



FINAL REPORT

Transportation Demand Management Study

City of Traverse City



MKSK

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STUDY SUMMARY

WHAT IS TRANSPORTATION DEMAND MANAGEMENT?

Transportation Demand Management is a general term for strategies that increase the efficiency and effectiveness of transportation infrastructure and resources, by encouraging traveler-choice patterns that:

- Redistribute demand away from constrained times, days, and seasons
- Redistribute demand away from constrained locations and facilities
- Reduce demand by increasing use of high-occupancy or high-efficiency transportation modes, such as:
 - Transit and ride-sharing modes that accommodate more travelers in fewer vehicles;
 - Ride services and car-sharing, which accommodate more travel relative to parking needs;
 - Bikes, scooters, and motorcycles, which take up less right-of-way and parking space; and
 - Walking which requires no parking and needs minimal right-of-way space.

BACKGROUND CONDITIONS

A review of Background Conditions was conducted to gain insights from previously-completed studies, data-collection, and analysis, and to identify primary issues, concerns, and opportunities with downtown stakeholders.

Document Review

This project benefitted from previously completed study, analysis, data assembly, and documentation from several efforts, key amongst which are those listed below.

- *Downtown & Corridor Market Analysis Update, AECOM, 2016*
- *Traverse City Parking Services Quarterly Reports*
- *Traverse City Downtown Permit Parking Services Policy (2016)*
- *Traverse City Parking Services 2015-2018 Parking Plan*
- *Neighborhood Parking Meetings: Minutes*
- *Residential Parking Survey Summary Memo*
- *Traverse City Parking Services/DDA: Residential Parking Program Recommendations*
- *Bay Area Transportation Study: Transit Service & Coordination Study (Nov. 2011)*
- *City of Traverse City Master Plan: Transportation Element (November 2011)*
- *Traverse City Area Transportation and Land Use Study: Vision 2035 (September 2014)*
- *Traverse City Parking Services Downtown Parking Maps*

Stakeholder Engagement

Concurrent with the review of the above documentation, the study team facilitated meetings, discussion groups, and surveys to gain the insights of those most directly engaged with the downtown parking system, and the mobility resources and options shaping the intensity and patterns of downtown parking demand. These are summarized below.

Focus Groups

A series of focus-group discussions was held over two days, to gain better understanding of how the current parking system, and its interface with available mobility/access options, is serving the needs, preferences, and future interests of downtown stakeholders. This included the following stakeholder groups.

- Small Business Owners
- Large Business Owners/Employers
- Downtown/Mobility Advocates
- Developers
- Employees
- Residents

Key Input Received

- Visitor parking availability is a problem mostly limited to summer months or special events.
 - Generally, the shuttles used to provide remote parking for *large* events, *such as the National Cherry Festival and Traverse City Film Festival*, were said to work very well.
- Convenient and affordable employee parking is more of an issue.
 - Options discussed included a reduced parking permit fee, allocation of a specific number of spaces in the deck or on the top floors of the decks, and neighborhood parking permits
- BATA seen as an unattractive alternative to driving right now, due to limited hours of operations and frequency, low parking costs, and car-dependent development outside downtown.
- Traverse City is a fairly bikeable and walkable city (not as much in the winter, however).
- Parking spillover into the neighborhoods, and management policies that limit parking in the inner ring of residential streets pushes the parking further out into the neighborhoods.
- Policies surrounding parking – e.g. meters end in the early evening but the garages charge until midnight – are inconsistent with demand-based pricing best practices, and can be confusing for the customer.
- While some believed the new parking structures were not needed or that visitors and employees would not use them, occupancy has been fairly high.
- Strong support in the business community for a 3rd public parking structure
- New development is displacing existing public parking lots and reducing system capacity.

- Some resistance to public-private partnerships for new structures, not confident the City can negotiate good deals
 - Successful examples from other cities might help address these concerns
- City leadership wants to explore TDM and parking management options to avoid the construction and maintenance costs associated with constructing parking.
- General support for some type of reliable and convenient shuttle/circulator service.
 - Parking shuttle from remote lots for employees, particularly in peak summer months
 - Downtown circulator, primarily to serve a Park Once approach for visitor parking, while also connecting employees to cheaper, peripheral parking options.
- Meters – 3 hours is preferred over the former 2 hour but employees do move vehicles to avoid tickets.
- Some confusion in the municipal parking lots over which are permit only vs. available for the public.
- Look for Park Once options with improved pedestrian and bike facilities and wayfinding
 - Look at road diet opportunities, potential cycle track, more bike parking etc.

Employee Survey

An online survey was developed and distributed to employees of downtown Traverse City businesses. Questions were designed to generate responses to help define and describe the parking/commuting needs, preferences, and experiences of this critical downtown stakeholder population. The survey was open for six weeks in April and May 2017, during which time 434 people completed the survey. Of the 434 participants:

- 219 identified as salaried employees;
- 206 identified as hourly employees; and
- Nine identified as volunteers.

Asked to identify their usual mode of travel to their primary downtown job, most identified driving alone, including:

- 93% of hourly employees;
- 88% of salaried employees; and
- 78% of volunteers.

Other Key Findings

- Transit was cited by very few as their primary commute mode
- Those most interested in using alternative commute modes are most interested in cycling.
- Weather, convenience, and travel times all appear to be significant barriers to alternative-mode use, as cited by those indicating an interest in using these modes more often
- By far, the most common commuter benefit offered to downtown employees is free parking, with parking-cost subsidies the next-most common.
- Most employees park no more than a block away from their worksite (66% of salaried employees, 54% of hourly employees.
 - Volunteers are generally walking farther from their parking space to their worksite than other employees.

- Less than half of driving commuters indicated that they would prefer a primary parking location different from the one they currently use.
 - Among survey participants that indicated a preference to change their primary parking location, the most commonly-cited barrier to their preferred option was cost.

CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT

Building upon the understanding of background conditions, the study team reviewed direct conditions of parking supply and demand, as well as the availability and role of non-driving mobility options.

Public Parking Supply

TCPS manages the downtown supply of on-street parking that is complemented by a significant system of off-street public parking lots, as well as two, large public parking decks.

Parking Facilities	Spaces
On-Street	1,287
Public Parking Lots	1153
Public Parking Decks	1,062*
Combined	3,502

* This includes 65 spaces, within the Hardy deck, that are reserved for a private entity.

TCPS regulates these spaces to ensure they remain accessible for intended users, primarily through the following tools.

- Pricing
- Time Limits
- Permit-parking only (primarily commuter and ADA parking)

The maps below identify the location, regulations, and capacities of these parking facilities.

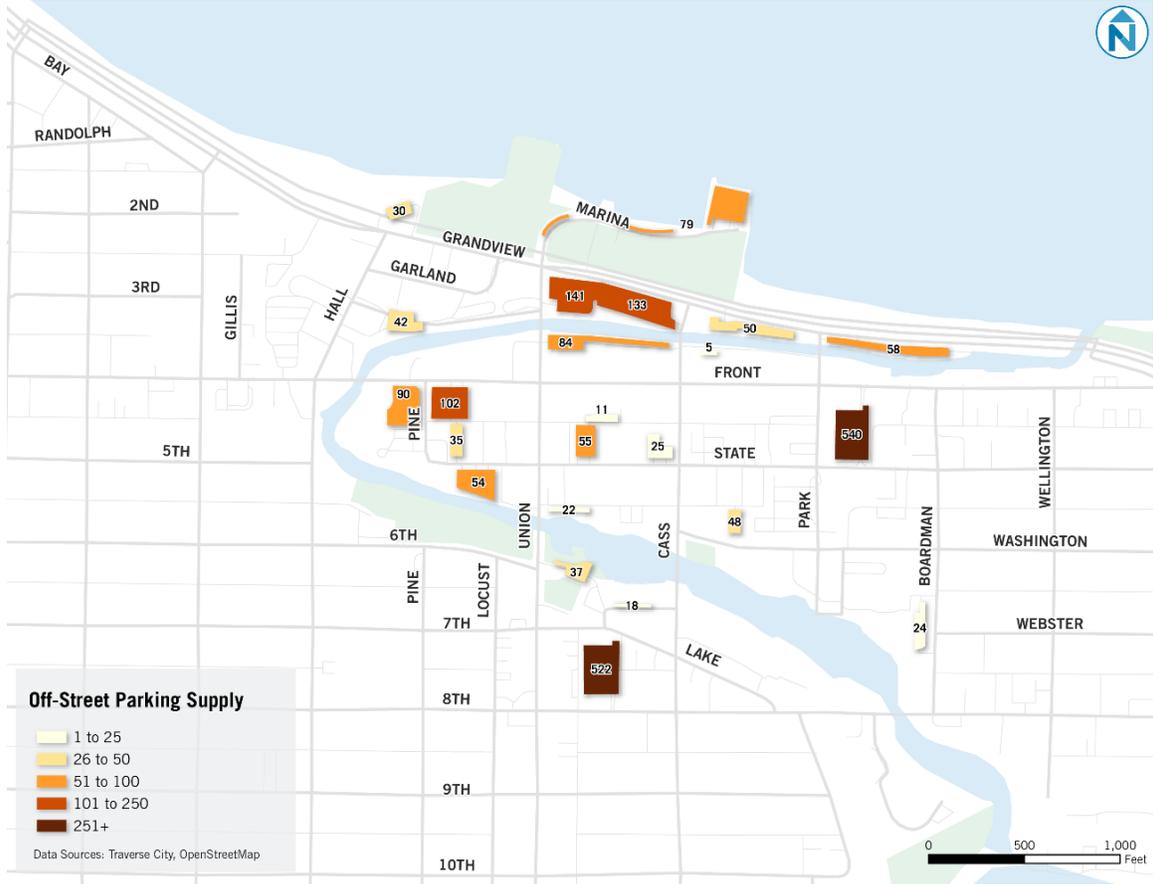
Figure 1 Downtown Parking by Regulation



Figure 2 On-Street Parking Capacity



Figure 3 Off-Street Parking Capacity



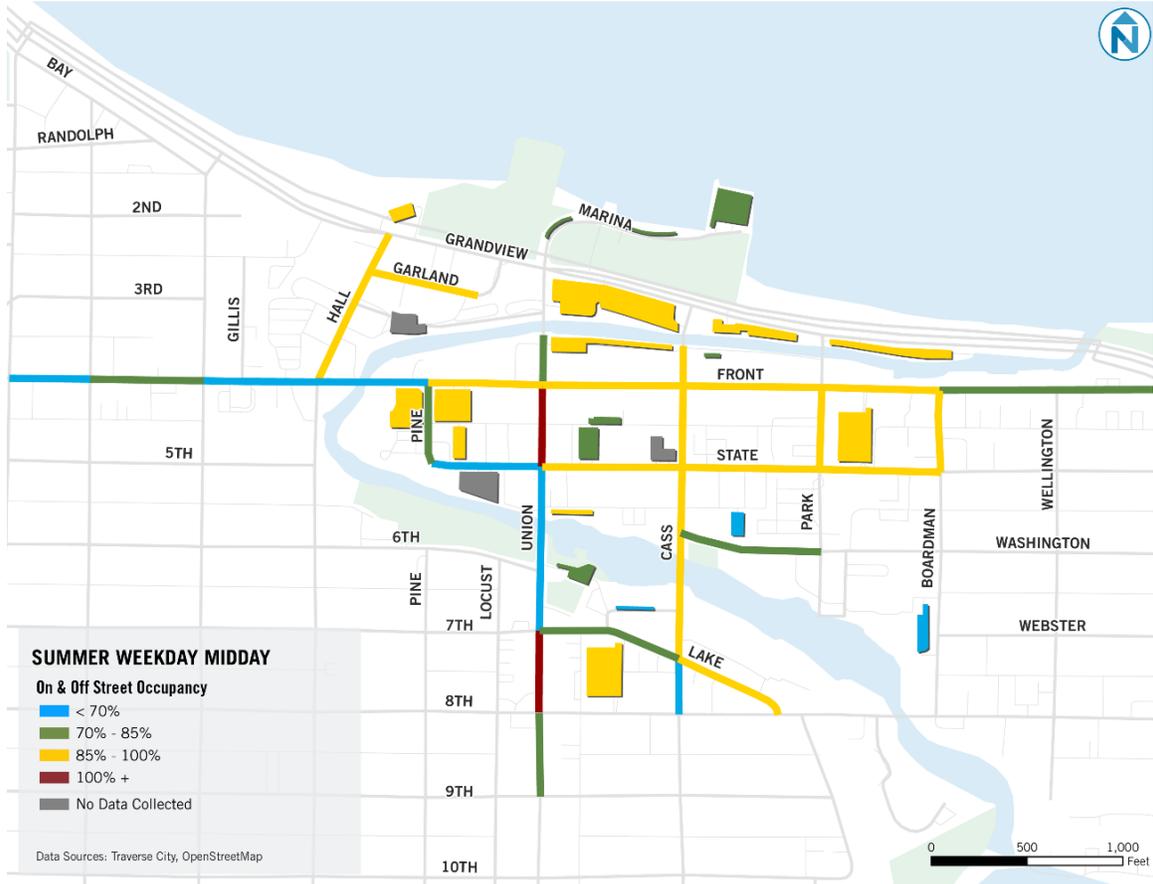
Parking Utilization

There is a seasonal nature to activity and travel demand in Traverse City, making it essential to assess parking utilization throughout the year.

Peak Season (Summer)

Summer is peak season in Traverse City, when steady, year-round resident and employee populations are joined by thousands of vacationing families and tourists, drawn to the city’s extensive shores, lakes, and rivers, and the many other outdoor and recreational offerings of Michigan’s Up North regions. Parking occupancy data, from counts conducted during July 2016 and July 2017, was aggregated to provide a measure of “typical” conditions during this peak-summer month. Average utilization measures were calculated from this data, to provide a measure of parking availability. The map below provides an overview of these measures, and as such a sense of parking opportunities presented to drivers arriving in downtown during a summer midday.

Figure 4 Summer Season Utilization – Weekday Mid-Day



Shoulder Seasons (Spring & Fall)

Downtown activity has been increasing during Traverse City’s “shoulder” seasons, like the fall, putting more pressure on the TCPS parking system compared to past norms. The maps below present utilization conditions, based on occupancy-data measures from midday periods in the spring and the fall.

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Figure 5 Spring Season Utilization – Weekday Midday

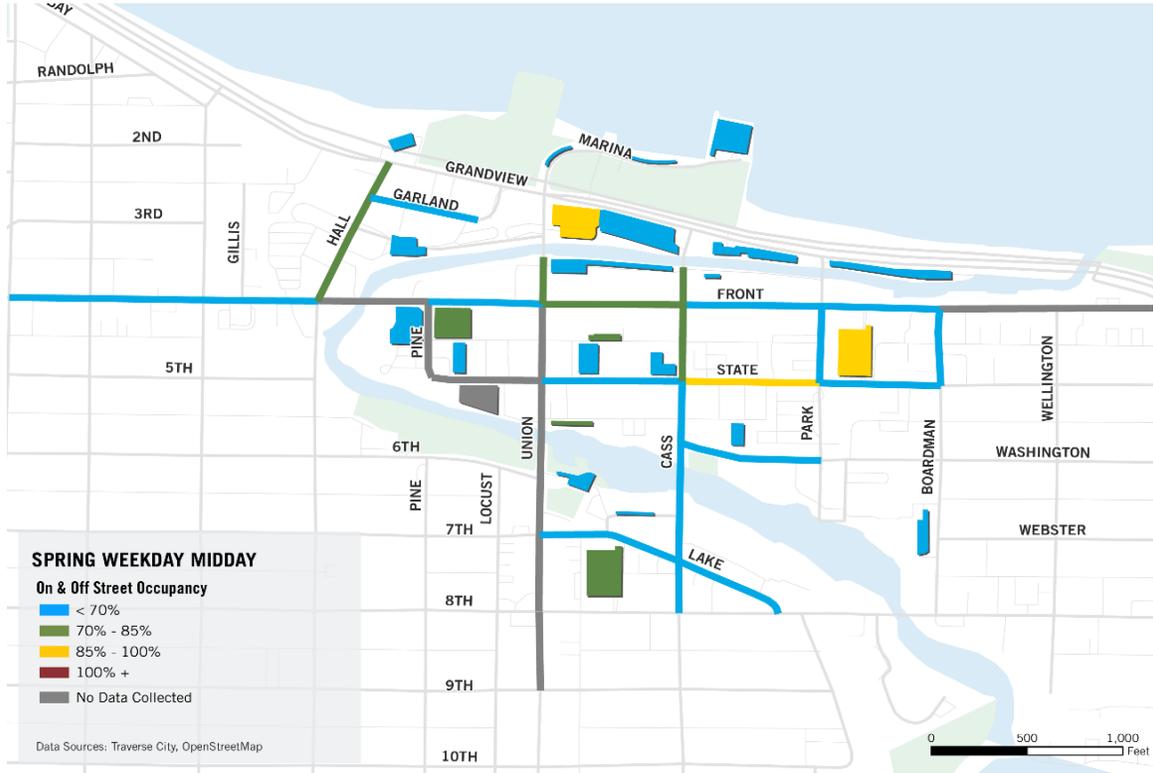
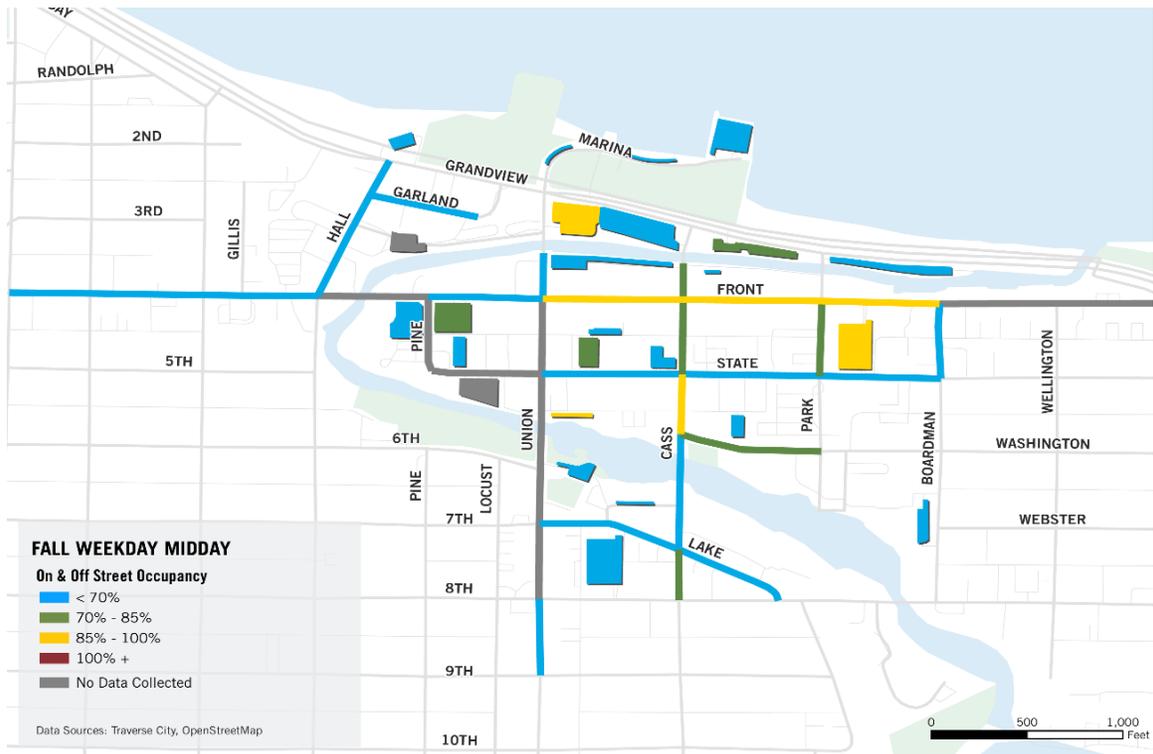


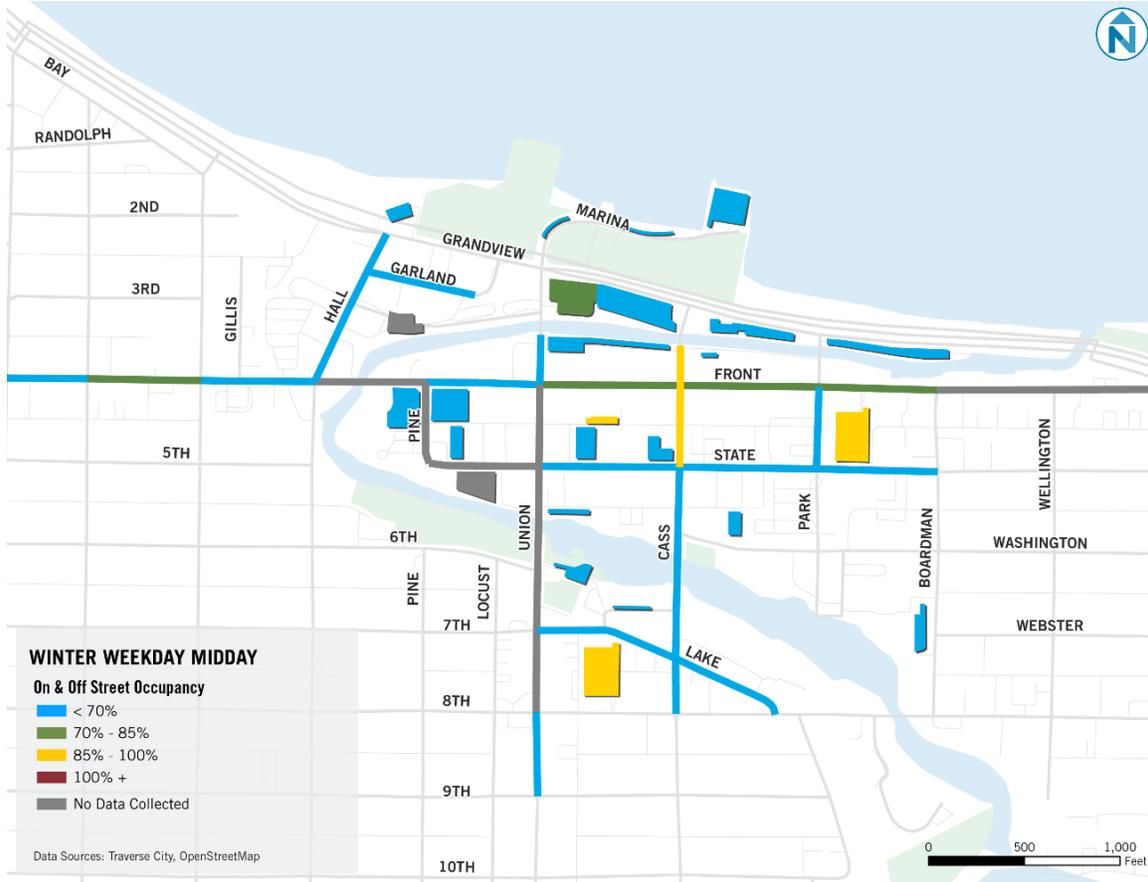
Figure 6 Fall Season Utilization – Weekday Mid-Day



Off Peak Season (Winter)

Winter is the “off season” for downtown Traverse City and therefore typically the period during which parking demand tends to be at its lowest levels of the year. The map below provides an overview of utilization conditions during occupancy-count surveys, conducted during weekdays at midday.

Figure 7 Weekday Mid-Day Utilization – Winter



Parking Costs and Revenues

Fiscal-year financial data from 2015 and 2016 provide a detailed summary of the costs associated with maintaining the downtown parking system, and the revenues it generates. The table below provides an overview of key costs and revenues from this data.

Figure 8 TCPS Downtown Public Parking System

Parking Facilities	Costs		Revenues		Income	
	2015	2016	2015	2016	2015	2016
On-Street	\$392,865	\$523,487	\$599,152	\$852,230	\$206,287	\$328,743
Surface Lots	\$729,272	\$870,642	\$862,195	\$1,055,490	\$132,923	\$184,848
Decks	\$782,147	\$748,326	\$949,312	\$1,012,285	\$167,165	\$263,959
Combined	\$1,904,284	\$2,142,455	\$2,410,659	\$2,920,005	\$506,375	\$777,550

It is worth noting that while, overall, each of the parking-system components presented above is profitable, the 10 surface lots that the City leases from private owners consistently cost more to lease than they take in. Each of these lots lost revenue in both 2015 and 2016, with losses totaling about \$55,000 in 2015 and just under \$50,000 in 2016.

Projected Parking Supply/Demand Changes

Expected Land-Use Development

For the last several years, downtown Traverse City has been attracting a remarkable level of development activity and interest. This provides significant upsides for walkable-urban development and downtown growth, both of which support the central TDM objective of more growth with less roadway and parking infrastructure. This growth, however, will increase aggregate parking demand in the downtown, and many projects are likely to occur on sites that currently provide parking, thus potentially reducing future supplies.

Proposed West Front Street Garage

Planning is in progress for a new parking deck, to be built on the site of a 102-space DDA lot on West Front Street. The expected capacity for this facility is roughly 400 spaces, providing a net gain of 298 spaces for the DDA system. The City is in the process of hiring an architect to get the planning and design process started.

Projected Net Changes

To address the challenges and opportunities presented by these changing demand and supply conditions, development and parking data were analyzed to project net changes to parking demand and supply over the next 5-10 years. The table below presents a summary of the resulting projections, including:

- Expected changes in the next five years, from current and underway projects
- Expected changes in the following five years, from planned and proposed projects
- Projections of increased parking demand increase, assuming most parking is provided as an on-site amenity (Urban, Mixed-Use Rates)
- Projections of increased parking demand increase, assuming most parking demand is accommodated via TCPS resources (Shared Parking District Rates)
- Projected, net changes to both public and private parking supplies.

Figure 9 Summary of Projected Supply and Demand Changes

Downtown Development Projects	Projected Increase in Peak Parking Demand		Net Parking Supply Change	
	Urban Mixed-Use Rates	Shared Parking District Rates	Public Parking Impact	Private Parking Impact
Current & Underway	95	70	0	96
Planned & Proposed	589	437	-156	446
West Front St Garage		-	298	0
Total	708	504	142	542

Key Findings

- Peak-hour parking demand is likely to increase by between 500 and 700 spaces in the next few years, assuming mode shares remain as they are today.
- Roughly 550 spaces are proposed to be included with the development expected to generate this increased demand.
- With the loss of over 150 public spaces, resulting from private development on current lot sites, this could create a future supply deficit of ~300 spaces.
- *This deficit could be offset by the proposed West Front Street garage, as currently planned.*

Beyond addressing the potential supply deficit, the West Street garage importantly expands the DDA public parking system. Such expansion will offer much greater efficiency and effectiveness in addressing overall parking demand in the downtown, compared to expansions of private parking supplies. This presents a critical opportunity to reduce the overall supply needs of a growing downtown Traverse City, particularly as mobility options begin to alter long-established relationships between growth, mobility, and personal-auto use.¹

Emphasizing public supply expansions over on-site parking at new development should be a core growth, and TDM, strategy, starting with those projects identified here as Planned & Proposed, and for all future growth.

¹ <http://www.latimes.com/business/la-fi-car-future-real-estate-20170405-story.html>

Non-Driving Mobility Conditions

Figure 10 Bike Lane and Summer Bike Corral on Front Street



BATA Services

Core Services

BATA provides more than half a million annual rides to residents and visitors in Leelanau and Grand Traverse Counties. BATA's core services consists of the following four service types.

- City Loop - a network of five fixed-routes, four of which are radial routes that travel east, west, and south out of the downtown Hall Street Transfer Station.
- Village Loop - a deviated fixed-route² and flag stop service³, consisting of five routes, that connects villages and towns in Leelanau and Grand Traverse Counties to downtown Traverse City.
- City Link – Door-to-door, demand-response operating within Traverse City and the immediately surrounding area.
- Village Link – Door-to-Loop demand-response service connecting rural areas and the Village Loop.

² The Village Loop allows for drivers to deviate up to $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile off the route

³ "Flag stop" service refers to the practice of allowing riders to wave down the bus to be picked up, and to request to be dropped off, at any safe location along the route instead of at an official stop location.

Recently, BATA began operating the “Village Link 15” service, which is a demand-response service similar to Village Link but with designated time-points at three stops:

- Hall Street
- Munson
- Lake Ann

Seasonal Services

Additional service and a Ski-n-Ride program are provided from January to March, connecting popular ski and snowboarding areas, including Crystal Mountain, The Homestead, Mt. Holiday/Timber Ridge, and Hickory Hills. Some of the venues offer incentives, such as discounted lift tickets and food and beverage vouchers, when BATA riders present their pass or receipt. The East Traverse Flex Route, which operates throughout the school year, offers one trip per day in each direction between downtown Traverse City, the Cass Road Transfer Station, and various schools and ski resorts east of downtown.

The Bike-n-Ride program connects cyclists to the Leelanau Trail between Traverse City and Suttons Bay and the Sleeping Bear Heritage Trail between Glen Arbor and Empire. The per-person one-way fare is \$3.00. In addition, all BATA Loop route buses are equipped with bike racks that can accommodate up to three bikes.

BATA also offers shuttles for many of the summer festivals and activities organized each year in the Traverse City Area. Services include the Interlochen Summer Concert Bus throughout the summer, Cherry Festival Shuttle in July, Traverse City Film Festival Shuttle in July, and Cedar Polka Fest Shuttle in June.

Pending Improvements

In May 2017, Grand Traverse and Leelanau County voters passed a millage increase that will allow BATA to maintain its current operations and grow its level of service. The additional revenue is expected to go toward many of the recommendations listed in the recent Community Needs Assessment, including:

- Creating a downtown loop route with 15-minute frequency,
- Park-n-ride enhancements,
- Technology upgrades (online scheduling, real-time bus tracking, mobile fare payment),
- Rural service improvements (more direct door-to-door connections)
- Fleet and facility changes (replace aging vehicles, improve bus stop access and safety)

As of August 2017, planning was underway for the downtown loop service, including discussions with potential funding partners, and an expectation to launch the new service in early 2018.

Ride Services

Taxi service is available in Traverse City, with a few small taxi companies operating in the area. Service is primarily provided for trips to and from the airport.

Uber and Lyft began operating within Traverse City during this study. Before that, a comparable service known as TransportHer began operating throughout the city, in May 2017. This service is

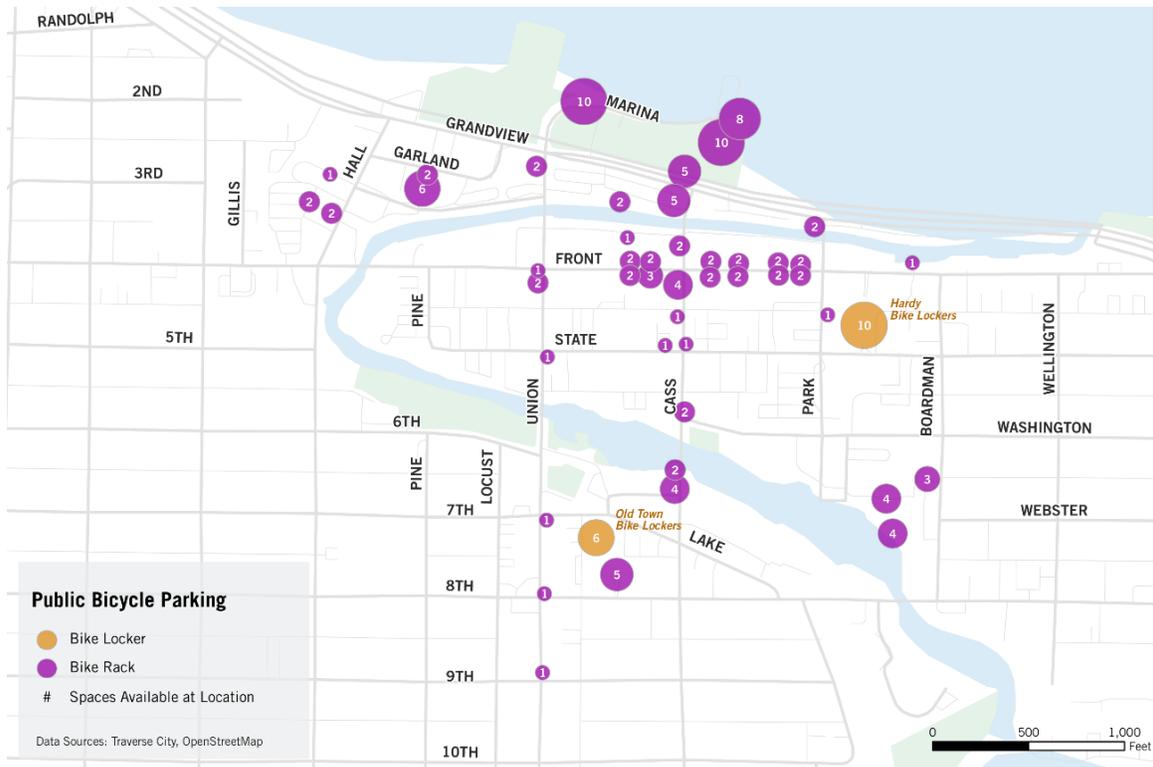
designed specifically to provide safe rides to female passengers with only female drivers, but soon expanded to serve seniors and children as well.⁴

Bicycle

The City has been investing in bike infrastructure for several years. Bike parking opportunities are available throughout the downtown, including dedicated bike lanes have long been serving cyclists along State and Front Streets. Many downtown streets benefit from lower speeds and modest traffic volumes, making them viable locations for shared lanes.

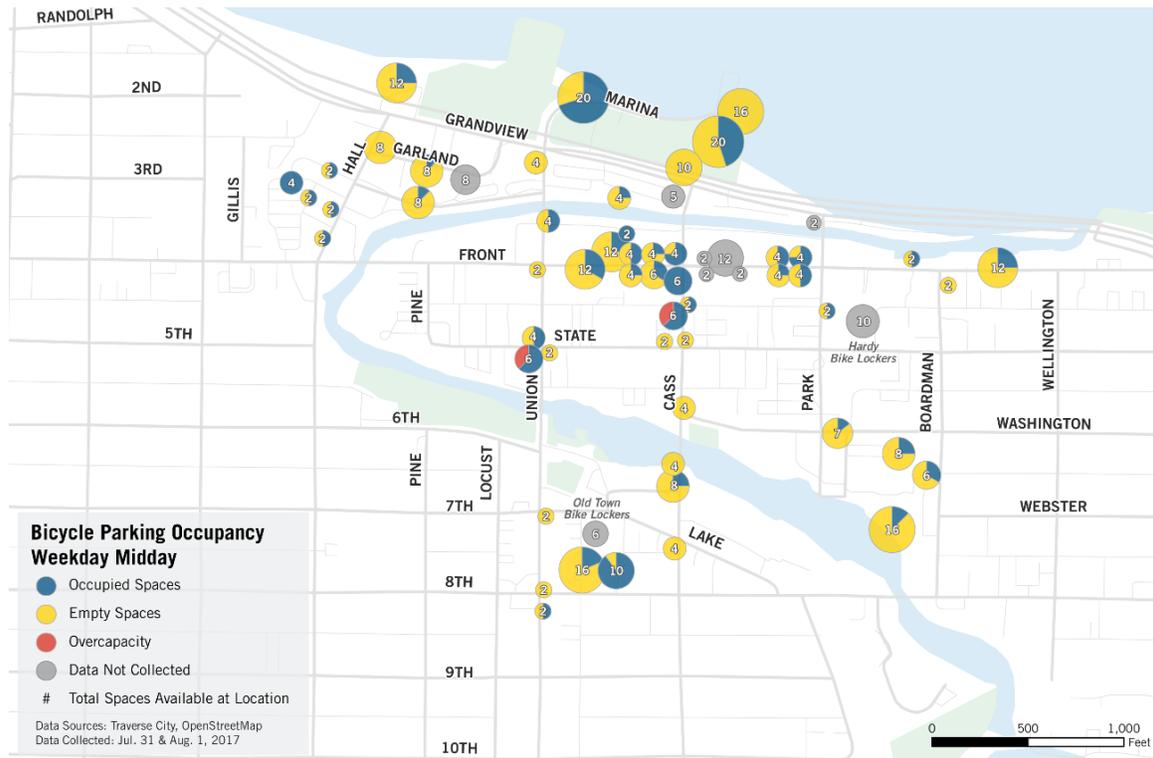
This vital infrastructure is evident across the downtown and surrounding areas, and is well utilized. Observed conditions indicate that, not only is there ample bike parking, but that it is well distributed to accommodate demand. With a few exceptions, installed bike racks appear to be well utilized but not overwhelmed with demand.

Figure 11 Public Bike Parking Spaces



⁴ <http://www.traverseticker.com/story/ride-sharing-business-launches-in-traverse-city>

Figure 12 Summer Utilization Measures



Shared-Use Path Systems: TART Trails

Traverse Area Recreation and Transportation (TART) Trails is a non-profit organization that builds and maintains shared-use trails in the greater Traverse City area. As of 2017, TART has built, or maintains, over 100 miles of trails in the region. The primary trail in the network is the TART Trail, which runs 10.5 miles from Acme Township, through downtown Traverse City, and up to Grielickville.

KEY ISSUES & OPPORTUNITIES

Parking Supply & Demand

- During summer months, parking demand consistently overwhelms the downtown parking system, constraining availability across most of the system, and creating acute demand pressures on downtown-core blocks and facilities.
- Outside of these months, conditions of constrained availability tend to be limited to subsets of high-demand parking locations (on-street parking, particularly along Front Street and adjacent blocks) and facilities (commuter parking in the decks and centrally-located lots).

- On-street parking is the most-consistently constrained parking inventory, with high-demand blocks experiencing availability constraints throughout the year, and well-beyond the midday peak.
- Conditions, expectations, and preferences vary significantly among residents and neighborhoods regarding curbside parking and regulations.
 - This indicates that an opt-in process for adding new blocks to the program, and offering a suite of curbside-management options to choose from, will be key to successful resident-permit parking implementation.
- While some off-street facilities experience constrained availability beyond the summer, there is sufficient capacity for TCPS to offer commuter permits to anyone who wants one, without having to maintain a wait list for any individual facility.
- Seasonally limited constraints create an opportunity to focus TDM investments, programming, and resources on seasonal mode shifts that can reduce commuter-parking demand in order to increase capacities made available for visitors, while also ensuring that visitors can get to and around downtown without a car (and are aware of this).
 - Importantly, this focus would also align TDM efforts with the months during which drivers tend to be most inclined to adopt modes of travel that increase one’s exposure to the elements, which includes transit.
- Year-round parking-management and TDM efforts are nonetheless critical to maintaining consistent parking availability, by:
 - Redistributing demand, provide a better and more-consistent parking experience across downtown.
 - Reducing parking demand by creating an environment in which most visitors who drive downtown will use just one parking space while downtown (Park Once).
 - Reducing parking demand by improving non-driving mobility to/from and within downtown.
 - ... This should include visitor-focused TDM strategies that can increase ride-service, transit, and cycling use among visitors in all seasons.

Projected Supply & Demand Changes

- Demand projections support the DDA’s plan to develop a small parking garage on the west side of downtown to replace surface lots in that area that will be displaced by development.
- This presents an opportunity to focus supply-development investments on big-picture opportunities, rather than acute and pressing needs.
- This should provide leverage to the City, allowing it to seek strategically-important opportunities to:
 - Redevelop existing surface lots, either as mixed-use buildings with public parking or as parking-structures with street-level commercial uses, in line with the redevelopment vision for the downtown core.
 - Facilitate joint-development partnerships to bring targeted land-uses to the downtown.
 - Discourage on-site, private parking at new downtown development projects, by offering reliable access to shared, TCPS-managed parking structures.

Non-Driving Mobility

Multimodal

- Well designed and convenient pedestrian systems, bike amenities, car sharing/ pooling and shuttles will help alleviate the parking stresses on the downtown at the same time as supporting local resident mode shift.

Transit

- BATA offers a wide variety of services to meet the needs of a large service area that has population and employment densities ranging from very-low rural densities to higher urban densities.
- Feedback from stakeholders and the public indicates that BATA is usually not viewed as a viable option for completing trips, particularly for employee commutes. Determining the reason for this will require further study, but observations on BATA's fixed-routes from this existing conditions review include:
 - Travel time may feel too long compared to other modes,
 - City Loop may not be convenient enough for commuters at every 30-minutes – a missed bus potentially means a missed appointment, meeting, etc.,
 - City Loop routes focus on providing geographic coverage to both the city and the low-density areas surrounding the city rather than emphasizing corridors and frequency,
 - Village Loop and City Loop services operate as two different services for the most part, but opportunities may exist for the services to work more in conjunction,
 - Downtown circulation is not a primary focus for BATA.
- Transit competes for riders in small cities like Traverse City not only with personal vehicles, but also with walker and bikers. Walking, biking, and parking your car are all relatively easy (as well as free or inexpensive) in Traverse City, so the pressure to take transit is likely low.
- BATA's seasonal and special services are a great opportunity to increase the visibility and image of transit in Traverse City, and many of these are very popular with the public according to feedback the study team received.
- Emerging mobility options and technologies offer new opportunities for transit that can provide a more attractive and efficient service.

Ride Services

- Ride-service companies, including the innovative startup TransportHer, creates novel partnership opportunities to reduce drive-alone dependence among downtown employees, residents, and visitors.
 - Create a partnership to promote these services to visitors arriving via the airport, and staying downtown, in lieu of renting a car.
 - Provide a Guaranteed Ride Home benefit to transit, bike, and ride-share commuters.
 - Encourage developers to provide tenants with ride allowances to reduce parking demand and expand equitable mobility options.

Pedestrian

- Traverse City has made great strides in their pedestrian network with widening sidewalks in the core downtown, providing high visibility crosswalks, bumpouts, a shared street on Garland, and pedestrian signs and signals.
- This strong pedestrian network supports a “park once” use of the downtown parking infrastructure.
- Implementation of the 8th Street plan and West Boardman recommendations would further advance this goal.

Bicycle

- Bike infrastructure has long benefitted from City investments and planning priority.
 - Bike parking opportunities are available throughout the downtown.
 - Bike lanes were recently striped on State and Front Streets.
- This momentum should continue.
 - Though many downtown streets are lower speeds and volumes making them appropriate locations for shared lanes, the demographic of the peak season user is more novice riders and families who tend to not feel comfortable without a dedicated lane.
 - Dedicated lanes make the transition to using a bicycle as a primary mode of transportation a more feasible option.
- Though right-of-way width constraints exist, there are areas where lane use can be re-evaluated.
 - Consider necessary lane widths, utilization of dedicated left and right turn bays and their utilization rates, Intersection treatments, tree lawns and sidewalk widths.
- A comprehensive bike share or bike rental program could also help alleviate parking pressures in the downtown.
 - The DDA could look to coordinate, sponsor, and promote a venture.
 - Since many tourists are families, it would be necessary to supply appropriate equipment to handle children and well as adults.

TDM

- TDM can provide the most significant benefit to downtown parking, mobility, and access conditions during summer months.
 - This aligns perfectly with seasons in which non-driving options like cycling and transit tend to be most attractive to those who have the option to drive.
 - This creates an important opportunity to focus TDM energies, investments, and activities on promoting these driving alternatives, precisely when they are most likely to appeal to commuters, many of whom may remain committed drive-alone commuters from October to April.
 - This could include the following May – September programs and commuter benefits.
 - ... funding a bus-pass program for downtown employees
 - ... providing downtown employees with free bike-share to make peripheral and remote parking options more viable

- ... Higher permit-parking rates to encourage seasonal use of ride-sharing, park-and-ride, transit, and cycling options.

RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES

Following is an overview of recommended TDM strategies. The study's Recommended Strategies report provides additional detail on most of the strategies below, while detailed overviews are provided for underlined strategies in the appendix to this report.

QUICK WINS

Following is a list of recommended immediate-implementation priorities – Strategies that promise meaningful improve opportunities, and can be implemented directly by the DDA/TCPS, and should encounter minimal implementation barriers.

Define a Performance-Based Pricing approach.

Link parking rates to demand, measured as utilization/availability conditions during peak-demand periods, to underscore the TCPS's standing policy that pricing is the most effective, and intuitive management tool for maintaining demand/supply equilibrium across the downtown and across times of varying levels of demand.

- Review rates annually to determine if adjustments are warranted, raising or lowering rates to address any meaningful gaps between targeted and actual Availability measures.
- Provide transparency by releasing data analysis, findings, and any subsequent management/pricing adjustments in an annual Performance-Based Management report.⁵

Adjust parking rates to reflect locational demand patterns across downtown.

Define a premium zone for on-street parking rates to create more consistent availability on these high-demand blocks.

- Front and State streets between Pine and Boardman streets
- Pine Street, Union Street, Cass Street, Park Street, and Boardman Avenue, between Front and State streets

Define a premium zone for hourly, off-street parking rates to create more consistent availability in these high-demand areas.

- From State Street, north to the Boardman River
- Between Wadsworth Street and Boardman Avenue

Vary parking rates by season.

To maintain more-consistent availability during high-demand seasons, while not reducing demand during off-season months, establish a calendar of rate adjustments that closely track seasonal demand patterns. The following table presents an illustrative set of rates and a schedule for adjustments to help illustrate the recommended framework for seasonal hourly-parking rates.

⁵ Case Study example: <http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/parking/docs/2016AnnualReport.pdf>

Collecting occupancy/availability data will be essential to make any necessary adjustments to these rates and the schedule of adjustments over time.

Figure 13 Recommended Hourly Rates

	Summer		Spring/Fall		Winter	
	Premium	Base	Premium	Base	Premium	Base
On-Street	\$2.50	\$2.00	\$2.00	\$1.50	\$1.50	\$1.00
Off-Street	\$2.00	\$1.50	\$1.50	\$1.00	\$1.00	\$0.50

Seasonal supply/demand variations present a key TDM opportunity for Traverse City. Shifting commutes away from drive-alone modes will be both easiest and most necessary for easing supply constraints during summer months. Conversely, the months in which it is typically most challenging to encourage transit, ride-share, and cycling commutes are the months in which such shifts are least necessary for maintaining an optimal supply/demand balance downtown. This facilitates a demand-based pricing approach that optimizes mode-shift opportunities by aligning rates with supply/demand conditions, as they fluctuate across the year – keeping rates effective in high-demand months, while easing rates during months when non-driving options are least viable and appealing.

The following table presents an illustrative set of rates and a schedule for adjustments to help illustrate the recommended framework for seasonal off-street permit-parking rates. Collecting occupancy/availability data will be essential to make any necessary adjustments to these rates and the schedule of adjustments over time.

Figure 14 Recommended Off-Street Permit Rates

	June - Aug	May & Sept	Oct, Nov, Mar, April	Jan. & Feb.
Decks	\$100	\$75	\$50	\$25
Premium Lots	\$75	\$50	\$35	\$20
Other Lots	\$50	\$35	\$25	\$15

Extend meter hours into evenings in peak and shoulder seasons.

Meter schedules should be adjusted to reflect evolving downtown parking patterns, which increasingly tend to intensify around the midday/lunch period and evening/dinner period, rather than following the typical workday schedule of most parking-meter regulations. Further, the seasonality of parking demand patterns in Traverse City merits seasonal meter-schedule variations. The following pricing schedules are recommended, as a starting point, to reflect seasonal fluctuations in time-of-day and day-of-week demand patterns.

- Summer: 8 AM – 10 PM, Monday – Saturday
- Spring and Fall: 10AM – 8 PM, Monday - Saturday
- Winter – 10AM: 6PM, Monday - Saturday

Expand employee-parking options.

Create on-street permits for long-term parking on blocks along strategically selected streets.

- The block of Wadsworth Street, between Fifth Street and West Front Street is a good example of a non-neighborhood street that could accommodate this.
 - Pilots on such streets, along with an established Resident Parking Permit program could provide “proof of concept” experience to explore designating employee-parking permit regulations on some neighborhood streets.

Offer ride-share participants the best parking.

Reserve a modest number of high-convenience spaces, including the best spaces within high-demand parking facilities, for registered ride-share vehicles.

- This can be limited to mornings until 10AM, making any spaces not occupied by then available for general parking.
- Require carpools to register with the DDA, to receive a hangtag or decal that will allow them to park in carpool-reserved spaces.

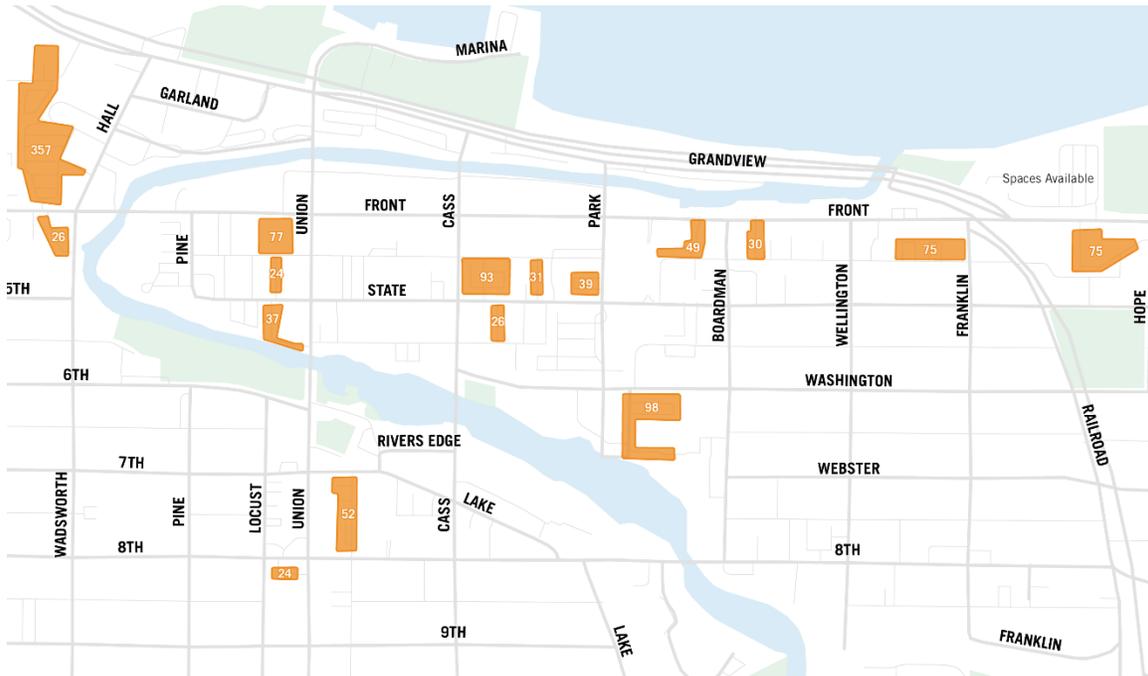
Provide Commuter Counseling services.

TCPS staff should work with area-employers, and their HR staff, to ensure that they understand the downtown parking system, and the range of commute modes and commuter benefits available to their employees.

- Complement this work with a standing offer to schedule one-on-one Commuter Counseling sessions with employees and new hire.
- This can help promote TCPS’s TDM efforts and programs, and reduce the parking stress and worry that can affect downtown employee recruitment and retention.

Broker shared-parking arrangements.

Figure 15 Several Private Lots Suggest Promising Shared Parking Opportunities



Several lots with workday demand schedules provide opportunities to explore options for arranging evening/late-night use by downtown employees, using permits to control access to these private facilities and potentially fund participant benefits like snow clearance, lighting and maintenance, liability-insurance offsets, etc. Traditional shared-parking arrangements between lot/property owners can also be brokered by the City/DDA to reduce implementation barriers.

- Engage private-lot owners to develop an evening-employee strategy that could include designated permits to help control use of shared facilities.
 - These would be for permits that the DDA would issue to downtown businesses, with the over-costs revenue provided to the lot owners.
- Ensure that property owners know and recognize that the DDA is willing to provide intermediary services to develop sharing arrangements and agreements.

Broker shared-parking, offering pay-by-phone pricing as incentive.

This technology has proved critical to allowing owners of private parking facilities to monetize parking that they make available during off-hours.

- Use TCPS’s pay-by-phone system to avoid common barriers to shared parking arrangements, unlocking significant potential capacities within the downtown core.
- Offer lot owners access to the payment system, providing a means for them to monetize their excess, off-hour parking capacities.
 - This would be a compelling incentive to expand off-hour sharing among the many, substantial private lots in and around downtown.
 - Pay-by-phone vendors will typically work with lot owners to define rates and hours of access, and provide signage.
 - This signage, consistent with what is used at TCPS meters and off-street facilities, provides reassurance to drivers that these spaces are legitimately available to the public.

Create short-term parking in off-hour loading zones.

On prime commercial streets, set loading-zone regulations to hours that balance the morning/afternoon peak in loading activity, with evening/weekend peaks in short-term parking demand.

- Adjust the schedule of loading-zone restrictions, as negotiated with nearby commercial uses who rely upon these spaces for delivery of goods and services, to expand curbside-parking capacities during evening and weekend periods, when demand for such high-convenience parking is at its peak, and when loading zones attract little to no activity

Create early morning loading zones to encourage more activity at these times.

Generous early-morning loading zones on secondary streets, or on alternate sides on prime streets, can encourage more truck deliveries during these times of modest short-term parking demand.

- Set aside entire blocks for commercial loading/unloading between 6AM and 10AM, when short-term parking demand is modest.
- Pilot this on side streets, perhaps alternating sides of the street to moderate the impact on parking supplies, and expand to primary streets if results are positive.

Establish RPP-eligible zones.

Identify as RPP-eligible, all residential blocks on which time limits have been established primarily to mitigate against impacts from non-residential parking demand.

- Define zones, based on these blocks and natural/established neighborhood boundaries.

Set an appropriate threshold for majority support for applying RPP regulations.

Allow residents within eligible zones to petition to establish RPP regulations for their zone.

- Petitions showing that at least 51% of eligible households support RPP regulations is a standard practice for urban RPP programs, with many cities using higher thresholds.
- City of Traverse City has indicated that 51% is their preferred threshold, which is in line with standard practice for urban RPP programs.
 - Some cities choose a higher threshold – 60% in Austin, TX and 80% in Chicago, IL – emphasizing that strong support is necessary to justify restricting wider access to these streets.
- A successful petition should result in zone-wide establishment of RPP regulations.

Identify Regulatory Options.

Work with residents to identify the most-appropriate set of regulations/restrictions for each zone, the primary components of which should include the following.

- Parking options for non-permitted vehicles: None, 1 hour, or 2 hours
- Overnight parking: Allowed, Not Allowed, Allowed for permitted vehicles, Allowed only outside snow seasons, Allowed broadly
- Non-Resident permits: Whether or not to allow non-residents to buy daytime permits, with revenue set aside for neighborhood investments

Ensure RPP Schedule and Calendar respond to relevant conditions in each zone.

Some streets/zones may only need RPP during summer months; others may experience year-round impacts that should be addressed.

- Ensure that time-of-day and days-of-the-week schedules for RPP regulations align with periods of significant impact.
- Allow options for seasonal and year-round RPP regulations.

Address blocks with significant non-residential uses.

Address issues related to blocks with significant, non-residential uses, such as schools.

- Clarify that the majority-support threshold is based on share of households, not share of property ownership.
- Where non-residential uses do not abut residential uses, exempt the block-faces abutting the non-residential uses from RPP regulation.
 - So, for example, the sides of Seventh and Eighth streets abutting Central School could remain regulated to support school functions, while RPP regulations are in place on the opposite block-faces, to preserve residential access during times of significant school activity.

Require Determination of Need for expanding, or creating new, RPP zones.

Many cities, including Austin, TX and Washington, DC, conduct field surveys in areas that have successfully petitioned for new RPP streets/zones. These surveys are used to determine if there is a need to improve availability for residents, and whether or not non-residential parking demand is significant factor in reduced availability.

- Require demonstration of need as a step in the implementation process for establishing RPP regulations on new blocks.
 - Set a utilization threshold of 75% for proposed blocks/zones
 - Set a non-resident utilization threshold of 25%

Invest in License Plate Reader technology.

License Plate Readers (LPR) can significantly improve enforcement while also generating an ongoing stream of data to track occupancy measures, and availability/utilization patterns across downtown.

- These can also facilitate RPP programs, by removing the need for physical permits, including guest permits, as resident and visitor vehicles can be registered by license plates.

Explore Digital Validation options.

Businesses concerned about the impact of performance-based pricing during high-demand seasons, can use validation codes to their customers, who can use these codes at digital meters/kiosks or via pay-by-phone to pay for parking.

- Approach the City’s pay-by-phone vendor about the potential to develop validation codes for this purpose.

SHORT-TERM PRIORITIES

Following is a list of recommended short-term implementation priorities – Strategies that promise meaningful improvement opportunities, but may require a bit more time and/or coordination with external implementation partners, and may encounter some moderate implementation barriers.

Formalize a Performance-Based Management approach.

TCPS uses pricing as a primary means of distributing parking demand more broadly across its downtown parking system, using lower rates to shift some parking activity away from the high-demand core.

- Following is a series of recommendations to formalize this approach, to create more transparency, clarity, and understanding regarding how, why, and when parking rates, regulations, and restrictions are established and adjusted.

Formally define Availability as the primary performance measure for parking management in downtown.

- For visitor parking, define Availability as the number of empty parking spaces available, at any given time, along individual block faces and within individual off-street parking facilities.

- For commuter/resident parking, define Availability as the number of long-term parking permits (daily or monthly) available for off-street parking facilities.

Monitor Performance.

Track occupancy/availability conditions across the TCPS parking system, using data-tracking technologies, as may be available, as well as field surveys.

- This should include all off-street facilities, all metered on-street blocks, and residential blocks known to attract significant parking demand (which is likely to change, seasonally).
- Take measures monthly, or more frequently as may be viable.
- Track findings against defined performance targets

Define performance targets.

Targeted availability conditions:

- On-street parking: 15% of spaces are available, or about 1-2 spaces on each block-face
- Off-street, hourly parking: 10% of spaces are available
- Off-street, long-term parking: 5% of spaces are available, with no wait list for monthly permits.

Define thresholds for management change.

Thresholds for rate increases:

- On-street parking: Availability averages less than 10%, over three months of measures during peak-demand periods
- Off-street, hourly parking: Availability averages less than 5%, over three months of measures during peak-demand periods
- Off-street, long-term parking: Wait lists are established, with applicant wait-times lasting more than three months.

Threshold for rate decreases:

- For all types of parking: Peak-period availability averages less than 50%

Expand employee-parking options.

Broker shared-parking arrangements to allow evening employees to use private lots that offer excess capacity at suitable times.

- Lots associated with the Record Eagle, the Visitors Center, 401 West Front Street, CMH, and Coldwell Banker are examples of strong candidate location/business combinations.

Seek Park-Once synergies.

Prioritize Pedestrians

Seek traffic-control policy changes that will make walking distances feel shorter, and thus encourage more walking and less driving for local travel. These should include:

- Disallowing right turns on RED signals.⁶
- Establishing Leading Pedestrian Intervals.⁷

Establish a public bike-share program.

Bike-share is a highly effective first-mile/last-mile mobility resource that can connect peripheral parking facilities to downtown destinations, and make getting around all of downtown easier without a car.

- Cycling season coincides with seasons of peak parking demand, making bike-share an asset for supporting Park Once when its demand-reduction benefit is most valuable.

Partner with BATA on the planned Downtown Circulator.

Work with BATA to ensure that the planned downtown circulator functions as a Park Once amenity across the downtown. A high-frequency, downtown-focused service could help connect more peripheral parking locations to primary downtown destinations, and better connect the downtown core to emerging districts, like those in the Old Town area and around Garland Street.

Potential improvements could include:

- More one-seat rides through interlining or redesign – If the system can be designed so that the same physical bus serves two different routes, it increases the ability of users to make longer trips without having to transfer.
- Higher frequencies along priority corridors – 30-minute headways offer the lowest frequency at which transit users find the bus *somewhat* convenient.
 - Increasing frequency improves that feeling of convenience for users and increases the likelihood of them using the service.
 - Two routes that overlap along a particular corridor can be coordinated to offer more-frequent service within the overlap zone.
- Simplified service – to make service intuitive, logical, and easy to understand. Guidelines to simplify service include, but are not limited to:
 - Routes should operate along a direct path
 - Route deviations should be minimized
 - Major routes should operate along arterials
 - Routes should be symmetrical
 - Service should be consistent

Establish a clearer and more comprehensive park-n-ride program.

- Dedicated, safe, and visible park-and-ride lots have been an effective strategy for many small- and medium-sized cities to attract commuters and visitors to transit who would otherwise need to pay expensive parking costs or struggle to find parking near their destinations.

⁶ <https://nextcity.org/daily/entry/cities-pedestrian-safety-ban-right-turns-on-red>

⁷ <https://nacto.org/publication/urban-street-design-guide/intersection-design-elements/traffic-signals/leading-pedestrian-interval/>

- BATA does not have formalized park-n-ride lots or a park-n-ride program similar to its Bike-n-Ride and Ski-n-Ride programs.
- Strategically located lots that are well lighted and maintained, and offer amenities similar to large bus stops, along with free or low-cost parking, transit pass options, and convenient bus service can attract new riders and reduce the need for specific employer shuttles and additional parking garages.

Shift toward monthly permits as the primary/only commuter permit format.

Effective January 1, 2018, the City will no longer offer annual parking permits. This is an important change that helps support TDM efforts.

- The City should continue in this direction by eliminating quarterly permits within two years, supported by technology and online resources to ease permit purchases and renewals.
- Monthly permits will amplify the potential effectiveness of season permit rates, intended to incentivize commute-mode shifts during months of peak visitor-parking demand.
 - Conversely, quarterly permits are more difficult to price seasonally, and create a “sunk cost” effect on daily commute-mode decisions that favors driving alone.
- Consider moving toward a drawdown-permit/account, like the City of Boulder’s Cash Pass, which was instituted to remove sunk-cost incentives to drive that “unlimited parking” passes can create.⁸

Develop a Guaranteed Ride Home benefit.

Many would-be transit riders or carpoolers continue to drive to work out of concern that they might not be able to reach a sick child, or go home sick, or that their ride home may have to leave early or work late. A GRH benefit can effectively address these concerns, at a modest cost, as the frequency of use tends to be quite low.⁹

- Provide registered, non-driving commuters with a modest allowance of free rides, using taxis or ride services, for when unexpected circumstances impact travel needs/options.
 - There may be a unique opportunity to partner with Traverse City’s innovative ride-service company, TransportHer, to be the primary provider of benefit rides.
 - This, in turn, would help establish this new service, which can reduce auto-dependence among downtown employees, residents, and visitors.

Develop Park Once zoning strategies.

Park Once Development can be defined as land-use and economic expansion that relies primarily on a central, shared pool of spaces, rather than a series of privately-controlled, on-site facilities. Such an approach reduces parking activity by decoupling the use of parking facilities from one’s destination, allowing most parkers to move about the area without having to re-park their cars. The most important zoning strategy for supporting Park Once development is removing minimum parking requirements, something the City accomplished decades ago. Following is a series of recommendations that can build upon this, to discourage the expansion of parking supplies that do not support Park Once.

⁸ <https://boulder.colorado.gov/parking-services/downtown-parking-garages>

⁹ <https://nctr.usf.edu/jpt/pdf/JPT%2010-4%20Menczer.pdf>

Establish code maximums on on-site parking.

- Allow developers to exceed maximums by:
 - Shared-parking commitments
 - Unbundling all residential parking
 - Contributions to a City fund for investments in public parking, mobility, and TDM

Encourage developers to purchase parking permits, rather than providing on-site parking.

- Allow the long-term commitment to provide TCPS permits to satisfy any remaining minimum parking requirements in and around downtown.

Add bike-parking requirements for downtown development.

Cycling is an essential asset for reducing parking demand during downtown’s peak and shoulder seasons, freeing up more spaces for the influx of visitor vehicles during these months. Cycling is the most popular alternative to driving among downtown commuters. One of the most common barriers to a cycling commute is the lack of secure, sheltered parking options at places of employment. The zoning code can reduce this barrier by ensuring that appropriate parking facilities are provided at all new downtown commercial and mixed-use projects. And, unlike minimum requirement for auto-parking spaces, these requirements typically do not create cost barriers to downtown development.

- Include distinctions between short-term (outdoor racks) and long-term (indoor or outdoor shelters, lockers, rooms, etc.) facility requirements

Explore Fleet-Sharing strategies.¹⁰

Coordinate with City of Traverse City on the potential to use fleet-sharing services to:

- Reduce the City’s fleet-maintenance costs, and
- Help lure a car-share provider to the Traverse City market.

Establish more bike corrals.

Corrals on secondary streets may help raise the profile of cycling as a means of accessing downtown, particularly during summer peaks.

- “Approach” blocks along Union Street, Cass Street, Park Street, and Boardman Avenue provide an ideal opportunity to capture the attention of cyclists as they reach the edge of the downtown core.

Explore the City’s Joint Development opportunities and advantages.

Absorb lessons from peer experiences.

- Study evolving best practices among peer cities like Grand Rapids and Ann Arbor.
 - Ensure that TCPS and the City do not undervalue the benefits that such partnerships could present to private investors.
 - Press this advantage to ensure optimal benefits for the TCPS parking program.

¹⁰ <https://www.fastfleet.net/about> <http://www.fleetshare.com/>

Continue to reinvest parking revenues to fund synergistic downtown/mobility improvements.

Priority consideration should be given to the following potential investments that would directly support TDM efforts.

- Co-funding a downtown circulator service
- Co-funding a downtown employee bus-pass program
- Co-funding a downtown bike-share program
- Co-funding complete-streets, street design projects

Formalize a Parking-Benefit District approach to investing parking revenues.

TCPS uses parking revenue to fund public benefits like sidewalk snow clearance and public bike racks and shelters. Formalizing this approach into a codified Parking Benefit District program will ensure that parking revenues (minus expenses) are fully captured for investment in local, public improvements.

- Promote this Benefit District approach to raise awareness of the local benefits provided by parking revenues.
- Ensure that benefits include non-driving mobility and commuter-benefit investments that can reduce parking demand (and, thus, performance-based rates).
- Provide annual updates on key investments made with parking revenues within an annual Performance-Based Management report.

Refine escalating parking-violation fine structure for overtime and non-payment parking violations.

Start with a modest fine for second offenses

- Double the fine for each subsequent offense.

Invest in enforcement technology.

License Plate Readers can streamline compliance monitoring for payment, time-limit, and permit-based regulations.

- While monitoring, readers also generate data that can be used to track occupancy/availability conditions.

COMPLEMENTARY STRATEGIES

Following is a list of strategies that should be implemented largely in support of, and/or as expansions to, Quick Win and Short-Term Priority recommendations.

Expand employee-parking options, via daytime permits for RPP streets.

Once an RPP program has been implemented and shown to be effective, seek zones/neighborhoods willing to pilot a program in which daytime permits are sold to area employees.

- These permits can be limited to specific streets/blocks with significant daytime capacities.
- The number of permits offer can also be controlled to mitigate against reduced availability on any street or block.

Explore Transit Benefit options.

As transit improvements increase the viability and appeal of transit commuting, ensuring that this option is significantly cheaper than parking may become a highly-effective TDM investment.

- Complemented with seasonal permit rates, this could be very effective during months of high visitor-parking demand, creating more hourly parking capacity in the process.
- Work with the City and DDA-constituent businesses to explore options for collectively funding a bus-pass program for all downtown employees.
 - This could be modeled on the Ann Arbor DDA go!pass program.
 - A new model is emerging in Columbus, Ohio where downtown businesses have agreed to pay an assessment to provide this employee benefit to all downtown employees.¹¹

Develop a Public Valet program.

As a component of the Performance-Based parking management, Public Valet is particularly well suited to address the challenges of exceptionally high demand conditions – including seasonal and event peaks. In contrast to the typical valet service, which is linked to a specific destination, or set of destinations, a Public Valet is open to all drivers, thus making it a viable parking option for all visitors and a means of accessing any downtown destination.

- Pilot a program that uses blocks of on-street parking for a public valet service, accelerating turnover of these spaces, while using off-street facilities with excess capacity to accommodate valeted cars.
- Valet stations located along Pine Street and East Front Street, at the periphery of the downtown core, would provide high convenience to drivers, and could make use of nearby private facilities with excess capacity.

Ease time limits.

As performance-based pricing is established as an effective, primary management tool for maintaining hourly-parking availability, ease or eliminate time limits to improve the downtown parking experience.

- Begin by removing time limits for off-street lots during evenings and weekends.
- Remove time limits for additional off-street lots as performance-based pricing and enforcement strategies begin to prove effective in achieving availability performance targets.
- As on-street availability becomes more consistent, through pricing strategies, increase the time limits on most blocks.
 - Another option is to remove time limits, and instead create a progressive rate structure that would incentivize turnover by making the 2nd hour of parking more expensive than the first, and the 3rd hour more expensive than the 2nd, and so on.

Provide high-amenity bus stops within activity centers.

Attractive and accommodating bus stops can raise the perceived appeal of available transit services. Conversely, bus stops with minimal amenities create a perception that local bus services

¹¹ <https://www.citylab.com/transportation/2017/08/downtown-columbus-will-buy-bus-rides-for-workers/536088/>

are not widely used and likely not very effective for common travel needs. Key amenities for improving service to existing customers, and attracting new riders, include the following:

- Sheltered waiting areas with seating and lighting
- Fare and boarding information
- Mapped routes with connecting service information
- Waste bins
- Functional and aesthetic integration into the streetscape

LONGER-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS

Following is a list of recommended strategies with longer-term implementation expectations – Strategies that will require significant time and/or coordination with external implementation partners, and may encounter significant implementation barriers.

Use Information, Signage, Wayfinding, and Branding to encourage broader use of all public parking options.

Combine the TCPS branding with a color scheme to mark commuter, premium hourly, standard hourly, and perhaps discount hourly parking locations; Curb markings and/or meter decals could also similarly guide drivers toward lower/higher parking-rate options.

Figure 17 Branding + Color Scheme Guide Drivers to Right-Fit Parking Options



Image: Downtown Sacramento Partnership

Support Park Once through street-design interventions.

Use streetscape and street-design interventions to improve pedestrian, bike, and transit circulation throughout downtown, including:

- Better street-crossing facilities for pedestrians.
- Protected bike lanes for cyclists.
- Curb-extensions and passenger amenities at bus stops for downtown transit.

Develop TDM standards for downtown development.

Establish requirements and/or incentives to include TDM strategies in downtown projects, not limited to the following.

- Unbundled parking (parking is an optional cost added to housing, commercial space)

- Car-share parking (when a provider service is operating downtown)
- Showers and changing facilities (non-residential uses)
- On-site space for a bike-share station (when a program is established)
- Funding toward improvement/expansion of bike-share infrastructure (when a program is established)
- Bus-pass benefits for residents/tenants

Pilot a Parking Partners program.

Once pay-by-phone has been established as a Shared Parking brokerage tool, work with private-facility owners to pilot a Parking Partners program that allows TCPS to incorporate partner parking facilities into a distinct component of the TCPS system, creating a sense of cohesion and authenticity among these shared facilities that can increase their use by the general driving public.

- Use pay-by-phone to allow facility owners to charge for use of their shared facilities.
- This will also make these parking options clearer and provide a legitimizing consistency among these spaces, by using the same pay-by-phone signage and decals as used for TCPS parking spaces.
- Develop an outreach process for engaging early partnerships.
- Establish a user-friendly, web-based widget for private facility owners to inquire formally about participating in the program.