

DRAFT



**DOWN
AUSTIN TOWN
PARKING STRATEGY**

BRIEFING BOOK

**DOWN
AUSTIN TOWN
ALLIANCE**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

PROJECT STEERING COMMITTEE

Charles Heimsath, Chair, Downtown Austin Alliance Board
Annick Beaudet, Austin Transportation Department
Greg Canally, Austin Financial Services Department
John-Michael Cortez, Office of Mayor Adler
Steven Halpin, Texas Facilities Commission
Steve Grassfield, Austin Parking Enterprise
Todd Hemingson, Capital Metro
Tim Hendricks, Downtown Austin Alliance Board
Jeff Howard, Downtown Austin Alliance Board
Cole Kitten, Austin Transportation Department
Chi Lee, Gensler
Steve Oliver, Chair, Planning Commission
Martin Zamzow, Office of Travis County Commissioner Daugherty

DOWNTOWN AUSTIN ALLIANCE STAFF

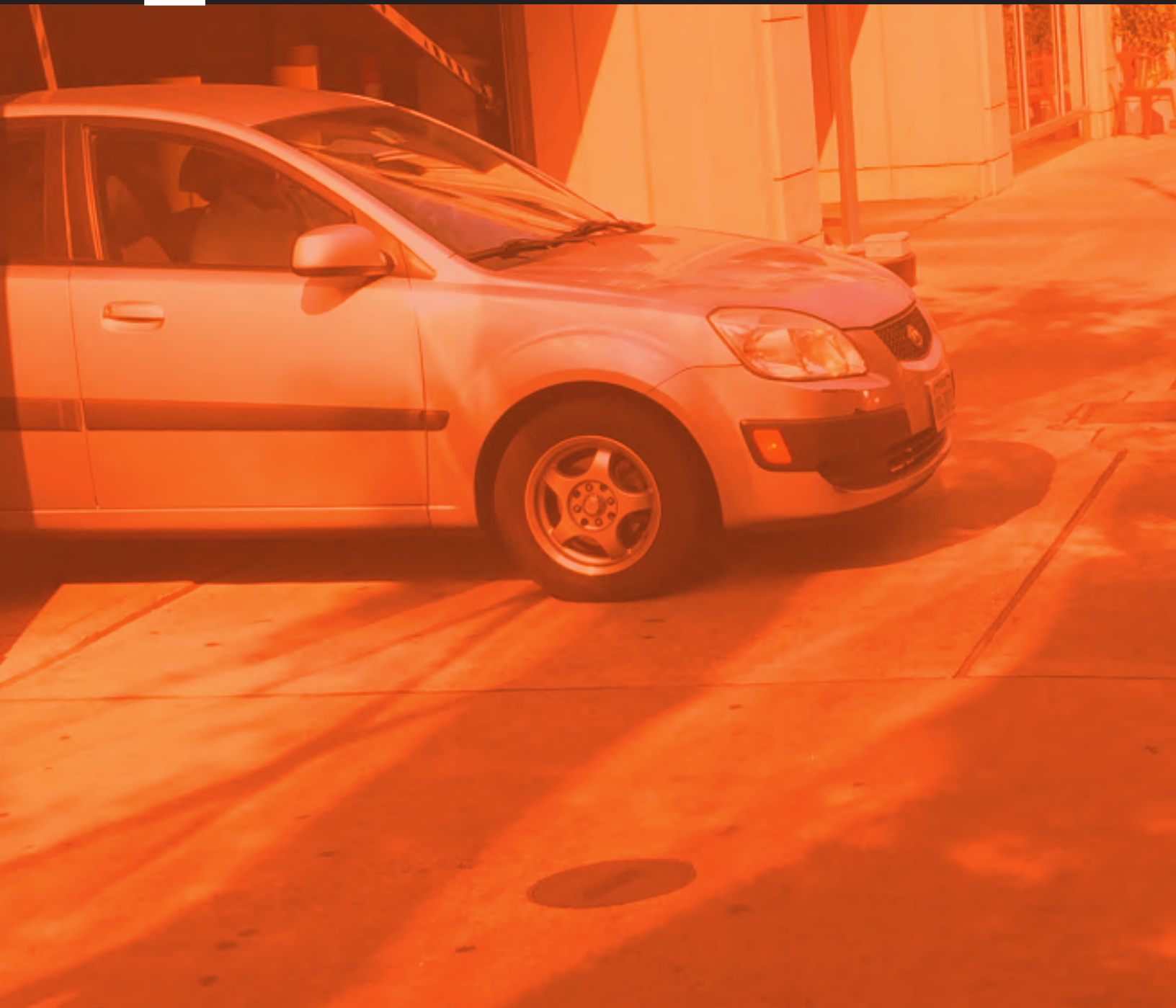
Dewitt M. Peart
Melissa Barry, Project Manager
Molly Alexander
Jenell Moffett

CONSULTANT TEAM

Nelson\Nygaard Consulting Associates
Asakura Robinson Company
DIXON Resources Unlimited
McCann Adams Studio

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WHY STUDY DOWNTOWN PARKING?

As one of the fastest growing U.S. cities, Austin is experiencing significant change. The downtown is rich with entertainment and historic uses that have made Austin a world-class destination. Office growth is occurring at a fast pace, as employers look to capitalize on downtown's economic vitality. Downtown is also home to emerging and historic residential neighborhoods.

Rapid growth has challenged downtown's continued success. With emerging mixed-use districts and new large residential projects, large developable sites are quickly disappearing. Future development will more likely occur on smaller sites, which are financially constrained. The day-to-day experience and convenience of parking has also emerged as an issue, as many different uses compete for parking throughout the day.

As cities grow and evolve, parking often emerges as the window into difficult conversations about how a place can and should change. Austin has established an ambitious vision for its downtown. Its ability to achieve that vision will be determined by many factors, but parking is central to the final outcome.

It is important to study parking in Downtown Austin because:

- **Parking is about access.** The future of Downtown Austin is a multimodal one that seeks to provide more transportation choice by making it as easy as possible to not drive. Efficient parking management can help to support reduced reliance on single-occupancy vehicle trips.
- **Parking is about congestion.** Parking management is one of the best tools to reduce driving and demand for parking. Downtown can accommodate more people and jobs, while reducing congestion, but only if parking is managed in a way that better communicates its real costs.
- **Parking is about economics.** Parking takes up a lot of land and is costly. Providing parking has tradeoffs and impacts how much new office, retail, or housing the downtown can develop. Evaluating these tradeoffs is crucial to future growth plans.
- **Parking is about housing affordability.** Parking is very expensive to build, operate, and maintain. As such, parking impacts the cost of housing. Providing the right amount of parking, and managing it effectively, can help Austin provide more housing choice and improve affordability.
- **Parking reflects larger mobility trends.** Vehicle ownership is trending downwards, as younger generations have fewer licenses, buy fewer cars, and enthusiastically embrace new technology and forms of mobility. The role of autonomous vehicles



is uncertain, but their impacts will likely be profound. Downtown Austin needs to embrace these trends and think strategically about the future of parking.

The Downtown Austin Alliance (DAA) has initiated this study to comprehensively tackle the issue of parking in downtown. The DAA and its partners know parking must be addressed to ensure that downtown is active, vital, accessible, and diverse. The Downtown Austin Parking Strategy is a comprehensive, forward-thinking effort to improve parking in the downtown area.

Use of the Briefing Book

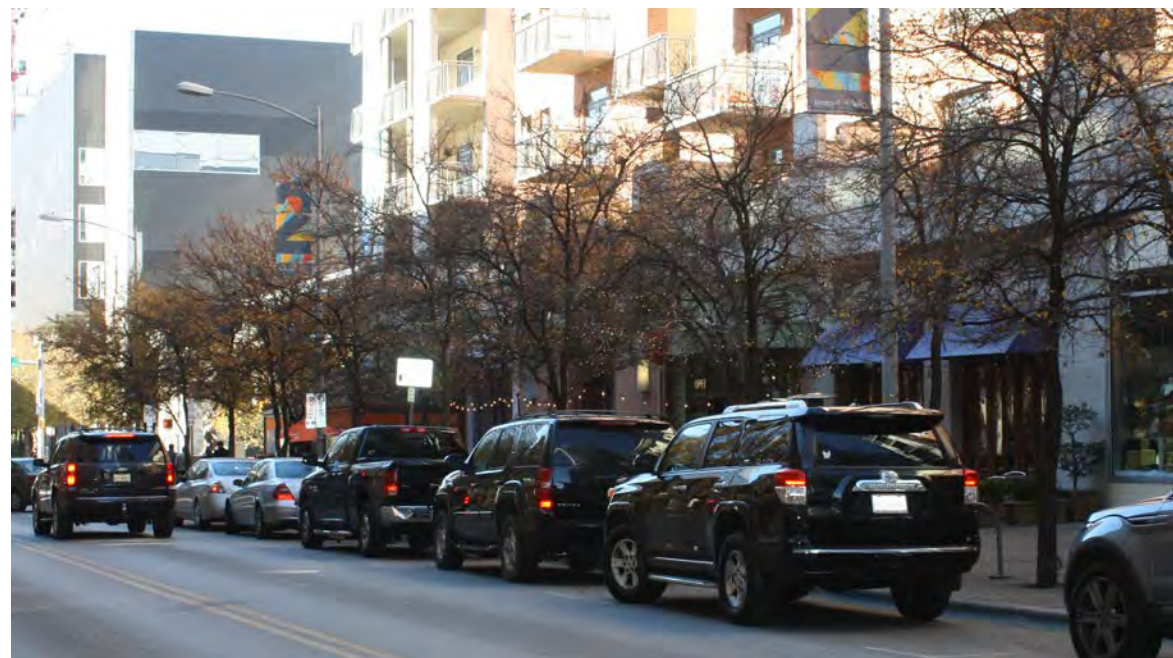
This Briefing Book is the first major deliverable for the Downtown Austin Parking Strategy. It summarizes the existing work to date, including stakeholder interviews, community feedback, data analysis, and documentation of key issues and challenges.

A primary focus of the Briefing Book is the summary of the number of parking spaces and level of parking demand for downtown. This information is crucial in order to ensure that ongoing conversations are informed not just by perception, but real data.

The information in the Briefing Book establishes a shared understanding of what works well and what can be improved in regards to parking. It allows for a robust and productive discussion of potential improvements and sets the framework for the next stages of the project.

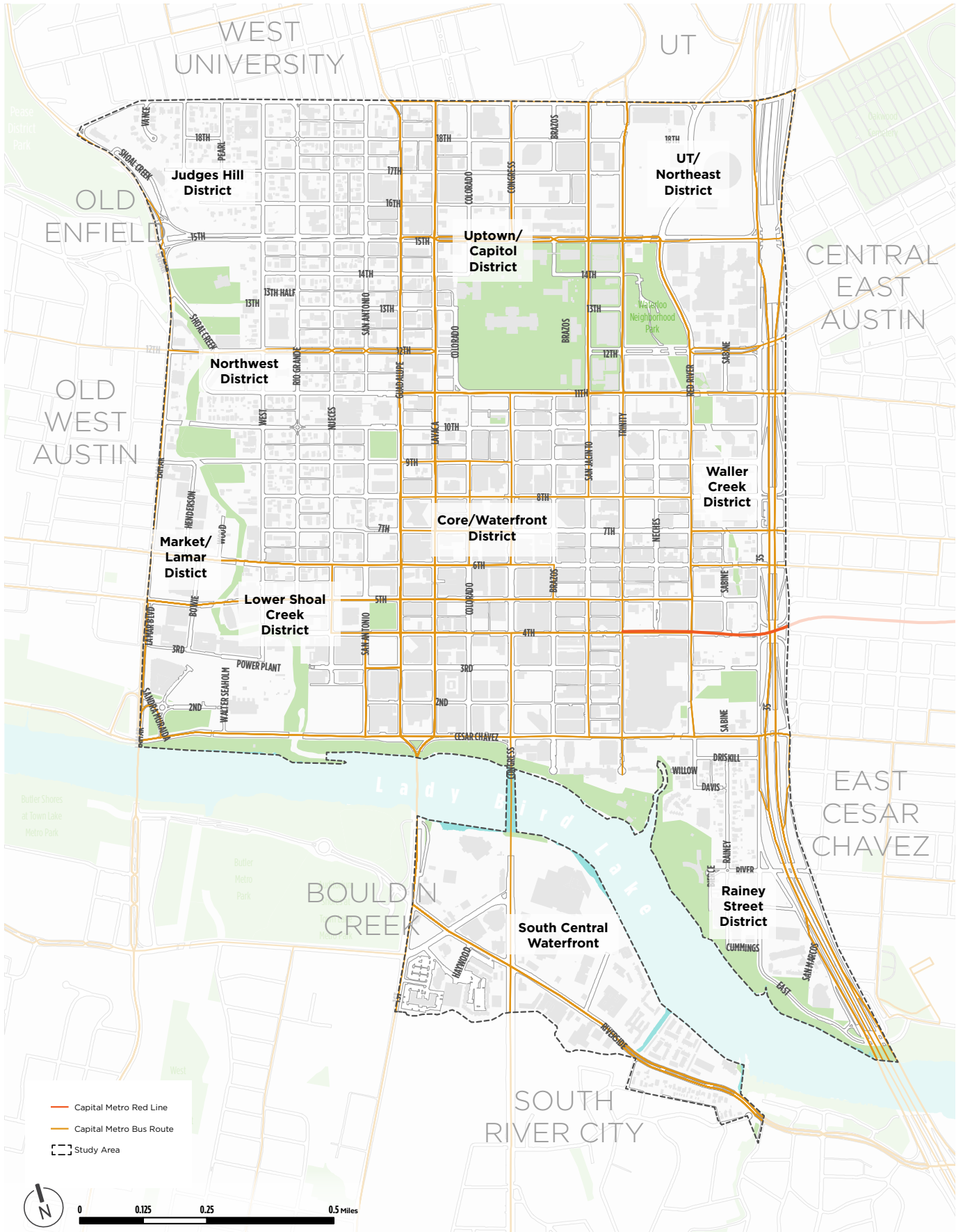
No recommendations are proposed as part of the Briefing Book. The Briefing Book is one piece of many that will be developed over the course of this study to ensure that Austin has the best possible set of recommendations going forward. Additional analysis is already underway, and multiple inputs from stakeholders and the public are still necessary to arrive at any conclusions.

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Parking management is one of the best ways to reduce driving and congestion.

FIGURE 1
Project Study Area



The information in the Briefing Book establishes a shared understanding of what works well and what can be improved in regards to parking.



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WHAT IS THE PROJECT APPROACH?

The Downtown Austin Parking Strategy is a comprehensive effort that will document the current parking system and parking behavior, solicit feedback from the community, and examine expected future parking needs based on Austin's rapid growth.

To establish an understanding of the issues and opportunities, the project team conducted a detailed review of past, recent, and ongoing plans. In addition, the project team conducted numerous stakeholder interviews, held a community workshop, and created an online survey to solicit feedback on key parking challenges and desired areas of improvement.

A major step was creating a baseline of the current state of on-street, off-street, public and private parking assets. This analysis included an inventory study, based on a combination of existing data, stakeholder input, and field surveys. The project team also collected utilization information for public and private on- and off-street parking through stakeholder surveys, existing data sets, and field visits.

The second phase of the project will focus on two key elements. First, the team will analyze the parking data in the context of downtown's future growth and review how this growth is shaped by demand and supply. Second, the team will develop strategies to improve the downtown parking system, further informed by a best practices review and additional community outreach.

Project Goals and Objectives

Project goals and objectives were developed to ensure a shared understanding amongst stakeholders about the existing and future role of parking in downtown. The goals and objectives also inform project analysis, will shape development of study recommendations, and establish a foundation for future parking management in downtown.

Austin's downtown parking system should be:



Supportive, fostering broader community goals identified through ongoing and previous planning processes



Multimodal, recognizing that parking is one element of an accessible downtown



Available, managing parking to ensure a consistent parking experience



Cost-effective, maximizing existing parking and making fiscally sustainable investments



User-friendly, prioritizing customer convenience and ease of use



Adaptable, facilitating ongoing improvements as the downtown evolves

Project Goals and Objectives

GOAL	OBJECTIVE
SUPPORTIVE	Develop and foster a parking system that supports Austin's larger vision for a thriving downtown that enhances quality of life for residents, visitors, businesses, and employees.
	Use parking policy and management to achieve a balance of larger objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Retain the positive qualities of downtown's vibrant and unique culture o Support the tourist industry, entertainment venues, and major events o Support existing retail and the eclectic mix of local stores o Attract new and diverse retail and businesses to downtown Austin o Accommodate existing and future office, retail, commercial, and housing development
	Develop and foster a parking system that supports the many ongoing and future planning efforts across downtown's diverse districts, neighborhoods, and communities.
	Develop and foster a parking system that supports existing land uses and unlocks downtown's development potential.
MULTIMODAL	Recognize that some people will need a place to park downtown and that a well-managed parking experience is fundamental to downtown's ongoing success.
	Develop and manage parking as one element of Austin's efforts to improve overall downtown mobility and access.
	Develop and manage parking as a means to reduce congestion from single-occupant vehicle trips.
AVAILABLE	Manage parking with the primary goal of consistent and equitable on- and off-street availability.
	Utilize policies and management tools to achieve a target availability rate.
COST-EFFECTIVE	Maximize use of existing parking.
	Share public and private parking to the greatest extent possible.
	Add new parking supply in the most strategic and cost-effective manner possible.
	Right-size the parking code to ensure adequate parking and development flexibility.
	Use parking revenue to support the citywide parking system and overall mobility improvements.
USER-FRIENDLY	Prioritize a convenient parking system that is seamless to navigate and easy to understand for all users.
	Clearly communicate and promote information about parking options, programs, and improvements.
	Utilize technology strategically to communicate travel and parking information across multiple platforms.
	Make it easy to park once and walk, bike, take transit, or share rides to multiple destinations.
	Ensure that the parking experience is safe and comfortable.
	Enforce parking rules and regulations fairly and consistently.

GOAL	OBJECTIVE
ADAPTABLE	Clearly define roles and responsibilities, and empower staff through policy, tools, and data to effectively implement, operate, and manage the parking system.
	Utilize new technology platforms to operate and manage the system through streamlined data collection and processing.
	Use data consistently to inform decision making, enhance community understanding, guide system investments, and inform program adjustments.
	Position downtown to effectively respond to changes in parking behavior from improved mobility options, autonomous vehicles, and the sharing economy.

Project Steering Committee

The Downtown Austin Parking Strategy is guided by a diverse Steering Committee, including representatives from both the public and private sector. Members include:

Charles Heimsath, Chair, Downtown Austin Alliance Board

10 Annick Beudet, Austin Transportation Department

Greg Canally, Austin Financial Services Department

John-Michael Cortez, Office of Mayor Adler

Steven Halpin, Texas Facilities Commission

Todd Hemingson, Capital Metro

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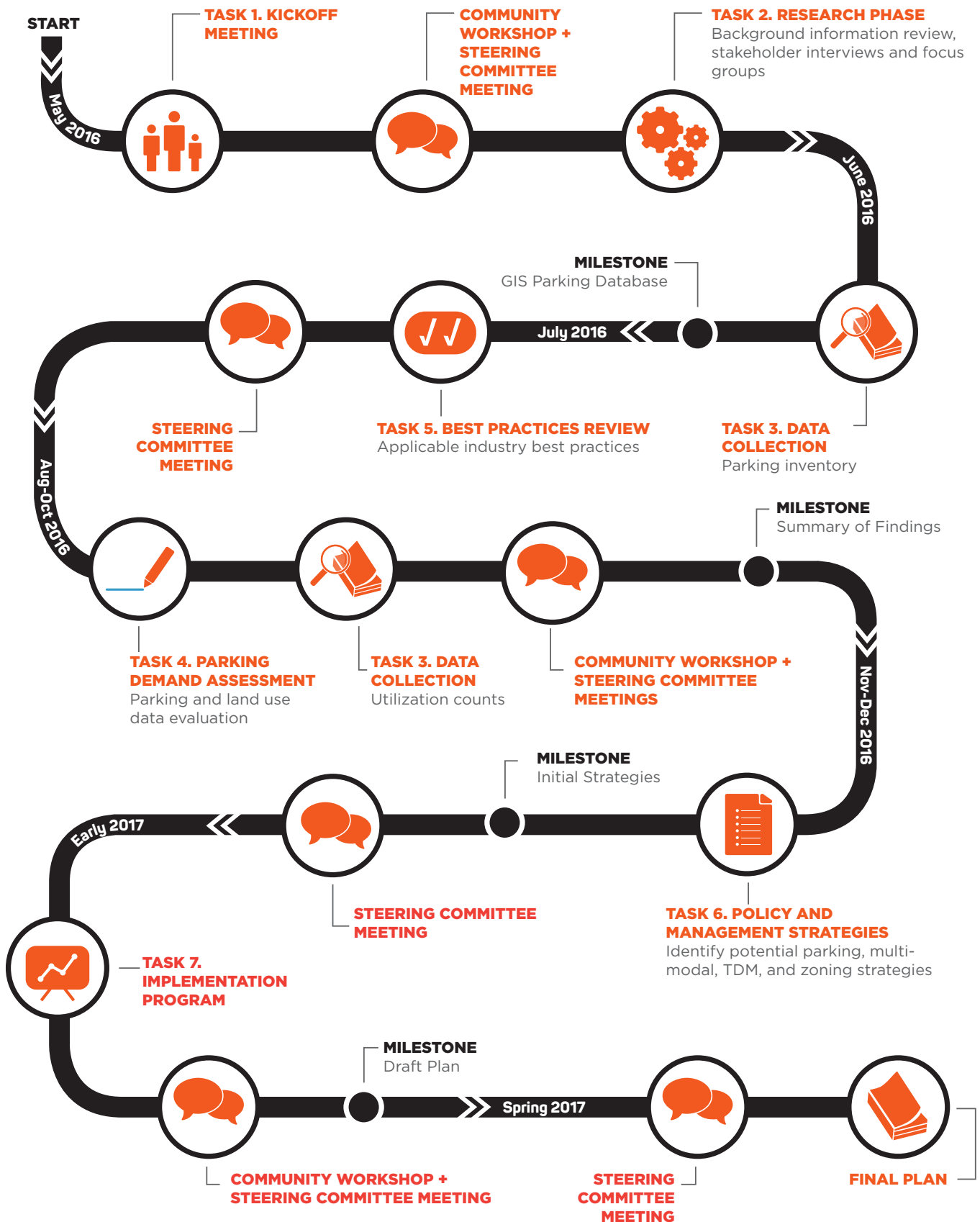
Melissa Barry, Project Manager, Downtown Austin Alliance

Community Outreach

This study includes a comprehensive outreach program designed to be robust, inclusive, and innovative. The input will be used to confirm and refine a cohesive project vision, as well as provide input at key stages in the project to guide the development of final recommendations. The major components of the outreach plan include:

- Project Steering Committee
- Project website
- DAA newsletters
- Media advisories and press releases
- Online community survey
- Three community workshops
- Stakeholder interviews with local and regional agencies, property owners, developers, and other community groups
- Presentations to elected bodies

PROJECT TIMELINE & KEY MILESTONES



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WHAT IS THE PLANNING CONTEXT?

Downtown Austin is a dynamic place. Its growth and change is not random, but the result of careful, comprehensive, and deliberate planning processes.

In order to effectively analyze parking conditions, and make informed recommendations, it is essential to review the existing planning context. This study should learn from past and present planning work, respect and reflect the outcomes of those efforts, and use that work to establish a shared understanding of the most essential parking issues and opportunities.

This chapter includes a brief overview of the most relevant studies and plans and an assessment of the Land Development Code as it relates to Downtown parking.

Relevant Studies and Plans

A. Downtown Parking Study (2009) – Study of parking in Downtown Austin, including inventory and demand analysis. The study concluded that parking supply is usually adequate to accommodate typical demand, but that event demand can result in parking issues.

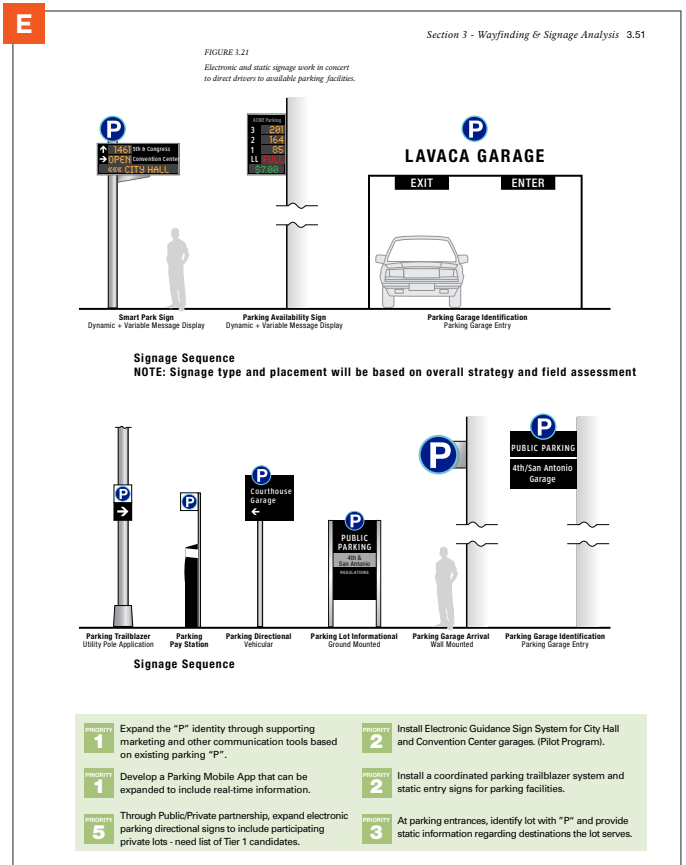
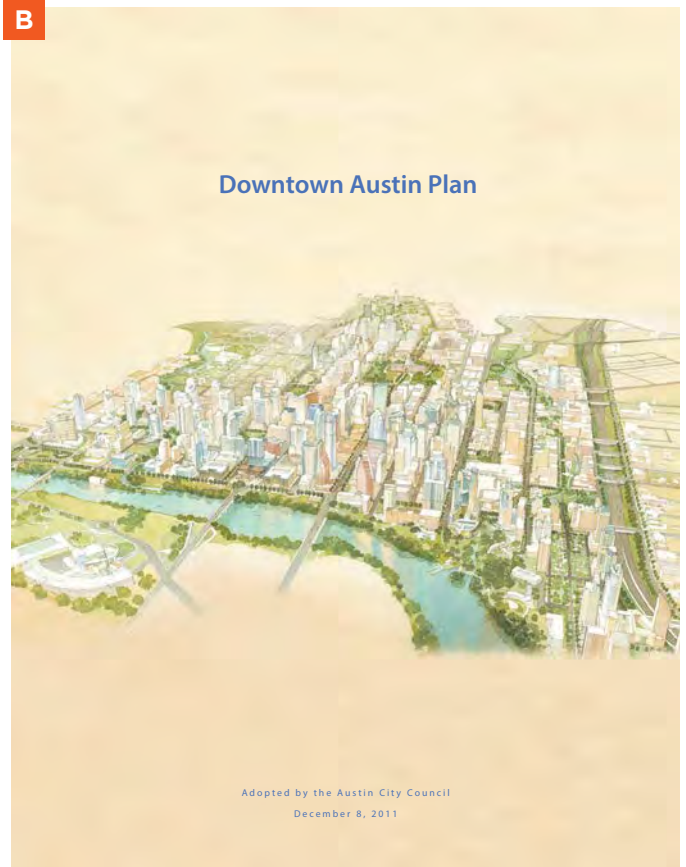
B. Downtown Austin Plan (2011) – 25-year vision plan which serves as a guiding document for future development and policy-making. The plan includes several parking-related recommendations focused on shared parking and ways to reduce vehicle demand. Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan (2012) – Guide for Future Growth focuses on issues at the citywide scale and provides high-level policy language for issues such as livability, transportation, housing, energy, and the environment.

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C. Travis County Central Campus Study – Phase II (2012) - Vision for County Campus envisions “an active, pedestrian-friendly urban district” and proposes an additional 1.9 million gross square feet of development by 2035.

D. UT Austin Campus Master Plan (2012) - Long-term vision for a dense Central Campus with surface lots replaced by new development. The plan recommends parking supply to be kept at a “practical minimum.”

E. Downtown Austin Wayfinding Master Plan (2013) – Wayfinding program intended to enhance the experience for all downtown users. Parking is a key focus of the plan, with an emphasis on a diverse platform of signage, mobile applications, and real-time information. Implementation of plan recommendations is ongoing.



F. UT Austin Medical District Master Plan (2013)

- Defines the vision for a new medical district on the southern edge of UT. A key plan principle is to minimize the conflicts between pedestrians and motor vehicles. Significant new parking construction is proposed.

G. Downtown Parking Management Study (2014)

- Analysis of City of Austin employee parking by time-of-day at seven parking garages. Observations indicated high demand during the day, with low demand in the evenings.

H. South Central Waterfront (SCW) Initiative (2014) / SCW Vision Framework Plan (2016)

- The SCW Initiative recommends investments to establish a pedestrian-friendly, accessible, and affordable district. The Vision Plan proposes new development with consolidated parking, as well as reduced parking requirements combined with mobility projects and programs.

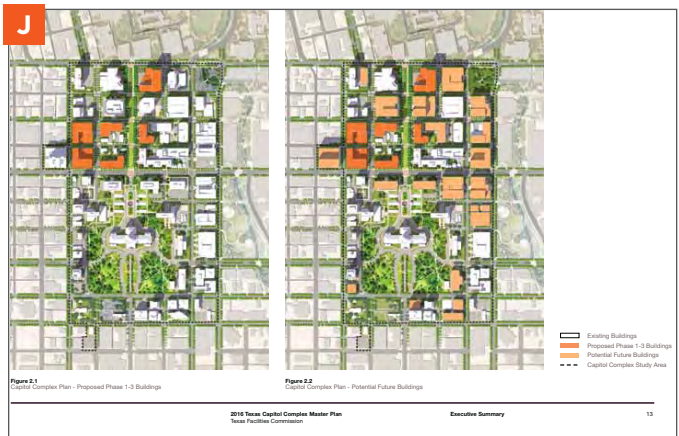
I. Austin Convention Center Long Range Master Plan (2015)

- A vision plan for how the Convention Center will expand and develop. The preferred option would increase the meeting space by 65,000 square feet and add a below-grade parking garage and service docks.

J. State of Texas Capitol Complex Master Plan (2016)

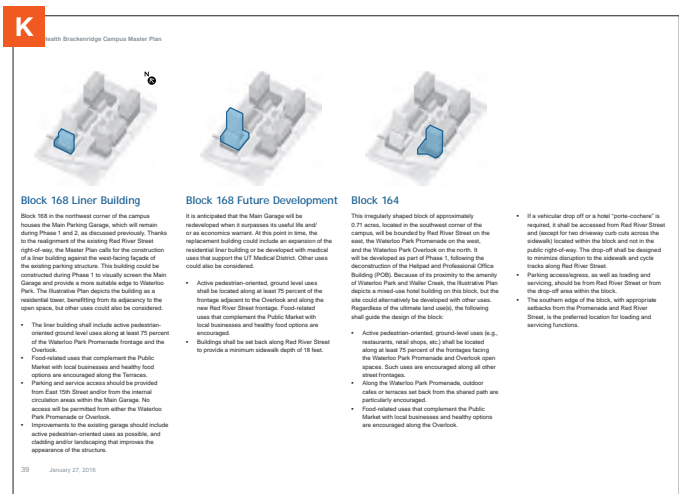
- Guiding document for the future growth and development of the Capitol and other state offices. The plan identified potential sites for development, including surface parking lots and parking garages. Transportation Strategy Recommendations (2016) - High-level strategic plan to enhance transportation management strategies to accommodate population and economic growth without creating more traffic

congestion. Includes eight priority actions over the next two years.



K. Central Health Brackenridge Campus Master Plan (2016)

- Vision for the future development of the area, calling for the developer to work collaboratively to create an area-wide mobility and parking plan to help reduce vehicle trips and on-site parking supply.



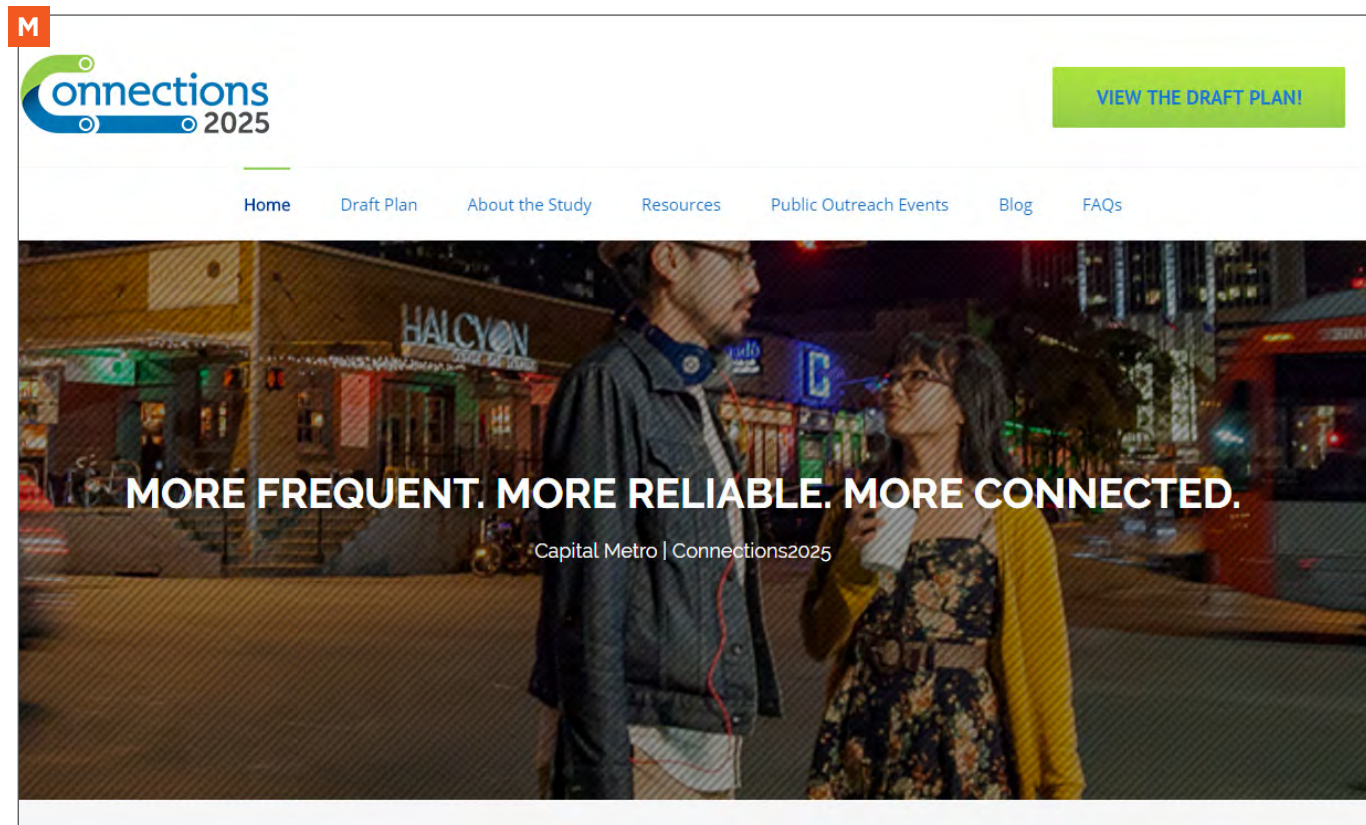
L. Austin Strategic Mobility Plan (Ongoing)

- City-wide effort to develop goals, objectives, and actions for near- and long-term transportation investments. Focus is on programs, projects, and performance metrics to improve system efficiencies, manage demand, and add capacity for all modes.

M. Capital Metro Connections 2025 (Ongoing) – Assessment of existing and future transit conditions and needs. Service recommendations are intended to increase ridership through network redesign and operations, develop a core transit network, and create a more efficient regional transit system.

N. Rocky Mountain Institute – City of Austin Partnership (Ongoing) – Partnership with the Rocky Mountain Institute, City of Denver, and City of Austin to address transportation issues through technology and innovation.

O. CodeNEXT (Ongoing) - Citywide initiative to revise and update the City’s Land Development Code. Process intends to modify the land use code to be consistent with the City’s goals and vision for the future and to address critical issues.



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Land Development Code

Austin’s parking supply is developed and managed through a diverse set of regulations and policies. In particular, Article 7, Chapter 25 of the Land Development Code (LDC) and Chapter 9 of the Transportation Criteria Manual (TCM) regulates the provision and design of off-street parking and loading in Austin. Included below is a summary of key provisions.

ZONING DESIGNATIONS

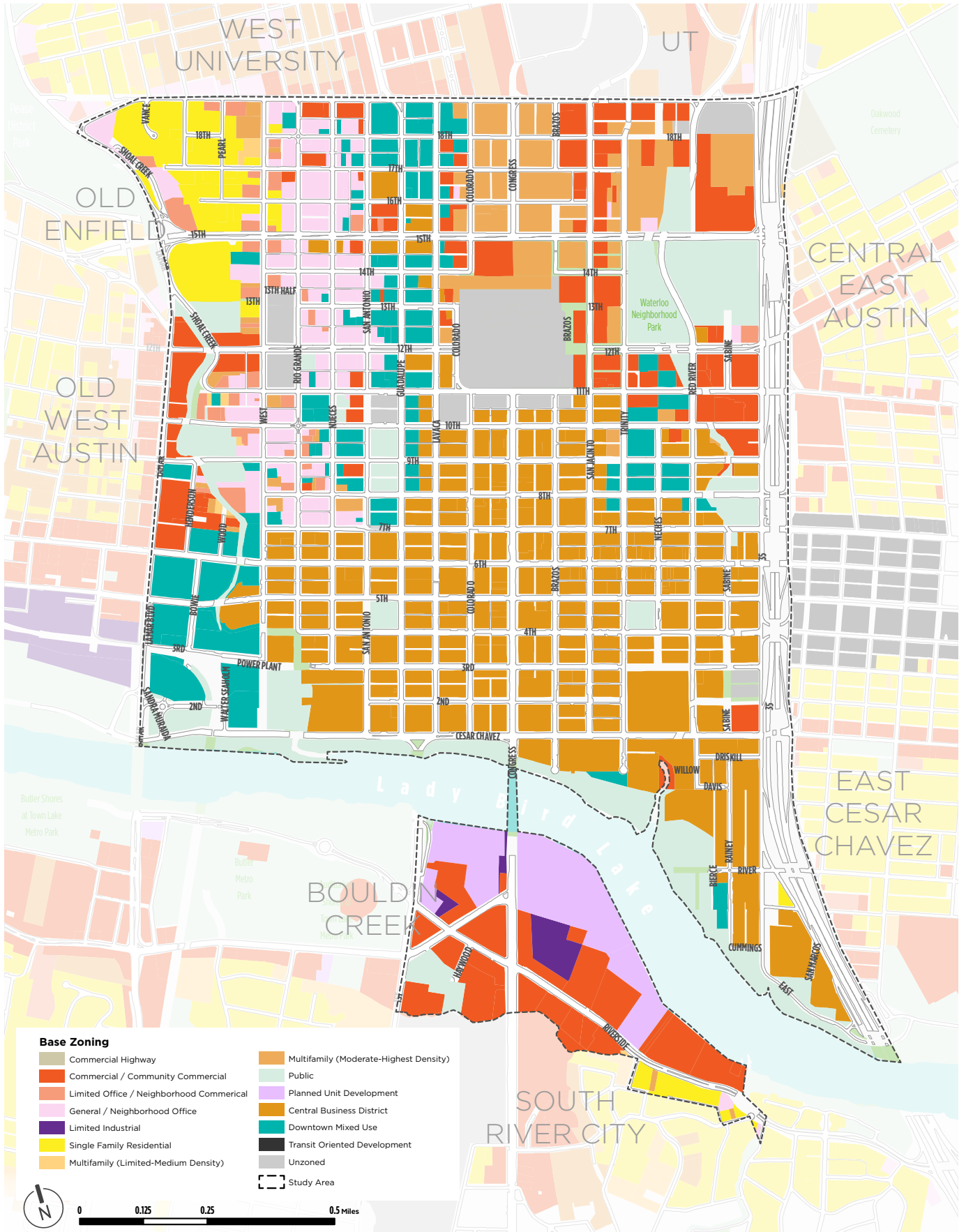
The project study area and its base zoning districts are shown on the following page. The primary designation in the study area is the Central Business District (CBD), which occupies much of the downtown core, and the Downtown Mixed Used (DMU). Commercial, General Office, and Commercial Highway occupy much of the land area north of 11th Street and west of San Antonio Street. Single-family residential occupies much of the northwest corner of the study area.

MINIMUM PARKING REQUIREMENTS

The table below summarizes the city's minimum parking requirements for selected land uses. Within the CBD and DMU, new development is **not required** to provide off-street parking.

Land Use	Vehicle Parking	
	Per Unit, Room, Seat or Person	Per 1,000 SF
Residential		
Single-Family	2 per unit	-
1-Bedroom Unit in Multi-Family or Condo	1.5 per unit	-
2+ Bedroom Unit in Multi-Family or Condo	1.5 per unit + 0.5 for each addl BR	-
Non-Residential		
Business, Retail, Administrative, Financial, Personal, and Professional Services	-	3.64
Hotel or Motel	1.1 per room	-
Theater	0.25 per seat	-
Medical Offices		
In Medical Building	-	5
In Mixed Use or Shopping Center	-	3.64
Restaurant		
Less than or equal to 2,500 sq ft	-	10
More than 2,500 sq ft	-	13.33
No dining area provided	-	3.64
Cultural Services	-	2
Hospital	0.25 per bed + 0.50 per peak shift employee	-

FIGURE 1
Land Use and Zoning



MAXIMUM PARKING REQUIREMENTS

Development within the CBD and DMU can only build up to a maximum of 60% of the minimum required spaces. The maximum amount of vehicle parking can be waived if:

- All spaces are provided in a parking structure
- The number of spaces does not exceed 110% of the minimum spaces required (increases greater than 110% are subject to specific approval)
- Bicycle parking is increased proportionally

REDUCED PARKING DISTRICTS

In addition to the CBD and DMU districts, several other areas in the city allow for reductions in minimum parking requirements. These include:

- Reduced Parking Area - 80% of standard amount. Area is generally bound by Loop 360, Highway 183, and Highway 71, not including properties in the CBD, DMU, or TOD districts.
- Central Urban Redevelopment (CURE) Area - For properties that are not located in the CBD or DMU zone, but located in the CURE area, the parking requirements are reduced to 80% of the minimum required under the standard code. For historic landmarks or other properties in a historic district, the minimum is 50%. The CURE area is generally bounded by Martin Luther King Blvd., Lamar Blvd., Lady Bird Lake, and along the 6th, 7th, 11th, and 12th Street corridors.
- University Neighborhood Overlay (UNO)



KEY CONCEPT

MINIMUM PARKING REQUIREMENTS dictate how much parking must be built, depending on a development's size and land use category. They are often set based on a particularly influential industry guidebook, *ITE Parking Generation*, which uses a limited number of suburban sites to generate an average parking demand for each of more than 100 land use categories. The presumption that parking demand is the same for every building with the same land uses is often inaccurate. Instead, density and diversity of nearby land uses, the price of parking, and the convenience of transit service are key determinants of parking demand.

Minimums increase the cost of housing and construction by forcing developers to dedicate a portion of a limited building envelope to car storage, at great expense - between \$20,000 and \$40,000 per space. The provision of each additional space increases rents by an average of \$225 per month¹. Assuming typical development costs, the provision of a parking space per unit can increase development costs by 12.5%, or 25% with two parking spaces².

¹ www.reinventingparking.org/2015/06/how-much-does-one-parking-spot-add-to.html

² www.vtppi.org/park-hou.pdf

District - Commercial uses are not required to provide parking if they are less than 6,000 square feet or located on segments of Guadalupe St. or 24th St. Multi-family residential can provide 40% of the standard parking requirement if: 1) car sharing is provided or 2) 10% of units are affordable for at least 15 years. All other uses must provide at least 60% of the standard parking requirement.

- Transit Oriented Development (TOD) District - All uses must provide 60% of the parking spaces required by the code.

ADDITIONAL PARKING REDUCTIONS

Additional reductions in minimum parking is allowed across the city, up to 40%, under the following conditions:

- 10% reduction for provision of shower/ changing facility (depending on square footage)
- Per space reduction for adjacent on-street parking
- 10% reduction for preservation of trees
- 20 space reduction per car sharing vehicle provided

OFF-SITE PARKING

All or a portion of required off-street parking may be provided off-site, subject to certain conditions regarding the location of parking relative to the use and zoning district. Off-site parking is allowed primarily for office, religious, and educational uses and must be within 1,000 feet of the primary use.

SHARED PARKING

The sharing of parking is allowed per the guidelines described in Chapter 9.6 of the TCM. Approval of shared parking is subject to minimum project size and submittal of a shared parking study using the Urban Land Institute's "Shared Parking" methodology. Ongoing monitoring and reporting of parking occupancy is required. Shared parking reductions are not typically considered or discussed in the CBD or DMU because of their reduced parking requirement.

REQUIREMENTS FOR CHANGES OF USE

Per Chapter 9.7 of the TCM, a change of use (i.e. from a retail to a restaurant use) is subject to an assessment of required parking spaces. In general,

a change to a use with traditionally higher parking demand requires the provision of additional spaces to make up the parking "deficit."

PARKING MANAGEMENT DISTRICTS

Parking Benefit Districts (PBD) are allowed to be formed, subject to meeting certain conditions. PBDs allocate a percentage of the funds from paid parking to fund improvement to walking, bicycling, and transit in the district. There is currently one benefit district in the West Campus Neighborhood.

A Parking and Transportation Management District (PTMD) can be formed by City Council, subject to meeting certain conditions. In PTMDs, parking revenue can fund traffic and mobility improvements. Two PTMDs currently exist: in the Mueller District and in the East Cesar Chavez neighborhood.

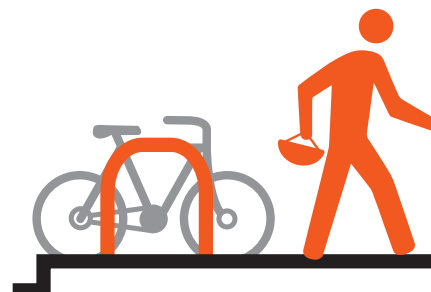
BICYCLE PARKING

Bicycle parking is required per Appendix A of the LDC and its installation is subject to certain design requirements. A minimum of 50% of all required bicycle parking shall be located within 50 feet of the principal building entrance.

BICYCLE PARKING WITHIN

50'

OF BUILDING ENTRANCE



Summary of Key Findings

- There is a significant number of past and present planning efforts for downtown. In general, all of these plans reinforce a downtown vision that prioritizes ongoing vitality, economic growth, multimodal access, and reduced reliance on single-occupancy vehicle trips.
- All of the planning efforts acknowledge the key role of parking in downtown Austin, and most recognize that parking can and should be improved with new management approaches.
- The plans reveal a tremendous amount of future growth. From a parking perspective, most of the plans address that growth by seeking to add a significant amount of parking.
- Within each plan, there is limited thinking of building or managing parking from a unified “downtown” perspective. The plans for new parking supply largely envision that supply as targeted to a specific or limited set of users. This “silo” approach does not reflect the vision for a “park-ounce” downtown, where parking is shared extensively.
- The existing Land Development Code (LDC) parking code includes many industry best practices. These include: no or reduced minimum parking requirements, maximums within the downtown core, reductions for transit-oriented development and multi-family housing, and the use of parking districts to improve parking management and fund mobility improvements. The code generally offers a framework for a downtown that prioritizes biking, walking, ridesharing, and transit over single-occupancy vehicle trips.
- Areas for potential revision were identified within the existing LDC. These include:
 1. The existing LDC, including the table of minimum parking requirements, is complex. There are likely opportunities to streamline and simplify portions of the parking regulations to improve its ease of use and further incentivize desired outcomes.
 2. The code is silent on a number of typical policy tools, including in-lieu fees and transportation demand management (TDM). Both of these policy levers work to improve development flexibility and reduce the overall demand for parking.
 3. The existing regulations around shared parking appear to be onerous and likely do not do enough to incentivize the sharing of parking assets.
 4. The requirement to make up the parking deficit for changes of use could also be impacting development flexibility, especially for uses on smaller parcels.
 5. Some of the requirements, such as monitoring and reporting on shared parking and car sharing, could be overly burdensome and limiting use of these tools.
 6. The maximums in downtown are flexible, allowing developers to quite easily provide more than the 60% “maximum.” A “hard” maximum on parking in the CBD and DMU is worth further discussion.

4



CONSENS

ParkX
Pay By Smartphone

- 1 Download Free App
- 2 Enter Parking Zone
- 3 Select Duration
- 4 Pay By Smartphone

AUS1
No Smartphone? No Problem. Call or Text 'Park' to 818-888-8888

EasyParkUSA
wise parking solutions

AUSTIN ZONE 1

Duncan Industries
INSERT COIN OR PARKING CARD TO DISPLAY TIME PURCHASED

HOW IS DOWNTOWN PARKING MANAGED AND OPERATED?

A parking management program spans the entire system, including all spaces and how they are regulated, perceived, and priced. In a well-managed parking system, different users can easily find the spaces that they need, and perceive parking to be easy, comfortable, and convenient.

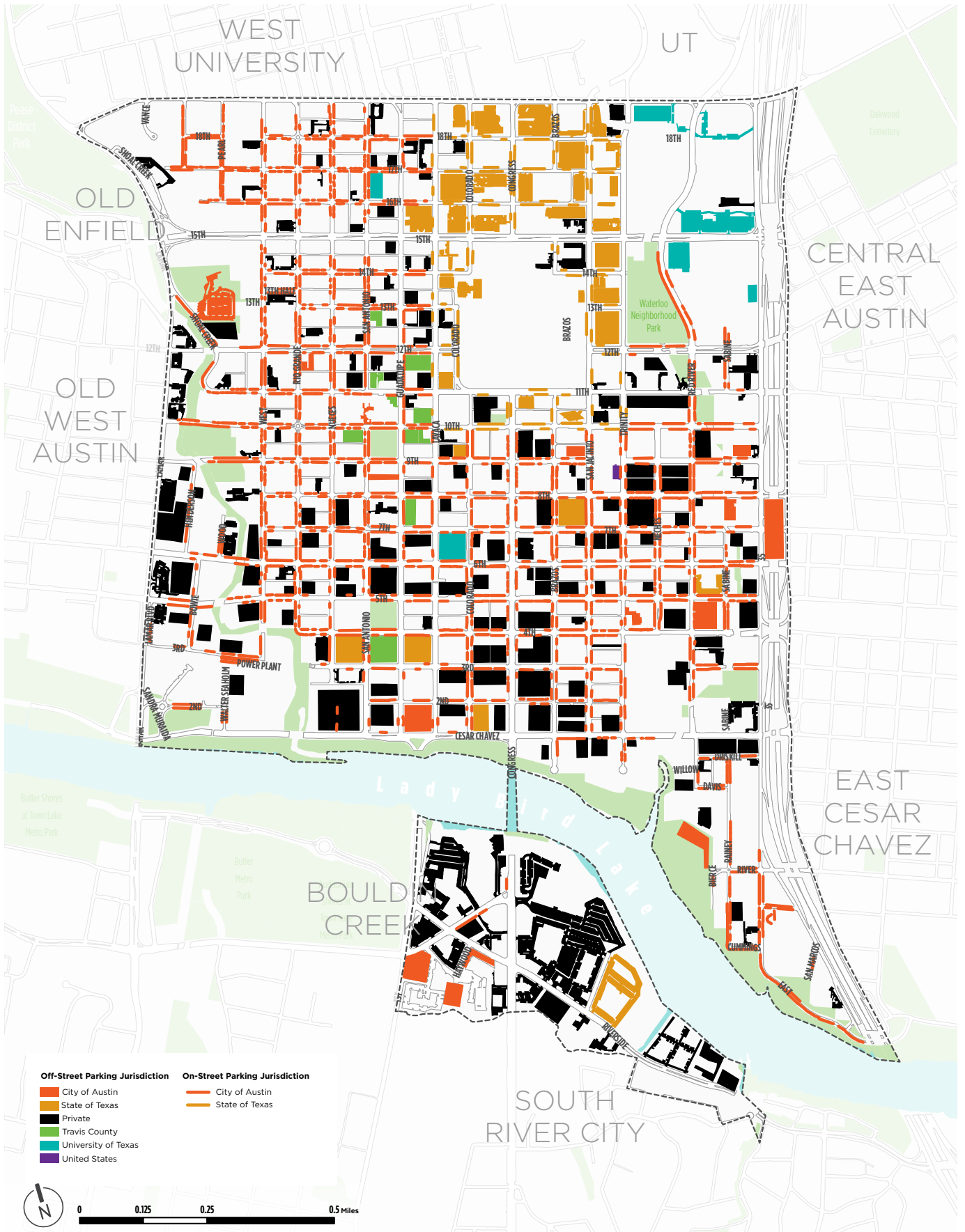
This is difficult to achieve in a dynamic downtown like Austin, and requires coordinated tools such as wayfinding, carefully calibrated pricing, easy-to-use payment systems, and intuitive regulations. More importantly, effective parking management often requires a wide range of entities to work together, as the motorist does not typically care who controls a given parking space, only whether that space is available and convenient to park in.

This chapter provides a summary of how regulations, payment systems, and governance affect the user's parking choices and the system as a whole.

Parking Operations and Management

There are many entities that contribute to management of the parking system as a whole in Austin; 64% of parking is privately owned while various government bodies own the remaining 36%. The City of Austin manages most on-street parking in the study area (88%), with the exception of the on-street parking around the State Capitol.

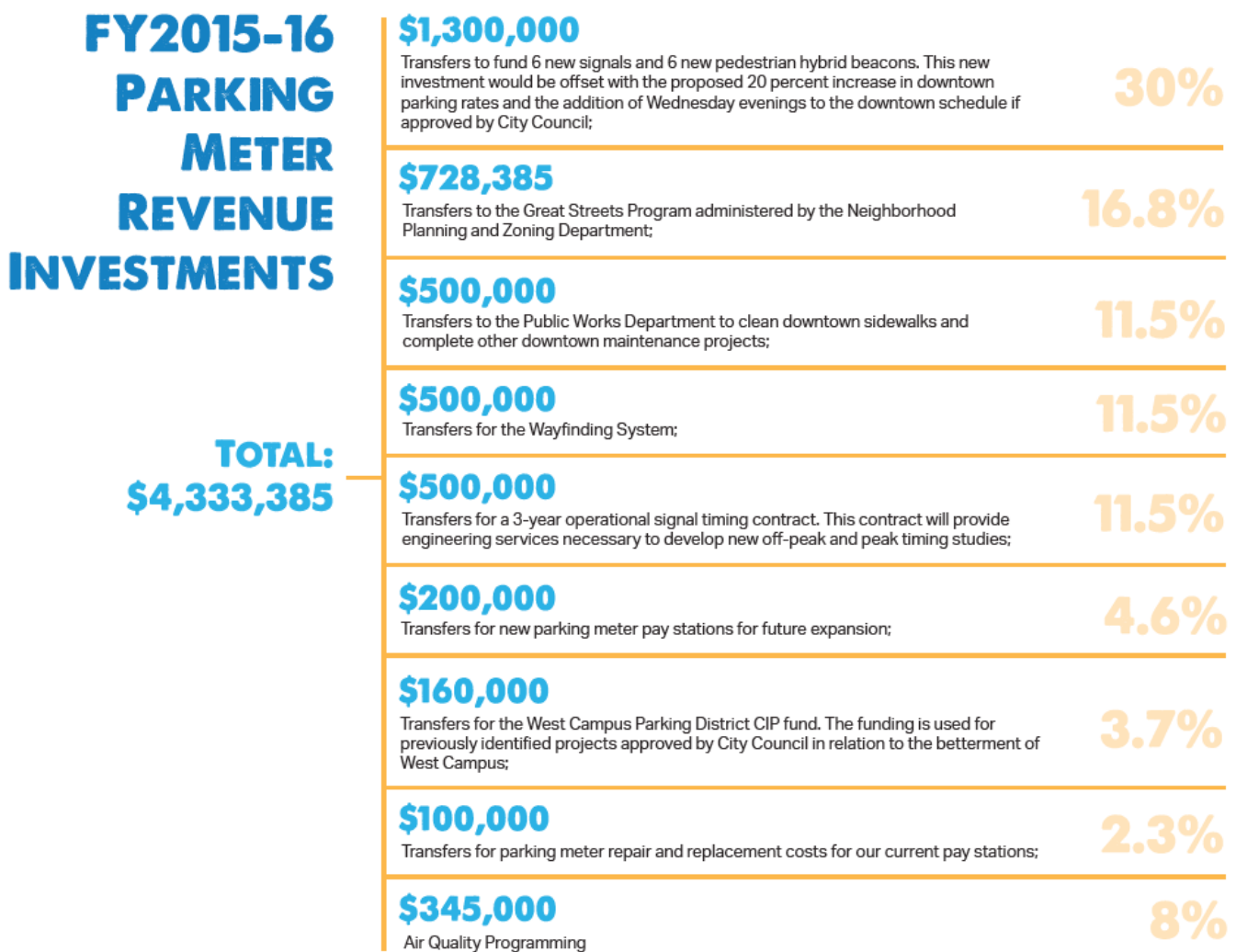
FIGURE 1
Parking Jurisdiction



PARKING ENTERPRISE

The City's Parking Enterprise (the Enterprise) manages most on-street parking in the study area and recently took over the management of some City-owned structured parking.

Revenues from parking, ground transportation permits, and resident parking permits go back into the Enterprise Fund, although citation revenue goes to the General Fund. City policy is to dedicate 40% of revenues to support other multimodal programs, such as Great Streets projects and wayfinding. This reinvestment is a national best practice, as it recognizes that parking is one part of the mobility system to, from, and within downtown. It also represents a customer-service rather than revenue-based approach, where users are paying into improvements that not only improve parking, but reduce overall parking demand.



Overall, the structure and goals of the Parking Enterprise allow it to effectively manage the parking that it controls for a positive customer experience, although barriers exist to further enhance management. For example, the municipal code allows the City engineer to set regulations and make technology choices, so the Enterprise can be flexible and respond to demand patterns.¹ However, dynamic adjustments of parking prices, a key to creating availability, is not an approved municipal policy and there are potential legal issues to navigate with such a policy.

As a result, on-street prices are low compared to market demand and corresponding off-street prices, which means that on-street parking can be scarce as users seek out this cheap resource. Nevertheless, the City was recently able to raise the hourly rate for the first time since 2004, from \$1.00 to \$1.20. Since 2010, the Enterprise has led a citywide upgrade of thousands of meters to kiosks that accept multiple forms of payment, as well as an in-car payment system (see Chapter 8). Payment technology can be a frustrating barrier to parkers – often it is not the price but the payment requirements that drivers find most onerous. The new payment technologies lower the barriers for drivers and allows for simple, easy payment.

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The Enterprise has also worked independently and cooperatively to provide additional information related to parking locations and availability, with significant results. The City Hall parking garage will soon have variable signs on it reporting the number of parking spaces available as part of an overall wayfinding effort. In addition, the City provides all meter data to ParkMe, a private company that publishes real-time availability online. Users can go online and review where parking may be available at any given time using this information, which helps reduce frustration with the system as people understand exactly where to go to park and what to expect when they arrive.

The Enterprise does much more than operate parking and has several programs in effect to address employee parking concerns, parking in special districts, and transportation demand management. However, within the current system, the Enterprise has minimal interaction with parking controlled by other entities, which makes up a significant portion of Austin's supply.

¹Austin Municipal Code, 12-3-5

PARKING ENFORCEMENT

- Parking enforcement is run and implemented **by capable and dedicated staff**. There is a deep understanding of the issues and opportunities related to enforcement, as well as a consistent effort to provide officers with the right tools.
- Multiple stakeholders indicated that there is a **need to improve enforcement** of parking regulations in downtown. Many articulated that the system can be easily “gamed.”
- Areas for improvement are largely related to **availability of resources and a clear, consistent policy framework** to empower staff to ensure compliance. Key enforcement issues that surfaced include:
 - Consistent **violation of time limits** (see Chapter 7). Of particular concern are construction workers and employees arriving early in the morning and parking all day long.
 - **Low citation rates** that provide limited financial incentive to comply. Citation rates for common violations are less than many off-street rates.
 - Limited authority within the Parking Enterprise to **boot or tow vehicles**.
 - Difficulty in **filling open staff positions**, which impacts ability to effectively enforce in all areas.
 - Effective policies for **managing disabled parking** placards, which allow people to park for free for as long they want, thereby impacting on-street availability.
 - Significant allocation of resources for **event management** and operations.
 - **Limited use of data** to inform or target common violations or behaviors.
 - **License Plate Recognition (LPR)** is an increasingly popular enforcement tool for municipalities, as it reduces administrative costs and significantly improves compliance. LPR is not currently employed in Austin.

PARKING ENTERPRISE PROGRAMS

Affordable Parking Program

The City has recently started an Affordable Parking Program, piloting \$35 monthly passes for downtown employees at the Waller Creek Garage. Employees can park in the evening at the garage, between 6 p.m. and 5 a.m. The Enterprise is working with the Red River Cultural District to raise awareness of this program.

Parking Cash-Out

ATD is serving as a model by providing parking cash-out as a benefit for employees. Providing free parking creates an uneven incentive for commuters; many choose to drive simply because they have a free parking space. By offering employees the cash value of their parking space on a monthly basis, for example, employees understand the true cost of parking and have a more even choice between modes. The goal of this program is a 20% reduction in employee single occupancy vehicle use.

Loading Permit Program

In addition to longer-term regulation setting, the Enterprise operates a dynamic loading permit program. Commercial vehicle operators can use these permits at metered spaces over and above existing loading zones, but only in designated areas. Loading is also permitted by right on streets that have more than two lanes in each direction, which has a traffic calming effect on otherwise wide streets. Overall, loading access is permitted in many places in downtown, although for non-regular users, loading access requires some research.

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STATE CAPITOL

The State of Texas manages on- and off-street parking around the Capitol building, which constitutes approximately 18% of the supply in the study area. Meter revenue around this area goes directly into maintaining the Capitol parking system. The Capitol Complex also has significant off-street parking assets, with 14 garages and 20 surface parking lots.² Most of this off-street parking is restricted to specific user groups (employees and visitors) during the daytime hours. Several State-managed parking facilities will frequently open up to the public during the evenings for events in downtown and the University campus.

Meters in this area are predominantly coin-operated only, requiring users to carry change. The technology and payment systems do not match the rest of downtown and can be confusing to the user.

²As reported by HWA, "Texas Facilities Commission Capitol Complex Parking Utilization Study," October 10, 2014.

TRAVIS COUNTY AND UT AUSTIN

Travis County operates about 10 facilities in downtown Austin, about half of which are open to the public at night. UT operates another 10 off-street facilities in the study area, most of which are open to the public, particularly for events.

The cost for public access to these facilities varies significantly, even by operator. For example, Travis County's 700 Lavaca Garage offers public parking for \$1.50 per 20 minutes, while its lot at 3rd and Guadalupe is a flat fee of \$10. UT's facilities are generally \$3 per hour, although some vary by day. Many UT facilities offer a different price for event parking. While these price changes may accurately reflect demand patterns, they can pose a communication challenge to visitors.

Most of these facilities also provide access for those holding permits at all times, meaning that although they are open to the public there may not be spaces available.

PRIVATE OPERATORS AND OWNERS

Approximately 64% of the parking in the study area is privately owned, with about a dozen parking operators in downtown. This parking falls into three categories: restricted, open to the public, or a mix of the two. About 21% or 13,000 spaces of privately-owned parking is not available to the public at all, and is instead restricted to certain users.

Many operators provide both contract monthly parking and hourly parking.

- Private average monthly price: \$200 (ranges from \$50 to \$533; the most common unreserved monthly rate is \$150 and the most common reserved monthly rate is \$250)
- Private average hourly price: \$3.65³
- City hourly price: \$1.20 per hour

³Any facilities charging only flat fees had their highest flat fee, divided by 8. The average flat fee charged is approximately \$10. If one only looks at the average hourly rate for facilities that charge by increments of an hour or smaller, the average rate is \$6 per hour. Approximately half of all private facilities charge a flat fee at all times parking is available to the public.



PRICE AND TIME LIMITS

To the user, the owner/operator of parking is less important compared to how much the parking costs and how it can be used. Of all off-street parking in Austin, 43% is publicly available at all times, while 33% is a mix of regulations.

On-Street Regulations

On-street spaces vary significantly in regulation, with over 150 regulations signed on the street. Within these categories, many on-street spaces change regulations throughout the day. For example, almost 10% of pay station zones have completely different regulations at different times of day restricting who can use the spaces. In addition, there are times when the paid zones are free – traditional days such as Sundays, but also after 6:00 p.m. on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays. The times that these regulations change is inconsistent, and therefore confusing to all but the most sophisticated and regular parker.

The Residential Permit Program (RPP) increases the amount of on-street parking available to residents and their guests while balancing the needs of others who desire to park along the street. Vehicles parked in designed RPP parking areas must display a valid parking permit. Currently, there are 35 different RPP zones, covering 244 blocks.

Price

On-street parking in Austin is priced between \$1.00 and \$1.20 per hour. This is much lower than hourly parking in most off-street facilities, which gives users a strong incentive to spend time hunting for on-street parking, thus contributing to congestion and circulation issues.



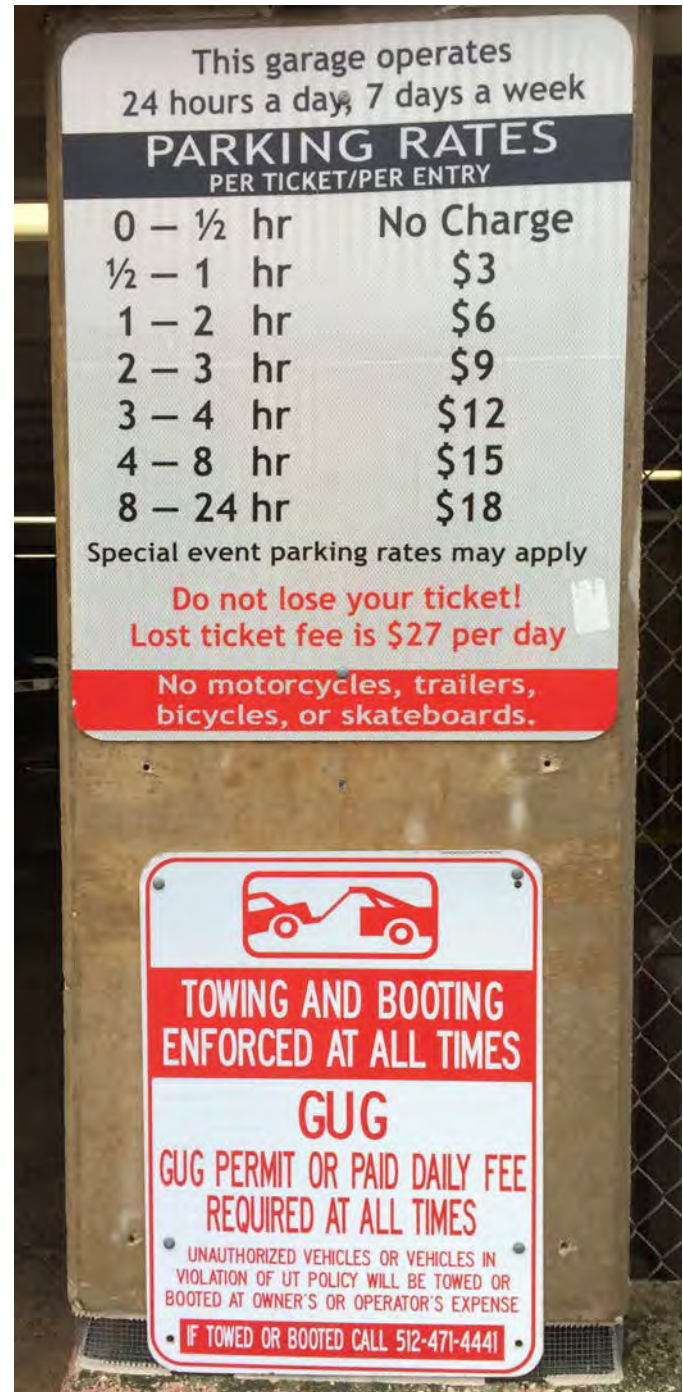
KEY CONCEPT

TIME LIMITS, while meant to encourage turnover, also effectively tell customers and visitors that they have to leave. Austin's current 3-hour time limit in many areas prevents visitors from spending extra time and money downtown. Pricing spaces appropriately to their value instead allows people to buy exactly the amount and type of parking time that they need while still encouraging availability. As described in Chapter 7, observations indicate that in many places people are overstaying the time limits and parking for extended periods of time.

OFF-STREET REGULATIONS

The majority of parking in Austin is off-street, and various entities manage this parking. Highlights of the publicly available off-street inventory include:

- Daily and hourly parking rates are offered, while many offer monthly permits as well
- Most facilities are open early in the morning through late in the evening, or 24 hours per day
- Most offer payment by credit card, some are cash-only, and few accept pay-by-phone
- Rates for permits range from \$50 to over \$500 monthly
- Several facilities offer a “night rate” that starts at a certain hour and is not hourly
- Maximum daily payments range from \$18 to \$25, with a few slightly lower
- Some facilities charge by 15-, 20- or 30-minute increments rather than hourly, with rates as high as \$3 for each 15 minutes
- Other facilities escalate prices, i.e. providing the first two hours free and charging after that, or increasing the price steadily by 30-minute or hourly increments. Others charge for the first hour and then by a set increment after that.
- Signage and wayfinding on these facilities is not standardized



Parking rates and signage are often uncoordinated across the downtown.



Continued investment in the walkability of downtown can ensure safe and comfortable access to parking.

Summary of Key Findings

- The Parking Enterprise is a strong framework for the City to manage assets.
- The City and Enterprise are leading the way in seeing parking as one piece of the mobility puzzle. This is reflected in the reinvestment of parking revenues in downtown.
- The number of entities managing parking downtown has created a system that is challenging for the user to understand. In particular, the variety of prices incentivizes unfamiliar users to hunt for the cheapest deal and may leave them with the perception that they have paid too much.
- Overall, many private and non-city operators make their parking facilities available for public use at night, but users may have to move their vehicles before the morning.
- On-street rates are much less than off-street, which creates an incentive for drivers to hunt for parking on-street for long periods of time to “get the best deal.”
- Time limits on on-street parking tell users that they have to leave downtown, and many do not observe the posted time limits.
- Enforcement has strong and dedicated staff. The creation of a strong enforcement policy that empowers staff, and is supported by additional resources for staffing and permit system management, would help to enhance enforcement practices.

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PARKING ↘

HOW MANY PARKING SPACES ARE IN DOWNTOWN?

There are an estimated 71,504 total parking spaces within the Downtown Austin study area. This number includes public, private, on-, and off-street parking. It does not include parking spaces associated with single-family driveways or garages.

OFF-STREET SPACES

65,099

ON-STREET SPACES

6,405

To determine the number of parking spaces in the study area, the consultant team conducted an inventory of the entire study area in the summer of 2016. The inventory was conducted in collaboration with Downtown Austin Alliance, the City of Austin, downtown stakeholders, and private property owners. Data sources include a combination of existing GIS databases, previous parking studies, data from public and private sector parking facility managers, and field collection.

It is important to emphasize that the inventory presented in the Briefing Book represents a “snapshot” summary. The number of parking spaces in the study area on any given day or time is constantly changing due to street closures, construction activity, or additions/reductions in parking. The information presented is based upon the best available data to date.

Off-Street Inventory

- The total number of off-street spaces identified was 65,099, across 462 parking facilities. To facilitate an efficient analysis within the project budget, facilities with 25 or less spaces were not analyzed on a detailed level.
- There are 255 facilities with over 25 spaces, totaling 62,805 spaces, or 96.5% of the total known off-street inventory. Each of these facilities was assigned a designation of “availability” and “land use.”
- Of these 62,805 spaces, 43% are available to the general **public** at all times, while 25% are **restricted** to employees, residents, and visitors of the building served by the parking facility. The remaining 33% of spaces have **varied** availability within the facility and by the time of day. For example, a garage exclusive to employees during the daytime opens up to the general public at night, charging a flat fee. Although almost 27,000 off-street spaces are public in their availability, about two-thirds of those spaces are technically located in privately-owned facilities.

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KEY CONCEPT

DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

- **Public:** Facility is predominantly available to any member of the general public who wishes to park.
- **Restricted:** Facility is predominantly restricted to residents, employees, and customers only.
- **Varied:** Facility is either mostly split between public and restricted spaces, or availability changes depending on the time of day.

Availability	# of Spaces*	% of Off-street Spaces
Public	26,870	43%
Restricted	15,392	25%
Varied	20,543	33%
Total	62,805	100%

*Includes only facilities with 25+ spaces

- Although almost 27,000 off-street spaces are public in their availability, about two-thirds of those spaces are technically located in privately-owned facilities.
- Alternatively, there are approximately 14,200 spaces located in facilities owned by the City of Austin, Travis County, the State of Texas, the University of Texas system, and the Federal government. Many of these spaces are restricted to employee use and not available to the general public.
- The City of Austin owns and operates a small share of the off-street parking in the study area, at just over 4,150 spaces or about 7% of the off-street supply.



Publicly available parking is managed by a mix of public and private entities. The City of Austin manages a small share of off-street supply.

FIGURE 1
Type of Parking Space by Jurisdiction

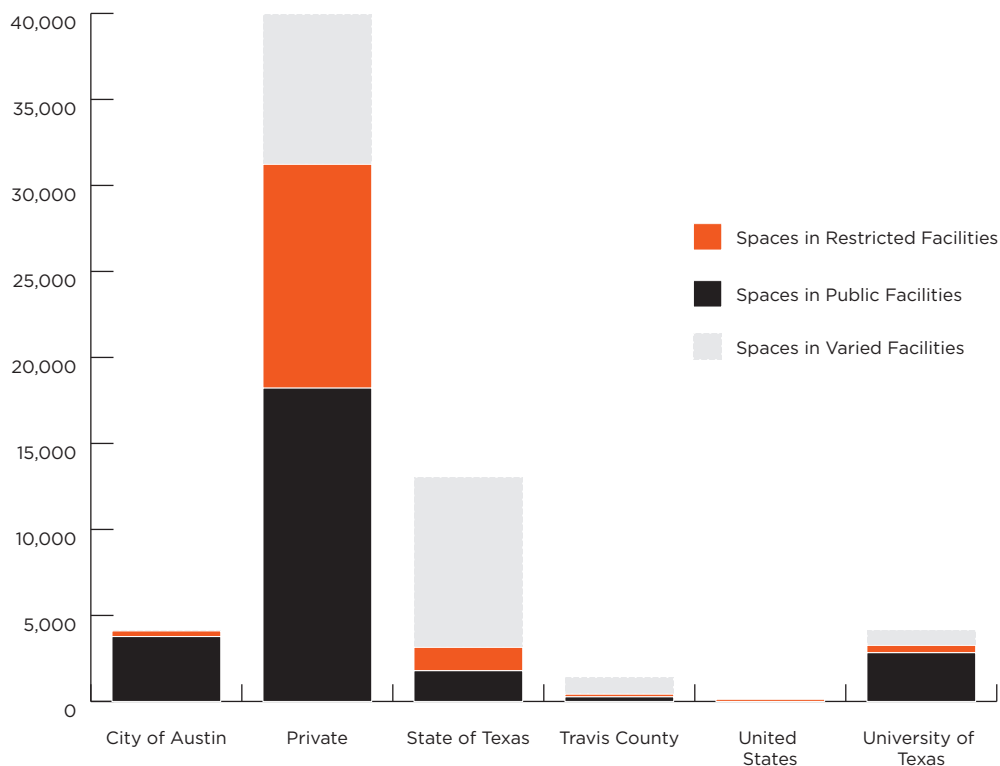
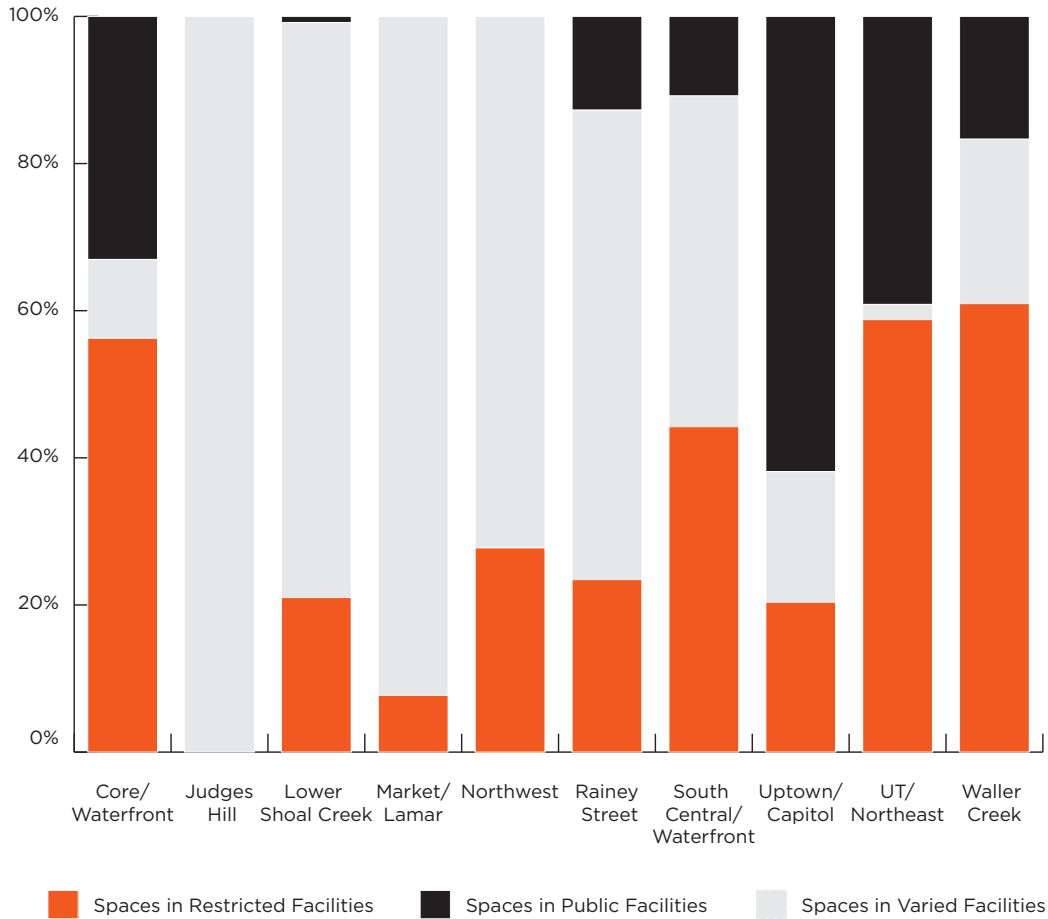


FIGURE 2

Type of Parking Space as Percentage of Total Available



- Northwest, Lower Shoal Creek, Judges Hill, Rainey Street, and Uptown/Capitol each have less than 30% of their spaces always open to the public. Such restrictions are a barrier to a “park once” visit to those locations. By contrast, there is a much smaller share of “Restricted” spaces in the Core/Waterfront, UT/Northeast, and Waller Creek areas.

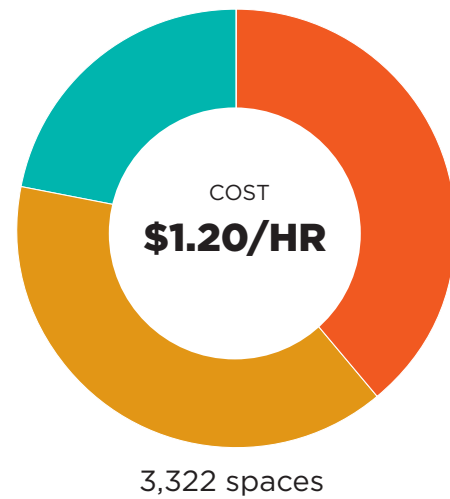


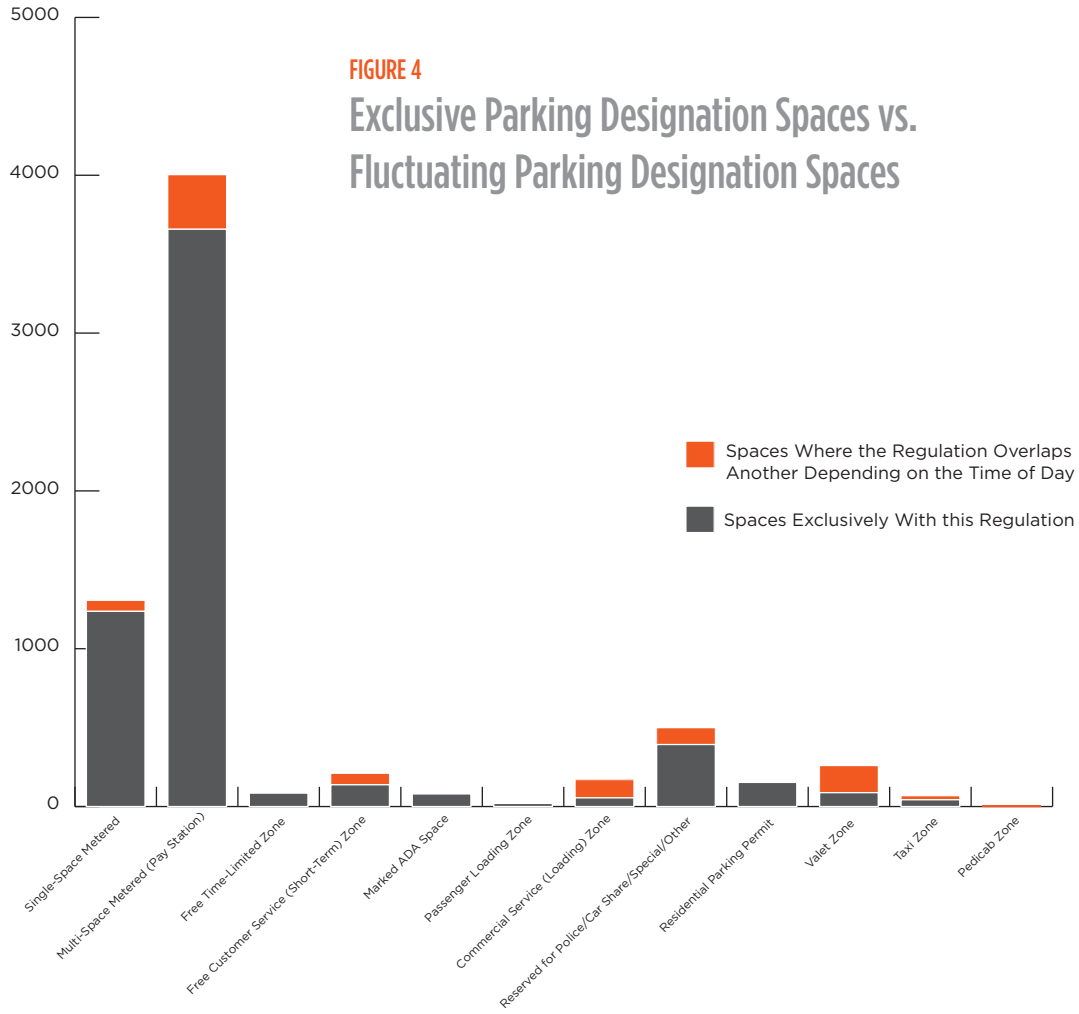
Field surveys were used to determine and update parking inventory information.

On-Street Inventory

- There are 6,405 on-street parking spaces in Downtown Austin, 5,309 (82%) of which are metered.
- There are at least six different time limits applied to the on-street spaces in downtown Austin. The most common time limit in downtown is 3 hours, which applies to 55% of all on-street spaces. The next most common time limit is 5-hour parking, approximately 28% of all spaces.
- About 51% of all on-street spaces charge \$1.20 per hour, a rate which was set by the City in 2016. The other metered rate in downtown is \$1.00 per hour.
- The City of Austin does not manage the entirety of downtown on-street parking. The State of Texas manages 789 metered spaces surrounding the Capitol, which is 12% of the total on-street inventory. City permits or mobile app payments are not valid at State meters.
- There are hundreds of parking spaces in which the regulation may change depending on the time of day. For example, two-thirds of all valet parking spaces and commercial service (loading) spaces are subject to a different regulation during another time of day.

FIGURE 3
On-Street Inventory by Hourly Cost and Time Limit





- The Core/Waterfront district has the highest share of on-street spaces at 2,521, or 39%. The Northwest district has the second highest at 1,147, or 18%. All other districts have less than 1,000 on-street spaces and several districts have less than 400 on-street spaces.

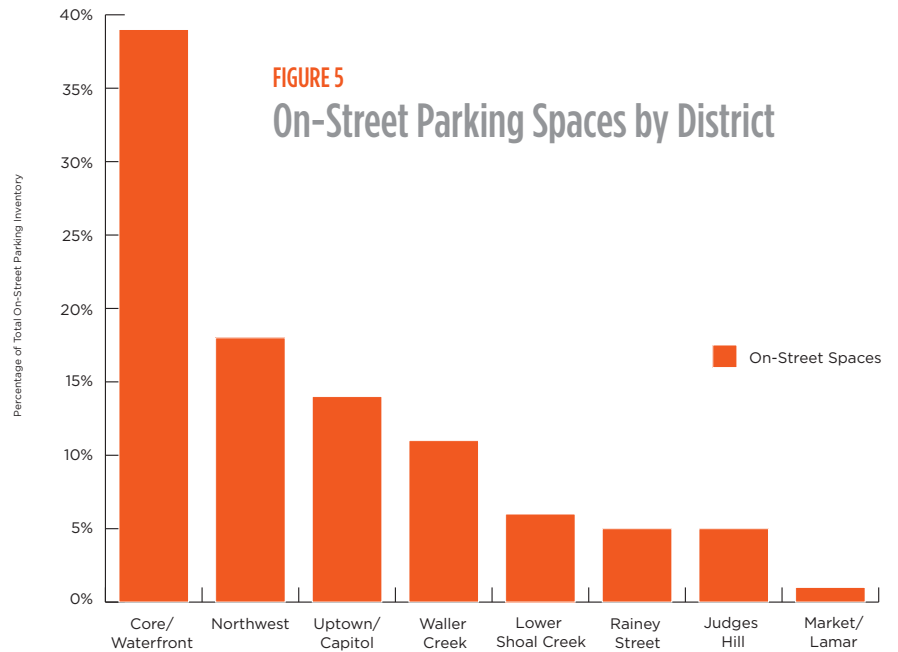


FIGURE 6
On-Street Parking Rate

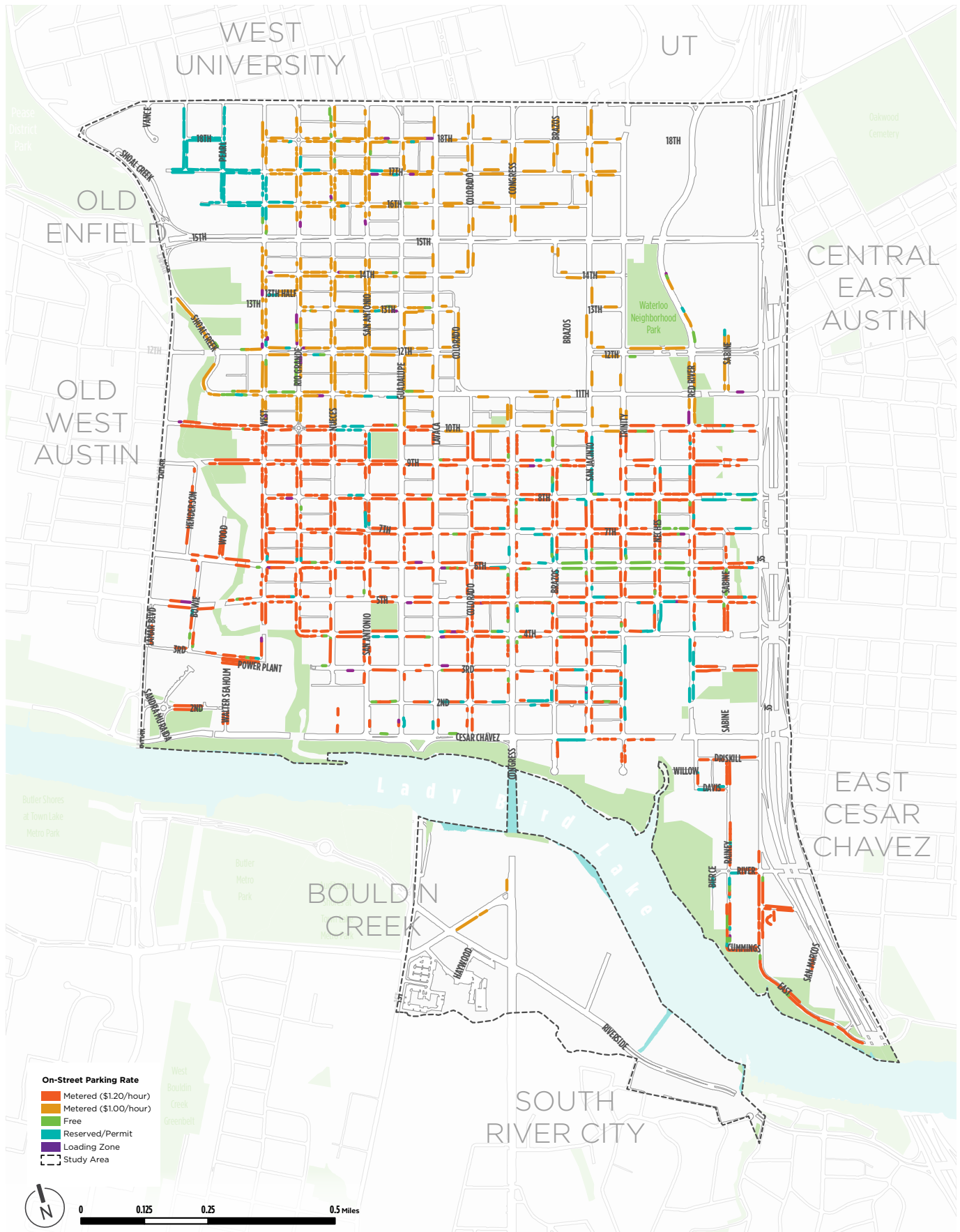
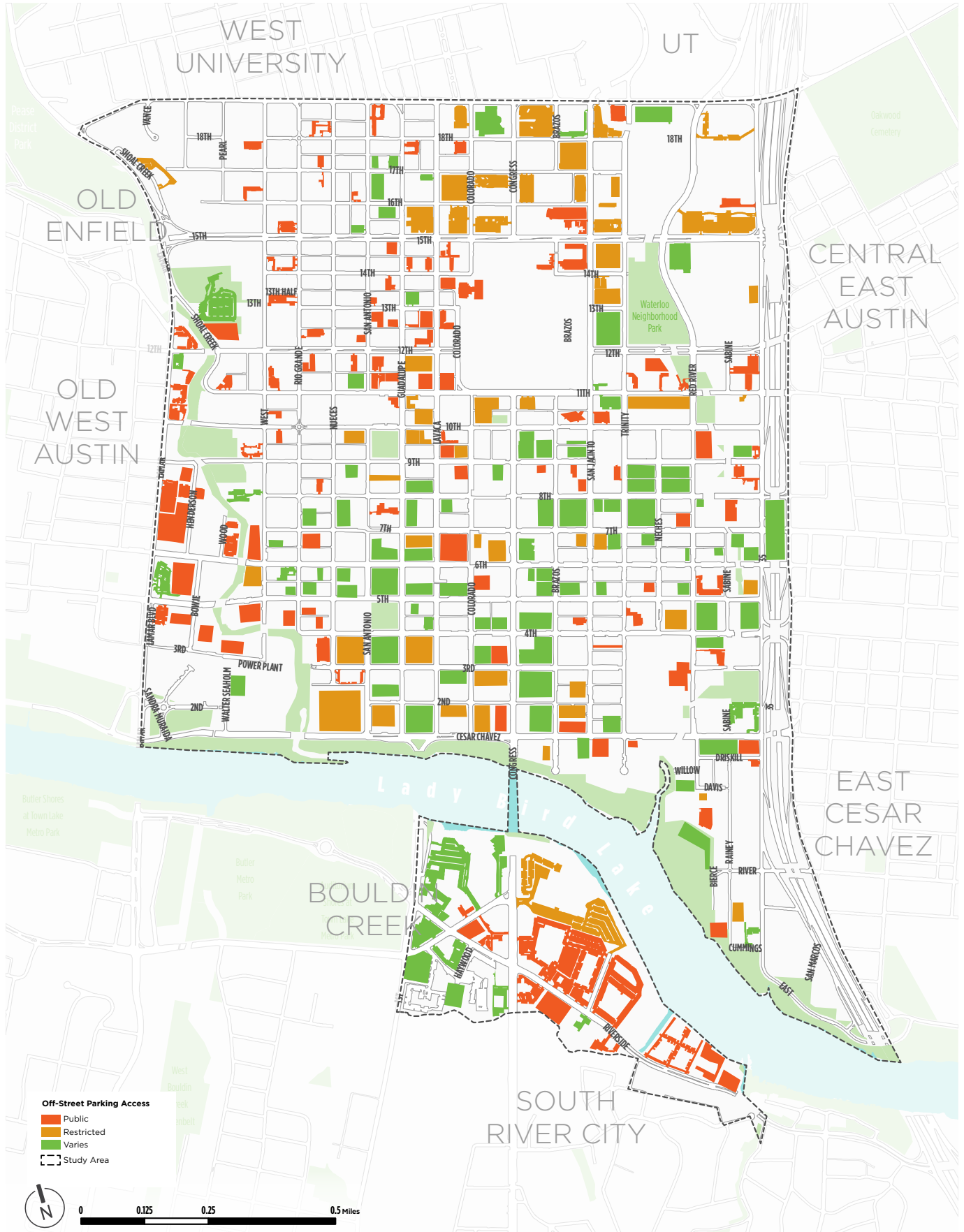


FIGURE 7
Off-Street Parking Access



Summary of Key Findings

- There are more than 71,500 parking spaces within the Downtown study area.
- More than 65,000 of those spaces are in off-street lots or garages. On-street parking comprises only 9% of the total parking supply.
- There are many different entities controlling parking, each with different purposes and reliance on different patrons and needs. Although expected in a state capitol, the City, County, State, and University are all major influencers of the parking and transportation system.
- The City of Austin only operates about 7% of the off-street supply. The State of Texas operates more than 20%, but most of the off-street supply is “privately” owned/operated.
- Not every space is open to the general “public.” In fact, only 43% of off-street spaces are “public” at all times. Another 33% have public availability at certain times of the day. One out of four off-street spaces is not open to the general public at any time during the day.
- The different restrictions create a “fragmented” parking supply that can potentially undermine notions of availability and flexibility within the system. Outside the core, the system is noticeably fragmented, as many districts have significant restrictions on who can use off-street spaces at all times of the day.
- The City of Austin operates the on-street parking, with the exception of about 12% of spaces under the jurisdiction of the State of Texas.
- Many on-street spaces have multiple regulations throughout the course of the day. While the flexibility at the curb is needed to accommodate different types of parking at different times of the day, the number of regulations can create confusion for motorists.

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HOW MANY VEHICLES ARE PARKING DOWNTOWN?

There are over 71,500 parking spaces in the Downtown Austin study area. To better understand how those parking spaces are used, utilization data was obtained for a representative sample of the public, private, on-, and off-street parking facilities throughout the study area.

The primary sources of the utilization data include:

- Field counts of over 4,500 on-street spaces and over 8,600 off-street spaces were conducted on September 14th, 16th, and 17th during a morning, midday, and evening time period.
- Meter transaction data from over 550 metered on-street spaces (from the same dates and times as the field counts) was used to estimate utilization data for on-street spaces.
- Utilization data for almost 15,000 off-street spaces was obtained via voluntary information submitted by the managers of off-street facilities and recent parking studies by the City of Austin and the Texas Facilities Commission (TFC).
- For parking facilities in which no data was available, utilization was calibrated and modeled from the available data sources to estimate utilization.

It is important to emphasize that the utilization data presented in this chapter represents a “snapshot” in time for a typical day, informed by the most recent and available data sets. On any given day or on any given block, utilization can vary dramatically. Therefore, the primary use of this data is to identify macro-level issues and challenges, key trends, and opportunities for improvements.

What do the charts and maps show?

To describe utilization in specific locations, maps of off-street locations and on-street segments have been assigned a specific color to indicate the level of utilization during that time frame.

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Color	Percent Utilization	Takeaway
Grey	0-30%	VERY UNDERUTILIZED. Any resource that consistently performs at this level, especially during peak-demand periods, should be viewed as very underutilized.
Light Blue	30-60%	UNDERUTILIZED. Any resource that consistently performs at this level, especially during peak-demand periods, should be viewed as underutilized.
Medium/Dark Blue	60-80%	LIGHTLY UTILIZED. Although the resource has higher demand, there is still substantial parking availability.
Green	80-90%	IDEAL. The resource is actively used, yet there is consistent availability for someone seeking a parking spot.
Red	90% or more	AT CAPACITY. These facilities are heavily used and can make it hard to find parking. Facilities that consistently perform at this level will generate frustration about the lack of parking options.

KEY FINDINGS

At its peak period, it is estimated that there are almost 45,000 vehicles parking across the study area. Given that there are 71,500 spaces in the study area, it would appear, therefore, that parking should be easy to find. However, the full picture of what one experiences when looking for parking in downtown is much more nuanced.

The parking “peak” **varies by time and geography**. For example, in the Core/Waterfront district, the peak occurs at midday during a weekday. By contrast, the peak in the Rainey Street area is on Friday and Saturday nights.

There are many situations, depending on the time, day, location, and user group, in **which parking is very difficult to find**. The challenge of finding a parking spot, is particularly evident:

- On Congress Avenue, where on-street parking is full during the weekday midday and very high most other times.
- On blocks in popular nightlife locations throughout evenings and afternoons, including West 6th Street, East 6th Street, and Sabine Street (Figure 8).
- In the Core/Waterfront district for:
 - All parking for hotel/tourism land uses on weekend evenings (Figure 9)
 - All parking restricted for employees working in commercial and government land uses on weekday middays (Figure 10)
 - All publicly available parking for institutional and government land uses on weekday middays (Figure 11)

FIGURE 8
West 6th Street

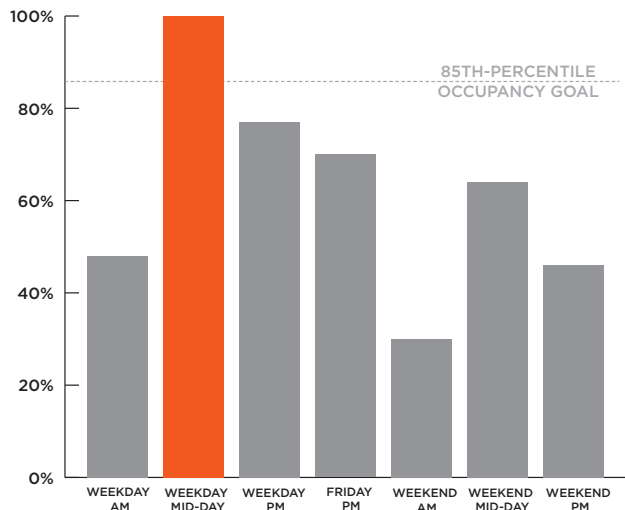


FIGURE 9
Off-Street Core/Waterfront District Hotel/
Tourism Uses

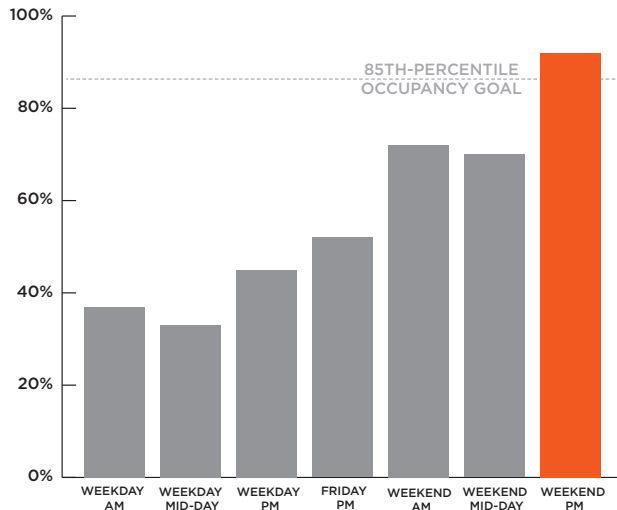


FIGURE 10
Off-Street Core/Waterfront District Commercial
and Government Uses—Restricted Only

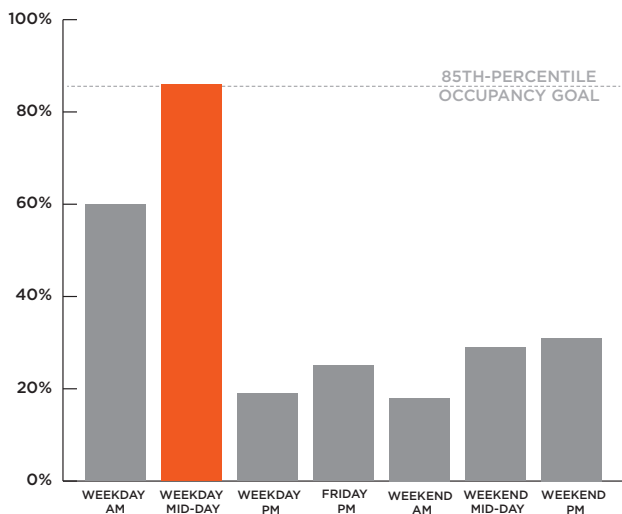
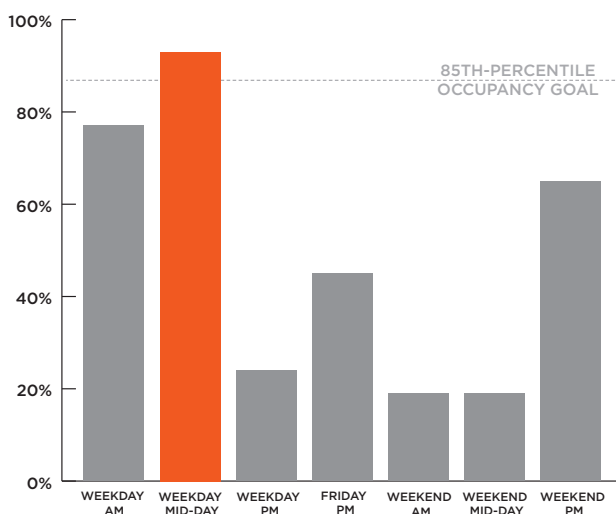


FIGURE 11
Off-Street Core/Waterfront District Institutional
and Government Uses—Available to Public at all
Times



- On blocks in walking distance of Austin Community College’s Rio Grande Campus during weekday mornings, afternoons, and evenings, including Rio Grande Street and West Avenue north of 12th Street
- All publicly available parking in the Rainey Street District on Friday evenings (Figure 12).
- Throughout the Lower Shoal Creek area, but particularly during the evenings.
- All privately-owned and publicly-available parking in the Waller Creek District on weekday mornings, weekday middays, weekend mornings, and weekend middays.

While parking can be difficult to find in many areas and times, the utilization also reveals another crucial trend—even in areas with high demand, and even during peak periods, **there is typically underutilized parking spaces with a relatively short distance.** For example:

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- While on-street parking is hard to find on Congress Avenue (Figure 13) at many times, the data indicates that there are thousands of underutilized off-streets spaces within a few blocks of the Congress Avenue corridor, as well as on the equivalent section of Colorado Avenue (Figure 14)- just one block away.
- The very small supply of on-street parking in the South Central/Waterfront district faces relatively high demand during Friday evenings, the same time many people flock to the location to view the emerging bats from the Congress Avenue Bridge. Meanwhile, the hotel parking garages immediately off South Congress Avenue and surrounding the limited on-street parking are very underutilized.

FIGURE 12
All Parking Rainey Street District—
Publicly Available to All

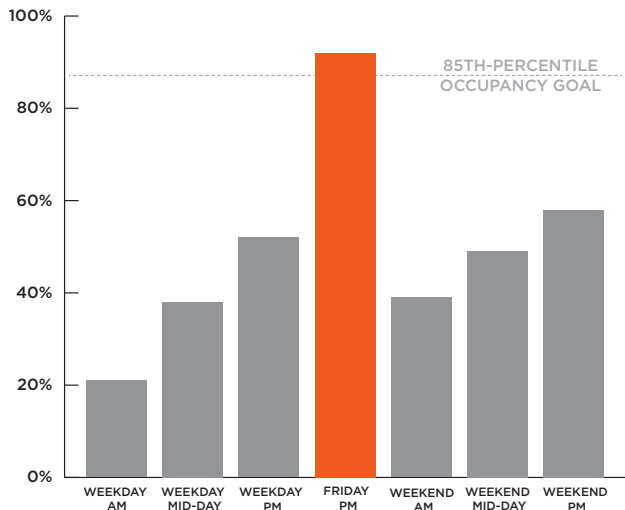


FIGURE 13
On-Street Congress Avenue from River
to 10th

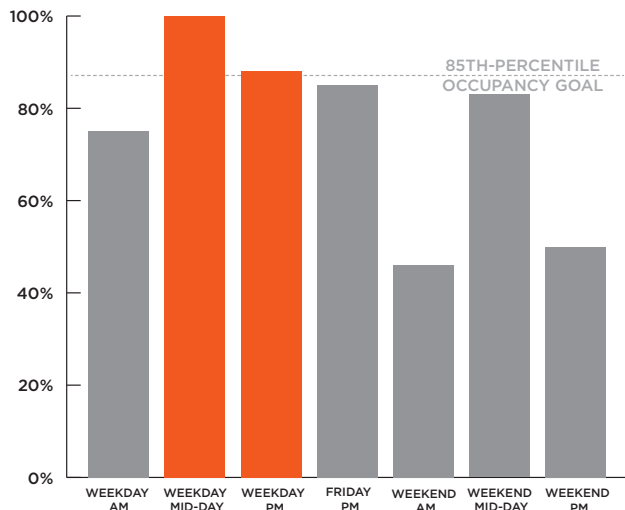
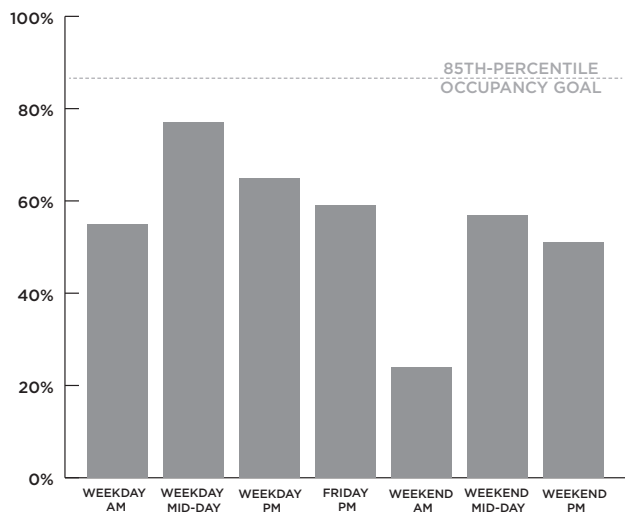


FIGURE 14
On-Street Colorado Ave from River to 10th



Many spaces are open during peak periods, **yet people either cannot find them, perceive them as inconvenient or expensive, or are not allowed to use them.**

- The surface lot under I-35, for example, is within walking distance of the famous entertainment and nightlife along East 6th Street. However, during all three evening periods, the parking lot was counted at less than half full. There are many convenience spaces in the location, but the lot may be perceived as unsafe.
- There are surface parking facilities, such as those in proximity to Lamar Avenue, which are signed for customers only with the threat of towing “at all times.” Such restrictions are even in effect after the stores close for the night and utilization dwindles. Meanwhile, on-street parking during Friday evenings along other streets in the Lower Shoal District like 3rd, Power Plant, and West, are full of vehicles.
- State-owned facilities in the Uptown/Capitol district have a cumulative occupancy of under 15% during weekday evenings-- leaving over 7,500 spaces vacant in the evening. Most of those facilities restrict access from the public during some or all of the day.

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At most times, **on-street parking is underpriced.** The existing hourly rates of \$1.20 or \$1.00 result in high demand for on-street spaces, especially since most publicly-available off-street parking in the study area is more expensive.

Several hundred on-street spaces in the study area may be unavailable at any given time **due to construction and regular events** (such as farmer’s markets). Examples include:

- San Antonio and East 7th Street (construction)
- 12th Street between Brazos and Red River (construction)
- South Congress between Barton Springs Road and Lady Bird Lake (construction)
- West 4th between San Antonio and Guadalupe (farmer’s market on Saturdays)



**TOWING ENFORCED
AT ALL TIMES**

**TENANT / CUSTOMER PARKING
WHILE ON PROPERTY ONLY**

**MUST PARK BETWEEN LINES
UNAUTHORIZED VEHICLES WILL BE TOWED
AT OWNER OR OPERATOR EXPENSE
FOR TOWED VEHICLES CALL:**

J & J TOWING 512 - 462 - 2244



**NO GYM
OR CONDO
PARKING ON
SURFACE LOT**



**GYM & CONDO
PARKING ON BOWIE ST.**



SHOPS PARKING ONLY

7



HOW LONG DO PEOPLE PARK AT THE CURB?

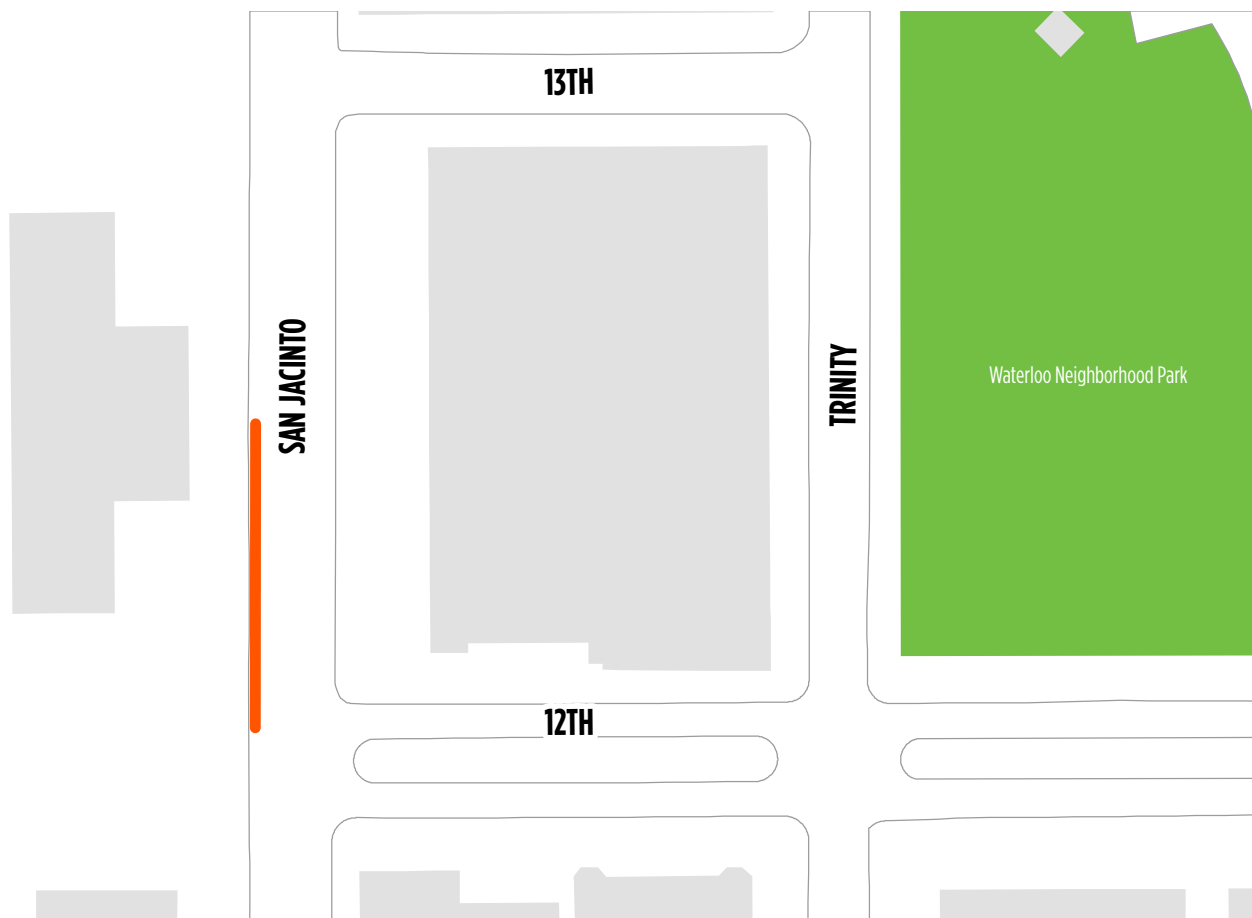
In addition to understanding how many vehicles are parked in downtown, it is also important to document parking behavior, notably the length of time parked. Many of the on-street spaces in the study area have a time limit, in addition to an hourly price.

Time limits are designed to ensure that the most convenient on-street spaces are available for shorter trips. If a vehicle is parked all day long in front of a business, it limits access for other residents, visitors, or customers.

Time limits, however, are only as effective as their enforcement. If motorists know that enforcement is lax or inconsistent, it is likely they will stay longer than the posted time limit.

To better understand length of stay and turnover, temporary cameras¹ were utilized to capture parking behavior along key blocks or block segments within the study area. Locations were selected to capture a *sample* of parking behavior and the differences in parking behavior at different locations throughout downtown.

¹No private or personal information was collected or stored. Data is reported in the aggregate.



SAN JACINTO BOULEVARD

- All 10 observed spaces are paid and limited to 3-hour parking from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. (Monday-Wednesday), 7 a.m. to midnight (Thursday-Friday), and 11 a.m. to midnight (Saturday).
- Parking utilization varied by day of the week and time of day, largely reflecting the demand patterns of state employees. In general, there were available spaces for all but a few hours in the evening (Figure 1).
- Spaces are in demand on Wednesday until about 4 p.m. when employees go home. Spaces were mostly full on Wednesday night due to a hearing at the Capitol and on Saturday night. Occupancy on Friday was below 60% throughout the day.
- This location had relatively low turnover as more than half of the parking sessions were longer than three hours. On Wednesday, there were 3.7 vehicles per space and the average length of stay was just under three hours. Several spaces were occupied by one vehicle for the whole work day (Figure 2).
- Average length of stay on Friday was 103 minutes and on Saturday was 83 minutes.

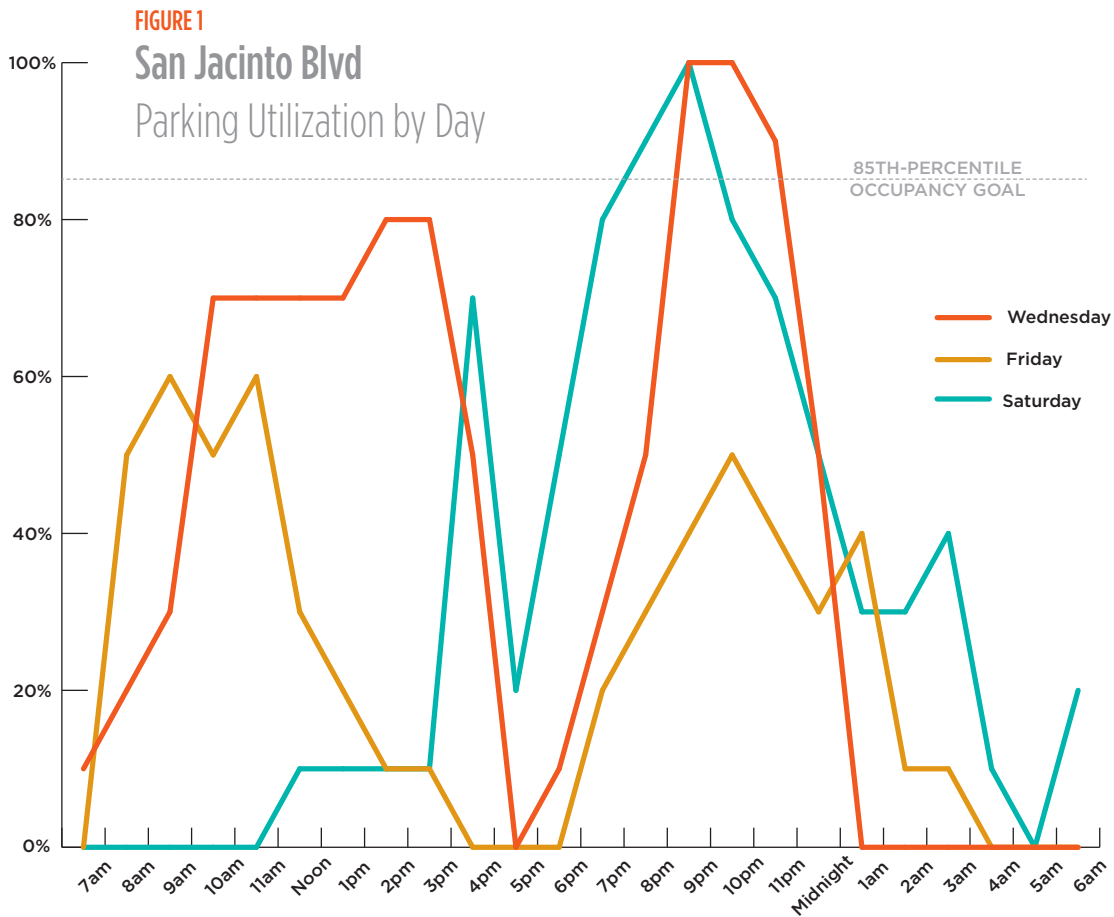
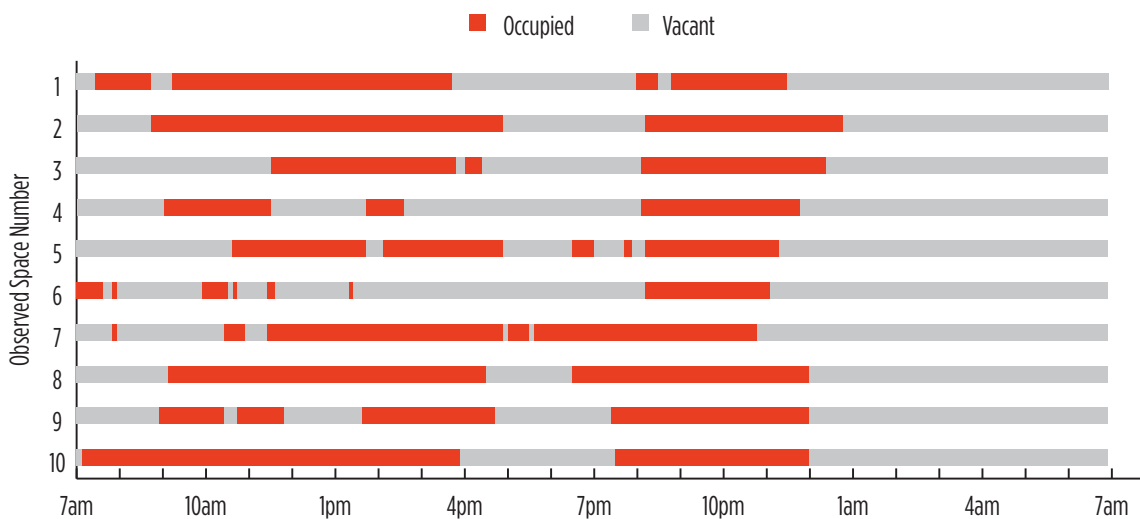
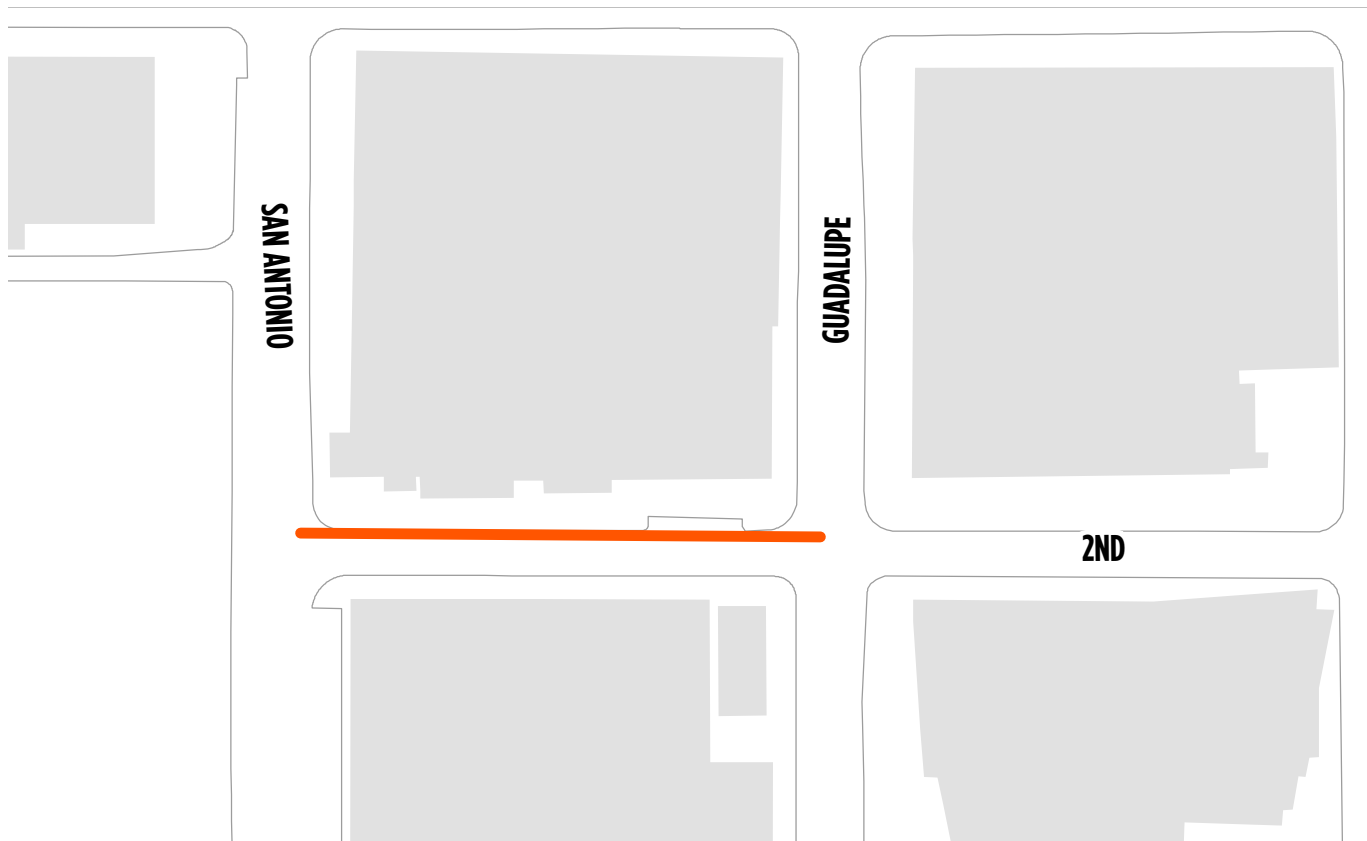


FIGURE 2
 San Jacinto Blvd
 West side
 Between 12th and 13th Streets
 Wednesday 7 am to Thursday 7 am



All spaces are paid and limited to 3-hour parking from 7 am to 6 pm (Monday-Wednesday), 7 am to midnight (Thursday-Friday), and 11 am to midnight (Saturday).



WEST 2ND STREET

- Nine spaces were observed, with four paid spaces as 15-minute/valet, three paid spaces as 3-hour parking, and two free disabled spaces.
- Parking utilization varied by day, but was generally above 60% for most of the day. Wednesday experienced the highest level of daytime demand. This location also has high demand during the evening, as four of the spaces become valet loading zones. Saturday levels of utilization in Figure 3 appear lower than they are, as a space may be physically empty, but is restricted to valet.
- Turnover was highest at this location – an average of 9.1 vehicles per space on Wednesday and Friday. Average length of stay was 71 minutes (Wednesday), 155 minutes (Friday), and 90 minutes (Saturday).
- The higher turnover can partially be attributed to the 15-minute regulations and valet operations. Figure 3 shows the parking session length by space for Friday.
- Despite the higher turnover, there were still many vehicles parking beyond the posted time limits. As shown in Figure 4, despite the 15-minute and 3-hour limits, several vehicles were parked for eight plus hours. This block is adjacent to a number of construction sites, and it was observed that construction workers were parked on this block for a number of hours.

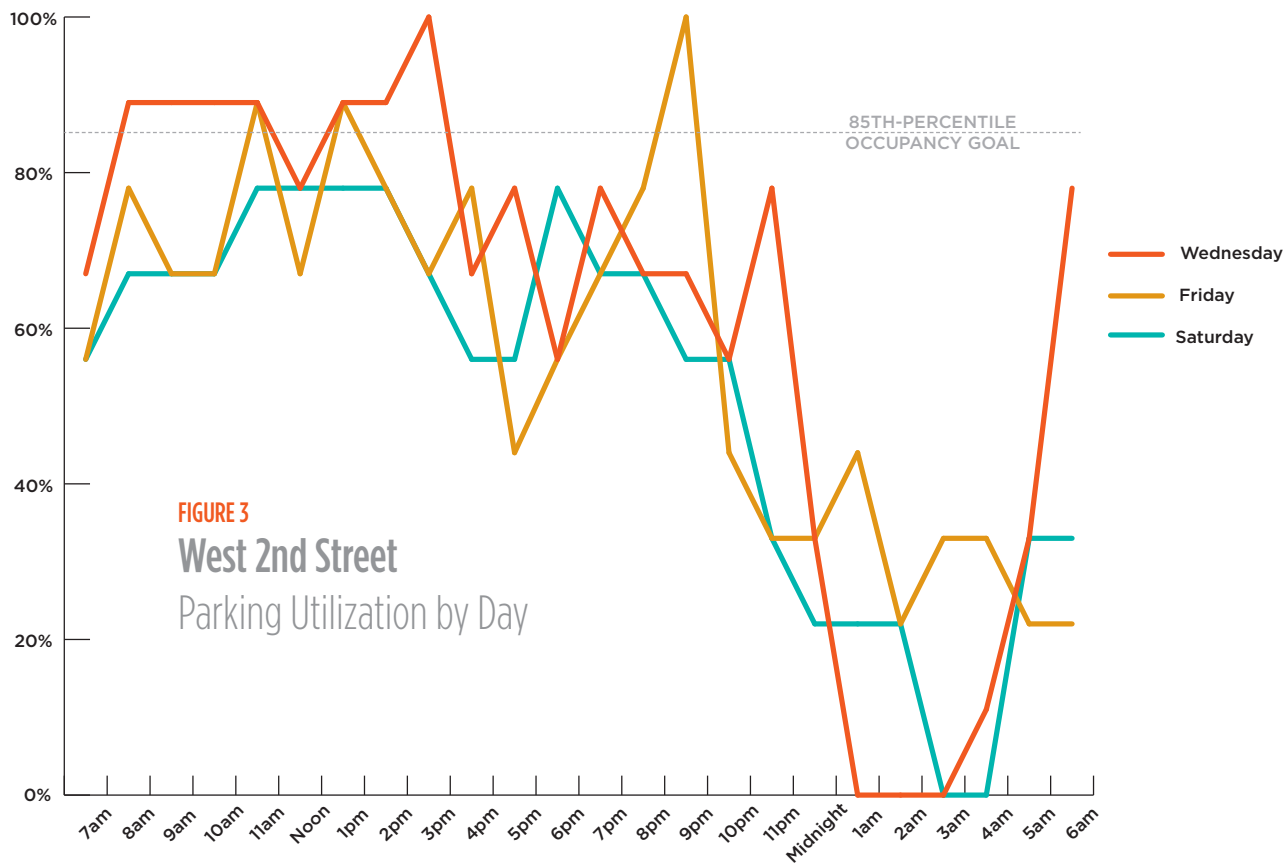
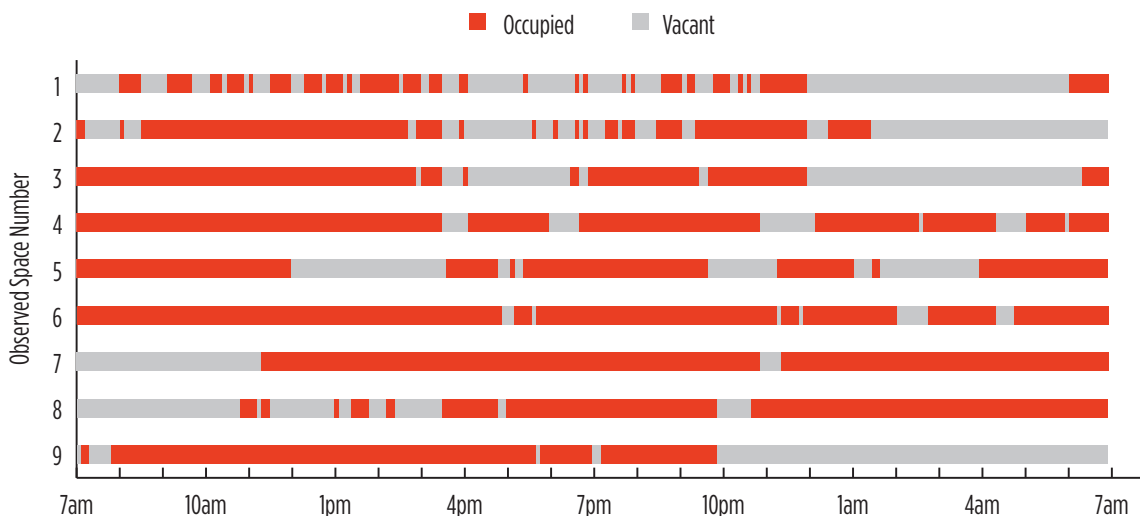


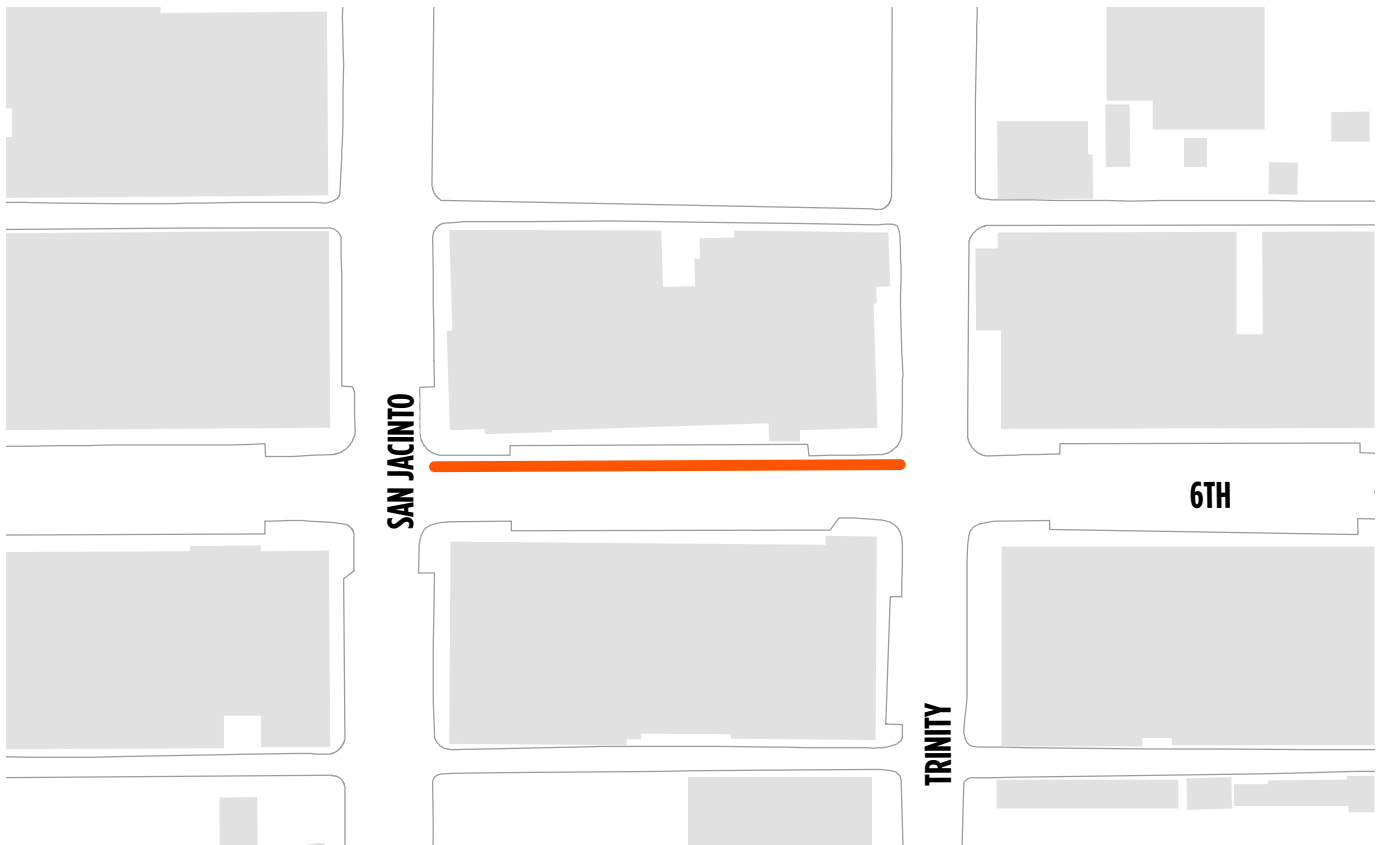
FIGURE 4 West 2nd Street
North side
Between San Antonio and Guadalupe
Friday 7 am to Saturday 7 am



Spaces 1-4 start as 15-minute free customer service zones at 7 am. At 5:30 pm, they become valet-only spaces. This continues until 2:30 am when the regulations end.

Spaces 5-7 are limited to 3-hour paid parking from 8 am to 6 pm (Monday-Wednesday), 8 am to midnight (Thursday-Friday), and 11 am to midnight (Saturday).

Spaces 8 and 9 are free time-unlimited parking for vehicles with valid disabled placards.



EAST 6TH STREET

- All spaces are free with 2-hour time limits between 7 a.m. and 9 p.m. for all days of the week. Parking is prohibited from 9 p.m. until 3 a.m. on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday nights.
- Data is only available beginning at noon (due to camera obstructions) and was only collected on Wednesday due to the parking restrictions starting on Thursday.
- This location had high levels of demand throughout the day. The 10 spaces were near or at capacity until 9 p.m. After 9 p.m. occupancy declined, but occupancy remained above 60% until 4 a.m. (Figure 5).
- Given that most businesses on this street close before 4 a.m., it is likely that several of these vehicles parked on the street were owned by employees.
- Turnover was low on this block. Average length of stay was 166 minutes, far beyond the 2-hour limit.
- As shown in Figure 6, many vehicles were parked in the same spot for over seven hours at a time.

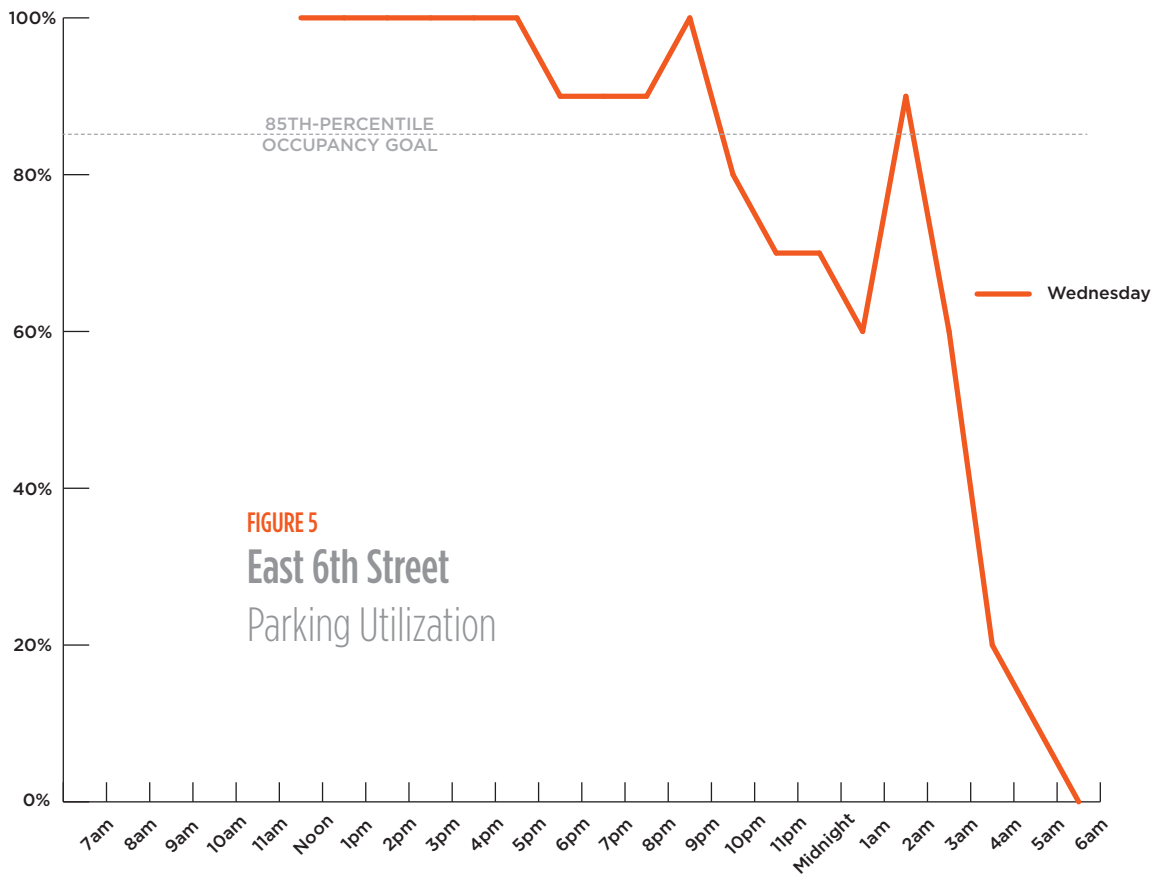
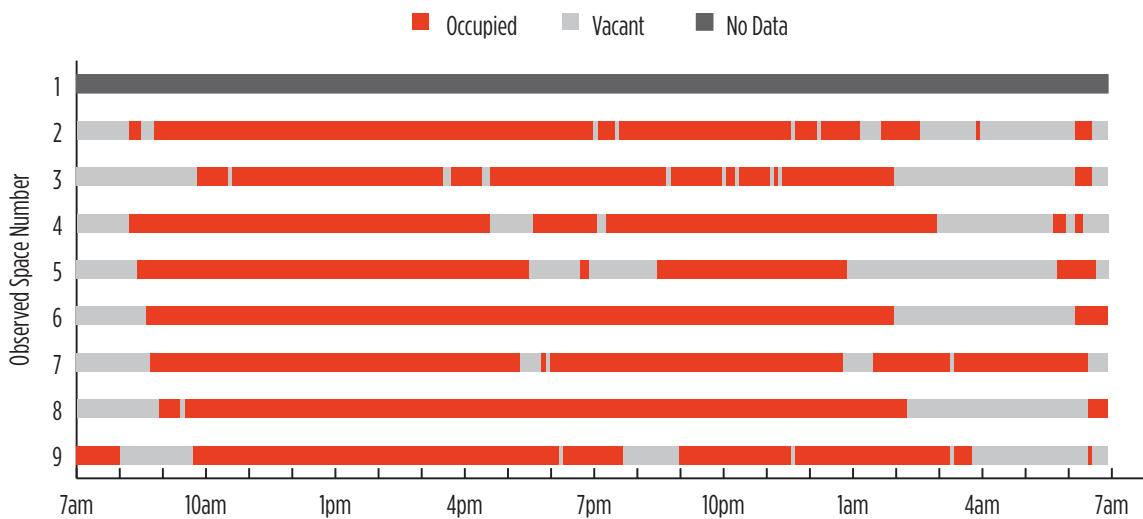
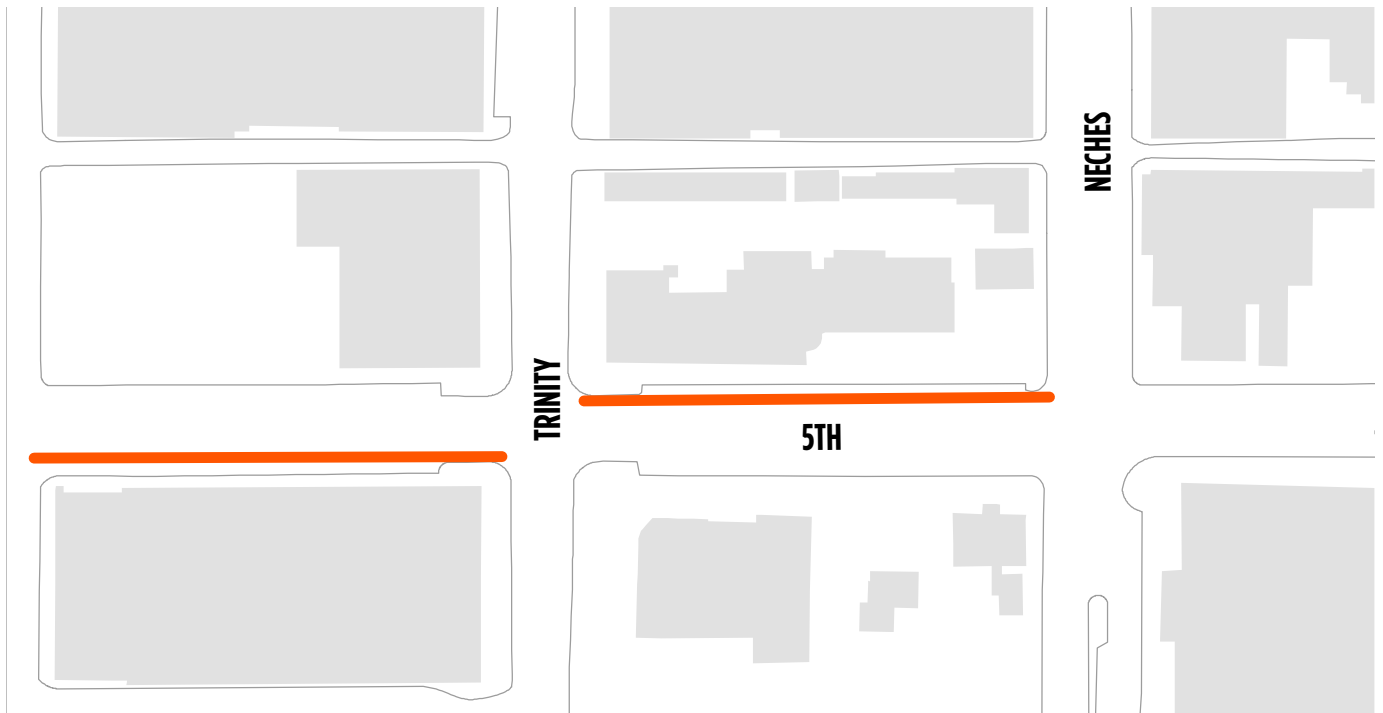


FIGURE 6 East 6th Street
 North side
 Between Trinity and San Jacinto
 Wednesday 7 am to Thursday 7 am



All spaces are free with 2-hour time limits between 7 am and 9 pm, all days.
 Parking is prohibited from 9 pm until 3 am on Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights.



EAST 5TH STREET

- Two locations were observed on East 5th Street². On Friday, six spaces between Trinity and San Jacinto were observed. All spaces are paid and are a combination of 15-minute and 3-hour regulations. On Saturday, 11 spaces between Trinity and Neches were observed. All spaces are paid and are 3-hour time limited
- Between Trinity and San Jacinto spaces are above 100% occupied as it was observed that more vehicles were parking than marked, legal spaces. During the lunch time hours, there were consistently 9-10 vehicles parked on the block. It is likely that motorists did not realize that parking was not allowed due to the unmarked spaces and unclear signage. After 3 p.m. occupancy declined and did not exceed 40% (Figure 7).
- Parking turnover was high on the block between Trinity and San Jacinto, as average length of stay on Friday was just over one hour.
- By contrast, on Saturday between Trinity and Neches, the observed spaces were consistently full from 10 a.m. to 5 a.m. the following day. This high demand is likely due to several nearby events occurring on that day.
- From Trinity and Neches, vehicles parked and stayed for long periods of time without moving. In fact, for 8 of the 10 spaces, vehicles were parked for 16-17 hours, despite the posted 3-hour time limit. As a result, open spaces were very hard to find (Figure 8).

²Parking was prohibited on Saturday, 9/24 between Trinity and San Jacinto. The camera was moved a block to the east, and data was available from 10 a.m.

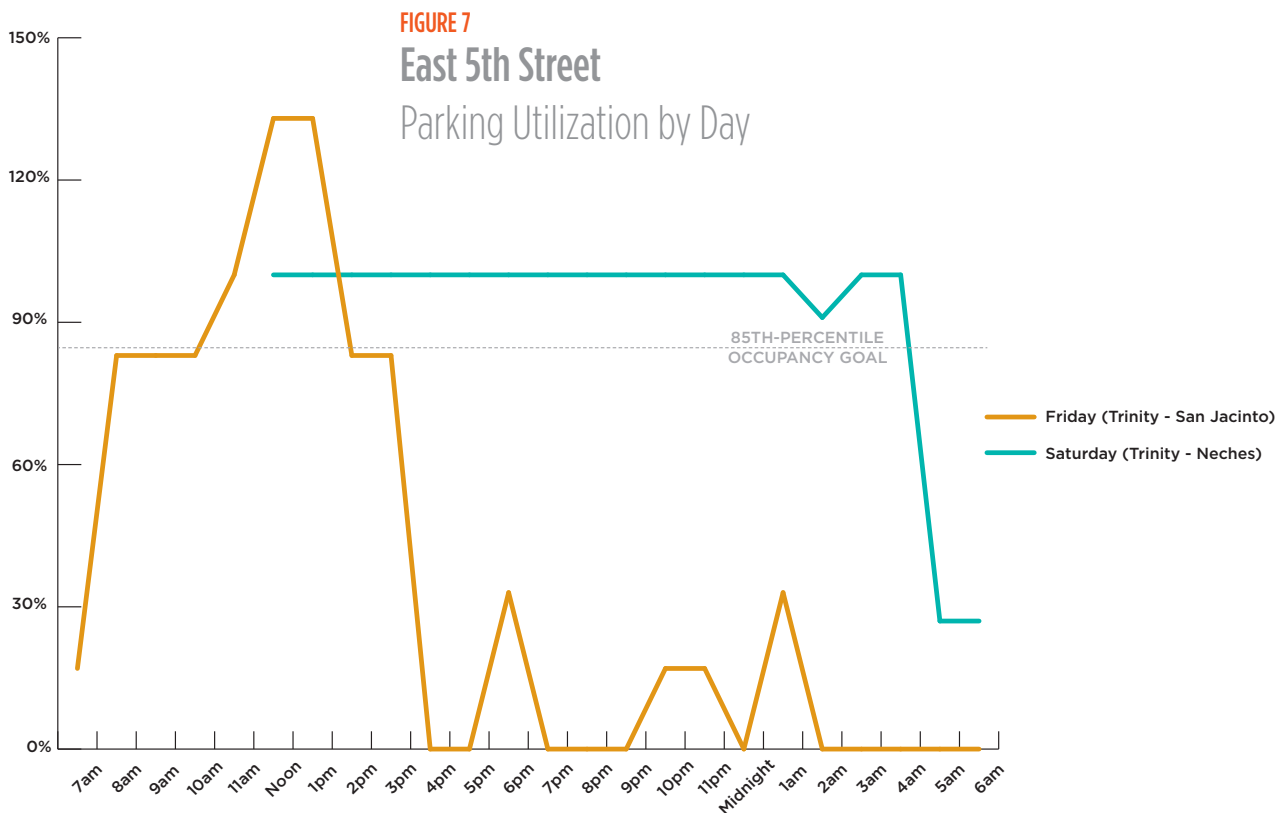
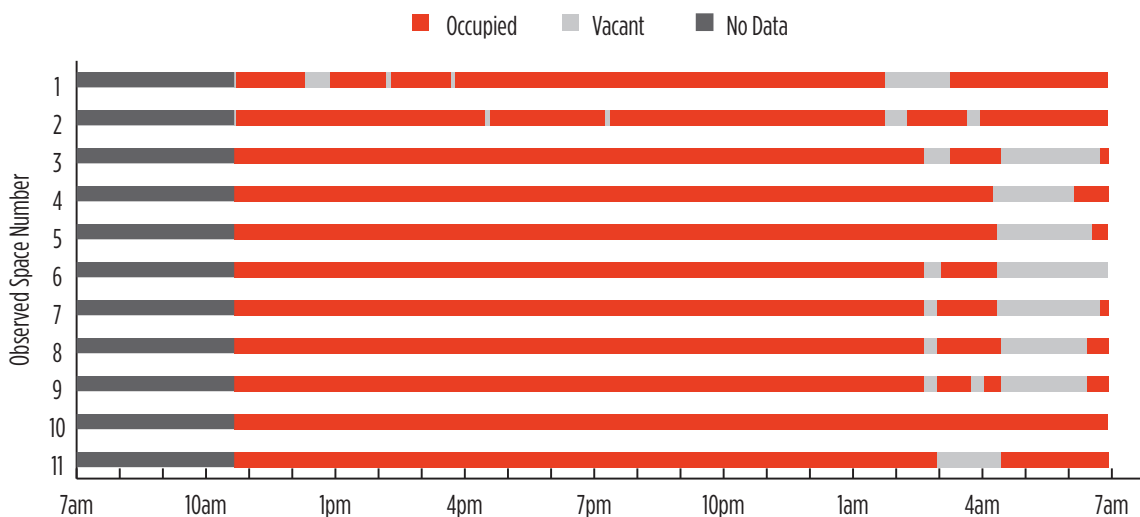


FIGURE 8
 East 5th Street
 North side
 Between Trinity and Neches
 Saturday 11 am to Sunday 7 am



All spaces are 3-hour paid parking from 8 am to 6 pm (Monday-Wednesday), 8 am to midnight (Thursday-Friday), and 11 am to midnight (Saturday).

Length of parking sessions on East 6th Street often exceeded the time limits.



Summary of Key Findings

- Parking utilization is driven by adjacent land uses. For example, parking on San Jacinto largely reflects state employee work patterns – with higher demand in the daytime and low demand at night, except during night events at the Capitol.
- By contrast, East 6th Street and West 2nd Street have more consistent parking demand throughout the day and night given the proximity to a mix of office, retail, and entertainment uses.
- Parking turnover varied substantially across the five locations. Turnover was low near the State Capitol, indicating high employee parking. Turnover was much higher on West 2nd Street, which is not surprising given the presence of valet operations.
- East 6th Street had much lower turnover than East 5th Street, just one block to the south. Clearly, the presence of paid parking influences a motorist’s parking behavior.
- It is very likely that employees are parking on East 6th Street, restricting access to customers. One vehicle was parked from 9 a.m. to 2 a.m.
- In all cases, there were clear violations of time limits. Every location had several spaces occupied by the same vehicle for consecutive hours beyond the time limit. East 5th was the most pronounced, as many vehicles were parked for more than 15 hours at a time.

Summary of Observations

STREET	SEGMENT	SIDE	# OF OBSERVED SPACES	DAY OBSERVED	VEHICLES PER SPACE	AVG. LENGTH OF STAY (MINS)
San Jacinto Blvd.	12th to 13th	West	10	9/21	3.7	170
San Jacinto Blvd.	12th to 13th	West	10	9/23	3.2	103
San Jacinto Blvd.	12th to 13th	West	10	9/24	4.9	83
West 2nd Street	San Antonio to Guadalupe	North	9	9/21	9.1	71
West 2nd Street	San Antonio to Guadalupe	North	9	9/23	9.1	155
West 2nd Street	San Antonio to Guadalupe	North	9	9/24	5.3	90
East 6th Street	Trinity to San Jacinto	North	10	9/21	5.2	166
East 5th Street	Trinity to San Jacinto	South	6	9/23	8.2	64
East 5th Street	Trinity to Neches	North	11	9/24	2.9	426


ONE WAY




8

PARKING


TOWING ENFORCED
 24 HOURS / 7 DAYS A WEEK
CUSTOMER PARKING
 BY PERMIT ONLY
 PAY THE METER!
 UNAUTHORIZED VEHICLES WILL BE TOWED AT THE
 OWNER'S OR OPERATOR'S EXPENSE.
 RELIANT TOWING 512-363-5900


TOWING ENFORCED
 24 HOURS / 7 DAYS
TENANT / QUS
 PARKING ONLY
 IN DESIGNATED
 UNAUTHORIZED VEHICLES
 TOWED AT OWNER'S EXPENSE
 FOR TOWED VEHICLES
 ISSUED TO 11/15/17

INSTRUCTIONS
 1. PRESS ANY KEY TO START &
 SELECT PAYMENT
 2. ENTER LAST 3 CHARACTERS
 OF LICENSE PLATE NUMBER
 3. MAKE PAYMENT-
 NO CHANGE IS GIVEN.
 PAY EXACT AMOUNT
Prices include Tax
 4. TAKE RECEIPT FROM TRAY


ParkMobile
 DOWNLOAD
 PREMIER PARKING APP
 BRAZOS
 PARKING ZONE #
6502
 WWW.PREMIER-PARKING.COM
 OR CALL 1-877-727-5018



NOTICE
PAY MACHINE ONLY

THIS LOT IS OPERATED BY
PAY MACHINE ONLY.
VIOLATORS WILL BE TICKETED,
BOOTED AND/OR TOWED AT
OWNER'S EXPENSE.
PAYMENT TO UNAUTHORIZED
PERSONNEL WILL NOT BE
RECOGNIZED.



ATTENTION

Register your space number at the
pay station immediately upon
parking. Please use automatic Pay
Machine when lot is not staffed.
Lot can be staffed during special
events, at this time, please pay
informed attendant.

This lot provides a parking space
only. You are solely responsible
for your person, vehicle and belongings.
If this is not acceptable, and you
do not leave this location within five
minutes of entering at no charge.



WHAT IS THE PARKING EXPERIENCE?

The parking experience is determined by more than just the number of parking spaces, cost, or regulations. It is the combination of all the components of the parking system that impact a motorist's decision about where to park, how to park, and how they feel about it.

The City and its partners have made significant strides in recent years and Austin is a best practice in many respects. Yet, there are areas for improvement that can help to reduce frustration and foster a more user-friendly experience. This chapter summarizes the systems that shape the parking experience, including:

- **Parking wayfinding** - Is signage easy to understand? Is signage coordinated? Do signs point me to available spaces? Are regulations clear?
- **Parking information** - Can I find information online? Is information available across multiple platforms?
- **Pedestrian access** - Do I feel safe and comfortable walking to and from my parking space? Are garages and lots well lit?
- **Parking IT** - Is it simple and easy to find and pay for parking? Do the IT systems enable effective management?

Parking Signage

- The City conducted a downtown wayfinding study in 2013 and parking was a key focus. Implementation of the recommendations are underway and progress has been made. Continued implementation is key to improving the parking experience.
- The City has prioritized improved wayfinding to City-operated garages. An upcoming pilot program will focus on new real-time information and changeable message signs to direct people to open spaces.



- There is limited use of real-time signage in downtown directing motorists to available spaces. The City is investing in such systems, but private sector implementation is ad hoc.
- Overall, signage is inconsistent throughout the downtown – different colors, symbols, fonts, and signage types. There is limited branding of parking assets and private operators largely utilize their own signs.



- Signage varies from district to district. For example, the State Capitol and other entities utilize their own systems separate from the City.
- Inconsistent signage can create confusion about a person's ability to legally park in a space. This is especially true in garages with both restricted and public parking. A lot of signage is restrictive, creating ticket anxiety for motorists.



- Regulation signage for curb spaces accurately conveys the regulations, but there are likely opportunities to simplify and clarify. For example, each meter includes multiple decals, including ParkX, EasyPark, Austin Zone #, meter rates, regulations, etc. The sheer volume of information can create confusion and apprehension, especially for visitors.



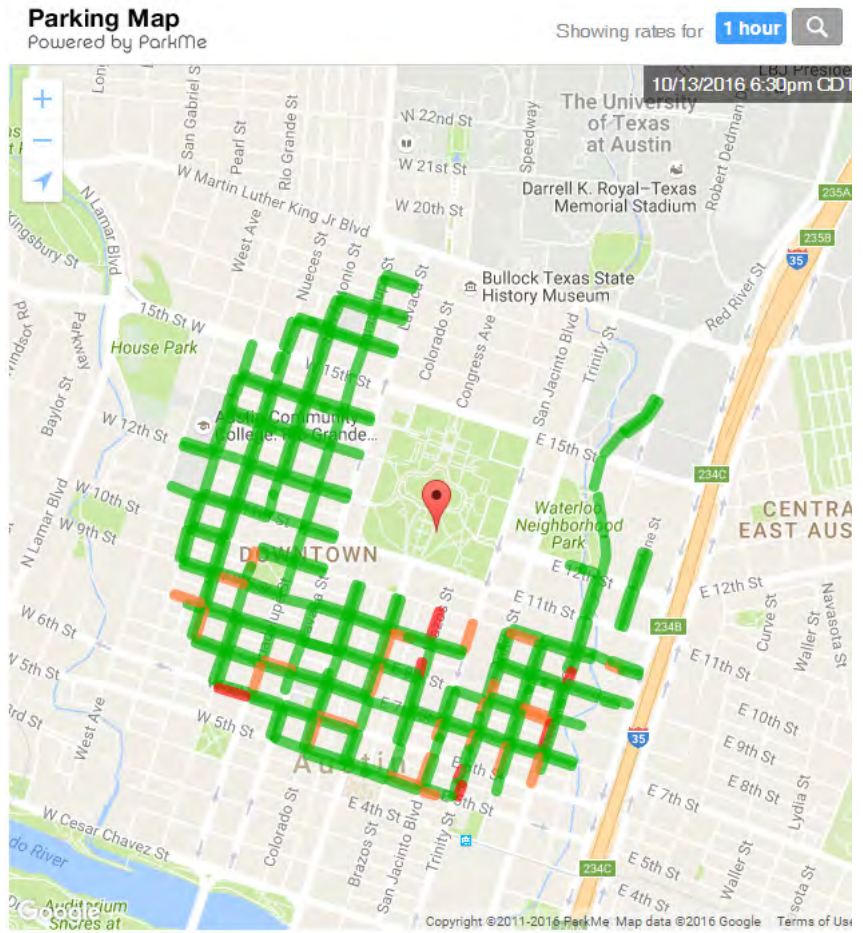
- Some curb markings are inconsistently applied. For example, not all curbs have the red markings where “No Parking” is denoted by signage. Delineation and marking of valet stands is also inconsistent throughout downtown.

- The number of public events and construction activity in downtown dictates substantial use of temporary signs and “bagging” of meters. Such activity creates a large administrative and operational burden on the City.



Parking Information

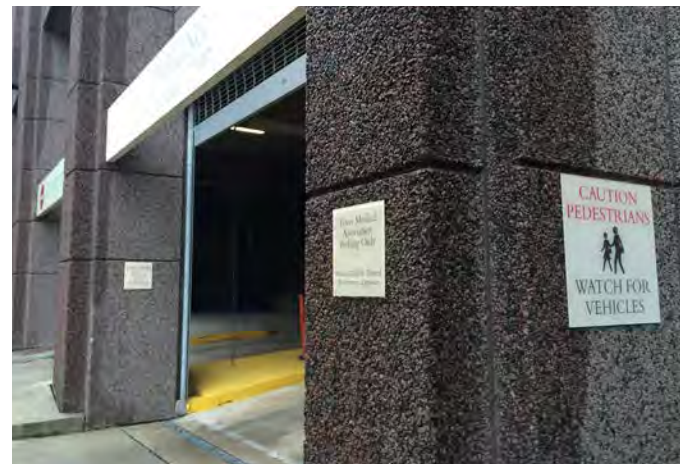
- The City of Austin provides a wealth of parking information on its website, yet the information is dispersed, can be duplicative, is lengthy, or can be hard to locate. There are opportunities to consolidate, simplify, and update information under a one-stop parking website.
- ParkMe, a third party vendor with access to Austin’s meter data, provides a real-time and searchable map of on-street parking on the city website. The ParkMe website and mobile app also include information for a limited number of off-street facilities. The City is set to supplement this service with Path to Park, as described below.
- With the exception of the ParkMe map, information on the website is static and not updated dynamically. Some maps and information are out of date. For example, meter rate information has not been updated in all locations to reflect the new \$1.20 per hour rate.
- There are numerous City social media feeds, but none specifically dedicated to parking. Parking information or updates are not consistently communicated via social media channels.



ParkMe offers real-time information for portions of the study area. The City is looking to complement this service in 2017 with “Path to Park.”

Pedestrian Access

- Garages in Austin are generally designed to ensure easy and safe vehicle movements at slow speeds. The placement of driveways and elevators may lead to individuals walking in the vehicular right of way.
- There are many instances, particularly in the downtown core, where entrances and exits conflict with sidewalks. Although targeted overhead lighting and warning signage increases the visibility of these conflict points, it is inconsistently applied.
- The slope of the sidewalk at some curb cuts may also lack a level cross slope, creating potential hazards.
- Some locations—particularly places with temporary establishments or food truck courts—have non-compliant curb cuts. These curb cuts will continue to compromise the accessible path of travel for people walking until resurfacing.
- In locations where conflict points with garage entrances are reduced, notably Congress Avenue, consistency in sidewalk slope and appealing streetscapes create a safe and comfortable walking experience.
- On-street parking is typically adjacent, if not, proximate to an accessible sidewalk.
- There are examples of on-street parking spaces, particularly in residential areas, where there are no sidewalks and meters are simply placed adjacent to the roadway. This design is not accessible for people



Pedestrian safety and comfort is essential to creating a “park-once” downtown.

with disabilities. For others, the slope of the land may possibly restrict the opening of car doors or force people to walk in the street.

- Lighting in the core is pedestrian-oriented and creates a comfortable experience. As one moves farther from the core, lighting is inconsistently applied. Improved lighting and access can help to distribute parking demand to more remote parking.

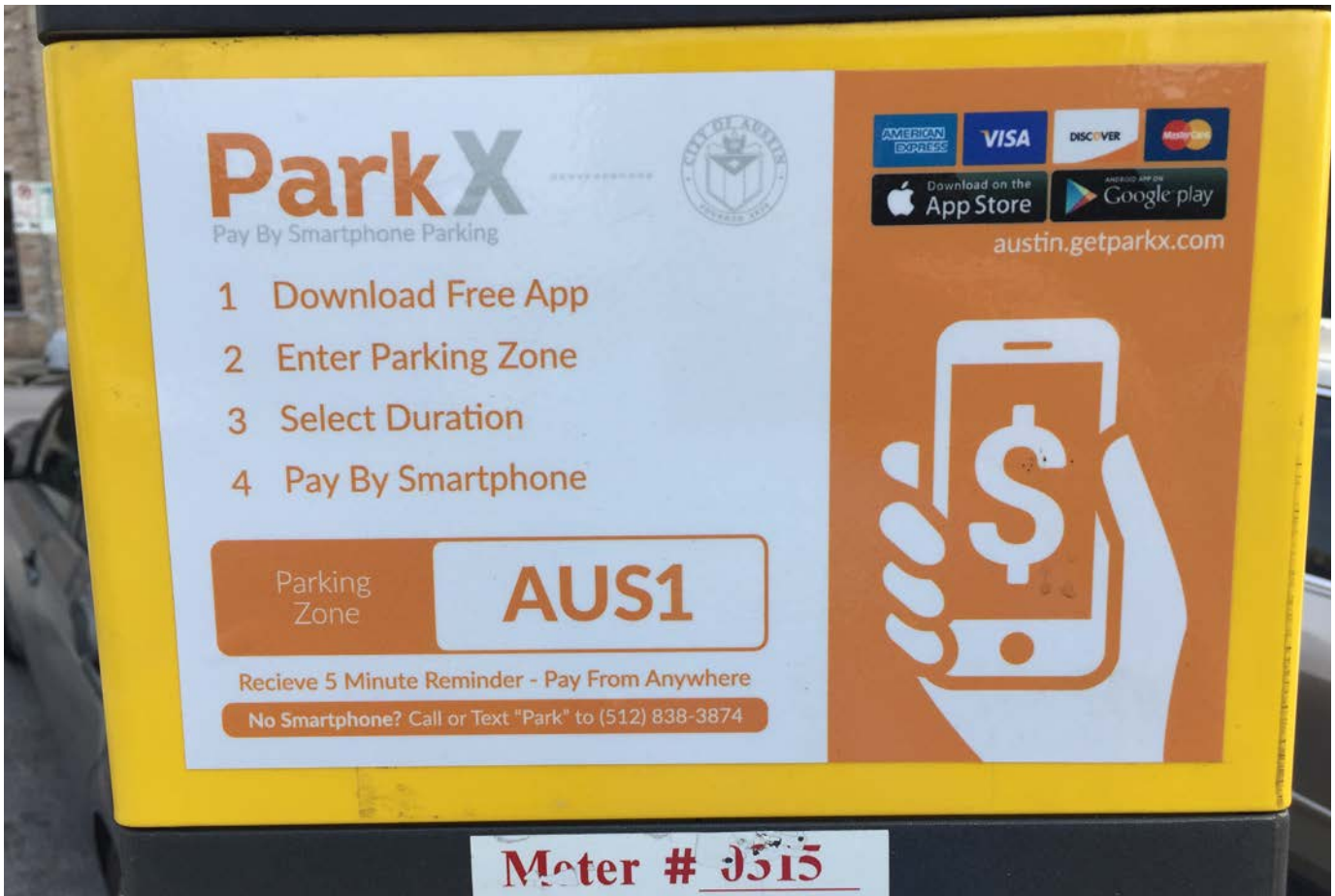
Parking IT

ON-STREET SYSTEMS

- In general, the City’s infrastructure reflects industry best practices and further investment is planned. The on-street meters have been upgraded in recent years to “smart” technology, allowing multiple forms of payment. Smart meters allow for tracking of real-time revenue and transaction data and remote rate adjustments.
- The City has two types of meters: IPS M5 single-space meters and Parkeon Strada multi-space pay stations. The multi-space meters are utilized in pay-and-display mode. City policy is to use a pay station wherever there are more than four spaces on the block. Both meters allow for coin, token, credit/debit card, smart card, mobile payment and optional “contactless” payment.
- The City recently installed 30 new IPS single space meter heads with integrated vehicle detection sensors. The City is piloting these meters to test the feasibility of using these sensors to reset payment time to zero when a vehicle leaves a parking space.



- Austin’s system offers an excellent example of vendor integration, as IPS has a feed into the Parkeon system, creating a consolidated backend system for meter revenue reconciliation.
- The City has a detailed understanding of its on-street meter inventory as a result of a two-year investment in developing an in-house, GIS-based database. The tool allows for visualization of the parking meters and their associated regulations and rates.
- Mobile information and payment systems have been adopted and embraced by the City, including: ParkX is Austin’s pay-by-phone system that allows users to pay for parking and extend time remotely, pay via a phone call or text, or use a web-based application. ParkX also allows businesses to discount parking expenses for customers who use the system via a validation code.



The City of Austin offers a pay-by-phone option at its meters via ParkX.



The City has two types of meters
- IPS M5 single-space and Parkeon
Strada multi-space pay stations.



- EasyPark offers a portable, electronic device payment that users can prepay and leave in their vehicle, thereby eliminating the need to return to the meter. In addition to parking costs, there is a cost for the device itself, membership fee, and reload fees.
- ParkMe is a third party vendor that has been allowed access to the IPS meters and Parkeon pay stations. ParkMe provides real-time data on rates, regulations, and availability. The system does not cover all of downtown.
- In early 2017, Austin will implement “Path to Park” as part of its contract with Parkeon. It is a free application that will provide user real-time information about the location of available parking, including interactive guidance. Austin will be just the second U.S. city to adopt this new technology after the City of Sacramento.

Key Takeaway

The City also allows payment via EasyPark, a portable, electronic prepayment system.

- City staff state that up to 10% of total parking transactions are derived from mobile payment, with an upward trend. Compared to most cities, Austin’s share of mobile meter transactions is on the high end.

- The City operates a residential permit program, allowing households to buy two stickers and two hand-tags for \$20 each. Guest permits are available to purchase from the City at \$1 each. Currently, there is no on-line system for ordering, buying, or renewing permits, as existing IT does not have the functionality to support this. Costs to upgrade have been deemed prohibitive, so permit renewals are done by hand by neighborhood volunteers.
- The City’s meter maintenance team is well-managed, practicing preventative maintenance, and utilizing custom in-house solutions to assist with meter operations. Due to a huge volume of special events, the meter team spends a large amount of time putting up and removing temporary special event parking signs. The meter shop current asset management system can be improved to reduce manual data entry and improve administrative efficiencies.
- Other IT systems are in place in the study area, namely the State Capitol and UT. These systems are not integrated with the City systems. The State operates about 850 meters, of which roughly 30% are “smart.” The remainder are old POM coin meters that do not allow for dynamic management, such as remote rate changes.
- There are numerous valet operators and stands within downtown, and stakeholders indicate that the demand for valet is growing. Valet operators pay the City a fee of \$.60 per hour per space for use of the curb spaces.
- New valet systems are being introduced to Austin, such as Luxe. Luxe allows motorists to drop off and pick up their vehicle anywhere via a mobile app. Luxe also offers refueling and cleaning services. Traditional valet operators expressed frustration about the inconsistency of enforcement of valet rules and regulations.

The State Capitol operates its own separate on-street system and is looking to upgrade many of its older meters.



Off-Street Systems

- The City-operated off-street garages utilize the latest Amano McGann Parking Access Revenue Control System (PARCS) technology. All city-operated garages were updated within the past 12 months.
- City-operated surface lots are serviced by Parkeon Strada pay stations, the same pay stations which are used on-street.
- A limited number of off-street facilities are also included in the ParkMe network. ParkMe is also integrated with Parking Panda, which allows users to search, browse, and reserve parking spaces in downtown.
- Private lots and garages use a variety of payment systems, depending on the private operator. Some facilities also provide for mobile payment, yet the specific application varies by facility (i.e. Parkmobile and PassportParking). Operators indicate that user adoption of mobile payments for their lots/garages has been slow. Many apps charge a transaction fee which can deter use.
- As discussed above, wayfinding and signage varies from lot to lot and garage to garage. In many cases, it is difficult to distinguish between City-owned/public parking and private/reserved parking.



Summary of Key Findings

- The City of Austin and its parking staff have embraced the leading industry practices for parking IT systems. The creation of the Austin Enterprise has allowed for substantial investments in technology to improve the user-friendliness of parking and ensure effective management of assets. Overall, the City has the correct tools, and there is a strong desire amongst staff to stay ahead of the technology curve with ongoing investments.
- The City and its partners are eager to implement further technology tools. However, it appears that a more refined and strategic vision for technology solutions, tied to new management policies, would better ensure successful implementation. There are many different systems that can be hard to distinguish as a user.
- The City has a strong maintenance department that has done well to troubleshoot issues and manage high volumes of events.
- There are opportunities to continue to improve the parking experience, including:
 1. Aligning on-the-ground and mobile payment systems across the study area and within the public and private sectors
 2. Coordinating parking signage, including real-time signage, especially among the public and private sectors
 3. Consolidating and streamlining online parking information. Improved messaging and communications through multiple platforms.
 4. Additional resources to invest in staffing, permit system management, and enforcement guided by a strong policy framework.
 5. Continued investment in the walkability of downtown to ensure safe and comfortable access to parking. Improved access can better distribute demand.

9



HOW DO DOWNTOWN EMPLOYEES + RESIDENTS TRAVEL?

This chapter provides a summary of key travel metrics for downtown employees and residents, including commute mode share, vehicle ownership, and travel distance to work.

It is important to document and track these data points over time as they provide insight into levels of parking demand and the overall performance of the transportation and parking system. Travel behavior also informs the development of parking management strategies. Solving downtown's parking challenges are intimately tied to its ability to improve access for all modes of travel.

If certain strategies can reduce the number of employees and residents who are driving to work, then the amount of parking that is needed will also decline. Similarly, the more people who both live and work within downtown, the greater the opportunity to reduce trips by vehicles.

With this data, downtown stakeholders can better understand Austin's progress toward a multimodal downtown that reduces parking demand by giving people improved options to take transit, carpool, bike, and walk.

Commute Mode Share

The majority of Downtown employees arrive at work by driving alone, roughly 80%. Drive alone mode share is higher in downtown than for the City and County, but the same as Texas as a whole. Almost 11% of Downtown employees are carpooling. Transit and bike mode share for Downtown employees is higher than the City and the region. Approximately 5% of Downtown employees ride transit to work. The figure below shows a comparison of downtown to the region and the map on the facing page shows mode share by downtown area.

FIGURE 1
Downtown Employee Commute Mode Share

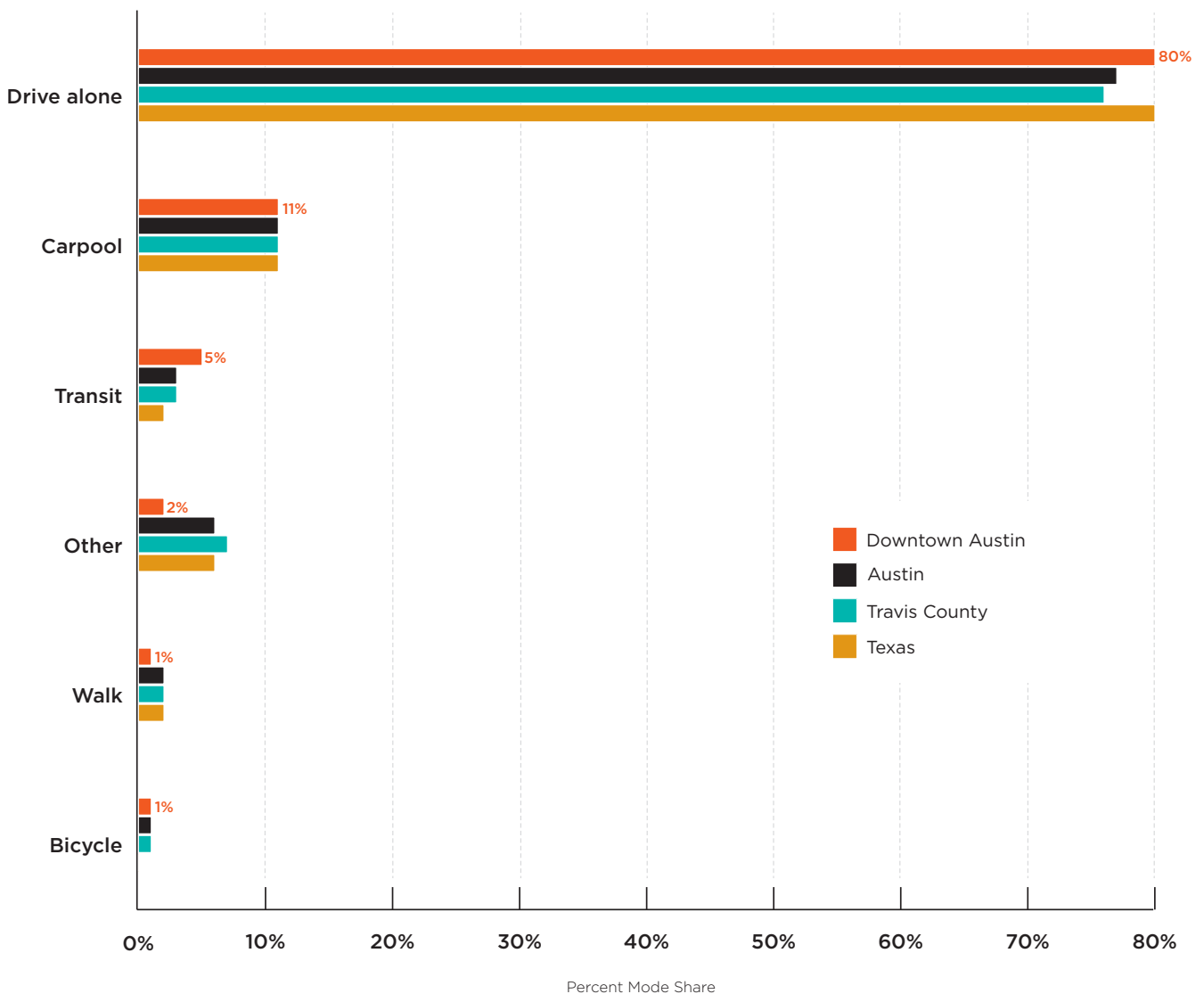
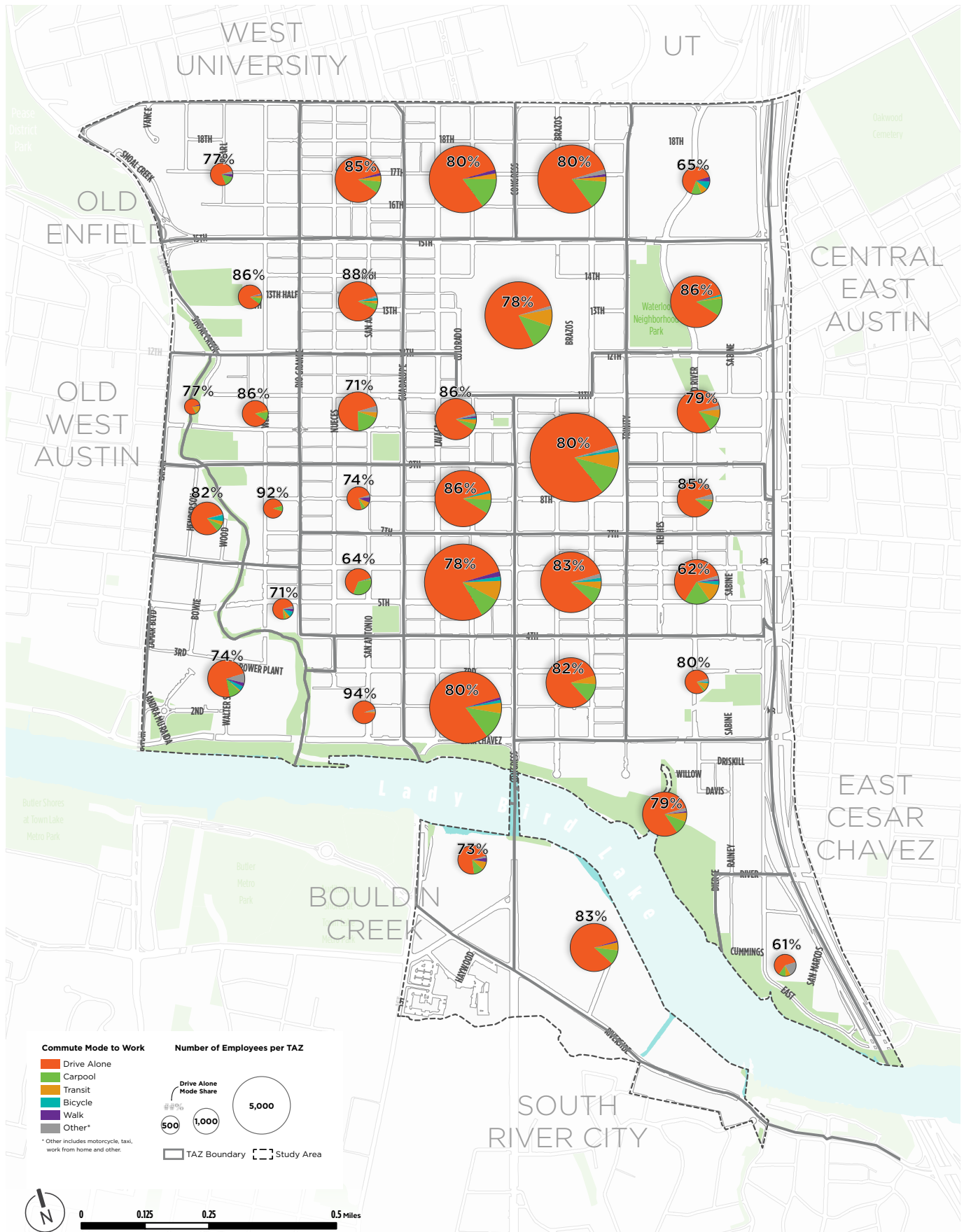


FIGURE 2

How Downtown Employees Get to Work



Boundaries shown are Traffic Analysis Zones (TAZ) per the Census Transportation Planning Product (CTPP)

The majority of Downtown residents also drive alone to their job, but at a much lower rate, approximately 58%. Given the walkability of downtown, it is not surprising that a large share of residents, more than 18%, walk to their job. The walking rate for Downtown residents is seven times higher than Austin residents and more than 11 times that of Texas residents. Biking rates are over 3% in downtown, also much higher than in the City and the region.

FIGURE 3
Downtown Resident Commute Mode Share

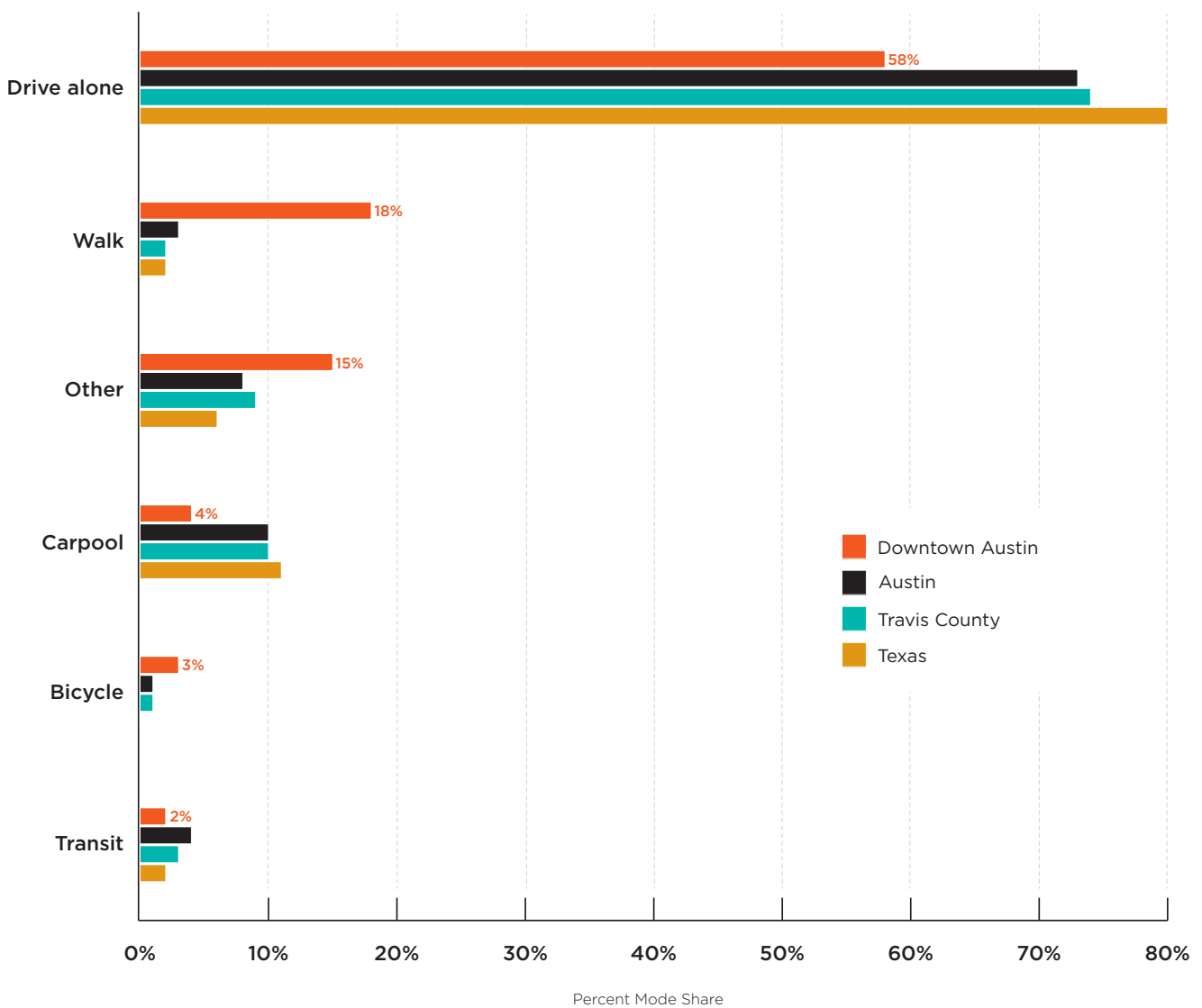
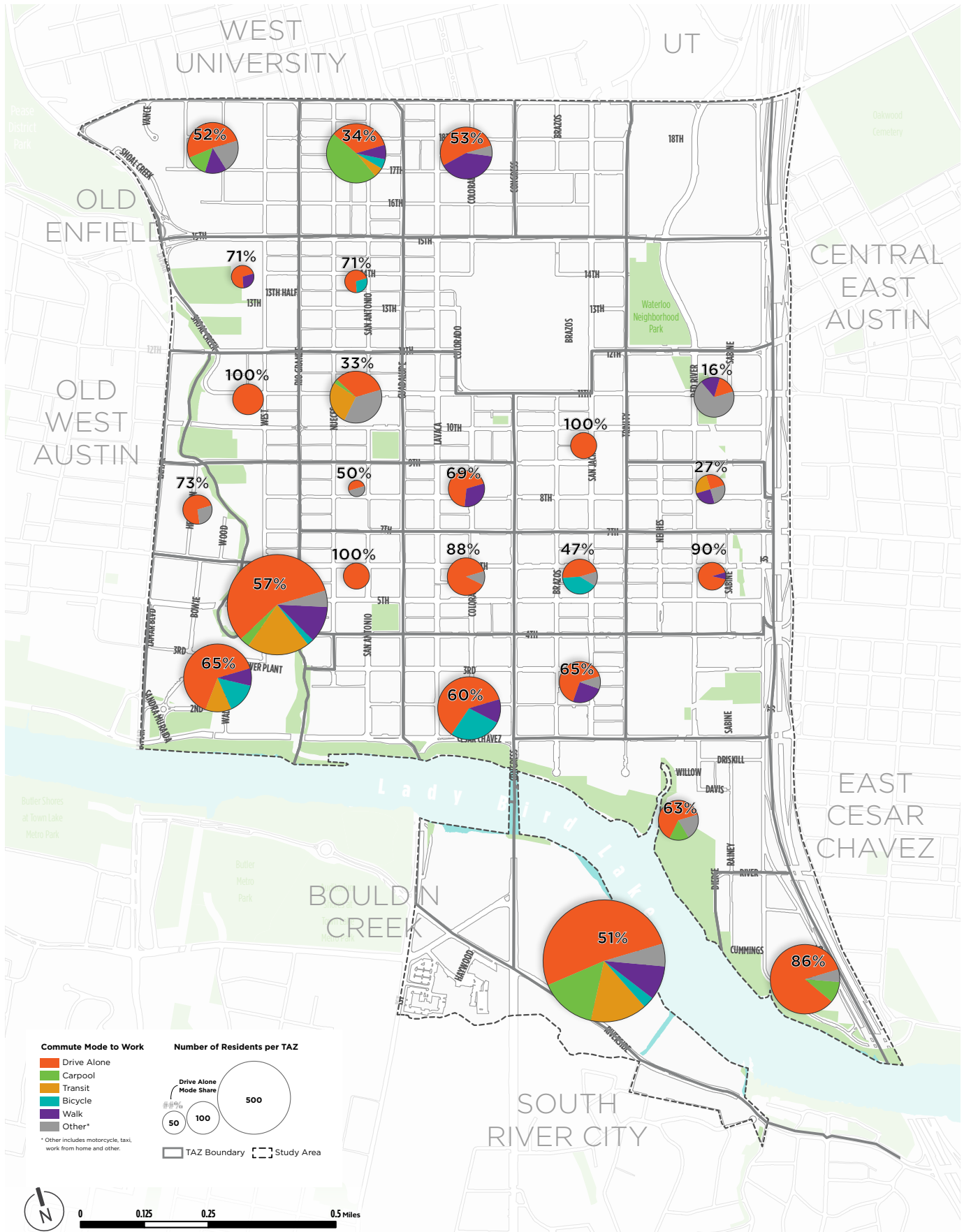


FIGURE 4

How Downtown Residents Get to Work



Boundaries shown are Traffic Analysis Zones (TAZ) per the Census Transportation Planning Product (CTPP)

Vehicle Ownership

As of 2014, approximately 11% of the households in the study area do not have access to a vehicle. This is almost 5 percentage points higher than Austin as a whole and almost double the rate of Travis County and Texas. Compared to five years earlier, the number of zero-car households in downtown has declined. In all, vehicle ownership per household is lower in downtown than in Austin or Texas as a whole.

FIGURE 5
Percent of Downtown Households Without a Vehicle

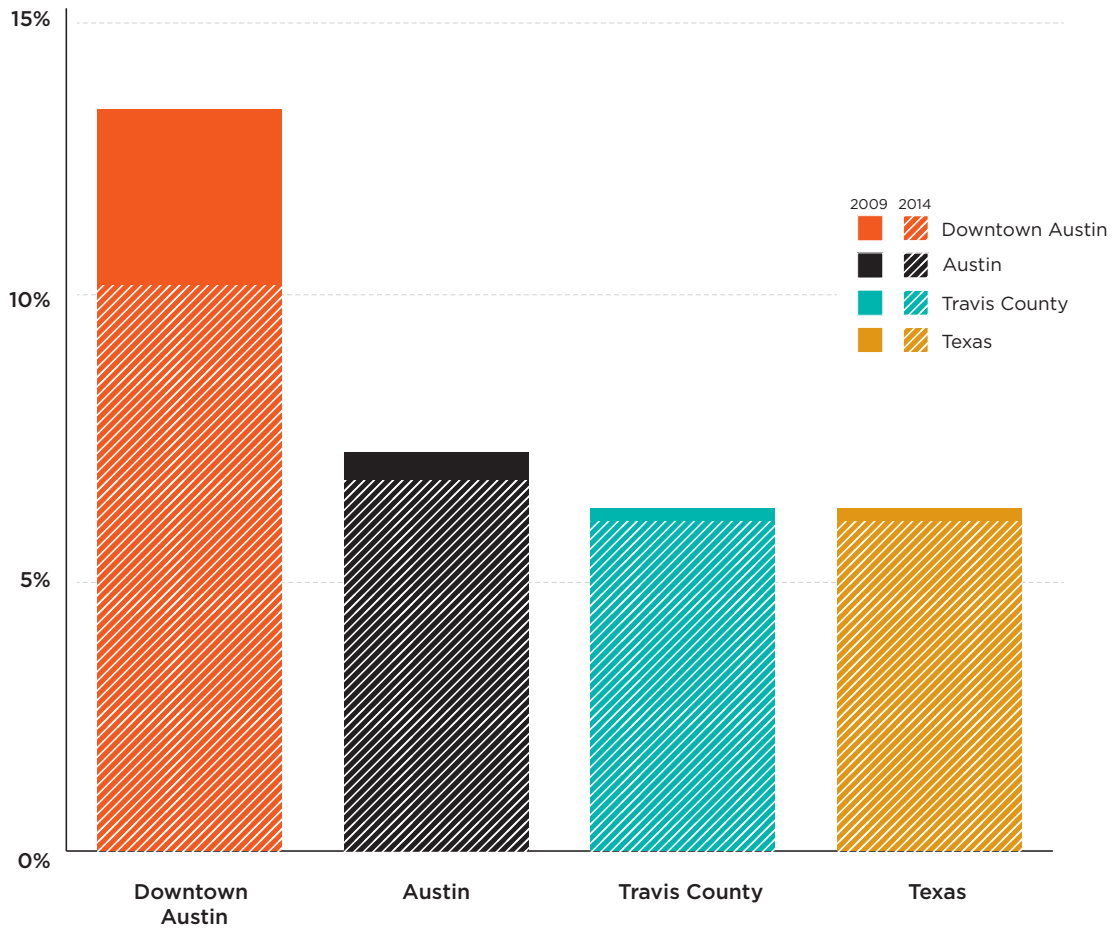
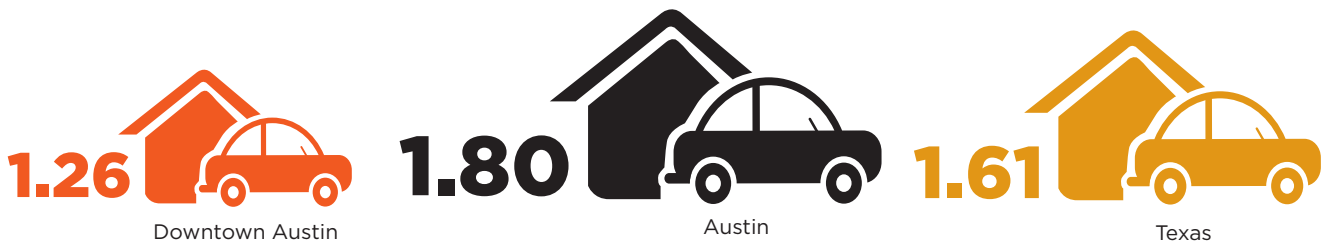


FIGURE 6
Average Vehicles per Household



Source: US Census ACS 2010-2014 5-Year Estimates (Tables B25044 and B25046)



Vehicle ownership per household is lower in Downtown than in Austin or Texas as a whole.

Travel Distance to Work

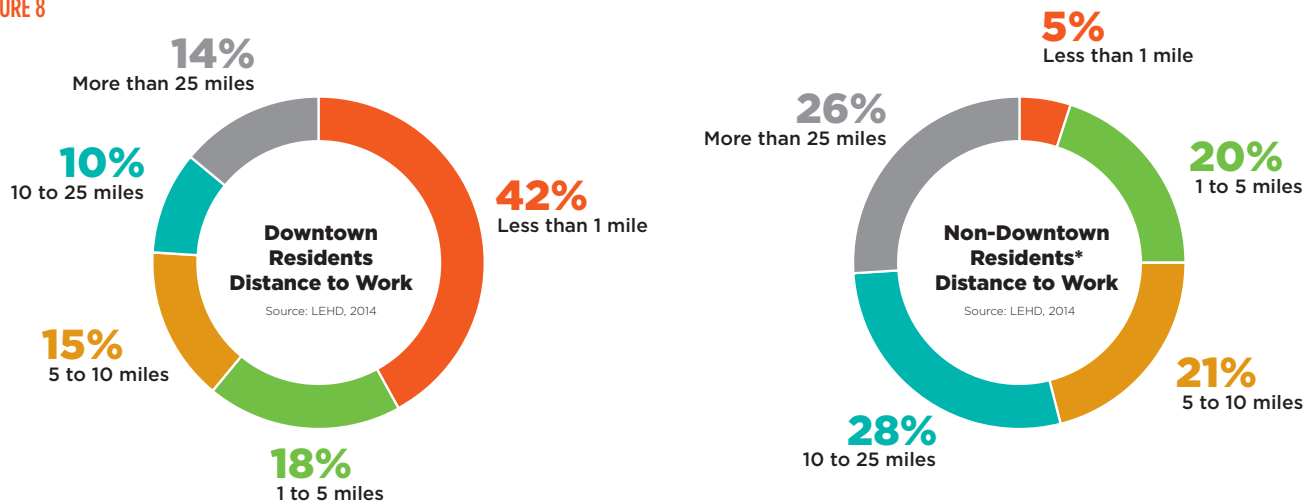
As of 2014, there were approximately 86,000 jobs in Downtown Austin, but only 3,600 residents. In fact, only 1.1% of Downtown employees live in Downtown Austin. Approximately one quarter of Downtown residents work in downtown.

FIGURE 7



Given that most Downtown employees live elsewhere, many have to travel long distances to get to their job. Only 5% are within one mile and more than one quarter must travel more than 25 miles to their job. By contrast, Downtown residents live much closer to their place of employment. More than 40% have to travel less than one mile and more than 60% are within five miles.

FIGURE 8



*Downtown employees only

Summary of Key Findings

- There are far more employees than residents in downtown. However, the data likely does not reflect recent housing trends. The small sample size of downtown residents results in a higher margin of error.
- A large majority of Downtown employees drive alone to work, at a rate higher than that of the City and Travis County.
- Employees are coming by other modes, however, as more than one in ten carpools and over 5% take transit to work. Transit mode share is higher for Downtown employees than the region.
- Residents of downtown drive alone to work far less, as almost one in five walks.
- Many Downtown residents do not have access to a vehicle, and average vehicle ownership rates are lower in downtown. The connected and accessible nature of the downtown street network clearly allows for more travel by non-drive alone modes.
- 42% of downtown residents live within one mile of their job and 60% live within five miles.
- As more residents move to downtown, there will likely be less vehicles per person and a large opportunity to further incentivize short commute trips by transit, rideshare, biking, and walking.
- Improving travel options, particularly transit service for those that live far away from downtown, will be essential to reducing the number of employees driving alone.
- Data for non-commute trip behavior was not available. Additional survey work would better capture mode split data for non-work trips, which represent the vast majority of people's travel.

10



WHAT DOES THE COMMUNITY SAY ABOUT PARKING?

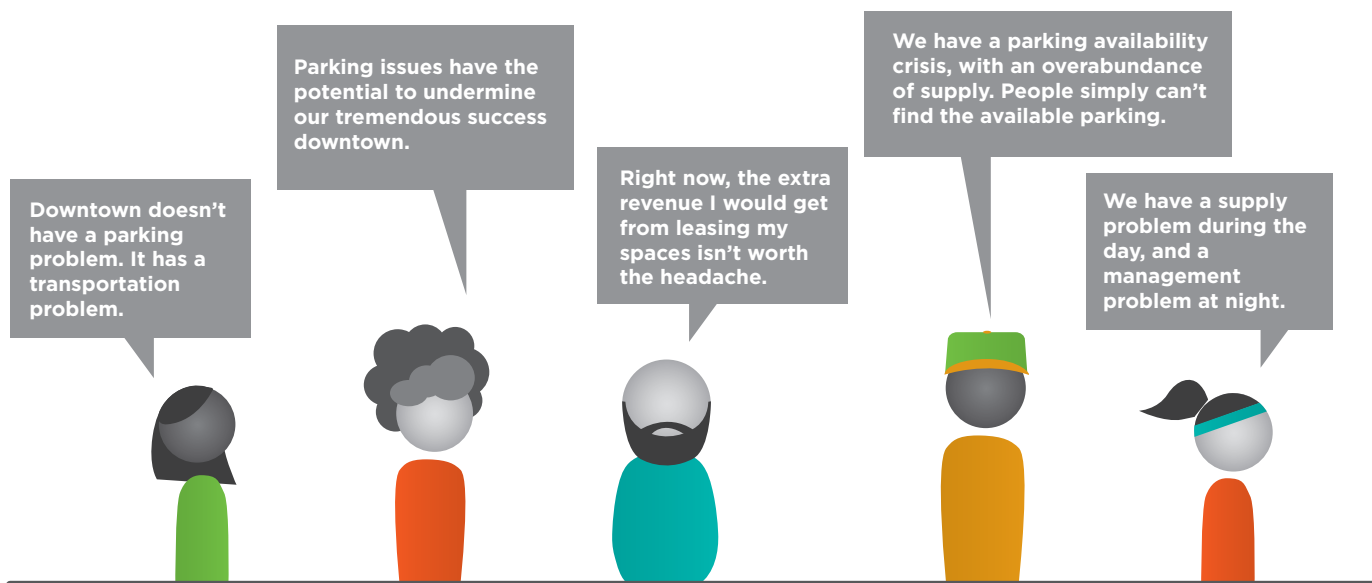
This study includes a comprehensive outreach program designed to be robust, inclusive, and innovative.

The major components of the outreach plan include:

- Project Steering Committee
- Project [website](#)
- DAA newsletters
- Media advisories and press releases
- Online community survey
- Three community workshops
- Stakeholder interviews with local and regional agencies, property owners, businesses, developers, and other community groups
- Presentations to elected bodies

This chapter summarizes the key findings from the community outreach conducted thus far, including stakeholder interviews, the initial community workshops, and the online parking survey. This input has been used to confirm and refine a cohesive project vision, and deepen understanding of the key issues and opportunities. Additional outreach will be conducted, including two more workshops, to guide the development of recommendations.

STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS



The project team spoke with a diverse cross-section of the downtown community. The primary goals were to identify stakeholder goals and vision and brainstorm challenges and solutions. The following interviews were conducted:

- Transportation Department
- Planning Department
- Public Works Department
- Economic Development Department
- Parking Enterprise
- Council Members
- State Capitol
- Travis County
- Downtown Owners/Property Managers/
Business Owners
- Downtown Developers
- Parking Operators
- Mayor's Office

Summary of Stakeholder Interviews

Category	Feedback
Goals & Objectives	Downtown parking should support Downtown’s vitality and future growth, especially infill development . However, some are concerned about the pace of growth and believe there is not enough parking. A coordinated and comprehensive plan is strongly desired.
	Parking must be more convenient and user-friendly . Parking challenges could undermine downtown success.
	Existing and future traffic congestion is a major problem that needs to be addressed. Managing parking more effectively offers one tool to reduce congestion .
	Similarly, parking approaches should support the city’s efforts to create a more multimodal downtown .
	The private sector has to play a bigger role, focusing on improved sharing of parking .
Issues & Challenges	New forms of technology should play a major role in management and information.
	Many available parcels left in downtown are a quarter block or less , which typically do not allow for on-site and/or structured parking.
	Housing is becoming more and more expensive. Many believe that a strategic approach to parking can lower housing costs .
	The current development market strongly prefers on-site and dedicated parking. Office space is harder to lease when parking isn’t on-site.
	Yet, newer downtown employers have lower parking demand and a growing segment of employees do not drive . Employers are responding with mobility programs for employees.
	Transit service must be improved to give people real commute options. One desired service is a downtown “park-n-ride” circulator.
	Signage and technology has improved, but can continue to be enhanced. People have trouble finding available parking or understanding the regulations.
	On-street payment technology gets positive feedback, but the pay-by-cell and ParkMe programs have not fully caught on yet.
	Enforcement can be improved, as some people know how to “game” the system . Citation rates are cheaper than most daily rates in garages.
	Property owners are sharing their parking, but barriers exist to expanding shared parking , including cleaning, liability, lighting, signage, technology.
	Some want to raise/lower parking rates based on demand and time of day. Parking is underpriced and would help to distribute demand. Others believe demand-based pricing will be confusing to patrons and difficult to implement.
	Parking is available in State Capitol in the evenings, but it is disconnected from downtown . State law restricts use of these facilities.
	Code regulations are generally good, but there are opportunities to improve ease of use, flexibility for developers , and encourage use of alternative modes.
There is tension between keeping on-street parking and removing some spaces for bike lanes, transit improvements, and expanded sidewalks.	
The desire and use of curbside valet is growing , yet the programs are uncoordinated. Regulations of valet operators should be fair and consistent.	



COMMUNITY WORKSHOP

98

On May 11th, 2016 the Downtown Austin Alliance hosted the first public workshop for the Downtown Austin Parking Strategy. Approximately 75 people attended the workshop.

The workshop was organized around multiple interactive station areas, which incorporated maps, provided project information, and highlighted existing conditions information. A presentation by the consultant team summarized the importance of effective parking management in Downtown Austin, highlighted how parking connects to larger mobility issues, and provided an overview of the project's objectives, scope of work, schedule, and approach.



Jeff Tumlin from Nelson\Nygaard gave an overview of the project and the importance of parking in Downtown Austin.

Mapping Exercise

Maps showing the study area, parking inventory, existing regulations, zoning, and issues/opportunities were provided. People were asked to add their comments and thoughts.

- Participants identified where parking was available during certain times of the day and who was utilizing different parking areas. Other notes included where to find “hidden parking” in certain areas.
- Wayfinding to available parking was identified as a need throughout downtown, especially on major arterials such as Congress Avenue.
- Participants cited poor management of public and private parking facilities at many garages throughout downtown, in addition to rising parking costs.



Priority Voting

Another station provided a list of various statements about parking and asked attendees to vote for the statements they agreed with the most. The statements demonstrate tradeoffs and community preferences regarding parking operations, regulations, requirements, and location. Statements receiving the strongest support included:

- I support the removal of some on-street parking spaces to expand sidewalks and improve the streetscape.
- Existing signage and parking information is poor. I don't know where available parking is located or what the regulations are.
- The City should better manage event parking. Major events need a more comprehensive management approach.
- I am worried about the impacts of new development on parking in downtown.
- If there was guaranteed low cost/free parking, I would be willing to park further from my destination and walk or take transit.



Workshop attendees used dots to indicate preferences about parking issues and solutions.

Word Wall

Another station had comment boards for people to respond to specific parking questions or topics, such as “Signage and Wayfinding” or “Employee Parking,” allowing attendees to provide free form comments and feedback. Key feedback from attendees included:

“Tax lots and garages at a higher rate to encourage development.”

“Expand enforcement to seven days a week.”

“Continue free meter parking on Sundays and holidays or after business hours.”

“Use peak pricing. Street spaces are too cheap.”

“Garages increase their rates at the same time and are expensive.”

“Provide mobile apps such as where parking is available, virtual permits, better real time traffic.”

“We have a lot of surface lots that could be garages.”

“Reduce or loosen the parking minimums especially for mixed use projects.”

“Need well-lit parking spaces and streets.”

“Encourage cooperation between public and private employee parking facilities.”

“Need to issue more tickets and enforce time limits better.”

“Unify parking signage standards and have real-time information about spaces available in garages.”

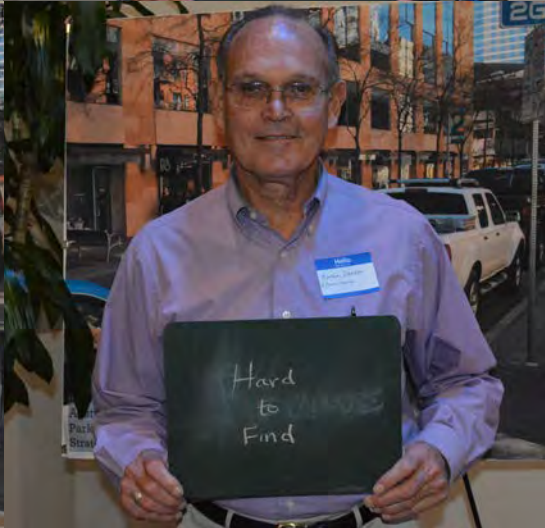
Please write down
your thoughts on
these parking
related issues...

taxi stands & circulation
effect on traffic, esp late
night weekends

Business Breakfast

On Thursday, May 12th, 2016 the Downtown Austin Alliance and the consultant team hosted a breakfast for stakeholders within the downtown business community. Approximately 40-45 people attended the breakfast. Similar to the workshop, attendees were given a presentation on the importance of effective parking management in Downtown Austin and how parking connects to larger mobility issues, as well as an overview of the project's objectives, scope of work, schedule, and approach. A discussion and Q&A session followed.





What does parking mean to you?



ONLINE PARKING SURVEY

To better understand parking in Downtown Austin, an online parking survey was conducted. The survey goals were to:

- Collect information about parking behavior in Downtown Austin
- Provide insight into public perception of the parking system
- Identify major issues for downtown visitors, residents, employees, and business owners
- Understand the tradeoffs of parking access, availability, and price for downtown parkers
- Leverage other data collection efforts to develop a more holistic understanding of downtown parking conditions, perceptions, and needs

D4



The survey was open to the public from Monday, September 26th through Friday, October 14th. The survey was distributed via the following channels:

- Media advisory with link to parking survey
- Links on the Downtown Austin Alliance (DAA) News section and Parking Strategy webpage
- Shared via DAA's Facebook & Twitter accounts
- Two articles in This Week in Downtown, DAA's weekly newsletter, distributed to approximately 6,000 subscribers
- Two e-blasts distributed to approximately 6,000 subscribers
- Targeted emails sent to key project stakeholders
- Distributed communications toolkit with sample content to: Capitol Metro, City of Austin Mobility News, Downtown Austin Neighborhood Association, and Mobility Austin

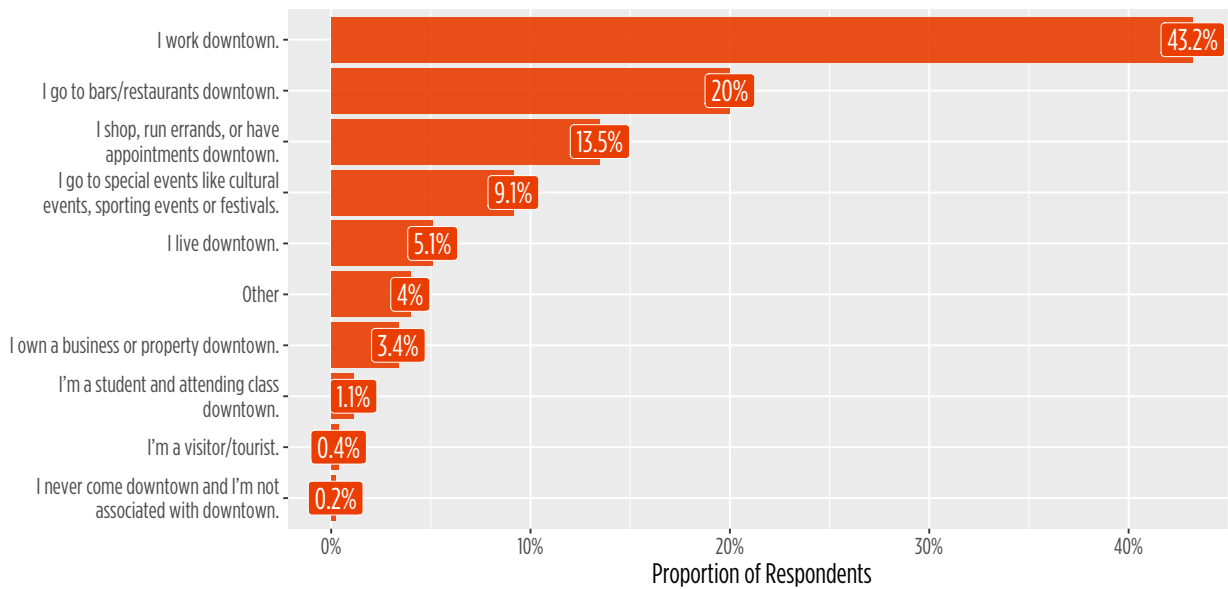
A total of 1,335 responses were received. The key findings of the survey results are summarized below.

TRIP PURPOSE

The survey asks for primary trip purpose to downtown, sorting the survey participants into “user groups” (e.g., employees, residents, visitors). Over 43% of respondents are employed in Downtown Austin, and another 20% typically come downtown to patronize bars/restaurants. Only 5% of respondents identified primarily as residents.

FIGURE 1

Why do you typically come to Downtown Austin? (N=1,335)



PRIMARY TRANSPORTATION MODE

Sixty percent of respondents drive to downtown alone, and another 18% carpool, as illustrated in Figure 2. Eight percent take transit to downtown, and 4% bicycle. Figure 3 compares travel mode by trip purpose. About 35% of employees drive downtown, while people traveling for other purposes are more likely to carpool or use other modes.

FIGURE 2

How do you typically travel to Downtown Austin? (N=1,318)

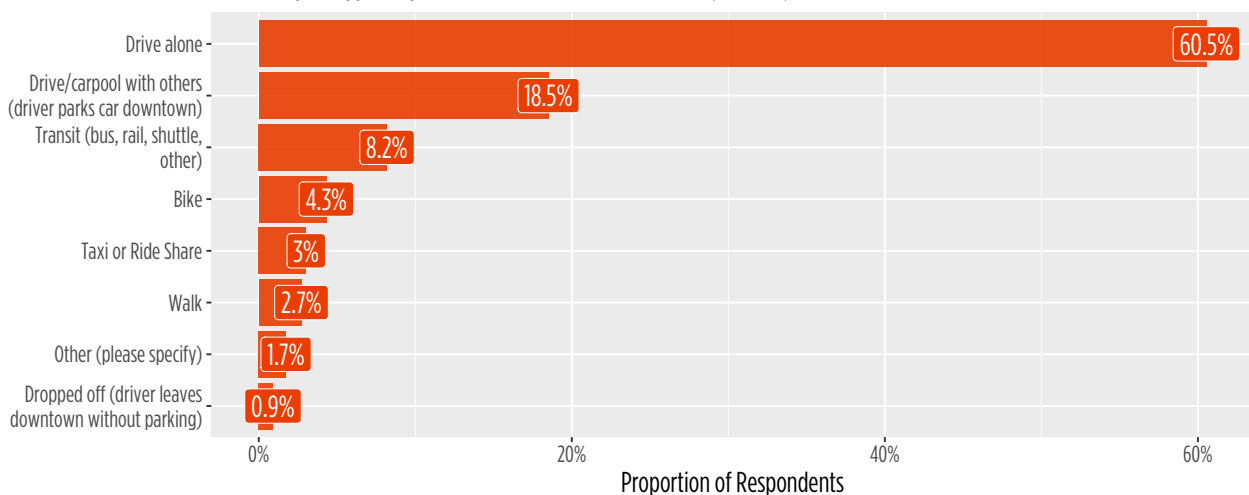
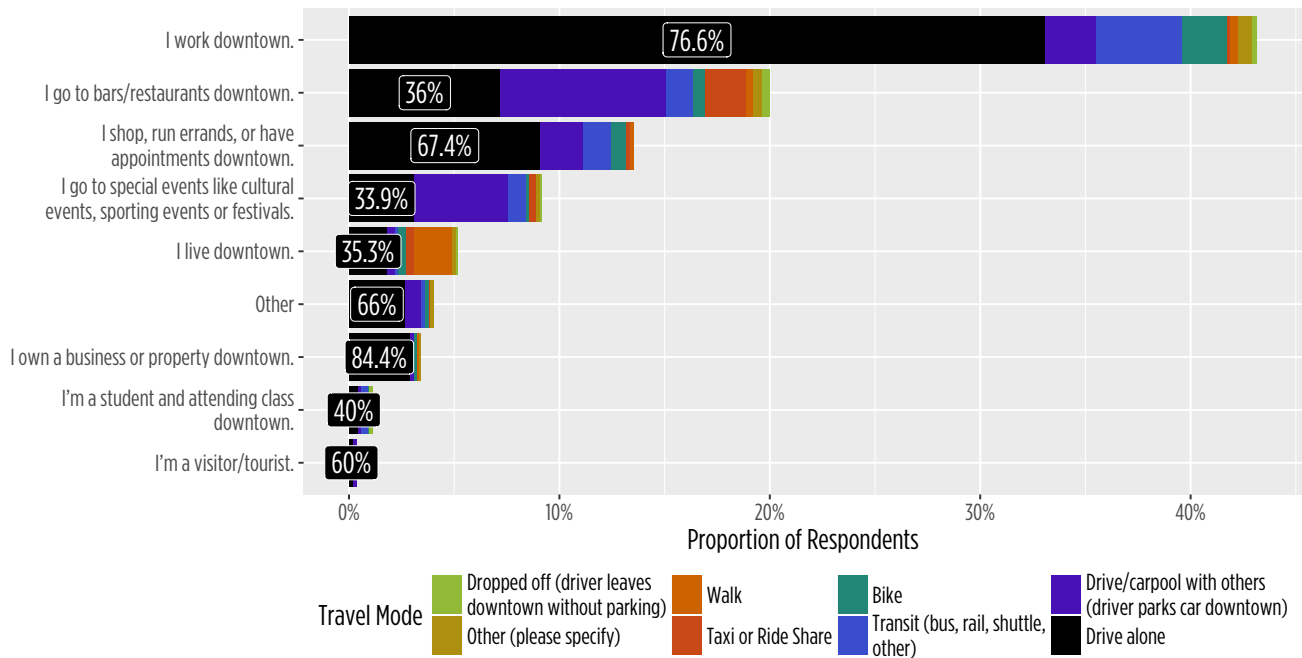


FIGURE 3

Trip Purpose vs. Travel Mode (N=1,318)



PRIMARY TRANSPORTATION MODE

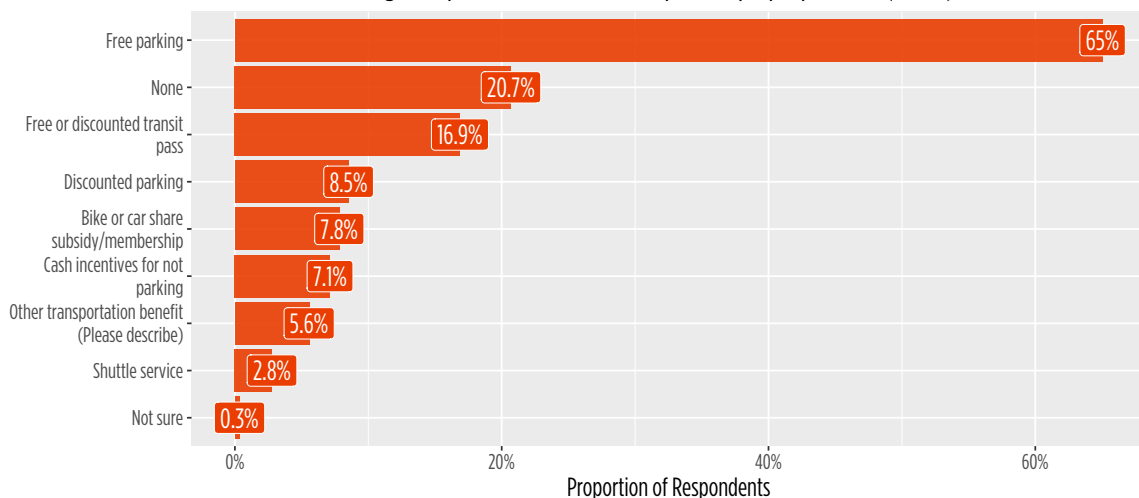
16

Over 500 respondents indicated which transportation benefits they receive from their employers (Figure 4). Of those, 65% received free parking, and another 8.5% received discounted parking. Over one fifth of respondents said that they did not receive any transportation benefits. Programs to encourage travel by transit, biking, carpooling, or walking are far less common. Almost 17% receive a transit subsidy, but less than 8% of respondents indicated they received bike/car share subsidies, cash incentives for not parking, shuttle service, or other benefits.

Most employers in the area do not appear to offer transportation demand management (TDM) benefits, and free parking for employees is a standard practice.

FIGURE 4

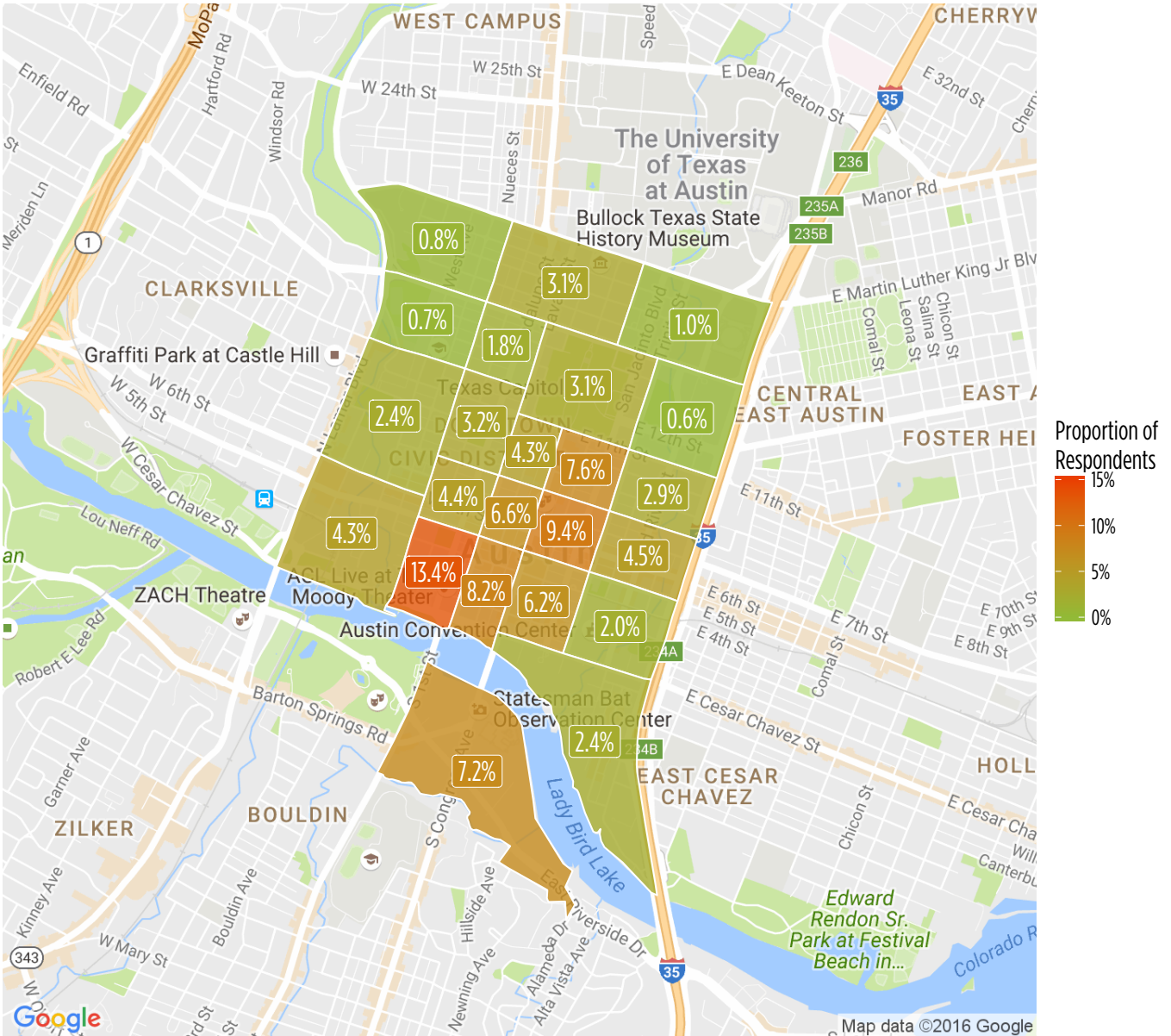
Which of the following transportation benefits does your employer provide? (N=575)



PARKING LOCATIONS

Respondents indicated where they typically park using a map of downtown divided into subareas, as illustrated in Figure 5. Most people park in the core of downtown, which is not surprising given the proximity to trip generators and the higher share of parking located there.

FIGURE 5
In which downtown area do you typically park (N=1,191)



Nearly 40% of respondents typically park at on-street metered spaces (Figure 6), even though on-street spaces are a small share of the overall supply. One-third of respondents park in a free off-street space (likely provided by their employer), and nearly one-fifth of respondents park in a paid lot or garage.

FIGURE 6

Where do you typically park in Downtown Austin? (N=1,202)

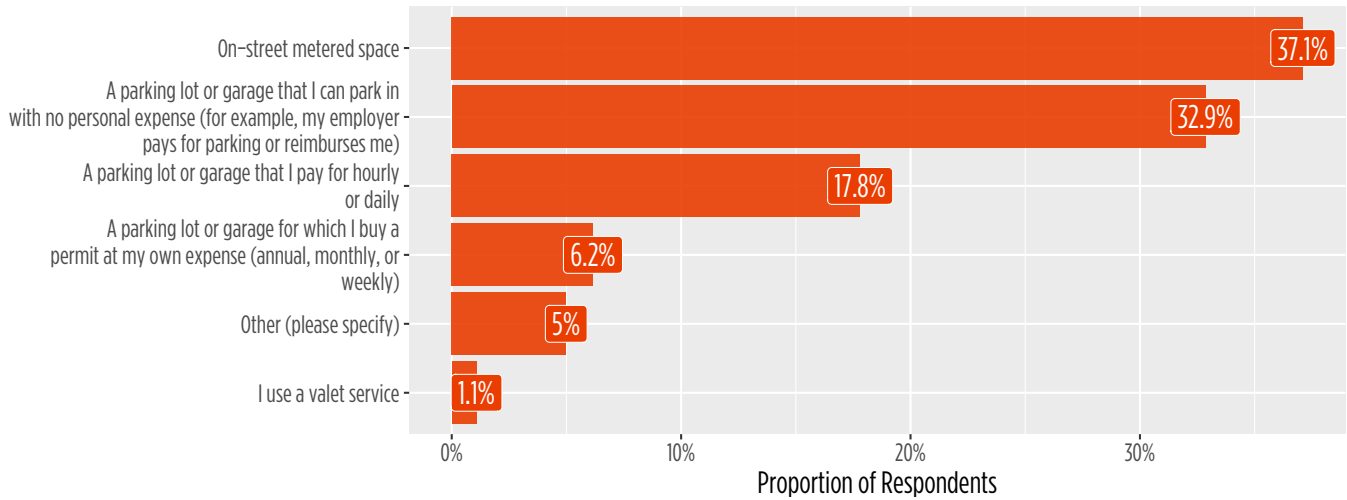
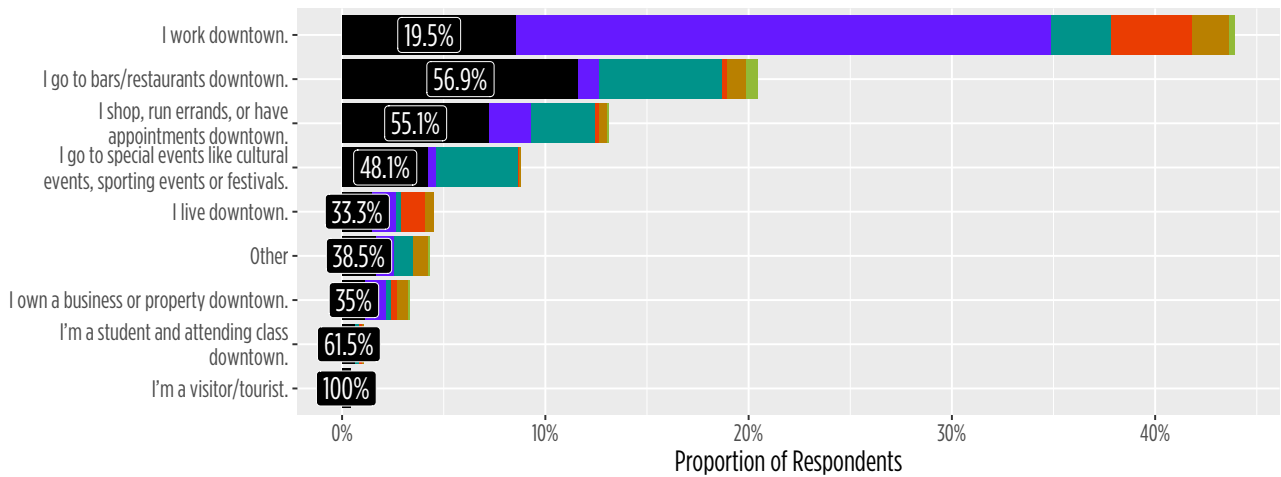


Figure 7 presents a comparison of parking facility types by trip purpose. Most employees park in off-street garages or lots, but about 8% of employees who drive are parking in on-street metered spaces. Ideally, these spaces should not be utilized by long-term parkers.

FIGURE 7

Trip Purpose vs. Parking Facility Type (N=1,202)

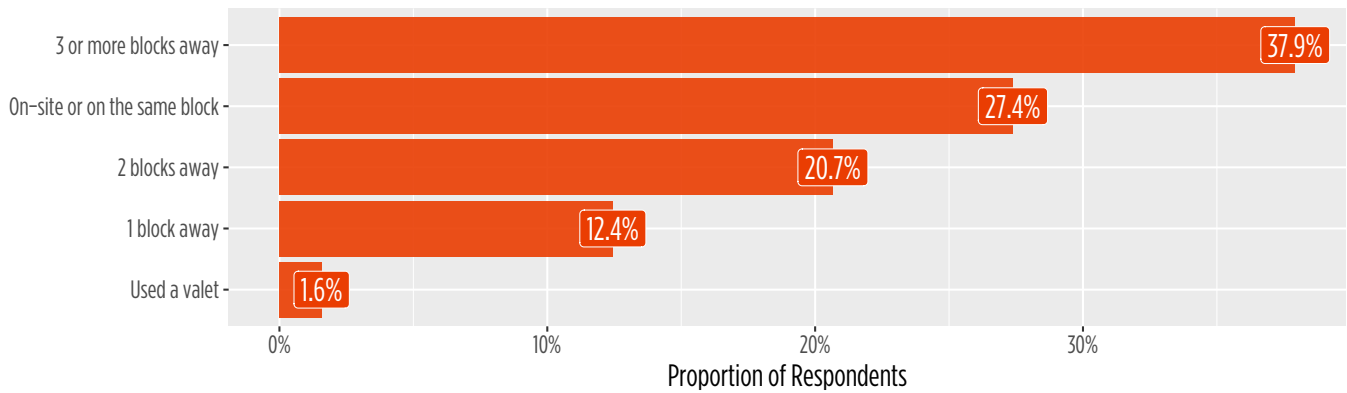


FINDING PARKING

In total, nearly 60% of respondents are able to find a spot within 2 blocks or less of their destination, or roughly a five-minute walk (Figure 8). Another quarter park on-site or within the same block as their destination. Yet, there are some motorists who do have to walk farther, as over one-third of respondents indicated that they park “3 or more blocks away” from their destination.

FIGURE 8

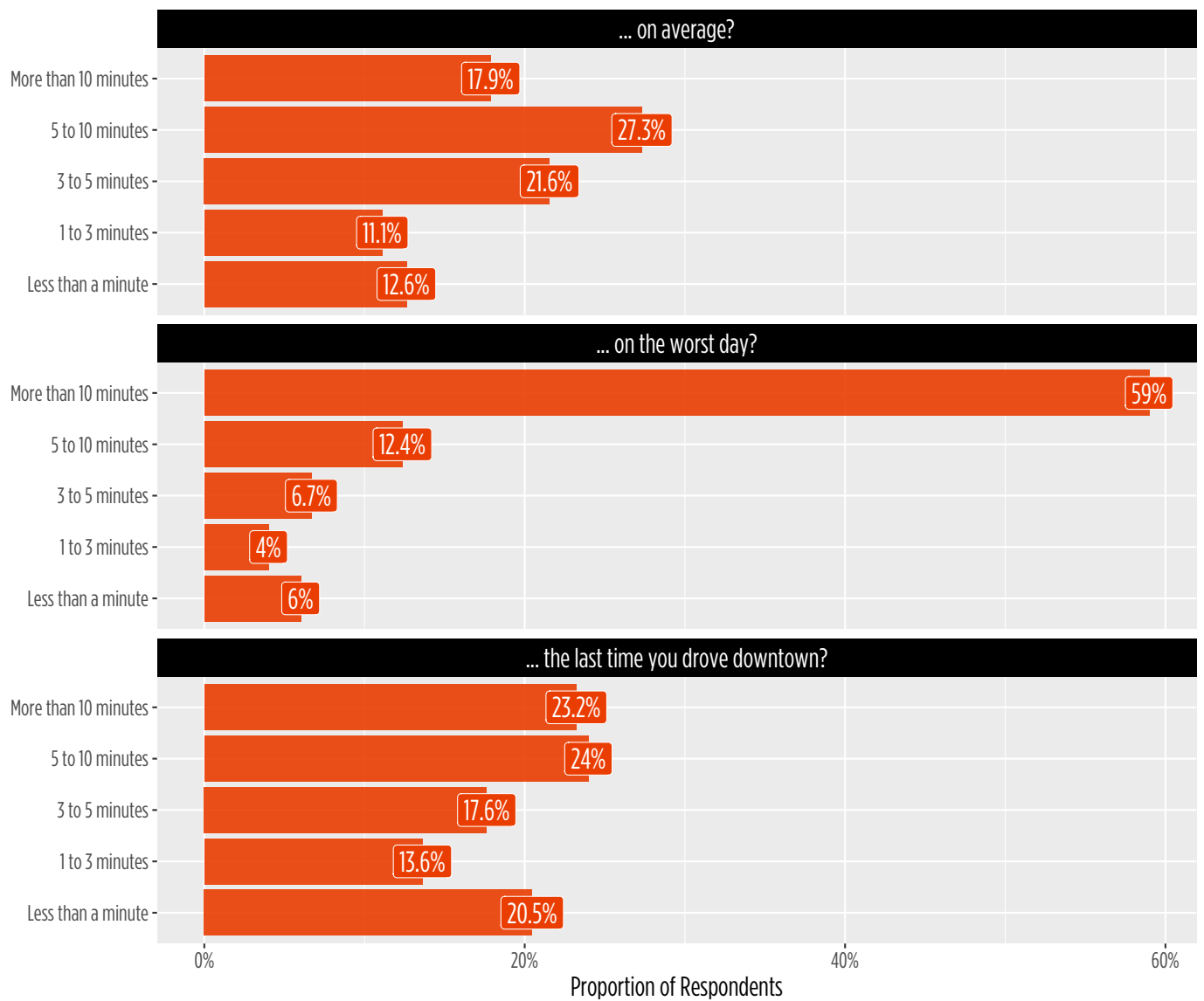
Approximately how far away from your final destination did you park the last time you parked Downtown? (N=1,205)



Respondents also indicated how long it typically takes them to find parking on average, during the worst case scenario, and on the last time they parked downtown (Figure 9). On average, nearly three quarters (73%) of respondents can find parking in under 10 minutes, and another 45% can find parking in under five minutes on a typical day.

Sixty percent of respondents say it takes longer than 10 minutes during the worst case scenario. However, even on the worst day, more than 16% say they can find parking in under five minutes.

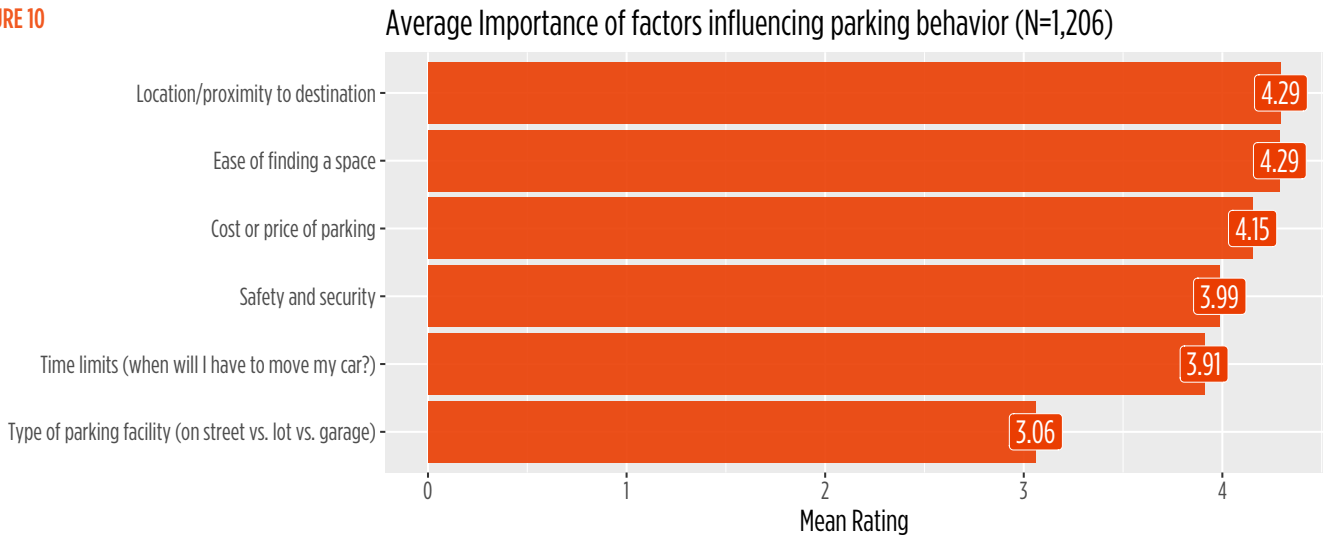
FIGURE 9 How long does it take you to find a parking spot... (N=1,197)



PARKING PREFERENCES

Respondents indicated the factors most likely to affect their parking decisions, as illustrated in Figure 10, on a 1-5 scale. Respondents prioritized parking availability and proximity to destination, with cost being the third highest priority. Respondents were least concerned with the type of parking facility.

FIGURE 10



Respondents were also asked about several parking and policy trade-offs; these results are illustrated in the following figures.

- Seventy percent of respondents would prefer to walk rather if it allowed them access to free or cheaper parking.
- Over two-thirds of respondents would prefer to park once and walk, bike, or take transit between downtown destinations, as opposed to driving from location to location.
- Over a third of respondents would like to be able to park for free or cheaply in an off-street parking facility and ride a free shuttle to downtown. Another third would like to not drive at all.
- Nearly two-thirds of respondents would like the city to maintain existing parking or build new parking, even with the associated tradeoffs of building more parking. This preference is relatively uniform across the different trip purposes.

FIGURE 11 If you have been unable to find parking, have you ever decided to give up and just leave downtown? (N=1,235)



FIGURE 12

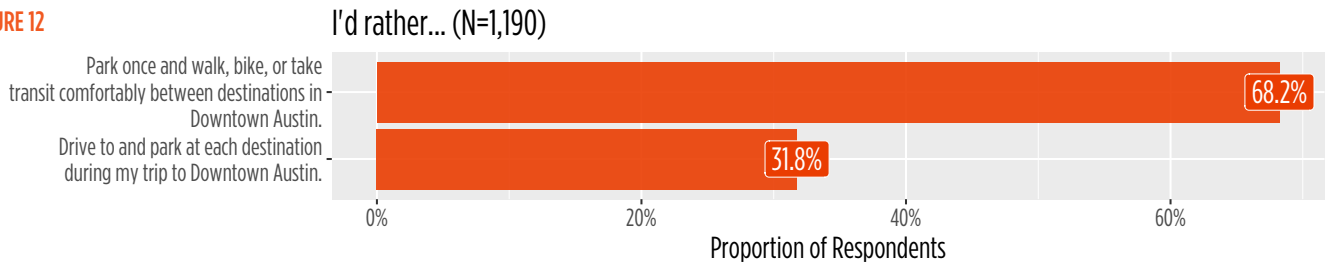
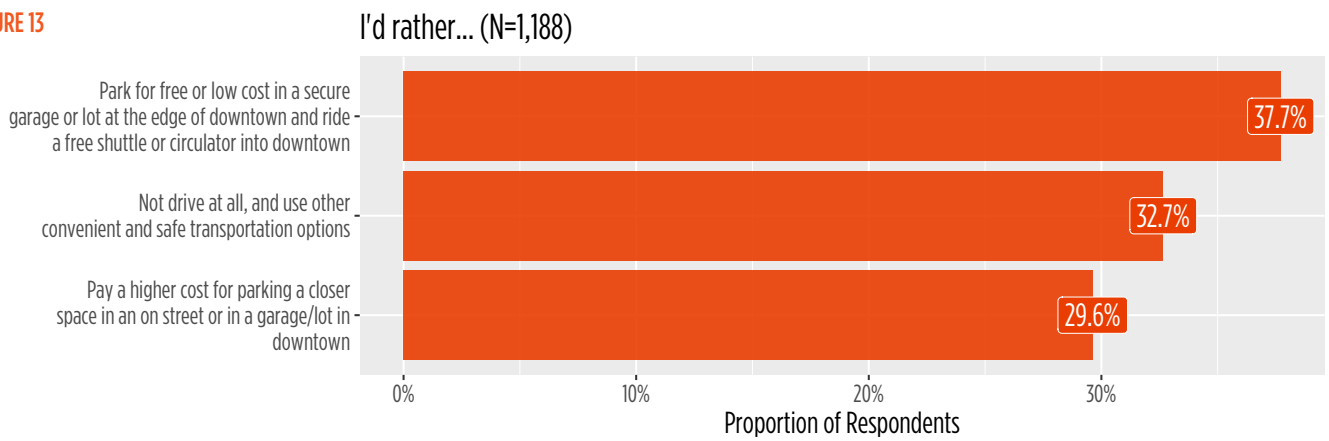
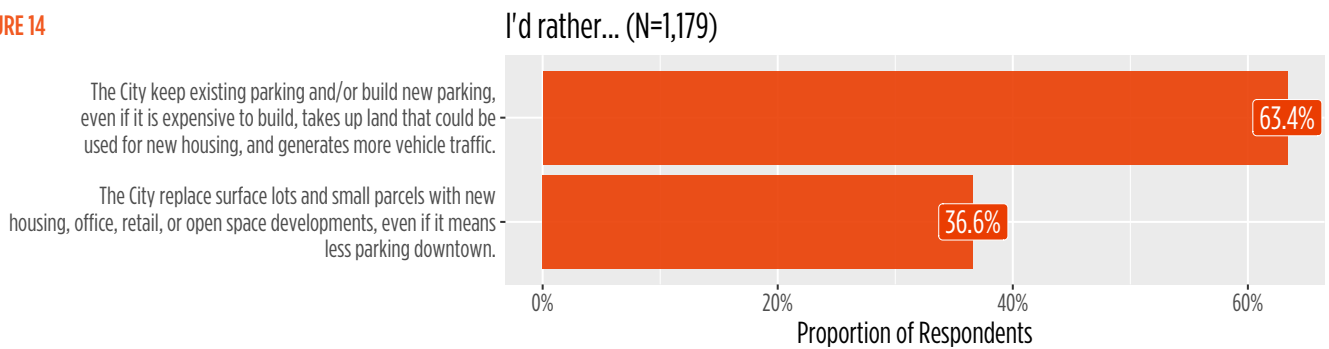


FIGURE 13



112

FIGURE 14



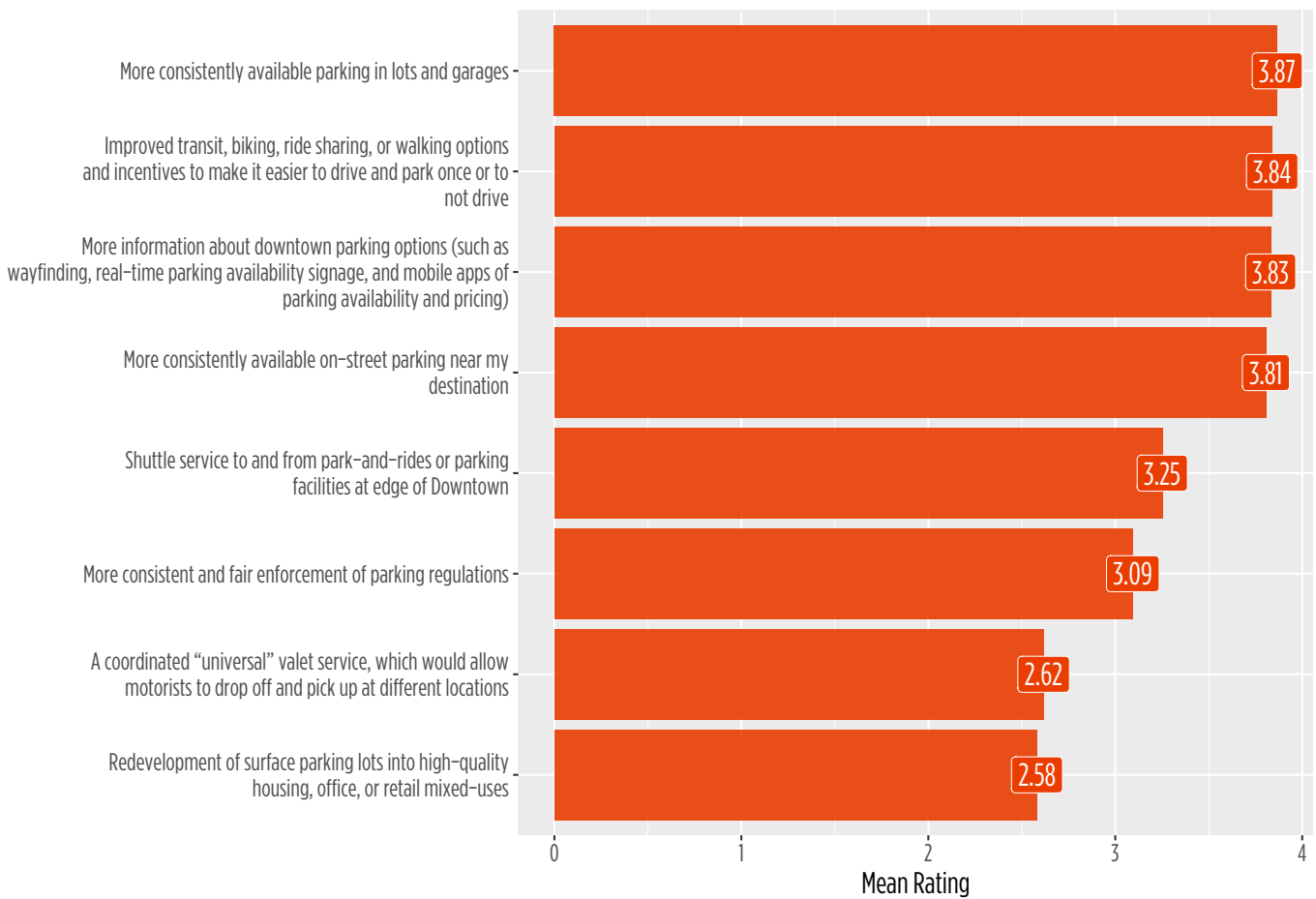
POTENTIAL PARKING IMPROVEMENTS

Respondents indicated how important a potential improvement would be to them on a 1-5 scale (1 being least important, 5 being most important). No options were seen as “unimportant,” but several rated higher.

- Availability of parking (both on and off-street) is highly prioritized
- Alternatives to driving are also strongly preferred.
- Improved information about parking options is also desired.

FIGURE 15

Average Rating of Improvements (N=1,167)



WHAT IS DOWNTOWN'S BIGGEST CHALLENGE IN TERMS OF PARKING AND TRANSPORTATION? A SAMPLE OF RESPONSES...

"Office/service workers taking all the short-term visitor spots."

"People in Austin drive cars for their convenience, speed of transit, versatility and freedom of choice. More free parking."

"Safety. Parking garages can be a scary experience for a woman."

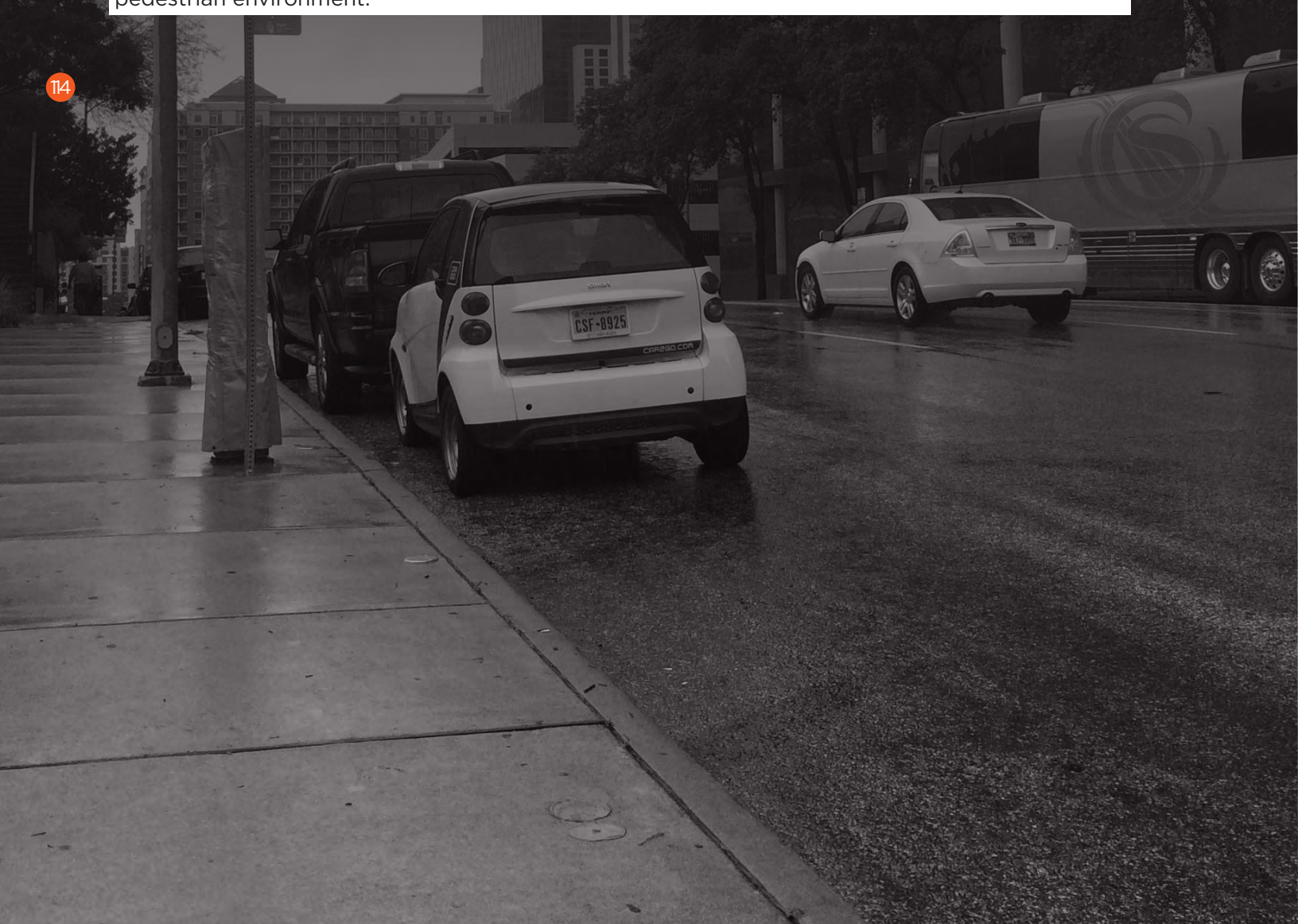
"Reliable transit to get downtown without a car."

"Being able to find available parking, with pricing information. It is difficult to know when a lot or garage has available parking and is open to the public."

"Street parking is under-priced."

"City keeps getting rid of parking and lanes for underutilized buses and bike lanes."

"Too much parking in downtown, leading to tons of traffic on wide roads, making for an unfriendly pedestrian environment."



HOW WOULD YOU IMPROVE PARKING IN DOWNTOWN? A SAMPLE OF RESPONSES...

“Differentiate pricing so that high-demand spaces are more expensive and low demand spaces are less expensive.”

“Build more parking structures, and require business to provide a certain amount of parking in order to operate.”

“Encourage perimeter parking with safe, comfortable, and frequent shuttle service.”

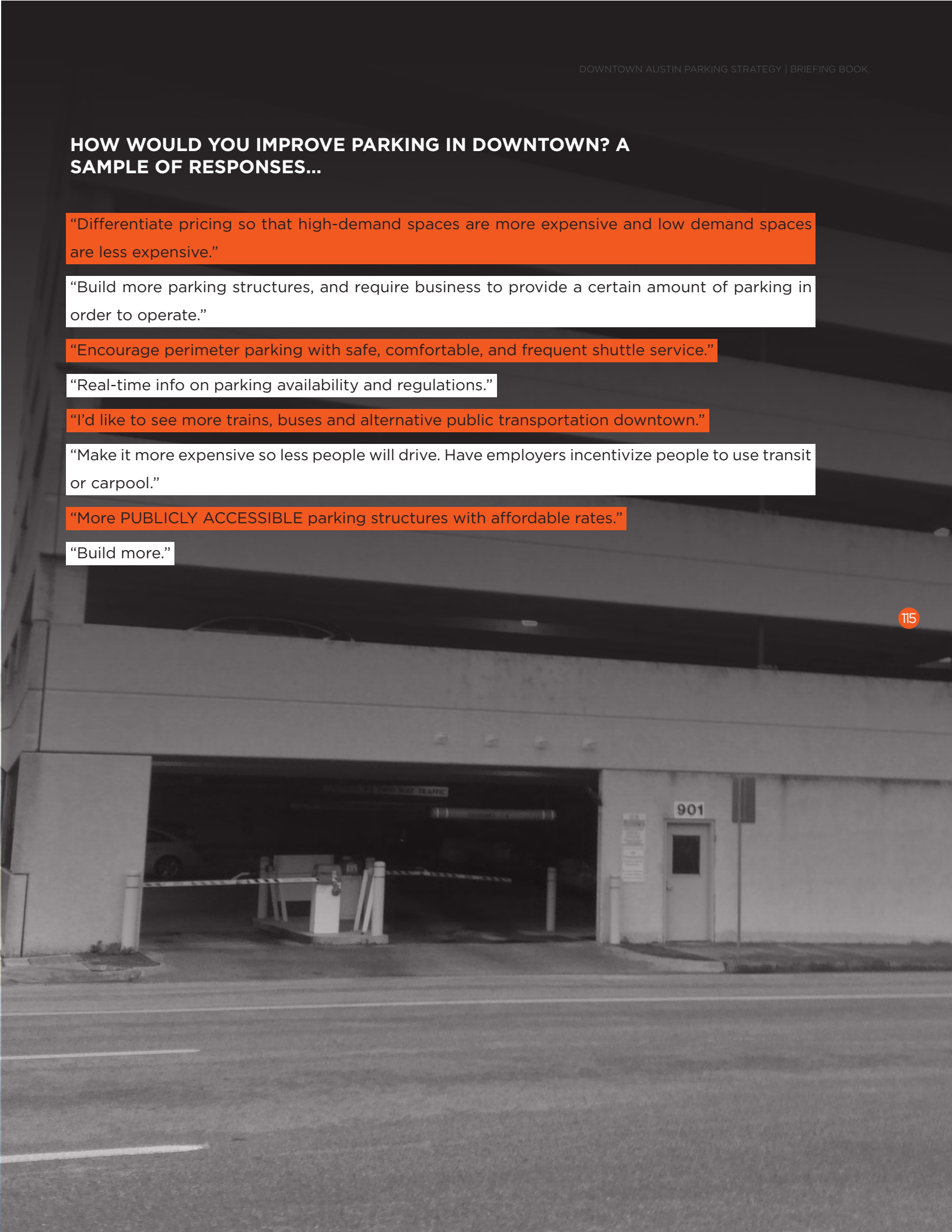
“Real-time info on parking availability and regulations.”

“I’d like to see more trains, buses and alternative public transportation downtown.”

“Make it more expensive so less people will drive. Have employers incentivize people to use transit or carpool.”

“More PUBLICLY ACCESSIBLE parking structures with affordable rates.”

“Build more.”



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PARKING

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PassportParking

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DIGITAL

INSTRUCTIONS

1 PRESS KEYPAD TO START
2 FOLLOW PROMPTS
3 MAKE PAYMENT
4 TAKE RECEIPT

PRESS OK ON KEY PAD TO START
PLACE RECEIPT ON DASH

1	2	3
4	5	6
7	8	9
CANCEL	0	OK

NO CHANGE IS GIVEN BY THIS MACHINE
NO REFUNDS

CASH ONLY

CREDIT CARD

NO CHANGE IS GIVEN BY THIS MACHINE
NO REFUNDS

RECEIPT



Summary of Key Findings

- **Free or discounted parking is available for most employees, and TDM benefits are rare.** These two factors do not incentivize the use of alternative modes for travel to and within downtown Austin.
- **Curb parking is being utilized for long periods of time and by employees.** Many people are parking in curbside spaces for long periods of time (3 or more hours), including employees. This could result in low turnover for curbside spaces that decreases access for shorter types of trips (e.g., shopping, errands).
- On average, people indicate that they can find parking **within 5-10 minutes and within a short walk.**
- **People may leave downtown if they do not find parking.** Parking availability is critical to ensuring access to downtown, as many people currently drive and acknowledge that they have left downtown if unable to find parking.
- **Respondents want more transportation options.** Respondents would like more alternatives to driving, including access to public transit, ridesharing, and bicycling. Most people prefer to park once and use alternative modes to travel in downtown, and they would also be amenable to parking further away and using a park-and-ride shuttle.
- The survey responses to the open-ended questions **reflect a tension between two general positions about the future of parking in Downtown Austin.** One group wants to prioritize access for vehicles by requiring and building more parking and making it free. By contrast, others in the community support better management of existing parking supported by multimodal investments to decrease parking demand.

**DOWN
AUSTINTOWN
ALLIANCE**