

POULSBO DOWNTOWN PARKING STUDY

ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING 2

JULY 28, 2023

Meeting Attendees:

Becky Erickson, Mayor

Ray Stevens, Planning Commission

Mark Kipps, Planning Commission

Jerry Block, Planning Commission

Gary McVey, Planning Commission

Britt Livdahl, City Council

Ed Stern, City Council

Sandi Kolbeins, The Loft (Restaurant)

Kristin Jagodzinski, Flicka (Retail Shop)

Tasha Zetty, RE/MAX

Paul Anunson, Sons of Norway (Non-Profit)

Mike Brown, Landowner

Diane Lenius, City of Poulsbo

Heather Wright, City of Poulsbo

Michael Bateman, City of Poulsbo

Josh Ranes, City of Poulsbo

Nikole Coleman, City of Poulsbo

April Zieman, City of Poulsbo

Drew Willsey, Consultant Team

Mallory Baker, Consultant Team

Renata Langis, Consultant Team

Meeting Objectives:

1. Review the project scope, schedule, and core objectives.
2. Summarize results of the existing conditions analysis and discuss results.
3. Share core themes of community survey responses and discuss responses.
4. Questions and comments
5. Next steps

Meeting Minutes

Meeting began at 2:05 pm PDT. Mallory Baker reviewed the project scope, schedule, and core objectives. Drew Willsey gave a presentation summarizing existing conditions. A group discussion on data collection and analysis followed the existing conditions summary. Mallory Baker continued the presentation, summarizing community survey responses, followed by a group discussion of the responses. Mallory Baker shared the draft vision and guiding principles for parking in Poulsbo, and discussed next steps for the project.

Questions and Comments About Presentation Slides (included as attachment):

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Question: One of the conclusions from the previous parking studies was that Poulsbo does not have a parking problem, it has an enforcement problem. Based on the presentation you've shared, it seems like that is not the case. Can you share your thoughts on that conclusion?

Response (Mallory Baker): The length of stay analysis shows that downtown Poulsbo has healthy turnover rates. While enforcement can help mitigate parking demand, other tools can be more useful, including wayfinding and signage, communication, and more options for seniors and persons with disabilities. Also, shared parking in private lots can be implemented to increase use of those facilities and help mitigate parking demand. Both Mallory Baker and Drew Willsey agreed that the parking issues cannot be addressed through enforcement alone.

Comment: Kitsap bus route 33 recently increased in headways from 30 minutes to 1 hour. It's also recovering from the pandemic, a difficult three-year period in which transit ridership decreased significantly and still has not recovered.

Response (Mallory Baker): We realize that transit is not a feasible option for getting to downtown, and must plan for and accommodate vehicle trips to downtown, as well as other modes.

Question: The plan should be considering not only current demand but also future demand as the community grows. 90% occupancy indicates that many people are circling looking for a parking space. Also, it does not reflect the demand that is not observed due to people who did not try looking for a space, deterred by limited availability.

Comment: It would be nice to have alternative gathering spaces with cafes and shopping that were located outside of downtown to reduce trips to the downtown core and reduce parking demand and congestion. I think that we need to be thinking about other neighborhoods where we can create public spaces.

Response (Mallory Baker): Those are good insights. It's nice when the discussion goes beyond parking, because people don't come to downtown Poulsbo just to park their car. The analysis does include assessment of existing parking facilities which could be used more efficiently. Our understanding is that the preferred option is to utilize existing space available before considering the costly proposal of adding parking to an already compact and built-out area. Drew Willsey added that as the community grows the density will increase but even shared parking on a modest scale can help address growing parking demand in the future.

Question: I understand that we want to make the most of existing space for parking, however, if additional parking is needed in the future, where would be the best location for it?

Response (Mallory Baker): Walker will consider the need for additional parking in the future, but in the immediate term, we can get additional use out of existing parking. Gathering funding and identifying a site for future parking expansion takes time. There are strategies that can be implemented immediately.

Comment: I'm surprised that parking is considered a quality of life issue; I consider many other issues to be important to quality of life.

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Response (Mallory Baker): I understand this reaction. However, parking can be an emotionally-charged topic and is important to the community, reflected in the volume of responses (over 800 responses in a short period of time for a community with a small population).

Comment: I think education is key to changing people's behavior when it come to parking. I'm older than the average person in Poulsbo but I'm willing to walk a couple of blocks from my parking space to the destination.

Response (Mallory Baker): described the thought process that parkers use when making decisions about where they should park in downtown, including concerns about parking too far away, and the desire to keep trying to find a spot nearby, even if it means circling the block a few times.

Comment: If we charged just \$1.00 per hour, there would be reduced parking demand even in the most busy on-street locations. Based on the responses, it sounds like people are entitled when it comes to parking. They want to find parking when they want it in their desired location without having to walk.

Question: Does it make sense to consider parking demand and management on a seasonal basis?

Response (Mallory Baker): Absolutely. Parking analyses are done with the industry standard of 85% effective supply. We can consider other parking management techniques in addition to seasonality. I also want to clarify that the quality of life answer choice was the most popular (selected by 50% of respondents) among the response choices for a required question that asked respondents to classify parking under a specific category to understand its relevance to them. This answer choice doesn't necessarily mean it's negatively affecting people's quality of life.

Final Questions and Comments

Comment: Please provide a summary of the parking analysis in advance of the meeting. It's easier to be engaged during the meeting when there is more time to review and process the results.

Response (Mallory Baker): I agree that this is important and will provide the results in advance of the next meeting.

Comment: As an elected official, I understand the importance of parking demand in Poulsbo and that it is a matter of utilizing existing parking space more efficiently. It would be great to see some parking management solutions for addressing parking issues beyond just signage and wayfinding.

Response (Mallory Baker): Can you please elaborate on what types of parking management solutions you are looking for? The next meeting will include several concrete strategies for managing parking demand. Parking and wayfinding is just one strategy that is proven to be effective; there are many other things that can be done.

Question: Is it common for a community to perceive that there is a parking issue even when there are existing parking facilities that are underused?

Response (Mallory Baker): Downtown parking is usually a demand distribution issue, which means that most people want to go to the same place at the same time. Poulsbo has the benefits of a walkable community with short walking distances. It's a very common issue for communities to perceive parking is more of a problem than it actually is, even when there are ample parking facilities.

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Next Steps

Finalize Vision and Guiding Principles

Draft Strategies

Meeting concluded at 3:30 pm PDT.

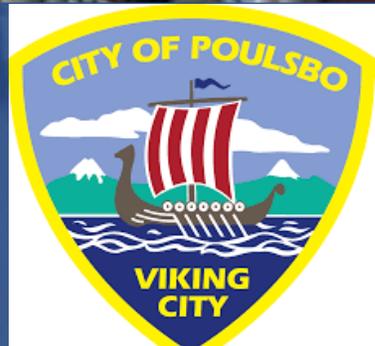
Attachments:

Meeting PowerPoint Presentation



Downtown Poulsbo Parking Study

Advisory Committee Meeting 2—July 27, 2023



We’ve studied quite a bit—now is the time to make real and impactful change!

Build a parking system **fit for Little Norway.**

- Align with vision for Downtown success.
- Address existing and foreseen challenges.
- Be proactive in making changes to parking management that improve economic and social vitality.
- Sustainably allocate and build resources.

Project Objectives



Update our **framework** for managing parking downtown given existing and projected conditions and our vision for success.



Create **metrics** that show us when to change our approach and help inform how we're doing.



Expand and refine our **menu of options** for different kinds of parkers—residents, employees/commuters, visitors and more.



Understand **resources needed** for near-term, mid-term and long-term objectives.



Share and build consensus with **decision-makers** so we can get things done!

Project Scope and Schedule

June—July Discovery + Visioning

Advisory Committee Kickoff*
Community Survey
Data Collection
Vision and Guiding Principles

July—August Strategies Identification and Vetting

Advisory Committee Meetings (2 and 3)
Strategy Identification and Vetting

August—October Create a Plan for Action

Advisory Committee Meetings (4)
Implementation and Action Plan
Final Plan Presentation

What We've Learned: Data Collection and Analysis

Existing Parking Supply

1,289

Total Number of Spaces in
Downtown Poulsbo

198

Total Public On-Street Parking
Supply Downtown

413

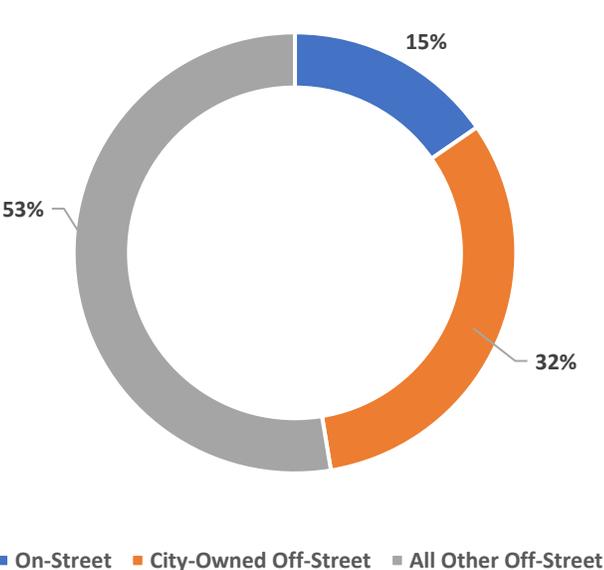
Number of City-Owned Off-Street
Parking Spaces

676

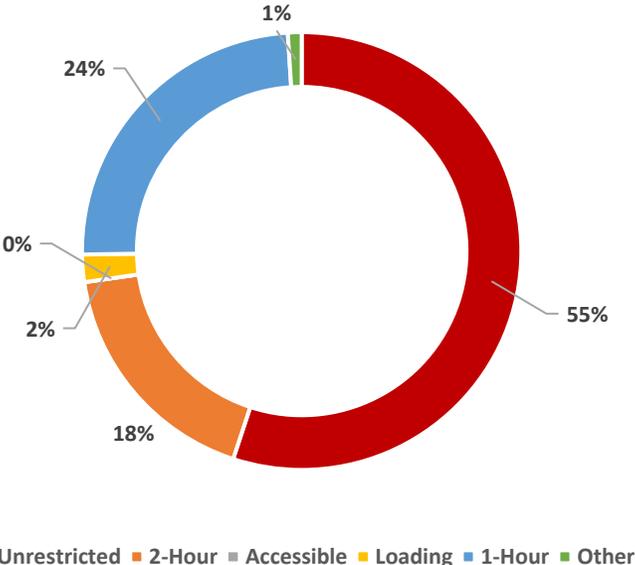
Number of Privately-Owned
Off-Street Spaces

16%

Increase in Downtown Parking
Supply Since 2006



Downtown Parking by Type (On-Street, Public Off-Street, Private Off-Street)



On-Street Parking Downtown by Type

Existing Parking Demand (Off-Street)

88 - 90%

Peak Off-Street Percent Occupancy in Public Lots at 1 PM (Both Days)

38 - 50%

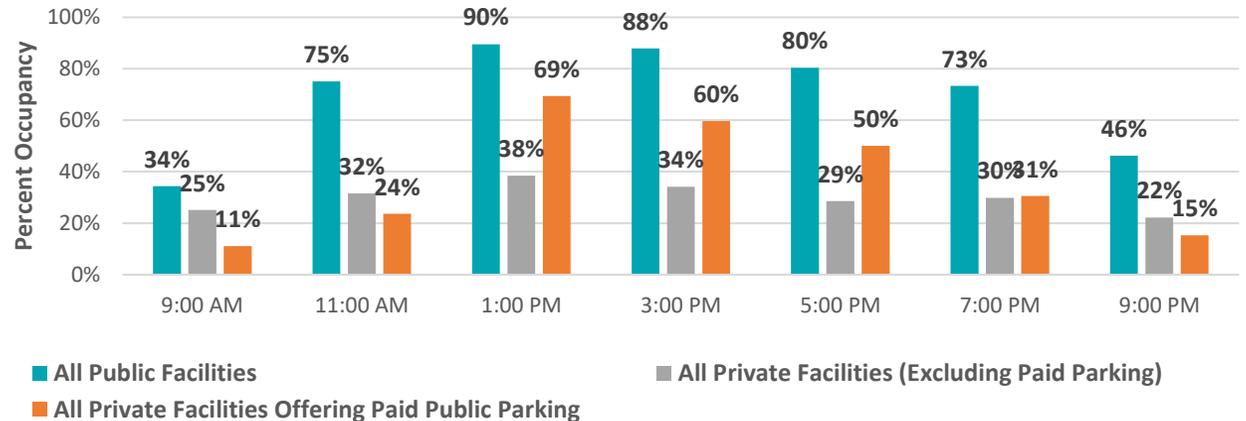
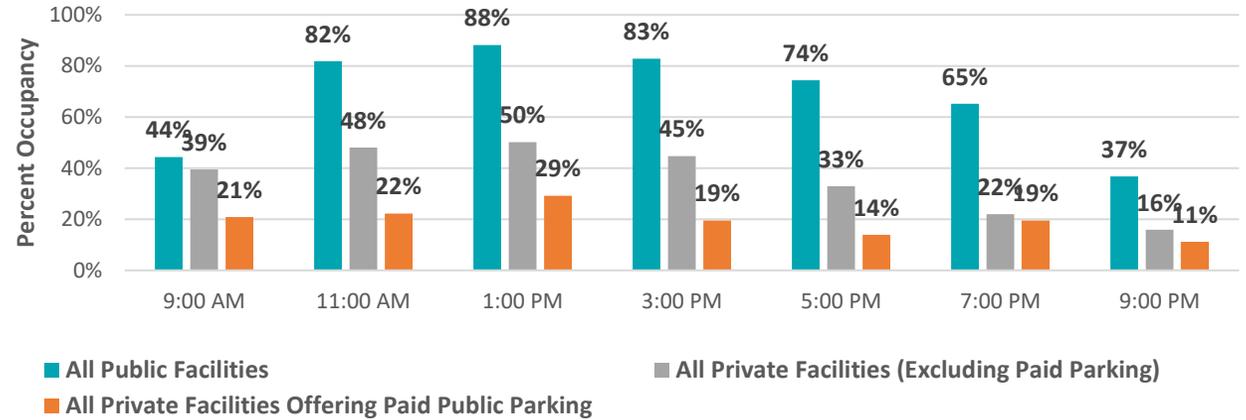
Peak Off-Street Percent Occupancy in Private Lots at 1 PM (Both Days)

319 - 355

Systemwide Effective Surplus of Off-Street Parking at Peak Times (Public and Private)

11AM - 5PM

When Public Lots are At or Over 75% on Weekend



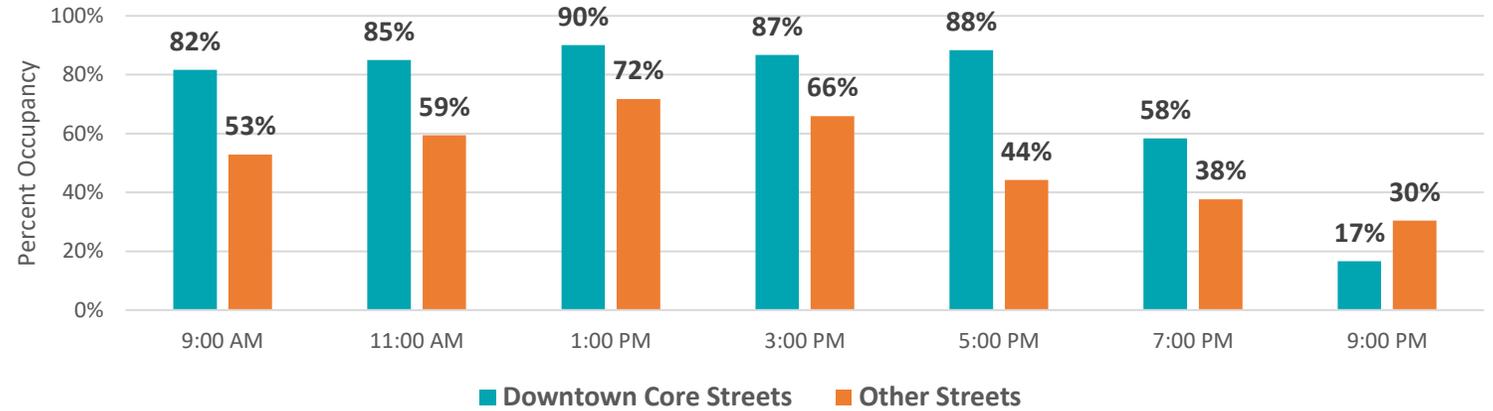
Existing Parking Demand (Off-Street)

98%

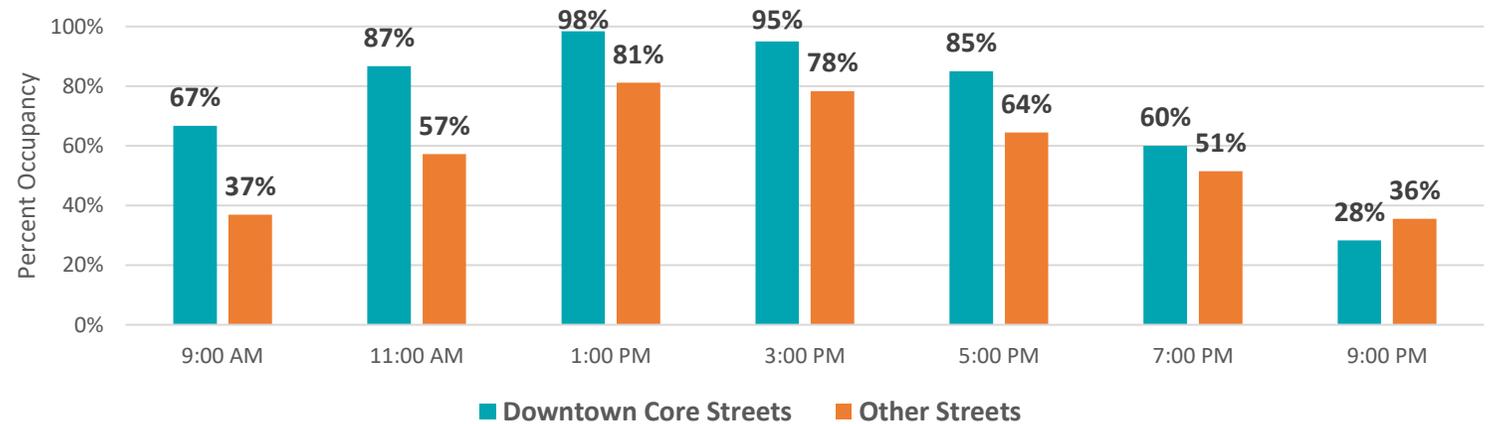
Peak On-Street Percent
Occupancy on Weekend Along
Core Streets Downtown

81%

Peak On-Street Percent
Occupancy on Weekend along
Other Streets in Study Area

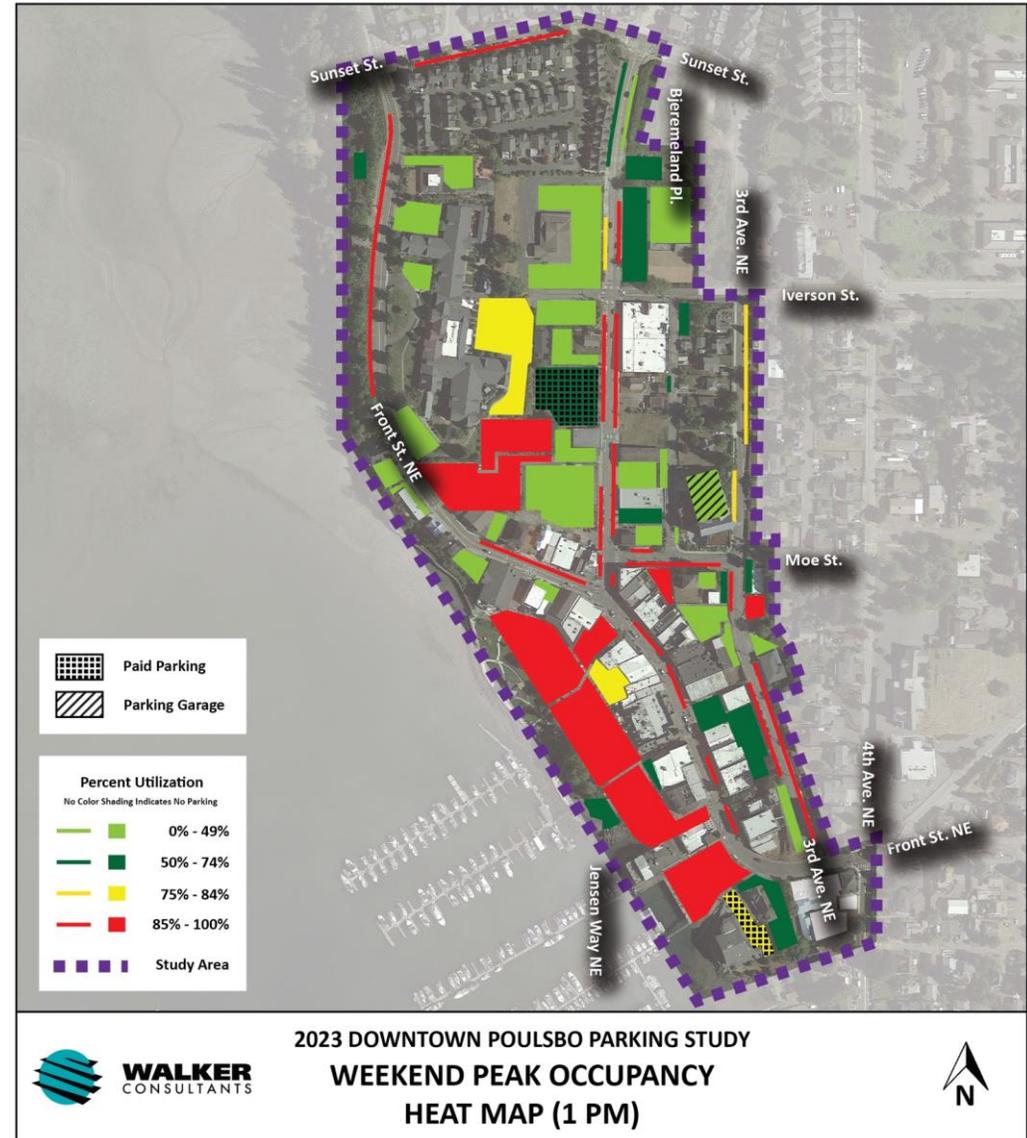
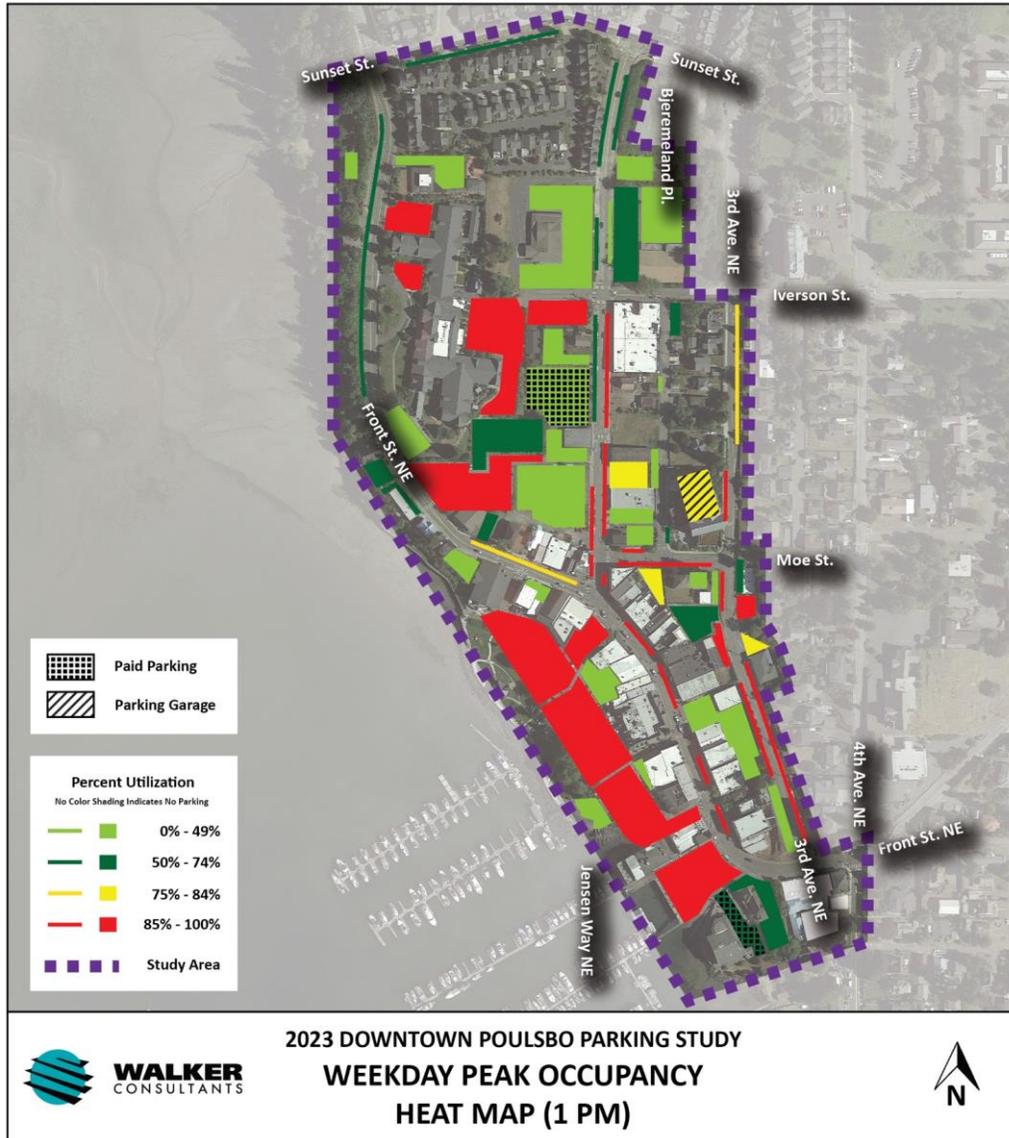


Weekday Percent Occupancy



Weekend Percent Occupancy

Existing Parking Demand (Heat Maps)



Length of Stay

3:00

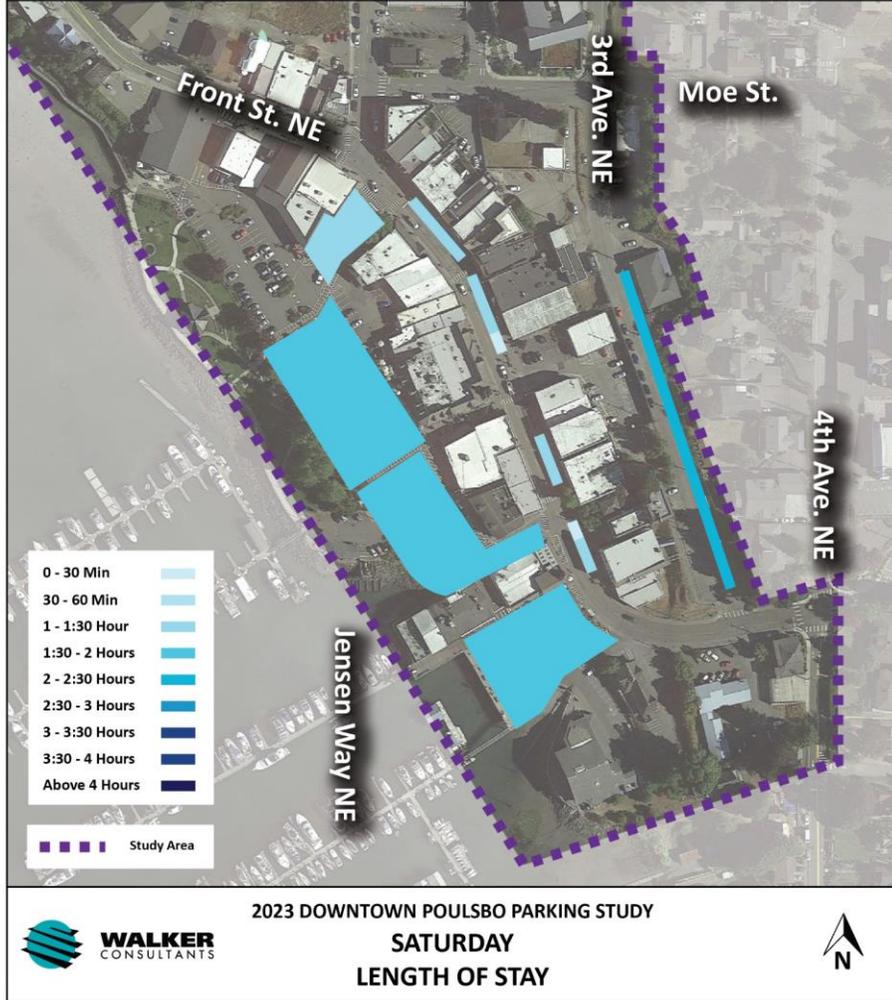
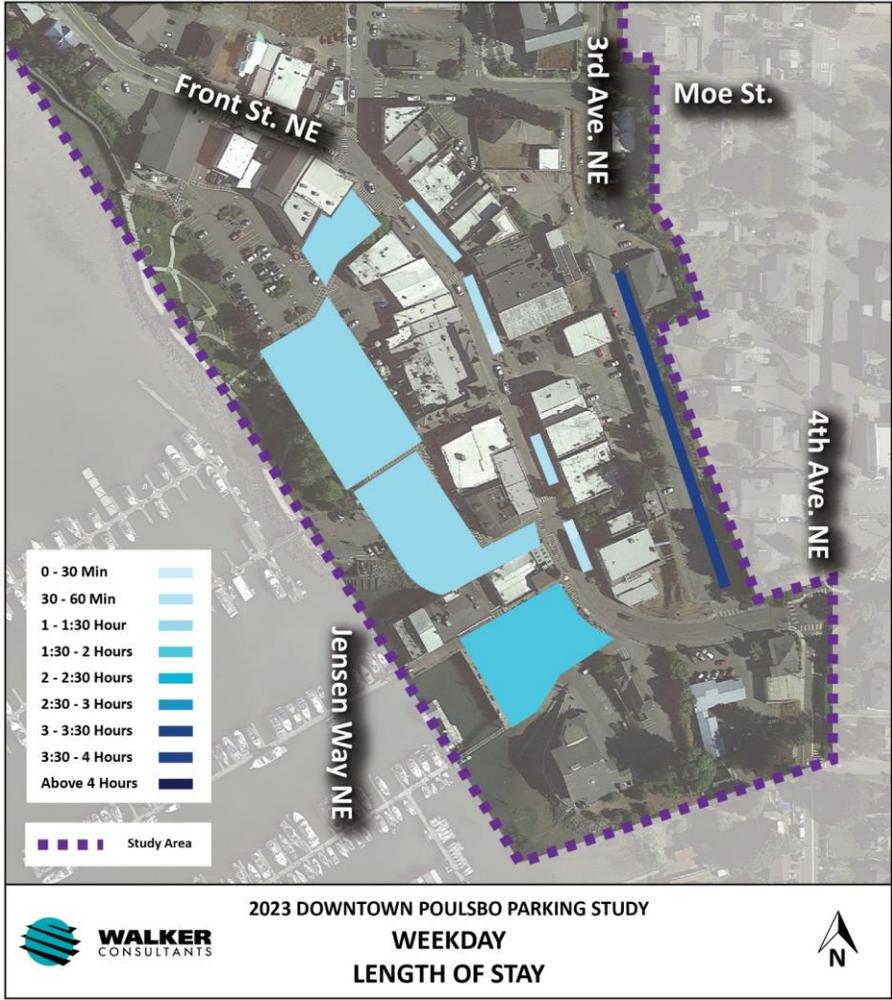
Average Length of Stay on
3rd Ave. on Weekdays
(H : M)

1:25

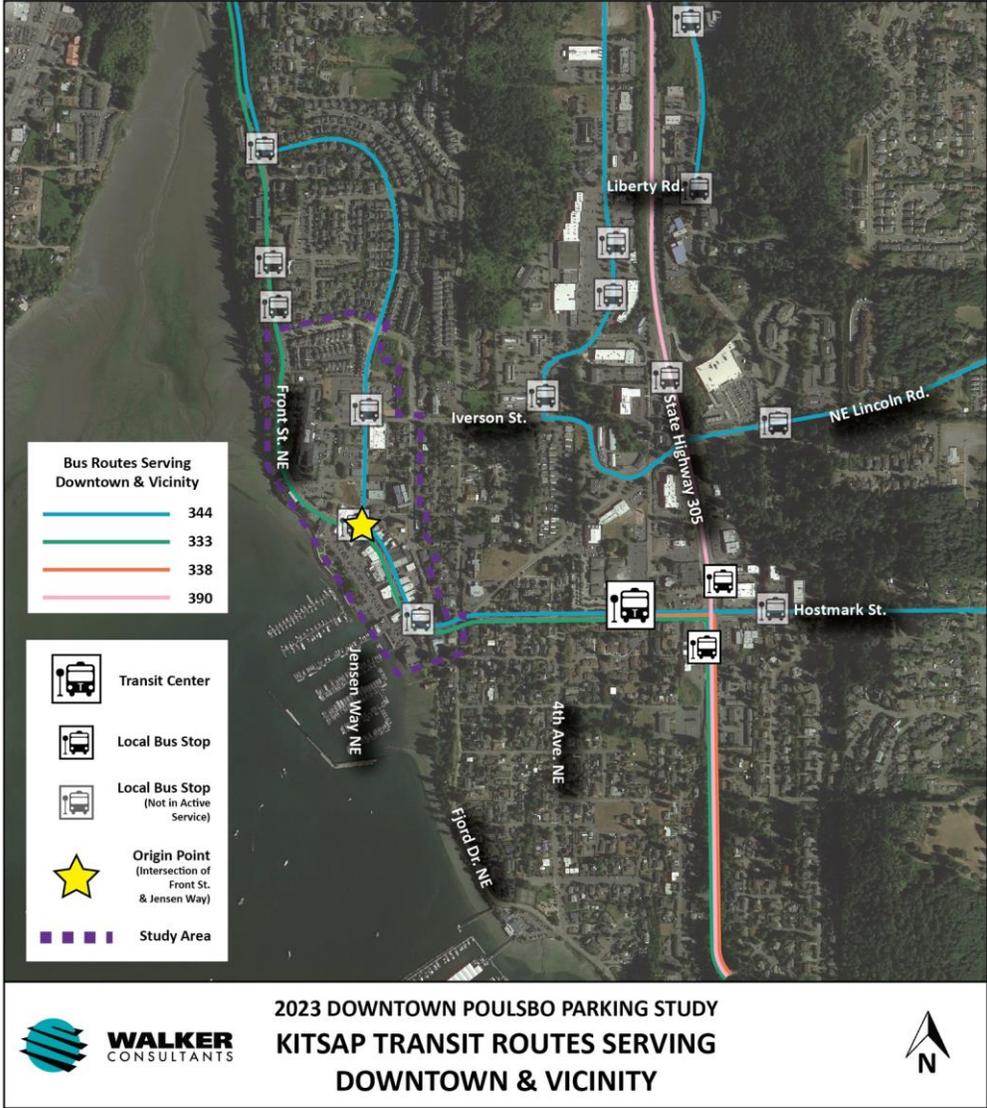
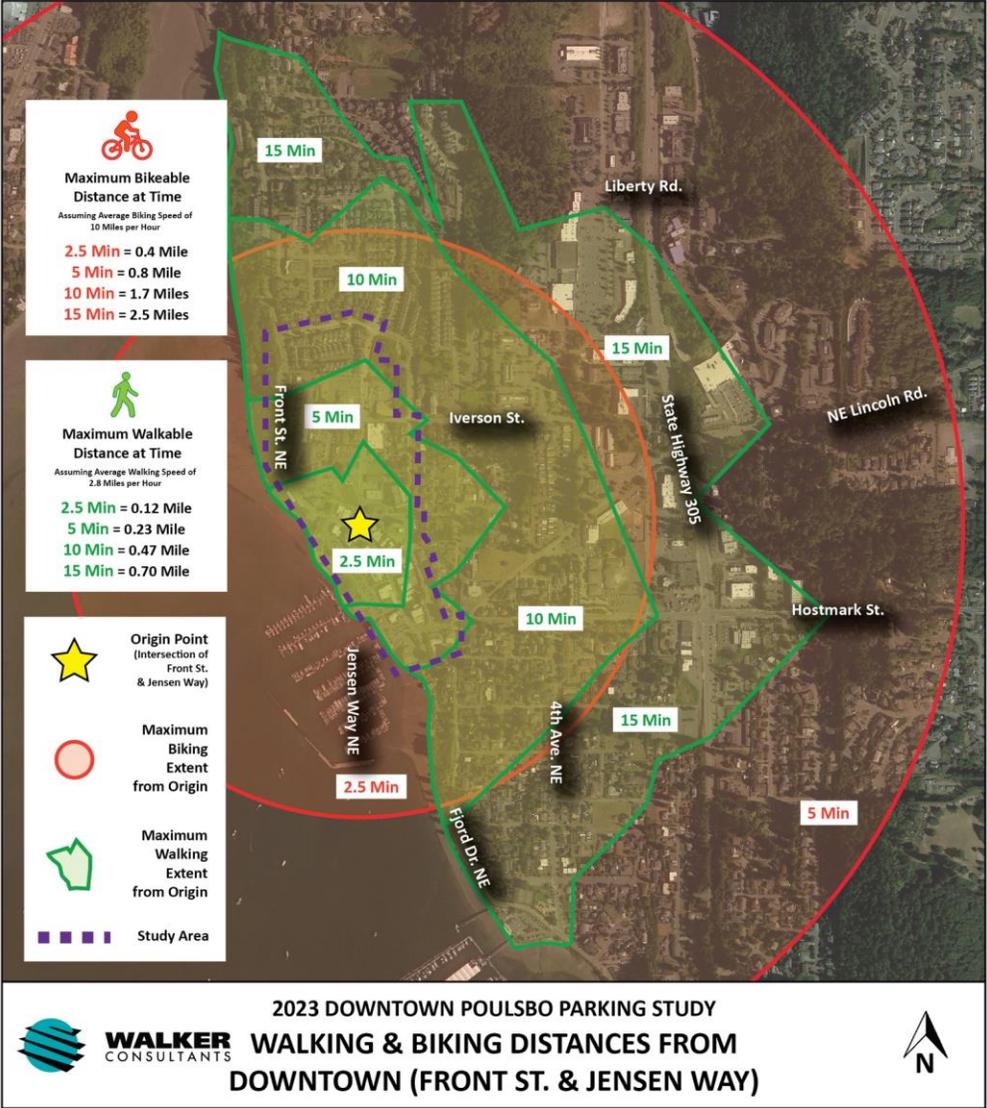
Average Length of Stay
Overall on Weekdays
(H : M)

1:31

Average Length of Stay
Overall on Weekdays
(H : M)



Multimodality



81%

Walk Score

N/A

Transit Score

32%

Bike Score

Key Observations & Themes

- Some new developments, modest increase in parking inventory observed since last study.
- Most public parking facilities operate at capacity for most of the day, but a few are somewhat underutilized (King Olav Overflow during weekdays and City Hall Garage during weekends).
- Private parking facilities are underutilized.
- The current parking system may be nearly exactly accommodating typical peak parking demand loads.
- More parking may not be needed at this time.
- Most parking is within a 2.5-minute walk of the center of downtown, while nearly all is located within a 5-minute walk.
- High parking turnover was observed overall, and employees seem to mostly be parking off-street and along 3rd.
- Downtown is friendly for pedestrians and bikes, but transit is lacking.
- The existing public parking inventory should be maintained or slightly expanded, however, especially in conjunction with more new development.

Other Observations

- Wayfinding signage is lacking across downtown, for both destinations and public parking areas.
 - It was not obvious that the City Hall Garage provided any public parking.
- Posted time restrictions are confusing, especially on Front St., and it is unclear which spaces are under a time limit and which ones are not.
- Distinction between public and private parking may be confusing (SEA Discovery Center and Port of Poulsbo).
- Ample loading areas provided & were well used.
- It is unclear whether or not parking is allowed or legal along some on-street frontage (3rd Ave., Bjerremeland Pl.)
- Overnight parking policy unclear and unsigned.
- No on-street accessible spaces observed.
- Vehicular and bicycle traffic appeared to circulate well, and parking lots seemed to function well overall.
- Pedestrian crossings lack vertical “ped x-ing” signage.

Discussion

Data Collection and Analysis

What We've Learned: Community Insights

Travel Behaviors and Decision-Making



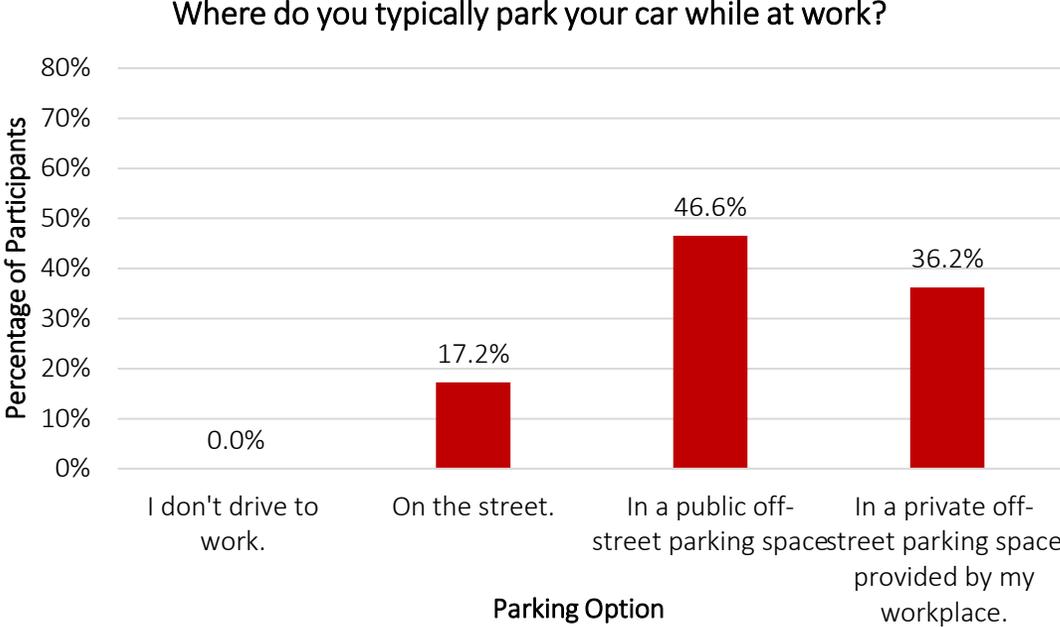
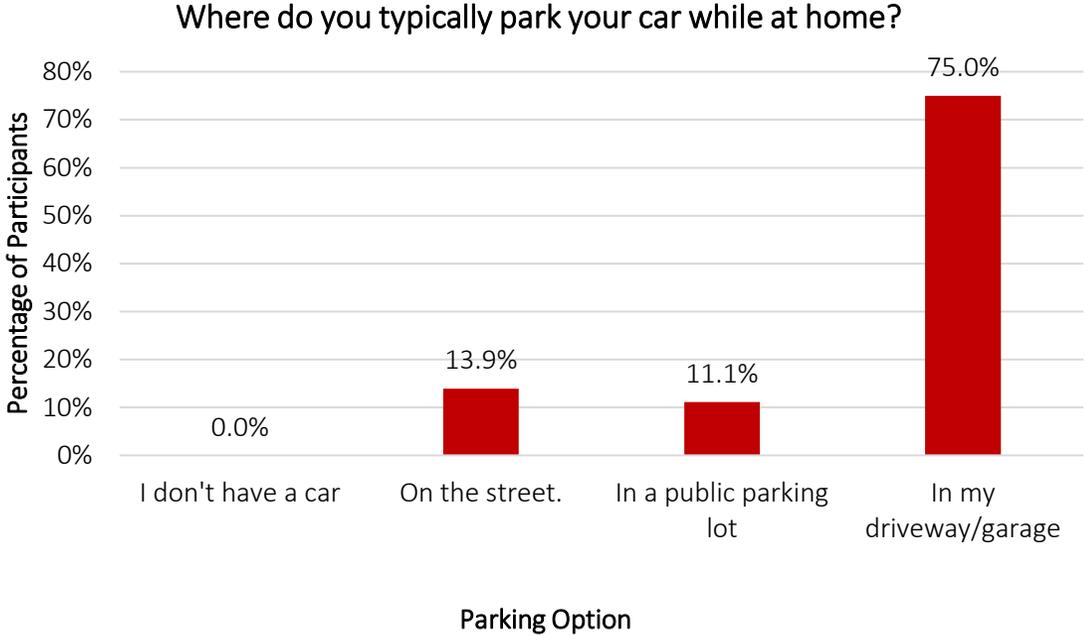
- **Year-round, vehicles are the primary mode of transportation used to get to work or to run errands, followed by walking.**
 - For both work trips and errands, approximately three-quarters (76.5% and 80.6%, respectively) of participants were extremely likely to travel by car, followed by 8.0% and 11.6%, respectively, who are as likely to travel by foot.
- **While vehicles are the primary mode of transportation used to get to downtown events, such as Viking Fest, walking is another popular choice.**
 - 61.0% of participants reported that they were extremely likely to travel to downtown events by car, followed by 19.3% extremely likely to travel by foot, 3.8% by carpool, and 2.5% by bike.

Parking Experiences



- While many respondents saw City Hall as a strong parking option, **28% of respondents** were unaware that it offered public parking.
- **17% of respondents** were unaware that the Port of Poulsbo offered parking to the general public.
- Many respondents indicated that **they perceive a lack of parking downtown**—particularly among respondents who are older and experience mobility issues.
- Many respondents smartly recognized the possible role **private parking could play** in building up parking resources.

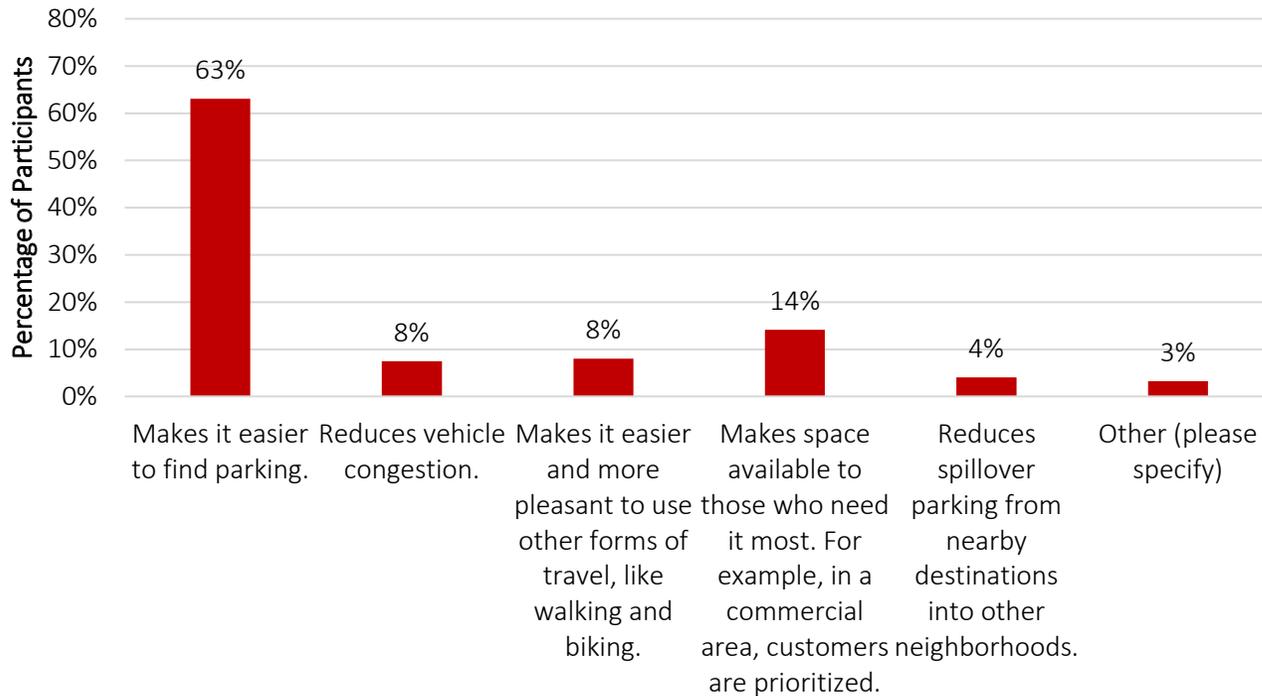
Reliance on Public Parking System



- **25%** of respondents who live in Poulsbo rely on the public parking system for at-home parking.
- **64%** of respondents who work in Poulsbo rely on the public parking system for at-work parking.

Parking Priorities

Which of the following goals for parking management is of the highest importance to you?



- Half of respondents (50%) see parking as primarily a **quality-of-life issue**, followed by an economic issue (34%). Between economic, quality of life, equity and climate, **climate scored lowest (2%)**.
- The single most important parking system goal for survey respondents is to **make parking easier to find**, by a substantial margin.
- The top three areas of improvement are **vehicle congestion, make it easier to find parking, and prioritize parking** for those who need it the most.

Discussion

Community Insights

Bringing it Together: Strategies Vision and Guiding Principles

Draft Vision and Guiding Principles

Vision Statement

We see parking as a way to help people live, work and have fun in Poulsbo. We envision a parking system that facilitates and supports Poulsbo's cultural, economic and social strength.

Guiding Principles

We seek strategies and actions that...

1. Address localized demand shortages that frustrate users and reduce parking system efficiency.
2. Equitably accommodate all users in need of a parking option, including long-term (8+ hours), mid-term (2-8 hours) and short-term (2 hours or fewer) parkers.
3. Prioritize parking management techniques and policies in keeping with Poulsbo's welcoming, friendly spirit.
4. Support a multimodal environment that maximizes mobility freedom, choice and safety for the Poulsbo community.
5. Maximize long-term financial sustainability for the parking and mobility system so that it can continue to serve the Poulsbo community.
6. Take a data-based, steady and contextual approach to change—from changing parking management practices to adding new parking facilities.

Discussion

Vision and Guiding Principles

Wrap-Up and Next Steps

August Tasks

Finalize Vision and Guiding Principles

Draft Strategies

Thank You.