



**TOWN OF LOS GATOS  
COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT**

MEETING DATE: 08/20/2019

ITEM NO: 15

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DATE: August 15, 2019  
TO: Mayor and Town Council  
FROM: Laurel Prevetti, Town Manager  
SUBJECT: Provide Input to the Comprehensive Downtown Parking Study

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Provide input to the Comprehensive Downtown Parking Study.

**BACKGROUND:**

On March 19, 2019 the Town Council approved an agreement with Dixon Resources Unlimited (DIXON) for a Comprehensive Downtown Parking Study. The study scope includes a full review of existing conditions, past parking discussions and policies, outreach to stakeholders, data collection and analysis, and suggested strategies for managing parking in the future. DIXON will be developing a Parking Roadmap with an Action Plan for improving the Town's parking program. The Action Plan will recommend goals and strategies related to parking demand management, employee parking, residential parking, enforcement, loading zones, electric vehicle charging, high school area parking, shared parking, special events, wayfinding, and transportation demand management.

Previous parking studies, including a 2001 study, have found the need for additions and changes to the parking program. The 2001 Parking Management Study found that public parking spaces were heavily occupied (93%) at mid-day during the week and on Saturday. The study also found that more than 850 employees parked in prime parking spaces in the downtown core. The 2001 Study recommended a variety of parking management strategies to meet an 85% parking occupancy target. The study resulted in the addition of parking spaces, including spaces in parking lot 6 (behind the La Canada Building). Other recommendations included expanding the holiday valet program, allowing the leasing of private parking spaces to downtown employees, a residential permit program, establishment of 90-minute parking zones in the Main Street District, hiring of additional Parking Control Officers, and a two-phased

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Parks and Public Works Director

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Reviewed by: Town Manager, Assistant Town Manager, and Town Attorney.

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BACKGROUND (continued):

approach that maximized existing parking assets first before increasing parking supply.

DISCUSSION:

Since the start of the Comprehensive Downtown Parking Study in May 2019, a number of stakeholder meetings, surveys, and parking data collection efforts have occurred as summarized below. In the coming months, additional data will be collected, DIXON will develop a Parking Roadmap and Action Plan, and the study with recommendations will conclude in the late fall of 2019.

An initial round of stakeholder meetings were conducted in May and June 2019. Table 1 outlines the primary discussion topics by stakeholders during each meeting:

Table 1. Stakeholder Meeting Summary of Topics

Date	Meeting	Discussion Topics
May 1	Police Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enforcement staffing;</li> <li>• License plate recognition cameras and virtual permitting;</li> <li>• Centralized parking program management; and</li> <li>• Employee permit parking program.</li> </ul>
	Residential Parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parking garage development;</li> <li>• Expansion of residential permit parking program;</li> <li>• Mitigate high school student parking impacts; and</li> <li>• Parking enforcement.</li> </ul>
May 2	Chamber of Commerce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employee permit parking program;</li> <li>• Parking structure development;</li> <li>• Commercial loading zones;</li> <li>• Time limit length of time and hours of operation;</li> <li>• Paid parking;</li> <li>• Wayfinding signage; and</li> <li>• Shuttle program.</li> </ul>
	Town Manager, Community Development Director, and Planning Director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Modernization of the parking program;</li> <li>• Wayfinding signage;</li> <li>• Paid parking;</li> <li>• Valet parking expansion;</li> <li>• Parking municipal code updates; and</li> <li>• Local circulator shuttle.</li> </ul>

DISCUSSION (continued):

Date	Meeting	Discussion Topics
June 5	Los Gatos High School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Traffic flow and roadway capacity;</li> <li>• 90-min. parking stalls;</li> <li>• Parking structure;</li> <li>• Pedestrian overpass;</li> <li>• Permit parking policies; and</li> <li>• Shared parking.</li> </ul>

Parking occupancy and turnover data collection also began in May 2019. The goal of the data collection was to evaluate parking utilization trends for on- and off-street parking before and after the summer season and the One-Way Street Pilot. Samples of evening and weekend data were also incorporated into the plan. The data collection schedule is outlined in Table 2:

Table 2. Data Collection Dates and Times

Round*	Dates	Times
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wednesday, May 1</li> <li>• Friday, May 3</li> <li>• Saturday, May 11</li> </ul>	9AM, 12PM, 3PM, 6PM, 7PM
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wednesday, May 22</li> <li>• Friday, May 24</li> </ul>	9AM, 12PM, 3PM, 6PM
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wednesday, June 26</li> <li>• Friday, June 28</li> <li>• Saturday, June 29</li> </ul>	9AM, 12PM, 3PM, 6PM, 7PM
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wednesday, July 31</li> <li>• Friday, August 2</li> <li>• Saturday, August 3</li> </ul>	9AM, 12PM, 3PM, 6PM, 7PM
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wednesday, August 21</li> <li>• Friday, August 23</li> </ul>	9AM, 12PM, 3PM, 6PM
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wednesday, September 11</li> <li>• Friday, September 13</li> </ul>	9AM, 12PM, 3PM, 6PM

*\*Rounds 1 and 2 of data collection consist of a reduced study area. The remaining data collection rounds are an expanded study area that also include private parking supply. Trends will be utilized to make assumptions about occupancy and turnover rates.*

DISCUSSION (continued):

Initial high-level findings from the first three rounds of data collection include:

- Portions of Santa Cruz Avenue, University Avenue, and Main Street often reached capacity;
- There were typically parking spaces available 1 or 2 blocks from heavily impacted areas;
- Peak parking occupancy typically occurred around 12PM and 3PM;
- Parking occupancy was higher in the downtown commercial and civic center areas compared to residential streets;
- Highest occupied public lots typically included: Montebello, Park Ave, South Side, and Lots 2 through 6.
- Some private parking lots were underutilized
- The majority of vehicles were parked for less than 3 hours at a time on-street in the downtown commercial and civic center areas;
- The on-street civic center area parking was generally less than 70% occupied throughout the day with very few blocks reaching capacity during the data collection times; and
- Average daily occupancies in residential zones were around 40% each day and very few residential streets reached capacity during the day.

As data continues to be collected, more findings regarding overall trends and patterns will be realized. DIXON plans to assess the data along with stakeholder feedback to evaluate the perception of parking and identify strategies that will maximize the use of existing parking assets.

In addition to collecting parking data, DIXON visited a variety of downtown businesses and conducted employee surveys in-person on June 5, 27, and 28. A total of 77 employees were surveyed from 61 businesses. Key findings include:

- 93% drove a car to get to work;
- 10% parked on-street and 56% in a public parking lot;
- 92% parked within 1 block of their work;
- 72% would be willing to buy an employee parking permit if it meant they could more easily find a space to park;
- 81% think there is not enough parking downtown for customers;
- 50% think customers would not be willing to pay for parking, 36% think they would, and 14% are not sure.

DISCUSSION (continued):

Participants were also asked what they would do if they could change, fix, or improve anything about parking in Los Gatos. A variety of responses were given, with some of the most frequent responses including:

- Add more long-term parking options or increase time limits;
- Build a parking garage;
- Create more employee permit parking locations;

DIXON also developed a more detailed online survey to reach a broader audience. The Town promoted the online survey through social media platforms beginning mid-June and 326 responses have been collected to date. The majority of participants live in or near the Town and visit downtown multiple times per week with 20% of participants working downtown. Response highlights include:

Regarding their most recent visit to Downtown Los Gatos:

- Dining and shopping were the most common reasons for visiting downtown;
- Very few visits lasted more than 4 hours;
- The majority of participants took a personal vehicle to reach downtown;
- Zero participants took public transit to reach downtown;
- The amount of time it took to find parking was evenly varied, with a slim majority finding a parking space in less than 5 minutes;
- The majority found parking within 1 block of their destination; and
- The majority would not have been willing to pay for parking for a more convenient space.

Ease of finding of parking space was on average the most important factor when deciding where to park:

- The majority agreed that they would visit downtown more often for leisure activities if parking were easier to find.

In addition, the majority of participants believe that:

- The 2-hour time limit is not long enough for most visitors, but a 3-hour time limit is;
- There is not enough long-term parking downtown; and
- The Town should build more parking.

DIXON will continue to evaluate parking occupancy, turnover, and survey data to incorporate findings into the Parking Roadmap and Action Plan.

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SUBJECT: Provide Input to the Comprehensive Downtown Parking Study

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CONCLUSION:

This meeting provides an opportunity for the Council to offer feedback and direction regarding the Comprehensive Downtown Parking Study. Based on the Council's comments, DIXON will incorporate additional considerations into the study and prioritize recommendations according to Council's input. The draft report that results from the study will be presented to the Council in the late fall.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact as a result of this report.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT:

This is not a project defined under CEQA, and no further action is required.