

Summary of Parking Meetings: January 2025

The City held three public meetings with residents to present the Parking Study results, discuss possible upcoming parking changes in the community, and gather feedback. Below is a summary of those meetings.

Wednesday, January 29; 10:30 a.m. at the Holiday Inn on Old West Main Street

Attendance: 25 residents/business owners, 4 Council members (Janie, Don, Ron, and Vicki), and 3 staff members (Kyle, Brandy, and Michelle)

Highlights: A majority of the attendees were business owners in the West End District. For this meeting, the City presented the parking study results and then offered options for the group to consider for future parking changes specific to the West End District. This included choices for changing some unlimited-time parking spots to 3-hour parking spots and possibly changing the locations of some 15-minute spots. The group almost unanimously agreed they did not want any changes at all. They felt most businesses do not have the parking they need currently.

Here is a summary list of the concerns shared by those in attendance:

- Businesses do not have enough parking.
- Many shared concerns about the parking spots at the Bauer Built building potentially going away at some point. This area has been very helpful to staff and customers at the businesses. If that goes away, some want another option for a parking lot.
- There were several suggestions that the City tear down the Bauer Built building and replace it with a public parking lot.
- Several comments noted that the proposed plan for 15-minute stalls places those stalls in front of businesses that do not need them (e.g., industrial users) and moves them further away from the businesses that would benefit from them.
- Attendees also shared they would like more lighting on side streets, and a few mentioned they would like more lighting along the western portion of Old West Main Street (past Holiday Inn and the Pottery).
- People would also like more clarification on how much on-street parking is available along the side streets (restriping could help make these spots more visible).
- After the meeting, a couple of attendees mentioned that drivers drive too fast along Old West Main. It's a concern for those turning from side streets into the main roadway – there are many near misses. Possibly consider 4-way stops at one or two of these intersections?

- ✓ Staff needs to confirm the total number of public parking spots available, especially on side streets.
- ✓ The City reiterated that changes are probably coming in the future as this area changes and grows, but the changes don't need to come immediately.

Wednesday, January 29, 6:30 p.m. at the Ignite / Community Development Building.

Attendance: 32 residents/business owners, 2 Council members (Beth and Ron), Mayor Gary Iocco, and 3 staff members (Kyle, Brandy, and Michelle)

Highlights: Attendees were a mix of downtown residents, business owners, and interested citizens. Here is a summary list of the concerns shared by those in attendance:

- People were not pleased about the change in general from parking for free to needing a permit (basically free because enforcement has not been in place consistently).
- The fee for monthly permits is too high.
- Some people said many downtown residents are on fixed incomes and/or live in rent-controlled units and cannot afford the increased costs.
- Some people want to have a spot to themselves if they pay the monthly fee.
- Some people want a few more accessible (handicapped) parking spots throughout downtown.
- Some wanted the library to keep all of its 15-minute parking spots, instead of decreasing them.
- A business owner requested that a 15-minute stall be added in front of her business and not at the end of the block because the clientele at her business includes many elderly persons.
- Hanisch Bakery was concerned because their 8-hour employees start early in the morning, during the current "no-parking" hours between 2 and 6 a.m. This may be something the City needs to revisit.
- Some were bothered that the potential enforcement strategy would still penalize people who move their cars in time, but they may not move them far enough away from the original spot, and, therefore, may be fined anyway. maybe not far enough away from their original spot and will still get fined.
- ✓ Staff needs to get clarity on the parameters and logistics of 20-hour parking, overnight parking, and the no-parking hours between 2 a.m. and 6 a.m.
- ✓ Staff needs to clarify how the police department's enforcement software is used and what the rules would be.

Thursday, January 30, 10:30 a.m. at the Ignite / Community Development Building.

Attendance: 5 residents/business owners, 4 Council members (Janie, Beth, Don, and Ron), and 3 staff members (Kyle, Brandy, and Michelle)

Highlights:

- One downtown resident said she was guaranteed a parking spot in the lower level of Studebaker through the contract with her condo. Staff will be checking on this, since all the parking spots in that area are public, and staff is not aware of contracts that include parking in that ramp.
- Resident was also concerned about lack of maintenance in the lower level of Studebaker.
- One idea came up to better sign the Sheldon's East Avenue entrance through the half-circle "carriage drive" as an accessible drop-off area to the theater. These doors are sometimes used for this, but most people don't know that option is available.
- A resident asked if some 15-minute parking spots near downtown residential apartments could be 15-minute spots all day (all 24 hours), instead of just during the day (between 8:00 and 5:00). Then, residents would be able to use those 15-minute spots for unloading groceries, etc., even at night, near their apartment before they park overnight in a lot or ramp. (Another downtown resident disagreed with this idea.)
- Residents also agreed it's hard to park, walk, and see around extra-long vehicles that are parking in the angled spots downtown.
- ✓ Staff will check on the cost maintenance plans in the CIP for Studebaker and other ramps.

Next Steps:

- The staff parking committee will meet to review the public comments and consider responses to the questions that need further clarification.
- Staff will complete further research on the time limits and how to address overnight parking restrictions and 20-hour restrictions. Does this allow residents and employees to park overnight, or should they need a permit?
- Staff will bring the major decision points to a future Council meeting for Council members to discuss and give staff direction. Examples include the 15-minute stall locations, permit fees, cost estimates for new signage, consideration of loading zones for residents, the potential addition of more accessible parking stalls,

whether or not to restrict overnight parking, how to enforce 20-hour limits in ramps, etc.

- Bring a final policy document back to the Council for action in early 2025.