

Galveston Avenue Corridor Parking Study
Stakeholder Interview Summary
May 2017

Prepared for the City of Bend
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in coordination with Rick Williams Consulting, Inc. and Kittelson & Associates, Inc.

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Introduction

The Galveston Avenue Corridor comprises a mix of commercial businesses and established residential neighborhoods in northwest Bend. The area has become increasingly active with residents and visitors frequenting the many restaurants, bars, and shops. While off-street parking exists at local businesses, some overflow visitors as well as employees utilize adjacent residential streets for parking during business hours. While the area has changed and grown, parking is not well understood there and no analysis of the parking system has been done to date.

The Bend City Council asked City staff to study parking in the area. The City contracted with Rick Williams Consulting (RWC), a parking management firm to conduct an analysis of the parking conditions in the study area. In addition to RWC, Kittelson & Associates, a transportation engineering firm, and Anne E. George Facilitation, Mediation + Public Involvement, a local public engagement consultant, are part of the project team.

The study began in April 2017, and is scheduled to be completed in early fall. The study will involve both an analysis of the current parking conditions and result in the development of a set of possible parking management solutions for community consideration.

Methodology

In May 2017, the project team conducted 10 interviews with 14 stakeholders to obtain some initial community input on both the final study area and local experiences parking. Interviewees were selected by City staff and the project team for the active role they play in the community, their varied interests, and their knowledge and skills. Interviews were conducted by Anne George on the project team. Interviews were held in-person and took place in coffee shops or the offices of interviewees. (See Appendix B for a full list of interviewees.)

Study Area Feedback

The interviewees were asked for feedback on the initial study area. (*The study area map can be found in Attachment A of this document.*) The majority of stakeholders interviewed felt the study area was sufficient and would allow the team to identify parking conditions and issues of note in the Galveston Avenue Corridor. Some felt the study area could be expanded an additional block both north and south from Galveston Avenue as they perceived visitors and employees in the area sometimes parked up to three blocks from Galveston Avenue when visiting an establishment. A participant also encouraged the City to include the Newport Avenue area in the study, contending that the Newport Avenue Corridor would likely experience similar parking issues as the Galveston study area in the future.

Key Themes

Interviewees were asked for their thoughts on what was both working well and what they perceived might need attention or study regarding parking management in the Galveston Avenue Corridor.

Parking System Components Working Well

Interviewees said there were components of the parking system in the area that worked well and should be noted.

Off-Street Parking

Some interviewees said they felt that many of the lots in the off-street parking system worked well. A number of businesses have parking lots that accommodate the parking needs of their

customers, interviewees said, although those businesses seem to have visitors who visit for periods of less than an hour and have small staffs. It should be noted there was concern expressed by interviewees about the capacity of some off-street lots that served restaurants and bars where visitors, interviewees said, often stayed for longer periods and parking stall turnover in the lots was infrequent.

On-Street System Satisfactory

Some interviewees felt the residential streets provided a valuable on-street parking option for visitors when off-street parking was at capacity at commercial establishments. In addition, some interviewees felt the on-street system was more than adequate for the different users in the system. Some interviewees shared that when they visited the area they were usually able to find vehicle parking within a two-block distance from their destination at all times of the day, which they found acceptable.

Area Residents and Others Considerate

Both business owners and local residents shared that they felt local inhabitants were considerate of visitors parking on residential streets. Interviewees said they felt people were generally attentive when driving on residential streets, particularly visitors or residents who lived in or frequently visited the area, they said. However, there was concern expressed that some visitors parking in the neighborhoods were loud, impeded access to driveways and/or mailboxes, or drove inattentively, with some interviewees speculating that these visitors were less familiar with the area or were not “locals.” Some interviewees said they felt some vehicles often parked too close to some of the residential intersections causing concerns about safety for pedestrians and drivers.

Market Will Result in a Commercial Area that Is Right-Sized for the Corridor

Some stakeholders said the system was working as it should and over time market forces would ultimately lead to a “right-sizing” of businesses and their accompanying parking needs in the area. Due to the location and lot sizes in the commercial area, some interviewees said they felt businesses that could accommodate the parking needs of customers would remain and thrive in the area. Businesses that needed or wanted to grow would find they needed to move to another area that could accommodate both their facility and parking needs. Interviewees felt this was already happening with at least one restaurant and brewery on the avenue opening a new location in an industrial area on the east side of Bend with a larger facility and parking area.

Parking System Community Concerns and Interests

Interviewees did share some concerns and thoughts for study about a number of themes on parking in the Galveston Avenue Corridor.

Lack of Parking Management

Some interviewees said they felt the parking system in the area felt chaotic or needed management. Interviewees said they felt there was no organization and the parking system was difficult to navigate. On-street stalls were not clearly marked and visitors often parked at inconsistent distances from other vehicles or impeded access to driveways and/or mail boxes.

Some interviewees said they felt local businesses lacked coordination and did not work well together to accommodate area parking needs. Businesses seemed unwilling to share off-street stalls when their lots were underutilized or their businesses were closed, some interviewees said.

Others said they felt residents contributed to parking issues when they appeared protective of the on-street parking in front of their homes, with interviewees saying some residents placed cones in front of their homes or were outwardly unwelcoming to visitors.

Galveston Avenue Corridor Brand

Interviewees expressed concern that businesses in the area may already be suffering because of a perception of a parking problem in the area. Business owners said that they feared customers were already choosing not to visit the area, especially during peak periods, because of a lack of perceived available parking. One interviewee remarked that the area had created a positive local reputation as a dynamic and enjoyable district, but that reputation was in danger if people began to brand the area as being one with a parking problem. Perhaps validating the concerns of some businesses, a number of interviewees shared that they had in fact chosen not to visit the area because of a concern there would not be parking available sufficiently close to their destination or they had, in fact, traveled to the area and left because they were unable to find parking within a short distance to their destination.

Commercial Parking in Residential Area

Some interviewees said they felt residential streets were not appropriate areas for commercial parking. Study area residents, interviewees said, were frequently unable to find on-street parking in front of or near their homes. There were concerns expressed that visitor and employee parking on residential streets had negatively affected the neighborhood with evening visitors who were impolite or seemingly inebriated returning to their vehicles on residential streets creating noise and damaging property.

Congestion was a concern for some interviewees who said they were troubled by visitor and employee parking on residential streets. This congestion, they said, was a result of both an increase in the number of vehicles parking on residential streets and visitors circulating through the neighborhood seeking parking. Others said they felt the change in the types of businesses that had been established in the last decade, mostly restaurants and bars, had resulted in more businesses operating in the evening, resulting in greater parking impacts in the residential areas. Visitors and employees were now more likely to be in the area in the evening when residents were often home or returning home in the evening. In the past, interviewees said, the business types were more mixed and attracted visitors at different times throughout the day.

Zoning

Some interviewees expressed concern about the current set of zoning categories for commercial establishments. Interviewees said they felt the categories were too broad and that certain uses within a category generated different levels of traffic or customer turnover. However, businesses in a category were held to the same parking standard of other businesses that generated more traffic or visitors who stayed longer. For example, interviewees said a coffee shop is held to the same parking requirements as a full-service restaurant where visitors tend to stay longer.

Others expressed concern that some city zoning required too little parking of commercial businesses by allowing commercial businesses to count on-street parking in their parking plans or allowing two adjacent buildings to count the same on-street stall.

A concern was also noted about zoning that allowed businesses to provide fewer vehicle parking stalls if they made other accommodations, such as increased bicycle parking. One interviewee said it felt like the City took an “apologist approach” toward business and would

make every accommodation possible to attract business, regardless of the real parking needs of the area.

In addition, while some interviewees expressed a desire for higher mandatory parking minimums, or the minimum number of stalls required by use, other interviewees said they felt the City should move to a policy of parking maximums, or the maximum number of parking stalls allowed. These interviewees said they felt parking minimums contributed to unnecessary off-street paved parking lots and only encouraged more vehicle traffic to the detriment of other travel modes such as transit, bicycling, or walking.

City Staff Expertise

Interviewees did express some concern about the expertise or knowledge of City frontline staff regarding parking requirements. Some interviewees said they felt they were not able to obtain accurate information or discuss options or solutions confidently with City staff when either developing a parcel or making changes to an existing business or location. Other interviewees said they felt some businesses would benefit from hiring professionals versed in land use and parking when considering development.

Local Challenges

Some interviewees said they felt there simply was not enough physical space in the commercial area to keep visitors and employees from parking on the residential streets. In saying so, some interviewees cautioned the project team to be careful and not overpromise on the benefits of new parking management for the area.

Other interviewees expressed concern about any plan to increase off-street parking requirements for businesses in the Corridor or calls for the area to build an off-street lot. These interviewees said they felt additional off-street parking would not resolve resident concerns, but rather exacerbate them. One interviewee remarked that if you built more parking more visitors would simply come to the area because parking would become more available.

Safety

While measurements of traffic safety or analysis are not part of the parking study, stakeholders expressed concern about pedestrian and bicyclist safety in the area as a result of increased vehicle parking on the residential streets in the study area. Some interviewees said they felt residential streets with vehicles parked on both sides of the street and a lack of sidewalks on a number of streets created an unsafe environment.

Vehicles, some interviewees said, were often parked too close together on streets or illegally at corners limiting sight lines for drivers. A lack of striping at intersections or identifying parking stalls, they said, contributed to safety concerns. Some interviewees said that with vehicles parked on both sides of the streets and two elementary schools just outside the study area, young students and families were often found bicycling or walking on streets that could not accommodate two vehicles traveling in opposite directions.

However, some interviewees said they felt allowing parking on both sides of the street, as opposed to one side of the street, created a safer environment for pedestrians and bicyclists because it encouraged drivers to travel slowly.

Input for Study Team

Interviewees were asked if they had questions or concepts they might like the project team to study. While the study, interviewees were told, is limited to a parking analysis of the area, interviewees were welcome to provide any input.

Ideas for Study

Data

Interviewees were pleased to learn that the study team would collect local data. Of note, there has not been a parking analysis study done in the area. Interviewees said they were pleased that the study team would collect data on occupancy, duration of stay, and non-resident vehicles parked on street in residential areas.

Interviewees did ask if data could be collected on the number of people traveling to the Corridor, as well as on drivers who choose not to park in the area due to a perceived lack of available parking stalls in the study area. However, the parking study is not scoped for this type of traffic analysis.

One Size Fits All

Some interviewees suggested the project team consider developing recommendations to address specific sections of the Corridor, where parking is found to be the most constricted, rather than suggestions that were designed to be implemented in the entire study area.

Pedestrian Friendly

Interviewees asked if there were ways that parking management could improve safety for pedestrians. Some interviewees asked if the study would consider including recommendations to make the area more pedestrian friendly, including a suggestion to have businesses coordinate to commit to shoveling sidewalks during snow events or installing bicycle racks as alternatives solutions in parking management. While the parking study will not be a transportation analysis study of the area, the study team will consider issues such as parking violations or limited sight lines due to parked vehicles.

Parking Assumptions

Some interviewees asked that the study challenge assumptions around parking minimums and perceptions that additional parking stalls would improve the area. One interviewee said that it was not about telling people they could not drive to the area, rather it was about providing people with good options for traveling to the area.

Zoning

Interviewees wanted to know if the study would consider how current zoning affects parking management goals in the area and make recommendations around possible changes. While the project team will consider zoning in its analysis, a citywide parking study underway will likely consider this question on a citywide basis.

Galveston Streetscape Planning Coordination

Interviewees wanted to know how and if the project team would consider the new Galveston Streetscape design in its parking study analysis and suggestions.

Future Planning

Interviewees asked that the project team develop suggestions for parking management that could adapt as the area changed over time. For example, interviewees asked how self-driving vehicles or the proliferation of private ride-hailing companies would affect parking management

in the area in the future. Other interviewees suggested the project team consider solutions that could be implemented if and when the commercial area become denser or built out.

Ideas to Explore

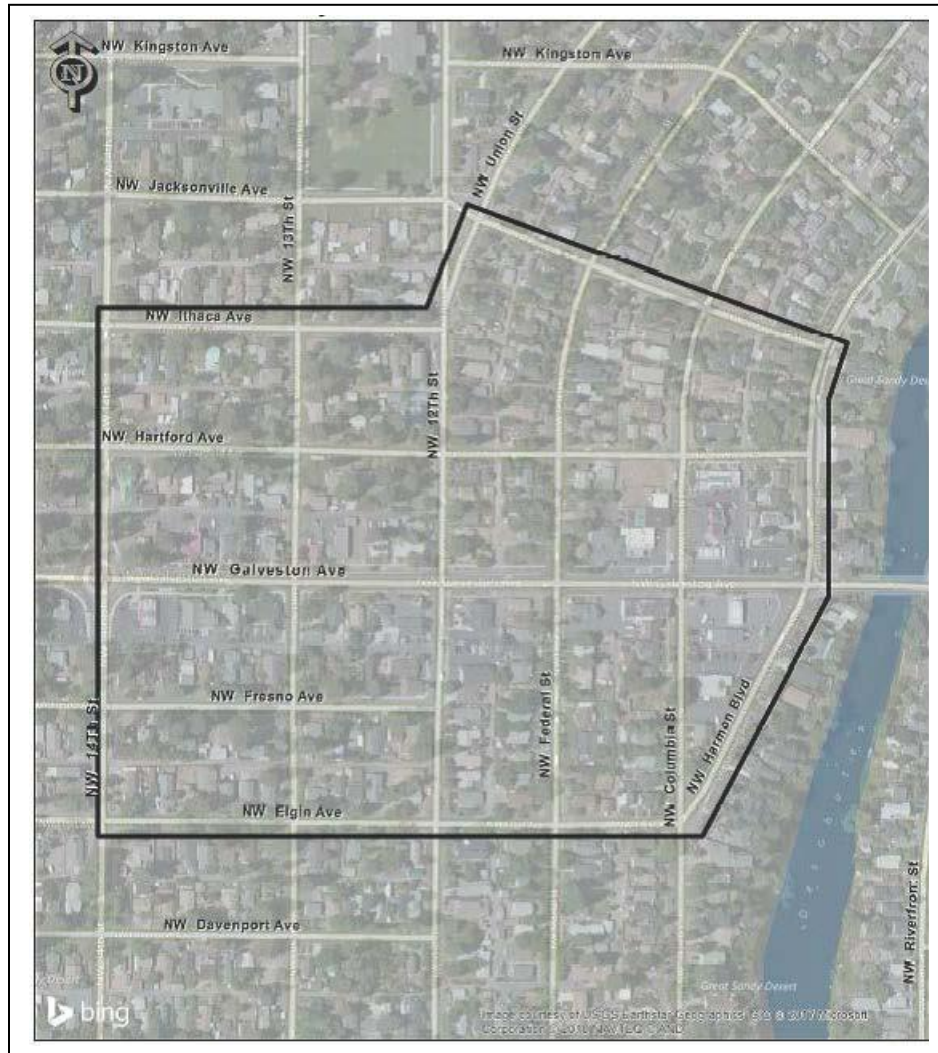
While the parking study will begin with data collection and analysis, interviewees were eager to begin talking about potential management activities. The study will begin with data collection and community input. A list of possible management activities will then be developed, following the data analysis by the project team. Strategy implementation is not part of this study.

- Parking district: Interviewees were interested in learning more about the benefits, drawbacks, and costs of establishing some sort of parking district in the area.
- Employee and visitor parking area: Some interviewees expressed curiosity about the development of visitor and employee parking areas that might serve the study area or multiple commercial areas near Galveston, such as Downtown Bend and the area around Century Center on NW 14th Street.
- Delivery trucks: Where delivery trucks could safely park and unload was an item some interviewees said they hoped the study would address.
- Shared off-street parking: Interviewees were interested in learning how businesses with underutilized off-street parking or businesses that were open at different hours might organize or cooperate to share off-street parking.
- Satellite parking: Shuttle services that allowed visitors and employees to park outside of central Bend, or simply transported visitors to popular areas around Bend in a loop, were also of interest to some interviewees.
- Alleyways: Some interviewees were interested to learn about how parking might be better utilized in the alleyways behind many of the businesses.

Conclusion

Interviewees were generally pleased that the City was undertaking this study and that public engagement would be an important component of the project. The notion that the study would be data driven was also seen as a positive by interviewees. The study will result in an evaluation of the existing parking supply in the area to identify constraints and surpluses. The study will conclude with the results of the analysis and a list of suggestions for the City and community later this year.

Attachment A Galveston Avenue Corridor Parking Study Area Map



**Attachment B
Stakeholder Interview List**

Barb Campbell	Bend City Council
Kevin Collins	Business owner
Sarah Durfee	Local resident
James Fagan	Local resident
David Gurule	Business owner
Brian Harrington	City of Bend Planning Department
Pat Huber	Property owner/developer
Mary Ann Kruse	Local resident
Mikel Lomsky	Property owner
Vince Mercurio	Bend Planning Commission
Bill Moseley	Bend City Council
Amanda Olson	Local resident
Bryan Tremayne	Business owner
David Waldron	Architect

Attachment C
Interview Protocol

City of Bend Parking Management Study Galveston Avenue Corridor

Stakeholder Interview Protocol
Spring 2017

Stakeholder Interviews

Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed. While I have a set of questions I would like to ask you, the interviews are designed to be a conversation.

The City Council asked staff to study parking along the Galveston Avenue Corridor. The City contracted with Rick Williams Consulting (RWC), a parking management firm, Kittelson & Associates, a transportation engineering firm, and Anne E. George Facilitation, Mediation + Public Involvement to conduct an analysis of the parking conditions in the study area. The project team will seek the assistance of the public to both help define the final study area and provide information on local experiences parking in the study area. The outcome of the study will be an analysis of the current parking conditions and a framework of potential parking tools for consideration by the community.

A brief written summary will be created based on these interview discussions and will highlight the major themes shared by interviewees. A list of interviewees will appear in the summary; however, your comments will not be attributed to you. You may also ask the interviewer to keep something you said confidential; if you do so it will not be mentioned in the summary. The summary will help focus the project team in the study.

Thank you!

Interview

1. *Interviewer will share a map of the current inventory map with interviewee(s) during the interview.* The project team will collect data in an area usually larger than the actual parking study area. This is called the study inventory area. The project team is still developing the final study area for the Galveston Avenue Corridor study. Currently this map shows the parking data inventory area where the team will collect parking data. Looking at this inventory map, what might the final study area be? Remember the study area will be the area where the team will identify parking issues and develop a list of possible solutions for consideration.
2. What is working in the current parking in the Galveston Avenue Corridor area? What concerns might you have?
3. The study is about identifying and analyzing the existing parking conditions in the Galveston Avenue Corridor. What questions would you like the parking study to try and answer?

4. What areas of the Galveston Corridor area experience the most impact from parking? What parts of the area experience the least impact from parking?
5. How are you and/or your organization affected by parking in the Galveston Corridor area?
6. Why do you travel to (or through) the Galveston Avenue Corridor? Do you access the corridor in any other ways (walk, bike, transit, other)?
7. If and where do you park when you are in the study area? (on-street or off-street)
8. If you own or manage a business in the area, where do your employees park when they are in the study area? Where do you think other employees park in the study area? (on-street or off-street). If you do not own or manage a business in the area, where do you think employees park?
9. If you own or manage a business in the area, where do your customers park? (on-street or off-street) Where do you think customers of other businesses park in the study area? (on-street or off-street) If you do not own or manage a business in the area, where do you think customers park in the area?
10. What do you think might be some possible differences of opinion about parking in the study area? What do you think most people might agree on about regarding parking in the study area?
11. Do you have any suggestions for the study team as they begin this study?
12. Is there anyone else I should be speaking to about this study?
13. Do you have any questions or additional comments?

For more information please see the City of Bend website:

<http://bendoregon.gov/parkingstudy> and click on “Galveston Avenue” in the first paragraph of the home page.

Or go directly to the Galveston Avenue Study page:

<http://www.bendoregon.gov/government/departments/growth-management/parking-study/galveston-avenue-corridor-parking-study>

Contact:

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