RICK WILLIAMS CONSULTING
Parking & Transportation

DOWNTOWN BEND PARKING STUDY
DOWNTOWN STAKEHOLDER ADVISORY COMMITTEE
INITIAL STRATEGY CONSIDERATIONS (DRAFT FINAL)

A.   EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Rick Williams Consulting (RWC) was retained by the City of Bend to conduct an overall evaluation of the downtown parking system and develop a comprehensive Strategic Parking Management Plan. The RWC team also includes Kittelson & Associates (KAI) and Anne E. George Facilitation, Mediation + Public Involvement (AG).

The evaluation entailed review of existing parking operations and previous study findings, public engagement/outreach, and comprehensive data collection. All recommended strategies have been informed by in-depth discussions and topic-specific work sessions with the Downtown Stakeholder Advisory Committee (DSAC).

Twenty-eight strategies have been developed for consideration. Strategies for operations and infrastructure are intended to be phased over 48 months; beginning with adoption of the plan. The strategies are presented in a listed order; recommending an iterative process whereby each strategy builds upon work and outcomes of a previous strategy. Near term strategies intend to focus management and decision-making, leverage opportunities within the existing supply of parking, reformat existing pricing structures, better communicate options and expectations and continue to use data to facilitate decision-making. Longer term strategies include new approaches to pricing (where pricing is not now in place), infrastructure and access capacity needs, and funding.

The DSAC approved this draft on February 16, 2017, and believes the recommended strategies respond to the unique environment, goals, and objectives of downtown Bend. Strategies are offered within the context of recently completed data findings and consistency with Guiding Principles developed and approved by the DSAC and City Council in August 2016.

A.   SUMMARY FINDINGS – SYSTEM PERFORMANCE

1. **Solutions**: There is a finite supply of parking in downtown Bend. Currently, there is availability in the on-street and off-street supplies. New systems need to be implemented to direct users to available supplies. If Bend is to have a customer-

first parking management system, the system must appeal to and accommodate visitors, and identify safe and accessible parking for employees and residents.

2. **Use:** Summer is the peak season, with the number of vehicle trips downtown and use of the supply about 12.5% higher than in spring.

3. **Parking Behavior:** There is no significant change in parking behavior between the two seasons for either employees or visitors. This includes average duration of stay, number of employee permits, rates of violation, and turnover.

4. **High-Use Areas (On-Street)**: In spring and summer, there is a defined area of high parking activity in the downtown core, which shows sustained occupancy rates of 85% or greater. This area of parking constraint operates much differently than the east side of downtown, which is underutilized in spring and summer. Given this, modifying the parking management district or managing parking by zone may make sense.

5. **Off-Street Parking Availability:** Although parking activity is higher in summer, the off-street system still has a meaningful amount of unused parking, particularly in the parking garage.

6. **Shared Use:** There are opportunities for shared use of off-street parking facilities. For example, three publicly controlled lots[1] could accommodate employee and off-peak event parking. Partnerships with owners of private parking lots present a significant opportunity.

7. **The Mirror Pond lots** are consistently constrained at or above 85% occupancy. Strategies should be developed to address this.

8. **Surrounding Neighborhoods:** Surrounding neighborhoods may benefit from a separate engagement process that investigates the trade-offs of neighborhood parking management to further protect resident and guest parking access.

The strategies below are intended to be implemented in the listed order. However, the timing and final order of implementation will be further reviewed and refined by the Project Management Team (PMT) and DSAC through plan development.

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[1] Includes the City-owned parking garage, the Newport Lot, and County parking facilities.

B. POLICY AND ORGANIZATIONAL ACTION STRATEGIES[2]

Incorporating parking system management into the City's development policy ensures that the goals of the Parking Management Plan can be met. The following strategies should be implemented within 12 months of plan adoption.

1.   Formalize the Guiding Principles as policies in appropriate City documents.

2.   Adopt the 85% Rule as the standard for measuring performance of the parking supply and triggering specific management strategies, rate ranges and efforts by discrete zone.

3.   Centralize the management and administration of parking in a Parking Services Division, integrated with the broader program of transportation services management.[3]

4.   Create the position of Parking Demand Manager for the City of Bend. Develop a job description and submit a service package to hire an appropriate individual.

5.   Establish a Downtown Parking Advisory Committee to assist in implementation and ongoing review of the parking plan.

6.   Evaluate collection of data to measure parking impacts in select neighborhoods adjacent to the downtown, as well as feasibility and cost of neighborhood permit programs (e.g., administration, process and stakeholder education).

7.   Develop funding options to support parking management, maintain the existing parking supply, and support future growth, ensuring the financial feasibility of the system.

8.   Create a cohesive pricing policy for on- and off-street parking in downtown Bend. Establish a fair market rate to ensure that prices:

   -   Support businesses;
   -   Encourage neighborhood parking management; and

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[2] These strategies would revise the municipal code to support long-term planning and efforts to "right-size" parking in new development. They will be developed in Phase 2 of the larger city-wide parking study, integrating specific recommendations related to the downtown. Recommendations from this process will be brought back to the DSAC and City Council for review and input.

[3] The Parking Division must coordinate with transportation staff to achieve balanced access across all transportation modes.

- Encourage the use of alternative modes.

9. Evaluate and implement solutions to safety impediments that create inconvenient and inefficient connections to parking, e.g., lighting, sidewalk/paths, lot conditions, etc.

C. PARKING MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES - OPERATIONS

The following strategies should be implemented within 12 to 24 months of plan adoption.

10. Establish business-to-business and residential outreach on parking issues, including education and planning, and a *Customer First* Partnership with the Downtown Bend Business Association.
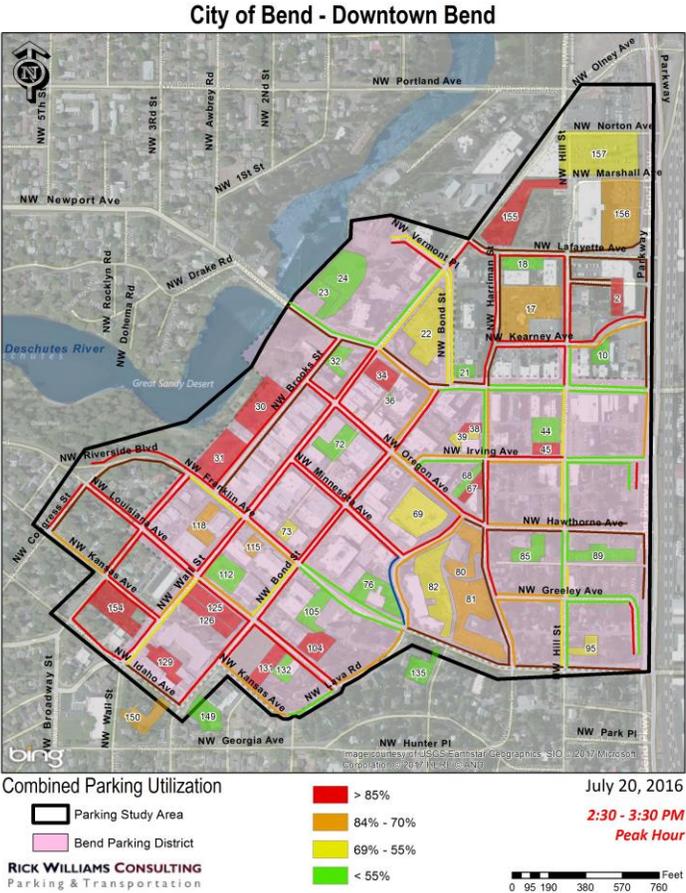
   Efforts could include:

   - Improved education and communication of parking options to employees, residents, and visitors.
   - Maps and other materials to identify parking availability and rules of use.
   - Informational kiosks.
   - Co-marketing opportunities with retail shops, hotels, restaurants, event venues.
   - Alternative mode education and incentives.
   - Interactive website.
   - Tie all information to new brand/logo (see Strategy 16).

11. Identify off-street shared-use opportunities based on data from the 2016 parking study. Establish goals for transitioning permit users and long-term parkers out of on-street parking, begin outreach to opportunity sites, negotiate agreements, and assign permittees to facilities.

12. Implement variable-rate pricing for on-street permits based on location, demand, and availability of parking. This will create pricing differentials between "premium" and underutilized locations.

13. Reduce or phase out the number of "2-Hour or as Otherwise Specified" on-street stalls in coordination with Strategies 11 and 12 above.

14. Based on documented parking behavior, establish four distinct on-street parking management zones in the downtown parking district. Use 2016 occupancy data to define the boundaries.

    - 2-Hour parking (base standard) in the core zone.
    - 3-Hour parking (base standard) in the east zone.
    - 3-Hour parking (base standard) in edge areas of the parking district not covered by the core and east zones.
    - Allow limited employee permit parking in the east zone, coordinated with Strategies 10 and 11 above.
    - Establish a periphery area adjacent to the parking district with a time-stay standard appropriate to the residential nature of this area, coordinated with Strategy 6 above.
    - Establish an exceptions process for locating high turnover parking stalls (e.g., 15, 30-minute), loading zones, taxi stalls, oversize vehicles, etc. in the management zones

City of Bend - Downtown Bend

Combined Parking Utilization

- Parking Study Area
- Bend Parking District

> 85%
84% - 70%
69% - 55%
< 55%

July 20, 2016
2:30 - 3:30 PM
Peak Hour

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15. Improve safety and security at Mirror Pond lots and eliminate free parking for the first two hours.

    - Implement progressive hourly parking, with a lower rate for the first two hours, then increasing rates for each additional hour.
    - Limit time stays (e.g., four-hour maximum).
    - Extend parking restrictions to 8:00 p.m.

16. Create a critical path timeline to a new parking brand that can be utilized at all City-owned lots and shared facilities, and in marketing/communications.

17. Standardize the design of on-street parking signage in the parking management district and incorporate the new brand/logo.

    Example: On-street "Brand" Springfield, OR

    ‑ Make all core-zone parking 2-Hour.
    ‑ Make all non-core-zone parking 3-Hour or By Permit.
    ‑ Reduce the number of No Limit stalls.

18. Rename all public parking facilities by address.

19. Establish best-practice protocols and performance metrics for enforcement personnel and support enforcement with appropriate technology.

20. Where practical, expand the bike parking network to connect parking and the downtown, encouraging employee bike commute trips and drawing customers to downtown businesses.

    - Bike lanes.
    - On-sidewalk bike parking.
    - Bike corrals in the street or on public or private plazas.
    - Indoor employee parking on private property.

21. Develop a reasonable schedule of data collection—no less than once every 24 months—to assess performance of the parking supply and support the 85% Rule for decision-making.

22. Using data collected per Strategy 21, evaluate on-street pricing by zone in high-occupancy areas. If peak occupancy exceeds 85%, implement on-street pricing during enforcement hours where appropriate.

    - If on -street pricing is implemented, review on-street time stays established in Strategies 14 and 17.

23. Eliminate free parking in the public garage when on-street parking is priced and garage occupancies exceed 85%. Implement demand-based pricing for all hours of enforced parking—e.g., hourly, evening, weekend, overnight, and event rates.

D.   PARKING MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES: INFRASTRUCTURE

The following strategies build upon and are facilitated by work completed in Strategies 1 through 23. They should be implemented within 24 to 48 months of plan adoption.

24.   Develop and implement improvements at the downtown public parking garage to enhance its appearance, identity, safety, revenue control, communications technology, and pedestrian access.

   Improvements should include:

   - Lighting upgrades.
   - Entry/exit counter systems (to track stall occupancy).
   - State-of-the-art pay stations.
   - Exterior signage displaying brand/logo and occupancy information.
   - Interior directional signage upgrades.

25.   Solicit firms to establish wayfinding and dynamic signage systems in the public right of way, integrated with the off-street system and using the brand/logo developed per Strategy 16.

   - Design signage.
   - Identify appropriate access portals for locating signage.
   - Explore real-time communications linking multiple sites, apps, websites, and other resources for dissemination of information.

26.   If existing parking becomes limited, explore expanding access capacity with new transit and parking.

27.   Develop cost forecasts and feasible financing methods for preferred parking supply and transit/shuttle options, coordinated with Strategy 7.

28.   Expand capacity as necessary and feasible.

The City and DSAC may elect to reorder, accelerate, or moderate strategies depending on community support and consensus, opportunity, and/or funding. All strategies will require consistent and dedicated management with active participation by the private sector.