



# Downtown Parking Management Plan 2020 Update Final Report



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## Overview

### Study Background

#### Downtown Today

##### Downtown

Marquette's historic walkable downtown centers on the intersection of Washington Street (EW) and Third Street (NS). Much of this district is built to a density that provides opportunity for accessibility through a vehicular street grid, walking and cycling, and public transit routes. The commercial center for Marquette and the region, the downtown area also has a significant and growing residential population, with single-family homes, multi-dwelling units, and an expanding number of mixed-use residential developments that capitalize on the strong demand for walkable urban living options. Institutional uses also provide education and cultural enrichment throughout the district.

##### Third Street

Further North on Third Street is an additional pocket of commercial and mixed-use establishments, making up the Third Street Corridor. Traditionally, Third Street services the needs of students of Northern Michigan University, and connects the campus area to downtown. In many ways, however, the distinctions between the campus, Third Street, and downtown are blurring in terms of housing and commercial markets, while the distinctive character of each area provides a vibrant range of options.

#### Marquette Downtown Development Authority

The Downtown Development Authority (MDDA) was established by City Ordinance in 1976 under the authority of Michigan Public Act 197 of 1975. The purpose of the Authority, as stated at the time, was to “halt property value deterioration and increase property tax valuation... to eliminate the causes of that deterioration, and to promote economic growth.” Within their designated boundaries, Act 197 empowers the state's Downtown Development Authorities to:

- Analyze economic conditions and trends
- Complete long-range planning
- Acquire and improve land
- Construct, improve, rehabilitate, maintain, and operate buildings; and
- Construct and maintain public facilities.

The Marquette Downtown Development Authority currently uses several sources of funding, including tax increment financing (TIF) and a 2-mill property tax on property within its district. Its annual budget is approved by the City Commission.

The MDDA's service area is made up of two districts: Downtown and Third Street (Figure 1). The Downtown District is the MDDA's original service area. It centers around the blocks between Fourth Street and the waterfront, and the Washington Street corridor. In 2012, the service area expanded up the Third Street corridor to Fair Street. This expansion took place as part of the MDDA's TIF renewal, however the TIF area only applies to downtown.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> While the TIF only applies to MDDA's Downtown District, the MDDA millage supports both districts.

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 Marquette Downtown Development Authority

Figure 1 DDA Districts / Study Area



The MDDA Parking Program

MDDA has operated and maintained public parking downtown since the Authority was established in 1975. It currently manages eight parking facilities, all within the traditional Downtown District. The MDDA parking program is self-funding, with all parking revenues captured within a dedicated Parking Fund. For 2018, 56% of the Parking Fund’s annual revenue came from revenues collected from parking meters, while 43% came from permit-sale revenue. This revenue must cover a range of expenditures, from operating costs and capital investment/maintenance related to parking resources, to organizational expenditures such as staffing, office space, and utilities. Details are provided in the table below.



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**Figure 2 Parking Fund Budget in Relation to MDDA's Budget, 2019**

Parking Fund	Budget	% of MDDA Budget
Revenue	\$383,000	28%
Operating Expenditures	\$293,801	29%
Capital Expenditures	\$24,000	13%
2011 Bond Principal & Interest	\$157,630	100%
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$475,431</b>	<b>35%</b>
<b>Revenue – Expenditures Balance</b>	<b>\$(92,431)</b>	<b>-7%</b>

As shown above, last year's revenue failed to cover expenses by nearly \$100,000.

### 2013 Parking Management Plan Key Recommendations

The table below provides a summary of key recommendations from the Parking Management Plan adopted in 2013.

**Figure 3 2013 Parking Management Plan Recommendations**

2013 Recommendation	Changes Implemented
<b>Manage Demand to Expand Supply Benefits</b>	
Focus on Performance and Customer Service	The investment in new meters and a pay-by-phone service, both provided by industry-leading vendors, represents tangible investments in technology that makes Downtown's most high-demand parking spaces easier to use.
Adopt Availability as Primary Performance Measure	Metered parking was expanded along blocks of on-street parking that were documented to most-consistently lack availability during demand peaks.
Adopt Price as the Primary Tool for Meeting Performance Targets	Significantly expanded metered parking, and concentrated metered parking on high-demand streets
Embrace the Parking Benefit District Model	Meter revenue has significantly reduced the need to cover DDA parking expenses with TIF revenues, freeing up those revenues for investment in public improvements.
Invest in New Technology	2017: 400 new smart meters for on-street spaces <sup>2</sup>
Pilot On-Street Parking Benefit Pricing/ Restructure Off-Street Pricing	2017: Metered parking fares increased from \$0.25 to \$0.50 per hour.

<sup>2</sup> Marquette Downtown Development Authority, "New Parking Meters Installed in Downtown Marquette," July 11, 2017. <https://downtownmarquette.org/new-parking-meters-installed-in-downtown-marquette/>

## 2020 Update to the Downtown Parking Management Plan

Marquette Downtown Development Authority

2013 Recommendation	Changes Implemented
<b>Strategically Expand Supply</b>	
Re-Examine Clear-Vision Distances (Immediate Gain)	17 on-street parking spaces were added by reducing these distances along Third Street.
Explore Consolidating Accessory Lots and Driveways (Longer-Term Payoff)	The MDDA has continued to initiate and facilitate dialogue among lot owners in this sub-district, but with little progress.
Explore Lot Purchase/ Lease Options (Longer-Term Payoff)	This is not considered a current MDDA strategic pursuit for Third Street.
Joint-Development Structured-Parking Opportunities (Longer-Term Payoff)	Partnerships with owners of key downtown properties have been explored, particularly along Washington and Front streets, but without any specific opportunities being identified as imminently viable.
<b>Strategically Expand Capacities</b>	
Broker Shared-Parking Agreements	The MDDA is actively exploring options for using its new pay-by-phone service to allow owners of private lots to monetize their parking via off-hour paid-parking.
<b>Additional Recommendations</b>	
Complete Third Street <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Apply the City's Complete Streets Policy</li> <li>▪ Better Accommodate Third Street Bike Traffic</li> </ul>	Southbound bike lane added, between Arch and Bluff streets
Strategic Coordination with Parking Enforcement: Incremental Fines, Evening and Weekend Enforcement, Data Collection and Information Sharing	The MDDA continues to explore opportunities with the City to improve parking enforcement, but no progress on any of these specific recommendations has been made.
Promote the Parking System	Semi-annually updated parking brochure on MDDA website, includes bike trail routing. <sup>3,4</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Marquette Downtown Development Authority, "Marquette's Downtown District Parking Guide," 2018. <https://downtownmarquette.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/Parking-brochure-Summer-2018-legal-size.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> Marquette Downtown Development Authority, "Downtown Marquette Parking Guide," May 2019. <https://downtownmarquette.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Parking-Brochure-Website-May-2019.pdf>

## The 2020 Plan Update

In the seven years since Marquette's Parking Management Plan was adopted, the MDDA has added 400 new parking meters, and adjusted meter rates, enforcement times, and permit types and pricing. In particular, the new parking meters and pricing have yielded increased parking turnover where and when they are in effect. However, there has also been an observable shift in demand for fare-free 2-hour parking in off-street lots, impacting the consistency of availability for rental permit holders.

The Downtown parking supply will be reduced by 66 spaces when the redevelopment of the South Main Lot begins. To offset the impact of this redevelopment project, and to facilitate continued redevelopment of surface lots in the Downtown core, a key objective of the 2020 Parking Management Plan Update, is to identify opportunities to develop new public parking facilities.

### Objectives

The primary objective of the PMP Update is to develop a long-term parking strategy for the DDA District that:

- Encourages investment in the district, including additional residential units as well as an enhanced business climate
- Balances the needs of customers, clients, district employees, businesses, and residents
- Maximizes the value of existing parking resources
- Minimizes the negative impacts of surface lots
- Improves existing parking facilities
- Addresses opportunities related to emerging technologies
- Encourages the re-development of private lots
- Seeks sufficient revenues to ensure the parking program is self-sufficient and to allow for future parking development
- Provides for future parking improvements
- Establishes parking rates that reflect the market and encourage intended use of the system
- Defines a financially viable approach to funding and building new parking facilities to facilitate the redevelopment of Downtown-core surface lots

### Report Structure

This report provides an overview of study findings, analysis, and strategic recommendations culminating in an updated Parking Management Plan. It is organized, as follows:

- **Parking Profile** – An overview of key parking conditions, not limited to supply, demand, operations, and financial sustainability.
- **Mobility Profile** – An overview of key non-driving mobility resources, issues, and opportunities that help reduce dependence upon downtown parking while adding to a sense of vibrancy to downtown's businesses and public spaces
- **Growth + Development Profile** – A summary of anticipated changes, largely but not exclusively on anticipated land use developments and changes to current parking demand and supply.
- **Key Issues & Opportunities** – A summary of key conditions that will be the focus of the Parking Management Plan
- **Parking Management Plan** – A summary of recommended parking supply, management, and operations strategies

# Parking Profile



## MDDA Parking Supply

MDDA manages nearly 1,400 parking spaces, including just over 100 on-street spaces within the Third Street district. Since 2013, seven new on-street parking spaces have been added along Third Street, through the reduction of sight-distance requirements to an urban-context standard that allows parking closer to intersections.

**Figure 4** Parking Supply

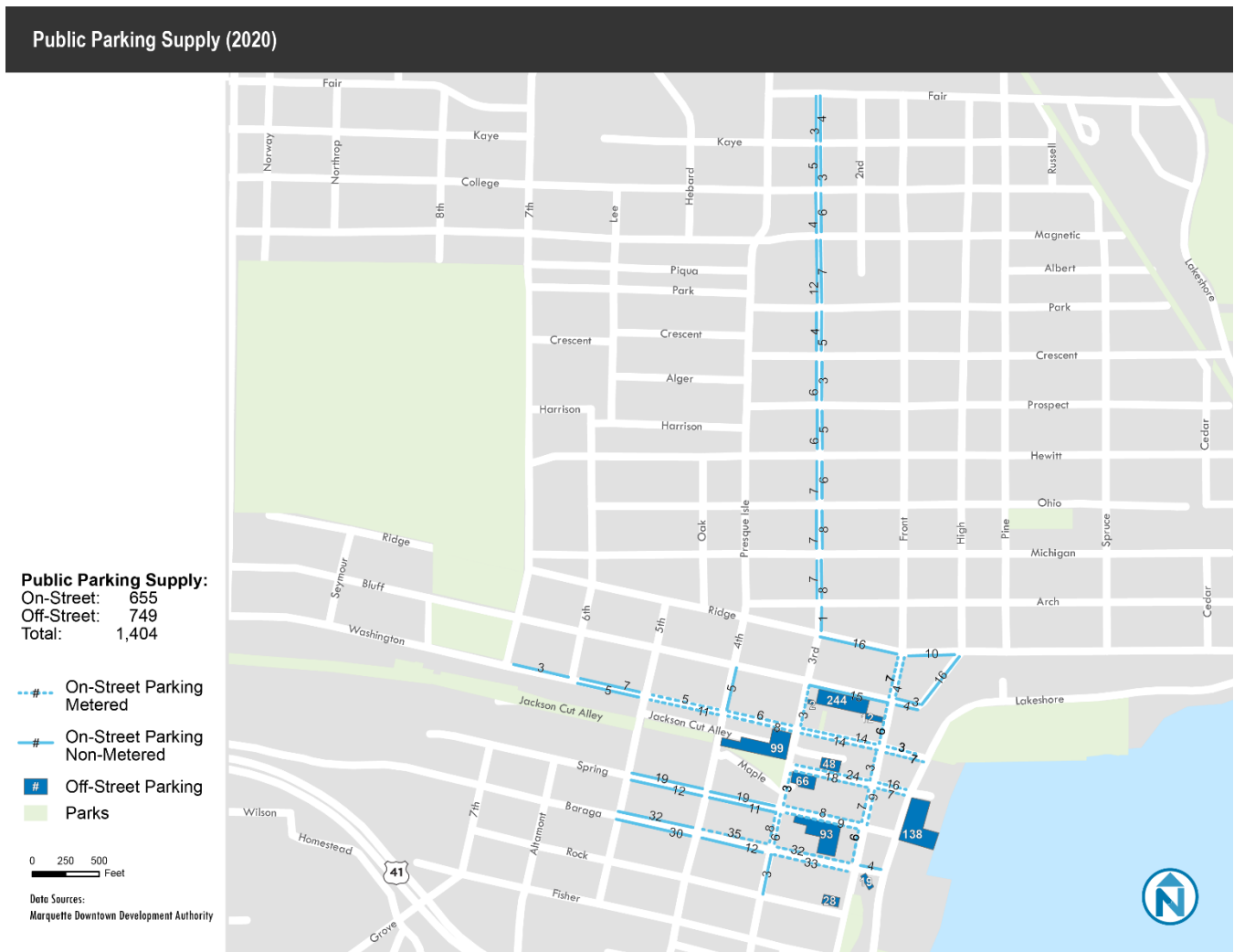
Type of Parking	Supply
<b>On-Street: All</b>	655
On-Street: Downtown	538
On-Street – Third Street	117
<b>Off-Street</b>	749
<b>Total</b>	1,404

Sources: B. Downtown Marquette Parking Guide, 2019



2020 Update to the Downtown Parking Management Plan  
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Figure 5 Parking Supply Map



## On-Street Spaces

The majority of on-street parking spaces managed by MDDA are free, with time limits enforced during weekdays to maintain turnover. Since 2013, MDDA has converted 279 time-limited on-street spaces to metered parking, as recommended in the Parking Management Plan. A detailed summary of the current on-street parking supply is provided below.

Figure 6 On-Street Parking Supply

Location	# of Spaces				Total
	Metered	2- Hour Time Limited	ADA	Loading Zone	
Downtown	294	211	30	3	538
Third Street	0	114	3	0	117
All	294	325	33	3	655

## Off-Street Facilities

The MDDA-managed off-street supply remains largely unchanged since the Parking Management Plan was adopted. The table below provides an overview of the facilities that constitute this supply, including an inventory for each, quantified by space type.

**Figure 7 Off-Street Parking Supply**

Facility Name	Type of Parking Provided <sup>A</sup>						
	Daily Permit <sup>B</sup>	Overnight Permit <sup>C</sup>	24-Hour Permit <sup>D</sup>	Hourly Meters / Paystation	2 Hour Fare-Free Available	ADA Spaces	Total Supply
Bluff Street Ramp: Lower Level	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	4	122
Bluff Street Ramp: Upper Level	✓	✗	✗	✗	✓	1	122
Bluff St. Alley	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	0	12
North Main Lot (no free parking)	✗	✗	✗	✓	✗	2	48
South Main Lot (to be redeveloped)	✓	✗	✓	✗	✗	2	66
Spring Street Lot	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	2	93
Rock Street Lot	✓	✗	✓	✗	✓	1	28
Baraga Avenue Lot	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	1	19
Lakeshore Blvd Lot	✓	✗	✗	✓	✓	6	138
Marquette Commons	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	4	99
Upper Commons	✗	✗	✗	✓	✗		
<b>Total</b>						21	747

Note: A. ✓ indicates parking type is available. ✗ indicates parking type is not available.  
 B. Daily permits enable parking in designated off-street parking facilities from 6am to 6pm on weekdays.  
 C. Overnight permits enable parking in the Bluff Street Ramp: Lower Level from 6pm to 9am, daily.  
 D. 24-Hour permits enable a 24-hour assigned parking space in Bluff St ramp only, all other 24 hr passes are unassigned spaces in designated off-street parking facilities.

## Key Management Practices



### Off-Street

#### Permit Parking

The DDA offers several types of permits to accommodate downtown commuters and residents.

#### Standard Permit

- \$25/month (\$75/quarter)
- Allows unlimited parking in designated permit lots
- A discount is available for employers who purchase 10 or more permits; \$20/month/ permit
- No overnight parking

#### Overnight Bluff Street Ramp Parking Permit

- \$35/month
- Allows parking between 6am and 9pm in a designated part of Bluff Street's lower level.

#### 24-Hour Permit

- \$35/month (\$105/quarter)
- Allows unlimited parking in designated permit lots
- Allows overnight parking in designated areas of these lots

#### 24-Hour Reserved Permit

- \$60/month (\$180/quarter)
- A limited number of reserved spaces are available for
- Allows unlimited parking in spaces designated for 24-hour-reserved permit parking
- Spaces are located in the lower level of the Bluff Street Ramp

## 2020 Update to the Downtown Parking Management Plan

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### Visitor Parking

The DDA accommodates visitor parking in its off-street facilities by providing metered parking spaces, free time-limited parking in many designated permit lots, and through free evening and weekend parking in all facilities.

## **On-Street Parking**

### Metered Parking

#### Implementing PMP Recommendations

- Overview of the process of implementing more metered parking, since the PMP.
- How many spaces have been created?
- What has this changed about the revenue for the parking system – in 2012 parking revenue was just 70% of Parking Fund revenues, and today it is just about 100%, is this something that can be tied to meter-revenue impacts?
- Have any businesses noted any improvement with 1) customer parking experience and/or 2) reducing merchants/employees parking in on-street spaces?

#### Meter Technology

In 2017, MDDA purchased 400 smart meters. These meters converted many previously time-limited on-street spaces to metered parking downtown. Unfortunately, the warranties on these meters are running out, and many are coming to an earlier than expected end of their service lives as well. The units purchased in 2017 were discounted older model units, but intended for longer-term use.

The MDDA is seeking new meters that function better for longer in low temperatures, and high snow and ice conditions. Individual meters, area pay stations, and zone-based mobile payment systems are options in consideration.

### Time Limited Parking

Weekdays, between 9am and 5pm, parking durations are limited for most on-street parking in Downtown and Third Street. These time limits vary depending by location. Metered spaces on Washington and Front Streets limit parking to three hours. All other metered spaces allow for up to 10 hours of parking/

### Enforcement

On-street parking regulations are enforced by the Marquette Police Department (MPD). One full-time MPD officer is dedicated to enforcement 9 AM - 5 PM weekdays. Overnight parking is prohibited on all public streets, Citywide, from November 1st through April 1st, to facilitate snow clearance. The current fines for parking violations are as follows:

- Expired Meter: \$15
- Too close to crosswalk: \$25
- Driveway/Sidewalk Obstruction: \$25
- Hydrant Obstruction: \$25
- Time Limit Violation: \$25
- ADA Violation: \$100
- Expired Permit/No Permit: \$25
- Winter Parking Ban: \$75
- Right of Way: \$50



## Comparable Peer City Practices

Peer cities in Northern Michigan offer useful benchmarks for comparing key parking management practices. The tables below provide key points of comparison between Marquette, Sault Ste Marie, Petoskey, and Traverse City.

**Figure 8 Paid Parking Mechanisms**

City	Meters	Permits	Parking App
Marquette	Yes	Yes	Passport
Sault Ste Marie	Yes	Yes	N/A
Petoskey	Yes	Yes	Parkmobile
Traverse City	Yes	Yes	Parkmobile

Sources: Marquette Downtown Development Authority, City of Sault Ste Marie, Petoskey Downtown, and Downtown TC

**Figure 9 Peer Comparison: Off-Street Permit Price**

City	Monthly Permit Price	
	Base	Premium
Marquette	\$25.00	\$60
Sault Ste Marie	\$25.00	\$35.42 <sup>A</sup>
Petoskey	\$60.00	\$120.00
Traverse City	\$36.00	\$48.00

Note: A. Based on annual permit fee.

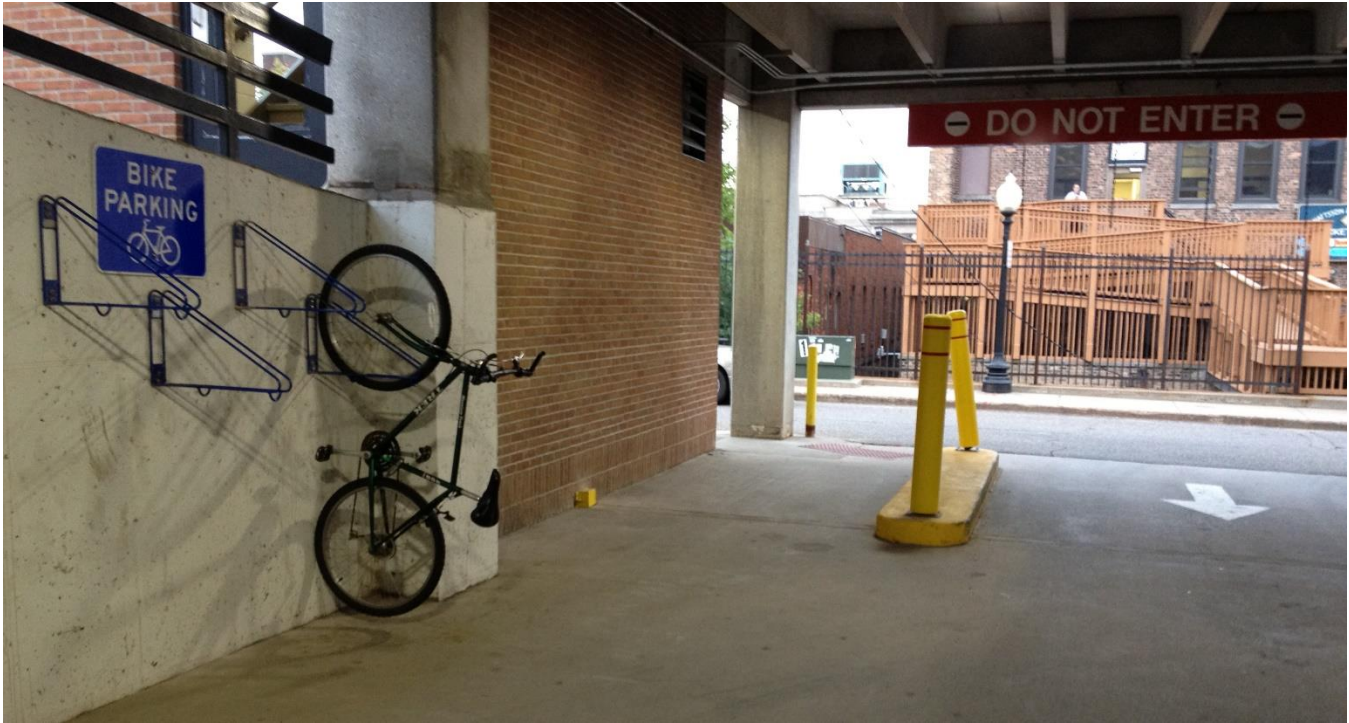
Sources: Marquette Downtown Development Authority, City of Sault Ste Marie, Petoskey Downtown, and Downtown TC

**Figure 10 Parking Regulations Enforcement Schedule**

City	Evening Enforcement?	Weekend Enforcement?	Free Parking Holidays
Marquette	No	No	No
Sault Ste Marie	No	No	No
Petoskey	No	Sat	Yes
Traverse City	No	Sat	Yes

Sources: Marquette Downtown Development Authority, City of Sault Ste Marie, Petoskey Downtown, and Downtown TC

## Mobility Profile



## Public Transit

The Marquette County Transit Authority provides fixed-route, deviated fixed-route, and dial-a-ride public transportation to Marquette County.<sup>5</sup> The system has nine fixed routes and two deviated fixed-routes.

Most routes start between 6am and 10am on weekdays and run until approximately 6 or 7pm. Eight routes offer Saturday service from 8 or 9am to between 5 and 7pm. The Marquette, Ishpeming, Negaunee route is the one route operating on Sundays, with afternoon service from 1pm-5pm. Both deviated fixed-routes operate one day per week—the Western Marquette County route on Thursdays and the Palmer Area route on Fridays.

Fixed-route fares are \$0.80 on most fixed-routes; the Marquette/Ishpeming/Negaunee and Marquette/Sawyer/Gwinn routes are both \$1.60 per trip. General public fares on dial-a-ride and deviated fixed-route services are distance based, ranging from \$2.60 to \$5.60. All services offer discounted fares for older adults, people with disabilities, and students.

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<sup>5</sup> Marquette County Transit Authority, "Marq-Tran Routes & Schedules." <https://marq-tran.com/marq-tran-routes-schedules/>

## Active Transportation

### Local/Regional Trails



Image source: <https://mitrails.org/library>

The **Iron Ore Heritage Trail** is a 47-mile, year-round, multi-use trail that crosses the Marquette Iron Range. The rail-trail, which was designated as a National Recreation Trail in 2018, shares and celebrates the area's rich mining history with interpretive signage, artwork, and connections to museums along the way. The trail follows several former railroads built to carry the iron ore from the mines to the Lake Superior harbor, including the rail line that traversed downtown Marquette. This latter rail/trail route connects with the Marquette Multi-Use Path.

### Marquette Multi-Use Path

Marquette's Multi-Use Path encompasses 19 miles of paved trail that encircles the city and connects to Presque Isle Park in the north and to the town of Harvey in the south. The trail provides access to several Marquette neighborhoods, shops and services, and other attractions and opportunities. The eastern leg of the trail follows the shore of Lake Superior, connecting to several beaches, parks, and other waterfront destinations.

## Bike-Share

Marquette's only bike share program is operated by the Northern Michigan University's Lydia Olson Library. The program was started by the Associated Students of Northern Michigan University (ASNMU), who continue to maintain the program's bike fleet. The program offers free, short-term bicycle rentals available, for up to three days, to NMU students with their NMU ID.<sup>6</sup>

## Ride Services

### Lyft

Lyft is a transportation network company that offers ride-hailing service via a mobile application. Lyft started service in Marquette in 2018,<sup>7, 8</sup> and has a local service area spanning the Upper Peninsula, pending-driver availability.<sup>9</sup>

## Growth & Development Profile

### Growth Prospects

There is significant opportunity to attract private land development to the downtown core, with vacant lots and surface parking areas being the most viable sites for new development. Such growth could add significant vitality and continuity to the downtown, particularly if a continuous line of commercial storefronts can be established along Front Street between Washington Street and Baraga Avenue. Such growth, however, will require a strategic approach to developing replacement-parking facilities to both replace any parking lost to redevelopment, and accommodate the new parking demand created by the development itself. This latter objective is key to reducing how much parking is required to support more downtown growth, by accommodating new demand in DDA-managed parking, rather than private, accessory parking lots that provide no shared/public benefit to the district.

### Anticipated Parking Supply Changes

The loss of the South Main Street Lot, which has been sold to a developer, is tied to increased demand for Downtown-core housing and commercial space. This suggests that MDDA should prepare for additional substantial economic-development opportunities to be linked to the loss of existing downtown parking lots. The table below identifies the surface lots most likely to attract significant redevelopment interest over the next 10 years. Several private lots in this area are also likely to be redeveloped at some point, particularly if MDDA surface lots can be replaced with new, efficient, public parking resources nearby.

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<sup>6</sup> Associated Students of Northern Michigan University, "Bike Share," Northern Michigan University. <https://www.nmu.edu/asnmu/bike-share>

<sup>7</sup> Hollebeke, Mollie, "Lyft driver in Marquette calls out need for more drivers," UPMatters, WJMN-TV, May 3, 2018. <https://www.upmatters.com/news/lyft-driver-in-marquette-calls-out-need-for-more-drivers/>

<sup>8</sup> Eggleston, Sam, "August's business growth news around the U.P.," Second Wave Upper Peninsula, August 31, 2017. <https://www.secondwavemedia.com/upper-peninsula/features/augustroundup83117.aspx>

<sup>9</sup> Lyft, "Upper Peninsula." <https://www.lyft.com/rider/cities/upper-peninsula-mi>



**Figure 11 Off-Street Parking Supply**

Facility Name	Spaces
North Main Lot	48
South Main Lot	66
Spring Street Lot	93
Rock Street Lot	28
Baraga Avenue Lot	19
Lakeshore Blvd Lot	138
Marquette Commons	99
<b>Total</b>	<b>491</b>

Developing a plan for replacing this capacity with a centrally-located, MDDA-managed parking structure or two would not only facilitate continued economic growth for Downtown, but provide an opportunity to replace some private/accessory parking resources with shared/public parking facilities. This would increase short-term supply efficiencies, while also providing increased long-term resiliency for the Downtown parking supply as mobility options and preferences continue to alter parking-demand patterns and projections.

## Projected Parking Demand

The history of development in Marquette suggests that the pattern of development including sufficient parking supply to meet its own demand will continue. However, should it prove viable to construct new MDDA parking facilities along the scale of the 500-space margin identified above, there should be excess capacity – at least early on – to accommodate demand from new development, thus facilitating:

- Infill projects on sites lacking viable on-site parking options
- Projects that maximize land use capacities by reducing on-site supplies
- A long-term shift away from private/accessory parking toward shared/public parking in Downtown.

Success in achieving these goals, especially the last two, will require strategic coordination with developers seeking to minimize their on-site parking supplies. This should focus on ensuring that MDDA is compensated for the parking it provides – through increased permit demand, primarily, but also through increased TIF revenues sufficient to continue to provide sufficient parking for continued redevelopment in Downtown and Third Street.

## Key Issues & Opportunities

### Issues

#### Parking Supply

**Barriers to surface lot replacement will limit downtown growth.**

DDA-managed surface lots offer the most significant, market-viable, and important development opportunities in downtown. Particularly, the lots located between Front and Third Streets, and Washington and Baraga Streets offer a premium location and low redevelopment costs for projects of a significant scale. From a redevelopment perspective, infilling this area with active ground-floor destination and activating upper-floor commercial space

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and/or housing units would help remove the activity gaps that currently create a sense of disconnection between the Washington Street and Baraga Street corridors, and would help extend the Front Street and Third Street corridors, which today only extend for a block or two.

#### **Downtown parking generates limited revenues.**

The primary barrier to surface-lot replacement is the cost of structured parking compared to the revenues currently generated by downtown parking. This greatly limits the options for funding the construction of parking that could effectively replace the capacity that redevelopment of surface lots would remove. Any debt necessary to fund new parking facilities would need to be linked to revenue streams beyond what might be generated by the parking facility itself.

#### **DDA parking system revenues cannot support large capital investments.**

Parking system revenues currently cover the cost of maintaining and operating all DDA-managed parking resources. They are not sufficient, however, to cover the annual cost of paying off the debt-service obligations from its most recent, large capital investment – renovations to the Bluff Street ramp, completed in 2011. While system revenues have increased over the last several years, most significantly following the installation of meters on several high-demand blocks in downtown, current levels are far from offering a capacity to secure financing for the development of structured parking that could replace downtown surface lots.

#### **Public parking is primarily limited to curbside spaces in Third Street.**

Third Street lacks any off-street parking facility of significant that is publicly accessible. This places a significant emphasis on curbside parking options, particularly for supporting park-once access to the many popular destinations located along this corridor. The lack of parking meters on Third Street itself also suggests that area employees/business-owners likely use many of these spaces each day, reducing the capacity to accommodate customers/visitors in these most highly visible of curbside spaces.

## **Parking Management**

#### **Limited functionality of aging parking meters.**

The meters currently in place have suffered from poor performance for several years, increasing the level of maintenance attention and cost beyond sustainable levels. This affects the cost-effectiveness of this vital curbside management tool, and will gradually erode confidence and support for these devices and in the benefits of metering curbside parking generally.

#### **Non-permitted overnight parking affects snow clearance.**

On any given morning, there tends to be multiple vehicles left over from the previous night despite lacking overnight parking permits. This results from a long-standing practice of area residents of taking a cab home following an evening, to avoid driving while intoxicated, leaving their cars parked downtown. While this practice carries many, important benefits, it does interfere with snow clearance in DDA lots; and when snow clearance is suboptimal, the capacity of these lots, which tends to be reduced even when snow clearance is unobstructed, is further reduced. A key distinction between this form of overnight parking, and the form that is controlled via permits, is that permitted parkers benefit from receiving information on where to park to minimize interference with snow clearance. By comparison, non-permitted drivers tend to be unaware of the impact of their parking on snow clearance and often park without the intention of leaving their car in place all night.

#### **Modest parking revenues have limited expansion of metered parking.**

The meters added to downtown curbsides since the 2013 study have proven effective at maintaining more consistent turnover and availability among downtown's most popular parking options. This is a key benefit for improving the visitor/customer parking experience, as it builds confidence that downtown offers several parking

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options that will reliably be available upon arrival. The cost of purchasing new meters, however, has delayed the extension of this benefit to additional and emerging commercial/retail blocks in downtown and along Third Street. Despite the fact that the meters added since 2013 have more than paid for themselves, the acquisition of new meters remains a significant capital expense relative to the finances of the DDA parking system.

#### **The lower level of the Bluff Street ramp is currently underutilized.**

The transition to hourly parking for this level of the ramp has succeeded in creating a standing option for downtown visitors, in a convenient location, as there tends to be ample availability on this level even during peak-demand times. At this point, however, it appears that these spaces are too underutilized, with half or more of the spaces noted to be empty at all times. Permit holders for upper-level parking have also expressed frustration at not being able to park in the lower level when the upper level is full and dozens of empty spaces remain available below.

### **Related Mobility Issues**

#### **Transit costs more than parking.**

The MarqTran base fare for a round-trip to downtown is \$1.60. By comparison, a DDA parking permit, for a full-time employee, costs less than \$1.25 per day. This parking cost is the same for all DDA parking facilities, and there is no wait list for such permits. This makes it almost impossible for MarqTran to attract riders who have the means to commute by personal vehicle.

#### **Strong and sustained interest in funding transit service expansion has not found viable implementation options.**

Several downtown entities and stakeholders, including the City, the DDA, and Northern Michigan University (NMU), have expressed interest in and explored options for funding more transit service within downtown and between downtown, Third Street, and the NMU campus. Efforts over the last several years to act upon these interests have met with resistance from MarqTran and have not gone forward.

#### **Lack of ride services increases non-permitted overnight parking.**

Non-permitted overnight parking typically results from drivers seeking to avoid driving while intoxicated. Across the country, such practices have increasingly been replaced by using ride services to avoid driving at all on occasions likely to lead to intoxication. The minimal presence of such services, such as Lyft and Uber, limited such a transition in behavior in Marquette.

## **Opportunities**

### **Parking Supply**

#### **Funding new parking construction to enable redevelopment of Downtown surface lots.**

Financing new parking structures would facilitate the redevelopment of surface lots in Downtown by providing a ready supply of available replacement parking. Joint development opportunities would help ensure that any new MDDA parking supplies would replace rather than simply expand parking capacities.

### **Parking Management**

#### **Metering Third Street would better distribute demand and help maintain consistent availability.**

Following the 2013 study, the DDA led efforts to expand on-street parking capacity on several blocks along the Third Street Corridor, by reducing the distance by which parking is set back from intersections. This benefits of

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this added capacity can be expanded by providing a cost-based incentive to use the spaces on side streets, many of which provide excellent convenience to Third Street destinations, but are less obvious and require a bit more navigation compared to just pulling into a space on Third Street. Metering the spaces on Third Street, while maintaining free parking in side street spaces, would help redistribute some of the parking demand on Third Street to make better use of all available street parking options. In particular, this would encourage employees and business owners to use side street parking spaces, preserving more of the most convenient and visibly evident parking options for customers/visitors.

#### **Promoting Bluff Street ramp as location for non-permitted overnight parking.**

The lower level of this parking ramp provides several advantages for accommodating overnight parking by drivers who leave their cars downtown unexpectedly and without a permit for doing so. Most importantly, the fact that this level is covered means that parking in this location will not interfere with snow clearance operations, and that drivers need not “dig out” their cars in the morning (thus making retrieval easier and more expedient). Another advantage is the minimal use of this level for permit parking, with the result that overnight and early morning parking demand is quite modest, providing a significant time/capacity buffer for dealing with vehicles that are not retrieved first thing in the morning.

### **Related Mobility Opportunities**

#### **Expanded transit service would create more synergy within and between key growth areas.**

Direct and frequent transit service between the NMU campus and downtown, travelling the length of Third Street, would better connect several key areas in central Marquette, making it easier and more likely for NMU students to frequent Third Street and downtown destinations and events, while also making Third Street destination and NMU events and amenities more accessible to the growing downtown population. Lastly, it would make both NMU and downtown destinations and job centers more accessible to those living along the Third Street corridor. Perhaps most importantly, this form of expanded access would bring more people to each area who need no parking.

#### **Expanded transit could support some park-and-ride opportunities.**

An NMU - Third Street – Downtown circulator service would also facilitate potential park-and-ride opportunities. This could include opportunities to make use of the significant parking resources left in place and largely unused when the hospital left its NMU-adjacent location for downtown. These opportunities will be limited by the reality that both the parking involved and the transit ride from it would likely have to be provided free of charge. With the best of downtown parking options costing no more than \$25/month, a park-and-ride alternative would likely have to be completely free of charge to attract commuters in any significant numbers.



## Plan Update Strategies

Following is a series of strategies recommended for the 2020 Update to the Downtown Parking Management Plan.



### Supply Expansion

#### On-Street Supply

**Work with property owners to close redundant/disused driveways.**

**Pair streetscape improvements with agreements to close/relocate driveways where doing so will recapture parking capacity and improve walking conditions along key commercial streets.**

Two parking lots located on opposite sides of 4<sup>th</sup> Street, at Washington Street, encapsulate the challenge and opportunity in this recommendation. The one on the west side of 4<sup>th</sup> Street is accessible from three distinct curbcuts, two of which are located on 4<sup>th</sup> street (though one is currently not used for access, its curb cut remains) with the third located on Washington Street. As a result, there is no parking on this stretch of Washington Street, and its sidewalk is dominated by space shared with cross vehicle traffic.

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Figure 12 Redundant and Excess Driveways Reduce On-Street Parking and Sidewalk LOS



By contrast, the lot on the east side of 4<sup>th</sup> Street has no access point from Washington Street, relying solely on 4<sup>th</sup> Street for access – with the result that this length of Washington Street presents uninterrupted walking, and accommodates several bike racks and three metered parking spaces.

Figure 13 Gains Possible from Closing Driveways are Evident Across the Street.



## Stripe parking spaces along the full 400 block of Baraga Avenue.

### Striping on-street spaces can increase their capacity.

- The head-in parking on this block is not striped west of the St. Peter Cathedral parking entrance, resulting in inefficient parked-car configurations that reduce the capacity along this block.

## Add Barrier-Free Parking in front of County building entrances on 200 block of Baraga Avenue.

### The County building entrance is an ideal location to accommodate those with mobility challenges.

- The County has identified the opportunity to redesign the two spaces that align with the sidewalk leading to these entrances as barrier-free spaces, to accommodate a high level of need among their visitors.

## Off-Street Supply

### Explore options for building a parking deck.

### Develop a basic proforma to track the financial viability of available/future opportunities.

Develop a process for evaluating the cost/revenue implications of potential supply development opportunities, including per-space, annualized estimates of:

- Construction Cost, as annualized debt service obligations
- Operating and Maintenance costs
- Parking revenues
- New MDDA (TIF, property-tax, other) revenue, from the property-value increase following the redevelopment of surface lots made possible by developing replacement parking facilities

### Prioritize Joint-Development opportunities.

- Joint-development can spread the costs and risks associated with constructing parking facilities, while ensuring that facility design and management align with community standards and priorities.
- Such projects also create more resilient mobility infrastructure that ensures that new investments create shared benefits.
- This resiliency can ensure that parking built to support private development remains a resource to support downtown needs beyond the on-site development – something that may become increasingly important should mobility trends prove to reduce parking demand in urban areas.

## Expand Third Street's public supply during evenings and weekends.

### Partner with Passport to help private lot owners monetize their off-hour excess capacity to provide needed public parking during evenings/weekends.

The availability of pay-by-phone technology allows lot owners to directly monetize their off-hour capacity. This could greatly expand public parking options in Third Street, where all off-street parking options are privately controlled.

- Recruit early-adopter lot owners to pilot this technology, which can provide direct revenue every week while supporting area evening-based businesses with limited on-site parking
- Lot owners can set the hours of public access, determine parking rates, and maintain their current lot-enforcement approach
- Mobile-payment vendors will provide signage, with pricing and lot identification for payments, and facilitate payment and revenue flows back to lot owners.



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- The City/MDDA can provide monitoring, ticketing, towing support in exchange for an administrative fee
- Work with early-adopter lot owners to document their experiences, including setup and management, partnerships and risk management, revenues, etc.
- Positive outcomes from early participants should be used to recruit additional participants.

## Capacity Expansion

### On-Street Capacity

**Use variable curbside regulations to expand capacities in line with demand peaks.**

**Pair morning loading zones with Midday through Evening meters on select commercial blocks.**

Focus on high-demand areas where patterns/needs vary across the day and week. Optimize truck access during mornings. Shift to focus on keeping metered parking spaces accessible, as the lunch-hour peak approaches and continuing through the dinner-hour peak.

On select commercial-street blocks:

- Prioritize loading/unloading during early mornings – 6am – 10am
- Prioritize short-term/metered parking from late-morning through the evening – 10am – 10pm

On adjacent side-street blocks:

- Prioritize short-term parking (30 minutes) access during early mornings – 6am – 10am
- Prioritize loading/unloading from late-morning through the evening – 10am – 10pm

**Figure 14 Example of Variable Regulations Approach in downtown Santa Cruz, CA**





## Demand Distribution

### Permit Strategies

**Create an Afternoon/Evening Permit to encourage evening-shift employees to park in MDDA lots.**

**Discount permits that are not valid until after the lunch-hour peak will provide evening-shift employees an affordable alternative to street parking.**

Downtown commuters with a conventional, weekday work schedule need to be able to find a parking space upon first arriving in the morning, and often upon returning from a lunch trip. After two or three in the afternoon, most of these employees will not use their cars until they leave for the day. At the same time, the lunch-hour demand peak begins to ebb, increasing availability even in downtown's more popular lots.

This presents an opportunity to create a permit that is only valid after the lunch-hour rush is over, offering access to highly convenient MDDA lots at a discounted rate as a means of keeping more evening-shift employees from parking in on-street spaces that should be prioritized for customers.

**Develop digital permits to expand management flexibility and overnight parking options.**

Digital permitting, which uses license-plate-recognition technology to allow vehicle license plates to function as parking permits, can expand management, permitting, and pricing options while minimizing the administrative labor required. Such permits may make it more viable for MDDA to manage off-street parking permits for private lots, allowing residents to take advantage of excess evening capacities in lots near their home, and allowing lot owners to monetize this capacity – with MDDA ensuring compliance with restrictions and addressing violations, in exchange for an administrative fee.

### Pricing Strategies

#### On-Street

**Use tiered rates to better distribute Downtown on-street parking demand.**

**Start by charging more for on-street than for off-street parking.**

Pricing all hourly parking at the same rate will result in a lack of availability among the most popular parking options. As new meters are introduced, the following tiered rates should be established for all hourly parking across Downtown and Third Street:

- \$1/hour:
  - Washington Street, Baraga Avenue, and Front Street in Downtown
  - Third Street in Third Street District
- \$0.50/hour:
  - All other on-street meters
  - All hourly parking in MDDA off-street facilities

#### **Meter Parking on Third Street**

**Better distribute demand and help maintain consistent availability along this primary customer parking street.**

Following the 2013 study, the DDA led efforts to expand on-street parking capacity on several blocks along the Third Street Corridor, by reducing the distance by which parking is set back from intersections. This benefits of this added capacity can be expanded by providing a cost-based incentive to use the spaces on side streets, many of

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which provide excellent convenience to Third Street destinations, but are less obvious and require a bit more navigation compared to just pulling into a space on Third Street. Metering the spaces on Third Street, while maintaining free parking in side street spaces, would help redistribute some of the parking demand on Third Street to make better use of all available street parking options. In particular, this would encourage employees and business owners to use side street parking spaces, preserving more of the most convenient and visibly evident parking options for customers/visitors.

#### Extend meter enforcement into evenings and weekends.

##### **Meter schedules must adapt as downtown economies increasingly rely upon evening/weekend commercial activity.**

Evening and Saturday pricing will help keep on-street parking available during these emerging activity peaks. By contrast, early morning periods are less dependent on pricing, as demand tends to be more modest. This suggests an ideal schedule for meter enforcement would be something like the following:

- Monday – Thursday: 10am to 8pm
- Friday and Saturday: 10am to 10pm

#### Formalize a performance-based pricing policy for on-street parking.

##### **Formally identify pricing as the primary tool by which MDDA will seek to maintain on-street parking availability throughout Downtown and Third Street.**

Establish that peak-hour “space availability” is the Key Performance Indicator for setting/adjusting parking rates. Develop informational material on this policy, explaining that consistent on-street availability provides several economic-development benefits, including an improved parking experience, as more parking options are more consistently available, more of the time. Clarify that the economic-development benefits of this improved experience are far greater than any positive direct-revenue benefit received through the meters. Lastly, acknowledging that such a strategy will generate increased revenues as demand for downtown parking grows, this information should also clarify that resulting parking revenues are returned 100% in the form of maintaining the MDDA parking system + special programming.

##### **Let your constituents explain the benefits.**

Work with constituent businesses who are positioned to benefit from effective on-street pricing, providing them with discussion points for addressing customer frustration with meters/pricing by explaining how their business benefits from this management approach. This can include:

- The tendency of business owners and employees to park in unmetered on-street spaces, greatly reducing customer access
- The tendency of pricing to encourage greater use of underutilized parking options that remain free, so that space availability is more consistent, and parking is easier to find for everyone
- The distinct benefits of the MDDA system in which meter revenues are controlled by an organization whose singular mission is to support downtown economic development – the money won’t disappear into a general, municipal fund – but will go toward downtown investments over which downtown businesses have influence as assessment payers

## Off-Street

### **Eliminate Free 2-hour parking in MDDA lots.**

**To ensure that permit holders can find a space in the appropriate MDDA lot/ramp, the 2-hour period of free parking should be eliminated in all permit lots.**

For facilities that offer hourly parking, charge all non-permitted vehicles \$0.50/hour for parking, between 10am and 6pm.

### **Adjust off-street permit rates to redistribute demand and ease constraints in popular parking options.**

**Create tiered rates to help redistribute demand across more of the MDDA off-street system.**

The current off-street parking supply is more than sufficient to meet current commuter parking needs, but uneven utilization patterns that favor Downtown-core locations constrain availability among several of these facilities. The following rates are recommended to help ease these constraints and make better use of underutilized locations.

- \$60 – Reserved Space Permit (24/7 spaces)
- \$50 – Bluff Street (lower level, non-reserved) Permit
- \$40 – Premium Lot Permit (Bluff Street upper, Spring Street, North Main)
- \$30 – Standard Lot Permit (Rock Street, Baraga, Commons)
- \$20 – Lower Harbor Lot Permit
- \$20 – Afternoon/Evening Permit (any lot, valid after 2pm only)

### **Allow Hourly paid parking for non-permitted overnight parking in Bluff Street Ramp lower level.**

Allow hourly parking in the lower level of the Bluff Street ramp, at all times, to encourage use of these spaces for occasional overnight parking needs during winter parking restrictions. For those whose overnight parking needs are more frequent, the currently available \$35 permit option will remain attractive. An hourly-rate option, however, will be more cost-effective for those with less frequent need of overnight, making good use of these covered spaces which are currently underutilized during overnight hours

## **Mobility Improvements**

### **Bike**

#### **Encourage more cycling in fair-weather months, support all-year riders.**

**Adopt seasonal bike-corral program.**

- Identify strategic locations, adjacent to supportive businesses/property-owners, for seasonal installations that can provide high-convenience parking to accommodate increased cycling activity.

**Offer enhanced bike parking.**

- Provide shelters over popular bike-rack locations, to protect bikes from weather/elements.
- Enhance security by using street cameras to monitor open bike parking spots to improve bike-parking security.

**Create a Downtown Bike Parking Map.**

Guide riders to seasonal and all-year facilities, including:

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- All permanent and temporary/seasonal rack locations
- Locations offering shelter and/or enhance security for longer-term parking
- Locations offering valet and/or other special services during events

## Transit

Explore options for establishing a Downtown-Third Street-NMU shuttle.

Figure 15 Proposed Shuttle Route and Stop Alignment



### Expanded transit service would create more synergy within and between key growth areas.

Direct and frequent transit service between the NMU campus and downtown, travelling the length of Third Street, would better connect several key areas in central Marquette, making it easier and more likely for NMU students to frequent Third Street and downtown destinations and events, while also making Third Street destination and NMU events and amenities more accessible to the growing downtown population. Lastly, it would make both NMU and downtown destinations and job centers more accessible to those living along the Third Street corridor. Perhaps most importantly, this form of expanded access would bring more people to each area who need no parking.

**Expanded transit could support some park-and-ride opportunities.**

An NMU - Third Street – Downtown circulator service would also facilitate potential park-and-ride opportunities. This could include opportunities to make use of the significant parking resources left in place and largely unused when the hospital left its NMU-adjacent location for downtown. These opportunities will be limited by the reality that both the parking involved and the transit ride from it would likely have to be provided free of charge. With the best of downtown parking options costing no more than \$25/month, a park-and-ride alternative would likely have to be completely free of charge to attract commuters in any significant numbers.

## Operations & Technology

### Replace parking meters.

**Pay-stations (or, kiosks) will reduce costs and maintenance challenges, compared to single space meters.**

On-street meters are due for replacement as their maintenance burden has increased, particularly as the performance of their solar batteries has declined. MDDA should replace these meters with pay stations, which can greatly reduce costs related to credit card fees, while also reducing the level and complexity of snow-clearance and other cold-weather maintenance activities. Key advantages of choosing pay stations over single-space meters for the MDDA system include:

- Operating costs – Pay stations tend to offer significant cost savings on assessed wireless and credit-card-transaction fees.
- Coin Collection Frequency – A larger carrying capacity decreases the frequency of collections, reducing staff time
- Solar Array – More flexibility in placing pay stations on any given block increases opportunities to maximize solar capture.
- Fewer/Larger Batteries -- A larger battery size offers performance benefits compared to the batteries within single-space meters, while replacing single-space meters with pay stations will reduce the overall number of batteries that must be serviced.
- Enforcement – Pay stations will facilitate a transition to pay-by-plate metering, which offers several customer-convenience, and enforcement-effectiveness advantages.

### Explore options for digital validation.

**Use mobile-payment technology to develop validation for on-/off-street parking options.**

Coordinate with the DDA’s mobile-payment vendor about Digital Validation options.

- Digital payment systems, including mobile payment, can make validation a seamless experience.
- This can include a code for free or discounted parking for future parking activity.
- The City of Detroit recently introduced this through its Passport -maintained mobile-payment service, allowing merchants to pay for customer parking at Park Detroit meters, using digital codes that can be entered at a meter/kiosk or via its mobile app.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> <http://www.parkdetroit.us/merchants.html>



## Establish a Performance Monitoring Program.

### Measure what you manage.

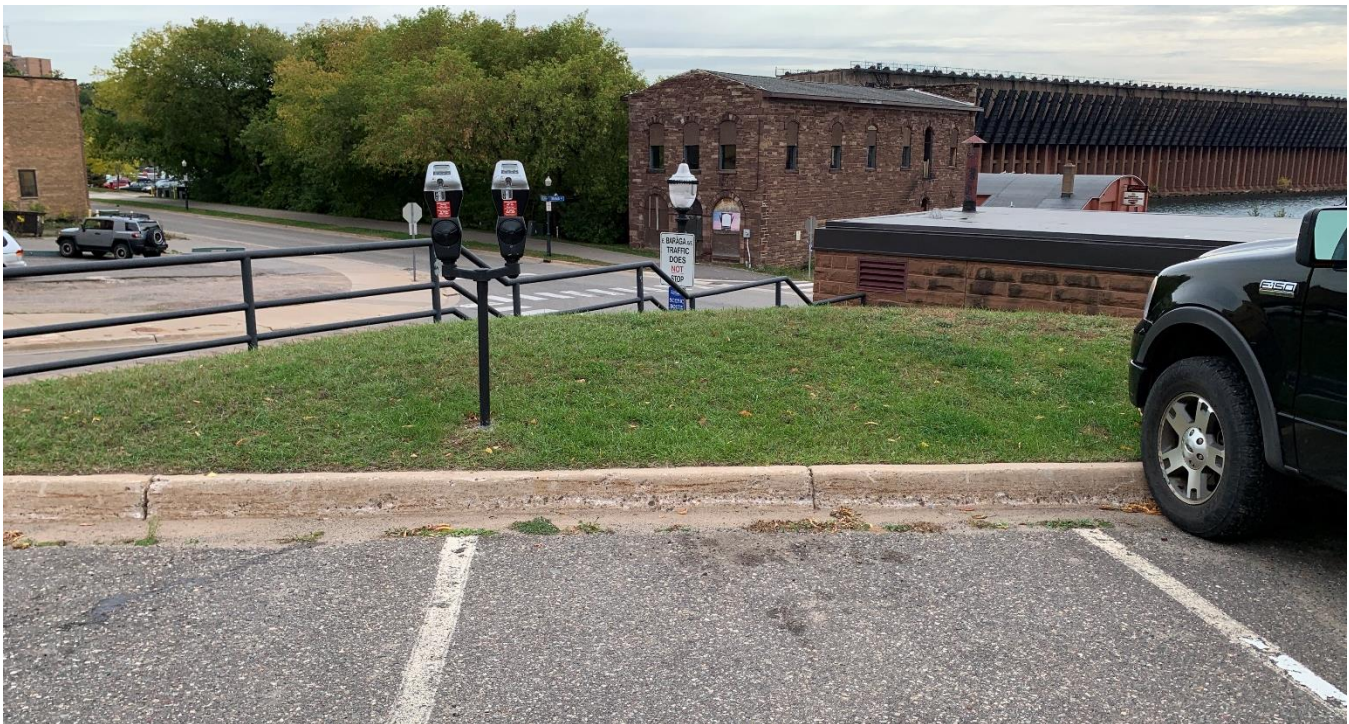
Whatever management strategies are employed to maintain availability, their success is best measured by counting empty parking spaces on high-demand blocks and in high-demand off-street facilities, at the busiest times of the week.

- Regular counts conducted in high-demand locations at peak-demand times will allow MDDA staff to monitor parking availability
  - It will also allow MDDA staff to assess the impacts of policy and regulatory changes, including any pricing adjustments, on parking behavior and resulting space availability.
- Counts should be completed at least annually, but the more frequent and consistent the better – see appendix for detailed overview of a performance-monitoring program.
- It is essential that count data be analyzed specific to time of day and at the block-face/facility level.
  - An area-wide measure showing ample availability can obscure chronic constraints at specific locations.
  - Similarly, daily average measures can obscure prolonged constraints experienced during midday peaks.

### Use new meter technology to estimate and track utilization without manual counts.

When MDDA upgrades its meters, it should ask vendors to ensure that transaction data can be captured at a sufficient level of detail – transaction/blockface, at least – to estimate levels and patterns of occupancy/availability across all metered blocks at all times.

## Implementation Guide



Initial efforts to implement these recommendations should focus on securing the benefits of QuickWin opportunities – strategies with minimal implementation barriers that offer tangible benefits if successful. These

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are identified below, followed by strategies best pursued as short-term, medium-term, and longer-term improvement priorities and opportunities.

## Quick Win Opportunities

Strategies that should be prioritized for implementation by 2021 include the following:

### Supply/Capacity Strategies

- Stripe parking spaces along the full 400 block of Baraga Avenue.
- Develop financial strategies to clarify opportunities to fund future supply development projects.
- Use pay-by-phone to expand the Third Street District's public supply during evenings and weekends.
- Use variable curbside regulations to expand on-street capacities when demand is high.

### Management, Operations, and Technology Strategies

- Create an Afternoon/Evening Permit to encourage evening-shift employees to park in MDDA lots.
- Formalize a performance-based pricing policy for on-street parking rates.
- Explore options for digital validation.
- 

### Mobility Improvements

- Adopt a seasonal bike-corral program.
- Create a Downtown Bike Parking Map.
- Operations

## Short-Term Priorities

Strategies that should be prioritized for implementation by 2022 include the following:

### Supply Strategies

- Work with property owners to close redundant/disused driveways.
- Add Barrier-Free Parking in front of County building entrances on 200 block of Baraga Avenue.
- Identify potential Joint-Development opportunities to expand DDA parking supplies on current surface lots.

### Management, Operations, and Technology Strategies

- Develop digital permits to expand management flexibility and overnight parking options.
- Use tiered meter rates to better distribute on-street parking demand in Downtown.
- Use tiered permit rates to better distribute commuter parking demand across all available DDA facilities.
- Meter parking along Third Street within the Third Street District
- Extend meter enforcement into evenings and weekends.
- Eliminate Free 2-hour parking in MDDA lots.
- Replace parking meters.
- 

### Mobility Improvements

- Expand offering of enhanced (sheltered and secure for longer-term use) bike parking.
- Identify funding strategy for establishing a Downtown-Third Street-NMU shuttle.

## Medium-Term Strategic Priorities

Strategies that should be prioritized for implementation by 2025 include the following:

### Supply Strategies

- Release an RFP for joint development to expand parking supplies as part of a mixed-use development on a Downtown surface lot.

### Management, Operations, and Technology Strategies

- Establish a Performance Monitoring Program.
- Use new meter technology to estimate and track utilization without manual counts.

## Longer-Term Opportunities

Strategies that should be re-evaluated annually, and amended as may be appropriate as conditions change and other strategies take effect, to be implemented whenever circumstances suggest the time is right:

### Supply Strategies

- Use joint-development of surface lots as the only/most-appropriate strategy for expanding DDA off-street parking supplies.
- Continue to work with property owners to eliminate redundant driveways, or replace essential driveways, on streets where there is high demand for the additional on-street parking and better walkability that this would provide.