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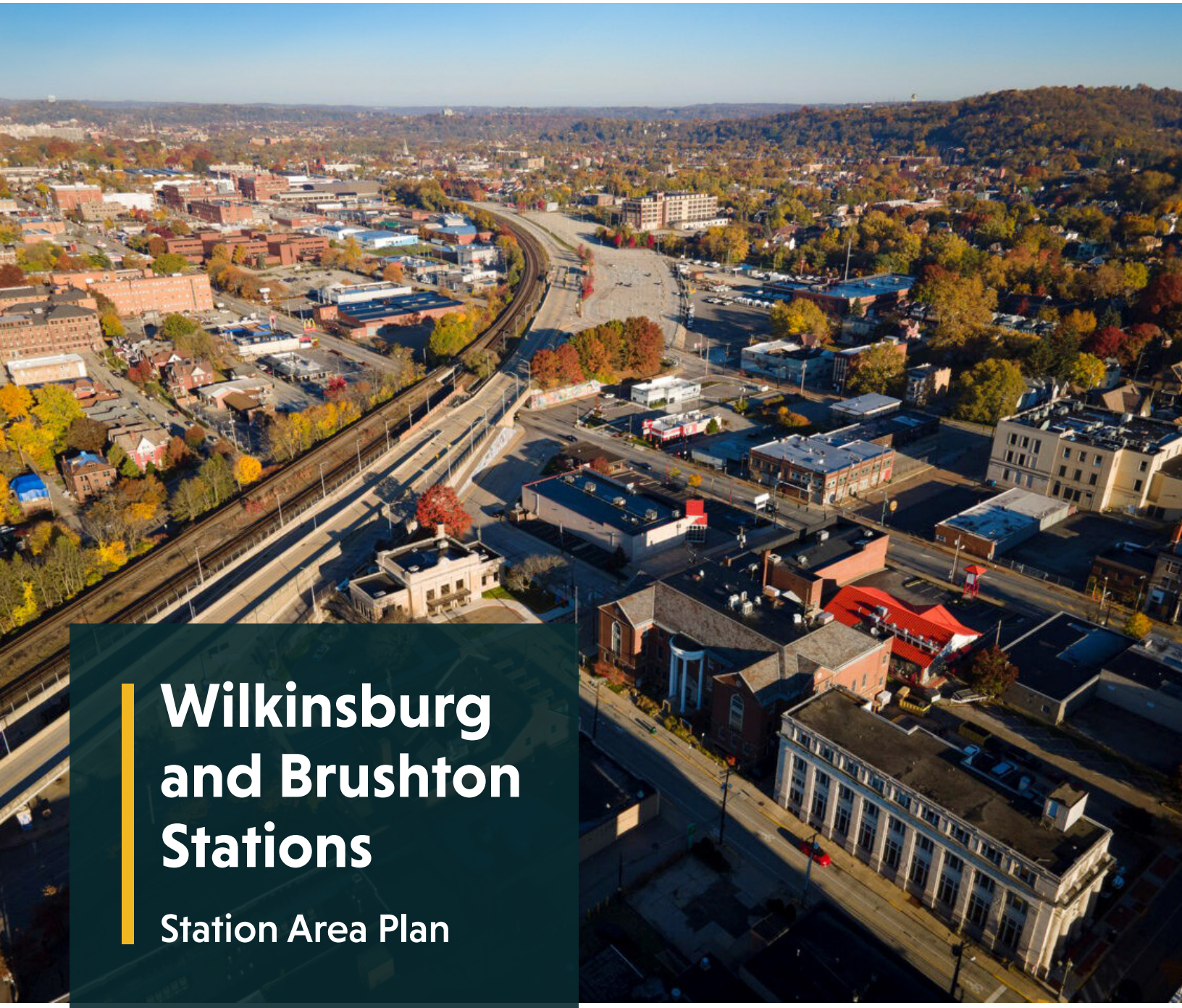


Wilkinsburg and Brushton Stations

Station Area Plan

Appendix 4

Parking Strategy

October 2023

PRT
Pittsburgh Regional Transit

BUILDING ON THE EAST BUSWAY

WILKINSBURG AND BRUSHTON STATIONS PARKING STRATEGY

As part of the Wilkinsburg Station Area Plan, PRT can deploy a comprehensive strategy for parking to evolve at the future Wilkinsburg and Brushton stations over the next 20 years. This strategy adjusts along the way to incrementally reposition the site from a location where the automobile is the primary mode of access supported by the station design, to a pedestrian-friendly, multi-use community destination where walking is the primary mode of access, and park and ride access is available and managed to support broader community and mobility goals.

Parking Existing Conditions Summary

The parking lot that serves the existing Wilkinsburg Station has 728 spaces. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, demand for park and ride often filled all 728 official spaces, with additional cars parking informally where they could fit in the lot. On some days, parking for the station spilled over into adjacent neighborhoods, as seen below on Pitt Street in May 2019.

Figure 1. Spill Over Parking along Pitt Street (May 2019)

Recent Parking Counts at Wilkinsburg

In the fall of 2022, Service Development Associate (SDA) staff from PRT counted cars after the end of morning rush hour in the Wilkinsburg lot on six different days. The average of these counts is 334 cars, and the median value is 339 (see **Table 1**).

Table 1. Wilkinsburg Park and Ride Counts in Fall 2022

Date	Total Cars
Tuesday, October 11, 2022	371
Tuesday, October 18, 2022	339
Thursday, October 20, 2022	346
Tuesday, November 8, 2022	310
Tuesday, November 10, 2022	320
Tuesday, November 22, 2022	278
Thursday, December 1, 2022	371

These counts were repeated in March 2023 and the average number of cars had declined slightly to 319, with a median value of 324 cars (**Table 2**).

Table 2. Wilkinsburg Park and Ride Counts in March 2023

Date	Total Cars
Wednesday, March 1, 2023	332
Tuesday, March 7, 2023	306
Wednesday, March 8, 2023	309
Friday, March 10, 2023	324
Tuesday, March 28, 2023	326

These two sets of counts conducted at two different times of year show a highly stable "new normal" park and ride market that has led to the 728-space Wilkinsburg parking lot being up to 55 percent empty most of the time.

How Managing Parking Supports Multiple Goals

Proactive parking management and park-and-ride lots is not only a way to meet demand for access to transit; it is also a way for transit agencies to make progress towards their equity and climate action goals.

Parking Management Supports Equity

While transit users typically have lower incomes than their metropolitan area at large, among transit users, park-and-ride commuters are the most likely to have incomes at or above the metropolitan average and are among the transit commuters with the most resources. Therefore, when transit park-and-ride assets are re-positioned to support those who do not own cars, this generally increases equity by transferring the focus of transit access to supporting those with the greatest need for transit.

Parking Management Supports Climate Action

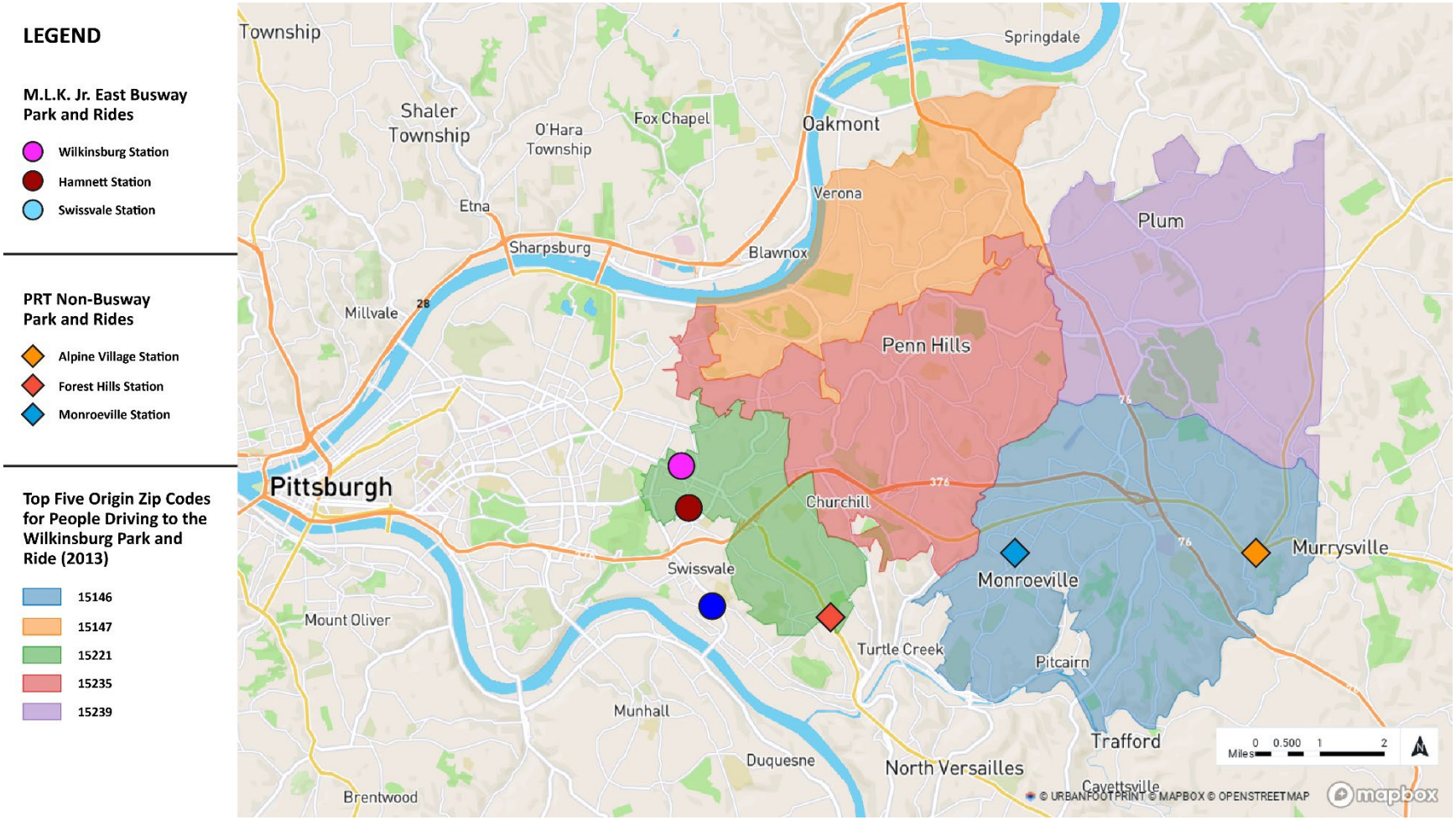
Compared with walking, bicycling, and other micro-mobility devices, driving to a transit station to park and ride emits significantly more pollution from both the fuel burned en route, and the cold start of the engine, when the anti-pollution controls are not fully activated. De-emphasizing park and ride as a transit access mode and supporting more environmentally friendly access modes supports progress towards PRT's climate goals.

Parking Management Supports Efficient Facility Use Along the East Busway

In addition to the 728 existing spaces at Wilkinsburg Station, there are also 128 parking spaces at Hamnett Station and 163 spaces at Swissvale Station. Managing parking at Wilkinsburg, including through pricing, can help allocate transit demand for East Busway services to various lots based on how strong the market is for Transit-Oriented Development at any given station. The parking spaces across these three East Busway stations should be considered as one combined resource, where decisions about parking at Wilkinsburg can include parking management responses at Hamnett and Swissvale as well.

Figure 2 shows the Top 5 park and ride zipcodes for Wilkinsburg station based on a 2013 license plate survey. Four of these five zipcodes have similar access to Hamnett Station and Wilkinsburg, and three of the five zipcodes have similar access to Wilkinsburg and Swissvale.

Figure 2. Top Five Origin Zip Codes for People Driving to the Wilkinsburg Park and Ride



This suggests that using parking pricing and other management strategies could lead some of those who park at Wilkinsburg to park at either Hamnett, Swissvale or other parking lots in this part of the metro area.

Spring 2023 counts collected by PRT indicate that there is significant capacity available at several park and ride lots that are relatively close to the Wilkinsburg Park and Ride Lot (see **Table 3**).

Table 3. Spring 2023 Park and Ride Counts

East Region P/R Lots	Total Capacity	ADA Spaces	Average Cars Parked	Utilization	85% Capacity	Remaining Spaces to 85%
Wilkinsburg Station b	730	16	333	46%	NA	NA
Alpine Village	245	8	77	31%	208	132
Forest Hills	168	6	20	12%	143	123
Swissvale Station b	153	7	96	63%	130	34
Monroeville Mall	140	2	20	15%	119	99
Hamnett Station b	128	6	72	56%	109	37
Beulah Church	100	0	14	14%	85	71

The six park and ride lots listed below Wilkinsburg Station in **Table 3** can collectively accommodate another 496 cars without passing the 85 percent full threshold. While parking pricing will not cause every park-and-rider to switch to a new lot, PRT can proceed with confidence that those who want to continue to park and ride for free using PRT services will have choices available to them.

With these existing conditions and data, a multi-phase approach to parking that is attuned to each development phase of the Wilkinsburg and Brushton site can be successful. The next section of the memo highlights strategies for each phase.

Phase I – Charge for Park and Ride Prior to Major Construction at Wilkinsburg

The most powerful signal PRT can send to riders that the land under the Wilkinsburg parking lot is a scarce and valuable resource is to begin charging for parking at the site. Several of the key benefits of charging for parking are covered above and reducing park-and-ride traffic ahead of a multi-year, multi-phase construction process is another worthy goal.

PRT can introduce a minimum price of $1.50 to $2.50 per day to park at Wilkinsburg Park and Ride, with a monthly price equivalent to 20 days of usage at the above rate with a 10 percent to 15 percent discount.

This park and ride price could be introduced in two ways:

- As a price on parking only at the Wilkinsburg lot, with other area park and ride lots remaining unpaid.
- As a broader application of parking pricing to all lots, where the price at Wilkinsburg would be at least $0.50 to $1.00 higher than the price of other area park and ride lots.

Each of these implementations should encourage park and ride activity to shift from Wilkinsburg to other lots to some degree ahead of construction at Wilkinsburg Station.

To incentivize change further among the major park and ride zipcodes of 15221, 15235, 15239, 15146 and 15147, in the first week that parking pricing is implemented at Wilkinsburg, it is also recommended that all boardings before 12 noon each day at Swissvale, Hamnett, Alpine Village, Forest Hills, Monroeville Mall, and Beulah Church parking lots be fare free during the first week of priced parking at Wilkinsburg.

Since the area will be a major construction site in years to come, parking payment technology should be linked to license plates, and not painted space numbers on the ground. It is possible that parts of the Wilkinsburg lot will open and close in response to construction, and license plate validation will minimize the amount of "re-setting" of the lot that must be done each time construction staging shifts positions.

Conducting Equity Analysis Around Park and Ride Pricing

When transit agencies introduce new routes, take away old ones, or raise fares, a best practice encouraged by FTA is to conduct a Title VI analysis to examine if the impacts of a policy decision at the transit agency is disproportionately impacting low-income and minority residents. Conducting Equity Analysis for Park and Ride requires different approaches than those used for local bus route changes.

Geographic Considerations

Typically, Title VI analysis documents the demographics of the area immediately surrounding the location where the transit policy change is taking place. However, park and ride users typically live 2 to 10 miles away from the park and ride lot. Therefore, a more accurate way to assess who is impacted by changes to a park and ride lot is to use survey data that identifies the addresses or zipcodes of the home addresses of park and ride users, and to use either Census data from those locations, or ideally, self-reported demographic data from park and ride users from transit agency surveys.

Stakeholder Definition Considerations

As PRT plans to redevelop the Wilkinsburg parking lot in the coming years, Title VI analysis should broadly review positive and negative impacts to all transit users, and not just those who park and ride at the site. When PRT builds affordable housing in the future on land used for park and ride today, benefits accrue to lower-income transit users who live in that housing on land that used to be a park and ride lot. The demographics of these future users and impacts to current park and ride users can be compared to both Allegheny County demographics and PRT Equity Index measures to help determine whether policy changes disproportionately affect low-income and minority riders.

Rider Income Considerations

The 2014 PRT survey confirms what we see nationally – that park and ride users are more likely to be higher income than lower income. Among those who use park and ride to access PRT either all or most of time, 68 percent reported an income over $50,000. Those who never used park and ride were the opposite, with 65 percent of those who never used park and ride reporting incomes below $50,000.

Transit Access Mode Considerations

At PRT, like most other large transit agencies, the vast majority of transit trips begin and end with walking. Only 28 percent of transit riders used a parking lot in PRT's 2014 onboard survey. This percentage has likely declined in the early 2020s with changes in work from home after the COVID19 pandemic. Any Title VI analysis of changes to park and ride should acknowledge that 72 percent or more of PRT riders are not likely to be impacted at all by changes to park and ride lots or their pricing.

Avoiding Spillover Effects in Neighborhoods through Enforcement

Throughout Phase I, and all subsequent phases, regular parking counts should be monitored using both payment data and parking enforcement. Enforcement of parking fines should be conducted by PRT or its contractors and should match local parking fines in the municipality in which the land is located.

Onsite enforcement of parking payment at Wilkinsburg Multimodal Center will also require offsite enforcement to manage overflow parking onto neighborhood streets. Any enforcement workplan for the station area should include patrolling adjacent streets. Rosedale Street and Madeira Street are already part of Pittsburgh's Residential Parking Permit (RPP) District "O," and it may be help enforcement to extend the RPP program to cover the entirety of the blocks bounded by Rosedale St, Pitt St, Susquehanna St and Hill Avenue.

PRT can also work with the Borough of Wilkinsburg to monitor whether park and riders seeking free parking in neighborhoods is becoming a challenge. If so, the Borough may be able to introduce its own RPP program within neighborhoods to help local residents park on-street while steering park and riders to PRT lots and parking decks.

Identifying Any Startup Partnership Opportunities

PRT has had previous conversations with the owners of 7800 Susquehanna Street about the possibility of the building owners leasing parking from PRT on behalf of their tenants. Any initial parking charge introduction process should also include early coordination with the 7800 Susquehanna owners to see if there is a mutually beneficial outcome possible for both the owners and PRT.

Phase II – Consolidate Parking Geographically at Wilkinsburg to Aid Construction and Operations

As the major work to build the 15-bay bus charging facility and relocation of the Wilkinsburg Station get under way, PRT should work with the construction management teams of each project to identify driving paths for cars and walking paths for park-and-riders that minimize interaction between transit users and construction activities.

This may include having park and riders enter only at Wilkinsburg, and construction vehicles only at Brushton, or vice versa, or using the Hill and Rosedale Ave entrance for either construction or park and ride as appropriate.

While it is easy for park and riders to park wherever they wish today, it will be beneficial to PRT operations and construction teams to consolidate parking into one contiguous area as much as possible. Using water-filled barriers, signage and other movable construction site materials, PRT can steer park and riders to safe locations to park while construction is ongoing.

Right-Sizing Interim Parking Lot Space Availability

Whenever a new location on the Wilkinsburg lot is identified to become near-term parking while other spaces close to accommodate construction, PRT should strive to provide enough spaces to accommodate the average daily parking demand at Wilkinsburg from the prior month plus 20 percent more spaces.

If after Phase I, many park-and-riders shift to Hamnett and Swissvale and only 150 park-and-riders continue to use Wilkinsburg, any temporary parking situation for construction should provide 180 spaces if possible. The reason to provide this over-capacity during construction is to help absorb any unexpected surge in demand that may otherwise spill out into the adjacent neighborhood streets.

Phase III – After the New Wilkinsburg Multimodal Center is Open, But Brushton Station is Not Yet Constructed

Once the Wilkinsburg Multimodal Center is open and accommodating bus traffic at both sets of platforms, the most desirable place for park and riders at Wilkinsburg will be Development Site B in **Figure 3**.

Figure 3. Wilkinsburg and Brushton Stations Conceptual Design Site Plan

Parking Price Increase #1

Upon the opening of Wilkinsburg Multimodal Center, it is recommended that the daily parking price increase by $0.50 to recognize the increased value of the location brought by the new station, and to continue to manage parking demand.

Park-and-riders should be encouraged to park in the Development Site B area, and if demand warrants it ahead of the Brushton Station opening, the Development Site A area as well.

Phase IV – Opening of Brushton Station

After Brushton Station opens, it will provide a park-and-ride opportunity to downtown Pittsburgh with a slightly shorter ride than the Wilkinsburg Multimodal Center. This will draw some of the park and ride demand that is using Development Site B to Development Site C for those who are particularly sensitive to their overall travel times.

When this occurs, as long as both Development Site B and C are not imminently slated for development, PRT can either apply the same parking price or different parking prices in the two locations in order to encourage park and riders to choose the lot that works best for PRT operations or for construction management.

Phase V – Activation of Development Site A

When the first vertical development at Site A is ready to begin construction, PRT should look at usage counts across Site B and Site C to determine if any site B parking is still needed. If Site C can accommodate all park and ride activity under the price and level of demand when Site A goes under development, PRT should encourage all park and ride to move to Site C to make construction access for Site A as easy as possible.

Parking Phasing and Pricing in Subsequent Development Phases

Once the development of Site A is complete, depending on the development concept that is built, there may be new decked parking or surface parking around the Site A development that could be used to serve the new buildings and perhaps some park and ride capacity.

In all Joint Development projects at Wilkinsburg and Brushton, PRT should work with potential development partners to assure that parking at each development site is:

- Shared
- Actively Managed
- Unbundled (sold or rented separately from residential or commercial building space)
- Priced according to demand

The next section describes each attribute above in greater detail.

Shared Parking

Shared parking is the ability of multiple land uses or businesses in a development or a district to effectively share parking resources due to variation in the peak usage time of individual uses, the presence of transit, bicycling, and walking opportunities in the district, and accounting for the ability of visitors to a walkable urban place to visit more than one destination without the need to move their vehicle. Sharing parking resources provides the ability for each parking space to be occupied more frequently, maximizing both usage and revenue, as well as lowering initial construction costs.

Actively Managed Parking

Effective active management of parking spaces acknowledges that demand for parking for different uses will vary by the day of the week and time of day, and rules around parking are then set to optimize the use of multiple parking spaces and parking facilities with those usage patterns in mind.

Examples of managed parking include:

- Using on-street spaces for short-term parking to support business activity, while using parking decks or parking lots for full-day parking to accommodate employees or hotel guests.
- Setting a maximum time limit of two or three hours per on-street space to encourage turnover for businesses, regardless of whether spaces are priced or not.
- Allocating parking spaces further from core business areas to business employees to maximize access for customers.
- Coordinating parking assignments across different business hours. For example, a bakery could have dedicated parking spots for customers until 3:00 p.m. and then those spaces are available for any onsite use after closing at 3:00 p.m., whether spaces are priced or not.

Unbundled Parking

Parking Spaces should be leased or sold separately from commercial or residential space. This reduces the rents for residential units and non-residential spaces by the cost associated with the construction of parking spaces. Such a policy allows households with cars to choose to lease a space rather than requiring everyone to pay for the parking spaces through their rents, including the households that may have two driving adults but share one vehicle.

The same is true for commercial tenants. A business may decide that the access afforded by being near the rail station means that they need fewer spaces for their employees and customers than they would in a location with lower levels of transit service.

Priced Parking

Appropriately priced parking encourages turnover for businesses and promotes transit usage. Parking rates are typically determined by market conditions, with parking lots with low demand typically charging less than those with high demand.

Customers appreciate being able to be confident that they will be able to find a space when they drive to a pay-to-park location, and therefore, a best practice in pricing is to charge the lowest price possible (including $0) that still keeps 10 percent to 15 percent of the parking spaces available on one block of a street, or in a specific parking lot or deck.

More expensive rates charged for parking will cause customers to limit their stay on the lot or search out less expensive, possibly less convenient locations to park. It may also encourage people to choose park and ride, transit, or bicycling as ways to reach their destination.

As TOD districts grow and develop, it is likely that some station areas will have priced parking at most times of the day and week, whereas others will only have priced parking on certain days and times. This is a normal part of TOD evolution.

Using Data from Earlier Steps to Influence Subsequent Steps

As PRT's Transit-Oriented Communities program matures, earlier policy actions become learning opportunities to help calibrate future actions. This can be particularly true with parking. After each parking price change or action, PRT can study the following questions to inform future decisions:

- How many cars kept going to the lot that was priced?
- Of those who switched lots, which lots were the most popular after the pricing change?
- How many pre-price-change park and ride users switched to other access modes to transit, such as walking, bicycling, getting dropped off, or local bus?
- How many pre-price-change park and ride users are no longer using transit?

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