

# Berkley DDA Parking Plan

*For 12 Mile Road and Coolidge Highway*

May 2009

Prepared by the City of Berkley  
Downtown Development Authority



With assistance from LSL Planning, Inc.



**LSL Planning, Inc.**

Community Planning Consultants





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## Acknowledgements

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## Purpose and Benefits

Like most downtowns, Berkley requires a sufficient supply of convenient parking for vibrant business. Berkley's Downtown Development Authority (DDA), involved in many projects to improve the downtown, has always made parking one of its priorities. Since the DDA prepared its first parking study in 1995, many improvements have been made, including reintroduction of on-street parking along 12 Mile Road. This update to that report takes a fresh look at parking needs for today and the future.

Using "best practices" methods and standards from ITE Planning for Parking and the Small Town Parking Handbook as a basis, this Parking Plan identifies current or predicted parking deficiencies and recommendations to meet the parking needs for existing and future downtown uses. While one focus is best locations for additional municipal parking lots to meet that need, a host of other recommendations are noted. Among those are improvements to increase use of existing on-street parking, increasing parking supply through redesign of lots, facilitating shared parking among private property owners when they have distinct peak parking times, simplifying signage and adding visual interest to parking areas and managing parking to ensure prime spaces are available for customers. This plan is flexible so recommendations and priorities may be adapted as needs change with new uses (for example, restaurants require more parking per square foot than a hardware store).

This Plan supports the vision in the city of Berkley Master Plan for a more walkable district with a mixture of new uses to complement the existing solid core of businesses. Berkley's downtown developed over time resulting in a wide variation of building and parking arrangements. Parking is provided through a mixture of on-street parking in the front, municipal lots in the rear, and private parking lots, some in the front, others on the side or in the rear. This gives a customer options, but is also confusing.

Long term viability of the DDA partially depends on the availability of conveniently located parking to serve customers, residents, visitors, employees and deliveries. Through cooperation between the DDA, city, private property owners, and developers,

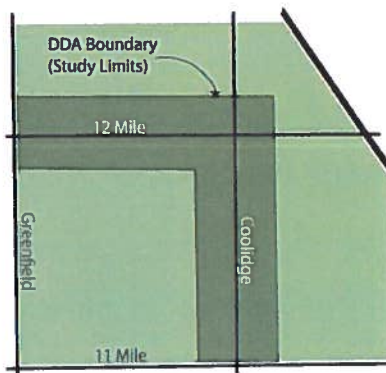




coordinated capital investment will maximize the benefit to the district's vitality and minimize impacts on adjacent uses.

## Plan Area

Berkley's downtown is not really a traditional, compact downtown, nor is it a typical commercial strip. Instead, it is a hybrid of the two. Stretching one mile west from the intersection of Coolidge and 12 Mile Road to the intersection of Greenfield Road and 12 Mile Road and one mile south along Coolidge Highway to 11 Mile Road, the downtown consists of a wide variety of land uses. Businesses range from well-known restaurants and a toy store to a grocery store, various types of retail and service establishments, and institutional uses.



*DDA Parking Plan Area along 12 Mile Road from Greenfield Road to Coolidge Highway, and along Coolidge Highway from 12 Mile south to 11 Mile Road.*

Berkley's downtown evolved in an attempt to keep up with the times. Initially most of the buildings were constructed close to the street abutting adjacent buildings, as occurs in a traditional downtown. As the need for parking and loading grew, some parking areas were added in the rear alley areas. During the automobile age, many of the buildings were built with some parking in the front and on the sides, while in other locations, older buildings were torn down to add parking spaces. Part of the current mixture of building form and parking may have also been due to changes in city requirements related to the amount of parking spaces a business needed to provide on-site. As a result of many factors, parking is provided through a disorganized mixture of parking options including on-street, municipal lots and some private parking lots, particularly evident in the downtown core (along 12 Mile Road between Tyler Avenue and Coolidge Highway).

This plan encompasses the entire DDA, which extends out from the intersection of Coolidge Highway and 12 Mile Roads one mile to the west to Greenfield Road, and one mile to the south to 11 Mile Road.

## Project Process

The DDA parking committee, comprised of three members of the DDA Board, coordinated the project and provided input on concepts and data to the parking consultants. This committee



organized an outreach effort that included surveys, a Business Forum and a presentation to the Planning Commission to present concepts and gather input.

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## Data Collection and Methodology

Parking needs vary with the economy and by season, day of the week, and time of day by business. For example, parking needs for the A&W and Dairy Queen are highest in the summer and parking for the dance studio is highest on a particular evening of the week. Parking demands also vary as different types of businesses come and go or change their hours of operation.

Just as streets are not designed for the busiest day of the year, commercial parking is not designed for the day after Thanksgiving. On those busiest days, employees need to park at more remote locations and business operations need to take other measures to free up customer parking, as found at many well-managed malls and chain stores. Yet it is important to design parking for one of the more typical busy days of the year.

The Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) National Parking Association and other professional parking groups recommend downtowns be surveyed during the 20<sup>th</sup> "peak hour," which usually occurs on a Saturday before Christmas holiday. Fortunately, the timing for this plan allowed counts during such a "peak" time. Further, it was determined that parking counts during the holiday shopping season would provide a good barometer of peak needs, especially given the sluggish regional economy when this plan was prepared in 2008/09.

Through surveys of business owners and operators, dates and times of day for the parking occupancy counts were identified. The consultant team then conducted counts of occupied parking spaces at three different times, including morning, afternoon, and evening on a typical weekday, Friday, and Saturday. So this "snapshot" of parking demand may need to be supplemented by additional counts during other seasons and especially as conditions change or specific parking improvements reach the design stage.



High volumes of traffic along both 12 Mile Road and Coolidge Highway can be a barrier for pedestrian crossings, despite the presence of crosswalks and pedestrian signals. As a result, the parking assessment assumes having each side of 12 Mile Road or Coolidge Highway be "self-parked." As large projects are proposed in the future (such as the Catalytic Project in the City's Master Plan or others that encompass an entire block of frontage), another look at parking needs for proposed uses should be conducted to avoid parking problems and position the development for success.

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## Data Analysis

Nationally recognized parking experts have described a 'healthy' parking occupancy for downtowns at between 70-85%, with lots regularly over 85% being perceived as full by potential customers and lots fewer than 70% being underutilized. This can vary depending upon the use being served. For example, an office lot full of employees can be designed for closer to 100% at peak times, but "reserving" 10-15% provides flexibility to handle demand fluctuations and can prevent a customer from not visiting. The consultants compared the observed occupancy to spaces available in both parking lots and on-street parking areas to calculate parking occupancy. The plan established three categories of occupancy that reflect low (below 70%), well-used (70-85%) and near capacity (over 85%) that prioritized problem areas. Parking utilization of 70% or greater is shown on the recommendations and classified on the peak occupancy maps (located in the appendix) with red (over 85%) for currently deficient areas, and yellow areas for well-used lots that may be deficient in the future (70-85% occupancy). Lots that are not approaching capacity have no color shading.

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## Goals

At the outset a set of plan goals were established to guide recommendations. These goals, listed below, were applied as criteria to rank the relative benefits of alternative recommendations to help set priorities.

1. **Provide sufficient, convenient, and attractive parking** throughout the business district, with a general guide to provide sufficient parking within 400-500 feet of

business, preferably on the same side of Coolidge Highway or 12 Mile Road for pedestrian convenience.

2. **Maximize the efficiency, visual interest, visibility, aesthetics and convenience** of existing municipal parking lots and in some cases, private lots.
3. Create an attractive, pedestrian friendly environment to **improve walkability** downtown between parking and businesses.
4. Capitalize on momentum of parking improvements as **catalysts for other DDA activities** such as the façade improvement program.
5. **Implement** recommendations in the **City's Master Plan**, particularly parking to support infill development and the "Catalytic Project".
6. **Promote a cooperative approach** between businesses, and minimize negative impacts on the adjacent residential neighborhoods.
7. Improve **marketability** of certain buildings with limited parking.
8. Maximize the **return on investment for DDA funding** of parking improvements, i.e. improvements that would benefit more than one business or that have a high cost-to-benefit ratio.
9. Incorporate **"green" technologies** in parking improvements, i.e. pervious pavement or solar lighting.

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Based on the parking occupancy data and observations, a number of key findings were noted:

- **Primary problem concentrations.** Several large concentrations of 90-100% occupied parking areas during peak use exist between Tyler Avenue and Coolidge Highway along 12 Mile Road and between Wiltshire Road and Catalpa Drive along Coolidge Highway. These areas are highest priority for expanded municipal parking.
- **Secondary problem concentrations.** Other problem concentrations of 70-100% peak occupancy were observed

## Key Findings and Observations

along 12 Mile Road near Prairie Avenue, Coolidge Highway near Edgewood Boulevard, and Coolidge Highway south of Harvard Road. In those areas, there is potential for shared parking agreements among select businesses, and opportunity to enhance on-street parking. While there is also the possibility of expanding municipal parking, it is less of a priority than areas where parking currently exceeds supply.

- **Signage and wayfinding.** Directional signage along 12 Mile Road and Coolidge Highway does not provide a clear path to the parking areas in the rear of businesses, accessed along the side streets and/or alleys. In several cases, once a customer arrives in the vicinity of the municipal parking lot, public spaces are not clearly distinguished from private ones.
- **Unclear private parking ownership.** In some cases, there is enough parking to meet overall needs, but different spaces are owned by different businesses. Customers of one business unknowingly occupy spaces owned by another, leading to tension among the owners of adjacent businesses and towing of vehicles.
- **Barriers to additional on-street parking.** Adding on-street parking may be difficult due to traffic volumes, driveways, and cross-streets along 12 Mile Road and Coolidge Highway, and left-turn bays along Coolidge Highway that shift the through lanes out to the curb at signalized cross-streets.
- **On-street parking convenience and comfort.** While on-street parking is provided in several areas along 12 Mile Road and sporadically along much of Coolidge Highway, occupancy data clearly shows that it is underutilized, even in areas where off-street parking lots are at or near capacity. One likely reason is that it is uncomfortable to back into those parallel spaces given the sporadic location and speed of traffic in through lanes. This situation is less evident along 12 Mile Road where curb bumpouts at the ends of blocks provide some protection for a parking motorist.
- **Snow removal.** During the winter months, the project team found that snow was not effectively removed from



*Underutilized on-street parking on 12 Mile Road during mid-day peak.*

the parking lane (reducing space) nor was it cleared from the sidewalks adjacent to the parking lane (meaning parkers must walk in traffic lanes to the next driveway or clearing in the snow before they could get off the street, and in some cases passengers could not easily open doors to exit parking vehicles.

## Solutions and Prioritization

Based on the data, observations, and goals of the plan, a number of recommendations were identified. Illustrative maps show the recommendations for specific locations. Overall, recommendations described below were classified into four main categories:

1. New, expanded and reconfigured municipal parking lots including wayfinding signs to those lots.
2. Enhancements to on-street parking.
3. Improvements to expand capacity, shared parking, or better managed use of private parking lots.
4. Revisions to the zoning ordinance parking standards.



*An example of more pronounced signage for public parking lots.*

## Four Key Capital Projects



Based on the analysis of parking data and land use discussed in this plan, the top four capital projects identified as most important to addressing parking in the Berkeley DDA are summarized in the map to the left and shown in more illustrative detail in the images on the following pages.



## 12 Mile Road Recommendations

Along 12 Mile Road, there are areas of current or future potential deficiency along both the north and south side of the street. The major concentration of deficiencies or areas where implementation is needed is in the Downtown Catalytic Project area, in the area of Tyler Avenue and Robina Avenue.

*New, expanded, and reconfigured municipal parking.*

**Key Capital Project A:** On the south side of 12 Mile Road, parking areas on three blocks from Tyler to Wakefield had 100% occupancy during one or more observation periods (see parking areas outlined in red in illustration "A"). The plan recommends coordinating rear façade improvements with reconfiguration and aesthetic enhancement of existing municipal parking and new municipal parking to expand current lots. These projects should all include design features from the standard streetscape design already in place along 12 Mile Road. It is estimated that new parking areas could yield 20-70 additional spaces, based on 55-60 foot typical lot width and one-way configuration shown.

### Key Capital Projects "A"



**Current Parking Deficiency Potential Expansion Area**

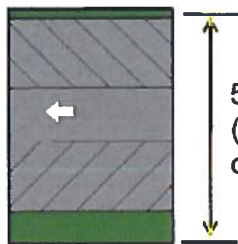
Current: 34 municipal spaces  
Potential Gain: 24-72 spaces



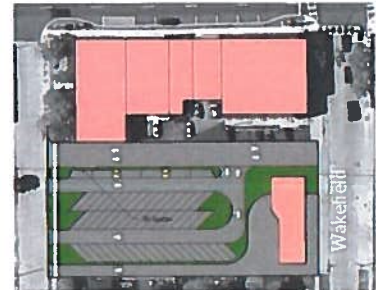
**Municipal Lot Restriping Rear Façade Improvements Aesthetic Enhancements**  
Current: 59 spaces  
Potential Gain: 10 spaces



**Potential Private Lot Reconfiguration**  
-Consolidate parking areas  
-Reduce or remove drive-thru lane area  
Current: 34 spaces and Bank drive-thru  
Potential Gain: 20-50 spaces



55 – 60'  
(typ.)  
one-way



The middle block, between Griffith Road and Robina Avenue, is central to the Master Plan's Catalytic Project and can benefit from reconfiguration of parking. To the east, the plan recommends reconfiguration of the private lots where the National City Bank drive-through currently takes up a significant amount of pavement (between Robina Avenue and Wakefield Road). In concert with reconfiguration of existing parking and alley areas, reconfiguration or elimination of the drive-through lanes could result in 50-90 additional parking spaces.

**Key Capital Project B:** On the north side of 12 Mile Road, the block east of Tyler Avenue has partial municipal parking and partial private parking lots. The first house north of the private parking area was purchased and demolished by the City in early 2009 with plans to accommodate and expansion of the nearby parking lots. However, there is an opportunity to coordinate design of the new lot and the two existing lots to maximize parking yield and improve aesthetics to support the recently remodeled businesses fronting 12 Mile Road on this block. It is estimated that this new area and reconfiguration of adjacent existing public and private lots could yield at least 20 additional parking spaces (see Key Capital Project "B" illustration).

*Enhancements to on-street parking.* A 2008 streetscape project added on-street spaces to several blocks along 12 Mile Road, complete with curb bump-outs. The plan recommends additional enhancements to the streetscape along 12 Mile Road including clearer signage to find parking areas (including reducing the amount of other signage currently in place) and improvement in coordinated snow removal from the parking lanes and sidewalks by the City, DDA, and property owners. In addition, the on-street parallel parking spaces on both 12 Mile Road and Coolidge Highway could be restriped to include a 5-15 foot long maneuvering zone in between the front and back of every other space to ease entering and exiting the spaces. In particular, this may allow a more convenient parking maneuver for motorists along the busy street, especially those not entirely comfortable with parallel parking.

*Private Parking.* Several areas on the west half of 12 Mile Road were observed to have pockets of insufficient parking. The location and varying sizes of off-street parking areas make

### Key Capital Project "B"



- New lot alone = 8 spaces
- Redesigned coordinated = 20 spaces (+12 gain)



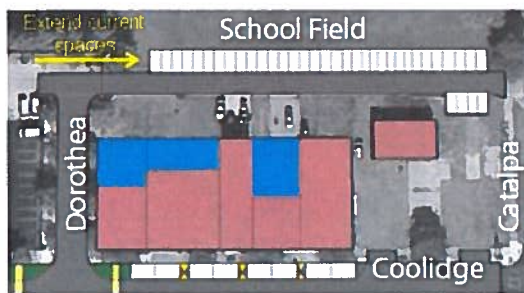
*Maneuvering zones in between shorter on-street spaces guide cars to leave larger gaps to ease entering and exiting on-street spaces.*

choosing which lot and space to park in when accessing a particular business unclear. Several areas are shown on the recommendations maps where establishing equitable shared parking agreements would support business district vitality. The agreements would be legal agreements that should be encouraged and mediated by the DDA but ultimately rest in the control of the property owners.

## Coolidge Highway Recommendations

Along Coolidge Highway, there are areas of current or future potential deficiency along both sides of the street. The major concentration of deficiencies and observed issues is in the area between Wiltshire Road and Catalpa Drive.

### Key Capital Project "C"



New Lot—Dorothea and adjacent lot



- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <p><b>A</b> Retain drive-thru<br/>31 total spaces<br/>90 degrees</p> | <p><b>B</b> Remove drive-thru<br/>48 total spaces<br/>60 degree parking</p> |
|--|---|

*New, expanded, and reconfigured municipal parking.* On both sides of Coolidge Highway between Wiltshire Road and Catalpa Drive, a high concentration of businesses are located on shallow parcels with few opportunities for parking in the rear. The lone municipal lot on the east side off of Dorothea Road provides approximately a dozen spaces. But this lot is a considerable distance from most storefronts and was observed to have many long-term, employee, and business vehicle uses. The plan recommends extending the municipal lot along the east side of the alley south to Catalpa Drive, adding an estimated 30-40 spaces in what is currently a 20 foot deep stretch of school playfield leased from the City. Another recommendation in this area is to vacate the Dorothea Road right-of-way, and reconstruct that 66 foot wide area as a municipal parking lot, which would add an estimated 30 parking spaces. If coordinated with the adjacent cleaners to the north, the cleaner's lot and Dorothea Road right-of-way could be redesigned to add an estimated 55 parking spaces.

*Enhancements to on-street parking.* Along Coolidge Highway, the Wiltshire Road – Catalpa Drive stretch and another stretch south of Harvard Road are the highest priority throughout the DDA for the addition of bump-outs and traffic calming streetscape to improve the convenience and safety of on-street spaces. Signage to current and future municipal lots should also be added or improved on side streets leading to municipal lots. As with 12



Mile Road, snow removal on-street and on the sidewalk needs to be coordinated with the City, DDA, and property owners to make on-street spaces convenient and available to customers in all seasons. Also as noted for 12 Mile Road, the on-street parallel parking spaces could be restriped to include a 5-15 foot long maneuvering zone to ease entering and exiting the spaces.

As mentioned earlier in the plan, a secondary concentration of high occupancy parking is in the block southeast of the corner of Coolidge Highway and Edgewood Boulevard, currently home to Bagger Dave’s Restaurant. In addition to the restaurant and an office, two vacant commercial buildings on the northeast corner have only 4 on-site spaces, and could add to the current problem when they are reoccupied or redeveloped. Two solutions are recommended, with the first being adding additional on-street parking on Edgewood Boulevard (described in this paragraph), and the second being a shared private parking agreement with the Credit Union one block north to share off-peak parking with one or all of these businesses (described in the following paragraphs). Currently, a median on Edgewood Boulevard east of Coolidge Highway is located in between Bagger Dave’s Restaurant and the two vacant commercial buildings. Removal of the median would allow additional on-street reverse angle or parallel parking to increase available parking supply.

*Private Parking.* Two small areas of current or projected deficiencies along Coolidge Highway are recommended for the DDA to encourage and/or mediate shared parking agreements. The first, mentioned above for on-street enhancements, is at Edgewood Boulevard on the east side of Coolidge Highway. During our counts, Bagger Dave’s was 100% occupancy at every evening occupancy count, while the Credit Union a half a block north has a large parking area with available capacity during bank business and no use during off hours (evenings). The second area is around three restaurants south of Harvard on the west side of Coolidge Highway, where Little Caesar’s Pizza and two sit-down restaurants to the south have parking deficiencies and unorganized parking areas. A shared parking arrangement could include maintenance sharing and cost sharing of improvements to coordinate striping and circulation along all three lots to maximize parking in the area.

### Key Capital Projects “D”





## Zoning Ordinance Recommendations

In addition to the physical planning, parking is also influenced by the City of Berkeley's parking requirements in the zoning ordinance. Those regulations become important as businesses look to expand, add uses or locate in Berkeley. Balancing an assurance of sufficient parking for current and future businesses with excessive requirements that might discourage a business from locating in the DDA District is a challenge for the city. Although the ordinance has been amended in the past to generally reduce parking requirements for certain uses to a more reasonable level, new research and more recently accepted standards suggest that there are still a few refinements to consider.

Currently, the City Zoning Ordinance requires no parking for a business when it is located within 500 feet of a municipal lot (regardless of number or availability of spaces). The use of municipal lots to offset parking requirements is a common practice in similar downtown districts. When coupled with a lack of criteria to assess the number and use of spaces in a lot, the City's 500 foot length is not designed in the best interest of a viable business corridor. The plan recommends regulations be adjusted to require that the City and applicants evaluate the number and location of spaces available off-site, and include flexibility to allow the Planning Commission the power to consider this more detailed information in determining what number of on-site spaces are needed for site plan approval. As the DDA continues to increase walkability, the Planning Commission may decide to count spaces

on the other side of the main street (12 Mile Road or Coolidge Highway) toward the parking requirements, which is currently not allowed.

For regulations determining the number of spaces required, the plan recommends either individual adjustments to 8 or 9 key uses, or a revision to adjust most uses in the DDA to

Use	Current City Parking Standard	Recommended
Furniture and appliance, household equipment, decorator, office supply, showrooms	One per 400 square feet	One per 800 square feet + 1 per employee
Grocery store	Nine per 1,000 square feet	Four per 1,000 square feet
Convenience or liquor store	Six per 1,000 square feet	Four per 1,000 square feet
Planned commercial or shopping center	Ten per 1,000 square feet	Four per 1,000 square feet
Office, medical	Ten per 1,000 square feet	Four per 1,000 square feet
Restaurants, carry out	One per 75 square feet	1 space per 3 persons capacity
Restaurants, fast-food, drive-in, drive-through	One per 75 square feet	1 space per 3 persons capacity
Restaurants, other	One per 60 square feet	1 space per 3 persons capacity



a consistent standard of 4 spaces per 1000 square feet gross floor area. This consistent standard reduces confusion for potential or expanding businesses and protects against the possibility of one development with a certain use being constructed at a lower standard and then not being able to support uses that have higher standards in the future.

## Implementation Action Plan

To coordinate the recommendations and concepts in the plan, the following Implementation Action Plan matrix was developed to identify tasks, key responsibility and agency, and priority time frames. The following provides the DDA with a quick reference guide to progress of implementing the recommendations and key responsibility for initiating and following up on outstanding tasks.

	Task	Key Responsibility
Short Term	Restripe on-street parking spaces as Tandem Parallel Parking (5-15 foot maneuvering zone in between every other space)	City, DDA
	Reconfigure Griffith-Robina municipal lot to maximize spaces, add standard streetscape elements and improve walkability	DDA
	Planning Commission to evaluate Zoning Ordinance Changes	Planning Commission
	Add themed signage to identify and add visual interest to municipal parking areas	DDA, City
	Expand parking in 4 critical areas with standard streetscape elements, coordinated rear façade improvements and pedestrian friendly design features	DDA, City
Mid Term	Install/enhance pedestrian crosswalk at Dorthea	City, DDA
	Bump-outs along Coolidge Hwy (with standard streetscape elements)	City (DDA)
	Shared parking agreement in Credit Union lot	DDA
	Other capital projects as needs change	Various

*Note: Priority of recommendations may change based on new business needs or funding opportunities*

	Task
DDA Ongoing	Facilitate shared parking agreements
	Facilitate public/private snow removal
	Work with new businesses & Planning Commission to meet parking needs
	Periodically update parking data
	Location of dumpsters/shared dumpsters
	Educate businesses on benefits of keeping prime spaces available for customers





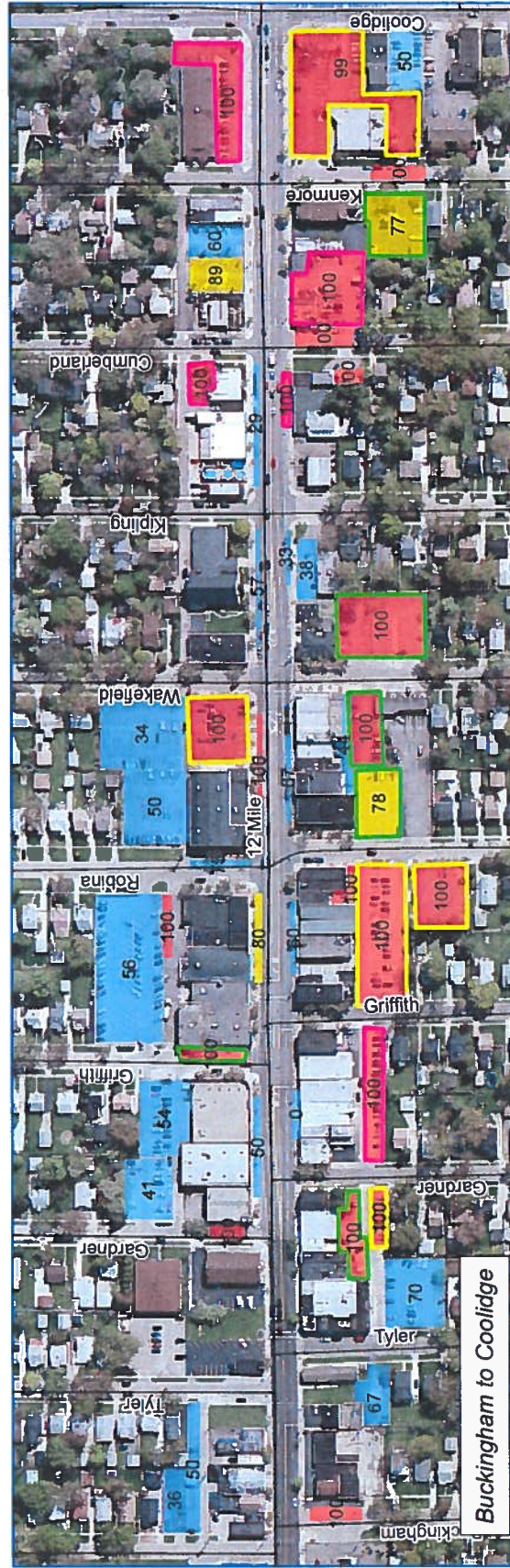
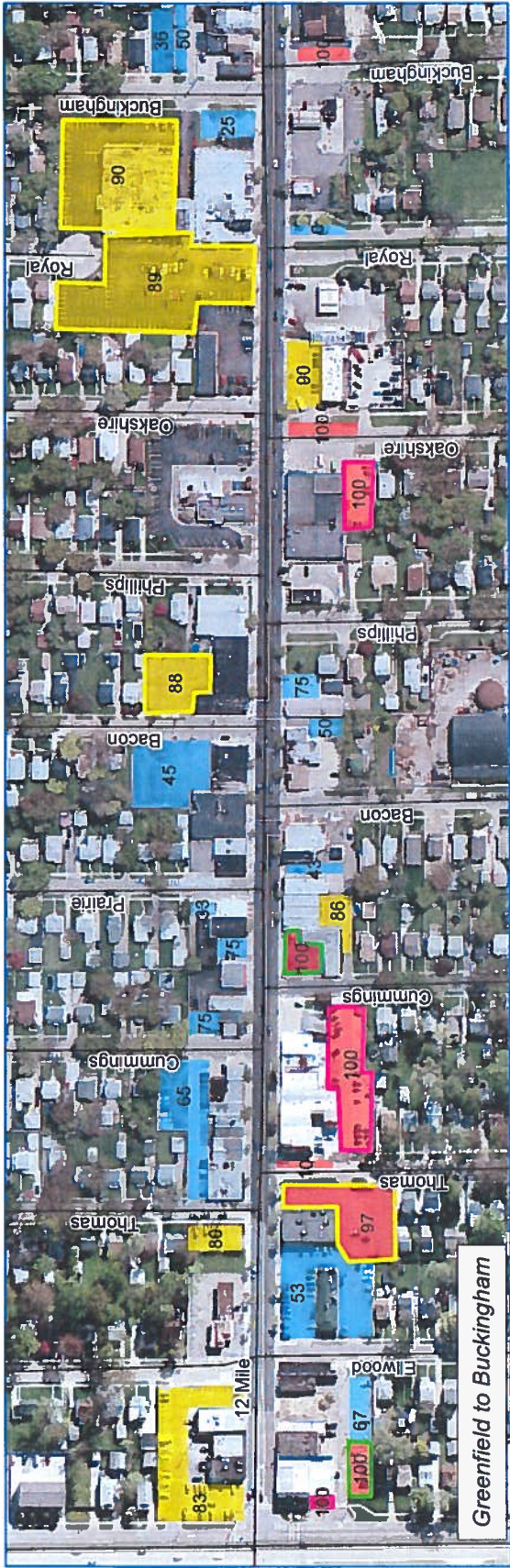


# Appendix: Coolidge Peaks

City of Berkeley Parking Study

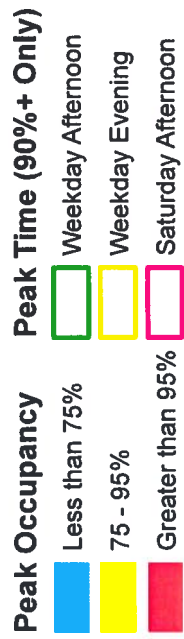
<b>Peak Occupancy</b>	<b>Peak Time (90%+ Only)</b>
Less than 75%	Weekday Afternoon
75 - 90%	Weekday Evening
Greater than 90%	Saturday Afternoon





## Appendix: 12 Mile Peak Use

City of Berkeley  
Parking Plan



0 125 250 500 Feet

Source: LSL Planning, A/CGI  
December 2008