



DATE: January 22, 2019

CATEGORY: New Business

DEPT.: Community Development

TITLE: **Downtown Valet Parking Pilot Program**

RECOMMENDATION

1. Approve the continuation of the Downtown Valet Parking Pilot Program at Parking Lot 11 (Franklin Street and Villa Street) with changes to the hours of operation.
2. Appropriate \$105,000 from the Parking District to fund continuation of the program from March 2019 through June 2020. (Five votes required)

BACKGROUND

The City of Mountain View has a thriving downtown composed of a variety of restaurant, retail, and personal service operations, which draws patrons from Mountain View and the region, as well as businesses and residences. Due in part to the success of downtown, the current demands on public parking exceed the “parking standard practical capacity” of 85 percent. This means when 85 percent or more of the spaces are occupied, it becomes difficult for a driver to find a parking space without having to “cruise” for parking.

Currently, downtown Mountain View is supported by 11 public parking facilities composed of 2 parking structures and 9 surface parking lots totaling 1,584 off-street parking spaces (Attachment 1 – Downtown Mountain View Parking Map). These off-street parking spaces have a two-hour timed parking restriction (one location – Parking Lot 11 at Franklin and Villa Streets, has a three-hour time limit) from Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. To help manage daytime parking demands of long-term parkers (i.e., employees) and short-term parkers (i.e., retail/restaurant patrons), the City administers a Downtown Parking Permit Program for property owners, businesses, and residents within the Parking Maintenance and Operations Assessment District (Parking District).

In October 2016, the City Council held a Study Session to discuss downtown parking demands and provided input on options to accommodate parking demands in downtown Mountain View. The City Council directed staff to explore two short-term pilot programs—ride-sharing credit and valet parking—and two long-term options—shared parking agreements and a paid parking study. In February 2017, the short-term programs were approved (Attachment 2—Council Report). The ride-sharing credit pilot program was not launched due to the inability to reach agreements with the major ride-sharing companies. Meanwhile, the valet parking pilot program was launched in March 2018. The purpose of this report is to provide a summary of the pilot program's operations and results since the launch and to recommend continuing the pilot program for a second year with some modifications.

Pilot Program Overview

The purpose of the valet parking pilot program is to help with the demand for downtown parking by increasing the number of parking spaces through greater efficiency and utilization of an existing public parking lot, as well as to provide convenience to patrons. The valet service is an attendant-assisted program. The cars are not dropped off with the parking attendants. Rather, the parking attendants are present at the designated parking lot to manage vehicles coming and going. When there are open parking spaces, drivers self-park their vehicles in a specific parking space as directed by the attendant. If all of the parking spaces are occupied, the attendant directs drivers to park in the drive aisle blocking parked vehicles. The utilization of the drive aisles to create additional (unmarked) parking spaces increases the capacity of the existing lot. Once parked, the attendant takes the keys and issues the driver a claim ticket. This allows the attendant to move vehicles in the drive aisle as needed to allow blocked vehicles to exit.

The pilot program is located at the northern portion of Parking Lot 11—Franklin Street at Villa Street (see Map 1), and operates during lunch and dinner hours under the following schedule: Thursday through Saturday from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. and 5:00 p.m. to 12:00 midnight. Lot 11 has 77 marked parking spaces and cars can be parked for a maximum of three hours between 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. There is no time limit for parking in marked spaces outside of these hours. The pilot program adds an estimated 21 unmarked spaces for a 27 percent increase in parking lot capacity during the valet parking hours of operation. This does not include the surface lot the City acquired from the 250 Bryant Street (former Dunn Automotive site) property owner.

Lot 11 was selected based upon the size of the parking lot, wider drive aisles, location in the downtown, and minimal impacts to adjoining properties. The City contracts with Parking Company of America, a parking management company, to operate and manage the valet service. No fee is currently charged to encourage drivers to use the program and provide support to the downtown business community. The pilot program was established as a yearlong program to run through the holiday season. Staff partnered with the Central Business Association (CBA) and Chamber of Commerce to promote the program.

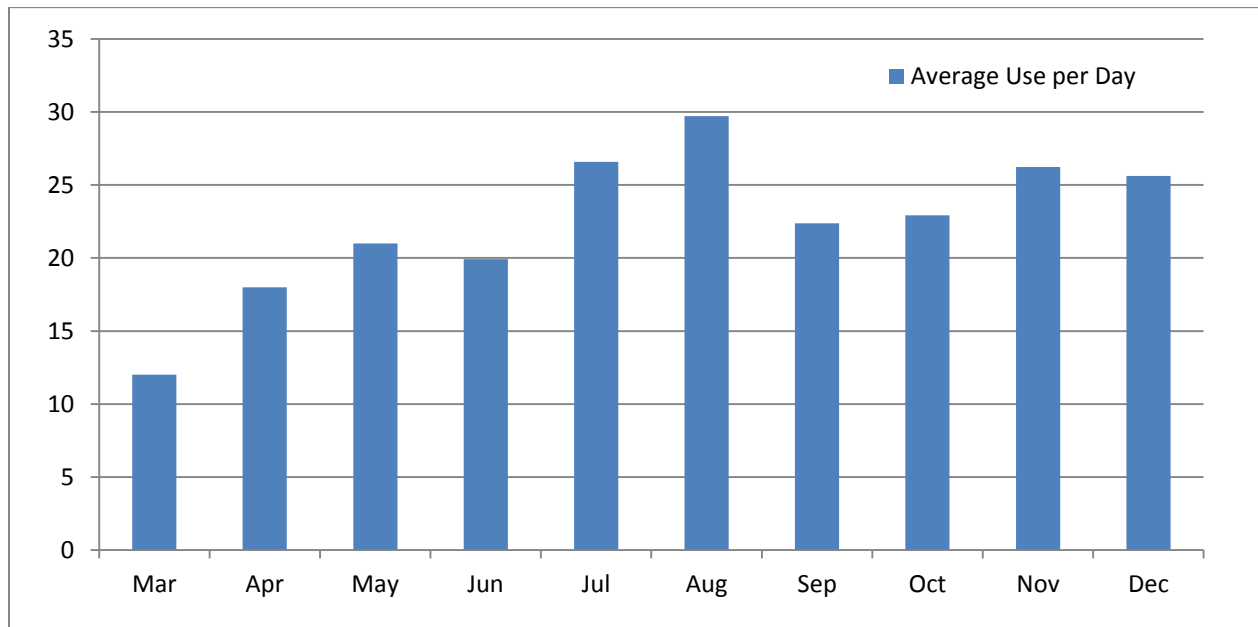
Map 1: Lot 11 Valet Parking Pilot Program



ANALYSIS

Staff has tracked the pilot program's usage over the past 10 months (see Table 1 below). During the pilot program launch and initial four-month ramp-up period, a daily range of 12 to 22 cars valet parked per day. Program usage increased and peaked in August with an average of 30 cars parked per day. The program usage dropped in September and grew modestly from October through December. In total, from March through December 2018, 131 days of valet parking service were provided to the community and 2,917 vehicles used the service.

Table 1: Average Number of Vehicles Using the Program per Day



At the January 8, 2019 Downtown Committee meeting, the Committee discussed the pilot program and provided input. The Committee discussed changing the hours of operation, identifying ways to incentivize drivers to use the service, increasing program utilization, and customer service. The Committee recommended changing the program hours to a continuous operation from 11:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. and providing more customer service through a simple survey and identifying an after-hours key pickup location in Mountain View. Currently, any keys left with the valet service after the program closes are kept with the parking management company and the vehicle owner is responsible for picking up their key at their Palo Alto office. (Thus far, one key was left with the service.)

Staff recommends continuing the pilot program for another year at Lot 11 on the same days (Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays) at no cost to the driver, but changing the hours of operation from a lunch and dinnertime operation only to a continuous operation from 11:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. Given the thriving downtown, parking demand continues to exceed the parking standard practical capacity of 85 percent and the program will continue to provide additional parking spaces at relatively low cost. Also, changing the hours to a continuous service will provide flexibility to drivers who are parking within the allowed time restrictions but do not meet the program hours. If supported by City Council, the change in hours would take place in March 2019, and the second year of the pilot program would run through the end of Fiscal Year 2019-20 (June 2020). To increase utilization of the program, staff will continue to work with the Downtown Committee, Central Business Association (CBA), and Chamber of

Commerce to develop additional marketing strategies to promote and increase awareness of the program.

Additional Parking Initiatives

The pilot program provides additional parking capacity without having to make physical changes to the site and continues to address immediate needs for more parking. Long-term improvements to the parking lot will be discussed under the Fiscal Year 2019-20 Capital Improvement Program process in the second quarter of 2019. However, staff continues to explore additional parking options to help address future parking demands when Parking Lots 4 and 8 (Hope Street between Evelyn Avenue and Villa Street) and Lot 12 (California Street at Bryant Street) are taken off-line while the lots are being developed. The development on Lots 4 and 8 will increase the number of public parking spaces upon completion of the development (76 new public parking spaces and 160 additional public parking spaces during the evenings and weekends), and the City Council has directed that all 160 public parking spaces on Lot 12 shall be replaced. Staff is currently in conversations with Kaiser about a shared parking opportunity which may include an expansion of the valet parking pilot program and is also exploring opportunities to use vacant private properties within the greater downtown for additional parking, including 380 Bryant Street at California Street and the Castle Farms property (no address available because it has never been developed) located near the southeast corner of Villa Street and View Street. These parking options will return to the City Council with recommendations at a later time. The City Council is also currently scheduled to hold a Study Session on the paid parking study in March 2019.

FISCAL IMPACT

The first year of the valet parking pilot program (March 2018 to March 2019) cost the City approximately \$81,000 and was funded through the City's Downtown Parking Maintenance and Operations Assessment District program (Parking District). This included the valet parking staffing from the parking management company, cost for minor repairs of the parking lot, and signage. Implementation of a second year (March 2019 through June 2020) with the change in the hours of operation would require the City Council to appropriate \$105,000 for the program. The Parking District will continue to fund the program. The budget request would fund an increase for the valet parking staffing and support enhanced signage and marketing efforts.

Costs	2018 Costs	2019 Estimated
Valet Parking Staffing	\$76,000	\$100,000
Signage	\$2,000	\$1,000
Parking Lot Repairs	\$3,000	N/A
Marketing	N/A*	\$1,000
Miscellaneous	N/A	\$3,000
TOTAL	\$81,000	\$105,000

*Completed within the current Economic Development Division budget.

CONCLUSION

Downtown Mountain View is home to a diverse mix of retailers, restaurants, and companies. The overall management of the downtown public parking system helps support businesses and residents by providing efficient and effective public parking resources. Continued implementation of the valet parking pilot program would support the current parking demands and make the existing public parking system more efficient at relatively minimal cost and without having to create new parking facilities. Staff will continue to evaluate the program through customer surveys, daily program usage, and downtown parking demands. If changes to the pilot program are needed, staff will return to the City Council for an update and recommendations.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Modify the proposed operations, such as location, days of the week, and hours, for the valet parking pilot program.
2. Provide other direction on the current pilot program.
3. Discontinue the pilot program.
4. Provide other direction.

PUBLIC NOTICING

Agenda posting and a copy of the report was sent to the CBA, Chamber of Commerce, Downtown Committee, the Old Mountain View Neighborhood Association, and Shoreline West Association of Neighbors. In addition, notices were mailed to the downtown businesses and property owners within the Parking District.

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TC/3/CAM
822-01-22-19CR

Attachments: 1. Downtown Mountain View Parking Map
2. February 28, 2017 City Council Report