



## **CITY OF VANCOUVER, WASHINGTON CENTRAL PARK PARKING MANAGEMENT PLAN**

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### APPENDIX

Stakeholder Process Report for the Central Park Parking Management Plan

# CENTRAL PARK - PARKING MANAGEMENT PLAN

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## A. PLAN PURPOSE

The City of Vancouver initiated a process and study to examine parking and access issues in the Central Park plan area of Vancouver. The purpose of the study was to develop a parking management plan that:

- Reflects the concerns and priorities of Central Park stakeholders regarding parking and access for the district as it grows;
- Establishes a framework of objectives, goals and strategies to guide decision-making for parking in the future; and
- Informs and guides decision-making by the City's Parking Manager, Planning and Transportation staff and the City Council as new projects are proposed and/or constraints in the parking system are identified.

The plan provided herein reflects the findings and recommendations of a diverse and representative group of Central Park stakeholders. The full Stakeholder Process Report for the Central Park Parking Management Plan can be found in the attached Appendix.

## B. BACKGROUND

### The Role of Parking in the Central Park Plan Area

The role of parking in any business district or plan area cannot be seen as a stand-alone solution in and of itself. The key to a successful district/plan area is the land uses that comprise it and the mechanisms in place to support those land uses. The Central Park Plan area of downtown Vancouver is truly unique in its blend of open space, commercial, educational, recreational, social services and historic land uses. It is a vital area that has a clear sense of place and identity.



**Fort Vancouver Regional Library – Operations Center**

Preserving this identity in the face of growing demand for access and the possible advent of new light rail development in the plan area will be challenging. To meet this challenge, parking must be managed for an effective and efficient system of access that supports priority land uses and caters to the needs of priority users. As such, the true role of parking management is to assure that the desired vision for Central Park is fully supported. This vision is summarized in detail in the recently completed and adopted *Central Park Plan Update (January 2008)*.

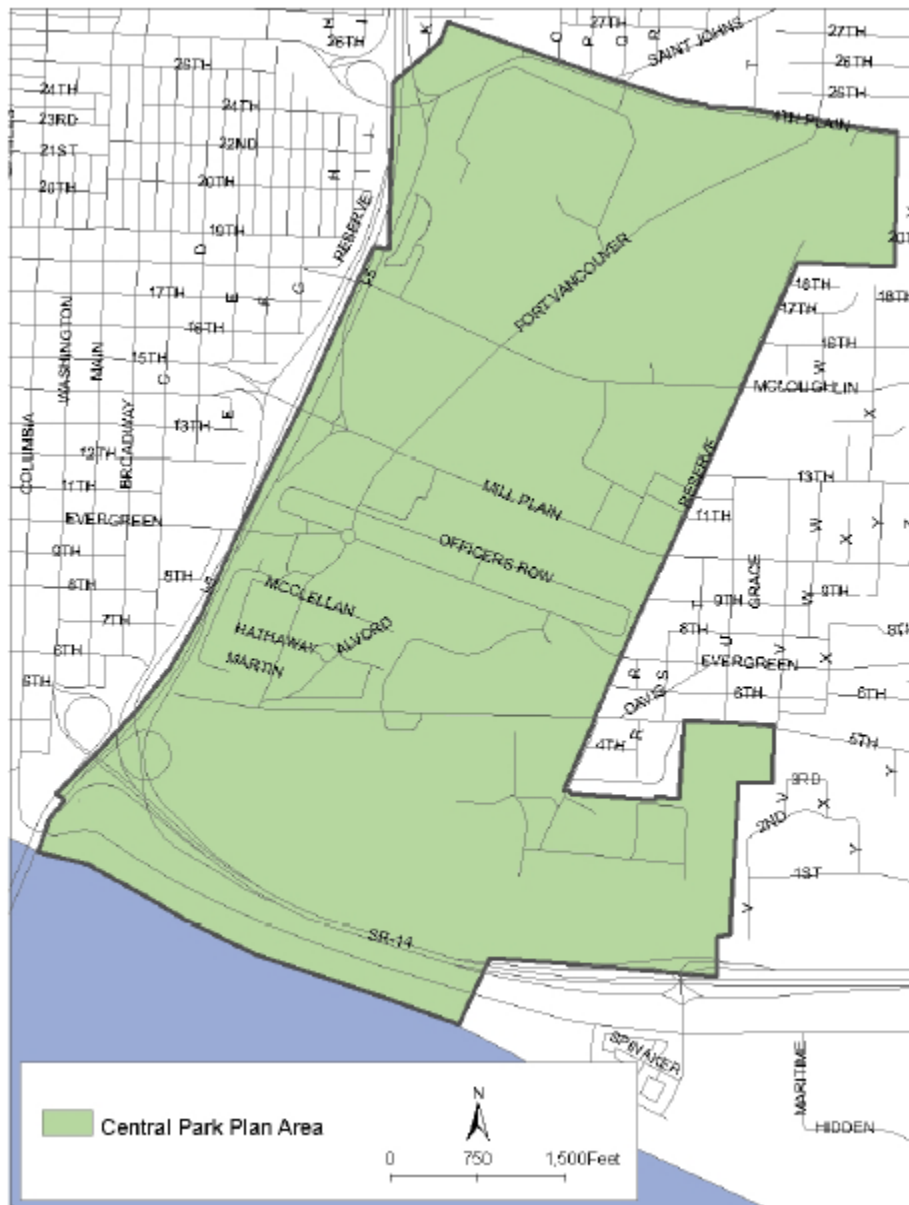
### **Plan Area**

Prominently located at the Columbia River gateway to Washington State and the Vancouver City Center, the Central Park Planning area possesses unique public destinations of national, state and local significance.

Located just east of the Vancouver City Center, the Central Park Plan area includes approximately 692 acres. It is bounded to the west by Interstate-5; on the south by the Columbia River; and on the east, north and northwest by residential neighborhoods. Three other City designated plan areas connect to the Central Park Plan sub-area, including: the Fourth Plain Corridor to the north, the City Center to the west, and the Lower Grand Employment Center to the southeast.

The map provided in Figure 1, provides a graphic illustration of the area.

**Figure 1**  
**Central Park Plan Area**



## Major Users in the Plan Area<sup>1</sup>

There is a diversity of educational, recreational, social service and historic uses located within the plan area. Public agencies own the majority of property in the Central Park Plan area while only 2.7 acres are owned privately. The following significant uses are located within the Central Park plan area:

- Army Barracks
- Army Cemetery
- Clark Community College and athletic fields
- Clark County Community Health Center
- Clark Public Utilities main office
- Federal Highway Administration offices
- Fort Vancouver Little League Fields
- Fort Vancouver National Historic Site
- Fort Vancouver Regional Library
- Hudson's Bay High School and athletic fields
- Luepke Senior Center
- Marshall Recreation Center and Park
- Officer's Row
- Pearson Field Airport and Museum
- Swift Skate Park
- Vancouver Police Dept. headquarters
- Veterans Administration Hospital
- Water Front Park
- Water Works Park Facilities



*The Marshall Recreation Center*

The privately owned parcels include small commercially used parcels and vacant parcels. Residential land use is minimal and is mostly located on the Veterans Affairs Campus and Officers Row within the Historic Reserve.

### **Policy Foundation**

The need for the development of a parking management plan was called out in the 2008 adopted *Central Park Plan Update*. The Plan provides policies for land use that includes great streets, gateways, linkages, wayfinding and access systems. The Central Park Plan also has a parking goal statement with associated policies.

*Goal: Parking is neither the first thing visitors see nor the most extensive land use.*

The associated policies related to the above goal are listed below.

**CP-16** Manage parking and design parking facilities in Central Park to minimize impervious surface, reduce its prominence as a land use and to meet user needs.

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<sup>1</sup> Language for this section is borrowed from *City of Vancouver Central Park Plan Update (January 2008)*



**CP-17** New Park and Ride facilities shall be located and built to facilitate shared non-peak-hour parking with Central Park institutions and to minimize impervious surface and land used for parking.

**CP-18** The City with other agencies and institutions of Central Park should cooperatively work to ensure a complementary on-street and off-street parking system.

**CP-19** Develop a master parking management plan for the Central Park Sub-area to make efficient use of limited land and cater to the needs of priority users.

The recommended strategies developed through the planning process are intended to inform and support the above listed policy objectives.

## Plan Approach



*Clark College*

The Central Park parking management plan approach is premised in the belief that a full understanding of the role that parking plays in the growth of the area must be informed by active involvement of key stakeholders in the district. Understanding stakeholder concerns and ideas for Central Park is critically important because they are the users of the parking system on a daily basis. In addition, their investment and ownership in Central Park will be supported as the recommendations of the parking study and management strategy are put in place over time. Any parking or access changes made to the area will have a direct impact on those who own,

work, visit, or reside in the Central Park Plan area. The City is committed to a parking management plan that has endeavored to be sensitive to, and cognizant of, this relationship.

A Central Park Stakeholder Parking Committee (SPC) was established to provide oversight, guidance and review of the study process. The SPC was also charged with identifying key issues regarding parking, transportation and access in the Central Park Plan area and the impact of parking on the continuing vitality of the area.

Key stakeholders included representatives from both public and private entities, City staff, neighborhood association representatives, residents and property owners. These individuals provided significant assistance in the identification, description, and prioritization of issues to be addressed. They have been instrumental in the development of strategies and plans necessary to guide the parking management plan that is an outgrowth of the parking study report found in the attached appendix. To guide the development of the parking management plan, the SPC generated the following framework goals:

- Create a flexible plan with implementing strategies meant to serve the unique and changing nature of Central Park Plan Area;
- Identify immediate to near-term strategies to improve known parking and access constraints;

- Identify strategies to improve access opportunities for patrons, employees, students and residents of the plan area;
- Identify for the City and area stakeholders mid to long-term parking management decision-making triggers and guidelines.



The work of the SPC resulted in the development of functional alternatives and strategies to improve identified deficiencies and initiate a plan for the on-going management of, and planning for, access in Central Park.

For further information on the SPC process refer to the attached appendix.

### **C. PARKING MANAGEMENT PLAN**

This Section presents a proposed parking management plan for the Central Park plan area. The proposed plan strives to remain consistent with the intent and priorities established and recommended by the SPC (see Appendix for full stakeholder report). As stated earlier, the parking management recommendations are offered as a framework to guide and inform decision-making by the City's Parking Manager, Planning and Transportation staff and the City Council as new projects come forward in Central Park and/or constraints in the parking system are identified.

The strategies that follow are designed to assure that priority access is maintained within the Central Park "parking management area." Overall, the plan is intended to provide a flexible system of parking management that is triggered by demand and implemented within the context of the 2008 adopted *Central Park Plan* and the consensus recommendations of the SPC.

#### **Plan Format**

As a result of continuing discussions with the City and the Central Park SPC, specific parking management strategies have been identified and are recommended for implementation. Recommendations for policy actions and several near-term strategies will optimize the efficiency of the *existing* parking inventory in Central Park. Additional mid and longer-term strategies are also recommended for consideration. The SPC believes all of the recommendations presented in the report are consistent with the study goal of improving and enhancing the parking system in Central Park.

These recommendations are organized as follows:

1. Recommended Policy Actions
2. Parking Management Strategies: Near-term Implementation
3. Parking Management Strategies: Mid-term Implementation
4. Parking Management Strategies: Long-term Implementation

## 1. POLICY ACTIONS (Immediate Implementation)

### a. Formally establish the Central Park plan area as a parking management district.

Central Park should be established as a single parking management district that recognizes the interdependent impacts of parking and access on all entities within the plan area. Unlike other areas of the city center, Central Park is extremely unique in its composition of integrated, historic, business, educational and recreational, and social service land uses within a single area and therefore, some traditional parking management strategies appropriate to downtown-like urban areas may not be applicable in Central Park. Establishing a new parking management district within Central Park is consistent with the progression of the City's parking management concept of identified parking districts (e.g., City Center and Uptown Village).

### b. Formalize the 85% Rule as the optimum occupancy standard for the parking management district and the “trigger” point for decision-making within the supply of City controlled and/or operated on and off-street parking.

In the management of parking, a supply of parking can *appear* full or constrained to a user when it approaches 85% occupancy. The 85% occupancy standard is an “optimum usage point” within a parking supply that leaves a cushion or buffer of 15% supply to accommodate unexpected peaks and general growth within the supply. More importantly, it also allows for a certain level of *customer convenience* to find *available* parking stalls. In short, communities that employ the 85% Rule use the rule as an action point for considering and/or implementing more aggressive management measures to assist customers in finding available supply.

As 85% occupancy triggers are activated (at the district or node level)<sup>2</sup>, strategies will then be implemented to address specific demand and capacity issues in a manner appropriate to that particular point in time. This allows the parking management plan to remain fluid and adaptable to changing conditions as the area develops and grows.

The SPC strongly suggests that the 85% Rule be used as a decision making benchmark that should be surpassed before implementation of more aggressive parking actions in the Central Park plan area (e.g., on-street time stays, permit programs, etc.).

### c. Re-evaluate parking minimums currently in place within the area by providing options and incentives to developers to support efforts to build less parking (such options could include – but not be limited to - shared use agreements, Transportation Management Plans (TMP's), shuttle programs, satellite parking programs, fee-in-lieu options, etc.).

In an effort to support the consensus desire to preserve green space and transition more employees and students to alternative modes of access, this plan recognizes that minimum parking requirements must be balanced with land use goals. As such, developers should be allowed to propose options that ensure access for priority users, minimize costs and protect the open areas within Central Park.

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<sup>2</sup> For purposes of the 85% Rule, a node would be an area at least three blocks in size. Though the 85% Rule can be used to initiate discussion of strategies to mitigate parking constraints at any level, most often a “parking constraint” is evaluated within the context of a manageable supply of parking.



**d. Re-evaluate parking maximums as new alternative mode infrastructure (e.g., light rail, bikeways, etc.) comes on line.**

In the near future, parking maximums in the Central Park plan area will need to be coordinated with City planning efforts, to be compatible with future access infrastructure investments, and to meet commute trip goals. Current standards and requirements allow and encourage an oversupply of parking when contrasted with already adopted City goals and objectives for increasing use of alternative modes. With the advent of light rail, and/or increased bus transit the City must reassess parking maximums to correlate with the goal of reducing single occupant vehicle commute trips. This type of decision making should (a) be strategically timed with assured and meaningful implementation of new alternative mode infrastructure and (b) coordinated with on-going discussion and partnership with plan area stakeholders.

**e. Clarify design guidelines for any new parking development in Central Park**

As surface lots, structures, and park and rides are developed in Central Park, the City will need to create guidelines that (a) effectively accommodate new demands for access into Central Park and (b) preserves green space that is integral to Central Park's unique identity.

To develop these guidelines the City should:

- Work with developers to ensure that as new parking is developed; it does not dominate the visual quality of the area (whether it is in surface or structured facilities).
- Assure that parking structures are built at an appropriate scale and are sensitive to the "openness" of Central Park.
- Assure that parking structures contribute to the streets they abut and promote and encourage pedestrian traffic.

**f. The City should engage with the Columbia River Crossing project to discuss the impacts of a major Park & Ride within Central Park and work to identify strategies that assure the Park & Ride is built with the design guidelines established through this parking management plan.**

The potential positive and negative impacts of a large park and ride facility in Central Park were thoroughly discussed by the SPC. Recognizing the need to support alternative travel modes and protect the integrity of the plan area's access system, the SPC recommends that the City immediately engage the Columbia River Crossing project and require, at minimum, the following conditions:

- A Park & Ride should provide shared use opportunities for area stakeholders and as a resource for reducing the overall parking need within Central Park.
- Impacts of Park & Ride traffic and potential impacts on parking supply in Central Park (on and off-street) should be addressed by the owner of the Park & Ride facility and mitigated.
- Mitigation plans should be developed to address for park and ride facility "spillover." Agencies responsible for the mitigation plans should be identified.
- Plans for managing spillover in coordination with other park and rides in Vancouver should be developed and in place before opening of any new park and ride.

## **2. PARKING MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES: Near-term implementation (0 – 1 year)**

### **a. Maintain an on-going Stakeholder Parking Committee (SPC) made up of representative stakeholders of Central Park to serve as an oversight and resource group for implementation of new parking strategies in Central Park.**

The SPC recognizes that much of the work associated with this plan will be contingent on (a) new development in the area, (b) growth in demand and (c) availability of funding. Never the less, the group believes that a continuing role for stakeholders is necessary to assure that the Intent and Priorities established in the plan are addressed as appropriate. Though existing parking conditions are not considered to be severely constrained, the SPC recognizes that the impacts of the CRC, nearby SW Waterfront development, and the downtown Library project can quickly change the dynamics of parking in the plan area. Many of the near and mid term strategy recommendations outlined here will also require additional input from, and liaison with, the stakeholders. The SPC recommends:

- Establish a SPC for the plan area comprised of a representative group of plan area stakeholders.
- The charge of the SPC will be to advise the City on timing and implementation of parking strategies as developed in this plan and to monitor attainment of the intent and priorities established for this plan (see Appendix, Stakeholders Process Report).
- At the outset, schedule meetings no less than twice a year.
- With opening of the CRC light rail project, schedule meetings more frequently.

### **b. Define on-street parking areas based on primary use and standardize time limits. This will assure that priority users of Central Park receive preference for on-street parking stalls by area.**

Currently, there are various on-street time limit allowances throughout the plan area. Within the City supply of on-street parking, it is recommended that a more standardized format be developed and implemented. The City should initiate a process with the SPC to establish area standards and then move to re-sign on-street areas to reflect these standards. This process could include:

- Determine streets and their primary on-street time limit standard (e.g., 2 or 3 Hour parking most areas with “by permit” areas near the college and high school).
- An on-street permit system limited to Central Park users and managed to the 85% Rule.
- Development of a timeline for implementation of signage and/or a benchmark for initiation of an on-street permit program.

### **c. Develop framework for an on-street parking permit system for Central Park employees and students - as appropriate (using the 85% Rule) to minimize/eliminate non-Park users from the on-street system.**

As demand for parking grows, conflicts for access to on-street parking will increase. At this point, an on-street permit program may be necessary to (a) assure priority users are served and (b) to balance the mix between the need for employee/student parking and visitor capacity. To assure accommodation of priority users, on-street permits should be limited to employees and students based in Central Park. Over time, the total number of

permits allocated for use on-street will need to be reduced as the 85% occupancy standard is surpassed.

**d. Identify streets where on-street parking can be added as a means to increase visitor supply of parking.**

A cost effective way to increase parking supply is through the addition of on-street parking. An on-street stall, if created, is much less expensive than a surface or structured off-street space and is usually in a location (on-street) that a customer/visitor prefers. The SPC believes there are a number of on-street areas in Central Park that have potential for a parking “add back” as either new stalls or conversion of parallel parking to angled parking. The SPC recommends the following:

- Initiate process with a stakeholders committee and City traffic/transportation personnel to identify streets for additional on-street parking.
- Evaluate existing areas with parallel parking for angled parking.

**e. Stripe/re-stripe existing public inventory of on-street parking.**

Many on-street areas within Central Park are not clearly demarcated by striping. In some areas the existing striping is faded or difficult to discern. In other areas, it is not clear whether one can or cannot park on-street. To facilitate the desired outcome of convenience and ease of use, the SPC recommends that all available on-street parking in Central Park be clearly striped to guide users into stalls, improve ease of access and distinguish between allowed parking and no parking areas. Effective striping also reduces incidents of damage to vehicles and facilitates compliance. The City should also include routine and periodic re-striping of the public parking supply in the on-going City capital improvement budget.

**3. PARKING MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES: Mid-term implementation (1- 2 years)**

**a. Assure that existing Central Park parking is not used as a satellite location or “park and ride” for downtown employees or transit riders whose primary destination is outside of Central Park and that planning is in place to address opening of the CRC park and ride.**

The SPC recognizes that the Columbia River Crossing will likely result in the location of a large park and ride facility in Central Park. Issues related to its impact on the area and management are discussed in the Stakeholders Process Report (attached as Appendix). The SPC recommends that the City move now to assure that existing parking supply is effectively managed to accommodate identified priority users. Between now and the opening of the CRC park and ride, the City will need to consider timing for the implementation of programs and strategies that would be initiated upon opening of the park and ride facility.

**b. Facilitate shared use and/or lease agreements with owners of private surface lots to provide for an interim supply of parking per desired use(s).**

As much of the parking in the area is owned and controlled by private entities, shared use agreements cannot be compelled. The City can play a role in convening stakeholders to routinely evaluate parking constraints and opportunities in the plan area as a means to encourage shared use relationships. Therefore, the SPC forum, with City guidance, can be

an effective means through which the parking dynamics of the area can be understood and individual parking “needs” can be collectively discussed. The City should also explore with stakeholders the development of incentives to encourage shared use agreements. This could include signage, landscaping, lighting and sidewalk improvements, leasing and/or revenue sharing. Finally, the City could also serve as a resource to catalogue existing shared use agreements in the area that could be used as models for entities considering a shared relationship.

**c. Routinely conduct parking inventory analyses in Central Park area.**

The most effective way to time and implement parking strategies is within the context of objective data and information. The SPC believes the best benchmark for parking management is the 85% Rule. To gauge this standard, the City should conduct a parking inventory and capacity analyses for the on-street system on a routine basis. Private entities’ sharing in such efforts for their off-street assets (to match the City’s efforts) is something that would be explored in the SPC process. The SPC recommends that the City evaluate capacities within its inventory at least every two years. The SPC recognizes that this will come at a cost to the City. As such, cost, funding and budget resources need to be identified.

**d. Implement new time standards and on-street permit program if 85% rule is exceeded in 2.b & c., above.**

**4. PARKING MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES: Long-term implementation (2 – 5 years)**

**a. Prior to the construction of a CRC Light Rail, develop a strategy for future parking pricing.**

Though the SPC sees parking pricing within Central Park as a last resort, stakeholders should begin to discuss the thresholds of parking demand and constraints that if surpassed, would lead to the implementation of paid parking systems. This discussion would include evaluation of all the near and mid-term strategies suggested in this plan to facilitate parking availability and efficiency; the cost of new systems and infrastructure, as well as the cost to administer parking management in the future. A general framework for pricing resources in City ownership (primarily on-street) should be developed before the opening of CRC light rail to assure that if pricing were an option the City and stakeholders could move forward in a timely manner that assures Intent and Priorities are achieved.

## D. STRATEGY SUMMARY

Strategy	Immediate (0 – 6 months)	Phase 1 (0 – 12 mos.)	Phase 2 (12 – 24 mos.)	Phase 3 (24 – 60 mos.)	Comment
<b>POLICY ACTIONS</b>					
<b>1. a</b> Establish Central Park as distinct parking management area	✓				Recognizes unique character and needs within Central Park
<b>1. b</b> Formalize 85% Rule as decision making trigger	✓				Aids in guiding future decision making and strategy implementation
<b>1. c</b> Re-evaluate parking minimums	✓				Current “required” parking may discourage development and oversupply parking.
<b>1. d</b> Re-evaluate parking maximums	✓				Ties parking standards to new alternative mode infrastructure and commute trip reduction goals.
<b>1. e</b> Clarify design guidelines for new parking	✓				Establishes standards that correlate to goals for preserving green/open space.
<b>1. f</b> Engage CRC to discuss impacts of park and ride and negotiate operating standards	✓				Assures priority users are accommodated.
<b>NEAR TERM IMPLEMENTATION</b>					
<b>2. a</b> Maintain SPC process		✓	✓	✓	Assures consistency of plan and stakeholder input and involvement
<b>2. b</b> Evaluate and recommend time stay standards for on-street parking in plan area		✓			Provides better coordination of time stay to primary users.
<b>2. c</b> Develop framework for on-street permit system.		✓			Assures implementation of an effective program if 85% thresholds are surpassed.
<b>2. d</b> Identify streets where on-street stalls can be added or parallel parking can be reformatted to angled parking		✓	✓		Cost effective way to add parking to the supply.
<b>2. e</b> Re-stripe on-street parking supply		✓			Better identifies stalls for users and contributes to convenience and ease of use.

Strategy	Immediate (0 – 6 months)	Phase 1 (0 – 12 mos.)	Phase 2 (12 – 24 mos.)	Phase 3 (24 – 60 mos.)	Comment
<b>MID-TERM IMPLEMENTATION</b>					
<b>3. a</b> Implement strategies as necessary to prevent out of district users from monopolizing CP supply.			✓	✓	Plans in place to react to growth in demand. Agreements in place with CRC as to operation and management of future park and ride.
<b>3. b</b> Facilitate shared use agreements.			✓	✓	City and SPC act as “convener” of stakeholders to cooperatively understand supply dynamics and “share” resources to maximize parking availability.
<b>3. c</b> Routinely monitor parking utilization in City owned parking supply. Partner with private entities to coordinate parking inventory analyses of private supply. Conduct analyses at least every two years.			✓	✓	Provides information for informed decision making and to measure impact of parking management plan.  Supports 85% Rule
<b>3. d</b> Implement time standards and permit programs as developed in 2 b & c.			✓		Assures effective and efficient implementation of programs to respond to growth in demand and/or identified parking constraints.
<b>LONG-TERM IMPLEMENTATION</b>					
<b>4. a</b> Develop a strategy for future parking pricing in the City owned supply.				✓	Assures effective and efficient implementation of programs to respond to growth in demand and/or identified parking constraints.

## E. SUMMARY

The City of Vancouver and the stakeholders of Central Park are striving to manage growth to fit into the future vision for Central Park. A strong parking management plan is one tool that can assist the City and stakeholders in attaining its vision.

A strong parking management plan:

- Defines the intended use and purpose of the parking system
- Manages the supply
- Monitors use and responds to changes in demand
- Maintains the intended function of and priorities for the overall system



- Is financially sustainable

The parking management strategies recommended here were developed to optimize the use of existing parking resources in Central Park and realistically prepare for future growth in the area. These strategies include policy recommendations, near-term management recommendations, and on-going (mid- and long-term) management recommendations.

The strategies are presented in a logical sequence of activities and decision-making that build upon each other. We believe the parking management plan presented in this report will support on-going and sustainable vitality for Central Park by assuring access for customers, visitors, employees and residents of the area. The Plan will also continue to address the sensitive balance between the need for access and the strong desire to preserve the green and open areas that so clearly define Central Park.



*Clark College students and Oswald the CC mascot*

As with any parking management program, the success of the plan is dependent upon its use by the City and the continuing role of stakeholders. Parking management is an on-going process that requires the commitment of time, resources and public/private effort. The plan and its associated goals and strategies need formal endorsement by the City and continued support by the SPC to assure implementation and on-going management of the parking system.

## APPENDIX

### Stakeholder Process Report for The Central Park Parking Management Plan

A Central Park Stakeholder Parking Committee (SPC) was established to provide oversight, guidance and review of the parking management study process. The Committee was also charged with identifying key issues regarding parking, transportation and access in the Central Park Plan area and the impact of parking on the continuing vitality of the area.

Key stakeholders included representatives from both public and private entities, City staff, neighborhood association representatives, residents and property owners. These individuals provided significant assistance in the identification, description, and prioritization of issues to be addressed. They have been instrumental in the development of strategies and plans necessary to guide the parking management plan that is an outgrowth of this study.

The work of the SPC resulted in the development of functional alternatives and strategies to improve identified deficiencies and initiate a framework plan for the on-going management of, and planning for, access in the Central Park Plan area.

#### Process, Intent and Priorities

To develop a parking and access plan for the Central Park Plan area, it was first necessary to understand the dynamics of land use, access and growth that are unique to Central Park. Community perceptions and realities regarding constraints that limit existing institutional and business entities from expanding and those that limit Central Park's ability to attract new visitor growth needed to be fully considered. Similarly, opportunities and successful programs/strategies that contribute to efficient and manageable access in the area needed to be understood in order to ensure they are supported and enhanced by the new parking strategies developed.

Five work sessions with the SPC were held to establish a consensus view of challenges and opportunities and to establish the intent and priorities for parking management in the Central Park Plan area. The following are topic summaries from the SPC work sessions, beginning with a general consensus statement on access as established by the SPC.

#### General Statement on Access

At initiation of the work sessions on parking management for Central Park, it was important to establish with the group whether there was a need for any active parking management that would exceed current "status quo" levels. There was strong consensus among stakeholders that the special nature of the area and the need to preserve its unique character was paramount. To this end, the SPC developed the following statement.

*It is desired and expected that a growing number of people will want and need to access Central Park. As such, there will be an increase in the number of trips to Central Park over the current status quo. Stakeholders and the City need to begin to plan now for how such trip growth will be accommodated through better parking management and support for alternative modes.*

## Desired Outcomes

SPC members were asked to take a moment and state what they would like to see as an outcome of the parking management plan process. For example, if a new parking management program were developed, what beneficial outcomes would be derived? A bulleted list of those desired outcomes are provided below.

- Any new plan should provide for adequate parking for *users of Central Park*, which includes visitors, employees and students.
- Parking should be convenient to use and easy to find.
- The plan results in the provision of parking in a format that is screened and does not detract significantly from the green area and/or the natural character of Central Park.
- Parking should be shared to the highest degree possible, recognizing that private owners of parking should always maintain priority use of their own parking supply.
- Multiple users using space more efficiently should be a workable goal.
- Parking should be managed to avoid overspill (from other areas into Central Park and from Central Park into other areas).
- Parking should be managed to assure both a perceived and real sense of security.
- New parking requirements shall not limit property owners from achieving their master plans.

It was clear from the discussion of desired outcomes that SPC members felt that the current system of parking management lacks the integration and consistency necessary to achieve the larger vision of an area with growing demands for access. Reaching the desired goal of a usable and friendly parking system requires more clarity and coherency in how parking is, and will be, managed. The discussion confirmed that the City needs to begin to move beyond the status quo in managing both existing and future parking supply.

## Definition of Parking Users in the Central Park Plan Area

There are many “users” who access the Central Park Plan area and utilize its parking assets. The SPC felt it important to understand who uses the area for parking as a precursor to discussions and decision-making relative to those for whom parking would be prioritized. The SPC recognizes that as parking demand grows and constraints in the system emerge, conflicts between users will occur. Over time, specific City owned and controlled inventories within the plan area will require more aggressive management to assure that priority users are accommodated and other users are “parking where it is most beneficial to the vision of Central Park.”

The range of parking users now accessing the Central Park supply includes:<sup>3</sup>

### a. *General Visitors*

This would include those who go to Central Park for short purpose trips. These users generally need a time stay of less than four hours. Types of general visitors include:

- + Casual users - Those who go to Central Park to enjoy the park’s open spaces, recreational facilities and the Reserve.

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<sup>3</sup> The listing of parking users is not presented in any priority order. See Parking and Access Priorities below.

- + Business clients – Those who use the services of businesses/entities located within the Central Park area.

Heaviest demand for general visitors is most likely evenings, weekends and during events. The on-street system is likely the first point of access for these users.

b. *Students*

Students of Clark College and Hudson's Bay High School who are enrolled for classes and academic purposes. These users generally need from 2-Hours to all day.

Heaviest use is Monday – Friday during the academic year (September – May). Ideally, these users would be transitioned in to off-street parking supplies.

c. *Employees*

Those individuals who work for businesses, organizations or agencies that rent, lease, own or operate sites within the Central Park Plan area, and whose workplace parking is within the Central Park area. These users generally need all day parking.

Heaviest use is Monday – Friday, year round, though variations in demand will occur over the course of an academic year. Ideally, these users would be contained within off-street supplies.

d. *Vendors*

Those who arrive in Central Park to provide services to businesses and all other entities doing business in Central Park. This includes delivery, sales and maintenance service providers.

Heaviest use is Monday – Friday, year round. Ideally, these users would be provided access on-street and in off-street supplies, particularly those with short time stay requirements.

e. *Residents*

Those who live within the Central Park Plan area boundaries. Heaviest demand for residents is most likely evenings and weekends. Ideally, these users would be contained within off-street supplies.

f. *Non-Park users*

Those who go to Central Park to use its parking supply as a means to access another destination by another mode. This includes those who park in Central Park and walk, bike or take transit to another area like downtown Vancouver). These users generally want all day parking.

Heaviest use is Monday – Friday, year round. Ideally, these users would be transitioned out of the plan area.

## Parking and Land Use

The SPC recognizes the delicate balance that is currently in place between key business and organizational land uses and the open spaces that comprise (and define) the Central Park Plan area. The SPC agrees that providing parking to meet future demand within Central Park will require some critical value choices and concurs with the goal of “accommodating new demand for access to Central Park, while preserving green/open space that gives the area its identity.” The SPC also recognizes that this goal is extremely challenging from the point of view of land availability and cost. Nonetheless, future decision-making regarding parking should include the following considerations:

- Limit or restrict the amount of green area currently not in parking that will be allowed to transition to parking.
- To the degree possible, move future parking into structures or satellite areas served by connectors (e.g., transit, shuttles). Structures would need to meet specific design criteria established by the City (see Section 8, Parking Design, below).
- Overspill of Central Park parking demand into adjacent areas (neighborhoods) should be minimized.
- Shared parking arrangements should be pursued and negotiated to encourage parking between areas.

## Parking and Access Priorities

### *Parking Priorities*

Parking in the Central Park Plan area is not in infinite supply. An over supply of surface lot parking spaces will create a conflict between parking demand and the 2008 Central Park Plan goal to preserve green open space. Adding new supply will also be costly, particularly if new supply is provided in structures or underground. As increased demand creates constraints within the supply, the City will need to be more focused and targeted in managing its parking assets within the Central Park Plan area, which at this time is primarily comprised of on-street parking.

The SPC recommends that parking supply managed by the City of Vancouver be operated over time to assure that specific users are accommodated to the highest degree possible.<sup>4</sup> The SPC realizes that as more aggressive and targeted management of City supply occurs (e.g., on-street parking regulation), “non-priority” users will be directed into private supply or out of the plan area. This may result in the need for private owners of parking to increase their level of management and control of their parking inventories.

The SPC recommends the following priorities for parking in Central Park and encourages the City to consider these priorities as it implements strategies and programs in the management of its supply.

- All parking within the Central Park Plan area should be prioritized for people visiting, working, going to school or living in the district. Users outside these priorities would be

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<sup>4</sup> The PAC reiterates that this plan is specific to City managed supply and is not intended to mandate or require specific parking management strategies to private owners of parking. However, the PAC would encourage private owners of parking in the area to consider the principles and priorities of this plan as they manage their own supplies.

“managed out of the system” as constraints and conflicts in parking demand increase over time.

- On-street parking within the Central Park Plan area should be prioritized for visitors and students. The mix of such users should be determined by area (e.g., on-street parking near Clark College or Hudson’s Bay High School would have a higher mix of students).
- Off-street parking in the Central Park Plan area should be prioritized for employees as well as providing additional access for visitors, students and residents, particularly as the on-street system becomes increasingly constrained.
- The 85% occupancy standard should be used to manage the mix of city owned on-street parking users.
- Over time, and as the 85% occupancy threshold is exceeded, on-street parking should be managed to favor the “general visitor” - casual and business client user as defined in **Definition of Parking Users**, above.
- Businesses and public agencies should be encouraged to, consider the 85% occupancy strategy for managing their privately owned off-street parking systems.

### *Access Priorities*

The SPC agrees that as demand for access to Central Park grows, there will be a need to encourage meaningful shifts of demand into other non-auto modes. From the perspective of parking management, those users of the plan area most conducive to such a transition would be employees and students. As the City engages in parking management within Central Park its decision-making should be guided by the following objectives:

- As the on-street supply becomes constrained, more employees and students (who currently park on-street) will need to be transitioned into off-street supply (primarily owned by private entities).
- Concurrently, there should be a significant transition of employees and students to alternative modes, correlated to meaningful improvements in transit, bike/walk and rideshare infrastructure. This will be facilitated by more aggressive management of the City’s on-street supply (which could include time stay restrictions, on-street permit systems and/or paid parking).
- A growing number of General Visitors should have a greater range of options to access Central Park (e.g., transit, bike/walk and rideshare). However, the car will likely remain the primary source of access for these users into the near future and, therefore, visitor/customer car trips will likely increase over time.

### **The City’s Role in Central Park Parking**

The City can have a significant influence on parking in the Central Park Plan area in several ways. These include focused and targeted management of its own inventory in the plan area, partnerships with private entities to share resources, through the potential provision of parking supply (i.e., additional on-street stalls and/or off-street facilities) and through regulation. In moving forward with decision making regarding parking in Central Park, the SPC recommends the following as regards the role the City should play in balancing parking need and demand.

- The City should first and foremost manage the on-street system to assure; efficient and appropriate turnover and general visitor access is prioritized.



- The City should have a financial role in future off-street parking supply, particularly if general visitor demand for parking within Central Park exceeds the capacity of a well managed on-street supply.
- The City should always be looking to partner with other entities in Central Park to: increase the parking supply for priority users, share and consolidate access for priority users in strategic locations within the plan area and help reduce costs and maximize operating capacities.
- The City should consider new regulations that reduce minimum parking requirements as a means to: preserve land area in green space, support alternative modes, and augment design requirements and guidelines for any new parking developed.
- The City should act as a resource to convene stakeholders within the plan area to explore programs that improve efficiency and assure priorities are met, identify and create shared use opportunities and provide data/information to inform decision making.

## Street Systems

The SPC is highly supportive of the Great Streets concept and policy developed in the *Central Park Subarea Plan*. The Plan summarizes Great Streets as follows:

*Great streets provide places for people to walk, physical comfort, spatial definition, qualities that engage the eyes, transparency, a complementary built environment, quality of construction, a safe atmosphere for everyone, and treat pedestrians and bicyclists as important users, while continuing to provide access for autos and public transit.*<sup>5</sup>

In support of the great streets concept, the SPC recommends the following points be considered in future City decision-making. The SPC believes implementing strategies in support of these points will further the great streets concept and benefit parking in the area for priority users.

- Fort Vancouver Way, McLoughlin and Mill Plain need to be slowed down or “calmed” to provide a safer access environment in Central Park.
- Where possible, parking should be added to streets (or areas of streets) that currently do not have parking.
- Angled parking should be considered (where appropriate) as a means to increase parking supply.
- Wherever parking is added, the City should be sensitive to design and layout to assure that goals for increased parking supply, safety and traffic calming are met.

## Parking Design

The SPC realizes that new parking demand in the future will likely lead to some net new parking within the plan area. The City must remain sensitive to the overall goal for preserving green and open space. As such, a review and revision of parking design requirements is likely necessary for the Central Park area. To this end, the SPC would recommend that the following points be considered within the context of the City’s design guidelines for parking in Central Park.

- As new parking is developed, it should not dominate the visual quality of the area (whether that is in surface or structured facilities).

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<sup>5</sup> See *City of Vancouver Central Park Plan Update (January 2008)*, particularly Great Streets, CP-8, page 17

- Parking structures should be of appropriate scale and sensitive to the “openness” of Central Park.
- Parking structures should contribute to the streets they abut and promote and encourage pedestrian traffic. This would be accomplished through aesthetically pleasing ground floor active use(s), visitor space or screening.

### **Park and Ride Facilities**

With the possible advent of light rail accessing the plan area via the Columbia River Crossing, the SPC felt it imperative that the City and community understand the impacts a rail stop and park and ride could have in the Central Park Plan area. The SPC believes that a light rail stop within Central Park can have a positive impact on parking demand if more trips *to the* district were to arrive via the rail system. This would very much support the access priority (referenced above) to influence “a significant transition of employees and students to alternative modes.”

The SPC also believes that the primary purpose and priority of a park and ride facility is to serve users whose ultimate destination is “out of district.” As such, although park and rides are essential to promoting transit rider ship, they must be understood, managed and designed in a manner that complements the access vision and priorities of the community in which they are located. If not managed strategically, there could be a negative impact on parking within the plan district, particularly if park and ride demands spill out of the facility and in to the general supply of parking in the plan area. If this occurred, district parking would be taken away from priority users. However, a well managed park and ride could also provide beneficial “shared use opportunities” for users of the district, particularly during evenings and weekends when general visitor access demand can be significant. Mitigating conflicts with park and ride operations and capitalizing on opportunities should become a key negotiating point by the City and stakeholders with the light rail project.

To this end, the SPC recommends the following for consideration in its planning for park and rides as well as in its strategic decision making for parking management in Central Park:

- A park and ride project should demonstrate that the facility is integrated and contributes to the fabric of the Central Park Plan area. This would be accomplished by designing an aesthetically pleasing ground floor with active uses(s) - commercial, retail visitor uses. The active ground floor use should reinforce the continuity of pedestrian activity. Active-use ground floor design standards should be developed to ensure street and public plaza facing facades to read as an active wall with clear glazing, taller ceilings of 12 to 15 feet, articulated parapet design, and made of durable materials.
- Any proposed park and ride development should submit a Transportation Management Plan that, at a minimum, describes on-site management systems and operations that assure efficient traffic ingress and egress as well as how on-street and off-street parking impacts associated with the park & ride would be mitigated.
- Demonstrate that light, noise and traffic impacts on surrounding areas are mitigated.
- Demonstrate that the provision for shared parking use opportunities for area stakeholders and as a resource for reducing overall parking need within the area of the park & ride is accomplished.

## **Adjacent Areas – Residential Neighborhoods**

The SPC recognizes that as parking becomes more constrained within the plan area and more aggressive parking management strategies are implemented that Central Park user parking could spill over into adjacent residential areas. As this parking management plan seeks to limit “non-Park users” from Central Park parking supplies, it should also endeavor to contain Central Park user parking demand within the plan area. For this reason, the SPC would recommend the following for consideration by the City:

- If overspill from Central Park users adversely impacts adjacent neighborhoods, the City should implement neighborhood permit programs at the request of the affected neighborhoods.
- If there are opportunities to share supplies between areas in a manner that is mutually beneficial, then such opportunities should be pursued.

## **Measurement and Information**

The SPC believes that current levels of parking are sufficient to meet the current status quo demand. As such, initial implementation of parking strategies would more than likely be measures that make the system more understandable, improves or adds parking where appropriate and begins to identify constraints. However, the SPC also believes that within the next 3 – 5 years demands on the parking system will increase and constraints will exacerbate. As such, this plan calls for initiation of a measurement and information gathering process that will facilitate strategy implementation as “decision making benchmarks” are surpassed.

The SPC recommends the following to the City for consideration in the implementation of this plan:

- Develop processes through which the occupancy and use of on-street parking is routinely tracked and assessed. Such measurement should be based in the 85% occupancy standard. Findings of such routine assessments would be used to facilitate actions/strategies to assure Central Park access priorities are met.
- Such measurement should also include adjacent residential areas. Information from such assessments would be provided to neighborhood associations to assist in their decision-making regarding potential residential permit programs.
- Baseline data on how current employees and students access Central Park should be compiled. This would be similar to information produced in Commute Trip Reduction (CTR) surveys for large employers.
- An inventory of all on and off-street parking spaces in the Central Park plan area should be compiled and routinely update.

## **Cost**

Many of the changes recommended for consideration in this plan will come at a cost to the City. The SPC recognizes that forward movement on even near term implementation strategies (e.g., signage, permit programs, re-striping, etc.) are premised on the availability of funding and budget resources. Given the economic times, procuring funding for implementation of strategy elements may be difficult. The SPC recommends that the City initiate costing of specific strategy elements for this plan as soon as possible and begin work with City Council and other agency representatives to develop a funding strategy for parking management in the Central

Park Plan area. It is essential that there is an allocation of funds necessary to assure effective implementation of this plan.