

THOMPSON BOULEVARD

RECOMMENDED IMPROVEMENTS

II. STREET TREES

The portion of Thompson Boulevard that passes through Downtown (between Chestnut Street and Figueroa Street) should be urban in character. Accordingly trees between Chestnut Street and Figueroa Street should be planted in tree wells. Street trees west of Figueroa Street and east of Chestnut Street should be planted in landscaped parkway strips.



A possible Thompson Boulevard street tree species with a large canopy is the Flowering Red Gum Tree (*Eucalyptus filicollis*), Ventura's official tree.



An alternate street tree for Thompson Boulevard is the Chinese evergreen Elm (*Ulmus parvifolia*).



Another street tree for Thomson Boulevard is the Brazilian Wood (*Cedrella fissillis*).

III. STREET LIGHTS

Thompson Boulevard is currently a street that is dominated by fast moving automobiles. However, as the vacant properties begin to develop, more and more pedestrians will walk along Thompson Boulevard. Street lights should be introduced that illuminate the way for automobiles and pedestrians alike.



Examples of combination pedestrian / carriageway fixtures

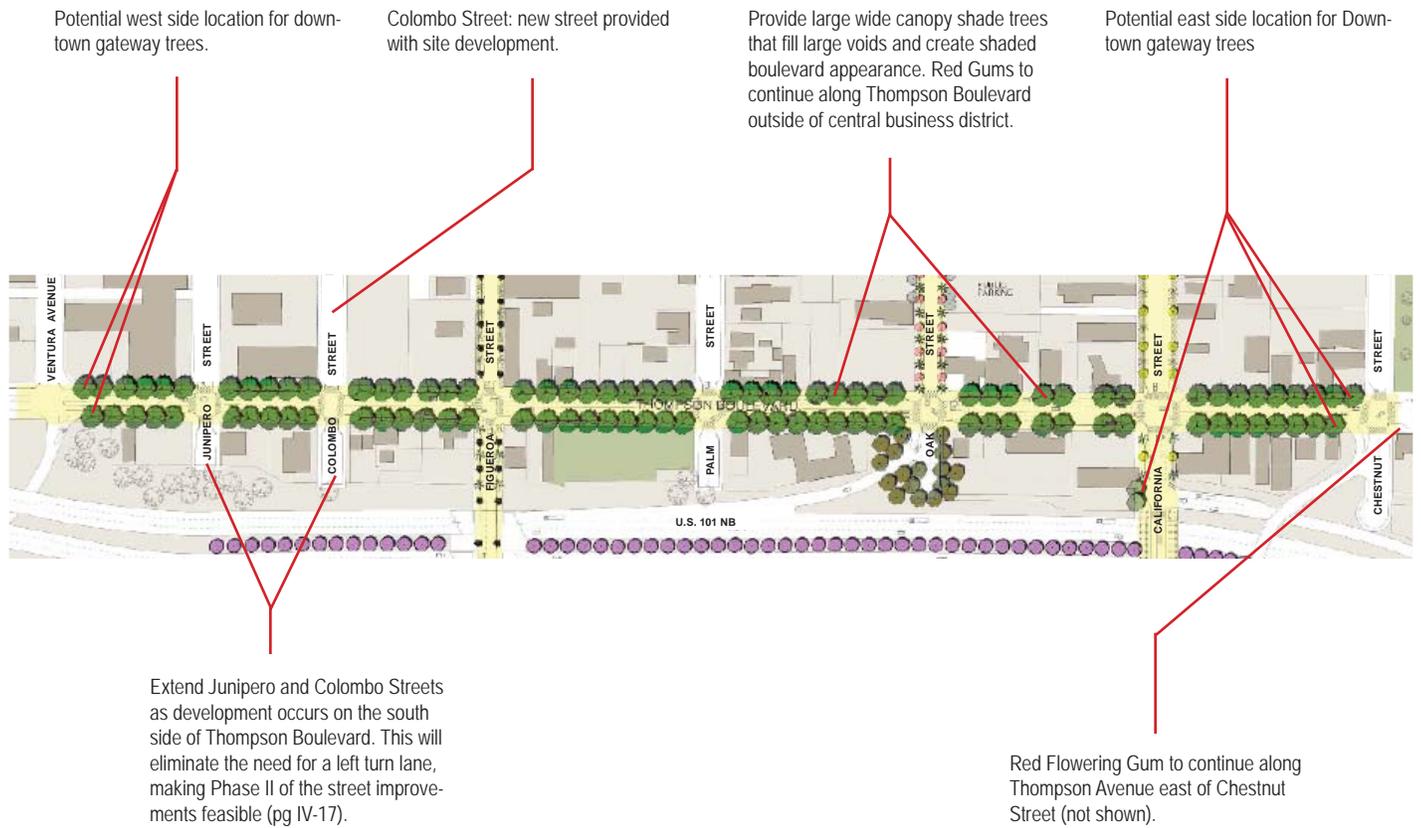
IV. SIGNAGE & GRAPHICS

An effective way to transform the haphazardly placed utility boxes along Thompson Boulevard is to paint their surfaces with a variety of creative and playful designs.



THOMPSON BOULEVARD

RECOMMENDED IMPROVEMENTS



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DOWNTOWN PARKING MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

The Downtown Parking Management Program (DPMP) requirements were developed on the premise that parking is not an end in itself, but a means to achieve broader community goals by leveraging existing assets. Managing both parking supply and parking demand establishes a necessary balance between providing too much parking and not providing enough parking to meet community needs. Too much parking wastes valuable land resources, distorts the urban form, encourages automobile dependence, and increases the cost of new development. Not providing enough parking limits economic growth and increases traffic congestion. The City desired balance for parking supply and demand is achieved when 85% of the parking supply is utilized during peak periods leaving 15% of supply available for use at any given time. Implementation of the requirements in this program will further the overall vision of a walkable, pedestrian-oriented and economically vital Downtown as identified in this Specific Plan, the 2005 General Plan and the 2005-2010 Economic Development Strategy.

The parking management goals, policies, actions defined in this program are based on recommendations in the March 2006 Downtown Ventura Mobility and Parking Plan prepared by Nelson/Nygaard Consulting Associates. Those recommendations were developed from an analysis of parking supply and demand conditions in downtown Ventura, a comprehensive review of transportation and parking management best practices, new technological advances in the field and surveys of cities comparable to Ventura¹. The consultant recommendations were then tailored to the City's unique needs based on extensive stakeholder input. The resulting policies and actions are summarized in the Implementation Plan Summary.

PURPOSE

The DPMP identifies the goal, rationale and benefit behind each requirement created to manage parking resources in the Downtown Specific Plan Area. Established by adoption of the Downtown Specific Plan, the DPMP consists of two major implementation strategies: (1) Managing Parking Supply and (2) Managing Parking Demand.

The requirements of this plan will be enacted partly via the Development Code in Chapter III and otherwise as outlined in the Implementation Plan Summary either by ordinance or by resolution of the City Council.

¹ Details regarding the analysis are described in the March 2006 Downtown Ventura Mobility and Parking Plan available at the City planning counter in Room 117 at 501 Poli Street and online (www.cityofventura.net/downtown).

DOWNTOWN PARKING MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

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- I. Implementation Plan Summary
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I. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN SUMMARY

Managing both demand and supply of parking is critical in achieving urban design, housing and economic development goals for Downtown. The actions needed to implement the goals of this plan are summarized in a series of steps that should be taken in specific order. The steps are strategic and organized to be cost-effective. The success of many of the recommendations in this plan will be leveraged if implemented concurrently, while the success of others depends on earlier recommendations being implemented and well established.

A. CONCURRENT IMPLEMENTATION: 2007

Implemented in conjunction with plan adoption by the City Council:

1. Implement new code and parking regulations for all new development in the Downtown Specific Plan area outside of the Coastal Zone that, among other things, reduces minimum parking requirements to levels that reflect urban demand in a downtown district.

B. NEAR-TERM IMPLEMENTATION: 2007-2008

Upon plan adoption by the City Council, staff will initiate the following actions (once funding is appropriated):

1. Hire new parking management staff (or contractors) to implement the requirements of this plan and perform ongoing monitoring and supply and demand analyses.
2. Complete a study of existing parking supply and demand for all public on-street, public off-street, and private parking lots and structures in the Downtown Specific Plan area.
3. Based on the results of the parking study identified in Step (B.2), determine where future public parking supply should be added due to high demand or anticipated redevelopment of existing at-grade lots. Reserve potential locations for future public parking structures. Proceed with initial planning, financing, and designing of a new public parking structure where demand is anticipated to be greatest.

C. SHORT-TERM IMPLEMENTATION: 2008-2009

Implemented upon certification of the DTSP by the California Coastal Commission and then by resolution or ordinance of the City Council:

1. Implement new code and parking regulations for all new development in the Downtown Specific Plan within the Coastal Zone that:
 - a. Reduces minimum parking requirements to levels that reflect urban demand in a downtown district; and
 - b. Expands applicability of the existing in-lieu parking fee program to all new development.

D. MID-TERM IMPLEMENTATION: 2008-2011

Implemented by resolution or ordinance of the City Council:

1. Require residential parking costs to be “unbundled” from the cost of the housing itself.
2. Form a Commercial Parking Benefit District that dedicates parking revenue to public improvements and services within the Downtown Specific Plan area only. Potential net revenue uses include landscaping, trash receptacles and collection service, street cleaning, pedestrian-scaled lighting, transit and bicycle infrastructure, and management of Downtown transportation amenities and infrastructure.
3. Implement a paid parking program to achieve Downtown revitalization goals, including improved urban design, cleanliness, safety and economic vitality. Paid parking program would be established in areas identified in Step B.2, and north of Highway 101. Public parking supply south of Highway 101 is not subject to the regulations of this Downtown Parking Management Program.
4. Establish Residential Parking Benefit Districts to prevent unwanted spillover parking in adjacent residential neighborhoods
5. Require all employers in the Downtown Specific Plan area to offer employees the option to “cash out” the cost, if applicable, of a parking space provided by the employer. Parking spaces paid for by employers are made available to employees as a Transportation Fringe Benefit to promote use of alternative transportation methods².

² Current state law (§43845 of the California Health and Safety Code) already requires employers with over 50 employees to offer the parking cash-out.

6. Require new mixed-use developments to provide common transportation amenities such as transit passes, bicycles, personal mobility devices, scooters, neighborhood use vehicles, and shared cars in proportion to the size of the development.
7. Perform ongoing monitoring, supply and demand analyses, and program operation.

E. LONG-TERM IMPLEMENTATION: 2011 AND BEYOND

Implemented upon success of Steps A through D:

1. Use net parking revenue from the Commercial Parking Benefit Districts to fund long-term transportation and parking demand management programs and incentives, and street improvements within the Downtown Specific Plan area, including:
 - a. Provide universal transit passes for all residents and employees in the Commercial Parking Benefit District; and
 - b. Establish a car sharing program with one or more convenient and highly-visible “pods” located in Downtown Specific Plan area.
2. Construct additional parking supply, such as parking structures, when Downtown peak parking occupancy regularly and consistently exceeds 80% in the Downtown Core. Parking supply shall be located as identified in Step B.2.
3. Through Development Code revisions, continue to reduce parking requirements in a phased approach as parking supply balances with parking demand. Allow further reductions for projects that incorporate transportation and parking demand management strategies.
4. Once parking resources are sufficiently shared to meet demand and future supply needs are funded, remove minimum parking requirements in a phase approach.
5. Perform ongoing monitoring, supply and demand analyses, and program operation.

II. MANAGING PARKING SUPPLY

WHAT IS A “PARK ONCE” STRATEGY?

Managing the supply of private and public parking will reduce the long-term cost of having to build more supply than is needed to support a successful, economically viable and sustainable downtown. Through efficient utilization and management of the current and future supply of parking, the City will ensure that sufficient parking is available for residents and visitors to Downtown Ventura. To generate economic vitality in Downtown, we will create an environment that enables a visitor to easily find parking such that he or she can park upon arrival in Downtown and then shop, dine or be entertained without having to get back in the car. This is called the “Park Once” strategy and it is implemented by:

- Managing parking supply as a public utility, just like streets and sewers, to maximize the efficiency of existing parking and provide public parking in strategically-placed, city-managed lots and structures; and
- Encouraging existing private commercial parking to be shared among different land uses so that spaces are available to the public when not serving private commercial use.

Operating the downtown parking supply as a single shared pool results in significant savings in daily vehicle trips, air emissions and costly provision of parking spaces, for three reasons:

1. Those arriving by car can easily follow a “park once” pattern: they park their car just once and complete multiple daily tasks on foot, or by using local transit, before returning to their car.
2. Spaces can be efficiently shared between uses with different peak hours, peak days, and peak seasons of parking demand (such as office, restaurant, retail and entertainment uses).
3. The parking supply can be sized to meet average parking loads (instead of the worst-case parking ratios needed for isolated suburban buildings), since the common supply allows shops and offices with above-average demand to be balanced by shops and offices that have below-average demand or are temporarily vacant.

DOWNTOWN PARKING MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Overall, the benefits of implementing a “Park Once” strategy for the entire Downtown include:

- A welcoming environment for customers and visitors through removal of confusing time and “no re-park” restriction signs scattered throughout Downtown.
- Greater urban design and redevelopment opportunities by consolidating the parking supply into strategically placed lots and new larger, more space-efficient (and therefore more cost-effective) structures.
- Finally, and perhaps most importantly, by transforming motorists into pedestrians, who walk instead of drive to different downtown destinations. A “park once” strategy is an immediate generator of pedestrian life, creating crowds of people who animate public life on the streets and generate patrons for street-oriented retail businesses and restaurants.

The strategy to initiate a “Park Once” environment is addressed in this Downtown Parking Management Program as a comprehensive series of actions and policies to manage both parking supply and demand.

POLICIES AND ACTIONS

The following parking supply management policies and actions will be implemented, in concert with policies and actions to manage parking demand, to meet the eight overall Downtown Specific Plan Goals. The following actions are summarized in Section I. Implementation Plan Summary in chronological order of implementation. For this Section, they are organized under pertinent policy statements.

Policy S1: Reduce and Eventually Remove Minimum Parking Requirements.

Action S1.1: Implement new code and parking regulations for all new development in the Downtown Specific Plan area that reduces minimum parking requirements to levels that reflect urban demand in a downtown district.

Action S1.2: Implement new code and parking regulations for all new development in the Downtown Specific Plan area that expands applicability of the existing in-lieu parking fee program to all new development.

Action S1.3: Through Development Code revisions,

continue to reduce parking requirements in a phased approach as parking supply balances with parking demand. Allow further reductions for projects that incorporate transportation and parking demand management strategies.

Action S1.4: Once parking resources are sufficiently shared to meet demand and future supply needs are funded, remove minimum parking requirements in a phased approach.

Policy S2: Implement a “Park Once” Strategy for the Downtown Specific Plan area.

Action S2.1: Complete a study of existing parking supply and demand for all public on-street, public off-street, and private parking lots and structures in the Downtown Specific Plan area.

Action S2.2: Based on the results of the parking study identified in Action S2.1, determine where future public parking supply should be added due to high demand or anticipated redevelopment of existing at-grade lots. Reserve potential locations for future public parking structures. Proceed with initial planning, financing, and designing of a new public parking structure where demand is anticipated to be greatest.

Action S2.3: Construct additional parking supply, such as parking structures, when Downtown peak parking occupancy regularly and consistently exceeds 80% in the Downtown Core. Parking supply shall be located as identified in Action S2.1.

Policy S3: Form commercial and residential parking benefit districts.

Action S3.1: Form a Commercial Parking Benefit District that dedicates parking revenue to public improvements and services within the Downtown Specific Plan area only. Potential net revenue uses include landscaping, trash receptacles and collection service, street cleaning, pedestrian-scaled lighting, transit and bicycle infrastructure, and management of Downtown transportation amenities and infrastructure.

Action S3.2: Implement a paid parking program to achieve Downtown revitalization goals, including improved urban design, cleanliness, safety and economic vitality. (Paid parking would be established in areas identified in Action S2.1, and north of Highway

101. Public parking supply south of Highway 101 is not subject to the regulations of this Downtown Parking Management Program.)

Action S3.3: Establish Residential Parking Benefit Districts to prevent unwanted spillover parking in adjacent residential neighborhoods

RATIONALE FOR ACTIONS

Action S1.1: *Implement new code and parking regulations for all new development in the Downtown Specific Plan area that reduces minimum parking requirements to levels that reflect urban demand in a downtown district.*

Timing: Concurrent with DTSP adoption (2007) and ongoing

Reducing and eventually removing minimum parking requirements will remove barriers to new development, encourage efficiently shared public parking, and create a healthy market for Downtown parking, where parking spaces are bought, sold, rented and leased like any other commodity.

Minimum parking requirements have emerged as one of the biggest obstacles to many cities' efforts to encourage new residential and commercial development in their revitalizing downtown areas. As UCLA professor Don Shoup describes it, "Parking requirements cause great harm: they subsidize cars, distort transportation choices, warp urban form, increase housing costs, burden low-income households, debase urban design, damage the economy, and degrade the environment... Off-street parking requirements also cost a lot of money, although this cost is hidden in higher prices for everything except parking itself."

Minimum parking requirements currently serve to prevent spillover parking, the phenomenon of commuters filling up all of the parking spaces on a downtown's streets, and then spilling over into adjacent residential areas. However, once the actions in this program are implemented, market rate prices for on-street parking in the Downtown Core will ensure that ample vacancies exist on the street directly in front of businesses. In the adjacent residential neighborhoods, the mechanism

of residential parking benefit districts³ will ensure that unwanted spill over parking is prevented there as well. Once these two key program actions have been implemented, imposing minimum parking requirements becomes superfluous.

Ventura's existing minimum parking requirements often require more than one square foot of parking area for every square foot of building. And the minimum parking requirements for downtown often require more parking than building, and this is especially true for uses that help create vibrancy and life downtown (restaurants, night clubs, etc). Removing these requirements, and the interim step of reducing them to levels appropriate to a traditional downtown, can greatly improve urban design, while making it possible to build many projects that were previously infeasible.

After minimum parking requirements have been reduced – and after the recommendations in this plan to prevent spillover parking have been successfully implemented – minimum parking requirements for all new development in the Downtown Plan Specific will be removed. Doing so will provide numerous rewards, allowing Ventura to achieve its goals of a more walkable and transit oriented downtown, a healthier economy and environment, lower housing costs and better urban design.

While the necessary strategies to prevent spillover parking are being established, minimum parking requirements for downtown Ventura will be reduced to rates that reflect the actual demand observed in similar mixed-use downtowns.

New Minimum Parking Requirements

The 2000 Census shows that residents of Downtown own substantially fewer vehicles per household than both the national average and the citywide average; this pattern holds true for both rental units and ownership units. Among homeowners in the Downtown, the average household owns 1.48 vehicles, while among renters the average household has just 0.72 vehicles. To reflect this difference in vehicle ownership rates, the minimum parking requirements included in the Development Code (Chapter III) have been revised. The new minimum parking requirements are as follows:

1. Nonresidential Parking requirements: 2 parking spaces per 1,000 square feet.

³ See Actions S3.1 through S3.3 for a description of the proposed parking benefit districts.

DOWNTOWN PARKING MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

The establishment of a single, “blended” ratio for all nonresidential land uses serves two purposes: (1) it reflects the typical average demand for observed for Downtown Ventura uses in comparable downtowns; and (2) it makes it possible for land uses to change freely over time within a building, as property owner’s needs and economic demands change.

2. Residential parking requirements: 1 parking space per 1,500 square feet.
 - a. No parking spaces required for single-room occupancy (SRO) units

Additionally, the following parking provisions are established:

- Except for designated disabled parking spaces, no parking spaces for any use in the Downtown Specific Plan area are required to be individually accessible (e.g., tandem, stacking, and valet parking are permitted by right to satisfy the minimum parking requirements).
- Shared on-site parking between land uses with different periods of peak parking demand are allowed for all uses in the Downtown Specific Plan area. Shared on-site parking is allowed to satisfy 100% of the minimum parking requirement for each use at the approval of the Community Development Director.
- Off-site parking is allowed, within 1,250 feet, to satisfy 100% of the minimum parking requirement for each use at the approval of the Community Development Director. Off-site parking located further than 1,250 feet may be allowed at the approval of the Community Development Director.
- The incorporation of transportation and parking demand management strategies to justify a reduced amount of parking will be allowed at the approval of the Community Development Director.

Action S1.2: *Implement new code and parking regulations for all new development in the Downtown Specific Plan area that expands applicability of the existing in-lieu parking fee program to all new development.*

Timing: Short-term (2008-2009)

The current option to pay a fee in-lieu of providing on-site parking will be expanded to apply to all development types within the Downtown Specific Plan area. Payment of the in-lieu parking fee for each required space would be allowed to satisfy 100% of the minimum parking requirement. The in-lieu revenue generated by the program will be used to fund parking and transportation management strategies contained in this plan.

Action S1.3: *Through Development Code revisions, continue to reduce parking requirements in a phased approach as parking supply balances with parking demand. Allow further reductions for projects that incorporate transportation and parking demand management strategies.*

Timing: Long-term (2011 and beyond)

For greater explanation of the rationale and benefit of reducing minimum parking requirements, see also the description for Action S1.2.

Action S1.4: *Once parking resources are sufficiently shared to meet demand and future supply needs are funded, remove minimum parking requirements in a phased approach.*

Timing: Long-term (2011 and beyond)

After market-rate pricing has been instituted for Downtown’s on-street parking and residential parking benefit districts have been established, the City will be able to remove minimum parking requirements in the Downtown Specific Plan area. For greater explanation of the rationale and benefit of reducing and eliminating minimum parking requirements, see the description for Action S1.2.

Action S2.1: *Complete a study of existing parking supply and demand for all public on-street, public off-street, and private parking lots and structures in the Downtown Specific Plan area.*

Timing: Near-term (2007-2008)

A regularly updated analysis of parking supply and demand is required to maximize the efficient siting and management of the parking supply. Until management

systems such as parking meters and kiosks are in place that can monitor parking utilization on a daily basis, a regular update of on-street and off-street parking supply and utilization is required.

Action S2.2: *Based on the results of the parking study identified in Action S2.1, determine where future public parking supply should be added due to high demand or anticipated redevelopment of existing at-grade lots. Reserve potential locations for future public parking structures. Proceed with initial planning, financing, and designing of a new public parking structure where demand is anticipated to be greatest.*

Timing: Near-term (2007-2008)

Because the funding, planning and design efforts required to construct a public parking structure take many years to complete, these steps must be initiated in advance of actual need and as early as possible. That way, the City will be able to provide adequate parking once surface lots are converted to new uses and the Downtown occupancy rates demonstrate that additional parking supply is needed.

Action S2.3: *Construct additional parking supply, such as parking structures, when Downtown peak parking occupancy regularly and consistently exceeds 80% in the Downtown Core. Parking supply shall be located as identified in Action S2.1.*

Timing: Long-term (2011 and beyond)

Construction of a City-funded public parking structure takes years of planning and fund raising, which is why the planning for such structures will take place beginning in 2007. The actual construction of a new structure should be underway by 2011 or should begin when occupancy regularly exceeds 80% in order to maintain and not exceed 85% occupancy in the Downtown Core.

Action S3.1: *Form a Commercial Parking Benefit District that dedicates parking revenue to public improvements and services within the Downtown Specific Plan area only. Potential net revenue uses include landscaping, trash receptacles and collection service, street cleaning, pedestrian-scaled lighting, transit and bicycle infrastructure, and management of*

Downtown transportation amenities and infrastructure.

Timing: Mid-term (2008-2011)

Always available, convenient, on-street customer parking is of primary importance for ground-level retail to succeed. To create vacancies and rapid turnover in the best, most convenient, front door parking spaces, it is crucial to have price incentives to persuade some drivers to park in the less convenient spaces (on upper floors of a parking structure or in a lot a block or two away): higher prices for the best spots, cheap or free for the less convenient, currently underused lots. The sequential steps necessary to accomplish this include:

1. Create both commercial and residential parking benefit districts

Creation of both commercial and residential parking benefit districts will manage supply and demand by putting customers first to create vacancies and turnover of the most convenient “front door” curb parking spaces to ensure availability for customers and visitors. The Districts will also provide revenues necessary to increase the supply of shared public parking and improve the public realm.

2. Amend existing downtown commercial parking districts

There are currently two downtown commercial parking districts that were established in the 1950's. They have a long history and may have remaining obligations that should be addressed. Currently, the two districts are the only Downtown areas in which in lieu fees may be collected.

3. Implement paid parking (see Action S3.2)

Action S3.2: *Implement a paid parking program to achieve Downtown revitalization goals, including improved urban design, cleanliness, safety and economic vitality.*

Paid parking would be established in areas identified in Action S2.1, and north of Highway 101. Public parking supply south of Highway 101 is not subject to the regulations of this Downtown Parking Management Program.

Timing: Mid-term (2008-2011)

DOWNTOWN PARKING MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Multi-space, pay-by-space parking meters will be installed in the core commercial area of downtown. Meter locations will be finalized through analysis of existing parking supply and demand conditions identified in the parking study per Action S2.1.

- Multi-space meters control 10-20 parking spaces, resulting in just one or two meters per block face.
- Meters will accept multiple forms of payment (coins, credit cards, etc.) and may allow the user to extend time from any other meter, or by cell phone, to provide ease of use.
- Meters will be solar powered and centrally networked with wireless technology, to reduce operation costs and improve parking management and pricing decisions.
- Implement a “pay-by-space” payment system which allows motorists to park, pay, and go (not pay-and-display, which requires customer to return to vehicle to display a receipt and can contribute to litter problems)

Parking prices will be set at rates that create a 15% vacancy rate on each block.

Motorists can be thought of as falling into two primary categories: bargain hunters and convenience seekers. Convenience seekers are more willing to pay for an available front door spot. Many shoppers and diners are convenience seekers: they are typically less sensitive to parking charges because they stay for relatively short periods of time, meaning that they will accumulate less of a fee than an employee or other all-day visitor. By contrast, many long-stay parkers, such as employees, find it more worthwhile to walk a block to save on eight hours worth of parking fees. With proper pricing, the bargain hunters will choose currently underutilized lots, leaving the prime spots available for those convenience seekers who are willing to spend a bit more. For Downtown merchants, it is important to make prime spots available for both those who are willing to pay a small fee to park are also those who are willing to spend money in downtown stores and restaurants.

If prices are used to create vacancies and turnover in the prime parking spots, then what is the right price? An ideal occupancy rate is 85% at even the busiest hour, a rate that leaves about one out of every seven spaces available, or approximately two empty spaces on each block face. This provides enough vacancies

that visitors can easily find a spot near their destination when they first arrive. For each block and each parking lot in Downtown, the right price is the price that will achieve this goal. This means that pricing should not be uniform: the most desirable spaces need higher prices, while less convenient lots are cheap or may even be free. Prices should also vary by time of day and day of week: for example, higher at noon, and lower at midnight.

Ideally, parking occupancy for each block and lot should be monitored carefully, and prices adjusted regularly to keep enough spaces available. In short, prices should be set at market rate, according to demand, so that just enough spaces are always available. Professor Donald Shoup of UCLA advocates setting prices for parking according to the “Goldilocks Principle”:

The price is too high if many spaces are vacant, and too low if no spaces are vacant. Children learn that porridge shouldn’t be too hot or too cold, and that beds shouldn’t be too soft or too firm. Likewise, the price of curbside parking shouldn’t be too high or too low. When about 15 percent of curbside spaces are vacant, the price is just right. What alternative price could be better?

If this principle is followed, then there need be no fear that pricing parking will drive customers away. After all, when the front-door parking spots at the curb are entirely full, under-pricing parking cannot create more curbside parking spaces for customers, because it cannot create more spaces. And, if the initial parking meter rate on a block is accidentally set too high, so that there are too many vacancies, then a policy goal of achieving an 85% occupancy rate will result in lowering the parking rate until the parking is once again well used (including making parking free, if need be).

Time limits and all-day loading zones will be eliminated.

Once a policy of market rate pricing is adopted, with the goal of achieving an 85% occupancy rate on each block, even at the busiest hours, then time limits can actually be eliminated. With their elimination, much of the worry and “ticket anxiety” for downtown customers disappears. There will always be spaces available to park.

All-day loading zones will also no longer be necessary once parking meters are installed since there will always be a space available to park on the block where the loading is occurring. Allowing commercial loading to take place in the morning hours (7 am to 10 am) for free will shift this activity to a more appropriate time period when larger delivery vehicles will not block traffic or take several parking spaces.

Action S3.3: *Establish Residential Parking Benefit Districts to prevent unwanted spillover parking in adjacent residential neighborhoods.*

Timing: Mid-term (2008-2011)

Once the Commercial Benefit District is established some existing residents inside of the district boundaries will have no readily available, free off-site parking. As the City transitions from a downtown with free parking to one with market driven parking pricing, a short term parking permit arrangement will be established to handle the transition. The permit will give existing residents who do not have any available on-site or alternative parking the ability to park in a designated lot.

III. MANAGING PARKING DEMAND

Managing the demand for parking will allow current investment of parking supply to be utilized more efficiently, thereby reducing the long-term cost of having to build more supply than is needed to support a successful, sustainable downtown. The following set of parking demand management policies and actions will be implemented, in concert with policies and actions to manage parking supply, to meet the eight overall Downtown Specific Plan Goals. The following actions are summarized in Section I. Implementation Plan Summary in chronological order of implementation. For this Section, they are organized under pertinent policy statements.

POLICIES AND ACTIONS

Policy D1: Manage the demand for public and private parking.

Action D1.1: Implement new code and parking regulations for all new development in the Downtown Specific Plan area that requires residential parking costs to be “unbundled” from the cost of the housing itself.

Action D1.2: Hire new parking management staff (or contractors) to implement the requirements of this plan and perform ongoing monitoring and supply and demand analyses.

Action D1.3: Require all employers in the Downtown Specific Plan area to offer employees the option to “cash out” the cost, if applicable, of a parking space provided by the employer. Parking spaces paid for by employers are made available to employees as a Transportation Fringe Benefit to promote use of alternative transportation methods⁴.

⁴ Current state law (§43845 of the California Health and Safety Code) already requires employers with over 50 employees to offer the parking cash out.

DOWNTOWN PARKING MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Policy D2: Invest a portion of net parking revenues in transportation demand management strategies.

Action D2.1: Use net parking revenue from the Commercial Parking Benefit Districts to fund street improvements and long-term transportation and parking demand management programs and incentives within the Downtown Specific Plan area, including:

- a. Universal transit passes for all residents and employees in the Commercial Parking Benefit District; and
- b. A car sharing program with one or more convenient and highly-visible “pods” located in Downtown Specific Plan area.

RATIONALE FOR ACTIONS

Action D1.1: *Implement new code and parking regulations for all new development in the Downtown Specific Plan area that requires residential parking costs to be “unbundled” from the cost of the housing itself.*

Timing: Concurrent with DTSP adoption (2007)

The City will require that all new residential development “unbundle” the full cost of providing parking from the cost of the housing itself to create a separate charge for use of the parking spaces.

Parking costs are generally included in the sale or rental price of housing. But although the cost of parking is often hidden in this way, parking is never free. Everyone pays for parking, but almost nobody pays directly. Each parking space can cost upwards of \$31,000 to build new and is usually already included in the purchase price of the residential unit. Unbundling parking provides a financial reward to households who decide to dispense with one or more of their cars, and helps attract those who wish to live in a transit-oriented neighborhood where it is possible to live well with only one car, or even no car, per household.

Allowing this choice can provide a substantial financial benefit. For example, among downtown Ventura households earning less than \$25,000 per year, more than 40% have no car, and more than 70% have one car or fewer. Unbundling parking costs means that these households no longer have to pay for parking spaces

that they may not be able to use or afford.

Charging separately for parking is also the single most effective strategy to encourage households to own fewer cars, and rely more on walking, bicycling and using public transit (especially when coupled with universal transit passes). According to one study, unbundling residential parking can significantly reduce household vehicle ownership and parking demand by as much as 35% depending on the monthly cost of the parking space.

Action D1.2: *Hire new parking management staff (or contractors) to implement the requirements of this plan and perform ongoing monitoring and supply and demand analyses.*

Timing: Near-term (2007-2008)

Action D1.3: *Require all employers in the Downtown Specific Plan area to offer employees the option to “cash out” the cost, if applicable, of a parking space provided by the employer. Parking spaces paid for by employers are made available to employees as a Transportation Fringe Benefit to promote use of alternative transportation methods⁵.*

Timing: Mid-term (2008-2011)

Requiring all new and existing employers that provide subsidized employee parking to offer their employees the option to “cash out” their parking subsidy will lower parking demand. Many employers in downtown (including the City itself) provide free private parking for their employees. Under a parking cash out requirement, employers will be able to continue this practice on the condition that they offer the cash value of the parking subsidy to any employee who does not drive to work.

The cash value of the parking subsidy would be offered in one of two forms:

- A transit/vanpool subsidy equal to the value of the parking subsidy (of which up to \$105 is tax-free for both employer and employee)
- A taxable carpool/walk/bike subsidy equal to the value of the parking subsidy

⁵ Current state law (§43845 of the California Health and Safety Code) already requires employers with over 50 employees to offer the parking cash out.

Employees who opt to cash out their parking subsidies would not be eligible to receive free parking from the employer, and would be responsible for paying to park on days when they drive to work even if there is no pay mechanism.

BENEFITS OF PARKING CASH OUT

- Provides an equal transportation subsidy to employees who ride transit, carpool, vanpool, walk or bicycle to work. The benefit is particularly valuable to low-income employees, who are less likely to drive to work alone.
- Provides a low-cost fringe benefit that can help individual businesses recruit and retain employees.
- Employers report that parking cash-out requirements are simple to administer and enforce, typically requiring just one to two minutes per employee per month to administer.

In addition to these benefits, the primary benefit of a parking cash out program is their proven effect on reducing auto congestion and parking demand. Studies that illustrate programs implemented in cities, colleges, and by individual employers, covering tens of thousands of employees and hundreds of firms show that, even in suburban locations with little or no transit, financial incentives can substantially reduce parking demand. On average, a financial incentive of \$70 per month reduced parking demand by over one-quarter. At the University of Washington, a financial incentive of just \$18 per month reduced parking demand by 24 percent.

State Law currently requires the employer to provide a cash allowance to an employee if the employer has an out-of-pocket expense to provide parking for its employees. For instance, the office building that is planned on being built at 60 California Street has entered into an agreement with the City to lease spaces in the City's Santa Clara Street Parking structure. If the owner of the building passes on the monthly per space lease cost of the parking to a tenant, the tenant (employer) is required to provide a subsidy to any employee that does not use one of the leasable spaces, provided that the employer receives a credit for the unused space.

However, to achieve the full potential of parking cash-out programs, Ventura would adopt local legislation that extends parking cash out requirements to all employers

in the Downtown Specific Plan area who provide free/reduced price parking to their employees, including both those who own or lease their parking. The ordinance would require that any downtown employers that provide subsidized parking to one or more of their employees must provide all their employees with the option to "cash out" their employee parking by taking the cash value of the parking subsidy. To establish the value of parking, the ordinance would define the market value of parking downtown using the most recent estimate of the cost to add additional parking spaces to downtown, including both the opportunity costs of land, and the cost to build operate and maintain parking itself. This figure currently stands at \$188 per month.

In order to enforce this parking cash out requirement, the City would have to require employers to provide proof of compliance (via an affidavit signed by a company officer) at the same time that they receive/renew their business license or pay their annual business taxes. This method ensures that all employers are in compliance with parking cash out requirements on an ongoing basis, rather than limiting proof of compliance to a one-time enforcement for employers occupying new or renovated commercial buildings.

Action D2.1: *Use net parking revenue from the Commercial Parking Benefit Districts to fund street improvements and long-term transportation and parking demand management programs and incentives, within the Downtown Specific Plan area, including:*

- a. Universal transit passes for all residents and employees in the Commercial Parking Benefit District; and*
- b. A car sharing program with one or more convenient and highly-visible "pods" located in Downtown Specific Plan area.*

Timing: Long-term (2011 and beyond)

EXAMPLE PARKING DEMAND MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS AND INCENTIVES

It can often be cheaper to reduce some of the parking demand than to only construct new parking. The City will invest in the most cost-effective mix of transportation modes for access to downtown, including both public parking and transportation demand management strategies. By investing in the following package of demand-reduction strategies, the City will cost-

DOWNTOWN PARKING MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

effectively reduce parking demand in downtown (and the resulting traffic volumes) by one quarter to one third. A portion of parking revenues (and other fees, grants, and/or transportation funds, when available) will be used to establish a full menu of transportation programs for the benefit of all downtown residents and employers. These programs may include:

- **Carpool & Vanpool Incentives.** The City will work with the Ventura County Transportation Commission's Rideshare program to provide ride-sharing services, such as a carpool and vanpool incentives, customized ride-matching services, a Guaranteed Ride Home program (offering a limited number of emergency rides home), and an active marketing program to advertise the services to employees and residents.
- **Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities.** Sidewalk and street crossing improvements will make walking safer and more desirable. Increased bicycle facilities including a centralized location for secure bike parking, clothes lockers, and shower facilities.
- **Transportation Resource Center.** An information center will be established to provide personalized information on transit routes and schedules, carpool and vanpool programs, bicycle routes and facilities and other transportation options. The center may take a variety of forms from an actual physical storefront to on-line based virtual resource center.

Employees commuting to Downtown already have lower drive alone rates than employees who work elsewhere in Ventura (60% compared to 66%) and commute by transit, bike, and on foot at twice the rate of employees commuting to other areas of Ventura. With a focused effort, and genuine financial incentives, the share can be increased.

Commute Mode for Downtown Employees

Commute Mode	Downtown	Citywide
Drive Alone	60%	66%
Carpool	10%	11%
Transit	2%	1%
Bike / Walk	6%	3%
Worked at home	2%	3%
Total Non-Drive Alone	21%	19%

Source: 2000 US Census Transportation Planning Package

Universal transit passes for all residents and employees in the Commercial Parking Benefit District.

A universal transit pass program provides free, unlimited ride transit passes for every employee and resident of the Downtown Specific Plan area. The annual passes will be purchased by the Parking Benefit District from the transit operators (SCAT and VISTA). Universal transit passes will not only reduce parking demand, but will provide public transit systems with a stable source of income, while helping increase ridership.

A review of existing universal transit pass programs found that the annual per employee fees are between 1% and 17% of the retail price for an equivalent annual transit pass. The principle of employee and/or residential transit passes is similar to that of group insurance plans – transit agencies can offer deep bulk discounts when selling passes to a large group, with universal enrollment, on the basis that not all those offered the pass will actually use them regularly.

An example of a universal transit pass is the Eco-Pass program in downtown Boulder, which provides free transit on Denver's Regional Transportation District (RTD) light rail and buses to more than 7500 employees, employed by 700 different businesses in downtown Boulder. To fund this program, Boulder's downtown parking benefit district pays a flat fee for each employee who is enrolled in the program, regardless of whether the employee actually rides transit. Because every single employee in the downtown is enrolled in the program, the Regional Transportation District in turn provides the transit passes at a deep bulk discount.

Universal transit passes provide multiple benefits for riders, the City, and transit providers as listed below:

For transit riders:

- Free access to transit (e.g., eliminating the current \$1.25 per ride or \$41 per month South Coast area transit pass price)
- Rewards existing riders, attracts new ones
- For employees who drive, making public transit free can effectively create demand for existing transit routes that provide convenient park-and-ride shuttles to existing under-utilized remote parking areas.

For transit operators:

- Provides a stable source of income
- Increases transit ridership, helping to meet agency ridership goals and farebox ratio requirements
- Can help improve cost recovery, reduce agency subsidy, and/or fund service improvements such as a downtown shuttle

For the City and Downtown:

- Reduces traffic congestion and increases transit ridership
- Reduces existing parking demand. For instance, Santa Clara County's ECO Pass program resulted in a 19% reduction in parking demand
- Reduces unmet parking demand. For instance, UCLA's BruinGo! program resulted in 1,300 fewer vehicle trips which resulted 1,331 fewer students on the wait list for parking permits (a 36% reduction)
- Reduces future growth in parking demand. For instance, the University of Washington's U-Pass program helped avoid construction of 3,600 new spaces, saving \$100 million
- Universal transit pass programs can benefit new development if implemented concurrently with reduced parking requirements, which consequently lower construction costs
- Providing free transit passes to residents provides an amenity that can help attract renters or home buyers seeking a "downtown lifestyle"

For employees/employers:

- Reduces demand for parking on-site or leased spaces off-site.
- Provides a tax-advantaged transportation benefit that can help recruit and retain employees

As many case studies illustrate, free transit passes are an extremely effective means to reduce the number of car trips in an area; reductions in car mode share of 4% to 22% have been documented, with an average reduction of 11%. By removing any cost barrier to using transit, including the need to search for spare change for each trip, people become much more likely to take transit to work or for non-work trips.

Many cities and institutions have found that trying to provide additional parking spaces costs much more than reducing parking demand by simply providing everyone with a free transit pass. For example, a study of UCLA's universal transit pass program found that a new parking space costs more than 3 times as much as a free transit pass (\$223/month versus \$71/month).

In addition, on-street parking spaces formerly taken by residents' autos free up more spaces for short-term parkers. This can provide additional parking revenue to pay for improvements in the Commercial Parking Benefit District. For example, the same study of UCLA's universal transit pass program mentioned above found that an hourly space on-campus generates 30% more revenue than a monthly space if used 50% of the time and 149% more revenue than a monthly space if used 100% of the time.

Purchase of a universal transit pass program for all downtown employees and existing residents will be funded through some combination of the following funding sources:

- Parking revenue
- Grants from environmental, public health, traffic mitigation sources (grants usually funds pilot projects)
- Local Transportation Development Act (TDA) funds

In implementing a universal transit pass program, the City will emphasize:

- Universal coverage for all residents, which will allow for a lower per rider costs and a deeper discount to be offered
- Automatic opt-in, which lowers sign-up barriers and encourages greater participation and ridership gains
- Plan for targeted transit service improvements to further encourage usage of the universal transit pass and/or to respond to increased ridership after the program is launched

Car Sharing Program

The City of Ventura will establish a car sharing service with one or more shared vehicle "pods" strategically located in the Downtown Specific Plan area. In order

DOWNTOWN PARKING MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

to help establish a car sharing service, the City will establish a car sharing program concurrent with the launch of the a transit pass program and include the following strategies:

- Replace some existing city-owned fleet vehicles with car sharing cars.
- Partially or fully subsidize operation costs for a specified term.
- Require developers to pay into a car-share start-up fund.
- Provide other incentives, such as:
 - » Offering convenient and visible spaces in downtown public parking facilities to car sharing providers for locating car sharing “pods”.
 - » Requiring developers of large downtown projects to offer car sharing operators the right of first refusal for a limited number of parking spaces
 - » Offering city employees discounted annual car sharing memberships.

National car sharing operators using telephone and Internet-based reservation systems, allow for a hassle-free way to rent cars by the hour, with members receiving a single bill at the end of the month for all their usage. The shared cars are located at convenient neighborhood “pods”.

This strategy has proven successful in reducing both household vehicle ownership and the percentage of employees who drive alone because of the need to have a car for errands during the workday. As a result, car sharing can be an important tool to reduce parking demand.

For residents, car sharing reduces the need to own a vehicle, particularly a second or third car. Recent surveys have shown that more than half of car-share users have sold at least one vehicle since joining a program in the San Francisco Bay Area. For employees, car sharing allows them to take transit to work, since they will have a vehicle available for errands during the day.

Dedicate Parking Revenues to Public Improvements and Public Services that Benefit the Downtown Specific Plan Area

Revenues from paid parking in the Commercial Parking Benefit District will fund public improvements that benefit the Downtown Specific Plan area. (“Revenues” means total parking revenues from the area, less revenue collection costs, such as purchase and operation of the meters, enforcement and the administration of the district.) Downtown parking revenues need to be spent for the benefit of the Downtown on projects that merchants and property owners have had a choice in deciding rather than having the parking revenues disappear into the General Fund. Bonding against future revenue (i.e. issuing revenue bonds) will enable to fund larger capital projects (including the cost of the meters) in the early stages of implementing the Commercial Parking Benefit District.

To ensure such continuing support for a Commercial Parking Benefit District, and for continuing to charge fair market rates for parking, it is crucial to give downtown stakeholders a strong voice in setting policies for the district, deciding how downtown parking revenues should be spent, and overseeing the operation of district to ensure that the monies collected from their customers are spent wisely.

Establish a Parking Advisory Board

To accomplish this, the City Council should establish an advisory board, similar to the City of Pasadena’s Parking Meter Revenue Advisory Board, which advises the City Council on policies, rates and expenditures of meter revenues. City Council would appoint the members of the Advisory Board, with the recommended composition including City staff, Downtown business and property owners and other Downtown community leaders. In particular, the Advisory Board should advise City Council how the community would like the meter revenue spent in downtown. The City Council will retain final approval over all expenditures.

DOWNTOWN 2006-2011 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

Table V-1

Project	Project Description	Responsible Agency/Dept.	Completion (If funded) FY	Total Estimated Project Cost	Funding Source	Funding Identification
DRAINAGE						
93008	Chestnut/Main Drainage Improvements	Public Works	2007-08	\$449,000	CIP General	Funding Identified
93009	Kalorama/Church Storm Drain Replacement - Phase I	Public Works	2007-08	\$654,599	CIP General	Funding Identified
93013	Beach Water Quality Improvements Phase I	Public Works	2006-07	\$953,000	Grant (CIP General)	Funding Identified
93013	Beach Water Quality Improvements Phase II	Public Works	2008-09	\$747,000	Unfunded Grant	Funding Not Identified
72036	Kalorama/Church Storm Drain Replacement - Phase II	Public Works	2008-09	\$1,100,000	CIP General	Funding Not Identified
72051	Surfers Point Concrete Removal	Public Works	2009-10	\$400,000	CIP General	Funding Not Identified
72066	Alessandro/Sanjon Drainage System	Public Works	2008-09	\$1,000,000	CIP General	Funding Not Identified
FACILITIES						
72031	HVAC City Hall West	Public Works	2008-09	\$1,200,000	CIP General	Funding Not Identified
72043	Beachfront Parking Structure Repairs	Public Works	2008-09	\$927,200	CIP General	Funding Partially Identified
93958	Downtown Cultural District Implementation	Comm Services	2006-07	\$824,000	CIP General	Funding Identified
93998	City Hall East First Floor Refurbishment	Public Works	2007-08	\$2,914,000	CIP General	Funding Identified
99884	Downtown Restroom	Redevelopment Agency	2007-08	\$479,500	Redevelopment Agency	Funding Identified
72052	Maintenance Yard Roofs & Skylights	Public Works	2009-10	\$345,000	CIP General	Funding Not Identified
72057	City Hall Back Entrance Renovation	Public Works	2009-10	\$250,000	CIP General	Funding Not Identified
72058	City Hall Third Floor Tenant Improvements	Public Works	2008-09	\$2,000,000	CIP General	Funding Not Identified
72059	City Hall Second Floor Renovation	Public Works	2009-10	\$500,000	CIP General	Funding Not Identified
72061	California Plaza Repairs	Public Works	2008-09	\$300,000	CIP General	Funding Not Identified
72063	Downtown Tree Well Electrical System Replacement	Public Works	2008-09	\$300,000	CIP General	Funding Not Identified
78004	ADA - Ortega Adobe and Olivias Adobe	Public Works	2010-11	\$517,500	CDBG	Funding Not Identified
93980	Pomenade Beach Stairs and Seawall	Public Works	2008-09	\$2,682,000	CIP General	Funding Partially Identified
94664	Santa Clara Senior Center Renovation	Public Works	2008-09	\$500,000	CDBG	Funding Not Identified
(none)	New Parking Structure	Public Works	2011 +	\$10,000,000	RDA, Development Impact Fee	Funding Partially Identified

DOWNTOWN 2006-2011 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

Table V-1

Project	Project Description	Responsible Agency/Dept.	Completion (If funded) FY	Total Estimated Project Cost	Funding Source	Funding Identification
PARKS AND RECREATION						
92865	Seaside Wilderness Park Enhancement	Public Works	2007-08	\$610,540	Grant (CIP General)	Funding Identified
92895	Ventura River Estuary Enhancement	Public Works	2006-07	\$90,000	Grant (CIP General)	Funding Identified
93014	Cemetery Memorial Park Improvement	Public Works	2007-08	\$435,000	CIP General	Funding Identified
93959	Surfers Point Improvements	Public Works	2007-08	\$6,537,137	Grants (CIP General)	Funding Partially Identified
72018	Mission Park Restroom Renovation	Public Works	2008-09	\$977,500	CIP General	Funding Not Identified
PUBLIC ART						
79119	City Hall Art Gallery Improvements	Comm Services	2008-09	\$100,000	Public Art (01)	Funding Identified
98150	Public Art - California Street Bridge	Comm Services	2007-08	\$400,000	Public Art (12)	Funding Partially Identified
98158	Public Art - Figueroa Street	Comm Services	2006-07	\$65,000	Public Art (12)	Funding Identified
98165	Public Art - Mission Park Gateway	Comm Services	2007-08	\$90,000	Public Art (18PT)	Funding Identified
98167	Public Art - Beachfront Promenade & Surfers' Point	Comm Services	2007-08	\$32,000	Public Art (01)	Funding Identified
98174	Public Art - Historic Water Aqueduct	Comm Services	2007-08	\$70,000	Public Art (72)	Funding Identified
98184	Public Art - Cemetery Memorial Project	Comm Services	2006-07	\$25,000	Public Art (01)	Funding Identified
98175	Public Art - Oak Street Improvements	Comm Services	2008-09	\$231,500	Public Art (12)	Funding Identified

Project	Project Description	Responsible Agency/Dept.	Completion (If funded) FY	Total Estimated Project Cost	Funding Source	Funding Identification
STREETS & STREETScape						
72024	ASM - Downtown	Public Works	2008-09	\$750,000	Gas Tax	Funding Identified
72046	ASM - Olive Street Resurfacing	Public Works	2008-09	\$1,000,000	Grants & Gas Tax	Funding Identified
91894	California Street Bridge Upgrade	Public Works	2007-08	\$1,231,000	Grants & Gas Tax (TDA)	Funding Identified
91911	Figueroa Street Underpass	Public Works	2006-07	\$532,640	Grants & Gas Tax	Funding Identified
71010	City Parking Lot Irrigation & Landscape Upgrade	Public Works	2009-10	\$690,000	CIP General	Funding Not Identified
72025	ASM - Poli Street/Buena Vista Area	Public Works	2009-10	\$990,000	Gas Tax	Funding Identified
72040	Main Street Bridge Protection	Public Works	2008-09	\$300,000	Gas Tax	Funding Identified
99885	Oak Street Improvements	Redevelopment Agency	2008-09	\$611,000	Redevelopment Agency	Funding Identified
WASTEWATER UTILITY						
96880	Sewer Capacity Upgrades	Public Works	2007-08	\$322,490	Wastewater	Funding Identified
96885	Downtown Sewer Line Replacement	Public Works	2007-08	\$450,000	Wastewater	Funding Identified
96889	2005 Sewer Lining and Manhole Rehabilitation	Public Works	2007-08	\$1,000,000	Wastewater	Funding Identified
96886	Aliso Relief Sewer	Public Works	2008-09	\$1,000,000	Wastewater	Funding Identified
WATER UTILITY						
97901	Downtown Water Main Replacement	Public Works	2007-08	\$2,472,500	Water	Funding Identified
97887	Booster Pump Station Upgrades	Public Works	2009-10	\$2,500,000	Water	Funding Not Identified
97889	Waterline - Harbor Blvd.	Public Works	2008-09	\$2,000,000	Water	Funding Not Identified