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November 30, 2020

(Sent via Email: [amoorewells@cityoffortpierce.com](mailto:amoorewells@cityoffortpierce.com))

Ms. Audria Moore-Wells  
Special Projects Coordinator  
City Manager's Office  
City of Fort Pierce  
100 North U.S. 1  
Fort Pierce, FL 34950

Re: *Parking Planning Services  
Update to 2016 Walker Study, Fort Pierce, Florida  
Walker Project No. 15-002450.00*

Dear Ms. Moore-Wells:

Walker Consultants is pleased to submit the following report update for the recommendations and evaluation of the parking program in Downtown Fort Pierce, as well as an analysis and evaluation of parking programs for the development areas of Fort Pierce Beach, the Lincoln Park District, and the Peacock Arts District.

We look forward to discussing our findings and recommendations with your parking committee members and appreciate the opportunity to be of service to you on this project. If you have any questions or comments, please do not hesitate to call.

Sincerely,

WALKER CONSULTANTS

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Tom Szubka", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Tom Szubka, CAPP, CPP  
Senior Consultant

Cc: Jim Corbett, CAPP, Walker Consultants  
Bobby Mordenti, M.U.D., Walker Consultants



# Parking Study Update

City of Fort Pierce, Florida

November 30, 2020 ( DRAFT )

Prepared for:

Office of the City Manager  
City of Fort Pierce, Florida



**WALKER**  
CONSULTANTS

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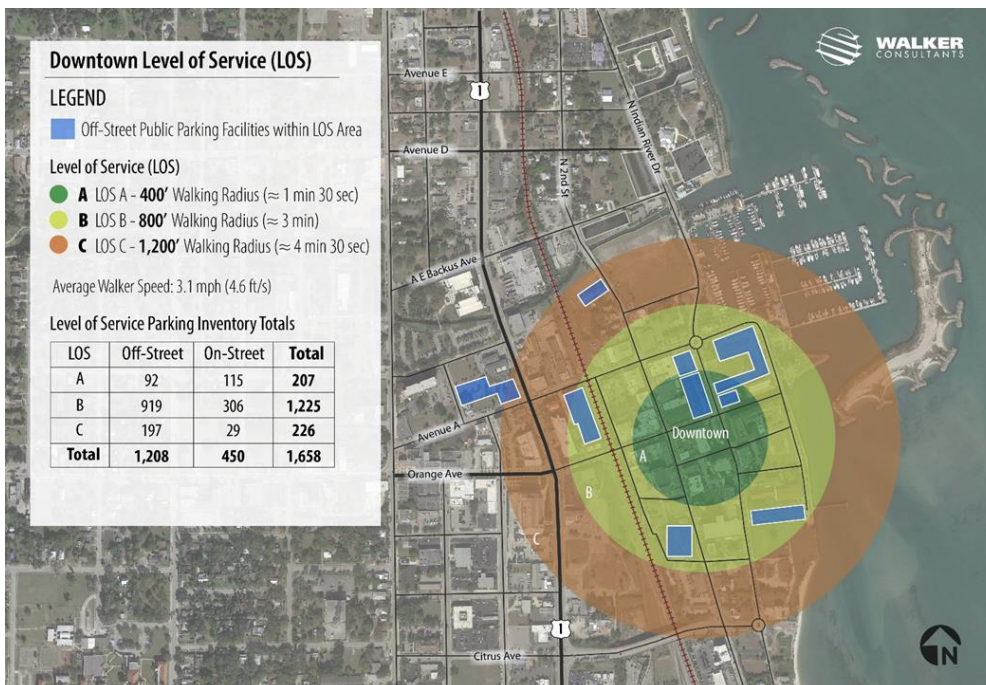
# Executive Summary

As noted in the 2016 report provide by Walker Consultants for the City of Fort Pierce, parking continues to play a key role in the development of a municipal community. The 2016 report discussed reasons why the City would implement a paid parking system and defined the goals of the system to guide its development. The considerations provided in the 2016 report remain accurate with some minor changes added due to the advancement of certain technologies and best practices in the parking industry. What has changed in this study update is the maturation of the City’s growth and development, including its parking needs. To that end, Walker Consultants has re-evaluated the City’s parking program and is providing the recommendations identified in this report.

The City should implement a parking program that can independently manage, operate and improve the parking supply and demand for the districts identified in this report. The program would benefit as an enterprise fund so that parking funds generated from the system can be utilized for program improvements, streetscaping enhancements, and development efforts. Highlighted recommendations include improvements for the following categories.

## Downtown Paid Parking Program

- All public parking within the Level of Service (LOS) zones A and B should require a fee to park to manage demand and encourage turnover. On-street parking should require a premium fee to park as it is the most convenient. Off-street parking should require a lesser fee to readily attract visitors and limit the desire to circle through the downtown streets to find an open on-street parking space. Paid parking rates should take the place of time limits to manage utilization and to simplify the program for customers. All other public parking, at LOS C or greater, should be considered free parking with generous time limits until additional development dictates an adjustment.



- Rates for a paid parking program should be set to encourage turnover so that there is always space (typically 15%) available as a parking customer arrives at the intended destination. It is also a best practice to set rates so that the more convenient, on-street parking is priced higher than the off-street parking. Hours of operation should begin with the workday (6am) and carry through the evening start of the dinner and entertainment demand (8pm). Event parking should be set in a similar fashion, but at a flat rate that is equivalent to the duration of the hourly parking rate.
- A rate structure with a range of rates should be established to allow flexibility for the City to raise and lower parking rates as appropriate, without the need to create a new ordinance each time a change is required. This will allow the City to have a more dynamic program that can be readily adaptable to the community needs. In addition, Chapter 34, Article II, Sec. 34-35 should be reviewed to increase the fine rate from \$18 to a higher amount so as to create a greater disparity between paid parking rates and penalty fine amounts, which will ensure greater compliance. If the fine amounts are too low, parking customers may be more inclined to “take a chance” as the penalties may not be much more restrictive than paid parking compliance.
- An effective and comprehensive public awareness campaign should be conducted as it will play a key role in a successful implementation of the program. The focus should be on the added convenience of the credit card payment feature, and enforcement ambassadors should go through training to assist patrons as the new meters are deployed. This communications plan should provide information on key events impacting Fort Pierce parking access issues and should be responsible for increasing public awareness of downtown parking through events, activities, publications, press releases, maps and other literature.



## Downtown Employee Parking Program

- The City Hall garage should be used for free employee parking with no time limits and the use of a parking permit credential. Use of this facility, as it is primarily located within LOS B and borders LOS C, will provide a dedicated facility for employees and business owners to consider as the paid parking program is implemented. The City Hall garage has been identified as a great resource for the community and has been largely underutilized to date.



## Jury Parking Program

- Any overflow parking from the County Garage for the courthouse should utilize the City’s paid parking system or park for free in the City Hall parking garage located on Orange Avenue.



## Parking Program Management

- In place of adding city staff to manage and provide enforcement of the recommended changes to the parking regulations, the City should consider using a professional parking management firm to meet the labor and management requirements. While this recommendation will shift the day to day operating responsibilities, it does not relieve the City of its ultimate responsibility to ensure the system continues to meet the needs of its residents, local business owners, and visitors.



## Technology Solution

- All technology solutions should employ the industry best practice of using the license plate as a parking credential in conjunction with license plate recognition solutions.
- Payment options should include a combination of strategically placed of multi-space pay stations with mobile payment options. This will facilitate the customer interaction with the parking programs and provide efficient revenue collection for the City.
- The City of Fort Pierce should consider the acquisition of a permit and enforcement technology solution that will facilitate the enforcement, permit management, and collection of fines for the paid parking program. A solution of this type will improve management efficiency for the City and improve customer interface with the parking program. The City can develop specification criteria for procurement, typically through an RFP process.



## Inventory Reconfiguration

- The parking lot located at 100 N. Indian River Drive (locally referred to as Marina Square), should be reconfigured to formalize the parking inventory potential and eliminate the pervious parking area. With a current inventory of 143± parking spaces, a reconfiguration can create an inventory of 225± parking spaces for a net gain of 82± parking spaces.



## Kings Landing Development Impact

- As the development of Kings Landing advances, the City should look to the opportunity to develop a public/private partnership to develop a parking structure on surface parking Lot 12 to increase inventory. This is a location that can serve downtown, Kings Landing, Edgartown, as well as future developments in the area and will aid in resolving inventory needs created by the Kings Landing Development.



## Beach District Paid Parking Program

- The public parking inventory within the Beach District areas should require a premium parking fee for non-resident visitors.
- As paid parking is introduced to the Beach District, the opportunity to create a Resident Beach Parking Program should be implemented that will allow Fort Pierce residents the opportunity to access the public parking inventory within the Beach District without having to pay the daily or hourly non-resident fee to park.



## Lincoln Park District Parking Program

- Increase the in-lieu payment to accommodate the anticipated costs for surface parking development (not including land costs), currently at \$3,000 - \$5,000 per space so that the City may use the funds to acquire and develop parking in the District where appropriate. The City should also consider changing the ordinance so that the in-lieu payments will directly benefit the parking system, rather than the City's multimodal fund.

- As the Lincoln Park District matures in its development, the City should look to strategically acquire land that can be used for parking inventory, and ultimately further development. With a healthy payment in-lieu strategy the City will have funding for development of surface parking and can look to acquire land independently or through public/private partnerships.



## Peacock Arts District Parking Program

- The City should work with District business owners to share parking inventory for use during large events and downtown overfill needs before the City begins steps towards acquiring real estate for parking needs.



# 01 Introduction

# Introduction

The City of Fort Pierce (City) is considering alternatives to improve the availability of downtown parking and strategic development of parking programs in developing districts that include Fort Pierce Beach, the Lincoln Park District, and the Peacock Arts District. Over the past five years, the City has installed two-hour parking limits for on-street parking in core areas of the downtown.

As downtown continues to evolve, parking availability continues to be challenged and the burden of enforcement using limited enforcement staff and dated techniques has added to the frustration for citizens, merchants and city staff.

Likewise, as the development districts mature, the City is looking to be strategic about parking programs in the districts to “get ahead” of any obstacles created by rapid development success.

## Stakeholder Input

Walker had the opportunity to interview several stakeholders identified by the City for the Downtown, Lincoln Park and Beach Districts. Stakeholders included members of the community and city staff. The following is a list of the stakeholder positions interviewed by Walker:

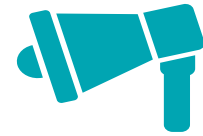
### Stakeholders

- City Engineer
- Deputy Police Chief
- Lincoln Park Mainstreet
- Downtown Business Association
- Fort Pierce South Beach Association
- Main Street of Fort Pierce
- Audubon Development (Kings Landing)

Highlights of the overall feedback include:

#### **Downtown**

- Friday Fest events are a big draw and parking is at a premium
- Enforcement is a challenge
- Plenty of parking, people do not want to walk
- City garage always has enough space, need to make more “user friendly”
- Delivery vehicles are a concern
- Jury parking on Monday mornings can be an issue
- Kings Landing and Edgartown developments will add to the demand for parking
- Need to brand parking better
- Need better traffic flow
- Paid parking is supported from the business community
- Need more loading zones



#### **Lincoln Park District**

- Redevelopment of the theater will promote Avenue D development and will be the catalyst for the area. Off-street parking in the area should be acquired by the City
- Parking near the multi-modal center would be advised

#### **Peacock Arts District**

- 7<sup>th</sup> Street has the greatest potential for development
- Orange Ave. also prime for development

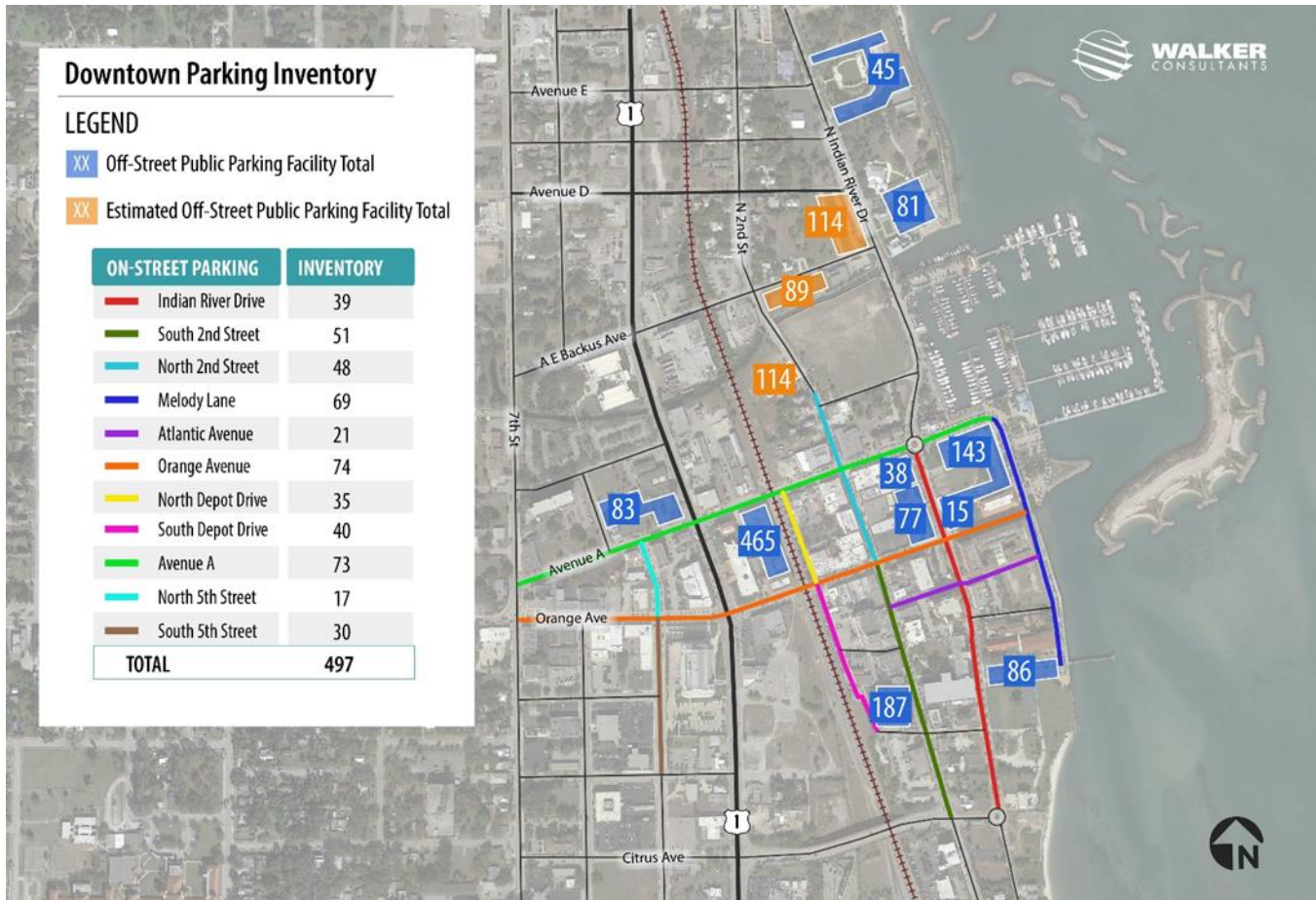
#### **Beach District**

- Only really have parking concerns on a holiday weekend.
- Restaurants and bars are just as popular as the beach
- No additional parking is needed as several lots are not fully utilized
- Residents are not typically burdened
- Additional concerts/events can be prone to creating parking demand

# Evaluation of Current Parking Conditions

The City's current parking program is limited to time-limited parking for on-street spaces in the downtown core, with all other areas defined by unrestricted free parking.

*Exhibit 1: Downtown Fort Pierce Parking Inventory*



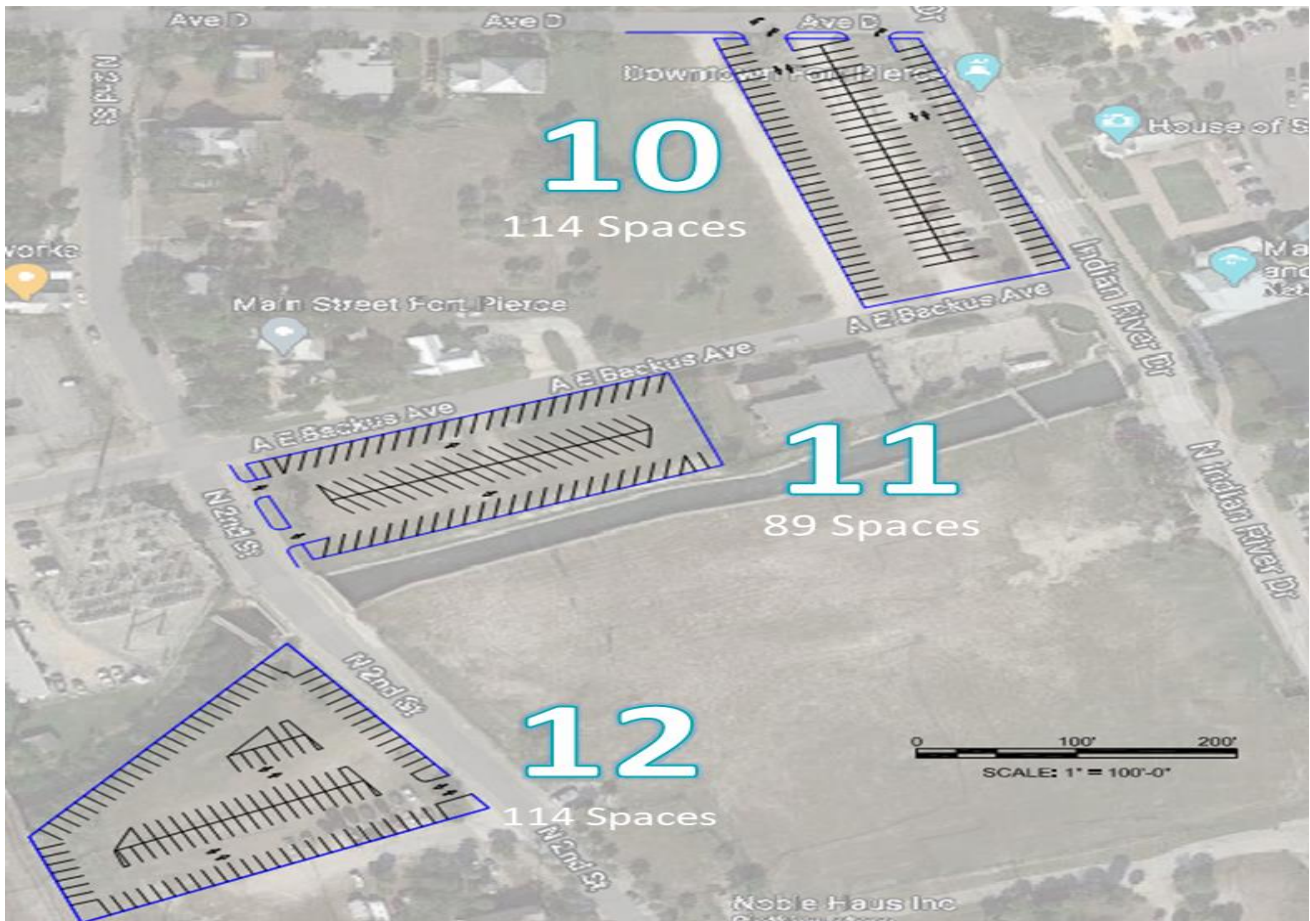
Source: Walker Consultants, 2020

The parking space inventory, as show in **Exhibit 1**, shows a healthy inventory for current conditions of the Downtown District. Of note:

- The 45 spaces at the River Walk Center can be considered destination driven and are not impactful to the downtown core under today's conditions.
- The 86 spaces at the St. Andrews Episcopal Academy are currently dedicated to its use as are the 83 spaces located at the Norte Dame Mission Catholic Church, west of US 1 at Avenue A. Future partnerships with these organizations could be explored to supplement the public parking inventory during the "off-hours" of these organizations, however today the parking is exclusive.
- The 187 parking spaces in the County parking facility are currently unavailable after business hours and on weekends. Opportunities to partner with the County to supplement the public parking inventory should be explored.
- The 465 parking spaces in the City parking facility are underutilized and widely available for use.

- The surface lot locations identified in orange represent off-street locations which are owned by the City and are currently unpaved, non-delineated parking assets. Currently, these assets are not listed in the City's public parking inventory. Walker has included these lots as inventory in this report and should be considered viable options for use as they potentially represent 317± spaces of usable inventory as shown in **Exhibit 2** and labeled as lots 10, 11 and 12.

*Exhibit 2: Estimated Inventory of Unpaved Lots 10, 11, 12*

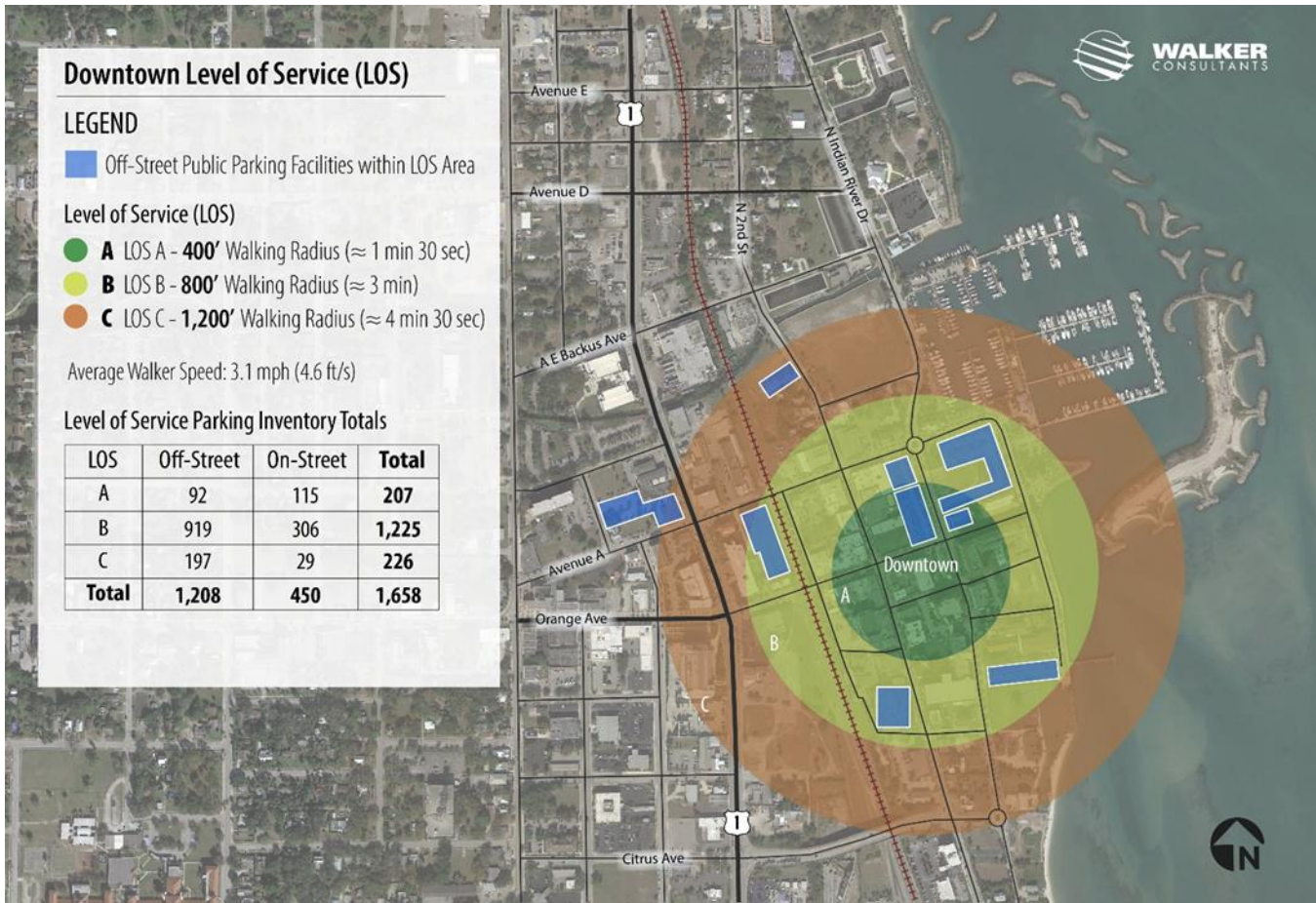


Source: Walker Consultants, 2020

## Walkability and Level of Service

Visitors, customers, and employees each have a unique perception of what is an acceptable parking location in relation to their destination. Employees are typically encouraged to park further away, while visitors and customers desire access to the closest parking available.

*Exhibit 3: Level of Service Inventory*



Source: Walker Consultants, 2020

In **Exhibit 3**, walking distance times are presented to help provide a common context of acceptable walking distances from the downtown core and the available parking within each level of service (LOS). The levels of service, as defined in the exhibit, are indicators of the willingness of an individual to walk to/from their destination with both physical and perceived effort considerations.

As shown in the exhibit, 13% of parking inventory is within a LOS A and 74% of parking inventory is in LOS B, totaling 86% of parking inventory within a 3-minute walk or less of the downtown core.

Inventory within LOS A should be made available for visitors and customers to the area, while employees that will typically park for extended periods of time should park in more remote or lower LOS areas.



## 02 Paid Parking Program

# Paid Parking Program

On-street parking has become the preferred choice in Downtown Fort Pierce, as it is the most conveniently located and free. The result is increased traffic as users circulate searching for an open spot, increased carbon emissions and ultimately patron frustration.

Free parking increases the tax burden on all city property owners, not just visitors and employees. Providing free parking puts the City of Fort Pierce and its taxpayers in the position of being the ultimate, sole provider of downtown parking for the foreseeable future because parking revenue at today's parking rates is not sufficient to amortize the costs of constructing new parking. Within the downtown core, the City controls a finite number of parking spaces and finds itself in an unintended consequence of needing to carefully manage the allocation of this scarce resource.

## Benefits

The reasons that a city would implement a paid parking system are simple. The goal should be to promote parking turnover through value-pricing options while generating funds to develop and sustain a municipal parking system. Without convenient and accessible public parking inventory, downtown development will continue to face many challenges. The following are three key examples of the benefits for implementing a paid parking program.

## Transportation Demand Management (TDM)

The primary purpose for charging a fee for parking convenience is not the collection of revenue, although this is important, but rather to allocate a scarce resource efficiently. Most highly valued commodities in limited supply are often most fairly rationed by price. Charging appropriate parking fees allows the market participants to value each parking asset properly.

Paid parking is an effective means of managing parking behavior to encourage turnover and maximize the parking supply. By moving long-term parking customers, mainly employees, to park in less visible off-street parking lots, visitors will have access to the most convenient on-street spaces to benefit their experience and increase curbside access to local businesses. In addition to the benefits of managing parking behavior, revenue from the use of preferred on-street spaces can be used to fund additional parking assets.

## Streetscape Improvements

Welcoming and attractive streetscapes that encourage the pedestrian experience will further promote the use of underutilized parking inventory, as the walking distance will not be perceived as onerous. Feedback from the stakeholder meetings conducted by Walker clearly indicates that the pedestrian route on Orange Avenue that crosses the railroad track is in need of streetscaping improvements and may be an area where the City of Fort Pierce can prioritize its consideration. Considered a best practice, funds generated from a paid parking program could be earmarked for streetscape improvements, as these considerations will aid in the TDM goals of the parking system.

## Development Support

As the City looks to support developing districts by reducing or eliminating the development parking minimums in the City code, a paid parking program will provide benefits. Revenues generated from a paid parking program can not only create a revenue stream from which to support these efforts, but the revenues can be bonded to allow the City to finance land acquisition and development costs to create additional parking inventory for when it is needed.

A healthy, paid parking program will be operationally self-sufficient and should provide the City an additional source of funds for expanding the program when necessary, while continually improving the streetscape and beautification efforts for the City.

## Recommended Approach

When evolving from a free parking system to a paid parking system, Walker recommends keeping an element of the system free. Typically, these free parking elements should remain throughout lesser-utilized public parking areas, and in most cases, the perimeter areas of downtown. Initially, visitors and residents may not be excited about the fact that they now must pay a fee to park in the core areas of downtown. The tradeoff will come in the form of available public parking during peak times in the core area. These same users will have the option of parking for free and walking (or riding on a local transit option) or pay a fee to park in a convenient location, relative to their downtown destination.

## Downtown District

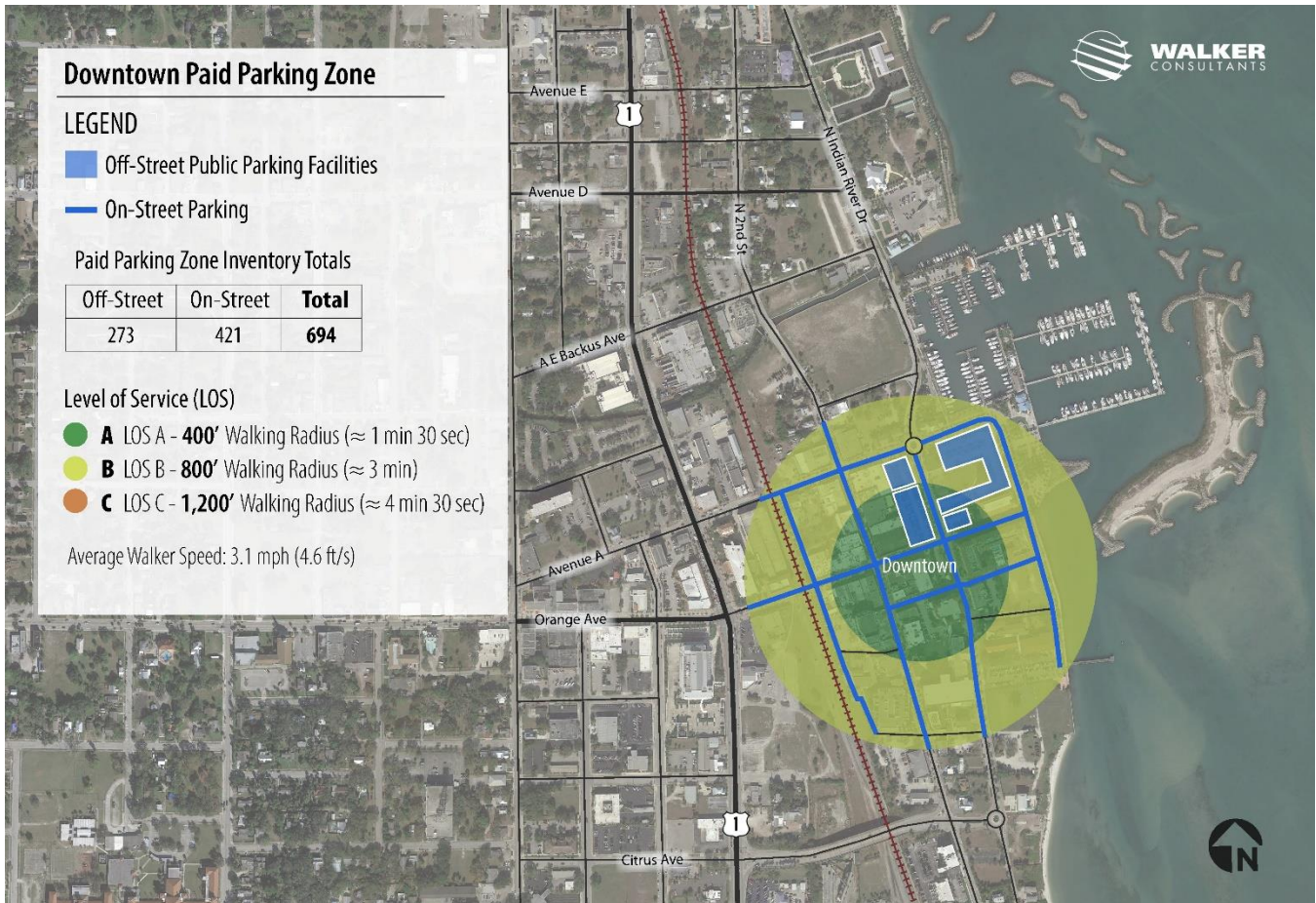
In the downtown parking environment, the parking inventory that is in the most demand should require a premium parking charge. As the Downtown District is still relatively small and with a good walkability rate, Walker recommends that paid parking be first implemented in the areas considered to be in the Level of Service A and B as shown in **Exhibit 4**. This will ensure that any paid parking patron will not walk, on average, for more than 800 feet or for longer than 3 minutes to arrive at their destination.



### Walker Recommends

All off- and on-street public parking identified in **Exhibit 4** should require a fee to park to manage demand and encourage turnover. On-street parking should require a premium fee as it is the most convenient and off-street parking a lesser fee. Paid parking rates should take the place of time limits to manage utilization and to simplify the program for customers. All other public parking, at LOS C or greater, should remain free parking with generous time limits until development dictates adjustment.

Exhibit 4: Proposed Downtown Paid Parking Zone



Source: Walker Consultants, 2020

## Employee Parking

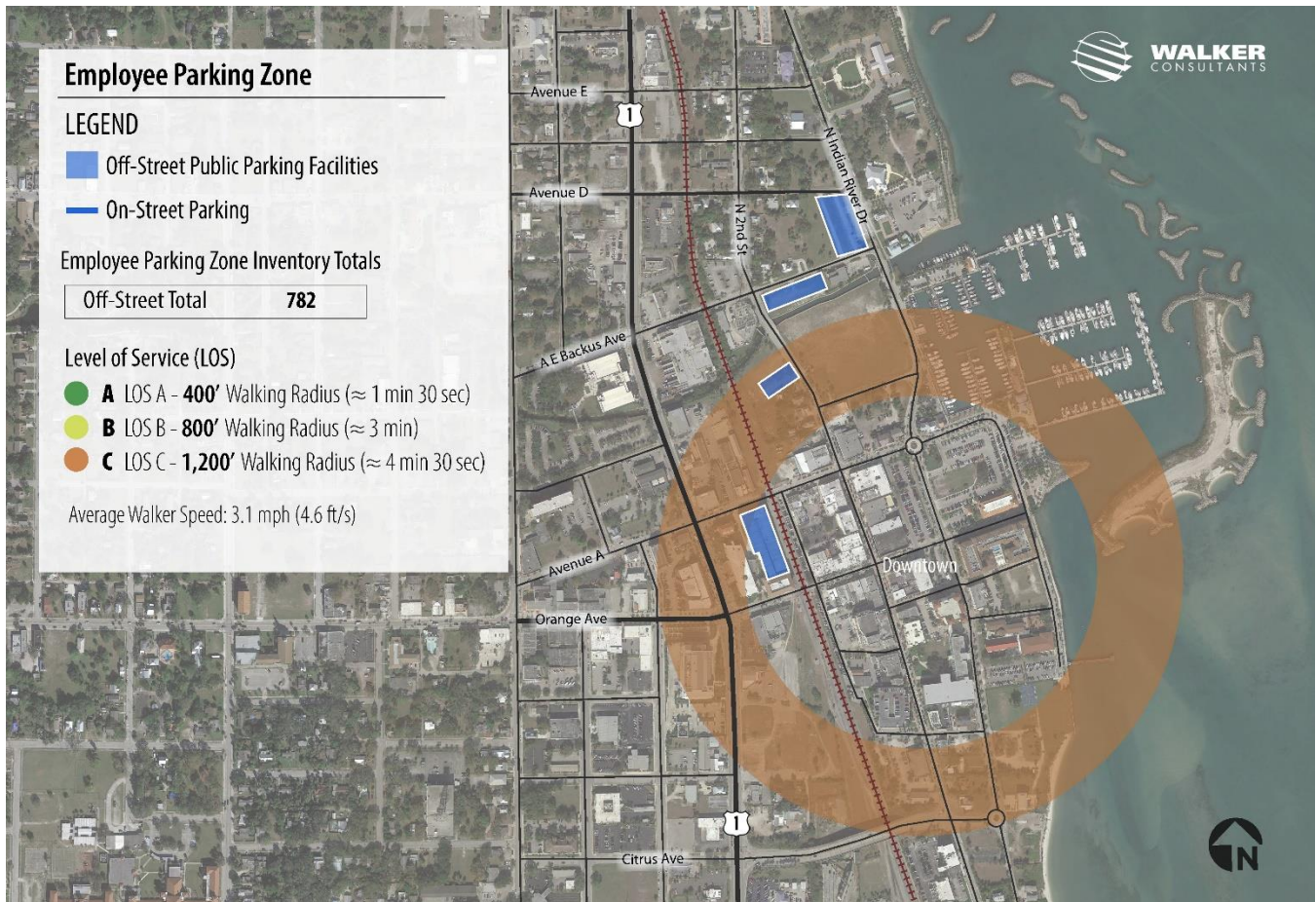
The need to maintain reasonably priced and accessible employee parking is critical to any downtown area. Without employees, businesses could not operate, and employers would seek alternate sites for operating their businesses. Fortunately, for most downtown areas, business owners rely upon the urban density as much as the urban population depends upon the business. To encourage the use of off-street parking locations, we do not propose charging a fee for employees to park and walk or park and ride a shuttle at this time. As identified in **Exhibit 5**, Walker recommends that parking locations in LOS C be utilized for employee parking.



## Walker Recommends

Walker does recommend use of the City Hall garage for free employee parking with no time limits through a permit program. Use of this facility, as it located in LOS B and borders LOS C, will provide a dedicated facility for employees and business owners to consider as the paid parking program is implemented. The City Hall garage has been identified as a great resource for the community and has been largely underutilized to date.

Exhibit 5: Proposed Downtown Employee Parking Zone



Source: Walker Consultants, 2020

## Event Parking

Event parking users (Farmer’s Market, festivals, community events, etc.) should utilize the parking system as any other user group, with paid parking remaining intact. The City can evaluate a range of parking fees for events on a case by case basis to reduce paid parking hours or rates as deemed necessary. Typically, event parking will be assigned a predetermined flat rate in order to maintain the integrity of a paid parking component to the system while offering relief to a multi-hour event. The City should be mindful of eliminating paid parking for events as it sets precedents for future events and user groups.

## Jury Parking

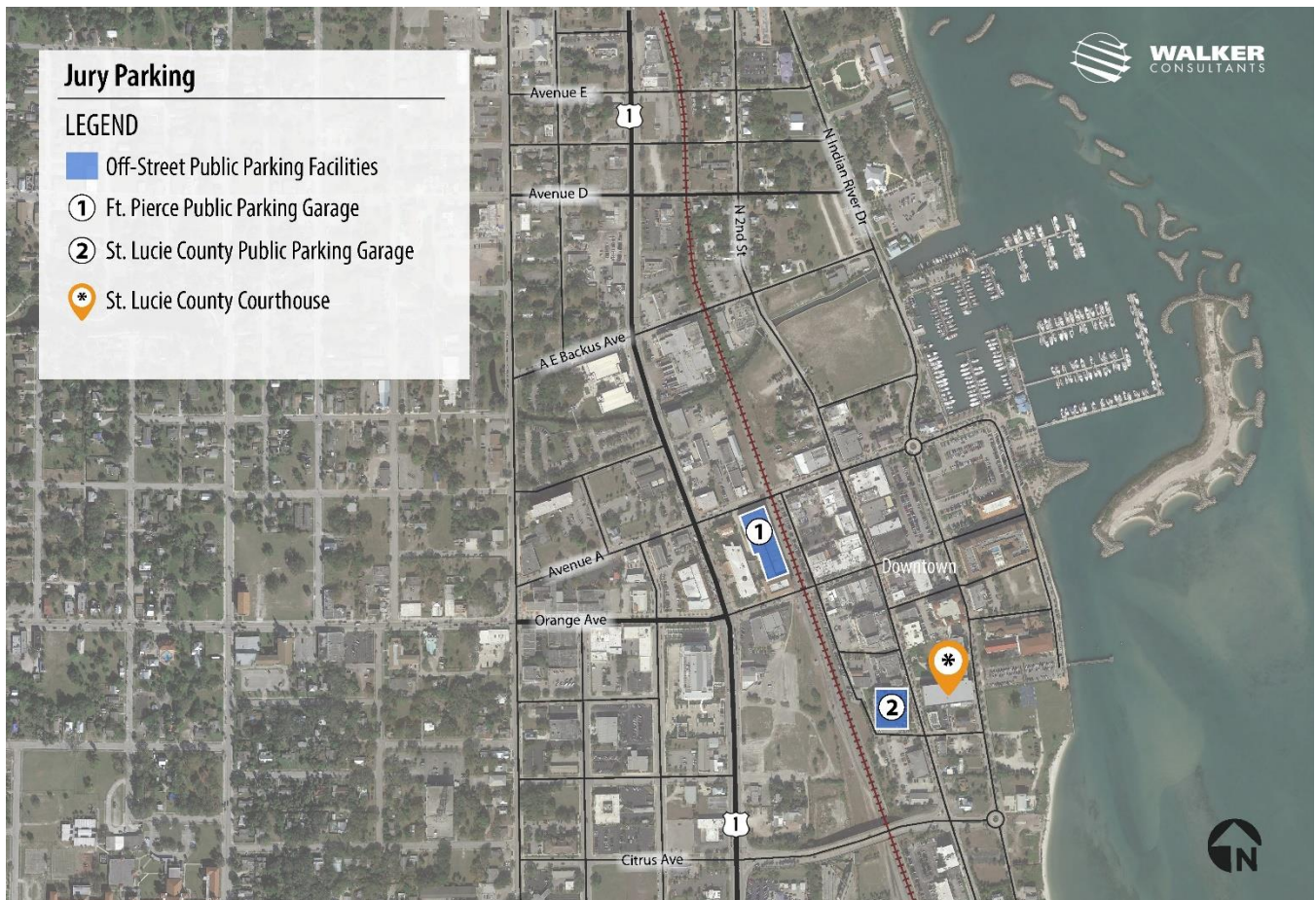
Parking for the County courthouse and serving Jurors is being provided by the Court in the County Garage.

### Walker Recommends

Any overflow parking from the County Garage for the courthouse should utilize the City's paid parking system or park for free in the City Hall parking garage located on Orange Avenue.

The parking in the City Hall parking garage will be at no charge (as at the County garage), offering options, as shown in **Exhibit 6**, for courthouse patrons and jurors to avoid time limit restrictions suggested by paid parking areas.

*Exhibit 6: Proposed Jury Parking*

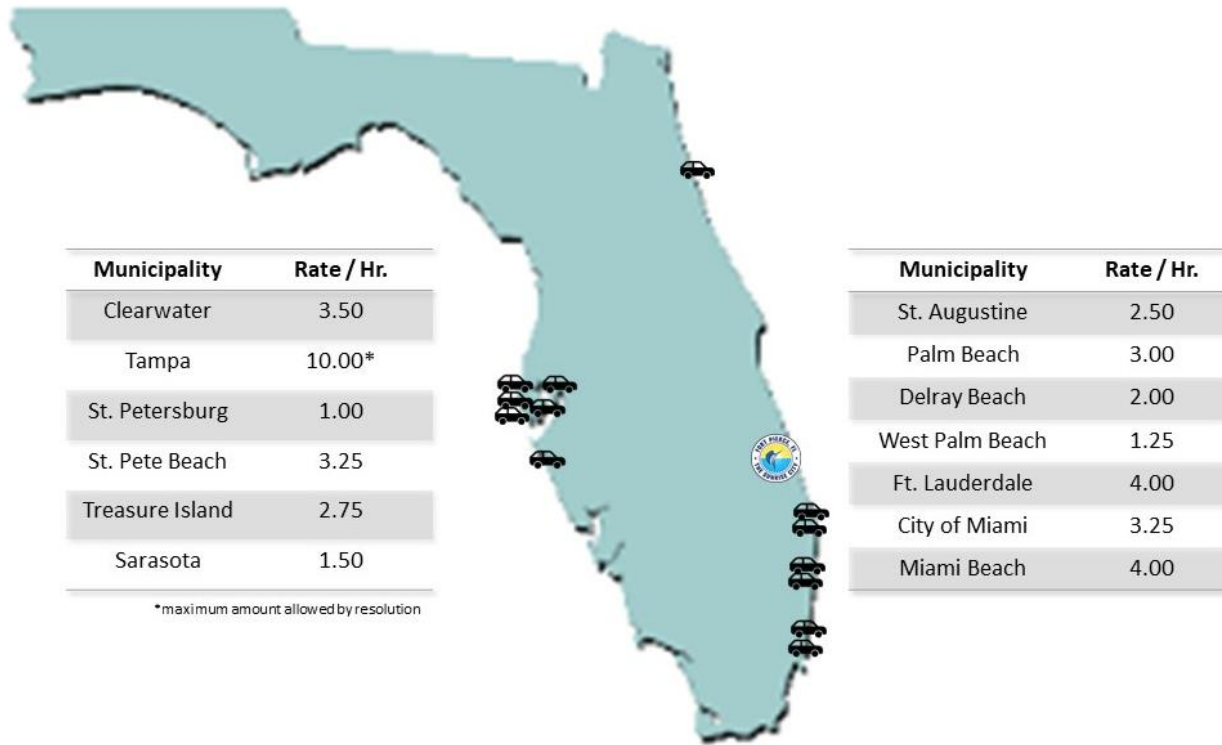


Source: Walker Consultants, 2020

## Rates & Time Restrictions

A search of Walker’s project database in the Florida market reveals the municipal comparison rates relative to communities that have developed on-street paid parking systems.

*Exhibit 7: Florida Market Parking Rates*



Source: Walker Consultants, 2020

As shown by the data in **Exhibit 7**, comparable on-street rates typically range from \$1.00 per hour to \$10.00 per hour in core areas. Walker encourages the City of Fort Pierce to consider establishing a downtown paid parking system with a value pricing approach in mind. In core areas where demand typically exceeds 85 percent of the available inventory, we recommend establishing a rate to promote availability of premium curbside parking. When core rates are paired with short-term duration limits, parking inventory will almost always be available to the first-time visitor and local repeat patron.



### Walker Recommends

Rates for a paid parking program should be set to encourage turnover so that there is always space (typically 15%) available as a parking customer arrives at the intended destination. It is also a best practice to set rates so that the more convenient, on-street parking is priced higher than the off-street parking. Hours of operation should begin with the workday (6am) and carry through the evening start of the dinner and entertainment demand (8pm). Event parking should be set in a similar fashion, but at a flat rate that is near the equivalent of four hours of the hourly parking rate. The following exhibit provides an example of a rate structure that could be a starting point for the City of Fort Pierce paid parking program.

*Exhibit 8: Proposed Parking Rates for Paid Parking Program*

Type	Rate / Hour	Maximum	Event Parking	Event Parking Duration
<b>On-Street</b>	\$2.00	No Maximum	\$6.00	6am of the following day
<b>Off-Street</b>	\$1.00	\$6.00	\$4.00	6am of the following day

Source: Walker Consultants, 2020

## Process

Developing and implementing a paid parking system can be a long and tiresome road for local officials and business owners if both parties do not share a common set of goals. Walker recommends the need to elicit input from local business owners and community leaders to gain the collective community support that is often vital to the successful implementation of a well-developed plan. Ideally, the plan should improve overall downtown conditions while taking advantage of existing resources and considering future planned opportunities.

Walker suggests an approach to identify alternatives for addressing parking challenges, including the use of technologies that enhance the user-friendliness of parking while evaluating opportunities to increase parking capacity and reduce parking demand.

## Establish Ordinances for Paid Parking

Of initial concern, should be the requirement to amend the city charter, specifically Chapter 34, Article II, to establish a code of ordinances for paid parking. A typical amendment may define general provisions throughout the corporate limits of the city and establish an administrative authority over the code of ordinances. Specific to the development of the code, language should be created to address regulations, permits and penalties.



### Walker Recommends

A rate structure with a range of rates should be established to allow flexibility for the City to raise and lower parking rates as appropriate, without the need to create a new ordinance each time a change is required. This will allow the City to have a more dynamic program that can be readily adaptable to the community needs. In addition, Chapter 34, Article II, Sec. 34-35 should be reviewed to increase the fine rate from \$18 to a higher amount so as to create a greater disparity between paid parking rates and penalty fine amounts, which will ensure greater compliance. If the fine amounts are too low, parking customers may be more inclined to “take a chance” as the penalties may not be much more restrictive than paid parking compliance.

## Enforcement Approach and Options

Enforcement of parking regulations is required to ensure the success of any parking management plan. The ultimate goal is not to issue citations; but rather, to ensure users follow the established policies so the system is fair to all users. Enforcement can be viewed as only punitive, but it can also be used as a tool to educate and provide service to patrons of the downtown area. To accomplish this, Walker recommends that Fort Pierce adopt the “Ambassador Approach” model for the enforcement of the parking regulations. This approach is considered a best practice in the industry and many of its principles have been adopted by large and small cities successfully.

The mission of the Ambassador Program is to provide hospitality, tourism and public safety services to local citizens, businesses and visitors, in addition to enforcing parking regulations. Ambassadors would be required to complete a multi-faceted training in hospitality and customer service, emergency response and first aid, public transportation and city services.

The primary goals of an Ambassador program are to promote the area, resolve concerns, deter criminal activity, and help make the Fort Pierce a better, safer and friendlier place to live, visit, shop and conduct business. Ambassadors should initiate personal contacts with the parking public, have the ability to issue warnings and slightly fewer citations, and interact with visitors and citizens in a positive manner.

The vision of the program is to help promote a progressive, dynamic downtown experience. The Ambassadors may accomplish these goals while providing parking management by monitoring public safety, extending a helping hand in emergency situations, and calling on area merchants on a regular basis.

Beyond enforcing parking regulations, the following are examples of appropriate behaviors and duties of Ambassadors:

- To greet visitors and offer customer service;
- To be a friendly face in response to many people's initial interaction with the City;
- To give accurate directions to visitors and direct visitors to destinations;
- To provide information and explain local traffic and parking regulations to seek voluntary compliance;
- To distribute City brochures and maps;
- Identify and relay pertinent information on public area conditions needing action; and
- To deter criminal activity by their presence.

Ambassadors may utilize a less formal uniform than that of the police, with some cities using a branded polo shirt, unique hat, or shorts.



### Walker Recommends

In place of adding city staff to manage and provide enforcement of the recommended changes to the parking regulations, the City should consider using a professional parking management firm to meet the labor and management requirements. While this recommendation will shift the day to day operating responsibilities, it does not relieve the City of its ultimate responsibility to ensure the system continues to meet the needs of its residents, local business owners, and visitors. Several parking management firms offer both on-street and off-street parking management services, including monitoring length of stay for time-limited spaces, issuing and adjudicating parking citations, collecting parking fees, and oversight for event parking needs. Another approach is toward outsourcing management responsibilities of the parking program suggests an opportunity to shift the oversight responsibilities to an existing downtown management association or a downtown development authority.

Services are typically provided for a management fee plus expenses or flat hourly rate based on position, often with incentives for specified performance criteria. To obtain competitive and comparable proposals, we recommend issuing a request for proposals that includes the goals and vision of the program, a detailed description of the duties, hour of operations and expectations, along with specific pricing details.

## Citation Issuance and Fines

As part of the overall parking program and in addition to parking revenues collected, citation fines would offset the cost of employing ambassadors to help fund the parking program. While not to be considered a primary revenue stream, a portion of parking funds will be attributed to parking citations.

Citation fines should be set at a level that will encourage the compliance of parking program rules and payment of set parking rates. For example if a parking rate is set at \$5 dollars a day, a citation fine of \$6 is not sufficient to encourage payment of the parking rate as the patron who chooses not to comply may see value in “taking a chance” of not receiving a citation for a difference of only \$1. If the citation is set at \$10, then the patron may re-think the position towards voluntary compliance. In general, most patrons will pay if payment methods are well advertised, easy to understand, and easy to use. The citation fine is set to encourage the ambivalent patron to reconsider compliance.

As citation fines will be a source of funding, proper management tools and software should be procured. Permit and citation technology solutions are now available through web-based, database management systems that will track citations, from issuance to payment, provide auditable records, and integrate with the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) and/or license plate look-up services. The solutions providers in this space are trending towards significant reductions in the cost of the software as a solution (SaaS) for permit and citation services if they can bundle the cost of collection services for outstanding citation payments. Permit and enforcement software solutions can also manage and track the adjudication process.

## Adjudication Process

Proper management of a municipal citation program should provide the opportunity for a patron to dispute a violation. With modern permit and enforcement SaaS solutions, this can be accomplished virtually online.

When a patron goes online to review their citation record, they will have the opportunity to select a dispute button. They would then provide relevant information as well as their explanation for their dispute. Under a first-level dispute resolution policy, a designated staff member of the third-party operator (typically a supervisor or manager) will review the dispute and overturn the citation, reduce the fine, or uphold the citation and provide the patron a reason for the action via an electronic reply.

The process can end here, or further opportunity for dispute can be provided with the aid of an independent magistrate to review and rule on the status of the citation. This process can also be conducted online via written correspondence or through virtual video conferencing. The magistrate can work directly with the software solution to input their decision, which will directly be applied to the citation record and provide a seamless update of the process.

The third-party parking operator would be responsible for interviewing and contracting with the special magistrate, typically a local judge or attorney with experience in municipal claims adjudication. The operator will provide the magistrate with information on code, citation records and software system operating procedure. Setting regularly scheduled times for hearings is typically best for all parties involved (i.e. first Tuesday of each month).

As this would be a newly created municipal citation program it is suggested that an on-line, virtual adjudication process be implemented, enhancing the customer service level as patrons can dispute from anywhere virtually.

Outstanding or uncollected citations should be processed through the citation management system and a third-party collection agency. Many of the permit and citation solutions providers have collection solution offerings for which use can offset the cost for the management software. These third party collection agencies maximize the ability to collect in-state and out-of-state delinquencies through established relationships with U.S. DMV agencies and skip tracing waterfall procedures that streamline the use of electronic information, automated lists, and networks of vendors to obtain the appropriate contact information and begin the collections process for each delinquent citation.

## Technology

The proper use of technology will help make it easier for people to reach their destination, improve asset management and supply/demand balancing, and optimize customer service and program revenues. To that end, it is important to identify and select technologies that integrate seamlessly so that the program will be easy to manage and create a unified customer experience. Solutions described in the following pages will identify technologies that will support the goals of the program.

### License Plate as a Credential

Use of a vehicle license plate as a credential has many uses in parking, as every vehicle has a unique license plate for identification. These uses include virtual permits, revenue control and enforcement. In conjunction with License Plate Recognition (LPR) technology, this solution can help streamline the effectiveness of the parking program and facilitate the customer's ability to self-manage their parking account/credentials. Application of LPR can:

- Verify payment for parking
- Verify access to authorized parking customers (permits)
- Expedite enforcement of parking program violations



#### Walker Recommends

All technology solutions should employ the industry best practice of using the license plate as a parking credential in conjunction with LPR solutions.

### Payment Options

The most successful parking programs always ensure that they facilitate the payment process for its customers. Often, customers do not consider the fees involved, as it is part of the experience, if the process to pay is easy to understand, easy to use and is reliable.

While providing payment options to customers is important, it is not recommended to allow the use of cash as an option for payment. The cost to collect, process, and secure cash payments has increased over the years, and often affects the reliability and security of the collection devices. Most customers will have the ability to use a credit or debit card, and can set up a payment option in advance, thus eliminating the need for cash.

The elimination of cash will increase the security of the parking facilities, not only for the parking patron, but the City's personnel. With the use of credit card only multi-space meters and mobile phone payments, there will be no concern for the parking patron as they will not be fumbling with cash and subject to risk. This holds true for staff, as they will no longer be removing and transporting cash throughout the parking facilities and back to a secure money counting facility.



### Walker Recommends

Payment options should include a combination of strategically placed multi-space pay stations with mobile payment options. This will facilitate the customer interaction with the parking programs and provide efficient revenue collection for the City.

## Multi-Space Meters

Multi-Space Meters (MSM) have been implemented by cities to collect revenues and have been found to be superior to traditional single-spaces meters in many ways:

- Improve streetscape by reducing the clutter of single space meters along a curb.
- Reduce maintenance and collection costs as one MSM can replace 8-10 single-space meters.
- Improve safety by reducing collection points for staff and customers.
- Provide multiple payment options.
- Flexible rate structures
- Multiple product menus (parking, boat slip rentals, beach chairs, etc.)
- Cloud-based operating system and improved reporting capabilities.

Modern MSM solutions offer customer friendly interfaces that can include color displays, touch screens, and text receipt options. When implementing an MSM solution,



### Walker Recommends:

- Elimination of cash as a form of payment. Use of credit card payments only improve security for both customers and staff while also reducing maintenance concerns and costs.
- Elimination of paper receipts. Use of text receipts only reduces consumable costs and maintenance costs.
- Pair MSM solution with mobile payment solution.
- Operate with the industry best practice of pay by plate using the vehicle license plate as a credential.

## Mobile Payments

Often referred to as pay-by-cell or pay-by-app, mobile payments are becoming a best practice method of payment in the parking and mobility industry. By shifting the payment platform from the City to the customer, the City reduces the need to maintain revenue collection devices while providing an element of convenience to the customer. In addition, fees for this service are typically borne by the customer as a "convenience fee" currently at \$0.15 - \$0.35 per transaction for most simple paid parking transactions.

Customers would simply download the mobile payment app, create an account, and populate their account information that would include vehicle license plate(s) and payment method (credit/debit/payment service). When ready to pay for their parking session the customer will:

- 1) Open the app,
- 2) Confirm their vehicle license plate, or enter a new/additional license plate,
- 3) Choose their parking lot/zone,
- 4) Choose their duration,
- 5) Confirm payment.

As the parking program is based on the license plate as a credential, the vehicle will be identified as paid and the cloud-based system will communicate status to enforcement ambassadors.

Fees collected from the mobile payment transaction will be directly deposited to the City's established bank accounts and the mobile payment vendor will invoice the City for the convenience fees each month.

## Permit Management and Enforcement

In the parking and mobility industry, it is typical that permit management and enforcement solutions reside under a single platform.

### Permit Management

Permit management software solutions operate with the same function regardless of the permit type, the only difference are the operating parameter/rules of the permits. Permit considerations for the City's program will include an employee parking credential and a resident parking credential for Beach District parking access.

The permit management solution will operate under an account-based system. This means that every address/resident will have an account. With this account established, the City can validate residency (tax records, utility bills, etc.) at periodic intervals and send electronic renewal notices for permits. Vehicle information and permit status is managed in a cloud-based software solution that is accessed by enforcement solutions.

Employees and residents can self-manage their account, adding and removing vehicle license plate information, updating contact information (email, cell, etc.). The system will allow operational business rules to be set to limit the number of permits sold in any given category or location, and create a self-managed, online system that will improve the current manual permit issuing process.

In the event employees and residents do not have a means toward self-managing their account through an online software solution, the City will need to offer a customer service solution whereby an employee or resident may visit the parking offices during business hours to obtain their parking credential permissions. Staff will need to manually manage the process for this exception.

### Enforcement

Enforcement technology will primarily use license plate recognition (LPR) to validate the status of a vehicle. The officer/ambassador will be issued a handheld device in which the vehicle license plate can be scanned or manually entered. The device will have cellular data connectivity which will allow the license plate to be compared to the permit system database as well as the payment platform database (meters and/or mobile payment) to validate status within seconds. If the vehicle is valid, the officer/ambassador will move on to the next vehicle, if not valid, the device will allow the officer to populate the citation information, take photos, and print the citation with a portable, Bluetooth enabled printer. The officer will place the citation on the vehicle windshield and move to the next vehicle.

In addition to a handheld device, a mobile LPR vehicle should be considered. This type of vehicle (typically a small pick-up truck, small sedan, or electric golf cart is used) will be equipped with LPR cameras and lighting which will allow the officer/ambassador to more efficiently patrol the parking areas. As the vehicle drives through the area, the LPR cameras capture the images of the vehicle license plates, translates the image to text files, and compares that data to the permit system database as well as the payment platform database within seconds. If the vehicle is valid, the officer/ambassador will move on to the next vehicle. If not valid, the system will allow the officer to populate the citation information, take photos, and print the citation with a portable, Bluetooth enabled printer. The officer will place the citation on the vehicle windshield and move the next vehicle.

The permit and enforcement software solution will also allow the violator to pay online or submit an adjudication application request. With direction to a system website, through a link from the Town website or direct access, the violator will be able to look up the citation record, pay via credit card or payment service, or dispute through allowed program methods.



### Walker Recommends

The City of Fort Pierce should consider the acquisition of a permit and enforcement technology solution that will facilitate the enforcement, permit management, and collection of fines for the paid parking program. A solution of this type will improve management efficiency for the City and improve customer interface with the parking program. The City can develop specification criteria for procurement, typically through an RFP process.

## Communication

No matter the technology or solutions employed, it is important to have a clear and effective communications plan. Focus should be on the benefits of the program and how it will ultimately serve the community. An effective and comprehensive public awareness approach about the program and how to use it will play a key role in successful implementation of these technologies.

## Communication Activities

Based on other Florida cities' experiences and successful installations of new meter systems, the following list provides examples of communications activities prior to, during and after installation:

- Six to three months prior to installing the new equipment, issue a press release announcing plans for new system, with a focus on the added customer convenience.
- Conduct community outreach meetings with stakeholders in advance of implementing the new paid parking technology.
- Deploy a website with project updates and payment instructions.
- Display sample meters in a public area for people to see, touch and feel prior to beginning the installation.
- Develop and provide informational and instructional handouts (card and/or fliers) throughout the downtown and on the website, illustrating how to use the new meters.
- Develop a directional video for municipal television and/or YouTube.
- Issue a progress press release a few weeks prior to the initial installation.
- Install MSMs and signage with covers featuring the words "Coming Soon" so that patrons can see where the new equipment is installed.

- Position trained parking ambassadors around the new MSMs to assist patrons with their use.
- Issue a press release regarding the deployment of the new MSMs and areas scheduled for deployment.
- Provide citation warnings, rather than fines, for a short period of time following MSM deployment.

## Sign Package

A sign package is a key component of MSM installations. Walker recommends following the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices for Streets and Highways (“MUTCD”) 2009 Edition for any added signage.

Section 2B.46 Parking, Standing and Stopping Signs of the MUTCD cover signs governing vehicle parking, stopping and standing. MUTCD specifically states:

“If a fee is charged for parking and a midblock pay station is used instead of individual parking meters for each parking space, “Pay Parking” signs should be used. Pay Parking signs should be used to define the area where the pay station parking applies. Pay station signs should be used at the pay station or to direct road users to the pay station.”



### Walker Recommends

An effective and comprehensive public awareness campaign should be conducted as it will play a key role in a successful implementation program. The focus should be on the added convenience of the credit card payment feature, and enforcement ambassadors should go through training to assist patrons as the new meters are deployed. This communications plan should provide information on key events impacting Fort Pierce parking access issues and should be responsible for increasing public awareness of downtown parking through events, activities, publications, press releases, maps and other literature.

## Implementation

Implementation of a paid parking program is most effective when done in a methodical manner. Following is an ordered timeline of when each part of the implementation process should take place, often necessary before moving on to the next steps in the process.

### Immediate Action (3-6 Months)

- Establish ordinances to allow paid parking within specific parking areas in downtown Fort Pierce.
- Review options for staffing and management of the paid parking system – either internally or subcontracted. If subcontracted, recommend retaining assistance in developing RFP documents and obtaining proposals.
- Continue process of public meetings to address concerns and explain the program.
- Develop an RFP to purchase an integrated Pay by Plate meter, Mobile Payment Service and License Plate enforcement system, with the specific options either included or available at a later date, including implementing a pilot program.
- Begin process of establishing a standard parking signage for directional and locational parking wayfinding.

## Short-Term (6-12 Months)

- If applicable, obtain and review management proposals for system
- Identify locations for the MSMs and signage with specific focus on the program rollout area.
- Establish an informational site on parking within the city website.
- Obtain and conduct a review of MSM proposals and enforcement equipment.
- Display a sample MSM for the public to see and try out inside City Hall or other public space.
- Implement paid event parking for larger events.
- Begin training of ambassadors and deploy with the program.
- Conduct public and media outreach to communicate the parking plan and pending changes.
- Review and test License Plate Reader enforcement technologies.
- Develop printed parking brochure with map of public parking facilities and city parking app.
- Implement an ambassador approach to parking enforcement.
- Finalize standard parking signage and begin installation.

## Mid-Term (1-1.5 Years)

- Consider expanding the paid parking program to on-street and off-street areas where new development has occurred.
- Re-evaluate parking occupancy with paid parking in place. Occupancy should be more evenly spread out and one or two spaces should be available on each block face.
- Begin adding additional parking within the downtown area as either surface parking or parking structured spaces.

## Long-Term (Over 3 Years)

- Review parking demand and overall parking management plan.
- Continue to seek private development that includes adding public parking within the core area if that has not yet occurred.



# 03 Downtown District

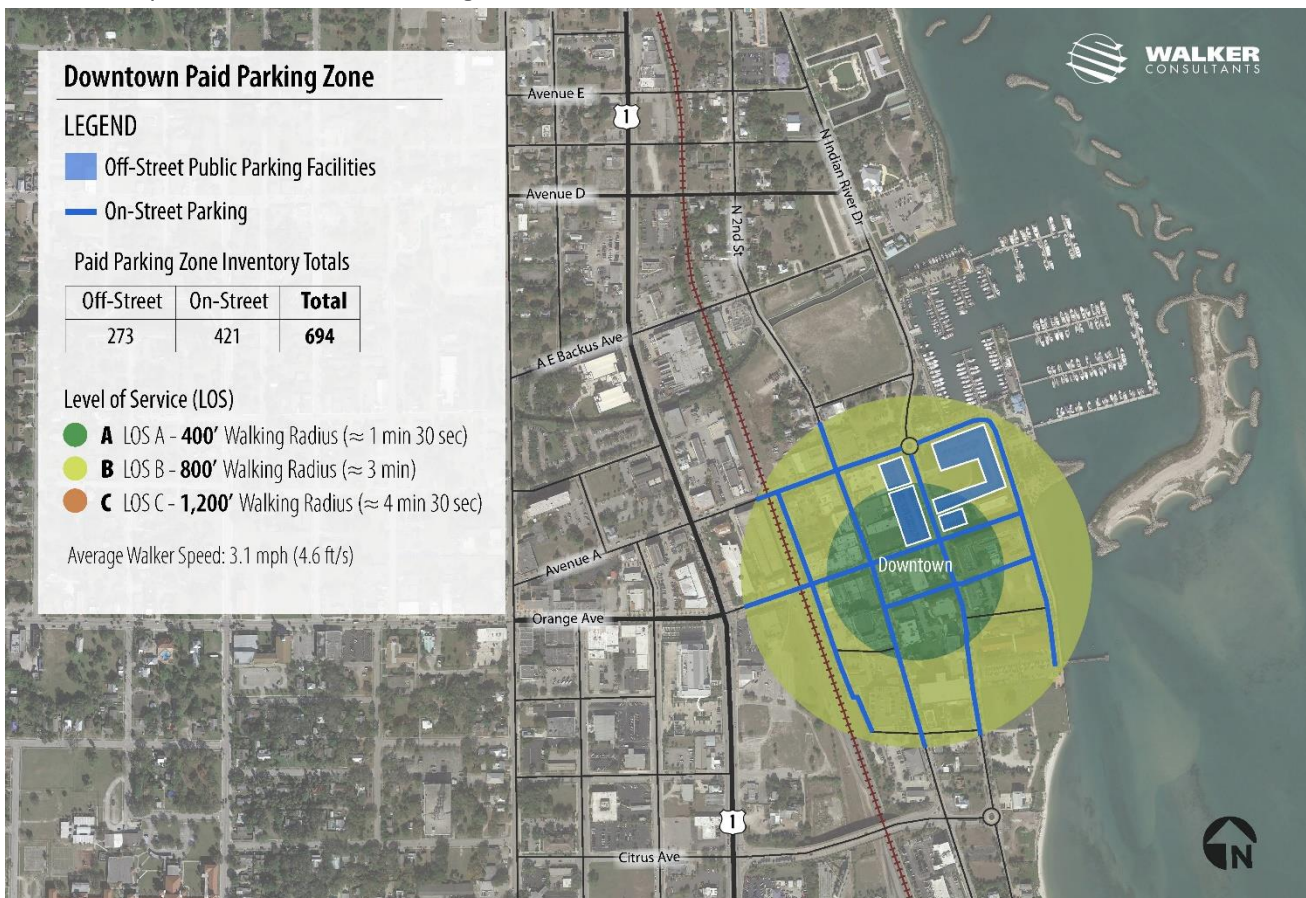
# Downtown District

City code, section 125-315., (4) c. allows for additional reduction of the parking minimums for the Downtown Business and Entertainment Districts, granting a one hundred (100) percent reduction for off-street parking. It should be noted that these reductions also reduce the potential payment in-lieu of fees to zero as there is no incentive, other than the needs of the development, to create any parking inventory that would benefit the area. To that end, the City should look to acquire or utilize land already owned to serve as potential parking inventory, with the strategic intent to further develop through partnerships that can increase parking inventory for the area. Funding for these sites can be acquired through the use of the City’s multimodal fund or the implementation of a paid parking program.

## Implementation of Paid Parking

In the downtown parking environment, the parking inventory that is in the most demand should require a premium parking charge. As the Downtown District is still relatively small and with a good walkability rate, Walker recommends that paid parking be first implemented in the areas considered to be in the Level of Service A and B as shown in **Exhibit 9**. This will ensure that any paid parking patron will not walk, on average, for more than 800 feet or for longer than 3 minutes to arrive at their destination.

*Exhibit 9: Proposed Downtown Paid Parking Zone*



Source: Walker Consultants, 2020

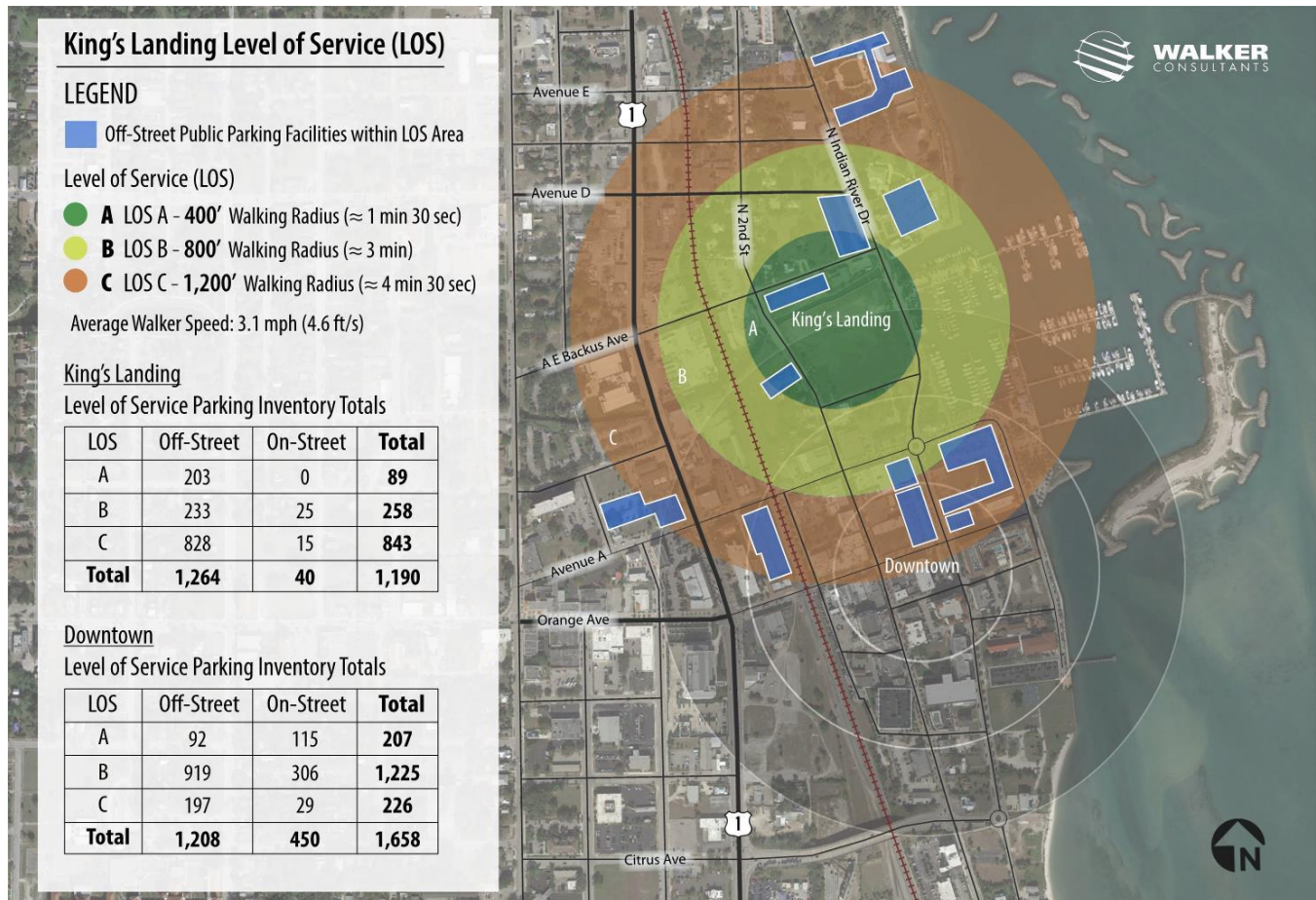
All public parking within the proposed Downtown Paid Parking Zone should require a fee to park to manage demand and encourage turnover. On-street parking should require a premium fee as it is the most convenient, while off-street parking is less convenient, suggesting a lesser fee. All other public parking, at LOS C or greater, should be considered free parking with generous time limits until development dictates adjustment.

Walker will recommend one exception in that the current City Hall parking deck remain free parking with no time limits. As it borders the LOS B and C zones, and currently an underutilized asset, it will be a great goodwill “offering” to the public giving them a convenient alternative to paid parking. This asset is also largely identified as a great resource for downtown employees to park conveniently to almost anywhere in the district.

## The Effect of the Kings Landing Development

The proposed development of Kings Landing will have a significant impact on the parking inventory in the Downtown District. It is understood Kings Landing will create a second destination epicenter that will increase the parking demand and further stress the parking inventory. **Exhibit 10** shows the visual effect on parking LOS and the affected demand.

*Exhibit 10: Kings Landing Level of Service Inventory*



Source: Walker Consultants, 2020

As of the date of this report, it is understood the development will include (current projected estimates) land uses<sup>1</sup>:

- 12 single-family homes and townhomes
- 174,000 SF of condominium space
- 24,800 SF of restaurant space
- 42,800 SF of ground-floor retail space
- 13,000 SF of office space
- 100-key boutique hotel
- Include table of estimated land use.

Cursory review of these projected land uses estimate that the development would require an estimated 650-700 parking spaces just to satisfy the needs of the Kings Landing development. In addition, it is believed the development would remove at least two of the non-delineated City owned and operated parking lots that are estimated to have 317± public parking spaces. Depending on the development plans for providing parking inventory, (as City code does not require development of parking) a net increase in demand of 300 – 1,000 parking spaces could be projected.

The Kings Landing development will likely accelerate the parking needs for downtown and the City should look to implementing the paid parking program to fund the strategic development of public/private partnerships to increase inventory.



### Walker Recommends

As the development of Kings Landing advances, the City should look to the opportunity to develop a public/private partnership to develop a parking structure on surface parking Lot 12 to increase inventory. This is a location that can serve downtown, Kings Landing, Edgartown, as well as future developments in the area and will aid in resolving inventory needs created by the Kings Landing Development.

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<sup>1</sup>[www.audubondevelopment.com/kings-landing](http://www.audubondevelopment.com/kings-landing)

# Future Inventory

Walker has reviewed several of the existing parking parcels owned and operated by the City. In our review process, we found an opportunity to improve and formalize inventory in the Downtown District.



## Walker Recommends

The parking lot located at 100 N. Indian River Drive (locally referred to as Marina Square), should be reconfigured to formalize the parking inventory potential and eliminate the pervious parking area. With a current inventory of 143± parking spaces, a reconfiguration can create an inventory of 225± parking spaces for a net gain of 82± parking spaces.

*Exhibit 11: Marina Square Parking Reconfiguration Inventory Estimate*



Source: Walker Consultants, 2020



04 Beach District

## Beach District

As a result of the Parking Consulting Services Study conducted by Walker Consultants in 2016, alternative analysis for three sites identified by the City as potential options to construct new parking facilities, surface or structured. **Exhibit 12** identifies the sites that were evaluated.

The three sites considered are as follows:

Site #1: SW Corner of S. Ocean Dr. and Seaway Dr.

Site #2: SW Corner of S. Ocean Dr. and Binney Dr.

Site #3: SW Corner of S. Ocean Dr. and St. Lucie Ct.

*Exhibit 12: Proposed Beach Parking Sites*



*Source: City of Fort Pierce, Walker Consultants -2016*

Of the three sites, site #3 was evaluated to be the most attractive option as an alternative site given its capacity of 59± potential surface lot spaces and location to the beach and local attractions.

Since 2016:

- Site #3 has been reconfigured by the City and is now utilized as an unimproved parking lot to expand the public parking inventory at this site. This site is an asset that could be considered for additional improvement and the 2016 evaluation by Walker Consultants remains valid. This site, if improved to contain a parking structure, could improve inventory by up to 200± parking spaces.
- Site #2 remains unchanged since 2016.
- Site #1 has been developed into a paved parking lot, which is managed by a local parking operator with a paid parking component. This lot adds 43± spaces to the local parking inventory in a prime location while introducing the paid parking concept to the market.

Conceptual construction costs remain consistent with the recommendation provided by Walker in 2016. For a surface parking lot, a budget of \$3,000 to \$5,000 for the “hard” construction cost may be used. The “soft” cost would be approximately 20% and would include items such as survey, geotechnical studies, A/E design fees and testing/inspection during construction. For a parking structure a budget of \$18,000 to \$24,000 per space for “hard” construction cost may be used and soft costs should also be around 15%. These costs account for the fact that the sites will have approximately between 35 and 50 spaces per level (sites # 1 and 3). Respecting the maximum allowable building height of 45 ft. the parking structure on any of these sites would have a total of 4 levels (Ground plus 3 elevated levels). At this early stage the storm water management requirements from the SFWMD and other reviewing agencies are not defined. They will have an impact on the construction cost. Those requirements are typically better defined once a site is selected and a Civil Engineer/Surveyor performs a survey of the property.

Interviews with stakeholders suggest that the demand for additional parking inventory is not critical in that the current inventory is only stressed a few times each year. It is noted, however, that when stress on the inventory does occur, it is caused by non-resident visitors. As the City looks to strategically modernize its parking program, and develop funding sources for potential future improvements, a paid parking program could be implemented with current technologies that will also allow Fort Pierce residents to access beach parking at no charge.



### Walker Recommends

Similar to the Downtown District, the areas in most demand should require a premium parking charge. In the Beach District, Jetty Park and the nearby businesses serve as one focal point for demand. Other areas include public parking at South Causeway Park located on Seaway Drive (adjacent to the St. Lucie County Aquarium), and South Beach Park located on SR A1A. As private parking operators have improved nearby Site #1 as a paid parking operation, the City should consider implementing non-resident paid parking at the Jetty Park parking lot, South Causeway Park and South Beach Park. This rate can be a flat/event-type rate that will allow the patron to park all day and should be considered in the range of \$5 - \$10.

With the proximity to the beach and the water, Walker recommends the utilization of mobile payment technologies to eliminate the need of payment kiosk hardware and the associated maintenance needs. As documented earlier in this report, payment and enforcement will be based on utilizing the vehicle license plate as a credential which will also allow for the implementation of a Resident Beach Parking Program for the Beach District.

## Resident Beach Parking Program

With the advent of the parking industry using the vehicle license plate as a credential, along with supporting technologies, it is possible to create a parking program that reduces the administrative burden of organizing and enforcing a designated permit class while allowing for relatively easy access for constituents. By implementing the enforcement technologies and mobile payment technologies detailed earlier in this report, the City can create a permit class for a Resident Beach Parking Program.

The resident would simply register through the provided website (the City's permit & enforcement technology) and provide proof of residency (Business rule to be determined by the City) by electronically attaching/uploading required documents. The City designee would review the electronic documentation and approve/deny the account request.

Once approved, the resident would have an account for which then can actively manage by providing their vehicle license plate(s) (can be changed at any time). The vehicle license plates would then be seen as a Resident Beach Parking Permit type and parking enforcement ambassadors will see the vehicle as valid in the Beach District. Often limits to the number of active vehicles at any given time are identified as a business rule to limit abuse and this can be decided by the City as the program is implemented.

This type of program, whether it is free parking for residents or a discounted rate, will help garner support from the residents to use the paid parking program to help manage demand while raising funding for future improvements.



### Walker Recommends

- As paid parking is introduced to the Beach District, the opportunity suggests a need to create a Resident Beach Parking Program that will allow Fort Pierce residents the opportunity to access the public parking inventory within the Beach District without having to pay the daily or hourly non-resident fee to park.



05 Peacock Arts District

# Peacock Arts District

City code, section 125-315., (4)c. allows for additional reduction of the parking minimums for the Peacock Arts District, granting a fifty (50) percent reduction for the adaptive reuse or expansion of an existing structure, and a twenty-five (25) percent reduction for new development or construction of buildings. This incentive will encourage development; however, the development success may lead to the consequence of insufficient parking inventory at a future date. To that end, the City should look to acquire or utilize land already owned to serve as potential parking inventory, with the strategic intent to further develop through partnerships that can increase parking inventory for the area. These partnerships may require the sale of land or the share of existing surface parking inventory during non-business operating hours.

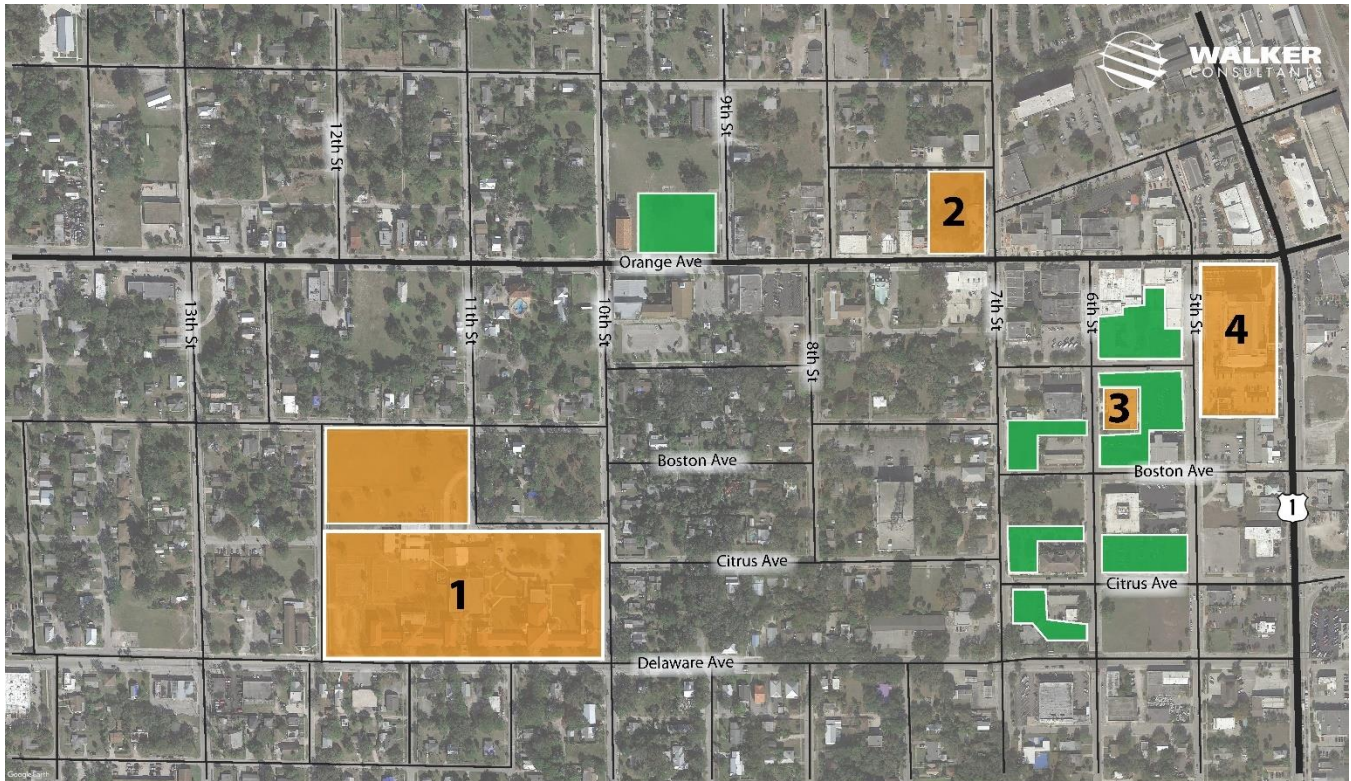
## Time Limit Zones and Applications

The Peacock Arts District continues to pursue its development goals through the development of neighborhood streetscape infrastructure and private development construction. At this stage of development, the City should focus on measuring curbside demand impacts, similar to efforts on the outskirts of the Downtown District, of implementing a time-limited parking program for on-street parking and unlimited time for off-street parking when demand dictates. The District parking program may then consider graduating into a paid parking program in areas where capacity exceeds available inventory at peak. In this strategy, the paid parking will aid in pushing development around the peak areas, thus accelerating the infill development and maturing the District overall.

## Land Acquisition

As a result of development incentives, existing businesses have developed parking that may be suitable inventory for the near-term needs of this District. As **Exhibit 13** illustrates, parking inventory is conveniently located throughout the District and should be considered as a shared resource before the City begins steps toward acquiring real estate for parking needs.

Exhibit 13: Peacock Arts District Potential Shared Inventory



### Peacock Arts District - Potential Shared Parking Sites

 Peacock Arts District Landmarks

1. CAST - Creative Arts Academy of St. Lucie
2. Botanical Sanctuary (home of the Peacocks)
3. Fort Pierce Utilities Authority
4. Federal Courthouse

 Potential Shared Parking Sites


Source: Walker Consultants, 2020



### Walker Recommends

The City should work with District business owners to share parking inventory for use during large events and downtown overfill needs.



06 Lincoln Park District

# Lincoln Park District

The Lincoln Park District has no parking development allowances and must adhere to the off-street parking development code. As an incentive for development growth, the City should look to a payment-in-lieu program, which would allow potential developers an opportunity to pay into an infrastructure program to meet the needs of the community in lieu of meeting specific parking inventory needs for their property.

## Payment in-Lieu of Parking Requirements

Minimum parking requirements, which exist in nearly every American city, mandate that developers provide parking spaces for the public and employees to access any new or intensifying development and to mitigate parking spillover on to the street. The payment of parking in-lieu fees provides developers with an alternative to the traditional method of satisfying minimum parking requirements. The parking in-lieu fee is intended to address parking demand created by new development or redevelopment.

The amount of the in-lieu fee must typically reflect a reasonable relationship to the cost of providing new parking. Often, the requirements for the use of the in-lieu fee are typically less rigid than the requirements for a parking impact fee, which typically must be paid by a developer regardless of whether the project provides parking onsite or not. Policy goals can and often do play a significant role in the final determination of the in-lieu fee amount.

## Policies and Goals Regarding Parking and Access

A parking in-lieu fee policy has the potential to address many policy objectives. These include:

- Funding and construction of parking spaces to accommodate the parking and access required of new development, whether these spaces are new structured spaces or leased, private existing spaces. Typically, the assumption is that parking in-lieu fees can and should fully fund new structured spaces. The cost of net new structured parking spaces<sup>2</sup>, easily ranging from \$18,000 to \$30,000 per space excluding land costs, as well as a critical mass of development to generate sufficient funding to build an entire parking structure may at times present challenges to municipal governments;
- Flexibility for developers and business to satisfy parking requirements, flexibility provided by a fee in-lieu of providing a physical parking space can encourage economic development; and
- An emphasis on shared rather than reserved parking. Shared parking, especially public parking, allows parking spaces to serve multiple uses and can result in fewer necessary parking spaces. Rather than reserved parking spaces, which exclude many drivers from parking and sit unoccupied most of the time, the shared parking spaces created by in lieu fees are more efficient.

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<sup>2</sup> When parking structures are constructed on existing surface parking spaces, the cost per net new parking space increases dramatically as the net gain in the number of parking spaces must consider the replacement of the surface parking spaces.

Below is a summary of major advantages and disadvantages of a parking lieu fee policy:

### Advantages

- Fees may be used to fund the creation and availability of public parking spaces, and potentially other modes and transportation-related improvements ranging from bicycles, transit or pedestrian improvements that can increase the effective supply of parking or equivalent means of access to serve the area.<sup>3</sup>
- Fees can improve the efficiency of existing spaces to accommodate more people (by funding access improvements and parking management strategies) or to lease private parking spaces for use by the public if such a policy is found helpful or cost effective.
- Fees can serve as a fair funding source for parking that has a clear nexus between the development that will generate new parking demand in the district and pay for the parking to accommodate the additional demand.
- Fees provide flexibility for developers in how to provide (and pay for) parking spaces.
- Fees provide flexibility with regard to a change of use (particularly for historic buildings). For example, if a retail space is changed to a restaurant use, additional in-lieu fees can be assessed for the increase in parking demand generated by the new use.
- Fees can promote shared parking, which should make parking spaces more efficient, thus lowering costs and the amount of land needed for vehicle storage.
- Fees can promote a “park once,” district in which customers can park one time to visit several destinations as opposed to having to move their cars between private parking lots after visiting one establishment.
- Fees can promote historic preservation - buildings that might otherwise face challenges or be unusable or unusable due to an inability to meet parking requirements may find it easier to find tenants.

### Disadvantages and Caveats

- The elapse of time between the payment of in-lieu fees by a developer, the lack of predictability regarding the rate at which fees will accumulate, and the availability of new public parking spaces or other methods of access can result in significant unpredictability within the system.
- High in-lieu fees may discourage development or simply result in developers not selecting an in-lieu fee option.<sup>4</sup> Developers may balk at paying in-lieu parking fees if they perceive them as too high, defeating the purpose of a parking in-lieu program if developers choose to simply provide parking on site.

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<sup>3</sup> A parking in-lieu fee provides the developer with an option to make a payment in-lieu of building a parking space to satisfy the parking requirement; payment of the fee is not mandatory as the developer may simply satisfy the requirement if he/she chooses. Further, the intent of the parking requirement is to provide adequate access to the site, the assumed method being a parking space. In both cases, through research and discussions we understand that a reasonable relationship between the parking in-lieu fee and satisfaction of the requirement is necessary to satisfy the requirement. This contrasts with satisfaction of an impact fee, for which a strict nexus is required; a parking impact fee must be paid (there is no alternative) and in turn a structured parking space must be provided by the municipality. The City should consult with its legal counsel regarding legal questions in this matter.

<sup>4</sup> A few cities mandate the payment of in-lieu fees whether or not the developer provides parking space on their site. Such a practice reduces developer flexibility and can increase developer cost, if some onsite parking spaces are deemed necessary to the success of the project.

- Low in-lieu fees may not be sufficient to cover the capital and maintenance costs of new or existing parking spaces. Additional sources of revenue may be needed to finance the parking system.
- Fewer on-site parking spaces may be less desirable to many developers than providing parking for their patrons or employees on site.
- The public parking spaces constructed by in-lieu fees are not reserved or guaranteed for specific uses. When a business provides its own private parking, it may be easier to ensure that customers have spaces.

A structured parking space is the most expensive way by which a city can provide parking and access to its downtown. A policy of building structured parking to address parking demand may also conflict with the City's broader transportation, land use, and environmental goals. Further, construction of a parking structure of a desired number of spaces may require the accumulation of in lieu fees over an undetermined length of time. Improving access using methods other than new structured parking, including surface parking, sharing existing private parking spaces, shuttles to peripheral locations, bicycle and pedestrian improvements or other measures related to transportation demand management strategies may allow the City to respond more quickly and nimbly to parking access challenges in its downtown than would the long-term planning and costs associated with structured parking.

Further, Payment in Lieu of Parking can only work as an alternative to providing the required spaces identified in the City Code. As the City of Fort Pierce, in order to encourage development, has reduced or eliminated parking space minimums to development and re-development projects, it will be difficult to establish a meaningful Payment in Lieu of Parking Fund for which to finance city developed parking or alternative parking programs. If a Payment in Lieu of Parking fund is desired, the City of Fort Pierce may need to re-evaluate its development incentives.

## Methodologies for Setting a Parking in-Lieu Fee

Determining the cost per space of building additional structured parking is one approach cities have taken to set in lieu parking fees. However, to establish a more precise nexus, cities often project the amount of required parking spaces generated by anticipated development over a specified time frame. The cost of providing a mix of parking and other transportation and access alternatives is then divided over the number of required spaces that have been forecast. This method requires agreed-upon projections for future development, and the desired policies for parking and parking alternatives, in Downtown Fort Pierce.

In one Walker financing study, we found that more than half of the cities whose policies we reviewed used in-lieu fees to help finance new parking facilities. However, fee amount varies substantially, as we have seen cities charge a fee ranging from \$1,000 to \$70,000 per space. Some cities collect an amount that is sufficient to build new structured parking spaces. Others charge enough to operate or maintain existing surface parking spaces.

The range in fees reflects cities' differing policy goals and financial resources. Charging a low fee may reflect either a significant subsidy for parking provided by the City to encourage development and/or discourage the (over) building of parking in a downtown area. Charging a high fee may reflect high development costs; however, if parking is provided free of charge for parking users, parking revenue will not be available to offset costs. A high in-lieu fee may also demonstrate a City's unwillingness to provide a subsidy to provide new parking spaces or desire that developers provide their own spaces on site.

We note that building structured parking on existing surface parking lots results in a significantly higher cost per net new parking space than does the construction of parking on a parcel that does not currently provide parking. Such a consideration typically justifies an increase in the cost of providing public parking, and by extension, a parking in lieu fee.

The cost to provide parking represents a significant portion of total development costs and can either “make or break” or reduce the size of a project. A parking in lieu fee is often a policy tool used to stimulate development by reducing project costs. To the extent that the City does not wish to place the fully loaded cost to provide public parking on a developer or property owner (construction, soft costs, operations, short-term, and long-term maintenance costs), the City may choose to subsidize the cost of providing parking.

## Ongoing Operation and Maintenance Costs

Ongoing operating and maintenance costs will vary over the life of the parking structure. Using our data base of operating and maintenance costs for parking structures, we assume an average, annual, blended cost per space of \$586± per space per year over time.

Long-term capital maintenance funds in the range of \$75 to \$100± per space, should be set aside in a sinking fund to maintain the parking structure. Because these costs are ongoing, we suggest that their incorporation into any fees applied by the City should be on an annual, rather than on an up-front, lump-sum basis.

## Land Costs

Land costs are not typically included in in-lieu-fee calculations. Including land costs would increase the fees applied to development dramatically.

Walker understands the City ordinance currently requires an in-lieu fee of \$2,000 per space.



### Walker Recommends

Increase the in-lieu payment to accommodate the anticipated costs for surface parking development (not including land costs), currently at \$3,000 - \$5,000 per space so that the City may use the funds to acquire and develop parking in the District where appropriate. The City should also consider changing the ordinance so that the in-lieu payments will directly benefit the parking program, rather than the City’s multimodal fund.

## Time Limit Zones and Applications

Like the Peacock Arts District, the Lincoln Park District continues to pursue its development goals through the development of neighborhood streetscape infrastructure and private development construction. At this stage of development, the City should focus on measuring curbside demand impacts, similar to efforts on the outskirts of the Downtown District, of implementing a time-limited parking program for on-street parking and unlimited time for off-street parking when demand dictates. The District parking program may then consider graduating into a paid parking program in areas where capacity exceeds available inventory at peak. In this strategy, the paid parking will aid in pushing development around the peak areas, thus accelerating the infill development and maturing the District overall.

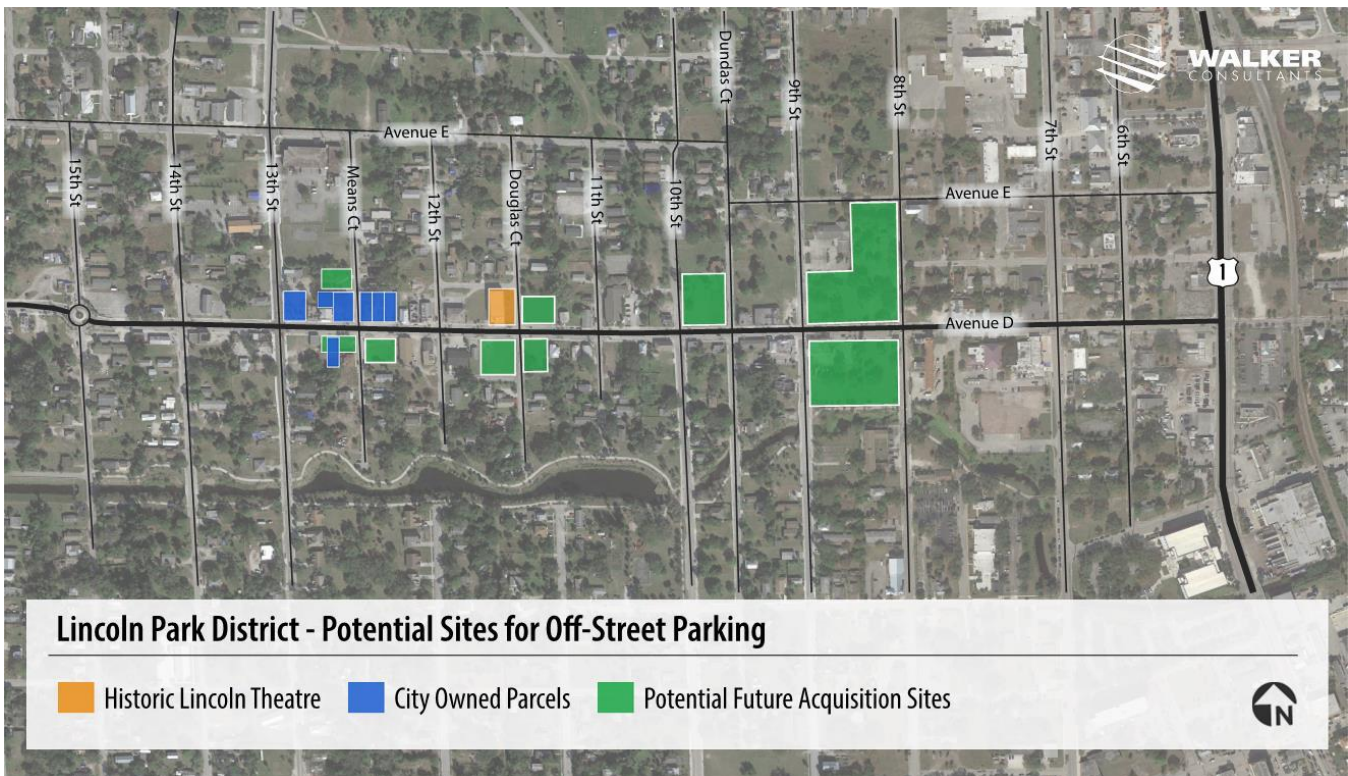
# Land Acquisition



## Walker Recommends

As the Lincoln Park District matures in its development, the City should look to strategically acquire land that can be used for parking inventory, and ultimately further development. With a healthy payment in lieu strategy the City will have funding for development of surface parking and can look to acquire land independently or through public/private partnerships. **Exhibit 13** highlights potential opportunities for parking inventory development as the Lincoln Park District matures and begins to link with Downtown development. Congruent development strategies between the Lincoln Park District and the Downtown District will allow for seamless transition between the two districts that will create greater community impact.

*Exhibit 14: Lincoln Park District Potential Parking Sites*



Source: Walker Consultants, 2020

