

Downtown Parking Study

Wilson, NC



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Prepared For
City of Wilson, Planning & Community Revitalization

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Downtown Businesses and Merchants

Arts Council of Wilson
BB&T
Carrons Funeral Home
Dance Studio B
Edna Boykin Cultural Center
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Wilson Hardware
Wilson Housing Authority
Wilson Iron Works
Wilson Parking Commission
Wilson Renaissance Center

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Glossary of Terms

The following is a brief list of phrases and terms that are used within this report.

- ADA parking – marked or signed parking spaces that are available to persons with disabilities and displaying either an ADA placard (hang tag) or ADA license plate.
- Demand – an estimation of the number of vehicles that are in need of a parking space during a specified period of time. Existing parking demand will typically refer to the busiest period of the busiest day of the week based, and on parking occupancy counts.
- Demand margin: assumes that the vehicles observed during the peak period does not include individuals who may be working from home, on vacation, or otherwise away from their normal place of business on the day of data collection. For the purposes of this study the demand margin will be 10%.
- Effective demand: calculated as the existing number of vehicles observed during the peak period plus a specified demand margin to account for individuals who were not at work on the day of data collection. For the purposes of this study the effective demand will be 110% of the observed occupancy counts.
- Effective future capacity: calculated as [raw surplus] – [effective demand].
- Efficiency – the highest and best use of a parking lot, which involves maximizing the physical layout of parking spaces as well as the oversell of parking permits to maximize the number of parkers without reaching 100% capacity during the peak period.
- Employee – individuals who regularly park within downtown for a typical work week. This category excludes irregular visitors that may be arriving for meetings, errands, special events, or other activities, such as jury duty.
- Employee parking – spaces or lots that are generally available during regular business hours (8am to 5 pm, Monday through Friday).
- Future parking demand – the estimation of additional vehicles that are generated by development; also refers to a specified period to time (either AM or PM peak period).
- Length of Stay – the duration of time that a vehicle is parked, either within a single (on-street) parking space, or among several parking spaces in a common area.
- Loading Zone – on-street parking location that is shared among nearby businesses for the purposes of *very brief* loading and unloading of delivery vehicles.
- Metered parking – parking spaces that are controlled by a parking meter device for the purposes of encouraging short parking duration and turnover within a high demand area.
- Occupancy – parking spaces that contain a vehicle during a specified time period (typically measured during AM, mid-day, PM, or evening).
- Periphery parking location – parking lot or block that is located along the boundary of a specified area, *further* than other locations. These areas are generally low-demand.

- Permit parking system – a physical sticker or hang tag that allows access to either a specified lot or a limited number of lots, and is coordinated by an organization or agency that efficiently manages parking resources for all users.
- Proximate parking location – a parking lot or block that is more centrally-located within a specified area, closer than other locations. These locations are generally high-demand.
- Regular parking – any non-reserved parking space that is generally available to any and all parkers. This category would include any timed on-street parking spaces, unless specifically stated otherwise.
- Reserved parking – signed parking spaces that are designated to a single individual, and are rented for a monthly fee.
- Resident – an individual that lives within or adjacent to the study area.
- Resident parking – parking that is associated with nearby dwellings, typically single-family homes, townhomes, or condominiums.
- Supply – the total number of physical parking spaces that are available for parkers. Parking supply may refer to existing or future conditions. Public or private ownership of the parking supply may be an important distinction.
- Surplus parking – calculated as [existing parking supply] – [effective demand].
- Turnover – the number of vehicles that will utilize a single parking space during a specified time. Parking turnover is usually discussed in terms of on-street parking spaces within a high demand area. An on-street parking space with a 1-hour time limit will (in theory) have a higher turnover rate than one with a 2-hour time limit. This assumes that active enforcement will discourage any illegal parking.
- Visitor – an individual that irregularly arrives within the study area for either business, pleasure, or errands, and is not a downtown employee.
- Visitor parking – parking spaces that are provided for short-term clients/customers, typically at no charge to the individual, however may be subsidized by the department or agency. Visitor parking spaces may either be specifically signed as ‘Visitor’, or may include metered parking.

Executive Summary

The purpose of this parking study is to evaluate existing conditions, utilization, policies and practices within Downtown Wilson. This report documents the analysis from these activities and recommends near-term (1-5 year) improvements that will:

- inform and transform the public’s perception of downtown parking,
- strengthen the administrative role(s) of the City’s parking management system, and
- balance the parking needs of all users in an equitable manner.

The study will also prepare for more long-term improvements (5-10 years) that support further economic development opportunities in the City.

The plan vision was developed in coordination with the project steering committee. The plan’s vision statements are:

- Effectively utilize the existing parking resources and plan for future parking needs
- Treat parking as a limited resource to serve future economic development opportunities

Plan goals are measurable outputs that support the overall plan vision. Working in conjunction with the project steering committee, the following project goals were identified:

- Quantify the existing parking supply and utilization
- Recommend operational and management improvements
- Strategize and document the future parking demand
- Improve wayfinding and access to/from visitor parking areas
- Develop a strategic plan for future parking needs
- Identify and mitigate the potential parking-related barriers to future economic development opportunities
- Quantify the economic benefits/costs of parking resources

Community Involvement

The project team conducted 21 interview sessions with various stakeholders and groups. The purpose of these interviews was to gather first-hand knowledge of the City’s parking challenges, parking enforcement, revenues generated by parking, daily management of the parking system, and other related topics.

The perception of (evening) safety issues was the most frequently discussed topic, particularly relating to walking to/from public parking lots. This topic was routinely mentioned by stakeholders as the rationale to park within on-street spaces in front of their place of business or employment.

General Topics of Agreement

Stakeholder interviews revealed a positive reaction toward installing on-street parking meters to ensure availability for customers/shoppers. There was also a repeated desire among business owners to allow validation of paid parking for customers, as was previously available.

General Topics of Disagreement

Stakeholder interviews revealed that all groups of parkers were routinely occupying on-street parking spaces in high-demand areas for a majority of the day. This indicates a current disparity of value between the parking needs of (a) individuals who live and work downtown, and (b) the economic benefit of available on-street parking spaces. The take away message is that all stakeholders seem to value free, convenient parking locations over the ‘greater good’ philosophy of reserving on-street parking spaces for retail customers and visitors to foster economic development within downtown. This will be an important challenge for the City to overcome as the parking management system evolves.

General Topics of Uncertainty

The Wilson County and Federal Courthouse schedule was discussed as a major generator for visitor parking demand. The court schedule, however, will vary by day throughout a typical month, making it challenging to identify the peak day, or peak hour.

Existing Supply and Utilization

VHB conducted a field inventory of all parking spaces within downtown. Field work confirmed the total number of parking lots, documented whether the lot was public or private, and counted the number of parking spaces of each type (e.g. meter, reserved, ADA, or general unreserved). The project team returned on the following day to conduct AM and PM field surveys of parking utilization, as well as an analysis of on-street parking turnover.

A total of 453 on-street parking spaces exist with 93% of these having a 2-hour maximum time limit. A total of 3,100 off-street parking spaces were inventoried, 63% (1,944) of which were private parking and beyond the control of the City of Wilson (Table 2).

The City of Wilson is responsible for the maintenance of 1,424 total parking spaces; 282 of these are currently leased from private owners (Table 6).

To assess the existing demand, occupancy counts were collected during a single ‘snap shot’ in time. The total number of parked vehicles observed during the AM peak period was 1,498 cars (42% occupied). The most heavily occupied parking areas were the municipal-reserved category (58%; 288 vehicles), which includes City and County of Wilson parking lots where a majority of employees park during the day (Table 7). The least occupied parking areas were on-street parking spaces (30%; 138 vehicles).

The existing parking supply analysis suggests that, with more than 900 empty spaces observed during the peak period, the City of Wilson has sufficient parking supply to meet the existing demand. However, in some high-demand downtown locations, the current distribution and balance of parking supply may be contributing to a perceived parking shortage.

An on-street turnover analysis found 33 vehicles (11%) that were observed on four or more occasions, which likely represent downtown employees who are choosing to park for a majority of the day within the free, on-street parking spaces. These 33 vehicles occupied 193 of the total service hours (17%), as well as 35% of the total occupied service hours. It is possible that some of these 33 vehicles are being ‘shuffled’ to adjacent on-street parking spaces for the purpose of avoiding a citation.

A number of on-street vehicles were observed on four or more occasions throughout the 8-hour sample period. Twenty-three of these vehicles were ‘shuffling’ their vehicles to multiple locations, while the remaining 10 remained parked in one space, either because they are willing to pay the citation (\$5) or they did not receive a citation. These 33 vehicles were occupying 17% of the total available service hours within high-demand locations along Nash St, Tarboro St, and Goldsboro St near the center of downtown (Table 11).

Future Parking Demand

The VHB team identified development projects that are expected within the near-term (1-5 years) and long-term (5-10 years), estimated the parking demand that can be anticipated from these projects, and determined if additional parking supply will be necessary to meet this future demand.

The project team developed a spreadsheet model that quantifies parking generation from square footage and land use type inputs using standards from the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Parking Generation (4th Edition) manual. This model may be easily updated in the future as needed and new demand estimates would be generated.

The City of Wilson has an estimated [raw surplus of 783 parking spaces currently](#).

Near-term development projects are expected to generate 56,000 GSF and a parking demand for 434 new parking spaces. This future demand will be accommodated by the current raw surplus, leaving an estimated [balance of approximately 349 parking spaces in the near-term](#).

If all of the currently vacant properties were re-activated in the long-term, an additional 151,000 GSF and parking demand of 418 parking spaces is expected, which yields a [negative balance of approximately \(-69\) parking spaces in the long-term](#), and additional parking supply may be needed. The cost of constructing new parking spaces to meet the future estimate demand would be greater than \$300,000. This cost could be deferred by several years by encouraging employees who currently park on-street to find suitable parking within the under-utilized parking lots that already exist.

In addition to the delayed construction costs, the City should also be financially motivated to free up as much on-street parking spaces as possible to avoid (potential) lost revenues from downtown shoppers who ‘can’t find on-street parking.’ This concept reinforces the removal of employee vehicles from the high-demand, on-street parking spaces for the betterment of the parking and economic systems of downtown.

Strategies

Finding a convenient parking space in Downtown Wilson has been easy in recent years. Data collection confirms, vehicles are typically occupying between 30-60% of parking spaces. As

downtown develops, and economic opportunities are realized there will be a greater number of vehicles and increased demand for these available parking spaces. City has initiated this study to begin planning for physical and programmatic improvements that will effectively balance parking supply and demand before parking becomes a challenge. This plan includes many recommendations, some would be relatively quick and inexpensive while others will take time and require a shifting of perspectives and administration. The most challenging recommendation involves the overall administration of the parking program, which is presented in Sections V and VI discussing three possible options in regards to the future administrative management of parking:

1. The City can continue with the current Parking Commission arrangement, however it should transition in terms of the Commission's role and level of coordination with other City departments;
2. The full responsibility for parking planning and operations can be internally reorganized into a City department; or
3. Responsibility for parking planning and overall parking policies could be vested in the Planning and Revitalization department and it is assumed that parking matters would fall to a new Parking Committee within that organization.

All three management options are feasible for the future, and changes may begin now while parking is not an issue. Maintaining the current structure necessitates some administrative and logistical changes to improve efficiencies. The City should emphasize how parking is linked to strategic planning, policy making and daily operational activities that support the economic health of downtown businesses and development goals for Downtown Wilson.

Implementation

Some of the initial or interim steps within the overall process include:

Short-term

- Review elements of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) as they relate to City-owned parking facilities
- Review all vehicular signs located within the roadway right-of-way for compliance with design standards from the Manual for Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) http://mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov/kno_2009r1r2.htm
 - Perform audit of all City of Wilson signs within Downtown for consistence of message, visibility from driver or pedestrian perspective, and physical condition. Identify the lead agency that is responsible for each sign.
- Identify a lead agency or department to manage the business of parking, and define mission, goals, objectives, and roles among various City departments
 - Hire a Director of Parking Services, preferably a Certified Administrator of Public Parking (CAPP) to administer the lead agency.

- Perform regular peak period occupancy counts of all municipal parking lots, summarize results, track changes over time, and report the findings to City Council.
- Deter on-street parking by downtown employees through education, enforcement, and financial controls
- Establish a formalized procedure for the citation review process
- Begin to treat parking as a financially-independent, or self-liquidating operation, and implement gradual changes toward this objective
 - Hold parking revenues separate from the General Fund; use for upgrading enforcement software, equipment, signage, maintenance, technology improvements, etc.

Long-term

Aspirational principles serve as the guiding force for these long-term improvements. Some of these recommendations will require complementary improvements that can be made in the near-term.

- Treat all municipal parking facilities as a managed system, recognizing that high-demand areas will require additional accessible parking accommodations while low-demand areas will require fewer
 - Strive for equity among all users, especially ADA, and visitors, particularly for on-street parking spaces in high-demand areas. This includes correcting the conditions that allow over-stay parking.
 - Investigate the retrofit of one of the centrally-located visitor parking lots into an access (gate) controlled hourly parking
- Consider investing in an electronic license plate tracking/ticketing system for enforcement
 - Perform research on the available on-street parking meter technology options and select an option with upgrade capabilities as the system evolves over time
- Begin marketing the benefits of on-street metered parking for customers to all downtown merchants to unite perspectives
- Consider a parking permit management system that balances the needs of residents, employees, and visitors through issuance or purchase of parking permits

Section I – Introduction and Background

The City of Wilson initiated this parking study for multiple purposes. This starts with the understanding of the current and future parking demand followed by implementation recommendations to best meet the parking needs of visitors, businesses, employees and prospective investors seeking to improve and develop downtown properties.

The project team of VHB Engineering working in coordination with Carl Walker, Inc. initiated field data collection during May 2014. Following the assessment of existing parking supply and utilization, the project team met with stakeholders to discuss and solicit feedback on the parking system management. Stakeholders included representatives of the City of Wilson, Wilson Police Department, local merchants, developers, downtown employees, and residents.

This report documents the analysis from these activities and recommends near-term (1-5 year) improvements that strives to:

- inform and transform the public’s perception of downtown parking,
- strengthen the administrative role(s) of the City’s parking management system, and
- balance the parking needs of all users in an equitable manner.

The study will also prepare for more long-term improvements (5-10 years) that support further economic development opportunities in the City.

Plan Vision

The purpose of the plan vision is to explain the impetus of the project and guide the analysis of data and recommendations. The plan vision was developed in coordination with the project steering committee, which included staff members of the Wilson Planning and Revitalization, and Engineering Division. The plan’s vision statements are:

- Effectively utilize the existing parking resources and plan for future parking needs
- Treat parking as a limited resource to serve future economic development opportunities

Plan Goals

Plan goals are measurable outputs that support the overall plan vision. Working in conjunction with the project steering committee, the following project goals were identified:

- Quantify the existing parking supply and utilization
- Recommend operational and management improvements
- Strategize the future parking demand and document
- Improve wayfinding and access to/from visitor parking areas
- Develop a strategic plan for future parking needs
- Identify and mitigate the potential parking-related barriers to future economic development opportunities
- Quantify the economic benefit/costs of parking resources

Section II – Community Involvement

Background

The study team was asked to provide a local context to the parking challenges that face the City of Wilson from the perspective of those who live, work, and experience downtown on a daily basis. Without this local knowledge, the parking study recommendations would likely be more generalized, rather than specific to the City of Wilson, and the likelihood of success would suffer as a result.

Overview of Community Involvement

On Tuesday June 10th and Wednesday June 11th 2014 the project team conducted 21 interview sessions with various stakeholders and groups. Additional follow-up conversations via phone and email were conducted for clarification of specific topics and perspectives. The purpose of these interviews was to gather first-hand knowledge of the City's parking challenges, parking enforcement, revenues generated by parking, daily management of the parking system, and other related topics. A full summary of the stakeholder interviews is provided in Appendix A.

Interviewees included members of downtown development organizations, City Council and the City Manager's office, as well as downtown merchants and developers, representatives from the Wilson Police Department, Planning and Development Services, Wilson County, and non-profit organizations that live, work and enjoy downtown.

Interview Themes

Safety Concerns

The perception of (evening) safety issues was the most frequently discussed topic, particularly walking to/from public parking lots. This topic was routinely mentioned as the rationale to park within on-street spaces in front of their place of business or employment. This perception was not, however, substantiated by City of Wilson Police Department crime statistics.

Safety is an important theme because a functional parking system depends upon a balance between price, location, and availability (demand). Parkers are given the option of parking among the available parking supply, and there are simply not enough parking spaces that are: (a) free; (b) in front of their specific destination; and (c) available when they need it. One or more of these three characteristics will need to be mitigated.

Safety issues, whether perceived or actual, will automatically narrow the 'acceptable' parking options to a smaller subset of likely high-demand locations right outside the door of their destination. Frequently these locations may be fully occupied and the user will become frustrated with the "lack of parking spaces in downtown." In reality there are plenty of available parking spaces less than 1-block away however the user has disregarded them as 'unsafe.' This situation runs contrary to the plan vision of effectively utilizing the existing parking resources.

Management of Parking

Interviewees expressed general confusion regarding the overall management of the parking system. Responses to questions such as “What agency is responsible for the day-to-day management of the parking system?” as well as “Who is responsible for general maintenance such as sweeping, lighting, striping or removal of trash from parking lots?” were less than definitive or often simply unknown to stakeholders.

This topic is important because parking is an underappreciated yet highly-visible resource that requires effective management. Identifying the agency or departments that are financially or administratively responsible for these resources on behalf of the general public will help establish credibility and authority in the mind of residents, visitors, and City employees.

General Topics of Agreement

Stakeholder interviews revealed a positive reaction toward installing on-street parking meters to ensure availability for customers/shoppers. There was also a repeated desire among business owners to allow parking validation for customers, as was previously available within the Barnes Street lot prior to the removal of its staffed ‘gate house.’ This topic supports the plan vision of treating parking (especially on-street) as a limited resource to serve future economic development opportunities.

Also discussed by many stakeholders was the need for strategically-located on-street loading zones (one per block) for short duration loading and unloading. These locations are best at the beginning or ending of each block so large vehicles or trucks will not have to parallel park.

There was agreement regarding the need for additional ADA-compliant parking, particularly on-street. This may prove challenging as the site requirements for an on-street ADA space are difficult to satisfy with parallel spaces. Angled on-street parking will more-easily satisfy ADA requirements because the required 5-foot wide access aisle connects directly to the sidewalk.

Evening and weekend special events were frequently discussed in terms of needing additional parking options. This was particularly mentioned when two or more events are scheduled on the same evening. This topic suggests that the coordination of events among various public, private, and non-profit organizations could be centralized by a single office/agency, in coordination with the Wilson Police Department.

General Topics of Disagreement

Stakeholder interviews revealed that certain groups of parkers were continually utilizing on-street parking spaces in high-demand areas for a majority of the day. The disagreement was apparent when each group identified *others* as the most common ‘violator’ of this unwritten rule. When asked the question “Who parks within on-street parking spaces in front of retail storefronts?” merchants suggested that the City and County employees, particularly those with a government-issued vehicle, were the problem. This could potentially be explained as multiple employees parking for brief periods of time in an identical looking vehicle. Government employees suggested that Courthouse employees and prospective jurors were more likely occupying these on-street parking spaces. Other stakeholders suggested the downtown employees and business owners were the ‘violators’. Several merchants admitted that they or their employees would routinely park on-street and keep an eye out for the parking

enforcement officer. The take away message is that all stakeholder groups value free, convenient parking locations over the ‘greater good’ philosophy of leaving on-street parking spaces for retail customers and visitors in order to foster economic development. This is will be an important challenge for the City to overcome as the parking management system evolves.

General Topics of Uncertainty

The Wilson County and Federal Courthouse schedule was discussed as a major generator for visitor parking demand. The court schedule, however, will vary by day throughout a typical month, meaning that it is challenging to identify the day of peak parking demand. Quantifying the parking demand that is generated by the court system is important because the courthouse does not provide parking on-site, rather these visitors are directed to park within the Centre Brick lot located 2-blocks away. Stakeholder interviewees suggest that first-time jurors are typically unfamiliar with downtown and either disregard the parking directions or choose a more convenient location closer to the courthouse, either within the Barnes Street lot (1-block closer) or within an on-street parking space (2-hour time limit). This irregular influx of visitor parking will disrupt the established parking balance among downtown employees, which in-turn will impact the availability of on-street parking spaces for customers and other visitors. This process demonstrates a parking ‘spill over’ effect where one parking user group will displace another from proximate to more periphery parking lots.

Reserved parking spaces are offered through the Wilson Parking Commission for a varying monthly price. Interviewees suggested the approximate monthly price may vary between \$10, \$15, or \$20. It is believed, however not confirmed, that these prices are based on proximity to the center of downtown and demand for those finite number of parking spaces. The Barnes Street Lot is centrally-located and therefore the highest monthly cost, while other lots are ‘further’ away and therefore less expensive. There was general confusion relating to the process of acquiring a reserved parking space, how they are assigned, how and where they are documented, as well as the revenue that is collected. Some interviewees suggested (unsubstantiated) that many reserved parking spaces are no longer collecting monthly revenue and the signs could be removed. It was also uncertain if there is a seasonal trend to reserved parking space requests (i.e. whether the hot summer months, or the cold winter months have encouraged more parkers to seek a reserved parking space).

Some interviewees suggested that the (default) 2-hour time limit for on-street parking should be reduced to 1-hour to support customer parking availability and discourage employees from parking and ‘shuffling’ throughout the day. This objective would come at a physical cost of revising the existing signage as well as require more frequent enforcement (and possibly an increase to the number of citations issued) to ensure compliance. This objective supports both of the plan vision statements relating to the effective utilization of parking resources and treating parking as a limited resource for economic development. Replacing on-street parking signs will not, however, resolve the problem of over-stay parking or employee shuffling.

Summary Comments

Stakeholder interviews provided important context toward understanding the local parking issues. Whether these topics were confirmed or unsubstantiated, the varying perceptions of downtown parking is reality for visitors, employees, residents, and merchants, and therefore the issues are valuable.

RECOMMENDATIONS - STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

The following qualitative recommendations are based on the local information and perspectives formulated during the project stakeholder interview process. Section VII of this report will provide more detail on the proposed implementation of these recommendations.

- Identify a lead agency or department to manage the business of parking, and define roles among various City departments that compliment this service
- Clearly define the agency's mission, goals, objectives, and progress towards achieving these objectives on a publicly-available website
- Strive for equity among all users, especially ADA, and visitors, particularly for on-street parking spaces in high-demand areas
- Establish marketing strategies and outreach initiatives to begin the process of changing perspectives on parking as a limited resource that is shared equally among all users
- Collaborate with County and private agencies for special event coordination that require or disrupt parking availability, including evenings and weekends
- Study the pattern of reserved parking spaces throughout a typical year, and identify any peak demand trends
- Offer a variety of parking options based on location and price, and allow users to choose an appropriate level of parking service
- Deter on-street parking by downtown employees through education, enforcement, and financial controls
- Offer parking validation options (digital, print, or other) for merchants to provide to their customers
- Consider increasing the minimum parking citation (\$5 currently) to discourage over-stay parking

Section III – Existing Parking Supply and Utilization

Background

The study team was asked to organize and conduct a field inventory of the existing parking supply as well as a determination of existing utilization in advance of the initial project steering committee meeting.

The project study area was defined as a 35 block portion of downtown, bounded by Jackson St to the north, Vance St and Lodge Streets to the east, Pender St to the south, as well as Hines St and Kenan Streets to the west (Figure 1).

The on-street parking turnover analysis was limited to a 6-block area (Figure 1), identified as the most heavily utilized. This limited area was necessary because this analysis required an hourly recording of license plates, which was not feasible for the entire 35-block area.

Overview of Existing Parking Supply

Part one of this section discusses the number of parking spaces, by type and location, within the study area, while part two of this section discusses how these spaces are being used.

Parking Inventory

On Tuesday May 20th 2014 the project team conducted a field inventory of all parking spaces within the defined 35 block study area. This initial field work confirmed the total number of parking lots, documented whether the lot was public or private, and counted the number of parking spaces of each type (e.g. meter, reserved, ADA, or general unreserved). The total parking supply is displayed in Figure 2.

On the following day, Wednesday May 21st 2014, the project team conducted AM and PM field surveys of parking utilization, as well as an analysis of on-street parking turnover.

On-street Parking

A total of 453 on-street parking spaces exist along 57 block-faces (Table 1). For example, on-street parking along both sides of a street for one block would count as two block-faces.

Two-hour time limit parking accounts for 423 (93%) of these on-street parking spaces, the remaining 30 spaces are either 15-minute or 30-minute time limit. The 15-minute time limit spaces were found along Goldsboro Street adjacent to City Hall and Tarboro Street; the 30-minute time limit spaces were found along Goldsboro Street adjacent to the Courthouse.

Table 1: On-street Parking Spaces by Street Name

| Street Name | # Block-faces | Total Spaces | Street Name | # Block-faces | Total Spaces |
|--------------|---------------|--------------|-----------------|---------------|--------------|
| Nash St | 10 | 98 | Green St | 4 | 28 |
| Tarboro St | 6 | 79 | Broad St | 2 | 15 |
| Goldsboro St | 8 | 63 | Lodge St | 2 | 13 |
| Barnes St | 10 | 62 | Vance St | 2 | 11 |
| Douglas St | 7 | 46 | Jackson St | 1 | 4 |
| Pine St | 4 | 30 | SUBTOTAL | 57 | 453 |

Figure 1: Project Study Areas

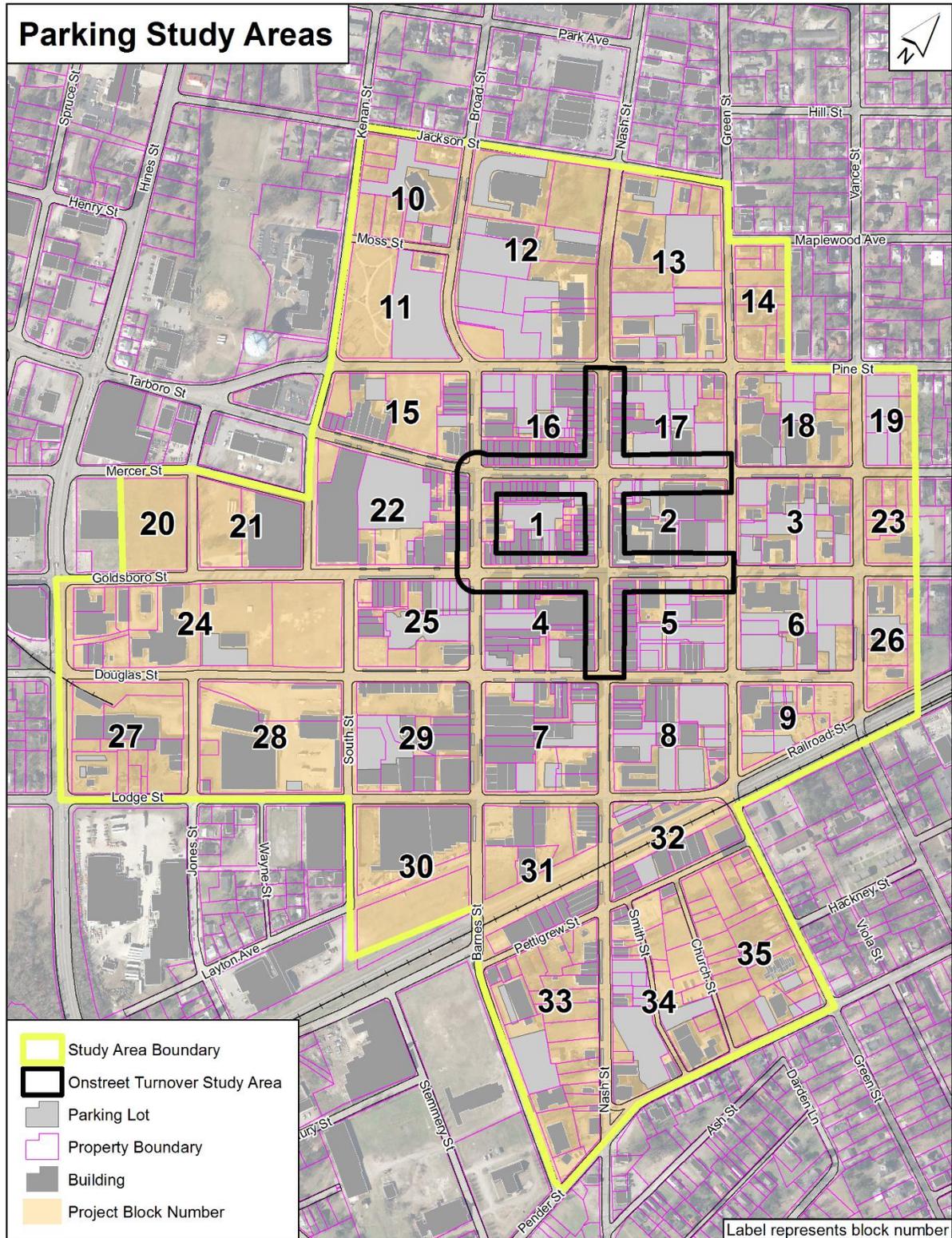
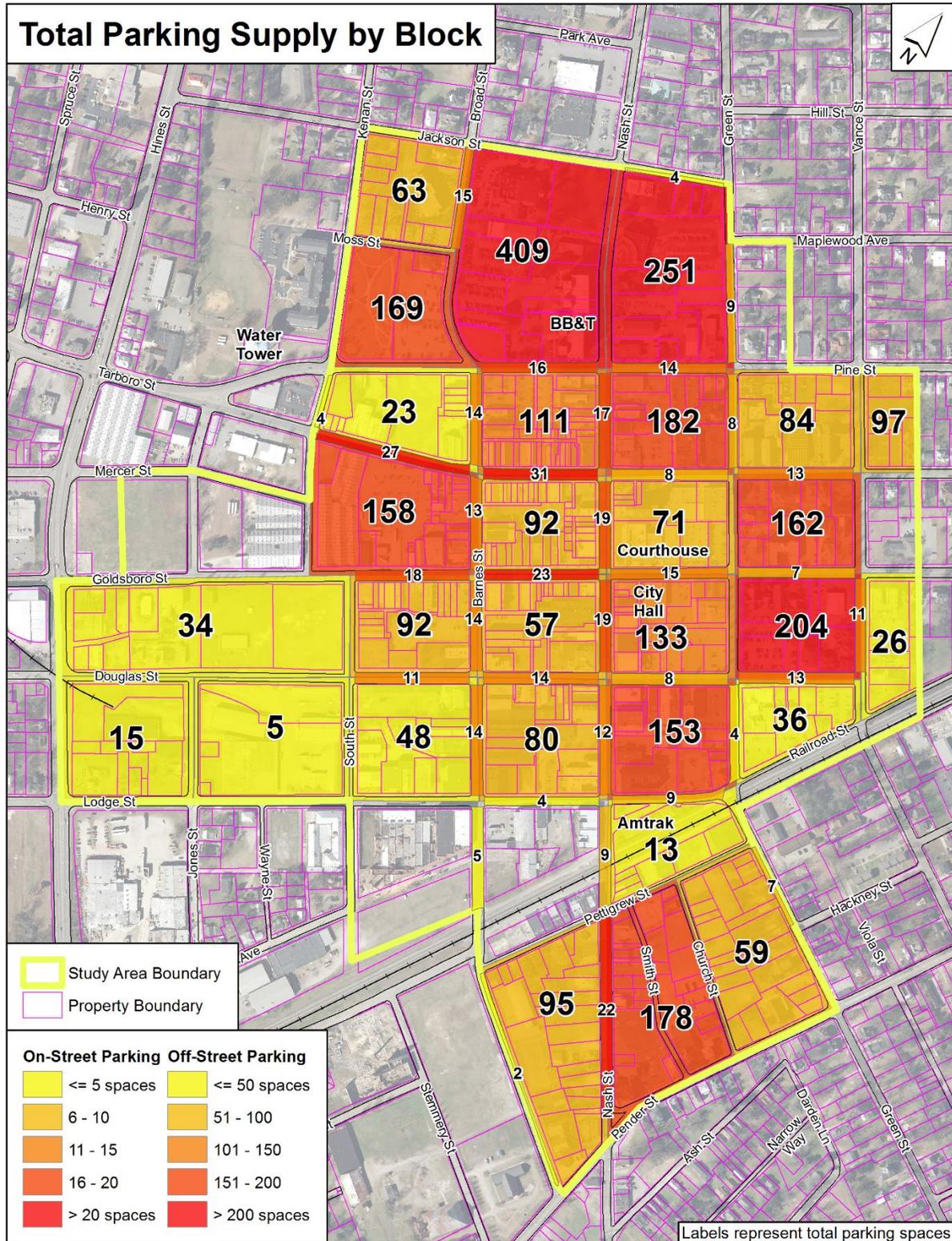


Figure 2: Total Parking Supply by Block



Off-street Parking

A total of 93 parking lots were inventoried, totaling 3,100 off-street parking spaces. This supply is unevenly distributed among 29 of the study area blocks (Figure 3).

Private parking lots accounted for 73% (68 lots) of the total parking lots and 63% (1,944) of the total off-street parking spaces (Table 2).

Table 2: Off-street Parking Spaces by Type

| Parking Lot Type | # Lots | Total Spaces | Regular | Private | Meter | Municipal Reserved | Signed Reserved | ADA | Other |
|----------------------|-----------|--------------|------------|--------------|------------|--------------------|-----------------|------------|----------|
| Private | 68 | 1,944 | - | 1,855 | 14 | - | - | 75 | - |
| Municipal – Visitor | 11 | 657 | 326 | - | 121 | - | 186 | 23 | 1 |
| Municipal – Reserved | 14 | 499 | 194 | - | - | 255 | 24 | 22 | 4 |
| SUBTOTAL | 93 | 3,100 | 527 | 1,855 | 135 | 255 | 210 | 120 | 5 |

Total Parking Supply by Block

Aggregating parking supply by block (Table 3, Figure 2) is one method to visualize and quantify locations for comparison. The blocks with higher parking supply are located around the periphery of the study area, such as north of Pine St, and east of Green St.

Table 3: Parking Spaces by Block

| Block # | On-Street | Off-Street | Total Spaces | Private | Public | Note |
|---------|-----------|------------|--------------|---------|--------|--------------------------------|
| 1 | 40 | 92 | 132 | X | X | Barnes St lot |
| 2 | 26 | 71 | 97 | | X | Courthouse |
| 3 | 17 | 162 | 179 | X | | Private parking lots |
| 4 | 29 | 57 | 86 | X | X | Colony Lot |
| 5 | 18 | 133 | 151 | | X | City Hall/Police Station |
| 6 | 17 | 204 | 221 | X | X | City Hall employee parking |
| 7 | 13 | 80 | 93 | X | X | |
| 8 | 22 | 153 | 175 | X | X | Wilson County and Amtrak lot |
| 9 | 5 | 36 | 41 | X | | Community Health Center |
| 10 | 9 | 63 | 72 | X | | Wilson Housing Authority |
| 11 | | 169 | 169 | X | | BB&T overflow parking |
| 12 | 11 | 409 | 420 | X | | BB&T |
| 13 | 10 | 251 | 261 | X | X | BB&T overflow parking |
| 14 | 9 | - | 9 | | | Green St parking only |
| 15 | 28 | 23 | 51 | X | | |
| 16 | 44 | 111 | 155 | X | X | Pine St Lot |
| 17 | 15 | 182 | 197 | X | X | Bass Lot |
| 18 | 8 | 84 | 92 | X | | Private parking lots |
| 19 | | 97 | 97 | X | | Private parking lots |
| 22 | 26 | 158 | 184 | | X | Centre Brick Lot |
| 24 | - | 34 | 34 | X | | Future Whirligig Park property |
| 25 | 32 | 92 | 124 | | X | Batten Lot |
| 26 | 5 | 26 | 31 | X | | |
| 27 | - | 15 | 15 | X | | |
| 28 | - | 5 | 5 | X | | |
| 29 | 11 | 48 | 59 | X | | |
| 30 | 5 | - | 5 | | | Barnes St parking only |
| 31 | 11 | - | 11 | | | Nash St parking only |

| Block # | On-Street | Off-Street | Total Spaces | Private | Public | Note |
|-----------------|------------|--------------|--------------|---------|--------|--------------------|
| 32 | 11 | 13 | 24 | X | | Amtrak |
| 33 | 24 | 95 | 119 | X | | |
| 34 | - | 178 | 178 | X | X | 500 E. Nash St lot |
| 35 | 7 | 59 | 66 | X | | |
| SUBTOTAL | 453 | 3,100 | 3,553 | | | |

Table 4: Municipal Parking Spaces

| Parking Type | Total Spaces | % |
|-----------------------|--------------|----|
| On-Street | 453 | 28 |
| Municipal – Visitor | 657 | 41 |
| Municipal – Reserved* | 499 | 31 |
| SUBTOTAL | 1,609 | |

*Includes Wilson County parking lots.

Municipal Parking Supply

Public parking spaces, maintained by the city, accounted for 971 (27% of total) of off-street parking supply, and all 453 (13% of total) of the on-street parking supply (Table 5, Figure 3).

The City of Wilson does not have maintenance authority over private parking lots, however parkers are utilizing both public and private lots throughout the week, month, or year. For this reason all parking spaces were included for this analysis, however [future parking demand will exclude the private parking supply as well as any Wilson County employee parking lots.](#)

A total of 282 (29%) of the City’s off-street parking spaces are leased, including 20 metered spaces and 114 reserved spaces that generate parking revenue (Table 6, Figure 4). This is important because the entire parking system depends upon limited or no disruption of service. If one leased parking lot is no longer available then these users will likely relocate to a nearby municipal parking lot and either meet or exceed the parking capacity of that lot, which may in turn displace some users into more distant municipal parking lots. The spill-over effect of displaced parkers would be noticed within several surrounding parking lots. The City of Wilson should pursue long-term lease agreements with private property owners to secure the availability of these spaces.

Table 5: Municipal Parking Facility Ownership

| Parking Type | Total Spaces | Leased* | Owned |
|----------------------|--------------|------------|------------|
| On-Street | 453 | - | 453 |
| Municipal – Visitor | 657 | 230 | 427 |
| Municipal – Reserved | 314 | 52 | 262 |
| SUBTOTAL | 1,424 | 282 | 689 |

*Leased parking lots are identified in Table 6 and Figure 4.

Table 6: Leased Parking Lots by Parking Space Type

| Leased Parking Lot | Total Spaces | Regular | Meter | Signed Reserved | ADA |
|--------------------------|--------------|------------|-----------|-----------------|-----------|
| Bass Lot #5 | 48 | | 14 | 34 | |
| Batten Lot #11 | 61 | 57 | | | 4 |
| Lighthouse Lot #5 | 31 | 29 | | | 2 |
| Pine St Lot #7 | 90 | | 6 | 80 | 4 |
| St. Timothy’s Church Lot | 52 | 47 | | | 5 |
| SUBTOTAL | 282 | 133 | 20 | 114 | 15 |

Figure 3: Municipal Parking Supply

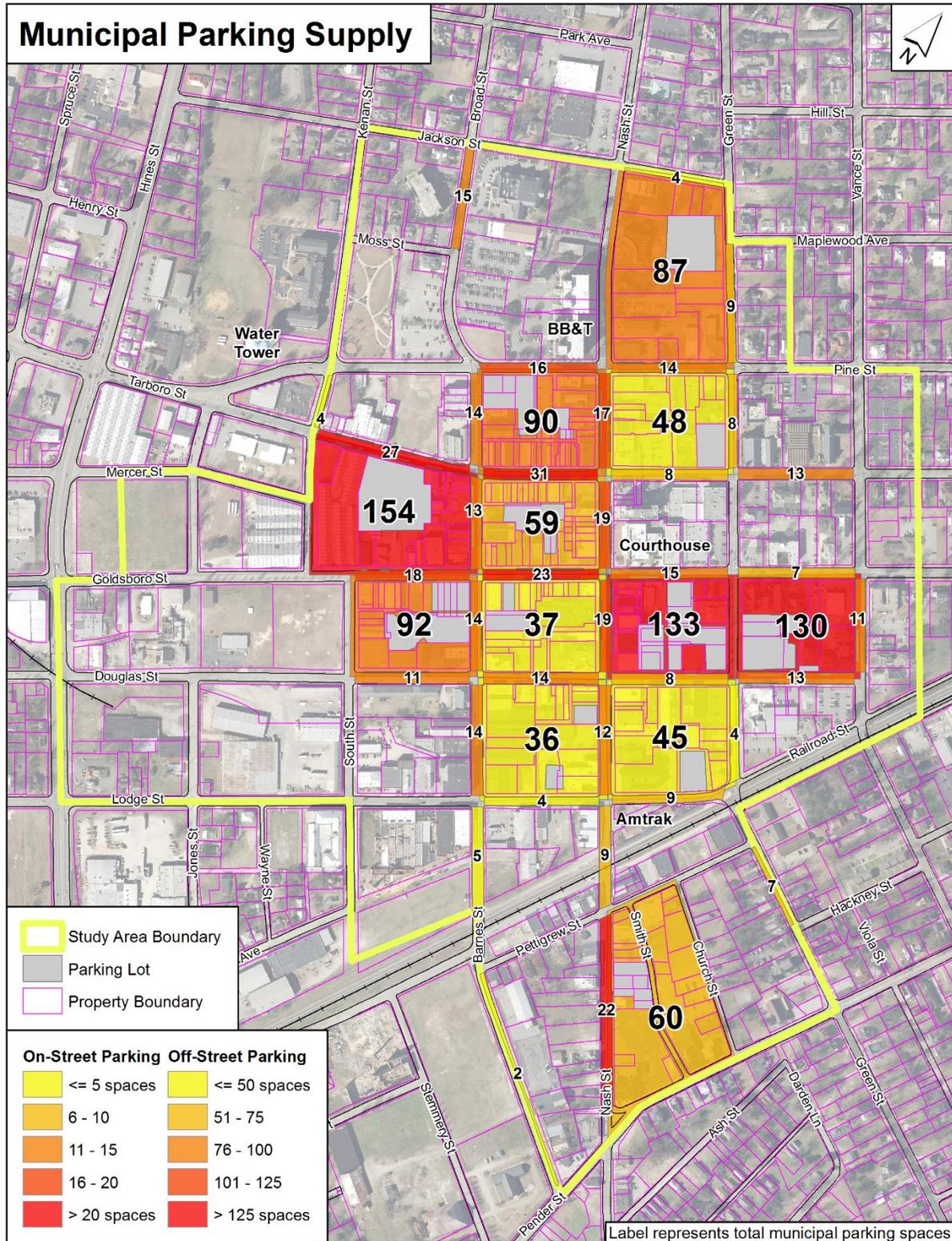
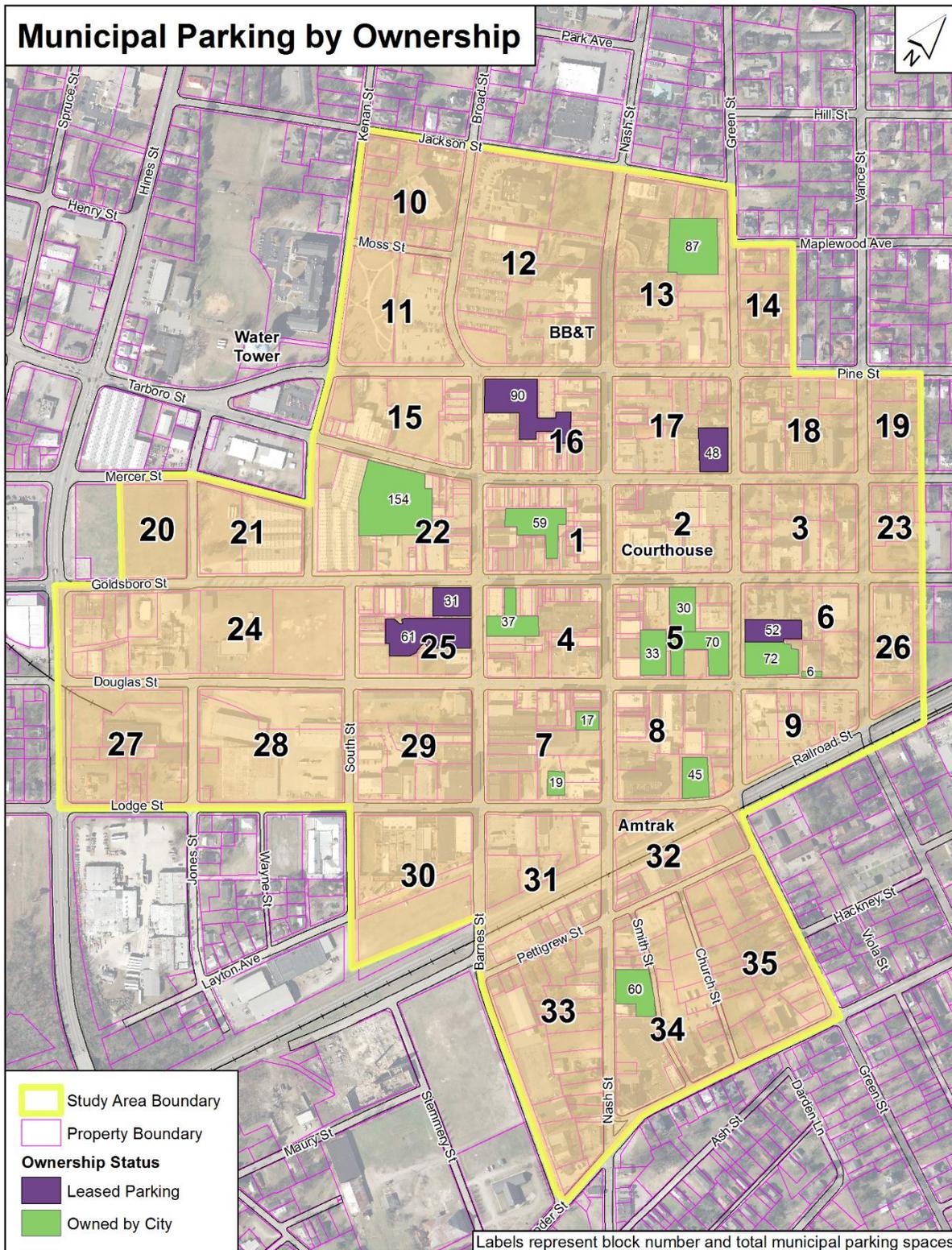


Figure 4: Municipal Parking by Ownership



Existing Parking Utilization

A parking utilization survey is one method to approximate the existing demand, taken during a single ‘snap shot’ in time. The total number of parked vehicles observed during the AM peak period was 1,498 cars (42%).

For a planning-level analysis such as this, an 85% occupancy rate during the peak period is the ideal level of utilization, which balances the efficient use of parking resources while maintaining a reasonable number of available spaces for visitors. This target is especially true for on-street parking, where one could expect one vacancy for every seven on-street spaces. There are exceptions to this rule-of-thumb, such as ADA, reserved, or metered spaces, however the 85% target is an accepted planning-level metric.

Utilization of Total Parking

The most heavily occupied parking areas were the municipal-reserved category (58%), which includes City and County of Wilson parking lots where a majority of employees park during the day. On the opposite end of the spectrum, the least occupied parking areas were on-street parking spaces (30%). Visitor parking lots (31%) and private parking (45%) fell in between these two (Table 7).

There were a number of on-street parking blocks with an observed occupancy rate greater than 70% however, which is more than double the total on-street parking occupancy. As expected these block faces were located within a 2-block distance of the Courthouse, which is (assumed to be) the center of downtown (Figure 5). These blocks include:

- ❑ Green St (100% of 4 spaces) between Lodge St and Douglas St (blocks 8-9)
- ❑ Douglas St (85% of 13 spaces) between Green St and Vance St (blocks 6-9)
- ❑ Nash St (76% of 17 spaces) between Tarboro St and Pine St (blocks 16-17)
- ❑ Goldsboro St (71% of 7 spaces) between Green St and Vance St (blocks 3-6)
- ❑ Goldsboro St (70% of 23 spaces) between Barnes St and Nash St (blocks 1-4)

Table 7: Observed Peak Period Occupancy

| Parking Type | Total Spaces | Cars | Occupancy % |
|----------------------|--------------|--------------|-------------|
| On-Street | 453 | 138 | 30% |
| Municipal – Visitor | 657 | 201 | 31% |
| Municipal – Reserved | 499 | 288 | 58% |
| Private | 1,944 | 871 | 45% |
| SUBTOTAL | 3,553 | 1,498 | 42% |

Utilization and Availability of Municipal Parking

The number and pattern of unoccupied (raw surplus) spaces is shown in Figure 6, note the blocks along the periphery contain the largest surplus of spaces, with the exception of the City Hall lot which has a large portion of metered parking. These values represent the existing ‘surplus’ or cushion for future development during the AM peak period. Note the private parking supply is excluded from this analysis because the City of Wilson does not have jurisdictional authority within these lots.

It is plausible, however, that some of the 501 observed vehicles located within on-street, municipal-visitor, or municipal-reserved parking lots during this analysis period will also periodically park within private parking lots (Table 8). The current parking model within downtown does not restrict parking beyond the timed on-street parking, and it is reasonable to assume that most people park anywhere they find convenient. This theory reinforces the need for a relatively conservative approach, including a targeted maximum occupancy rate of 85% to provide flexibility for this analysis.

Table 8: Municipal Parking Occupancy and Availability

| Parking Type | Total Spaces | Cars | Empty Spaces | Occupancy % |
|-----------------------|--------------|------------|--------------|-------------|
| On-Street | 453 | 138 | 315 | 30% |
| Municipal – Visitor | 657 | 201 | 456 | 31% |
| Municipal – Reserved* | 314 | 162 | 152 | 52% |
| SUBTOTAL | 1,424 | 501 | 923 | 35% |

*Excludes Wilson County parking lots from this table.

Utilization and Availability based on Location

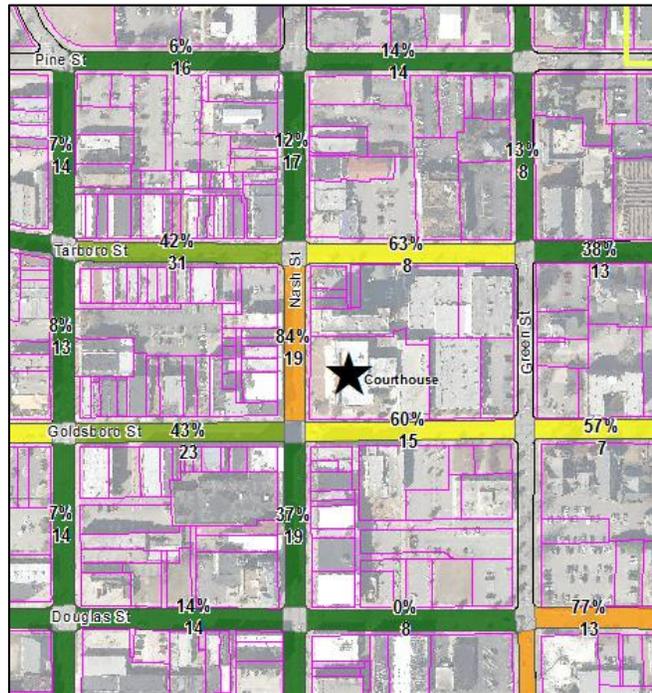
Eight study area blocks were observed to be more than 50% occupied during the AM peak period. Two of these eight blocks contained fewer than 50 total parking spaces, leaving six blocks that are considered the (relative) high-demand locations. These blocks are displayed in Table 9 below.

Table 9: Study Areas Blocks with Greater than 50% Observed Occupancy

| Block # | Total Spaces* | Cars | Occupancy % | Note |
|-----------------|---------------|------------|-------------|------------------------------|
| 12 | 420 | 346 | 82% | BB&T |
| 2 | 97 | 62 | 64% | Courthouse |
| 1 | 132 | 81 | 61% | Barnes St lot |
| 8 | 175 | 93 | 53% | Wilson County and Amtrak lot |
| 17 | 197 | 105 | 53% | Bass Lot |
| 29 | 59 | 30 | 51% | Industrial parking area |
| SUBTOTAL | 1,080 | 717 | 66% | |

* Includes on-street and off-street parking areas.

The City of Wilson does not own off-street parking lots within either block 12 or 2, the two highest occupancy blocks from Table 9. These two blocks represent the largest private employer (BB&T) and the Courthouse (County and Federal). It is worth noting that 30 vehicles (for 42 spaces) were observed along the three blocks that surround the Courthouse during the PM peak period (side graphic). These data suggest that the Courthouse is an important generator of parking demand, as indicated during stakeholder interviews.



PM Peak Occupancy near Courthouse

Figure 5: Total Parking Utilization

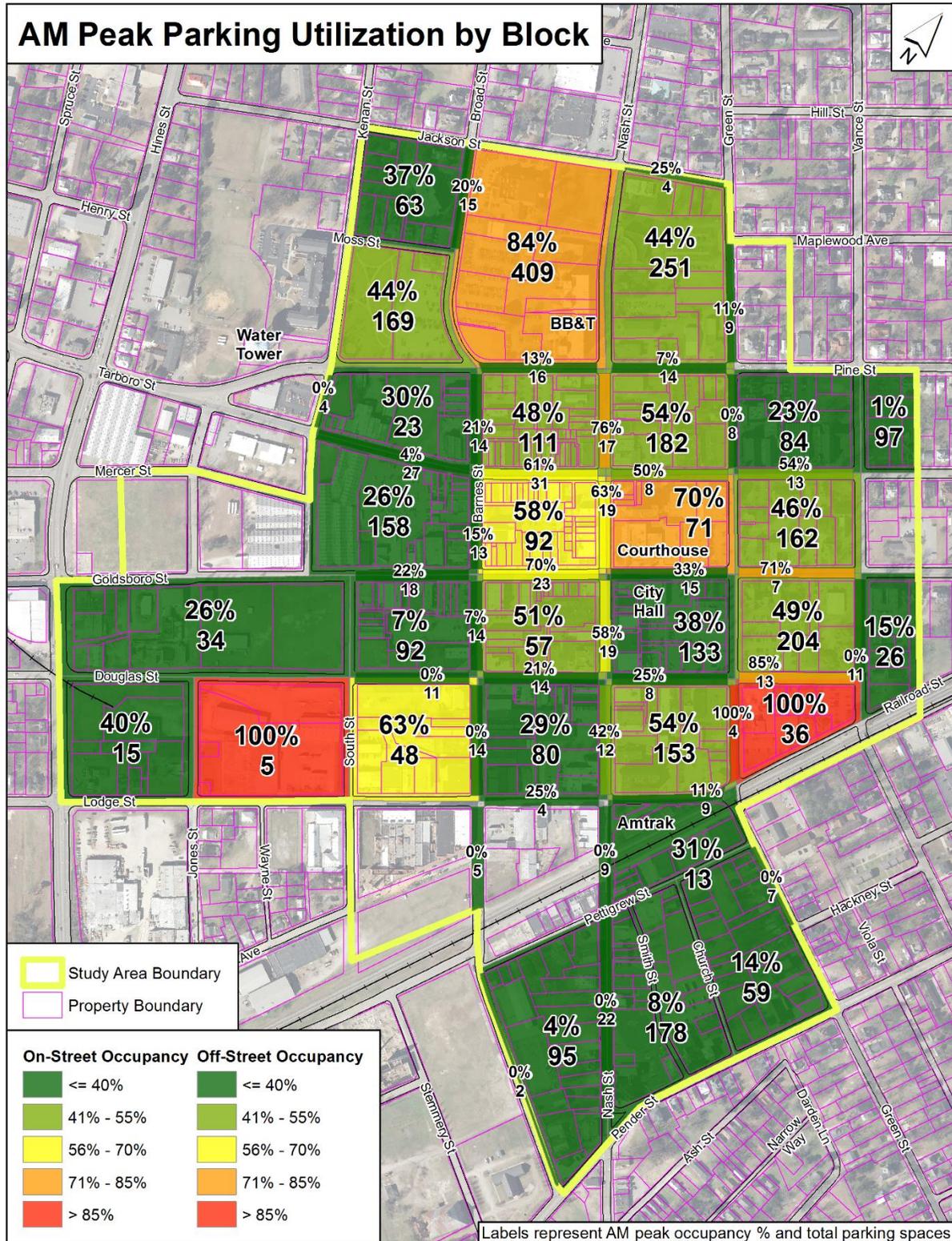
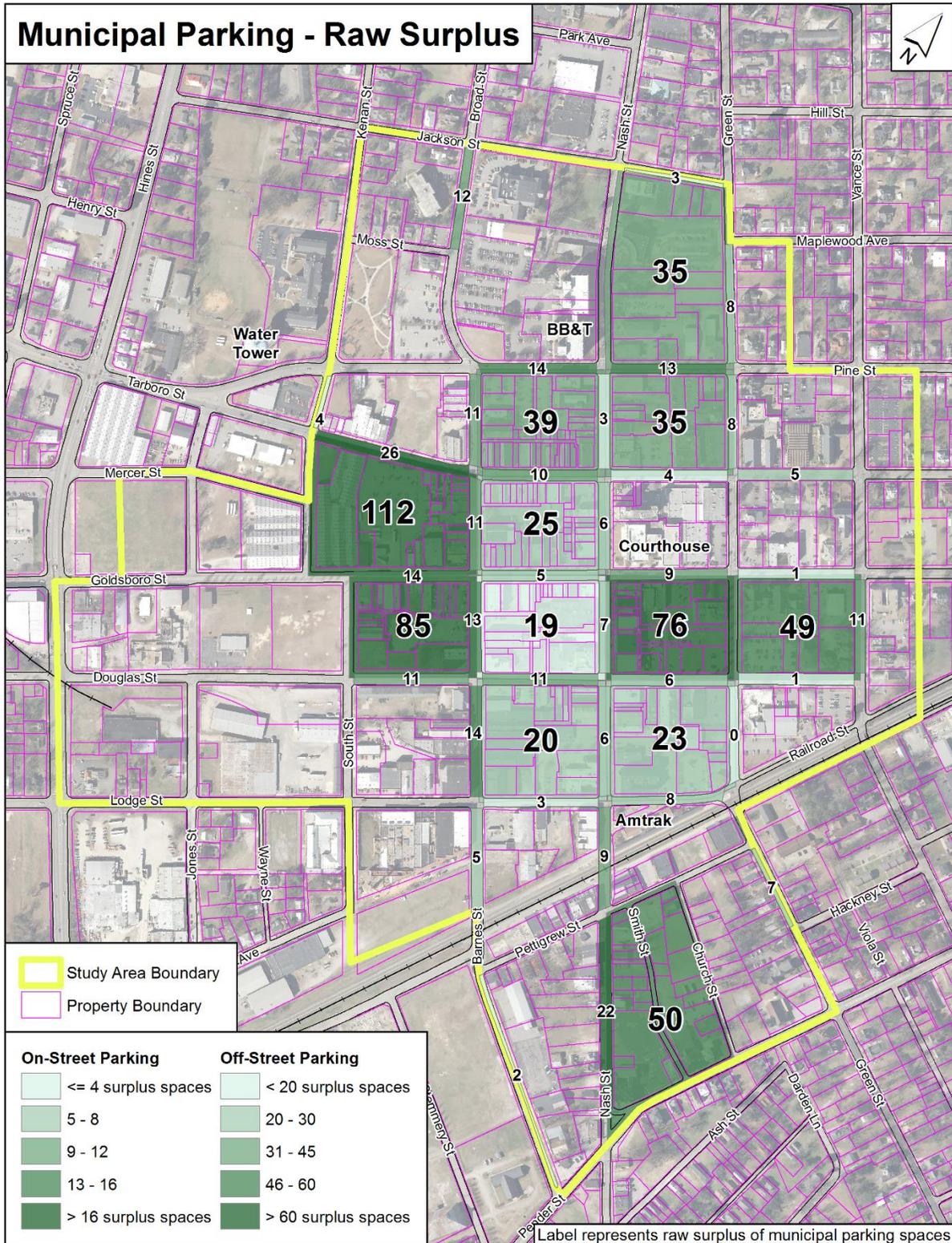


Figure 6: Municipal Raw Surplus of Parking



On-street Parking Turnover

The purpose of the on-street parking turnover analysis is to determine whether vehicles are systematically violating the 2-hour time limit by relocating their vehicle periodically throughout the day. This condition allows too many of the critical on-street parking capacity to be routinely taken up by employees, who simply shuffle their vehicles and remain parked for the full day.

The turnover analysis involved an hourly cycle of all on-street parking along a 3-block portion of Nash St, a 2-block portion of Tarboro and Goldsboro Streets, and a 1-block portion of Barnes St, for an eight hour survey period (8 complete cycles). Each on-street parking space was inventoried with a notation of the vehicle license plate. The entire list was then transferred into a spreadsheet database for analysis of repeating license plates.

Length of Stay Analysis

A total of 145 on-street parking spaces were surveyed within the study area over an 8-hour time period. A total of 293 unique vehicles were observed (Table 10), and occupied 505 of the 1,160 (47%) available ‘service hours’ (Table 11).

A total of 236 vehicles (81%) were observed on one or two occasions, representing ‘legal’ parkers within the study area. These 236 vehicles occupied 285 of the total service hours (25%). This analysis suggests that no less than 81% of on-street parkers are legitimate visitors or customers who are parking for 2-hours or less. This is a very positive finding.

Twenty four vehicles (8%) were observed on three occasions, which may represent legitimate parkers making two or more separate errands throughout the day. This group may also represent employees (a) working less than full-time, (b) taking an extended lunch break, or (c) attending an off-site meeting during the day. These 24 vehicles occupied 72 of the total service hours (6%). This is considered a neutral finding, as it cannot be assumed that these vehicles were systematically shuffling among on-street parking spaces.

Table 10: Length of Stay Summary of Vehicles

| Frequency Observed | Vehicles | % | % |
|--------------------|------------|-----|-----|
| 1 | 187 | 64% | 81% |
| 2 | 49 | 17% | |
| 3 | 24 | 8% | 11% |
| 4 | 8 | 3% | |
| 5 | 6 | 2% | |
| 6 | 6 | 2% | |
| 7 | 9 | 3% | |
| 8 | 4 | 1% | |
| SUBTOTAL | 293 | - | - |

Overstay Parking

The remaining 33 vehicles (11%) were observed on four or more occasions (Table 10), which likely represent downtown employees who are choosing to park for a majority of the day within the free, on-street parking spaces rather than in a more distant and likewise free parking lot. As displayed within Table 11, these 33 vehicles occupied 193 of the total service hours (17%), as well as 35% of the total occupied service hours. To avoid a parking citation, these parkers are regularly ‘shuffling’ their vehicles to adjacent on-street parking spaces. Thirty-three vehicles is

not a substantially large number, however these 11% of vehicles were occupying 17% of the total service hours, and within relatively high-demand locations along Nash St, Tarboro St, and Goldsboro St near the center of downtown.

Table 11: Length of Stay Summary of Service Hours

| Frequency Observed | Vehicles | Service Hours | % | % |
|--------------------|------------|---------------|------------|-----|
| 1 | 187 | 187 | 16% | 24% |
| 2 | 49 | 98 | 8% | |
| 3 | 24 | 72 | 6% | 6% |
| 4 | 8 | 32 | 3% | 17% |
| 5 | 6 | 30 | 3% | |
| 6 | 6 | 36 | 3% | |
| 7 | 9 | 63 | 5% | |
| 8 | 4 | 32 | 3% | |
| SUBTOTAL | 293 | 550 | 47% | - |
| Unoccupied | - | 610 | 53% | - |
| GRAND TOTAL | 293 | 1,160* | - | - |

*1,160 total service hours (145 spaces x 8 hours of survey)

Overstay Parking and the Employee ‘Shuffle’

Of the 33 vehicles observed on four or more occasions (displayed in grey within Table 11):

- 13 relocated their vehicles to two or more locations;
- 8 relocated their vehicles to three or more locations; and
- 2 relocated their vehicles to four or more locations, suggesting either they attended several meetings throughout the day, or they were actively working to avoid a citation.

Overstay parking and the Single-space violators

Ten of the 33 vehicles observed on four or more occasions remained in only one parking space, without the need to relocate their vehicle. This characteristic suggests many things, all of which are plausible:

- The maximum on-street parking time limit of 2-hours is not an effective deterrent;
- Alternative options for free, convenient off-street parking are not perceived as equitable to on-street parking;
- The existing parking enforcement system is not an effective deterrent to downtown employees; or
- The existing parking enforcement system is flawed, and does not emphasize control of overstay parking

Summary of Existing Conditions

- The City of Wilson does not have a shortage of parking supply to meet the existing demand, as there were more than 900 empty spaces observed during the peak period

- In some high-demand downtown locations, the current distribution and balance of parking supply may be contributing to a perceived parking shortage
- A small number of on-street parkers are ‘shuffling’ their vehicles to multiple locations
- Some violators remain in one parking space for an extended period of time, either because they are willing to pay the citation (\$5) or they do not receive a citation
- Public perception must be addressed in order to effectively utilize all parking resources
- Price is an effective tool for modifying parking behavior and adjusting public perception
- Marketing is also an effective tool for modifying public perception
- Enforcement should be used as a last line of defense tool for modifying public perception

RECOMMENDATIONS - EXISTING SUPPLY AND UTILIZATION

The following recommendations are based on the quantitative analysis of available and field-collected parking data and best management practices:

- The City of Wilson should pursue a balanced utilization of all parking lots, whether they are located proximate to downtown or located along the periphery
 - Manage all parking lots as part of one unified system, and offer a variety of parking options based on availability, location and price, allowing users to choose which combinations are personally important
- Deter on-street parking by downtown employees, as well as over-stay parking from all users, through education, enforcement, and financial controls
- Encourage the preservation of on-street parking spaces for use by customers and visitors to downtown for short-term, high-turnover use
- Prepare for the potential installation (even if this day is several years from now) of parking meters or multi-space pay stations along certain blocks of downtown
- Establish a program to collect peak period occupancy counts on a regular basis and summarize the findings over time to substantiate any changes to the management or enforcement of parking resources, and document these findings

Section IV – Future Parking Demand Estimation

Background

The VHB team identified near-term development projects that are expected within the near-term (1-5 years) and long-term (5-10 years), estimated the parking demand that can be anticipated from these projects, and determined if additional parking supply will be necessary to meet this future demand.

Overview of Future Parking Demand Estimation

There are many quantitative methods for determining the approximate future parking demand. There are likewise many assumptions that must be made based on the best available information. The project team developed a spreadsheet model that quantifies parking generation from square footage and land use type inputs. The Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Parking Generation (4th Edition) manual was referenced for this analysis, and adjustments were made based on professional judgment.

Using the available building square footage and assumptions based on land use, the project team quantified the number of future developments that may occur before the effective future capacity is reduced to a point that future parking is needed.

Assumptions for Future Demand Analysis

- **Existing supply:** includes only City of Wilson-controlled parking spaces. Tables within this section excludes two parking lots that are not located proximate to downtown:
 - Customer Service lot (87 spaces)
 - 500 E. Nash St lot (60 spaces)
- **Occupancy:** estimated based on parking occupancy counts collected during the AM peak period of Wednesday May 21, 2014
- **Demand margin:** assumes that the vehicles observed during the peak period does not include individuals who may be working from home, on vacation, or otherwise away from their normal place of business on the day of data collection. For this study the demand margin is 10%.
- **Effective demand:** calculated as the existing number of vehicles observed during the peak period plus a specified demand margin to account for individuals who were not at work on the day of data collection [110% of peak period vehicles observed]
- **Surplus parking:** calculated as [existing parking supply] – [effective demand]
- **Effective future capacity:** calculated as [surplus parking] – [effective demand]
- Near-term projects include potential development opportunities in the 1-5 year timeframe, and have been openly discussed with City of Wilson staff.

- Long-term projects represent currently vacant properties that are assumed to be re-activated in the 5-10 year timeframe, and the potential land uses are assumed based on previous or current use.
- Total future parking demand that is generated from redevelopment will be needed at different times of the day, and therefore the total number of parking demand should be viewed as a ‘no greater than X spaces’ figure. Shared parking opportunities are greatest with residential parking, or fine-dining restaurants with limited lunch-time demand.
 - Most residential development units are not intended to be live-work units (2 have been completed to date and one additional is planned), and therefore the parking demand may be shared by other land uses during the day.
- Management of parking spaces will remain a function of the City through some version of a permitting system, rather than conveyed directly to a developer for private use. This strategy will allow the City to maximize shared parking opportunities.
- All currently leased parking lots are assumed to be renewed or extended without disruption of service.

Future Development Projects – Near-Term (1-5 years)

Working in coordination with the City of Wilson, VHB identified 12 near-term projects that are anticipated to generate additional parking demand within downtown.

VHB applied standard parking generation ratios per 1,000 Gross Square Foot (GSF) to each land use category in order to estimate the future demand that may be expected. The summary of near-term projects are shown in Table 12 below, sorted by ascending ratio.

Table 12: Near-Term Future Parking Generation by Land Use

| Land Use Type | Est. GSF | Unit | Ratio | Parking Demand |
|---------------------------------|---------------|-------------|-------|----------------|
| Residential | | Dwelling | 1.5 | 254 |
| Recreation | | Per acre | 2 | 4 |
| Commercial / Retail / Mixed Use | 36,000 | GSF / 1,000 | 2.5 | 90 |
| Government Office | 12,500 | GSF / 1,000 | 4 | 50 |
| Restaurant | 5,000 | GSF / 1,000 | 4 | 20 |
| Restaurant (Sit Down) | 2,600 | GSF / 1,000 | 6 | 16 |
| SUBTOTAL | 56,000 | | | 434 |

Residential development represents the single largest parking demand generator within the first 5-years (254 of 434 new parking spaces needed).

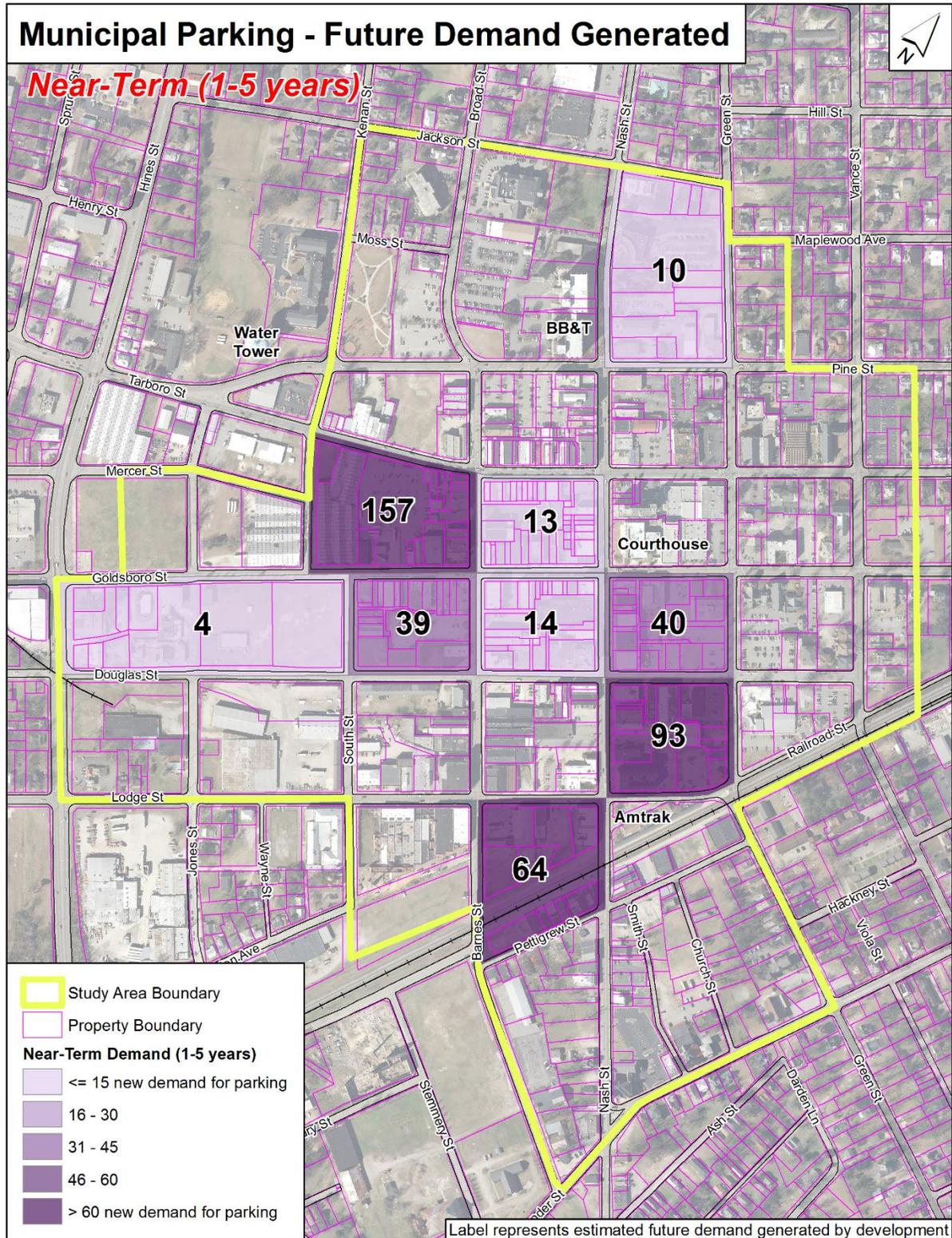
An estimated demand for 90 new parking spaces is expected from the Retail, Commercial, and Mixed Use Development land uses. There is an expected 36,000 new GSF in the first 5-years from these categories.

Government office space (50 new spaces), restaurants (36 spaces), and recreation (4 spaces) constitute the remainder of the total demand for 434 new parking spaces. This new parking demand will be satisfied by the existing raw surplus of parking.

The new parking demand generated will not be evenly distributed across all downtown blocks however. Working in conjunction with the City of Wilson and based on the best available information to date, the distribution of future parking demand generated by near-term projects is shown in Figure 7. On-street and off-street parking is not differentiated on this figure because the new parking demand includes customers, employees, and residents. There are three study area blocks that stand-out with high future demand (blocks 22, 8, and 31), all three include residential development projects.

The development of the Vollis Simpson Whirligig Park is included as a near-term project. A park or recreation area of this size does not generate a significant parking demand, as compared to other land uses (residential, office, restaurant, etc.). The annual Whirligig Festival, however, draws more than 35,000 attendees to downtown, which represents a tremendous parking demand. This event is managed as a special event with unique parking considerations that are simply not directly connected with the typical weekday analysis included in this plan. If the Whirligig Park generates significantly greater parking demand than anticipated within the first five (5) years, there is estimated to be a positive balance of surplus parking spaces to meet this demand. In this scenario the need for additional parking spaces will be accelerated within the longer-term time frame (5-10 years) discussed in the next section.

Figure 7: Future Demand Generated by Near-term Developments



Future Development Projects – Long-Term (5-10 years)

Working in coordination with the City of Wilson, the project team identified an additional 23 reactivation opportunities (currently vacant buildings) that would potentially generate additional parking demand within downtown. Parking demand for 418 new parking spaces is anticipated based on their approximate square footage and assumed land use types (Table 13).

Table 13: Long-Term Future Parking Generation by Land Use

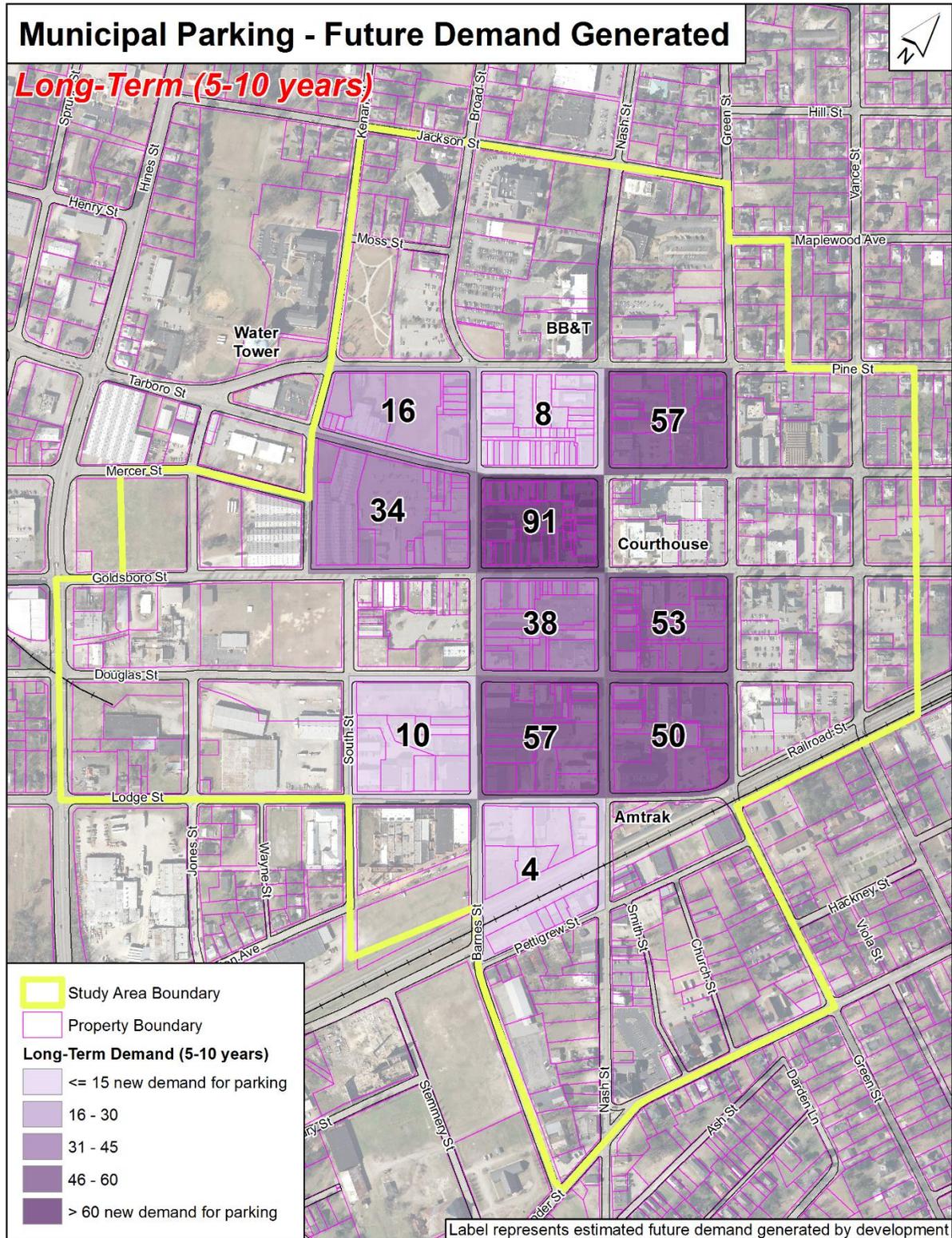
| Land Use Type | Est. GSF | Unit | Ratio | Parking Demand |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|-------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| Residential | | Dwelling | 1.5 | 5 |
| Commercial / Retail / Mixed Use | 110,000 | GSF / 1,000 | 2.5 | 275 |
| Bank (Drive in) | 11,000 | GSF / 1,000 | 3 | 33 |
| Office | 12,600 | GSF / 1,000 | 3 | 38 |
| Restaurant | 17,000 | GSF / 1,000 | 4 | 67 |
| SUBTOTAL | 150,600 | | | 418 |

An estimated demand for 275 new parking spaces is expected from the Retail, Commercial, and Mixed Use Development land uses, totaling 110,000 new GSF. These three categories have been combined into one because the parking ratios are identical (2.5 new spaces per 1,000 GSF), and the details of these potential future development projects are not fully defined.

Office space (38 new spaces), bank (33 spaces), restaurants (67 spaces) and residential (5 spaces) constitute the remainder of the total demand for 418 new parking spaces.

The distribution of future parking demand generated by long-term projects is shown in Figure 8. The resulting pattern of parking demand generated centered around the Courthouse and City Hall, in contrast to near-term projects, which were more on the periphery.

Figure 8: Future Demand Generated by Long-term Development Opportunities



Future Parking Supply Additions

The City of Wilson has identified six potential surface parking expansion projects for this analysis. Depending upon which projects are actually constructed, there is a potential gain of 100-150 additional surface parking spaces to support future development or mitigate parking supply losses.

Assumed Construction Costs

The approximate construction cost (materials and labor only) of a surface parking lot will average between \$3,500 and \$5,000 per parking space. This can vary geographically with the availability of materials and construction labor. For comparison, the average construction cost of a surface parking deck will vary between \$16,000 and \$20,000 per parking space and likewise vary tremendously based on site conditions, design, lighting, materials, and other factors.

This planning-level parking analysis will use the following assumed costs for future construction:

- \$4,500 per parking space within a surface parking lot
- \$18,000 per parking space within a structured parking deck

Using these cost assumptions the potential gain of 100-150 additional surface parking spaces identified by the City of Wilson would cost between \$450,000 and \$675,000 to construct. Those same additional parking spaces would cost between \$1.8 million and \$2.7 million to construct within a parking deck, plus interest over a 30-year period.

It is worth noting that the construction of a 100 space structured parking deck, although they do exist, would be highly undesirable. Parking decks of larger size (400 spaces or more) yield a lower average cost per parking space because they are more efficiently designed, with fewer design-constrained 'dead spaces' within corners, underneath ramps, elevators, or stairwells. This is an effect of the 'scale of economies', where a larger quantities produced will average a lower per-unit fixed cost. For this reason the costs will typically outweigh the potential benefits of a small parking deck.

Balance of Parking Supply and Demand

Based on the existing occupancy count analysis described in Section 3, there were 445 vehicles observed within municipal parking spaces during the AM peak period. Assuming a demand margin of 10% (i.e. individuals who may be working from home, on vacation, or otherwise away from their normal place of business on the day of data collection) this translates to an effective demand of 494 vehicles looking for parking during the peak period (Table 14).

Municipal parking spaces totaled 1,277 parking spaces, minus the effective demand of 494 vehicles, leaving an estimated [raw surplus of 783 parking spaces currently](#). These surplus spaces represent \$3.5 million in construction costs that may be leveraged for future development.

Near-term development projects are expected to generate a parking demand for 434 new parking spaces. This future demand will be accommodated by the current raw surplus, leaving an estimated [balance of approximately 349 parking spaces in the near-term](#).

Long-term development opportunities could generate a parking demand for an additional 418 parking spaces. If all of these re-activation opportunities are realized, then the number of raw surplus parking spaces during the peak period will be surpassed by future demand during this 5-10 year timeframe, and additional parking supply may be needed.

Table 14: Existing Supply, Demand, and Surplus of Parking

| Parking Type | Existing Conditions | | | | | Near-term | Long-term |
|------------------------|---------------------|------------|---------------|------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| | Total Spaces | Cars | Demand Margin | Effective Demand | Raw Surplus | Demand | Demand |
| On-Street | 453 | 138 | 0.9 | 153 | 300 | | |
| Municipal – Visitor | 597 | 192 | 0.9 | 213 | 384 | -434 | -418 |
| Municipal – Reserved* | 227 | 115 | 0.9 | 128 | 99 | | |
| SUBTOTAL | 1,277 | 445 | | 494 | 783 | -434 | -418 |
| Parking Balance | | | | | +783 | +349 | -69 |

The previous section discussed future parking supply additions that could add 100-150 parking spaces through construction of surface parking lots (construction cost \$450,000-\$675,000).

The City should evaluate surface parking construction options, as well as alternatives for expanding the number of leased parking lots from private land owners, and even strategies for managing parking demand through a permitting system. The most cost-effective approach may involve a combination of all three alternatives.

RECOMMENDATIONS – FUTURE PARKING DEMAND

- Evaluate potential locations for a future parking deck facility, and estimate the financial costs of design, construction, and maintenance
- Investigate all parking lot expansion options to delay the construction of a parking deck
- Treat parking supply as a managed system and seek out strategies to maximizing utilization of all facilities through travel demand management, permit prices, incentives, or implementing a permit zone system for user groups
- Expect certain blocks of high-demand to experience a shortage of parking during peak periods, and promote the availability of parking in low-demand areas

Section V – Management of Parking Systems

Background

The City has initiated this study to begin planning for physical and programmatic improvements that will effectively balance parking supply and demand before parking becomes a challenge. The study team was asked to review the current structure for management of parking resources in downtown Wilson and identify opportunities for improvements as appropriate.

This task consisted of three basic elements:

- Examine current framework for management of downtown parking resources in light of frameworks used in other cities and professional parking management standards
- Identify strengths and weaknesses of the current framework
- Recommendations for more effective system management framework if appropriate

Overview of Parking Management Approaches

Although the application of some approaches is affected by the size of the town or city, there are wide variations in how municipalities manage their parking systems and resources regardless of size. In fact, there are two overlapping spectrums to consider.

One reflects the range and depth of overall municipal involvement in providing and managing parking. Some cities, even large cities like Atlanta, Charlotte and Washington, D.C. leave most of the responsibility for providing and controlling parking to the private sector. At the other end of the spectrum are cities such as Raleigh, NC that have developed sophisticated parking systems that are owned and controlled by the municipality. In most cases, at any point along this spectrum, cities control on-street parking, whether through direct operation or through a contracted operator.

The other applies to municipalities that are, in fact, actively involved in downtown parking. It deals with the specific structure used to develop and manage parking facilities. At one end of that spectrum are cities, such as Raleigh, that own and control parking assets as a function of a City Department. In some cases, private firms are contracted by municipalities to handle the day-to-day operation of some portion of a city-owned parking system. Raleigh engages a private parking management firm to operate its off-street parking facilities although it handles all planning and maintenance internally. At the other end are cities that have chartered formal Parking Authorities that act with varying degrees of autonomy. They can have very limited authority, acting primarily in an advisory role, or they can have the power to plan for future parking needs, set parking policy, and issue bonds to fund the development of new parking facilities or land bank property for future parking development. The Downtown Toledo Parking Authority (Toledo, OH) is a good example of an independent parking authority created by City and business community as a 501 C-3, self-funded, non-profit organization to plan, develop and manage the parking system in downtown Toledo.

Essential Elements for Parking System Management

An appreciation for the role of parking in maintaining the health of Downtown businesses and promoting growth is not limited to large cities. Leaders in small towns and medium-sized cities are constantly reminded of how parking availability and perceptions about downtown parking affects businesses and growth prospects. If parking is not an issue, it normally means downtown businesses are not in high demand and there are no active development efforts underway. As communities and their downtowns experience or pursue growth, proper planning for parking needs and how those resources will be managed become increasingly important. In the early stages of downtown redevelopment, when parking is plentiful it is ignored. But, it cannot be ignored indefinitely. At some point new parking demand overtakes available supplies of convenient parking. If insufficient attention is given to parking, growth prospects and the health of existing downtown businesses are affected by the lack of strategic planning to meet parking needs, and effective management of existing parking resources.

It is difficult to reduce parking management functions to a “short list”, but the following can be considered essential elements that must be present in developing and supporting an effective parking system. **These descriptions are not intended as a critique of the current structure for parking management in Wilson, but are generic background descriptions that have broad application in most cities.**

■ Planning

The importance of far-sighted planning for parking cannot be overstated. It should be a foundational consideration that is part of every element of the broader planning process for Downtown. Insufficient parking, whether through inadequate supply or inefficient management of existing resources, can weaken and even derail development efforts.

Parking planning involves its deliberate and consistent inclusion in downtown planning processes, identifying strategies and policies that are consistent with, and support, the broader goals set for Downtown. Good parking planning can, and should, be used to leverage new business opportunities. When a master planning process or development plans move ahead without consideration of parking support or impacts, the result can be missed opportunities to acquire land or the “right” sites for parking. Parking support is then cobbled together from what is left and the result can be challenging or confusing for businesses or activity centers that are the focus of the development effort.

- ❑ The responsibility for parking planning should be more clearly defined and attached to specific entities or individuals who clearly recognize the link between parking supply and development
- ❑ Those responsible for parking planning must be actively involved and consistent participants in all elements of the broader downtown planning process that is affected by parking
- ❑ Parking planning must include the development of strategies that are consistent with downtown goals, priorities and development efforts

■ Policy Making

The parking system is a management tool and a development tool. It requires a good understanding of parking management principles as the basis for the development of strategies and policies that have a high likelihood of accomplishing targeted objectives.

Although the conditions and circumstances of each downtown are unique in some respects, there is a core set of parking principles that have been proven through application in the marketplace. Some are intuitive and obvious to anyone who drives and parks. Other principles seem to go against logic or individual experience but are, nevertheless, true.

The adoption of ineffective parking strategies, whether driven by individual bias, political influence, or misunderstanding of parking principles, will undermine efforts to build a healthy and functional downtown. If policy decisions for on-street and off-street parking are made by different entities, it is critically important that those policies are consistent with a single set of core objectives set for the parking system as a whole. Although operational responsibility for on-street and off-street parking can be divided, key policies for both must be developed in a cooperative effort. Strategies, policies and practices for on-street parking management can directly undermine strategies for effectively managing off-street parking resources.

- ❑ The responsibility for policy making related to downtown parking must be entrusted to individuals or teams that have an understanding of proven parking principles, or willing to learn those principles from valid industry sources
- ❑ Policy development and application should be based on those principles and not on personal experience or opinions
- ❑ Responsibility for both on-street and off-street parking policies must either rest with a single entity or be closely coordinated in working toward the same objectives

■ Operations

A parking system is most effective in supporting community goals when the attention it receives is planned, organized, informed and consistent. Like any business, it requires continuous attention and its performance must be monitored. In larger cities, this may involve a sizeable staff and specific specialties. Smaller cities may operate well with a very limited staff but require significant cross-training and multi-tasking to maintain daily operations through the year.

- ❑ Sufficient staff must be available to implement established policies and procedures. Understaffing can be a false economy, underestimating the importance of effective control and enforcement to the downtown economy.
- ❑ Those with management responsibility must understand the available performance indicators that are meaningful for their operation and monitor those indicators on a regular and consistent basis - making adjustments in the operation as needed
- ❑ Equipment used in managing the parking system should provide the capabilities and flexibility that is actually needed in order to make the system work and provide the level of service that the community needs

- ❑ A plan for maintaining parking facilities and equipment should be a keystone of the parking operation even if maintenance funding is limited. Funding constraints actually increase the importance of a plan that has been carefully crafted to get the most out of the resources that are available.

■ **Accountability**

In most cities, management of the parking system is a key element of city government regardless of who has that direct responsibility. A clear line of accountability must be in place to help maximize and maintain parking system performance. If the municipality is actively involved in providing public parking as it is in Wilson, the ultimate responsibility for system performance cannot be delegated by City Administration without appropriate and effective controls. Those controls should include regular, meaningful reports regarding parking system activity and performance.

- ❑ The responsibilities and authority of those with direct responsibility for parking system management should be clearly defined
- ❑ They should be required to submit regular and meaningful reports of system activity and performance. This should include an annual system report that summarizes key performance indicators and includes an update of long-term plans. Performance indicators should be established at the beginning of the year after review and approval by City Administration and City Council.
- ❑ Particular attention should be given to financial accountability, primarily with respect to parking fees, meter collections and fine revenues. The separation of duties principle should be applied to the extent that it is feasible. A clear audit trail should be established, based on standard accounting principles, and the financial reporting procedures (including documentation) should be structured around that audit trail. The audit trail must begin at the earliest possible point of accountability in the collection and reporting process. That process should not only facilitate audit controls but should also include mechanisms to ensure that full reconciliation of funds actually take place consistently.

Assessment of Parking Management Structure in Wilson

Current Structure

Most management responsibilities for the parking system in Wilson rest with the Wilson Parking Commission, which is comprised of six commissioners. The Commission was created through City Ordinance by the Wilson City Council under a city ordinance with the following language:

Sec. 22-141. Created.

There is hereby created an advisory commission in the city to be known as the "Wilson Parking Commission." (Code 1969, § 30-190)

Sec. 22-142. Appointment of members; terms.

The parking commission shall consist of six (6) members. The city council shall appoint two (2) members each year with the term of office being for three (3) years. In the event a vacancy occurs, the city council shall fill the vacancy for the unexpired term of that member on the commission. The term of office of those members of the commission, whose term expires on December thirty-first, shall be extended to March thirty-first and, thereafter, the term of office shall commence on April first and expire on March thirty-first. (Code 1969, § 30-190.1; Ord. No. O-127-90, § 1, 12-6-90)

Sec. 22-143. Meetings.

The parking commission shall meet at least quarterly or more often if the commission deems appropriate. (Code 1969, § 30-190.2)

Sec. 22-144. Recommendations and reports to council.

The parking commission shall study the parking needs of the city and shall periodically make recommendations and give reports to city council and the city manager concerning the parking needs, regulations and other matters in the city. (Code 1969, § 30-190.3)

Sec. 22-145. Continuation of functions.

The parking commission may continue to perform such functions as deemed appropriate.

Assessment

Functional Structure

The ordinance creating the Parking Commission is general. It does not clearly define the role of the Commission, particularly as it relates to the four key areas of Planning, Policy-Making, Operations and Accountability described earlier. The Commission is defined in the ordinance as an "advisory commission" but, in reality, it performs operational functions that are well outside a purely advisory role including:

- ❑ Collection and deposit of parking meter revenues
- ❑ Administration of space rental agreements including collection of rental fees
- ❑ Special events coordination
- ❑ Preparation of an annual facility maintenance plan and coordination with city engineers on long-term maintenance requirements
- ❑ Occasional direct interaction with the parking public, particularly visitors to Downtown Wilson

Reporting Structure

The commission reports directly to the City Council. It has an elected Chairman who essentially functions as chief operating officer for the commission with periodic oversight and concurrence of the other commission members. This is apparently the result of his willingness to take on responsibility for day-to-day administrative decisions and, in some cases, direct management of parking system activities. The chairman position is a part-time commitment with minimal financial compensation.

Because parking supply has remained ahead of demand for many years administrative reporting and oversight by City Council has been largely unnecessary. This condition is understandable, however not desirable for the long-term.

Authority

The following synopsis of the Commission's authority is based on interviews and not on specific provisions of the ordinance. There may be some documentation of delegation of these functions to the Parking Commission by City Council and subsequent delegation of specific functions to the Chairman by the Commission, but that documentation was not researched or volunteered.

Functions of the Commission (formal or in practice):

- Administration of parking space rentals
- Changes in the mix of rented, metered or free spaces in City-owned surface lots
- Monitoring of enforcement, particularly violation of rented spaces
- Liaison with merchants
- Response to incidents on managed lots
- Contracted services for parking lot maintenance
- Daily deposit and reporting of rent collections
- Collection, deposit and reporting of parking meter revenue
- Preparation of end-of-month summary reports of revenue collections

Limitations

The Commission has no budget and does not retain any revenues generated by the parking and enforcement operations. All revenues go into the City's general fund. The funds are identified by source within the City's accounting system for accountability and management information purposes, but are not linked directly to operating costs of the parking system. All expenses related to the parking system are folded into the budgets of individual City departments.

The Commission has no power to acquire assets, including real property. It can only make recommendations to the City Council for those acquisitions.

The Commission has no power to lease property. It can only make recommendations to the City Council for the lease of property for parking.

It has no authority to issue bonds or generate funding of any kind.

The Commission has only two paid employees, the Chairman and one administrative person who administers parking space rentals. It was not clear whether the administrative person is compensated separately or out of the monthly payment for services made to the Chairman.

Coordination

Although the ordinance specifies commission meetings no less than once each quarter, that schedule has been inconsistent.

The Deputy City Manager is a member of the Commission and serves as a direct liaison with the City's administrative staff.

There has been informal coordination between the Commission and those responsible for downtown development efforts. The opportunity exists for greater coordination that will improve development of strategies and policies that are directed toward mutual goals and objectives.

Consultant's Observations

There is a general lack of understanding about the role of the Parking Commission and how it conducts its business. It was difficult to get a clear picture of what is expected and what is actually taking place. During stakeholder interviews, contradictions in accounts of how the Commission operates and how the parking system is managed were the norm.

This observation does not mean that the Commission and Chairman are not operating in what they believe to be in the best interest of the City. Conversations during the stakeholder interviews indicated a sincere effort to support the needs of downtown businesses, the customers they serve, and other visitors to Downtown Wilson. There was anecdotal evidence of sensitivity to the importance of hospitality in responding to specific situations when they arise, particularly when it involves visitors from outside Wilson.

Another significant observation, mentioned earlier, was the lack of continual coordination between the Parking Commission and those involved in downtown development efforts. Those two entities must work in close harmony in pursuing strategies for downtown business health and development. If used properly, parking is an important downtown development tool. That fact is already recognized in some of the recent cooperative efforts between the City and

developers interested in investing in downtown projects. The City’s support has come in the form of long-term parking commitments to meet the needs of those projects. Such arrangements can be deal “makers” when potential projects do not have sufficient space on-site for needed parking or when the cost of providing that parking pushes overall project costs beyond the point of financial feasibility. As a note, the City is already aware of the need to use great care in making such commitments, considering long-term costs and the parking need to meet other parking demand in the area.

The next section of this report will focus on approaches used in other cities to manage parking. That information will be useful, but will be of limited benefit until all entities with City government with responsibilities related to parking and those associated with development efforts have come together to establish clear goals for the parking system, endorsed by all, and parking management strategies that will best support Downtown Wilson, now and in the future.

The following is a summary of key observations based primarily on interviews with stakeholders and City staff members. Some of these summarize issues already discussed.

- There are no written guiding principles, established priorities, or management strategies for the parking system that are either formally articulated or widely recognized across City departments and among business owners
- There is a lack of clarity regarding the role of the Parking Commission
- Information gained during the stakeholder interviews revealed variations in understanding and opinions related to the Commission’s mission, its functions, its practices, pricing for rented spaces, control of parking revenues, and level of interaction with City departments
- Planning for parking seems to be limited to ad hoc efforts that are related to immediate or near-term circumstances, typically related to planned or potential development activity. Planning occurs as “across the table” discussions among affected City staff members and those involved in downtown development efforts. Although it may recommend property acquisitions to City Council, the Parking Commission does not appear to play a significant role in coordinated planning for Downtown parking needs, particularly planning related to future needs.
- There is a general lack of understanding of established technical principles of parking system management related to the use of pricing as a management tool. Current policies are counterproductive because critical on-street parking is free and there is a fee for the use of the most convenient off-street parking facilities. This pricing is “upside down”, providing a strong incentive for employees and court visitors to park for extended periods in the free on-street spaces.
- The parking enforcement function is ineffective in terms of sufficient staff allocation and technical resources. The result is an ongoing challenge to complete all required administrative tasks while maintaining an effective level of field activity (chalking and meter tours).

- The parking enforcement effort is limited by the lack of an electronic plate tracking and citation system that provides real-time information to the enforcement officer in the field. This also limits flexibility in policies that the City might need to implement
- There is no prohibition in current ordinance against “meter-feeding”. A vehicle can remain parked in the same space indefinitely as long as the meter is paid. Currently, this is not an important issue as those meters are located in off-street lots, but should be addressed if meters are installed at on-street spaces, if needed in the future, for parking management purposes.
- Downtown merchants recognize the importance of on-street parking to their businesses but there are differences in opinion as to what measures should be taken to help make certain that the availability of on-street parking for customer and visitor use is maximized.
 - An outlier opinion suggested that parking should be opened to any and all users without restriction or time limits
 - Some merchants, and others, pointed to a significant level of “abuse” by City and County employees who habitually park either their personal vehicles or official vehicles in on-street parking for extended periods, often for the full day. Court visitors were also recognized as a problem in terms of taking up on-street parking that is needed for retail customers, often for extended periods.
 - Some merchants recognized that, in addition to the need to move City and County employees out of on-street spaces, downtown business owners and their employees should not be using on-street parking in the core business area
- Cooperative attitudes from the City and County administration in keeping government employee and official vehicles out of on-street spaces were cited, while recognizing that the problem persists

Approaches Used in Other Cities

Every city is different, with different history, different economic drivers, and its own set of goals for Downtown activity and development. Simply adopting a model that works in another city does not assure successful application in the community where it is applied. It is useful to look at parking programs in other cities for tools that may be applicable in Wilson, but strategies and policies for the parking program in Wilson must be tailored to the specific local conditions and plans for future growth.

Rather than cite blanket descriptions of parking programs in other cities, it may be best to talk about specific program elements that, based on the study team’s exposure to conditions in Wilson, would appear to have potential applicability. In some cases, the cities are somewhat similar to Wilson in size. However, some aspects of parking programs in larger cities will be cited as good examples of broadly applicable “best practices.”

Lynchburg, Virginia

Lynchburg is located in the western part of Virginia along the James River. There are multiple employers in the greater Lynchburg area, with no reliance on a single industry. The downtown

is fairly active although it suffers, as do many cities in the region, from the loss of retail business to nearby shopping centers.

Relevant Aspects of Parking System Management

Well-Defined Structure

Although downtown Lynchburg is larger than Wilson, it serves as a good example of how a parking authority or commission can establish a fairly well-defined mission and objectives. The following text is taken from two locations within the City’s website. The first section describes the mission and principle tasks of the Authority. The second section is taken from the most current Work Plan that restates the mission (in modified form) and lays out goals and objectives for the year.

Introduction

The Lynchburg Parking Authority is responsible for the oversight and has the authority to set policy concerning all City of Lynchburg off-street parking facilities.

The purpose of the Parking Authority is to develop plans for and to coordinate the development and use of sufficient off-street, public-owned parking facilities in the City and as necessary to acquire, construct, reconstruct, equip, improve, extend, enlarge, maintain, repair and operate off-street parking facilities.

Mission

The mission of the Lynchburg Parking Authority is to recognize that it is a not-for-profit public service organization established under the Acts of Assembly of Virginia, to provide off-street parking within the commercial and residential districts of the municipality consistent with the plans and policies of the municipality.

- ❑ To operate and maintain the City of Lynchburg parking facilities in a professional manner so as to complement the community and to emphasize a high level of customer service.
- ❑ To receive revenues derived from the use of the parking facilities and to use those revenues to maintain, finance, and improve the public parking system and to provide improved amenities in the Central Business District.
- ❑ The Authority operates in a fiscally responsible manner, consistent with applicable accounting procedures, governing regulations, and contractual obligations.
- ❑ The Authority shall continually improve and increase parking opportunities to meet the unique challenges that are presented as the result of growth and development within the City.
- ❑ For more information contact the parking authority at parking.authority@lynchburgva.gov.

Work Plan Statement:

1. To increase communications between the public and private sectors regarding current parking policies and future parking needs.
2. To maximize off-street parking options for downtown visitors, businesses, and residents.

3. To maximize on-street parking options for downtown visitors, businesses, and residents.
4. To determine the most appropriate method of financing and location for a new parking facility.

Mission

The mission of the Lynchburg Parking Authority is to support the development of adequate parking for commercial, retail, residential, and recreational use in the downtown area. Adequate parking will provide all downtown visitors and customers with a convenient, safe, secure, and aesthetically pleasing parking experience.

Objectives

Set policy that is an interrelated web of strategies and tactics that are formulated to meet certain goals for the parking system. The primary goal is to support the Mission Statement.

Tasks

Develop policies of operation, maintenance, and allocation of spaces for parking facilities (on-street and off-street).

- Increase communications with downtown stakeholders. Raise public awareness of parking availability and the location of parking facilities.
- Create a parking website to post all meeting schedules, minutes, and other parking related information.

Goal 1: Increase communications between the public and private sectors regarding current parking policies and future parking needs.

Objectives:

- Capture input from downtown stakeholders regarding current parking conditions and future parking needs.
- Encourage better utilization of existing parking spaces.
Institute periodic forums to discuss parking concerns, expectations and needs.
- Enhance public relations by developing a parking information brochure that will contain public parking information, rates, and other parking related information.

Goal 2: Maximize off-street parking options for downtown visitors, businesses, and residents

Objectives

- Maximize the efficiency of existing parking facilities.
- Develop an off-street parking inventory and introduce new parking technological controls.
- Create mixed utilization of off-street parking spaces.
- Maximize the revenue stream.

Goal 3: Maximize on-street parking options for downtown visitors, businesses, and residents.

Objectives

- Evaluate current City ordinances and review current on-street enforcement policies/practices.
- Implement paid on-street parking.
- Utilize advanced parking strategies and install technologies to control on-street parking spaces.

- Make recommendations to the City Manager, Parking Authority, and City Council to amend the parking ordinance and approve the parking policy.

Goal 4: Determine the most appropriate method of financing and location for a new parking facility.

Objectives

- Create a financing model for the new parking facility.
- Analyze other localities' revenue generation and financing methods.
- Determine the capital and operational costs of existing and new facilities.

Creative Involvement in Expanding Public Parking Options

At the time that a comprehensive parking study was performed in 2007, Lynchburg was facing significant challenges in managing its parking system. On-street parking was limited to 2-hour stays (no meters) and there was no public parking available in off-street facilities other than lots and decks dedicated to specific businesses or government offices. Public parking for periods longer than two hours, whether paid or free, was simply not available. Apart from parking in on-street spaces, employees had to park in facilities owned by business establishments (including their employers) or pay by the month for reserved parking. There were no options to pay by the day and a strong incentive for employees to park on the street.

The 2007 parking study recommended that the Authority hire a professional parking manager to operate existing city-owned facilities and to take advantage of the large amount of underutilized private parking capacity that was available throughout Downtown Lynchburg. The study proposed that the Parking Authority approach owners of underutilized parking capacity, offering to establish public parking operations in the unused portion of those facilities. The Authority would provide the equipment, implement any lot modifications (numbered spaces, etc.) and administer both monthly permits and daily parking fees (where applicable). Revenues would be applied first to recovering the start-up and equipment costs. Once those costs were recovered, revenue would be split with the property owner in an agreed proportion.

The City followed that recommendation and hired an experienced parking manager who moved forward with the expansion of public parking in privately owned lots. That effort has included some more typical long-term leases but the program is continuing as a way to take advantage of all existing parking capacity within the downtown area, whether publicly owned or privately owned.

The 2007 study recommended the eventual implementation of paid on-street parking (parking meters) as a way to better manage that valuable resource. The implementation of paid on-street parking was intended to move downtown employees out of the on-street spaces and into the off-street parking options that were being created and expanded by the ongoing efforts of the Authority. Support for paid on-street parking among the downtown merchants has been growing, some recognizing it as a way to open more on-street parking for their customers and others wanting to create an additional revenue stream for the development of additional parking capacity.

Rock Hill, South Carolina

Rock Hill is a community located approximately 20 miles southwest of Downtown Charlotte. It has a downtown of similar size to Wilson although the activity level for downtown businesses is

higher. The City owns one parking structure and a series of surface lots that provide the bulk of public parking in the downtown area.

Relevant Aspects of Parking System Management

Downtown Parking Management Commission

Similar to Wilson, the City of Rock Hill has a Downtown Parking Management Commission that is responsible for management of the City’s downtown parking resources but, as the text from their website (below) reveals, their responsibilities are more clearly defined.

The Commission works closely with the Danville Economic Development Authority which, in reality, drives much of the planning activity related to parking because parking is used as a development incentive through creative public-private partnerships. The quarterly meeting schedule is evidence that the Commission is more involved in oversight and policies setting than day-to-day management. Day-to-day management is actually carried out by the Economic Development staff.

Authority:

The Downtown Parking Management Commission was created by City Council on November 9, 2009. The purpose of the Downtown Parking Management Commission is to oversee parking in the Downtown Parking Management System on a long term basis. During the period 2001 to 2006, a Downtown Parking Commission, whose members were elected by property owners within the Downtown Parking Management System, functioned in a similar capacity.

Membership:

7 members appointed by City Council. Members are required to have a stake hold in Downtown Rock Hill. Members must reside within the Rock Hill City limits.

Responsibilities:

- To oversee parking in the Downtown Parking Management System on a long term basis.
- To hear appeals and grievances on a regular basis.
- To review the availability of adequate parking and its allocation between long and short term uses.
- To make recommendations to the City Manager and City Council on such areas as the fee structure and methods used to assess fees for the Downtown Parking Management System.
- The Commission is authorized to adjust fees in the event of an undue hardship if an unjust result will occur unless such adjustment is made.

Meeting Schedule:

The Commission meets on an “as called” basis as determined by the Commission members and the Downtown Parking Administrator in Room 371 at Rock Hill City Hall. Meetings are not expected to exceed four (4) per year.

Parking System Funding

Rock Hill created an elementary funding mechanism several years ago that was designed to offset some of the cost of operating the City’s downtown parking lots. The system rests on minimum parking requirements that are set for the downtown rather than exempting Downtown as most cities of that size do. The parking requirements are much lower than those applied to the suburban areas and more appropriate for the actual parking needs of Downtown businesses and residences. Businesses can provide for all or part of their parking needs on their own property. If more parking is needed to meet the City’s minimum requirements for that land use, the business is obligated to pay the City a very modest annual fee to support the parking that is provided by the City. The assumption is that parking in City-owned facilities makes up the shortfall.

In 2012 the City engaged a parking consultant to analyze the actual cost of acquiring, maintaining and operating its parking facilities, with an objective of laying out reasonable options for a fee structure that would recapture more of those costs. The study was prompted, in part, by the prospective construction of the second parking deck and the higher costs associated with developing structured parking.

The City’s plan is to increase business parking fees over time to progressively narrow the gap between what the City expects to invest in new parking development and the revenues coming in from the parking system. The overall program and the current focus on balancing revenues and costs is a good example of far-sighted planning and a funding mechanism that can sustain long-term parking infrastructure and downtown development.

Danville, Virginia

Danville is located in the western part of Virginia along the Dan River. It is a city of similar size to Wilson with a similar history as a hub for tobacco warehousing and distribution. A large portion of building square footage is located in former tobacco warehouses located in the Tobacco Warehouse District adjacent to the downtown core. Some warehouse structures in this district have already been converted to office or residential space and interest in further development of these buildings seems to be gaining momentum. Parking has been recognized as a major planning component of the City’s downtown development effort, including the recent completion of a Parking Master Plan.

The City provides free public parking in its public surface lots but paid monthly contract parking appears to be coming a larger factor in the parking market.

Since there is no paid public parking in Danville, there is no established parking revenue stream to support expansion or operation of new parking lots or structures. Based on the projections of new parking demand that will be created by “probable” both near-term and long-term development activity, the City will be facing a challenge in funding the parking capacity needed to support that development.

Relevant Aspects of Parking System Management

City owned parking lots are managed by the city, but that management effort is limited to signage and maintenance since all city-owned parking is free to the public.

Planning

The City and its Economic Development Authority have been working closely together as a well-integrated team in doing the necessary strategic planning for parking that will support

anticipated growth. That process included their in-depth involvement in a recent parking study that provided a detailed analysis of parking needs related to future development opportunities. The study provided multiple options for the strategic placement of parking supplies to support potential development, helping ensure that sufficient parking would be available. It also identified sites that would allow efficient facility design (reducing the overall cost per space) and maximize opportunities for shared parking.

Property Acquisition

As the Danville Economic Development Authority and the City look forward for ways to support the growing interest in new development, particularly in the Tobacco Warehouse District, they are relying to a great extent on the funding and purchase power of the Danville Industrial Development Authority to acquire both buildings and potential parking sites. This places the financial burden outside of the City budget and allows acquisition decisions to be made on the basis of a development plan that is not encumbered by normal purchase processes and changes in the political landscape.

Traverse City, Michigan

Traverse City is a community of similar size to Wilson located in the northern portion of the Michigan peninsula on Lake Michigan. The parking system consists of one parking structure and approximately 25 City-owned surface lots. On-street parking is controlled by parking meters.

Relevant Aspects of Parking System Management

Although the Parking Department is a formal City department, its staff consists of employees of the Traverse City Downtown Development Authority (DDA) contracted by the City to manage the parking system. Part of the reason for that structure is to provide continuity of the parking operation in the event that the DDA is dissolved.

The Parking Department operates as a self-funding enterprise fund. It collects all on-street and off-street parking revenues, paying all operating and capital expenses out of those revenues.

As a City Department, the Parking Department is still subject to oversight by the City Administration but acts with virtual autonomy in terms of setting parking system policies and rates. It works closely with the DDA in planning for future parking needs and that relationship is strengthened by the fact that Parking Department staff is comprised of DDA employees.

The Parking Department has the authority to acquire or enter into lease agreements with property owners for property developed for use as City parking facilities.

Management of the parking system is the sole responsibility of the Department Manager who is qualified as a parking professional.

Burlington, North Carolina

All public parking in downtown Burlington, North Carolina is owned and managed by the City's Public Works Department. As in Wilson, on-street parking is controlled by time limit enforcement with no on-street parking meters. As in Wilson, Burlington contends with constant abuse of on-street parking by downtown employees who park in on-street spaces and move their vehicles periodically to avoid ticketing.

Relevant Aspects of Parking System Management

The City of Burlington Public Works Director (Nolan Kirkman) has taken on the role of parking system manager in a more direct way than has been found in most cities of similar size and with a similar number of parking facilities. The Director is at the forefront of downtown parking system management, including policy recommendations and implementation related to parking space allocation, parking rates for off-street lots, and long-term planning. He has endeavored to learn essential parking management principles and apply those principles to policies and strategic parking planning in Downtown Burlington. In particular, he has gained an understanding of on-street and off-street parking as single, inseparable “system”, that must have compatible policies on both sides of the equation. As an example, additional “free” parking space was created in the City’s off-street lots in conjunction with an intensified enforcement effort to downtown employees from on-street spaces needed for customers. The new emphasis in the on-street enforcement program was supported by space allocation changes in the off-street lots.

The Burlington Downtown Corporation (BDC), a 501 C-3 non-profit organization, is the entity primarily tasked with downtown development efforts but it is not directly responsible for parking system planning or management. The Public Works Director is an Ex Officio member of the BDC and serves as the direct link between development efforts and parking planning. The working relationship is very active and planning efforts involve broad participation by the City staff and BDC staff.

Summary Comments

The approaches used in other cities illustrate a variety of structures for parking system planning and management, but the most consistent contrast between these structures and conditions in Wilson are the degree to which responsibilities are defined and the degree to which the various entities with a stake in parking cooperate on a regular basis in planning and policy-making decisions. In all cases cited, the structure of responsibilities is more clearly defined and joint planning activity is more consistent than in Wilson. The difference may be a function of what is happening in those other cities, with parking rising to a higher level of importance on everyone’s agenda. However, it is obvious from the recent parking arrangements that have been made to accommodate new downtown development that parking planning in Wilson needs to be elevated to a higher level.

GENERAL COMMENTS

- Current parking enforcement efforts in Wilson are weakened by the fact that the parking enforcement officer is required to perform administrative functions that take a significant portion of the workday. Effective enforcement depends not only on consistency but also on the ability of the enforcement staff to schedule tours that are appropriate for the time limits being enforced. When the schedule for enforcement tours allows employees to avoid ticketing by moving their vehicles only once during the morning and once during the afternoon there is little real control. As a result, too much of the critical on-street parking capacity is routinely taken up by employees vehicles. That is the current situation in Wilson.

Recommendation: Some or all of the administrative functions related to citations, sending notice letters for unpaid fines, and developing boot lists should be assigned to clerical staff, freeing the enforcement officer to remain in the field as much as possible. This will allow the officer to conduct more frequent enforcement tours that will make it more difficult for employees to park in on-street spaces routinely and avoid ticketing.

- The enforcement tours should be scheduled so that employees cannot avoid ticketing by moving their vehicles only once during the morning and once in the afternoon. If the first morning tour is scheduled too early in order to make time for other tasks, employees who typically arrive just after the first tour will not be chalked until the second tour, effectively enjoying the additional time without risk.
- The City should consider investing in an electronic license plate tracking and ticketing system. The principle feature of this type of system is that it allows the enforcement officer to enter the license plate numbers of parked vehicles into a handheld device. The license plate information is stored in a database along with any past history of violations or unpaid tickets associated with that license plate. The device is also used to generate and print tickets, with that information uploaded to a workstation at the end of the day or via a wireless connection.

Significant benefits include:

- ❑ Each plate entry for parking vehicles is time-stamped. This provides an accurate of parking durations for each parked vehicle that is independent of the tour schedule or variations in that schedule. By doing so, it provides more accuracy, more legal validity and more flexibility in scheduling tour times.
- ❑ A record of unpaid tickets resides in the handheld unit, providing the enforcement officer with an immediate alert when a violator has exceeded the threshold for a higher level of enforcement action such as booting.
- ❑ The scofflaw list residing in the handheld is updated automatically with additional violation and payment information, eliminating the need for manual list preparation.
- ❑ The enforcement officer does not have to rely on memory or time-consuming review of manually compiled scofflaw lists to identify repeat violators.
- ❑ The system provides for more flexibility in defining how far vehicles must be moved to avoid ticketing. Reliance on chalking is very limited in this respect.
- ❑ The violations history database provides flexibility in implementing “grace” policies for first-time violators. This can be a very valuable tool when trying to strengthen efforts to move employees from on-street spaces. If a violator does not have any previous violations with a prescribed period (e.g. 12 month period), the enforcement officer can issue a courtesy warning that advises the parker that they overstayed the time limit but are not being ticketed as a courtesy to them as downtown visitors or customers. It also advises that their license plate number will remain in the database for a year and that they will be ticketed for any overstays of time limits within that year. The number of

allowable violations without ticketing can be varied as the City deems appropriate and consistent with its efforts to open on-street spaces to customer but avoid negative impressions.

These types of grace programs have proven to be very positive public relations programs without compromising the core objective of keeping employees out of on-street spaces. Employees park every day and quickly become repeat offenders. Visitors who are new to Wilson do not.

Trying to implement such a program without a portable database requires that the enforcement officer call a clerical person to check the primary database (at the Police Department) each time a ticket is written. With the information resident in the handheld device, that information is immediately available to the enforcement officer any time a ticket is initiated.

- The enforcement officer does not have to rely on memory or time-consuming review of manually compiled scofflaw lists to identify repeat violators. The system can be set to alert the officer whenever the plate number of a habitual violator is entered, even if that vehicle is not currently in violation. If the city ordinance allows for booting when the vehicle is not currently parked in violation, this would allow the enforcement officer to take action any time a habitual violator is found on the street.

Parking software systems require a significant investment but there are multiple options to tailor a system to meet the needs of the city at the lowest practical cost. It should be considered an investment in management of the City's valuable parking resources and promoting Downtown rather than something that will generate a direct positive cash flow. In fact, its successful implementation should be reflected, over time, in a reduction in the number of tickets written and fines imposed.

Section VI – Strategies for Wilson

Background

Finding a convenient parking space in Downtown Wilson has been easy in recent years. As downtown develops, and economic opportunities are realized there will be a greater number of vehicles and increased demand for these available parking spaces. The City has initiated this study to begin planning for physical and programmatic improvements that will effectively balance parking supply and demand before parking becomes a challenge. This plan includes many recommendations, some would be relatively quick and inexpensive while others will take time and require a shifting of perspectives and administration.

Under this task the study team was asked to identify recommendations that will allow the City of Wilson to more effectively manage its parking system over time. The most significant decision to be made involves the administration of the entire parking system, and how it is managed in the future. There are three unique options: (a) continuation of the current Parking Commission; (b) Internal reorganization; or (c) External reorganization.

Recommendation Options – Management of Parking Systems

Option A – Continuation

The City can continue with the current Parking Commission arrangement, however it should transition in terms of the Commission's role and level of coordination with other City departments.

- One benefit of continuing with a Parking Commission is continuity of parking knowledge and the history of the parking program. It has been very beneficial when parking commissions or parking advisory committees have been sufficiently involved in developing parking strategies and policies that they have become well-versed in the core principles of parking system operations and management. That knowledge carries forward despite changes in City administration or staff.
- If there is high turnover in the City administration, this benefit can be really important. However, if the knowledge the commission itself experiences high turnover or does not take advantage of the opportunity to really understanding the dynamics of downtown parking, that potential benefit may not be realized.
- The role and responsibilities of the Commission must be clearly defined so that the Commission, City administrators and the public know what is expected and understand the Commission's scope of authority.
- The Commission should be thoroughly integrated into the City's overall planning process and not carry forward policies that are independent of that process. This can take the form of the Chairman's regular participation in planning and development meetings or the Commission can establish a smaller sub-group that is tasked with actively participating in planning/coordination meetings. With additional staff added as needed over time.

- Accountability of the Commission should be clearly established through meaningful and well-crafted reporting mechanisms. Those mechanisms should be based on system performance parameters that are set out in advance, with regular benchmarking against past performance.
- The Parking Commission should meet on a regular, scheduled and consistent basis. Quarterly meetings may be sufficient, but representatives of both City administration and the Wilson Planning and Revitalization department should participate in order to provide first-hand updates about development efforts and help maintain the Commission’s awareness of future parking needs.
- The parking enforcement officer can continue as a member of the police department but should continue to be a NON-sworn officer as she is now – without other law enforcement duties. The enforcement officer can report operationally to the police department command, but operate under policies set by the Commission for parking enforcement policies and practices.
- Maintenance responsibilities for the City’s parking facilities should be clearly assigned to a specific City department and that assignment should be communicated to all levels of City government and the downtown development staff.
- Maintenance costs related to parking system facilities and equipment should be set out as parking costs in the City’s budget and expenditure tracking system in order to identify the actual cost of providing and maintaining various elements of the system.
- A long-range capital program for parking facility maintenance should be developed to anticipate and provide funding for periodic major maintenance and rehabilitation projects.

Option B – Internal Reorganization

Full responsibility for parking planning and operations can be taken into a City department.

- The assigned department should have full budgetary and operational control of both on-street and off-street parking operations to help ensure the effective integration of policies for both.
- The department would administer the rental of parking spaces in City-controlled parking facilities and collect meter revenues. It would make decisions related to space allocation, rates and fee collection methods within parameters set by City Council.
- A senior staff member within that department should be assigned primary oversight responsibility for the parking system and be provided sufficient formal training in parking operations to carry that responsibility (e.g. training and education opportunities available through professional trade organizations such as the International Parking Institute).
- That staff member should be the primary liaison between the department and both the downtown development staff and the general public in matters related to parking planning, policies and enforcement.

- Regular participation in city planning activities related to both infrastructure and development should be a major charge to that staff member. An active working relationship with those involved in downtown development should be a high priority.
- The role of the parking system and the department managing that system should be clearly established, including clear definition of parking allocation and management priorities as they relate to the support of downtown businesses, downtown residents and new development efforts. The City must establish priorities for the use of its parking resources and define the degree of discretion that is granted to the department in supporting downtown development efforts.
- The parking enforcement officer can continue as a member of the police department but should continue to be a NON-sworn officer as she is now – without other law enforcement duties. The enforcement officer can report operationally to the police department command, but operate under policies set by the City department responsible for parking enforcement policies and practices.
- The Parking Commission can still have an active role in management of the parking system, but working closely with the responsible city department in an advisory capacity. It could serve as a regular or periodic liaison with downtown business owners and the general public in matters related to parking system operations and policies.

Option C – External Reorganization

Responsibility for parking planning and overall parking policies could be vested in an external downtown development organization (referred to as ‘organization’ from here) that focuses on economic growth, and it is assumed that direct responsibility for parking matters would fall to a new Parking Committee within that organization.

- Based on the size of the community, the size of City government and the level of activity in Downtown Wilson, it is not recommended that this organization function with the full level of autonomy that is sometimes granted a Parking Authority. The organization would formulate parking strategies and related parking policies that would be subject to City Council approval after passing through a formal review process by City administration to ensure that all downtown interests are considered and protected.
- The external organization would take on day-to-day management responsibilities for both the City’s on-street and off-street parking operations.
- The parking enforcement officer can continue as a member of the police department but should continue to be a NON-sworn officer as she is now – without other law enforcement duties. The enforcement officer can report operationally to the police department command, but operate under policies set by the organization for parking enforcement policies and practices.
- Maintenance responsibilities may be assigned to a City department, but the organization would work with City engineers to develop an ongoing maintenance plan and standards that would be used as the basis for the City’s budgeting process and daily

maintenance plan for City parking facilities. The organization would be responsible for regular monitoring of maintenance needs and maintenance performance in order to promote high standards.

- The organization would administer the rental of parking space in City-owned parking facilities and collect meter revenues. It would make decisions related to space allocation, rates and fee collection methods within parameters set by City Council.
- The organization would develop and make recommendations for changes in parking strategies, space use priorities, citation and parking fees to City Council.
- The organization would be required to submit regular, periodic reports to City Council of parking system performance and the status of any initiatives based on meaningful performance measurements set in advance and approved by City Council.
- The Parking Commission could continue under a modified role, serving in an advisory capacity to this organization. It could provide additional perspectives on planning and policy matters as well as serving as an avenue for feedback from the community. In this role, the Commission should include both a senior member of City Administration (as it does now) and a member of the organization to facilitate cooperative efforts and the flow of information.

All three management options are feasible, including a combination of several options that transition over time. Maintaining the current structure demands the changes outlined above for that option. Without those changes the City will lack the close coordination for strategic planning, policy making and operational accountability that is needed to support the health of downtown businesses and development goals for Downtown Wilson.

Section VII – Implementation Plan Recommendations

VHB has organized the individual recommendations identified in previous sections into a phased implementation approach. This plan has been structured with a 10-year time frame and therefore recommendations for implementation are separated into near-term (1-5 years) and long term (5-10 years).

Near-term Recommendations

With clear understanding of the long-term aspirational principals, the following recommended improvements are to be considered initial or interim steps within the overall process.

Recommendations should be phased over time, and evaluated continually to track their impact (positive or negative) on the parking system.

Physical Improvements

- Identify strategically-located on-street loading zones (one per block) for short duration loading and unloading
- Perform audit of existing lighting conditions within parking lots, along streets and pedestrian connections
- Review elements of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) as they relate to City-owned parking facilities
 - Natural Surveillance – lighting
 - Natural Access Control – fences, walkways and security
 - Territorial Reinforcement – landscaping and signage
 - Maintenance – repairs and trash removal
- Improve visibility characteristics to address perception of safety
- Increase the standard minimum parking stall width to 8’ 6” for all future spaces
- Perform audit of all City of Wilson signs within Downtown for consistence of message, visibility from driver or pedestrian perspective, and physical condition. Identify the lead agency that is responsible for each sign.
 - Review of on-street parking signage indicating that 2-hour on-street parking is enforced “Monday-Saturday”
- Review all vehicular signs located within the roadway right-of-way for compliance with design standards from the Manual for Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD)
http://mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov/kno_2009r1r2.htm
- Implement visitor parking wayfinding signage program aimed specifically for Courthouse visitors, and directs them toward the Centre Brick lot (#1)

Administrative Recommendations

- Identify a lead agency or department to manage the business of parking, and define roles among various City departments that compliment this service
 - Hire a Director of Parking Services, preferably a Certified Administrator of Public Parking (CAPP) to administer the lead agency
 - Become involved with the Carolinas Parking Association (CPA) network of parking professionals
 - Clearly define the agency’s mission, goals, objectives, and progress towards achieving these objectives
- Expand the Parking and Traffic website, and post relevant FAQs and contact information. Use neighboring cities as examples, such as
 - Raleigh’s ParkLink:
<http://www.raleighnc.gov/business/content/PWksParkingMgmt/Articles/ParkLink.html>
 - Park Wilmington:
http://www.wilmingtonnc.gov/city_manager/economic_development/parking
 - City of Greenville:
http://www.greenvillenc.gov/departments/financial_services_dept/information/default.aspx?id=384
- Perform regular peak period occupancy counts of all municipal parking lots, summarize results, track changes over time, and report the findings to City Council
- Pursue (reasonable) long-term lease agreements with private property owners to secure the availability of these currently leased parking lots, beginning with centrally-located, high-demand lots
- Establish marketing strategies and outreach initiatives to begin the process of changing perspectives on parking as a limited resource that is shared equitably among all users
 - Display reserved parking availability and monthly rates per lot within a variety of print and digital media
 - Display all existing municipal parking areas and their supply (# spaces).
- Outreach to City and County agencies - responsibilities of various government entities with a stake in parking must cooperate on a regular basis in planning and policy-making decisions
- Collaborate with various City, County and private agencies for special event coordination that require or disrupt parking availability, including evenings and weekends
- Coordination with Planning and Revitalization on a regular basis
- Offer parking validation options (digital, print, or other) for merchants to provide to their customers
- Deter on-street parking by downtown employees through education, enforcement, and financial controls

- Consider increasing the minimum parking citation of \$5 (currently) to discourage over-stay parking within the timed on-street spaces
- Enforcement should begin earlier in the day so that employees cannot avoid ticketing by moving their vehicles only once during the morning and once in the afternoon
- Some or all of the administrative functions related to citations, sending notice letters for unpaid fines, and developing boot lists should be assigned to clerical staff, freeing the enforcement officer to remain in the field as much as possible
- Establish a formalized procedure for the citation review process
- Review crime statistics for downtown and market the results
- Begin to treat parking as a financially-independent, or self-liquidating operation, and implement gradual changes toward this objective
 - Hold parking revenues separate from the General Fund; use for upgrading enforcement software, equipment, signage, maintenance, technology improvements, etc.
 - Establish a budget for staff, operations, planning and design of future parking facilities

Long-term Recommendations

Aspirational principals serve as the guiding force for these long-term improvements. Some of these recommendations will require complementary improvements that can be made in the near-term that establish the initial framework or change public perception over time.

Administrative Recommendations

- Treat all municipal parking facilities as a single system to be managed, recognizing that high-demand areas will require additional accessible parking accommodations while low-demand areas will require fewer
 - Strive for equity among all users, especially ADA, and visitors, for on-street parking in high-demand areas. Includes correcting conditions that allow over-stay parking.
 - Offer a variety of parking options based on location and price, and allow users to choose an appropriate level of parking service that meets their needs
 - This may involve hiring an outside vendor to provide mobile payment options for on-street parking
 - This may involve revising the fees associated with monthly reserved parking based on lot location, duration, and availability (24-hours per day reduced to 10-hours)
 - Study the pattern of reserved parking spaces throughout a typical year, and identify any peak demand trends. Understand who these individuals are, and what their parking needs are so that they are appropriately accommodated.
 - If visitor parking demands are sufficient, the City should investigate the retrofit of one of the centrally-located visitor parking lots into an access (gate) controlled parking lot. The

Barnes St Lot (#2) is the most likely candidate since it previously was controlled by an attendant and is perceived as the highest-demand parking lot.

- Evaluate the benefits of on-street metered parking for customers to all downtown merchants
 - Ensure that revenue generated from on-street parking will be reinvested in downtown parking system enhancements such as improved signage, repair and maintenance, design and construction, enforcement, long-range planning, and administration
- Consider investing in an electronic license plate tracking and ticketing system for parking enforcement. This should be especially important since the City is allowed to retain its parking citation revenue, as opposed to State Institutions (Universities) that are required to return 80% of their parking citation ‘fees’ to the local education fund.
 - Perform research on the available technology options and select an option with upgrade capabilities as the system evolves over time
- Consider transitioning to a permit management system for residents, employees, and/or visitors. A limited number of permits should be valid for a variety of ‘zoned’ parking lots. Permits should be issued (or sold at varying prices) according to their location.
 - Total permits issued must be actively managed so as to ‘guarantee’ a space is available during peak periods, or provide overflow parking options nearby for special events

Appendix A - Stakeholder Interview Summary



Memorandum

To: Ellen Hoj, City of Wilson

Date: June 2014

Project No.: 38401.00

From: Timothy Tresohlavy, VHB Engineering

Re: Wilson Downtown Parking Study –
Stakeholder Interview Summary

This memorandum serves as the full summary of stakeholder interview discussions. Specific reference to names have been removed for privacy. Topics have been grouped by general theme.

Statements are not necessarily the opinions of the project team, or the City of Wilson. These are statements and notes collected during interviews on Tuesday June 10th, and Wednesday June 11th 2014.

Parking Enforcement

One parking officer – full time – civilian –working hours 8:15-5:15 (parking enforced 8am-6pm)

- No weekend enforcement, though on-street parking signs state “8am to 6 pm Mon – Sat”
- Enforcement has a specific route, however currently focusing on reducing the boot list
 - “Boot list” – 5 outstanding tickets or more (late fees count too)
 - 20 min route for on-street spots – mark with chalk
 - Then do 5 metered parking lots – off street – 15 min
 - Together this makes one route or tour
 - Takes longer when people ask
 - Handwritten tickets
 - Wilson Parking commission has asked for lists of new repeated offenders
 - Sunguard Public Sector ticket tracking system (manual entry)
 - Current outstanding tickets – can be obtained through system but is not
 - Parking Enforcement cannot do anything if they have only 2, 3 outstanding tickets
- Typical day includes at least two tours of metered parking per AM, and PM. This schedule is frequently interrupted by the need to enter citations into the tracking system and perform DMV checks.

Existing standard operating procedure:

1. Give ticket
2. Enter ticket into computer system at the end of the daily shift
3. Use NC DMV search for name and address of vehicle owner
4. Generate monthly report letters – to people that have X amount parking violations outstanding, how to pay (mail or come in person to utility department)
 - These individuals are automatically added to scofflaw list (unpaid citations)

The project team requested parking citation reports from the past year (2013-14):

- # tickets issued per year 877, totaling \$4,667 in potential fines
- # appealed/dismissed unknown
- \$ appealed/dismissed unknown

- \$ paid/unpaid \$16,412 in unpaid tickets (1,830) currently
- \$ outstanding forever unknown

The current parking citation amount is:

- \$5 for failure to pay the meter or exceeding time limit;
- \$10 for parking in a non-parking area, loading zone, wrong direction, or all others;
- \$50 for fire lane or ADA violation

Previously parking citations were paid to the Director of the Wilson Parking Commission. These citations are now paid and collected by the City's Customer Service (Utility Cashiers). There are no online payment options for parking citations.

Parking citation appeals are made to the Chief of Police.

More "Rigorous enforcement would be an expensive proposition", and probably not as effective as simply working with merchants, government employees, and visitors to balance parking needs, making occasional concessions. The current time limits (mostly 2-hour maximum) for on-street parking is difficult to enforce and unnecessary.

- From a marketing perspective: why force people out of parking spaces when the goal is to attract people downtown? If people want to stay longer they will shuffle anyway.
- Why not open up the system? To the people that break the rules, it already *is*

Wilson Parking Commission (WPC)

Begun in the 1960s, created by city council – board appointed by city (chartered), in an effort to remove political influence from the topic of downtown parking

- People who have a concern or interest in downtown parking
- Currently 6-10 people
- Meet as required (lunch at a restaurant)
- Doesn't have anything required to do on a regular basis

Role and authority: responsibility to ensure adequate and appropriate parking downtown for all people

- WPC is an **advisory board** only
- WPC does not involve parking forecasting – "reactionary more than visionary"
- WPC does NOT buy property – can facilitate (identify/recommend acquisitions to city council)
- WPC has no budget from city – self-sustaining through fines, sale of reserved spaces, and meters (maybe)
- People always perceive a lack of parking (on street, in front of store) – WPC to assess how to react: (1) Make and execute policy with approval of city council; (2) Recommend to city council who can modify on-street parking management/signage

The City of Wilson does NOT issue permits – WPC can rent spaces (off street) monthly (\$10) or quarterly – meter removed from space, signage changed (eg: "Reserved: Anyone Company")

- It is believed that some reserved parking signs are not removed immediately when users stop paying.

Interviewees expressed general confusion regarding the overall management of the parking system. Tracking down the answers to some questions proved to be challenging.

Reserved Parking Spaces/Signs

List of reserved parking spaces is managed by Ms. Carlette Paris, with Chuck Powell's development office

Pine Street Lot: Many reserved rental spaces (suggested fee of \$20 per month):

- 80 reserved of 90 total spaces
- 12-15 reserved spots out of 80 are leased from century link (owns land along fence-line)

- Unknown if the reserved parking revenue is sufficient to break even with the operation and maintenance costs of this parking lot
- Barnes Street lot (#2) – mostly metered parking; 6 reserved spaces on private property
 - This is unsubstantiated; the parking lot is owned by the City of Wilson
- Bass lot (#5) – Leased parking lot that is more than half reserved parking spaces, and remainder are metered parking spaces

Reserved parking is believed to be \$10/month or \$30/quarter – BB&T employees reserve a majority of them within the Pine St Lot, despite the fact that they have free parking directly across the street.

- It is assumed that BB&T employees rent these spaces for the following reasons:
 - The monthly cost is reasonable;
 - They have a consistent parking space, and don't have to 'remember' where they parked; and
 - They know the owner of vehicles who park adjacent to their vehicle, and trust that their personal vehicles will not be 'dinged'

Wilson County employees who work in/near the Courthouse (Register of Deeds) pay for a reserved parking space within the City of Wilson City Hall Lot (#3) behind the Police Station. There is available (free) parking directly across Douglas St, near the Wilson County Office Building (112 N Douglas St), less than 100' away. There is occasional (visitor) overflow parking into this lot from the Community Health Center, across Green St.

Public Perceptions, Safety & Security

The City of Wilson “does not have a parking problem”; they have *challenges* with parking perception

- People who don't come downtown often cite safety and lack of parking as reasons
- Statistically downtown is safe
- There is a lot of available parking, however it is not located as close as they want

Does city/county provide adequate parking for their employees? Can this be documented?

In favor of marketing Wilson's parking supply – emphasize how many spaces, and where, and how long of a walk from these lots to certain destinations?

- This could be accomplished by a walk-times map, with certain destinations (nodes) and distances/walking times displayed along connector lines. University transportation departments generate these type of alternative transportation maps each fall.

There is a perception of security issues within downtown, especially on behalf of women walking at night

Parking lot 1 (Centre Brick Lot) – is under-utilized, maybe lighting is a problem

Signage can be improved a lot (general signage) – directional points to places that are closed

- Parking lot signage could be more standardized
- Visitor parking signs are uniform but old
- City has rebranded itself – need to update signage to reflect that

Customer feedback has not indicated that lack of parking is an issue.

City of Wilson Amtrak lot, located along Lodge St across from the Amtrak Station, has a perception as unsafe due to loitering near station. This explains why City/County employees choose not to park here, and the observed peak parking occupancy was 44% (20 cars for 45 spaces).

Wilson Housing Authority has relocated its rent check collection services (to 213 Broad St near Wilson County Library) due to a lack of available parking near its main office (301 E Nash St; near Imagination Station)

Maintenance of Parking Lots

City of Wilson - Public Services installs and maintains meters and signage;

- City employees clean the parking lots during week
- Parking commission pays private enterprise for “major cleanup” once a week
 - Go through parking lots more thoroughly. Supposedly every weekend (Sundays).
 - Cut weeds, grass, empty trash cans
 - This service is (presumed to be) paid through parking revenue – citations

Leased Parking lots

Many lots may be continuing under expired leases or verbal agreements to avoid lease cost increases at renewal. Upon further discussion these fears may be unsubstantiated, per James Green, Wilson Engineering

The following five (5) lots have been confirmed as leased parking lots, as of 2014

- Bass Lot (#5)
- Pine St Lot (#7)
- Batten Lot (#11)
- Lighthouse Lot (#15)
- St. Timothy’s Church (verbal agreement)

Parking Meters and Revenue

Parking enforcement officer and City maintenance staff person collect meter revenue (Both have full set of meter keys) once a month (last week of the month). Collection process takes approximately 1 hour. All meters are collected at once. Coins are delivered to Wilson Bus Station for counting. Revenue from each lot are counted and reported separately. Deposits are made at the City Utility Payment Office (Customer Services on W Nash St). Meter revenue reports are generated for (a) City Collections; (b) Wilson Parking Commission; and (c) Police Department.

Not sure about what the meter revenue used for (operations, maintenance, general fund?)

Meters are very old, and difficult to read or operate. Not sure how much revenue is generated by meters.

The Barnes Street (lot #2) meters were suggested to be “ancient” surplus units that could not be adjusted, and therefore the rate of \$0.25 per hour is fixed (non-adjustable).

- These meter heads should be immediately swapped for adjustable meters from other City lots because the Barnes Street Lot #2 is a high-demand location that generated the second most meter revenue this year (\$5k).

Barnes St Lot – Parking Attendant

Barnes Street lot (#2) – Was once protected by a parking lot attendant, however the salary was greater than the amount of revenue generated.

- City of Wilson decided to close the attendant booth in 2013
- The lot was unreserved for ~3 months: The same usage patterns were observed as previous, when the lot was controlled by an attendant.
 - This is unexpected; it is assumed that once the lot was no longer controlled that its usage would dramatically increase to full capacity (free-for-all).
- Lot is now nearly entirely metered (52 of 59 spaces)
- Business owners supported the parking lot attendance model

On-Street Parking

Estimated that “90% of on-street parkers within the high-demand sections of Nash, Goldsboro, and Tarboro Streets” are employees, who move their cars periodically to avoid ticketing.

On-street parking should be reserved for CUSTOMERS

- Store owners and government/city employees parking on-street is a problem
- Employees are the most common abusers of the 2-hour parking limit, including courthouse workers in government issues cars, County Sheriffs too

Visitors to the Wilson County Register of Deeds use either the 30-min on-street parking spaces in front of the Courthouse, or the City Hall Lot (#3) meters.

One business owner currently shuffles car every 2 hours; not sure if other business owners do the same

On street parking in front of store – 2 hour parking maximum

- Courthouse patrons take spots – constant turnover on court days
 - Court days (Monday and Tuesday) can't get a spot in front of store
- Owners and customers have to shuffle every 2 hours
- This situation is “terrible” for business owners
- Some on-street parkers near Amtrak are blocking visibility of restaurant along Nash St

Potential solutions to on-street parking use:

- Lease parking spaces in Barnes St lot to business owners (off street parking for employees – underutilized spots)
- Other option is Centre Brick Lot (Hi-Dollar lot), though it is perceived as too far (1 block)
- Additional options: Lighthouse lot, or Batten lot (1 block down, 1 block over)
- Establish permitting system for business owners (zones), or reserve a single space (farther away)
- Reduce the time limit to 1-hour to ensure turnover; however this would also require additional parking enforcement to be effective

Areas in front of the courthouse are likely the only locations with difficulty of finding on-street parking spaces – this may only be a perception however, not based in actual parking occupancy counts. Confirmed by parking enforcement officer observations.

City/state employees and business owners parking on-street as close to their offices as possible

- City employees in marked cars (government issued, government plates)
- Occupying prime spaces

Loading Zone Spaces

There are no on-street loading areas in front of (this particular) store

- Currently business owners inform parking enforcement ahead of time if/when on-street parking is needed for large delivery (or customer with trailer)
- Concerns for customers and loading areas

Major Parking Generators

Imagination Station Museum of Science and History (224 E Nash St) generates 19,000 visitors per year, including school buses, parents (who drive separately), summer camps (buses)

- Special events on weeknights may generate 50-100 patrons (6-times per year)
- Most visitors park on-street, or within the Colony Lot (#12) within the same block
- Buses drop off along Douglas St, and park within the Batten Lot (#11) because it has room to turn around
- Amtrak train often used by museum patrons
- Minor issues relating to parking:
 - Parents or chaperones have limited parking options
 - Perception of safety issues at night

The annual **Whirligig Festival** (1st weekend of November) generates 30,000 visitors per weekend

- Festival takes up 5 blocks of downtown, in coordination with the Wilson Police Department
- Festival visitors are not charged for parking, and would like to keep it this way; the festival is free of charge too
- Centre Brick lot is used for festival vendors
- BB&T lot (private) is used for festival employees
- No real parking complaints because public and private stakeholders are working together
- Festival would like to expand in the future along Douglas St, forming an 'L' shape

Arts Council hosts evening events that fill up Barnes St lot (#2) and adjacent Colony lot (12)

- 5:30-7:30 every 2 months Thursdays
- Rehearsals, Wilson woodcarvers Association, Wilson Active Artists Association all coincide Tuesday evenings
- Children's art shows 3 times a year, 670 people, 4 hour event (people stay <1.5 hours)
- Boykin Theater (W Nash St) used 257 nights a year – large cast (musicals) can be a problem at times:
 - Private Lots: BB&T lot and First Citizens Bank lots used (filled) for big theater shows
 - Barnes St lot (#2) preferred because of handicap access for seniors (arts patrons)

Infrastructure Improvement Options

- On-street bulb-out in front of Boykin Cultural Center (W Nash St) for ADA drop-off is tremendously valuable. Would like to add one in front of the Arts Council entrance on Goldsboro St.
- Additional driveway access with parallel on-street parking along rear of Wilson Renaissance Center may be possible through public-private partnership.
- Goldsboro St is marketed as the 'Avenue of the Arts' with planned sidewalk improvements.

Parking Lot Revenues

Report generated by Kim Hands, Finance Director, City of Wilson

| Parking Lot Name | FY 2012-13 | FY 2013-14* |
|-------------------|-----------------|------------------|
| City Hall Lot | \$12,600 | \$10,000 |
| Pine St Lot | \$11,000 | \$8,500 |
| Bass Lot | \$10,200 | \$8,000 |
| Barnes St Lot | \$9,800 | \$5,100 |
| Nash Lot | \$900 | \$600 |
| Batten Lot | \$600 | \$900 |
| Centre Brick Lot | - | - |
| Colony Lot | - | - |
| Douglas St Lot | - | - |
| 500 E Nash St Lot | - | - |
| SUBTOTAL | \$45,100 | \$33,100* |

*Partial fiscal year (July 2013 to May 2014)

Finances suggest the City parking system generates approximately \$40k annually from parking meter and reserved parking revenue (\$45k last year; \$33k this year).

- This excludes parking citation revenue (unknown amount)
- Parking meters exist in five City parking lots, though only three of these lots have generated more than \$500 during the 2013-14 fiscal year.

Finances suggest the City parking system costs approximately \$80k annually for maintenance and operation (\$81k last year; \$78k this year).

**Appendix B -
Existing Parking Supply Inventory and Utilization Summary**



Memorandum

To: Ellen Hoj, City of Wilson

Date: September 2014

Project No.: 38401.00

From: Timothy Tresohlavy, VHB Engineering

Re: Wilson Downtown Parking Study – Existing
Parking Supply Inventory and Utilization

This memorandum serves as a summary of the existing parking supply and utilization analysis. Field observations were collected on Tuesday May 20th and Wednesday May 21st 2014.

Existing Parking Supply

The project study area was defined as a 35 block portion of downtown, bounded by Jackson St to the north, Vance St and Lodge Streets to the east, Pender St to the south, as well as Hines St and Kenan Streets to the west (Figure 1).

Table 1: Summary of Total Parking Spaces by Type

| Parking Lot Type | Total Spaces | Regular | Private | Meter | Municipal Reserved | Signed Reserved | ADA | Other |
|-----------------------|--------------|------------|--------------|------------|--------------------|-----------------|------------|----------|
| On-Street | 453 | 451 | - | - | - | - | 2 | - |
| Private | 1,944 | - | 1,855 | 14 | - | - | 75 | - |
| Municipal – Visitor | 657 | 326 | - | 121 | - | 186 | 23 | 1 |
| Municipal – Reserved* | 499 | 194 | - | - | 255 | 24 | 22 | 4 |
| GRAND TOTAL | 3,553 | 971 | 1,855 | 135 | 255 | 210 | 122 | 5 |

*Includes Wilson County parking lots, used for daily employee parking.

Total parking supply by ownership classification is shown in Figure 2. Individual parking lots are displayed with their respective total parking spaces per lot.

On-Street Parking

A total of 453 on-street parking spaces exist in downtown Wilson. Two-hour time limit parking accounts for 423 (93%) of these on-street parking spaces, the remaining 30 spaces are either 15-minute or 30-minute time limit.

Off-Street Parking

A total of 93 parking lots were inventoried, totaling 3,100 off-street parking spaces. This supply is unevenly distributed among 29 of the study area blocks (Figure 3).

Total Parking by Block

The blocks with higher parking supply are located around the periphery of the study area, such as north of Pine St, and east of Green St. These blocks are shown in red within Figure 3.

Municipal Parking Supply

Public parking spaces, those maintained by the City of Wilson, accounted for 971 (27% of total) of off-street parking supply, and all 453 (13% of total) of the on-street parking supply (Figure 4).

Table 2: Municipal Parking Spaces

| Parking Type | Municipal Spaces | % |
|-----------------------|------------------|----|
| On-Street | 453 | 32 |
| Municipal – Visitor | 657 | 46 |
| Municipal – Reserved* | 314 | 22 |
| SUBTOTAL | 1,424 | |

*Excludes Wilson County parking lots.

Leased Parking Supply

A total of 282 (29%) of the City's off-street parking spaces are leased, including 20 metered spaces and 114 reserved spaces that generate parking revenue (Figure 5).

Table 3: Leased Parking Lots by Parking Space Type

| Leased Parking Lot | Total Spaces | Regular | Meter | Signed Reserved | ADA |
|--------------------------|--------------|------------|-----------|-----------------|-----------|
| Bass Lot #5 | 48 | | 14 | 34 | |
| Batten Lot #11 | 61 | 57 | | | 4 |
| Lighthouse Lot #5 | 31 | 29 | | | 2 |
| Pine St Lot #7 | 90 | | 6 | 80 | 4 |
| St. Timothy's Church Lot | 52 | 47 | | | 5 |
| SUBTOTAL | 282 | 133 | 20 | 114 | 15 |

Existing Parking Utilization

Total Parking Utilization

More parked vehicles were observed during the AM peak period (1,498 cars, 42% occupied) than the PM peak period (1,261 cars, 35% occupied).

Table 4: Total Parking Occupancy (AM and PM Peak)

| Parking Type | Total Spaces | AM Cars | AM % Occupancy | PM Cars | PM % Occupancy |
|----------------------|--------------|--------------|----------------|--------------|----------------|
| On-Street | 453 | 138 | 30% | 124 | 27% |
| Private | 1,944 | 871 | 45% | 685 | 35% |
| Municipal – Visitor | 657 | 201 | 31% | 196 | 30% |
| Municipal – Reserved | 499 | 288 | 58% | 256 | 51% |
| SUBTOTAL | 3,553 | 1,498 | 42% | 1,261 | 35% |

Excluding blocks with less than 50 parking spaces, block 12 (BB&T office towers) represented the highest parking occupancy rate (84%), as well as the largest parking supply (409 spaces). The second highest parking utilization was block #2 (Courthouse, 70% of 71 spaces), and the third highest was block #1 (Barnes St Lot, 58% of 92 spaces). Total parking utilization is shown in Figure 6.

On-Street Parking Utilization

During the AM peak period there were five blocks with an occupancy rate of 70% or higher. These blocks were all south of Pine Street, west of Vance Street, North of Lodge Street, and East of Barnes Street, forming a 12-block area (Figure 7).

During the PM peak period there were three blocks with an occupancy rate of 70% or higher. These blocks formed a much smaller 6-block area near the Courthouse, and the Wilson Community Health Center near the intersection of Douglas Street and Green Street (Figure 9).

Table 5: On-Street Parking Occupancy (AM and PM Peak)

| Road Name | Total Spaces | AM Cars | AM % Occupancy | PM Cars | PM % Occupancy |
|-----------------|--------------|------------|----------------|------------|----------------|
| Nash St | 98 | 41 | 42% | 31 | 32% |
| Tarboro St | 79 | 31 | 39% | 30 | 38% |
| Goldsboro St | 63 | 30 | 48% | 34 | 54% |
| Barnes St | 62 | 6 | 10% | 3 | 5% |
| Douglas St | 46 | 16 | 35% | 12 | 26% |
| Pine St | 30 | 3 | 10% | 3 | 10% |
| Green St | 28 | 5 | 18% | 6 | 21% |
| Broad St | 15 | 3 | 20% | - | - |
| Lodge St | 13 | 2 | 15% | 3 | 23% |
| Vance St | 11 | - | - | 2 | 18% |
| Jackson St | 4 | 1 | 25% | - | - |
| Kenan St | 4 | - | - | - | - |
| SUBTOTAL | 453 | 138 | 42% | 124 | 35% |

Roadways are sorted in descending order of total on-street parking spaces.

Municipal Parking Utilization

The pattern of municipal parking utilization is shown in Figure 10. As expected, the occupancy rates dramatically decrease for areas that are greater than 1 block from either City Hall or the Courthouse. The lone exception is the Customer Services office located north of Pine Street (block 13, 54% occupancy).

Length of Stay Analysis

The on-street parking turnover analysis was limited to a 6-block area (Figure 1). A total of 145 on-street parking spaces were surveyed within the study area over an 8-hour time period. A total of 293 unique vehicles were observed, and occupied 505 of the 1,160 (47%) available 'service hours.'

Twenty four vehicles (8%) were observed on three occasions, which may represent legitimate parkers making two or more separate errands throughout the day.

Thirty-three vehicles were observed on four or more occasions (Table 7), which likely represent downtown employees who are parking for a majority of the day within on-street parking spaces. These 33 vehicles occupied 193 of the total service hours (17%), as well as 35% of the total *occupied* service hours in relatively high-demand locations along Nash St, Tarboro St, and Goldsboro St.

Table 6: Length of Stay Summary of Service Hours

| Frequency Observed | Vehicles | Service Hours | % | % |
|--------------------|------------|---------------|------------|-----|
| 1 | 187 | 187 | 16% | 24% |
| 2 | 49 | 98 | 8% | |
| 3 | 24 | 72 | 6% | 6% |
| 4 | 8 | 32 | 3% | |
| 5 | 6 | 30 | 3% | 17% |
| 6 | 6 | 36 | 3% | |
| 7 | 9 | 63 | 5% | |
| 8 | 4 | 32 | 3% | |
| SUBTOTAL | 293 | 550 | 47% | - |
| Unoccupied | - | 610 | 53% | - |
| GRAND TOTAL | 293 | 1,160* | - | - |

*1,160 total service hours (145 spaces x 8 hours of survey)

Empty Parking Spaces

The pattern of empty municipal parking spaces is shown in Figure 11. There were a total of 923 empty parking spaces (315 empty on-street; 456 empty municipal-visitor; and 152 empty municipal-reserved).

Assuming a demand margin of 10% (i.e. individuals who may be working from home, on vacation, or otherwise away from their normal place of business on the day of data collection) this translates to an effective demand of 494 vehicles looking for parking during the peak period.

Municipal parking spaces totaled 1,277 parking spaces, minus the effective demand of 494 vehicles, leaving an estimated **raw surplus of 783 parking spaces currently** (Figure 12). These surplus spaces represent \$3.5 million in construction costs that may be leveraged for future development.

Table 7: On-Street Parking Supply and Occupancy

| Road Name | From Road | To Road | Spaces | | | AM Peak Occupancy | | | | PM Peak Occupancy | | | |
|--------------|--------------|---------------|--------|-----|-------|-------------------|-----|---------|--------------|-------------------|-----|---------|--------------|
| | | | Timed | ADA | TOTAL | Timed | ADA | AM Cars | AM Occupancy | Timed | ADA | PM Cars | PM Occupancy |
| Barnes St | Douglas St | Goldsboro St | 14 | | 14 | 1 | | 1 | 7% | 1 | | 1 | 7% |
| Barnes St | Goldsboro St | Tarboro St | 13 | | 13 | 2 | | 2 | 15% | 1 | | 1 | 8% |
| Barnes St | Lodge St | Douglas St | 14 | | 14 | | | | | | | | |
| Barnes St | Pender St | Pettigrew St | | 2 | 2 | | | | | | | | |
| Barnes St | Pettigrew St | Lodge St | 5 | | 5 | | | | | | | | |
| Barnes St | Tarboro St | Pine St | 14 | | 14 | 3 | | 3 | 21% | 1 | | 1 | 7% |
| Broad St | Moss St | Jackson St | 15 | | 15 | 3 | | 3 | 20% | | | | |
| Douglas St | Barnes St | Nash St | 14 | | 14 | 3 | | 3 | 21% | 2 | | 2 | 14% |
| Douglas St | Green St | Vance St | 13 | | 13 | 11 | | 11 | 85% | 10 | | 10 | 77% |
| Douglas St | Nash St | Green St | 8 | | 8 | 2 | | 2 | 25% | | | | |
| Douglas St | South St | Barnes St | 11 | | 11 | | | | | | | | |
| Goldsboro St | Barnes St | Nash St | 23 | | 23 | 16 | | 16 | 70% | 10 | | 10 | 43% |
| Goldsboro St | Green St | Vance St | 7 | | 7 | 5 | | 5 | 71% | 4 | | 4 | 57% |
| Goldsboro St | Nash St | Green St | 15 | | 15 | 5 | | 5 | 33% | 9 | | 9 | 60% |
| Goldsboro St | South St | Barnes St | 18 | | 18 | 4 | | 4 | 22% | 11 | | 11 | 61% |
| Green St | Hackney St | Pettigrew St | 7 | | 7 | | | | | | | | |
| Green St | Lodge St | Douglas St | 4 | | 4 | 4 | | 4 | 100% | 3 | | 3 | 75% |
| Green St | Pine St | Maplewood Ave | 9 | | 9 | 1 | | 1 | 11% | 2 | | 2 | 22% |
| Green St | Tarboro St | Pine St | 8 | | 8 | | | | | 1 | | 1 | 13% |
| Jackson St | Nash St | Green St | 4 | | 4 | 1 | | 1 | 25% | | | | |
| Kenan St | Tarboro St | Pine St | 4 | | 4 | | | | | | | | |
| Lodge St | Barnes St | Nash St | 4 | | 4 | 1 | | 1 | 25% | 2 | | 2 | 50% |
| Lodge St | Nash St | Green St | 9 | | 9 | 1 | | 1 | 11% | 1 | | 1 | 11% |
| Nash St | Douglas St | Goldsboro St | 19 | | 19 | 11 | | 11 | 58% | 7 | | 7 | 37% |
| Nash St | Goldsboro St | Tarboro St | 19 | | 19 | 12 | | 12 | 63% | 16 | | 16 | 84% |
| Nash St | Lodge St | Douglas St | 12 | | 12 | 5 | | 5 | 42% | 3 | | 3 | 25% |
| Nash St | Pender St | Pettigrew St | 22 | | 22 | | | | | 1 | | 1 | 5% |
| Nash St | Pettigrew St | Lodge St | 9 | | 9 | | | | | 2 | | 2 | 22% |
| Nash St | Tarboro St | Pine St | 17 | | 17 | 13 | | 13 | 76% | 2 | | 2 | 12% |
| Pine St | Barnes St | Nash St | 16 | | 16 | 2 | | 2 | 13% | 1 | | 1 | 6% |
| Pine St | Nash St | Green St | 14 | | 14 | 1 | | 1 | 7% | 2 | | 2 | 14% |
| Tarboro St | Barnes St | Nash St | 31 | | 31 | 19 | | 19 | 61% | 13 | | 13 | 42% |
| Tarboro St | Green St | Vance St | 13 | | 13 | 7 | | 7 | 54% | 5 | | 5 | 38% |
| Tarboro St | Kenan St | Barnes St | 27 | | 27 | 1 | | 1 | 4% | 7 | | 7 | 26% |
| Tarboro St | Nash St | Green St | 8 | | 8 | 4 | | 4 | 50% | 5 | | 5 | 63% |
| Vance St | Douglas St | Goldsboro St | 11 | | 11 | | | | | 2 | | 2 | 18% |
| | | | 451 | 2 | 453 | 138 | - | 138 | 30% | 124 | - | 124 | 27% |

Table 8: On-Street Parking Supply and Occupancy

| Block | Off-Street Total | On-Street Total | TOTAL SPACES | AM Cars | AM % Occupancy | PM Cars | PM % Occupancy |
|-------|------------------|-----------------|--------------|---------|----------------|---------|----------------|
| 1 | 92 | 40 | 132 | 81 | 61% | 63 | 48% |
| 2 | 71 | 26 | 97 | 62 | 64% | 77 | 79% |
| 3 | 162 | 17 | 179 | 85 | 47% | 82 | 46% |
| 4 | 57 | 29 | 86 | 40 | 47% | 33 | 38% |
| 5 | 133 | 18 | 151 | 60 | 40% | 43 | 28% |
| 6 | 204 | 17 | 221 | 107 | 48% | 91 | 41% |
| 7 | 80 | 13 | 93 | 26 | 28% | 31 | 33% |
| 8 | 153 | 22 | 175 | 93 | 53% | 73 | 42% |
| 9 | 36 | 5 | 41 | 41 | 100% | 24 | 59% |
| 10 | 63 | 9 | 72 | 25 | 35% | 26 | 36% |
| 11 | 169 | | 169 | 74 | 44% | 36 | 21% |
| 12 | 409 | 11 | 420 | 346 | 82% | 255 | 61% |
| 13 | 251 | 10 | 261 | 112 | 43% | 89 | 34% |
| 14 | | 9 | 9 | 1 | 11% | 2 | 22% |
| 15 | 23 | 28 | 51 | 9 | 18% | 15 | 29% |
| 16 | 111 | 44 | 155 | 73 | 47% | 53 | 34% |
| 17 | 182 | 15 | 197 | 105 | 53% | 69 | 35% |
| 18 | 84 | 8 | 92 | 19 | 21% | 13 | 14% |
| 19 | 97 | | 97 | 1 | 1% | 1 | 1% |
| 22 | 158 | 26 | 184 | 43 | 23% | 47 | 26% |
| 24 | 34 | | 34 | 9 | 26% | 5 | 15% |
| 25 | 92 | 32 | 124 | 9 | 7% | 27 | 22% |
| 26 | 26 | 5 | 31 | 4 | 13% | 6 | 19% |
| 27 | 15 | | 15 | 6 | 40% | 8 | 53% |
| 28 | 5 | | 5 | 5 | 100% | 5 | 100% |
| 29 | 48 | 11 | 59 | 30 | 51% | 31 | 53% |
| 30 | | 5 | 5 | | | | |
| 31 | | 11 | 11 | 1 | 9% | 3 | 27% |
| 32 | 13 | 11 | 24 | 5 | 21% | 7 | 29% |
| 33 | 95 | 24 | 119 | 4 | 3% | 12 | 10% |
| 34 | 178 | | 178 | 14 | 8% | 24 | 13% |
| 35 | 59 | 7 | 66 | 8 | 12% | 10 | 15% |
| | 3,100 | 453 | 3,553 | 1,498 | 42% | 1,261 | 35% |

Table 9: Existing Supply, and Demand

| Parking Type | Existing Conditions | | | | |
|------------------------|---------------------|------------|---------------|------------------|-------------|
| | Total Spaces | Cars | Demand Margin | Effective Demand | Raw Surplus |
| On-Street | 453 | 138 | 0.9 | 153 | 300 |
| Municipal – Visitor | 597 | 192 | 0.9 | 213 | 384 |
| Municipal – Reserved* | 227 | 115 | 0.9 | 128 | 99 |
| SUBTOTAL | 1,277 | 445 | | 494 | 783 |
| Parking Balance | | | | | +783 |

Figure 1: Parking Study Areas

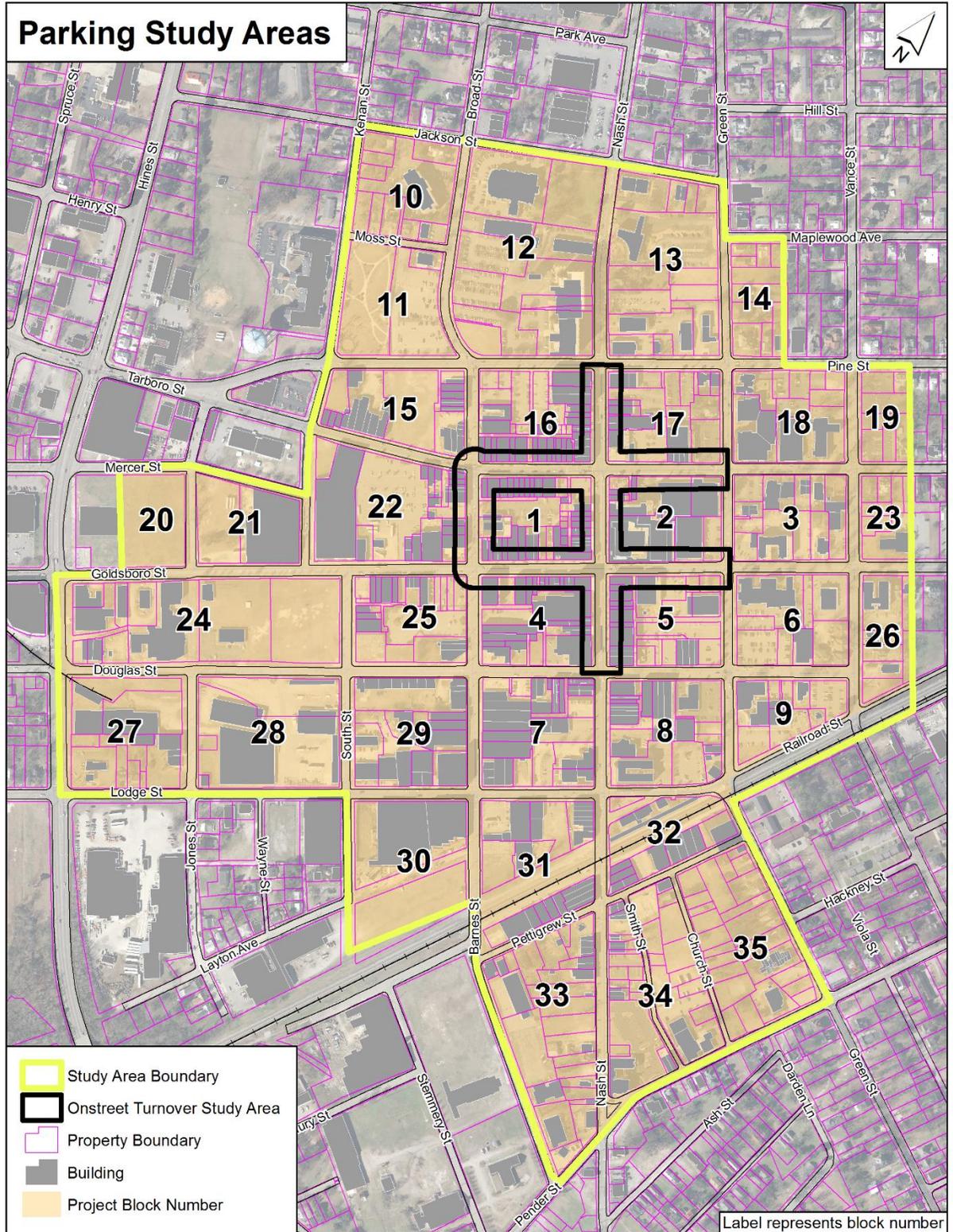


Figure 3: Parking Supply by Block

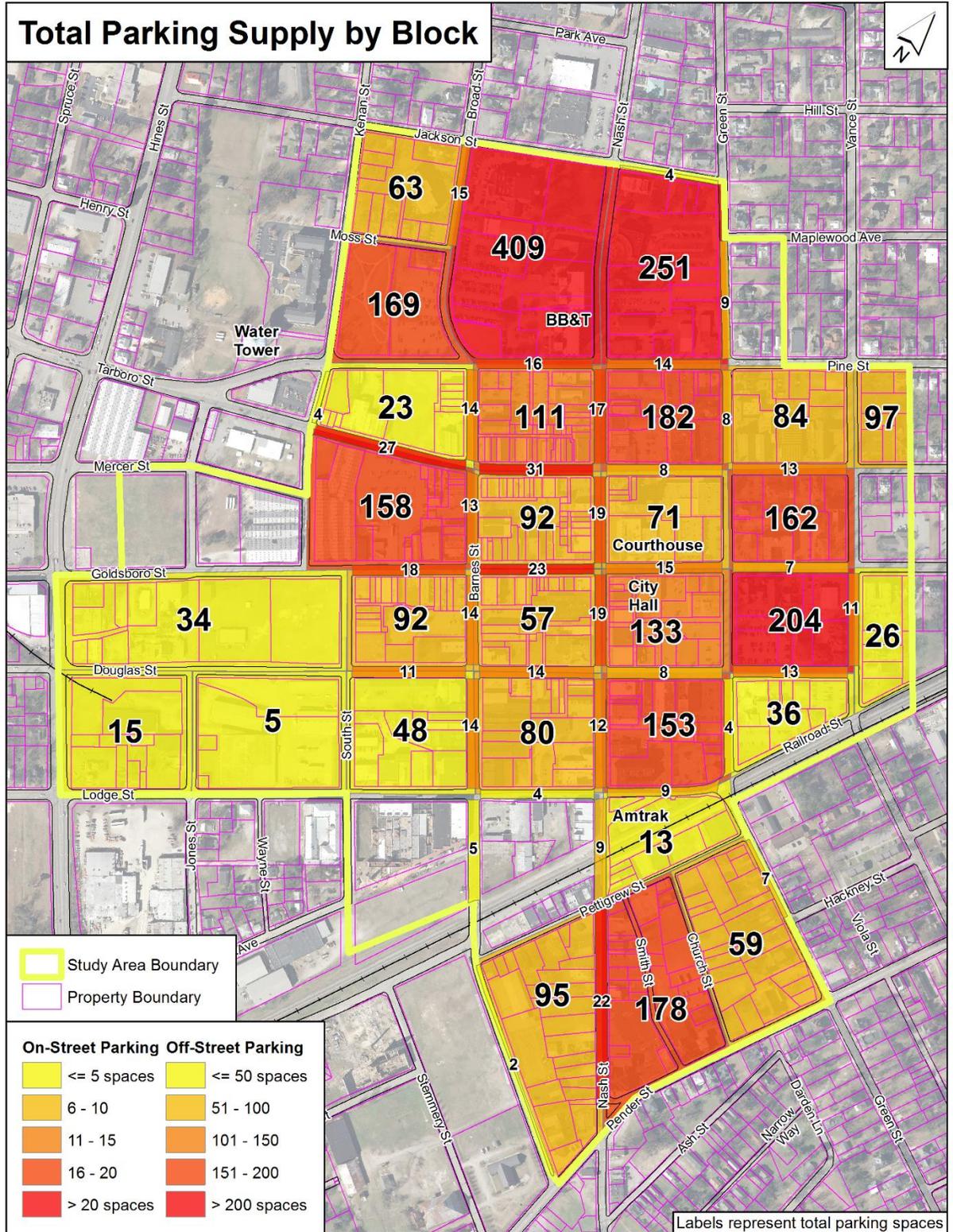


Figure 4: Municipal Parking Supply

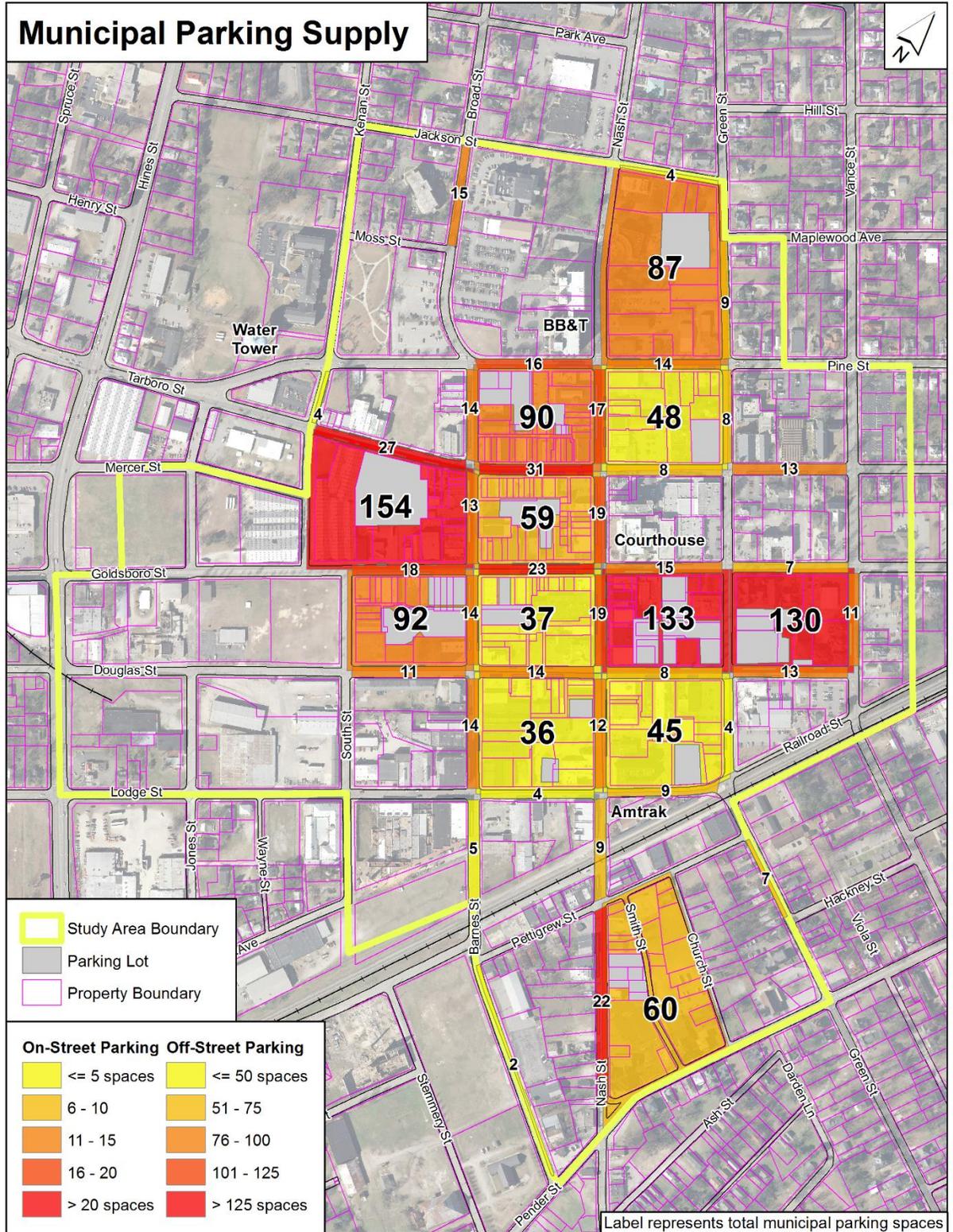


Figure 5: Municipal Parking by Ownership

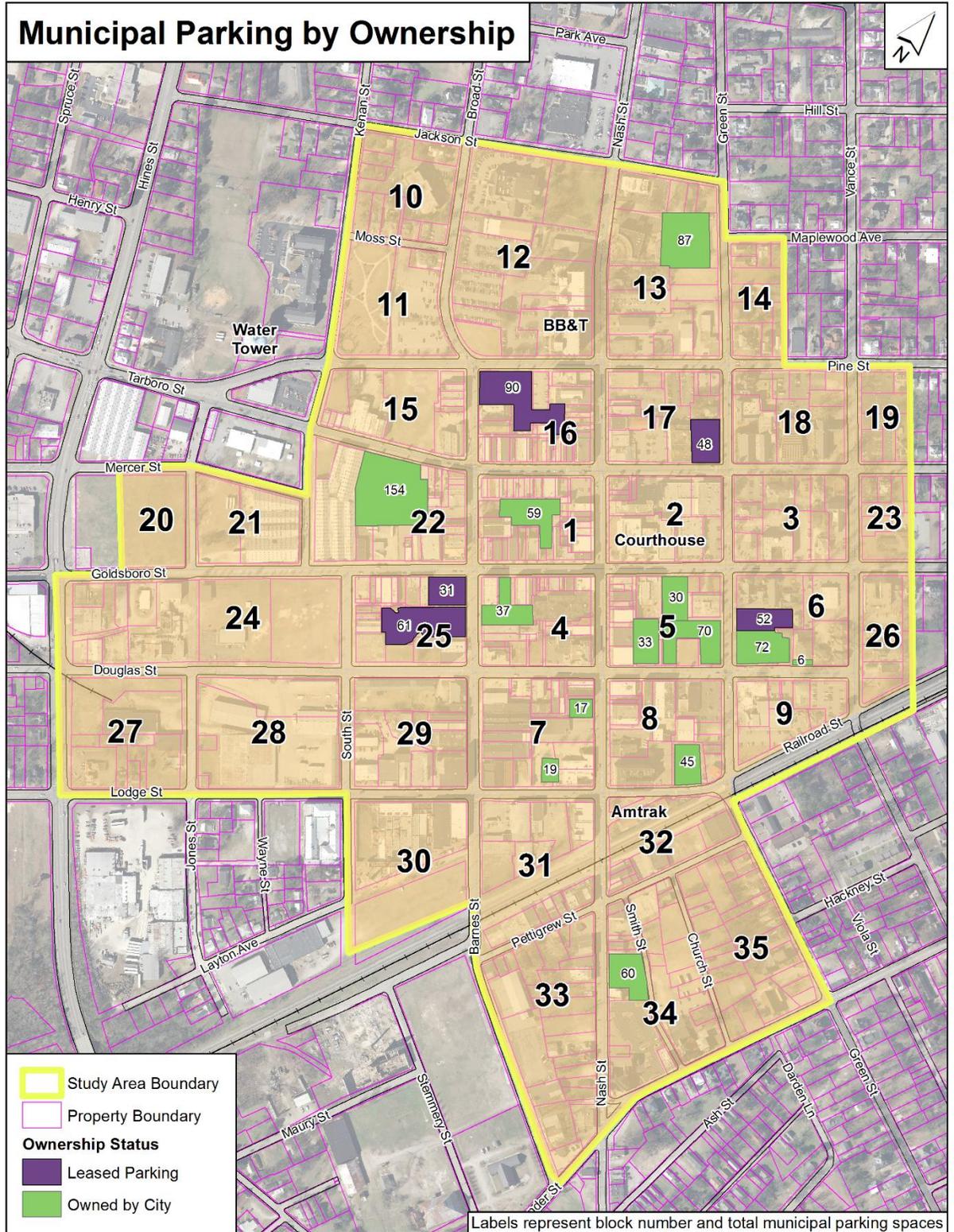


Figure 6: Total Parking Utilization (AM)

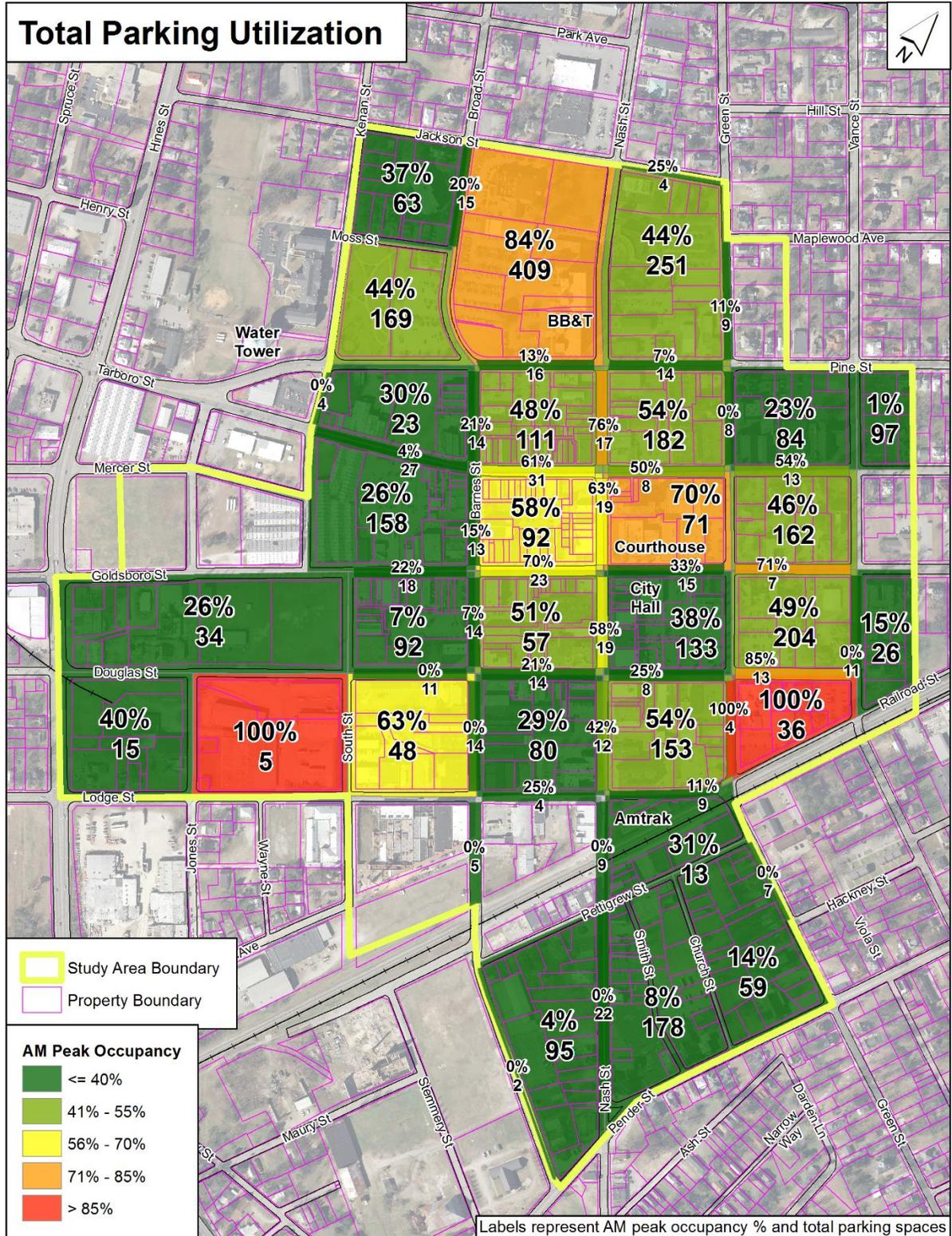


Figure 7: Total Parking Utilization (PM)

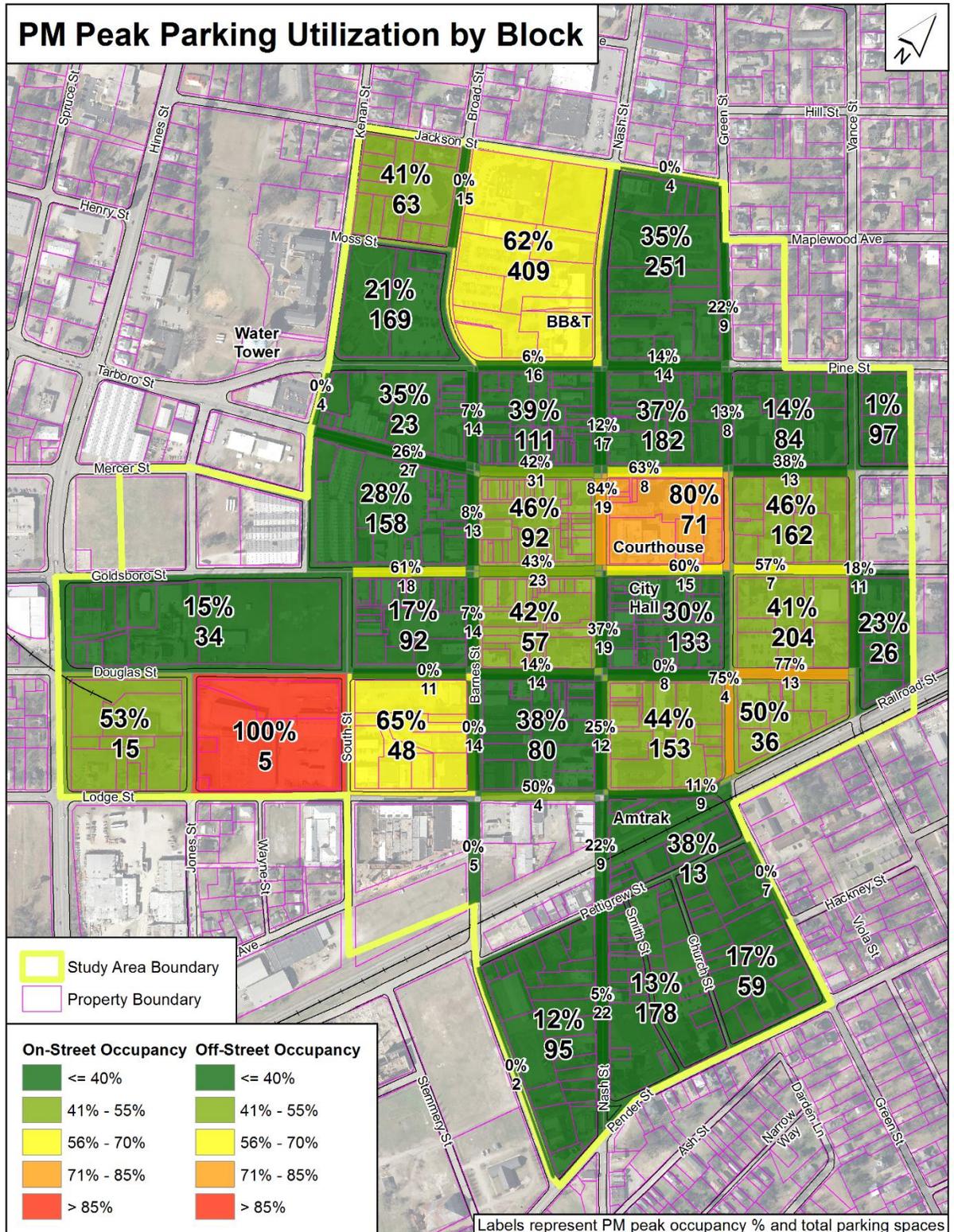


Figure 9: On-Street Parking Utilization (PM)

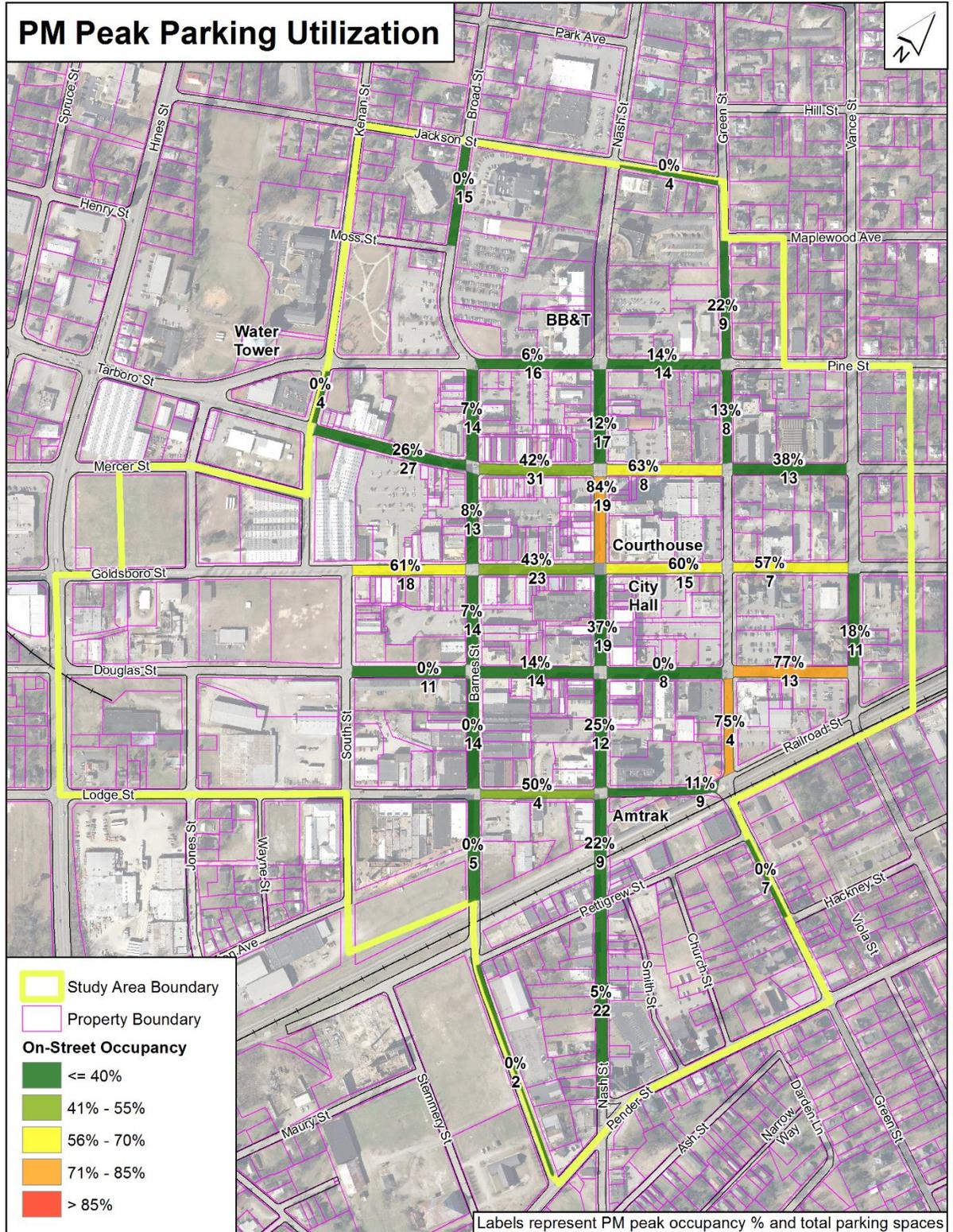


Figure 11: Empty Municipal Parking Spaces

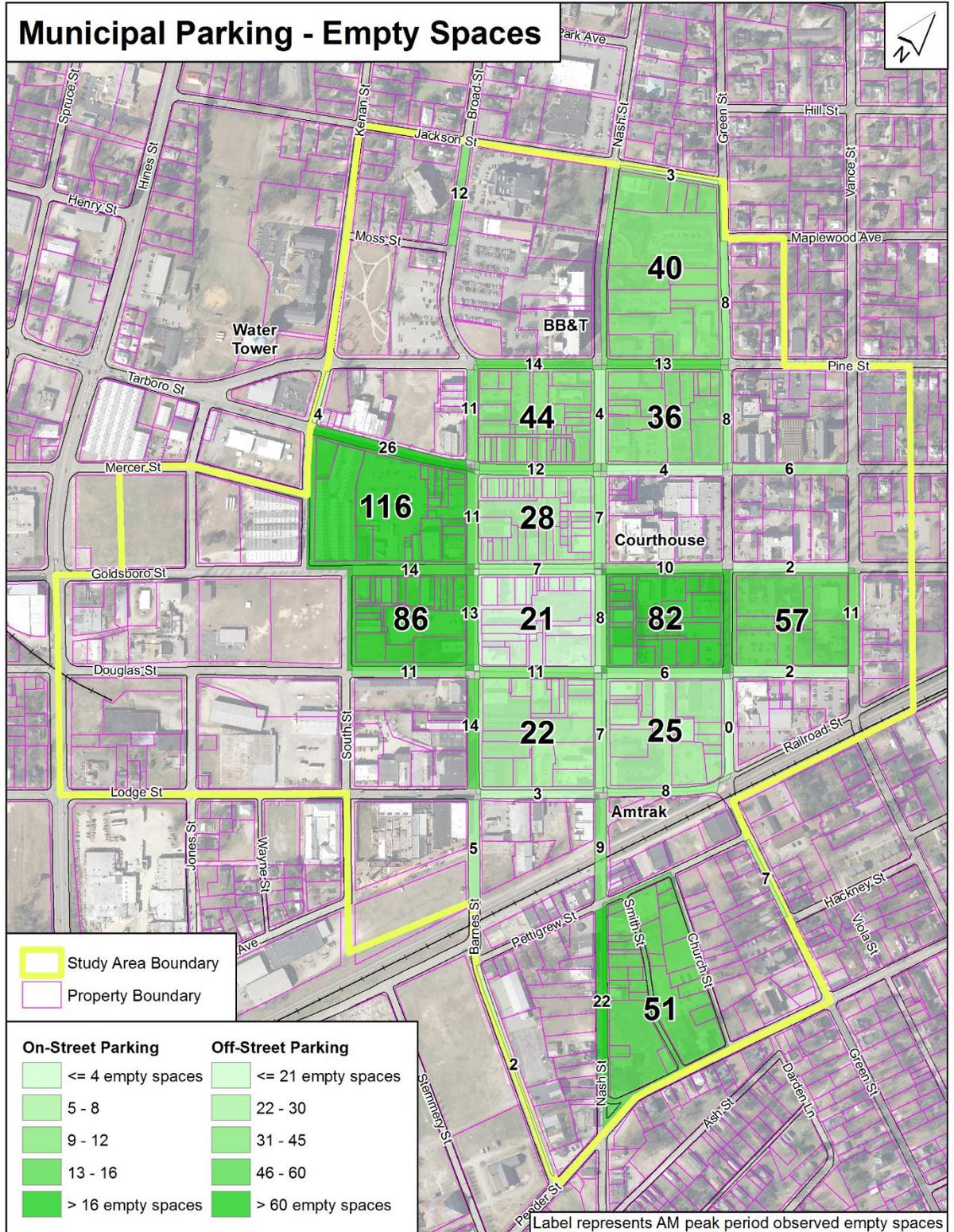
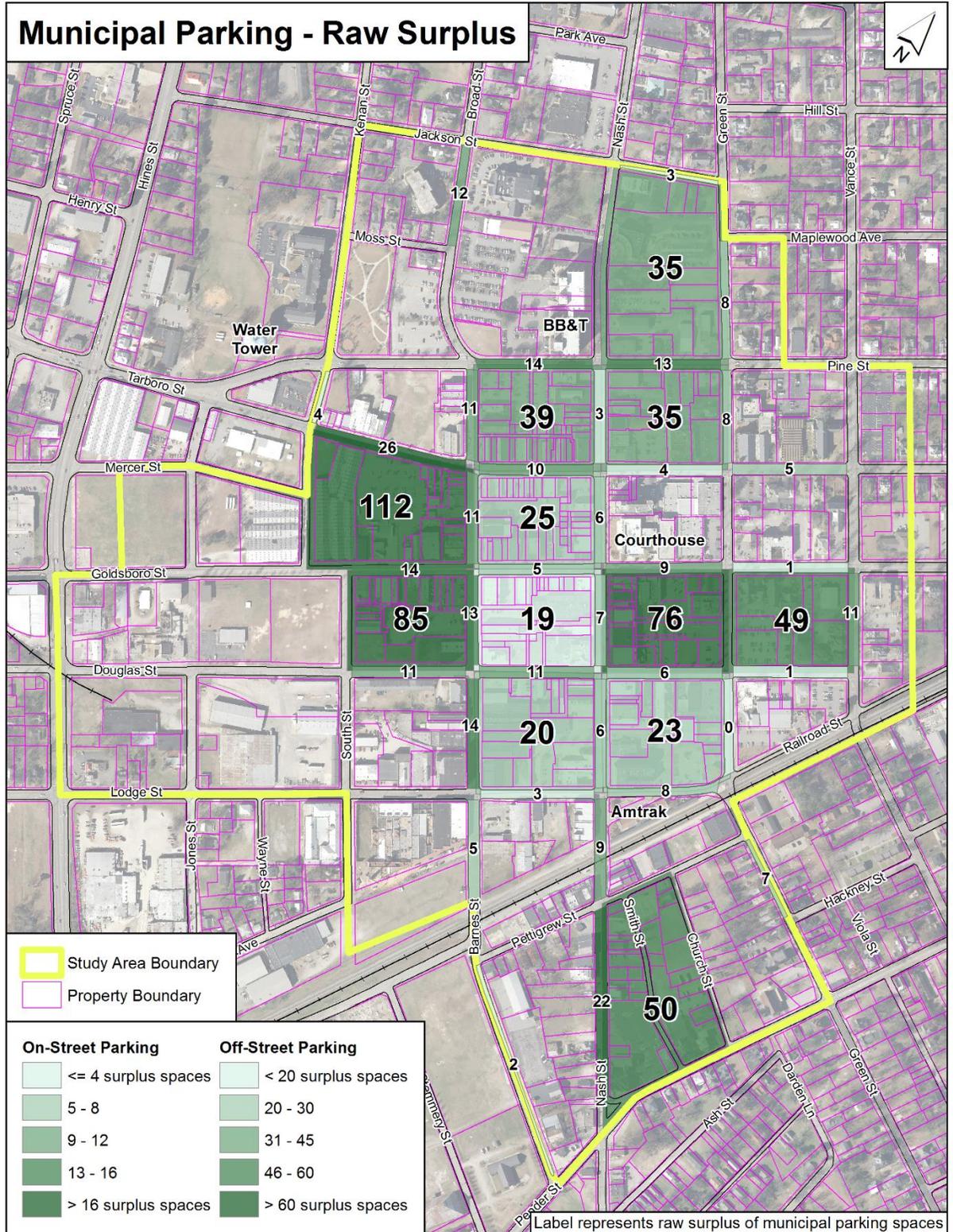


Figure 12: Municipal Parking Raw Surplus



**Appendix C –
Technical Memorandum – Parking Agreements**

TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM

To: Bill Martin
VHB Engineering

From: Lee Bourque

Re: Wilson, NC Downtown Parking Study
Issues Related to Long-Term Parking Lease
(Additional Service Task)

This memorandum will address a number of issues related to the pending long-term lease for parking that the City of Wilson is considering as part of a downtown development project. Some of these issues were identified in preparation for the initial conference call with the City and refined according to additional information that was provided in that conference call and in the sample agreement that was developed in obligating parking support for a development on the "Western Auto Property" in Downtown Wilson. The more recent conference call with a representative of the City Attorney's office was also considered in developing this memorandum.

Some issues are logically linked. Others are "free-standing" issues that apply universally. I will attempt to identify links where applicable, but there are a number of possible combinations of contractual provisions that would include both linked and free-standing elements. In some cases this may require repeat references to specific issues in order to identify those links.

Quotation marks are used frequently in these descriptions to identify specific parking related terms that are recognized by parking professionals and planners.

This memorandum is intended for use by the City of Wilson and includes objective comments that do not necessarily give preference to the City's interest. It is not intended for other distribution.

Nature of the Agreement - Impact on Parking System Management and Efficiency

One of the key factors is the nature of the agreement in terms of how the specific obligations of the City are defined. Although the developer may prefer a typical “lease” agreement that provides access to and control of specific parking spaces, that is not in the best interest of the City and other parking generators that are in the immediate area - now or in the future.

1. It is in the City’s best interest to frame the agreement as a “License Agreement” that provides the developer, and the developer’s tenants, access to a defined amount of parking but does not attach that license to any specific spaces or number of spaces.
 - a. The “license” approach is important to the long-term health of the downtown parking system and downtown businesses.
 - 1) It is important maximizing the efficient use and benefit of existing parking resources in supporting Downtown.
 - 2) It becomes increasingly important as new growth and development is realized in Downtown - with increased parking demand and, in many cases, the loss of existing parking capacity to make way for that development.
 - 3) The financial impact of achieving efficiency in the parking system becomes even more important when downtown density reaches the point where some or all of new parking capacity must be provided in parking structures vs. surface lots - at a typical cost of \$18,000 to \$22,000 per space for structures vs. \$2,000 to \$4,000 per space for surface lots.
 - b. The primary obligation for the City should be to “guarantee” available parking without designating specific spaces or a specific parking area that is not shared with other parkers.
 - c. “Shared Parking” is a basic element in planning for downtown parking. The shared parking concept is based on the fact that the activity patterns of different parking generators in the same area normally differ to some extent by time of

day or day of week. The classic example is a parking lot that is used by businesses during the week and by a church on Sunday. Another can be residential parking that is used by business customers during the day and occupied by residents after hours. Parking for businesses with normal 8-5 hours can be used by restaurants that begin their evening service at 5 PM. The extent to which shared parking benefits can be realized depends on how dissimilar the activity patterns are.

- d. In well-developed downtowns where land has become a scarce asset, it is important that the amount of land that is dedicated to parking is minimized and that parking should be used in the most efficient manner possible. In simple terms, efficient use means making that parking available to as many users as possible in order to provide the maximum amount of support for the downtown business and other activities it is intended to serve. Any restrictions added to a portion of the parking supply reduces its overall availability to be “shared” and reduces the efficiency of that valuable asset. The number of businesses and customers it can serve is reduced.
- e. A pure “lease” of specific parking spaces, or a specific number of parking spaces, reduces efficiency and parking support by limiting when and how that space can be used.
 - 1) The most inefficient arrangement is “Reserved” parking where the use of individual parking spaces is limited to individual users. When the “owner” of the space is not present, the space remains unused and provides no benefit to the area.
 - a) When looking for ways to improve parking system performance, experienced parking managers and consultants normally make the reduction or elimination of reserved parking a high priority. Although reserved spaces can be priced to compensate for their exclusive use, there is no way to reduce the negative impact on system efficiency as long as the space remains fully “reserved”.

- f. By contrast, a “license” to use a shared parking area maximizes efficiency. This is the arrangement that put in place by experienced parking system managers who understand the importance of maximizing shared parking benefits in supporting downtown businesses and development.
- 1) Although the term “license” may be subject to different interpretations, the definition applied here is the one that is most widely recognized by consultants and other parking professionals. It provides the licensee with the right to park in an identified parking facility and carries with it an obligation on the lessor to ensure that space is always available to all licensees. When the license is limited to a specific facility or, in some cases to a specific area within a facility, that obligation is rather clear and easily managed. If the license applies to a multiple parking facilities, the licensee may not be assured of finding a space in the location of choice - but can be assured that a space is available within the set of facilities covered by the license.
 - 2) From an operational perspective, a license is normally provided and controlled by either issuing “permits” that are displayed with the parked vehicle or by providing gate cards that the parker uses to activate an entry control gate.
 - 3) In facilities that are limited to permitted parkers, the displayed permit is a simple and effective form of administration and control. If a vehicle displays a valid and current permit, parking is authorized. If no permit is displayed, the vehicle is not authorized to park and it is subject to enforcement action (ticketing, booting or towing). Enforcement in City-owned parking facilities is more flexible than in private lots because the City has the option of ticketing rather than always having to resort to booting or towing. That option is not normally available to private parking facility owners.
 - 4) These parking facilities can also be used for “transient” parking. “Transient” parkers are defined within the parking industry as parkers who pay by the

hour or by the day. The terms "Permit", "Monthly", or "Contract" parkers generally refer to those who pay by the month or are otherwise granted a license to use the facility.

- 5) If transient parkers are allowed in the facility, the number of transient parkers must be controlled (limited) in order to ensure that sufficient parking is available to meet obligations to "permit" parkers. This can be accomplished in one of two ways:
 - a) A portion of the lot can be dedicated to "Permit Parkers Only" with appropriate signage. The permit area could also be physically separated from the balance of the facility and gated.
 - The balance of the lot can be made available with our without charge to transient parkers. If a fee is charged, the spaces can be controlled by standard parking meters or by one or more "multi-space" meters that are used to pay for parking at any of the transient spaces.
 - However, this essentially creates two parking facilities, with the permit area shared only by parkers with permits for that area. Some shared parking benefit is available if the transient area is not heavily used by transient parkers after normal business hours. In that case, permit parkers can be granted parking privileges in the "transient" area in the evening and on weekends. If new businesses with evening activity are added to the mix, this option may be of limited use as there may be no overflow spaces actually available in the transient area.
 - b) The second control approach is to physically control access to the entire facility and limit the number of transient parkers through an automatic count system. This is a long-established standard

practice and most parking equipment manufacturers provide this capability as a basic system feature.

- Permit parkers would be provided with gate cards to activate an entry gate. The entry can be a separate gate or a gate shared with transient parkers.
- Transient parkers will be required to take a ticket at the entrance (or some other form of "credential") and either pay at the point of exit or pre-pay at a central Pay-on-Foot station. When payment is received, the Pay-on-Foot station provides the parker with a validated ticket or other credential that is used to activate the exit gate. By tracking the number of transient entries and exits, the number of transient parkers can be limited. This allows the facility operator to ensure that sufficient space remains available to meet obligations to permit parkers.
- All parkers (transient and permit parkers) fully share the facility with no restrictions. Specific spaces can still be signed for specific uses, even as Reserved spaces, but the entire facility is generally shared.
- A significant benefit of this type of system is that the manager can change number of transient parkers allowed into the facility at specific times of the day or days of the week. For example, more transients can be allowed in the lot during 8-5 business hours, but the number reduced in the evening to accommodate residents returning to the facility. If most permit parkers are downtown employees rather than residents, the number of transients allowed on the weekends can be increased as well.

- a. If it is necessary to control access to a dedicated permit parking area within the facility, that area must be either limited to the highest levels of the structure, with a gate to control access to those levels, or be located outside the vertical circulation pattern. It may require a 3-bay design in order to provide a separate gated area in the third bay, with the vertical circulation route provided in the other two bays. With a typical design for two-way traffic, this would increase the required width of the facility by some 60 feet and limit options in locating the facility.
4. Basis of Committed Number of Licenses:
- a. There are two ways to measure the parking commitment, spaces per unit or spaces per bedroom.
 - b. Spaces-per-Unit provides no real flexibility for the parking allocation to automatically adjust to likely demand, which is often higher as the number of bedrooms increases. However, this basis does provide a more certain commitment by the City without hamstringing the developer in changing the mix of apartment configurations.
 - c. Spaces-per-Bedroom better matches actual likely demand with the parking space commitment. However, the City would have to limit its commitment to a specified cap. The City should also be aware of a disruptive practice in some cities where parking is scarce but allocations are based on the number of bedrooms. Apartments are designed and approved by City Zoning with three bedrooms in order to qualify for a higher parking allocation. After move-in, one of the bedrooms is converted to another use (e.g. office or media room) but the higher parking allocation remains.
5. Market Impact of "License" vs. "Lease" Approach:

The license approach can impact the marketability of residential units but that impact is related to the nature of the residential units and the method of control.

- a. The highest level of service provided to residents is provision of individually reserved parking spaces that are protected by effective physical barriers that control both vehicle and pedestrian access. This provides the highest level of consistency and security. This arrangement also provides the strongest marketing support in leasing or selling residential units.

This level of control is most typical of high end “owned” residential units, particularly if parking levels are linked to residential hallway levels.

- b. A shared residential parking area that is similarly controlled provides the next highest level of service.

This is more typical of high-end rental units or medium priced condos and more typical when there a common elevator core provides access to all levels.

- c. A shared residential parking area that limits vehicle access but does not control pedestrian access is the next level of service.

- d. This is a more typical arrangement for moderately priced apartment units.

- e. All of these are affected by the local market and what is provided in competing residential developments. However, residential developments located Downtown tend to place a higher priority on taking advantage of shared parking opportunities because the overall development cost for parking is normally higher in a downtown setting.

Paid Parking Provisions

Previous discussions included the possibility of the City making a commitment to the developer to provide a specific number of licenses at no charge to the developer as a “right by agreement”, but would not waive the right of the City to charge tenants for the use of those licenses. This approach is strongly recommended for several reasons.

1. Due to the expected long-term nature of the lease it is important that the City secure a revenue stream to offset the on-going cost of providing the parking that is committed to

the developer. This is particularly important when considering the possibility that existing surface lots may be replaced at some point by more expensive structured parking as parking demand grows or existing parking capacity is lost to development sites.

2. Even though paid parking may not be a significant part of the current market in Wilson, that is likely to change (It will change.) at some point in the future if downtown development efforts are successful. Paid parking provides financial support for development of new parking resources as a normal element of Downtown evolution. Because parking rates are determined, in part, but the actual increase in construction and operating costs, market rate parking tends to follow the actual financial needs of the downtown parking system. Any significant exceptions undermine that natural market support.
3. Paid parking that is “unbundled” from rents tends to reduce demand and parking capacity requirements.
 - a. When residential tenants are given the opportunity to purchase permits for parking rather than having a specific number of permits included in the rent, the number of permits actually purchase is normally less than the number of spaces utilized when parking is included in the rent. Some residents will choose to save money by reducing their family fleet to a single automobile if reasonable alternative travel modes are available or one of the family members works within walking distance of the downtown residence. When parking is bundled with rents, there is a noticeable tendency for downtown residents to drive to downtown workplaces even though those workplaces are within a reasonable walking distance.
 - b. The impact of “unbundled” parking not only reduces the amount of parking actually needed to meet demand, it reduces the number of vehicles operating on downtown streets and reduces emissions.
4. It is recommended that the Agreement allow for market pricing of the licenses obligated under the agreement so that those rates can be adjusted to reflect actual increases in the cost of providing and maintaining that parking. Such a provision should be

accompanied by terms for how such pricing will be determined if there are no non-residential parkers in the facility to establish a market price.

5. If any pricing concession is granted to the developer (that affects pricing to tenants), the City should limit that pricing concession to a single space per unit, with any additional obligation available to tenants at the full market rate being charged to other permit parkers.

Flexibility in the Location of Provided Parking

The example Western Auto agreement allows the City to provide the obligated parking license at any facility within one block of the development site. This is a significant benefit to the City in terms of flexibility and cost. A similar provision should be included in the pending agreement. However, the definition of “within one block” should be clarified as to whether it means within an adjacent block or one block distant from the edge of the development block.

Some provision for priority in assignment of parking within the development block may be reasonable, giving priority to residents of the subject development over any new demand generators that are granted license to park in the City’s facilities. The subject residents would not be displaced by obligations to a new development.

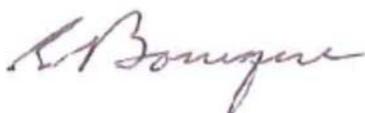
Survivability of City Commitments If Units are Converted to Condos

The commitments made by the City to the developer can be carried forward to new owners under condominium conversion so long as those commitments do not change or lengthen the commitment.

Maintenance of Facilities

1. If the Agreement will be on a license basis, the City would normally be responsible for all custodial, mechanical and capital maintenance activity and costs.
 - a. The City should enter into no special obligation to maintain the residential parking at a standard higher than that provided in the parking facility as a whole. This is particularly important if the parking areas are shared with non-residential parkers.
 - b. The City should control all aspects of facility maintenance because they are inevitably linked in protecting and preserving mechanical and structural systems.
 - c. The City is in a better position to budget for required capital maintenance costs that can be expected over the life of both surface lots and parking structures.
 - d. With fully responsibility for the entire facility the City is also in a better position to accomplish needed maintenance and ensure that all maintenance and repairs meet City standards.
 - e. The ability to accomplish needed maintenance tasks is also affected by any parking area that is set aside for the exclusive use of resident parkers. If spaces are taken out in that area for maintenance, they have to be replaced somewhere else in the facility. (If transient spaces are taken out of service for maintenance, the number of transient parkers allowed in the facility is normally reduced until those spaces are returned to service.)

END

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "A. Bouqure".

**Appendix D -
Technical Memorandum – Parking Control Methods**

TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM

To: Bill Martin
Timothy Tresohlavy
VHB Engineering

From: Lee Bourque

Re: Wilson, NC Downtown Parking Study
Controlling/protecting resident permit parker access

My previous Technical Memorandum did, in fact, address possible methods for controlling the parking lot to protect the number of spaces committed to resident parkers. I have expanded some of the point here to add some clarity and "visibility". Hopefully, this will help the City get a clearer picture of their options.

Terms in this memorandum:

- RESIDENTS:** Residents of the proposed residential building with a parking commitment from the City.
- EFFICIENCY:** Parking "efficiency" means that the City is getting more benefit out of the spaces in the lot by making them available to more parkers.
- As pointed out in the Technical Memo and in the two previous phone conversations, this will become more important as development takes place and more parking is needed to support that development. It will become even more important when demand reaches the point that new parking capacity will have to be provided in multi-level parking structures at \$20,000 or more per space. "Efficiency" is important in terms of both cost and land consumption.
- PERMIT PARKER:** A parker who has a monthly permit or an open-ended permit that provides parking privileges on the lot. A permit parker could be a resident or anyone purchasing a parking permit from the City.
- TRANSIENT PARKER:** A parker who pays for parking at the time it is used ... by the minute, hour or day. A transient parker could also be someone using the lot without charge if the lot is open to the public without charge.

PARKING CONTROL OPTIONS:

- 1) If the spaces are marked in any way for the exclusive use of the residents, the City has given up the ability to make those spaces available to others ... whether it is 24/7 or for a specific period of the day.

That should be avoided.

- 2) The only way to operate the lot efficiently and not lose the use of spaces when they are not occupied by residents is to control overall access to the lot. The “formula” cited below seems to be a paradox, but it is completely accurate as a principle of parking management.

The ability to control and limit access by a specific parker group
=
The ability to maximize availability for that group

There are two ways to accomplish that.

a. 100% CONTRACT PARKER LOT:

If the City restricts the lot to permits parkers (no transient parkers), the City can control the number of resident and non-resident permits that are sold for that lot. No gates controls would be needed but some enforcement activity would be required. The City could gradually increase the number of non-resident contract parkers until the lot reaches its optimum utilization (high occupancy but never “full”). At that point it is likely that the number of permits could exceed actual lot capacity by 10% - 20%. The ability to oversell on the non-resident permits allows the City to achieve the desired efficiency. Of course, this option does NOT provide for transient parking, which may be what nearby businesses actually need.

b. CONTROLLED LOT WITH TRANSIENT PARKERS (paying by the hour or by the day):

If the City needs to use the lot for transient parking (free, or paid by the hour/day), a control perimeter and gates will be required in order to protect the commitment to the RESIDENTS.

- i. The resident permit parkers and other permit parkers would be provided gate cards to access the parking lot. The number of gate cards would equal the commitment made by the City and the City will have made a commitment that sufficient space will always be available to accommodate all of those parkers. However, the number of spaces actually occupied by resident permit parkers would normally be less than the number of gate cards issued, particularly during the daytime.
- ii. The City could allow the general public to enter and use the lot for free or for a fee (transient parkers). However, City would use the gate control

equipment to limit the number of transient parkers that could enter the lot in order to protect the City's commitment to the resident parkers.

1. As a very simple example, the system would be set to limit the number of transient parkers in the lot at any time to 100 if there are 300 spaces on the lot and 200 are committed to permit parkers. The entry and exit gates communicate to track both entries and exits in maintaining the total count of transient vehicles in the lot.
 2. More realistically, if the City finds that the number of RESIDENT permit parkers on the lot never exceeds 150 between 9 A.M. and 4 P.M. on weekdays, the system can be set to allow 140 transient parkers on the lot during those hours ... leaving a 10 vehicle "margin" to make sure the a resident parker never finds the lot FULL. The City has created 60 more transient parking spaces during the business hours of 9 A.M. and 4 P.M. while living up to its commitment to serve 200 resident permit holders ... with no instances of a full lot. Those 60 spaces are worth \$1,200,000 if the City had to provide them in a parking structure at \$20,000 per space.
 3. When the maximum allowed number of transient parkers is reached, an automatic sign at the entry point would display "PERMIT PARKERS ONLY" until some of the transient parkers leave and free up more space. The sign is controlled by the gate and count system. The system can be set to reduce the number of transient parkers allowed in the lot after 4 P.M. when more resident parkers are present. This can get a little complicated and require close management attention if there is periodic high transient demand in the evening so that the number of transient parkers remaining in the lot after 4 P.M. exceeds the more restrictive evening limit. This normally occurs during downtown events with a late afternoon start or when downtown bars promote a late afternoon "happy hour" that is popular.
- iii. The best fee collection method is for a gated lot used by transient parkers is to issue a ticket at the entry point. The fee can be paid to a cashier at the time of exit, or paid at an automated "Pay-on-Foot" station or automated "Pay-in-Lane" device at the exit gate. There are pros and cons for each method.
 - iv. An alternate that is much less common is to control the number of entries with a gate and count system, but not issue a ticket at the entrance.
 1. The entry/exit gates would only be used to control the number of transient parkers in the lot, making sure that sufficient space is available for resident permit parkers.
 2. All collection and enforcement for transient parkers would be through some form of meter system.

3. The entry sign would display an "OPEN" message as long as the limit for transient parkers had not been reached.
4. Once in the lot, a parker would either pay a meter installed at the space or a multi-space meter that covers the entire lot. (Using meters at each space in a fully shared lot is a waste of equipment if half of those spaces are occupied by resident or non-resident monthly parkers. So, a multi-space meter is the better option.)
5. Both multi-meter variations are workable - "Pay-and-Display" and "Pay-by-Space". Each has advantages and disadvantages.
6. Any parker would be able to use any space on the lot. Transients would either display a paid receipt or the system would record the "paid" space number marked on the pavement – depending on which type of multi-space meter system is installed. The disadvantage of a single-meter or multi-space meter system in this situation would be that the permit holders would have to display a parking permit unless the permit is linked to a license plate number. By contrast, if tickets are issued to transient parkers at the entry and the fee collected at the time of exit, all parkers still in the lot are considered legitimate and no permits would have to be displayed. Permit holders would only need gate cards to activate the gate and would not have to identify themselves on the lot by displaying a permit.

c. SEPARATE RESIDENT PARKING AREA:

The City has a third option that offers a lesser degree of improved efficiency in a separate RESIDENTS ONLY parking area, but only if the City is allowed to monitor utilization patterns and set aside only the number of spaces that are needed to meet actual resident parker demand.

Basically, the City is dividing the existing lot into two separate lots, one for resident permits holders and one for other parkers. It is likely that utilization in the RESIDENT area will frequently fall well below the capacity allocated to that area but the City will have no means of taking advantage of that available space if access is restricted to permit parkers.

END

