



Case Study: Nashville Downtown Parking Strategy

As interim manager of the Nashville Downtown Partnership, Urban Place was given the task of developing and implementing a parking strategy for downtown. The challenge was multi-faceted and included the lack and affordability of both on-street parking for shoppers and off-street parking for workers and visitors. Improving the reality and perception of parking in downtown was key to the short-term survival of the retail business and the long-term vitality of the downtown office market.

After researching the best parking practices of successful downtowns and defining the common elements that made them successful, we developed the following goals for Nashville:

- Integrate all types of parking in the equation – on-street, off-street, short-term, long-term, public and private – in order to truly solve the parking problem.
- Involve the private sector property and business owners, through the Nashville Downtown Partnership, in all important parking decisions.
- Reinvest parking revenues into the downtown. Operate parking not just to maximize parking revenue, but also to maximize the vitality of downtown, which in turn produces larger tax revenues for the city.

Urban Place developed the following statement to guide the Nashville Downtown Partnership approach to parking management:

“Our mission is to support the economic vitality of Downtown Nashville by offering a mix of affordable parking options that meet the needs of both the short-term and long-term retail customer and the long-term office tenant.”

Working with the City of Nashville and the Nashville Downtown Partnership, Urban Place developed recommendations for the Partnership in three areas:

- Develop a low cost, remote, parking shuttle program
- Manage the City-owned, off-street parking system
- Increase on-street parking on downtown streets

All three recommendations were implemented, resulting in the “The Park It Downtown!” program. The results:

- The Partnership now operates a remote parking shuttle that delivers more than 500 office employees to work each day for \$20 a month.
- The Partnership now manages over 2,000 off-street parking spaces in downtown and is reinvesting the increased net revenue back into downtown through marketing programs.
- More than 200 on-street parking spaces have been added.
- In cooperation with private parking lot owners, two programs were developed to reduce the cost of downtown parking: “2 for 1” and “5 after 5”.