



Image: Wichita Business Journal 2/12/2016

Getting Smarter about Parking

A Parking Management Toolkit for Wichita

September 2018



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Introduction

On August 21, 2018, Jeffrey Tumlin of Nelson\Nygaard delivered a presentation on how Wichita could get smarter about its parking policies. The talk was held at the Wichita Art Museum, and sponsored by Health ICT, in collaboration with the Health and Wellness Coalition of Wichita, Wichita Area Metropolitan Planning Organization and Downtown Wichita, a corporation that handles the city's economic development in the core area.

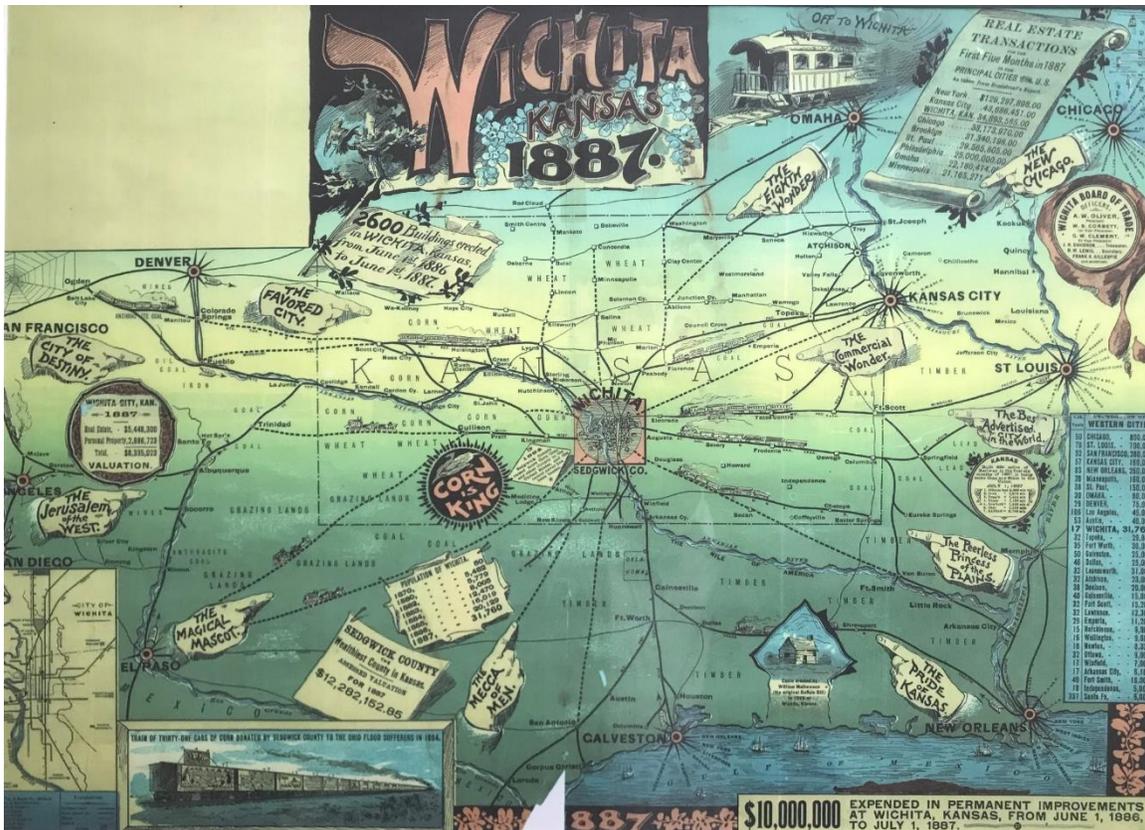
A summary of the presentation can be found at Health ICT's Facebook page -- <https://www.facebook.com/HealthICTsedgwick/> -- and the full video is available on YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GHGpeX5swt8>.

This document builds upon that presentation to provide a toolbox of measures Wichita might use to align its parking policies with the city's larger goals.

Key Themes

For over 150 years, Wichita has sat at a key crossroads of the Chisolm Trail, railways, highways, and air routes that cross North America. It thrived because it has been the slow spot for so many long trips, a place of convenient exchange, and place that added value to goods grown, raised, and extracted from hundreds of miles around.

Wichita 1887



Parking Management Toolbox

Wichita

In 1936, even in the Great Depression, downtown Wichita was a walkable, thriving place, supporting a far greater population and commerce than it does today.

Downtown Wichita 1936



Wichitaimages.org

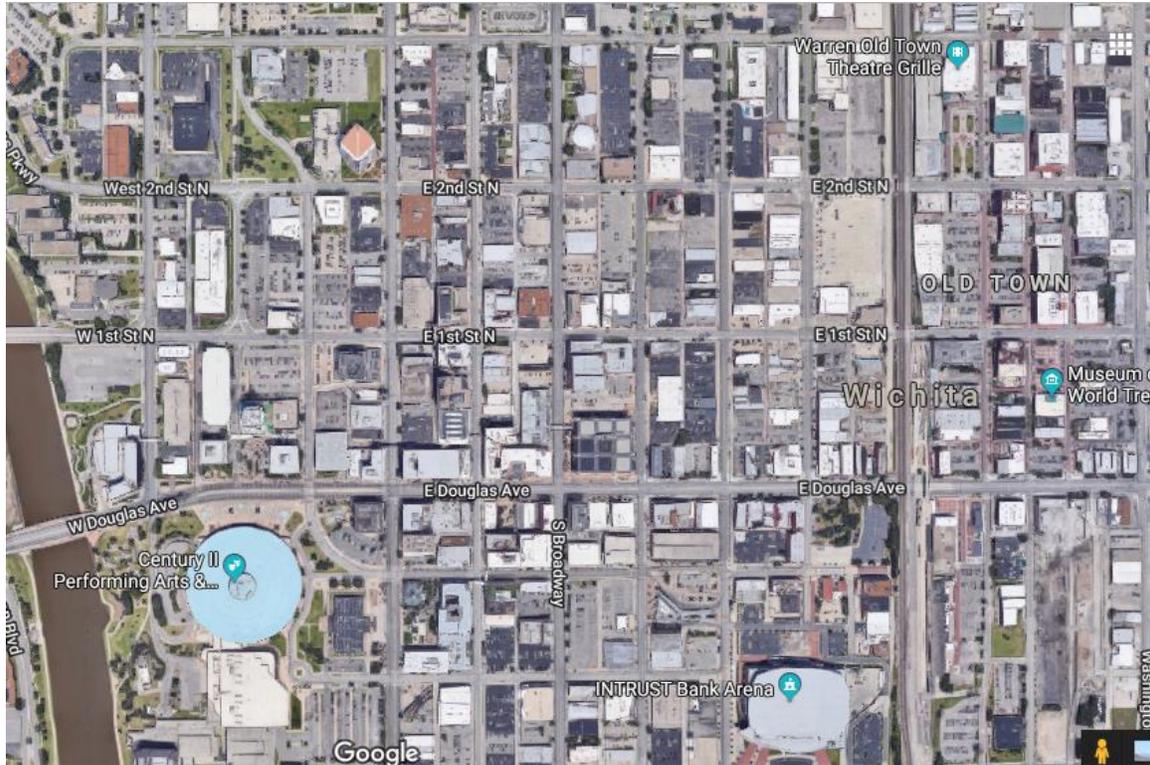
Today, however, Wichita's core is dominated not by commerce but by parking. Parking consumes over half the land area. As was common among cities all over America, Wichitans sought to capture the modernity and convenience of the automobile by retooling their walkable city for cars. Like most American urban leaders, they believed that they could win against the suburbs by competing on suburban terms. Rather than play to the city's strengths – its walkability, relationship to the river confluence, its nearby neighborhoods – Wichita demolished much of its downtown to set aside its land for car storage.

Parking is an essential element of any successful downtown. Downtowns need parking to thrive. Too much parking, however, can be worse than too little. The challenge is figuring out the optimal supply of parking, then carefully managing parking to make sure that customers and employees can always and easily find a space. Parking is a costly infrastructure investment, and setting space aside for cars precludes using that space for commerce. This documents provides a simple, high-level toolkit to help Wichita figure out the best parking supply to meet its economic development and quality of life goals, and how to get the best use of that parking investment.

Parking Management Toolbox

Wichita

Downtown Wichita Today



Toolbox Overview

The Toolbox is organized into the following management objectives.

- Tools to **Shift Demand** for more even distribution among all parking options
- Tools to **Reduce Demand** for parking in order to reduce supply needs and to balance modes of access in favor of vibrant, walkable-urban environments
- Tools to **Expand Capacities** of existing supplies to avoid the cost and physical impact of constructing new supplies
- Tools to **Expand Supplies** of public parking, in lieu of parking reserved for a particular development or set of land uses.
- Tools for **Event Management** to ease constraints on “everyday” parking resources during intense-demand conditions.
- **Technology** Tools to bring state-of-the-practice efficiencies and customer-service to the Downtown Wichita parking system.
- Tools for **Coordinated Management**: policies, practices, and operations that optimize system-wide management and synergies with complementary programs and activities.

Shift Demand

Primary Objective: Ensure effective distribution of parking demand to make the most use of available parking capacities, and to maintain consistent space availability across all parking options.

Tool: Performance-based Management Policy

In Action: Establish a policy of performance-based management for Wichita’s parking resources.

Make clear that Wichita’s parking management programs, strategies, activities, and investments are focused on achieving formal performance goals and objectives. A performance-focused management approach can take many forms, but its central components consist of the following.

- Establishing “space availability” as the Key Performance Indicator for assessing parking management effectiveness.
 - If spaces are consistently available, measures like parking duration and turnover become far less important.
- Setting hourly parking rates based directly on demonstrated, geographic and time-of-day demand patterns.
 - Highest where and when demand is highest, lowest where and when demand is lowest.
- Adjusting rates periodically to influence these demand patterns in pursuit of a specified availability target, at all times but particularly during demand peaks.
- Investing parking revenue in local improvements, including off-street parking, walking, bicycling, transit, streetscape, and sidewalk improvements.
 - This can reinforce the message that the primary purpose of parking rates is to manage demand and keep spaces available, not to fill budget holes.

Consistent parking availability, and the benefits arising from it, are the central objectives of this approach, and will prove elusive if pricing is not truly responsive to parking behavior. This can be politically challenging if rates continue to rise. Communicating the benefits of this approach, and sticking to it until meaningful improvements in availability are evident, will be critical to success.

In Action: Define Availability as the Key Performance Indicator for parking management.

The most essential performance indicator for parking management in any downtown is the availability of public parking spaces, near prime destinations and during the busiest times of the week. Without strategic management, parking demand will cluster tightly around these locations, resulting in constrained availability precisely where most drivers would prefer to park. Without management cues toward less-obvious parking options, this pattern typically creates a strong perception that “there is nowhere to park,” even when ample availability can be found on nearby blocks.

In Action: Define Key Performance Indicator target/s.

Achieving optimal availability conditions can bring about several parking-management objectives, primarily:

- Improved customer-service, as more parking options are more consistently available, more of the time;
- Reduced traffic and emissions, as finding a space no longer requires extra driving;
- Simplified management, as pricing is refined to the point where few other regulations/restrictions are required to achieve desirable conditions; and
- Rationalized revenue streams, as parking revenues increase with demand, providing resources to invest in management and/or supply strategies to maintain availability.

A standard performance target for on-street availability is 15% of spaces, or about 1-2 spaces, on each block-face. At this level of availability, empty spaces are evident to passing drivers, removing anxiety over finding a space, or having to “circle back” for a space passed up in hopes of better options. Drivers can simply choose where to park, and find a space there, even during the busiest times of the week.

For off-street facilities, availability targets can be set a bit lower, perhaps 10%, depending on the ease of access and the efficiency of circulation in the facility.

In Action: Monitor Performance.

Whatever management strategies are employed to maintain availability, their success is best measured by counting empty parking spaces among Downtown’s and Old Town’s best-used parking locations, at the busiest times of the week. Regular counts conducted in high-demand locations at peak-demand times will allow city or Downtown Wichita staff to monitor parking performance and measure the impacts of policy and regulatory changes, including any pricing adjustments.

It is essential that count data be analyzed specific to time of day and at the block-face/facility level. An area-wide measure showing ample availability can obscure chronic constraints at specific locations. Similarly, daily-average measures can obscure prolonged constraints experienced during midday peaks.

Tool: Pricing

In Action: Establish parking rates as the primary tool for redistributing demand in aid of more consistent availability among all parking options.

Identify parking rates as the primary tool for shifting parking demand away from oversubscribed supplies toward alternative options with excess capacity, in order to improve access to Downtown and Old Town destinations, simplify the parking experience, and to avoid perceptions that parking is undersupplied. While time limits are often perceived as more “customer friendly” than meters and pricing, there are significant shortcomings in this management tool that can ultimately make commercial centers less accessible to customers.

- Enforcement of time limits is more labor intensive and less effective, generally, than basic payment enforcement.

- Time limit compliance is often lowest among local employees and business owners, who quickly learn enforcement patterns and schedules, tend to arrive when the best parking spaces are widely available, and park for several hours at a time.
- Time limits can be particularly unwelcoming for visitors, creating ticket anxiety and the need to ration and track the time they spend in the area.

Tool: Tiered Rates

In Action: Maintain pricing tiers that reflect parking demand patterns.

Pricing is most effective in redistributing demand when parking rates offer varied and clearly distinguishable cost options. This range in cost is critical to influencing parking-activity patterns, and thus distributing demand/occupancy more evenly across all parking options.

Tool: Incremental Rates

In Action: Increase the hourly rate for longer stays.

Incremental rates incentivize shorter parking stays in high demand locations, by adjusting hourly rates based on duration. Digital meters can vary parking rates, applying a base rate to short stays, and applying premium rates to longer stays. This allows pricing to reduce demand specifically among drivers whose parking needs are better accommodated off-street, creating more availability at no added cost to most customers.

Tool: Rate Adjustments

In Action: Increase or decrease rates in response to occupancy/availability measures/patterns.

Parking demand is not a static measure. It is governed by numerous, constantly changing conditions. For rates to be effective in maintaining consistent access to parking options, they must rise and fall in response to demand conditions. Monitoring utilization patterns will be essential for this, to avoid making rate changes based on anecdotal evidence or popular complaint. It will also be important to not change rates too often, to allow the driving public to adjust to the change.

Tool: Pricing Schedules

In Action: Align pricing schedules with demand, not the workweek.

Enforcement of paid parking (and time limits) tends to roughly follow the 9AM to 5PM workweek schedule, sometimes six days a week, but rarely seven. The result is that the most critical parking resources tend to be overpriced in the morning, when demand is modest at best, and underpriced at night and on weekends. This is particularly true where evening-oriented food and beverage businesses dominate area commercial activity.

Shifting enforcement schedules to better correspond to demand peaks can make these areas more accessible when restaurants, coffee bars, and other gathering places are busiest, while providing a few hours of free parking to attract more morning activity.

Tool: Expanding Off-Street Parking Options for Employees

In Action: Secure shared-parking arrangements for off-hour employee parking in private lots.

Provide a conduit between business, property, and lot owners with recognizable opportunities for mutually beneficial shared-parking arrangements. Initiate negotiations by providing an independent perspective on issues and opportunities, identifying shared-benefit opportunities, and helping to address common concerns. Negotiate agreements, including identifying strategic agreement components, as necessary, such as:

- Restricting access to the shared parking to area employees, perhaps through permits, to reduce risk and increase accountability.
- Compensation in the form of increased lot maintenance, lot improvements, added security, etc.
- Defining any added security or enforcement measures necessary to ensure that the primary uses of the lot are prioritized.

In Action: Develop a permit program to allow employees to park on underutilized streets.

Even in downtown-adjacent neighborhoods, residential curbsides go largely unused much of the day, including in areas where nearby employees struggle to find appropriate parking options. Many cities have successfully addressed this set of opportunities and constraints by creating permits for local employees to allow them to park on residential streets. The number of employee permits issued is limited to ensure that local curbsides can accommodate the demand without constraining resident parking access, and permit revenue is generally set aside for improvements in the area where the permits area used.

Reduce Demand

Primary Objective: Reduce parking supply needs, primarily by improving the functionality, appeal, and cost-competitiveness of non-driving mobility options for accessing Downtown Wichita.

Tool: Bike Parking

In Action: Provide ample, high-quality bike parking options.

Each downtown trip completed on a bike leaves one parking space open for another trip made in a car. Providing attractive bike parking options can encourage more such trips, at far less cost and in much less space compared to meeting automobile parking needs. A single vehicle parking space can accommodate eight or more parked bikes. Furthermore, studies have shown that, in many

cases, bicycle customers frequent neighborhood commercial districts more often compared to driving customers.¹

In Action: Create a Bike Parking Map.

Include bike parking information in all parking maps – see strategy in the Capacity Expansion toolset below.

Tool: Curbside Space allocations.

In Action: Set aside curbside space to complete/expand multimodal networks.

Curbside space can sometimes provide more mobility and access when set aside to complete or expand multimodal networks. This can include space used to accommodate bus stops, bike corrals, bike-share stations, protected bikeways, bus lanes, curb-extensions in support of pedestrian networks, car-share parking, and taxi/Lyft-car stands.

Tool: Transit Options

In Action: Provide high-amenity bus stops to improve the functionality and perception of this key mobility resource.

Attractive and accommodating bus stops can raise the perceived appeal of available transit services, particularly along Douglas. Conversely, bus stops with minimal amenities create a perception that local bus services are not widely used, and likely not very effective for common travel needs. Key amenities for improving service to existing customers, and attracting new riders, include the following.

- Sheltered waiting areas with seating and lighting
- Fare and boarding information
- Mapped routes with connecting service information
- Waste bins
- Functional and aesthetic integration into the streetscape

In Action: Explore evolving options for local shuttle service.

Local shuttles can expand the effective range of Downtown parking options. This can facilitate Park Once management objectives, and thus reduce parking demand, by providing an attractive option for in-Downtown travel and reducing the need for second and third parking spaces during Downtown visits. Several cities have begun to explore options provided by vendors, such as San Diego's FRED (Free Rides Everywhere Downtown) and Columbus's Hopper Carts, which provide free rides that can be hailed along designated routes, or via app-requested pickups.

¹ *Bike Lanes, On-Street Parking and Business, Clean Air Partnership, 2009.*

http://www.bikeleague.org/sites/default/files/bikeleague/bikeleague.org/programs/bicyclefriendlyamerica/bicyclefriendlybusiness/pdfs/toronto_study_bike_lanes_parking.pdf

Tool: Commuter Benefits

In Action: Provide transit-passes to Downtown employees.

Employee parking can have profoundly negative impacts on Downtown’s customer parking capacities. Given that employees tend to arrive well before the first waves of customer demand, the area’s most convenient curbside spaces are particularly vulnerable. Pricing and other on-street management strategies, as identified in the Toolbox, can be very effective in managing these impacts. What has proven even more effective in many cities is making transit free for local employees. Ensuring that transit is significantly cheaper than driving has had a profound impact on transit mode shares among participating employees in several cities across the country, including Boulder, Colorado which was an early adopter of this strategy, and Ann Arbor, Michigan, which has achieved similar results from a program based on Boulder’s.

More recently, two Special Improvement District organizations launched an ambitious version of this strategy, which currently offers free transit to roughly 40,000 downtown employees in the City of Columbus, Ohio.

In Action: Establish a guaranteed-ride-home benefit for non-driving Downtown employees.

Such benefits can provide critical support for non-driving commuters, by providing them with free, viable options for incidents such as working late, falling ill, or having to return home or pick up a dependent during the day.

This should be coordinated with Wichita Transit.

In Action: Develop a Live Near Your Work program

Several cities and employers have begun to offer what is often known as “Live Near Your Work” incentive programs, which encourage employees to purchase homes close enough to their place of work to make transit, cycling, or walking commutes viable. Typically, this is done through matching grants or low-interest loans to reduce the upfront home-purchase costs.

Tool : Mobility in the Zoning Code

In Action: Incentivize/require multimodal amenities and driving alternatives.

Bike Parking Requirements

Include distinctions between Class 1 and Class 2 facilities, as noted below.

- Class One facilities are secure, weather-protected facilities intended for use as long-term, overnight, and work-day bicycle storage by dwelling unit residents, non-residential occupants, and employees.
- Class Two facilities are located in a publicly-accessible, highly visible location intended for transient or short-term use by visitors, guests, and patrons to the building or use.

Car-Share Parking

Credit each car-share space as equal to 2 required parking spaces for residential uses or 3 required parking spaces for commercial uses.

Unbundled Residential Parking Credits

Reduce parking requirements by half for multifamily uses when spaces are sold or rented separately from the purchase or lease of a residential unit.

Bike-Share

Credit a bike-share facility with a minimum of 10 spaces as equal to 3 vehicle parking spaces.

Changing Facilities

Reduce the required number of vehicle parking spaces by 3 spaces for each changing facility that includes a shower and set of lockers.

Expand Capacities

Primary Objective: Increase the capacity of existing parking (and curbside loading) supplies, primarily by making available options more broadly accessible and functionally viable.

Tool: Shared Parking

In Action: Broker Shared-Parking agreements.

Work with Downtown business owners identify shared parking opportunities and interest, and seek opportunities to broker sharing arrangements. Viable sharing arrangements can fail to materialize due to a lack of initiative on those seeking more capacity, or to liability concerns on the part of those with excess capacity. Downtown Wichita can help initiate negotiations, provide an independent perspective on issues and opportunities, identify shared-benefit solutions, and help address common concerns/remove common barriers.

In Action: Use pay-by-phone to encourage off-hour shared parking.

Engage owners of private parking lots about this opportunity to monetize their off-hour parking capacities, by coordinating with Downtown Wichita and a pay-by-phone vendor. The vendor and the facility owner can work out details such as shared-parking schedules and rates. Typically, the vendor will install its standard signage, consistent with those used for Downtown Wichita parking in the district, and distribute revenue to the facility owner in accordance with their agreement.

In Action: Convert private facilities to public facilities

Seek opportunities to convert private lots to public, Downtown Wichita-managed resources, in return for improving and maintaining these facilities. Buy-in among lot owners will typically require trust in the “big picture” benefit of supporting a broader range of destinations with their parking resources; that an overall increase in activity and visitors to the area will be good for their “bottom line”. A critical component of this is trust in Downtown Wichita’s capacity to effectively

manage parking in the area to ensure that their customers will still have suitable parking options during peak-demand conditions.

In Action: Establish a Public Valet program to extend the effective capacity of key Downtown curbsides.

Public valet offers the same curbside efficiencies as a typical valet, but is available for everyone, regardless of their Downtown destination/s. Such a strategy can effectively combine the convenience of curbside parking, while shifting utilization away from these areas and toward off-street facilities that would otherwise be underutilized. This can include private lots, through signed agreements, or using public parking lots that tend to be unpopular self-parking options.

In Action: Establish a Resident Parking Benefit District program.

Excess capacity along residential streets can be used to provide employee parking, and shift employee parking impacts away from customer parking locations. Businesses near residential areas can purchase “business vehicle permits”, which are non-transferable, allowing Downtown Wichita to control the number of permits issued in any micro area. This also links permitted vehicles to specific businesses, facilitating redress of any issues that might arise regarding permit use or misuse. Revenue from permit sales would be used to fund neighborhood improvements.

Tool: Variable Curbside Regulations

In Action: Prioritize short-term parking over loading/unloading when short-term parking demand is highest; and prioritize curbside loading/unloading at times when short-term parking demand is modest or low.

Loading/unloading and short-term parking tend to be the greatest and most consistent curbside parking needs in Downtown. At peak, either can consume entire block-faces of retail-parking capacity. This makes it essential for curbside regulations to respond to the variations in their demand patterns, using variable programming to give more space to each use when it is most needed.

In most downtowns, this will mean more loading/unloading space in the early mornings, shifting toward more short-term parking toward midday. Distinctly generous, morning-hour loading zones along prime commercial streets will provide incentive for larger delivery vehicles to avoid the midday and evening peak periods, when smaller loading zones should be provided around the corner, on side streets.

In Action: Expand/eliminate time limits as pricing becomes the primary tool for maintaining availability.

Effective pricing strategies can make time limits unnecessary. Removing them can be particularly supportive of “destination districts”, in which many visitors are drawn by a variety of destinations and do not know how long they will want to stay at the time of parking. By contrast, too-restrictive time limits can render much of an area’s parking supply unsuitable for most customers.

In Action: Set aside curbside space for higher-capacity parking uses.

Vehicles that require less curbside space for parking can provide more access in less curbside space. This can include bicycle parking, bike-share stations, and motorcycle parking. Seasonal

bike corrals, in particular, may be particularly useful in promoting non-driving travel to and around Downtown Wichita during activity peaks.

Tool: Information, Signage, Wayfinding, and Branding

In Action: Develop a comprehensive communications plan that includes coordinated and unified wayfinding, information, signage, and branding program.

Pricing is most effective in managing demand and maintaining availability when drivers understand their options, clearly and comprehensively, before arriving. Ensure that drivers know their parking options, including their cost, time limits, and any other restrictions.

Wayfinding

Wayfinding is a means of providing intuitive visual cues and information to drivers, upon arrival. The first objective of wayfinding, therefore, should be to reinforce information provided to drivers before they arrived, and direct them to their parking option of preference. At the same time, effective wayfinding can provide visual information that suggests parking opportunities, and guides drivers toward their “right fit” options, even if they knew nothing of these options before arriving. This can include varying meter types or markings that correspond to pricing and/or time limits, and branding off-street locations that accommodate hourly parking.

Information

The three essential pieces of information that must be clear for all parking options are:

- Hourly rates, as well as any variations on these
- Time limits
- Schedule of enforcement

This information should be provided and disseminated via multiple media, with a focus on informing drivers of their options before they arrive in Downtown. This can include information specifically on free parking, where and when it is available, which can both help shift peak demand to off-peak times and locations and reduce frustration among drivers expecting to find free parking where and when it is not an option. This could include private facilities that are available for parking after-hours.

Signage

Clear and concise signage should serve two primary functions. The first is to complement wayfinding, in providing essential details on parking options for drivers arrived with little or no information. By complementing effective wayfinding elements, this information can be visually discrete, and textually concise, while effectively guiding parking searches. The second function is to confirm to each driver that the space she/he has found is indeed priced and regulated as expected. Preferably, this happens without the drivers having to leave their cars.

Branding

Branding is one of the most effective means of identifying parking options that are managed consistent with Downtown Wichita’s parking program. This can include branding extended to private facilities that offer a parking experience largely indistinguishable from parking in a Downtown Wichita facility. Such branding can assure drivers that a particular parking option has

been priced, regulated, and maintained consistent with the Downtown Wichita parking system, including enforcement that is user friendly and parking rates that are no higher than what is necessary to keep demand balanced with supplies.

In Action: Create a Comprehensive Downtown Parking Map.

This is a critical component of a comprehensive information campaign. It should include all streets that offer on-street parking, marked according to time restrictions and meter rates. It should also include off-street locations that offer public parking. This can also include facilities that only provide public parking on certain days, or during certain times of day, as these may emerge out of efforts to increase shared parking opportunities. The map should be provided at a single website, which should be referenced on all local business websites.

Expand Supplies

Primary Objective: Expand the supply of public parking, while reducing expansions of private/reserved parking.

Tool: Curb-Cut Reduction/Elimination

In Action: Work with property owners to remove redundant and excessive curb-cuts.

Despite the high value and limited quantity of curbside parking spaces in Downtown, unnecessary curb cuts remain common. These are often found among frontage parking lots that are essentially one very wide curb cut. Parking lots with redundant driveways are also common, as are disused curb cuts left over from previous land uses. Downtown Wichita can assist local businesses and property owners to regain curb capacity at these locations.

In Action: Update development code to minimize/prohibit driveways on pedestrian-priority streets.

Ensure that the development code supports walkable development in Downtown by identifying streets on which driveways/curb-cuts are discouraged or prohibited.

Tool : Park-Once Zoning strategies

In Action: Establish an In-Lieu Fee option to fund public parking in lieu of private/accessory parking within Downtown.

Allow all parking requirements to be met through an In Lieu Fee, or comparable alternative.

In Action: Adopt a “progressive” rate structure for in-lieu fees.

For an In Lieu Fee option to be successful, it must offer meaningful cost savings compared to meeting minimum requirements via on-site parking. Nonetheless, the fee must be significant enough to provide sufficient revenue for the City/Downtown Wichita to accommodate the parking/travel demand created by the approved development project; whether that accommodation is in the form of added public parking capacity, mobility improvements, or expanded/enhanced parking management programs. Fortunately, Downtown Wichita-built

parking capacities tend to be much more cost effective than private, on-site parking capacities, providing a significant range within which an In Lieu Fee rate can be effective. This range is even wider if the City/Downtown Wichita has the option to invest in mobility improvement and demand management, as well as public parking.

In Action: Incentivize the provision of shared/public parking when developments include parking on-site.

Establish parking maximums for accessory (non-shared) spaces, allowing parking in excess of maximums only if the excess spaces are shared, or via payment of a fee comparable to the In Lieu Fee.

Tool: Joint-Development

In Action: Seek Joint-Development opportunities to spread costs and risks associated with constructing parking facilities, and to ensure public access to parking built to support private projects.

Joint-development has become an increasingly popular strategy for expanding municipal parking supplies. This approach avoids stand-alone parking structures, and ensures public access to parking built to support new development. It also allows developers and cities to focus on what they specialize in, land-use development and parking management, respectively, increasing the end results for both.

Tool: Adaptable Parking Infrastructure

In Action: Secure ownership/control of surface lots on the periphery of Downtown.

Acquiring and improving existing lots for surface parking has also emerged as a low-cost means of hedging parking investments against potential declines in parking demand. This is, essentially, adaptable-design “on the cheap”. Not only does it greatly reduce supply-development costs compared to conventional, stand-alone, structured parking development, it builds in a real estate investment that can further area growth and encourage more mixed-use development. Compared to flexibly-designed parking structures, this avoids the upfront design/construction cost premiums, as well as the costs of building out the facility for new uses when parking activity declines.

Manage Event Demand

Primary Objective: Increase the capacity and efficiencies of existing parking and mobility resources, beyond what is necessary for day-to-day management success, improve access to events of all sizes throughout Downtown.

Tool: Cross Marketing

In Action: Cross-market events with local businesses to spread arrival/departure demand peaks.

Cross-market between events and local businesses to encourage event attendees to arrive earlier/stay longer than they otherwise would. This helps to stagger arrival and departure times, reducing the intensity of arrival and departure traffic at the Arena and Performing Arts Center.

Tool: Transit

In Action: Develop transit plans, including marketing to event-goers.

Market transit services as part of all large-event promotions. This should include scheduling and fare information, and any event-based changes to either. Ideally, a trip-planner is included on all event web pages, and a URL to same is included in all printed marketing materials.

Tool: Remote Parking

In Action: Incorporate remote and off-site parking facilities, with shuttle service.

Maintain transit/shuttle service to available parking facilities during large events.

Tool: Technology

In Action: Offer pre-assigned parking.

Develop an online reservation system to allow attendees to pre-purchase parking in advance of an event. This will simplify parking, particularly for those less familiar with Downtown parking, and help organizers to better plan for capacity needs and changes in traffic flow. Parking options could be matched with arrival and/or departure routes in order to increase driver convenience reduce traffic, and direct congestion away from areas of event congestion.

Tool: Demand Management

In Action: Offer VIP parking.

Charge a premium rate for the best locations, relative to the specific event, while providing information about lower-cost alternatives. Make use of market mechanisms to distribute demand more evenly across a greater number of parking locations. While increased rates during events can be viewed as "gouging", increased rates for the most convenient parking locations can be a very effective means of reducing congestion at these locations.

In Action: Offer high-occupancy-vehicle priority parking.

Reduce parking rates and/or reserve premium spaces for high-occupancy vehicles to incentivize ridesharing to large events.

Tool: Valet

In Action: Develop a Bike Valet program.

Offer bike valet offer the same convenience and capacity-expansion benefits of traditional valet in promoting exceptional levels of bike traffic to large events. Bike valet services provide easy, “front-door”, secure bike parking along with personal service, often provide by bike advocacy volunteers. Easing the challenge and uncertainty of finding secure bike parking during events can dramatically increase the bike mode share and reduce pressure on auto-parking resources.

In Action: Expand public (automobile) valet options

Drivers are typically more willing to consider valet parking during events, particularly if marketed as a means of avoiding unfamiliar parking conditions and complexities. This can be used to squeeze greater capacity out of existing parking facilities, as valet-parked vehicles can be organized into tandem arrangements (bumper to bumper) that can increase capacity by as much as 40%.

Deploy Best-Practice Technologies

Primary Objective: Use innovative, state-of-the art technologies to optimize parking management and improve the customer experience.

Tool: Payment Technologies

In Action: Make it easy to pay for parking.

Invest in technologies that make it easy for drivers to pay for parking. Parking meters are often resented more for their inconvenience than for the modest cost they add to a downtown visit.

At a minimum, payment technologies should include accommodation of credit-card payments and seamless coordination with a mobile payment option (pay by phone). Both of these options provide a transformational change in how drivers respond to parking options and their costs. The convenience this offers facilitates greater compliance and reduces resistance to higher parking rates (critical to pricing curbs appropriately to maintain availability in high-demand areas).

Meters

There is, today, a wide range of single-space parking meters and multispace pay-stations/kiosks that facilitate credit-card payment.

Pay by Phone

One of the fastest-growing payment technologies is mobile payments. Almost invariably, this option is a complementary payment option, offered at spaces that can also be paid via a physical meter/pay-station. But, some municipalities have adopted mobile payment systems in lieu of

having any physical meters. Drawbacks to such an approach, primarily related to accommodating those who do not own a smartphone, or do not wish to use their phone to pay for parking.

Pay-by-phone can be used to price off-street parking facilities that lack access-control systems. This makes it a crucial tool for incorporating private parking facilities, through shared-parking agreements, as well as public facilities that had been designed for free parking.

Digital Validation

Offering a validation system can ease resistance to pricing, particularly among local business owners. Digital payment systems, including mobile payment, can make validation a seamless experience. This can include a code for free or discounted parking for future parking activity.

Consistency

Work with private parking owners/operators to ensure that the same pay-by-phone vendor can be used for Downtown Wichita and private parking options, simplifying the parking experience for all drivers.

Tool: Monitoring Technologies

In Action: Make performance monitoring easier.

License Plate Recognition

Not only does LPR technology greatly improve the efficacy of parking-regulation enforcement, it greatly facilitates programs to monitor “performance”, including tracking capacity utilization during key times and following changes to parking rates or other regulations. Following a performance-focused enforcement approach, LPR devices will organically be collecting “occupancy” data, via plate “reads” in facilities and on blocks where availability is most likely to be constrained. This provides an invaluable source of data that can be matched to supply in order to track conditions of utilization/availability.

Parking Transaction Software

Explore options for contracting services that track parking transactions in real-time across networked on-street meters and off-street payment systems, and use algorithms to convert this data into estimates of parking utilization/availability. Such services are relatively new, and require “spot checks” of actual utilization/availability counts, via manual surveys or through LPR data, to establish and maintain accuracy. Smarking is currently the industry leader, but competition should be expected to arise over the next few years.

Tool: Controlled-Access Technologies

In Action: Facilitate Access-Control systems in larger facilities.

Mobile payment and pay-by-space/pay-by-plate technologies are making it easier to price off-street parking in facilities without access controls. And, LPR technology can greatly reduce the labor cost and increase the effectiveness of enforcement in such facilities. However, larger parking facilities should be designed to include access control systems, or to facilitate their eventual installation.

Coordinate Management

Primary Objective: Ensure streamlined and coordinated management within the City, while maximizing synergistic opportunities related to public and private growth, mobility, and sustainability initiatives.

Tool: Enforcement

In Action: Establish a performance-based enforcement program.

Parking enforcement should be focused on management objectives, rather than compliance or infraction revenue for their own sake. Enforcement is not only an extension of parking management; it is parking management's most public "face." As such, it can create profound distrust of the management system if it appears that rules and infractions are prioritized as ends in themselves, rather than means of facilitating optimal parking conditions.

In Action: Use non-police enforcement.

The single most-effective strategy for improving parking enforcement is for it to be managed as part of the overall parking operation, and not as an aspect of law enforcement. Parking pricing and regulation cannot be effective without compliance, making enforcement an essential component of parking management. Parking violations, by contrast, naturally and understandably fall low on the list of most police department priorities.

In Action: Invest in License Plate Reader technology.

LPR technology, like most digital technologies, is continually evolving, getting smaller, more effective, and generally less expensive in the process. Handheld devices can greatly simplify time limit enforcement, increase its efficacy, and reduce its labor commitments. They can also expand permit-strategy options, such as proving employees with permits for off-hour parking in designated location, by automatically linking license plates to a permit database.

In Action: Institute incremental fines.

Enforcement is essential to the effective management of public resources — protecting those who play by the rules from those who willfully abuse them. But it is important that penalties for rules violations distinguish between occasional mistakes and intentional flouting of regulations. The primary objective of parking tickets and fines should always be to discourage repeat violations. A warning and a bit of information is all that most drivers will need to avoid repeat violations. In any city, however, there will be those who will continue to disregard rules unless the cost eventually becomes too great.

In Action: Include a "first-time forgiveness" policy.

First-time violations should incur only a "courtesy" ticket (no fine), that includes detailed information on parking options, pricing, and regulations, as well as information on the escalating fine schedule for repeat violations. This emphasizes that parking enforcement is really about managing access to public resources. This also formally adds an information-providing role for Community Standards Officers (CSOs), altering their relationship with the parking public.

Combining this with incremental fines would look something like the following.

- The first ticket in any 12-month period does not incur a fine.
- The violator is provided essential parking information, and directed to Downtown Wichita's parking/mobility websites for more information.
- A second violation within 12 months would be fined at the current level.
- Subsequent violations would go up substantially, perhaps doubling each time.

In Action: Focus enforcement where it can best improve KPI performance.

Enforcement officers should be trained to watch for key parking utilization conditions, which should help them determine where to focus their efforts to best achieve more consistent availability.

- Areas of consistently reduced availability — Areas where available spaces are consistently hard to find should become obvious to CSOs as they become more cognizant of the priority placed on maintaining access to short-term spaces. Once recognized, these areas should receive priority attention throughout the day. Downtown Wichita can assist in identifying target enforcement areas by creating quarterly, parking-utilization reports.
- Areas of reduced availability in the early mornings — This is an indication of business owners and/or employees parking or loading from these spaces, as visitor parking demand is rarely significant before Noon (except outside coffee shops or similar morning-rush oriented businesses). This is not a problem in itself, and none of these vehicles will be in violation until after 10AM. But, if enforcement is lax in these areas, many of these vehicles will begin to overstay time limits, reducing availability for customers. If availability does not improve by 10AM, such blocks should be targeted for time-limit enforcement.
- Areas of ample availability — Likewise, CSO's should become aware of areas where finding a space is rarely a problem, and de-prioritize these areas for enforcement. Consistently issuing tickets in low-demand environments sends the wrong signals about which objectives enforcement is meant to serve. It also misallocates limited enforcement resources away from where they can provide the most benefit. Again, quarterly usage reports can help to inform which areas fall in this category.

Tool: Residential Parking Permits

In Action: Address spillover-parking impacts through a comprehensive resident-permit program.

Creating availability within commercial areas can shift demand into surrounding neighborhoods, a phenomenon often called "spillover" parking. Spillover impacts can reduce neighborhood support for key