

## Oil City Public Parking Study Fall 2013

### **Purpose:**

At the request of the City Manager, the Oil City Department of Community Development performed a parking study to determine general usage and availability of parking in the downtown business district on both the North and South sides of the City.

### **Methodology:**

The Department requested and received an inventory of all public parking areas from the Police Department. This list included on-street and lot parking; metered, free, and permitted spaces. It was determined to survey the parking situations at specific times of day: early morning, mid-morning, lunchtime, and mid afternoon. Days of the week were chosen at random. Data was also collected on a Friday evening and Saturday mid-morning, typically times where a change in parking patterns might be seen.

No data was collected during days when events or special attractions were scheduled to avoid artificially skewing the numbers. Anomalies in data collection were noted such as spaces blocked for construction and a few illegally parked cars. None of the anomalies were determined to be statistically significant.

Community Development staff collected data on foot, walking each of the streets and lots and counting spaces in use. Each collection period lasted no more than one hour. The data was entered into a spreadsheet and calculations determined the percentage of spaces used during the time period, by street and lot. The data has been aggregated over time and by area to determine average percentage of usage.

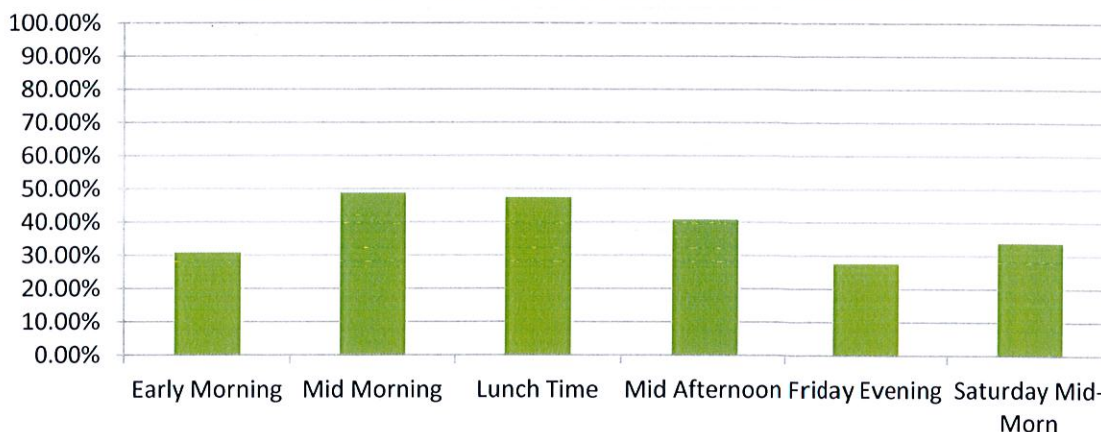
For the purpose of this study, we broke out parking usage by Downtown Area (North and South), Street, and Lot. The study also examines the frequency of use of handicapped spaces and permit spaces.

There are a total of 512 public parking spaces in the City of Oil City: 281 on-street spaces and 231 lot spaces. The areas are defined as such:

<b>Northside Streets</b>	<b>Total Number of Spaces</b>	<b>Permit / Reserved Spaces</b>	<b>Handicapped Spaces</b>
Elm Street	42		2
Seneca Street (from bridge to Duncomb)	61		3
North Seneca Street (north of Duncomb)	18		1
Center Street	5		
Sycamore Street	7		1
Main Street	12	2	
<b>Northside Lots</b>			
Lot 15 (Justus Park lot)	78	68	4
Lot 3 (beside Train Station)	33	2	2
Lot 12 (between railroad bridge and Luther Place)	16		1
Lot 7 (behind Cornplanter Square)	18		1
Lot 9 (Near Wooden Nickel/Blizzard Lot)	34	25	
<b>Southside Streets</b>			
Front Street	28		2
First Street	50		1
Central Avenue	39		2
State Street	19		
<b>Southside Lots</b>			
Lot 11 (across from YWCA, off Central Ave)	41	14	2
Lot 5 (behind Friedhaber's)	11	11	

Generally, across all time periods, on-street parking is used more often than parking lot spaces (43.83% street usage vs. 31.53% lot usage). The data collection showed that the highest percentage of parking occurs in on-street spaces during all time periods and the largest percentage of total spaces used is during the mid-morning hours (48.83%).

**Figure 1: City-wide Parking Usage (All Public Parking)**



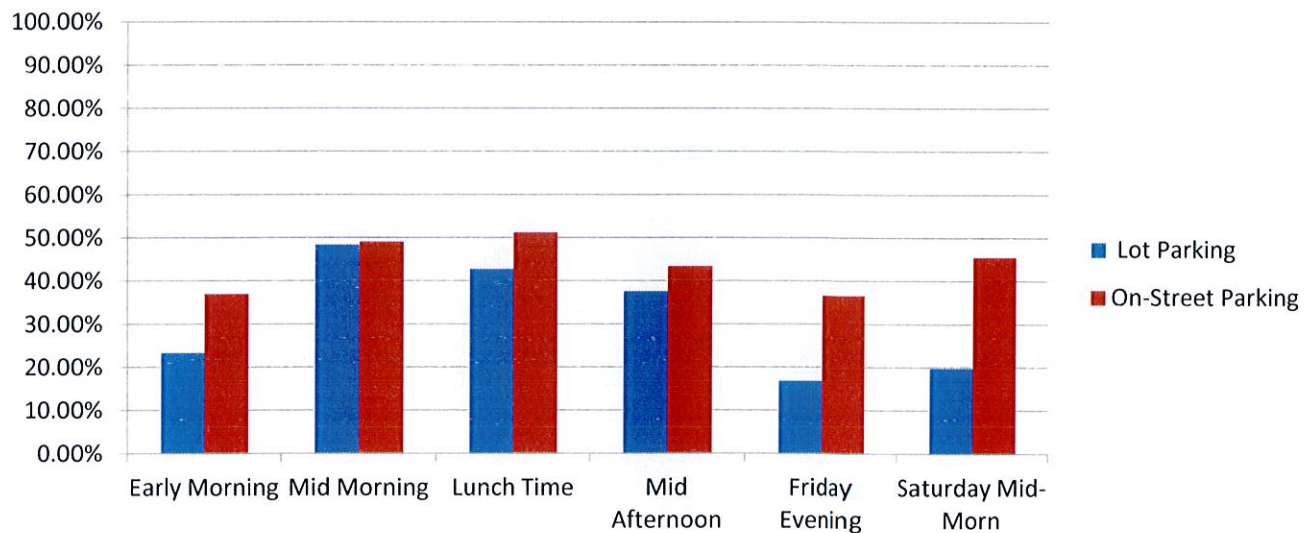
When separated by geographic area, parking is generally spread evenly throughout the City with an average of 39.89% usage on the Southside and 37.35% usage on the Northside, across all time periods.

**Figure 2 City-wide Parking Usage (North vs. South)**



According to the data collected, on-street parking is used more often than lot parking. On average, street parking is utilized 43.83% compared to lot parking at 31.53%.

**Figure 3: City-wide Parking Usage (Lot vs. Street)**

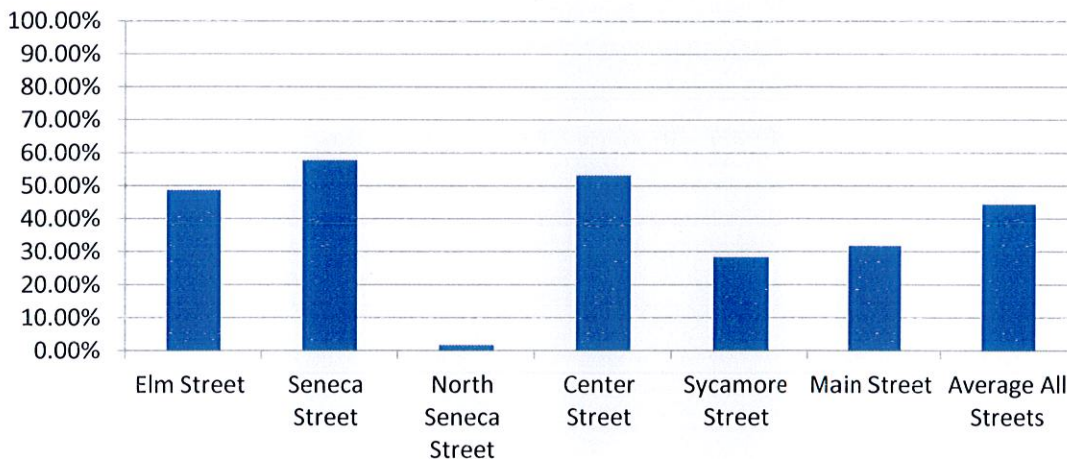


## Northside Parking

Including all public parking spaces, usage on the Northside averages 37.35%. Street usage is greater than lot usage; 44.6% vs. 31.5%.

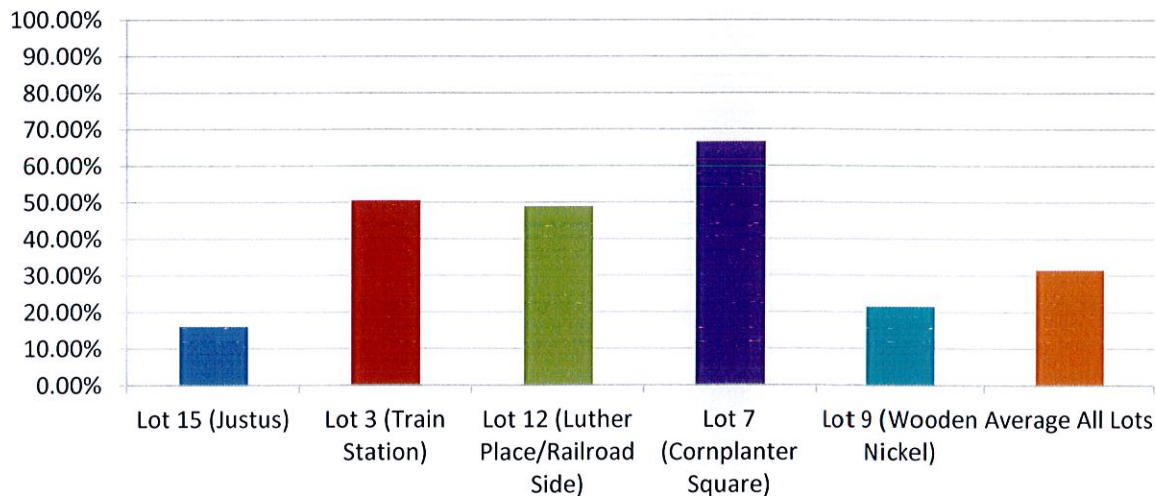
Seneca Street has the largest number of on-street parking spaces (61) and is the most heavily used at an average of 57.9%. Center Street is next highest at 53.3%, but only contains five parking spaces. The 18 spaces on North Seneca Street are rarely used, averaging only 1.85% during the period of this study. Averages for all Northside on-street parking are below.

**Figure 4: Northside On-Street Parking**



Lot 15 (the Justus Lot) contains the largest number of parking spaces (78) for lots on the Northside, but is the least used (16%). The most heavily used lot is Lot 7 (Cornplanter Square) with a usage rate of 66.67%. It is also one of the smallest lots with only 18 spaces.

**Figure 5: Northside Lot Parking**

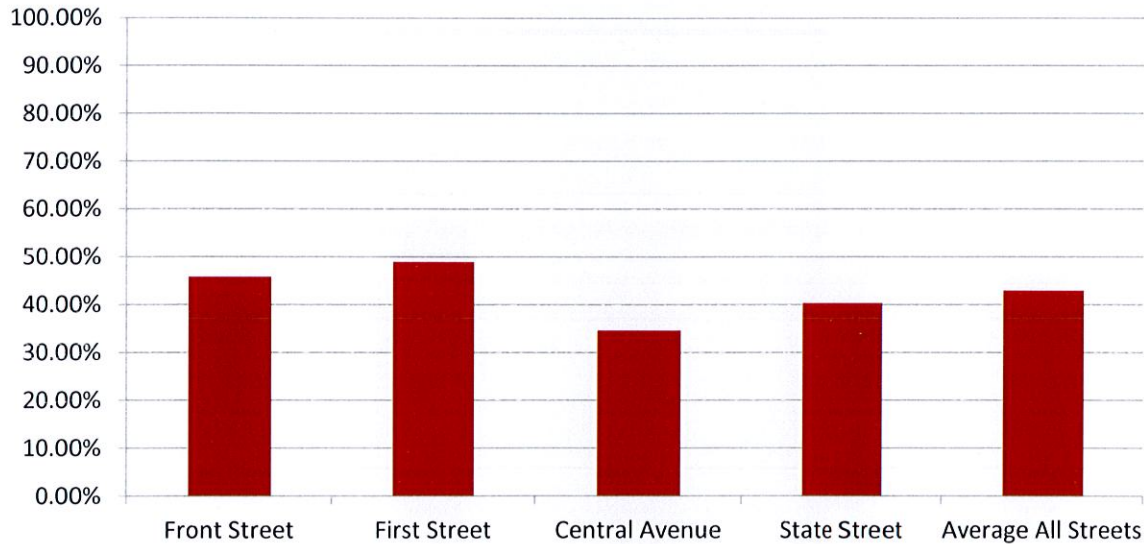


## Southside Parking

The Southside is comparable to the Northside. Overall parking usage, including both lots and on-street, is 39.89%. On-street parking is used more frequently than lot parking; 43% vs. 31.7%.

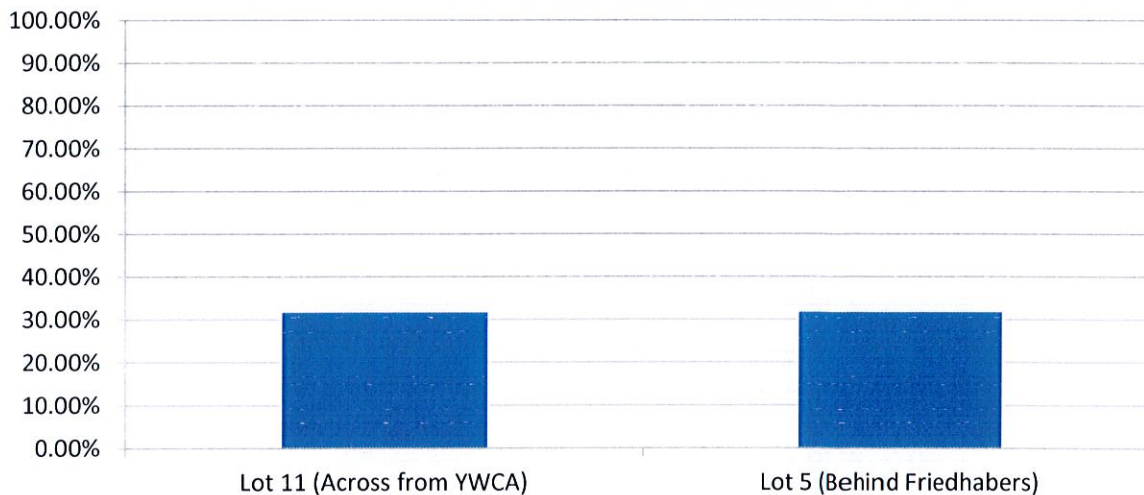
On-street parking is fairly evenly spread throughout the Southside with the highest usage seen on First Street (49%) and the lowest on Central Avenue (34.6%).

**Figure 6: Southside Street Parking**



Lot usage on the Southside is low at 31.73%. Lot 5, located behind Friedhaber's, is strictly permit only. Lot 11 (across from the YWCA/Central Ave) contains 14 permit spaces and 27 metered spaces. The metered spaces are used much more frequently than the permit spaces.

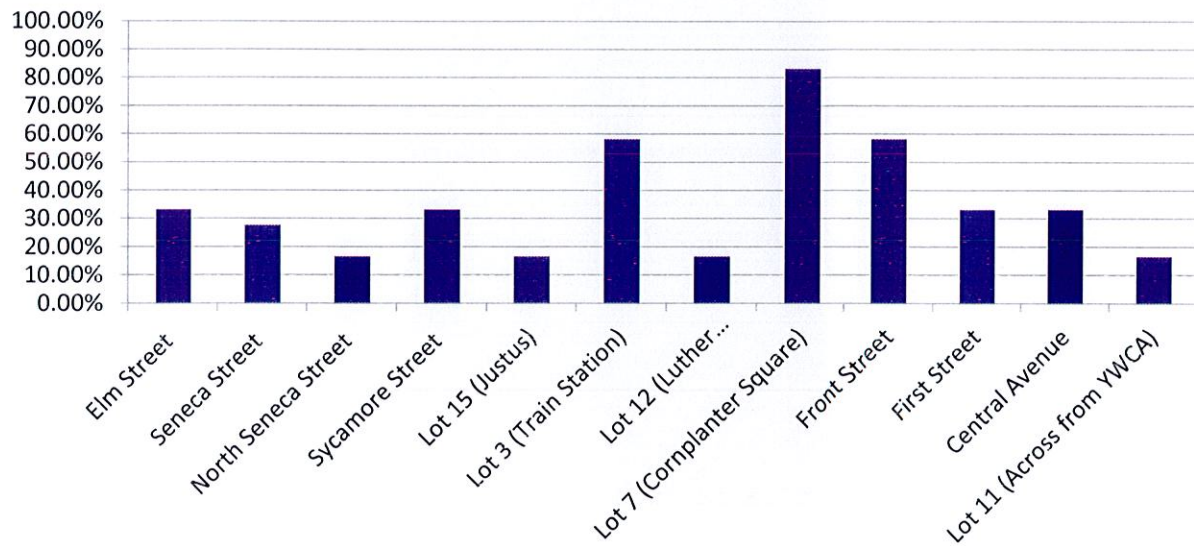
**Figure 7: Southside Lot Parking**



## Handicapped Space Usage

Of the 512 public parking spaces within the City, 22 are designated as handicapped parking spaces. Average usage across all time periods and locations is 33.3%. The space used most frequently is in the Cornplanter Square Lot (Lot 7) at 83%. This is logical given that Lot 7 is the most heavily used lot in the City. Lot 3 (next to the Train Station) and Front Street are both at 58.3% handicapped space usage. One of the two handicapped spaces in Lot 3 is reserved for an employee of the OC&T Railroad. The handicapped space used most heavily on Front Street is located in front of the Library handicapped access ramp.

Figure 8: Handicapped Space Usage



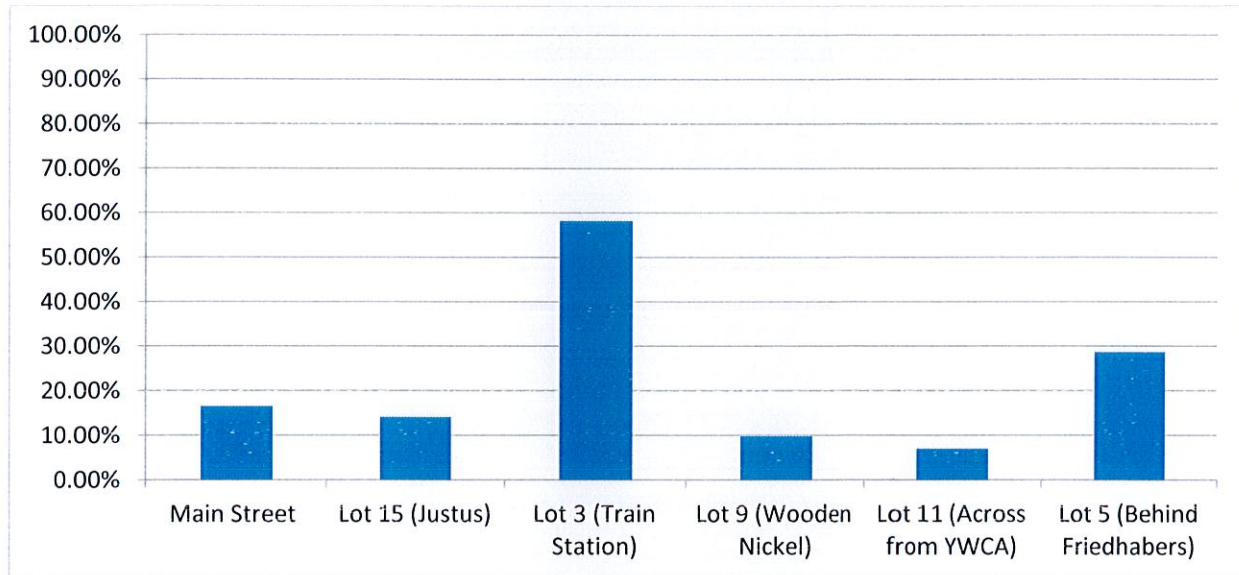
## Permit and Reserved Space Usage

There are 115 Permit-only parking spaces in the City. Additionally there are 7 reserved spaces which are located as such: 2 on Main Street for the Chamber of Commerce, 2 in Lot 3 for OC&T Railroad employees, 2 in Lot 15 for the Code Office and 1 in Lot 15 for the Arts Council. With the exception of the 2 reserved spaces on Main Street, all permitted and reserved spaces are located in public parking lots.

On average in 2012, there were 73 permits purchased per quarter, 63% of permitted spaces. During the third quarter of 2013, 54 permits were active – only 44% of the permits available.

Overall, permit/reserved parking is greatly underused at an average of only 14.62% usage. The highest usage 58.3% is Lot 3 which are the two reserved spots for the Railroad employees. The least used permit lot is Lot 11 (Across from the YWCA) at 7.14%. The largest lot is located near Justus Park (Lot 15) and contains 68 permitted or reserved spots. These spots are utilized just 14.2% of the time.

**Figure 9: Permit & Reserved Space Usage**



### Considerations

There are a number of variables that may impact parking patterns in the future. These variables should be considered prior to making any major changes to parking patterns.

1. North Seneca Street – Parking on this section of Seneca Street is practically zero. Businesses on the west side of the street have private parking lots for their employees and customers. The east side of the street contains a number of vacant buildings. Should these buildings become occupied or redeveloped, the need for parking may grow. Also consider the open private lot across from the Drake Building which would be put into play if development occurred across the street.
2. Seneca Street – Currently this street sees most parking activity. Yet it contains a number of vacant buildings. Again, if these buildings should be redeveloped, parking need in this area will grow.
3. Penn Dot – When the Parking Ramp closed, Penn Dot employees found other places to park. Some found private lots, some park on the street and some purchased permits. Penn Dot is currently undergoing a project to build an employee parking lot along Elm Street. This should reduce the number of those employees using public parking spaces.
4. Trail Town Concept – Talks have been taking place regarding how to make the bike trail passage through the downtown safer. Ideas include removing the parking spaces along North Seneca Street and creating a bike lane; and changing the traffic pattern on Seneca and Elm to create either a bike lane or a “share the road” concept. Parking may be affected and should be considered during Trail Town planning.
5. Justus Park Lot (Lot 15) – It appears from this study that the city may have too many permitted parking spots; specifically in the Justus Park lot which is the largest and most underutilized lot in the city. The majority of spaces in this lot are permitted but only 14% are occupied on average. Removing the permit signs and adding more metered parking may encourage additional use of the lot. Additionally, due to the location of the lot (around and under the bridge), improved signage may also increase usage.

# DOWNTOWN OIL CITY

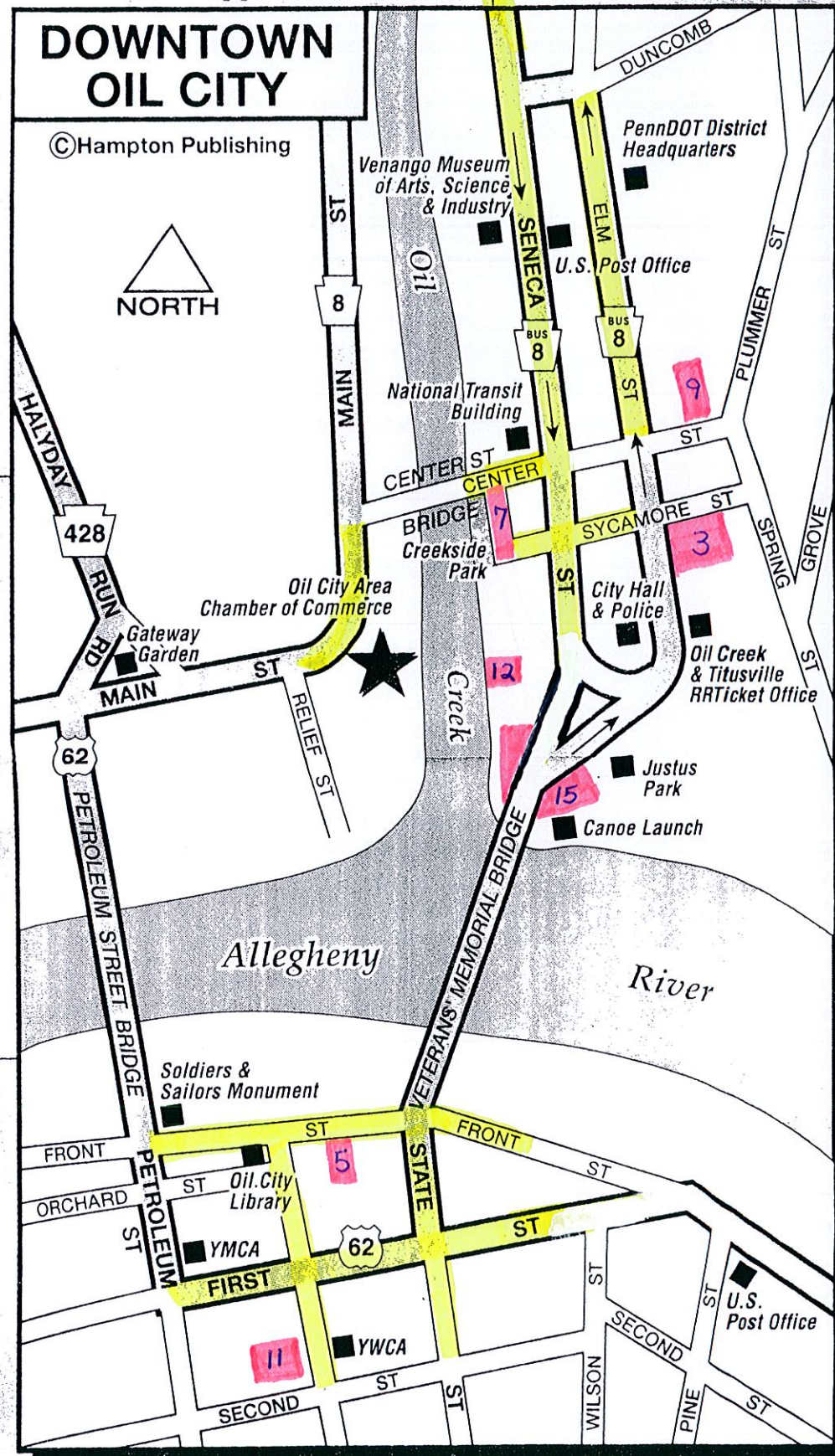
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Oil City Public Parking Areas

 On-Street Parking

 Lots



10

11

Lower Twomile Run

Cranberry MS & HS

**Northside  
Public Parking (Metered and Lots) Only**

	Total # of Spots	Friday 4-Oct Early Morn	Percent Occupied	Tuesday 1-Oct Mid Morn	Percent Occupied	Thursday 26-Sep Lunch Time	Percent Occupied	Monday 21-Oct Afternoon	Percent Occupied	Friday 11-Oct Friday Eve	Percent Occupied	Saturday 26-Oct Saturday Mid-Mn	Percent Occupied	Avg. Percent Occupied by Area
<b>Northside Street Meters</b>														
Elm Street	42	20	47.62%	27	64.29%	27	64.29%	21	50.00%	19	45.24%	9	21.43%	48.81%
Seneca Street	61	33	54.10%	42	68.85%	43	70.49%	31	50.82%	28	45.90%	35	57.38%	57.92%
North Seneca Street	18	1	5.56%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	1	5.56%	0	0.00%	1.85%
Center Street	5	1	20.00%	4	80.00%	3	60.00%	2	40.00%	1	20.00%	5	100.00%	53.33%
Sycamore Street	7	1	14.29%	2	28.57%	1	14.29%	3	42.86%	4	57.14%	1	14.29%	28.57%
Main Street	12	1	8.33%	5	41.67%	4	33.33%	7	58.33%	2	16.67%	4	33.33%	31.94%
All Streets	145	57	39.31%	80	55.17%	78	53.79%	64	44.14%	55	37.93%	54	37.24%	44.60%
<b>Northside Lots</b>														
Lot 15 (Justus)	78	10	12.82%	20	25.64%	21	26.92%	20	25.64%	2	2.56%	2	2.56%	16.03%
Lot 3 (Train Station)	33	10	30.30%	27	81.82%	21	63.64%	18	54.55%	14	42.42%	10	30.30%	50.51%
Lot 12 (Luther Place/Railroad Side)	16	7	43.75%	13	81.25%	11	68.75%	7	43.75%	6	37.50%	3	18.75%	48.96%
Lot 7 (Complanter Square)	18	2	11.11%	18	100.00%	16	88.89%	16	88.89%	8	44.44%	12	66.67%	66.67%
Lot 9 (Wooden Nickel)	34	10	29.41%	13	38.24%	8	23.53%	7	20.59%	4	11.76%	2	5.88%	21.57%
All Lots	179	39	21.79%	91	50.84%	77	43.02%	68	37.99%	34	18.99%	29	16.20%	31.47%
North Side Total Cars & Average %	324	96	29.63%	171	52.78%	155	47.84%	132	40.74%	89	27.47%	83	25.62%	37.35%
<b>Notes:</b>														
		Lot 7 blocked by construction. 3 spaces blocked by construction on Sycamore. 1 vehicle illegally parked in NPZ on Seneca Street.			1 vehicle in loading zone on Seneca St. (Seneca Court)			1 vehicle parked in loading zone on Elm (Grandview Estates). 1 vehicle parked in loading zone on Seneca (Seneca Court)			2 spaces blocked by construction in Lot 7. 2 spaces blocked by construction on Sycamore			

Southside  
Public Parking (Metered and Lots) Only

	Total # of Spots	27-Sep Friday Early Morn	Percent Occupied	22-Oct Tuesday Mid Morn	Percent Occupied	25-Sep Wednesday Lunchtime	Percent Occupied	3-Oct Thursday Afternoon	Percent Occupied	11-Oct Friday Evening	Percent Occupied	26-Oct Saturday Mid Morn	Percent Occupied	Avg. Percent Occupied by Area
Southside Street Meters														
Front Street	28	17	60.71%	13	46.43%	11	39.29%	13	46.43%	1	3.57%	22	78.57%	45.83%
First Street	50	21	42.00%	21	42.00%	28	56.00%	27	54.00%	23	46.00%	27	54.00%	49.00%
Central Avenue	39	8	20.51%	19	48.72%	15	38.46%	9	23.08%	13	33.33%	17	43.59%	34.62%
State Street	19	1	5.26%	5	26.32%	12	63.16%	9	47.37%	11	57.89%	8	42.11%	40.35%
All Streets	136	47	34.56%	58	42.65%	66	48.53%	58	42.65%	48	35.29%	74	54.41%	43.01%
Southside Lots														
Lot 11 (Across from YWCA)	41	13	31.71%	14	34.15%	19	46.34%	14	34.15%	5	12.20%	13	31.71%	31.71%
Lot 5 (Behind Friedhabers)	11	2	18.18%	7	63.64%	3	27.27%	5	45.45%	0	0.00%	4	36.36%	31.82%
All Lots	52	15	28.85%	21	40.38%	22	42.31%	19	36.54%	5	9.62%	17	32.69%	31.73%
Southside Total Cars & Average %	188	62	32.98%	79	42.02%	88	46.81%	77	40.96%	53	28.19%	91	48.40%	39.89%

NOTES:

4 spaces in Lot 11 blocked for Construction. Portions of Central Avenue blocked just prior to survey (opened during counting)		1 vehicle parked illegally at end of block (corner of First and Wilson). 4 spaces on Central Ave and 4 spaces in Lot 11 blocked by construction. 1 vehicle parked in NPZ on Front St.	1 vehicle parked illegally at end of block (corner of First & Wilson). 4 spaces in Lot 11 blocked by construction	4 spaces blocked by construction in Lot 11. One vehicle illegally parked (NPZ) on Front St.
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# Handicapped Space Usage

	# of H-spaces	Early Morn	Mid Morn	Lunchtime	Mid Afternoon	Friday Eve	Saturday Mid-morn	TOTAL	Average
Elm Street	2	0	0	1	0	1	0	4	33.33%
Seneca Street	3	0	0	0	0	1	1	5	27.78%
North Seneca Street	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	16.67%
Sycamore Street	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	33.33%
Lot 15 (Justus)	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	16.67%
Lot 3 (Train Station)	2	1	1	1	1	0	1	7	58.33%
Lot 12 (Luther Place/Railroad Side)	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	16.67%
Lot 7 (Cornplanter Square)	1	1	1	0	1	1	0	5	83.33%
Front Street	2	1	1	0	1	0	2	7	58.33%
First Street	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	33.33%
Central Avenue	2	0	0	1	1	0	0	4	33.33%
Lot 11 (Across from YWCA)	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	16.67%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>33.33%</b>
		13.64%	13.64%	13.64%	18.18%	22.73%	18.18%		

## Permit Spaces

	# of Permit and Reserved Spaces	Early Morn	Mid Morn	Lunchtime	Mid Afternoon	Friday Evening	Saturday Mid-Morn	TOTAL	Average
Main Street	2	0	1	1	0	0	0	2	16.67%
Lot 15 (Justus)	68	7	15	18	18	0	0	58	14.22%
Lot 3 (Train Station)	2	1	2	2	2	0	0	7	58.33%
Lot 9 (Wooden Nickel)	25	2	6	3	4	0	0	15	10.00%
Lot 11 (Across from YWCA)	14	0	0	3	2	0	1	6	7.14%
Lot 5 (Behind Friedhabers)	11	2	2	3	5	3	4	19	28.79%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>12</b> 9.84%	<b>26</b> 21.31%	<b>30</b> 24.59%	<b>31</b> 25.41%	<b>3</b> 2.46%	<b>5</b> 4.10%	<b>107</b>	<b>14.62%</b>