Comprehensive Parking Plan for Downtown San Diego

Parking Management Case Studies

Final Summary

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May 19, 2008

TABLE OF CONTENTS

OVERVIEW 1

CASE STUDY: PASADENA 2

Description 2
Background 4
Summary 7

CASE STUDY: PORTLAND 8

Description 8

PORTLAND CASE STUDY: DOWNTOWN PORTLAND 10

Description 10
Background 11

PORTLAND CASE STUDY: LLOYD DISTRICT 13

Description 13
Background 14

CASE STUDY: THE CITY OF SEATTLE 17

Description 17
Background 18
Special Events 19

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS 21

REFERENCES 22

Tables

Table 1: Case Studies & Downtown San Diego's Potential Solutions 1
Table 2: Old Pasadena Parking Rates 3
Table 3: Downtown San Diego Potential Solutions versus Pasadena Principles 4
Table 4: Downtown Portland Parking Rates 10
Table 5: Downtown San Diego Potential Solutions versus Downtown Portland Principles 11
Table 6: Downtown San Diego Potential Solutions versus Lloyd District Principles 14
Table 7: Lloyd District Parking Management Program 15
Table 8: Downtown Seattle Parking Rates 17
Table 9: Downtown San Diego Potential Solutions versus Downtown Seattle Principles 18

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Figures

Figure 1: Parking Locations in Old Pasadena 2
Figure 2: Locations of Valet Parking in Old Pasadena 6
Figure 3: Downtown Portland and Lloyd District 9
Figure 4: SmartPark Locations, Portland 12
Figure 5: Lloyd District, Portland 13
Figure 6: Free Transit Zone Boundaries in King County, Seattle 19

OVERVIEW

Parking management comprises techniques, strategies, and tools that impact location, cost, supply and demand of parking. Implementation of parking management strategies at a local level can enhance economic vitality, provide project mitigation and improve traffic circulation.

Parking management strategies result in a better use of parking and transportation resources. The key approach is to develop a parking management program tailored to the needs of the specific community. The following are important principles for the Comprehensive Parking Plan for Downtown San Diego:

- Develop a comprehensive on-street and off-street system that maximizes the effectiveness of on-street and off-street parking and better manages parking resources to alleviate parking supply-and-demand mismatches, which result in either too much or not enough parking.
- Develop new development strategies that share parking resources and use demand-based parking requirements.
- Recognize the importance of transit as a means to increase economic vitality while reducing parking demand.
- Use wayfinding systems that enhance access and mobility and link parking, transportation and various downtown destinations.
- Identify the priority parker for each specific project area and recognize that no "one size fits all" approach will be successful; account for the unique land use and site characteristics of each neighborhood in downtown San Diego.
- Recognize the importance of noncommute modes and activities in a vibrant downtown and develop a parking management program to reduce special event parking impacts on other downtown activities.

Although there are many examples throughout the United States that follow some of these principles, the project team identified three case studies (Pasadena, Portland and Seattle) which can be compared for initial discussions about downtown San Diego. Table 1 shows how these programs relate to potential solutions.

Table 1
Case Studies & Downtown San Diego's Potential Solutions

	Parking Management: Maximize Effectiveness	New Development	Transit	Wayfinding	No One Size Fits All	Special Events
Pasadena	✓	✓		✓		
Portland – Downtown	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Portland – Lloyd District	✓	✓	✓			✓
Seattle	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓

The following sections summarize some of the key components of these parking management programs.

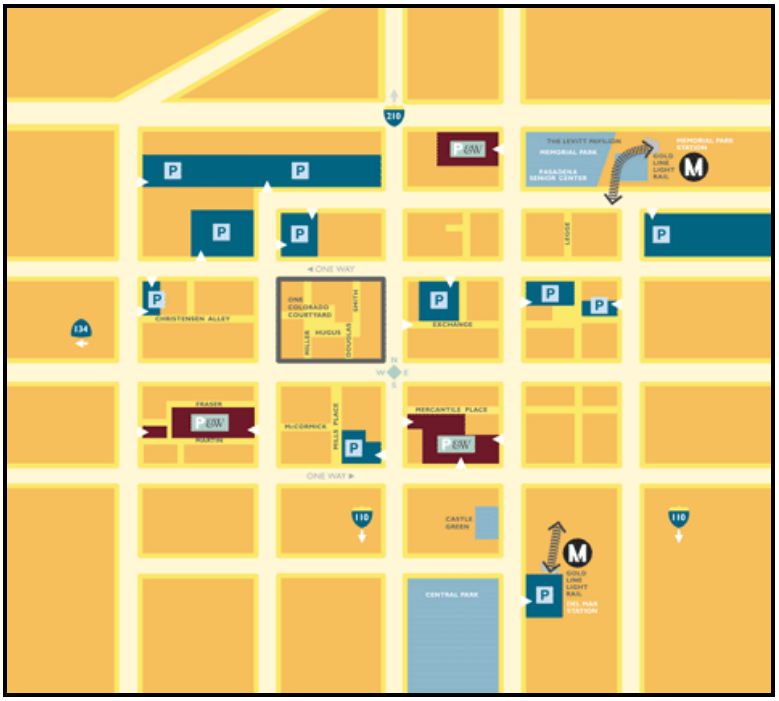
CASE STUDY: PASADENA

Description

There are 145,000 people in Pasadena, which is located about 10 miles northeast of downtown Los Angeles. Pasadena's central business district, an example of urban renaissance, is called Old Pasadena.

Old Pasadena is now considered a vibrant shopping, dining and entertainment destination. During the day the district attracts people to dine, work, shop and do business. Evening brings movie-goers and those seeking an entertainment experience. According to the Southern California Association of Governments, there are about 110,000 jobs and 40,000 residents in Old Pasadena. The following map shows parking locations in Old Pasadena.

Figure 1
Parking Locations in Old Pasadena



Source: Oldpasadena.org, 2008

In Old Pasadena, there are an estimated 750 on-street parking spaces and 8,000 off-street spaces. The on-street rate is $1.25 per hour. The city operates three parking structures in Old Pasadena with approximately 1,600 spaces. In these facilities, the first 90 minutes are free, the hourly rate is set at $2 and the maximum rate is $6. Vehicles that enter from 10:00 p.m. to 5:00 a.m. pay a $5 flat rate (Meyer Mohaddes, 2006). Table 2 summarizes parking rates for Old Pasadena.

Table 2
Old Pasadena Parking Rates

Hourly	Daily	Monthly
$0.75 to $1.25 on-street, $1.00 to $5.00 off-street First 90 minutes are free in public off-street structures	None provided in public parking structures	$75 to $80 in public off-street facilities and $60 to $105 in private off-street facilities

Source: City of Pasadena, 2008

For new development projects, the city reduces the off-street parking requirements in Old Pasadena by 25 percent and allows shared multiuse parking and zoning parking credits.

The focus of the Old Pasadena parking system is to make the on-street parking more accessible and available for customers rather than visitors and employees. According to the Kolozsvari and Shoup (2003) study in Old Pasadena, the city did the following:

- Gained support of merchants for installing the meters by agreeing that the revenue stays in the Old Pasadena District.
- Coordinated efforts with the Old Pasadena's Business Improvement District (BID) to create boundaries for the Old Pasadena Parking Meter Zone (PMZ).
- Founded the Old Pasadena PMZ Advisory Board, which was made up of businesses and property owners. The members provided input for parking policies and spending priorities for Old Pasadena's meter revenues.
- Installed parking meters to manage on-street parking supply and established a $1.00 hourly rate. Increased available parking spaces by pricing the on-street spaces.
- Allocated all of the funds to public investment in the Old Pasadena District.
- Utilized funds to purchase street furniture, trees, tree grates, and historic lighting fixtures and maintain the area. Maintenance included daily street sweeping and steam cleaning of Colorado Boulevard sidewalks.
- Conducted a marketing campaign to inform shoppers of the benefits of meter revenues.

Old Pasadena included the parking system as an integral part of its revitalization and economic development strategy. Many of these principles have applications and potential use in Downtown San Diego. Table 3 compares potential Downtown San Diego parking solutions with Pasadena principles.

Table 3
Downtown San Diego Potential Solutions versus Pasadena Principles

Downtown San Diego	Pasadena
Comprehensive on-street and off-street system maximizes the effectiveness of on-street and off-street parking and better manages parking resources	• Coordinated on-street and off-street pricing system • Pedestrian-friendly customer parking system • "Park once" system • Parking as a public-private partnership – on-street parking revenues reinvested in Old Pasadena • Universal valet program
New development strategies	• Reduction of parking requirements • Zoning parking credits • Parking finance mechanisms
Transit is a means to reduce parking demand	• Gold Line (light rail), Metro, Foothill Transit and Pasadena ARTS
Wayfinding systems	• Signage and information linking parking and destinations • Streetscape and amenities to support active pedestrian system
Identify priority parker and no "one size fits all"	• Customer as priority parker
Special event parking management program	• N/A

Background

During the 1970s, there were plans for a major revitalization effort in Old Pasadena. Revitalization plans included demolition of large blocks of land and development of single projects with dedicated off-site parking. At this time, Old Pasadena consisted of old buildings with very little parking. A citizen group joined with business and property owners to create its own revitalization plan and stopped the proposed Old Pasadena demolition. In 1981, the city established new policies for Old Pasadena based on new revitalization policies that included the development of pedestrian friendly parking structures north and south of Colorado Boulevard and creation of a "park once" environment that encourages people to walk from parking to places within Old Pasadena.

In 1983, the city of Pasadena created the mechanism to finance multiuse public parking structures that included tax increment funds, rent from garage commercial tenants, zoning parking credit contracts, and net operating income. Pasadena proposed various sources of funding. These include the following:

- Tax increment funds
- Rent from commercial tenants
- Zoning parking credits
- Net operating income.

The “Parking Credit Program” constitutes a contract between the city of Pasadena and private developers and/or tenants to meet off-street parking requirements for building permits and occupancy permits. It is not an “in-lieu” program because it required the development and assignment of parking to new development. As part of the Parking Credit Program, the city issues 1.5 parking credits per space in existing public garages. Businesses that buy credits to meet the city's parking requirements do not receive permits to park in the municipal structures.

The parking credit program began in 1987, and by 2001 the city had allocated 2,350 credits. This allows businesses to satisfy the city's parking requirements without providing any additional on-site parking spaces. Because the city reduces the off-street parking requirements in Old Pasadena by 25 percent and issues 1.5 parking credits per public space, Old Pasadena has fewer parking spaces than the rest of the city.

By 1993, the city had built parking structures, revitalized more than 75 percent of the blocks and more than 100 buildings were readapted for new uses. The public parking avoids the usual haphazard distribution of small private parking lots attached to individual businesses without regard to the design of the neighborhood. According to Marsha Rood, former Development Administrator for the city of Pasadena, parking was part of an overall economic revitalization package. By 1993:

- Sales volume increased from $10 million to $102 million.
- Tax increment increased from $100,000 to $1.2 million.
- Rents increased from $0.25 to $3 to $4 per square foot.
- There was approximately $200 million in private investment and $23 million in public investment.

However, there were still issues regarding the use of on-street parking and off-street public parking structures. The free on-street parking was competing against paid garage parking and it was difficult to enforce the time limits. Employees were taking spaces adjacent to businesses.

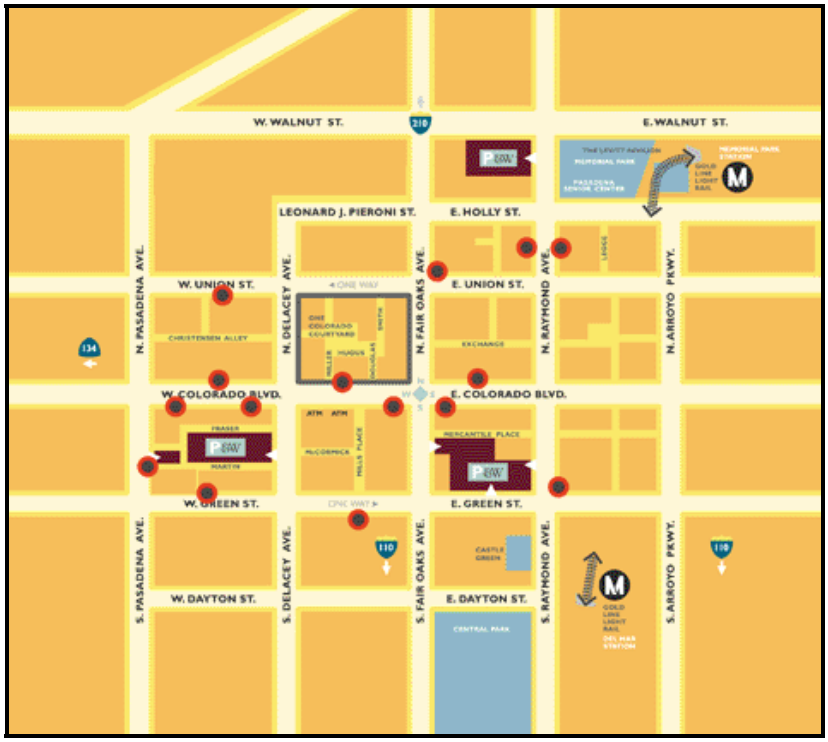
Many people were against paid on-street parking because there was free parking at malls and other shopping districts. From 1993 to 1995, the city of Pasadena and local businesses worked together to set up a process and organizational infrastructure that defined uses of net revenues from the parking meters. Developed in partnership with the city of Pasadena, the Old Pasadena Business Improvement District reinvests parking revenues in the district. The BID Board consists of business and property owner who set spending priorities and make recommendations to the city based on the zone’s parking meter revenues. In the first project, they agreed upon a plan in which net revenues from the meters would go to planning and capital costs for the Old Pasadena Streetscapes and Alley Walkway Plan (a 20-block area). The 1995 plan included $5 million in physical elements such as historical lighting standards, street trees and grates, concrete paving of all alleys, benches, trash receptacles, wayfinding signs, directories, historical alley markers and other physical improvements. It also included a $700,000 annual operation and maintenance budget to provide security and clean and maintain the streetscape and alley walkways (now about $545,000 a year).

Sales tax revenue quadrupled. By 1994, Old Pasadena's sales tax revenues surpassed those of Plaza Pasadena, the nearby shopping mall with free parking (the city had assisted with a $41 million subsidy in the 1970s). The Plaza Pasadena was demolished in 2001 to make way for a new redevelopment with

storefronts that resemble Old Pasadena. In 1998, Old Pasadena's sales-tax revenues also surpassed those of South Lake Avenue, formerly the city's premier shopping district.

Another feature of the Pasadena parking system is a universal valet program. With the universal valet parking program, customers can drop off their car at selected locations in Old Pasadena and ask to have their car waiting for them at a different stand. Cost is $7 with validation and $10 without. The system is privately run and utilizes a variety of small surface parking lots throughout the area. The following map shows locations for valet parking.

Figure 2
Locations of Valet Parking in Old Pasadena



Source: Oldpasadena.org, 2008

In 2001, the garages' total capital and operating expenses amounted to $4.84 million, while the parking fees brought in $3.25 million. Because drivers pay two-thirds of the garages' total annual capital and operating costs, the city can charge businesses a modest fee for the parking credits. The total parking credit payments were $229,000, or only 5 percent of the total public parking expenses. The $1.59 million shortfall (annual expenses minus parking revenues) is made up by parking credits, investment earnings, tax increment revenues, and lease revenue for the ground floor retail space. The parking credit system thus shifts most of the burden of paying for parking from businesses to drivers. Businesses pay very little for parking credits because drivers pay to use the public spaces.

More recently, Old Pasadena has seen the development of new transit options to further enhance the person-carrying capacity, better manage parking demand and increase walkability. This includes improvements to the

regional bus system (Metro and Foothill Transit), development of the Gold Line, and the local community bus service (Pasadena ARTS).

Summary

According to a presentation given by Marsha Rood (2006), as of 2005, the results of this parking management program include:

- $500 million in private investment
- $25 million in public improvements
- $220 million annual sales volume
- $2.3 million annual tax increment
- 30,000 – 40,000 weekend visitors.

She summarized the key elements of Old Pasadena's parking management program as part of a solution package that included:

- Revitalize district—not fix parking problem.
- Develop long lasting public/private partnership to fund operation and maintenance issues.
- Park-once principles help to create a vibrant and active pedestrian environment and shared parking. They work best if they include commercial retail and restaurant uses.
- Streetscape expands walking area and links walking areas to parking garages.
- Finance and funding mechanisms based on district income are more acceptable.
- Parking meters and paying for parking is more acceptable if there are tangible results and benefits to the district.

CASE STUDY: PORTLAND

Description

The city of Portland has a population of more than 500,000; the metropolitan Portland area has more than two million people. The city of Portland is known for its integrated land use and transportation program, which strongly emphasizes the use of alternative transportation modes, and a comprehensive parking management program. The city has an on-street parking carpool program that allows registered carpools to have priority from 6:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. at a cost of $50 per month. Tri-Met provides transit service (light rail and bus) in the Portland area. Pass programs allow participation on a monthly and annual basis. Employers may purchase a universal annual pass that allows all employees to use transit on an unlimited basis for a substantially discounted price which is based on the use of transit at the employment site. This case study focuses on two areas in Portland: Downtown Portland and the Lloyd District. These two areas are major employment centers separated by the Willamete River.

Since the 1970s, the city of Portland and the Association for Portland Progress worked together on parking and transportation issues in downtown Portland.

More recently, the city of Portland has partnered with the Lloyd District Transportation Management Association to develop an equally successful parking and transportation program in the Lloyd District.

The following is a map of Downtown Portland and the Lloyd District.

Figure 3
Downtown Portland and Lloyd District

Source: Portland, 2008

The following paragraphs describe both of these project areas.

PORTLAND CASE STUDY: DOWNTOWN PORTLAND

Description

Downtown Portland has 85,000 employees and 15,000 residents. Its parking inventory includes 5,000 on-street spaces, 4,000 public off-street spaces and 50,000 private off-street spaces. On-street occupancy is around 92 percent during a typical weekday. Table 4 lists parking rates in downtown Portland.

Table 4
Downtown Portland Parking Rates

Hourly	Daily	Monthly
$1.25 (public); generally $1.50 to $3.00 (private)	$7.00 to $16.00 (private); no public daily parking; early-bird parking is available at $7 per day.	$150 to $200

Source: City of Portland, 2008

Downtown Portland has retained many of its older historic buildings, constructed new major developments and seen an increase in transit use from 20–25 percent to about 35–37 percent and a reduction in single occupant vehicles to 45 percent. This has been a factor in the creation of a vibrant downtown including shopping, dining and a variety of business venues.

Unlike many downtown revitalization projects, Portland's plan did not call for widespread demolition and reconstruction. In the early 1970s, Portland's central city was beginning to decay and was having a difficult time competing with suburban shopping malls located outside the downtown core and in neighboring cities.

The city of Portland has also developed land use strategies based on a parking maximum and preservation of parking rights for older buildings. There is no minimum parking requirement for sites located less than 500 feet from a transit street with 20-minute peak hour service (Portland, 2006).

Portland also has no requirement for residential parking within its central city area and has imposed a residential parking maximum of 1.35 stalls per unit. Financial institutions are providing the necessary financing to make these Portland projects feasible, with an average rate of residential occupancy in downtown Portland at 97 percent (US EPA, 2006).

Table 5 presents a side-by-side comparison of downtown San Diego's potential solutions with those of downtown Portland.

Table 5
Downtown San Diego Potential Solutions versus Downtown Portland Principles

Downtown San Diego	Downtown Portland
Comprehensive on-street and off-street system maximizes the effectiveness of on-street and off-street parking and better manages parking resources.	• City of Portland system prioritizes on-street parking for customers. It also built public parking structures for customers. All other parking is provided by the private sector. Transit is used to manage excess demand and increases the system's person-carrying capacity.
New development strategies	• Parking maximums • Parking cap • No minimum parking requirement for sites located less than 500 feet from a transit street with 20-minute peak hour service • Historic Preservation Parking System creates a market for transferable parking rights that lead to shared parking arrangements
Transit as a means to reduce parking demand	• Transit mall and MAX system • Fareless square – transit rides are free within downtown Portland • Universal Annual Transit Pass Program
Wayfinding systems	• Comprehensive wayfinding system – SmartPark links parking with destinations.
Identify priority parker and no "one size fits all"	• City of Portland identifies the customer as the priority parker and has designed the public system to serve this target market. The city does not provide commuter parking.
Special event parking management program	• PGE Park

Background

Beginning in the 1970s, the city invested in a transit mall (1976), Waterfront Park (1978), Pioneer Courthouse Square (1986) and opened Pioneer Place mall (1990). At the same time, the city invested in light rail (MAX) and opened its first line in 1986. The system now has three lines with 44 miles of track and 64 stations, and is seen as a catalyst for more than $4.7 billion in development and revitalization. In 2001, the city opened a 4.0-mile streetcar line.

A key component of the Portland parking plan was establishing maximum parking requirements for new development. In Portland, set parking maximums are based on the availability of transit service. Lower maximums are based on a quarter-mile walk from a frequently served bus stop or half-mile walk from a transit station. Therefore, parking maximums are lower in central business districts and downtown due to the availability of alternative modes (transit). The parking maximum in the central downtown core is 0.7 per

1,000 square feet and up to 2.5 in adjacent business districts. In more suburban areas with limited or no transit service, the parking maximum is set as high as 3.4 per 1,000 square feet. This ratio is adjusted every 5 to 7 years based on available transit service in an area.

Parking maximums are also used as part of Portland's historic preservation parking policy. In 1975, the city of Portland established an overall cap of 40,000 downtown parking spaces. The cap was increased to 44,000 in the 1980s and has since been increased.

Older buildings have parking rights of a maximum entitlement that can be combined with other uses. This creates a market for transferable parking rights and is used to develop parking facilities that can combine parking rights of multiple buildings (such as a hotel, retail shops and a historic office building).

Portland understands the importance of its on-street parking resources as part of a comprehensive parking management program. Downtown Portland has a "core area parking zone" with 90-minute paid parking stations and meters. Portland has also established special use zone areas that allow for longer-time stays, based on users and priority parkers. For example, parking located near Portland State University is standardized with 3-hour time limits to allow for a longer stay by its part-time student population.

The city of Portland focuses its efforts and parking system on providing short-term customer parking (the city of Portland does not provide commuter parking and relies on the private sector parking supply for this target market). The downtown Portland parking system includes SmartPark.

Figure 4
SmartPark Locations, Portland

Source: City of Portland, 2008

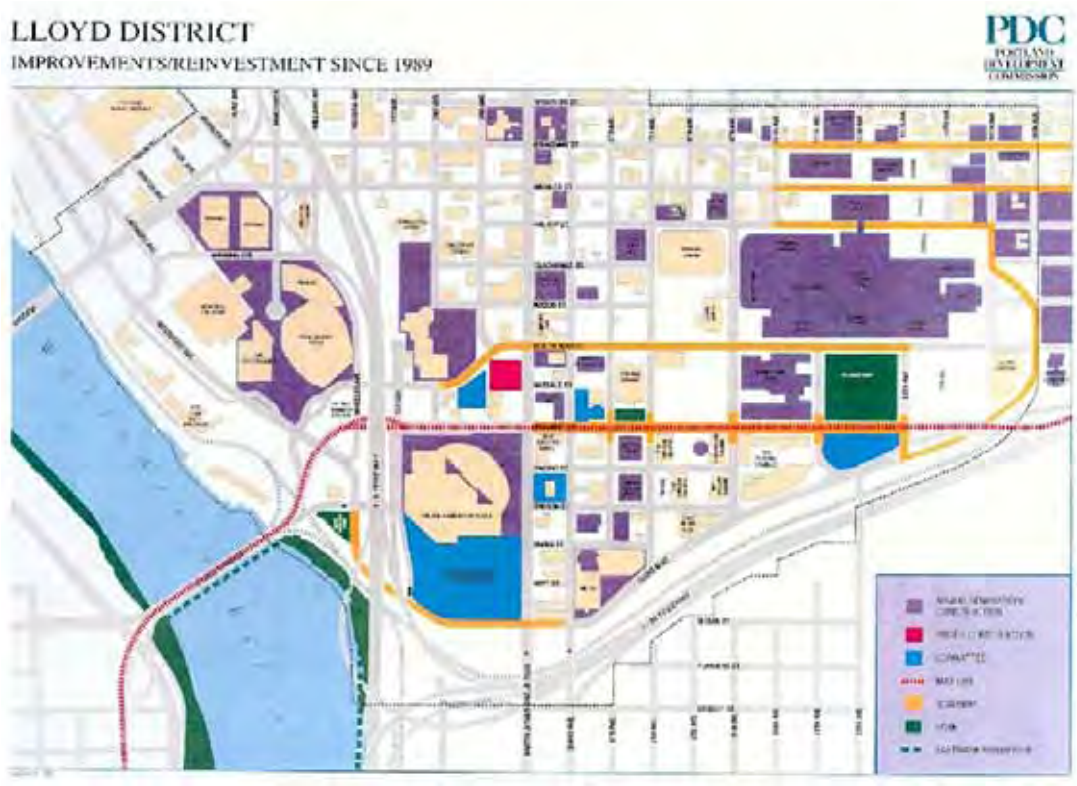
The SmartPark system, depicted above, includes seven downtown public facilities with nearly 4,000 public spaces. These facilities are publicly owned, but operated by private operators. Parking rates are $1.25 an hour for the first 4 hours. With a $25 or more purchase at one of more than 700 validating merchants, customers can receive 2 hours of free parking.

PORTLAND CASE STUDY: LLOYD DISTRICT

Description

The Lloyd District meter district is located just across the Willamette River from downtown Portland (see figure below). Most meter revenues are allocated to transportation improvements and programs in the Lloyd District. The Lloyd District meter district includes 5,233 employees and nearly 2,000 metered stalls that serve a mixed-use business center including the Rose Garden (home of the Portland Trailblazers) and the Convention Center.

Figure 5
Lloyd District, Portland



Source: Rick Williams, Lloyd District TMA 2006

Table 6
Downtown San Diego Potential Solutions versus Lloyd District Principles

Downtown San Diego Potential Solutions	Lloyd District
Comprehensive on-street and off-street system maximizes the effectiveness of on-street and off-street parking and better manages parking resources.	• On-street paid parking for customers and some for carpoolers (before 10 a.m.). • Reduce commuter demand for parking. • Eliminate free on-street and commuter parking.
New development strategies	• Restrict new surface parking lots • 51 percent of on-street parking revenues are allocated to Lloyd District • Development of parking maximums • Reduction of parking demand from 3.95 spaces per 1,000 square feet to 1.95.
Transit as a means to reduce parking demand	• MAX light rail system • Development of specific bus routes to serve Lloyd District • Encourage use of alternative modes to reduce parking demand. • Transit-oriented development guidelines • Annual employee (universal) transit passes for all members of the Lloyd District TMA • Revenue sharing of transit pass sales • Lloyd District is part of Fareless Square
Wayfinding systems	• Development of walking system and creating links from transit and parking to destinations in the Lloyd District.
Identify priority parker and no “one size fits all”	• Customer first.
Special event parking management program	• Rose Garden (Portland Trailblazers) and Convention Center

Background

In September 1997, the city of Portland installed on-street parking meters in Lloyd District. The Lloyd District On-Street Parking Management Plan (1997) and the city of Portland's Parking Meter District Policy (1996) provide guidelines and directions for the allocation of net meter revenues from parking meter systems.

Specific allocation of new parking meter revenues occurs as part of the city’s budget process. Every two years, the Lloyd District meets with the Portland Office of Transportation (PDOT). The parking meter districts are managed with the following objectives:

- Customer first. Support the economic vitality of the district. Decisions on meters and meter rates should not result in economic harm to the district.
- Reduce commuter parking demand.

- Encourage and promote use of all alternative modes such as transit service, carpools, bicycle and pedestrian modes.

Meter system revenues that are not spent on district services are applied to citywide and multidistrict service costs.

Parking meter revenues can be used to meet bond payment obligations. This potential call on parking meter funds takes priority over all other uses except for the costs associated with collecting meter revenues. The first priority for meter district revenues is to pay the capital costs of the meter system. Capital costs of meter systems include the cost of parking meters, ancillary equipment and all cost associated with the installation of the meters.

Revenues remaining after capital costs, enforcement and operating costs are allocated to support transportation services within the Lloyd District and City.

The majority of net revenues go to support transportation and parking services and programs. The Lloyd District receives 51 percent of the net revenue for its programs (for FY2007, this was $82,500). The following summarizes activities of the Lloyd District Transportation Management Association (TMA).

The Lloyd District TMA Program

The Lloyd District TMA (Williams, 2006) worked with the city of Portland and Tri-Met to develop transit improvements and incentives with a parking management program. This included:

Table 7
Lloyd District Parking Management Program

Transit	Parking
• Development of transit-oriented development guidelines. • Establishment of new direct bus route connecting homes with destinations in the Lloyd District. • Agreement to purchase annual employee transit passes through establishment of the Lloyd District Passport Program. • Revenue sharing of transit pass sales.	• Elimination of free on-street parking, installation of parking meters and development of parking meter revenue sharing plan. • Elimination of free commuter parking. • Development of aggressive maximum ratios. • Restrictions on future development of surface parking lots. • Restrictions on parking near the MAX light rail station.

Source: Lloyd District TMA

Before the start of this program the transit share was 8 percent. By 1997, the transit mode split increased to 21 percent. At the end of 2005, the transit share rose to 41 percent.

The Lloyd District has created more than 1.3 million square feet of new public/private development, reduced the commercial office vacancy rate from 12 percent (2001) to 3 percent, decreased parking from

3.5 spaces per 1,000 square feet to 1.95, and removed 1,433 commute vehicles, with an estimated savings of more than $35 million in parking development costs (estimated based on a construction cost of $25,000 per space in the Lloyd District).

CASE STUDY: THE CITY OF SEATTLE

Description

The city of Seattle has a population of about 580,000 people. The Seattle metropolitan area includes a populace of 3.2 million. Seattle has been working on developing a neighborhood parking management program since the 1990s. Today it includes 30-plus Seattle neighborhoods. This case study focuses on downtown Seattle and the central business district.

Downtown Seattle is the central business district, providing 113,000 jobs and is home to 17,988 residents (PSRC 2007). The mode split is 48 percent SOV and 52 percent non-SOV (with about 40 percent of whom commute by bus). Downtown Seattle is geographically constrained by Elliott Bay, hills and a tidal flat. According to the PSRC (2006), there are 25,965 parking spaces available in the Central Business District with an average occupancy weekday rate of 70.1 percent (85 percent on-street and a range of about 65 percent to 75 percent off-street). The city of Seattle has about 5,000 public on-street spaces and fewer than 3,000 private off-street parking spaces. Table 8 shows estimated parking rates in the downtown core.

Table 8
Downtown Seattle Parking Rates

Hourly	Daily	Monthly
Generally, $7 per hour	Generally around $25 in the downtown core; early bird rates are available at $13	Generally around $275 in the downtown core

Source: City of Seattle, 2008

Seattle has no minimum parking requirement, a parking maximum of one space per 1,000 square feet of office space in the central business district and has a policy to set meter rates that result in 85 percent turnover at 2-hour spaces.

The city of Seattle (2007) developed its own objectives for parking in center city Seattle (which includes downtown). These objectives include the following:

- Manage on-street parking and loading
- Maximize use of existing parking supply as short-term rather than long-term commuter
- Improve customer and visitor access through transparent pricing and marketing
- Build new technology to direct motorists to short-term parking
- Manage commuter parking to reduce downtown congestion
- Address parking losses in the central waterfront.

Table 9 shows a comparison between Downtown San Diego potential solutions and principles for downtown Seattle.

Table 9
Downtown San Diego Potential Solutions versus Downtown Seattle Principles

Downtown San Diego	Downtown Seattle
Comprehensive on-street and off-street system maximizes the effectiveness of on-street and off-street parking and better manages parking resources.	• Most of the public parking supply is on-street parking. • Almost all of the off-street parking is provided by the private sector.
New development strategies	• No minimum parking requirement.
Transit as a means to reduce parking demand	• Extensive transit system. • Ride free area in downtown Seattle. • Annual transit pass program (Flexpass). • Parking cash-out due to unbundled parking leases, limited parking supply, parking pricing and high land values.
Wayfinding systems	• Encourage "park once" and use free transit system in downtown Seattle. • Plans for a system to direct visitors to short-term parking.
Identify priority parker and no "one size fits all"	• City of Seattle has developed an approach based on development of a neighborhood parking management program to meet needs of specific Seattle communities. • Offer CityPark tokens that can be used for both parking and transit discounts.
Special event parking management program	• SAFECO Field and Qwest Field; only 1,250 parking spaces at each location; rely upon available private parking system and transit options.

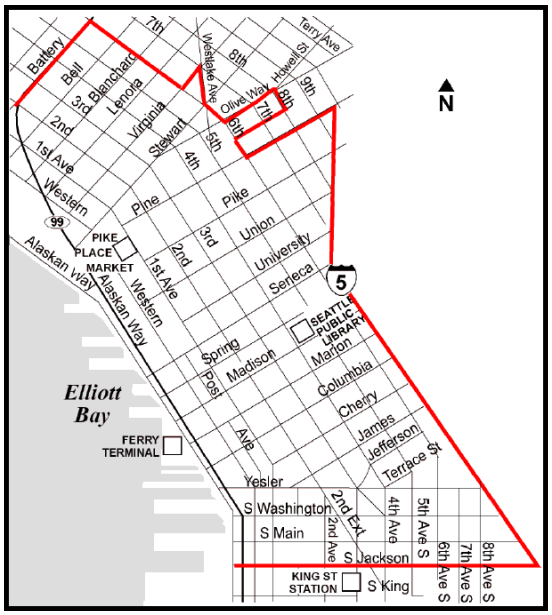
Background

In 2004, Seattle began the three-year process of replacing the majority of the 9,000 single-space parking meters in the city (2,420 of which are in the central business district) with approximately 1,600 pay stations. It has a carpool parking program that offers discounted parking in the central business district. Other incentive examples include preferential carpool and vanpool parking in off-street lots, guaranteed ride home programs for rideshare participants, and ride match database programs.

As a result, per-space parking revenue with the same fee has increased 40 percent due to the propensity of motorists to use credit cards (62 percent of parking revenue) to purchase the maximum parking period allowed and avoid a parking ticket.

King County Metro and other service providers provide transit options in downtown Seattle. King County Metro offers monthly, quarterly, and annual bus pass program options. Their Flexpass program allows employers to purchase an annual bus pass for all employees at a reduced fee. Riding transit in downtown Seattle is free between 6 a.m. and 7 p.m. The boundaries for the free transit zone are shown on the following map.

Figure 6
Free Transit Zone Boundaries in King County, Seattle



Source: King County Metro 2008

Seattle's commuter rail service links commuters to downtown Seattle. A light rail system is under construction that will provide additional transit service linking downtown with the Seattle area.

Downtown Seattle has developed a market-driven, parking cash-out program because it has created an environment that allows businesses to cash out. Businesses are using versions of parking cash-out because it makes economic sense and serves their own self interest. Downtown Seattle has the key elements to promote cash-out, including the following:

- Excellent transit service
- Unbundled parking leases
- Limited parking supply and high parking prices
- High land values

Special Events

The Seattle Mariners baseball team (SAFECO Field) and Seattle Seahawks football team (Qwest Field) are within walking distance of each other in downtown Seattle (near the junction of I-5 and I-90, the King Street

train station and south of the International District). South of these facilities are railroad, industrial, and warehouse uses. SAFECO Field opened in 1999, seats 47,116 people and has 1,250 parking spaces. Qwest Field opened in 2002, seats 67,000 people and has only 3,100 spaces.

Both facilities rely on surrounding off-street private sector parking lots and extensive use of the public transit system (within walking distance of both stadiums). According to the Washington State Public Stadium Authority (2008), Qwest Field & Event Center has parking for 3,100 automobiles on-site and 8,400 in surrounding lots. Qwest Field manages three parking garages: the North Lot, Qwest Event Center Garage, and Union Station Garage. Most of this parking should also be available for events at SAFECO Field. Depending on the event, parking costs range between $5 - $25.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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