



## MEMORANDUM

TO: Staff and File  
FROM: Shannon Cox, Planning Department, Town of Apex  
DATE: March 6, 2024  
SUBJECT: Saunders Lot Information Exchange & Business Owner Survey Summary

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### **Purpose and Overview:**

The purpose of this memorandum is to summarize feedback received on possible mitigation measures to address the temporary loss of an anticipated 96 spaces in the Saunders Lot during reconstruction and expansion. This memorandum summarizes feedback received during an in-person information exchange held on Monday, February 19, 2024, at Town Hall and through a follow-up online survey specifically for downtown business owners conducted between February 23, 2024 – March 1, 2024. The purpose of the information exchange was to discuss: (1) the status of the Saunders Lot project and (2) mitigation options for the parking impact during lot construction. The meeting was open to the public, but invitations were specifically distributed by the Economic Development Department to downtown business owners. A list of attendees is provided as Attachment A. The purpose of the survey was to provide an additional opportunity for downtown business owners to provide input on parking mitigation, in response to a request during the information exchange. Fifty-five total responses were received to the survey of business owners. Forty-eight businesses shared the name of their business, which was noted as required. Seven respondents did not share their business name. Responding businesses were categorized as follows: Beauty and Wellness (3), Food and Beverage (10), Services (16), Shopping (19), Unspecified (7).

**Question 1: Rank your preferences among possible parking mitigation options:**

Rank your preferences among possible parking mitigation options.

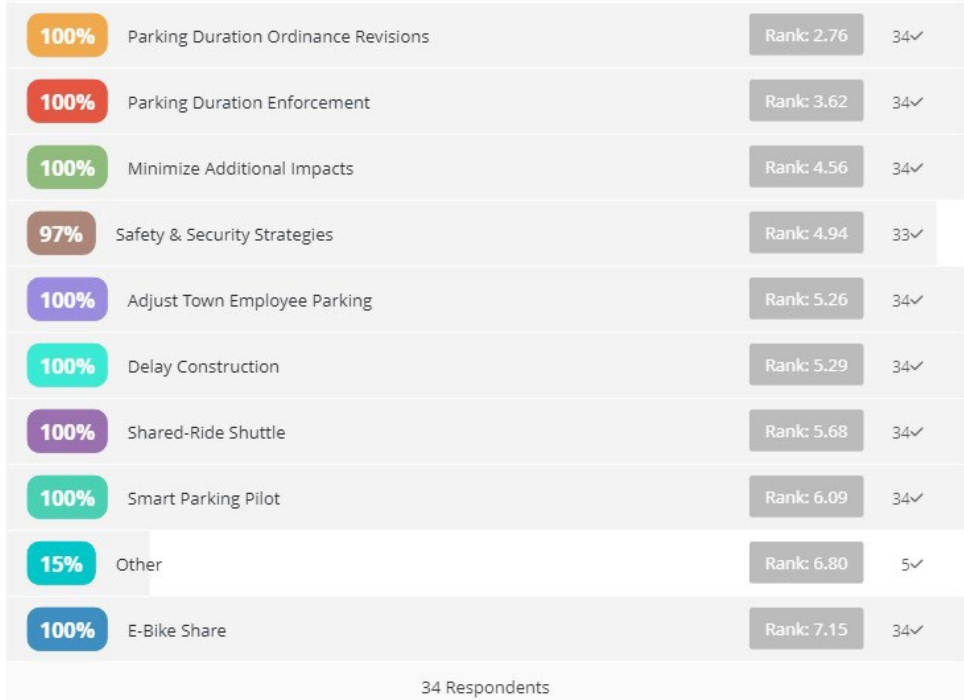


Figure 1. Results of poll during information exchange

Rank your preferences among possible parking mitigation options. If you would like to provide an explanation for your response, please use the comment box following the question.

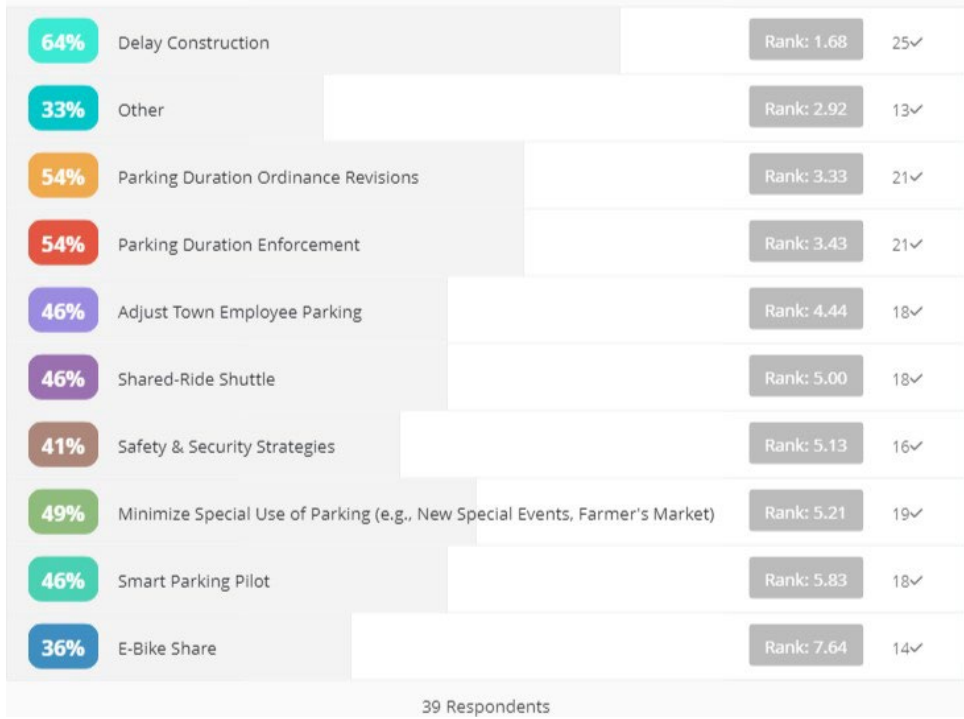


Figure 2. Results of poll from downtown business owner survey

### Summary of comments from information exchange:

- Other recommendations for mitigation:
  - Request to improve lighting to help with safety concerns about walking to remote parking. Lighting is low on the east side of the railroad tracks.
  - Request to keep the construction vehicles outside of the downtown area altogether. It was noted that if the Williams Lot can be made available for construction vehicles, it should be used instead for public/employee parking.
  - Request for a robust and well-funded marketing campaign. This should include getting information to media outlets.
  - Request to pursue a shared parking agreement with Baucom Elementary School.
  - Request to provide a shuttle for employees.
  - Request to add parking in the space along S Elm Street, next to the railroad.

### Summary of comments from survey:

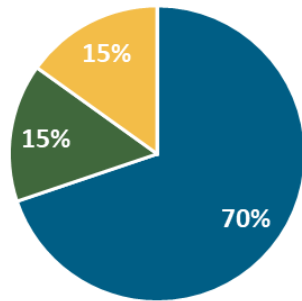
- “Other” responses:
  - Deck (3)
  - Meters (1)
- Time restrictions (4)
  - Temporary parking duration mitigation DURING the construction period will be helpful for all businesses, especially our friends relying on foot traffic only for sales. However, we don't want those short-term changes become permanent after construction is over, so I put OTHER over ordinance revisions.
  - I suggest each business is allotted at least one permitted spot near their store/office. Time restrictions are not preferred for business owners.
  - We have employees who are over the age of 70; most of our shoppers are 50 and over. It is critical to us that our employees are able to park close to our store; they aren't able to walk or bike several blocks to get to work. We need safe and convenient parking for them.
  - Employee parking on Seaboard is a high priority. As a jewelry business my employees are at increased risk of targeting. Having spaces removed from long term parking is dangerous for them. At present I have CCTV cameras available to watch employees, but if they have to walk or wait for rides to come pick them up, it increases risk, especially when they have to work later hours during the holiday season when it gets dark early.
- Delay construction (4)
  - For the downtown businesses to survive, these plans and any future parking plans, involving the construction of a lot or deck resulting in loss of any parking, MUST be done outside of the October-December timeframe. This is peak shopping time that makes up a majority of annual income for these businesses.
  - As was mentioned at one of the latest town meetings, these surveys can be skewed (intentionally or not). Who has the most to lose regarding this issue? No doubt the businesses.

- I'm not under any delusion that this won't be hard, no matter when we start it. I can say doing the construction during the 4th quarter will hurt both my businesses for sure.
- January is the slowest time of the year, if we start in summer '24, construction will take place during our busiest months.
- Electric Bike Share and Shuttle (2)
  - Also want to say a comment on the electric bike thing it'll end up being just like all these big cities that people are driving these scooters all over and then leaving them in the middle of the street leaving the middle sidewalks I think the electric bike will create another problem [rather] than help.
  - I find it highly unlikely anyone is going to be interested in any type of shared shuttle situation. This is a small town, not a city where people are going to be shuttling in. Also, E-bikes are not effective for anyone who lives outside of Downtown Apex and most people who live close by walk.
- Deck (1)
  - I do not understand why Apex will not invest in Downtown---It seems that every proposed housing project is being approved with no conditions of road expansion and beauty—the parking survey of 2019 is out of date and downtown will need a parking deck or else businesses will close---invest like Cary and Morrisville and Holly Springs---perhaps new unafraid board members are needed.
- Minimize Events (1)
  - No matter what mitigation strategies are employed, visitors to the downtown district and corresponding businesses will be discouraged from visiting by the inconvenience associated with the lack of nearby parking. At a minimum, events & festivals that are going to interfere with the already limited parking, should be postponed until after the conclusion of the project out of consideration for the downtown businesses that are grinding every day to succeed.
- Other ideas/comments (3)
  - I also encourage making a few spots in the Seaboard lot designated for motorcycle/mopeds. One vehicle spot can be two spots for two-wheel vehicles.
  - Omit the park area where all the parents and kids sit, make it parking. The kids running around at the busiest times of the day is unsafe. It is a constant hazard that should be addressed also.
  - The temporary loss of 96 parking spaces will have a severe negative impact on our business. Please consider a different approach to solving your limited parking issue.

**Question 2: What is your opinion regarding delaying the start of construction to January 2025 instead of Summer 2024?**

This question was only asked directly through the business owner survey.

What is your opinion regarding delaying the start of construction to January 2025 instead of Summer 2024?



■ Strongly Agree with Delay   ■ Agree with Delay  
■ Disagree with Delay   ■ Strongly Disagree with Delay

Figure 3. Preferences regarding delaying construction from business owner survey

Summary of comments from survey:

- Strongly Agree with Delay
  - We should definitely not do construction during the busy season of the year from September to January all the other months are available and we should not be closing a whole parking lot to do this construction. I think it could be done half of one side and then half of another side and control the construction vehicles that will be blocking other parking spots also!
  - The slowest sales time of year for our business, and probably most downtown businesses, is January and February. By delaying construction until the early part of next year, you have the potential to minimize some of the negative impact on downtown retail businesses. It is our strong desire that the length of construction be shortened as well by a minimum of 2 months. Eight months is an extremely long time to have businesses to be negatively affected by the limited parking. If the eight-month time frame remains in effect, it will adversely impact our busiest time of year, the Summer months, which helps to sustain our business throughout the rest of the year.
  - Taking away parking spots in a town that needs more parking is not a good solution - keep parking spaces open and come up with another strategy to address issue. Please!
  - Mostly people visit downtown Apex during the summer. If the Town starts construction during the summer months, which will create a roadblock, so less people will visit downtown Apex.
  - Summer and Fall is our busiest time of year for Scratch. Making it difficult for people to find parking during our busiest times will likely reduce our overall sales drastically. Further, doing construction during months when the weather is nice and our guests use our outdoor patio spaces would cause us to lose our outdoor seating during peak months.

- September thru December largest sales opportunity in retail sales...
- Delay until downtown isn't so busy during the holidays. Our employees need parking, leaving and returning during the day is a hassle now.
- Trying to miss the holiday season schedule to help assist downtown business owners
- Our fourth quarter is what keeps our downtown retail businesses afloat throughout the year. Lack of parking and the perception of inconvenience that the community will inevitably have will significantly decrease visitors/shoppers to Salem Street. The potential loss of income during these high-value months would be devastating for these businesses. Additionally, our downtown is traditionally a significant space for residents and visitors during the holiday season. Attendance and engagement in these seasonal, community activities will be dramatically affected by lack of parking and accessibility.
- Respect the importance of holiday sales to small businesses
- These businesses operate all year long hoping to have a good 4th quarter, as this could make or break their ability to stay in business. They may struggle to stay alive during your whole plan and keep the shoppers coming only to lose their businesses when the parking lot comes to completion.
- There is no good time to disrupt all of Downtown Apex & make parking worse than it already is BUT because we need a better parking lot regardless, starting in January is best as it doesn't immediately disrupt the busiest season of the whole year. Starting in Summer will 100% ruin every single business in downtown Apex.
- If it requires 8 months to construct, allowing construction to begin in the summer mean it will run through the holidays. This significantly impacts parking and traffic. In will negatively impact businesses and patrons to have lack of parking and increased traffic, thus keeping people away during a crucial time of year. Waiting till January 2025 allows a full year before holidays come around again and people will love to see parking back.
- We do about 40% of our yearly sales from October-December. The downtown retail businesses count on robust holiday sales to have profitability for the fiscal year. Statistics show that when the Saunders lot has been closed in the past we see on average a 40% decrease in sales on those days. Most retailers will not survive the lot being closed during the holiday season.
- Q4 holiday sales revenue is critical to downtown businesses - without it, many will fail. The Town has the ability to minimize the impact of this project by delaying project start to January 2025.
- The life of a business owner in downtown Apex is not what some may think. We are not raking in the big bucks, nor are we wealthy individuals just running hobby businesses. Each day, week, month & year we worry about making payroll, paying rent, and paying our personal mortgage from the store income. We wonder about college tuition and the feasibility of retirement. We have invested our life savings, our 401ks, and our hearts and souls into these businesses. And, we have chosen to do it in Apex because we believe in its potential. In addition, we are responsible for

the livelihoods of our employees as well as local vendors and makers. Dollars spent in downtown Apex have a far greater reach than just Salem Street.

- Disruption of parking in the Saunders lot threatens the continued viability of many downtown businesses, but never more than during the holiday season when the majority of our sales occur. Many downtown businesses operate at or below breakeven for the majority of the year, relying on strong holiday sales where we realize upwards of 36% of our yearly revenue. When parking is disrupted in the Saunders Street lot, whether for a short-duration or an all-day event, downtown business revenue drops by an average of 26%. Such a significant reduction in gross revenue across an entire holiday shopping season would put businesses below breakeven for the entire year resulting in closures & bankruptcies.
- With a project start of January 2025, an 8-month project timeline would bring construction to a close in August, well before the start of the critical holiday shopping season. We are asking 8 months to be the maximum, and potential delays need to be built into that 8 months. We ask that penalties be included in the construction contract. We are going to need at least the month of September to communicate with our customers and to regain their confidence and comfort with visiting downtown before the holiday season even begins.
- Our businesses may seem replaceable, but consider this: According to the Destination Development Association in their “Keys to Outstanding Downtowns”, destination retailers play a vital role in the viability of a downtown, and “turnover has to be less than 5% per year. Revolving door downtowns are not sustainable in the long run.” Would our replacements be destination retailers who drive traffic and represent the Downtown Apex brand or would they be chains who are not invested in the welfare of Apex? It would be a shame for those who worked so hard to make the downtown plan happen be out of business before it comes to fruition.
- Agree with Delay
  - We understand that a summer 2024 start may not actually be an accurate start date. We do feel that starting construction in the first quarter of 2025, may allow construction to be closer to completion by the 4th quarter of 2025.
- Disagree with Delay
  - We think this will hurt no matter when it is started/completed. Costs will not go down if delayed so that is a concern. We hope that all parking spots will be made available to people wanting to spend money in downtown Apex during the construction. Even if that means inconveniencing city employees and employees of downtown businesses. Smarter planning of events and parking closures for those events is needed.
  - There will always be a "reason" for a delay. May as well get it over with.
  - It will likely take more than 8 months- so impact Q4 of 2025 anyway. Weather will be worse for patrons and employees to walk further to work which could actually hinder foot traffic more at slower time of year. Summer months easier to walk and usually better weather. Additionally, the preschool is not open in summer- they take up so much space twice a day. Instead of carpooling, they camp in spots and

socialize at drop off and pick up, which is lunchtime; one of the worst times to find a space around the downtown. Starting in June we have at least 2 full months without the preschool and part of a third. Many consumers vacation in the summer months, so also less foot traffic to need to park. Patrons of festivals, parades and special events have no problem parking and walking when they want to be downtown. Q4 there is a focus on shopping local, consumers will make the effort and there are no competing events or festivals in the downtown.

- Delay's don't fix the problem. Agree the best solution and move forward.
- Strongly Disagree with Delay
  - Holiday time is a very important time for any business - and downtown Apex. Construction during the busiest time of the year would be detrimental to every single business in downtown and would result in great loss.

**Question 3: In general, what is your perspective on adding more parking time restrictions in downtown?**

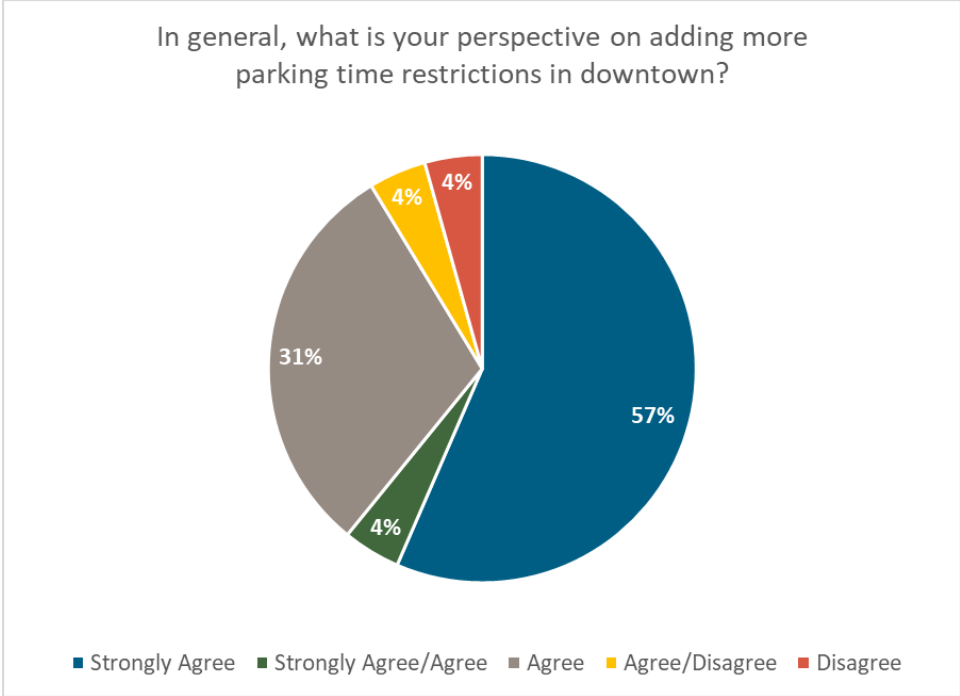


Figure 4. General preferences regarding time restrictions from information exchange



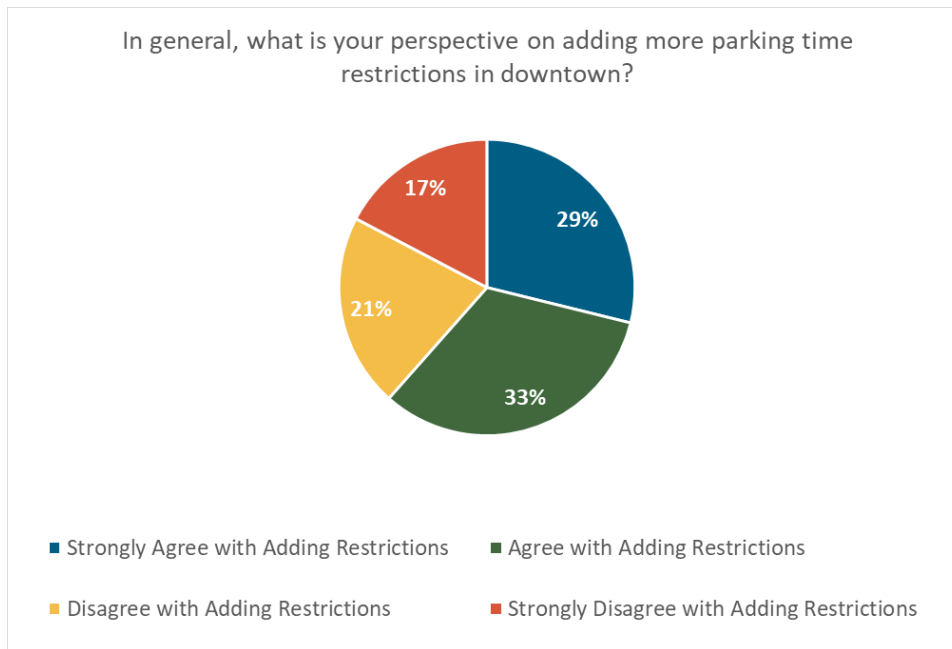


Figure 5. General preferences regarding adding parking restrictions from business-owner survey

**Summary of comments from survey:**

- Strongly agree with adding restrictions
  - I see business owners, and employees parking along Salem Street and utilizing top parking spots all day long downtown. On Chatham Street alone, there are 2-3 vehicles daily that park all day long and take up valuable space for 8+ hours.
  - I agree with adding restrictions. However, the town employees and business employees both need a reasonably close place to park. The incentive for business owners to give their parking spaces to shoppers is the survival of their livelihood. Since town employees do not have this incentive they may have to be required to shuttle from Town Hall area parking to be able to provide the needed spaces to shoppers. As far as permanent changes, does this mean worker will never have the ability to park in the newly completed parking lot greater than 3 hours?
  - Employees of Oppidan & construction workers, in addition to the hair salon and coffee shops always take up front row parking as they're the first to arrive in the morning. They stay here all day and limit accessible parking for customers. 100% fully on board with adding time restrictions & even signs stating "for customers only".
  - I would like to see restrictions on w Chatham as well, as employees use the spaces right in front of our store for all day parking
  - While adding restrictions would be very helpful it is crucial that it be enforced.
  - If the Town adds parking time restrictions, they must be enforced, lest they be ignored.
- Agree with adding restrictions

- Although we agree with adding time limit restrictions in light of limited parking, it also has the potential to frustrate potential visitors who may decide that visiting downtown Apex is just not worth the hassle.
- Restrictions can help, but they won't be the best solution. Just opens up another can of worms of people being disgruntled with parking tickets
- Maybe a 24-hour restriction to the lots with none so vehicles aren't stored in the lots.
- I think the issue is the restrictions are not enforced or supported
- We agree that there needs to be parking time restrictions; however, we would like for there to be designated retail/restaurant employee parking on Seaboard without restriction.
- Consider making 2-hour park and 3 hours parking the same time frame for less confusion.
- Disagree with adding restrictions
  - Not going to be helpful for employees and customers for time limits
  - Our employees work 7-5 Monday-Friday, would there be parking passes that exempted them from the time limitations?
  - Not sure this will affect that many visitors and will be an extra burden on whoever has to enforce it.
  - More worried about employee parking during business hours if limited parking.
  - Parking time restrictions would prevent full time business owners and employees from the ability to park throughout their workday. Would accommodations be made for these circumstances?
  - I have teenage employees and want to provide a safe, close place for them to park. While you are offering walk to/ride to parking for employees, I fear some will opt out and walk by themselves.
  - Agree with adding restrictions during construction but strongly disagree with making permanent. We worry about the ability to recruit & retain employees, as well as having to adjust our business model for more hybrid remote work as in 2020, which we found ineffective for our business model. Temporary changes will help businesses to allow access to patrons but long term is going to impact all businesses downtown. So, in favor now but not long term. Similarly, for town use, festivals/events- we are concerned now but not in the future as long as festivals are not more than 1 day and don't impact the area lots for days to set up and break down like Pigfest does. All businesses downtown should have equal access to new public parking after it's complete except for green areas highlighted in map. All these restrictions would be hard/expensive to enforce; a lot of expense and people power or meters, which we are not in favor of having downtown. We need to keep plenty of drop off- pick up loading zones around the footprint for deliveries and access to our businesses for our own supplies or service providers. A few, but not nearly all businesses downtown have some dedicated private parking. We don't need to add more of those types of restriction hurdles.
  - Adding permanent parking restrictions before the building of multi-level parking lot is contradictory. If downtown Apex is in need of parking restrictions then more

parking spaces are needed. If that means the need to add multi-level parking, that should be considered. Parking restrictions should only be considered when ALL other options are exhausted.

- Strongly disagree with adding restrictions
  - You could revisit restrictions when you have ample supply of parking spaces to meet current and growing demand.
  - The hope for our downtown is for people to walk and visit multiple businesses throughout their time in downtown. Adding limitations on parking will deter people from enjoying their time in town and ultimately hurt smaller businesses that rely on foot traffic.
  - Would be very negative and set a reason in the future not to return to historical downtown Apex...would not fix the parking concerns.
  - I bought my building with my hard-earned money. One of the best aspects of my building was that I would own a large parking lot behind my building. I have 8 employees. Office hours are M-F 8AM until 5:30PM. Where are they going to park? My current parking lot is a great asset to my office, employees and customers. I don't want to sell it, and I will go to the extreme to prevent the Town from taking it.; I think it's the government job to support the private sector. Not to discourage people from visiting Apex. Restrictive parking will discourage visitors. Perhaps on the Salem Street should have a restriction. My employees do not park on the street. I preach that this is for customers and visitors to Apex.
  - I think there should be some consideration for the business owners.
  - People travel here to partake in the town. Patrons will not appreciate revising parking to shorter restrictions followed by enforcement of those restrictions. The longer people spend downtown and feel more relaxed about parking the more they spend and the more frequently they visit and spend. Don't make it hard, especially when parking downtown is already challenging, and construction is going to take away necessary spaces.
  - This would directly affect scheduling my employees as they normally work 4-6 hours shifts.

**Question 4: In general, for the areas shown in green with proposed 2-hour time restrictions between 9:00 am - 5:00 pm, Monday through Saturday, is this...**

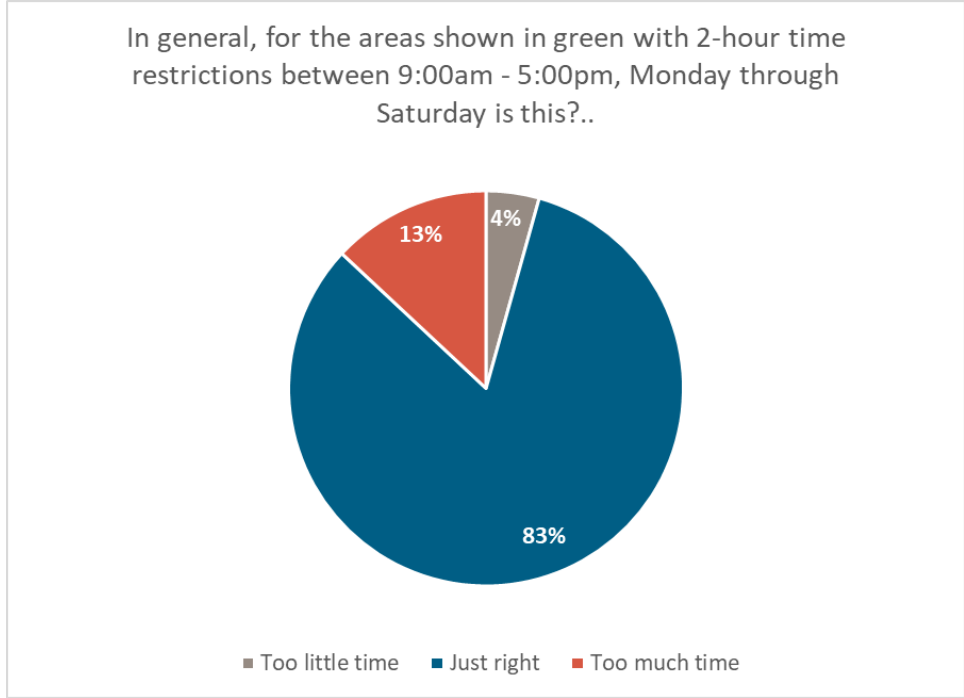


Figure 6. Comment form responses on 2-hour parking generally

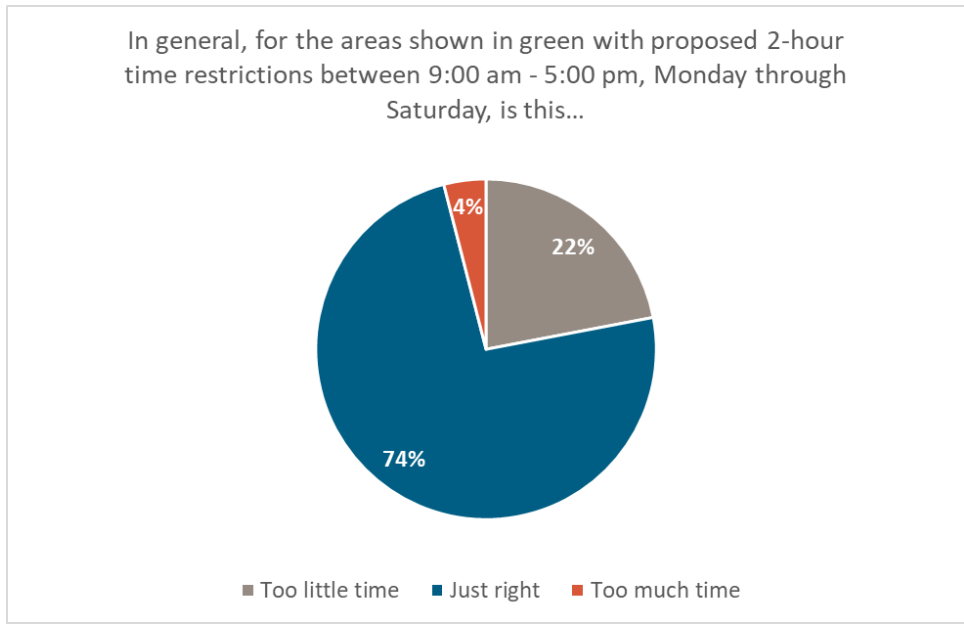


Figure 7. Business owner survey responses on 2-hour time limits generally

**Summary of comments from survey:**

- Too little time

- Not sure visitors would have time to experience the beauty of downtown Apex in 2 hours; shopping, lunch or dinner, having a stop at our dessert (ice cream/candy) outlets, all while taking a stroll around the Town.
- I think 3-4 hours would fit the activities we are trying to promote downtown. Dining and shopping take more than 2 hours.
- 3 hours would be better to be consistent with the other proposed 3-hour restriction. If parking is difficult to find, a 2-hour vs 3-hr restriction is not going to stop someone from parking there. They will take any spot they can get.
- Again, if the town needs time restrictions, then there needs to be more parking spaces created, e.g. multi-level parking.
- 3 hours allows people to not feel so rushed. Any less and people feel like you are kicking them out. They will be thinking about parking instead of enjoying their time. As their time limit approaches, no one moves the car, they leave instead. We need to foster an environment of "relax, enjoy and stay awhile" so people can get enveloped in the charm that is downtown. Happy people breed happy businesses and a prosperous city.
- Just right
  - 2 hours from 9am-5pm seems satisfactory.
  - Seems to be a right amount of time, as people are downtown for a variety of reasons.
  - Main street should be restricted.
  - The main street should be timed like it is now.
  - The 80 parking spots that will remain in place during construction (currently showing in blue), should be time limited to ensure that spots are not taken by employees or Town staff.
- Too much time
  - Need close parking for employees
  - I believe it's too little time on Saturdays and just right for Monday through Friday.

**Question 5: In general, for the areas shown in purple with proposed 3-hour time restrictions between 9:00 am - 5:00 pm, Monday through Saturday, is this...**

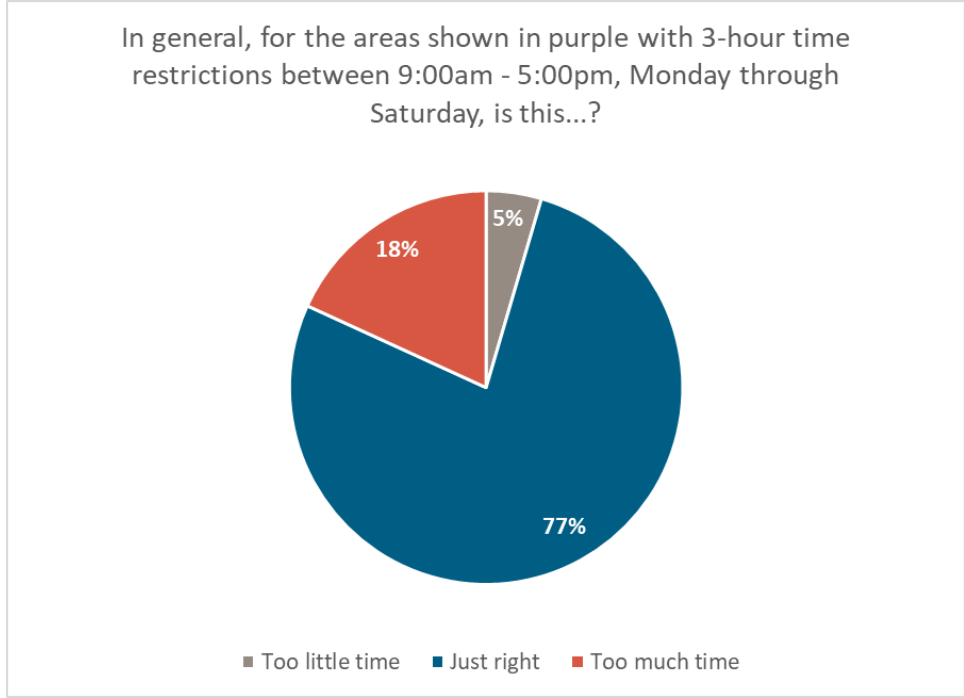


Figure 8. Comment form responses on 3-hour parking generally

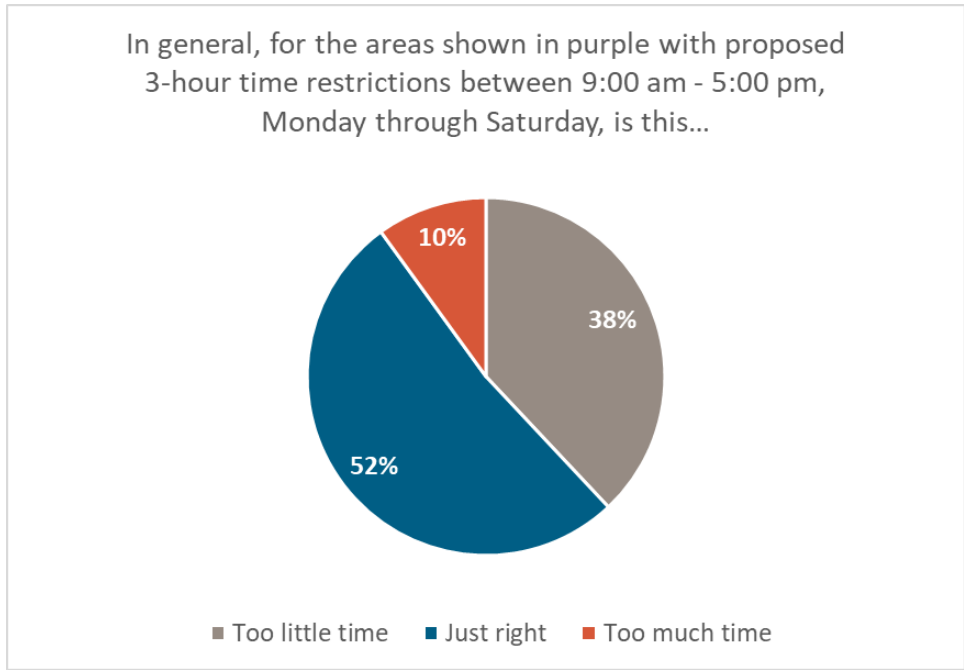


Figure 9. Business owner survey responses on 3-hour time limits generally

**Summary of comments from survey:**

- Too little time

- Employee parking needs to be addressed
- I bought my building with my hard-earned money. One of the best aspects of my building was that I would own a large parking lot behind my building. I have 8 employees. Office hours are M-F 8AM until 5:30PM. Where are they going to park? My current parking lot is a great asset...See More
- I park on Seaboard during my workday as do many of the employees of the Peak on Salem, Mission Market, 122 N. Salem St. These restrictions prevent us from parking there for our workday or shift.
- 4 hours due to employees needing to park close
- I have teenage employees and want to provide a safe, close place for them to park. While you are offering walk to/ride to parking for employees, I fear some will opt out and walk by themselves."
- Downtown business employees need long term parking. If this can be mitigated by the judicious use of parking stickers for employees and owners, I'd be more supportive of time restrictions.
- There should not be parking timelines, but if someone sees fit to have them...no fewer than 3 hours would be appropriate with a caveat of "unless permitted".
- On Saturdays I believe 3-hour parking is sufficient for shoppers, however it does make me concerned for my employee parking as their shifts are more than 3-hour longs.
- Just right
  - Just right for the parking situations we have today, long term it will send "be-back" customers to other downtowns...
  - How will it be enforced? Fines? Towing? Monetarily increase limit to park? We don't want to penalize the patrons to the point they will not want to visit Apex. We want to have spots for everyone who needs them for the whole day to be conveniently available, but the closest ones for shoppers/patrons.
  - Just right for construction phase but too much long term and perhaps too vast as it goes down south Salem both during construction and after. Again, not in favor after, just no other way to vote.
  - Just right, WITH the caveat of designating some of purple on Seaboard for unrestricted retail/restaurant employee parking.
  - But Seaboard could be 4 hours to allow for those who eat & shop.

**Question 6: Are there areas shown without parking time restrictions that should have them? Please specify:**

Summary of comments from information exchange:

- Five (5) commenters indicated the 80 remaining spaces (gravel lot)
- One (1) commenter included all areas shown in blue should have a four-hour limit.

Summary of comments from business-owner survey:

- A few 15-30 min spots designated in the Depot lot
- A few 15-30 min spots in the Saunders lot
- All downtown parking should have some time restrictions

- Commerce St should be limited to 2 or 3 hours
- Commerce street should also have restrictions- there are already a lot of private spots but there are at least 4 near Saunders that should be timed or those will not move all day M-F. Curious to know if preschool owns the spaces in front of their fence.
- With the businesses backing up to and facing Commerce street, I feel like a loading zone/short-term parking would be good there. Just a thought.
- Yes, Chatham street to prevent all day parking of employees who work on Salem St.
- I prefer to have a shuttle bus during the weekend or only on special festivals, from the blue zone to downtown Apex.
- No- we all gotta park somewhere and these side streets that lead into neighborhoods, those home owners - like with festivals need to realize that cars may very well be parked in front of their home and should not be ticketed or towed.
- Maybe consider parking meters
- We need some areas close to downtown with no restrictions.
- The 80 spots that will remain during construction need to be time limited to ensure the spots are used by patrons rather than employees or Town staff.
- Gravel part of Saunders lot.
- The lots with no restrictions could be used to store vehicles or abandoned vehicles. Maybe a 12-24-hour restriction for those.
- There should not be overly restrictive parking nearby. Rather there should be plenty of this parking option or else shoppers will be turned off to come to Apex because of this.

**Question 7: Are there areas shown with parking time restrictions that should not have them? Please specify:**

**Summary of comments from information exchange:**

- One (1) commenter suggested removing restrictions on Saunders Street (2.04)
- One (1) commenter suggested reducing restrictions on E Chatham Street (9.05, 9.06, 9.07)
- One (1) commenter suggested removing some restrictions on Seaboard Street for business employee parking.

**Summary of comments from business-owner survey:**

- All, we prefer no time restrictions and encourage longer time spent in downtown for economic purposes.
- Areas for store owners and employees should be given no time restrictions.
- Current building owners' private lots
- Employees working downtown need parking without restrictions, not just Town of Apex employees.
- Frankly the ancillary/side/feeder streets should not have time limits.
- Handicapped Parking
- Might have too much purple down South Salem during construction. Again, not keeping after construction.
- I believe Seaboard should be allowed for downtown Apex business employees.
- Entire area along Seaboard.



- Seaboard due to employees needing to park or offer some sort of employee parking close to the businesses.
- Seaboard St. should not have time restrictions.
- Yes, part of Seaboard needs to be reserved for retail/restaurant employee parking. Safety reasons, employee age/physical ability, and shifts that are longer than 3 hours.
- Yes, too late in the game to make those changes...

**Question 8: What other comments would you like to share?**

**Summary of discussion during information exchange:**

- Engagement process:
  - Request to get more input from business owners on parking mitigation.
    - Response: Another survey had not been planned, but staff will take this under consideration.
- Time restrictions and enforcement:
  - Statement that enforcement of time restrictions is essential and long overdue.
  - Request to consider a pilot program for time restrictions.
  - Request to consider paid parking to encourage turnover.
  - Question if Farmers Market would be exempt from the 2-hour restriction in Depot.
    - The draft Ordinance text includes a process for requesting an exemption for special events/special uses.
  - Statement that time restricted parking needs to include the gravel portion of the Saunders Lot. This is the bulk of spaces during construction.
  - Question about how eliminating restrictions on overnight parking helps with mitigation.
    - Staff clarified that these recommendations are to address a safety concern about people possibly driving while intoxicated if they are not allowed to park overnight and are not specific to mitigation.
  - Question whether Town employees would be exempt from time restrictions.
    - Response: Time restrictions would apply to everyone.
- Parking supply calculations, inventory, and parking deck:
  - Statements that calculations regarding new parking supply are inaccurate.
    - Seaboard Lot improvement did not create 48 new spaces as people were parking there before.
    - On-street parking was allowed before it was striped, so that should not be shown as new parking.
  - Statements that past parking inventories do not accurately capture current parking demand.
    - The last Parking Length of Stay Analysis was completed in August 2022. Prior parking studies were in 2019. August is a slow month for retail. January, February, and August are not the times to do this. May and holidays are a preferred time for a parking inventory.
    - Population has increased in Apex since the August 2022 parking study.
  - The Town should construct a parking deck. A portion of a parking deck could be designated for employees.

- Response: The, Downtown Plan considered a deck and found that a parking deck is not needed at this time, but recommended monitoring for the future. We need to find the right place and opportunity for a parking deck. This is still on the table for the future, it is just not the purpose of this project.
    - Business owners would be more willing to make sacrifices during construction for a parking deck.
  - Delay construction:
    - It is essential that downtown businesses not lose holiday season revenue – adjust construction schedule to avoid 4<sup>th</sup> quarter (September – December).
  - Pick-up/drop-off spaces:
    - Question if a drop-off/pick-up spot has been considered.
      - Response: Yes, two of these spaces are proposed on N Salem Street.
    - Request to provide these areas where you are not allowed to park.
    - Request for an additional drop-off space on Seaboard Street.
  - Transit:
    - Question about GoApex Route 1 ridership and if the funding for this service could be used for another purpose.
      - Response: Over 12,000 boardings last year – the first year of service. This year service has been about 30% over last year, month-to-month. Funding is 50% through Wake Transit. Mitigation strategies are intended to add to existing options.
    - Question about whether the planned GoCary Route 12 stop in front of Halle would take away additional parking.
      - Response: This bus stop will not take a parking space.

Summary of general comments on comment forms from information exchange:

- Five (5) comments about a parking deck:
  - Move forward with a plan for a garage at Town Hall? At Moore Street?
  - If you aren't going to do a parking deck now in Saunders Lot - approve the zoning for it now so it doesn't need to be revisited.
  - Build the Deck.
  - Please build a deck.
  - I vote for a parking deck with a level dedicated to employee parking.
- Five (5) comments about delaying construction:
  - Starting construction January 2025 is critical for downtown business survival.
  - Please consider delay of construction - or redo the whole design plan based on more current data.
  - Delaying project start to avoid disrupting fourth quarter holiday sales is critical for the survival of downtown businesses.
  - Strongly encourage considering the timing to not affect the holiday season.
  - Delay construction to January 1<sup>st</sup>.
- Five (5) comments or questions about proposed parking time limit restrictions:
  - Is the curved section labeled 2.08 still handicap parking?

- My employees are older and cannot walk several blocks to work. My concern is employee parking, my employees work shifts that are longer than three hours.
- 80 spots need time restrictions.
- Once parking is complete - not in favor of permanent timed parking in new Saunders Lot - only on Salem Street (green spaces). Employee may park other places now but could lose employees if over a year.
- Employee parking (designated) would be helpful.
- Two (2) comments about Town employee parking:
  - Could non-essential Town employees work remote during construction?
  - Town employees must be prohibited from parking in Saunders Lot during construction. Those remaining spaces are critical for patrons.
- Two (2) comments about accommodating drop-offs for transport-network companies (e.g., Uber, Lyft):
  - There is an opportunity to have designated Lyft/Uber pick up on curbs without parking spots.
  - Uber drop off/pick up spot.
- Five (5) other comments:
  - E-bikes can't carry purchases! Safety for bikes - Salem Street drivers go too fast.
  - Consider leasing CSX right of way along Elm Street (by the Methodist Church) to add parking like that added on Seaboard Street.
  - Could temporarily make side streets one way to create parking or valet space.
  - Need employee parking map.
  - My biggest concern is to ensure vendors of the Farmers Market can use the Depot lot for their entire market time on Saturdays. Right now, vendors are parking in the lot with their tents to keep from taking additional parking spaces from consumers. After parking construction, we would prefer to have full use of the lot for only vendor tents and have vendors park elsewhere - as the market grows. Thank you for all your efforts surrounding the constructions which are upcoming. It's truly appreciated.

Summary of other comments from business-owner survey:

- Employee parking
  - Allowing owners and their employees parking permits if they do not have their own dedicated parking spaces would be good if parking restrictions must be implemented, but if the town needs parking restrictions then more spaces should be considered.
  - I do have a lot of concern with the employee parking. I am concerned that having employee parking in a designated area that is a bit of a walk could impact the safety of me employees especially when it starts getting darker earlier. All of my employees are females and having them walking to their car at night for a good distance of a walk would be very concerning and could also affect how I am able to obtain and add more employees.

- We need to add parking for employees within walking distance and I need to add more lighting to the new parking that you guys created in the back of the bank and also signage so people would know to park there.
- Parking deck/additional parking
  - Other towns that we compete with have such structures, i.e., downtown Cary. Apex is being blind if we forget that there is up and coming competition for our business!
  - In the meantime, other temporary or even permanent lots should still be pursued. The phase in parking plan does not provide enough spots for the growth in vehicles in Apex, not to mention the surrounding areas to visit Apex.
  - Absolutely, Love the plans set out by the Town of Apex for downtown, I just hate to see the town spend the dollars today when more changes to our parking situation will have to be made within the next few years. I understand your budget restraints, yet I truly believe we have enough friends of Apex to help put a budget together that would include a beautiful parking deck in town.
  - The Saunders lot is an ideal location for a parking deck.
  - Add as many temp gravel spots as you can on the Saunders lot, removing shrubbery and grass where possible and order a parking deck that spans the gravel and paved areas. Then continue on with revitalizing Salem Street while waiting for the parking deck to be funded, ordered and installed. There was a rumor about Apex Baptist church allowing town parking on their lot and considering a parking deck for that location- I'm not sure if this is correct or helpful.
- Parking design
  - There is so much wasted space in the parking area. Get rid of the picnic area, it is a hazard.
- Delay construction
  - I believe we all want the parking project to happen and soon...I appreciate the significant work the town has done to create a smooth transition, but the timing is potentially devastating for these businesses. I would love to see the delay to January to allow our downtown businesses to survive this and all the other Downtown Plan-related construction projects. Thank you for taking the time to get this input!!
  - In order for us to be able to stay in business it is very important for there to be a delay in construction until after fourth quarter...
  - Respect small businesses in terms of timeframe
- Parking restrictions and enforcement
  - I feel that no matter whether it be a 2- or 3-hour time restriction that with a shortage of parking patrons will take a spot wherever they can get it and take their chances, if they come at all. Therefore, be consistent with the time restriction. Will enforcement make much of a difference? It may discourage coming at all. Therefore, plenty of no time restriction options nearby should be available.
  - Temporary spots in Saunders lot must also have time restrictions or there will be employees parking in them.

- Do not enforce the parking. The parking is bad enough downtown for staff and patrons. It leaves a bad taste in someone's mouth when you come downtown to engage and spend money and you are welcomed back to your car or mailbox with a parking ticket. It drives people away. Make money another way.
- In order for us to be able to stay in business it is very important for...parking to be metered to ensure that the available parking is actually available for patrons. I require my staff to park in the side or back church lot as it is, and it will be very helpful to have all businesses require the same and for there to be penalties when offsite parking isn't utilized.
- Shared parking
  - 2 of the biggest land owners in downtown are the Methodist and Baptist churches. They have 2 of the largest parking lots in all of downtown. Can their lots be used for general parking?
  - What is holding up negotiations with the Churches that have the parking available? How many spots do they have to offer? I would think this is an extremely important factor in this parking study at least temporarily, if not permanently.
- General/other
  - Please keep in mind all the businesses that will be very negatively affected by this. We're already preparing options for other locations if we need to move due to construction issues and I don't think anyone believes for 1 second all of this will be completed within 8 months.
  - Don't take away parking spots when the goal is to incrementally add parking spots. Not good for Apex residents or local businesses supporting them!
  - A robust, well-funded paid advertisement campaign should be a key component of the mitigation strategies
  - Is there any way, construction can be done at night only? 11pm to 8 am or 9 AM
  - Doing construction at night will avoid all traffic and parking issues
  - My suggestion is adding signage to the Moore Street lot and socialize it along with the walking ramp from Town Hall to downtown which many don't know about yet.
  - Add rental bikes which is in your master plan and move employees to dedicated spots.
- Outreach
  - Thank you for asking these questions and listening to the business community!
  - Thank you for coming up with strategies for us to consider and asking for input.