

2016-2018 Downtown Access Study Executive Summary



Prepared by Buffalo Place Inc.
For the Access & Infrastructure Committee
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2016 - 2018 Downtown Access Study

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Executive Summary

Introduction

Downtown building owners, managers, and employers report difficulty securing tenants, and housing employees due to an inability to identify available parking. Buffalo Place Inc. responded to this concern and kicked-off a focused review of downtown access in May of 2016. A committee of interested downtown stakeholders was formed, including property owners and managers, leasing agents, realtors, employers, parking, access and infrastructure providers including the City of Buffalo, Erie County, NFTA, NYS DOT, Thruway Authority, GBNRTC, Go Buffalo Niagara, BNMC, and private and not for profit parking operators.

The primary goal of this Downtown Access Study is to support increased occupancy, utilization and vitality of Downtown Buffalo. As determined by the land use inventory in this study, there are currently 5.7 Million square feet of vacant building space Downtown, more than 20% of building space. Of the vacant building square footage, 1.7 million is vacant Class A and B office space. Sufficient access is critical to fill these spaces.

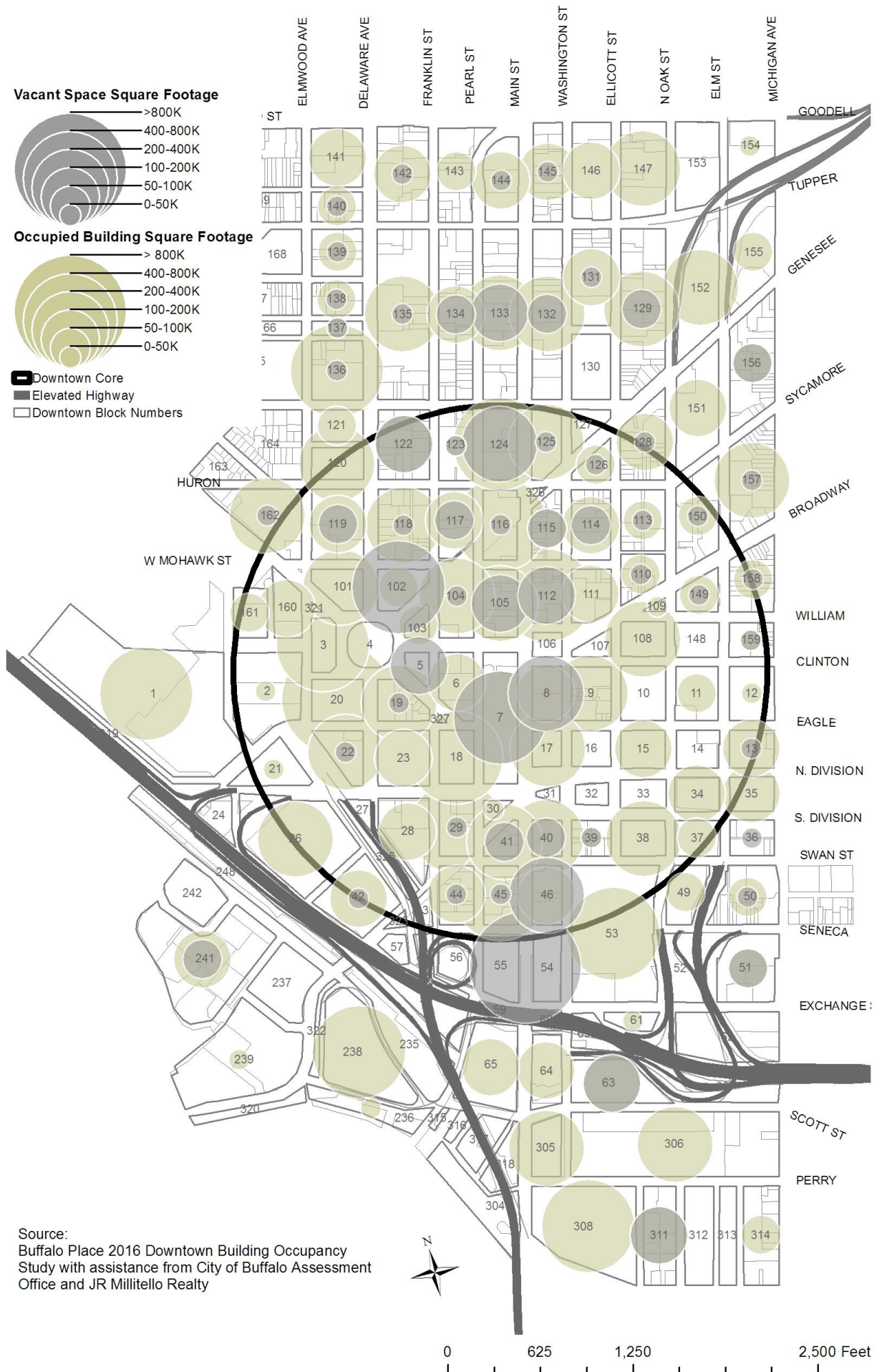
While building managers and realtors emphasized that lack of sufficient parking is an impediment to increasing activity in Downtown Buffalo, other partners encouraged greater utilization of alternate means of access including transit, bicycle travel, and shared automobile use. Using the 2000 Access and Infrastructure Task Group effort, *Destination Downtown Buffalo 2002*, as a model, the committee performed an in-depth dive into downtown access, capturing data on current and potential future demand, as well as access options and current utilization rates. The committee has been guided by the principles of smart design, the access recommendations of the *Queen City Hub Strategic Plan for Downtown Buffalo*, and the Buffalo Green Code.

The Access & Infrastructure Committee developed a list of concerns, desired outcomes and identified the information required to develop effective conclusions (Appendix A1 and A2). Staff proceeded to collect information and to present policy questions to the committee for discussion, evaluation and guidance.

The following map illustrates 2017 Downtown vacant and underutilized space per block in gray, identifying the major properties that motivate this Access initiative. The committee, with a goal of putting fallow space in downtown to work for the community, sought ways to improve downtown access, particularly in blocks where access was seen as a problem for putting to work nearby vacant space or for developing underutilized parcels.

The *Destination Downtown Buffalo 2002* report successfully accomplished its goals. The re-pricing of curb parking, creation of 532 curb spaces, and public investment in the expansion of two parking ramps (+1,400 spaces) set the stage for the last decade of downtown growth, including a 3.86 million increase in building square footage, and a 787,513 SF increase in occupied office space. The access improvements that were brought about by that study have now been fully absorbed. Additional capacity is required to facilitate another round of downtown private sector investment.

Building Occupancy and Vacancy



Study Method

Access Study Parameters

Study Area

The study area is bounded by South Elmwood / Terrace/ Skyway on the west, Edward/Goodell on the north, Michigan on the east, and the river on the south. See map on page 32.

Peak Hour Study Period

The Access Study investigates Downtown during the Monday to Friday, daytime workweek, the peak time for downtown use of the parking supply and transit services. Downtown evening and entertainment uses on weekends are increasing, but do not approach the capacity issues of the workweek.

Downtown Population –

Estimate of Downtown Buffalo CBD Employment – 2018

Buffalo Place found that we had collected sufficient survey information during the Access Study to make a reasonable estimate of downtown employment. Based on the number of parked cars noted in the 2016 curb and off-street parking surveys, and the Downtown Buffalo 2018 Transportation Mode Survey completed by downtown employees, Buffalo Place estimates total downtown employment of 55,362. Of these downtown employees, 46,135 work during the weekday, peak-hour study period. Details can be found on page 26.

Estimate of Downtown Buffalo CBD Residents – 2018

Based upon the 2012-2016 US Census American Community Survey Five-Year Estimates, BUDC reported occupancy trends, and Buffalo Place's collected housing unit data, Buffalo Place estimates the population within the Central Business District (between Goodell/Edward Streets, Elmwood Avenue, the Michigan Avenue and Elmwood Avenue) to be 2,061 residents. Details can be found on page 28 and in Appendix D.

Estimate of Downtown Buffalo CBD Visitors – 2018

The estimate of downtown visitors during the weekday study period is based on the number of short-term parkers, both at the curb and in lots/ramps, the number of hotel guest based on number of rooms and hotel occupancy rates, and an approximate number of visitors who travel via Metro bus or rail. Buffalo Place estimates that in addition to the downtown workforce, approximately 4,230 people visit downtown each weekday. Details are on page 28 and in Appendix E.

Methodology

Current use of downtown access methods was documented, including:

- Supply and utilization survey of off-street parking
- Supply and utilization of on-street (curb) parking
- Transit ridership and use of pre-tax and corporate pass transit incentives
- Survey of Downtown Employee Transportation Mode
- Supply of public bicycle racks and Reddy Bikeshare facilities

Downtown land uses within the study area were documented. Current demand for parking was calculated for the major downtown land uses during the weekday study period. Demand factors were balanced until they reflected the existing use of downtown parking spaces.

Future development projects mentioned in local media were evaluated and, with the assistance of several downtown developers, a list of projects likely to occur within the next five years was developed, see page 69. The impact of these development projects on downtown parking supply and utilization was calculated.

Commercial office space was tracked over the previous decade to identify occupancy trends. Conservative, moderate and aggressive office-absorption rate trends were identified and applied to Class A and B office spaces with occupancies lower than 85%, the occupancy rate where buildings are essentially fully occupied within normally expected shifts of tenancies. The impact of these office absorption trends on parking utilization was calculated. See pages 72 through 79.

The Access & Infrastructure Committee reviewed projected estimates of parking utilization and determined that unused parking at the periphery of downtown does not address the persistent deficit in the core area, which is limiting building occupancy. The Access & Infrastructure Committee determined that at least 1,000 additional ways to access Downtown Buffalo would be needed to free up existing core parking areas, so that vacant core buildings could become occupied.

The availability and use of transit was documented (pages 87 through 99), as was the availability of bicycle facilities for employees (pages 100 through 104). Downtown Employees were surveyed about how they currently commute to Downtown for work, and their attitudes about different modes of travel. This helped to identify alternative options and incentives that could be considered for encouraging employees to commute without using limited core parking spaces (pages 105 through 128).

The Committee developed goals for 1,000 new ways to access downtown including: creation of new curb parking spaces, management of privately held parking, carpooling, converting parkers to transit, encouraging use of low-cost satellite parking facilities and price adjustments (page 132).

Finally, recent changes in the Downtown parking supply and in projected development projects and office absorption rates were reviewed. Projected Downtown parking supply and utilization was recalculated. Additional solutions were recommended by the Access & Infrastructure Committee (page 135).

Key Findings

Initial Off-Street Parking Findings:

- There is a surplus of off-street parking in Downtown, but it is not located within walking distance of core employment.
- 59% of off-street parking is available to the general public, but 41% is held for private use by the owner and/or tenants.
- Parking available to the general public is used more intensely than private parking, with two Core districts over capacity and a third only 54 spaces from capacity.
- Privately held parking is less efficiently used, with a greater percentage of unused spaces.
- Privately held parking has been increasing in Downtown and parking available to the general public has been declining. Upcoming changes in ownership of two Buffalo Civic Auto Ramps will further reduce the portion of the parking supply that is available to the general public, and make it more difficult to create an efficient supply of parking that will meet the needs of Downtown business, but not overwhelm other uses.
- One solution to lack of available parking in the core is to find ways to utilize available periphery parking spaces.

Initial On-Street Parking Findings:

- Curb parking regulations and restrictions have generally been in place for ten years. This is a good time for review, and to identify if more spaces can be put to efficient use for short-term parkers who patronize downtown retail, restaurant and service businesses, or can be made available for longer duration parkers who work or live nearby.

- Curb parking availability is limited for the general public, especially short-term spaces. Longer duration parking at short-term meters and increased restricted parking contribute to this limitation.
- The above observation is supported by the Downtown Buffalo 2018 Transportation Mode Survey. 2% of respondents report regularly feeding a short duration meter for all day parking. The 47 respondents represent 752 Downtown employees. This removes 59% of the publicly available short duration downtown parking meters from use. If not occupied by all-day parkers, at least 3,000 short duration patrons would have used those 2 hour metered spaces each day.
- Restricted parking spaces have lower occupancy rates than curb parking available to the public. Perhaps some restricted parking could be freed up for use by the general public. There also is additional informal restricted parking usage with parked cars placing government department signs and restaurant menus on their dashboards, not all of which are authorized.
- Average duration of parked vehicles is over 2 hours, and most spaces are signed for 2 hour parking maximum. Parkers are returning to feed meters and staying for longer durations at short-term meters. Mid-range duration parkers needing 3 to 5 hours of parking seem to be feeding meters regularly. This may be due to increased pricing of off-street short-term parking.
- It may also be time to consider balancing curb-parking rates to make feeding meters less attractive. Most itinerant off-street parking rates result in parkers paying for a day of parking within 2 or 3 hours. If a parker needs 3 to 5 hours of parking, they must pay the full daily rate. Perhaps a possible solution could be tested at a public parking facility by increasing the number of hours of parking to five before charging the maximum daily rate.

Combined Parking Supply Findings:

- While there is a surplus of parking spaces in Downtown as a whole, spaces are not available close enough to demand in current Downtown Core districts, especially the historic Retail Core.
- The Downtown core area, including the historic Retail Core, Government, Main Genesee and Office districts, has 38% of downtown's parking spaces but contains 65% of the demand for parking with more consumer businesses and the 65% of Downtown's employees who work in the core.
- Thousands of core parkers currently walk to periphery parking, especially from the Government District, as documented in the employee survey and calculated demand estimation.
- The Office district contains the core-parking surplus with 838 surplus spaces of the net 808 Downtown Core surplus. At the time of the on and off-street parking surveys in 2016, six of the Office District building were in transition to new uses and were under construction.
- The development projects expected to occur over the next five years, combined with conservative office expansion following the 10-year trend, will put the Downtown Core into a 500-car deficit.
- The Core deficit expands to 630 and 760 if office growth is moderate or more aggressive
- As has been stated repeatedly by downtown employers and developers, tenants and employers must know that there is some available parking nearby before they will commit to sign a lease or move employees Downtown.
- Other access solutions can help, and should be aggressively pursued. GBNRTC and Go Buffalo Niagara are able to work with employers and landlords to identify and implement solutions
- Publicly managed, shared parking is the most efficient parking option. Private restricted facilities are less intensively used. If our goal is to minimize the amount of space dedicated to parking yet to provide sufficient supply to support occupancy of vacant buildings, then publicly managed, shared parking should be the preferred alternative.
- Structured parking is a much more efficient use of Downtown land to supply the parking spaces necessary for vacant buildings to become occupied. 37% of the current Downtown parking spaces are in ramps and garages, but they only take up 4% of the Downtown footprint and 13% of the total parking supply footprint.

- It is time to look at replacing some existing surface parking lots with more efficient structured parking. This will allow the supply of parking to increase while also freeing up new land areas available for development. Developers have noted that the supply of available building stock is diminishing, creating pressure, finally, for conversion of parking lots to development projects. The recent housing report by The Partnership advocates for use of surface parking lots as development sites.
- Green Code/ Unified Development Ordinance requirements for active uses at the street level of structured parking facilities have a positive effect on street life over existing open parking lots.
- There are other city models where a separate company manages surplus private parking spaces for owners, and makes them available to the general public.
- Moderate pricing changes should be considered as an option to promote helpful access behavior changes, e.g. preserving short-term curb-parking for short-duration visits to Downtown; use of low-cost satellite parking facilities for cost sensitive employees; converting parkers to transit; and encouraging carpooling, bicycling and walking. Moderately increased fees may be more acceptable to the public if they are dedicated to a fund that will reduce the cost of less convenient access options, with the purpose of making available priority core parking spaces needed to achieve increased building occupancy.
- Curb parking rate changes should be selected to support high occupancy of curb parking spaces while still leaving some spaces available for short duration parkers to cycle through. Rates that are perceived as too high will result in fewer parked cars, lower revenues and increased demand for expensive and difficult to provide off-street parking. When spaces do not generate enough income to cover meter and maintenance expenses, they should be put to work for downtown by providing free additional parking supply.
- Off-Street parking fee increases should be phased in over time so that employee dissatisfaction does not result in tenants relocating to available suburban space. Increased building vacancy is followed by reduced assessed values and lower property tax generation.

Transit Findings/Recommendations:

- Downtown is served by both Metro Rail and Metro Bus, with 9% of downtown employees reporting that they use transit for commuting.
- Use of Pre-tax flex benefits for purchase of transit passes by employees help make transit more competitive, but the logistics for employees to purchase passes are inconvenient due to IRS regulations and NFTA's use of PayPal for credit card processing. Employees often must go to NFTA's Cash Office at 181 Ellicott Street to purchase passes or the employer must purchase passes for the employee via invoice and company check. This difficulty will be mitigated when NFTA migrates to their new fare collection system.
- The new NFTA fare system will allow purchase and reloading of Metro Passes with pre-tax benefit debit cards eligible under IRS guidelines.
- Efforts to expand the use of pre-tax transit flex benefits should utilize the new fare collection system, rather than attempting to work around current logistics.
- NFTA's Corporate Pass Program, another excellent benefit option for employees, is currently being tested. This program includes a pre-tax purchase of transit passes component and requires a minimum employer contribution of \$10 per month, combined with NFTA's volume discount of \$10 per month. Transit passes could be reduced from \$75 per month to approximately \$48, depending on the employee's personal tax rate.
- NFTA is willing to offer the Corporate Pass volume discount to smaller employers if an "umbrella" organization organizes the Metro pass purchases. The BNMC is an excellent model of this in the Medical Campus area. This will be an important goal for downtown to encourage greater utilization

of transit for employee commuting. It will also be a way to offer the Corporate Pass discount to employers offering transit-benefit debit cards, who may be willing to contribute to employee monthly transit costs to match NFTA's discount.

- A goal for growth in use of Metro Perks and pre-tax transit benefits for Downtown Buffalo might be 1 % of downtown employees. This is based on the experience of a Downtown employer with offices in other regions where transit is more easily purchased with pre-tax income. The number of downtown employees has been calculated to be 55,362. One percent would be 553 people.

Bicycle Commute Findings

- 1% of Downtown employees report bicycle use as their primary mode of transportation for the commute between work and home. This equates to 515 downtown employees.
- When specifically asked how often they bicycle to work, 2% of employee survey respondents report daily and 2% report often. This equates to 2,000 committed bicycle commuters.
- 64% of employee respondents report owning a bicycle and 12% report that they have ridden to work at least once, establishing a pool of 4,464 potential bicycle riders.
- Based on the survey results, we can assume that 500 to 2,000 downtown employees are regular bicycle riders and that they need secure bicycle parking to avoid theft. Many may have access to indoor parking, but there is also a need for publicly provided, secure bicycle parking for committed riders.
- Plans to support growth of bicycle use are in place and should be supported. The *2016 Buffalo Bike Master Plan Update* identifies catalyst projects to be built over the next decade Downtown, to encourage additional bicycle use by less adventurous riders. These include: improvement of the Broadway Five-Point intersection at William and Ellicott to Michigan; and marked lane or cycle tracks on Church and Division between S. Elmwood and Michigan.
- The City of Buffalo plans additional separated bike lanes on S. Elmwood and Lower Terrace.
- Use of ReddyBike at large satellite parking lots was identified as another incentive to move parkers from core parking locations so they may “park and bike” to core work locations.
- Secure bicycle parking near bike-commuter employment areas to prevent theft is identified as an unmet need that would encourage more use of bicycle travel for commuting. Secure bicycle parking may be provided as an enclosed space, a lock-up cage, or as individual lockers. Individual lockers must have a transparent component so they will not become used for unrelated storage.

Downtown Buffalo 2018 Transportation Mode Survey Findings

- The number of people commuting to work by car has increased in the last 20 years and the number of people using public transit had declined. Survey responses indicated that 82% of Downtown employees are driving alone and 5% are carpooling.
- 2% of respondents, or between 752 to 886 1,100, employees, indicated that they are parking at 2-hour meters and paying the meter throughout the workday, leading to 59% to 69% of the short-term parking meters being used by employees and not available to short-term parkers and downtown visitors.
- Approximately 16% of respondents indicate that they have trouble finding parking. This equates to between 7,344 to 8,858 employees who are having trouble finding all day parking in Downtown.
- Many people are currently walking a distance to find parking. Approximately 19% of respondents, which represents 8,300 to 10,518 employees, are walking further than a 5-minute walk for parking. This corresponds to the parking demand conclusion generated from calculated land use that thousands of core area employees, particularly in the Government District, are already walking to periphery parking.

- Approximately 15,120 people who do not currently carpool indicated that they would be interested in carpooling if they knew someone to carpool with, had assistance finding a carpooling partner, had priority parking for carpoolers, or other incentives.
- About 10,032 employees ride transit from time to time, as opposed to daily or never. They are a potential target group for conversion to become daily transit riders.
- Employees who are given subsidies for parking are more likely to drive alone. Employees who are given subsidies for transit are more likely to use transit.

Parking as a Land Use Findings

- The volume of parking as a proportion of Downtown has been discussed at length with estimates as high as 50% of Downtown's land area being erroneously noted as parking in local media. The 2017 Land Use inventory, updated in 2018, found 10,374,942 square feet of parking of all types including ramps, lots, private and publicly available. Parking is 26% of the 39.6 million square feet of land and buildings in Downtown Buffalo. These parking areas cover 33% of the 19.7 million square foot surface footprint of Downtown.
- Consolidation of parking lots into efficient structured parking has been discussed as a goal since the *Queen City Hub Plan* for Downtown Buffalo was released in 2004. Ramps and garages make up 46% of Downtown's parking square footage, but take up only 4 % of the Downtown footprint and 13% of the total parking footprint. Parking lots make up 54% of parking square footage and 28% of the Downtown footprint.

2018 Update of 2016-2017 Analysis

Since the parking analysis work completed in 2017, several changes have occurred:

- In 2018, the Court/Franklin lot at 50 Court Street was converted from publicly available to private use for the Public Safety Campus. Occupancy of the Police and Fire Headquarters at the Michael J. Dillon Federal Court House brought new employees into the core. The use of the building was anticipated in our future development scenario; however, the employee only use of the parking lot was not included. This results in a loss of 65 parking publicly available spaces in the Core.
- The conversion of the One Seneca Ramp and Main Place Mall Ramp from public to private ownership will be occurring over the next year. Additional demand at the One Seneca Ramp was already included in our future development scenario with the development project occurring there. While the future operation of the ramp at Main Place is unknown, it is likely that more spaces will be dedicated to private use to provide for occupancy of upper floors at Main Place and the attached Liberty Building. Based on our estimates and the estimated parking demand factors to fill this space with tenants new to downtown, 389 spaces of the current parking supply at Main Place Ramp would no longer be publicly available within the Downtown Core.
- The expected development at 201 Ellicott Street (currently the Ellicott-Oak Lot) has progressed and the lot is expected to close in the spring of 2019 for brownfield remediation. As currently proposed, only fourteen parking spaces are to be included in the development. The result is a loss of 375 spaces within the Downtown Core not included in development forecasts, at the same time that the project adds demand for additional parking in the area from residential and other uses.

Projects in the future demand scenario seem to be on track as predicted, including:

1. Public Safety Campus – former Dillon Courthouse – opened summer 2018
2. Market Arcade Movie Theater – opened summer 2018
3. St Paul's Parish Commons Apartments – opened Spring 2018
4. 500 Pearl Street – to open winter 2018-2019

5. The Marin – former Marine Trust and Roblin Buildings – under construction
6. Explore and More Museum - Under Construction
7. Labatt's Warehouse – former High Temp Fabrication building –Restaurant opened Fall 2018
8. Seneca One – Under construction
9. The Antonio Retail Space Buildout – Theatre opened Oct 2018, retail space built
10. Alexandre Apartments – opened spring 2018
11. 523 Main Street – Restaurant space opened summer 2018
12. New Development Parcels at Canalside – Proposal Selected
13. Wyndham Hotel/restaurant – former AM&As – Construction underway

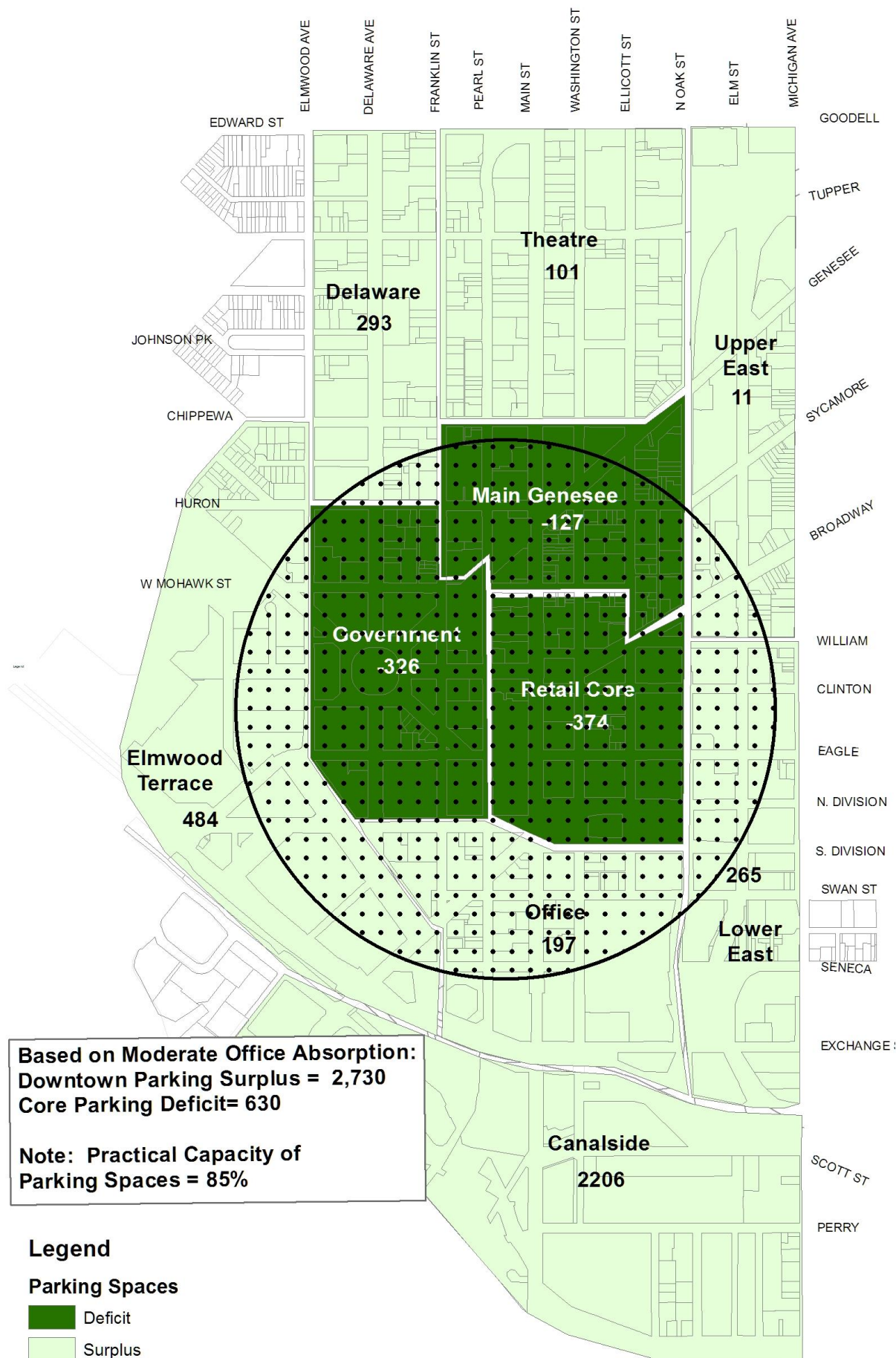
In total, a loss of an additional 829 spaces is expected within the Downtown Core because of these changes. When applied to the Moderate (2%) Office Absorption numbers previously calculated, the parking surplus for Downtown as a whole would drop from 2,730 to 1,901 spaces. The Core parking deficit would increase from 630 spaces to 1,459 spaces. While not yet included in these calculations, based on the preliminary design discussions, an additional 60 parking spaces will be needed in the historical Retail Core, during the workday, to provide parking for the residential units planned for 201 Ellicott Street. The 150 spaces needed by those residents in the off-peak evening and weekend hours are not considered in this analysis.

The following *Table: Updated 2018 Parking Surplus/Deficit* illustrates these changes.

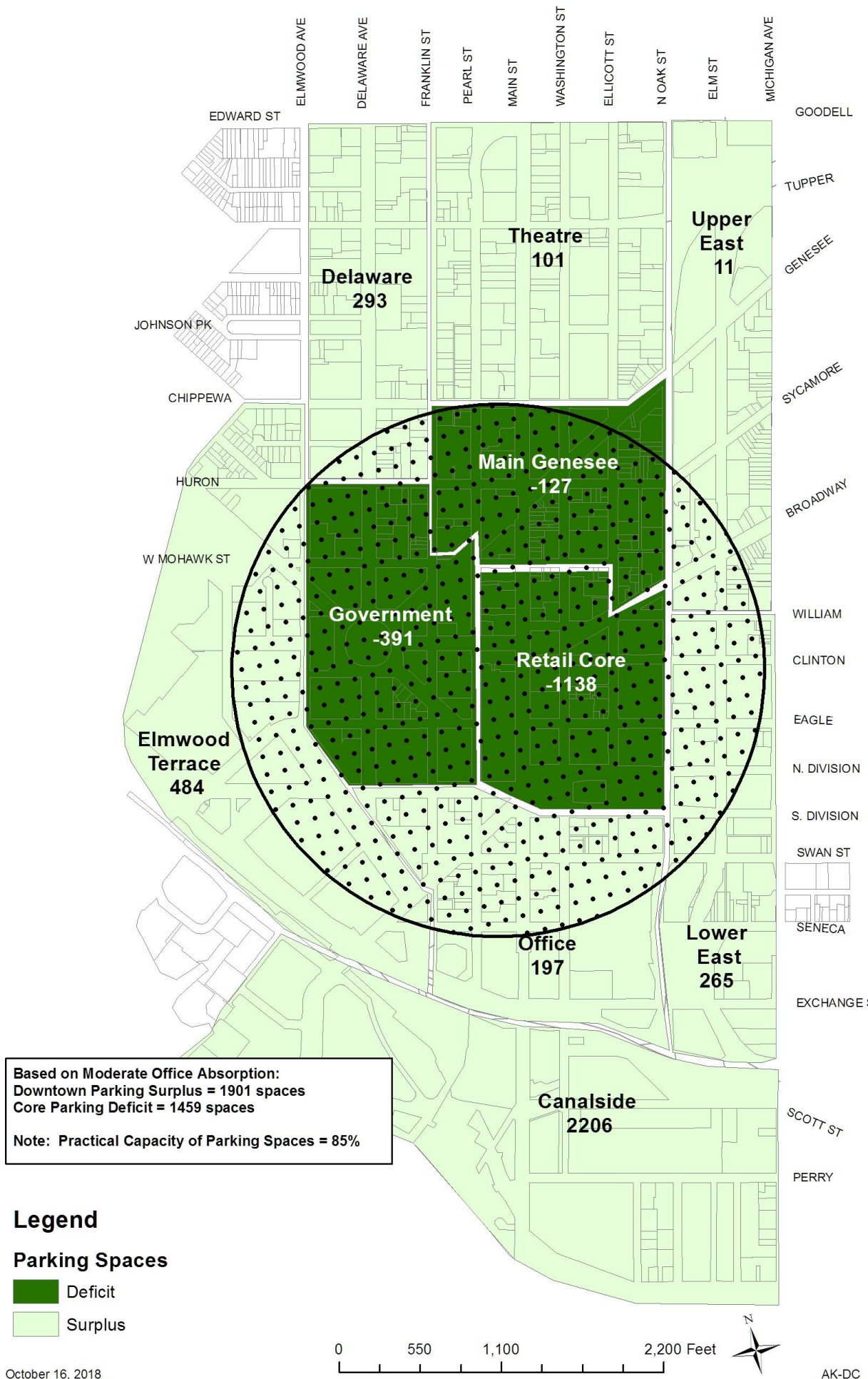
District	Surplus/Deficit Moderate Used in Study	Surplus/Deficit Moderate with 2018 Changes
Delaware	293	293
Theatre	101	101
Upper East	11	11
Main Genesee	-127	-127
Elmwood/Terrace	484	484
Government	-326	-391
Retail Core	-374	-1138
Lower East	265	265
Office	197	197
Canalside	2206	2206
Total Surplus/Deficit	2730	1901
Core Surplus/Deficit	-630	-1459

The following maps illustrate the *Surplus/Deficit with Calculated Future Development and Moderate (2%) Office Absorption*. The 2016 map illustrates *Surplus/Deficit by District* and 2018 is displayed by *District and by Block* so the problem areas can be more easily identified.

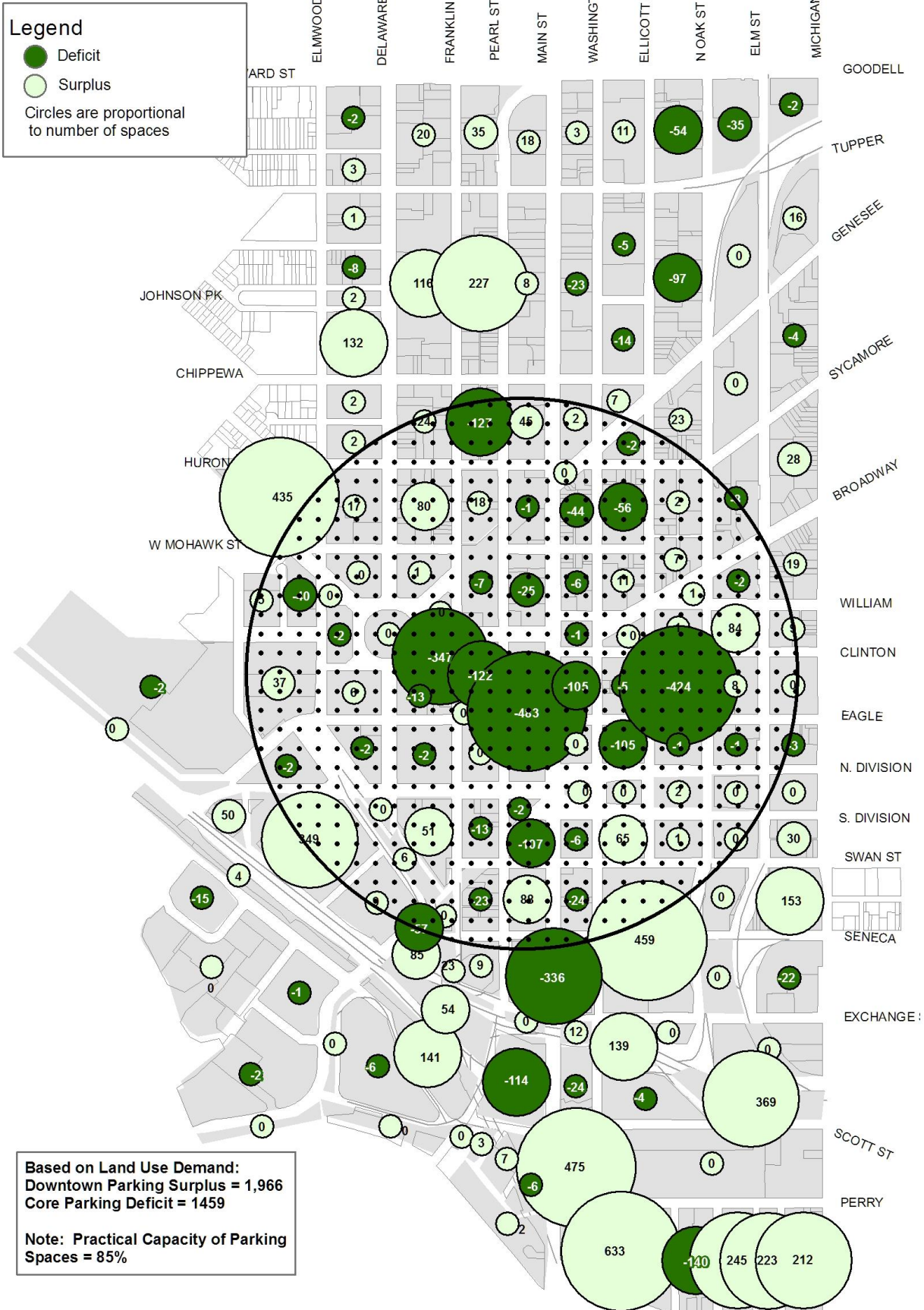
2016 Surplus/Deficit per District with Calculated Future Development and Moderate (2%) Office Absorption



2018 Updated Surplus/Deficit per District with Calculated Future Development, Moderate Office Absorption and New Changes



2018 Updated Surplus/Deficit per Block with Calculated Future Development, Moderate Office Absorption and New Changes



Recommendations

Identify 1,000+ New Ways to Access Downtown Buffalo.

The Access & Infrastructure Committee of Buffalo Place Inc. conducted a two-year study of Downtown Access with the goal of supporting occupancy, activity and health. The major study conclusion is that at least 1,000 additional ways to access downtown Buffalo will be necessary to facilitate expected development projects and to secure occupancy of vacant buildings.

Specific Recommendations for 1,000 New Ways to Access Downtown:

	Recommendation Summary	1,000 New Ways to Access Downtown
1	Create New Curb Parking Spaces	200
2	Convert Parkers to Transit	200
3	Use Price to Move Core Parkers to Satellite Parking Facilities	200
4	Offer Joint Management of Surplus Private Parking Spaces	100
5	Offer a BCAR Carpool Incentive Program for a Net Loss of Monthly Parkers	50
6	Use Price to Encourage Periphery Parking. Dedicate Moderately Increased Fees to support the Access Program of Non-traditional Transportation/ Parking Choices	250

Recommendation Details

1. Create 200 new curb parking spaces
 - A. Staff identified some 300 potential spaces to be considered for additional parking. City of Buffalo Public Works and Parking Departments are reviewing the list to identify which spaces can be put in place and which may not be feasible. Details are in Appendix M.
 - 288 proposed spaces are under review,
 - 14 have been approved,
 - 10 were found not possible by City Public Works.
2. Convert 200 Parkers to Transit. Specific program ideas include:
 - A. Offer a Free Try Out Transit Program to Downtown Employees who may not have experience riding Metro Bus or Rail.

A limited version of this program was identified as eligible for funding under CMAQ and was included in a recent grant application by NFTA with GBNRTC. A reduced price metro pass (\$35, a \$40 deduction) in the month of May for participants who register for Air Quality Action Day updates in the Clean Air NY program. If this application is awarded, funding would be available for 500 participants to test lower cost transit during the three-year grant program.
 - B. Market Try-Out Transit to BCAR parkers, for a two-month duration, offering no-risk return into the BCAR system. A similar program was effective in the late 1990s.

A specific program for BCAR parkers would not be eligible for CMAQ funding as it targets a specific group. The month of May reduced price program described above can be marketed to BCAR monthly parkers along with the general population, and BCAR could allow any

participants a no-risk trial, if desired. This idea can be pursued if the CMAQ grant is awarded.

- C. Encourage companies to offer pre-tax flex transit benefits to employees – Metro Perks program
 - Employees can save 10 – 37% of transit pass fees, depending on their personal tax rate. Most would save 22% or less, see page 98. Employers also save FICA on the tax savings.
 - The best timing for this option is after NFTA launches their new fare system, as logistics for purchase of Pre-Tax Metro passes are currently complicated.
- D. Expand Corporate Pass Program (\$10 volume discount to employees from NFTA if matched by an equal or greater contribution by the employer.)
 - Employee transit passes would be reduced to \$55 per month before additional pre-tax savings are subtracted. Most employees would purchase passes for \$43 to \$50 per month, depending on their personal tax rate.
 - Market to large employers (NFTA requires 25+ participants per company to obtain the volume discount)
 - Find an umbrella organization to package and offer discounts to smaller companies as the BNMC is doing for the medical campus
 - Cover umbrella organization out of pocket expenses as part of overall access support program
3. Encourage 200 cost sensitive parkers to relocate from BCAR core spaces to underutilized periphery parking spaces by providing a group discount.
 - Requires funding to reduce parking fees sufficiently. The program offered by M&T Bank has attracted users at a rate of \$19/month for KeyBank Arena ramp parking and \$29/month for HarborCenter Ramp Parking, both less than posted monthly rates.
 - BCAR has allocated some funds to support satellite parking for 2018-9. Additional funding from the overall Access Program will be needed to reach the 200-car goal.
 - The future DL&W Metro Rail Station was thought to be a permanent solution for this option, but needs review now that a design concept is available. Current station access is oriented towards the foot of Main Street. This access path may be too far from the parking supply at Illinois (KeyBank Arena Ramp), Mississippi, Baltimore and Columbia Streets to attract users.
4. Open an additional 100 publicly available off-street parking spaces by offering joint management and marketing of surplus, privately held parking, currently reserved for use by the owner or tenants.
 - Attempt to make matches with a private parking operator to manage
 - If not adopted by a private owner, this would require an organization to operate with administrative expenses to be covered by the overall Access Program.
5. Create a Car Pool incentive program at BCAR facilities; offer the same program to private operators. Attract net loss of 50 cars.
 - A similar program offered by GoBNMC has been successful.
 - Incentives will be needed to make this system feasible, such as preferred parking locations near the exit, and a reduced parking fee from sharing one monthly parking rate, etc.
 - Will need to find ways to connect Carpoolers to those who live near them. There is a state website, but assistance through the parking operator will increase user friendliness.

- Funds to support this program in BCAR ramps were included in GBNRTC's application under NFTA for CMAQ funding including signage and advertising for carpooling of five spaces at five BCAR ramps (Augsburger, Mohawk, Main Place, Fernbach and Turner), for a total of 25 priority carpool parking spaces. An option to expand is available if there is demand for more carpool spaces.
 - The Downtown Employee Transportation Mode Survey indicates interest by some 15,120 downtown employees in carpooling if provided assistance in finding carpool partners, or were offered incentives such as priority parking locations.
6. Use moderately higher prices at BCAR facilities to increase the differential cost and encourage use of less expensive parking in the periphery, freeing up 250 core spaces. Reserve new revenue to support the Downtown Access Program. Specifically:
- Revenue to support lower cost periphery parking program – an outside contribution is required to price satellite parking at a low enough rate to be attractive to price sensitive parkers – M&T satellite parking pricing example.
 - Support Try –out Transit initiatives that are linked to BCAR monthly parkers
 - Provide Secure Bicycle parking options for frequent bike commuters – secure lock up rooms or lockers

The following [Additional Recommendations](#) are made due to the 2018 projected increase in the core parking deficit:

1. Insure adequate short-term curb parking by: Considering enforcement techniques and balancing pricing for long and short duration curb parking to lessen incentives for illegally feeding meters. If curb rates are to be moderately increased, dedicate increased revenues to an overall downtown Access Program to encourage alternative transportation choices including Try Out Transit and Low-Cost Satellite parking. Consider if all-day meter rates adequately cover meter collection and maintenance expenses.
2. Construction of structured parking to replace smaller facilities or inefficient lot parking in key demand areas. Prepare for losses in publicly available parking expected when the Court Franklin lot is dedicated to City employees, and Main Place and Seneca One Towers ramps revert to private owners, and become dedicated to those facilities.
 - A. Preferred sites where new structured parking will support increased occupancy of vacant buildings:
 - 201 Ellicott
 - Mohawk Ramp Area
 - Court Street
 - B. Interest in consideration/ study of building structured parking ramp spaces to support building occupancy and to free up low density parking lots for building development has been mentioned by:
 - BCAR – Concern regarding the prospective loss of 1,532 spaces in the publicly available system when Main Place and Seneca One Tower Ramps revert to the building owners and Court Franklin lot goes out of public service.
 - Ciminelli Development Planning group – The 210 Ellicott project motivates review of the downtown parking supply.
 - The Partnership's recent housing study supports use of current parking lots as development sites, and consolidating parking into fewer, more densely populated parking structures.
 - *Queen City Hub Strategic Plan for Downtown Buffalo* supports development of structured parking facilities to allow for development of surface parking lots.

- C. Funding for ramp construction is an issue, especially since parking reserve funds have been allocated to the City General Fund. Some work is underway by BCAR to identify if private tax incentives may have a role.
- 3. Create an Access Program Fund to support less traditional transportation/ parking choices. Dedicate increased revenues from increased curb and BCAR public parking rates to these programs. (Builds on recommendation #6. Assumes management of a more comprehensive downtown access system.)
 - A. Management/marketing and subsidy of periphery parking
 - B. Try Out Transit pass program
 - C. Convert BCAR parkers to transit with no-risk test passes
 - D. Reduction of Carpool pass fee as an additional incentive to encourage carpooling at BCAR facilities.
 - E. Umbrella agency for small businesses to participate in NFTA's corporate transit pass program
 - F. Management of surplus, privately held off-street parking
 - G. Provision of secure public bicycle storage in secure room/lock-ups or lockers to prevent bike theft for frequent riders.
- 4. Create a Shuttle system to encourage park and ride between the Canalside area at the south of Downtown, near KeyBank Arena, and Main Street corridor employment. Currently employees who park in the KeyBank Center and HarborCenter ramps use Metro Rail to travel to their workplace in the Downtown Core. A shuttle program would offer an additional higher level of customer service similar to the Park'n go Shuttle of the early 2000s. This and a low parking fee will motivate more employees to overcome the inconvenience and extra time required to use a satellite parking facility.