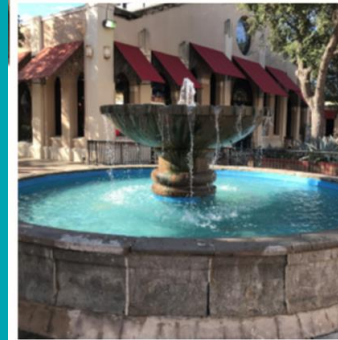




WALKER
CONSULTANTS



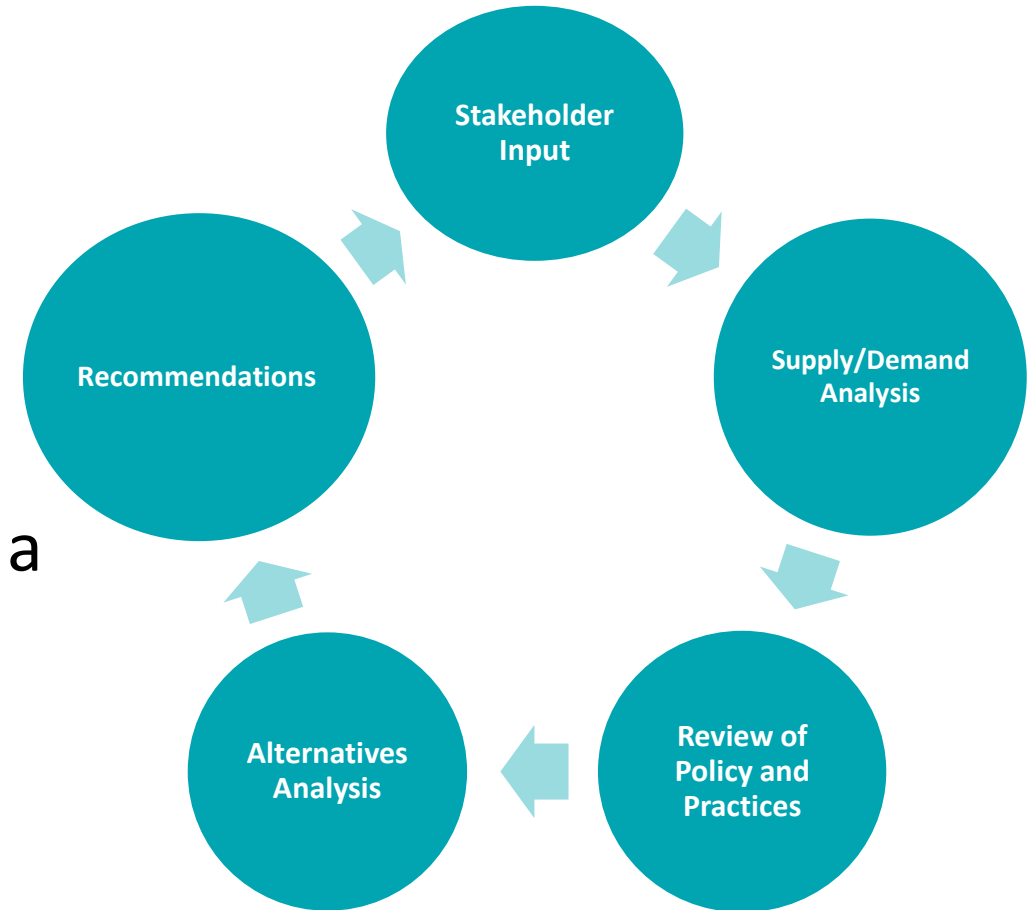
BUILDING ENVELOPE
CONSULTING
FORENSIC RESTORATION
PARKING DESIGN
PLANNING

CITY OF LAREDO DOWNTOWN PARKING STUDY JUNE 04, 2019



KEY PROJECT COMPONENTS AND STUDY PROCESS

- Coordinated and attentive **stakeholder and community engagement**
- A **comprehensive space inventory** of the downtown parking system
- An **occupancy survey** delivering performance analytics
- A **review of existing parking policies** and a parking **alternatives analysis**
- A forward-looking series of **recommendations**

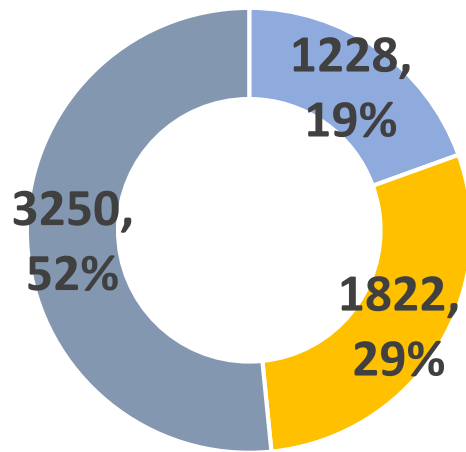


PUBLIC SURVEY KEY FINDINGS

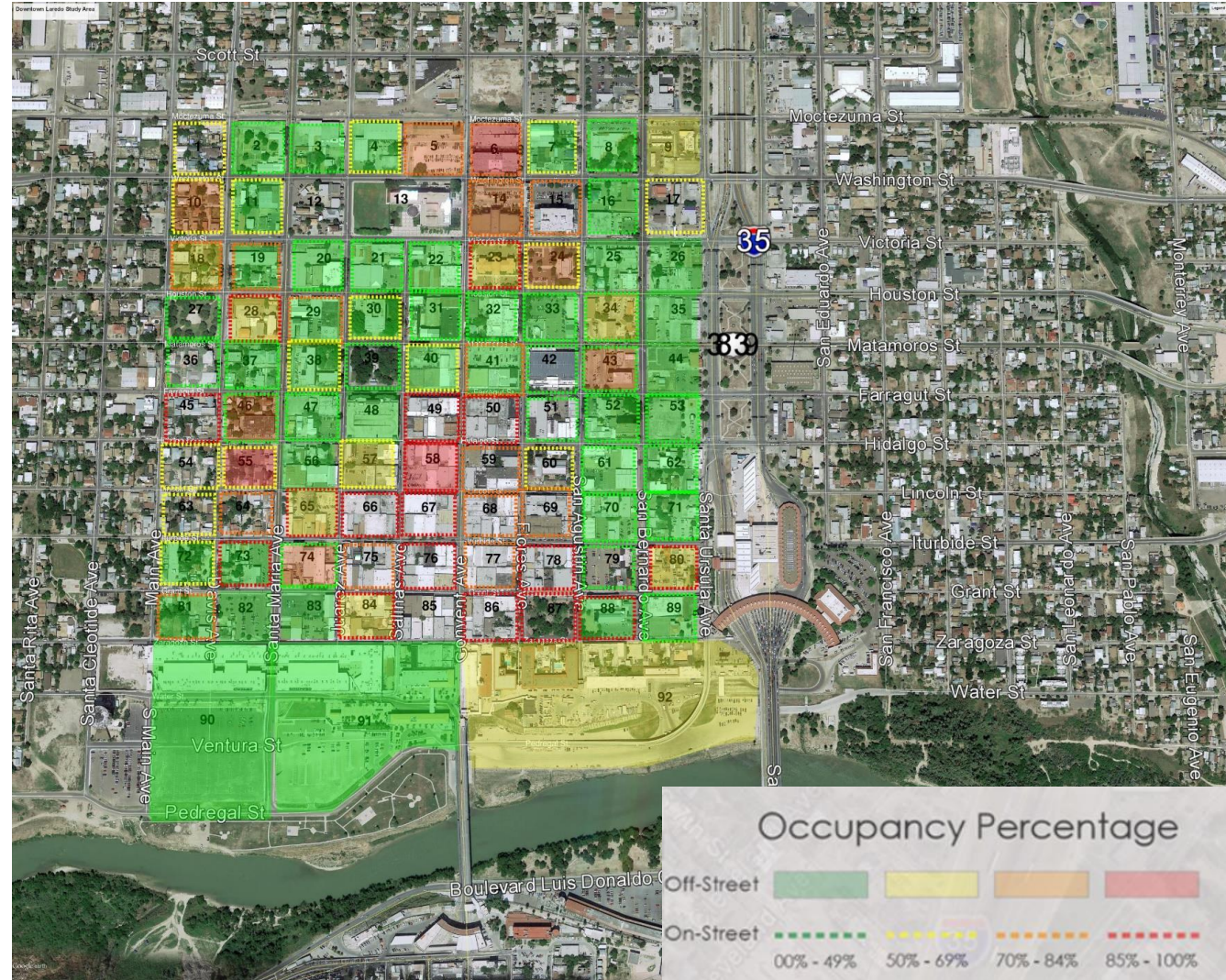
- **Parking Availability** and not Proximity to Destination or Costs is the most important factor related to parking in downtown for survey respondents (50 percent answering availability; 30 percent proximity; 20 percent costs);
- Nearly **62 percent** of survey respondents are **dissatisfied with downtown parking**;
- Survey respondents cite **difficulty finding parking** (65 percent unable to find available parking downtown versus 35 percent able to find parking);
- More than 75 percent of survey respondents say **downtown visitors and customers do not know where they can find public parking**;
- **Nearly 62 percent of respondents do not think on street spaces are typically available and that on street spaces are turning over as intended through rates and hours of enforcement**;
- Most survey respondents agree that **meters work consistently** (80 percent agree that meters are in good working order);
- **Approximately 63 percent of respondents say that long-term parking spaces are not clearly identified and that people do not know where to go for all-day parking**;
- Nearly 83 percent of respondents find downtown wayfinding inadequate to help find their way from a parking space to their destination.

SUPPLY AND DEMAND KEY FINDINGS

- Approximately **6,300 ± parking spaces** surveyed across the 92-block Study Area
- Overall utilization **below 50 percent** at peak hour – afternoon
- “Hot-spots” observed

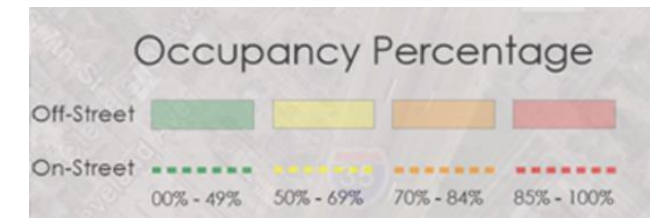


- On-Street
- Public Off-Street
- Private Off-Street



KEY FINDINGS

- Parking “Hot Spot” Blocks identified in downtown core where occupancy exceeded 85%
- Blocks with dense building coverage and no off-street parking accommodation saw higher utilization in Core Area



THERE IS AN ABUNDANCE OF AVAILABLE PARKING SPACES DOWNTOWN, HOWEVER, THERE ARE PROBLEMS LOCATING PUBLIC SPACES AND DISTRIBUTING DEMAND

- **The primary Study takeaway is that a more vigorous parking management program needs to be pursued through adjustments to current parking policies.**
- **On-street utilization is greater than off-street utilization**
(55 percent total occupancy on street; 22 percent off-street)
- **On-street rates are too low**
(\$0.75 an hour at the meter; \$2.13 an hour average facility)
- **Existing Wayfinding and Directional signage is inadequate**



Study Recommendations

1. IMPLEMENT A COORDINATED RATE STRATEGY FOR ON STREET AND OFF-STREET PARKING

- On-street rates too low creating higher demand and congestion at curb
- Space occupancy at the curb is greater because it is the most visible and convenient parking space
- Curb space should be priced higher than off-street parking because it is premium space, usually closer walking distances to door fronts



On-street

\$0.75

Average
Hourly Rate

55 % Total
Occupancy



Off-street

\$2.13

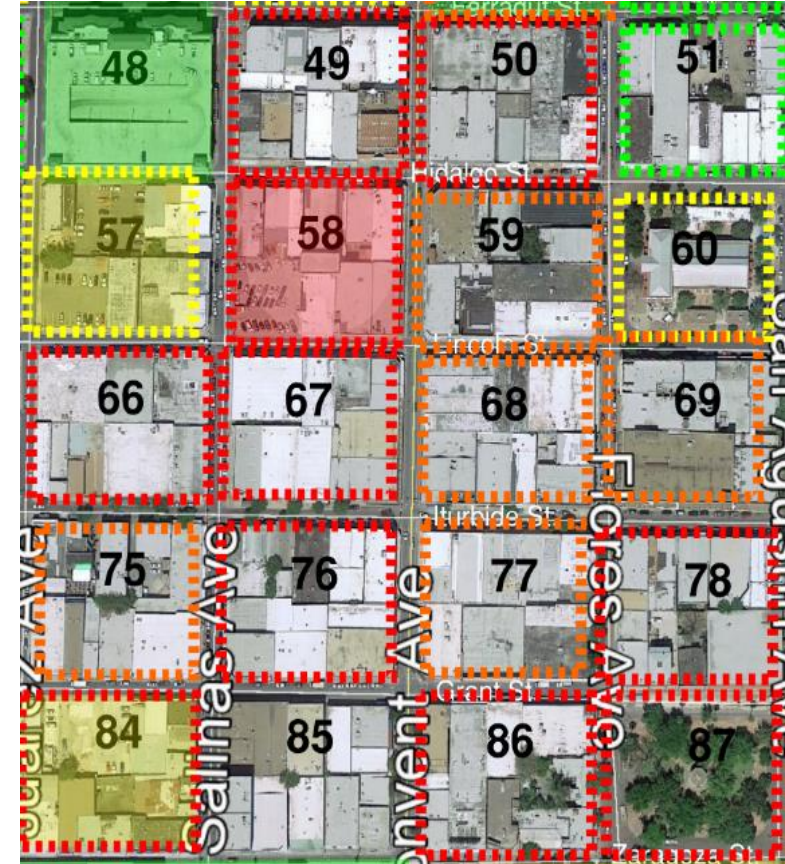
Average
Hourly Rate

24 % Total
Occupancy

We recommend that lower utilized spaces outside of the established “hot-spot” zones keep an existing rate of \$0.75 an hour while on-street “hot-spot” spaces be priced at an initial rate of \$1.50 an hour.

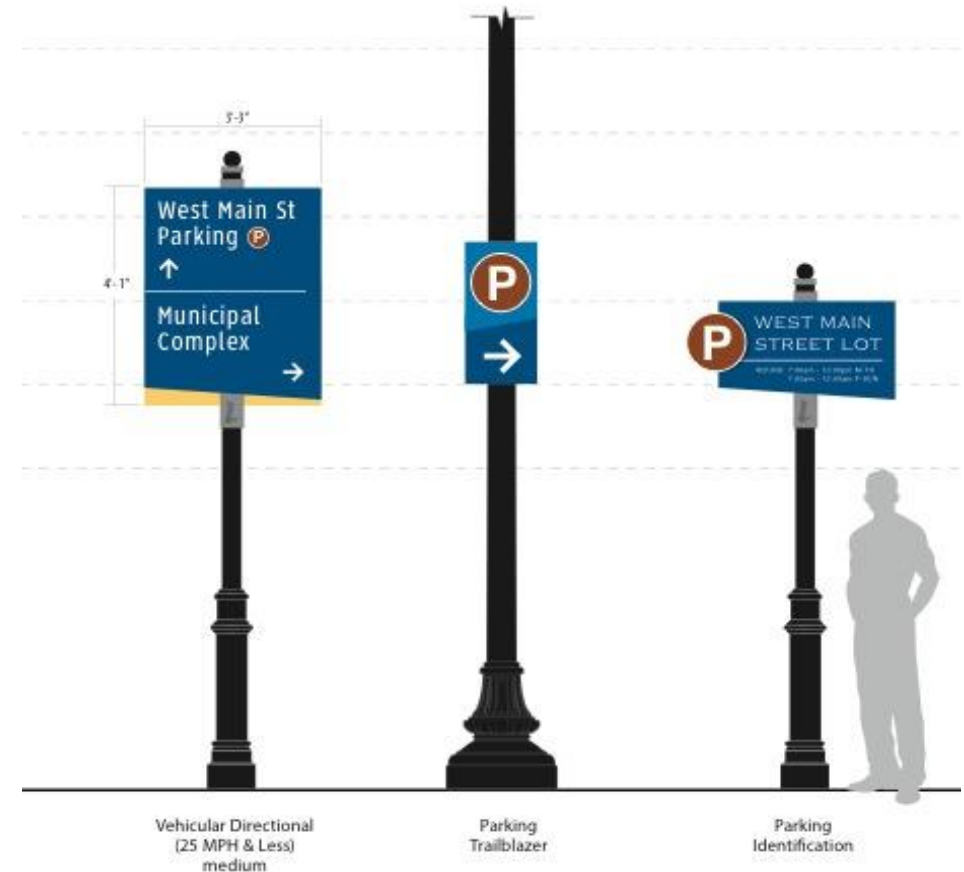
2. EXTEND HOURS OF ENFORCEMENT TO 9 PM THROUGH SATURDAY FOR ITURBIDE ON STREET ZONE

- On street zones that receive high evening usage should extend hours of enforcement to ensure greater turnover and space availability for evening users
- Extended hours of enforcement discourages overnight parking along key entertainment district streets
- Non-entertainment district zones (e.g. Government District, St. Peter's etc.) should maintain enforcement until 6 PM
- At any given time, occupancy targets should be 70-85 percent per block face, 1-2 open spaces per block face



3. IMPROVE PARKING WAYFINDING SIGNAGE

- Missing wayfinding and directional signage is contributing to congestion at the curb because users are having a difficult time locating available off-street parking options
- Locating public parking can be a challenge for motorists, **80 percent of survey respondents said parking signage in Downtown is inadequate**
- An improved wayfinding and signage system can help motorists more easily identify public parking, mitigate congestion on the curb, and distribute parking demand more evenly across the downtown



4. PROMOTE PARKING THROUGH ROBUST MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

- Users are having trouble identifying public parking options
- Communications can be improved by creating a downtown parking website
- If patrons have a tool they can use to find helpful information prior to arriving downtown, the overall downtown experience can be enhanced

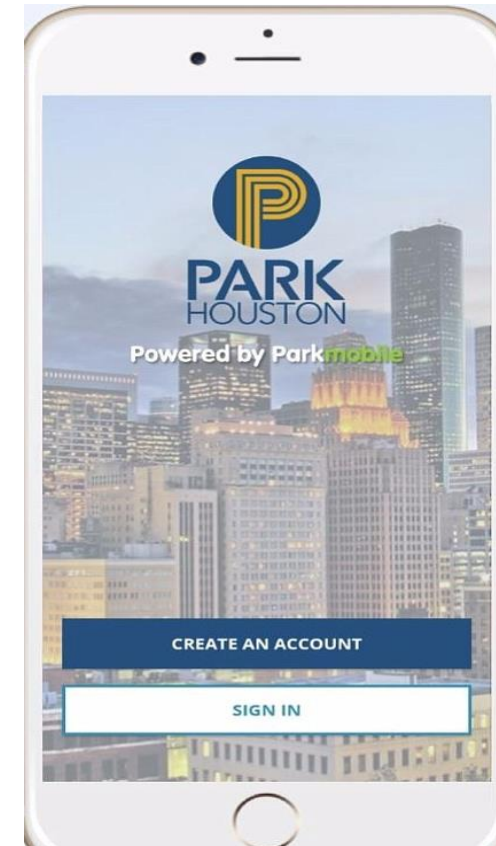


Downtown Tallahassee, Florida

<http://tallahasseedowntown.com/parking/>

5. CONSIDER LAUNCHING A MOBILE PARKING APP AS A CUSTOMER SERVICE TECHNOLOGY ENHANCEMENT

- The City is in development of a mobile parking app which Walker encourages
- The benefits of mobile apps include:
 - ✓ Flexibility for users who no longer have to walk to meter to load and reload time
 - ✓ Coin and cards no longer needed at the meter
 - ✓ Ability to receive message alerts when time is expiring
 - ✓ A transaction history available to account users
 - ✓ Parking location display, rate, and space availability information



Parking Mobile App - Park Houston

6. ENHANCE THE PEDESTRIAN REALM TO SUPPORT A 'PARK ONCE' DOWNTOWN DISTRICT

- Downtown Laredo is highly compact and walkable and scaled around higher pedestrian use
- A Park Once District ensures users are only parking their vehicle once and walking across the downtown
- By improving the downtown pedestrian experience, users are more likely to walk greater distances between their destination and parking areas
- Improved lighting and public safety for evening and nighttime users was voiced as a concern by downtown stakeholders



Sidewalk concrete cracking and overgrown vegetation observed creating access and use challenges

7. PROMOTE SHARED USE PARKING AGREEMENTS BETWEEN THE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTOR

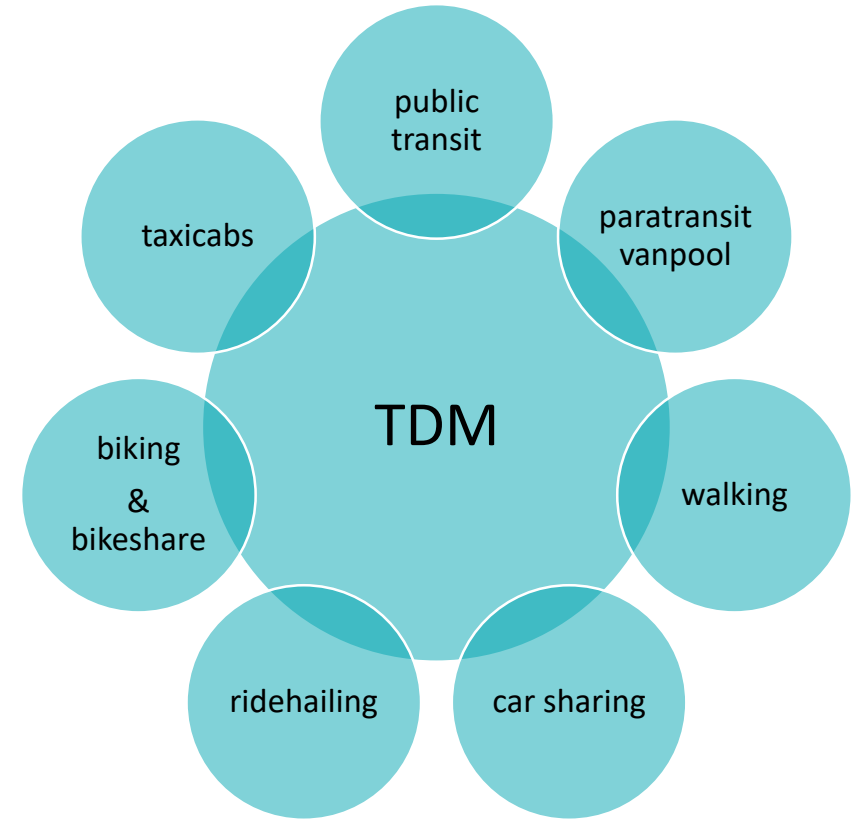
- Continue to create agreements to share underutilized parking lots between their private owners and the public
- Shared parking takes advantage of “off-peak” hours to maximize the use of existing parking resources
- If 5-10 percent of partially reserved off-street spaces were available for a portion of the day that would contribute another ± 325 spaces into the public system, a more cost effective course of action than building a new garage
- Explore feasibility of partnering with the county to make the estimated 146-space HEB garage have some public parking accommodation across evenings and weekends

Weekday Peak	Nighttime Peak	Weekend Peak
Office	Restaurants/Bars	Retail Stores
Banks	Residential	Churches
Government Facilities	Entertainment	Auditoriums

A synergy between daytime and night-time uses can be identified. For example, downtown churches parking demand is fewer on non-Sundays

8. EXPLORE THE POTENTIAL FOR TRANSPORTATION DEMAND MANAGEMENT SOLUTIONS DOWNTOWN

- Driving and parking in downtown is the preferred travel mode today and primary way current users are accessing downtown
- Explore partnerships with the private sector and El Metro to address transportation needs; promote alternative transit accommodations downtown, and provide commuters more options to access downtown
- We recommend the City convene public and private sector stakeholders to identify and prioritize programs that work for them to reduce car dependency in the downtown



9. CONSIDER LOW COST OPTIONS TO MAXIMIZE THE EXISTING PARKING SPACE EFFICIENCY AND GAIN ADDITIONAL SPACE IN NEEDED AREAS

- Walker does not recommend building a parking garage in the downtown at this time
- Opportunities to increase space efficiency in existing “hot-spot” areas by restriping and reconfiguration
- We recommend the City further study the feasibility of converting existing parallel spaces to angled spaces on the east block face of San Agustin Plaza, which can yield a net gain of 11 spaces
- Additional lot restriping at Washington and Convent can yield approximately 120 spaces



10. IMPLEMENT A DOWNTOWN PARKING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

- Form a downtown parking advisory committee with broad representation of interests including members of the downtown business community, retailers, restaurateurs, bar owners, downtown institutions and organizations i.e. Laredo Main Street, Performing Arts Center etc.
- No formal governmental capacity proposed, but, a group that can meet on a quarterly basis to discuss parking trends and issues downtown and provides feedback to the City
- Goal is to forge a valuable public-private partnership that advises, improves public communications, and balances the needs of the downtown parking system for the benefit of all users



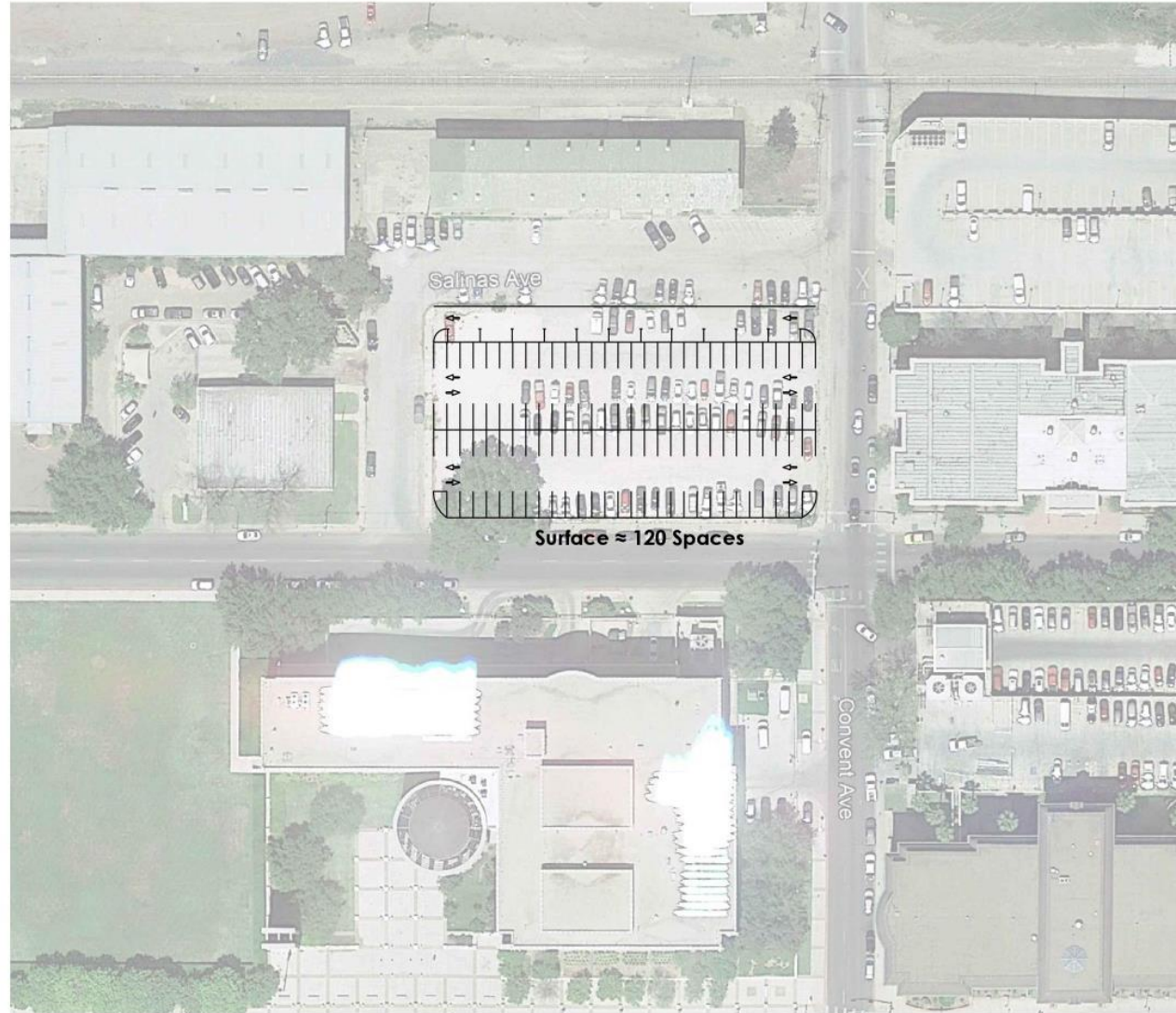
ALTERNATIVES

- Angled parking at San Augustine Plaza
- Way to pick up a few more spaces on the eastern block face
- ± 15 spaces



ALTERNATIVES

- Striping and functional layout of existing gravel lot in Government District
- ± 120 spaces



Potential Surface Parking for Laredo Judicial Area

Q&A