

Executive Summary

The Gwinnett Place Community Improvement District (GPCID) commissioned this parking management study to examine current and future parking issues in the CID area. This study not only looks at the current situation, but is also forward-thinking addressing problems that may present themselves as the area redevelops. It is a pro-active approach ensuring parking will play a positive role in the redevelopment of the area and not detract from it. By adequately studying the issue now steps can be taken to correct current problems and prevent future parking issues from arising.

Currently 40% of the land area in the CID consists of surface parking. This represents a significant amount of underutilized land. It does not exemplify the “highest and best use” of land as the area redevelops. Excessive surface parking is by far the most significant parking problem facing the CID today. For the area to redevelop into the desired walkable and vibrant urban center considerable amounts of surface parking should be reduced.

In this study a variety of parking management techniques used by other municipalities and organizations were examined to determine their ‘suitability of fit’ for the GPCID area. Some of these include establishing parking maximums, shared parking provisions, public parking decks, and on-street parking among others. Of these several were determined to be appropriate to pursue in the CID and are discussed in further detail in the study recommendations and conclusions section. The major findings are summarized on the next page.



Summary of Major Findings

- Gwinnett County recently (2005) amended their parking regulations, significantly reducing the number of parking spaces developers are required to supply and also establishing maximums they cannot exceed. This should considerably reduce excessive surface parking for new development and redevelopment sites. Since little development has occurred in the CID since the new standards took effect they should be monitored to ensure they adequately meet the GPCID goals of reducing surface parking.
- The implementation of a Tax Allocation District in the CID area should be pursued. This funding mechanism should be used to finance a centrally located public parking structure. Such a structure would free up significant amounts of land from surface parking and serve many different businesses and activities. It would help create the needed ‘park once’ environment the area currently lacks. To see the most benefit this structure should be sited in close proximity to the Gwinnett Place Mall.
- On-street parking is currently not feasible or needed in the area because of existing roadway designs and development patterns. As the area redevelops it will become practical and desired. It will offer convenience and urban design benefits and should be included on secondary roads in the CID. TAD funding should be pursued to construct new streetscapes that incorporate this type of parking. On-street parking spaces should be permitted to count towards required parking spaces as long as they are in close proximity (within 700 feet) of building entrances.
- Additional changes should be made to Gwinnett County’s parking regulations including allowing density bonuses for the use of structured parking and the ability to use fees in lieu of off-street parking. Density bonuses would provide an economic incentive for new development to build expensive structured parking with extra profits from the construction of additional revenue producing space. Fees in lieu would provide a mechanism for developers to pay into a fund used for the construction and maintenance of parking facilities to avoid placing this parking on-site. Required spaces could be shifted to parking structures and facilities in close proximity to the site.
- County actions should be monitored to ensure policies from the Gwinnett County 2030 Unified Plan, that are in keeping with the parking goals of the CID, are followed. These include transforming the area into a mixed-use center, using TADs to fund parking infrastructure, promoting shared parking facilities, and implementing new design standards to improve the appearance and location of parking areas.

