

Date: September 19, 2014
To: City Council
From: Carissa Miller, Senior Planner
Re: Joint SSMID & Council Workshop (9/22) - Downtown Parking Study



In April 2014, the City entered into agreement with Rich & Associates to complete a Downtown Parking Study. A draft of the Fort Dodge, IA Downtown Parking Study has been completed and is available for review; said draft may be found at www.ssmidfd.com. Within the process of developing this Study, Rich & Associates and City staff held various stakeholder meetings in relation to downtown parking. A survey was also made available online to downtown property owners, business owners and the general public. The feedback from these surveys is included in the appendices of the Study. The main topics noted by stakeholders and those surveyed included; convenience and walking distances, meters (some people think this detracts from downtown), enforcement (too many tickets), handicap parking is limited, need for wayfinding signs, cost of parking and need for more parking.

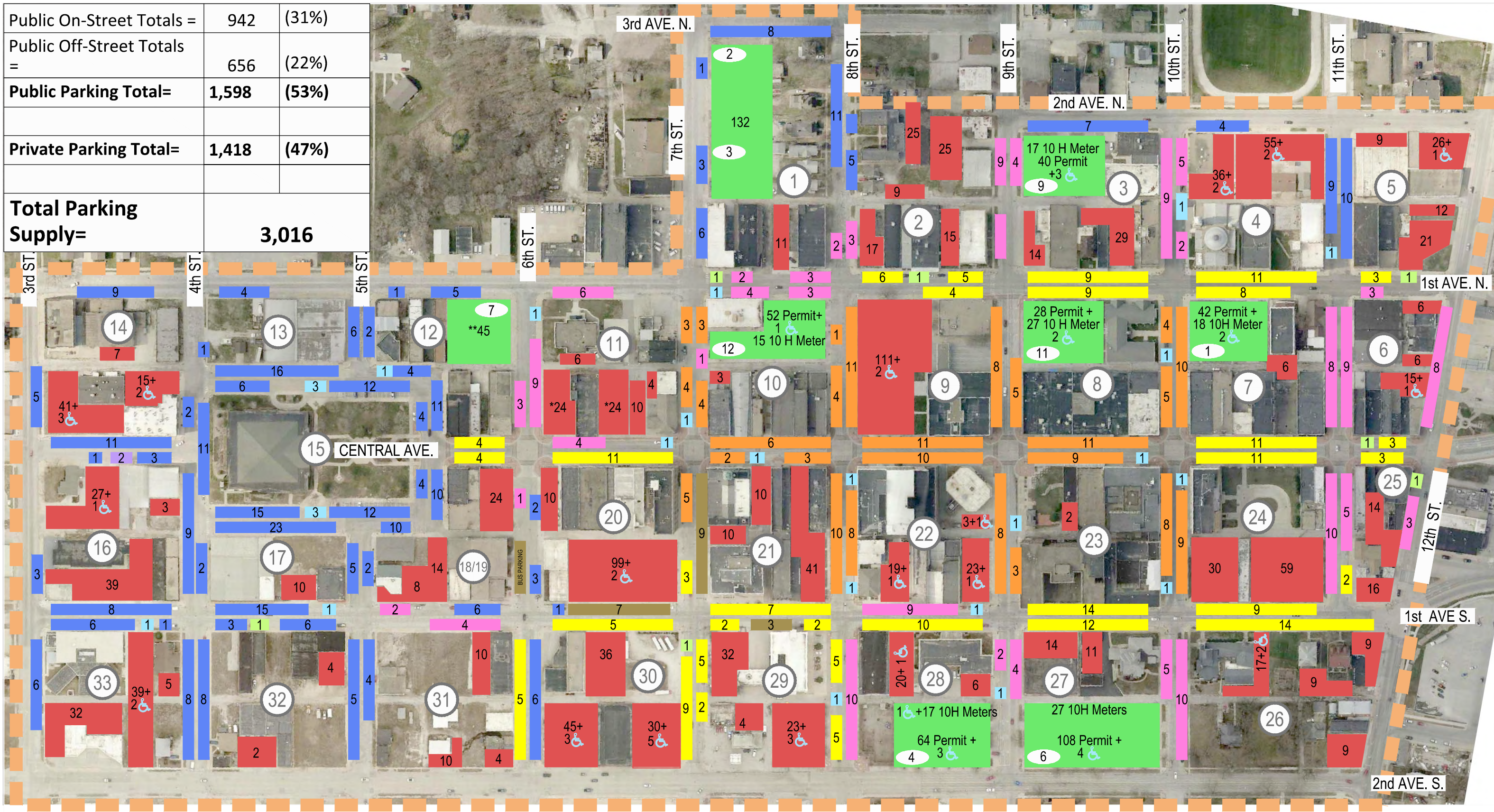
Rich & Associates completed a comprehensive analysis of parking availability in the downtown and its impact to businesses, and quantified future demand based on land uses and building occupancy projections. See the enclosed maps for a spatial view of the findings, which portray the following:

- The City controls 53% of parking in the downtown. To successfully manage municipal parking in relation to allocation, changing demand, market pricing and enforcement; it is desirable to have at least 50% of the supply.
- There are four public lots that are in need of barrier free spaces (2/3, 6, 7, 12)
- 15% of observed vehicles were in violation on the day of observation. 5% is considered a sign of adequate enforcement.
- Multiple vehicles stayed in the downtown for 8 hours or 4-6 hours before/after lunch; these seemed to be downtown employees.
- At its peak occupancy (2-4 pm), about 37% of the downtown parking spaces were occupied.
- Parking generation ratios (which indicate the number of spaces vs. square footage and occupancy types in buildings) are lower in Fort Dodge than what Rich & Associates typically sees in a downtown setting.
- The study area is shown to have an overall surplus; however, are pocket areas within downtown that have parking shortfalls (blocks 6, 21, 22, 23 and 25).
- Many stakeholders feel there is a parking shortage in the downtown because some employees of the downtown parking on-street.

Based on the public input and findings, Rich & Associates provided recommendations of actions, policies and/or projects to improve parking in the downtown. These recommendations are included as a table in this packet. Within their recommendations, Rich & Associates provided a recommended time frame for implementation. It will ultimately be up to our downtown leaders (SSMID, Parking Committee, City Council) to prioritize these actions based on available funding, general need and overall feasibility.

Rich & Associates will present a PowerPoint of the findings and recommendations. At this workshop SSMID and the City Council are welcome to ask questions and provide feedback on the Study.

Public On-Street Totals =	942	(31%)
Public Off-Street Totals =	656	(22%)
Public Parking Total=	1,598	(53%)
Private Parking Total=	1,418	(47%)
Total Parking Supply=	3,016	



DOWNTOWN FORT DODGE PARKING STUDY
FORT DODGE, IOWA

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08/14

BLOCK NUMBER

LEGEND:

ON STREET PARKING

- 15 MINUTE
- 30 MINUTE
- 1 HOUR
- 2 HOUR
- 2 HOUR METER
- UNRESTRICTED

OFF STREET PARKING

- PRIVATE
- PUBLIC
- BARRIER FREE
- RESERVED
- CONSTRUCTION SITE DURING STUDY
- LOT PARTIALLY CLOSED DURING STUDY

X PARKING LOT #

BLOCK FACE KEY PLAN:

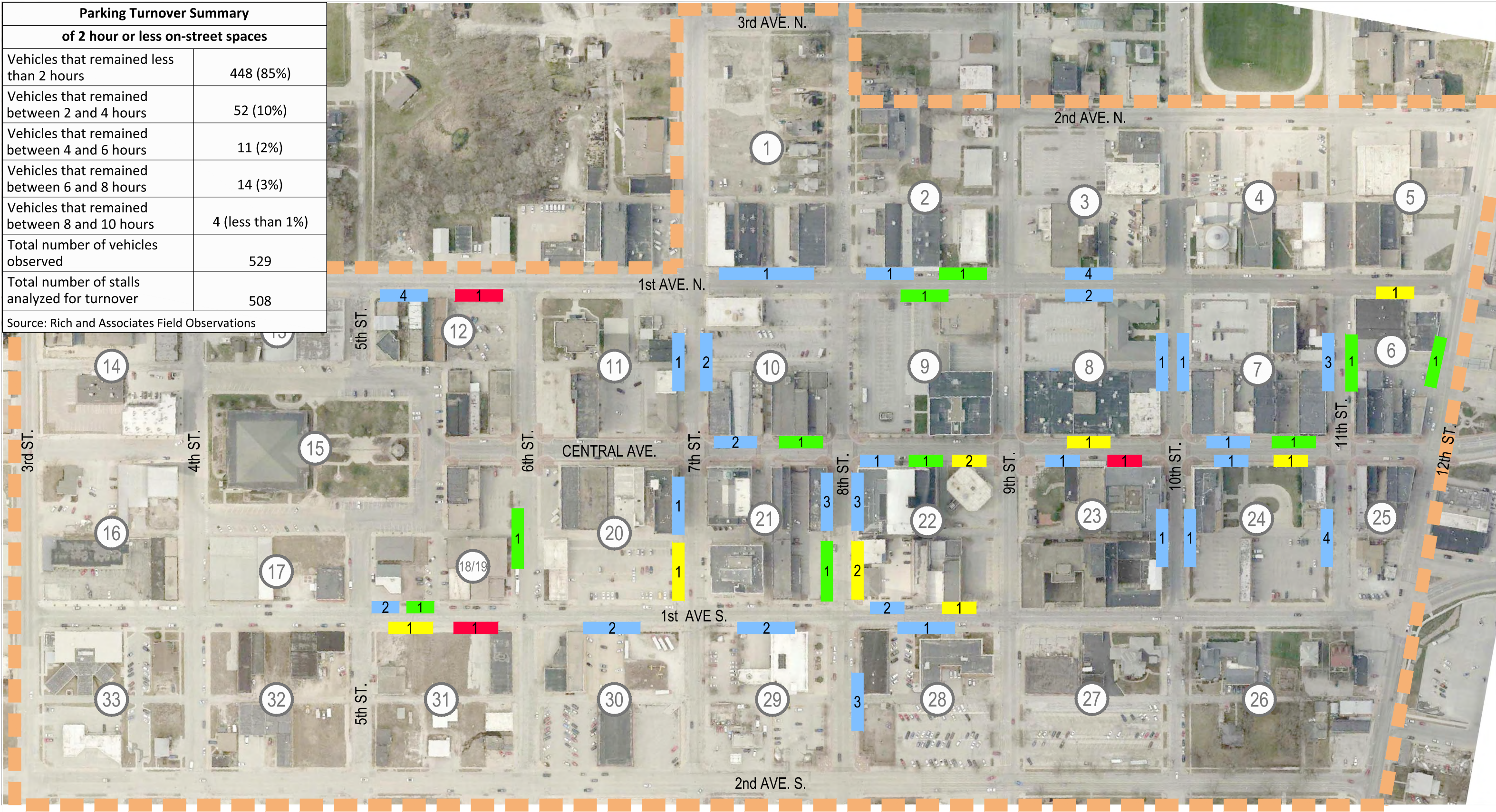
Sheet Title: **PARKING SUPPLY**

AN INVENTORY OF ALL PARKING IN THE STUDY AREA BOTH PUBLIC AND PRIVATE

MAP 2

Page 11

Parking Turnover Summary of 2 hour or less on-street spaces	
Vehicles that remained less than 2 hours	448 (85%)
Vehicles that remained between 2 and 4 hours	52 (10%)
Vehicles that remained between 4 and 6 hours	11 (2%)
Vehicles that remained between 6 and 8 hours	14 (3%)
Vehicles that remained between 8 and 10 hours	4 (less than 1%)
Total number of vehicles observed	529
Total number of stalls analyzed for turnover	508
Source: Rich and Associates Field Observations	



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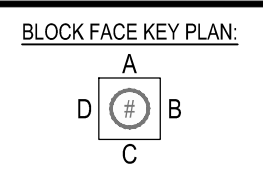
#
BLOCK NUMBER

LEGEND:

STUDY AREA

LENGTH OF VIOLATIONS

- VEHICLES REMAINING 2 - 4 HOURS
- VEHICLES REMAINING 4 - 6 HOURS
- VEHICLES REMAINING 6 - 8 HOURS
- VEHICLES REMAINING 8 - 10 HOURS



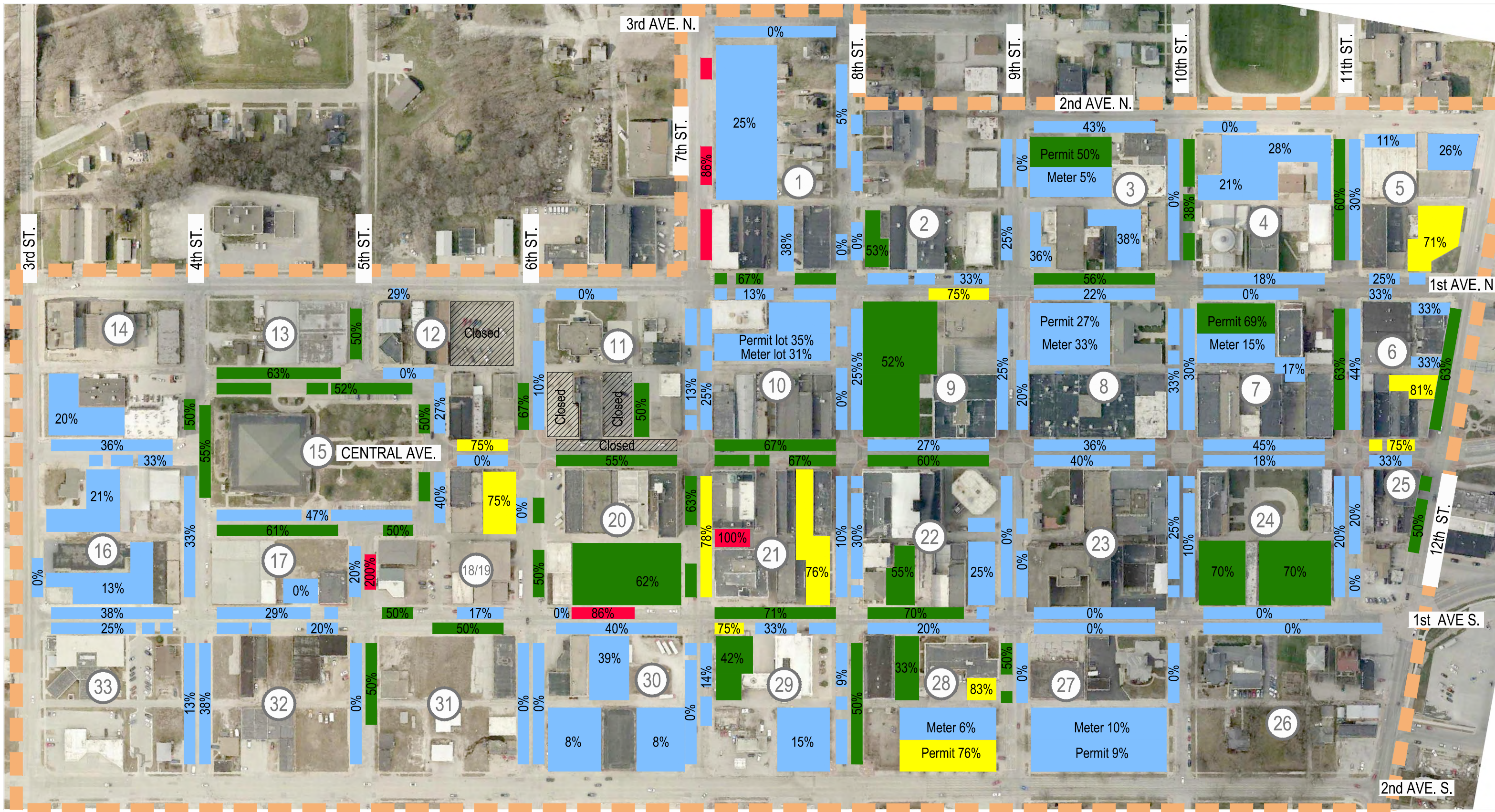
Sheet Title:

LOCATIONS OF VIOLATIONS DURING TURNOVER & OCCUPANCY

MAP Number:

MAP 3

Pg. 17



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PARKING STUDY**

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BLOCK
NUMBER

LEGEND:

	STUDY AREA		85% through 100%
			75% through 84%
			50% through 74%
			0 through 49%



Sheet Title:

PEAK OCCUPANCY

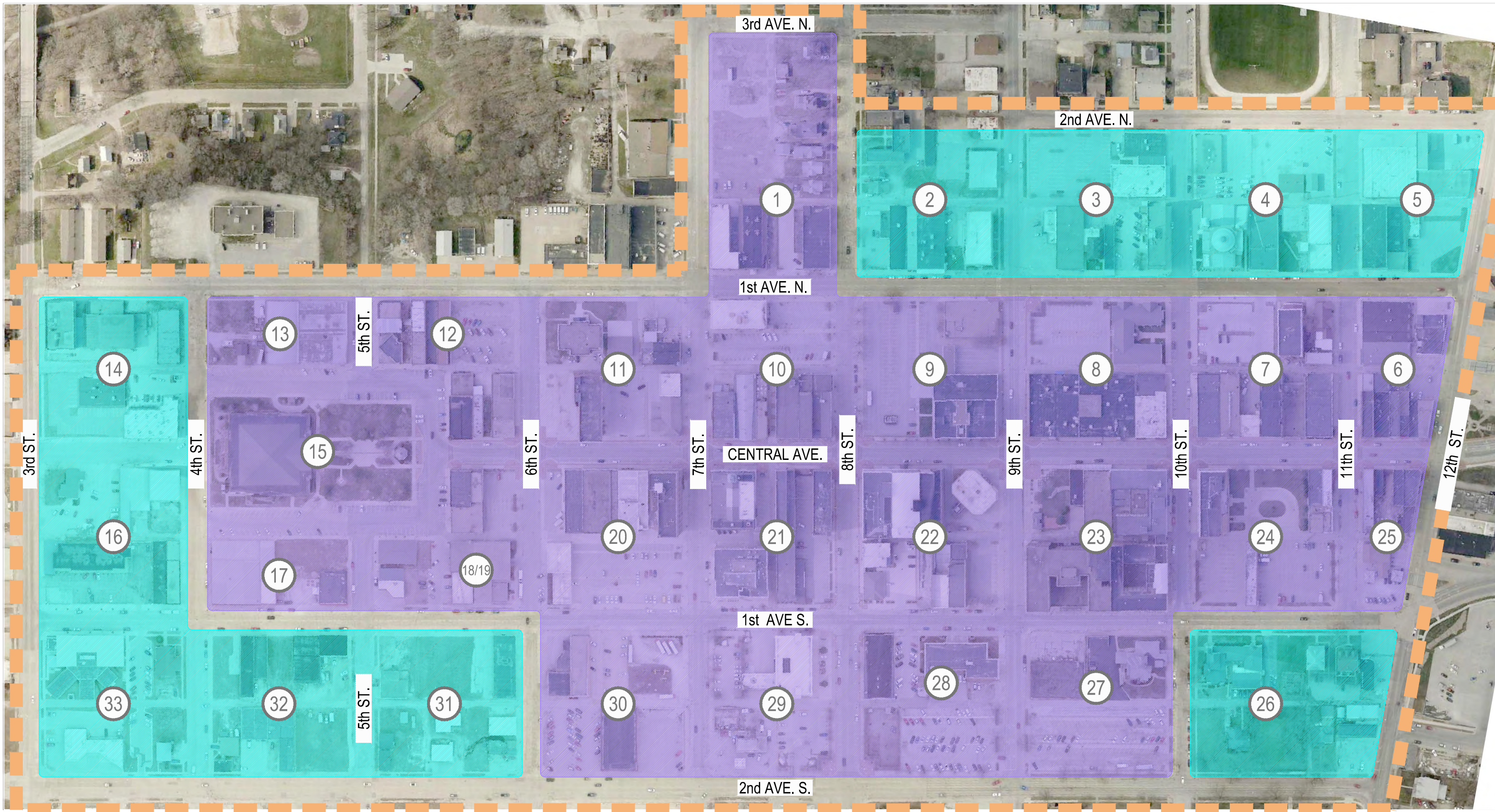
Thursday June 12, 2014 2:00pm - 4:00pm

MAP IS A SPATIAL REPRESENTATION
OF OCCUPANCY AT STATED TIME

MAP Number:

MAP 4

Pg. 21



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BLOCK
NUMBER

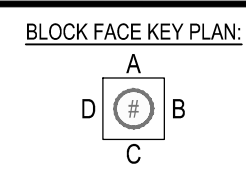
LEGEND:

STUDY AREA

ZONES

ZONE 1 - PARKING SURPLUS = 809

ZONE 2 - PARKING SURPLUS = 515



Sheet Title:

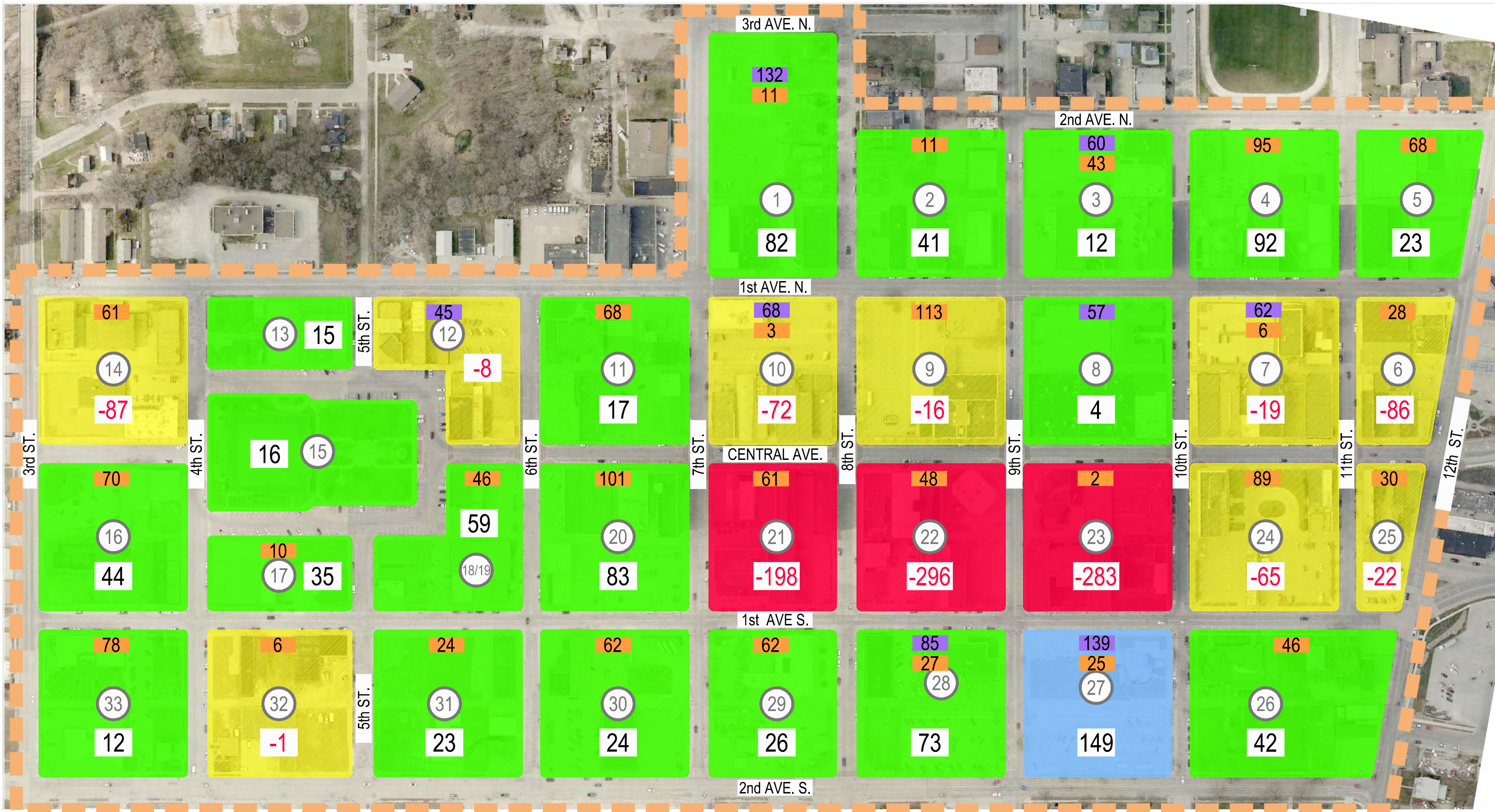
PARKING ZONE MAP

MAP IS A SPATIAL REPRESENTATION OF
THE PARKING SURPLUS/DEFICIT BY BLOCK

MAP Number:

MAP 5.1

Pg. 31



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BLOCK NUMBER

LEGEND:

STUDY AREA

SURPLUS OF PARKING

- +100
- 0 through 99

DEFICIT OF PARKING

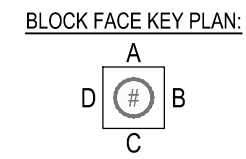
- 99 through -1
- 100 +

PARKING INVENTORY

- PUBLIC PARKING
- PRIVATE PARKING

DEFICIT OR SURPLUS OF PARKING

#



Sheet Title:

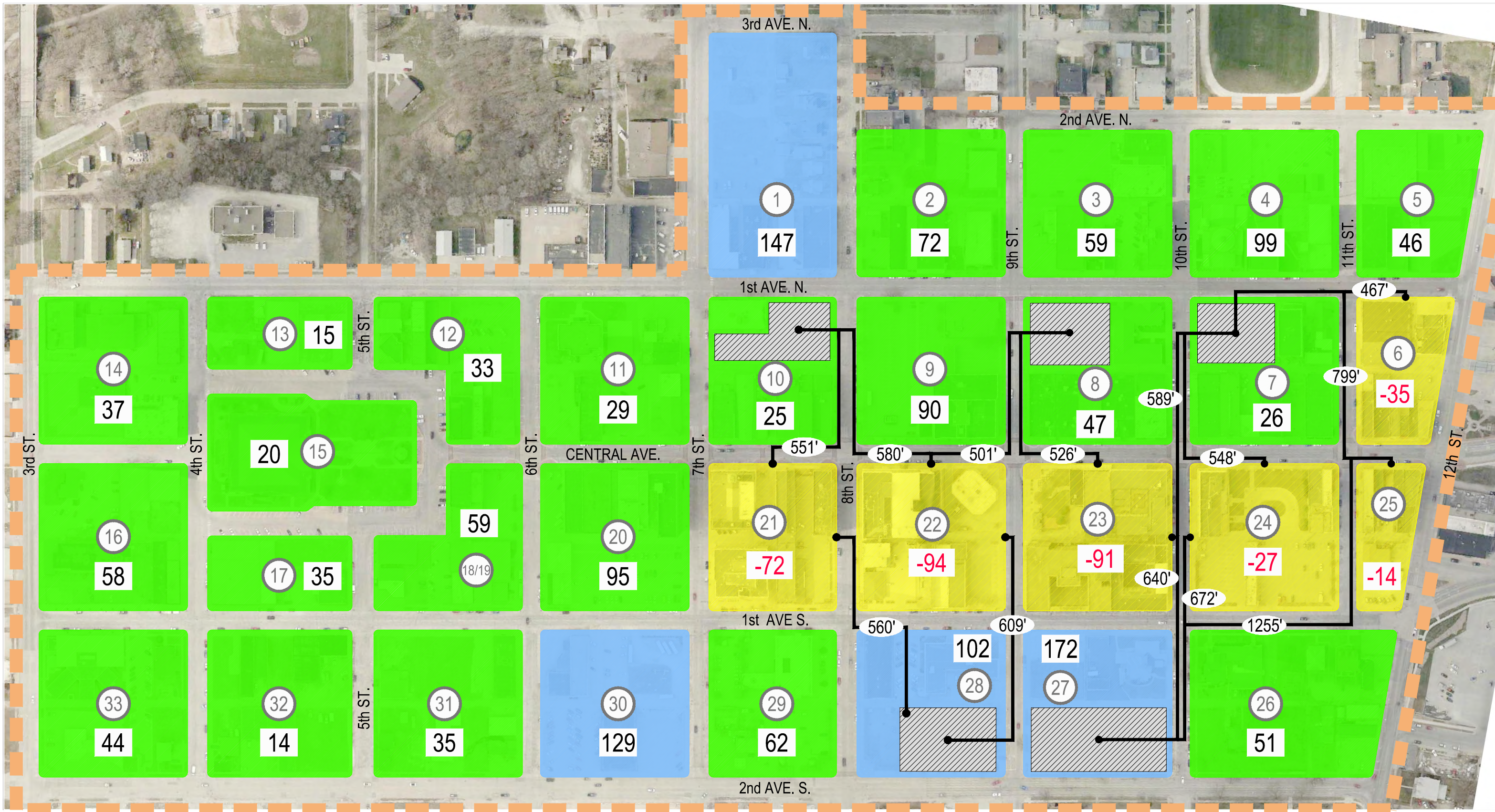
PARKING SURPLUS/DEFICIT 5 YR. PROJECTION

MAP IS A SPATIAL REPRESENTATION OF THE PARKING SURPLUS/DEFICIT BY BLOCK

MAP Number:

MAP 5.2

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BLOCK NUMBER

LEGEND:

SURPLUS OF PARKING

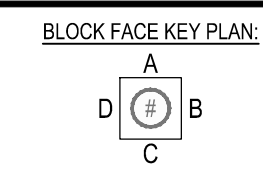
- STUDY AREA
- +100
- 0 through 99

DEFICIT OF PARKING

- 99 through -1
- 100 +

PUBLIC PARKING LOT

WALKING DISTANCE
MEASURED FROM CENTER OF BLOCK TO CENTER OF THE LOT



Sheet Title: **WALKING DISTANCE TO PUBLIC LOTS**
WITH CURRENT SURPLUS/DEFICIT

MAP Number: **MAP 6**
Pg. 37

Downtown Parking Study Implementation Plan

Recommendation Type

Time Frame

Policy Action

Action Strategy

Project Initiatives

Immediate Action

0-3 Years

3-6 Years

6-10 Years

Recommendations

1 Pedestrian Enhancements

1.1 Identify and expand the brick sidewalks throughout the study area. Additionally identify and fix sidewalks and ramps, and paint/re-paint crosswalks throughout the study area.

expand brick Sidewalks
fix sidewalks
paint/repaint crosswalks

	✓	✓				✓
	✓	✓		✓		
		✓		✓		

1.2 Maintain clear pedestrian pathways in public lots and consider shared dumpsters in lots that have several businesses surrounding the lot.

maintain clear pedestrian pathways
shared dumpsters

		✓		✓		
✓	✓	✓			✓	

1.3 Maintain landscaping in lots, trim trees covering signs and any landscaping blocking sight lines. Work with local volunteers to fill planters with flowers or mulch and remove dead trees from lots.

tree trimming
landscaping lots

		✓	✓			
✓	✓	✓		✓		

1.4 Minimize surface lots and consider working with building owners to add art or murals to pedestrian alleys.

✓	✓				✓	
---	---	--	--	--	---	--

1.5 Try to avoid areas of conflict with vehicles and landscaping, street furniture or post boxes.

		✓	✓			
--	--	---	---	--	--	--

1.6 Add additional lighting to lots and maintain lighting levels throughout the downtown.

✓	✓			✓		
---	---	--	--	---	--	--

2 Bicycle Parking

2.1 Add additional bicycle racks to the downtown and follow the guidelines provided on new racks.

		✓		✓		
--	--	---	--	---	--	--

3 Signage

3.1 Rich & Associates recommends the addition of a family of parking wayfinding signs in addition to the currently used identification sign in the downtown.

location and direction signs
accompanying signs

✓	✓			✓		
✓	✓				✓	

3.2 Place signs on each block face at the recommended distance or stickers on the meter poles to show the durations allowed to park.

		✓		✓		
--	--	---	--	---	--	--

3.3 All of the parking signs should use the same text size and color scheme.

		✓		✓		
--	--	---	--	---	--	--

4 Marketing

4.1 1. Develop a flyer that can be distributed to businesses and can be carried by the Parking Enforcement Officers (POE).

✓	✓		✓			
---	---	--	---	--	--	--

4.2 Specifically run a marketing campaign to get the word out about the Park Card.

✓	✓		✓			
---	---	--	---	--	--	--

4.3 Work with the court system to develop a brochure that can be sent out detailing where jurors should park.

✓	✓		✓			
---	---	--	---	--	--	--

4.4 Market and promote bicycle use as an alternative to driving. Along with this, consider aiming to achieve the designation as a "Bicycle Friendly Community"

market and promote bicycle use
aiming to achieve the designation as a "Bicycle Friendly Community"

✓	✓	✓		✓		
✓	✓	✓			✓	

5 Parking Duration/Allocation

5.1 All of the on-street parking that is currently one hour should be converted to two hour parking.

		✓		✓		
--	--	---	--	---	--	--

5.2 Lot # 7 should become a permit and metered lot when repairs are completed to make this lot more useable.

✓	✓			✓		
---	---	--	--	---	--	--

6 Parking Lot Improvements

6.1 Lighting along with introduction and directional signs need to be addressed in all public parking lots.

✓	✓			✓		
---	---	--	--	---	--	--

6.2 An education program along with marketing the parking system will need to be a priority and it will need to be addressed consistently.

✓	✓		✓			
---	---	--	---	--	--	--

6.3 As funding allows and after lighting and signs are addressed in all lots, it will be necessary to systematically move through the rest of the lots to make repairs, add additional signs, resurface, restripe and upgrade landscaping.

✓	✓				✓	
---	---	--	--	--	---	--

Downtown Parking Study Implementation Plan (p2)

Recommendation Type

Time Frame

Policy Action	Action Strategy	Project Initiatives	Time Frame			
			Immediate Action	0-3 Years	3-6 Years	6-10 Years

Recommendations

7 Maintenance of Parking Spaces On-street and Off-street

- 7.1 Develop a snow removal policy for streets, on-street parking, sidewalk, and lots and work with business owners to educate.
- 7.2 Develop a maintenance schedule for the lots to keep up with maintenance needs and help budget yearly costs.

8 Barrier Free Parking

- 8.1 There are four lots (#2/3, #6, #7 and #12) that currently need barrier free spaces.
- 8.2 signs.
- 8.3 Some barrier free spaces have meters in the lots and some do not making it confusing when parking. If a space requires a permit or a payment to the meter, signs need to clearly give direction.
- 8.4 In order to reach the 2 percent benchmark in the Iowa ADA on-street parking guidelines, Fort Dodge needs to install one additional on-street barrier free space.

9 Create a Sinking Fund for Maintenance and Upgrades to the Parking System

- 9.1 Create a sinking fund for maintenance and upgrades to the parking system. We recommend putting aside \$25.00 per parking space per year.

10 Discourage the Development of Any New Private Parking Lots in the Downtown

- 10.1 Though the City currently controls 53% of the available parking in the downtown it is recommended that this number remain closer to 60% to help facilitate the re-occupancy of vacant space along with the ability to pro-actively reallocate parking for new developments.
- 10.2 The City should work with private parking owners to allow for public shared use of the private parking areas where possible.

11 Parking Enforcement

- 11.1 Currently there is not a parking shortage and the parking supply is averaging at a peak occupancy under 40 percent, so there is not yet a need to increase the number of PEO's. When the occupancy is closer to 70-75 percent during peak occupancy there will be a need for additional staff.
- 11.2 PEO's should use handheld parking ticket writers that track license plate numbers and print tickets.
- 11.3 PEO's should be dedicated to parking duties, only being reassigned during emergencies or special circumstances that may arise.
- 11.4 Street signs should indicate that parking is enforced from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday – Friday in any and all areas where there is a limited duration or restrictions for parking.
- 11.5 The Cushman used for parking enforcement has several problems and will need to be replaced in the near future. Plan for the replacement of the Cushman unit within the next 3 – 5 years and budget appropriately.

12 Parking Fines

- 12.1 Continue the practice of placing all parking revenues, including fines, parking permits, and meter revenue into the parking fund.
- 12.2 The current parking fines are appropriate and do not need to be raised at this time. Review again in 3-6 years.
- 12.3 Consider offering courtesy tickets when making any changes to the parking system, including the first few weeks of enforcement when a regular enforcement schedule begins again.
- 12.4 It is recommended that the anti-shuffling ordinance be reworded, it is currently unclear.

Policy Action	Action Strategy	Project Initiatives	Time Frame			
			Immediate Action	0-3 Years	3-6 Years	6-10 Years
✓	✓	✓	✓			
✓		✓		✓		
		✓		✓		
		✓	✓			
	✓	✓		✓		
✓			✓			
✓	✓				✓	
✓	✓				✓	
		✓				✓
✓			✓			
		✓	✓			
		✓				✓
✓			✓			
	✓				✓	
✓				✓		
✓				✓		

Downtown Parking Study Implementation Plan (p3)

Recommendation Type

Time Frame

Policy Action

Action Strategy

Project Initiatives

Immediate Action

0-3 Years

3-6 Years

6-10 Years

Recommendations

13 Meters and Charging for Parking

- 13.1 Continue to place all parking revenue into the parking fund to pay for the maintenance and future upgrades to the parking system in the downtown.
- 13.2 Use the POE's as ambassadors of the downtown to help with the education process and teach parkers how to use the meters. The POE's can also help market the Park Card which makes it easier to pay for parking.
- 13.3 Consider expanding the two hour meters to the North side of Central Avenue between N. 6th Street and N. 4th Street because these spaces are not turning over. The City will need to monitor the turnover and occupancy of the downtown over the next three years to help determine when to add additional meters.

14 Parking Requirements for Zoning

- 14.1 It is recommended that Fort Dodge change their D-1 Core parking requirement for multi-family to 1 space/unit.
- 14.2 A residential parking permit program should be developed for existing residential developments and any residential units located above existing businesses.

	Recommendation Type			Time Frame			
	Policy Action	Action Strategy	Project Initiatives	Immediate Action	0-3 Years	3-6 Years	6-10 Years
13.1	✓						
13.2	✓	✓	✓	✓			
13.3		✓	✓		✓		
14.1	✓			✓			
14.2	✓	✓	✓	✓			