

PROJECT #21-4494.00
6602 East 75th Street, Suite 210
Indianapolis, IN 46250DATE: April 25, 2019
TO: Damion Pregetzer
FROM: David Garza
PROJECT NAME: Downtown Ames Parking Study317.842.6890
walkerconsultants.com

OVERVIEW

The City of Ames and selected parking study consultant, Walker Consultants, held the Downtown Ames Parking Study Kickoff meeting Thursday April 25, 2019 at the Ames Chamber of Commerce conference room to initiate the downtown parking study and hold the first steering committee meeting.

Attendees:

David Garza, Walker Consultants (project consultant)
Damion Pregetzer, City of Ames (project sponsor)

Kelly Diekmann, City of Ames
Drew Kamp, Ames Chamber of Commerce
Kurt Jensen, First National Bank
Pat Breen, Aunt Maude's
Sara Spohnheimer, The Frame Shop

An overview of the study, process, and schedule was presented followed by a discussion of downtown parking related issues.

ISSUE IDENTIFICATION AND DISCUSSION

- Employee parking v. customer parking uses and needs;
- Parking enforcement practices;
- Is enforcement being carried out consistently and fairly;
- Parking rate escalations and the context for rate changes;
- Parking system operational requirements;
- Library parking;
- First National Bank parking;
- Main Street retail and restaurant parking needs and specific uses;
- Monthly parking;
- The mix of parking lot time limited spaces;
- Parking benefits district or business improvement district;
- Walking distance tolerances in downtown;
- Seasonality factors
- Biking storage requirements;
- Planning for future development parking needs;

- Door front access mentality;
- Farmers Market parking needs;
- Parking technology opportunities;
- Age demographics of community and comfort using technology;
- Meters accepting additional forms of payment;
- City Hall parking;
- New redevelopment opportunities;
- Heavy daytime usage today reflecting current mix of businesses;

The general group consensus is that parking space availability is typically not an issue in the downtown, however, there are peak hours of the day and days of the week in which parking space availability can become an issue on a block-to-block basis. The mix of on-street and off-street public parking options has provided business patrons and employees with available parking options. Walking between destinations and parking areas has been an issue in the downtown. Generally, people like to be able to be within front-door proximity to their destination and do not like to walk very far, said the group. Seasonality factors influence walking tolerances. Warmer weather encourages greater walking distances.

Parking rate increases have recently been an issue for certain Main Street businesses. However, available, free off-street parking has helped allay some concerns about customer and employee parking. The group agrees that parking for their employees is currently a greater challenge than for their customers. Steering committee members would like to see the Study address current parking needs and future parking considerations and explore program enhancement opportunities to support the goal of maintaining public parking access and space availability for customers and employees downtown.