

Chapter 4-6: Parking Plan

Introduction

Redmond is a growing city, with a vision for two vibrant urban centers in Downtown and Overlake. By 2030 the City anticipates growing to a population of 78,000 residents and an employment base of 119,000 jobs, with three-quarters of new residences and two-thirds of new commercial floor area to be developed in Downtown and Overlake. Parking is a key piece of our transportation infrastructure and will play an important role in supporting this growth, providing access for residents, customers, visitors, and employees. The amount, location, and management of parking has significant impacts on economic viability, resulting community character, and the ease of access for residents, visitors, customers and employees. This chapter provides strategies and actions to proactively address parking's role in supporting and shaping our City, and capitalizes on opportunities to attain our long-term growth, mobility, economic, and land use objectives.

Advancing the Strategies

Support Urban Centers

A coordinated approach to parking that addresses parking supply through “right-sized” parking standards and the development of strategic public parking facilities, coupled with proactive parking management that optimizes the value provided by limited parking inventory, is a critical element that supports the growth and development of Redmond's urban centers. A common problem in developing urban areas is not a deficiency in the total amount of parking that is available, rather it is that high demand parking facilities are full, while other nearby parking facilities are empty. For example, the Downtown Parking Study found that overall there is adequate supply of parking within Downtown. However, this supply had not been actively managed, resulting in high value parking sites being inefficiently utilized, with high occupancy and low turnover rates, while less convenient parking stalls remained under-utilized and available¹.

Managing parking facilities so the most convenient spaces are available to priority uses, such as customers or freight deliveries, and making the parking system easy to understand, supports Redmond as a positive and convenient place to do business, improves the vitality of current business owners, and helps support additional businesses in the future.

There is an opportunity to take strategic steps to reduce the total amount of parking that is required for new development, to increase economic vitality, and achieve the desired growth and development. The cost of parking is significant, up to \$35,000 per space for structured parking, and the amount of parking required can often “make or break” a particular development project². This is particularly important as our urban centers

¹ Downtown Redmond Parking Study, January 2008, City of Redmond

² Overlake Parking Management Plan, June 2009, City of Redmond

transition from a suburban to a more urban environment, and new development must compete with lease rates from nearby developments with surface parking. In addition, an oversupply of parking wastes resources, and limits the amount of land available for more valuable purposes. The Overlake Parking Management Plan found that over 100 acres would be needed if all required parking were provided as surface parking (see Figure 1). This represents a significant amount of the total land area in this neighborhood.

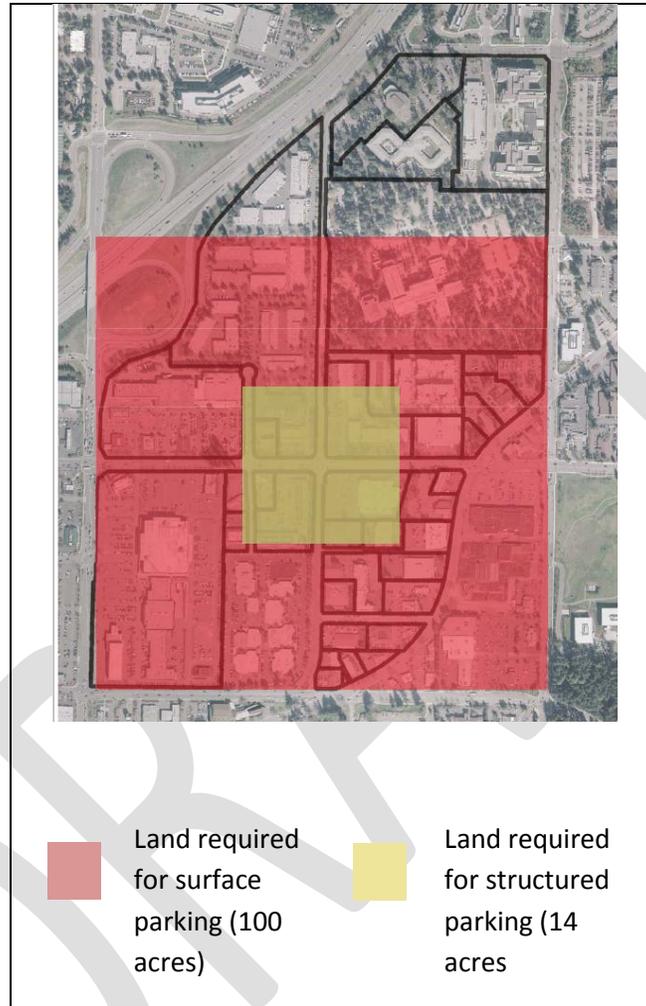


Figure 1. Surface parking requires significant amounts of land

Supporting Sustainability and the Natural Environment

Implementing a coordinated approach that decreases the total amount of new surface parking for new development reduces the overall negative impacts on the local natural environment, and supports the City's environmental sustainability goals. Large surface parking absorbs and retains heat from sunlight contributing to a 'heat island effect.' In addition, ground covered in asphalt is impermeable, preventing natural infiltration. This increases total peak runoff during rain events, contributing to erosion as well as transporting pollutants such as oil, gas, grease, heavy metals to our local watersheds.

Goals for Parking

As illustrated by the challenges and opportunities above, too much parking wastes resources, increases costs for current and existing development, and negatively impacts the resulting community character, natural environment, and economic vitality. At the same time, a lack of parking availability, or inadequate pedestrian access to parking facilities, limits access to key destinations, businesses and services, hurting both mobility and economic vitality. Therefore, there are four interrelated objectives that should be addressed by the City's approach to parking:

1. Reduce the total amount of parking needed to support development
2. Seek to establish parking facilities that are designed and located to support our land use vision
3. Manage parking to support and facilitate access to businesses, services, and residences
4. Ensure that walking routes to and from parking are safe and comfortable

The following statement summarizes these four interrelated objectives:

We should seek to have as little land use dedicated to parking as is possible, but should ensure that we have as much parking as we need - designed, located, and managed in a manner that supports our economic, land use, and community character goals.

It is the goal of this parking plan to balance these intertwined challenges and opportunities by implementing the strategies, methods, and actions that:

1. Optimize the use of limited parking inventory
2. Improve access to businesses by managing short-term and long-term parking, and provide a coordinated strategy for freight access
3. Support an easy to use and easy to navigate parking system
4. Balance vehicle parking needs with the City's land use vision
5. Provide a clear path for development in our urban centers
6. Support existing businesses and recognize that different uses have different parking needs
7. Anticipate and establish a framework to manage impacts
8. Incorporate TDM and parking management techniques
9. Monitor the use and respond to changes in demand or supply
10. Maintain intended function of the overall system
11. Respond to community input and needs
12. Take an integrated approach

System Development

Optimizing Parking in Mixed Use Centers

As Redmond's urban centers become more dense and walkable mixed use areas, there is an opportunity to approach parking needs at the area level, as opposed to the individual business or parcel level. In essence, in urban, mixed use districts, parking should be managed and treated as a utility. The goal of an area-wide strategy to parking is to optimize the utilization of the overall parking resource, facilitate desired new development, support and improve access for customers, residents, employees, and freight in a cost-effective manner, and support a "park once and walk" strategy that reduces traffic and increases pedestrian activity. Many of the parking strategies listed in this section are important tools that help with the successful implementation of an area-wide parking strategy. By considering parking supply and implementation on an aggregate basis, rather than as individual lots for individual parcels or businesses, the City can optimize the use of total parking supply, support more compact development, increase development affordability, reduce overall costs to the community, and take actions that directly and indirectly support the development of our urban centers as walkable places.

Given the unique nature of Redmond's two urban centers, and the distance between them, the City should implement unique and tailored parking plans for Overlake and Downtown.

Parking Management

Parking management seeks to ensure that as many people as possible have the opportunity to reach their intended destinations and participate in their planned activities, that the use of the available parking supply is optimized and efficient, and that the overall parking system is functioning as intended. Parking management is often implemented through pricing, permits, time limits and designated drop-off, freight, and delivery locations. A key to successful implementation is the prioritization of the parking resource to meet local needs. For example, the Downtown Parking Study found that even though there was enough aggregate parking supply, prime on-street parking spaces were occupied by employees and residents. Visitor parking was perceived as being unavailable for customers and visitors. Through coordinated implementation and enforcement of permits and time limits for on-street parking, the Downtown Parking Management Program sought to prioritize customer access at high demand locations, thereby improving overall access and increasing the economic value provided by the existing parking supply.

One important objective of a parking management strategy is optimizing the 'occupancy' rate, or the percent of spaces that are occupied during periods of peak demand. The industry standard is a target of up to 85%, where up to 85% of on-street parking spaces are occupied. This target maximizes the use of the available on-street resource, while at the same time parking is available to the customer or visitor, and reduces the time and traffic dedicated to drivers searching for parking. Parking management through the issuance of permits and time limited parking provides an important mechanism to achieve an optimal parking occupancy. For example, in Downtown, by providing a limited number of on-street monthly parking permits, the City gains control of how the on-street system is utilized, and will be in a position to ensure that the 85% occupancy standard is met, as well as derive a source of revenue to support on-going parking programs and strategy implementation.

Another important objective is improving 'turnover', or the number of times a space is used each day, for high demand locations. As density increases, and mixed use development becomes more prevalent in our urban centers, managing on-street parking to prioritize customer access and increase short-term parking turnover at high demand locations allows more customers to reach more businesses, all within available parking resources. This creates an attractive and convenient place to do business for residents and customers, increases the amount of available space that can be dedicated to active and revenue generating uses instead

of parking, helps create a vibrant, active pedestrian-oriented place, and supports the economic vitality of Downtown Redmond. This provides an important opportunity to support economic vitality and improve access to local businesses

The City should continue to manage on-street parking resources as valuable infrastructure with the aim of maximizing turnover and economic productivity in high demand locations and facilitating lower turnover and longer term vehicle storage in lower demand locations.

Economic Benefits From Parking Management

The Downtown Parking Study estimated that each customer spends approximately \$20 per visit and that the parking space turnover rate on average is 3.23 times a day³. That equates to \$65 per day times 250 days or \$16,250 per space in annual sales to retailers. Using the 300 two-hour parking spaces in the enforced Downtown Parking area for customers, estimated retail sales would be \$4,875,000 annually. Retail sales tax to the City would be \$41,438 annually. An employee using the same parking space has a turnover rate of one time per day with an estimate of \$5 retail spending. That equates to \$5 per day times 250 days or \$1,250 per space annually. The outcome accommodates more visitors and customers resulting in positive sales revenue. In addition, managing the City's existing asset of on-street parking decreases the need of incurring capital costs of approximately \$20,000 to \$50,000 per stall to build new parking.

Management Tools for Freight Access and Deliveries

Local deliveries and freight access are important to the local economy. Measures should be taken to accommodate local deliveries, such as the identification of specific loading zones, or shorter term time limits, such as 15 minute limited parking that can accommodate both passenger drop-offs and freight deliveries. Spaces can be dedicated for deliveries all day, or during specific time periods when appropriate. In many cases, alleyways or side access to buildings are appropriate zones to accommodate freight and delivery access. In addition, working with local businesses to stage deliveries during off-peak periods, where appropriate and feasible, is an effective strategy to accommodate delivery and freight needs. The City should periodically review the demand for delivery and loading zones, and designation of dedicated loading zones should be done in cooperation with neighborhood businesses, property owners, and

residents.

Enforcement

Enforcement is critical for effective parking management implementation. Enforcement requires resources to implement, both in labor and equipment, and the main goal of enforcement is to ensure that the parking system is operating as planned and as needed. Enforced rules should be clear and understandable, and should be designed to support the objectives of the parking system, such as turnover, access for priority users, or reduced 'spillover' impacts from other uses.

Shared Parking

Shared parking allows a single parking resource to be shared among different adjacent land uses to take advantage of different periods of peak demand, thereby reducing the total amount of resources that need to be dedicated to parking. This can be a single private lot shared between two nearby uses, or a central 'public' parking lot for a neighborhood or district. Shared parking is currently allowed in the Redmond Zoning Code, and can be used by a developer to reduce the overall amount of parking provided by a development. To be successful, parking should be shared between land uses that have non-concurrent peak parking demand. For

³ Downtown Redmond Parking Study, January 2008, City of Redmond

example, shared parking between office and retail uses is often successful because the demands for the two uses occur at different times.

Centralized Parking Facilities

In Redmond's urban centers there is a growing opportunity to develop and foster centralized parking facilities. Centralized parking facilities treat parking resources like a common utility, and allow parking to be shared among several land uses, such as residential, office, and retail. This reduces the amount of parking necessary for each nearby development. In addition, a centralized parking facility further encourages a "park once" strategy, where a traveler may park once and walk to multiple destinations within the neighborhood or district. Safe, comfortable walking routes are critical for the success of off-site parking, including centralized parking facilities, and have a large impact on the ability of a centralized parking facility to serve nearby uses.

Joint public-private parking partnerships

Joint public-private parking partnerships are often found within mixed-use neighborhoods and seek to reduce the costs of jointly developed private office, retail, or residential uses, or the private development can serve to defray some of the public cost in developing a shared parking facility. These public-private partnerships can occur through a variety of arrangements including:

1. Public acquisition of land and sale or lease of land/air rights not needed for parking to accommodate supporting private use.
2. Private development of integrated mixed-use development with sale or lease-back of the public parking portion upon completion.
3. Through a public development authority or other special purpose entity such as public facility district created for the project or urban area.

Transit Rider Access and Park and Rides

There is strong demand for parking at transit centers and park and rides that have good regional express transit service. The Overlake Transit Center, Redmond Transit Center and Bear Creek Park and Ride spaces are at, or over, 100% capacity on most weekdays. While the opportunity to expand park and ride stalls within Redmond's urban centers is limited, actions should be taken to expand parking facilities for transit patrons in strategic areas, such as Southeast Redmond, or through partnerships that use existing parking spaces that are underutilized during the day. In addition, actions that maximize access within available resources, such as designating drop-off zones, and enforcement to ensure that park and ride stalls are utilized by transit patrons, should be implemented.

Customer Information / Legibility

In order to be successful, the overall parking system should be easy to use and understand for the end user. The Parking Stakeholders' Advisory Committee cited easy to access, easy to understand parking resources as a key guiding principle. The City should capitalize on the opportunity to support an easy to use parking system through the implementation of 'wayfinding' signage within the public right-of-way, as well as through improved online and print materials.

"Right Sizing" Parking Requirements

"Right-sizing" parking requirements seek to set parking minimums, and maximums that balance parking demand and supply, and take into consideration the cost of development and overall space available within a neighborhood.

In particular, minimum parking requirements have a significant impact on the overall cost of development, and the resulting development footprint. The City's vision, especially for Redmond Urban Centers, targets a much higher proportion of employees over time using transportation modes other than driving alone, leading to a situation where the current parking requirements may need to be adjusted downward more commensurate with desired and expected levels of parking demand. For example, the Overlake Parking Management plan found that the parking development standards for Overlake generally support the Overlake vision. However, the study found that the requirements need further evaluation to determine how specific standards can be used to achieve the desired mixed-use development pattern and multimodal travel objectives.

In-Lieu Fees

The City has adopted an In-Lieu fee program, where a developer can reduce the minimum number of required parking stalls through a fee "in-lieu" of parking. Funds are dedicated toward funding shared public parking facilities within a neighborhood. Often, the in-lieu fee is less than the cost of providing the parking directly, and supports the development of a shared parking resource, where each public space can serve multiple users and multiple land uses throughout the day. As a result of higher turnover and use throughout the day, 100 public parking spaces provided through a fee-in-lieu program can be equivalent to 150 to 250 private parking spaces⁴.

Demand Management

The Transportation Demand Management Plan in this TMP highlights the strategies and actions the City takes to maximize the efficiency of the City's infrastructure to support mobility and economic development. These are implemented in coordination with the overall parking plan in part to accommodate growth and development while minimizing the amount of parking demand, and associated parking facilities needed. Programs that focus on employee parking demand, and programs that focus on urban areas with higher levels of transit access often have more opportunities for successful parking demand management implementation. Parking pricing is an effective transportation management strategy as well as parking management tool.

System Implementation Steps

Complete a Public, Shared Parking Facility in the Downtown Urban Center

Provide a 'parking product' in the Downtown to create a safe and positive customer experience with parking and the Downtown.

Establish a Shared Parking Resource in the Overlake Urban Center through a Public-Private Partnership

In order to provide a shared parking resource and facilitate the 'right sizing' of private segregated parking in the Overlake urban center, work with local property developers to establish a shared parking resource in the vicinity of the North Village Park in the Overlake Village, to serve nearby land uses and the 152 Avenue NE retail corridor.

Continue to Implement Parking Management in Downtown

As part of the Citywide parking program implementation, continue the successful implementation of Downtown Parking Management, including enforcement, communication, and community outreach.

⁴ Victoria Transport Policy Institute <http://www.vtpi.org/tdm/tdm89.htm>

As development occurs and parking demand increases or changes, the performance of the overall program should be monitored, and the Downtown Parking Management Program should be adapted to meet changing needs.

Develop and Implement a Parking Management Strategy in the Overlake Neighborhood

With consultant assistance, monitor and evaluate parking demand in the Overlake Village. Create a parking management program for Overlake that focuses on reducing or, in the long term, eliminating minimum parking standards, and creating a residential parking permit program as needed. Refine parking credits for mixed-use developments.

Coordinate Parking Management with Freight/Delivery Needs

Future development of parking management in Downtown and Overlake Village should evaluate and provide for freight delivery needs and transition strategies as these centers develop. Potential solutions include designating loading/unloading zones that are protected during specific times of day.

Establish Additional Shared Use Parking through Public-Private Partnerships

Establish and support additional shared use parking facilities in Redmond's urban centers and employment areas where appropriate through:

1. The negotiation of shared use and/or lease agreements with owners of strategically placed existing private lots to provide for an interim supply of parking where needed;
2. The lease or acquisition of strategically located land parcels for use as future public off-street parking locations;
3. Partnerships to implement coordinated public parking, with a focus on pay per use pricing, utilizing existing facilities. Elements should include standardized signage and wayfinding to help make the overall parking system easy to use.

Conduct a Parking Study for Downtown, Overlake and Southeast Redmond

As part of the 3 Year Action Plan (Chapter 8), identify actions, implementation timeline and transition strategies for parking to support development of Overlake, Downtown, and Southeast Redmond. The Downtown element should include an evaluation of the amount and type of parking needed to support access and to create a more pedestrian friendly environment.

Incorporate Parking in City Planning Processes

As part of the on-going planning process, the City should include an assessment of the interplay between parking's role in providing access and sheltering pedestrian zones from traffic, and other needs such as travel throughput for bikes, transit, and vehicles. In particular, attention should be paid to on-street parking requirements, as well as parking minimums, maximums, and design standards for development.

Continue to Develop and Improve Parking Information Materials

Parking information materials should continue to be developed and improved in order to enhance the understanding and access of the City's overall parking system. Actions should include coordinated wayfinding signage in rights-of-way to direct visitors to off-street locations, and on-line and print materials.

Develop a Source of On-Going Funding for Parking Management

Establish a parking fund as a mechanism to direct revenues derived from parking to a dedicated fund for each neighborhood or parking zone. Dedicate all net parking revenues for parking and maintenance operations within the neighborhood or zone and ensure on-going parking solutions that are financially sustainable.

“Right Size” Parking Requirements

Evaluate adjustments to minimum and maximum parking ratios for new development to determine specific standards that can be used to achieve the desired mixed-use development pattern and multimodal travel objectives. Assure that access impacts of new development are meaningfully addressed and are correlated to actual parking demand and new or planned shared parking facilities.

Regional Policy Participation

Continue to participate in county and regional forums that address the nexus between parking regulations, mixed use, and transit oriented development.

Work with Local Transit Agencies to Provide Commuter Parking Resources

Continue to work and collaborate with local transit agencies to provide commuter parking resources, such as leasing existing parking for park and ride use, or improved parking management techniques for existing park and ride lots. The City supports the early development of increased commuter supply parking in Southeast Redmond to help 'pre-build' the transit market for Light Rail in Southeast Redmond, and to mitigate increased travel demand along the SR 520 corridor, especially when light rail arrives at Overlake.