

City of Greenfield
Preliminary Parking Study

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INTRODUCTION

Staff in the Planning Department have been periodically told that it is difficult to find parking in the downtown area. The purpose of this study is to analyze some possible recommendations to improve available parking and make it more accessible to residents and visitors. This study will examine existing parking location, signage, and other factors that could contribute to a perception of a lack of available parking.

There are currently over 1000 parking spaces within the downtown. These include a mix of public and private spaces, as well as on-street and parking lot spaces. The City of Greenfield also maintains parking agreements with private owners within the downtown to provide conditional public parking at additional lots. One example of this is an agreement with the Greenfield Christian Church to allow public parking on their lot except during Sunday service.

In order to determine appropriate solutions, staff recommends considering all potential issues. Issues can largely be separated into ones of *accessibility* or *availability*. Many presume that “parking issues” are limited to simply not having *enough* parking, but this is often not the whole case for many cities.

Availability issues could include things such as parking not being located proximate to desirable sites and businesses, or parking having restrictions that make it unusable at desirable times. Issues can be actual or perception-based, meaning that residents or visitors may not *perceive* that parking is readily available. Examples of this could be drivers not realizing that they can park on the street, or signage not alerting drivers that a lot is public.

Accessibility issues may include things like circulation routes or entrances that make it difficult to get to a parking area. This could also include signage that is ineffective or missing. Especially in terms of visitors, intuitive parking systems that make it easy to find parking are an important piece to a thriving downtown. Other issues could include the circulation patterns within the downtown if a parking lot or area is not easily accessed due to driving restrictions or difficult entrances/exits.

This report will identify potential issues, solutions that present a short to long term timeframe, and further studies that may be beneficial to consider. It is not in the scope of this study to do a capacity test at various parking lots, and future updates to other plans such as the Thoroughfare Plan or the creation of strategic/action plans for the Downtown could include this in the future.

SIGNAGE

Directional signs and wayfinding are important components to a downtown. This helps travelers new and returning to navigate an area with ease. Easy to read signs should be provided for drivers and paired with pedestrian-scale wayfinding for maximum impact.

Signage within the downtown is scattered and inconsistent. Some signs are traditional white and green street signs, and others are specialty black and white signs that hang from decorative sign arms throughout the downtown. At some intersections, both types of signs exist, such as the intersection of Pennsylvania and Main Street. Signs on parking lots are often smaller and less readable from across the street, for example on the Harvest Market lot and the City lot. This can make it difficult for drivers to quickly determine if a parking lot is public parking or restricted.

There are also gaps in the location of signs, with major routes like State Street not having directional signs along it. The “Harvest Market” parking lot can be easily accessed via State Street and Main Street, making appropriate signage on these routes very important. While there are multiple signs on Pennsylvania and Main Street, there are none on South Street to direct drivers off of State Street to the large parking lot. Quickly identifiable signs have some possibility of triggering an impulse decision in drivers to encourage them off the main routes to stop and enjoy the City.

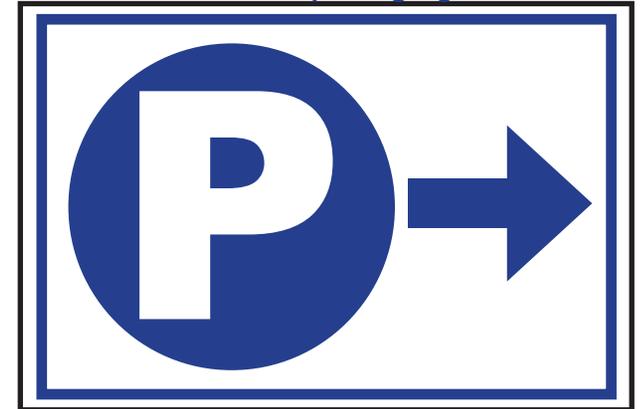
The following section identifies potential improvements to parking and directional signage within the downtown. Proposed signs are included with the recommendations and expanded on page 4. Existing conditions are mapped on page 5, with recommended sign placements and map on page 6.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Replace existing parking signs with consistent, cohesive signs that are easily readable to drivers**
 - Signs should be easy to read and readily identifiable, such as the examples to the right and sign families on the next page
- **Ensure that signage is positioned at intersections one block off of the intersection of Main Street and State Street in all directions to guide traffic to major lots**
 - This will eliminate any need for signs pointing in all directions at the major intersection
- **Place monument or decorative signs on major public parking lots to ensure that once drivers are directed toward a lot they know exactly which one is public**
 - Minimum solution: public parking signs similar to those used for directional signs
 - Enhanced solution: monument or barn wood such as the existing ones on the City lots to identify them as public
- **Ensure that signage on conditional lots is provided and readable from a distance**
- **Provide additional parking signage for street parking to alert drivers of its availability**
- **Work with private lot owners to improve signage as part of a grant program if possible**



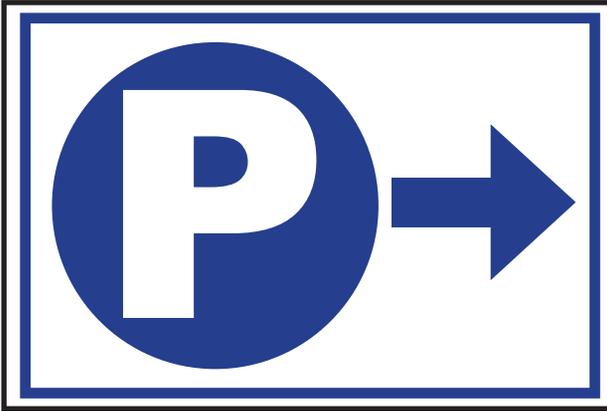
Two examples of signs that could be used for directional parking signs



If monument signs could not be created, a coordinating sign such as this could be used for parking lots

SIGN DESIGN OPTIONS

Directional



Parking Lot



Conditional



AFTER 4 P.M.

AFTER 4 P.M.

AFTER 4 P.M.

EXISTING CONDITIONS



SIGN PLACEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS



RECOMMENDED SIGN AREAS

1. Pennsylvania and Main Street Directional Signs

- Southeast corner of the intersection: Sign should face west and point south to the harvest market lot.
- Northwest corner of the intersection: Sign should face east and point south to the harvest market lot.
- Southwest corner of the intersection: Sign should face North and point south to the Harvest Market lot.

2. Harvest Market Parking Lot Sign Identifying it as Public

3. South and State Street Directional Signs

- Northeast corner of the intersection: Sign should face south and point west to the harvest market lot.
- Southwest corner of the intersection: Sign should face north and point west to the harvest market lot.

4. Griggsby Parking Lot Sign Identifying it as Public

5. North Street Alley Parking Lot Sign Identifying it as Public

6. North Street On-Street Parking

- Additional standard signs acknowledging parking is allowed

7. North and State Street Directional Signs

- Northeast and Southwest corner of the intersection pointing east and west for North Street street parking.

8. American Legion and Main Street Directional Signs

- Southeast corner of the intersection: Sign should face west and point south the county lot and North to the church lot.
- Northwest corner of the intersection: Sign should face east and point south the county lot and North to the church lot.

9. Greenfield Christian Church conditional lot sign

10. Police lot signage

- It should be discussed with the police department how they want this lot signed going forward

11. County parking lot signage

- It should be discussed with the county how they want this lot signed going forward

12. Alley Directional Signage to/from County parking lot

- If the large county lot is signed as public, directional signage on State Street should direct drivers down the alley. Signage could also be included on the west alley to direct them back to State Street from the lot.

13. County Parking conditional lot sign

14. City parking conditional lot sign

- Existing signs are hard to read from across the road and additional or new signs should be considered

SIGN TOTALS

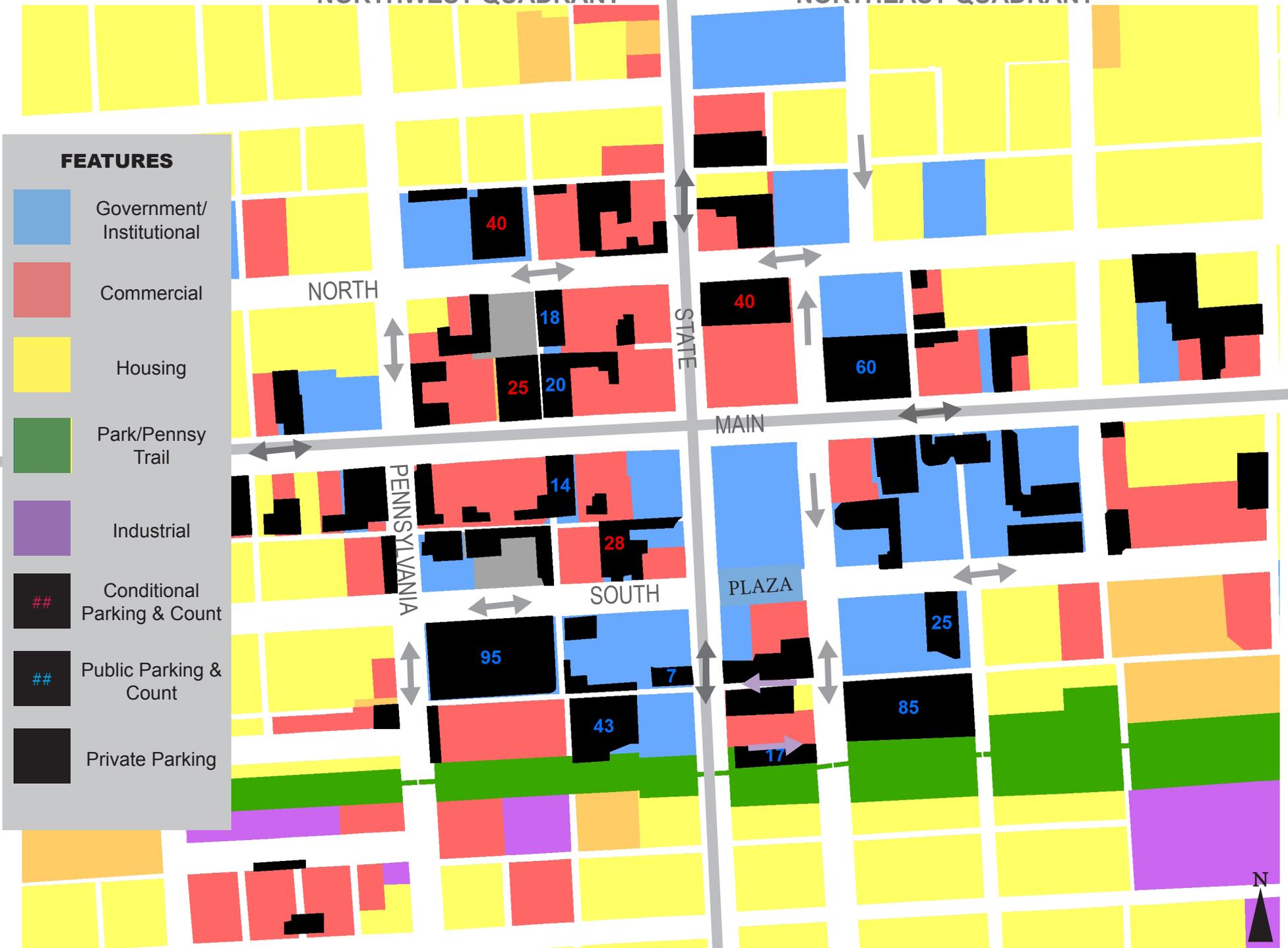
- Directional: **8-10**. A minimum of eight signs are needed, and two additional may be required depending on how the large county lot is signed for use on the alleys.
- Parking Lot: **4-5**. A minimum of four will be needed, with a potential fifth if the large county lot is signed strictly as public.
- Conditional Signs: **3-4**. A minimum of three signs will be needed with a possible fourth depending on the county lot. This number would include an additional sign on the city lot.
- Other: additional on street signs for North Street and additional streets as deemed necessary.

NORTHWEST QUADRANT

NORTHEAST QUADRANT

FEATURES

- Government/Institutional
- Commercial
- Housing
- Park/Pennsy Trail
- Industrial
- Conditional Parking & Count
- Public Parking & Count
- Private Parking



SOUTHWEST QUADRANT

SOUTHEAST QUADRANT

PROXIMITY & CIRCULATION

It is important to remember that high-volume traffic can sometimes be a barrier to pedestrian activity. State Street and Main Street both have a fair amount of traffic on them, including heavy trucks and semis. If pedestrian-friendly infrastructure is not provided, such as delayed signals, crosswalks, etc., some people may not feel comfortable crossing these routes. Many people are also used to parking near where they want to visit.

Using State and Main as dividing lines, the downtown can be broken in to four quadrants. The west quadrants have more commercial business, shown in red in the land use map on the previous page, while the east quadrants have more government and institutional uses. Circulation is fairly simple throughout the west quadrants as all routes allow two-way travel. The east quadrants have series of one-way streets that may change to two-way travel after one block.

In the northwest quadrant, 36% of the available spots (not including on-street parking) are public. The additional lots have restrictions, and other potential parking is private or unpaved. The public parking in the alleys is one-way going North from Main Street, leaving public parking limited and potentially difficult to access for someone driving on North Street if street parking is not available. This could be offset somewhat by a combination of fresh paint for parking spots and additional street parking signs.

The southwest quadrant houses the largest lot in the downtown, as well as a few other public lots. The majority of spaces in this quadrant are public and provide fairly easy access to businesses along Main Street. The North Street Living Alley with bump-outs along

Main Street could also improve access to those businesses.

The southeast quadrant also has a large lot, but the lot is less accessible from State Street than the Harvest Market lot. Access from State is achieved through a pair of one-way alleys. While the lot can also be directly accessed from Main Street via American Legion Place, returning to Main Street requires using State Street or using South Street to get around the one-way block of American Legion. While improvements to the circulation could make it easier to park in this lot, it should be noted that this lot is the furthest away from many of the businesses and may still not be utilized to the extent that others are.

The northeast quadrant has two large lots. The lot east of State Street provides parking for various surrounding businesses, and the church lot just north of Main Street is mostly public except during service times. Signs for the State Street lot are small, and may be difficult to read for travelers. Circulation is also somewhat limited in this quadrant, with the one-way street adjacent to the church lot. This prohibits directing drivers off of State Street to access the church lot via North Street.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Formalize an agreement with Greenfield-Central for public use of the lot on North Street**
 - The majority of businesses are along this street, and it is a very walkable area
- **Improve the alleys connecting the large county lot to State Street**
 - While this lot may not make as large of an impact currently with most businesses focused north of Main Street, it is close to businesses on American Legion and is proximate to the Pennsy Trail and future planned areas
- **Re-examine the one-way streets on American Legion and East Street**
 - Business owners near here should also be approached if it determined that these streets should go back to two-way
 - Some angled parking would be lost and replaced with parallel parking. In light of this, additional lot agreements could be made to provide additional parking
 - The full two-way from Main Street to the county lot could make parking there more intuitive

PARKING STALL SIZE

There are other factors that could improve the parking environment within the downtown, one of which is reexamining parking requirements. This can be done in two ways—the number of spaces required per business, and the dimension of parking stalls.

This report will focus on size of parking stalls, but future updates in the zoning code should also review the number of spaces required for a business to ensure that it is on par with surrounding cities. Currently, the city requires parking spaces to be 10’ wide and 20’ long, except in the TN District where spaces can be 9’ wide by 18’ long.

A sampling of communities of varying sizes around the area showed that most communities in the region have moved to a required minimum of 9’ wide by 18’ long parking spaces. This gives a developer the option of making them 10’x20’ if deemed necessary, but provides some flexibility for sites that may be tighter. A table of the results is included to the right.

Many cities have shifted to narrower parking spaces but leave it open to the developer if they would like to build larger parking spaces. This allows for flexibility in designs. While some vehicles are very large (ex. the Chevrolet Suburban at 80 inches wide), a 9’ space still allows room to open doors. There has been a recent buying shift to smaller SUV’s and Crossovers, and this should be considered as well.

The shift to smaller parking spaces could increase the amount of spaces available in public and private lots. The Harvest Market Lot could potentially increase by five or more spaces depending on design. While this may

not seem like a lot, when applying this to all lots within the downtown the numbers would begin to add up quickly. It could also allow some flexibility in street layouts with slightly smaller parallel spaces. This could benefit roads that might be viewed for trail projects or road diets in order to provide some additional room for landscaping.

To provide the most impact, the City could initiate the zoning ordinance update process and restripe public lots and parking areas. The City could also consider partnering with private lot owners to incentivize lot restriping in additional areas.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Reduce required parking stall minimum sizes in the Downtown to 9’ wide by 18’ long, leaving flexibility for developers to make larger stalls if they wish**

Community	Parking Requirement
McCordsville	“at least 19 feet long and 9 feet wide”
Pendleton	Parallel Spaces: minimum width of 9 feet and minimum length of 21 feet Others: minimum of 9 feet width and 18 feet length
Richmond	minimum of 9 feet wide and 18 feet long
Shelbyville	9 feet wide by 18 feet long parallel: 9’x22’
Anderson	not less than 10’ wide and 18’ long
Muncie	9 feet wide by 18’ long parallel: 8’x22’
Fishers	minimum width of 9’ length varies 16’-18’ based on adj. use (e.g. landscaping 16’)

FURTHER STUDY

There are other factors that could be studied in conjunction with future plans and updates. It is not within the scope of this report to do a capacity study for existing parking spaces. A capacity study could utilize volunteers, traffic count tubes, or cameras to monitor parking lots throughout the day and count how many vehicles are coming in and out of the lots. This could be done on multiple days through the week to determine capacity and how full each lot is on average.

This would provide an idea of where parking lots are more full, and which are being underutilized. By knowing this, data-driven decisions could be made on where to locate additional parking in the future if an opportunity arises, or where a parking garage should be located in the future if constructing one was deemed necessary and feasible.

A requirement analysis could also be done to determine how existing parking numbers relate to required minimums by use. This could be done by calculating the square footage of existing retail, housing, government, and other uses in the downtown. The parking space per square foot calculations would then be applied. A shared parking percentage could be applied, such as 75%, to determine how the number of spots that exist relates to how many would be needed. This could be done for the downtown as a whole, and also broken down into quadrants. This would be a more theoretical way to determine where and if parking was lacking, while the capacity study would be more definitive.

These are a few options of what can be done after the interim solutions posed in this report. As downtown businesses fill in, more in-depth analysis may be required.

CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, there are a variety of ways that parking can be potentially improved in the short term. It should be ensured that parking is intuitive, easy to locate, and efficient. Making the most of existing parking areas will help the City to not create excess parking in the limited space within the downtown. Future updates to the Revitalization and/or Comprehensive Plan could include further analysis through capacity and requirement studies to ensure a proactive and responsible approach to future parking.