

ANALYSIS OF EXISTING CONDITIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

The background materials and research provided a strong basis for the conclusions which are presented herein.

On-street Parking is Overused

It is clear from the observations that on-street parking experiences high occupancies for most hours of the day - even into the evening. While this is not unusual during the 11:00 A.M. to 2:00 P.M. period, it is unusual in the late afternoon and early evening. Low enforcement, especially in the evening hours, may be partly responsible for this but it is clear that demand is high, even in late afternoon.

Off-street Parking is Underused

While several employee lots for LaSalle Bank are heavily used, substantial vacant spaces occur in the City lot, Sears lot, Marshalls lot, Jewel lot, and Parkside Bank lot. All of these lots are candidates for possible shared use through leases to long-term parkers. If 70 to 100 spaces could be found for long-term parkers, and an aggressive enforcement program was pursued, this would solve the shopper and business parking problem.

Area Parking Characteristics

The Six Corners District has two distinct characteristics: East of Cicero Avenue there is adequate parking for customers and employees with the exception of Bally's. West of Cicero Avenue, there is a shortage of employee parking. If 50 to 70 spaces could be found the immediate problem would be solved.

Parking Enforcement

As previously mentioned, the parking surveys provided information on time limit violations

and the Chicago Police provided information on the number of tickets issued daily. There is no enforcement of the two-hour time limit; therefore, there is universal use of on-street parking in the retail district for long-term parking by employees and business owners.

Employee Parking

In the discussion of parking use, it was pointed out that the area west of Cicero was short of long-term (employee) parking. There is a critical need for safe and attractive long-term spaces for use by employees now.

“Surplus” Parking Supply

The eastern half of the District (east of Cicero) has ample parking with the exception of the area around Bally’s. The Sears-Jewel-Osco lots provide some parking for people who are not customers and for employees. Apparently, the large surplus of parking on this site makes Sears oblivious to this practice. However, in the future, as pressures on parking intensify, Sears may become concerned and will enforce private parking.

The lot east of La Salle Bank, N.A. on the south side of Irving Park Road has been referred to as having “surplus” spaces. There are actually four separate parking lots - two customer lots and two employee lots. During the 1999 survey period only about 25 spaces out of over 200 spaces were vacant - and these were in the customer parking area. It does not appear that this is a reasonable “shared parking” opportunity. See Figure 6 for picture of lot.

Financing for Parking

The report notes the need for 70 to 100 additional long-term spaces for employee use -especially in the western sector of the study area. Several options for meeting this need will be discussed in the next chapter; however, the issue of financing will be problematic. Several methods are typically used such as TIF, special assessment districts, revenue from parking meters and fines and private funds. Depending on the location of proposed parking sites TIF may be possible. Private funding through individual development projects may also be possible. Revenue from parking meters and fines are collected by the City’s Revenue Department and are deposited in the general fund. Therefore, these funds which are typically used to support special assessment districts for parking, are not available.

STRATEGIES

Based upon conclusions stated in the previous section, there are several strategies that should be used to solve the “parking problem.” Each strategy should fit in a unified approach to the parking solution and should be used in concert with other strategies.

Increase Enforcement

This strategy is suggested to **encourage** all-day parkers to park off-street in parking lots. This will require more personnel than is currently being used to enforce tune limit regulations. More aggressive enforcement must be coupled with the provision of more off-street spaces on the west side of the District.

Improve the City Lot

The existing City Laporte Avenue lot is currently in poor repair and is used by residents in the area for the storage of non-operable vehicles, vehicles for sale, and by local business firms owning delivery vehicles (see Figures 7 and 8). The lot is only 50% occupied. While this is only one of several “opportunity sites” which will be discussed later, it is the easiest and quickest to do. This lot is proposed for employee parking at a minimal charge.

Shared Parking with Private Lot Owners

Several opportunities exist for use of unused privately owned spaces. These include the Parkway Bank site, Sears parking lot, LaSalle drive-in site on Cicero Avenue, and other private owners. A “parking bank” should be established and maintained by the Six Corners Main Street office. Contacts with private lot owners and the assembly of potential sites for lease should be done by that office. This is the basis for the “parking bank.” The strategy when contacting lot owners is to obtain a few spaces in each lot for lease to long term parkers (employees) on a month-to-month basis.

“Opportunity Sites”

There are a number of opportunity sites which may provide additional parking for the District. These are illustrated on Figure 9 and are briefly described here. A more detailed description is included in the appendix.

Site 1 - City- LaPorte Avenue Lot

This is an existing lot that contains 128 spaces. The lot is poorly maintained and presents a “bad image” but is ideally located for long-term parking. Current usage is 40 cars - a net gain of 88 spaces.

Site 2 - 4936-50 West Irving Park Road Site

This site is behind the bridal shop, copy store, and several other stores. It now contains 18 spaces on two adjacent lots. It could be redesigned to provide approximately 22 spaces. This is a candidate for the parking bank.

Site 3 - Dakin Street Site

This site would provide 130 spaces if combined with the existing LaSalle Bank, F.S.B. lot. The parkway on the south side of Dankin would remain and angle parking would be installed on both sides necessitating the removal of the curb and parkway on the north side. Cooperation with LaSalle, F.S.B. would be required.

Site 4 - Warner-Milwaukee Street Site

Located at the north edge of the study areas, this site could provide 30 spaces. While not likely to be used by customers, the lot could be used by employees as well as an overflow lot by theater patrons.

Site 5 - Belle Plaine Avenue Site

Currently, the site is occupied by an apartment building which fronts on Belle Plaine Avenue. The advantages of the site are its proximity to the proposed Klee Building renovation and the proposed theater renovations - both key projects in the revitalization of Six Corners - and both projects needing off-street parking. The site also has the advantage of being centrally located but not requiring demolition of storefronts on either Milwaukee Avenue or Cicero Avenue. Depending on the number of levels, the site can provide 120 spaces per level, or with three levels, 360 spaces.

With the demolition of one store front, a pedestrian access to Milwaukee Avenue could be

provided which will enhance the use of the facility and will provide convenient access to the theater.

Site 6 - LaSalle Drive-in Site

This is the site of an existing drive-in banking facility to be abandoned by LaSalle Bank. The site, if redesigned, could provide 50 - 60 spaces and would be an ideal location for Family Fruit Stand. A private lease of the facility may be possible.

Site 7 - Bally's/LaSalle Site

This is the only site that currently is an existing parking lot that is fully utilized; therefore, a one-level parking deck over the existing parking lot is envisioned. This would provide approximately 50 additional spaces.

Site 8 - LaSalle Bank-N.A. Site

This is four parking lots, all independently designed and all owned by LaSalle Bank. Due to the design of the individual lots and the presence of alleys in between, the layout is very inefficient. A redesign of the lots with a combination of three into one will provide 75 additional spaces, part of which could be allocated to the “parking bank” for lease.

More detail is provided on each of the candidate sites in the appendix of the report.

Parking Promotion

Currently, the Six Corners District has over 2000 parking spaces, yet little effort has been made by district stakeholders to promote this fact. Our strategy to improve the efficiency of use of the current facilities is to provide parking maps and information to both employees and customers on available parking. This can be done through parking maps, a parking bank, and articles in the local media and newsletters by the Chamber and Six Corners Main Street.

Signing is another promotional device which could help improve the understanding and image of the Six Corners parking system. Site, trailblazer and regulatory signs need to be provided on street to guide customers and employees to appropriate off-street parking areas.