

City of Eau Claire Parking Study Findings and Recommendations

December 18, 2024

DRAFT



Study Background

- Downton Eau Claire has had steady growth over the past two decades
- Parking and underutilized spaces have been developed into other land uses
 - Development opportunities and interest
- Older parking structures have become obsolete
- Community concern over parking supply
- Cost of operating the parking system a growing concern



Study Objectives (from RFP)

- Recommend strategies to maximize the use of available parking.
- Recommend strategies to improve the accessibility of convenient parking for visitors to the CBD.
- Recommend strategies to minimize the negative impacts of surface parking lots.
- Recommend strategies to improve existing parking facilities and plan for future parking improvements and possible locations for future parking assets as existing surface parking lots are redeveloped.
- Explore and discuss public-private partnerships for parking assets, parking enforcement, and parking operations.
- Evaluate the feasibility of parking benefit districts.
- Recommend emerging technologies that improve customer service and enforcement efforts.
- Recommend strategies to include autonomous vehicle growth.
- Recommend parking rates that encourage effective use of parking infrastructure.
- Recommend strategies to provide revenue to recover parking costs.
- Recommend strategies for more efficient parking operations.

Study Process – On-Site

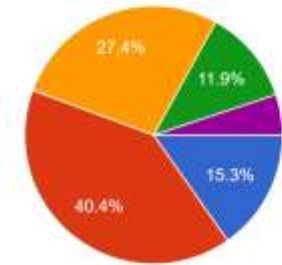
- **Observe daily operations and planning**
 - Conducted limited parking occupancy counts
- **Met with BIDS**
 - South Barstow
 - North Barstow
 - Grand Ave.
 - Water St.
- **One-on-One interviews**
 - Business owners, interested citizens, City Council members
- **Public open house on parking**
- **Chamber of Commerce breakfast on homelessness**



Information Review

- DECI parking survey from February 2024
- Parking system financial information
- Eau Claire Comprehensive Plan and other documents
- Pipeline projects and potential development sites
- Parking policies, operational plans, initiatives
- 2019 Parking Study
- Comparable communities evaluation

If you drove, how long did it take you to find parking?
2,622 responses

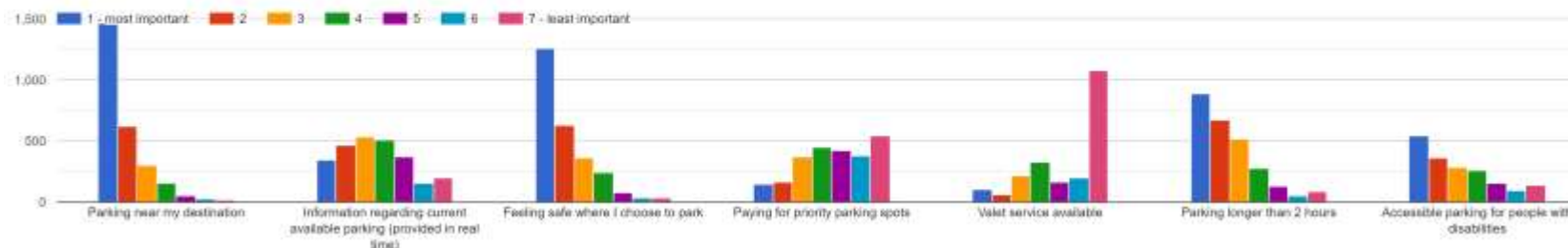


- no time, I find a spot right away
- 5 minutes or less
- 10 minutes or less
- 10+ minutes
- I didn't drive on my most recent visit

Parking Survey Results (DECI February 2024)

- Parking near my destination and feeling safe are high priorities
- Visitors
 - 93.3% drove - alone (68.5%) or carpooled (24.8%)
 - 80% felt it was difficult (moderately to extremely) to find parking
 - 79.3% parked on-street
- 95.9% of employees drive alone to work

As it pertains to parking, which characteristics are most important? (rank in order of priority - 1 being most important and 7 being least important)



Findings

Current Parking

- **Free, time-limited, on-street parking**
 - 2 hours throughout most of downtown
 - 6am – 6pm – 7 days per week
 - Block face parking restrictions to limit re-parking
- **Paid off-street parking**
 - \$.50 - \$1.00 per hour
 - 24 hours – 7 days per week
- **Administration**
 - Engineering
 - Off-street parking operations and facility Maintenance
 - Neighborhood services – enforcement
 - Police – appeals and spot enforcement coverage
 - City Managers Office – support



Eau Claire Parking Policy Implications

- Premium (location) parking spaces are also the least expensive (good intention of giving the best parking for free to incentivize patronage)
 - Free, time-limited, on-street parking
- **Current policy makes other parking options unattractive**
 - Off-street parking is further away, has a cost, and is perceived as possibly unsafe
- **The average patron considers on-street parking as the only reasonable parking option**
 - Effectively limits the consumed parking supply to a fraction of the total spaces that are available
 - Creates the perception that downtown parking is difficult to find, even though there are open spaces in downtown at most times

Parking Occupancy

- 2019 Parking Study – pre-COVID

- Daytime
 - Off-street – 45%
 - On-street – 44%
- Friday evening
 - Off-street – 29%
 - On-street – 49%



- 2024 spot checks

- Daytime
 - Off-street – N/A
 - On-street – 43%
- Weekend evening
 - Off-street – 18%
 - On-street – 48%
- Core area of downtown (Madison St. to Lake St.)
 - Weekend evening
 - Off-street – 20%
 - On-street – 57%
- Barstow St. and Graham Ave. (South Barstow)
 - Weekend evening
 - On-street – 81%

Parking Occupancy

- On-street parking in core areas can feel full during the day and on busy evenings
- The parking structures are currently underutilized – under 50% as a whole
- Currently there is ample parking supply to meet the needs of the community – it is located in the parking structures, and lots outside the core of downtown
- Two parking structures – Riverside and Gibson are scheduled for demolition over the next three years
 - 525 parking spaces will be removed
 - Parking supply could be an issue

Potential Parking Supply Changes

Eau Claire Parking Land Use Considerations			
Available Public Parking			
Address / Site / Project	Public Parking Spaces	Potential New Parking Supply	Potential Change in Parking Supply
Gibson St. Ramp	405	250	-155
Riverside Ramp	119	0	-119
202 Graham Lot	115	115	0
308 Graham Lot	63	63	0
Four Corners Lot	32	32	0
Schlegelmilch Lot	60	0	-60
Transit Center Garage	43	70	27
Gibson and Dewey Lot	60	60	0
Farwell St. Reconstruction	0	25	25
	897	615	-282

 = Planned

Building Land Uses	Current Parking Demand	Potential New Parking Demand	Change in Parking Demand
Graham Riverside	145	200	55
200 Riverfront Terrace	140	285	145
JAMF Building	125	250	125
Galloway Deck liner building	0	25	25
202 Graham	0	150	150
308 Graham	0	150	150
448 Graham (Riverside Ramp)	0	100	100
Schlegelmilch Lot	0	0	0
	410	1160	Total 750

- Development of parking lots and increased occupancy of existing buildings could change the parking equation

Parking Supply Changes

- Weekend evening – 600-800 available parking spaces off-street
 - On-street parking is well utilized (feels full)
- Possible reduction in parking approximately 300 spaces
- Potential growth in parking demand approximately 750 vehicles
- Shortage up to 550 parking spaces when/if plans come to fruition
 - Shortage could happen along Barstow and Graham, where it is most needed
- Changes to parking supply happen one project at a time – regular monitoring of occupancy levels is essential





Off-Street Public Parking Supply

-  City Own / Operate
-  Private

Fall 2024



Off-Street Public Parking Supply

-  City Own / Operate
-  Private
-  Development Site

Short-Term Future Condition



Off-Street Public Parking Supply

-  City Own / Operate
-  Private
-  Development Site

*Future with Additional
Development Opportunities*

The Gibson Ramp

- 405 spaces
- Supports
 - 112 hotel rooms at The Lismore (Parking Demand – 120 vehicles)
 - 14,000 sq ft of banquet space (Parking Demand – 84 spaces)
 - 27 residential units at Barstow Commons (Parking Demand – 35 spaces)
 - Events at the Pablo Center
 - Numerous businesses and organizations in the South Bartow district
- Scheduled for demolition in 2026 and construction of replacement structure completed in 2028
- South Barstow district needs the off-street parking supply in this area to support existing businesses and future growth

Parking System Finances

- **Annual revenue under \$800,000**
 - Ramps and lots
 - \$500,000 - \$650,000 annually in permits and daily parking
 - Over \$100,000 annually transferred to North Barstow TID (North Barstow Ramp)
 - Citations – downtown and across the city (amount varies annually)
 - Downtown - \$70,000 - \$85,000, *Rest of city – over \$200,000*
 - Other revenue – app fees, property sale
- **Annual operating expenses over \$1 million (CIP not included)**
 - Payroll, snow and ice, utilities, contract services, supplies, etc.
 - City annually transfers \$200,000 - \$250,000 to Parking Utility from General Fund to cover operating expenses
 - Projected 2025 deficit - \$354,000, proper allocation of housekeeping staff
- **City anticipates spending \$20 million in parking CIP through 2028**

Parking System Financial Implications



- The City is subsidizing parking to help draw people downtown
- Some visitors are not Eau Claire taxpayers. Parking is “Free” for them, but people living in Eau Claire are paying through taxes
- The parking financial deficit encourages deferred maintenance, reduced staffing, and limiting services
 - Not just for parking, but other services as well

Parking Operations and Administration

- **Engineering manages off-street parking**
 - Employee permits
 - Hourly
 - Residential permits
- **Neighborhood Services conducts on-street enforcement (January 2024)**
 - LPR technology for measuring time limits
 - Focus on downtown, but responsible for entire city
 - One staff member, 20-30 hours per week
- **Police manage appeals and provide coverage for enforcement gaps**
- **Infrastructure Committee brings forward community needs**

Parking Leadership

- Parking leadership is not clearly defined internally or to the community
- Tasks dispersed across multiple departments
- Staff has done a good job managing tasks
- No one is focused on operational cohesion and strategic planning
 - Multiple needs, tight budgets, legacy operations
- Adaptation to changing conditions, technology, and community demands requires focus

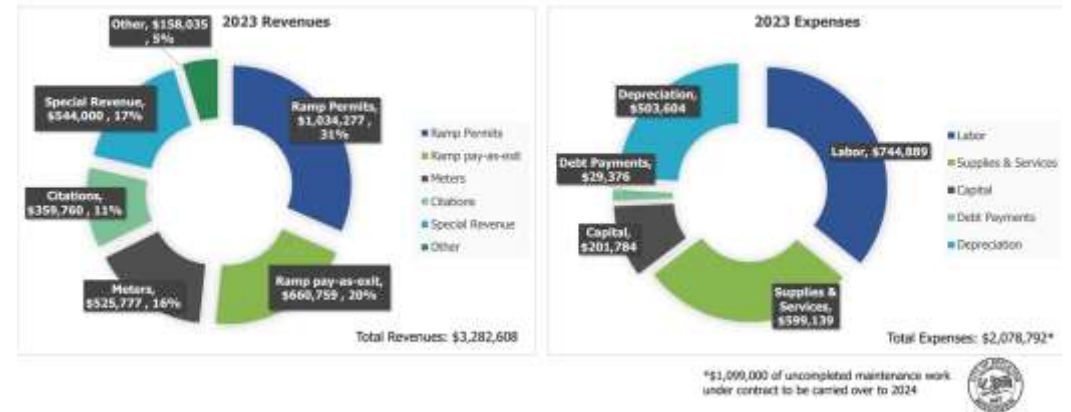


Comparable Communities

La Crosse, Oshkosh, Janesville, Appleton, Green Bay

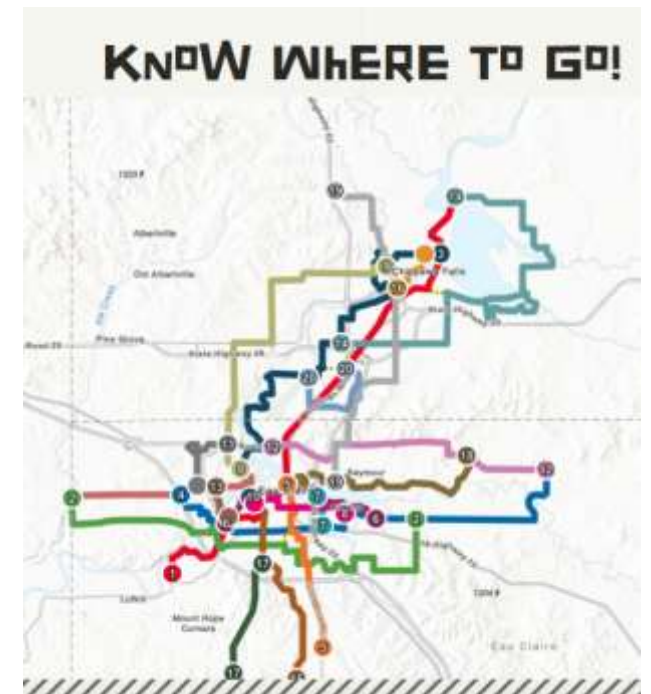
- La Crosse, Janesville offer free / time limited parking on-street
 - Janesville does not charge for off-street
- Appleton and Green Bay charge both on-street and off-street
- Community transportation habits are similar
 - Drive alone rate – La Crosse 70.8% (L), Janesville 81.3% (H), Eau Claire 78.2%
- Appleton has strongest financial situation – self supporting, others require contribution from General Fund

2023 Financial Overview



Alternative Transportation

- Good connectivity with bike paths (local and regional), sidewalks, and transit
- Bicycle Friendly Community – 6,700 bicycle parking spaces
- Emphasis on pedestrian and bicycle access in 2015 Comprehensive Plan
- Weather is a factor for year-round usage
- The community embraces bicycling and walking opportunities across the city.



SWOT

- **Strengths**

- Growing and vibrant downtown embraced by community
- Private investment into downtown continues
- Community infrastructure – farmers market, bike paths, parks, Pablo Center, etc.
- Alternative transportation infrastructure

- **Weaknesses**

- Parking leadership not clearly defined
- Parking rate policy has created uneven user behavior
- On-street parking policies have become complicated with block face parking and related policies
- “Free parking” is the only value perceived by the public



SWOT

- **Opportunities**

- Three riverfront parcels available
- Gibson and Riverfront parking scheduled for demolition
- Farwell St. traffic study options
- Environment for change is ripe

- **Threats**

- Parking system finances and budget pressures
 - Cost to rebuild parking supply
- Trepidation over paid on-street parking and changes to parking operations
- Concern over safety in parking ramps



Eau Claire Parking Summary / Context

- **Continued downtown growth and investment**
 - Parking lots are prime locations for continued densification
 - Three riverfront properties available in next few years
 - Residential development continues to be the leading market
 - Desire for downtown day resource center
- **COVID and other factors continue to (re)shape downtown**
 - Less daily office workers and 8-5 employees
 - Evolution into a community gathering / entertainment district
 - PABLO, Lismore, and other activities create event traffic
 - Concerts, farmers market, festivals
 - Evenings are a key component of downtown now and into the foreseeable future

Eau Claire Parking Summary / Context (Cont.)

- **Public feels that finding parking is challenging (DECI 2024 Survey)**
 - 80% of patrons rated it moderately difficult to very difficult to find parking
 - 58.7% reported leaving downtown without finding a space
 - Safety is a concern
- **Parking assets are going away**
 - Multiple parking lots sold / developed over the past several years
 - Gibson and Riverside ramps due for demolition in next three years
- **“Free” on-street parking is costing city taxpayers \$250,000 annually**
- **Significant capital spending decisions are necessary regarding parking**

Focusing Policy



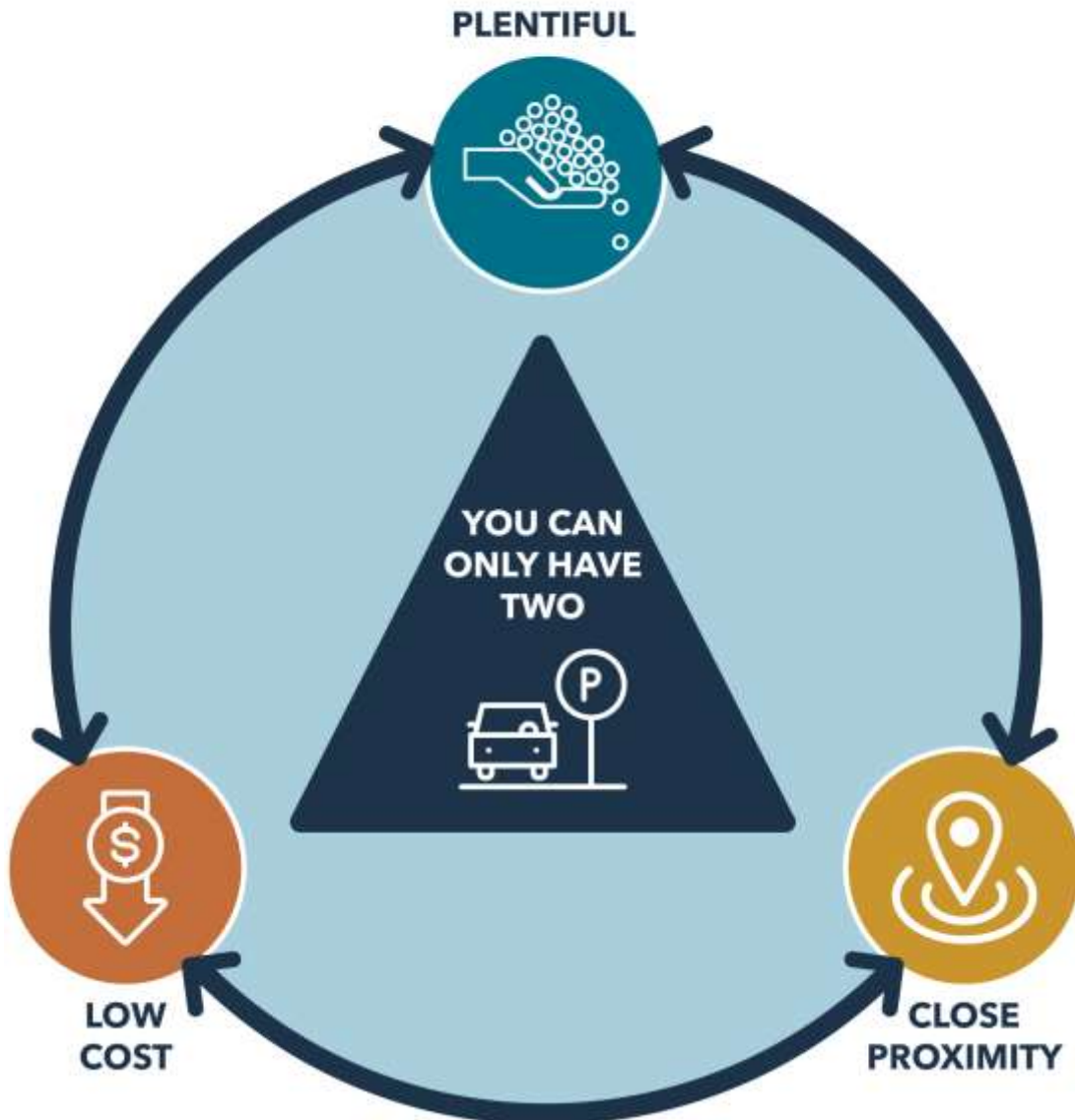
Defining Goals – The Parking System....

- Exists to support the community and help make Eau Claire a great place to visit, work, and live
- Promotes economic vitality of the BID's
- Will be financially sound and self-sustaining
- Provides operational excellence that minimizes complaints to staff and Council
- Plans for the future parking and mobility needs of the community
- Is flexible to adjust as community needs change over time

Managing Parking Supply

- Time limits are a broadly used parking management tool, but can be difficult to deploy efficiently
 - Vehicles have to be verified twice (arrival and violation)
 - Remedy is punitive (citations), creating conflict
 - Creates game of cat and mouse – implementing block face parking rules
- Parking rates are another tool for managing the parking supply while offering the patron choice on where to park
- Generally, a choice driven approach manages supply most effectively
 - Most desired parking is the most expensive
 - Reasonably priced employee parking in off-street lots and garages
 - Free / low-cost parking on the perimeter and suitable alternative transportation

THE PARKING PARADIGM



Parking Supply Dynamics

- Plentiful – more than 50 spaces
- Close proximity – within 200 feet
- Low cost – No cost to patrons, and low cost for Owner to build and maintain
- Downtowns cannot have all three characteristics simultaneously

Rate Policy and Patron Behavior

- Where someone parks is a series of decisions made by the patron
- How close do I need to be to my final destination?
 - Mobility or walking issues
 - Carrying items to destination
 - Time spent at destination (is the walk longer than the stop?)
- How much am I willing to pay to park?
 - *Premium* – location is my most important criteria, willing to pay for it
 - *Reasonable* – parking is a service I need and I am willing to pay something
 - *Free* – I am price sensitive and willing to walk blocks, use alternative transportation, or get dropped off / picked up

Assumptions Guiding Recommendations

- The City will take a lead role in parking policy and supply management
- Policy will align with the City's Comprehensive Plan
- Walkability and safety are core components of effective parking policy
- A large majority of people will still drive over the next 25 years, even though:
 - Alternative transportation, EV and AV's, and a robust bicycling / walking culture are growing elements of regional transportation
- There needs to be sufficient public parking to support vitality and growth. A shortage of parking would negatively impact economic conditions.

Framework of Policy Changes

- Parking responsibility is spread across several departments. Coordination of policy, operations, and leadership is needed.
- Changes to public parking will be explained to the community, implemented on a planned schedule, and support community goals.
- The city is operating the public parking system with an annual deficit that is only likely to increase. This is not sustainable fiscal policy for Eau Claire taxpayers.
- Land uses, parker behavior, and economic conditions continually change. The parking system must remain flexible and support the needs of the community now and into the future.

Recommendations

Focused on North Barstow and South Barstow BID Boundaries

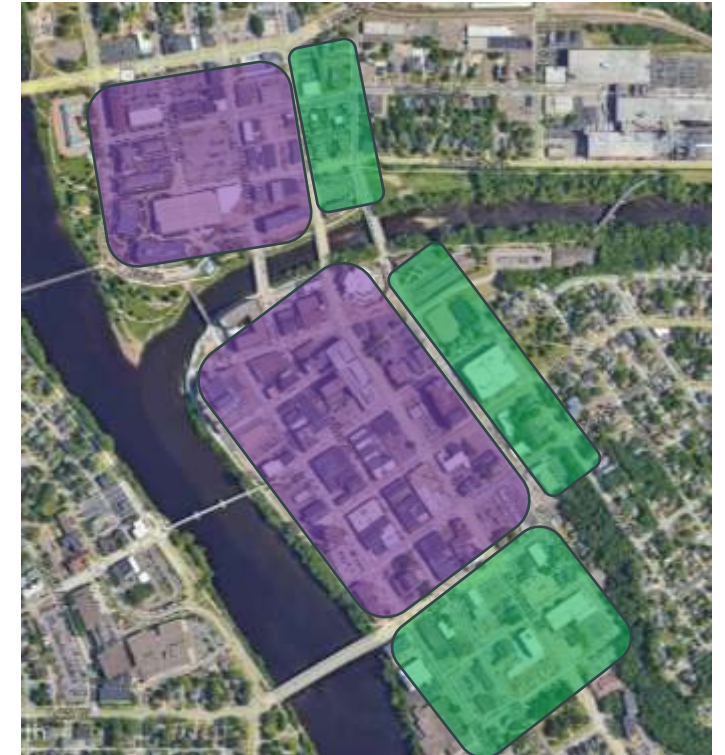


A RESET of Parking Policy and Operations

- **Changes in the community require a new approach**
 - New buildings and development, planned parking structure demolition, new community gathering spaces, department leadership
- **Parking policy should reflect goals**
- **Rate structure that supports on-street parking availability and employee/residential parking needs**
- **Administrative/operational structure providing leadership and operational excellence**
- **Plan for future parking supply to meet growth demands**

On-Street Parking

- On-street parking with hourly rates to promote turnover and availability
 - \$1 per hour
 - No time limits enforced – rates promote turnover
 - Hours from 9 am to 9 pm, Monday – Saturday
- **Prime locations** should have the highest rates
- Lower rates **outside the core** of downtown
 - \$.50 per hour
 - Monitor over time to address vehicle migration to lower cost areas
- Adjust rates for inflation every three years
- Loading zones for loading and short-term use (Uber, doordash, etc.)



Off-Street Parking

- Off-street parking priced for longer stays, employees, residents, and those who don't want to search for a space on-street
- **Parking Ramps**
 - Charge during peak hours, 9am-midnight, Mon - Sat
 - One hour free - \$.75 per hour thereafter
 - Charge non-payers based on license plate reads, not just whether they are cited
 - Daily max price - \$10
 - Employee, residential parking priced to accommodate varying needs
 - Maintain rate schedule for employees and residents
- **Adjust rates with inflation**
 - Permits annually
 - Hourly rates annually

Off-Street Parking Lots

- Four Corners Lot – maintain \$1 per hour rate, change time to 9am – midnight
- Riverview Lot – maintain rates and hours
- Main St. Lot – \$.50 per hour, 9am – 6 pm
- Schlegelmilch – Low cost permit parking when ready
 - Schlegelmilch Lot is a likely development site, plan for loss of parking supply and revenue over the next few years
- Seaver St. Lot – maintain rates and hours
- Bring private parking lots into the public parking inventory when possible (current Four Corners lot)



Enforcement Policy

- Consistent but not overbearing presence. Goal is to catch habitual offenders, while helping visitors find easy to use parking
- Enforcement staff reports to Parking Director
 - Full-time enforcement position with back-up for off days (can assist city-wide)
 - Increased presence in off-street facilities with permits / hourly rates
- Citation fines and fees
 - \$20 Expired Meter fine for on-street
 - Void one meter ticket per 6 months upon request, no appeal necessary
 - Maintain unpaid citation increases and registration hold
 - Promote quick and easy online citation payment

Effects of Parking Rate Changes

- Utilize parking pricing to reach allocation goals – changes public perception regarding the amount of available public parking
 - Visitors have open parking spaces
 - Employees have reliable parking with pricing options
 - People can attend events without concern for parking supply
- Encourages use of off-street parking for longer stays and employees
- There is a risk of pushing price sensitive parkers to edges of downtown or into neighborhoods
 - Needs to be monitored over time. May happen initially and recede.
- **Private parking lot owners will act to maximize their assets (a good thing)**
 - Charge for parking and bring underutilized spaces into the market
 - Tighten No Parking rules to assure their patrons have a space
 - Should maximize parking utilization across the city – limiting empty asphalt!

Technology

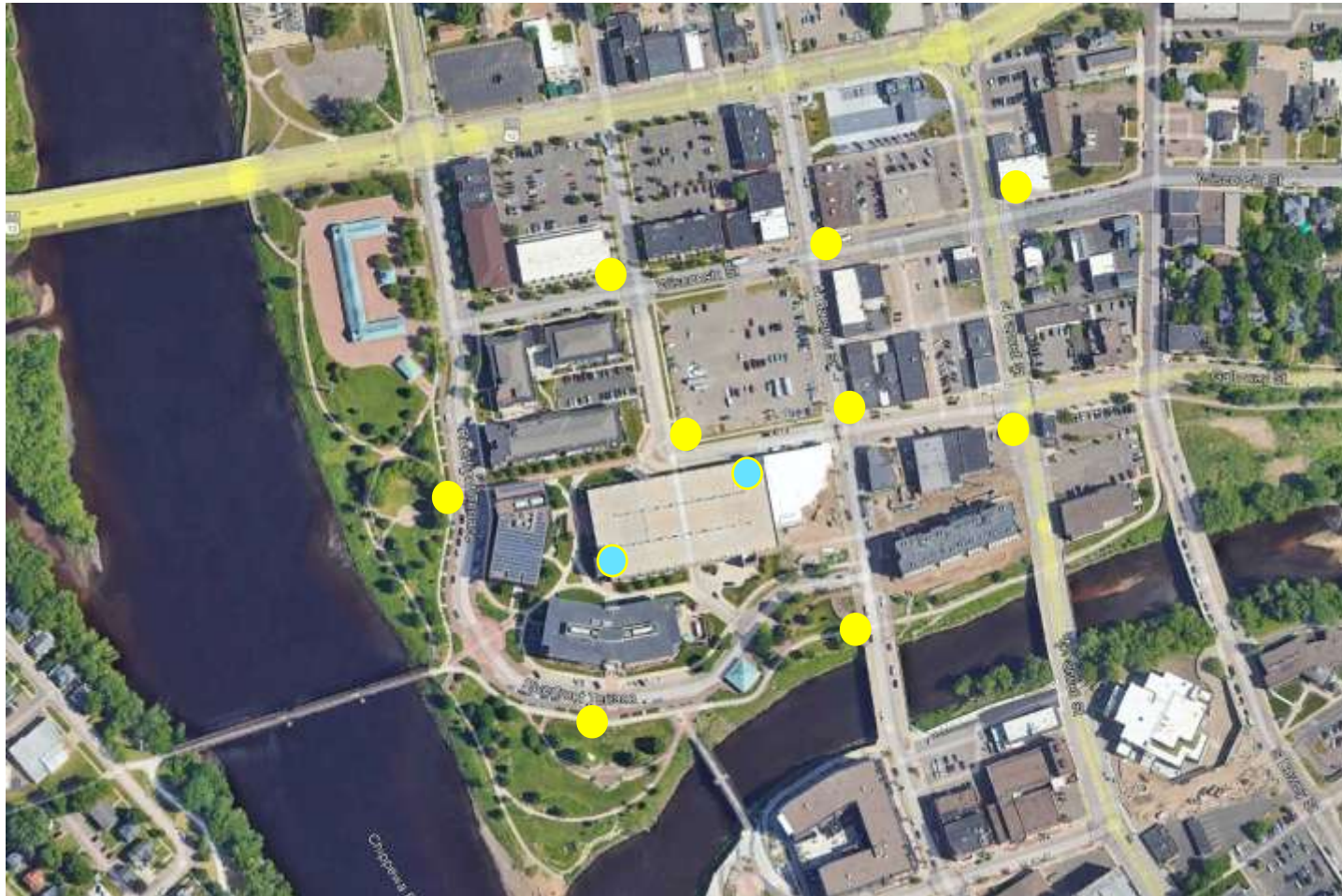
- On-street pay stations similar to those currently used in parking structures (familiarity)
 - Mobile app payments will grow steadily over time
- Determine whether to use current payment vendor (Passport web solutions utilizing Flowbird hardware) or issue RFP for a new vendor team
 - Avoid different technology / payment providers for on-street and off-street
 - Coordinate with UWEC and CVTC if possible – one app across the community
- Online payment of permits, citations, validations, and event passes
- First 30 days – enforcement staff assists patrons in signing up for mobile app, loading information, practicing on paystations, etc.
 - May issue some warning citations, but a slow roll-out with light enforcement



Paystations



- Paystation investment of \$600,000 to \$800,000
- Strategic locations and routes to destinations
- Promote use of mobile app for patron convenience
 - Parking and mobility operations will continue to trend toward greater use of mobile apps
 - Some communities have usage rates exceeding 80%
- Coin and cash payments should be low, limiting staffing and shrinkage concerns
- Paystations have a limited life 7-12 years
 - In a decade, there may be a need for only a few sprinkled across the downtown, limiting the next capital investment

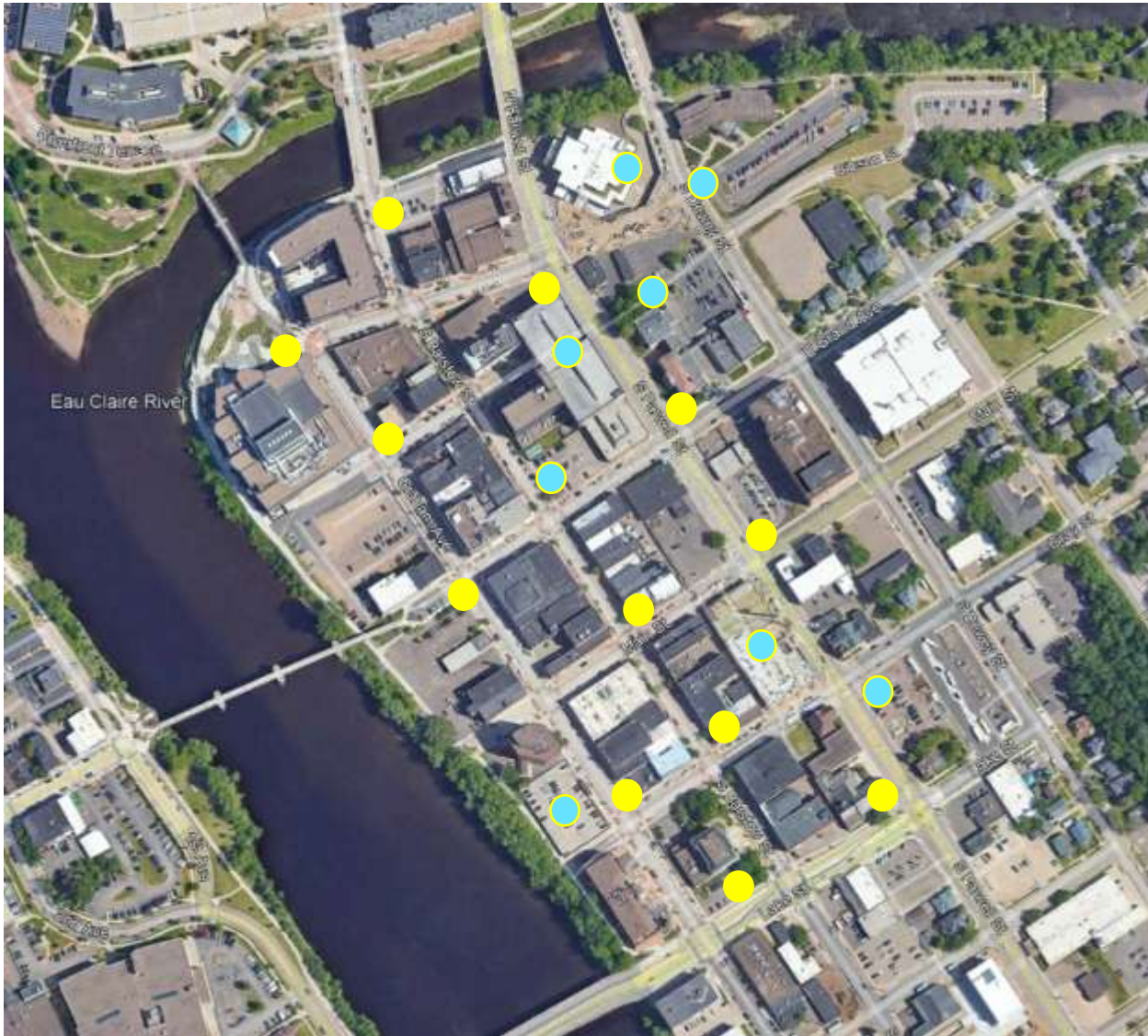




Parking Pay Station Locations - North



Any paystation can be used for payments for all parking locations (on or off-street)

-  off-street
-  on-street



Parking Pay Station Locations - South

Any paystation can be used for payments for all parking locations (on or off-street)

-  off-street
-  on-street

Parking Benefits District (PBD)

- PBD Concept – Financially self-sustaining operation with specific goals
- Paid parking is an essential component of a PBD
- All parking revenue and expenses flow into and out of the Parking Utility
 - On-street, citation, off-street, advertising, and other revenues
 - Staffing, operational expenses paid from parking revenues
 - Ideally debt service and capital maintenance expenses covered
 - If there are excess funds, they stay with the Parking Utility – not sent to General Fund
- **Initial Goal: Funding operations and capital costs of the parking utility**
 - Not guaranteed, this will take effort
- Goals such as funding alternative transportation, pedestrian enhancements, and new downtown infrastructure will come as program develops
- Parking Utility is an enterprise fund – Similar to Appleton

Parking Leadership and Operations Structure

- There should be a face for parking and mobility
 - Leadership / engagement with community
 - Manage BIDS, and neighborhood parking across the city
 - Operational excellence
 - Plan for the future
- Direction and goals set by Council and guided by City Manager's Office
- Daily operations
 - City Department / Parking Utility
 - Professional parking operations contractor

For a parking reset to be successful, accountable leadership needs to be identified and supported.

Parking Operations as a City Department

- Department Director is face of parking for the City
- Control / responsibility for hiring process and HR functions
 - Maintaining appropriate staffing is challenging
- Flexibility to assist / get assistance from other departments
 - DPW for repairs, maintenance, snow clearing, etc.
- Cooperation on internal elements easier when all aspects are City operations
 - Banking, records, citation issuance, technology ownership, liability, etc.



Parking Operations Utilizing Contractor

- Professional operator provides breadth and depth of parking and transportation experience and knowledge
 - Communication and collaboration essential between contractor and city
 - Regular meetings between city contract manager and contractor
 - Private HR functions, although pay rates determined with city input
 - Familiar with parking technology, integrating platforms, proper applications
 - MAY provide upfront cash (technology upgrade) for longer-term contract
- General Manager / Director can be face of parking for Eau Claire
- Contract outlines priorities, goals and incentives
- Cost = expenses + operator fees and overhead

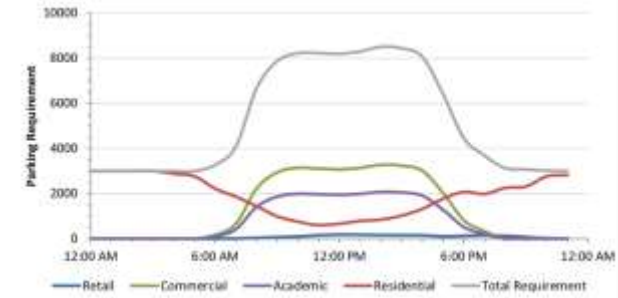


ParkFerndale

Department or Contractor?

- Neither is perfect – performance is dependent on staff implementation
- Contractor does not eliminate City involvement in parking, but reduces daily operations including staffing, patron questions, permit issuance, etc.
- Contractor should be cost plus management fee
 - Incentivize effective management, budget adherence, and staff retention
 - Foster atmosphere of great service, not revenue generation
- None of the comparable cities are contracted to a parking operator
- Either route must be implemented with full support and a commitment to creating a great parking system

Parking Supply Changes



- Parking demand constantly changes due to changes in land use
 - Retail or office (3.5 vehicles per 1,000 sq.ft) to restaurant (15 vehicles per 1,000 sq. ft.) can cause a quick change in parking needs
- Pinpointing the number of spaces required is impossible because land uses change regularly....measure often.
- Understanding Eau Claire's ever changing parking demand is key to effectively managing supply
 - Regular counts
 - Working with Planning Department on which properties are likely to be developed
- Numerous, smaller, mixed-use, off-street parking structures spread parking supply out and utilize limited land area effectively

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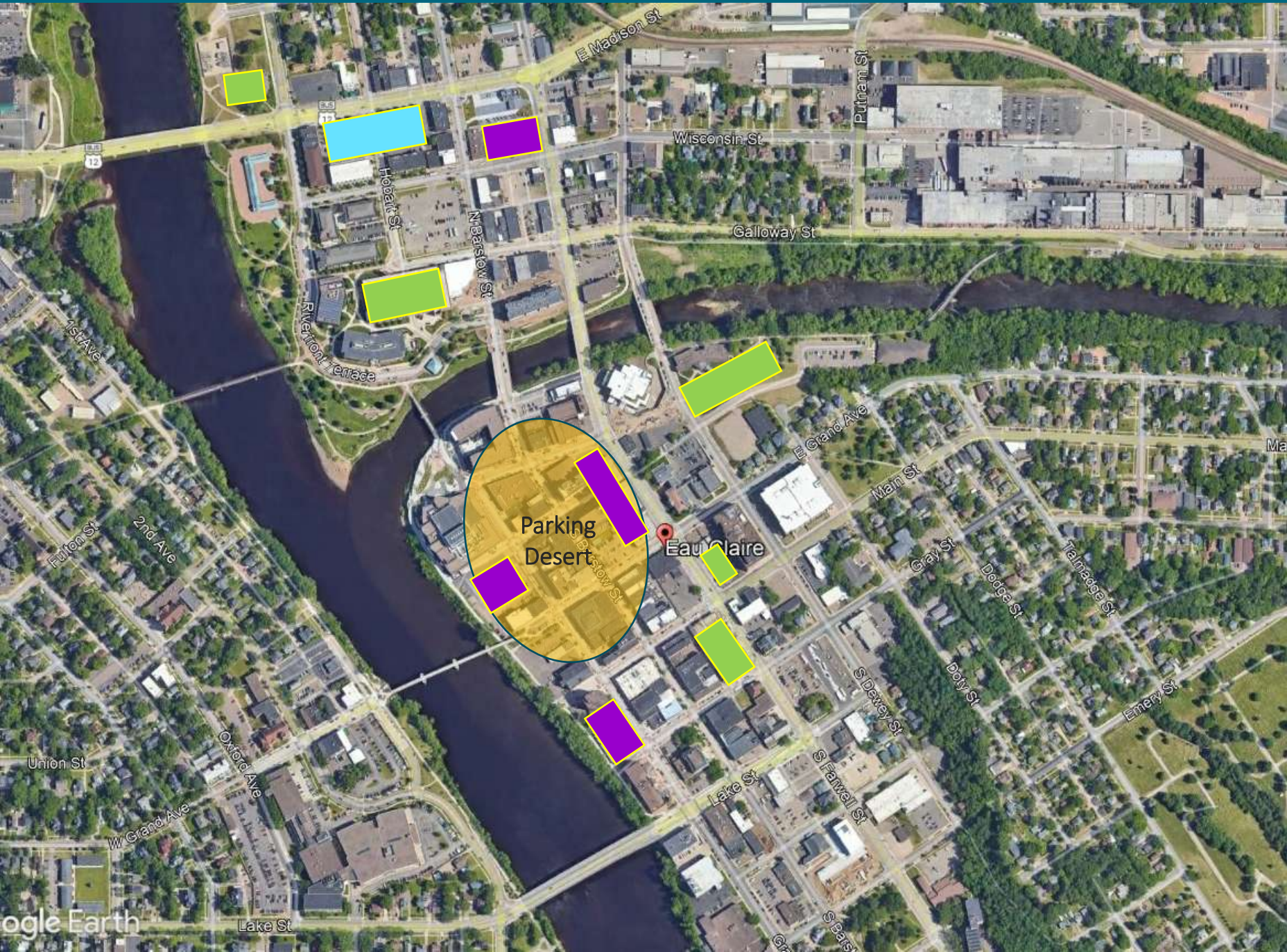
Off-Street Public Parking Supply

-  City Own / Operate
-  Private

*Future with Additional
Development Opportunities*

Adding Parking Supply

- Due to the cost (\$40,000 - \$50,000 per space) structured parking is a sizable and important investment
- To support downtown vitality parking should be spread throughout
 - Gibson Ramp site – 250-300 spaces to support surrounding businesses
 - Riverside – 100 public spaces as part of development
 - 200 / 300 Graham Ave. – 100 public spaces as part of the development to support the PABLO Center and businesses in the area
- The riverfront properties are likely development sites. The city should team with the developers to include public parking along with development requirements. Potentially all parking is public parking.



Off-Street Public Parking Supply

-  City Own / Operate
-  Private
-  New Parking Options

*Future with Additional
Development Opportunities*

Gibson and Riverside Transition Plan

- **Develop a plan for closing of parking structures**
 - Relocate permits / direct visitors to North Barstow Ramp
 - Reserve Four Corners lot for Lismore
 - Utilize entire Schlegelmilch lot property
 - Promote Riverview lot (City staff)
 - Maximize new Transit Center garage
 - Lower level of Riverside (if safe)
 - Potential on-street parking along Farwell St.
- **Conditions will change and the Transition Plan will have to adjust. But a plan should be in place prior to loss of parking spaces.**

North and South Barstow BIDS

- Geographically linked – community does not generally see them as different destinations – both are “downtown”
- Continually growing with new development opportunities
- Entertainment district with numerous restaurants, bars, and event locations, along with a strong retail base
- Parking policy should be consistent between the two areas
- Hours, technology, and methods should be similar to keep things simple for patrons



Grand Avenue BID

- Neighborhood Business District
- Self contained, should not spill over into neighborhood too much
- Recommendation: On-street three-hour time limit, 9am – 9pm
- After hours use of the County parking lot is a benefit, communicate with County to make sure this continues
- Slight Risk – downtown patrons park here and walk across the bridge with paid on-street parking and other policy changes in South Barstow
 - Monitor and adjust as needed




Water Street BID – Commercial Corridor

- Geographically separated from other BIDS
- Members like things the way they are, don't see a need for significant changes in policy
- Recommendations
 - Charge in both municipal parking lots - \$.50 / hour, 9am – 9pm (Mon – Sat)
 - On-street three-hour time limit, 9am – 9pm
- **Keep parking from overflowing into the neighborhood (monitor)**
 - Zoning, residential permits / restrictions
- **UWEC has seen enrollment dip over the past few years – lessening pressure**
 - Coordinate with UWEC to offer parking solutions in their parking lots
- **Promote alternative transportation options for students**



Signage and Wayfinding

- Good use of the  symbol
- Consistent, concise, understandable, well placed
- Regulatory signs important for on-street parking and public safety
- When replacing signage, consider a graphic representation package.
- Continue with the universal symbols and effective branding...however, the reset is a good time to start new branding



Online Presence

- Online information currently resides on Police, Neighborhood Services, Streets and Fleet, and Engineering pages of City website
 - Consolidate to one location
- Paying online should be quick and easy
 - Daily, permits, citations, event pre-pay, everything
- Online presence should connect to solutions. Avoid endless links that cause frustration.
- Encourage / promote signing up for the mobile app
 - Offer one free parking session (3 hours) per account
- Utilize online validations for merchants, events, specific needs



Communications Plan for Parking Reset

- **Create dedicated parking page on City website (one click)**
 - Centralize current content, post updates on schedule, installation, new rates, closings, pertinent data
 - Post how-to videos for technology applications
- **Host two Town Halls for community to ask direct questions**
- **Engage merchants for communication and support (DECI a key contributor)**
 - Flyers posted in business locations
 - Regular email reminders of progress and key dates
 - Meet with the BIDS
- **Utilize 30-day Grace Period at initiation of on-street paid parking**
 - Staff walking around showing people how to use meters and mobile app, education on rates and locations, issue only warning citations, and building trust

Homeless Population and Parking

- Topic voiced several times in parking survey and on-site meetings
- Some people feel unsafe in parking structures and note homeless as part of the issue
- City leadership is working to address the issue and assure citizens that downtown is safe to patronize
- Assumptions supporting effective parking policy
 - People can safely walk several blocks to utilize parking
 - Parking structures are easy to use and do not pose a safety risk
- While a complicated issue, safe parking areas are required to maintain a vibrant downtown

Electric and Autonomous Vehicles

- EV and AV adoption has had a jagged trend line
 - Consumer preferences differ geographically
 - Changing government mandates / incentives / policies
 - Charging infrastructure development impacted by government policy
 - Oil and gas are regulated, but supplied almost entirely by the private sector
 - Debate over whether EV's are truly “green”, including battery supply chain issues
- Vehicle manufacturers are seeing a softening in the market
- There will be steady progress toward an EV future, but not as quickly as many intended just a few years back



Eau Claire and EV and AV Vehicles

- **Does Eau Claire want to spend taxpayer dollars subsidizing EV infrastructure?**
 - Simple goal: Being revenue neutral while supporting EV growth
- **Let the private sector provide the infrastructure and charging stations as needed for the market**
 - Avoid ACT 121 concerns where possible
 - Charging revenue can go to the Parking Utility, but not the General Fund
 - Invite private sector businesses to provide charging infrastructure in city parking facilities - charge them a fee for being on your site
- **Prepare parking facilities to expand charging capability**
 - Electrical infrastructure designed into new facilities
- **Prepare to expand EV access, but don't get too far out in front**

Community Acceptance of Parking Reset

- There are concerns that paid parking will hurt downtown.
- Parking survey – 80% say parking is difficult, 46% say very or extremely difficult. *Downtown is already being hurt by parking concerns.*
- An effective parking system generates community acceptance.
 - Easy to find, available parking spaces
 - Attentive staff that solves problems
 - Clean and welcoming facilities
 - Options for employee parking
 - Technology that works and is easy to use
 - Alternative transportation options
 - Enforcement of chronic abusers, forgiving for visitors
- People don't want to pay for a system that doesn't serve their needs



A Parking System that Supports Downtown

- The community does not want to pay for what they currently get for free
- They also don't want to pay for a system that doesn't serve their needs
 - Many consider the current parking situation inadequate
 - Availability of open parking spaces and condition of facilities
- A Parking Reset *must* provide a better parking experience
- The Parking Utility should offer great service and promote downtown vitality
 - On-street parking that is easy to find, use, and pay for
 - Clean, safe, and highly utilized parking structures and lots
 - Enforcement that is consistent but not overbearing
 - Provides options for location, price, length of stay and payment

A Highly Adaptable Parking System

- Adaptability rooted in informed decisions, not reactions
- Conduct on-street and off-street parking occupancy counts monthly
 - GIS format to organize data and promote analytical approach
 - Weekday daytime, weekend evening, and event counts
 - Understand how development pressure and changes in the community are truly impacting parking demand
- Adjust allocation of employee, resident and visitor parking as needed
- Understand “when” it is time for policy changes

Benchmarking Parking

- When parking areas (2-4 block sections) are regularly over 80% occupied on typical days or evenings, implement additional parking supply or re-allocation among user groups
 - General economic conditions will cause fluctuations. Regular data collection is important to understand trends.
- **Annual Report**
 - Revenue per space (on and off-street)
 - Expense per space (on and off-street)
 - Citation issuance, collection rates and trends
 - Payment processing fees and costs
 - Staffing and retention costs

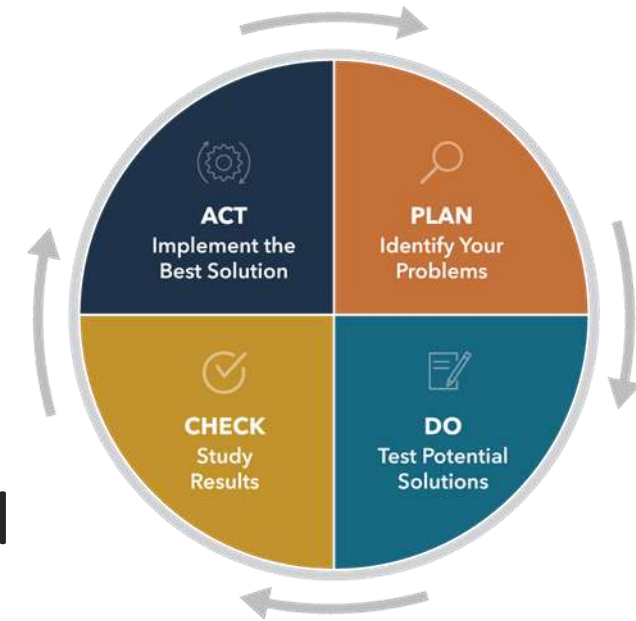


Be Patient with the Reset

- A reset of pricing, policy, hours, technology, and physical assets will take time. Patience and measurement are critical.
- Communicate regularly with the public.
 - Dates, technology deployment, implementation process, results, setbacks, etc.
 - Website posts, public meetings, DECI, Infrastructure Committee, City Council
- Complaints should not be ignored, but must be measured as a concrete problem versus an aversion to change.
- Changes should be given one year to take hold and affect behavior. Conduct a thorough review after one year and make necessary changes based on data and results.

Recommendations Summary

- Create internal Parking Department or contract professional parking management
 - Goals: High quality customer experience and financially self-sustaining
- Initiate on-street paid parking
- Adjust hours to match peak usage times (9am – 9pm)
- Strategically replace parking supply that is being removed
- Measure, evaluate, and adjust to changing conditions
- Communicate Department goals and accomplishments to the community
 - Annual Report to Council
 - Post operational metrics on City Website



Process Summary

- Development, COVID, and changing characteristics of downtown have left policies and strategies that don't match well with current parking needs.
- A reset of parking programming will provide the opportunity for the City to meet the new demands and create a parking system that serves downtown.
- There are many moving parts to a reset, and it will not happen effectively without a leader to focus on both the big picture, and the details. Hire or contract a Parking Director to focus on implementing the reset.
- Adjust continually to the needs of the community through occupancy counts, engagement with the community, and transparency.

Thank You

