

**REPORT FORMAT: REVIEW OF PRIMARY DRIVERS BEHIND THE
STUDY**

- Ⓟ A need to quantify parking supply in the Downtown Core area;
- Ⓟ A need to assess the existing level of service with respect to parking demand versus parking supply;
- Ⓟ A need to quantify existing parking problems;
- Ⓟ A need to develop options to mitigate identified parking problems;
- Ⓟ A need to assess traffic circulation within the Downtown Core and integrate traffic and parking systems; and
- Ⓟ A need to anticipate parking and traffic operational challenges into the future and develop strategies to cope with the future demands.

Ⓟ **A need to quantify parking supply in the Downtown Core area and a need to assess the existing level of service with respect to parking demand versus parking supply:**

The data collected tells us that the Downtown Core area has sufficient parking inventory to serve the needs not only of the City's residents, but of the larger CVRD. It is a difficult calculation to make because "sufficient" can be subjective. Depends upon the travel habits of the community, demographics, availability of transit, auto ownership (24,000 registered vehicles) density, degree of shared parking.

- ◆ We know that Duncan has double the number of stalls than Sidney (similar population catchment)
- ◆ We know that Duncan has a similar number of on-street stalls as the City of North Vancouver.
- ◆ We know that Duncan's utilisation of its on-street parking is far below these communities.

The City of Duncan has 1041 on street stalls, 1,015 off-street for a total of 2,056 stalls. (1 stall per 12 vehicles registered in the CVRD) Rule of thumb: 1 stall on street, which accommodates multiple sites is the equivalent to 1.5 to 2.5 stalls off-site which are site specific.

By comparison: Town of Sidney: 399 on street, 128 off street, totally 527 stalls

City of N. Vancouver: Central Lonsdale: 1500 on, 3500 off

Lower Lonsdale: 558 on, 2428 off

Ⓟ **A need to quantify existing parking problems:**

Some Parking Myths:

- ◆ "Tight" parking conditions are not necessarily a bad thing.
- ◆ Malls have free parking – and downtowns have to compete with that.
- ◆ Malls have more convenient parking.

Parking Truths:

- ◆ People will always complain about parking
- ◆ On-street parking is always undervalued yet in the most demand.
- ◆ Parkers will try every alternative before using off-street parking.

City's Responsibility: To manage parking effectively.

- ◆ Accommodate the needs of the high priority parkers first.
- ◆ Encourage low priority parkers to not use the high demand stalls.

City's Limitations:

- ◆ Cannot increase on-street inventory – yet this is where the pressure will be. (Angle parking will increase the inventory somewhat, but not extensively)

Problem Identification:

For the most part – the City does not appear to have any serious parking problems.

1. Some abuse of short term on-street stalls by long term users. Some high occupancy of on-street stalls by short-term parkers.

- ◆ There are some "hot spots", but there are good hot spots and bad hot spots.
 - Good ones refer to high use but with high turnover – healthy utilisation
 - ◇ Station Street area on Saturdays
- ◆ Bad hot spots refer to areas where there is suspected abuse:
 - ◇ Social Services area
 - ◇ CVRD Building area
 - ◇ Shaw building area
 - ◇ Behind Overwaitea

2. High utilisation of off street stalls

- ◆ Long term pay lot between Queens and James St.

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3. Parking for the people with disabilities is under-supplied

- ◆ CVRD has highest population in BC of people with disabilities
- ◆ 1800 placard holders – 3.6% of driving population yet only .4% of parking stalls downtown
- ◆ Placard holders who are employed are served well but not those on fixed incomes
- ◆ Could impose a perception that Duncan is not accessible which could have an economic impact.

4. Revitalisation related concerns

- ◆ Parking requirements inhibit affordable development
- ◆ No parking requirements area does not match the Development Permit area

Ⓟ **A need to develop options to mitigate identified parking problems:**

There are a menu of options available. Section 5.2 lists them and illustrates the Pros and Cons. They are presented in this way as a long-lasting "tool kit" for the City to pull out when it comes across problems in the future. The ultimate management strategy lies with the City.

Recommendations from the report:

- ◆ Increase the number of loading zones
 - ◇ *Organizes the behaviour of merchants, may lead to reduction in parking abuse of on-street parking*
- ◆ Change time restriction on one side of Station Street to 1 hour to encourage turn-over.
 - ◇ *This is a more "hands on" approach to enforcement. May not be appropriate for Duncan. Examples of the two schools of thought:
City of Vancouver has a blanket 2 hour restriction – easier to enforce and manage. They are not worried about downtown revitalisation – they are working on maximizing efficiency and transferring parking revenues into general budget.*
 - ◇ *City of Victoria chooses to have a very hands on turn-over management scheme – with 20 minute, ½ hr, 1 hour, 1 ½ hour and 2 hour metered parking. Parking plays a key role in downtown economy. It is revenue neutral – profits are rolled back into enforcement. They are also trying to improve the off-street parking.*
- ◆ Install directional signage to off-street lots
 - ◇ *Strategically placed signs can direct visitors and regular patrons/merchants to private and public parking opportunities.*
- ◆ Extend long term parking on Duncan Street as demand dictates.
 - ◇ *Adjacent lots are full – signalizes a demand and an opportunity.*
- ◆ Increase the number of parking stalls for the disabled on-street, designate convenient long term stalls in 2 hour lot next to Train Station.
 - ◇ *Parking utilisation will not be compromised. Economic incentive. Must have an accessibility strategy to accompany this however.*
- ◆ Improve walking conditions throughout the core – link off street facilities and neighbourhoods.

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◇ *Increasing the number of visitors who "park once" will reduce traffic circulation, increase spontaneous shopping, and magnify the social rewards resulting from patrons choosing to come downtown rather than the mall.*

◆ **Update/Review Parking Requirements in the City's Zoning Bylaw to encourage revitalisation.**

◇ *Utilisation of the City's parking supply has room to grow therefore the City is in the enviable position of being able to grant relaxation in order to encourage affordable development. However, parking requirements are an important leverage: a relaxation in stall requirements can be granted in lieu of much needed public works such as lighting, landscaping and pedestrian and cycling corridor development.*

◆ **Establish a Parking Management Committee**

◇ *Some communities, where parking management is divisive or a key component to an economic strategy (tourism), they have developed a committee made up of stakeholders charged with the job of managing the City's parking resource. Often the committee will develop promotion campaigns, (competing with Malls) education and enforcement (merchants abusing on-street) as well as policy development (parking for the disabled) and sustainable transportation initiatives (TDM). This committee can be a sub-committee of another group with related activities (business associations, transportation management associations.)*

Ⓟ **A need to assess traffic circulation within the Downtown Core and integrate traffic and parking systems:**

Traffic Circulation:

The recommendation is to install a one-way couplet system with Duncan Street and Canada Avenue. The Synchro model shows, that from all the options reviewed, a one way couplet has the greatest benefits from a network performance perspective.

Benefits:

- ◆ Improved pedestrian safety (only have to cross one direction of traffic at a time)
- ◆ Increased manoeuvrability
- ◆ Creates more capacity for a longer period of time.

Integration with Parking:

- ◆ Allows for narrowing of roads which in turn creates more opportunity to create more parking.

Ⓟ A need to anticipate parking and traffic operational challenges into the future and develop strategies to cope with the future demands:

As capacity increases on the Highway, access into the downtown (from the south and the east) will become more and more challenging, resulting in isolation of the core.

Alternative accesses must be looked at as both Trunk Road access and Coronation have a barriers.

There are other key corridor routes which will have increased pressures put on them:

- ◆Trunk Road/Government St. as it performs as a link to Lake Cowichan
- ◆Jubilee and its link with Cairnsmore.

It will be very important for the City of Duncan to participate in, or coordinate a Regional Transportation Plan so that the various jurisdictions are working together.

A pro-active approach will ensure that the City's road network continues to integrate its downtown core with the rest of the Cowichan Valley, and not be by-passed or 'cut off" from the growth and prosperity.