

Boulder City Downtown Parking Study

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*Prepared for:
Boulder City, Nevada*



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INTRODUCTION

The *Boulder City Master Plan*, adopted in December of 2003, includes the following policy related to a downtown parking strategy:

“The city should continue to work with the business community to develop a parking strategy for the downtown that addresses short and long-term parking needs in relation to business development activities, directional signage, parking enforcement, employee parking, adjacent neighborhoods, and other related issues.”

This report documents the parking strategy called for in the *Master Plan*. Included is material from the technical memorandum presented to the Planning Commission on February 24, 2004. The report also responds to comments at the Commission meeting. Those comments included the following:

- Steer parking away from residential areas.
- Maintain adequate parking to support tourism.
- Encourage employees to avoid parking in customer parking areas.

- Identify locations for RV parking.
- Improved signage would be helpful.
- Maintain a pedestrian-friendly environment.

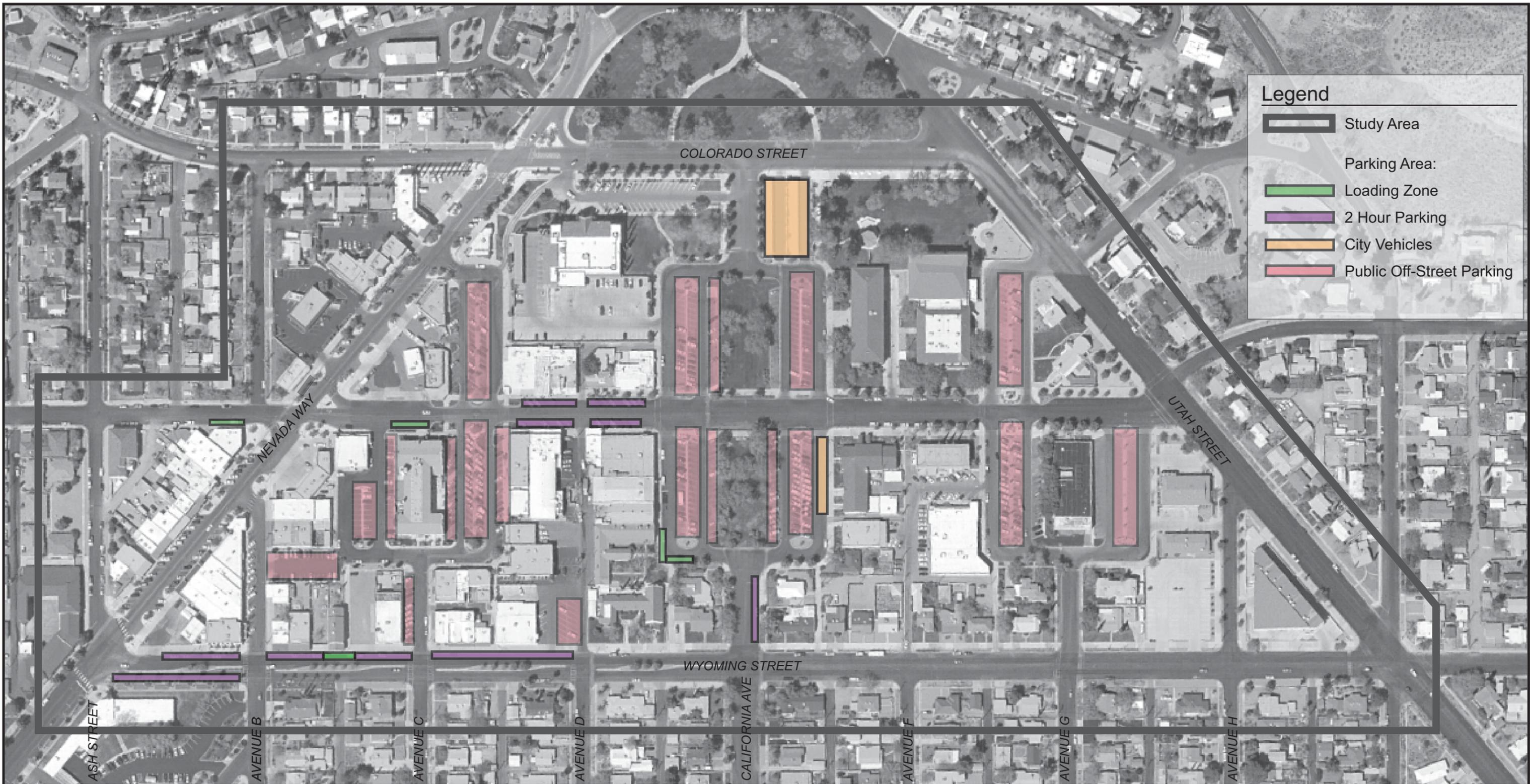
A. Analysis of Existing Conditions

Our study area is generally bounded by Colorado Street, Utah Street, Wyoming Street, and Nevada Way. Within this area, there are approximately 1,308 total parking spaces, comprised of 490 on-street spaces and 818 spaces within parking lots. Figure 1 depicts parking spaces with time or access restrictions – loading zones, 2-hour parking, customer parking, parking designated for City vehicles. It also shows unrestricted, off-street public parking

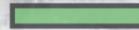
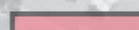


Looking east on Arizona Street

areas. Post Office parking, located off of Colorado Street, is not considered public parking since it is restricted to



Legend

-  Study Area
- Parking Area:
-  Loading Zone
-  2 Hour Parking
-  City Vehicles
-  Public Off-Street Parking

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Figure 1

Special Parking Areas



Post Office patrons and employees only. The vast majority of study area parking is unrestricted, as shown on Figure 1.

Table 1 summarizes the results of parking field data collected on Friday, November 14th, 2003; Saturday, November 15th; and Wednesday, November 19th at four different times: noon, 2:00 PM, 4:00 PM, and 6:00 PM. These data points reflect both weekday and weekend conditions, including one day (Wednesday) when City offices were open, and one day (Friday) when City offices were closed.



Looking northeast on Nevada Way

The table shows which time period experienced the greatest overall concentration of parking. On Wednesday and Friday, this occurred at noon, and on Saturday, at 2:00. Parking accumulation was highest on Friday, when 46 percent of on-street spaces and 41 percent of parking lot spaces were occupied, for an overall

total of 43 percent occupancy. Wednesday peak parking reached 42 percent of available capacity, and Saturday reached 27 percent.

While overall parking availability is adequate, there are certain street segments that experience more pronounced parking occupancy. On Wednesday, Figure 2 shows 80 percent parking occupancy was exceeded at noon in the following areas:

- Nevada Way, between Arizona Street and Wyoming Street
- Ash Street, east side, between Arizona Street and Nevada Way
- Avenue B, between Nevada Way and Wyoming Street
- Arizona Street, both sides, east and west of Avenue D
- Arizona Street, south side, adjacent to City offices
- Wyoming Street, north side, between Avenue G and Avenue H
- Small parking area adjacent to the theater

On Friday, Figure 3 shows 80 percent parking occupancy was exceeded at noon in the following areas:

- Nevada Way, between Arizona Street and Wyoming Street

Table 1
Parking Utilization Summary
Boulder City Downtown Parking Study

	Wednesday				Friday				Saturday			
	Noon	2:00	4:00	6:00	Noon	2:00	4:00	6:00	Noon	2:00	4:00	6:00
Available Spaces												
On-Street	490	490	490	490	490	490	490	490	490	490	490	490
Parking Lots	818	818	818	818	818	818	818	818	818	818	818	818
<i>Total</i>	1308											
Occupied Spaces												
On-Street	203	158	143	139	225	174	154	129	132	160	118	97
Parking Lots	340	300	306	203	336	289	285	218	198	197	177	136
<i>Total</i>	543	458	449	342	561	463	439	347	330	357	295	233
Percent Occupied												
On-Street	41%	32%	29%	28%	46%	36%	31%	26%	27%	33%	24%	20%
Parking Lots	42%	37%	37%	25%	41%	35%	35%	27%	24%	24%	22%	17%
Overall Utilization	42%	35%	34%	26%	43%	35%	34%	27%	25%	27%	23%	18%

Source: Boulder City Staff; Fehr & Peers

Wyoming Street, both sides,
between Nevada Way and
Avenue B

- Avenue B, between Nevada Way and Wyoming Street
- Parking lot located east of Avenue B
- Wyoming Street, south side, between Avenue B and Avenue C
- Wyoming Street, north side, between Avenue C and California Ave.
- Arizona Street, both sides, east and west of Avenue D
- Small parking area adjacent to the theater
- Arizona Street, south side, adjacent to City offices
- Some parking areas serving City offices

On Saturday, Figure 4 shows 80 percent parking occupancy was exceeded at 2:00 PM in the following areas:

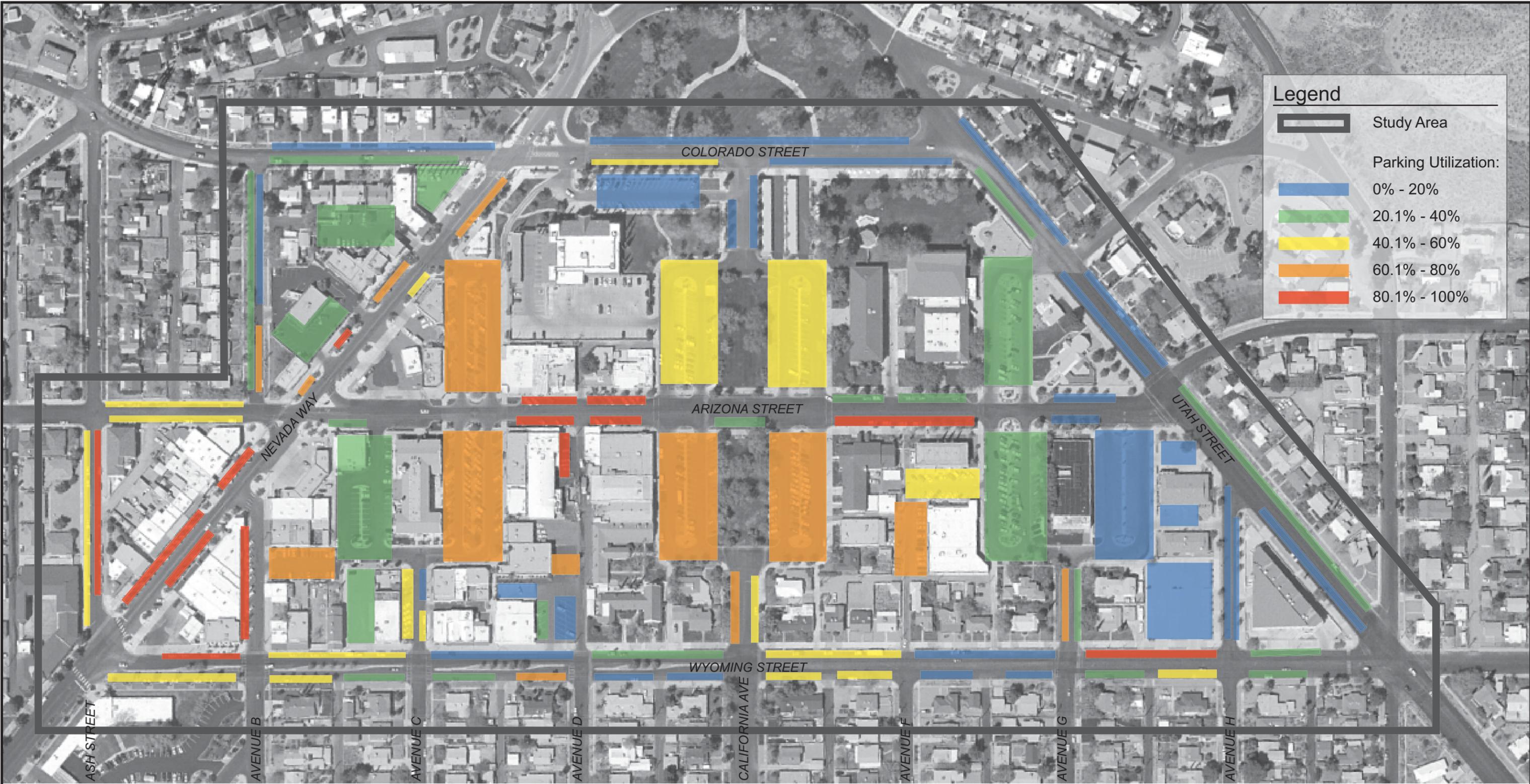
- Nevada Way, between Ash Street and Avenue B
- Ash Street, east wide, between Nevada Way and Arizona Street
- Arizona Street, south side, east of Avenue D
- Arizona Street, north side, in front of Parks and Recreation building

- Parking lot behind the Credit Union

Whenever parking demand exceeds 80 percent of available parking supply, a locational parking shortage exists. As noted above, parking supply exceeds demand on an overall basis within the study area. However, during peak times, parking spaces can be difficult to find primarily in and around the retail and restaurant area bounded by Ash Street, Arizona Street, Avenue B, and Wyoming Street. These on-street spaces and parking lots are frequently fully or almost fully occupied.



Looking south into Hotel Plaza



Legend

Study Area

Parking Utilization:

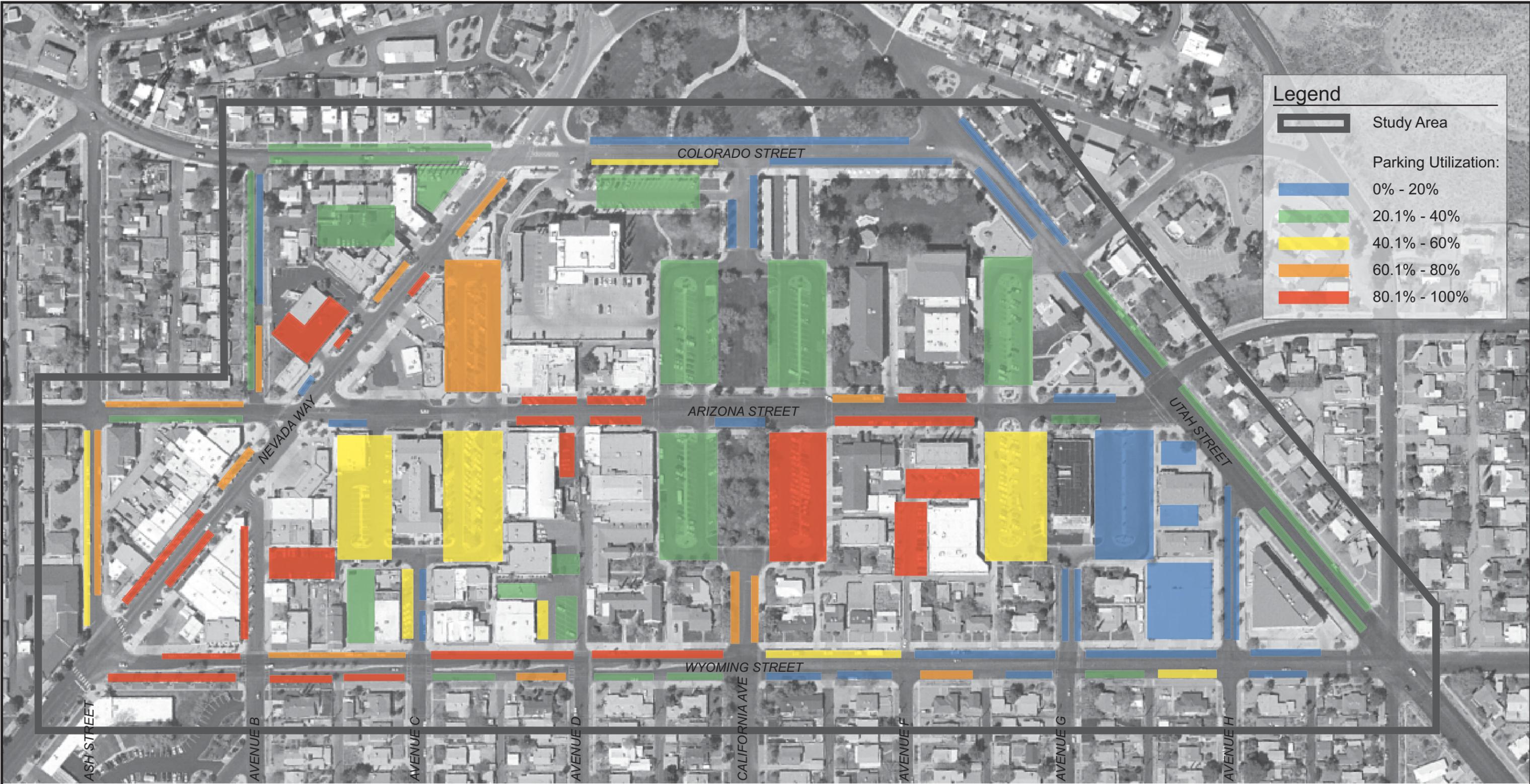
- 0% - 20%
- 20.1% - 40%
- 40.1% - 60%
- 60.1% - 80%
- 80.1% - 100%



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Figure 2

Wednesday 12:00 PM Parking Utilization



Legend

Study Area

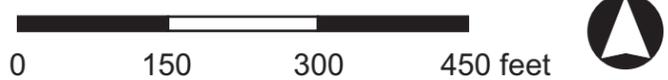
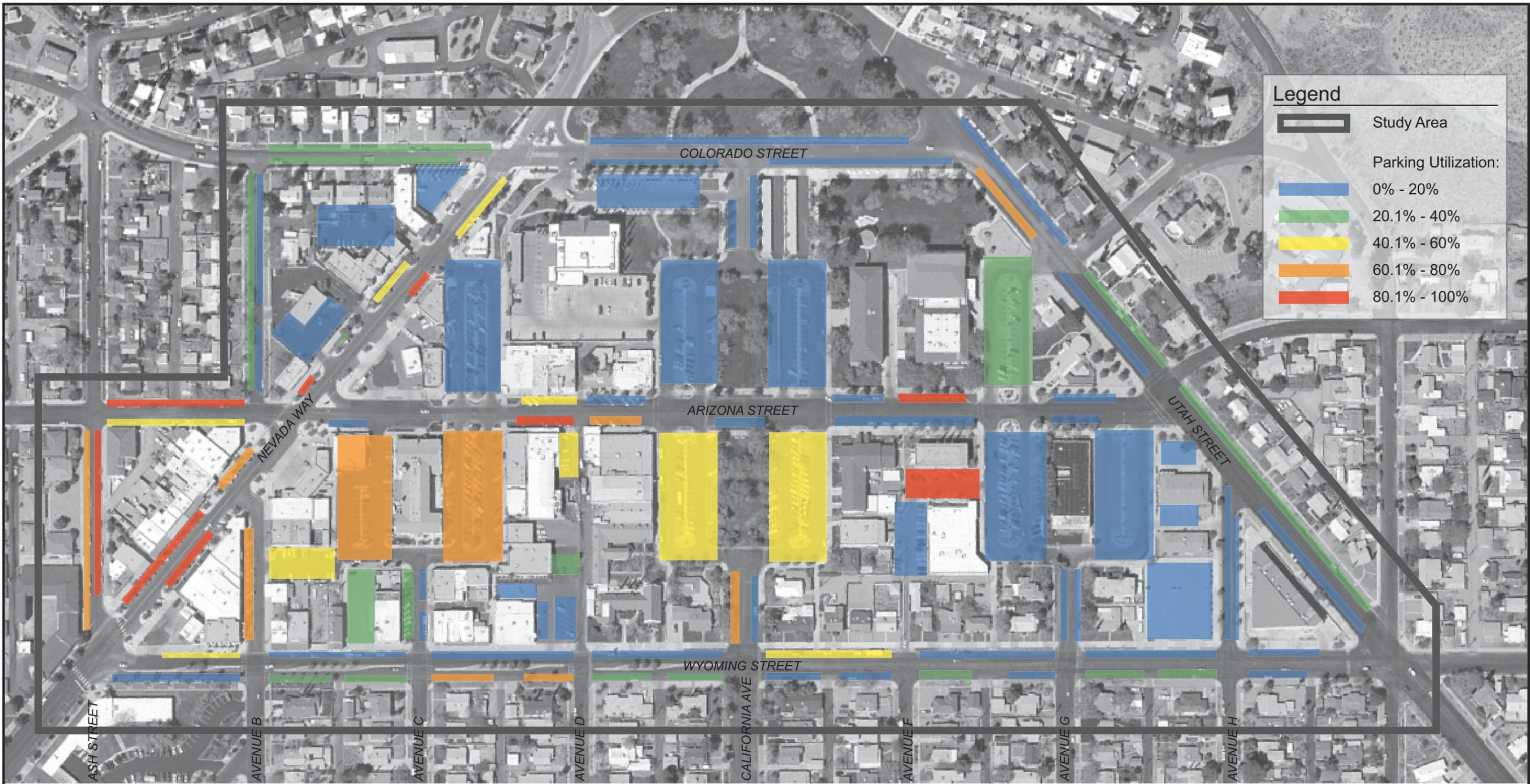
Parking Utilization:

- 0% - 20%
- 20.1% - 40%
- 40.1% - 60%
- 60.1% - 80%
- 80.1% - 100%



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Figure 3
Friday 12:00 PM Parking Utilization



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B. Findings: Existing Conditions

Data collection and analysis, field review, and comments at the Planning Commission meeting indicate the following:

- While overall parking supply exceeds parking demand within the study area, certain areas experience parking demand that equals 80 percent or more of available parking supply.
- Existing parking lots are well-marked.
- Most on-street parking spaces are not striped with parking "T's."
- Some 2-hour parking signs should be replaced due to age.
- Current enforcement of 2-hour parking zones and loading zones appears to be minimal.
- During peak times, parking spaces can be difficult to find primarily in and around the retail and restaurant area bounded by Ash Street, Arizona Street, Avenue B, and Wyoming Street.
- Existing parking supply provides sufficient spaces to serve existing study area land uses.
- Downtown parking demand should be discouraged in residential areas.

- Consideration should be given to pull-through parking for buses and recreational vehicles.
- Employee parking should be discouraged in prime customer parking areas.
- Parking lot directional signage should be enhanced.

C. Future Parking Demand

Boulder City does not prepare quantified estimates of future downtown development potential. For purposes of this study, an average rate of 1,000 square feet per year was



Looking northeast on Nevada Way

selected as a future annual development increase within the study area. This would consist primarily of retail and restaurant space, as further described below. For comparison purposes, the City has approved a total of 4,500 square feet of new construction in the study area over the past five years, or just under 1,000

square feet per year. The study area contains approximately 240,000 square feet of non-residential space, excluding city-owned buildings.

Boulder City currently requires 1 space for every 2 seats for restaurants, and 1 space for each 300 square feet of retail space. For every 1,000 square feet of retail space, 3.3 parking spaces would be required. A small specialty restaurant could have around 3,000 total square feet of space and approximately 20 seats, requiring 10 spaces (the restaurant ratio would therefore equate to 3 spaces per 1,000 square feet). At 1,000 square feet per year, the City would therefore experience the need for approximately *three new off-street parking spaces per year*.

In a downtown setting, it is traditional to require that some or all of required parking be provided off-site (either in shared public or private parking lots, or on-street) rather than on each individual development parcel. This approach insures that valuable downtown land, typically in smaller lots, is not compromised by inefficient, small parking areas.

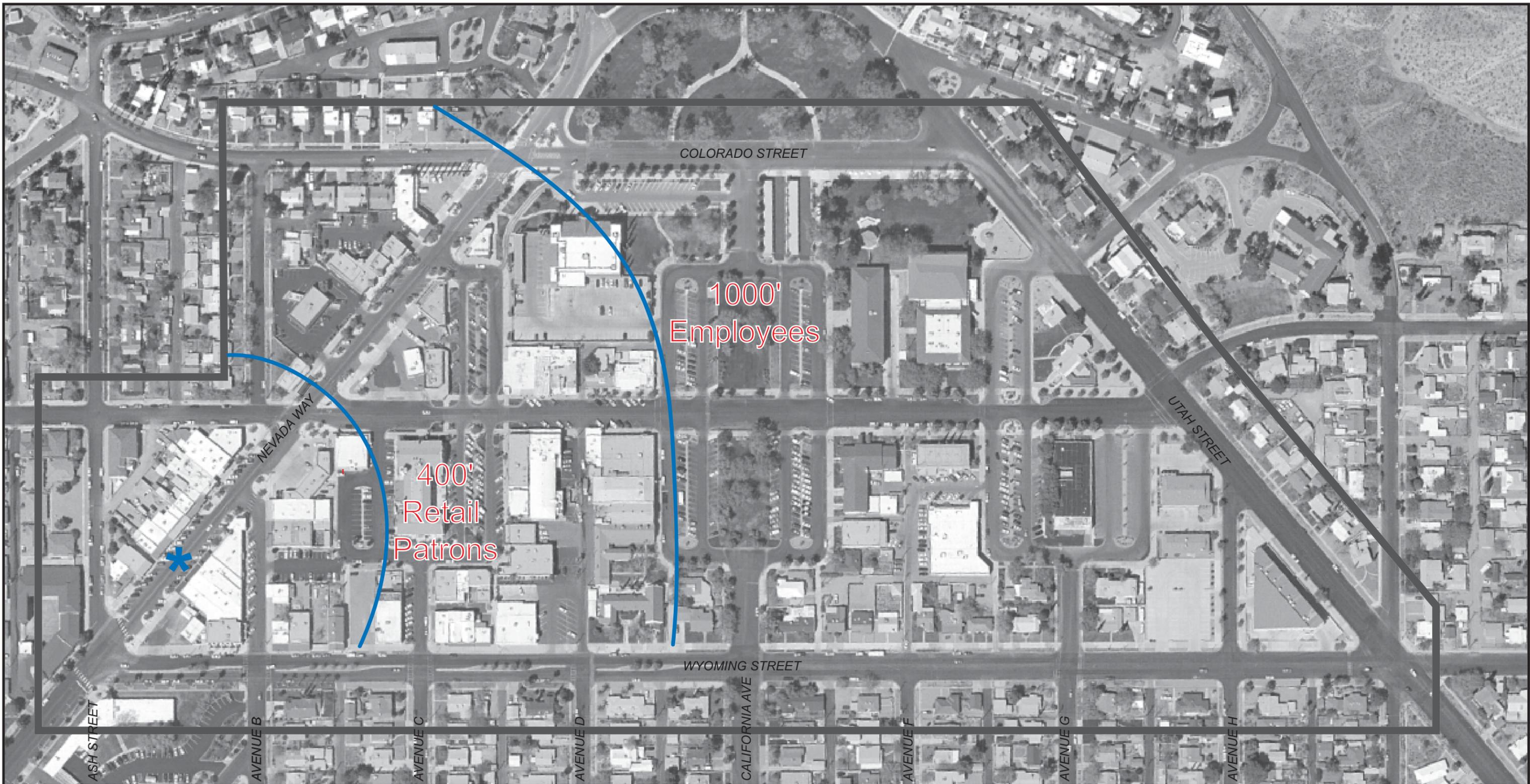
Table 1 indicated that the current peak parking utilization, which occurs on a Friday at noon, is 43 percent of available supply. However, it has also been demonstrated that certain

parking areas experience utilization rates exceeding 80 percent, evidence of a potential *localized* shortage.

Figure 5 shows the 400-foot and 1,000-foot distances from Nevada Way between Wyoming Street and Avenue B. This location on Nevada Way represents the “epicenter” of parking demand – an area that experiences 80 percent parking demand during peak times. The 400-foot distance represents a comfortable walking distance for retail patrons, while the 1,000-foot distance represents the comfortable walking distance for employees.

In the context of available supply and the key areas of parking demand, the future demand of four spaces per year has the following implications:

- Some level of additional development can be accommodated within the existing parking supply, dependent on the geographic location of development.
- Beyond seven years, if new development focuses on the area within the 400-foot line on Figure 5, parking demand may spill over into nearby residential areas if new parking supply is not provided.



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Figure 5
Typical Retail Patron and Employee Walking Distances
From Nevada Way near Avenue B

The implications of future parking demand are further explored in the Recommendations section below.



Looking East on Arizona Street

D. Short-, Mid-, and Long-Term Recommendations

Based on the analysis of existing conditions and considering the findings listed above, a number of recommendations have been prepared. These recommendations have been categorized as short-term (1 to 5 years); mid-term (6 to 10 years) and long-term (beyond 10 years). These recommendations will need to be implemented in the context of established City planning documents, available operating resources, and anticipated capital improvement program allocations.

Short-Term Recommendations **(implement within one to five years)**

1. Improve and update signage for parking restrictions and parking lots. An inventory of downtown parking signs should be completed, with all faded signs repaired or replaced.
2. Assess adequacy of existing parking lot lighting through an evening survey of all downtown parking lot luminaries.
3. Install new parking directional signs on Wyoming Street, Colorado Street, Arizona Avenue and Nevada Way to guide motorists to parking lots on either side of Arizona Avenue.
4. Investigate potential locations for bus and recreational vehicle parking.
5. Consider additional enforcement of areas with 2-hour parking restrictions. This will insure turnover in the most popular patron parking areas.
6. Educate employees and businesses on importance of convenient customer parking.

7. Work with local businesses to direct employee parking away from areas with peak parking demand.
8. Require preparation of parking management agreements for each development application. These agreements should consider shared parking opportunities, identify the location for both patron and employee parking, and require a commitment for employee parking away from congested parking areas.
9. Investigate establishment of a parking in-lieu fee, as a means to accumulate funds for the provision of future parking supply.
10. Monitor parking spill-over onto Ash Street and adjacent residential neighborhoods. Consider establishment of neighborhood parking permits if spill-over parking cannot be addressed through merchant and business owner efforts.
11. Conduct regular meetings with downtown businesses and merchants to address emerging parking issues and needs.



Parking in Hotel Plaza

1. Prepare an updated map showing available downtown parking locations. Make this available to all downtown merchants and businesses.
2. Work with merchants to assess adequacy of existing loading zones. Provide additional enforcement of existing loading zones.
3. Determine, identify, and sign locations where business owners/employees should park. Initially, these areas should be outside the 400-foot radius shown on Figure 5.
4. Analyze parking time zones to determine appropriate time limits with special attention to employees who need full-day parking.
5. Review anticipated development forecasts in the context of available parking, and assess need for downtown

Mid-Term Recommendations
(implement within six to ten years)

parking structure or additional on- or off-street parking supply.

Long-Term Recommendations
(implement beyond ten years)

1. Update development forecasts within the study area.
2. Conduct downtown parking surveys during three time periods and quantify available parking supply.
3. Identify potential locations for additional on- or off-street parking spaces and/or a downtown parking structure.
4. Construct additional on- or off-street parking spaces.
5. Prepare detailed design studies and preliminary cost estimates for the downtown parking structure.
6. Identify funding resources and a project timeline for the structure.
7. Determine if project construction drawings are to be prepared and if project will proceed through construction.
8. Secure funding sources, complete project design, and construct downtown parking structure.



Looking north on Hotel Plaza