

Making Parking Work In Downtown Albuquerque



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Confession: I'm A Shoupista. What Does That Mean?

THE SHOU DOCTRINE

Essays Celebrating Donald Shoup and Parking Reforms

Edited by **Daniel Baldwin Hess**



Typical Attitudes About Parking

- I should be able to park directly in front of my destination for free at all times
- I should not have to walk far from my car to my destination
- Paying for parking is deeply offensive if not un-American



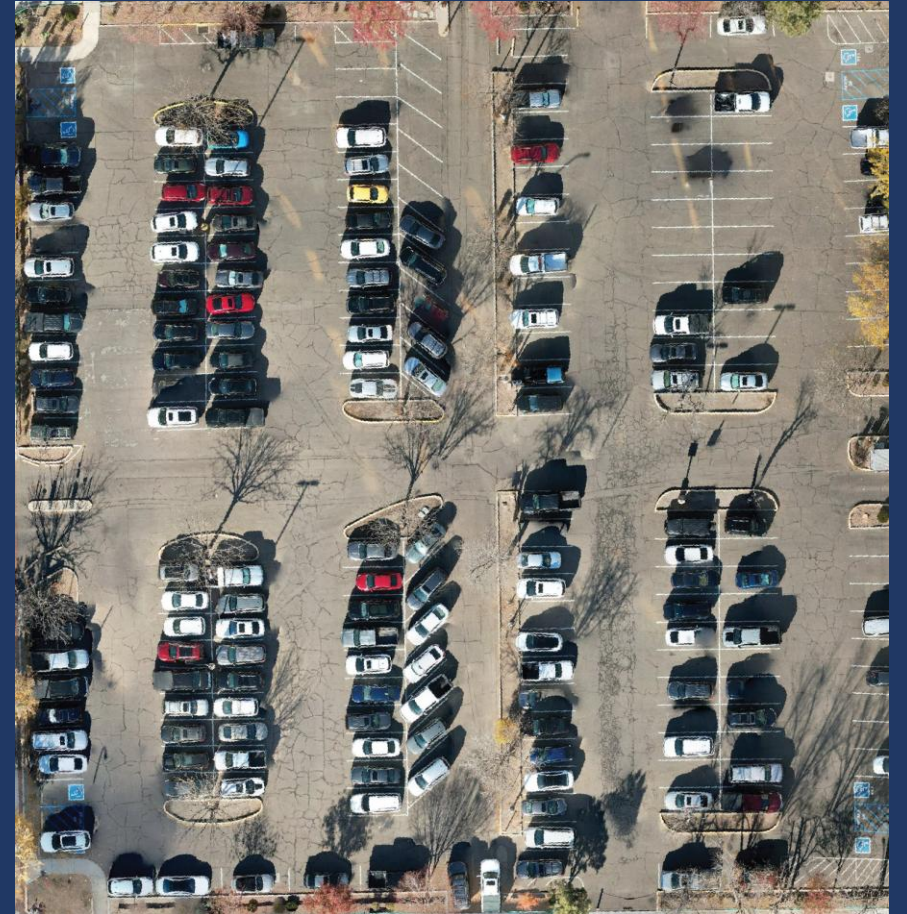
Realistic Attitudes About Parking

- Parking, even parking owned by public agencies, is a limited commodity
- In some cases, demand exceeds supply and therefore parking must be managed by pricing and regulation
- Parking management needs to occur on a district- or subdistrict-wide basis, not at the individual parcel level



Typical Parking Behavior

- Motorists will follow the path of least resistance
- They will seek free on-street parking first, often cruising
- They will often overlook off-street opportunities
- They will usually spill over into unregulated adjacent areas



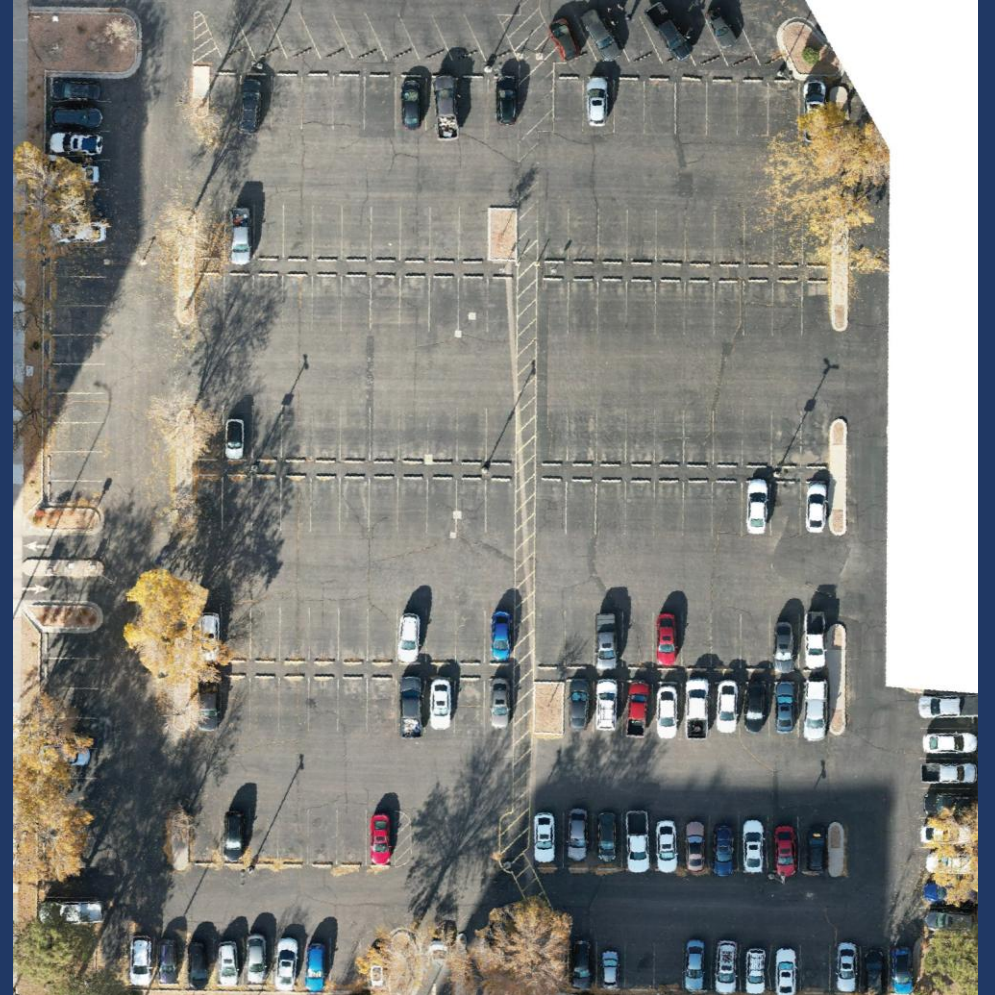
Typical Circumstance: Demand

- There's often **more demand than supply** in prime locations
- This leads to “cruising,” which causes congestion



Typical Circumstance: Supply

- There's often **an over-supply** of parking not far away.
- But sometimes it is not used because of expectation of proximity



Typical Practice: On-Street Parking

- Prime spaces are underpriced relative to demand
- This leads to
 - Lack of turnover
 - Cruising
 - Congestion



Typical Practice: On-Street Parking

- Pricing is often based on longstanding practice, not actual demand
- In entertainment districts, for example, this means parking is often **free** during **high-demand periods**



Typical Practice: Garages

- Parking garages are managed individually
- This leads to **overpricing** and demand distortions



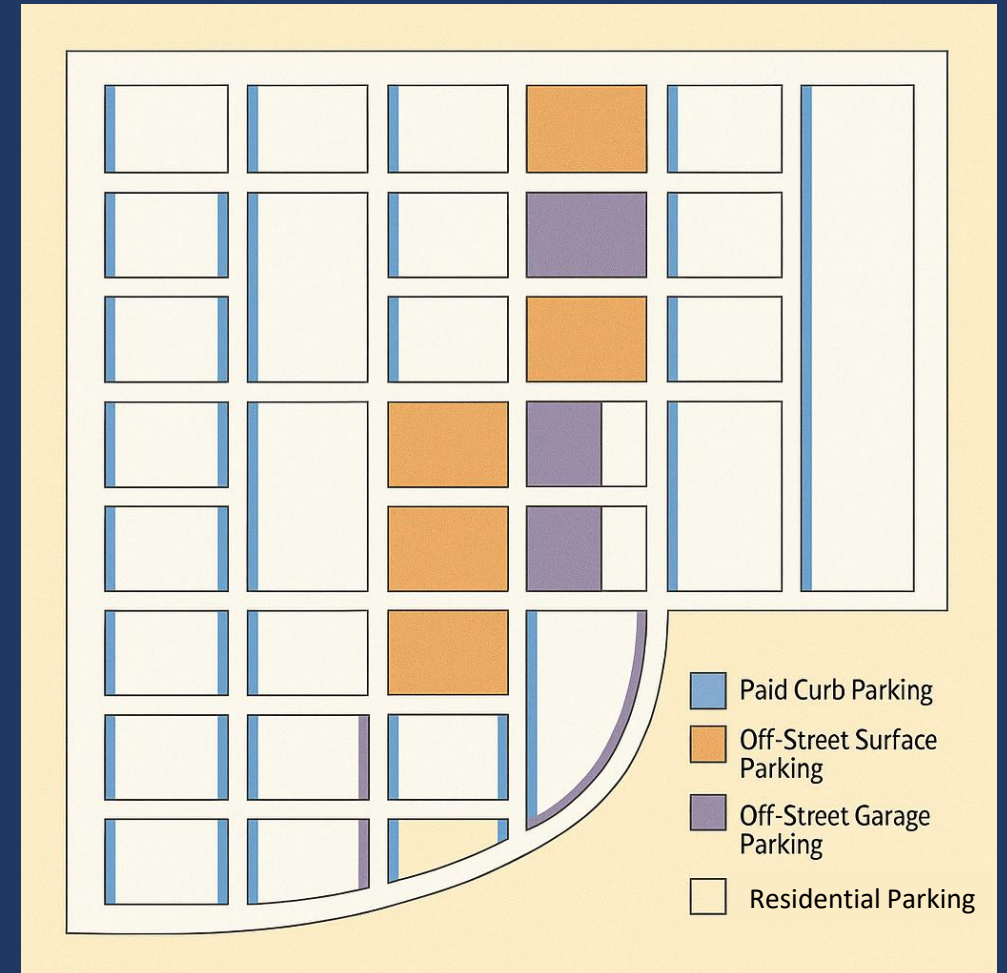
Typical Responses to Parking “Problems”

- More parking spaces
- More parking enforcement



Some Emerging Practices

- Managing Downtown Parking **as a system**
- Pricing based on **demand**
- Pricing more **dynamically**
- Pricing curb parking **higher** than garage parking
- Creating parking **benefit districts**



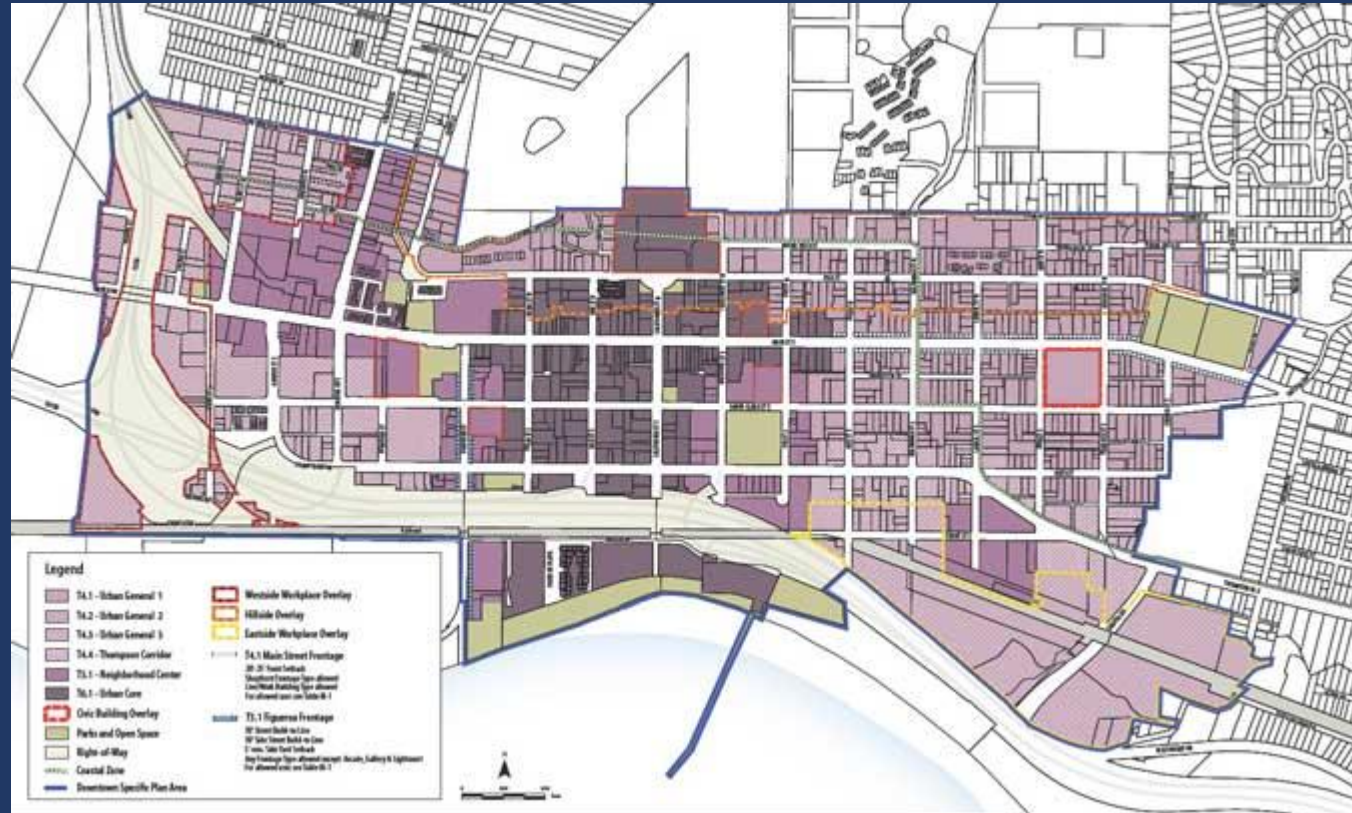
A Real-Life Parking Story



*Ventura, California: A beachfront downtown ...
where parking was the key to revitalization*



Early '90s Specific Plan created parking waivers in central part of downtown



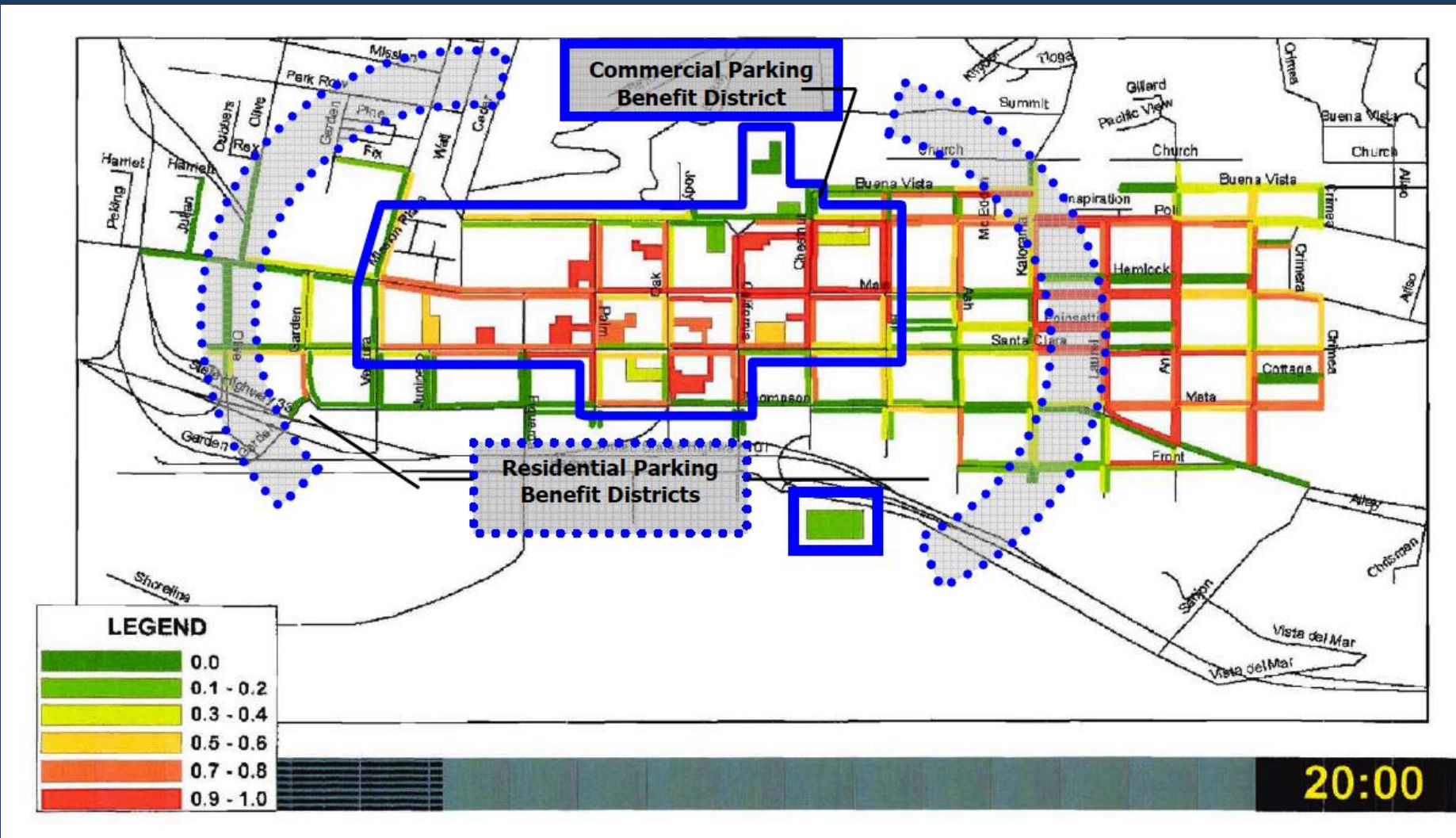
Stimulated significant development
in the downtown



1,581 *public off-street parking spaces*
1,906 *private off-street parking spaces*
(not all 1,906 spaces mapped)



Analysis of parking utilization



New system

DOWNTOWN VENTURA PARKING



Immediate Practical Effect

- Employees parked in lots, not on street
- Street parking was ample adjacent to popular businesses
- Many business started reimbursing customers for cost of parking



Now, there was political fallout

People were confused at first



Some thought: No cruising = no business



The Mayor was reamed on right-wing talk radio



But business went up



Now, things changed during COVID

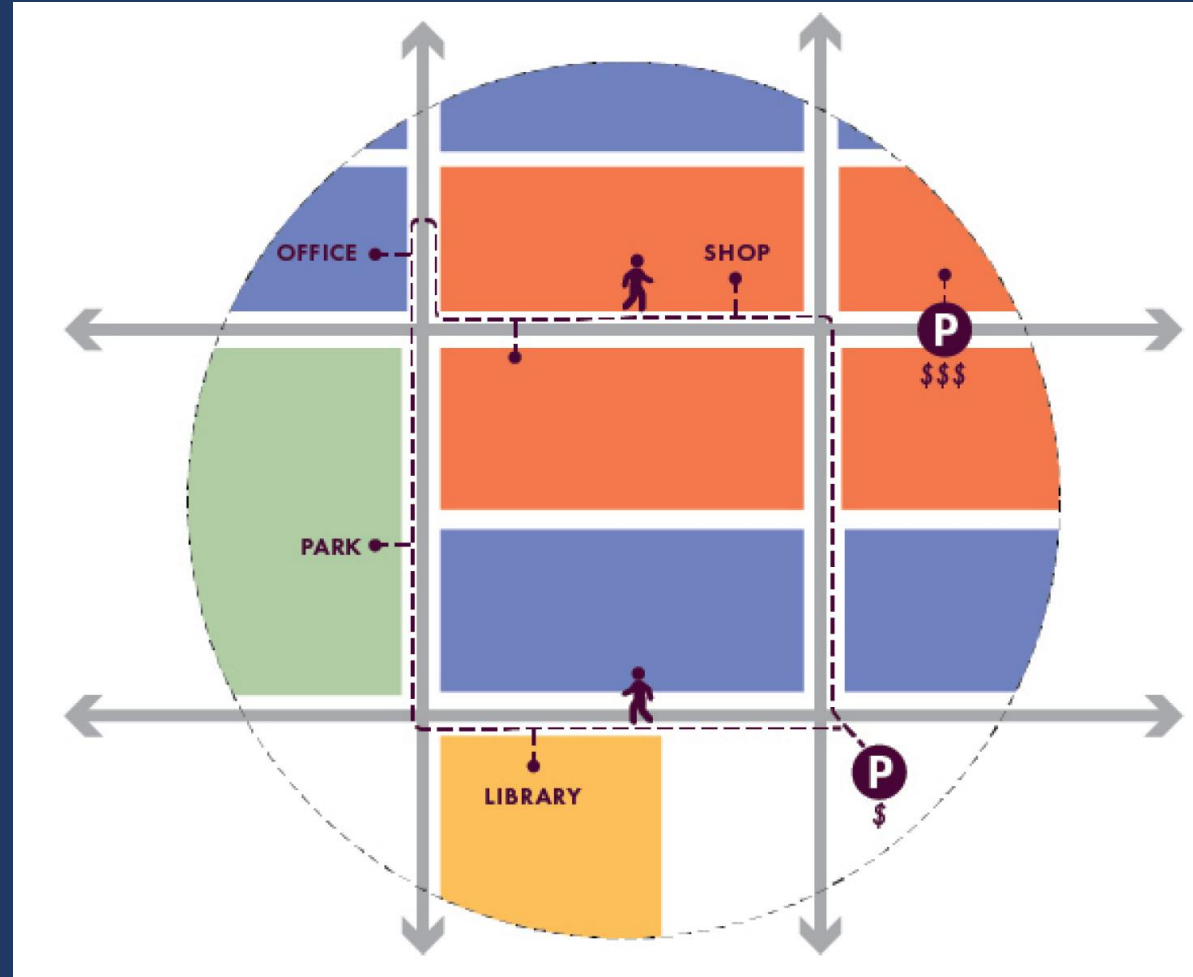
But the lessons
remain the same



Five Things to Think About

1. Manage Parking (Including Curbs) As A System

- Motorists **don't think of parking facilities discretely.**
- Neither should **policymakers!**
- Promote **"Park Once"** approach



2. Use Pricing to Balance Parking Utilization

- Use **demand** to set prices
- Don't underprice **on-street** parking
- Price **public garage** parking competitively



3. Make It Easy To Change Pricing

- Parking demand is **dynamic** (i.e. it changes)
- **Pricing** must be able to respond and adjust quickly.
- Pricing should be **removed from politics** as much as possible



4. Create Parking Benefit Districts

- City **shares revenue** with local district
- District revenue used for **local improvements**
- Can increase **local support for pricing**
- Improvements can lead to **increased revenue**



5. Unlock Private Underutilized Parking Assets

- Many parking facilities – public and private – are **underutilized**
- Can be made available to the public or **businesses that need parking**
- “You’d be surprised what people will do when you offer them **money**” – *Donald Shoup*



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Substack: The Future Of Where

