

**2015 Old Town Area
Parking Study (OTAPS)
Work Group**

Final Report and Recommendations

October 2015

Prepared by:

Department of Transportation and Environmental Services

Old Town Area Parking Study (OTAPS) Work Group 2015 Report

Background

In 2010, the City conducted the Old Town Area Parking Study (OTAPS) to assess the availability of on- and off-street parking in Old Town. The City convened the Old Town Area Parking Study (OTAPS) Work Group later that year to assess the recommendations set forth in the Old Town Area Parking Study and to develop recommendations for implementing parking management strategies. This Work Group was reconvened in 2012 and 2015 to continue review of these recommendations and implementation.

Since the first Work Group, a number of important recommendations have been implemented, including a pay by phone payment system, operated by Pango, to pay to park on-street using a cell phone. Another recommendation completed is the implementation of an online program to print guest parking passes and the replacement of nearly all single space, coin-operated meters in the City with multi-space meters. There are now 142 multi-space meters, and 43 double space meters.

Reconvening the Work Group in 2015

One of the recommendations of the 2012 Work Group was to monitor on-street and off-street parking to determine areas that have exceeded the 85% parking occupancy threshold. In the fall of 2014, the City collected this data and reconvened the Work Group to review the results. The reconvened Work Group included representatives from the previous stakeholder groups, which are listed below. The two changes to membership were to appoint representatives from the Planning Commission and Transportation Commission in place of City staff from the Departments of Planning and Zoning (P&Z) and Transportation and Environmental Services (T&ES).

Stakeholder Group	Representative
Alexandria Chamber of Commerce (1 member)	Charlotte Hall
Alexandria Commission on Persons with Disabilities (1 member)	Mollie Danforth/Kent Fee
Alexandria Waterfront Commission (1 member)	Howard Bergman
Citizen representative (2 members)	Mark Abramson Mark Feldheim
Old Town Business and Professional Association representative (1 member)	Danielle Romanetti
Old Town Civic Association representatives (2 members)	Yvonne Weight Callahan Bert Ely
Parking garage owner/operators representative (1 member)	Andrew Blair, Colonial Parking
Planning Commission representative (1 member)	Stew Dunn
Real Estate Developer representative (1 member)	Rob Kaufman, PMA Properties
Small business owners, including restaurants, retailers, and hoteliers (3 members)	Jody Manor, Alexandria Restaurant Commission Roger Parks, small business representative Elizabeth Todd, Old Town Boutique District (Chair)
Transportation Commission representative (1 member)	Nathan Macek (Vice Chair)
Upper King Street Neighborhood Association	Aimee Houghton

representative (1 member)	
U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (1 member)	Jim Nowak
West Old Town Citizens Association representative (1 member)	Keil Gentry

Parking occupancy data collected by the City, as well as research of parking trends in the study area was part of a packet of background data evaluated by the Work Group. The background data can be viewed here:

https://alexandriava.gov/uploadedFiles/2015%20OTAPS%20Data%20Requests_Final.pdf

An analysis of the parking occupancy data collected in 2014 showed the following trends:

- Overall metered parking has seen a slight increase in occupancy as shown in Figure 1. A decrease in metered parking occupancy has occurred west of Alfred Street. An increase in occupancy has occurred east of Alfred Street.
- Garage parking occupancy is down as shown in Figure 2.
- Overall on-street parking occupancy has increased in residential areas on weekday evenings, but remains constant on weekends.
- Overall parking occupancy levels are higher east of Alfred Street in Districts 1 and 2 than west of Alfred Street.
- On-street parking occupancy rates exceed 85% during the weekend evening hours in Districts 1 and 2 east of Alfred Street.
- Garage and surface lot parking is less prevalent west of Alfred Street.

Figure 1: Comparison of Metered and Non-Metered Parking Occupancy on a Weekday Evening, 2009-2014

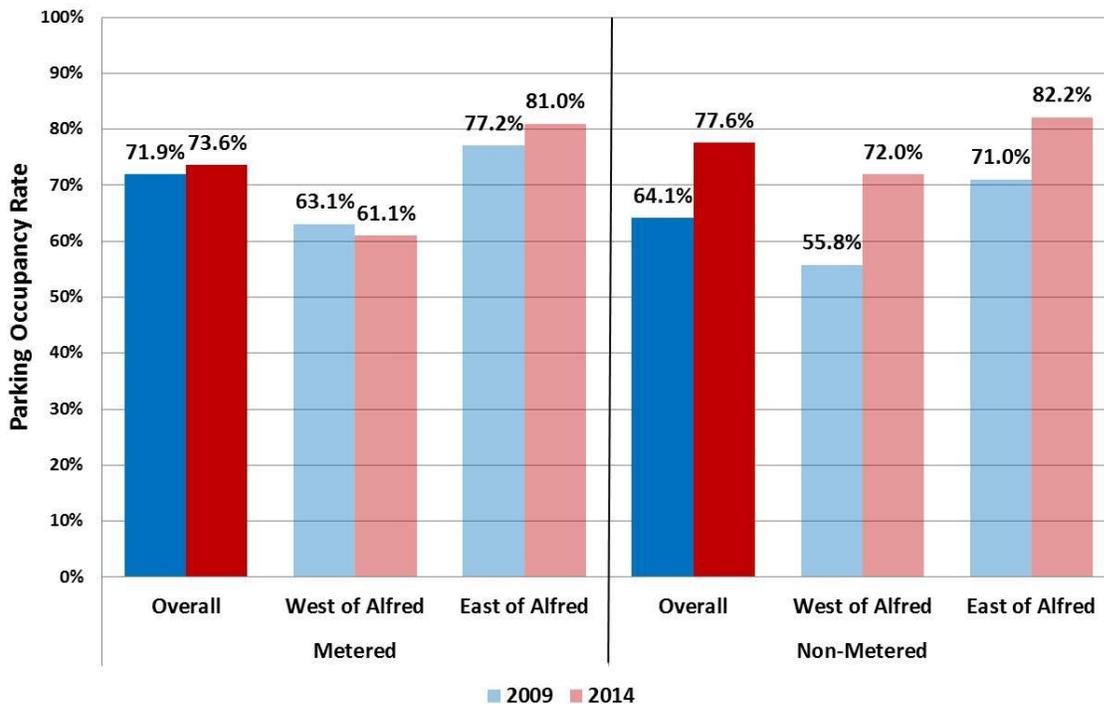
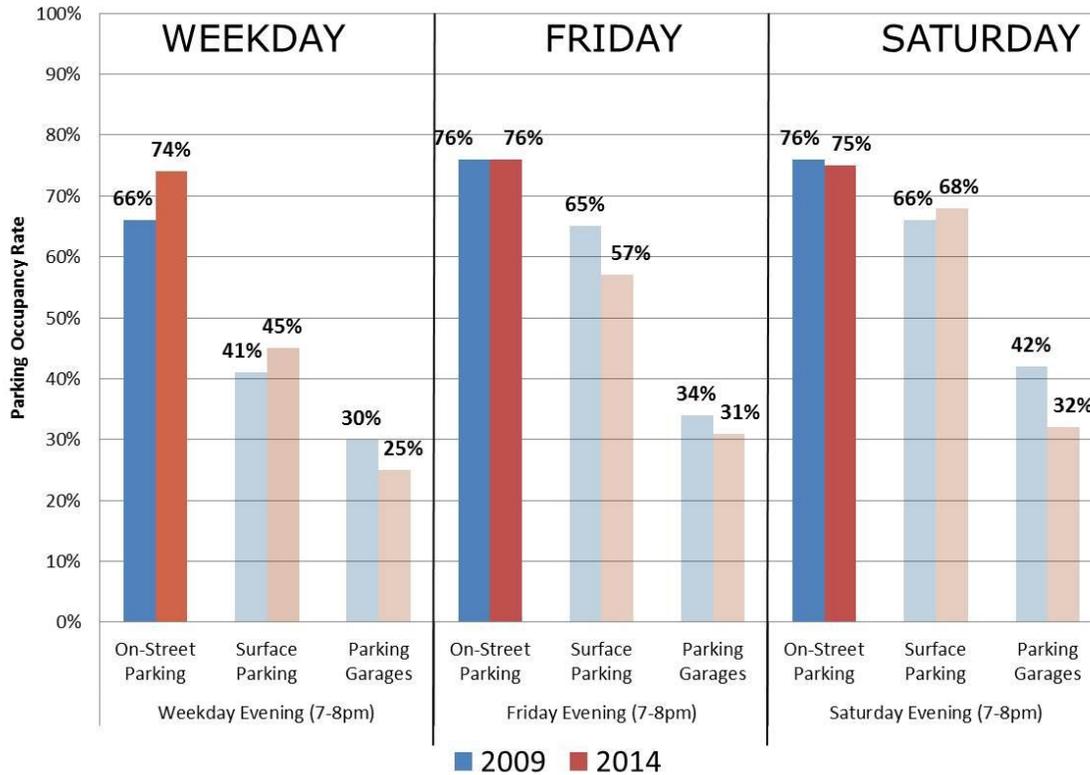


Figure 2: Comparison of Parking Occupancy Rates, 2009-2014



The Work Group began meeting in January 2015 and held a total of eight meetings between January and August, summarized in the table below. Each meeting had a public comment period.

Meeting	Discussion
January 28, 2015	Kick-off meeting and review of the 2014 parking occupancy data.
February 25, 2015	Review of meter regulations and additional data collected in the study area.
March 25, 2015	Review of meter regulations and potential tools to encourage usage and turnover, and introduction to potential residential parking policy tools.
April 29, 2015	Discussion about residential parking policy tools.
May 27, 2015	Discussion about restricting residents of new DSUP development from obtaining residential parking permits and an overview of the parking enforcement program and available resources.
June 11, 2015	Discussion about employee parking management tools and wayfinding options. Polling exercise to review draft Work Group recommendations. Sticker exercise for public to comment on draft Work Group recommendations.
June 24, 2015	Review of the polling results and discussion about the draft recommendations.
August 11, 2015	Final review of the draft recommendations.

Goals

The 2015 Work Group identified the following goals for improving parking management in the study area:

- Encourage short-term visitors to park in metered areas rather than residential blocks.
- Encourage long-term visitors to use transit and park in off-street garages and surface lots.
- Preserve parking on residential blocks for residents and guests.
- Encourage compliance at meters and in residential parking districts.

Discussion of Tools

- The Work Group evaluated potential parking management tools according to these goals. City staff provided background data related to each respective parking management tool considered by the Work Group. During the discussion, the Work Group considered implementation options for each tool and how, and if, these tools could achieve their desired goals for improving parking management. The 2015 OTAPS Work Group Recommendations Chart (Attachment 1) summarizes the final recommendations for each of these tools. Within the chart, staff noted the majority and minority position expressed by the Work Group members. For some tools, the Work Group made specific motions that came out of the discussion from a particular meeting, listed below. However, the Work Group did not prioritize the full list of recommendations and these motions were not intended to imply a higher priority than other tools without a separate motion. Extend maximum time limit for meters west of Alfred Street from 2 to 3 hours (OTAPS Work Group motion made on April 29, 2015)
- End meter times at 7 p.m. for meters west of Alfred Street (OTAPS Work Group motion made on April 29, 2015)
- No universal restriction be placed on the availability of residential parking permits in new residential developments in District 1 through 5 and that each Development Special Use Permit (DSUP) be considered on its own merits with respect to the issuance of residential parking permits (OTAPS Work Group motion made on May 27, 2015)
- Increase funding to modernize citation and enforcement equipment; increase funding to support additional parking enforcement officers (PEOs); and reinstate the adjudication process (OTAPS Work Group motion made on May 27, 2015)

The Work Group's recommendation to extend the maximum time limit for meters west of Alfred Street from 2 to 3 hours was approved by the Traffic and Parking Board on May 18, 2015. The Work Group's recommendation to end meter times at 7 p.m. for meters west of Alfred Street was not brought before the Board as the fiscal implications required greater analysis. On June 23, 2015, City Council approved a resolution extending the maximum time limit from 2 to 3 hours for parking meters west of Alfred Street within parking meter Zone 2. This change was effective on July 1, 2015.

The Work Group approved a motion during the final meeting on August 11, 2015 that the 2015 OTAPS Work Group Recommendations Chart was an accurate summary of the Work Group's discussion. In general, Work Group members expressed that all of their recommendations are intended to work together cohesively in order to improve parking management in the study area.

The 2015 Work Group recommended that recommendations from the 2010 and 2012 OTAPS be superseded by their recommendations shown in Attachment 1.

Conclusion

From January through August, the Work Group reviewed data, listened to presentations from parking enforcement and Pango, and heard the concerns of many members of the community. Members weighed all of the information carefully, discussed all issues amongst themselves and developed a comprehensive set of recommendations to address parking management in the study area. It is the intent of the Work Group that these recommendations be viewed as a comprehensive response to Old Town parking issues.

Staff would like to thank all members of the OTAPS Work Group for volunteering their time and expertise to help address these issues.

Attachments:

1. 2015 OTAPS Work Group Recommendations Chart

2015 OTAPS Work Group Recommendations

Parking Management Goal	#	Parking Management Tool Considered by OTAPS Work Group	2015 OTAPS Work Group Recommendation (Majority)	Minority Comments	Notes	Budget Impact
Encourage short term visitors to park in metered areas rather than residential blocks	1	Maximum Time Limit for Meters	(1) Extend maximum time limit for meters <u>west</u> of Alfred Street from 2 to 3 hours* (OTAPS WG motion - 4/29) (2) Extend maximum time limit for meters <u>east</u> of Alfred Street from 2 to 3 hours.		Part 1 of this recommendation as already been implemented.	Low
	2	End Time for Meters	(1) End meter times at 7 pm for meters <u>west</u> of Alfred Street (OTAPS WG motion - 4/29) (2) No change to the end time for meters <u>east</u> of Alfred Street.	Two WG members were not supportive of ending meters times at 7 pm for any location in the study area since this would decrease turnover in the evening.		High
	3	Ticket fees	Reduce the ticket fees for meter violations, but maintain the current fee for residential parking violations.		New tool discussed 6/24/15	Medium
	4	Meter rates	No change to the meter rates recommended.		New tool discussed 6/24/15	N/A
Encourage long term visitors to use transit and park in off-street garages and surface lots	5	Garage/Surface Lot Pricing and Payment	(1) Adjust the pricing of the City garages and surface lots to be less than the cost of parking at a meter. (2) Reduce the rates at City garage and surface lots on weekends and evenings. (3) Make City owned surface lots available for long term parking and coordinate the hours of operation with the meters hours. (4) Coordinate operations, maintenance, and policies of facilities between City departments.			High
	6	Wayfinding	(1) Provide/promote digital wayfinding with parking garage information through mobile apps and websites and maintain a current City parking map. (2) Direct staff to add additional parking wayfinding signage consistent with the City's Wayfinding Plan guidelines. (3) Explore adding appropriate real-time information for garage signs.			High
	7	Information and Marketing	Direct staff to work with Visit Alexandria and AEDP to provide better marketing of transit and parking options available in the City, including the City's Pay by Phone feature.			Low
	8	Employee Parking and Transit Programs	(1) Provide more off-street parking options for City employees on the waitlist by increasing the number of monthly garage spaces in City garages or applying the City's garage subsidy to private garages. (2) Direct staff to help facilitate coordination with private garage owners for garage spaces and promoting transit programs for private employers.	Some WG members did not support subsidizing employee parking. Some WG members supported increasing transit benefits, although the majority did not think the cost would create a significant change in behavior for employees.		Medium to High
	9	Transit Service	(1) Explore adding morning trolley hours and reducing headways. (2) Optimize DASH routes operating in Old Town. (3) Optimize transit fare policy in Old Town with consideration of a fare free transit zone.		New tool discussed 8/13/15	Low
Preserve parking on residential blocks for residents and guests	10	Pay by Phone Payment in Residential Areas	Implement a pilot program for adding a pay-by-phone payment requirement for residential blocks following public engagement with the residents of the proposed blocks. The pay-by-phone payment requirement would not apply to residents of the district where that block is located nor would apply to those resident's guests.	One WG member supported a staff initiated pilot program because they felt it could be more successful and provide data needed to encourage other blocks to apply this tool.	Many WG members supported the use of this tool, but felt it was appropriate to ensure the process for the pilot program was initiated by residents.	Low
	11	Resident Only Parking	Do not implement resident only parking.	Some WG members supported this recommendation as a way to ensure parking for residents.		N/A
	12	Restrictions on New Development	No universal restriction be placed on the availability of residential parking permits in new residential developments in districts 1-5 and each DSUP be considered on its own merits with respect to the issuance of residential parking permits. (OTAPS WG motion 5/27)	Some WG members did not support this recommendation since they felt it was not responsive to the City Council's request for guidance, was not equitable to residents of new developments, and changed the existing practice of allowing residents of new developments to be eligible for residential parking permits.		Low
	13	Limit Residential Parking Permits	Do not limit the number of residential parking permits.	Two WG members were supportive of limiting the number of residential parking permits.		N/A
	14	Residential Parking Permit Fees	Maintain the current residential parking permit fees for the first and second vehicle registered to a household but increase the fee for any additional vehicles.	Two WG members were concerned about this recommendation as they saw the increase in permit fees as a financial burden on households with three or more registered vehicles		Low
	15	Time limits for residential permit parking districts	Amend the City Code to allow one hour parking as an option for residents to request through the residential permit parking district process.	Some WG members were concerned about use of this tool without clear criteria for when and where to allow it. Widespread implementation of one-hour time limits on residential blockfaces could create additional parking issues by severely limiting parking options for visitors requiring one to two hours of parking.	If this tool was approved, it would still require residents to initiate the request and review by the TPB. As part of that review, staff would evaluate whether the location and occupancy trends warranted shorter time period.	Low
	16	Adjust district boundaries	Reexamine current district boundaries to determine if a smaller district adjacent to King Street would be appropriate.		New tool discussed 6/24/15	Low
Encourage compliance at meters and in residential parking districts	17	Staff initiated process for amending/changing residential permit parking districts	No change to the process for amending/creating residential permit parking districts	One WG member felt a staff initiated process -- in parallel to the existing resident-initiated process -- would allow for more consistent parking regulations block-to-block that would be less confusing to residents and visitors alike.	New tool discussed 6/24/15	N/A
	18	Enforcement	(1) Increase funding to modernize citation/enforcement equipment (2) Increase funding to support additional PEOs (3) Reinstate the adjudication process (OTAPS WG motion 5/27)			High