

Parking Management Plan – Operating Principles

This section of the report presents a proposed parking management plan for downtown Springfield. The proposed plan strives to remain consistent with the Guiding Principles and give direction to future decision-making for the implementation of parking management strategies. These strategies are designed to assure priority access is maintained in each parking management zone. Overall, the plan is intended to provide a flexible system of parking management that is triggered by demand and implemented within the context of consensus goals and vision for the downtown.

The purpose of the parking management plan is to:

- Clearly define the intended use and purpose of the parking system,
- Manage the supply and enforce the parking policies and regulations,
- Monitor use and respond to changes in demand, and
- Maintain the intended function of the overall system.

1. PARKING MANAGEMENT PLAN

A. Parking Management Zones

Different segments of the downtown have different economic uses and represent different points of access into the downtown. The Guiding Principles developed by the Parking Advisory Committee (PAC) emphasize the heart or central core of downtown represents the area in which the highest density of economic activity and access is intended to occur. There are also distinct areas of the downtown with differing levels/types of desired economic activity. The desired uses in a particular area of downtown should drive the decision making for the type of parking required. Parking, then, becomes a management tool that supports specific economic uses. Implementation of parking management strategies in publicly controlled parking supply is supportive of the economic development plan for the City of Springfield and its downtown.

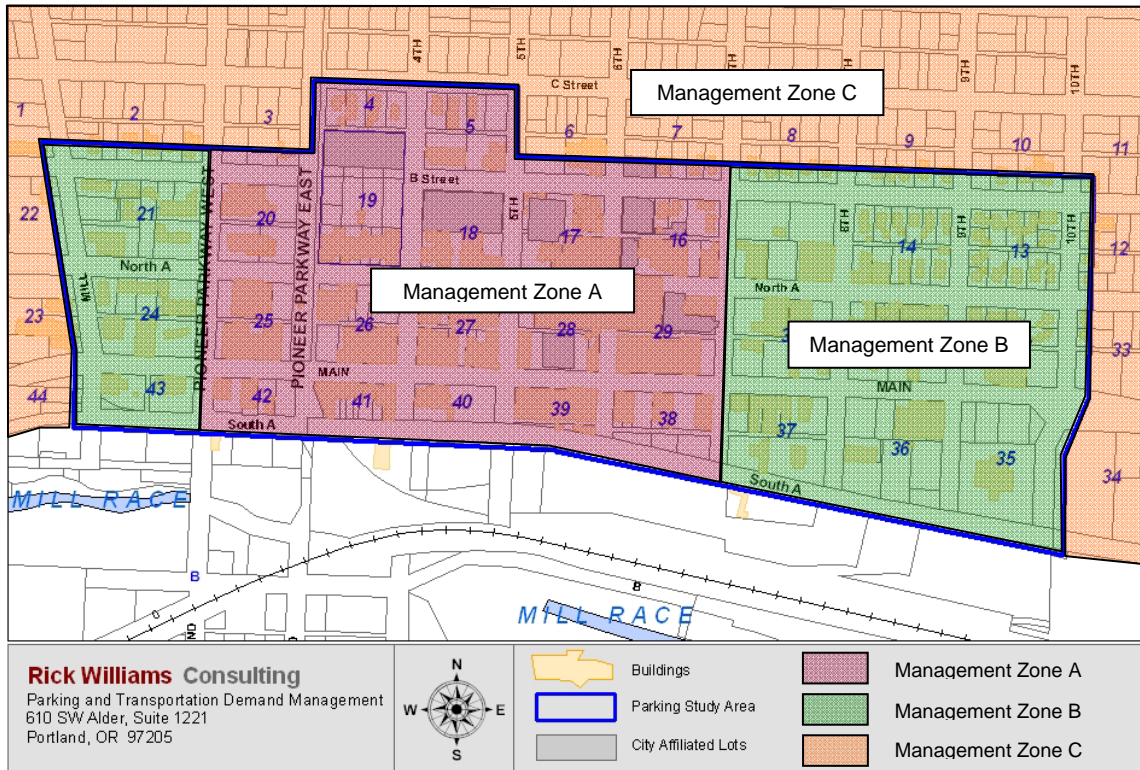
Figure A, next page, shows three recommended *parking management zones* for downtown Springfield.

Zones A and B were primarily derived from the PAC process and informed through work and analysis completed in **Section XX** from data zones. Zone C represents a “peripheral zone” comprised primarily of residential uses, which needs some management to assure that spillover impacts from Zones A and B are mitigated or minimized. Zone boundaries were established based on the existing economic and transportation characteristics, as well as desired uses for the area, as identified by the PAC. Each zone is summarized and its primary purpose and priority stated in this section below.

In short, these five zones represent “economic activity zones” in the downtown that are both reflective of existing land uses in addition to areas where future growth of specific economic development is anticipated and desired. From an access perspective, each zone will need to be managed in a manner that supports priority economic uses and users identified for that zone.

Figure A

**Downtown Springfield Parking Management Study Area
Parking Management Areas**



B. Operating Principles

Operating principles define the purpose and priority for parking in each of the Parking Management Zones. Operating Principles complement and reinforce the Guiding Principles established for the downtown. Within the context of the operating principles for each zone is a specific implementation framework through which decision making for that zone can occur. The implementation framework provides an on-going foundation for strategic decision making grounded in the operating priorities established for the zone and for the downtown as a whole.

With adoption of a parking management plan the City commits to implement parking management strategies in *publicly controlled* parking areas to assure the purpose and priority for parking established in the Operating Principles are consistently attained.

Operating principles and an implementation framework have been developed for each parking management zone. It is important to recognize the operating principles and the implementation framework for each zone are intended to serve as neutral reference points from which discussions of parking decision making and strategy implementation are based over time. As 85 percent occupancy triggers are activated, these principles and framework guidelines will help future decision-makers through strategy development. Strategies will then be implemented to address specific demand and capacity issues in a manner appropriate to that particular point in time. In this manner, the parking management plan remains fluid and adaptable to changing conditions as the downtown develops and grows.

ZONE A - Core Zone

The core zone of downtown includes the highest density of development and is intended to support a high concentration of employment, retail, restaurant, and entertainment opportunities.

1. Operating Principles (Zone A)

The primary purpose of parking in Zone A is to serve customer and other short-term visitor needs and support desired economic uses in the zone.

- The purpose of, and priority for, public parking in Zone A is to support and enhance the vitality of the retail core.
- Parking for short-term users is the priority for on-street and off-street spaces in Zone A.
- Employees should be discouraged from parking in Zone A, particularly on-street.
- Parking will be provided to ensure convenient, economical, and user-friendly access for customers, clients, and visitors to downtown at all hours of the operating day (i.e., weekdays, evenings and weekends).
- All on-street parking in Zone A will be regulated (i.e., time stay and enforced).

2. Implementation Framework (Zone A)

- A. All on-street parking will be 2 hour parking based on the principle that:
 1. The 2 hour time stay allows adequate customer, visitor and client access to the retail core; and
 2. Uniform time stays foster a parking environment that is easy for the customer, visitor and client to understand.
- B. The long-term priority for on-street parking in Zone A will be 2 hour parking. As strategies within this plan are implemented, any on-street spaces of longer duration will be transitioned to off-street locations within the core and immediately adjacent to it.
- C. The priority for off-street parking in Zone A will be a combination of stays of employee parking and visitor parking that accommodates customers, visitors and clients needing longer term stay opportunities. Employee parking in the core is to be discouraged over time as visitor demand increases. As visitor demand increases the mix of employee parking in Zone A should favor visitors with more employees moved to Zone B and/or alternative modes.
- D. The City will conduct regular utilization and capacity studies to ascertain the actual peak hour utilization and average turnover of parking resources in the core area. If utilization of on and off-street parking in Zone A exceeds 85 percent and turnover meets desired rates, the City will evaluate and implement one, or a combination of, the following implementation steps “triggered” by the 85 percent threshold:
 - Increase level and/or duration of enforcement to assure desired rate of turnover and minimize/eliminate abuse (i.e., exceeding time stay, moving to evade).
 - Reduce on-street time stays to increase turnover (e.g., 2-hours to 90 minutes) as appropriate.

- Transition employee parking in Zone A into other parking zone(s) through attrition and/or elimination of monthly permits issued for long-term parking in the zone.
 - Pursue shared-use agreements with private lots to provide for additional short-term parking in Zone A.
 - Pursue implementation of valet programs (e.g., in partnership with restaurants) to enhance customer/visitor access by shuttling cars to areas with available capacity.
 - Convert some signed time limits to metered time limits to create greater efficiency in actual rate of turnover and to create a potential revenue source for new supply.
 - Expand the boundaries of the Core management zone to increase the number of on-street visitor spaces.
 - Increase non-SOV use (i.e., programs for shuttles, transit, ridesharing, etc.)
 - Create new public supply in Zone A.
- E. The City will establish policy guidelines for exceptions to the short-term parking requirements in Zone A.
1. Handicapped/disabled access
 2. 15 - 30 minute zones
 - a. Specific criteria for approval (i.e., by specific business type).
 - b. Specific locations (i.e., end of block versus mid block).
 - c. Number per geographic area (i.e., shared by users in a particular area).
 3. Loading zones
 - a. Maximum number per block face(s).
 - b. Limitation on number per geographic area (e.g., no more than two for every three continuous block faces).
 - c. Evaluation of opportunities for shared loading and customer parking.¹

ZONE B – Emerging Core Zone

Zone B, the Emerging Core Zone, includes a mix of development types, but at lower densities than in the core and with a relatively higher proportion of service, auto dealer ships, residential and professional services. Expansions of the economic land use characteristics of Zone A are expected to occur in the Emerging Core Zone.

1. Operating Principles (Zone B)

The City's goal is to continue to encourage the mixed-use development of this zone, particularly as it supports the retail core. As such, on street parking in Zone B is intended to transition over time to serve short-term parking needs and the desired land uses in this zone. In the interim, surplus parking in the zone can be effectively utilized to meet unmet long-term demand.

¹ "Combination Loading Zones" have been used in other jurisdictions allowing loading during specific periods of the day (e.g., 6:30 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.) , then convert to short-term parking during all other time periods. Such zones, if successfully managed, can increase overall short-term supply.

- Most (if not all) on-street parking in this zone will be transitioned to serve short-term, visitor parking. Off-street parking will continue to provide a mix of short and long-term stay opportunities.
- Underutilized on-street parking in this zone will be made available to employee parking.
- Over time, on-street parking will reflect a balanced mix of short and long-term stay opportunities. Long-term parking may eventually require transition into off-street supply.
- Off-street parking in this zone is intended to provide convenient and cost-effective employee parking supply as a measure to preserve higher access opportunities for customer and patron use in the core zones.
- Parking in this zone will be managed in a manner that minimizes and mitigates spill over of commercial parking demand into residential areas immediately adjacent to the central business district.

2. Implementation Framework (Zone B)

- A. The majority of on-street parking will be 2 hour parking “or by permit,” with an appropriate mix of short and long-term parking based on capacity considerations (i.e., 85% Rule). This is based on the principle that:
1. This mix of parking is conducive to both customers and employees and longer term visitor parking for the downtown;
 2. There is adequate on-street capacity in the zone to meet both short and long-term parking demand.
 3. The current economic uses in the zone do not as yet require the type of turnover ratios necessary in Zone A.
- B. The long-term priority for on street parking in Zone B will be 2 hour parking. As strategies within this plan are implemented, long-term parking (time stays and permits) will be transitioned to off-street locations within the Emerging Core Zone and immediately adjacent to it.
- C. The priority for off-street parking in Zone B will be mixed-use parking to accommodate the full range of users, including employees, customers, visitors and clients. These facilities are intended to provide for a range of time stay opportunities.
- D. The City will conduct regular utilization and capacity studies to ascertain the actual peak hour utilization and average turnover of parking resources in Zone B. If utilization of on and off-street parking in the Emerging Core Zone exceeds 85 percent and turnover meets desired rates, the City will evaluate and implement one, or a combination of, the following implementation steps “triggered” by the 85 percent threshold:
- Increase level and duration of enforcement to assure desired rate of turnover and minimize/eliminate abuse (i.e., exceeding time stay, moving to evade).
 - Increase mix of short-term time stays (2 Hour only) to increase turnover.
 - Pursue shared-use agreements with private lots to provide for additional parking in Zone B or adjacent areas.
 - Transition on-street employee parking in Zone B into available off-street locations within the parking zone or “satellite locations.”

- Increase non-SOV use by employees (i.e., programs, transit, bike/walk, ridesharing). This would be accomplished through reduction/elimination or pricing of monthly permits issued for parking in off-street locations.
 - Meter/charge for parking (on and/or off-street) to create greater efficiency in actual rate of turnover and to create a potential revenue source for new supply.
 - Create new mixed-use public parking supply within or adjacent to the zone.
- E. The City will establish policy guidelines for exceptions to the parking requirements in the Emerging Core Zone.
1. Handicapped/disabled access
 2. 15 - 30 minute zones
 - a. Specific criteria for approval (i.e., by specific business type)
 - b. Specific locations (i.e., end of block vs. mid block)
 - c. Number per geographic area (i.e., should be shared by users in a particular area)
 3. Loading zones
 - a. Maximum number per block face(s).
 - b. Limitation on number per geographic area (e.g., no more than two for every three continuous block faces).
 - c. Evaluation of opportunities for shared loading and customer parking.

ZONE C – Peripheral Parking Zone

The Peripheral Area serves a high proportion of residential demand with some low-density commercial uses. If spillover effects from the Core and Emerging Core Zones (Zones A & B) are problematic, a Residential Parking Zone (RPZ) may be established to ensure that adequate parking is available for demand generated from uses within the Peripheral Area. Initially, parking in the Peripheral Area is intended to be largely unregulated.

1. Operating Principles (Peripheral Parking Area)

Parking in the Peripheral Area is intended to serve residential demand and uses generating demand from within the zone. It is intended that “spill over” from other parking zones within the CBD be mitigated.

- Parking in the Peripheral Area is intended to meet demand generated within this parking area.
- Parking in this area is unregulated. As such, no time stay restrictions are in effect. Future management strategies assumed for this area would be contingent on the parking activity, capacity, and utilization of all other parking zones.
- If parking spillover from Zones A or B results in inadequate parking availability for properties within the Peripheral Area, Residential/Area Permit Zone programs may be desired.

2. Implementation Framework (Peripheral Area)

- A. Parking in this zone is unregulated. As such, no time stays are in effect. Future management strategies assumed for this area will be contingent on the parking activity, capacity, and utilization of all other parking zones.
- B. Residential Permit Zone programs may be implemented if parking spillover from Zones A – E results in inadequate parking availability for properties within the Peripheral Area.