

June 6, 2024

To: Community Planning/Local Coastal Program Ad Hoc Committee
From: Richard Stanger, Member
Mark Mack, Member
Subject: Evaluation of Fehr & Peers Parking Study Dated November 2021

Study Purpose:

The Community Plan/Local Coastal Program Ad Hoc Committee was asked by the Venice Neighborhood Council to evaluate the subject report as part of the Committee’s work. Study recommendations are listed in abbreviated bullet form after a review of the Study’s main findings. At the end are those recommendations we feel are the ones the VNC should support as a priority.

The Fehr & Peers Parking Utilization and Transportation Management Strategies Report, Venice Coastal Zone, (the “Study”) was prepared for the City of Los Angeles’ Department of City Planning. Its purpose was “to evaluate existing conditions and determine short- and long-term recommendations to improve parking in the Venice Coastal Zone.” As the Study notes at the outset, these need to be implemented in a manner that maximizes public access to coastal designations. Any changes of parking policy that might negatively affect coastal access will need to be approved by the California Coastal Commission.

Discussion of Study Highlights:

One objective of the Study was to document the existing parking supply and utilization.

The Coastal Zones Parking Supply:

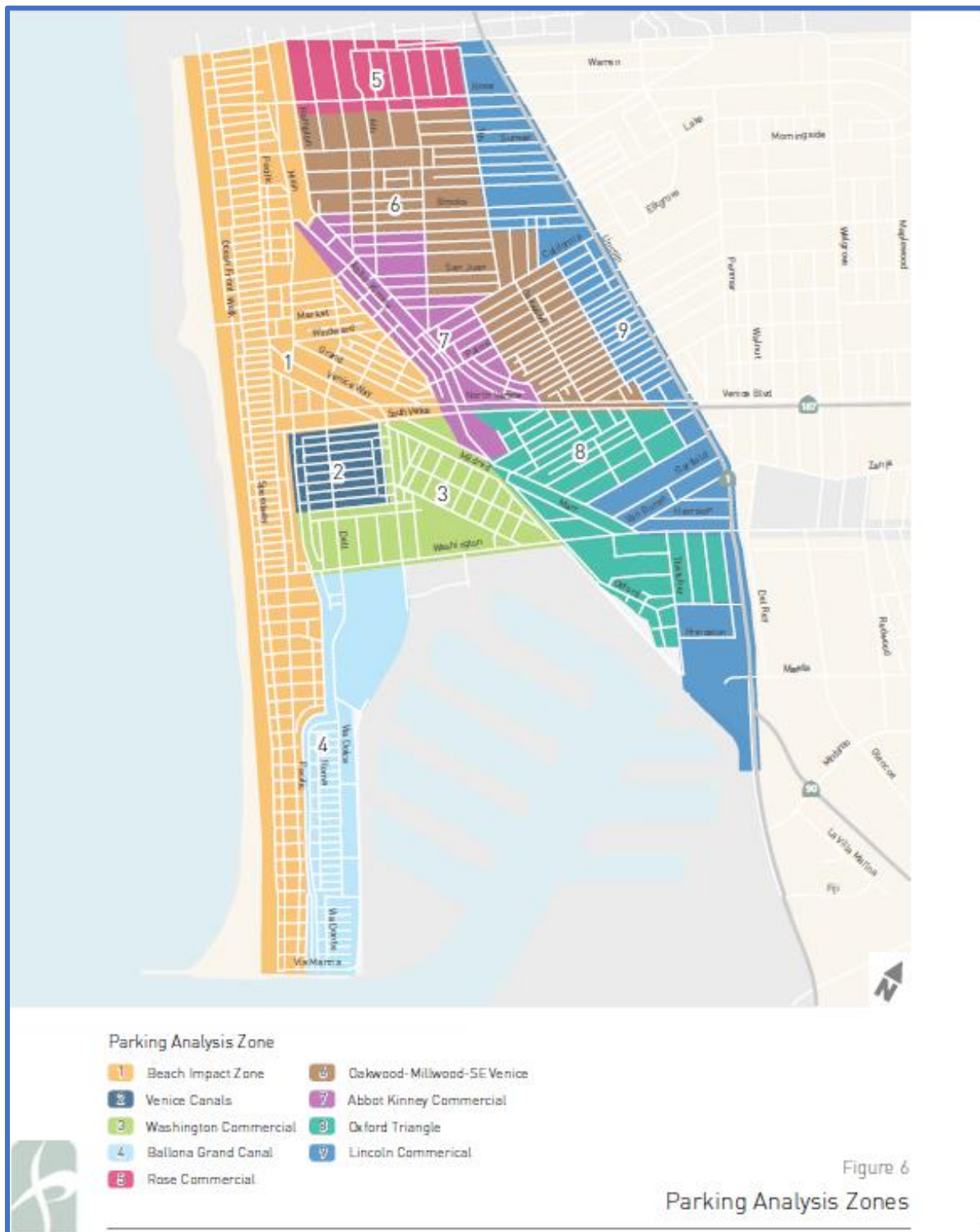
There are a total of 14,291 estimated parking spaces in the Coastal Zone: an estimated 12,157 on-street and a counted 2,134 off-street parking spaces. The on-street spaces were estimated because street parking spaces are not clearly marked. The estimation method seemed appropriate (although 12,157 is a very precise estimate!) The Study’s Table 4 summarizes the supply of parking spaces.

Parking Type	Number of Spaces
On-Street Marked (Metered)	329
On-Street Marked (Not metered)	116
On-Street Unmarked	11,712
On-Street Subtotal	12,157
Off-Street Public Lots	1,563
Off-Street Private Lots	571
Off-Street Lots Subtotal	2,134
Total	14,291

Source: Fehr & Peers, 2019.

Parking Utilization:

Another objective of the Study was to determine parking utilization. To do that The Study divided the Venice Coastal Zone into the nine zones below.



Parking Zones Used in the Study

The Study also focused on four key days of the year. They were:

1. A weekday in May 2018, when area schools were in normal session
2. A weekend in May 2018, when area schools were in normal session
3. A weekday in July 2018, when area schools were out of session
4. A weekend in July 2018, when area schools were out of session

Both the number of cars parking and how long each parked was estimated using Automated License Plate Recognition technology. The methodology and technology used also seemed appropriate. More than four dates might have been better, but given probably cost constraints, the dates arguably capture typical off-season and in-season snapshots of parking use within Venice. It should be noted that the counts were taken before the Covid pandemic, although the Study Report is dated November 2021. For this reason, the data collected probably remain appropriate in 2024.

Table 10: Peak Period On-Street Parking Occupancy and Availability in the Venice Coastal Zone

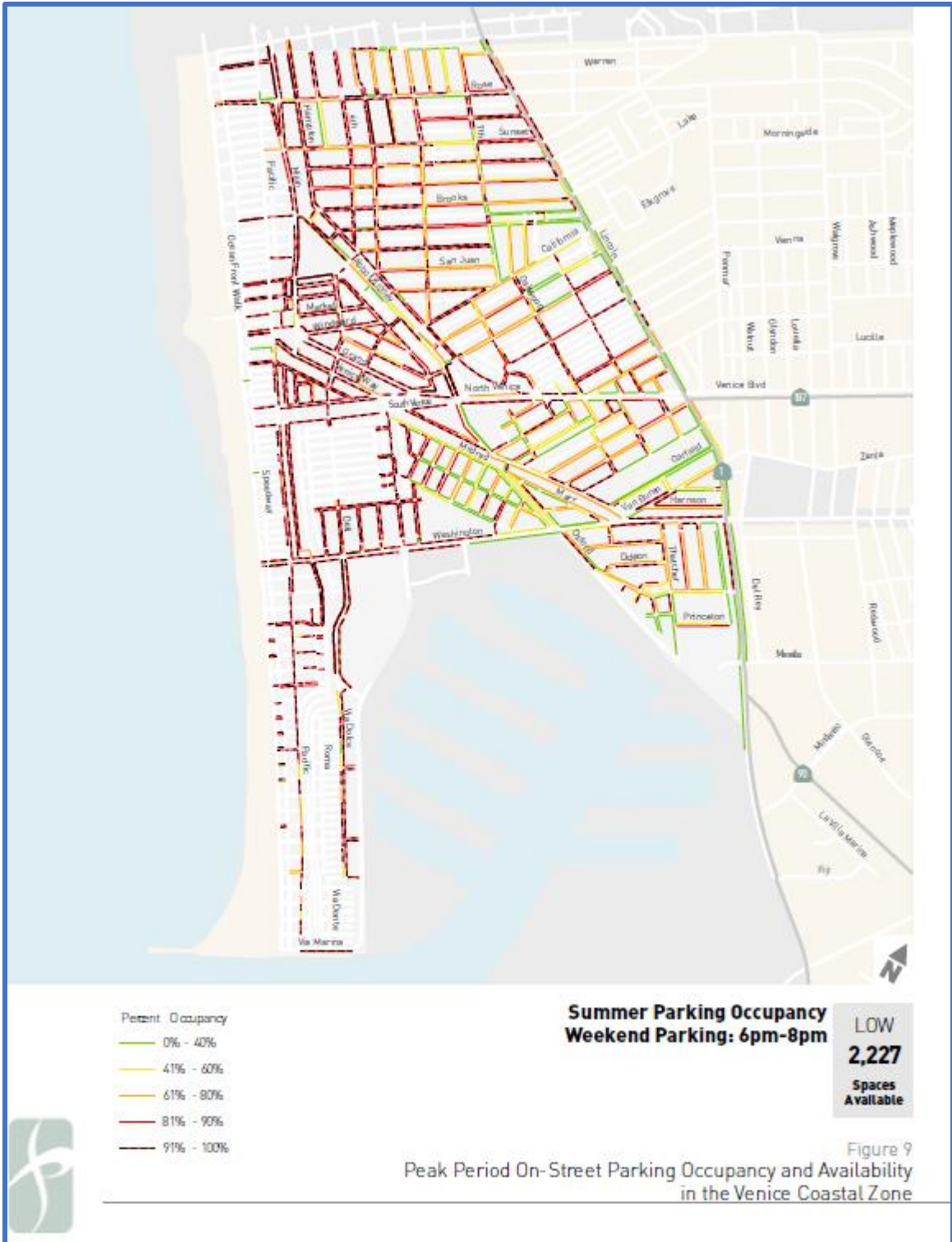
	Non-Summer Weekday	Non-Summer Weekend	Summer Weekend
Occupied Spaces	8,938	9,216	9,875
Total Unrestricted Spaces ¹	11,887	11,826	12,102
Percent	75%	78%	82%
Available	2,949	2,610	2,227
Availability Scenario	Medium Availability	Medium Availability	Low Availability

Notes: 1. The supply of unrestricted spaces changes by time period according to parking restrictions in place on different days of the week.

Source: Fehr & Peers, 2019.

Overall, the Study found that parking utilization is fairly high throughout the year. Along the major streets of Venice the parking utilization throughout the majority of a day approaches 100%, with the exception of Lincoln Blvd. and eastern Washington Blvd. As expected, the closer a residential street is to the beach, the more utilized its parking supply, especially during summer weekends. High parking utilization during then extends east to 7th Street. Abbot Kinney Boulevard and surrounding streets have high parking utilization well into the evening.

Parking used to be seen as a free asset and to be used on a first-come basis. A “parking problem” simply meant inadequate parking supply. Now the focus is on managing the parking supply through parking fees to maximize parking supply. It is in better parking management where parking supply can best be optimized.



**Parking Utilization During Summer Weekend Evenings,
 One of Many Such Figures in the Report**

Parking Constraints and Opportunities:

The Study points out that:

Nearly all on-street parking in the Venice Coastal Zone is free and without time restrictions (aside from scheduled street cleaning). This encourages visitors to spend time circling through residential streets, searching for an available parking space, while publicly owned and operated lots are underutilized. Proper pricing, along with time restrictions, can help manage on-street and off-street parking supplies more efficiently and improve access for everyone.

Time limits are perhaps the simplest way to control the use of on-street parking. In some areas, such as along streets close to commercial areas, parking duration limits would lead to more turnover and more available parking spaces. Off-street parking lots, especially the 11 City lots, could be better managed through higher/lower fees and modified duration limits – and stricter enforcement. Throughout the year as many as 39% of its parking spaces are not utilized. For example LADOT's lots between the Venice Boulevard roadways west of the library (Lots 701 and 731) are severely underutilized because of its high flat fees. Overall, parking meters are few and should be better enforced/managed as the Study found 50% of vehicles violated the meter restrictions.

The Study points out that new technology, such as LA Express Park™, can use real-time data from sensors and mobile technology to better manage the on-street parking supply. LA is installing this technology in Venice and as of 2021 had installed 300 sensors covering 318 parking spaces.¹

Assessment of Travel Behavior of Trips Ending in Venice:

Using GPS and cellphone data, the Study determined where people coming to Venice came from. Santa Monica (21%) and the South Bay (20%) are the origins for many Venice-bound trips on an average weekday. Most trips are for personal and recreational reasons and not for work. All trips to Venice average 8.4 miles on weekdays, 9.4 miles on weekends.

As for Venetian travel behavior, “compared with the City of Los Angeles overall, residents of Venice are twice as likely to walk or work from home, five times as likely to bicycle, nearly half as likely to carpool, and one-fifth as likely to take transit. These figures indicate there is already a higher use of active modes among Venice residents and highlight the potential to shift to non-auto modes for other types of trips. In addition, the low share of transit signals opportunity in this area to provide service that better meets the needs of those in Venice.” (page 53) Vehicle ownership in Venice is higher than the rest of the City, but more households have just one vehicle (48%).

¹ An additional program option recommended for consideration would install meters along all street segments in the Beach Impact Zone, including residential streets, with provision for residents to register their vehicles and obtain permits to park without paying for meters. Such a program has been in place in the city of Hermosa Beach for several decades. Residents and employees who work within the Beach Impact Zone can obtain permits to park at the so-called “yellow post” meters without paying.

Parking Space Requirements for New Developments:

The Venice Coastal Zone is required to have more parking spaces per residential unit than almost any other southern California coastal community. It also has the highest number of required spaces per square foot of commercial, office, and restaurant uses. The Study notes that since these parking space requirements were adopted, alternatives like Uber, Lyft, electric scooters, bicycle lanes, etc., have created downward pressure on parking requirements. All that required off-street parking also makes walking less attractive as pedestrians have to navigate across driveways and look at parking space after parking space.

Therefore the Study recommends that parking requirements be relaxed for the most categories of uses, but only those for residential uses are shown in Table 34 (the full list is in the report):

Table 34: Automobile Parking Requirements (Potential Updates and Existing)

Land Use Type	Potential Updates Venice Coastal Zone ²⁵	Existing Venice Coastal Zone (2004 Specific Plan)
Residential Uses		
Single Family Dwelling, except as listed below:	2/du	2/du
Single Family Dwelling in Silver Strand	3/du	3/du
Single Family Dwelling in Venice Canals	3/du	3/du
Single Family Dwelling with lot width > 40 ft	3/du	3/du
Multi-family Dwelling, as listed below:		
1-2 Habitable Rooms	1/du	2/du + 0.25/du for guests
3 Habitable Rooms	1.5/du	2/du + 0.25/du for guests
4+ Habitable Rooms	2/du	2/du + 0.25/du for guests
Accessory Dwelling Unit*	1/du	---

Evaluating The Parking In-Lieu Fee Program:

This program allows business owners and developers to pay a fee instead of physically providing the required parking spaces. Cities typically use in-lieu fees to provide shared parking, subsidize shuttle services, or implement effective parking management strategies. The present fee is \$18,000 per parking space set in 1999 (and worth \$25,300 in today's dollars). Since 2002 until October 2020, there have been 56 spaces not built and in-lieu fees totaling \$1,082,000 collected. However, by 2021 only \$386,000 has been spent and \$694,000 remains to be spent. Projects completed have been 116 parking spaces along Electric Avenue and two added small LADOT public lots on City-owned properties.

The Study notes that the average cost to provide a publicly-provided, above-ground parking now averages \$36,500. It recommends that the in-lieu fee be raised to that amount and that it have an automatic annual adjustment. Because of the exceptional cost of land, in-lieu fees should not be used to build public lots on privately-owned property. Instead the Study recommends the in-lieu fees be used (among other

alternatives): to place metered parking in the beach lots and/or have valet parking at beach lots; place meters in four LADOT lots; convert parallel parking to diagonal parking on Grand Boulevard between Windward Circle and Cabrillo Avenue; install wayfinding signage; and upgrade bicycle lanes and pedestrian facilities.

However, the \$36,500 one-time fee may be too large for many smaller businesses. The Study therefore recommends replacing the in-lieu fee with a Parking Credit Fee of \$1,800 per space per year to be used by businesses for up to 100% of their required spaces (but not more than 25% of the total "credit pool" per business). The size of this "credit pool" that would be available under the program would be based on the number of parking spaces not used during the busiest summer weekend days in publicly-owned off-street lots. (The Study estimated a pool at that time of 98 spaces.) The fee would be reset annually and bi-annually for the number in the available pool.

Parking Benefit District:

The Study notes that the City of Los Angeles has approved a Parking Benefit District pilot program, which will help identify best practices. It states that the Venice Coastal Zone is an ideal setting for a because of its unique character and the many tourists who come from across the world. Revenues from parking meters and fees would be collected and reinvested within Venice for better management of parking assets, enforcement, and more smart parking meters, etc.² Establishing a Parking Benefit District should be a priority of the VNC. (See Recommendations section at end.)

Overall Study Recommendations:

The Study includes a number of recommendations and it would be worthwhile reviewing them starting at page 71 of the Study. Below is a bullet point summary of only some of them grouped by category.

General:

- Encourage walking, bicycling and other active modes within Venice.
- Consider ways to increase transit within Venice, both regional services and local access services.
- Install wayfinding signage at entrance roadways to Venice to guide drivers to off-street beach parking lots and metered parking streets. Pedestrian signage should also be provided to help them walk to key destinations. These signs should be consistent in style, branding, and be adequately sized.
- Near the beach and on Abbot Kinney, designate pick-up and drop-off locations that are adequately-sized and signed to limit double-parking that interferes with traffic.

² Nearby cities with PBDs include Pasadena, Ventura, and San Diego.

Street Parking:

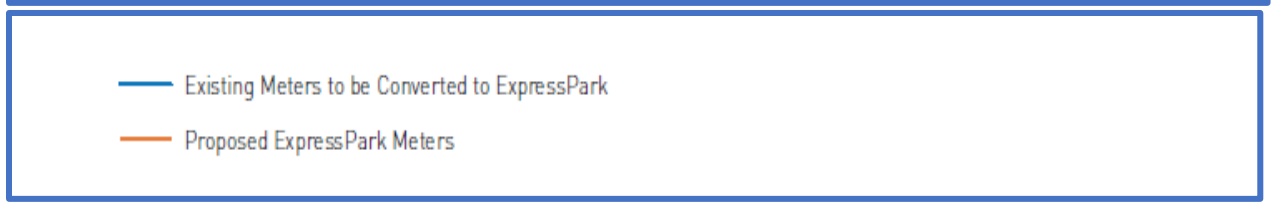
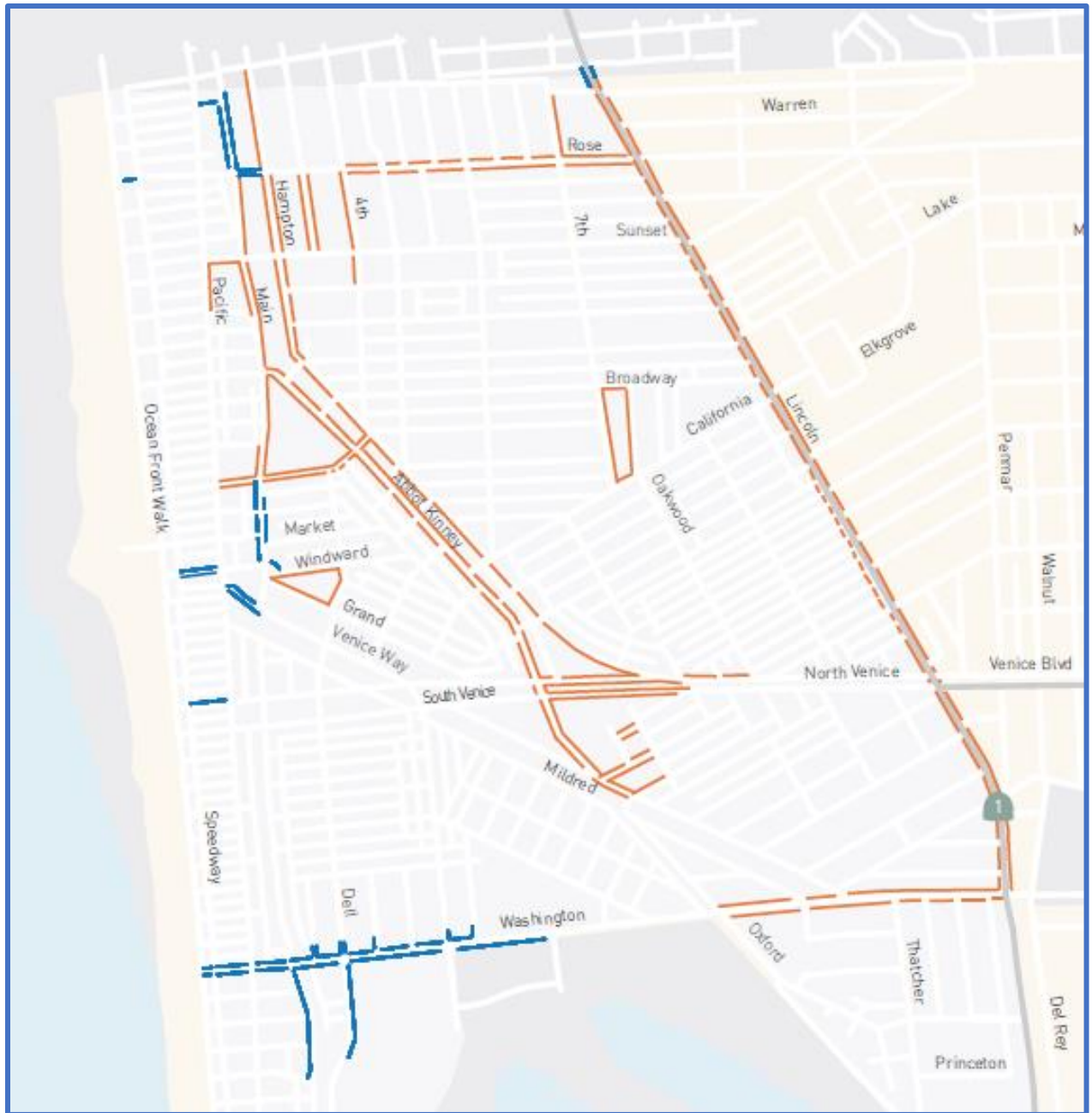
- Price on-street parking according to demand. Incentivize short-term use of on-street parking and longer-term use of off-street parking. Encourage visitors and employees to use off-street parking.
- Implement diagonal parking on wide streets like Grand Boulevard.
- Establish a Preferential Parking Program to exempt permit holders in residential areas from metered parking fees in certain areas.

Off-Street Parking:

- LADOT parking spaces are poorly managed. Even at peak times on summer weekends there are still 500 spaces available. Private parking lots charge more with more dynamic fee schedules than public lots.
- Establish hourly rates for better use of underutilized public lots; current beach parking incentivizes all-day parking with high flat fees.
- Consider valet parking at beach lots and allow (at-grade) stacking of parking.

Parking Management:

- Consider creating a Parking Benefit District to keep parking revenue local.
- Consider establishing a Parking Credit Program instead of the one-time, in-lieu parking fee for businesses.
- Provide LA Express Park meters on all street segments that are not along residential property frontage. The Study lists 29 specific street segments to be included as shown in Figure 20, below. LA Express Park provides drivers with real-time information to guide vehicles to available parking spaces.
- Set a goal to have LA Express Park meters on all streets in the Beach Impact Zone with provisions for residents to obtain permits to park without having to pay the meters. Such a program has been in place in the city of Hermosa Beach for several decades.



Study Figure 20: Recommended Streets to be LA Express Park Metered

Recommendations for Committee Discussion and Approval:

The Study points out that a major problem with parking in the Venice Coastal Zone is lack of parking enforcement and poor management of the City's off-street parking lots, in particular the lot between the Venice Boulevard roadways west of Ocean Avenue. It is unclear why this is, if there is any place/person in-charge, or how best to correct the problem. One solution might be for Venice to establish a Parking Benefit District to collect parking revenues in order to, in part, better manage Venice Coastal Zone parking.

We believe there are Study recommendations that should be implemented in the near term. They are:

1. Establish the Venice Coastal Zone as a Parking Benefit District to capture a significant share of parking-related fees to be used within Venice. Priority for funding should be to establish an effective parking management program and better enforcement and wayfinding signage, pedestrian and bicycling improvements.

In Parking Benefits Districts (PBD), revenues from parking meters and fees are collected and reinvested within the district to fund neighborhood improvements. The City of Los Angeles has approved a PBD pilot program, while nearby cities with PBDs include Pasadena, Ventura, and San Diego. The Venice Coastal Zone is an ideal setting for a PBD because of its unique character and the many tourists who come from across the world.

2. Provide LA Express Park meters on all street segments that are **not** along residential property frontage as shown in the Study's Figure 20 above. LA Express Park provides drivers with real-time information to guide vehicles to available parking spaces. The unspent in-lieu parking fees can either fund or help fund this program. The exact locations for LA Express Park meters would be determined with community input, so Figure 20's locations should be seen as recommendations, not the final decision.

In particular, implement LA Express Park metered parking along Abbot Kinney Blvd. and near the beach that would charge more and have shorter time limits so that more plentiful off-street metered parking becomes more attractive.

3. Re-orient all Grand Blvd. parking to diagonal spaces to increase the supply of parking near the beach. Doing this will yield about 90 additional parking spaces. Other similar streets could be made one-way to allow for more, diagonal parking spaces. Angled on-street parking already exists in Venice and more use of it should be made where street widths allow.
4. Valet parking operations can increase the supply of parking for visitors. The County-operated lots located on the beach at Rose Avenue, Venice Boulevard, and Washington Boulevard currently operate at over 80% occupancy from 10 am to 6 pm on summer weekends. Reserving some portion of the lots for valet parking would further increase parking supply in all three of the beach lots.

5. Establish drop-off and pick-up locations along Abbot Kinney and near the beach to lessen double-parking that interferes with traffic flow.
6. Install wayfinding signage at entrance roadways to Venice to guide drivers to off-street beach parking lots and metered parking streets. Pedestrian signage should also be provided to help them walk to key destinations. These signs should be consistent in style, branding, and be adequately sized. Their design might be solicited from Venice's designers.
7. As part of the updating of the Venice Community Plan and Land Use Plan, adopt the recommendations for required parking ratios as stipulated by the consultant. Venice has higher parking requirements than many other coastal communities.
8. The present in-lieu fees need to be raised substantially to the average cost of providing above-ground parking. Yet more than doubling the fee will be too high for many businesses. The Study consultants suggest implementing a Parking Credit Program. Setting up such a program is a fairly complicated affair, and it is not clear how it would be managed. Nevertheless, it is something Venice should consider implementing.

Appendix

Below are more details on some of the recommendations:

Pricing and Payment Strategies

Parking pricing and payment technologies can aid in the management of parking. The price of parking is an important factor of any parking management program. Nearly all on-street parking in the Venice Coastal Zone is free and without time restrictions (aside from scheduled street cleaning). This encourages visitors to spend time circling through residential streets, searching for an available parking space, while publicly owned and operated lots are underutilized. Proper pricing, along with time restrictions, can help manage on-street and off-street parking supplies more efficiently and improve access for everyone.

LA Express Park™ is an enhanced parking meter program that uses real-time data from sensors and mobile technology to better manage on-street parking supply. In the Venice Coastal Zone, approximately 300 sensors covering 318 parking spaces have been installed. Of those 318 parking spaces, 187 are single space parking meters and 131 are pay station spaces. LADOT is currently implementing LA Express Parking in Venice.

An additional program option recommended for consideration would install meters along all street segments in the Beach Impact Zone, including residential streets, with provision for residents to register their vehicles and obtain permits to park without paying for meters. Such a program has been in place in the city of Hermosa Beach for several decades. Residents and employees who work within the Beach Impact Zone can obtain permits to park at the so-called “yellow post” meters without paying.

Parking Benefits District

In Parking Benefits Districts (PBD), revenues from parking meters and fees are collected and reinvested within the district to fund neighborhood improvements, such as street sweeping, tree planting and trimming, sidewalk and street repair, and street lighting, signage and signalization. The City of Los Angeles has approved a PBD pilot program, which will help identify best practices for the city’s diverse neighborhoods and commercial districts. Nearby cities with PBDs include Pasadena, Ventura, and San Diego. The Venice Coastal Zone is an ideal setting for a PBD because of its unique character and the many tourists who come from across the world.

Angled On-Street Parking

Angled parking presents an opportunity to increase parking supply using the city’s existing streets. Some design requirements and recommendations exist, but there are options in designing and implementing angled parking, including the degree of angle. Front-in angled parking exists along portions of Rose Avenue, Windward Avenue, and Washington Boulevard in the Venice Coastal Zone.

Converting to angled parking on Grand Boulevard could add an additional **87 on-street parking** spaces where demand is among the highest while maintaining the existing bike lanes.

Parking Credit Program

Parking credits are a land use entitlement that allow new and expanding businesses (or, potentially, residences) to satisfy code-required parking by identifying a pool of actual public or private spaces as surplus or underutilized inventory and then selling parking credits to utilize the pool of parking. The number of active credits is determined by regular occupancy surveys taken at parking facilities in designated districts. Active parking credits are then monitored, subtracting the number of parking credits sold from the number of credits available in each district. A parking credits program, if priced right, could address one of the shortcomings of an existing in-lieu fee program by providing an option for businesses to pay a smaller one-time fee along with an annual fee.