

## Appendix C

### Inventory Analysis – Passenger and Commercial Loading Zones

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#### A. BACKGROUND

One of the most important elements for creating an active, vibrant downtown environment is the availability of convenient, accessible on-street parking for the customer/visitor/patron of the downtown. Increasing the number of available on-street parking opportunities for patrons will maximize the number of customers/visitors accessing the downtown. Efficient and optimal use of *on-street* parking also helps to reduce the overall amount of *off-street* parking stalls (potentially in parking structures) that need to be built. Off-street parking, while necessary, is much more expensive to provide.

The first level of review in a parking management plan is an evaluation of potential opportunities to “add back” parking on-street. This can be accomplished by providing parking at block faces that currently have no parking (pending review of traffic and safety impacts) and/or converting existing parking (i.e., loading zones, 15-minute zones, taxi zones, etc.) that is underutilized to more appropriate use designations (i.e., metered with appropriate time stay allowances).

To this end, the Parking Steering Committee (PSC) requested a more specific analysis of Passenger Loading Zones (PLZ) and Commercial Loading Zones (CLZ) in the downtown using actual usage data derived from the Parking Demand Analysis inventory conducted in downtown on May 20 and 22, 2004.

The basic question asked by the PSC was: Are there spaces currently designated as PLZ or CLZ that would better serve the downtown as metered patron stalls if it was demonstrated that PLZ or CLZs were significantly underutilized?



Information gained through this analysis assisted the PSC in its deliberation of strategies and management programs designed to improve overall access for patrons and users of the downtown. The following analysis addresses some of the potential add back opportunities for Downtown Spokane regarding loading zones.

#### B. METHODOLOGY

During the course of the downtown-parking inventory, surveyors counted the number of vehicles occupying passenger and commercial loading zones during each hour of the study. Counts were conducted between 10:30 a.m. and 9:30 p.m. on Thursday, May 20, 2004 and 11:30 a.m. and 10:30 p.m. on Saturday, May 22, 2004.<sup>1</sup> Since restrictions on the use of PLZs and CLZs

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<sup>1</sup> For the purposes of this analysis, data from the May 20, 2004 survey was used (versus Saturday, May 22, 2004) because the Thursday study day provided higher percentages of use, thereby ensuring a more conservative representation of parking activity in passenger and commercial loading zones. Stated differently, if Saturday data were used for the analysis, use of these zones would be understated.

are in effect until 6:00 p.m. (except for a few cases) this analysis summarizes usage only until 6:00 p.m., assuming that after 6:00 p.m. these zones generally operate no differently than a metered stall.

To be consistent with information already provided in Section I of this report, data for loading zones has been summarized for the entire South Study Zone area as well as four sub-zones that include:

- Core Zone
- Convention Center Zone
- West End Zone
- Periphery Zone

**C. PASSENGER LOADING ZONES (PLZ)**

Within the boundaries of the South Study Zone area there are a total of 40 PLZs. Of that total 25 are in the Core Zone, two are in the Convention Center Zone, four in the West End Zone and nine in the Periphery Zone. Each PLZ differs in total size ranging from 20 to 140 feet. If these stalls were converted to standard on-street metered parking stalls, 72 metered stalls could be “added back” to the supply.

**Table 1**, below, summarizes actual use data from the on-street parking inventory.

**Table 1  
Passenger Loading Zones**

	# of Existing PLZs	# of Potential Metered Stalls if Converted	Possible Vehicle Hours (10:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.)	Actual Vehicle Hours in Use on Survey Day	Actual Usage as Percent of Possible Vehicle Hours <sup>2</sup>
<b>Core Zone</b>	25	48	336	54	16%
<b>Convention Center Zone</b>	2	3	21	1	5%
<b>West End Zone</b>	4	6	42	3	7%
<b>Periphery Zone</b>	9	15	105	17	16%
<b>Totals (South Study Area)</b>	40	72	504	75	15%

For each of the four parking data zones in the downtown, the following conclusions can be derived as regards utilization of PLZs.

<sup>2</sup> It is important to note that these utilization numbers are very low, considering that the on-street peak utilization of metered stalls was significantly higher in each zone observed during the survey days.

### Core Zone

- ✓ There are 25 passenger-loading zones distributed across the Core Zone.
- ✓ Based on the size of the current zones, there is the potential to create up to 48 metered on-street stalls.
- ✓ Those 48 potential stalls had 336 possible vehicle hours for use during the survey day.<sup>3</sup>
- ✓ Only 54 actual vehicle hours were recorded during the course of the survey day, which represents 16 percent utilization across all stalls.

### Convention Center Zone

- ✓ There are two passenger-loading zones located in the Convention Center Zone.
- ✓ Based on the size of the current zones, there is the potential to create up to three metered on-street stalls.
- ✓ Those three potential stalls had 21 possible vehicle hours for use during the survey day.
- ✓ Only one vehicle hour was recorded during the course of the survey day, which represents just 5 percent utilization of these stalls in the Convention Center Zone.

### West End Zone

- ✓ There are four passenger-loading zones located in the West End Zone.
- ✓ Based on the size of the current zones, there is the potential to create up to six metered on-street stalls.
- ✓ Those six potential stalls had 42 possible vehicle hours for use during the survey day.
- ✓ Only three vehicle hours were recorded during the course of the survey day, which represents just 7 percent utilization of these stalls in the West End Zone.

### Periphery Zone

- ✓ There are nine passenger-loading zones located in the Periphery Zone.
- ✓ Based on the size of the current zones, there is the potential to create up to 15 metered on-street stalls.
- ✓ Those 15 potential stalls had 105 possible vehicle hours for use during the survey day.
- ✓ Only 17 vehicle hours were recorded during the course of the survey day, which represents 16 percent utilization of these stalls in the Periphery Zone.

***Overall, the entire demonstrated use of PLZs in the South Study Zone reaches an average of just 15% of all potential vehicle hours during which a patron vehicle could be parked. This is of particular relevance in the Core Zone where a small deficit of on-street stalls (28 stalls) has been established during the peak hour.***

In summary, it appears that PLZs receive very minimal use by patrons of the downtown. Conversion of PLZs to metered stalls would “add back” 72 potential parking stalls to the South Zone study area. Given that the parking inventory established an average daily turnover rate in the downtown of 5.1 turns per metered stall per day, adding back underutilized PLZs would create capacity for an additional 367 vehicle trips during the course of a typical enforcement day. In the Core Zone alone, which currently has 486 metered stalls, the conversion of the 25

<sup>3</sup> 48 potential stalls each with 7 observable enforcement hours (10:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.) yields 336 possible vehicle hours.

PLZs into 48 metered stalls represents a potential 10 percent increase in the number of on-street spaces that would be available to patrons. This would be a simple and efficient solution to the current on-street parking deficit in the Core Zone and a significant accomplishment at little to no cost to the city.

#### D. COMMERCIAL LOADING ZONES (CLZ)

Within the boundaries of the South Study Zone area there are a total of 119 CLZs. Of that total 47 are in the Core Zone, 13 are in the Convention Center Zone, 10 in the West End Zone and 49 in the Periphery Zone. Each CLZ differs in total size ranging from 20 to 140 feet. If these stalls were converted to standard on-street metered parking stalls, 207 metered stalls could be “added back” to the supply.<sup>4</sup>

Table 2, below, summarizes actual use data from the on-street parking inventory.

**Table 2  
Commercial Loading Zones**

	# of CLZs	# of Potential Stalls	Possible Vehicle Hours	Actual Vehicle Hours	Percent Usage
<b>Core Zone</b>	47	88	616	106	17%
<b>Convention Center Zone</b>	13	21	147	15	10%
<b>West End Zone</b>	10	18	126	12	10%
<b>Periphery Zone</b>	49	80	560	60	11%
<b>Totals</b>	119	207	1449	193	13%

For each of the four parking data zones downtown, the following conclusions can be derived as regards utilization of CLZs.

##### Core Zone

- ✓ There are 47 commercial loading zones distributed across the Core Zone.
- ✓ Based on the size of the current zones, there is the potential to create up to 88-metered on-street stalls.
- ✓ Those 88 potential stalls had 616 possible vehicle hours for use during the survey day.<sup>5</sup>
- ✓ Only 106 actual vehicle hours were recorded during the course of the survey day, which represents 17 percent utilization across all stalls.

<sup>4</sup> Unlike PLZs it is important to recognize the important and necessary function that CLZs provide for business and the movement of freight and other services into and out of the downtown. It is doubtful that 100% conversion of CLZs to on-street metered parking would occur (as it could with PLZs). Nonetheless, an analysis of the actual utilization of CLZs is important to the overall discussion of on-street parking. Strategic reduction of CLZ spaces, based on utilization, is clearly a relevant and cost-effective parking management strategy.

<sup>5</sup> 88 potential stalls each with 7 observable enforcement hours (10:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.) yields 616 possible vehicle hours.

### Convention Center Zone

- ✓ There are 13 commercial loading zones located in the Convention Center Zone.
- ✓ Based on the size of the current zones, there is the potential to create up to 21 metered on-street stalls.
- ✓ Those 21 potential stalls had 147 possible vehicle hours for use during the survey day.
- ✓ Only 15 vehicle hours were recorded during the course of the survey day, which represents just 10 percent utilization of these stalls in the Convention Center Zone.

### West End Zone

- ✓ There are 10 passenger loading zones located in the West End Zone.
- ✓ Based on the size of the current zones, there is the potential to create up to 18 metered on-street stalls.
- ✓ Those 18 potential stalls had 126 possible vehicle hours for use during the survey day.
- ✓ Only 12 vehicle hours were recorded during the course of the survey day, which represents just 10 percent utilization of these stalls in the West End Zone.

### Periphery Zone

- ✓ There are 49 passenger loading zones located in the Periphery Zone.
- ✓ Based on the size of the current zones, there is the potential to create up to 80 metered on-street stalls.
- ✓ Those 80 potential stalls had 560 possible vehicle hours for use during the survey day.
- ✓ Only 60 vehicle hours were recorded during the course of the survey day, which represents 11 percent utilization of these stalls in the Periphery Zone.



**Overall, the entire demonstrated use of CLZs in the South Study Zone reaches an average of just 13% of all potential vehicle hours during which a patron vehicle could be parked. In general, it is accurate to say that current CLZ zones may be overprovided based on actual demonstrated use.**

While the consultant team would not suggest significant reductions in CLZs given the need for on-going freight and delivery access, *this analysis demonstrates that further investigation of underutilized or poorly placed CLZs, particularly in the Core Zone where patron parking demand is most prevalent.* The City should consider developing definitive criteria for citing future CLZs in the downtown and make better use of combination zones that serve commercial loading and unloading in the morning hours while also serving customer/visitor needs (as metered parking) during the midday and afternoon peaks.

## **V. SUMMARY**

Based on information derived from the on-street data survey, it is clear that PLZs and CLZs in the downtown are underutilized. It appears that significant reductions or even elimination of PLZs would result in benefits to both the downtown (in terms of net new parking access) and to downtown patrons (in terms of increased parking availability). The “add back” of PLZs to metered patron parking supply would also likely result in increased revenue to the City and a reduction in the cost of future off-street parking development. The analysis also calls for a strategic investigation of areas and block faces in the downtown that could convert some CLZ space to metered patron supply.