

City of Plainfield Comprehensive Parking System Review & Assessment (DRAFT)

Plainfield, NJ

March 01, 2024



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Zenobia Fields
Plainfield Economic Development Department
Director
515 Watchung Avenue, 2nd Floor
Plainfield, NJ 07060

RE: *City of Plainfield – Comprehensive Parking System Review & Assessment – DRAFT*

Dear Ms. Fields,

Attached for your review and comment is the City of Plainfield Comprehensive Parking System Review & Assessment (the "Study") – 3RD Draft. We look forward to discussing any questions or comments you may have regarding the DRAFT Study at your convenience. Once we have received your feedback, we will update this Draft Report as appropriate and issue the Final Report. Thank you for the opportunity to work with you on this project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'J. Zullo'.

James Zullo, AICP, PP, CAPP
President

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DRAFT

Introduction

THA Consulting Inc. (THA) was engaged by The City of Plainfield (the “City”) to produce comprehensive review of the parking conditions and operations within four (4) distinct study areas within the City, to identify parking challenges and issues and to recommend parking management strategies and potential ordinance changes to help support the City’s residential quality of life, economic development, and future growth.

In order to undertake this study, THA reviewed parking related information, including the Parking Plan Circulation Element of the Master Plan 2020; participated in meetings with the Plainfield Economic Development Department; and obtained parking and redevelopment related information from the Economic Development Department and the Plainfield Parking Utility. THA also obtained feedback and input from the general public, business owners, residents, and stakeholders at a Parking Advisory Meeting on December 12, 2023 and through an online parking survey. Lastly, THA conducted a Parking Demand Analysis of the four (4) study areas in the City, and reviewed parking operations, ordinances, and policies in the City.

Based on this information, THA prepared the assessment of the current parking inventory, its level of utilization, and how it is managed, operated and enforced. We have provided recommendations to improve downtown parking operations and strategies with the intent of accomplishing the following:

- Identifying any current, unmet parking demand within the study areas, as well as any unmet parking demand from redevelopment projects planned or under construction;
- Expanding the capability of parking operations through the hiring of additional staff personnel and the incorporation of upgraded enforcement technology and industry-specific training programs;
- Maximizing the utilization of the existing parking assets for various user groups by promoting increased turnover and maximizing the availability of on-street parking;
- Providing increased convenience and a higher level of parking patron comfort with enhanced parking information, wayfinding, and facility improvements; and,
- Implementing ordinances that prepare the City for potential areas of conflict in public parking management.

Parking Demand Analysis

Overview

THA undertook a Parking Demand Analysis for four (4) study areas identified by the Economic Development Department and Parking Utility in Plainfield to understand the level of parking utilization in the study and any conflicts that may exist amongst different user groups including residents, local businesses, commuters, and new development. The intent of this analysis was to accurately inventory existing parking resources within the study areas and measure current parking demand to determine what areas need potential adjustments in terms of time limits, ordinances, and enforcement.



To undertake the parking assessment study, THA developed an inventory of both on-street and off-street parking assets within the study areas, performed field observations with parking counts, and obtained occupancy data to gauge the utilization of these parking facilities. Based on this information, THA prepared an assessment of the current parking inventory and its level of utilization. The assessment attempts to accomplish the following:

- Inventory existing on-street and public off-street parking supply in the study areas.
- Determine peak parking occupancy levels based on occupancy counts for on-street and public off-street parking assets.
- Summarize the results of the parking inventory, the associated current parking demand, and present it graphically on maps and charts.
- Determine which areas and streets have high parking utilization and potential areas where parking may be more heavily utilized, considering current and planned development projects and increased economic activity due to the anticipated growth of the area.

Study Areas

The study area for the Parking Supply and Demand Assessment consists of four (4) study areas, each with unique parking dynamics. **Figure 1** illustrates the areas surveyed, including:

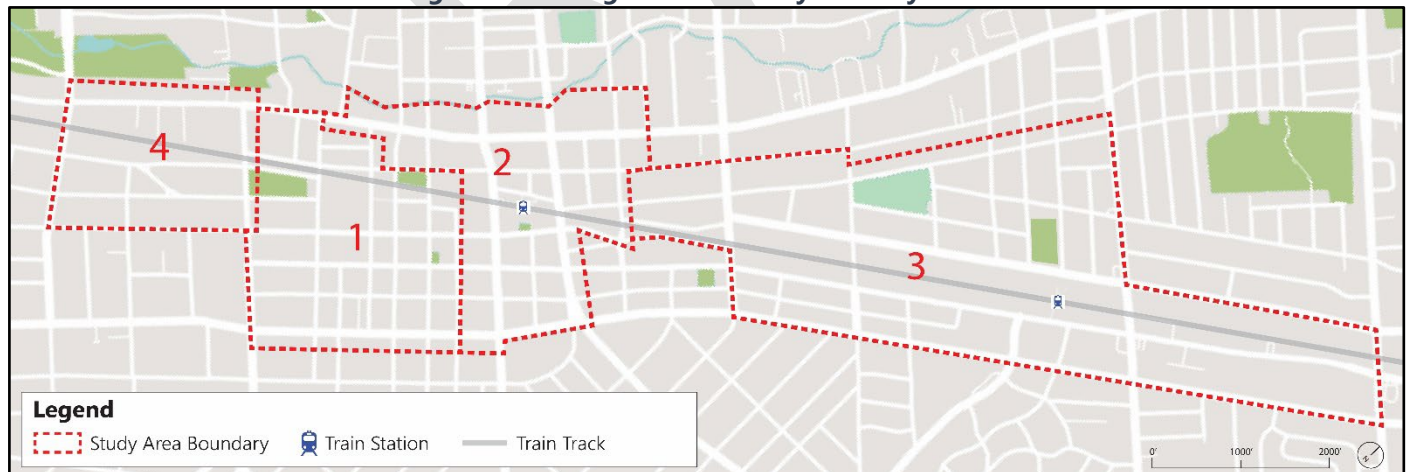
Study Area 1 (Central Neighborhood Commercial) – a primarily residential neighborhood directly west of the downtown.

Study Area 2 (Central Business District) – the downtown and central business district around the NJ Transit Plainfield Station.

Study Area 3 (Netherwood Neighborhood Commercial) – a commercial and residential area east of the downtown including the NJ Transit Netherwood Station.

Study Area 4 (Central-West Neighborhood Commercial) – a primarily residential neighborhood directly west of Hannah Atkins Park.

Figure 1: Parking Demand Analysis Study Areas



Source: THA Consulting, Inc. 2023

The study areas were identified based on the presently levels of parking utilization, reported parking problems and conflicts between residential and commercial / commuter uses, and the anticipated increased demand for on-street parking adjacent or near new or pending development projects. The downtown study area was identified due to the increased business and residential activity and the potential loss of parking due to the creation of a pedestrian /event plaza in the area.

Parking Supply and Demand

The parking resources in the study areas are utilized by multiple user groups consisting of residents, business patrons, merchants/employees, and commuters. The following section of the report outlines the current parking supply and parking occupancy in each study area based on THA's field work.

Parking demand refers to the number of parked vehicles observed or recorded at a particular time of day. Parking occupancy refers to the portion, represented as a percentage, of parking spaces that are occupied by vehicles at a specific time and date. THA conducted observations and parking counts of Study Areas 1-3 on Wednesday, September 27, 2023, from 10AM to 8PM, and Saturday, September 30, 2023, from 10AM to 8PM. During the Saturday count, a large event closed two of the off-street lots and pushed demand in much of Study Area 2 beyond capacity, so THA performed a third parking count in Study Area 2 on Saturday, October 28, 2023, from 1PM to 8PM. The weekend occupancy results in this section thus contain counts from both days to represent a typical Saturday. THA conducted parking counts of Study Area 4, on Tuesday, November 7, 2023, from 11AM to 6PM. During our fieldwork, the weather was temperate for the time of year. THA identified the peak occupancy for on-street and off-street parking, which is presented in the narratives and tables below.

Study Area 1 (Central Neighborhood Commercial)

This study area is a mostly residential area in Plainfield directly west of its downtown. Included in this area are two parks, a few small businesses, and civic buildings, as well as several apartment complexes and multi-family houses. Study Area 1's boundaries are Front Street and 2nd Street to the north, 7th Street to the south, Arlington Avenue to the east, and Plainfield Avenue to the west.

Study Area 1 – Parking Supply

The study area's public parking supply consists of approximately 676 on-street parking spaces. This area contains no public off-street lots. On-street parking consists of non-metered parking with 12-hour time limits. The publicly owned, on-street parking inventory is the primary focus of our assessment. **Figure 2** displays the parking supply on each street section in the study area, and **Table 1** lists the number of existing on-street parking spaces for each street within the study area.

Figure 2: Public Parking Supply - Study Area 1



Source: THA Consulting, Inc, 2023

Table 1: On-Street Parking Supply - Study Area 1

Street	Supply
Orchard Pl	16
2nd St	38
3rd St	16
4th St	73
5th St	96
6th St	68
7th St	60
Elmwood Pl	20
Liberty St	92
Field St	17
New St	76
Central Ave	49
Madison Ave	55
Total	676

Source: THA Consulting, Inc, 2023

Study Area 1 – Parking Demand

Table 2 below illustrates the weekday and weekend on-street parking occupancy in the study area. Tables illustrating weekday and weekend on-street parking occupancy on specific streets can be found in **Appendix A**.

Table 2: Parking Occupancy in Study Area 1

Weekday On-Street Parking Occupancy, Wednesday, September 27, 2023

Type	Supply	10 AM		1 PM		4 PM		7 PM	
On-Street	676	338	50%	343	51%	382	57%	486	72%

Weekend On-Street Parking Occupancy, Saturday, September 30, 2023

Type	Supply	10 AM		1 PM		4 PM		7 PM	
On-Street	676	452	67%	436	64%	442	65%	518	77%

Source: THA Consulting, Inc, 2023

During the weekday count (Wednesday, September 27), the peak on-street parking occupancy in the study area was 486 spaces or 72% occupancy, which occurred at 7 PM. On the observed weekday, the on-street parking occupancy gradually increased throughout the day with the largest increase occurring between 4PM and 7PM. Several street sections were occupied beyond capacity. Because the study area does not have regulated or metered on-street parking, streets occupied beyond capacity often have cars parked too close to the corners illegally creating vehicular and pedestrian safety concerns. By 7pm, every street in the area was more than 50% occupied, with 3rd Street and Field Street fully occupied.

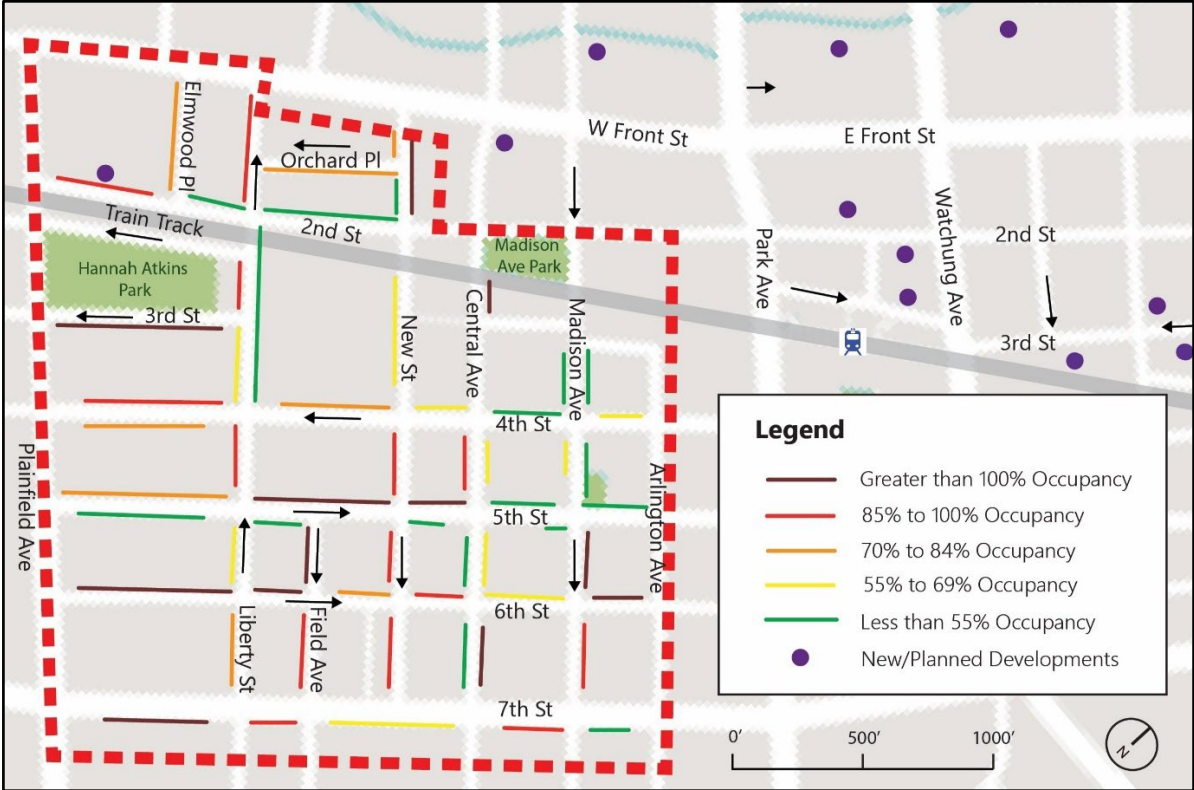
During the weekend count (Wednesday, September 30), the overall peak on-street parking occupancy in the study area was 518 spaces or 77% occupancy, which occurred at 7PM. Occupancy slightly decreased after 10AM before increasing again in the evening, with a noticeable increase between 4PM and 7PM. As seen during the weekday, several street sections were occupied beyond capacity during the evening, mostly around the southwest section of the study area on or adjacent to busier east-west streets.



Multifamily apartments on New Street

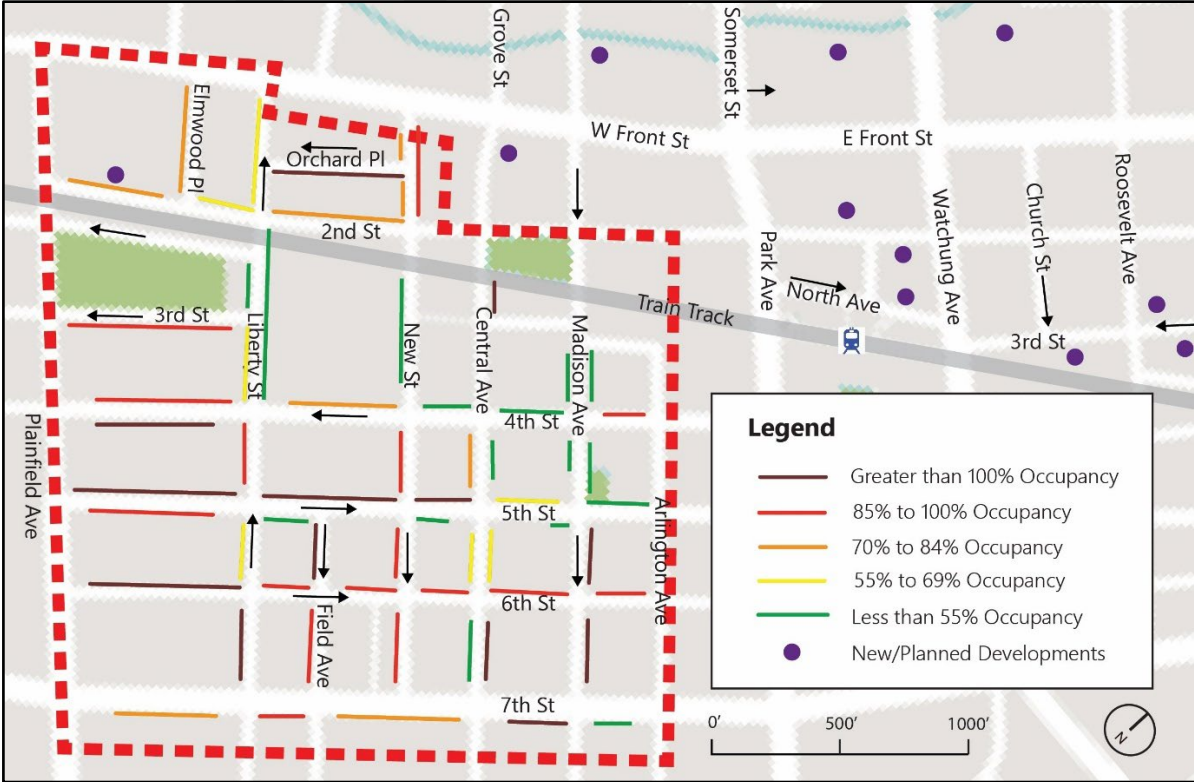
Apartment building on 7th Street

Figure 3: Weekday Peak Parking Occupancy “Heat” Map: 7 PM



Source: THA Consulting, Inc, 2023

Figure 4: Weekend Peak Parking Occupancy “Heat” Map: 7 PM



Source: THA Consulting, Inc, 2023

Key Observations

- Visitors to Hannah Atkins Park at 3rd Street and Plainfield Avenue often take up on-street spaces.
- Heavily occupied sections of 4th Street, 5th Street, 6th Street, New Street and Field Avenue have multiple multi-family apartment buildings per block. Many of these apartments lack driveways and residents park on-street.
- Madison Avenue is less utilized closer to the railroad tracks. These blocks have inconsistent lighting and sidewalk quality.
- New Street and Liberty Street are not heavily utilized between 2nd Street and 4th Street. These blocks are mostly apartment buildings with parking provided off-street.
- Streets between 2nd Street and Front Street are heavily occupied. The Elmwood Square development in this area provides parking for residents off-street.

Study Area 1 – Recommendations

- Establish consistent parking enforcement patrols of Study Area 1 to dissuade double parking and other traffic/pedestrian safety violations (**see page 28**).
- Implement additional parking on both sides of Madison Avenue alongside the Madison Avenue Skate Park (**see page 29**).
- Designate sections of Study Area 1 as Resident Permit Parking (RPP) zones, limiting the number of permits issued per residential unit (**see page 45**).

Study Area 2 (Central Business District)

This study area consists of Plainfield's downtown business district including the NJ Transit Plainfield station. The study area boundaries are North Plainfield to the north; 7th Street to the south; Westervelt Avenue, Roosevelt Avenue and Watchung Avenue to the east; and Arlington Avenue to the west; as well as a three-block appendage to the west along Front Street.



Lot 8

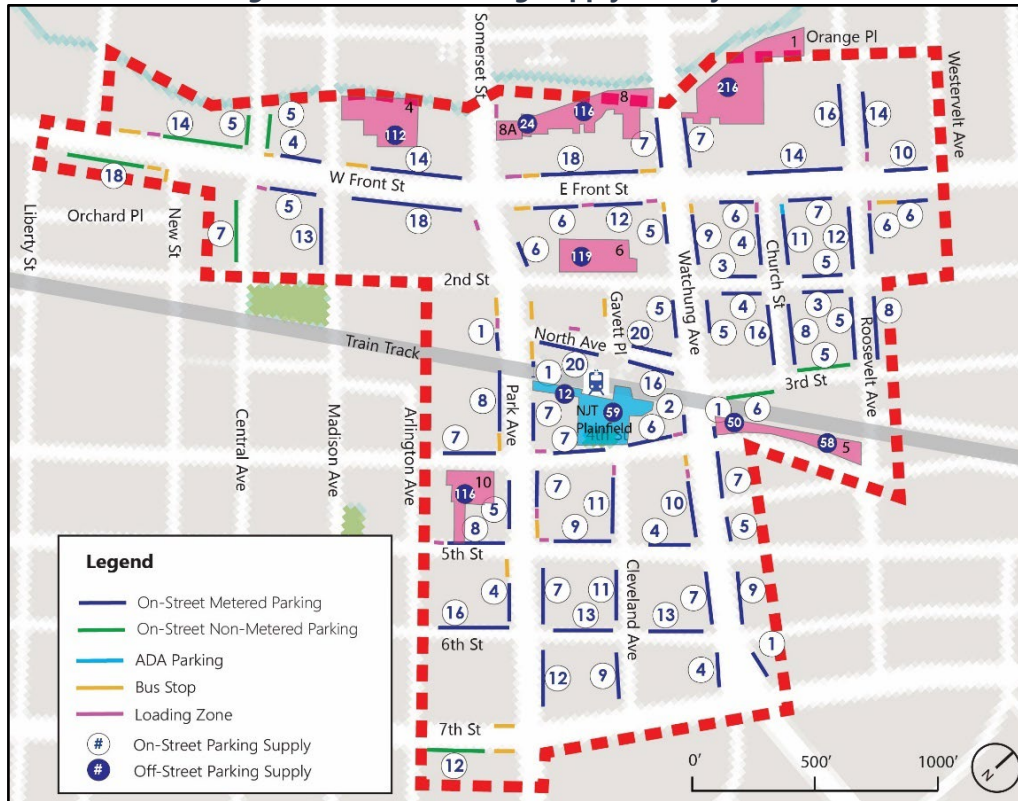


Park Avenue, south of Front Street

Study Area 2 – Parking Supply

The study area's public parking supply consists of approximately 633 on-street parking spaces and 838 off-street public lot spaces, totaling 1,471 spaces. THA surveyed eight (8) off-street lots available to the public including commuter lots for the NJ Transit Plainfield station. On-street parking consists of metered and non-metered parking, with time limits ranging from 2- to 12-hours. The public off-street lots are metered or permit parking. The publicly owned on-street and off-street parking inventory is the focus of the assessment. **Figure 5** illustrates the on- and off-street parking resource locations within the study area.

Figure 5: Public Parking Supply – Study Area 2



Source: THA Consulting, Inc, 2023

Metered spaces are priced at \$1.00 / hour with 2-hour time limits and non-metered spaces have 2- and 12-hour time limits. The off-street public parking spaces are available to permit parkers and transient parkers. The fee for transient parkers is \$1.00 / hour and up to \$10 / day. The monthly parking fee for the off-street Lots 5, 6, and 8 is \$60 per month, and the fee for Lots 1, 4 and 10 is \$50. The NJ Transit Plainfield Lot only allows daily parking at a rate of \$4.45 / day. **Table 3** lists the number of existing on-street parking spaces for each street, and **Table 4** lists the number of existing parking spaces in each off-street lot within the study area.

Table 3: On-Street Parking Supply – Study Area 2

Street	Supply
Front St	152
2nd St	15
North Ave	56
3rd St	11
4th St	21
5th St	21
6th St	42
7th St	12
Grove St	10
Central Ave	7
Madison Ave	13
Park Ave	58
Cleveland Ave	31
Watchung Ave	84
Church St	39
Roosevelt Ave	61
Total	633

Source: THA Consulting, Inc, 2023

Table 4: Off-Street Public Parking Supply – Study Area 2

Facility Name	Supply
Lot 1	216
Lot 4	112
Lot 5	50
Lot 6	119
Lot 8	116
Lot 8A	24
Lot 10	116
NJT Plainfield	85
Total	838

Source: THA Consulting, Inc, 2023

Study Area 2 – Parking Demand

Table 5 below illustrates the weekday and weekend on-street and off-street parking occupancy in the study area. Time periods where occupancy exceeds 80% on-street or off-street are highlighted. Tables illustrating weekday and weekend on-street parking occupancy on specific streets can be found in **Appendix A**.

Table 5: Parking Occupancy in Study Area 2
Weekday Parking Occupancy, Wednesday, September 27, 2023

Type	Supply	10 AM		1 PM		4 PM		7 PM	
On-Street	633	334	53%	366	58%	363	57%	428	68%
Off-Street	838	429	51%	416	50%	387	46%	378	45%
Total	1471	763	52%	782	53%	750	51%	806	55%

Weekend Parking Occupancy, Saturday, September 30/October 28, 2023

Type	Supply	10 AM		1 PM		4 PM		7 PM	
On-Street	633	495	78%	503	79%	518	82%	491	78%
Off-Street	838	344	41%	410	49%	369	44%	388	46%
Total	1471	839	57%	913	62%	887	60%	879	60%

Source: THA Consulting, Inc, 2023

Study Area 2 – Weekday Parking Occupancy

During the weekday count (Wednesday, September 27), the peak on-street parking occupancy in the study area was 428 spaces or 68% occupancy, which occurred at 7 PM. The on-street parking occupancy was relatively stable throughout the workday, with a small peak observed during the lunch hour and a large increase in cars in the evening. East Front Street, as well as some of the streets closer to Roosevelt Avenue and 7th Street retained relatively low occupancies in the evening. A few streets, including North Avenue and Central Avenue, doubled their occupancy between 10AM and 7PM. West Front Street and adjacent streets, as well as portions of Watchung Avenue and Park Avenue, were occupied beyond capacity at 7 PM, with many cars illegally parked in loading zones and other marked no-parking zones.

During the weekday count (Wednesday, September 27), the combined peak off-street parking occupancy in public facilities was 429 spaces or 51% occupancy, which occurred at 10 AM. The lots closest to West Front Street and Park Avenue, including Lots 4, 6, 8a, and 10, sharply increased in occupancy in the evening. The Plainfield Station lot reached a much lower occupancy in the evening due to commuters having returned home, and Lots 1, 5, and 8 were less than half-occupied in the evening due to being too far from open businesses or being perceived as unavailable to patrons. **The total overall peak parking occupancy in the study area is approximately 806 spaces or 55% occupancy, which occurred at 7 PM.**

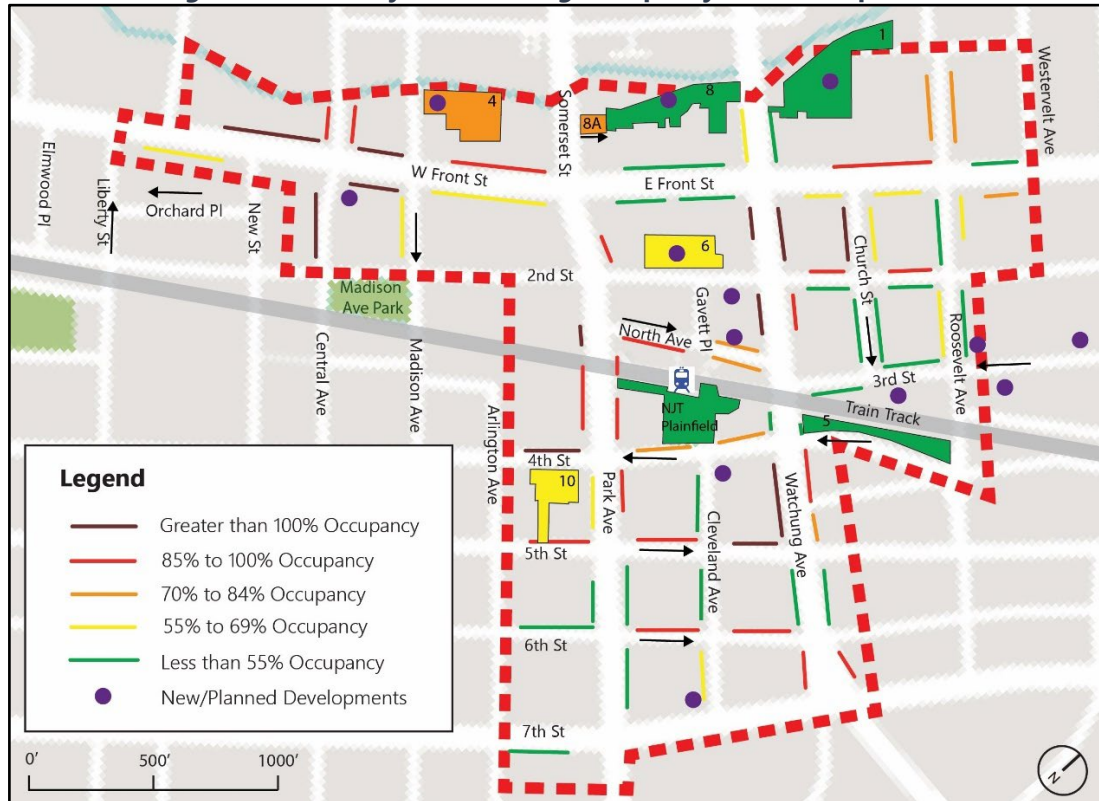
Study Area 2 – Weekend Parking Occupancy

During the weekend count (Saturday, September 30/October 28), the overall peak on-street parking occupancy in the study area was 518 spaces or 68% occupancy, which occurred at 4PM. Occupancy remained relatively steady throughout the day, with a peak in the evening. On North Avenue, Grove Street, Central Avenue and Park Avenue, occupancy remained above 80% for the duration of the parking counts, and by the early evening, most street sections between Front Street and the NJ Transit Station were nearly fully occupied. 6th Street, 7th Street, and Cleveland Avenue, the streets farthest from Front Street, the commercial center, had relatively low occupancy throughout the day.

During the weekend count (Saturday, September 30/October 28), the combined peak off-street parking occupancy was 410 spaces or 49% occupancy, which occurred at 1 PM. Some of the off-street lots closest to Front

Street and Park Avenue were nearly fully occupied at midday, while lots with entrances slightly further away were significantly less occupied. Facilities and streets that were not directly visible or accessible from the main thoroughfares were largely underutilized, especially in places that lacked direct pedestrian shortcuts or signage. Lot 8A, the smallest lot in the study area, was full for most of the evening. **The overall peak parking occupancy in the study area was 913 spaces or 62% occupancy, which occurred at 1 PM.**

Figure 6: Weekday Peak Parking Occupancy “Heat” Map: 7 PM



Source: THA Consulting, Inc, 2023

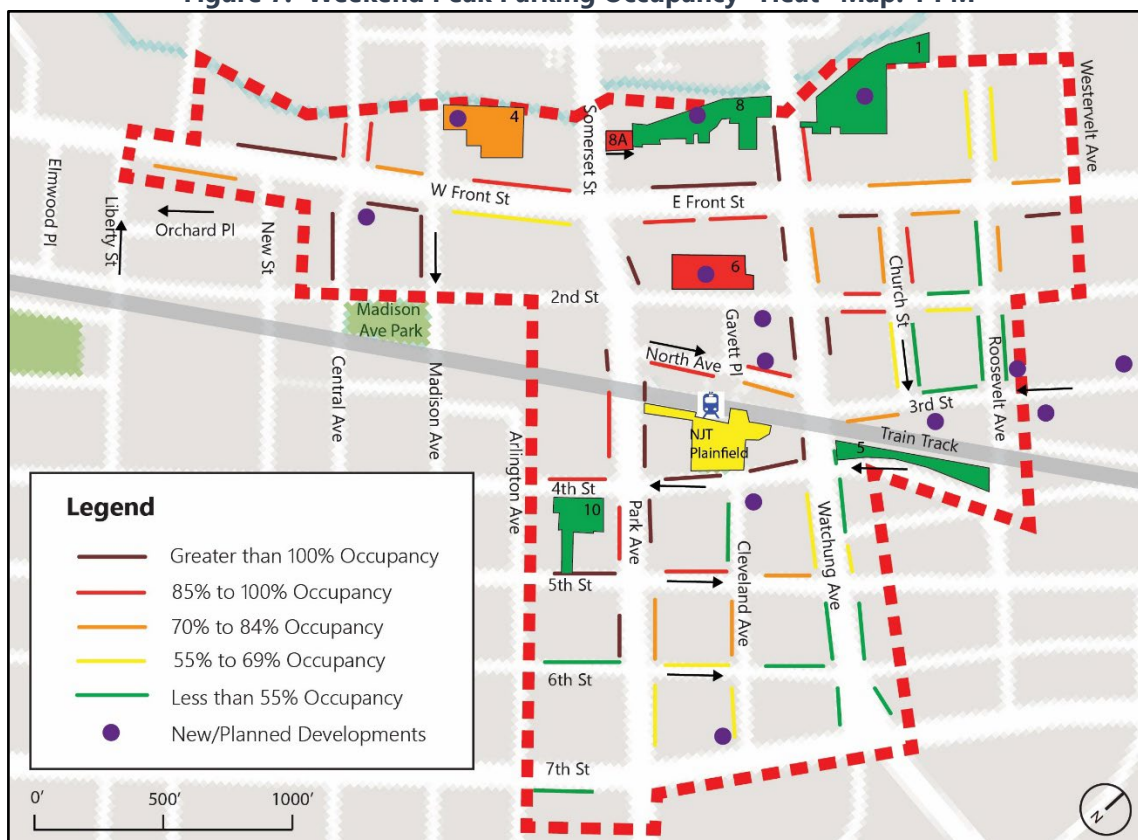


North Avenue on a weekday afternoon



Lot 6 on a weekday afternoon

Figure 7: Weekend Peak Parking Occupancy “Heat” Map: 1 PM



Source: THA Consulting, Inc, 2023

Study Area 2 – Key Observations

- Lots 1, 5, 8, and 10 are consistently underutilized, even when other lots are full.
- Lots 1, 4, 6, and 8 are planned for mixed-use development, which will include the replacement of the current public parking supply. Additionally, a garage is considered at the police parking lot on 4th Street and Cleveland Avenue.
- 4th Street, North Avenue and sections of Park Avenue and Watchung Avenue adjacent to Plainfield Station are much more utilized than the primary lot for the station, likely due to commuters avoiding the fee in the lot.
- Gavett Place and North Avenue are planned to become a pedestrian plaza, which will eliminate approximately 56 on-street spaces and 14 off-street NJ Transit spaces. These spaces will be relocated to a section of Lot 5 currently designated as public permit parking.
- Private vehicles often park in loading areas on Front Street, Watchung Avenue and Park Avenue, while commercial vehicles often double park or use metered spaces for loading.
- There are currently alleyways/pedestrian connections between Front Street and Lots 1, 4, 6, and 8. However, these connections are not well identified and lack pedestrian-friendly design.
- Streets closer to 7th Street, including sections of Park Avenue, Cleveland Avenue and Watchung Avenue, are underutilized at peak hours.
- There are permit spaces available in Lots 1, 4, 5, 6, 8 and 10. Half of lot 5 is reserved for Police Department employees. Some visitors park in permit spaces, especially after enforcement hours.
- Lots 8 and 10, as well as portions of other lots, lack consistent lighting and areas are dark in the evenings.
- There is a lack of parking wayfinding signage directing vehicles and pedestrians to public lots, as well as signage at the entrance of lots that indicates that the lots are available for public parking.

Study Area 2 – Recommendations

- Establish consistent parking enforcement patrols of Study Area 2 to promote turnover of highly utilized on-street parking and dissuade traffic/pedestrian safety violations **(see page 28)**.
- Extend enforcement hours downtown from 6PM to 8PM Monday through Saturday. Enforcement during extended hours would focus on prohibited zone, safety, and permit parking violations. Enforcement of fee parking can also be included in Lots 4, 6 and 8a, which are heavily utilized on weekend nights due to the adjacent night clubs **(see page 28)**.
- Increase overtime meter fine rates **(see page 28)**.
- Implement additional on-street parking on currently prohibited sections of Madison Avenue, Central Avenue, 4th Street, and 5th Street to assist in offsetting the loss of spaces from the pedestrian plaza **(see page 29)**.
- Allow taxis and personal vehicles to access the edges of the pedestrian plaza during peak commute hours. All existing loading zones should be clearly striped with appropriate signage **(see page 31)**.
- To make more on-street parking accessible to patrons, implement a Merchant Parking Program to allow employees/business owners to park for free or low cost in designated sections of underutilized lots, including Lots 1, 8, and 10 **(see page 32)**.
- Install SafetySticks in problematic no-parking areas and permit spaces to enforce prohibited area and safety violations **(see page 39)**.
- Market and promote higher utilization of pay-by-cell app to enhance customer convenience **(see page 37)**.
- Regularly check lighting in public lots to ensure adequate lighting levels and improve user comfort **(see page 40)**.
- Implement a wayfinding and lot signage program to direct visitors to public parking facilities and improve delineation of permit parking spaces within lots with consistent signage **(see page 40)**.
- Enhance alleyways and open spaces connecting Front Street to off-street lots with public art, lighting and signage. Similar improvements can be made to low-demand streets, including Cleveland Avenue, 3rd Street and Roosevelt Avenue **(see page 42)**.

Study Area 3 (Netherwood Neighborhood Commercial)

Study Area 3 consists of the light commercial corridor along North Avenue and South Avenue directly east of the downtown, as well as some of the residential areas immediately surrounding them. Included in this area are the NJ Transit Netherwood Station, several small businesses, chain restaurants and apartment buildings. Its boundaries are 2nd Street to the north; 7th Street to the south; Leland Avenue to the east; and Richmond Avenue to the west; as well as a section of 3rd Street extending west towards Roosevelt Avenue and a section of South Avenue extending east towards Terrill Road.



Netherwood Station South Lot

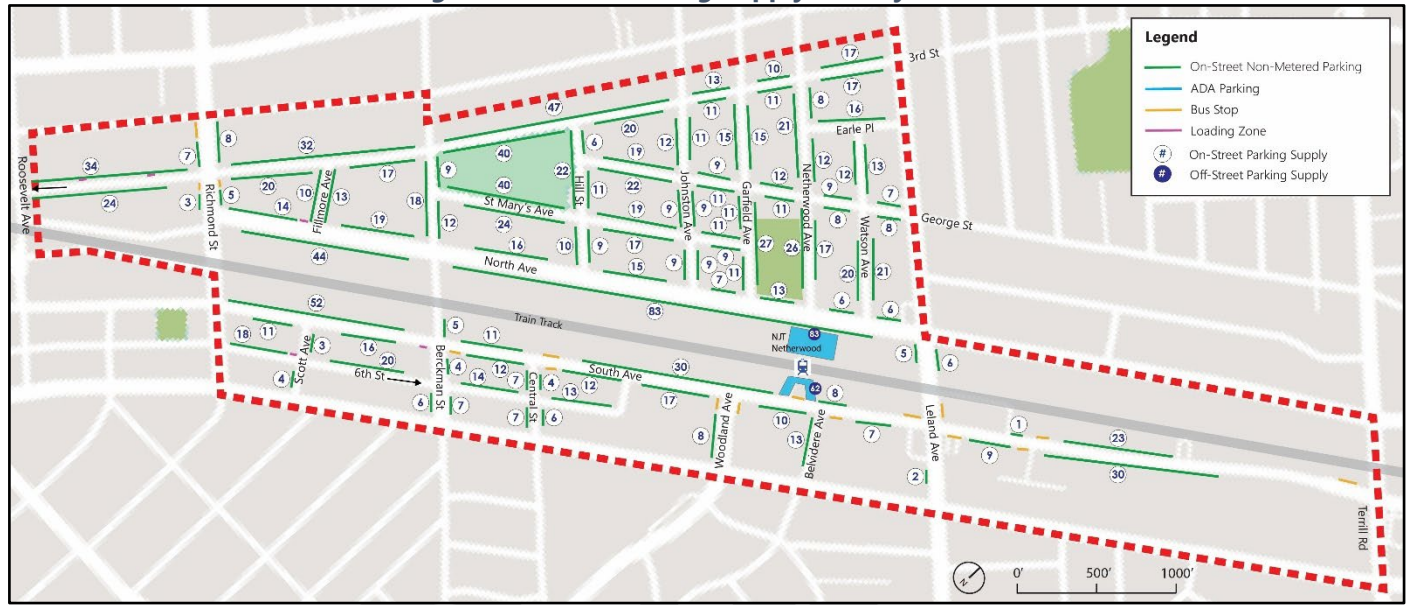


South Avenue, east of Berckman Street

Study Area 3 – Parking Supply

The study area's public parking supply consists of approximately 1,645 on-street parking spaces and 145 off-street public lot spaces, totaling 1,790 spaces. THA surveyed 2 off-street commuter lots for the NJ Transit Netherwood station. On-street parking consists of non-metered parking, with time limits ranging from 10 minutes to 12 hours. The publicly owned on-street and off-street parking inventory is the focus of the assessment. **Figure 8** illustrates the on- and off-street parking resource locations within the study area.

Figure 8: Public Parking Supply – Study Area 3



Source: THA Consulting, Inc, 2023

On-street parking consists of non-metered parking with 1-, 2- and 12-hour time limits, as well as 10-minute spaces on North Avenue adjacent to Netherwood Station North. The off-street public parking is the commuter parking lots at the Netherwood Station available to commuters for \$4.45/day and permit holders for \$120 quarterly. **Table 6** lists the number of existing on-street parking spaces for each street. **Table 7** lists the number of existing parking spaces in each off-street lot within the study area.

Table 6: On-Street Parking Supply – Study Area 3

Street	Supply	Street	Supply
3rd St	313	Berckman St	61
Earle Pl	15	Central St	24
George St	116	Hill St	58
St Mary's Ave	120	Johnston Ave	59
North Ave	223	Woodland Ave	8
South Ave	249	Garfield Ave	79
6th St	91	Netherwood Ave	84
Richmond St	23	Belvidere Ave	13
Fillmore Ave	23	Watson Ave	66
Scott Ave	7	Leland Ave	13
Total	1645		

Source: THA Consulting, Inc, 2023

Table 7: Off-Street Public Parking Supply – Study Area 3

Facility Name	Supply
NJT Netherwood N	83
NJT Netherwood S	62
Total	145

Source: THA Consulting, Inc, 2023



South Avenue, west of Leland Avenue

Study Area 3 – Parking Demand

Table 8 below illustrates the weekday and weekend on-street and off-street parking occupancy. Tables illustrating weekday and weekend on-street parking occupancy on specific streets can be found in **Appendix A**.

Table 8: Parking Occupancy in Study Area 3
Weekday Parking Occupancy, Wednesday, September 27, 2023

Type	Supply	10 AM		1 PM		4 PM		7 PM	
On-Street	1645	757	46%	725	44%	692	42%	611	37%
Off-Street	145	63	43%	59	41%	52	36%	16	11%
Total	1790	820	46%	784	44%	744	42%	627	35%

Weekend Parking Occupancy, Saturday, September 30

Type	Supply	10 AM		1 PM		4 PM		7 PM	
On-Street	1645	645	39%	683	42%	757	46%	790	48%
Off-Street	145	11	8%	9	6%	10	7%	11	8%
Total	1790	656	37%	692	39%	767	43%	801	45%

Source: THA Consulting, Inc, 2023

Study Area 3 – Weekday Parking Occupancy

During the weekday count (Wednesday, September 27), the peak on-street parking occupancy in the study area was 757 spaces or 46% occupancy, which occurred at 10 AM. Please note that the overall on-street occupancy includes several streets with an abundance of available spaces due to low-density housing with driveway parking. The on-street parking occupancy gradually decreased throughout the day, with some streets reaching peak occupancy at various times of day. 3rd Street, North Avenue, and South Avenue, the streets with the largest number of available spaces in the study area, were the highest occupied between 10am and 1pm. North Avenue and South Avenue experienced high occupancies between Richmond Street and Berckman Street.

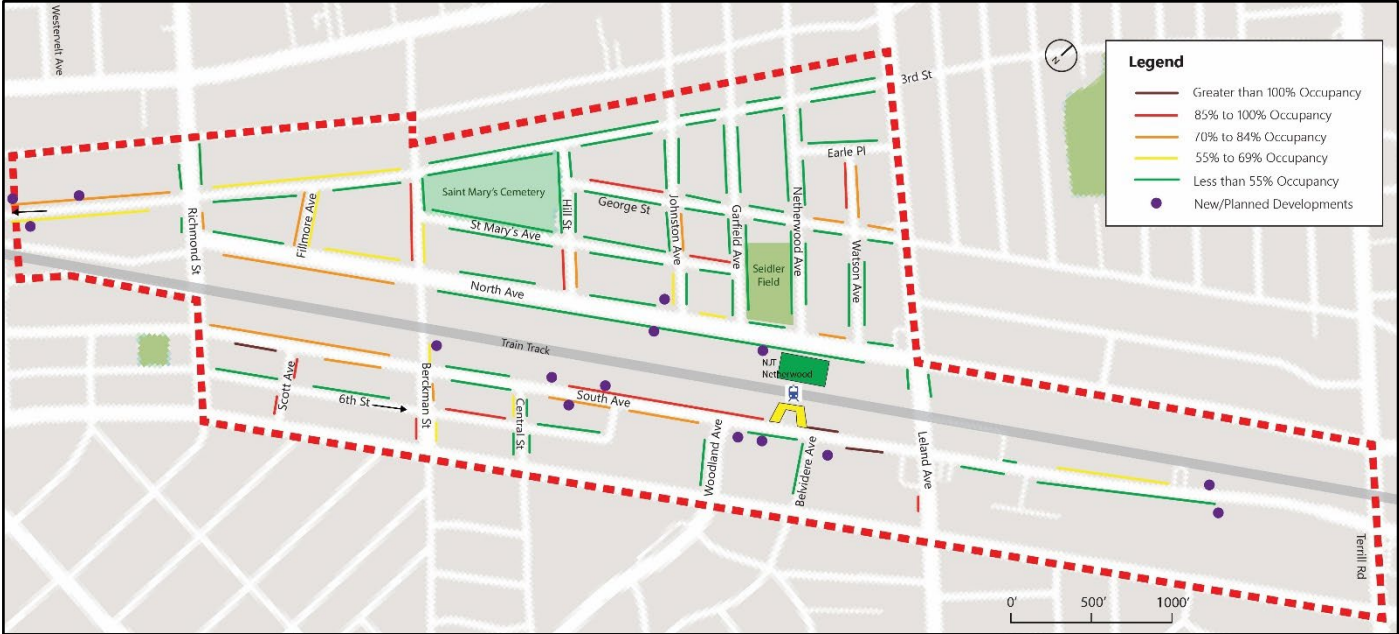
During the weekday count (Wednesday, September 27), the combined peak off-street parking occupancy in public facilities was 63 spaces or 43% occupancy, which occurred at 10 AM. The lot on the south side of the station (NJT Netherwood S) remained at least half-full in the morning and afternoon, while the north lot was consistently less than one-third occupied. Both lots decreased significantly in the evening. The total overall peak parking occupancy in the study area is approximately 820 spaces or 46% occupancy, which occurred at 10 AM.

Study Area 3 – Weekend Parking Occupancy

During the weekend count (Saturday, September 30), the peak on-street parking occupancy in the study area was 790 spaces or 48% occupancy, which occurred at 7 PM. The on-street parking occupancy gradually increased throughout the day, with some streets reaching their peak earlier in the evening. Several sections of South Avenue were full or parked beyond capacity, with illegal parking seen frequently in front of businesses and recent mixed-use apartment developments. South Avenue, 6th Street, Johnston Avenue and Belvidere Avenue reached occupancies above 75% in the evening.

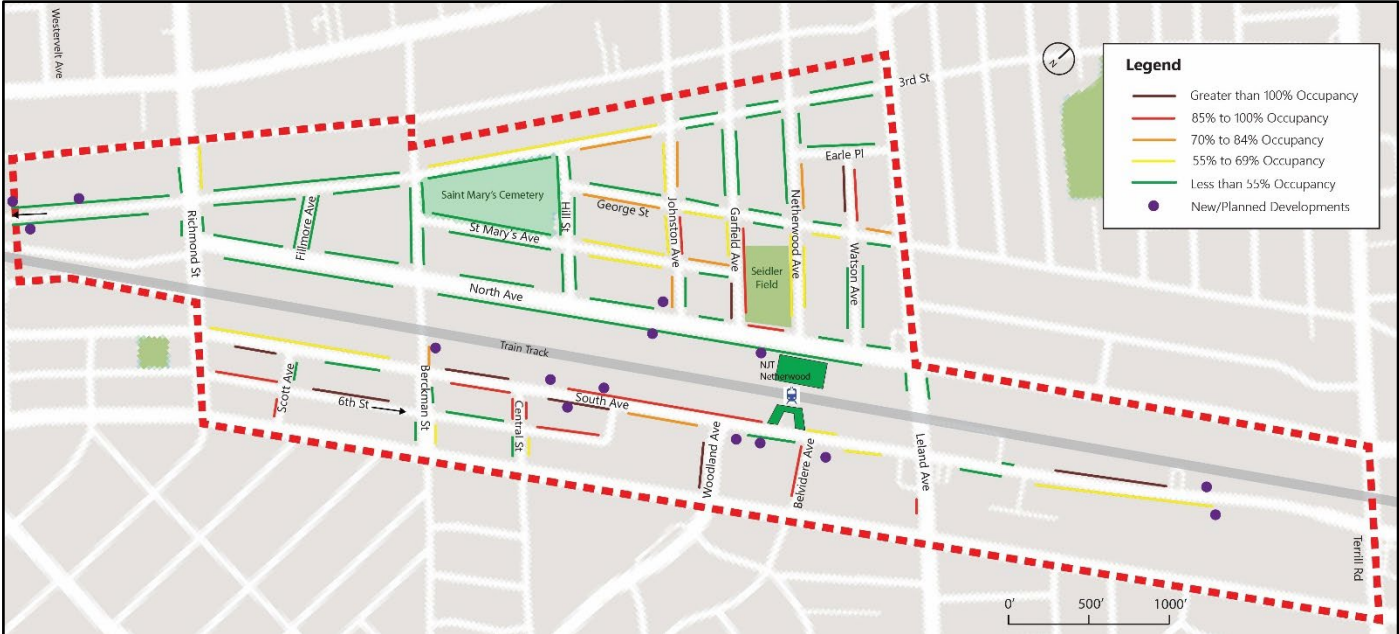
During the weekend count (Saturday, September 30), the combined peak off-street parking occupancy was 11 spaces or 8% occupancy, which occurred at 10 AM and 7 PM. Neither lot had an occupancy greater than 15% at any observed time. The overall peak parking occupancy in the study area was 801 spaces or 45% occupancy, which occurred at 7 PM.

Figure 9: Weekday Peak Parking Occupancy “Heat” Map: 10 AM



Source: THA Consulting, Inc, 2023

Figure 10: Weekend Peak Parking Occupancy “Heat” Map: 7 PM



Source: THA Consulting, Inc, 2023

Key Observations

- South Avenue includes Netherwood Station, auto body shops and other businesses. Residents often have to compete with employees, commuters and auto body vehicles for on-street parking.
- There are several new mixed-use apartment complexes on South Avenue recently completed or under construction, as well as a large warehouse pictured on the left below that is currently in use. Retail patrons of present and future establishments in the new buildings may compete with new apartment and existing area residents for on-street spaces. During the weekday and weekend counts, utilization of South Avenue was highest in the early afternoon on street sections closest to the warehouse and new developments.
- Residential streets adjacent to Netherwood Station, including 6th Street, Woodland Avenue and Belvidere Avenue, are heavily occupied during the weekday and weekend. This is likely due to commuters parking on-street to avoid the parking fee in the NJ Transit lots.
- There are an abundance of spaces on the south side of North Avenue between Richmond Street and Johnston Avenue that are heavily utilized on weekdays. This area currently has a few small businesses and no major developments, but may be developed in the future.
- Parking is not permitted on the portions of North Avenue, Garfield Street and Netherwood Avenue surrounding Seidler Field on weekday mornings to prohibit commuter parking. These streets are often heavily utilized during evenings. Also, there are signs here advertising Resident Permit Parking, despite there being no current program.
- Multiple development projects are planned for 3rd Street between Roosevelt Avenue and Richmond Street. As a result, there will likely be more demand for on-street parking in the future.



South Avenue, west of Berckman Street on a weekday



North Avenue east of Richmond Street on a weekday

Study Area 3 – Recommendations

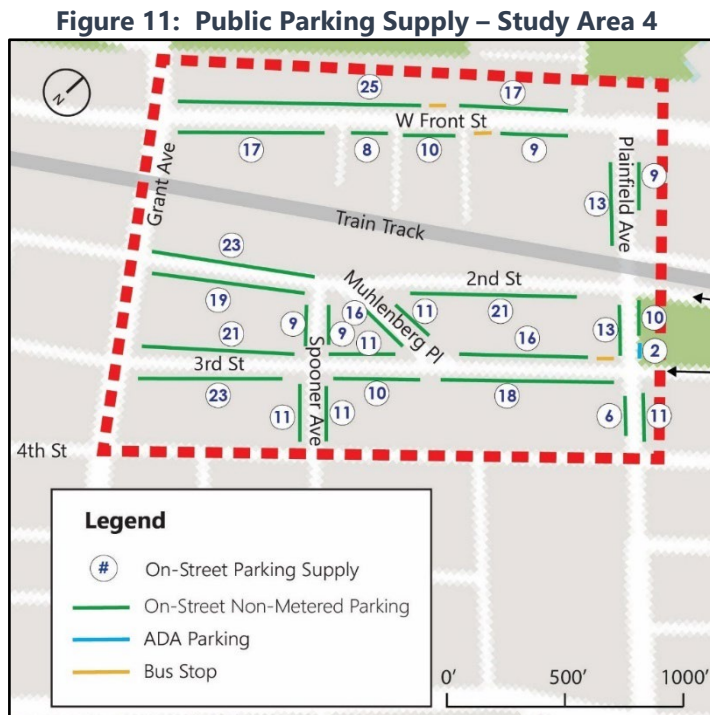
- Establish consistent parking enforcement patrols of Study Area 3 to dissuade traffic/pedestrian safety violations and commuter parking. **(see page 28).**
- Implement on-street time limit or fee parking along commercial sections of South Avenue to promote turnover and utilization for retail patrons. Also, reduce the time limit on the remainder of South Avenue and North Avenue **(see page 30).**
- Designate streets north of North Avenue and streets south of South Avenue as Resident Permit Parking (RPP) zones to dissuade commuter parking in the area **(see page 45).**

Study Area 4 (Central-West Neighborhood Commercial)

Study Area 4 is a mostly residential area directly to the west of Study Area 1, consisting of single and multifamily houses, apartment developments and small businesses, most of which are located on Front Street. Its boundaries are Front Street to the north; 4th Street to the south; Plainfield Avenue to the East; and Grant Avenue to the west.

Study Area 4 - Parking Supply

The study area's public parking supply consists of approximately 377 on-street parking spaces. This area contains no off-street lots. On-street parking consists of non-metered parking with 12-hour time limits. The publicly owned on-street parking inventory is the primary focus of our assessment. **Table 9** lists the number of existing on-street parking spaces for each street within the study area.



Source: THA Consulting, Inc, 2023

Table 9: On-Street Parking Supply – Study Area 4

Street	Supply
Front St	86
2nd St	63
Muhlenberg Pl	27
3rd St	99
Spooner Ave	40
Plainfield Ave	62
Total	377

Source: THA Consulting, Inc, 2023



3rd Street, across from Muhlenberg Place

Study Area 4 – Parking Demand

Table 10 below illustrates the weekday on-street parking occupancy.

Table 10: Weekday On-Street Parking Occupancy in Study Area 4

Type	Supply	11 AM		1 PM		4 PM		6 PM	
On-Street	377	157	42%	157	42%	176	47%	207	55%

Study Area 4 – On-Street Parking Occupancy

During the weekday count (Tuesday, November 7), the peak on-street parking occupancy in the study area was 207 spaces or 55% occupancy, which occurred at 6 PM. Most streets occupancy did not change significantly until the evening, except for 2nd Street and 3rd Street, which had smaller peaks in the morning. 3rd Street had the highest occupancy in the evening, with a couple sections exceeding capacity from illegally parked cars. A section of 2nd Street between Muhlenberg Place and Plainfield Ave also remained at least 80% occupied throughout the day.

Figure 12: Weekday Peak Parking Occupancy “Heat” Map: 6 PM



Source: THA Consulting, Inc, 2023



S 2nd Street, east of Muhlenberg Place



Muhlenberg Place and 3rd Street

Study Area 4 - Key Observations

- 2nd Street is heavily occupied between Muhlenberg Place and Plainfield Avenue, where parking is only allowed on the south side. Some of the vehicles on the street may be from an auto body shop.
- There is a small vacant grass lot owned by the City on 2nd Street, adjacent to the auto body shop that could serve as an area permit pocket parking lot for residents.
- There are several duplexes on 2nd Street and 3rd Street, as well as a new apartment building at the intersection of 2nd Street and Grant Avenue.
- 3rd Street is heavily occupied around its intersections with Muhlenberg Place and Spooner Avenue. There is a convenience store and a small park at the intersection with Muhlenberg Place, but Muhlenberg Place is not utilized consistently as 3rd Street.
- Front Street and Plainfield Avenue in this study area are not heavily occupied on weekdays.
- There are two (2) ADA spaces available on Plainfield Avenue for visitors to Hannah Atkins Park.

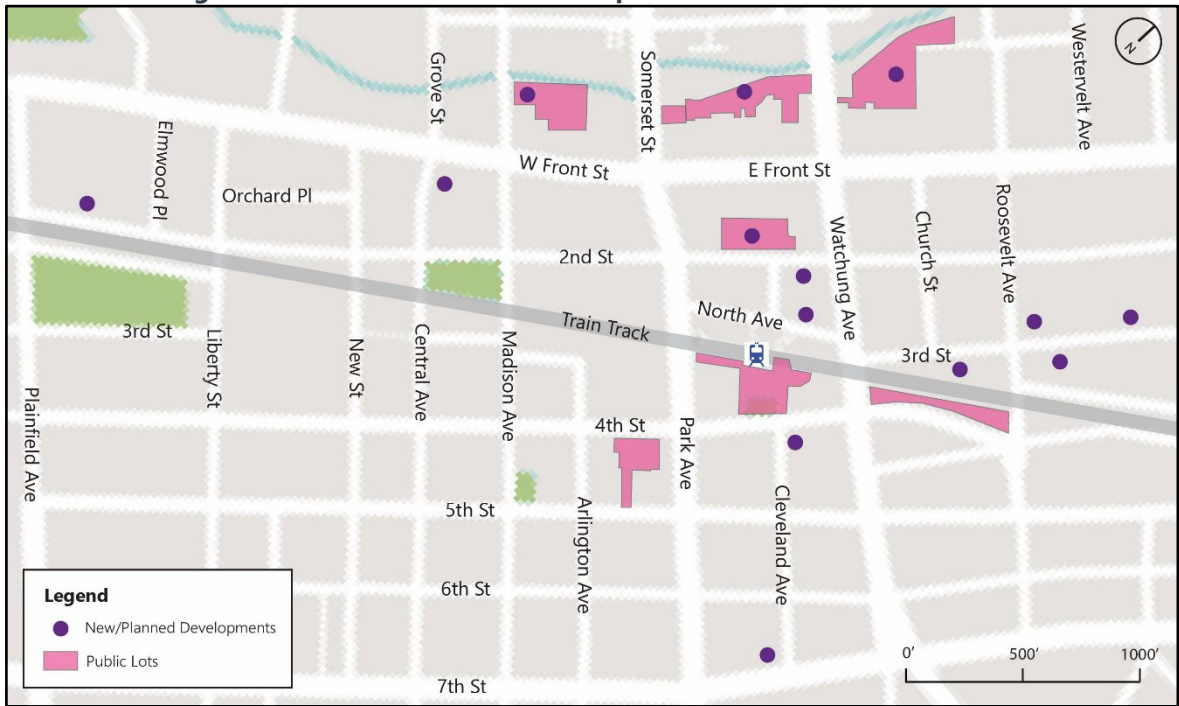
Study Area 4 – Recommendations

- Create a pocket surface lot from City-owned property on 2nd Street for residents and/or adjacent businesses **(see page 31)**.
- Incorporate Study Area 4 and some of the surrounding neighborhood north of 7th Street into a Resident Permit Parking (RPP) Zone to increase the availability of on-street parking for residents **(see page 45)**.

New Developments

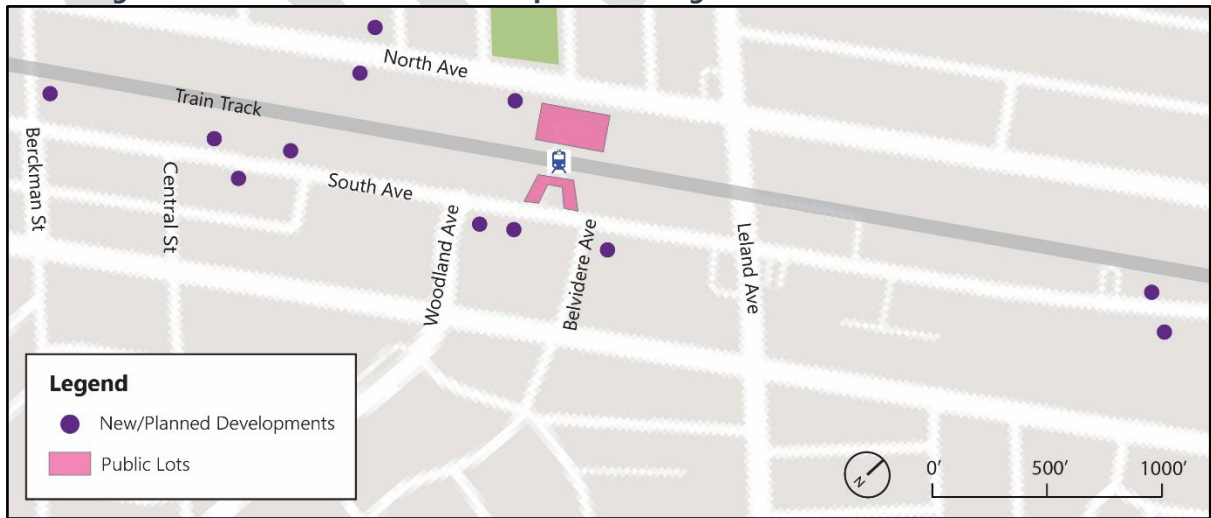
The demand for on-street parking may increase given the amount of development underway, planned and contemplated along North Avenue, South Avenue, 3rd Street, and other streets. Some of the recently completed projects include the Art Lofts, Netherwood Flats, 803 South, 1000 North, and Quin Apartments. Figure 13 illustrates locations of new and planned developments downtown, and Figure 14 illustrates locations of new and planned developments along North Avenue and South Avenue.

Figure 13: Locations of New Developments in Downtown Plainfield



Source: THA Consulting, Inc. 2023

Figure 14: Locations of New Developments along North Avenue and South Avenue



Source: THA Consulting, Inc. 2023

Parking Operations Review & Recommendations

Parking Administration and Management – City of Plainfield Parking Utility

Most municipalities recognize the importance of providing adequate parking for residents, visitors, shoppers and people employed within their communities. However, not every municipality realizes the importance of integrating all aspects of providing public parking within the framework of a parking system. When parking functions are divided between multiple municipal departments, no single department or manager has the full authority to plan, supervise, and operate municipal parking services. Due to this lack of centralization, there is less proactive planning, performance analysis, financial assessment and control of the parking system and operations. There are typically three types of government entities that manage and operate parking systems within the state of New Jersey: Parking Authorities, Parking Utilities and Parking Departments / Bureaus. Each of these entities has its strengths and weaknesses. Plainfield has a Parking Utility, which operates under the direction of its Economic Development Department where public parking services and operations are centralized.

City of Plainfield Parking Utility (PPU)

The PPU has a number of strengths, including a Director, an operating budget separate from the municipality, the ability to generate annual surplus revenue and retain earnings, and the utility's function is strictly limited to providing public parking. Given the continued revitalization of the City of Plainfield and the finite parking resources, it is critical for the PPU to continue to effectively manage and maximize the utilization of its existing parking assets and to enhance the overall public parking system to support the City's residential quality of life and businesses. This includes opportunities to improve operations and efficiency, increase convenience for patrons, coordinate both on-street and off-street parking pricing, provide appropriate levels of enforcement, encourage the delivery of parking information, and improve the security and user comfort of downtown parking resources.

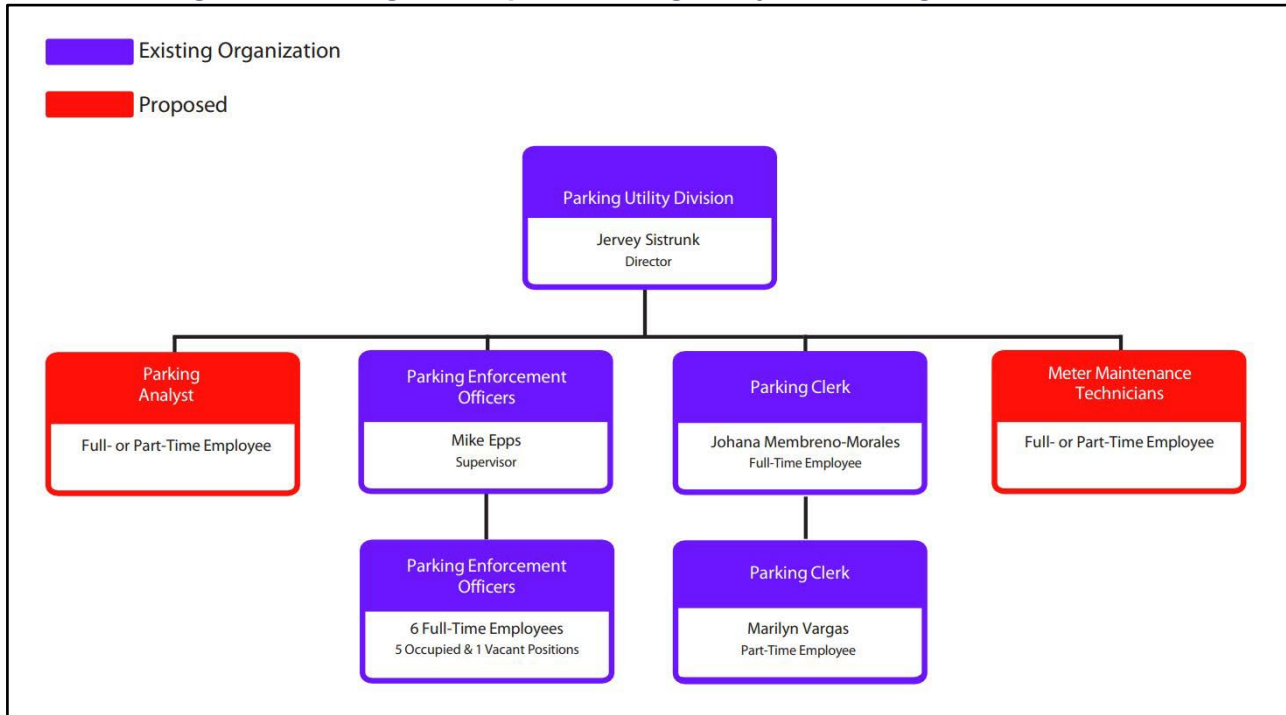
Staffing

The Director of Plainfield's Parking Utility Division currently oversees 8 staff members: two (2) parking clerks, one (1) parking enforcement supervisor, and five (5) full-time parking enforcement officers. The Utility presently has (1) vacant Enforcement Officer position. Outlined below is a description of PPU roles and responsibilities:

- **The Parking Utility Director** - oversees the Department's Parking Operations Division. This role is primarily responsible for mentoring / staff development, oversight, and maintenance of parking facilities, equipment, collections and enforcement.
- **Parking Clerks** - report directly to the PPU Director. They are responsible for handling insurance, accounting and record keeping.
- **The Parking Enforcement (PEO) Supervisor** - reports to the PPU Director and supervises five (5) parking enforcement officers. This position is also responsible for conducting collections, coin counting and bagging, and maintenance of parking equipment and facilities, as well as parking signage. This position often shares responsibilities with the Director.
- **Parking Enforcement Officers** - report to the PEO Supervisor and are primarily responsible for the enforcement of on- and off-street parking ordinances and regulations in the City.

Figure 15 illustrates the existing and proposed organizational chart for Plainfield's Parking Utility Division incorporating the recommended positions.

Figure 15: Existing and Proposed Parking Utility Division Organization Chart



Source: City of Plainfield and THA Consulting, Inc. 2023

Given the critical role that the PPU has related to the provision and management of parking resources as the City continues to develop and revitalize, the PPU should perform the following personnel enhancements:

A full- or part-time Meter Technician should be hired to alleviate many of the responsibilities currently overseen by Parking Enforcement staff. It is an industry best practice to separate meter maintenance and collections functions from parking enforcement responsibilities. This position would primarily be responsible for maintaining, troubleshooting, and repairing parking meters and pay stations, programming, and performing revenue collections. The Meter Technician's duties typically include:

- Collecting, logging, and transporting parking revenue.
- Conducting preventative maintenance to parking equipment.
- Responding to service calls and monitoring software for parking equipment malfunctions.
- Troubleshooting parking equipment malfunctions, requesting, and replacing parts.
- Responding to customer complaints and concerns regarding parking technology and payment concerns.
- Assisting in the marketing of parking information and changes related to meters and payment technology **(See page 43)**.
- Providing updates to the Director regarding parking equipment inventory, equipment and facility maintenance, and other changes.

The PPU should also either designate an existing staff person or hire a full- or part-time employee for a Parking Analyst position, to assist in future parking planning and strategies associated with managing public parking assets in coordination with new developments. This position can provide analytical support to help plan future parking policies, regulations, time limits, and pricing strategies. The Parking Analyst's duties typically include:

- Develop performance standards and monitor program performance.

- Design and analyze PEO deployment strategies.
- Conduct in house demand studies and observe on-street activities.
- Refine parking policies, ordinances, pricing, and regulations for adjusting parking patterns.
- Review on-street parking revenue and expenses.
- Review on-street parking rates, and fines structure compared to peer municipalities.
- Review the number of issued parking tickets for on and off -street parking by zones.
- Review transient and permit occupancy data by facility.
- Make recommendations to establish / refine parking policies, pricing and regulations for new parking patterns.
- Assist the Director in monitoring performance of the parking system.

Standard Operating Procedures

The PPU should develop a Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) manual that outlines policies and procedures that guide staff and define roles and functions of enforcement and meter collection / maintenance personnel. SOPs include descriptions of the responsibilities of each staff position, guidelines for the appropriate use of equipment, expectations for staff conduct, appearance, and attendance, as well as the procedures for reporting infractions, defective equipment, and daily summaries. The PPU should engage staff in the development or review any existing SOP manual. New or updated SOP manuals should be distributed to the meter technician and enforcement staff, with refresher / orientation sessions held for personnel. The SOPs should be periodically reviewed and amended to ensure accuracy and applicability.

Staff Training

Presently, the PPU staff receive limited parking industry specific training through an official curriculum. The PPU should provide parking enforcement staff with parking industry specific customer service and conflict resolution training to provide them with the necessary tools to better perform their responsibilities. The training topics include the role of the parking enforcement officer, and how this role interacts with the overall parking program and City's parking services; identifying parking demand and utilization by area/zones; citation productivity; and strategies to reduce complaints. The New Jersey Parking Institute has



designed a Parking Enforcement Officer course to address the contemporary needs of PEO's in the field today. Geared towards new and experienced parking enforcement officers, the course addresses the inherent risks and challenges presented to PEO's by establishing the qualifications of the PEO, key qualities necessary to successfully fulfill the role of PEO, powers and duties, a review of parking violations, an explanation of summons issuance, adjudication and collection, and dealing with the public. Every session is updated with the latest information available in enforcement and advancements in technologies to stay current and relevant. This course is offered by Harry Delgado, hdelgado@njbpa.org.

Parking specific management and leadership training is available through the International Parking and Mobility Institute (IPMI) (<https://www.parking-mobility.org/>), the National Parking Association (NPA) (<https://weareparking.org/>), the local New Jersey Parking Institute (NJPI) (www.njparkinginst.com), the New York State Parking and Transportation Association (NYSPTA) (<https://www.nysparkingandtransportation.com/>), and the Pennsylvania Parking Association (<https://www.paparking.org/>). Through these various national and regional parking associations, the City's parking director and supervisor can receive industry specific training, information, and exposure to municipal parking

management, policy, and technology best practices. The leading professional credential in the municipal parking industry is the Certified Administrator of Public Parking (CAPP). (IPMI) (<https://www.parking-mobility.org/>).

It is increasingly important to provide frontline parking staff with conflict resolution and customer service training. These staff members often have to deal with a general public that is upset aggravated and there are parking industry specific training opportunities for the PPU. KEJ Associates LLC, located in Lawrenceville NJ offers frontline staff training for field staff and supervisors. Five courses are available including: Customer Service; Conflict Resolution; Basic Leadership/New Managers Training; Effective Change Implementation/How to Succeed in a Changing Workplace; and Respect in the Workplace. These sessions are offered by Kim Jackson, kejhwp@kejassociates.com.

IPMI offers a multitude of on-demand courses and on-site training programs for professional development that can count towards a CAPP application or Recertification including:

- Courses for Parking, Transportation and Mobility Professionals including Fundamentals of Parking & Mobility, Off-Street Parking Management and On-Street Parking Management.
- Management Courses.
- On-Site Trainings for Frontline Staff including Conflict Resolution, Customer Service, Industry Fundamentals: Best Practices for Parking & Mobility Programs and Tactical Communication 101/201.
- On-Site Trainings for Leadership Development including Change Management: The Human Factor, Courageous Leadership, Implementing Organizational Change and Strategic Process Development.

Event Parking Management

Presently, event parking in Plainfield is handled by the Police Department. Prior to large events, which are held in Lots 1 and 8, permit holders in these lots are notified that they can park in other public lots downtown for free during the day of the event. Smaller events are typically held on-street at Gavett Place. During our observations during a large downtown event on September 30, 2023, incidences of illegal on-street parking were observed on most streets in the downtown, while the utilization of other off-street lots increased without exceeding capacity. More than half of the spaces in Lots 5 and 10, the public lots farther from the event, were available, as well as many of the spaces in Lot 1.

Effective management of special event parking is increasingly important to municipalities and downtowns seeking to foster economic development, generate activity for local businesses, and enhance the vibrancy of the community. Special events, such as Plainfield's 'Hispanic Heritage Block Party', often serve as an introduction of the City to new future customers and residents, therefore, the parking experience must be positive to ensure that they come back. As well as providing adequate parking for attendees, event parking management should ensure that attendees are able to travel between the parking areas and event entrance safely and comfortably. Accordingly, Plainfield should establish an official event parking management plan. Event parking plans can be coordinated with the input of business owners and other City stakeholders.

Parking Enforcement and Curb Management

In vibrant and active cities today, curb space is increasingly valuable, being utilized by multiple entities. Be it the increasing popularity of drop-off and pick-up zones for Transportation Network Companies (TNCs) and ride-hailing services, pick-up and delivery services (Grub Hub/Door Dash), e-commerce deliveries, on-street parking spaces for retail and restaurant patrons, or lanes for alternative modes of transportation (i.e. bikes and e-scooters), there is growing competition for limited curb space.



These factors make it more important than ever to effectively enforce on-street parking. The curb space needs to potentially shift from primarily being focused on on-street parking to a more flexible sharing of space that includes pick-up/drop-off zones for passengers and goods. However, it is important that this increased activity be regulated to dissuade improper and prohibited parking activities. Fair and consistent enforcement of parking regulations is critical to the free flow of traffic, vehicular and pedestrian safety, and parking turnover to support local residents, retailers and merchants. Inconsistent enforcement of regulations is detrimental to the parking program as it catches people unaware and provides the impression that parking enforcement is unpredictable, arbitrary and capricious.

Presently, the Plainfield Parking Utility has five (5) Parking Enforcement officers (PEOs) that report to a supervisor. Four of the officers are scheduled full time, while one officer is scheduled for 20 hours per week. There are typically 4 officers present every weekday and 3 officers present on Saturdays. On a typical weekday, 2 PEO's arrive at 8:00 AM and the remainder arrive at 10:00 AM. Despite enforcement hours spanning until 6:00 PM, most officers leave around 4:30 PM. Parking Enforcement Officers are assigned to either the area north of the train tracks, where they operate on foot, or south of the train tracks, where they use two enforcement vehicles.

With an increased amount of residential and commercial development growth throughout the City, parking availability will be a growing concern, especially downtown and along major thoroughfares including North Avenue and South Avenue. It is important to ensure that there is a regular and consistent level of enforcement to promote adherence to the variety of parking regulations and time limits throughout the downtown and congested commercial and residential areas. We recommend that time-limit parking be increasingly enforced to promote turnover. During our field observations we observed very limited enforcement downtown and it was confirmed that enforcement outside of the downtown was beyond the Utility's current capabilities.

On-street parking is often the most convenient parking in a downtown and the appropriate turnover of these highly convenient spaces is critical to providing access to the downtown businesses. On-street parking is used by patrons of multiple retail and commercial establishments. The on-street parking downtown and off-street hourly parking is limited to 2-hour parking, from 8AM to 6PM Monday through Friday, except for Thursdays when it is extended from 8AM to 9PM, and 9AM to 4PM on Saturday. However, due to the inconsistent time limit enforcement, these spaces are regularly utilized by retail business owners and employees, thereby reducing the availability of the most convenient spaces intended for retail patrons. The high occupancy of these on-street spaces presents the perception that there is a lack of convenient parking on major commercial streets in the City. Accordingly, these spaces should be enforced regularly to ensure that parkers are abiding by the time limit, thereby turning over the spaces more frequently and creating more available parking for patrons visiting the downtown.

To improve the consistency of enforcement, the City should implement the following recommendations:

- Hire the additional PEO position presently budgeted.
- Produce and track summary enforcement reports related to ticket issuance by type, zone, and PEO. This information will identify appropriate benchmarks for PEO's and help determine if enforcement is consistent. The PEO supervisor should review the enforcement reports to ensure compliance with parking enforcement expectations on a daily basis. Specifically, the supervisor should review the enforcement data to identify any time "gaps" throughout the day which indicate the amount of time elapsed between parking citations.
- Ensure that PEO staffing hours and zones are consistent to ensure regular enforcement of all areas thereby reducing complaints that enforcement is arbitrary, irregular, and capricious. In general, PEO patrol routes should be established and scheduled consistently in all time limit areas to effectively dissuade overtime parking, double parking and other traffic/pedestrian safety violations.
- Warnings can be issued as a preliminary step to violators prior to increased enforcement to educate the parkers as to the need for consistent enforcement of time limit parking and inform parkers of alternate, longer duration parking options.
- Extend the enforcement of downtown/Study Area 2 from 6PM to 8PM Monday through Friday and until 6PM on Saturday. Our counts and parking observations identified an increase in parking occupancy in the early evening which is likely the result of evening restaurant employees and patrons. The extension of enforcement into the early evening will help ensure that the most convenient parking is available to customers downtown versus the employees. Employees should be directed and incentivized to utilize the more remote parking facilities including Lots 1, 8 and 10.

Parking Fines

Parking fines administered by PEOs include overtime parking fines, as well as general fines for local parking ordinance violations, such as parking in loading zones and bus stops. THA conducted a survey of parking fines for similar municipalities, and Plainfield's parking fines are below most other municipalities surveyed. It is recommended that the City increase its *general* parking fines to ensure that they deter illegal parking. It may also be beneficial for the City to increase their *overtime* parking fine. **Table 11** shows the rates of parking fines of municipalities in New Jersey.

Table 11: Peer Municipalities' Parking Violation Fines

Municipality	Overtime Fine	General Prohibited
Millburn	\$30	\$45
Montclair	\$30	\$54
Perth Amboy	\$30	\$60
Somerville	\$40	\$50
Westfield	\$30	\$35
New Brunswick	\$35	\$30-40
Elizabeth	\$40	\$50
Average	\$34	\$48
Plainfield	\$33	\$38

Source: THA Consulting, Inc. 2023

Additional On-Street Parking in Prohibited Areas

As Plainfield's commercial areas continue to develop with mixed-use development, the competition for public parking will increase, especially on streets within the downtown. Two streets downtown, North Avenue and Gavett Place, are planned to be remodeled into a pedestrian plaza eliminating 56 on-street spaces and 14 spaces used by Plainfield Station. While these spaces are planned to be relocated to the currently permit-only Lot 5, the growth in visitors that the plaza will bring may still increase demand. During our observations, we noted several on-street locations that were prohibited for parking that appeared to be appropriate for on-street fee parking. These potential locations were in active commercial areas and did not appear to conflict with the safety of pedestrians or the flow of traffic.

On-street fee parking provides convenient parking for downtown patrons. It also helps calm traffic within the downtown environment and improve the pedestrian experience. On-street parking serves as a buffer for sidewalks, pedestrian activity, and sidewalk cafes. When fee parking is consistently enforced, it is highly effective at regulating parking spaces for intended durations and users. In addition, revenue generated by fee parking supports operations and improvements to the parking system and can be reinvested in the downtown district.

From our assessment, we noted potential opportunities for approximately **67** new on-street spaces. **Table 12** below outlines the locations and the number of new spaces recommended.

Table 12: Potential Additional On-Street Parking

Location	Side	Type	# of New Spaces
Central Avenue between 2nd Street and Front Street.	East	Parallel	10
Madison Avenue between North Plainfield and Front Street.	West	Parallel	8
Madison Avenue between Front Street and 2nd Street.	East	Parallel	10
Madison Avenue between 2nd Street and train tracks	Both	Parallel	14
4th Street between Watchung Avenue and Park Avenue	South	Parallel	10
5th Street between Watchung Avenue and Park Avenue	South	Parallel	15
Total			67

Source: THA Consulting, Inc. 2023

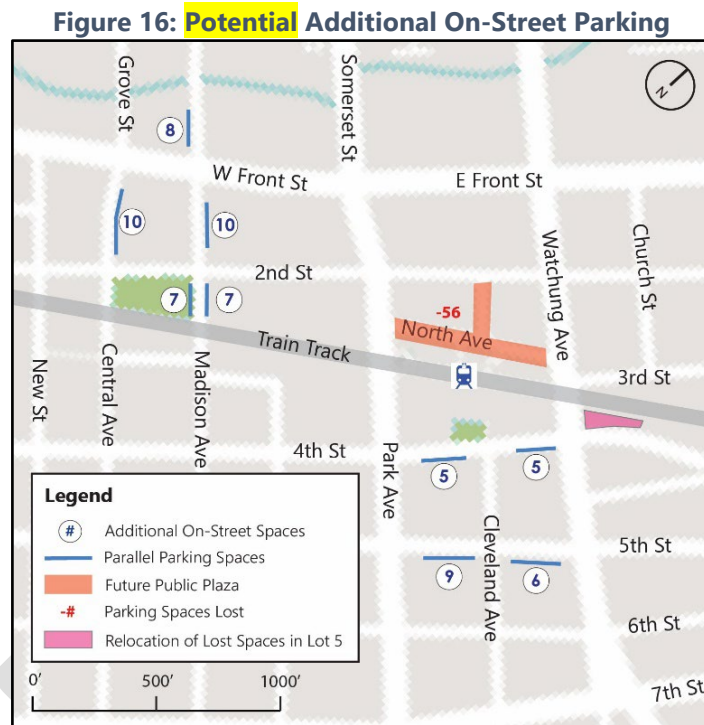


Central Avenue at the intersection with Front Street



4th Street at the intersection with Watchung Avenue

The City should have its engineer perform a comprehensive audit of the proposed on-street parking locations to confirm that the on-street parking will not negatively impact pedestrian safety and the flow of traffic. These additional spaces will increase the supply of convenient on-street parking and generate additional revenue. **Figure 16** below illustrates the recommended locations of new parking spaces. While most of the proposed spaces could be incorporated as fee parking, the 14 spaces along Madison Street south of 2nd Street are adjacent to a public park and should be designated as free visitor parking.



Source: THA Consulting, Inc. 2023

Proposed Regulated Parking

The commercial strip along North Avenue and South Avenue in Study Area 3 currently provides many on-street parking spaces, some of which have 1-hour time limits. Residents compete with several new mixed-used developments, auto-body shops, and commuters for on-street spaces along this corridor, and while paid spaces may be feasible on streets closest to Netherwood Station, it may not be practical to implement fee parking, as most businesses here have off-street parking for customers. To free up on-street spaces, heavily utilized areas should have time-limits lowered to 1-hour parking, and the PPU should establish consistent enforcement routes throughout these areas. Additionally, the section of 3rd Street between Roosevelt Avenue and Watchung Avenue in the downtown is currently unmetered and does not experience high parking demand, but this is likely to change as the pedestrian plaza is implemented. **Table 13** below outlines streets that should be prioritized for reduced time-limits and increased enforcement.

Table 13: Existing Unregulated Parking Areas in Need of Enforcement

Location	Side	Type
North Avenue between Johnston Avenue and Watson Avenue	Both	Parallel
South Avenue between Richmond Street and Berckman Street	Both	Parallel
South Avenue between 6th Street and Leland Avenue	Both	Parallel
3rd Street between Roosevelt Avenue and Watchung Avenue	Both	Parallel

Source: THA Consulting, Inc. 2023

In addition, to ensure that commuters and other non-residents visiting North Avenue and South Avenue do not park on residential streets nearby, the City should designate surrounding streets as Resident Permit Parking (RPP) zones (**see page 47**) and allow residents with permits to park at metered or time-limit spaces on North Avenue and South Avenue without being required to observe fees or time limits.

Pocket Lot

The creation of small surface lots from vacant properties in neighborhood areas can be effective in mitigating parking demand. During our observations, we noted a small undeveloped property along 2nd Street in Study Area 4 that could accommodate the high demand from nearby multi-family houses as well as vehicles from the neighboring auto repair shop. This lot could accommodate approximately 22 spaces that could be available for residents and/or leased to nearby businesses, as well as up to 11 additional stacked parking spaces to be leased to the adjacent repair shop. **Figure 17** below illustrates the lot with two options for stacked parking.



660 South 2nd Street

Figure 17: Potential Pocket Lot in Study Area 4



Source: THA Consulting, Inc. 2023

Loading Zone Enforcement / Permit Program

As the downtown continues to develop with new businesses and demand for on-street parking increases, the enforcement of loading zones will grow more challenging, causing conflicts with local merchants since the loading zones are often occupied by the private vehicles of business owners loading and unloading for their retail operations. Typically, the use of loading zones is restricted to commercial vehicles with the corresponding commercial license plates during normal business hours. This enforcement challenge is prevalent in downtown areas with numerous small businesses where the merchants use their private vehicles for deliveries and loading of merchandise.

To address this issue and reduce the conflict and abuse of loading zones by local business owners, the City can implement a Loading Zone Permit Program to better control and regulate loading zones in the downtown. The Loading Zone Permit Program would allow business owners to obtain a permit from the City that would allow their private vehicle to occupy a loading zone for deliveries and loading for a limited amount of time, say 15 minutes. Commercial vehicles would not need the loading Zone Permits to use loading zones. The Loading Zone Permit could be purchased or renewed semiannually or annually, and should the City go to a mobile license plate recognition enforcement system as outlined later in the report (**see page 38**), enforcement can be effective and efficient. Currently, there are several loading zones in Study Area 2, but many are poorly marked, and curb space not marked for parking or loading is often taken up by loading vehicles.



Some recommended regulations of the Loading Zone Permit Program include the following:

- The acquisition of a loading zone permit is contingent on the applicant satisfying any outstanding City parking tickets against a license plate registered in his/her name.
- Commercial vehicles may utilize the loading zone for up to 30 minutes.
- Loading zone permit holders (private vehicles) utilizing a loading zone permit are limited up to 15 minutes.
- During such utilization, a vehicle shall, at all times, display a loading / unloading or pick up / delivery placard or permit, as required by the City, on the dashboard or driver's sun visor (facing outward).
- The vehicle shall, at all times, have its warning lights flashing.
- In addition to other penalties provided by law, any vehicle illegally parked in a loading zone for more than one hour may be towed at the expense of the owner.
- In addition to other penalties provided by law, the permit of any permit holder receiving three or more tickets for violating the permitted use of the permit, within one calendar year, is subject to revocation of the permit by the City.

Additionally, as the City plans to turn Gavett Place and North Avenue adjacent to Plainfield Station into a pedestrian plaza, there will be a heightened need for pick-up and drop-off locations. We recommend allowing taxis and personal vehicles to access the edges of the pedestrian area during peak commuter hours on weekdays.

Merchant Parking

In the parking survey, several downtown employees indicated that they usually park in an off-street lot. Currently, off-street Lots 1, 4, 5, 6, 8, and 10 accommodate employee permit parking, delineated by signage and yellow striping. Employee parking permits increase the availability of on-street spaces by reducing the number of employees parked in front of businesses. Given the low utilization in Lots 1, 8 and 10, the City should further incentivize merchant / employee parking with free or reduced cost permits in these lots. Higher utilization of these lots by employees will free up on-street parking.

Parking Pricing Strategy

Critical to the City's parking management is the proper pricing of on and off-street parking. On and off-street parking are valuable municipal assets that must be effectively priced and regulated particularly within downtown areas. On-street parking—typically the most convenient parking—should be available to support retailers, restaurants, and businesses, while off-street parking is a crucial resource to provide parking for downtown business employees, long-term visitors, and residents.

On-street parking provides quick and convenient access to businesses located in downtown Plainfield and is often preferred by users or patrons in comparison to off-street parking lots. Accordingly, a goal of on-street parking management is to promote a high turnover of the on-street parking spaces to accommodate multiple users throughout the day. To accomplish increased turnover, in addition to consistent time limit enforcement, a basic parking management premise prescribes that on-street parking should be priced at a higher rate per hour than off-street parking to dissuade longer term parkers from monopolizing the on-street spaces. As such, charging appropriate and coordinated rates for both on and off-street spaces, coupled with consistent parking enforcement, are essential parking management practices to promote turnover of the most convenient on-street parking, and to encourage longer-term parkers to off-street lots or garages, thereby increasing overall downtown accessibility and mobility.

Charging appropriate parking rates has the following benefits:

- Regulates on-street parking availability and increases accessibility for the intended users of on-street parking spaces: patrons of businesses.
- Allows downtown visitors and patrons to find convenient parking more quickly.
- Reduces parking violations, which results in fewer negative experiences for visitors, residents and employees.
- Encourages downtown employees to use longer term off-street facilities and designated employee parking areas and discourages meter feeding.
- Maintains a consistent revenue stream for the Plainfield Parking Utility (PPU) so that it can remain self-sustaining without requiring City subsidies.
- Generates revenue to manage, administer, and maintain the parking system including revenue collection, equipment purchases and repairs, enforcement, and the associated parking system administration and management.
- Generates revenue to support the regular and capital maintenance of existing parking facilities to ensure safety, and user comfort.
- Generates revenue to support the development of new parking facilities, parking improvements, community improvements to support economic activity and development in Plainfield.



Historically, much of Plainfield's on-street parking in Downtown and along South Avenue has been and is highly utilized. While some public parking lots Downtown reach capacity at peak hours, other lots remain mostly underutilized. The high level of occupancy of on-street parking often causes cars to "cruise" Plainfield's commercial centers to look for an available space and sometimes park illegally, creating increased traffic congestion and other negative mobility side-effects including:

- Frustration trying to find a parking space.
- Parking in residential areas, negatively impacting neighborhoods.
- Increased illegal parking in prohibited zones causing difficulty for bikers and pedestrians to navigate safely.
- Increased illegal parking in loading zones causing delivery vehicles to double park.
- Increased greenhouse gas emissions due to space cruising.

Municipal Parking Rate Comparison

Short Term Parking

Table 14 illustrates the short-term hourly parking rates for similar municipalities in northern New Jersey. Rates for off-street parking lots and garages range from \$1.00 per hour to \$3.00 per hour. On-street rates range from \$0.75 per hour to \$2.00 per hour. Plainfield's on-street and off-street short-term rates are below the average rates of other municipalities in the region.

Table 14: Peer Municipalities' Short-Term Hourly Parking Rates

Municipality	Hourly		
	Lot	Garage	On-Street
Elizabeth	\$2.00	\$2.00	\$1.50
Montclair	\$1.00	\$2.00	\$1.00
New Brunswick	\$3.00	\$3.00	\$2.00
Rahway	\$1.00	\$1.00	\$1.00
Somerville	\$0.50	N/A	\$1.00
Westfield	\$0.50	N/A	\$0.75
Average Parking Rate	\$1.33	\$2.00	\$1.21
Plainfield	\$1.00	N/A	\$1.00

Source: THA Consulting, Inc, 2023

Off-Street Employee Permit Parking

Table 15 illustrates the daily and monthly employee parking rates for similar municipalities in northern New Jersey. Daily parking average rates in lots and garages range from \$5 to \$23. Average rates for monthly parking passes range from \$50 to \$150 per month for lot spaces, and from \$70 to \$195 for garage spaces. The rates for employees in Plainfield are close to the average rates of similar municipalities in the region.

Table 15: Peer Municipalities' Off-Street Employee Permit Parking Rates

Municipality	Daily		Monthly	
	Lot	Garage	Lot	Garage
Elizabeth	\$ 10.00	\$ 10.00	\$ 150.00	\$ 150.00
Montclair	\$ 5.00	\$ 7.00	\$ 50.00	\$ 70.00
New Brunswick	\$ 18.00	\$ 23.00	N/A	\$ 195.00
Rahway	\$ 12.00	\$ 12.00	\$ 100.00	\$ 120.00
Somerville	\$ 5.00	N/A	\$ 50.00	N/A
Westfield	\$ 5.00	N/A	\$ 50.00	N/A
Average Parking Rate	\$ 9.17	\$ 13.00	\$ 80.00	\$ 133.75
Plainfield	\$ 10.00	N/A	\$75-90	N/A

Source: THA Consulting, Inc, 2023

On-Street Parking Pricing Strategies

As referenced, parking rates should aim to differentiate shorter and longer stays so that short-term parkers (2 hours or less) can more easily access on-street spaces near their destinations, while longer-term parkers (more than 2 hours) are encouraged to use off-street lots. Outlined below are pricing strategies for consideration:

Demand Based Pricing

With demand-based pricing, rates are adjusted based on recent occupancy data and are periodically re-evaluated to respond to changes in occupancy over time. Rates are based on “high occupancy zones”, which can be a single zone, or tiers of zones with different parking occupancy rates. Typically, the busiest zones (80% of greater occupancy) are adjusted to a higher price, while less utilized zones are lower priced to encourage parkers to switch from more congested areas. If demand-based pricing is pursued, the occupancy data for Study Areas 2 and 3 will guide the PPU with regards to the number of zones to create, and the rate adjustments for each zone. Demand based pricing works best in communities that have a significant public parking concentration in the core downtown areas or around a popular attraction or generator, with less utilized parking outside of the core area.

Short-term parking rates should be adjusted based on the parking demand. To implement demand based pricing, the PPU would perform periodic occupancy counts to regularly assess on-street parking demand to inform future parking adjustments. For areas that are over 80% occupied during enforcement hours, a higher parking rate is recommended than the rest of the areas (**see Appendix A**). This method would encourage parkers that are more price sensitive to park in the areas with less parking demand and potentially free up parking in the busier areas of the downtown.

The pros and cons of Demand Based Pricing are outlined below:

Pros:

- Parking across the entire system is potentially more evenly distributed, thereby reducing parking congestion in the downtown core, and increasing the amount of available parking.
- Easy for parkers to understand, particularly where technology availability is limited.
- Improves inventory management and enhances revenue generation.

Cons:

- Occupancy can vary within the same zone, so the busiest streets may remain busy even if other streets in the high occupancy zones have more availability.

Demand-Based Pricing Case Studies:

- **Seattle (SeaPark program), CA** - In 2010 & 2011, Seattle collected occupancy data for its on-street metered parking throughout the city (approximately 12,000 spaces) and decided to implement neighborhood-based demand pricing with a target occupancy of 70-85%. In neighborhoods where occupancy was greater than 78%, rates were increased by \$0.50 per hour, and where occupancy was below 58%, rates were decreased by \$0.50 per hour. The Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) continues to collect occupancy data annually every spring using LPR technology, then adjusts parking rates on an annual basis. This process allows the SDOT to change parking behavior on a large-scale with a limited capital budget, since it doesn't rely on sensors to collect occupancy data.
- **Boston's Back Bay, MA** - A PILOT program in Boston included a zone-based static model, where all parking rates in the Back Bay neighborhood increased from \$1.25 per hour to \$3.75 per hour. By the end of the PILOT, average stays in a parking space decreased from 1 hour 22 minutes to 1 hour 8 minutes. Additionally, illegal parking and congestion were reduced, and the overall number of cars parked in metered spots went down by 11%. Comparatively, in Boston's Seaport District, the other part of the PILOT implemented dynamic pricing where rates changed block-by-block with less success. In the Back Bay district, parking revenue increased by \$5.7 million, while in the Seaport district, revenue only increased by \$300,000. The City determined that driving behavior did not change as much in the Seaport district because it was more difficult to effectively communicate pricing information to drivers using a block-by-block dynamic pricing model.

- The rate differential between high demand and lesser demand zones may have a limited impact on modifying parking behavior.
- Different rates throughout the City can confuse first-time downtown visitors and communicating demand-based pricing policies to the public can be a challenge.

Progressive Pricing

Progressive parking pricing is a pricing strategy to increase on-street parking turnover in high-demand areas. With Progressive Pricing hourly rates increase after the initial desired time limit, and increase substantially more per hour to remain parked on the street. Drivers who want to stay in an area longer, whether they're employees, residents or visitors, are encouraged through this strategy to utilize parking in off-street lots with lower fees. With progressive pricing, hourly rates start at a moderate price to accommodate the intended short-term users and increase per hour past a certain time limit to disincentivize long-term parking. Progressive parking pricing is used in areas where parking demand is high, and space is limited.

Pros:

- Eliminates the "arbitrary" time limits often found on-street while still encouraging the space to frequently turnover.
- Parking revenues can increase without changing rates for short-term parkers.
- Eliminates enforcement and violations for time limits.
- Encourages parkers to utilize off-street parking lots for longer term parking.

Cons:

- If there is not a significant difference between the desired length of stay (2 hour) rate and the higher progressive rate, then parkers who are less price sensitive may stay longer in the same space, reducing an area's parking availability.

Parking Rate Considerations

Recent parking occupancy data collected in Plainfield (September-November 2023) presented herein reflects that on-street utilization is high on several metered streets, while most off-street facilities have significant parking availability. In summary, both on and off-street parking fees should be strategically adjusted in the future based on the following considerations:

- The high demand for on-street, short-term parking in Study Area 2 downtown.
- The anticipated increase in demand for on-street parking from several new developments along busy streets.
- The need to promote higher turnover of the convenient on-street parking to accommodate multiple downtown patrons and visitors during a typical day.
- The need to encourage downtown employees to use off-street facilities and discourage meter feeding.

Progressive Pricing Case Studies:

- **Portsmouth, NH (Stay & Pay program)**- eliminated time limits for on-street parking. It kept the same rates as before for the first three hours, and hourly rates increased for longer stays. After the first three hours, rates increase from \$2.00/hour to \$5.00/hour in high-occupancy zones, and from \$1.50/hour to \$3.00/hour in other areas. During the 9-month long PILOT, 91% of users vacated the space within 3 hours, net system revenue increased 14%, and stays within the City's parking garages increased.
- **New Brunswick, NJ** - uses progressive pricing to encourage parkers to use off-street parking decks for medium- to long-term visits. The rate structure below compares the cost it would be to park for a given time at an on-street space versus an off-street space.

New Brunswick On-Street versus Off-Street Pricing

Parking Duration	On-Street	Paterson Deck, Morris Deck, New St Deck, Lower Church Deck
0 - 1 Hours	\$2.00	\$3.00
1 - 2 Hours	\$4.00	\$6.00
2 - 3 Hours	\$7.00	\$8.00
3 - 4 Hours	\$11.00	\$10.00
4 - 5 Hours	\$16.00	\$11.00
5 - 6 Hours	\$22.00	\$12.00
6 - 7 Hours	\$29.00	\$13.00
7 - 8 Hours	\$37.00	\$14.00
8 - 9 Hours	N/A	\$16.00
9 - 10 Hours	N/A	\$16.00
10 - 11 Hours	N/A	\$17.00
11 - 12 Hours	N/A	\$18.00
12 - 13 Hours	N/A	\$19.00
13 - 24 Hours	N/A	\$20.00 (\$21.00 at Morris)
Lost Ticket	N/A	\$25.00 Per Day

- The comparative parking rates of other similar municipalities in the region.
- The increasing costs associated with managing, administering, and maintaining the Plainfield parking system.
- The need to generate adequate revenue to support parking management improvements, parking facility capital maintenance, and the development of new parking facilities or other mobility options.

Parking Equipment and Technology

Plainfield currently uses 46 Flowbird pay stations for most fee spaces on Front Street, Park Avenue, Watchung Avenue, Madison Avenue, North Avenue, Roosevelt Avenue and Church Street, while some of the less utilized streets downtown use traditional meters. The single- and double-headed MacKay MKH Series meters on other downtown streets only accept coins. At Flowbird spaces, users can pay by license plate for a set duration of time using coins, credit/debit, or pay-by-app. Off-street fee spaces, as well as spaces along 4th Street east of Watchung Avenue, use T2 LUKE II parking pay stations, which allow payment by numbered space using coins, cash or credit/debit.

The City uses the Flowbird mobile parking app to pay for on-street fee parking. ParkMobile is used for daily parking in Plainfield's NJ Transit Stations. In addition to added parking payment convenience, Mobile payment apps are increasingly used as a tool to provide municipalities with greater information that can be applied to help improve curb management. Information that can be gathered includes how much one pays to park, methods of payment, length of stay, high-demand and low-demand areas, etc. Access to this data can provide municipalities with a better understanding of its parking utilization in order to better manage its parking resources. This information is particularly useful when applied to make data-driven decisions.

The convenience of paying for parking by smart phone and the ability to remotely activate and reactivate the parking session is a significant benefit to downtown users, including retail or restaurant patrons, commuters and employees. Merchants can establish accounts to pay or discount customer parking via cell phone should they desire to do so. Pay-by-cell systems can also be a financially appealing option as they require minimal investment on the Municipality's part. Typically, the Municipality incurs little cost to implement the pay-by-cell system because the service provider sets up the operating program, installs signage, markets the service, and negotiates with the municipality an appropriate service fee to be added to individual parking transactions (usually \$0.25 - \$0.50 per transaction). Because pay-by-cell systems are dependent on a debit/credit card payment, there are credit card transaction fees that are either borne by the municipality or transferred to the user.

ParkMobile

Given the high level of utilization and recognition of the Park Mobile App throughout New Jersey, the City may add the ParkMobile App to pay for parking in the City. ParkMobile is a national market leader, especially in New Jersey, where 55 municipalities use its services. On October 3, 2023, THA conducted a meeting with ParkMobile and the PPU, where it was concluded that ParkMobile services could be operational in Plainfield approximately 45 – 60 days after execution of a signed contract. The City can procure ParkMobile services through the NCPA or Omnia purchasing co-op. The addition of the ParkMobile App with appropriate signage and marketing would likely increase utilization of mobile payments. The use of both Flowbird and ParkMobile will require effective information and marketing to clearly communicate these changes to residents, commuters and visitors.



ParkMobile sign at Netherwood Station

Resident Discount Parking Program

A program to offer discounted parking to Plainfield residents could be implemented through the PPU's. The service would allow users to download a mobile app onto their phones, upload their credit card or Apply Pay information, and indicate the particular zone that they wish to park, enter their car's license plate number, and pay for parking for the desired duration. The Resident Discount Program would need residents to register with the PPU by providing the required residency information and their vehicle's license plate number. The license plate data is then integrated with the mobile app service when the resident downloads the mobile app. When the resident parks at an on-street space, either citywide or in specific areas offering the Resident Discount Program, the resident uses the app, enters their license plate, and the service automatically recognizes them as a resident and offers the discounted rate. This also allows the PPU to adjust parking rates for visitors and while providing a lower fee to its residents. The resident discount program can also be utilized at the PPU's pay-by-plate pay stations.

Case Studies:

- *Miami Beach, FL* - A residential discount program has been implemented in cities to increase the adoption rate throughout the city. After registering their license plate, Miami Beach residents obtain a discounted parking rate when they use the ParkMobile app. ParkMobile also agreed to waive transaction fees for registered Miami Beach residents when used for payment of on-street, off-street or garage parking.
- *Hoboken, New Jersey* - When residents register their license plate and have a valid Resident On-Street Parking Permit, if they use the ParkMobile app to pay for the on-street parking, after entering their license plate number, the ParkMobile system will automatically recognize the license plate and will apply a 50% discount to the parking transaction.

Mobile License Plate Recognition Enforcement

To enhance its parking enforcement program, the PPU should evaluate the benefits and the return on investment of mobile License Plate Recognition (LPR) enforcement and a virtual parking permit system. LPR systems use specialized cameras to capture and record license plates in conjunction with analytics that automate license plate reading, identification, and matching plates listed in a live database. LPR is effective in monitoring and enforcing time limit parking and permit parking that as it detects and notifies the PEO of vehicles illegally parked in a permit area or in a space beyond the permitted time. Parking enforcement productivity increases significantly with mobile LPR systems, allowing enforcement to be consistent and cover the necessary areas of the City, and it enhances the enforcement of time limitations since manual "chalking" is no longer required. LPR also yields increased parking compliance, which results in more paid fines, increased revenues, and ideally more available parking. This efficiency provides the PEO more time to perform other enforcement or downtown ambassador activities. Advantages of mobile LPR enforcement systems are:

- Capable of tracking vehicles with outstanding tickets, fines, warrants.
- Allows enforcement officers to monitor time limits and prohibits moving into an adjacent space.
- Allows enforcement staff to cover a larger area.

In addition, with continued development in Plainfield, the City can use mobile LPR to more efficiently collect occupancy data that helps inform future parking policy, enforcement, and management decisions. The periodic collection and analysis of occupancy data with LPR technology can help parking management entities proactively address new utilization trends and adjust their operations accordingly.



The costs of LPR have dropped to a reasonable rate and given the manual nature of the municipality's existing enforcement, an LPR system can be a cost-effective way to undertake enforcement. For a system equipped with one LPR vehicle, the permit management software, warranties and other necessary equipment, systems are approximately \$40,000 per LPR vehicle and maintenance costs are approximately \$5,000 per year. The PPU should meet with LPR providers and solicit a firm budget estimate to implement the technology and compare the capital and recurring costs of the system versus the existing manpower, administrative, and costs associated with the current enforcement.

Digital / Virtual Permitting

Digital permitting uses computer software to automate and streamline the parking permit process. A digital system administers and tracks permits, and it has a wide array of task-specific tools to perform multiple functions. Parkers can apply for digital parking permits online. Approvals can take place online in a matter of minutes, as the application's information can be instantly verified and approved using the software's database, and online parking permit submissions and payment features are standard options. PEOs use LPR technology to enforce the digital permits at a faster rate because all parking permits with the system are license plate based. This also benefits the parker because the permit cannot get lost or stolen. A digital permitting system improves customer service and staff efficiency, making parking operations more cost-effective. Benefits of the digital / virtual permit software systems include:

- Increased Efficiency – Permits are easier to administer and manage, resulting in less labor costs and time.
- Management – Can assign and track vehicles to better manage wait lists, payments, Residential Permit Programs, etc.
- User Friendly Convenience – System allows residents to register and pay for permits online.
- Online Reports – Enables parking manager to have reliable information on resident vehicles and parking permits.
- Email Alerts – Generates communications with permit holders of pertinent information such as lot closures, permit renewals, etc.

MPS SafetySticks

The City can also enhance their enforcement capabilities in highly utilized loading zones and challenging prohibited zones with MPS (Municipal Parking Services) SafetySticks, a stationary solar-powered bollard that uses LPR technology to detect illegal and overtime parking. This equipment can be installed on sidewalks along loading zones, bus stops, and other prohibited areas to detect illegal parking. The LPR camera scan records the violating vehicle's license plate and the data is uploaded to the enforcement software and enforcement staff reviews and approves the violation. The approval process prevents potential errors that could otherwise result in false violations. Citations from SafetySticks can be sent by mail to vehicle owners after approval, effectively deterring illegal parking in critical or prioritized areas.



Parking Occupancy Technology

As Plainfield's public lots are developed and public parking is included in the new projects, smart parking occupancy solutions and technology provides the ability to optimize existing parking facility utilization. These systems and the real-time communication of accurate parking availability information are a valuable methodology to combat the negative parking experiences that are often the result of a perceived lack of parking. The perception that parking supply is inadequate is often based on the time associated with locating an available space. As such, the ability to deliver



real-time parking availability information for multiple downtown parking facilities so parkers can locate a space more quickly will improve the overall parking experience for Downtown Plainfield. As Plainfield develops its public off-street lots, it will be important to communicate parking availability at future mixed-use parking facilities by implementing this technology.

Facility Maintenance

When visiting the downtown, parking facilities will often be the first and last impression that visitors will have. Accordingly, it is critical that the parking facilities be attractive, well maintained, and secure to provide a high level of user comfort and acceptance, as well as present a positive impression of the downtown. It is also important to maintain these facilities to prevent personal injuries, reduce the City's associated liability, and to ensure that parking assets are maintained to maximize their useful life.

Lighting and Safety

Based on our evening site visit and observations, it was noted that the paths of travel between various locations and the public parking lots were dimly lit. Some residents and visitors stated in the parking survey (**see Appendix B**) that they do not feel safe utilizing the public parking facilities. Lots 8 and 10, which were consistently underutilized during the parking occupancy counts, lacked consistent lighting, leaving many available spaces in the dark. Other lots with higher utilization had adequate lighting over most of the available spaces, but there were still dark areas present. The lighting should be regularly checked to ensure that it is operational and provides adequate lighting levels so that parkers have a high sense of comfort when parking in the evenings.



Lot 10



Lot 8

The City's Engineering Department should survey the lighting levels in the study area and develop a plan to establish a minimum lighting level for the parking lots in the downtown and along the paths of travel from the public parking lots to downtown destinations.

Parking Wayfinding and Lot Signage

In the parking survey and during the stakeholder meeting, residents expressed the lack of signage directing vehicles to parking options (**see Appendix B**). Wayfinding is a comprehensive signage system that clearly communicates the location of parking and various destinations. A good wayfinding system will help reduce vehicle traffic and extraneous vehicular circulation. An ineffective parking wayfinding signage system may contribute to a perception that there is lack of convenient public parking when in fact there are multiple lots located to serve downtown businesses.

To be effective, signage and wayfinding must be clear, concise and simple, and consist of the following:

- **Wayfinding signs** located on streets leading to the downtowns, these signs show where parking can be found.
- **Site signs** located at the parking lots, these signs describe the type of parking available (permit, daily, etc.).
- **Parking rate signs** located in proximity to the parking space, these signs provide hourly, daily, and monthly rates.



Site sign in Somerville, NJ



Wayfinding signs in Somerville, NJ

An important aspect of signage is the use of graphic design. Effective signage programs combine aesthetics with information. Choice of color, typeface, character size, weight and spacing, and the use of uppercase and lowercase text all influence readability. A well designed and implemented wayfinding and signage system will not only make finding and using Plainfield's parking more convenient, but it can also help enhance the image of the downtown and create a "branding" opportunity for the City and its parking system. Some best practices for the design and placement of signage are as follows:

- Signs directing vehicles and pedestrians would ideally only display the universal "P" for parking with a directional arrow, and a background that aesthetically compliments Plainfield's downtown.
- Wayfinding signage for both pedestrians and vehicles must be continuous (i.e. repeated at each point of choice) until the destination is reached.
- Signs should be placed in consistent and predictable locations.
- A sign should be placed at points where a driver or pedestrian must decide.

Plainfield currently has a limited, incohesive wayfinding system, with one (1) wayfinding sign and site signs of varying sizes and designs that can be difficult for passing vehicles to read. Lots 1 and 8 display signage within them delineating permit spaces and time limits but there is a lack of signage at their entrances conveying the availability of public parking. To effectively communicate this information, site signs should be present at the entrances of each lot, conveying the lot number and type of parking permitted in the largest font, followed by information conveying time limits, parking rates and contact information.



Existing wayfinding and lot signage in Plainfield

Parking Connectivity and Pedestrian Place-Making

Most of the public off-street parking available downtown is located on side streets and behind retail and restaurant destinations. Many of the spaces between buildings on Front Street provide direct pedestrian access to off-street lots, but these connections are informal and may appear unsafe due to sidewalk/pavement conditions, lack of lighting and bare walls. We specifically noted the vacant greenspace between Lot 4 and East Front Street, the alley connecting Lot 8 to Front Street, and the closed driveway connecting Lot 1 to Front Street.



Closed driveway connected to Lot 1



Alley connected to Lot 8

Creatively enhancing these linkages can be as simple as adding a vibrant, attractive mural for a comfortable connection or colorful LED lights to transform a seemingly unsafe parking lot / linkage, creating a greater sense of place and connectivity, and enhancing safety for pedestrians. Enhancing the blank walls in many of the public lots and linkages in the City where possible will enhance the connectivity between the parking lots. Below are examples of creative place-making initiatives to connect alleyways to public parking lots.



Creative Place-Making Initiatives Linking Alleyways to Public Parking Lots

Several street sections south of Plainfield Station also lack consistent lighting, sidewalk maintenance, and pedestrian amenities like benches. These streets are often sparsely occupied during peak hours despite being located within a few blocks of downtown businesses. By making these improvements, visitors would be more comfortable parking on these streets and contribute to parking availability.

Parking Program Communications and Marketing

A common problem experienced by municipal parking systems is that there is little effort expended to communicate and promote the mission, assets, and functions of the parking system. The City should undertake an initiative and program to inform its residents, downtown merchants, employees, shoppers, commuters, and the general public on how the entire parking system operates. The joint communications program should coordinate all parking information under a single “brand” and address the need for consistent enforcement and the value of limited parking assets. The objective in promoting a parking system is to transform what can often be perceived as a negative image into a positive one.

Although the City’s parking website offers some information pertaining to parking permits and contact information, the City should add information pertaining to rates, violation fines, off-street parking facilities, parking time limitations, frequently asked questions (FAQ’s) related to parking, as well as a portal for permit applications. The City can look to the parking website for Norwalk, CT (www.norwalkpark.org), as their website mentions an app specifically pertaining to parking problems, concerns, and comments, and to the Parking Authority’s website for Hartford, CT (hartfordparking.com/), as their website contains real-time traffic information and live traffic conditions for parkers. In addition, utilizing social media outlets such as Facebook and Twitter are also a cost-free strategy to connect with the public and convey information and updates related to Plainfield’s parking. The Miami Parking Authority uses a multitude of social media outlets to communicate to the parking public regarding events and promotions, and to relay timely information regarding the parking program or situations that may impact local neighborhoods.

The City should also produce a bi-lingual parking brochure and e-brochure that provides valuable parking information, such as parking locations, number of parking spaces, parking rates, and time limitations, etc. for residents, downtown customers, commuters and visitors. The brochure should include an FAQ section with instructions, definitions of parking policies, permit information, paying and contesting parking tickets, etc. The PPU can also coordinate with the Economic Development Department to create promotional initiatives to market downtown retail and restaurant establishments and communicate the location of available parking for customers. Lastly, the City should also update its current webpage for the Parking Utility to include a dedicated page for parking comprised of the latest parking news, plans, policy or ordinance changes, and improvements with how they will affect the community. See the following municipalities’ parking websites:

- Norwalk Parking Authority’s website (www.norwalkpark.org/)
- Bloomfield Parking Utility’s website (bloomfieldparking.org/)
- New Brunswick Parking Authority’s website (www.njnbpa.org)
- Keene, New Hampshire’s parking services page (<https://keenenh.gov/parking-services>)

Parking Ordinance Recommendations

Payment in Lieu of Parking (PILOP)

The high cost of providing surface or structured parking facilities in urban environments, i.e. land acquisition, soft cost, development fees, and construction hard costs often effect project feasibility and result in developers requesting waivers from municipal parking requirements. A municipality which adopts an ordinance that implements a program for Payment In Lieu Of Parking (PILOP) offers a developer the option to pay a fee for each waived parking space, in lieu of providing the number of parking spaces required by local land use ordinance. The municipality utilizes the PILOP fees to maintain or construct public parking facilities available to the general parking public. For years, municipalities have used PILOP initiatives as a way of allowing new development to proceed without providing all or some of the required parking on the development site. PILOP programs can be a valuable tool for promoting new development, especially with the presence of mass transit where residents and employees have the option of an alternative mode of transportation.

The PILOP fee is generally calculated based on the per-space cost of constructing surface or structured parking. Depending on the location and type of parking, this fee can range from as little as \$5,000 to \$15,000 per space in smaller cities with abundant and inexpensive land for surface parking, to over \$25,000 to \$35,000 per space in more dense areas where structured parking is required due to land costs and the desired development density. The benefits of a PILOP program include the reduction of over building parking facilities, encouraging shared parking, saving valuable land for other uses, and creating a fund for future parking and alternative modes of travel initiatives. PILOP programs exist around the country with different ways to finance the in-lieu costs developers must pay. These typically depend on the fiscal needs, liquidity, and desires of each municipality. Some variations on methods to collect payment include:

- Lump sum payment
- Annual installment payment
- Combination of both upfront and installment payments
- Guaranteed monthly permit sales/ payments

Plainfield should create a PILOP ordinance with a dedicated fund for revenues and then reinvest these revenues in a parking / transportation fund. Funds contributed to a PILOP fund can be used for the following:

- Acquire simple fee or other interest in land, and other real property for parking purposes.
- Construct, maintain, operate, lease, manage, or otherwise provide off-street parking facilities for public use.
- Provide public information to enhance parking utilization including publicity campaigns, signage, and other informational devices.
- Coordinate plans for parking facility improvements and expansion with public transportation plans and operations.
- Fund parking studies and professional fees for feasibility analysis, design and construction of new facilities.

The benefits of adopting a PILOP program include:

- Developer flexibility;
- Public parking facilities can be shared by multiple users (private parking facilities are often restricted to users generated by the owner's development project);
- Consolidation of multiple small and single user parking facilities, into a larger strategically located public parking facility;
- Reduction or elimination of parking variances granted by a municipality;

- Creates a level playing field, where all developers contribute to and share public parking; and,
- Provides a funding mechanism for public parking improvements and facilities.

Several NJ municipalities that presently have PILOP ordinances include Rahway, Asbury Park, Union Township, Hackensack, and Passaic. **Table 16** outlines the PILOP parking fees in other NJ municipalities. **See Asbury Park's PILOP Ordinance and Hackensack's PILOP Ordinance in Appendix C.**

Table 16: PILOP Fees in Other NJ Municipalities

Municipality	PILOP Fee (Per Space)
Asbury Park	\$15,000
Hackensack	\$2,500-\$9,000
Passaic	\$2,500-\$9,000
Rahway	\$5,000-\$10,000
Union	\$4,000-\$8,000

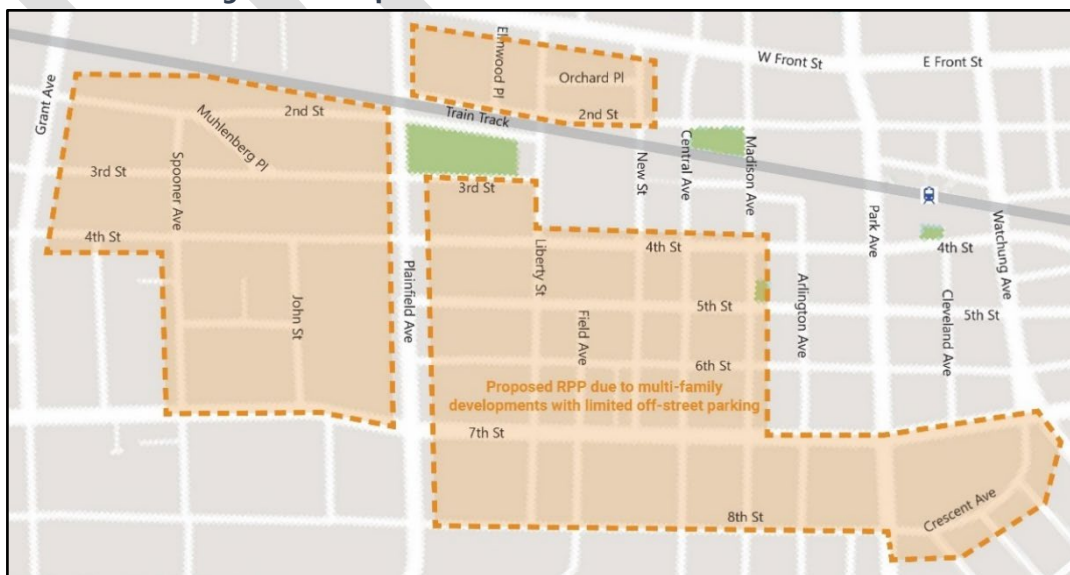
Source: THA Consulting, Inc. 2023

Resident Permit Parking (RPP)

Residential Parking Permit (RPP) Programs are a means to regulate on-street parking in neighborhoods and communities that are adjacent to high-use parking generators such as train stations, hospitals, theaters, and employers. RPP Programs prohibit overflow parking by non-residents in designated areas helping to ensure that convenient on-street parking spaces are not monopolized by surrounding high parking demand residential, institutional, commercial, or industrial activities.

Currently, many Plainfield residents adjacent to businesses and transit stations find it difficult to park in the on-street spaces closest to their residence. This is especially present in neighborhoods with auto body/vehicle maintenance shops since there is often not enough room on their properties for the employees and customers vehicles. Additionally, some residents have trouble finding parking on streets with a significant amount of multi-family houses or developments that do not have adequate off-street/driveway parking. **Figures 18 and 19** below illustrate what areas in Plainfield may be appropriate as RPP zones based on our observations of areas with conflict between residents and major parking generators. RPP can be established to limit employee and commuter parking in residential areas and can effectively be enforced with LPR technology. Additionally, if paired with a digital permit system, residents could access the permit application on the PPU's website, upload the residency data requirements, and their license plate becomes their credential or "permit", allowing them to easily renew their permit every period.

Figure 18: Proposed RPP Zones West of the Downtown



Source: THA Consulting, Inc. 2023



Elmwood Place apartments on 2nd Street



3rd Street east of Grant Avenue

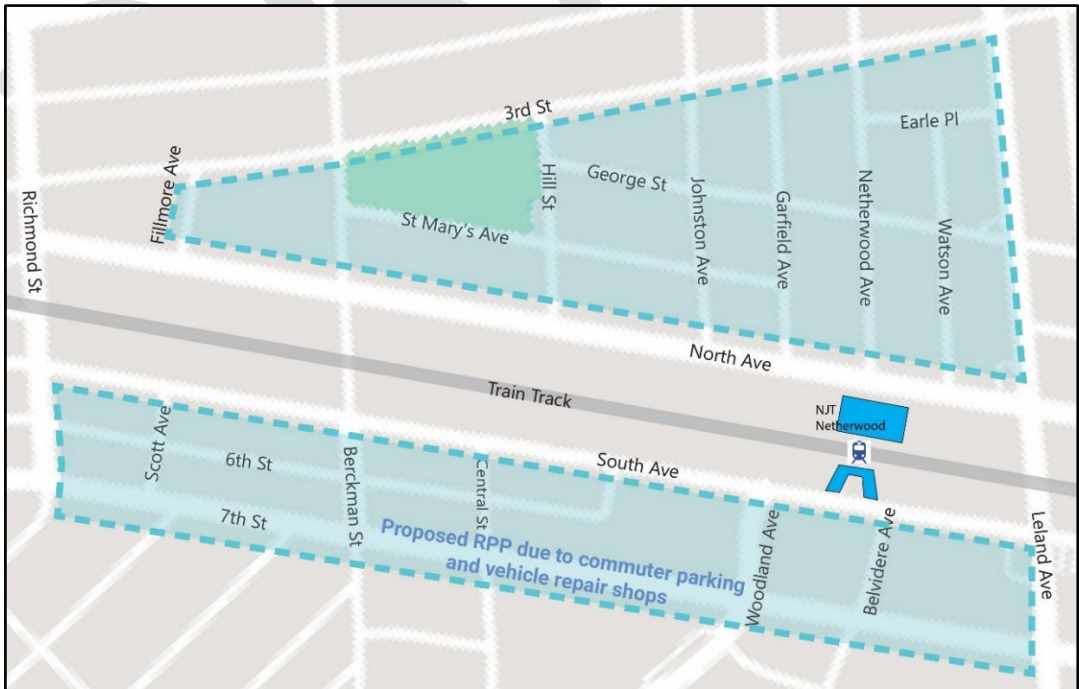


New Street between Front Street and 2nd Street



6th Street east of Plainfield Avenue

Figure 19: Proposed RPP Zones Near Netherwood Station



Source: THA Consulting, Inc. 2023



South side of South Avenue, west of Berckman Street



North side of North Avenue, east of Garfield Avenue

Several NJ Municipalities have implemented RPP programs, including Morristown, New Brunswick, Perth Amboy, Rahway, and Westfield. RPP programs generally follow a similar process of online registration, review, distribution, and renewal, but the cost, frequency of issue, amount of permits per household, and amount of visitor permits per household can differ between municipalities.

Table 17 outlines the RPP programs in similar NJ municipalities.

Table 17: Residential Permit Parking Programs in Other NJ Municipalities

Town/City	Frequency of Issue	Month Issued	Cost Schedule	Amount Issued per Household (Residents)	Amount Issued per Household (Visitors)
Morristown	Annually	Renewed for every January	Free	3 permits per dwelling unit	N/A
New Brunswick	Up to 3 years	Renewed from when the permit was obtained	Free	3 homeowner permits	1 homeowner visitor pass may have 2 vehicles registered
Perth Amboy	Annually	Renewed for every January	Free	Unlimited	N/A
Rahway	Unlimited	Doesn't expire as long as permit-holder uses same residence	Free	Unlimited	3 visitor passes per permit holder at any one time
Westfield	Annually	Renewed for every January	Free (only needed on select streets near downtown)	2 permits per dwelling	\$5 per pass, only 1 guest at the same time

Source: THA Consulting, Inc. 2023

The City should create an RPP program that defines the number of permits issued per household based on defined property characteristics or uses, including driveway availability, numbers of bedrooms, etc. The number of visitor parking permits issued per household is dependent upon the determination of the Director if the maximum number of residential parking permits per household has been reached. A comprehensive RPP ordinance should address all situations where non-permit vehicles would need to be allowed in a permit zone, including residential social events, emergency vehicles, contractors/service vehicles, delivery vehicles, and vehicles parked for TNCs like Uber and Lyft. The City can accommodate social events in RPP zones by granting residents a one (1) day suspension of enforcement for a

fee, and any vehicle with a loading zone permit or commercial vehicles bearing the name and address of their business can be exempt from violations during service hours. **New Brunswick's RPP Ordinance can be referenced in Appendix C as sample language. Asbury Park's RPP Brochure can be referenced in Appendix D as a sample for marketing an RPP program.**

Study Recommendation Summary

#	Parking Recommendations Summary
Parking Administration and Management	
1	Fill the vacant Enforcement Officer position, hire a Parking Analyst, and hire a Meter Technician.
2	Develop a Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) manual that outlines policies and procedures that guide staff and define roles and functions of enforcement and meter collection / maintenance personnel.
3	Provide parking enforcement staff with parking industry specific customer service and conflict resolution training to provide them with the necessary tools to better perform their responsibilities.
4	Create an established event parking management plan / process under the jurisdiction of the PPU.
Parking Enforcement and Curb Management	
1	Produce and track summary enforcement reports, related to ticket issuance by type, zone, and PEO.
2	The Parking Enforcement Supervisor should review daily the enforcement reports, data, trends and enforcement "gap" report.
3	Develop enforcement patrol routes to create greater PEO accountability and update regularly.
4	Issue warnings to violators as enforcement increases downtown.
5	Increase enforcement hours downtown from 6PM to 8PM Monday through Friday and until 6PM on Saturday. Employees should be directed and incentivized to utilize the more remote parking facilities including Lots 1, 8 and 10.
6	Increase the overtime fine rate and general prohibited fine rates.
7	Perform a comprehensive audit of the proposed on-street parking locations in prohibited zones to confirm that the on-street parking will not negatively impact pedestrian safety and the flow of traffic.
8	Regulate non-metered on-street parking along North Avenue, South Avenue and 3 rd Street through lower time limits and increased enforcement.
9	Create a pocket lot in Study Area 4 that could be used by residents and leased to nearby businesses.
10	Approve and implement a Loading Zone Permit Program to better control and regulate loading zones in the downtown. Allow for limited vehicle access to the pedestrian plaza at peak commute times.
11	Further incentivize merchant / employee parking with free or reduced cost permits in Lots 1, 8 and 10.
Parking Pricing Strategy	
1	Implement alternative on-street pricing strategies to promote turnover and discourage long-term parking by downtown employees in high demand areas and help distribute parking demand to low utilization areas.

Parking Equipment and Technology	
1	Implement ParkMobile for paid parking in the Downtown. If implemented, the PPU should ensure that the dual use of Flowbird and Parkmobile is clearly communicated and effectively marketed to users.
2	Create a resident discount parking program through the ParkMobile service.
3	Evaluate the benefits and the return on investment of License Plate Recognition (LPR) enforcement and a virtual parking permit system.
4	Implement MPS SafetySticks to enhance enforcement capabilities in loading zones, bus stops and in off-street permit spaces outside of enforcement hours.
5	Install digital signage systems for future developments with public off-street parking.
Facility Maintenance	
1	Lighting should be upgraded and regularly checked to ensure that it is operational and provides adequate lighting levels so that parkers have a high sense of comfort when parking in the evenings.
2	Establish a signage and wayfinding system that is simple and conveys a distinct Plainfield brand. All public parking should be easily identifiable to a first-time visitor without creating any confusion about who may or may not park in a given location.
3	Renovate alleyways and open spaces connecting Front Street to off-street lots, implementing creative lighting, street furniture, plants, public art, and signage to guide pedestrians and enhance the identity of the Downtown.
Parking Program Communications, Information and Marketing	
1	Add information to the City's website pertaining to parking time limitations, frequently asked questions (FAQ's) related to parking, the reasons and rationale for parking enforcement and time limits, as well as links to off-street parking and permit information.
2	Produce a parking brochure and e-brochure that provides valuable parking information for residents, downtown customers, commuters and visitors.
3	Add a parking survey component to the website and review the survey results periodically.
4	Encourage retail, dining and entertainment venues to establish a "linking" program via their websites to the City's parking resources.
Parking Ordinance Recommendations	
1	Create a PILOP ordinance with a dedicated fund for revenues and then reinvest these revenues in a parking trust fund dedicated to expanding the public parking opportunities throughout the downtown.
2	Designate residential areas with high utilization and conflict between residents and other users as Resident Permit Parking (RPP) areas and create a permit program where residents can register and renew parking permits online.

Appendix



Appendix

Appendix A – Parking Occupancy Tables and Graphs

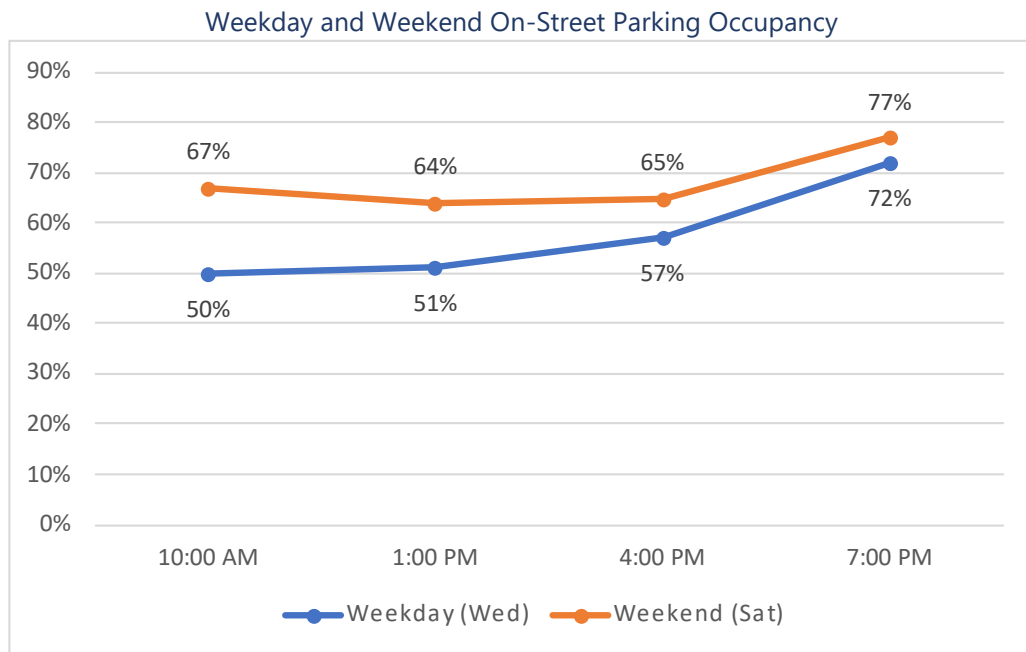
Study Area 1

Weekday On-Street Parking Occupancy, Wednesday, September 27, 2023

Street	Supply	10 AM		1 PM		4 PM		7 PM	
Orchard Pl	16	10	63%	10	63%	14	88%	13	81%
2nd St	38	21	55%	18	47%	20	53%	26	68%
3rd St	16	9	56%	8	50%	11	69%	17	106%
4th St	73	40	55%	35	48%	39	53%	49	67%
5th St	96	39	41%	37	39%	41	43%	51	53%
6th St	68	49	72%	44	65%	36	53%	66	97%
7th St	60	35	58%	40	67%	40	67%	48	80%
Elmwood Pl	20	4	20%	5	25%	9	45%	14	70%
Liberty St	92	23	25%	18	20%	37	40%	52	57%
Field St	17	6	35%	6	35%	12	71%	17	100%
New St	76	47	62%	57	75%	63	83%	65	86%
Central Ave	49	23	47%	28	57%	29	59%	35	71%
Madison Ave	55	32	58%	37	67%	31	56%	33	60%
Total	676	338	50%	343	51%	382	57%	486	72%

Weekend On-Street Parking Occupancy, Saturday, September 30, 2023

Street	Supply	10 AM		1 PM		4 PM		7 PM	
Orchard Pl	16	17	106%	18	113%	14	88%	17	106%
2nd St	38	27	71%	33	87%	29	76%	29	76%
3rd St	16	12	75%	13	81%	13	81%	14	88%
4th St	73	50	68%	47	64%	50	68%	54	74%
5th St	96	53	55%	54	56%	54	56%	79	82%
6th St	68	53	78%	49	72%	51	75%	67	99%
7th St	60	38	63%	33	55%	46	77%	48	80%
Elmwood Pl	20	13	65%	12	60%	10	50%	16	80%
Liberty St	92	47	51%	39	42%	30	33%	47	51%
Field St	17	12	71%	11	65%	13	76%	20	118%
New St	76	51	67%	62	82%	66	87%	59	78%
Central Ave	49	35	71%	25	51%	30	61%	34	69%
Madison Ave	55	44	80%	40	73%	36	65%	34	62%
Total	676	452	67%	436	64%	442	65%	518	77%



Source: THA Consulting, Inc, 2023

Study Area 2

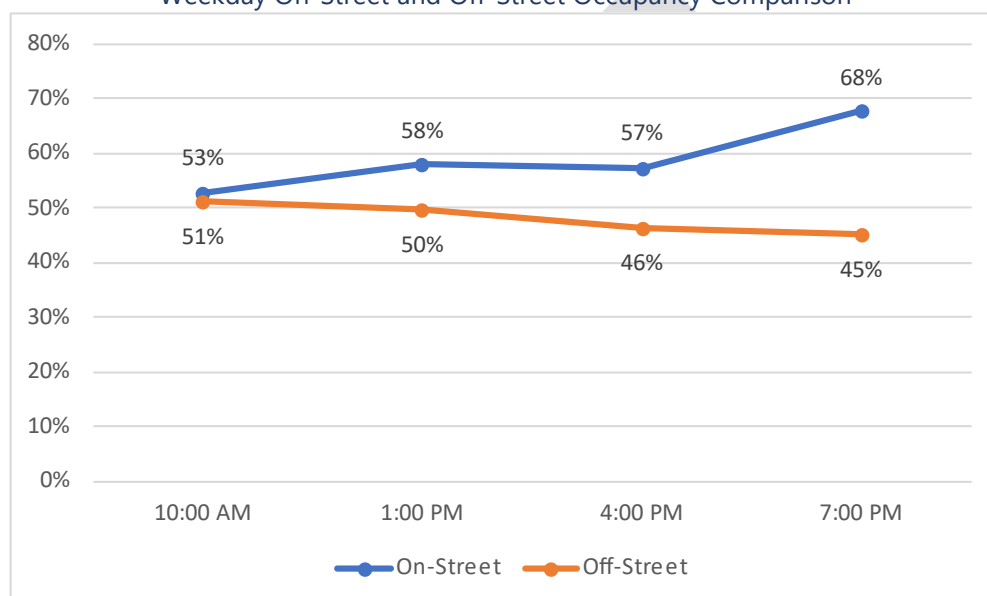
Weekday On-Street Parking Occupancy, Wednesday, September 27, 2023

Street	Supply	10 AM		1 PM		4 PM		7 PM	
Front St	152	89	59%	97	64%	87	57%	109	72%
2nd St	15	7	47%	2	13%	6	40%	11	73%
North Ave	56	21	38%	33	59%	39	70%	48	86%
3rd St	11	12	109%	11	100%	5	45%	0	0%
4th St	21	20	95%	17	81%	19	90%	20	95%
5th St	21	18	86%	17	81%	21	100%	22	105%
6th St	42	13	31%	14	33%	22	52%	24	57%
7th St	12	0	0%	4	33%	0	0%	0	0%
Grove St	10	10	100%	10	100%	8	80%	9	90%
Central Ave	7	6	86%	0	0%	7	100%	11	157%
Madison Ave	13	4	31%	5	38%	6	46%	9	69%
Park Ave	58	35	60%	45	78%	35	60%	37	64%
Cleveland Ave	31	2	6%	4	13%	3	10%	5	16%
Watchung Ave	84	55	65%	62	74%	58	69%	67	80%
Church St	39	17	44%	18	46%	10	26%	19	49%
Roosevelt Ave	61	25	41%	27	44%	37	61%	37	61%
Total	633	334	53%	366	58%	363	57%	428	68%

Weekday Off-Street Public Parking Occupancy, Wednesday, September 27, 2023

Facility Name	Supply	10 AM		1 PM		4 PM		7 PM	
Lot 1	216	121	56%	102	47%	81	38%	45	21%
Lot 4	112	65	58%	59	53%	70	63%	94	84%
Lot 5	50	38	76%	30	60%	32	64%	21	42%
Lot 6	119	60	50%	73	61%	75	63%	69	58%
Lot 8	116	44	38%	34	29%	24	21%	15	13%
Lot 8A	24	8	33%	15	63%	12	50%	18	75%
Lot 10	116	22	19%	23	20%	26	22%	70	60%
NJT Plainfield	85	71	84%	80	94%	67	79%	46	54%
Total	838	429	51%	416	50%	387	46%	378	45%

Weekday On-Street and Off-Street Occupancy Comparison



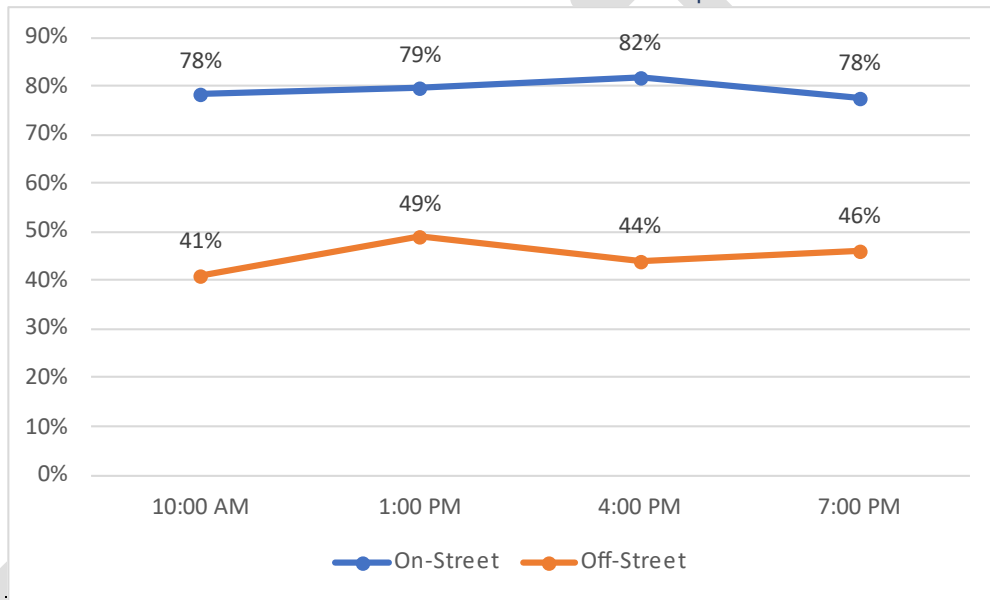
Weekend On-Street Parking Occupancy, Saturday, September 30/October 28, 2023

Street	Supply	10 AM		1 PM		4 PM		7 PM	
Front St	152	126	83%	139	91%	154	101%	120	79%
2nd St	15	11	73%	11	73%	11	73%	15	100%
North Ave	56	57	102%	52	93%	58	104%	57	102%
3rd St	11	11	100%	5	45%	1	9%	0	0%
4th St	21	18	86%	27	129%	18	86%	8	38%
5th St	21	15	71%	20	95%	20	95%	17	81%
6th St	42	22	52%	20	48%	22	52%	24	57%
7th St	12	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Grove St	10	10	100%	10	100%	10	100%	10	100%
Central Ave	7	11	157%	8	114%	10	143%	12	171%
Madison Ave	13	8	62%	17	131%	13	100%	13	100%
Park Ave	58	51	88%	59	102%	56	97%	50	86%
Cleveland Ave	31	16	52%	17	55%	15	48%	16	52%
Watchung Ave	84	85	101%	63	75%	62	74%	60	71%
Church St	39	20	51%	27	69%	28	72%	35	90%
Roosevelt Ave	61	34	56%	28	46%	40	66%	54	89%
Total	633	495	78%	503	79%	518	82%	491	78%

Weekend Off-Street Public Parking Occupancy, September 30/October 28, 2023

Facility Name	Supply	10 AM		1 PM		4 PM		7 PM	
Lot 1	216	57	26%	67	31%	40	19%	47	22%
Lot 4	112	90	80%	78	70%	65	58%	83	74%
Lot 5	50	16	32%	13	26%	19	38%	15	30%
Lot 6	119	98	82%	112	94%	99	83%	86	72%
Lot 8	116	20	17%	31	27%	35	30%	53	46%
Lot 8A	24	0	0%	21	88%	22	92%	24	100%
Lot 10	116	15	13%	32	28%	31	27%	33	28%
NJT Plainfield	85	48	56%	56	66%	58	68%	47	55%
Total	838	344	41%	410	49%	369	44%	388	46%

Weekend On-Street and Off-Street Comparison



Source: THA Consulting, Inc, 2023

Study Area 3

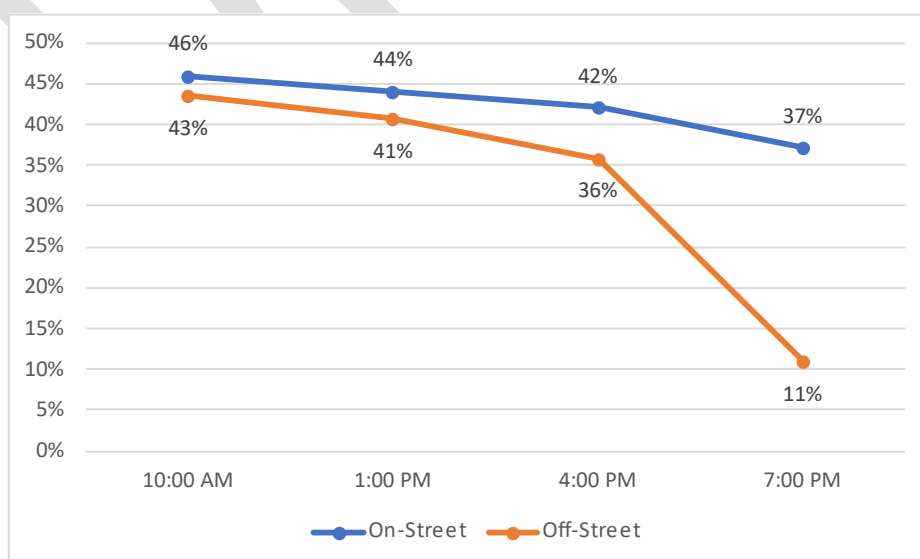
Weekday On-Street Parking Occupancy, Wednesday, September 27, 2023

Street	Supply	10 AM		1 PM		4 PM		7 PM	
3rd St	313	87	28%	87	28%	90	29%	71	23%
Earle Pl	15	6	40%	4	27%	4	27%	7	47%
George St	116	59	51%	44	38%	55	47%	58	50%
St Mary's Ave	120	33	28%	31	26%	34	28%	49	41%
North Ave	223	130	58%	133	60%	104	47%	56	25%
South Ave	249	175	70%	170	68%	162	65%	111	45%
6th St	91	53	58%	42	46%	17	19%	16	18%
Richmond St	23	8	35%	7	30%	10	43%	8	35%
Fillmore Ave	23	17	74%	14	61%	12	52%	7	30%
Scott Ave	7	7	100%	2	29%	2	29%	0	0%
Berckman St	61	41	67%	30	49%	35	57%	34	56%
Central St	24	9	38%	9	38%	11	46%	24	100%
Hill St	58	23	40%	22	38%	13	22%	11	19%
Johnston Ave	59	29	49%	34	58%	45	76%	38	64%
Woodland Ave	8	2	25%	6	75%	4	50%	7	88%
Garfield Ave	79	14	18%	24	30%	31	39%	36	46%
Netherwood Ave	84	23	27%	32	38%	23	27%	36	43%
Belvidere Ave	13	7	54%	6	46%	8	62%	10	77%
Watson Ave	66	32	48%	26	39%	29	44%	32	48%
Leland Ave	13	2	15%	2	15%	3	23%	0	0%
Total	1645	757	46%	725	44%	692	42%	611	37%

Weekday Off-Street Public Parking Occupancy, Wednesday, September 27, 2023

Facility Name	Supply	10 AM		1 PM		4 PM		7 PM	
NJT Netherwood N	83	25	30%	26	31%	22	27%	9	11%
NJT Netherwood S	62	38	61%	33	53%	30	48%	7	11%
Total	145	63	43%	59	41%	52	36%	16	11%

Weekday On-Street and Off-Street Occupancy Comparison



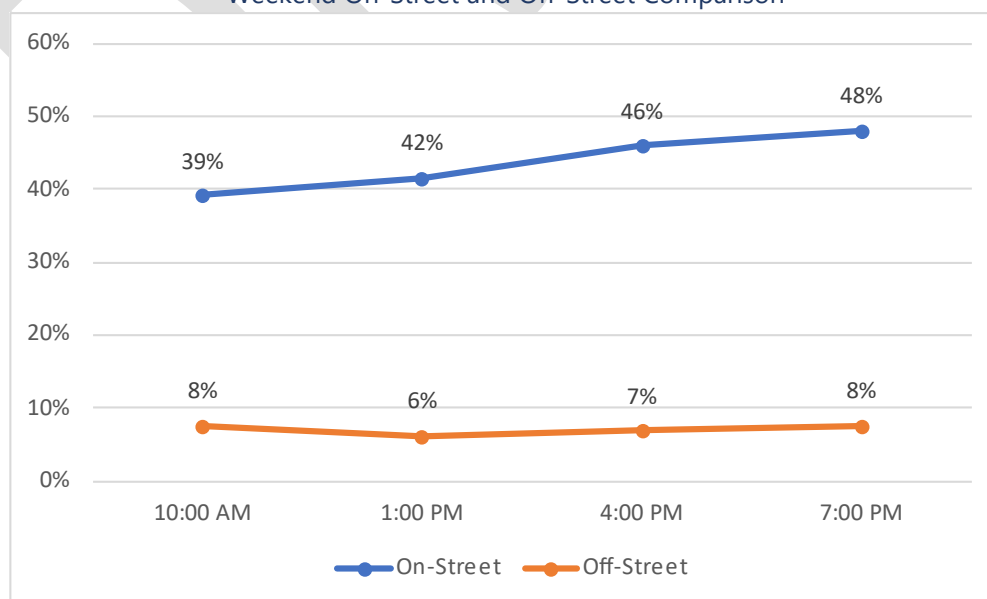
Weekend On-Street Parking Occupancy, Saturday, September 30

Street	Supply	10 AM		1 PM		4 PM		7 PM	
3rd St	313	67	21%	82	26%	90	29%	88	28%
Earle Pl	15	6	40%	5	33%	5	33%	7	47%
George St	116	36	31%	44	38%	46	40%	48	41%
St Mary's Ave	120	43	36%	40	33%	57	48%	48	40%
North Ave	223	42	19%	50	22%	46	21%	53	24%
South Ave	249	169	68%	186	75%	208	84%	191	77%
6th St	91	66	73%	62	68%	72	79%	69	76%
Richmond St	23	10	43%	8	35%	10	43%	10	43%
Fillmore Ave	23	5	22%	6	26%	8	35%	7	30%
Scott Ave	7	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	5	71%
Berckman St	61	15	25%	18	30%	18	30%	19	31%
Central St	24	5	21%	3	13%	7	29%	17	71%
Hill St	58	15	26%	16	28%	18	31%	15	26%
Johnston Ave	59	41	69%	41	69%	46	78%	42	71%
Woodland Ave	8	4	50%	5	63%	4	50%	9	113%
Garfield Ave	79	24	30%	30	38%	27	34%	50	63%
Netherwood Ave	84	42	50%	35	42%	47	56%	50	60%
Belvidere Ave	13	14	108%	14	108%	13	100%	13	100%
Watson Ave	66	40	61%	36	55%	33	50%	47	71%
Leland Ave	13	1	8%	2	15%	2	15%	2	15%
Total	1645	645	39%	683	42%	757	46%	790	48%

Weekend On-Street Public Parking Occupancy, September 30

Facility Name	Supply	10 AM		1 PM		4 PM		7 PM	
NJT Netherwood N	83	3	4%	3	4%	2	2%	4	5%
NJT Netherwood S	62	8	13%	6	10%	8	13%	7	11%
Total	145	11	8%	9	6%	10	7%	11	8%

Weekend On-Street and Off-Street Comparison



Source: THA Consulting, Inc, 2023

Study Area 4

Weekday On-Street Parking Occupancy, Tuesday, November 7, 2023

Street	Supply	11 AM		1 PM		4 PM		6 PM	
Front St	86	31	36%	32	37%	37	43%	44	51%
2nd St	63	31	49%	28	44%	35	56%	34	54%
Muhlenberg Pl	27	9	33%	9	33%	12	44%	16	59%
3rd St	99	56	57%	53	54%	55	56%	76	77%
Spooner Ave	40	14	35%	17	43%	19	48%	19	48%
Plainfield Ave	62	16	26%	18	29%	18	29%	18	29%
Total	377	157	42%	157	42%	176	47%	207	55%

Source: THA Consulting, Inc, 2023

Appendix B - Summary of Public Survey Feedback

1. Additional Parking Downtown – There is a significant lack of parking Downtown and in other commercial areas during peak hours. Many residents support creating additional parking, which could manifest as parallel or angled on-street spaces, expanded existing lots, pocket lots, or garages.
2. Enforcement – Parking enforcement capabilities and efficiency need to improve/expand in both commercial and residential areas. Illegal and overtime parking needs to be addressed.
3. Pedestrian Experience – Sidewalks along on-street parking and pathways leading to off-street lots from the Downtown need more benches, lighting and other amenities.
4. Wayfinding – Residents support adding signage on major streets directing vehicles and pedestrians to parking areas in the Downtown.
5. Parking Facility Maintenance – Many see off-street lots in the City as unsafe, poorly lit or poorly maintained.

Appendix C – Sample PILOP and RPP Ordinances Language

1. Asbury Park Ordinance § 2-87. Payment In Lieu Of Parking in the Central Business District (CBD). [Ord No. 2017-6]

The payment in lieu of parking shall be \$15,000 per space. All units that are deemed affordable per HUD standard for Monmouth County for a minimum of ten (10) years shall pay fifty (50%) percent (\$7,500) of the fee per space. The proceeds shall be deposited into a fund established solely for the acquisition, development, expansion or capital repair of public and municipal parking facilities, traffic- or transportation-related capital projects, the provision or operating expenses of transit facilities designed to reduce reliance on private automobiles, programs to facilitate carpooling or ride sharing, and creating a consistent streetscape for all user groups utilizing all modes of transportation by introducing context-sensitive design elements at intersections and corridors, such as parking meters, wayfinding signage, kiosks, trails, sidewalks, crosswalks, streets and similar improvements that connect users to public and municipal parking facilities throughout the City. The proceeds of such fund shall not be considered a part of the municipal general fund.

2. Hackensack Ordinance No. 53-2015. Payment in Lieu of Parking

WHEREAS, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40:48-2, the governing body of a municipality may make, amend, repeal, and enforce such other ordinances, regulations, rules and by-laws not contrary to the laws of this state or of the United States, as it

may deem necessary and proper for the good of government, order and protection of person and property, and for the preservation of the public health, safety and welfare of the municipality and its inhabitants, and as may be necessary to carry into effect the powers and duties conferred and imposed by this subtitle, or by any law; and

WHEREAS, the City of Hackensack (" City") is committed to finding innovative ways to facilitate the growth and progress of the community; and

WHEREAS, the City has considered allowing developers to make a payment in lieu of parking (" PILOP") to the City's Parking Utility for projects the City Planning Board or Zoning Board of Adjustment determines to be acceptable, but which lack sufficient parking, and the City Planning Board or Zoning Board of Adjustment has determined that a variance is justified because the impact of parking is not detrimental to the immediate area; and

WHEREAS, permitting PILOPs will create a mechanism for the Planning Board and Zoning Board of Adjustment to waive parking requirements without burdening resident taxpayers while maximizing potential development opportunities; and

WHEREAS, permitting PILOPs will provide potential additional benefits such as creating a level playing field for all developers, allowing for developer flexibility, providing a funding mechanism for public parking improvements and facilities, and creating greater parking for the public at large; and

WHEREAS, having considered the benefits the City has determined that allowing PILOPs for worthy projects is in the best interests of the City and its citizens;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED, BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF HACKENSACK, as follows:

SECTION 1. Chapter 26, is amended to add Article VI, entitled " Payment in lieu of Parking" such that The City of Hackensack Municipal Code, Part II entitled "General Legislation," states:

26-1. Purpose of Parking Improvement Program

When the proposed construction and use of any new building or structure or the proposed enlargement or increase in the capacity of new use of any existing building or structure results in practical difficulty or undue hardship in complying with the off-street parking requirements of the City Zoning and Planning Ordinance, the Planning Board and/or Zoning Board of Adjustment, in its discretion, upon finding(s) that such difficulty or undue hardship exists, and if the applicant is otherwise in accord with the provisions of the Municipal Land Use Act, may permit the applicant to elect to contribute to the City's Parking Improvement Program (PIP) Trust Fund in lieu of providing the total number of parking spaces required by City ordinance.

26-2. Areas eligible for participating in parking improvement program Pursuant to the Local Redevelopment and Housing Law ("LRHL"), certain areas within the City have been designated as areas in need of redevelopment or areas in need of rehabilitation. The designated areas are those most in need of additional off-street parking and most adversely affected by the granting of parking waiver variances. Construction of additional off-street parking by the City will serve new and existing residents, and patrons and applicants requesting parking variances. Projects submitted to the Planning Board and/or the Zoning Board of Adjustment that are sited within a duly-designated area in need of redevelopment or area in need of rehabilitation will be eligible for participating in the parking improvement program.

26-3. Number of Parking Spaces for which a Variance is Requested.

- a) The planning board and/or board of adjustment when reviewing an application for development which requests a parking space variance shall determine the number of off-street parking spaces required for the application to conform to the requirements of the City zoning and planning ordinance, and then shall establish the number of parking spaces for which the applicant seeks a variance.

b) The provisions of this section of the zoning and planning ordinance creating the Parking Improvement Program shall not allow the waiver of required off-street parking spaces or facilities, where they can be installed by the applicant without undue difficulty or hardship, unless the approving authority, by resolution, agrees in its sole discretion that it has an excess supply of available on or off-street parking in the area of the development project.

c) The contribution and payment of the PIP fee, in lieu of providing the required off-street parking spaces, shall only be made at the request of an applicant, who would otherwise be required to install off-street parking based upon the applicant's proposed use, and is unable to do so in accordance with the requirements of the zoning and planning ordinance.

26-4. PIP Fee to be Assessed Developer for Off-Tract Parking Improvements.

a) The applicant agrees, at its request, to be assessed a PIP fee for each parking space not otherwise provided by the applicant as required by the City zoning and planning ordinance.

b) The City has determined 400 square feet to be the parking industry standard for a 9 foot by 18 foot parking stall, including drive aisles and other common areas associated with the development of a parking lot or parking garage.

c) The PIP fee to be assessed by the City for each parking space for which the applicant seeks a waiver shall be calculated as follows, until otherwise amended or revised by ordinance:

Affordable Rental Residential Unit = \$ 2,500

Market Rate Rental Residential Unit = \$ 5,000

Commercial/Retail/Office Lease Unit = \$ TBD

For Sale Condominium Unit = \$ 9,000

d) In addition to the per parking space PIP fee assessment, the applicant shall pay pursuant to NJSA 40:55-D-3.2 the reasonable fees assessed by the municipality or applicable land use board for review of the developer's application and supporting information as well as preparation of documents necessary to effectuate the purpose of this ordinance, including but not limited to attorney review, parking consultant, engineering cost estimates and appraisal services.

e) In the event that the applicant has provided the City with other payments, waived tax appeal rebates, deeded or contributed by nominal lease real property, constructed off-site improvements, constructed replacement parking facilities, etc. the City Council in its sole discretion may credit the applicant with the reasonable value of such payment, contribution and/or improvements toward the PILOP required.

26-5. Payment of PIP Fee by Applicant.

The timing of the PIP fee payment shall be in the discretion of the approving authority. Payment by the applicant of the PIP fee assessed may be imposed as follows:

a) Upon the granting of the variance by the planning board or board of adjustment

b) In the case of a development project at the time that the applicant or the successor to the applicant's approvals secures their building permits.

c) Over a term of years, in the event the PIP payment exceeds \$250,000, to be authorized by Resolution of the City Council. The payment term shall not be in excess of five (5) years, payable in yearly installments, with legal interest.

c1) To secure payment of applicant's obligation to the PIP Trust Fund, a municipal assessment for a local improvement pursuant to NJSA 40:56-et. seq., shall be placed upon applicant's real estate which was the subject of the parking variance.

c2) The provisions of N.J.S.A. 40:56-et. seq., shall apply in the event of a default or late payment.

26-6. Collection of PIP Fee Assessment.

a) In the event that the Planning Board or Zoning Board of Adjustment approves by Resolution payment of the PIP fee by installment, a real estate assessment shall be collected by the municipal tax assessor's office in the

manner proscribed by statute and the funds so collected shall be turned over to the City Chief Financial Officer for deposit into the City's Parking Improvement Program Trust Fund.

b) In the event that the applicant is directed by the Planning Board or Zoning Board of Adjustment to pay the PIP fee assessment in a single lump sum, the assessment shall be collected by the City Chief Financial Officer for deposit into the City's Parking Improvement Program Trust Fund.

26-7. Collection of PIP Fee Assessment.

The City may apply to the State of New Jersey, Department of Community Affairs, Local Finance Board pursuant to administrative rule, for its approval and establishment of a dedicated and restricted Trust Fund for deposit of the PIP fees assessed by the Authority pursuant to the parking space variance, as determined by the Planning Board or Zoning Board of Adjustment.

26-8. Collection of PIP Fee Assessment.

The assessed fees collected and deposited into the Parking Improvement Program Trust Fund shall be dedicated to provide for: engineering and design; traffic and other feasibility studies; acquisition through purchase or condemnation; erection, construction of or installation of off-street parking facilities, parking structures, or equipment; and other associated parking project development costs. The expenditure of such funds for said purposes shall be made by the City Manager or his or her designee at the time and in the manner determined by the City to be in the best interests of the City in providing off-street parking.

3. New Brunswick Ordinance Chapter 10.28. Residential Parking Permits

10.28.010 - Parking by permit only in designated residential areas.

No vehicles are parked on the streets or parts of streets designated in Schedule 41 attached and made a part of this chapter during the hours designated in the schedule, unless:

- A. The vehicle is owned or operated on a regular basis by a resident of that street and the vehicle is properly registered pursuant to the digital procedures established by the New Brunswick Parking Authority.
- B. The vehicle falls under one of the exceptions to the parking ban set forth in Section 10.28.020.

(Ord. No. O-051703, § 1, 6-7-17; Prior code § 12-20)

10.28.020 - Exemptions.

The following vehicles are exempt from this parking permit section.

- A. Visitors. A vehicle obtaining a current visitor parking permit may park provided that the operator of the vehicle is a bona fide guest of a residence within the permit parking area. The visitor's permit shall be obtained pursuant to the digital procedures established by the New Brunswick Parking Authority.
- B. Contractors, Service and Delivery Vehicles. Contractors, service and delivery vehicles bearing the name and address of a commercial business may park without a permit during the time they are rendering service to a residence within the permit parking area.
- C. Emergency Vehicles. Emergency vehicles and public service, telephone and other public utility vehicles may park within the permit parking area during the time they are rendering service or repairs within the area.

(Ord. No. O-051703, § 2, 6-7-17; Prior code § 12-20.1)

10.28.030 - Designation of permit parking areas.

Whenever the city business administrator, or his or her designee, shall determine that certain streets exclusively or primarily servicing residential land uses, or portions of such streets, are being used for parking by the operators of vehicles who do not reside on the streets, and that the average number of such vehicles parking in such manner is in excess of twenty-five (25) percent of the number of parking spaces on such streets and that the total number of parking spaces actually occupied exceeds sixty-five (65) percent of the total number of parking spaces on such streets on the weekdays of any month, as disclosed by an engineering or traffic study, then the city business administrator or his or her designee shall recommend to the city council that such streets be included within this chapter.

(Prior code § 12-20.2)

10.28.040 - Administration.

Application for parking permits under this section are made in writing on forms provided to the city business administrator, or his or her designee, including the New Brunswick parking authority. Permits are granted only under the following terms and conditions:

- A. To persons who are residents on the street or portion upon which parking is restricted by this section, a permanent permit, valid for up to a year for tenants and three years for owner-occupants, may be issued for every vehicle owned or principally operated by such person, subject to a limit of two permits for each residential dwelling unit, provided that three permits per unit is authorized if all three of the vehicles for which permits are sought are registered to that address and remain so registered during the permit period, or if one or more such vehicles is a leased vehicle, the principal operator of which has a driver's license and insurance card showing the same address as the unit.
- B. Visitor permits may be issued for each residential unit in a structure on any street or portion upon which parking is restricted by this section for use by visitors to a resident of a residential dwelling unit within such structure subject to a maximum of two permits per structure. A multi-family structure which is owner-occupied may be issued one additional visitor permit. Such visitor permit must be obtained by and issued to the owner of the structure and will be valid for a period of one year. Such permits may be renewed for succeeding years or months as needed.
- C. To such other persons or businesses who, in the judgment of the business administrator or parking authority, are determined to be suffering undue hardship after consideration of the purpose of this chapter. Businesses are limited to thirty-three (33) percent of the off-street spaces in the parking area or fifty (50) percent of the number of persons employed by the business.

(Ord. No. O-051703, § 4, 6-7-17; Ord. O-020208 §§ 3, 4, 2002; Ord. O-049901 §§ 3, 4, 1999; prior code § 12-20.3)

10.28.050 - Reproduction of permits prohibited.

- A. No person, unless authorized by virtue of his or her employment, shall:
 - 1. Copy, reproduce or otherwise create a resident parking permit or a visitor parking permit authorized by Section 10.28.010 through 10.28.040;
 - 2. Create a facsimile or counterfeit resident parking permit or visitor parking permit;
 - 3. Display or use a resident parking permit or visitor parking permit knowing the same to have been copied, reproduced or otherwise created in violation of subsections (A) or (B) of this section.
- B. No person shall furnish false information or fraudulent documents in connection with an application for a resident parking permit.
- C. Any person violating the provisions of subsections (A) or (B) of this section is punished by a fine not to exceed three hundred dollars (\$300.00) and/or imprisonment for not more than ten (10) days and forfeits the right to receive or use a parking permit under this chapter for a period of three years.

D. No permit authorized may be issued to a person with three or more outstanding summonses for violations of this chapter.

(Ord. O-049901 § 5, 1999; prior code § 12-20.3A)

10.28.060 - Responsibility to traffic rules and regulations.

A resident parking permit does not exempt a resident from obeying all traffic rules and regulations including but not limited to too close to stop signs, intersections, alternate side.

(Prior code § 12-20.4)

10.28.070 - Limited distance.

The visiting permits are valid within a reasonable distance from the address for which the permit is issued.

(Prior code § 12-20.5)

10.28.080 - Permit parking advisory committee.

A. There is created a permanent permit parking advisory committee which shall monitor the implementation and results of this chapter as amended and make such recommendations as it deems appropriate relative to measures that may ease parking congestion and related problems and report on the results of its work at least annually on or before July 1 of each year.

B. The committee shall consist of the following:

1. One member of council selected by council;
2. A representative of the city administration designated by the mayor;
3. The executive director of the New Brunswick parking authority who shall serve as chairperson of the committee unless the executive director decides not to serve in that capacity in which case, the members of the committee will select its chairperson;
4. The director of the department of planning, community and economic development or his or her designee; and
5. Five residents from neighborhoods within the permit parking program who are appointed by resolution of council.

C. The citizen members of the ad hoc permit parking advisory committee as of the effective date of the ordinance codified in this section are deemed to be appointed as members of the committee established by this chapter and shall serve terms of three years from that date and until their successors are appointed and qualify.

D. The committee shall meet and organize within thirty (30) days of the effective date of the ordinance codified in this section and at least semiannually thereafter. The committee shall meet on the call of the chairperson or on the written request of any four members being filed with the city clerk. The committee may, subject to the approval of the city administrator, call upon such city appointed officials and employees as may be of assistance to it in its work.

(Ord. O-010206 § 3, 2002)

Appendix D – Sample Communications/Marketing Materials

1. Asbury Park's RPP Brochure

Asbury PARK

Resident Permit Parking 2018

How to Apply



HOURS:
Monday - Friday
9:00 AM - 4:30 PM

Please bring all required documentation and payment to the Office on 1201 Springwood Avenue. Application forms are available online or at the Parking Utility Office. If all required information is provided, permits are typically distributed immediately.

NEW! Apply Online

The City of Asbury Park has launched an online permit portal where residents can purchase parking permits.

Visit:
<http://www.thepermitportal.com>



Applicants can register, upload documentation, and pay and renew online. Parking permits must be picked up at the Parking Utility Office.

A convenience fee is added to the cost of the permit to complete online transactions.

Are you eligible for a parking permit?

Residential permits are limited to residents that demonstrate lack of access to available off-street parking, subject to City verification.

What is access to off-street parking? The ability to purchase, rent or otherwise utilize at least one (1) parking space associated with a specific dwelling unit or when a dwelling unit has a driveway, garage or other parking space.

Dwelling units with access to at least one (1) available off-street space shall be required to utilize that space. Any additional resident driver with a vehicle may obtain a parking permit. In Zones 1, 2, and 3, there are a maximum of four (4) permits allowed per dwelling unit. In Zone 4, a maximum of two (2) permits may be obtained.

Residents living in buildings with parking lots or garages are required to provide a letter from the property owner/manager stating that the resident does not have access to off-street parking in order to receive a permit.

Documents Required

Applicants **MUST** provide proof of residency and proof of vehicle registration (for all vehicles).

For Proof of Residency
Residents **MUST** provide either:

- 1) A copy of the deed for the property showing the applicant's name or copy of the original lease OR rental agreement showing the applicant's name as a current renter **AND** one (1) of the items below:
 - Valid NJ Driver's license with an AP address
 - Utility bill issued in the past 90 days for the same legal residential AP address in the applicant's name
 - Current tax bill for the same legal residential Asbury Park address in the applicant's name
 - Checking or savings account statement within past 60 days for same legal AP address in applicant's name
 - First class mail received from any Federal, State or local government agency within past 90 days at the same legal residential AP address in applicant's name
- OR
- 2) Residents without a copy of deed or lease in the applicant's name may provide two (2) of the above items.

Asbury PARK

Resident Permit Parking 2018

Fees

The cost and availability of a residential permit is dependent upon the zone and the number of permits purchased per dwelling unit.

Zone	Permit #1	Permit #2	Permit #3	Permit #4
1	\$90.00	\$120.00	\$150.00	\$180.00
2	\$90.00	\$120.00	\$150.00	\$180.00
3	\$90.00	\$120.00	\$150.00	\$180.00
4	\$90.00	\$120.00	N/A	N/A

Permits can be paid for by cash, check or credit card.

Permits may be replaced, if lost or stolen, at the full price of the residential permit. If the permit is damaged, it may be replaced for \$5.00 as long as the original permit is returned.

Bangs Avenue Garage
Permits for the Bangs Avenue Garage are \$75.00 per month. A minimum of 3 months' payment is required. Renewals must be paid 5 days prior to expiration.

Frequently Asked Questions

Residential Permits are valid for the 2018 calendar year and expire on December 31, 2018.

Permit hangtags must hang on the vehicle's rear view mirror and must be visible from outside of the vehicle at all times.

Permit hangtags shall have no more than two (2) vehicle license plates listed, but only one vehicle may utilize the permit hangtag at any one time.

All other posted street regulations must be adhered to, including alternate side parking for street sweeping and snow removal and time-limited spaces (such as 15-minute parking spaces).

Zone 4 Resident Permit Holders may park anywhere in the CBD between the hours of 10:00 PM to 10:00 AM.

Guest passes are not available, however, discounted bulk parking can be purchased using the "Asbury PARK" mobile parking app (<http://www.asburyparkapp.com>).

Permit Parking Signs




Signs throughout the City indicate resident only permit parking areas and paid parking areas where permits may be used. The applicable zones are listed on each sign.

Questions?

Call 732-502-4562
Email parking@cityofasburypark.com
Visit <http://www.cityofasburypark.com/parking>

Asbury Park Parking Utility
1201 Springwood Avenue
Asbury Park, NJ 07712
Hours: Monday - Friday, 9:00 AM - 4:30 PM

