



Prepared for the City of Fort Bragg

Appendix B: Planning Context

Downtown Comprehensive Parking Strategy

April 2024



WALKER
CONSULTANTS



Appendix B

Planning Context

Planning Context

This Planning Context section provides an overview of the existing planning goals and policies, zoning and land use regulations, development standards, and parking enforcement regulations and practices. It also provides an overview of the City's current and planned multimodal transportation options that relate to access and parking demand. Finally, it concludes with relevant demographics and a discussion of how growth may affect the study area in the future. The Planning Context chapter findings inform recommendations for Downtown Fort Bragg.

Relevant Planning Goals and Policies

This subsection highlights General Plan policies and programs that are relevant to downtown access and parking management. It also reviews the Citywide Design Guidelines as they relate to parking and the Central Business District, and it summarizes the recommendations and strategies from other related planning efforts, including the Street Safety Plan and the Central Business District Revitalization Plan. This report's recommendations are designed to support the General Plan policies and complement the specific strategies developed in other plans.

General Plan Policies

The Fort Bragg City Council adopted the Inland General Plan in 2013. The Plan regulates land use for inland properties that are within city limits but that are not in the Coastal Zone. The Coastal Zone is accounted for in the Coastal General Plan, which was adopted and certified by the Coastal Commission in 2008. The goals, policies, and programs in the Inland General Plan and Coastal General Plan are not identical but largely overlap. The Circulation Element and Community Design Element subsections below highlight relevant policies and programs from the Inland General Plan; most are also included in the Coastal General Plan.

Circulation Element

The Circulation Element contains policies and programs related to improving the transportation system throughout the City, including in the Central Business District. The Element has a strong emphasis on improving access via walking, biking, and shared mobility. It calls for the development of priorities related to parking, and for actions that will increase the land use efficiency and user-friendliness of the parking system. It suggests the City coordinate with regional entities and pursue grant funding for some projects and also calls for new development to pay its fair share of transportation improvements. Circulation Element policies and programs of relevance to this report include:

- **Policy C-1.1:** Balance the need of all users. The City shall 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.
- **Policy C-1.2:** Walking and bicycling shall be considered an essential and integral part of the city's circulation network.
- **Policy C-5.1 Community Priorities for Transportation Improvements:** Place a higher priority on maintaining a sense of place and enhancing the attractiveness of the Central Business District than on efficient traffic flow and movement.

- **Policy C-5.2 Franklin Street:** Ensure that Franklin Street in the Central Business District is maintained as a pedestrian-oriented corridor with safe vehicular and pedestrian traffic patterns.
- **Policy C-6.1 Additional Off-Street Parking:** Continue to construct additional off-street parking spaces in the Central Business District.
 - Program C-6.1.1: Continue, and update, as needed, the City's parking in-lieu fee program for the Central Business District.
 - Program C-6.1.2: Define priorities for the acquisition of property and the construction of additional parking facilities.
 - Program C-6.1.3: Encourage the use of reciprocal access agreements and interconnecting off-street parking and circulation between adjacent commercial uses.
 - Program C-6.1.4: Develop a comprehensive signage program within the Central Business District to direct vehicles to off-street parking areas.
 - Program C-6.1.5: Develop incentives for employers and employees to park off-street in the Central Business District.
- **Policy C-7.1:** Improve and update parking regulations in accordance with best practices and smart growth principles.
 - Program C-7.1.1: Revise the Inland Land Use and Development Code to reduce parking requirements for: 1) affordable and senior housing developments; 2) commercial and mixed-use projects within a reasonable walking distance of downtown; and 3) small infill projects in areas with an abundance of on-street parking.
- **Policy C-10.1 Encourage Transit Use.**
- **Policy C-11.1 Continuous Sidewalks:** Require an uninterrupted pedestrian network of sidewalks, with continuous sidewalks along both sides of streets. New development shall provide sidewalks along project frontages to close gaps in the City's sidewalk network.
 - Program C-11.1.2: Work with the Mendocino Council of Governments and Caltrans to construct pedestrian walkways over the Hare Creek and Pudding Creek Bridges. These facilities may qualify for Transportation Enhancement Activities (TEA) funding available through Mendocino Council of Governments (MCOG).
- **Policy C-11.5 Pedestrian Paths:** Develop a series of continuous pedestrian and multi-use walkways throughout the commercial districts and residential neighborhoods.
- **Policy C-12.1 Comprehensive Bikeway System:** Establish a comprehensive and safe system of bikeways connecting all parts of Fort Bragg.
- **Policy C-12.2:** Improve and expand bicycle facilities and infrastructure according to the City's Bicycle Master Plan and the Residential Streets Safety Plan recommendations.
 - Program C-12.2.3: Complete the bikeway system as indicated in Map C-2: Bicycle Paths with parking-in-lieu funds, dedications, grant funding, traffic impact fees, and other means, as appropriate.
 - Program C-12.2.7: Promote and encourage bicycling as a method to reduce the City's impact on climate change.
 - Program C-12.2.8: Utilize dedications, grant funding, traffic impact fees, and other means, as appropriate, to acquire rights-of-way needed for a comprehensive bikeway system as described in the Bicycle Master Plan.

- **Policy C-12.3:** Require new development to provide on-site connections to existing and proposed bikeways, as appropriate.
- **Policy C-12.4:** Require new development, redevelopment, and significant renovation projects to provide superior bicycle/bicyclist support infrastructure.
 - Program 12.4.1: Consider revising the Inland Land Use and Development Code to reduce parking requirements for projects that facilitate employee/customer bicycle use beyond current code requirements by providing: indoor or covered bike storage, lockers for personal belongings, changing rooms and showers, and/or bicycles for employee use.
 - Program 12.4.2: Update the bicycle parking guidelines in the Citywide Design Guidelines. Consider requiring larger “vehicle prints” for bike parking and bikeways that accommodate bike trailers for carrying children, dogs, parcels, groceries, freight, etc.
- **Policy C-12.5: Bicycle Parking:** Provide adequate and secure bicycle parking at bus stops, schools, the library, parks, City offices, and commercial areas.
- **Policy C-12.8:** Improve continuity and connections between the City’s bike facilities and those of the County and State.
 - Program C-12.8.1: Produce and distribute a map illustrating all local and regional bicycle routes, facilities, and important destinations.
- **Policy C-15.1 Development to Pay its Fair Share:** Require new development to pay its fair share of transportation improvements to maintain levels of service and traffic safety in the City.
 - Program C-15.1.1: Develop a City-wide Traffic Mitigation Fee Program.

Community Design Element

The Community Design Element contains policies and programs related to maintaining community vibrancy and a strong sense of place. Many policies focus on the Central Business District in particular, and support adaptive reuse and economic vitality, pedestrian activity, parking availability, distinctive signage, and public gathering spaces. Community Design Element policies and programs of relevance to this report include the following:

- **Policy CD-2.1 Adaptive Reuse:** Facilitate the adaptive reuse of existing older buildings in the Central Business District.
- **Policy CD-2.2 Pedestrian Activity:** Encourage increased pedestrian movement and activity in the Central Business District.
 - Program CD-2.2.1: Continue to support the operation of a Farmer’s Market and a multitude of street fairs and promotional activities in the Central Business District.
- **Policy CD-2.3 Economic Vitality:** Continue to support the economic diversity and vitality of downtown businesses.
 - Program CD-2.3.1: Consider establishing a Business Improvement District (BID) to stimulate increased business activity and revenues by helping to fund public improvements and loans and/or grants for private improvements in the Central Business District.
- **Policy CD-2.4 Parking:** Improve the availability of public parking facilities in the Central Business District and other commercial areas.
 - Program CD-2.4.1: Implement shared parking agreements wherever feasible. Utilize, as appropriate, development agreements, conditions of approval, easements, and other means to assure shared parking arrangements.

- Program CD-2.4.2: Consider establishing a parking assessment district for the Central Business District to help finance the acquisition of property for additional off-street parking lots.
- Program CD-2.4.3: Periodically update the Central Business District parking in-lieu fee program to ensure that it presents a fair and equitable alternative to the provision of on-site parking.
- **Policy CD-2.5 Strengthen the Distinctive Identity of the Central Business District:** Strengthen the distinctive identity and unique sense of place of the Central Business District.
 - Program CD-2.5.1: Consider establishing a sign program for the Central Business District, with distinctive signs at the entryways to and within the Central Business District.
 - Program CD-2.5.2: Locate an area where a pocket park or a small plaza could be established for public gatherings, street fairs, concerts, and similar outdoor public events.
- **Policy CD-7.2 Provide Public Open Spaces:** Encourage the development of public open spaces for gatherings and fairs in commercial areas of the City.
 - Program CD-7.2.1: Consider the purchase of appropriate locations for public open space and the enhancement of existing public spaces to accommodate community gatherings.

Citywide Design Guidelines

The City of Fort Bragg adopted the Citywide Design Guidelines in 2022. In general, the guidelines provide guidance to help ensure new developments are consistent with the City’s goals and character. Guidelines of relevance to this plan include parking guidelines, guidelines specifically for the Central Business District (CBD), guidelines related to bicycle infrastructure and bus stops, and guidelines related to signage.

Parking guidelines prioritize safety and efficiency:

- Shared parking is encouraged; smaller parking areas should be consolidated into larger lots.
- Eliminate unnecessary driveways; use patterned concrete or pavers to differentiate driveway access from sidewalk.
- Solar-covered and shaded parking lots are encouraged.
- Pedestrian access to and from parking areas should be clearly marked, separate from vehicle traffic, and landscaped with shrubs or shade trees.

Some guidelines address the CBD specifically:

- Parking is not allowed in the CBD between building front doors and the street they face.
- Pedestrian-oriented spaces are encouraged, such as plazas, courtyards, outdoor dining, mid-block alleys.

Some guidelines are for new developments:

- Projects in new developments should include bike lanes as part of the street section, where feasible.
- Developments near bus stops should consider convenience, comfort, and access; they should provide wide sidewalks, seating areas, and weather protection.
- Pedestrian amenities (benches, shelters, drinking fountains, lighting, trash receptacles, electric vehicle charging stations, and bicycle racks) are strongly encouraged.

The guidelines also provide the following instructions for signage:

- Should have continuity with surrounding buildings.
- Should be easy to read, with lettering contrast and a brief message.
- Symbols and logos are encouraged.
- Should be at or near parking area entrances to indicate the most direct access.

The parking and access strategies and actions recommended in this report are designed to be consistent with these Citywide Design Guidelines.

Street Safety Plan

The City of Fort Bragg adopted a Street Safety Plan in 2018. Its goals include creating safer streets to encourage walking and biking as alternatives to the private automobile and improving pedestrian and bicycle facilities and safety. The contents of the Street Safety Plan include four study roadways for design recommendations, two study roadways with recent improvements, three study intersections, speed surveys, traffic and pedestrian counts, and parking counts on Elm Street and Stewart Street.

Community outreach conducted for the plan found the following:

- Walkability rated at 64/100
- Pedestrian safety rated at 41/100
- Bike access and safety rated at 50/100

When asked to provide input on potential actions, participants **widely supported** the following street safety strategies: dedicated bike lanes, buffered bike lanes, narrowing lanes to create room for a bike lane, striped crosswalks, all-way stop controls, and pedestrian signal timing improvements. Participants were more supportive than not but had **mixed opinions** about: single-sided parking and raised median crossing islands. Finally, participants **widely opposed** the following safety strategies: bulb-outs, narrowing through striping to control vehicle speeds, and speed humps.

The Street Safety Plan recommended the re-striping of bicycle facilities, adding pedestrian crossing signs to uncontrolled crosswalks, re-striping faded crossings, and traffic calming on Pine Street and Maple Street.

The parking and access recommendations in this report are designed to complement the goals and strategies in the Street Safety Plan.

Buffered Bike Lane



Source: City of Fort Bragg, Street Safety Plan, 2018.

Central Business District Revitalization Plan

The City of Fort Bragg and the Community Development Committee have developed a plan of action with economic development recommendations to support the CBD. The economic development toolkit includes the following strategies:

- Coordinate Downtown Business Conversation Regarding a Business Improvement District (BID)
- Walking Tours
- Improve Town Hall Restrooms
- Increased Pedestrian Dedications
- Public Art
- Improve Business Directory & Directional Signage
- Install Trees, Planters, and Landscaping
- Install Bollards to Block Vehicular Traffic for Special Events
- Reconsider Allowable Land Uses
- Employ Code Enforcement Actions
- Establish Regular Walking Patrol
- Temporary Waiver of Water/Sewer Capacity Fees
- Create Public Gathering Space

The City has already implemented a bollard plan to block vehicular traffic for special events. The bollards allow for Franklin Street to be closed between East Pine Street to the north and East Oak Street to the south (or smaller street segments within). It also allows for the closure of Pine Street between McPherson Street and Franklin Street, and for the closure of Laurel Street, Redwood Avenue, and/or Alder Street between McPherson Street and the alley just east of Main Street.

Some of the CBD revitalization strategies (like the bollard plan detailed above) are complete, some are in process, and some are on hold. There may be opportunities for this report's strategies to improve parking and access in the CBD to complement the economic development strategies included in the CBD Revitalization Toolkit.

Zoning and Land Use

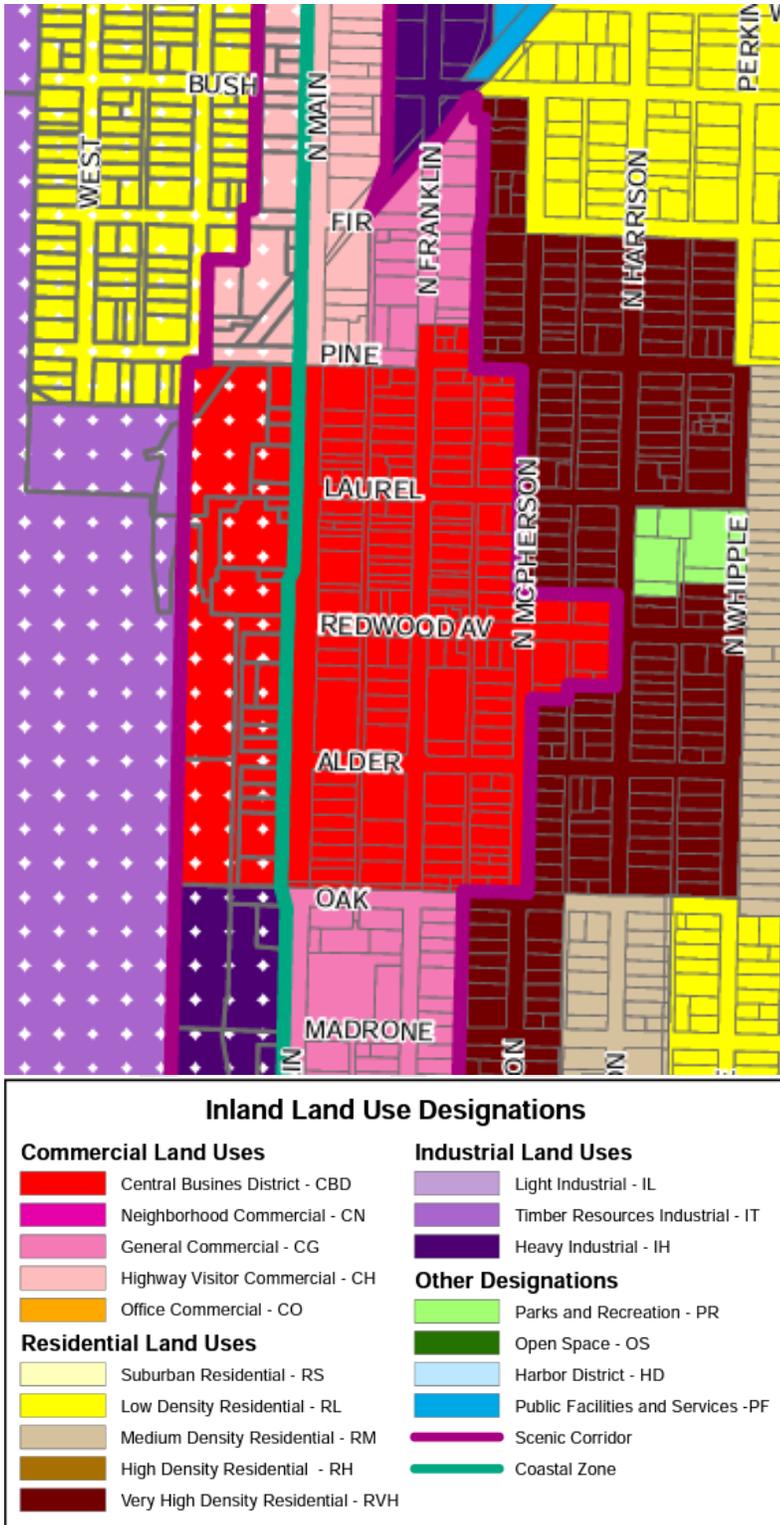
The study area for this project corresponds with the City's Central Business District, shown in red in the zoning map in Figure 1 on the next page. The land west of Main Street (Highway 1) is in the Coastal Zone, as designated by the zoning map's white dotted overlay, and the land east of Main Street is in the Inland Zone. The CBD is bordered primarily by Highway Visitor Commercial and General Commercial land uses to the north and south, Very High Density Residential land use to the east, and Low Density Residential and Light Industrial land uses to the west.

The purpose of the CBD zoning district is explained in Chapter 18.22 of the Inland Development Code:

"The CBD zoning district is applied to the core of the downtown which is the civic, cultural, and commercial center of the City. The CBD zone is intended to accommodate retail stores, government and professional offices, theaters, and other similar and related uses in the context of pedestrian-oriented development. The maximum allowable residential density within the CBD zone for the residential component of a mixed use project is 40 dwelling units per acre; the maximum floor area ratio (FAR) is 2.0. The CBD zoning district implements and is consistent with the CBD land use designation of the General Plan."

Another interesting feature of the CBD zoning district is that residential uses are permitted by-right only on the upper levels of mixed-use structures, an element of the district's pedestrian-oriented development.

Figure 1: Zoning Map of Fort Bragg CBD and Surrounding Areas



Source: City of Fort Bragg, 2023.

Municipal Code Regulations and Requirements

This section summarizes the City's parking regulations, off-street parking requirements for new developments and use changes, and opportunities for flexibility regarding the off-street parking requirements.

Parking Regulations

Chapter 10.20 of the Fort Bragg Municipal Code establishes various parking regulations, and any vehicle that does not comply with the regulations is subject to citation. The regulations include:

- Mobile vending is allowed only with a mobile vending permit. The mobile vending operation may not remove any parking spaces on Main Street.
- The parking area on the south side of the Fort Bragg Fire Station is restricted to City employees and volunteer firefighters only.
- The City may establish and enforce the following time limits:
 - Designated green curb/20 minute spaces, between 7am-6pm except Sundays and holidays.
 - Designated 1-hour parking spaces, between 9am-6pm except Sundays and holidays.
 - Designated 2-hour parking spaces, between 9am-6pm except Sundays and holidays.
- Vehicles parked in EV charging spaces must be connected to charging equipment and abide by any posted time limits between 9am-10pm.
- All night parking may be prohibited by resolution on certain streets and is prohibited for vehicles over 30 feet in length in residential districts.
- Vehicle habitation on public streets and other public property is prohibited.
- Large motor vehicles, non-motorized vehicles, and commercial vehicles may not be parked on public streets or in publicly owned or leased parking lots.
- Vehicles may not park in the same space for more than 72 hours.

The Fort Bragg Municipal Code does not establish any parking meter zones, parking benefit districts, or residential parking permit zones.

The parking citation fees for violations of the parking regulations are included in the City's fee schedule. According to the 2022/2023 fee schedule, most parking violations are subject to a \$45 fee. Fees are slightly higher for 72-hour parking violations and significantly higher for parking in an ADA space without a disabled parking placard or permit.

Off-Street Parking Requirements

Section 18.36.040 of the Inland Land Use and Development Code establishes off-street parking requirements for different land uses and structures. The code includes specific parking requirements for over 50 unique land uses. There are both minimum and maximum parking requirements or ratios, which may be based on the number of residential units, building floor area square footage, or the number of employees.

- **Parking minimums** are a historical feature of many development codes across the country, intended to ensure that suitable off-street parking facilities are provided for all uses and developments. Unintended

consequences include creating an artificial subsidy for driving and creating auto-oriented environments in which driving is the most convenient and attractive mode of transportation.

- **Parking maximums** exist to avoid the inefficient use of land, unnecessary pavement, and excessive storm water runoff from paved surfaces.

Both new developments and changes in use of existing structures must comply with parking requirements. Parking for the disabled must be provided on site in compliance with California Building Code Standards. Multifamily residential developments with at least five units and all nonresidential developments are also required to provide bicycle parking that is conveniently located and generally within proximity to the main entrance of a structure. There are no requirements for unbundled parking or parking cash out.

All parking requirements, even those outside CBD, have the potential to affect citywide vehicle ownership and transportation choices, and therefore to also affect parking demand within the CBD.

Parking Requirement Flexibility

Parking Reductions with a Minor Use Permit (Citywide)

The two subsections below are opportunities for parking requirement flexibility that are available citywide. They provide context for understanding the City's standard approach to parking reductions; however, any new developments and use changes within the Central Business District would not need these options, as the area has long been given increased parking flexibility, as discussed in the CBD Special Parking Combining Zone section below.

Shared On-Site Parking with Recorded Covenant

According to Section 18.36.080(A) of the Inland Land Use and Development Code, if two or more adjacent developments have different peak usage periods, they may apply for a Minor Use Permit, which would allow the developments to use the same parking facilities to satisfy their parking requirements. According to Section 18.36.090(A)(2), parking facilities may be located within 300 feet of a nonresidential parcel if shared parking is used to meet parking requirements. The application fee for a Minor Use Permit is \$1,160, and a permit for Shared On-Site Parking requires a recorded covenant running with the land, recorded by the owner of the parking lot.

Documentation Showing Fewer Spaces are Needed

According to Section 18.36.080(B) of the Inland Land Use and Development Code, new developments may also apply for a Minor Use Permit granting a reduced parking requirement based on quantitative information provided by the applicant that documents the need for fewer spaces (e.g., sales receipts, documentation of customer frequency, information on parking standards required for the proposed land use by other cities, etc.). Parking requirements may be reduced, by the review authority, where the project facilitates bicycle use by providing bicycle storage, lockers, changing rooms and showers and/or bicycles for employee use.

CBD Special Parking Combining Zone

The Land Use and Development Code establishes a CBD Special Parking Combining Zone with increased flexibility in parking requirements. The boundaries of this Zone are shown in Figure 2.

Figure 1: CBD Special Parking Combining Zone



Source: City of Fort Bragg, Inland Land Use and Development Code, 2023.

Simplified and Lower Minimum Parking Requirements

As shown in Figure 3 on the next page, the Inland Land Use and Development Code Section 18.36.080 (C) establishes simplified minimum parking requirements for the CBD that group together multiple land uses and require less parking than would be required if the same development were located elsewhere in the City. For example, bars and restaurants in the CBD must provide one space per eight seats or per 400 square feet of floor area, while elsewhere, bars must provide 1 space per 5 seats or per 250 square feet of floor area, and restaurants must provide one space per 100 square feet of dining area. The requirements for residential dwelling units and retail commercial and office uses are similarly simplified and reduced.

Figure 2: CBD Zoning District Parking Requirements

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.

Source: City of Fort Bragg, Inland Land Use and Development Code Chapter 18-36, Table 3-8, 2023.

Exemptions from Requirements

Section 18.36.080 (C) also includes the following exemptions from parking requirements in the CBD:

- Replacement of an existing use with a new use determined to be similar by the Director.
- On the ground floor, any intensification of a commercial use except for bars, cocktail lounges, restaurants, and taverns.
- Any use with hours of operation exclusively after 5:00 p.m.
- Residential dwelling units located above ground floor commercial uses.

Parking In-Lieu Fee

According to Section 18.36.080 (C) of the Inland Land Use and Development Code, if a new project or change in use within the CBD Special Combining Zone is unable to meet its parking requirement on-site, the property owner may pay a parking in-lieu fee for each space not provided. Having minimum parking requirements without an in-lieu fee option, especially in a built-out area like the CBD, can prevent economic development from occurring.

The in-lieu fee was established to provide flexibility for property owners in the Central Business District. Property owners can pay the fee instead of developing on-site parking which would otherwise use a significant amount of land and have a high cost to build. The parking in-lieu fees allow for better urban design, more flexible and effective land use, historic building reuse, and economic development.

Funds from parking in-lieu fees are deposited in a special fund and may be used to acquire or develop off-street parking facilities in the vicinity, to implement strategies that help reduce parking demand, or to improve access to parking. This fund had a balance of \$34,791 at the end of Fiscal Year 2022.

Parking In-Lieu Fee Recent History:

- **January 2008: Parking In-Lieu Fee Updated by Resolution No. 3139-2008**
 - Fee amounts based on a nexus study completed in 2007
 - \$4,000 for uses within an existing building
 - \$8,000 for uses within a new building
- **July 2011: Parking In-Lieu Fee Reduced by Resolution No. 3467-2011**
 - \$2,105 for uses within an existing building
 - \$4,212 for uses within a new building
 - Rationale:
 - The recession resulted in reduced property values.
 - No business or property owners had chosen to pay the fee since it was increased in 2008.
- **October 2012: Parking In-Lieu Fee First Waived by Resolution 3576-2012**
 - Parking In-Lieu Fees were temporarily waived for changes of use within an existing building.
 - The waiver has been renewed annually since that time.
 - Rationale:
 - Fees are a barrier to new businesses and to businesses that are interested in expanding their hours of operation to daytime hours.
 - The City wishes to reduce the number of vacant storefronts in the CBD and improve the economic vitality of the downtown area.
 - Parking availability has not reached a critical level during most hours and times of the year.
 - Extension of the fee waiver was found to be consistent with the City's Priority Area 1: Jobs/Industry and Goal 3: Foster and help sustain local businesses.

Development Impact Fees

Off-street parking requirements and parking in-lieu fees are tools the City can use to make sure new developments contribute their fair share toward transportation infrastructure; however, these tools result in a benefit/subsidy only for private vehicles and do not account for infrastructure that supports other transportation modes.

The City of Fort Bragg does not require new developments to include on-site transportation demand management features or require that they contribute to a citywide fund (such as a "Sustainable Transportation Fund") to promote access and connectivity for sustainable modes of transportation, such as walking, biking, and shared mobility.

The City currently has an Impact Fee Nexus Study underway, which will recommend updates to reflect the incremental cost of new development on City infrastructure. Currently, impact fees that must be paid by new developments include only wastewater, water, and storm drain capacity fees, and general plan maintenance fees. The potential for new transportation improvement fees has been analyzed in the study; however, due to the current desire to avoid hindering new development, the City Council gave direction not to include these additional fees.

Multimodal Transportation Options

Regional Transportation Services

Attractive multimodal transportation options can help reduce parking demand. Fort Bragg is served by the Mendocino Transit Authority, which offers fixed route public transit (within Fort Bragg with connections to the larger region) and on-demand dial-a-ride services.

Fixed Route Public Transit

Public transit fixed routes include:

- Route 5 (BraggAbout) within the City of Fort Bragg (see Figure 4 on the next page)
 - Runs Monday to Friday, with hourly stops from approximately 7:00 am – 5:30 pm
 - Cash fare is \$1.50, with discounts for students, seniors, and those with disabilities
- Route 60 (The Coaster) within the City of Fort Bragg and south along the Coast
 - Connects with other regional routes
 - Runs Monday to Friday; main stop in Fort Bragg is at Boatyard Drive
 - Four southbound departures, between approximately 7:30 am and 4:00 pm
 - Four northbound arrivals, between approximately 9:45 am and 5:45 pm
 - Cash fare ranges from \$1.50 (within Fort Bragg) to \$5.25 (connections to Gualala or Ukiah)
- Route 65 (CC Rider) from the south edge of Fort Bragg to Santa Rosa, through Willits and Ukiah
 - Connects with Ukiah and Santa Rosa
 - Runs 7 days per week; main stop in Fort Bragg is at Boatyard Drive
 - Four southbound departures, between approximately 6:40 am and 3:20 pm
 - Four northbound arrivals, between approximately 11:00 am and 7:00 pm
 - Sunday service has only one southbound departure (6:40 am) and one arrival (5:11 pm) each day

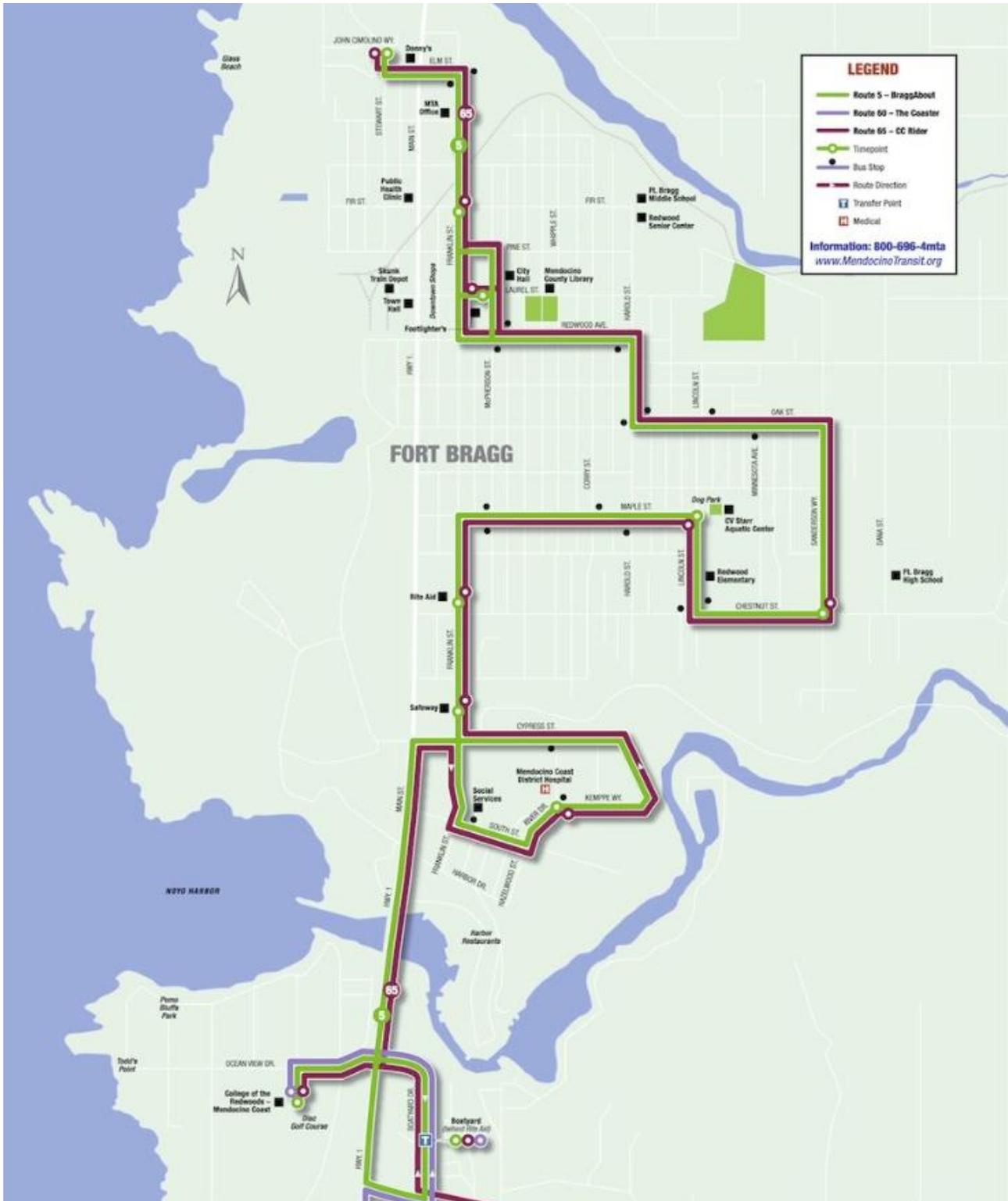
The MTA bus stop in Fort Bragg’s CBD has a covered shelter near the intersection of Laurel Street and McPherson Street, just north of the public parking lot. Both Route 5 and Route 60 stop here, and riders can connect with Route 65 at the Boatyard Drive stop.

Central Business District MTA Bus Shelter



Source: Google Maps, 2023.

Figure 4: Mendocino Transit Authority Routes in Fort Bragg



Source: Mendocino Transit Authority, 2023.

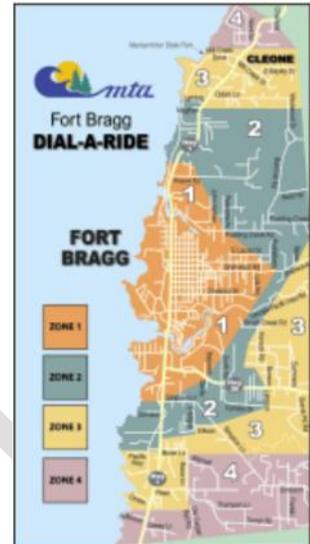
Dial-A-Ride Service

In Fort Bragg and the surrounding areas, high rates of private vehicle ownership and use combined with the relatively low population density results in transit ridership demand that may be too low to support very frequent service or extended hours of operation. Similarly, low demand results in limited availability of transportation network company (e.g., Lyft or Uber) services.

To help fill in the gaps of fixed route transit, the MTA also offers Dial-A-Ride services to the public. This service is available Monday to Friday between 8:00 am and 6:00 pm and on Saturdays between 10:00 am and 5:00 pm.

MTA customers in Fort Bragg may reserve a Dial-A-Ride bus up to two weeks in advance and at least 24 hours in advance to be guaranteed a scheduled ride between any origin and destination within the service area, from Jug Handle State Park and Gibney Lane on the south to Ward Avenue in Cleone on the north. The fare for the general public is \$6.00 per ride within the central zone (Fort Bragg) and an additional \$6.00 per zone in the surrounding areas, as shown in Figure 5. Discounted fares are available for ADA passenger companions, seniors, and children.

Figure 5: MTA Fort Bragg Dial-a-Ride Zones



Source: Mendocino Transit Authority, 2023.

Active Transportation

Due to the limited service hours, the potential for public transportation services to reduce automobile parking demand in Fort Bragg’s Central Business District may be relatively low. Active transportation modes, such as walking, biking, and e-biking, may be more attractive with the right infrastructure in place. Fort Bragg is particularly well-suited for biking, as the City has a moderate climate without extreme high or low temperatures, is relatively flat, and most residents live within two miles of the CBD.

Existing and Planned Bicycle Infrastructure

Bike Lanes

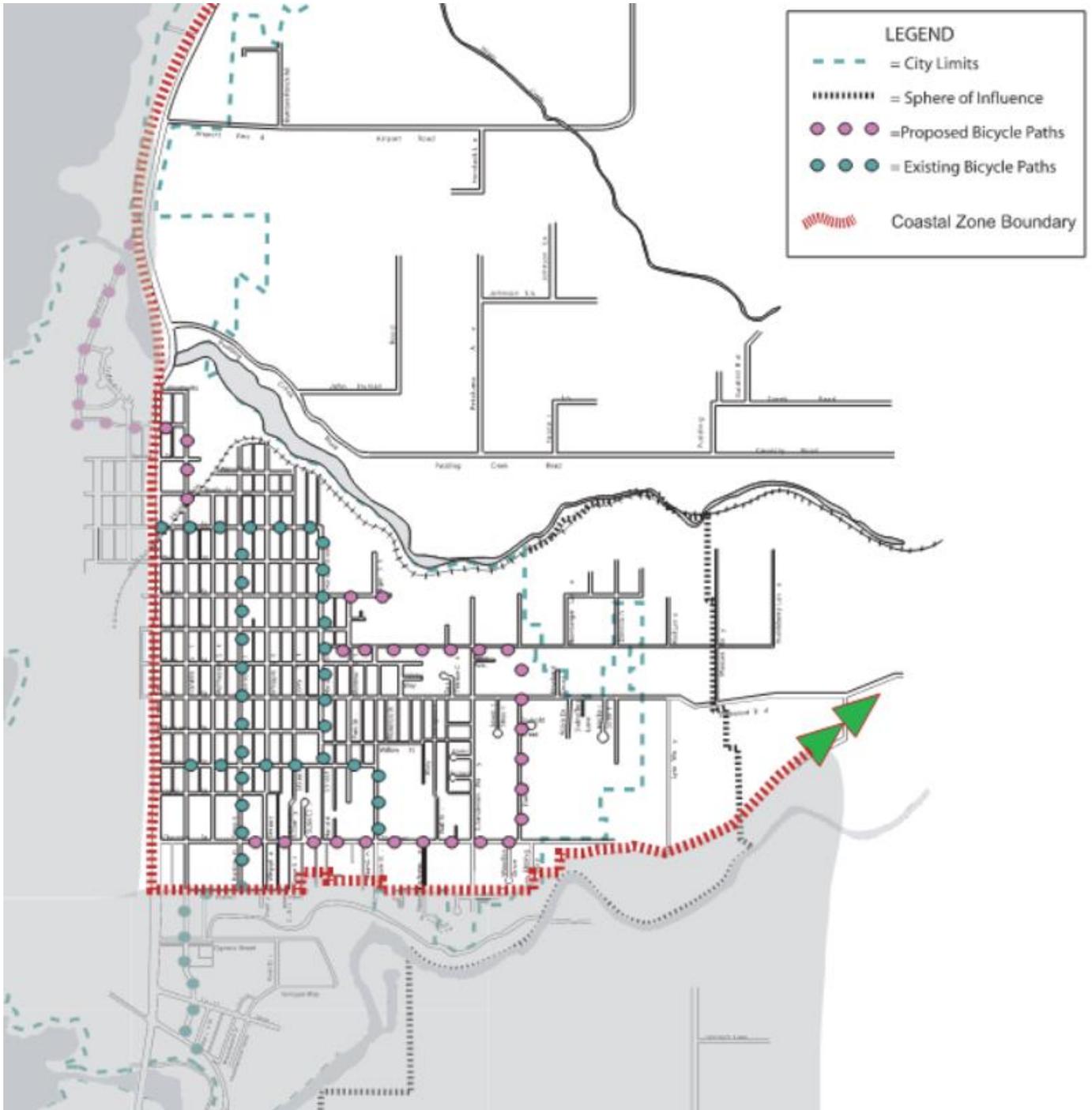
The Circulation Element of the Inland General Plan includes a map of existing and planned bicycle paths within the City (see Figure 6). The two bikeways that go through the CBD are along Main Street and Oak Street, and these connect to other bikeways – providing bike access to the CBD for more of the City. However, this infrastructure may not be considered safe by all potential bicycle users. Main Street has a Class III bikeway (shared lane marking or “sharrow”), which requires bicyclists to share a lane with vehicles. Oak Street has a Class II bikeway (striped lane), but the lane markings are somewhat discontinuous and faded.

Class III Bikeway on Main Street



Source: Google Maps, 2023.

Figure 6: Existing and Proposed Bicycle Paths in Fort Bragg



Source: Fort Bragg General Plan Circulation Element, 2013.

On routes that lack dedicated bicycle infrastructure, bicyclists who feel unsafe riding in the street may feel they have little choice but to ride on the sidewalk, which can decrease feelings of safety for pedestrians. Other travelers who have the option of using a private vehicle may be dissuaded from biking altogether if they perceive a lack of safe bike infrastructure. During the site visit in August 2023, Walker staff observed several bicyclists riding on the sidewalk in the CBD, even while it was discouraged by posted signage.

Bicyclist Riding on the Sidewalk in the CBD and Posted Signage



Source: Walker Consultants, 2023.

Bike Parking

Bike parking also has the potential to help reduce the demand for automobile parking, especially when bicycle parking is located directly in front of destinations so that it is potentially even more convenient than vehicle parking. Fort Bragg's CBD does have several bicycle racks, but they are not always conveniently located. In some cases, street signs and light poles function as bicycle parking (as shown in the images on the next page). While these informal solutions can function as secure bike parking options, they may be less attractive to bicyclists, who may not know whether it is legal to lock a bicycle in these places.

The bike racks that do exist are relatively basic in appearance and may not always stand out to bicyclists. There may be opportunities to provide additional bicycle parking options that are more convenient, while also adding aesthetic appeal and character to the CBD.

The CBD also lacks bicycle lockers, which may be favored by cyclists who intend to park in the CBD for longer time periods or who have invested in more expensive bicycles or e-bikes. There are no e-bike parking and charging stations.

Bicycle Racks in the CBD



Source: Walker Consultants, 2023.

Parked Bicycles Observed in Fort Bragg's CBD

Bicycle Locked to a Sign on Franklin Street



Bicycle Locked to a Sign on Main Street



Bicycles Locked to a Light Pole Laurel Street/Franklin Street



Bicycle Locked to a Bike Rack on Franklin Street Sidewalk



Source: Walker Consultants, 2023.

Pedestrian Infrastructure

Fort Bragg’s CBD features several elements that support pedestrian activity, including marked crosswalks and pedestrian curb extensions (“bulb-outs”). Many of the pedestrian infrastructure projects identified in the Mendocino County Regional Transportation Plan and Active Transportation Plan as Tier 1 priorities for Fort Bragg are located outside of the CBD, including along South Main Street, but these projects still have the potential to promote pedestrian access to the CBD by increasing overall connectivity.

Areas of Opportunity

Some strategies used to promote active modes of transportation and reduce parking demand in other cities have yet to be explored by Fort Bragg. For example, there are no docked or dockless bicycles or scooters available for public use, no posted maps or signs showing active transportation routes and public transit connections, and no employee incentive programs or subsidies for bicycle or e-bike purchases and maintenance. In some cases, active transportation messaging and incentives can be a cost-effective way to reduce parking demand.

2022 Mendocino County Regional Transportation Plan & Active Transportation Plan

The 2022 Mendocino County Regional Transportation Plan and Active Transportation Plan identifies short- and long-range improvements planned throughout the county.

Improvements to active transportation infrastructure in the county can improve access to Downtown Fort Bragg and affect people’s transportation choices; if more people choose to walk or bike downtown in the future, parking demand may decrease. Planned improvements in Fort Bragg include Bike and Pedestrian Improvements to South Main Street, which may be implemented when funding becomes available.

The Mendocino Council of Governments supports planning efforts, applies for relevant grants, and distributes grant funding to member agencies, including the City of Fort Bragg. Their prior and ongoing efforts to reduce GHG emissions involve the following:

- Providing an effective public transit system or alternative mobility solutions
- Expanding non-motorized modal alternatives
- Promoting the expansion of alternative fuels
- Investing in projects that reduce congestion
- Participating in long term planning efforts that are likely to reduce sprawl and promote infill
- Identifying funding to implement all of the above
- Expanding infrastructure to support utilization of zero emission vehicles

Existing Parking Supply

Public Parking

Parking Areas

Fort Bragg currently has four **publicly owned parking lots** that serve the Central Business District, three within the CBD and one just outside the CBD on the western edge:

1. City Hall Lot: 422 N Franklin Street (north of City Hall)
 - Approximately 41 spaces, including two ADA spaces and two EV charging stalls.
2. Laurel Lot: 230 E Laurel Street (south of the bus stop on Laurel Street, between Franklin and McPherson Street)
 - Approximately 19 spaces, including two EV charging stalls
3. 4## Main Street (east of Main Street, south of North Coast Brewing Co.)
 - Approximately 19 spaces, including two ADA spaces.

In addition, the CBD has hundreds of **public on-street parking** spaces throughout the district, including diagonal parking on Alder Street between Main Street and Franklin Street and on Laurel Street between Main Street and McPherson Street. There are designated **ADA spaces** in two public parking lots as well as ADA blue curb spaces on the street.

Most public street parking in the CBD has **2-hour time limits** posted, including on Main Street, Franklin Street, Laurel Street, Alder Street, Redwood Street, and parts of Pine Street and Oak Street. McPherson Street is a more residential area and does not have posted time limits.

During the site visit on Wednesday, August 16th, the project team observed **parking availability** throughout the CBD during the Farmers' Market. This event involved a partial closure of the City Hall parking lot and a closure of Franklin Street between Pine Street and Laurel Street. It was a warm, calm, summer day during the tourist season and represents **typical peak demand conditions**. Parking was well-utilized, but even during this time, multiple on-street and off-street public parking spaces were available within two blocks of the Farmers' Market, including ADA spaces.

Parking Signage and Wayfinding

Public Parking Lot Signage

As mentioned in the subsection above, the City has three publicly owned parking lots. There is some signage indicating that these lots are available for public parking, but it may be only near the entrance or facing only one direction of traffic. Walker identified the following signage or lack thereof for each of the three public lots:

1. City Hall Lot: 422 N Franklin Street (north of City Hall)
 - a. White and green sign for northbound traffic on Franklin Street, a little before the entrance
 - b. White and green sign for southbound traffic on Franklin Street, directly across from the entrance
 - c. No signage on Pine Street at or near the alley that provides access from the north to this lot

- d. Signage needs on Laurel are non-applicable, as the alley is one-way southbound and would not permit vehicle access to this lot directly from Laurel
- 2. Laurel Lot: 230 E Laurel Street (south of the bus stop on Laurel Street, between Franklin and McPherson Street)
 - a. White and green sign near the Laurel Street entrance for eastbound traffic (one-way street)
 - b. White and green sign for southbound traffic on Franklin Street, just before the intersection with Laurel
 - c. Signs on Main Street before the turn to Laurel indicate public parking eastward along Laurel.
- 3. 4## Main Street (east of Main Street, south of North Coast Brewing Co.)
 - a. No entrance signage for northbound traffic on Main Street
 - b. Small blue sign across from the Main Street entrance for southbound traffic on Main Street
 - c. No entrance signage observed on Pine Street, Laurel Street, or at the alleyway entrance (however, this lot is configured to have a single entrance, on Main Street, and so signs on these secondary streets are likely unnecessary as they would only point to an exit)

The current signage does not have a unified look and theme. For example, signs are of different colors (see images below). There is no numbering system (e.g., Lot 1, Lot 2, etc.) with maps to help visitors locate parking facilities.

Various Downtown Parking Signs



Source: Walker Consultants and Google Maps, 2023.

Other Parking Signage

For visitors and many residents, Main Street (Highway 1) is the primary street of entry into the downtown. There are several directional parking signs on Main Street indicating public parking to the west. These signs may help visitors find street parking or may lead them to believe that private parking areas are open to the public.

Signs for northbound traffic on Main Street:

- Between Alder Street and Redwood Street, **pointing westbound on Redwood Street.**
- Between Laurel Street and Pine Street, **pointing westbound on Pine Street.**
- Just south of Alder Street, **pointing westbound on Alder Street.**

Signs for southbound traffic on Main Street:

- Just north of Oak Street, **pointing westbound on Oak Street.**
- Just south of Laurel Street, **←→ showing public parking is allowed along Main Street.**

There are **marked curb parking spaces** along some segments of Main Street, such as between Laurel Street and Redwood Street. These can help visitors understand that street parking is allowed. There are also many **two-hour parking** signs throughout the Central Business District. Regardless of whether time limits are enforced, these signs can help visitors identify streets where curb parking is allowed. However, there are also some areas where street parking may be allowed, such as on northbound Main Street between Alder Street and Redwood Street, but where there are no stall markings or signs indicating that the curb may be used for parking.

EV Parking and Charging

The Central Business District has four public charging stations for electric vehicles: two in the public parking north of City Hall, and two in the public parking lot southeast of City Hall. These stations offer free charging for the first hour and charge \$1.50 thereafter. The City has a service agreement with ChargePoint EV Charging Solutions. The EV charging stalls have four-hour time limits.

Private Parking

Although the scope of this study did not include an inventory of parking facilities, it was clear from the site visit that a significant share of the land in the CBD is dedicated to surface parking lots. Most of the parking facilities in Fort Bragg’s CBD are privately owned. While several lots have physical barriers restricting access, many privately owned parking facilities are informally used by visitors and members of the public, including non-customers.

Section 10.20.035 (A) of the municipal code acknowledges this use of private parking facilities: *“The City Council finds and declares that there are privately owned and maintained off street parking facilities within the City which are generally held open for use by the public for purposes of vehicular parking.”*

Fort Bragg Municipal Code 10.20.035 and California Vehicle Code 21107.8 provide that the Police Department may enforce traffic and parking regulations on privately-owned parking lots. An owner interested in public enforcement at their facility may submit an application, which must go through a committee before the facility is included in a City Council resolution. Property owners must purchase and maintain signage informing the public that the property is subject to the City’s traffic and parking regulations.

Facility owners who have not opted for this public enforcement option must deal with parking violations on their property through private towing, a consequence that some owners may feel is too harsh for most parking violations.

While many private parking lots are informally used by other visitors, the City also has a prior history of more formal agreements allowing for the public use of privately owned parking facilities. Currently, however, the City does not have any agreements for private parking facilities being made accessible for public use.

Privately Owned Parking Facility in Downtown Fort Bragg



Source: Walker Consultants, 2023.

Parking Repurposed for Other Uses

Some areas—both on-street and off-street—formerly reserved for private parking now serve other uses. For example, some off-street parking spaces adjacent to downtown restaurants have been repurposed for outdoor dining.

Outdoor Dining

The City first allowed outdoor dining in parking lots as a temporary safety measure during the Covid-19 pandemic, and many local restaurants took advantage of the opportunity. The City found that outdoor dining is popular with the community, and allowing it can help support local businesses, attract pedestrians, and create a more vibrant downtown. Efforts are currently underway to establish regulations and standards in the municipal code that will formalize outdoor dining areas. The plan is to hold a Public Hearing and consider adopting a Resolution of the Fort Bragg Planning Commission to Amend Division 18 to the Fort Bragg Municipal Code to add Chapter 18.42.166 “Restaurants – Outdoor Dining” to establish regulations and standards for outdoor dining.

The regulations would allow outdoor dining by-right for facilities 1300 square feet or below and require a Minor Use Permit for outdoor dining facilities over 1300 square feet, subject to design review. Parking would not be required for any outdoor dining facilities, nor would the facilities be subject to water and sewer capacity fees.

Outdoor Dining Area in a Private Downtown Parking Lot



Source: Walker Consultants, 2023.

Mobile Vending

Similarly, curb spaces can also be used for economically productive uses, including temporary uses like food trucks, which contribute to a more vibrant and active downtown streetscape. For example, the photo below shows visitors congregating near a food truck on Franklin Street.

Food Truck on Franklin Street



Source: Google Maps, 2023.

Section 10.20.150 of the Inland Land Use and Development Code includes regulations for Mobile Vending Vehicles, which may be parked in the curb in the public right-of-way. Mobile vending vehicle sales are restricted to food and drinks for immediate consumption and flowers. Applications are considered under the “Minor Use Permit” and are reviewed by Community Development Director. Applications must show the specific location where the vehicle will be parked, and the vehicle cannot remove parking spaces on Main Street, create traffic visibility issues, or interfere with business operations or residences within 300 feet. Permits for vending on City streets require obtaining an encroachment permit and adhering to liability insurance requirements, and they are granted for a 3-year term.

Other Potential Uses

Other potential uses of curb parking include loading and delivery zones, parklets, bike lanes, and bike parking. Downtown Fort Bragg has several designated loading zones—such as on the south side of Pine Street just west of Main Street—but does not have any curb space dedicated to parklets, bike lanes, or bike parking. Occasionally, entire street segments (including the parking) are repurposed for community events or the weekly Farmers’ Market, and the City has recently implemented a bollard plan to facilitate temporary street closures downtown.

Parking Enforcement

Any parking enforcement in Downtown Fort Bragg is handled by the City's Police Department. Although most downtown parking spaces have time limits, proactive parking enforcement has not been a priority for the City.

Many community members do not believe they should receive parking citations, and many City and business community leaders are concerned that proactive parking enforcement could discourage visitors who receive a citation from returning to Downtown Fort Bragg.

Furthermore, there are several practical constraints to increasing parking enforcement efforts. For example, the City does not have modern enforcement technology, such as electronic ticket writers that can display whether a vehicle has previously received violations (which would help officers determine whether to issue a warning or citation) or license plate readers that allow enforcement officers to easily monitor vehicles parked in two-hour spaces without a more labor-intensive method, such as chalking tires.

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Economic Development and Growth Potential

The City is actively looking to revitalize the Central Business District. There are several vacant properties and storefronts throughout the district, and if new development occurs without a corresponding increase in the parking supply or without other actions (such as active transportation infrastructure improvements or incentives) taken to manage transportation demand, it is possible that parking utilization may increase enough that parking availability becomes widely seen as an important issue to solve.

Redevelopment of the former Mill Site may also increase the number of trips taken to downtown Fort Bragg. The most recent concept plan for this brownfield site included a Glass Beach Station Area, residential neighborhoods, an Oceanfront Hotel and Condominiums, parks and open space, and a CBD Mixed Use and Promenade area just north of Redwood Avenue. The concept plan also included 510 total spaces of public parking.

Ultimately, if the City is successful in revitalizing the CBD and the parking demand increases, maintaining availability of convenient parking may require a long-term plan to manage parking demand and/or increase the supply of parking available for public use. Several planning efforts to improve access via bike and pedestrian infrastructure are currently underway, including the development of new bicycle infrastructure that will help connect the downtown with the rest of the City. Especially given the potential for future growth, planning is necessary to maintain and improve transportation access for everyone who lives in, works in, or visits Downtown Fort Bragg.

Vacant Storefront in Downtown Fort Bragg



Source: Walker Consultants, 2023.