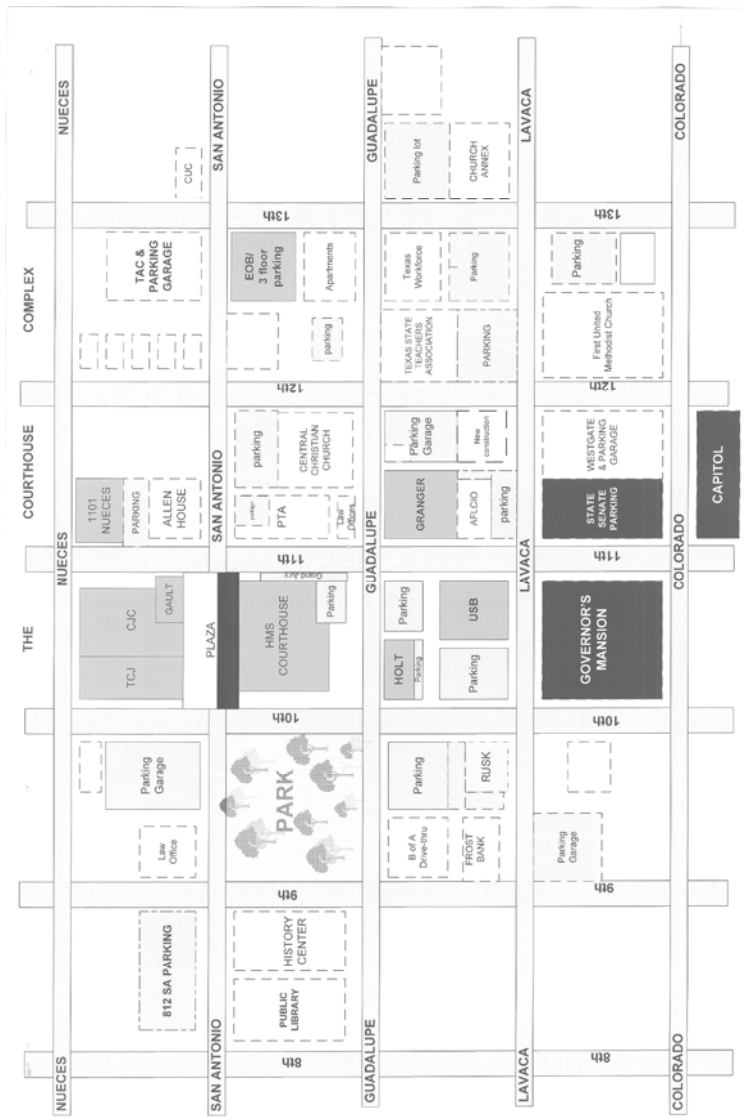


2009

# Parking Committee Report



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## Report Icon Meanings

 Question asked by Commissioners Court on 3/17/07

 Parking Committee Recommendation

 Survey data & quotes from Employee Survey  
(anonymous & edited for length)

 Supporting Information

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# Scope of Work & Recommendations

## SCOPE OF WORK

On March 27, 2007, Commissioners Court created the Parking Committee and charged it to:

- ✓ **Study** the downtown parking situation and make recommendations to improve it.
- ✓ **Research** the alternatives to Single Occupancy Vehicles (SOVs).
- ✓ **Recommend** changes to the County's parking policy.
- ✓ **Answer** the questions asked by the Commissioners.

The Parking Committee now returns to Commissioners Court with this report and a draft revised parking policy.

## RECOMMENDED CHANGES

The Parking Committee makes almost 30 recommendations throughout the report (marked by the pencil symbol) but would like to emphasize these:

- ✓ Hire a full-time parking administrator to enforce policy and coordinate alternative transportation programs.
- ✓ Buy, build and/or lease more parking spaces.
- ✓ Provide transparency by posting the policy, wait list and assignment list on the intranet.
- ✓ Increase incentives to encourage alternative transportation such as free bus passes and commuter tax benefit programs.

### To Improve Parking Situation

- ✓ Implement rideshare, vanpool, carpool, teleworking and similar programs to reduce the need for spaces. Participate in CapitalMetro or similar commute solutions programs to encourage employees to use public transportation, bikes, and carpools.
- ✓ Implement a pilot of zoned parking and encourage space sharing to decrease the number of unused spaces.
- ✓ Reduce the number of county vehicles housed downtown.

### To Update Parking Policy

- ✓ Change method of how employees are added to waitlist from ledger date to hire date.
- ✓ Maximize the pool of non-reserved spaces available to general employees by limiting the number of reserved spaces. Update the parking policy if spaces are permanently removed from the non-reserved pool. Implement clear, objective criteria and update regularly. Audit annually.
- ✓ Update the Parking Inventory, List of County Vehicles, and Specified Positions.
- ✓ Establish standing Parking/Transportation Committee.

# 1. Study of Downtown Parking Situation

## OVERVIEW OF PARKING SITUATION

Travis County has 57 departments either fully or partially housed in the Courthouse Complex. Approximately 2,700 employees work in these departments. Of these, 556 downtown employees are on the parking wait list.

There are 1,334 parking spaces in owned or leased garages and lots – 139 for county vehicles, 41 reserved for special use, 232 reserved for specified positions and 922 for employees.

The difference between need and availability of spaces creates a 6 year wait for a county-assigned parking space.



## DATA SOURCES

This report uses two employee surveys.

1. The primary source is an email survey sent by the parking committee to all employees having an email address on June 27, 2007. The survey's purpose was to capture employee opinions on transportation and parking. Of the 1,396 employees who responded, 66 percent work downtown. Fifty-nine percent of downtown workers who responded have a county-assigned parking space. Almost 600 of the survey responses included written comments. A selection of the comments is included in this report.
2. The second source of employee survey data comes from Transportation and Natural Resources. Adele Noel, Air Quality Project Manager, collected the results for a grant sponsored by Commute Solutions that provided free bus passes for county employees. Approximately 244 bus passes were distributed during the three-month grant period. During July and September 2007, participants were asked to respond to a survey tracking any changes in transportation modes.

Additional sources of information includes:

1. The 2001 Parking Study conducted by Wilbur Smith Associates. This 2001 study detailed the parking environment at the time and provided suggestions for easing the parking needs. Several of the suggestions are repeated in this report.
2. Administrative Operations data for current space allocation and wait list numbers.
3. The county's financial system, HTE, for the demographic and address data.
4. CapitalMetro's website for Commute Solutions information.
5. *Best Workplaces for Commuters*, March and November 2005 publications of the United States Environmental Protection Agency.
6. Research by committee members. Committee members interviewed other Texas counties and major downtown and Central Texas employers to learn their parking practices.

## How are the 1,334 downtown spaces used?

Downtown Parking	Non-Reserved*	Reserved for Special Use**	Reserved for County Vehicles	Reserved for Specified Positions***	Total
Courthouse, Front	7			13	20
Courthouse Annex	2	1		16	19
Courthouse, North side		12			12
Executive Office Bldg	73	2	40	4	119
Granger Garage	285	4	33	65	387
10 Guadalupe Lot	46	1	1	20	68
Rusk Bldg,	23	1			24
San Antonio Garage	232	7	33	108	380
USB West & South	83	13	32	6	134
Maintenance, 10th & Lamar	6				6
<b>Total Owned</b>	<b>757</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>139</b>	<b>232</b>	<b>1169</b>
9 Lavaca	40				40
812 San Antonio	65				65
12 <sup>th</sup> Guadalupe	5				5
13 <sup>th</sup> Guadalupe	10				10
1310 Lavaca	20				20
TAC Lots	25				25
<b>Total Leased</b>	<b>165</b>				<b>165</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>922</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>139</b>	<b>232</b>	<b>1334</b>

\*Non-Reserved spaces (922) are the pool of spaces assigned to general employees.

\*\* Special Use spaces are reserved by policy (41) and include parking for grand jurors, visiting judges, the public, the disabled, volunteers, and carpool/vanpool riders.

\*\*\*Specified Position spaces are reserved for elected and appointed officials and their staff (232).

## Who does not have parking?

20% of the estimated 2,700 employees who work downtown do not have assigned parking. Of those on the wait list:

- 50% have worked with the County for less than 3 years; 75% for 4.5 years; the average is 3.4 years
- 50% are pay grade 16 or lower; 40% are 15 or lower; and 25% are 13 or lower



Of those without a parking space:

26% use metered parking,  
19% use private contract parking,  
14% ride the bus.



\$98 is the average amount employees reported paying for parking each month.

These 556 employees may be on the parking wait list for 6 years. A disproportionate number of employees in the lower pay grades are forced to pay for parking because there are no county-assigned spaces available. This is a deterrent from working in Travis County's downtown campus. Most other County sites have free parking.

**Q 1.1 – Should the County attempt to acquire additional parking spaces? If so, why?**

**Q 1.2 – Should the County attempt to acquire additional parking spaces? If not, why not?**



*A1.1 and A1.2 – Yes.*

Travis County should continue acquiring additional leased spaces and buy, lease or build a parking garage downtown. Travis County could purchase a remote parking facility and run a shuttle between the facility and downtown for both county fleet vehicles and employees, as was recommended by the 2001 Parking Study. Per the County Attorney's office, subject to certain location requirements, Travis County does have the authority to build a garage and lease the spaces.


Insufficient employee parking leads to a number of issues for Travis County:

- The long waiting list for employees causes lower morale and a financial burden for new employees. Almost 600 employees included comments with their survey answers. Many of the comments described the difficulties and fiscal costs of not having parking.
- Using metered parking reduces employee productivity because they must feed the meter every two hours or risk a ticket. According to one part-time employee who commented in the survey, a parking ticket cost almost as much as his or her salary for the day.
- It also reduces availability of public parking needed by litigants, child support clients, visitors, and jurors who conduct business within the Courthouse Complex.

**Why Lease Spaces?**

The most successful parking strategy to date has been a combination of leasing parking spaces and moving parking-intensive offices like the Tax Office and Sheriff to other locations.

Roughly 18% of the non-reserved spaces are provided by leasing. The leasing program provides 165 spaces to employees who otherwise would not have spaces.



\$98 per month is the average price the county pays to lease a space.

Cost per year: \$193,800

**Why to Not Lease?**

Leasing is a short-term solution. The \$193,800 annual cost of leasing is expensive and the leased spaces can be unreliable because:

- Some contracts are month-to-month and not always renewed by the facility owner or operator.

- Prices have increased annually.
- Landlords may place restrictions on the contract, such as maintenance requirements.
- Contracts are difficult to secure at reasonable costs during good economic times.
- The availability of parking spaces in private offices for lease is dwindling.
- This solution does not address the need for additional public spaces.

### Why Build a Parking Facility?

Unless Travis County plans to relocate all functions, *including courts*, out of downtown, the need for parking will extend long into the future. The courts are parking-intensive, needing spaces not just for employees but for jurors and litigants. Two previous parking studies (1993 and 2001) recommended additional and adequate parking facilities as a way to accommodate the present and future parking needs for Travis County employees, visitors and the general public.



The Parking Committee has identified three parking-facility options:

1. If building for county-use only, implement zoned parking. Like the airline model, zoned parking “overbooks” a facility, knowing that 15-20 percent of spaces will not be used on a given day.
2. If building for county-public mixed parking, adopt the hospital model where public parking charges offset the cost of building a facility that is also used by employees. The City of Austin is building parking garages as public/private ventures.
3. Consider building and sharing a facility in partnership with another government entity such as Austin Community College, the City of Austin, or the State of Texas. The Austin Community College Rio Grande Campus could be an ideal potential partner as they have land and county employees and students compete for the same spaces. Legal authority for such a relationship would have to be researched.

### Why to *Not* Build?

Building downtown is problematic because the County would have to look further than three blocks from the courthouse for a location that could hold an adequate parking facility given the Capital View Corridor issues. The statute also limits the location of a county-owned or county-operated garage to near or adjacent to the County Courthouse. Building a facility would be expensive. The estimated costs for 2009 show that an above ground garage would cost \$86 per square foot or \$30,000 per space.<sup>1</sup> Building a facility the size of the Granger garage at 170,400 ft<sup>2</sup> would cost \$14,654,400 today, not including land.



### Suggestions from Parking Survey:

- “I say close the park next to Travis Co. Court House and build garages for employees.”

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<sup>1</sup> Estimates obtained from Travis County Facilities Management.



- “Just build another parking garage downtown, or move all of the criminal courts and staff next to the jail at Del Valle and build huge parking lots.”
- “Maybe you should consider adding on to the existing parking garage.”
- “The County could buy/lease/build a garage. Knock down the Constable 5 bldg and the 1010 Lavaca St. bldg and build a huge garage for everyone!”
- “The County should buy another property near the courthouse and build another garage that is bigger than what is currently needed. This County will only continue to grow and we have to meet this demand head on in order to maintain the stability in the working atmosphere and to better serve the County.”
- “The County should purchase and build parking garages on existing lots, i.e. the Northeast corner of Guadalupe and 13th, to accommodate employees in the EOB.”

**Q 1.3 – What alternative transportation and/or parking service providers are available (private parking facilities, meter availability including pre-paid meter cards, and COA hang-tags, CapMetro, carpool organizations, car share, etc.....)?**

**A 1.3** – *Note: CapMetro programs, carpools, etc., are discussed fully in Questions 2.1 and 2.6.*

**Private Facilities**

Travis County currently leases 165 spaces from the closest private facilities that have affordable rates and a block of available spaces.

Employees also have the option of contracting directly with private facilities to arrange parking.

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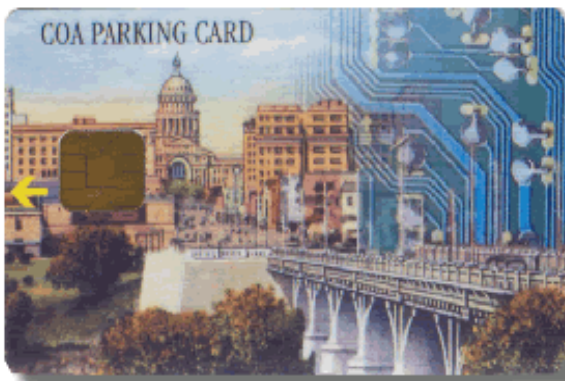
\$98 = the average monthly amount employees pay to lease spaces.

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63 % = Percentage of employees without parking who said they would be interested in leasing a space if Travis County could help negotiate a lower rate in a private facility.

**Prepaid Meter Cards**

Meter cards may be an option for employees who occasionally need to park downtown because their regular offices are located outside of the Courthouse Complex or they telework. These cards replaced the City of Austin hang tags.



The cards would not be a feasible replacement for assigned employee parking because the monthly cost is higher than leasing spaces.

The COA parking debit card can be used at city parking meters. Cards cannot be used in State meters on streets surrounding the Capitol. The cards cost \$5 each plus time credited to the card at

\$.25 per quarter-hour. A maximum of \$650 (650 hours) can be loaded onto the card. Cards can be recharged at the City's office on 12<sup>th</sup> and Rio Grande.

**Pros**

1. Cards can be used to free up space in garages if given to employees who have both an assigned space and only an occasional need to park in downtown for a few hours. *Example: Employees who telework or who office on Airport Boulevard or Palm Square.*
2. Amount credited can be controlled since it is a debit card.

**Cons**

1. Monthly cost of parking using debit card (\$160) is higher than average leased space in a private garage.
2. Card program must be managed and audited.
3. The City does not replace lost, stolen, or damaged cards; nor does it refund unused credit on cards.

**Q 1.4 – What is the average number of empty parking spaces in the Granger Parking Garage at 10 am and 3pm Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays?**

*See Complete Chart in Appendix 4.*

**A. 1.4** – The committee conducted audits of the Granger, San Antonio and Executive Office Building garages from February 23<sup>rd</sup> through March 27<sup>th</sup>, 2009. The following summarizes the utilization of parking spaces in those garages during average work weeks. The week of Spring Break was not included in the average calculations.

<b>Audit of Empty Parking Spaces</b>			
	<b>Granger</b>	<b>EOB</b>	<b>San Antonio</b>
<b>Avg # of Vacant Spaces*</b>	104	28	118
<b>Total # of Spaces</b>	387	119	380
<b>% Vacant</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>31%</b>
<i>*Does not include Spring Break Week 3/16-3/20</i>			

**2. Alternatives to Single Occupancy Vehicles (SOV)**

**Q 2.1 – What steps may be taken to encourage employees to use public transportation?**

**Q 2.2 – What steps may be taken to encourage employees to use public transportation and other alternatives to SOV?**

**A. 2.1 & A 2.2** – The CapitalMetro Commute Solutions Program was established to help larger employers like Travis County implement alternative transportation programs.



Work with CapitalMetro to develop park-and-ride facilities and employee vanpools. Travis County should participate in the Commute Solutions program or use Commute Solutions as a model to implement its own program.

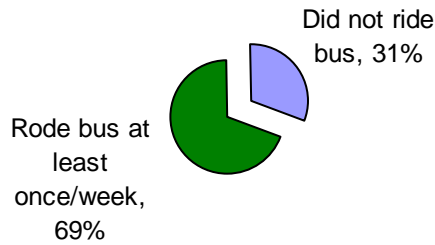
For three months in 2007, Travis County participated in a **subsidized transit pass grant**. Air Quality Project Manager Adele Noel distributed 244 free bus passes to employees. Sixty percent of the recipients used the passes to take 6,797 bus rides during July and September. One-third responded to the survey reported in the box at right.



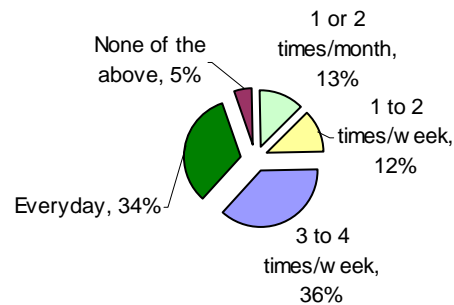
Employees use signs in the elevators and mass email announcements to find carpool riders. Rideshare programs help drivers find carpool opportunities easily. There are vendors who specialize in **ride-matching programs**. Travis County could create a match program in-house, an intranet bulletin board, or a portal on sites such as NuRide.com and RiverCityRideshare.com so that employees have a central location to find carpool options.

## Bus Pass Program Survey Results from TNR

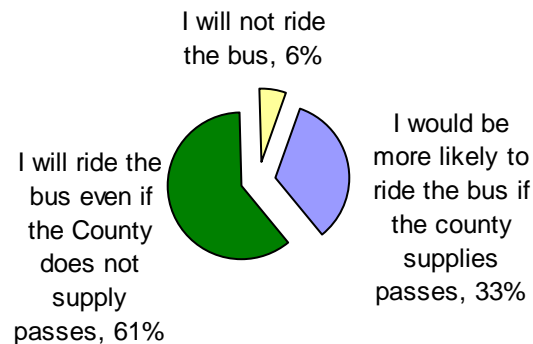
### Before the pass program, the employee:



### During the pass program, the employee rode the bus:



### After the pass program, employees said:



### Would employee give up a parking space for a paid bus pass?



**6,797 = Number of bus pass trips taken by employees in July & September 2007.**



A major reason employees hesitate to give up SOVs is the fear that they will need their cars in an emergency. The **Guaranteed Ride Home** programs provide a limited number of taxi rides that participants can use in the event of an emergency.



Explore relationships with local businesses for **discounted employee rates**. Austin CarShare would allow employees to use car sharing resources downtown to run personal errands or fulfill appointments during the day. Bicycle shops like Mellow Johnny’s or gyms could provide facilities such as storage and showers for commuters.

**Q 2.3 – How can we accurately measure the number of people who actually give up their parking space and use public transportation?**

**A 2.3 –** We may not be able to count the number of employees who relinquish a parking space to use public transportation. Employees who regularly use alternative transportation still want to retain their free parking space. In the rare instance that an employee is offered a parking space and they refuse or defer it, a reason for the decision could be recorded and tracked.

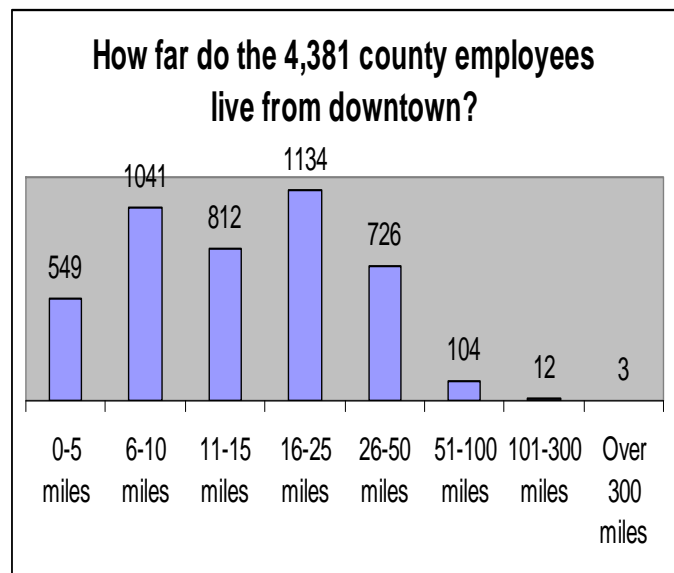
Overwhelmingly, county employees view parking as a benefit earned by many years of service, one that would be gone forever if relinquished. Additionally, employees fear that on days when they would need to drive to work (for example, for doctors’ appointments or early release of schools), no free parking space would be available. This causes employees to hoard parking spaces “just in case,” even when they routinely take an alternative form of transportation to work.



To avoid the inefficiency of empty spaces, departments should encourage space sharing and cooperation, particularly among teleworkers. Spaces could be designated for use by those who generally use alternative forms of transportation or the County could participate in a guaranteed ride program.

**Q 2.4 – Should the Court *discourage* the use of personal vehicles to travel to and from work?**

**A 2.4 –** No, because it would probably not be successful. Employees have rational reasons for driving their personal vehicles to work. Most live 11 miles or further from their workplace<sup>2</sup> and/or have appointments or school pick-ups after work.



<sup>2</sup> Source: List of active employees in H.T.E. system by home zip code.

Most, 68%, said they would not use CapitalMetro even if it were free because:

- After work commitments such as picking up children from daycare and appointments during the day preclude using alternative transportation.
- Riding the bus would take longer.
- There is no bus service near their homes.
- There are scheduling conflicts.
- They use their personal vehicle in their work.

### Q 2.5 – Should the Court *encourage* employees to use carpools and other alternatives to single-occupant-vehicles (SOV) to travel to and from work?

A 2.5 – Yes. A program promoting all alternative forms of transportation could help reduce the use of SOVs and ease the burden on employees who lack parking. This program would be highlighted during new employee orientation with an additional component addressing existing employees. The most popular alternative mode is the use of carpools as evidenced by survey responses.

**Carpools:** Of employees who do not carpool:

- 43% *would or might* carpool if assisted in finding partners.
- 44% *would or might* carpool if a parking space was provided for the carpool vehicle.
- 54% *would not* be interested in carpooling.

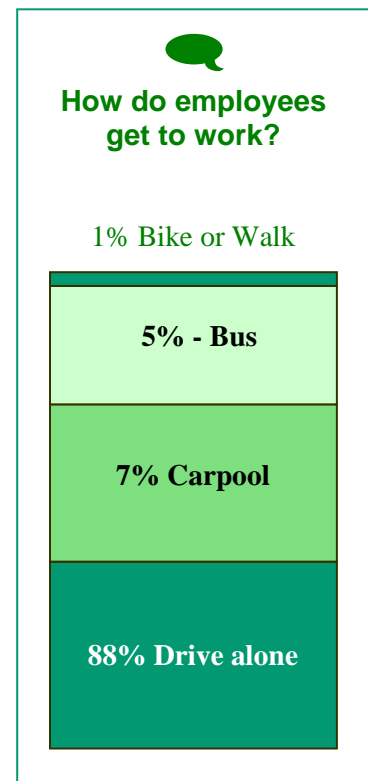
**Bus:**

- 28% answered that they *would use CapitalMetro, if it were free* and when their cars are not needed.
- As for using Park and Rides, 39% said they *would or might use* one if a van were offered instead of a bus.

**Bikes:** 24% said they *would or might* ride their bike to work if there were showers and bike racks.



Managers should be flexible in allowing indoor storage of bicycles used for commuting and allowing electric bicycles to recharge at County facilities during the day. *Note:* There are bike racks in front of the Granger and USB buildings.



## Selected quotes from survey:

- “I come in at 5 in the morning. There is no bus schedule then.”
- “I have been riding the bus for eight years and it is a wonderful mode of transportation. Sometimes we have to ride in the older buses that are not very comfortable and sometimes we are fortunate to ride in the newer and more comfortable ones. Riding the bus reduces the amount of wear and tear on my car and saves me money on gas.”
- “I have too many obligations after work (picking children up from school and day care) for it to work for me. The buses don’t start running until after 0530 and I would have to change into my uniform after getting to work ( I would not ride a bus in uniform) [sic]The buses take way to long and I would not get home for about an hour when it takes me about 15 to 20 minutes by car. It is also unsafe to ride a bike to work on the routes that I would have to take.”

### Q 2.6 – (Should the Court encourage employees to use carpools and other alternatives to single-occupant-vehicles (SOV) to travel to and from work?) If so, what practices have been successful elsewhere?

A 2.6 – The Court could make it easier for employees to find carpool buddies and to use alternatives to SOVs. Some practices, like encouraging telecommuting, have advantages beyond savings in parking and emissions. The **Employer-Provided Amenities** and **Work-Place Changes** listed below have had success elsewhere.<sup>3</sup> **Financial Incentives** are discussed in **Q3.11**.

#### *Employer-Provided Amenities*

- **Employer-supported vanpools** (in-house or through outside agency such as CapitalMetro’s commuter vans)<sup>4</sup> – Employers provide a van, gas, insurance and maintenance to the designated employee driver. The driver can collect five to 12 coworkers either from their homes as with a carpool or from a standard location such as a **transit station shuttle**. Usually this service is combined with a **carpool/vanpool preferential parking space** and a **guaranteed ride home**.
- **Commuter Tax Benefits**<sup>5</sup> – A limited amount of the value of qualified parking, commuter highway vehicle transportation and transit passes an employer provides to employees can be excluded from the employee’s wages. In a payroll deduction program, commuters set aside up to \$230 per month out of their own paychecks to pay for transit passes or vanpool expenses, or up to \$230 per month for parking. For each month, both can be taken up to \$460 per month. Federal law allows pre-tax payroll

<sup>3</sup> [www.bestworkplaces.org/about/choice.htm](http://www.bestworkplaces.org/about/choice.htm) is the source for the practices listed here. The site recommends using a combination of the options below to qualify for a “Best Workplaces for Commuters” designation. A Cost to Business Savings calculator is available at [www.bestworkplaces.org/resource/calc.htm](http://www.bestworkplaces.org/resource/calc.htm) to help evaluate the options.

<sup>4</sup> Commute Solutions’ Let’s Ride Vanpooling page [www.commutesolutions.com/vanpool.html](http://www.commutesolutions.com/vanpool.html).

<sup>5</sup> Internal Revenue Service 2009 Publication 15-B, Employer’s Guide to Fringe Benefits [www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p15b.pdf](http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p15b.pdf).



deductions of up to \$2,760 for transit expenses per year per employee and up to \$2,760 for parking per year per employee. The savings in employee payroll taxes can be used to pay for the administration of the benefit.

- **Employer-Paid Tax-Free Benefits** – Up to \$230 per month for transit or vanpool expenses, or up to \$230 per month for parking can be offered tax-free to employees without incurring payroll taxes for the employer or employee. All costs are incurred by the employer.
- **Secure bicycle parking, showers, and lockers** – Some employers add **free electric bicycle recharging stations**. The facilities encourage the use of alternate modes of transportation and are sometimes implemented on a rental basis to assist with cost-recovery of the facilities.
- **Emergency or Guaranteed Ride Home (GRH) programs** generally use subsidized taxi fare to cover emergency rides for Commute Solutions participants, but use of company vehicles is also common. CapitalMetro, for instance, offers a GRH program to its vanpool members and Express/Flyer Bus riders. For an annual membership of \$5, riders get up to four taxi rides each calendar year for emergencies and each taxi ride is reimbursable up to \$48.50 for fare and gratuity.<sup>6</sup>

### *Changes in Work Place*

- **Compressed work schedules** - A work schedule that allows employees to complete a full-time schedule in fewer than five days a week. Employees can work 10-hour days four days a week, or 12-hour days three days a week. Another option is for employees to work their usual number of hours in a two-week period in nine days, with the tenth day off.
- **Proximate commute** - Employees work at locations closer to their homes.
- **Teleworking (telecommuting)** – A work arrangement in which employees work part- or full-time from alternate locations, such as their homes or telework centers. Teleworking may be used on an as needed basis such as Ozone Watch and Warning days if the department is not ready to implement the policy permanently. A pilot of extended teleworking access is recommended while a more formal policy is developed.<sup>7</sup>

Teleworking assignments do not change the conditions of employment, total work hours, or compliance with the organization's policies. It works best when applied to job duties that can be done independently with little extra equipment, such as research, analysis, report writing, case review, editing, and planning.

Some Travis County employees telework already, but informally. Departmental managers decide who may telework, when, how, and for what projects. Per ITS, around 450 employees use VPN (Virtual Path Network) to access the county network from home. Most of these employees work at night. Around 150 are Sheriff's Office employees.

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<sup>6</sup> Commute Solutions' Let's Ride manual [www.commuterolutions.com/letsride/grh.html](http://www.commuterolutions.com/letsride/grh.html).

<sup>7</sup> A local example of a formal telecommuting policy is the University of Texas Telecommuting Policy <http://www.utsystem.edu/policy/policies/int136.html>.

**Benefits**

- ☞ Teleworking is an established practice in many organizations. Travis County already has teleworking but on an informal basis.
- ☞ Reduced need for parking. Teleworkers can share a parking space with other teleworkers by alternating days at the office.
- ☞ Reduced traffic congestion, emissions.
- ☞ Office sharing reduces overhead.
- ☞ Can be used in disaster preparedness as an alternative workplace.
- ☞ Saves time and cost to employee.
- ☞ Considered a low-cost employee benefit but is really a management option.
- ☞ Can improve employee morale and productivity.

**Limitations:**

- ☞ Can only be used for job duties that do not require interaction with the public or coworkers on a daily basis.
- ☞ Requires high-speed Internet access in the employee’s home. -- Who pays for this?
- ☞ Requires a computer. -- Who provides the computer? For technical and security reasons, it is best if a County laptop is used. Cost= \$3,106 for laptop and \$311 for software versus \$2,608 for a desktop.
- ☞ Office phone calls cannot be transferred to the employee's home phone.

An informal survey was sent by the committee to all departments asking for information regarding the current use of telecommuting. The survey asked if departments currently have employees who telecommute and/or if they believe the department could implement telecommuting. Following are the results from all departments that responded to the survey.

<b>Department</b>	<b>Possibility of Implementing Telecommuting?</b>
County Judge	Could consider
PBO	All staff telecommute on an as needed basis
ITS	20 out of 97 employees might be able to telecommute part time
District Attorney	Has 1 teleworker; it may be possible in the future for some staff to telecommute a portion of the week
Probate Court	Not an option - everyone is needed in court
CSCD	Exploring possibility of 2 - 3 Probation Officers telecommuting 2 days a week
TCCES	Could consider 3 positions telecommuting
SACA	Could consider 3 positions telecommuting
TNR	Could consider 7-10 out of 90 employees telecommuting part time
Cash Investment	2 out of 4 employees can telecommute
RMCR	1 current teleworker; would consider more staff telecommuting if part time



## Selected Quotes from survey:

- “The County should strongly encourage department heads to require telecommuting for employees whose work can be done away from the office. The County should also encourage department heads to allow flex-time scheduling for those employees whose work can be done outside of regular business hours.”
- “The nearest Park and Ride facility is almost as far from my home as my office, so this is not a good option for me. What about merging parking solutions with telecommuting options? Consider going to 4 ten-hour days and splitting County provided parking for non-essential employees in the downtown complex between employees (2 ten hour telecommute days and 2 ten hour days downtown with a parking space, days alternating between 2 employees). If telecommuting from home isn't an option, how about providing space in the precinct offices so that telecommuters could use the County facilities nearest their homes on their telecommute days?”
- “I could telecommute several days per week but I can't as the agency that employs me does not yet demonstrate the flexibility to allow employees to do this.”
- “I currently ride the bus at least 3 days a week, but I do like the idea of telecommuting. I have the equipment and services needed to do that. Also, I've done my time and have a county assigned parking space and feel that I should not have to give it up. When I ride the bus I notify a co-worker who does not have a spot and allow him/her to use it.”
- “A definite 4 day 10 hr work week would help those individuals having to come to work an extra day and would save in time and gas for them. All areas should look into a 4 day work week, and insure that skeleton administrative help is there. The 4 day work week or alternate would help those individuals in saving as well as benefit them having to not spend any sick or vacation time. Therefore using the day off to do those types of things as well as save on gas.”

## 3. Recommended Changes to County Parking Policy

### Q 3.1 – What steps, if any, might the Court take to ensure fair allocation or assignment of current parking spaces?



**Reduce the number of required riders for a carpool from three to two.** Travis County can encourage carpooling by continuing to provide carpooling spaces but reducing the number of required participants from three riders to two. Note: Space sharing, when two or more employees take turns using a parking space but do not drive in together, is not the same as carpooling.



**Post the parking policy on the Intranet.** In survey comments, employees expressed distrust that the parking policy is applied fairly but also demonstrated that they do not know

what the policy says or how it is applied. Most employees have never seen the parking policy. Employees believe that spaces are assigned by longevity with no exceptions but that is not what the current policy instructs.

 **Address ledger vs. hire date issue in the policy.**

Change the policy to make placement on the parking wait list automatic, based on hire date (same as retirement).

In the current policy, employees must request parking by turning in a form. They receive spaces based on the date the request for a parking space is received (are added to the “ledger”), not the first day of employment. For various reasons, some employees fail to add their names to the ledger for some time after they begin work.


Using reports from the Auditor’s Office or by importing HTE data, the Parking Administrator can place and remove employees on the parking list based on hire and termination dates without any action by the employee. This policy change would reduce placement confusion and record keeping.

**How does an employee miss getting on the parking list?**

- Employee didn’t own a car when first hired
- Employee didn’t hear the part of orientation about the parking wait list
- Employee lost, forgot or thought he had turned in the parking request along with all the other forms during orientation
- Employee knew he would office away from downtown so saw no reason to place name on wait list

 **Make the parking process more transparent.**

Post the parking *wait* and *assignment* lists on the intranet. If needed, include the policy exception that justifies an early parking assignment. Employees do not know that there are exceptions to the assignment order rules. Employees consider parking spaces to be a benefit earned by longevity and notice if a coworker is assigned a place to park before they are. They would be less resentful of the “line jumpers” if they knew about the exemption for elected officials, medical needs, department assignments, etc.

 **Perform an annual audit of the parking wait and assignment lists** against the parking policy to ensure that assignments and exceptions comply with policy. Post the results of the audit on the Intranet.

 **Specify that newly acquired parking spaces be assigned as promptly as feasible.** The reason: Waiting to assign a space can cost an employee who pays for parking an average of \$98 per month.

 **Create a clear parking policy that addresses reserved/non-reserved spaces.**

Reserved spaces are those spaces that are set aside for a particular reason or for certain positions. Since the current parking policy was written in the 1990s, the number of reserved spaces has increased to accommodate new courts, additional county vehicles, moves, changes in management levels, and reorganizations, but the policy has not been updated.

Increasing the number of reserved spaces reduces the pool of spaces that can be assigned to employees on the wait list.

The Parking Committee had a difficult time with the reserved/non-reserved space issue. Reserving spaces reduces the availability of spaces to general employees and increases their wait time for a space. Waiting employees see a new employee receive a space immediately and feel it is unfair. However, eliminating reserved spaces would be impractical. The committee tried to find a balance in its recommendations but will need further guidance from the Court and information from affected departments.

The Parking Committee recommends:

1. The number of reserved spaces set aside for grand jurors, visitors, etc. should remain the same as in the current policy. The number of visiting judge spaces should also remain the same but visiting judges should be encouraged to use the space of the judge for whom they are substituting, if possible. The courts should be encouraged to manage the visiting judges spaces so that spaces are not left vacant but are used when not needed by a visiting judge. Similarly, grand juror spaces should be available to employees when not needed for the Grand Jury. Reason: Sharing spaces is more efficient than leaving spaces vacant.
2. County vehicles should continue to receive reserved parking spaces but drivers should be encouraged to park their personal vehicles in the space when the county vehicle is offsite. Reason: The space will not be left vacant and drivers can ensure that the county vehicle's space is available when it is returned at the end of shift.
3. The new policy should prohibit the addition of reserved spaces unless the parking policy is amended by Commissioners Court. For example, spaces should not be assigned to vendors through contracts. Reason: Adding reserved spaces reduces the pool of spaces assignable to employees on the wait list.
4. Positions that receive a parking space out of waitlist order should be renamed "specified positions." Reason: The term "key position" has a different meaning elsewhere in the Travis County Code.
5. Make it clear that reserved parking spaces are assigned to that position, not the employee. Employees who leave a specified position should relinquish the assigned space and be placed on the wait list in hire/ledger date order.
6. The qualifications for selection as a specified position should be clear, objective, and apply equally to all downtown departments. Reason: Clear, objective criteria are easier to enforce and reduce the perception of unfairness. The Parking Committee recommends using an organization chart and/or emergency personnel list to delineate which positions to designate as a "specified position." (This will be contentious. To avoid creating additional inequity, the committee recommends "grandfathering" employees (not positions) who would otherwise lose a space if the new criteria were adopted.)
7. Most elected and appointed officials receive more than one parking space and some receive two spaces in addition to their own. The current policy designates this "(position) +1." The committee recommends naming a specific position on the elected/appointed official's staff instead of using "+1." Reason: When the official's staff



**Create a position responsible for managing parking and assign it adequate staffing -- .5 FTE for parking or 1.0 FTE for Parking + Transportation.**

When General Services implemented parking administration fourteen years ago the County employed far fewer downtown employees, employees waited two years for parking, and one FTE worked two hours a week to administer parking in addition to her regular duties.

Since 1994, the number of downtown employees has increased to 2,700, the parking wait time has increased to 6 years, and one FTE works approximately 20 hours a week administering parking in addition to her regular full-time duties.

<i>A .5 FTE could assume these duties of the parking administrator:</i>	<i>A 1.0 FTE could assume the duties of the parking administrator and:</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manage parking assignments.</li> <li>• Enforce the parking policy and manage towing process.</li> <li>• Update the Court on how the parking situation is affected by office relocations.</li> <li>• Update the parking wait list on the intranet bi-weekly.</li> <li>• Coordinate striping and numbering of parking facilities.</li> <li>• Issue and track parking tags.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advise space planning committees on parking-related space issues.</li> <li>• Implement recommendations to reduce SOVs.</li> <li>• Coordinate with CapMetro and other agencies and serve on teleworking committee.</li> <li>• Coordinate with TNR on clean air projects and other transportation initiatives.</li> <li>• Coordinate with local businesses regarding parking and transportation alternatives whenever possible.</li> <li>• Produce a transportation access guide on the intranet.</li> <li>• Research lease opportunities and manage leased spaces.</li> <li>• Implement a pilot of zoned parking.</li> <li>• Make recommendations when needed to manage parking that may occur in locations outside of the downtown campus.</li> </ul>



### **Review the parking policy annually and update it when exceptions are made.**

To enforce the parking policy fairly, the Parking Administrator will need a clear and updated policy. If spaces are to be removed from the non-reserved pool, the policy should be amended.



### **Create an appeal or grievance process.**

Form a standing Parking Committee to audit the policy and respond to grievances and appeals. The committee's decisions would be appealed to Commissioners Court.



### **Alter space management method.**

Repeatedly in the survey employees reported that "there are always empty spaces" in the garage. When Parking Committee members audited the "empty" spaces, there were several reasons why a space may be empty (doctors' appointments, vacations, etc.). The committee recommends continuing to have assigned spaces *but* encouraging more sharing so that no spaces are unused (more administration) and implementing a pilot of zoned parking (less administration but more capital expense).

#### **Assigned Spaces + Sharing**

Assigned spaces are the least efficient use of parking spaces. On any given day some employees will be absent and the space will be unused. Some of the inefficiency could be offset by helping employees share spaces that would otherwise sit empty. For example:

- Allow employees to continue to loan spaces to coworkers on the days their spaces are not needed. Vacationing and teleworking employees should be encouraged by their departments to coordinate sharing with employees who do not have parking.
- If it is determined that a space has been sublet or loaned to a non-employee for consideration, the employee should lose that parking space.
- Many employees work a schedule that allows them to leave at 3 p.m. or 3:30. Others schedule appointments in the late afternoon so they do not need to return downtown. Opening the parking facilities to first come, first served after 3 p.m. would help employees who park at meters to save money and use spaces that might otherwise be empty.

#### **Zoned Parking (spaces are not assigned)**

The 2001 Parking Study estimated that 15 to 20% of assigned spaces in Travis County parking facilities are unused because of vacations, illness, telecommuting, etc. The audit conducted by the Parking Committee February 23<sup>rd</sup> through March 27<sup>th</sup>, 2009 discovered more than 20% of the spaces were consistently empty in the Granger, San Antonio and EOB garages. To ensure the spaces are used, the 2001 Parking Study recommended the practice of "zoned parking."

With zoned parking, a limited number of employees are given permission to park in unassigned spaces on a first come, first served basis. The spaces are "overbooked" by some percentage much like airline seats. It is more space-efficient to have unassigned spaces available to more employees than to have assigned spaces limited to fewer employees who will not use them every day.

For zoned parking to be implemented successfully, facilities must be secured with parking arms that only open for the limited number of employees with passes to park. It helps to combine zoned parking with telework, bus pass programs, etc., to maximize flexibility.

<b>Parking Arms (Needed for Zoned Parking)</b>	<b>Price</b>	<b>Spaces Recovered*</b>
Granger Garage	\$25,052	52
USB South and West Lot	\$35,292	13
Guadalupe and 10th St. Lot	\$29,232	10
EOB (all three entrances)	\$44,334	12
San Antonio Garage	\$33,738	51
<b>Total for parking arms:</b>	<b>\$167,648</b>	<b>138</b>
* Used 15% overbook. Spaces reserved for special use and county vehicles are not included but specified position spaces are. Prices were quoted in 2007.		

Zoned parking can create problems for employees who work overlapping shifts. Employees may not find a space on their preferred floor in the garage. Also, employees are likely, but not guaranteed, a parking space when they need one. For this reason, assigned spaces may be retained for certain positions.

**Q 3.2 – How can we do an audit of the current parking situation (all assigned spaces vis-a-vis actual users of that space)?**

The Parking Committee audited the parking situation by reviewing the parking assignment list relative to these aspects: county vehicles assigned spaces, key positions assigned parking, and accuracy of assignment and waiting lists.

**1. Parking Policy 11.005 – Appendix B: List of Parking Spaces for County Vehicles**

Committee members compared the number of county vehicle parking spots designated in the parking policy and the number in use. Results: There are many more county vehicles assigned general pool spaces than there are spaces set aside for county vehicles in the policy. This finding is not surprising since the number of county vehicles has increased since the parking policy was adopted in the 1990s. As valuable assets, county vehicles are expected to be parked on-site and in designated spots.



Employees who drive county vehicles during the day frequently park their personal vehicles in the county vehicles’ space. This practice should be allowed to continue because this form of space sharing utilizes a space that would otherwise be empty during the day. The practice also ensures that the designated space is available when the county vehicle needs it.



Reduce number of county vehicles housed downtown to only those vehicles that are used downtown. Currently, 139 county vehicles are parked in downtown facilities. County vehicles take up 12% of county-owned spaces.



## 2. Parking Policy 11.006 – Appendix C: Key Positions/Assigned Parking

Committee members compared the “permanent” space assignments to the Chapter 11 Parking Policy “Key Positions” list. Changes such as major reorganizations, the addition of new courts and new departments, and moves from locations with parking to locations without parking have caused the list of reserved spaces to grow since the policy was adopted in the 1990s. As the number of reserved spaces increase, fewer spaces are available in the general pool for assignment to waiting employees.



Amend the “key persons” or “permanent space assignment” list in the policy. Change the term to “specified position” because the term “key person” has a different meaning elsewhere in the Travis County Code. Require that any additions to the position list include an amendment to the parking policy. Even routine changes, such as the addition of new courts, should cause an amendment in the policy if the result is a reduction in the general pool of assignable spaces. Vendors should not be assigned spaces through contracts.

## 3. Duplicate spaces, relocations, and longevity issues

Name changes, terminations, hirings, relocations, space-transfer requests, etc., cause the parking list to change constantly. Committee members reconciled the parking list against the county’s payroll system in H.T.E. for possible errors caused by this dynamic nature of the data. The audit was a valuable exercise because it introduced an opportunity to improve the process. For example, adding an employee ID field reduces the importance of a changing data field (last name) caused by name changes (marriages, divorces).



Implement a process to provide the Parking Administrator with accurate information on new hires, terminations, and relocations. For example, require that the Parking Administrator be given access to termination and new hire reports sorted by employee ID. Require departments to enter location codes into H.T.E. that identify where employees work. Although a few departments are using the field, most departments do not. Currently, there is no consistent identifier used in the system for all employees to provide reliable information as to the location of an employee’s primary work site. This field should be a required field for all new PAFs and would be instrumental in updating the parking list accurately for relocations.



After a new parking policy is approved and an initial reconciliation is completed, the parking list should be audited annually.

### Q 3.3 – In what creative ways can we have the available spaces be used by more employees?



**A 3.3 –** In addition to the other recommendations made in this report, create a parking hub in-house. This parking hub could be used on a department, location or county-wide basis. Employees post available parking spaces when they know in advance that their space will be vacant. Employees without parking may then reserve the space. Some

departments already do this informally, telling employees who do not have parking when another will be out of the office, on vacation or sick. The GroupWise calendar, which is used to reserve meeting rooms, has the potential to be used to reserve a parking space.

### Q 3.4 – What does the private industry do to maximally allocate parking spaces?

*See Summary Chart in Appendix 3.*

**A 3.4 –** The Victoria Transport Policy Institute presents a comprehensive list of parking management strategies. The table in Appendix 4 summarizes the strategies, indicates their typical reduction in parking requirements, and whether they tend to reduce vehicle traffic and therefore provide additional benefits (such as reductions in congestion, accidents, energy consumption, pollution emissions and consumer costs.) Some of these strategies are being recommended by the Parking Committee such as shared parking and improving parking facility design and operation. Further details of how local businesses address parking are provided in questions 3.8 and 3.9.

### Q 3.5 – What will be the process for updating the current parking policy?

**A 3.5 –** Per the charge given to the Parking Committee, a draft of a revised parking policy is included in the appendix of this report. With the assistance of the County Attorney’s Office, the committee drafted a policy that incorporates the recommendations included in this report. The revised parking policy is not completed because it has not yet been submitted to the Court and departments for review. Further direction from the Court on this issue is requested.

### Selected quotes from survey

- “Parking is a seniority perquisite and should remain that way, also it should be based solely on seniority with NO other consideration, especially position or political.”
- “I know that there are more people than spaces but as a trial attorney with a schedule that varies greatly & a parent that needs to pick up/drop off kids I do not see any way to go without a car. I rode the bus for a year, carpooled with my husband for a while and then paid for parking for about three years before I got a space. One thing that seems to be a big problem - if you get assigned out of the downtown area and you give up your spot and then get moved back, you go to bottom of list. This is stupid. Policy should encourage people to park away from downtown and reward those who do - not punish them! Also I know defense attorneys park in county spots that people loan/let them pay them for!”
- “I think the most unfair aspect of the parking policy is that only the downtown employees are penalized and all others areas have free parking. The examination of the parking policy should not just look at how can we get people out of their spaces, but also at the bigger picture and other coalitions that the county is a member of. How can we use this opportunity to address our parking problem and do something for air quality?”



- “There are many people who have assigned parking places who do not work in the downtown area. I feel they should give up their spots. There are also many people who have assigned parking who do not use them because they either use the park and ride or use the disabled parking passes. My suggestion would be that if you personally don't use your assigned parking spot more than 3 times per week, you should give up the parking spot. You should not be able to keep a spot forever if you don't use it because of seniority or because you may get a job back downtown and may need that spot some day. I say "get back on the waiting list"!

### Q 3.6 – How should the County address the employee parking problem?



**3.6** – The County should adopt a mix of short-term and long-term strategies to address the parking problem.

#### **Short-term:**

- Adopt policies to address fairness issues and to maintain the pool of non-reserved parking spaces.
- Designate a .5 or 1.0 FTE as Parking Administrator to manage parking.
- Open parking facilities to first come, first served for employees after 3 p.m.
- Create telecommuting and flextime options and encourage employees who participate to share spaces.
- Highlight alternative transportation options during new employee orientation and encourage use by the entire workforce. Help employees find carpool options and assist with route and schedule planning.

#### **Long-term:**

- Include Parking Administrator or a Parking Committee member in long-term space planning projects.
- Build a parking facility, either downtown or at the Airport complex. If at Airport, run a shuttle from Airport Boulevard to downtown for jurors and employees.
- Adopt the recommendations of the 2001 Parking Study and implement a pilot of zoned parking. *Note:* This is a long-term solution because its success depends upon the installation of infrastructure improvements such as parking arms and badge-entry systems.
- Continue to relocate departments that are currently housed in the Courthouse Complex to areas with sufficient parking for both the department and the public that needs to use the services of the department. The following departments were identified in the 2001 Parking Study as being eligible to be moved from the downtown campus. This table shows how many spaces would be freed and not needed if the department were to move using 2009 data. If all departments were moved, the wait list would be reduced by 87% to 75 employees.

Department	Spaces assigned to Department's Employees	Department employees on wait list	NUMBER OF COUNTY VEHICLES	Spaces freed or not needed if department moved:
TNR	52	30	41	123
ITS	65	20	3	88
Facilities	35	15	15	65
Auditor	37	25	0	62
Purchasing	24	9	1	34
HRMD	33	5	0	38
Commissioners Court	17	4	0	21
PBO/Cash Mgt	10	3	0	13
RMCR	23	3	2	28
Treasurer	4	2	0	6
Admin Ops	3	0	0	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>303</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>481</b>

**Q 3.7 – What should the County's position be on providing free parking for employees?**

**A. 3.7** – This subject generated both more survey comments and more passion than any other question. We have included a sampling of quotes to convey the interest this question generates.



The Parking Committee recommends that employees not be charged for parking because:

- Free parking is considered a longevity benefit, one that employees are passionate to retain. Removing this benefit will create much ill-will.
- Justifying and enforcing parking charges at non-downtown locations will be difficult. Locations like Airport Boulevard combine employee parking with free public parking.
- It will be difficult to generate enough revenue to compensate for leased spaces for employees who lack parking by charging employees with parking. Unless employees outside of downtown were charged, each downtown employee with parking will have to pay \$47 to compensate each employee without parking \$100. Every downtown employee assigned



**What amount would you pay for parking if charged?**

59 % would pay for parking if it costs \$25-\$50.  
41 % percent would still be willing to pay for parking if it cost \$50-\$100.



**How far would you walk for free parking if Travis County charged for the garages?**

12% would walk 0 blocks  
44% would walk 1-2 blocks,  
26% would walk 3-4 blocks,  
12% would walk over 4 blocks.

parking will have to pay \$41 per month to raise enough money to lease 721 spaces (provided enough lease spaces were available).<sup>8</sup>

### Selected quotes from survey

- “I do not believe we as county employees should have to pay to come to work with the little salary that we receive. As for the employee that do not have a parking space. They should just have to wait just like I and many others had too. I understand their frustration because I was in the same boat back then as they are now. But I waited and did not complain. Because when you first start working for the county and go to orientation it is made very clear that there is a waiting list for parking. They also give you an estimated time frame. I know that I was told it was at least a 5yr wait and it was. So for 5yrs I paid to work w/the county with no reimbursement.”
- “I believe we should have free parking, since pay raises are hard to come by. And when there is a cost of living increase its not enough to keep with the economy. We would have to choose between health insurance for the family or parking.”
- “Although I realize it is difficult for newer employees to park, I feel that those of us that have waited on the list for years should not be penalized. I would be willing to pay a minimum amount for my parking space if need be.”
- “I would gladly pay for a space up to 90.00 per month.”
- “I don't mind having to pay for parking I already have to pay \$85 per month for private parking but I don't mind because I know my car is being watched by an attendant.”
- “Please do not make it worse. It is difficult now to recruit and retain professional staff when there are so many other job opportunities in the Austin area that provide higher salaries & free parking for employees. Would be perceived to be unfair if the County takes away or charges an employee for a parking space when they have waited in excess of 6 yrs for a parking space. I would suggest any changes to the parking policy should apply to all County staff (elected/appointed officials, exec mgrs, dept heads, county vehicles, employees, etc.). If the policy is changed to charge staff in the downtown complex for parking spaces, then the same amount should be charged to staff in other locations.”
- “I'm working 2 jobs trying to make ends meet. I can not afford to pay for parking. If I could afford it I would pay. I have been taking chances by parking in open spaces in the county garage. I get emails saying that I need to move my car. The other day someone put stickers all over my car windows saying no parking. I don't like being a burden I just don't know what else to do.”
- “It is outrageous and absurd to even suggest that only downtown workers have to face the prospect of paying for parking to weed out the less serious types. If you are going to suggest charging for parking, then every person who parks at every site, even those with free and sufficient parking, ought to pay the same amount. Otherwise you are discriminating against those downtown and creating two classes of employees. Only apply the money to

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<sup>8</sup> Assumes 1,200 downtown employees have county-assigned parking. 721 spaces equal the number of parking spaces currently leased and the number of employees on the wait list.

contracting for more spaces. If you charge - no exempt slots. The electeds and appointeds pay, too, and county vehicles. Bottom line---everyone must be in the same boat and treated equally even if it all sucks. Stop telling everyone to ride the bus."

- "It took me 5.5 years and it cost me thousands of dollars in parking fees to private contractors before I got a parking spot. Therefore, I am not enthusiastic about paying for parking again unless the cost is subsidized. A cost of \$50 / month would cost the employee \$1200 out of pocket in two years. That's a lot of many to all employees, and not affordable to many. If a fee is charged to park in county facilities, it needs to be a minimal amount."
- "It would be extremely unfair to require employees in the downtown area to pay for parking when county employees in other locations have parking provided. The only fair thing would be to compensate those in the downtown area who do not have parking."
- "Maximum fee \$60.00. Currently salaries are very low to pay more for parking anywhere."
- "I again, feel that as a long time employee I should NOT have to pay or give up my parking. I waited a long time for parking and feel that I deserve it. I would love to keep it and feel that I should. Again, being an 11 year plus employee my parking works for me."
- "The County has charged for parking before. I remember having to pay to park in the Granger garage; it was more for covered than on the 8th floor."
- "Travis County should provide parking for all of its employees at no charge. As average government employees we do not make much money as it is and with costs of living continuing to go up we average folk need every dime we make to make ends meet. If you must charge, perhaps charge the employees that make over \$60,000.00 year, including Commissioners, Judges, Attorneys, etc."
- "We really need to address this problem for county employees. We serve & protect this city. Solutions, parking passes for us to park free at meters. First come, first serve on parking spaces, add on the current parking garage by building higher, give us a good rate on another parking garage. Large cities like Philly and New York are already doing this. Why is Texas in the dark ages? Most employees that I've talked to are willing to pay 10.00 to 20.00 a month for parking. The convenience would be worth it. Thank you"
- "As a county employee the waiting list when I started was approximately 6 yrs. I finally received a parking space and am very appreciative. As stated on previous questions I currently do not make enough money to pay for parking and do not live near a Capitol Metro bus stop."
- "End "free" parking. All of us with parking should pay to subsidize the 600+ who need parking and/or alternatives. Pay for actual total costs plus bonus to bus/bike riders. (No tax money.) Assign a block of parking to shift employees to share. Provide bonus to persons who take alternative methods and do not use any parking space. Bus / bike riders should have a bonus above costs funded by the persons who pay for parking spaces."

### Q 3.8 – What is the policy of other major employers in Central Texas?

### Q 3.9 – What is the policy of other major employers in Central Texas and elsewhere?

*See Summary Charts in Appendix 2.*

**A. 3.8 and 3.9** – Among the **government employers in downtown Austin**, the policy is to provide free employee parking but not necessarily assigned parking or parking located at the work site. In both the City of Austin and the state offices, management is most likely to have on-site parking and employees are provided leased parking. The employee parking for the state agencies is first come, first served, usually in garages. In both cases, there appears to be sufficient parking.

Committee members called four **county governments**: Bexar, Harris, Tarrant, and Dallas counties. None of the counties surveyed provided free parking to all employees:

- Tarrant County charges all employees, regardless of their position, \$15 per month for uncovered parking and \$20 per month for covered parking. There is an 18-month wait list in Tarrant County.
- Bexar County provides free parking to elected/appointed officials and management but charges other employees \$50 per month. There is a six-year wait list for parking in Bexar.
- In Harris and Dallas counties, upper management has free parking but other employees must find parking on their own. These downtown areas have more options available for parking, including metered spaces and surface lots.

Among the 12 **non-government employers in downtown Austin** surveyed by the committee, seven provide free parking, usually in leased space. Two employers leave parking up to the employee. Employees of the other three employers pay between \$45 and \$100 per month for parking in leased space. (In the case of the employees who pay \$45, parking in the leased spaces costs \$85 but the employer subsidizes \$40.)

### Q 3.10 – Should the County treat parking as a benefit (i.e. those without spaces are compensated as Auditor does) or as a User Fee Amenity (i.e. those with spaces pay for the spaces)?



**A 3.10** – The committee recommends continuing to treat parking as a benefit much like longevity pay. Downtown employees who stay with the county eventually receive a parking space (around 2 years after they begin receiving longevity pay at four years).

The committee would like to stress that the parking benefit is not applied equally to all employees. Employees who work outside of downtown do not have to wait or pay for parking. Certain positions receive spaces immediately while others wait about six years.

The Auditor's Office addresses this by compensating employees who do not have a parking space to offset the cost of paying for parking. The compensation ends when the

employee is offered a parking place. This is funded by the department's allocation for compensation issues.



Permit County departments the flexibility to use their compensation dollars to offset parking costs for employees who do not have county-assigned parking.



Survey respondents stated that, on average, \$54 is a fair amount per month that Travis County should compensate those employees who do not have parking spaces.

- 45% believed the amount should be \$1-\$50;
- 33% believed it should be \$51-\$100;
- 16% believed there should be no compensation; and
- 7% believed it should be over \$100.



When asked to specify the amount of compensation to the type of parking, 60% said those parking in a garage should receive \$1-\$50, while 27% thought they should receive \$0. If parking in a surface lot, 69% of the respondents believed the amount of compensation should be \$1-\$50, and 28% believed it should be \$0.

### **Q 3.11 – If parking is to be treated as a benefit, should the limited benefit be triaged by need or by longevity?**



**A 3.11** – Parking should be treated like longevity. The survey showed that employees believe that longevity is an equitable method. Unlike need, which is subjective, the hire date is a quantitative measure that can be applied automatically and equally.

### **Q 3.12 – If the benefit is triaged by need, what standards should be applied to assess the need (small children, distance between home and work, health concerns, job requires unique travel flexibility.....)?**



**A 3.12** – A revised parking policy should include a provision for employees to receive a space out of hire-date order if they have a documented medical need. The hire-date exception is also applied to carpoolers and specific elected and appointed positions. Other than the exceptions identified in the policy, the committee does not recommend parking be assigned by need.

### Q 3.13 – How might the Court use financial incentives to address current parking problems?

A 3.13 - Note: *Non-financial Employer-Provided Amenities are discussed in Q2.6<sup>9</sup>*

**Parking cash-out** – An employee receives some benefit, usually money, for days he does not use employer-provided parking. Employees may "cash-out" the value of employer-provided parking by foregoing parking, and receive the taxable cash value of the parking in return. Employees who continue to use free parking forego the cash but realize quickly that there is an opportunity cost to "free" parking and begin to behave as though they pay for parking.


Another cash-out scenario is the flat monthly **commuter/parking allowance**. Employers "charge" the employee for parking in employer lots but give an allowance that can be used for parking or commuter fare. If the employee uses the employer parking, he pays for it out of the allowance. This solution can be combined with commuter tax benefits and made part of regular payroll processes. If the employee gives up the space, he gets more money, on which he pays taxes. In all of the scenarios, the employee pays taxes on the cash received and the employer has an administrative burden.

By providing an incentive not to use employer-provided parking, cash-outs encourage employees to use alternative forms of transportation.

**Tax-free transit/vanpool benefits** – Employers can provide tax-free commuting benefits to their employees up to \$230 per month for transit or vanpool expenses and up to \$230 per month for parking expenses. Employers save money because they do not pay federal income or payroll taxes on the value of the fringe benefit. Employees receive this benefit for free.

### Q 3.14 – Are such incentives affordable?

A 3.14 – For some employers, cash-outs are cheaper than leasing or building additional facilities. Cash-outs can be distributed daily, monthly, or annually. Other benefits like bus passes, teleworking opportunities, etc., can be offered in lieu of cash. More study will need to be completed to assist the Court with decisions on the affordability of the options. Comparison should be made between financial incentives and non-financial incentives like teleworking.

 The Parking Survey asked employees, "What is the dollar amount you would accept to give up your parking space?" Of the respondents who answered the question, 34% said the median amount they would accept is \$100. Six percent of employees would give up their parking spot for more salary and 1 percent would if given a free bus pass. However, the rest said they would not give up their county parking space under any circumstances.

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<sup>9</sup> This report relies on information received from various tax sources, and such laws are subject to change. The statements made in this report may have to be revised if and when the County considers implementing these programs.



## Conclusion

Parking is a difficult issue to resolve for Travis County. Several studies have been completed and yet the wait for an assigned space is still six years. Employees and constituents alike have difficulty finding parking in the congested Courthouse Complex. The Parking Committee appointed by the Commissioners Court on March 27, 2007, has spent numerous hours researching options and identifying solutions to provide some relief.

Of the many recommendations offered in this report, the committee would especially like to highlight the following. These would make the greatest impact in alleviating some of the frustration associated with employee parking.

- **Hire a full-time Parking Administrator to enforce policy.** The size of the workforce has grown and the needs of employees and downtown businesses have changed. A full-time position is required to adequately manage the parking needs of the County, including the Courthouse and Airport Complexes. This recommendation has been made by two previous committees and is no less important today.
- **Buy, build and/or lease more parking spaces.** About one-fifth of the County's downtown workforce is without parking and is expected to wait six years for an assigned space. Lack of parking affects productivity and is an employee retention issue. As possible, departments and vehicles that are not needed downtown should be moved to another location.
- **Provide transparency by posting the policy, wait list and assignment list on the intranet.** Employees want to believe there is equality in the assignment of parking spaces. Posting the information on the County's intranet site would allow employees to confirm their place on the wait list, verify their parking assignment, and understand exceptions to the normal assignment rules. It would reduce the inquiries to the Parking Administrator. And it would provide a check and balance to the method of assignment.
- **Increase incentives to encourage alternative transportation.** Although employees are unlikely to give up a parking space once assigned, this would reduce the burden for employees without assigned spaces. It may also encourage employees to try alternatives to SOVs if a guaranteed ride home or pool of spaces for alternative transportation uses were available. Additionally, the environmental and air quality impacts would also be beneficial.





## APPENDIX 1. SUMMARY OF PARKING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS TABLE

Page 7	Continue acquiring additional leased spaces and buy, lease or build a parking garage downtown. Purchase a remote parking facility and run a shuttle between the facility and downtown for both county fleet vehicles and employees.
Page 8	Three parking-facility options have been identified: build for county-use only, implementing zoned parking; build for county-public mixed parking, adopting the hospital model where public parking charges offset the cost of building a facility that is also used by employees; consider building and sharing a facility in partnership with another entity such as Austin Community College, the City of Austin, or the State of Texas.
Page 11	Work with CapitalMetro to develop park-and-ride facilities and employee van pools.
Page 11	Create a match program in-house, an intranet bulletin board, or a portal on a site such as NuRide.com or RiverCityRideshare.com so employees have a central location to find carpool options.
Page 12	Participate in a Guaranteed Ride Home program providing a limited number of taxi rides that participants can use in the event of an emergency.
Page 12	Explore relationships with local businesses for discounted employee rates related to transportation needs.
Page 12	Departments should encourage space sharing and cooperation, particularly among teleworkers.
Page 13	Managers should be flexible in allowing indoor storage of bicycles used for commuting and allowing electric bicycles to recharge at County facilities during the day.
Page 17	Travis County can encourage carpooling by continuing to provide carpooling spaces but reducing the number of required participants from three riders to two.
Page 17	Post the parking policy on the Intranet.
Page 18	Address ledger vs. hire date issue in the policy.
Page 18	Make the parking process more transparent.
Page 18	Perform an annual audit of the parking wait and assignment lists against the parking policy to ensure that assignments and exceptions comply with policy.

Page 18	Specify that newly acquired parking spaces be assigned as promptly as feasible.
Page 18	Create a clear parking policy that addresses reserved/non-reserved spaces.
Page 20	Create a position responsible for managing parking and assign it adequate staffing -- .5 FTE for parking or 1.0 FTE for Parking + Transportation issues.
Page 21	Review the parking policy annually and update it when exceptions are made.
Page 21	Create an appeal or grievance process.
Page 21	Alter space management method. Implement a pilot of zoned parking and encourage space sharing to decrease the number of unused spaces.
Page 22	Continue to allow employees who drive county vehicles during the day to park their personal vehicles in the county vehicles' space.
Page 22	Reduce number of county vehicles housed downtown to only those vehicles that are used downtown.
Page 23	Amend the "key persons" or "permanent space assignment" list in the policy. Require that any additions to the position list include an amendment to the parking policy.
Page 23	Implement a process to provide the Parking Administrator with accurate information on new hires, terminations, and relocations.
Page 23	Audit the parking list annually after a new parking policy is approved and an initial reconciliation is completed.
Page 23	Create a parking hub in-house that could be used on a department, location or county-wide basis. Employees would post available parking spaces when they knew in advance that their space would be vacant so it could be reserved by those without parking.
Page 25	Adopt a mix of short-term and long-term strategies to address the parking problem.
Page 26	Do not charge employees for parking.
Page 29	Continue to treat parking as a benefit much like longevity pay.
Page 30	Allow compensation funding to be used to offset employee parking costs.
Page 30	Continue to treat parking like longevity pay. Employees view this as a equitable

	method.
Page 30	Do not assign parking by need. Include a provision for employees to receive a space if they have a documented medical need, are in a carpool, and other exceptions specified in the parking policy.

 APPENDIX 2. PARKING POLICY SUMMARY TABLE

1. What is the policy of other major employers in Central Texas?

**Downtown Government**

City of Austin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Parking depends on the department and building in which the employee works.</li> <li>▪ Some have parking right in the same building.</li> </ul>
Austin Public Library - 800 Guadalupe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Free parking for employees.</li> <li>▪ Parking for management onsite.</li> <li>▪ Leased spaces for other employees.</li> </ul>
Austin History Center - 810 Guadalupe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Free parking for employees.</li> <li>▪ Employer pays for employee parking in leased spaces.</li> </ul>
State of Texas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ House and Senate have assigned spaces.</li> <li>▪ Commissions have space in garages around the Capitol that are on a first come/first served basis.</li> <li>▪ There are also public parking spaces that are paid parking.</li> </ul>
Federal Courthouse - 200 W. 8th St.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Judges, clerks, department managers have on-site parking.</li> <li>▪ Other employees park in leased parking.</li> </ul>
US Post Office	Free parking for employees.

**Downtown, Non-Government**

Allan House Lawyers - 1104 San Antonio	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Firm rents from Central Christian Church for \$85 and supplements \$40 of this for employees.</li> <li>▪ Employees pay \$45 per month.</li> </ul>
Chase Bank --800 Lavaca Chipotle Grill- 801 Congress	Employees park on their own.
Clark, Thomas & Winters - 700 Lavaca	Employees pay \$100 per month.
Frost Bank - 401 Congress	Employees pay \$80 per month.
Texas PTA - 408 W. 11th Texas State Teachers' Assoc. - 316 12th Minton/Burton - 1100 Guadalupe Lloyd, Gosselink, Blivens -816 Congress Harry Whittington - 807 Brazos	Firm/Employer pays for/supplies parking.
IBC Bank - 816 Congress Wolf Camera - 607 Congress	Spaces leased to provide parking.

## 2. What is the policy of other major employers elsewhere?

### Government

Bexar County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is a 6 year wait for parking. In process of building two new garages downtown.</li> <li>Employees pay \$50 per month. <i>Exception:</i> management, elected/appointed officials and employees with more than 25 years of service park free.</li> </ul>
Dallas County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Employees responsible for own parking. <i>Exception:</i> Elected/Appointed Officials and some upper management have assigned parking.</li> <li>Employees can get a DART pass for \$5 a month. The pass also covers Fort Worth &amp; Dallas.</li> </ul>
Harris County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parking spaces for management positions only.</li> <li>County credit union has some discounts for bus passes.</li> <li>Some private lots cost \$2 per day but employees hesitate to use these lots because of safety concerns.</li> </ul>
Tarrant County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 ½ year waiting list.</li> <li>All employees pay \$15 for open parking or \$20 for covered. Supplements a bus pass.</li> </ul>
City of Madison, WI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Within bond covenant for new structures, not permitted to have free parking. Includes contracts with vendors.</li> <li>Only downtown parkers charged; offices in outlying areas have free parking.</li> <li>To help compensate downtown employees, paid for 8-hour work day but only work 7.75 hours. 25 hour extra goes toward parking costs.</li> <li>City offers free bus passes and park and ride lots operated by Madison Metro. Pay on per ride basis - \$.92/ride.</li> <li>City operates 6 garages ranging from 1600 – 5000 spaces. Metered parking is \$1.25/hr, garage is \$1.10/hr 6am – 6pm and \$3 total 6pm – 6am.</li> <li>Have own car pooling computer matching program.</li> </ul>
Other Agencies in Madison, WI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Madison County provides parking for 80% of its downtown employees with a 1,000 space garage. Employees pay \$15-17/day. Free bus passes available.</li> <li>State of Wisconsin has no free parking. Pay \$133/mth with 1.5 year waiting list. \$1.10/hr at meters. Also have bus pass and car pool programs. State uses own vans when they are off duty for a van pool. They are assigned by neighborhood and use IRS rate to figure costs based on mileage that is split by passengers.</li> </ul>

### Non-Government

Whole Foods – 525 N Lamar Blvd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Transportation issues fall within their core mission. There is no separate budget line for transportation. For example, new bike racks fall under Regular Repair/Maintenance line. Off-and-on 10-20 staff spends 1-2 hours/week on setting up systems and disseminating information -- as part of their overall core values. No non-monetary incentives offered.</li> <li>The global office encourages carpool and vanpool internally. Many of the younger team members are more likely to bus and bike. They have several bike racks -- most are for general use.</li> <li>Thought they had a more than ample parking lot but they're still working on it. There are 590 store-level employees and 350 upstairs-office employees who park there.</li> <li>Their participation in the CapMetro program hit a snag, though it was highly successful. The company votes on benefits every 2-3 years. They determined that the transportation subsidy was a benefit not available to all the other stores. They're looking at other ways to provide free bus passes. They distributed 150 passes for the free program. They're currently selling bus passes for \$10/month.</li> </ul>
Spanion – 5501 E Oltorf St	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Member of EPA's Best Workplaces for Commuters (BWC.gov). Non-Monetary incentives offered: Winner of Commute Challenge three years in a row. Committed just under \$20,000 in 2006. There are more telecommuters who aren't part of the program (same with carpoolers, etc.) Staff time/labor: 40 hours/year.</li> <li>Carpool matching + incentives. Reserved spaces and gas money for carpoolers. Vanpools via</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bus passes – free for employees. Bus riding stats: 2 bus passes/month.</li> <li>• Bike parking and on-site showers &amp; lockers.</li> <li>• Awareness campaigns with Monthly prize drawings. Steady stream of people joining the program for incentives. 100 active employees per month with 50 more participating of and on.</li> <li>• 28 telecommuters joined program.</li> </ul>
<p>Advanced Micro Devices 5204 E Ben White Blvd</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Austin office has 2500 employees. There are 50-100 cars per day saved from coming to AMD. Active participants total 150. Objective: Take cars off the road. Staff time/labor: One part-time staff at 20 hours/week. Resources committed by company: \$5,000/year. Promote via mass e-mails, refining logo/slogan, create new marketing materials. They are phasing out subsidies when the scope changes from Austin to North America. They are replacing the subsidy with a pre-tax payroll for bus or vanpool vouchers (@ \$30/month). Tax code allows \$110/month for mass transit.</li> <li>• 5 sub-programs: Carpool, Vanpool, Bike, Bus, Telecommute. Offer various incentives, monthly drawings. Non-monetary incentives offered: Preferred parking, bike racks, and showers. Toyota, local bike shop discounts in the works. Track how often using alternative methods to get incentives.</li> <li>• Provide preferred parking for vanpools and carpools. Setting up park &amp; ride vanpools for new SW Parkway site.</li> <li>• Bus riding stats: Avg. of 12 riders/month. Covered &amp; secured bike racks &amp; showers on-site.</li> </ul>
<p>University of Colorado in Boulder, CO</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Faculty and staff ride buses and light rail free of charge.</li> <li>▪ No longer present university parking in employee orientation – only alternative modes of transportation. As a result, has seen an increase in holders of bus passes (from 80% in 1998 to 99% in 2005) and a reduction in SOV use. In 1995, 67% drove alone and 19% used transit. In 2005, 55% drove alone and 37% used transit at least once during a typical week.</li> </ul>

**APPENDIX 3. PARKING MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES TABLE**

<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Typical Reduction</b>	<b>Traffic Reduction</b>
Shared Parking	Parking spaces serve multiple users and destinations.	10-30%	
Parking Regulations	Regulations favor higher-value uses such as service vehicles, deliveries, customers, quick errands, and people with special needs.	10-30%	
More Accurate and Flexible Standards	Adjust parking standards to more accurately reflect demand in a particular situation.	10-30%	
Parking Maximums	Establish maximum parking standards.	10-30%	
Remote Parking	Provide off-site or urban fringe parking facilities.	10-30%	
Smart Growth	Encourage more compact, mixed, multi-modal development to allow more parking sharing and use of alternative modes.	10-30%	X
Walking and Cycling Improvements	Improve walking and cycling conditions to expand the range of destinations serviced by a parking facility.	5-15%	X
Increase Capacity of Existing Facilities	Increase parking supply by using otherwise wasted space, smaller stalls, car stackers and valet parking.	5-15%	X
Mobility Management	Encourage more efficient travel patterns, including changes in mode, timing, destination and vehicle trip frequency.	10-30%	X
Parking Pricing	Charge motorists directly and efficiently for using parking facilities.	10-30%	X
Improve Pricing Methods	Use better charging techniques to make pricing more convenient and cost effective.	Varies	X
Financial Incentives	Provide financial incentives to shift mode, such as cash out.	10-30%	X
Unbundle Parking	Rent or sell parking facilities separately from building space.	10-30%	X
Parking Tax Reform	Change tax policies to support parking management objectives.	5-15%	X
Bicycle Facilities	Provide bicycle storage and changing facilities.	5-15%	X
Improve User Information and Marketing	Provide convenient and accurate information on parking availability and price, using maps, signs, brochures and electronic communication.	5-15%	X
Improve Enforcement	Insure that parking regulation enforcement is efficient, considerate and fair.	Varies	
Transportation Management Associations	Establish member-controlled organizations that provide transport and parking management services in a particular area.	Varies	X
Overflow Parking Plans	Establish plans to manage occasional peak parking demands.	Varies	
Address Spillover Problems	Use management, enforcement and pricing to address spillover problems.	Varies	
Parking Facility Design and Operation	Improve parking facility design and operations to help solve problems and support parking management.	Varies	

Source: Victoria Transport Policy Institute, <http://www.vtpi.org/tdm/tdm28.htm>. This table summarizes the parking management strategies described in this chapter. It indicates the typical reduction in the amount of parking required at a destination, and whether a strategy helps reduce vehicle traffic, and so also provides congestion, accident and pollution reduction benefits.



**APPENDIX 4. AUDIT OF EMPTY PARKING SPACES IN COUNTY GARAGES**

Audit of Empty Parking Spaces					
Day	Date	Time	Granger	EOB	San Antonio
Monday	23-Feb	10:00 AM	100	23	N/D
Monday	23-Feb	3:00 PM	88	27	95
Wednesday	25-Feb	10:00 AM	87	23	N/D
Wednesday	25-Feb	3:00 PM	93	24	108
Friday	27-Feb	10:00 AM	114	38	N/D
Friday	27-Feb	3:00 PM	139	36	146
Monday	2-Mar	10:00 AM	105	27	N/D
Monday	2-Mar	3:00 PM	124	24	113
Wednesday	4-Mar	10:00 AM	91	26	N/D
Wednesday	4-Mar	3:00 PM	97	28	N/D
Friday	6-Mar	10:00 AM	105	36	N/D
Friday	6-Mar	3:00 PM	126	30	141
Monday	9-Mar	10:00 AM	104	27	N/D
Monday	9-Mar	3:00 PM	90	28	90
Wednesday	11-Mar	10:00 AM	97	26	96
Wednesday	11-Mar	3:00 PM	74	24	103
Friday	13-Mar	10:00 AM	100	32	N/D
Friday	13-Mar	3:00 PM	121	34	140
Monday	16-Mar	10:00 AM	122	30	N/D
Monday	16-Mar	3:00 PM	118	32	156
Wednesday	18-Mar	10:00 AM	N/D	34	N/D
Wednesday	18-Mar	3:00 PM	124	38	N/D
Friday	20-Mar	10:00 AM	154	45	N/D
Friday	20-Mar	3:00 PM	167	52	197
Monday	23-Mar	10:00 AM	109	29	N/D
Monday	23-Mar	3:00 PM	111	22	102
Wednesday	25-Mar	10:00 AM	95	26	N/D
Wednesday	25-Mar	3:00 PM	122	N/D	116
Friday	27-Mar	10:00 AM	N/D	36	N/D
Friday	27-Mar	3:00 PM	N/D	N/D	162

<b>Avg # Vacant Spaces*</b>	104	28	118
<b>Total # of Spaces</b>	387	119	380
<b>% Vacant</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>31%</b>

*\*Does not include Spring Break Week 3/16-3/20*

*N/D (no data) represent missed counts.*



**CHAPTER 11. Parking**

§ 11.001 Purpose

§ 11.002 Definitions

§ 11.003 Administration of this Policy

§ 11.004 Commuting Options

§ 11.005 Inventory and Control of Parking Facilities

§ 11.006 Additional Parking Facilities

§ 11.007 Reserved Spaces

§ 11.008 Non-Reserved Spaces

§ 11.009 Transferring Non-Reserved Spaces

§ 11.010 Parking Committee

§ 11.011 Complaints and Appeals

§ 11.012 Inventory of Downtown County Parking Facilities

§ 11.013 Specified Positions

**§ 11.001 Purpose**

(a) The purpose of this Chapter 11 is to:

- (1) codify the policy and associated procedures which Travis County uses to allocate limited parking resources;
- (2) implement and enforce such policy and procedures in an efficient, transparent and effective manner; and
- (3) provide parking facilities or arrangements for Travis County employees in a consistent, rational and equitable manner.

(b) The scope of this policy is limited to County Parking Facilities located in the CBD until such time that parking spaces in non-CBD facilities need to be allocated using the procedures established by this policy.

(c) This Chapter 11 shall also be known as the “Parking Policy.”

**§ 11.002 Definitions**

- (a) “Assigned Space” means a Non-Reserved Space that has been assigned to an employee on the Waitlist.
- (b) “Carpool” means a group of two or more County employees riding in the same vehicle to their workplace at least three out of five County work days a week.
- (c) “Central Business District” (“CBD”) means the downtown section of the City of Austin in which the highest percentage of retail, office, hotel, entertainment and governmental land uses are located.
- (c) “Commissioners Court” means the Travis County Commissioners Court.
- (d) “County-Owned Vehicles” means those vehicles owned by Travis County.
- (e) “County Parking Facilities” means the complete inventory of parking facilities located in the CBD and listed in § 11.012.

- (f) "Non-Reserved Space" means a parking space in a County Parking Facility that does not fall within a Reserved Spaces category under § 11.007. Non-Reserved Spaces include the general pool of parking spaces from which employees on the Waitlist are assigned spaces.
- (g) "Parking Administrator" means the Travis County employee designated to manage and enforce this Parking Policy. The Parking Administrator shall be selected by the Executive Manager designated by Commissioners Court to be responsible for parking matters.
- (h) "Parking Committee" means the panel consisting of those County employees appointed by the Commissioners Court and having the responsibilities described in § 11.010.
- (i) "Reserved Space" means a parking space in a County Parking Facility that has been removed from the pool of available County-provided parking spaces because it falls within one of the reserved space use categories described in § 11.007.
- (j) "Specified Position Space" means a County-provided parking space reserved for those specified positions listed in § 11.013.
- (k) "Transfer Request List" means the list of County employees who have requested a transfer from one assigned space to another.
- (l) "Waitlist" means the list of County employees who have not yet been assigned a County-provided parking space, and which is maintained by the Parking Administrator to ensure the equitable assignment of County-provided parking spaces.
- (m) "Waitlist Number" means the serial number assigned to a County employee on the Waitlist.

**§ 11.003 Administration of this Policy**

- (a) The Executive Manager designated by Commissioners Court to be responsible for parking matters is hereby authorized to delegate the responsibilities and duties assigned to him or her in this Parking Policy to the Parking Administrator.
- (b) The Parking Administrator shall manage the assignment of parking spaces in County Parking Facilities according to this Parking Policy and perform the other duties assigned to him or her in this Parking Policy.
- (c) It shall be the responsibility of the Human Resources Management Department to inform new County employees of this Parking Policy.
- (d) The Auditor's Office shall provide to the Parking Administrator, on a semi-monthly basis, a report of employee transfers, new hires and terminations so that the Waitlist may be updated.

**§ 11.004 Commuting Options**

- (a) The Parking Administrator shall use best efforts to make available information regarding employee commuting options on the intranet.
- (b) The Human Resources Management Department shall present to employees commuting options during New Employee Orientation by distributing any materials that have been provided to the department by the Parking Administrator.

**§ 11.005 Inventory and Control of Parking Facilities**

- (a) **Inventory.** The Parking Administrator shall update the County Parking Facilities inventory at least twice a year.
- (b) **Striping and Signage.** The Parking Administrator shall be responsible for striping and signage of the County Parking Facilities. This responsibility shall include painting and/or installation of appropriate signage (space

numbers, Specified Position titles and any other necessary information) on all spaces located within the County Parking Facilities.

- (c) **Unauthorized Vehicles.** The Parking Administrator shall be responsible for control of County Parking Facilities.
  - (1) **Enforcement.** Enforcement of this Travis County Parking Policy shall be based on a “complaint” system. If an employee finds an unauthorized vehicle parked in the employee's assigned parking space, or in a parking space that the employee reasonably believes to be an illegal or dangerous space, the employee may contact the Parking Administrator, which shall take appropriate action to resolve the situation, including by arranging for removal of the vehicle from the parking facility.
  - (2) **Enforcement Procedure.** The Parking Administrator will, if circumstances warrant, attempt to locate the driver of the unauthorized vehicle for up to one half-hour (30 minutes) after receiving the complaint, and, if the driver is located, shall ask the driver to immediately move the unauthorized vehicle. In the event that the Parking Administrator concludes that circumstances do not permit a search for the driver of the unauthorized vehicle, or if the driver of the unauthorized vehicle refuses to move, then the Parking Administrator may take immediate action to remove the vehicle from the County Parking Facility.
- (d) **Warnings.** The Parking Administrator may place warning tickets on vehicles that are parked in a County Parking Facility without proper authorization.
- (e) **Towing.** Unauthorized and/or abandoned vehicles parked in a County Parking Facility will be subject to impoundment at the vehicle owner's expense.

## **§ 11.006 Additional Parking Facilities**

### **(a) Non-County Temporary Parking Permits.**

- (1) Temporary parking permits for use of spaces located on the grounds of the University of Texas campus will be provided to early-voting elections personnel, convenient to the University of Texas early voting site.
- (2) The Travis County Elections Division staff shall seek to obtain an appropriate number of such permits to ensure that early-voting elections personnel are provided a sufficient number of temporary parking spaces, in convenient locations.

### **(b) Acquisition of Additional Properties**

- (1) Within ten (10) business days of the closing of a real estate transaction in which the County acquires title to real property that includes an additional parking facility, the additional facility shall be added to the inventory of County Parking Facilities listed in § 11.012.
- (2) Within five (5) business days of the inventory update, the parking spaces made available as a result of the real estate acquisition will be assigned in accordance with the Assignment Procedures described in § 11.008(b).

### **(c) Leased Parking Facilities**

- (1) Within ten (10) business days of the conclusion of a lease or license transaction in which the County acquires the right to use additional parking spaces in facilities owned by third parties, the additional facility shall be added to the inventory of County Parking Facilities listed in § 11.012.
- (2) Within five (5) business days of the inventory update, the parking spaces made available as a result of the lease or license transaction will be assigned in accordance with the Assignment Procedures described in § 11.008(b).
- (3) In the event a lease or license to use parking spaces in a third-party facility is terminated and/or expires on its own terms, the Parking Administrator shall immediately (within three (3) days of

termination/expiration) notify all employees who use such spaces. Reassignment of parking spaces for affected employees shall proceed in accordance with §11.008(b)(2)(D).

### § 11.007 Reserved Spaces

- (a) **Reserved Spaces.** Parking spaces shall be reserved in the downtown area for the uses and durations specified below:
- (1) **Public Use.** Eleven (11) spaces in one or more County Parking Facilities are reserved for use by members of the public while they are conducting business with the County.
  - (2) **Grand Juror Use.** Twelve (12) spaces on the southwest corner of 11<sup>th</sup> Street and Guadalupe Street shall be reserved for use by the members of the Grand Jury during their prescheduled meeting times. At all other times, the spaces will remain reserved for temporary assignment by the Parking Administrator on an as-needed basis and in his/her discretion. The Parking Administrator and criminal courts administrative staff shall cooperate to ensure that the Parking Administrator is given timely notice of all Grand Jury meeting schedules and to enforce the restrictions on use of reserved spaces by Grand Jurors as described herein.
  - (3) **Visiting Judges Use.** Five (5) spaces in the downtown campus area shall be reserved for visiting judges. Visiting judges will be strongly encouraged to first use the space assigned to the judge for whom they are substituting. If that is not possible, they may use the reserved spaces designated as "Visiting Judges" spaces.
  - (4) **Volunteer Use.** Three (3) spaces shall be reserved in the downtown campus area for use by volunteers in County facilities. The Parking Administrator shall provide volunteers with a placard or other written signage that may be placed in the volunteer's vehicle identifying the vehicle as authorized to use the reserved space.
  - (5) **County-Owned Vehicles Use.** County-Owned Vehicles will be assigned spaces in County Parking Facilities on an as-needed basis when and if parking on public thoroughfares is not available.
  - (6) **Specified Positions Use.** Specified Position Spaces shall be reserved at the County Parking Facility located in closest proximity to the place of work of the person holding the specified position. Specified Position Spaces are assigned to the County position, not to the individual person holding that position. An employee hired into a specified position receives a Specified Position Space but does not retain the Specified Position Space if he or she transfers to a position not listed in § 11.013.
- (b) **Restrictions.** Because any increase in the number of Reserved Spaces inventory reduces the pool of assignable spaces to County employees, the following restrictions apply:
- (1) **Contracts.** Parking spaces may not be assigned to vendors by contract unless the proposed space is reserved by amending this Parking Policy.
  - (2) **Sub-Leasing.** Parking spaces provided to a County employee, either by reservation or by assignment, are for the sole use of the employee and may not be subleased or traded except through authorized procedures. "Subleasing" or substituting parking spaces without authorization from the Parking Administrator may result in forfeiture of an assigned parking space. However, allowing another County employee to use one's assigned space if the space would otherwise be unused is not restricted.
  - (3) **Revising Number or Category of Reserved Spaces or Specified Positions.** Revision of the number or category of Reserved Spaces listed in § 11.007(a) or revision of the number of Specified Positions requires the approval of the Commissioners Court through the amendment of this Parking Policy.
  - (4) **One Space per Employee.** No employee may be assigned more than one space.

### § 11.008 Non-Reserved Spaces

- (a) **Responsibility.** The Parking Administrator shall be responsible for:
- (1) Assigning parking spaces from the pool of Non-Reserved Spaces to employees on the Waitlist according to this Parking Policy.

- (2) Maintaining the Waitlist.
  - (3) Maintaining the Transfer Request List.
  - (4) Monitoring and enforcing parking space assignments. This responsibility includes administering towing procedures when needed.
  - (5) Providing process transparency. For transparency and auditing purposes, the Waitlist, the Parking Facility Inventory and this Parking Policy shall be made available for viewing on the intranet.
- (b) **Assignment Procedures.** Non-Reserved Spaces shall be assigned to County employees in Waitlist Number order, which is based on hire date.
- (1) **Waitlist.** The Parking Administrator shall establish and maintain the Waitlist.
    - (A) The Waitlist will include the employee name, the date of hire and the employee's Waitlist Number.
    - (B) The Waitlist will be available on the intranet.
    - (C) Each employee who has a Travis County email account and whose name has been added to the Waitlist will receive an email notification indicating the employee's Waitlist Number at least annually.
  - (2) **Waitlist Number.** Each employee on the Waitlist will be given a Waitlist Number.
    - (A) The date of hire of the employee will serve as the effective date of that employee's entry onto the Waitlist.
    - (B) In the event multiple employees are hired on a given date, the names of the employees shall be entered on the Waitlist in order of employee number (from lowest to highest), as designated by the Travis County Auditor's Office.
    - (C) When an employee receives an assigned parking space, that employee's name will be removed from the Waitlist and the next employee on the Waitlist will move up.
    - (D) Within five (5) days of termination/expiration of a lease or license for use of parking spaces in third-party facilities in which an employee has been assigned a parking space, the Parking Administrator shall place the names of affected employees back on the Waitlist, in the order described above (hire date, then employee number).
    - (E) Within five (5) days of receiving the semi-monthly report from the Auditor's Office detailing personnel changes, the Parking Administrator shall make the necessary adjustments to the Waitlist.
  - (3) **Assignment List.** The Parking Administrator shall keep a written record of spaces assigned, employees assigned to the spaces, the numerical order of space assignments, and the date on which the assignment was made.
  - (4) **Special Requests.** Employees may submit any special requests (e.g. medical need, car pool, specific lot or garage space, etc.) that the employee wishes the Parking Administrator to consider when that employee is assigned a parking space. The Parking Administrator, in his or her discretion, may consider or refuse to consider such special requests.
  - (5) **Exceptions.** Spaces will be assigned by the Parking Administrator in order as listed on the Waitlist, with only the following exceptions, in order of priority:
    - (A) **Medical Need.** An assignment may be made out of Waitlist serial order to accommodate an employee's need based on a permanent or long-term medical need, when satisfactory documentation of such need is presented to the Parking Administrator. The Parking Administrator shall have discretion to make assignments out of Waitlist serial order for medical reasons.
    - (B) **Carpool.** An assignment may be made out of Waitlist serial order to accommodate a request for a Carpool space.

- (i) Documentation of members of the Carpool must be presented to the Parking Administrator as a precondition to receiving a Carpool assignment.
  - (ii) It shall be the duty of the Parking Administrator from time to time to verify that each assigned Carpool space is still being used by a Carpool of two (2) or more County employees. The assignment of a Carpool space will be revoked if the Carpool ceases to exist and the space will be reassigned to the employee listed next in order on the Waitlist.
  - (iii) Once one of the members of the Carpool is assigned an individual parking space, the remaining member of the Carpool shall have ten (10) days to replace that member with another County employee; if no replacement is found within the time required, the Carpool space will be reassigned.
  - (iv) In the event Travis County receives a grant intended to encourage use of carpooling as a means of transportation, such funds shall be used, to the extent permitted by the Carpool grant terms and conditions and any other applicable laws, to support and advance the goals and purposes set forth in this policy.
- (C) **Move to Specified Position.** When an employee on the Waitlist is appointed to a Specified Position listed in § 11.013, that employee must, effective as of the date of the appointment, immediately begin to use the Specified Position Space specially designated for that position.
- (i) That employee's name shall be removed from the Waitlist and the Waitlist order will be accordingly adjusted.
  - (ii) If the employee appointed to a Specified Position has already received, and is using, an assigned space, the employee shall, effective as of the date of appointment, immediately begin to use the Specified Position Space and cease using the previously assigned space, which shall be reassigned in serial order of the Waitlist.
- (D) **Move from Specified Position.** When an employee moves from a Specified Position listed in § 11.013, that employee will be placed on the Waitlist in the order specified in § 11.008(b).

### § 11.009 Transferring Non-Reserved Spaces

- (a) **Transferring Spaces.** Employees who have been assigned a Non-Reserved Space may request a transfer of their assigned parking space to an available Non-Reserved Space by contacting the Parking Administrator to have their name added to the Transfer Request List. Transfer requests will be granted for the purpose of transferring an assigned space in a remotely located County Parking Facility to a location in closer proximity to the employee's worksite.
- (1) Transfer requests will be granted in priority order based on, first, the date of submission of the transfer request and, second, the distance (greatest to least) between the employee's worksite and the County Parking Facility in which the employee's assigned space is located.
  - (2) If multiple employees request transfers on the same date, and the distance between those employees' worksites and the County Parking Facilities in which their assigned spaces are located is equal, then the transfer requests shall be granted in order of, first, hire date, and, second, employee number (from lowest to highest).
- (b) **Shift Changes.** Notwithstanding the prohibition against subleasing or trading parking spaces, the Parking Administrator is authorized to work with various Travis County departments, including the Sheriff's Office and the Community Supervision and Corrections Department, to accommodate shift changes and work-site transfers for employees of those departments, and may reassign parking spaces from time to time accordingly.

### § 11.010 Parking Committee

- (a) **Purpose.** The Parking Committee shall have as its primary purpose the final resolution, in an expeditious and fair manner, of conflicts and disputes related to County-provided parking spaces and/or arising out of this Parking Policy.

- (b) **Responsibilities.** The Parking Committee shall:
- (1) **Assist.** Assist the Parking Administrator in overseeing the implementation, management and enforcement of this Parking Policy.
  - (2) **Evaluate.** At least once annually, assess and evaluate the quality of the Parking Administrator's performance of his/her obligations as set forth in this Parking Policy.
  - (3) **Research.** Continue to research and monitor alternative transportation modes that are or may become available to County employees and to present such alternatives to the Commissioners Court at least once every two years.
  - (4) **Audit.** At least once annually, perform a comprehensive audit (including a written report and any other appropriate documentation) evaluating the extent to which the purposes of this Parking Policy as described in § 11.001 have been achieved.
  - (5) **Recommend.** On an as-needed basis, recommend modifications to this Parking Policy and/or adoption of supplementary County transportation policies.
- (c) **Complaints.** The Parking Committee shall also receive, maintain and act on complaints and appeals received from County employees relating to Parking Policy matters, including without limitation those matters described in § 11.011.
- (d) **Composition and Selection.**
- (1) **Membership.** The Parking Committee shall consist of seven (7) members, all of whom shall be full-time County employees. At least two (2) members of the committee should be on the Waitlist and at least two (2) members should use alternate methods of transportation regularly. For each grievance, at least three (3) members will be selected to serve.
  - (2) **Excluded.** The following positions or departments are excluded from membership eligibility:
    - (A) elected or appointed officials;
    - (B) immediate staff to the Commissioners Court;
    - (C) the Parking Administrator; and
    - (D) immediate staff to the Executive Manager who supervises the Parking Administrator.
  - (3) **Selection.** Parking Committee members shall be selected by Commissioners Court.
  - (4) **Term.** Parking Committee members shall commit to serve a two-year term.

### § 11.011 Complaints and Appeals.

- (a) **Written Complaint.** When an employee believes that the Parking Administrator has erred in the assignment of a parking space according to this Parking Policy, or has otherwise failed to manage the County Parking Facilities and/or to enforce this Parking Policy in a prompt, fair and conclusive manner, the employee shall present the complaint in writing to the Parking Committee.
- (b) **Review by Committee.** The Parking Committee shall review the parking assignment, or other Parking Policy matter that is the subject of the complaint, for conformance with this Travis County Parking Policy and shall either affirm or modify the Parking Administrator's decision or render a new decision on that basis.
- (c) **Appeal to Commissioners Court.** Employees may appeal the Parking Committee's decision to the Commissioners Court by notifying the Commissioners Court in writing of their intent to appeal and by requesting that the matter be placed on the Commissioners Court agenda. During the next practicable Voting Session of the Commissioners Court, the Commissioners Court shall consider the appeal and make a final decision on the parking assignment or other Parking Policy matter that is the subject of the complaint.

**Committee Member**

Florence Briceno  
Rachel G. Castro  
Lori Clyde  
Sydnia Crosbie, *co-chair*  
David Escamilla / Tenley Aldredge  
Loretta Farb  
Moses Guzman  
Lynn Harper  
Amanda Janecek  
Jeanie Maldonado  
Edith Moreida  
Rose Rowland  
Lisa Rush, *co-chair*  
Melissa Velasquez  
Melinda Watts  
Dina White  
Mike Wichern / Carolyn Damron  
Martin Zamzow

**Department**

Sheriff's Office  
District Clerk's Office  
Purchasing Department  
Transportation & Natural Resources  
County Attorney's Office  
Office of Commissioner, Precinct 2  
Treasurer's Office  
Administrative Operations  
District Attorney's Office  
Sheriff's Office  
Office of Commissioner, Precinct 4  
Facilities Management Department  
Records Management Department  
Office of the County Judge  
County Attorney's Office  
District Attorney's Office  
Auditor's Office  
Transportation & Natural Resources





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