CAPITAL CITY DEVELOPMENT CORP

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Parking Strategic Plan

APPENDIX F2

ULI Article - Parking as a Catalyst

Kimley»Horn

Expect More. Experience Better.

Parking as Catalyst

GEOFF ADAMS

Parking garages can serve as important catalysts in the preservation or redevelopment of downtown centers. Well-designed, well-located garages can become part of the revitalization of theater and shopping districts, help make downtown housing more attractive, and arrest the flight of retail and customers to suburban malls.

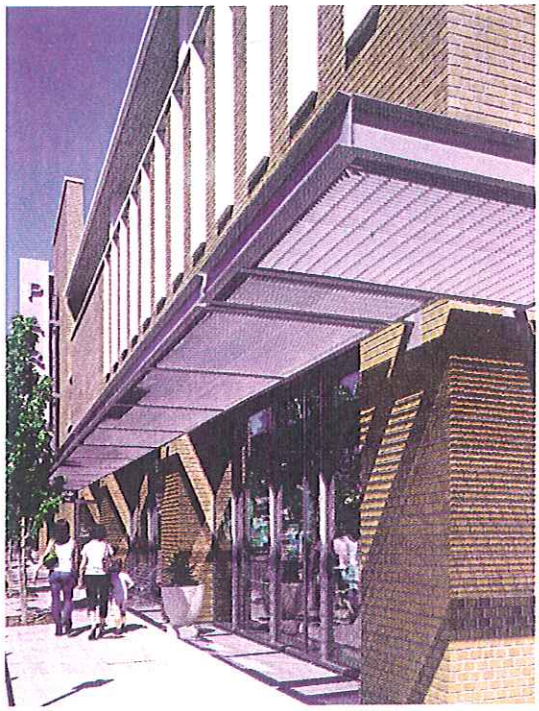
CONTEMPORARY, FUNCTIONAL GARAGES can be an asset to a city and its inhabitants, and can make visiting downtown more appealing. There are three key elements to consider: the driver, the pedestrian, and the context. Older parking structures have tended to focus on the car, the maximal number of spaces per floor, and driving patterns. This leaves out the pedestrian and the context.

A parking structure may be the first and last experience associated with a visit to downtown, so it needs to facilitate the transition from driver to pedestrian, from roadway to streetscape and back again to create a positive experience for those in driver/pedestrian roles. Successful urban parking structures address movement in a way that makes people wish to return.

For pedestrians, two significant considerations are safety and security. A parking garage needs good lighting with no hiding spaces. Structural elements should not block views, so drivers exiting their cars can see exactly where to go to get to the elevator or stairway. Visitors to the urban garage need clear connections that orient them to downtown destinations. The building itself is a sign. Stairway and elevator placement and design should offer these strong connections.

For drivers, tight dimensions, poor maneuverability, or unclear markers as to where and how to turn to find spaces might work for an employee garage or a commuter garage—where people come in early in the morning and know exactly what they have to do to find their parking space—but will not work for shoppers, theatergoers, and other visitors who do not park in a garage regularly. Drivers must be able to easily maneuver through the garage and find parking spaces, which should be generous enough to allow for easy parking.

Parking garages should also address their context. How will the structure be integrated with historic buildings, ongoing developments, and open spaces, while providing enough flexibility to accommodate future growth and changes? Density, traffic, and pedestrian patterns; adjacencies; design guidelines; historic building codes; urban fabric; and neighborhood impact are all important factors to consider. Parking structure design can also involve street and sidewalk enhancements as well as provide related public amenities that reinforce pedestrian vitality, such as parkways, plazas, courtyards, bicycle and commuter facilities, and retail and commercial uses. In addition, the materials used and the scale of the garage in relation to existing buildings are important to consider, as well as the integration of the structure through high-quality design and the incorporation of retail.



MATTHEW MILLMAN

A new parking garage in Petaluma, California, offers 30,000 square feet (2,791 sq m) of ground-floor retail that wraps around the structure and contributes to the surrounding pedestrian environment.

Parking structures are particularly important in redevelopment efforts that seek to bring cinemas back downtown, competing with high-visibility locations near freeways where surface parking is plentiful. The formerly agricultural city of Petaluma, California, created the Theater District redevelopment area in its historic downtown to revitalize a neighborhood full of abandoned or half-abandoned agricultural and light-industrial metal buildings. A whole new block of commercial development, with ground-floor commercial uses and two residential levels above, has been recently added with a seven-screen multiplex serving as an anchor. In addition, the city provided a parking structure as an incentive to development. The new garage is centrally located, offering spaces for 515 cars, and 30,000

MATTHEW MILLMAN

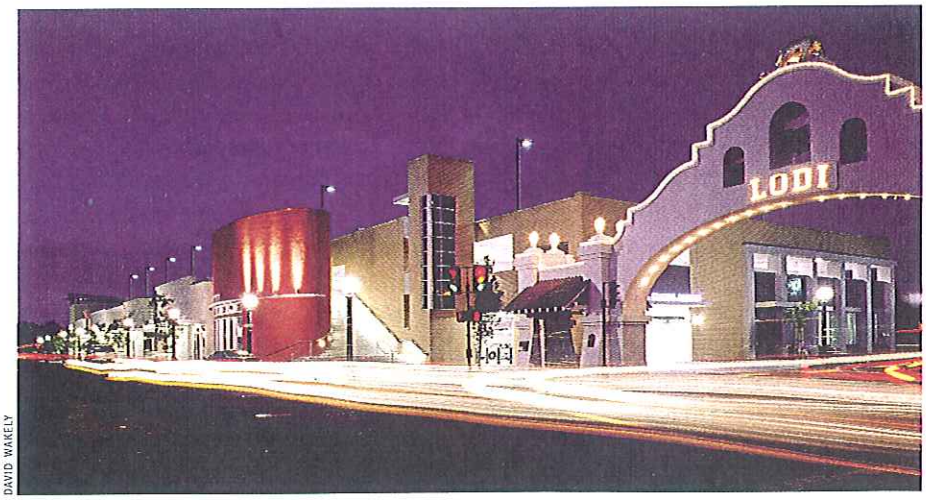
The five-level parking garage, centrally located in a redevelopment district of Petaluma, blends with light-industrial buildings along the city's riverbanks.

square feet (2,791 sq m) of ground-floor retail wrap the structure. Ground-floor retail is a critical component of a downtown revitalization parking project because it connects the structure to the surrounding pedestrian environment and contributes to an active urban district.

The vehicle and the pedestrian entrances to the parking structure are both on the corner that faces downtown, next to the elevator tower, with the two entrances clearly distinguished from each other. The ground floor contains the ramp, parking for the disabled, and retail spaces, including some offices at the back. All of the other spaces are on the upper levels. The garage is five levels tall on the east side facing the river, where the mass of the structure does not conflict with any adjacent buildings. It drops one level on the west side facing a historic fire station and future three-story commercial and residential developments, keeping the size in scale with the neighborhood. To serve as a neutral backdrop for the downtown's historic buildings, the design is contemporary, with subtle references to the older architectural styles: the use of brick—a common building material in Petaluma—and blue ceramic tile, a suggestion of a smokestack or grain tower. A simple metal screen on the back breaks down the traditional garage grid.

In the town of Lodi, California, a new three-level, 330-stall garage plays an integral role in the city's effort to establish a multimodal hub downtown. The city relocated a historic Southern Pacific Railroad station to the site next door to make room for the parking structure and added a bus station, creating a new transit center. The new structure provides parking for the new theater one block away, and with the train station creates a transportation plaza that has the capacity to accommodate potential future commuter-rail service. The project offers strong pedestrian connections to downtown, which has recently been enhanced with new streetscapes and paving. Because of the width of the site, it was possible for the ground-floor retail component facing Sacramento Street to extend outside the footprint of the garage, allowing for the creation of a more variegated streetfront, which not only is compatible with the historic building across the street, but also helps attract businesses that draw customers and animate the street.

The mixed-use parking structure in Lodi, California, acts both as a transportation hub with street-level retail plus an entryway to the revitalized downtown.



DAVID WAKELY

The city of Lodi asked for particular materials—cement plaster and ochre-colored brick—that match not only the newly restored train station, but also the paint on the new bus station. This helps give the transit center a unified look, despite disparate architectural styles. On the side of the garage closest to the railroad, metal screens create an industrial, contemporary feeling. The taller elements at the northwest and southwest corners along Sacramento Street form clean, elegant-looking anchors that help connect the structure to the transportation center at one end and to the downtown at the other.

For the city of Claremont, California, a new 160,000-square-foot (14,883-sq-m) parking garage helps create a landmark entry for this former center of the citrus packing industry. Currently under construction, the garage is part of a pedestrian-scale commercial and residential expansion of the Claremont Village, the area's historic downtown. A specific plan for the village expansion was developed, including theater, hotel, residential, and commercial uses, with the parking structure in the center. Much of the land used for the project had been vacant; a redeveloped packing plant is being converted into a commercial and retail space with a restaurant. The two corners of the garage on First Street provide important pedestrian connections with the existing and expanded Claremont Village. The eastern corner provides an entry plaza for visitors to the village. The western corner that creates a space between the garage and the existing citrus packing plant will become an outdoor dining area.

The city-built parking structure satisfies the parking requirement for the two adjacent developments as an incentive for developers. The garage itself is faced with low-scale retail, about 6,000 square feet (558 sq m) of small shops, easily subdivided into smaller spaces. Retail storefronts are thereby created on both

sides of First Street, which is expected to encourage an active pedestrian environment.

Architecturally, the idea was to connect the garage and its retail spaces as much as possible to the expansion development as well as to the existing village. The project involved extensive discussion with the city about where the major pedestrian circulation would be, where the major car circulation would be, and how to separate them for safety and ease of access. Generously sized stairways are placed to encourage people to take the stairs rather than elevators. The second level has a public terrace over the restaurant, offering a view of mountains to the north. Public art includes a 20-foot-by-40-foot (6.1-m-by-12.2-m) glass-tile mosaic that was created through a design competition.

The garage itself is clad in corrugated metal, similar to that of the packing plant. Adjacent to the railroad tracks, a curving ribbon form of perforated metal appears to undulate when viewed from passing trains and automobiles. About a 100 of the 480 spaces are targeted for use by MetroLink commuters. As at Lodi, the Claremont parking structure will support a sustainable downtown by providing convenient access to the commercial center of the community as well as to public transit for longer trips.

Parking structures are more expensive to build than surface parking, but the payoff for revitalized downtowns can be well worth the cost. Most parking structures constructed as part of redevelopment efforts do not charge for parking—-the main intention is to support the surrounding commercial, retail, and entertainment uses. (Many of these garages, however, are designed with infrastructure to accommodate equipment and attendants in the future.)

As towns and cities grow denser, and efforts are made to create pedestrian-friendly, thriving downtowns, these once utilitarian structures are playing a more significant and integrated role in new development. UL

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[ULI has a forthcoming book on the evolution of parking garages.]

Exploring a New Planning Paradigm for the 21st Century

MARGE FAHEY

A projected increase of 100 million people by midcentury will profoundly change the face of the American landscape, and, as a result, require a paradigm shift in planning to keep the nation's cities globally competitive, according to land use experts participating in ULI's recent Larson Forum.

THE 2006 LARSON FORUM, an annual gathering of real estate leaders who exchange ideas and best practices for creating better communities, held recently in Washington, D.C., focused on emerging megaregions.

According to Robert Lang, director of the Metropolitan Institute at Virginia Tech, the United States likely will evolve into 20 megaregions, or "megapolitans," each of which contains two or more metropolitan areas with cities located from 50 to 200 miles apart, and with urban cores largely supported by commuters from those areas. These megapolitans will absorb two-thirds of the country's new population, will account for 70 percent of growth, and will produce 70 percent of the country's gross domestic product, Lang noted. "Some of the greatest job opportunities are in the urban realms of emerging megapolitans."

Lang pointed to Phoenix and Tucson as an example of cities growing closer together. Based on U.S. Census projections, Phoenix/Tucson will contain 10 million people by midcentury, Lang noted, and "will be known as the Sun Corridor."

The politics of hypergrowth will be challenging, Lang predicted. For instance, the U.S. Census Bureau has maps showing Providence, Rhode Island, and Boston as joined, but this is "more connectivity than local politics can handle," he said.

Although the tremendous growth outlined by Lang will provide opportunities for development, participants agreed that it will also present many challenges and require changes in planning at the federal, state, and local levels. These challenges—how to accommodate growth and create positive change in the economic, social, and environmental fabric of urban areas—formed the basis for the forum's discussion.

Major discussion revolved around sustainability (including global warming and energy), transportation (infrastructure), housing and social equity (including race and income), international competition (thinking nationally, regionally), education (affecting directly land use patterns), political leadership, and advocacy.

"One of the major shifts ULI has to make is to define sustainable development as equity that includes social capital and social health," said John Knott, president and chief executive officer, the Noisette Co., North Charleston, South Carolina. "We have to recognize that