

6.0 Downtown Strategies

6.4 Transportation

Goal: Expand diverse and convenient choices for downtown access and mobility.

Objectives:

- Develop a multi-model and interconnected system of parking, circulation, and mobility.
- Incentivize the increase of residential housing within much of the study area through the adaptive reuse of underdeveloped historic buildings as well as through new construction by providing greater flexibility to residential developers in meeting minimum parking standards.
- Strengthen the presence, connectivity, and exploitation of the Deckers Creek Trail facility.
- Pursue satellite parking and shuttle linkages for longer-term and storage parking demand within the downtown.
- Maximize the availability and utilization of high turnover, on-street customer parking.
- Provide improved pedestrian connections between the riverside of University Ave and downtown.
- Provide improved pedestrian connection to access Decker's Creek from the Greenmont and South Park neighborhoods

Actions:

- 6.4.1 Manage access, mobility, circulation, and parking as one interconnected system, coordinated through a collaborative partnership between the City, the County, and private investments while at the same time expanding convenient choices for downtown access, circulation, and mobility.
- 6.4.2 With the assistance and support of the Morgantown Parking Authority, the City should implement an in-lieu of parking fee program for downtown residential developers. Reducing the economic, design, and return-on-investment burden that residential storage-type parking presents to developers should create opportunity for additional housing supply within the downtown. Although there appears to be room for residential growth given the current supply of public parking, the City will need the ability to plan for and fund additional public parking as demand increases from consequential residential growth. Examples of programs that should be studied in developing an effective approach for downtown Morgantown include, but are not limited, to State College, PA; Kirkland, WA; Palo Alto, CA; Berkeley, CA; and, Chapel Hill, NC.



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- 6.4.3 Identify and consolidate parking. As noted during the vision sessions and market survey, there is a perception that there is a lack of and/or an inability to find parking in the downtown. It appears that in some locations of the downtown, parking is adequate but is difficult to locate or identify. Rather than pursue an expensive and currently unnecessary program of adding more parking lots, consistent parking signage and identification of existing lots should be considered.
- 6.4.4 Minimize, where practicable, one-way streets. If downtown Morgantown is going to survive in the long run, traffic engineering must recognize and accommodate downtown revitalization. One-way streets and the loss of on-street parking throughout the downtown is a recipe for decreased pedestrian activity, reduced shoppers, economic decline, and the loss of revitalization opportunities and investment. On-street parking is the gold standard for retailing. Making the downtown easier to navigate will increase the exposure of the retail stores and result in greater sales and a larger, more varied customer base.
- 6.4.5 Study the feasibility of a downtown shuttle; use shuttle services to link parking with major downtown destinations and WVU.
- 6.4.6 Improve the downtown walking network through the upgrading and enhancing the existing alleyways.
- 6.4.7 Update rates, fee collection, lighting, and security in public parking areas. Build operating partnerships among the City, the County and the private sector.
- 6.4.8 Operate satellite park-and-ride and storage parking facilities in partnership with private land owners.
- 6.4.9 Create a bicycle and trails comprehensive plan in order to increase the access to Deckers Creek, which is severely limited and hard to find from downtown and surrounding neighborhoods.

The Creek and its close proximity is an enormous asset to the downtown as a whole and should become the direct link to the River from downtown and surrounding neighborhoods. To meet its full potential, users must have a better feeling of safety, particularly under the University and South High Street Bridges, which can be accomplished through stronger trailheads, wayfinding, improved lighting, and aggressive management and policing of trash, debris, and graffiti.

Another challenge in reaching the full potential of the Trail is the water quality of Deckers Creek, which has been degraded by numerous pollutants. There is already an active local non-profit group called "Friends of Deckers Creek (FODC)" that was started in 1995 in order to work towards remediating the Creek and enable people to "fish by 2010, swim by 2015." The City and the other jurisdictions along Deckers Creek need to take an active interest in the cleanup of the Creek in order to maximize the value and usability of this asset for the current and future generations.

