

BOARD OF ALDERMEN

ITEM NO. D(1)

AGENDA ITEM ABSTRACT

MEETING DATE: October 8, 2002

TITLE: A Presentation of the Downtown *Parking Task Force Report*

DEPARTMENT: Community and Economic Development	PUBLIC HEARING: NO
ATTACHMENTS: A. Resolution B. Report C. Parking Survey	FOR INFORMATION CONTACT: James R. Harris, 918-7319

PURPOSE

The purpose of this item is to present the *Parking Task Force Report* to the Board of Aldermen. The administration recommends that the Board of Aldermen accept the report and refer it to the town staff, Transportation Advisory Board and the Downtown Development Commission for review and comments.

INFORMATION

On April 9, 2002 the Board of Aldermen held a work session to discuss the Economic Development Tool Box recommendations and Action Plan from the Downtown Visioning process. As recommended, the Board established a Downtown Parking Task Force to identify cooperative parking ideas for the downtown. In addition, the group was to discuss the possibility of constructing parking facilities and to explore construction financing mechanisms for the proposed facilities.

Members on the Task Force represented downtown business owners, downtown real-estate owners, developers, architects, the Maple Avenue neighborhood, Planning Board, the Downtown Development Commission, and town staff.

The town's involvement in expanding downtown parking availability is critical to doubling the commercial tax base. While the Town has leased property, developed parking, and offered free parking over the years, it has become apparent that parking needs are changing. Carrboro has a limited number of commercial lots left to accommodate the proposed increase in building square footage and provide adequate on-site parking.

An additional idea that was discussed by the Task Force but not included in the report was the promotion of the free bus service to increase ridership by non-traditional potential riders. That would involve increasing the number of shoppers from single-family households who come to the downtown to shop and to visit professional offices.

The Task Force after reviewing the data made the following recommendations:

1. **Revise Parking Ordinance**
Charge staff to draft a revised Parking Ordinance.

2. **On-street Parking**
Charge staff to identify and to create fifty new on-street parking spaces in the downtown area by the end of FY 2003, and a total of at least two hundred on-street parking spaces by the end of FY 2008.
3. **Walkability and Transportation**
Develop a walkability program that includes enhanced traffic calming, crosswalks and sidewalks in the downtown. Aggressively pursue the development of bike- and pedestrian-friendly roads throughout the community.
4. **Consolidations and Sharing**
Survey downtown business owners to investigate opportunities for town-facilitated parking consolidation & sharing and develop standards, protocols and incentives for such facilitation. A suggested survey is attached.
5. **Enforcement & Fees**
Establish an enforcement program for existing short-term parking. Develop parking usage fee strategies to pay for enforcement and management and to contribute to Parking Development Trust Fund. Establish a monitored trial of multi-bay metering in the public lot at East Main and Roberson streets.
6. **Parking Development Trust Fund**
Establish a capital fund for land acquisition and development for parking and related purposes. The Fund is to be supported by payment-in-lieu fees, by any operational surplus of parking usage fees, and by a Town of Carrboro budget line item of at least \$50,000 annually. In addition to strategic land acquisition, acceptable uses for the fund would include street modifications to accommodate on-street parking, provision of bike and public transportation support facilities that directly impact parking demand, and the layout, landscaping & paving of surface lots and construction of parking decks.
7. **Structured Parking**
Charge staff to identify strategic locations for major parking structures as a guide to land acquisition in accordance with long-term vehicle management policy.
8. **Reporting**
Report to the Board annually on the progress on the recommendations with the understanding most of the items are contingent upon funding from town sources or some other resource and without such funding the projects can not be completed.

The Task Force discussed creating a revenue stream to support the purchase of land for the development of town-owned parking lots and using payments-in-lieu to fund parking structures. With this plan, the developer would not have to provide on-site parking. Short-term parking revenue is another potential income source. The committee is aware that the Town has set aside sufficient funds to finance up to \$500,000 in capital needs for parking related purposes. The Community and Economic Development Department is conducting ongoing negotiation with landowners.

ADMINISTRATION'S RECOMMENDATION

The administration recommends that the Board of Aldermen accept the report and recommendations and forward them to town staff, the Downtown Development Commission and the Transportation Advisory Board for review and comment.