



Agenda Abstract

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Meeting Date:	Feb. 26, 2024
Department:	Community Services
Agenda Section:	Regular
Public hearing:	No
Date of public hearing:	N/A

PRESENTER/INFORMATION CONTACT

Shannan Campbell, Planning & Economic Development Manager

ITEM TO BE CONSIDERED

Subject: Downtown Parking Update

Attachments:

Sign Images – Construction Parking

Summary:

In response to concerns from downtown businesses regarding parking availability, staff will provide an update to the board and public on recent and planned future activities.

Downtown/West Hillsborough Business Owners Meeting (Jan. 22) – staff and Mayor Bell heard various perspectives from business owners regarding parking experiences.

Notable comments included:

- Concern over the sustained parking of construction vehicles in on-street spaces
- Lack of lighting in the alley parking lot between King and Margaret, general safety concerns for late night staff
- Frustration with the availability of lower-level parking in the county garage (specifically on court days)
- Ready availability of accessible parking for mobility-limited people

Specific follow-up actions include:

- Creation of temporary “construction parking” spaces in the town-owned alley lot
- Ordering of additional lighting for that lot as a pathway between the parking deck and the King Street area
- Staff will explore the question of individual rental of lower-level spaces in the county deck as requested
- Staff will work with communications on additional education of available parking, time limitations and alternative transportation choices

Ideas that need further exploration:

- Is the current 3-hour limit suitable, does it need to be reduced?
- What level of enforcement is desired by the community and what can the town effectively provide?
- Is there an appetite for more paid parking options, such as metered spaces? (This was brought up at the meeting but received generally negative feedback).
- Is it possible to increase police presence at night to address safety concerns for staff and customers walking to further parking areas?
- Potential of a shuttle to and from the parking deck?
- Additional bike parking availability?

Upcoming Parking Study

Town staff is working towards advertisement for a consultant to engage in a comprehensive parking study covering downtown and the West Hillsborough business areas. The study is intended to provide data on current parking inventory, trends in public parking, strategies for event parking, options for accessible parking and potential options for additional parking if needed. Staff is exploring options for technical assistance from Durham-Chapel Hill-Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Organization (DCHCMPO) staff on procurement and administration of funding for the project, which could be a significant relief for town staff.

Financial impacts:

Minimal cost for signage fabrication and installation so far. Depending on the board's interest in specific enforcement or other activities, there may be additional costs. The parking study is funded jointly by the town, Tourism Board, Tourism Development Authority and DCHCMPO and is already budgeted.

Staff recommendation and comments:

None.

Action requested:

Provide feedback on proposed plans and any additional follow-up items.