Cape Coral
FLORIDA

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DRAFT

# CITY OF
# CAPE
# CORAL

## SOUTH CAPE PARKING MANAGEMENT PLAN

DDEC  MOBILITY COHORT  NUE URBAN CONCEPTS
LAND USE · MOBILITY · PARKING · FEES

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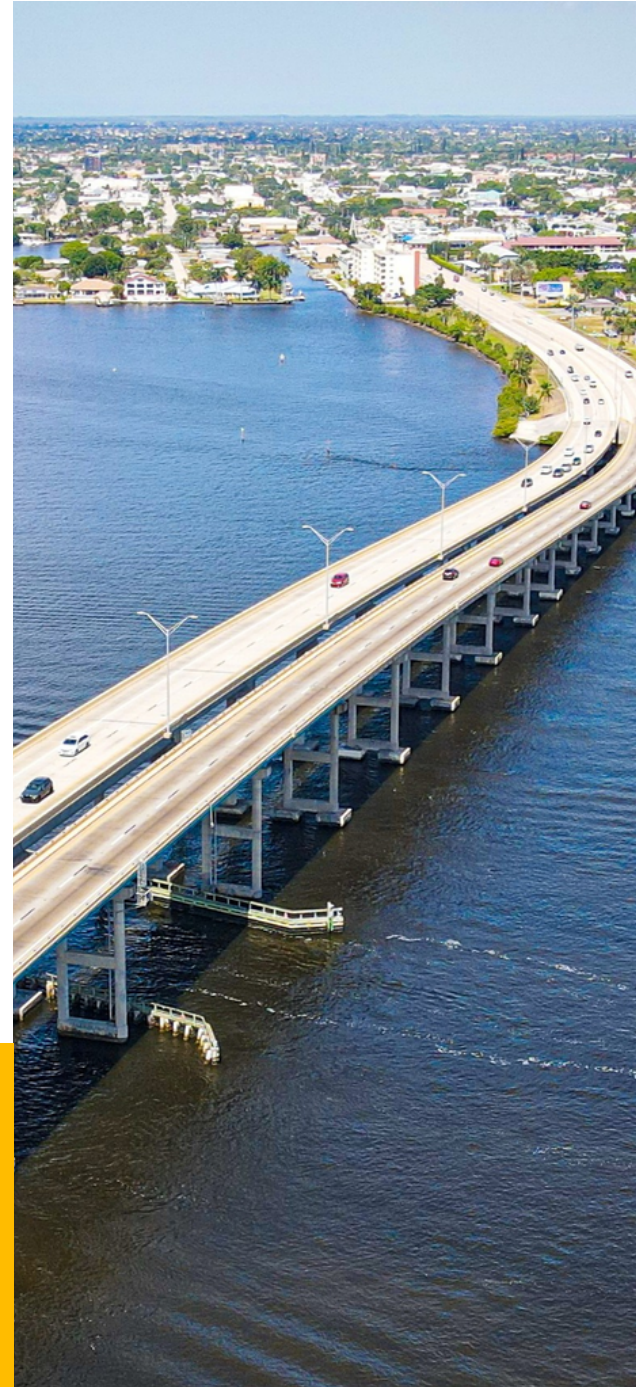LAND USE · MOBILITY · PARKING · FEES

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# Executive Summary

The South Cape Parking Management Plan serves as a detailed guide and strategic framework addressing the evolving parking and mobility needs of the South Cape area in Cape Coral, Florida. The plan is rooted in a data-driven approach and comprehensive stakeholder engagement, aiming to optimize existing parking resources, balance diverse parking needs, enhance the user experience, and ensure sustainable, future-proof solutions. The introduction provides a contextual backdrop, depicting Cape Coral's growth into a bustling city and South Cape's transformation from a declined area to a commercial and entertainment hub.

The evolution of South Cape has brought about significant parking challenges, primarily due to the city's history as a pre-platted community and strong residential and automobile-focused planning, resulting in increased traffic congestion. The South Cape Parking Management Plan, therefore, sets out to address these issues with an objective-centered approach. It seeks to maximize the utility of current parking spaces, harmonize the parking needs of businesses and residents, and enhance the overall parking experience. The plan is committed to sustainable development and involves the community in the planning process to reflect the diverse needs of the South Cape area.

The planning context of the report includes a thorough analysis of existing conditions, parking inventory, land usage, and occupancy patterns. This part of the report also assesses the current parking program, focusing on policies, regulations, customer experience, equity, mobility, and zoning requirements. The issues analysis highlights high priority issues that emerged from the analysis of existing conditions. The stakeholder and community engagement chapter details the methods and outcomes of the public information plan, revealing community preferences for parking availability and alternative transportation modes. A peer city and best practices review examines similar cities' parking management practices, providing valuable insights for South Cape. This section of the report covers the best practices in parking management, including dedicated management, effective wayfinding, time management policies, regular maintenance, and specialized parking zones.

Proposed recommendations in the plan include the implementation of a Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Program, the adoption of a Mobility Fee, exploration of grant opportunities, public-private partnerships, and the gradual introduction of a paid parking system. These recommendations are supported by a future implementation plan, which outlines the construction of a multifunctional parking structure and mobility hub, public-private partnerships for parking infrastructure development, the introduction of parking fees, and a comprehensive study of the Cape Coral Parkway corridor.

This South Cape Parking Management Plan is a testament to Cape Coral's commitment to addressing current and future parking challenges in South Cape and is guided by overarching goals to improve the efficiency of the existing parking assets, manage parking demand by facilitating a "park once" environment, and add future parking capacity as redevelopment occurs; with the ultimate vision of a thriving entertainment district and improved experience for residents, visitors, and local businesses.

# INTRODUCTION AND BRACKGROUND

## Overview of Cape Coral and South Cape

Cape Coral, a vibrant city in Southwest Florida, is known for its extensive canal system and outdoor recreational activities. Founded in the late 1950s and incorporated in 1970, the city has experienced rapid growth and development, making it the 8th most populous city in Florida. With an estimated population of 216,992 in 2022, the city is expected to add an additional 100,000 people by 2050 and host approximately 375,000 people at buildout.

The South Cape area, a hub of this bustling city, represents the heart of the city's cultural and economic activities.

Characterized by its unique blend of residential, commercial, and recreational spaces, South Cape has emerged as a focal point for community interaction and business growth.

The area has undergone significant transformation since its inception. Initially planned as a residential community, South Cape has evolved into a dynamic commercial and entertainment district. This evolution has been accompanied by challenges typical of growing urban areas, such as the need for efficient parking solutions catering to the needs of residents, businesses, and visitors.



**Project Location Map**

**Map Legend**
Public Lots    Private Lots
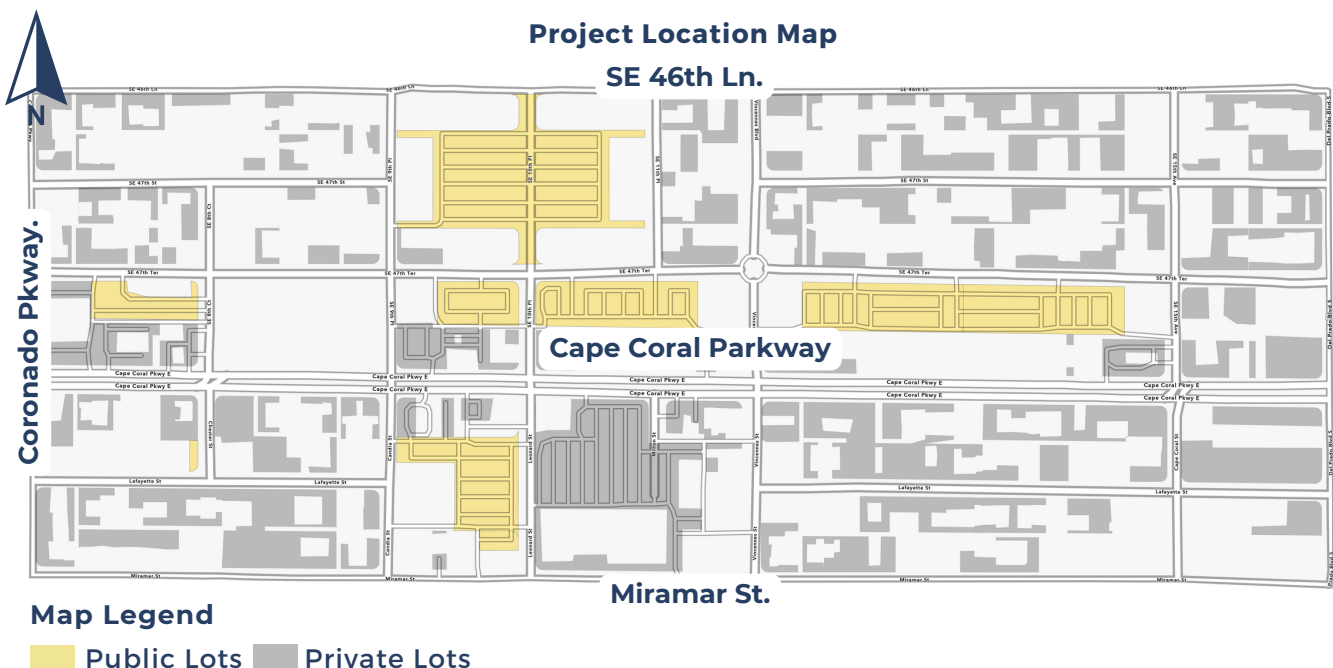
## Evolution and Current Parking Challenges



The South Cape Parking Management Plan seeks to balance three parking priorities: availability, affordability, and accessibility. Finding a balance that is tailored to the South Cape community is crucial to successfully addressing parking challenges.

- **Availability** means having enough parking to meet demand so drivers can find a spot without excessive searching and congestion.
- **Affordability** involves setting reasonable parking rates that users can pay without undue burden.
- **Accessibility** refers to locating parking conveniently near destinations and designing it to serve all people regardless of ability.

By ensuring parking is available when and where people need it, reasonably priced, and easy to access for all, cities can develop equitable systems that meet transportation needs, support businesses, reduce congestion, and improve quality of life.

As South Cape has grown, so too have its parking needs. The original design of the area did not fully plan for the current demand for parking, which has led to several challenges:

- **Limited Parking Infrastructure Availability:** Initially, the area was developed with a focus on residential use, with limited foresight into the commercial boom that would necessitate more robust parking solutions.
- **Increased Vehicle Traffic**: The growth in business and tourism activities has led to an increase in vehicle traffic, exacerbating parking availability.
- **Inadequate Parking for Commercial Areas:** Many businesses in the district face challenges due to the insufficient number of parking spaces, particularly during peak hours and special events.

These challenges have highlighted the need for a comprehensive approach to parking management that considers the evolving dynamics of South Cape.

## Goals of the Parking Management Plan

The primary goal of the South Cape Parking Management Plan is to develop a strategic framework that effectively addresses current and future parking demands while aligning with the broader goals of urban development and sustainability in Cape Coral.



More specific goals of the plan include:

- **Optimizing Existing Parking Resources:** Maximizing the utility of current parking spaces through innovative management and technological solutions.
- **Balancing Parking Needs:** Creating a harmonious parking environment that balances parking availability, accessibility, and affordability and serves both businesses and residents.
- **Enhancing User Experience:** Improving the overall experience for users of the parking system, including ease of access, payment options, and safety.
- **Sustainable and Future-Proof Solutions:** Implementing environmentally sustainable practices and ensuring the scalability of parking solutions to accommodate future growth.
- **Create a Park Once Environment:** Facilitating parking in designated parking locations and use alternative modes of transportation to access destinations within the district.
- **Community Engagement and Stakeholder Involvement:** Actively involving local businesses, residents, and other stakeholders in the planning process to ensure that the solutions meet the diverse needs of the South Cape community.

This plan aims to transform the parking landscape of South Cape into a model of efficiency, sustainability, and user-friendliness, contributing positively to the overall quality of life and economic vitality of South Cape.

# PLANNING CONTEXT

The Planning Context for the South Cape Parking Management Plan encompasses a detailed review of existing plans and policies, comprehensive data analysis, and a thorough assessment of the current parking program. This section integrates insights from the "Planning Context and Existing Conditions" memo (**Appendix 1**) and other key documents to develop a nuanced understanding of the parking dynamics in the South Cape area.

## Data Collection & Review of Existing Plans & Policies

In developing the South Cape Parking Management Plan, a comprehensive data collection and analysis process was undertaken to establish a deep understanding of the existing parking situation. This effort involved reviewing a range of vital documents and data sources, including city and county codes, ordinances, GIS data, and various planning studies. This thorough analysis provided a detailed picture of the existing conditions, regulatory processes, and background planning documentation related to parking in the South Cape area.

The team's approach to data collection was meticulous and collaborative. Working closely with the City Project Manager, the methodology was aligned with the project's goals, ensuring a cohesive and targeted approach. This collaboration was pivotal in gathering relevant data that accurately reflected the current parking assets, usage patterns, and parking demand.

Key documents reviewed during this process included:

- CRA Redevelopment Plan (2019).
- CRA Reports & Development Outlook.
- Cape Compass 2030 Strategic Plan.
- LeeTran Ultra Mobility on Demand Service Update.
- Lee County MPO Cape Coral Transit Demand/Alternative Assessment Study.
- Cape Coral Comprehensive Plan: Chapter 8 - Transportation Element.
- Cape Coral Land Development Code - Article 6: Parking.
- Resolution 04-07 - Repealed PILOP Fee Schedule.
- Ordinance 97-22 - Amendment to Article 6: Parking (Ongoing).
- Lee County Parking Regulations and Zoning.
- Multimodal Master Transportation Plan Existing & Future Conditions (Ongoing)
- Public Parking Wayfinding Branding Options.

# Data Analysis

A comprehensive evaluation of parking spaces was conducted, encompassing both public and private sectors, across varied times of day and week. The "Planning Context and Existing Conditions for the South Cape Parking Management Plan" (**Appendix 1**) details the extensive data collected, highlighting key aspects of parking availability and usage within South Cape.

- **Parking Inventory Counts:** The parking inventory revealed that the South Cape area possesses a total of 7,308 parking spaces. A striking 90% of the available parking is off-street, surface parking, either marked or unmarked. A significant portion of these, accounting for 74%, are private parking spaces, while public parking accounts for 26%. Additionally, approximately 190 of these spaces are designated as private alley parking. This insight into the ownership and distribution of parking spaces is crucial for understanding the dynamics of parking management in the area.

- **Unpaved Parking Spaces:** An interesting aspect of the parking landscape in South Cape is the prevalence of unpaved parking areas. The analysis identified that 29% of the private parking spaces are unpaved. This finding is relevant not only for current parking utilization but also future development and improvement plans, considering factors including environmental impact and upgrades to infrastructure.

- **Land Usage for Parking:** The study found that over half of the land area in South Cape is dedicated to parking. This extensive allocation of land to parking highlights the importance of parking in the area's urban planning and development. It also raises questions about land use efficiency and the potential for more sustainable or multi-functional use of this significant portion of urban space.

- **Parking Occupancy and Utilization Patterns:** The occupancy counts showed diverse usage patterns. While overall occupancy was relatively low for each time period measured, the analysis indicated higher occupancy for public parking during various times. The overall occupancy for public parking across all periods measured was 71%, while public, off-street parking on weekday afternoon was 96%. Public, off-street parking was lowest on the weekend at 52%. While occupancy of public parking did not reach the full available capacity at night or on the weekend, the analysis revealed a concentration of parking in hot spots within popular public parking lots including Iguana Mia, Big Johns, and City Plaza. These patterns are vital for understanding peak parking times and for formulating strategies to manage parking demand effectively.

## Data Analysis

### *Parking Inventory*

| | On-Street Marked and Unmarked | Off-Street Marked | Off-Street Unmarked | Total Parking |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Public** | 756 | 1,133 | - | 1,889 |
| **Private** | - | 3,283 | 2,136 | 5,419 |
| **Total** | **756** | **4,416** | **2,136** | **7,308** |

### *Parking Utilization*

| | Daytime (7/20/23) | Nighttime (7/21/23) | Weekend (7/22/23) | Average Occupancy |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Public/ on Street** | 252 (33%) | 540 (71%) | 211 (28%) | 334 (44%) |
| **Public /Off street** | 1,089 (96%) | 610 (54%) | 584 (52%) | 761 (67%) |
| **Private off street Marked** | 791 (24%) | 935 (29%) | 571 (17%) | 766 (23%) |
| **Private Off-street unmarked** | 152 (7%) | 96 (5%) | 76 (4%) | 108 (5%) |
| **Total** | **2,284 (31%)** | **2,181 (30%)** | **1,442 (20%)** | **1,969 (27%)** |

The data analysis provided a detailed understanding of the parking situation in South Cape, uncovering specific challenges like the prevalence of private parking and unpaved spaces, and the significant land area dedicated to parking. These findings are instrumental in guiding the development of a nuanced parking management plan that addresses both current needs and future growth in the South Cape.

# Parking Program Assessment

The Parking Program Assessment was a comprehensive analysis of the existing parking framework including a close look at policies and regulations, customer experience, zoning requirements, equity, and mobility and accessibility.

## Policies and Regulations:

The assessment revealed that current parking policies, governed by the Cape Coral Land Development Code (Article 6: Parking) and shaped by historical documents such as Resolution 04-07 and the recently adopted Ordinance 97-22, could benefit significantly from the integration of modern technology. The analysis showed a reliance on traditional methods, indicating an opportunity to leverage current technological advancements to enhance efficiency in parking management.

## Customer Experience:

Customer experience analysis, informed by detailed stakeholder feedback from the "Stakeholder Engagement Summary" (**Appendix 2**) highlighted a communication gap between parking management and users. The findings suggested an urgent need for a digital strategy to enhance awareness and understanding of parking options and regulations.

## Zoning Requirements:

Zoning requirements within the South Cape District, as per the Land Development Code (Table 6.1.7.B.), specify parking provisions for various developments, including residential, hotels, restaurants, bars, and other non-residential establishments. These provisions dictate the required number of parking spaces based on property size and type and currently facilitate the provision of exclusive surface parking lots for individual businesses and developments.

## Equity Analysis:

The equity analysis focused on ensuring inclusive access to parking facilities. It considered the accessibility needs of diverse economic backgrounds and individuals with disabilities. Insights from the "Lee County MPO Cape Coral Transit Demand/Alternative Assessment Study" were instrumental in highlighting areas needing improvement to ensure equitable parking access.

## Mobility and Accessibility:

A key aspect of the assessment was the integration of mobility and accessibility considerations, as detailed in the Cape Coral Bicycle & Pedestrian Master Plan. The plan includes proposals for sidewalk enhancements and bike lane expansions, such as the additional 93 miles of sidewalks and 138 miles of bike lanes. High-crash corridors like Cape Coral Parkway and Del Prado Boulevard were identified for safety improvements.

## Program Assessment Findings

- Minimal integration of technology in parking management.
- Communication gaps affecting customer experience with a proposal for a digital engagement strategy.
- Need for reform in the land development code to facilitate innovative parking solutions.
- Emphasis on equitable parking access, based on the "Lee County MPO Cape Coral Transit Demand/Alternative Assessment Study".
- Need for integrated multimodal improvements and services.

In summary, the Parking Program Assessment highlighted the need for a multifaceted and modern approach to parking management in South Cape. This involves leveraging technology, enhancing communication, reforming parking code, ensuring equitable access, and integration with multimodal modes of transportation. These findings provide key insights for refining Cape Coral's parking program to better serve the diverse needs of South Cape.

## Planning Context Key Findings

A thorough evaluation of the South Cape Planning context, including a review of the city's existing plans and policies, data analysis, and assessment of the existing parking program revealed the following key findings:

- **Lack of Formalized Parking Management Policies:** The area suffers from the absence of clear and structured parking management regulations.
- **Induced Demand from Free Parking:** The City of Cape Coral does not currently implement paid parking. The widespread availability of free parking has contributed to a surge in demand during peak hours, exacerbating congestion issues.
- **Insufficient Commercial Loading Zones:** The absence of designated loading zones hinders smooth traffic flow and creates challenges for businesses requiring short-term parking for deliveries.
- **Unclear Curb Policies & Regulation of Rideshare Companies:** There is a lack of clear guidelines regarding short-term parking and loading zones for rideshare.
- **Poorly Marked Pavement:** Inadequate pavement markings contribute to the disorganization of parking spaces, leading to inefficient use of available parking areas.
- **Unauthorized Parking on Private Property:** Many individuals park on private property without permission, leading to trespassing issues and reducing available parking spaces.
- **Disorderly Alleyways & Vehicle Abandonment:** Alleyways throughout the area are disorderly and are used for employee parking and staging of business equipment. Abandoned vehicles occupy parking spaces for extended periods.



- **Municipal Lots Misuse:** Municipal lots, intended for public use, are utilized by businesses for their vehicle staging operations (e.g. construction trucks, food trucks, storage trailers), further limiting available parking spaces. These vehicles may sit unused for long periods of time, or indefinitely, and utilize valuable parking assets.
- **Disrupted Parking Spaces by Dumpsters:** The presence of dumpsters within parking lots diminishes the number of usable parking spaces.
- **Lack of Parking Regulations Enforcement & Illegal Parking Practices:** Existing signage notifies users of the City's right to enforce Florida Statute regarding trespassing on public property, but communication is not clear as to how or when this is enforced. The absence of adequate enforcement of parking regulations has resulted in violations going unchecked, contributing to parking violations and chaos.

The lack of consistent monitoring and ticketing further perpetuates the culture of non-compliance with parking regulations. Due to the lack of enforcement, illegal parking practices such as parking in fire lanes, handicapped spots without permits, and blocking driveways have become prevalent issues. The lack of enforcement has allowed recurring violations, illegal parking practices, vehicle abandonment, and a general culture of non-compliance.

- **Transportation Safety Concerns:** As South Cape has become a more popular destination for entertainment, the area has seen an increase in pedestrian flows leading to an increase in pedestrian-auto conflicts, particularly on Cape Coral Parkway and 47th Terrace. Pedestrian safety concerns and a need for additional traffic calming measures to slow vehicles, visible intersections, and safe midblock crossings emerged as priorities through stakeholder engagement.

- **Lack of Alternative Mobility Options and Welcoming Pedestrian Environment**: Lack of safe and convenient multimodal facilities, multimodal parking, and bicycling and pedestrian amenities such as shading and nighttime lighting, discourage both the use of alternative transportation modes to access South Cape and the willingness to walk further distances from parking locations. This, in turn, leads to high vehicle use and puts pressure on the demand for parking.

# Stakeholder/Community Engagement

## Engagement Strategy and Methodology:

The Public Information Plan (PIP) (**Appendix 3**) formulated a multifaceted engagement strategy to gather comprehensive input for the South Cape Parking Management Plan. This approach was tailored to ensure wide-ranging community participation and feedback.

- **Meetings and Workshops:** Key engagement milestones included public and stakeholder meetings conducted throughout the project process. These gatherings facilitated several in-depth discussions and were pivotal in capturing diverse community perspectives. The city conducted a comprehensive stakeholder engagement process with three focus groups to inform the South Cape Parking Management Plan (**Appendix 2**). Focus Group #1 included internal City stakeholders and technical staff including staff in from Economic & Business Development, Public Works, Planning, Development Services, the City Arborist, and Engineering. Focus Group #2 included regional agencies including Lee County, MPO, and Lee Tran. Focus Group #3 included the South Cape Hospitality and Entertainment Association. Two public meetings were held at the Public Works Department on October 25, 2023, and November 15, 2023. (**Appendix 4 & 5**). Presentations were also given to the Committee of the Whole and the Executive Team to solicit feedback and ideas from the city's leadership (**Appendix 6 & 7**).

- **Digital and Media Outreach:** The PIP employed a robust digital strategy, utilizing social media channels, the city's website, and a project specific webpage for regular updates. Additionally, strategic press releases were issued to enhance reach and engagement, ensuring broader community involvement and awareness.

## Summary of Stakeholder and Community Feedback:

The engagement process yielded insightful feedback, highlighting key concerns and preferences regarding parking management in South Cape:

- **Parking Availability Concerns:** Many stakeholders expressed dissatisfaction with parking availability, particularly during peak hours and special events.
- **Regulation and Enforcement Needs:** Participants highlighted the necessity for clearer parking regulations and consistent enforcement.
- **Sustainable Transportation Interests**: Stakeholders demonstrated a strong interest in improved options for alternative transportation modes, including better public transit and an enhanced pedestrian environment.
- **Paid Parking:** Survey results show that stakeholders expressed concern regarding a potential transition to a paid parking system, citing concerns for businesses and added costs to visiting and enjoying the area. In meetings, there was mixed support for paid parking.
- **Parking Structure:** In the community public meetings, support was voiced for a parking structure.

## Parking Survey

The Parking Survey was launched on June 1, 2023, and was strategically disseminated through various channels to ensure wide and diverse participation. Digital platforms, city channels, and business networks were utilized to reach a broad audience, capturing the perspectives of different community segments. This approach ensured that the survey could gather inputs from a representative cross-section of the community, providing a holistic view of the parking user experience.

The content of the survey was crafted to cover a range of parking-related topics. It aimed to gauge the community's preferences for parking locations, gather opinions on parking costs, and understand views on parking enforcement mechanisms. These areas were chosen to provide comprehensive insights into the various facets of parking that affect the daily lives of residents, visitors, and business owners in South Cape.

Survey responses offered valuable, data-driven insights into the community's perceptions and preferences regarding parking (**Appendix 2**). These findings are instrumental in shaping the recommendations and strategies of the Parking Management Plan. By understanding the community's needs and concerns related to parking, the plan's recommendations are tailored to address these issues effectively and efficiently. This survey, therefore, plays a critical role in ensuring that the parking strategies developed are aligned with the actual needs and preferences of South Cape.

### Survey Key Results:

**63%**
Age 35 and up

**62%**
Visit on weekend p.m.

**81%**
Visit by car

**31%**
Prefer to use on-demand vehicle

**38%**
Prefer bikes, golf carts, transit, or ride-share

**66%**
Trouble finding parking

**42%**
Trouble near destination

**79%**
Would walk up to 2 blocks

**74%**
Not willing to pay for parking

**58%**
Support improvements

## Implications for the Parking Management Plan:

The extensive stakeholder engagement process and the comprehensive parking survey conducted for South Cape have played a pivotal role in shaping the Parking Management Plan. These efforts have provided a wealth of insights, leading to several key implications for the development of the plan:

- **Integrated Parking Solutions:** The feedback gathered emphasizes the need for a balanced approach that not only increases parking spaces but also enhances overall mobility options. This dual focus aims to cater to the varied needs of the community, acknowledging that an effective parking strategy involves more than just adding parking spaces. It's about creating a cohesive system that facilitates ease of movement and access within the South Cape area.
- **Equitable and Inclusive Strategies:** The plan also underscores the necessity of developing parking strategies that are equitable and accessible to all people, including those with disabilities.



This involves creating parking solutions that are physically accessible and adopting pricing models that are financially equitable. The aim is to ensure that parking facilities and services are inclusive and consider the diverse needs of the entire community.



In summary, the stakeholder engagement and parking survey processes have been integral in guiding the development of a Parking Management Plan that is responsive to the diverse needs and expectations of the South Cape community. The plan aims to provide integrated, technologically advanced, equitable, and inclusive parking solutions, which reflect the community's aspirations for more efficient and user-friendly parking.
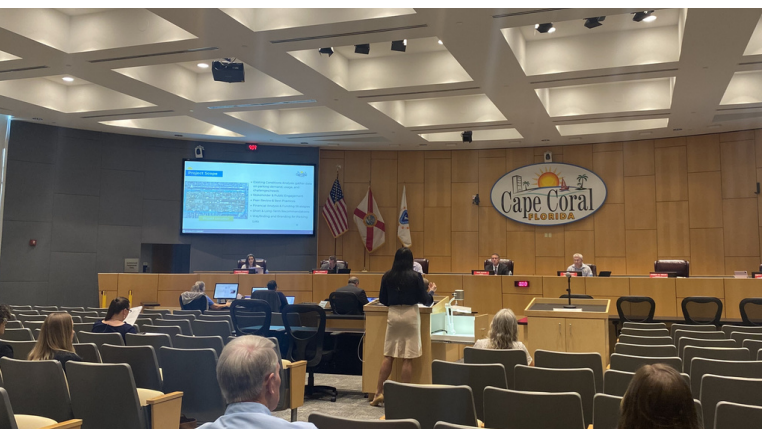
# Issue Analysis

## Identification of High-Priority Issues

The analysis and methodology outlined in the previous sections of this report were used to identify high-priority issues that must be addressed to improve the parking experience in South Cape.

**Induced Parking Demand from the Availability of Free Parking:** South Cape's existing urban environment is a result of a city-wide system of policies, land use practices and design decisions that did not originally contemplate mobility and accessibility beyond the car. The city's origins as a predominately residential pre-platted community currently isolates car use as the only viable means of travel to and from the area. As South Cape emerges as a renewed commercial entertainment district, the provision of free public and private surface parking lots that provides convenient accessibility to cars has facilitated an increased demand for vehicle parking that the city struggles to address.

Half of the district's land area is currently dedicated to free, surface parking, yet there is still a perception from the community that parking availability is an issue. If the city continues to facilitate new parking capacity through surface parking lots, this would not only be costly, but the area would face a grave loss of land with revenue-generating potential to spur economic growth.

**Inefficient Utilization of Parking Spaces:** While there is a perception of a lack of parking in South Cape, the district offers a total of 7,308 parking spaces in a small area of approximately 0.16 square miles. Almost 75% of this parking is private, highlighting a notable imbalance in utilization. Although the area offers a mix of businesses and activities that attract customers and patrons at different times throughout the day, many private businesses provide exclusive parking that sits unused when businesses are closed. Additionally, with no curb regulations to encourage turnover, vehicles can park in front of businesses or in the city's public parking lots for extended times.

**Lack of Parking Regulations and Enforcement**: While standard parking regulations are in place, the city lacks parking regulations that are tailored to the needs of South Cape. There is inconsistent enforcement of the standard regulations because the city does not have a dedicated parking enforcement officer and this responsibility falls on the police department. This leads to illegal parking practices such as parking in fire lanes and handicapped spots without permits and the blocking of driveways. Additionally, the lack of enforcement has allowed recurring violations, illegal parking practices, vehicle abandonment, and a general culture of non-compliance with parking rules.

**Funding Parking Improvements:** The city does not have a dedicated fund for parking improvements and does not currently take advantage of certain available financial tools that could aid in raising revenue for such improvements. While the South Cape CRA can implement improvements through tax increment financing (TIF), these funds are applied to a variety of improvements in the CRA and cannot be expected to cover the full cost of parking improvements needed.

**Lack of a Quality Multimodal Environment:** Every car trip begins and ends with parking and the demand for parking is entirely impacted by how people chose to travel to, from, and around South Cape. The lack of safe and convenient multimodal facilities, multimodal parking, and bicycling and pedestrian amenities discourage the use of alternative transportation modes for people in South Cape. Lack of landscaping, streetscape, shade tree-lined sidewalks, and pedestrian lighting reduce the distance people are willing to walk from their parking spot to their destination, preventing the facilitation of a mobility-centric environment that would not only address parking, but would aid in addressing larger issues of equity, safety, and transportation deficiencies. This, in turn, leads to high vehicle use and puts pressure on the demand for vehicle parking. The use of scattered surface parking prevents organized pedestrian 'flow' and the city's current land development regulations prevent smaller lot frontages and other people-friendly design features that would facilitate an urban feel.

**Future Parking Capacity:** The city is pursuing aggressive infill and redevelopment in the South Cape area and has already made improvements in the district in anticipation of this redevelopment, namely the 47th Terrace



streetscape improvement project. As activity in the area increases, there will be a need to increase parking capacity in the future. With increased activity, land values will also increase, and free surface parking will no longer be the best use for this valuable land. In recognition of this, the city will need to plan for a future vertical parking structure to provide new parking capacity. This strategy for new parking capacity would facilitate a park once environment where residents, employees, and visitors can park in a parking structure and use alternative modes of transportation to access destinations within the district. This, in turn, will improve pedestrian activity and facilitate the growth of a vibrant entertainment district.

# Peer City Review & Best Practices

## Peer City Review

The Peer City Review (**Appendix 8**) focused on the cities of Fort Myers, Sarasota, and West Palm Beach. The review is aimed at understand each city's approach to parking management and to determine the applicability of these strategies to South Cape's context. These cities were selected for their commuting patterns, demographic similarities, and range of progress in parking. During the evaluation, several similarities and differences emerged.

Each city has a notable population of older residents, and in terms of racial demographics, 'White alone' is predominant. However, Cape Coral has a comparatively lower percentage of Black or African American residents. A common thread across these cities is the car-centric commute pattern, which underscores the importance of efficient parking management systems.

## City of Fort Myers:

- Offers on-street parking with coin-only mechanical meters and smart meters.
- Three parking garages in Fort Myers are managed by third parties with rates capped at $5 per day.
- The city implements a zone-based time management policy to encourage parking turnover.
- Many restaurants offer valet parking to patrons.
- EV charging stations are provided in parking lots throughout the downtown
- Downtown is serviced by LeeTran's fixed route bus and the seasonal River District Trolley which provides mobility for visitors throughout the downtown and to/from Cape Coral.
- The city fosters a welcoming bicycle and pedestrian environment with traffic calming measures and various pedestrian amenities.

### City of West Palm Beach:

- Features a structured parking system with paid on-street parking and garages.
- The city utilizes Park Mobile for parking payments and offers valet services managed by One Parking.
- The city implemented parking reforms, eliminating parking minimums in certain districts.
- The city also promotes multimodal travel with micromobility hubs and a microtransit system.
- The city utilizes a high-quality wayfinding system with gateway signage and directional signage throughout, parking lot branding, and an informational online website.

### City of Sarasota:

- Well-organized parking system with a mix of on-street and off-street parking.
- Has a history of paid parking and currently utilizes Park Mobile pay stations.
- The parking system includes special areas for valet parking and discounted monthly employee permits.
- The city used 75% of meter revenue and a special assessment to fund the construction of a parking garage.
- The city focuses on pedestrian-friendly environments and offers a trolley service to reduce parking demand.
- The city utilizes shared parking strategies in private parking garages.
- The city provides a shared bicycle system to travel around downtown.



**Insights from the Peer City Review offer valuable guidance for South Cape's parking management, highlighting the need for innovative, communicative, and inclusive strategies.**

# Best Practices for Parking Management

A review of best practices in parking management  highlighted several best practices that are applicable to South Cape:

- **Dedicated Parking Management:** Assigning full-time personnel to oversee parking operations.
- **Time Management Policies:** Encouraging parking turnover through time-restricted parking zones.
- **Maintenance and Special Use Provisions:** Regular maintenance of parking areas and provisions for special user spaces.
- **Employee and Visitor Parking Zones:** Differentiating parking areas for employees and visitors.
- **Parking Enforcement:** Establishing systems for monitoring and enforcing parking rules.
- **Education and Communication:** Conducting campaigns to educate users about parking rules and alternative transportation.
- **Branding & Wayfinding:** Branding of public parking lots and wayfinding signage direct traffic flow to preferred locations and create a sense of place.
- **Alternative Mobility Options:** A variety of mobility choices through shared mobility, mictotransit circulators, and bicycle infrastructure decreases parking demand and reduces congestion.
- **Pedestrian Environment:** The use of traffic calming measures and pedestrian amenities creates a welcoming environment that encourages walking.

The review brought to light several best practices pertinent to parking management. These include the need for dedicated personnel to oversee parking operations and effective wayfinding systems for ease of navigation. Time management policies, regular maintenance, and provisions for special user spaces were identified as crucial elements for an efficient parking system. Additionally, the review underscored the importance of parking enforcement, the adoption of smart payment technologies, and the role of educational campaigns in informing users about parking rules and alternatives to car travel.

Adapting these best practices from similar urban environments is crucial for addressing the unique challenges and opportunities in South Cape. The review not only informed the development of the Parking Management Plan but also sets a benchmark for creating an accessible, user-friendly, and sustainable parking landscape.

# Proposed Recommendations

The South Cape Parking Management Plan proposes a multifaceted strategy to enhance the parking experience as part of a larger comprehensive vision for mobility in the South Cape (**Appendix 9**). Central to the plan is the introduction of a Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Program with a fee structure, which obligates developers to contribute toward mitigating the impact of new developments on the transportation system. Additionally, a Mobility Fee is recommended to supplement TDM revenue to fund multimodal improvements, including improvements to parking. The adoption of a TDM Program and Mobility Fee creates two new city-controlled streams of revenue that the city has not previously utilized.

To augment these funds, the plan also recommends exploring various grant opportunities from federal, state, and private sources, specifically targeted at parking and mobility projects. Public-Private Partnerships (PPP) are also identified as a vital component to finance, develop, and manage parking facilities, leveraging private sector expertise and resources.

Finally, the plan recommends a phased approach to introducing a paid parking system in the long-term, starting with special events and gradually expanding to a comprehensive system.

As infill redevelopment occurs and the areas sees an increase in activity, paid parking would assist in managing increased parking demand and generate consistent revenue.

Implementation of these recommendations involves amending the Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Regulations to incorporate new policies. This is complemented by the implementation of a Wayfinding & Branding Plan to improve navigation, accessibility, and placemaking. Critical to the management of these initiatives are the new roles of the Mobility Program Manager and Coordinator, in overseeing various aspects of parking and mobility programs. The plan also looks toward the future with a comprehensive corridor study for Cape Coral Parkway, considering repurposing parking spaces and enhancing the thoroughfare's functionality.

The introduction of parking fees based on demand, the development of parking structures and mobility hubs, and ongoing policy and infrastructure development are envisioned to create a vibrant, efficient, and user-friendly parking and mobility system in South Cape.

# Policies, Programs & Projects

The South Cape Parking Management Plan encompasses a comprehensive framework of policies, programs, and projects. Detailed plan recommendations are provided in **Appendix 9.**

## Policies

The plan introduces a suite of innovative policies, drawing on successful models from peer cities and industry best practices. These include revising parking standards to eliminate minimum requirements and setting vehicle parking maximums, tailored to cater to an enhanced pedestrian environment. The Surface Parking and Curbside Management Policy introduces Flex Zones and varied parking durations to encourage turnover and accessibility.

A Shared Parking Policy streamlines how businesses can share parking spaces, enhancing efficiency. A Parking Management Policy is proposed to oversee parking and transportation coordination, complemented by a comprehensive Parking Enforcement Policy for effective rule enforcement.

An updated Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Policy encourages alternative transportation modes, and a "Park Once" Environment Policy aims to integrate various transport modes seamlessly. Additionally, a Mobility Plan and Fee, along with a Parking Enterprise Fund Policy, are suggested for strategic planning and financial management of parking-related activities.

## Programs

The strategic programs include a Transportation Demand Management Program (TDM), featuring initiatives like public awareness campaigns and commuter incentives to reduce traffic and promote sustainable transport. The Parking Education & Digital Engagement Program aims to inform residents and visitors about efficient parking practices. Discounted Ride-Share Rides during peak hours and special events, a Shared Mobility program for bicycle and scooter systems, and Designated Employee Parking Program are all part of the plan. Additionally, a Valet Parking Program and Green Parking Initiatives, focusing on expanding electric vehicle charging stations, are proposed.

## Projects

Key projects under the plan align with a park once vision for the district. Policies, programs, and projects in the South Cape Parking Management Plan are intricately linked, with each element reinforcing and enabling the others. Policies provide the necessary legislative framework and strategic direction, programs offer actionable steps to implement the policies, and projects materialize the vision and goals outlined in both policies and programs.

A Valet Parking Pilot enhances the visitor experience with convenient services during events. The Wayfinding & Branding Plan focuses on improving navigation, while the Surface Parking and Curb Management project aims to optimize curbside space. Additional bicycle parking infrastructure, the 'Current' circulator service, and the transition to trash compactors in parking lots are also included.

Furthermore, the development of mobility hubs and construction of a multifunctional future parking structure are envisioned.

This cohesive approach ensures that each aspect of parking and mobility management is addressed comprehensively. The success of the plan hinges on this all-encompassing strategy, as it allows for a balanced and effective transformation of the South Cape's transportation and parking landscape. The integrated nature of these components is critical in realizing the plan's goals of a vibrant, accessible, and sustainable urban environment. It's an "all or nothing" scenario, where the absence of any one component could undermine the effectiveness and potential success of the overall plan.
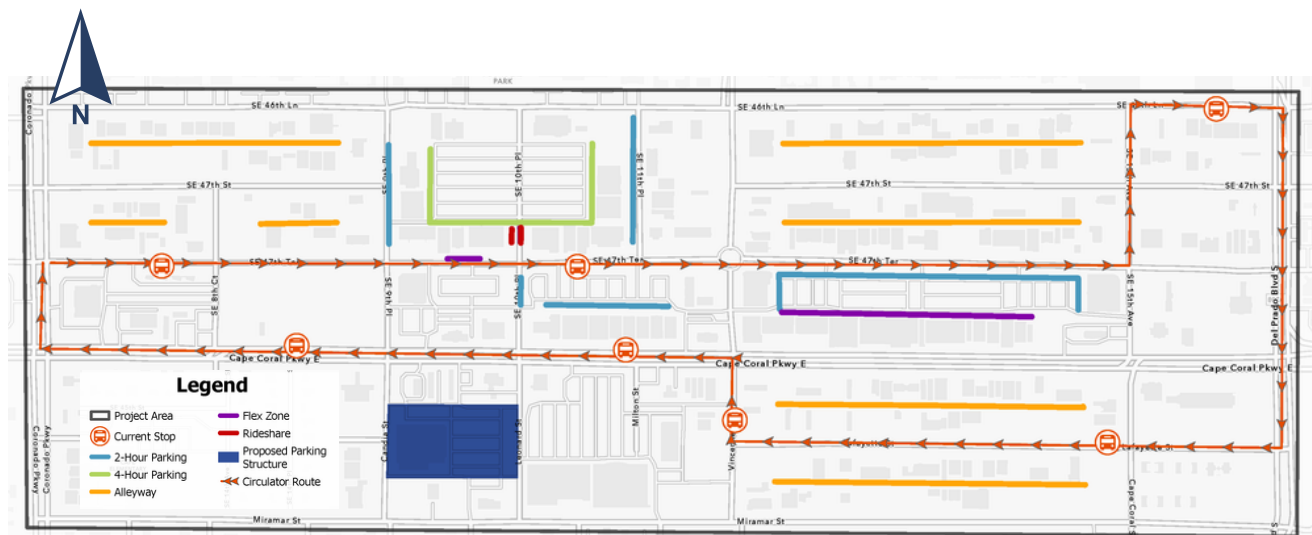


**Proposed Surface Parking and Time Management Changes**

## Branding and Wayfinding



The Cape Coral Wayfinding & Branding Report (**Appendix 10**) outlines a comprehensive strategy for improving navigation and establishing a unique identity for South Cape. The focus is on enhancing the user experience for residents and visitors by addressing current wayfinding challenges and introducing effective branding. Key issues identified include inconsistent signage, difficulties in parking lot identification, lack of branding, poor visibility of existing signage and regulations, insufficient parking directional signs, and lack of destination signs leading to a reliance on informal parking lot naming conventions.

The project's scope encompasses developing two branding concepts for public parking lots, integrating logos, colors, and typography. The branding package aims to contribute significantly to placemaking and to enhancing South Cape's identity. The project process involved stages like kickoff meetings, stakeholder engagement, site analysis use of GIS mapping, and design development of a wayfinding system.

The goal is to streamline navigation, increase business visibility, and cultivate inviting public spaces, thereby enriching the urban environment of South Cape.

The methodology included creating a "sea vs. land" branding strategy, gathering community feedback, and finalizing the branding concept for city council approval. Public engagement strategies included social media, surveys, and press releases to ensure community involvement in the branding process.

LAND VS. SEA



SOUTH CAPE

SOUTH CAPE

Key wayfinding challenges, such as signage inconsistency and lack of parking lot identity, highlight the need for a more user-friendly, branded wayfinding system. The report proposes unique branding identities for each parking lot, inspired by natural and cultural elements, with distinct logo marks for easy identification.

The wayfinding design recommendations include developing distinct branding identities for seven parking lots and future structures, reflecting South Cape's unique characteristics. Each lot is associated with a specific logo mark, enhancing recognition and contributing to a cohesive branding strategy. The report emphasizes the importance of effective wayfinding and branding in creating a seamless, inviting atmosphere, which reinforces South Cape's reputation as a vibrant, urban destination.

# Funding Strategies for Parking Improvements

The South Cape Parking Management Plan encompasses a diverse range of funding mechanisms, which are key to the successful implementation of its parking and mobility initiatives. These recommendations focus on establishing a sustainable financial model for the parking system.



- **Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Program with Fee Structure:** This program involves developers contributing to the TDM fund, which is used to mitigate the impact of new developments on transportation infrastructure and promote sustainable mobility options. It is an innovative approach that encourages alternative transportation modes and supports the City's mobility initiatives.
- **Mobility Fee:** A one-time fee levied on new or expanded developments to offset their impact on the transportation system. This fee, based on multimodal projects identified in a Mobility Plan, provides flexibility to fund a variety of infrastructure projects, including parking improvements.
- **Grants:** Pursuing federal, state, and private grants for specific parking and mobility projects. These grants can provide significant financial assistance, particularly for capital-intensive projects, and offer opportunities to enhance parking infrastructure and promote sustainable transportation.
- **Public-Private Partnerships (PPP):** Engaging with private entities to fund, develop, and manage parking facilities. PPPs can help expand capital resources and ensure efficient management of parking infrastructure.
- **Parking Enterprise Fund:** Gradually introducing a paid parking system, starting with special events and transitioning into a broader system in the long-term. This would generate a steady revenue stream and encourage responsible parking behavior.

## Next Steps Recommendations

The implementation plan for the South Cape Parking Management Plan involves a sequence of strategic steps to be taken in the near future:

- **Amend Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Regulations:** Incorporate recommended policies and establish a framework for implementing the proposed programs and projects.
- **Implement Wayfinding & Branding Plan:** Develop and install comprehensive signage and digital tools for improved navigation and accessibility in the South Cape area.
- **Create New Parking Management Positions:** Establish new staff roles like Mobility Program Manager and Coordinator to oversee the implementation and management of parking and mobility programs.
- **Initiate Curb Management and Wayfinding Programs:** Develop a curb management program, and implement wayfinding solutions to improve traffic flow and parking discipline.
- **Establish a Parking Enterprise Fund:** Set up a fund for parking operations and improvement projects to ensure proper resource allocation and financial management.

# Future Implementation Plan

The Future Implementation Plan of the South Cape Parking Management Plan is a forward-thinking strategy, which aims to translate the outlined policies, programs, and projects into tangible results over the long-term. This plan is designed to methodically execute the vision of a seamlessly integrated and efficient parking and mobility system. Key aspects include the construction of a state-of-the-art parking facility, functioning both as a parking solution and a mobility hub, to be equipped with modern technologies such as real-time availability tracking and contactless payment systems. The plan also envisions the gradual introduction of a paid parking system, starting with special events and expanding to a parking structure and citywide, to generate a sustainable revenue stream for parking infrastructure.

The long-term plan for South Cape's parking management focuses on:

- **Parking Structure and Mobility Hub:** Construct a multi-purpose parking facility and develop mobility hubs to enhance accessibility and support an integrated multimodal transportation system.
- **Public-Private Partnerships for Parking Infrastructure:** Explore partnerships with private firms for the efficient development and management of parking facilities.
- **Introduction of Parking Fees:** Implement a demand-based parking fee structure to generate revenue for maintaining and improving parking facilities.
- **Cape Coral Parkway Corridor Study:** Undertake a comprehensive study to explore options for repurposing parking spaces and enhancing the corridor's functionality, safety, and appeal.



Another significant component is the establishment of public-private partnerships for the development and management of parking infrastructure to capitalize on private sector efficiency while retaining public control. This holistic approach ensures the alleviation of immediate parking constraints and fosters a conducive environment for sustainable urban development, which ultimately enhances the overall livability and accessibility of the South Cape area.

- **Continued Policy and Infrastructure Development:** Further develop and refine policies and infrastructure projects to support the evolving needs of the South Cape area.

These recommendations represent a comprehensive and forward-looking approach, combining policy development, strategic partnerships, technological integration, and financial strategies to achieve an efficient, sustainable, and user-friendly parking and mobility system in the South Cape area.

# Appendices

SOUTH CAPE PARKING MANAGEMENT PLAN

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One Team. Infinite Solutions

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