

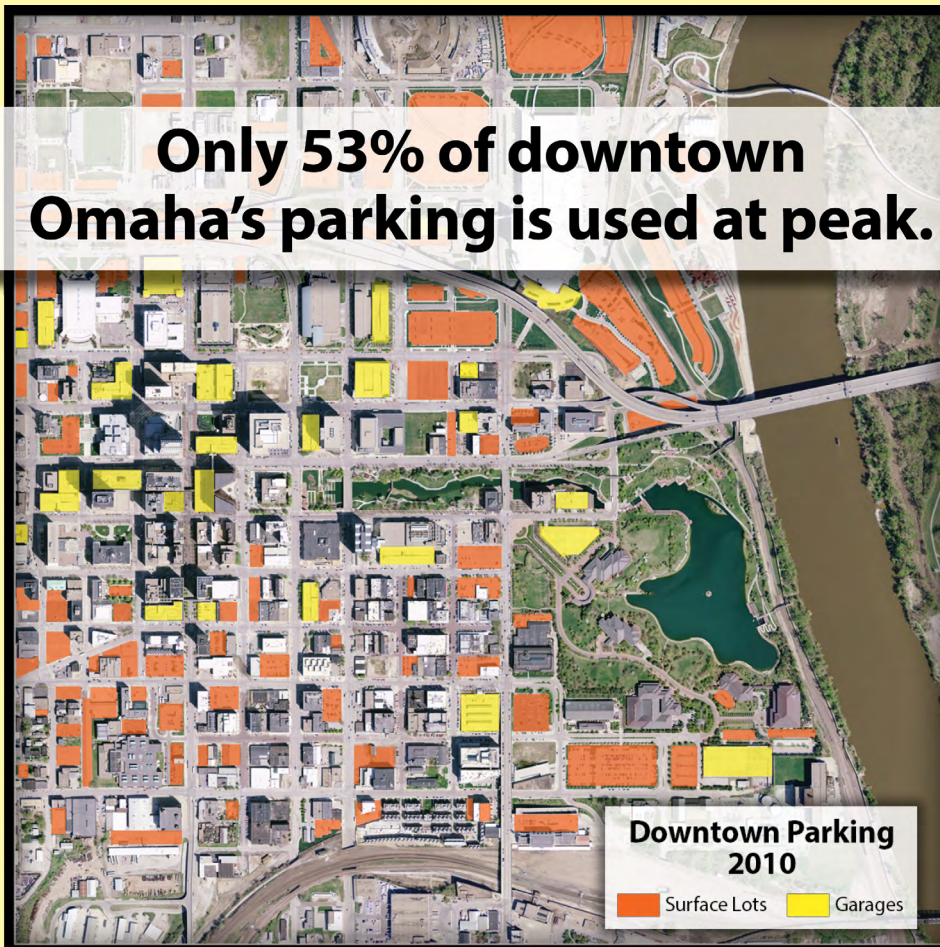
Parking Management in Downtown Omaha: A Health Impact Assessment



May 2015

Summary

A recent study found that Omaha is only using 53% of its downtown parking – leaving over 18,000 parking spaces empty even at peak times. Despite the overall abundance, circling to find a parking space still occurs, especially in the Old Market, creating a perception that downtown Omaha needs more parking. These parking management challenges create unnecessary health consequences through increased stress, added air pollution, and sedentary behavior. Plans to adjust parking rates and prioritize shared parking would better protect the health of the 20,000+ people who park in downtown Omaha each day while better solving the current parking challenges.



Source: Parking Management Plan -- Omaha Downtown Improvement District. Walker Parking Consultants. November 8, 2011

Background

In 2011, the City of Omaha and the Metropolitan Area Planning Agency (MAPA) contracted with Walker Parking Consultants to develop a Parking Management Plan for downtown Omaha. One of the main conclusions of the plan was that downtown Omaha, including the Old Market, did not suffer from a parking shortage.

Instead parking difficulties were the result of a "patchwork of parking policies" that had "the unintended consequence of putting visitors and employees, transient and long-term parkers in competition for the most convenient and often least expensive spaces." For example, the plan noted that street parking was free at peak times for the Old Market while parking in a garage or lot cost \$4-\$8. As a result, motorists circle to find a free on-street spot, creating the perception of a parking shortage while in reality thousands of nearby spots are going unused.

To remedy these issues, the plan called for establishing a new Parking Manager position to coordinate all parking activities. Previously, parking activities were fragmented across five different city departments (Public Works; Parks, Recreation, and Public Properties; Planning; Police; and Finance). In 2012, the City of Omaha created this position and then hired Ken Smith, who had served as the parking manager in Lincoln, NE for 11 years.

"In virtually all cases, even if additional parking were constructed, the parking challenges faced by most parkers would not improve without the implementation of improved parking management policies."
 --Parking Management Plan:
 Omaha Downtown Improvement District p. 64

Purpose

The Downtown Omaha Parking Health Impact Assessment (HIA) focused on two decisions being considered for 2015 by the City of Omaha: 1) adjusting parking rates and 2) increasing the use of shared (as opposed to reserved) parking. An HIA brings together scientific evidence, public health expertise, and stakeholder input when making decisions on projects or policies that would not otherwise focus on health. The key principle is to weigh health impacts at the time of decision-making because the effects of built-in environment decisions, such as with parking, can last for decades.

Shared Parking

Parking can be shared when:

- Demand for parking occurs at different times (e.g. an office building and a movie theater can share parking because the office needs parking during the day while the theater needs it in the evening and on weekends);
- When multiple tasks can be accomplished after parking once (e.g. in a traditional Main Street or downtown where there are a mix of different retail businesses).

When parking is reserved or exclusive, it is used more sporadically. For example, a church parking lot can sit empty except for Sunday and a reserved employee space goes unused at night and when the person is at a meeting, off sick, on vacation, etc.

Priorities for the HIA

Work on the Downtown Omaha Parking HIA began in earnest in June 2014. Several meetings were held with Ken Smith, Parking Manager for the City of Omaha, to better understand proposed changes to parking. Previous parking studies by Walker Parking Consultants and Verdis Group were also reviewed. From this information, the three research priorities for the HIA were established:

1. **Parking Efficiency** – The costs of building parking are extremely high. Failure to properly manage this resource can have health consequences on top of the financial burdens. The additional pavement required for parking in excess of what is needed contributes to the heat island effect as well as poor water quality from runoff.
2. **Walkability** – Increasing the distance people are willing to walk would also address parking challenges. The 2014 update to the Downtown Omaha Parking Management Plan stated “significant amounts of unoccupied parking supply are located within two to four blocks from the core Central Business District. The challenge is not the shortage of supply, but the location of supply.”
3. **Demand for Parking** – Storing cars takes up huge amounts of space (see below). Transit, walking, and biking can be used as tools to reduce the amount of space for parking to free up room for additional businesses and amenities.

Space requirements for 60 people by bike, car, or bus



Description of Approach

The scientific literature on the three priorities – as well as health data from local Community Health Needs Assessments – were reviewed for information that was relevant to the City of Omaha and the Omaha Parking Advisory Committee. Interviews were conducted with a wide variety of parking stakeholders to determine their perspective on the pros and cons of the proposed parking changes.

Interviewees included:

- Shelly Stokes, Old Market Business Association president
- T.J. Twit, Lund Company vice president
- Vic Gutman, Omaha Farmers Market and the Summer Arts Festival organizer
- Steve Jensen, former City of Omaha Planning director
- Derek Miller, City of Omaha transportation planner
- Troy Davis, board member of the Old Market Business Association and the Downtown Improvement District
- Mike Moylan, Shamrock Development president
- Mindy Tene, facilities manager with First National Bank

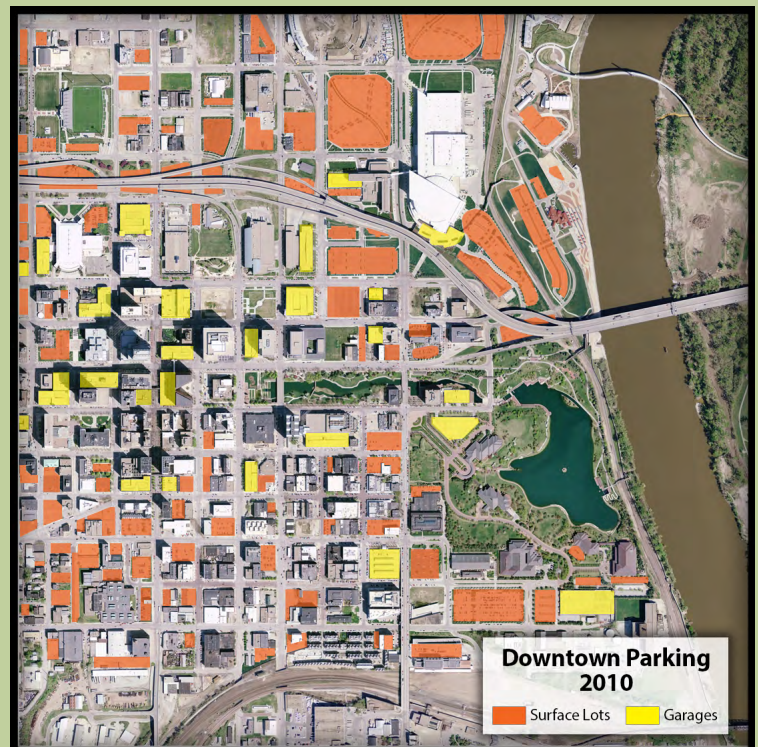
Key Findings from the Scientific Literature

The information collected from scientific research and interviews was reviewed by the HIA Team working group and the City of Omaha in order to determine which findings were most significant.

- Studies by Donald Shoup, an economist at UCLA, have repeatedly found that the stress of finding parking is more likely to deter a person from visiting a place than the cost of parking. Studies in England have reached the same conclusion.
- Human-scale amenities like ground floor retail, places to sit and congregate, street trees, and access to food are key to creating places where people choose to walk. A growing number of cities are creating “parking benefit districts” where parking revenue is reinvested back into an area to pay for these placemaking improvements.
- Another place to address walkability is within the parking garages themselves. For example, studies at the Ohio State University, a mall in Camillus, NY and a park in San Diego, CA have found that increasing lighting is the single biggest factor for reducing both perceived and actual crime in garages.
- Programs that give employees cash instead of subsidizing their parking have been found to decrease the number of solo drivers by 17%. Carpooling, transit use, biking and walking all showed large increases.
- Researchers at the University of Connecticut and University of Wisconsin found that overbuilding parking in city centers displaces economic activity instead of supporting it. This finding was echoed by the Central Omaha Transit Alternatives Analysis, which found that achieving downtown Omaha’s full development potential would cost half as much using a mixture of transit and parking versus building parking only.

Downtown Omaha Parking – Past and Present

Prior to World War II, downtowns like Omaha’s were designed to support large numbers of people walking and taking transit. Due to the dominance of the automobile and a desire to keep up with suburban developments offering free parking, downtowns have increasingly devoted large amounts of land to parking. Studies from Omaha and across the U.S. point out that devoting so much land to parking is likely displacing economic activity instead of supporting it because of all the offices, retail businesses and housing that can’t be built.



Health Impacts by Different Parts of Omaha

Parking & Health Impacts – Old Market

Key Findings	Key Recommendation
Street parking being free while garages and lots cost \$4-8 creates an artificial shortage in parking that leads to circling.	The City of Omaha should adjust parking prices to eliminate the artificial shortage in parking.
Circling to find parking increases stress and air pollution.	
<p>Elevated stress and air pollution levels harm health by contributing to a range of chronic diseases and other poor health outcomes.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stress causes blood sugar levels to increase to prepare for a “fight or flight” response. When no “fight or flight” occurs to use this excess sugar in the blood, the result is increased risk of diabetes and obesity. • Air pollution causes tissue damage in the lungs that can trigger asthma or COPD attacks. It also causes blood vessel inflammation that can induce a heart attack or stroke. 	

Parking & Health Impacts – Rest of Downtown

Key Findings	Key Recommendations
Using a siloed approach that focuses almost exclusively on ensuring sufficient parking supply has led to overbuilt parking. Only about half of parking is being used at peak times.	The City of Omaha should utilize shared parking strategies to avoid overbuilding parking.
Overbuilt parking undermines walkability (and thus physical activity) by decreasing the number of destinations within walking distance while creating dead spaces and blank walls. It also increases heat island effect and water runoff problems such as water contamination and flooding.	The City of Omaha should partner with Metro Transit and MAPA to develop commuter choice programs to reduce parking demand.
<p>Physical inactivity is one of the most important causes of preventable deaths.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over the long-term, inactivity leads to chronic diseases like heart disease, obesity, diabetes, & osteoporosis. • Over the short-term, inactivity causes blood flow to the brain to slow which reduces concentration, memory, and decision-making. Mood is also impaired. 	

Parking & Health Impacts – Outside of Downtown Omaha

Key Finding	Key Recommendation
Underpriced parking in “Main Street” areas (Blackstone, South 24th Street, Benson, Dundee, Aksarben Village) can also create a shortage in parking that results in circling (and thus increased health risks).	Expand parking management to areas outside of downtown – primarily through the creation of Parking Benefit Districts.

Summary of Recommendations

The following recommendations summarize the opportunities for the City of Omaha Parking Division and the City of Omaha Parking Stakeholders Committee to enhance the parking experience while also improving health outcomes.

1. Move forward with plans to: 1) eliminate the artificial parking shortage in the Old Market by balancing the parking rates between on-street and off-street parking options and 2) adopt shared parking strategies to reduce overbuilding. These plans would free up parking spaces to decrease both circling and the need to build new parking which would reduce stress levels and air pollution while improving the walkability of downtown Omaha.
2. Develop commuter choice programs for downtown employers in partnership with Metro Transit and MAPA. Examples include parking cash-out programs, incentives for walking or biking, transit pass subsidies, telecommuting/flexible work schedules, and park-and-ride options. These programs would reduce parking demand while increasing physical activity.
3. Utilize Parking Benefit Districts to expand parking management to “Main Street” areas of Omaha outside of downtown. After covering necessary costs and parking infrastructure, a Parking Benefit District ensures parking revenue is used for improvements within the district instead of going into a citywide general fund. The revenue can then pay for sidewalk repairs, street trees, lighting, and safety enhancements that would increase walking and mitigate air pollution.

This HIA was conducted through funding from the CDC’s Healthy Community Design Initiative. Partners on this HIA included the **City of Omaha, the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services, the Metropolitan Area Planning Agency, and Omaha by Design.**

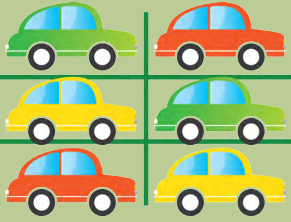
For more information, please contact:

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Douglas County Health Department

(402) 444-7225

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Downtown Omaha Parking Health Impact Assessment Supplemental Information January 2015

The report for the Downtown Omaha Parking Health Impact Assessment (HIA) was intentionally designed in an issue brief format to be readable and engaging for community members and other stakeholders. As a result, a large amount of the information generated during the HIA was not included. The following appendices make this information available to those who are interested in exploring these areas in more depth.

Full-size Visuals *Appendix A*

- *Downtown Omaha Parking in 1941*
- *Downtown Omaha Parking in 2010*

Stakeholder Interviews *Appendix B*

Additional Research Information *Appendix C*

- *HIA Methodology & Monitoring*
- *HIA Scope*

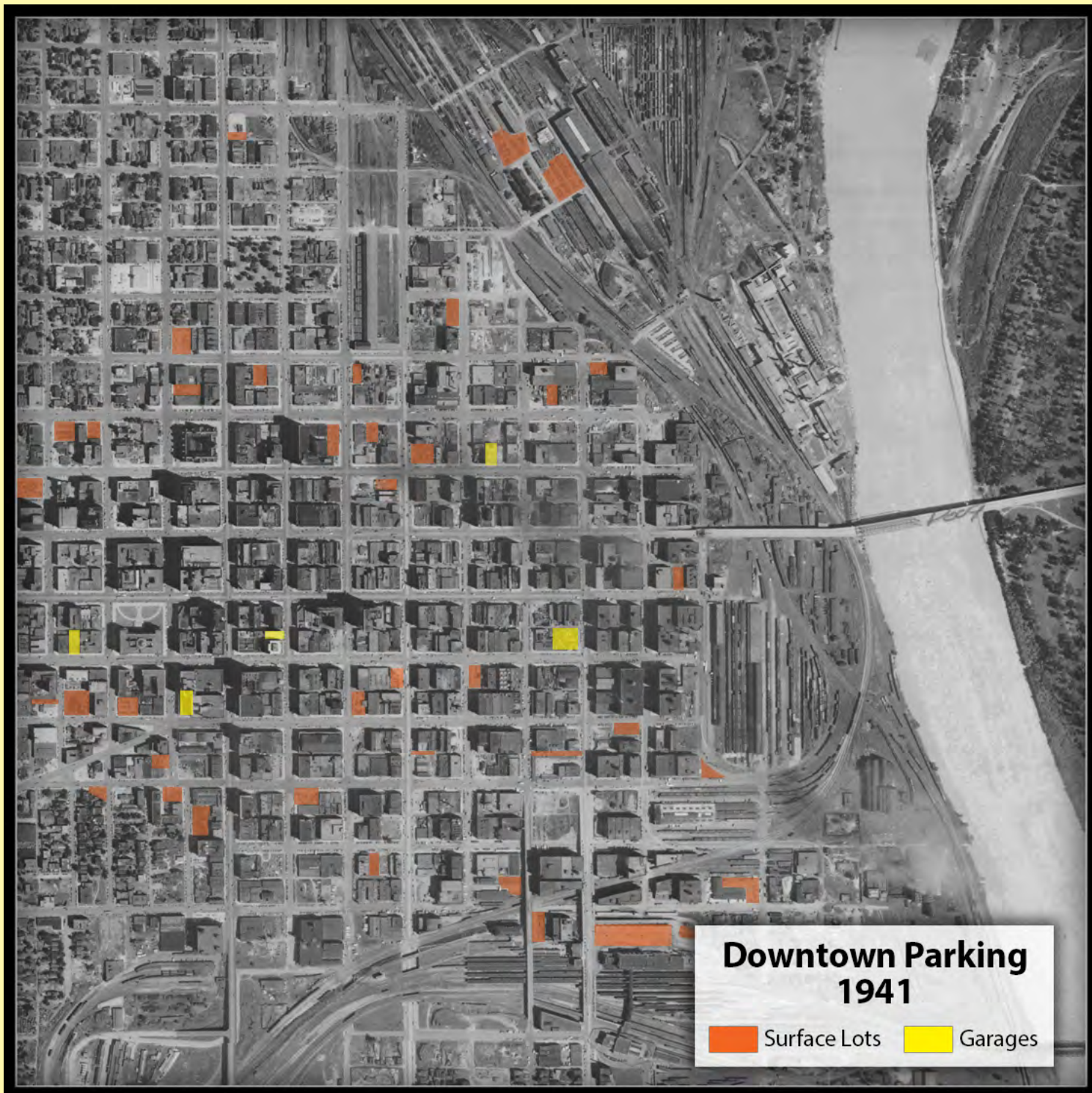
References *Appendix D*

Individuals who are interested in conducting a similar HIA – or local stakeholders who have questions or comments about the HIA methodology or findings – are welcome to contact the Douglas County Health Department to learn more.

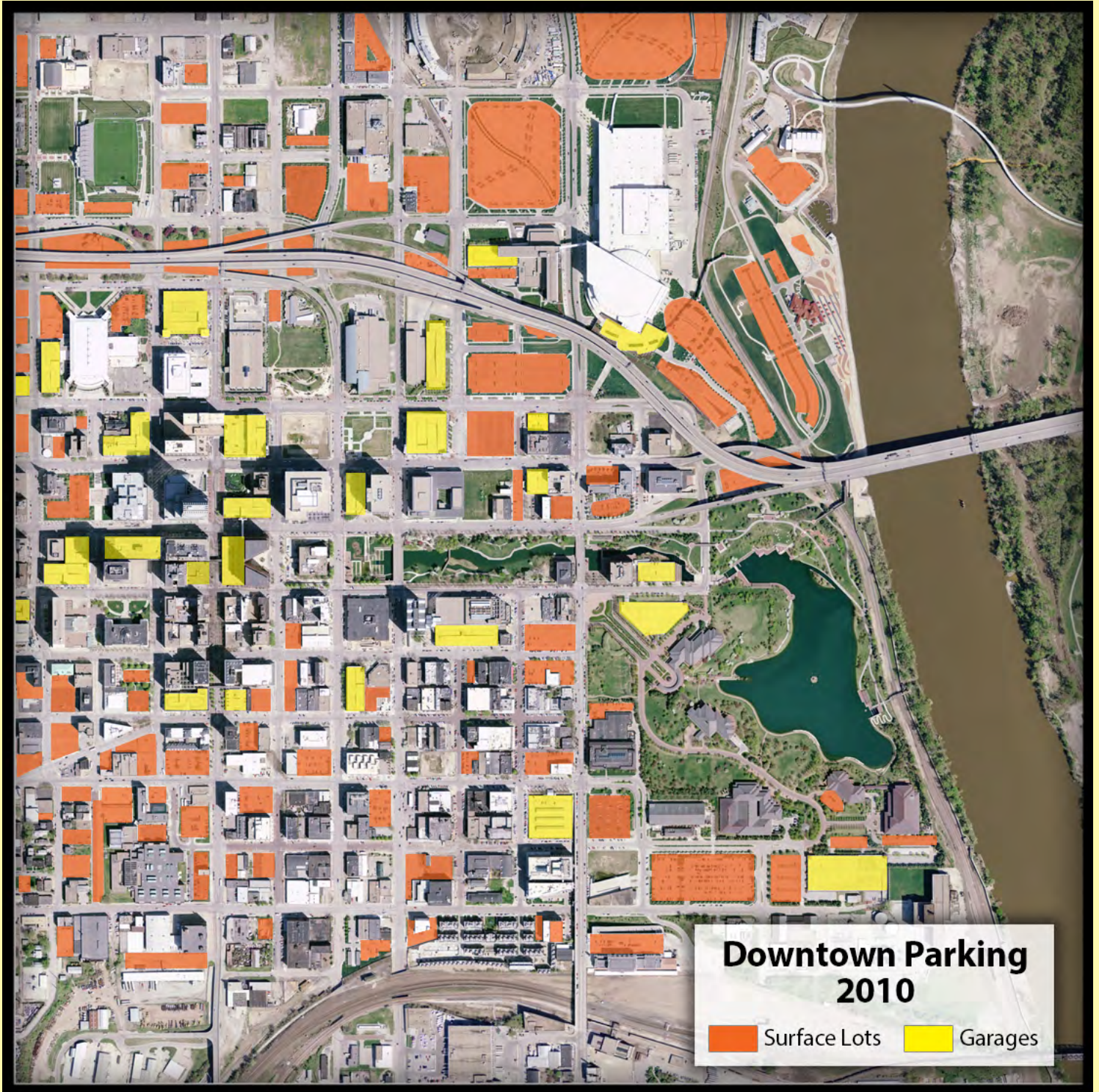
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(402) 444-7225
andy.wessel@douglascounty-ne.gov**

Appendix A
Full-sized Visuals

Downtown Parking 1941



Downtown Parking 2010



Appendix B

Stakeholder Interviews

Name: Troy Davis

Date: 8-5-14

Organization/Affiliation: Owner of Curb Appeal and Board member of the Downtown Improvement District and the Old Market Business Assoc.

1. Benefits of the Status Quo (Parking Convenience Model -- Free, Abundant, & Close)?
2. Costs of the Status Quo (Parking Convenience Model)?
3. Benefits of the Proposed Changes (Parking Efficiency Model – Don't Have to Circle, Building Just What You Need)?
4. Costs of Proposed Changes (Parking Efficiency Model)

	Parking Convenience Model (Status Quo)	Parking Efficiency Model (Proposed Changes)
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For other people, the free parking on evenings and weekends is the main benefit. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Can’t happen soon enough” – but adjusting the parking rates and hours between meters and lots does need to happen at the same. • A big benefit will be that residents, employees, and even some extended visitors will actually use the lots. • Will lessen the traffic and free up meters.
Costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The biggest cost is all the traffic that comes from people circling for free parking. • Right now the lots and garages cost too much both hourly and monthly. • People don’t realize there is a max rate for the day. • Isn’t safe with circling e.g. Old Market Trick or Treat. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The biggest downside will be hearing all the confusion and complaints over the short-term.

5. How much of the difficulty people might have is due to coping with change vs. a genuine weighing of the pros and cons of the status quo vs. the proposed changes?

I think there is always a struggle to adjust to a change especially when it creates confusion. There will be a spike in people being frustrated but then they will adjust. There is a big need for outreach and communication that is concise and happens all at the same time to keep that confusion and misinformation to a minimum. When the new meters were installed, people were confused at first so the City put stickers on but some of the stickers didn't stick because it was winter. Also, occasionally there have been some issues with the parking app functionality. Those things just add to people's frustration with change.

6. Is there anything else that is important to know? Anyone else that would be important to talk to?

If it was me, I would make the parking times and costs the same across the city (Downtown, Midtown, Dundee, Benson, and Village Pointe). There would be a huge uproar for awhile but then things would be consistent, which would be **better in the long run.**

Name: T.J. Twit

Date: 8-8-14

Organization/Affiliation: VP with Lund Company

1. Benefits of the Status Quo (Parking Convenience Model -- Free, Abundant, & Close)?
2. Costs of the Status Quo (Parking Convenience Model)?
3. Benefits of the Proposed Changes (Parking Efficiency Model – Don't Have to Circle, Building Just What You Need)?
4. Costs of Proposed Changes (Parking Efficiency Model)

	Parking Convenience Model (Status Quo)	Parking Efficiency Model (Proposed Changes)
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• It is cost prohibitive for a business to build more parking so not having a parking minimum helps with that.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Moving from reserved parking to a common pool within a given radius would help solve some of our parking challenges.• Having good transit (like Charlotte's Light Rail) could also really improve the dynamics of parking in downtown.
Costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We can't lease space because we can't park the new employees. Pacific Life moving from the Landmark Building in downtown to the Aksarben Village is a prime example. We had parking solutions but it would have meant people walking 3-4 blocks.• The commute used to be the big deterrent for a business being downtown, but now it is parking.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Really difficult to get people to move away from reserved parking. They want the peace of mind of knowing where they will park and that there will be a spot available for them.

5. How much of the difficulty people might have is due to coping with change vs. a genuine weighing of the pros and cons of the status quo vs. the proposed changes?

I think there is this cultural aspect to Omaha around being able to park close. For employers, it is part of their recruitment and retention package. I think that culture can change in Omaha, especially if we have high-quality transit, but it will take time.

6. Is there anything else that is important to know? Anyone else that would be important to talk to?

Right now we do have a problem with parking that isn't going to go away. The supply isn't really growing but the demand certainly is.

Name: Vic Gutman

Date: 8-8-14

Organization/Affiliation: President of Vic Gutman & Associates (Omaha Farmers Market & Summer Arts Festival)

1. Benefits of the Status Quo (Parking Convenience Model -- Free, Abundant, & Close)?
2. Costs of the Status Quo (Parking Convenience Model)?
3. Benefits of the Proposed Changes (Parking Efficiency Model – Don't Have to Circle, Building Just What You Need)?
4. Costs of Proposed Changes (Parking Efficiency Model)

	Parking Convenience Model (Status Quo)	Parking Efficiency Model (Proposed Changes)
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Being free on Saturdays makes it easier for people to come to the Old Market. It levels the playing field with projects and events outside of downtown.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• It will hopefully free up street parking so people don't have to hunt for a spot.• Keeping employees from taking all the metered spots.• Being able to use a credit card is a plus because people don't have to hunt for change.
Costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attendance has dropped off at the Farmers Market in the Old Market because the story is that you can't find parking.• Employees are currently taking up many of the free metered spots.• Another cost is the time it takes to find a parking space.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Now people are going to have to worry about paying for parking on Friday evenings and Saturdays.• Some people won't want to park in the garages because they have gotten used to parking on the street and they don't like using garages in general.• The 2 hour time limit will send the message to them that in downtown you don't have time to see a show or shop or eat a meal.

5. How much of the difficulty people might have is due to coping with change vs. a genuine weighing of the pros and cons of the status quo vs. the proposed changes?

Change is going to be hard but good communication can get you through it well.

6. Is there anything else that is important to know? Anyone else that would be important to talk to?

Some of the garages are terrible so I'm not convinced that people will see them as good alternatives to parking on the street. The big challenges are going to be the Old Market and then for shows at the Holland. For the Orpheum, they've worked out a deal with OPPD for parking, but the Holland is more of a challenge. I believe there is a FNB garage that is close, but it isn't open to folks coming to the Holland. Joan Squires with Omaha Performing Arts is key to the roll-out of the parking changes.

Proximity is very important for older people and for anyone carrying something. I find that people are willing to walk different distances from parking for the Farmers Market (1-2 blocks), Summer Arts (3-4 blocks) or a concert or show (4-5 blocks).

Name: Shelly Stokes

Date: 8-8-14

Organization/Affiliation: Corporate President of Spaghetti Works and President of the Old Market Business Association

1. Benefits of the Status Quo (Parking Convenience Model -- Free, Abundant, & Close)?
2. Costs of the Status Quo (Parking Convenience Model)?
3. Benefits of the Proposed Changes (Parking Efficiency Model – Don't Have to Circle, Building Just What You Need)?
4. Costs of Proposed Changes (Parking Efficiency Model)

	Parking Convenience Model (Status Quo)	Parking Efficiency Model (Proposed Changes)
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Really don't see the benefit. People like free parking but the trade-offs aren't worth it for the Old Market.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pricing will be a big help to the circling for parking.• Renaming the lots and having better wayfinding will help reduce the stress people feel about parking.• Walking is part of the experience of the Old Market-- will also further build up the number of people who walk from the Century Link or CWS to the Old Market.
Costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Added stress of traffic and trying to find a parking space. Also carrying change/ cash is a headache.• People saying they aren't going to go to the Old Market because there is not enough parking. "Avoiding a nice night out over parking."• The present system encourages people to try to get that spot right in front ("Rockstar Parking").	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The biggest headache is likely going to be from people who see the parking changes as just another money grab or tax from the City.

5. How much of the difficulty people might have is due to coping with change vs. a genuine weighing of the pros and cons of the status quo vs. the proposed changes?

At first the price changes are going to cause a huge uproar. We still have a lot of the business owners that don't know because they haven't come to the meetings where Ken has talked about it all. It will be really easy to the media to just lead with the "Parking prices are going up" story and if we don't make sure to reach some of the "dirty laundry airers" that we have in the Old Market, that is the story they'll tell too.

6. Is there anything else that is important to know? Anyone else that would be important to talk to?

Often residents are parking in the metered spaces on Friday evening and then staying there all weekend. Residents will also talk about the hassle of carrying groceries 2-3 blocks.

It is huge for people to know what to expect when they come to the Old Market as far as finding parking and knowing what the price will be. Otherwise it really is a source of stress for people that keeps them from coming.

Name: **Derek Miller**

Date: 8-12-14

Organization/Affiliation: **City of Omaha Transportation Planner**

1. Benefits of the Status Quo (Parking Convenience Model -- Free, Abundant, & Close)?
2. Costs of the Status Quo (Parking Convenience Model)?
3. Benefits of the Proposed Changes (Parking Efficiency Model – Don't Have to Circle, Building Just What You Need)?
4. Costs of Proposed Changes (Parking Efficiency Model)

	Parking Convenience Model (Status Quo)	Parking Efficiency Model (Proposed Changes)
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• People like having their own reserved space for work.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• You can minimize parking with a “Park Once” model.• Easier to create places without huge amounts of land going to parking.• Important to recognize good congestion (a place is busy and vibrant) vs. bad congestion (circling for parking).
Costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Biggest cost is the lost development potential when too much space goes to parking or when people won't locate downtown because of parking concerns.• Parking isn't the highest and best use which includes the revenue that is lost on parking property vs. land that is more developed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• There will be challenges with short-term public perception – especially if people see it as a money-making scheme by the City.• Some people fear parking in a garage – may be more of an issue for women if there is no activity in the garage to make it feel safe.

5. How much of the difficulty people might have is due to coping with change vs. a genuine weighing of the pros and cons of the status quo vs. the proposed changes?

People will like having 1-2 spaces open per block once they get used to it. At first, people are likely to feel stressed about finding a spot but the new technology and better marketing will be able to help.

6. Is there anything else that is important to know? Anyone else that would be important to talk to?

We've been doing work through both the Alternatives Analysis as well as looking at sites of a potential new downtown corporate headquarters and what we've learned is that we will be able to accommodate substantially more new development in downtown if we build transit and new parking rather than if we just build new parking.

Name: Mindy Tene

Date: 8-12-14

Organization/Affiliation: Facilities Management with First National Bank

1. Benefits of the Status Quo (Parking Convenience Model -- Free, Abundant, & Close)?
2. Costs of the Status Quo (Parking Convenience Model)?
3. Benefits of the Proposed Changes (Parking Efficiency Model – Don't Have to Circle, Building Just What You Need)?
4. Costs of Proposed Changes (Parking Efficiency Model)

	Parking Convenience Model (Status Quo)	Parking Efficiency Model (Proposed Changes)
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Able to provide a variety of parking locations with various price points.• FNB typically has a 1:1.5 ratio for parking spaces to employees, which is better than a 1:1 ratio.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Want to see improvements to the downtown streetscape and more places worth walking to.• More things that create street life like food, music, vendors, culture, families walking around, etc.• Pasadena is an example of a city that has done a great job creating vibrant streets.
Costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Initially, people often frustrated by having to park farther away while they are on the waiting list for a closer spot.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The City doesn't really promote walking. Walking to decompress or engage with a vibrant downtown isn't really valued and talked about. Even keeping the parking garages and the streets near them clean is something the FNB often does to be a good corporate citizen because it is something the City can't or won't pay enough attention to.

5. How much of the difficulty people might have is due to coping with change vs. a genuine weighing of the pros and cons of the status quo vs. the proposed changes?

Many people end up turning down the closer parking once their name rises to the top of the waiting list because they get used to the walk as decompression time and don't want to pay the higher price.

6. Is there anything else that is important to know? Anyone else that would be important to talk to?

Right now, we provide free parking on our lots in North Downtown and then have people shuttle in through a partnership with Metro Transit.

Name: Steve Jensen

Date: 8-14-14

Organization/Affiliation: Principal at Jensen Consulting

1. Benefits of the Status Quo (Parking Convenience Model -- Free, Abundant, & Close)?
2. Costs of the Status Quo (Parking Convenience Model)?
3. Benefits of the Proposed Changes (Parking Efficiency Model – Don't Have to Circle, Building Just What You Need)?
4. Costs of Proposed Changes (Parking Efficiency Model)

	Parking Convenience Model (Status Quo)	Parking Efficiency Model (Proposed Changes)
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Very few benefits to the status quo from my perspective.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The biggest advantage to using parking more efficiently is how it can allow us more flexibility for creating economic development in downtown.• Talking about parking efficiency also brings up transit which can be a huge tool for reducing the need for parking.• If we give people the option to cash-out by unbundling parking, then people can save money.
Costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The biggest cost is the need to provide parking – especially a dedicated space for parking – hinders the development potential of downtown.• Dedicated spaces for parking ends up leading to lots of unused parking.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hard to share spots across a long distance which is how a circulator like the streetcar can help.

5. How much of the difficulty people might have is due to coping with change vs. a genuine weighing of the pros and cons of the status quo vs. the proposed changes?

There will be a short-term uproar but then people will figure it out. They will figure out that with the parking changes, the garages are cheaper and they can now find an on-street spot.

6. Is there anything else that is important to know? Anyone else that would be important to talk to?

In the Alternatives Analysis, we found that to create more economic development for downtown we would have to spend a huge amount on increasing parking. On the other hand, if we build the BRT and Streetcar, then we can create much more economic development without needing to build so much parking. Also, we have done a Downtown Corporate Headquarters Study which found that parking is the biggest challenge for locating a new headquarters like UP or FNB downtown.

Name: Mike Moylan

Date: 8-22-14

Organization/Affiliation: President of Shamrock Development

1. Benefits of the Status Quo (Parking Convenience Model -- Free, Abundant, & Close)?
2. Costs of the Status Quo (Parking Convenience Model)?
3. Benefits of the Proposed Changes (Parking Efficiency Model – Don't Have to Circle, Building Just What You Need)?
4. Costs of Proposed Changes (Parking Efficiency Model)

	Parking Convenience Model (Status Quo)	Parking Efficiency Model (Proposed Changes)
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The City providing parking acts as an incentive for economic development if not an outright subsidy. In many cases, developers and restaurants didn't have to build the parking themselves, but their customers get to take advantage of it.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• If we can figure out the parking, then we'll be able to really develop the urban fabric of downtown Omaha.
Costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The City needs to be efficient with its operations and marketing so it isn't losing money.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The risk is people feeling that the City is just using parking as a cash cow.

5. How much of the difficulty people might have is due to coping with change vs. a genuine weighing of the pros and cons of the status quo vs. the proposed changes?

The City has put in place a good Parking Committee. Ken is doing a good job listening to them. They will also be able to help Ken take some of the political heat when changes happen because these will be things that the Committee has signed off on.

6. Is there anything else that is important to know? Anyone else that would be important to talk to?

It is critical that the City not try to take advantage of the parking they have and use it as a profit center. Parking (through the Enterprise Fund) needs to pay for itself and be financially stable, but it shouldn't be overcharging people. If it does that, then parking provided by the City will stop acting as an economic development incentive. Right now it is a public good, like parks are, and parking needs to stay that way in Omaha.

Appendix C
Additional Research Information

Downtown Omaha Parking HIA Methodology and Monitoring

The majority of work for the Downtown Omaha Parking HIA was conducted by members of a local HIA Team. Members of the HIA Team include:

- Andy Wessel, Community Health Planner (Douglas County Health Department)
- Carlos Morales, Bicycle Pedestrian Coordinator (City of Omaha Planning Department)
- Bill Lukash, Environmental Compliance Planner (City of Omaha Planning Department)
- Heather Tippey Pierce, General Services Manager (City of Omaha Public Works Department)
- Dennis Bryers, Park Planner (City of Omaha Parks, Recreation and Public Properties Department)
- Joel Cota, Community Liaison (City of Omaha Mayor's Office)
- Michael Helgerson, Transportation Planner (Metropolitan Area Planning Agency)
- Kelly Bouxsein, Healthier Communities Administrator (CHI Health)
- Teresa Gleason, Program Manager (Omaha by Design)

The work of the HIA Team is overseen by a 20 member steering committee of senior Omaha leaders called the Health Community Design Partnership. They include amongst others:

- The Douglas County Health Director
- The City Planning Director
- The City Traffic Engineer
- The Omaha Housing Authority's Executive Director
- The Senior Director of Community Development for the Chamber of Commerce

Screening

In late 2013, members of the HIA Team assembled 23 potential candidate projects, policies or plans for conducting an HIA. These 23 candidates were narrowed to a shortlist of 7 candidates following discussions by the HIA Team of these 23 candidates based on the following criteria:

- 1) clearly identified decision;
- 2) sufficient time;
- 3) impact to health or social determinant of health;
- 4) impact to health equity;
- 5) unclear connection to health;
- 6) decision-makers' openness to input; and
- 7) potential side benefits such as new partnership.

Additional information on the 7 HIA candidates was collected and assembled into profiles of each candidate. A meeting of the Healthy Community Design Partnership steering committee was held on January 24, 2014 where members reviewed the candidate profiles and then evaluated them using a selection matrix of criteria like that used by the HIA Team.

The parking management policy changes for downtown Omaha were selected at that time because parking is not typically associated with health outcomes yet it plays a key role in shaping the built environment. After further discussions with Ken Smith, the Parking Manager for the City of Omaha, the decision was made to focus the HIA on two critical – and controversial – aspects of a larger effort to reform parking management. The two decisions were: 1) adjusting parking rates for both parking meters and garages, and 2) switching to a shared parking emphasis for parking garages instead of providing large amounts of reserved parking (see HIA Brief report).

Scoping

The primary population to be affected by the parking policy changes are the people who live and work in downtown Omaha. While downtown Omaha has a relatively small but growing base of residents, approximately 25,000 jobs are located there. Additionally, downtown Omaha is the location for the convention center as well as several major attractions including the Old Market and the NCAA College World Series. A conservative estimate of the number of people significantly impacted would be 40,000.

Following several meetings with the Parking Manager for the City of Omaha, review of previous parking studies by Walker Parking Consultants and Verdis Group, and subsequent discussions by the HIA Team, the research priorities for the HIA were established as parking efficiency, walkability, and demand for parking. More detail about research questions, analytic methods, and data sources can be found in the separate Scope document (see attached).

Assessment

The 2011 Parking Study by Walker Parking Consultants and their 2014 update were used to provide numbers on current parking use and efficiency. Current conditions for parking were also assessed by mapping surface lots and parking garages onto a 2010 aerial of downtown Omaha. A 2010 aerial was used to correspond more closely to the original parking research conducted in 2011. Visual inspection of an aerial map combined with a review of historic Sanborn maps were used to map surface parking and garages in 1941 to provide a comparison to a pre-World War II pattern of development for downtown Omaha. Starting in the mid-1800s, Sanborn maps documented the use of land and where buildings were located in order to estimate fire insurance liability in U.S. cities. Now they are frequently used for historical research into the growth of cities.

Over ninety research articles and reports were reviewed to help understand how the City of Omaha's proposed changes to parking in downtown Omaha would affect health determinants and outcomes. Health data from a 2011 Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) is the best source of local health data for Omaha; however, the CHNA data is challenging to apply to downtown Omaha because the population affected is largely the downtown workforce. The CHNA collects information based on where people live and not where they work. Additionally, the research findings were supplemented with key informant interviews conducted with a range of stakeholders (see HIA Brief report for more information).

Recommendations and Reporting

See Downtown Omaha Parking HIA Brief report

Monitoring

Due to its importance, monitoring of parking efficiency and parking demand and relevant progress on HIA recommendations will be closely followed by the City of Omaha and the Metropolitan Area Planning Agency, two active partners on this HIA. Regular reporting on these issues will be made to the Omaha Parking Advisory Committee. The Douglas County Health Department will be more involved with monitoring the walkability components of HIA recommendations. This work will take place under a Nebraska Walkable Communities initiative funded through the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services.

Downtown Parking HIA Scoping Worksheet

Overriding Question: What are the impacts — including health effects — of downtown parking decision-makers (City of Omaha, private parking operators, developers, property managers, & major employers) adopting a parking efficiency approach over a parking convenience model?				
Key Health Determinants	Baseline Research Questions	Impact Research Questions	Research Tasks	Data Sources
On-Street Parking Efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are the traffic and environmental effects of circling for parking? What are the health effects of circling for parking? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are the likely effects to traffic and the environment if on-street parking occupancy was at 85% instead of being exceeded at 120%? What are the health effects if on-street parking occupancy was at 85% instead of 120%? What other changes to on-street parking would improve the health of downtown Omaha and people who live, work, and visit there? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Document Impacts of On-Street Current Conditions and Planned Changes Conduct risk-reward interviews with representatives of the Old Market Business Association, the Omaha Farmers Market, and the Downtown Improvement District. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lit Review Interviews
Off-Street Parking Efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are the traffic and environmental effects of building more parking than is needed? What are the health effects of over-building off-street parking? What are the effects of surface vs. structured parking? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are the likely effects to traffic and the environment if off-street parking occupancy is at 85% instead of 55%? What are the health effects if off-street parking occupancy is at 85% instead of 55%? What other changes to off-street parking would improve the health of downtown Omaha and people who live, work, and visit there? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Document Impacts of Off-Street Current Conditions and Planned Changes Conduct risk-reward interviews of with representatives for Developers, Property Managers, Private Operators, and Facility Managers for Major Employers Collect Case Studies of New Parking Construction vs. Shared Parking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lit Review Interviews Interviews with Follow-up Research
Walkability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What factors currently support walking between downtown parking facilities and destinations? What factors currently undermine walking between downtown parking facilities and destinations? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How would achieving 85% occupancy for on-street parking affect walkability? Off-street? What other changes would improve walkability between parking facilities and destinations in downtown Omaha? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct Walk Audit of Parking Facilities to Primary Destinations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Walk Audit Results GIS
Transportation Demand Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are the current benefits and costs of providing parking vs. supporting non-SOV options? What are the current benefits and costs of pooling parking resources? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How would achieving 85% occupancy for parking affect transportation choices? What other changes would increase non-SOV travel into downtown Omaha? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct risk-reward interviews with Representative of City Planning and Facilities Managers for Major Employers Collect Case Studies of Building Parking vs. TDM 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interviews Interviews with Follow-up Research

Appendix D

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