

# Downtown Parking Garage

## Frequently Asked Questions

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- 1. How many total parking spaces will be in the garage and how many will be “net” new parking spaces?**

*The total number of spaces will ultimately be determined with the final design of the garage. In this early stage of concept, we anticipate approximately 200 parking spaces in the new garage. There are 47 existing parking spaces, with 29 north of the old Municipal Court and 18 east of Galaxy Bakery. We anticipate approximately 150 “net” new parking spaces.*

- 2. Will it cost money to park in the garage?**

*The City does not intend to charge for parking in the garage during the first few years, but may choose to charge or limit parking during special events (for example, may consider the garage being utilized for ADA parking during festivals). Future Councils may choose to change this policy if needs and demands change in the future.*

- 3. How is it funded?**

*The garage is budgeted at \$5 million, all being funded through debt that is amortized over 20 years. The annual payments of the debt are budgeted to be split between the property tax rate for the entire city tax base at 50% and the Downtown Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone Fund (only downtown properties) at 50%. The Downtown TIRZ is already in place and the revenue comes from existing taxes.*

- 4. What is the tentative schedule?**

*Our preliminary schedule shows:*

<i>24 weeks</i>	<i>Design</i>
<i>18 weeks</i>	<i>HARC/Site/Building Plan Review</i>
<i>8-10 weeks</i>	<i>Bidding and Award</i>
<i>1 Year</i>	<i>Construction</i>

*We are looking at 2 years from the time we award a design contract, which we are hoping to award by the end of this year.*

## **5. Why are we building a garage at this location?**

*The 2014 Downtown Master Plan update recommended the City view parking as a utility versus a land use because it provides a service that customers use. The DMP also identified four potential parking garage locations and recommended that the City initiate a study to study the issue more closely. Of those four locations, only two are owned by the City. The Downtown Parking Study (DPS) was completed in 2015 and studied various locations, including the location currently planned at Main and 6<sup>th</sup>.*

*This location is owned by the City and is conveniently located close to the Square. The smaller scale provides an opportunity to improve current parking inventory as opposed to waiting ten or fifteen years to be able to afford to build the larger structure planned at 9<sup>th</sup> and Main in the future. This location also takes fewer spaces off line during construction than the future, larger location.*

## **6. Is this the only garage the City will ever build?**

*The City will continue to evaluate parking needs for the downtown area, consistent with the parking study and the master plan. This garage is considered the first garage and will likely be followed by a second garage in the future when demands increase. The City is also making other parking improvements, including expanding the Sunflower lot (across from library), which is property the City leases from the County. The County retains the right to build on that lot when their facilities needs drive expansion.*

## **7. Why are we considering a parking garage now?**

*The downtown parking study recommended short, mid and long term solutions. Many of the short term solutions have been implemented, including expanding and enhancing surface parking and increasing enforcement for 3 hour limited parking.*

*The City has seen robust development over the past four years, with 8 new businesses opening in 2019 and 11 more currently in development. As the intensity of use increases for the downtown area, parking needs increase. This garage presents a mid-term parking solution that fits the City budget and addresses parking for the Square in a convenient location. This project is expected to help address the additional parking needs due to increased activity so that visitors are not tempted to utilize on street parking in the adjacent neighborhoods.*

## **8. Where can I park during construction of the parking garage?**

*We encourage visitors to the Most Beautiful Town Square in Texas to find additional parking in one of our many free parking lots downtown.*

- *Red Poppy Lot at 9<sup>th</sup> and Main has 136 parking spaces available*
- *Sunflower Lot at 8<sup>th</sup> and Martin Luther King Jr. St. has 140 parking spaces available*
- *Daisy Lot at 5<sup>th</sup> and Austin has 108 parking spaces available*
- *County Parking Garage at 4<sup>th</sup> and Rock is free and available for public parking*

**9. Will renovations at 101 E. Seventh St., the former Council Chamber and Municipal Court building, affect parking?**

*The City has agreed to provide use of a portion of the property that will become the garage for use during structural enhancements to 101 7<sup>th</sup> St. Staff is communicating regularly with the owner on project schedules. The current project schedule (as of August 2019) for those renovations has needed use of the City's ending property prior to the beginning of the City's project in early summer 2020, so no conflict is anticipated. Staff will continue to coordinate with the building owner to facilitate that schedule, and mitigate any conflicts which may arise if schedules shift.*

**10. What will happen to spaces next to Galaxy Bakery?**

*The 18 parking spaces next to Galaxy Bakery are included in the 47 total spaces for the Bluebonnet Lot. The City is considering the potential future use of this site.*

**11. Provide an update on surface parking lot construction north of Library. Why was a parking garage not built on the County property?**

*The Sunflower Lot is in the process of being expanded by 66 additional parking spaces. Recently the county buildings to the east of the existing parking lot were demolished to make way for the additional parking spaces. We anticipate awarding a construction contract for the parking lot in September and completing construction this Fall.*

*Fortunately the City and County were able to reach a mutually beneficial agreement for the use of the property. The buildings sat empty for a few years and a parking lot is useful for any visitor to our downtown. Since the property is owned by the County and leased by the City, we are unable to build a parking structure on the lot.*

**12. How many spaces were available in downtown in 2015? In 2019?**

*The 2015 Parking study included the Monument Café lot and the North Library parking lot and included 610 lot spaces. With the sale and development of city owned properties, 83 spots were reduced for public use. In addition, 24 spaces were utilized with the development of the Watkins building (on a non-city owned lot that was used by the public).*

*The expansion of the Sunflower lot (currently under construction) will net an additional 66 spaces.*

*The parking garage is expected to increase overall public parking by 153 spaces*

<i>Sale of City Hall</i>	<i>Minus ( - )</i>	<i>19 spaces</i>
<i>Development of Old Library</i>	<i>Minus ( - )</i>	<i>40 spaces</i>
<i>Development of GCAT</i>	<i>Minus ( - )</i>	<i>24 spaces</i>
<i>Development of Grace lot</i>	<i>Minus ( - )</i>	<i>24 spaces</i>
<i>New Parking Garage</i>	<i>Minus ( - )</i>	<i>47 spaces</i>
<i>New Parking Garage</i>	<i>Plus ( + )</i>	<i>200 spaces</i>
<i>Sunflower Lot Expansion</i>	<i>Plus ( + )</i>	<i>66 spaces</i>