

Technical Assistance for Sustainable Communities: Building Blocks

Technical Assistance Tool: Parking Audit

Kauai County, Hawaii

May 14-15, 2014

To: Lee Steinmetz, Transportation Planner, County of Kauai
From: Jim Charlier, Charlier Associates
Date: June 4, 2014
Re: Suggested Next Steps as Outcome of Technical Assistance

Background

In signing the Memorandum of Understanding for our technical assistance award with Kauai County, Smart Growth America (SGA) committed to delivering a final report summarizing the parking audit workshop and recommending specific strategies for the implementation of our recommendations. Both local officials and members of the public attended the May 15th community stakeholder workshop. County Department Heads and/or their representatives also attended a briefing on May 14th. The May 14th and May 15th meetings were organized by a core team of County and SGA staff, who debriefed after each event.

The “Parking Audit” workshop presented in Kauai provides a neutral setting where an impartial parking expert can evaluate local policies and practices and offer advice based on the state of the practice, with an emphasis on what works well and what should be avoided. The intent of the workshop was neither for SGA to create a plan nor bind the community to any particular course of action, but rather to facilitate a discussion within the community about how best to manage parking in the Lihue Town Core area.

Purpose of this Memo

The workshop was designed as an opportunity to further the discussions on how the County might most effectively partner with other entities to manage parking to achieve community revitalization goals. The purpose of this memo is to summarize SGA’s recommendations on what action steps the County might take to facilitate improved parking management.

1. Key issues addressed during the workshop

This workshop was focused on the Lihue Town Core area, including the Lihue Civic Center and the Rice Street Corridor. Lihue is the largest city in Kauai, which is a rural island with a resident population of about 70,000 people. The County had previously prepared design plans for the Town Core and for the Civic Center complex.

Lihue is the “downtown” of the island, with Rice Street its “main street.” The study area is the seat of County government and the location of a number of state offices. Rice Street is an aging commercial/mixed-use corridor that is beginning to see reinvestment and redevelopment interest. The Civic Center area is made up of large office buildings and large surface parking lots. Many

streets, including both Rice and Hardy, have some amount of on-street parking.

The overall issue in this workshop was how parking demand, supply and management strategies, policies and measures could be tailored to support the redevelopment of the Town Core and the Rice Street corridor. The County has adopted a “complete streets” resolution and soon will be reconstructing Hardy Street as a complete street (another important street in the Town Core). Rice Street is in the process of being designed for future implementation. Improving pedestrian and bicycle accommodation along these streets is a major objective of those projects. In addition, the County adopted its Multimodal Land Transportation Plan, which calls for mode shift from single occupancy vehicles to transit, pedestrian and bicycle transportation to accommodate future growth. It became clear that parking is closely related to both improving the infrastructure needed for mode shift and economic development of the Town Core.

The County hopes to use the tools provided in this workshop and the lessons learned from implementation in future parking audits of other mixed-use areas of the island. This workshop was envisioned as a prototype that County staff could replicate in these other areas without requiring consulting support.

Specific issues addressed at the workshop included:

- How to conduct accurate parking inventory and utilization studies;
- What role on-street parking should play on Rice and Hardy Streets and how this could be reconciled with “complete streets” design objectives;
- What management and enforcement strategies and policies would be appropriate for the surface parking lots, given the mix of government office workers and commercial customers;
- How to assess and plan for future parking demand taking into account potential redevelopment and anticipated Civic Center improvements
- What techniques would allow or facilitate sharing of surface parking lots that are underutilized today, such as the one at Convention Hall;
- What role, if any, parking pricing should play in managing and funding parking supply in the area;
- How to use shared parking standards to encourage redevelopment and infill and avoid over-supplying parking; and
- Other urban design and planning strategies that would support intermodal and multimodal approaches to parking management.

2. Targeted policies/ideas/strategies discussed during the workshops

A core team met on Wednesday morning to prepare for the workshops, and again on Thursday afternoon to debrief and develop next steps. A workshop for senior County managers was held on Wednesday afternoon, and a general public workshop was held on Thursday morning.

Key policies, ideas and strategies that were discussed included:

1. Addressing demand as well as supply, paying particular attention to:
 - a. Mode share of trips to, from and within the area;
 - b. Economic activity, business cycles and vacancies;
 - c. Parking pricing; and,
 - d. Land use mix.

2. Policies and approaches to managing parking supply, including:
 - a. Regulations (ordinances, etc.);
 - b. Funding (paying for new supply);
 - c. Enforcement; and,
 - d. Information – providing wayfinding and other information.

3. Policies and approaches appropriate in downtown areas, including:
 - a. Modern enforcement systems and technologies;
 - b. Removing barriers to redevelopment and infill projects; and,
 - c. Providing on-street parking to support storefront retail.

4. The potential need for a parking district:
 - a. To facilitate shared parking and joint use parking;
 - b. To provide a way to collect revenue and fund the various demand and supply measures;
 - c. To provide parking enforcement at a level that would not be possible for local law enforcement, given other priorities; and
 - d. To provide a decision entity to bring together public and private land owners, agencies and businesses in a collaborative setting to anticipate and address parking issues and opportunities.

The public forum included discussion of the parking audit results, which showed that – overall – there is a parking over-supply in the study area, although different sub-areas showed different degrees of this. This led to discussion of how existing parking supply could be deployed more effectively to postpone the need for expensive new parking supply.

3. Actions to address policies/strategies

The core team developed a list of priority actions and agreed on who would take what roles.

- a. Establish Lihue Town Core Database Layers in County GIS
(Lead: shared by Planning and Public Works Departments)
Incorporate parking audit results into GIS database and shape files. This will support future analyses and updates to the audit research.

- b. Rice Street Design and Timing in Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)
(Lead: shared by Planning and Public Works Departments)
Develop design concepts for a re-stripping of lanes on Rice Street. Hold community meetings to discuss design with public. Take design to County Council for approval and get work scheduled in County Capital Improvements Program.

- c. Lihue Town Core Multimodal Access and Circulation Plan
(Lead: shared by Planning and Public Works Departments)
Coordinate with Rice Street re-stripe (b, above).

- d. Lihue Community Plan
(Lead: Planning Department)
Incorporate parking audit findings and recommendations into the Lihue Community Plan. Recommendations to be incorporated include: need for more detailed Rice Street

streetscape plan and Lihue Town Core multimodal access plan; parking management plan; and potential for creation of special district for long-term multi-modal circulation and parking management.

- e. Form Based Code
(Lead: Planning Department)
Incorporate shared parking and parking management into the proposed Form Based Code. Use the South Kauai Community Plan as a pilot to test these techniques. Later, apply them to Lihue Town Core and other town core areas in future development plans.
- f. Parking Management Plan
(Lead: shared by Planning and Public Works Departments)
Develop a parking management plan for Lihue Civic Center and adjacent on-street parking. Implement the management plan prior to completion of the Hardy Street reconstruction project.
- g. Promotional Program
(Lead: shared by Planning and Get Fit Kauai)
Develop a promotional transportation demand management program that may include:
 - Walk to lunch day;
 - Ride the bus week;
 - Bike to work day;
 - Guaranteed ride home benefit, and
 - Other strategies.

4. Time frame for accomplishing actions

3 months after workshop:

- Lihue Community Plan
- Form Based Code/parking incorporation into South Kauai Plan

6 months after workshop:

- Establish Lihue Town Core Database in GIS
- Promotional Program

9 months after workshop:

- Rice Street Design and CIP
- Lihue Town Core Access and Circulation Plan

1 year after workshop:

- Parking Management Plan