

Draft Report
**DOWNTOWN PARKING
MANAGEMENT PLAN**

Executive Summary

Presented to:
City of Vallejo, California

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November 19, 2007



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INTRODUCTION

The primary purpose of this parking study was to determine short-term and long-term recommendations to improve parking in downtown Vallejo. The parking study initially evaluated existing conditions, determined primarily through reviews of background materials (including previous parking studies), cursory parking occupancy surveys, and stakeholder input meetings. The examination of existing conditions provided the baseline data from which future development, with its impact on parking supply and demand, could be evaluated. Finally, parking alternatives were considered to address future needs, as well as improve the utilization and efficiency of existing parking resources. Future parking alternatives included potential parking supply changes, as well as general parking management strategies.

The study area for this study was roughly bounded by Capitol Street to the north, Curtola Parkway to the south, Sutter Street to the east and Mare Island Way to the west. Some areas outside of these streets were also included.

ASSESSMENT OF CURRENT PARKING CONDITIONS

The downtown study area has a total parking supply of 2,850 parking spaces. Of these, 1,850 parking spaces (65%) are in off-street parking areas and 1,000 spaces (35%) are located on-street. The on-street parking inventory includes both marked parking spaces and locations where on-street parking is possible but not currently marked.

Some parking areas could not be accurately inventoried, as they lacked parking stripes or existing stripes were not visible. In these situations, inventories were estimated based on the size of the parking area. Residential parking areas, including apartment complexes and private driveways were not counted in the parking inventory as they would not contribute to any shared parking opportunities.

Current Parking Demand

Based on other similar municipal parking occupancy studies conducted by **Carl Walker**, it was determined that the surveys would be conducted every two hours between 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. The occupancy survey was conducted on Wednesday, December 6, 2006. The completed survey provided a "snapshot" of parking occupancy, and did not attempt to determine the absolute peak parking period.

The overall peak period of parking occupancy occurred at 12:00 p.m. on the survey day. During this period, a total of 1,488 parking spaces were occupied. This level of



occupancy translates into 52.2% of the total parking supply. During the peak period of parking occupancy approximately 57.6% of the on-street parking supply and 49.3% of the off-street parking supply was occupied. While off-street and overall parking occupancies fell after 12:00 p.m., on-street parking occupancies increased after 12:00 p.m. in some areas.

Of the available off-street general public parking supplies located in the downtown study area, approximately 53.3% of the spaces were occupied during the overall peak period of parking. Of the total general public parking supply in the study area (1,568 spaces - both off-street and on-street), approximately 56.1% of the spaces (879 spaces) were occupied during the overall observed peak period of parking.

The level of parking occupancy observed during parking inventory and occupancy counts was consistent with previous parking studies conducted in the area. A parking study completed by Kimley-Horn in 2005 found a peak parking occupancy of 54% for on-street parking spaces (weekday – 12:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.) and 46% for off-street spaces (weekday – 12:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.) The overall peak parking occupancy noted in the 2005 study was approximately 50%, or 735 parked vehicles in 1,471 parking spaces. The study area in the Kimley- Horn study was smaller than the study area of this project, and the number of parking spaces included was limited to on-street spaces and city-owned spaces. For the same area, *Carl Walker* observed a peak parking occupancy of approximately 50% at 12:00 p.m.

Current Parking Adequacy

Based on the effective parking supply of the study area (approximately 90% of the total parking supply), there is currently a parking surplus of 1,003 spaces or approximately 40% of the effective supply. It is important to note however that while a significant parking surplus exists in all areas, a substantial portion of the parking is private and use is restricted. At the peak parking period, approximately 56% of the total public parking supply and 48% of the total private parking supply was utilized.

Downtown vacancy rates appeared significant in some areas during field counts, and therefore observed parking demand may be lower than the demand that would be calculated for the downtown land uses.

Public Input Workshop

In order to solicit input from the downtown community, the City of Vallejo organized a parking study workshop. The workshop was held on February 21, 2007, and included representatives from city staff, downtown business and property owners, developers, and other members of the general public.



At this workshop, background issues, parking inventory/occupancy counts, and basic parking management concepts were discussed. Also, the attending community was provided an opportunity to voice their concerns and provide potential solutions.

PROJECTION OF FUTURE PARKING CONDITIONS

To project future parking adequacy, the anticipated parking demands for each development project were estimated in a 2005 parking study completed by Kimley-Horn (EIR for the Downtown Vallejo Specific Plan). Based on the parking occupancy counts conducted by *Carl Walker* in December 2006, parking demand estimates calculated in the 2005 study were adjusted to better reflect existing conditions. The estimated parking demand was then compared to the available parking on each block and within the area each development is located (a one to two block radius around the development – assuming people could walk at least one or two blocks to the development).

Based on the review of currently anticipated development projects, future parking adequacy would be projected as follows:

Projected Future Parking Supply

Current Parking Supply:	2,850 spaces (overall)
Parking Lost to Development:	-526 spaces (501 are publicly owned spaces)
Parking Added during Development:	83 (estimated on-street additions – not including new parking for Marina Vista or Triad residential)
Projected Parking Supply after Development Projects:	2,407 spaces (overall – 2,166 space effective supply at 90%)

Projected Future Parking Demand

Current Adjusted Parking Demand:	1,562 spaces (overall)
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Anticipated New Parking Demand (at weekday peak):	231 spaces (Triad developments minus loss of restaurant in Lot E – not including residential and live/work space in Triad)
Estimated Need for Existing Vacant Space:	720 spaces (assuming 90% of ULI Shared Parking Model projection based on land uses)
Projected Parking Demand after Development Projects:	2,513 spaces (overall)
Projected Future Parking Adequacy:	347 space deficit (effective supply of 2,166 minus projected parking demand of 2,513)

As the vacant space estimation includes a substantial portion of anticipated new special event space, it is assumed that any adjustment for vacant space would provide shared parking for events.

Parking Supply/Demand Alternatives

To meet future parking demands, several parking supply alternatives are typically available to municipalities:

- The city could decide to improve the utilization of existing parking supplies.
- The city could create additional parking spaces in existing unimproved areas (either on-street or off-street) to provide additional parking.
- The city could require new downtown developments to provide sufficient parking.
- The city could work to reduce parking needs in the study area through the implementation of various transportation demand management and parking supply management strategies.
- The city could utilize a combination of alternatives.



Carl Walker recommends that the city utilize a combination of the available alternatives, as it provides a reasonable approach to dealing with future demands and should limit future parking expenses. Also, this approach will allow the city to show the community that all options were explored prior to expending any city funds for constructing parking facilities. This alternative would involve the city working with private parking lot owners to better utilize the existing parking surplus before adding additional parking supplies. Off-street parking facilities would be used for long-term parking (e.g., business owners, employees), and on-street parking would be used for visitor parking. If sufficient parking could not be secured using this approach, then the city would consider improving existing parking supplies and/or adding new supplies as appropriate. If new parking spaces were added, either through additional on-street spaces or parking structures, the city could look to developers to help defray a portion of the costs. Finally, the city would continue encouraging the use of alternative modes of transportation, as well as other parking demand management strategies, to reduce overall parking demands.

While it appears that there is a significant opportunity to improve the utilization of available parking supplies before adding any parking facilities, it is important to note that the city may not be able to improve the utilization of available private parking facilities. Also, the off-street public parking facilities will not be available at some point in the future as they are lost to development. Therefore, the city will most likely need to construct a public parking facility in the future if other alternatives are not available (e.g., incorporating public parking into other private developments). Based on the projected parking deficit of 347 spaces, it would appear that approximately 400 additional parking spaces could be needed in the future (assuming an effective supply factor of 90%). The city should assume that between 50% and 75% of future off-street parking be allocated to long-term and permit parking.

PARKING MANAGEMENT AND OPERATIONS STRATEGIES

The purpose of providing parking management strategies is to help improve downtown parking conditions, both currently and in the future. The parking management options included in the main report are recommended in order to provide guidance in developing the parking system, improve parking system management and efficiency, and meet future parking needs.

Parking System Guiding Principles

Having a well-crafted set of parking principles establishes the goals and objectives that will ultimately define the character of the downtown. Having established these principles, the community will know what is expected and, hopefully, will have had the opportunity to be involved in the definition of the downtown parking principles. Using



this approach as a first step to parking management can build recognition and increase respect and support for parking goals and management. **Carl Walker** strongly recommends that the City of Vallejo create and approve a set of guiding parking principles.

Parking System Organization and Management

Carl Walker strongly recommends that the City of Vallejo work to create a vertically integrated downtown parking system; whether it is a city department, a newly created parking authority, or some other entity. All downtown public parking assets should be incorporated into the parking system including off-street parking lots, on-street spaces, enforcement, and fine collection. All parking related revenues should flow toward the goals of the parking system, in concert with the designated parking guiding principles.

With respect to a preferred management organization, **Carl Walker** recommends that the city strongly consider the creation of a downtown parking authority (or at least an advisory parking commission). The Board of Directors is a critical element of this model and should be made up of 7 – 11 members including representation by the City of Vallejo (e.g., council members, city traffic department, community development) and other downtown town stakeholders (e.g., private parking lot owners, business owners, property owners, residents).

The implementation of pay parking, and the reallocation of parking enforcement revenues to the parking system, could conservatively generate approximately \$1.7 million per year. Assuming an average cost to operate the system of \$550 per space (not counting Lot J – 1,134 total publicly owned spaces), per year, system expenses could total \$624,000 or more per year. Therefore, approximately \$1.1 million could be available for parking construction needs. Other revenue streams would help ensure sufficient funds are available to fund future needs.

Parking System Operations

Once a management structure has been determined, operating strategies can be set. There are four primary methodologies for operating parking programs: self-operations, outsourced management contract, outsourced concession agreement, and a professional services model. After reviewing the available parking system operations options, **Carl Walker** would recommend that the city strongly consider either the management agreement alternative or the professional services model. The city (or parking authority) would outsource day-to-day parking operations to an experienced parking services provider.



Pay Parking and System Management Technologies

With respect to off-street parking facilities, future public parking lots/structures should incorporate pay parking. Existing off-street surface lots could incorporate multi-space meter technologies to collect fees (for visitor parking spaces) and access card technologies (for permit spaces), assuming the lots will remain in existence long enough to justify the expense of the investment. If access control equipment is installed, **Carl Walker** would recommend using AVI technology.

Based on existing and anticipated future parking demands, on-street parking will likely be a mix of pay parking and time-limited parking. Multi-space parking meters would be recommended for pay parking on-street (e.g., pay by space), and pay by cell phone technology could be incorporated.

Initially, on-street pay parking should be implemented in the core of the study area. This would include (both sides of each street – 442 spaces total):

- Georgia Street, from Sutter Street to at least Santa Clara Street (98 spaces);
- Virginia Street, from Sonoma Boulevard to Sacramento Street (61 spaces);
- York Street, from Sutter Street to Sacramento Street (59 spaces);
- Sacramento Street, from Capitol Street to Maine Street (87 spaces);
- Marin Street, from Capitol Street to Maine Street (94 spaces);
- Sonoma Boulevard, from Capitol Street to Maine Street (43 spaces).

With respect to parking rates, on-street parking should be more expensive than off-street parking. On-street parking provides a higher level of convenience to most parkers; therefore, it generally has a higher level of demand. Also, structuring parking rates to encourage the use of off-street parking will help keep on-street parking available for short-term downtown visitors.

Parking Enforcement Strategies

The success of any parking management program requires an effective enforcement component. Building an enforcement program requires making many critical strategic and tactical decisions which can greatly impact a program's success and ability to adapt with changing conditions. With this in mind, the following enforcement improvements are recommended:

- Transfer responsibility for parking enforcement to a vertically organized department or authority responsible for the overall Vallejo parking program.



- Ensure enforcement statistics are accurately tracked, and conduct regular reviews of parking citation statistics to ensure goals are achieved.
- Implement a tiered parking citation fine structure.
- If responsibility for enforcement is transferred to another department or an authority, the appeals hearing process should be separated organizationally from enforcement.
- Work to improve parking citation collection rates.

Parking Signage and Wayfinding

In order to clarify parking in downtown, the city should provide adequate signage to denote public parking facilities as well as parking facility regulations. Ideally, parking signage should be part of a larger downtown wayfinding system. Directional signage should be provided to help visitors locate parking resources downtown, depending on the type of parking they need. Then, signs should be located in each parking lot that provides a name for the lot, who can park there, as well as any specific restrictions.

Parking Security and Lighting

Public parking facilities should embody the concepts of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED). Parking facilities should be properly landscaped, lines of sight should be unobstructed, potential hiding places should be eliminated, and adequate lighting should be provided. In order to determine if lighting is sufficient in parking areas and pedestrian pathways, **Carl Walker** recommends that the city conduct a downtown lighting study in the future.

Loading and Delivery Parking

Although delivery vehicles cannot be removed from downtown, their impact can be minimized through coordinated efforts among area businesses. Potential strategies for addressing delivery vehicle challenges could include the following:

- Delivery vehicles should be discouraged from parking on narrow streets and in no parking zones.
- The city should consider the creation of delivery loading zones in strategic locations.
- The city should identify specific delivery vehicle concerns and work with downtown businesses to encourage deliveries during off-peak parking periods



(e.g., mornings), as well as encourage the use of smaller delivery vehicles whenever possible.

Parking Communications and Marketing

While the current downtown parking system is not overly complex, a breakdown in communications can foster a perception of parking problems. One-page parking maps could be created to show the locations of public parking supplies, provide downtown parking policies and regulations, provide contact information for questions and provide other downtown information. Other downtown marketing materials, either developed by the city or other organizations, should include parking information for visitors.

Incorporating Parking and Transportation

The concept of integrating transportation and parking elements as part of the larger strategic vision for the downtown supports the adoption of a “Park Once – Pedestrian First” planning concept. This concept encourages employees and visitors to park their vehicles in one location and then use another form of transportation to move around the downtown with excellent pedestrian, transit, parking, and bicycle facilities. This concept will become very important as the downtown develops. Several key issues would include:

- Provide adequate transportation options for people visiting/working downtown.
- Institute pay parking for all visitors and employees.
- Ensure downtown streets and sidewalks adequately serve the needs of pedestrians, transit users, bicyclists, and vehicles with the focus on serving pedestrians first.
- Develop, manage, and operate parking as a component of civic infrastructure and reduce overall parking ratios over time to create a “Park Once” environment.
- Modify the identity of the downtown to make it more understandable and attractive to infrequent users.



ACTION PLAN AND RECOMMENDATIONS SUMMARY

Short-Term (Within the Next Twelve Months):

1. The impending closure of Lot J is the first parking related issue the city will need to address. The city needs to begin planning for the closure of Lot J by relocating users as outlined in Section 3.03 of the main report. The city should begin planning for parking relocations as soon as possible by providing notice to businesses located near the lot, providing notices to the general public (e.g., flyers, news releases, city website), and posting signs at the lot.
2. Begin work on formally creating a downtown Vallejo parking district. The creation of the district should incorporate the ability to collect parking fees for both on-street and off-street parking, prepare for the creation of a downtown parking authority to manage the parking system, and provide the necessary authority to begin incorporating related parking functions (e.g., downtown parking operations and management, parking enforcement, parking planning) into a vertically-oriented management structure.
3. Until the parking authority is created, designate a single city department as responsible for downtown parking planning and management.
4. Maximize on-street parking in the downtown area where possible. On-street parking should be available for visitor parking only, and long-term parkers should be directed to off-street parking facilities.
5. Develop and approve a set of guiding principles for the downtown Vallejo parking district. The process to define parking system guiding principles should include significant public input.
6. Improve downtown parking signage and wayfinding.
7. Conduct a maintenance review of existing public parking lots/spaces.
8. Using the recommendations included in the main report, begin improving downtown parking enforcement.
9. Using the suggestions provided in this report, ensure adequate pedestrian paths exist to and from parking areas. Work with community stakeholders to improve both real and perceived safety levels in parking areas and on pedestrian pathways.



10. With respect to new developments, attempt to better utilize existing parking supplies prior to designing and constructing new parking areas.
11. Select a minimum of two primary sites, and four alternate sites, for future parking structures. *Carl Walker* would recommend the site designated in the Downtown Specific Plan (public parking lot on the northwest corner of Marin Street and York Street) as the first primary site. This site could provide approximately 200 parking spaces in three levels (hopefully leaving sufficient room for mixed-use space). Assuming a conservative construction cost of \$30,000 per parking space and an interest rate of 6% for 25 years, the total project cost could be \$8.5 million (with annual debt service of \$670,000). Another 150 to 200 parking spaces will be needed in the future, assuming development occurs as anticipated.
12. Designate where on-street pay parking will be implemented, and begin the purchasing process to secure the necessary equipment.
13. In concert with the process to select parking access and revenue control equipment, decide how parking will be operated in downtown. Begin the process to select a contracted parking operator.
14. Develop a parking marketing program to include information for downtown visitors and businesses.
15. Update the parking zoning code (and/or the Downtown Specific Plan), as well as existing municipal codes, to include the following issues:
 - o An approved shared parking methodology.
 - o Acceptable parking structure design criteria.
 - o Allowing in-lieu fees and setting requirements.
 - o Improved lighting standard (using the recommendation included in this report).
 - o Specific requirements for bicycle parking (typically a percentage of vehicle parking requirements).
 - o Provide an approved process to institute valet parking in the downtown.
 - o Provide options for tandem parking (situations where one space blocks another) for residential parking and/or valet parking, if desired.
 - o Ensure ADA parking standards adhere to federal ADA guidelines.
 - o Allow for the use of multi-space parking meters, opposed to only allowing single space meters.
16. Work with downtown businesses to determine loading and delivery needs.



Mid-Term (Year Two):

1. Conduct an update of the parking inventory and occupancy surveys contained in the main report.
2. Ensure the city has sufficient land use data for the downtown parking district, and update annually or as necessary.
3. Continue work to improve lines of communication between the downtown parking system and downtown businesses, residents, visitors, and special event venues. This could include a monthly downtown parking district newsletter and a listing of monthly special events.
4. Complete the purchase, installation, and marketing of pay parking in the downtown district. This should include on-street and off-street parking areas.
5. Complete the selection of a contracted parking operator for the downtown parking district.
6. Review parking enforcement statistics to ensure recommended goals are being met.
7. Depending on updated area development project timetables, begin preliminary design discussions for the first public parking structure.
8. Provide sufficient support for alternative modes of transportation. Provide adequate bicycle racks, comfortable pedestrian paths, bike paths, etc. in the district to encourage a pedestrian first mentality.
9. Conduct a downtown lighting study to ensure lighting levels support safety and security goals and objectives.
10. Investigate opportunities to improve customer service by instituting additional service programs, such as battery jumps, lock-out assistance, tire inflation, etc.
11. Consider completing an annual report for the downtown parking district.

Long-Term (Years Three and Later):

1. Develop additional parking supplies when needed.



2. The development of a parking garage should coincide with the development(s) it is serving or based on growing parking demands in the downtown. Building a parking garage with the hope of attracting development should only occur if sufficient district development demand warrants. In-lieu fees could be used to provide/supplement the funds necessary for parking facility design and construction.
3. Investigate opportunities to incorporate additional parking technologies to improve downtown parking operations and management. This could include variable message systems (to direct parkers to available supplies), MLPR enforcement systems, wireless parking sensors, etc.

