

Downtown Parking Management Analysis **Mobile, Alabama**



Phase One Services

The study team of Urban Place Consulting Group, Inc. (Steve Gibson) and Downtown Parking & Planning Associates, LLC (Andy Miller, AICP) was requested to perform a Downtown Parking Management Analysis on behalf of the Downtown Mobile Alliance. The purpose of the study was three-fold: 1) to identify parking issues and constraints that are serving as barriers to downtown development; 2) to develop recommendations for improvements that will remove those barriers; and 3) to facilitate the development of a final, workable plan with key staff and stakeholders.

Specifically, our scope of work included the following primary tasks:

- Evaluate the Parking System From a Management and Operations Perspective
- Observe and Provide Assessment of the Current On Street Parking Program
- Review Budget and Financial Information and Provide Assessment
- Review and Comment On Previously Completed Parking Supply and Demand Studies
- Perform a Comparable Cities Parking System Analysis
- Develop Recommendations for Possible Improvements

Our findings showed that the Downtown Mobile parking system suffered from a historic lack of parking planning, management and leadership. Previous parking studies had been completed, but no action was ever taken by the City to implement changes or to increase the supply of public parking. We were able to demonstrate how parking system revenues have been declining over recent years and the reasons for the declines. Our analysis was able to demonstrate how the City's contract with its current parking enforcement vendor was not structured in the best interests of the downtown and was in fact negatively impacting the overall downtown experience. Our parking supply and demand review indicated that parking supply in the core downtown redevelopment area may soon face shortages if efforts are not undertaken soon to plan for, and develop additional parking capacity.

As a result of our initial analysis and recommendations, the Downtown Mobile Alliance has formed a Parking and Transportation Committee that has adopted the following mission statement as it partners with the City to address parking in a more pro-active manner.

Downtown Mobile Alliance Parking and Transportation Mission Statement:

The Alliance's Parking Mission is to support economic development by developing a downtown parking system that values each customer and provides a positive parking experience in downtown.

Phase Two Services

A direct result of our initial management analysis was the creation of the “Mayor’s Downtown Parking Working Group”. UPC and Downtown Parking & Planning were asked to perform additional services that included the following major tasks:

- Work with the working group and downtown stakeholders to further define the Core Purpose and Core Values of the “new” downtown parking system
- Work in conjunction with the Mobile Police department to develop a more user friendly protocol for parking enforcement officers
- Perform a comprehensive inventory of on-street parking to document existing conditions and posted regulations, and to make specific recommendations to create additional on-street parking spaces in the downtown core area
- Update parking supply and demand estimates to account for recent or pipeline development projects and to determine parking adequacy
- Develop recommendations to encourage the upgrade of substandard private surface parking lots in the Downtown Development District



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