

Appendix C. Parking Strategies

Bremerton Parking Study

Introduction & Project Scope

Community concerns regarding parking impacts in Downtown Bremerton and the surrounding residential areas have existed for many years. This study is the first significant effort by the City and the community to better understand parking conditions, obtain public input, work with key community stakeholders, and develop parking policy and management strategies to support community goals for Downtown Bremerton, residential neighborhoods, economic development, housing, and transportation.

This document provides a summary of select strategies available to address the parking issues identified during the study. Each strategy will have system-wide impacts and the effects of implementation should be considered comprehensively.

Strategies

Based on input from the public, the advisory committee, the City, and data collection and analysis the following draft parking management strategies are proposed for further consideration. Some of the strategies represent multiple options to address the same issue and are subject to further community decision-making. The timeline for implementation is provided as short-term (1 year), mid-term (1-2 years) and long-term (3+ years). Mid- and long-term strategies are anticipated to take longer than a year to implement, but work should commence soon after adoption of the Bremerton Parking Study.

Exhibit 1. Parking Strategies and Timeline

CATEGORIES	PARKING STRATEGY	TIMELINE
Parking System	Prioritize certain parking areas for residents, customers, and employee parking and manage accordingly	Short-term
	Reestablish the City parking committee and develop a working group with representatives from NBK, the Shipyard, WA State Ferries, Kitsap Transit and others	Short-term
	Create a new position in the City of Bremerton to manage the parking system in	Mid-term

CATEGORIES	PARKING STRATEGY	TIMELINE
	Bremerton including monitoring, policy, maintenance, and operations	
Enforcement	Purchase a License Plate Reader (LPR) unit for use by parking enforcement throughout the City	Short-term
	Increase parking violation fines and consequences	Short-term
Downtown	Charge for on-street parking in parts of downtown to discourage the “Bremerton Shuffle” and increase access for visitor parking (in addition to the 10-hour paid spaces)	Mid-term
	Eliminate 10-hour parking Downtown and convert to short-term visitor parking	Mid-term
	Discourage new employee and commuter parking facilities in Downtown unless to serve businesses in the Downtown Subarea Planning Boundary	Short-term
	Prohibit the re-parking of vehicles throughout specific areas of Downtown	Short-term
	Encourage shared parking for off-street facilities to take advantage of any underutilized parking	Mid-term
	Require loading vehicle permits	Mid-term
Transit and Multi-Modal Transportation	Work with Kitsap Transit to ensure parking locations and transit routing work well with the Bremerton parking system and commuter needs	Mid-term
	Improve opportunities for pedestrian and bicycle access to Downtown and major employment areas	Long-term
Residential Neighborhoods	Establish defined residential parking zones and standardize the parking restrictions within each zone	Mid-term
	Option A: Implement a residential-only permit system in residential neighborhoods	Mid-term

CATEGORIES	PARKING STRATEGY	TIMELINE
	mostly heavily impacted by employee and commuter parking	
	Option B: Allow employees to purchase on-street permits and invest a portion of the proceeds back into the residential neighborhood	Mid-term
Employee Parking	Work with the Naval Base and Shipyard to require more long-term on-site parking	Long-term
Special Events	Develop an overflow parking plan for occasional special events	

STRATEGY DISCUSSION AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Parking System

The following strategies address the overall parking system:

Prioritize certain parking areas for residents, customers, and employee parking and manage accordingly

The City should develop and implement clearer policies regarding preferred parking users throughout the parking system, including on- and off-street facilities. When available parking capacity exists, secondary users may be provided. Once the parking priorities are more clearly established, the City should focus on the enforcement and management of the system to achieve desired outcomes. The following parking priorities should be implemented:

- **Residential Neighborhoods:** On-street parking is prioritized for residents through the residential permit program. If capacity is available, and is supported by the City and neighborhood residents, employee permits may be provided with a portion of the permit revenue being invested back in the neighborhood.
- **Downtown:**
 - **On-Street Parking:** On-street parking is prioritized for short-term visitors to Downtown. Longer-term parking users, including employees and commuters, should park off-street or use other transportation options to access Downtown when available.
 - **Off-Street Parking:** Off-street parking should be prioritized for longer-term parking for those visiting and working Downtown. Future parking expansion to serve commuters and employees outside of Downtown should be located outside of the Downtown boundary.

Estimated Costs: Minimal costs to the City associated with staff time.

Reestablish the City parking committee and develop a working group with representatives from NBK, the Shipyard, WA State Ferries, Kitsap Transit and others

The City has had several different parking committees over time. The City should reestablish and maintain a dedicated committee to advise City staff and City Council on parking policy and management and get input from the public on parking issues. The committee should establish and maintain a relationship with major employers, institutions, and transit agencies to cooperate on parking issues.

Estimated Costs: Minimal cost to the City associated with staff time.

Create a new position in the City of Bremerton to manage the parking system in Bremerton including monitoring, policy, maintenance, and operations

Bremerton has a complicated parking system and a unique set of parking issues for a City of its size. Currently, parking management is the responsibility of the City Clerk, Finance Director, and Impark through a service contract for enforcement and management of City-owned facilities. To address current issues identified in the data collection findings and concerns from the public, the City should hire a full-time staff person to lead management of the parking system and implement the recommendations in this plan. Duties may include staffing the parking committee, managing parking policy and regulations, overseeing enforcement, engaging the public and representatives from major stakeholder groups, advising the City Council, and overseeing the financing, operations, and maintenance of the City's parking facilities.

Estimated Cost: \$80,000 per year including benefits.

Enforcement

The following strategies address enforcement of the City's parking system:

Purchase a License Plate Reader (LPR) unit for use by parking enforcement throughout the City

As shown in the data collection findings, enforcement is constrained by existing resources, the size of the parking system, and high demand for parking. Current enforcement is done using handheld devices that require the digital "chalking" of tires. The enforcement officer must then return to the same area after the expiration of the time-period to issue any citations. This process is not efficient and limits the area that can be covered, making compliance difficult.

One of the strategies to improve parking enforcement is to use a license plate reader(s) (LPR). An LPR unit is a camera mounted to a vehicle that allows the enforcement officer to drive around as the system collects license plate information for enforcement. The LPR unit can be used in several different ways depending on the parking restrictions in place. For example, with time limited parking the LPR unit will "chalk" vehicles, but can cover much more ground than an enforcement officer using a handheld device. The LPR unit also allows for the loading of license plates associated with residential and employee permits and will automatically notify the enforcement officer when it detects an unpermitted vehicle. For paid parking, the LPR system can be tied to real time license plate data that will notify the officer immediately of any violations depending on the type of paid parking system in use.

Estimated Cost: \$140,000 investment in year 1 for LPR equipment, installation, and software for both enforcement and data collection. Ongoing software costs approximately \$60,000 per year. These costs

may be offset initially by increased violation revenue and long-term by increased in revenue through permit programs and paid parking.

Increase parking violation fines and consequences

To improve enforcement and achieve compliance with City parking regulations, the City should consider increasing the cost for parking fines and escalation for multiple violations. The current fine for a violation of time limits is \$25 and may not be sufficient as a deterrent given the high cost for all-day parking in Bremerton. Increasing the fine for first time violations to \$35 to \$40 would be more of a deterrent to risking a parking violation. Doubling the base violation for each repeat violation within a three-month time frame would also likely reduce violation rates and improve compliance.

Increasing parking fines may bring an initial increase in revenue, but would likely decrease over time as compliance increases. The purpose of parking fines is to achieve compliance and violation revenue shouldn't be relied on for long-term management and operation of the parking system.

Estimated Costs: Minimal costs to the City to update the City's parking violation rates.

Downtown

The following strategies are focused on Downtown Bremerton:

Charge for on-street parking in parts of downtown to discourage the "Bremerton Shuffle" and increase access for visitor parking (in addition to the 10-hour paid spaces)

One of the key data collection findings was to confirm the existence of the "Bremerton Shuffle," where parking users move their vehicles frequently to avoid paying for parking or getting a parking ticket. On-street parking Downtown should be prioritized for short-term visitors to access Downtown businesses, services, and amenities. To discourage the movement of vehicles, the City should expand short-term paid parking Downtown. There are several options for implementing paid parking in terms of equipment and technology including:

Single-space parking meters

Single-space parking meters allow for the payment of parking by cash or credit card at each parking stall and are generally more convenient than multi-space pay stations.

Exhibit 2. Example of Single-Space Parking Meters



Source: www.minnpost.com, 2017

Estimated Cost: \$300-\$500 per meter. Downtown has 1,062 on-street parking stalls for a total cost range of \$318,600 and \$531,000 plus maintenance costs.

Multi-space pay stations

Multi-space pay stations require payment and the display of a ticket on the vehicle or inputting license plate information. Bremerton currently uses multi-space pay stations by T2 Systems to serve some parking areas. A single station can typically cover 10-15 parking stalls.

Exhibit 3. Example of Multi-Space Pay Station by T2 Systems



Source: www.timesbusiness.com, 2017

Estimated Cost: \$5,000 to \$10,000 per unit. Downtown has 1,062 stalls for a total cost range of \$354,000 to \$1,062,000.

Pay by Phone or Similar Service

Another option for on-street paid parking is to use Pay by Phone or a similar service. Pay by Phone allows parking users to pay for parking using a smart phone app, on the web, or via phone by calling a toll-free number. Bremerton already provides the option to use Pay by Phone at some of the City's paid parking facilities. Often time Pay by Phone options are provided in addition to standard meters, but the City could expand paid parking using only Pay by Phone. The upfront costs are significantly reduced because the City would not have to purchase or maintain costly parking meters or pay stations. In addition, license plate data from Pay by Phone can be integrated in real time with the use of LPR for enforcement. Pay by Phone may also be used to set variable pricing. For example, a resident could pay a different fee than an employee for a permit program. Pay by Phone can be used for both short-term paid parking or for longer term permit parking, such as the City's current residential permit program.

Estimated Costs: The only costs to the City is to install signage, which is provided by Pay by Phone at no cost to the City. Signs may be installed on existing sign posts to further minimize costs. Pay by Phone charges a 35-cent transaction fee that is typically in addition to the parking cost.

Estimated Revenue: To start, it is anticipated the City could charge on average about \$1 per hour for parking with the potential for increased rates in the highest demand areas. Based on these rates it is anticipated the City could generate approximately \$50 per parking stall per month. With a total parking stall count of 1,062, stalls it is estimated the City could generate approximately \$53,000 per month or \$636,000 per year. These revenue estimates are conservative, and the City could potentially generate significantly more revenue.

Eliminate 10-hour parking Downtown and convert to short-term visitor parking

Several Downtown blocks allow for 10-hour parking and should be converted to short-term visitor parking to support Downtown businesses. Long-term parking should be focused off-street.

Estimated Costs: Minimal costs to the City. Remove existing meters and implement short-term paid parking consistent with the recommendation to add paid parking Downtown.

Discourage new employee and commuter parking facilities in Downtown unless to serve businesses in the Downtown Subarea Plan Boundary

The City of Bremerton has invested significant resources into revitalizing Downtown. Investments in streets, parks, and public spaces have improved the overall experience Downtown. The high demand and cost for parking Downtown is a deterrent to redeveloping existing parking lots to support more active Downtown uses that are consistent with the City's vision. Downtown parking should be prioritized to support desired Downtown land uses, including parking for employees working Downtown, and short-term visitor access. Parking for employees working outside of Downtown, including at NBK, should be discouraged at least in the short-term. Using large areas of Downtown to support employee and commuter parking for land uses outside of Downtown provides little benefit in support of the City's goals for Downtown.

Estimated Costs: Minimal costs to the City. May require an update to the City's municipal code.

Prohibit the re-parking of vehicles throughout specific areas of Downtown

Currently, it is only a parking violation for vehicles to re-park on the same named street in the Downtown. The City should amend the parking code to prohibit the re-parking of vehicles within a larger area to discourage the "Bremerton Shuffle." The City should prohibit re-parking within a four-block radius of

where the vehicle first parked within a four-hour period. The use of LPR will make it easier to enforce this regulation.

Estimated Costs: Minimal cost to the City. Action requires an update to the City’s municipal code.

Encourage shared parking for off-street facilities to take advantage of any underutilized parking

Despite very high parking demand, there is some capacity in the off-street system in Downtown. Some of this parking is restricted to support on-site land uses and is not currently available for public use, but could be made available through shared parking. Where capacity exists, the City should encourage the use of shared parking to support the Downtown parking demand with a focus on longer-term parking demand from employees or commuters. Increasing the use and efficiency of the off-street system will reduce pressure on the on-street system from the “Bremerton Shuffle” and long-term parking users.

Estimated Costs: Minimal cost to the City. An update to the City’s municipal code may be required to allow and encourage shared parking. The City may also use resources to share parking data with property and business owners that may have available capacity to facilitate the use of available parking.

Require loading vehicle permits

Currently, the City is responsible for locating loading zones and there is no fee or permit for the adjacent businesses. One option is for the City to require vehicle loading permits for loading areas within the public right-of-way along with a permit fee.

Estimated Costs: Minimal costs to the City. An updated to the City’s municipal code will be required. Permit fees will cover the costs of managing the program.

Transit and Multi-Modal Transportation

The following strategies are focused on transit and multi-modal transportation:

Work with Kitsap Transit to ensure parking locations and transit routing work well with the Bremerton parking system and commuter needs

Kitsap Transit is currently updating its transit systems plan that serves as the agency’s long-term plan for transit service improvements including park and ride facilities. Kitsap Transit has a major role in providing commuting options to employees in Bremerton including regular bus service, worker-driver buses serving NBK, van pools, and park and ride facilities. The City should maintain an active partnership through the City’s parking committee and City staff to improve access to major employers and minimize parking impacts Downtown and in residential neighborhoods.

Improve opportunities for pedestrian and bicycle access to Downtown and major employment areas

Improving opportunities for commuting and traveling by biking and walking has the potential to reduce parking demand and impacts in Downtown and in residential neighborhoods. The City should continue to pursue these opportunities in and around Downtown and connections to residential neighborhoods. Parking revenues should be considered to support pedestrian and bicycle improvements, such as through an employee parking permit program.

Residential Neighborhoods

The following strategies are focused on residential neighborhoods:

Establish defined residential parking zones and standardize the parking restrictions within each zone

The City has an extensive residential permit program that includes residential areas most likely to be impacted by non-residential parking demand, such as near NBK and Olympic College. However, the parking restrictions for non-permitted vehicles vary in some cases from block to block and are not consistent. The most common parking restriction for non-permitted vehicles is a 2-hour time limit. It is common for cities to develop residential parking zones, which are smaller geographic areas covering specific neighborhoods and include uniform parking restrictions within the zone. Permits are typically issued by zone with further restrictions on how close permit holders must park to their residence. These uniform boundaries and restrictions allow for easier enforcement, management, and public outreach to stakeholders within each zone.

Estimated Costs: Costs to the City include updating mapping of zone boundaries, upgrading to existing signage, new permits by zone (which may be virtual), and updating to the City's municipal code. These costs may be offset by increases in permit fees or working with a third-party vendor to minimize upfront and ongoing program maintenance costs.

Option A: Implement a residential-only permit system in residential neighborhoods mostly heavily impacted by employee and commuter parking

To increase the efficiency of enforcement the City could implement residential only parking in all areas that currently have residential permit parking. Enforcement officers would simply have to look for unpermitted vehicles and not have to chalk tires and return after the time-period has expired to issue any parking violations. Residential guests would be allowed to park for longer than the time-period with a guest permit.

Estimated Costs: Costs to the City include updates to the City's municipal code and new signage, but may be offset by increases in permit costs.

Option B: Allow employees to purchase on-street permits and invest a portion of the proceeds back into the residential neighborhood

Another option for addressing employee parking in residential neighborhoods is for the City to issue permits for employee use and use a portion of the funds to invest in neighborhood improvements. The concept of sharing parking revenue with the neighborhood is referred to as a parking benefit district because parking revenue directly benefits the neighborhood or district where the revenue is being generated. Funds may be used for sidewalk, street, public space improvements, or other amenities within the neighborhood. To implement this system the City should conduct more outreach with neighborhood residents and could allow the neighborhoods to choose to opt-in to the program. Residents may have concerns about the availability of residential parking and the impacts of providing employee parking, but should also consider the benefits to the neighborhood of having funding for neighborhood improvements. The City would also have to do more analysis to determine how many parking stalls would be available, the locations of those parking stalls, and at which times per day to ensure there is adequate parking for residents and their guests.

Estimates Costs and Revenues: Upfront costs include updates to the City’s municipal code, developing an employee permit system, and initial management of the program. However, the permit fees would more than offset costs to the City. Due to the high demand for employee parking and high cost of parking in Bremerton, permit fees may be in the \$40 to \$50 range per month. For example, if the City sold 2,000 permits monthly, annual gross revenues are estimated at between \$960,000 to \$1,200,000.

Employee Parking

The following strategies are focused on employee parking:

Work with the Naval Base and Shipyard to require more long-term on-site parking

During the stakeholder advisory meetings representatives from the Navy indicated a desire to provide more long-term parking for employees on-site. However, they indicated that securing funding for constructing new parking is challenging. The City should work with NBK and the Shipyard to explore options for providing more on-site parking or other options that are not within Downtown Bremerton.

Special Events

The following are strategies to address parking during special events:

Develop an overflow parking plan for occasional special events

Parking for special events presents unusual challenges due to very high demand over a short period. The City should work with event managers, transit agencies, and business and property owners on parking strategies for public events. Strategies may include the use of shared parking at off-street facilities, signage to direct attendees to available parking, the use of buses or shuttles from park and ride facilities, and reduced pricing at City owned facilities to encourage the use of available parking.