



TOWN OF MIDDLEBURY DOWNTOWN PARKING STUDY

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Special thanks to the residents, business owners, and employees for their participation throughout the process that helped guide the Steering Committee to have a better understanding of the parking conditions and strategize how to improve the parking experience in downtown.

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Details of the parking system issues are provided in this chapter. Additionally, strategic recommendations are provided that address the challenges and can improve and better manage the downtown parking system.



1. Introduction

Downtown Middlebury has become a vibrant destination, with its unique culture and variety of local businesses attracting a significant number of residents and visitors. There isn't a day that goes by without seeing foot traffic, and often, finding parking requires searching for a spot a block away from your destination. While these are positive challenges, they are ones the Town of Middlebury aims to address to maintain the vibrancy of downtown.

Daily parking experiences for downtown businesses, customers, and residents have emerged as a key challenge, with many different users competing for limited space. As Middlebury continues to grow and thrive, it is essential to conduct a detailed review of parking conditions to ensure that it meets the needs of the expanding community.

Purpose for the Study

Recognizing the growing customer base and near-zero vacancies, the Town of Middlebury initiated this parking study. The goal is to address the challenge of customers often having to search for a parking space. The Town selected the Michiana Area Council of Governments (MACOG) to conduct this study.

The Downtown Middlebury Parking Study aims to achieve several goals:

- 1. Create a downtown environment that fosters growth;**
- 2. Support existing and future businesses;**
- 3. Benefits residents and visitors; and,**
- 4. Enhance the experience and safety for all users.**

Planning Approach

MACOG and the Town of Middlebury kicked off the planning process by organizing a Steering Committee consisting of the downtown businesses, Town staff, and a representative from the Town Council. This committee served as the lead to oversee the study and ensure it is reflective of the community's needs.

This study supports a data-driven process to spatially show where people are parking and highlight the parking deficiencies to systematically document the key challenges and needs of the users in downtown Middlebury. Additionally, this study provides the Town and the Chamber a comprehensive guide to aid the Town in making parking management decisions.

This study employed a data-driven approach to identify where people are currently parking and highlighted the deficiencies. The study systematically documented the primary challenges and needs of downtown Middlebury users. This is the final report that offers the Town an overview of the current parking conditions, a peak demand analysis, and recommendations to enhance the parking management.



Planning Process

1. Review recent and ongoing plans to establish a broad understanding of the Town's vision for downtown, the issues, and opportunities.
2. Create a comprehensive parking database of on-street, off-street, public and private parking facilities through numerous field visits and existing data sets. Data collected included an inventory of total spaces, restrictions, and utilization.
3. Engage the community to solicit feedback on key parking challenges, their needs, and insight on applicable strategies. This was accomplished through stakeholder interviews, an online survey, and a stakeholder workshop.
4. Facilitate regular Steering Committee meetings to review the findings from the three technical reports and strategize how to best engage the public.
5. Conduct a demand analysis based on the existing land use and anticipated growth to systematically project the downtown parking needs. MACOG analyzed the practical use and model the behavior of the parking activity.
6. Lastly, identify parking management strategies to improve the downtown parking system and users' experiences.

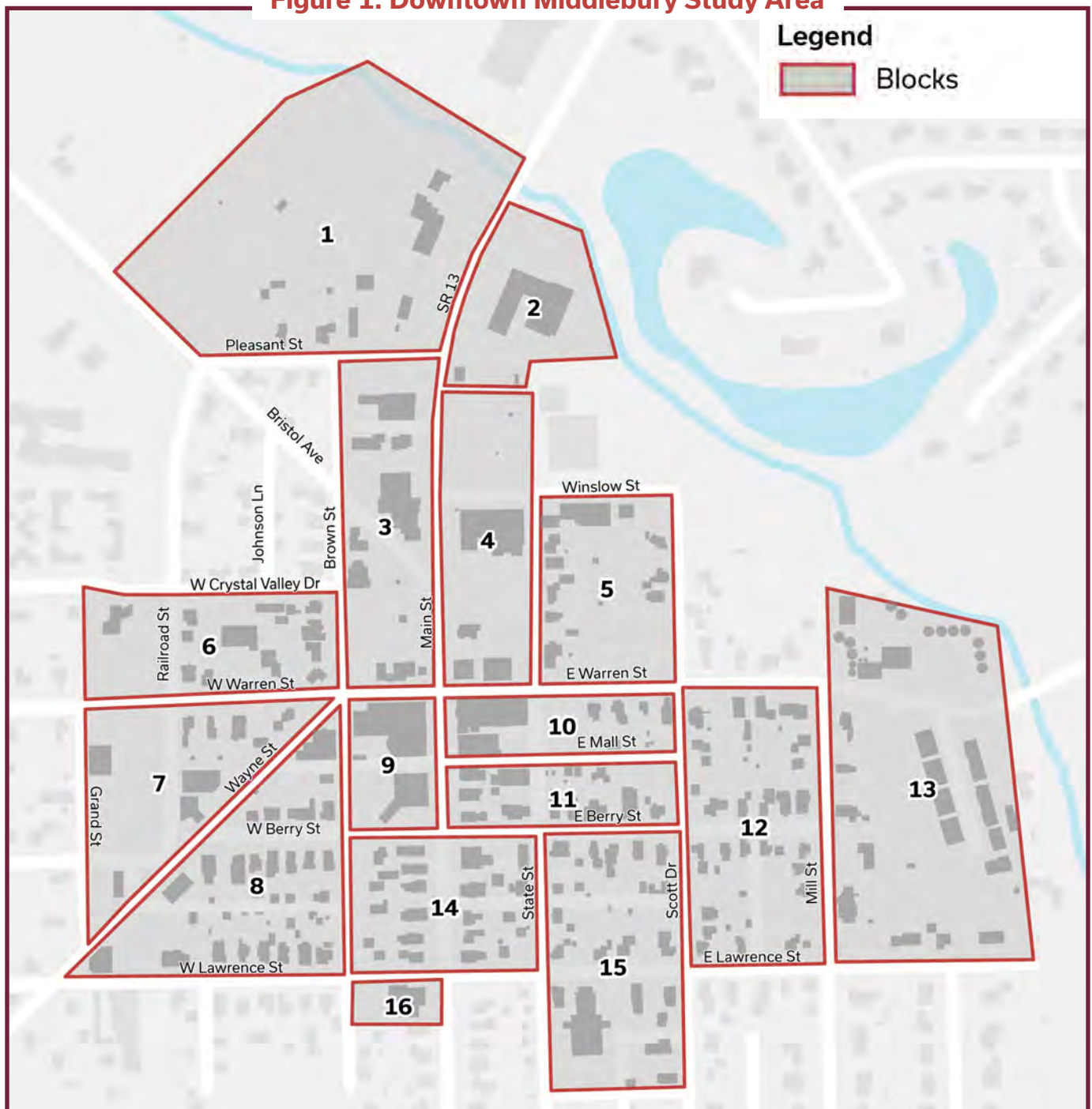


Study Area

The study area, determined by the Town, shown in the red outline in **Figure 1**, is comprised of the commercial and residential areas within a two-mile radius of the central business district. The study area was divided into a 16-block area consisting of a mix of land uses including civic, government, professional offices, retail, restaurants, banking, and other service businesses.

Block boundaries were defined by the centerline of the road system to ensure on-street parking was accurately assigned to its corresponding block. Each block was assigned a number to assist with tracking data, displaying a summation of on-street and off-street parking, identifying areas that experience surpluses or deficits of parking spaces, and the impact on parking conditions.

Figure 1: Downtown Middlebury Study Area





2. Parking System

The Parking Study took on a comprehensive approach to document the current parking system and the parking behavior to gauge the issues as well as opportunities.

A crucial first step was creating a comprehensive parking database to document the Town's parking assets. This involved multiple field surveys to inventory the parking supply for on-street and off-street parking facilities. MACOG also documented the parking activity by observing the utilization of parking during peak business hours in the morning and afternoon across two months.

This section provides an overview of the existing parking system and parking activity characteristics for downtown Middlebury. The information was collected through several field observations by MACOG between October and December in 2024, with a follow-up observation in April 2025 to see if adjustments were warranted.

Parking Inventory

MACOG conducted a detailed inventory of the parking supply in the study area. Parking supply includes publicly available lots, privately owned lots (restricted to customers and employees), and on-street parking. The on-street parking is not restricted by a time limit. The initial inventory of spaces used recent aerial photography to map the total number of available spaces and then verified by staff during field observations to denote the type of parking facility and if any restrictions were present. There are a total of 1,011 parking spaces in the study area. The following sections detail the distribution of the supply of parking.

ON-STREET

The existing on-street parking spaces were inventoried and assigned their corresponding block number. The available on-street parking does not have a time restriction and are available for first come, first served basis. **Table 1** shows the breakdown of the type of restriction and the available number of spaces for on-street and off-street parking in the study area.

While the majority of the available on-street spaces in the central business district are marked, the markings show signs of fading and need to be remarked. There are a couple of streets, south of Warren Street, that allow on-street parking but are unmarked spaces. Additionally, the on-street parking is not signed. Outside of the central business district are residential areas that allow on-street parking but are unmarked spaces. To determine the number of available spaces on the streets with unmarked spaces, MACOG used the method from the, “*Parking Management Made Easy: A Guide to Taming the Downtown Parking Beast*.” This guide provides an estimate based on the total distance measured along the curb excluding driveways. As shown in **Table 1**, MACOG identified 241 available on-street parking spaces in the study area.

OFF-STREET

The existing off-street parking lots were inventoried and assigned their corresponding block number. MACOG identified 770 off-street parking spaces in the study area, see **Table 1** for the breakdown. Of the available off-street parking supply, approximately 164 spaces are publicly accessible and 606 spaces are privately-owned and reserved for employees or customers. Public off-street parking is provided by the Town of Middlebury and the Middlebury Public Library. There are 6 public parking lots in the study area, 5 are available by the Town and 1 by the Library.

Table 1: Downtown Parking Restrictions

Restriction Type	On-Street Parking	Off-Street Parking
No Restriction	241	164
Reserved Restriction	-	606
Timed Restriction	-	-
Total	241	770



PUBLIC & PRIVATE PARKING SUPPLY

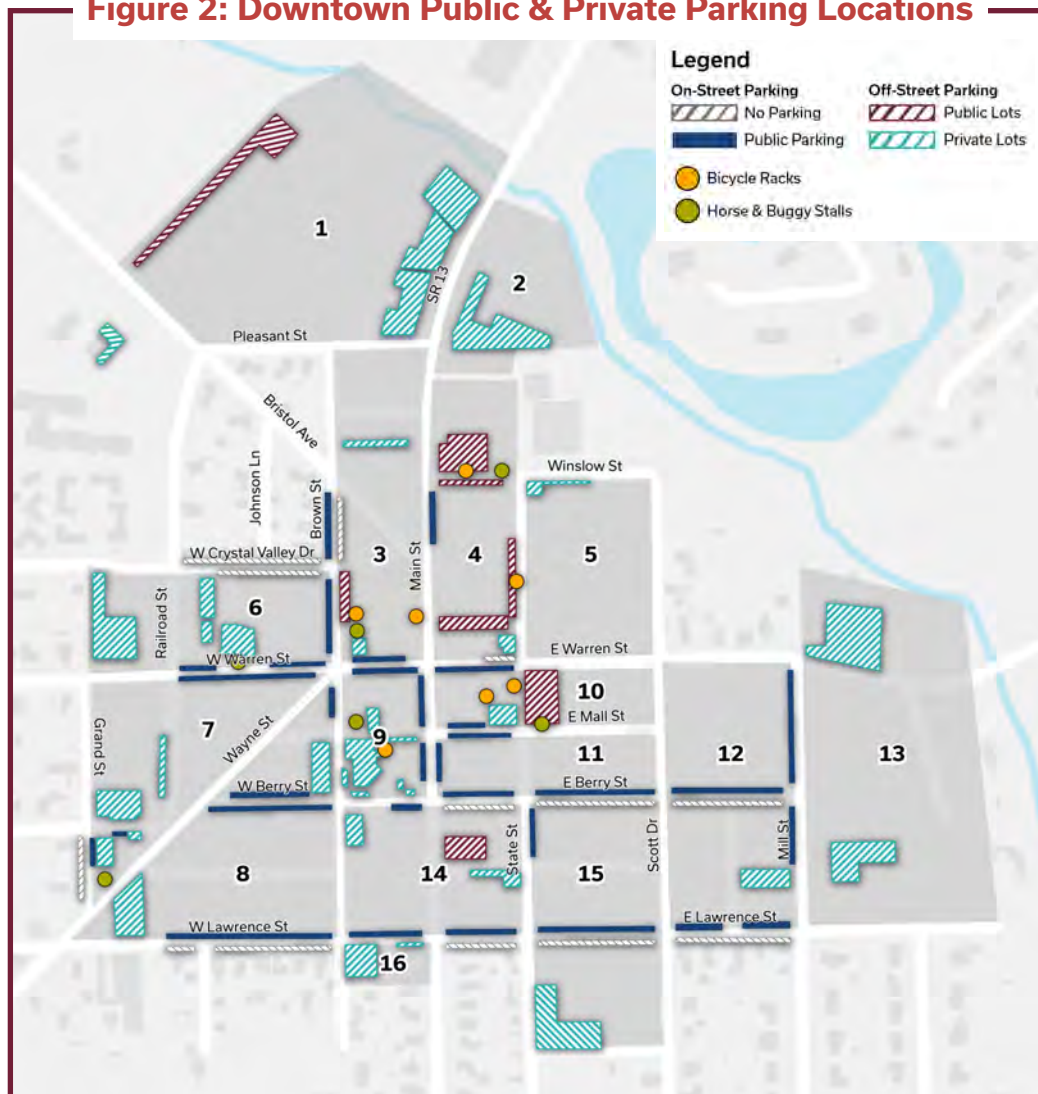
Figure 2 below depicts the location of the on-street parking and the public and private parking lots. There are a total of 356 parking spaces in the central business district, with 97 as on-street spaces and 259 as off-street parking lots. Of the 356 spaces, approximately 243 (68%) are public (on-street and off-street parking) while 113 (32%) are private spaces in off-street lots.

A general rule of thumb is public parking should account for at least 50 percent of the total parking supply in the central business district.

*Additionally, during field observations, MACOG noted that First State Bank was constructing a new administrative building with a private lot of approximately 36 spaces and two hitching posts for horse and buggy. These were not included in the total private parking supply.



Figure 2: Downtown Public & Private Parking Locations



Parking Utilization

An effective parking management plan should be based on conditions observed during typical business days, not special events, and during peak business hours. To assess the current peak parking conditions, MACOG conducted parking occupancy surveys to determine how many vehicles are utilizing the on-street and off-street parking facilities. Staff conducted the occupancy surveys on four separate weekdays in October and November in 2024, with one survey on a Saturday in October. Given the surveys were done late in the season, MACOG did one follow-up survey on a Wednesday in April 2025, to note any adjustments in the maximum occupancy. The parking occupancy surveys were conducted during the following days and times.

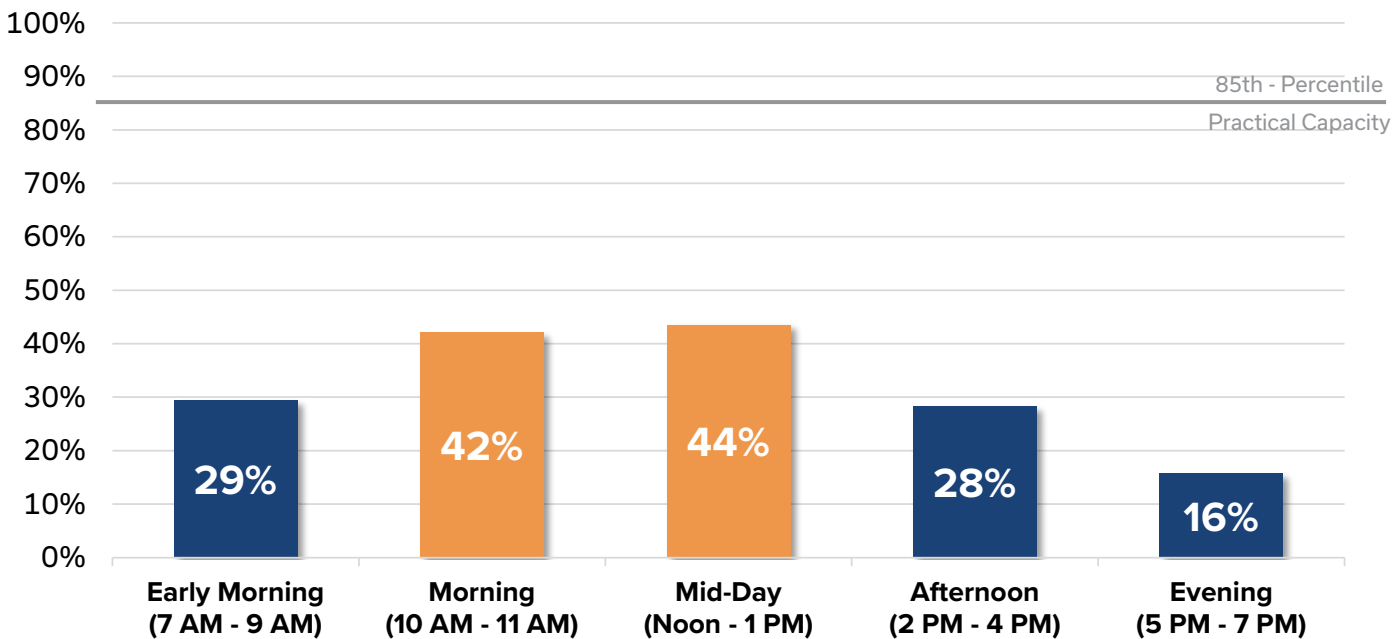
- Wednesday, October 23, 2024 - 7 AM to 9 AM; 9 AM to 11 AM; and 11 AM to 1 PM.
- Saturday, October 26, 2024 - 7 AM to 9 AM; 9 AM to 11 AM; and 11 AM to 1 PM.
- Tuesday, October 29, 2024 - 11 AM to 1 PM and 2 PM to 4 PM.
- Monday, November 4, 2024 - 7 AM to 9 AM and 9 AM to 11 AM.
- Thursday, November 7, 2024 - 5 PM to 7 PM.
- Wednesday, April 30, 2025 - 7 AM to 9 AM; 9 AM to 11 AM; 11 AM to 1 PM; and 2 PM to 4 PM.

Figure 3 below shows the comparisons of the observed parking occupancies during the six surveyed time-periods.

Early Morning & Morning Peak Occupancies

Based on our analysis, the peak occupancy for this time period occurred between 10 AM and 11 AM, with demand reflecting the start of the workday for most professional and service businesses. As shown in **Figure 3**, this is when we observed 427 occupied parking spaces, leaving 584 spaces available in the study area. This finding highlights a clear surge in parking demand after the initial morning rush (7 AM to 9 AM), when only 298 spaces were occupied. **Figure 4** on the next page further illustrates the distribution of this demand across the different blocks.

Figure 3: Observed Peak Parking Occupancy



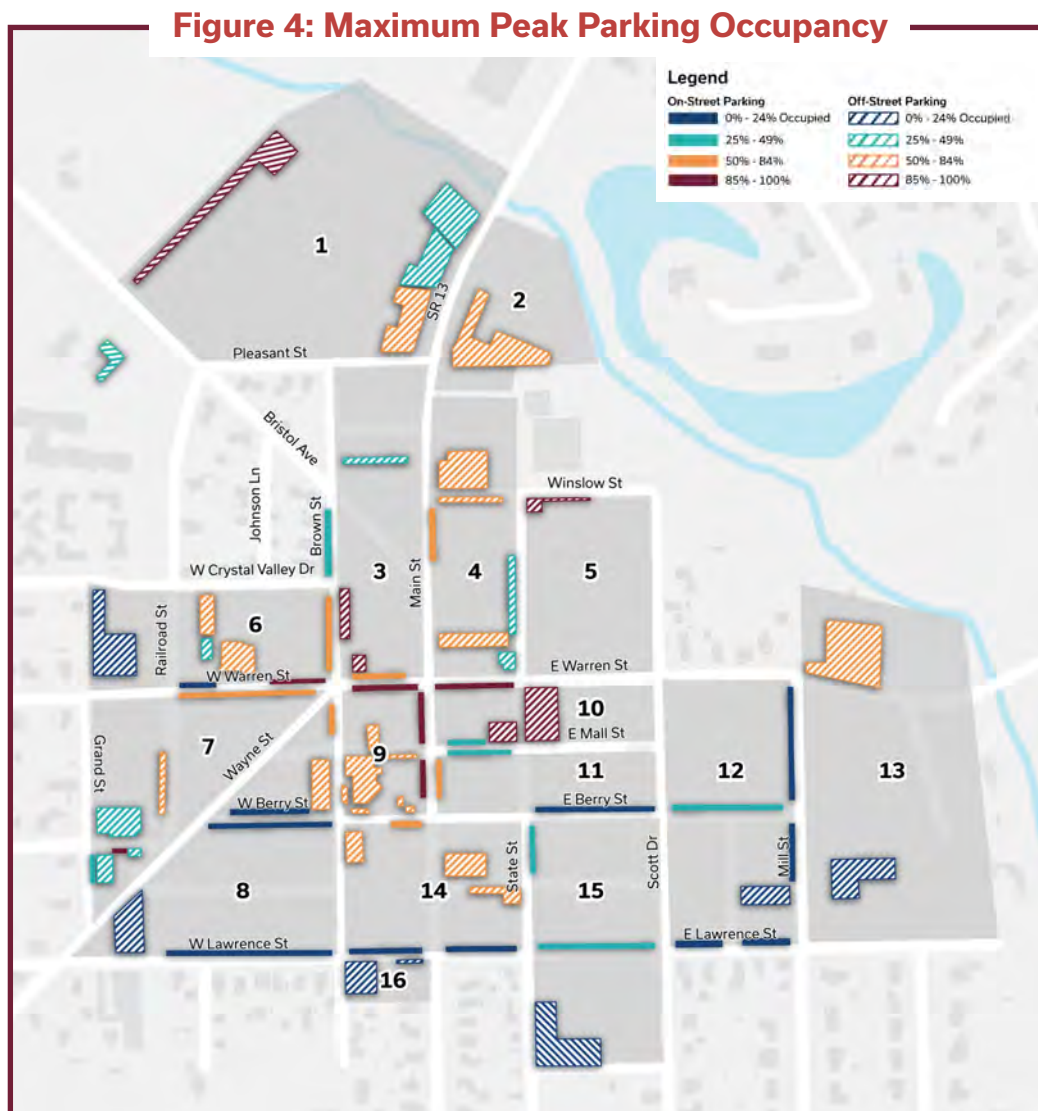
Mid-Day Peak Occupancy

Our analysis found that the highest overall parking occupancy of the day occurred during the mid-day lunch period, from Noon to 1 PM. This finding aligns with the peak operating hours for many of downtown's retail businesses and restaurants. As **Figure 3** shows, approximately 44% of the on-street and off-street parking supply was occupied—or 440 spaces—leaving 571 unoccupied spaces.

Afternoon & Evening Peak Occupancies

The afternoon (2 PM to 4 PM) and evening (5 PM to 7 PM) surveys show a noticeable decrease in parking occupancy compared to the earlier parts of the day. As **Figure 3** illustrates, this is consistent with most professional offices, banks, and service businesses nearing the end of their operational hours. During these times, we observed a significant surplus of available parking, with 725 unoccupied spaces in the afternoon and 852 unoccupied spaces in the evening.

Figure 4 below graphically shows the overall parking occupancy for each block in the study area during the maximum peak observances.



HORSE & BUGGY PARKING PEAK OCCUPANCY

Horse and buggy parking was also observed at various stalls and hitching posts during the occupancy surveys. The locations of these stalls and hitching posts are shown in **Figure 2** on page 10, and their capacities were estimated. **Figure 5** below illustrates the peak percent occupancies for horse and buggy parking during the six surveyed periods. **Table 2** below shows a breakdown of the parking occupancy.

Within these three blocks, parking presents specific challenges.

- In Block 4, the horse and buggy hitching posts near the Public Library have a capacity of 4 spots. During a survey conducted in the afternoon, it was noted that this area was at full capacity, with 100 percent occupancy.
- In Block 7, the hitching post area for the Hilltop Restaurant has a capacity of 3 spots; however, during a morning survey, 8 horse and buggies were occupying the space.
- In Block 10, the horse and buggy hitching posts located in the public lot at the corner of Warren Street and State Street have a capacity of 12 spots. During a morning survey, it was observed that 14 horse and buggies were utilizing these spaces.

Figure 5: Observed Horse & Buggy Peak Percent Occupancy

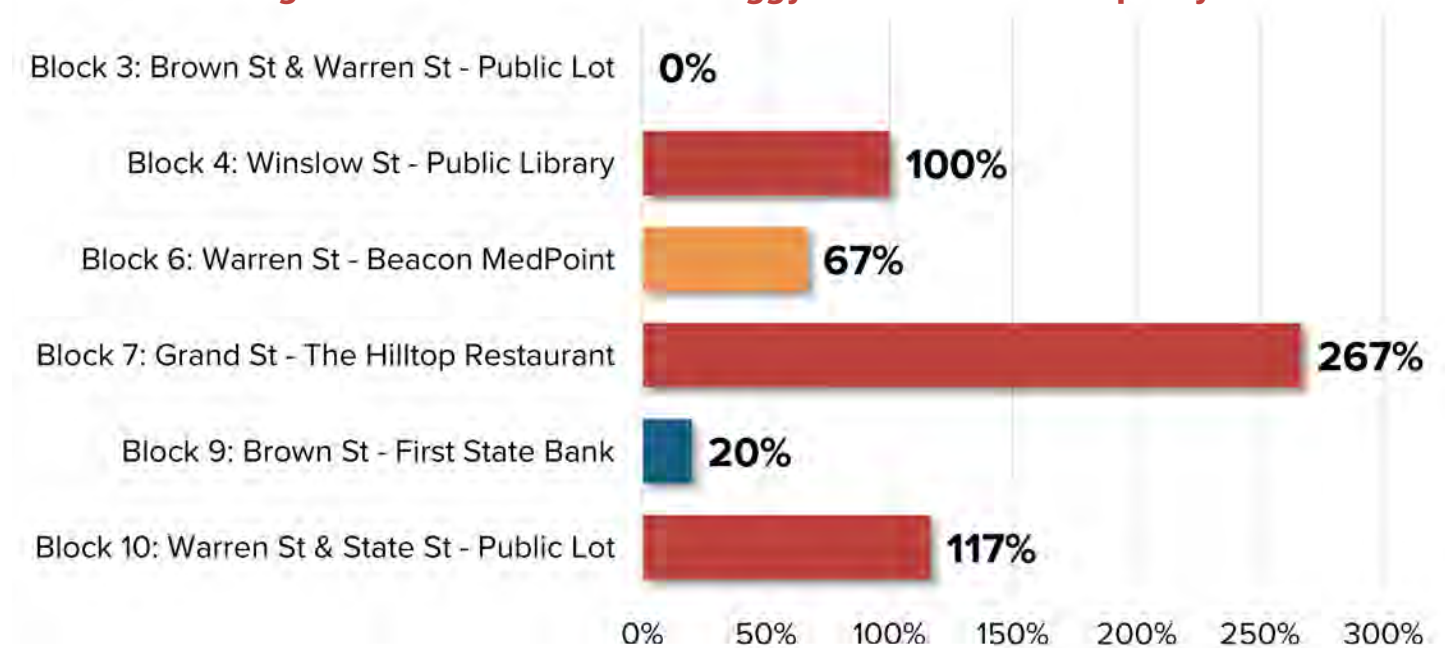


Table 2: Horse & Buggy Parking Occupancy

Location	Available Capacity	Maximum Occupancy	Percent Occupied	Surplus/ Deficit
Block 3: Brown St & Warren St - Public Lot	4	0	0%	4
Block 4: Winslow St - Public Library	4	4	100%	0
Block 6: Warren St - Beacon MedPoint	6	4	67%	2
Block 7: Grand St - The Hilltop Restaurant	3	8	267%	-5
Block 9: Brown St - First State Bank	15	3	20%	12
Block 10: Warren St & State St - Public Lot	12	14	117%	-2

PUBLIC PARKING PEAK OCCUPANCY

While our overall analysis shows an abundance of available parking spaces even during peak demand, this includes both public and private facilities. This section focuses on the public parking supply, which is often difficult for the general public to find during peak hours. As previously indicated, the peak overall parking demand occurs during the mid-day lunch period, between Noon and 1 PM. It is around this timeframe that parking available to the general public becomes difficult to find.

As **Figure 6** shows, the challenge of finding a parking spot during this time is evident in blocks 3, 4, 9, and 10. Within these four blocks, finding a public parking spot is particularly a challenge:

- In Block 3, the public lots next to East Memorial Park are at 100 percent occupancy, and the on-street spaces across the street from Varns & Hoover had 59 percent occupancy.
- In Block 4, the public lots near the Marathon Gas Station, and the Public Library had 54 percent occupancy.
- In Block 9, the on-street spaces were at 100 percent occupancy.
- In Block 10, the public lot at the corner of Warren Street and State Street had 91 percent occupancy, and the on-street spaces had 67 percent occupancy.

Figure 6: Observed Peak Occupancy - Public Parking

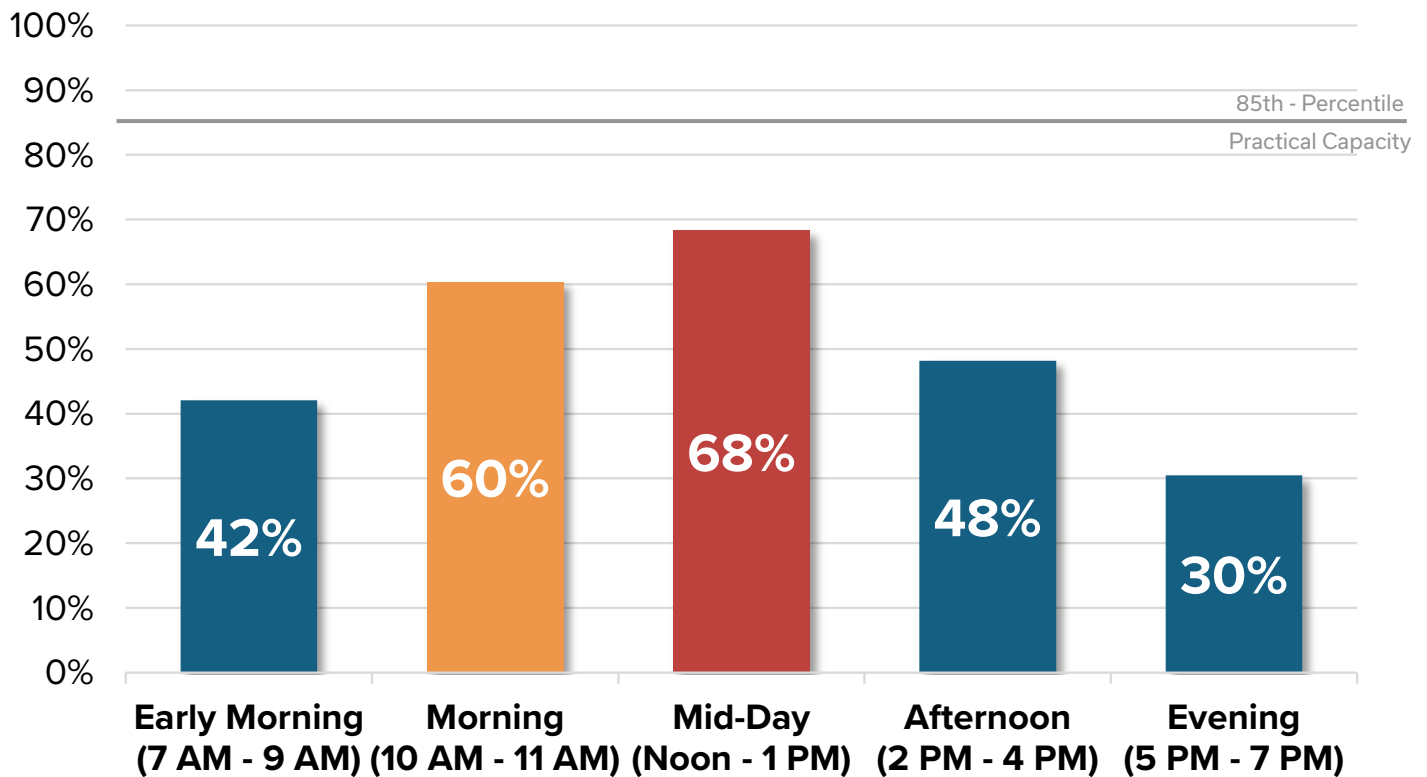
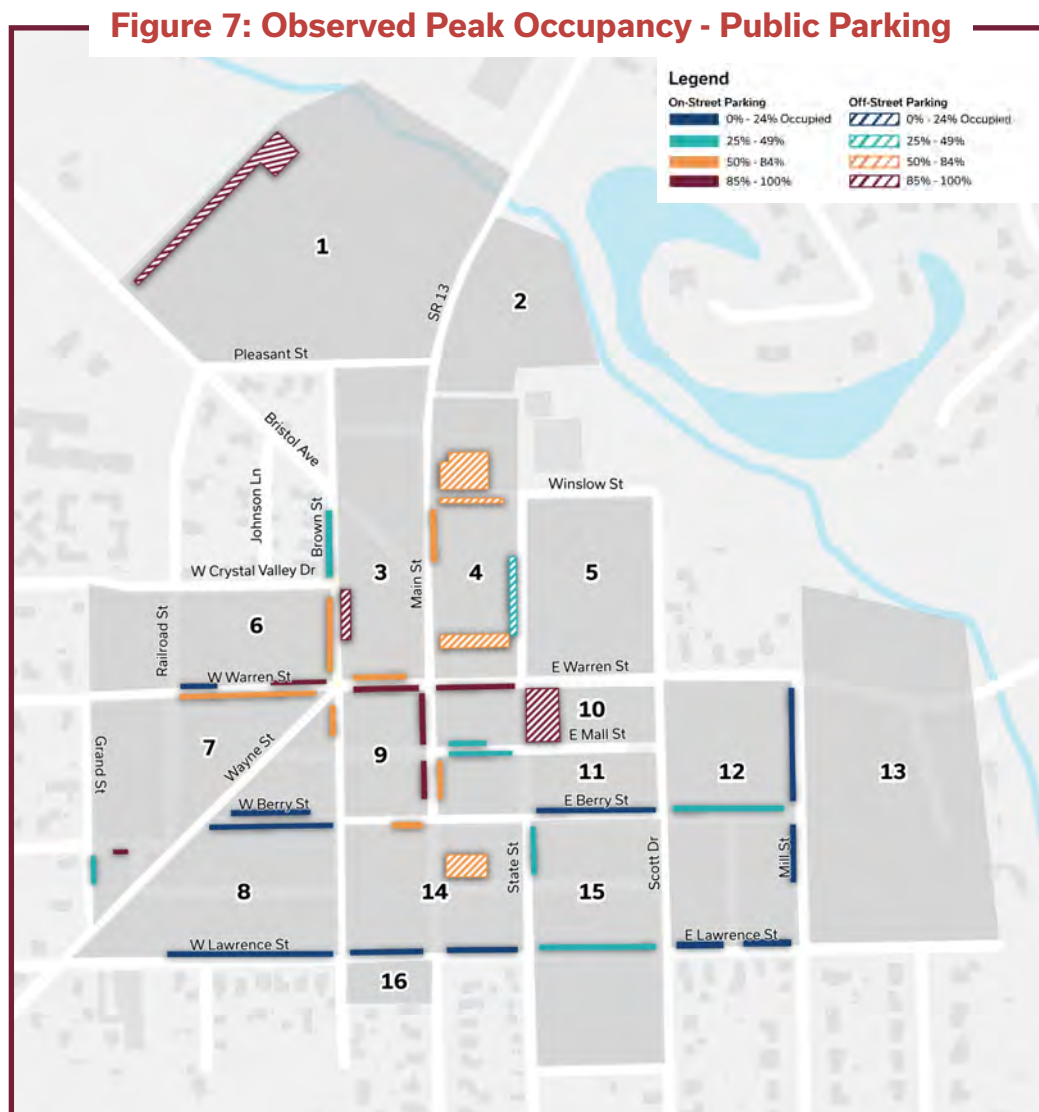




Figure 7 below displays the spatial breakdown of the observed peak occupancy for the public on-street and off-street parking supply in the central business district.





3. Public Engagement

A critical component of the study was public engagement. Engaging the daily users of the parking facilities was instrumental to have a better understanding of the different needs and experiences parking downtown. Efforts included a public input survey, an online “Map Where You Park” activity, stakeholder interviews, and a public review period of the Final Report.

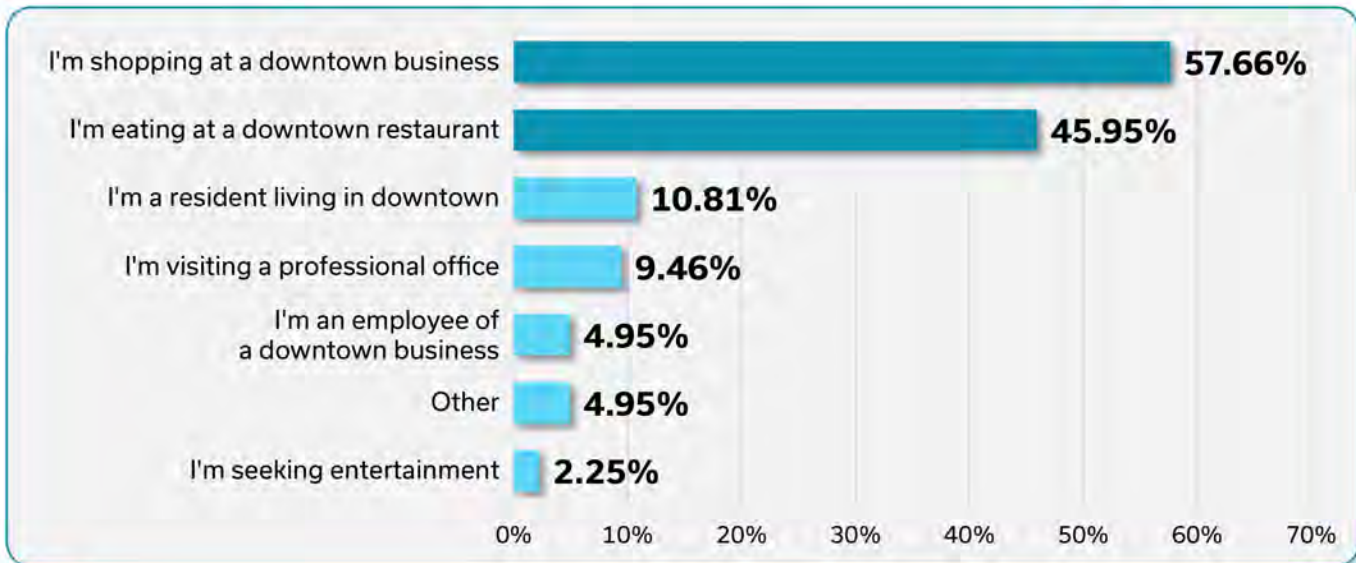
In March and April 2025, the Town conducted a public input survey to gather information on where people park downtown, how long they stay, the times they visit, their parking preferences, the challenges they encounter, and their ideas for improvement. We received responses from 222 individuals. The survey was accessible online on the project’s website (engage.macog.com/middlebury-downtown-parking), and hard copies were available at Town Hall and the Middlebury Public Library. Notices about the survey were posted at downtown businesses and promoted on the Town of Middlebury’s Facebook page. It was also featured in the March edition of the inMiddlebury magazine and the community newsletter.

Middlebury residents had the opportunity to review and comment on the draft Final Report between September 1, 2025 and October 8, 2025. The draft Report was available for electronic viewing on the project website and an article was published in the inMiddlebury Magazine. Residents were encouraged to submit their comments using the online comment form, and we received three comments. The comments were reviewed and responded to on October 15, 2025.

Coming to Downtown

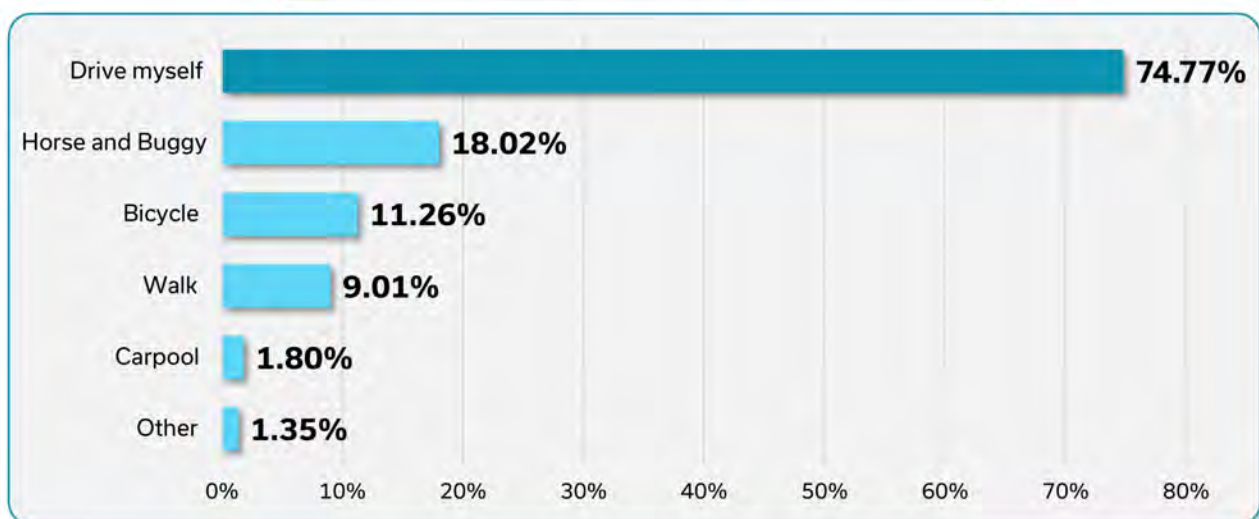
The first survey question asked respondents to indicate what brings them to downtown (see **Chart 1** below). The majority of respondents indicated they come into downtown to eat at a restaurant (45.95%) and to shop at a downtown retailer (57.66%). Other respondents indicated they are an employee of a downtown business (4.95%), visiting a professional office (9.46%), seeking entertainment (2.25%), they are a resident living downtown (10.81%), or other reasons (4.95%).

What most often brings you to downtown?

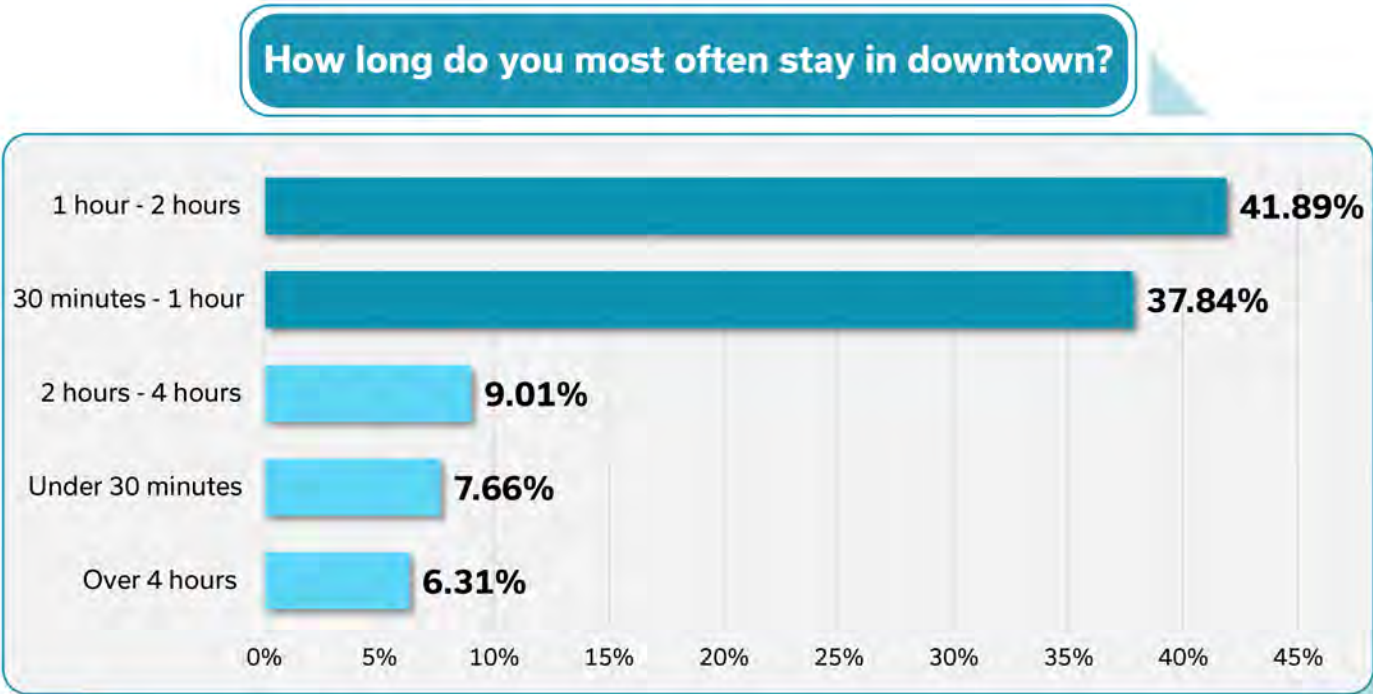


The second question asked respondents how they generally come into downtown (see **Chart 2** below). The majority of respondents, 74.77%, drove downtown themselves, with 18.02% came by a horse and buggy. Approximately 11.26% biked and 9.01% walked into downtown, and 1.8% carpooled.

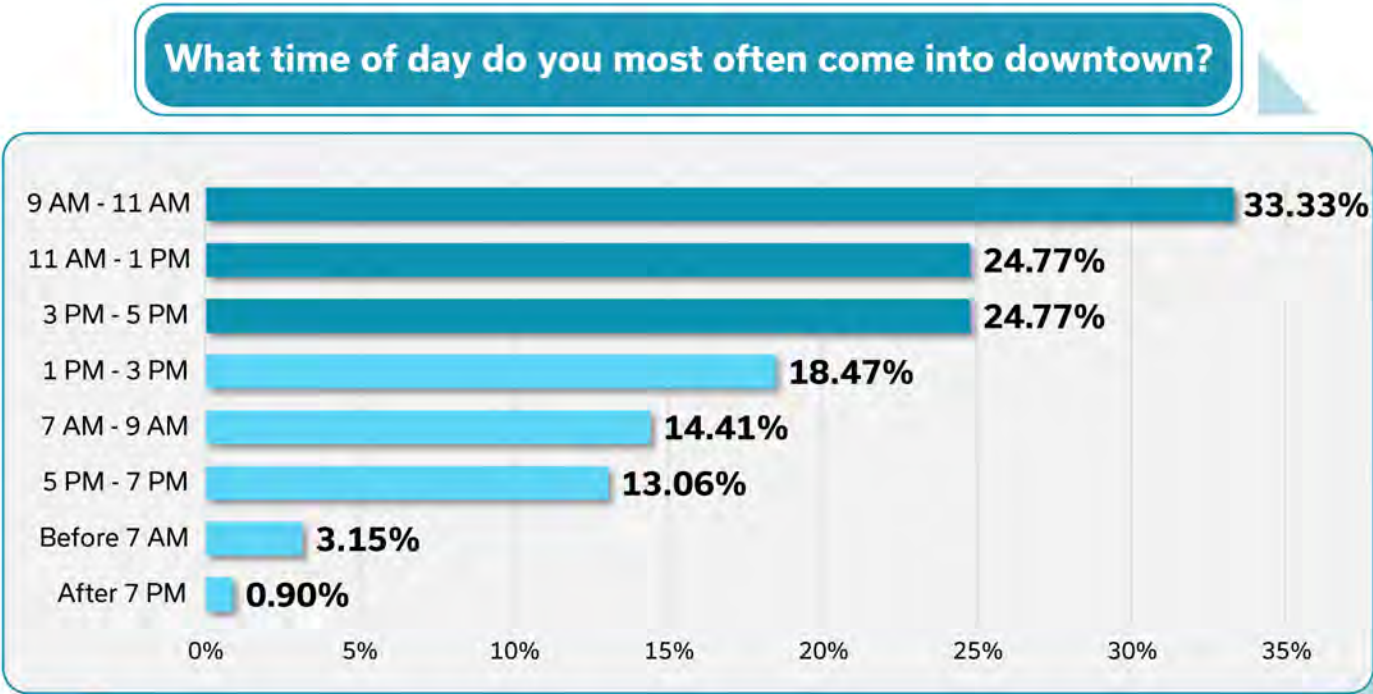
How do you generally come into downtown?



The third question asked respondents how long they stay in downtown. The majority of respondents stayed downtown for 1 hour to 2 hours (41.89%). The next highest duration was 30 minutes to 1 hour (37.84%) (see **Chart 3** below).

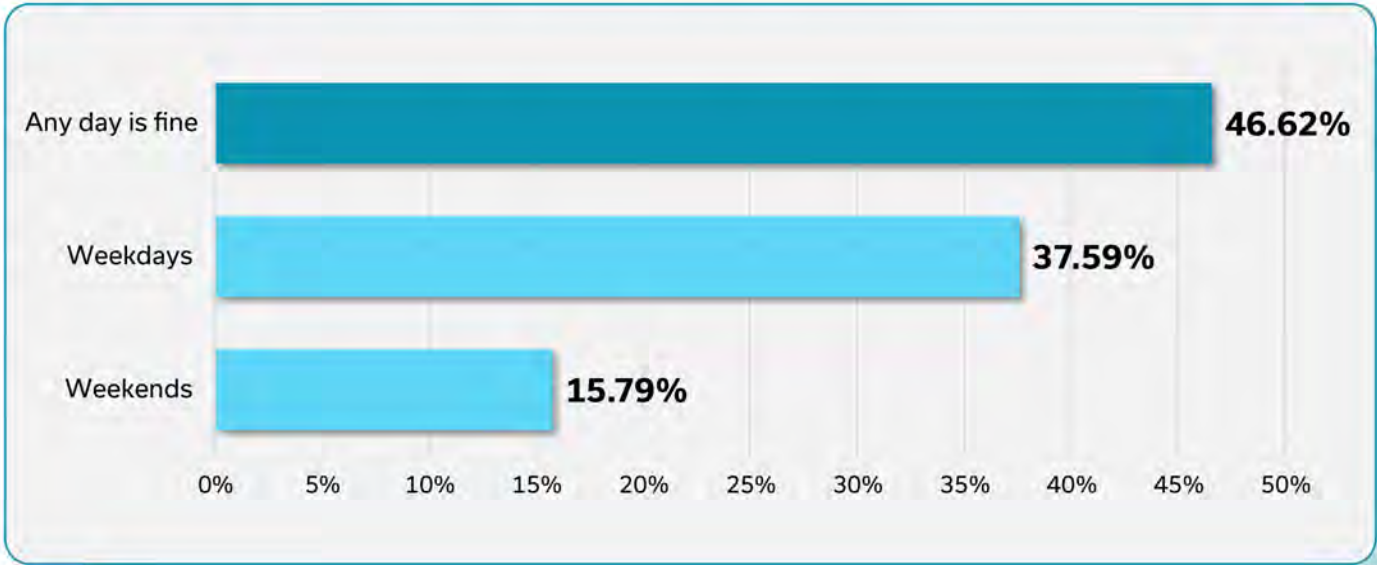


The fourth question asked respondents to indicate the time of day they most often come into downtown. As shown in **Chart 4** below, the most common times for respondents to come downtown were between 9 AM and 11 AM (33%). The next common times were between 11 AM and 1 PM (25%) and 3 PM and 5 PM (25%).



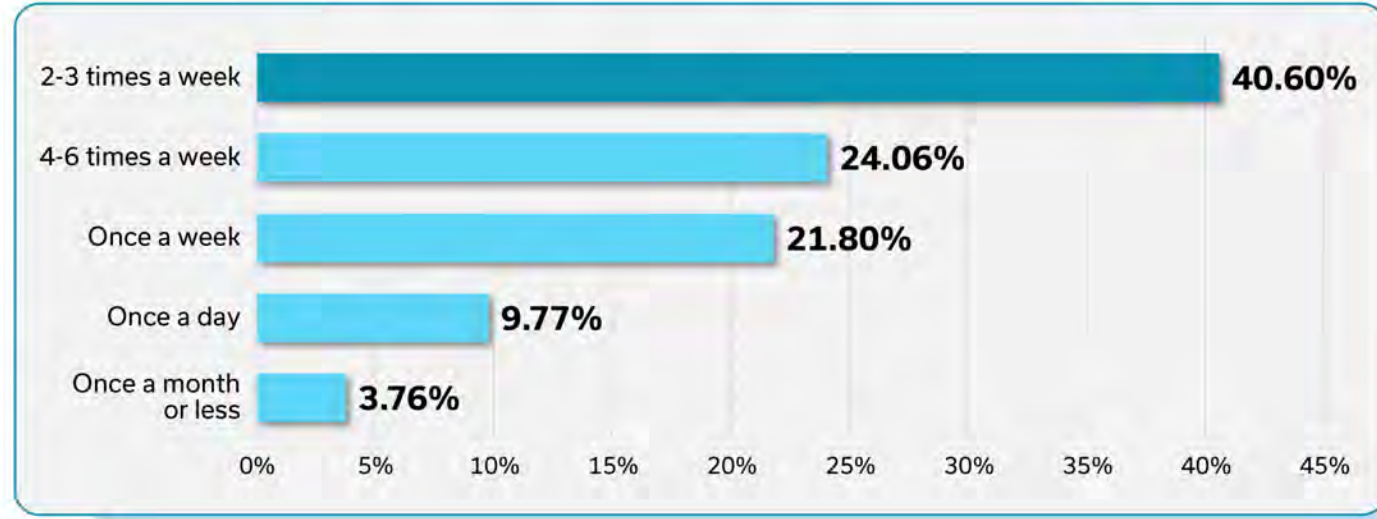
The fifth question asked respondents to select the days of the week they prefer to come into downtown. The majority of respondents said any day is fine, 47% (see **Chart 5** below). Approximately 38% said they prefer to come on a weekday and 16% said they prefer to come on the weekends.

On what days of the week do you prefer to come into downtown?



The sixth question asked how often they come into downtown, (see **Chart 6** below). Most respondents, 41%, indicated they come into downtown 2-3 times a week and 24% said they come 4-6 times a week. Approximately 22% said they come once a week, while 10% said they only come once a day, and 4% said only once a month.

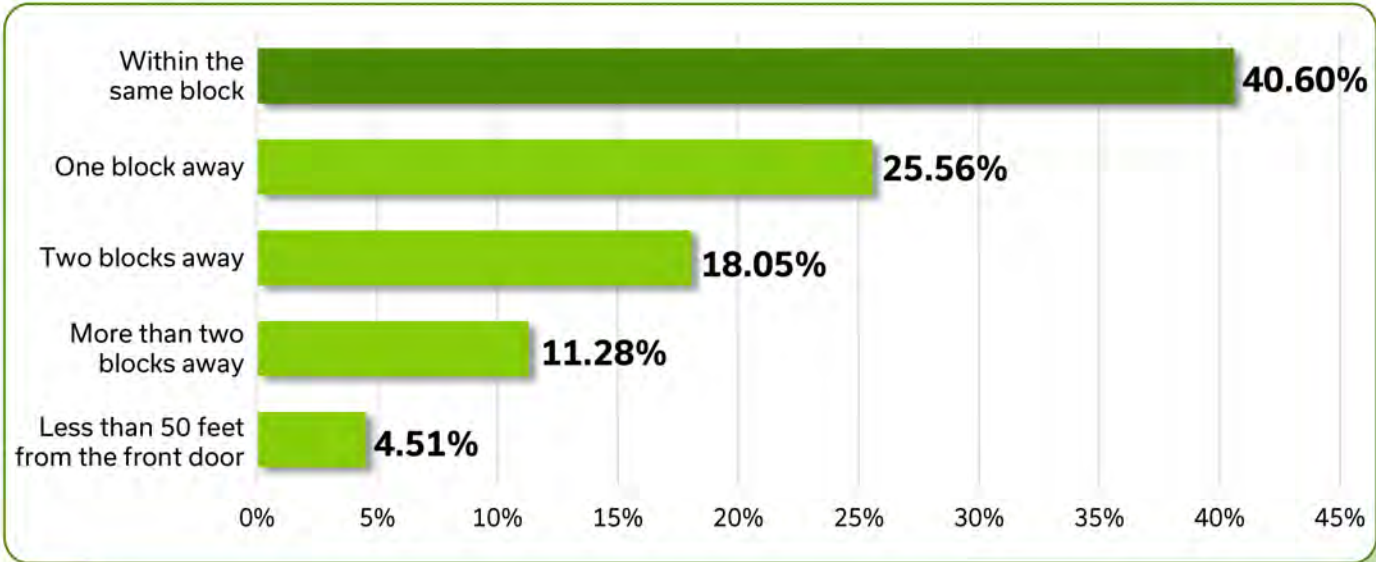
How often do you come into downtown?



Where in Downtown

The seventh question asked respondents how far from their destination are they willing to park (see **Chart 7** below). The majority of respondents (55%) indicated that they would be willing to park a block or two blocks away and walk to their destination.

How far from your destination are you willing to park?



Parking Preferences

The eighth question asked respondents to rate how important the given factors are in choosing a place to park (see **Chart 8** below). The top three factors respondents indicated as most important were:

1. Being able to park as long as you need to;
2. Parking in a well-lit area; and,
3. Being in a parking lot.



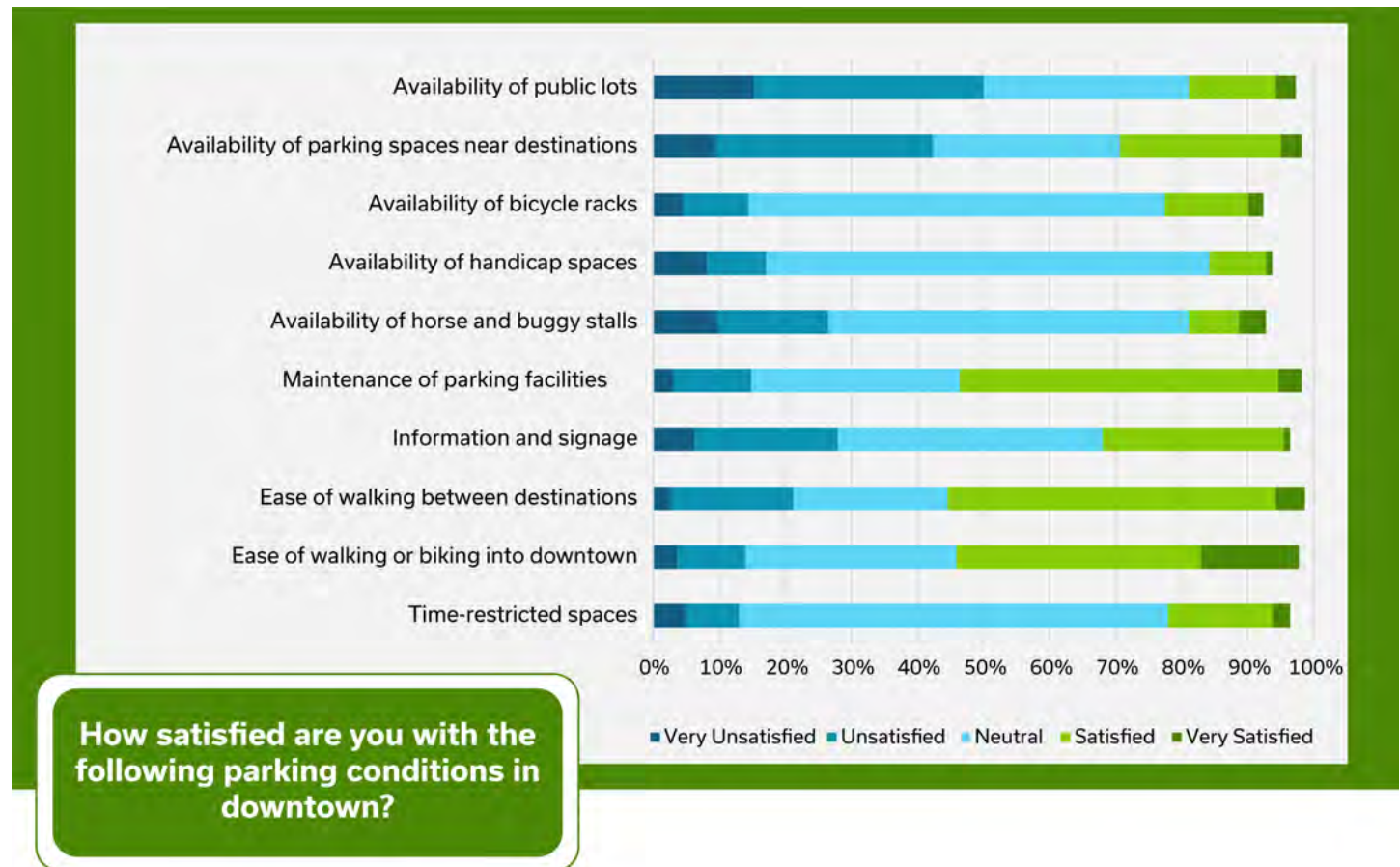
The least important factors when choosing a place to park were:

1. Being able to see their parked car from their destination,
2. Parking in a reserved space for customers near the front door of the business; and,
3. Being on-street.

The ninth question asked respondents to rate their satisfaction with the given parking conditions in downtown (see **Chart 9** below).

The majority of respondents were **satisfied** with:

- The ease of walking or biking into downtown;
- The ease of walking between destinations; and,
- The maintenance of parking facilities.



The majority of respondents were **unsatisfied** with:

- The availability of public lots;
- The availability of parking space near destinations; and,
- Information and signage.

The majority of respondents were **neutral** about:

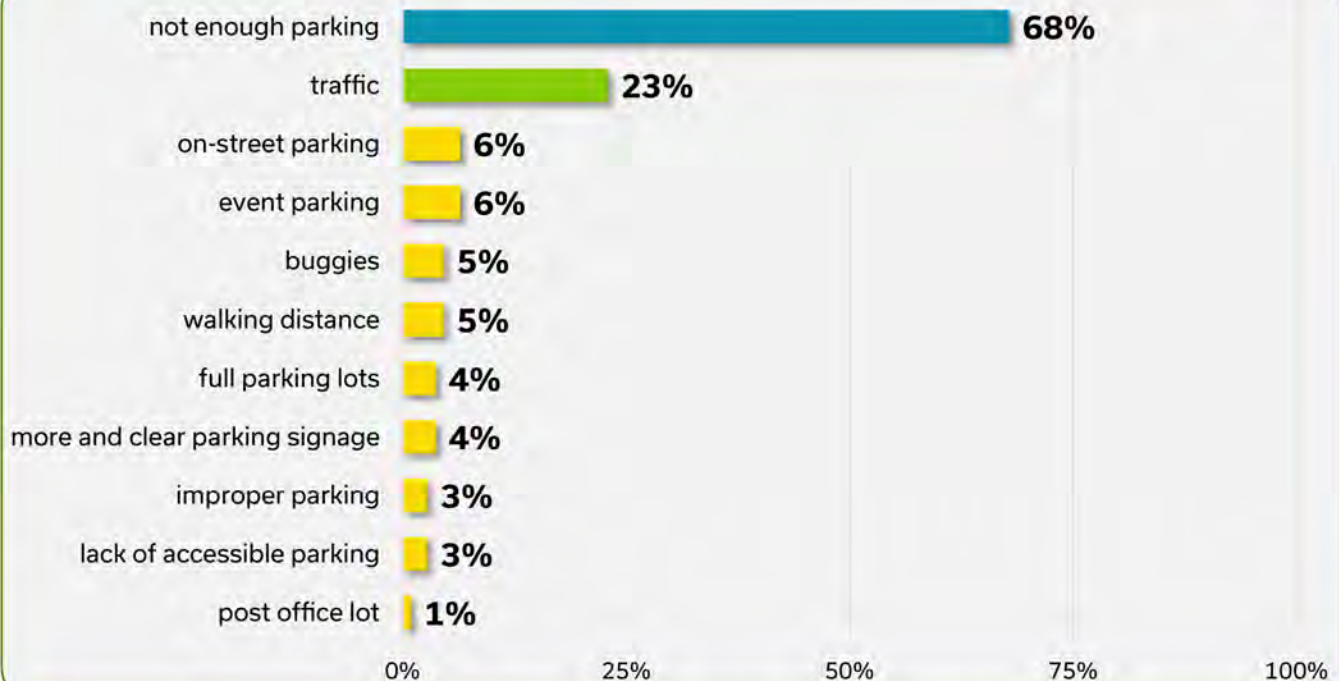
- The amount of time-restricted spaces;
- The availability of bicycle racks;
- The availability of handicap spaces; and,
- The availability of horse and buggy stalls.

Parking Issues

The tenth question asked participants to share what they thought were the major parking issues are in downtown. The common responses are displayed in the word cloud followed by a summary of what participants commonly shared (see **Chart 10** below the word cloud).



What are the major parking issues when trying to park in downtown?



Most Common Issues

- 68% of respondents said there is “**not enough parking**” in downtown.
- 23% of respondents said the “**traffic**” on Warren Street and SR 13 is a problem.

Other Common Issues

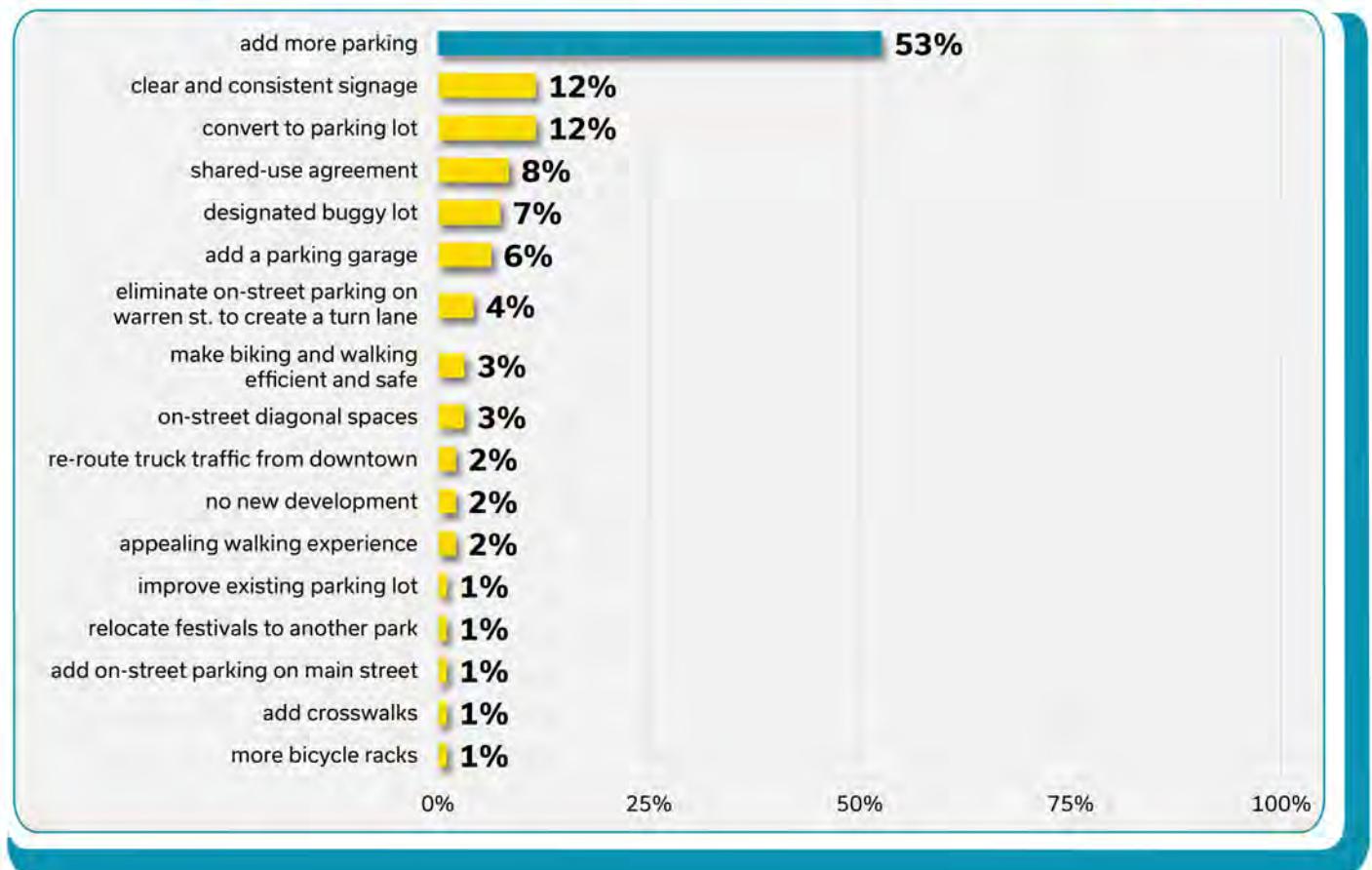
- 6% of respondents said the “**on-street parking**” is an issue because of the traffic and safety of crossing on Warren Street and SR 13.
- 6% of respondents said there is not enough “**event parking**” and have a hard time finding a place to park during festivals and special events.
- 5% of respondents said mixing with “**buggies**” in parking lots can be challenging because of the amount of space that is needed to accommodate for the horse and buggies.
- 5% of respondents said the “**walking distance**” from the parking lots to businesses on Main Street is too far away.
- 4% of respondents said the “**full parking lots**” for the public lot off Warren Street and State Street is challenging to find an open spot during midday.
- 4% of respondents said there needs to be “**more and clear parking signage**” to let people know where to park.
- 3% of respondents said the horse and buggies are “**improper parking**” by using both sides of the hitching post or are out in the street making it difficult at times to navigate around.
- 3% of respondents said there’s a “**lack of accessible parking**” close to businesses main entrances or for event parking for elderly or those with disabilities.
- 1% of respondents said the “**post office lot**” can get busy and is challenging to get in and out.

Parking Improvements

The last question asked participants to share what they thought would be a solution to improve parking in downtown. The common responses are displayed in the word cloud followed by a summary of what participants commonly shared (see **Chart 11** below the word cloud).



What is one solution to improve parking in downtown?



Most Common Solution

- 53% of respondents said the single solution to improve parking is **“add more parking”** in downtown that is public parking.

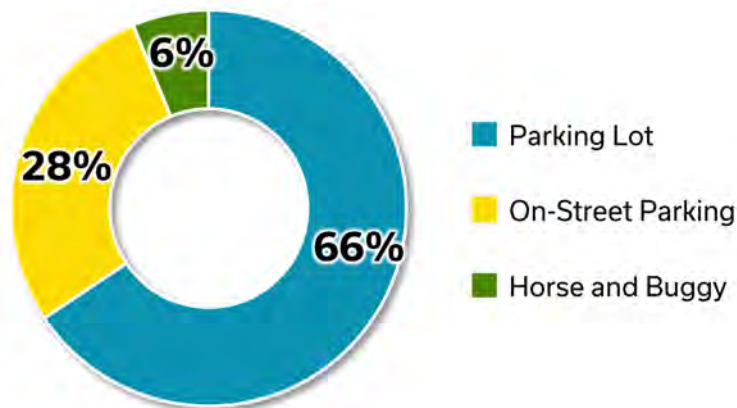
Other Common Solutions

- 12% of respondents said adding **“clear and consistent signage”** will help let people know where they are allowed to park.
- 12% of respondents said explore the feasibility to **“convert to parking lot”** as properties come available for sale.
- 8% of respondents said create a **“shared-use agreement”** with businesses to allow the public to park in their private lots during non-business hours.
- 7% of respondents said adding a **“designated buggy lot”** will increase the parking availability for the Amish.
- 6% of respondents said explore the feasibility to **“add a parking garage.”**
- 4% of respondents said explore the feasibility to **“eliminate on-street parking on Warren Street to create a turn lane”** to improve the traffic flow.
- 3% of respondents said **“make biking and walking efficient and safe.”**
- 3% of respondents said add **“on-street diagonal spaces.”**
- 2% of respondents said explore the feasibility to **“re-route truck traffic from downtown.”**
- 2% of respondents said **“no new development.”**
- 2% of respondents said add a more **“appealing walking experience.”**
- 1% of respondents said **“improve existing parking lot.”**
- 1% of respondents said explore the feasibility to **“relocate festivals to another park.”**
- 1% of respondents said **“add on-street parking on Main Street.”**
- 1% of respondents said **“add crosswalks.”**
- 1% of respondents said add **“more bicycle racks.”**

Map Where You Park

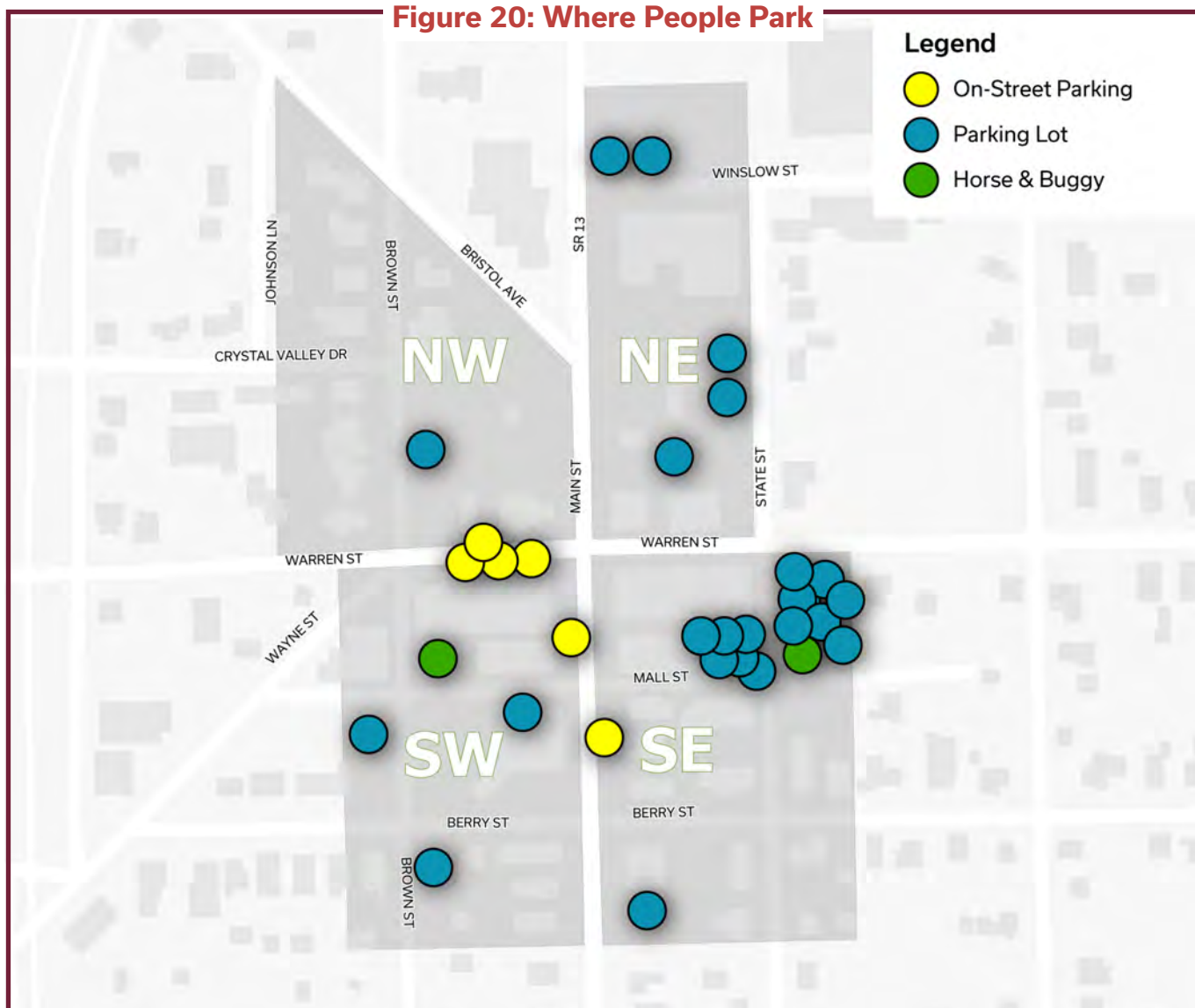
In addition to the input survey was an online mapping activity available on the project website. This activity had individuals place a marker on a map of downtown to indicate where they prefer to park and if they're parking in a lot, on-street, or in an area designated horse and buggies.

There were 32 individuals who participated in the activity. The **Chart** on the right displays the utilization breakdown of the types of parking facilities. **Figure 20** below illustrates where the 32 individuals like to first find a parking space when visiting downtown.



Then, the markers were overlaid on top of the Walk Zones, introduced in the “Parking Demand Analysis Report, to see which zone had the most activity. As shown on **Figure 1**, the SE zone had the highest activity, with 16 people parking in this area and the SW zone was the second highest activity level, with 9 people parking in this area.

Figure 20: Where People Park



Stakeholder Interviews

During the public engagement period in March 2025, MACOG conducted interviews with four downtown business owners that included the Old Hoosier Meats, First State Bank, the Legendary Grind, and the General Store. Business owners were asked a series of questions to know how many employees they employ, the peak operation times of the day, where they have designated parking areas for their employees and customers, if applicable, and lastly, rate how important a series of factors they thought their employees and customers value in choosing where to park.

At the end of the interview, business owners were asked to share the greatest issues they or their employees experience with parking in downtown and the potential improvements to help address their issues. Below is a summary of what the business owners said are the issues they experience, and on the next page is a summary of the potential improvements to benefit the parking experience.

Parking Issues

- The removal of the on-street spaces on Main Street/SR 13 further exacerbates the limited supply of parking in downtown.
- Employees and customers having to share parking in public parking lots.
- Many of the retail businesses have the same peak operation times of the day, which causes a high concentration of multiple users competing to find a parking space.
- Need more horse and buggy parking areas as there are limited designated areas. Additionally, in the designated areas, often times the horse and buggies are parked outside of the given area.
- Speeding traffic on Winslow Street to avoid the main traffic light.
- First State Bank is the primary owner of the private lots around the bank and often times the general public will park in the private lots and stay there for the duration of their trip. This takes away parking for bank employees and its customers.
- Need better enforcement.
- Lack of clear and consistent signage causes confusion for customers to not know where they can park.
- The on-street spaces along the south side of Wayne Street, east of Main Street/SR 13, are not usable because of being close to the through-traffic and the curb is raised too high causing people to have to step up onto the sidewalk or step down onto the street.
- Need to improve the crossings at the intersections along Wayne Street between Brown Street and State Street, and the intersections along Main Street/SR 13 between Winslow Street and Berry Street.
- Improve pedestrian safety trying to cross Main Street/SR 13.
- Need more handicap accessible parking spaces.

Potential Improvements

- Add parking enforcement to ensure proper use of the parking facilities.
- Add clear and consistent signage to let people know where they can park.
- Acquire nearby residential or commercial properties that come up for sale to explore turning the property lot into a parking lot. One area is the location of the former church site off Brown Street.
- Add more buggy parking, where feasible, i.e. in the public parking lot off State Street and near the Public Library.
- Discourage traffic from using Winslow Street as a cut-thru to bypass the main traffic light. One solution could be adding a stop sign at the State Street intersection.
- Explore the feasibility of adding a Hawk Signal on SR 13.
- Create a public-private partnership to have a parking permit system.
- Add more handicap parking spaces near retail businesses.
- Explore the feasibility to create angle parking on Brown Street.



4. Parking Demand

Downtown Middlebury has a mix of land uses, offers a walkable street grid, and has the ability to encourage people to park once and not drive to each destination.

In order to model future growth impacts on parking in downtown, MACOG further defined the study area into walk zones. This allowed MACOG to conduct a detailed parking demand analysis to closely portray where people are parking and the likely businesses they are visiting. This approach is based on national standards and practices while using observed behaviors and local data to better account for downtown Middlebury's parking patterns. This analysis provides the Town the current and future parking demands that helped guide the Steering Committee to identify the potential strategies.

Assessment of Parking Conditions

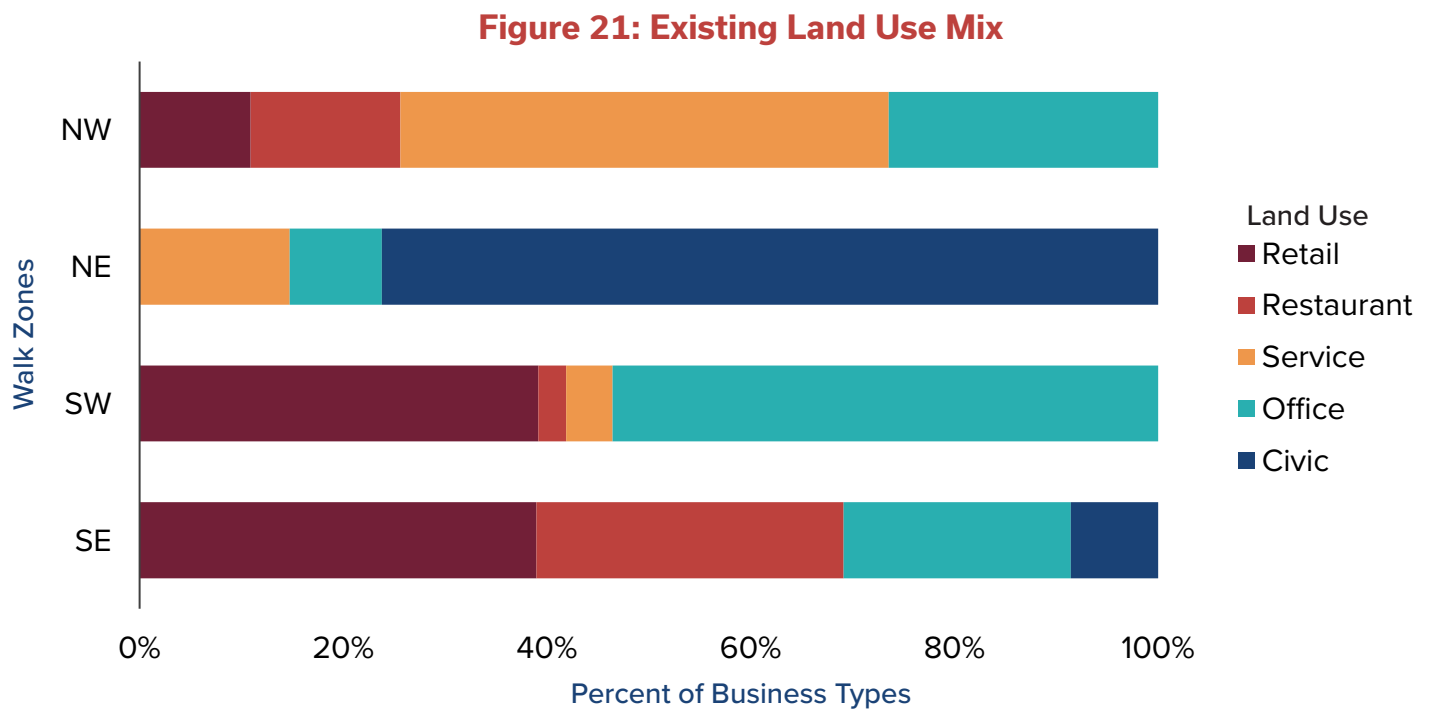
TRADITIONAL DEMAND MODELS

Traditionally, land use planners and civil engineers have utilized the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Parking Generation Manual peak parking demand rates to determine a development’s demand on parking. ITE rates are derived from several case studies around the nation and provide an analysis based on the size of development in an urban and suburban context and multiples it with a standard peak parking rate to generate the maximum number of spaces each use or building needs.

However, ITE rates and methodologies often fail to capture the actual parking behavior or demand and assumes that spaces are utilized at a constant rate throughout the day and calculates a peak demand rate for the worst-case scenario. The Michiana Area Council of Governments (MACOG) interviewed downtown businesses to gauge their needs, peak operations, and the location their employees and customers are likely parking. The survey indicated that downtown businesses have different peak demands throughout the day. Therefore, analyzing Middlebury’s parking system using only ITE rates and methodologies at the block level for the entire study area is not an efficient way to understand the actual parking behavior between the existing supply and demand of parking as calculations would show Middlebury would need to build an “oversupply” of parking spaces. This would likely cause available land for prime real estate development to be sacrificed for a surface lot to meet the calculated demand on parking, which would not reflect the Town’s vision and goals for downtown Middlebury of being a vibrant, walkable destination.

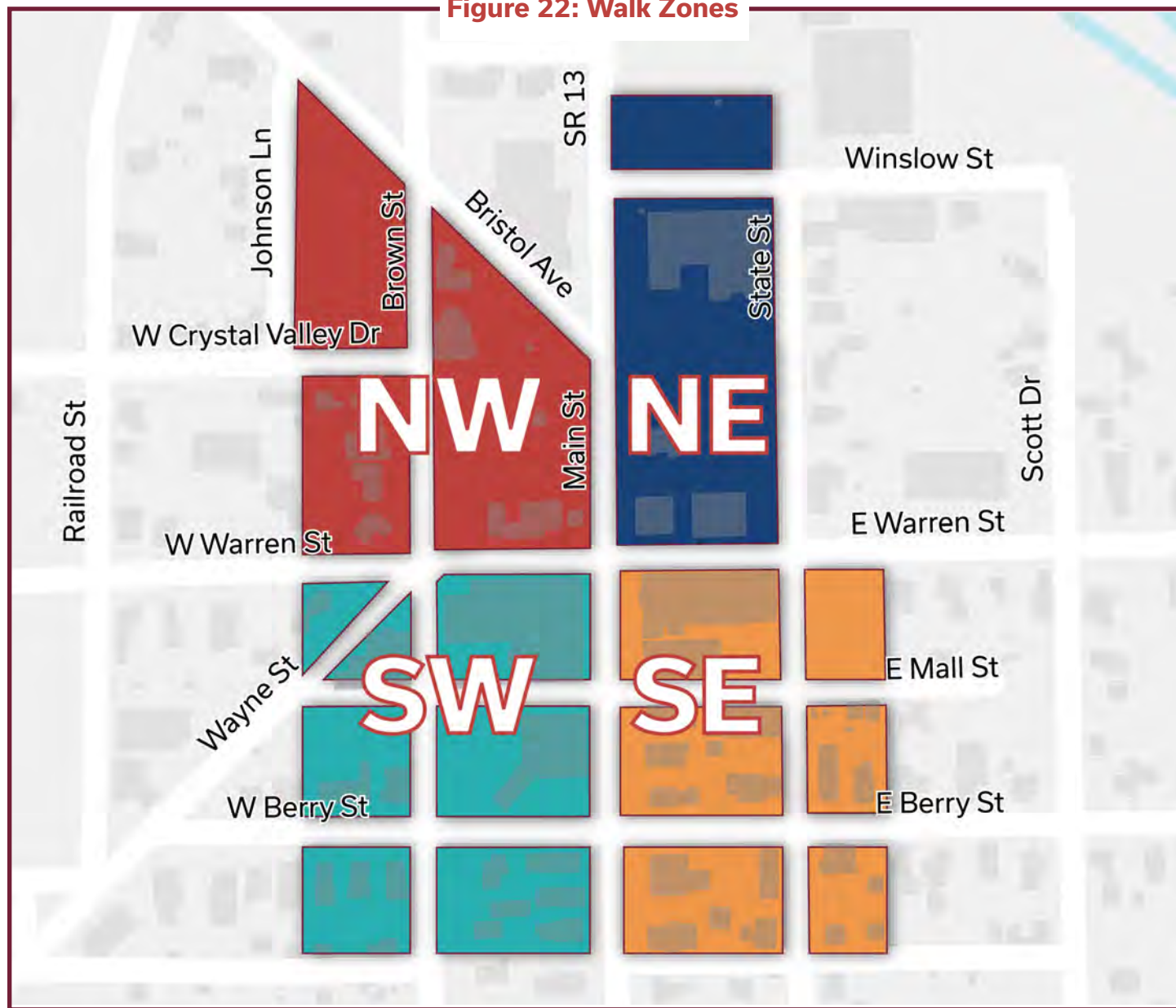
WALK ZONE ANALYSIS

To accurately model downtown Middlebury’s parking behavior, MACOG divided the study area into four walk zones. These zones are based on major activity centers along Warren Street and SR 13/Main Street, providing a more precise way to analyze where people park and where they walk. **Figure 21** below summarizes the existing land use mix generating the demand for parking in each of the four walk zones.



These four walk zones provide a more accurate portrayal of where people are parking and the likely businesses they are walking to. Contrary to the ITE methodology of generating a peak demand rate by the individual use, MACOG generated demand rates by the walk zones to provide an observed peak rate. This allowed MACOG to understand the current and future parking needs identified in the next section of this report, and will later be used to provide strategic recommendations per zone rather than general strategies for the entire study area. **Figure 22** below displays the four walk zones.

Figure 22: Walk Zones



To better understand the current parking situation, MACOG observed and analyzed both public and private parking locations, adjusting the existing supply to reflect a practical capacity of 85%. Industry standards indicate that parking facilities are optimally utilized when 85% of spaces are occupied. When occupancy exceeds this threshold, motorists often struggle to find available parking, leading to longer search times and increased circulation. This can also contribute to higher congestion levels, longer travel times, and potential safety concerns.

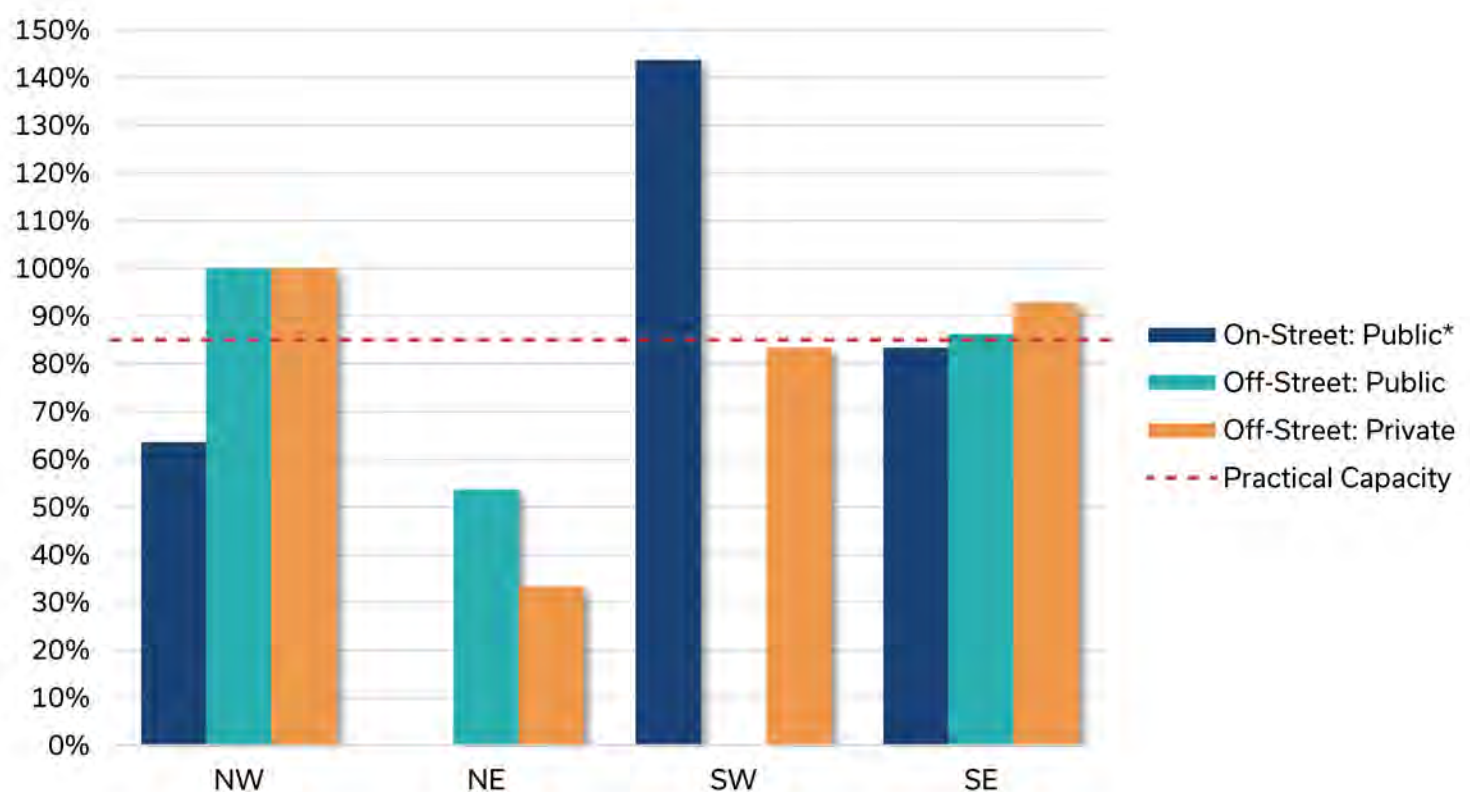
It's important to note that the Town has been made aware from the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) that in the near future, SR 13/Main St. is planned to be reconstructed and that the 19 available on-street parking spaces between Winslow St. and Berry St. will be removed.

Therefore, MACOG removed the 19 on-street spaces from the parking demand analysis. The location and quantities of the on-street spaces that are being removed on SR 13/Main St. include:

- 5 spaces in the NE zone next to East Park;
- 10 spaces in the SW zone next to Varns & Hoover Hardware Store, Gohn Brothers, Village Inn restaurant, and First State Bank; and,
- 4 spaces in the SE zone next to the Global Tax & Accounting office and the Graber Law Firm, PC office.

This will help the Town have an understanding of what zones are generating the most activity and where parking is likely needed to support that demand. This, in turn, will aid in identifying targeted parking management strategies for these zones. **Figure 23** below illustrates the observed parking demand by walk zone along with each zone's practical capacity.

Figure 23: Observed Parking Demand by Walk Zone



**Removes the on-street parking on SR 13/Main St.*

Based on the data collected, the NW, SW, and SE zones are either over or close to their practical capacities.

Within these three zones, here is a breakdown of where the challenges are.

- In the NW zone, the public lot on the east side of Brown Street next to East Memorial Park, is at 100 percent occupancy and the on-street spaces on the west side of Brown Street is at 64% occupancy. The on-street spaces on the north side of Warren Street is at 100% occupancy.
- In the SW zone, the on-street spaces on Warren Street and Main Street are at 100 percent occupancy, and the on-street spaces on Berry Street is at 75% occupancy. The private lots owned by First State Bank is at 83% occupancy.

- In the SE zone, the public lot at the corner of Warren Street and State Street is at 91% occupancy and the on-street spaces had 67% occupancy. The private lot owned by the Legacy Furniture & the Legendary Grind is at 93% occupancy.

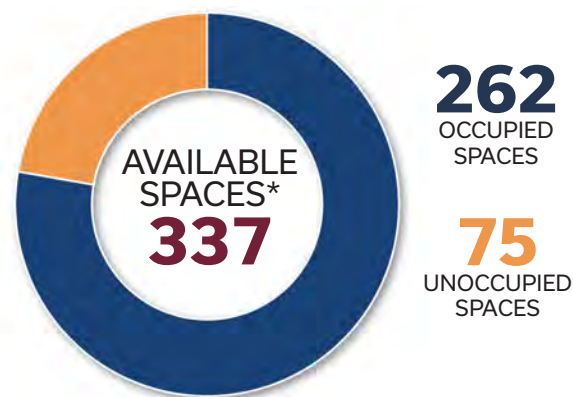
With many on-street and off-street spaces over or near the 85% practical capacity limit in these three zones, very few spots are left. This creates the perception that there is no parking available, causing customers to search longer and drive farther to find a space.

From MACOG’s observations, it’s estimated that the total number of available spaces in the four walk zones is 337 spaces, with 262 spaces observed to be occupied, leaving a total of 75 unoccupied spaces, see **Figure 24**. The unoccupied spaces can be translated as an estimated parking surplus.

The next section summarizes the parking demand analysis to identify the current observed situation and examined future scenarios to see what will happen to the current situation if demand continues to grow.

For this analysis, MACOG adjusted the existing parking supply by 85% for each zone to reflect its practical capacity, see **Table 3** below. Although the data analysis is showing that there is available parking in each of the zones, a total estimated surplus of 75 empty spaces. While 75 empty spaces might sound like a lot, they can be hard to find. This highlights the concept of “practical capacity” thus presenting perceived deficiencies.

Figure 24: Total Observed Demand



**Removes the on-street parking on SR 13/Main St.*

Table 3: Observed Parking Demand

Walk Zone	Available Capacity*	Practical Capacity	Occupied Spaces	Percent Occupied	Percent Occupied - Practical Capacity	Surplus/ Deficit
NW	63	54	47	75%	88%	16
NE	85	72	45	53%	62%	40
SW	106	90	98	92%	109%	8
SE	83	71	72	87%	102%	11
Total	337	286	262	78%	91%	75

**Removes the on-street parking on SR 13/Main St.*

Parking Demand Analysis

Current Parking Demand

To establish the current parking demand of what is actually occurring in downtown today, MACOG obtained the buildings' square footage and the land use classification in each of the walk zones, and used the current supply to calculate a zone's total building area, a parking supply rate, an observed demand rate, and the number of spaces needed to support the peak demands, see **Table 4** below.

Table 4: Current Parking Demand

Walk Zone	Available Capacity*	Occupied Spaces	Total Building Area (Sq. Ft.)**	Parking Supply Rate	Observed Peak Demand Rate	Calculated Spaces Needed	Percent Spaces Needed	Surplus/Deficit
NW	63	47	8,803	7.16	5.34	47	75%	16
NE	85	45	27,728	3.07	1.62	45	53%	40
SW	106	98	70,048	1.51	1.40	98	92%	8
SE	83	72	49,270	1.68	1.46	72	87%	11
Total	337	262	155,849	2.16	1.68	262	78%	75

*Removed the on-street parking on SR 13/Main St.

**Excluded any residential properties.

MACOG calculated the overall parking supply rate by dividing the 337 available spaces from the total building area, multiplied it by 1,000 square feet, to estimate that approximately 2.16 parking spaces are provided per 1,000 square feet of the uses in downtown. Next, MACOG calculated the observed peak demand rate by dividing the 262 occupied spaces from the total building area, multiplied it by 1,000 square feet, to estimate that approximately 1.68 parking spaces are demanded per 1,000 square feet of the uses in downtown. Next, MACOG calculated a zone's deficiency to know how many spaces are needed to support the demand rate by multiplying the total building area by the 1.68 observed peak demand rate to estimate that approximately 262 are needed to support the current demand, leaving a total surplus of 75 spaces.

The study revealed that during peak hours, the NW, SW, and SE zones are at or over the practical capacity. In particular, the SE zone sees the highest demand, given the existing mixture of retail and restaurants in this zone.

Parking Demand Scenarios

Now that we have an understanding of the current parking situation in downtown, if the Town didn't have these deficiencies, MACOG analyzed future scenarios to assess the potential impacts on the current demand.

The first scenario is a comparison to the data summarized in **Table 3**, using the engineering standards from the ITE Parking Generation Manual. The ITE rates are derived from several case studies around the nation and provide an analysis based on the size of development in an urban and suburban context and multiples it with a standard peak parking rate to generate the maximum

number of spaces each use or building needs. **Table 5** below summarizes what the ITE demand rates are for each zone based on the current mix of land uses in downtown.

Table 5: Current Parking Demand Based on ITE Demand Rates

Walk Zone	Available Capacity*	Total Building Area (Sq. Ft.)**	Parking Supply Rate	ITE Demand Rate	Calculated Spaces Needed	Percent Spaces Needed	Surplus/Deficit
NW	63	8,803	7.16	3.75	33	52%	30
NE	85	27,728	3.25	3.21	89	105%	-4
SW	106	70,048	1.66	2.78	195	184%	-89
SE	83	49,270	1.77	3.69	182	219%	-99
Total	337	155,849	2.28	3.20	499	148%	-162

*Removed the on-street parking on SR 13/Main St.

**Excluded any residential properties.

This scenario shows that under ITE standards, the current supply of parking is insufficient. The Town would need to add 499 spaces to meet the ITE-projected demand, resulting in a deficiency of 162 spaces.

Given the current conditions and limited land for new development, MACOG developed three future redevelopment scenarios based on a continuation of the current mix of land uses. We projected low, medium, and high growth scenarios based on a likely percentage of new activity.

- **Low Redevelopment (adding 20,000 sq. ft.):** A low activity level would likely add a 10 percent increase to the parking demand.
- **Medium Redevelopment (adding 35,000 sq. ft.):** A medium activity level would likely add a 20 percent increase to the parking demand.
- **High Redevelopment (adding 50,000 sq. ft.):** A high activity level would likely add a 30 percent increase to the parking demand.

The anticipated impacts from the three redevelopment scenarios are summarized in **Table 6** and **Figure 25** on the next page.

Table 6 summarizes the added demands and the surpluses or deficiencies for the established redevelopment scenarios.

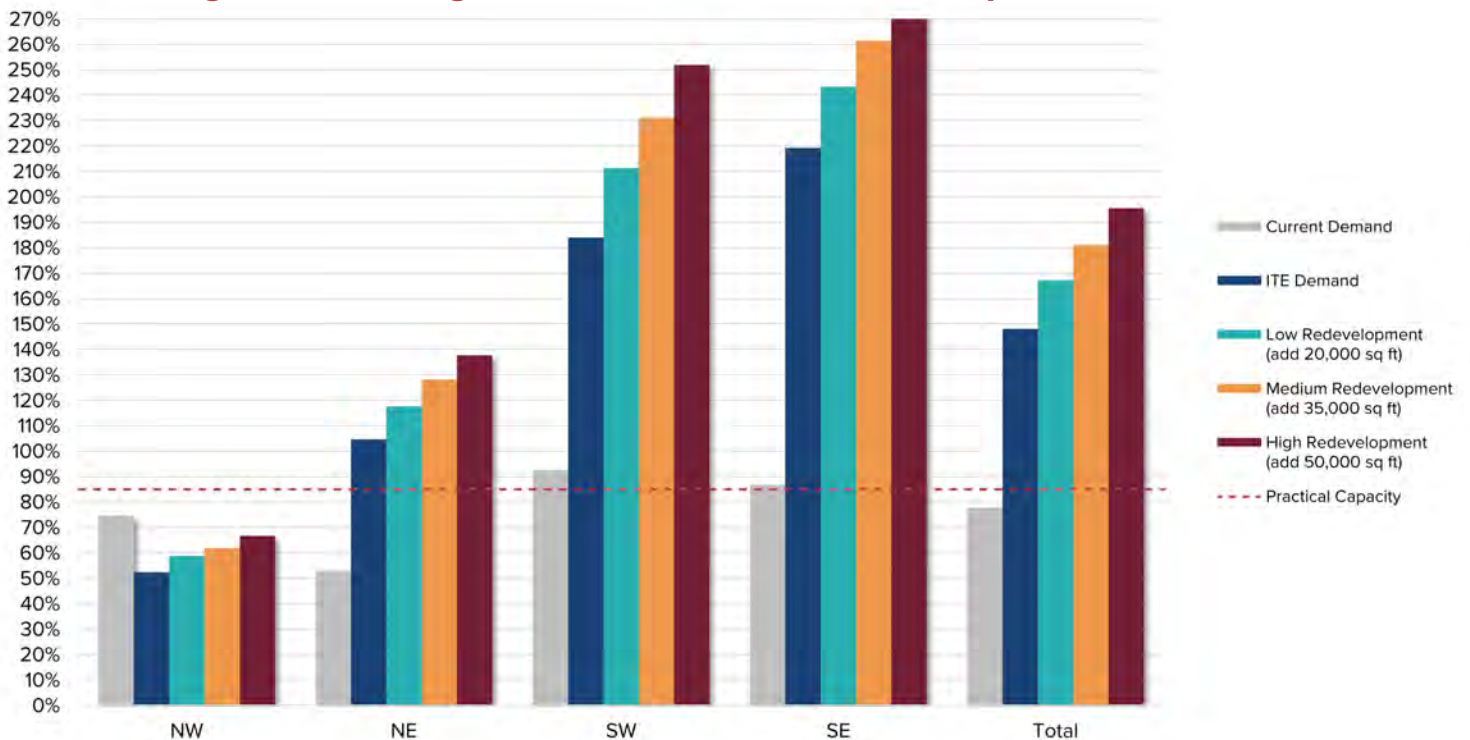
The three redevelopment scenarios illustrate that adding more buildings with a similar mix of land uses will only exacerbate existing deficiencies.

Table 6: Future Growth Scenarios

Scenario	Total Building Area (Sq. Ft.)	Parking Supply (Available Capacity)	Calculated Spaces Needed	Added Demand	Percent Occupied	Surplus/Deficit
Current (Observed Peak Demand)	155,849	337	262	0	78%	75
Current (ITE Demand)	155,849	337	499	237	148%	-162
Low Redevelopment (adds 20,000 sq. ft.)	155,849	337	563	64	167%	-226
Medium Redevelopment (adds 35,000 sq. ft.)	155,849	337	610	47	181%	-273
High Redevelopment (adds 50,000 sq. ft.)	155,849	337	659	49	196%	-322

MACOG does not recommend building the full amount of spaces shown in **Table 6**. Instead, we recommend that the Town focus on targeted parking additions, particularly in the SE zone. As shown in **Figure 25**, this zone has the greatest need, largely due to its concentration of restaurants, which generate the highest parking demand.

Figure 25: Parking Demand Based on the Redevelopment Scenarios





5. Parking Strategies

The Downtown Middlebury Parking Study aims to assist the Town in achieving several goals to enhance the parking experience and management. These goals include:

- 1. Create a downtown environment that fosters growth;**
- 2. Support existing and future businesses;**
- 3. Benefits residents and visitors; and,**
- 4. Enhance the experience and safety for all users.**

To improve parking management and the experiences of users, the Town and local businesses must establish a public-private partnership, as many of the proposed strategies will require programmatic and policy changes.

Public engagement was crucial throughout the process to gain a better understanding of the diverse needs and experiences related to downtown parking. Efforts included a public input survey, an online “Map Where You Park” activity, and stakeholder interviews. The results of these engagement efforts were presented to the

Steering Committee in May 2025 and informed the recommendations outlined in this section of the final report.

These strategies are organized into seven main themes.

- **Add New Parking Lots**
- **Improve Pedestrian Safety**
- **Shared Parking Agreements**
- **Clear & Consistent Signage**
- **Policy Changes**
- **Promotion & Marketing**
- **Alternative Transportation Solutions**

This section of the Final Report outlines the themes and their relevance in enhancing parking management and user experiences.

Add New Parking Lots

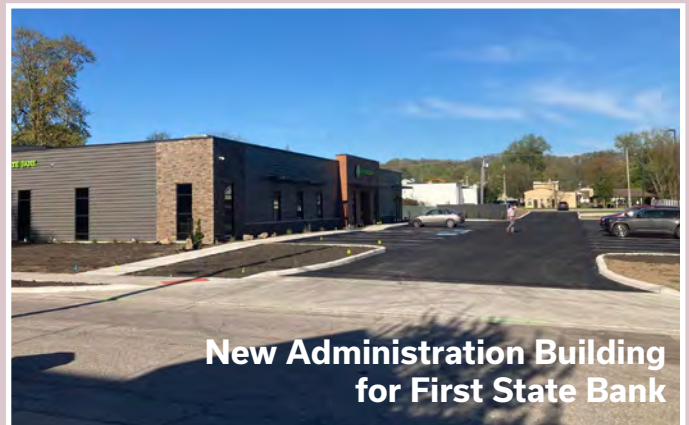
The most direct way to increase parking is by adding new parking lots. However, the challenge in downtown is there are limited to no properties available for redevelopment. Currently, there are no vacant or undeveloped land, and has two public parks on each side of SR 13/Main Street in the heart of downtown. Additionally, in the near future, INDOT will be rehabbing SR 13 and removing the 19 on-street parking spaces. INDOT had previously removed several spaces in front of the businesses on the east side of SR 13. The removal of the remaining spaces will continue to exacerbate the need for more parking.

One possible solution the Town can explore is acquiring strategically located properties—either within or on the edge of the downtown—through the real estate sale process.

In addition to the general real estate sale process, is the tax sale process. By working with local partners, the Town can identify properties that are being sold for unpaid taxes. This approach provides a clear path to acquiring underutilized land and repurposing it for public use. The goal is to develop these new lots to offer a long-term solution that expands the town's parking inventory.



Public Parking Lot Next to East Memorial Park



New Administration Building for First State Bank

Improve Pedestrian Safety

Addressing pedestrian safety is a key strategy for improving the overall parking experience. When residents feel safe walking, they are more likely to park in a less-crowded lot and walk a short distance to their destination. This can help ease the strain on high-demand parking areas by encouraging the use of parking lots in another block and reduce traffic congestion. There are several ways the Town can improve the safety for pedestrians. One way is to improve crosswalks, especially across major roads like SR 13/Main Street and Warren Street. The following are ways to improve the safety for pedestrians.

- Adding high-visibility crosswalk markings and pavement markings.
- Adding pedestrian-activated flashing beacons, “in-street” crossing signs, or yield signs.
- Ensuring clear sight lines for both drivers and pedestrians.
- Adding ADA accessible curb ramps.
- Enhancing the existing sidewalks.



Examples of High-Visible Crosswalks



Shared Parking Agreements

Not every parking space needs to be owned by the Town. A shared parking agreement allows a business, organization, or even a church with a large parking lot to let the public use their spaces during off-hours, like evenings or weekends. This strategy is cost-effective because it doesn't require new construction. Instead, it maximizes the use of existing parking facilities and could support users who need to park and stay for more than two hours.

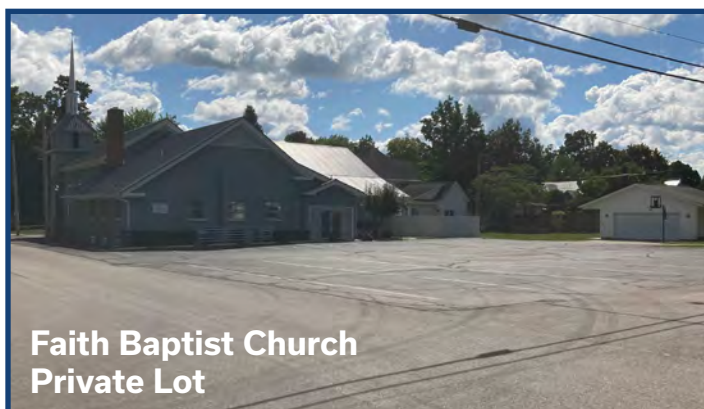
First State Bank already has this type of a strategy in place, with signs stating parking in their lots is open to the public outside of business hours. However, the challenge they're experiencing is the general public are parking in spaces reserved for their customers by the main entrances, and walking to visit other nearby businesses. While First State Bank wants to maintain being a supportive partner to the Town and other businesses to help offset or relieve some of the demand for parking, this strategy does require a level of enforcement to ensure users are using the facilities accordingly.



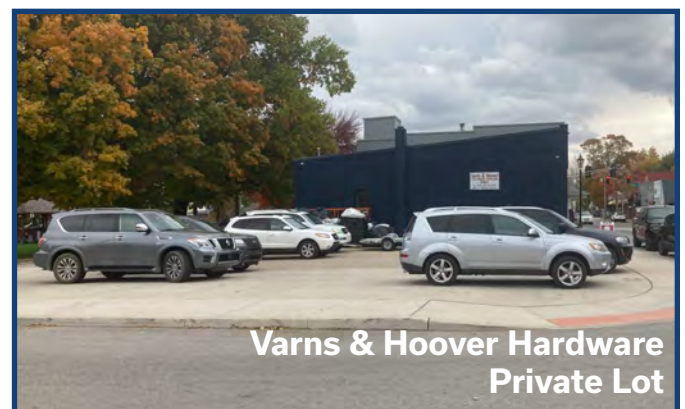
**First Mennonite Church
Private Lot**



**First State Bank
Private Lot**



**Faith Baptist Church
Private Lot**



**Varns & Hoover Hardware
Private Lot**

Clear & Consistent Signage & Markings

Parking frustration often comes from a lack of information. Clear and consistent signage and pavement markings helps drivers quickly find available spots, know where parking is allowed, and understand if there are restrictions. This includes:

- Directional signs pointing to parking lots from main roads.
- Easy-to-read signs at lot entrances and on-street that state parking restrictions, such as time limits, permit requirements, or tow-away zones.
- Pavement markings to ensure parking spaces are clearly defined, both in lots and on the street. This helps maximize the number of cars that can fit and prevents drivers from parking in prohibited areas. Having clearly marked on-street spaces helps patrons to know where they can park.

Currently, the challenge for many of the downtown businesses is they don't have designated parking lots or on-street spaces and have to compete for parking with the general public. An additional challenge, for example near Old Hoosier Meats, is the business owner has shared that patrons can park on Brown Street next to his business; however, it is not signed or does not have pavement markings and customers end up parking further away because they are not aware they are allowed to park there.



While there are public parking areas available downtown, currently, only the lot at the corner of Warren Street and State Street is signed as a public parking lot. All the other public parking lots are not signed leaving a level of confusion if patrons are allowed to park there. It is recommended that the Town install parking signs at all of the other public parking lots using the universal “P” symbol for users to easily and clearly signify that its a public lot.

MIDDLEBURY DIRECTIONAL & PUBLIC PARKING SIGNS



Policy Changes

ENFORCEMENT

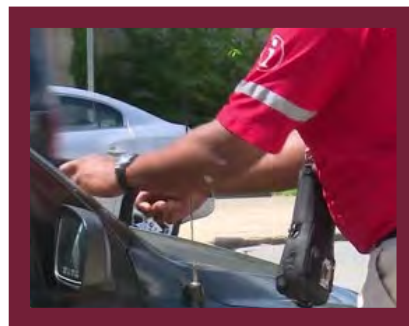
A key component of an efficient parking system is enforcement of the parking regulations. Consistent and fair enforcement of restrictions ensures that people respect the policies and not park in a space where they are not authorized. This can be done through a parking attendant or automated systems. One automated system is an “electronic chalking” system that documents or scans license plate information by capturing an image and digital time-stamp. When the time expires from a particular image, the officer can return to that parked vehicle to efficiently monitor its status. Currently, the Town does not have a designated staff person to enforce parking nor are there restrictions to enforce.

TIMED-RESTRICTIONS

While on-street parking in the four main blocks of downtown was observed to be in high demand, the majority of the public lots were also seen as a high demand. Each parking facility observes the same dynamic-high competition between customers, business owners and employees. Each group wants the convenience of parking either in front of the business or in the immediate adjacent parking lot. In terms of the public parking lots, while they are indeed available for public use, none of the public lots have a time restriction. The challenge is downtown employees have longer term needs and occupy their space the entire duration, which does not induce turnover to make spaces available for incoming customers. It is suggested then to consider turning the high demand public lots into timed-restricted lots such as 2 hours to encourage higher turnover, especially during peak periods. This will discourage long-term users to leave these prime spaces available for customers. To better accommodate employees, it is recommended to partner with churches located a couple of blocks away that are underutilized, for long-term employee parking and implement the shared-use agreement strategy. These peripheral lots could have no time restriction to allow employees to remain there during work hours.

PERMIT SYSTEM

In addition to designating certain lots as employee parking, the Town and businesses could partner to establish a “Downtown Employee Parking” permit system. The permit system would be managed by the Town but administered by the businesses. Participation would be voluntarily and free for employees to park in the designated areas. However, employees would need to register their vehicle to reduce inappropriate use from unauthorized vehicles. Employers could also offer incentives for employees to choose to bike or walk. A permit system is a great way to manage long-term parking, particularly for residents or employees who need all-day access, while keeping prime spots open for customers.



Promotion & Marketing

A great parking plan is useless if no one knows about it. Promotion and marketing are key to getting the word out. You can create a simple parking map to show the location of the lots, on-street spaces, bicycle racks, and horse and buggy parking. This map can be posted online, in kiosks, or in businesses. The Town does have an information display case, as shown in the image on the right, that has a map of downtown highlighting the public parking lot. However, this map could be improved by marking all of the other public parking lots and the other noted parking facilities, and adding a key noting any restrictions, if applicable. The Town is also looking into adding public parking markings in Google Maps.



To help educate the public on parking options or explain the restrictions, the Town can use social media, or write articles in the newsletter and the inMiddlebury Magazine. Additional promotional materials may include a parking brochure, adding a section on the Town's website, or create a display of real-time availability either by signage or mobile phone application.

In addition to promoting and marketing the locations of parking areas, the Town could add “Walk Your Town” signs, as highlighted below. These types of signs let pedestrians know how far away (in minutes) they are from their destination. This encourages them to choose parking that is more than a block away from their destination.

EXAMPLES OF PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS

"Walk Your Town" Signs

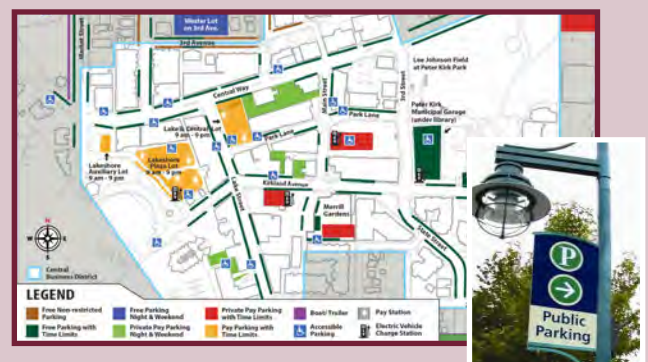
- Affordable, easy to read, and includes an interactive app.
- Pedestrian scale signs navigating from parking location to destination.



PARKING MAP

Kirkland, WA

- Clear and readable map.
- Light post signage directs motorists to parking locations.
- Mobile application to pay for parking.



Alternative Transportation Solutions

In a small town, you can think beyond using a vehicle to make your shorter trips. Alternative transportation can reduce the number of vehicles needing a space, which helps reduce the demand for parking.

BICYCLE PARKING

Currently there are designated bicycle parking provided in each of the four main blocks downtown. The specific locations of the racks are displayed in **Figure 2** on page 10.



HORSE AND BUGGY PARKING

Offering more designated horse and buggy parking area, especially on the east side could address current deficiencies in buggy parking in downtown. One challenge is it's difficult to navigate horse and buggies through the southwest portion of downtown, around First State Bank, because of Brown Street being a one-way street. Another challenge is the hitch posts parking areas causes the horse and buggies to stick out either in the roadways or in the parking spaces, which causes a safety concern.



GOLF CART ZONES

As golf carts become more popular, you can establish specific golf cart parking zones or charging stations to encourage their use for short trips, freeing up regular car spots.





TOWN OF MIDDLEBURY DOWNTOWN PARKING STUDY

Michiana Area Council of Governments

227 W. Jefferson Blvd.
County-City Building, Room 1120
South Bend, IN 46601