

STAFF REPORT
City of Lancaster

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Date: September 27, 2011

To: Mayor Parris and City Council Members

From: Brian S. Ludicke, Planning Director
Robert C. Neal, Public Works Director

Subject: **Downtown Parking Management**

Recommendation:

Approve the appropriation of \$75,000.00 from the Traffic Impact fees fund balance to Capital Improvement Budget Account No. 232-13AC001-924 for a Downtown Parking Strategy Study.

Fiscal Impact:

With this action, sufficient funds are available in the Capital Improvements Budget Account No. 232-13AC001-924 for the Downtown Parking Strategy Study.

Background:

During the July 28, 2011 City Council Meeting, City Council directed staff to study the need for a Downtown parking structure. A comprehensive approach was taken, examining existing parking utilization, soliciting input from the BLVD Association, and studying how other communities manage their downtown parking needs. A summary of findings is given below.

A parking supply and utilization analysis was conducted in 2006 as part of the preparation of the Downtown Lancaster Specific Plan. This study indicated that the maximum rate of parking space occupancy in the downtown area as a whole was 38%, meaning that a significant surplus of parking spaces existed. Staff conducted some additional parking counts in the six-block "core area" (bounded by Kettering Street, Date Avenue, Milling Street, and Fern Avenue) where the majority of physical change has occurred since 2006 to determine current supply of both on and off-street parking, and determined that total parking supply has remained largely unchanged. An analysis of total parking demand for the core area based on the specific plan requirements (including the recently opened cinema and other proposed uses), indicates that an overall slight surplus of parking still remains. Staff field investigations, conducted on various days and times during the past month, confirm this conclusion.

Staff has also investigated other cities with successful downtown areas and found that complaints related to the amount of parking are not uncommon. However, the most successful downtown areas have implemented effective parking strategies that not only seek to make efficient use of the existing parking resource, but put into place long-term approaches

to provide and maintain adequate parking that complements the overall development strategy for the downtown area. Staff believes that there is a need for a parking management study/strategy that will inventory available parking in the downtown area, including location, quantity, and actual usage. The study would also identify where and what parking facilities would be needed to support long-term development and use expectations in the downtown area, including a comparative analysis of alternative scenarios of providing and managing downtown parking. The study would incorporate transportation demand management (TDM) measures among its parking management scenarios, including what parking revenue systems, if any, would be suitable.

BSL/jr