Memorandum

To: Bergen Watterson, Town of Carrboro | Date: September 23, 2016

Project #: 38539.00

From: Timothy Tresohlavy, VHB | Re: Carrboro Parking –Survey Summary

Purpose and Background

The purpose of this memo is to provide a very high level summary of the Carrboro NC Downtown Parking Survey. Full results including tables and charts are available as a PDF attachment.

The survey launched on February 4th, 2016, and remained open until August 26th, 2016. A total of 602 respondents completed the survey over the six (6) month period. Nearly all respondents provided a zipcode within Carrboro (57%) or Chapel Hill (31%).

Visiting Downtown

Half of respondents indicated that they visit downtown Carrboro daily. The most common trip purposes were dining/shopping (84%), socializing (68%), Farmers' Market (54%), or personal business (48%).

A small percentage of respondents (13%) visit less than once per week.

A very small number of survey respondents (18 total, 3%) indicated that they do not regularly visit downtown Carrboro. Parking availability was an issue for four (4) of these individuals. The most common reasons for not visiting included: working elsewhere (7 individuals), shopping elsewhere (5), limited parking (3), inconvenient parking (3), and/or lack of transportation options (1).

Half of respondents typically drive alone, and one-quarter choose to carpool. This leaves 25% who arrive via alternative modes of transportation, which is a very good overall percentage.

Fewer than one-in-five respondents indicated that overall availability and ease of parking has affected their decision to visit downtown (17%). Personal security within public parking lots is an issue for twenty respondents (4%) who indicated that they felt "sometimes unsafe." This is a small percentage, however a significant and sensitive topic.

Duration of Stay

Most respondents indicate that they typically stay in downtown for less than 4-hours (81%), and more than half stay for less than 2-hours (56%). This relates well to the current 2-hour time limit for public parking, which was found to be appropriate for most respondents (62%), while an additional one-quarter would like the limit to be 4-hour (26%).

Parking Location and Walk time

Respondents indicated that the last time they chose to drive to downtown, they parked in a public lot (72%) more frequently than a private lot (26%), which is interesting since more than 80% of total parking is private.

A 5-minute walking time from their parking lot to their destination was the majority response (93%), and a 2-minute walk was indicated by most respondents (72%). As anticipated most respondents found this walk-time convenient (86%), and a small proportion were "neutral" (11%).

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Possible Barriers

Possible barriers that are preventing more frequent visits to downtown include: cannot easily find parking (30%), sidewalks are not connected or maintained (23%), convenient parking spaces are occupied (21%), other/open-ended response (18%), the 2-hour parking limit is inconvenient (13%), reserved parking signs are confusing (12%), gravel parking lots (9%), poor lighting (7%), and walking too far to final destination (4%).

Improve Parking

Respondents were asked "To improve parking the Town should..." and the more common choices were: encourage alternative modes of transportation (55%), construct a parking deck (34%), lease additional parking from private property owners (33%), other/open-ended response (23%), allow on-street parking (22%), enforce the 2-hour time limit for public lots (19%), build surface parking (18%), and do nothing (10%).

Paid Parking

Two-thirds of respondents would prefer not to pay an hourly fee (64%), and one-third responded "No way!" (29%). An equal percentage (29%) indicated "Maybe", or "Yes" to hourly paid parking.

Respondent Demographics

Survey respondents were asked seven (7) demographics questions at the end of the survey. Most respondents (61%) lived in 1 or 2 person households. One third (33%) of respondents had children under the age of 18 living at home.

Mobility Options

Seven (7) respondents indicated that they did not own a vehicle (1%); most owned two or more vehicles (70%).

For comparison with bicycles, many respondents indicated that they did not own a bicycle (19%); an equal share owned one bicycle (18%); most owned two or more bicycles (63%). Half of respondents were willing to ride a bicycle to Downtown Carrboro, and a slightly smaller half of respondents were unlikely (41%) to ride.

Half of respondents currently ride Chapel Hill Transit or GoTriangle buses to varying destinations, however a much smaller portion (16%) ride a bus to downtown Carrboro. This gap suggests that the current routes, stops or service frequency may not be convenient for downtown trip purposes.

Respondents were also asked if riding transit was an option from their home. Half of respondents indicated yes (46%), and half indicated no (47%), with the remainder unsure. One-third of total respondents were unlikely to ride transit if the routes were more convenient from their home, while nearly half were likely to ride (44%).