



RESIDENTIAL PARKING PERMIT DISTRICT (RPPD)

Parking Management Recommendations

April 2021

BOZEMAN^{MT}

Prepared By:



BACKGROUND

In January and early February of 2021, the City of Bozeman Economic Development Department hosted a series of community engagement meetings to build trust between the City and residents, increase utilization of the Residential Parking Permit Districts (RPPD), and surface any challenges the stakeholders are experiencing. The engagement session was undertaken at the direction of both the Bozeman City Commission and the Parking Commission.

Purpose and Approach

Parking management is a complex, and sometimes emotional, area of focus that must address numerous interests and perspectives. The purpose of the engagement process was to inform all stakeholders as to intent and desired outcomes of parking management in residential neighborhoods, provide a space beyond the public meeting format for the community to engage with staff, Parking Commissioners, and neighbors to learn and problem solve about RPPD issues.

To accomplish this, two meetings for residents of the RPPDs were held. The first meeting established a common understanding of Values and Guiding Principles that define the desired outcome of parking management in residential neighborhoods. This established the framework for discussion in 30-minute small breakout sessions to compile community feedback, which was reported back to the entire group. Information from this feedback shaped the key findings, and corresponding recommended solutions that were presented at the second meeting. Meetings were held:

- January 28, 2021 -Values and Guiding Principles
- March 3, 2021 – Recommended Solutions

This report summarizes information presented at these meetings with residential stakeholders. It also outlines the key challenges and concerns expressed by participants regarding the existing RPPD program format. Additionally, it documents solutions recommended by the consultant team to address concerns that were expressed and to serve as an action plan for staff and the community to move forward.

Parking Handbook

At the outset of the engagement process, the [Bozeman Parking Handbook](#) was created to serve as a guide to document and communicate the community foundation, intention and desired outcomes of parking policies. The Handbook will help facilitate decisions for future parking management policies that will help achieve the desired values for the community.

VALUES AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Parking management entails far more than simply providing access to a parking stall. It is a comprehensive system that integrates alternative modes of transportation (e.g., transit, biking, walking, ride-share) to maximize opportunities for people to efficiently access different locations across the city. How this system is implemented, and where investments are made, depends on a

city's set of Values for managing growth and Guiding Principles that clearly state desired outcomes for managing parking and transportation access, in residential neighborhoods and commercial areas.

The intent for both Values and Guiding Principles is to establish a basis for consensus and provide the City an evaluative filter for decision-making; ensuring that recommended actions and implementation of City plans are shaped by adopted policy and best practices. City Values and Guiding Principles for parking management were presented and discussed with stakeholders at the first RPPD public engagement session on January 28, 2021. These are listed below.

Values

The following values prioritize outcomes for future city development in alignment with the City Commission Strategic Plan adopted in 2018. A more detailed explanation of these values and specific alignment with the Strategic Plan is provided in the Parking Handbook.

ENVIRONMENT

- **Address City Climate Goals** – Provide diverse transportation options (e.g., walk, bike, bus, remote work, rideshare) to reduce climate impacts.
- **Prevent Sprawl** - Use land more efficiently to reduce over-building roads, infrastructure, and parking surfaces.
- **Build a Healthy Environment** – Encourage walkable development patterns.

COMMUNITY

- **Accessible Neighborhoods** – Residents should be able to park on their street and have guests easily visit.
- **Strong Local Businesses** - Businesses should have parking accessible to customers in order to thrive.

CIVIC RESPONSIBILITY

- **Public Fiscal Responsibility** – Cover the costs of programs and services with appropriate fees.
- **Community Engagement** – The city will employ transparent, upfront, clear communication to gather input from the public to help shape policy.
- **Equity** – Public policy should strive to eliminate negative impacts on those least able to bear costs.

Guiding Principles

Parking management is intended to maximize public investments in infrastructure that align with the established values. The following Guiding Principles for managing the public supply of parking are reflective of priorities established in the Downtown Strategic Parking Management Plan that was adopted in 2016. A more detailed explanation of these Guiding Principles is also provided in the Parking Handbook.

- 1) **Neighborhoods** – The City will ensure adequate parking for residents and guests in neighborhoods
- 2) **Downtown** – The City will ensure adequate parking for customers and visitors downtown
- 3) **Role of Private Sector** – The private sector (developers and employers) is primarily responsible for providing employee parking.
- 4) **Decision-Making** – Objective and publicly available data and performance measures will determine when new types of management or construction of additional supply is needed.
- 5) **Efficiency** - Unlock existing parking supply and promote use of alternative modes of transportation. Create capacity through strategic management of existing supply (public and private), reasonable enforcement, and integrating parking with alternative modes. The efficient use of parking is encouraged by “unlocking” supply. The amount of available supply is determined by two factors 1) measuring performance of the existing parking supply through objective data collection, and 2) evaluating demand against an occupancy standard determined by neighborhoods and the Parking Commission that reflects the character of the neighborhood. This allows some areas to maximize the use of parking areas, while others will retain more vacancies. On-street parking is a finite supply. By maximizing the use of the supply, it reduces the need to build more stalls within the overall system.

RPPD STAKEHOLDER CHALLENGES AND DESIRED OUTCOMES

Information derived from the January 28, 2021 breakout sessions was consolidated into several key themes that were consistently expressed by stakeholder participants. The City believes that this community input reflects important issues for consideration in managing the RPPD.

Below, these themes are summarized. Each theme is accompanied with a brief descriptive narrative to better clarify each challenge. These challenges and desired outcomes shape the recommended solutions outlined later in the Section - RPPD Recommended Solutions.

The following key findings and recommended solutions were presented at the March 3, 2021 RPPD neighborhood stakeholder meeting. Solutions were crafted to address specific concerns and challenges derived from the community feedback gathered during the meeting on January 28, 2021. These priorities reflect important issues for consideration in managing the RPPD.

There were several consistent themes heard from neighbors as to currently perceived challenges inherent to the existing RPPD program format. These challenges and desired outcomes shape the recommended solutions outlined later in the Section - RPPD Recommended Solutions.

Visitor Pass Process is Challenging – Simplify and streamline the process to access visitor passes.

Transparent Fees – Current permit fees include the cost of citation labor without the benefit of citation revenue. This may create higher annual permit costs.

Consistent Enforcement – Not clear when enforcement patrols the neighborhood and how recurrent issues are addressed.

MSU Factor – Fraternity/sorority houses may foster long-term parking on street and game day parking can be an issue.

“Efficiency” Guiding Principle: Residents of the MSU RPPD expressed concern around and resistance to unlocking existing supply. Residents of the BHS RPPD shared anecdotes of underutilized supply. There is significant variation within both RPPDs of areas with availability of and lack of parking supply.

Safety – Include Safety as a Value/Guiding Principle in considering parking management solutions with the following recommended language:

Parking Systems will be Safe - The on- and off-street public parking systems and related programs will be managed to be safe, reliable, user-friendly, and attractive. They will complement the quality of the areas/districts they serve for visitors, residents and employees. Safety involves effective coordination of enforcement, lighting, secure linkages between destinations and quality infrastructure (on-street, in lots, garages and alternative modes).

RPPD POTENTIAL CONFLICTS WITH CURRENT CITY VALUES AND PARKING MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES

The existing format of the MSU and BHS RPPD's creates conflicts with city Values and Guiding Principles (as summarized above). The City recognizes that the two existing RPPD's were established before adoption of the 2016 Downtown Strategic Parking Plan and the 2018 City Commission Strategic Plan. To this end, the City wants to address the community concerns stated above in the existing RPPD's and ensure that moving forward, future RPPD's are managed more in accordance with current City policy.

Areas where the current RPPD format conflict with current values and principles are summarized below. These conflicts were presented to participants in both the January and March 2021 public engagement meetings. Further clarification of these issues is below.

Exclusive use of public right of way - The current RPPD program format only allows residents, home offices, and guests to park on the public right-of-way. This prohibits non-residents from

parking within the RPPD boundaries. This is a format that does not conform to industry best practices for use of the public right-of-way within a residential permit district. Best practice protocol would be to (a) prioritize use of residential right-of-way for residents and their guests, then (b) manage that priority through use of residential tenant/guest permits and time limited parking (e.g., 2 Hours). Time limited parking would serve to discourage overspill of employees from adjacent commercial areas but allow resident and non-resident visitors access to unused supply (simplifying resident guest pass need to only long-term stays).

Equitable use of a public asset – The current RPPD format essentially treats the public right-of-way as a private street, which is not the case within any other residential neighborhoods or managed parking area in Bozeman (or most cities nationally). City codes can identify priority users within a public-right-of way (e.g., transit lanes and stops, bike facilities, short versus long-term parking, etc.) but should not prevent use of any underused supply to the general public. Priority parking within public assets should be managed rather than reserved.

Maximizing public supply - A key goal of the strategic parking plan is to efficiently manage the public parking supply. The exclusive use provision of the existing RPPD conflicts with this goal. Like a reserved parking stall within a parking garage, which sits unused if the reserved permit holder is not parking, it creates significant inefficiencies in the supply, encourages overbuilding parking and auto use¹, and denies access to other users.

Financial viability – The city's goals and principles for parking call for systems that are financially self-supporting. Exclusive use provisions within parking systems reduce the ability to provide (and sell) parking based on best practices for managing demand. As with maximizing the public supply, financial viability goals result in increased revenue, better integration with alternative modes, and an overall reduction in the amount of parking built over time. Also, in situations of exclusive use (as in the example of reserved parking in a private garage) costs are usually higher to the user as they are expected to pay a premium for the benefit of exclusivity. This is not the case within the current RPPD format, nor the desired outcome expressed by the community.

RPPD RECOMMENDED SOLUTIONS

The following solutions were presented at the March 3, 2021 RPPD neighborhood stakeholder meeting. Solutions were crafted to address specific concerns and challenges derived from the community feedback gathered during the meeting on January 28, 2021.

Solutions are provided in an Immediate/Short-term (6 – 12 months) and Mid-term format (12 – 24 months) implementation format. Those charged with leading these efforts is provided under the column "determination to proceed." Immediate/Short-term solutions address actions that require minimal (if any) funding, presenting quick and timely solutions to some commonly expressed

¹ Exclusive use encourages driving given that as the stall is "reserved" there is no need to consider other modes of access.

community concerns. Mid-term solutions will require additional time and funding and address concerns that will result in better efforts at longer term community discussion, planning and decision-making.

Immediate/Short-Term: 6-12 months

Topic	Description	Determination to Proceed
Recognize the Value of Safety	Update Parking Handbook with a new Guiding Principle pertaining to safety with language provided in RPPD Stakeholder Challenges above. Report back to community on process and completion.	Staff
Visitor Pass	Create a neighborhood focus group to design an improved online visitor pass system. Evaluate options that include both on-line and other format solutions. Examine and document current flaws, evaluate capacity for changes in administrative workflow and costs to potential options.	Staff
Consistency in Enforcement	Improve communication from city on enforcement schedule, and responsibilities.	Staff
Permit Fee Transparency	Remove consideration of both citation labor cost and revenue from permit fee amount. Only charge a fee amount for the direct administration cost of managing and monitoring permit system. All future parking citation labor and revenues will be accounted for in a separate cost center independent of parking management operations.	Parking Commission
New Residential Parking Districts	The existing RPPD program should not be expanded as it conflicts with city values/guiding principles. If new residential parking management districts are desired, they should be implemented under the Parking Benefit Zone (PBZ) code.	Residents/Parking Commission

Medium-Term: 12 - 24 months

Topic	Description	Determination to Proceed
Neighborhood support and funding	Members of the Inter-neighborhood Council (INC), University Neighborhood Association, Cooper Park Neighborhood Association, and Midtown Neighborhood Association should present the request for additional commitment of staff time and resources to a specific area in the city with exclusive use of a public asset. Secure commitment from neighborhood leadership that additional cost of data collection will be applied to permit fee cost.	Parking Commission and Neighborhood leadership
Collaborate with MSU	Work with MSU Parking Services, INC Leadership, sororities and fraternities to develop collaborative and realistic solutions to parking issues in the RPPDs.	Staff
Collect Data	Develop success metrics and collaboratively collect data within the RPPD and with MSU	Staff

<p>Implement Holistic Management Solutions with MSU</p>	<p>City staff develops solutions based on data that achieves desired outcomes. With data evaluate potential benefits of strategies that might include varied/graduated permit fees for multiple-permit dwellings, game day/event management, and abandoned vehicles. Implementation approved by Parking Commission.</p>	<p>Parking Commission</p>
--	---	---------------------------

SUMMARY

Community stakeholders from existing RPPD neighborhoods provided valuable insights into challenges that they view within the current RPPD format. There was an overall general support for both the City's Values and its Guiding Principles for parking management. There was also strong support for the current operating format of RPPD's (i.e., exclusive use) and equally strong opinions regarding the need for transparency in the program, keeping costs affordable and using data to address on-going management and decision-making. Equally important was the City's continued support of its values and the City's goals related to the equitable use of public assets, maximizing use of its public supply, and financial viability.

The solutions offered here provide a means to both improve the existing RPPD format (recognizing the unique factors that led to their establishment before adoption of the 2016 Downtown Parking Strategic Plan and the 2018 City Commission Strategic Plan) and assure that new residential permit districts will follow the Parking Benefit Zone format for residential permit districts recently adopted into the City Code.

On-going communications between the City and stakeholders, and a commitment to data, will facilitate transparency and sound decision-making.