Chapter 15
PARKING

Downtown parking constitutes a problem to almost every motorist. No American city has solved it in a completely satisfactory manner. The essence of the difficulty, of course, is the concentration of drivers' destinations within an area of limited size.

Parking is an integral part of the overall transportation process. Adequate highways in and out of the Central Business District cannot be more effective than the terminal facilities or parking spaces permit. They must be considered together.

The 1945 Transportation Survey revealed that every day about 49,000 automotive vehicles seek a place to park in the downtown area. This represents the present scale of the parking demand problem.

Statistical data and a more detailed discussion of the problem and its proposed solution are contained in the Master Plan report on Parking.

The Plan presented herein applies exclusively to the downtown area. Parking in connection with suburban business centers is discussed in the chapter on Community Plans.

Influence of Expressways

The development of the three metropolitan expressways which will have downtown Cincinnati as their main destination will have a marked effect on the parking situation. They will invite more and more motorists by facilitating quick, safe, and convenient trips to the downtown area. With the proposed modified expressways they will accommodate as much as 60% of the daily traffic destined for the downtown area.

The expressways may be expected to bring as much as 25% more traffic into the area than entered it in the peak year 1941. The prime need will be parking facilities well located with respect to the Central Business District and the peripheral streets which act as distributors between expressways and downtown destinations.

Changes in Modes of Travel

Downtown Cincinnati is deficient in parking spaces, particularly in respect to the most highly concentrated area bounded by Seventh, Elm, Main and Third Streets.

According to the 1945 Transportation Survey in that year 225,300 trips were made daily (24 hours) to and from the area bounded by Plum Street, Central Parkway, Eggleston Avenue, and the Ohio River. For 1941 the corresponding figure was 228,300.

While the volume in the two periods remained almost the same the mode of travel was substantially different. In 1941, 44% used public transit while in 1945, during wartime gasoline rationing, this figure was 68%. With improvements in service the normal pre-war 44% may be expected to rise gradually to 50%, in line with experience showing that the larger the metropolitan population the greater the proportion of public transit riders. The latter figure was used in determining the percentage of motor travel to be expected in the future.

Factors Which Influenced the Plan

The problem of parking relates directly to automobile drivers and their downtown travel habit pattern. The more important factors which influenced the Parking Plan were destination, purpose of trip, time of arrival in the area, and length of time parked. All of these factors are exhaustively reviewed on pages 37 to 41 inclusive in the Master Plan report on Parking.

Present Parking Demand

Traffic constantly enters and leaves the downtown area. Accumulations begin about 7:30 A.M. By 9:30 departures begin to increase and by noon the two-directional flows are about equal. The peak accumulation of cars in the downtown area occurs between 1 P.M. and 3 P.M. In each of the two hours following 1 P.M. accumulations are about equal.

To relate characteristics of the normal pre-war and post-war periods to parking habits available statistics were adjusted to 1941. A curve developed on the basis of half-hour intervals and known destinations, time of arrival, and length of parking shows a net accumulation of 20,800 vehicles parked. This means that the 18,780 parking spaces available were crowded considerably be-
GENERAL LOCATION SCHEME FOR PARKING FACILITIES
DOWNTOWN CINCINNATI

SCALE IN FEET
400 600 1200

CITY PLANNING COMMISSION CINCINNATI OHIO

SOURCE: 1945 TRANSPORTATION SURVEY
METROPOLITAN MASTER PLAN
Beyond their normal capacity. The number of additional parking spaces now required is therefore approximately 2,250 in round numbers.

**Future Requirements**

Population studies of the Metropolitan Area indicate that the 1940 population of 787,044 may be expected to increase to about 924,000 by 1970. Based on the indicated relationship between trips and population, the number of trips into the downtown area will likewise increase. In 1940 and 1945 inbound daytime trips totaled 102,151 and 102,845 respectively. By 1970 these trips, it is estimated, will increase to approximately 120,000. If 50% of these trips are made by automobile the destinations in the area which represent parked cars at the end of the trip some time during the day will be 54,600.

Thus based on peak hour demand the increase in parking spaces necessary by 1970 to take care of the accumulation of cars in the peak period between 1 P.M. and 3 P.M. will be 2,600 spaces, plus the 2,250 spaces needed now, or a total of 4,850.

Assuming that traffic increases warrant prohibition of curb parking on all streets between Third and Ninth, Central and Broadway by 1970, and abandonment of the more inefficient off-street parking facilities, the total parking spaces necessary in addition to those now existing will be about 6,000.

The area required for such a volume of parking on open lots would be equivalent to about 10 city blocks. It must therefore be assumed that some of the spaces will be provided in multi-deck structures.

**Basis of the Plan**

The underlying basis of the Plan is that parking facilities should be located outside of, but as close as possible to, the highly congested retail shopping district bounded approximately by a line along the center of the blocks between Third and Fourth Streets, Eight and Ninth Streets, Elm and Race Streets, and Main and Sycamore Streets, as shown in Fig. 52. Within this area parking lots should gradually be eliminated and construction of new garages avoided.

There should be provided an inner belt of parking garages as close as possible to this congested area primarily to serve the short time parkers, and an outer belt of parking lots (a considerable proportion probably operated by parking meters) on sites permitting charges low enough to accommodate long time parkers.

Major traffic relief will be afforded by construction of the Millcreek, Northeast and Dixie Expressways which provide means for motor vehicles to bypass the central core area. For traffic destined to this area, convenient access arrangements from expressways to properly-located parking facilities will reduce to a minimum the travel over streets in the most congested section.

In the Plan open-deck garages are proposed immediately adjacent to this congested area. Parking lots are suggested in the remainder of the downtown area.

**The Parking Plan**

The Parking Plan is shown in Fig. 53. It was developed from an evaluation of available facilities, land use, expressways, traffic, types of facilities, site costs, present and anticipated parking requirements and other related data.

In the Plan parking facilities are located between the expressways and the highly congested retail business district. Fig. 52 shows how vehicles may travel between expressways and parking facilities with minimum use of downtown streets. Free movement between parking facilities and expressways will be further expedited by increasing the no-curb-parking area to the boundary streets — Broadway, Ninth, Plum and Third — after completion of the expressways.

To avoid creating congestion care must be exercised in locating entrances and exits of parking facilities considering distances from intersecting streets, relative traffic volumes on adjacent streets, and direction of one-way traffic having in mind avoidance of use of streets in the inner core area.

The Plan has assumed expansion of the one-way street system within the area bounded by Plum Street, Central Parkway, Broadway and Third Street, except that Eighth Street, Court Street, and Fifth Street east of Main will remain in two-way operation. This will affect entrance and exit locations. Traffic movements shown in Fig. 52 are based on such a pattern.

The long-range objective toward which parking facility expansion should be directed is shown in the Plan. It anticipates eventual replacement of several garages and numerous lots by higher type or more appropriate uses. Other existing sites should be expanded to make a more economical layout possible or because of demand for additional parking spaces within their respective areas. To supply the increase in demand some new sites have also been designated.

With one exception, the Plan does not recommend any new facility with over 600-car capacity although several larger garages now existing will continue. A maximum capacity of 500 vehicles is probably a preferable standard at which to aim. Excessive concentration
in one structure tends to congest traffic along streets adjacent to entrances and exits and often involves longer walks to destinations than is considered convenient.

Garages and lots in the Plan have been chosen in relation to their convenience to destinations, relative land cost, and potential uses. The basic elements involved in a satisfactory plan include quantity, location and rate structure.

Public transit should afford convenient service between the more remote parking facilities such as the riverfront and the heart of the business district.

The Plan contemplates interim use of portions of blocks within the proposed Riverfront Redevelopment Area during the period of its redevelopment. Parking spaces to be available ultimately in that area for use by persons destined for the business district approximate 2,000. The transit service envisioned for the redeveloped Central Riverfront can insure the popularity of these parking spaces.

Ways and Means of Providing Facilities

Methods of providing parking facilities range from unregulated commercial ownership and operation to public ownership and operation, with intermediate variations such as merchants' co-operative arrangements, public utility type of regulation, public ownership with private operation, etc.

To be fully successful a complete parking program requires municipal regulation with possibly actual provision of some of the facilities by public agencies. In order to assure a pattern of parking facilities adequate in terms of location and quantity, whenever necessary the City should take steps through the power of condemnation to assemble sites for parking facilities as needed.

Municipal ownership of land used for parking facilities is advisable not only to assure an adequate supply in the right locations but to guarantee their relatively permanent retention in that use.

Municipal operation appears much less important. Publicly-owned facilities may be leased to commercial operators or such an organization as a merchants' association.

The City's participation may be through a city department or the establishment of a semi-independent parking authority, although the former is to be preferred. A single public agency should be made directly responsible for handling those aspects of the parking problem which concern the public interest.

A periodic check survey should be made at least every three years in order to keep this Parking Plan up to date.

Legislation

To carry out this Plan additional legislation is needed. Ohio State enabling legislation, passed in 1947, should be broadened to give cities more freedom in developing and regulating parking facilities. This is necessary for the immediate attack on the problem.

In the long-range picture certain local action needs to be considered. The City's Zoning Ordinance and Building Code should be revised to reflect parking needs in relation to desirable types and intensities of land use. Provision of space for off-street parking as well as for loading should be required wherever desirable and feasible. Any legal requirements that add unnecessarily to the cost of new parking structures and hence to their service charge to the public should be discovered and eliminated.