parking management must be simple enough that parkers can easily know how long they may park in any given space, and what the fee for parking in that space (if any) is.*

The background discussion on management options and considerations is broad with topics such as Travel Demand Management, Residential Parking Zones, preferential parking options for carpools and vans, and electric vehicle parking all discussed.

After presenting four potential management and payment scenarios, a scenario that provides 2 hours free parking at all public parking locations was recommended. There would be a single, 2 hour maximum stay in a 24hr period for on-street users and anything more than 2 hours incurring a cost for off-street locations. The recommendation relied upon the use of multi-space parking meters (i.e. one meter could be used to take payment for multiple spaces). Education was also identified as a key component using both printed materials, a website, a hotline and guides to help confused users. Real-time information on parking structure occupancy was also recommended with the data being provided to users as they entered the downtown.

Many aspects of the plan's recommendations were implemented with multi-space meters rolled out in the downtown area. The relevant parking sections in the CBJ Parking code (CBJ 72.14) were amended to devolve management responsibilities to the City Manager giving them power to:

- Establish parking payment areas in line with an adopted parking plan.
- Install parking payment equipment
- Amend rates to ensure that all spaces are 80-90% occupied during peak hours
- Establish a Parking Management Advisory Committee

Additionally, the code amendment identified how money from parking payment should be divided:

*(a) 50 percent shall be deposited in a designated parking revenue fund, the intent of which is to fund the operations, maintenance, enforcement, and expansion of public parking facilities; and*

*(b) 50 percent shall be deposited in a designated neighborhood improvement fund, the intent of which is to fund improvements, maintenance, security, and beautification of the neighborhood in which the funds are collected.*

Ultimately, the technology for payment and enforcement system behind the payment system failed. The 'temporary' solution since 2013 is to require cash payment into coin boxes for a limited number of short-term spaces, provide 2 hour free parking in on-street spaces in the downtown core (albeit difficult to enforce), and much of the MPG and DTC parking structures being dedicated to permit holders who can apply for a weekly, monthly or yearly permit (although there is no guarantee that a space will be available to them).

In 2015 CBJ hired a consultant to recommend a replacement system design that would serve the downtown core. That study provided a number of management recommendations and ultimately noted that the 2010 concept and management approach was sound.

**2013 Comprehensive Plan** – The Comprehensive Plan also makes some specific recommendations on parking in the downtown (Sub-area 6) as potential components of a Downtown Juneau Transportation Management Program:

*Guideline 13A. Establish a covered walkway network throughout downtown [presumably to provide shelter when walking from more distant parking locations].*

*Guideline 13B. Establish a parking policy that will guide planners in determining the amount of parking that should be provided for specific uses downtown. The CBJ government should re-examine the parking requirement for*

*development of residential units and for tourist-oriented uses in downtown. In addition to the Fee-In-Lieu-of-Parking program, the CBJ government should provide alternatives, such as participation in a coordinated Downtown Transportation Management Program, for downtown developers whose proposals do not meet on-site parking requirements. Provisions should be added to accommodate use of parking structures, shuttles, and other means to meet the parking need. However, ensure that these programs do not induce property owners to demolish historic structures to make way for higher intensity uses or taller structures.*

*Guideline 13C. Modifications in the current management of the existing parking supply, such as shared daytime and nighttime and week-day and week-end parking, should be made to make parking more accessible to patrons of area cultural arts or commercial businesses and for area residents.*

*Guideline 13D. Development of additional parking supply: construction of centralized parking structures should be phased in and reevaluated on a case-by-case basis. Surface lots can be established on a temporary basis to act as place-holders for potential future structures and provide additional parking while a centralized structure is being developed and the initial use of the structure evaluated.*

*Guideline 13E. Management of downtown parking should be centralized, though still coordinated with other CBJ departments, for all aspects of the parking program. The parking program should be continually-monitored to determine how programs are working. The management of the downtown parking program is an on-going process that needs continuous review and revision. The CBJ government needs to involve the state and federal governments in shared development of solutions, since parking demand created by state and federal offices are a major factor in downtown parking shortfalls.*

*Guideline 13F. The CBJ should continue its efforts to develop a convenient transportation terminal near downtown. The terminal should provide a transfer station for mass and rapid public transit where commuter busses, and possibly a light rail system would connect to shuttle busses for localized distribution. Commuters may park their automobiles at the terminal, and catch a shuttle to the downtown core.*

*13G. Other methods suggested to ease the parking problem downtown include construction of a light rail or similar system between the valley and town, supplemented with fast, efficient, localized shuttles; and development of high-density mixed use, but predominantly residential, areas that would provide the opportunity for people to live near their work, shopping and recreation needs, thereby significantly reducing or eliminating the need for a private vehicle altogether.*

*13H. Another suggestion related to parking is to eliminate the parking requirement for certain affordable high-density dwelling units in the downtown core area, such as the small, Single Room Occupancy (SRO) units, other student housing, senior housing and/or seasonal worker housing whose occupants are likely not to own vehicles. This would facilitate the development of affordable housing downtown that, in turn, would create a more dynamic, 24-hour downtown and would free up rental housing elsewhere in the borough. This concept may not work for all types of dwelling units developed in downtown, such as loft housing, family-size housing or artist housing whose occupants are more likely to own vehicles; those developments may participate in the downtown Fee-in-Lieu of Parking program established in 2006.*

*Guideline 16. Consider mechanisms to encourage and allow residential development on Gastineau Avenue by eliminating the parking requirement for uses whose occupants or visitors would travel by walking, bicycling or by public transit."*

The Comprehensive Plan, as part of Demand Management Options in a Downtown Transportation Management Program, also identifies the crucial role consistent enforcement plays in parking management. If enforcement is not constant, it leads parkers to 'risk' that they may get lucky with not receiving a citation.

**2015 Juneau Economic Development Plan** – As part of the goal for downtown revitalization, the Economic Development Plan recommends that a new downtown parking management system be established with parking data continuing to be collected.

**2012 Willoughby Plan** – Key to the successful implementation of the Willoughby Plan is the relocation and consolidation of the surface parking in the area. It is noted that surface parking is the predominant land-use in the area. The design principles in the adopted chapter of the plan recommends that future parking is behind or under buildings, on-street, and in parking garages. This would then free up the space for provision of new streets/pedestrian areas, and mixed use buildings, and allows for buildings to be located directly on the street front more like street in the downtown core.

The plan notes that parking in the area will need to be sequenced to achieve the ultimate vision with temporary parking lots being utilized as new parking structures are constructed. Three locations for new structures are identified:

- Part of new mixed use building on Corner of Whittier and Willoughby (Current location of DEC Building)

- New North State Office Building parking on Willoughby Avenue (adjacent to Fireweed Place)
- New structure on Federal Building parking lot

The plan determined that the proposed redevelopment in the area would require a 15% increase in parking spaces in the area. The Plan also notes that the Aak'w Kwaan Village District should be subject to the PD-1 parking requirements (60% reduction) because:

- *Existing parking is not fully utilized now except during events (like Centennial Hall conventions and Celebration);*
- *Some buildings are already functioning with reduced parking below PD-2 (30% reduction) and sometimes below PD-1 (60%)*
- *For off hour events there is ample parking available in the district through shared use;*
- *The 2000 U.S. census shows that from 45 to 60% of residents in downtown walk to work and are less reliant on cars;;*
- *The proximity of this area to public transit;*
- *The fact that services and goods are close by within walking distance; and*
- *The intent is to emphasize parking demand management and transit oriented development in the Willoughby District.*

**2015 Willoughby District Parking Master Plan Initial Evaluation of Options** – The State had noted that parking availability in the Aak'w Kwaan Village District was limited for their needs. While no firm recommendations resulted from the study it did not that parking in the Aak'w Kwaan Village District was also impacted by spill over from Downtown parking. A survey of downtown parkers was undertaken to gain insights into where they parked, and to understand barriers to Travel Demand Management approaches that would reduce single occupancy commuting. The study also reviewed a number of potential locations for an additional parking structure.

The survey results suggest that a majority of commuters would not alter their single occupancy vehicle use but there was also a significant minority who would switch to van pools, car pools or transit if incentives were available. As identified in the 2010 Downtown Juneau Parking Management Plan, even a small switch in commuter single occupancy vehicles (SOVs) to high occupancy vehicles (i.e. car pooling) could deliver useful reductions on parking demand. For example if the observed 82% of vehicles operating as SOVs were reduced by 7% to 75% SOVs, demand for space would be reduced by 102 vehicles. The gains do not have to be huge to achieve noticeable demand reduction. The survey summary was as follows:

- *Most workers regularly commute in single-occupancy vehicles.*
- *Most passenger-car commuters park near their place of employment in spaces provided or subsidized by their employer.*
- *More than half of the commuters would walk to work if they lived closer, but most will not walk when faced with existing geographic commuting distances.*

- *Over 1/3 of commuters say they would cycle to work if they lived closer, while more than ¼ say that they would never cycle.*
- *Most commuters would carpool to work if they were offered incentives or it were more convenient, while just under half say they would never carpool.*
- *Many commuters would vanpool to work if they were offered incentives, but more than half say they would never vanpool.*
- *Many commuters would commute by bus if bus service were more convenient, but about 1/3 say they would never commute by bus.*

Seven potential sites for an additional parking structure were also identified though not all directly in the Aak’w Kwaan village district. The consultants undertook a multi-factor assessment that suggested that new structures at the Federal Building surface parking lot, then the SOB North Garage, followed by the vertical expansion of the DTC parking structure would be the best options. No further work on developing an additional parking structure has been done since.

**2009 Historic Design Guidelines** – As part of overall design guidelines for the Downtown Historic District the guidelines for surface parking lots and for multi-story structures. Similar to the guidelines in the Willoughby Plan, recommendations are for parking lots not to front directly onto streets and instead place them to the rear of new buildings. This promotes a consistent street ‘wall’ matching how the rest of the Downtown Historic District is currently constructed but also promotes the enclosed compact streetscape with all the associated benefits presented in the Willoughby Plan (e.g. eyes directly on the street, traffic calming effect of a more compact feel, etc).

The Historic Guidelines also provide recommendations on the need for the facades of parking structures to be sympathetic with the surrounding buildings neighborhood and to have street level uses (e.g. commercial spaces) around the exterior.

**Waterfront Plan** – The Waterfront Plan addresses notable additional parking at a number of places:

- Recognizes a new State Museum will provide additional spaces – the museum has ~100 parking spaces most of which are underground and available to the public. These could be an opportunity for shared parking for events at Centennial Hall or the JACC.
- Additional parking on street as part of sub-port redevelopment. Parking along Whittier Street in the sub-port area would provide a useful pedestrian buffer as part of streetscape design.

- A new two level parking structure in the area adjacent to the bridge where there is currently a privately owned surface parking lot for the State workers that occupy two the buildings there (bordered by W. 9<sup>th</sup> Street/W. 8<sup>th</sup> Street, and Overstreet Park). This is identified as a partnership between CBJ /State, and private land owners. While not mentioned in the plan, this could serve as a parking and ride location linked to Downtown using a transit circulator as highlighted in the Visioning report.

Other small scale parking addition are also noted that would associated with new parks (e.g. Overstreet Park and the Little Rock Dump).

The plan also describes how commercial uses should be wrapped around the MPG parking structure.

**Public electric vehicle charging** – Juneau has a growing number of electric vehicles. Juneau is attractive for electric vehicles because there is less concern regarding range anxiety and local climate is optimum for long term battery life. Juneau has relatively cheap electricity by Alaskan standards and it is nearly always generated from carbon free sources local hydropower. This latter aspect means it is in line with the intent of the 2011 Climate Action and Implementation Plan.

The 2013 Comprehensive Plan has the following implementing action that would apply to public parking lots downtown although metering has not been pursued because the cost of processing a payment often outweighs the cost of the electricity. The number of vehicle chargers is not yet high enough to be a concern to AEL&P in terms of peak loading impacts (and the equity of restricting on use over another could be questioned).

*8.7 - IA4 Provide metered electric energy sources at public parking lots and garages to re-charge public and private electric automobiles, and provide preferential parking spaces for those vehicles. The metered electrical sources should have the functionality of being turned off automatically or manually by AEL&P and/or CBJ staff during periods of peak loading of the electrical system or emergency situations.*

The growth in EVs was aided by a grant awarded to the CBJ and Juneau Community Foundation to enable the installation of public charging infrastructure. Funds from that grant enabled the installation of 14 charge ports at 11 locations, with the initial objective to allow a battery-only EV to make a round trip from any starting point on Juneau’s limited road system. CBJ has hosted and maintained stations in both the MPG and DTC and CIP funding is available for additional charging stations. There are two Level II 240v chargers available in the MPG and one Fast DC charger located in the DTC. There is no additional fee for use of EV parking spots – just the standard parking fee that applies to all short-term spaces in the facility. DC fast charging stations have a different level of complexity for installation and cost that Level II chargers do not but can provide a full charge within 1-2 hours while a Level II charger would take 8-14 hours for a full charge (dependent on battery size).

The Visioning report contains recommendations from the consultants to increase availability of vehicle charging in downtown. There is some demand for additional charging stations in neighborhoods which are reliant on on-street parking. The Juneau Renewable Energy Strategy identifies electrification of the transportation system as one of four strategies to shift community energy use to renewable sources. CBJ has set further money aside as part of JRES funding to develop a formal EV Charging Infrastructure Plan – this would building the more piece meal components that the Juneau Commission on Sustainability and CBJ Staff has already undertaken with input from the Juneau Electric Vehicle Association. This should address and existing barriers to those without convenient access to vehicle charging.