

The facts about:

Visitor Serving Parking Facilities in San Diego

La Jolla Area Study by Wilbur Smith & Associates, 2002

Background

The City of San Diego is working to address parking deficiencies in three visitor-serving neighborhoods: Old Town, Pacific Beach and La Jolla. The La Jolla study was initiated in fall 2000 and completed in May 2002 by Wilbur Smith Associates.

Survey Area

The study focused on the commercial core area of La Jolla, known as “the Village,” and included the coast. Approximate boundaries were from Prospect Pl. to Draper Ave. and from Torrey Pines Rd. to Coast Blvd.

Parking Shortage

The report confirmed that La Jolla has a substantial parking deficiency. The shortage is most acute in the business/retail area from Prospect Ave. to Kline St. and from Ivanhoe Ave. to Girard Ave. In this area, the study showed an average demand of 935 spaces and an existing supply of 533 spaces. During peak hours, a severe shortage exists in the business/retail area south of Girard Avenue as well. The report further finds that even if all off-street parking facilities (private parking garages) were used, there would still be a shortage of spaces. Over the next 20 years, the demand will steadily increase, while supply will remain relatively fixed.

Traffic Congestion

One of the key findings of the study is that traffic congestion in the village is caused, in large measure, by drivers circling the blocks in search of free, on-street parking.

Proposed Solutions

The study recommends implementing a comprehensive parking program in La Jolla including the construction of one or more public parking garages in central locations. In addition, the study recommends:

- *Increasing on-street parking by converting parallel parking to diagonal, where feasible;*
- *Creating a well-designed signage program to direct cars to local parking facilities;*
- *Providing a residential parking permit program in select areas;*
- *Establishing a uniform 90-minute time limit for on-street parking (now 2 hours);*
- *Implementing paid, on-street parking in the central village area and along the coast;*
- *Using revenues from on-street parking to finance new public parking garages;*
- *Forming a La Jolla Parking District to administer the program within the community.*

Can't We Solve the Problem Without Meters?

The study clearly found that public parking garages could not be constructed without significant and reliable revenues from paid, on-street parking. It further reported that if

on-street parking remained free in the core area of the Village, the garages would be underused and traffic congestion would worsen as residents, visitors and employees vied for the free spaces.

Alternatives to Parking Meters

The study recommends implementing parking meters, or a modern alternative, on a pilot basis in the core area of the Village and along the visitor-serving areas of the coast. Alternatives to standard city parking meters include “Pay and Display” or “Pay and Walk Away” systems, that place a single collection station for multiple spaces and accept coins, tokens or pre-paid parking smart cards. Similar programs have been successful in cities including Aspen, Colorado, and Portland, Oregon. Locally, this type of program is now being implemented in Hillcrest.

Parking Meters Along the Coast?

The study recommends including paid parking along the coast to preserve access by visitors and local residents. Paid parking would ensure parking turnover and prevent area employees from filling the spaces during the days and evenings.

Potential Public Parking Garage Sites

The parking study conducted a preliminary assessment of seven possible locations for future public parking garages. It does not recommend a preferred site. The analysis is only intended to provide approximate construction costs, project possible revenues, and estimate the number of parking spaces that could be provided in each location. Potential sites included Red Roost/Red Rest on Coast Blvd.; the “Dip” at Prospect and Girard; the old Shell Station site at Prospect and Cave St.; the Helen Smith property on the 7800 block of Herschel Ave.; La Valencia parking lot on the 7900 block of Herschel Ave.; Cave Street in the 1200 block north of Ivanhoe; and the Union Bank parking lot at Herschel and Silverado.

Parking Garage Site Selection Process

The Land Use & Housing Committee of the City Council eliminated all potential garage sites except for the “Dip” site, the Helen Smith property and the Union Bank parking lot. A final site would be selected after a future environmental study is completed.

More Information

For additional information or to obtain a copy of the complete study, contact Siavash Pazargadi, transportation planner with the City of San Diego, at (619) 236-6608 or spazargadi@sandiego.gov.