# Summary of Comments on Draft Report (January and February 2010)

# **Comments Received During the Meetings**

- 1. The draft report recommendations seem sound; the city just needs to begin implementing improvements.
- 2. The Library lot would not be a good place to have long-term parking as it is heavily used by Library patrons.
- 3. The city should designate parking spaces for electric car and carpools to help encourage the use of these options.
- 4. In terms of pay parking, if it is implemented, the first 60 minutes should be free and there should be no charge after 6:00 p.m.
- 5. The city should not pay for construction of the RTD parking garage. Instead, RTD should pay for its construction.
- 6. There are concerns about the negative impact of pay parking in Olde Town. Specifically, there are concerns how pay parking will affect Olde Town businesses.
- 7. Shared parking is a good idea and the city should seek additional opportunities for shared parking agreements.
- 8. With the tight parking in Olde Town, a parking garage somewhere in the area would be helpful, but the Shrine of Saint Anne's parish family does not want one close to the school or church.
- 9. Regarding current usage, Grandview tends to be busy during the day and the Udi's lot is busy day and night. Updated utilization counts may be needed to review these conditions.
- 10. Look at putting long-term parking on Upham and the east end of Grandview. The city should study other locations as well.
- 11. The city should work with businesses on coordinating truck delivery to minimize traffic impacts.
- 12. In terms of shared parking, could the city enforce parking limitations on private land where the public is allowed to park? Also, liability issues need to be addressed in executing shared parking agreements.
- 13. Possible opportunities for shared parking agreements include the Udi's lot, the northern St. Anne's lot, the Rising Church lot and the Qwest lot.
- 14. In looking ahead to the construction of garages, the phasing of construction and related impacts need to be addressed. Construction can be disruptive to the parking supply. For example, the construction of the RTD garage will mean

- people currently parking in the surface lot will need to park elsewhere while the facility is built. Where will people park will the garage is constructed?
- 15. Initially, enforcement should be approached on just a complaint basis- the city should pass the authorizing ordinance, publicize how enforcement will occur if a complaint is received, and then enforce based on complaints.
- 16. The city needs to work on the management and coordination of special events.

# Comments Received After the Meetings

# Comment #1:

- 1. I like the idea of a first-warning parking ticket. Nothing turns off a consumer like getting a ticket, especially if the parking rules recently changed.
- 2. Bike parking should be plentiful enough that cyclists can see their locked bikes from shops or restaurants. Totally-enclosed bike lockers in parking lots would be another option. Cyclists may spend many hundreds, if not thousands, of dollars on their bikes. Leaving them in an area where they may be vandalized or stolen is not an attractive option.
- 3. I personally would prefer to see bike ways around the Olde Town area. I personally prefer to ride 57th Avenue because Grandview is generally too narrow and has too many cars parked along the street, with the potential for opening car doors to take out a cyclist. As long as cyclists could easily get into the area and then slowly ride or even walk into the interior, I think this would be viable option, as opposed to making every street bike- and pedestrian-friendly, which may be cost-prohibitive.

#### Comment #2:

1. I like the idea of not creating more parking spaces than needed. However, it would be smart not to wait too long as costs are much lower right now. The three-story parking facility at the RTD sounds wise and I appreciate trying to keep parking out of residential areas.

# Comment #3:

The draft study report makes dozens of recommendations for meeting future parking needs--some with obvious merit and others that don't appear to be good choices for Arvada in the next decade. That's too many to comment on individually, so I will limit myself to the broader study suggestions as outlined here:

#### 1. Need

The study makes a poor case for financing increased parking capacity in the next seven to ten years. That's particularly true for the suggestions that money be 'banked' for the construction of a future parking structure. Moreover, the projected demand (and locations for that demand) beyond the next decade seem to be very speculative.

The study does, however, suggest that the 2000+ spaces of future parking demand will largely be below the railroad tracks. I found that surprising. I had expected more future demand north of the tracks. The study also hints that much of that new demand is likely to be met as a part of future commercial developments in those areas when they occur and do not need to be funded by the City.

Setting aside substantial funds for a future parking structure or for setting up a metering system doesn't make much economic or policy sense in the near future. From the information in the draft report and from that provided by RTD in its FTA-approved EIS, banking monies now for demand that only may come from the opening of the Gold Line in 2017 is something that can end up hurting future commercial development in Olde Town. Considering the projections' uncertainties and the investment needed to meet any substantial additional parking demand, it is best to wait until the Gold Line has been in operation for a full year, or there is a significant development proposal from the private sector.

# 2. Parking Enforcement

I suggest that City Planning check with the City's Attorney (and our current Police Chief) before acting on a parking enforcement ordinance. It seems strange that an ordinance is needed to enforce any regulatory sign contained in the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD)--parking included. Did the Council have to pass an ordinance to allow tickets to be written for speeding? For overweight trucks? For

restricted left turns? For anything else in the model traffic code? Did City Council's in other Colorado cities have to pass special ordinances just for parking? So far, the only

explanation given for this strange circumstance is that the City police will not enforce signed parking restrictions--not that the courts will not uphold citations when issued. Mr. Daly may save the Council some time and effort with a quick review of this issue before it is brought to them.

The study does not make a compelling case for stricter parking enforcement in the near future. Indeed, the study strongly suggests just the opposite. Because of good citizen compliance with existing enforcement signs, little, if any, parking capacity will be added by stepped-up enforcement. The report also suggests that enhanced parking enforcement may actually have a negative impact on local businesses.

Any enhanced parking enforcement should start out by being response-based in the same way that our residential code enforcement is now. Only after that, and only if businesses and local residents are asking for action, should the Council request pro-active enforcement.

# 3. Parking Structures

For several reasons, the construction of a City-sponsored parking structure in Olde Town should be delayed as long as possible. Each of the potential sites for a new parking structure imposes a significant burden on local residents, businesses or users.

The newly added site (from earlier proposals) for a potential structure at the NE corner of Ralston Road and Olde Wadsworth (now designated as 'B' with the other structures re-lettered) does not seem viable because of its distance to the Gold Line station and because of pedestrian-crossing issues with Ralston Road-although it may meet the particular needs of future commercial redevelopment north of Ralston Road, if that ever happens.

Metered parking in Olde Town should be delayed as long as possible because of its negative impacts on local businesses and nearby residential areas. The principal is simple. Metering will discourage visits to Olde Town. Why is this not in the draft report?

RTD's parking structure on the SW corner of Vance and Grandview may not be built despite the agency promising to build one by 2030 in its final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). In part, this is because of the lowered projected parking demand levels due to doubling of the Gold Line's rush-hour headways from 7.5 minutes to 15 minutes. (See the FTA's comments with its Record of Decision.) RTD's revised projections now show the need for no additional parking from opening day to the year 2030 because of the reduced headways. The parking study's final report should accurately reflect RTD's EIS and the FTA's Record of Decision anticipated parking demands.

As this study points out, the City may not be in the position to fund a parking structure by itself. If the private sector is expected to finance and build a parking structure in Olde Town, they will expect to recover their investment and operating costs through parking fees. From a financing prospective, private-sector funding for a parking structure does not appear feasible without the City agreeing to a non-compete clause that requires the City to have metered parking throughout Olde Town. That's not what we want. Moreover, RTD's plans to build an EIS-required free parking structure in the same area by 2030 is likely to depress opportunities for private-sector financing of any new parking structure in another Olde Town location. The final report should reflect that reality.

The City should not consider partnering with RTD to meet future parking needs, but rather with RTD's private-sector partner for operating the Gold Line. That profit-motivated partner (or, more accurately, group of partners) should be selected by the middle of this year, but they may not have a handle on what it would take to improve line ridership with comprehensive Olde Town parking management until months after the Gold Line's opening day. Unless their partnership with RTD fails, they will be the ones running that line for decades to come, not RTD.

#### 4. Schedule

I found the proposed implementation schedule to be too aggressive given the data that supports it. This is particularly true for the recommended activities identified as Mid-Term 2011 to 2015 and later. In my view, the proposed timeline for implementation of the various phases of the study's recommendations are not supported by the data given. Most of the proposed timelines should be set back by seven to ten years and then re-evaluated at that time.

# 5. In Lieu Fees

The suggested in-lieu fees are excessive. They may inhibit economic development in

Olde Town or create undesirable growth patterns. The draft report says that they are based upon the per-space cost of building a parking structure. That rate, in turn, encourages developers to simply buy or develop cheaper private surface parking when possible. That will then encourage less-dense commercial development--which seems inconsistent with the high-density development planned for Olde Town. As the report points out, surface parking should only costs a tenth of the cost of 'structured' parking. Still, I think that in-lieu fees are a good idea and that they should start now, but at a more reasonable rate that is not counterproductive.

# 6. The Quality of the Study

Kudos to the consultants that did this work, Carl Walker and Urban Trans. Although I firmly disagreed with many of the study's benefits-of-paid-parking positions, necessity statements, proposed implementation timeframes and the certainty of their demand projections, I still believe that this is quality work. I found that the consultant collected a good data snapshot of what's happening in Arvada today and what is needed to plan for Olde Town's future parking needs. Their many examples of what works in other communities were especially valuable.

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