



City of Fort Bragg Comprehensive Downtown Parking Study

February 24, 2023

Prepared by

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City of Fort Bragg
Attn: June Lemos, MMC, City Clerk
416 North Franklin Street
Fort Bragg, CA 95437
jlemos@fortbragg.com

Re: Proposal for City of Fort Bragg- Comprehensive Downtown Parking Strategy

Dear June Lemos,

The Walker team is excited to submit for your consideration our approach to perform a successful collaboration with the City of Fort Bragg ("City") that will address the goals outlined in the Request for Proposals for the Comprehensive Downtown Parking Strategy. We bring unmatched expertise and experience in all things parking, transit, and access including parking policy, practical shared parking measures, electric vehicle infrastructure, curb management, active transportation, transit planning, complete streets design, wayfinding, operations, technology, and enforcement. We are passionate about helping Fort Bragg shape a more livable, equitable, active, and economically vibrant Central Business District (CBD) by addressing longstanding parking issues to create a more people friendly place.

We know the relationships between mobility, parking, placemaking, land use, and development are core to the project process. Walker brings a complete understanding of the connection between the public-right-of-way and parking, from streetscape design to managing valuable curb zones, as exemplified in our projects such as parklet designs for both Benicia and Winters, California, reorganizing parking and loading zones in San Luis Obispo, and Pismo Beach, California, street redesign to create more pedestrian and community space and reviewing park and rides in Mercer Island, Washington, code modernization in Sunnyvale, California, and parking in-lieu fee programs in Healdsburg, California.

We understand the City of Fort Bragg's growth, and the quality of that growth, is tied to the vibrancy of the Central Business District. People visiting Fort Bragg's CBD enjoy a walkable place filled with retail shops, art galleries, and restaurants. Beginning in 2007, the City established a parking in-lieu fee, which it reduced by 50 percent in 2011, and then in 2012 set a moratorium on the fee and parking requirements for new development. This has resulted in an overparked CBD that needs a strategic vision and plan. The City is now working to make the CBD more pedestrian friendly by partnering with merchants on a comprehensive revitalization strategy. Part of that strategy is navigating a path forward for parking policies.

We will draw on our nationwide experience and expertise. We have spent thousands of hours studying parking over several decades as the lead author of the International Council of Shopping Center's (ICSC) and Urban Land Institute's (ULI's) Shared Parking Models and publications, and for the past four years, conducting an extensive curbside research and development initiative with cities of all sizes, independently vetting and testing dozens of strategies to collect millions of curb use data points. From this research we have created strategic parking and curb management policies that align with adjacent land use and make places more enjoyable to visit and stay. We also understand the economics, having secured more than \$3 billion in parking-related financing to build off-street parking and winning over \$9.5 million in grants to support electric vehicle charging infrastructure.

We can take the exciting and make it substantive. Curb management, new technologies, and elimination of parking requirements are the new, hot planning trends. Conversations and pilots around the country have been focused on technology and new mobility applications. Talking about the latest “it product” or what “this city is piloting” misses the nitty-gritty work of implementing policies, practices, and designs that are manageable and, at times, must be incremental, but focused on the long-term vision. This is especially true for cities like Fort Bragg, where there are limited travel options other than driving, but people want more walkability or to park once and walk. Providing a better built environment and creating parking policies to spur development will require focusing on actionable and implementable recommendations based on land use dynamics and planning design context. We know the policy and are prepared for tough conversations.

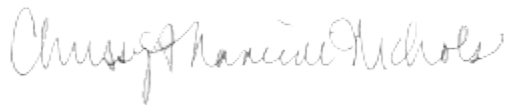
Together, we can take the elements that make parking planning and management impactful and exciting, contextualizing them for Fort Bragg’s reality of budget, staff time, and practical and political hurdles to get the most productivity out of its streets and land dedicated to parking.

Ben Weber, who will be the Consultant’s Project Manager, has over ten years’ experience as an urban planning and design consultant. His background is in helping communities understand physical planning concepts and the policies needed to shape quality places. Ben is National Charrette Institute certified and has led multi-day charrettes for projects as diverse as transit corridor land use plans, transportation system plans for Tribal communities, and development scenario planning for corporate campuses. He will be hands-on with you, not only as your primary project contact, but also leading the preparation of research, site observations, outreach events, and recommendation setting. Ben managed teams and complex projects by doing the work and positioning each team member to make their best contributions across the work scope.

Chrissy Mancini Nichols based in the Bay Area, will be Project Director. Chrissy has led over 100 municipal parking projects and brings 18 years of project experience to her engagements in the technical realm and nationwide best practices related to parking and access to create spaces where people want to visit. If you have any questions, please contact Chrissy at cmancini@walkerconsultants.com or 415.830.8464.

Sincerely,

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E. Scope of Work

Project Understanding and Approach

The City of Fort Bragg, its businesses, residents, and visitors are at the confluence of converging and complimentary trends, providing an opportunity to rethink how parking and access should be provided to enhance the quality of life and economic development in the Central Business District (CBD). The traditional paradigm of transportation in California that requires a parking space for every person who patronizes and works at a restaurant or other business is evolving. Changing consumer preferences for the simple convenience and pleasure of bicycling and walking, or “parking once” and walking to multiple destinations, gives people choices other than relying on driving and parking to reach their destinations. Furthermore, vacant and peripheral parking lots offer opportunities for long-term parking and even creating more transit access through park and rides.

The inefficiency and cost of devoting too much land to parking and inefficient management of parking contributes to this paradigm, constrains business, and limits the City’s ability to advance economic goals. An inefficient parking system increases traffic, deters bicycling and walking, prevents existing businesses from expanding or new businesses from opening, and limits the number of businesses and destinations to visit in the City.

The question then becomes the requirements, location, and allocation of parking spaces vis a vis patrons and employees. Moving forward productively also likely requires changes to parking regulations and policies, and rethinking how parking can complement walking and biking. Further given the State of California’s aggressive emissions reductions goals and ambitious goals to convert to electric vehicles, how does the City plan for the future of electric vehicles to encourage adoption and satisfy charging demand? Walker is working with communities to plan for electric vehicle charging infrastructure, fleet electrification, and sustainable microgrid powered systems.

At Walker, we know Fort Bragg’s galleries, restaurants, and shops are the draw (not the parking). Although the parking may not be “the draw,” the amount and location of the physical space it occupies makes how, and where, parking is provided crucial for the success – or failure – of place making, “the destination.” Abundant parking can come at the expense of desirable spaces for people. At Walker, we approach our engagements keenly aware of this challenge, and recognize that addressing it effectively in Fort Bragg’s Central Business District will be a crucial component for the success of the engagement. Our expertise in all things parking and street design, including the planning, ordinances, enforcement, activation, funding, and technologies, ensures that new and existing businesses have adequate parking, while creating opportunities to claim unused space for people, and complement biking and walking. Further, while transit may be limited, we know if you can move some people to transit, it opens up parking spaces for customers. Parking lots on the periphery may serve as park and ride locations to spur transit ridership. Together, these elements can work together to support the City’s goals to revitalize downtown development and create a more people-friendly place.

Our Process

- **Understand the City of Fort Bragg’s holistic approach.** The City’s planning efforts embrace the connections between economic, social, and quality of life. Recommendations developed through this work will be equally comprehensive in their scope and impact.
- **Use the City’s goals as a north star.** The Comprehensive Downtown Parking Strategy can provide a path for all efforts related to parking, access, economic development, and placemaking. Walker will view the City’s goals and economic revitalization plans as our “north star” for developing recommendations that meet the core vision and values of the City and its constituents.
- **Be aspirational and inspirational, but also data-driven in identifying best practices.** In tailoring best practice solutions, Walker will evaluate not only aspiration and innovation, but also the effectiveness in performance

of those best practice solutions from a quantitative and qualitative standpoint for Fort Bragg’s local context. The guiding question in this search will always be “to what extent will this solution serve the Fort Bragg community?”

- **Focus on clear and unified messaging.** We will ensure that this effort is an extension and continuation of the City’s planning efforts through clear and unified messaging in open and collaborative partnership with City staff and stakeholders.
- **Be ready for implementation.** We will deliver a plan that is implementable and outlines costs and funding opportunities.

Scope of Services

The following is Walker’s detailed scope of work, outlining how the Project Team will work with the City, the community, and other stakeholders to achieve the goals and objectives of the project as outlined in the RFP. Walker will honor the goals of the tasks as set forth in the RFP as well as add value using creative solutions with a pragmatic and implementable focused deliverable.

Task 1- Project Management

Task 1.1 Kick Off Meeting. Walker will conduct a virtual kick-off meeting with the City’s project manager and all City and Walker team members to explore project parameters, objectives, purpose, assumptions, and goals. The kick-off meeting will include a discussion of project scope, schedule, and budget.

Task 1.2 Regular Meetings. Walker will hold regular phone or web meeting check-ins with the City’s project manager, and applicable team members.

Task 1.3 Monthly Invoices. Walker uses an internal electronic accounting system, which prepares monthly invoices and progress reports that track schedule and budget. We will issue monthly invoices to the City with summaries of staff work on the project.

Deliverables:

- Meeting minutes and follow up action items
- Monthly invoices

Task 2- Investigation

Simply establishing a starting point for a parking plan can be challenging. People’s lived experiences tend to inform their concerns and desires more than hard data does. We propose to investigate your parking systems from as many angles as possible. This includes empirical fact collection, discussions with your City’s leaders, and conversations with the community. Walker will conduct a deep-dive review of exiting data, studies, regulations, policies, and other documents to provide background and context for the study. This includes a review of the following pertinent studies and available data, but not limited to the City’s Land Use and Development Code, In-lieu fee revenues, the Downtown Revitalization Strategy, Inland General Plan, and other related policies, plans, and studies.



Community connection and engagement in the City of Winters, CA.

Task 3- Site Visit

The Walker team is familiar with Fort Bragg and will build on that knowledge to evaluate existing parking and pedestrian issues and opportunities in the Central Business District. Walker will visit Fort Bragg for one site visit and city tour with the City to evaluate existing parking issues (on and off-street) and pedestrian impediments in the CBD study area. This will include a high-level evaluation of existing parking facilities and utilization, existing wayfinding and signage (including parking signage) within and at the major entries leading to the CBD, and identification of key travel decision points within the CBD. Walker will also review the pedestrian environment to understand any limitations, obstructions, or other challenges related to street design, sidewalk, and overall access that may limit a more people friendly, enjoyable, and walkable atmosphere. Specific location evaluations include the Adler Street Trail head, vacant lots on the edge of the CBD, potential park and ride lots near Mendocino Transit Author stations, and siting for EV charging stations, solar covered parking areas, or metered parking.

Deliverables:

- Existing Conditions summary of Tasks 2 and 3 findings, prepared as a section and appendix of the Draft/Final Report

Task 4- Community Outreach

During the Task 3 site visit, Walker proposes to coordinate timing to hold one interactive meeting with the community at large, with an agenda to be developed with the City. The goal is to have interactive activities for the participants, for example, give them the opportunity to identify and sketch parking and transportation issues on oversized project maps. Walker proposes to hold the meeting in coordination with another event, such as the downtown revitalization quarterly meeting.

Alternative/Online Survey: As an alternative to an in person community meeting, and if it is decided that there would be greater community input via an online survey, Walker proposes an alternative outreach strategy through one focused online survey. The survey will provide Walker team input on people's opinions, priorities, and concerns related to parking and the pedestrian environment to identify recommendations. The online survey will be distributed to the City's contact list and via city e-newsletters and social media feeds. Carefully formulated survey questions will be augmented with images, maps, or other visuals to help enhance people's understanding and make their responses more meaningful.



Community outreach efforts in the City of Benicia, CA.

Deliverables:

- Community Outreach summary, prepared as a section and appendix of the Draft/Final Report

Task 5- Develop the Central Business District Parking Strategy

We know parking is a political process. Our team members are policy experts who have shepherded policy initiatives through local, state, and federal elected bodies, from fundamental change to minor amendments. We will work with the City to frame policy strategies and actions based on goals, data, visualizations, and real-life examples, to convey the story for policy and program change.

Based on findings from previous tasks and learnings from the community Walker will define strategies for aligning the parking system to create an optimal program. Strategies considered for Fort Bragg will include the following:

- Updates to the City’s Land Use Code for parking requirement, reductions, and the in-lieu fee.
- Strategies to create a more walkable and pedestrian friend environment and promote pedestrian activity so people can walk between destinations and are encouraged to “park once” and visit more businesses.
- Areas for park and ride stations to increase transit access.
- On-street parking regulations including time limit policies and strategies, and enforcement.
- Enhancements to parking policies and the relationship between on- and off-street parking including time limits, hours of operations and programs for resident, overnight, and employee parking. We will explore how policies can better balance on and off-street parking supply, create optimal parking utilization and increase parking turnover.
- Accommodating demand by user group (residents, employees, and visitors) and areas of interest, and using vacant lots for long-term parking.
- Recommendations for improvements in parking wayfinding.
- Technology recommendations to improve the efficiency of the parking enforcement program.
- Measures for improved use of existing public and private parking facilities including shared parking and other shared use agreements. Walker has worked with multiple communities on developing shared parking agreements between public agencies and private owners.
- Parking demand management including resident and employee Transportation Demand Management strategies to mitigate parking demand, and access improvements that reduce the need to drive and park or own a vehicle.
- New operational strategies.
- Planning for electric vehicle infrastructure and potential solar installations.
- Opportunities to increase access and if optimal, repurpose existing underutilized parking supply to activate downtown and support local businesses. Examples of more people-centric uses include parklets, streateries, and pop-up retail/restaurants.



Walker worked with Fresno County Transit Agency to implement an EV transportation plan.

Walker anticipates presenting the list of strategies and actions in a visual, easy to digest format, such as a matrix.

Deliverables:

- Strategies and actions list.

Task 6- Draft Comprehensive Parking Strategy for the Central Business District

Once all deliverables from previous tasks are completed and approved and strategies developed, Walker will create an illustrative and digestible digital draft report to the City for review including proposed code amendments.

Deliverables:

- Draft Reported via a digital copy in a commonly accessible format.

Task 7- Revisions to the Comprehensive Parking Strategy for the Central Business District

Walker will respond to one (1) consolidated round of City comments of the Draft Report.

Task 8- Joint Planning Commission and City Council Workshop

Walker will present the parking study at one (1) joint City Council/Planning Commission meeting.

Deliverables:

- Presentation material for joint City Council/Planning Commission meeting.

Task 9- Final Comprehensive Parking Strategy for the Central Business District

Walker will prepare a Final Digital Report and proposed ordinance. The Final Report will be reader-friendly with a variety of communication modes, including text, maps, graphics, tables, matrices, and other infographics, as necessary.

Deliverables:

- Final Report is provided via a digital copy in a commonly accessible format. Walker will also provide all work products associated with the project to the City.