

Parking Master Plan | 9/27/22 Public Workshop #2 Notes

Oral Comment Summary

Many of the comments took the form of questions directed to City consultant Steve Brown with Fehr & Peers. Where responses were provided, these are denoted by "F&P" below the speaker's comments.

- Gene Felder:
 - Did F&P review prior parking studies, including the IBI study prepared for the Downtown Specific Plan update. If so, what was their assessment?
 - F&P: The studies were provided to F&P as part of this project and they were reviewed so that F&P would have a greater knowledge base of the City. F&P does not have further comments on those studies.
- Chris Catsimanes:
 - How was on-street parking supply determined?
 - F&P: When parking stalls were striped, the quantity was self-evident. On unmetered streets with unmarked parking spaces, the study assumes one parking space for every 20 feet of curb, which is standard.
 - Did F&P evaluate the City's parking requirements for restaurants and bars?
 - F&P: F&P will be assisting staff to review all of the parking ratios and provide recommendations. Their recommendations would also include giving property owners the option to purchase in-lieu parking certificates, with those funds to be put toward new public parking spaces within the project vicinity.
- Pat Menne:
 - Spoke about her experience living near Thousand Steps Beach in South Laguna. Mentioned that driveways on 8th Avenue occupy a lot of area along the street, such that on-street parking is very limited. It was not surprising to see high occupancy on that street when many are competing for a very limited pool of available parking. Pat sees a lot of public parking in her residential neighborhood. The residents in that area depend on street parking due to the limited parking provided at their residences. She believes that parking within the neighborhoods should be limited to residents only through a permit program. If parking meters were to be installed, the issue would be worse.
 - In response to the presentation, Pat believes that every street in South Laguna between West and 10th Avenue should be red (very high occupancy) on the heat maps. The area is heavily impacted by public parking.
 - Agreed with F&P's point that proximity to the destination is key to limiting visitor impacts on the residential neighborhoods. Should have pockets of public parking supplied at strategic locations. As much as we can, we should also put parking at the City's periphery (e.g., Act V and the Village Entrance).
- Toni Iseman:
 - Agrees with Pat that South Laguna has a significant parking problem. The area adjacent to the HIP District is also an issue. Toni commented that visitors will travel inland when parking on Coast Highway is not free. Mentioned that she has heard from residents who are frustrated by visitors and employees parking in their neighborhoods.
- Chris Quilter:

- Looking to the future, Chris sees zero population growth. There is also a lot of talk about people transitioning away from traveling by personal vehicle. With this in mind, is it wise to invest in parking infrastructure?
 - F&P: The future is hard to predict. We also thought we would have self-driving cars by now, with the vehicle driving itself to park at a peripheral lot after dropping passengers off at the destination.
- If investment in public transportation lags behind our investment in public parking structures, Chris thought we may be misreading future trends.
- Ann Christoph:
 - Why were there no parking counts at Providence Mission Hospital? The site provides public parking. Ann believes that the existing public parking signage is misleading and ineffective.
 - Michael Litschi: This was due to timing. The hospital lots were unavailable for public parking during the survey period as they were being resurfaced. However, we know that we can work to increase parking utilization at this property. New signage was also recently added on Coast Highway that provides clearer messaging to encourage public parking use.
- Gayle Waite:
 - Lives downtown and witnesses the parking issues daily. Gayle was glad to hear that the data collectors physically counted occupied parking spaces since she does not have meters on her street that are otherwise tracked with the City's parking sensors.
 - How do you encourage people to pay for parking when it's free in the neighborhoods? Gayle recommends setting time limits on public parking to encourage turnover.
- Jacob Cherub
 - Trip origin data (presentation slides 11 and 12): In addition to the percentage breakdown of trip origins (north, south, and east), do we know the total number of vehicles that are coming to Laguna Beach from each of those regions?
 - F&P: We do not. The information, which is drawn from cell phone data, is only a sample.
 - Jacob hopes that resident needs will have a high priority with these solutions. The City's parking challenges are not just limited to the summer visitor season.
 - Happy to hear that zoning needs to take businesses into account. Jacob commented on the need to park different uses at different rates based on their intensity of use.
 - Does not believe that the City has been collecting enough in-lieu fees for commercial projects, and it was unclear to him how those funds are currently being used. Jacob appreciated that the Parking Master Plan will include recommendations for the City's in-lieu parking certificate program.
- John Thomas:
 - It would be helpful to know the total number of vehicles coming into the City.
 - The Laguna Canyon Road Task Force found that a large number of vehicles entering the City drive through and exit Laguna Beach without stopping.
 - F&P: It is difficult to count volumes because while we can determine how many vehicles are entering Laguna Beach, we don't have a good method to determine the length of stay.

- Referring to a parking study prepared by IBI for the Downtown Specific Plan update, John commented that we may only be over 85% utilization in the downtown 5% of the time. Relatedly, does it make sense to build more parking when peak season is only 10 weeks of the year?
- John opined that population density is critical to making mass transit work.
 - F&P: There are established thresholds for when different types of transit make sense, but we also need to consider the location. Laguna Beach with its 3 access points is isolated. Although topography makes some modes of transit infeasible (e.g., trains), the City is heading in the right direction with the trolley. There are many transit options that are suitable for Laguna Beach such as neighborhood electric vehicles (NEVs).
- Anonymous Speaker:
 - The speaker commented that it was not quite clear what the problem was that we were trying to solve, given that demand is infinite. However, the speaker believes the City is doing a great job with its transportation demand management strategies. The speaker recommended that the Parking Master Plan be renamed to the Mobility Enhancement Plan.
 - Many commercial parking lots in the City were built because the Zoning Code states the on-site uses have high parking requirements, but the speaker's observation is that the lots go underutilized because they are private and only some individuals have access to them.
 - F&P: Public-private partnerships are feasible when it benefits both parties. The City could for example retain a vendor to provide a public parking use during off-hours, with the vendor also responsible for monitoring and maintaining the lot during public use hours when the on-site businesses are closed.
- Jerome Pudwill
 - How do we quantify the demand for new public parking?
 - F&P: New supplies should consider the mitigating effects of transportation demand management strategies.
- Anonymous Speaker:
 - As a Woods Cove resident, he appreciates that the restaurants and bars contribute to a great walkable district. However, each new restaurant that opens contributes to the parking impact problem. Can we have our cake and eat it too?
 - Anthony Viera: We will need to find a good solution for Laguna Beach so that we can preserve human-scale development and walkability, and continue to enjoy small lot development patterns. This can be difficult to balance with high off-street parking requirements that are expected to be fulfilled on the same property.
- Chris Catsimanes
 - We need to consider the socioeconomic makeup of visitors. It appears that many day visitors do not patronize local businesses and are looking for free beach parking.
- Anonymous Speaker:

- In response to the heat maps included with the presentation, the speaker was surprised that some streets such as Cliff Drive weren't fully "in the red" (i.e., greater than 85% parking occupancy), given their anecdotal experience with that area.
 - Michael Litschi: Staff will review the Cliff Drive utilization during the survey period, which is tracked by the City's parking sensor data.
- Jerome Pudwill:
 - Without knowing how many spaces we need, how do we develop solutions?
 - F&P: the need is not a singular, definable number; it does not exist.
- Michael:
 - If new parking structures are built, would they be full most of the year?
 - F&P: This would be location-dependent. F&P would not recommend a new structure if it would only be at capacity for five days a year, for example.
- Gayle Waite:
 - The on-street parking within residential neighborhoods should be available to residents only.
 - Shohreh Dupuis: City staff, Mayor Kempf, and Mayor Pro Tem Whalen have met with the California Coastal Commission staff to make the case for resident-only street parking in the neighborhoods. The Coastal Commission has been very resistant to this idea and they have not given any indication that they would reconsider their position. Nonetheless, the City will continue to press the issue.
 - Mayor Kempf: She and Mayor Pro Tem Whalen spoke with Coastal Commission staff during the pandemic to provide an overview of the parking issues in Laguna Beach and ask if the Commission would be open to resident-only parking in the neighborhoods if the City were able to build sufficient public parking supply that visitors could access. Coastal staff responded with a firm no.
- Chris Quilter:
 - The parking problem would be lessened if residents were required to clear their garages of storage and use their garages for parking.
- Toni Iseman:
 - Wants to see a parking structure at the Act V property for use as employee parking with frequent shuttle service. Employers should allow employees to clock into work when they arrive at Act V to encourage its use.
- Jacob Cherub:
 - Cited the Red Dragon project, which he thought had a good outcome with a comprehensive parking management strategy. Has F&P had experience with public-private partnerships to mitigate employee parking impacts on neighborhoods?
 - F&P: There are examples of this working, such as in Costa Mesa and the Anaheim Packing District. However, it will be more difficult to achieve in Laguna Beach due to the higher cost to provide parking.
- John Thomas:
 - Commented that Salt Creek beach has an enormous parking area managed by the County. In lieu of creating our own supply, could we encourage visitors to park at large parking lots and structures outside of the City and provide robust public transit to shuttle visitors back and forth?

- F&P: Peripheral parking is viable and should be explored.
- Chris Catsimanes:
 - The beneficiaries of public parking are the businesses, who have not had to pay toward creating public parking. Believes that residents end up paying for parking that does not benefit them.
 - F&P: Phase 2 of this project will include an assessment of funding strategies.

Written Comment Summary:

- Rob Alan: Is the data representative when the survey was conducted on two days in July only? This period represents the peak demand.