

Study Session

Draft Parking Strategy Framework

Fort Bragg Planning Commission

December 13, 2023



Study Session Sequence of Events

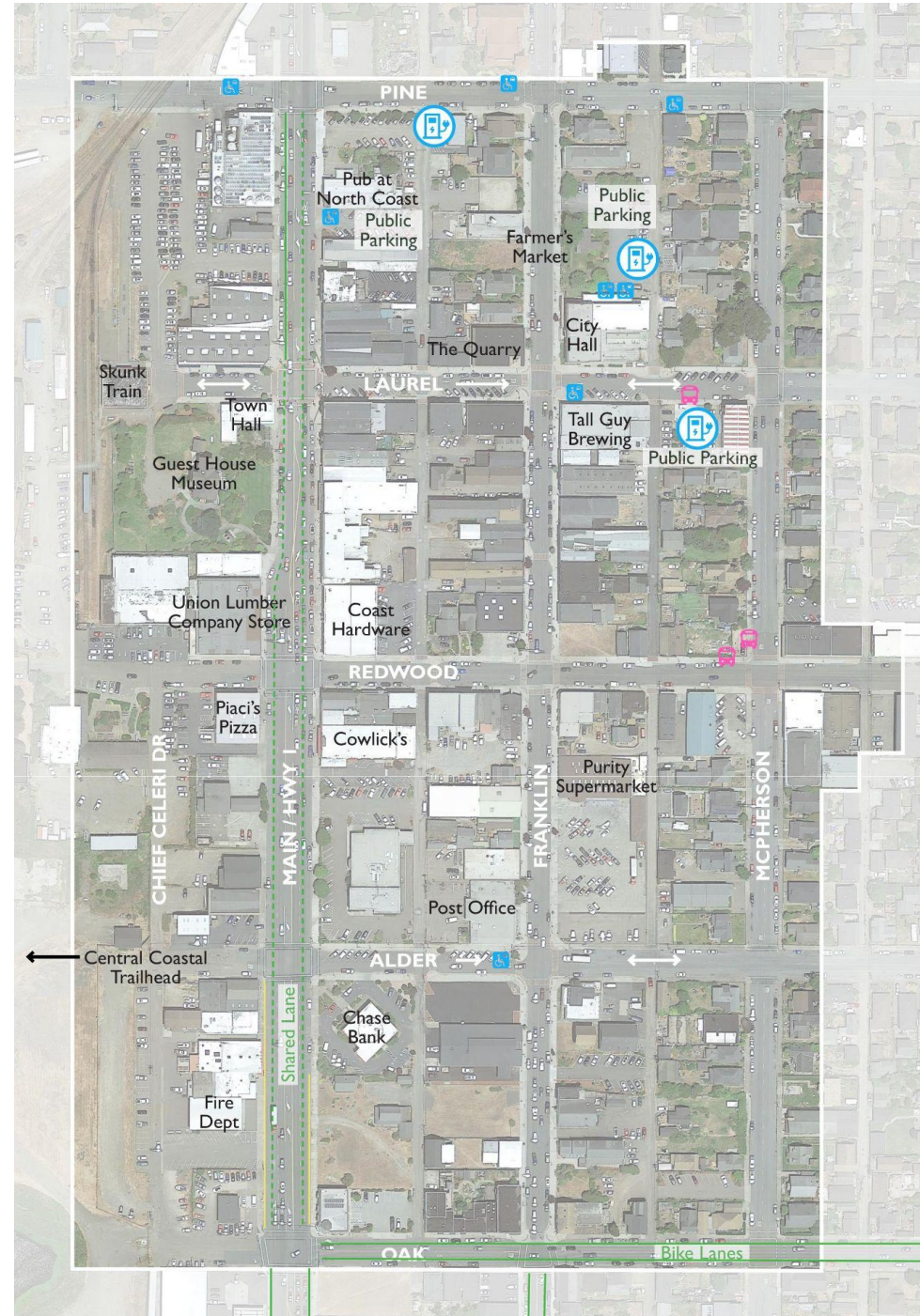
1. Staff introduction to the project
2. Presentation of project process and strategy framework with opportunities for discussion amongst Commissioners, Staff, and Consultant
3. Public Comment
4. Planning Commissioner's questions and discussion

Project Process

- Previously
 - Existing Conditions and Field Investigation
 - Community Outreach
- **Today**
 - **Planning Commission review of the strategy framework**
- Upcoming Documentation
 - Plan Report and Draft Code Updates
- Upcoming Review in early 2024
 - Planning Commission review of draft code edits
 - City Council review of near-final study and code
 - City Council review on Consent agenda

Three Basics Steps

- **Observe and Express:**
Conditions, Opportunities,
and Challenges
- **Discuss and Evaluate:**
Goals, Options, and
Impacts
- **Formalize and Enact:**
Intentions, Policies, and
Actions



BOLD COLORFUL

Subdued gray

Housekeeping Topics

Study will address these - but they are not core topics for today

OUTDOOR DINING IN PARKING LOTS



- City currently deliberating options via different project
- Possible approach: “over-the-counter” review if under 1,300sf; minor-use permit needed above 1,300sf

ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING



- Study will document local and statewide EV code
- City may continue to deploy EV charging on public lots
- Private parking operators are also adding more EV charging
- Not recommending installing on-street parking EV charging

Housekeeping Topics

Study will briefly address, but not a core topic for today

REGIONAL TRANSIT



- Community feedback reports support for expanded transit
- Integrate MTA signs and stations into Fort Bragg streetscapes
- Consider park-&-ride lot options in and near Fort Bragg

WALKING AND BICYCLING PROJECTS



- Parking Study supports City's active mobility goals
- Parking strategies will align with Design Guidelines and Mendocino County Active Transportation Plan

Topics to Discuss

PARKING REQUIREMENTS AND IN-LIEU FEE FOR DEVELOPMENT



- Minimums are lower in CBD than citywide; maximums also apply
- In-lieu: est'd 2008; Cut by 50% in 2011; waived for change-of-use 2012
- Several discretionary processes exist for reducing the requirement

Topics to Discuss

CITY-RUN PUBLIC PARKING OPTIONS



- Three officially marked Public off-street lots; two with EV charging

Topics to Discuss

ON-STREET PARKING MANAGEMENT



- Two-hour time limit on most downtown streets
- City has not prioritized strict enforcement

Topics to Discuss

ALTERNATIVE USES OF STREET PARKING - OUTDOOR DINING



- City is also addressing mobile vending tonight
- Could consider more permanent street seats and eateries

Topics to Discuss

BICYCLE PARKING



- Bicycle parking is scattered around
- Could add more public bike parking
- May want to update bike parking code for development projects

Topics to Discuss

TROLLEY CIRCULATOR



Ukiah, CA

- Consider a seasonal trolley circulator shuttle

General Plan Land Use Policies

Goal LU-3 “Ensure that the Central Business District remains the historic, civic, cultural, and commercial core of the community”

- LU-3.2 “Support mixed use development... in the CBD”
- LU-3.3 “In the CBD...encourage residential uses, mixed residential, and commercial uses, and the preservation of historic structures”
- LU-3.4 “Encourage infill development of vacant and underdeveloped land in the CBD...”
- LU-3.6 “Encourage the adaptive re-use and more complete utilization of buildings in the CBD...”

Said another way:

People places

Active uses

Economic diversity

*(Overabundant parking
doesn't support those)*

General Plan Circulation Policies

- C-5.1 “...higher priority on maintaining a sense of place...than on efficient traffic flow”
- C-6.1.1 “...update...the parking in-lieu fee program”
- CD-2.4.1 “Implement shared parking agreements wherever feasible”

Your General Plan is pretty solid for prioritizing strong, flexible places over absolute fast, super easy driving

Existing Policy - Challenges and Tensions

18.10.010 - Purposes of the Inland Land Use and Development Code, part D

“Minimize automobile congestion by

promoting pedestrian-oriented development,

safe and effective traffic circulation, and

adequate off-street parking facilities”

Great!

Makes sense

Hmm...more parking leads to more driving¹

Be clear-eyed about effects and what “adequate” means

¹In short, the more parking that is provided, the more that residents drive”, from *What Do Residential Lotteries Show Us About Transportation Choices?*, Millard-Ball, et al. Urban Studies, 2021. Source: <https://transfersmagazine.org/magazine-article/issue-8/what-do-residential-lotteries-show-us-about-transportation-choices/>

Existing Policy - Challenges and Tensions

C-1.1 “Balance the need to increase motor vehicle capacity with the need for complete streets that provide facilities for bicycle and pedestrian circulation and commercial viability”

Is it necessary to increase motor vehicle capacity?

“Balance” still too often defers to car travel

C-6.1 “Continue to construct additional off-street parking...”

What is the need case?

Parking is a dev’p barrier

C-6.1.5 “...incentives for employers and employees to park off-street...”

What incentives are actually possible?

C-15.1.1 “Develop a City-wide Traffic Mitigation Fee”, CD-2.4.2 “Consider establishing a parking assessment district...”

City has lately been focused on reducing fees and costs

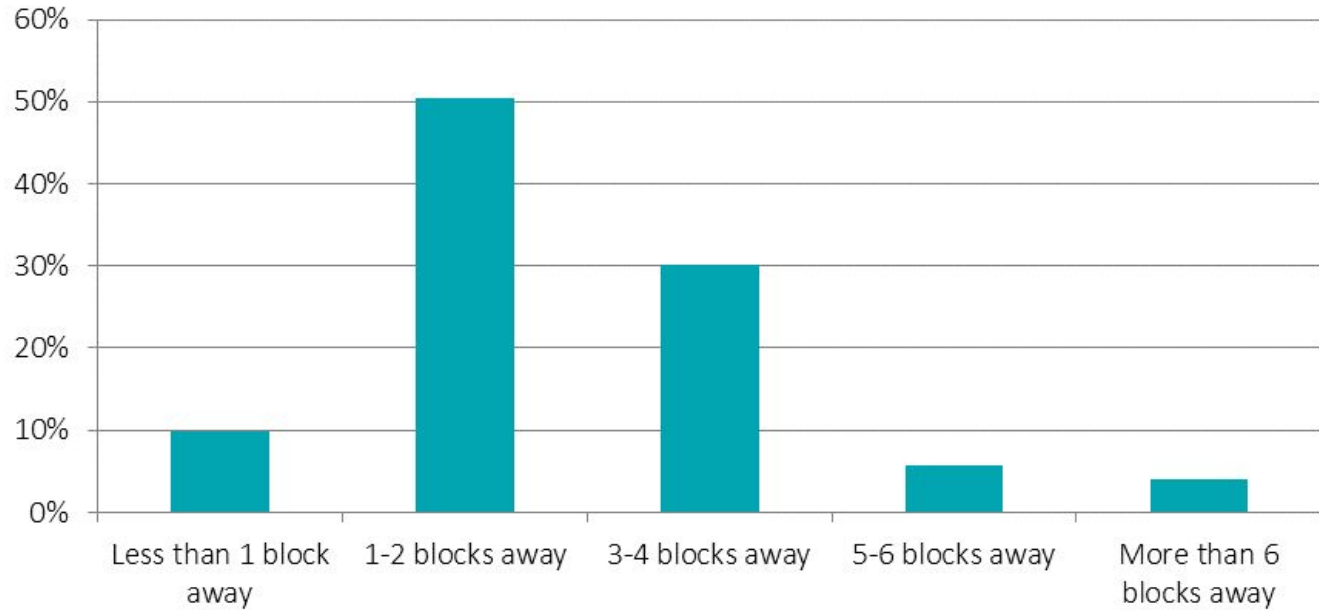
Parking is Usually Available



Community Survey

Most participants **do not perceive a parking problem** and indicated they would be *willing to park and walk farther than they currently do.*

When you visit downtown Fort Bragg, how far are you **willing** to park from your destination?



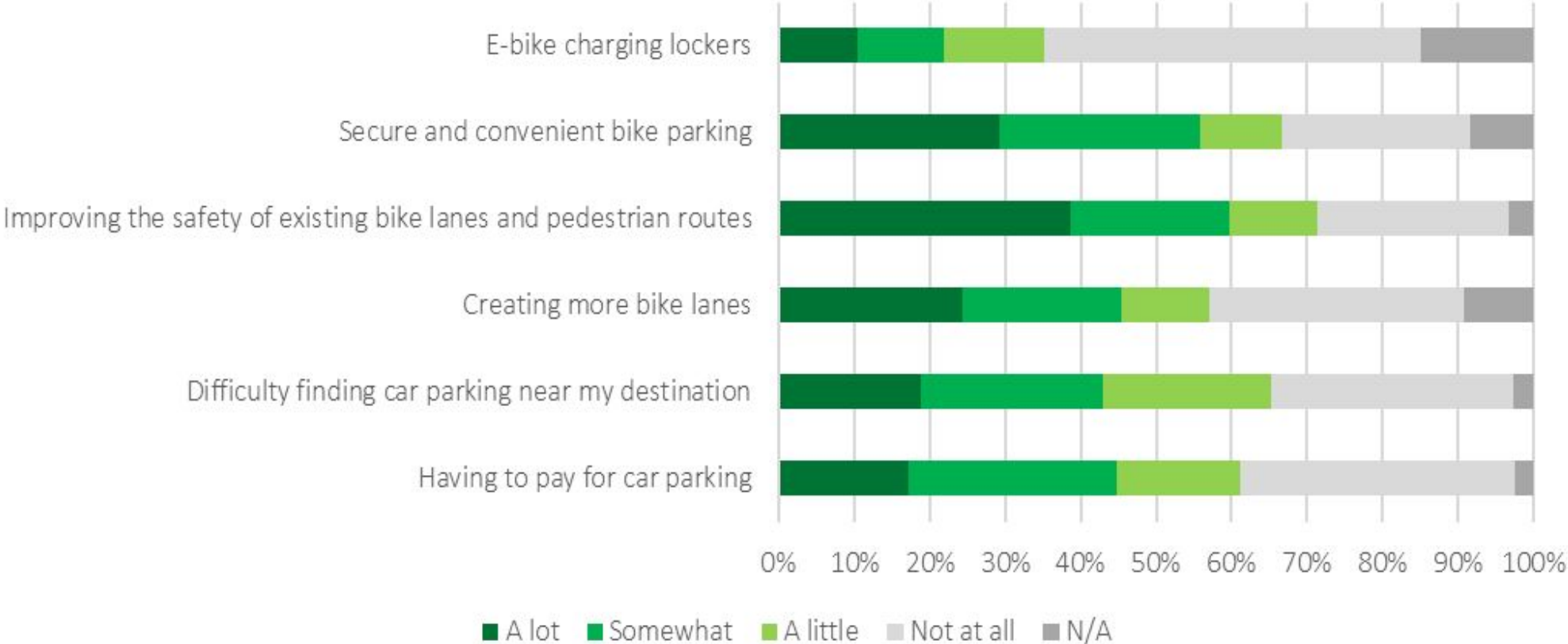
When you visit downtown Fort Bragg, how far do you **typically** park from your destination?



Community Survey

- Results suggest it is also possible to develop strategies and use resources to significantly reduce parking demand, rather than focusing only on increasing supply.

How much would each of the following increase the likelihood that you choose to bike or walk to and from downtown?



Community Survey

Downtown Access Strategy	Share selecting “very” or “somewhat” helpful
- Installing signs and maps showing available transit options and bike routes	87%
- Improving sidewalks, bike infrastructure, and bike parking	81%
- Increasing parking supply through shared parking agreements	81%
- Increasing availability of convenient parking through demand-based pricing	53%

Farmer's Market Booth - August 16

- Dot voting was used to identify desired areas of improvement.
- Most verbal comments emphasized the need to improve the pedestrian environment, shared mobility options, and bike parking. **Comments centered around prioritizing access, safety, and convenience for modes of transportation other than driving.**

Desired Area of Improvement	Number of Votes
Walking/biking	9
StrEATery/Street Seats	4
Car-free Streets	3
Navigation/Maps	2
Lot Parking	1
Street Parking	0
Electric Vehicle Charging	0

Your Ideas for Downtown Fort Bragg

Sus ideas entro de Fort Bragg

Please select all the reasons you travel to Downtown Fort Bragg.
¿Para qué viaja al Centro de Fort Bragg? Seleccione todas las que apliquen:

I work Downtown Yo trabajo en el Centro	I live Downtown Yo vivo en el Centro
For shopping and dining Para ir de compras y a restaurantes	For professional services, such as doctor visits Para servicios profesionales, como visitas al médico
For parks and recreation Para parques y recreación	For special events (including today) Para eventos especiales (Incluida hoy)

What would you like Downtown Fort Bragg to have more of or better?
¿Qué le gustaría que el Centro de Fort Bragg añadiera o mejorara?

Car-free streets Calle sin coches	StrEATery / Street Seats Asiento de la calle	Walking / biking Infraestructura para caminar / Ir en bicicleta	Navigation / Maps El sistema de orientación
Lot parking Estacionamiento	Street parking Estacionamiento en la calle	Electric vehicle charging Carga de vehículos eléctricos Ir en bicicleta	Other? BHH PPG 15 PDP 142 Caminar, Bicicleta, Ir en bicicleta

On the Map

En el mapa

- Put a dot where you park your car when you come to Downtown
Ponga un punto donde estaciona su auto cuando viene al centro
- ~ Draw the route you take when you walk or bike to Downtown
Dibuje la ruta que toma cuando camina o va en bicicleta al centro
- Put a dot on your favorite destinations
Ponga un punto en sus destinos favoritos

Community Town Hall - August 17

- Parking availability isn't currently a big problem
 - 70% indicated parking is “usually or always” easy to find
 - 20% indicated parking is “sometimes” easy to find
- **Shuttles** may be worth considering for festivals and events
- Support for developing **shared agreements** to use existing parking more efficiently, to increase access and convenience while preserving land

What strategies would you support to improve access to Downtown?



Assumptions for Parking Management

- City is not prioritizing strict parking enforcement
 - Tolerable, because parking isn't currently congested
- The practical lack of parking minimums in downtown has become the default condition
 - In-lieu fee for change-of-use has been waived since 2012
 - Downtown hasn't had major new development activity
- City needs to bring more certainty to in-lieu fee (keep it or not)
 - Recurring annual waiver process is impractical
- Adding payment to public parking is not on the table currently
 - Current non-congested parking doesn't warrant it
- Driving and parking will remain an important way to get downtown
- "Park once" is a very viable strategy to support
- City is uncertain about the necessity of adding more off-street public parking
 - General Plan calls for it, but demand may not warrant it

Places and people are the destination and appeal.

Driving and parking is just one way to have access.



Empty parking is wasted opportunity.

Manage parking to make what exists available for broader ranges of users.



The land used by parking is very valuable.

How should land be used to support downtown vitality?



San Luis Obispo, CA

Build more parking only if supply is truly congested.

First seek to increase functional supply through parking management.



Vancouver, WA

Parking gets supplied for many reasons.

Having laws that require parking are often unnecessary.



Bainbridge Island, WA

Parking should be managed granularly for different users.

Different locations and rules for parking help meet different people's needs.



Seattle, WA

Astoria, OR

San Luis Obispo, CA

San Luis Obispo, CA

TOPIC

Off-street parking requirements for CBD development projects and the in-lieu fee option

KEY QUESTIONS

- Keep, reduce, or eliminate?
- If minimums kept, keep in-lieu fee option?
- Only for some uses (commercial, residential)?

TO CONSIDER:

- **Eliminate parking requirements for all uses**
 - Formalizes the conditions that have existed since 2012 for change-of-use projects
 - Makes desirable, urban infill projects more feasible, especially on tight CBD sites
 - Gives developers flexibility to choose their own parking supply (many will choose to build some)
- **Eliminate in-lieu fee**
 - Becomes irrelevant without parking minimums
 - City wants to continue keeping development fees low
 - If kept (along with minimums), is likely to generate only small fund increases
- **Promote shared parking agreements as an option**
 - CBD has underused private parking supply for potential sharing
 - Gradual development pace in CBD is unlikely to cause parking “shock”
 - California AB 894 (effective 1/1/24) has rules requiring shared parking options
- **Reduce or remove minimums Citywide?**

Existing Parking Requirements for CBD Development Projects

CBD-specific parking minimums

Land Use Type:	Vehicle Spaces Required
Bars, cocktail lounges, restaurants, and taverns	1 space for each 8 seats or 1 space for each 400 sf of floor area, whichever would yield more spaces.
Lodging Bed and breakfast inns Hotels or motels Residential dwelling units	1 space for each unit, plus 1 space for the manager or owner. 1 space for each dwelling unit.
Retail commercial and office uses	1 space for each 600 sf of floor area.

Citywide maximums also apply:

- Bars, lounges: 1 per 3 seats or 100sf
- Restaurants: 1 per 40sf dining area
- Multifamily housing: 2.25/unit
- General retail: 1 per 200sf indoor floor area
- Et cetera

TOPIC

Examples of Removing/Reducing Parking Minimums

- **Arcata, CA (pop. 18k)**
 - No minimums in Commercial Central, except for housing 7+ units
 - Citywide maximums
- **Central Point, OR (pop. 19k)**
 - Eliminated minimums citywide in early 2023
- **Healdsburg, CA (pop. 12k)**
 - No minimums in downtown for non-residential uses under 15,000sf
- **29 Palms, CA (pop. 28k)**
 - Downtown commercial and public zoned land - no minimums
- **Mountain Home, ID (pop. 15k)**
 - No parking minimums in Downtown Overlay area zone
- **Dozens more around the U.S.A.**

TOPIC

Additional City-run Public off-street parking

AN EASY FIRST STEP:

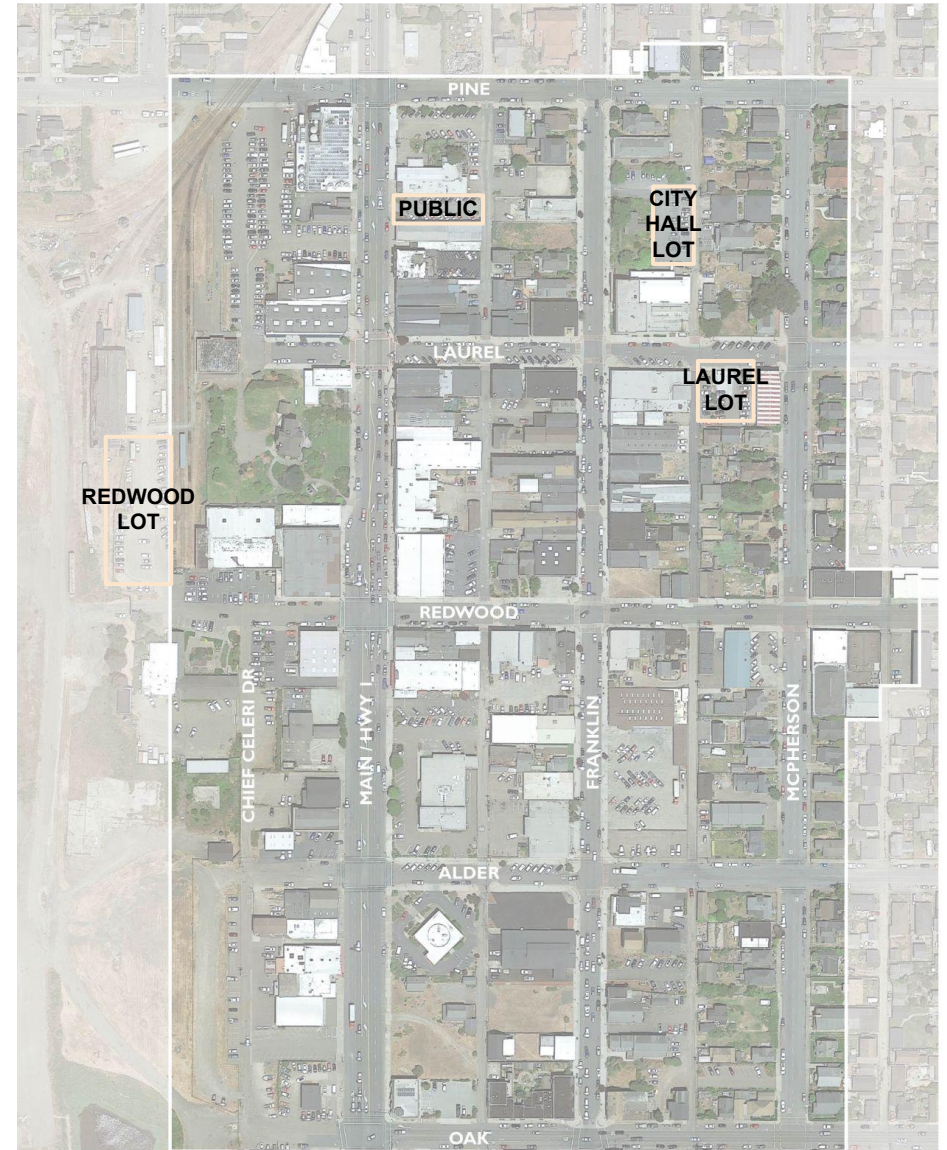
Improve wayfinding to existing public parking

- Some signage is outdated - points to wrong place or isn't marked



KEY QUESTIONS

- Provide more?
- If yes, where?
- Funding sources?



TOPIC

Additional City-run Public off-street parking

TO CONSIDER:

If needed, secure access to:
Existing unused parking (Site 1)

- Privately owned, chained off



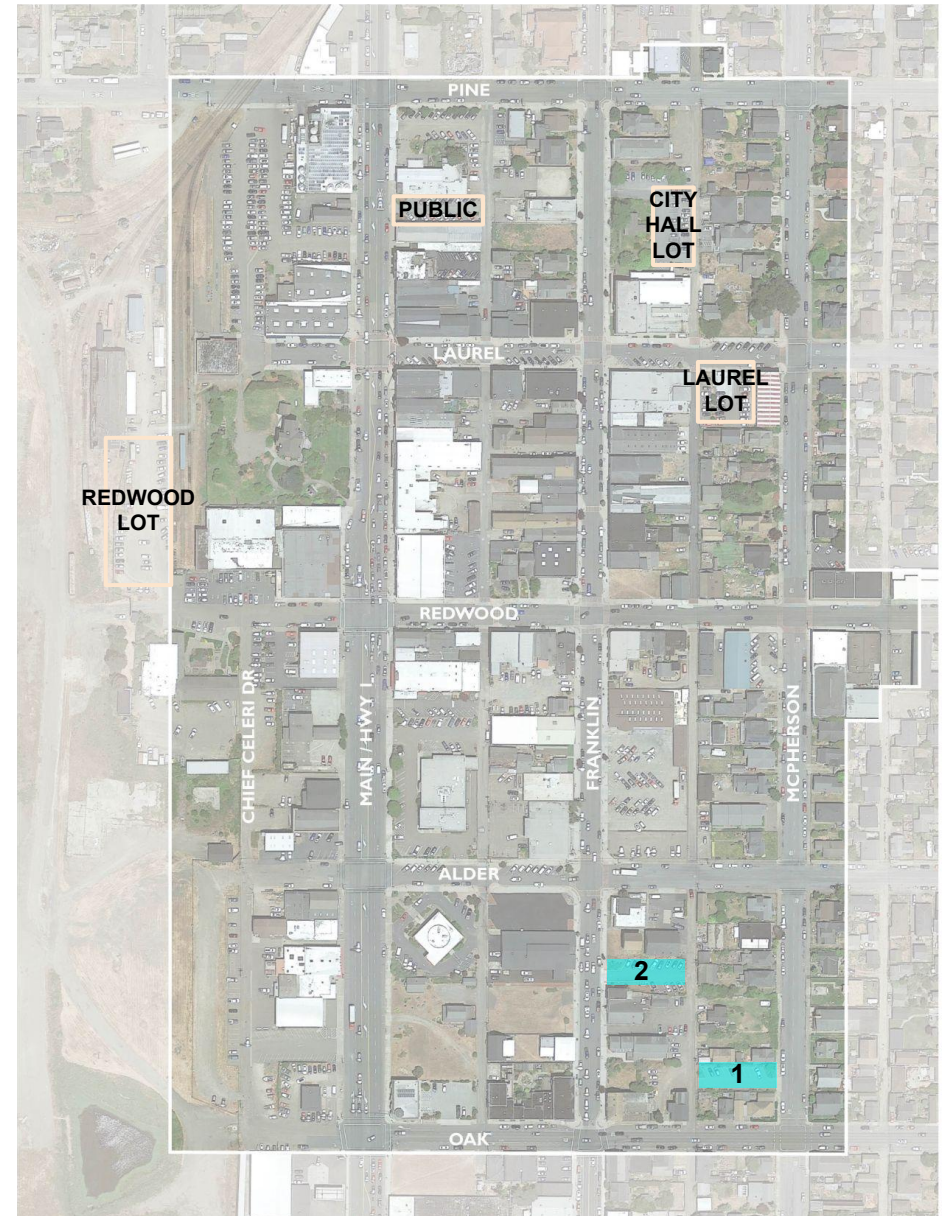
Underused parking (Site 2)

- Owned by credit union, chained off



KEY QUESTIONS

- Provide more?
- If yes, where?
- Funding sources?



TOPIC

Additional City-run Public off-street parking

TO CONSIDER:

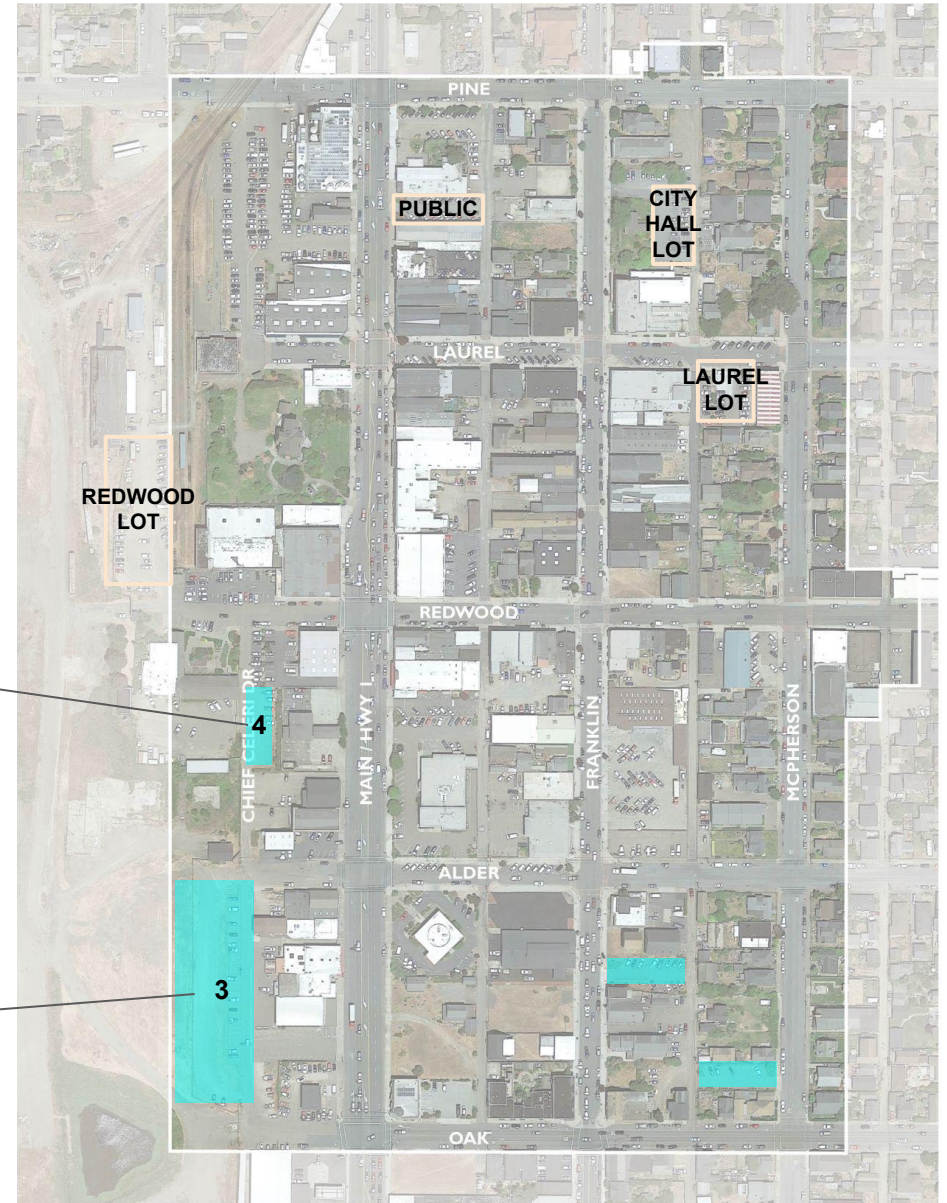
Formalize Public access to currently unofficial parking locations

- Locations 3 and 4 - privately-owned, but are informally used as general parking
- Would require purchase or lease agreement to make formally public



KEY QUESTIONS

- Provide more?
- If yes, where?
- Funding sources?



TOPIC

Additional City-run Public off-street parking

TO CONSIDER:

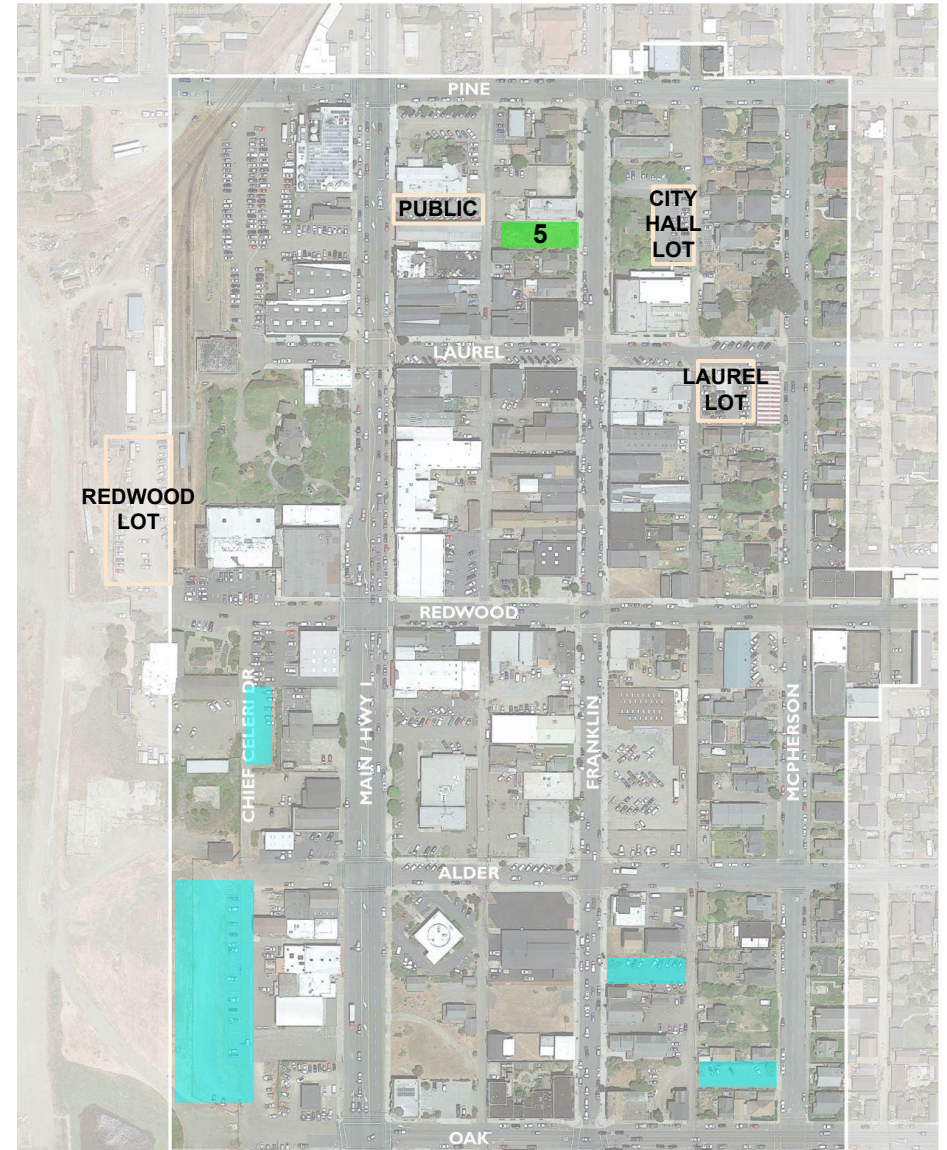
Build new temporary parking

- Location 5 - vacant, for sale lot
- Would require capital projects to construct parking stalls



KEY QUESTIONS

- Provide more?
- If yes, where?
- Funding sources?



TOPIC

Additional City-run Public off-street parking

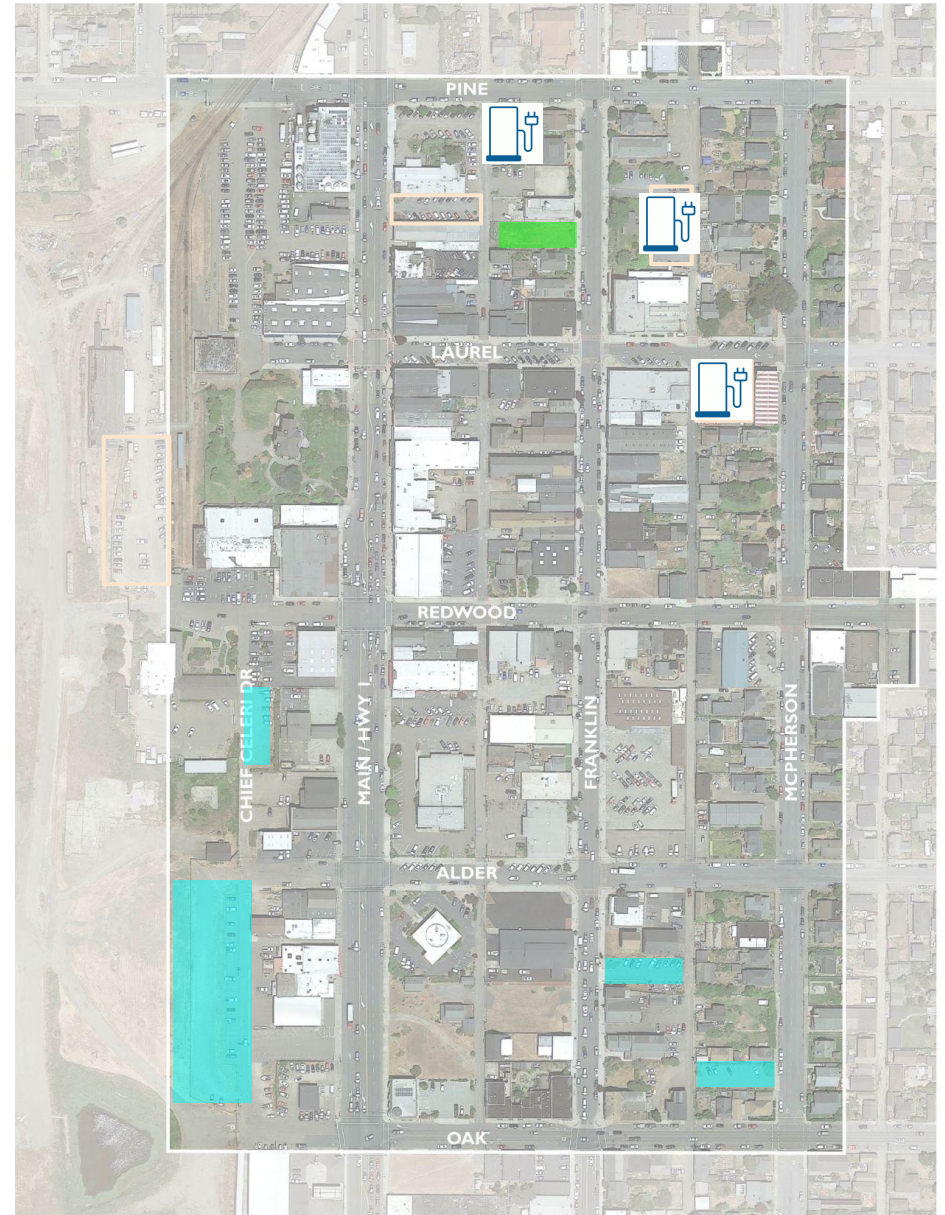
REQUIREMENT:

If additional off-street public parking is built, add more EV charging

- CalGreen Code reqs. for EV charging apply to new/alteration public parking
- Recommend doing an EV parking count of utilization to gauge demand
- Existing City partnership with Chargepoint is working well
- Building development also subject to CalGreen EV requirements

KEY QUESTIONS

- Provide more?
- If yes, where?
- Funding sources?



TOPIC

On-street parking management

KEY QUESTIONS

- Boost enforcement?
- Change time limits?
- Consider paid parking?
- Employee parking?

TO CONSIDER:

- **Small increases to enforcement activity**
 - Focus on warnings/education before citations
 - Conduct mini parking counts to observe infraction stays past two hours
- **Maintain current 2-hour time limits from 9am-6pm**
 - *Could* extend to 8pm or 9pm on busy streets (e.g. Laurel) - but light enforcement practices probably make this a moot point
- **Paid parking is unnecessary and impractical in near-to-medium-term**
 - This Plan will discuss paid parking triggers for future consideration
- **Businesses can encourage employees to use off-street parking**
 - Difficult to make progress without “carrots” (incentives, perks) or “sticks” (paid on-street parking, stronger enforcement)
 - Need to appeal to the sense that preserving on-street parking for customers is good for business

TOPIC

Parking Supply and Management - Linked Opportunities

Conditions are ripe for you to modulate parking supply, promote sharing, fine-tune rules and enforcement, and have an adaptable system.

Compact downtown where “park-once” is viable and walking is enjoyable

Low/moderate downtown development rate means unlikely demand “shocks”

Available on-street and off-street parking is usually nearby and easy to find

Public off-street parking from the City can be the flexible, marginal supply

TOPIC

Parking Management in the Future - Ideas to Consider

*These ideas may be suitable in the future, if parking congestion increases. The Study will briefly discuss what factors could warrant these steps.

- **Making enforcement of public parking significantly more strict**
 - More rigor with warnings and citations for time limits
 - Helps promote turnover and parking availability
 - Trigger: Significant observed time limit infractions and parking congestion
- **Payment for public parking**
 - Street space is a valuable public good - payment helps allocate use
 - Helps promote turnover and parking availability
 - Spend citation revenue on downtown services and improvements
 - Trigger: significant parking congestion and lack of availability
- **Neighborhood parking districts**
 - Issue permits for resident parking in areas near downtown
 - Helps prevent spillover of downtown parking
 - Trigger: Obvious spillover and street parking congestion in neighborhoods

TOPIC

Curbside Parklets / StrEATeries

KEY QUESTIONS

- Does City want an official in-street dining option?
- If yes, with what conditions?
- Amend 10.20.150 to explicitly allow in-street dining seating?
Or other code sections?

TO CONSIDER:

- **Allow seasonal or year-round in-street curbside parklets / strEATeries**
 - Link fees to existing 10.20.150 Mobile Vending and Sidewalk Vending rules
 - California SB 314 (2021) largely allows outdoor parklet alcohol service
- **Establish rules about use, design, safety, business hours, maintenance, etc.**
 - Seasonal or year-round?
 - Equipment and fire protection
 - Traffic protection
 - Non-interference with utilities and public works
- **Consider caps on total quantity and/or location proximity**
- **Other Permit approval criteria from 10.20.150 could be adapted to parklets**

TOPIC

Bicycle Parking

KEY QUESTIONS

- More City-installed bike parking, new types?
- Different code reqs. for development?

POTENTIAL OPTIONS:

- **City continues to install bike parking in high-traffic public areas**
 - Standard racks
 - Consider other types such as bike corrals or bike lockers
- **Consider bike parking requirements in change-of-use, not just new build**
- **Develop stand-alone bike parking minimums (de-couple it from vehicle code)**
 - If vehicle parking minimums are reduced or eliminated, it makes current bike parking code basically moot
 - (Current code: bike parking must equal 10%+ of vehicle parking quantity, minimum two spaces, for non-residential). Etc.
- **Think about standards for locations, interior/exterior, accessibility, cargo bikes**
 - Different bike parking serves different users

TOPIC

Central Fort Bragg Circulator

KEY QUESTIONS

- Should this Study lightly flesh-out a circulator idea?
- What cost, partnership, and operations factors are key?

POTENTIAL OPTIONS:

- **Note: Public comments (especially at August 2023 town hall) were curious about the circulator idea; said it could be great for reducing local driving**
- **Route on and near Hwy 1 around Noyo-Downtown-Trestle**
 - Hotels, downtown, attractions, beach access, tourist sites
- **Pilot launch: summertime on weekends**
 - May have access to an MTA-owned trolley part-time
- **Call it the “Sea Glass Shuttle”?**



TOPIC - POSSIBLE CODE CHANGES

18.36.080.C.2 - Table 3-8 Parking Requirements in CBD

Land Use Type:	Vehicle Spaces Required
Bars, cocktail lounges, restaurants, and taverns	1 space for each 8 seats or 1 space for each 400 sf of floor area, whichever would yield more spaces.
Lodging	
Bed and breakfast inns Hotels or motels	1 space for each unit, plus 1 space for the manager or owner.
Residential dwelling units	1 space for each dwelling unit.
Retail commercial and office uses	1 space for each 600 sf of floor area.

- These could be reduced or eliminated
- Does City want to consider commercial, lodging, and residential separately?
- If minimums are kept, study will still look at the exemptions in 18.36.080.C.1
- If minimums are kept, would City want to create bespoke maximums for CBD (possibly lower than the Citywide maximums)?

TOPIC - POSSIBLE CODE CHANGES

18.36.080 Reduction of Parking Requirements

A. Shared on-site parking.

1. Where 2 or more adjacent uses have distinct and differing peak parking usage periods (e.g., a theater and a bank), a reduction in the **required number of parking spaces** may be allowed through Minor Use Permit approval granted in compliance with § [18.71.060](#).
2. Approval shall also require a recorded covenant running with the land, recorded by the owner of the parking lot, guaranteeing that the required parking will be maintained exclusively for the use served for the duration of the use.

- **Requirement** provisions would go away if parking minimums are eliminated
- Emphasize code to promote shared parking options even if minimums are gone - some projects may still want to build parking; sharing provides more options

Summary of Key Questions

- **PARKING MINIMUMS:** Keep, reduce, or remove?
- **IN-LIEU FEE:** Keep or eliminate? (linked to minimums decisions)
- **PARKING MANAGEMENT:** Any changes to public parking time limits, enforcement, supply locations?
- **PUBLIC OFF-STREET PARKING:** Same, less, or more supply?
- **STREET SEATS / STREATERIES:** Change policy to formally allow in-street dining areas?
- **BICYCLE PARKING:** Changes to public supply? Changes to requirements in development code?
- **TROLLEY CIRCULATOR:** Would you consider it? Should this Study include a brief assessment of introducing it?