

# **Sacramento Central City Parking Master Plan Draft Policy Recommendations Version 3 September 27, 2005**

## **Introduction**

In a meeting on August 2, 2005, the Sacramento City Council approved a resolution that identified a set of goals and objectives to guide parking policy for the Sacramento Central City. The nine goals approved in that resolution were as follows:

1. Support the citywide goals of economic development, livable neighborhoods, achieving sustainability and improving public safety
2. Supply parking to meet need
3. Use time limits, rates and enforcement to manage parking supply efficiently
4. Modify the Residential Parking Program to manage the retail/residential interface
5. Minimize the negative impacts of parking
6. Make parking safe, secure, attractive and convenient
7. Operate City–owned parking in a financial sound manner
8. Promote alternative modes of transportation and walkable communities
9. Provide transportation options to encourage use of existing parking supply

For each of these nine major goal statements, the resolution approved by the City Council also identified a set of specific objectives. The City Council directed staff to work with its consulting team to develop recommendations for the Central City Parking Master Plan that would lead to attainment of those objectives. In this document, the detailed objectives for each goal are identified and the consultant’s recommendations corresponding to each objective are provided in italics. An initial draft of the recommendations was presented to the project’s Stakeholder group on August 25, and subsequently in a series of focus group meetings that sought input from specific geographic areas within the Central City and the public open house on September 15. Comments from these meetings and other comments received were considered by the project team in producing this revised set of recommendations.

## **Policy Recommendations**

- 1 Support the citywide goals of economic development, livable neighborhoods, achieving sustainability and improving public safety**
  - 1.1 Ensure that adequate parking is provided with new development to prevent adverse impacts on existing land uses and to support a synergistic mix of land uses including office, residential, retail, restaurant and entertainment;**

- 1.1.1 *Establish flexible parking ranges for all types of development to allow developers flexibility to match parking with the needs of the specific project*
- 1.1.2 *Maintain current parking minimum of one space per 600 square feet for office and adjust maximum to one space per 400 square feet*
- 1.1.3 *Maintain current minimum of one space per residential unit in Focus Area 1, increase the minimum to 1.5 spaces per unit in the remainder of the Central City, and create a flexible parking range for residential development by specifying maximums by type of unit, density of development and/or location in the Central City*
- 1.1.4 *Require that at least one space per unit be provided onsite for residential development*
- 1.1.5 *Modify zoning code to make off-street parking provided for residential units “accessory” to the residential units to prevent them from being used to support other off-site purposes and restrict residents of new residential developments from participating in the City’s Residential Permit Parking program*
- 1.1.6 *Require off-street parking for all retail and entertainment development in the central business district (C-3 zone) and in the arts and entertainment district unless adequate publicly available off-street parking exists within a two-block radius of the subject site*
- 1.1.7 *Require that institutional developments (hospitals, museums, universities, etc.) provide a parking plan as part of the development EIR*

**1.2 Adopt City policies and standards that support new development in the Central City**

- 1.2.1 *Adopt City policy and guidelines to establish “in-lieu-of-parking” fees for development of less than the minimum required parking*
- 1.2.2 *Allow flexibility for construction of less than minimum parking (with in-lieu –of parking fee) when development is adequately served by transit and where mixed-use development allows for shared use of parking*

**1.3 Allow flexibility in City policy to tailor requirements to the nature of new development proposed**

*(See Recommendations 1.1.1, 1.2.1 and 1.2.2)*

**2 Supply parking to meet need**

**2.1 Use parking minimum (ratios) to ensure developers provide most of the new parking needed;**

*(See Recommendations from Section 1.1)*

**2.2 The City of Sacramento should act as a broker when feasible to supply parking when the private sector does not;**

- 2.2.1 *Broker agreement among business owners to supply additional publicly available parking in the Midtown entertainment district either by constructing new parking or by making existing private parking available in the evenings and on weekends*
- 2.2.2 *Consider brokering agreements among businesses owners to supply additional publicly available parking in other areas as the need arises*
- 2.2.3 *Broker with other parking facility owners and operators to supply additional publicly available parking for special events*
- 2.2.4 *Consider use of a Benefit Assessment District to fund new parking where there is a deficiency of parking for existing commercial land uses*

**2.3 Take a strategic approach to parking master planning that will allow short-term decisions to be made consistent with long-term strategies or plans;**

- 2.3.1 *Formulate a City policy to permit interim use (no more than two years with no renewal) of vacant lots for parking with exemption from some of the requirements for improvements when there is a demonstrated need (current occupancy of at least 85%) that is limited in time and is consistent with a longer-term master plan for the site and immediate area*
- 2.3.2 *Consider extending the five-year surface lot permit to eight years when need for parking can be demonstrated and all code-required improvements are made, and require that existing non-conforming lots meet requirements and a permit be obtained for continued use*

**2.4 Provide adequate monitoring of parking supply and utilization to be able to identify deficiencies or conflicts when they develop.**

- 2.4.1 *Conduct occupancy counts for all publicly available parking in the Core (Focus Area 1) and Midtown (Focus Area 2) at least every three years to identify deficiencies*
- 2.4.2 *Track additions and subtractions of parking and parking variances as new development occurs*

**2.5 Pursue opportunities to increase the amount of parking provided by existing facilities**

- 2.5.1 *Stripe spaces in un-metered on-street parking areas to increase the number of parking spaces provided*
- 2.5.2 *Re-stripe on-street and off-street spaces to increase the number of spaces provided, where possible*
- 2.5.3 *Consider use of angle parking on streets where the angle parking will not interfere with safe traffic operations or compromise the historic nature of the area*

- 2.5.4 *Cooperate with the City of West Sacramento to identify opportunities for mutually beneficial reciprocal use of available parking facilities*

### **3 Use time limits, rates and enforcement to manage parking supply efficiently**

- 3.1 Establish priority for parkers for each type of parking;
  - 3.1.1 *Recognize residents as the priority in Residential Parking Permit area and shoppers, visitors and other short-term users as the priority in Core on-street and City-operated off-street parking in Downtown Plaza and the Tower Garage in Old Sacramento*
  - 3.1.2 *Set target mixes of short-term and long-term parkers in other City-operated garages to establish priorities for parkers*
  - 3.1.3 *Recognize commuters and other long-term parkers as the probable priority in other off-street facilities*
- 3.2 Use time limits to make sure priority parkers can find parking;
  - 3.2.1 *Where appropriate, reduce the time limit from 2 hours to 90 minutes to discourage employee parking*
  - 3.2.2 *Reduce time limits for long-term on-street spaces to five hours to facilitate use of spaces by commuters employed in the immediate area*
- 3.3 Establish rates that encourage efficient use of spaces;
  - 3.3.1 *Use rates to maintain occupancy rates in City-owned facilities at or below 85% of total capacity to insure adequate access to parking for priority users*
  - 3.3.2 *Reduce the effective short-term rates in the Core area off-street facilities through an expanded merchant validation program to encourage use of the off-street spaces by shoppers and visitors and to reduce the overall demand for on-street spaces*
  - 3.3.3 *Increase the on-street meter rates in the Core area to discourage long-term use of Core area metered spaces by commuters*
  - 3.3.4 *Increase rates at long-term metered spaces to reflect the rates for nearby off-street facilities*
- 3.4 Enforce parking restrictions and regulation to ensure the appropriate use of on-street parking;
  - 3.4.1 *Strictly enforce Disabled Parking, Loading Zone, Residential Permit Parking, time limits and metes throughout the Central City*
  - 3.4.2 *Generate or support state legislation to help curb abuse of disabled placards*

### **4 Modify the Residential Parking Program to manage the retail/residential interface**

- 4.1 Operate Residential Permit Parking (RPP) areas in a way that protects the residential character of the neighborhoods and ensures adequate parking availability for residents while also supporting the needs of small, neighborhood-supporting business located in or adjacent to the areas;

- 4.1.1 *Extend parking restrictions and enforcement in Residential Permit Parking zones beyond 6 P.M.*
- 4.1.2 *Add 90-minute meters in residential areas around evening entertainment areas and enforce rates and time limits for all except residents and disabled parkers*
- 4.2 Adopt policies that provide greater consistency and clarity in the Residential Permit Program areas;
  - 4.2.1 *Modify RPP ordinance to establish criteria for creating new zones or annexing neighborhoods into RPP zones*
- 4.3 Provide employee permits in Residential Permit areas if there is a surplus of parking (criteria to be defined).
  - 4.3.1 *Identify blocks in RPP zones where there is surplus daytime parking (criteria to be defined) and sell a limited number of day-time parking passes to local businesses for employee or customer parking*

## **5 Minimize the negative impacts of parking**

- 5.1 Minimize the visual intrusion and other negative environmental impacts of parking;
  - 5.1.1 *Maintain existing requirements for lighting, landscaping, drainage and other improvements for permanent new parking*
  - 5.1.2 *Adopt City policies to encourage or require use of ground floor for retail in new parking structures*
- 5.2 Minimize the land devoted to parking in the Central City;
  - 5.2.1 *Maintain existing City policy to prohibit the addition of new stand-alone parking that is not associated with a specific new development*
- 5.3 Reduce the adverse impacts of commuter parking in residential neighborhoods; *(See Recommendations from Sections 1 and 4)*

## **6 Make parking safe, secure, attractive and convenient**

- 6.1 Provide adequate maintenance of City-owned parking so that it is safe, secure, clean and attractive for its users
  - 6.1.1 *Use Parking Fund to ensure adequate maintenance, cleaning and security of the City's parking assets*
- 6.2 Make the use of on-street and other City-owned parking easy and convenient through information, good signage, convenient payment options, and logical access and exit points.
  - 6.2.1 *Include information on privately-owned but publicly available parking on the City's web site*
  - 6.2.2 *Provide additional information and signage for bicycle parking in publicly available parking facilities*
  - 6.2.3 *Pursue additional branding of the City's parking facilities*
  - 6.2.4 *Consider dynamic parking information system to help shoppers and entertainment customers locate available parking*

6.2.5 *Continue to replace old meters with new meters or pay stations that accept multiple payment methods including coins, bills and credit cards*

## **7 Operate City–owned parking in a financially sound manner**

- 7.1 Ensure that the City’s parking program is financially self-sufficient;
  - 7.1.1 *Set parking fees and fines at levels that cover capital, operating, maintenance and enforcement costs and generate additional revenue to expand the parking program to meet the growing needs of the City*
- 7.2 Offer City-owned public parking at a rate that recognizes the cost of providing parking and the economic value of the parking;  
*(See Recommendation 7.1.1)*
- 7.3 Provide parking discounts when they reflect appropriate incentives for the use of City-owned parking and when the discount is financially feasible;
  - 7.3.1 *Maintain discounts for the disabled (free on-street), low-income workers, part-time workers and shoppers where appropriate*
- 7.4 Structure the financial accounting from parking and parking enforcement with sufficient flexibility to allow maximum effectiveness in the parking program;
  - 7.4.1 *Combine all revenue from City-owned parking and parking enforcement into a single Parking Enterprise Fund.*
  - 7.4.2 *Use the combined Parking Enterprise Fund to support all City parking programs or other programs to accommodate or reduce parking demand*
- 7.5 Maintain all City-owned parking facilities and revenue collection equipment for maximum effectiveness and efficiency;
  - 7.5.1 *Maintain revenue collection equipment for on-street and off-street operations and replace where appropriate*
- 7.6 Provide operational policies and procedures to ensure that the City’s parking program is run effectively, efficiently and according to the highest standards of the parking profession
  - 7.6.1 *Update the City’s employee manuals for parking-related functions*
  - 7.6.2 *Enhance the financial and operational reporting capabilities to allow optimal financial management of the City’s parking assets*
  - 7.6.3 *Replace the City’s parking validation system for shoppers with a system that is less susceptible to abuse and requires less administrative support from the City*

## **8 Promote alternative modes of transportation and walkable communities**

- 8.1 Reduce parking requirements when transit service to an area or opportunities for shared parking may reduce the parking demand
  - 8.1.1 *Adjust parking minimums and maximums downward over time as transit service and ridership increase in the Central City*
- 8.2 Encourage use of RT services to and from the Central City
  - 8.2.1 *Use City funds to promote the use of RT park-and-ride and transit services as a substitute for parking in the Central City*

8.3 Support employer-based programs to reduce commute vehicle trips to the Central City

*8.3.1 Use the Parking Fund to support Transportation Management Associations and employers in promoting alternative modes for commute trips to the Central City*

**9 Provide transportation options to encourage use of existing parking supply**

9.1 Use the Parking Fund to provide transportation services that link Central City areas with surplus parking with areas of high parking demand/deficiency.

*9.1.1 Consider using shuttle services to link available parking with popular trip destinations to address parking needs in areas without sufficient parking capacity*