

PARKING MANAGEMENT PLANNING COMMITTEE PROPOSED PARKING POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

VISION STATEMENT

In that parking is one of several components contributing to the vitality of the Kent Central Business District (CBD), it must, therefore, be monitored and adjusted on a continuous basis to assure, at a minimum, it does not hinder the viability of the CBD, and at best, positively contributes to the City's urban presence. It is the consensus of the Parking Management Planning Committee that the existence of a comprehensive and coordinated parking policy promotes an environment in which:

- The residents of the City of Kent will be proud of their Central Business District
- The residents of the City of Kent, and visitors to the City, will be able to enjoy an aesthetically pleasing and functional downtown area
- All buildings within the CBD will be fully occupied
- All vacant land within the CBD will be occupied by a building, or placed into open space uses
- All property owners are satisfied with the lease rates received for their buildings
- The City can demonstrate a strong pedestrian presence

In an effort to bring about these desired results the following recommendations are offered as a means to that end.

SHORT- AND INTERMEDIATE-TERM OBJECTIVES

1. Parking lots/structure considerations
 - a. Better utilize the existing city parking lot behind East Main and North Water Streets (former bank parking lot)
 - b. Development of a similar lot south of East Main Street
 - c. Development, and full utilization, of the proposed parking lot located in the north central section of the West River Neighborhood development area
 - d. Encourage the development of parking lots/structures in, and near, the CBD if the proposed facilities will contribute to addressing CBD parking demand. Any proposed new parking facilities must be consistent with existing, permitted land uses as stated in the City's Zoning Ordinance
2. Parking Categories
 - a. Define the location, and coordinate the administration, of two-hour, free, daytime parking on streets, and in CBD parking lots
 - b. Define the location, and coordinate the administration, of medium-term (between 2- and 10-hour) parking options
 - c. Define the location, and coordinate the administration, of peripheral lots for employee parking at a set monthly fee per space

- d. Development, and administration, of 10-hour parking facilities. Establishment of a multi-tiered fee schedule based on proximity of parking facilities to the city's commercial center with costs higher in the center of the city than at peripheral parking locations
 - e. Consideration of for-fee evening parking in city-controlled parking lots. Parking fees for evening parking will be established only if this policy is deemed to be a financially feasible alternative
 - f. Define the location, and coordinate the administration, of for-fee, long-term, evening parking for CBD residential units lacking on-site parking
3. Additional parking capacity generation – Purchase/lease additional parking facilities
 - a. Haymaker/Franklin
 - b. Saint Patrick's Church parking lot
 - c. Other areas
 - i. City Hall Parking Lot
 - ii. Central School
 - iii. Davey Drill Property
 - iv. West River Neighborhood
 4. Zoning solutions
 - a. Utilize Parking Plans exclusively in the three CBD zoning districts
 - b. Modify the regulations
 - i. Reduce the Parking Plan agreement time commitment to a more appropriate timeframe
 - ii. Remove the requirement that the parking agreement be recorded on the property deed
 5. Parking Action Committee – Creation of a Committee to be appointed by City Council, charged with implementing the parking policies approved by Council. Members of the Parking Action Committee should be:
 - a. City of Kent Community Development Director
 - b. City of Kent Safety Director
 - c. City of Kent Service Director
 - d. Five members of the Business Community, appointed on:
 - i. Geographic Basis – (e.g.: East and West Main Streets, North and South Water Streets, Franklin Avenue, side streets...)
 - ii. Land Use Basis – (e.g.: Church, service, retail, housing and nightclub representation...)
 6. Duties of the Parking Action Committee
 - a. Management and control of available parking facilities in the CBD by:
 - i. Defining the location and availability of parking
 - ii. Establish charges for services
 - iii. Enforcement responsibility
 - iv. Information gathering and dissemination
 - v. Single-Point-of-Contact – information, permits, enforcement...
 - b. Encouragement of Shared Parking arrangements
 - c. Encouragement of increased use of alternative transportation modes (walking, transit use, bicycle use...)
 - d. Parking Program provides information and control, businesses pay for services

7. Development of an aesthetic improvement program
 - a. Facilitate off-street parking layout and beautification
 - b. Development and implementation of a comprehensive signage plan
 - c. Improved sidewalk systems
 - d. Improved public space lighting
 - e. Street furniture
8. Development of new programs, and promotion of existing programs that offer financial incentives encouraging the use alternative transportation modes:
 - a. Federal Tax Credits for van pooling
 - b. Reimbursement for employers who pay for employee public transit use
 - c. Van/car Pool incentives
 - d. Free, and secure, bike storage facilities for employees utilizing bicycles for commuting
9. Funding for parking operations should be supported through user-fees that are directed into a specific enterprise fund. The sources of these fees will be through:
 - a. Parking Permits
 - b. For-fee evening parking charges if financially feasible
10. Initially, some form of subsidy would be required from the City, but the intent is for the operations of the program to become self-sufficient
11. Funding for short- and long-term capital projects – Provide for a capital funding program consisting of public, private and grant funding sources as determined by City Council

LONG-TERM OBJECTIVES

1. Purchase/lease additional parking capacity as needed
2. Event organization/coordination
3. Make CBD a full activity center
4. Consideration of and facilitation of the creation of Business/Special Improvements Districts
5. If supported by market demand, study the viability, and facilitate the construction, of parking structures
6. Promotion of “Back-Alley” business development
7. Funding considerations
 - a. Capital Funding - Provide for a capital funding program consisting of public, private and grant funding sources as determined by City Council
 - b. Operations Funding – Coordinate an operations funding program to be supported through user fees and other sources such as:
 - i. Parking permit fees
 - ii. For-fee evening parking charges if financially feasible

The Policy Recommendations of the Parking Management Planning Committee should be reviewed annually, and modified according to the changing parking and development needs of the community.

