

**Downtown Comprehensive Parking Program**  
*Final Draft*  
**Steering Committee Recommendation**  
**April 22, 2002**

**Updated January 2003**

**Submitted by:**

**The Downtown Spokane Partnership  
Business Improvement District  
City of Spokane**

## Downtown Comprehensive Parking Program Steering Committee Recommendation

### 1. Introduction

A key recommendation in the Plan for a New Downtown is the development of a City of Spokane comprehensive strategy to deliver parking as a necessary infrastructure for an economically healthy downtown. The effective and efficient delivery of downtown parking includes a wide-range of activities from meters and structured parking, to enforcement, surface lots, validation and more.

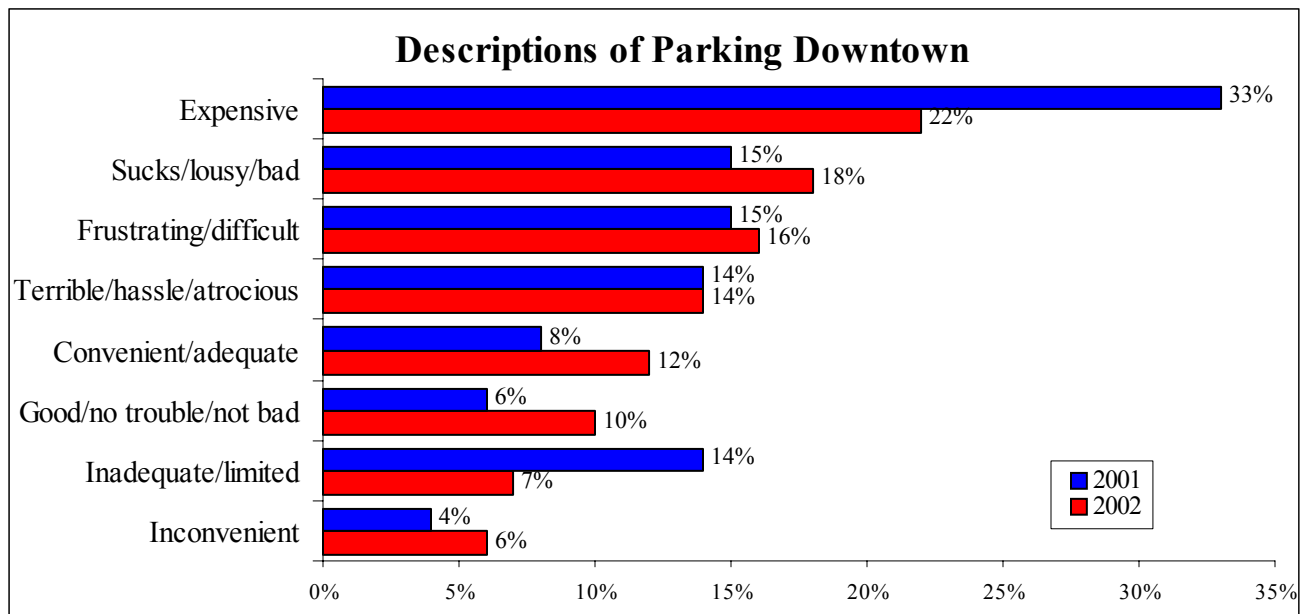
Initial research of other cities revealed that most cities have a violation-oriented parking system managed as a city revenue center. Unfortunately, it appears the Spokane system has evolved over time in a similar manner.

### 2. Spokane WA - Existing Conditions

A 400-sample survey was conducted between February 13 and 19, 2002 of Spokane County residents with a margin of error of 4.9%.

*Q.4 What key words would you use in describing parking in downtown Spokane?*

The following graph shows the distribution of descriptions for both surveys.

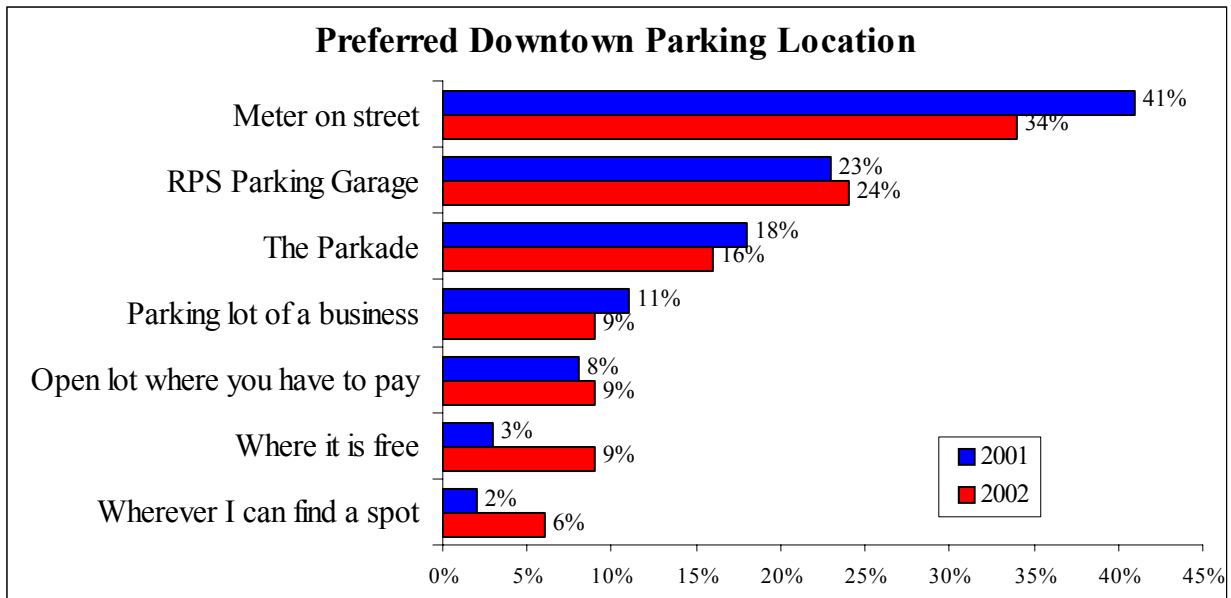


While mentions of high price (22%) were still most prevalent, they were much lower than in the 2001 sampling (33%).

Unfortunately, fully 54% still describe Downtown parking as *lousy, frustrating, terrible and inconvenient* up 6% over 2001 when combined. It appears Downtown Spokane could do a better job providing Downtown customers with an improved parking experience.

*Q.5 Where do you typically prefer to park when you are downtown?*

Meter parking on the street was still most popular (34%), but preference was down from the previous poll (41%). The following graph shows the responses for both 2002 and 2001.



It appears Downtown customers are slowly moving from meter spaces to the RPS garage, surface lots and where parking is free.

*Q.6 The last time you parked in a covered parking garage or outdoor lot in Downtown, did you receive any type of parking validation or discount?*

Thirty-eight percent (38%) reported that they received a validation or discount. This was identical to the 2001 sampling. There appears to be potential in expanding the awareness and usage of the EasyPark validation program as it relates to improved customer service.

### **3. Purpose/Goal**

Increasingly cities are recognizing that public parking can play an important role in the revitalization of downtown. Through the development of a comprehensive downtown parking system that is *customer service-based*, cities have increased revenue while decreasing costs.

While some of these cities do generate revenue for their general fund, the majority of new revenue is typically invested back into the parking system to further customer service. The results include not only a better managed, economically healthy city parking system, but also a much healthier Downtown leading to more commerce activity and increased sales tax revenue.

The goal then is to develop:

**A customer service-based Downtown parking system  
to promote economic development in Downtown Spokane.**

### **4. IDA ADVISORY PANEL PRIMARY RECOMMENDATION**

In 2001 the City of Spokane, BID and DSP contracted with the International Downtown Association (IDA) to review and recommend a strategic direction for the development of a customer-service based comprehensive downtown parking system. In November, an IDA Advisory Panel toured Spokane, interviewed individuals and made specific recommendations as outlined below.

- Create a new private, nonprofit organization, similar to the PPDA (but not the PPDA). The new organization should be governed by a board of 9-13 members representing downtown business interests and the City of Spokane. The new organization should assume responsibility for the entire downtown public parking system – meters, enforcement, surface lots and garages; and should coordinate its activities with private providers to ensure the best possible experience for downtown parking customers. The new organization should have a name that clearly distinguishes it from the PPDA and other existing parking organizations.
- Hire an experienced, motivated, and energetic parking manager who both possesses extensive parking management knowledge and skills, and understands downtown’s history and development goals. The downtown parking system should contract day-to-day operations to a capable, experienced, customer-oriented parking management company. Finally, we recommend that Spokane set its sights high – in other words, seek to create an award-winning “best-in-class” parking system.
- Launch this effort with a small group of private and public stakeholders convened as soon as possible; and develop a proposal for a new corporation in the next 60-

90 days (April). The boards of DSP, the BID and the City Council should approve resolutions supporting the creation of the new corporation.

- Commit some of the funds set aside for a parking study to the legal and administrative costs of creating this corporation.
- Consider undertaking the following activities with the remaining funds: (1) A physical inventory and use study; and (2) A projection of future parking demand and supply.
- Remaining funds should be held until the new corporation is organized, and these funds should be targeted toward the goals and objectives approved by the current parking committee and toward specific questions that the new board and executive director determine are most urgent and most strategic.

The Parking Steering Committee has accepted the IDA recommendation, but has discussed issues surrounding various organizational strategies going forward.

#### **4. Organizational**

The Steering Committee discussed in depth whether to utilize the current PPDA or create a new PPDA.

A Public Parking Development Authority (PPDA) can have limited or far reaching purposes and the City Council has the power to create a PPDA for any purpose. While PPDA's do not generate money and have no taxing authority, they act much like a public corporation or small business generating revenues to allow the PPDA to carry out programs. The City's assets are protected if the PPDA goes bankrupt. PPDA meetings are open to public and if dissolved or becomes insolvent the Spokane Superior Court would liquidate assets.

The current PPDA has a broader goal than is currently being utilized and has the ability to focus on all of Downtown parking rather than just River Park Square and the current litigation. The PPDA has worked hard as a volunteer group and has the institutional knowledge to be able to implement a parking system. The creation of a new PPDA may create the impression the City and business community is diverting funds to the new organization and until the RPS litigation is resolved, it is unlikely the City would support the creation of a new PPDA and the transfer of City assets that would be needed to implement a new parking system. This alternative would include increasing the size of the current PPDA to 13.

The IDA Panel strongly recommends the creation of a new 13-member PPDA, citing the "baggage" of the RPS litigation that has tainted the current PPDA as an effective organization. The Steering Committee expressed concerns the money generated for the

“parking system” or other assets like parking lot facilities may get pulled into the litigation if the current PPDA is utilized. With a new PPDA established, it would be able to manage the current parking assets and once there is resolution to RPS, include the garage facility.

*Steering Committee Recommendation*

*The issue of the current or new PPDA is premature given the anticipated 18-month to 3-year timeline for the resolution of the RPS litigation. Therefore, the Steering Committee recommends an incremental approach that maintains momentum and focuses on planning and adjustments in anticipation of a comprehensive downtown parking system.*

*A parking professional would be retained through a contract with the DSP and financed by the BID for a minimum 2-year period. The Parking Manager would have the authority to organize and deliver parking services (lots, meters, enforcement, garages, validation, marketing, related programs) and would be accountable directly to the BID/DSP and report to the City Administrator.*

**5. Program Administration – Hire a Professional, Full-time Parking Manager**

The DSP/BID will monitor day-to-day operations of a full time Parking Manager with monthly reporting to the City Administrator. The Manager will work closely with the city staff and DSP/BID on a variety of Downtown parking management issues including surface lots, meter enforcement and collection and RPS operations. Issues associated with the RPS litigation will remain a City of Spokane issue.

Since 1995 the DSP/BID has spent approximately \$200,000 annually on programs to deal with the negative aspects associated with parking including the cost, accessibility and level of service. These programs include validation, employee parking, value-added promotions and advertising.

The City of Spokane administration agrees with the direction and notion of a full-time Parking Manager. However, the City of Spokane is not able to commit the annual allocation of funds to support the position.

The City of Spokane is willing to split any “new” revenue in the system – through decreased cost or increased earnings 50-50, through which the DSP/BID could use a portion of the new revenue to cover the City’s cost of the position and to carry out operational initiatives.

It is assumed the City of Spokane will contribute annual existing parking budget resources such as surface lot revenue, meter collection and enforcement costs (from the general fund), lot maintenance and capital investment into the continued management of the system.

**Budget Year 1 - 2003:**

**Revenue:**

DSP/BID	\$200,000
City of Spokane	0
New Revenue (earning/decreased costs – if any)	
<b>Total</b>	<b><u>\$200,000</u></b>

**Expenses:**

Salary	\$ 60,000
Benefits	12,000

**Marketing/Programs:**

Easy Park	17,500
City Ticket	5,000
Courtesy Tickets	35,000
Bounce Back Promotion	7,500
Study/Analysis – Inventory/Demand Analysis	40,000
Program expenses – signage, uniforms etc	18,000
Search	<u>5,000</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$200,000</b>

**7. Parking Manager**

Proposed Compensation:

- Minimum 2-year contract beginning April 1, 2003 and ending March 2005
- Salary: \$55,000 - \$60,000 annually
- Benefits: standard package calculated at 20% of salary: \$12,000
- Search: regional/national. Cost \$5,000
- Job Description – see attachment

Objectives currently being done by the BID and City:

1. New user friendly uniforms for meter collectors and meter enforcement patrol
2. Expand City Ticket (employee parking) program
3. Expand (more business and garage/lot participation) and improve Easy Park validation value to customers
4. Expand bounce-back type customer service parking programs
5. Advertise and promote available, affordable and safe downtown parking
6. Randomly distribute Downtown coupons to system parkers
7. Developing an effective on-street, employee abuse parking enforcement program

Responsibility of the New Parking Manger: (Bold = year one deliverables)

1. **Provide a consistent and on-going voice for issues associated with a customer-oriented, comprehensive parking system**
2. Provide escort services to parking customers
3. **Investigate “first hour free” validation**
4. Be well aware of changes to the parking system and the budget implications on the City Spokane
5. Investigate and implement the strategic location of diagonal parking
6. **Inventory and understand the entire system of parking including Downtown and program areas that affect all of the City of Spokane such as handicapped space enforcement etc.**
7. Review current meter and garage rates to effect customer behavior reflective of changes Downtown and on an on-going basis.
8. **Build personal and business relationships with city department personnel, city leadership, private parking operators, private parking owners and Downtown business users.**
9. Investigate and establish a monthly employee parking program at city facilities
10. **Improve and maintain the condition of the freeway and convention center surface lots**
11. Develop a unified signage/marketing program
12. Integrate the developing Riverpoint Campus parking program into the system
13. **Move parking violation pay station back into city hall and investigate pay boxes at on-street locations through out Downtown.**
14. **Conduct on-going Focus Groups and surveys to better understand the Downtown customer/parker and adjust programs accordingly**
15. Be pro-active and use available public tools such as TIF financing to strategically build new structured parking to accelerate Downtown investment
16. Determine the role of the MPO and CTR and air quality attainment in the development of a parking system
17. Complete a parking Demand Analysis per IDA recommendation
18. **Complete parking space inventory per IDA recommendation**
19. Investigate meter enforcement on Sundays to decrease employee abuse
20. Investigate meter enforcement past 5:00PM to curb employee abuse
21. Research and maintain knowledge of “state of the art” parking systems and technology and apply as appropriate
22. Find funding and install new smart meter heads through out the city on-street system
23. Investigate and implement a residential permit program for Saturday parking in residential areas and as more downtown housing comes on-line.
24. Identify ways to decrease cost and increase revenue that *INCREASE* the level of customer service.
25. Advocate for all parking revenues and cost to be included in a parking enterprise fund

- 26. Review the seven different meter zones (length of stay) and adjust accordingly
- 27. Package and bid out surface lots under the freeway and convention center surface lots to improve service and generate increased revenue for the system**
- 28. Work with city meter enforcement and Downtown employers to reduce employee on-street parking abuse by 50%**
- 29. Investigate pricing of meters, commercial loading zones, special event permits, construction permits, infraction fees to assure the cost is effecting customer behavior in a fair and appropriate way resulting in a system that is perceived as fair and responsive and supportive of Downtown development.**

**9. Timeframe**

Advertise the position	February 2003
Interview candidates	March 2003
Parking Manager begins work	April 1, 2003

## **Attachment #1**

### **DOWNTOWN SPOKANE PARTNERSHIP Job Description**

**Title:** Downtown Spokane Parking Manager  
**Reports To:** President - Downtown Spokane Partnership  
**Effective:** April 1, 2003

---

#### **The Downtown Spokane Mission Statement**

To develop a parking system in Downtown Spokane that views each user as a valued customer and provides exemplary operations, maintenance, marketing, customer service and safety with the result that parking becomes, in every respect, an asset and an advantage for Downtown Spokane.

#### **Purpose of Position**

Reporting to the Downtown Spokane Partnership (DSP), the Manager will be responsible for all aspects of the management and operation of the Downtown Parking System. This includes, but is not limited to, the operations, marketing, promotion, administration, policy implementation, fiscal reporting and communications.

#### **Duties and Responsibilities**

1. Develop a request for proposal and administer the bid process for the professional parking management contract to operate/maintain city-owned parking lots.
2. Develop and implement operational standards and goals for the overall parking experience with the purpose of “leading by example” and encouraging private parking operators to elevate their standards and “perceived value” to the customer.
3. Initiate and implement the start up of the Downtown Parking System. This includes setting up an office, collaborate with City, BID and DSP staff and plan and coordinate the transition of various city services to the new system.
4. Provide and be responsible for routine, accurate fiscal reporting commensurate with the expectations of the BID/DSP and in compliance with local, state and federal requirements. Also, establish and be responsible for a budget as approved by the BID/DSP.
5. Create a working downtown parking information management system, organizing information including, but not limited to, parking revenues, operating costs, number of parked cars, number of spaces, special events revenues, opportunity costs of free parking programs, etc.

6. Develop and implement a marketing plan for the parking system in conjunction with the BID/DSP and City that may include items such as consistent signage, beautification, downtown informational media, voucher systems, surveys, etc.
7. Develop and implement a program that coordinates parking efforts with private parking operations.
8. In general, serve as a liaison with the City of Spokane, other parking operations, the Convention Bureau, and any other businesses or downtown organizations as necessary to meet the mission of the downtown parking program.

## **Qualification Criteria**

The following factors have been identified as attributes for the Manager.

- Five years of progressively responsible experience in the field of private or municipal parking administration, management and operations.
- Experience with local government or similar management association involving interaction with the business community, merchant organizations and local governmental agencies.
- Be a strong leader, capable of serving as the “spokesperson” for the downtown parking program and have an effective communication skill level – able to express ideas clearly, both verbally and written.
- Have an accessible, facilitative management style which fosters a productive, positive, cooperative and well-coordinated effort in relationships with Board, Committees, local government and appropriate business and community interests.
- Have a high level of personal energy, enthusiasm and a “spirit of entrepreneurship”.
- Capable of functioning effectively in a climate of openness, able to project a strong and stable demeanor in a highly visible public role under scrutiny and news media attention.
- Be proactive with all participants involved in downtown planning, development and economic vitality.
- Be able to establish “instant credibility” and maintain and intensify the momentum of established plans for development.
- Be a visionary, with an ability to see the “big picture” as well as being “results oriented”.
- Have the ability to “coordinate diverse interests”, find common ground and consensus, and “bring people together”.
- Be a “dynamic advocate of the downtown”, have a “flair for promotion”, be able to create “sustained excitement”, and “orchestrate an effective marketing program”.
- Be able to effectively market the downtown parking program to visitors, as well as repeat, everyday users.
- Have a desire to make downtown a friendly and attractive “people place” with a positive public perception and be familiar with special event programming.
- Must have managerial, fiscal and operational experience with Central Business District parking facilities. Five to ten years experience preferred.

- Minimum education: Bachelors Degree or equal experience.

### **Salary and Benefits**

The Parking Manager will receive a compensation and benefit package commensurate with background, qualifications, achievements and record of performance.