

Proposed Guiding Principles for Downtown Parking Management October 2017 (v2)

A. INTRODUCTION

This memorandum outlines a recommended draft set of Guiding Principles for the management of parking in downtown Leavenworth. The outline below represents input taken from the Leavenworth Downtown Parking Stakeholder Advisory Committee (DSAC) at its July 20, 2017 work session with the consultant.



This summary is intended to represent the consultant's draft recommendation, based on the input received from the DSAC. As such, the purpose of this draft is to illicit reaction, discussion and additional input from the DSAC. The aim is to ensure that these proposed Guiding Principles are reflective of the intent, purpose and priorities of the DSAC for managing parking in the downtown.

Input received at upcoming DSAC meetings and scheduled public forums will be used to further revise and/or refine this draft, resulting in a final set of recommendations that best reflect the guidance of the DSAC. Final refinements can be made to the Guiding Principles subsequent to input from the Leavenworth City Council later in the public engagement process.

B. WHAT WE HEARD – STAKEHOLDER INPUT

A successful downtown has a clear sense of place and comprises an exciting and attractive mix of uses and amenities. The role of parking is to support the realization of this vision. Simply put, *people do not come downtown to park*. They come to experience an environment that is unique, active, and diverse. A well-organized and sustainable parking system helps make it safe, easy, and convenient for them to do so.

Desired Outcomes

If parking is to be successful, the parking management plan will need to:

- Get the right parker to the right stall – make a place for each user of downtown.
- Assure convenient, affordable, and available parking for tourists and customers.
- Make it easy for employees to park in places that do not conflict with tourists and customers.
- Educate and encourage appropriate use.

- Create a “park once” system that lets users find a convenient space and take advantage of downtown’s walkable environment to connect hotel, business and retail destinations.
- Create a diversity of parking options to meet a variety of parking needs.
- Clearly communicate how and where to find appropriate and available parking; make parking understandable.
- Provide for an integrated on- and off-street system that works for all users and supports and encourages a successful public/private partnership.
- Integrate and encourage alternative modes (bus/shuttle, bike and walk).
- Anticipate and respond to increasing demand for access to the downtown.
- Use pricing (as necessary) to ensure that parking stalls turnover and provide resources for future solutions and capacity.
- Ensure that the public parking system pays for itself, recognizing that all users are beneficiaries of parking.

Supporting Leavenworth’s Unique Character

Leavenworth is a special place. How we manage our parking system should reinforce and enhance Leavenworth’s unique qualities and character. These qualities include:

- A family friendly, small town feel.
- A clean, green and cohesive community.
- A walkable city, with a variety of high quality businesses and attractions.
- A year round city that includes the downtown that is connected to not just business but to opportunities for recreation and other outdoor opportunities.



C. GUIDING PRINCIPLES – ELEMENTS OF PARKING MANAGEMENT

The Guiding Principles outlined here are summarized under theme categories. Ideally, these will establish a basis for consensus and provide near- and long-term direction for parking management in the downtown. The principles are presented at this time in no particular order or priority.

1. CITY ROLE AND COORDINATION

- a. **Primary Role (City of Leavenworth).** The City’s role in providing public parking is listed in priority order and includes;
 - Accommodating tourist/customer access downtown,
 - Providing (in partnership with the private sector) reasonable access for downtown employees,

- **Facilitating residential and/or guest access in neighborhoods immediately adjacent to the downtown.**

The cost for providing parking, especially off-street, is very high. The City cannot be fully responsible for providing parking to all users. The City role must prioritize downtown's public system for tourists and customers.

- b. Primary Role (Private Sector). Employee parking should be led by the private sector and through partnerships where the City can reasonably participate (financially or programmatically).**

The private sector must take a lead role in providing parking for downtown employees. The City can complement the private sector role with surpluses in its supply and by providing safe, reliable, and effective non-auto access to downtown.

- c. Effective Communications. High-quality, user-friendly communications to ensure easy access for customers and visitors to appropriate and available parking near their destination.**

The City's must ensure that signage and wayfinding leads downtown tourists and customers to available parking supplies that are suited to their destination and time-stay needs. This may require real-time monitoring and communication of available public supplies. Parameters of use (e.g., length of stay, pricing, etc.) must be clear and concise and not detract from the image of downtown. Communications systems must be reliable and easy to use and understand.

- d. Stakeholder Support. Ensure that a representative body of affected private and public constituents routinely informs decision-making.**

Active participation by those affected guarantees an understanding of and agreement on parking management and the "trigger" points for decision-making are built into the parking plan. This will be best accomplished through an established parking advisory committee that reviews performance, serves as a sounding board for issues, and acts as a liaison to the broader stakeholder community.

2. *PRIORITY USERS*

- a) On-Street System (downtown). The most convenient on-street parking will be preserved for the priority user; the tourist/customer trip.**

The on-street parking system in the downtown must be formatted in a manner that supports turnover and minimizes conflicts between the priority user and other users. For the most part, employees should not park on-street in the downtown, particularly when demand for tourist/customer parking is high.

b) On-Street System (immediately adjacent neighborhoods). The most convenient on-street parking will be preserved for the priority user; the resident and their guests.

As with on-street parking in the downtown, neighborhood parking must be formatted in a manner that assures priority access and minimizes conflicts between the residential users in a neighborhood and other users. For the most part, employees should not park on-street, particularly when demand for parking by neighborhood residents and guests is high. When demand is low and/or surpluses of parking exist, the City can accommodate non-priority users in the on-street system for interim periods.

c) On-street Turnover. The on-street parking system is a finite resource and will be managed to provide a rate of turnover that supports downtown vitality.

Most users of the downtown favor on-street parking. This premium on-street parking resource needs to be managed to provide a rate of tourist and customer turnover that supports downtown vitality. With this principle comes the recognition that continued growth in downtown parking demand will, over the longer term, need to be accommodated in off-street locations. Longer-term patron and employee parking must be managed so as not to conflict with customer parking, particularly on-street. On-street parking must be managed according to demand and time-stays conducive to priority customer need. This will be supported by parallel efforts by the City and private sector to maximize off-street opportunities and increase alternative mode options.

d) Off-street System. Coordinate off-street parking resources (public and private) to meet employee demand; integrated with strategies that encourage walking, biking, riding transit, and carpooling/ridesharing.

All parking strategies, particularly for employees, should be coordinated with the City's broader transportation demand management goals and objectives to ensure that users have reasonable options available for access (which includes auto, transit, bike, walk and ridesharing). This effort should be pursued as a partnership between the City and private sector businesses.



3. ACTIVE CAPACITY MANAGEMENT

- a) **Optimize Utilization. Manage the public parking system using the 85% Occupancy Standard to inform and guide decision-making.**

The 85% Rule is an operating principle for coordinating parking supply. When occupancies routinely reach 85% during peak periods, more intensive and aggressive parking management strategies are called for to assist priority users in finding available parking. The 85% Rule will facilitate reasonable and effective decisions regarding time stays, enforcement, and other decisions related to capacity management.

- b) **Resolve Constraints. Parking demands in excess of the 85% Occupancy Standard will require best practice strategies to minimize parking constraints.**

Strategies that will be identified in the Downtown Parking Management Plan will be triggered by the 85% Rule. The City and the Parking Advisory Committee will be committed to moving forward with recommended strategies when parking demand requires them. Changes to the status quo can be difficult, but continued constraints in parking and access will adversely impact the downtown's success and ability to absorb growth.

- c) **Shared and Remote Off-street Parking. Encourage shared parking in areas where parking is underutilized (within the downtown and remotely in facilities linked by other modes). This will require an active partnership with owners of private parking supplies.**

Private parking facilities in downtown and locations outside downtown may be underutilized. Efforts should be made to facilitate shared use agreements between different users (public and private) to direct parking demand into these facilities, in order to optimize the utilization of existing parking resources. This may require linking more remote locations via shuttles or transit.

4. *INFORMATION SYSTEMS (SUPPLY & CUSTOMER-BASED)*

Supply-based

- a) **Monitor & Report Utilization. Implement performance measurements and reporting to facilitate decision-making.**

Committing to a routine and objective system of measurement and reporting ensures that decision-making will be informed. Key metrics include occupancy, turnover, average duration of stay, rate of violation, and customer input. Performance monitoring also provides a basis for routine evaluation of program effectiveness.

Customer-based

- a) **Product Quality. Provide and manage a safe, user-friendly and attractive on-street and off-street parking and communications system. This will be provided in a manner that complements the quality of downtown and attracts patrons to downtown.**

The parking system and its supporting programs should be of a quality level that reflects the quality of downtown Leavenworth itself. On-street parking should be uniformly managed and enforced to assure an intuitive, reasonable sense of the allowed time stay. Off-street facilities should be of uniform quality and identity to create a clear sense that the user is protected and free from harm (safety), convenience, understandability and coordination with the pedestrian environment. Communications systems should be cutting edge, professional and effectively coordinated. All systems should be reliable and easy to use and understand.

- b) **System Communications. Improve existing and create new information resources (outreach, education, maps, websites, apps, etc.) for use by the public and private sectors. Communications systems must be uniform and strategically coordinated.**

Efforts to improve understanding, awareness, and ease of use of the parking and access system should be upgraded. A clear schedule should be maintained for the dissemination of information. This could be coordinated through a partnership between the City, the Leavenworth Chamber of Commerce, hotels, venues and other entities. High quality communication and marketing materials should be integrated into a comprehensive package of services to inform and guide the parking public into the on- and off-street parking system.



- c) **Branding & Wayfinding. Augment and expand the existing wayfinding system for the downtown that links parking assets and provides directional guidance, preferably under a common brand/logo.**

Leavenworth has a good foundation for wayfinding in place. The City needs to ensure that all public parking resources are clearly identified and explained through branding and signage. This will increase awareness and understanding of how to access on- and off-street parking resources. A common brand unifies marketing materials, signage systems, and other communications and simplifies customer recognition and use of the system.

5. *INTEGRATION WITH OTHER MODES*

- a) **Encourage and facilitate increasing percentages of use, particularly by employees, of alternative travel modes to free up parking capacity.**

Vehicle parking should not be the only access option, particularly for employees. Every parking stall occupied by an employee means a lower rate of turnover and less access for tourists and customers. Employees should be given reasonable access to parking, but encouraged to use alternative modes that include walking, biking, transit, and ridesharing. Nearby residents should be encouraged to use Leavenworth's sidewalk system to access downtown. Community members from greater distances should be encouraged to bicycle and ride transit for downtown access. Providing safe and reliable non-auto modes of access to downtown (walking, biking, transit), relieves pressure on the parking system, enhances the attractiveness of downtown, and accommodates nearly all types of users.

b) Bicycle Parking. Increase bike parking on- and off-street to enhance the broader bicycle network.

The City of Leavenworth's bike parking network should be as effectively formatted as the auto parking system. On- and off-street parking facilities for bicyclists are efficient and low-cost.

6. PLANNING FOR FUTURE SUPPLY

a) Planning & Funding. Planning for future supply growth will be strategic and routinely evaluated to ensure the City is ready to respond to growth, recognizing that assembling funding for new growth takes time and will require a varied package of funding resources (and partnerships).

The City must plan for its supply growth needs and initiate long-term planning efforts to assemble funding and partnerships necessary to that growth.

7. FINANCIAL VIABILITY

a) Fiscal Stewardship. All parking operations must be financially sustainable.

Parking revenues should cover the cost of operations as well as providing reasonable surpluses of revenue to ensure the highest quality access product, customer convenience, system maintenance, safety, and service delivery. This will require multiple sources of revenue for parking operations, maintenance and system growth. Revenue sources can include leases, enforcement fees, hourly rates and other user fees, and/or partnerships with the private sector.