

Downtown Parking Management Action Plan Study SUMMARY

The Downtown Parking Management Action Plan study was initiated by the Downtown TMA to address current and future parking needs in central Atlanta. At the study's conclusion in June 2006, the Action Plan will result in a recommended parking demand management program for implementation by the Downtown TMA and other interested organizations.

The Downtown Atlanta Parking Management Action Plan will result in solutions that:

- Reduce parking demand and improve the efficiency of the existing supply.
- Optimize the use and availability of the existing parking supply in meeting current and future needs.
- Decrease regular and special event parking-related traffic congestion and unnecessary travel and emissions.
- Integrate parking management that supports greater use of transit, vanpools, carpools, flexible work schedules, and mobility and access improvements for bicyclists and pedestrians.
- Recommend parking management solutions that support a balanced, linked and sustainable multimodal transportation system characterized by transit use and vibrant neighborhood businesses and residential areas.

The scope of work for the Action Plan is comprehensive, with most of the inventory and analysis scheduled to begin in January 2006. The study encompasses the following key tasks:

1. Existing Conditions and Stakeholder Involvement

This task will include the review of existing plans and programs that influence Downtown mobility, accessibility and parking. It will also create a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) that will meet 3 to 4 times throughout the study process to guide study decisions and review findings. A stakeholder involvement strategy will also be developed and implemented. Stakeholder involvement may include, but is not limited to, an electronic survey, a parking workshop, personal interviews and/or focus groups.

2. Physical Inventory and Utilization Survey

This task will assess both public and private on-street and off-street parking facilities starting with data that is collected on a block-by-block basis. An Occupancy Survey will measure vehicle accumulation during the peak times of the day (e.g., late morning). Specific to on-street parking, a significant and representative sample of on-street parking will be identified within the study area for turnover analysis. The occupancy survey will be conducted separately from the On-Street turnover and enforcement survey.

This task will result in a digital and hard-copy mapped inventory of on-street and off-street parking facility spaces. The inventory will include the duration of parking by block and will be supplied in a matrix summary, provided in both Excel & GIS software formats.

3. Parking Supply and Demand Analysis

Using the field data collected in the previous task, this task will involve a thorough analysis of the existing conditions. The analysis will:

- a. Identify the location and concentration of any parking surpluses;
- b. Identify areas of high parking occupancy that may indicate a shortage of parking in general or within a specific category (for example, parking facilities that are in high demand near some public-sector/government buildings);
- c. Examine utilization of on-street spaces in terms of maximizing the availability of convenient short-term, on-street parking areas that depend on that support. Abuse of short-term meter parking in specific areas, and in the system as a whole, will be translated into the number of legitimate short-term parking stays “lost” because of the abuse.
- d. Evaluate the effectiveness of current enforcement against standards recognized within the industry.

Projections of future parking demands and parking sufficiency will also be developed and analyzed for 2, 5 and 10-year horizons.

These tasks will result in a market analysis and will identify specific focus areas where transit enhancements might be the most beneficial. A model will be developed that depicts the topographical sensitivity to parking rates where major points of parking generation can be identified. The Downtown TMA will receive a digital model that will serve as a tool for predicting future parking sufficiency, and the model will allow for the application of variables related to changing parking ratios, restrictions, occupancy changes and changes in transit use. The tasks will also result in recommendations related to strategies for improving the utilization of existing parking resources while respecting the importance of preserving parking revenues generated by commercial parking operators.

4. Development of Supply-Side Solutions, including solutions specifically for Special Event Parking

The following supply-side strategies will be reviewed and evaluated for their effectiveness and applicability to Downtown:

- a. Shared parking arrangements
- b. Use of satellite parking
- c. Preferential parking
- d. Convenient bicycle parking and amenities
- e. Re-striping efficiencies
- f. Valet parking

- g. Improved information systems and wayfinding, including vehicular and pedestrian signage;
- h. Improved collection systems/technologies

Best practices regarding special event parking will also be researched and alternative approaches will be developed. All supply-side solutions will be summarized according to the following criteria:

- Related study goals and issues addressed
- Associated implementation plans
- Phasing and schedule for improvements
- Challenges
- Cost
- Level of effectiveness, applicability and feasibility

5. Development of Demand-Side Solutions

The following strategies will be reviewed and evaluated for their effectiveness at decreasing demand for Downtown parking and reducing traffic congestion:

- a. Parking pricing
- b. Parking incentives
- c. Improved pedestrian circulation
- d. Wayfinding improvements
- e. ITS and other real-time technology-based solutions
- f. Peak-hour parking
- g. Reserved HOV parking
- h. Discounted employee transit passes
- i. Parking cash-out programs
- j. Parking maximums
- k. In-lieu development fees

Similar to the previous task, all demand-side solutions will be summarized according to the following criteria:

- Related goals and issues addressed
- Associated implementation plans
- Phasing and schedule for improvements
- Challenges
- Cost
- Level of effectiveness, applicability and feasibility

Un-bundled parking facilities will be identified in addition to opportunities such facilities present as shared parking and parking cash-out facilities. Locations suited for peak-hour pricing concepts and shared parking facilities will also be identified. The role that developers, parking managers and parking companies play in the implementation of the Action Plan will be defined.

6. Development of Parking Policy and Municipal Parking Needs

The study will research the methods and innovative approaches by which other peer cities have administered and financed their parking systems. Alternative funding arrangements that have been used to develop municipal parking authorities and their associated financial scenarios will be explored. The study will also evaluate Downtown Atlanta's current parking regulations, ratios and minimums relative to the current lack of municipal parking and the potential future provision of municipal facilities. Transportation demand management (TDM) measures appropriate for integration in the Development Review process will also be identified.

7. Development of Public Information Tools

A parking information website will be developed from data collected in the parking inventory. This website will consist of attractive maps, pictures and data that characterize the individual parking facilities of the Downtown area. The website will be created in a format that allows Downtown residents, employees and visitors to easily navigate to specific parking information. The format will also allow TMA staff to facilitate changes as Downtown development changes. Additional information, such as current parking news, general transportation updates, transit options and information about other TDM-related programs, will also be available through this web-based tool.

For additional information or to provide input regarding the Downtown Parking Management Action Plan Study, please contact:

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