

Ann Arbor Downtown Development Authority

Public Parking & Transportation Demand
Management Strategies Plan

DRAFT

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Public Parking & Transportation Demand Management Strategies Plan Table of Contents:

Executive Summary	page 4
Introduction	page 5
Benchmark and Public Input	page 6
Travel Demand Management (TDM) – An Overview	page 9
2007 Nelson/Nygaard Reports	page 11
Public Parking and Transportation Plan Goal, Objectives, and Strategies	page 12
Ann Arbor Downtown Development Authority Parking Principles	page 12
Strategy 1: Manage downtown curbside parking	page 14
Strategy 2: Support the downtown evening economy	page 17
Strategy 3: Develop new off-street parking strategies	page 20
Strategy 4: Explore policies and plans to add and subtract public parking	page 22
Strategy 5: Expand upon options for personal transportation vehicles	page 23
Strategy 6: Increase use of public transit by downtown workers	page 25
Strategy 7: Improve parking and transportation communications	page 26
Strategy 8: Develop strategies for downtown & near downtown residents	page 27
Strategy 9: Explore other miscellaneous parking and transportation suggestions	page 28
Appendices	page 31

DRAFT

Executive Summary

On December 21, 2009, the question of extending parking meter enforcement past 6pm came before Ann Arbor City Council as a revenue-generating idea, as City Council and City staff have worked hard over the past several years to find new sources of revenues that enable the City to maintain current service levels for its citizens. The discussion about “evening enforcement” was enlarged to a broader conversation about public parking, and the Ann Arbor Downtown Development Authority (DDA) was asked to pursue the development of a parking plan that included the following elements:

- A communication plan to Downtown patrons, merchants and evening employees
- Options for low cost parking for evening employees
- Variation of rates and meter time limits based on meter location
- Hours of enforcement
- Methods of enforcement

See Appendix XX for the complete City Council resolution.

For four months the DDA committed its staff and board resources to developing this plan. In-depth and extensive discussions were held at nearly every DDA committee meeting and board meeting, and the small staff of the DDA dedicated nearly half of their work hours during this time to listening, researching, and writing.

What follows is a document that encompasses recommendations for the existing public parking and transportation system, as well as recommendations to support the downtown evening economy, which is how the “evening enforcement” question came to be restated. The plan begins with background information and an overview of Demand Management, and then assembles recommendations for nine broad areas of focus: 1) managing downtown curbside public parking to create turnover, 2) developing a comprehensive TDM strategy to support the downtown evening economy including parking and transportation solutions, 3) developing new strategies to make it even more attractive for patrons to park off-street, 4) developing policies and plans to add and subtract downtown public parking, 5) developing additional parking options for personal transportation vehicles, 6) increasing downtown employee use of public transit, 7) improving parking communications, 8) developing a more comprehensive parking and transportation strategy for downtown & near downtown residents, and 9) other miscellaneous parking and transportation recommendations.

Introduction

In late December 2009, Ann Arbor City Council made the decision to pursue the creation of this parking plan. They began with a discussion around the question of whether to extend on-street parking meter operations as a way to provide a new source of revenue to address current budget shortfalls. Enforcing the parking meters past 6:00 p.m. would certainly generate much-needed funds for the City, but City Council recognized additional benefits, as well. Most importantly, if managed correctly, extending on-street meter operations could improve the downtown experience for many by making highly sought-after on-street parking spaces more available to customers in the evening. But extending operation of the meters past 6:00 p.m. would be a significant change in how parking has been managed downtown. City Council asked the Ann Arbor DDA to assemble a management plan that would optimize positive benefits and minimize negative impacts to customers and employees, including a communication plan and low cost parking options for evening employees. The DDA Board embraced this assignment, as they saw it as an opportunity to support the growth of downtown commerce and residential life. The DDA's parking principles and practical expertise managing public parking work within a demand management framework, and they have found success working in partnerships with the getDowntown Program, Ann Arbor Transportation Authority, and the downtown business, culture and residential community.

Public parking is an indispensable asset that, when used well, promotes core area vitality, economic development and increasing residential numbers. The DDA has operated public parking since 1992 and since that time has pursued these goals while building a public parking system that is financially healthy and structurally sound, and meets the needs of several million customers a year.

There are other important measurements of success to note that point to the efficacy of the DDA's demand management practices and principles. Over the past two decades more than 2.4 million square feet of private commercial and residential development has taken place in the Ann Arbor DDA District (this doesn't include University of Michigan developments). Nearly all of the tenants, customers, visitors and residents brought to downtown as a result of this new development rely on the public parking system, yet the increased demand is managed within a system that hasn't substantively increased in size in 27 years. Further, even as the parking system saw new demand, the use of the Ann Arbor Transportation Authority transit system and other sustainable transportation options has also grown. There is a high degree of "park once" behavior in the downtown, and the percentage of commuters driving alone is far lower in the central business district and downtown area than elsewhere in the city and county.

The plan that follows is a continuation of current programs and policies, most of which are working well. However, there are new challenges that must be addressed. This document builds on what is working and what we should do to meet these new needs.

Issues to be Addressed

The first issue that came forward was the City of Ann Arbor's need for additional funds to balance its municipal budget. In 1992, Proposal A and Headlee Amendment eliminated the City's ability to

increase taxes to keep pace with the increasing cost of providing valued city services. State-shared revenues have been dramatically reduced over the past decade, and now more than 40% of City property is off the tax rolls given the increasing size and number of City parks, UM properties, and properties owned by various other nonprofits, churches, and government agencies. Despite having reduced the size of its work force by 30%, the City must identify new revenues to keep General Fund services intact for its citizens.

But equally important is a long-overdue need to develop a multi-faceted transportation and parking plan to support the downtown evening economy. Years ago, most downtown Ann Arbor businesses shut their doors at 5:30pm. Since the early 1980's, we've seen a transformation in downtown as many retail shops stay open into the evening, we have more than 100 restaurants of nearly every cuisine or type, and downtown found new purpose as the social gathering place for the community after work or classes. These changes crept up on us gradually, and there have not been any substantive changes in transportation and parking strategies to support this heightened downtown activity level that takes place after 6pm.

Benchmark & Public Input

The document that follows was assembled over the past four months with input from a variety of sources. DDA staff assembled information about the current public parking and transportation system operations. They also researched parking information from other comparable communities, including hours of operation, variable parking rate strategies and communication tools. This information reinforced recommendations contained in the 2007 Nelson/Nygaard reports, as well as best practice programs and approaches in use around the country that may be adapted for use in downtown Ann Arbor.

During the time this plan was assembled nighttime on-street meter turnover was studied in the Main Street and State Street Areas by several interns. Their observations showed an average evening occupancy rate at the on-street parking meters of 95.5% for both areas; Donald Shoup and other parking industry experts argue that systems should be managed so there is an occupancy rate of 85%. Further, the Main Street area showed a particularly high prevalence of long term parking that correlates with employee hours.

Other bench mark data to note includes:

- 2,208,497 people used public parking lots and structures in 2009 (not including monthly pass holders) when coming downtown to receive government services, attend classes, enjoy concerts or a presentation at the Library, attend a meeting or join up with friends for dinner.
- 6,216 downtown Ann Arbor employees have a go!pass, with ridership steadily increasing (39,580 rides in February 2010 alone)
- Go!pass use on Night Ride grew over 600% in the 6 month period from its inception (now serving approximately 500 riders a month)
- AATA reports growing reliability indicators, in the last quarter of 2009, 94.7% of trips finished on time

- A May 2009 getDowntown survey of primarily daytime employees, showed that out of 343 responses, 53% said that they lived in Ann Arbor and 8% said they lived in Ypsilanti, with smaller numbers living in various other communities. A March 2010 DDA survey of evening employees and volunteers revealed that the proportion that live in Ypsilanti was much higher: Out of 183 respondents, 65% reside in Ann Arbor, 20% in Ypsilanti, and fewer percentages from surrounding communities.
- In downtown there are at least 150 downtown businesses that are open after 7pm, all of whom have either employees and/or volunteers.
- An assessment of City of Ann Arbor crime data revealed a low level of crime in the DDA area. Of the 3,611 “major” crimes reported in 2009, 3.2% occurred within the DDA boundaries, the majority of which were property crimes (car theft, burglary, etc). Only three “major” crimes occurred in public parking facilities - all of which were motor vehicle theft.

Through examination of other communities, we learned the following:

- The average metered parking rate for Michigan and Midwestern downtowns we examined is approximately \$1.30/hour (cities with differential pricing charge as much as \$2.00 in the downtown core).
- A number of other communities charge much higher parking rates for the most convenient on-street metered spaces, with lower rates on the periphery.
- The majority of parking management in vibrant downtowns occurs with some TDM strategies and the overall goal of improving downtown vitality.
- Many cities operate on-street parking meters in the evening including: Birmingham, MI, Dearborn, MI, Ferndale, MI, Royal Oak, MI, Madison, WI, and Minneapolis, MN.
- Parking enforcement and parking operations are often managed jointly by one agency

Public outreach and input:

Seeking to get input from the greatest number of community voices in the short time frame available, the DDA worked with a local consultant to create and distribute an electronic Parking Management Values survey, as well as to assist with six small group public meetings. As part of this project, DDA staff also created and distributed three small- scale surveys to gain feedback on specific areas of inquiry, and the getDowntown Program Director met with and received input from a sample of 20 downtown businesses.

The initial large-scale Parking Management Values Survey measured the community’s alignment with the DDA’s demand management principles and practices. The DDA put great effort into ensuring broad distribution by sending it to an email list of over 1,600, posting the survey to the City’s webpage and Ann Arbor.com, distributing press releases to community and student news sources, and posting the survey link to Facebook and Twitter. With more than 1,200 respondents, the survey provides a representative snapshot of patron values and priorities (See Appendix XXX for a copy of the survey and results summary).

Respondents aligned highly with DDA parking principles and goals; however, this high level of alignment began to fall away where principles translate into practice. For example, the survey showed strong support for making parking convenient for customers; but there was disagreement

regarding specific tactics such as reserving the most convenient structure spaces or using time limits at the meters to encourage parking turnover. The results affirmed the challenge that the DDA faces: the public parking system serves diverse interests; each strongly supporting concepts which they believe directly benefit them, and resisting tactics that may negatively affect them.

In addition to surveys, the DDA oversaw six group meetings with community members, downtown customers, business owners, cultural group representatives, and residents. Dozens of people participated in these meetings and the DDA gained a great deal of useful feedback and insight, particularly about the nature and needs of the evening economy, and about how to improve the existing parking and transportation system. Meeting attendees reported they benefited as well; 94% of attendees felt they were provided useful information and 100% felt they were able to share their thoughts, questions, and concerns (See Appendix XXX for the full report).

The DDA sought public feedback on three additional topics to examine with more depth some of the issues and concerns raised in the Values Survey and focus group meetings: epark satisfaction, evening employees, and evening commerce.

Epark survey:

While the new multi-space parking machines - epark – has met with generally positive reviews the Parking Values Survey revealed concerns by members of the community. DDA staff used this parking plan process as an opportunity to work with the equipment manufacturer to improve the speed of operation at the machines. Interns were used to survey random epark patrons after this upgrade and found very positive responses. (See Appendix XXX for a full report):

- 63.3% found the speed of the transaction excellent or satisfactory
- 85% found the size and visibility of the display screen excellent or satisfactory
- 88.8% found the option to pay by credit card very useful or useful
- 80.3% found the option to add time at any Epark machine very useful or useful
- Overall, nearly 80% of respondents found the Epark machines very easy or easy to use

Evening employee survey:

Evening employees play an important role in the health of the downtown evening economy. To help inform the DDA about their travel habits and needs, a survey was distributed to downtown area associations and businesses, and focus group meetings were held by the getDowntown Program Director. Findings include the following: (See Appendix XXX for a full report):

- Evening employees are price conscious – many earn lower wages, thus many search for free parking and have concerns about alternatives if free parking were to disappear
- Evening bus and transit service does not meet the needs of evening workers. Service ends before most employees finish their work shifts.
- Evening employees need more communication about parking and transportation options. Brochures, emails, and managers are good ways to communicate options to them.
- Evening employees are concerned about safety. While downtown Ann Arbor has a low crime rate, many employees, especially women, expressed safety concerns regarding walking to parking structures and other locations late at night

Evening Commerce:

To expand on the information received from customers through the Parking Values Survey and focus group meetings, the DDA conducted an evening commerce survey. The survey was designed to understand the habits of those coming to downtown in the evening for entertainments, including who they are, how they travel, and what they seek out of a downtown experience (See Appendix XXX for a full report). Findings include:

- Responses show that downtown patrons visit the various downtown areas, on average, several times a year or more.
- The majority of respondents stay for several hours, arriving between 5 pm and 9 pm (with 5 pm to 7 pm having a slightly higher rate of responses) and leaving between 9 pm and 11 pm.
- The majority of respondents reported that they sometimes, almost always, or always participate in more than one activity during a visit. Very few do only one thing and then leave.
- Respondents seek a downtown experience. They expressed a range of desired activities and atmosphere – but generally indicated that their decision to come downtown is based on whether or not their desired experience can be found.
- A number of respondents expressed that frustration or satisfaction with transportation options can make coming downtown more or less likely. Patrons expressed particular dissatisfaction with finding easy, convenient parking and having to circle around blocks to find on-street spaces; a lesser number voiced their desire to have free or cheap parking.
- Respondents clearly desire increased evening transportation options – particularly transit. The majority of respondents expressed willingness to use and pay for local transit and circulator service.
- Overall, respondents rated coming to downtown Ann Arbor for evening entertainment as a positive experience – particularly the types of entertainment activities offered, the appearance of downtown, and an overall feeling of safety.

Parking & Transportation Demand Management (TDM) – an Overview

The idea behind Transportation/Parking Demand Management – or Travel Demand Management – (TDM) is to create an interconnected transportation and parking system that offers as many attractive choices as possible. People regularly make decisions for themselves about the transportation selection that best meets their needs, with consideration for such things as convenience, reliability, time, weather conditions, hassle, price, safety, and environmental goals. We are not all the same and our needs are as diverse as we are. Further, our needs constantly change depending on circumstance, weather conditions, and trip purpose.

The best example of a demand-managed system is at the airport. The curbside spaces right outside the arrival or departure area are under very high demand, and they are policed constantly to keep spaces turning over to accommodate the next passenger. The airport also provides high cost Short Term parking in the parking structure immediately adjacent to the gates, as well as Long Term parking in the structure that is not quite as convenient, but at a lower price. As part of this demand-managed system there are also remote lots that cost much less but require a shuttle bus, as well as shared van rides to the airport on vehicles such as Select Ride. Travelers choose the

option that best meets their need, depending on such considerations as how long their trip will last and how price sensitive they are.

A key element of a demand-managed system is communications so that individuals are aware of transportation or parking choices. At the airport, large wayfinding signs, websites and advertisements from airport shuttle operators help to convey information about relative cost and convenience of the various options.

Successful downtowns have long relied on an understanding that parking demand can be “managed” by making some transportation and parking choices faster, more convenient, easier, or cheaper. But encouraging transportation choices is not the same thing as mandating transportation behavior. Our unique, vibrant downtown is surrounded by suburban office, retail, and dining options offering their own unique virtues – which generally includes plentiful free parking. While competing with such locations on pure parking terms is unwise – playing to downtown’s strengths, including promoting a balanced multi-modal transportation culture, maintaining viable on-and off-street parking options remains an important component of downtown’s economic success.

While some view public parking as being in conflict with sustainable transportation, the reality remains that parking is an interconnected part of the larger transportation system, and every day people are making complex choices for themselves based on the options available to them at the time they need them. This interconnected system is further complicated by the completely independent parking and transit system operated within downtown by the University of Michigan, whose policies regarding such things as parking rates have an impact. In addition, the City’s small size and tax millage limits how much service can be provided by the Ann Arbor Transportation Authority.

There is no city anywhere in the country that utilizes a pure demand-managed public transportation and parking system; there is no ideal model for the Ann Arbor DDA to copy. However, it is worth noting that the Ann Arbor public parking and transportation system has been using elements of TDM for many years. As an example, since the early 2000’s the DDA has charged less to park in off-street parking spaces than it charges at on-street meters as a way of managing the high demand for on-street metered spaces. Another example is the use of DDA parking revenues as the source of funds to subsidize go!passes to downtown workers, which makes both the bus ride and the parking at a periphery park and ride lot free, thus helping to spread demand throughout the parking system. As stated before, communication is central to a demand-managed system. A key communication effort in downtown Ann Arbor is managed by the getDowntown program. GetDowntown works to reduce the number of downtown commuters driving to work alone by promoting various transportation choices, providing research on the benefits of sustainable transportation, organizing events, interacting with downtown employers and employees, and interfacing with numerous downtown stakeholders.

On-street pricing that reflects and responds to demonstrated parking demand has emerged in recent years as the most promising tool for addressing chronic on-street parking constraints. This

approach is based on the original intent of parking meters — to charge just enough for on-street spaces to promote functional rates of turnover and availability on high-demand streets. The problem has been that often prices have consistently, and often significantly, lagged the dramatic increase in downtown parking demand. Current best practice parking principles hold that to be truly effective, prices must be re-linked to demand, including charging wherever and whenever availability is below desirable levels. Not only does this approach have the most basic principles of market economics behind it (when offering a fixed-supply of any good, price is really the only effective means of managing demand) it also offers the unique benefit of being a revenue-positive option for downtown.

2007 Nelson/Nygaard Reports

In 2007, the DDA commissioned Nelson/Nygaard, professional transportation consultants, to develop the first-ever comprehensive study of the downtown parking system. A significant portion of this study included an assessment of the supply of public, UM, and private parking spaces, and the user demand on the public parking system. Upon completion of this report, the City of Ann Arbor commissioned Nelson/Nygaard to develop a series of parking and transportation recommendations to encourage even greater use of sustainable transportation choices. (link to these studies: http://www.a2dda.org/resources/data_reports/). Nelson/Nygaard provided many dozens of recommendations that built on the demand-management framework and strategies already in place and captured ideas from around the country, including use of new technology, providing new express bus service, and providing downtown employers and employees with more information and choice. Three years after receipt of these reports, nearly every recommendation has been pursued, implemented or tested and set aside (See Appendix XXX).

Continuing On Our Path – 2010 Public Parking and Transportation Plan

The DDA takes a careful, measured implementation approach to parking and transportation system changes. This allows time to assess the impacts of new programs and pilot projects and to determine how programs can be improved before they become system-wide changes. Of vital importance is that the city ensures that policy changes preserve the financial underpinnings of the public parking system, as the funds needed for debt service, repairs and on-going operations must be protected. An equally important imperative is that parking management, including its pricing, programs, enforcement or equipment changes, must be done in such a way as to keep downtown attractive to prospective office tenants, customers, residents, and small independent businesses. Our downtown economic and social vitality is a community asset to protect and nurture.

Managed appropriately, public parking can be a powerful economic development tool. As part of a larger transportation system, it can improve accessibility, business vitality, and the downtown experience without dominating streetscapes, and without encouraging oceans of parking lots and auto dependence. We have an opportunity to continue improving the daytime parking and transportation system to meet the ever changing needs of the core area, as well as to shape a new, comprehensive, strategic, and useful evening strategy for downtown.

PUBLIC PARKING & TRANSPORTATION DEMAND MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES PLAN OVERVIEW

PLAN GOAL:

To expand upon an integrated set of transportation and parking approaches that support a strong, attractive, vital, and diverse downtown and core area.

PLAN OBJECTIVES:

1. Encourage even greater use of sustainable transportation to and through downtown including walking, bicycling, car sharing and transit use, as well as new technology personal vehicles.
2. Gain even greater efficiency from the public parking system by spreading demand through a more varied price structure based on geography, time of day, and other elements.

PLAN APPROACH:

1. Create additional attractive commuter options to increase awareness and use of sustainable transportation choices.
2. Provide parking patrons with more information about their parking and transportation choices.
3. Use both discounted and premium pricing as a tool to provide more parking choices and information so as to extend parking usage more broadly throughout the public parking system.

DDA PUBLIC PARKING PRINCIPLES:

1. Parking is part of a transportation system, and should be understood in that context.
 - It's the people we want downtown, not necessarily their cars.
 - A "menu" of ways to get downtown should be supported and constantly improved upon so people can make transportation and parking choices.
2. Plan parking carefully to support downtown vitality:
 - Public parking policies should be based on an overarching vision for downtown, urban planning principles, best practices and regular analysis.
 - Parking is the means to an end, not the end in itself.
 - Parking is not a silver bullet - no one ever came downtown to park; but the right balance of parking availability, location and price is essential to downtown's vitality and growth.
 - Cars make it possible for many people to use and enjoy the downtown, and the negative impact of automobiles is usually a symptom of bad design.
 - Sustainable transportation choices can be encouraged but should not be mandated because plentiful attractive commercial alternative exist outside downtown.
3. Encourage desired choices:
 - Parking rates, time limits, regulations, and enforcement are tools that can be used to encourage positive behaviors.
 - If provided with useful comprehensive information, people will make transportation choices that work best for them.
 - Parking is very different in an urban environment than in the suburbs, and it is important to understand the differences between these two settings.

4. Ensure that the public parking system continues to be financially self-sustaining:
 - The public parking system operations are now and should continue to be financially self-sustaining, with no need for tax subsidy. The users of the system should pay for the system, including operation, maintenance, repair, and eventual additions to the system.
 - All parking has value.
5. Invest in facility quality, aesthetics and longevity:
 - Build it right the first time.
 - Attractive facades, landscaping and public art incorporated into facilities benefits all users of downtown, not just those with cars.
 - Ensure that future parking facilities are appropriately located.

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Strategy 1: Downtown curbside public parking should be managed to create turnover at the most convenient, commercial locations so these spaces can be more easily used by a large pool of downtown users.

Because the supply of curbside parking is essentially fixed, curbside parking policy is fundamentally about managing the demand for an unchanging supply. Commercial downtown streets have the greatest competition, with customers, employees, delivery vehicles, clients, downtown residents, and buses vying for the curb space in front of prime locations. Best practice strategies encourage regular turnover, both by private vehicles and commercial vehicles. An array of tools are used to achieve this, including parking meters or central pay stations, time limits, user restrictions such as loading zone designations, and enforcement.

When managed well, parking enforcement helps to make it possible for many thousands of people to access a very limited, highly-valued resource. But where it is seen as overly aggressive or implemented solely to generate revenues, parking enforcement can be used as an easy excuse for people to avoid downtown. Having an effective parking system requires that parking rules and regulations be established and then enforced fairly, consistently, and with sensitivity to the fact that most customers' first and last impression of downtown begins and ends with their parking experience. The way in which enforcement influences parking spaces management will have a great deal to do with whether these patrons come away frustrated or eager to return downtown again soon. For this reason, parking operations and enforcement should be managed so that the number of parking tickets eventually decreases and the number of patrons complying with parking regulations increases.

Parking enforcement and parking operations are two halves of the same parking system. Optimally, enforcement and operations strategies are planned and managed together.

All public parking functions were managed by the City of Ann Arbor Parking Department up until 1992, at which time the DDA took over management of City parking structures and three largest parking lots. In 2002 the City Parking Department was eliminated and the DDA took over management of the remaining City parking lots and on-street parking meters, with parking enforcement assigned to the City Police Department to manage as a Community Standards operation. Community Standards staff also regulates sidewalk cafés, sidewalk signs, graffiti violations, trash violations, weed violations, and other city regulations (see Appendix XX for a full list of operations).

Parking elements that are enforced include on-street parking meter turnover, both inside and outside downtown, parking structure "shopping zone" areas, loading zone use, and residential permit areas outside downtown.

Recommendations/Tactics:

Curbside Parking Space Uses

- Continually review and adjust the uses of curbside parking as needed, including temporary uses such as in-street bicycle racks, as well as more long-term uses.
- Regularly evaluate the location of handicapped/accessible parking spaces to ensure spaces are distributed throughout the system and are located in areas of current need.
- Regularly evaluate the location and enforcement of very short-term entertainment venue passenger loading/unloading zones, as these spaces provide much-needed access for a wide variety of patrons.
- Develop a strategy for on-street loading zones to encourage turnover and discourage misuse. Strategy ideas include:
 - It is recommended that parking meters or pay stations be used to encourage turn over at commercial loading zones, as this technology is easily understood.
 - It is recommended that the DDA establish rates for loading zone meters and regularly adjust as needed.
 - Stored value cards should be made available to commercial users to reduce the need for coins.
 - Assess hours of enforcement in each location, type of loading zone (e.g. passenger drop off, loading/unloading, semi vs. smaller trucks) on a regular basis.
 - Review fine amounts as part of a review of other parking fines to encourage compliance with regulations, and adjust as necessary.
 - Ensure that information regarding loading zone use are communicated in advance to prepare commercial users for any change in system management.
- Locate downtown taxi stands strategically. For instance, locate taxi stands outside downtown entertainment bars and nightclubs to encourage patron use late at night.
- Regularly evaluate meter bag policies and rates to ensure that these meter bags support downtown construction activities, special events that draw large audiences downtown, and other important purposes, while discouraging long-term use of on-street parking meter spaces.
- Continue integrating other beneficial and temporary uses for on-street spaces, including on-street bike racks, outdoor restaurant seating, meter bag rental, etc.

Curbside Parking Space Pricing

- Develop a demand management on-street parking plan whereby there is a more marked difference between parking rates in high demand and low demand parking areas. Variable demand-driven geographic pricing is a technique in use in many American cities, including Madison and Royal Oak, and should be applied in Ann Arbor, as well.
- Coordinate the application of this on-street parking demand pricing plan with hourly prices in the off-street parking facilities.
- Commit to a regular review of parking rates, as the downtown parking system is dynamic and is constantly changing.
- Explore the following designations for on-street parking:
 - High demand curbside areas – priced at the high-end of the rate scale and with time limits to reflect demand and encourage turnover
 - Lower demand curbside areas – priced in the middle of the rate scale with time limits to reflect demand and encourage turnover

- Lowest demand curbside areas – priced considerably lower with a time limit to reflect level of demand
- Adjust off-street parking rates in coordination with changes to the on-street parking rates and time limits.

A sample illustration of variable price management can be viewed in Appendix XXX. This illustration of curbside parking rates and locations accomplishes the twin goals of extending parking demand throughout the system using bigger price differentials than exist today, and reducing concerns about possible parking tickets from staying over the time limit.

Curbside Parking Technology

- Continue to replace traditional parking meters with multi-space parking pay machines to increase patron payment options on street, including coins, credit/debit cards, and payment by cell phone.
- Promote and distribute a stored value card for epark multi-space parking pay machines to increase the payment options available.
- Develop a multi-year equipment upgrade plan for multi-space parking machines and enforcement equipment to ensure that the technology works together and that the parking system maintains best industry practices.
- Use “parking ambassadors” to answer questions when presenting new parking technology, as many people who are otherwise resistant are likely to embrace new technology when coached.

Curbside Parking Enforcement

Optimally, manage parking operations and enforcement so that the number of parking tickets eventually decreases and the number of patrons complying with parking regulations increases.

- Assess if parking fine amount and hourly on-street parking rates are in synch or work against each other, and adjust accordingly.
- Assess if parking fine amounts are appropriate. Parking violations that may cause life/safety concerns (e.g. parking in front of a fire hydrant or in a fire lane) should be increased to communicate the importance of these regulations. Other fine amounts should be adjusted as necessary following input from residents, business owners, City staff, and others. (see appendix XXXXXX).
- Investigate the possibility of escalating fine amounts for recurrent scofflaws.
- Assess towing policies and practices on a regular basis.
- To lessen patron frustration about receiving a ticket, improve information on parking tickets & envelopes including how to pay online or avoid a ticket in the future. Improve website information and provide a feedback mechanism unrelated to contesting parking tickets.
- Pursue ideas that would make it possible to pay for parking tickets and stored value meter cards in one location, providing increased convenience to customers.
- Explore making it possible to pay parking tickets at the epark machines as a way of reducing patron inconvenience and frustration.

- Explore making it possible to pay for parking tickets at banks, thus reducing the number of patrons who feel compelled to come to City Hall for this function. Determine if it is feasible for downtown banks to dispense stored value meter cards.
- Investigate ways to incentivize on-line ticket payment to encourage timely payment and increase customer convenience. Investigate ways to incentivize purchases of stored value cards online to increase customer convenience and encourage greater use.
- Investigate curb painting as a way to distinguish where parking shouldn't occur (e.g. fire hydrants), and to designate specific parking designations (e.g, handicapped parking or loading zones).
- Review whether it makes sense to continue processing tickets out of state or whether there are community or operational benefits to processing ticket payments locally.
- Develop regular enforcement benchmark reports to share information with the public about activities, costs of operation, and other information. Parking enforcement is easily demonized, and one counter to this may be to make the process more transparent and the benchmarks more positive, including the number of tickets being reduced over time.
- Explore the use of automatic cell phone messaging when parking space time limits are being reached as a way of reducing the number of over-the-limit parking tickets.

Strategy 2: A comprehensive TDM strategy should be developed and utilized to support the downtown evening economy, including a management strategy for on-street parking spaces, creation of additional evening employee parking/transportation options and communication strategies.

There have been theaters and bars in downtown since its start. But beginning in the early 1980's the economy of downtown began a significant shift later into the evening, as the number of restaurants doubled, retail shops and service businesses such as hair salons began staying open past 8pm, and coffee shops gained new roles as unofficial offices for 10-99 employees working with wireless connections on their laptops. However, as the downtown economy extended later into the evening, transportation and parking policies have stayed relatively unchanged.

When Nelson/Nygaard conducted their 2007 study of the downtown public parking system they noted that daytime demand management strategies were working to encourage long term parking off-street thereby leaving approximately 32% of on-street spaces available for customers. In contrast, they noted that after 6pm, when parking enforcement ended, little turn over occurred and 0% of on-street meters were available. In their report they recommended that enforcement policies be changed to address this disparity.

Strong demand for customer and employee parking is present during evening hours as much as it is during the day, but the challenges to meet this demand are different at night. To cite just a few transportation and parking differences: AATA service levels currently decrease after 6pm, many customers come downtown at night for entertainment without fixed plans for how long they'll stay, evening employees tend to have more unpredictable work schedules, and parking structure spaces (public and UM) become more available than they are during the day.

As mentioned earlier, many dozens of people participated in focus group meetings and important insights were provided about the nature of the evening economy, and the expectations patrons, employees, volunteers, and others have about parking and transportation. Some of these include:

- Downtown Ann Arbor has assets in the evening, and parking meters should be managed to reflect that.
- There is general awareness that evening employees are not motivated to park away from the most convenient on-street spaces without extended meter enforcement; yet there isn't consensus about extending meter operation into the evening even if it means more parking for customers because of the concerns about the negative perception this might create.
- There is general agreement that if meter operation is extended later, it should be managed to support the activities in downtown, not as a way to generate revenues through parking tickets.
- Downtown employees (both paid and volunteer) need additional transit and affordable parking options. There is general recognition that these elements will work together with meter enforcement to encourage positive parking behaviors for evening employees as they do for daytime employees.
- Safety and the perception of safety in the evening is key.
- Ann Arbor residents have different expectations for free evening parking than visitors coming to downtown from other places.
- The occasional or new downtown user, including some evening entertainment patrons, don't have the same opportunities to develop habits and learn the system as regular users, thus extending evening operation of the meters should be done cautiously and carefully so as to avoid surprising people with tickets.

Recommendations/Tactics:

Evening transportation and parking program

- Promote use of the DDA off-peak/overnight monthly parking permit to evening workers (current price \$30/month). These permits provide parking in nearly all downtown parking structures from 3:30pm to 9:00am.
- Explore the creation of a pilot program in which an evening parking area is provided on the roof of the Fourth & William parking structure with very low cost, pay-by-use parking to make it attractive to evening employees and others with price sensitivity. Explore the use of Automated Vehicle Identification (AVI) cards or other automated equipment to facilitate this use.
- Promote and expand use of AATA's Nightride program, which is subsidized by the DDA for go!Pass holders, costing \$1/ride anywhere in the city limits. Explore whether different service strategies or additional subsidies may reduce wait times and expand coverage areas.
- Work with AATA to develop a plan to increase transit and other transportation services after 6pm to make transit a more attractive night time alternative.
- Develop a strategy to enhance evening transit between Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti. This might be done in partnership between AATA, the two DDAs, and Cities of Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti, large employers, and UM and EMU.

- Assess whether to approve funding to reinvent the LINK to make it more convenient for evening customers and patrons to park in lower cost locations.
- Encourage after hours free parking in the Fingerle parking lot by employees and volunteers working at night for nonprofit organizations with signage that states that the lot is free after 5pm.
- Explore development of a role for the DDA to ask downtown private parking lot owners to allow evening use of these private lots by downtown customers and employees. If public use of these lots is agreed do by owners, the DDA can promote the use of these private parking lots after hours to downtown employees.
- Downtown cultural groups such as the Hands On Museum are offering slumber parties and other all-night activities. Develop parking strategies to support these offerings.

Hours of evening parking meter operation

During the time this plan took shape, on-street parking demand during the first quarter of 2010 was studied during the day and evening. Hours of highest demand appeared to begin in the middle of the morning and extend until at least 9pm. A second examination was done on the use of the off-street parking lots and structures, as downtown patrons have been paying to park in these facilities after 6pm for many years. What was learned was that patron numbers off-street increased each hour after 6pm until about 9pm where numbers began to fall off. Further, as part of the input gleaned from the public meetings held during the development of this plan, it was learned from restaurateurs and cultural group leaders that many of their patrons are coming downtown either at about 7pm for dinner or at about 6pm for dinner and a show, and in both cases are parking until at least 9pm. Other communities with on street meter operations after 6pm were contacted to learn more their experience, and it was learned that good communication with downtown patrons was a necessary element in their success. This information was distilled down to the following recommendations regarding extending operation of the Ann Arbor on-street parking meters after 6pm. It must be noted, however, that downtown is a dynamic, constantly-changing environment, and these ideas should be tested and adjusted regularly as necessary.

- Shift hours of on-street parking meter operation. Currently on-street parking meters operate from 8am-6pm. It is recommended that:
 - Meter operations should be shifted to run 9am to 9pm. There is less demand than there may have been previously at 8am for on-street parking meters. Shifting the start time for meter operation one hour later gives a positive message about the “free parking” offered 8am-9am. And shifting operations later until 9pm matches what was seen as the time when demand for on-street meters was at its greatest.
 - Meters in high demand areas should have their time limits extended from 2 hours to 3 hours, with unlimited time limits in low demand areas. What was heard recurrently in focus group meetings was the concern about the negative perception parking tickets engender, and that this concern far outweighed other issues because media and community messages regularly focus on this single factor which can make downtown seem unfriendly to customers. To address this concern, it is being recommended that the meter

limits be extended to reduce the risk of over-the-limit parking tickets, as this is the largest single generator of parking tickets.

- If and when meter operations are shifted later past 6pm, it is important that the communication about this change be done with the knowledge that it is a significant change from what had been done in the past. Ideas to communicate this include: posting large signs on the parking equipment to let patrons know at least a month in advance of any changes, working in collaboration with downtown partners including businesses and cultural groups to get the word out, street banners and media stories. It may be useful to designate a period of time when patrons receive warnings rather than parking tickets as another way of communicating the change.
- Continuously measure the impact of such changes based on user data and adjust accordingly

Evening communications

- Produce a nighttime map/brochure that shows public parking locations, highlighting those with reduced costs.
 - This will include structures and lots with an off-peak entry price. Include the roof of the 4th & William garage if a low-cost daily parking area is established.
 - This will include free public parking lots (1st & William, Fingerle lot).
 - This map can be distributed to downtown businesses for display on work area bulletin boards, insertion into pay envelopes, as well as provided electronically as web content for business and entertainment websites.
 - Produce this map/brochure in English and in Spanish.
- Develop as part of the getDowntown work plan an outreach informational effort to target employers with evening hours. This program may include special web content, regular meetings with employees and managers, use of facebook and targeted events to gain attention to transportation options.
- Provide entertainment venue and restaurant managers with the DDA website address showing public parking vacancy information to share with their patrons and customers: http://www.a2dda.org/parking_transportation/available_parking_spots/. Movies, concerts, and other performances begin at a set time and having information immediately available via PDA about where parking is more available may enable patrons to park quicker and make their curtain in time.
- Create a text-alert program whereby individuals can sign up to be notified when parking policies, rates, or facilities change.
- Ensure that current crime rate information is available on the DDA website and other locations to address perceptions or concerns about safety.

Strategy 3: Develop new off street parking strategies to make it more attractive for patrons to park off-street in public parking facilities, and thus relieve pressure on curbside parking, support downtown commerce and entertainment, and increase patron awareness of their parking use and costs.

Recommendations/Tactics:

Off-street parking rates

- Offer a pre-paid parking option on weekend evenings or at other times to relieve traffic congestion in the structures or lots after big concerts and other events such as graduation or conferences.
- Explore development of a pilot “early bird special” rooftop parking area on selected parking structures. Such a program may spread parking demand deeper into the facility and relieve pressure on the lower levels, thus making the more convenient spaces more available to customers. The Fourth & William and Ann Ashley parking structures would provide good pilot locations to explore this option given the large number of daytime workers who use these facilities.
- Explore eliminating the merchant validation program and instead offer one hour free parking in the structures. Free structure parking is being used in other Michigan cities with mixed use downtowns, as the offer of free is very attractive and easily understood. The DDA believes that every parking space has value, but if used correctly, using this pricing strategy may lessen demand at the meters and extend parking more broadly throughout the system. The financial underpinnings of the public parking system must be safeguarded, so this program should begin with a pilot approach to better understand how revenues may be affected by this concept before moving to a full-system application.
- Shift “shopping zone” space restrictions in the campus-area structures from 6am-10am, to 7am-10:30am to better match the hours of customer demand in the area.
- Develop a multi-tiered monthly parking permit and AVI system that assigns a value to parking guarantees.
- Regularly check classified ads and other information sources to monitor private parking prices and availability to keep track of how off-street public parking policies are affecting demand for private parking.

Off-street parking equipment

- Offer use of Automated Vehicle Identification (AVI) technology in the parking structures. This cashless, hands-free system enables patrons to upload value to a windshield plaque and value is automatically withdrawn upon exiting. The technology provides much valued convenience, but may confuse long-time users as it will require that facility gate arms remain lowered at all times, even during nonpayment/free parking periods such as holidays.
- Develop the option for parking patrons to manage and monitor their parking online, similar to how banking and other services are managed online. This can include establishing a monthly debit account for permits or AVI accounts, or creating a pay-by-cellphone account for the epark on-street parking system. Optimally this online system will allow patrons to monitor their parking usage and costs, thereby empowering them to make choices about parking and transportation choices.

Other off-street parking recommendations

- Reconsider offering a free downtown circulator (LINK) that runs a route between the downtown parking structures as a way of making the parking structures more attractive, as well as supporting park-once behavior, and encouraging people to extend their patronage and use of downtown, particularly at the corners of downtown (Ann Ashley, Forest).

- Consider integrating more public art into the parking structures as a way of creating more of an “experience”. Artwork may serve as part of the wayfinding experience in a parking structure, and it will communicate a sense of “cool” in an otherwise sterile environment.
- Stakeholders in the Kerrytown area have expressed concern that there is no location in their commercial area where patrons can park for unlimited amounts of time without fear of a parking ticket. Many don’t perceive the Ann Ashley parking structure as part of their neighborhood despite its location two blocks from the Kerrytown Shops. To address this need, the DDA explored with the Kerrytown neighborhood the idea of installing gate arms at the Farmers Market parking lot so that it could be enclosed when the Market isn’t in operation. There didn’t appear to be strong support for this idea, so the DDA may want to explore modifying the Miller Street side of the Ann Ashley parking structure to allow car entry/exits, as an idea to make the structure seemingly more visible and thus connected to the Kerrytown area.

Strategy 4: Develop policies and plans to add and subtract public parking downtown based on redevelopment, walkability, and transportation goals.

There is strong consensus about the community vision for downtown, including the goal to make it possible for many more people to live downtown. Further, we want it to be even more walkable than it is today, and that the downtown retail and commercial mix should be even more diverse and healthy, and that it support important needs of downtown residents. Developing new policies for where and how to add or subtract parking downtown is an important element to support this vision.

Recommendations/Tactics:

- Where it is feasible, add on-street parking meters within the DDA District to support adjacent commercial or residential activity, to help sidewalks to become more pedestrian-friendly and less impacted by traffic, and to make downtown government services and destinations more accessible.
- Develop a multi-faceted approach for the eventual redevelopment or reuse of city-owned downtown surface lots. This plan should be developed with input from Ann Arbor residents about the uses they’d like to see added to downtown and advice from urban planners on best practices recommendations. This would be used as a guide for any future Requests for Proposals (RFPs) or city downtown planning efforts.
- Continue examining parking demand factors to determine when to add more parking into the system.
- Establish a City policy regarding removal of on-street public parking spaces. From 2002-2008, approximately 175 street meters were removed for a variety of purposes including to accommodate private and University of Michigan projects. The DDA asks that a City policy be established regarding the removal of on-street parking meters, because on-street spaces are limited in number and provide important benefits:

- They help make streets pedestrian friendly, as parked cars create a comfortable barrier between traffic and people on the sidewalk. The most walkable downtown sidewalks tend to have on-street parking beside them.
- They convey a lot about the perceived convenience of visiting the area and are essential for businesses providing quick pick-up or products that are cumbersome to carry. Without a supply of convenient parking spaces, much of downtown's commercial diversity would disappear.
- They are important to people who are unable to walk a great distance to their destination, including many in the disabled community, children, and seniors, and they serve downtown residents who need to get groceries and bulky items upstairs.
- They are necessary for electricians, rug cleaning companies, and others called in on an emergency basis that need their vehicles parked close by to perform their service.

Given the important benefits provided by on-street parking spaces, efforts to permanently remove these spaces should be resisted unless a compelling broad community benefit can be established. In instances where City Council determines that an on-street meter removal does not benefit the larger Ann Arbor community, a City-approved meter removal fee should be established and regularly increased, perhaps equivalent to the cost to replace this space in a future downtown public parking structure.

- Create a City-approved Payment-In-Lieu policy whereby downtown developers can provide an approved payment in lieu of providing parking as part of their own developments. This will benefit the downtown by centralizing parking under the DDA's auspices for maximal efficiencies, it will reduce the number of curb cuts which work against downtown walkability, and will make the downtown development process more comprehensible and transparent. This policy should determine if fees provide ongoing parking rights. Further, these fees should be set aside along with the parking-removal fee noted above and escrowed for future public parking additions or transportation enhancements such as transit centers or bus stop improvements. Much research was conducted on payment-in-lieu fees used around the country as part of the A2D2 process. Two possible strategies include:
 - A lump sum amount per parking space is established, based on a comparable cost to the public parking system to construct this parking space.
 - A contract is established for monthly parking permits with an additional amount per month assigned to the cost that escalates on a rate of inflation.
- Explore a strategy to build out or activate the first floor of parking structures where possible to make the adjacent sidewalk more walkable and to achieve downtown goals. The loss of ground floor parking spaces will be offset by the gain of new downtown activity and walkability. As part of this, recognize the concern that the DDA/City not be seen as undercutting the private commercial market by leasing these spaces at a subsidized rent.
- Encourage the City to enforce its regulations regarding private parking lots and backyard parking.

Strategy 5: Develop additional parking options for personal transportation vehicles, including motorcycles, bicycles, and vehicles using new energy.

Even as gasoline prices increase in the future it is very likely that many people will continue to opt to use personal transportation vehicles, because they will always be the most convenient transportation mode. They allow people to come and go as desired, which is something transit's fixed schedules doesn't permit, and they allow for other benefits such as personal expression or cost savings. These personal transportation vehicles may be motorized (e.g. motorcycles) or nonmotorized (bicycles) or may use alternative energy sources (hybrid or all-electric cars or Segways). Further, they may be seasonally used (mopeds) or have value all-year round.

Recommendations/Tactics:

Two-Wheeled Personal Vehicles

- Explore ways to incorporate more motorcycle/moped & bicycle parking into the off-street parking system. Currently parking gates do not reliably detect motorcycles, mopeds and bicycles which can make it unsafe for these vehicles to enter gated parking lots and structures, so initial efforts have focused on providing parking outside gated areas. Emerging technologies will likely bring improvements, so regular investigations should be made to see how two-wheeled vehicles can be parked safely within structures and lots.
- Investigate selling permits to motorcycle and moped users to provide parking guarantees in covered parking locations.
- Monitor motorcycle and moped usage to ascertain locations of greatest demand to focus efforts to provide additional spaces. Talk with motorcycle and moped users to elicit feedback on parking needs.
- Pilot a program for on-street motorcycle parking spaces in high demand areas during warm weather months. The pilot program may include painting on-street parking spaces and covering lines at the end of the season, plus use of epark stations which may be programmed to add and subtract motorcycle spaces into the parking system as seasonally needed.
- The seasonal in-street bicycle rack proved to be very popular in its first year. Expand the number of in-street bicycle racks as demand warrants. Utilize the request form on the DDA website to help determine locations and quantities of in-street bicycle racks.
- Develop a program whereby in-street bicycle racks can be requested for use during special events where sidewalks are thronged with pedestrians to reduce sidewalk conflicts.
- Publicize the bike rack request form on the DDA website to track demand for additional permanent bike racks, both in the structures and on the sidewalks. Installation of additional bike parking should be done strategically to encourage bike use while not creating conflicts for pedestrians or sidewalk café use.
- Design, print and distribute a downtown bike parking map to convey information about locations, how to rent a bike locker, and where downtown bike resources such as bike shops are located downtown.
- At least on a quarterly basis, systematically remove abandoned bicycles from downtown bike racks to free up bicycle parking. Ensure that 48-hour maximum time limit signage is clearly visible or notices attached to bikes for at least 48 hours before removing bicycles.

Four-Wheeled Personal Vehicles

- Taxis don't currently have a strong presence in downtown as they do in other cities. They offer a valuable service, and efforts should be undertaken to encourage more taxi use in downtown, such as changing policies regarding hailing a cab.
- Locate downtown taxi stands strategically to encourage taxi use as an attractive alternative to driving. For instance, locate taxi stands beside downtown entertainment bars and nightclubs to encourage patron use after drinking.
- Develop a Zipcar request form on the DDA website to enable downtown users to request new locations for additional vehicles.
- Encourage electric and hybrid-electric cars and other new energy vehicles. Tools could include preferential convenient parking spaces, discounted parking rates, or provision of plug in charging stations, either at cost or free.
- Encourage the use of supermini automobiles by exploring the possibility of setting aside the use of reserved smaller spaces in the convenient spaces near parking facility entrances or by providing parking discounts.

Strategy 6: Increase downtown employee use of public transit by expanding AATA service hours, developing a strong Ypsilanti/Ann Arbor transit plan, and making downtown transit stops more user-friendly.

Ann Arbor Transportation Authority (AATA) is a not-for-profit unit of government that operates the local public transit system for the greater Ann Arbor-Ypsilanti area. AATA enables area residents to reach their destinations at reasonable cost, and offers the region efficient, environmentally sound transportation alternatives. Many hundreds of thousands of AATA riders come into and out of the downtown core every year, often using the Blake Transit Center on South Fourth Avenue and the North University Transit Center, which is shared with the University of Michigan Blue Buses. AATA has worked in partnership with the DDA and City for many years to increase ridership by downtown users, most notably with the go!pass program.

As we look to the future and strive to expand the number of downtown commuters choosing to use AATA as the ride of first choice, new resources and service priorities will be needed to enable AATA to continue growing its ridership. Optimally, a fully-funded county-wide service plan will take shape in the coming years that incorporates commuter rail, enhanced express bus service, and increased commuter transit options between Ypsilanti and Ann Arbor. Other ideas to encourage AATA ridership growth are as follows.

Recommendations/Tactics:

- AATA and DDA can work together to improve downtown bus stops to make transit a more attractive option. Bus stop amenities could include route maps showing destinations and streets, service information including weekends and evenings, seating, rain/snow shelters, and if possible, electronic information giving time and the estimated arrival of the next available bus.

- Work and/or meetings typically begin on the hour or half hour. AATA bus schedules should be recalibrated so that buses arrive in downtown at ten or five of the hour, not ten after or twenty of the hour.
- Locate downtown bus stops strategically as part of a transportation hub that also includes Zipcars, taxi stands, bike parking, or other transportation elements. To the extent possible downtown bus stops may also be used by other transit types (e.g. Megabus, BTB Partybus, Greyhound, UM blue bus, etc.) to facilitate transportation hub use.
- DDA can assist AATA with its Blake Transit Center replacement in conjunction with a strategy to make the 300 block of South Fourth more pedestrian friendly and attractive, and to continue the evolution of this area as an important downtown transportation hub that includes Zipcars, bike parking, and transit. Strategies may include
 - Electronic messaging on the Fourth & William parking structure giving the time and estimated bus arrival time.
 - A build out of the lower level of the parking structure with a new GetDowntown office and perhaps AATA meeting space.
 - Colorful banners on the lamp posts promoting transit.
 - detailed route information and maps
 - Improved seating and pedestrian amenities such as trash cans, bike racks, more street trees, twinkle lights and other elements.
- Explore having the UM use the Blake Transit mall as a Blue Bus stop to encourage patrons who want to make a transfer between the AATA and UM Blue Bus systems. UM employees and students live throughout the community and a transfer point on S. Fourth Avenue would expand the number that will choose to use transit instead of bringing a car to the core area.
- Explore having a Megabus and/or a Greyhound bus stop on the Blake Transit mall.
- Expand AATA service during morning and afternoon rush hours so buses run at least every 15 minutes.
- Develop a comprehensive Ypsilanti/Ann Arbor transit plan that includes express bus service from downtown to downtown, local service, and evening local service until 12midnight or 1am.
- Broaden publicity about AATA's "Emergency Ride Home" program for car pool/van pool users. getDowntown and DDA can assist with this communication effort.
- Explore the feasibility of the getDowntown program managing an Emergency Ride Home program for businesses participating in the go!pass program.
- DDA can work with getDowntown to expand the value of go!passes. This may include discounts to downtown businesses, and subsidized use of transportation options such as express bus service.
- The City, DDA, and getDowntown can support the AATA by championing the opportunities created by east-west and north-south commuter rail service, including transit connections into downtown.

Strategy 7: Improve communications to downtown business owners, employees, customers and visitors by developing new communication tools and sharing information more broadly.

Recommendations/Tactics:

General communications

- Encourage getDowntown to continue to interface regularly with downtown business managers/owners to provide information about transportation resources and answer questions
- Encourage getDowntown to continue providing commuting presentations and chats, and to begin charting attendance and seek to increase number and attendance by 10% annually.
- Encourage getDowntown to continue attending Downtown Area Association meetings, Think Local First meetings, Downtown Marketing Task Force meetings, and Chamber of Commerce events, and to meet with other organizations such as Spark that sponsor regular meetings downtown. These meetings are opportunities to provide information to those who are responsible for providing information to others.
- Explore ideas to communicate with downtown Ann Arbor employees, such as regular “meet and greets” outside the parking structure with informational materials
- Encourage getDowntown to continue increasing participation in the Commuter Challenge. The Commuter Challenge has been an invaluable tool to reach first time transit or other alternative transportation users.
- Maintain relationships with media outlets and seek to increase coverage through blog and press release contributions to Ann Arbor.com, Ann Arbor Chronicle, CTN, etc
- Continue to enhance social media presence in order to better connect with downtown employers and employees as a way of sharing transportation information.
- Create a text-alert program whereby individuals can sign up to be notified when public parking policies, rates, or facilities change. Individuals are currently able to sign up for alerts when AATA makes changes, including route or fare changes, and it would be useful to create a similar system for public parking.
- Use ambassadors when presenting new parking technology, as many people who are otherwise resistant will likely embrace technology when coached.
- Understand that many people in the community do not use computers to receive information, and materials must also be provided in written form such as program inserts.

Evening Communication Strategies

- The DDA and the getDowntown program can work together to assemble all information about evening parking and transportation options, including a downtown map showing discounted parking locations, information on discounted monthly offpeak parking permits, Nightride, and bus service, as well as a link to the DDA website showing parking vacancy information.
 - This information should be provided electronically to evening culture organizations and businesses for their websites, newsletters, brochures and programs. This will enable them to share information directly with their patrons, volunteers, and employees, and customers.
- Provide this amalgamated evening transportation and parking information electronically to the downtown area associations and Ann Arbor Convention and Visitors Bureau for their websites.
- Twice a year email this amalgamated evening transportation and parking information to getDowntown’s 450+ downtown business email list for businesses to share with their customers and employees.

- Schedule a downtown focus group including arts and culture representatives, business owners, and customers to help the DDA reorganize its website portion relating to parking and transportation options to ensure that information is easily found. As part of this work, create subsections outlining information for downtown users during the day and during the evening.
- Provide downtown performing arts/entertainment venue managers with the DDA website address showing parking structure vacancy numbers so they can share this with their patrons.

Strategy 8: Develop a parking and transportation strategy for downtown & near downtown residents

Residents living in and near the DDA District can readily use sustainable and active transportation modes such as walking or bicycling when running errands or going to work in the core area. One of the most valuable reasons to live centrally is the ability to function easily and enjoyably without a car for much of life’s purposes. However, downtown and near downtown residents also have unique needs that their suburban counterparts don’t experience relating to parking. Many residences don’t have parking assigned to their units, and the street in front of their home is likely to be impacted by commuter parking. Understanding and addressing the unique parking and transportation needs of downtown and near downtown residents is an important way to support downtown residential density and vitality.

DDA District residents

- Broaden awareness of the DDA’s offpeak/overnight monthly parking permit for downtown residents. This permit is currently available in most parking structures (See Appendix XXX, downtown transportation programs, for details). The permit allows for one grace day a month where the vehicle can remain all day in the structure, as there may be instances where a resident is home sick or has to stay home to meet a repair person.
- Track the use of the Downtown Zipcar Program and determine how well it meets the needs of downtown residents. Survey downtown residents to help determine the location of future vehicles added to the downtown/UM Zipcar fleet.
- Explore the feasibility of a pilot long-term automobile storage option at Vets Park, as the parking lot on Dexter Road has regular access by bus, is well lit, and the lot has capacity during the months where the soft ball leagues are not active.
- Explore the creation of strategic bicycle parking locations for downtown residents, including guaranteed covered bike racks and bike lockers, to address the need created by small downtown apartments without sufficient room for bicycles.
- Publicize the downtown’s bike rack request form to downtown residents and residential property owners to increase the number of bike racks near downtown residential units.
- Reexamine bringing back the LINK/downtown circulator to help downtown residents shop, attend concerts, and access the full downtown.

Residents Living Outside Downtown

- Develop a residential permit master plan for the near downtown neighborhoods to eventually establish a ring around the downtown that discourages commuter and storage parking on near

downtown residential streets. Meet with individual neighborhood groups to develop the strategies for their own particular part of this residential ring, including determining whether to use parking meters or residential permits.

- Evaluate the current residential permit program to determine areas of improvement and change, including permit costs and enforcement strategies and policies.
- Investigate the possibility of creating a shared curb painting program to better distinguish where parking shouldn't occur (e.g. correct distance from driveways). If the program has appeal, the City could hire a contractor to manage the program and thus reduce costs per household.
- Explore odd/even parking for fall and winter months to allow for leaf & snow maintenance in the near downtown residential areas where on-street parking is preventing city service delivery.
- Explore creating a near downtown "ombudsman" position so a point person is available to respond to residential neighborhood parking concerns.

Strategy 9: Other miscellaneous parking and transportation suggestions

- Provide a specific city staff or department name and email to downtown stakeholders so they know who to contact when downtown street lights are out, as citizens don't know which street lights are the responsibility of DTE and which belong to the City of Ann Arbor. Lighting is important if patrons will be willing to walk greater distances to and from parking.
- A large number of downtown employees work variable schedules, so transportation and parking solutions must be flexible to accommodate them.
- Parking turnover needs are dissimilar in different downtown districts and in front of different kinds of businesses, so a one-size fits all parking meter operation and enforcement strategy won't work. At the same time, too much variety in regulation may be confusing. To that end, regular communication is needed to understand how best to address each area of downtown with parking operations and regulations strategies.
- Transportation services and options are also dissimilar in different downtown areas. It is important to meet with stakeholders to understand how transit and other transportation services can be modified or enhanced to meet the evolving needs of the district.

Items to be provided in the final Draft Appendices or DDA Website:

Nelson Nygaard Progress Report & Accomplishments to Date (current Dec 2009)

Transportation & Parking options and programs available in the DDA

- General transportation options chart
- Parking options chart
- Parking options Maps

Parking & Transportation System – Overview of Use

- Go!pass use Summary
- Night Ride use Summary
- Evening Meter Turnover Report
- 2009 Map of City Stats Near the Downtown Ann Arbor Area

Evening Business Community Analysis

- Chart of Evening Businesses (includes number of employees typically on staff)

Community Benchmarks & Case Study Findings

- Community comparison chart
- Case Study Reports

Community Outreach & Surveys

- Copy of values survey
- Values survey results summary
- Copy of Community Focus Group Meeting Handouts
- Community Focus Group Meeting Note Summary
- Community Focus Group Feedback Form Results
- Copy of E-park Survey
- E-park Survey Summary
- Copy of Evening Employee Survey
- Evening Employee Survey Results Summary
- Evening Employee Focus Group Summary
- Copy of Evening Commerce Survey
- Evening Commerce Survey Results Summary

Differential Rate Scenario

- Illustration of Differential Rates
- Map illustrating Example Differential Rate zones

Schedule of Fines Scenario

- Chart showing current fines and example of changes to illustrate the importance of life-safety parking violations

DRAFT