State of the Parking System
FINAL
Downtown Spokane Parking Study

July 2018

NELSON NYGAARD

DIXON RESOURCES UNLIMITED

IDAX DATA SOLUTIONS

Table of Contents

Table of Figures

1 PROJECT OVERVIEW

Downtown Spokane's unique history and strong link with the past have positioned it as a premier destination to live, work, and play both today and in the coming decades. Substantial citywide and regional growth is anticipated by 2040, and **downtown will be a major focal point.** Investment is already occurring at a rapid pace, with new transformative developments in the pipeline.

Mobility and access will play a fundamental role in helping Spokane achieve its larger goals. There is a recognition that while the automobile will continue to be front and center, the transportation system must prioritize a shift of some vehicle trips to transit, biking, walking, and shared mobility services in order to achieve long-term success.

Parking is at the nexus of these growth and mobility conversations. How Spokane manages, supplies, and designs parking will have a direct impact on its ability to create a multimodal, mixed-use place and further enhance the vitality of downtown.

WHAT IS THE DOWNTOWN PARKING STUDY?

Over the past decade and half, Spokane has made progress on improving the downtown parking experience. With parking studies in 2005 and 2010, Spokane has done the "Parking 101," yet more work is needed. With rapid growth and change on the horizon, now is the time for a fresh look at parking.

The **Downtown Parking Study** will include a thorough evaluation of the existing parking system. At the end of the study, Spokane will have a comprehensive six-year plan and package of recommendations designed to facilitate growth and activity downtown, while making parking more convenient and user-friendly for residents, businesses, employees, and visitors. Over the course of 2018, the City, community, and the consultant team will seek to answer some key questions as part of this work:

- How many total parking spaces are there in downtown?
- How are they regulated and priced?
- How many people are parking in these areas? What is the busiest time of day?
- What are the biggest issues and challenges?
- Is there enough parking today? For the future?
- What is the most cost-effective mix of investments?

WHAT IS THE STUDY AREA?

The **project study area** is shown in Figure 1-1. It generally is bounded by Boone Avenue to the north, Division Street and Cowley Street to the east, Rockwood Boulevard, 9th Avenue, and 5th Avenue to the south, and Cedar Street and Maple Street to the west.

It is important to note that there is a similar, yet distinct study underway for the **University District**.

WHAT IS THE PROJECT APPROACH?

There are two primary phases to the study. The **first phase** includes an assessment of the current system, identifying key issues, challenges, and opportunities through data collection and analysis, as well as solicitation of community feedback.

The **second phase** will focus on strategy development, crafting a comprehensive and diverse set of recommendations to improve parking over the short- and long-term. The project schedule is shown in Figure 1-2.

Throughout the study, there will be multiple opportunities for the **community and stakeholders to provide input.** The input will be used to confirm and identify key challenges, as well as provide feedback at key stages in the project to guide the development of final recommendations. The major components of the outreach plan include:

- Presentations to the Parking Advisory Committee (PAC)
- Project website
- Spokane blog
- Media advisories and press releases
- Online community survey
- Community workshops
- Stakeholder interviews with local and regional agencies, residents, businesses, and community groups
- Presentations to elected bodies

WHAT IS THE STATE OF THE SYSTEM REPORT?

The ***State of the System Report*** summarizes the existing work to date, including stakeholder interviews, community feedback, data analysis, and documentation of key issues and challenges. A primary focus is the summary of the parking inventory (number and type of parking spaces) and level of parking demand in downtown.

Ultimately, the *State of the System Report* establishes a shared understanding of what works well and what can be improved. It facilitates 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 this document. Additional analysis is already underway, and multiple touchpoints with stakeholders and the public are still necessary to arrive at any conclusions.

Figure 1-1 Parking Study Areas

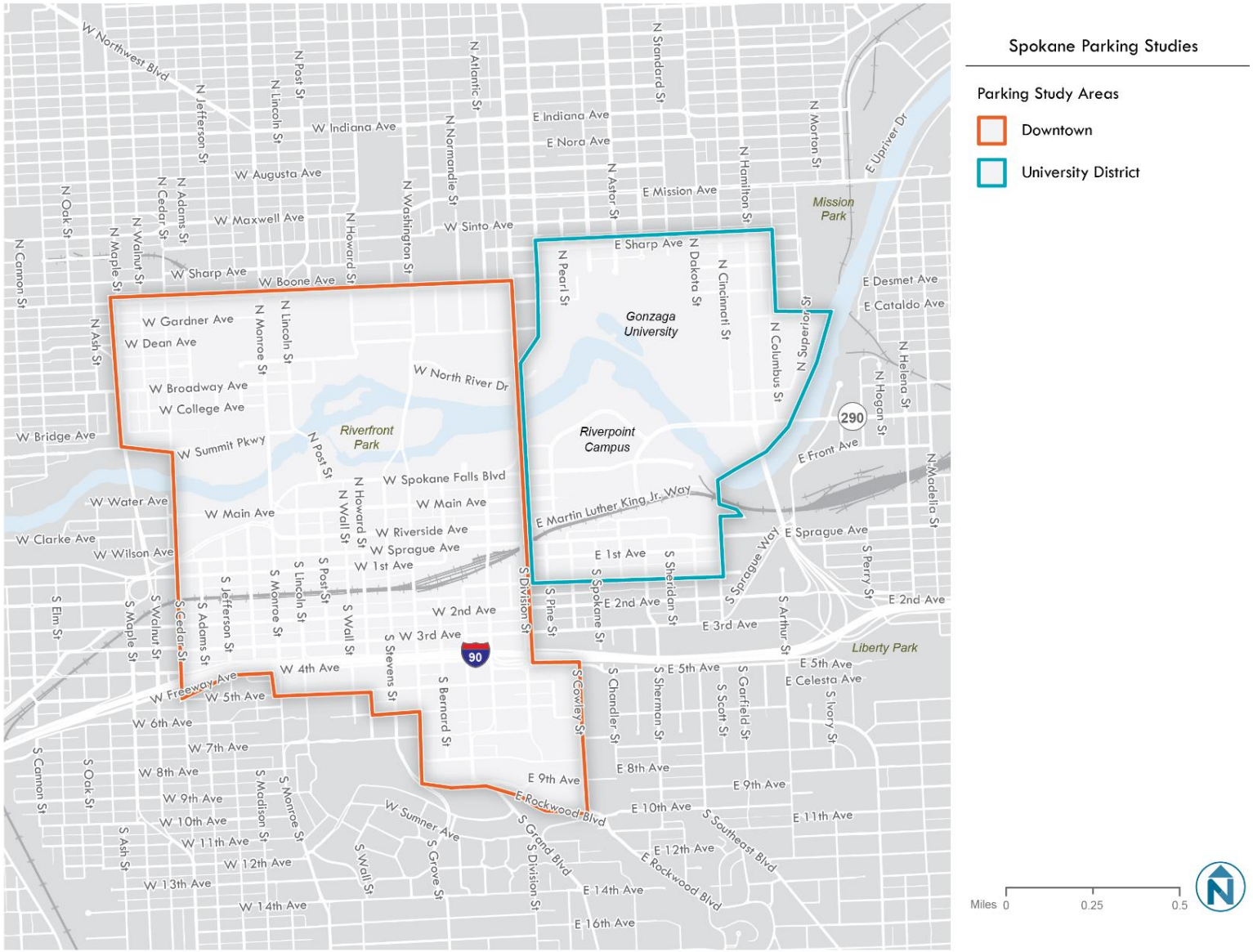
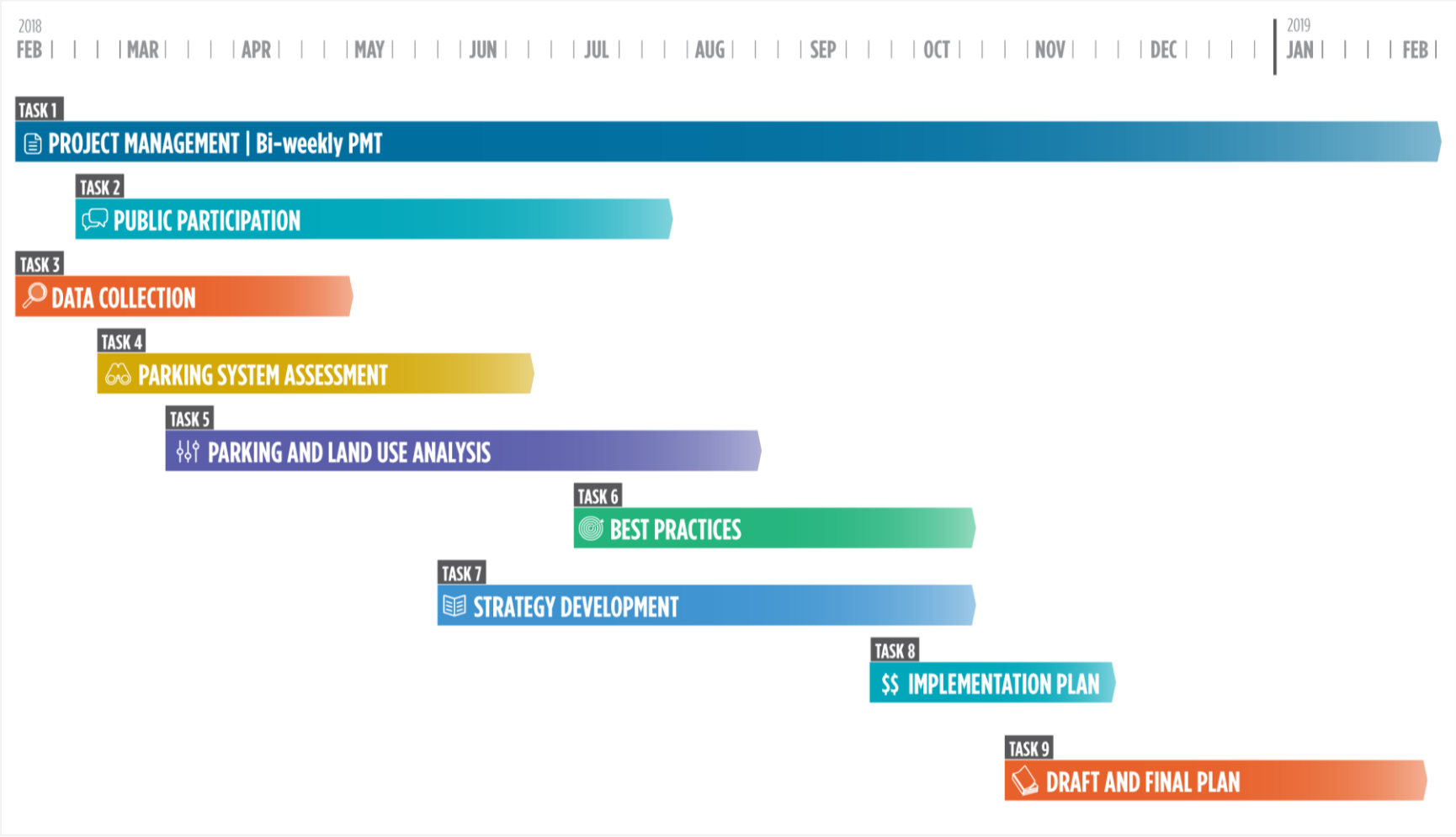


Figure 1-2 Project Schedule



2 WHAT WE HEARD – COMMUNITY INPUT

This chapter summarizes the key findings from the **community outreach conducted thus far**, including stakeholder interviews, a downtown community event, and the online parking survey. Information has been distilled and summarized by the consultant team to identify key stakeholder perceptions and feedback. This input will be used to confirm and refine a cohesive project vision, and deepen understanding of the key issues and opportunities. Additional outreach will be conducted to develop recommendations.

STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

The project team conducted individual and small group interviews to capture a representative cross-section of perspectives in the downtown. Focused conversations allowed the project team to probe more deeply on key issues. The following stakeholder groups were interviewed, capturing feedback from **more than 75 individuals**.

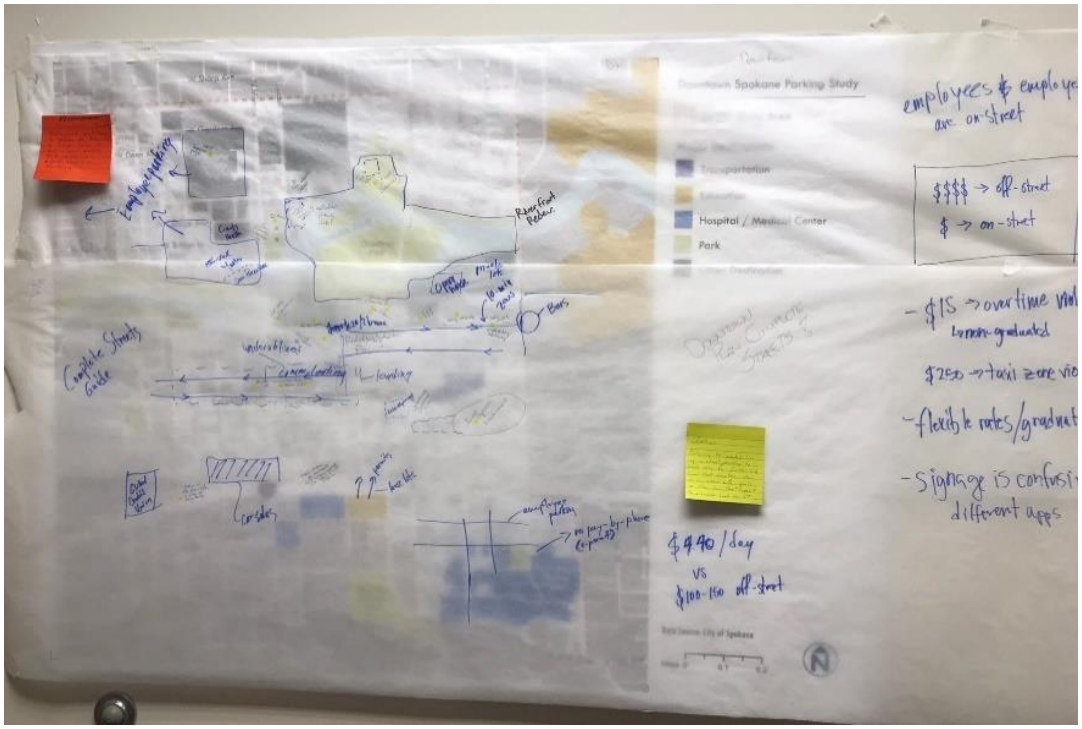
- Businesses and employees
- City Council members
- City staff, including planning, transportation, enforcement, and operations
- Commercial delivery services
- Downtown Spokane Partnership (DSP)
- Healthcare providers
- Housing providers
- Parking Advisory Committee (PAC)
- Parking operators
- Public schools
- Residents
- Spokane Transit Authority (STA)
- Taxi, Uber, and Lyft representatives and drivers
- Transit, bicycle, and pedestrian advocacy groups

Summary of Stakeholder Interviews

Below is feedback received from stakeholders, distilled and summarized by the consultant team to provide a sample of parking perceptions, opinions, and experiences by the greater Spokane community.

- In general, **parking is seen by some stakeholders as a "problem,"** generating overall frustration and strong opinions.
- Depending on the stakeholder/user, however, the "problem" **was defined in many different ways.** For some it was a "supply" problem, while others felt that parking was generally available, but not easy to access and/or managed as well as it could be. For some, it was a combination of factors.
- There is particular concern that parking has limited **certain types of employers (i.e. Class A office) from locating downtown**. Other stakeholders have conversely noted that there are other employers locating in downtown **to leverage downtown's mixed-use vitality and multimodal access for their employees.**
- **Stakeholders indicate that demand for curb spaces is high, particularly in the "core."** Covered and secure off-street parking is highly desired.
- There was a general consensus that **on-street parking should be for visitors and customers**, not for long-stay parkers.
- There is substantial **concern among business and property owners about on-street loading**, both for commercial deliveries and passenger loading. Increased Lyft/Uber use and loading activity have put pressure on the curb, and led to challenges with double parking and balancing access for Lyft/Uber, taxis, transit, and public parking.
- The parking "experience" can be improved.
  - There is a lack of a **visible "brand" and coordinated information/wayfinding** for finding a parking spot.
  - **Payment technologies are inconsistent** (e.g., multiple systems) and can be inconvenient (e.g., having to pay for a full hour even if one only needs 15 minutes) for both meters and off-street surface lots. New parking technology and real-time information can be used to a greater degree.
  - **Safety and comfort issues** discourage walking and limit the reach of the parking system. Many do not want to walk more than a block or two. Surface lots are less desirable to park in and are an impediment to a vibrant downtown.
- **Better communication and education around parking and related programs is needed.** For example, many businesses did not know about the City Ticket service for employees. Others had misconceptions about how the parking system works and how meter revenue is used.
- After an initial review, it appears that **on-street spaces are substantially cheaper than off-street spaces.** This likely has a number of impacts on the system, contributing to circling for a cheap on-street space and less curb parking for visitors and customers.
- **Recent growth and development** in downtown Spokane is perceived to have increased pressure on the parking system, especially in on-street spaces adjacent to new developments.

- More people living in downtown have led to an **influx of resident vehicles** being continuously stored downtown, with a shortage of covered, long-term spaces to store them.
- **Special events,** notably within the Entertainment Parking District, contribute to spillover parking and high demand in key locations.
- **Equity is a concern**, especially for lower-income service workers and their cost to park.
- The **zoning and development standards** require careful assessment. Staff and stakeholders recognize that there is likely opportunity within the code to streamline and maximize development/permitting review to ensure that upcoming and planned projects result in desired outcomes.
- There is a desire from some business owners to explore **additional changes to the right-of-way** as a means to maximize on-street parking. More conversions of parallel to angled parking, as well as center-running parking, were identified as potential strategies to further investigate.



Workshops with City staff and various stakeholder groups allowed participants to identify key parking issues and concerns.

- **Part of the parking challenge in Spokane is about "culture,"** and the expectation for parking in downtown. Spokane area and regional residents are not used to paying much, if at all, for parking, or being told how long they can park their car. There is a conflict in expectations when comparing downtown to Spokane's suburbs, which provide plentiful free parking at business parks and shopping centers.
- There are several planned projects that would potentially add **new parking facilities** in the downtown. These projects are in various stages of development and planning. It is unclear at this time to what degree this study can influence and/or inform those projects.
- The City and its partners have made initial steps to address parking via **demand-side solutions** and maximize use of existing parking facilities (i.e. City Ticket service). However, there is a sense that more comprehensive policies and incentives around mobility options and choice could help to address some of the parking challenges.

Sample of Stakeholder Input

The quotes on this page represent a broad sample of direct feedback heard throughout stakeholder meetings. They are intended to highlight stakeholder perceptions and opinions about the parking system.

"Downtown simply doesn't have enough parking."

"We need to change the expectation in Spokane that you will always have a free parking spot right out front."

"Parking is too expensive for many of my employees."

"The Central City Line will change everything. I will finally get a bus pass."

"Parking in Downtown Spokane is easy…if you know what to do."

"Parking is easy to find if you are willing to walk a little bit."

"Supply is not well matched to demand – we need a technological bridge."

"There are some great parking facilities, but it's friendlier to employees and residents than to visitors."

"Parking in Spokane is cheap, compared to other Northwest cities."

"Having better signage and less private parking would be ideal."

"Many lots are in poor condition…Locals have lived with the current situation a long time, but visitors are less tolerant."

"It would be great if the Passport app allowed us to locate spaces that are not being used to find parking close to the area I need to park at."

"Longer meter times for eating, shopping, and entertainment."

"Having just one payment system would be great."

COMMUNITY EVENT

On May 21, 2018, the City of Spokane hosted a community event about ongoing and upcoming planning work in the downtown. The event included a series of interactive stations at which the community could learn and ask questions about the various plans and projects, including the Downtown Parking Study.

For the parking study, community members could review project informational materials, as well as provide feedback via an issues and opportunities map, a word wall, and an online survey. Highlights of the feedback are included below.

- **Parking during special events**, including concerts, sporting events, and shows, is a concern of event goers as well as general travelers to downtown Spokane.
- **Consistency in parking technology and signage** is an improvement community members would like to see. The potential for real-time parking information (e.g., via an app) excited people.
- **Some expressed concerns about the general scarcity of parking** in downtown, and suggested additional parking structures.
- **The community would like to see increased turnover of on-street parking.** They expressed concerns about employees 'plugging' the meters past the time limit.
- **Improved transit service** to encourage people to leave their cars at home was a frequent refrain among community members.

A community workshop in May allowed people to provide interactive input on several downtown efforts, including the parking study.

ONLINE PARKING SURVEY

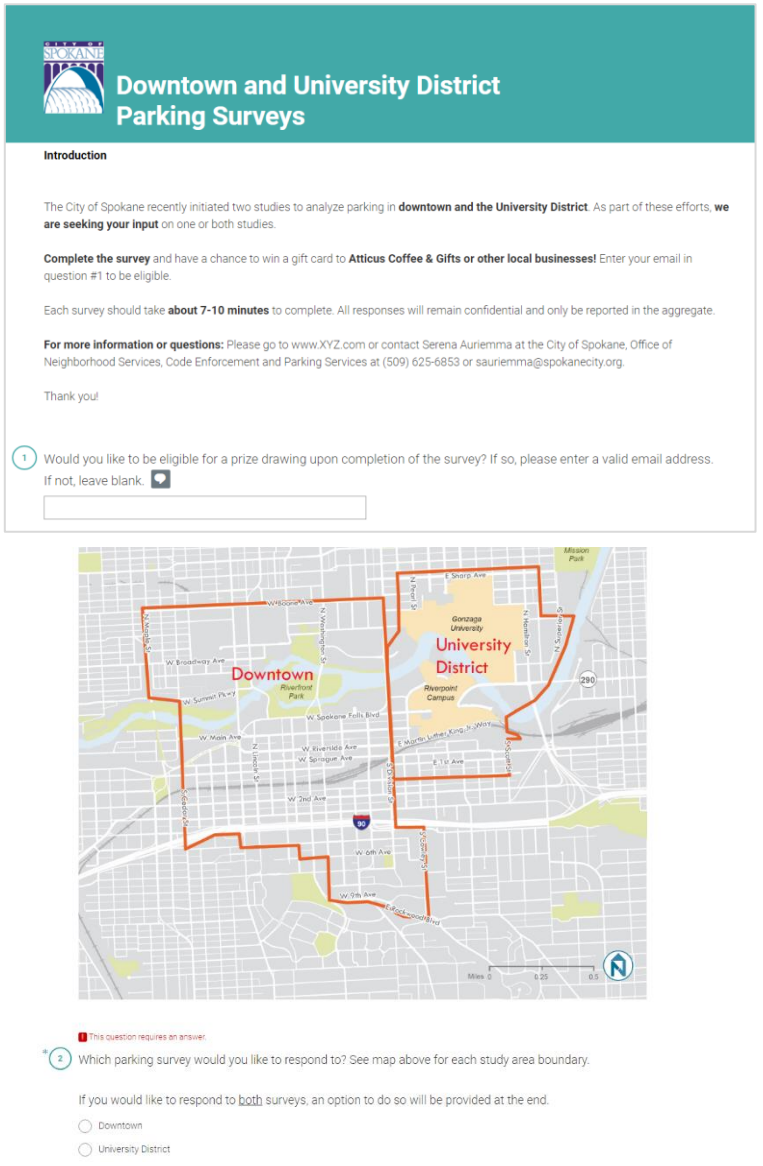
An online survey was conducted to capture additional input from the community about downtown parking. The **goals of the survey** included:

- Collect information about parking behavior in downtown Spokane
- Provide insight into public perception of the parking system
- Identify major issues for downtown visitors, residents, employees, and business owners
- Leverage other data collections efforts to develop a more holistic understanding of downtown parking conditions, perceptions, and needs

The survey was open from **May 4th to May 31st**. It was distributed via the following methods:

- Emails to City of Spokane and partner outreach lists
- Social media and web advertising
- Distribution of flyers and bookmarks with survey link throughout study area

A **total of 1,861 responses** were provided to the downtown survey and key findings are summarized below. The detailed results of the survey are presented in a separate Survey Analysis Memorandum.



The survey collected information about typical travel and parking patterns and preferences, while also asking respondents questions that helped sort them into user groups.

Summary of Survey Findings

Who Responded?

- **Nearly 60% of respondents said their primary purpose for travel downtown was non-work related.** One-fifth of respondents come downtown to shop, run errands, or meet with friends/family, and another fifth come downtown for recreation – to go to special events and to eat/drink. Over half of respondents come to downtown for at least two purposes.
- **The majority of respondents park in the Downtown Core zone,** but the Downtown Core only represents 18% of spaces in the study area. Responses were weighted to represent each zone based on their proportion of the study area parking supply.
- **Half of respondents are very frequent visitors to downtown (5 days per week or more).** Another fifth of respondents come downtown 1-4 days per week, and another fifth beyond that come downtown a few times per month.

How do Respondents Travel and Park Downtown?

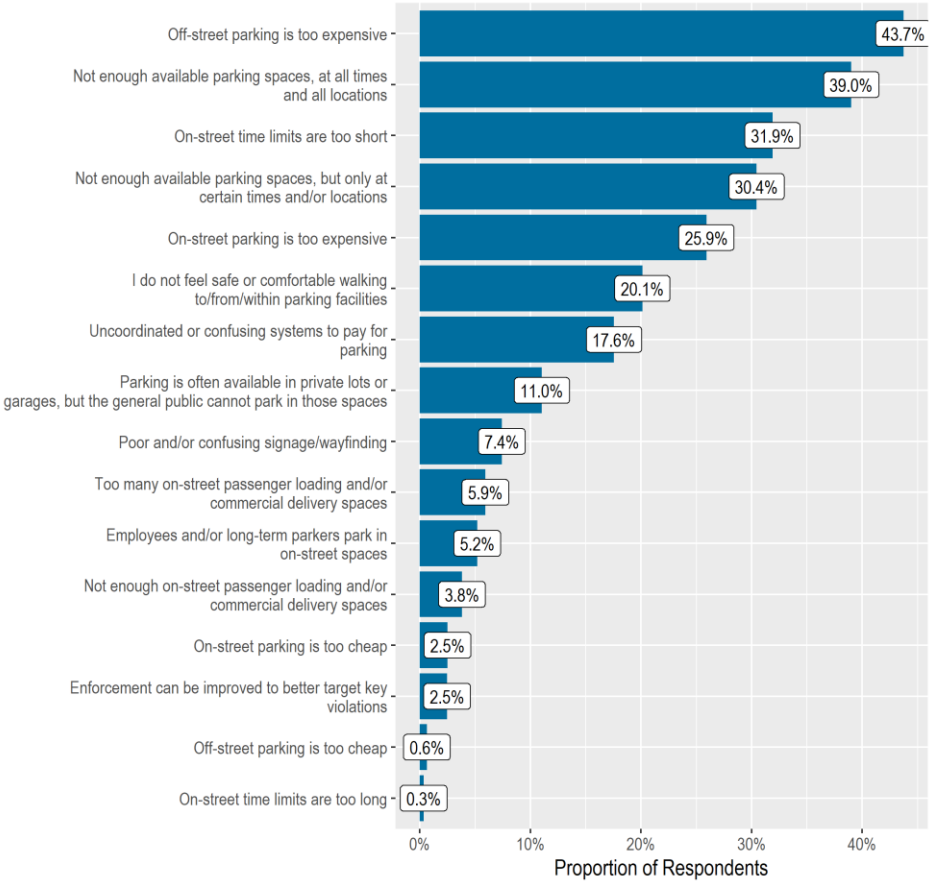
- **Two-thirds of respondents drive alone downtown,** and another fifth carpool with others. Nearly 10% take transit, walk, or bike.
- **One-quarter of respondents have free parking,** while nearly one-fifth have a free or discounted bus pass.
- **One-third of respondents typically park in a metered on-street space.** A quarter park in a facility fully or partially subsidized by their employer or residence. One-fifth park in a facility they pay for by the hour or day, and 15% park in a facility where they buy an annual/monthly/weekly permit.
  - Respondents who work or own a business or property downtown were more likely to park in facilities for free or at a reduced expense or park in a facility with a recurring permit.
  - Respondents who go downtown to eat/drink or shop/run errands were most likely to park in a metered space.
  - Respondents parking in the Downtown Core and adjacent areas were more likely to say they typically park in on-street metered spaces. Respondents parking in the Spokane County Campus area were most likely to say they park in a facility in which they pay for a recurring permit.
- **Thirty percent of respondents who park downtown park on-site or on the same block**, another 30% park three or more blocks away, and the remaining 40% park 1-2 blocks away.
  - Respondents eating/drinking were most likely to park approximately two blocks from their destination.
  - Respondents who live or own a business/property downtown were most likely to park on site or on the same block.
  - Respondents parking in the Arena neighborhood or the West End South area were the most likely to park three or more blocks from their destination.
  - Respondents parking on site or on the same block were most likely in the Hospital District, Spokane County Campus, and Convention Center areas.
- **The most common durations for parking were 2-3 hours (21%) or more than 8 hours (30%).**

- Respondents parking for more than 8 hours are typically working downtown, living downtown, or own a business or property downtown.
- Respondents parking 2-3 hours were typically eating/drinking or shopping/running errands.

Parking Preferences

- **Two-thirds of respondents indicated that the proximity of parking to their destination** was among the three most important factors in choosing a location to park. Price of parking (55%) and ease of finding a space (45%) were next in importance. Many respondents also indicated personal safety/security (30%) and time limits (26%) were important in selecting a location.
- **Nevertheless, over two-thirds of respondents would rather walk further to their destination for free or cheaper parking** than pay more for parking closer to their destination.
- **The top three parking issues indicated by respondents were** 1) off-street parking is too expensive (44%), 2) there is a lack of parking supply across the study area (39%), and 3) the on-street time limits are too short (32%).
  - Respondents working or living downtown were more likely to indicate that off-street parking was too expensive.
  - Respondents who do not come downtown were more likely to say on-street parking was too expensive and that they do not feel safe/comfortable walking to/from parking.
- **The top three parking system improvements preferred by respondents were** 1) new parking facilities open to the general public (34%), 2) longer time limits at on-street spaces (33%), and 3) improved travel options and incentives for not driving alone (27%).

Figure 2-1 Top Three Parking Issues for Survey Respondents



TOP FIVE TAKEAWAYS

Stakeholder Interviews and Community Event

1. Depending on the stakeholder group, the downtown parking "problem" **was defined in many different ways.** For example, there is particular concern that parking has limited certain types of employers (i.e. Class A office) from locating downtown. Other stakeholders have conversely noted that there are other employers locating in downtown to leverage downtown's mixed-use vitality and multimodal access for their employees.
2. There is **growing competition for the limited on-street parking** in downtown, especially in the core. New technologies, mobility services, and growth have exacerbated this tension.
3. The **parking "experience" can be improved** with additional investment in communication, information, payment technology, and overall pedestrian safety and comfort.
4. **A big part of the parking challenge in Spokane is about "culture,"** and how to better manage the expectation for free, on-site parking in downtown.
5. There is opportunity to address downtown parking challenges with a **coordinated approach to trip reduction** through mobility programs.

Online Parking Survey

1. **The top issue for respondents was that off-street parking was too expensive.** As discussed in later chapters, off-street parking costs significantly more than on-street parking, leading to increased pressure on the limited on-street parking in high demand areas.
2. **Nearly a third of respondents expressed that time limits are too short.** People would like to be able to park on street for up to three hours to eat, drink, or run errands.
3. **The majority of folks traveling to downtown do not have access to a free or discounted bus pass.** There is potential opportunity for employers to play an increased role in encouraging the use of multimodal options to travel downtown.
4. Over two-thirds of respondents **would rather walk further to their destination for free or cheaper parking** than pay more for parking closer to their destination.
5. The **top three parking system improvements** preferred by respondents were: 1) new parking facilities open to the general public (34%), 2) longer time limits at on-street spaces (33%), and 3) improved travel options and incentives for not driving alone (27%).

3 PLANNING CONTEXT

The Downtown Parking Study is not occurring within a vacuum. Numerous past plans, studies, and initiatives have shaped today's downtown. Several current and future planning efforts, as well as evolving demographics, will also determine what downtown will look like in the decades to come.

It is crucial that this parking study recognize and respect this planning context. In order to fully understand the key issues and craft a set of recommendations, the project team has reviewed past and present planning work, and documented policies, recommendations, and findings that are relevant to the parking system. This review includes the following major components:

- **Plans and Studies**
- **Projects**
- **Demographics and Travel Patterns**

Downtown Spokane has implemented the vision of many of its past plan and studies. Substantial new growth is occurring or planned. Demographics are quickly evolving. All of which will impact the future of parking.

PLANS AND STUDIES

Figure 3-1 documents relevant plans and their major findings and/or implications for the Downtown Parking Study.

Figure 3-1 Summary of Relevant Plans and Studies

Plan	Year	Lead Agency or Organization	Summary
Downtown Central: 2018 Update to the Downtown Plan	2018	City of Spokane	Spokane is currently engaged in an update to the downtown plan, originally adopted in 1998 and most recently updated in 2008. The update will include a robust community engagement process and multiple areas of coordination with the Downtown Parking Study, including a future parking demand analysis based on multiple downtown growth scenarios.
Transit Development Plan	2018	Spokane Transit Authority	The 2017 Transit Development Plan outlines the next six years of programs and activities for the Spokane Transit Authority, which currently operates 35 bus routes, three transit centers, and 13 park-and-ride lots within its service area. Planned major activities include expansion of the employer-sponsored bus pass program and the Universal Transit Access Pass, implementation of the Central City Line, and renovation of the downtown Bus Plaza.
Shaping Spokane: Comprehensive Plan for the City of Spokane	2017	City of Spokane	The City of Spokane's Comprehensive Plan was last updated in 2017. The Comprehensive Plan sets forth goals and policies to guide future growth and development in Spokane. The plan envisions a network of transportation alternatives that includes transit, bicycling, walking, carpooling, and more efficient use of the automobile. It encourages shared parking strategies, limits on the development of new parking, the use of parking structures integrated with other land uses, and infill development in downtown.
Spokane Bicycle Master Plan	2017	City of Spokane	Spokane's 2017 Bicycle Master Plan envisions a network of comfortable bikeways, convenient and secure bicycle parking, and education and enforcement programs that will help Spokane reach a target bicycle mode share of 5% in the next 20 years.
Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Toolkit	2016	City of Spokane	An update to the Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Toolkit was completed in 2016 and released as part of the 2017 Comprehensive Plan update. TDM programs seek to reduce vehicle trips and parking demand by incentivizing multimodal travel. The updated Toolkit summarizes 13 TDM measures, including their relative cost and benefit and appropriate implementation steps.

Plan	Year	Lead Agency or Organization	Summary
Pedestrian Master Plan	2015	City of Spokane	The Pedestrian Master Plan includes an assessment of existing conditions, best practices, and existing design guidance for the pedestrian environment. It sets goals and recommends policies and actions to support a more walkable Spokane. The Pedestrian Needs Analysis identifies downtown as a Pedestrian Priority Zone, based on the level of demand and existing infrastructure.
Downtown Spokane Parking Study Update	2010	City of Spokane, Spokane County	The last downtown parking study was completed in 2010. The study included data collection for a targeted area south of the river covering approximately 11,300 parking spaces. Key findings from the 2010 study included: ▪ Peak demand for on-street parking was 63% at 7:30 p.m. Peak demand for off-street parking was 58% at 1:30 p.m. ▪ Parking activity is up in three of four parking zones, including a marked increase in evening activity ▪ Commuter parking rates have increased significantly in off-street garages ▪ Abundant off-street spaces are available throughout the day in all areas of the downtown A set of 11 core recommendations were provided in 2010, split between policy actions and management actions. Some of the key recommendations, such as establishment of a Parking Advisory Committee (PAC) and an increase in rates to $1.20 per hour, have been implemented.
University District/Downtown Transportation Improvement Study	2009	City of Spokane	The Transportation Improvement Study provides an assessment of multimodal transportation needs in the University District and downtown and suggests improvements to reduce vehicle miles traveled and greenhouse gas emissions. Key parking recommendations include: ▪ Expand parking meters to the west end of downtown and install pay stations ▪ Add on-street parking and convert parallel parking to angle parking on several lower volume roadways ▪ Improve parking guidance systems with dynamic message signs to guide users to major parking facilities downtown ▪ Provide bicycle parking

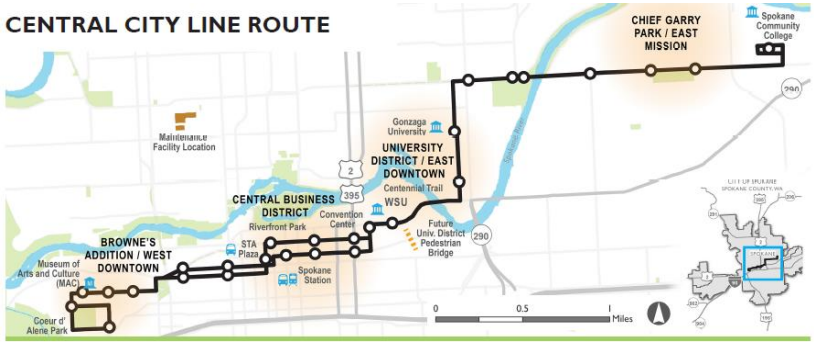
Plan	Year	Lead Agency or Organization	Summary
Fast Forward Spokane - Downtown Plan Update	2008	City of Spokane	The 2008 Downtown Plan Update envisions downtown as a regional hub where residents and visitors participate in shopping, working, living, recreation, education, and entertainment. The development concept includes streetscape improvements to create a network of "complete streets," pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly corridors that provide east-west links through downtown, increased public transportation, and smart growth that balances increased density with livability.
Growth and Transportation Efficiency Center (GTEC) Plan	2008	City of Spokane	The State of Washington created the GTEC program to increase the efficiency of the transportation system in places where people and jobs are concentrated. The downtown Spokane GTEC plan proposes policies, improvements, and strategies to help meet the goal of reducing drive-alone trips by 10% and vehicle miles traveled by 13% for work sites in downtown. Strategies that affect parking include: ▪ Encourage parking management that reduces drive-alone trips ▪ Add vanpools ▪ Provide adequate bicycle parking
Downtown Spokane Parking Demand Study	2005	City of Spokane	The 2005 Parking Demand Study found that overall parking occupancy reached a peak of 64% of total capacity on business days. It found the utilization of off-street facilities was low in the downtown core and on the west end, that time-stay violations were high, and that the available parking was sufficient to accommodate existing and future demand. The study recommended signage and communication improvements, an evaluation of time-stay regulations, the creation of a parking steering committee, and the designation of a parking manager.

PROJECTS

Several ongoing and future projects will shape the future of transportation and parking in downtown Spokane.

Central City Line

The Central City Line is a six-mile bus rapid transit (BRT) route connecting the Browne's Addition neighborhood to Spokane Community College via downtown and the University District, scheduled for completion in 2021.



The Central City Line will serve an estimated one million annual riders, with zero-emission electric vehicles and amenities targeted at commuters. It is expected to have a positive economic impact and to help mitigate traffic and parking congestion in downtown.

The Central City Line Strategic Overlay Plan identifies transit-supported economic development opportunities and land use policy changes to accompany the Central City Line. Strategies relevant to parking include reduced parking requirements, developer bonuses for building off-street parking or secure bike parking, and the encouragement of travel demand management (TDM) programs and transit-oriented developments that reduce the need for parking.

It is currently estimated that the Central City Line will result in the loss of approximately 40 on-street spaces along its route within the downtown.

Bicycle Master Plan Implementation

Spokane is currently implementing facilities identified in the Bicycle Master Plan, including plans for a new major bicycle facility on Riverside Avenue through the downtown core.

The City is also engaged in an ongoing effort to bring a bike share program to Spokane, with a launch date as early as 2019. A major goal for the bike share system is to help reduce downtown parking demand by providing an alternative to driving, particularly for short, midday trips. Bike share can also provide first- and last-mile connections for people who take transit.

The bike share program is expected to have major hubs in downtown and the University District. The bike share program could impact on-street parking to accommodate bike share hubs and/or bike parking. No estimates are yet available.

Transit Plaza Operational Analysis

The Spokane Transit Plaza Operational Analysis project will consider restructuring bus operations near the Transit Plaza to implement planned service increases. The resulting plan will guide implementation of new services around the Transit Plaza and within downtown Spokane throughout the next five years as service is incrementally improved with full operations, including the Center City Line.

Potential benefits of the project include improved convenience for riders, improved operational efficiency, positive outcomes for all street users, and shrinkage of the current passenger loading area requirements of the Plaza.

Main Avenue Streetscape Pilot

See summary of project in Chapter 4.

Other Major Projects

A number of approved and potential projects will also impact downtown and its parking system. These include:

- Redevelopment and revitalization of **Riverfront Park**
- **University District Gateway Bridge**, providing enhanced pedestrian and bike connectivity to downtown
- Replacement of the **Post Street bridge**
- Various **pedestrian and sidewalk** improvements
- **Mixed-use** development at old Macy's building
- Potential/planned **developments:**
  - Additional mixed-use projects at Kendall Yards
  - Mixed-use project at old Wonder Bread building
  - Mixed-use project at Ridpath Hotel
  - Mixed-use project at old YWCA site
  - Spokane Regional Sportsplex just east of Spokane Arena
  - Plus numerous others

Ongoing revitalization of Riverfront Park (top) and proposed new Sportsplex north of the river (bottom) will have ongoing impacts on downtown and the parking system. Sources: my.spokanecity.org and www.spokanesportsplex.org.

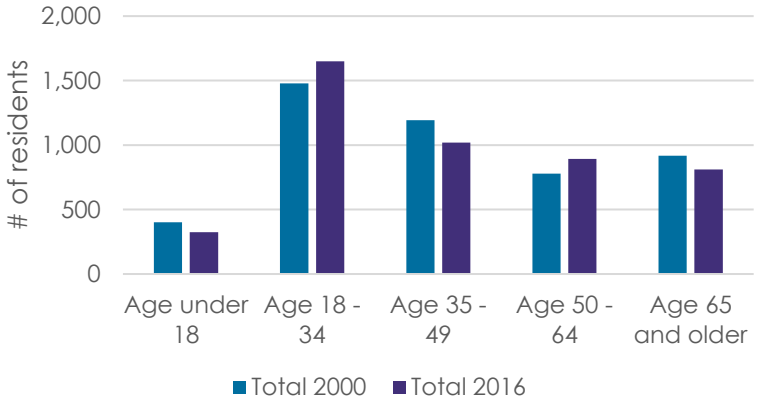
Demographics and Travel Patterns

The demographics and travel patterns of downtown Spokane are evolving. These trends will impact not only who lives and works in downtown, but also the parking system. This section summarizes some of these trends.

While the number of people living in the heart of downtown Spokane has declined over the past several decades, recent data suggests a reverse in that trend. Within the project study area north of the Spokane River, the population increased by nearly 50% between 2010 and 2016. Many of the neighborhoods adjacent to the study area are experiencing population growth as well. **Downtown employment increased by 6%** between 2005 and 2015, to nearly 39,000 jobs[1].

Millennials make up the largest age group living downtown. There has also been an increase in residents age 50-64.

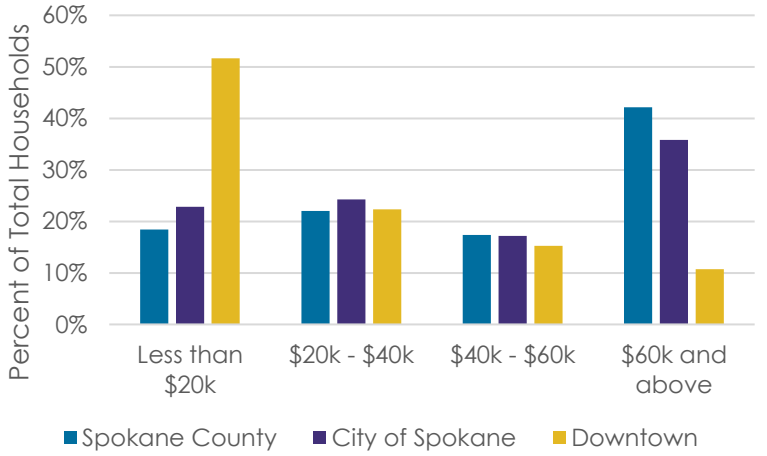
Figure 3-2 Age of Downtown Residents in 2000 and 2016



Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2000 Census and 2016 American Community Survey

Downtown residents are disproportionately low-income. Nearly three-quarters of downtown households earn less than $40,000 a year. More than half of households earn less than $20,000 a year, more than double the city and countywide rates.

Figure 3-3 Income of Downtown Households Compared to City and County Household Incomes



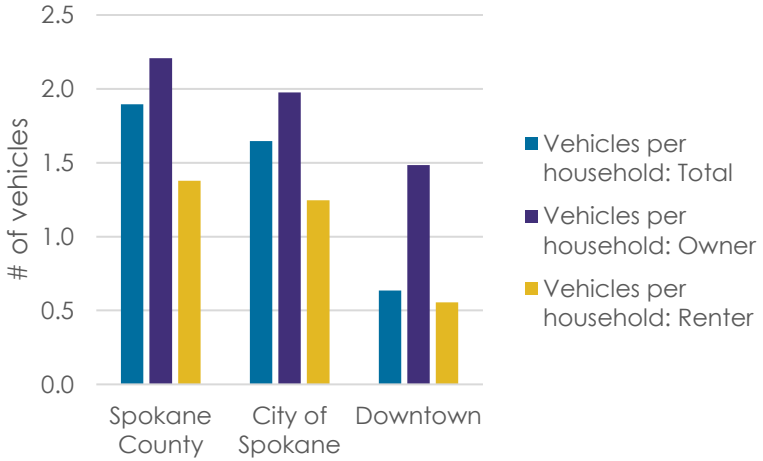
Source: U.S. Census Bureau – 2016 American Community Survey

[1] US Census Longitudinal Employer Household Dynamics, 2005 and 2015

The **vast majority of downtown households rent** – 94%, nearly twice the rate of the city as a whole. Households that rent have a much lower average rate of car ownership than owner-occupied households (Figure 3-4).

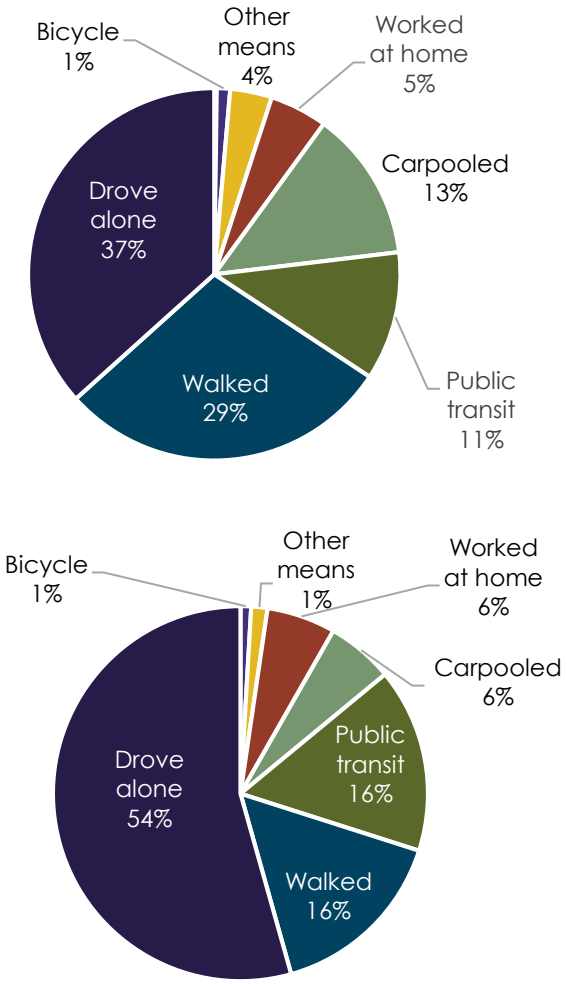
On average, **downtown households own fewer cars than the city and county households:** 0.6 vehicles per household in downtown, compared to 1.6 for the City of Spokane and nearly two vehicles per household for Spokane County. Slightly over half of downtown households **do not own a car at all**.

Figure 3-4 Average Vehicles per Household



Over half of downtown residents drove alone to work in 2016, up substantially from 39% in 2000. The number of people who walked to work dropped significantly during the same time period.

Figure 3-5 Commute Mode Share of Downtown Residents, 2000 (top) vs. 2016 (bottom)



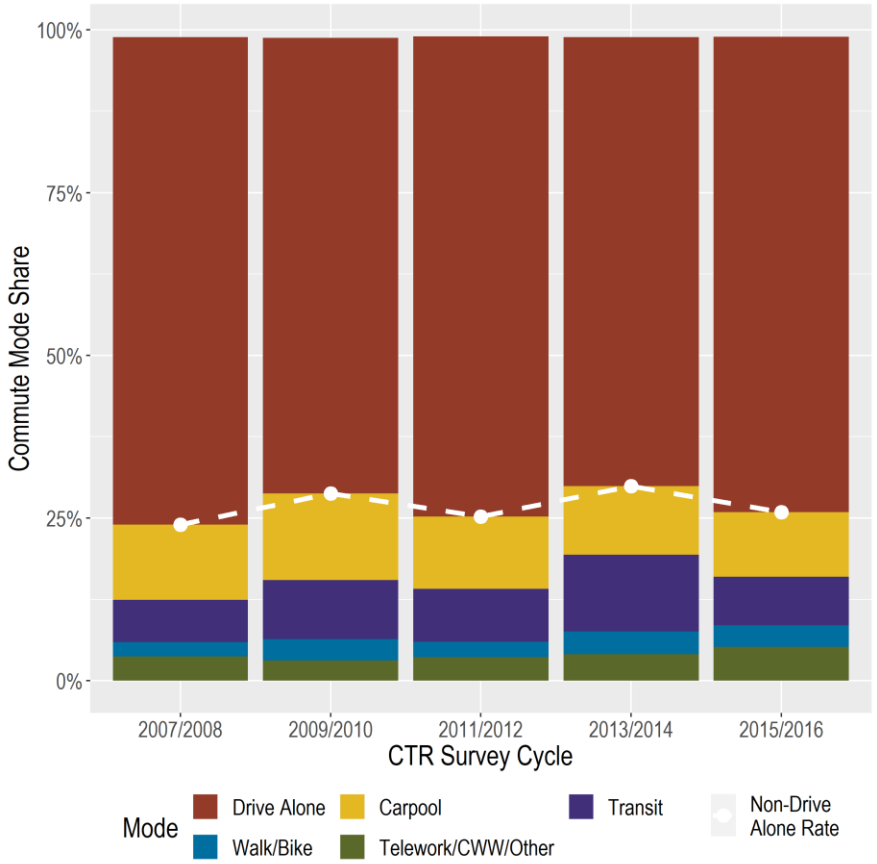
Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2000 Census and 2016 American Community Survey

The downtown study area has a total of 25 employers participating in WSDOT's Commute Trip Reduction[2] (CTR) program, comprising a total of nearly 11,000 employees.

The Drive-Alone Rate (DAR) – the primary performance metric of the CTR program – shifted from 75% in 2007/2008 to 73% in 2015/2016, with a low of 69% in 2013/2014. The lower DAR in 2013/2014 was primarily due to a particularly high transit mode share (11.8%) that year.

The majority (10% out of 27% in 15/16) of CTR employees' non-drive-alone trips are being made via carpool, with transit accounting for 8%, walking/biking accounting for just over 3%, and the remainder of trips being allocated to teleworking, compressed work week, and other modes.

Figure 3-6 Mode Share for CTR-Affected Employees in Downtown (2007-2016)



Source: WSDOT Statewide CTR Survey Results (2007- 2016)

[2] WSDOT's Commute Trip Reduction program mandates that all employers (within counties with more than 150,000 residents) with 100 or more full time employees commuting during the 6-9 a.m. peak period participate in an annual survey and develop a plan for reducing their employee's drive-alone rate (DAR).

Figure 3-7 CTR Sites within Downtown Study Area

Source: WSDOT Statewide CTR Survey Results (2007- 2016)

TOP FIVE TAKEAWAYS

Plans and Studies

1. Planning efforts for downtown Spokane emphasize the **need for a multimodal transportation system** in which walking, bicycling, and transit are attractive options.
2. Past parking studies have found that **downtown has ample off-street parking,** but that demand is on an upward trend for on-street spaces.
3. Multiple plans recommend **shared parking**, signage and wayfinding improvements, and installation of more bike parking.
4. **Transportation Demand Management (TDM) strategies have been developed** and are part of downtown's toolkit for managing demand for parking facilities. TDM implementation has been limited to larger employers as part of the state's CTR program.
5. The potential for **transit service improvements,** as well as expansion of the employer sponsored pass programs, can play a key role in managing demand for employee parking in downtown.

Projects

1. Parking impacts and parking loss mitigation around **Central City Line and future bike share** is an issue to assess further.
2. **Transit in downtown Spokane** is getting a major overhaul in the next few years – plaza operations will be reconfigured, normal bus service will increase, and the Central City Line will provide a new high-frequency, high-amenity route.
3. Spokane is pursuing a **bike share program** to launch as early as 2019 – this can be a key strategy for addressing mobility within downtown and encouraging downtown employees and residents to bike.
4. **Riverfront Park's renovation** will be a regional draw for residents, employees, and visitors, with potential parking impacts to address.
5. **Mixed-use and residential developments** are proposed in downtown – how this affects parking supply and demand will be considered as part of a more detailed land use analysis.

Demographics and Travel Patterns

1. The **resident population** in downtown Spokane had been in decline for several decades, but is experiencing a resurgence in just the last few years.
2. **Employment** in downtown Spokane is increasing – nearly 39,000 jobs were added between 2005 and 2015.
3. Many downtown residents have **lower incomes, tend to rent, and tend to own fewer cars.** These demographic groups are most likely to use other modes to get to work, but over half of them drive in downtown.
4. Approximately **70% of CTR employees commuting to downtown Spokane drive alone** accounting for nearly 8,000 drive-alone trips (and associated parking spaces) per day – this is a key source of parking demand that should be considered for increased focus in TDM programming.
5. As the number of people living and working in downtown Spokane continues to grow, increasing use of transit, carpools, and active transportation **will be key to mitigating increased demand for parking**.

4 POLICY, PROGRAMS, AND MANAGEMENT

Through previous parking studies and various initiatives over the years, the City of Spokane has established a strong policy and management framework for parking. While ongoing improvements are needed as downtown grows and evolves, there exists a foundation by which Spokane can continue to innovate its approach to parking.

This chapter documents and summarizes the **current policies, programs, and management practices.** This baseline information will help this study more effectively establish the next era for parking in Spokane.

MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

Parking management in the City of Spokane falls within the **Neighborhood and Business Services division**. Neighborhood Services and Code Enforcement and Parking Services are the two departments within the division that directly manage parking. Parking Services has one parking foreperson who supervises 13 full-time employees (FTE).

Staff from other agencies, divisions, and departments also have key responsibilities that impact the downtown parking system. These include staff from the Planning Department, who set land use and development policy within the Comprehensive Plan, specific area plans, and the Municipal Code; and staff from Public Works, who design and manage the public right-of-way.

In downtown, the **Parking Advisory Committee (PAC)** plays an advisory role, representing a range of downtown stakeholders on parking. The PAC is a 13-member committee appointed by the City Council. The PAC was established to advise the City Council on investments in the parking environment, policy, and rate-setting as informed by the downtown parking study. Current PAC members include representatives from City Council (two members), Downtown Spokane Partnership, Spokane Arts, River Park Square, Spokane Transit Authority, Visit Spokane, Goodale & Barbieri, and other local businesses.

POLICIES AND PROGRAMS

Figure 4-1 provides a brief summary of the existing policies and programs that govern downtown parking. These policies and programs have evolved over the years as Spokane has sought to actively manage on-street parking, support a variety of users, and create a more cohesive parking system. A map of the parking district boundaries is shown in Figure 4-2.

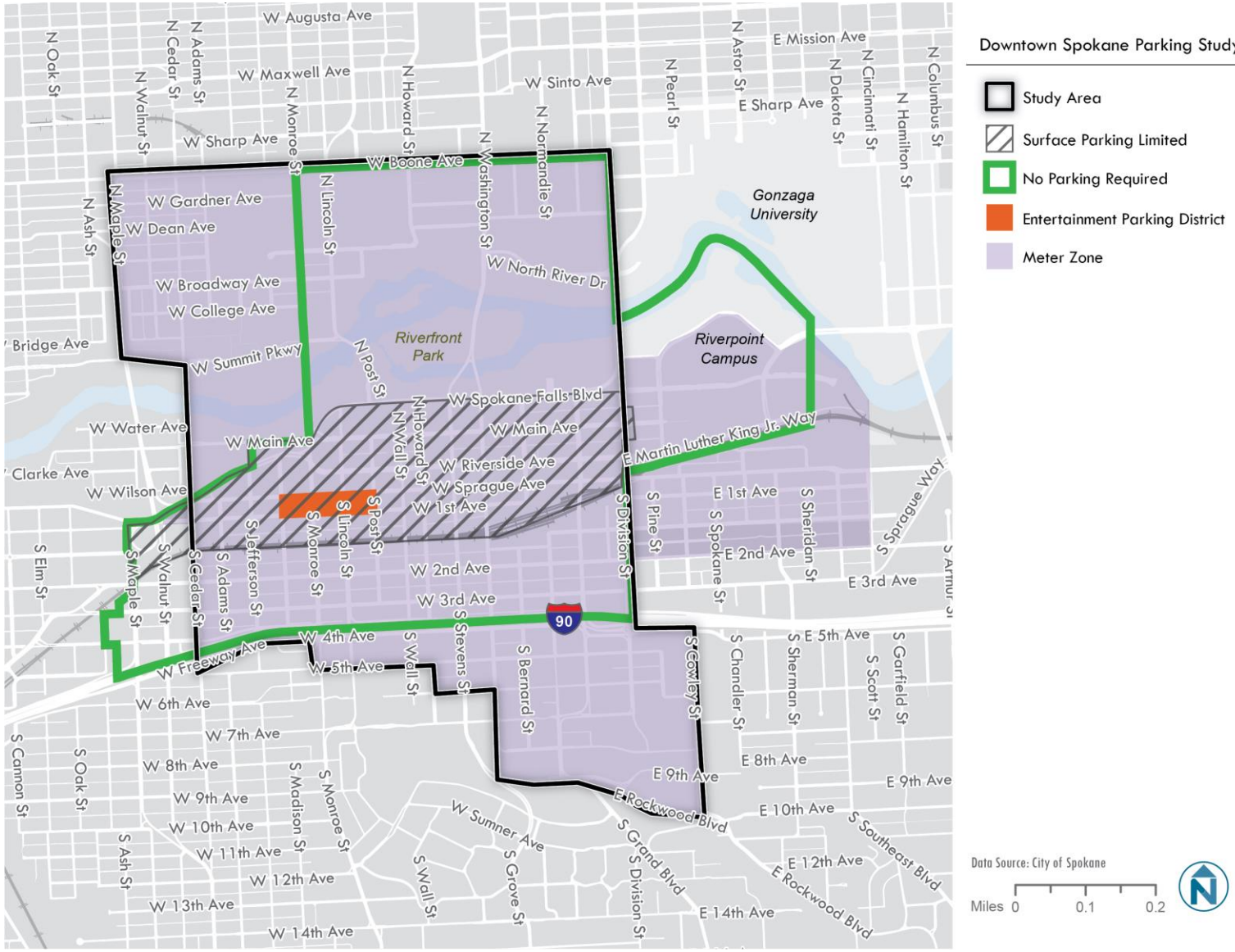
Figure 4-1 Existing Downtown Policies and Programs

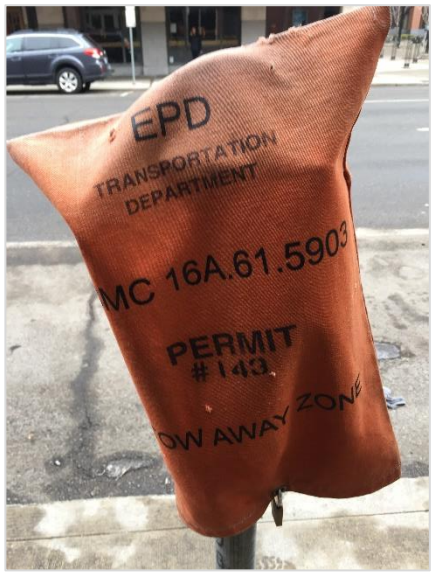
Category	Policy/Program	Description	Key Details
Parking Districts	Parking Meter Area	Pricing of parking is utilized as a key tool to manage parking and generate turnover of parking spaces. As established by Spokane Municipal Code (SMC) 16A.61.5902, parking meters are authorized in the downtown as defined by the Parking Meter Map (Figure 4-2). Rates are established in SMC Chapter 08.02 – Fees and Charges.	**Hours of Operation** M-Sa, 8 a.m. – 7 p.m., except for 10 meter holidays **Rates** 2-hour meters ($1.20 per hour) 4-hour meters ($.80 per hour) All-day meters ($.40 per hour)
	Entertainment Parking District (EPD)	Within downtown the EPD was established to meet specific operational and parking needs of entertainment venues in the area. The EPD zone offers a modified meter bag program (see below) to facilitate loading activity. The EPD boundaries are shown in Figure 4-2.	
Permits	Meter bags	Construction, maintenance, and entertainment activities within downtown often require use of on-street parking. To enhance access for these activities, meter bags can be leased on a daily, monthly, or annual basis to temporarily exempt designated spaces from posted parking regulations.	Costs are variable
	Commercial Loading Zone (CLZ)	Commercial vehicles can purchase a CLZ decal to facilitate curbside loading at designated CLZ spaces. Food trucks, taxis, and mobile vendors are not eligible. Rates are established in SMC Chapter 08.02 – Fees and Charges.	**Hours of Operation** 8 a.m. – 6 p.m. for a maximum of 30 minutes **Rates** $100/vehicle/yr. (before 6/30) $50/vehicle/yr. (after 7/1) $15/vehicle for single, transfer, replacement, decal correction

Category	Policy/Program	Description	Key Details
	Special Loading Zone (SLZ)	SLZs are created within a legal parking space via a meter bag. SLZs are for loading activity of commercial, service, news media, and non-profit vehicles. Food trucks, taxis, and mobile vendors are not eligible. Rates are established in SMC Chapter 08.02 – Fees and Charges.	Maximum of 30 minutes Pricing is set on a sliding scale depending on user and permit type. Prices can range from $15/meter/day to up to $350/quarter.
	Residential Permit Program (RPP)	RPPs allow vehicles to park free of charge at all-day meters only. RPPs are only distributed to landlords or property management companies, who then allocate to residents. Rates are established in SMC Chapter 08.02 – Fees and Charges.	Permits are non-transferable Cost is $25 per permit per month
	Americans with Disability Act (ADA)	Per SMC 16A.61.582, vehicles with ADA tags are permitted to park for up to four hours. In metered areas, ADA vehicles can park for free up to four hours. ADA vehicles must pay the posted rate after four hours.	See Chapter 5 for summary ADA inventory
Programs	Pay-by-phone	Pay-by-phone via a smart phone for on-street meters is available via Passport Parking. Some off-street lots also offer pay-by-phone via different vendors (e.g., CallToPark).	Allows users to pay via remote "wallet," monitor their parking session, extend time remotely, pay prior to meter hours starting at 7 a.m., get reminders before payment expires, and view parking history/receipts.
	EasyPark	EasyPark is a validation program within downtown. Participating businesses validate parking and reduce parking costs by $1 for customers who make a minimum purchase.	Provides $1 off parking Valid at River Park Square and several Diamond-operated parking lots
	PremierPass	PremierPass is another downtown validation program that allows participating businesses to pay for up to two hours of customer parking. This program cannot be combined with EasyPark program.	Provides 2 hours of free parking Valid at River Park Square and several Diamond-operated parking lots

Category	Policy/Program	Description	Key Details
	City Ticket	Operated by STA, the City Ticket program allows employees to park at the Spokane Arena and ride a free shuttle (Route #1) into downtown. City Ticket is discussed in more detail below.	**Hours of Operation** M-F, 6 a.m. – 8 p.m. City Ticket pass holders can park on weekends provided no events are scheduled 10-minute shuttle frequency **Rates** $35/month
	Employee parking	Monthly parking is available to employees at many lots and garages in downtown. Rates vary based on facility type (lot versus garage) and location.	See Chapter 5 for a summary of employee parking spaces

Figure 4-2 Parking District and Zoning Boundaries





The project team explored the parking system infrastructure on the ground in February 2018. Above are different meter technologies, an example of signage, and a meter bag – these are available for activities and businesses who want to pre-pay for curb parking.

The City Ticket shuttle provides a lower-cost, remote option for parking near downtown destinations – people can park in the Arena lot and ride the shuttle the rest of the way. Reserved lots for permit holders and residential permits were common in downtown Spokane.

Main Avenue Streetscape Pilot

In 2016, the City of Spokane implemented a pilot street design project and parking program on **Main Avenue between Washington Street and Pine Street**. The primary goals of the pilot project are to create a more inviting, safe, and vital streetscape that prioritizes walking and biking. Key changes to Main Avenue included:

- Conversion of a **northbound travel lane to left turn only** at Bernard Street
- Conversion of **parallel parking to back-in angled parking** from Bernard Street to Browne Street
- Conversion of **middle two travel lanes to angled parking** between Browne Street and Division Street
- Northern travel lane and parallel parking on north side converted to **head-in angled parking** from Division Street to Pine Street
- **Net gain** in on-street parking spaces
- New **pedestrian crossings,** curb extensions, and streetscape improvements
- Installation of **pay-by-plate kiosks**

Newer meter technology allows customers to pay-by-plate or credit card. The project team heard generally positive feedback about the angled parking the City has recently piloted on Main Avenue.

MOBILITY PROGRAMS

Other key mobility and transportation programs in downtown impact parking demand and effectiveness of the overall parking system. These programs are designed to distribute parking demand to underutilized facilities, as well as reduce overall employee parking demand to free up spaces for residents, visitors, and customers.

Demand reduction programs ultimately support Spokane's efforts to reduce congestion and create a more walkable, safe, and active downtown.

City Ticket

As described above, the City Ticket program, operated by STA, provides **a reduced cost parking option for employees**, while reducing parking demand in the downtown core. Employees, or their employers, can buy a pass for $35 per month to park at the Spokane Arena lot on weekdays from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m. and then take a free shuttle to downtown. Service frequency is 10 minutes.

The City Ticket shuttle has 22 riders per revenue hour, which exceeds the target productivity set by STA of 19.7 riders per revenue hour. Farebox recovery also exceeded the target of 10% -- it recovered 18% of its cost in fares.

Nevertheless, there is still **a significant amount of excess capacity in the service.** Capacity utilization was between 15% and 20% for 2017. In 2017, there was an average 454 City Ticket passes purchased per month. Given the 900 parking spaces available at the arena, there is still capacity for the City Ticket program to grow.

Universal Transit Access Pass (UTAP)

Several universities and agencies hold an agreement with STA that enables their **employees and students to utilize a universal bus pass** as part of the Universal Transit Access Pass (UTAP) program. The program was started in 2013 with a two-year federal grant, but has since continued to be supported by reimbursement agreements with the following institutions and agencies:

- Universities
  - Eastern Washington University
  - Washington State University
  - Community Colleges of Spokane
  - Gonzaga University
- Agencies
  - City of Spokane
  - Spokane County

Employer Sponsored Bus Pass Program (EsBP)

STA also provides a bus pass program that allows employers to **purchase discounted bus passes for their employees.** Two options exist for employers:

1. Employers that provide a discount of up to $4 to employees on a 31-day bus pass, will get a corresponding match from STA up to a $4 savings (i.e., a $60 bus pass could cost $52 for the employee).
2. If an employer gets 100 or more employees to participate, STA will provide a 25% discount on each 31-day bus pass.

There are currently 57 total employers participating in the EsBP programs.

Commute Trip Reduction

In 1991, the State of Washington adopted its CTR law[3] with the intent of reducing employee drive-alone rate (DAR) and drive-alone trips (DAT). The law requires CTR-affected employment sites to create a plan for how to reduce employee DAR. The CTR requirements apply to employer sites meeting the following criteria:

- Employ 100 or more full-time employees whose workdays start between 6 a.m. and 9 a.m. on weekdays
- Located in a county with more than 150,000 residents

The Spokane Regional Transportation Council (SRTC), the federal Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and state Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RTPO), adopted the Spokane Regional CTR Plan in 2008[4]. The plan set a goal to reduce drive-alone trips by 10% from present levels (75%).

Given the data presented in Chapter 3, **the employers in downtown Spokane have not been able to meet those reduction targets** – as of the 15/16 cycle they have only reduced their DAR by 2.5% (to 73%). This trend is better than Spokane County as a whole, which has seen its DAR increase by 5% (3 percentage points) from 74% to 77%.

SMC Chapter 15.01 fulfills Spokane's obligation to adopt a CTR plan and implementing ordinance. SMC 15.01 defines the basic CTR terms and outlines the mandatory program elements (15.01.410). CTR sites within Spokane must meet minimum reporting requirements, hire an on-site transportation coordinator, provide employees with travel information, and provide a minimum of two trip reduction programs.

Spokane County oversees a website (https://mycommute.org) that is a central communication point for CTR-related programming. It includes a ride-matching portal for carpoolers, summaries of policies including the CTR program itself, the Guaranteed Ride Home (GRH) program, and commuter tax benefits.

It also provides extensive resources for Employer Transportation Coordinators (ETCs), which are responsible for administering CTR programming at their worksites. Resources include sample messaging, maps, and information about travel options. The county also hosts an annual awards event, which awards high performing (in terms of drive-alone trips reduced) employees, employers, and ETCs.

For the last decade, the City has signed a series of two-year agreements with the Spokane County CTR department granting them the City's annual CTR fund allocation in exchange for implementing the CTR programming for the city. The City has its own ETC for city employees, but the coordination and operation of CTR programs for all other large employers in the City of Spokane is the responsibility of the county, per those agreements.

[3] Revised Code of Washington (RCW) – Section 70.94.527
Washington Administrative Code (WAC) – Chapter 468-63

[4] https://www.srtc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/regional_ctr_plan_11608.pdf

MUNICIPAL CODE

The City of **Spokane Municipal Code (SMC)** sets parking policy and establishes the regulatory authority by which staff can enforce those policies. Ultimately, the municipal code defines how Spokane will grow over the coming decades. A city's parking and transportation system can only be efficient if the municipal code establishes a strong, yet flexible framework by which to guide new development and changes to the right-of-way. This section summarizes the existing portions of the SMC that dictate parking policy and management.

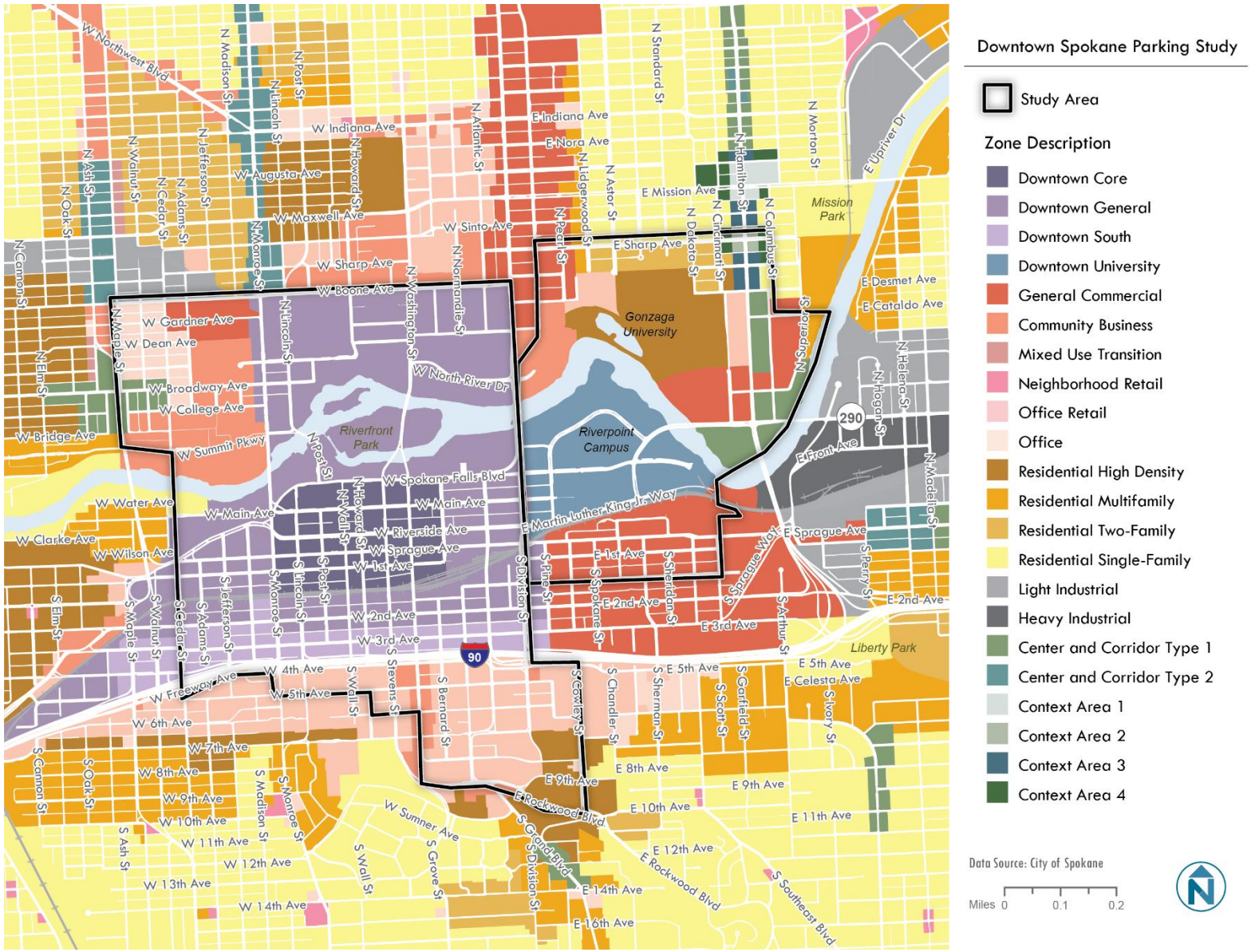
Zoning Designations

Within the Downtown and University District parking study areas, there are a **variety of zoning categories**, offering a mix of policies and regulations related to parking. The zoning categories are summarized in Figure 4-3. Figure 4-4 shows the City of Spokane zoning map.

Figure 4-3 Zoning Categories by Study Area

Downtown	University District
Center & Corridor Core Zone 1 (CC1)	Center & Corridor Core Zone 1 (CC1)
Community Business (CB)	Community Business (CB)
Downtown Core (DTC)	Downtown University (DTU)
Downtown General (DTG)	General Commercial (GC)
Downtown South (DTS)	Office Retail (OR)
General Commercial (GC)	Residential Multifamily (RMF)
Office (O)	Residential Two Family (RTF)
Office Retail (OR)	
Residential High Density (RHD)	

Figure 4-4 City of Spokane Zoning Map



Land Use Standards

This section summarizes the key provisions within **Title 17C – Land Use Standards** of the SMC as they relate to parking policy and management.

Downtown Parking Standards

As shown in Figure 4-4, there are **four downtown zoning categories – DTC, DTG, DTS, and DTU.** The first three zones are within the Downtown study area, while the DTU zone is within the University District study area.

There are specific regulations related to parking within the downtown, recognizing that parking should be managed differently here due to the density of uses, land use mix, transit access, and overall multimodal vision established for downtown by the Comprehensive Plan and Downtown Plan.

Key downtown parking provisions include:

- **No minimum amount of on-site parking is required** within the Downtown Parking Requirement Map, as defined by Section 17C.230-M1 (Figure 4-2).
- For areas within the downtown zones (i.e., DTU), but not within the Downtown Parking Requirement Map, **the minimum parking requirement is 1 space per 1,000 gross square feet (GSF) or 1 stall per dwelling unit**, whichever is less.
- The **maximum amount of parking** allowed is three spaces per 1,000 GSF.
- New **standalone commercial parking lots are not allowed** as the primary use within the area shown in Figure 4-2. Standalone commercial parking as a primary use must be located entirely within a parking structure.
- **Downtown parking structures** adjacent to a Type I street (Community Activity Street) or a Type II street (Community Connector) must include street-level retail, office, or civic uses along at least 50% of the street frontage not devoted to vehicular access.
- All parking facilities must have **lighting** compliant with the standards of the Illuminating Engineering Society of North America; and **signage** identifying floors and pedestrian walkways.

"Limiting the number of spaces allowed promotes efficient use of land, enhances urban form, encourages use of alternative modes of transportation, provides for better pedestrian movement, and protects air and water quality."
SMC Section 17C.230.120.

General Parking Standards

Figure 4-5 summarizes the zoning standards for parking that apply to both downtown and the rest of the city. These include standards for not only how much parking should be built, but also key provisions related to sharing of parking, facility design, carpool parking, and bicycle parking, among others.

Figure 4-5 Summary of Parking Standards

Standard	SMC Sections	Summary
Minimum / Maximum Requirements	17C.230.100 17C.230.110 17C.230.120	See Figure 4-6 for summary of minimums and maximums by zone and land use. Parking requirements for mixed-use sites is calculated by the sum of the required parking for the individual uses. For every 5 non-required bike spaces = reduction of 1 vehicle space, up to 10% of required parking (includes conversion of existing parking). Immediately adjacent, non-restricted on-street parking spaces may count towards the minimum parking requirement (1 space = 20 feet). Parking provided within a building structure is not counted towards maximum (17C.230.120.B)
Parking Exceptions	17C.230.130	New building/addition less than 3,000 SF is exempt from parking requirement (Downtown, CC, FBC, CA1-3 zones). Director may approve ratios higher/lower and/or reduce or waive requirement if data is provided to support application or with an area management plan utilizing shared parking. Existing legal nonconforming buildings that do not meet minimums do not have to provide off-street parking when remodeling increases the amount of required parking occurs within the existing structure.
Change of Use	17C.230.110.B.5	A change of an existing use to a new use with a higher parking requirement must provide the additional parking, except when the additional increment required is 5 or less spaces. New uses receive credit for parking provided by existing use.
Joint Use / Shared Parking	17C.230.110.B.2	Joint/shared parking is allowed for non-residential uses if a shared parking analysis is conducted and a shared parking agreement is submitted with application.
Off-site Parking	17C.230.100.E	Required spaces must be within 600 feet of use (CC zones) and within 400 feet of the site (all industrial and commercial zones). Required spaces must be within 400 feet of use (RHD zone) and on-site (RA, RSF, RTF, RMF zones).
Stacked / Valet Parking	17C.230.100.F	Allowed to count towards minimum parking requirement. Attendant must be present to move vehicles.

Standard	SMC Sections	Summary
Carpool Parking	17C.230.110.C	Office, industrial, and institutional uses with 20+ on-site parking spaces, must designate a minimum of 5 spaces or 5% of all spaces (whatever is less) for carpool use before 9 a.m. on weekdays. Spaces must be closest non-ADA or customer spaces to the building entrance or elevator. Regulatory signs must be posted.
Parking Structure Design	17C.230.310	Parking structures that are part of a building must provide at least 2 design treatments on street-facing facades to reduce visual impacts. Free-standing parking structures must provide all design features on the façade above the ground level.
Parking Dimensions	Table 17C.230-3 Table 17C.230-4	Design dimensions are defined in 17C.230. Downtown, CC, NR, FBC, and CA1-3 zones have smaller 2-way aisle width and stall depth requirements.
Transportation Demand Management (TDM)	Chapter 15.01	See discussion of Commute Trip Reduction (CTR) program above.
ADA Parking	17C.230.140.E.3	Specifies that dimensions, minimum number, location, signage, and design of disabled person parking and access standards are defined through the building code and the latest American National Standards Institute (ANSI) standards.
Bicycle Parking	17C.230.200	Must provide equivalent of 5% of total vehicle spaces provided. Minimum of 1 bicycle space per 10,000 SF. Less than 10,000 SF must provide at least 1 bicycle space. Applies to Downtown, FBC, CA1, CA2, CA3 zones. Must provide equivalent of 5% of total vehicle spaces (if 20+ vehicle spaces required. Applies to RMF, RHD, CC1-4, O, OR, NR, NMU, CB, GC, and I zones.

Figure 4-6 Summary of Minimum and Maximum Parking Requirements

By Zone (Selected Zones)			By Land Use (Selected Land Uses)		
Zone	***Minimum***	***Maximum***	***Land Use***	***Minimum***	***Maximum***
RTF, RMF, RHD, O, OR, CB, GC,	Per SMC Table 17C.230-2	Per SMC Table 17C.230-2	**Residential**	1 per unit + 1 per BR after 3 BRs 1 per ADU SROs are exempt	None
CC1	1 per 1,000 GSF (NR) 1 per 1,000 GSF or 1 per unit plus 1 per BR after 3 BRs (R)	4 per 1,000 GSF (NR) 4 per 1,000 GSF (R)	**General, Medical/Dental Office; Medical Center; Community Service**	2 per 1,000 GSF	5 per 1,000 GSF
Downtown	None within designated zone (SMC 17C.230-M1) Outside of designated zone - 1 per 1,000 GSF or 1 per unit, whatever is less	3 per 1,000 GSF	**Retail, Personal Service**	3.3 per 1,000 GSF	5 per 1,000 GSF
			Restaurants/Bars	4 per 1,000 GSF	16.7 per 1,000 GSF
			Health Club/Gym	3.3 per 1,000 GSF	5.6 per 1,000 GSF
			Theaters	1 per 4 seats or 1 per 6 ft. of bench area	1 per 2.7 seats or 1 per 4 ft. of bench area
			Colleges	1.7 per 1,000 GSF (excluding dorms) + 1 per 4 dorm rooms	5 per 1,000 GSF (excluding dorms) + 1 per 2.6 dorm rooms
			High School	7 per classroom	10.5 per classroom

GSF = gross square feet, NR = non-residential, R= residential, BR = bedroom, ADU = Accessory Dwelling Unit, SRO= single room occupancy

Motor Vehicle Regulations

In addition to the land use standards described above, the Municipal Code also defines the regulations for motor vehicles, including the specific "rules of the road." SMC Chapter 16A.61- Rules of the Road includes specific key provisions related to parking. These are briefly summarized in Figure 4-7.

Figure 4-7 Summary of Motor Vehicles Regulations (Selected Sections)

Standard	SMC Sections	Summary
Special Parking for Persons with Disabilities	16A.61.381	Establishes the disabled parking requirements and provisions and penalties for violation of disabled parking.
Parking Time Limited and Regulated	16A.61.561	Establishes a 24-hour maximum parking limit on any city street and the 8 a.m. – 7 p.m., Monday-Saturday time limits within the parking meter area. Allows for one 15-minute extension beyond maximum time at a meter by phone.
Taxicab Zones	16A.61.5702	Establishes authority to designate spaces for taxicabs or other vehicles carrying passengers for hire.
Commercial Loading Zones (CLZ)	16A.61.5703	Establishes the regulations governing the CLZ program, including conditions for permits, eligible uses, time limits, and penalties.
Taxicabs and Buses	16A.61.5705	Establishes that only officially designated vehicles may stop or stand in taxi zones. Establishes loading regulations for buses and taxis.
Residential Area Parking Passes	16A.61.5708	Establishes that only owners of multifamily residential properties located within the parking meter boundary may purchase monthly parking passes. Property owners shall create a roster and pay for all parking passes on a monthly basis. Pass holders can park at only "all day" meters without payment.
Free Parking by Disabled Persons	16A.61.582	Establishes that the time limit for free parking is four hours for vehicles displaying a disabled placard under RCW 46.61.582 at metered and non-metered on-street spaces, where such four-hour limit is posted. Where a meter allows time in excess of four hours, meter fees shall be paid after four hours. Where the four-hour limit is not posted, disabled placards allow for unlimited free parking.
Parking Meter Area Map	16A.61.5902	Establishes that parking meters are authorized in the Parking Meter Map, in any City-owned public parking lot within or adjacent to either the congested district or any other area wherein parking meters are otherwise permitted. New parking meters located in the Parking Meter Map, but outside of the four downtown zones, must be approved by Council.

Standard	SMC Sections	Summary
Entertainment Parking District	16A.61.5903	Establishes the EPD, as shown in Figure 4-2
Installation of Parking Meters	16A.61.5904	Establishes authority of parking manager to install meters as single space, multi-space Pay-by-Space, or multi-space Pay-and-Display meters.
Parking Time Limit	16A.61.5910	Establishes the time limits, payment terms, and holidays at metered spaces.
Fees and Rates	08.02.083	Establishes the fees and rates for parking meters and permits.

TOP FIVE TAKEAWAYS

Management Structure

1. Parking policy and operations in Spokane depend on input, and affect the outcomes, of several divisions within the City of Spokane, as well as external stakeholders. **The Parking Advisory Committee (PAC) is the nexus between internal and external stakeholders.**

Policies and Programs

2. Parking rates and duration restrictions within Spokane's meter district were recently simplified to three rates/durations constant throughout the day. While this offers simplicity for parkers and enforcement, **the current structure does not support dynamic management of the system to adjust rates based on demand.**

Mobility Programs

3. The City Ticket shuttle program enables downtown employees to park at the Spokane Arena parking lot and ride a free shuttle into downtown Spokane. **This program, and other mobility programs/incentives, present an opportunity for improving mobility choice in the downtown core.**

Municipal Code

4. The current parking code includes many national best practices, namely **no off-street parking minimums within the core, as well as off-street maximums.** Parking minimums have been consistently shown to result in excess parking capacity in downtown, increased housing costs, and reduced development feasibility, especially on small lots or with adaptive re-use. Eliminating parking minimums does not mean that no new parking will be built – current development proposals indicate that new parking will be coming to downtown.
5. However, there are **areas of the code to further evaluate that could enhance parking management, maximize downtown development, and streamline the development process.** These include, but are not limited to:
    a. Adjustments to bike parking standards to reflect best practices
    b. Requirements or incentives for implementation of TDM or mobility programs
    c. Policies for unbundling cost of parking from rent/lease/purchase agreements
    d. Shared parking requirements/incentives
    e. Changes of use and their parking burden
    f. Management practices, especially authority of staff to adjust rates and regulations to dynamically manage the parking system
    g. Policies for curb space management to maximize its utility for different users and shared mobility services
    h. Design and future-proof requirements for new parking garages

5 PARKING INVENTORY – HOW MANY PARKING SPACES ARE IN DOWNTOWN?

This chapter summarizes the downtown study area's parking inventory. It documents the number of spaces for both on- and off-street facilities, as well as how those spaces are both priced and regulated. This detailed parking inventory will allow the City, project team, and stakeholders to have a robust understanding about the number of spaces in downtown and how they are currently managed.

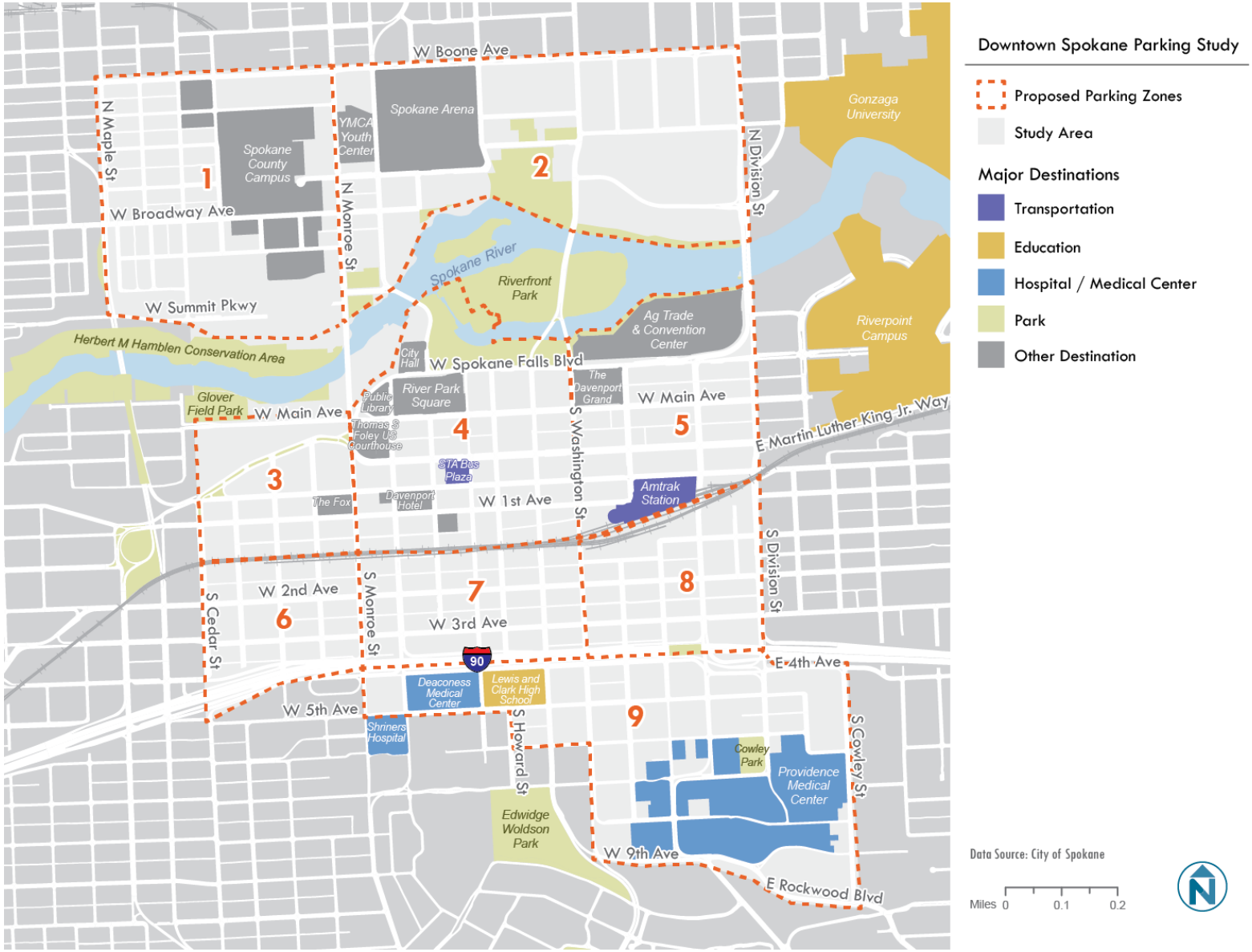
It is important to emphasize that the inventory presented represents **a "snapshot" summary.** The number of parking spaces in the study area on any given day or time is constantly changing due to street closures, construction activity, or additions/reductions in parking. The information presented is based upon the best available data to date. The inventory does not include parking spaces associated with single-family driveways or garages.

METHODOLOGY

The data collection began by using a combination of existing data from the City of Spokane in addition to aerial imagery to develop a geometric database of all on- and off-street parking in the study area. This data was supplemented by **a team of IDAX field surveyors** to count and/or verify the numbers and types of parking spaces based on manual counts and observations of signage. Space types were detailed in terms of their public availability, when they were reserved, who they were reserved for, and the typical price each parking facility.

Figure 5-1 illustrates the study area. For analysis purposes, **the study area was broken up into sub-zones.** These sub-zones were developed based upon previous parking studies, prominent geographic barriers (e.g., the railway/viaduct and the Spokane River), and discussion with the City project team. These analysis zones represent a reasonable walk shed and have similar land uses and travel patterns. **The zone names and boundaries are specific to this project only**.

Figure 5-1 Downtown Parking Study Area and Zone Boundaries



OVERALL INVENTORY

The downtown study area has a total of **almost 37,000 parking spaces.** These spaces take up approximately **29% of land within the study area, and up to 40% in the Arena zone.**

Inventory is summarized by general space type and zone in Figure 5-2. How those spaces occupy land in the zones and study area are shown in Figure 5-3. Figure 5-4 illustrates the density of parking spaces throughout the study area in a simplified map. Key data points are highlighted below.

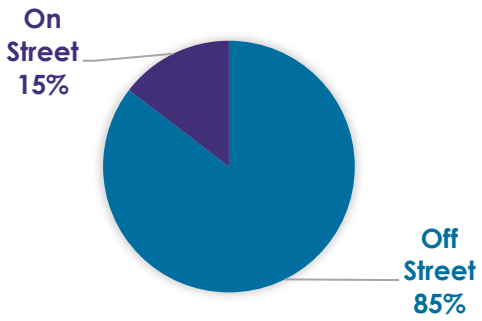
The downtown study area has a total of almost 37,000 parking spaces. These spaces take up approximately 29% of land within the study area.

Space Types

- **Over one-third of parking in the study area is off-street paid parking available to the public.** The majority of that parking is concentrated in the Downtown Core, in the Convention Center area, and by the Spokane arena.
- Twelve percent of parking in the study area is available to **customers of businesses only**. The largest portion of this parking is in the Arena neighborhood.
- On-street metered parking (provided and operated by the City of Spokane) accounts for **9% of parking in the study area**.

Zones

- **Nearly 60% of parking is split between three areas** – the Downtown Core, the Arena neighborhood, and the Hospital District. The Spokane County campus has the next highest portion, with 11% of the total parking inventory.
- The Arena zone has the highest portion of its land occupied by parking at 40%. This is due to the **high number (6,000) of surface parking spaces** in this area—most related to the Spokane Memorial Arena itself.
- The Downtown Core has the **lowest proportion of its land occupied by parking** at 19%, and the lowest land area consumed per space at 137 SF per space. This is due to the high number (4,600) of structured parking spaces in this area.



Overall

- As illustrated in Figure 5-4, there appear to be **four primary parking 'sheds'** – the Downtown core, the Hospital District, the Arena zone, and the Spokane County campus.

Figure 5-2 Overall Parking Inventory, by Zone (On- and Off-Street)

Simplified Space Type	Total Spaces	% of all Spaces	1 - Spokane County Campus	2 - Arena Neighbor hood	3 - West End	4 - Downtown Core	5 - Conventi on Center	6 - West End South	7 - Southern Downtown Core	8 - East End South	9 - Hospital District
Off-Street: Public Paid	12,482	34%	674	2,817	335	4,231	2,146	0	881	246	1,152
Off-Street: Customer	4,688	12%	580	1,449	258	270	374	176	450	585	546
Off-Street: Not Field Checked*	4,401	12%	62	334	276	710	110	248	116	63	2,482
On-Street: Metered	3,181	9%	309	200	402	577	430	255	375	240	393
Off-Street: Medical	2,546	7%	108	299	0	0	0	224	0	4	1,911
Off-Street: Employee	2,196	6%	534	471	336	51	84	0	0	44	676
On-Street: Open (Free)	1,654	5%	705	260	7	8	3	82	17	138	434
Off-Street: Reserved	1,344	4%	379	130	80	289	93	25	209	42	97
Off-Street: Private	1,126	3%	35	111	123	50	18	582	62	103	42
Off-Street: Resident	924	3%	216	422	24	20	60	8	10	68	96
On- and Off-Street: ADA	819	2%	101	204	30	113	79	24	80	45	143
On- and Off-Street: Other	616	2%	29	28	9	42	22	433	7	7	39
On- and Off-Street: Loading	440	1%	25	34	45	153	65	22	26	15	55
On- and Off-Street: University/School	208	1%	6	0	0	0	27	0	79	89	7
On- and Off-Street: Service Vehicles	196	1%	149	6	5	9	6	0	7	14	0
Total	**36,821**	**100%**	3,912	6,765	1,930	6,523	3,517	2,079	2,319	1,703	8,073
Share of All Spaces	100%		11%	18%	5%	18%	10%	6%	6%	5%	22%

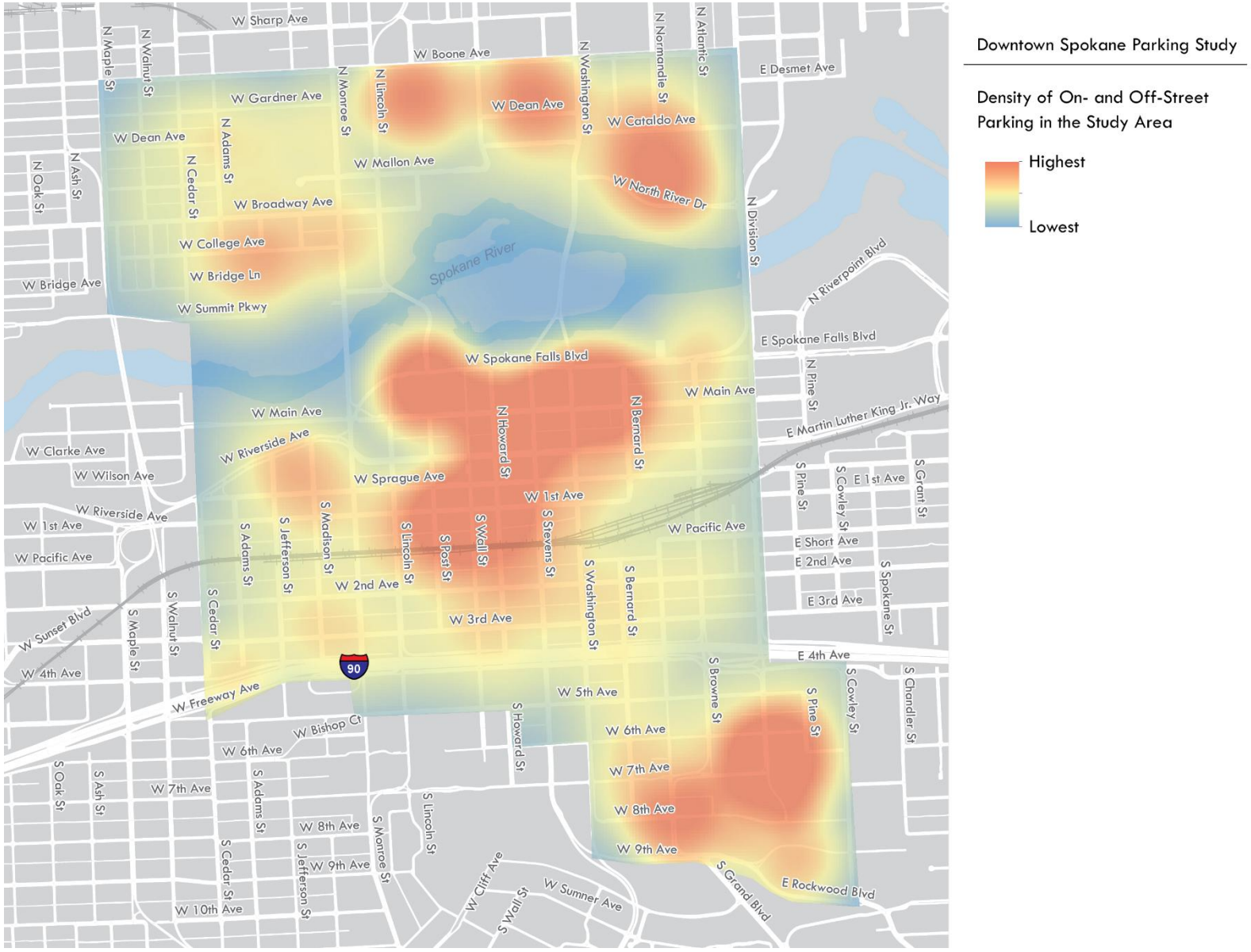
* Off-street, not field-checked spaces include all spaces data collectors were unable to gain access to for field checking. Multiple attempts were made to access each site.

Figure 5-3 Land Area Allocated to Parking, by On/Off-street and Zone

Zone	Off-street Parking					On-street Parking		Total Parking Land Area	Total Zone Land Area	% of Land Consumed by Parking
	# Structured Spaces	# Surface Spaces	# Total Spaces	Land Area	Land Area per Space	# Spaces	Land Area*			
1) Spokane County Campus	13	2,819	2,832	1,213,917	430	1,080	172,800	1,386,717	5,534,621	25%
2) Arena Neighborhood	228	6,046	6,274	2,611,474	428	491	78,560	2,690,034	6,702,498	40%
3) West End	601	863	1,464	368,885	252	466	74,560	443,445	1,970,755	23%
4) Downtown Core	4,598	1,155	5,753	691,005	120	770	123,200	814,205	4,253,600	19%
5) Convention Center	1,417	1,598	3,015	894,130	297	502	80,320	974,450	3,335,168	29%
6) West End South	29	1,673	1,702	569,213	334	377	60,320	629,533	1,777,395	35%
7) Southern Downtown Core	117	1,777	1,894	725,138	383	425	68,000	793,138	2,419,847	33%
8) East End South	0	1,302	1,302	579,070	445	401	64,160	643,230	2,375,774	27%
9) Hospital District	4,997	2,208	7,205	1,481,216	206	868	138,880	1,620,096	5,887,559	28%
Total - Entire Study Area	**12,000**	**19,441**	**31,441**	**9,134,049**	**291**	**5,380**	**860,800**	**9,994,849**	**34,257,218**	**29%**

* based on an assumed 160 square feet per space

Figure 5-4 Density of On- and Off-street Inventory



ON-STREET PARKING

Figure 5-5 presents a more detailed summary of on-street parking spaces in the study area. Overall, there are **nearly 5,400 on-street spaces.** Nearly one-third of those spaces are 2-hour metered spaces, and another 30% are unregulated/free spaces. Another quarter of spaces are All-Day metered and 4-hour metered spaces (21% and 6%, respectively).

The remaining 8% of spaces are different types of loading zones and other specific use spaces (e.g., ADA, police only). There are **only six designated on-street ADA spaces** in the Downtown study area[5].

Figure 5-6 illustrates how those space types are distributed over the study area geographically, with additional detail about loading zones illustrated in Figure 5-7.

Figure 5-8 breaks down the spaces and space types by zone. One-fifth of on-street spaces are in the Spokane County campus area, and most of these are free. Sixteen percent are in the Hospital District, and these spaces are split between free and metered spaces. Fourteen percent are in the Downtown Core, with most of these being metered spaces or loading zones.

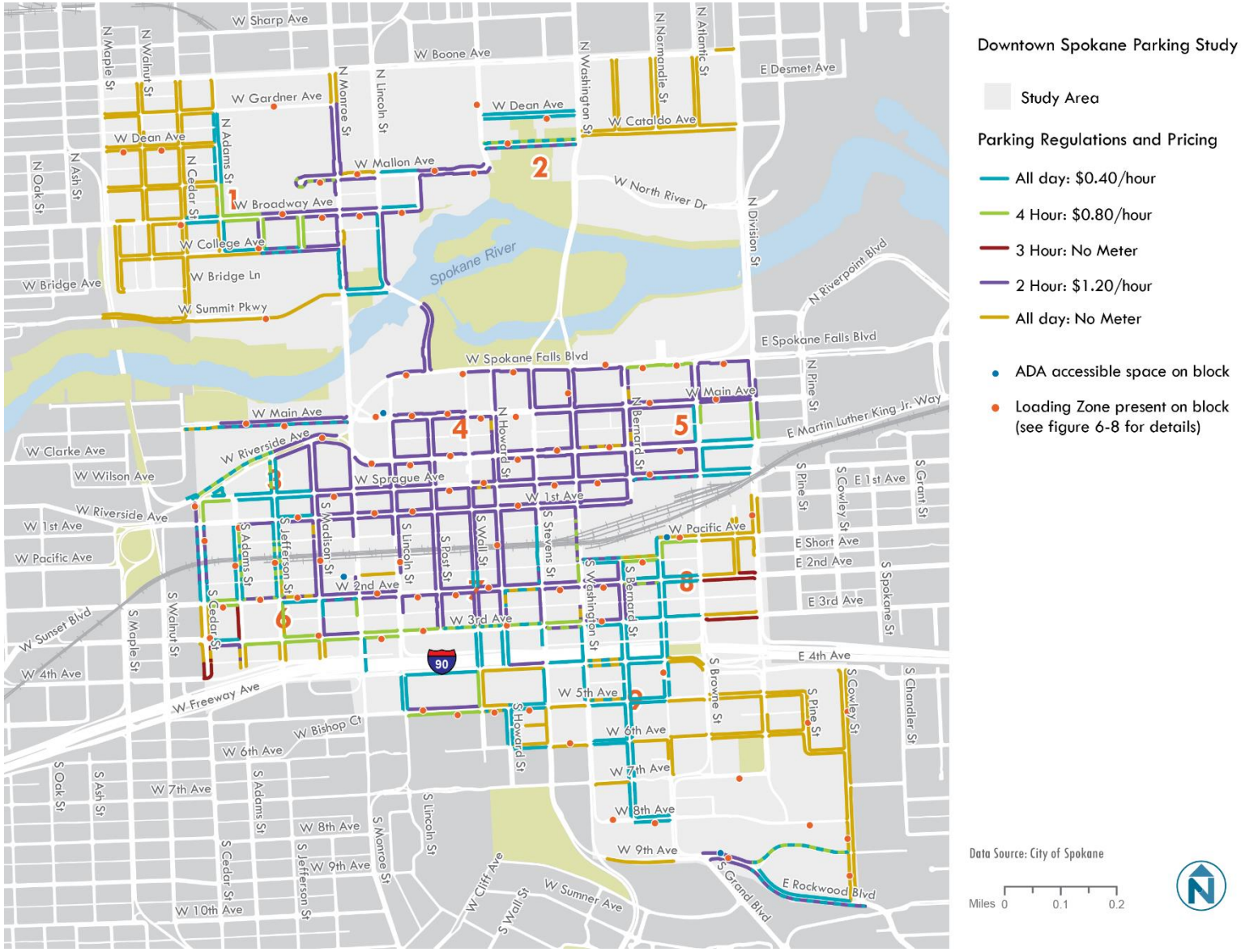
Commercial and 10-minute loading zones are concentrated in the Downtown Core and adjacent zones. Passenger/taxi loading zones are mainly located in the Convention Center, Arena, and Downtown Core areas.

Figure 5-5 On-street Inventory, by Regulation Type

Regulation Type	# Spaces	% Spaces
2-hour Metered ($1.20/hr.)	1,714	31.9%
Unregulated (Free)	1,606	29.9%
All-Day Metered ($0.40/hr.)	1,130	21.0%
4-hour Metered ($0.80/hr.)	337	6.3%
Commercial Loading Zone	192	3.6%
10-minute Loading Zone	116	2.2%
Passenger/Taxi Loading Zone	96	1.8%
Other	67	1.2%
3-hour (no meter)	48	0.9%
Police Only	43	0.8%
Other Loading & Delivery	23	0.4%
Disabled	6	0.1%
Total	**5,378**	**100%**

[5] Parkers utilizing handicapped placards can park at any meter without a fee.

Figure 5-6 On-street Regulations and Pricing



Downtown Spokane Parking Study

Study Area

Parking Regulations and Pricing

- All day: $0.40/hour
- 4 Hour: $0.80/hour
- 3 Hour: No Meter
- 2 Hour: $1.20/hour
- All day: No Meter

- ADA accessible space on block
- Loading Zone present on block (see figure 6-8 for details)

Data Source: City of Spokane

Miles 0 0.1 0.2

Figure 5-7 On-Street Loading Zones

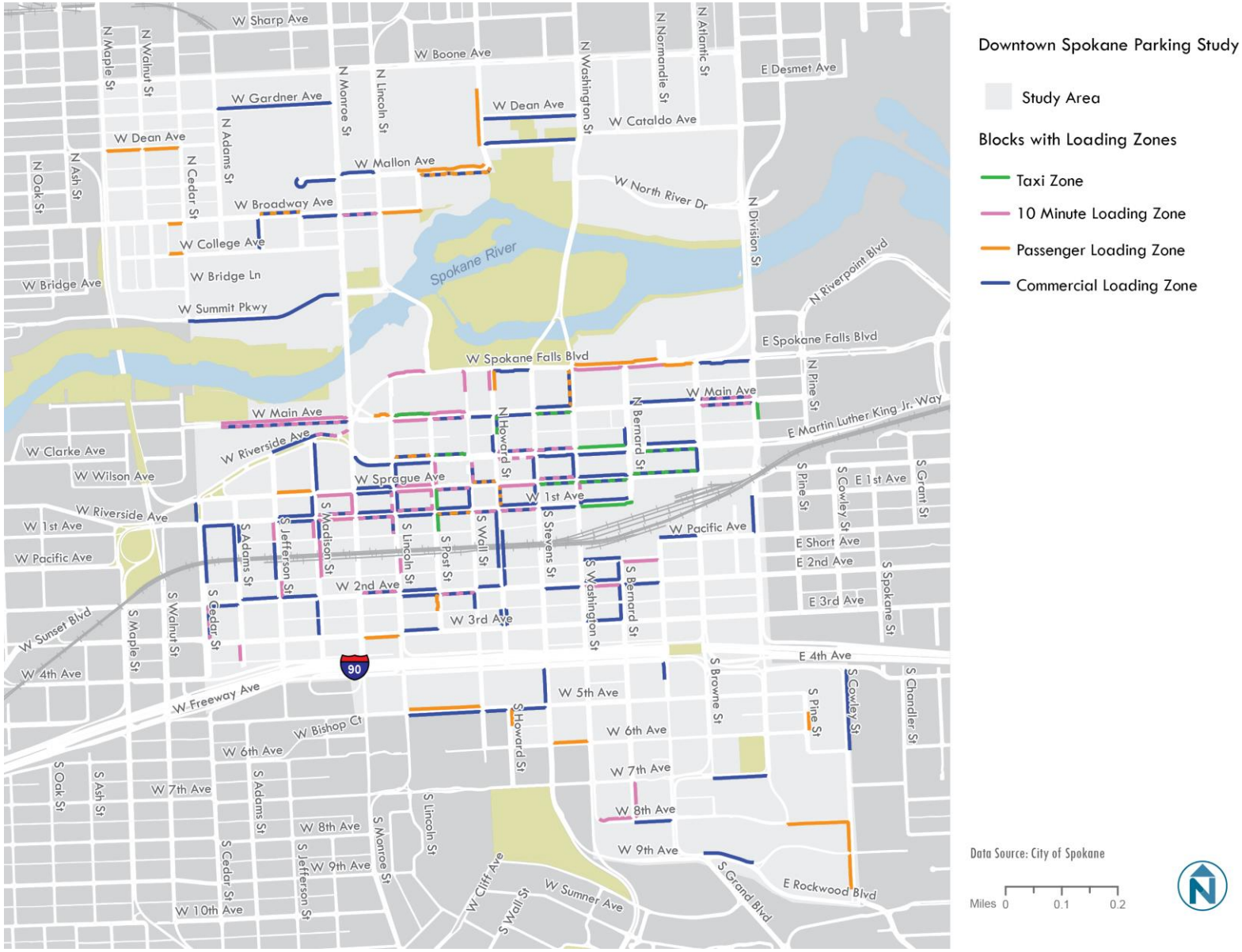


Figure 5-8 Summary of On-Street Regulations and Pricing, by Zone

Regulation Type	# of Spaces	1 Spokane County Campus	2 Arena Neighborhood	3 West End	4 Downtown Core	5 Convention Center	6 West End South	7 Southern Downtown Core	8 East End South	9 Hospital District
2-Hour Metered ($1.20/hr.)	1,714	94	76	190	564	358	90	240	54	48
Open (Free)	1,606	705	260	7	8	3	56	17	116	434
All-Day Metered ($0.40/hr.)	1,130	132	123	178	0	53	78	88	145	333
4-Hour Metered ($0.80/hr.)	337	83	1	34	13	19	87	47	41	12
Commercial Loading Zone	192	12	5	23	75	20	12	16	12	17
10-Minute Loading Zone	116	0	2	20	56	15	10	7	3	3
Passenger/Taxi Loading Zone	96	7	23	2	20	25	0	3	0	16
Other	67	12	0	9	6	8	17	4	7	4
3-Hour (no meter)	48	0	0	0	0	0	26	0	22	0
Police Only	43	31	0	3	8	0	0	1	0	0
Other Loading & Delivery	23	2	0	0	19	0	0	2	0	0
Disabled	6	2	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	1
Total Spaces	**5,378**	**1,080**	**490**	**466**	**770**	**501**	**377**	**425**	**401**	**868**
Proportion of Total Spaces	**100%**	**20.1%**	**9.1%**	**8.7%**	**14.3%**	**9.3%**	**7.0%**	**7.9%**	**7.5%**	**16.1%**

Note: Monday – Friday Regulations shown. Some loading zones only in effect Monday – Friday, metered spaces not in effect Sundays.

OFF-STREET PARKING

There are a total of **31,441 off-street spaces** in the downtown study area. Figure 5-9 presents a breakdown of the unique space *types* by zone, which is a different view of the data than in earlier tables. A portion of off-street spaces (11%) are shared between different uses. Therefore, the number of unique space *types* (30,995) adds up to more than the number of unique field checked *spaces* (27,040).

The total estimated number of spaces is also shown, which includes spaces that **were unable to be field-checked** because of access issues for surveyors. A total of 4,401 estimated spaces were not field-checked, representing 13.7% of the total off-street inventory. The majority (56%) of these spaces were in the Hospital District.

More than half of off-street parking spaces in the study area are restricted and not available to the general public for all or a portion of the day.

Spaces that could not be field-checked by surveyors were estimated based on the average land area per space based on facility type (structured vs. surface) and analysis zone. They are shown separately and are assumed to be private lots reserved for private usage. Figure 5-10 and Figure 5-11 illustrate the distribution of space types by zone and geography.

Key findings of the off-street inventory include:

- Approximately 43% percent of off-street parking is **paid parking available to the general public**.
- **None of the off-street spaces in the study area are owned and operated by the City of Spokane** – this means the City has very little control over pricing and regulation of off-street facilities.
- Most of the paid and publicly available parking is **concentrated in the Downtown Core**, the Convention Center, the Arena neighborhood, and the Hospital District.
- Most remaining parking is **reserved for specific uses**. Thirteen percent is reserved for customers/clients, 9% is reserved for medical patients and medical employees, 7% is reserved for other employees. Other uses include hotels, residents, car dealerships, church, and others.
- The Southern Downtown Core and the East End South areas have the **highest proportion of shared parking** – nearly 30% of their spaces are shared between multiple uses, such as being reserved for employees during the day and being priced for the public in the evening.

Nearly 30% of spaces in southeastern downtown are shared between uses – this allows employees to park during the day, and the public to park at night.

Figure 5-9 Off-street Inventory, by Zone, Space Type, and Unique Spaces

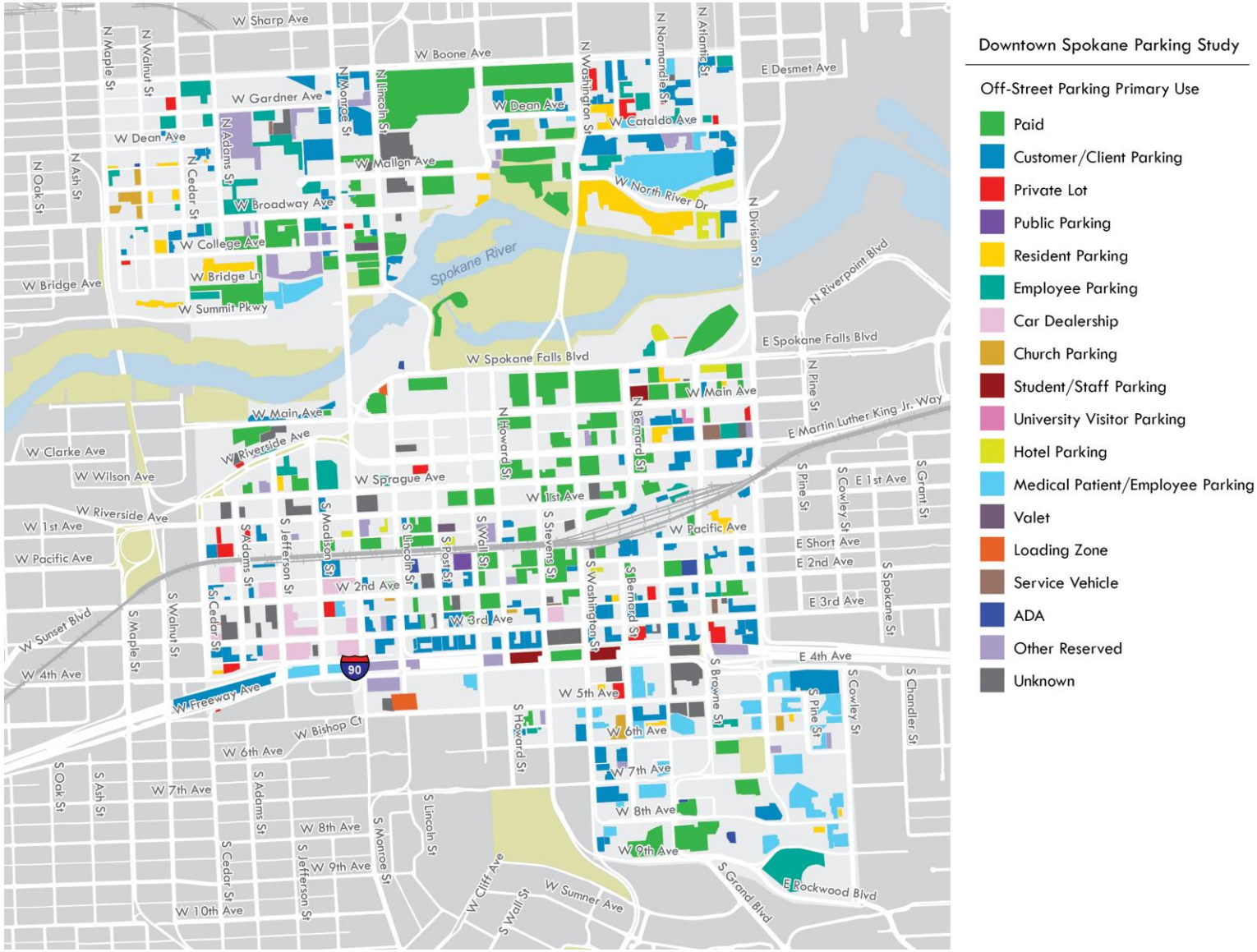
Space Type	# of Spaces	% of Total	1 - Spokane County Campus	2 - Arena Neighborhood	3 - West End	4 - Downtown Core	5 - Convention Center	6 - West End South	7 - Southern Downtown Core	8 - East End South	9 - Hospital District
Public Paid	13,321	43%	674	3,068	429	4,276	2,301	0	940	246	1,387
Customer/Client Parking	3,769	13%	474	1,051	231	82	285	176	434	572	464
Other Reserved	3,343	11%	379	151	80	289	93	111	678	403	1,159
Medical Patient/Employee Parking	3,016	9%	108	299	0	0	0	224	0	4	2,381
Employee Parking	2,207	7%	537	479	336	51	84	0	0	44	676
Resident Parking	939	4%	216	422	24	20	75	8	10	68	96
ADA	833	3%	99	204	30	112	79	23	80	44	162
Hotel Parking	987	3%	0	826	14	62	52	0	0	33	0
Car Dealership	574	2%	0	0	0	0	0	512	62	0	0
Private Lot	566	2%	35	111	123	50	32	70	0	103	42
Carpool/Vanpool Parking	467	1%	9	7	0	0	0	416	0	0	35
Service Vehicle	224	0%	191	5	2	1	5	0	6	14	0
Church Parking	208	1%	106	0	13	0	0	0	15	0	74
Student/Staff Parking	188	1%	6	0	0	0	14	0	79	89	0
Other	115	0%	12	25	0	19	32	0	80	0	26

Figure 5-9 (continued) Off-street Inventory, by Zone, Space Type, and Unique Spaces

Space Type	# of Spaces	% of Total	1 - Spokane County Campus	2 - Arena Neighborhood	3 - West End	4 - Downtown Core	5 - Convention Center	6 - West End South	7 - Southern Downtown Core	8 - East End South	9 - Hospital District
Number of Space Types	**30,995**	**100%**	2,846	6,687	1,282	5,110	3,089	1,540	2,306	1,620	6,515
Proportion of Space Types			9%	22%	4%	16%	10%	5%	7%	5%	21%
Number of Shared Spaces	**3,955**		76	747	94	67	184	86	528	381	1,792
Number of Unique Field-Checked Spaces	**27,040**		2,770	5,940	1,188	5,043	2,905	1,454	1,778	1,239	4,723
% Shared (out of Unique Field Checked)	**12.8%**		2.7%	11.2%	7.3%	1.3%	6.0%	5.6%	22.9%	23.5%	27.5%
Est. # of Non-field-checked Spaces	**4,401**		62	334	276	710	110	248	116	63	2,482
Est. # of Total Spaces	**31,441**		2,832	6,274	1,464	5,753	3,015	1,702	1,894	1,302	7,915

Note: Non-field-checked spaces estimated based on average area per space by facility type (structured or surface) and zone

Figure 5-10 Off-Street Parking, by Primary Use*



* "Primary Use" refers to the largest proportion of spaces for each facility

PRICE COMPARISON

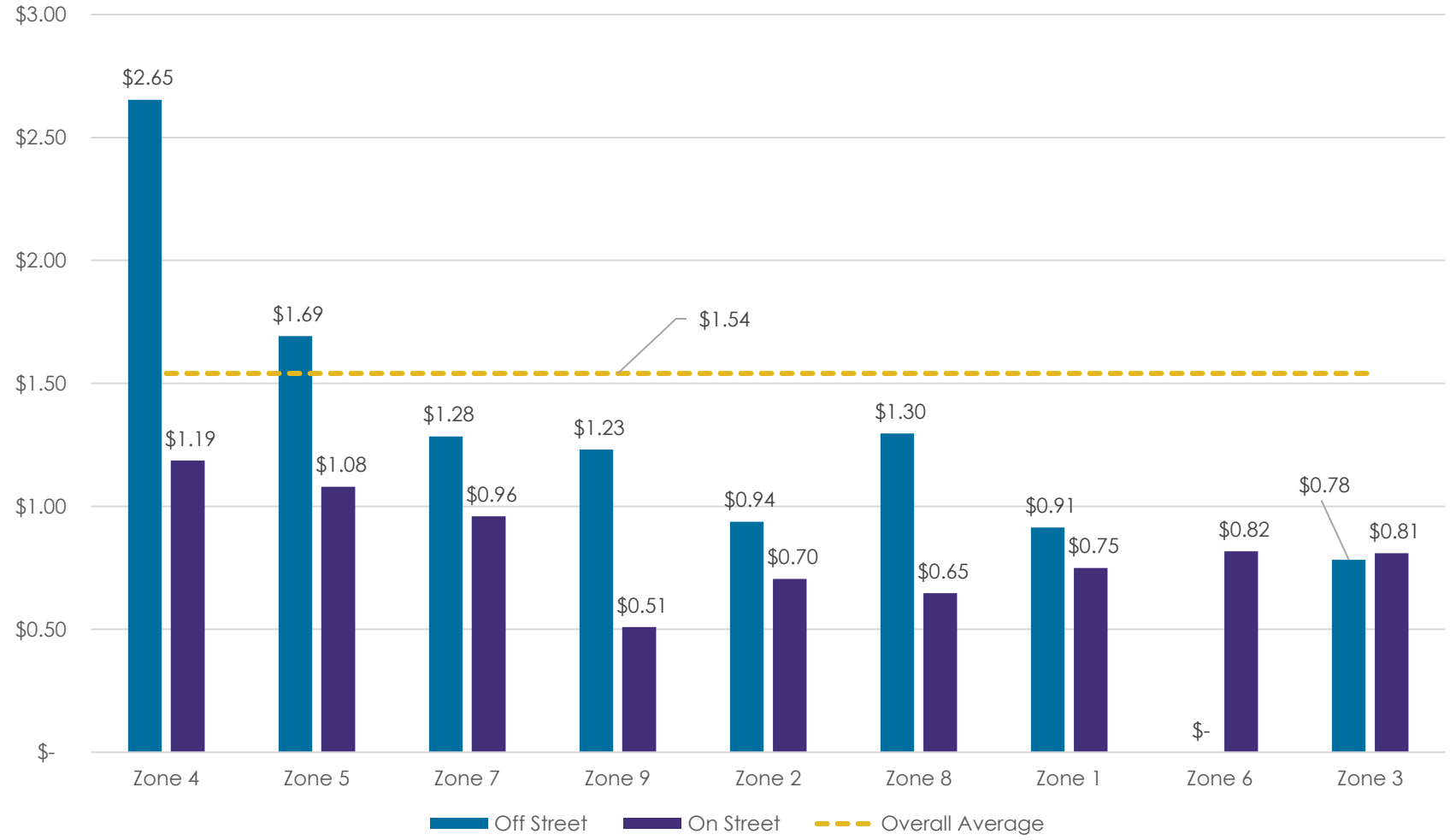
As shown in Figure 5-11, 53% of off-street parking and 41% of on-street parking is priced (within the study area). Conversely, 47% of off-street parking and 59% of on-street parking is free. A **large portion of this free off-street parking is not available to the general public** as it is reserved for specific uses – this is discussed in the next section.

Figure 5-12 compares the average hourly rate (per space) for all priced parking in each zone. Where priced off-street parking is available (each zone except West End South), it consistently **exceeds the price of priced on-street parking**. Off-street parking in the Downtown Core is **over twice as expensive (per hour)** as on-street parking in the same area.

Figure 5-11 Priced and Free Spaces, by Zone

Zone	Off-street Parking			On-street Parking		
	# Priced	# Free	% Priced	# Priced	# Free	% Priced
1) Spokane County Campus	425	2,345	85%	309	771	71%
2) Arena Neighborhood	2,962	2,978	50%	200	291	59%
3) West End	248	940	79%	402	64	14%
4) Downtown Core	4,361	682	14%	583	187	24%
5) Convention Center	2,270	635	22%	436	66	13%
6) West End South	0	1,454	100%	252	125	33%
7) Southern Downtown Core	762	1,016	57%	375	50	12%
8) East End South	161	1,078	87%	240	161	40%
9) Hospital District	1,910	3,523	65%	394	474	55%
Total	**13,099**	**14,651**	**53%**	**3,191**	**2,189**	**41%**

Figure 5-12 Off-street vs. On-street Average Hourly Rate Comparison (Priced Parking Only)



PUBLIC ACCESSIBILITY

Figure 5-13 summarizes the public and private ownership and access to parking by zone.

- **Less than half (45%) of all parking in the study area is paid and publicly available at all times** – 36% is off-street privately owned lots, and 9% is on-street.
- One fifth (21%) is privately **owned and available to the public on a limited basis** – typically this is customer, client, or patient parking. The largest concentrations of this type of parking are in the Hospital District and the Arena area.
- Over one quarter (28%) is privately owned and **only available to private motorists** – these are spaces reserved for employers, employees, patients, residents, and car dealership inventories.
- **Only 5% of parking is publicly owned and free** – these are on-street spaces open to the general public.

A substantial portion of off-street parking is reserved for specific users and not available to the general public for all or a portion of the day.

Figure 5-13 Public Accessibility of Parking

Public Accessibility	# of Spaces	% of Spaces	1 - Spokane County Campus	2 - Arena Neighborhood	3 - West End	4 - Downtown Core	5 - Convention Center	6 - West End South	7 - Southern Downtown Core	8 - East End South	9 - Hospital District
Privately Owned, Publicly Available (Paid, Off-street)	13,295	36%	773	3,021	365	4,343	2,225	23	961	290	1,294
Privately Owned, Privately Available	10,487	28%	1,305	1,644	877	1,121	392	863	476	409	3,400
Publicly Owned, Publicly Available (Paid, On-street)	3,187	9%	311	200	402	578	430	256	375	241	394
Privately Owned, Limited Public Use	7,582	21%	709	1,604	220	289	393	816	451	589	2,511
Publicly Owned, Publicly Available (Free)	1,744	5%	719	260	16	33	11	99	23	145	438
Loading/Service Vehicles	526	1%	95	36	50	159	66	22	33	29	36
Total	**36,821**	**100%**	**3,912**	**6,765**	**1,930**	**6,523**	**3,517**	**2,079**	**2,319**	**1,703**	**8,073**
Proportion of Spaces			**11%**	**18%**	**5%**	**18%**	**10%**	**6%**	**6%**	**5%**	**22%**

TOP FIVE TAKEAWAYS

1. **There are almost 37,000 parking spaces in the downtown study area.** On-street parking spaces make up just less than 15% of the overall parking inventory. In the Downtown Core (Zone 4), on-street parking is less than 12% of the total supply.
2. **Nearly one-third (29%) of land in the study area is occupied by parking**. This varies from 19% in the Downtown Core to 40% in the Arena neighborhood. Areas with more structured parking had lower rates of land consumption by parking and lower average area per space.
3. **About half of all parking in the study area is publicly available at all times.** Thirty-six percent is in off-street privately owned lots, 9% is in paid on-street spaces, and 5% is in free off-street spaces. On-street spaces are maintained and operated by the City of Spokane.
4. **Half of all parking in the study area is reserved for particular uses, and not available to the general public for all or a portion of the day**. The general public can use 21% of the parking if they are customers, clients, or students at the respective business, office, or institution. The other 29% of the parking is reserved for private motorists at all times – employees, residents, deliveries, etc.
5. **Off-street parking in the Downtown Core is over twice as expensive (per hour) as priced on-street parking in the same area**. The gap between on- and off-street rates is persistent throughout the study area, with the starkest differences in rates being in areas adjacent to the Downtown Core and the Hospital District.

6 PARKING UTILIZATION – HOW MANY VEHICLES PARK DOWNTOWN?

This chapter summarizes parking utilization in the downtown study area. It documents how many vehicles are parked downtown in both on- and off-street spaces on a "typical" day. The utilization study will allow the City, project team, and stakeholders to have a robust understanding about when and where vehicles are parked to identify current trends in demand.

It is important to emphasize that the data presented is **a "snapshot" summary,** highlighting basic trends on a representative set of days. Parking demand can and will vary from day to day. Additional and consistent data collection will be required to monitor trends over time.

For the sake of brevity, only the methodology and the combined utilization results are presented in this chapter. The separate on and off street utilization results are presented in Appendix A.

Field surveyors counted the number of vehicles in downtown to capture parking demand for a typical weekday, weekend, and special event.

METHODOLOGY

The IDAX data collection team conducted utilization counts for all on- and off-street spaces identified in the parking inventory (Chapter 5). Utilization counts were conducted **every two hours** during the following time periods to represent a typical weekday and a typical Saturday.

- **Weekday collection, from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m.** Data collection occurred over multiple weekdays (Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday) between April 10th and April 26th, 2018.
- **Saturday collection, from 10 a.m. to ~2 a.m.** Data collections occurred over multiple Saturdays – April 14th, 21st, and 28th of 2018.

Note that, throughout this chapter, the total supply surveyed for the utilization surveys will differ from the total supply counted in Chapter 5. This is primarily due to access issues which were inconsistent between inventory and utilization surveys – in some cases collectors were able to access facilities during the utilization collection, but not the supply collection, and vice versa. Additionally, there were also issues related to construction that may have occurred in one survey period, but not another. A summary of the supply surveyed compared with the full parking supply is available in Appendix A.

The team was also tasked with collecting utilization behavior for one special event demonstrating a likely peak demand for event parking in downtown Spokane. This event was selected to be the **Lilac Parade** because of its location within the study area and the timing of it relative to the other data collection efforts. The **Lilac Parade** took place on Saturday, May 19, 2018. This data collection occurred between 5 p.m. and 11 p.m. with counts occurring every hour. Data collected for the Lilac Parade was confined to the area shown in Figure 6-10, which extended east beyond the Downtown study area.

COMBINED UTILIZATION

This section combines on- and off-street utilization data to analyze Spokane's parking system demand as a whole. Throughout, on- and off-street utilization levels are compared to distinguish key differences.

Weekday

Figure 6-1 presents the weekday utilization for on- and off-street parking by zone and time of day. Key findings include:

- During the average weekday, parking utilization in the **study area peaks are 56% at 10 a.m. – 12 p.m.** 12 p.m. is also the peak total utilization for the **Downtown Core**, the heart of the study area and Spokane's parking program.
- While overall parking availability exists across the study area, certain sub-zones, blocks, and off-street facilities **had very high demand at peak periods.** In particular, **garages and surface lots within Main Street corridor and immediate core**, such as River Park Square, the Convention Center, and Parkade Plaza, were at or near capacity at peak period.

Figure 6-2 compares the on-street, off-street, and combined utilization profiles by time of day and zone. Key findings include:

- **Downtown Core.** On-street parking peaks at a different time *and* **at a higher occupancy rate than off-street parking** – peak utilization occurs at 6 p.m. near 75% for on-street parking and at 12 p.m. at near 65% for off-street parking. This trend is similar in the West End and the Convention Center areas, and appears to a less significant degree in the West End South, Southern Downtown Core, and East End South areas.
- **Arena neighborhood.** On-street parking peaks at a **higher occupancy rate (over 60%) during the mid-day** than off-street spaces (near 40%).This may be related to demand for parking in the adjacent Spokane County campus area or demand for parking by Gonzaga students.
- The **Spokane County campus and the Hospital District** have similar demand profiles between on- and off-street parking.

Figure 6-3 and Figure 6-4 illustrate peak parking utilization geographically. Key findings include:

- **Large off-street facilities in the northern part of the study area, such as the Arena lot, are underutilized.** The Arena lot is served by the City Ticket shuttle, and could be an opportune area for increased utilization.
- At 6 p.m., there is a mismatch in **utilization between immediately adjacent on- and off-street facilities**, which likely indicates motorists are responding to the different price signals – cheaper on-street parking (see Chapter 5) overall – as well as a significant share of off-street parking not available to the general public. For example, this discrepancy is pronounced along Sprague and Main streets, where off-street facilities have lower occupancy than adjacent curb spaces.

Figure 6-1 Combined (On + Off Street) Weekday Utilization, by Time of Day and Zone

Zone	Supply Surveyed (# of spaces)	Utilization by Time of Day							
		6 a.m.	8 a.m.	10 a.m.	12 p.m.	2 p.m.	4 p.m.	6 p.m.	8 p.m.
1) Spokane County Campus	3,440	25%	59%	68%	63%	65%	46%	28%	22%
2) Arena Neighborhood	6,609	12%	35%	40%	41%	40%	33%	18%	12%
3) West End	1,285	30%	46%	58%	60%	57%	47%	43%	36%
4) Downtown Core	4,792	18%	48%	61%	67%	65%	45%	37%	30%
5) Convention Center	3,342	23%	49%	55%	57%	48%	42%	36%	32%
6) West End South	1,222	23%	58%	66%	57%	50%	44%	24%	19%
7) Southern Downtown Core	2,069	11%	41%	51%	51%	46%	31%	17%	12%
8) East End South	1,509	15%	36%	46%	48%	38%	34%	24%	18%
9) Hospital District	7,094	29%	67%	74%	72%	68%	44%	27%	22%
Total	**31,363**	**21%**	**50%**	**55%**	**56%**	**55%**	**41%**	**28%**	**22%**

Figure 6-2 Combined (On + Off) Weekday Utilization Profile, by Zone

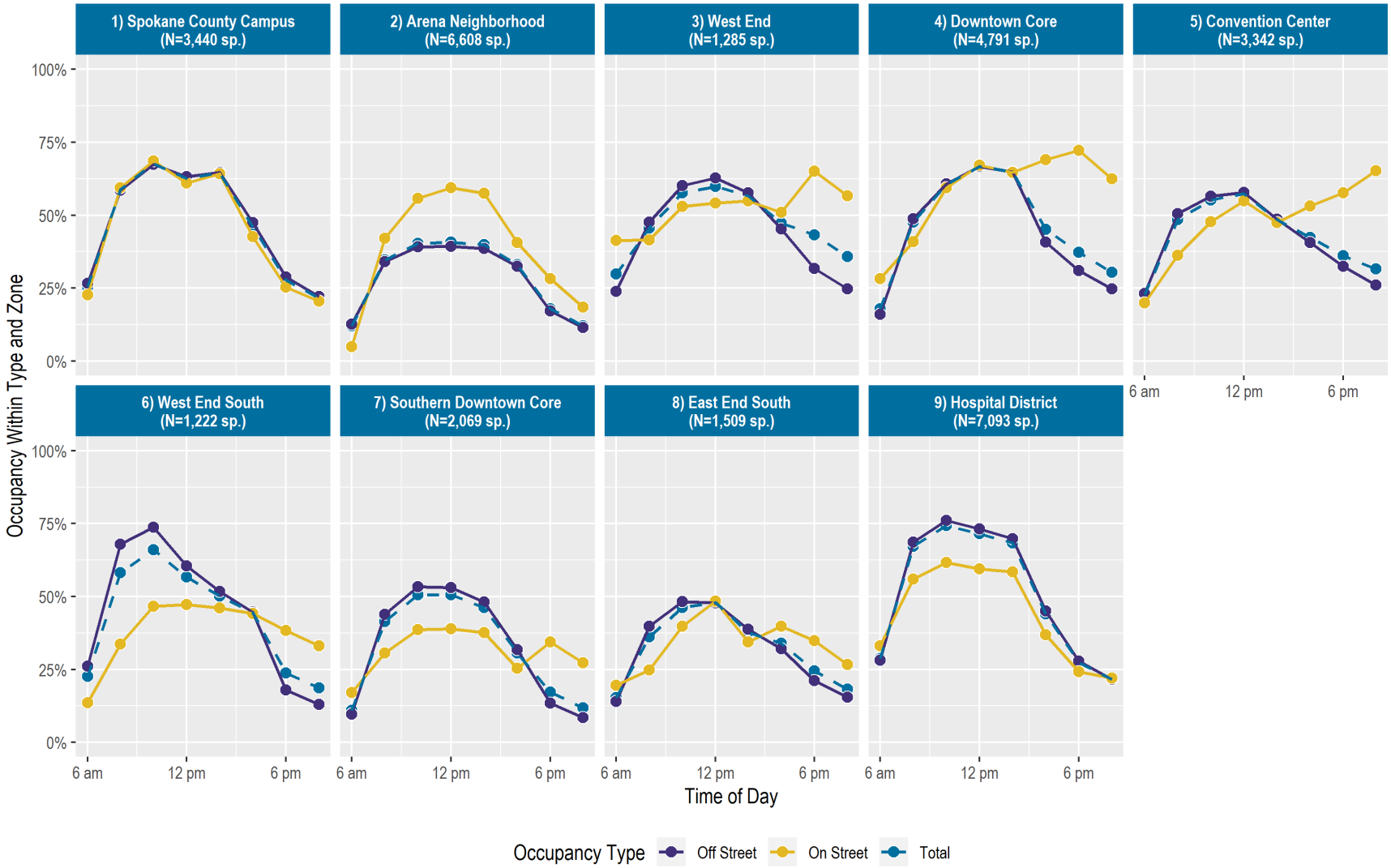


Figure 6-3 Weekday Combined Peak Utilization Map – Overall Study Area (12 p.m.)

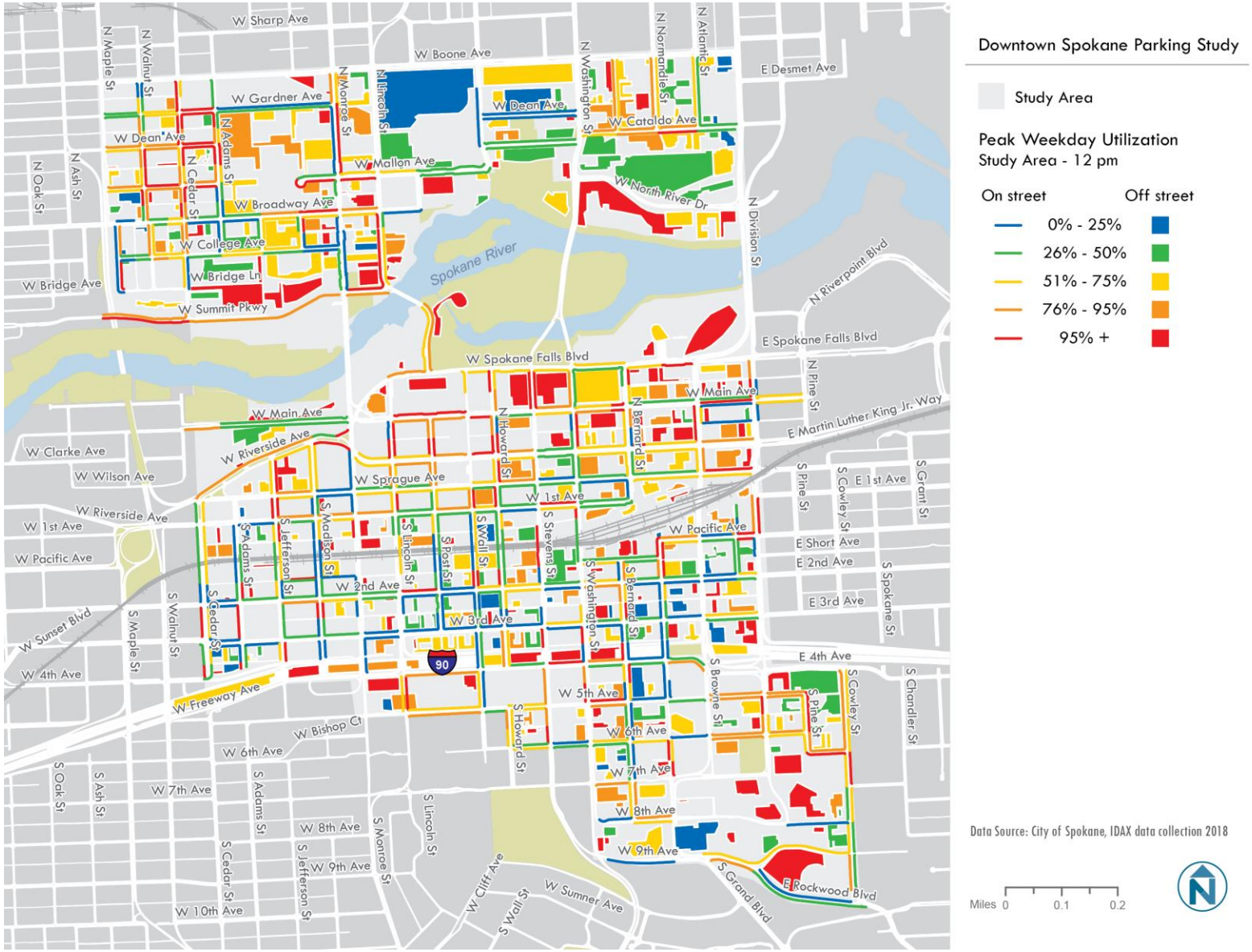
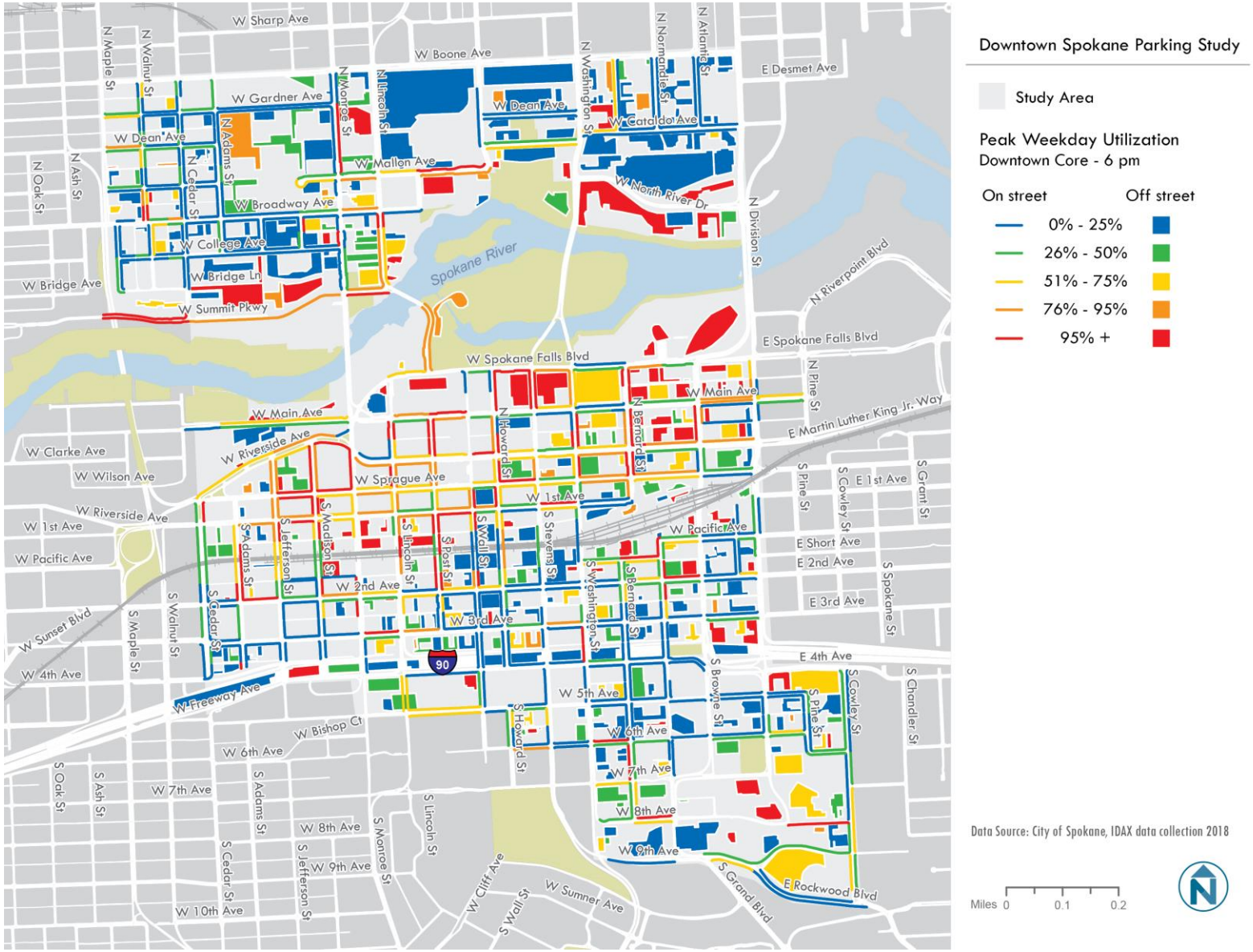


Figure 6-4 Weekday Combined Peak Utilization Map – Downtown Core (6 p.m.)



Saturday

Figure 6-5 presents the Saturday utilization for on- and off-street parking by zone and time of day.

- During the average Saturday, parking utilization **peaks at 31% at 6 p.m.**
- Utilization peaks in the **Downtown Core at 6 p.m. at 52%** and at 8 p.m. in the West End (56%) and Convention Center (55%).

Figure 6-6 compares the on-street, off-street, and combined utilization profiles by time of day and zone.

- In the six core[6] areas, on-street parking peaks at a higher rate and generally at a later time than off-street parking. This may reflect the different types of travel occurring on the weekends, as well as different price signals.

Figure 6-7 illustrates parking utilization geographically at the peak time of 8 p.m.

- Large **off-street facilities in the northern part of the study area**, such as the Arena lot, are underutilized.
- Off-street facilities south of the rail viaduct are also underutilized.
- Several blocks in the Downtown Core and Convention Center areas appear to have **high rates of on-street demand, but low rates of off-street demand**, reflecting price signals and restrictions on some off-street facilities.

[6] Zones 3 – 7 – West End, Downtown Core, Convention Center, West End South, Southern Downtown Core, and East End South

Figure 6-5 Combined (On + Off Street) Saturday Utilization, by Time of Day and Zone

Zone	Supply Surveyed (# of spaces)	Utilization by Time of Day							
		10 a.m.	12 p.m.	2 p.m.	4 p.m.	6 p.m.	8 p.m.	10 p.m.	12 a.m.
1) Spokane County Campus	2,973	27%	29%	31%	28%	25%	23%	19%	16%
2) Arena Neighborhood	4,944	18%	18%	19%	20%	21%	18%	13%	11%
3) West End	1,356	33%	34%	34%	39%	44%	56%	45%	32%
4) Downtown Core	5,258	27%	40%	46%	44%	52%	47%	30%	21%
5) Convention Center	3,367	29%	33%	47%	44%	49%	55%	41%	34%
6) West End South	1,158	16%	22%	24%	22%	33%	32%	17%	11%
7) Southern Downtown Core	1,804	14%	16%	13%	13%	24%	19%	11%	9%
8) East End South	1,419	23%	28%	27%	24%	26%	23%	13%	8%
9) Hospital District	7,635	21%	21%	21%	19%	18%	14%	14%	14%
Total	29,914	23%	27%	29%	28%	31%	30%	21%	17%

Figure 6-6 Combined (On + Off) Saturday Utilization Profile, by Zone

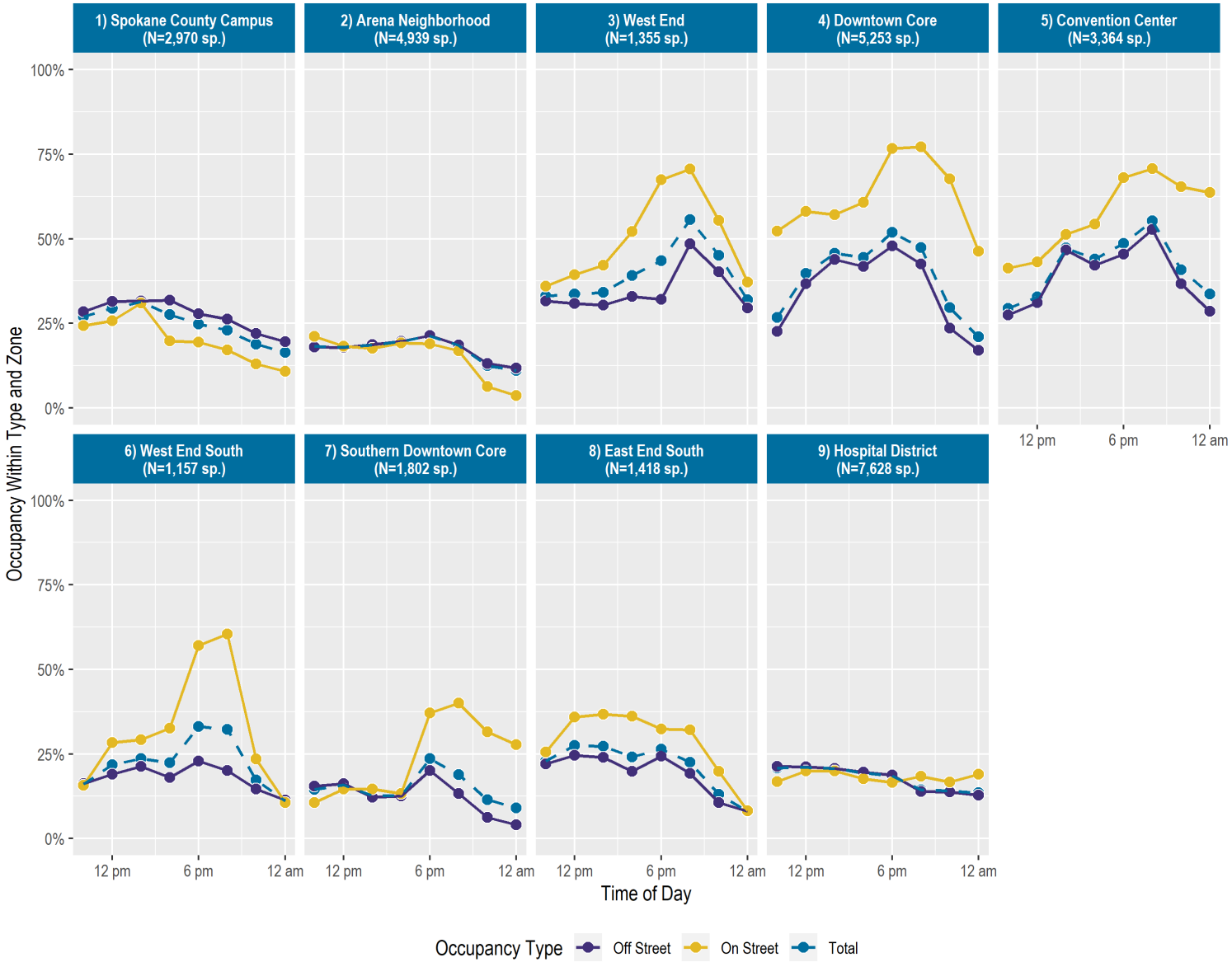
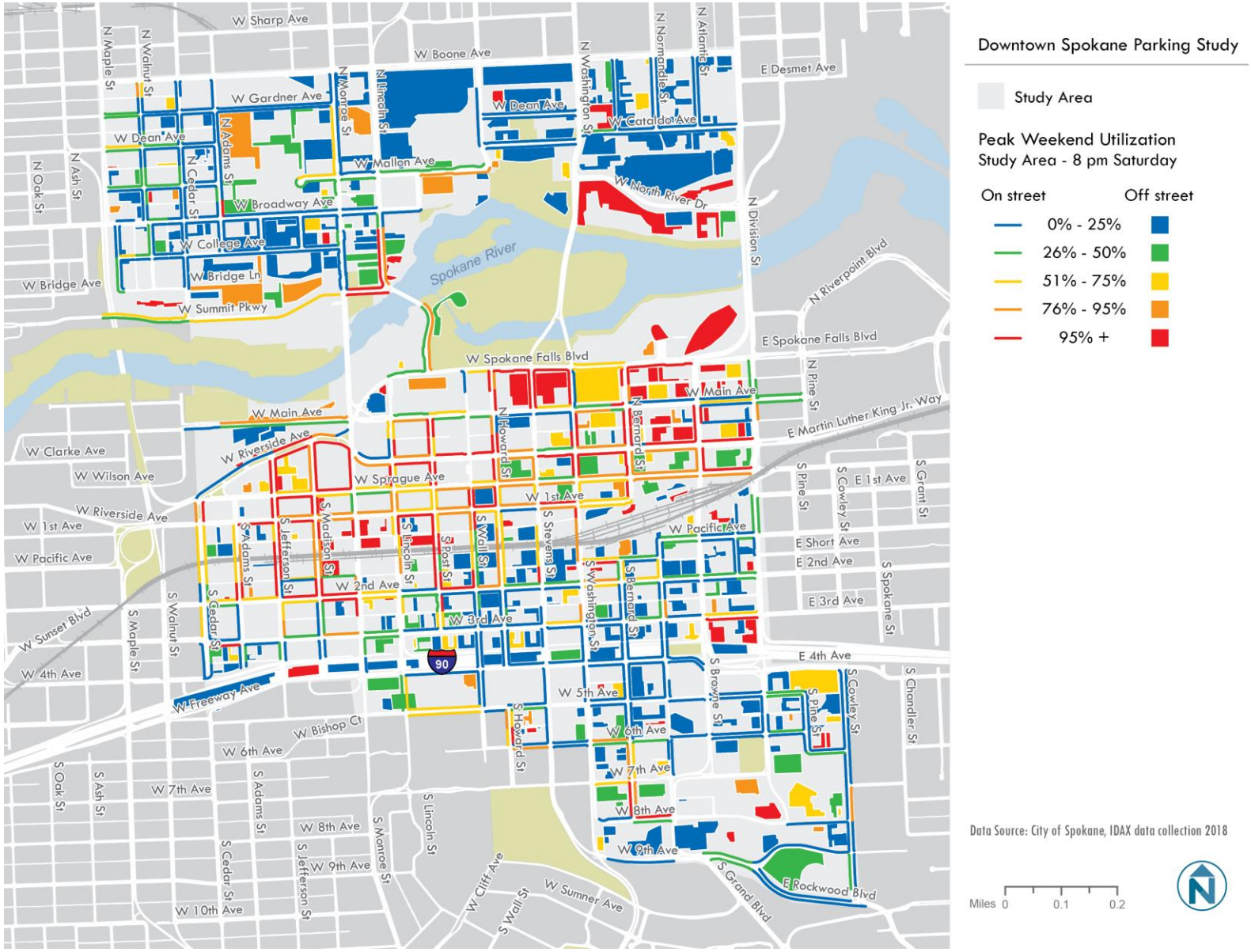


Figure 6-7 Saturday Combined Peak Utilization Map – Overall Study Area (8 p.m.)



Lilac Parade

Figure 6-8 presents the Lilac Parade utilization for on- and off-street parking by zone and time of day. Note that the Lilac Parade study area includes a portion of the University District in the ESU/WSU Campus area.

- During the parade, parking utilization **peaked at 63% at 8 p.m.** over the entire study area.
- Utilization peaked in the **Downtown Core at 7 p.m. at 83%** and at 8 p.m. in the West End and Convention Center areas, at 82% and 66%, respectively.

Figure 6-9 compares the on-street, off-street, and combined utilization profiles by time of day and zone.

- The few on-street spaces available in the EWU/WSU Campus area (part of the University District) filled to near capacity at 8 p.m. Overall, the occupancy rate of that zone was still low at 26% at the 8 p.m. peak.
- The West End South area (which has nearly 60 free on-street spaces) **filled to capacity at 8 p.m.** The overall occupancy rate was nearly 60%.
- On-street parking peaked at a higher rate in all zones besides the Downtown Core, where the few **off-street spaces not blocked off were filled to capacity.**

Figure 6-10 illustrates parking occupancy geographically at the peak utilization time of 8 p.m.

Figure 6-8 Combined (On + Off Street) Lilac Parade Utilization, by Time of Day and Zone

Zone	Supply Surveyed (# Spaces)	Occupancy by Time of Day					
		5 p.m.	6 p.m.	7 p.m.	8 p.m.	9 p.m.	10 p.m.
2) EWU/WSU Campus (U District)	983	9%	13%	18%	26%	24%	17%
3) West End	580	55%	64%	77%	82%	73%	51%
4) Downtown Core	316	44%	60%	83%	81%	73%	59%
5) Convention Center	3,045	37%	50%	60%	66%	64%	53%
6) West End South	278	22%	25%	42%	58%	40%	24%
7) Southern Downtown Core	987	18%	39%	49%	57%	54%	29%
8) East End South	888	30%	37%	53%	72%	62%	37%
9) Hospital District	341	81%	90%	93%	91%	92%	89%
Total	**7,418**	**33%**	**44%**	**55%**	**63%**	**59%**	**44%**

Figure 6-9 Combined (On+ Off) Lilac Parade Utilization Profile, by Zone

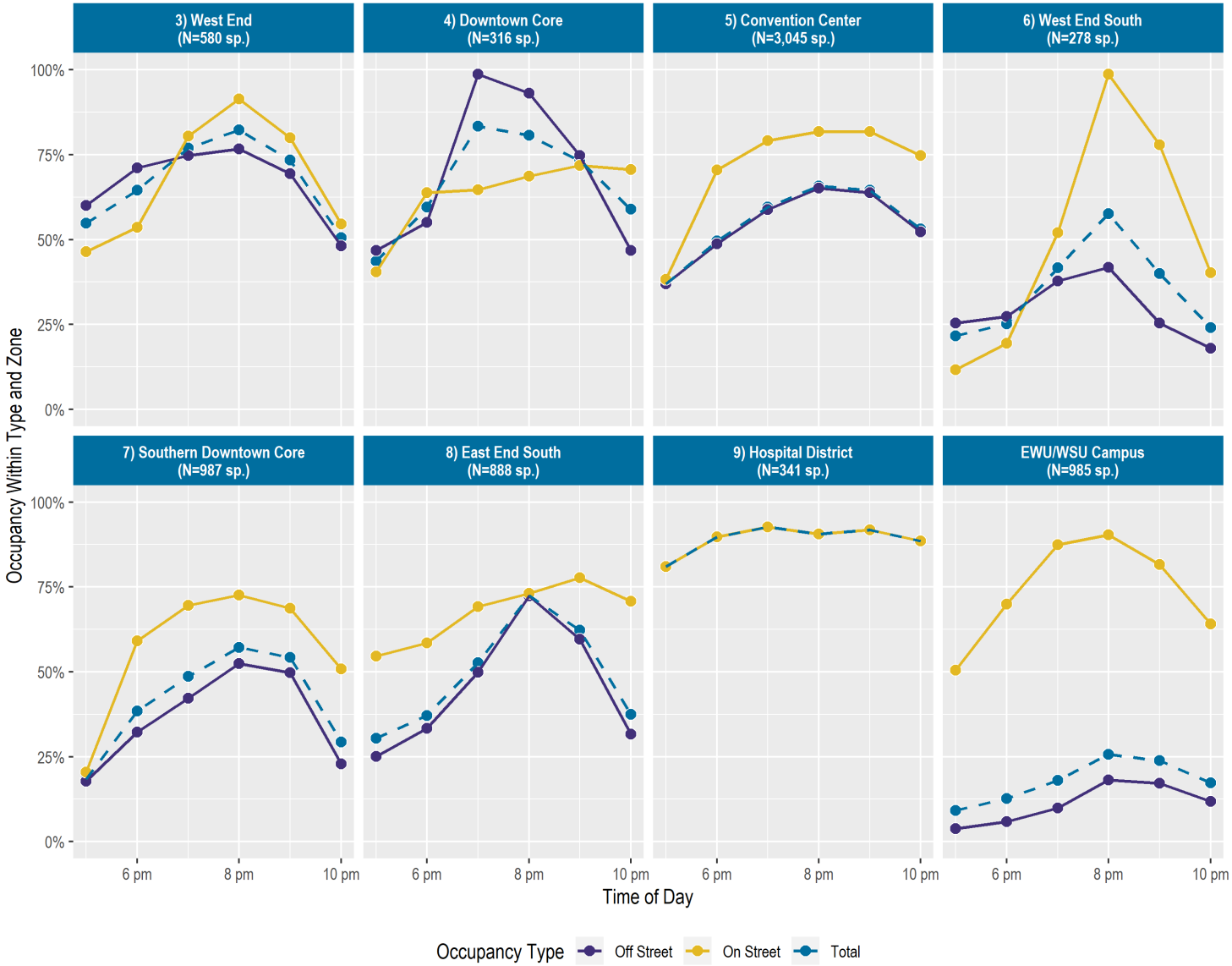
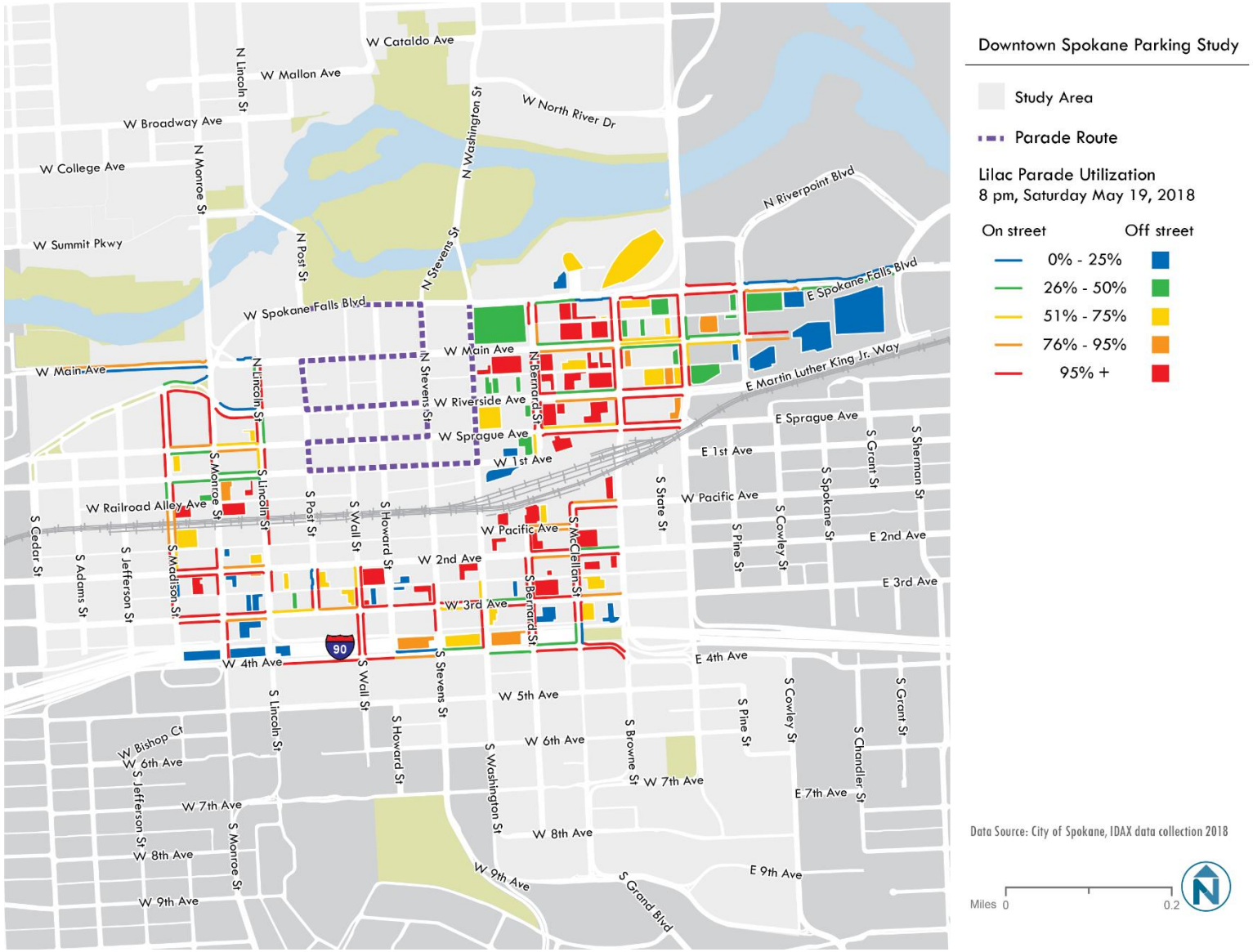


Figure 6-10 Lilac Parade Peak Utilization Map (8 p.m.)



TOP FIVE TAKEAWAYS

1. In general, the **combined utilization levels indicate at least 20-25% available parking capacity** throughout the study area relative to an 85%-90% ideal occupancy level. Nevertheless, certain sub-zones, blocks, and off-street facilities **had very high demand at peak periods.** In particular, **garages and surface lots within Main Street corridor and immediate core**, such as River Park Square, the Convention Center, and Parkade Plaza, were at or near capacity at peak period. On-street spaces in higher demand areas (e.g., the Downtown Core) are also nearing capacity, but off-street parking and on-street parking within a few block walk is often underutilized.
2. A combination of **pricing signals** (i.e. on-street parking cheaper than off-street), **use restrictions** (i.e. parking reserved by user group), and **physical barriers** (e.g., Spokane River/Riverfront Park, railway/viaduct) incentivize motorists to look for on- and off-street (especially garages) parking within the Downtown Core.
3. **Free on-street spaces experience some of the highest utilization rates** in the study area. **Metered spaces in the Downtown Core, West End, and Convention Center** also have high occupancy levels.
4. The **Spokane County Campus** and the **Hospital District** experience peak demand in the morning, while the **Downtown Core** and adjacent zones experience peak demand in the late afternoon and early evening. Service-oriented land uses (e.g., government, medical) have a demand curve that peaks earlier then entertainment/shopping areas.
5. Overall peak demand in the study area on a typical weekend was low, reaching **30% at 6 p.m.** Weekend peak demand was **highest at 6 p.m. in the West End and Convention Center zones**, peaking at 56%. During the Lilac Parade, demand peaked at 83%, **with almost all on-street spaces occupied.**

7 DURATION AND TURNOVER

Within a mixed-use downtown like Spokane's, it is important to document parking behavior, notably the **length of time parked**. Many of the on-street spaces in downtown 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. Yet, if a vehicle is parked all day long in front of a business, it limits access for other residents, visitors, or customers. Duration and turnover studies can also help identify if time limits need to be adjusted to better fit user needs.

METHODOLOGY

A *sample* duration/turnover survey was conducted for selected blockfaces (Figure 7-1), representing two high visitation areas in downtown Spokane.

Duration was monitored for two time periods: 1) a weekday between 7 a.m. and 10 p.m. and 2) a Saturday between 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. Parking duration was monitored by surveyors collecting the last four digits of every vehicle's license plate every 30 minutes during the study period.

This data was then processed by matching vehicles using the license plate digits and estimating the duration parked for each vehicle observation.

Figure 7-1 Duration and Turnover Study Area

SUMMARY OF RESULTS

Figure 7-2 presents a summary of the duration/turnover data for the entire study area by day type (weekday and Saturday) and space type.

- **Vehicles per space** indicates the level of turnover – 2-hour metered spaces and 10-minute loading zones saw between 5-7 vehicles per space (on average) during the survey.
- **Average stay** is calculated based on the estimated parking duration of each vehicle. The average stay for loading zones (both 10-minute and commercial) **exceeds their respective time limits of 10 minutes and 30 minutes.**
- **Violation rate** is estimated by comparing the estimated duration to the maximum time allowed (within operating hours) for each observation's space type.
- Roughly **5% of parkers during the survey period violated the 2-hour time limit** on metered spaces. About 6-12% of observations violated the 10-minute time limit on 10-minute loading zones, and 26%-32% violated the 30-minute time limit on commercial loading zones.
- **Unique vehicles.** The proportion of unique vehicles indicates that 7-8% of vehicles parking in 2-hour metered spaces parked in more than one space during the survey. Overall, 8% of parkers on weekdays parked in more than one space, and 6% of parkers on weekends parked in more than one space.

Data indicates that some motorists may be re-parking their vehicles to avoid the 2-hour limits.

Figure 7-2 Duration/Turnover Summary, by Day

Day Type	Space Category	# Spaces	# Vehicles	Vehicles per Space	Average Stay (minutes)	Violation Rate	# Unique Vehicles	% Unique Vehicles
Weekday	2-Hour Metered	180	1,159	6.44	76.1	5.4%	1,062	92%
	10-Minute Loading Zone	13	89	6.85	27.1	12.4%	87	98%
	Commercial Loading Zone	10	31	3.10	54.7	25.8%	29	94%
	Motorcycle Only	8	14	1.75	115.7	0.0%	14	100%
	Passenger/Taxi Loading Zone	2	4	2.00	22.5	0.0%	4	100%
	Total	**213**	**1,297**	**6.09**	**72.5**	**6.3%**	**1,196**	**92%**
Saturday	2-Hour Metered	180	1,137	6.32	95.6	5.3%	1,058	93%
	10-Minute Loading Zone	13	72	5.54	19.6	5.6%	70	97%
	Commercial Loading Zone	10	22	2.20	79.1	31.8%	20	91%
	Motorcycle Only	8	4	0.50	22.5	0.0%	4	100%
	Passenger/Taxi Loading Zone	2	3	1.50	25.0	0.0%	3	100%
	Total	**213**	**1,238**	**5.81**	**90.5**	**5.7%**	**1,155**	**93%**

BY ZONE

Figure 7-3 presents a more detailed breakdown of duration statistics by zone. Figure 7-4 and Figure 7-5 present maps of duration statistics over the study area. Figure 7-6 illustrates the distribution of durations by zone and day type. The following are key findings from those figures.

Turnover

- For both weekdays and weekends, turnover was higher in the Downtown Core than at Division & Main in most space types (except for Motorcycle Only). Turnover was also higher on weekdays than on Saturdays in the Downtown Core, whereas it was similar between weekdays and weekends at Division and Main.
- Loading Zone turnover was highest adjacent to River Park Square and on Main between Browne and Division.

Duration

- Durations were higher at Division & Main, on average. Saturdays also typically had longer stays within each area.
- Commercial loading zone stays were particularly long in the Division & Main area, though there were only two observations during the survey period.
- While violation rates ranged between 4-7% over the zones and days surveyed, the proportion of parkers staying longer than 2 hours ranged from 14% - 23%. Many of these parkers staying longer than 2 hours stayed past 7 p.m., so they were not in violation but are taking up considerable spaces and time in the parking system.

Violation Rate

- Violation rates were highest in commercial loading zones and were notably higher on weekends in the Downtown Core.

Figure 7-3 Duration/Turnover Summary, by Zone and Day

Day Type	Zone	Space Category	# Spaces	# Vehicles	Vehicles per Space	Average Stay (minutes)	Violation Rate	# Unique Vehicles	% Unique Vehicles
Weekday	Downtown Core	2-Hour Metered	150	608	4.1	73.8	7%	572	94%
		10-Minute Loading Zone	18	78	4.3	28.1	15%	76	97%
		Commercial Loading Zone	18	30	1.7	49.0	27%	28	93%
		Motorcycle Only	12	10	0.8	132.0	0%	10	100%
		Passenger/Taxi Loading Zone	2	4	2.0	22.5	25%	4	100%
	Division & Main	2-Hour Metered	210	551	2.6	78.6	4%	519	94%
		10-Minute Loading Zone	8	11	1.4	20.5	9%	11	100%
		Commercial Loading Zone	2	1	0.5	225.0	0%	1	100%
		Motorcycle Only	4	4	1.0	75.0	0%	4	100%
		Passenger/Taxi Loading Zone	2	0	0.0	0.0	-	0	-
Saturday	Downtown Core	2-Hour Metered	150	557	3.7	88.7	5%	533	96%
		10-Minute Loading Zone	18	65	3.6	19.2	5%	63	97%
		Commercial Loading Zone	18	21	1.2	69.3	33%	19	90%
		Motorcycle Only	12	1	0.1	15.0	0%	1	100%
		Passenger/Taxi Loading Zone	2	2	1.0	15.0	0%	2	100%
	Division & Main	2-Hour Metered	210	580	2.8	102.3	5%	536	92%
		10-Minute Loading Zone	8	7	0.9	23.6	29%	7	100%
		Commercial Loading Zone	2	1	0.5	285.0	0%	1	100%
		Motorcycle Only	4	3	0.8	25.0	0%	3	100%
		Passenger/Taxi Loading Zone	2	1	0.5	45.0	0%	1	100%

Figure 7-4 Map of Metered Space Duration, Turnover, and Violation Rate, by Day

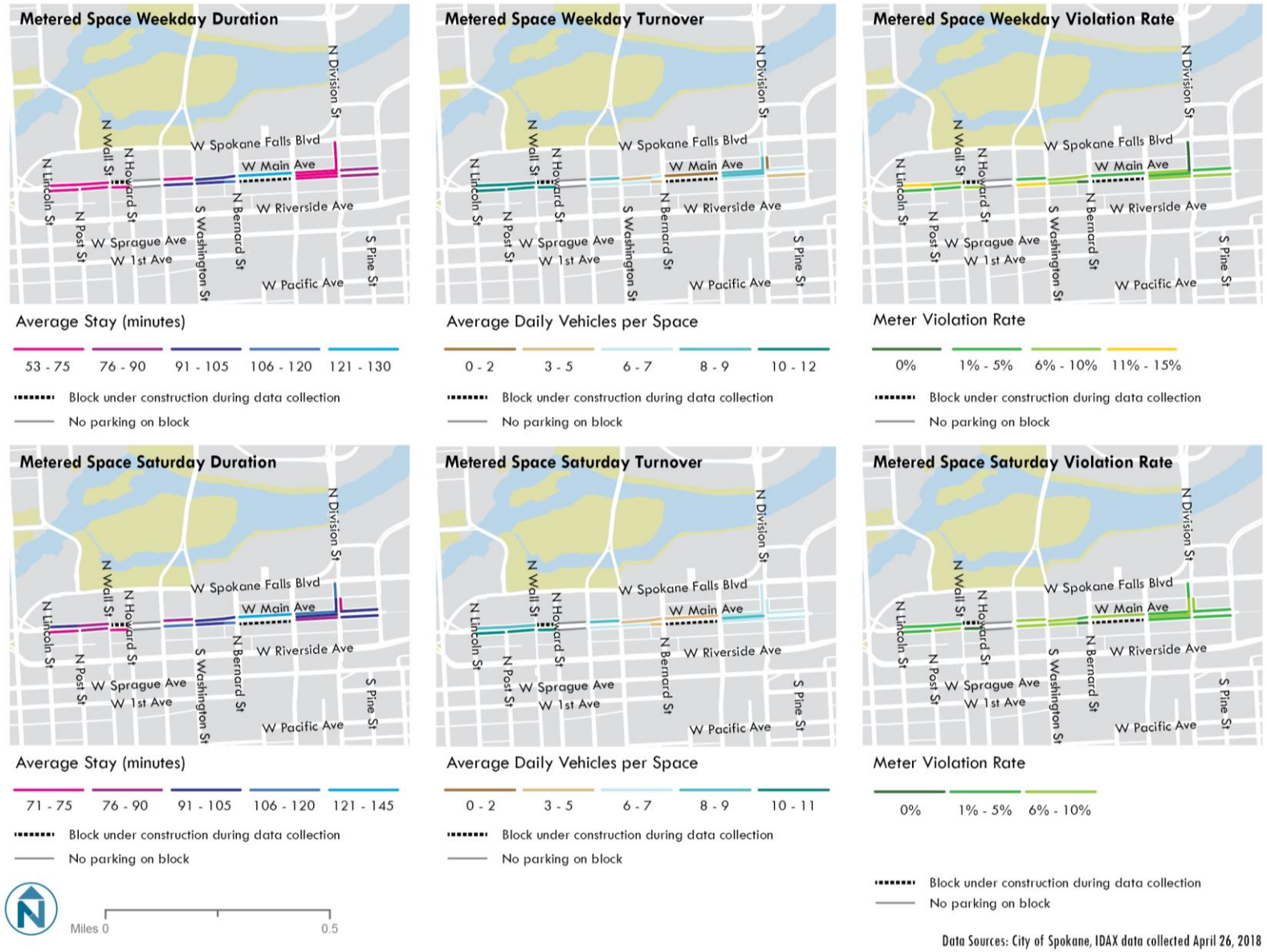


Figure 7-5 Map of Loading Zone Duration, Turnover, and Violation Rate, By Day

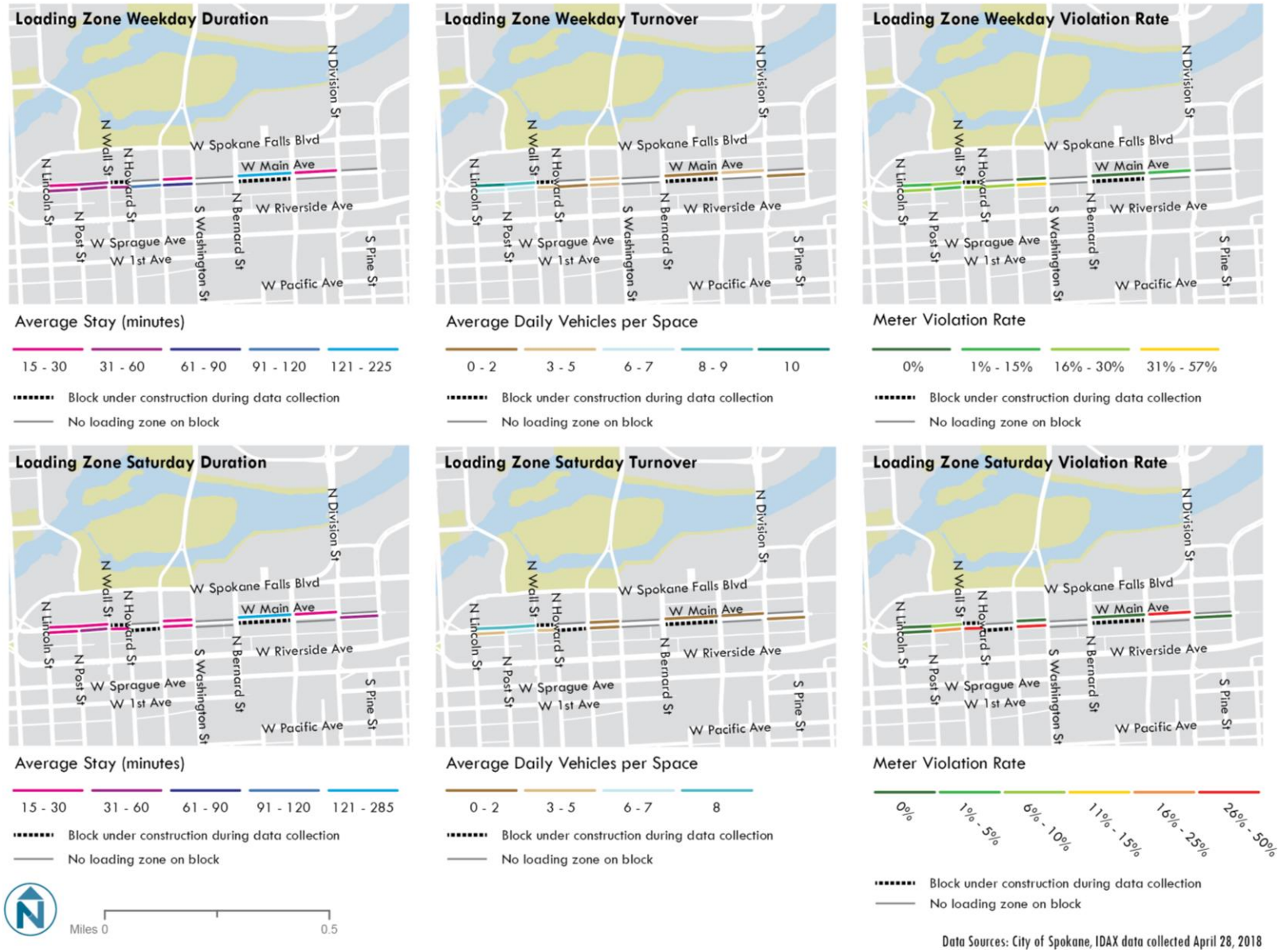


Figure 7-6 Metered Space Duration Histogram, by Zone and Day Type

BY TIME OF DAY

The following section summarizes turnover, duration, and the violation rate by time of day in Figure 7-7, Figure 7-8, and Figure 7-9.

Turnover

- Peak turnover for metered spaces is observed at different times for each zone and day type:
  - Downtown Core: 3-5 p.m. on weekdays, 2-4 p.m. on Saturdays
  - Division and Main: 5-7 p.m. on weekdays, 4-6 p.m. and 10 p.m. to 1 a.m. on Saturdays
- Loading zones saw the **highest turnover in the late morning and early afternoon**

Duration

- After 7 p.m., the duration is no longer enforced for metered spaces, and this **leads to longer average stays,** especially on Saturdays in Division & Main area.

Violation Rate

- The **violation rate for metered spaces is highest in the morning (7 a.m. to 1 p.m.)** during the week and during the early afternoon (12 p.m. to 4 p.m.) on weekends.
- As noted throughout this chapter, loading zone time limits are **consistently being violated.**

Vehicles were consistently observed violating the loading zone time restrictions.

Figure 7-7 Average Turnover (vehicles per space) by Day, Time of Day, and Space Type

Figure 7-8 Average Duration of Stay, by Day, Time of Day, and Space Type

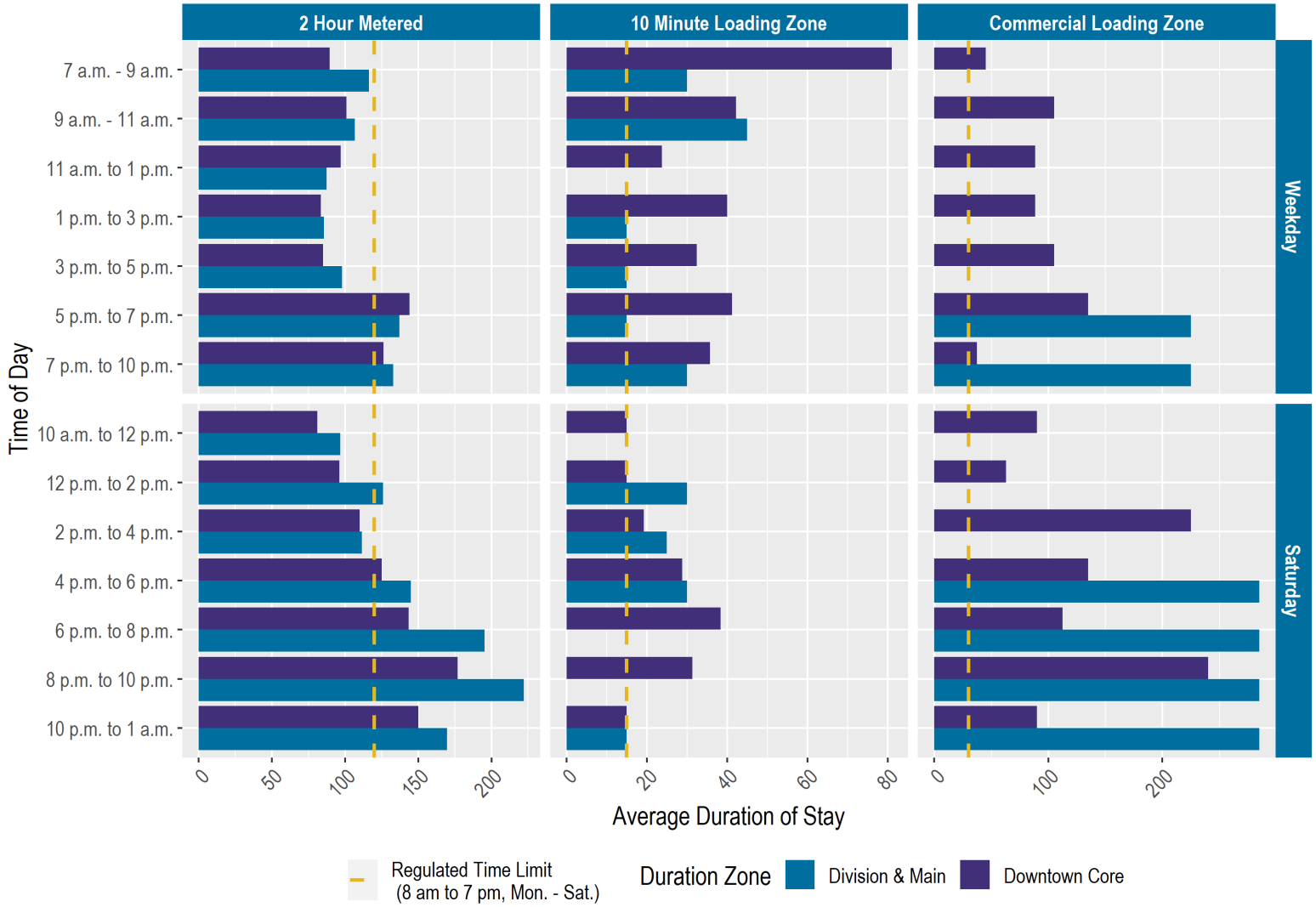
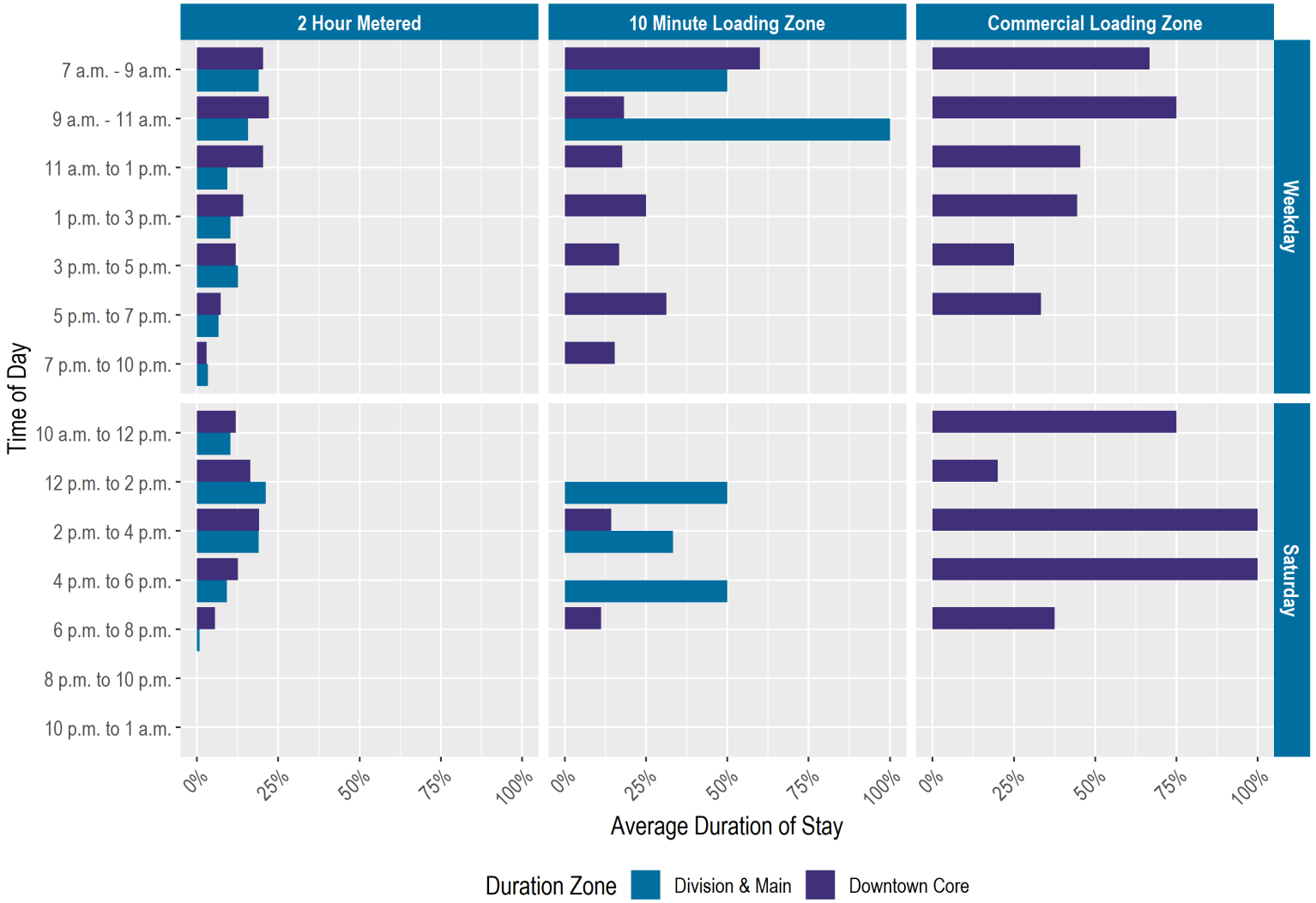


Figure 7-9 Violation Rate, by Day, Time of Day, and Space Type



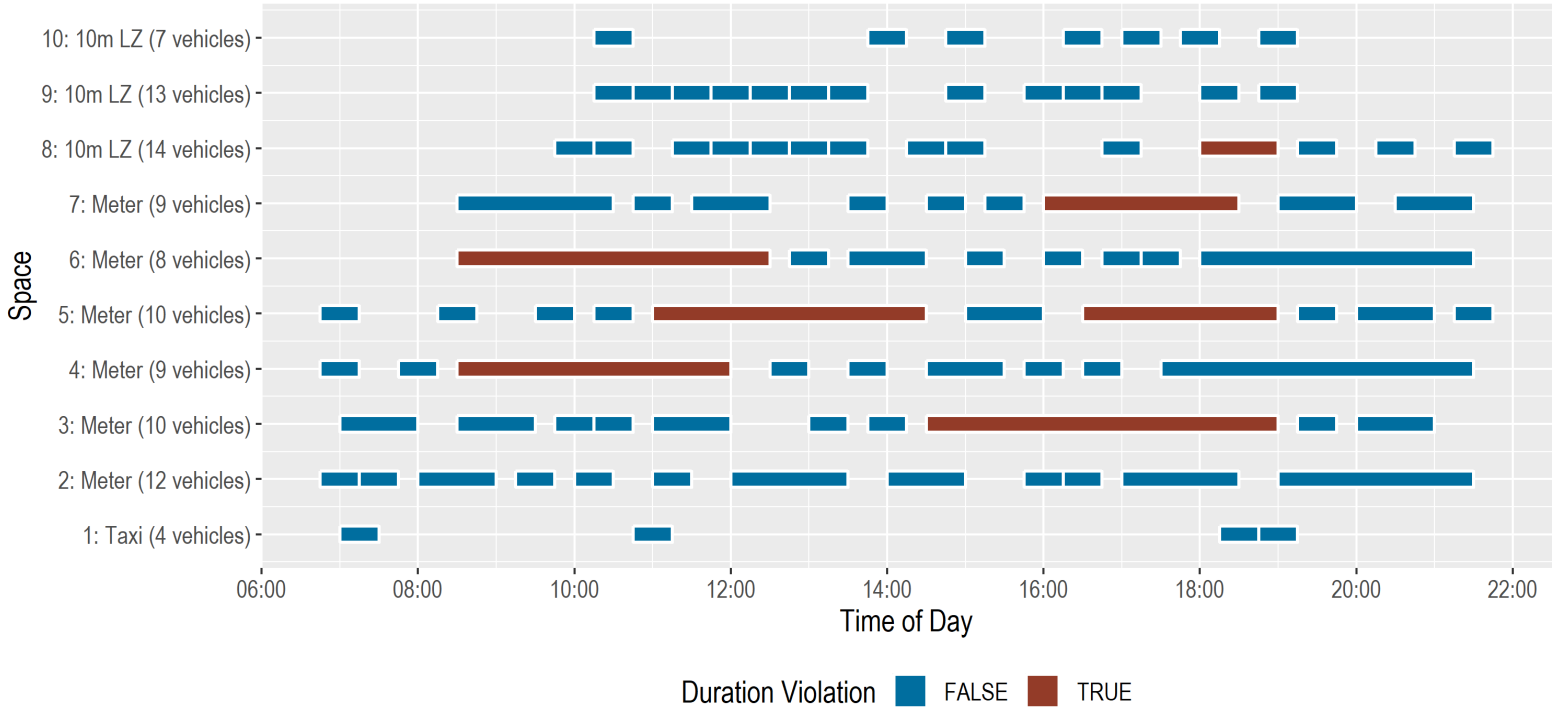
BY BLOCKFACE

Figure 7-10 provides an example of illustrating the data at a finer resolution – the full set of these time space plots are shown in Appendix B.

For the **north side of West Main (from Post to Lincoln) adjacent to River Park Square**, there are seven metered spaces and three 10-minute loading zones. There is significant turnover (9-10 vehicles per space) in these loading zones – likely more than could be captured by surveyors given the 30-minute survey frequency.

As demonstrated earlier, most loading activities are happening in the late morning and mid-day periods. The metered spaces have high turnover of nearly 10 vehicles per space (the average for the surveyed area is 6.4). **The metered spaces have violation issues** – there were six violations observed among the 58 vehicles observed for a 10% violation rate. The duration violations can significantly reduce turnover among these critical metered spaces.

Figure 7-10 Weekday Time Space Plot: West Main from Post to Lincoln (North side)



TOP FIVE TAKEAWAYS

1. Considering the distributions of parking durations and violation rates, as well as the feedback received through outreach, parkers want to be able to park for longer than two hours in the Downtown Core. Nearing and after 7 p.m., **parkers are consistently staying longer than two hours.**
2. **Longer stays and lower turnover on weekends** could indicate a benefit to having longer time limits, especially since overall utilization is lower on weekends. Tradeoffs of simplicity versus appropriate time limits should be considered.
3. Overstay violation rates in commercial and 10-minute loading zones are high – **26%-32% of observations in commercial loading zones and 6-12% of observations in 10-minute loading zones were in violation**. The City should consider:
    a. How does the City improve enforcement to decrease violation rates for loading zones?
    b. Do loading zones need longer times?
    c. Should (and by how much) the fine be increased for parking in a commercial or 10-minute loading zone?
4. **Roughly 6-8% of parkers are parking in more than one location during a given day.** This could be an indication that motorists parking in metered spaces are "shuffling" their vehicles during their stay around the downtown to avoid the time limits.
5. **Turnover is highest in the areas immediately adjacent to River Park Square and on Main Street between Division and Browne.** These are high turnover commercial areas where the two-hour time limit appears to work well.

8 PARKING EXPERIENCE

This chapter summarizes the findings about the parking experience in downtown Spokane. The parking experience is determined by more than just the cost of parking and number of spaces. For example, a certain street, parking lot, or garage may go unused not because of the cost to park there, but because the signage is confusing or people feel unsafe walking in that neighborhood.

This chapter documents the key elements that require ongoing improvements to ensure that parking is convenient and user-friendly. These elements include:

- **Parking Technology** – Is it simple and easy to find and pay for parking?
- **Parking Access** – Do I feel safe and comfortable walking to and from my parking space?
- **Parking Signage and 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?

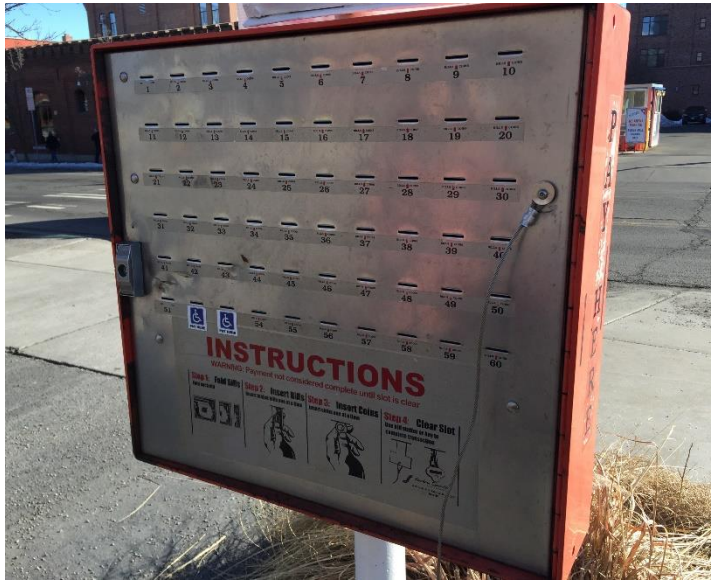
PARKING TECHNOLOGY

- The City of Spokane provides **multiple payment options for its on-street spaces**. Within the Downtown Core, there are 735 credit card-enabled, single-space smart meters (Duncan/CivicSmart) at approximately 40% of 2-hour metered spaces. The remaining 1,050 2-hour meters are coin-operated, single-space meters, and the additional 1,536 meters (4-hour and all day) outside the Downtown Core are also coin operated. All of the metered parking spaces allow for mobile phone payment (via Passport[7]). As part of the Main Avenue pilot, the City also utilizes a limited number of **pay-by-plate, multi-space kiosks** (Parkeon).
- Users do not directly pay **a service fee** for each meter transaction, as those are included in the hourly rate. The City pays a monthly service fee to the vendors.
- Most of the private garages and/or lots offer a combination of credit card (typically pay-by-plate) and mobile phone payment, yet the **specific system or mobile phone app can vary by facility**. For example, the mobile phone app utilized at Diamond parking facilities is Call to Park[8]. Call to Park charges a $.30 service fee per transaction directly to the user, which can discourage the use of mobile payment services by customers.
- Some private parking lots still **utilize "slot" boxes** to collect payment on-site, requiring cash or coin payment.
- The City of Spokane manages a **robust GIS shapefile of on-street parking inventory and regulations** within the parking meter area. Off-street data collected as part of this study will be integrated into the city's parking database and shapefile.
- The City is currently piloting **10 CivicSmart parking meter sensors** near City Hall to monitor real-time utilization of spaces. Monitoring and use of the data thus far has been limited, and the pilot data is not being reflected on the meters.
- While a diversity of payment options is provided, **the payment technology is fragmented**. Multiple meter types, mobile payment apps, and pay-by-plate systems create a less user-friendly system. Frequent parkers and guests may need to utilize multiple systems or apps within one visit to downtown, while fewer people carry cash or coins, limiting the utility of many of Spokane's meters.

The City utilizes older coin-operated and newer credit card-enabled, single-space meters. Both allow for mobile phone payment via Passport.

[7] www.ppprk.com

[8] www.calltopark.com



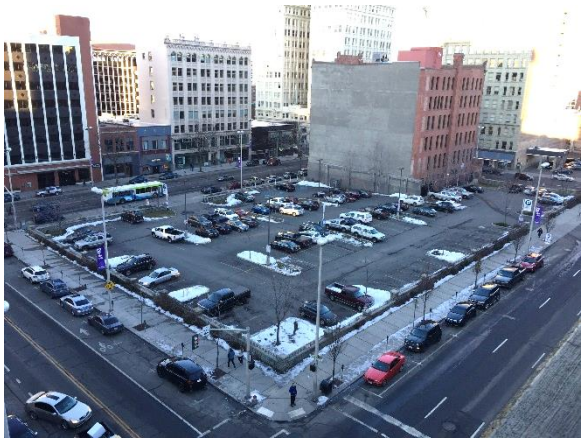
Payment technology systems vary widely throughout downtown, which can negatively impact the user experience.

Parking meter sensors have been piloted near City Hall (bottom right), but use of data thus far has been limited.

PARKING ACCESS

- The downtown core provides a **strong, attractive, and legible street grid** for motorists and pedestrians, making it relatively easy to navigate to and from key destinations. Within the core, the sidewalk network is all but complete and recent investments in the streetscape create a pleasant walking environment.
- Outside the core, the pedestrian experience can be more challenging and less comfortable. **Sidewalk gaps exist and sidewalks are narrower**, while streets serve higher volumes of faster vehicle traffic. Key amenities, such as lighting and landscaping, are also more limited outside the core. These issues are pronounced for disabled motorists.
- Several significant **pedestrian barriers exist** within the downtown study area, including the railroad viaduct, I-90, Spokane River, and Division Street.
- Many garages and **parking lots front active pedestrian corridors**, presenting potential conflict points. Curb cuts for vehicle access also reduce the continuity of the streetscape.
- **Parking lots are a dominant land use** throughout the downtown study area. Some of these facilities are well-maintained, and provide attractive signage and adequate lighting. A number of parking lots, however, are poorly lit and maintained, creating an uncomfortable pedestrian environment and "dead" zones within the corridor or streetscape they front.
- **Weather can be a significant factor** in Spokane. During winter months, the pedestrian walk shed is more limited. Snow and snow removal can also impact sidewalk access and the overall number of available parking spaces.
- Pedestrian safety and comfort is essential to an effective parking system. Within downtown Spokane, it is likely that many facilities **outside the core go underutilized because the walking experience is challenging, confusing, or uncomfortable**.

Pedestrian access is crucial for parking, as the "reach" of the parking system in a downtown is impacted by safety and comfort of the streets. In Spokane, weather is also a key factor for the parking system.



Parking impacts, and is impacted by, the built environment. In downtown Spokane, parking garages can create uninviting, "blank" streetscapes or potential conflicts with pedestrians (top left and right).

Surface parking lots are a dominant land use, yet are less desirable to motorists, especially visitors new to downtown (bottom left and right).

Outside the Downtown Core, gaps in the sidewalk network impact accessibility to parking, especially for disabled motorists (right).

PARKING SIGNAGE AND WAYFINDING

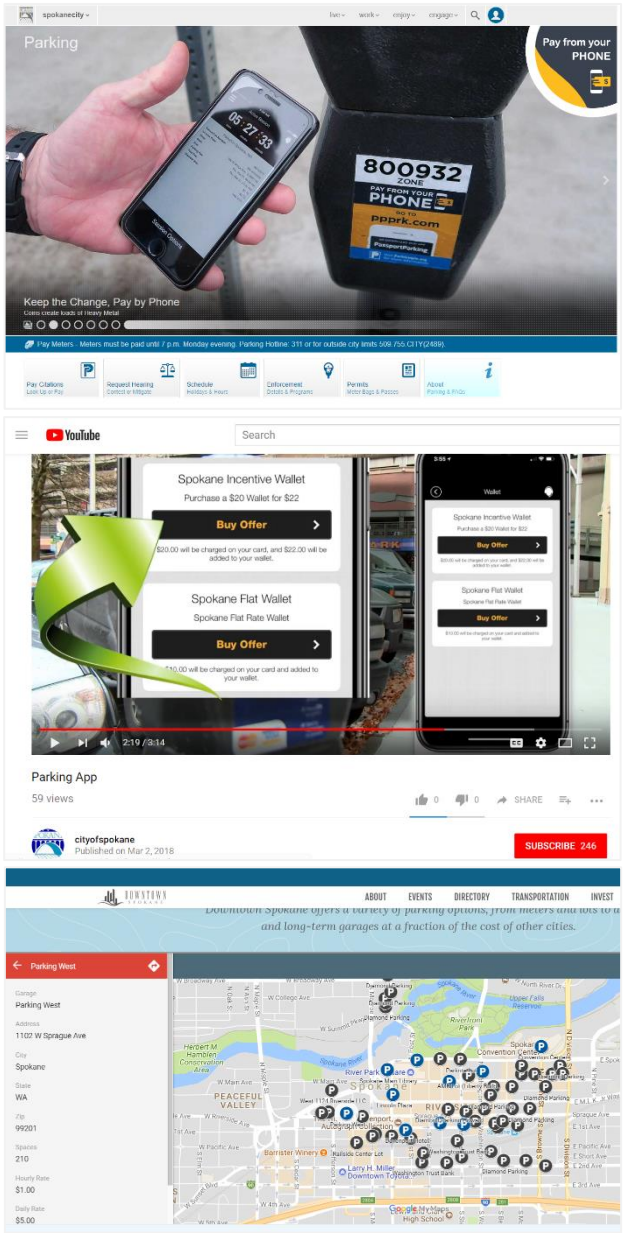
- Parking signage and wayfinding in downtown is provided and managed by the **City of Spokane and a mix of private property owners and parking operators.** For the most part, the City of Spokane manages signage for on-street parking and signage within the public right-of-way. Off-street parking signage is typically implemented by private entities, each with their own unique signage and style.
- There is **no single, unified parking "brand"** in downtown. MySpokane and 311 decals on meters provide a small precedent, but it is not utilized on parking signage elsewhere.
- **Signs on meters** provide information about rates, regulations, and payment options. However, many meters have decals which can create confusion (i.e., listing two websites for more information). Some older meters are difficult to read or were noted for having conflicting regulations.
- Parking wayfinding varies throughout the downtown. There are **different colors, fonts, and symbols** to indicate the location of parking facilities and their respective rates/regulations. The variety of signage **dilutes the overall downtown "brand."**
- Some of the signs, typically for private parking lots, are physically located in the sidewalk, **creating potential conflicts** for pedestrians and individuals with disabilities.
- Rates are posted at facilities, but are often **not legible to drivers** until one has already parked and is ready to pay.
- The variety of signs can **create user confusion and uncertainty** about what parking is publicly available versus what is restricted to specific users. This often creates ticket "anxiety" and negative perceptions about the system.
- Some wayfinding is provided to motorists directing them to key parking facilities, but there is **limited to no real-time signage** within downtown indicating actual availability of spaces in off-street facilities.

Different parking facilities utilize different types of signage to communicate parking information. Rate information is often not legible to the driver until after entry.

The wide variety of parking wayfinding and signage in downtown can lead to confusion for motorists, making it difficult to determine where one can park. The variety of signage also dilutes the overall downtown "brand."

PARKING INFORMATION

- The majority of parking information is provided on the city website. It includes basic information on Spokane's approach to parking management in downtown, key initiatives, permit programs, meter schedule, enforcement, and how to pay and contest citations. In all, the **website provides a streamlined and user-friendly portal for most parking issues and programs.**
- A short, how-to **video** is also provided, summarizing the why and how of downtown parking. A parking **blog** also provides ongoing updates about parking in Spokane. Finally, the City of Spokane also provides a **brochure** that answers a series of parking FAQs.
- Spokane also utilizes its various **social media channels** to provide parking information and occasional updates on parking programs in downtown.
- The information provided by the city, however, focuses primarily on the on-street system and regulations. This is largely due to the fact that the city owns and/or operates very little off-street parking. **Information is also largely static** and is updated on an as needed basis.
- The city website links to the **Downtown Spokane Partnership**, which provides information on its website related to key parking programs, including a **searchable Google map of off-street parking facilities**. Information on the map includes location, number of spaces, and rate information, yet not all parking facilities are included.
- Information for off-street parking is also provided via a **variety of third-party websites** hosted by individual facilities (e.g., River Park Square), private operators (e.g., Diamond Parking), or parking search engines (e.g., BestParking.com).



The City of Spokane website (top) and social media channels (middle) are utilized to communicate key parking information. Third-party websites, such as the Downtown Spokane Partnership, provide most of the available information about off-street parking.

TOP FIVE TAKEAWAYS

1. While a diversity of payment options is provided, **the payment technology in downtown is fragmented**. Multiple meter types, mobile payment apps, and pay-by-plate systems create a less intuitive and user-friendly system. Frequent parkers and guests may need to utilize multiple systems or apps within one visit to downtown, while fewer people carry cash or coins, limiting the utility of many of Spokane's meters.
2. The **Downtown Core provides a strong and legible street grid** for motorists and pedestrians, making it relatively easy to navigate to and from key destinations. Outside the core, the pedestrian experience can be more challenging. In addition, a number of parking lots are poorly lit and maintained, creating an uncomfortable pedestrian environment and "dead" zones within the corridor or streetscape they front. Within the downtown study area, it is likely that many off-street facilities **outside the core go underutilized because the walking experience is challenging, confusing, or uncomfortable**.
3. **Weather can be a significant factor** in Spokane. During winter months, the pedestrian walk shed is more limited. Snow and snow removal can also impact sidewalk access and the overall number of available parking spaces.
4. There is no single, unified parking "brand" in downtown, and parking wayfinding varies throughout the downtown. The **variety of signage dilutes the overall downtown brand, and can create user confusion and uncertainty about what parking is publicly available** versus what is restricted to specific users. This often creates ticket "anxiety" and negative perceptions about the system. The lack of real-time signage within downtown limits a motorist's ability to find available parking.
5. The **city website provides a streamlined and user-friendly portal** for most parking issues and programs. However, most information about private off-street parking is only found on the Downtown Spokane Partnership and/or third-party websites. As a result, **parking information for the user can be difficult to find.**

9 OPERATIONAL ASSESSMENT

The operational assessment will allow for definition of a parking operations and technology roadmap that will ensure a stable and efficient parking operation for the city. To inform the assessment, the consultant team met with members of Parking Enforcement, Meter Collections, Finance, and Neighborhood Services & Code Enforcement. The team also participated in a daily operational duties tour, including meter collection, meter maintenance, and parking enforcement.

ENFORCEMENT

Staffing and Routes

Parking enforcement staff are knowledgeable and committed to their wide range of challenging duties. Staff split duties between parking enforcement, meter collections and maintenance, revenue reconciliation, and general administrative duties. **The current staffing schedule relies on the prioritization of enforcement and collections of the downtown meter district, as well as neighborhoods based on need.** The Parking Enforcement Department is staffed between 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. Monday to Friday and 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. on Saturdays with one Parking Enforcement Officer (PEO) dedicated to neighborhood enforcement working until 10:00 p.m. The department has one Parking Foreperson who supervises 13 full-time employees.

The Parking Foreperson and Parking Enforcement Specialist II in charge of meter maintenance have a long history with the department. Their knowledge and understanding of the daily parking operations such as route schedules, collection days, and the meter maintenance procedures is invaluable. **A short- and long-term secession plan and training for these key positions** is needed to mitigate any operational deficits if staff retire or change of positions.

There are no permanent enforcement route assignments. Instead, routes are designated each morning by the Parking Foreperson based on collection needs and the number of residential neighborhood parking complaints. For parking meter enforcement, the PEOs aim to check each meter once or twice an hour. Meter payment status is checked by the PEO first by visual inspection. When a meter time is expiring, the meter will count down to 0, then to -5:00, providing parkers a 5-minute grace period before the meter flashes red to indicate expiration. Prior to issuing a citation, PEOs must first access the Passport mobile app to check for an active mobile payment session.

Permits

As discussed in Chapter 4, the City of Spokane has designated passenger, commercial, and special loading zones throughout the downtown meter boundary. These include the Commercial Loading Zone (CLZ) permit and the Special Loading Zone (SLZ) permit. The SLZ permits are operationalized through the meter bag program.

Staff indicated that the SLZ meter bags can be difficult to track and enforce. Durations for which the meter bags have been approved are often not communicated to the PEOs, and staff does not have ability to check the validity of the meter bags in the field. There were some locations where staff noted that the meter bag has been locked on a meter for a long period of time, but the PEO was unsure if the requester had continued to extend their request or if it had expired.

With a Residential Parking Pass (RPP), a vehicle may park at an all-day meter free of charge; 2-hour and 4-hour meters still require payment. Hangtags are distributed by the City to property owners or landlords for $25 per month.

The City of Spokane recently expanded the mobile payment platform from Passport to include the RPP program. This allows the passes to be purchased, managed, and tracked electronically by license plate, which **enables enforcement by License Plate Recognition (LPR) technology.**

Meter bags can be difficult to enforce. Staff do not have means to check the validity of the bag or its approved duration in the field.

Neighborhoods

Spokane's neighborhoods enforcement program is complaint-driven. The City utilizes code enforcement software, Accela, to track and manage parking complaints. The Accela system allows for complaints by residents to be distributed to the Parking Enforcement staff, and it provides tracking of workflow and reconciliation of the issues.

Complaints are usually for vehicles that have violated the 24-hour on-street parking maximum, but areas are also checked for standard violations, such as parking in front of a driveway or fire hydrant. Enforcement staff may, but not always, begin with a warning ticket, which is at the discretion of the PEO.

Metered Citation Rates

One of the most common violations, an expired meter, has a citation penalty of just $15.00. Relative to an all-day parking cost of $13.20 at the 2-hour meters, the citation rate **does not incentivize drivers to pay for parking or comply with the time limit.** When the price of the citation is only slightly higher than the comparative all-day rate, it often makes sense to risk receiving a citation rather than moving one's vehicle multiple times a day.

In short, the parking meter and citation rate structures are not optimized to encourage compliance or turnover, thereby undermining the benefits of downtown's paid parking system.

TECHNOLOGY

Meters

The City of Spokane has a mix of smart and traditional single-space meters. In November 2017, the City converted Main Avenue to create a back-in angle parking area. As part of the new parking area on Main Avenue, the City's Parkeon pay stations were updated to pay-by-plate for payment.

All the metered parking spaces allow for Passport mobile payments. **The unique numbering system for the Passport zones identifies where a vehicle is parked.** Zone numbers include information about the unique location of the blockface. There are potential loopholes in this system, which make it difficult for PEOs to cite violators.

Enforcement

The City currently has one vehicle equipped with License Plate Recognition (LPR) technology to check for valid payments in the Parkeon pay-by-plate angle parking pilot on Main Avenue and to check vehicles violating the 24-hour parking rule enforcement in the neighborhood areas. **With the RPP program going plate-based through Passport, LPR will also be expanded to check for RPP compliance.** At the time of the on-site visit, the LPR vehicle was not operational and there was no indication by staff when it would be back in service.

Enforcement staff use **Motorola/MC75A6 handhelds with Duncan/CivicSmart AutoPROCESS citation processing software** to write tickets and Zebra Technologies/MZ320 ticket printers. It was observed that the handhelds were lagging in response time and were not always populating with data, such as previous citations issued. It was also observed that batteries drained quickly, did not charge, or the handhelds froze, requiring multiple reboots.

Due to a lack of integration between vendors and equipment, PEOs are required to check for valid meter payment through the Passport app on separate mobile phones for each vehicle parked at an expired meter. Because of this, **PEOs are frequently switching between their mobile phone and the enforcement handheld to check for compliance.**

The City is currently piloting 10 CivicSmart parking meter sensors in front of City Hall. The pilot is being overseen by CivicSmart, but is not being actively monitored by City staff. The sensors are in test mode and are collecting data for meter reset but **while in the pilot phase, the information is not being reflected on the meters or to the parker.** There are an additional 700 sensors in the parking storage area that are not currently in use.

COLLECTIONS, MAINTENANCE, AND RECONCILIATION

Collections

Meter collection schedules vary by need and demand for each area. Typically, downtown meters, most of which are 2-hour meters, will be collected at least three times per week, 4-hour meters one to two times per week, and all-day meters once per week. **Collections are completed daily on weekdays by the PEOs.**

All single space parking meters are keyed to the same key. Copies of the keys are each assigned to a specific PEO, and are not based on meter, location, or route. Although this was done for convenience, and there exists a formal sign-out process for the keys, **this approach presents a security risk.** If a key goes missing, or is stolen, it can be used to access all single space meters. This also means that all meters would need to be re-keyed if a key was lost or stolen.

Revenue collections staff uses an open-can system for single space collections, meaning the coin canister, and monies, are accessible to staff. The coins within the collection cups are funneled into a collection cart. Between the opening of the meter and the depositing of the coins into the cart, the money is exposed to the meter collector and the public. This protocol poses a safety and security risk for collections staff. **Closed-can systems and electronic locks would improve security.**

Spokane also features charity meters in which monies can be donated at the meter or at a drop site at the airport and train station. PEOs are responsible for the collection and reconciliation of these donations, including bill currency. The time commitment to pick up and count the monies from the drop sites removes the PEOs from their primary job duties, including enforcement of the downtown parking policies.

Maintenance

The City **has not been receiving consistent reports from the parking management software** regarding meter status. For example, staff is not receiving the dead battery reports, which alerts them when a battery is dead or low. Reports come from staff and the public, which results in a delay for meter repairs. In addition, because of the number of systems available to report down meters, there are at least six different processes to report and identify meter issues.

For meter repairs, some staff is completing meter maintenance work without formal or certified training. Additionally, when sending meter mechanisms to vendors for repair, which costs $100 per unit, some meters are being returned still broken. Further follow up by the City is needed around these issues.

Reconciliation

Meters are collected during morning routes and returned to the vault room. Then, meter keys are returned and logged into the log book. The last collector of the day is responsible for ensuring all keys are accounted for in the key box. Coins are counted in two-person teams by route, and full bags are collected by the armored truck company, Loomis. Loomis only picks up full bags, and the half open bags are left in the safe.

Although collection counting is done in two-person teams, the only security in place is cameras. **No specific security issues were identified, yet an enhanced process could better protect the City and its staff.** For example, direct oversight from the Finance Department could ensure financial accounts are properly reconciled. Furthermore, coin deposits are tracked by staff, but are not compared to vendor reports for financial anomalies or level of accuracy. Staff track collections using a Microsoft Excel sheet, which can be problematic in the long-term.

It was also noted that the City of Spokane is being charged a monthly $5 fee for 800 smart meters despite there only being 735 actively installed. The vendor charges a monthly fee for the service of each parking meter in operation. This discrepancy should be addressed right away.

Finally, the meters have poor coin discriminators which result in the presence of junk coins, such as counterfeit, foreign currency, or tokens during collections. This does not adhere to industry standards and creates the opportunity for new management policies.

Open-can collections pose a safety and security risk for staff. Closed-can systems and electronic locks would improve security.

TOP FIVE TAKEAWAYS

1. Parking Services has been under the direction of Neighborhood Services & Code Enforcement for the past two years. There has been improvement in operations following an internal technology review. The recently filled Parking Manager position **should prioritize enhanced communications** between management and front-line staff.
2. The Parking Foreperson and PEO II in charge of meter maintenance have a long history with the department. Given their long tenure and institutional knowledge, a **succession plan and training for these key positions is needed to mitigate any long-term operational deficits**.
3. Meter collections are handled by PEOs while also enforcing parking policy. Spokane's staff are hard-working and highly knowledgeable, but **breadth and depth of their duties poses a long-term risk for efficient operation of the system.** Formal training has not been provided or mandated for meter maintenance staff.
4. **The collection, maintenance, and reconciliation processes and protocols can be improved.** For example, an open-can system for meter collections poses a risk to staff and the City, while additional financial oversight would protect the City in the long term.
5. **The City should prioritize several key issues with their meter vendors.** Reporting from vendors has been inconsistent and staff has found it to be unreliable. Meters which have been sent back for repair are being returned with the issue unresolved. Problems with the vendor handhelds are on-going. Finally, the lack of integration between the various technologies causes operational inefficiencies and requires the use of separate devices to verify status and to follow up on service requests.

10 USER PROFILE SUMMARY

This chapter summarizes a downtown **user profile**, describing general types of parking user groups, how much parking is available to them, and an estimate of each group's level of use. Much of this information is described in previous chapters (Chapters 5 and 6), but is synthesized again for easy reference. The user profile was developed based on both quantitative and qualitative data, including the parking inventory and utilization data, the survey results, and feedback received from the City and stakeholders.

It is important to note that it is difficult to specifically define how each parking space in downtown is allocated to, and utilized by, the different users of the parking system at all times of the day. **Within a mixed-use downtown, and as discussed in Chapter 5, much of the inventory is shared among multiple users.** For example, a parking space can be used by an office worker during the day, a shopper in the evening, and a resident at night, making it difficult to pinpoint exactly how much parking is allocated and utilized by different users. The user profile summarizes the best estimate based upon available data.

USER PROFILES

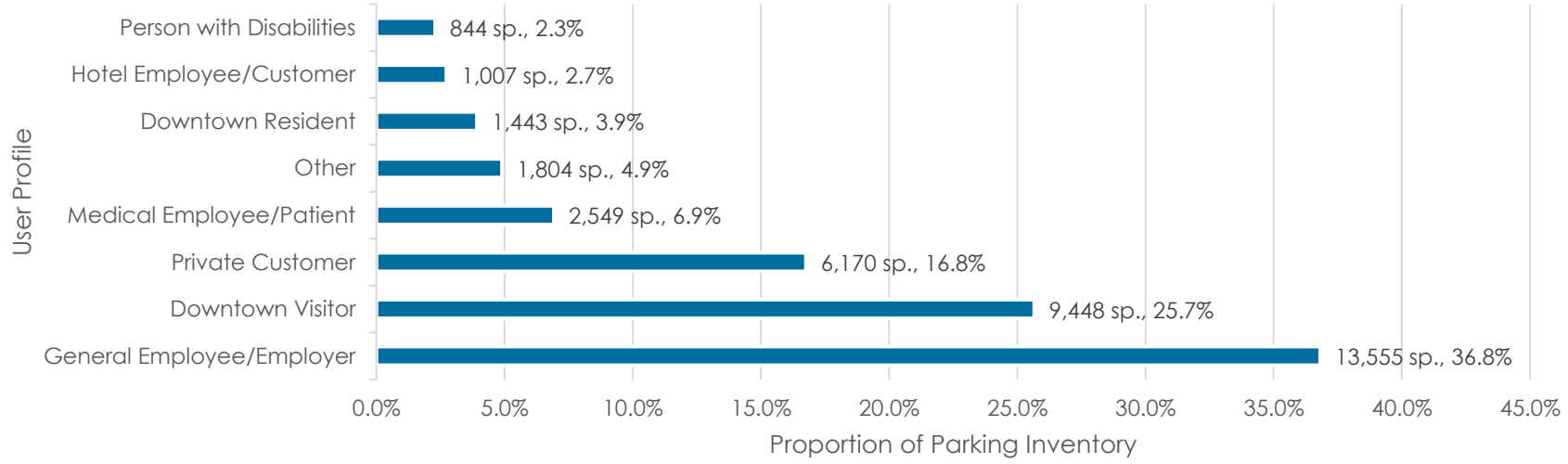
Figure 10-1 estimates the available parking inventory, as well as peak demand for the different user groups. Figure 10-2 illustrates the distribution of parking inventory by user group. Most of the user groups have utilization levels close to the overall study area average with two exceptions:

- **Medical employee/patients compete for parking to a greater degree** than all other user groups – peak parking demand for their facilities reaches 75% during the mid-day period. This still leaves some reserve capacity, but given the occasionally emergent nature of this type of parking demand more reserve capacity may be desired.
- **Persons with disabilities** have the least competition for spaces within the study area – this is likely an acceptable arrangement given the travel burden placed on persons with disabilities.

Figure 10-1 Estimated Inventory and Peak Utilization, by User Group

User Group	Estimated Number of Parking Spaces	Proportion of Parking System	Estimated Peak Demand (vehicles)	Estimated Peak Occupancy	Peak Demand Period
General Employee/Employer	13,555	36.8%	7,644	56%	10 a.m. - 2 p.m.
Downtown Visitor	9,448	25.7%	5,522	58%	4 p.m. - 8 p.m.
Private Customer	6,170	16.8%	3,442	56%	10 a.m. - 2 p.m.
Medical Employee/Patient	2,549	6.9%	1,908	75%	10 a.m. - 2 p.m.
Other	1,804	4.9%	963	53%	10 a.m. - 2 p.m.
Downtown Resident	1,443	3.9%	770	53%	12 a.m. - 6 a.m.
Hotel Employee/Customer	1,007	2.7%	545	54%	4 p.m. - 8 p.m.
Person with Disabilities	844	2.3%	203	24%	10 a.m. - 2 p.m.
Total	**36,821**	**100.0%**	**20,997**	**57%**	**10 a.m. - 2 p.m.**

Figure 10-2 Estimated Inventory Distribution, by User Group



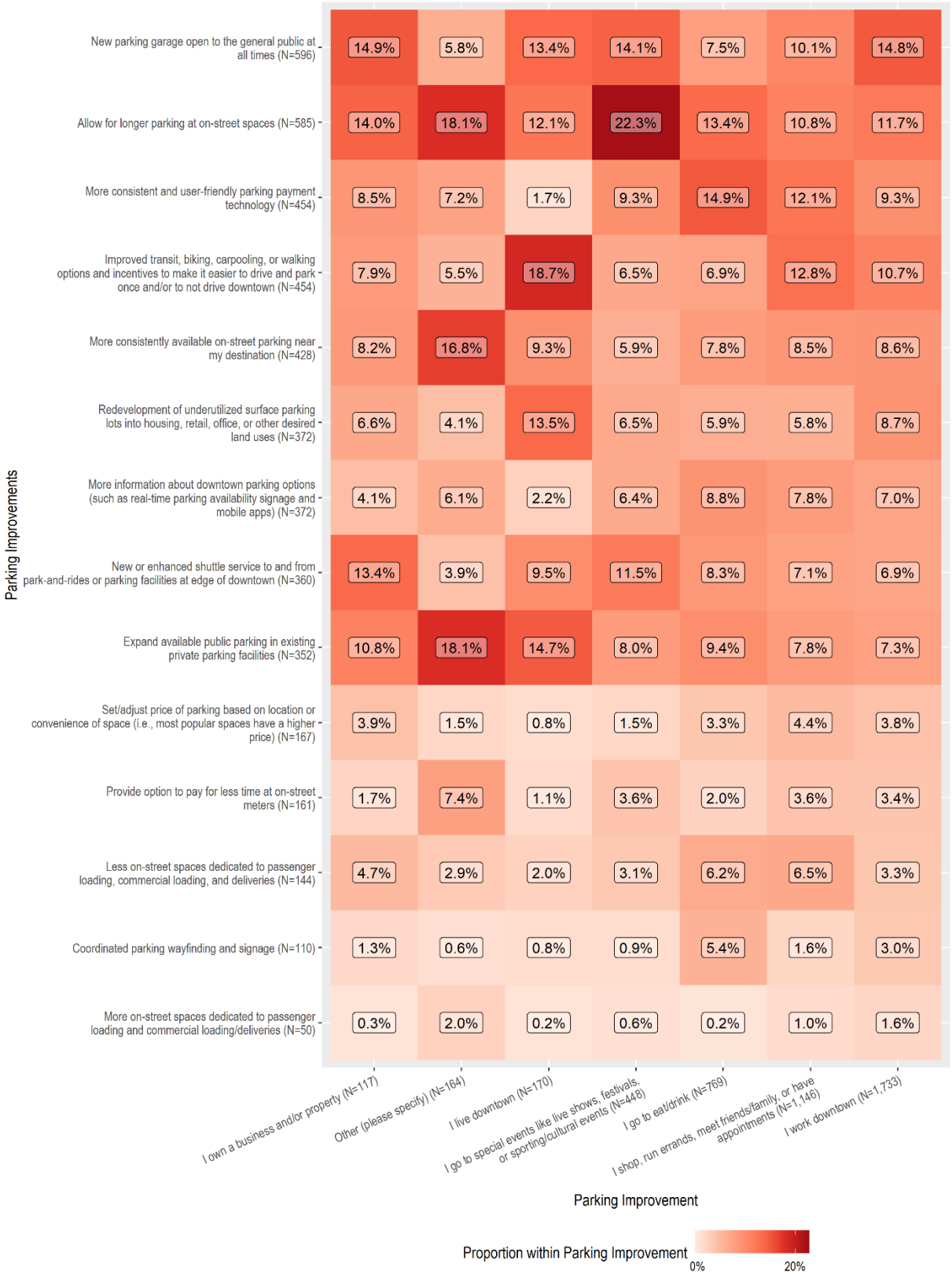
- **General employee/employer.** These users park near their place of work, primarily in an off-street facility. Nearly 40% of these users park in a lot at a free or reduced rate from their employer, 30% park in a garage or lot at their own expense with a recurring (annual, monthly, weekly) permit, and 10% park in a lot or garage they pay for by the hour/day. Fifteen percent park in a metered space and the remainder park in non-metered spaces. These users park downtown very frequently (five or more days per week) and also typically park downtown for other reasons as well (e.g., eating, running errands).
- **Downtown Visitor.** These users come to downtown to eat, drink, run an errand, or meet with a friend or family member approximately 2-3 times per week. The majority of these users (50-70%) park in an on-street metered space, and another 25-30% park in off-street facilities they pay for by the hour.
- **Downtown Resident.** These users live in downtown Spokane, and typically park in an all-day metered space with a Residential Parking Permit (RPP) or park in a lot/garage for free or partially subsidized by their residence.
- **Medical Employee/Patient.** These users either work at or are visiting the hospital, medical offices, or clinics primarily concentrated in the southern portion of the study area. They typically park in off-street facilities reserved for their use free of charge or pay a fee to park at an off-street facility. Employees park daily and patients/customers typically park 1-2 times per week.
- **Hotel Employee/Customer.** There are approximately 1,000 off-street parking spaces reserved for hotel employees and customers throughout the downtown area. Many of these users are also temporary visitors to Spokane from outside the city or region. A quarter of this parking is for valet customers.
- **Private Customer.** The remainder of customer parking besides hotel and medical uses was designated for these users. These are motorists visiting restaurants or other businesses with off-street parking reserved solely for their customers. These users park approximately twice per week.
- **Person with Disabilities.** ADA spaces are provided for persons with disabilities throughout the study area – the vast majority of these are off-street, and are distributed throughout the different types of lots and garages.
- **Other.** There are other users not highlighted above which represent a small but important minority of overall parking activity – this includes loading/delivery zone users, service vehicle drivers (e.g., police, county), electric vehicle drivers, and others.

Figure 10-3 and Figure 10-4 cross-tabulate survey respondents' primary travel reason (similar to user group) with their top three parking issues and parking strategies, respectively. Key trends relevant to the user groups defined above include:

- **Downtown workers** expressed that off-street parking is too expensive. They would like to see an increase in the off-street parking supply.
- **Downtown visitors** expressed that there is a shortage of available parking – this perception likely stems from the high competition for the most convenient on-street spaces in the Downtown Core. They would like to see more friendly parking payment technology and longer durations for on-street spaces.
- **Downtown residents** would like to see improved travel options so it is easier to not drive downtown. They would also like to see more public parking available in private facilities, and the redevelopment of surface parking in other desired uses.

Figure 10-3 Downtown User Group vs. Parking Issues

Figure 10-4 Downtown User Group vs. Parking Improvements



TOP FIVE TAKEAWAYS

1. **Reserved employee/employer parking accounts for over one-third of available parking inventory**, and has a peak demand of 56% utilization during the middle of the day. Stakeholders indicated that employer/employee parking is very constrained, especially for office workers in the core. However, there still appears to be overall capacity in the system. Pricing, access restrictions, and distance from core of available supply contribute to frustration for certain employers and employees.
2. **Downtown visitor parking (which is shared with other uses) accounts for approximately one-quarter of the parking inventory**, with a peak occupancy of 58% during the late afternoon/early evening. Stakeholders indicated that visitor parking can be difficult to access. Again, while this is more apparent in the Downtown Core, there still appears to be reserve capacity throughout the system. These users would like to see more convenient payment systems, increased availability of on-street parking, and longer on-street time limits.
3. **Private customer parking accounts for 17% of the parking system.** These are mostly surface lots at businesses throughout the study area. Occupancy is approximately the same as the study area average. This supply represents a potential sharing opportunity, especially during off-peak hours for businesses.
4. **Reserved medical employee/patient parking accounts for approximately 7% of the parking inventory,** with a peak occupancy of 75% during the mid-day period. This is the highest peak occupancy of any user group.
5. **Off-street resident parking accounts for 4% of parking in the study area**. Residents are also allowed to park at the curb via the residential permit program. Stakeholders indicated resident parking is constrained, and resident survey respondents expressed that a key issue was lack of available parking in key locations. An increasing influx of residents in downtown bringing cars with them can be problematic for parts of the study area without dedicated residential parking.