

TO: James L. App, City Manager  
FROM: Robert A. Lata, Community Development Director  
SUBJECT: Downtown Parking and Circulation Analysis and Action Plans  
DATE: October 1, 2002

Needs: For the City Council to review the Draft Downtown Parking and Circulation Analysis and Action Plans and Mitigated Negative Declaration therefor. At the conclusion of the public hearing, the City Council may decide to approve this project or the Council may request additional information and analysis.

Facts:

1. Revitalization of Downtown Paso Robles has been a major focus of the City, Main Street, and the Chamber of Commerce.
2. To this end, the City's Economic Strategy was prepared in part to provide guidance on the types of actions to ensure the continued revitalization of Downtown Paso Robles.
3. The City's Economic Strategy envisions that Downtown Paso Robles will be developed into a Commercial/Entertainment Center that caters to the tourists, that accommodates a Governmental Center (e.g. Public Safety Center, County Courts, etc.), and that provides professional office space.
4. The objectives of the revitalization efforts are to generate new investment in the Downtown and to create constant pedestrian activities and events that will attract youth and families to the Downtown.
5. In order to achieve these objectives, the City's Economic Strategy identifies the need to take the following actions:
  - Development and implementation of a plan to optimize parking, including a parking plan for the Downtown;
  - Support of "eased" parking restrictions;
  - Begin planning for a city parking facility; and,
  - Development of a detailed circulation plan that is based on a citywide traffic study of the west side and retail core (i.e., Vine Street to Riverside Avenue; 1st Street to 24th Street).
6. Over the years, there has been much public discussion and debate about how to ensure the continued success of the Downtown and how to address the parking and circulation needs.
7. Recent surveys of local business owners and residents suggest that it is becoming more difficult to find convenient parking in the Downtown.
8. In the fall of 2001, the City Council retained the services of Kimley-Horn and Associates to prepare an independent study reviewing parking and circulation in the Downtown.
9. The study encompasses the area bounded by 17<sup>th</sup> Street on the north, Riverside Avenue on the east, 6<sup>th</sup> Street on the south, and Olive Street on the west.

10. The study identifies:

- Existing and future parking demands in the Downtown;
- Areas for new parking lots and/or a parking structure;
- Capital improvement projects for the City to implement, including
  - The striping of new angled on-street parking spaces,
  - Installation of signage for public parking lots,
  - The marking of parking spaces “For Customers” only,
  - The installation of “Loading Zone” signage near Idlers,
  - Traffic signal synchronization, and
  - Traffic calming strategies;
- Ways to divert through traffic around the Downtown in order to eliminate the need to widen Spring Street and 13<sup>th</sup> Street to 4-lanes;
- Parking management techniques (time limits, enforced parking restrictions, installation of parking meters, etc...) to increase parking turnover; and,
- Financing options for implementing the recommended Parking and Circulation Action Plans for the Downtown.

11. The Action Plans identify a series of steps that can be taken to address the parking and circulation needs of the Downtown, including:

- Recommendations that range from instituting parking management techniques (time limits, enforced parking restrictions, installation of parking meters, etc.) to building facilities to increase the supply; and,
- Proposals to modify the existing circulation system in order to improve traffic and pedestrian flow in the Downtown.

12. A complete copy of the Parking and Circulation Analysis and Action Plans is attached to this Staff Report for the Council’s review and consideration.

13. To date, public participation has involved:

- Holding a Public Workshop to receive input and suggestions.
- Circulating the Draft Parking and Circulation Analysis and Action Plan to the City’s ad-hoc Parking and Circulation Committee for review and comment. *(The Committee has representation from the City Council, Planning Commission, Main Street, and the Chamber of Commerce).*
- Discussing the Draft Parking and Circulation Analysis and Action Plans at a meeting of the City’s ad-hoc Parking and Circulation Committee. At the meeting, the Committee:
  - ✓ Refined the recommended Action Plans; and,
  - ✓ Recommended that the Draft Parking and Circulation Analysis and Action Plans

be brought forward this fall for review and consideration.

The Committee's goal is for the City to be in a position to ask the business owners to implement a voluntary parking plan for their employees during the 2002 holiday season. *(If the volunteer efforts are unsuccessful, the Committee has recommended that the City enact and enforce parking restrictions during the hours between 10 am to 2 pm, Monday through Friday). It should be noted that further discussion on financing options would need to occur should the City be asked to institute parking restrictions.*

14. City staff will verbally update the Council as to the action taken by the Planning Commission on this Project at its September 24, 2002 meeting.

Analysis

And Conclusion:

**Findings:** The findings of the Draft Parking and Circulation Analysis have been divided into two separate sections. Each section is presented in summary below (see attached Report for more detailed information).

### 1. Parking

**Supply** - There are approximately 2,968 public parking spaces in the Downtown. The number of parking spaces is sufficient to meet the current customer and employee demand. However, these spaces are located throughout the Downtown and not in the areas where demand is the highest. It has been determined that there is a need for 100 additional parking spaces at this time and that there will be a total need for 350 additional parking spaces by the year 2007.

**Location** - The study demonstrates that there are enough parking spaces in the Downtown to meet existing demand. However, many of the parking spaces are not located in the areas where people want to park. In Paso Robles, the preferred average walking distance is approximately one-block or one minute. Consequently, the need for additional parking spaces may actually be overstated. It is not uncommon in active Downtown business districts to observe shoppers willing to walk longer distances.

In the commercial core, there is an existing deficit of 100 to 161 parking spaces. The core is defined as the area bounded by 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> Streets on the north, Riverside Avenue on the east, 10<sup>th</sup> Street on the south, and Vine Street on the west.

**Demand** - Parking demand varies significantly by time-of-day and day-of-the-week. The average demand for on-street parking is the highest in the commercial core, most notably in the area around the park. The public parking lots with the highest average demand on weekdays are the Spring Street lot, the Railroad Street lot, and the 12<sup>th</sup> Street lot. The public lots are typically 60% full on weekdays, with occupancy decreasing on the weekends. Weekday demand tends to decrease after 6 pm, except near restaurants and the movie theatre.

### 2. Circulation

**Planned Improvements** - The Circulation Element of the Paso Robles General Plan identifies the need to widen Spring Street and 13<sup>th</sup> Street to 4-lanes. The widening is needed to accommodate the traffic projections associated with future development throughout the City.

**Alternatives** - There are alternatives to the widening of Spring Street and 13<sup>th</sup> Street. One alternative is to divert the traffic that uses these streets to other roads in the Downtown

that have excess capacity. A proportion of the traffic (perhaps as much as one-third) using Spring Street and/or 13<sup>th</sup> Street is passing through the Downtown en route to other areas. Diversion of this through traffic out of the Downtown core will reduce traffic volumes on Spring Street and/or 13<sup>th</sup> Street and may eliminate the need for widening.

It has been suggested that the City Council consider a temporary closure of 13<sup>th</sup> Street at Railroad Street. This temporary closure was suggested as a means to study its effect on diverting through traffic out of the Downtown core. From a public safety standpoint (police, fire, and paramedics), the proposed closure is not the preferred approach since it could have implications regarding a timely response.

Action Plan. The recommended Action Plan is divided into two parts: 1) Parking and 2) Circulation. A multi-faceted approach is suggested. It involves implementing the least expensive options first. It should be noted that a means to finance implementation of the Plans needs to be developed.

### **1. Short Term Parking Action Plan**

- A. Voluntary Parking Restrictions - Ask business owners to encourage their employees to park outside of the Downtown core during the 2002 holiday season in order to free up spaces for patrons.

The volunteer efforts are to be started as soon as possible, and are to be put into effect from mid-November through the end of January 2003 to permit an opportunity to evaluate its effectiveness.

- B. Institute peak period time limitations at certain locations throughout the Downtown between the hours of 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. with different time limits in different locations.
- C. Provide additional angled on-street parking where it is feasible to do so.
- D. Propose a budget for adding new signage to direct the general public to the public parking lots.
- E. In cooperation with Main Street, mark the curb faces in selected blocks of the Downtown to designate on-street parking spaces “for customers.”
- F. Sign the “loading zone” area near Idlers as a public loading zone – intended for vehicles with a commercial license.
- G. Consider initiating the process of acquiring one or more properties in the Downtown to construct additional public parking lots. The property or properties should be large enough to accommodate a parking structure in the future.

### **2. Mid-Term Parking Action Plan**

- A. At the end of the three-month trial period, measure the success of the voluntary parking restrictions through physical observation of the number of spaces available for customers and through a Main Street survey. If the voluntary efforts are unsuccessful, consider enforced parking, installation of parking meters, or construction of parking structures.

- B. Provide on-street handicapped access parking where feasible.
- C. Allow loading zones to be established by the Streets & Utilities Committee.
- D. Identify sites for property acquisition and begin the acquisition process.

**3. Long-Term Parking Action Plan**

- A. If the voluntary efforts do not work, business owners should be surveyed to determine if they are willing to pay for the \$80,000 to \$100,000 annual cost of providing enforcement personnel to implement timed parking restrictions and signage reflecting the applicable time limits.
- B. If the survey indicates that the business owners are not willing to provide the annual funding for time-limited parking restrictions, the question of funding should be brought to the City Council for consideration. If the Council approves the request, proceed accordingly. If the Council denies the request, install parking meters.
- C. Acquire property for the construction of additional parking spaces in the Downtown area, especially north of the City Park and south of City Hall.
- D. Construct additional parking spaces and/or a parking structure.

**4. Short Term Circulation Action Plan**

- A. Install directional signs at 10<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> Streets, which would divert traffic from these streets to River and Creston Roads.
- B. Close off 13<sup>th</sup> Street for a two-week period in the block between Railroad and Park Streets to determine the patterns of traffic that result from the closure.
- C. Measure the effect of the 13<sup>th</sup> Street closure on Downtown traffic flows.

**5. Mid-Term Circulation Action Plan**

- A. When the northeast and southeast corners of 4<sup>th</sup> and Spring Street are developed, propose a budget for modifying the lane configurations to channel a lane of traffic east on 4<sup>th</sup> Street and north on Pine Street.
- B. If the temporary closure of 13<sup>th</sup> Street is unsuccessful, begin design efforts to implement the traffic calming improvements found in certain sections of Downtown to other areas.
- C. Pursue funding for a Project Study Report to assess a new roadway connection between Spring Street and Pine Street, south of 4<sup>th</sup> Street to help divert traffic off of Spring Street in the Downtown.

**6. Long Term Circulation Plan**

- A. Depending on the outcome of the trial 13<sup>th</sup> Street closure, develop a budget for a permanent closure or barrier.

## 7. Downtown Parking Requirements

- A. Extend the expiration date of the reduced parking requirements for Downtown that is currently in the Zoning Ordinance for an additional five years.
- B. Consider eliminating compact parking spaces, revising the parking lot design standards to reflect current practices relating to geometric design, and creating a “Shared Parking” section for mixed-use development projects.

### Program Implementation

After consideration of the findings and recommended Action Plans, City staff is requesting that the Council provide input as to the priority for moving forward with Program Implementation. City staff is also seeking Council direction as to the relationship of this Program to the other identified top priority projects and goals of the City. Further, the identification of a source of revenue to finance the recommended actions for addressing the Downtown parking and circulation needs is a critical component that should be developed.

Fiscal  
Impact:

The fiscal impact associated with Program Implementation is variable since it is dependant on the elements selected. It should be noted that a means to finance Program Implementation has yet to be developed. There are various options available for financing Program Implementation, including:

- Collection of fees from a Downtown Parking Assessment District;
- Identification of a source of income to finance the Action Plans;
- Reliance on revenue generated from income received from on-street meters, from code enforcement of time restrictions, and/or from off-street parking fees;
- Citywide development impact fees for investment in Downtown parking and circulation improvements (These fees could only be used to pay for infrastructure, not enforcement or maintenance of the improvements. Additionally, the accumulation of sufficient funds for use in making the various improvements may take many years).

Options:

- a. Adopt Resolution No. 02-xx approving the Mitigated Negative Declaration and associated Mitigation Monitoring/Reporting Program.
- b. Adopt Resolution No. 02-xx approving the Downtown Parking and Circulation Analysis; and approving the Recommended Action Plans.
- c. Consider discussing the priority and possible sources of funding to provide for implementation of the individual items listed in the Action Plans.
- d. Request additional information and analysis, including development of a specific funding proposal.
- e. Amend, modify, or reject the foregoing options.

Attachments:

1. Draft Downtown Parking and Circulation Analysis and Action Plan
2. Proposed Resolution to Adopt Mitigated Negative Declaration
3. Initial Study
4. Proposed Resolution Recommending Project Approval

RESOLUTION NO. 02-

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PASO ROBLES  
APPROVING A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION AND MITIGATION  
MONITORING / REPORTING PROGRAM FOR THE DOWNTOWN PARKING  
AND CIRCULATION ANALYSIS AND ACTION PLANS

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WHEREAS, the City has retained the services of Kimley-Horn and Associates to prepare an independent study reviewing parking and circulation in the Downtown; and

WHEREAS, an Initial Study was prepared for this project (attached) which concludes that it qualifies for adoption of a Mitigated Negative Declaration and approval of a Mitigation Monitoring/Reporting Program; and

WHEREAS, the project area encompasses the area bounded by 17<sup>th</sup> Street on the north, Riverside Avenue on the east, 6<sup>th</sup> Street on the south, and Olive Street on the west; and

WHEREAS, public notice of the proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration was given as required by Section 21092 of the Public Resources Code; and

WHEREAS, public notice of the proposed Mitigation Monitoring/Reporting Program was given as required by Section 15097 of the Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act; and

WHEREAS, based on the information contained in the Initial Study prepared for the Downtown Parking and Circulation Analysis and Action Plans, the proposed mitigation measures, the mitigation monitoring/reporting program, the staff report, and public testimony received as a result of the public notice, the City, using its own independent judgment, finds that all potentially significant effects of the project on the environment can and will be avoided or mitigated to a level of insignificance by:

1. Imposing the specified mitigation measures on future projects implemented pursuant to the Parking and Circulation Analysis and Action Plan; and
2. Requiring compliance with the Mitigation Monitoring/Reporting Program that establishes a program for reporting on or monitoring the changes which the City has incorporated into the Parking and Circulation Analysis and Action Plans; and
3. Specifying that further site-specific environmental review will be conducted for future projects implemented pursuant to the Parking and Circulation Analysis and Action Plans.

WHEREAS, a public hearing was conducted by the City Council on October 1, 2002, to consider the facts as presented in the staff report prepared for this project, and to accept public testimony regarding this proposed project.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the City Council of the City of El Paso de Robles does hereby:

1. Adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Parking and Circulation Analysis and Action Plans; and



2. Establish a Mitigation Monitoring/Reporting Program for the Parking and Circulation Analysis and Action Plans.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the City Council of the City of Paso Robles this 1<sup>st</sup> day of October 2002 by the following vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSTAIN:

ABSENT:

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Frank R. Mecham, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Sharilyn M. Ryan, Deputy City Clerk

RESOLUTION NO. 02-

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PASO ROBLES  
APPROVING THE DOWNTOWN PARKING AND CIRCULATION ANALYSIS  
AND ACTION PLANS

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WHEREAS, revitalization of Downtown Paso Robles has been a major focus of the City, Main Street, and the Chamber of Commerce; and

WHEREAS, the City's Economic Strategy was prepared and adopted in part to provide guidance on the types of actions to ensure the continued revitalization of Downtown Paso Robles; and

WHEREAS, the City's Economic Strategy envisions that Downtown Paso Robles will be developed into a Commercial/Entertainment Center that caters to the tourists, that accommodates a Governmental Center (e.g. Public Safety Center, County Courts, etc), and that provides professional office space; and

WHEREAS, The objectives of the revitalization efforts are to generate new investment in the Downtown and to create constant pedestrian activities and events that will attract youth and families to the Downtown; and

WHEREAS, in order achieve these objectives, the City's Economic Strategy indicates that the following actions should be taken:

- Development and implementation of a plan to optimize parking, including a parking plan for the Downtown;
- Support of "eased" parking restrictions;
- Begin planning for a city parking facility; and,
- Development of a detailed circulation plan that is based on a citywide traffic study of the Westside and retail core (i.e., Vine Street to Riverside Avenue; 1<sup>st</sup> Street to 24<sup>th</sup> Street).

WHEREAS, the City has retained the services of Kimley-Horn and Associates to prepare an independent study reviewing parking and circulation in the Downtown; and

WHEREAS, based upon the facts and analysis presented in the staff report, and public testimony received, the City Council finds that the project qualifies for adoption of a Mitigated Negative Declaration and approval of a Monitoring/Reporting Program; and

WHEREAS, a public workshop was held on May 1, 2002 to receive input and suggestions on the Parking and Circulation Analysis and Action Plans; and

WHEREAS, an ad-hoc Parking and Circulation Committee comprised of representatives of the City Council, the Planning Commission, Main Street, and the Chamber of Commerce was formed to review and provide input on the Draft Downtown Parking and Circulation Analysis and Action Plans; and

WHEREAS, the ad-hoc Parking and Circulation Committee has recommended to the Planning Commission that the Draft Parking and Circulation Analysis and Action Plans be approved; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission reviewed the Draft Parking and Circulation Analysis and Action Plans at its September 24, 2002 and the Commission's recommendations have been verbally presented to the City Council at its October 1, 2002 meeting; and

WHEREAS, the City Council held a duly noticed public hearing on October 1, 2002, to consider the facts as presented in the staff report and to accept public testimony; and

WHEREAS, based upon the facts and analysis presented in the staff report and public testimony received, the City Council finds that the Draft Downtown Parking and Circulation Analysis and Action Plans properly identifies the steps to be taken to address the needs of the Downtown and to ensure its continued vitality.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the City Council of the City of El Paso de Robles does hereby:

1. Approve the Draft Downtown Parking and Circulation Analysis; and
2. Approve the Recommended Action Plans; and
3. Ask the City's ad-hoc Parking and Circulation Committee to develop a proposed funding and implementation program.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the City Council of the City of Paso Robles this 1<sup>st</sup> day of October 2002 by the following vote:

AYES:  
NOES:  
ABSTAIN:  
ABSENT:

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Frank R. Mecham, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Sharilyn M. Ryan, Deputy City Clerk