

Historic District Parking Implementation Plan Update

DRAFT

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Prepared for:

City of Folsom, California

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of Folsom desires to develop a thorough understanding of the dynamics of development and parking in its Historic District, and how it will evolve over time, while ensuring that the City anticipates, and keeps current with, changing demands. The City took an initial step towards this understanding in July 2002, with the preparation of the *Historic District Parking Improvement Implementation Plan* (Gordon H. Chong & Partners/Walker Parking Consultants). This study's objective was to "determine the best way to add parking inventory and thus support the development of commercial activity in the Historic District." While the 2002 *Plan* established recommendations for the future, the dynamics in the Historic District have certainly changed over the past six years. In addition, the City recently prepared the *Parking Management 5-Year Plan* which updates parking conditions and near-term parking management strategies.

The purpose of this *Implementation Plan Update* is to refresh the 2002 *Plan* to more accurately quantify the effect of recent District development and a better defined future build-out scenario on parking supply and demand. More specifically, this report documents both existing and future parking supply and demand, evaluates potential sites for additional parking structures, considers parking and funding strategies, and assesses special events and parking interaction with other concurrent District studies.

Existing Parking Supply and Demand

Based on the data collection and analysis of existing supply and peak demand, there is sufficient parking within the study area to accommodate current typical weekday and weekend peak demands, particularly since the Rail Block parking structure was completed. While some zones experience relatively high demands, overall, there is ample available parking within the entire District. However, recent field observations show spillover parking into adjacent residential neighborhoods, particularly in the vicinity of the intersection of Wool Street and Figueroa Street.

Future Parking Supply and Demand

A single future development scenario was developed which is constrained by the amount of future parking supply that can be achieved by the addition of one new parking structure. This new structure is assumed to be constructed on the Trader Lane lot, and incorporates ground floor retail. Based on a preliminary schematic and feasibility evaluation, 442 spaces can be accommodated in this structure. The net available parking spaces within the District, after accounting for existing and planned/approved parking demand and practical capacity¹, is up to 425 spaces. This level of parking supply (425 spaces) was determined to accommodate approximately 55,000 square feet of retail, 27,000 square feet of restaurant, and 20,000 square feet of office uses in addition to the planned/approved projects, as well as the proposed retail on the ground floor of Trader Lane parking structure. The future retail and restaurant square footages were estimated using the existing proportion of retail and restaurant square footages within the District. The total future development that could be accommodated is 121,850 square feet, including 19,850 square feet of ground floor retail within the proposed parking structure.

Adequacy of City's Current Historic District Parking Supply Strategy

Currently, the City of Folsom requires a flat parking ratio of 1 space per 350 square feet for all land use types (retail, offices, restaurants, museums, etc.) within the Historic District. The detailed parking analysis in this study indicates that this requirement is not sufficient to address the future parking needs of the District. The District proposes to add approximately 121,850 square feet (SF) of commercial use, in addition to existing land uses and planned/approved projects. Utilizing the City's existing requirement of 1 space per 350 SF, the additional proposed development (121,850 SF) would require approximately 350 parking spaces, yet the parking demand analysis identifies a need for 425 spaces. In order to meet the existing and future parking demand, the City should either increase its current parking ratio from 1 space per 350 SF, to 1 space per 305 SF, or adopt separate parking ratios for retail (1 space per 350 SF), restaurants (1 space per 170 SF for fine

¹ The practical capacity for parking is defined at 85-90 percent utilization of parking spaces.

dining, and 1 space per 210 SF for casual dining), and office (1 space per 460 SF) uses. Revising the City's parking ratio is applicable for private development that would provide some, or all, of its required parking on-site. It would also be applicable should the City select to permit new development to meet its parking requirements in municipal parking structures by paying an in-lieu fee (see funding strategies).

Assessment of Potential Parking Structure Sites

Six potential sites were initially identified by the City for the construction of additional Historic District parking supply. Through preliminary discussions with City staff, this initial list of six sites was subsequently reduced to five with the elimination of one site determined to be generally infeasible, and the least desirable location of all potential sites. Two sites were determined to best meet site evaluation criterion. Subsequent discussions with the City determined that one of these sites, the Trader Lane lot, should be the single location considered for the development of a new parking structure.

Parking Implementation Strategies

The implementation of parking management strategies is intended to ultimately result in more efficient use of limited parking resources. Thirteen parking management strategies, including both near- and long-term components, are identified which could be implemented within the Historic District to address the existing and the projected future parking conditions. These strategies are summarized as follows:

Near-Term Strategies

- a. Increase the current parking ratio from 1 space per 350 SF to 1 space per 305 SF.
- b. Monitor neighborhoods, especially the neighborhood adjacent to the intersection of Wool Street and Figueroa Street, for spillover parking as development intensifies within the District.
- c. Monitor the implementation of planned/approved projects to determine when 80 percent of the parking demand occurs within the District.
- d. Add provision to the City's Municipal Code requiring large developments to provide on-site loading and unloading zones.
- e. Identify existing on-street parking spaces which could be used for loading and unloading during off-peak hours.
- f. Enforce parking restrictions by issuing warning parking tickets during an acclimation period.
- g. Identify time restricted, on-street valet parking spaces to be used by restaurants during the mid-day (noon to 2:00 p.m.) for lunch, and during the evening (6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.) for dinner.
- h. Add on-street parking spaces as suggested by City's *5-Year Parking Management Plan* (January 2008).
- i. Encourage subsidized transit fares and continue operating the Valet/Pedicab program. Also, identify additional bike storage facilities within the District.
- j. Implement City recommended parking management strategy within the Rail Block parking structure.

Long-Term Strategies

- a. Adopt separate parking ratios for retail (1 space per 350 SF), restaurants (1 space per 170 SF for fine dining, and 1 space per 210 SF for casual dining), and for office (1 space per 460 SF) uses.
- b. Establish and implement in-lieu parking fees. The timing of the in-lieu parking fees could coincide with the City's decision (if implemented) of adopting separate parking ratios for retail, restaurants, and office uses with the District.
- c. Gradually implement a Residential Permit Parking Program (RPPP) in neighborhoods experiencing spillover parking impacts.
- d. Start construction of a 422 space parking structure on the Trader Lane Lot when the district-wide parking demand reaches approximately 85 percent of the available parking supply at the time, or when approximately 80 percent of the planned/approved projects' parking demand occurs within the District.
- e. Identify heavily utilized off-peak loading and unloading zones and designate them as permanent loading and unloading zones without time restrictions.

- f. Restrict all on-street parking within the District to 2 hours and enforce parking restrictions by issuing parking tickets.
- g. Remove the 3-hour parking limit from all off-street parking lots, and institute parking charges based on the number of hours parked. Also, during the construction of the Trader Lane parking structure, the City should identify off-street parking lots within the vicinity of the District to be used as overflow in case the parking spaces within the District are fully utilized. Identify permanent off-street valet parking spaces for existing and future restaurant uses throughout the District.
- h. Conduct a detailed study to identify streets within the District where angled, on-street parking could be implemented.
- i. Gradually implement parking meters for on-street parking spaces on streets serving retail/restaurant uses.
- j. Continue to explore the feasibility of a full-time parking enforcement position, or volunteer help.
- k. Encourage Pool Vehicles/Guaranteed Rides Home program.
- l. Work with Regional Transit to fully and appropriately address the Light Rail Transit parking situation within the District.

Funding Strategies

The City of Folsom currently provides free parking for users in the Historic District. The City currently pays for parking through a combination of bonds issued by the Redevelopment Agency, which paid for the construction of the new Rail Block parking garage, and from City Department budgets, which pays for maintenance of the garage. The maintenance budget is shared equally among all of the City departments, although the funding is not allocated specifically for parking during the budgeting process.

The funding strategies discussed in this report are available to the City should the current financing mechanisms no longer meet the City's needs. It is understood that user fees are not being considered for the Historic District parking. If that policy decision continues, the City may want to consider charging for event parking in the existing parking structure, perhaps on "Thursday Night Market" nights, as a way to raise at least some revenue to be used for operations and maintenance.

Other Considerations

Special Events Assessment

The Historic District has several routine "special" events which result in parking and circulation restrictions different from normal conditions. These "special events" all incorporate closure of a portion(s) of Sutter Street, and alter vehicular access and circulation. Through consultation with the City, it was determined that the Thursday Night Market is the most representative of the conditions experienced during abnormal events within the District, and should be used as the basis of this assessment.

Based on assessment of existing conditions and consultation with the Merchant's Association representatives, two primary special event management strategies were developed: overall improved utilization of Historic District parking facilities, and concentrated vendor access, parking, and circulation.

Assessment of City's 5-Year Parking Management Plan

In January 2008, the City prepared a *Historic District 5-Year Parking Management Plan* which addresses existing parking conditions, as well as the anticipated changes that will occur over the next four to six years. The *Plan* concludes with seven recommendations for addressing the established objects. This report provides a discussion and evaluation of the *Plan's* conclusions.

Historic District Streetscape Project

The City's concurrent Historic District Streetscape Project is intended to enhance the human scale of the District by widening sidewalks, narrowing vehicle travel ways, and providing uniform aesthetic components to unify the entire District. The conceptual improvements to Sutter Street also include the addition of on-street parking between Riley Street and Wool Street, the only segment of Sutter Street within the District that does not currently have on-street parking. This block of Sutter Street between Riley Street and Wool Street experiences the greatest parking supply deficit for both existing and build-out conditions. Considering its central location, this block serves as the core, attracting dense development and associated vehicle and pedestrian activity.

The additional parking supply proposed to be provided along this block of Sutter Street is anticipated to serve as premium parking for the businesses located along this segment, and should be designed, implemented, and enforced as such.