To: Meridian City Council
Re: MDC *Destination: Downtown*-Parking Element
Dear Councilmembers,

In July 2025, a work session was held to discuss the parking element of *Destination: Downtown.* The work session consisted of an overview of the approach, such as the technical parking inventory and use survey, the opinions of the parking subcommittee, and the guidelines used to determine the recommendations. Recommendations are split among five different categories, given a high-level price estimate, and placed into a temporal prioritization including near-term, mid-term, and long-term.

Today's Work Session
Today, we are here to discuss the parking plan, clarify any misunderstandings or technical questions, consider the recommendations for priority timing and direction to staff, and what, if any, changes should be considered to the final draft.

As a reminder, the committee sought a parking system that achieved the following characteristics:

- *Convenient and Welcoming,*
- *Well signed and safe,*
- *Forward-thinking and responsive,*
- *Viable, and*
- *Consensus-based.*

The guiding principles used to shape plan recommendations included the following listed by topic:

Downtown Parking Management Guiding Principles

Priority Users

1. Customers: Preserve the most convenient on-street parking for the priority users—fostering a system that encourages turnover and easy access for short-term stays of 2 hours or less.

2. Employers: Preserve the most convenient on-street parking in the neighborhood streets around downtown for the priority users—residents rather than customers, employees, and full-day parking needs.

3. Mix of Employees: The off-street system (public and private) should serve a mix of customers, employees, and employers, and remain flexible to respond to changing needs as downtown develops.

Optimize Utilization: Manage the public parking system using the 85% occupancy standard to inform and guide decision-making.

Active Management

Shared Off-Street Parking: Encourage shared parking in parking facilities that are underutilized within the downtown. This will require an active partnership with owners of private parking supplies.

Information Systems

Branding & Communication: Building on past parking analysis, expand parking branding and communication system for the downtown to link parking assets and provide directional guidance, preferably under a common brand or logo.

Monitor & Report Utilization: Implement performance measurements and reporting to facilitate decision-making and inform policy changes.

Safety: Routinely review and evaluate parking and supporting pedestrian infrastructure to create a safe, walkable environment that ensures safety standards are being met for the current use patterns and anticipated future growth.

Safety & Events Concerns

Events: Meridian experiences a number of small and large events throughout the year, which results in spillover parking in adjacent neighborhoods. This adds to congestion, parking scarcity, and general safety concerns.

Financial Viability

Fiscal Stewardship: All parking operations must be financially sustainable, including investment in new off-street parking in lots or garages. Life-cycle cost analysis should be undertaken for any parking structure analysis.

City & MDC: These agency roles in providing public parking are listed in priority order and includes: Accommodating customer/visitor access downtown; Provide (in partnership with the private sector) reasonable access for downtown employees; and facilitate residential and/or guest access in neighborhoods immediately adjacent to downtown.

Roles & Coordination

Public Sector: Public employees' parking should lead by example where the city directs employees to park in specific parking lots identified for their use, mitigating conflicts with customer parking.

Stakeholder Support: Ensure that a representative body of affected private and public constituents routinely informs decision-making.

Analysis Takeaways

The most significant finding of the parking analysis and plan is that parking in the traditional downtown code is adequate for the time being. However, to ensure parking is not a contentious issue now or, in the future, certain management and operation recommendations should be considered. Furthermore, though some of the strategies do have budget implications or enforcement components, the recommendations do not include major financial commitments like a publicly funded parking garage or parking meters-both of which have been challenging within the Treasure Valley in recent years. Maintaining an adequate supply of downtown parking is attainable even as conditions change and parking demand increases. To make certain, adopting parking plan recommendations or similar iterations, and implementing them over the suggested timeline horizons will optimize spaces, minimize conflicts, and help residents, business owners, and property owners thrive in the downtown landscape.

The parking plan is organized by timeframes and management strategies.

Recommended timeframes range from 0-12 Months to 48+ Months, and include strategies such as Policy and Code, Management and Administration, Residential Parking Operations, Downtown Parking Operations, and Communications and Outreach. Recommendation cost estimates range from <$15,000 to >$100,000. Below is a summary table from the parking plan for illustrative purposes.

Parking within Destination: Downtown

The following pages include the specific recommendations contained within *Destination: Downtown.* Most immediate strategies involve existing guidelines, policies, and established boundaries. Some of the strategies go beyond governing policies and address consistency with respect to signage. The key point is that the parking element of *Destination: Downtown* did not include the parking conditions outside of the downtown city core. The focus for parking was the traditional downtown areas and immediately adjacent neighborhood streets.

Table 1: Parking Management Strategy Summary Table

ID	Strategy	Immediate	Short-Term	Mid-Term	Long-Term	Relative Cost	Relative Effectiveness	Correlated Strategy Implementation
	Scale	♦	♦	♦	♦	$$$$	•••••	
P1	Formalize Guiding Principles	♦				$	••••	P2
P2	Adopt Parking Code Updates			♦		$	••••	P1
P3	Define Parking Management District Boundaries	♦				$	••••	P2
P4	Periodically Review Parking Citation Fees		♦			$	••	D4
P5	Develop Policy for Residential Permit Program		♦			$	•••	P2
M1	Formalize Ongoing Parking Management Position		♦			$$	•••••	M2
M2	Establish Inter-Agency Communication Protocols	♦				$	•••••	M1
M3	Continue to Convene the Parking Subcommittee	♦				$	•••••	M2
M4	Implement Routine Data Collection		♦			$$	••••	M3
R1	Protect Residential Parking – Establishing an RPPZ			♦		$	••••	P2, P5, M5
R2	Implement License Plate Based Permitting in RPPZ				♦	$$	•••	P5, R1
D1	Standardize Time Restrictions	♦	♦			$	•••	P3, D3, M2
D2	Reduce the Number of No Limit Stall in the Parking Management District	♦	♦			$	••••	D1, M2
D3	Install Consistent Time-Limited Parking Signage	♦	♦			$$$	••••	C1, C2, D1
D4	Initiate Periodic Parking Enforcement		♦	♦		$$	••••	P4, C1
D5	Stripe or Maintain Striped On-Street Parking		♦	♦	♦	$	•••	P3, D3
D6	Assess ADA Compliance in Public Parking Facilities			♦	♦	$$	••	D9
D7	Facilitate Shared Use Parking Agreements		♦	♦	♦	$	•••	D2, D3, D4
D8	Install Additional Bike Parking		♦	♦		$$	•••	D3, C1
C1	Enhance Parking Information Website	♦	♦	♦	♦	$	••••	D1, D2, D3, D4, D8, C2, C3, C4
C2	Expand "Downtown Brand" – Develop a Logo for Downtown Parking		♦			$	••••	D3, C1, C3
C3	Rename Public Off-Street Lots		♦	♦		$$	•••	D3, C2
C4	Introduce a *Customer First* Parking Program		♦	♦		$$	•••	C1, C3, D3

ID	Strategy	Implementation Timeframe				Relative Cost	Relative Effectiveness	Correlated Strategy Implementation
		Immediate	Short-Term	Mid-Term	Long-Term			
	Scale	♦	♦	♦	♦	$$$$	●●●●●	
P1	Formalize Guiding Principles	♦				$	●●●●	P2
P2	Adopt Parking Code Updates			♦		$	●●●●	P1
P3	Define Parking Management District Boundaries	♦				$	●●●●	P2
P4	Periodically Review Parking Citation Fees		♦			$	●●	D4
P5	Develop Policy for Residential Permit Program		♦			$	●●●	P2
M1	Formalize Ongoing Parking Management Position		♦			$$	●●●●●	M2
M2	Establish Inter-Agency Communication Protocols	♦				$	●●●●●	M1
M3	Continue to Convene the Parking Subcommittee	♦				$	●●●●●	M2
M4	Implement Routine Data Collection		♦			$$	●●●●	M3
C1	Enhance Parking Information Website	♦	♦	♦	♦	$	●●●●	D1, D2, D3, D4, D8, C2, C3, C4
C2	Expand "Downtown Brand" – Develop a Logo for Downtown Parking		♦			$	●●●●	D3, C1, C3
C3	Rename Public Off-Street Lots		♦	♦		$$	●●●	D3, C2
C4	Introduce a *Customer First* Parking Program		♦			$$	●●●	C1, C3, D3
R1	Protect Residential Parking – Establishing an RPPZ			♦		$	●●●●	P2, P5, M5
R2	Implement License Plate Based Permitting in RPPZ				♦	$$	●●●	P5, R1
D1	Standardize Time Restrictions	♦	♦			$	●●●	P3, D3, M2
D2	Reduce the Number of No Limit Stall in the Parking Management District	♦	♦			$	●●●●	D1, M2
D3	Install Consistent Time-Limited Parking Signage	♦	♦			$$$	●●●●	C1, C2, D1
D4	Initiate Periodic Parking Enforcement		♦	♦		$$	●●●●	P4, C1
D5	Stripe or Maintain Striped On-Street Parking		♦	♦	♦	$	●●●	P3, D3
D6	Assess ADA Compliance in Public Parking Facilities			♦	♦	$$	●●	D9
D7	Facilitate Shared Use Parking Agreements		♦	♦	♦	$	●●●	D2, D3, D4
D8	Install Additional Bike Parking		♦	♦		$$	●●●	D3, C1

Strategies

Immediate strategies include those highlighted in **red** above and on the following page. Strategies listed for immediate implementation are generally low-costs and involve internal discussions and agreements between City staff, ACHD and MDC staff, and communication with the downtown businesses and property owners. The only exception to cost in the strategy to install consistent time-limited parking signage. However, that strategy is envisioned to stretch over the coming few years, which should reduce any on-time cost.

Many of the remaining strategies suggested for immediate implementation concern the consistency of time. This means ensuring all zones and allotted parking time is applied clearly, consistently, and in a highly visible way. In some instances, this may mean installing more signs or updated signs, and in others, it may be about reinforcing the message displayed on existing signs.

The main objective of all immediate actions is to ensure that the parking indicators and policies for downtown Meridian are clear to all users, so as not to create confusion and to make eventual policy enforcement as easy as possible.

Council Actions

All of the individual strategies and their suggested order of operations are ultimately up to the City of Meridian. Questions that need answering include:

1. Is the list and implementation timeframe generally agreeable?

2. Does staff have the direction and resources needed to carry out the suggestions?

3. Are there additions, modifications, or deletions that should be considered?

4. Outstanding concerns or questions that still need to be satisfied before adoption?

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