

“PARKING ONCE” IN OLD PASADENA

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The challenge...

Old Pasadena was on the chopping block in the 1970s

- **Little support for revitalizing Old Pasadena**
- **Very little existing parking in the area**
- **Revitalization models were based on demolition of large blocks and single projects with their own parking**

Building the coalition to save Old Pasadena

- **Mid-1970s:** A citizen-based group joined with business and property owners in Old Pasadena to create a revitalization strategy and to stop demolition plans
- **1981:** Pasadena Redevelopment Agency Board abolished and City Council took over
- **1981:** Revitalization of Old Pasadena now the policy for the City of Pasadena

The Parking Strategy

1. Develop pedestrian-friendly structured parking north and south of Colorado Boulevard
2. Create a “park once” environment where people would walk about 1500 feet from parking to places within Old Pasadena

Parameters for “Park Once”

- Anti-demolition ordinance and design guidelines severely restricted choices for parking locations
- 1983 Downtown Plan for Old Pasadena called for compact, multi-use environment, shared parking and pedestrian-friendly environment
- Parking Assessment District failed in 1981

THE OLD PASADENA PARKING FACILITIES

City Parking Facilities Financing

- Financing Vehicle: City-Backed Certificates of Participation
- Sources of debt service:
 - ✓ Tax increment funds
 - ✓ Rent from garages commercial tenants
 - ✓ Zoning Parking Credit Contracts
 - ✓ Garages net operating income

Zoning Parking Credits

- Contract between City and Private Developers and/or Tenants to claim spaces for building permits and occupancy permits
- Not an “in lieu” program – parking spaces had to be there
- Represents only subsidy to Old Pasadena development: \$50/yr, \$100/yr, then up to \$200/yr. based on CPI

Fair Oaks And Union Parking Facility

- 1986 - Fair Oaks And Union Parking Facility (North of Colorado Blvd.)
- Public-private partnership



Fair and Union “Akbar” Restaurant



De Lacey Avenue Parking Facility

- **1987 – De Lacey Avenue Parking Facility (South of Colorado Blvd.)**
- **City designed, financed, developed, and operated**



“De Lacey’s Club 41” Restaurant



Schoolhouse Block Parking Facility

- 1987 –
Schoolhouse
Block Parking
Facility (South Of
Colorado Blvd.)
- City designed,
financed, built
and operated



Schoolhouse Block “Wilshire Fireplace Shops” Retail



Challenges ...

- Plan initiated by City staff in 1988, but put on hold because of current efforts to form Business Improvement District
- District subsequently formed in 1989
- Decision not to do Plan until dedicated funding source(s) identified
- BID's efforts concentrated on clean and safe, advocacy, and ensuring developers followed design guidelines

Measures of Success by 1993...

- Over 75% of the blocks had been revitalized and over 100 buildings seismically reinforced
- Two multi-screen cinemas and many restaurants and retail shops
- Major retailers – both local, regional and national

The Numbers by 1993...

- Increase in sales volumes from \$10 million in 1983 to \$102 million in 1993
- Increase in tax increment from \$100,000 in 1983 to \$1.2 million in 1993
- Over \$200 million in private investment and \$23 million in public investment
- Increase in rents on Colorado Blvd. from \$.25 in 1983 to \$3 - \$4/ sq. ft. in 1993

Why Parking Meters?

- Free on-street parking was competing against paid garage parking
- On-street parking not managed well re: time limit enforcement
- Employees taking spaces adjacent to businesses
- Source of General Fund revenues

Initial Failure to Install Meters

- Parking meters had never existed in the City
- Free parking at malls and other shopping districts
- National Real Estate recession began in 1991 - Old Pasadena was still fragile
- City's Public Works Department initiated parking meter installation in 1991 with little public involvement

Resolution of Parking Meter Issues

- October 1993 Old Pasadena Visioning Process reaffirmed the initial 1978 Plan for revitalization and public-private coalitions:

Old Pasadena stakeholders – property owners, business owner, residents and City officials – will work together to make the area safe, clean and indeed beautiful, creating an environment friendly to pedestrians yet accessible by both autos and mass transit.

Striking the bargain...

Net revenue from the meters goes to:

- *City's planning and capital costs for the Old Pasadena Streetscapes and Alley Walkway Plan for 20-block area*
- *Old Pasadena BID for clean, safe and maintenance costs of streetscapes and alley walkways*

Meters on the streets

- *The City keeps the parking meter fines*
- *Meter heads show that fees are for District public improvements, safety and maintenance*



THE STREETS
AND ALLEY
WALKWAYS
IMPROVEMENTS

Old Pasadena Streetscapes and Alley Walkways Improvements

- The Process: “Core Group” formed in 1994 of Old Pasadena property owners, businesses, preservation community and City staff to develop plan
- Consultant hired and Plan adopted in July 1995 by City of Pasadena
- GOAL: To enhance “Walkable Urbanity” within Old Pasadena

Elements of the Plan...

- \$5 million in ***physical elements*** such as historic lighting standards, street trees and grates, concrete paving of all alleys, benches, trash receptacles, way finding signs, directories, historical alleys markers, etc.
- \$700,000 in ***annual extraordinary operation and maintenance*** by the BID

Many awards by mid-1990s...

- ❖ INTERNATIONAL DOWNTOWN ASSOCIATION**
- ❖ NATIONAL MAIN STREET CENTER**
- ❖ LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMISSION**
- ❖ LAMBDA ALPHA INTERNATIONAL**
- ❖ PASADENA BEAUTIFUL FOUNDATION**
- ❖ ETC.**

The Numbers by 2005...

- **\$500 m + in private investment**
- **\$ 25 m + in public improvements**
- **\$220 m + in annual sales volume**
- **100 + historic buildings
seismically upgraded**
- **\$2.3 m in annual tax increment**
- **30,000 – 40,000 weekend visitors**

Lessons Learned...

- 1. The goal is to revitalize the district, not to “fix the parking problem”**
- 2. Long-lasting Public-Private-Community partnerships with common goals are critical for long-lasting success**
- 3. “Park Once” policies are workable only within compact, mixed-use districts with active pedestrian life**

Lessons Learned (cont'd)

- 4. “Park Once” garages work best if they include commercial retail and restaurant uses**
- 5. Streetscape improvements are necessary to expand the “walk domain” from “Park Once” garages**
- 6. Extraordinary operation and maintenance is possible only if there is a private-sector based improvement district**

Lessons Learned (cont'd)

- 7. “Park Once’ allows the use to be physically separated from the parking, thereby maximizing shared parking opportunities**
- 8. Financing mechanisms based upon district-generated income are more acceptable**
- 9. Parking meters are more acceptable if there is a clear nexus of benefit and fee**

***THANK YOU FOR
YOUR ATTENTION!***